CHAPTER : II

THE PERSPECTIVE OF MULTICULTURALISM IN ROHINTON MISTRY’S \textit{SUCH A LONG JOURNEY AND A FINE BALANCE}\\

A cold coming we had of it,
Just the worst time of the year
For a journey, and such a long journey … \footnote{1}

Rohinton Mistry extracted the title of the novel \textit{Such a Long Journey} from T.S. Eliot’s famous poem \textit{The Journey of the Magi}. The novel is representation of Gustad’s long and endless life journey. Being a Parsi himself, Mistry takes the responsibility to represent the realistic picture of Parsi community. To understand how the social, historical, political, and religious conditions affect the Parsi community’s identity has simplified by the writer. His attitude in an interview with Ali Lakani : “when I say ‘community’ I don’t mean to say own community, but the community in Bombay, people who were my classmates, neighbours, my fellow country men.” \footnote{2} He is very sensitive to the various sufferings felt by his community. He also tries to explore aspects of other community from country in this novel. He has assumed that he expects his writing will ‘preserve a record of how they lived, to some extent’. \footnote{3}

As a Parsi, Rohinton Mistry is an ingredient of a minority community in India, which associates its ancestry to pre-Islamic Persia. Thus, Nilufer Bharucha’s comment, that Mistry, as an Indian of Persian origin, was ‘diaspora even in India’. \footnote{4} Rohinton Mistry is author for whom India is significant as a theme of his work. Particularly Bombay is the master resource of his writing he has published. Bombay is the city that is home to the Parsi community after “running away from the Muslims.” \footnote{5}

Mistry has in his Canadian narratives, used his location in diasporas to interrogate normative statements concerning the thoughts of home and related spaces of emplacement and belonging. ‘Throbbing between two lives, the one in Bombay and the one … in Toronto’, \footnote{6} He
has very extensively presented the experience of immigration, the gigantic pain of not being with his own community. According to Nilufer Bhaeucha:

“As an Indian who now lives in and writes from Canada. Rohinton Mistry is a writer of the Indian Diaspora. However Mistry is also a Parsi Zoroastrian and as a person whose ancestors were forced into exile by the Islamic conquest of Iran, he was in Diaspora even in India. Like other Parsi writers, his writing is informed by this experience of double displacement.”7

Rohinton Mistry endeavors the best at expressing reliable image of the India through his novels. His novels depict the image of relationships among self-identity, community, and place. Such a Long Journey is one of the best examples of multiculturalism, which exposes two sides of multiculturalism, positive as well as negative. He writes for Indian Diaspora even he permanently settles in the new land i.e. Canada. According to John Annie’s opinion:

“Diasporic writers paint the vastness and the complexities of the home country which contains everything in multitudes-multiple truths, multiple crisis, multiple realities, and this diversity is portrayed for the world wide reading public, and chiefly for the Indians.”8

There are some multicultural aspects presents in the novel are culture, identity, society, politics, religion, gender, language, migration, isolation, homelessness, globalization, education, faith, food, festivals, customs, toleration, and conflict. All these multicultural perspectives have been finely observed in Such a Long Journey. Rohinton Mistry has shown courage and sensibility to express reality of postcolonial India of Emergency period. He is a creative writer who has expressed his own experiences of migration and memories of his past. He has portrayed canvas of his own life and culture through the writing. His works are the greatest resource of his cultural and ancestral life history, which helps the next generation.
Rohinton Mistry’s writing shows a new kind of writing. As a multicultural Parsi writer, very thoughtfully he has remembered his community’s journey through time and history with a sense of reminiscence. The place of Parsis in the postcolonial India gives way to a new kind of psychological pain, which Mistry reflects throughout an oppositional form of examination. As Manjit Inder Singh says:

“Mistry draws a human world of sounds and smells, locations and dislocations, colourful speech and cultural mores for reading as resistance in the postcolonial paradigm. Mistry’s writing thus also becomes a kind of ‘writing back’ to a dominant community’s culture and practices that necessitate a writer’s commitment and responsibility. Much in the postmodern vein, Mistry seeks to reinvent buried and alternate meanings hagemonised by India’s master-narratives, to impose a narrative mode of historical and political re-structuring of experience.”  

Such a Long Journey is a vivid novel of middle-class characters from the contemporary India. This novel deals with basic and serious issues of life. The story mainly deals with Gustad’s life experiences. He is a clerk in a bank. Such a Long Journey is the representation of awareness of Parsi community in a way that the community appears as a protagonist referring human characters to the background.

Such a Long Journey associates with impact of nationalism and neocolonialism on the Parsi community and their life. Mostly, the novel is associated with Nagarwala case which is completely related with Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi and her secretary but afterwards it spread all over in the society that there is an involvement of Billimoria, a Parsi. Deliberately Billimoria had been involved in this case. Gustad Noble is very typical Parsi character portrayed in the novel. He practices all rituals and prayers of Parsi community but enjoys Western Culture too. The name “Noble,” satirically associates with his prosperous past when his father was a rich book-shopkeeper until he was bankrupt by his own brother. When Gustad’s father is admitted in hospital, “the finest bookstore in the country,” move to his uncle to destroy it. In the opinion of
Coleman the destruction of the bookshop and the furniture, shops are representation of “the decline of the Parsi community.” The Gustad hug to habits from the past and trust the old fashioned, outdated medicines of Dr. Paymaster and the crazy jadoo-mantra of Miss. Kutipitia to the more highly developed medical cure available in general Bombay hospitals indicating their larger doubt of the cosmopolitanism and major Hindu culture of Bomaby.

Rohinton Mistry sheds light on enormous pillar of Parsi community i.e. religion and religious faith in *Such a Long Journey*. The novel opens with religious activity of Gustad Nobel, facing eastward to offer his orisons to Ahura Mazda, is a worship prayed by Parsis.

“Ahura Mazda is described as the highest spirit of worship in Zoroastrianism, along with being the first and most frequently invoked Spirit in the Yasna. The literal meaning of the word Ahura is light and Mazda is wisdom. Zoroastriansm revolves around three basic tenets – Good Thoughts, Good Words and Good Deeds.”

Gustad is a protagonist of the novel, therefore entire novel reveals around it. He prays ‘Ahura Mazda’ on every first light of morning and recites “*kusti prayers*” regularly. Rohinton Mistry deliberately explores the observation of this holy prayer *kusti* in *Such a Long Journey*. Sooni Taraporevala’s opinion about *Kusti prayer* is:

“The *kusti*, the sacred cord, made of seventy-two threads of lambswool, is entined thrice around the waist, again symbolically reminding the wearer of the holy triad of good words, thoughts and deeds. The untying and retying of the *kusti*, accompanied by the *kusti* prayers, is always done facing the direction of a source of light: the sun, the moon or a lamp. Along with the sudrah, the *kusti* is the ‘badge’ of all believers, male or female, rich or poor, priest or layman.”
Rohinton Mistry intentionally presents every aspect of Parsi culture in Such a Long Journey. He explores minute observation of Parsi culture, people who lives in Khodadad Building. This building is the locality of Parsis. Rohinton Mistry also highlights culture of other community in the novel. He sheds light on Hindu customs and rituals in this novel. When Dilnavaz, Gustad’s wife go to milkman for milk and she observer that, “… short of hair growing from the centre of his otherwise perfectly shaven head never ceased to amuse her. She knew it was a Hindu custom in some particular caste…” This ritual is performed by Brahmán caste people. This auspicious ritual has known as ‘thread ceremony’ or ‘Upnayana Samskar’. Foremost aspects of Parsi culture have been shown in Such a Long Journey. Parsi rituals and ceremonies such as Navjote, The Fire temple and the Towers of Silence and other Parsi rituals have been pointed out in the novel. Narendra Kumar views:

“Though Prophet Zoroaster rejected ritualism, certain rituals are central to Parsee life, since they are invested with symbolic significance. Among the rituals in Parsee life, Navjote ceremony is the most significant one. Between seven and fifteen years of age, a Parsee boy or girl has to pass through this rite of initiation formally embracing the religion of Zarathustra.”

After pursuing ‘navjote’ ceremonies, the initiate is offered with the Sudreh. Another important auspicious aspect of Parsi community is the ‘Fire Temple’. This is sacred place of the Parsis and they pray their regularly. The characteristic of the temple is that the fire of the temple burns continuously without any end. Only sandalwood is allowed for the fire in the temple. Another important aspect of Parsis life is ‘Tower of Silence’ is the place for death rites. Rohinton Mistry exposes every surface of Parsi culture from beginning to an end in Such a Long Journey.

Most of the characters in the novel Such a Long Journey belong to Parsi community but some of the characters have been presented from other religions. Ghulam Mohammad is from Muslim community; Malcolm Saldnha is Christian and Bhimsen the peon
and Kashya the Jail superintendent from Hindu community. The relationship among all these peoples illustrates the aspect of multiculturalism. Malcolm is college friend of Gustad. When Roshan is extremely ill and nothing works for her sickness, therefore he decided to accompany Malcolm to Church for prayer and for blessings to Roshan’s recovery, to Protect Parsi major and Sohrabs carrier. “But he was on his guard, conditioned as he had been from childhood to resist the call of other faiths. All religions were equal …”18 The behavior of the people to believe on uniqueness reflects social harmony and multiculturalism in the society. The images of God’s are different but God is single in the world, they prayer methods are different but aim behind pray is one.

Religion in *Such a Long Journey* is significant aspect, which plays important role in the lives of characters. During the novel, Rohinton Mistry’s investigation of Zoroastrianism involves other faiths in what could be called a purposeful reading of religion. A religious faith becomes significant psychological mechanism. The best example of such kind of religious faith is highlights through pavement artist. The familiarity of Zoroastrianism with other religious faith has been portrayed throughout the text. Rohinton Mistry expresses his opinion about such kind of religious faith through Gustad:

“You see, I don’t like to weaken anyone’s faith. Miracle, magic, mechanical trick, coincidence – does it matter what it is, as long as it helps? Why analyse the strength of the imagination, the power of suggestion, power of auto-suggestion, the potency of psychological pressures?”19

Gustad has his own thoughts about faith. He gives equal status and respect for all religions. He expresses his thoughts with pavement artist:

“You see, I don’t like to weaken anyone’s faith. Miracle, magic, mechanical trick, coincidence does it matter what it is, as long as it helps? Why analyse the strength of the imagination, the power of
suggestion, power of auto-suggestion, the potency of psychological pressures? Looking too closely is destructive, makes everything disintegrate. As it is, life is difficult enough. Why to simply makes a miracle and what makes a coincidence?"  

