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<p>Humanities: This passage is adapted from Bharati Mukherjee's essay "A Four-Hundred-Year-Old Woman," which appears in the anthology <i>The Writer on Her Work</i> (1991 by Janet Sernburg).</p>	<p>人文：文章改编自 Bharati Mukherjee 的文章《一个 400 岁的女人》，摘自选集...</p>
<p>I was born into a class that did not live in its native language. I was born into a city that feared its future, and trained me for emigration. I attended a school run by Irish nuns, who regarded our walled-off school compound in Calcutta as a corner of England. My "country"-called in Bengali <i>desh</i>-I have never seen. It is the ancestral home of my father and is now in Bangladesh. Nevertheless, I speak his dialect of Bengali, and think of myself as "belonging" to Faridpur, the tiny village that was his birthplace. The larger political entity to which I gave my first allegiance - India - was not even a sovereign nation when I was born.</p>	<p>我出生于一个阶层，这一阶层不使用自己的母语。我出生于一个城市，这个城市忧心自己未来，培养自己的市民去移民。我就读的是爱尔兰修女开办的学校，这些修女认为我们位于加尔各答的封闭学校是英格兰的一角。我从未见过我的“故乡”--在孟加拉语中叫做 <i>desh</i>。那是我父亲的老家，在孟加拉国。不过，我讲孟加拉语的方言，认为自己“属于”福里德布尔，我父亲出生的那个小村庄。我所效忠的大一点的第一个政治实体—印度—在我出生时尚未成为一个主权国家。</p>
<p>My horoscope, cast by a neighborhood astrologer when I was a week-old infant, predicted that I would be a writer; that I would cross oceans and make my home among aliens. Brought up in a culture that places its faith in horoscopes, it never occurred to me to doubt it. The astrologer</p>	<p>附近的占星家在我还是个几周大的婴儿时，说我的星象预示着我未来会成为一名作家，将远渡重洋，在异国他乡安家立业。在崇拜星象的文化中长大，我从未怀疑过此。那位占星家预言了我一个悲伤的未来：命中注定离开印度意味着被真正的文化根源所放逐。而学校的修女则暗示，印度早已失去往日的</p>

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meant to offer me a melancholy future: to be destined to leave India was to be banished from the sources of true culture. The nuns at school, on the other hand, insinuated that India had long outlived its glories, and that if we wanted to be educated, modern women, we'd better hit the trail westward. All my girlhood, I straddled the seesaw of contradictions.

I have found my way to the United States after many transit stops. The unglimsped phantom Faridpur and the all too real Manhattan have merged as "desh". I am an American. I am an American writer, in the American mainstream, trying to extend it. This is a vitally important statement for me - I am not an Indian writer, not an expatriate. I am immigrant; my investment is in the American reality, not the Indian.

It took me ten painful years, from the early seventies to the early eighties, to overthrow the smothering tyranny of nostalgia. The remaining struggle for me is to make the American readership, meaning the editorial and publishing industries as well, acknowledge the same fact. The foreign-born, the Third World immigrant with non-Western religions and non-European languages and appearance, can be as

辉煌, 而如果我们这些现代女性想受教育的话, 我们最好向西前行。在我的童年时期, 我一直横跨在这两种信念的跷跷板上。

走走停停之后终于在美国找到了我的方向。从未见过的福里德布尔的幻影和实实在在的曼哈顿合并成为我的故乡。我是一个美国人。我是一个美国作家, 并在美国主流社会试图扩展它。

这对我来说是一个至关重要的声明--我不是印度作家, 不是侨民。我是移民, 我投入精力和时间的地方是在美国的现实社会, 而非印度的社会。

从七十年代初到八十年代初, 我花了痛苦的十年时间来摆脱令人窒息的乡愁。剩下的就是争取让美国读者, 也就是编辑和出版行业, 承认相同的事实。那些移民非美国本土出生, 来自第三世界, 不信奉西方宗教, 不使用欧洲语言, 不带有欧洲人面孔, 也可以和来自爱尔兰、意大利或俄罗斯的人一样都是美国人。

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American as any steerage passenger from Ireland, Italy, or the Russian Pale.

