Chapter-4

Social Stereotypes

Meera Syal is a British novelist of many talents. She sets the stage for a psychic struggle between individual rights and customary practice in her novels and screenplays. What follows is a compelling exploration of the epistemological crevices of competing psychic and sexual economics in which the common denominators are the oppression and interdependence of Black women. Syal's works shreds the illusion that education and modernization buy middle-class women enough consciousness to opt out of the patriarchal circuits of exchange and subjection. Meera Syal skillfully lays out the intangible but more compelling psychic economics of cultural insularity, immigrant self-perpetuation, and isolation in her work *My Sister Wife* (1993), in which Asif's and Maryam's cultural ambivalence takes root and finally overwhelms Farah's British sense of self and individuality.

Syal paints a contemporary picture of interlocking interests of desire and patriarchy, both Muslim and western through which this particular British Muslim household must determine its fate. Maryam and Farah eventually do, by killing the source of their discontent, Asif. Farah and Maryam are entangled in a traditional Pakistani Muslim situation, made possible by Asif's right to have more than one wife. Farah, driven to the edge of insanity by Asif's increasing psychological abuse, displaces her agony onto Maryam. Perceiving Maryam as the tormentor, Farah attempts to kill her by adding poison to the pitcher of drinking water kept in Maryam's room. But by a bizarre twist of events, Asif becomes the victim, leaving the women dependent on each other for help and care. This deeply troubling scenario ends inconclusively with Farah's inadvertent murder of Asif and the bleak companionship
in which Farah and Maryam find them, offering no suggestions as to how their predicament might be resolved within local communities.

South Asian feminist writers bring with them a rich baggage of cultural, linguistic, racial and religious diversity which gets accented by a feeling of nostalgia, different immigration patterns and the various waves of diaspora. They suffer from a sense of dislocation and alienation and "loss of identity". This "loss of identity" is not quite a "loss". The question of their identity, especially in women's writings assumes particular significance as they are out to create a "rupture" in "the great tradition" of male writing in a still dominantly patriarchal world. The chasm between the ideal and social reality continues to haunt the victims of discrimination providing a continuum to the diaspora consciousness, which is a source of creativity. Cross-cultural readings of diasporic authors are not so easy. Uma Parameswaran rightly observes:

Mutual exclusion often translates itself into both creative writing and literary criticism. The ... issue of 'appropriation of culture' throws yet another Wrench, for both sides are wary of crossing lines. Immigrant writers tend to restrict their setting and reviewers tend to focus on the 'immigrant' content of all works, ignoring other aspects of theme and technique (Begum, Hariharan 278).

A stereotype is a set of beliefs about the characteristics presumed to be typical of members of a group. Stereotypes distinguish one group from another like men from women, or blacks from whites. Stereotype can be positive or negative, accurate or inaccurate. To the extent that they are accurate, stereotypes provide information that is useful in forming expectations to help guide behaviour. To the extent that they are overgeneralizations, exaggerations, or inaccurate depictions of group members, stereotypes can lead to prejudiced perceptions, evaluations, and responses to
individuals. The works under analysis deal with the problems of female protagonists in their family and community, a female perspective is offered in a way that British South Asian women show their worries and feelings as well as try to find the solution for their problems through a negotiation and about the society around them despite the problem to cope with their reality. Each of us lives in a diverse social world. Although we are frequently unaware of it, our lives unfold within social contexts which are populated by people who are different—both from us and each other. The people who populate the situations in our day-to-day lives may differ in many ways, such as their ethnic identity, sex, cultural background, economic status, political affiliation, or religious belief. The specific dimensions of difference do not matter nearly as much as the fact that we think, feed, and behave within diverse social contexts. We learned of the many ways that social categories and stereotypes distort our thinking about outgroups and the inferences we make about people from other groups. We become architects of our own social realities when we express stereotypic beliefs and expectations about people based on their group membership. A cultural stereotype is the set of traits and characteristics that people associate with a particular social group. Cultural stereotypes are beliefs about others held by consensus in cultural groups. Cultural stereotypes are transmitted through socializing agents. Cultural stereotypes mainly preserve traditional knowledge about social groups and are passed from one generation to the next.

Meera Syal is a mastercrafts woman in situating characters in a particular social set up and valuing him or her in the light of the whole network of relationship that he or she finds entangled in. The individual is cross referred by polysmic social forces. Society consists of individuals and the individual is a part of society. It is a different matter that some individuals do not go well with the society for a number of
reasons. On the one extreme is the Sanyasi who renounces the rules of society. Women writers of all ages have a natural preference for writing women characters. Such preference may be a limitation to their creativity. Meera Syal is no exception in so far as she has written by and large about women characters and no wonder if most of her novels move around women characters. Because of her preoccupation with women characters many studies have come out on the subject.

Meera Syal's works are not merely accessed from a 'literary' perspective; she first came to the fore in the surge of British Asian women's writings in the 1980s alongside Ravinder Randhwa, Leena Dhingra, Rukhsana Ahmad, and others. She brought gendered questions of cultural identity to the fore, developing feminist themes, and challenging Eurocentric models of feminism by reformulating gendered ethnicities in her writings. The slow rise to visibility of ethnic minorities in British culture has been well documented, both in second texts and in fictional autobiographical narratives such as Meera Syal's *Anita and Me*. In the main Passage of Syal's text, Meena, the protagonist, describes the virtual absence of Asian and black faces in British media, as well as their distortion as a result of orientalist stereotyping, during the 1960s. She says:

According to the newspapers and television, we simply did not exist. If a brown or black face ever did appear on TV, it stopped us all in our tracks [...] and we would crowd round and coo over the walk-on in some detective series, some long suffering actor [...] with a goodness-gracious me accent [...] But these occasional minor celebrities never struck us as real; they were someone else's version of Indian, far too exaggerated and exotic to be believable (AM 165).
The British media were slow to reflect Britain's true multiethnic nature during
the second half of the twentieth century, programming designed to produce images of
multiethnic, multicultural British society has increased markedly over the past decade
whether by chance or design, this change occurred subsequent to a landmark in the
historical development of multicultural Britain: the Stephen Lawrence murder in 1993
and the resultant Macpherson report, which indicted the British police with
institutional racism. British television is a key public arena in which images and
narratives of British multiculturalism are constructed. Syal's text shows the absence of
any single version or narrative of British multiculturalism and reflects a different
constellation of the complex relations of identity and power in contemporary Britain.
Meera Syal is no exception in so far as she has written by and large about women
characters and no wonder if most of her novels move around women characters.
Because of her preoccupation with women characters many studies have come out on
the subject. Syal's *Anita and Me*, is a novel mainly concerned with Meena, the lively
daughter of Indian immigrants, cannot stand the boring immobility of the North and
shows a rebellious character, because she: "longs to escape from her humdrum
existence, into a world of tragedy and glamour, of technicolor emotions on a big
screen" (Adami 150).