From the religious point of vision, *Such a Long Journey* pays respect to India as an earth where different religions coexist. Deliberately the name and religion of the pavement artist has not mentioned in the novel. Respect for other religion or culture is the traditional strategy of Zoroastrianism. Such kind of religious faith represents multicultural view of the postcolonial stress i.e. potentiality of psychological pressure.

Rohinton Mistry illustrates custom of Parsi food in *Such a Long Journey*. They are very eager to their ‘delicious dhansak.’ Parsis are food lovers of a variety of non-vegetarian food, including the Indian Hindu’s sacred cow. Malcolm says:

“Lucky for…that we are minorities in a nation of Hindus. Let them eat pulses and grams and beans, spiced with their stinky asafetida – what they call hing. Let them fart their lives away… we will get our protein from their sacred cow.”

They feel very proud of their food because their food is one of the greatest sources of proteins and they take this from Indians sacred cows. We know that India is very faith following nation. Indians think that cow is holy animal and they worship her. Cow is known as ‘Go-Mata’; therefore, most of the Indian avoid cow meat in their food.

The study of the novel shows that Parsis are superstitious in nature. Gustad’s family is completely involved with Miss. Kutpitia, she is very superstitious and orthodox woman. She believes on Black-Jadu. She is interested in doing so many experiments on different things for getting free from difficult diseases. When Gustad’s family is in trouble, she attributed to the killing live lizard in the house. She also does experiments on Tehmul for getting good
results in Sohrab. She is very religious and orthodox woman who completely trusts on jaadu-mantra.

Dilnavaz also develops interest in Miss. Kutpitia’s magic practice for making things right in Sohrab’s life. Dilnavaz offers some limejuice to Sohrab for a magic result to regain his lost interests in IIT. Actually, there is no any result of this magic on him. For getting good results, Dilnavz and Miss.Kutpitia choose Tehmul and does experiment on him. Still there is no any result in Gustad’s family and things are becoming worse than bad continuously. Sohrab leaves home and Roshan’s illness goes on. For Roshans’s illness, Miss.Kutpitia asks Dilnavaz to do ritual:

“Take your needle and thread, a nice strong thread with a big knot at the end. Select a yellow lime, and seven chilies. Chilies must be green, not turning red. Never red. String them all together with the needle. Lime goes at the bottom. Then hang the whole thing over your door, inside the house.” 23

Dilnavaz does everything for the sake of her children. This represents mothers love for her children who does anything for them. She does whatever Miss Kutpitia suggests to do. She does so many experiments for getting results. For that, she offers lemon juice to Tehmul. In addition, cut his nails for nail therapy for getting more results. Such attitude and faith on black magic shows superstitious nature of the Parsis.

Such rituals are very popular in Hindu community too. Hindus follow such rituals for getting protection from evil eyes of others. As well as they hang, lime with chilies in front of their houses and shops for growth and protection from bad eyes. Therefore, that, every religion in India presents similarity among them. This is one of the multicultural perspectives found in the novel, which reflects ‘unity in diversity’.

Considering that Sohrab is not coming back home, Miss Kupititia asks Dilnavaz to get some nails of Tehmul to burn in coal fire. Moreover, when the nails melted, then turmeric
and cayenne powders have been sprinkled. This ritual “would open wide Tehmul’s channels, Miss Kutpitia had explained, through which his spirit would reach and yank the evil out of Sohrab’s brain,” Even that doesn’t work. Therefore, the last remedy is lizard therapy is notion out. “Terrible things could not happen. Miss Kutpitia’s eyes narrowed her voice dire, full of unspeakable events. And not all your sorrow or regret later on will do any good, or change one single thing.”

Some times coincidence makes miracles in the life; Roshan feels better, Gustad returns safely from the trip to Delhi and even in Sohrab’s absence, Dilnavaz feels, “…would now somehow be put right.” Unexpectedly, the day Sohrab transforms his mentality, Tehmul dies. Whether the return of Sohrab has something to do with the death of Tehmul is yet an issue of assumption.

One of the core themes of Rohinton Mistry’s novel is loss. Such a Long Journey explores the loss of material belongings as well as the loss of death or separation. First material loss in Gustad’s life is his family’s misery during his father’s bankruptcy. He also endures with the loss of deaths of his friends Jimmy, Dinshawj, and Tehmul. However, Gustad suffered from feeling of alienation, isolation, confusion, poverty and many more.

On the bad path of the life journey, Dinshawji is in the hospital after a sudden collapse in the Bank office. From many days, his health was not responding and gradually weakening. Then also, he never informs anyone about this. He hides his misery under the mask of joking Gustad warns him thus: “what you must do is stop your jokes and teasing with everyone. At the same time, I will start telling people that poor Dinshawji’s health in not well again, he is feeling completely under the weather.” One of the greatest losses in Gustad’s life inters in the form of the death of his best friend Dinshawji. Dinshawji dies of cancer.

Another shock enters in the life of Gustad in the image of Bilimoria. Court declared four years imprisonment to Bilimoria because of his involvement in bank corruption. During his imprisonment, he dies of heart attack and his funeral ritual at Tower of Silence takes place. Gustad has felt lonely and thought that he lost another close friend from this world.
Gustad’s son Sohrab loses interest in IIT. This is an unexpected shock for Gustad, because he expects some dream from him. His all dreams collapsed by the denial of Sohrab’s rejection to join IIT. Unexpected conflicts spoil Gustad’s dreams and life as well. Gustad wants to know cause behind Sohrab’s sudden reaction. “It’s not suddenly. I’m sick and tired of IIT, IIT, IIT all the time. I’m not interested in it I’m not a jolly good fellow about it, and I’m not going there.” Sohrab says it is not my idea of going to IIT but it is yours. He has not any significance in IIT but he loves his college and friends. According to Gustad, friendship is worthless and meaningless but it spoils life and future. Conflict between father and son highlights the image of globalization and modernity as well as the effect of generation gap. In fact, Gustad’s clash with his son is not for spoiling his life but it is the father’s desire to his: “…son will be a doctor, he will be an engineer, he will be a research scientist.”

Sohrab breaks down all dreams of Gustad’s life very suddenly. He has many expectations from Sohrab only for his bright and beautiful future. Nevertheless, he spoils every dream of his father’s life. It is the tendency of every father to send his son for reputed course or degree like engineering or medical. Here also Gustad wants to send Soharb for I.I.T. but not for B.A., Painting, Sculpture, or any other art. Gustad’s dreams, expectations, and hopes of life all ends within moment. He becomes very helpless on the journey of life. Sohrab only is the star of his life but his stars are disappearing from the sky one by one. Therefore, he is losing his confidence on the way of his long journey.

“Gustad Noble’s dreams and expectations are modest indeed, but circumstances prevailing in the India of his times conspire to deny him even these. It is very hard on him that he cannot make things happen in such a way as to fulfill his aspirations. Forces, stranger than himself, come in the way of his achieving his ambitions. His elder son does not join the IIT; Roshan, his favourite child, suffers from a prolonged illness; Dinshawji, his best friend, dies of cancer; and another friend, Bilimoria, betrays his trust. Gradually, Gustad Noble modifies his dreams and dilutes
his expectations. It is quite obvious that he is not in control of things. But this does not make him turn into a defeatist. In the calm manner with which he faces each trial of his life. It lies in his acceptance of the harsh realities of the world to which he belongs. His grandest moment comes towards the end of the novel, when he forgives his erring son, and clasps him to his bosom in a noble gesture of acceptance of Sohrab’s decision to lead his own life.”

Gustad’s life appears with full of sufferings and problems. One after one unfortunate incident arrives into his life. At this time sufferings enters in the reflection of Roshan’s deep-rooted illness. Roshan suffers from diarrhea and Dilnavaz trying different solutions for her curing illness. Gustad and Roshan visited to Dr. Paymaster for the investigation of her illness. Dr. Paymaster says, this is very dangerous virus to cure. He compares diarrhea disease with Pakistan. Pakistan is very simple sickness but very difficult to cure because Dr. America is feeding the virus.

Peculiarly, Gustad received a parcel from Major Bilimora. It becomes immense danger in his life. It is too difficult to hide ten lack rupees in home. This becomes ‘do or die’ situation in Gustad’s life. He intolerably bothers by the death of Tehmul Lungra a foolish and mentally retorted person. The prominent disturbance enters in the life of Gustad by the destruction of the huge ‘sacred wall’ by the Muncipal Authorities. This wall has protected his house from dirt and bad smell. However, after destruction of wall his house and family are almost in a misery.

Gustad has some quarrels with Mr. Rabadi in Khodadad Building. The real reason behind their quarrel is that Darius has an affair with his daughter. “Mr Rabadi was here. Complaining that Darius is after his daughter, that it looks very bad in the building.” Rabadi is famous as the dogwalla in Khodadad locality. After asking about this matter to Darius, he says that he only talks to Jasmine if she is there with his friends. Gustad suggests to Darius that: “Listen. Her father is a crackpot. So just, stay away. If she is with your friends, you don’t join
them.”32 Therefore, Gustad always takes care to avoid unnecessary argument with anyone but very often, he is helpless.

One more climax appears in Gustad’s life, the news of Major Bilimora’s arrest regarding corruption published in the newspaper. At the same time, Dr. Paymaster reports to Gustad about Roshan’s prolonged illness. He is bound to sell his camera and his wife’s two gold marriage bangles. Gustad has been suffering numerous dilemmas in his life journey.

