

Diasporic Influence in Indian English Fiction: A Study of Indo-American Women Writers

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Abstract

The literature of diaspora refers to the works written by those who live outside their native land. There are various types and kinds of diaspora literatures-African, Australian, Arab diaspora, and so on. Among these, Indian diasporic literature has caught 'fancy of writers, literati, historians and sociologists. Since, foreign land offers many fold of challenges in terms of adaptation and assimilation of various socio-cultural values. It is a globally accepted fact that Diaspora writers set a trend since the Independence. Diaspora literature irrespective of language, style, literary form and technique attract the readers crossing the borders. It may be stream of consciousness or magic realism or immigrancy or alienation or adaptability of a new land and culture. But nostalgia is alike for all Diaspora writers. Notably the works of Indian Diaspora cover all parts of the world. It is an Interesting Paradox that a great deal of Indian writing in English is produced not in India but in widely distributed geographical areas of indenture. This paper, as such is an attempt to analyse the influence of diasporic issues reflected in the Indian fiction, annexed with a brief review of Indo-American women writers.

Keywords: diaspora, identity crisis, displacement, alienation, exile



Diaspora the Concept

Etymologically the term 'Diaspora' is derived from the Greek term "diasperien", from "dia-across" and "sperien-to sow or scatter seeds" (Wikipedia-the free Encyclopedia). It is based on Hebrew word of diaspora - 'galut', meaning 'exile' (that is from the Holy Land) (The New Encyclopedia of Britannica (vol.3)). In the beginning the

term “diaspora” was used by the ancient Greeks to refer to citizens of a grand city who migrated to the conquered land with the purpose of colonization to assimilate the territory into the Empire. The concept ‘Diaspora’ refers to dispersal of Jews from Palestine throughout the world. Along with physical dispersal of the Jews, the term carries religious, philosophical and eschatological connotations, inasmuch as a special relationship is understood to exist between the land of Israel and Jewish people. This relationship ranges from eventual “ingathering of the exiles” to the classic view of Reform Judaism. Some of the Jews submerged themselves in non-Jewish environments more completely than the others. Because of assimilation and acculturation diaspora Jews were the Jews in a religious sense only.

Another early historical reference is the Black African diaspora, in 16th c., with slave trade, who exported (forced) West Africans out of their native lands and dispersed them in the “New World” - parts of North America, South America, the Caribbean and elsewhere. Dispersion of Africans, Armenians, Irish, Palestinians and the Jews conceived their scattering as arising from a cataclysmic event that had traumatized the group as a whole. Their dispersal was involuntary, pathetic and tragic. So, the term ‘Diaspora’ is used to refer to any people of ethnic population forced or induced to leave their traditional ethnic homelands; being dispersed throughout other parts of the world; and the ensuing developments in their dispersal and culture. The original meaning of ‘Diaspora’ was cut off from the present meaning. The diasporic ‘scattering’ is transformed into ‘gathering’ by Homi Bhabha. “Gathering of exiles and *émigrés* and refugees; gathering on the edge of ‘foreign’ cultures; gathering at the frontiers; gathering in the ghettos or cafes of city centers Also, the gathering of people in the diaspora: indentured, migrant, ...” (Bhabha 198-199).

Today, ‘Diaspora’ refers to a range of ethnic communities and a variety of categories of people like – political and war refugees, migrants, ethnic and racial communities, immigrants / expatriates / transnational communities. According to Steven Vertovec (1999) “Diaspora” is the term often used today to describe practically any population which is considered ‘deterritorialized’ or ‘transnational’ - that is, which has originated in a land other than which it currently resides, and whose social, economic, and political networks cross the borders of the nation-states or, indeed span the globe” (Vertovec, “Three Meanings of Diaspora”). Diaspora can perhaps be seen as a naming of the ‘other’ which has historically referred to displaced communities of people who have been dislocated from their native homeland through the movements of migration, immigration or exile. Diaspora suggests a dislocation from the nation-state or geographical location of origin and relocation in one or more nation-states, territories or countries.

