CHAPTER - I

INTRODUCTION

I.I: Introduction:

In the era of science and technology, globalization being the most crucial, critical and debatable issue, provides boost to mass migration across the globe. Since the dawn of civilization man has been migrating from place to place willingly, partially forcefully or forcefully. Globalization causes international migration such as ‘labour migration,’ ‘family migration’ and ‘brain-drain migration’ etc. Various cross-cultural migrations have been continued for centuries but tremendously increased during the last few decades. No doubt earlier migrations were product of forced or partially forced migration.

In the present days, the age of technology brings together the people from different countries. Everyone wants to move out of his or her native soil in search of better fortune, education, services, trade and commerce, economic benefits, better positions and perks. As a result of migration we have witnessed fundamental problems that immigrants face in alien country. Cross-cultural migration gives birth to the different problems like cultural conflict, crisis for identity, displacement, exile and expatriations etc. Migrated people belong to the particular cultural background and tried in various ways to relate to their homeland.

The literature produced by migrant or Diasporic writers is bound to express agony and painful experiences they encounter in alien land. It is a result of emergence of problems and a type of self analysis in order to survive in the Global world village. The issues like cross-cultural conflict, crisis for identity, sense of loss, alienation, homelessness etc. are discussed in various forms of literature by the Sri Lankan diasporic writers such as Gertrude De Silva, Nira Wikramasinghe, Romesh Gunesekera, V.V Ganeshnathan, Carl, Muller, Shyam Selvadurai, Yasmine Goneratne, Michelle De Kretser, Ru Freeman etc. to name a few. Michael Ondaatje’s writing appeals to wider international and globalised audiences. Michael Ondaatje is torn between his commitment to host culture and the yearning for the native culture. Living in Canada his intense desire to have his own identity is the cause behind writing novels. Ondaatje’s novels reflect the issue of ‘cultural conflict’ and ‘identity crisis’ which is core of the study. The present thesis entitled as, “CULTURAL
CONFLICT AND CRISIS FOR IDENTITY IN MICHAEL ONDAATJE’S FICTION” sheds light on the issues related to cultural conflict and crisis for identity with special reference to selected novels of Michael Ondaatje. It attempts to interpret the novels from the cross-cultural point of view and traces the diasporic elements in the novels such as: *Coming through Slaughter* (1976), *In the Skin of a Lion* (1987), *The English Patient* (1992), *Anil’s Ghost* (2000), *Divisadero* (2007) and *The Cat’s Table* (2011) etc. The present research work is a modest attempt to see how far Michael Ondaatje is successful in catching the above themes in his novels.

I.II: Justification:

Due to the advancement in Information Technology, it is observed that rate of immigration is increasing day by day. Immigrants are the advertent or inadvertent carriers of their own cultures, across the cultural and geographical divides. On the host land they suffer various problems like exile, dislocation, cultural alienation etc.

Michael Ondaatje is a Sri Lankan born first rank Canadian writer having Sri Lankan Burgher background who has created unique place among internationally acclaimed poets and novelists. He is well known for handling the themes like expatriation, displacement, homelessness, cultural clashes, issues of identity crisis. Some research work is being done on Michael Ondaatje’s work.

However, very less attention is given on the issues related to identity crisis and cultural conflict as far as Ondaatje’s fictions are considered. Hence the present research work is undertaken. It is the need of a time to explore the unexplored author like Ondaatje and to focus the significant aspects of his fictional work which appeal to wider international and globalised audiences. The present study will also be helpful to all immigrants who are migrating from place to place and facing the problems like identity crisis and cultural clashes. Almost all immigrants must be acquainted with the problems emerging due to cross cultural migration.

I.III: Aims and Objectives:

The present research work is intended to carry out with specific aims and objectives as given and listed below:

1. To study meanings of the terms like migration, immigration, diaspora, culture, cultural conflicts, identity crisis, displacement, rootlessness etc.
2. To study Sri Lankan- Canadian literature with special attention on cultural conflicts and identity crisis.
3. To trace cultural conflict in Michael Ondaatje’s fiction.
5. To study Ondaatje’s world view.
6. To interpret the novels from cross-cultural point of view.
7. To interpret the significance of Michael Ondaatje’s work.

I.IV: The Scope and Limitations:

• The present research has its own limitations too. It is based only on the selected novels by the Sri Lankan born Canadian diasporic writer Michael Ondaatje.

• The present work is confined to the printed and online works of Michael Ondaatje which focus on Ondaatje’s as a diasporic writer who tries to portray individuals and communities attachment to the centrifugal homeland. This attachment is to traditions, customs, values, religions and languages of the ancestral home.

• The selected text may be studied from political, geographical, psychological, sociological, philosophical, economical, feministic, cultural point of view but only the issues related to cross-cultural clashes and the crisis for identity are determined to study.

I.V: Review of Literature:

No doubt research has been done on Michael Ondaatje’s novels. Number of articles are written and published in various journals. He is also criticized by the number of critics for his oeuvre and his interest in national boundaries and identities in the context of cultural studies and issue related to identity.

Victoria Cook in an article, “Exploring Transnational Identities in Ondaatje’s *Anil’s Ghost,*” addresses issue of identity, paying particular attention to the way in which Ondaatje examines issues of identity that negotiates cultural and national boundaries and encompasses both central and marginal position. Glen Lowry in his “The Representation of ‘Race’ in Ondaatje’s *In the Skin of a Lion*” discusses the complex issue of race and cultural politics of reading and construction of whiteness.

Ondaatje always shows deep interest in the historical legendary figures as well as histories. Ajay Heble in “Michael Ondaatje and the Problem of History” observes, “Ondaatje has repeatedly been engaged in an attempt to incorporate marginal figures out of the historical past into a non-historical genre.” (Heble Ajay, 97)

Linda Hutcheon in “*Running in the Family:* The postmodernist Challenge” remarks, Ondaatje as, “Of all the Canadian poets who have turned to fiction in the last few decades (Cohen, Atwood, Kogawa, Musgrave and so on) Ondaatje is the one who is most aware of generic borders, and how they can be transgressed. Other writers have played with the borders between the novel and the short story (Alice Munro, Ray Smith) and even poetry and fictional prose (Derk Wynand, Leonardo Cohen), but Ondaatje takes such play one step further: beyond the boundaries of what we conventionally accept as ‘literary’ genre and into history and biography.” (Hutcheon, 32)

Some of the critics find Ondaatje in weak spot in the context of his south Asian connection. Arun Mukherjee criticizes Ondaatje for his travel memoir *Running in the Family* “for lack of cultural baggage brought with him when he came to Canada” And for the same work she criticizes Ondaatje as, “Ondaatje’s success has been largely through a sacrifice of his regionality, his past and most importantly, his experiences of otherness in Canada.” (Mukherjee, 49) Again Ondaatje is criticized by Mukherjee in her article “The Poetry of Michael Ondaatje and Cyril Dabydeen: Two Responses for Otherness,” she condemns Ondaatje for his total forgetfulness of otherness.

Winfried Siemerling in his “Oral History and the Writing of the Other in Ondaatje’s *In the Skin of Lion,*” argues that the recreation of oral narratives *In the Skin of a Lion* imagines the conveyance of oral histories of immigrant experiences obscured by historiography. Sandeep Sanghera in her, “Touching the language of citizenship in Ondaatje’s *Anil’s Ghost,*” discusses *Anil’s Ghost* as a novel about postmodern identity and it examines the question of foreignness. Ajay Heble in the
“Rumors of the Topography in cultural politics of Ondaatje’s *Running in the Family,*” underlines Ondaatje’s achievement and his relationship with Sri Lankan culture.

Susan Spearey in “Mapping and Masking: The Migrant Experience in Michael Ondaatje’s *In the Skin of Lion*” observes, “by alluding to and reappropriating received stories, traditions and generic conventions, Ondaatje stakes his claim to a cross-cultural inheritance, and pieces together an alternative literary tradition that answers to his most pressing concerns as a migrant writer. Similarly he shapes connections with old worlds and new, situating himself in relation to their various geographies and histories.” (Spearey, 48) Douglas Barbour in his review of Ondaatje’s poetry collection, *The Dainty Monster* has commented on Ondaatje’s use of “obsessively natural images.” (Barbour Douglas, 86)

Taking in to the consideration the above review it is clear that some research work is done on Michael Ondaatje’s work and no one has worked on all six novels from the perspective of culture and identity.

**I:VI: Chapter Scheme:**

For the purpose of convenience of the study, the present research work is divided into five chapters.

The first chapter is introductory in nature. It deals with the concept of migration, immigration, Diaspora, cultural clash, loneliness, exile, expatriation, identity crisis and various types of identities. It includes review and survey of Sri Lankan English fiction. It also takes a through account of Jewish Diaspora, Sri Lankan Diaspora, the survey of Sri Lankan English Fiction and a brief account of writers of Sri Lankan Diaspora. This chapter also focuses on the concept of culture, aspects of the Sri Lankan and the Canadian culture, the issue of cultural conflict and crisis for identity are discussed. Various types of identities are discussed in brief.

The second chapter deals with the biographical sketches of Michael Ondaatje not as an individual but as an author who is one of the few widely acclaimed Diasporic writers. This chapter also focuses on Michael Ondaatje’s attitude towards his homeland and adopted home. It focuses on how social, political, literal and cultural factors responsible for Ondaatje’s development as an author. It also describes development of an author with respect to culture and identity issue. It contains how Ondaatje’s sense of cosmopolitan makes him global Canadian author.
The third chapter mainly focuses on the issue of cultural clashes faced by Ondaatje’s protagonists in his selected work. The fourth chapter focuses on the problem of identity crisis faced by the protagonists in his selected work. The fifth chapter deals with the brief survey of entire process and the general summary of the research experiences. The present research focuses on the findings of the research. In short this chapter is the summing up of the research process.

I.VII: Definitions:

Cultural Conflict:

“Cultural conflict is the processes and the resulting guilt of fleeing a restrictive background of tradition.” (Sophia, 296)

Identity crisis:

“Identity Crisis refers to the crisis for the search of identity resulting from one’s landing in alien culture and trying to adopt the host culture in vain.”

The term cultural Conflict, refers to the conflict arising due to the meeting of two alien cultures. But cultural conflict and identity crisis are the results of migration and immigration. It is necessary to understand the meaning of the terms migration, immigration which are the major cause of cultural conflict and crisis for identity.

In order to understand the vastness and the concepts regarding the subject of diaspora, one should know the subtle changes witnessed by the last two or three decades in the diasporic studies. These changes are from expatriate to diaspora and from the politics of exile to hyphenated identities and translated men. It is necessary to comprehend the meaning of the terms migration, immigration, exile and expatriation etc.

I.VIII: Migration:

Migration is the movement of people from one place to another for the permanent or temporary settlement across the boundary in the new location. Migration derived its name from the Latin word ‘migare’ means to change one’s residence. Migration has been a significant part of history of South Asia since the earliest period. Migration is defined in an article, “Cultural Implications of Migration,” as, “The movement of the people over considerable distance leaving their former homes for a more or less permanent new domicile implying thereby movement of human beings, displacement from settled livings, and movement to a sufficient
Globalization brings together the people of different communities for various reasons. In short globalization boosts to improve and evaluate the structure of cultures. As a result of the international migration there is a tremendous increase in the cross cultural interaction among these migrants. Pradeep Chauhan in introduction to his book *Globalization and Indian Economy* writes about globalization in culture as:

> Advocates of globalization insist that free trade and free market don’t weaken or spoil other cultures, they improve them. Proponents explains that trade cultivates wealth. Wealth frees the world’s poorest people from the daily struggle for survival, and allows them to embrace, celebrate and share the art, music, craft and literature that might otherwise have been sacrificed to poverty.

(Chauhan, 3-4)

The term migrants call it diasporas, speaks about those who have been displaced from their place and have been called expatriates, exiles, “skilled cultural navigators” or in Ondaatje’s term “international bastards” (Ondaatje, 176), and so on. The cross cultural migration has been continued for centuries across the geographical divides either willingly or forcefully. For Salman Rushdie migration is a metaphor. He asserts:

> But I want to go further than such literalistic discussion; because migration also offers us one of the richest metaphors of our age. The very word metaphor with its roots in Greek words of bearing across described a sort of migration, the migration of ideas into images. Migrants-born across humans-are metaphorical beings in their very essence, and migration, seen as a metaphor, is everywhere around us.

