



Longing and Nostalgia in the novel of 'Jahajin'

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Abstract: - This paper is focus view on Longing and Nostalgia in the novel of 'Jahajin'. 'Nostalgia' is one of the concepts of philosophical that it has place in literature today in widely way. Its main thoughts focus is on the lives of immigrant's peoples and their external and inner strife in a new and alien land. Today migration studies have turned as a new area of research. In receny years immigration in a broader and comprehensive sense has started getting replaced by the word Diaspora. It is paradox that word Nostalgia is as old as well as new. New studies and researches bring out different elements of Diaspora literature. Even 'Diaspora' now also refers to people living outside their traditional homeland. The immigrants are feelings of longing, confusion, nostalgia, dislocation, and sufferings due to discrimination on the basis of race, community, language and religion. 'Jahajin' is a first fiction or debut work of Peggy Mohan. Jahajin is centered upon Deeda in whole life crossing the black water marks a new phase of life; a new beginning. Deeda weaves one by one her experience of being girmit, how they hardship and struggle they face, worked in hot temperature and their life on Esperanza estate. From her mind she recalls her life in India, boat journey of Faizabad to Trinidad and life of Esperanza estate. Deeda was felling nostalgia for their homeland of India.

Keywords: - Longing; Diaspora; Migration; Nostalgia; Sufferings; Motherland. Etc.

Introduction:-

Generally, Longing and nostalgia are the basic theme of the Diaspora literature. Peggy Mohan is one of the authors of Diaspora literatures. Her first novel jahajin is a debut work and she presents the longing for homeland in this fiction. She was born in Trinidad and her father comes from Indian descendant. Her father was an Indian from Trinidad and also her mother was come from Corner Brook, Newfoundland. She studied the linguistics at the University of the West Indies, Trinidad, and at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, where she complete her PhD dissertation on 'Trinidad Bhojpuri: A Morphological Study', the ancestral language of most Trinidad Indians, based on her recordings of the speech of old Indo-Trinidadians during the 1970s across. She is a sociologist, linguistic, television programmer producer, and more children's story writer and well know author.

As a versatile artist she tried her hands on various fields of the level. Mohan's first career was that of linguist, that can see in her novels.

Jahajin- A story of Longing and nostalgia:-

Jahajin is a first novel or debut work of Peggy Mohan. She comes from India to Trinidad who has Indian Descendants. In her first novel she narrates one by one various stories together, story from indenture labors, hundred and ten years old Deeda, who sailed on the same boat as narrator's very great-great grandmother, saga of Saranga, and narrator's own experience is also mentioned as a descendant of Jahajin condition. Generally, she has spent more than 70 years of her life in Trinidad which she refers to Chinidad – a land of sugar planets. Peggy Mohan's Jahajin is centered upon Deeda in whole life she was crossing the black water marks a new phase of life; a new beginning. So it has that it is worthy to take into account and study it as a discourse. Novel opens with the young narrator's audiocassettes records experience of Deeda and how lives of Indians who were recruited to work of sugar plantation in Chinidad – land of Sugar field. Etymologically, the word 'Jahajin' owes it creates to the Hindi language. It comes from Hindi word 'Jahaj' meaning is boat, ship etc. jahajin/Jahaji refers to the indentured laborer who made long journey by crossing the Kala Pani (Bay of Bengal) to reach their promised world and work on high temperature on sugar plantations. Here, Kala Pani refers to the black water that supposed change to the entire indentured laborer forever. Mohan's debut novel is suggestive that there is a woman at the centre Deeda; who was old woman from Basti district in Bihar state from India. In Jahajin, she sailed across the Jahaj, ship. Title of the fiction has a symbolic importance to made one. Deeda a Jahajin is the heart an epitome of strength and velour.

Deeda weaves her experience of being as girmit, they hardship and struggle they face, worked in hostile temperature and their life on estate in Trinidad. In Deeda's narration of Saranga's story it

is female monkey who was centre in the story. Peggy Mohan has centered her writing on the audio recorded chats with Deeda. Peggy Mohan's experience in India gave a final Finishing touch to her first work *Jahajin*. In *Jahajin* she has written down her predecessor were recruited as indentured laborers and how all made their journey through the sea Kala Pani in search of promised work and livelihood. In her blog 'Writing Jahajin' she writes down how the idea of writing Jahajin came to her mind.

It all started the day I happened upon Saranga story. An old woman who had come to Trinidad from Basti with her mother had started telling it to me afternoon. Just the beginning, I wanted more: I could already sense that the story was unusual. ("writing Jahajin." 12 July 2010. p.32 4)

For us it has more helpful to get achieve an understanding of the word 'Arkatinia' and 'Girmit': it is vernacular term for recruiter so on. The native persons of India who were recruited as indentured workers found it more difficult to pronoun the word 'recruiter', so they used arkatinia every time. Deeda signed work up the contract for the work in sugar land field. These workers always pronounce Trinidad as Chinidad, a land of Sugar. They were offered to work on Sugarcane fields from different regions or states of the India where they comes. She talks about them how they were gathered up all at one depot. Mukoon Singh and his two sons, Sunnariya, Sirju and Janaki-didi were on the same boat on their way to Trinidad (Chinidad) for work. The incident of Sirju how he was called and known as Langoor Mamoo is full of humor for some times. Also with these workers there were bandhaaris, bahnagis, masalaachis, and laskars as the boat was a streamer to get on. For Indian laskars in the boat that was only Indian stokers who could tolerate the heat inside the boiler room, where they would be burning coal to make the steam on high speed. Here, we can say that Indian laskars has no relax each and every time and they tolerance so many slavery by the people of white or goras man. It gives a glimpse of Kala Pani Taboo

So this was the kala pani, the black water that was supposed to change you forever. Turn you into an outcaste. Water all the way to the end of the world! Now our boat started to pick up speed, and head out straight toward the dark water of the open sea. (Jahajin-33)

In the grief of nostalgia and remembering his own homeland Sirju was started singing a song as he is moving back all the way back to Faizabad.