In the present novel *Anita and Me* (1996), the protagonist Meena, a nine years
old girl, born to immigrant, parents from India, grows up in England and struggles to
search for identity. Her inner thoughts are the medium through which the author
explores the other characters. The Kumars family is the only Indian family in the area,
are the pioneers of the diasporic waves bound to reshape the social composition of
England. This story begins with recounting the emotional struggles of an Indian girl to
make a new life in England. She feels suffocated with her Indian background and the
story is a combination of ethnicity and childhood. Meena very carefully elaborates on her coming of age she finds herself in the dilemma of cross-culture. She says: "I am not a liar. I just learned very early on that those of us deprived of history sometimes need to turn to mythology to feel complete, to belong" (AM 10). Meena's struggle for a positive identity as the only South Asian child in a village, where life is governed by low-level racism which takes both exoticizing and more vicious forms. She spends her time with white children and indulges in the same early teen pursuits as the white girls. The hybrid qualities of her identity come into full focus when she is placed in situations in which she is measured against the children of South Asians visitors from the town who have been brought up in accordance with other South Asians visitors from the town who have been brought up in accordance with other South Asian cultural norms. She is fluent in both the local dialect and mainstream teenage culture. Meera Syal's *Anita* and *Me* (1996), records the problems and the dilemmas of the characters, their feelings and emotions.

In the story the incidents take place one after another and the reflection of the incidents on the character, their reaction to the incident is admirable. The progression of the story and the wrong being rectified either by the character or by situation to bring a desired result on the minds of the readers is the most remarkable quality of her writings. The minute details of the character, their dressing style, their customs, their family highlights the migrant's quality. Working of the sub-conscious mind of the characters gives the reader an experience of despair in the nostalgic moments in which they are placed. Meena sense of insufficiency epitomises the bodily characteristic and derives from her broken identity. Meena's identity is divided into two halves between English social setting and the Indian family milieu. Syal suggests that body is like a mirror which shows personal experiences and psychological
tensions. Meena deplores the reverse privileged menacing hybridity not just in a visual performance but in the thickness body of the migrant. The young protagonist feels the physical changes and the awareness of undergoing a generational crisis bring her to a paradigmatic crossroads.

This is a turning point in Meena's life. Freud analysis links the importance of the self with the material entity of the body, and modern psychoanalysis Jacques Lacan has sustained the primacy of the visual in the perception of the self and the making of identity through the act of vision. Meera Syal's narrative Anita and Me (1996) is infinitely more complex than simple reading. Anita and Me is an example of Black British Bildungsroman and offers a movement from a position of naivety to enlightenment, as Meena develops and comes to terms with her own complex cultural positioning. Syal's first person narration is taken to reveal the progress achieved between the confused and unformulated child Meena, and the self-aware adult narrator Meena. In this novel the narrator recounts her early life as "the early years of struggle and disillusion, living in a shabby boarding house with another immigrant family, her mother 'a simple punjabi girl suffering from culture shock, marooned and misplaced in Walverhampton" (Upstone 123).The familiar traumatic vision of migrant experience is shown to be ironically for humorous effect. According to critic Hussain:

The problem of racial prejudices, of being a British-born Asian in the 1960s when such an experience is rare, of being a true minority in a world of almost exclusive whiteness, is behind Meena. She has emerged unscathed with a humour that announces her distance from the stereotypical definitions of Asianness into which she might be placed (Upstone 123).
The introduction does not end with their irony. It offers a far more ambivalent, and crucial comment. He argues that:

But I have always been a sucker for the double entendre; the gap between what is said and what is thought, what is stated and what is implied, is a place in which I have always found myself. I'm really not a liar, I just learned very early on that those of us deprived of history sometimes need to turn to feel complete, to belong (Upstone123).

Syal's novel is postmodern not in Rushdie's sense but like V.S. Naipaul's fiction. In her writings Syal shows a great interest in the mythical from her later fiction should not be simplistically divorced. In this novel, writer suggests a restoration of certainty and calm, but only inforces anxiety and tumult. Syal shows the classic elements of this story generational conflict, school experiences, the conflict between rural and urban life is intricately woven together. Meena's positive sense of self may be less transformation than a more traditional formation of her adult self with awareness of society's prejudices and limitations. Meena as an indulger in fantasies, a girl who actively positions herself.

Meera Syal's novel Anita and Me (1996), in which the protagonist, Meena's desire to see India and to become integrated within the Punjabi community, the traditional court of aunties and unless that enlarge Indian families and the arrival of Nanima, the maternal grandmother who performs a portrait of Mother India. Through these devices, Syal rewards Meena a gradual process of formation and maturity, a feeling of awareness while it is possible to view an autobiographical frame that illustrates the prejudices of Britain and its rejection of immigrants from former colonies.
It is worth noticing the controversial role assumed by 'aunties' in Indian culture, in their profound marginality, they tumultuously extend the domestic space of the Hindu family and constitute a symphonic texture of intentioned traditions and family ramifications. Syal treat the figure of auntie with a generous injection of irony and demolishes the grave image to paint a caricature, a light hearted personage. Meera Syal says that: "pleasure of writing as an Asian Woman is the pleasure of exploding stereotypes" (Adami 164). Many diasporic or Indian novels in English are devoted to the feminie issue of aunties, often associated with a shadowed state of widowhood, but here the case is different. Contravening the custom of encircling aunties within the restricted space of the *Zenana*, place exclusively dedicated to women and the author frees them from such segregating claustrophobia to revive the hybrid scenario and to assemble a crowded family reunion:

The Aunties all had their individual names and distinct personalities, but fell into the role of Greek Chorus to mama's epic solo role in my life. Although none of them, nor their husbands, the uncles, were actually related to me by blood, no their husbands, the uncles, were actually related to me by blood, Auntie and uncle were the natural respectful terms given to them, to any Asian person old enough to boss me around. [...] But me mom's sister is called a Masee, and my dad's sister a Buaji.... So you know the difference between pretended ones and real ones (AM 29-30).

In their anarchic exorbitance, aunties and partially uncles remind Meena of her indissoluble cultural background and stimulate her apparently mild interest in India. In Syal's novels both character Meena and Sunita, try to find out the value of culture and traditions. The vivacious style that they employ to picture aunties and uncles
mirrors and humorous modernity that replaces the strict notion of *purdah*, the segregating division of women from men, with urban cheerfulness, in the social architecture of diasporic writing, Syal testifies to the partial secularisation of Indian membership and revisitation of religious zeal. In Syal's fiction, the rehearsal of the female body does not solely replicate a discursive analysis, in which the biological condition and the constructed image of womanhood coincide. Paradoxically, the body of the Indian woman is shown by segregating norm of the *purdah* because in Indian society, the normative thrust has increasingly been towards the concealment of the female body and this marks the migrant's process of self-perception in the new location.