(Rushdie, 9-10)

Sri Lankan immigrants across the globe represent agony and painful experiences in the host land in the process of migration. Let’s study the terms like immigration, expatriation, exile, displacement etc.
I.IX: Immigration:

Immigration is the complex act that takes place either by force or by choice. When people cross the national borders during their migration they are called migrants or immigrants. It is the movement of people from their homeland to destination country. The term ‘expatriates’ and ‘immigrants’ are used as synonyms now a days. However it is important to make clear the both terms. Bharati Mukherjee draws line between immigrant and expatriates:

*In my fiction, and in my Canadian experience, ‘immigrants’ were lost souls, put upon pathetic. Expatriates, on the other hand, knew too well who and what they were, and what foul fate had befallen them.*

(Jodha Avinash, 2)

The term expatriation focuses on the native land that has been left behind, while immigration focuses on the country which one has entered as an immigrant. Critics consider the term ‘exile,’ ‘immigrant,’ and ‘expatriate ’as the synonym terms and to signify exclusive states of being. Its prefix invokes the states of exclusion. However, the excluding “e” has its opposite meaning as in, immigrant or inclusion. In other words the expatriate lives on his ‘ex’ status while the immigrant celebrates his present in the host land. Expatriate is caught between two languages and two culture negotiates a new literacy space, and as a member of a minority group experiences doubleness. Their condition is two- fold, shaped by here and there, or acculturation and displacement. A kind of tension is felt by immigrant. Critic such as Linda Hutcheon and Marion Richmond refer this condition as:

*... kind of tension felt by any immigrant to any place. Doubleness...is the essence of immigrant experience. Caught between two worlds, the immigrant negotiates a new social space; caught between two cultures and often languages, the writer negotiates a new literary space.*

(Hutcheon and Richmond, 9)

The condition of ‘doubleness’ makes immigrant to face the problem of ethnic identity which is always fractured and fragmented and always remain in frustration and in confusion.

However, the term immigrant designates a location, a movement or forward looking attitude. Immigrants express their experiences which are faced by them
during their migration as a diaspora. The act of writing is the best medium to express them, and to retain their identity which is lost during the migration. Memory helps to reconstruct and recreate the past.

Immigrants live a life of cultural estrangement away from their ‘true ideal’ home, the painful perceptual experiences of their own displacement, rootlessness and the feeling like an outsider is emphasized. “These writings in dislocated circumstances are often termed as exile literature.” (Saha Amit 186) Etymologically ‘exile’ comes from the root “salire” to leap, thus; ‘ex-silare’- to leap out. Being an exile is ‘to leap out’. This leaping out signifies a forced physical move out of one’s immediate geo-political and socio-cultural space.

Edward Said in an essay *The Mind of Winter* defines exile as “the unhealable rift forced between the self and its true home.” (Said 1984, 49) Again, Said in his essay *Reflection on Exile* comments on exile as:

*The condition of an exile and his experience is something very terrible, and the agony that he faces can’t be surmounted. The exile faces a rift at various levels, that is between self and home, between self and host country and the like. No doubt, there are movements of triumph and romance, heroism and achievements in his life. However, the loss of living behind one’s homeland is so great, that it undermines all gains.*

(Said, 173)

An immigrant in exile condition feels personal as well as social separation with his native place, between him and his true home. In Edward Said’s word the term, exile is, “Exile as being located between cultures and nations, as belonging to ‘both world’ without being completely of either one or the other.” (Said, xxx) Annie John in her volume *In Search of Greener Pasture* aptly comments:

*The immigrants, expatriates or exiles have been wrenched up and thrown away from their roots. The tensions that they face are multidimensional. The dislocation that they counter is on various levels- physical, social, cultural, and even psychical.*

(John Annie, 34)

An immigrant automatically becomes displaced person. He has torn between roots and uprootedness between flux of two opposing cultures and contrasting worlds.
Diasporic writer tries to negotiate a new space for himself. So it is necessary to study the meaning and the history of the term diaspora.

I.X: Diaspora:

Diaspora, as pointed out by various writers, is originally used for the Jews dispersal after the Babylonian captivity and with the passage of time for the Jews living outside Israel. The act of migration originated when Romans drove Jews away from their homes. In order to understand the emerging pattern of various international migrations, the migration scholars employ gardening terms like ‘uprooting’, ‘scattering’, ‘transplanting’ and ‘hybridity’ as a synonym for the term migration.

The concept of diaspora has encouraged new ideas and academic ventures in the area of migration, cultural and identity studies. The popularity of the term itself is related to the increasing significance of representations of ‘identity’ and ‘culture’ in international politics. However researcher wishes to emphasize on various kinds of migration in the context of identity and cultural study.

The Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary defines the term diaspora as “the movement of the Jewish people away from their own country to live and work in other countries.” Diaspora traditionally refers to a very specific situation, the exile of the Jew from the Holy Land and their dispersal throughout the globe. The Britannica Encyclopedia explains the term ‘diaspora’ as, “The dispersal of Jews among the Gentiles after the Babylonian exile (586 BC); or the aggregate of the Jews outside Palestine or present day Israel.” (Britannica Encyclopedia, vol.3) It is also defined as, “The forced exiles of the Jewish people, from Palestine, by the Babylonians in the sixth centuries BC and by the Roman Empire in the middle of the second century CE” (www.religioustolerance.org/gl_d.htm). William Safran’s definition of the term ‘Diaspora’ in his seminal essay on Diaspora, diasporic people are those who live “outside the homeland” and who are said to “retain a collective memory, vision or myth about their original homeland.” (Safran, 83)

From the above definitions it is clear that the scattering of the Jewish community and the term ‘diaspora’ perceives a special relationship between the native land of Israel and the Jew people along with the religious, philosophical, political, and eschatological connotations and foregrounds migration both by choice and by compulsion.
Excluding some earlier casual references, during 1960s and 1970s the classical meaning of the diaspora is extended to more common description of the dispersion of Africans, Armenians and the Irish. Like Jews, these people consider their scattering also arise from destructive events and from the traumatic historical experiences of victimhood at the hands of the cruel oppressor.

1980s onwards the term diaspora is mounted as ‘a metaphoric designation’ in order to describe different categories of people as expatriate, political refugees, alien residents, immigrants and ethnic and racial minorities. From the mid 1990s the social constructionist critiques have explored the new ways of studying the concept of diaspora by decomposing the former diasporic idea of ‘homeland’ and ethnic or religious community. In the postmodern world it is argued that the diasporic identities have been deterritorialized and constructed and deconstructed in a flexible and situational way.

By the turn of the 21st century the idea of home and homeland remains powerful. The phase of the assimilation is marked by the modified reassertation of the diasporic idea. Now a day with the emergence of globalization, the notion of diaspora is useful in understanding issues of migrants and their relationship between motherland and host communities.

Kachig Tololian in his editorial preface to the foundation issue of the journal Diaspora highlights, “diaspora are the exemplary communities of the transnational movement which interrogate the privileged homogeneity of the nation /state.” (Tololian, 5) In recent years the term ‘diaspora’ does more frequently used to characterize people exist away from their homelands. Kachig Tololian asserts:

…the term that once described Jewish, Greek and Armenian dispersion now shares meaning with a larger semantic domain that includes words like immigrants, expatriate, refugee, guest-worker, exile community, overseas community and ethnic community.

(Tololian, 4)

Tololian explains the characteristics of diaspora are:

…a culture and a collective identity that preserves elements of the homelands, religious, social and cultural practice and rhetoric of restoration and return or an organized
commitment to maintain relation with kin communities with the homeland.

(www.jstor.org/stable 2122404)

Robin Cohen in his Book *Global Diaspora* has specified some common features of Diaspora as:

> Dispersal from an original homeland, often traumatically, to two or more foreign regions; Alternatively or additionally, the expansion from a homeland in search of work, in pursuit of trade or to further colonial ambitions; A collective memory and myth about the homeland, including its location, history, suffering and achievements; An idealization of the real or imagined ancestral home and a collective commitment to its maintenance, restoration, safety and prosperity, even to its creation; The frequent development of a return movement to the homeland that gains collective approbation even if many in the group are satisfied with only a vicarious relationship or intermittent visits to the homeland; A strong ethnic group consciousness sustained over a long time based on a sense of distinctiveness, a common history, the transmission of common cultural and religious heritage and the belief in a common fate; a troubled relationship with host societies, suggesting a lack of acceptance or the possibility that another calamity might befall the group; a sense of empathy and co-responsibility with co-ethnic members in other countries of settlement even where home has become more vestigial; the possibility of a distinctive creative, enriching life in the host countries with a tolerance for pluralism.

(Cohen, 17)

In this context, the term diaspora refers to a situation in which a number of communities are sharing a common national, religious ethnic identity exist apart from a common homeland. The term also implies that over time, the communities maintain their distinctive identity, despite their existence as a distinct minority living in a host society. At the outset it is necessary to study the Jewish Diaspora.
I.XI: Jewish Diaspora:

Jewish diaspora is considered as a non-normative starting point for a discourse that is travelling in new global condition. The crushing of the revolt of the Judeans against the Romans and the destruction of second temple by the Roman general Titus in 70 A.D mark the catastrophic tradition. But long before it, the destruction of Jerusalem and razing of the walls of its Temple in 586 BC created the central folk memory of the pessimistic victim diaspora tradition –experiencing enslavement exile and displacement.

Between the year 597-586 BC Babylonian kings Nebuchadnezzar mercilessly expelled the Judeans to the different parts of Babylonian. Cyrus was the Persian king who conquered Babylonian and permitted and encouraged Judeans to return to their homeland. But majority of them preferred not to return to their homeland. Beyond the Babylon there were flourishing Jewish communities all over the Hellenic world. Jewish community scattered around the Gracio-Roman world and the Hebrew history became the history of diaspora.

Jewish, Irish, Palestinian, African and Armenian Diasporas are labeled as victim diaspora. Africans abroad have felt affinity with Jewish diaspora. The expressions black diaspora or African diaspora are used from mid-1950s or 1960s. Servitude, forced migration, exile and the development of a return movement are some obvious parallels between Jewish and African historical experiences.

Now a day the term diaspora is widely applied and the meaning of the term changes and expanded according to time. Majority of Sri Lankan English writers left Sri Lanka for various reasons. They have made an effort to accomplish them and sought recognition as diasporic Sri Lankan writers. The Sri Lankan diaspora is result of movement of different groups moved at different times due to the particular situations in different parts of the world.

I.XII: The Sri Lankan Diaspora:

Sri Lankan diaspora are migrants from Sri Lanka who have moved to different parts of the world. It is a product of several journeys. It starts before the colonial rule in Sri Lanka. Buddhist monks have crossed the island for religious purpose. *The Encyclopedia of the Sri Lankan Diaspora* explains the process of migration as:

*Long before the advent of colonial rule, Buddhist monks and nuns who crossed the Bay of Bengal influenced religious*
developments in Southeast Asia. In the 19th and early 20th centuries, large numbers of educated Sri Lankans personnel were procured to develop the frontiers of the British Empire. While the flow of professionals continued well after Sri Lankan independence, new movements from the island emerged in the late 20th and early 21st centuries-of refugees escaping the civil war and of semi-skilled and unskilled labourers seeking economic opportunities abroad.

(Reeves Peter, 16)

During the colonial rule Britishers required administrative personnel to serve in their colonies. Sri Lankan Tamils take advantage of this golden opportunity. The majority of Sri Lankans abroad are Sri Lankan Tamils followed by the Sinhalese. During the British colonial period, some of the Sri Lankan Tamils from the Jaffna Peninsula migrated to India for education, employment and business purpose and settle down in India. Peter Reeves quotes Suryanarayan, V. and V. Sudarsen who speak about the spread of Sri Lankan Tamil Diaspora and their relationship with their original homeland as:

However, if one analysis the spread of the Sri Lankan Tamils, there were several ‘pull’ and ‘push’ factors. An even more relevant characteristic that differentiates is the fact that those who have settled in the developed world and have acquired citizenship in these host countries are unlikely to return to Sri Lanka on a permanent basis.