“Diaspora” now speaks to diverse groups of displaced persons and communities moving across the globe. The term “diaspora’ is often used as a catch-all phrase to speak of and for all movements, however privileged, and for all dislocations, even symbolic ones. This term has been used by anthropologists, literary theorists, cultural critics, sociologists to describe the mass migration and displacements in the second half of the 20th to independence movements in formerly colonized areas, waves of refugees fleeing war-torn states and fluxes of economic migration in the post-World–War era. In short, the term ‘diaspora’ denotes communities of people dislocated from their native homelands through migration, immigration, or exile as a consequence of colonial expansion/imperialism/trade/business/better opportunities/hunger for better prospects/Globalization.

Diaspora in Indian fiction

Writers of Indian Diaspora, who were earlier called the expatriate writers have carved for themselves a special niche in the area of literature. Tapping their varied

experiences and rich exposure to advantage, these writers wrote with a broad vision and perspective. In the modern world of flux, uncertainty and constant erosion of identities they explore major issues like cultural conflicts, immigrant's alienation, psyche and changing social values. While assessing Indian diasporic fiction as a sub-genre of post-colonial literature, we observe that this field entitles the huge corpus of well recognized works widely read and rightly appreciated by global readers. The extraordinary representation of local-global, self-society and home-homelessness which form its core, inform us about the present day futility of making geographical borders for confinement of the circulation of free ideas between civilized human races. The motif of the Indian diasporic fiction is not only to highlight the issues of nostalgia and alienation but also to eliminate manifest as well as latent boundaries, the geographical and well as mental. As the imaginary and well distributed concrete borders of nation, race and ethnicity, render an enormous disservice to the progressive world, the vanity of having them is questioned by diasporic fiction. The purpose of diasporic stance is simply to recognize and respect different socio-cultural values and lead the world towards the harmonious cultural, social, racial and religious synthesis. The writers of old diaspora like V.S Naipaul(India- Trinidad) Harold Lado (Trinidad-Canada) Subramani(Fiji), K.S. Maniam (Malaysia) tend to express panic, nausea, hysteria, estrangement, violence and nostalgia in their works, the writers of new diaspora such as BharatiMukherjee (India- United States), Farrukh Dhondy (India-Britain), Agha Shahid Ali (India-United States), Rohinton Mistry (India-Canada), Sujata Bhatt (India-Germany) Kiran Desai(India-United States) and Jhumpa Lahiri (India-United States) are inclined to inhabit the liminalor threshold zone of intercutting subjectivities that defines the experience of migrancy.

Identity Crisis In Diasporic Fiction

Diaspora or expatriate writing occupies a place of great significance between countries and cultures. Living in an alienated country always proves really troubling for the marginalized strata of the Diaspora. The sense of homelessness which every immigrant suffers is genuine and intense. The disoriented and blurred memories of the homeland seem to whip up in them a pathetic feeling, craving for "home", a longing to go back to "the lost world". Though the immigrants are craving for "home", they have the ability to regenerate not only the nation they arrive at but the nation they have left. Anjali D Paramr and Arpita D Paramar in Golden research Thoughts mentions Baiku Parekh view on Indian diaspora, who states that the diasporic Indian is "like a banyan tree, the traditional symbol of Indian way of life, he spreads out his root in several soils, drawing nourishment from when the rest dry up. Far from being homeless, he has several homes, and that is the only way he increasingly comes to feel at home in the world"(Golden Thoughts1)

In today's multicultural world, hybridity and confusion of cultural identity are key issues. Whether in US or in England, immigration has resulted in a multi ethnic society and cultural diversity as well as problems of alienation, assimilation, which not only affected the society itself but the lives of various individuals. Traditionally, the countries like America and England has been defined as a melting pot in which various culture are assimilated and blended as immigrants mould their beliefs and behaviours to the which an immigrant maintains their cultural identity while learning to function in society. Thus there is a greater chance for the occurrence of cultural conflicts. Indian immigrants are isolated pockets of Indian culture within western society and they are exclusively made up of immigrant

Indians who constantly stoke the embers of longing for their left behind motherland and they negotiate any thought of assimilation. This creates problems for first generation diasporic Indians, especially in relation on to their own progeny, who , being born and bred in the West, define themselves Westerners of Indian origin and cannot identify with their parents ethnic self-fashioning.