The novelist clearly condemns and parodically challenges the female marginalisation of the East, a textual parallelism complies the bodily representation of both Asian and English female protagonists in as much as Meena and Anita pursue a bespangled appearance. The novel works with a series of multiple and contradictory identifications as Meena and her family negotiate a conflicted space in which, individually, they are treated with respect but as part of a larger category immigrants in a rural English situation, is a typical of this particular period- the late 1960s and is one of the few 'migrant' texts not set in an urban context. In some senses, the family's uniqueness gives them an elected role as exemplary representatives: "It was her duty to show them that we could wear discreet gold jewellery, dress in tasteful silks and speak English with a very strong accent" (AM 25). The village and its inhabitants are only seen from the perspective of the narrator and they are often constructed as figures in a gallery of working-class stereotypes. A reverse stereotyping or caricaturing takes place as the controlling gaze is Asian British. In a similar reversal, the Asian family gently pokes fun at the habits of their English friends.
The narrative is multi-voiced, all the voices are filtered through the mimicry and simulation of the narrator, and the white British characters have almost no voice of their own. When Meena tries to imagine India it is in the tropes and images of her locality plus 'a few cows lounging around on the corners' (AM 32). For her parents, on the contrary, Tollington is chosen precisely because its fields, trees, light and space 'could almost look something like home' (AM 35). Both parents and daughter in a sense 'find' themselves in translation.

The writer's textual strategy alternates the genre of comedy with dark mood of tragedy; the novel is not resistant from death, violence and betrayal. It sketches the difficult way from innocence to experience. The development of British society in the 1960s, it constant hints at sad domestic episodes of actual missing of children in the Manchester area. The bittersweet relation of representation which joins and divide Anita and Meena and mirrors the protagonist's crisis and quest for identity. Syal involved in metaphorical and physiological imagery discrimination between individual body and the intercultural surroundings. Two years of Meena's puberty and maelstrom of physical and psychological fervour. The scene depicts the mutable scenario, of society and ethnic belonging is take part and re-modernized.

Meera Syal's witty prose tackles the subject with cunning methods and abundant irony in the words of Meena so that when at school her teacher "Mr. Williams had asked where the moors came from [...] I had put up my hand and answered confidently, ‘Yorkshire, Sir!'" (AM 213). The confounding geography of otherness is here mocked by the author, who insists on the schematic constructedness of cultural identities and topographic cliches. Meena permeates into a state of halfway ethnic awareness and does not seem to fit in her body, which is perceived as an immutable hindrance that obliterates the cultural translation and communication
between East and West. Meena sense of insufficiency epitomises the bodily aspect and originates from her broken identity, divided between the English social setting and the Indian family surroundings. Meena denounces the nullifying choice of threatening hybridity not only in visual performance, but also in concreteness of the body of the migrant. Meena's undergoing a generational crisis bring her on the path of paradigmatic crossroads, which is turning point in her life. This is like a childish act which also displays a sense of unbelonging show the difference between Indianness and Englishness. She thinks that she can't go through with the society. Meena have turned to piercing and tattooing by using her skin as a site of construct and modify her identity like a postmodern heroine. Nowadays psychoanalysts explore the lively status of the self and constant attempts of the individual to grow into a different condition and such practice may also include earrings, cuts, piercing, lifting, tattoos or other means of corporeal transformation. These permanent signs eventually influence the structure of identity and determine the return to the intimacy of the self. Meera Syal's novel *Life Isn't All Ha Ha Hee Hee* (1999), offers a different response to the effects of globalization upon gender identities. Syal's novel represents traditional South Asian culture as repressive for women and her characters do not encompass the range of class divisions. These differences in focus and outlook mean that *Life Isn't All Ha Ha Hee Hee* celebrates the destabilizing effects of globalization upon traditional gender identities in its South Asian female characters. Syal's female characters are empowered to respond to the new gender possibilities that theorists such as true argue globalization represents. The novel mostly follows the trajectory that identifies in much recent South Asian diasporic fiction, in which western global modernity is represented as a progressive narrative for South Asian women. Nevertheless, despite the novel's favourable representation of the effects of globalization upon traditional
gender identities, Syal is also forced to confront how the destabilization of traditional South Asian gender identities does not always lead to more progressive conceptions of gender. On the one hand, this is because numerous South Asian male characters reify gender identities as a way of maintaining power in their personal lives. On the other hand, the novel's representation of white male characters suggests that the erosion of traditional South Asian conceptions of gender simply obfuscates the re-inscription of the gender hierarchy that Marxist critics identify within the world system.

The novel is divided into two halves that correspond to different seasons, the first beginning in winter and the second in spring. These two halves are each further divided into three sections that shift narrative point of view between the three female characters: Sunita, Chila and Tania. With respect to content, Syal places considerably more emphasis upon the male-female relationship amongst the South Asian Diaspora in Britain, allowing for a wider representation of South Asian diasporic masculinities and a more detailed examination of how globalization affects specific relationship between men and women. Syal attempts to manufacture dramatic tension in *Life Isn't All Ha Ha Hee Hee* by centering the narrative on Deepak's marriage to Chila and his subsequent affair with Tania. The ensuing melodrama, in conjunction with the pop culture language of the novel and fast paced narrative, evokes the tone of soap opera and popular film. These stylistic features of the text support the theme of globalization eroding traditional South Asia gender identities by underlining the extent to which the central female characters conceive of their identities in terms of global popular Culture, rather than South Asian cultural tradition.