The novel is more Historical and Political so that Mistry tactfully and delightfully exposes realistic political image of India in the novel. The novel closely interconnected with social and political background of India. Rohinton Mistry highlights on political disturbances, which are responsible for the common person’s life. Dr. Paymaster’s opinion about country:

“Our beloved country is a patient with gangrene at an advanced stage. Dressing the wound or sprinkling rosewater over it to hide the stink of rotting tissue is useless. Fine words and promises will not cure the patient. The decaying part must be excised. You see, the municipal corruption is merely the bad smell, which will disappear as soon as the gangrenous government at the centre is removed.” 33

Rohinton Mistry tries to express his views regarding politics of contemporary India. He blames on government for the miserable condition of the community. It is the central cause of evil things in society or nation. He suggests removing such kind of government from the nation. Rohinton Mistry observes socio-political background of Indian country before migrating to Canada. His novel is a canvas of the current political aspects and issues. In the words of Jasbir Jain remarks:

“Rohinton Mistrys works raises a whole lot of other questions specially related to the ‘homeland’ and political memory. Neither nostalgia nor memory in itself can account for this rootedness and
preoccupation with the homeland and the environment precincts of the city of birth. It is also not merely the fact of being more at home or having a more intimate relationship with the space back there. It is, more than all these, a projection of the individual character, a gesture of expanding the memory to include both the specific and the universal.” 34

Dinshawji and Gustad’s communication points out the remembrance of the days of Parsis in the past and Indira Gandhi’s decision to nationalize banks:

“What day’s those were, yaar. What fun we used to have … Parsis were the kings of banking in those days. Such respect we used to get. Now the whole atmosphere only has been spoiled. Ever since that Indira nationalized the banks.” 35

Dinshawji blames Indira Gandhi for her decision to nationalize banks. He thinks that she is responsible for Parsi’s tragic condition. This decision disappointed those Parsis of India who were the holders of private banks but she was right in her own way. She did not have any egotistic reason behind the nationalization of banks in the country.

“After becoming Prime Minister, Gandhi expressed the intention of nationalising the banks in a paper titled, "Stray thoughts on Bank Nationalisation" in order to alleviate poverty. The paper received the overwhelming support of the public. In 1969, Gandhi moved to nationalize fourteen major commercial banks.” 36

The Parsis feel anxious in Mumbai, because of its rapid growth. They are very disappointing to Shiv Sena for their domination in the Mumbai. According Dinshawji

“Wait till the Marathas take over, then we will have real Gandoo Raj.’ Said Dinshawji.’ All they know is to have rallies at Shivaji
Park, shout slogans, make threats, and change road names.’...
‘Names are so important. I grew up on Lamington Road. But it has
disappeared, in its place is Dada Saheb Bhadkamkar Marg. My
school was on Carnac Road. Now suddenly it’s on Lokmanya
Tilak Marg. I live at Sleater Road. Soon that will also disappear.
My whole life I have come to work at Flora Fountain. And one fine
day the name changes. So what happens to the life I have lived?
Was I living the wrong life, with all the wrong names? Will I get a
second chance to live it all again, with these new names?’ 37

Dinshawji says that there is other community, which is disturbing the social
harmony in Mumbai. Major Bilimoria’s reappearance disturbs the life of Noble Gustad.
Nagarwala case also plays vital role in *Such a Long Journey*. The fraud case of sixty lack rupees
by Nagarwalla, he received from bank manager in Delhi assumed on the power of a phone call
from Prime Minister, it is said, and he imitated her voice. Nagarwalla found dead after a few
months. Nobody knows about money and where it was kept. Throughout this period, it has been
considered that there is the strong involvement of a Parsi person known as Major Bilimoria.
Parsis reacts and show their reactions:

“The Nagarwala incident, because it involved a Parsi, jolted the
self-image of the community no less. Having long ago lost their
literature to the vandalism of Alexander, the Accursed, and their
dance, music, art, poetry and even their language to the process of
adapting to a new home in India the Parsis have developed a
particularized culture culled from a mixture of ancient myth and
legend overlaid by a life sustaining sense of recent achievement.
Gratified to have earned an honourable place in the country of their
adoption through their contribution to every field of endeavour and
proud of having retained a strong ethnic tradition the Parsis were
deeply anguished by the ambivalent role Nagarwala had played in
the sordid story.” 38
Parsis are very sensitive to their community and they do not want to damage their self-image. They do not like the involvement of any Parsis in any indignity. They feel honorable on a new land because they adopted many things for living on this land.

The journey in the novel is not only a physical journey but it is spiritual too. For being spiritual, one has to go through numerous sufferings and challenges. It is very important to know higher and nobler values of life, by identifying one’s own self. “A cold coming we had of it, Just the worst time of the year, For a journey, and such a long journey.”

Gustad’s life journey is like the journey of the magi. He desires to complete his dreams and ambitions but he suffered very much on the way of his journey from beginning to the end. He is very simple and honest person so he accepts things or realities very calmly in his life.

The novel Such a Long Journey ends with lines from Tagore’s Gitanjali: “And when old words die out on the tongue, new melodies break forth from the heart; and where the old tracks are lost, new country is revealed with its wonder.” The lines from Tagor’s Gitanjali represent the way Parsis migrated from Iran to India and how they accepted and settled down on new land and practices their faith. Thus, the journey from Firdausi’s Shah-Nama to Tagore’s Gitanjali is a long journey, which is in a cold and hostile world.

Mistry presents his social and political awareness in his novel Such a Long Journey; particularly the period of the 1971 Indo-pack war is extremely exciting. He manifests his anger and nervousness on Pandit Nehru and Indira Gandhi. Throughout the novel Mistry attacks on Nehru’s and Indira Gandhi’s. He says that she is responsible for making things worse than bad. On the contrary he praises Lal Bahadur Shashti because with his rule “the stagnant water of government would at last be freshened and vitalized.” In the words of Dr. Paymaster: “Short in height but tall in brains is our Lal Bahadur.” Because of his sudden death, the part of Indira Gandhi is supposed: “So that her father’s dynastic-democratic dream could finally come true.” Rohinton Mistry makes direct attack on Indira Gandhi and Shiv Sena for their awful behavior and treatment for Parsis. He expresses his political anger through Dilnavaz as: “wanting
to make the rest of us into second-class citizens. Don’t forget, she started it all by supporting the racist buggers.” The Paymaster puts the significance of the condition symbolically in the terms as:

“our beloved country is a patient with gangrene at an advanced stage. Dressing the wound or sprinkling rose-water over it to hide the stink of rotting tissue is useless. Fine words and promises will not cure the patient. The decaying part must be excised. You see, the municipal corruption is merely the bad smell, which will disappear as soon as the gangrenous government at the centre is removed.”

The fictional world of Rohinton Mistry represents the world of corruption, duplicity, domination, cruelty and perishes. From the beginning of the novel corruption has been highlighted by him. Not only political corruption has presented but the common corruption of daily life also presented in the novel. Milkman who offers milk by adding extra water into it shows daily corruption of life. The community depicted in the novel is completely miserable. Gustad tells the importance of democracy to Sohrab: “Be grateful this is a democracy. If that Russiawalla was here, he would pack you and your friends off to Siberia.”

Rohinton Mistry reflects the Indian national identity, which affects on a policy of otherness those pressures to abuse the Parsi community. The protagonists dislike the political party named Shiv Sena in Such a Long Journey as a very real threat to a diverse Parsi identity. Dinshawji, the protagonist’s doubts that, the Shiv Sena “won’t stop till they have complete Maratha Raj” with their “Maratha for the Maharashtrians nonsense.” Memorizing how followers of the Shiv Sena ill-treated Parsis as “Parsi crow-eaters,” consequently there is fear about “second-class citizens” in the mind of Dinshawji in the near future.

The confusing lives are the punishment of the identity crises and conflicts faced by the multicultural people. When someone migrates to a new land, he becomes a secondary part of that land.
The same thing take place with the Parsi community: “both the Parsis who sought greener pastures in the West and those who stayed all in India have experienced identity crisis and confusion.”

Parris take efforts to construct their own position in a foreign land as well as in India. Being a Parsi and the member of an exile community comes before their adjustment. Because their struggle for identity, they lose their hopes and become marginalized in both lands. As a multicultural writer, Rohinton Mistry represents quest for identity and shed light on struggle for identity of the Parsis:

“Identity and difference have framed the theoretical structure for the contests around multiculturalism. Vigorous attention has been given to defining identity; to analyzing why identities are important generally and academically; to the implications of proliferating identities and situated subjects for putatively universal concepts of value and rationality; and to nations of homogeneity that supposedly unite us all. Hegemonic or dominant identities and the exclusions they purport to license have been challenged in terms of difference, of local or particular identities.”

Exaggerated by such powerful and dominant communities, he wants to illustrate that dominance of the native people throw out the diasporic or exiled peoples into the margin. In a manner, he desires to present his own community in Such a Long Journey he exposes:

“Diasporic cultural identity is, therefore by its very nature predicated upon the inevitable mixing of castes and peoples. The interactions during the lengthy sea voyages began a process that led to the remaking cultural and ethnic identities.”
The cultural position of the multicultural society is not permanent so the people in multicultural community attempt to establish and attach with the situation more in which they are in exile. Accepting multiculturalism to settle, the multicultural society always searches for equal rights to all. They feel political, social, and cultural security and harmony in multicultural society:

“Multiculturalism refers to an order of instruction concerned to present that which a dominant culture has defined as “other” and inferior as well – in such a way that it may interrogate and challenge that which the dominant culture has defined as familiar and its own – and so, to be sure, major and superior.” 53

The linguistic issues with Shiv Sena are of central disturbance. The changing English road names into Marathi affect Parsis. Reacting to this Shiv Sena’s action Gustad’s opinion “What’s in a name”, 54 Dinshawji argues very angrily on the opinion of Gustad:

“Names are so important. I grew up on Lamington Road. But it has disappeared, in its place is Dadasaheb Bhadkhmakar Marg. My school was on Carnac Road. Now suddenly it’s on Lokmanya Tilak Road. I live at Sleater Road. Soon that will also disappear. My whole life I have come to work at Flora Fountain. And one fine day the name changes. So what happens to the life I have lived? Was I living the wrong life, with all the wrong names? Will I get a second chance to live it all again with these new? Tell me what happens to my life. Rubbed out, just like that? Tell me!” 55

Thus, Dinshawji is against the changing names of roads, which has constructed in the British period under British rule. This represents the British culture and values. For Shiv Sena and Parsis, language is important in their life because it ties up with the cultural aspects of self-identity. Therefore, that language plays very significant role in every community for
maintaining self-identity. Dinshawji states his uncertainties for the future of the Parsis, and Gustad Noble, focuses on the community’s insecure position, too:

“What kind of life was Sohrab going to look forward to? No future for minorities, with all these fascist Shiv Sena politics and Maratha language nonsense. It was going to be like black people in America – twice as good as the white man to get half as much.”

