CHAPTER II

The Diasporic Literature
(South Asian Immigrant Creative Writing)
Chapter-2

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Originally the term ‘diaspora’ (often with Capital ‘D’) referred to the Jewish diaspora indicating the dispersal of the Jews from Israel back in the sixth-seventh century B.C. and later in the second century A.D. from Jerusalem. Then from 200 A.D. to 900 A.D., there was large scale migrations between different countries for trade and people moved from one country to another for better prospects. Propagation of religions also became one of the important motives of migration. Colonial period witnessed migration due to war, slavery and imperial subjugation. People from colonized countries moved to other colonies as indentured laborers. The colonizers also captured the Africans and transported them as slaves. During the cold war era, people from Third world Countries became refugees in the UK, the USA and the other European countries. In post-modernist age, migration is mainly prompted by economic interests. The new diaspora in recent times generally hails from skilled professionals and upwardly mobile people.

Thus the concept of 'diaspora' in modern time has undergone a change. Time and space have shrunk on account of technological inventions and development of communication tools. Recent development of social networking has made a greater contribution in voiding this feeling. Facebook and Titter have searched for people their lost buddies and relatives living in far off land. This every moment communication and its easy availability have helped people to get adjusted in foreign lands comfortably. The trauma that accompanied displacement among the diaspora is almost absent. Safran identifies six features of the diaspora: dispersal, collective memory, alienation, longing for the homeland, a belief in its restoration and the act of self-defining with the homeland. In modern diaspora, we may not find all these characteristics but some new
phenomena such as relocation, assimilation, reconciliation and so on. The second generation diaspora literature focuses on the ‘third space’ which is the space of negotiating two disparate cultures. Then there is the question of identity, which is ‘hybrid’ identity. It combines pluralities and multi-layeredness. There are various identity groups among the diaspora depending upon the causes of migration and their responses to alien countries. The experience of displacement depends upon the factors like the generation of diaspora one belongs to, the attitude of the host countries, the causes that lead to migration and in recent context the effect of globalization. In modern times, the USA, for example, has become the second largest home of Indians in the world with more than two million people living and working in the US. The important question here is how one reconciles the continuity with the idea of location, dislocation and fluid identity. It must be noted that in the age of globalization, there is less dislocation but the psychological dislocation is the dominating trait of entire mankind today.

The diaspora of various countries and their experiences also differ as their history differs. David Pendery using Safran’s model relates the Chinese, the Jewish and the Black diasporas considering their ethnicity, history, race, culture and identity. The Chinese can be termed as ‘Sojourners’, the Jewish as ‘displaced people’ and the Blacks as ‘bondsmen’. Their homeland identities can be taken as nationalistic-mythic, autochthonous and mythic respectively. The initial new land identity of the Chinese is that of aliens, of the Jewish, as strangers and of the Blacks as subalterns.\(^1\)

The Chinese experienced arduous journey across an ocean to a new land followed by brutal, exploitative working environment. Blacks were forcefully removed from their homeland, their tribes and with the concept of a nation state quite unknown to them, their ideas of national, tribal unity were completely shattered in the USA where they were relocated as slaves. For them, the concept of original center was almost lost. The idea of mythic
Africa Collapsed ending into something of a singular racial identity. Chinese diasporic people did not have to face the huge challenge to their homeland identity and teleogy of return like the Jews and the blacks.

An Anthology of Asian Writers- AIIIEEEE! was published in 1974. It was the first major anthology of Asian American Writers launching fiery attack on American racialism. Maxine Hong Kingston’s China Men redefined Chinese individual and community identity in America. Her aim was to deflate the outdated model minority myth and move beyond defensive assimilative posture of Lin Yutang and at the same time avoid combative approach of China and other writers and to offer an assertive, creative representation of Chinese diaspora and their experiences.

Despite individual community experiences and responses, diasporas live mobile, transitional, changing, evolving lives. They are decentered in the sense that they have moved away from their original centers-nations, communities and affiliations. Paul Gilroy’s image of a ship is quite apt to define diasporic destiny. Gilroy writes that “The image of the ship – a living, micro cultural, micro political system in motion effectively captures the trans-nationality and intercultural relations, the exchange of ideas and activism.”

Travel metaphors are quite useful in understanding the dynamics of diasporic experiences. The conception of the shore also acts as the margin, boundary, periphery, and both the last territory as an exit from a homeland and the entrance to a new land. Diasporas are conditioned by the home shore they have left and the new shore they arrive at. Their writings are testimony to this ‘in-betweeness’ or ‘nowhereness’.

The Indian diaspora is the largest diaspora in the world with its global presence and a history that dates back to the Indian civilization. The Indians have been migrants for thousands of years. The Indian diaspora can be divided into three phases- ancient, medieval and modern. The ancient diaspora refers to laborers, crafts men and traders who explored new lands for work wealth and adventures. In medieval times, the British imperialism caused movement of the indentured laborers. In modern times, skilled,
educated and intelligent Indians moved to the USA and other European countries for economic and professional reasons. This ‘new diaspora’ is made of experts in different fields like IT, Medicine, Space Technology, Engineering, and Management and so on. There are eminent intellectuals, writers, orators, economists and financial experts etc. The Indian diaspora has attracted attention of the media and the people in general all over the world.

The Indian diasporic literature has become quite popular creating an impression that it represents true India. This is where the gist of the problem lies. Do the diasporic writings represent real India? Diasporic literature is certainly a useful resource for studying the psychology of the migrants. It speaks of diasporic experiences that the diaspora undergoes resulting from geographical displacement, alien customs, the problems of adjustment, longing for the homeland, the burden of beliefs, myths and heritage. These writers have double obligations. They write about their homeland for the natives of the country they have adopted and also speak of their diasporic experiences to the readers of their homeland. Diasporic literature can well be studied from Socio-Cultural point of view.

Makrand Paranjpe in his valedictory address at Patan, Gujarat discussed diasporic creativity. He asks - where are we to locate diasporic literature? Is it a part of some national literature or is it a completely different genre of writing? What are the critical parameters to evaluate this literature? What are the characteristics of a diasporic text? Makrand suggests two ways of reading some of the texts of diasporic creativity. It should be read along side their context but context should include a contrary text as well. There can be two kinds of contexts for diasporic text. One is a text by an English writer who actually lives in India. For example, Rushdie should be read alongside the writer like R.K. Narayan. The second context can be called vernacular context. For example, a writer living in Canada writes in Punjabi or any other Indian language other than English. He suggests that one way of reading *Midnight’s Children* is to read it alongside *The Legend of*
Khassak by O.V. Vijayan. In doing so, we shall be able to evaluate the merits and claims of the diasporic writings. Just as Indian English writings threaten to submerge regional creativity, the diasporic creativity seems to submerge native Indian English creativity. In many universities abroad, the courses in Indian literature have around 80% of diasporic writings. This means that the diasporic writings are construed as representations of the homeland which is often not the case. Makrand Paranjpe says that all works by Indian or South Asian writers abroad cannot be called diasporic texts. For example, Equal Music by Vikram Sheth does not conform to the standards of a diasporic text. A diasporic text must have a structure of location followed by dislocation and relocation. There should be crossing of borders or boundaries, moving from one culture to another and sense of alienation, resistance, reaction, assimilation and so on. There must be longing and memory for home and the feeling of being exiled and displaced. A diasporic text must portray the experience of dislocation. Among the diasporic writers, we may find several types. Raja Rao lived abroad for more than half a century but never became the part of that culture. He was a permanent alien in alien country. Then there are some writers who are neither ‘here’ nor ‘there’. There are like ‘Trishankus’ to use the metaphor employed by Uma Parmeshwaram. The third category is that of perfect immigrants who take foreign countries as their homes quite enthusiastically. However, their narratives certainly display hidden discontents and contradictions. Bharti Mukharjee can be cited as an example whose work Jasmine displays the fact the protagonist experiences the feeling of dislocation both in location from where she emerges and the location where she finally arrives. Thus Jasmine is certainly a diasporic text with diasporic sensibilities.