(Reeves Peter, 72)

The global Sri Lankan diaspora communities represent the ‘Sinhala diaspora,’ the ‘Tamil diaspora,’ and the ‘Burgher diaspora’ or the ‘Moor diaspora.’ Like other diaspora Sri Lankan diaspora is also scattered or dispersed across the globe with concentration and it numbers about three million world-wide. The Sri Lankan diaspora communities are now settled in South Africa, United Kingdom, Canada, India, Europe, Australia, USA, Malaysia, Singapore etc. The migration of Sri Lankan Tamils started in fifth century. Tamil diaspora prefers to be labeled as “Elean” or “Eezham,” “it is by this term that the earliest known ‘Tamil emigrants’ community identified itself and continues to identify itself to this day as the community of Eezhavar in south India.” (Luxshi Vimalarajah and R. Cheran, 13)
During British colonial period, European colonial powers intentionally have combined various regions without paying any attention towards the issues like diversity, differences, wishes and political will of the minority community. The impact of colonialism resulted in migration of Tamils in Tamil Nadu in Colonial India. British colonial government decided to employ local people for mid-level state sector occupations, based on the Colebrook recommendations of 1833. “Tamils in Jaffna also gained greater competency in English than other ethnic groups.” (Sabaratnam, 109) Because of the knowledge of English many Tamils were appointed to administrative positions in both Sinhalese and Tamil areas. “With the expansion of the British Empire, the British authorities’ required administrative personnel to serve in their far-flung colonies and the Sri Lankan Tamils availed themselves of this golden opportunity.” (Reeves Peter, 73) These selections led Sinhala to believe that British favoured Tamils.

Numbers of Tamils migrated to Colombo and on the various places on the island as well as places like United Kingdom where the economy is fascinating one. Fascinating economy is not only the reason for Tamils to migrate but the strength of education makes them able to migrate. Luxshi Vimalarajah and R. Cheran quotes Nithiyanandam who rightly identifies reasons of Tamil migration:

…”Political failure of [colonialism] in the form of absence of a suitable macroeconomic policy incorporating infrastructural investments and proper resource utilization. This shortcoming had however been fully disguised by the prolonged timeframe of colonial rule and the indirect nature of its manifestation. A closer scrutiny of the relevant facts will not fail to disclose that the internal migration of the Tamils had really been an upshot of this policy failure.

(qtd. in Luxshi Vimalarajah and R. Cheran 13)

Sri Lankan Tamils migrants migrated to Malaysia were very few in number, primarily to work in British owned rubber plantation. From 1860 onwards large numbers of immigrants are migrated to Malaysia. The Encyclopedia of Sri Lankan Diaspora gives the correct account of Sri Lankan migration to Malaysia as:

*The British took over the administration of Ceylon from the Dutch in 1795 and by the late 19th century a substantial number of children in the Jaffna peninsula had obtained an*
English education. This paved the way for their employment in the colonial civil service in various parts of the British Empire. Along with the Jaffna Tamils, Burghers and other Ceylonese communities also obtained English education and many sought employment in the British civil services abroad. English education was thus crucial in explaining the large-scale migration of the Ceylonese to Malaya.

(Reeves Peter, 78)

In 1948 Sri Lanka gained independence from British. Many people of Sri Lankan Burgher origin migrated to Australia and New Zealand. There was no significant migration from Sri Lanka before 1948. After the independence Sinhalese assert power of their majority. As a result, many Burgher or English speakers of Sri Lankan – European descent and Tamil begin to migrate to other countries. However, these migrants are highly skilled professionals including doctors, accountants, engineers and university lecturers who have left for foreign employment. In the late 19th century easygoing development in the English education in Singapore resulted as shortage of skilled staff for the further development. Ceylonese migrated to Singapore for the development of colonial bureaucracy. *The Encyclopedia of Sri Lankan Diaspora* describes various reasons for Ceylonese migration to Singapore as:

*The transfer of the straits settlement from British India to the Crown in 1867 was crucial in encouraging Ceylonese immigration to Singapore. Also important was the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 and the British expansion in Malayan Peninsular following the Pangkor Treaty in 1874. Collectively, these events laid the foundations for rapid socioeconomic change in the region, which was paralleled by an expansion of the colonial bureaucracy.*

(Reeves Peter, 86)

Independence from Great Britain in 1948 initiated violent conflict between the Tamil minority and the Sinhalese majority over the formation of constitution. Later this conflict is flared into riots when the Sri Lankan government passed the “Sinhala Only Act,” in 1956, which made Sinhala the official language of Sri Lanka. In 1972 Republican constitution was implemented which gave rise to the emergence of the Tamil militancy. The civil war has been officially started in 1983. A group called as Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam also known as LTTE or Tamil Tigers have started
conflicts with the Sri Lankan government. Tamil Tigers have demanded a separate Tamil state in the predominately Tamil Northeast section of Sri Lanka. Tamil Tigers have killed thirteen soldiers and communal riots between Tamil and Sinhala instigate in July 23, 1983, burning Tamil homes and killing them.

As a result, thousands of Tamils were killed. Many of the Tamils were migrated forcefully in Canada, India and Western Europe. The rise of communal riots forced Sri Lankan Tamils to migrate. The United States today become a home to growing population of Sri Lankans communities. Communal riots at home causes many Sri Lankan Tamils to seek political asylum or refugee in Europe. The Encyclopedia of the Sri Lankan Diaspora gives an account of Sri Lankan diaspora community in the United States:

Over the past decade, an average of 1300 refugees per year (mostly Tamils) have been granted asylum in the United States...Various estimates suggest that roughly 35 to 40 percent of the Sri Lankan American diaspora today is of Tamil origin, with the remainder largely being Sinhalese. Of the two groups, the former tends to hold a higher profile both within and outside of the United States for their political activism.

(Reeves Peter, 101)

After the oil boom of 1970 in oil exporting countries and due to oil price hikes, there was labour shortage in these countries. It has opened up job opportunities for many Sri Lankans in the Arab world. As petroleum products flowed out of the Gulf, as a result, millions of guest workers are needed for the development and modernization of the Gulf. The male contribution to foreign employment has been rising persistently, although it has been lower than the female departures.

Poor working condition, lower wages and other incentives have encouraged the educated people to move to other parts of the world in search of greener pastures. According to Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment Migration Profile of Sri Lanka, “it is estimated that currently Sri Lankan migrant population working overseas numbers at around 1.7 million.” (Migration Profile of Sri Lanka, 13) Most of these sojourners are not willing to settle permanently in the Gulf countries.

Since 1983 event of communal riot have had a huge impact on conflict-induced migration from Sri Lanka. Thousands of Tamils from Sri Lanka and guest
workers lodged asylum or refugee status in thirty one European countries during 1980 to 2007. Canada, Germany, UK, Switzerland and France are the major destinations for Sri Lankan diaspora.

Sri Lankan emigration to Canada is the output of changes in the Canadian migration policies and the economic condition of independent Sri Lanka. The Encyclopedia of Sri Lankan Diaspora gives the detailed account of Sri Lankan emigration to Canada as:

*Sri Lankan emigration to Canada initially began as a trickle.*

The only available data in Canada showed that there were only 27 Sri Lankan Burghers and Sinhalese prior to 1955...from the second half of the 1960s, key reforms in Canadian migration policies encouraged the movement of Sri Lankans to Canada. During Trudeau’s tenure as Prime Minister, the ‘White Paper on Immigration’ (1966) included non–discriminatory criteria and a point for entry. This resulted in the number of immigrants from Sri Lanka increasing substantially from 1967.

(Reeves Peter, 109-110)

The second largest presence in America’s New York City is one of the largest Sri Lankan communities outside of the country of Sri Lanka itself. Migration Profile of Sri Lanka by the Ministry of Foreign Employment Promotion and Welfare has published data about Sri Lankan diaspora as:

*The diaspora was estimate at one million as of 2010, one – quarter of all Sri Lankan Tamils with significant diaspora population in Canada. (200000-300000), UK (180000), Germany (60000), France (40000-50000) Switzerland (47000) and Australia (40000).*

(Migration Profile, 29)

In spite of some interference Sri Lankan diaspora holds an open competition with communities larger than them. As minorities in all the countries have settled in, and achieved and contributed out of proportion to their numbers. They have made their mark especially in medicine, the judiciary, science and engineering academia and educationists, in politics and public administration, in leadership of various religious faiths and in literature, culture and arts.
Sri Lankan writing in English is an act of ripeness and deep feelings; however it remains little ignored area of study. Some of the writers of Sri Lankan diaspora have touched the horizons of creativity. The present study specially considers the literature written in English by the Sri Lankan diasporic writers. Thus it is necessary to take a brief survey of Sri Lankan writing in English.

I.XIII: A Survey of Sri Lankan Writing in English:

The history of Sri Lankan English Literature needs to be focused with details. Sri Lankan writing in English is originated much earlier; one may trace its roots into long back before Sri Lanka has gained independence from Britain. But it is true that only after the independence the literature of significance is written. Literature written before the independence was not very admirable or rewarding one. It is produced in the form of books and in newspapers and journals also. The Sri Lankan art council has attempted to encourage Sri Lankan writers to write in English by offering prizes for writing in different genre. Sri Lankan English literature refers to the mass of literature written in English by the writers in Sri Lanka.

According to D.C.R.A. Goonetilleke the history of Sri Lankan English Literature can be studied in three period- the literature till 1948, literature from 1948 to 1971(1956 as important), and from 1971 to present. During the colonial period, Sri Lankan writing in English shows occasionally inspiring creativity in English. The Sri Lankan English novel begins with the publication of The Dice of the Gods in 1917 by Lucian de Zilwa. A Chandala Woman is followed in 1919 by the same author. Rosalind Mendis the first Sri Lankan woman writer published The Tragedy of a Mystery: A Ceylon Story in 1928. Other notable productions of the time are SJK Crowther’s The Knight Errant (1928) and H.E.Weerasooriya’s The Trousered Harijan. (1946) But all these books do not pass on any stimulus to write.

The flowering growth of Sri Lankan writing in English is influenced by the freedom struggle in India. Indian great poets like Rabindranath Tagore and Sarojini Naidu have great impact over Sri Lankan English writing. Writer like Ediriwira Sarachchandra (1914-1996) has written in Sinhala as well as in English and also influenced by Tagore and his mysticism of Gitanjali. D.C.R.A. Goonetilleke rightly observes:

In the 1930s and early 1940s, the Kandy Lake poets were inspired partly by Indian poets such as Rabindranath Tagore
and Sarojini Naidu. R. k. Narayan’s success in the West is likely to have stimulated Jindasa Vijutunga.

(Goonetilleke, https://read.amazon.in)

During 1930s, 40s and 50s Sri Lankan Universities had maintained high standard, and eurocentrism suppressing the creative writing in Sri Lanka. Patrick Fernando’s *Return of Ulysses* in 1955 is only the notable production of the whole period. Patrick Fernando’s writing neither influenced by the nationalistic current nor able to provide any momentum to write by others. Godfrey Gunatillake’s story *The Garden* (1958) presents symbolism. The influence of westerner on Sri Lankan English writers play an important role in the development of Sri Lankan English writing of the period.


The period between 1950s and 1960s was considered as the period of tranquility. The Sri Lankan Government has passed the ‘Sinhala only Act ‘in 1956. According to this act Sinhala is made as an official language of Sri Lankan people. The communal violence of 1958 is recorded by James Goonewardene in his unfinished novel *Sow a Storm*.

After the 1960s the writers of Sri Lankan writing in English have attempted to capture national experiences as well as their roots in their works. Punyakante Wijenaike has tried her best to record rural experiences in her work. She has achieved major success for *The Third Woman and Other Stories* (1963); it is a collection of short stories. Her novel *The Waiting Earth* is published in 1966. Her next work *Giraya* (1971) is a novella in which she turned towards the problem of alienation and the circumstances of her own life. This novel is adapted into a teledram.

*The Rebel* (1979) is the title story in her collection of stories. It depicts the exploitation of lower class by the upper class, which is one of the causes of the frustration in youth. It also focuses on the social value of the Sri Lankan community. It is the story of Kumari, an innocent victim. She is caught, raped and destroyed in the
rebellion of 1971. She is the representative of all untrained revolutionary force. Goonetilleke rightly comments on Wijenaike’s novel as:

*She is modest, and her title story is certainly, more important and covers a wider canvas than her remark suggest. She concentrates on the individual rather than on politics, and ‘the human angle’ is at the forefront however, she does reflect upon the politics of the insurgency too- conditions that gave rise to it, the objectives, thinking and personalities of the revolutionaries, even the revolt itself.*

(Goonetilleke, https://read.amazon.in)

Crisis in the society have become crucial issue of the discussion in Sri Lankan writing in English after the insurgency of 1971. In 1971 People’s Liberation Front is emerged against the government of the day and in 1972 there is an emergence of Tamil Militancy. The literature produced during this period is focused on the central issue of insurrection. It is necessary to focus on the account of important fictions which records the same issue. Goonewardene in his novels *A Quiet Place* (1968) and *Call of the Kirala* (1976) have recorded the issue of insurgency. *Acid Bomb Explosion* (1978) is his most successful long work in which he has handled the same theme. He has published this novel serially in the weekly Sri Lankan journal “Tribune.” *An Asian Gambit* (1985) is revised and expanded version of *Acid Bomb Explosion*. M. Chandra Soma’s *Out Brief Candle* (1981) and Raja Proctor’s *Waiting for Surabiel* (1981) deals with the complex issue of insurgency in it.

