

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **THE CONCEPT OF IDENTITY IN DIASPORA FICTION**

Indian diaspora fiction in English must be regarded as a sub-genre of Indian English diaspora literature written by the Indian diaspora writers. The novel of expatriation / immigrant fiction is its sub-form with its own distinct qualities. It is the literary product of the Indian encounter with the people of their hostland, their involvement in the country of their destination. To understand it properly one must have an adequate knowledge of the concept “Diaspora”, its meanings, history/ phases of global Indian diaspora, and the fiction written by the Indian - American women writers. Also it is necessary to understand the concept of ‘Identity’ in sociology, psychology and in diaspora fiction.

### **1) Diaspora :**

#### **I) Concept**

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

In the beginning the term “diaspora” was used by the ancient Greeks to refer to citizens of a grand city who migrated to the conquered land with the purpose of colonization to assimilate the territory into the Empire.

The concept 'Diaspora' refers to dispersal of Jews from Palestine throughout the world. Along with physical dispersal of the Jews, the term carries religious, philosophical and eschatological connotations, inasmuch as a special relationship is understood to exist between the land of Israel and Jewish people. This relationship ranges from eventual "ingathering of the exiles" to the classic view of Reform Judaism. Some of the Jews submerged themselves in non-Jewish environments more completely than the others. Because of assimilation and acculturation diaspora Jews were the Jews in a religious sense only. (Ibid)

Another early historical reference is the Black African diaspora, in 16<sup>th</sup> c., with slave trade, who exported (forced) West Africans out of their native lands and dispersed them in the "New World" - parts of North America, South America, the Caribbean and elsewhere. Dispersion of Africans, Armenians, Irish, Palestinians and the Jews conceived their scattering as arising from a cataclysmic event that had traumatized the group as a whole. Their dispersal was involuntary, pathetic and tragic.

So the term 'Diaspora' is used to refer to any people of ethnic population forced or induced to leave their traditional ethnic homelands; being dispersed throughout other parts of the world; and the ensuing developments in their dispersal and culture. The original meaning of 'Diaspora' was cut off from the present meaning .

The diasporic 'scattering' is transformed into 'gathering' by Homi Bhabha. "Gathering of exiles and *émigrés* and refugees; gathering on the edge of 'foreign' cultures; gathering at the frontiers; gathering in the ghettos or cafes of city centers .... Also the gathering of people in the diaspora : indentured, migrant, ..." (Bhabha 198-199).

Today, 'Diaspora' refers to a range of ethnic communities and a variety of categories of people like – political and war refugees, migrants, ethnic and racial communities, immigrants / expatriates / transnational communities. According to Steven Vertovec (1999) "Diaspora" is the term often used today to describe practically any population which is considered 'deterritorialized' or 'transnational' - that is, which has originated in a land other than which it currently resides, and whose social, economic, and political networks cross the borders of the nation-states or, indeed span the globe" (Vertovec, "Three Meanings of Diaspora").

Diaspora can perhaps be seen as a naming of the 'other' which has historically referred to displaced communities of people who have been dislocated from their native homeland through the movements of migration, immigration or exile. Diaspora suggests a dislocation from the nation-state or geographical location of origin and relocation in one or more nation-states, territories or countries. "Diaspora" now speaks to diverse groups of displaced persons and communities moving across the globe. The term "diaspora" is often used as a catch-all phrase to speak of and for all movements, however privileged, and for all dislocations, even symbolic ones. This term has been used by anthropologists, literary theorists, cultural critics, sociologists to describe the mass migration and displacements in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> c., particularly with reference to independence movements in formerly colonized areas, waves of refugees fleeing war-torn states and fluxes of economic migration in the post-World–War era.

In short, the term 'diaspora' denotes communities of people dislocated from their native homelands through migration, immigration, or exile as a consequence of colonial expansion/imperialism/trade/business/better opportunities/hunger for better prospects/Globalization.

As a result of the rapid expansion of the term and its use, ascertaining the meaning of ‘Diaspora’ in a comprehensive manner can be difficult. Kim Butler opines, “The definitions and understandings of ‘Diaspora’ get modified ‘in translation’ as they are applied to new groups” (189). So it is necessary to list the characteristics which are applicable here. Scholars like William Safran, Robin Cohen, and James Clifford have listed the defining characteristics of the diaspora.

William Safran in his “Diasporas in Modern Societies: Myths of Homeland and Return” defines ‘Diaspora’ as expatriate community that shares several qualities. The chief among them are -

- 1) Their own or their ancestors’ dispersion from a specific homeland to another country or place.
- 2) Retention of a collective memory, vision or myth about their original homeland.
- 3) Experience of a feeling of alienation and antagonism from the host society, and the feeling that they can never fit in.
- 4) Regarding the ancestral homeland as their true home and their sojourn as temporary, with the hope that they or their descendants would some day return.
- 5) Treasuring the collective past;
- 6) Commitment to the maintenance or restoration of the homeland (Safran 83).

Robin Cohen’s defining common characteristics of diaspora are as follows –

- 1) Dispersal from an original homeland, often traumatically, to two or more foreign regions;

- 2) The expansion from a homeland in search of work, in pursuit of trade or to further colonial ambitions;
- 3) A collective memory and myth about the homeland, including its location, history, suffering and achievements;
- 4) An idealization of the real or imagined ancestral home and a collective commitment to its maintenance, restoration, safety and prosperity;
- 5) 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;
- 6) A strong ethnic group consciousness sustained over a long time based on a sense of distinctiveness, a common history, the transmission of a common cultural and religious heritage and the belief in a common fate;
- 7) A troubled relationship with host societies, suggesting a lack of acceptance or the possibility that another calamity might befall the group;
- 8) A sense of empathy and co- responsibility with co-ethnic members in other countries of settlement even where home has become more vestigial; and
- 9) A possibility of a distinctive creative, enriching life in host countries with a tolerance for pluralism (*Global Diaspora* 17).

Cohen classifies diasporas into five categories- victim, labor, trade, imperial and deterritorialized (16).

He suggests that diaspora studies have gone through four phases – 1) study of Jewish experience from 1960s and in 1970s 2) 1980s and up to mid 1990s, in which diaspora was deployed as ‘a metaphoric designation’ to describe different categories of people – ‘expatriates, expellees, political refugees, alien residents, immigrants and ethnic and racial minorities. 3) from mid 1990, in the post-modern world, when identities have become deterritorialized and constructed and deconstructed in a flexible and situational way. Accordingly the concept of diaspora had to be radically reordered in response to this complexity. 4) since the turn of the century, the phase of consolidation, which has seen the danger of emptying the notion of diaspora of much of its analytical and descriptive power.

However, any group - living in displacement is called diaspora by James Clifford (1994). He thinks that the South Asian diaspora falls outside the strict definition.

Although the term ‘Diaspora’ has undergone changes in the meaning, it retains some of the features such as ‘homelessness’ ‘alienation’ (temporary) ‘rootlessness’ and love for the mother country. Salman Rushdie from his personal experience (1991) asserts – “Exiles or emigrants or expatriates are haunted by some sense of loss, some urge to reclaim, to look back, even at the risk of being mutated into pillars of salt. If we do look back, we must also do so in the knowledge – which gives rise to profound uncertainties - that our physical alienation from India almost inevitably means that we will not be capable of reclaiming precisely the thing that was lost; that we will in short, create fictions, not actual cities or villages, but invisible ones, imaginary homelands, Indias of the mind” (*Imaginary Homelands*, 10).

Jasbir Jain (2007) rightly calls the diaspora ‘both an ambassador and refugee’ (*Writers of the Indian Diaspora* 11). Emmanuel Nelson (1992) considers in the recent contexts of a variety of transnational ethnic experiences and asserts “ ‘Diaspora’ remains problematic” (*Reworlding ix*).

The causes of migration determine whether the emigration is voluntary or in-voluntary. There are variety of causes of diaspora e.g. - imperialism, colonialism, and its end, business or trade, wars, unemployment, job opportunities, poverty, social, economical and political background of the diasporas, prevalent condition, economical mode of transportation, agencies available who facilitate, ‘push’ factors and ‘pull’ factors (Jairam and Atal), economic opportunities, strong desire of intellectual and economic enhancement, IT, globalization process, and transportation system. Today the world has become ‘global-village’. Transnational networks are the pivotal aspects of globalization. Globalization has led to ‘time-space compression’ (Harvey). Deterritorialization is one of the central forces of modern world. Diaspora population is deterritorialized and transnational. Tololyan mentions that “Diasporas are the exemplary communities of the transnational moment” (*Diaspora*). Vertovec states “diaspora...any population... deterritorialized or transnational” (‘Three Meanings’). Now diaspora refers to “any minority group identifying with a particular homeland” (Gabriel, *Construction of Home*, 18).