Location and home allow for ample space and abundance of language. The feeling of dislocation and alienation create both positive and negative possibilities. Dislocation may be physical movement from home caused by war and persecution. It may be a voluntary migration with the feeling of estrangement and displacement. Expelled from home and lost in
the Diaspora, such people have made a constant subject of fiction and poetry German-Jewish philosopher Theodor Adorno rightly remarks,

“Every intellectual in emigration is, without exception, mutilated, and does well to acknowledge it to himself. His language is expropriated, and the historical dimension sapped. The isolation is made worse by the formation of closed and politically controlled groups, mistrustful of their members, hostile to these branded different.”

Nostalgia, longing and desire for home have become the central preoccupation of the diasporic writers. The 19th Century German poet Heinrich Heine’s poem expresses this kind of nostalgia very poignantly:

“A spruce is standing lonely
in the North of a barren height.
He drowses: ice and snowflakes
Wrap him in a blanket of white.
He dreams about a palm tree
In a distant eastern land,
That languishes lonely and silent
upon the scorching land.”

Language, culture and history are the three major constituents of diasporic memory. They form an emotional link with the homeland. Memory creates a primal home, the desired location through romantic evocations of domestic scenes and people. Global development has succeeded in creating awareness about the local and the indigenous also. ‘Think globally, act locally’ has been the motto of our times. It applies to many new social movements and institution. Now there is a renewed enthusiasm for the native cultures and literatures. There is an upsurge of regionalism and promotion of locate traditions, local histories and art. Diasporic writing draws out attention to the fact that the earlier notions of centre and margin, home and exile are rapidly changing. This however, does not mean that diasporic
literature is anti-universal. Great art always transcends the mere local or the limited and rises to the level of universal and the permanent.

Language is the symbol of empowerment and thus the writing serves as a subtle tool for self discovery. One makes other’s language his own. It incorporates rather than being incorporated. Thus diasporic literature can be viewed as the area for negotiating and contesting, for self-fashioning and refashioning. It emerges as a counter discourse which fictionalizes ‘otherness’ and ‘difference’ in the context of self and environment. Diasporic writings present dual perspectives that of the insider as well as the outsider. These writers have come out of ‘closed’ mentality and address the world that lies outside their respective communities and geographical boundaries. This aspect of diasporic literature makes it enduring and worthwhile. Its multicultural and pluralistic outlook makes it truly universal and appealing.

South Asian diaspora writings have received unprecedented attention and acclaim recently. Salman Rushdie’s novel Midnight’s Children in 1981 drew the attention of the critics towards the growing and maturing South Asian writings in English often by the diaspora. South Asian writers like Michael Ondaatje received Booker Prize for The English Patient in 1992, Arundhati Roy Received Booker Prize for her novel The God of Small Things in 1997. Jumpa Lahiri got Pulitzer Prize for Interpreter of Maladies in 2000 and V. S. Naipaul was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature in 2003. Novel and short story are the two genres that have become quite popular but it is heartening to note that there is a substantial amount of writing in English in other genres as well: poetry, drama, autobiography, memoirs and travelogues.

The South Asian experiences certain salient characteristics. Many works call attention to the idea of Empire and interrogate the colonial history. In the writings of Indian and Pakistani writers, the struggle for independence, the agony of Partition and its wounds are the recurrent themes. In SriLankan literature, the ethnic tension between the Sinhala and Tamil Tigers, violence and bloodshed it caused and displacement of around
1.5 million People from their homes find voice. A brutal Civil War that took place for independence from Pakistan figures in Bangladeshi literature quite often. Ideas of nationalism and attempts to define the new nations have become major concerns of the creative a writers.

A large bulk of these writings focuses on the issue of identity. South Asian writers writing in English largely favour a secular humanist perspective. There is the emergence of a new type of identity which is bases on humanism, tolerance and secular outlook. The notion of identity is an important focus particularly in the poetry of women poets who give highly volative expression to women’s issues in sociopolitical construction of the nation. Many writers who have left their homelands describe their immigrant experiences, predicament of displacement, questioning or celebrating their encounter with the new alien countries. The settings of these narratives are quite varied. In Hari Kunzru’s novel *The Impressionist*, the landscape stretches from Rajasthan desert, Agra, Fatehpur, Bombay, London, Oxford and finally to West Africa. Jhumpa Lahiri’s short stories are set in Urban American as well as Indian settings. V. S. Naipaul takes readers to slums in Mumbai, Trinidad, England and African countries. Salman Rushdie’s settings are often Pakistan and India, and England.

Economic development in South Asian countries has very positive impact on development of art and literature. South Asia has produced intellectuals of international repute who have turned to creative writings. Diasporic South Asians who pursued science, engineering, management and medicine have now turned to creative literature and media. Literary audience has also become globally aware and appreciates diasporic writings of the South Asian countries whole heartedly.

Sudhir Kumar in his paper *Diasporic Consciousness of Gandhi* in *Contemporary Diasporic Literature* edited by Manjit Indersingh calls Gandhi a diasporic writer who tried to mobilize the disparate and exploited ‘girimitas’ in South Africa and fight against racism and oppression. He created awareness among the Indians in South Africa touching upon their feelings of
alienation, nostalgia, displacement and memories of their past. The
diasporic discourse is largely political which involves unequal power
relationship and Gandhi was the first activist to realize this fact. Sudhir
Kumar says,
“This makes Gandhiji, scores of decades before a Homi Bhabha and Spivak
could theorize the hybridity who showed through his words and deeds both,
how well this “hybrid condition” could be used for political empowerment of
the most deprived diasporic subjects.”

Sudhir Kumar argues that the contemporary diasporic writers such as
Naipaul, Shashi Tharoor, Hari Kunzru, Salman Rushdie, Bharti Mukhrjee
and others have got a vital clue from Gandhi’s commitment to diasporic
issues. They have realized that a creative writer needs to be an activist and
crusader for justice and equality. Whether one agrees or not, Gandhi can
certainly be called a first writer-activist who took up the diasporic issues like
exploitation, oppression and erasure of identity in South Africa and fought
against racism in a new way. Giriraj Kishore in his book *Pahela Girmitiya*
has described Gandhi’s saga of struggle against racial oppression.

Noble Laureate Vidiadhar Surajprasad Naipaul is one of the most
controversial writers of our times. He was born in a Hindu Brahmin family in
Trinidad in 1932, a third generation West Indian of East Indian descent.
Naipaul’s Eurocentric training influenced his thinking which made him reject
both Hindu traditions and colonial society and its fake intellectualism.
Naipaul left for England where he studied and wrote novels, essays,
travelogues and short stories. He received many awards including the
coveted Nobel Prize for literature in 2001. Naipaul condemned orthodox Indian traditions and became agnostic and non-believer. He also regretted
the lack of native traditions in Trinidad. He felt that the Indian immigrants in
Trinidad lived in double exile. In his works, one finds, recurrent themes of
homelessness, spiritual isolation and perpetual exile. His creative talent has
been shaped by continuous perception of rootlessness, deracination and
displacement.
Naipaul’s *A House for Mr. Biswas* (1961) is constructed around the facts of his father’s life. It focuses on the protagonists’ desperate flight to have a house of his own; a symbolic act of a person’s need to develop an authentic identity. Mohan Biswas, the protagonist is a universal figure transcending boundaries of time and place. Bruce King compares the protagonist with Shakespeare’s King Lear. He says, “Biswas brings to mind Lear, unhoused, rejected by his family, alone with the Fools, un-protected from the violence of nature...Both the novels and the play are about individual’s who thought they could stand on their own and find that once they are unhoused, powerless, outside society;,, madness follows.”