Rohinton Mistry provides importance to the linguistic differences in *Such a Long Journey*. Tiffin, Ashcroft, and Griffiths present their opinion about norms of English language: “the most interesting feature of its use in postcolonial literature may be the way in which it also constructs difference, separation, and absence from the metropolitan norm.” Rohinton Mistry interconnects different languages with each other like English, Gujarati, Hindi, and Marathi in *Such a Long Journey*, for maintaining the balance of cultural diversity. The best example of this language diversity is conversation of Gustad with Dinshawji:

“Toba, Toba! Began to feel something wet on my shirt. And guess what it was. A dubbawalla. Standing over me, holding the railing. It was falling from his naked armpit: tapuck-tapuck, his sweat. I said nicely, “please move a little, my shirt is wetting, meherbani.” But no kothaa, as if I was not there.”

This linguistic approach expresses multicultural perspective of language. Here Rohinton Mistry never thought to use Indian regional dialect. *Such a Long Journey* is the mixture of all languages including English, Gujarati, and Marathi also. Hence, the study investigates that Rohinton Mistry does not forget to use Indian languages in his writing. Indian people have not any difficulty in using different languages from other community to speak. Therefore, language is one of the medium to share ideas, feelings, and emotions with each other in the society. Language is the strong pillar of multiculturalism. India is the nation of different languages and every citizen feels proud of his own language as well as he offers respect for other language also. The linguistic differences are shown in *Such a Long Journey*. The canteen is the best example:
“No linguistic or ethnic group was spread; perfect equality prevailed in the canteen when it came to jokes.” 59

Parsi community feels insecurity in Bombay. As well as they thought that there is no future for minorities.  *Such a Long Journey* is the reflection of betrays in the mind of Parsi community ‘little fears and anxieties.’ 60 Gustad seems to mean that the only one way for Sohrab is emigration. Actually, Sohrab is not interested in anything else. He is not in a condition to listen his father’s opinion about his future. He has taken decision not to study Engineering at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) but to continue study in Bombay and complete a Bachelor degree in Literature instead has taken as an individual offence by Gustad. His reaction towards his son’s decision had looked as a child. Rohinton Mistry shows the Shakespearean play *King Lear* as a cause in order to echo the theme of a difficult relationship between a father and Children. Gustad is dissatisfied that the hopes for his son’s career will not be realized:

“How many years have I watched over Sohrab and waited. And now I wish I was back at the beginning, without knowledge of the end. At the beginning, at least there was hope. Now there is nothing. Nothing but sorrow.” 61

Gustad feels very absent in his life because of Sohrab’s decision. He feels everything meaningless: “How to make him realize what he was doing to his father, who had made the success of his son’s life the purpose of his own? Sohrab had snatched away that purpose, like a crutch from a cripple.” 62 In fact such kind of Gustad’s behavior represents his egocentric nature. He wants to impose and enforce his own dreams on Sohrab. Such kind of force and enforcement of dreams reflects not only in Parsi community but also in other community also. All parents see their dreams in their children. So that, they tries to impose dreams on them for fulfilling their ambitions. “All I wanted was for him to have a chance at a good career. The chance wrenches away from me.” 63 The main intension behind this is that they want to make bright future of their children. This kind of aspect reflects the harmony in Indian society.
Such a Long Journey illustrates the multicultural aspect of religious faith as well as togetherness and harmony developed between human beings. Religion in Such a Long Journey is an important aspect of community as well as nation. It is the heart of community so there is: ‘no religion no community’. Rohinton Mistry has given focus on Zoroastrianism throughout the novel. Nevertheless, Zoroastrianism is also emphasized with other kinds of religious faith throughout the text. The pavement artist, himself has an important example of representing the meaning of not bounded to Zoroastrian religion but that all aspects of religious faith have the command of giving meaning:

“You see, I don’t like to weaken anyone’s faith. Miracle, magic, mechanical trick, coincidence – does it matter what it is, as long as it helps? Why analyse the strength of the imagination, the power of suggestion, power of suto-suggestion, the potency of psychological pressures?” 64

Thus, a confidential mythology has considered as potentially great policy of creating meaning as the customs and beliefs of Zoroastrianism, or any other kind of faith. Particularly postcolonial pressure on religion as symbol of cultural difference has been harmonized by a functionalist reading of a religious faith as helpful in making life meaningful.

In Such a Long Journey harmonious relationships and togetherness associates with other people has been well maintained by Rohinton Mistry. He tries to throws light on every aspect of life. One of the best elements of man’s life is friendship which is interlinks with a relationship which is very emotional, helpful and supportive. Friendship is a very personal sphere of sense opposed to a public realm entailing the threat of an erosion of meaning. The main protagonist of the novel Gustad holds his true relations for Malcolm as well as Jimmy and Tehmul. He is aware with Dinshawji’s irony and humour, Malcolm’s humanity, and Jimmy’s sense of impartiality are ethics which Gustad can identify with, and which he accepts. This becomes real manifestation of relationship at the end of the novel Gustad:
“slipped one arm under Tehmul’s shoulders and the other under his knees. With a single mighty effort he rose to his feet, cradling the still-warm body. The bandaged head lolled limply over his forearm, and he crooked his elbow to support it properly. ‘Wait! Bossie, wait!’ said Inspector Bamji. ‘He is very heavy, we will help, don’t -’ Gustad ignored him and began walking down the compound, away from them all, towards the stairway to Tehmul’s flat. They looked in silence now, too ashamed to follow.”  

Gustad holds Tehmul, the serious victim of the morcha. Gustad carries him as Jimmy carried that he himself after his road accident. It is not because of Zoroastrian faith but because of friendship and humanity. The thread of relationship represents bond of moral and respect in the life. Perhaps, it is Gustad’s ethical deeds rather than Mrs. Kutpitia’s magic, which creates unexpected reunion of his family. “Sohrab gazed after his father with fear and admiration” and learns to respect his father, through his father’s respect for others. The death of Tehmul and Gustad’s sorrow and sympathy for Tehmul represents the union and togetherness of his family.

The fictional world of Rohinton Mistry has shaped in *Such a Long Journey*, includes all aspects of gloomy world. Corruption is the significant aspect of his writing. Rohinton Mistry sheds light on all aspects of life including cultural, religion, linguistic and ethnic diversities with the image of contemporary society. He comments on corruption as darkness in the lives of people. “Like everything else about the government, foreign exchange regulations involved convoluted rules and tortuous procedures.”

*Such a Long Journey* is concerned with issues of cultural and political similarities as well as diversities. Khodadad building is a target point for the enemy’s air strikes; the windows of Gustad’s flat covered with blackout paper. Actually, blackout paper not removed for years, although the danger has long finished being imminent: “Gustad had put it up nine years
ago, the year of the war include with China”⁶⁸ but for Dilnavaz, the blackout paper becomes difficult because it collects dirt and more important thing is that it reduces the daylight. Here light represents the reality of Gustad’s life as well as his fear of light.

The compound wall of Khodadad Building becomes a line of protection against the road widening system, which is feared by Gustad. The compound wall is not only protection for Gustad Nobel’s family but also for whole Khodadad Building. It is a space where Gustad can practice his daily religious rituals very comfortably and happily:

“With the increase in traffic and population, the black stone wall became more important than ever. It was the sole provider of privacy, especially for Jimmy and Gustad when they did their kustis at dawn. Over six feet high, the wall ran the length of the compound, sheltering them from non-Parsi eyes while they prayed with the glow spreading in the east.”⁶⁹

Gustad’s memories have been attached with the compound wall; he used to do practice of kusti prayers with his best friend Jimmy Bilimoria. The fall of the wall destroys the memories of the past: “For the briefest of moments he felt the impending loss cut deeply, through memory and time; the collapse of the wall would wreak the past and the future.”⁷⁰ The importance of wall for Gustad is reduced because of “urinators and defecators.”⁷¹ Not only is the wall spread bad smell of urine, mosquitoes, and flies. The wall becomes very problematic for Gustad’s family and garden. The wall is only protection from outside world and nothing more. Once he decided to transform that wall into some magic so that he meet pavement artist to paint the wall with Indian deities. He comes to a decision to turn profane wall into a sacred place of worship. His idea of protecting his garden from passers-by ruminators’ into worshippers:

“What an amazing contrast to the wall of old, he thought. Hard now to even imagine the horrid shit-and-piss hell it was. Dada Ormuzd, You are wonderful. Instead of flies and mosquitoes
buzzing, a thousand colours dancing in sunlight. Instead of the stink, this glorious fragrance of paradise. Heaven on earth. Weeks had gone by since he last examined the wall properly. Everything in crayon had been erased and done over in oil, including the inaugural Trimurti of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva. What a miraculous transformation. God is really in His heaven, and all is right with Khodadad Building. 

The Pavement artist decorated the perspective of multiculturalism through his painting. The wall in Such a Long Journey becomes the best example of multicultural perspective. Pavement artist painted religious images on the wall, which represents the symbol of unity in diversity. It becomes representation of religious harmony in the society. The transformation of the wall becomes holy place to worship God and Godesses. The pavement artist says to Gustad:

“There is no difficulty. I can cover three hundred miles if necessary. Using assorted religions and their gods, saints and prophets: Hindu, Shikh, Judaic, Christian, Muslim, Zoroastrian, Buddhist, Jainist. Actually, Hinduism alone can provide enough. But I always like to mix them up, include a variety in my drawings. Makes me feel I am doing something to promote tolerance and understanding in the world.”

The big but dirty wall changed into sacred wall ‘such a beautiful place.’ Transformation of the wall represents acceptance of new changes in the multicultural society and live with harmony. Transformation plays very vital role in the age of globalization and migration. Everything is changeable or transformational so this is the rule of multiculturalism to change and transform it into new one. Because holy wall passerby peoples offering their respect and honoring the wall by worshiping very heart fully and passionately. Changing attitude of the Indian people with new environment is shown in the novel. According to Pandit Nehru:
“India was changing and progressing all the time. She was coming into intimate contact with the Persians, the Egyptians, the Greeks, the Chinese, the Arabs, the Central Asians, and the peoples of the Mediterranean.”

The picture of social harmony and secularism is portrayed pavement artist, whose name and identity is deliberately keeps mysterious in the novel by Mistry. He painted images of different religious deities on the wall – Hindu, Christian and Islamic and even the goddess beloved to prostitutes, Yellama. People from different religious faiths presenting their admiration to the wall and it stop to be a urinal. The reality is that members of different communities worship gently at the same wall signify that, a common person of the society can achieve communal harmony. In the words of Pandit Nehru:

“… in spite of the vast mental and cultural difference between the small thinking minority and the unthinking masses, there was a bond between them or, at any rate, there was no obvious gulf. The graded society in which they lived had its mental gradation also and these were accepted and provided for. This led to some kind of social conflicts were avoided.”