Sociological Profile of Indo–American Diaspora

Indo –American diaspora is one of the important diasporas which has exerted the massive impact on the literary world and produced literary genius of our time. As Jhumpa Lahiri is the recent author of Indo- American writing, before taking into account her literary contribution, it would be proper to take a brief note /review of the background of Indo – American writing of which Jhumpa Lahiri belongs as a second-generation expatriate writer. Let us first understand the sociological profile of Indian diaspora in America. An Indian American is a resident or citizen of the United States with origins in India. They both born in India and immigrated to United States or are born in the U. S. and have Indian heritage. Indian population is spread across the U. S. primarily in the urban areas in general and the large metropolitan area in particular. They are regarded very affluent community. Like the terms ‘Asian American’ or ‘South Asian American,’ the term ‘Indian American’ is an umbrella expression applying to people of widely varying socio-economic status, education, places of residence, generations, views, values, lifestyles and appearances. They are known to assimilate into American culture effortlessly because they have no language barriers and come from a similar society.

Indians are among the largest ethnic groups migrating to the USA legally. Immigration of Indian Americans has taken place in many waves since 1790, followed by a few hundred Indian emigrants through the 19th century. However, significant emigration from India to U.S. has taken place in two distinct phases from 1904, and after 1965. The first wave is a part of larger Indian Diaspora generated by British Colonial repression in India, the emigrants were mostly Sikh farmers along with political refugees and activists, middle / upper-class students from various groups, who come to gain political support from British rule. The second wave after 1965 included mostly students and professionals from the educated middle and upper classes in search of a better standard of living. After LPG and IT revolution, in 1990 Silicon Valley of American is dominated by Indian IT professionals.

A basic reality for most of the first generation, Indian Americans is that they have grown up bilingual. Those who have had the benefit of being educated in English medium school have grown up with English as another ‘native’ language. Unlike Chinese, language was no hurdle for Indian immigrants. Their cultural traits, excellent knowledge, good work habits have earned them the label of ‘model minority.’ For a large section of an Indian immigrant community, the bonds to India endure. Their consciousness and sensibility include strong and highly differentiated regional consciousness, having to do with language, food, religious affiliation, dress, etc.

Literary Profile of Indo- American Literature

Indian American literature is among the very ‘young’ literature in the United States, hardly forty years old.

(A) Memoirs: Writing by immigrants from the Indian sub-continent is associated with personal and communal identity, memories of the homeland, and the active response to this 'new' world. Writers express their personal, familial identities and socio-political contexts, explaining how and why they come to be where they are and to write what they do. Ved Mehta's autobiographical inquiry in *The Ledge between the Streams* deals with his personal and familial detailed in an old-fashioned way. Bharati Mukherjee widens the autobiographical tradition of Ved Mehta in quite different ways. Society is the subject matter of her memoir, *Days and Nights in Calcutta*, co-authored with her husband. It is a work in which Mukherjee reveals her nostalgia for her home city. Meena Alexander turned to writing for strength, catharsis, and alternate possibilities. The title of her memoir *Fault Lines* gives insight into one of the main preoccupations, self-creation, and identity formation in the context of migration. Abraham Verghese's *My Own Country* is a moving memoir of how human participation and engagement with a community make any place a home. This autobiography of a doctor specializing in infectious diseases, battling with AIDS patients in a small town in Tennessee, unfolds the satisfaction that many professional Indian Americans feel about their specialized work.