My literary agenda begins by acknowledging that America has transformed me. It does not end until I show how I (and the hundreds of thousands like me) have transformed America.

I've had to sensitize editors as well as readers to the richness of the lives I'm writing about. The most moving form of praise I receive from readers can be summed up in three words: I never knew. Meaning, I see these people (call them Indians, Filipinos, Koreans, Chinese) around me all the time and I never knew they had an inner life. I never knew they schemed and cheated, suffered, cared so passionately. When even the forms of praise are so rudimentary, the writer knows she has an inexhaustible fictional population to enumerate. Perhaps even a mission.

I have been blessed with an enormity of material: the rapid and dramatic transformation of the United States since the early 1970s. Within that perceived perimeter, however, I hope to wring surprises.

我的文学计划是在开始时承认美国改变了我, 一直持续到我能证明我(和成千上万的像我一样的人)已经改变了美国。

我现在不得不让编辑们和读者意识到我笔下描述的生活是多么丰富。我收到读者赞美中最感人的一个可以总结成四个字: 从不知道。意思是, 当我看到周遭这些人(印度人, 菲律宾人, 韩国人, 中国人)时, 我从不知道他们有自己的内心生活。我从不知道他们密谋过, 欺骗过, 忍受过, 热切关注过。即使作者收到的赞赏都是很基本的, 但她知道她有数不胜数的小说素材。也许甚至是种使命。

我一直有比较丰富的写作素材: 美国自 1970 年代初快速且戏剧性的转变。然而, 这一领域已然为人们所知, 我希望获取一些惊喜。

但我想象中的故乡也存在于我母亲和祖母讲的故事里, 那个印度教史诗的世界。尽管在移民和住宿上我已经花费了所有的希望和能

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Yet my imaginative home is also in the tales told by my mother and grandmother; the world of the Hindu epics. For all the hope and energy I have placed in the process of immigration and accommodation- I'm a person who couldn't ride a public bus when she first arrived, and now I'm someone who watches tractor pulls on obscure cable channels - there are parts of me that remain Indian. The form that my stories and novels take inevitably reflects the resources of Indian mythology-shape-changing, miracles, godly perspectives. My characters can, I hope, transcend the straitjacket of simple psychologizing. The people I write about are culturally and politically several hundred years old: consider the history they have witnessed (colonialism, technology, education, liberation, civil war). They have shed old identities, take on new ones, and learned to hide the scars. They may sell you newspapers, or clean your offices at night.

Writers (especially American writers weaned on affluence and freedom) often disavow the notion of a "literary duty" or "political consciousness," citing the all-too-frequent examples of writers ruined by their shrill commitments. Glibness abounds on both sides of the argument, but finally I have to side with my "Third World"

量—刚到美国时我不会坐公共汽车, 现在的我则可以通过模糊的电视屏幕看拖拉机拉力赛--我身体的一部分仍然是印度人。我的故事和小说的形式不可避免地反映出印度神话的来源, 奇迹, 或是上帝视角。我希望, 我作品中的角色不局限于简单的心理剖析。我笔下的人们在文化上政治上都过百岁: 这是考虑到他们见证过的历史(殖民主义、技术、教育、解放和内战)。他们蜕下旧的身份, 换上新的身份, 并学会隐藏起伤疤。他们可能卖给你报纸, 或在晚间打扫你们的办公室。

作家(特别是放弃富裕和自由的美国作家)经常否定“文学义务”或“政治意识”等概念, 频繁地引用一些被自己尖锐承诺所害的作家作案例。两方观点引发各种激烈的辩论, 但最后我不得不与我的“第三世界”的同胞们站在一边: 除了讲好故事之外, 我确实有更多责任。我的职责不仅是给传达出表达看法, 也是重新定义美国的本质。

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compatriots: I do have a duty, beyond telling a good story. My duty is to give voice to continents, but also to redefine the nature of American.	
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