Ediriwira Sarachchandra in *Curfew and a Full Moon* (1978) portrays insurrectionary activity and the frustration in youth, who becomes the prey of worst political system of Sri Lanka. Ediriwira Sarachchandra seems more sympathetic towards issue of insurgency. D.C.R.A. Goonetilleke rightly observes him as:

*He portrays the revolutionaries as both callow and genuinely idealistic. When the insurgency breaks out he describes it as ill-planned but well intentioned.*

(Goonetilleke, https://read.amazon.in)

Bandara Jayaweera’s *Fragrance Lost* (1977) is a novel depicting writer’s own experience of insurgency. He is a doctor and a JVP sympathizer. He is imprisoned and expresses his experiences in this work. Some diasporic writers explore their emplacement in time and place through international family narrative: Ondaatje in his

Diasporic writers of Sri Lanka mostly write on the modes of belonging, identity, geographical memory, and aesthetics of politics, war, violence and displacement. Yasmine Gooneratne in her first novel *A Change of Skies* (1991) explores the voration dictium “he who crosses the ocean may change the skies above him, but not the colour of his soul.” (Reeves Peter, 66) Many Sri Lankan diasporic writers explore the theme of identity in their work. Michelle de Kretser is also an Australian diaspora. She has set her novel *The Hamilton Case* (2003) in pre-independent Ceylon. It is detective type story of Sam Obeysekere. Kretser explores the theme of psychological damage created by colonialism. Her writing draws on the polarities and diasporic identity.


Diasporic responses to the war, violence and displacement are represented in Shyam Selvadurai’s *Funny Boy* (1994) and Robert’s *July* (2001); both the novels explore the lives marked by the ethnic violence of 1983. *Funny Boy* describes the
process of formation of identity through the perspective and experience of childhood in the context of the war. *Gorilla* (2008) by Shobasakthi is the story of young Rocky Raj, a child who grows up in the village of Kunjan Fields during the height of the insurgency in Sri Lanka.

It is significant to study some major Sri Lankan diasporic writers and some important characteristics of their writing such as home, identity, marginality, alienation, power politics, displacement and sexuality. Sri Lankan English writing is the product of colonial encounter between eastern and western world reflecting the theme of identity. It concerns with exploring themes and the notion of belonging, history and politics. It also shares many feelings with coexisting diasporic literature of South Asia, Africa, and Caribbean. South Asia becomes the center of attraction of whole world for cultural, economic diversities.

Majority of Sri Lankan writers in English prefer to live in Sri Lanka. But after the communal riot many of them are living out of Sri Lanka and seeking recognition and fame as diasporic Sri Lankan writers. The literature produced by these writers is an extraordinary. There is strength in their writing to change the center of English writing out of Britain. It has evolved as a powerful and valuable corpus of writing. *The Encyclopedia of Sri Lankan Diaspora* explains the literature of the Sri Lankan diaspora as:

*The literature of the Sri Lankan diaspora shares many concerns with synchronous diasporic literatures of South Asia, the Caribbean and Africa, many of which have also emerged from parallel histories of colonialism, post-colonial social and political conflict, and population, displacement and dispersal. These diasporas have been caused concurrently, but not equally, by conflict and violence, economic deprivation, and pursuit of personal and familial security, education and opportunity.*

(Reeves Peter, 65)

Sri Lankan diasporic writers are criticized for ignoring the realities of Sri Lanka, the island and to be unconcerned with their own people. They are also blamed to write for the global markets. They are not supposed to write for home audiences and so on. In spite of all the realities concerning Sri Lankan diasporic writers, the Sri Lankan diasporic literature enjoys greater access to the global market.
Moreover, the juxtaposition of the contemporary developments in the Sri Lankan English novel may help to understand its nature and scope.

I.XIV: The Writers of the Sri Lankan Diaspora:

The Sri Lankan diasporic writers are spread across the globe and they have created significant migrant population in Australia, Asia, Europe and North America. These writers share their point of origin as Sri Lankan, and are refracted according to the varied diasporic locations in which they live and write. Sri Lankan diaspora is splitted ethnically across the globe due to the ongoing histories of the ethnic violence on the island. In this connection Peter Reeves quotes Stuart Hall as:

_Moreover, the continuing histories of violence in Sri Lanka, the ethicized splitting of the diaspora as a mirror of nationalist politics, the various concepts of homeland in the Sri Lankan diasporic imaginary, as well as the multi-racial, cultural and gender politics in diasporic spaces all become the ‘unstable points of identification and suture’ that enable Sri Lankan writers to offer fresh perspectives on and from the diaspora._

(qtd. in Reeves Peter, 66)

The Sri Lankan writers which constitute the Sri Lankan diasporic literature are Rienzi Crusz, Yasmine Gooneratne, Romesh Gunesekera, Chandani Lokuge, Michael Ondaatje Shyam Selvadurai and Ambalavaner Sivanandan and so on. It is seen that all these diasporic writers show variation in exploring and presenting the diasporic concerns such as memory, identity and home. The group of diasporic writers such as Bandula Chandraratna, V. V. Ganesnathan, Michelle de Kretser, Ernest MacIntyre, Mary Anne Mohanraj, Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samara Sinha, Shiromi Pinto, Karen Roberts, Shobasakthi, Roma Tearne, Marian Yalini, Thambynamagayamaka, Yalini Dream, and their literary work is understood in terms of rapid global changes.

The Sri Lankan diaspora writers reveal the modes of belonging and inheritance with the help of their imagination. Their writing is inspired by the ethnic, gender or class struggles which are the characteristic of their origin. They present their homeland through their writing. Therefore it is necessary to study some Sri Lankan diaspora writers, especially novelists and the modes of their wring.
Yasmine Gooneratne:

Yasmine Gooneratne is Sri Lankan Australian diasporic writer, born in Sri Lanka’s well known Bandaranaike family in 1935. She is a university professor, literary critic, editor, biographer, bibliographer, novelist, essayist, short story writer and a poet who has educated at university of Ceylon and Cambridge. She has published number of books on various literary genres and shortlisted for various international awards. She has been a visiting professor at different universities across the globe. Her work includes Critical studies of Jane Austen, volumes of literary essays as well as poems, short stories, a family memoire and novels.

Her autobiographical memoire *Relative Merits: A Personal Memoire of the Bandaranaike Family of Sri Lanka* is published in 1986. In this fascinating memoire she delves back into early years of her family’s history and detail account of their lives. She portrays her father Sammy as an erratic, antic, charming and quick-tempered one. She has portrayed achievements, tragedies of her grandparents, uncles, aunts and cousins and sisters. She has also given references regarding the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka. It gives an account of stories of Sri Lanka’s aristocratic Sinhalese Bandaranaike family and their lives of three generation. It also recounts how this family history affects on the 20th century Sri Lanka.

Her first novel *A Change of Skies* (1991) explores the theme of immigration and assimilation into the host land. The novel juxtaposes Sri Lankan and Australian culture. It revolves around the life of Bharat, a young Asian Linguistics expert and his wife Navaranjini’s short term visit to Australia as a visiting professor. They face the problem of cultural clash and problems faced as a new comer in strange land. This novel is shortlisted for commonwealth prize and received “Marjorie Barnard Literary Award” in 1992.

Goneratne’s second novel *The Pleasures of Conquest* is published in 1995. It deals with the relationship between East and West, the era in the increasing nationalistic currents in Sri Lanka. It also portrays the impact of British colonial rule over the Ceylonese community and various aspects of immigration. It focuses on the historical as well as contemporary relationship between Europe and Asia.

Nihal de Silva:

Nihal de Silva was a Sri Lankan well-known novelist, mainly recognized for his love about wild life, which is reflected through majority of his work. Nihal de
Silva was killed by a landmine explosion at the Wilpattu National Park on May 28, 2006.

Nihal de Silva’s debut novel *The Road from Elephant Pass* is an action thriller novel published in 2003 in English as well as in Sinhala. The novel is based on the themes of war and survival. The novel is a great resource of number of techniques useful for surviving during the complicated situations. It is based on the war conflicting situation in Sri Lankan during the civil war. It depicts the racial conflict in the life of Wasantha and Kamala who are lovers. In this love story of Captain Wasantha Ratnayake and Kamala Velaiathan, the members of LTTE, fall in love with each other though they belong to different races and ethnicities. What follows is a story of their tragic love affair and happy ending of their marital life in foreign land.

Many birds like hawks, eagle-owls, hornbills, brown-headed barbets, parrots are the part of the novel. The novel is adapted for film in 2008, and it is directed by Chandran Rutnam. It is an action thriller film. In 2003 Nihau de Silva awarded for this novel by ‘Gratian Prize’ for creative writing in English. He also won the ‘State Literary Award’ for the best novel of the year 2003.

*The Far Spent Day* is his second novel which speaks about political corruption in contemporary Sri Lanka. It explores the contemporary Sri Lankan politics, misuse of power by politicians and ethnic violence in the country. Ravi the middleclass family boy is the protagonist of the novel. He is assaulted by the Government Minister’s son. Ravi’s family decides to seek justices. The Sunday Observer in its review on the novel expresses:

*The Far Spent Day* a tale of assault justice, sought love and betrayal, financial ruin, murder and then revenge and set in a realistic present day context certainly appears to do that... *The Far Spent Day* centers on a middle class family in Colombo.

(http://www.sundayobserver.lk)

*The Ginirella Conspiracy* depicts the story of ragging in Sri Lankan Universities. The novel centers on Sujatha Mallika a young village girl who enters in the Jaypura University and suffers ragging by seniors. The novel speaks about the plight of university system in Sri Lanka.
Romesh Gunesekera:

Sri Lankan born British novelist Romesh Gunesekera is grown up in Sri Lanka and Philippines. He has been living in Britain since 1970. He has bagged number of awards including the inaugural BBC Asia Award for achievement in Writing and Literature (1998); Premio Mondello Five Continents Award (1997); and the Yorkshire Post Best First Work Award (1995).

Monkfish Moon (1992) is Gunesekera’s collection of short stories which evokes ethnic and political tension in Sri Lanka and its impact on Sri Lankan people since 1948. These stories are nostalgic in nature. Epigraph of Monkfish Moon agitatively states, “There are no monkfish in the ocean around Sri Lanka.” (Reeves Peter, 67) Gunesekera’s fictions are unsurprisingly preoccupied with various kinds of rootlessness.

His first novel Reef (1994) is shortlisted for the Booker Prize for the fiction. Reef is a culinary novel which highlights Sri Lanka’s cuisine. The story is narrated by a young boy who after all becomes a cook for Mr. Salgado, a marine biologist. It depicts how, the political tensions in Sri Lanka finally lead to Triton’s and Mr. Salgado’s emigration to England. This collection of short stories reflects the imaginative vision of Gunesekera and explores home through the migrant frame of a memory.

Gunesekera effectively situates the disconnectedness of views and the identity of diasporic subject in the violence and conflict which dominates Sri Lanka. Gunesekera’s novel shows romantic or nostalgic attempt and it encompass Sri Lanka’s colours, tastes and sounds. His second novel The Sandglass (1998) addresses the issue of search for personal as well as national belonging. It is written when the violence in Sri Lanka is at the height. The novel tries to bridge between Sri Lanka and England. The Sandglass is the winner of the inaugural BBC Asia Award.

Gunesekera’s third novel Heavens Edge (2002), describes the story of protagonist’s journey from England to his ancestral homeland in search of his roots. Marc the narrator’s / hero’s longing or personal quest to reunite with his lost love. According to Marc, he is a man, ‘in search of himself.’ After all at the end of the novel Marc is succeeded in tracing his roots. In the review by Maya Jaggi she states about Marc as:

Marc, despite antecedents in four continents, has lived an “ultra cautious” life, believing trails of migration are cruel or
futile: that he should stay close to home. But the discovery of an antiquated video of his father spurs a quest. He lands on his grandfather’s island by moonlight, a “man in search of his father, or perhaps in search of himself.” The only quest at a seaside tourist hotel in this postwar trouble spot, he finds the erstwhile land of ancient ruined cities, cool tea hills and coconut plantations enduring a “peace” imposed by terror.