In the age of LPG (Liberalization, Privatization and Globalization) people have been moving around across borders as a matter of fact. Diaspora is a dispersion of people throughout the world from ‘homeland’/ from one’s natal country and culture to the ‘hostland’. ‘Diaspora’ can be a person migrating for better prospects of life, who is ever ready to

‘uproot’ and ‘reroot’. Yet the cause of migration decides the forms of diasporic experience and identity of diaspora as an expatriate or immigrant or transnational. There are three stages of diasporic experience : ‘home’, ‘away’ and ‘return’. Diaspora consciousness is constituted negatively and positively.

## **II) Global Indian Diaspora: History**

The Phases of Diaspora -

Indian diaspora is distinguished between two main phases of emigration -

1. Colonial Phase / Overseas emigration in the 19<sup>th</sup> c. - it began in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 19<sup>th</sup> c. and continued into the early decades of 20<sup>th</sup> c. (1834-1920). It was the emigration of indentured labourers from North India to British colonies – Guyana, Fiji, Trinidad, Jamaica the Dutch Colony- Surinam and other French Colonies. Some Tamil labourers were deported to Burma from Gujarat and Punjab, and the members of trading community also emigrated to South Africa and East Africa (Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda).
2. Postcolonial Phase / 20<sup>th</sup>c. migration to industrially developed countries. The Postcolonial Phase of Indian Diaspora started after the independence of India (1947). In this phase the emigration of Anglo-Indians to England and Australia took place. Professionals and semi-professionals migrated to the countries like UK., USA, Canada and the skilled and unskilled migrants emigrated to west Asia. The immigration of intellectuals in postcolonial period, called the ‘brain drain’ (voluntary and individual) of the scientists, doctors, engineers & professors in late 1960s, 70s, 80s, etc.

Although people from India have migrated to different geographical locations at different points of time in India's long history, their migration has led to, "Indianization of the globe" (Somayaji 99). Brain drain is turned into the brain gain. The 20<sup>th</sup> c. migration to the developed western countries was voluntary and industry and commerce oriented with higher level of education among the migrants.

The Indian diaspora includes millions of people in Surinam, South Africa, Trinidad, Tobago, Guyana, Jamaica, Mauritius, Fiji, Malaysia, and other countries. They left British India in 19<sup>th</sup> c. and early 20<sup>th</sup> c., and millions more have moved to US, UK, UAR (United Arab Emirates) in recent decades. They are identified as NRIs or overseas Indians or expatriates or immigrants. During the 19<sup>th</sup> c. and until the end of the British Raj much of the migration was involuntary - export of labour to other colonies under the indenture system. During the partition of India there was a lot of migration between India and Pakistan, Muslims, Hindus & Sikhs. Similar migration took place in 1971 between Bangladesh, Pakistan & India.

Upto 1947, the pattern of migration naturally changed. To seek better fortune and economic opportunities, Indians migrated at first to UK but later to North America, especially to USA and Australia. After 1970s oil boom in the Middle East, a large number of Indians emigrated to Gulf countries. Vijay Mishra (2007) divides the Indian Diaspora into two categories– 1. Old Diaspora 2. New Diaspora

The Indian diaspora is the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest and most spread out in the world. Indian Diasporas have managed to develop distinct identities and ways of life wherever they have settled and carry "little India" with them. They carry with them a socio-cultural baggage filled with predefined social identity, religious beliefs and practices, framework of

norms and values governing family & kinship organization, food habits, and language of their own. In fact, they don't like to be cut off completely from their homeland. They build 'imaginary homelands' in the adopted country. They retain the contact. The 'myth of return' is kept alive all the while.

Indian Diaspora's mode of adaptation is marked by a clear preference for economic integration more than for cultural integration. Indian diasporic community has suffered from harassment. e.g. their expulsion from Uganda under Idi Amin. They are also victims of racial discrimination. Bharati Mukherjee had a similar experience in Canada. The Indian diaspora is unique and diverse in terms of religion, region, caste, language etc.. According to Bhiku Parekh (1993) "Indian diaspora is one of the most varied ... half a dozen religions ... different regions ... dozen castes ..." (qut. in Jain, *Writers of Indian Diaspora*, 12). The Indian food is gaining popularity in the world. So the Indian restaurants are located in cosmopolitan cities of the world. It is due to diaspora and a process of Indianization of the world. Similarly the Indian cinema, yoga, Ayurveda, herbal medicines etc. have reached corners of the world. These are the stepping stones of Indianization of the globe. IT enabled services have deepened this process. Indian temples can be found around the globe as for the immigrants 'religion' is one of the identity markers and a major symbolic resource in building community and professing of ethnic identity.

Several diasporic Indians have carved out a dominant space in the knowledge based technologies and economies e.g. L. N. Mittal. The coveted academic status is established by persons like the Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen. Literary figures like Jhumpa Lahiri, Shauna Singh

Baldwin and Bharati Mukherjee have successfully presented mosaic of the cultural life of the people of the homeland and the adopted country.

### **III) Indian Diaspora Fiction of Women Writers in America**

The 'model minority' in America is the Indian diaspora community. They are working in IT, medicine, teaching and many other fields. This migration started in the last decade of 20<sup>th</sup> c., esp. to Canada. Sikh-Canadian community of Indian origin migrated over 100 years ago. Sikhs from Punjab landed in USA at Seattle and San Francisco in the late 19<sup>th</sup> c. and early 20<sup>th</sup> c.. After World War II the immigration policy was changed by America. So the large waves of Indian immigrants started in 1960s and continued in 70s, 80s, 90s and 21<sup>st</sup> c. The most recent and the largest wave of immigration to date occurred in late 1990s and early 2000.

People of Indian diaspora contribute to different fields of their adopted country and homeland. They are in every sphere of human life such as – commerce, industry, fine arts, science, technology, agriculture, politics and literature. There is a notable and sizable Indian diaspora literature in English. There are many fiction writers of Indian diaspora who are awarded different literary prizes. Bharari Mukherjee was awarded the National Book Critics Circle Award for fiction in 1988, Jhumpa Lahiri bagged the Pulitzer Prize in 2000, Kiran Desai won the Man Booker Prize of 2006 and NBCC. The other writers who have migrated to other parts of the world are awardees of Nobel Prize (V.S.Naipaul), Commonwealth Writers Prize (Shauna Singh Baldwin, 2000), the Best of the Booker Prize (Salman Rushdie, 2008), and Man Booker Prize (Arvind Adiga, 2008).

Fiction by Indian women writers constitutes a major segment of contemporary Indian diaspora literature. The women novelists of Indian diaspora in USA are Bharati Mukherjee, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, Anjana Appachana, Kiran Desai, Sujata Massey, Indira Ganeshan and Jhumpa Lahiri. These writers have made their homeland memorable and popular by writing about it. Through the movements of migration or immigration writers are turned diasporic. It depends upon individual's response to the adopted country and acceptance by the host. This acceptance also depends upon the value/importance of diasporic individual to the host society. At the initial stage they are 'outsiders' and face the question – who am I ? The initial works of diaspora writers are autobiographic and focus on the issues like nostalgia, rootlessness, homelessness, dislocation and displacement. There are two moves of the diasporic writer-1) Temporal move- a look backward to the past and a look forward at the future. It produces nostalgia, themes of survival, and cultural assimilation. 2) The Spatial move - involves a deterritorialization and reterritorialization connected by journey. There is a loss of territory-geographical and cultural and gain of new territory. So Diaspora fiction deals with space, move between 'home' and 'foreign' country, between 'familiar' and 'strange', 'the old' and 'the new'. The contrasts and comparisons between these two spaces are frequent in the novels of diasporas, which are different from the regular Indian English fiction. It is the passage to India with its images and impressions of India of their past, and its memory of an imaginary homeland. They blend their India of memory with their present as the country of their birth and its ties do not allow them psychologically to acculturate and assimilate in immigrated country. They turn homesick, homeless, alienated, nostalgic, and rootless and hence they go on deriving sustenance from the country of their residence. The cross-cultural experiences, idea of homeland, harsh

journeys taken by them, their unhousement and rehousing, dislocation, relocation, racial discrimination, language problem, and culture shock faced by them are the issues of the diaspora discourse. They engage in cultural transmission and double identification.