In *Area of Darkness* (1964), Naipaul attacks India several, particularly its poverty and squalor. He attacks the caste system and collective blindness of the people towards basic problems like poverty, lack of sanitation and segregation of society. He is critical of Gandhi and Nehru whom he considers grand failures. Naipaul has been criticized by many Indian writers and critics for his jaundiced view of India. In his book *The Mimic Men* (1967) focuses on the theme of colonial mimicry. He criticized the newly independent countries for their slavish imitation of the colonizer country. Individuals’ sense of identity is strongly influenced by the colonizer perception of them Naipaul comments “We became what we see of ourselves in the eyes of others.” The protagonist “Ralph” Kripal Singh experiences the feeling of abandonment at the end of the empty world. *A Bend in the River* (1979) dwells on the harmful impact of colonialism and growing sense of nationalism in the Third World. Naipaul returns to India again and again in works like *India a wounded civilization* (1977), *India: A million mutinies Now* (1990). His novels *The Enigma of Arrival* (1987) and *A way in the world* (1994) are autobiographical. His novel *Half a Life* (2001) portrays the ironic existence of diaspora through the story of Wily Somerset Chandran. *The Magic Seeds* is a sequel to *Half a Life* in which Willy Chandran undertakes a reverse journey from Berlin to India inspired by his sister Sarojini but in India, all his hopes crumble as he is unable to connect
with places and people in India. Willy is a drifter, a perpetual wanderer who is not at home anywhere but looking for home everywhere and finding it nowhere. The exile sensibility manifests in almost all major works of V.S. Naipaul making him a great diasporic writer.

Salman Rushdie was born in 1977 in Bombay. His parents migrated to Karachi in Pakistan. He studied at Rugby and Cambridge in England. He returned to Pakistan but founded in 'Creatively confounding'. In Pakistan he discovered, censorship was everywhere, inescapable, permitting no appeal. There was 'no room to breathe'. *Grimus* was his first work which was a failure. However, *Grimus* is an allegory of politics of Western powers. *Midnight's Children* is his sensual work which catapulted him to international fame. It deals with distorted politics of Eastern Hindu India. *Shame* dramatizes military politics of divided Muslim India. *Grimus* is a political satire on western secularism. It is a multi-dimensional novel, both picaresque and philosophical.

*Midnight's Children* deals with the vivisection of political secularism. It is a historical political fantasy about the Indian subcontinent. It narrates the story of Saleem Sinai in the first person narrative. The narrative spans six decades of 20th century. The protagonist Saleem Sinai embodies history of the Indian sub-continent in his tiny physical frame. He was born on 15th August, 1997 the illegitimate a son of a Hindu woman Vanita and William Methwold, an English man of mixed English and French blood, exchanged at the time of birth by the midwife, Mary Pareira and nurtured as the legitimate son of Ahmed and Amina Sinai. Saleem never experiences wholeness of personality and experiences fractured existence.

The novel begins with the loss of identity. Saleem is invested with extraordinary omniscience which enables him to have a peep into his prenatal existence. His mistaken identity is a factor that contributes to his rootlessness and fractured personality. The Sinai family migrates to Pakistan and settles in Karachi. Saleem comments on Jalian Wallah Bagh Tragedy, the independence and partition, Gandhiji's assassination, martial
law in Pakistan, Indo-China war, Indo-Pak war of 1965, the birth of Bangladesh in 1971, emergency in 1975 and Indira Gandhi's defeat in elections of 1977. Rushdie presents ‘Memory’s Truth’ through cinematography technique.

*Shame* presents the history of Pakistan. It is a mixture of history, politics, allegory and satire. It is critical of Bhutto, his daughter Benazir and Zia-ul-Haq. Omar Khayyam Shakil is the protagonist who is a peripheral, fragmented personality in Pakistan. He is the son of three mothers and anonymous father. He is congenitally an isolated self. *Shame* is a political novel that presents dictatorship syndrome through caricature and irony. Rushdie's *Satanic Verses* (1988) created great controversy and violent protest. It has been banned in several countries and Aya Tollah Khomeine dictated in a fatwa, a death sentence against its author. In this controversial work, he again explores the theme of migration through the parallel lives of Gibreel Farishta and Saladin Chamcha. Rushdie's post fatwa novel *The Moor's Last Laugh* (1995) reencounters the Islamic world examining the fluidity of history and cultural drift. *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* (1999) explores the boundary-crossing potential of music. *Fury* (2001) thematizes creativity against the background of pop culture. Rushdie's works deal with the fractured lives of people against the onslaught of historical events. As a Diaspora writer, Rushdie transcends mere geographical and physical migration dealing with spiritual alienation and rootlessness.

Anita Desai is a remarkable novelist and proponent of a feminine sensibility. The subject of her fiction has been solitude and alienation. She usually dealt with private lives of people in general and women in particular. She does not agree to the circumscribed notion of feminism that fails to integrate women's issues with human right, democratic rights and larger national movement for civil liberties. *Cry, the Peacock* (1963) her first novel recounts the story of Maya who is married to Gautama, an unimaginative, insensitive lawyer. An astrologer had made a fatal prophecy that her husband would die in the fourth tear of their marriage. Their married life is
punctuated by 'matrimonial silences'. Maya feels isolated and desolate. She turns schizophrenic after the death of her pet dog. She feels that she has "a body without a heart and a heart without a body". One calm and quiet evening, Maya goes up to the roof. She is bewitched by the sight of the pale moon. Gautama unconsciously stands between her and the moon. Maya causes her husband to fall from the roof to death. She regresses into an infantilism and subversive insanity and finally commits suicide.

In *Where Shall We Go This Summer?*, she moves to a more radical revolt of the middle-aged woman Sita. *Fire on the Mountain* examines the protest of two generations of women. *Clear Light of the Day* shows the importance of home and family. Tara and Bim are two sisters who differ in their attitudes and temperaments. Tara marries Bakul who is employed in diplomatic service abroad. There, they feel alien and return to India for reassurance of cultural identity. Bim sacrifices love and marriage and motherhood for life-long care of her aged aunt and retarded brother. She achieves symbolic motherhood and sustains family and home. She transcends the stereotyped binary opposition of sexes to approximate the ideal of Shiva and Shakti, the male substance and female energy. *In custody* explores the problem of alienation of an educated college teacher from his roots and culture. *Baumgartner’s Bombay* (1988) is about India from foreign perspective. *Journey to Ithaca* (1995) describes the pilgrimage of three Europeans to India. It employs journey motif for the spiritual quest when shows the uncertainty of the diasporic condition. Sophie undergoes the intense diasporic experience. She remains with Matteo but she is unable to justify his spiritual craze. She bears him two children but shields them from their father's spiritual madness. By juxtaposing Matteo's spiritual obsession with Sophie's rationalistic position, Anita Desai shows the inadequacy of both. She deglamorizes the Western craze for instant 'nirvana'. *Fasting Feasting* (1999) as set both an India and USA. It attempts to portray India and the USA in their different perspectives.
Anita Desai's *Bye-Bye Blackbird* (1985) deals with the migration of the Indians to England and disillusionment they often experience there. Dev comes to England to pursue his studies but he finds it very difficult to adjust with the alien surroundings. He is unable to bear the silence and emptiness of London. He feels trapped and racially conscious England questioning his choice of becoming "Macaulay's Bastard". However, he asserts that he was there to interpret India to them. Adit is a romantic admirer of England in the beginning but later he is drawn back to India the country which he called dirty and lazy. Sarah is an English girl married to Adit also faces identity crisis. She is romantically in love with India but when her husband expressed the desire that their child should be born in India, she felt shocked and surprised. She felt the sense of being uprooted. She accompanies her husband to India bidding goodbye to England. Anita Desai is also concerned with larger diasporic issues like inner alienation and uprootedness - rather than mere geographical displacement.

Kamala Markandaya is the pseudonym of Kamala Purnaiya born of a reputed family in Mysore in 1924. In 1948, she went to England hoping to support her as a journalist. However, in England, she had a tough time. She married an English man and lived in England as an expatriate. She is now a British citizen but her writings are anti-colonist and anti-imperialist. Her novel *Nectar in a Sieve* (1959) is her literacy tour at force. *Some Inner Fury* focuses on cultural difficulties involved in an interracial relationship that develops between Mira and Richard Marlowe, an English man. Her novel, *The Nowhere Man* (1972), with the sufferings of the first generation immigrants in England. The protagonist of the novel Srinivas leaves his native land to settle in England but eventually, he finds that he belongs nowhere. Through flashback technique, she recounts Srinivas's past life in India juxtaposing it against his present sufferings in England. The novel deals with the issues of diasporic angst, psychological and physical displacement and hyphenated identity often experienced by the immigrants in an alien country.
Bharti Mukherjee was born in 1940 and moved to Britain at the age of eight with her family. She was educated in Calcutta, Baroda, England and the USA. She married Clark Blaise, a Canadian in 1963. She moved to Canada with her husband but later returned to the USA where she taught at various universities. Bharti Mukherjee and her husband played supportive roles in each other's career. They pursued independent writing but also produced two nonfiction works in collaboration. She has combined a career of creative writing and teaching very successfully. Her choice to settle in the USA has had a liberating effect on her creative career. She embraced the openness of the American culture and its respect for one's individuality with enthusiasm and joy. She has stated emphatically that she would like to be treated as an American writer and not as a hyphenated or ethnic one. She is happily assimilated in American environment. In fact, her experience as an expatriate forms the main source of her writings. She is also concerned with migrations, dislocations and relocations. Her works also deal with the issues of identity, the notion of belonging, the feeling of alienation and rootlessness. She also questions the biases and prejudices of the two antipodal worlds.