Romesh Gunesekera’s fourth novel *The Match* (2006) depicts the story of Sri Lankan expatriate Sunny Fernando, the protagonist of novel and his expatriate life, his visit to Sri Lanka. The novel traces Sunny’s passion for cricket from childhood to teenager and as an adult from Colombo, Philippines to Britain respectively. In his latest work *The Prisoner of Paradise* (2008) Gunesekera portrays an enticing story of young lovers for freedom and for the quest of identity.

**Chandani Lokuge:**

Chandani Lokuge is a former Australian Commonwealth Scholar who was born in Sri Lanka in 1952 and migrated from Sri Lanka to Australia in 1987. She has worked as an editor for Oxford University Press of the Classic Reissue Series of Indian women’s autobiographies and fiction written in English. She is the author of three novels. And now Chandani Lokuge is developing the “South Asian Diaspora International Researchers’ Network with the help of Monash Arts, Aust. Lit Database and Monash Asia Institute. She has published number of books. Lokuge deals with the theme of migration and hybridization for her novels.

Her first novel *If the Moon Smiled* (2000) is shortlisted for the NSW Premier’s Literary Awards-Best Novel and Community Relations categories in 2001. This novel is about rooting, uprooting and re-rooting expresses the sad story of Manthri’s life. Manthri is the narrator of the novel. The story focuses Manthri’s psychological isolation in host land. It reveals her inability to assault with her adopted culture. Manthri feels nagging to live in Australia. She finds herself trapped in the land which does not support her native culture and not compassionate for her happiness. The novel offers unique insight into Sri Lankan culture. Lokuge portrays this novel with great pathos, that how the cultural migration or dislocation affects the past and the future of the immigrants.
Chandani Lokuge’s second novel *Turtle Nest* (2003) replicates the seduction and violence of migration. Aruni the protagonist of the novel is adopted by Sri Lankan parents in Melbourne. Aruni returns to her motherland Sri Lanka to find her roots in order to reveal the real truth about her real mother Mala. The novel is set in fishing village in Sri Lanka and it deals with the theme of cultural conflict, rootlessness and lost identity. *The Encyclopedia of Sri Lankan Diaspora* rightly points out Aruni’s plight as:

_Aruni adopted by Sri Lankan parents in Melbourne, who returns to Sri Lanka to find her roots. With her orphaned eyes, Aruni’s perspective is bereft of the security of position, she is dispossessed of both mother and motherland, and through her story of return and discovery, and Lokuge explores both the temptations and torments of belonging to places and people._

(Reeves Peter, 67)

*Softly as I Leave You* (2013) is Chandani Lokuge’s third novel which paints a tragic story of loss and fruitless love. The novel offers the insight into migrant’s world and their fractured perception, their togetherness and separation. The novel traces a Sri Lankan girl Uma’s migrant life with Chris a Venetian migrant an Australian in Melbourne and their love marriage and the complexity in their cross-cultural relationship.

**Roma Tearne:**

Roma Tearne is a Sri Lankan born UK based artist and writer. She was born in Sri Lanka in 1954 to Sinhala and Tamil parents. Her father was a Tamil poet and her mother was a Sinhala journalist. In 1964 she arrived with her parents to England as a result of racial conflict faced by her parents in Sri Lanka with painful memories of ethnic conflict. Their migration to England is described as, ‘a different kind of exile.’ Roma Tearne thinks, she is the child of a disgraced union of mixed parentage, born with a foot in both worlds. She has gained her master degree in the Ruskin School of Drawing and Fine Arts (Oxford). She is awarded with a fellowship in visual arts by the Arts and Humanities Research Council of Great Britain of Oxford Brookes University.
Being a diasporic writer, Roma Tearne is successful in fusing her own stories of displacement in her fiction and her writing reflects the quality of diasporic writing. As Tearne herself reveals, “Earliest memory was in 1958, in aged four, I watched a Tamil man being set on fire in Colombo.” (Reeves Peter, 67) An incident of loss, made her start writing. A painter has turned towards writing. Marianne Godard in her Master Thesis states Tearne’s journey from painting to writing as:

> Five years ago, a strange thing happened. While working in our house, a builder accidentally threw my old trunk into a skip. It was the same trunk that long ago had been my mother’s jasmine-scented shrine of hope. Carried across the seas on a journey that took 21 days, it now belonged to me and held the old photograph albums and diaries written by Heartsease [her mother’s pen name as a journalist]. By the time we realized what had happened, it was too late, and the skip had gone, taking the trunk with it. Apart from diary and two or three blurred photographs, I no longer have anything to remind me of my parents. I had been orphaned a second time. May be this was what was needed to push me to do the thing I had been avoiding for so long. To follow in my mother’s footsteps, to write.

(Godard Marine, 5-6)

Her novel *Mosquito* (2007) is a haunting love affair which is shortlisted for Costa First Novel Award. In *Mosquito* Tearne narrates the story of Theo Samara Jeeva, a widowed, middle aged narrator’s diasporic returns to his native land Sri Lanka after his wife’s death. During this journey Theo finds himself in a new, intense and scandalous love with a teenaged artistic young girl Nulani. In this war-torn country under the threat of civil war their love is increasingly faded by violence tearing them apart. Theo and Nulani’s tragic love story starts spreading like a mosquito. *The Encyclopedia of Sri Lankan Diaspora* compares the scandalous love affair of Theo and Nulani with the disease spreads by mosquito as, “The love is increasingly stained by a violence that spreads like a disease brought by a new kind of mosquito, bred alike in the North, the female suicide bomber. But unlike the mosquitoes the women were full of a new kind of despair and a frightening rage.” (Reeves Peter, 67)
Her second novel Bone China is published in 2008. In this family saga Tearne has covered the four generations of a Tamil de Silva family of Sri Lanka. The novel is set in the war-torn Sri Lanka and the England. The novel is autobiographical in nature, and depicts the love loss and the fate of Sri Lankan families migrating to Britain in the civil war situation. The East West encounter is the theme of the novel. The terrorist attack in July 2005 in London makes her write her third novel Brixton Beach which is published 2009.

Roma Tearne’s latest fiction The Swimmer (2010) is the portrait of Sri Lankan Tamil refugees’s life stories regarding the hope for better life in England away from the violence from the Jaffna. The novel also speaks about the unresolved loss of killing of thousands of Tamils in the civil war.

Rajiva Wijesinha:

Rajiva Wijesinha was born on 16th May 1954. He is one of the distinguished writers in English, in Sri Lanka. He is educated in Oxford university of Oxford, obtained his Ph.D degree and his thesis is published by University Press of America under the title of “The Androgynous Trollope.” He has worked as a Senior Professor of Languages at the University of Sabaragamuwa in Sri Lanka. Rajiva Wijesinha has been appointed as a Secretary General of the Sri Lankan Government by President Mahinda Rajepakse and in June 2008 he becomes Secretary to the Ministry of Disaster Management and Human Rights. He is a political activist belongs to the Liberal Party of Sri Lanka. He is also the member of Editorial Board of the Journal of the Commonwealth Literature. He was the first Sri Lankan writer whose work has been translated into European Languages.


He has published number of articles in books and major journals about politics and racial riots in Sri Lanka. He has worked for the British Council in Colombo for spreading English degree program for the students having no English Environment. He also has served as a consultant to the Ministry of Education in order to initiate English education in Sri Lanka which was banned by government for several decades.

Shyam Selvadurai:

Shyam Selvadurai is a Sri Lankan-Canadian writer who is of mixed Tamil and Sinhalese parentage. He was born in Sri Lanka in 1965. Now he has been living in Toronto since 1983. At the age of nineteen he migrated to Canada in order to escape the ethnic riots in Sri Lanka. Most of the Selvadurai’s novels take place in Sri Lanka. Selvadurai has successfully shared the heritage of his colonial past and ethnic conflict of his country through his novels. Canada play very minor role in his work though he lives in Canada from last 30 years.

Selvadurai successfully deals with the issue of homosexuality through his majority of work. His Funny Boy (1994) is an autobiographical novel and tells the story of Arjie, a Tamil boy who is grown up in Colombo, in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Arjie resembles to Selvadurai. It is an autobiographical novel. Arjie is the narrator, recounts that of Selvadurai’s story, looking back on his childhood in Sri Lanka. It is the story of Arjie’s homosexuality and of the violent conflict between Tamil’s and Sinhalese. The novel is episodic in nature. During the ethnic tension in Sri Lanka Arjie feels his homeland as an unsafe place, so his family decides to leave their home for an unknown Canada. The Encyclopedia of Sri Lankan Diaspora rightly comments about novel as:

Arjie’s story reflects that of Selvadurai who was born into a Colombo Tamil family in 1965 and left the island in the wake of the 1983 riots for Canada…Similar to Funny Boy, in that it explores the formation of identity and voice through the perspective and experience of childhood in the context of war.

(Reeves Peter, 69)
Selvadurai’s *Funny Boy* has gained the critical attention focusing on the exploration of homosexuality and ethnicity. It was also nominated for the Giller Prize and winner of the W.H. Smith / Books in Canada First Novel Award for Best Gay Men’s Fiction.

His second novel *Cinnamon Garden* (1998) is set in 1920s Sri Lanka depicting the closing years of colonial rule. It is historical in nature telling the story of Annalukshmi, a school teacher who struggle to find herself and her uncle Balendran a man in his middle ages. In the novel Selvadurai has presented the world of quiet racism and upper class thinking of Ceylonese people as like British rulers.

The review of *Edmonton Journal* of the novel *Cinnamon Garden* states: “A near miraculous capturing of life and love (both gay and straight), family tensions, political upheaval, labour unrest and feminism in the Ceylon of the 1920s.”

(http://www.shyamselvadurai.com/cinnamn.html)

Selvadurai in his third novel *Swimming in the Monsoon Sea* (2007) portrays the life story of 14 year old boy Amrith. He is the protagonist of the novel and known for his gay identity. The novel is set in Sri Lanka against the backdrop of civil war and focuses on how sex affects the life of men and women. The novel is finalist for Governor General’s Literary Award and also the Silver winner, Young Adult Category of Foreword Magazine’s Book of the Year Award.

In his latest novel *Hungry Ghost* (2013) Selvadurai develops his story on Sri Lankan myth of perethya. *Hungry Ghost* is the translation of the term preta in Buddhism from the Chinese adaptation. Shivan a gay of mixed parentage of Tamil and Sinhalese ancestry is the protagonist of the novel. It is the story of Shivan a teenager from upper middleclass family, his immigration to Canada to escape the island’s ethnic violence. But returns to his homeland as he is promised to have a better life on the island by his grandmother. Shivan’s life is haunted by his wealthy, implacable grandmother. The novel is of Dickensian in tone with Sri Lankan and Torontian flavor and reflects Shivan’s own struggle to overcome his homosexuality.

**Karen Roberts:**

Karen Roberts was born in Sri Lanka in 1965. Now she lives in California. She works in the field of advertising. Her novels are translated into number of other languages such as Portuguese, Dutch, etc.

Karen Robert’s debut novel *Flower Boy* is published in 2000. It is a romantic and tragic story of cultural conflict between two cultures. Her second novel *July
(2002) speaks about the ugly reality of war, communal violence and revenge. It portrays the description of the July riots very realistically. Niranjan and Priyanthi is the representative of Tamil- Sinhala violence. Anita Nair rightly comments on the novel as:

Karen Roberts draws a chilling and moving picture of a hot July day when Colombo explodes into a frenzy of madness. So that when you put the book down and take a deep breath to exhale the horror away, you realize the green truth that Karen Roberts has been hinting at all along...that all violence racial and otherwise is rooted in personal animosities and vendetta.

(Book Review by Anita Nair)

Her third novel The Lament of the Dhobi Woman is published in 2010 in Sri Lanka. It explores the issue of class difference in Sri Lankan society.

Shobasakthi:

Antonythasan Jesuthasan is a Sri Lankan Tamil writer and actor also known by the pseudonym Shobasakthi. He was born in 1967 in northern Sri Lanka. He was a former LTTE child-soldier and a full time member of it. He has disillusioned to the war conflicting situation in Sri Lanka and in 1988 he has travelled to Hong Kong and lived as a refugee in Bangkok. Shobasakthi provides valuable voice for those, who are victim diaspora, stateless refugees and asylum seekers. Now Shobasakthi is living in France. He has started writing under the pseudonym Shobasakthi. He has written number of plays, short stories, political essays and novels.