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

The books of Indian Diaspora constitute a minority discourse, surfacing with urgency in the field of cultural studies and ethnic studies in the USA. The Indo-American community in the present is neglected by politicians and social historians but their forced invisibility is challenged by the Indian women diaspora writers, the products of two cultures, like Bharati Mukherjee, Chitra Banejee, Meena Alexander, Jhumpa Lahiri and Kiran Desai. 'visible' and 'invisible', uncertain of their place in mainstream and minority group, Indian diaspora fiction writers try to "move from margin to center ... to an empowerment of themselves," (qut in Deshmukh 133) and transform American cultural and literary scenario. In an

interview with Russell Schoch Bharati asserted, “The original heirs of the American Dream encounter us on a daily basis : we are their doctors, their golf heroes, their film-makers, their spouses and their lovers. ‘We’ and ‘they’ have fused into ‘us’... that’s the two way transformation ....” (Schoch).

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

**Bharati Kirchner**, another Indian diaspora woman writer in America, by profession an engineer, tried with the idea of writing fiction and produced *Shiva Dancing* (1998), *Sharmila’s Book* (1999), *Darjeeling* (2002), and *Pastries* (2003). With Nostalgia she looks backward (past-India) and forward (USA-adopted country). Her Pendulum swings between the two worlds, but doesn’t stabilize either in the land of her birth or adoption. The protagonist Meena Kumari in *Shiva Dancing*, a victim of child-marriage, and kidnapping, turns a successful computer software designer in San Francisco. Yet she desires to reconnect with her past - family, village, her love, and India itself. The theme of nostalgia

dominates here. Like Bharati Mukherjee and Chitra Banerjee she has exposed the new layer of woman's life. For her progress or fluidity is possible in USA, especially to the victims of Indian tradition.

India-born **Kiran Desai (b. 1971)**, a daughter of noted Indian diaspora English author, Anita Desai, is the author of two novels – *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard*, (1998) and *The Inheritance of Loss* (2006) and awardee of Man Booker Prize of 2006. Since her teens she has been living outside India. The setting of the *Inheritance of Loss* is the North Eastern Himalayas and Kalimpong. (Nepal Gorkha Land). It was part of India, but now is independent.

The hero of *The Inheritance of Loss* is caught into the dilemma of his being Indian and American. That is the common theme of all diasporic writing. He is an illegal Indian expatriate in USA, works as a cook in a restaurant and gets detached from his family. By listening the Indian words like 'Namaste', 'Kusum Auntie' he is delighted and links himself to India. Abused by the Americans, the homesick hero, alienated, rootless, and homeless in New York, returns to his homeland.

**Jhumpa Lahiri (b. 1967)**, of the second generation of immigrants, born and brought up outside India is attracted by India and its culture. But like Bharati Mukherjee she considers herself an American. The Indian American experience is at the core of her first short story collection entitled – *Interpreter of Maladies* (1999). It received the Pulitzer Prize for fiction in 2000. Her first novel *The Namesake* (2003) made Mira Nair produce a film with the same title. The novel examines the nuances involved with being caught between two conflicting cultures with their highly distinct religious, social and ideological differences. The Bengali couple, Ashok and Ashima, from Calcutta migrates to USA where their two children - a son - Gogol-Nikhil and a daughter-Sonia are

born. Gogol is named after his father's favourite author but hates his name Gogol and the inherited values. He sets his own path to find his identity which depends on other factors than his name. The two generations, disconnected and alienated, are described in *The Namesake*.

**Anjana Appachana (b. 1956)** lives in America, though born and brought up in India. She has obtained degrees from Delhi University and Jawaharlal Nehru University. She learnt Creative Writing from Pennsylvania State University. She feels "writer's life is comparatively more comfortable in America than in India". Her *Listening Now* (1997) is about the experience of the ordinary Indian woman, her dreams and passions frustrated and realized, through and in spite of the mundane repetitive and domestic pattern of life.

The novelists of Indian origin Anjana Appachana, Bharati Kirchner, Jhumpa Lahiri, Kiran Desai are post- Rushdie/post-Bharati Mukherjee writers of Indian Diaspora. Anita Rao Badami (Canada), Sunetra Gupta (England), Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni (USA), Gita Mehta (India, UK, & USA), Meena Alexander (India, Sudan and USA) are the diaspora writers like Bharati Mukherjee but they differ in portraying the Indian women in their fiction. **Meena Alexander (b. 1951)** is a poet and scholar. She has produced two novels - *Nampally Road* (1991) and *Manhattam Music* (1997). **Anita Desai (b. 1937)** is a Bengali on her father's side and a German on her mother's. Born and raised in India she lived the major part of her life in India but now resides in USA. She has introduced the psychological novel in Indian English fiction. Her *Cry, the Peacock* (1963) is similar to Bharati Mukherjee's *Wife* (1975), in which protagonists (Maya and Dimple) murder their husbands. Yet there is a line of difference between them.

**Bharati Mukherjee (b. 1940)** is a pioneer of Indian English diaspora fiction. She has discussed the issues of expatriates, and immigrants and supplied solutions for their problems. She projects her own personal sense of dislocation and relocation in her novels. She maps the experience that is shared by many others and stands for the Indian immigrant community. Her fiction suggests her move is – ‘temporal and spatial’ (Nayar) looking backward and forward and the deterritorialization and reterritorialization which is connected by travel. Each of her novels is set in India and USA, home and adopted country / new homeland. There is a contrast and comparison between the two spaces. Since the publication of *The Middleman and Other Stories* (1988) she pictures the lives of immigrants in USA with positive attitude. Her characters try to assimilate and belong to the adopted country. Hybridity and identity find expression with new orientation. She concentrates on dislocation and relocation of the immigrants. So in her *Jasmine* (1989) she writes there is “adventure, risk and transformation” (240). The processes of relocation, assimilation and transformation are the outstanding issues for her. Yet she returns and tries to search for the roots in her *Desirable Daughters* (2002) and *The Tree Bride* (2004). Since *The Holder of the world* (1993) it seems that national borders are blurred and have vanished. Might be it is the part of the process of globalization, globalized India, and transnationalism. So all cultures are contaminated, miscegenated with and by the cultures they come in contact with. Out of this double or split consciousness, duality and hybridity are born.

Diaspora writing, in its theory and practice, is the work of exiles / expatriates / immigrants who have experienced unsettlement at all levels. Theorists like Homi Bhabha, Stuart Hall, Edward Said, Franz Fanon, Freud, Erikson, Du Bois, Gilroy, Appadurai and writers like V. S.

Naipaul, Salman Rushdie, F. Dhondy, R. Mistry, Kamala Markandaya, Bharati Mukherjee, Bapsi Sidhawa, Chitra Banerjee, Jhumpa Lahiri, K. Desai, et.al. were either exiles or expatriates or immigrants by force or choice.

## **2) Identity :**

### **I) Concept**

The main thrust of this first chapter is on the concept of 'Identity', sociological and psychological approach to the term' identity, its types, and the identity in diaspora fiction. Although the term 'identity' has a long history, it was not until the 20<sup>th</sup> c. that the term came into popular usage. What is an identity? Etymologically the word 'identity' is derived from the Latin root 'idem', meaning the 'sameness and continuity'. The *Oxford English Dictionary* (vol.5) gives the following meanings of 'Identity'- **1)** The quality or condition of being the same in substance, composition, nature, properties, or in particular qualities under consideration, absolute or essential sameness; oneness **2)** The condition or fact that a person or thing is itself and not something else. The person recognizes himself as the same and not someone else across time and place. Identity is an umbrella term used throughout the social sciences to describe an individual's comprehension of him or herself as a discrete, separate entity (Wikipedia). A thing or an individual is definitely recognizable or known to him/herself and others by the collective aspect of the set of characteristics. It is called his/her Identity (dictionary.com). 'Identity', the term includes the social roles, personal traits and conscious self images. 'Identity' - is the 'real me'.

The answer to the question 'who am I ?' is his/her identity. It is the prime wish of an individual to know him/herself. It is an attempt of his /

her search for the place in the world around him/her, what (s)he is and what is world-view of him/her. (S)he tries to determine what's unique and special about her/himself.

Defining identity is not an easy task and the genealogy of the concept reveals a tumultuous history. The category emerged for the first time with Aristotle where 'tautotes' had the meaning - 'shared identity'. In anthropology and sociology the term 'identity' has been discussed elaborately by the symbolic interactionists.

## II) 'Identity' : in Sociology

Sociology is the study of human society, many dimensions of social actions and social relationships. The process of learning the beliefs, norms and values that are socially expected of us as members of a particular society is called socialization. Each of us is linked to this process and each of us possesses a sense of 'self' - i.e. a sense of knowing a distinct identity of being set apart from other people and things. A person's sense of 'self' is not innate. Instead we actively construct a sense of self through our interactions with others in the process of socialization as we learn to become members of particular groups.