In earlier works, Mukherjee deals with cultural encounters between India and the United States but later, her works shift the focus to other multicultural encounters that take place in the USA. Her first novel The Tiger's Daughter (1971) has strong autobiographical overtones. It narrates the story of Tara who gets married to an American and returns to India briefly but finds that she is unable to connect herself to her motherland. She fails to adjust with the things. Once she loved and admired in the past, she feels like an alien in her own city Calcutta. At last she returns to the USA the land of her adoption. The stories of Darkness (1985) present the experiences of Indian immigrants in the USA. The Middleman and Other Stories (1988) focuses on immigrants from various countries that form the American Salad Bowl. Though they are minority voice, they are vital part of the American mainstream. As they contribute in the making of the American culture.
The Holder of the World (1993) focuses on the 17th century colonial America and the Mughal India. The novelist creates a vivid and complex tale of dislocation and transformation that take place in amalgam of two cultures. Leave It To Me (1997) is the story of a female child abandoned by a hippie mother from California. The girl child who becomes a young woman goes in search of her roots and true parentage. The revenge story is interwoven with the question of identity presented through twin motifs of Kali and Electra. Here the novelist explores the hyphenated individual's dilemma in the multi-ethnic USA. In her novel Desirable Daughters (2002) the concerns are again female identity and re-rooting of the self. Jasmine (1990) is the story of a rebellious girl Jyoti who rebels against the conventional set up of the traditional society. She goes to the USA where she becomes Jasmine, a personification of Americanness. Bharati Mukherjee writes about a minority community which frees itself from ghetto and adapts to the mainstream American culture and lifestyle. She advocates that through adaptation, adjustment, assimilation and acculturation, the immigrants can overcome the trauma of displacement and alienation. She is a diasporic fiction writer who holds that migratory experiences have enriched expatriate literary writings.

Ruth Jhabwala was born of Polish/Jewish parents in Germany in 1927. In 1939, her family migrated to England as refugees. The condition of displacement continued in her adult life also. She married an Indian Parsi architect and moved to New Delhi. After 24 years of struggle in India, she has made another home in New York. Her works include To whom She Will (1955) The Nature of Passion (1956), Esmond in India (1957), The Householder (1960), Heat and Dust (1970) In search of Love and Beauty (1983), Three continents (1987), Poet and Dancer (1993) and Shards of Memory (1995). Heat and Dust is considered her best work which had won her the prestigious Booker prize. The novel discusses India and its effects on the Westerners. Jhabwala's disillusionment is also evident in her short stories. She is critical of those who romanticize India and turn to the East for the spiritual search. She abhors exoticism that often attracts the Westerners.
to India. She is equally critical of the Indians who run after western materialism. She believes that one needs to have roots in one's culture in order to absorb the good in another. Ruth Jhabwala is a non Indian writer writing from an objective, intelligent observer, satirical commentator and close investigator of the Indian ways of life. She has described the theme of East-West encounter and explored the theme of expatriation in India. She portrays psychological turmoil of the expatriates in her works with rare insight.

Anita Desai's daughter Kiran Desai was born in 1971. She immigrated to the USA at the age of 14, when she got a degree in creative writing. She lives in Manhattan but often visits India and the United Kingdom. Her work *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard* (1999) was her debut which earned her quite a remarkable acclaim. Kiran, in spite of her split residential situations feels at home in India. She feels at India is her hermitage and it throbs in her blood. However, Kiran requires developing her literary skills expected of a matured creative artist.

Jhumpa Lahiri was born in 1967 in London to Indian parents her parents moved to the United States after her birth. Lahiri's collection of her short stories *Interpreter of Maladies* won her prestigious Pulitzer Prize in the year 2000. It is a collection of nine short stories set in India and United States. The author has assumed the role of an interpreter of suppressed emotions. Emotional anguish and nostalgia form the basic theme of the book. As a child of immigrant parents, she has undergone the experience of living two lives-one in India and other in the USA. The title story is about a young couple caught too early in the tangles of marriage and parenthood. In a story *Temporary Matter* there is a portrayal of soured marriage brought about by the loss of a baby. *Mr. Pirzada Came to Dine* is a story of a Pakistani scholar who visits an Indian family in the New England. Lahiri shows in this story that the Indian family and the Pakistani scholar experienced “single silence and a single fear”. They forgot all differences that the two countries always experience. *The Third and the Final Continent*,...
Lahiri sums up the diasporic experience by suggesting that assimilation is the only solution for survival in an alien land.

Anjan Appachana was born in 1956 in India but after her marriage, she moved to the USA with her husband. She teaches at Arizona state university and writes novels and short stories. Her two major works include *Incantation and other stories* and *Listening Now*, a novel. She dwells in domestic life and internal landscape. She explores the silence of women who are forced by patriarchal structure to maintain forced silence. *Incantations* is a collection of stories told by women of various age, experiences and backgrounds. In her novel *Listening Now* each chapter is narrated through the perspective of different characters involved in the life of Padma, the main character who has experienced tragic love, involving an illegitimate child and rejection by her lover. The author here maps the lines of urban middle class women who are caught between traditions and modernity. Her works do not directly deal with diasporic, situations but she objectively views the entangled lives of urban, educated middle class women reflecting on gender relations.

Anita Rau Badami was born in Orissa in 1964. She moved to Canada in 1991. Her first novel *Tamarind Mem* (1996) is based on her own life. The novel presents different perspectives of the mother Saroja in India and that of the daughter Kamini in Canada. It portrays the cultural affiliation versus individual desire. Her second novel *The Hero’s Walk* became quick popular winning several literacy prizes. Here, the author illustrates the emotional tensions that underlie current notions of the South Asian diaspora. For Badami, Canada has become her home and Canada is a muted presence in all her works that represent both freedom and possibility.

Shauna Singh Baldwin is also the diasporic Indo-Canadian writer. She was born in 1962 in Montreal, Canada. In 1972, she moved to India where she attended school and college in Delhi. She married an Irish American, David Baldwin. Her novel *What the Body Remembers* is set between 1937 and 1947 in undivided Punjab, chronically the last decade of
colonial rule and partition of 1947. Considering the overwhelming male perspective in the Indian fiction of the partition era, Baldwin writes into history a female script around two women Satya and Roop, co-wives of wealthy Punjabi whose family is displaced by the partition. She portrays the pain, desires, sadness and moments of happiness of these two women. Since the terrorist attack on the world trade center and Pentagon, Sikh Americans and other minorities have suffered the racist backlash. As a writer and diaspora, she says "Each of us given the ability to create or destroy - I opt to create". She believes firmly that writing has a therapeutic value in strife-torn world.

Sunetra Gupta was born in Bengal in 1965. She spent her childhood in Ethiopia, Zambia and Liberia. Later she studied biology at the Princeton University and settled in London. Her first novel Memories of Rain (1992) won her Sahitya Akademi Award in 1996. Her works are characterized by stream of consciousness style focusing on the interior lives of her characters. Her other works are The Glassblower's Breath (1993), Moonlight into Marzipan (1995) and A Sin of Color. Sunetra's interest lies in the inner worlds of her characters. Her writing interpolates cultures, histories and human understanding. Her fiction shifts the central preoccupation of diasporic writings from the crisis of identity to the mapping of a process of experience and feeling.