Shobasakthi in his first novel Gorilla (2008) narrates his own personal experiences as a LTTE child soldier during the civil war in Sri Lanka. It portrays the story of Rocky Raj, a child who has grown up in the village of Kunjan fields during the height of insurgency in Sri Lanka. Gorilla is translated in English in 2008 by Anushiya Ramaswami.

Shobasakthi’s writing always reveals the pains of personal as well as collective displacement and identity crisis. The Encyclopedia of Sri Lankan Diaspora rightly expresses Shobasakthi’s views of identity as:

The moment I left Sri Lanka, my identity as a militant became that of a refugee. But when I began to write, I became a traitor to my
race. I have been beaten up on the streets of Paris and on blogs by fellow Tamil refugees for my writings.

(Peter Reeves, 69)

Shobasakthi’s second novel *Traitor* (2003) is also translated by Anushiya Ramaswami in 2010. *Traitor* is based on the 1983s massacre in Sri Lanka. Shobasakthi is successful actor; he has written and acted in Sengadgl (*The Dead Sea*), a film about struggle in Tamil fisherman’s life. He has also acted in film Deepan which is autobiographical in nature and depicts the story of a former LTTE member, an asylum seeker in France. The film is the main attraction of Cannes Film Festival. The film tells the story of three Sri Lankan Tamil refugees. Deepan shows immigrant’s struggle to settle in a host land.

**Ambalavaner Sivanandan:**

Sivanandan is a novelist and a director of the Institute of Race Relations, a London based independent educational charity. He is a Colombo born writer considered as one of the leading Black political thinkers in UK. Sivanandan has left Sri Lanka in the 1958 race riot and arrived in Britain at the time of Notting Hill riots and suffers a lot. In 1972 he has become the director of the Institute of Race Relations (IRR) and the founding editor of the influential journal, *Race and Class*. He has published number of political essays on Race and class struggle regarding Sri Lankan politics.

Sivanandan’s *When Memory Dies* (1997) is an epic novel. It portrays the story of the island nation and the lives of the three generations, Sahdevan his son Rajan and his step son Vijay from colonial period to present time. The novel is set in Sri Lanka and covers the period 1900 to the 1980. Sivanandan carefully explores the causes of the civil war in Sri Lanka. Tamil Tigers- fights for independence from the majority, Sinhalese. Sivanandan tries to represent his nation with outstanding historical range. In this family narrative diasporic writer like Sivanandan paints his nation’s increasingly racialized politics.

*The Encyclopedia of Sri Lankan Diaspora* states: “the novel suggests that memory is not simply bout recreating narratives of history; rather, in retrieving stories of shared social and political affiliations arising from anti-colonial and post-colonial resistance to inequality and division, obscured by thee manipulations of postcolonial
politics, memory becomes an instrument of responsibility and resistance.”
(Reeves Peter, 69)

The novel is shortlisted for commonwealth writer’s Prize and winner of Sagittarius Prize. Where the Dance is (2000) is his collection of short stories.

V.V. Ganeshananthan:

V.V. Ganeshananthan is a fiction writer, a journalist, editor, essayist a former vice president of the South Asian Journalists Association. She is a Sri Lankan - American writer. She was the visiting professor of Creative Writing at the University of Michigan. Her work is appeared in Granta, The New York Times, The Atlantic Monthly, The Washington Post, Ploughshares and the Best American Non required Reading 2014. She is the award winning writer of Love Marriage and the founding member of Lanka Solidarity and member of the Board of Directors of American Institute for Lankan Studies. She has started to write Love Marriage as a part of her senior thesis at Harvard University.

V.V. Ganeshananthan’s debut novel Love Marriage (2008) is set in Sri Lanka and about the diaspora communities. It is the story of a family of the Tamil diaspora from the point of view of daughter Yalini who is born to Sri Lankan parents in New York on July 23, 1983. She is growing up as a member of a diaspora community in North America who finds her and her family’s origin. The novel depicts her sorrows of origin, in-betweenness, her neither nor condition. She is neither American nor Sri Lankan. This is the story of cultural conflict and identity crisis of Yalini and the many of first generation Sri Lankan diaspora members. In spite of the migration, two Tamil Sri Lankan families are connected with each other with tradition and marriage. Even in host country Yalini feels attachment towards her native land Sri Lanka. She is caught in-between conditions and reunites with her maternal uncle Kumaran who is Canadian immigrant and a former militant. The novel pursues the life of Yalini from America to Toronto. Jenani, Kumaran’s daughter is the narrator of the story. A review by Random House rightly comments on the novel as:

Through conversations with her uncle and parents, Yalini transcribes many stories of her family and their political allegiances through each generation of marriage. Doing so, she begins to understand the spectrum that feels the void between Arranged Marriage and Love Marriage. She learns of
her Uncle Neelan, who espoused the “enemy”, a Sinhalese girl who protected him when the Sinhalese-Tamil riots began; of her Great–Aunt Harini, who was abused in a marriage to a “wrong” man of her Aunt Uma who was too “special” to get married. Above all, it’s her Uncle Kumaran, who found love “under the strain of politics”, who helps her see that she can only “cure the future by knowing the past.

This novel is also long-listed for Orange Prize, Washington Post Book World Best Book of 2008. V. V. Ganeshananthan’s short fictions *Hippocrates: A Novel* (2009), *Enter the Body* and *A Just Country* are very famous. His *Hippocrates* is a Granta winner in 2009 and selected as a Best American Short Stories as a Distinguished Story of 2010.

**Michelle de Kretser:**

Michelle de Kretser is a Burgher descent Sri Lankan–Australian novelist who was born in Sri Lanka in 1958. She has migrated to Australia in 1972, at her age of fourteen. Her writing is drawn on the splits of diasporic identity.

In her debut historical novel *The Rose Grower* (1999) portrays ordinary people and their struggle in order to keep their concern in astonishing times. Three sisters and their father are struggling to survive in the period of French revolution. Kretser had recorded the period during 1789 to 1794, the years of the French Revolution. It paints the life of Sophie de Saint Pierre’s’ aristocratic but ruined family’s struggle to survive in the small provincial town in Southern France. The novel expresses American artist and balloonist Stephen Fletcher entry in the Sophie’s life. Stephen Fletcher falls out of the sky and falls in love with Sophie’s older married sister Claire and a young local doctor Joseph Morelle falls in love with Sophie. The horror of bloodshed is symbolized by Sophie’s blood coloured roses.

*The Rose Grower* throws a slanting light on the underside of history, where people find themselves torn between reason and desire, revolutionary zeal and unrequired passion.”

Kretser has set her second novel *The Hamilton Case* (2003) in pre-independence Ceylon. In the story an English tea planter is murdered. Sam Obeysekere is an elite lawyer who attempts to solve the mystery of the murder of the
planter. Sam is the product of an English public school education system in the colonial Sri Lanka. This local Sherlock Holmes tries to solve the mysterious murder case as like the imported detectives tales. The novel throes light on the evolution of wealthy Obeysekere family, the issue of racial inequality, cultural influences and the history of Sri Lanka at the turn of the twentieth century. It also reflects how the Ceylones try to make themselves more English than their English masters. *The Encyclopedia of Sri Lankan Diaspora* comments on the novel as:

...de Kretser explores the psychological damage wrought by colonialism. Alluding to her Burgher descent, de Kretser reveals that ‘there is always this divided sense that the place you are living in is not actually where you belong’, a realization that compels her to focus on self-alienating characters such as Obeysekere. While de Kretser’s novel is not a tale of diasporic experience, it imbuses subjectivity with the fracture and suppressed memory often allied with diasporic subjectivity.

(Reeves Peter, 66-67)

*The Hamilton Case* is the winner of The Tasmania Pacific Region Prize, Encore Victorian Premier’s Literary Award.

Kretser’s third novel *The Lost Dog* (2007) portrays the story of Tom Loxley, the Indian-Australian professor, his missing dog and his search for dog, which is disappeared into the bush in chase of wallaby. Dara Horn in the review of the novel states as, “The Lost Dog is really about Tom’s search for knowledge (in every sense) of Nelly and about the thin Veneer of modern civilization.” (www.washingtonpost.com)

The novel is long listed for the Man Booker Prize, in 2008. It is shortlisted for Barbara Jefferies Award. The novel is the winner of Commonwealth Writers Prize. It is also the recipient of Australian Literature Society Gold Medal. In 2008 it is also long listed for Australia – Asia Literary Award.

In her fourth novel *Questions of Travel* (2012) de Kretser traces the politics and philosophy of travel and the uprootedness. It is the portrait of two different personalities Laura and Ravi who are born in Australia and Sri Lanka respectively. The novel has bagged number of awards. It is the winner of Miles Franklin Award. It has received ALS Gold Medal and 2013 Prime Minister’s Literary Award for fiction. It is shortlisted for Dublin Impact Literary Award in 2014.
Ru Freeman:

Ru Freeman is an American Sri Lankan writer who was born in Sri Lanka in 1967. She is a journalist and activist, now living in Philadelphia. She has studied at University of Colombo and Murdoch. She has two novels on her name *A Disobedient Girl* (2009) and *On Sal Mal Lane* (2013). Her creative and political writing makes her internationally acclaimed writer. Her work is appeared in number of magazines and journals as like Huffington Post, Guernica, story Quarterly, Crab Orchard Review and in the Narrative World Literature Today.

In her debut novel *A Disobedient Girl* (2009), she explores the lives of two Sri Lankan women Latha and Thara who dreams of independence and their struggle for freedom. The novel is set against the backdrop of class and prejudice in Sri Lanka and the affects of class system on personal relationship. It is a deeply moving story of Freeman’s native land Sri Lanka’s conflicting war years. She has created flamboyant and instinctive world. Latha a servant girl is of the same age of Thara Vithange. Thara is the daughter of wealthy family and Latha works in Thara’s house from her age of five. Both the girls grow together as like friends. Freeman paints the picture of class difference of two girls and their struggles. It is also a map of womanhood, its longing and loyalties. A book review of *A Disobedient Girl* expresses:

> A *Disobedient Girl is a compelling exploration of personal desire set against the volatile backdrop of class and prejudice, as three women journey towards their future, united by a shared history and separated by different fates. A bold and deeply moving account that spans three decades of love and loss, it is a tale about the will to survive and the incredible power of the human spirit to transcend the unforgiving sweep of tragedy.*


*On Sal Mal Lane* is published in 2013, which examines the years, 1979 to 1983 the most important years up to the Sri Lankan civil war and the social unrestness on the island. Hearth family and their neighbours are at the center of the novel. The children of Sal Mal Lane are focused in the novel. Sal Mal Lane is a dead-end road in Colombo having multicultural society and people of different religion and ethnicity are living together. Naomi Benaron the author of *Running the Rift* in her review of *Sal Mal Lane* writes:
Through the microcosm of a single street- Sal Mal Lane- with its lush, fragrant trees and its multi-ethnic inhabitants, Ru Freeman leads the reader on a journey deep into the unraveling of Sri Lanka during its long and brutal civil war. Freeman creates a rich and complex world, and although we know where the story will lead us, we go willingly, because her characters are impossible not to love, impossible not to root for. In the end despite the wrenching tragedy, we come away uplifted and enriched.

(http://rufreeman.com)

Marry Anne Amirithi Mohanraj:

Mary Anne Amirithi Mohanraj is an American-Sri Lankan writer and editor. She was born in 1971 in Colombo, Sri Lanka. She has migrated to the United States at the age of two and there she has attended Miss Porter’s School and the University of Chicago. She has completed her PhD in English Literature from the University of Utah in 2005. Mary Anne Mohanraj has taught at the University of Utah, Vermont College and worked as a Visiting Professor at Roosevelt University, and Northwestern University.

Mohanraj mostly writes erotica and fictions. Her writing reflects issue of cultural identity. Kathryn in the City: Create Your Own Erotic Fantasy is published in 2003. Her work The Classics Professor: Choose Your Own Erotic Adventure is also an Erotic Fantasy. Her novel, Bodies in Motion (2005) is a novel in stories about two Sri Lankan immigrant families. It is an exploration of sexuality. It throws light on need of healthy sexuality for healthy society, which is an important part of our world. Her novel is the recipient of Asian-American Literary Award. According to her sex should not be hidden like a dirty thing. She has expressed her views on writing about sexuality, “I am particularly interested in the clash between social duty and individual desires, in the intrusion of political realities on private lives, in secrecy, in family and in how all these issues play out in the arenas of marriage, love, gender and sexuality.” (Bookslut/an interview with Mary Anne Mohanraj)

Her recent novel The Stars Change (2013) is a very short novel. It is an erotic science fiction. It is a mixture of erotica and science fiction together. The characters in this novel are from other planets. They are Kimsrialyani, Narita, Gaurav, Rajiv and Amara. The setting of the novel is a University towns inhabited by humans and aliens.
This novel presents lot of sex between human-human and human-aliens, their romantic relationship and the encounter between cross-species. The novel portrays the undertaking of social responsibility and community for the creation of better world on the so called planets. Mary Anne Mohanraj is the edition-in-chief and the founder of Clean sheets- an online erotica magazine.