Sociologist C. H. Cooley (1864-1929) developed the idea of '**looking-glass self**'. It means we acquire our sense of 'self' by seeing our 'self' reflected in other people's attitude and behaviour towards us and by imagining what they think of us. In this way other people serve as a kind of mirror for viewing the self. What we see in the looking glass is partly our own creation. Through people's words and actions we see our own self. Cooley says "self and society are twin born" (Calhoun,et.al. 120) .

G. H. Mead (1863 -1931) argued that the 'self' is composed of the 'I' and the 'Me' (two parts) (1934). 'I' is the 'self' as 'subject', the initiator of thoughts and actions. The 'me' is the self as 'object' as we imagine our 'self' from the perspectives of other people. Mead viewed words, gestures, and expressions as symbols constitute the very foundations of social life.

One of the several functions of self is to furnish our identities. In the process of social interaction and experiences, the self receives the labels, names and other aspects of identity which others have for us and transform them as our own. The self organizes our knowledge of who we are and what we think of ourselves in terms of our perception of others' response (Francis 228).

Freud (1856 - 1939) saw socialization as a struggle between biologically based drives for pleasure and the rules of acceptable conduct society imposes on us. These drives or forces are – **id, ego and super ego** - the parts of human psyche. Ego and super ego are the products of social interaction.

Cooley, Mead, and Freud put forth important perspectives on the process of socialization and human development. But socialization varies for different people, because it depends upon the social groups and categories to which they belong. e.g. black child and white child - their socialization is different in the same society.

A sociological approach to self and identity begins with the assumption that there is a reciprocal relationship between the self and society (Stryker, 1980). Self emerges in social interaction in society, i.e. there are as many different selves as there are different positions that one holds in society (James 1890). Identity, according to McCall and

Simmons (1978), is “the character and the role that an individual devises for himself as an occupant of a particular social position”(qut. in Stets and Bruke 11).

McCall, Simmons and Stryker state that “individuals have multiple identities due to actions in society and society structure” (ibid 14).

The sociological tradition of identity theory is linked to Symbolic Interactionism (SI) which emerges from the pragmatic theory of ‘self’ drawn by William James(1842 - 1910) and Mead (Scott and Marshall 231). The self is a distinctively human capacity which enables people to reflect on their nature and the social world through communication and language. Saussure’s structuralism and post-structuralism emphasizes the deeply formative role of language in the making of identity. Language produces the “meaning” and all social and cultural meanings are produced within the language. The world around us and our place in it - are made meaningful - within representation. Therefore who we are - our sense of identity is shaped by the meanings attached to particular attributes, capacities and forms of conduct. The French philosopher Foucault (1926 - 1984) proposed that individuals inhabit multiple identities. Identity, in relation to a range of social practices, is linked to larger structures like class, ethnicity, race, gender and sexuality. They interact with each other.

The interfusing of identities brings about the ‘hybridity’ of cultural identities (race and ethnicity). Identities are not pure but the product of mixing, fusion and creolization. Hybridity of cultural identities is not the product of assimilation of one culture by another, but the production of something new.

Jacques Lacan (1901-1981), the French psychoanalyst, emphasized the split and alienated aspects of identity. Like C. H. Cooley, Lacan's 'Mirror-state' locates the beginning of identity. The self is constituted by what is reflected - by a mirror or by the mother or by others in social relations. In modern sociology the term 'identity' is widely and loosely used with reference to one's sense of 'self' and one's feelings and ideas about oneself e.g. gender identity, class identity etc.. It is sometimes assumed that our identity comes from expectations attached to social roles we occupy and then internalize, so that it is formed through the process of socialization. (Scott and Marshall 231-33).

Today, the term 'identity' is emerging in sociological terms as something constructed, fluid, and multiple, impermanent and fragmentary (Bendle 2). This is in opposition to the earlier idea of an integral, original and unified identity. Several groups are questioning traditional identities that were previously accepted as 'given', 'normative' and 'established'.

There are two factors leading to reassertions of questions of identity - 1) Globalization, 2) End of the Cold War (USA and USSR). In contemporary societies huge nation-states, mass-migrations, wide range of personal choice, heterogeneous social networks - all these make identity problematic. The dilemma of 'identity' arises when one is not sure where one belongs to or in other words, where to place oneself among others. Diasporas face the problems of identity because they are the members of ethnic groups and the mainstream cultures at the same time. Caught between their parents' ethnic beliefs and values and that of the mainstream societies they face 'Double Consciousness'. As Du Bois (1868-1963) says "...the challenge for individual is to find ways of integrating the two views of self into a stronger personal identity that changes the meaning of each" (Calhoun 24-25). Mukherjee's heroines

have migrated either from the east to the west or from the west to east, and are caught between two cultures, societies. It is their geographical, cultural, psychological and social dislocation and relocation. It is, in the words of Du Bois, “two souls ... in one dark body” but it is not only two souls but many selves in one dark / brown body. Their race, religion, gender, nation, personal qualities etc. have given them different selves.

### III) ‘Identity’ : in Psychology

Whereas sociologists often talk about ‘**social identity**’, psychologists use the term ‘identity’ to define ‘**personal identity**’. Since 1950s and 1960s the concern with identity has mainly been in the domain of psychology and psychoanalysis. Erikson (1902-1994) states in his *Identity : Youth and Crisis* (1968) - “The more one writes about this subject (Identity), the more the word becomes a term for something as unfathomable as it is all – pervasive” (Preface 9). An individual’s search for his place in the world around him is as old as human existence itself, out of which emerged various “religions and philosophies” (Paranjape 1).

William James is the earliest among psychologists to give a comprehensive view of self - concept. According to him there are two main types of self-concepts **1)** the knowing self or ‘I’, **2)** the Empirical self or ‘me’(Paranjape 24 ). Mead also argued that the ‘self’ is composed of the “I” and “me” (Calhoun,et.al.121).

Psychodynamic discussions of identity begins with “Freud’s theory of identification, according to which the child comes to assimilate external persons or objects, usually the superego of the parent” (Scott and Marshall 331). Freud developed a comprehensive theory that held that personality consisted of three separate but interacting components - ‘ID’, ‘Ego’ and ‘Superego’. Freud’s five psychosexual stages of personality

development are – Oral, Anal, Phallic, Latency and Genital (from adolescence to adulthood). His theory was a theory of ‘libido’ development rather than ‘ego’-development.

John Locke (1632-1704) highlighted the problems of identity in ‘On Identity and Diversity’, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1689). According to Locke personal identity “depends on consciousness...”.

In routine social affairs a person is identified usually by his name, address, social status, position, occupation - this connotation is associated with the I-card, passport, named the ‘paper identity’ by Erikson (qut in Paranjpe 41) ). Erik Erikson’s 5th stage (from adolescence to adulthood) in psychosocial development of an individual is the stage of the search for identity. It is the process of “becoming”. Erikson’s eight stages of psychosocial development of human being in *Childhood and Society* (1950) display lifelong process of identity formation and the role played in it by the agents of socialization (family, school, mass media and peers). His framework rests upon the distinction between ego identity and social or cultural identity. Erikson saw “identity as a process ‘located’ in the core of the individual, and yet also in the core of his or her communal culture, hence, making a connection between community and individual” (Scott and Marshall 331). He formed the term “Identity crisis” during the Second World War with reference to the patients who had lost sense of personal sameness and historical continuity and subsequently generalized it to a whole stage of life – from adolescence to adulthood.

The successful organization of the personality within itself and into the social system (the process of identity formation), leads the individual to a psychological gain, an essential sense of well-being which Erikson has termed the sense of ‘Identity’. It is “an accrued confidence that the

inner sameness and continuity prepared in the past are matched by the sameness and continuity of one's meaning for others" (Erikson, *Childhood and Society*, 261).

#### IV) Identity - Types

According to Jonathan Culler (b. 1944) two basic questions underline modern thinking "...Is the 'self' something 'given' or something 'made'... should it be conceived in an individual or in social terms?" (Culler 108). If it is 'given and individual', it treats the self as something inner and unique, something that is prior to the acts it performs. If it is 'given and social' - the self is determined by its origins and social attributes - gender, race, religion, nationality, class, (caste), and ethnicity etc. which are 'given'. If it is 'individual and made' it is the changing nature of a self through its particular acts. If it is 'social and made' - it stresses 'I' through the various positions that 'I' occupy.

