A STUDY ON CROSS-GENERATION ASSIMILATION IN RUTH PRAWER JHABVALA'S *TO WHOM SHE WILL*

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Abstract: This article analyses the "Cross Generation Assimilation" in Ruth Prawer Jhabvala's To Whom She Will. The story is about the love affair between the sophisticated girl and the low-caste boy Hari. Their parents did not allow their love because they belonged to different castes. The writer clearly shows the Indian people who follow their caste system very strictly till now, and also, in this novel, few characters follow the Western culture. They know the culture because they are attached to the Britishers, whom they want to marry. Because when they marry the low caste people, they do not get the correct status from their caste people. Jhabvala presents in the novel the current situation of our country, who follow their blind tradition, which spoils their children in the future.

The changes and advancements in the Bengali novel predict the evolution of the Indian novel in several ways. The influence of the West, particularly English novels, was the most significant foreign effect on the Indian novel. However, following Indian independence, authors were influenced by models from the United States, Europe, and Asia. Though Indian novels have improved, they still have several limits. The first stage occurred during the reign of Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, when everyone, especially novelists, was mainly concerned with restoring national self-respect. The second phase occurred during Tagore's period when the primary issue was connecting the East and the West. The final stage is this dynamic period in which the writer wishes to identify with ordinary people. Recently, both in India and outside, Indian English Literature or Indian Literature in English has sparked considerable interest and relevance. It has begun to play a more significant role in international literature. It has recently demonstrated to the globe that Indian English Literature and Commonwealth Literature are not inferior to other literatures. In recent years, writers from Australia, New Zealand, the West Indies, South Africa, Canada, Nigeria, and India have significantly contributed to modern English literature. Fiction is now the most potent genre of literary expression, with a renowned and notable place in Indian English literature. There is a widespread assumption that the novel is the most appropriate manner of expressing feelings and ideas in our time and culture. Indian fiction in English is gaining international acclaim and becoming best-sellers. It finally asks whether the novel's tradition is part of the Indian tradition, the European heritage, or the English tradition. Carefully investigating and researching can solve the difficulties of tradition and modernity in books. As a result, the novel is seen as an abstract type and genre of writing. The early works published in Indian languages were cutting-edge novels, with their underlying foundations focusing on social conditions. At the same time, political developments generally provided the setting and subjects.

The struggle for independence, the pressure of control exerted by dominating groups, the need for self-defense, cultural connection, heritage, pride, individualism, and freedom maintained a constant presence in many literary works. A discernible shift may be noticed

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in literature when the political situation remains a crucial component of the setting. At the moment, the authors want to represent the lifestyle of immigrant people via novels and tales, with ideas and foundations that allow the author to offer readers either fragments or incidents of their diasporic existence.

Several Indian women writers have investigated female subjectivity to develop an identity that is not bound by a male-dominated culture. Along these lines, the Bildungsroman, or the theme of maturing from youth to womanhood, is an asymmetrical technique. Remember the House (1956), Ruth Prawar Jhabwala's debut novel To Whom She Will (1955), and her later Heat and Dust (1975), which won the Booker Prize, and Kamala Markandaya's Two Virgins (1973) are all outstanding delineations. Sex is implied in these writings, but it is presented more fully in Shobha De's Socialite Evenings (1989), in which she delineates the gorgeous sexual experiences of Mumbai's high society.

In the 1990s, a diverse group of Indian women writers took the stage, publishing novels highlighting shocking facts about Indian society and its treatment of women. Their work is distinguished by a strong affinity for the language and a genuine depiction of contemporary India in diverse forms. They typically clarify the urban comfortable and elite class, the social strata they are most familiar with.

Elaine Showalter observes in A Literature of Their Own that the working-class belief system of the best possible circle of womanhood, created in post-modern England and America, endorsed a woman who might be a Perfect Woman, an Angel in the House, cheerily meek to men, however solid in her inward virtue and religiosity, ruler in her particular domain of the Home. Showalter refers to the “ascension” of female intellectuals in early Victorian England. Nonetheless, it is Showalter’s depiction of the stage of “self-disclosure, a diverting interior emancipated from a piece of the confidence of resistance, a search for the character” that “artistic subcultures, such as dark, Jewish, Canadian, Anglo-Indian, or even American” women authors demonstrate.