From the above discussion of Sri Lankan English literature, it becomes clear that most of authors are concerned with the study of culture and identity. Hence it is imperial to have exhaustive study of the meaning of culture and identity.

I.XV: Culture:

Man being a social animal prefers to inhabit among the people of same idea, belief or ethnic community. The term culture is defined by many anthropologist or socialist. J Sathiavel in his article “Canadian Culture” defines culture as: “Culture in its anthropological usage, is the man made part of the human environment.” (Sathiavel, 47) The term culture is used in modern anthropology according to anthropologists, “culture is the way of life of a particular people living together in one place.” (Eliot, 120) The term itself signifies something that is related with human affairs. Word ‘culture’ comes from Latin word ‘Kulture’.

Every nation is characterized by their unique culture. For Eliot culture is tied to the people and ethnic or national group and it also governs large territories with derived borders. “Culture is more than the assemblage of its arts, customs and religious beliefs.” (Eliot, 120) In Notes towards Definition of Culture T.S. Eliot writes that religion and culture comprehend each other. For Eliot culture is “the whole way of life of people from birth to grave, from morning to night and even in sleep, and that way of life is also its culture.” (Eliot, 31)

Naylor defines culture as “the learned way (or ways) of belief, behavior, and the products of these (both physically and socially) that is shared (at least to some degree) within human groups and serves to distinguish that culture group from another learning different beliefs and behaviors” (Asian Journal of management Research). According to him all human beings are fundamentally same, but culture make them different and distinguishes them from other groups by creating and developing their “own version of culture” to meet their needs, desires and goals. Bhiku Parekh in his Rethinking Multiculturalism: Cultural Diversity of Political Theory defines culture as:
Culture is a historically created system of meaning and significance or what comes to the same thing, a system of beliefs and practices, in terms of which a group of human beings understand, regulate and structure their individual collective lives. It is the way of both understanding and organizing human life.

(Parekh, 143)

The concept of culture is very complicated one. Everyone has a culture, in fact everyone has cultures. Generally culture may be defined as, socially inherited shared and learned ways of living, possessed by a person by virtue of their membership in social groups. In the context of the culture and the diaspora study culture for Homi Bhabha is always, already in the sense, diasporized. Bhabha writes:

Culture as a strategy of survival is both transnational and translational. It is transnational because contemporary postcolonial discourses are rooted in specific histories of cultural displacement, whether they are the ‘middle passage’ of slavery and indenture, the ‘voyage out’ of the civilizing mission, the fraught accommodation of Third World migration to the West after Second World War, or the traffic of economic and political refugees within and outside the Third World…The transnational dimension of cultural transformation-migration, diaspora, displacement, relocation makes the process of cultural translation a complex form of signification.

(Bhabha, 247)

I.XVI: The Sri Lankan Culture:

Sri Lanka is a multicultural and multi religious nation. Sri Lanka formerly known as Ceylon is an island, located in the Indian Ocean of the south-eastern coast of the Indian subcontinent. The history of the colonial occupation has left some marks on island’s tradition. The Encyclopedia of Sri Lankan Diaspora expresses the impact of colonialism on island as:

The European colonial impact was deeper in Sri Lanka than in any other country in South Asia, largely because a significant part of
the country was under colonial rule for three and half centuries. The colonial impact laid the foundations for the Sri Lankan diaspora in the postcolonial era.

(Reeves Peter, 24)

Sri Lanka’s first contact with colonial power has come in early 16th century. The Portuguese arrived on the island in 1505 and island is under the Portuguese colonial rule about 450 years. From 1658 to 1796 Dutch invaded island “The Dutch East India Company came to Sri Lanka as allies of the ruler of Kandy, the only independent kingdom of Sri Lanka which survived Portuguese onslaught” (Reeves Peter, 24) and then British acquired control over island till 1948. Bitishers need the island of Sri Lanka as a good natural harbor. Sri Lankan Culture has long been influenced by the Buddhism. South Indian culture also influences on north most region of the country.

However, island’s culture is shaped by the various Portuguese, Dutch, British elements which have been intermingled with various traditional facets of Sri Lankan culture. Sri Lanka’s population is highly heterogeneous and has differentiated across ethnic, religious, linguistic, caste and regional lines. Michael Ondaatje in his family memoire, Running in the Family presents beautiful account of how Ceylon tempted the invaders, traders and adventurers who have violated island and left distinct mark on Ceylonese history and culture. Michael Ondaatje observes the hybridity and of the Ceylonese communities as:

This was Nuwara Eliya in the twenties and the thirties. Everyone was vaguely related and had Sinhalese, Tamil, Dutch, British and Burgher blood in them going back many generations. There was a large social gap between this circle and the Europeans and the English who were never a part of the Ceylonese community. The English were seen as transients snobs and racists and were quite separated from those who had intermarries and lived here permanently.

(Ondaatje 1982, 41)

A century and half of British rule had significant impact on the island’s economy as well as political set up and culture. Ceylonese considers English ‘transients’, ‘snobs’ and racists. D.C.R.A. Goonetilleke in his article “Sri Lanka’s Ethnic Conflict in its Literature in English” gives reasons for the communal violence.
on the island and the recent census of Sri Lanka. According to 1981s census of Sri Lanka:

*the population of Sri Lanka is over fifteen million, comprising 73.98 percent Sinhalese, 12.6 percent Tamils, 7.12 percent Moors, 5.56 percent Indian Tamils, 0.29 percent Malaya’s, 0.26 percent Burgers (descendants of the Portuguese and Dutch), and 0.20 percent others.*

(D.C.R.A Goonetilleke, 450)

In spite of the diversity in Sri Lankan culture, Sinhalese who speaks Sinhala and are predominantly Buddhist, Tamils who speak Tamil and predominantly Hindu, and Muslims who reside in the eastern coastal district and speak Tamil and mixed descendents of Europeans called as Burghers. The burgher community is the mixture of Portuguese, Dutch, English, Sinhalese and Tamils ancestry. The colonial history of Sri Lanka is presented by the burghers in their multilateral ethnicities. The burghers owe their origin to the colonial strategy of the Portuguese and Dutch. Later on Burghers are developed into separate branches, the Dutch Burghers and the Portuguese Burghers. Language represents the culture of that particular nation. In the Sri Lanka, languages spoken by the Sri Lankan are:

*Sinhalese people speaks Sinhala as their mother tongue, the Tamil people speak Tamil. English is also widely spoken. Sinhala is spoken by about 17 million people in Sri Lanka more than 14 million of whom are native speakers. It is one of the constitutionally recognized official languages of Sri Lanka along with Tamil.*

(www.wickipedia.org/wicki/Sri_Lankan_Culture)

Sri Lankan culture is rich in various ways as ancient historic scriptures have influenced by the Buddhist culture. Other art form which is famous in Sri Lanka is “Kandyan” dance form. In Sri Lanka a variety of dance styles are performed but Kandyan dance type is a classical one. Cuisine represents the culture of Sri Lanka. Cuisine of Sri Lanka is influenced by India especially of Kerala as well as foreign traders. Rice is the main food of Sri Lanka; it may be either steamed or boiled and served with spicy curry. Curries are made using mutton, fish or vegetables. Kiribath is a type of milk rice which is well known rice dish served in Sri Lanka.
Religion plays an important role in the life of Sri Lankans whether they may be Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim, Christian or of another faith. Official holidays are based on the religions. Poya or full moon day is one of them. In Sri Lankan culture there is not any difference in attitudes at all based on one’s gender. Women are as active as men at work place. Social class plays significant role in society and politics. In rural area still we find isolation of population based on caste. In Sri Lanka Civil War is fought from 1983 and it officially closed in 2009. Sri Lanka’s Civil War has been described as an ethnic conflict between majority of Sinhalese and minority of Tamils. Many Tamils have emigrated abroad due to a discrimination and harassment.

Ceylones have shown a deep and keen interest in preserving and developing their culture in the diaspora. Ceylonese immigrants have played a key role in British administration in Malaya. They have set up number of organizations in the host land. Numbers of Buddhist temples in Malaysia are sponsored by the Sri Lankan diasporic community. In the early 20th century a number of Ceylonese Tamil and Sinhalese institutions were produced in the increase in Ceylonese diasporic communities in the Singapore. The Sri Lankan diaspora in Singapore is successful in maintaining their cultural and traditional relationship with host land and assimilate into that culture.

I.XVII: The Canadian Culture:

Canada is one of ethnically most diverse and multicultural and the successful country on the face of the globe. Canada is a country in the North America which is consisting of 10 provinces and 3 territories. It is located in northern part of the continent and extends from the Atlantic to the Pacific and northward into the Arctic Ocean. Etymologically, the name Canada derives from the St. Lawrence Iroquoian word Kanta which means “village” or “settlement” indigenous inhabitants of the present-day Quebec City region have used the word to direct French explorer Jacques Cartier to the village of Stadacona in 1535. Afterword Cartier has used the word Canada in order to refer not only that particular village, but entire area subject to Donaconna, at Stadacona. And this land now we call it as Canada, which is inhabited by Aboriginal peoples. These Aboriginal peoples are from different cultures and number of linguistic groups.

The issue of Quebec (a province with a dominant French speaking population), Aboriginal groups who are further categorized as Indians (the ‘First Nations’), Inuit (Eskimos) and the Métis (descendents of European trappers and
Aboriginal woman) and the issue of the ethnic immigrants from the various Asian and European nations constitutes Canada’s multicultural society. As the people of different races, regions, languages and culture make the Canadian culture as a ‘culture of diversity.’ This multiculturalist’s country is influenced by the European culture and traditions, especially British and French. It is influenced by that of its linguistic, economic and cultural neighbour - the United State. The people of origin and immigrants include into the main-stream of Canadian culture. J. Sathiavel in Canadian Culture: Canadian Studies in India points out how a collection of diverse national and cultural groups forms the diverse and multiethnic community of Canada as:

The official Canadian census records individual origins according to the national group to which a citizen or his ancestor on the male side belongs to. Statistics on national origins from the census of 1961 gave the following percentages for a nation as a whole. British Isle 44 percent; France 30 percent; other nations of Europe 23 percent; Asia one percent; Indian Eskimo one percent; and others one percent.

(Sathiavel, 48)

Canadians of British Isles live in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. Canadians of French descent inhabits in the territories of New Found land of the Western provinces. Majority of Asiatic live in the British Columbia, and the Aborigines or the inhabitants of Indian and Eskimo origin live in Yukon and Northwest territories.

At the outset to know the history and culture of different provinces is very important. The culture of Quebec deals with the history and society of French speaking majority population. Quebec culture is unique because historically the French colonizers had ruled over Canada before the Bitishers defeated them. “The culture of Quebec is Western culture that is rooted in the history and society of French speaking majority.” (Sathiavel, 52) In Quebec’s culture French language is a constitutionally recognized official language. Quebecker’s culture is different that of English speaking provinces of Canada as:

History made Quebec as meeting place for cultures, where people from around the world experience America, but from a little distance and through a different eye. The culture of
Quebec is connected to the strong culture currents of the rest of Canada, United States, France and the United Kingdom. It is often described as a crossroad between Europe and America.

(Sathiavel, 51-52)

Before the arrival of French and British colonizers Aboriginal peoples are the original inhabitants of Canada. Niharika Rawat in her book Canadian Literary Identity National and Global aptly writes about the aboriginal people as:

Aboriginal people in present day Canada include the First Nations, Inuit, and Métis. The Métis are a mixed-blood people who originated in the mid-17th century when First Nations and Inuit people married European settlers.

(Rawat, 3-4)

Canada is basically a land of immigrants with only a sprinkling of its native inhabitants. Patricia Roy in article “Multiculturalism and the English Canadian Identity” quotes Margaret Atwood. Ottawa – born writer Margaret Atwood presents her views which become a sour phrase as: “We all are immigrants to this place even if we were born here.” (Roy Patricia, 202) Canadian culture is cohesion of many cultures and tradition. The British French and other Europe influences colour its own culture and tradition.