An individual does have 'multiple' identities - due to 'given' identity and 'made / manufactured / constructed identity'. The 'given' identities are determined by 'birth' or by 'origin' - National identity, cultural identity, gender identity, race, religion, caste or ethnic identity - all these identities are formed beyond our control. Also identity is based on personal qualities. It is 'constructed', 'made', the new identity. These identities are formed under the control of an individual, because he/she does like to enhance the self-esteem. The 'poor' can turn the 'rich'. It is the self-made identity.

Identity is associated with religion, ethnicity, culture, nation, class, caste, family, society and personal qualities of an individual. Whoever undergoes transformation from original ancestry to the desired identity, i.e. from 'given' to 'made' identity, faces the problem. Generally the

victims of society, the subalterns, do desire to transform themselves into higher self-esteem, another identity.

J. H. St. Jean de Crevecoeur (1735-1813), a Frenchman, after a stint in England, arrived in Canada and then came to American colonies and adopted New Yorkan citizenship in 1765. He asks in his *Letters from an American Farmer* (1782), ‘What is an American?’ – and states “ He is American, who leaving behind him all his ancient prejudices and manners, receives new ones ... the new government he obeys, ... He becomes an American by being received in the broad lap of our great *Alma Mater* ... individuals of all nations ... melted into a new race of men ...” (qut. in M.Ray, *Studies in Literary Criticism*, 244). But the scholars like Abraham Babu pose the question “ What is meant to be American in a nation where history has denied its people the bond of a common paternity?” (Babu 6)

In the ‘melting pot’ of American culture immigrants of different nations and creeds have abandoned their individual identities (given) and assimilated into the grand stew of American culture. But today all these Americans are engaged in search of identity and insist on a recognition of their independent entity. It means that the acceptance of diasporas into the host society doesn’t indicate that they feel at ‘home’ in adopted country.

**National identity** and **cultural identity** are interrelated, because ‘nation’ refers to the cultural bonds that give a sense of shared identity to a group of people who occupy or aspire to occupy the same geographic territory (Calhoun 443). People have always lived in groups defined by common culture and they have political autonomy. Thus a nation is a group of people who share common history, culture, language and ethnic origin and possesses its own government.

National identity means a belief i.e. membership of a nation. Today an individual can have such membership of more than one country i.e. the citizenship of 'homeland' and 'adopted country', the double citizenship. Yet the person who is born and brought up in a specific country from where his ancestors are, that country is considered his mother country, the homeland. He/she is a citizen of that nation. e.g. the person who is born in India is called Indian, it is his national identity. National identity refers to both the distinguishing features of the group, and to the individual's sense of it.

People of a nation possess generally the common history, common descent, common ethnic origin, common religion, common culture, and common language. But today in the process of globalization and migration countries have become multicultural, multilingual, multiracial, and multireligious. India, USA, Canada, England are multicultural and multilingual countries. There is a double consciousness in the minds of its members. It creates hyphenated national identity. e.g. Indo-American, Indo-British, Indo-Canadian, but "the hyphen that links them is also a sign of acceptable marginalization" (qtd in Jain *Writers of Indian Diaspora*, 129) .

One's identity is rooted in culture in which he lives. Culture is more or less the integrated pattern of thinking, understanding, evaluating and communicating that makes up a people's way of life. Values, norms, symbols, language and knowledge (facts, beliefs, and skills) are the elements of culture. It includes codes of manners, dress, language, rituals, norms of behaviour, system of belief, arts etc.. Culture is the product of social action.

The communities have their own local, regional, and national cultural identity. It is reflected through cultural markers like design of

the dress, style of headgear, community flags, ornaments or ornamental decoration of the body. Language has played an important role in shaping the local and regional cultural identity. In India it is the most important factor, because states were reorganized on linguistic principle after independence in 1947. Cultural identity is shaped by a complex set of factors which are associated with the process of evolution and beliefs of people. The family structure, child rearing processes, stories, myths, legends along with history constitute some of the elements which give identity to a culture as it manifests itself through symbolic expressions in material artifacts, expressive behaviour, language and literature. The members belonging to a community internalize this identity consciously or unconsciously in personality formation. Local or regional culture in India cannot be separated from the notion of caste, tribe, ethnic group or communities which are territorially located

Cultural identity of diasporas is also based upon their religion, nation, its culture, history, rituals, belief system, and religious symbolization of material products. So there are sub-cultures within the dominant culture. Subculture centers on a set of distinctive norms, values, knowledge, language and symbols that members of a cultural minority share among themselves and use to distinguish them from the dominant culture. But there is a possibility of identification with the dominant culture by the subculture, due to the interaction of members of both cultures. There is a necessity of cultural relativism (i.e. to look at things in terms of their meanings in other cultures) instead of ethnocentrism (view everything through the eyes of our own culture and its values). The cultural assimilation of Diasporas creates hybridity.

Cultural diversity is a fact of postmodern way of thinking. USA like India is multicultural. Earlier it was traditional, and now its culture is

universal. Stuart Hall in his 'Cultural Identity and Diaspora' (1990) states that diasporas' "cultural identities reflect the common historical experiences and shared cultural codes which provide us, as 'one people'... This 'oneness' ..." (Rutherford 223) continues to be powerful and creative force in emergent forms of representation amongst marginalized people. "Cultural identity ... is a matter of "becoming" as well as of "being"...cultural identities...undergo constant transformation" (Rutherford 225). Diaspora identities are constantly producing and reproducing themselves anew, through transformation and difference (237). 'Difference' creates an individual as the Other and the idea of otherness changes our conception of cultural identity.

**Gender identity** is an individual's self-conception as being male or female. Who we are and how we learn to think and act is very much a matter of whether we are male or female, that is, gender determines the identity of an individual. The term 'gender' refers to non-biological, culturally and socially produced distinctions between men and women, between masculinity and femininity, that reflects power and culture as well as social function. Gender differences result from socialization. Society establishes a set of cultural expectations for each gender and children are taught to conform to what society expects.

Biologically there are clear differences between men and women. But culturally and socially the differences are used to set the stereotypes of gender roles. They are viewed as different and unequal. So from clothing to choosing career they are expected to be different and unequal.

Mukherjee's heroines are presented accordingly in the social and cultural roles. It is expected that a woman should rear children, be a caretaker, do household chores, be protected, be a wife and mother. She is to be emotional, compassionate, less material but have superior verbal

abilities and better language skills. It is a fixed or 'essential' identity of woman.

Gender identity markers are – clothes, ornaments or jewelry, language, hairstyle, the way they behave, interact and communicate, even the size, shape and style of shoes, handkerchief etc. The quantity of food which they eat does tell the gender identity. Language and tradition in many societies insist that every individual be categorized as either man or woman. They have different functions, work, duties etc which are assigned by society. Gender consciousness is within an individual. It does express through individual's each and every act and word.

The concept of 'identity' in Sociology and Psychology is inadequate to explain the various identities of diaspora in a literary work. Diaspora novelist's identity in his narratives depends on the motives of diaspora's departure, his ability to adopt the new world, the problems he encounters there, the new culture and its impact on him, and his policy to survive .

#### **V) 'Identity' : in Diaspora Fiction**

Today in postcolonial diaspora studies 'Identity' issue is much discussed. The concept of 'identity' has persisted almost through nine decades. Diasporic literature explores the identities formed in multiple places, languages, religions and cultures of 'homeland' and 'hostland'. Since independence of India (1947) the Indian diasporic community has acquired a new identity due to the mutual process of self - fashioning and increasing acceptance by the adopted country. Diaspora creates an encounter between cultures, languages, thoughts and people, which produces what Homi Bhabha theorized as 'hybridity'. This hybridized state of immigrants is captured by the immigrant authors like Bharati

Mukherjee, Hanif Kureshi, Chitra Benerjee, Kiran Desai et. al.. Different kinds of migrations form different diasporic existence and experience. There is very often a misfit between a migrants' imaginary homeland and the adopted country's living conditions. He has to negotiate the memory of old identity and the concreteness of the new one. Bhabha rethinks about the questions of identity in his *Location of Culture* (1994). He sees the dislocations as a productive condition. The in-between space of migrants is the place to recast the identity of an individual. He sees identity as a process of negotiation and of articulation.