Women's activist authors, for example, Showalter and others, have been obsessed with investigating dialect as an office of phallocentric and articulating the demand for "gynocentric" (women's) discourse to communicate the female experience via writing. Postcolonial women writers writing at the intersections of indigenous culture and women's liberation face a significantly more difficult challenge, as they must contend with the twin issues of the authenticity of female speech in a man-centric culture and the undefined social and social "space" they occupy in their efforts to organize their writings within the context of women's rights.

Furthermore, because the term is open to various interpretative systems, the concept of "culture" itself is isolated in its connotation. Raymond Williams, for example, provides the phrase an anthropological meaning when he observes that culture was formed into an element, a constructive set of accomplishments and propensities, indisputably to reflect a better way of life than that accomplished by 'civilizational development.' However, as Gerald Graff and Bruce Robbins observe and comment on the conflict between culture in the anthropological sense and culture in the standardizing sense, it prompts a third way of utilizing the term, one that alludes neither to a people's natural lifestyle nor to the standardizing esteems lectured by driving learned people, but to a social battleground.

Nevertheless, there has been an astonishing blooming of Indian women writing in English during the last two decades, with the written output of this time being spread both in India and internationally. The writers are predominantly western-educated, white, lower-class women who express in their written work their dissatisfaction with the situation of upper-standing and class customary Hindu women who have been subjected to

injurious foundations, for example, youth marriage, settlement, restrictions on women's education, sorted out social associations, suttee, and approved widowhood.

This work is distinguished by an exceptional sense of language and a genuine portrayal of current India, with its typical assortments. It typically explains the urban professional class and the social strata they are most familiar with. Several Indian women writers have studied female subjectivity with the ultimate goal of developing an identity that is not bound by a male-dominated culture. Along these lines, the Bildungsroman, or the theme of growing up from childhood to womanhood, is a discontinuous philosophy.

The term "culturally diverse" refers to the impact of culture on an individual, a system, and items when different cultures come into touch. The environment in which a man is raised significantly shapes the person's qualities, values, customs, and demeanor. A cross-cultural association happens when a man comes into contact with the measures and aims of a different culture. Cross-cultural collaboration has had fundamental political, social, economic, and social repercussions for the entire community. The methodology of cross-cultural collaboration may be a driving element for reasons behind viewing recorded times from an overall perspective.

Culturally, various relationships began to affect human concerns from the most dependable days ever. Human social affairs began on lengthy separate journeys at the time Homo sapiens appeared, around between 40,000 and 35,000 years ago. Individuals had expanded across most of the world's habitable lands by roughly 15,000 B.C.E. Researchers have been able to follow the past advances of a few ethnic groups with remarkable precision by examining the features and dissemination of dialects and their branches, blood groupings, and material relics.

Even though persistent confirmation does not allow pieces of learning into the experiences of moving individuals, their advancements unquestionably led them into cross-cultural interactions, even in ancient occurrences. Each culture has its unique qualities and shortcomings.

The aliens are always trying to find a way to blend the local culture with the one they have learned. Regardless, this has resulted in mental fantasies that are outside of both the lifestyle. As a result, the solution to this problem is to maintain one's lifestyle even when living in a foreign territory. Man's brave desire to know the darkness and the walled-off has influenced him to conquer time and space. Some have relocated to exiled lands in pursuit of money, others to fulfill their aspirations, and others have gone on a journey of identity and toughness for the length of ordinary daily living.

Personality concerns the real or imagined self-esteem and self-image of a person, a gender, a community, a class, a race or sex, or a nation. Identity is the ability to reinterpret cultural traditions and norms to match one's experience. The failure to identify one's true identity leads to rootlessness and, eventually, alienation. One of the most severe issues confronting modern man is alienation. Its corrosive effect may be evident in the noticeable absence of a feeling of meaning in life.