Bapsi Sidhwa was born in Karachi in 1938. She belongs to the Parsi minority group in Pakistan. As a child, she contracted polio and spent much of her early life as an invalid. She moved to the USA in 1983 and became the US citizen in 1992. The Crow-Eaters (1980), The Bride (1983), Ice-Candy Man (1988), and An American Brat (1993). Sidhwa deals with the theme of injustice towards women, religious intolerance and cultural prejudices. Despite the seriousness of her theme, she employs humour, satire, irony and caricature. In The Crow Eaters, she provides a rare glimpse into the lives of a marginalized ethnic group of a Parsi community in South Asia. Ice Candy Man is a story of a Parsi girl crippled by polio who
witnesses the ethnic atrocities in Pakistan during the partition. *An American Brat* explores the issues of intercultural inflictions and difficulties of maintaining a sense of one's community in the new global world. The novel explores the encounter of an immigrant to American culture.

Kamila Samsie was born in 1973 in Karachi, Pakistan. Her works of prose fiction include *In the city by the Sea Salt and Saffron* and *Cartography*. Her novels deal with violence and political unrest in Pakistan. She addresses the issues that are not parts of just a Pakistani but a South Asian diasporic reality. She seems to ask- does leaving one's country allow one to forget the constraints that one used to find oneself in? Or does one seek to construct a new reality that partakes from both worlds?

Amitav Ghosh is a versatile scholar, anthropologist, sociologist and creative artist. His works include *In an Antique Land*, *The Shadow Lines*, *The Glass Palace*, *The Circle of Reason* and *The Calcutta Chromosome*. His novels blur boundaries of different genres - fiction, history, anthropology and so on. Migration becomes an important theme of his novel as each journey serves to impact the identity of the traveler or the migrant. *In An Antique Land* shows how imperialism results in ruthless exploitation of the people from developing countries. Ghosh shows the ill-treatment of the Egyptians by the Iraqis. The same is true of the Indian diaspora in Burma who works in docks, mills, pulling rickshaws and emptying latrines. Colonialism was responsible for the first wave diaspora while neocolonialism and neo-imperialism was the cause of the second wave diaspora. The first wave migrants brought more men from their countries as indentured labor helping the empire and colonizers. *The Glass Palace* shows how the soldiers from India in British Indian Army suffered. Many Indian soldiers of the Empire died tragic deaths in Malaya, Singapore and Burma longing for their homes. Amitav Ghosh's works stress the fact that homelessness is a fatal curse that befalls human beings during the course of history.
Philip Michael Ondaatje was born in 1943 on a tea estate in Keyalle, Ceylon (Sri Lanka). When he was 11, he left to study in England after his parents' divorce. In 1962, he immigrated to Canada. Though his ancestors are a mixture of Dutch, Sinhalese and Tamil, his outlook is British. He got his B.A. and M.A. in English and taught at some of the prestigious Canadian Universities. His important works are *The collected works of Billy the Kid* (1970), *Coming Through Slaughter* (1976). His collections of poetry include *The Dainty Monsters* (1967), *Rat Jelly* (1973) *Secular Love* (1984), *The Cinnamon Peeler: Selected Poems* (1991) and *Hand Writing* (1998). His novel *The English Patients* (1992) won the Booker prize. The author's diasporic background determines the themes of his works. He dwells in his writings on notions of home, identity, travel, history and migration. His success as a writer lies in sacrifice of his regionality, his past and his experience of otherness in Canada. His poems capture the insider-outsider dilemma that plagues the diasporic individual. He belongs and yet does not belong to his original home.

The protagonists in Ondaatje's works are always in the flux. The places that they inhabit are also mobile and transient. A sense of place is created through sights sounds and smells around him. His novel *The English Patient* also focuses on the theme of identity. *The collected works of Billy the Kid* is a collage prose, poetry and illustrations. The text reflects the fractures that characterize diasporic history. Past modern writers question and negate the idea of home but despite certain past modernist characteristics, Ondaatje's narratives show that diasporic writers try to seek firmer grounds on imposing imaginary homelands on certain geographical places.

Vikram Sheth was born in Calcutta in 1952. He studied in Oxford University where he earned a bachelor's degree in philosophy, Economics and Politics. He has published six books of poetry, three novels and a travelogue. *Mappings* is a collection of his translations into English from a variety of authors worldwide. His works *The Golden Gate* is a novel in
verse, 690 tetrameter rhyming sonnets. The book sold 1,50,000 copies. In 1993, he published a novel *A Suitable Boy*, the longest novel writer after Samuel Richardson's *Clarissa*. The novel centers on a story of a Hindu mother who searches for a suitable husband for her daughter. It deals with the issues like land rights, inter religious marriages and intersectional identity in modern India. *An Equal Music* (1999) belongs to the category of international literature. Sheth's works do not posses diasporic nostalgia, longing and sense of dislocation and marginalization. For him, the answer to the loneliness of the human condition seems to lie in the idea of a larger community. *An Equal Music* is an attempt to supersede the restrictive boundaries of nationalism advocating the philosophy of universal humanism.

I. Allan Sealy was born in 1951 in Christian family and attended La Martinere School in Lucknow. Then he studied at St. Stephen's College, Delhi. He went to the USA for his master's degree. He visited New Zealand, Australia before moved back to India. At present, he lives in Dehradun. He is often labeled as an Anglo-Indian writer, a category that is used to differentiate it from Indian English writers. However, he says that his sensibilities are those of any westernized urban Indian. One of his major themes is the search for identity by his characters. His novel *The Trotter Nama* is the story of seven generations of Trotters in Sans Souci. The mixed parentage symbolically depicted in their grey skin compels them to question their exact identity. The novel creates a metaphor of hijda or hermaphrodite for these characters whose identity is not certain. In his next novel *The Everest Hotel*, Ritu, a young nun grapples with her own identity questioning the doctrine of total obedience to the Christian sisterhood.

Hari Kunzru was born in 1969 in England to an Indian father and English mother. His debut novel *The Imprisonment* was published in 2002. It focuses on the significance of multiculturalism as an individual experience. It is an attempt to explore the center lost between past of the country and British nomination. The protagonist's journey is not merely physical one but mental or inner. His novel is an exploration of the self through history and
traditions. Hanif Kureishi was born in 1954 in England of a Pakistan immigrant father and English mother. He grew up amidst first hand experiences of racial and cultural clashes. He is a play-Wright and film director. His success as a playwright lies in his own experiences of racial and cultural clashes in England. He says that in England, writers like him are culturally marginalized and the critics in England still do not realize that the world is hybrid. In his essay 'The Rainbow Sign' (1986), he recalls his experience as a misfit in racially torn England. It is an autobiographical piece examining his exile condition and ambiguities of identity. 'My Beautiful Launderette' is a story depicting the conflict between immigrants and youth cultures in England. His next film *Sammy and Rosie Get Laid* questions social/political class. His other films are *London kills me* and *My son the Fanatic*. He has written film scripts, plays and novels. In his novel *The Buddha of Suburbia*, he explores the familial and racial conflicts. *The Black Album* (1995) deals with a young Asian growing up in London. His works are critical of fundamentalism and censorship. His novel *Gabriel’s Gift* (2002) shows his interests in pop, rave, ecstasy, rock music and the culture of drugs and sexuality.

Vikram Chandra, a novelist, short story writer, street play writer and essayist was born in 1961. He studied in Mayo College, Ajmer and got his bachelor’s degree in English and creative writing from the USA. He studied in film school at Columbia University in New York. He also got M.A. from Johns Hopkins University and M.F.A. from Houston University. His first novel *Red Earth and Pouring Rain* (1995) achieved huge success. His second book *Love and Longing in Bombay* (1997) is a collection of short stories. The five stories in the collection are named for the precepts of Hindu philosophy viz. *Dharma* (duty), *Shakti* (strength), *Kama* (desire) *Artha* (Economy) and *Shanti* (Peace). He has tried to show how these principles are woven with the lives of the Indian people. Chandra’s works deal with intersection, collision and hybridization of different cultures. In his essay *The Cult of Authenticity*, he discusses several common charges against the Indian writers living abroad that they are insulated from true Indian
experience, regional writers necessarily reflect Indian realities more sincerely and that the diasporic writers target a western audiences. Chandra counters these arguments by saying that writers must be free and to be deliberately anti-exotic is to be limited and censored.