Diasporas are identified as exiles, refugees, guest workers, expatriates, immigrants, and transnationals. They are differently identified due to their cause of migration and their response to dislocation, which form their sensibility in hostland. Diaspora discourse is filled with the words/concepts/terms such as emigrant, expatriate, immigrant, migrant and transnational. Generally 'Emigrant' is someone who leaves his/her country in order to live in another country. 'Immigrant' is someone who comes to live in a country from another country. Expatriate is someone who lives 'abroad' for a long period or who is expelled or moved from his/her native country or who withdraws 'himself' from its citizenship. Migrants' attitude and sensibility also offer them the new identity like an expatriate/immigrant or transnational. The migrants who go through travel, nostalgia, homesickness, and experience rootlessness, unbelongingness, alienation, double consciousness, are called expatriates. Immigrant is one who tries to reroot, enhouse, rebuild the home, assimilate/acclurate, and replant him/herself in the new soil. The transnational is able to live and assimilate in the countries of origin and destination. He is the man of every place. For him it is - 'one world, one people.' Yet the migrants go through the process of unhousement, enhousement, ghettoization,

ethnicity, homelessness, un-belongingness, uprootedness, rootlessness, alienation, isolation, nostalgia, assimilation, acculturation, transformation. So he is called exotic (unfamiliar), Trishanku (who is in the 'third space'), outsider (not a part of the community of hostland), nowhere man (neither belongs to the country of origin nor to the adopted country), marginal (an individual is denied access to the mainstream), Other (who is different from the native), stranger, alien (who belongs to another country & lives in a country of which he is not a citizen), transnational (belongs to the country of origin and adoption), transmigrant and so on, where there is the process of 'becoming' from 'being' and the identity crisis.

Diasporas try their best at first to keep their own identity in their own community. But outside of community, their social identity is lost due to their migration from their homeland to adopted country. There is the question of social and personal identity. He has to create new identity (ties) with his own abilities economical, intellectual, physical/psychological and political. He is identified as an expatriate or immigrant or transnational. There is no watertight compartment between them. Though there is difference between expatriate, immigrant and transnational as an individual. Today these words are used interchangeably to denote a person living in the country other than the country of his/her origins, who has migrated for any purpose and in any situation. Bhabha has seen this 'dislocation' as a productive condition. Their 'Thrishanku' position is the position to reframe the new identity

Edward Said states in his 'Reflections on Exile' "Exile is the unhealable rift between a human being and a native place, between the self and the true home, its essential sadness can never be surmounted, the achievements of exile are permanently undermined by the loss of

something left behind forever” (101). An Expatriate writer like V. S. Naipaul undertakes a journey to the homeland, history, memory, and clings to his ethnicity. Irving Howe states that “Nostalgia is the real reason for the expatriates need for evolving ethnic origins” (qut. in Kirpal 49). Ashish Gupta affirms that ‘one never leaves one’s country behind. Yet one can not live in the past’ (qut.in Jain, *Writers of* 17).

Movements of people across continents and countries over the past three to four centuries have made man, according to Alvin Toffler (1970), “nomad.” George Steiner (1968) describes the expatriate writer as “the contemporary everyman.” Uma Parmeswaran is interested in the components of diaspora sensibility and considers the expatriate sensibility as a legitimate term in the context of commonwealth literature

Early diasporas have considered their own identity as an ‘expatriate’ who are nostalgic, homesick, homeless, and rootless. Caught between two cultures, societies, countries and languages, life is painful for them. They have lost their ‘given’ identities. What is the image of an expatriate? ‘Expatriate’ identity – Bijay Kumar Das in his “The Politics of Identity: The Emigrants Write Back” states that - “expatriate writer is one who voluntarily leaves the country to promote his/her career and keep the option to return home” (*Literary Criterion*, XLVI : 6). Bharati Mukherjee in her “Imagining Homelands” defines expatriation as “... an act of sustained self-removal from one’s native culture, balanced by a conscious resistance to total inclusion in the new host society” (217). Mukherjee enlists the following motives for expatriation : “aesthetic and intellectual affinity, a better job, more interesting or less hassled life, greater freedom or simple tax-relief, just as the motives for non-integration may range from principle, to nostalgia, to laziness or fear” (217). The motives are as numerous as the expatriates themselves. Gomez

calls Expatriation a complex state of mind and emotion, “which includes a wistful longing for the past, often symbolized by the ancestral home, the pain of exile and homelessness, the struggle to maintain the difference between oneself and the new, unfriendly surrounding, an assumption of moral or cultural superiority over the host country and a refusal to accept the identity forced on one by the environment. The expatriate builds a cocoon around herself/himself as a refugee from cultural dilemmas and from the experienced hostility or unfriendliness in the new country” (Ramamurti 132). Expatriate writers foster/nurture grievances and display the pains of their position. Ashis Gupta, who had left homeland in quest for freedom, states “I seem to be living with ghosts from my past” (Jain, *Writers of Indian Diaspora*, 45).

An expatriate doesn't like to live with the divided self, or split consciousness. Geographical dislocation creates this position for an expatriate. Psychological hesitation for the acceptance of split consciousness or double consciousness is a crucial state for him. So expatriate is seen as an ‘outsider’, ‘marginal’, ‘trishanku’, ‘border intellectual’ ‘alienated’, who lives with ex-image, and nostalgia. It is his identity. He is a nowhere man; who belongs neither to homeland nor to the adopted country. Kurt Lewin, a psychologist, called adolescents ‘marginal men’ who were comparable to minority groups with ambiguous status. The psychological characteristics shared by these two groups are emotional instability and sensitivity, shyness, high tension, frequent shifts between contradictory behaviours (Paranjape).

Kai Nicholson in his “Are We Expatriate?” defines an expatriate writer as “the writer living and working abroad” (Dhawan and Sastry, *Commonwealth Writing*, 10). G. K. Subbarayudu in his “Patria, Expatriacy and the Question of Value” says that “whatever be the émigré’s new state,

the expatriate is never in a harmonious state till recovery of the patria takes place either in real terms or in notional-historical terms” (Ibid 18). Viney Kirpal lists the characteristics of expatriate writers : they are born and brought up in the societies where bonds with family, community, religion, folklore and other traditional arts are more or less intact (5). They carry their ethnic roots with them and intensify their sense of nostalgia. Nostalgia gets heightened when they are not accepted by the host on the basis of colour. Homelessness in their migrancy has been inspired by deep personal anguish. A search for the existential “I am” is urgent to them. They are marginal. Their “marginality’ itself is the result of ... race, religion and history” (Kirpal 5). The Third World migrant novelist tries to understand host society and disenchant fellow natives back home about the myth of white man’s superiority, honesty and sense of fair play. He tries to make the dominant group see itself as others see it. His quest of identity is for self-respect, as the citizen of hostland. He expresses the process of assimilation through love and marriage of white and non-white and the betrayal and dissatisfaction through their separation. Expatriate clings to “the souvenirs of an ever-retreating past” (Mukherjee, ‘Introduction’ to *Darkness*, 2).

Kirpal thinks that expatriate writer’s backward glance home conceals a yearning for the lost paradise; even his criticism of ‘home’ reaffirms the same longing. His characters are typed and recondite. His absurd situation doesn’t stop him from writing about expatriate’s experience to awake the readers to the injustice of his situation.

An ‘expatriate’ identity is the ‘negative identity’. But “negative identity” the creative individual must accept “as the very baseline of recovery”. Physically he doesn’t live in his homeland and psychologically in his adopted country. He maintains strong collective identity, ethnic

identity. It is his attempt, being the defense, in settled country, where he is not welcomed. Jasbir Jain states that “The word Diaspora carrying within it the ambiguous status ...”. Expatriate is placed in a state of limbo. Diasporas whose migration was involuntary in those cases the ‘given’ identity is lost due to dislocation and they are incapable to create new identity. So the negative connotation is attached with the word ‘expatriate’. It is very much common that each and every Individual tries at least to avoid the loss of identity if not possible to enhance.

Mukherjee regards expatriation as a restrictive and self-defeating attitude in a writer who becomes a “permanent scold” (‘Immigrant Writing’). Bharati considers that it is possible, in expatriation, to step out of the constraints into which one has been born and to exercise to the fullest the dual vision of the detached outsider. (‘Imagining Homeland’ 217). The Expatriate is a cool and detached outsider/onlooker in both the countries – the homeland and hostland. He is “validated by the hospitality, and he often returns it in civic dutifulness .... expatriation is the route of cool detachment ...”(218).

In the act of expatriation there is a process of leaving one’s familiar frame of references and relationships to an alien set of references and relationships. Expatriation involves geographical journey, displacement, dispersal, an emotional severing of bonds with the homeland followed by transplantation in a host country and its social environment. The term ‘displacement’, with a sense of being socially and culturally “out of space”, is applied to the migrants’ situation. Expatriate’s main focus is backward to the country of origin. He lives on ex-status and in the past. The features of his attitude, nature and behavior have given him the identity as an expatriate.