There are a number of specific ways that *Life Isn't All Ha Ha Hee Hee* shows globalization challenging traditional gender roles and identities amongst the South
Asian Diaspora in Britain, resulting in what the novel clearly finds to be more empowering female identities for women. The most important of these effects is the process of increasing women's participation in the paid labour market, which has a number of positive effects on the gender roles and identities available to women. Sunita recalls that for her mother a secret collection of gold jewelry is her "insurance", because South Asian women "don't have bank accounts so we have these. Just in case" (LAH 82). This lack of autonomy means that South Asian women of Sunita's mother's generation are forced to rely on their husbands and families for financial survival and, therefore, to adopt the domestic roles and identities defined for them within this social structure. The extent to which this limits gender possibilities for South Asian women is underlined by Sunita contrasting her mother to "Modern Auntie", whose divorce has liberated her from financial reliance upon her husband and the structures of the traditional South Asian nuclear family. The strategic roles of aunties as intermediaries within family and community conflicts are reiterated in the novel. In contrast to the rest of her aunties as spry and overweight fussy women. Sunita describes the legion of her aunties and uncles in an affectionate manner:

"There were too many aunties and uncles to remember their names, so I gave them my own titles, based on their most memorable characteristics. There were the obvious ones like Ginger Auntie (over fond of the henna bottle), Car keys Uncle (hands for ever in his pockets jingling things, at least I hoped they were his keys), Halitosis uncle My Bobby Auntie and my personal favourite, Existential Uncle, a tall thin man who never spoke when spoken to, but [...] as my confidante. It almost felt wrong to bestow the auntie label on her as she was nothing like the overweight fussy women who seemed to live at my house at
weekends. [...] And she wore make-up. But not the usual auntie warpaint of bright orange lipstick and alarming smears of eyeshadow.

She used it to give her face shadows and contours (LAH 79-80).

Sunita recognizes the need to cling to tradition and family union, which in the case of Indian culture translates an extended family tree. The new generation of British Asian women that Sunita, Chila and Tania, however a sea change is evident in how south Asian women are perceived in British society and the opportunities that are now available to them in an economy that has been transformed by globalization.

Tania offers the most pronounced example of women are no longer narrowly perceived as wives and mothers within traditional South Asian culture and society, but also represent a new vanguard of valued worker in the global economy. Tania in sharp contrast to those of her mother's generation, being South Asian and a woman is a prized identity in this new economy, making her a "marketable Asian babe kicking ass" (Roy 171), as one production company executive, Mark, puts it. According to mark, such marketability is bound to Tania's appeal to America production companies, of which he comments:

The yanks would love you"! Mark enthused. "You look Mexican. Tell them you're Asian and they'll expect some bird from Vietnam, say you're Indian and they'll ask what reservation. When they twig you're from the land of Ravi Shankar and holy men, they'll cream their Calvin Kleins (Roy 171).

These remarks suggest that not only has globalization enable more opportunities for South Asian women in the labour market, but also within the new global cultural economy South Asian female identity has been transformed into a salable "bit of exotic".Sunita and Chila do not represent such pronounced examples of
South Asian female career success, the importance of paid work to their lives and identities remains a significant theme in the novel. Chila's engagement with the public sphere is important to her, not to much for the political reasons but because it gives a sense of self-worth and meaning to her life. Consequently, after marrying Deepak and becoming a housewife not only to her sense as being "good" at something taken from her, but she is also cut off from the social relationships outside of the family structure.

Indeed, from Sunita's perspective, consumer culture represents an important way of rejecting the idea of self 'sacrifice' that is implicit in the Sita myth and the role of women as wife and mother within Hindu mythology. The process of reinvention destabilizes the static mythological narratives of gender that Syal finds problematic in traditional Hindu culture, such as "The Sita complex" that leads "many Indian women to equate marriage and partnership with trial and suffering" (Roy 173). In contrast to the archetypal narrative of women as self-denying, consumer culture is shown as a process that promotes and nurtures a sense of self in Sunita, enabling her to put her personal pleasure ahead of the needs of her family. Syal is addressing the theme of violence against South Asian women and raises a number of problems that result from an oversimplified valorization of western gender norms.

In Syal second novel, *Life Isn't All Ha Ha Hee Hee* (1999), three female protagonists play the central role in the whole story. The renegotiations are not only confined to the female characters in Syal's novel. In one striking scene, Akash, the husband of one of the three female protagonists, who works as a therapist because "transcultural therapy [...] that's where the money is" (Bartels,Wiemann 55) tries to reconcile an Indian couple by inducing the husband to edge his self-definition away from older ethnocultural models focused on male superiority:
There are the hardest habits to break", Akash continued, managing a re-assuring smile. "The old ones. All men have to contend with the example set by their fathers. But for us, we also have to reassess our cultural habits, too". Akash was flowing now. He loved these moments, when the theory became flesh, when it all fitted perfectly. "It is extremely hard, having to dismantle your belief system. Because we you are not only having to question your attitudes as a man, but more specifically, as an Asian man. It can seem like you're losing everything that makes you you but we all know, at least I hope we do know after two months together, that we are also the generation that can change things, redefine what being Asian and male or Asian and female means, without losing pride in who we are. Because culture evolves and changes, just like human beings", [...] "If you mention culture one more time, I might just throw up", said Seema calmly (Bartels, Wiemann 56).

The oversmooth therapist's version of ethnocultural change is bound to fail, and the scene ends in a turmoil of flying furniture and scattered papers rather than in reconciliation, but the problematic scene is that Akash himself is explicitly wrestle with later in the novel. In British Asian culture ethnicity is the main issue in literary studies. The ethnicity shows that new literature in English is not 'primordial' but 'modern' in the sense that it contributes a lot in transnational and transcultural contexts. As critic Tariq Modood put it:“It looks, therefore, as if the minority cultures, described here may be long term features of British society, but the ways in which minorities conceive of themselves and the cultural syntheses that are taking place are
various, changing and generating new mixed forms of ethnicity" (Bartels, Wiemann 56).

Syal's *Life Isn't All Ha Ha Hee Hee* (1999) maintains a subversive re-interpretation of the Asian community in London and breaks the plot into a series of episodic events, in a modernist fashion. The story is revolving around three Indian Women: Sunita, Tania and Chila. Indeed the female viewpoint dominants the novel and Meera Syal employs it as a tool to dismantle fixed cliches or collective stereotypes regarding both the Indian and English communities whereas the male characters play a minor role. All three female characters, shows individual features and has to survive through weird circumstances. Sunita embodies the sad and bored housewife, Tania tries to achieve a high rank in the world of Media and Chila performs the shy and inexperienced bride, predicated by the notion of having a proper Indian marriage. Syal's heroines display an energised reaction towards gender discrimination that stems from traditional Indian lore. It is very important to noticing about her operation goes beyond a feminist prototype, while the Indian 'mother' culture is well rooted in space and time and bans the intercultural agency of cross-over; the condition of the urbanised exiles becomes resistant and paradoxically problematic.