(B) Poetry: Poetry is not as popular as the novel or short-story but still, there is some major contribution by the Indian diaspora in Indo-American Literature. A. K. Ramanujan occupies an important place among Indo-American poets with a wish for connectedness and the absence of connection are the two facts of Ramanujan's poetic world. Meena Alexander's *Migrant Music* deals with belonging and home which are created by the excavation and re-composition of the past. Agha Shahid Ali is a Kashmiri exile. The themes of homeland, loss and exile are central to Ali's work. *The Half-Inch Himalayas*, a collection of poems depict in four sections; the very spaces opened up in exile. *A Nostalgist's map of America* is a volume that reveals alien spaces of hyphenated identity. Sharat Chandra's *April Nanjangud* views and remembers India through an expatriate's sensitive awareness. *Once or Twice* also contains some of his earliest passionate reflection of America's attitude towards its immigrants. *The family of Mirrors* is an extension of earlier immigrant themes. His *Immigrants of Loss* deals with universality of dislocation and sharply divisive nature of American social hierarchies. Vikram Seth, a well-known Indian expatriate novelist has also contributed to his collections of poems like the *Golden Gate* and *All You Who Sleep Tonight*. Poets like Vijay Seshadri, Ravi Shankar, Maua Khosala, Prageeta Sharma have also contributed their literary talent.

(C) Novel and Short-Story: Bharti Mukherjee is one of the prominent expatriate writers who reject the tradition-bound society of the East as she reaches out for the more empowering and individualistic society of the West. Her novel *The Tiger's Daughter* depicts a young women's unsettling return home to Calcutta after years abroad. The wife is about the desolation of an immigrant woman of middle-class Bengali origin devoid of her support structure in a foreign society. *Darkness* portrays the despair produced by the encounter with Canadian racism. Her *Middleman and Another Stories* reveals immigrant experience in US and Canada in ironic vein. Mukherjee's later novel *Jasmine* shows the possibilities of remaking oneself in the New World. Meena Alexander's writing shares her experiences of exile. Self-creation is a familiar theme of Meena Alexander's work. In *Manhattan Music* she portrays how New World Hybrid Dopti, a personification of the old world mythic Draupadi, saves Sandhya from an attempted suicide, as if to say that the challenge of exile is in survival and not in death. Vikram Seth shot to fame with *A Suitable Boy*, followed by the novel *Equal Music* and the non-fiction funnily memoir *Two Lives* written at the suggestion of his mother. Chitra Banerjee- Divakaruni's writing has come late in life and is directly linked with her migrant condition. Her *Mistress of Spices* is a novel that threads magic, memory, and immigrant life into a story of love and survival. Most of her fiction and poetry deals with the theme of gender and migration. Writers like Indira Ganesan, Amulya Maladi, Sanjay Kumar Nigam, Hema Nair, Vijay Lakshmi, etc. have also dealt with various aspects, dimensions of expatriate sensibility.

Second Generation Writers / ABCDs

American Born Confused Desi (ABCD) is a term that refers to people of Desi origin, living United States. 'Confused' refers to their confusion, regarding their identity having been born in America or lived there since childhood and been more closed to American culture than to their native culture. Their bonds in India are arbitrated by their parents. This second generation is more aware of struggles of people of color in the United States and attempts to review the inequalities of race and class. Another point that should be noted is that second generation women often find that they are subject to more paternal demands and limitations than their male counterparts. Dating often becomes an uncomfortable issue in the lives of teenage daughters. Conflicts faced within the home by the Indian American women are the subject of Sushama Bedi's novel *The Fire Sacrifice* and is a recurring theme of fiction and poetry in the recent anthologies. Jhumpa Lahiri represents the second generation diasporic 'desis' whose relationship with America as well as India is thoroughly different from that of the first generation. Lahiri portrays the situation of second generation expatriates who confidently asserts their ethnic identity in multiculturalists situation.