The writer from the Third World, the expatriate writer is the voice of his society, who addresses his people and also the oppressors, because he sees the whiteman and himself as fellow participants in the construction of the new world. His direct form of address is a kind of therapy for him that protects him against the mounting feeling of alienation in an adopted country (Kirpal 6). Even his criticism of reality of home reaffirms the longing for home as in V. S. Naipaul's *India: A Wounded Civilization*, Mukherjee's *The Tiger's Daughter*, and Rushdie's *Shame*. He looks back in anger on certain aspects of homeland as a detached observer of both the countries.

Expatriate writers and their narratives are interesting in (re)construction of identities in the migration pattern. The work of expatriate writer gives us the significant clues that expatriation does have some impact on him. Indian diaspora writers like Salman Rushdie, Kamala Markandaya, Farukh Dhondy, and others have kept in their writings the ever returning echoes of homeland. An Expatriate negotiates with the past and the present, the homeland and the host country. The changes get manifested in the writings of expatriate writer due to his detachment from homeland and partial attachment with the host country and his developed insights of both cultures.

What kind of themes do expatriate writers choose? Do they reflect the problems arising out of expatriation and experience of racism? Expatriate sensibility makes a writer write with his homeland in his bones. Yet he is aware of the cultural context of the country of his residence. He deals with the issues arising out of expatriation such as dislocation, homelessness, rootlessness, memory, nostalgia, culture shock, relocation, quest of new identity, myth of return, and many such issues related to expatriation. Naipaul insists on "homelessness",

“identity” that is shaped by exile. Bharati Mukherjee believes that a complete assimilation with the adopted land is the remedy to the dilemmas of diasporas. Rushdie is happy with the old and the new land equally. Like Bharati Mukherjee, Jhumpa Lahiri and Hari Kunzru do not like to be identified as Indian English writers. Shantha Rama Rao, Kamala Markandaya, the first phase of Indian diaspora women writers differ from Suniti Namjoshi, Bharati Mukherjee, Chitra Banerjee, Meena Alexander, Indira Ganeshan, the second generation of diaspora writers, who accompany today young and fresh Indian diaspora writers like Kiran Desai, Bharati Kirchner, Anjana Apachana et.al. They portray the world of their memory and desire. Their dislocation has given them plural relocations and destinations. At the initial stage, there is nostalgia, pain of exile, dislocation and homelessness, culture and language problems. This creates fragmentation, the broken mirror images, so they try to preserve their original cultural and ethnic identity. But as the years pass their stay extends and they have to change, they attempt to assimilate and reach at the centre or expand the periphery and become the part of mainstream. Simultaneously, they begin to ask questions of their own culture but pave the ways of their own to form their new identity. There is the process of ‘fluid identity’. Their in-between position and space is productive and creative. It is the opportunity to form new identity and belong to anywhere. They have the opportunity to tell the tale of their own homeland and adopted land.

After 1947, Indians’ voluntary migration is joyful, happy and satisfactory. The present immigrants migrate to seek happiness and fortune. The advanced facilities of transportation, communication and information have changed the psychology of diasporas. They compete with or surpass majority Americans in education, professional advancement

and income. But they are ignored and seen as foreigners. They achieve a higher degree of success than the average population. They assimilate in terms of economical and educational progress while maintaining ethnic identity in religion and ethnic customs. Naturalized citizenship doesn't require an immigrant to give up his / her religion, culture, language, whatever he wants to preserve.

The immigrant authors belong to the 'Model Minority'. They are in a unique position to tell a tale. They are different from expatriates.

Bharati asserts in an interview, "I am the first among Asian immigrants to be making this distinction between immigrant writing and expatriate writing" (Ameena *BOMB*). It indicates that Bharati is aware of the differences and similarities of expatriate and immigrant identities of an individual in the adopted homeland. Actually since *Days and Nights in Calcutta* (1977) she has transformed herself from an expatriate into an immigrant. She says "The year in India had forced me to view myself more as an immigrant than an exile" (Blaise and Mukherjee 296).

In 'Immigrant Writing: Give Us Your Maximalists' she asserts "Turn your attention to this scene, which has never been in greater need of new perspectives. See your models in this tradition, in minority voices, the immigrant voices, the second generation Jews and Italians and Irish and French-Canadians. We are in their tradition. We may look a little different, and carry different sounding names but we mustn't be seduced - by what others term exotic. Don't choose to be an exile out of fear, or out of distaste" (Mukherjee 29). America's 'Melting Pot' policy is the cause of her 'exuberance of immigration'. Melting Pot has the power to dismantle 'old world concepts of a fixed, exclusivist-national identity (American Dreamer) and to transform alienation and victimization into productive ambivalences. 'Fluidity' is at the heart of American landscape.

It offers, Mukherjee tells Connell in an interview, the “metaphors and symbolic location” (Edwards 46) for thinking about identity and migrancy. In USA Bharati sees herself as an immigrant, in the country of immigrants, very equal to white-European immigrants. She is aware of the duality, double consciousness and fluid identity of immigrant. It is also indicated in her choice of her literary model – Bernard Malamud instead of V. S. Naipaul, which signifies her transition from exiled expatriate to the vibrant immigrant. She has undergone a transformation as a writer. She thinks she belongs to America.

In the ‘Introduction’ to *Darkness* (1985) Mukherjee articulates her movement from expatriation to immigrant and describes the new immigrant fiction as “stories of broken identities and discarded languages”. She represents her migrants as characters fired by “the will to bond to a new society, against the ever present fear of failure and betrayal” (3). This ‘will to bond to a new home’ distinguishes the immigrant from an expatriate. The immigrant is willingly ready to alter the absolute state of being. There is no reversion. He is a creature of gain and is open to assimilate and discard nostalgia. Unlike the expatriate with his/her nostalgia for the past, the immigrant plunges into the present environment around him/her. Histories and memories are not sufficient for his survival in the hostland. In the words of Nagendra Kumar “immigration lays all emphasis on the cultural life of the host country ... immigrant celebrates his present in the new society” (17).

What is the image / identity of an immigrant? According to Mukherjee immigration refers to the act of adopting new citizenship, “going the full nine yards of transformation” (‘Imagining Homelands’ 216). Mukherjee differentiates between an expatriate and immigrant in her “Two Ways to Belong in America”. It is a tale of two sisters, Bharati

Mukherjee and Mira. Mira clings to her Indian citizenship and hopes to return ‘home’, to India. Bharati calls her an expatriate. But Bharati herself is an immigrant. She asserts “America spoke to me – I married it – I embraced the demotion from expatriate aristocrat to immigrant nobody, ... I need to feel like a part of community I have adopted ... I need to put roots down, to vote and make difference that I can. The price that the immigrant willingly pays ... the trauma of self-transformation” (*New York Times*). Immigration is the uplifting narrative, Bharati thinks, but it is not pretty and certainly not elegant, like expatriation. There is a social demotion. “It’s low-tech. I’m an immigrant, and to achieve that honour I gave up status that I’ll never be able to achieve in the New World” (“Imagining Homeland” 219-20).

Migrants turn their position as immigrant to look forward and relocate proudly in the new country and culture. They can’t imagine returning to homeland for other than family visits and relaxed vacations.

Immigrants’ first reaction is to material progress in adopted second homeland. It is the stepping stone of their identity construction, the comfortable position in the new world to enjoy its freedom. They are liberated from the restrictions of parent culture. The woman immigrants feel it very keenly and there is reversal of gender roles. They assimilate in the host culture more easily than their male counterparts. Yet sometimes they turn the victims of American sexism, racism and values.

They are very much equal to the citizen of the adopted country. They are committed immigrants. They do not remain marginal, but try to shift at the center either or expand the peripheries / boundaries. They are outsider–insider, mainstream fellows, and the naturalized citizens of the adopted country and equally of homeland. They don’t bother to shed the ties of homeland, because the borders of nation-state are washed away.

The immigrants do like 'becoming a citizen' totally and culturally to enhance their social state. But they travel with their parent culture, identities, history, language, religion, values, dress codes and etiquettes. It is a challenge to the culture of the adopted country. Also it is not easy for them to negotiate the old and the new cultures. Even it is difficult to fit in the home country. Immigrants struggle to survive, try to assimilate and face the identity issues of their own.