Arey, beehra ta gaawa, ta gaawaha
garerity Beerha ta soona, ta
soonaha gareriya! (Jahajin-62)

'Beeraha' denotes the deep lament of the gareriya, the shepherd, migrating to look for work, leaving his family behind forever. It has left an impact on Deeda's mind. It reminds to her the mind the past of picture of her husband who was in India and she left him. A song is the feeling nostalgia of migrants who in their search for work in sugarcane and leaves everything behind forever. At that time Deeda feels how she had thought about her husband as migrant. To write up back cover in this book gives a glimpse of this long journey. A thought of her husband leads her to tears sometimes. She think that how scenario is changed day per day. In the initial years how he used to go for work as a migrant worker and come back to her and his mother. But after long period of time he went on to work and never came back again. And now she is on her journey to work as migrant worker. She was not sure that she will be able to come back or not in motherland that on. Thus, the sea acts as symbol which divides both her and her husband. It reflects levels of awareness; depth of sea represents their human mind, emotion. Sea as a symbol can be analyzed as various types.

I had always thought my husband was the migrant, going far away and leaving me behind. But now was the one crossing a whole ocean and living him behind. I felt hot tears in my eyes, to think of him, and of where we were now listening to a beeraha. (Jahaji-63)

One morning narrator woke up early and went to Maracas Beach with her uncle's son Dylan and Fazie to meet them. All her life she had gone to the beach only with her parents to so on. The life was full of going to turn very serious, hostile, colourless, and full of impossible commitments to keep and continue to one. How narrator describes her nostalgias to go foreign land that....

My whole life had been heading up only towards going abroad: going abroad to study, going abroad to make my mark, and going abroad to make a life. The living world around me in Trinidad, the world I was only now getting to know, was something ephemeral. (Jahajin-75)

Narrator adds the cassette of 'Saranga ka Kheesa' and Ajie known about Bhojpuri Trinidad and she

helps to narrator when she feels the lost. There are three stories in *Jahajin*. First is Saranga's story that it was very heart toching; second the adventure life of Deeda whom combact whitemen and the third is Trinidad narrator's herself who works upon Trinidad Bhojpuri. Narrative voice leads on shifting from past to present and sometimes present to past. All these stories are co-related with each other like a great Bunyan tree which has different branches but rooted deeply in the same soil. Deeda describes her life when she reached in Trinidad. In Trinidad she would find fresh water again and feels very happy first time but less time not more, and she knew her stories would come to life again. Her stories needed shadow as well as light to make very interesting, sweetness as well as salt and earth to sink roots in deep way.

It was rule that small children could not go to work in the field of during crop. So a women working in sugarcane fields there was a need to appoint someone to look after their children on estate. Their mothers leave them with khelauni. Work on sugarcane field was something they were not used to; cutting the cane, strip off the leaves and bundled it. In the initial years they face hardships and very struggle working on cane fields. The men would cut and women would strip off the leaves from the cane and, clean and make it into bundles with all the same size in this way. They were worked like machine, four o'clock and at seven o'clock, the sun was rising they stop and drink some water then go back and start to strip cane with hard work. Ten o'clock get some rest and back to work for all. At four in the evening, the team leader came and told to go home where they lived. But the followings words of the song were still echoing inside in the mind of Deeda. How goras tyranny to working people in estate.

Go back to work! Don't skylark! Strip cane. Make bundles. Move on. (Jahajin-124)

The above line reminds Deeda to her motherland and feeling nostalgia in deep sense. The white men had tyranny to all jahajin who are working there as indenture labor all time. At Esperanza estate Mukoonsingh and Deeda came close to each other. This was not something good. They felt bound by compassion of true love. But it was hardly difficult for Deeda to refuse him that she had Kallo to look after. So many questions were running in the mind of her at that time because she says yes would Kalloo be able to adjust in India, people of India accept this alliance is nothing. Things in the sense of Trinidad are different from circumstances,

situation in India. If they come to India she also thinks in the term of caste. At Esperanza estate all Indian indenture comes to one community as Jahaji.

There are three stories running together resolves around for female. From Deeda's tale how women were made their way across two big oceans and also survive on foreign land and emerged as community to folklore of Saranga. Saranaga's story connects with Deeda in the sense of India level. In the common sense of term history is written by men. It provides a male's perspective on certain elements of past. Deeda's narration has changed this perception. She listen to their conversation of migration came across to her, as a story of women making their way alone where men in background, extras and strangers. In the history book it had always been the other way around: it was men who were the main heroes. But there was unwritten history of the birth of a new community in Trinidad. And it was women who were always at the centre of the story.

At the end, narrator visit Deeda's house where she has spent her early years after the marriage with her husband. Also Deeda's son Kallo was born in this hut and spent four years there to take. At last, Mohan has saw in the eyes of old man standing his hut where Deeda had packed those last handfuls of parched rice along with the sattwa powder and an extra sari long, long ago she had bought. Deeda had walked like her mother-in-law had told her to make her child come faster.

Conclusion:-

Thus, Peggy Mohan's *Jahajin* there is Deeda who was the central character in this fiction. Though it is not the form of traditional but it has lacks the fun elements like dancing, adorning one self, singing song but on a subtle level a parallel can seen from this perspective and so on. And also the story focuses on the major theme of longing and nostalgia. Deeda feels nostalgia for her mother land where she passed the old golden days with happiness. Really this story is associated the part of grief and dispersal and long wishing for mother land.

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