Upmanya Chaterjee was born in 1959 in Patna, Bihar. He graduated from St. Stephen's college, New Delhi and then joined I.A.S. in 1983. *English August: An Indian Story* was his debut novel. He also wrote short stories. His best known short story *The Assassination of Indira Gandhi* was published in William Heinemann collection of best stories in 1986. It was enter included in Anthology title *Mirror Work: Fifty years of Indian Writing in English* by Salman Rushdie. The response to his first novel *English August* (1994) was overwhelming. It is the story of a young I.A.S. officer Agastya Sen who is posted in a sleepy backwater town of Madna. In Madna, Marijuana, masturbation and mosquitoes become his constant companions. He drifts between states of quiet restlessness and drug induced torpor. Agastya's alienation in Madna shows that even within the same country, one can experienced the feeling of displacement and homelessness. It reflects on the metropolitan sensibilities and small town realities. Chaterjee's second novel *The Last Burden* explores the theme of alienation through dynamics of a family reunion in contemporary Indian middle class. Chaterjee had been to the U.K. as a writer in residence in University of Kent but he has chosen to live and write in India. He has worked on the theme of alienation but it is not the diasporic alienation but that of a dislocated, urban Indian.

Amit Chaudhari, born in 1962 in Calcutta was brought up in Bombay and later studied in England. He shuttled between India and England but finally settled in Calcutta. His works include: *A strange and sublime Address* (1991), *Afternoon Raag* (1993), *Freedom song* (1998), *A New World* and *Real Time* (2002). Chaudhari belongs to a new wave of writers with roots in post emergency India. His works are partly set in India and England. There are no catastrophic events in his works. He deals with
quotidian city life describing interaction with family servants, Indian culture, food and music. At the deeper level, he explores the themes of displacement and belonging through his characters that are not at home though they are in their familiar homely locations.

Meera Syal was born and brought up in a Punjabi immigrant family in England. She has traversed various creative areas like writing, film, TV etc. One of us is her play besides her novels Anita and Me (1996) and Life is not All Ha Ha Hee Hee (2001. Bhaji on the Beach a screen play portrays the confrontation between two generations of South Asian women. She satirizes older generation of women who are caught in time warp and are unable to accept new changes like individual self expression and sexual openness. Syal's forte is comic through which she expresses her belief that there is a possibility for a positive change. Anita and Me is an autobiographical work set in an English mining village, Meena, a 10 year old non white girl, faces racial discrimination and develops a deep crisis of identity. Life isn't All Ha Ha and Hee Hee deals with female friendship of three South Asian women.

The Parsee came to India from Southern Iran. They are a miniscule ethno-religious community. Their original homeland is Persian province Pars or Fars in southern Iran. They form almost 0.016 percent of India's vast population yet their contribution to economy of India, commerce, industrial development, politics and arts is highly remarkable. The Parsees follow Zoroastrianism which is considered as one of the oldest of the revealed world religions having its roots in a very distant past. The forced Islamization of Iran compelled Parsees to flee their homes and sought refuge in India. They came to the shores of Gujarat at Sanjan and dispersed in places like Ankleshwar, Navsari, Cambay and later many shifted to Bombay. Parsees have left an indelible imprint on Indian life with their unique contribution, particularly in industries and commerce. Dadabhai Naoroji was the first Indian to be elected to British House of Commons in 1892. Sir Pherozeshah Mehta and Madame Bhikhaji Cama were great
patriots who fought relentlessly for independence of India. Madame Bhikaji Cama was the first Indian woman to hoist the Indian tri-color on foreign soil. Jamshedji Tata has the pioneer of industrialization in India. The Parsees have contributed immensely in different fields like films, paintings, science, music and literature.

The Parsee writers fall into two categories: the writers who lived and wrote in India and expatriates. Dina Mehta, B.K. Karanjia, Keki Daruwalla can be cited as an example of stay at home writers. Farrukh Dhondy, Firdaus Kanga, Rohinton Mistry, Ardashir Vakil and Boman Desai are expatriate writers. The Parsees, because of their small number, enjoyed a marginal portion in British India. The British employed them as agents and other important positions because of their English education and westernized life style. The Parsees considered English education as blessing for uplift and development of India. The Parsees often initiated western life style excessively almost losing their original identity. They often suffered from double alienation. Thus, Parsees could never be completely anglicized nor could they become merged with the mainstream Indian life.

Expatriation caused further alienation from their roots. Viney Kirpal observes regarding the impact of expatriation:

"He (expatriate writer) is not the de-regionalized, deracinated man of modern West. His marginality itself is the result of his race, region and history. And he writes with this realization in his bones."  

The Parsees carry their ethnicity to the lands they move to. Many of them are motivated by their stay abroad. Some writers like Bapsi Sidhwa are unaffected by expatriation and remain rooted to the psyche of native land. Among the Parsees, Westernization and expatriation are the causes of dislocation but at the same time of their survival and development. The Parsee diaspora writers have contributed to fiction quite substantially both in quantity and quality. Rohinton Mistry was born in 1952 in Mumbai and spent his early life there. He graduated in 1975 from Mumbai University at the age
of 23. Mistry migrated to Toronto in Canada just one month after emergency was declared by Indira Gandhi in 1975. Mistry was not quite happy with his bank job. He started writing short stories and novels. His works gave him instant recognition. His works include: Tales from Firozsha Baag (1987), Such a Long Journey (1991) A Fine Balance (1996) and Family Matters (2002).

In his short stories, there is a brilliant illustration of the feeling of displacement quite often. In a story Lend Me Your Light, Kesri says: “I am guilty of the sin of hubris for seeking immigration out of the land of my birth, paying the price in burnt out eyes: I Tiresias blind and throbbing between two lives, the one in Bombay and the one to come in Toronto” (180). His novel Such a Long Journey (1991) is set in Mumbai with the political backdrop of Indo-Pak war leading to the birth of Bangladesh. A Fine Balance (1996) chronicles the state of emergency declared in 1975 by Indira Gandhi until the assassination of Indira Gandhi in 1984. His depiction of atrocities and dismal quality of life is truly highly realistic. His protagonists belong to marginalized community and writer depicts how tragedy looms large over their fragile lives. Family Matters (2002) depicts Parsee community's struggle to preserve their identity in hostile environment.

Bapsi Sidhwas’s works also provides the readers a rare glimpse into marginalized Parsi community in South Asia. Her major concern is also displacement and identity crisis. Her novel Ice Candy Man foregrounds the horrors of partition. In her works, there are multiple levels of diasporic experiences and their displacement. However, the novel ends with a note of assimilation. Parsees want stable and unified country whether it is India or Pakistan. The Crow Eaters throws light on a hitherto unexplored ethnocentric life of the Parsees. An American Brat deals with intercultural theme which has assumed vital significance as a poet colonial novel. There is a depiction of conflicting value systems of the east and the west in the narrative of the novel. Feroza, the woman protagonist is torn between two worlds and she lives in alien country as a marginalized person. She is
unable to discard the old traditions and she is also unable to find solace into the adopted land. In many diasporic writings, there is depiction of clash of cultures but also the need for assimilation and adaptation. Bharti Mukherjee advocates the rejection of the old and the acceptance of the new. She almost rejects the Indian identity to become an integral part of the adopted land. Sidhwa's roots continue to exist in her homeland even though she believes that one must assimilate and develop the sense of belonging to the land of adoption.

Firdaus Kanaga's *Trying to Grow* celebrates the social life of the westernized Parsees. Sara and Sera, Brit’s parents identify themselves with the colonizer. Brit’s, on the other hand, observes the Western world like a disinterested outsider. The novel ends with appositive note of affirmation that growing is learning and adapting to realities. Ardashir Vakil was born in 1962 and is permanent resident of Britain. Cyrus Readymoney is an adolescent boy observed with films, food and sex. He is quite indifferent to his religion faith and rituals. He lives in the juvenile world of fantasy. Films are life sustaining or they provide him with illusions and fantasy. Vakil’s another novel *One Day* describes an average day in the married life of Ben Tennyson and Priya Patnaik. The author portrays the world which is authentically multi-racial. Priya is an Indian girl married to an English man who is like ‘a swivel of layered chocolate, dark and white’. The novel deals with multi racial marriage and conflicts it creates in the life of the couple.