Tania's refusal of old traditional rules and labels renders her an unreadable character, oscillating in a borderline definition: she is neither Indian nor English. This shows the confusing relation of East and West, of Tania and Martin:

Of course, he could identify spoken Punjabi, but he somewhat never associated it with Tania [...] Martin was struck by the intimacy that a shared language could evoke, and how his writer's ear heard different tunes in each one. French always sounded dirty and indolent,
provocative pillow chat, even if a couple happened to be arguing over who last unloaded the dishwater. Spanish was passionate and slightly amused, as if the speaker knew it was obligatory to lose their temper about something inappropriate before the end of the sentence, and then forget about it two sentences later. Russian depressed him, in the way a good Vodka hangover did, and Mandarin was noble and slightly condescending. He had heard Malayalam once, in a South Indian vegetarian restaurant, he chose it as his favourite so far, as the babbles and rolling tongue plosives sounded like a large man farting in the bath. But Punjabi, he decided, he hated. It was crude, soil-bound, back-slapping macho sounding, no spaces to listen as Tania and the Bloke seemed to constantly talk over each other (LAH 126-127).

Through this representation, Meera Syal stresses the unconventionality of the girl and jeeringly portrays a character that may stand as a muse for a modern artist in search for originality. Meera Syal ambitiously tries to picture the human and psychological diversity by widening the scope of her prose. Syal's narrative unearths the paradigmatic space of diaspora, that creates meanings in the global redrawing of confines and cultures. Through the depiction of the lives of the three women in *Life Isn't All Ha Ha Hee Hee* raises questions of cultural difference, identity family expectations and traditional cultural practices, illustrating how they are negotiated in different ways by second generation British South Asian woman. Syal works suggest that escape or exile is not the only substitute for British Asian women. Syal's first play *one of us* features a runaway Asian girl, her successive protagonists are all women who have stayed close to the society while redefining what being an Asian women means. One thing is clear about Syal's female characters is that their portrayals by
contemporaries like Gurinder Chadha shows gendered and cultural expectations and roles from home that are not merely rearticulated but heightened in migration. South Asian British women's position is especially painful intersection between the West and their ethnic background. Straddling in cultural divides, some live double lives, as Syal illustrates in her characterisation of young women in secret relationships like Hashida in *Bhaji on the Beach* and Tania in *Life Isn't All Ha Ha Hee Hee*.

Syal's portrayals contest the patriarchal expectations imposed on Asian women by the majority community and their own communities. In Syal's novel *Life Isn't All Ha Ha Hee Hee*, represents positive aspects of being Asian women. In dissimilar ways, they face the ways in which the socialisation of some British Asian women reproduces relations of domination and subordination. The novel charts naive Chila's growth to a feminist self-relation as her marriage falls apart. Sunita's promising career as a lawyer seemed certain: “Now a dissatisfied mother she contemplates her vanished career, veering between guilt and the fear that she will end up like so many of her mother's friends, reeking of the sour, damp smell of unfulfilled potential” (LAH 242).

Tania, a stylish TV producer with a white boyfriend, makes an analogous recognition of the way some British Asian women excel in the workplace and yet still attempt to fulfill certain ingrained expectations in the domestic space: "We meet the world head up, head on, we meet our men and we bow down gratefully.... We hear out mothers voices and heed them" (LAH 145). Syal counters her emphasis on the performative nature of cultural and gendered identity with the insight that certain constructions of identity are harder to evade than others. Tania concludes: "Everything else I can pick up or discard when I choose; my culture is a moveable feast. Except for this rogue gene which I would cauterize away if I could" (LAH 146).
Syal's sensitive portrait of the complexities of British Asian mother-daughter relationship depicts patriarchy, buttressed by tradition at its most insidious, affected not so much by sanctions and coercion, as by consent and compliance. Syal presents these women's contestation of prescribed gender roles in ways that do not necessitate a self-distancing from one's culture. Syal's screenplay *Bhaji on the Beach* (1993), communicate a wide range of gender issues. *Bhaji* asserts the subjectivities of Syal's female protagonists, who are not the objects of a male phallocentric gaze. It explores how women see themselves. Bhaji spans three generations, exploring the discoveries that nine Asian women experience during a day trip, organised by the earnest feminist Simi of Saheli women's centre, to the quintessentially English seaside town of Blackpool. The film portrays the diversity of the community and the discrete ways in which Asian women of different generations have adapted to life in Britain. This is no simple 'sisterhood', despite Simi's invocation of female solidarity: "This is your day. Have a female fun time"! (Ranasinha 257). The characters range from boy-crazy teenagers Ladhu and Madhu, who are into bhangra and rap, to unfullfilled, middle-aged newsagents, and disapproving, small minded old ladies in saris. Hashida, an aspiring medical student, faces bigotry from this older generation of 'Aunties' when she discovers she is pregnant by her secret African-Caribbean boyfriend: "Why a black boy? What's wrong with out men? And what will the child be? Dark and all mixed up"! (Ranasinha 257).

The film closes with the possibility that Hashida does not have to lose her boyfriend Oliver or her "folks or they damn aunties either” (Ranasinha 257). The film ridicules attempts to view women through stereotypical, patriarchal, ethnocentric ways of seeing. *The Kumars at No 42* constitutes a different example of polyphony: not that of the multiple embedded voices of the documentary format but that of the television
chat show. *The Kumars*, is a real hybrid text with real-world and fictional levels. *The Kumars* are a fictional Asian family who has built their own television studio in their backyard to launch the media career of their son, Sanjeev. Each half-hour episode includes short sections with the Kumar family at home preparing to welcome their chat-show guests; the main sections consist of the chat show itself, in which Sanjeev, supported by his mother, father, and grandmother sitting on the Sofa, interviews British celebrities in front of a live television audience.

In the first episode of the *The Kumars (2001)*, the first celebrity guest is the film actor Richard E Grant. The initial dialogue emphasizes, Grant grew up in colonial Swaziland, where his family was part of the ruling elite. Instead of consolidating the potential "us" and "them" positions of difference between colonized and colonizer, the dialogue comically transforms it when Mr. Kumar addresses Grant as a fellow immigrant to Britain:

    MR KUMAR: Mr. Grant, you know that I've just realized? You were an immigrant into this country.

    RICHARD E. Grant: Yes.

    MR KUMAR: I was an immigrant into this country. (Grant gets up and shakes his hand: the audience applauds).

    GRANT: What passport have you got?

    MR KUMAR: Hold on. This is the thing I’ve just realized. We’re both successful.

    GRANT: We are.

    GRANDMOTHER: Was that a Question?

    SANJEEV: Surprisingly, that’s an interesting line of questioning from Dad.
(TO GRANT): Er, you know, do you ever still feel like an outsider?

MR. KUMAR: I’m glad you asked me that question.

SANJEEV: Dad, I’m talking to Richard.

GRANT: Yeah, Quite a lot. (Passing question to Mr Kumar) What about you?

MR. KUMAR: I feel, you know, we immigrants have worked hard and we’ve put a lot of money into the coffers of the country.

Grant: Definitely.