The image of ‘journey’ illustrates through the pavement artist who is always on his way. His notion of staying near the Khodadad building after the compound wall has been fully painted with the images of Gods and Saints, and people begin worshipping and offering money and flowers. The artist also modifies his canvas with the crayon paintings with oil paintings, which are permanent. When the municipality people break down the wall, the pavement artist understands how he was mistaken with the imagination of permanence. There is nothing permanent in life. So there is no any place of permanence on his way, there is only journey further on. When the wall is broken, he could work out the causes of sorrow: “a yearning for permanence, for roots, for something he could call his own, something immutable.”

‘journey’ in the title is therefore, not mere physical journey, but it is a journey of faith and spirit. By adopting crayon, painting instead of oil painting the pavement artist starts his journey again.
When Gustad offers good luck to him, he says: “Luck is the spirit of gods and goddesses.” He exposes the author’s significance that man must accept whatever come in his life path: “He learned to disdain the overlong sojourn and the procrastinated departure, for they were the progenitors of complacent routine, to be shunned at all costs. The journey – chanced, unplanned, and solitary – was the thing to relish.” Pavement artists says all life problems begin when we look for permanent.

However, the novel mirrors a glimpse of multicultural India through the Muslim Ghulam Mohammad who is very eager to save his Parsi friend Jimmy Bilimorias’s life at any cost. Friendship is a thread of relations, which are beyond religion, caste, and culture. Relations are the realistic pictures of the society, which have no any boundaries of caste, religion, or community. Humanity is only community on the earth, which always welcomes people to live happily and jointly.

Alternatively, Rohinton Mistry recommends insertion of “a cultural unity amidst diversity” exchanges by accepting a new understanding of postcolonial issues. “And when old words die out on the tongue, new melodies break forth from the heart; and where the old tracks are lost, new country is revealed with its wonders.” This quote from Rabindranath’s Gitanjali presents new hopes of both journey and country. While at the same time, it focuses on a positive attitude towards cultural differences. After ‘demolition’ of “The wall of gods and goddesses. The wall of Hindu and Muslim, Shikh and Christian, Parsi and Buddhist.” The pavement artist is ready for his next journey, which is not permanent. He says to Gustad: “I have taken everything I need for my Journey.” The novel *Such a Long Journey* promotes us life thought that life is nothing but a long journey endless journey up to the death of human being.

Rohinton Mistry carves out *A Fine Balance* artistically. The theme of the novel represents realistic events of the cultural life. It is an enormous milestone in the contemporary Indian fiction in English literature, reflecting a “stark and moving portrait of life during the Emergency.” He tries keeping fine balance in the lives of his characters throughout the novel. One of the most significant aspects of the novel is crowed and throbbing life of Indians. India has
been identified as ‘nation of dust and mud’ that is what we see in this novel. This novel interlinks with socio-political conflicts of the emergency period.

Even though, he is living in Canada since 1975, Mistry stores the memory alive of his early days in India. He remembers all memories of the past. In an interview with Veena Gokhale, he tells about his memory of India alive. He says:

“I general, I don’t think there is much one can do to keep memory alive – memory lives and dies on its own memory is a strange thing: when assumed to be dead, it can surprise one by returning to life. I am speaking, of course, not of memory that is concerned with things like street, names, film songs, etc. These things can be found in maps and books. I refer to those moments which at the time of actual occurrence may have seemed banal but which, given the gift of remembrance become moments of revelation. My novels as not ‘researched’ in the formal sense of the world. A newspaper, Magazines, chats with visitors from India chats with people on my infrequent visits to India these are the things I rely on, Having said that, I will add that all these would be worthless without the two main ingredients, memory and imagination.”85

A Fine Balance begins with an episode entitled as ‘prologue 1975’ and ends with ‘Epilogue 1984’. The year 1975 is known as the declaration of ‘a state of Internal Emergency’ by the Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi and the year 1984 is known as Mrs. Indira Gandhi’s murder by her Sikh bodyguards. The novel grows with the victimization of four major characters – Dina, Ishwar, Omprakash and Maneck Kohlah, at the time of Emergency. B. Indira illustrates:

“Emergency, a defense of an insecure leader, disturbs the coherence of routine of the average lives of Ishvar, Darjee and his youthful nephew Omprakash Darjee and their employer Dina Dalal, a middle aged widow and her paying guest Maneck Kohlah,
Dina and Maneck are only the indirect victim of Emergency as their lives are dependent on the lives of the tailors, Ishwar and Om. All of them are aware of something stifling their lives though they cannot link it to the existing political scenario of the country their struggle for survival, as far as they are concerned, doesn’t have a political angle to it they all believe that the oft-heard word Emergency is sort of a game played by the power centre and it would not really affect the ordinary people like them hence each in his way tries to connect the pervading discomfort and insecurity to their problems here and now. Very soon when their simplest dreams get thwarted they are forced into realizing the mayhem created by the Emergency.”

*A Fine Balance* associates with four central protagonists from different social, cultural, religious, and geographical backgrounds, who construct a small community, that efforts to escape from ideological and material violence of the nation. Rohinton Mistry portrays the picture of India bearing witness to the nation’s cultural and social diversity, desiring together geographical sites from across the subcontinent – the town, the village, the mountains – and portraying characters from a variety of religious and class communities. Rohinton Mistry desires not only to represent the realities of Emergency, but also the implications of the India’s principles of multiculturalism.

Both Ishvar and Om, the tailors, basically associate to the Chammar caste, they are known as untouchables in the society. Dukhi Mochi who lives in a very small village, he has two sons named Narayan and Ishvar. Both sent to the city for getting knowledge of tailoring. The high-caste people of the village do not like the decision of Dukhi Muchi. Because Dukhi Mochi “dared to break the timeless chain of caste, retribution was bound to be swift.” Rohinton Mistry illustrates his opinion:

“Dukhi Mochi’s decision to turn his sons into tailors was indeed courageous, considering that the prime of his own life had been
spent in obedient compliance with the traditions of the caste system. Like his forefathers before him, he had accepted from childhood the occupation preordained for his present incarnation.”

Both Dukhi and his wife Roopa do not desire that Narayan and Ishvar should follow the traditional work, which has been known as Chamaar. His best friend “Ashraf was the Muslim tailor in town.” So he decided to send his sons to him for learning tailoring. Ashraf Chacha is from Muslim community, he agrees to teach them tailoring well. He is very kind, sympathetic, and helpful to others.

The reflection of different communities and religions in *A Fine Balance* shows cultural harmony in the society. The best point of view of multiculturalism has been shown through the relationship between Dukhi and Ashraf. Ishvar and Narayan save the life of Ashraf Chacha and his family when he was caught in Hindu and Muslim riots. They changed the signboard of Ashraf’s shop named Muzaffar Tailoring Company into Krishna Tailors to keep away from the attack of the Hindus on Ashraf and his family. In this way, they protect the life of Ashraf’s family without any intention. Mumtaz, Ashraf’s wife touches their feet for saying that she will remain thankful to them forever. This shows humanity in the society to protect each other by helping them.

*A Fine Balance* sheds light on deep-rooted Caste system in India and evil customs of the community. Narayan is the victim of this caste-system. Narayan marries a beautiful girl Radha and they have a son Omprakash. Om lives with Ishvar for tailoring. Narayan wants to make some revolution in the society so that he decided to vote for right candidate of his choice and teach lesson to Thakur. He says “I could kill that Thakur. Nothing but a lowly thief. Moreover, they are all like that. They treat us like animals. Always have, from the days of our forefathers.” This approach of Narayan makes Thakur Dharamsi angry. Narayan and other two men, who accompany him, are badly treated by Thakur’s men. Naryan and others were murdered inhumanly and cruelly. Upper caste persons offer punishments to the untouchables. This kind of
circumstances keeps before the villagers for not daring next time. This represents the conflict between untouchable and upper caste.

Dina Dalal, is realistic character from Parsi community. Rohinton Mistry provides her enormous place in the novel *A Fine Balance*. Dina Dalal is “a beautiful young woman, she deserved nothing less than the best.” She got marries with Rustom by her own choice. However, unfortunately “Rustom passed away, and the snake is ready to strike.” His death in one road accident makes her widow at the age of forties, the sky of sorrow collapsed on Dina. She decides not to burden on her brother Nussawan and his wife Ruby. She “becomes more confident about her abilities” and determined to live independently in her husband’s flat. She runs tailoring business so she need of two tailors. Fortunately, she gets two tailors named Ishvar and Omprakash. One more Maneck Kohla “a paying guest, and it is my great good lick to get a nice Parsi boy – the son of my school friend!” He lives as a paying guest in her house. They all live happily and peacefully there.

“Dina’s rebellion against the tyranny of her autocratic brother and traditionally accepted norms of her orthodox Parsi community reflects the change from old to the new ways of thinking in Bombay and India. The detailed account of the Parsi rites and rituals, and family relationships is a world of authentic ethnic revelations that one normally expects from a social historian or anthropologist. But Mistry provides these elements as the sauce to his main dish of India under Indira’s Emergency in *A Fine Balance*.”

Unfortunate fate enters in the life of Daina in the image of landlord who informs her to leave the flat, which is rented by her husband. This situation makes her helpless and she has no way without going to her brother’s house. Not only Daina but also Ishwar and Om are victim of this situation. All these circumstances are responsible for Ishwar and Om’s life too and forced them to become beggars. According to Nilufer Bharucha:
“There is also the motif of ‘balance’ – a fine balance. It is this fine balance which is the persons concerned learn to master helps them to lead a relatively peaceful, happy life, if they fall, it tips them over into the abyss. Dina as a young girl, a married woman and a dependent widow, constantly upset the balance of patriarchy and has to pay for it in her truncated education, her husband’s death, the loss of her tailors, her home and ultimately her much prized independence.”

The novel illustrates the period of Emergency of India. How Indian society imbalanced during that period is portrays through all the characters presented in the novel. This novel sheds light on social, historical, and political development of India between the year of 1975 and 1985. Rohinton Mistry very delicately presents in the novel how Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi force a ‘State of Internal Emergency’ proves to be serious for common people. The novel portrays general vision of socio-cultural problems of the contemporary Indian society and Politics. According to the observation of K. Ratna Sheila Mani:

“The political – historical dimension of the novel is also obvious. The novel is saga that spans the momentous events of India’s history from the turbulent times of the country’s partition in 1947, to the macabre aftermath of the Prime Minister’s assassination in 1984. However, A Fine Balance is not merely a political novel.”