The effect of Western education, science and technology, mores, and styles of living have caused a ferment in the tradition-bound and superstition-ridden Indian culture, and Jhabvala's books attempt to represent the process of this cultural and socioeconomic amalgamation. Despite its poverty, dirt and disease, squalor and backwardness, heat and dust, and a variety of other horrifying living conditions, India has a peculiar appeal for Westerners who, tired of their materialistic pursuits of affluence, come here to find peace of mind and spiritual solace to give meaning to their meaningless lives. Such attempts, however, frequently result in frustration and disappointment, and as a result, the country's image appears to be deteriorating.

The issue of estrangement is intrinsically tied to the loss and search for one's identity. The identity of an Indian woman is usually connected to and determined by the social and cultural standards of a viable familial structure. This identity is defined by the boundaries of their social connection with males. In general, Indian women are thought to lack their individuality. With shifting gender norms, urban and metropolitan educated Indian women, immigrants, and expatriates seek to construct a new identity and redesign feminine gender identity and representations. Because of the complexities of the interaction between the plurality of selves and the larger society, the search for self-identity causes a crisis in modernity regarding a feeling of life's significance.

Ruth Prawer Jhabvala, as an Anglo-Indian author, took up the threads of Anglo-Indian literature with a fresh viewpoint and carved out a unique niche among Anglo-Indian novelists. She is mainly a European writer who spent time in India and shared her experience of Indian life and society via her words. Jhabvala's fiction is concerned with the issue of India and obsession. Her understanding of several facets of Indian life underpins her fictional Indians. Jhabvala had the chance to employ her capacity of careful observation of the surroundings as they transitioned chameleon-like from native to cosmopolitan, old to standard, and native to trendy while living in the city in the years leading up to independence. She has a unique style and approach to portraying people's difficulties in their relationships with their families.

Jhabvala uses her unique style and method to depict the difficulties people face in their relationships with their families. The East-West meeting, but on an equal level, between the employer and the servant, and she offers in her fiction the experiences of European women married to Indians and Indian women married to Europeans who are confronted with the unavoidable dilemmas of Hindu mixed families. Their differences have been articulated with remarkable power and deep comprehension. Her expertise appears to be in the intersection of two civilizations, European and Indian.

The cross-generational conflict was between the two post-independence families, one from the wealthy aristocracy who had lived in Delhi for generations and the other from the new immigrant group from North Punjab. The genuine representatives of these families' various communities are at risk of being overrun by one another's ranks due to the distinctive atmosphere in which they reside. A vast cultural gap separates the two communities, but the boundaries that each draws to maintain its independence are equally sacred and inalienable. In contrast to its intended effect, cultural absorption slowly but surely altered the appearance of India, according to Ruth Prawer Jhabvala. Her conclusion in her debut novel is that India assimilates her generation but not her culture.

Amrita's mother, Radha, surveys Amrita like a tracker when selecting a boy for the marriage. According to her, love marriage did not provide happiness to her daughter, and she feared Amrita's wrong choice would ruin her dignity in modern society. Under the influence of her widowed mother and her grandfather, Amrita concedes and resolves to marry Krishna Sen Gupta, a Bengali lecturer. His old-fashioned parents passionately force Hari to accept their proposal for an arranged marriage with Sushila, a girl from his community. Thus, ironically, Amrita and Hari are married as their parents arranged. Hari married Sushila for social reasons, not for love.

To Whom She Will (1955) is Jhabvala's first venture into Anglo-Indian writing. She arrived in India as a newlywed in 1954 and published her first novel within a year. Mrs. Jhabvala, like every other foreigner, was charmed and intrigued by the mythical kingdom of India. She was attracted by this unknown society's social and family structure, which was very different from the one she came from. Indian traditions, rituals, food, attire, and,

most importantly, the collision between contemporary and traditional Indian culture piqued her interest.