Mr. Kumar: Both of us.

Grant: Yes.

Mr. Kumar: But to the ordinary idiot in the pub, we're just a couple of freeloaders black people.

Grant: Exactly [The audience laughs] (Aldama 87-88).

The dialogue playfully ignores Grant's postimperial whiteness and his superior social and celebrity status within British society and, through the use of "us" and "them" and embraces Grant as a fellow black. The audience's applause, moreover, seems to imply a sincere wish for Britain to be an egalitarian, post imperial, multiethnic society.

Meera Syal's sketch comedies The Kumar at No. 42 and Goodness Gracious Me link her directly with a sort of popular sub-genre, covering over her important screen contributions. The Kumar at No. 42 is in fact, a doubly hybrid text, because it mixes both cultural worlds and television genres. The programme mixes the fictional and the authentic, bringing fictional characters representing Britain's ethnic minorities together with representatives of the real-world British media and entertainment
establishment in an interview scenario. It is shared media space and cross-cultural dialogues. The Kumar at No. 42 creates the kind of "new transcultural forms within" a "contact zone" or "third space"(Borg Barhet 280) that have been heralded as the hallmarks of cultural hybridity in postcolonial studies. The fictional framework is only the exclusive focus of the programme for a few minutes at the beginning of each episode when the Kumars are depicted in their living-room or kitchen preparing for the arrival of their celebrity guest, who then has to ring their door bell in order to gain attention to the house. In this Meera Syal shows the tensions and rivalries between the different members of the family and there is also a satirical articulation of the often contradictory voices, feelings, and responses of an immigrant community towards the established culture of the host country. Syal's Goodness Gracious me originally conceived as a radio show and then adjusted for BBC 2 in 1998. Structured through short colourful sketches, the series dismantles British preconceptions of Asian communities and mocks expectations of both Indian migrants.

Syal's Goodness Gracious Me originally conceived as a radio show and then adjusted for BBC 2 in 1998. Structured through short colourful sketches, the series dismantles British preconceptions of Asian communities and mocks expectations of both Indian migrants. In Goodness Gracious Me syal shows the notion of mimicry and behavioural patterns. Meera Syal wittily lampoons the fake myth of the purity of races and hierarchies and her textual strategy, which should not be confused with a fashionable pretension of teaching intercultural education, is endowed on the television medium, a popular tool to argue in a global community. Goodness Gracious Me's mainstream success draws not only on its sitcom aesthetic- the three Asian girl's disdain for Jess's lack of interest in clothes and men recall similar sketches from Goodness Gracious Me- but also on the conventions that structure this
kind of ethnic comedy; humour generated from generational conflicts. Feminist writers and critics have embraced an agenda that centres on the mapping of unexplored realms of female experience which hitherto had remained outside the documented scenario of human experience. Placing herself at the centre and redrawing the circle of existence around her, shifting the angles of vision at the periphery, the writer focuses on the unmapped wilderness of the female psyche. She moves through the culturally and socially circumscribed world to embrace hitherto conceptual and imaginary spaces. Reality thus becomes uncircumscribed notion outside of the patriarchal epistemology. South Asian women writers, caught in an unenviable position of rootlessness, creates a "feminist fable" that underlines the impossibility of locating and citing 'sites' for women. The traditional role of the South Asian woman has been placed to give way to a changing and changed reality.

The Black feminist writer tries to find a "tongue" and a "mother tongue" that seeks new dimensions for the signifier. Psychoanalytically feminist criticism shows the difference of women's writing in the author's psyche and the role of gender in the creative process. It incorporates the biological and linguistic models of gender difference in a theory of female psyche shaped by language and sex-role socialization. The history of the South Asian presence in Britain has been captured in different genres of writing-including academic studies, policy literature, oral history, creative writing and journalism-such accounts have been criticized for promoting gendered silences, stereotypes and the invisibility of women. Women's voices are often invisible or less visible in accounts of migration, settlement and community formation, as well as in more discussions of multiculturalism and racism, and the shift from a focus on ethnicity to religion. According to the oxford concise dictionary of politics begin: "Feminism is a way of looking at the world, which women occupy from
the perspective of women. It has as its central focus the concept of patriarchy, which can be described as a system of male authority, which oppresses women through its social, political and economic institutions" (Osborne 8).

Post-colonialism is a way of thinking about fictional writing within society. It stems from a socio-historical approach to the text psychological or psychoanalytical investigation looks at the novel in a different light: examining feeling, the unconscious or unspoken, dream or illusion-all aspects of the individual psyche. In psychoanalytical aspect, the world of imagery and symbol right is more important in comparison than facts and events. The theories of Freud inevitably underpin this type of analysis because it is Freud who first systematised the exploration of mental processes like 'Oedipus Complex'. Meera Syal is one of the best writers of contemporary fiction. She has acute powers of observation and has used them to interpret situation and processes that captivate imagination. Syal's voice always distinct grows deeper and more masterful. In her novels, Syal depicts the brilliant picture of East-West culture, and the illustration of past and the present.

Feminism today is widely perceived as being in crisis or decline, with the certainties, enthusiasm and political activism of earlier years replaced by apathy, infighting and defensiveness. Not only can it seem old-fashioned and irrelevant now that the rights for which earlier generations had to fight are taken for granted in western societies, but its core assumptions have been challenged by postmodernist thinking, and its intellectual energies sometimes seem to have spiralled away into the elaboration of increasingly impenetrable theories, far from the everyday concerns of 'ordinary women'.

South Asian writers most prominently appear to be their encounter with mainstream, mostly white British culture: spurring them to create, artistically express,
and explore their cross-cultural identities. Hybridity is the main point and neutral term for mixed race, it has become a term of celebration in the works of Meera Syal, whose protagonists struggle to get their own version of being British and Asian or Caribbean. Postcolonial writings are a legacy of pain, silence, humiliation, rootlessness which reappears in these writings in ghostly figures. South Asian women writers draw attention to the way displacements have determined cultural exchanges between communities and shaped new identities in an increasing mobile world.

Meera Syal's childhood experience of growing up in a small mining community is reflected in her writings. She has very well portrayed the psychological depth and complexities of her characters. Her works gives us a deep look into many aspects of the life of Asian woman such as arranged marriages, relationship issues, extra-martial affairs, childbirth, prejudice and discrimination. The women portrayed in her novels are often caught between two cultures with their daily struggle for freedom. It is a struggle between what they are and what they want to be. They want to live like any other woman in the country but their family and community want them to follow the culture they belong to and respect their values. This put a huge pressure on the psychology of her characters because how they behave at home is totally different from how they behave outside, switching accents and persona to mix-up with their friends. There is a huge gap between reality and expectations; hopes and dreams. Syal's narratives are the real social documents on tormented souls not with the usual sound and fury but rather imaginative reconstructions. However, as a product of hybrid culture.Syal tries to get the complete approval of her precisely because she considers India as her home.