Rohinton Mistry compares politics of India with the plague, because it is difficult to cure this disease from human body. So “we must be rid of this disease that plagues the body of our motherland.” One of the political leaders explains his view about dangerous social disease i.e. untouchabality, “No one is untouchable, for we are all children of the same God.”

The Emergency interrupts into the lives of Dina Dalal, Ishvar, Om and Maneck Kohla leading to their ending “…lost everything.” At the end of the novel, Dina Dalal takes the shelter of her patriarchy for the protection. Ishvar and Om accept begging for a living life.
Maneck Kohlah, the boy from Himalayas, suicide himself. All these characters suffer a lot in their life because of political strategies and policies. K. Ratna Shiela Mani illustrates:

“Mistry narrates the story in a masterly fashion and the reader is shuffled between various time phases that mark each major historical upheaval. He highlights crucial events in the country’s chronicle by depicting the background of each of the major characters.” 101

Rohinton Mistry portrays the character of Dina Dalal very creatively. She presents very modern woman in her thoughts. She is not a superstitious and orthodox woman. She is interested in living independent life so that she marries “Rustom Dalal”102, the man of her own choice. She suffers and faces so many problems in her life, but she never loses her confidence. After the death of her husband, also she lives independently without any hesitations. She makes her own earnings by doing tailoring for living life. At last, she loses her independency “Freedom remains a dream for Dina.” 103

Rohinton Mistry intentionally focuses on some minor characters in A Fine Balance. His main purpose behind creating such kind of minor characters is to highlight ethical dimension in the novel. One of the best minor character in the novel is Beggarmaster, an influential strong man, is truly interesting man. Maneck says him a modern businessman. Mistry has also given his focus on some another minor character named Rajaram, the barber. He plays interesting role in the novel he who murders two beggars for their lovely hair and in order to get rid from police he becomes a sanyasi, Bal Baba. Ratna Shiela Mani states, “It is to Mistry’s credit as a creator of characters that even the minor characters and their actions address moral questions.” 104

A Fine Balance ends with sad and negative events in the lives of protagonists. Rohinton Mistry also emphasizes negative aspects society of Indian multiculturalism in the novel. He has purposefully avoided some optimistic perspectives of the Indian multiculturalism. It is not the reality that all political parties are inadequate. In past, political leaders like Shashtriji,
Gandhiji, Jai Prakash Narayan and Morarji Desai are the best examples of the ideal statesmen of India. Mistry should have reflected the other side of Indian truth in his novels. The sense of devotion, humanity, love for culture and traditions are some of the advantages of Indian people. Unfortunately, Mistry closes the eyes to all these positive aspects in his writing.

Rohinton Mistry tries to hide the name of city. The name of city is mysterious in the novel but the readers have not any difficulty or doubt in identifying the city name as Bombay, ‘the most modern, most cosmopolitan city in the whole country’. Bombay is the small world for the Parsis and other peoples. It is known as multicultural city. From the beginning Bombay welcomes all “ancient migration” of people from different communities and places. People migrates Bombay for the purpose of earnings and living luxurious life. In fact, Parsis becomes very prosperous in Bombay.

*A Fine Balance* deals with the Emergency period of India and its effect on ordinary people’s life. This novel is the image of social and political dimension. Homi Bhaba says: “represent the cutting edge between the totalizing powers of the social and the forces that signify the more specific address to contentious, unequal interests and identities within the population.”

Rohinton Mistry takes effort to furnish a voice to marginalized community of India. He wants to open the image of marginalized groups from different communities. The marginalized groups of the society are the Parsis, the Chamaars, the Muslims, and the Beggars. He tries to explore the realistic picture of the Indian society before his readers.

Consequently, Rohinton Mistry signifies the cultural differences in *A Fine Balance*. A. K. Singh Says: “…is to initiate dialogue where it does not exist, particularly between the people and the communities that share certain geo-socio-eco-political and cultural space.” Pandit Nehru has given best lucid picture of ‘unity in diversity’ in his renowned book ‘Discovery of India’. Pandit Nehru observes that India is secular nation of different communities and religions, each of them offered their historical contribution for the nation. Going through
‘Discovery of India’ represents the image of multicultural India. Nehru’s observation tries to unite different cultures and religions.

Loss is significant aspect of *A Fine Balance*, related to the experiences of the characters presented in the novel. Dina Dalal loses precious and beloved people in her life, her father Dr. Shroff and her husband Rustom. Her father dies of a cobra’s bite; he loves his daughter Dina more than he loves his son. The death of her father is first loss in her life and death of her husband second loss in her life. Rustom’s death haunts her mind and seems isolation and loneliness. The evenings become the time when “the emptiness of her own life appeared starkest”.

A patchwork quilt is a piece of cloth mixing together with various different patches and colours of cloths into one. This represents the image of human existence. Thus, Om “would cut out all the bad parts. Snip out the scary nights and stitch together the good parts, to make time bearable. Then I could wear it like a coat, always live happily.” It is essential for Om to learn how to separate bad thing from life because it is not so easy to separate because: “Some things are very complicated to separate with scissors … Good and bad are joined like that. He laced his figures tight together.”

The novel has the image of quilt, which is made up of several parts of cloth, manifesting mixture of the most common things in postcolonial life. Om and Ishvar focuses the sensitivity of an artist analyzing the world:

“Calling one piece sad is meaningless … it is connected to a happy piece-sleeping on the varandha. And the next square chapattis, then that violet tussar, when we made the masala vada and started cooking together. And don’t forget this georgette patch, there Beggarmaster saved us from the landlord’s goondas .. Before you can name that corner, our future must become past. Time is without length or breadth. The question is, what happened during
its passing and what happened is, our lives have been joined together …Like these patches.”

Quilt ‘looks beautiful’ because it is the combination of different colours of different cloths. Therefore, a patchwork quilt represents the perspective of multiculturalism that is ‘living together’. In A Fine Balance, Daina Dalal, Maneck, Ishvar and Om from different community lives under one shelter. That is the shelter of multiculturalism. India also made up by different cultures and religions. The quilt reflects the efforts of Dian Dalal to unify it and it gives protection.

Rohinton Mistry highlights on Intercultural understanding among the characters in the novel. The evidence of mutual understanding between Dina Dalal, Maneck, Ishvar and Om is found in sharing their ideas among them. Sharing and understanding of cultural differences is a social interaction and it breaks down negative barriers of society.

Dina’s flat represents the microcosm world of different religions and cultures. Food is an important aspect in multicultural society. Food allows people to know who they are. Food by Dina Dalal, Maneck, Ishvar, and Om shows lights on perspective of multiculturalism. Food plays significant role in Parsi community: “Parsis were concerned, food was number one, and conversation came second.” It also encourages the intercultural exchange between the characters. It is a social occurrence, which brings people together form different communities. “Eating together lies at the heart of social relations; at meals we create family and friendships by sharing food, tastes, values, and ourselves.”

Parsis prefer non-vegetarian food mostly; they are very enthusiastic for such kind of food. On the contrary, untouchables also prefer non-vegetarian food for their meals. However, it is said that people from Brahmin community don’t desire to eat meat, they hate non-vegetarian food. However “They are all like that”, said Dukhi, ‘vegetarian in public, meat-eaters in private’.

In the modern age, there is demand for variety foods. Everyone needs a change in his or her life and food. In the age of migration and globalization, people are migrating from one place to another for different purposes so it becomes need to taste vegetarian or non-vegetarian.
In the age of connectivity, people are coming very close so food is not omission. Difference presented humorously in the novel: “the veg food is the same as non-veg, but minus the gristle and bones.”

The four characters of *A Fine Balance* have four things, which they use in common with respect to meal. At the beginning, they share manners. Dina comes to know that Ishvar and Om are not using cutlery. So that she uses her fingers for maintain equal status among them. Then Dina contributes her favorite china with tailors. The cups, which are very reserved for her, also shared with tailors and it creates a new equality among them. At last, they cook together; it shows communal harmony in the society. Here food is one of the delicious perspectives of multiculturalism, which connects peoples from different community and makes unity in them. The sharing of meal throws light on togetherness and it tries to remove darkness of their life and makes life bright. On the contrary, Dina’s life is full of loneliness and isolation: “What a change she thought – from the saddest, dingiest room in the flat, the kitchen was transformed into a bright place of mirth and energy.” At last, Dina and her residents share the same smell:

“In the WC, the tailors’ urine smell that used to flutter like a flag in the air, and in Dina’s nose, grew unnoticeable. Strange, she thought, how one gets accustomed to things. Then it struck her: the scent was unobtrusive now because it was the same for everyone. They were all eating the same food, drinking the same water. Sailing under one flag.”

India is the nation of sharing things very interestingly among themselves. All Indians live together very willingly in the society and they does not blame on each other’s culture or community. They have friends from different community so that they always try to maintain their relations. On the occasion of celebrations and festivals they come together to makes celebrations beautiful as well as they offers wishes and blessings for them. Whenever they come together, they share their foods happily and appreciate it vigorously. Hence, the study of the novel comes to the point that sharing food represents multicultural perspective of the India.
*A Fine Balance* brilliantly explores the transformation process from differences to sameness. Here Dina and other protagonists live under one shelter has been symbolically presented as flag. As well as they share same food and water and same the WC. The sameness, togetherness, harmony, transformation, and intercultural equalities highlight the multicultural perspective and attitude of the people. For Dina her "heaven is in this flat." Here image flag represents the flag of mother India. All children of India live together under the ‘tiranga’ of India. So all children are equal for mother she never makes differences in them. She makes same love for all without doing any partiality. Diana’s flat is image of India and all protagonists live together very happily under one shelter. Her flat represents as multicultural world of the India.