The crucial thing to remember is that Mrs. Jhabvala wrote this work in 1955 when India was still adjusting to its recently obtained freedom and the issues that came with it, particularly the situation of millions of Pakistani refugees. Mrs. Jhabvala noted them and wrote about them in her debut novel. She settled in Delhi after arriving in India, and Delhi was the desired destination for the bulk of migrants. Jhabvala quickly spotted three Punjabi refugees who were brave, hardworking, and honest. She described them: "Almost all Punjabis, they were resourceful, courageous, intensely practical people, who faced their situations squarely: there was no help for it, and they had to earn their living. So, they started again."

Jhabvala was an outsider when she wrote this work. She watched this unfamiliar civilization with astonishment and excitement and traveled through the first stage of the cycle, when there was immense enthusiasm, and everything Indian was magnificent. Mrs. Jhabvala detailed Indian railway stations, bazaars, and various social conventions such as thermodin's giving ceremony and, most notably, India's arranged marriage system, which was utterly new and exciting to Mrs. Jhabvala's Western mind. The novel's title is also based on the Indian concept that boys and girls should marry at a young age. It is based on Arthur We—Ryder's English translation of the following Panchtantra couplet.

The passage is ostensibly addressed to all the parents of desirable girls, and the suggestion is to marry them when they are young. The counsel provided in the passage had meaning and value in the Puranic or, at most, pre-Hindu-Code Bill eras because making an early marriage of daughters following legislative law goes against legal machinery. There is also the additional factor that in Puranic times, the age mandated for marriage was eleven or twelve to avoid class discord, which may endanger the social order.

Mrs. Jhabvala is not considering marrying girls at eleven or twelve, and the rhyme does not specify a maximum or minimum age. The reasoning behind this recommendation might be that in a growing country like India, marrying females at a young age is preferable. Mrs. Jhabvala suggested that girls marry at a young age. Still, she also based the novel's core premise on free vs. arranged marriage in modern urban culture and the conflict between the elderly and young generations. She also writes about various topics related to getting married in India. The caste system is a significant factor in arranged marriages in India. She has discreetly stated that whether they are from an educated contemporary Westernized civilization or a plain lower middle-class one, they want to marry a female from their caste and community. Not only that, but Mrs. Jhabvala goes so far as to write that, while young generations desire to follow the West and believe in free love and marriage, they finally cave into their parent's wishes and marry the girl or guy their families choose for them.

Mrs. Jhabvala makes fun of the young Indian generation who, although believing themselves to be contemporary and Westernized, attempt to do something that traditional Hindu society would not accept: falling in love with a guy (or girl) outside one's caste or community and social rank. They are met with fierce hostility, and the irony is that tradition triumphs against progress. In one of his articles analyzing the situation, D.C. Agarwal writes: "The traditionalists achieve much by hypothecating their individuality and Freedom. They achieve a sense of security and belonging. On the contrary, non-traditionalists must pay the price for their identity and "Lassaizfaire," even so, it is questionable whether they will succeed in the bargain."

The plot revolves around the love affair between the refined female Amirta and the low-caste lad Hari. The novel's core issue is love vs planned marriage in modern

metropolitan culture and the confrontation between the elderly and new generations. She murmured in this tale that Indian people believe in custom and strive to fall in love, which is not recognized by Hindu culture since they follow caste and, in the end, tradition prevails. The child protagonist, Amrita Chakravarty, was raised in an anglicized manner by her grandpa, Rai Bahadur Tara Chand. Amrita adores her All-India Radio colleague, Hari Sahani. Hari is uncomplicated, unaltered, and traditional. Despite their opposing personalities, Amrita and Hari adore each other and desire to marry. On the other hand, Rai Bahadur opposes Amrita's love connection with Hari, who comes from a poor Punjabi migrant family.