Meera Syal's *Bhaji on the Beach* (1993), a fiction film takes place in a single day. The film begins with a journey down a street in Birmingham, England's city as a
souk of multiplicity. Its historical memory shows the visit of Malcolm X's, as described in the Black Audio film 'Handsworth songs' - a "documentary - essay on the civil disobedience that erupted in reaction to the repressive policing of black communities in London and Birmingham in 1985" (Ciecko 73).

This film raises questions of the politics of representation, and is criticized by some British South Asians for not restricting itself to positive images of South Asians. It is explicitly feminist in its approach to its subject matter, offering a series of insights into the lives of a group of South Asian women from the Midlands, who range in age from teenaged Girls to elderly ladies. They come together for a day trip to Blackpool organised by the local Asian women's centre. The centers are managed and run by Asian women and provide a challenge to "male structures and dominance both in our own communities and in the wider society" (Ciecko 73). The film raises issues of white racism and ethnic stereotyping, problems within the South Asian community, including cross-generational conflict and domestic violence as a response to the changing role of women. It also looks at the community's reaction to interracial relations, in this case, a young South Asian woman and a Black man. The film establishes a number of symptomatic, if not necessarily representative, themes which are a source of conflict brought about, as initially presented, by female behaviour.

Gurinder Chadha's *Bhaji on the Beach* (1994) combines drama and comedy, rather than operating as a showcase for comic performance. Weaving together images of popular culture and practices with the lives of a group of Asian women from different backgrounds and generations. *Bhaji on the Beach* written by actor and writer Meera Syal, the movie combines quite different tones, moving between, in Andrea Stuart's words, 'high drama and slapstick comedy' (Tasker 166) comedy stems from the interplay of different generations (the giggling teenage girls, Madhu and Ladhu, who
always seem to say the wrong thing) and from the fantasy and dream sequences through which Asha rehearses the events of the film in stylised form. The film opens with a prefigurative scene in which Asha, first generation, 'hallucinates' on images of Hindu Goddess and of herself as a 'model' Indian wife serving an 'ideal' son, husband and daughter. An abrupt shift is produced by a number of camera shots from above showing Asha terrified and dwarfed by the swirling detritus of the retail store-cans, videos, newspapers, ice lollies.

This shot opens onto another in which her daughter, sons and husband fill out a very limited space and demand breakfast. This is a perspective which the feminist Simi, whose Sahili women's centre has organised the outing, is probably unaware of as the first generation is seen as part of the problem. Initially, there are two peer-based group affiliations seemingly irreconcilable, but slippages and overlaps occur.

The dramatic aspects of the film are most explicitly concerned with questions of cultural and of gendered identity. The kinds of concerns that are discussed by the characters, on appropriate behaviour for young women. Comedy is produced through ironic juxtapositions and through both visual and verbal gags. The use of humour in the movie also junctions as a counterpoint to perceptions of a Asian women and to the significance that Bhaji on the Beach has as the first feature film to be directed by an Asian women in Britain. Chadha observed that with Bhaji:"for the first time on British screens we'll be seeing ten Asian women who are strong, articulate and well-rounded characters who have their low point and their high-points. We're showing them as multi-dimensional people rather than just as shopkeepers" (Tasker 166).

This emphasizes the dramatic aspects of the film the different stories of the women and the ways in which they come together, Andrea Stuart terms humour 'Chadha's secret weapon' quoting her thus:"Whenever anyone describes one of my
plots as 'A group of Asian women ...' they think they have my number. So all my films have comedy in them to wrong foot people, to disrupt their expectations and to make them like about things in a different way” (Tasker 166).

Comedy functions to 'wrong foot' an audience willing to make assumptions about Asian women, since, comic performance is considered 'unfeminine', inappropriate for women, its use in Bhaji on the Beach works not only to undermine expectations about women and femininity but at a more particular level to subvert the passive Stereotypes of Asian women that persist in British culture. The humour also functions to locate the film and the characters in it, as both English and British and Asian, picking up on British cinema's comic tradition and, in touches such as the Punjabi rendition of 'Summer Holiday', articulating the specificity of an English and British-Asian culture. Bhaji on the Beach represents both an intervention in and contribution to the comic traditions which are so central to British cinema.

Bhaji plays with traditional insights of the Asian women by the representation of various group, and in doing so it displays complicated and for a while ambivalent acts of confrontation. the critic Parmider Bhachu argues about British Asian women are finding "newer cultural forms that derive from their ethnic traditions and that are constantly formulated in the context of their class and local cultures"(Ciecko 78), and she notes "the self-determination of Asian women as active agents who interpret and reinterpret, formulate and reformulate their identities and their cultural systems in a climate of continual change" (Ciecko 78).

Bhaji on the Beach uses stereotypes deliberately, often critically and sometimes sentimentally. The film leaves us at a point of departure, not of arrival. The possibilities that have been animated and mobilised by the narrative are still highly conditional, but each person, in a sense, is returning to a centre and not a
refuge. The film proposes its own logic and rhetoric, it does not simply represent or reflect, but "individuates and makes ambiguous the "legible" order" (Bromley161) of both 'bhaji' and 'beach' in their synecdochal forms. In all senses of the word, it is a motion picture.

Meera Syal's The Kumars At No. 42 has rapidly itself as one of the most successful British TV show of recent times. The Kumars is best defined as a hyphenated text and one that actively traces the experience of postcolonial migrancy in Britain. All the situations and characters in The Kumars are easily understandable. The house at No. 42 is introduced as the site of a remarkable venture with money supplied by the father, Ashwin, and a garden sacrificed by the mother, Madhuri, the Kumars have attached a TV Studio to their home so that their son, Sanjeev, can pursue his ambition of becoming a successful chat-show host. As for the characters themselves, the two parents are quite recognizable stereotypes. Ashwin is very inch the immigrant entrepreneur, for whom financial profit is the guiding principle in all things. As for Madhuri, she represents Indian domesticity and a maternal concern that Sanjeev should marry appropriately to ensure the continuity of the Kumar line.