Indian Diaspora Fiction of Women Writers in America

The 'model minority' in America is the Indian diaspora community. They are working in IT, medicine, teaching and many other fields. This migration started in the last decade of 20th c., esp. to Canada. Sikh-Canadian community of Indian origin migrated over 100 years ago. Sikhs from Punjab landed in USA at Seattle and San Francisco in the late 19th c and early 20th c. After World War II the immigration policy was changed by America. So, the large waves of Indian immigrants started in 1960s and continued in 70s, 80s, 90s and 21st c. The most recent and the largest wave of immigration to date occurred in late 1990s and early 2000. People of Indian diaspora contribute to different fields of their adopted country and homeland. They are in every sphere of human life such as – commerce, industry, fine arts, science, technology, agriculture, politics and literature. There is a notable and sizable Indian diaspora literature in English. There are many fiction writers of Indian diaspora who are awarded different literary prizes. Bharati Mukherjee was awarded the National Book Critics Circle Award for fiction in 1988, Jhumpa Lahiri bagged the Pulitzer Prize in 2000, Kiran Desai won the Man Booker Prize of 2006 and NBCC. The other writers who have migrated to other parts of the world are awardees of Nobel Prize (V.S. Naipaul), Commonwealth Writers Prize (Shauna Singh Baldwin, 2000), the Best of the Booker Prize (Salman Rushdie, 2008), and Man Booker Prize (Arvind Adiga, 2008).

Fiction by Indian women writers constitutes a major segment of contemporary Indian diaspora literature. The women novelists of Indian diaspora in USA are Bharati Mukherjee, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, Anjana Appachana, Kiran Desai, Sujata Massey, Indira Ganeshan and Jhumpa Lahiri. These writers have made their homeland memorable and popular by writing about it. Through the movements of migration or immigration writers are turned diasporic. It depends upon individual's response to the adopted country and acceptance by the host. This acceptance also depends upon the value/importance of diasporic individual to the host society. At the initial stage they are 'outsiders' and face the question – who am I? The initial works of diaspora writers are autobiographic and focus on the issues like nostalgia, rootlessness, homelessness, dislocation and displacement. There are two moves of the diasporic writer-1) Temporal move- a look backward to the past and a look forward at the future. It produces nostalgia, themes of survival, and cultural assimilation. 2) The Spatial move - involves a deterritorialization and reterritorialization connected by journey. There is a loss of territory- geographical and cultural and gain of new territory. So, Diaspora fiction deals with space, move between 'home' and 'foreign' country, between 'familiar' and 'strange', 'the old' and 'the new'. The contrasts and

comparisons between these two spaces are frequent in the novels of diasporas, which are different from the regular Indian English fiction. It is the passage to India with its images and impressions of India of their past, and its memory of an imaginary homeland. They blend their India of memory with their present as the country of their birth and its ties do not allow them psychologically to acculturate and assimilate in immigrated country. They turn homesick, homeless, alienated, nostalgic, and rootless and hence they go on deriving sustenance from the country of their residence. The cross-cultural experiences, idea of homeland, harsh journeys taken by them, their unhousement and rehousment, dislocation, relocation, racial discrimination, language problem, and culture shock faced by them are the issues of the diaspora discourse. They engage in cultural transmission and double identification.

A great body of fiction by Indian diaspora writers has emerged in the post-colonial period on the world literary scene. It is a distinctive force which supports the Indian English fiction. The bicultural/ multicultural, 'border intellectuals' (qut in Edwards 87), diaspora writers are identified as either expatriate or immigrant or transnational writers. But there is a sharp line of difference among these categories. Hybridity and Multilingualism or bilingualism are the by-products of diaspora. Diaspora writer writes in the adopted language and shows his/her sense of 'belonging' and affection for the 'new home' and culture. It is the conscious decision to abandon the part of one's cultural heritage and tradition. In this process, he has to live with a divided self. Bharati Mukherjee, Jhumpa Lahiri, Anjana Appachana, Kiran Desai are educated, westernized elites who have lived in many countries, multicultural and multilingual. English is their second mother tongue.

The books of Indian Diaspora constitute a minority discourse, surfacing with urgency in the field of cultural studies and ethnic studies in the USA. The Indo-American community in the present is neglected by politicians and social historians but their forced invisibility is challenged by the Indian women diaspora writers, the products of two cultures, like Bharati Mukherjee, Chitra Banejee, Meena Alexander, Jhumpa Lahiri and Kiran Desai. 'visible' and 'invisible', uncertain of their place in mainstream and minority group, Indian diaspora fiction writers try to "move from margin to center ... to an empowerment of themselves," (qut in Deshmukh 133) and transform American cultural and literary scenario. In an interview with Russell Schoch Bharati asserted, "The original heirs of the American Dream encounter us on a daily basis: we are their doctors, their golf heroes, their film-makers, their spouses and their lovers. 'We' and 'they' have fused into 'us' . . . that's the two-way transformation" (Schoch).