The immigrants accept the US as second and new homeland as they adopt bicultural perspective. They have willingly migrated and accepted the integration of the new and the old worlds. Immigrants bridge the two cultures and design a new model by integrating the two cultures. They are effective agents of change, the producers and consumers of syncretic culture informed by their self perceptions and understanding of the world around them. They belong to the new country of destination. They are strongly attached to the adopted country. Yet they face the largest—existential problem who am I? Their lifestyle, dual personality, identity, language, their understanding of homeland people and Americans of European or other heritage—all these are caught into interrogation. In the words of Stuart Hall "Identities are the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by and position ourselves within, the narratives of the past" (Rutherford 225). Identity for immigrants is not a fixed essence. They feel compulsion to search for identities.

They are not afraid of the unfamiliar present, and relocate themselves and rebuild the 'home' in the new world. They enjoy and celebrate their arrival and fact of being alive in the new world, as they look forward and give up the rigid hold of past. They attempt to escape from the dangers of depersonalization and self destruction in the process

of uprooting and rerooting. They are reborn or transform many times. Bharati says in an interview, - “For me, perhaps for other immigrant writers, there is a death and series of rebirth, it’s very painful and traumatic letting go of the old self” (Ameena). Immigrants are integrationist, mongrelizer, energetic, able to accept the changes, change themselves in the encounter of cultures and also bring about change in the environment around them. They assimilate but don’t deny the past, just give up the rigid hold on past. Immigrant is someone who has put down roots in America. Immigrants fairly adjust to the new country, new life-style, don’t feel alienated (existential). They are displaced but relocated at their destination, reroor themselves, rebuild the ‘home’, look forward to form new identity, the naturalized citizenship of new homeland. Hence an immigrant is the ‘holder’ of multiple identities. Bharati says in the ‘Introduction’ to *Darkness* that she saw her Indianness not “as a fragile identity to be preserved against obliteration” but “as a set of fluid identities to be celebrated” (Mukherjee 3). But immigrants lose a lot of prestige and pedigree in their travel. They don’t retain the past identity.

The immigrants achieve new identity with their own abilities. They are very skilful to balance relations with the adopted country. They appear practical, melt into adopted culture and do remain grateful and honest to the adopted homeland. Their transplantation in the new soil is successful. Like expatriates they have problems but they face and overcome them. Their migration is not ‘loss’ but ‘gain’. Its credit possibly, goes to the advanced technology of communication and transportation, the process of globalization in the many spheres of life and the cause of migration. Their in-between position is now a meaningful and supportive factor of life. The immigrant thus escapes from depersonalization and split personality. Though their path is not straight they go ahead with risks to turn as negotiators of both cultures and worlds.

Bharati had to migrate to Canada for her husband; but Canada's racism forced her to migrate to the USA. It was her diplomatic decision to make favourable condition for herself and her family. In her year long stay in India (1973-74) with her husband she understood what would be her position in her mother country. It is her foresight. She has asserted in an interview by Vignisson, "It would have been harder for me to have lived in Calcutta with a white American Professor than for me, an Indian wife, to live in a multicultural society here". Claiming American identity and refusing hyphenated identity, she has allowed herself to be co-opted by the US-melting pot. She rejects to categorize cultural landscape of America in the terms of dominant and minority, or centre and periphery, the binary and marginalizing strategies. She accepts the best way of life - to depart from scars by turning them into beauty spots. She says to Tina Chen , "...I see "diasporality" as a kind of continuum with immigrants and immigrationists at one end of the scale and expatriate or exilic figures and ...at the other. Those who decide , "all right, I'm going to go on with my life, the past is going to colour my preset and present is going to colour my future, but here and now, I'm a different person", these people reflect the spirit of immigrant writing by keeping themselves open to new experiences and responding second by second. They are changing and being changed : you are a new person every second of your life depending on how you act and whether you are open to bruising and dentings ..." (Edwards 92-93). Mukherjee suggests that the immigrants' entry into the melting pot is set to change not only him but also the dominant culture.

Her movement from expatriation to immigration has allowed her to grapple with the complexities of identity formation in the new world. For Mukherjee 'diaspora' means "...the end of that zigzag route - when you

think the journey is over it is only just beginning” (Gabriel, ‘Routes of Identity’ 134). Martin Heidegger in “Building, Dwelling, Thinking” recognized that “ a boundary is not that which something stops but as the Greeks recognized, the boundary is that from which something begins its presencing”.

Diasporas are precursor of modern transnationalism. Modern Diaspora is a transnational community. Contemporary immigrants can not be characterized as the ‘uprooted’. Many are transmigrants, becoming firmly rooted in their new country but maintaining multiple linkages to their homeland. Transmigrants are immigrants whose daily lives depend on multiple and constant interconnections across international borders and whose public identities are configured in relationship to more than one nation-state (Schiller, et.al.). Transmigrants settle and become incorporated in localities and patterns of daily life of the country of their adoption. At the same time they maintain connections, influence local and national events of their homeland and multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement

The assumptions about the uprootedness of migrants are changed since globalization. Dispersed populations construct themselves as “deterritorialized nation-states” (Schiller and Basch, et.al. 1995). The increase in transnational interconnection of immigrants is certainly made possible and sustained by transformations in the technologies of transportation and communication. e.g. Jet planes, telephones, faxes and internet facilitate maintaining close and immediate home ties.

The significant change is that the homelands of Diasporas are now accepting their immigrants as the population of their country. The immigrants live their lives across national borders and respond to the constraints and demands of two or more states. They have developed

social, cultural, economic and political ties that are expected across borders. Double citizenship of many countries adds in their means of connectivity. Their transnational network is an important feature of their system of relationships which has enabled to create solidarity and identity. In this way dispersed Diasporas of old have become today's transnational community. Transnationalism as a type of consciousness depicts an individual's awareness of 'here' and 'there' decontrol attachments, home away from home, the majority seems to maintain several identities that line them simultaneously to more than one nation.

Bhaba puts fourth in his *Location of Culture* the transnational aspect of culture: "culture as a strategy of survival is both transnational and translational. It is transnational because contemporary post colonial 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" (247). For the flow of cultural phenomena and transformation of identity global media and communication are the significant channels. 'Microelectronic' transnationalism is represented by electronic bulletin boards and the internet. Other medias are Diaspora literature, TV-Cable networks, exposition of satellite. Bhaba sees that diasporas' cultural subjectivities are formed "in the ... interstices - the overlap and displacement of" (*Location of Culture*, 2) their past and present culture that is their borderline subjectivities are formed "in-between" national and cultural boundaries. As connective tissue Diasporas become the "cultural hybridist", and they are situated in the "liminal" space.

Transnational identity of Diasporas, dispersed people, presents the transformative processes and developments of a transnational, transcultural, multilingual individual. The notion of Diaspora in the context of transnationalism claims that 'Diasporas' are the 'products' of transnational mobilization activities. They are conceived of as transnational ethnic groups defined by a common identity and attachment to real or imagined homeland. Deterritorialized Diaspora is named by F. B. Adamson (2008) as the 'cultural Diaspora'. Constructivists treat them as transnational, organized "imagined communities" (Anderson 1983). Cohen also has acknowledged the postmodern reality of diasporas as being builders of transnational community. He expands the term 'Diaspora' by including all the races of modern days in "travelling cultures". The culture that has lost their territorial meanings due to today's affordable and efficient means of communications and transportations. (qut. in Chen). They bridge the gap "between individual and society, ... the local and global, syncercitizing the diverse cultures in a complex ways" (ibid). They are neither fully assimilators nor separatists but are those with multiple cultural attachments whose subjectivity cannot be contained in one national location.

V. N. Hear in his *New Diasporas* (1998) has given three minimal criteria to call them diasporas, for whom he uses the term 'transnational community'.

The transnational identity can be formed through diaspora experiences and interaction within their new society together with their continued contact with the country of origin. The multiple ties and interactions that link people across borders is transnationalism. When we talk about transnational identity we are talking about the people who identify with more than one culture, more than one country, it goes

beyond the borders of a certain country, beyond individual's practical borders. So the person / individual feels at home everywhere. He is identified as transnational.

Thus the persons who are regardless of nation state boundaries in their relationship with another individual, who have the global cooperation of people without the government's role, who remain connected, have developed multiple ties, who form networks, and who are deterritorialized are identified as the transnational people. They have transnational approach of life. They have multiple locations and are irrespective of political boundaries. They reject the process of 'othering'. They are marked by double / multiple identifications, several identities which link them with host country and homeland, more than one nation and share same 'routes' and 'roots'. They are adaptive and collaborative 'migratory birds', who form new culture but their relationship is ambivalent. Yet they are not the isolated victims. They are capable of moving between 'homes'. Hall observes : "Diaspora identities are those which are constantly producing and reproducing themselves anew through transformation and difference" (Rutherford 235).

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