The two parents conform only too readily to recognizable stereotypes, the other two residents of No. 42 add significantly to the representation of Indianness in The Kumars. Most striking in this respect is the character of the grandmother ("Ummi"), played by Meera Syal, one of the writers of the show. In Syal's own word in an interview with BBC's "What's on", "Ummi" is the "wild card" of the family. Although her dress and her involvement in the making and serving of food are marks of her 'Indianness', her behaviour is far more unpredictable and outrageously subversive that of the stereotypical Ashwin and Madhuri. Syal captures this aspect of the show well in the same interview, where she talks of "ummi" having "free reined to
ask all the questions. We might privately think but never actually say", adding that "because she is so old, it's almost impossible to take offence" (Prentice 279). In the interactions between the family and the guests, "Ummi" is often deployed as a secret weapon of sorts, functioning as the voice of what might be termed a primal Indianness which has never been fully assimilated into the British way of life. Her mock denial to Richard E. Grant, the show's first guest tells it all the desire to because embarrassment is very much the name of the Kumars' game.

In Syal's script, the dramatic series of events that unravels in Britain is precipitated by customary practices embedded in Muslim private law. In Pakistan, men can legally marry more than one woman, and divorce is accomplished by the simple ritual of repeating the word Talaq three times. The narrative of bigamy dramatized in My sister Wife to its sordid end, we are left with the disturbing dilemmas posed by cultural relativism, whereby to condone the right to customary practice outside the purview of the secular state is to participate in perpetuating women's oppression. On the other hand, to disregard the regimes of patriarchal control that shapes the psyches of immigrant Muslim women in Britain would be to dehistoricize the kinds of laws and oppressions through which women's bodies and subjectivities are produced under the secular state.

Meera Syal's comedy Goodness Gracious me (BBC, 1998-2001), written and performed by British-born artists of South Asian descent. This comedy presents the legacy of empire and colonialism as well as the reality of tense race relations in contemporary Britain for the sake of the broadest possible audience acceptance. The critic Chris weedon argues that:"when looked at from the perspective of challenging white British ethnocentrism, a key question that Goodness Gracious Me raises is the
extent to which apparently progressive comedy is over determined by the long-standing reliance of mainstream comedy on racist stereotyping” (Alvares 123).

The similar point of view of the critic Sarita Malik added a supplementary cross-examination on stereotypes: she says: "because stereotypes are negotiated by Asians and deliberately subverted through visual puns, spectacle and parody, can we safely say that racist readings are not gleaned from the text" (Alvares 124). The sketch of the comedy shows the conflict and assimilation between Indian culture and modern British life. Some invert the roles to view the British from an Indian viewpoint and at the same time others pokes fun at Indian stereotypes. Many of the sketches in Goodness Gracious Me, which seem to be addressed in the first instance to a South Asian British audience, satirize the Asian characters and play around with norms and stereotypes among an audience that is predominantly white. The assumption of Asian British people about the comedy is that the most part involve stereotypes, given the long history of demeaning comic representations in music hall, novels, cinema, television and so forth.

This comedy addresses the widespread prejudice among white Britons that traditional Muslim families treat their daughters oppressively, denying them the freedoms enjoyed by non-Muslim girls and British women. It opens with the image of a traditional Muslim man, recognizable by dress, hat and beard. Despite his visible difference from the white British norm, he at the same time represents aspects of British normality. He is shown doing that quintessentially British thing, cutting the hedge in the well-tended front garden of his respectable suburban home. Stopped in his tracks by a reporter, Mr. Ishak and his wife are shown to be totally mystified by the questions that the reporter puts to them, questions which represent the widespread British view of Muslim families taken to extremes. The reporter suggests that Muslim
parents lock up their daughters, beat them if they fail to achieve at school, prevent them from enjoying normal teenage pursuits and forcibly marry them off to distant, deformed and uneducated relatives from Pakistan.

The Ishak's responses signify total non-comprehension and non-recognition of the stereotypes to which the journalist expects them to conform. The sketch does not end here. In a move which may well make politically aware white and other non-Asian viewers feel distinctly uncomfortable, the sketch takes a radical turn. Asked by the journalist to stage a beating for the benefit of television and readily agree. The effect of the sketch up to this point has been to render the reporter ridiculous and to undermine the familiar stereotype by subverting it. The final twist, which is at the expense of the Asian family, arguably weakens this effect in the interest of achieving a further comic impact which points to the political implications involved in changing the subject of ridicule. Comedy is a form that allows both the illicit and the tabooed to be voiced. It facilitates taking on the 'bad form' of talking about race and raising question of representation. It serves to reinforce stereotypes and legitimate racist bigotry.

Meera Syal heroines display an energised reaction towards gender discrimination that stems from traditional Indian lore. It is worth noting that her operation goes beyond a feminist prototype or a postmodern updating while the Indian 'mother' culture is well rooted in space and time and bans the intercultural agency of cross-over, the condition of the urbanised exile becomes impermeable and paradoxically problematic. The social and novelistic picturing of women acquires in the East a very different value from the one sustained in the west. Therefore the role the woman has to conform to prescriptive norms and in this respect the author moulds her fiction in a feminine perspective so as to dispute social constraints. In the
diasporic context, Meera Syal has to balance English modernity, adopted by her protagonists, and the Indian concept of belonging. Syal's narrative unearths the paradigmatic space of diaspora, one that creates meanings in the global redrawing of confines and cultures. Postcolonial criticism invites cross-cultural analysis without demanding extensive knowledge. It trades in stereotypes and the fantasy of locating a genuine anticolonial nationalistic subject grasped through a psychoanalytic framework that is itself not culturally specific. This lack of specificity has led some critics to compare the discourse of postcolonial criticism with that of colonial thinking. Postcolonial theory still orients the globe according to a single binary of Western historicism. It marks and markets the multitudinous cultures of the world and telescopes their geopolitical distinctions into invisibility. One colonial experience can come to resemble another. The critics indiscriminately embrace the other and level out the various competing others. What is important is that the other always be perceived as correct, regardless of differences. It must fulfill the critic's desire for a pure otherness in pristine luminosity.

In this manner, postcolonial criticism exhibits a banal Rousseauism that privileges non-western culture and glories in its presumptive eventual resurgence as it topples some establishment. Exile and migration have intensively influenced old and recent ages and re-shaped the geo-political configuration of the world, their most devastating effects lie in the waves of migrants abruptly re-collocated in new social contexts. The pernicious aftermath of ethnic conflicts marks profoundly individuals who are deprived of their own identity and culture since they become alienate nameless subjects in an incomprehensible scenario. Meera Syal's fiction represents the traditional role of women in diasporic fiction. She shows the typecast role played by the old ladies in dual cultural heritage. She explicitly frames the issues of gender
roles, family disputes, community conflicts and traditional role played by the female and also comes to bring forth their diasporic conditions and their way of thinking in a foreign land. Meera Syal shows the environment of both cultures like the British and Indian in which the characters have the strong sense of their own identity and they not only want to remain in British culture but also want to keep alive their traditional values of Indian culture.