The in-between space of Indian women writers of diaspora is positive and they have turned it to advantage. The women writers present the two colorful worlds/cultures. **Chitra Banerjee (b. 1956)**, Calcutta born, educated in India and America, like Bharati Mukherjee, lives in the USA since her early 20s. The author of the novels *The Mistress of Spices* (1997), *Sister of My Heart* (1999), *The Vine of Desire* (2002), *Queen of Dreams* (2004), and collections of short stories, *Arranged Marriage* (1995), and *The Unknown Errors of Our Lives* (2001), Chitra Banerjee founded the first South Asian Support Group for Women - 'Maitri', and helps the battered women in America. She heard the heart-rending stories of the women which inspired her to write the short stories in – *Arranged Marriage*. Her immigrant women characters are perceptively drawn. Both Bharati and Chitra are interested in the issues of women.

Bharati Kirchner, another Indian diaspora woman writer in America, by profession an engineer, tried with the idea of writing fiction and produced *Shiva Dancing* (1998), *Sharmila's Book* (1999), *Darjeeling* (2002), and *Pastries* (2003). With Nostalgia, she looks backward (past- India) and forward (USA-adopted country). Her Pendulum swings between the two worlds, but doesn't stabilize either in the land of her birth or adoption. The protagonist Meena Kumari in *Shiva Dancing*, a victim of child-marriage, and

kidnapping, turns a successful computer software designer in San Francisco. Yet she desires to reconnect with her past - family, village, her love, and India itself. The theme of nostalgia dominates here. Like Bharati Mukherjee and Chitra Banerjee she has exposed the new layer of woman's life. For her progress or fluidity is possible in USA, especially to the victims of Indian tradition.

India-born **Kiran Desai (b. 1971)**, a daughter of noted Indian diaspora English author, Anita Desai, is the author of two novels – *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard*, (1998) and *The Inheritance of Loss* (2006) and awardee of Man Booker Prize of 2006. Since her teens she has been living outside India. The setting of the *Inheritance of Loss* is the North-Eastern Himalayas and Kalimpong. (Nepal Gorkha Land). It was part of India, but now is independent. The hero of *The Inheritance of Loss* is caught into the dilemma of his being Indian and American. That is the common theme of all diasporic writing. He is an illegal Indian expatriate in USA, works as a cook in a restaurant and gets detached from his family. By listening the Indian words like 'Namaste', 'Kusum Auntie' he is delighted and links himself to India. Abused by the Americans, the homesick hero, alienated, rootless, and homeless in New York, returns to his homeland.

Jhumpa Lahiri (b. 1967), of the second generation of immigrants, born and brought up outside India is attracted by India and its culture. But like Bharati Mukherjee she considers herself an American. The Indian American experience is at the core of her first short story collection entitled – *Interpreter of Maladies* (1999). It received the Pulitzer Prize for fiction in 2000. Her first novel *The Namesake* (2003) made Mira Nair produce a film with the same title. The novel examines the nuances involved with being caught between two conflicting cultures with their highly distinct religious, social and ideological differences. The Bengali couple, Ashok and Ashima, from Calcutta migrates to USA where their two children - a son - Gogol-Nikhil and a daughter-Sonia are born. Gogol is named after his father's favourite author but hates his name Gogol and the inherited values. He sets his own path to find his identity which depends on other factors than his name. The two generations, disconnected and alienated, are described in *The Namesake*.