Mrs. Jhabavala skillfully depicts these two categories in modern society in this work. Hari and Amrita are the novel's two main protagonists, each representing a different segment of current Indian society. Hari and his family are from the lower middle class, are uneducated, and strongly believe in ancient traditions and practices. Amrita, on the other side, represents the opposing portion. She and her family are from the upper middle class. They are well-educated and, to some extent, westernized. Her grandfather, Pandit Ram Bahadur Saxena, was a British Raj lawyer who frequently interacted with Britishers and learned much about the Western world and its ways.

He and his family are the embodiments of contemporary civilization. Radha, Tarla, and Mira are his three daughters. He once permitted Radha to marry freely. She married a Bengali revolutionary of lower social standing. Radha's daughter is Amirta. Tarla is a well-educated woman with impeccable manners and is married to a wealthy guy, Vazir Dayal. She is fortunate enough to have both time and money to devote to several committees and women's groups. Mira is very different from her two sisters. Though she comes from the same family, she is far from modern: she is uninterested in anything and is just concerned with fine cuisine and fashion.

Amrita works at a radio station, where she meets Hari, a Punjabi teen from a different family. Their employment puts them so close that they fall in love with one another. Through this connection, Jhabvala explored the novel’s core issue, arranged vs free marriage. Amirta and Hari wish to marry each other and appear to be in love. Jhabvala wrote the entire tale of Hari and Amrita’s love in a hilarious tone. She looks to be mocking the whole affair at points. Amrita declares her love for Hari Sahni spectacularly in the studio. Her grandpa, who is opposed to their marriage, would want to send Amrita to England, but she wishes to stay with Hari. Unable to comprehend Amrita, Hari tells her: “You give up England for me,” says, “Your love for me is great. I am unworthy,” “I am,” he repeated sadly. “Who am I? Hari Sahni, an announcer in Hindi section. I draw only Rupees 300/- a month. I live in a rented house paying Rupees 50/- rent. I am nobody. I am nothing.”

This sense of being nobody reflects Hari's personality. Hari has been likened to Amrita as a weak character. He lacks elegance and sophistication, and a continual sense of being nothing plagues him. He believes he is in love with Amrita, and when Krishan Sen Gupta, a Bengali youngster who stays with Radha as a paid guest, talks to Hari about Amrita, he expresses his feelings in a lighthearted manner that removes any gravity and looks to be quite hilarious.

Though Hari, who has been presented as a weak figure, proclaims his love for Amrita, he cannot overcome his family’s rejection. His family disapproves of their marriage since a Bengali girl does not fit into their culture. Jhabvala brings up the topic of caste and community here. Punjabi and Bengali are said to be diametrically opposed languages. Their clothing, cuisine, language, and social conventions are all different, and as a result, they locate a wonderful lady, Sushila Anand, from their own caste and society, and Prema,

Hari's sister, informs him. She stresses the point further by telling him that Sushila is more beautiful than Amrita, has a beautiful voice, and, most importantly, is a girl from his community. He argues that he loves Amrita and even goes so far as to declare that he should not marry Sushila. However, the situation is settled when Suri, Prema's husband, informs Hari: "It is only a game, and we all play it. After marriage, you will forget, and you will laugh at yourself for taking it seriously" (p.117).

Hari's last protest comes very feebly and comically. He says: "Love is not a game. Hari protested feebly. At the moment he could not help wishing that it was". (p.117) The matter is settled here, but in these lines, Mrs. Jhabvala has been able to kill two birds with one stone. Ironically, she reveals the conception of love in India and aptly proves tradition's victory over modernity. She proves that India is still a backward place, no matter how much its younger generation strives to break the shackles of old traditions and customs.