Anxiety is one of the outlooks in the novel; Rohinton Mistry tries to focus his own migrant experiences through his writing. Maneck describes his life experiences in Dubai as ‘Empty … like a desert.’ Mistry therefore illustrates Maneck’s migration experiences as one of the problematic occurrence in his life. Mistry tries to present how migration becomes problem in the lives of protagonists. He thinks that migration is responsible for their bad end. Nevertheless, reality is that all protagonists migrated from their native place to new for the purpose of earning money. However, anxiety enters in their life and their life becomes patch of sufferings and sufferings. For Diana, Maneck, Om, and Ishvar, it is not possible to stitch their misery patch with the happy thread of life. Because all things go beyond limitations, so no one can do anything for making things better than worse. Other side of their misery is politics of the nation. Rohinton Mistry very carefully gathers all events to make situation worse.

The migration of Ishvar and Om to the city follows a model observed by Sandeep Pendse, for those who have been oppressed in the more traditional rural village, the city “holds out the promise of liberation from traditional oppression – caste, class or ethnic’ and ‘an escape from traditional bonds of community, caste and family.’

The globalization and modernization is responsible for Maneck’s migration from Hills, Om and Ishvar from the ‘Village by the River’ to the ‘City by the Sea’ to escape from the caste obstructions. The image of Ishvar is very mature, honest, and understandable in nature.
Ishvar says: “Listen, my nephew, this is the way the world works. Some people are in the middle, some are on the border. Patience is needed for dreams to grow and give fruits.” His character is very adjustable and acceptable. He does not blame on faith and fortune but he is always ready to accept situation as it is. He says: “Patience, Om some things cannot be changed, you just have to accept them.”

The rushing Iranian “Vishram Vegetarian Hotel on the corner. There were no secrets at the Vishram – everything was out in the open: the man chopping vegetables, another frying them in the huge black-bottomed pan, a boy washing up. With only one table in the little shop, Ishvar and Omprakash did not wait for a seat but ate standing with the crowd outside.” It is significant to Rohinton Mistry for representation of the city as a space of multiculturalism.

“The cook in one corner of the restaurant was working within a circle of pots and pans. They could see their tea simmering in an open kettle. Three roaring stoves sent clouds of greasy smoke to the ceiling. Flames licked the black bottom of huge karai full of boiling oil, bubbling dangerously and ready for frying. A drop of sweat from the cook’s shining brow fell into the oil; it spat viciously.”

The kitchen of Vishram Hotel represents image of city where “customs are different” itself. The openness of Vishram Hotel offers ultimate relationship and friendship between Maneck, Om and Ishvar. This is the place where these three shares their experiences. This hotel is the image of social interaction. Rohinton Mistry desires to depict Bombay as the city of multiculturalism and cosmopolitanism. Hotel always represents perspective of multiculturalism because whenever someone go there for serving food he never sees who is cook and from which community. As well as he never looks here and there for knowing peoples around him from which community. Without any communal information, a man serves food in the hotel. Then how one can say that nation is not multicultural, it is multicultural with some positive as well as negative point of vision.
The homelessness of Ishvar and Om in the new city makes them victims of the central “government’s tamasha” of ‘city beautification.’ Peoples like Nusswan Shroff, brother of Diana Dalal and Mr. Gupta, the manager of Au Revior Exports, who have no idea of the misery of the deprived peoples of the society. Situation changes with time and Dina’s life completely transferred into unhappiness. Dina Dalal becomes victim and servant of her brother Nusswan after the death of her father Dr. Shroff. Finally, she decided to marry a person of her choice and leave her parental home. However, unfortunately after the death of her husband, she lives with Maneck and two tailors under one shelter but at last she lost her battle of freedom with landlord and she becomes homeless. Consequently, there is no any way for her to go back and live with her brother. Consequently, Maneck flies to Dubai and Om and Ishvar becomes homeless along with Dina. The final proof of the chaos of the world observed by Maneck:

“I prefer to think that God is a giant quilt maker. With an infinite variety of designs. And the quilt has grown so big and confusing, the pattern is impossible to see, the squares and diamonds and triangle don’t fit so well together anymore, and it’s all become meaningless. So He has abandoned it.”

When Maneck come back from Dubai, he saw the anti-Sikh riots. The taxi driver who carries him is one who has covered his Shikh identity. The communal riot has float up repeatedly in post-Independence India. Beyond the reasons of riots, the politics of rioting demands a reassessment of the identity within multicultural India.

Rohinton Mistry sheds light on recurrent perspective of multiculturalism ‘nostalgia’, “…could change a thing about the misery and suffering – love and concern and caring and sharing come to nothing, nothing.” It manifests the disintegration of family and the community. A Fine Balance manifests “By this token, and augmented by ‘Indianisms’ and words incorporated from other Indian language” In the novels of Rohinton Mistry English language is interiorized and integrated with gesture, thought and feeling. Only an Indian could have written as his style. However, he has reflected Hinglish in his writing which is very surprising
one. The words he has used are not translated into English but are in devnagari script for presenting original language like Hindi, Marathi, and Gujarati. In the age of globalization and internet English, Hinglish and Minglish is getting very popular in the world, regarded as a union of Indian culture and Western language. “…history and read also a part of her abundant ancient literature, and was powerfully impressed by the vigour of the thought, the clarity of the language, and the richness of the mind…”\(^{133}\) Using such languages in communication becomes a trademark of multiculturalism. Mistry has used so many words other than English in his writing, which represents his nostalgia of Indian languages.

“At the turn of the century, however, a new trend seems to be emerging. Marketing strategies are now as important as the contents of a book or its author. Modern technology especially the media and the Internet has played a significant role in promoting new books.”\(^{134}\)

Rohinton Mistry sheds light on political conflicts regarding language. He exposes how some of the political parties like Shiv Sena tried to destroy and divide states on linguistic base. They desire to take political benefits of all these matter. Mistry expresses his anger in the novel *A Fine Balance*: “The fools want to divide the state on linguistic lines.”\(^{135}\)

Contemporary Indian culture is tremendously multifaceted on description of the strange combination of tradition and modernity as well as the diversity of subcultures and languages. The literary works, either in the regional languages or in English, are a significant means of sharing the vast variety and diversity of such a culture. K. R. Shrinivasa Iyengar observes the sufferings of the novelist:

“The old narrow loyalties were seen to wax as eloquent as ever. Communal, linguistic casteist passions were seen to come into the open with accelerated frequency. While talk of “emotional integration”.”\(^{136}\)
Dina, Maneck, Om, and Ishvar are come together for different purposes even though they are from different communities. M. N. Srinivas says: “Each caste has a culture which is to some extent autonomous: there are differences in dress, speech, manners, ritual, and way of life.”

Rohinton Mistry depicts the father-son conflict in *A Fine Balance*. Maneck Kolah’s father runs a small trade in the hills of North India. He is very special in the Kaycee (Kolah’s Cola), which he makes according to secret formula handed down by his ancestors. With the globalization and multi-nationalization, the Kaycee is on its way to slow down but sure end. Maneck suggests: “The future lies with technology and modernization.” His father forces him to get higher study in metropolitan city like Bombay. So that Maneck, has been get rid of the hills and come to city for higher studies. He caught in infested hostel students and ragging too much to bear he has come to Dina’s flat as a paying guest. Thus, the requirements for dislocation bring these four people together. Ishvar, Om and Maneck all of them portrays the ‘transitional man’ of the society. They are the men whose roots have been torn from the soil of their respective cultural lives.

Being a Parsi and then an immigrant in Canada, Rohinton Mistry sees himself as symbol of double displacement. Consequently, he represented such kind of displacement through his protagonists of the novel *A Fine Balance*. Traditionally Om and Ishvar are belongs to lower caste which is known as Chamaar in the Indian society. The dominance and suppression of the society and forces of their ancestor move them into the trade of tailoring. It illustrates that these men continuously aware about their roots in the social structure. Because of economic compulsions, they go away from their native place and environment. They are struggling for the secure place in the crowd of the urban place. The emotional displacement of accepting new profession of tailoring and physical displacement of moving to the new city for earning, and the feelings of alienation, dislocation and isolation force them to become beggars on the roads of metropolis.

Maneck Kohla, the young boy from the Himalayas, is another victim of double displacement. He faces emotional displacement in his college. He tries to adjust with that atmosphere in the college and hostel. At last, he takes revenge from that and shifted to Dina’s
flat. Then he migrated to Dubai. He feels unable to bear all realities of the society, al last Maneck look for a way out in suicide. Dina’s life is full of misfortunes and emotional difficulties. She is very lonely figure who struggling for freedom and independence. She got success in his tailoring with the help of Om and Ishvar. She caught between physical displacements by her landlord. At last, there is no way for her to leave flat and start her life in her brother’s house. Her life returns into pathetic state of mind. After all, she becomes very upset, nervous, and helpless so she adjusted with the destiny of the life. A bird always desire freedom from the cage to fly in the sky. He likes happy life in the open air but fortune always against our wish and forces to go back into the cage. Consequently, Dina’s fortune returns her to parental home, which is golden cage for her.

Bombay has been known as ‘City by the Sea’ in A Fine Balance. He portrays the city as the huge slum, industrial suffocation, the long queue for water, quarrels, open toilets, beggars begging on the road, harassment by the politicians and police. Mistry describes the picture of beggar and child labour problems in Bombay: “There are thousands of poor children in the city, doing boot-polishing at railway stations, or collecting papers, bottles, plastic – plus going to school at night.” Ishvar and Om migrate to city for earning money. On this Rajaram explains: “Thousands and thousands are coming to the city because of bad times in their native place. I came for the same reason.” Om and Ishvar also not decided to go back to their village after getting bad treatment in the village. At last, they decided to live in the city forever as a beggar. “The city grabs you, sinks its claws into you, and refuses to let go.”