Farrukh Dhondy is a multifaceted artist, a filmmaker, columnist, novelist, children’s writer and editor. He was born in 1944 in Pune and was raised in India till the age of 20 when he went to study. He is a Parsi writer with westernized education and outlook. In his book *Bombay Duck*, he addresses the painful issue of religious fundamentalism and intolerance. It provides almost factual, unsentimental portrayal of multi-culturism of England Dhondy voices concern over the loss of culture in the Indian context. Xerexes is a marginal man who is in search of his roots. He is not happy with Zoroastrianism and that makes him quite in different all faiths.
Dhondy advocates that in any good society, it is not the limitations that individuals that should matter most.

Boman Desai’s major concern is diaspora and it is the main purpose of his narrative in *The memory of Elephants*. Like Mistry and Dhondy, Boman Desai is also a Westerned Parsee but his narrative is overtly Zoroastrian. He refuses to convert himself to Christianity and rejects many things western. Nilufer Bharucha calls the novel an allegory employing the element of the fantastic. It is an example of tabulation that moves away from realism to functionality and romantic fable. Homi, the protagonist faces rejection in the west but his sticks to his faith in Zoroastrianism who reconciles the racial past with the present. Homi’s journey into the racial memory is not more nostalgia but the way of putting the past in time perspective and redefining his own existence in the present.

M. G. Vassanji’s works *The Book of Secrets* (1994) as set in east Africa and describes the experience of a fictional East Indian Community the Shams is uprooted from homeland and relocated in Dares Salaam. Vassanji himself was born in Nairobi, Kenya to Indian parents. He was brought up in Dares Salaam in Tanzania before immigrating to the USA and finally settling in Toronto, Canada. He describes himself an ‘an East African Canadian of Indian origin’. This works deal with the dynamics of exile from one home and self.

Diaspora literature of South Asian writers abounds in fiction while their contribution to poetry and drama is not so substantial. Poetry is the highest form of human utterance. Its language is metaphorical and much of the meaning lies between the lines. It often contains layers of meaning that need to be explored. The recent trend is not very heartening for poetry but poetry will never lose its significance in spite of the lean period it faces at present. In my dissertation, I am to focus on poetry of the diasporic women poets but in this chapter I have dealt with the diasporic literature of these South Asian writers in other genres of literature, fiction being the main genre practiced by these writers.
Diaspora poetry, though small in bulk in comparison to fiction, is quite commendable. Here, I shall deal briefly with diasporic poets including major women poets. In the chapters that follow, I shall deal with five women poets whom I have called ‘Cassandras in Exile’ – Meena Alexander, Sujata Bhatt, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, Moniz Alvi and Jean Arsanayagam.

A. K. Narayan was born in 1929 in Mysore in a conservative Brahmin family the received his B.A. in English form Maharajas College, Mysore and then M.A. from university of Mysore. He went to the USA on a Fulbright scholarship to study folklore and linguistics at Indiana University. In 1963, he got his doctorate. He taught at the University of Chicago for 30 years in the department of South Asian Languages and civilization. He received international recognition in the field of literature. He was awarded Padmashri in 1976 by the Government of India. In 1993, he died at the age of 64. He contributed 18 books and numerous essays this major partial works included The Striders (1966), Relations (1971), Selected poems (1976), Second Sight (1986). He was a great translator who tried to promote Dravidian literature and language in the western countries.

A.K. Ramanujan’s poetry exhibits diastolic sensibility time and again. He lived in the USA but he could never dissociate himself from Indian culture, tradition, art and language. His poems often deal with memories of his relations and the land he was born and brought up. His poetry shows his sense of displacement particularly during his early years in Chicago. A diasporic writer often maintains conscious distance from the country where he loves and keeps on returning to his homeland through memories and nostalgia.

The sense of alienation from physical and cultural environment is expressed in the words below.

“In Chicago, it blows
....
Enemies have guns.”
Friends have doubts
Wives have lawyers.
....
Give daughters pills,
Learn Karate.
In Chicago
lowest walk slow.”

In a poem On Memory, the poet attempts no native memory,
"Memory,
In a crowd of Memories, seems
To have no place
at all for unforgettable things.”

Ramanujan’s poems treat migration as loss of home and other relations, Kinship and family bonds. A person needs the sense of belongingness without which he/she experiences vacuum and solitariness. Looking for a Centre says that in modern world, there is no solution to the problems of personal identity, tradition and displacement.

“Looking for the centre these days
Is like looking for the center
For missing children.
Which used to be here, but now has moved.”

Ramanujan’s poetry is an attempt to resolve his distension through archetypal symbols and myths. Ramanujan, though lived in the USA, remained deeply rooted in India and Indian traditions. He remained rooted in the family and kinship with his homeland. This poem Hindu to His Body expresses his deep commitment to Hindu philosophy and Hindu tradition. He is therefore unable to adapt to American present and Westernized thinking. He continues to cling to the tradition he has inherited. In case of A. K. Ramanujan, it is the physical displacement that is responsible for his diasporas sense but it is his refusal and non-acceptance of the western way
of life that makes his a different kind of diasporic voice, this identify remains that of a homebound pilgrim. However, he acknowledges that he is the product of two forces – Eastern and Western. He admits:

“English and my disciplines (linguistics, anthropology) give me my “outer” forms – linguistic, metrical, logical and other such ways of shaping experience; and other such ways of shaping experience; and my first fieldtrips, my personal and professional preoccupations with Kannada, Tamil, the classics and folklore give me my substance, my “inner forms” images and symbols. They are continuous with each other, and I no longer can tell what comes from where.” 13

Nissim Ezekiel was born in Bombay in 1924 in a Jewish (Bene-Israel) & family. He studied in Mumbai and later in London. He was influenced by M. N. Roy’s Radical Democratic Party. Ezekiel died in 2009. He was a man of varied interests but he is mainly known for his contribution to Indian English poetry. These poetry collections include- A time to Change (1952), Sixty poems (1953), The Third (1959). The unfinished man (1960), The Exact Name (1965), Hymns in Darkness (1976) and Later Day Psalms (1982). He was trendsetter as a poet who condemned mediocrity and narcissistic attitudes in poetry. He stands for the synthesis of the Easterned the western, the ancient and the modern. For him, poetry is an important means for the search of identity. He firmly believed that Indian writers should be deeply rooted in Indianness. He identified himself with India.

“I have made my commitment now.
This is one: to stay where I am.” 13

As a Jew, he was a natural outsider but as he said himself circumstances and decisions related him to India. He says that a poet should always be ‘on fire’ trying to seek his true identity, not outer one but inner. He said,

“Confiscate my passport, Lord,
I don’t want to go abroad.
Let me find my sons
Diasporic poets often face trauma of displacement and rootlessness. Nissim Ezekiel is a poet with cosmopolitan outlook and faith in synthesizing power of art. Bruce King remarks very aptly:

“A central concern of Ezekiel’s poems always has been how, in an era of skepticism and secularity, one can live with a sense of grace, completeness, morality, truth and holiness”

Regarding his marginality and how he tackles it, Bruce King says,

“Whether in London, Bombay or Edinburgh, there is mention of the small room, the place which is ultimately his, and is himself.”