Amrita, on the other hand, proves more vital than Hari. Though ultimately, she gives in to her mother's wishes and agrees to marry Krishna, their paying guest, she fights for her love more bravely. She faces the opposition of not only her mother, Radha, who disproves Hari all along but also her grandfather, Pandit Ram Bahadur Saxena. He is not quite averse to her marrying outside the community and is opposed to the match with Hari on primarily social and cultural grounds. He feels that Hari, as a match for Amrita, is a total misfit in every way. Hari appears to him as a king of autodidacts with an untutored mind. So he opposes the proposal and tells Amrita: "In your case, the margin the discrepancy Between the two families, the young man's and yours: is too wide. It is a gulf which I cannot find it in my conscience to allow you to bridge". (p.35)

However, Amrita does not take this as the final word. She still thinks of how she can fulfill her love. As against Hari's feeble protest, we have Amrita's strong and open protest, which is a bold statement. It reveals Amrita's character and ironically presents a sharp contrast to Hari's character. Amrita is strong and ready to give up her family, money, and status for the sake of her love. She even goes to the extent of asking for help from Tarla's husband (Vazir Dayal). She plans to marry Hari in England, where there is no one to oppose them. She is so enthusiastic about their plans to go to England that she sends Krishna to Hari to tell him about her plans. However, Hari's response is against her hopes. He turns out to be a weak character. He tells Krishna: "But how can I leave Delhi? My whole family is here". Moreover, when Krishnan asked him pointedly, did you want to marry Amrita? Hari says Yes. Nevertheless, he does not sound very sure of himself, and as V. A. Shahane puts it: "He did not sound certain of himself, is the key not only of Hari's character and personality, but of the entire narrative and thematic structure of the novel itself. The uncertainty, the instability, the waywardness of Hari's emotional responses forms the crux of the problem Amrita is confronted with."

Jhabvala once again juxtaposes the two sections of Indian society successfully. She proves that the lower middle class is still weak and likes to stick to the traditions, whereas the modern Indian section at least dares to announce its disapproval of these old customs and traditions. Another point that Jhabvala subtly and deftly brings out in this novel is that, though the young generations in the upper-middle-class, educated society are courageous and emancipated, the older generation is still the same to a great extent. Amrita's mother, Radha, also disapproves of the match, not for the reasons her father gave, but because she feels: "In marriage the most important thing is that husband and wife should come from the same social class and you cannot be happy if you marry into a family that is not so good as yours" (p.8).

Since women are the main participants in these social and religious functions, Mrs. Jhabvala is delighted to describe how women spend their time cooking and fighting.

Who would believe that Jhabvala, who had been in India only for a year, could paint such a realistic picture of Indian women? What she has written is true and a common sight in a typical lower-class Hindu marriage. Her use of initial enchantment and excitement strikes us most in these lines. To give her novels an authentic touch, she uses these Hindi words, which we do not find in her later novels, though we are sure that with her keen sense of observation, she must have learned many more. Possibly, she spoke Hindi during her extended stay of almost three decades, but she chose not to write any Hindi words in her later novels.

Mrs. Jhabvala describes the marriage procession and the "Phera" ceremony. Descending the procession, she writes: "Hari felt as if he had been sitting on the mare forever. They had come from his own district through dense shop-live streets, and rugged lanes, with straw-roofed huts, under railway bridges, past sewers, past temples past tailor shops and silk shops with gaudy sarees fluttering on hangers, past crumbling tombs of Lodi periods and flashy little red and white petrol pumps (20-21)."

The entire episode is ironic when Jhabvala writes that Krishnan soon forges the 'West' and merges himself with Indian society. The fact that Indian society is too stringy for European nerves and one has to drown oneself in it if one wants to live there has also often been repeated in her later novels. Interestingly, the same idea runs through all her novels. What she writes in her first novel is also repeated in her last novels.

To sum up, we can say that Jhabvala's first novel, To Whom She Will, reflects the spirit of the new comedy of manners. While the individual theme is stated primarily through the personal conflicts of Amrita and Hari, the social theme is explored through the complications that parents, as the responsible agents of social institutions, bring into marriage. The "reconciliation" that makes the final marriage possible is ironically brought about when Amrita, who in the beginning loves Hari but is reconciled to the notion of marrying Krishnan Sen Gupta. Jhabvala's act, particularly significant in this contact, is her conscious and deliberate use of the comic.

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