The life in village as well as in Bombay presents the nostalgia, suffering, pain, and restless in the lives of protagonists. There life is nothing but the journey from one place to another. They were unable to find home in the city so that they are always experience ‘homesickness’ and “thinks of home every night.” They are trapped in an inevitable problem, between two worlds i.e. their native village which they abandoned and Bombay which has failed them despite promises. They are marginalized men, unable to reject the old and to discover peace in the new. Rohinton Mistry depicts homesickness of Om. He feels that: “I am very sick of the city. Nothing but misery ever since we come. I wish I had died in our village. I wish I had also burned to death like the rest of my family.”
*A Fine Balance* is the pivotal presentation of the untouchables, who are outcastes, are distinguished from caste Hindus, who constituted the four castes or *varnas*. “Of the Brahmins make up the priestly caste; the Kshatriyas are kings and warriors; the Vaisyas are cultivators and traders; while the Shudras are the servants”¹⁴⁵ and miserable condition of untouchables in the Indian society. According to Jaydipsinh Dodiya: “Mistry’s fiction is concerned with the great inequalities of the world; between the classes, genders, castes and official hierarches.”¹⁴⁶ He sheds light particularly on Chamaar caste, which is marginalized in the village. Peoples from this caste are thrown away from the politics and other activities of the village. They follow their traditions with honestly. Untouchables have been victimized by the higher castes in the society. Narayans rebellion against Thakurs and Pandits enforced him into the death. Consequently, Dukhi decided not to live them in the village so that he sent them to the city for tailoring. Because of the miserable condition at the village, they convert their ancestral business and adopted tailoring for living happy and peaceful life. Rohinton Mistry portrays the image of inhumanity, inequality, deprivation, misery and injustice faced by untouchables in Indian society through *A Fine Balance*. Therefore, the conflict between religion and compassion that Dr. B.R. Ambedkar presented in his speech on the “Annihilation of Caste”:

“Caste may be said: Caste may lead to conduct so gross as to be called man’s inhumanity to man. All the same, it must be said that the Hindus observe Caste not because they are inhuman or wrong headed. They observe Caste because they are deeply religious.”¹⁴⁷

Marginalization not only bounded to caste system but it seen in gender bigotry. Rohinton Mistry represents the marginalization of women in the male dominated society. He says, discrimination between the sexes is affected by the cultural creation of gender difference. After the death of Rustam Dalal, Nusswan Dina’s brother suggests her to get remarry. He is aware about Parsi community, which is generous to all a widow to remarry. Here he makes cultural differences between Hindu and Parsi community.

“Do you know how fortunate you are in our community? Among the unenlighted, widows are thrown away like garbage. If you were
a Hindu, in the old days you would have had to be a good little sati, and leap onto your husband’s funeral pyre, be roasted with him.”  

Rohinton Mistry tries to express evil customs of Hindu society by depicting that widows have no any respectful position in the society and they are like garbage. He also gives emphasis on ‘sati’ custom of Hindu. Nevertheless, he has forgotten to express positive side of culture that how all these system are also thrown away from Hindu community. Number of social reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, M.G. Ranade and Maharshi Karve fought against such customs and they offer respectful position to Women in the society.

Accordingly, Rohinton Mistry has illustrated the picture of Hindu society by saying that Hindu “society is based on the system of castes.” The novel is an exploration of marginalization of women in the society. Sexual exploitation based on religion and caste is one of the facets of Mistry’s writing. Rohinton Mistry tries to presents the exploitation of the untouchable woman by common workers of the rich man in the novel. “One shout from and they will come running. I only shout, and the owner and his sons would be here at once. They would strip you and whip you for stealing …they would take turn doing shameful things to your … body.” Untouchable’s anger for the Brahmins is peculiarly focused in A Fine Balance. Brahmins are responsible for their miserable condition in the society. They behave as an enemies of untouchables and “The Muslims have behaved more like our brothers than the bastard Brahmins and Thakurs.”

It presents two sides of coin, one unprotects them, and another protects them.

Education also marginalized in the lives of untouchables. Higher caste people not allow untouchables children in the school. They do not want to make them wise. A Fine Balance explores the marginalization of Chamaar’s in the school. School becomes the symbol of untouchable’s marginalization. “You Chamaar rascals! Very brave you are getting, daring to enter the school.” He also makes the reflection of holy book Bhagvad Gita: “You are lucky there wasn’t a holy book like the Bhagvad Gita in that cupboard, no sacred texts. Or the punishment would have been more final.”
Struggle for self-identity shows peculiar position in the lives of protagonist of the novel. Dina, Maneck, Om, and Ishvar are struggling for their identity, their sufferings, loneliness and social conditions bring them together. Rohinton Mistry paints the image of humanity through all these characters. They have different desires behind coming together but the goal is the same i.e. struggle for identity.

“Desire is like a tree that has so many branches such as ill, will and anger. The tree is mainly rooted with ignorance and its fruits are problems or sufferings. So sufferings has a vital place in human life. and has an unavoidable part in the journey of life. Physical, Psychological, Social sufferings have major role in human life and relationship and interlink among them. Physical suffering comes through unfortunate events like accidents. Some physical sufferings are based upon sins and passions of physical desires like sexual harassment. These are away from our control and situation from the outer world.”  

After all these protagonists are struggling to maintain ‘a fine balance’ in their lives. Their relationship is the thread of friendship bond, which encourage them to adjust life in any circumstances. The novel is canvas of endless sufferings of the individuals for the sake of maintaining their own identity in the society. The study of the novel also examines that how migration affects on the life of Om and Ishvar: “It’s not good to go far from your native village. Then you forget who you are.” So that ‘migration’ associates with the self-identity in one’s own life.

Untouchability and social factors are responsible for changing Narayan’s and Ishvar’s identity. For maintaining fine balance in life, their self-identity is being changed as Mochi to Darji: “Ashraf Chacha is going to turn you into tailors like himself. From now on, you are not cobbler – if someone asks your name, don’t say Ishvar Mochi or Narayan Mochi. From now on you are Ishvar Darji and Narayan Darji.” During the attack of political riots on
Ashraf’s shop, Om and Ishvar very skillfully protect him. Consequently, it was challenge for Om and Ishvar to show their identity of not being Muslims: “Step on the pavement and remove your pyjamas … their naked crotches, and was satisfied.” \(^{158}\) So for preserving and protecting one’s own cultural identity it is very essential to accept challenges on the path of life with some proof and evidence i.e. “… Hindu deities on the wall.” \(^{159}\) So that Rohinton Mistry accepted the challenge to keep his cultural identity as a Parsi in the world. Writing becomes instrument for him to preserve his cultural identity in the world and helpful for the next generation.

Daina Dalal is a modern idol of self-conscious young and beautiful woman. She is aware with her identity in home as well as in society. Therefore, that she do not want to become servant of her brother. This kind of awareness represents the identity in *A Fine Balance*. “I’m not your servant! Wash your own dirt plates! You said we would each do our own work! All your stinking things you leave for me!.. He’s cheating! He doesn’t do any work! Do everything!” \(^{160}\) She is not typical tradition Indian woman serving for men. One more important thing is that she marries a person of her own choice. After the death of her husband she live independently and hire her own business named ‘Au Revoir Export’ \(^{161}\)

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru presented his inaugural speech at the stroke of midnight on the 15\(^{th}\) of August, 1947, pointed to India’s long history of ups and downs:

“At the down of history India started on her unending quest, and trackless centuries are filled with her striving and the grandeur of her striving of her successes and failures. Through good and ill fortune alike she has never lost sight of that quest or forgotten the ideals which gave her strength. We end today a period of ill fortune and India discovers herself again.” \(^{162}\)

The study examines ‘unity in diversity’ in the novel *A Fine Balance*. In the age of globalization, modernization, and transformation India is one of the multicultural nations on the world’s map. Indian according to Jawaharlal Nehru: “The diversity of India is tremendous.” \(^{163}\) Rohinton Mistry tries to smear the photography of Indian multiculturalism through his
characters. He goes beyond the horizons of caste, gender, class, religion, and culture. At the beginning Ashraf Chacha, Mumtaz, Om, and Ishvar work and live together for the purpose of trade. They broke all barriers of community and religion by living, supporting and protecting each other. Afterwards Ishvar and Om migrated to city for the sake of earning more money. They thought “… There is lots of opportunity in the city; you can make your dreams come true.” and “…is more scope in a big place.” They take the shelter of Diana Dala a Parsi woman. Her flat represents ‘unity in diversity’, because Dina, Maneck, Om, and Ishvar come together from different community and live peacefully. They share their feelings and emotions but unfortunate comes into their lives as a “horrible walls” and all dreams scattered into pieces of loss, tears, and death. The balance maintained in the flat highlights the perspective of multiculturalism: “In here, there is limitless room – happiness, kindness, sorrow, anger, friendship – every – thing fits in here.” And they live “… life happily together.”

The exploration of communal harmony has been spread through Ashraf and Dhuki. They have been represented from different community but they have emotional touch in their relationship. Ashraf and Mumtaz show parental love for Narayan, Om and Ishvar. “When your father is not here, I stand in his place. And Mumtaz Chachi is like your mother, nah? You can tell us anything you like!” This kind of relationship reflects love, sympathy, and kindness in their relationship. This relation preserves the humanity and supports to maintain multiculturalism “same everywhere” in the society. Consequently, there is no doubt that India “…Treat … as your home…” Due to multiculturalism and globalization “… the world is much changed.” From the beginning India offer welcome to:

“a religion of non-Indian origin or, coming to India, settled down there, became distinctively Indian in the course of a few generations, such as Christians, Jews, Parsees, Muslims. Indian converts to some of these religions never ceased to be Indians on account of a change of their faith. They were looked upon in other countries as Indians and foreigners, even though there might have been a community of faith between them.”
The study is tremendous exploration of Rohinton Mistry’s *Such a Long Journey* and *A Fine Balance* highlights positive as well as negative perspectives of multiculturalism. For the most portion of the novel sheds light on negative points of the society but on the contrary Rohinton Mistry unable to hide his attachment and love with the motherland India. The linguistic differences, relationship with other community and Dina and her flat are all focuses on multiculturalism view of the novelist. Dina’s flat gives remarkable protection for Maneck, Om and Ishvar who are all from different communities. In *Such a Long Journey* Rohinton Mistry has given focus on Parsi community rather than others. Nevertheless, in *A Fine Balance* he depicts characters from different communities and tries to give them equal balance in the society. Therefore, it will be no longer to say: “… it was the same trouble everywhere – it was a real crisis of human nature, a revolution was needed in people’s hearts. But he would look into it, maybe assign him a new location.”¹⁷⁴ Life is nothing but to balance all things all time. If there is balance then all things go on proper path otherwise it is too difficult to deserve life dreams. Pandit Nehru has given his opinion:

“I balanced all, brought all to mind,
The years to come seemed waste of breath, A waste of breath the years behind, In balance with this life, this death.” ¹⁷⁵

Thus, there is no any nation in the world with all positive perspective of multiculturalism. Therefore, Pandit Nehru’s ‘*Discovery of India*’ helps us to know how India is ancient nation of multiculturalism where all communities live happily. *Such a Long Journey* and *A Fine Balance* represent “… India, that land of ours so dear to us, with all her faults and weaknesses, so elusive and so full of mystery.”¹⁷⁶
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