Anjana Appachana (b. 1956) lives in America, though born and brought up in India. She has obtained degrees from Delhi University and Jawaharlal Nehru University. She learnt Creative Writing from Pennsylvania State University. She feels "writer's life is comparatively more comfortable in America than in India". Her *Listening Now* (1997) is about the experience of the ordinary Indian woman, her dreams and passions frustrated and realized, through and in spite of the mundane repetitive and domestic pattern of life. The novelists of Indian origin Anjana Appachana, Bharati Kirchner, Jhumpa Lahiri, Kiran Desai are post- Rushdie/post-Bharati Mukherjee writers of Indian Diaspora. Anita Rao Badami (Canada), Sunetra Gupta (England), Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni (USA), Gita Mehta (India, UK, & USA), Meena Alexander (India, Sudan and USA) are the diaspora writers like Bharati Mukherjee but they differ in portraying the Indian women in their fiction. **Meena Alexander (b. 1951)** is a poet and scholar. She has produced two novels - *Nampally Road* (1991) and *Manhattam Music* (1997). **Anita Desai (b. 1937)** is a Bengali on her father's side and a German on her mother's. Born and raised in India she lived the major part of her life in India but now resides in USA. She has introduced the psychological novel in Indian English fiction. Her *Cry, the Peacock* (1963) is similar to Bharati Mukherjee's *Wife* (1975), in which protagonists (Maya and Dimple) murder their husbands. Yet there is a line of difference between them.

Bharati Mukherjee (b. 1940) is a pioneer of Indian English diaspora fiction. She has discussed the issues of expatriates, and immigrants and supplied solutions for their problems. She projects her own personal sense of dislocation and relocation in her novels. She maps the experience that is shared by many others and stands for the Indian immigrant community. Her fiction suggests her move is – 'temporal and spatial' (Nayar)looking

backward and forward and the deterritorialization and reterritorialization which is connected by travel. Each of her novels is set in India and USA, home and adopted country / new homeland. There is a contrast and comparison between the two spaces. Since the publication of *The Middleman and Other Stories* (1988) she pictures the lives of immigrants in USA with positive attitude. Her characters try to assimilate and belong to the adopted country. Hybridity and identity find expression with new orientation. She concentrates on dislocation and relocation of the immigrants. So in her *Jasmine* (1989) she writes there is “adventure, risk and transformation” (240). The processes of relocation, assimilation and transformation are the outstanding issues for her. Yet she returns and tries to search for the roots in her *Desirable Daughters* (2002) and *The Tree Bride* (2004). Since *The Holder of the world* (1993) it seems that national borders are blurred and have vanished. Might be it is the part of the process of globalization, globalized India, and transnationalism.

Conclusion

Diaspora, is therefore, a scattering of the seed in the wind, the fruits of which are a new creation and a fight to survive. Every diasporic movement holds a historical significance, as it carries within itself the kernel of the nations’s history. Diaspora is a journey towards self-realization, self-recognition, self-knowledge and self-definition. There is an element of creativity present in the diasporic writings and this creation stands as a compensation for the many losses suffered. All cultures are contaminated, miscegenated with and by the cultures they come in contact with. Out of this double or split consciousness, duality and hybridity are born. Diaspora writing, in its theory and practice, is the work of exiles / expatriates / immigrants who have experienced unsettlement at all levels. Theorists like Homi Bhabha, Stuart Hall, Edward Said, Franz Fanon, Freud, Erikson, Du Bois, Gilroy, Appadurai and writers like V. S. Naipaul, Salman Rushdie, F. Dhondy, R. Mistry, Kamala Markandaya, Bharati Mukherjee, Bapsi Sidhawa, Chitra Banerjee, Jhumpa Lahiri, K. Desai, et.al. were either exiles or expatriates or immigrants by force or choice. It is appropriate to say that diasporic Indian English fiction is an important genre depicting the experiences and mentalities of Indian diaspora in a broad sense. It makes space for the discussions about Indian immigrants and offers emotional security to that particular diaspora. Being the representatives of the Indian diaspora, diasporic female Indian writers are successful in addressing the readers of Indian English literature in a sensitive, unpretentious style while carrying a sense of the universal experience of immigration. Furthermore, diasporic Indian English fiction keeps their writers linked with India and the entire world.

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