Canada’s two official languages are English and French, The Canadian government has adopted a path of bilingualism, giving English and French the equal status in the government of Canada. Quebec’s official language is French. New Brunswick, is only officially bilingual provinces, has French speaking peoples. Niharika Rawat writes about diversity of languages used in country as:

Other provinces have no official languages as such, but French is used as a language of instruction, in courts, and for other government services, in addition to English. Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec allow for both English and French to be spoken in the provincial legislature, and laws are enacted in both languages. In Ontario, French has some legal status, but is not fully co-official. There are 11 Aboriginal language groups, composed of more than 65 distinct dialects. Of these, only the Cree, Inuktitut and Ojibwa languages have a large
enough population of fluent speakers to be considered viable to survive in the long term. Several aboriginal languages have official status in the Northwest Territories.

(Rawat, 15)

There are no professional theatres in Canada for long time. ‘The Little Theatre Movement’ in 1920s and the Dominion Drama Festival by 1933 give rise to the development in theatre in Canada the professional theatre has developed from long surviving repertory group. And now Canada has number of well known theaters.

American film industry has great influence over Canadian film market and Canadian film industry began to challenge Hollywood. Since 1980 Canada has developed as a dynamic film industry. Canada and Vancouver turn as a Hollywood production place as “Hollywood North.”

Canadians are very aware of preserving their culture and past. Thirty-six National History Parks and Museums are established by federal government in 1970s. Canadian literature reflects the influence of English, French, First Nations/aboriginal land and immigrants culture through their literature.

Canada being the nation of immigrants, literature whether written in English or French, often reflects the Canadian perspective. Canadian culture and identity is closely attached to its culture and represents through its literature. “Many writers try to maintain elements of their own culture, tradition and customs.” (Skvorecky 86) According to J. Sathiavel religious culture also constitutes Canadian culture and plays crucial role in Canada’s Cultural development:

Almost half of all Canadians profess Roman Catholicism, the United Church of Canada or Anglicanism. Roman Catholicism is especially strong in Quebec, New Found Land and the North West territory, where French Canadians have established their settlements. Lutheranism and the United Church are proportionally strong in Prairie Provinces.

(Sathiavel, 52)

The Germans, Italians, Ukrainians, Chinese and the south Asians constitute the predominant immigrant communities. Due to the demands from the various immigrants ethnic communities and in order to celebrate racial, religious and cultural background multiculturalism policy is adopted by Canada in 1970s and 1980s.
Multiculturalism makes Canada “a cult of minorities.” (Mathew, 120) Canadian cuisine varies from region to region.

I.XVIII: Cultural Conflict:

People around the world are similar as well as different, they are similar since they share common characteristics and at the same time they are different since every one of them is born and brought up in different cultures, having different set of beliefs and values. In the cross cultural migration the issue of cultural conflict is considered as an important in the migration studies. In the diasporic /migration study issue of cultural conflict is one of the features of it. At the outset it is important to study the concept of cultural conflict.

Cultural conflict is a type of conflict that occurs when different cultural values and beliefs clashes. In the multicultural society different social group have different cultural belief and ideas, these differences between beliefs and ideas leads to cultural conflict. Culture not only deals with music, language, literature, mortal life, but also with rules and condition which are basically related to the social community. There is no society without culture and culture cannot exist without society.

Jonathan H. Turner defines cultural conflict as, a conflict caused by “difference in cultural values and belief that place people at odds with one another.” (https://en.m.wickipedia.org/cultural_conflict) According to Alexander Grew cultural conflict “occurs when people’s expectations of a certain behavior coming from their cultural backgrounds are not met, as others have different cultural background and different expectation.” (https://en.m.wickipedia.org/cultural_conflict)

Each individual either immigrant or native deals with a particular culture. They belong to a large social group and the family of the nation and national history and geography. During the interaction among the different cultural group, what happens normally, human beings behave according to their own cultural background, if he/she crosses the boundaries of his/her culture, he carry with them their deeply rooted cultural beliefs and customs and cultural habits. But during the cross cultural migration these cultural habits or beliefs may not be coincide within the host country because both of them carrying their particular cultural background with themselves. The difference in cultural background cannot fulfill their expectation which leads to cultural conflict.
Not always but the cultural difference may be the one of the causes of cultural conflict. The way of life of a group is different from other and this cultural difference between different nationalities, religious or ethnic group causes cultural conflict. In this globalized world different society or ethnic groups have a particular life style, and if there is not any required awareness pertaining to different societies’ lifestyle leads to cultural conflict.

Every individual on the earth is busy in keeping to his/her struggles for their existences. He/she struggle for it and they not only exist but should be survived. So the struggle for the existence and the survival of the fittest are very important principles. Social changes and miscommunication are the reasons of the cultural conflicts. Conflict may be personal, racial or political it always brings disequilibrium in the community. It always tries to cope with homeland and host land.

I.XIX: Identity Crisis:

In the recent decades, population migration or the labour mobility have become the prominent issues in most of the parts of the world. Number of people in the world migrate either by choice, necessity or compulsion are born in one country and move to another during their life. The decision to leave one’s country of origin and move to another location disconnecting oneself from one’s familiar and social institutions and family members and adjust in host land is very difficult task.

Today, while talking about immigration and ethnicity we always use the word identity. Identity is a new term. It came into use as a popular social science term in 1950s. Identity comes from the Latin root ‘idem.’ The Oxford English Dictionary (OED) defines identity as: “The sameness of a person or thing at all time or in all circumstances, the condition or fact that a person or thing is itself and not something else.” (qtd by Gleason Philip, 911)

Globalization provides the context for the new cultural formation. Globalization is the process of intermeshing of world economy, politics and culture, gradually into a global system. Culture is considered as one of the most determining factors of a person’s identity. The intermeshing of culture causes identity crisis. Erickson was the key figure who coined the expression ‘identity crisis’ and did more to popularize the term. Psychoanalyst Erik Erikson’s concept of “identity crisis” as we know now is also derived mainly by the work of psychologist Erik Erikson’s (1902-1994) ego psychoanalytic theory in 1950. He has derived this concept from
Freudian id-ego-superego model. Jane Kroger and James E. Marcia in an article “The Identity Statutes: Original Meanings and Interpretations,” explains Erikson’s development of the concept from Freudian id-ego-superego model as:

“It will be worth reminding ourselves that the ego, the id and the superego are the concepts. They are abstractions that (sic) refer to certain characteristics of behavior. In contrast to the id, which refers to peremptory aspects of behavior, the ego refers to the aspects of behavior which are delayable, bring about delay or are themselves products of delay.

(Jane Kroger and James E. Marcia, 32)

Wikipedia defines the term Identity as: “Identity is the conception, qualities, beliefs and expressions that make a person or group different than others.” (https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Identity_social_science) Oxford Dictionary defines Identity as, “The fact of being who or what a person or thing is.” (http://www.Oxforddictionaries.com) Richard Jenkins in his work Social Identity defines identity that “refers to the ways in which individuals and collectivities are distinguished in their social relations with other individuals and collectivities.” (Jenkins, 4) Hogg and Abrams explains concept of identity, “identity is people’s concept of who they are, of what sort of people they are, and how they relates to others.” (Hogg and Abrams 1988, 2) Deng defines “identity is used in this book to describe the way individuals and groups define themselves and are defined by others on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, language and culture.” (Deng 1995, 1)

In order to develop an idea of a person it is crucial to focus on various types of identities. Two sense of identity are designated “social” and “personal” identity. Identity refers to the particular name or a particular person. Identity is a social construct and it is largely determined by the relationship between self and others.

**Personal Identity:**

The concept of personal identity is crucial one. It is used to refer to the result of identification. Personal identity can typically be glossed as:

*Personal identity is a set of attributes, beliefs, desires, or principles of action that a person thinks distinguish her in socially relevant ways and that a) the person takes special
The qualities or characteristics of a person that are reported to make personal identity are aspects in which the person takes a special pride or the loss of which is required a loss of self respect. In order to make up one’s personal identity, for e.g. My unusual height, my beautiful hair, my personal style, my occupation, my ethnic or religious identity, my moral or political convictions, my life-time goals, the specific local culture I belong to – all of these are things are necessary to understand. “In Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity” Charles Taylor seems to this approach of personal identity as:

…the question of identity …is often spontaneously phrased by people in the form: Who am I? What (answers) this question for us is an understanding of what is of crucial importance to us.

(Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity” Charles Taylor)

Social Identity

Particularly an identity is a social construct. Wikipedia defines “a social identity is the portion of an individual’s self concept derived from perceived membership in a relevant social group.” (www.wikipedia.org) John Turner in his social identity theory has introduced the concept of social identity as “a way in which to explain intergroup behavior.” (www.wikipedia.org)

Cultural Identity

Human beings organize their live in culturally derived system of meaning in order to view the world from within a culture. Culture is considered as one of the most determining factors of a person's identity. According to Stephen Buchner (1973), “the cultural identity of a society is defined by its majority group and this group is usually quite distinguishable from the minority subgroups with whom they share the physical environment and the territory that they inhabit.” (www.mediate.com) The concept of cultural identity is widely discussed by Stuart Hall. He writes:
Identity is not as transparent or unproblematic as we think. Perhaps instead of thinking of identity as an already accomplished fact, which the new cultural practices then represent, we should think, instead, of a identity as a ‘production’ which is never complete, always in process, and always constituted within, not outside, representation.

(Hall, 392)

According to Stuart Hall, there are at least two different ways of thinking about cultural identity. Identity is defined according to one’s shared culture as:

Cultural identity in terms of one shared culture, a sort of collective ‘one true self’ hiding inside the many other, more superficial or artificially imposed ‘selves’, which people with a shared history and ancestry hold in common. Within the terms of this definition our cultural identities reflect the common historical experiences and shared cultural codes which provide us, as ‘one people’, with stable, unchanging and continuous frames of reference and meaning, beneath the shifting divisions and vicissitudes of actual history.

(Hall, 393)

Identities are the names given to different ways we are located. The concept of cultural identity incorporates the shared values, beliefs and day-to-day activities and so on. Cultural identity is a symbol of one’s essential experience of oneself.

A cultural identity in the second sense according to Hall is:

Cultural identity in this second sense, is a matter of ‘becoming’ as well as of ‘being.’ It belongs to the future as much as to the past. It is not something which already exists, transcending place, time, history and culture.

(Hall, 394)

**Ethnic or National identities**

Ethnic identities are typically an affiliative construct, where individuals are viewed by themselves and by others as belonging to a particularly ethnic or cultural group. Yuet Cheung (1993) defines ethnic identification as “the psychological attachment to an ethnic group or heritage.” (Yuet Cheung 1993, 1216) The term ethnic group and ethnicity are first used in anthropology to refer to a people presumed
to affiliate with the same cultural group and who shared the same custom. At first ethnic identity is used as a synonymous with race or racial identity and ethnicity in general.

Each ethnic group has its own unique culture. On the basis of this the community asserts its right to exist according to its own belief and customs. National identity is typically a matter of birth rather than achievement.

1.XX: Conclusion:

At present time, the cross-cultural migration across the geographical divides in search of betterment provides boost to mass migration. Migration is always a complex act, it may be either willingly or forcefully, it causes troubles in the life of people. Immigrants are the advertent/inadvertent carriers of their cultures. Intermeshing of cultures causes cultural clashes which is the one of the reasons of identity crisis. It is the need of time to create awareness among immigrants about the emergence of problems with respect to cross-cultural encounters in migration.

The contemporary diasporic Sri Lankan English writers have attracted attention of international readers. The diasporic literature negotiates and delineates with the commitment to host culture and the yearnings for the native culture. It also reflects intense desire to have his identity. The condition of ‘doubleness’ makes immigrant to face the problem of ethnic identity which is always fractured and fragmented and always remain in frustration and in confusion.

In the context of diasporic study Sri Lankan diasporic writers negotiates with the diasporic theme of uprooting, dislocation, cultural hybridity, alienation, expatriation, exile, identity and cultural clashes. They try to balance between the opposing worlds. Culture plays an important role in the context of diaspora study. Culture is the whole way of life of people from birth to grave. Sri Lankan culture is shaped by the intermingling of various traditional facet of Portuguese, Dutch and British element. In the multicultural society there is a difference in cultural value and beliefs. Clash of these values and beliefs is the result of cultural conflict. Cultural clash is the crucial issue in the diasporic subject. Identity is the symbol of one’s essential experience of oneself. Issue of identity crisis is the feature of cross-cultural study.
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