Zulfikar Ghose was born in Pakistan in 1935 and then went to England in 1952. Since 1969, he has been living in the USA. He is poetical works include The Loss of India (1969), (1969), Jets of Orange (1967) and The Violent West. Zulfikar’s poetry expresses his estrangement from his homeland. He had lived in India (undivided) before independence in deep communal harmony. Divided India gave him deep agony and pain. The brutal political realities tormented him. He wrote,

“India was at civil war,
The crow excreted where he pleases,
And I
reborn from a fairy tale
saw bones charred
in mounds on pavements.
It was no country
for princes, and eagles soared
above the darker clouds
The undergrowth
heaved uneasily with poison of snakes
'The heart is free!' People cried.
What if truth runs on like blood?
We have our independence
‘The blood of India ran out with my mouth.” 17

In the beginning, he feels stranger and exiled in England. He says that in English, he feels like ‘a child at museum’ as if looking at ‘England through pictures’. But by and by, the poet begins to experience intimacy and closeness in England. He says,

“Now I am intimate with England: we meet as lovers…
To this country I have come, 
Stranger or inhabitant.
This is my home.” 18

At present, major women diaspora poets are actively voicing their anguish and ecstasy in their poetry. These major women poets are Meena Alexander, Moniza Alvi, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, Jean Arsanayagam, Shauna Singh Baldwin, Sujata Bhatt, Sunanda Mongia, Panna Nayak, Gayatri Majumdar, Anne Runasinghe, Mani Rao, Hima Raza, Boshra Rehman, Suniti Namjoshi, Taslima Nasrin, Uma Parmeshwaran, Lakshmi Gill and so on. There are also diaspora poets both women and men actively creating their space through poetry in their regional languages also. There are diaspora poets who write in Hindi, Punjabi, Marathi, Gujarati and so on. Here I shall briefly introduce some of the major women poets writing in English and then more on to regional writers who have contributed to diaspora literature quite substantially.

Among those who write in English, Meena Alexander has achieved worldwide recognition for her extraordinary output both in bulk and quality. Meena was born in 1951 in Allahabad but she grew up in Sudan. She studied in England, taught at Delhi and Hyderabad and then migrated to the USA after her marriage with David Lelyveld, a historian of South Asia. Alexander calls herself an Indian as well as American writer and she has
multiple boundaries and affiliations. Most of her writings explore the themes of migrancy, exile, border-crossing, multiple births, anchorages and affiliations. Her poetical works include *The Bird’s Bright Ring* (1976), *Without Place* (1978), *I Root My Name* (1977), *Stone Roots* (1980), *The Storm* (1989), *Night Scene, the Garden* (1989), *House of a Thousand Doors* (1988) and *River and Bridge* (1976). She has also written two novels: *Nampally Road* (1991), *Manhattan Music* (1997) and a memoir *Fault Lines* (1993). *Illiterate Heart* (2002) has won PEN Open Book Award in 2002. It is an extraordinary poetical work of one of the strongest female voices. In *Illiterate Heart*, the formation of identity through language within conditions is patriarchy and colonization has been vividly described. Meena Alexander’s *Raw Silk* (2004) poems deal with poet’s emotions open revisiting India after a long absence and finding wounds of communal riots in Gujarat. However, other poems are set in New York City in the aftermath of 9/11 terrorist attacks. She says that these poems are torn out of her flesh, her own carnal being, her body. Thus she partakes of the pain involved. In an interview with Ruth Maxey for ‘*The Kenyon Review*’, Meena Alexander said,

“In a time of violence, the task of poetry is in some way to reconcile us to our world and to allow us a measure of tenderness and grace with which to exist.” 19

Taslima Nasreen stands out as a great rebel, poet, essayist, novelist of Bangladesh. She is activity involved with women’s rights movement, Human Right movement, secular movement and feminist movement. She can be called a perpetual diaspora facing state of exile. She is an atheist revolutionary who has invited the wrath of extremists and fundamentalists. She is a physician by profession who is under the threat of death by fundamentalists. Like Rushdie, she has been charged of blasphemy and she has lived in exile in India and Sweden. She was attacked by fundamentalists in 2007 in Hyderabad. Taslima was born in August, 1962 in Bangladesh. She received her M.B.B.S. degree from Mymensingh Medical
College and worked as a physician with the health department of Bangladesh.

Taslima started writing poetry at the age of 13. Her openness and rebellious thoughts invited anger of the orthodox people. Her novel Lajja (shame) showed the ugly marginalization of Hindu community in Bangladesh. Bangladesh government banned the book and Islamic fundamentalists declared death sentence. In 1993, a case of blasphemy was filed against her. Her poetical works include Hunger in the Roots (1986), Banished Within and Without (1995), Poems from Exile (1996), Water Lilies (2000), Feeling Empty (2004) etc. She has received numerous awards from all over all the world.

Taslima has been labeled as ‘female Rushdie’ by media. In 1994, Rushdie wrote a letter to her saying that she must not relent. He wrote,

“It is a disgrace that your government has chosen to side with the religions extremists against their own history, their own civilization, their own values.”

Talima advocates equality and freedom for women. She wants women to liberate themselves from patriarchal bonds and live free life full of love and liberty. She addresses a sad girl in one of her poems.

“Sad girl, forget your sorrow
Throw open all the windows
Dance as you please in the whirlwind of
light and air.”

Taslima is angry at religion bigotry. She wants all religions to be abolished and wants to establish only the religion of humanity. She wants all temples, mosques and churches to be burnt and turn them all into prayers halls into hospitals, playgrounds, gardens, academics of arts and universities of learning. In a very poignant poem she says:
“I’m going to move ahead
Behind me my whole family in calling,
My child is pulling my sari-end,
My husband stands blocking the door,
But I will go.
There’s nothing ahead of but a river
I will cross
I know how to swim.
but the wont let me swim, won’t let me cross.”  

Her poem *Women and Poets* expresses her philosophy of poetry. She says that the source of poetry is pain and therefore when a human being suffers, he/she becomes a woman, a poet. She says:

“You have to be a woman first if you want to give birth to a poem.

A word without any pain is fragile, breaks when touched who knows more than a woman all the lanes and alleys of pain!”  

Sujata Bhatt was born in Ahmedabad in Gujarat in 1956. She grew up in Pune and immigrated to the USA in 1968 where she got an MFA degree at the Writer’s Workshop at the University of IOWA. Currently she lives in Germany. She has translated Gujarati poetry into English for the Penguin anthology of Contemporary Indian women poets. Her major collections of poetry include- *A Colour of Solitude* (2002), *Monkey shadows* (2001) *Augatora* (2000), *The Stinking Rose, Brunizem* (1993) and *Point no Point* (1997) etc. She has lived in India, Europe and the US and has widely travelled across different countries. Her poetry shows the impact of changing environments that she encounters as a diaspora. She feels the pain of displacement but she avoids its exhibition. She carries with her the seeds of home wherever she goes. A sense of continuity in terms of relationship with home and its memory pervades throughout her poetry. She says:
“I am the one
who always goes
away with my home
which can only stay inside
in my blood-my home which doesnot fit
with any geography.” 24

In The One who Goes Away, reiterates very plainly and openly.

“But I never left home.
I carried it away
with me- here in my darkness
in myself.” 26

Her post colonial consciousness is reflected in her poem History is a Broken Narrative where she says that when one changes a language, one makes one’s own language. In many of her poems, she is quite nostalgic about her childhood and past memories. This process leads her to constructing the image of home and nation. In the next chapter, I shall deal with Meena Alexander and Sujata Bhatt’s diasporic sensibility in details discussing their relevant poems.

Eunice de Souza was born in 1940 whose major poetic concern has been ethnicity. Her first book Fix published in 1979, underscores her struggle to find a way by which she could belong to the main stream in cosmopolitan Bombay where she has lived for a long time. In her poem De Souza Prabhu, the speaker in the poem says that her name is Greek, Surname Portuguese and language alien. However,

“These are ways of belonging” 26

She is a poet of Goan origin who finds it difficult to deal with multicultural aspects of her being she often refers to her Goan roots as she is Portuguese Goan Roman Catholic based in Bombay. In many of her poems, she refers to her ‘Goanness’, its customs, traditions, upbringing, social taboos, inherited lifestyle and the discomfort that she faced in
following them or opposing them. Melanic Silgardo, a Goan poet and former student of Eunice de Souza, was born in 1956. She too is a Goan Catholic who has now settled in the UK. Her poems are quite confessional. She suffers through her rejection of her father and she expresses this pain:

“You never knew I met my pillow
oftener than I had ever met my bed.” 27

Both De Souza and Silgardo deal with the problem of being alien in their own family environment and lack of communication and emotional charm.

Imtiaz Dharker was born in a Muslim family in Lahore, Pakistan in 1954. She was realized and educated in Britain. She has married an Indian Maharashtrian Hindu and lives in Bombay. Her collections of poetry are Purdah (1989) and Postcards from God (1994). She is an artist. Illustrator and filmmaker and through her creative works, she has expressed her distinctive multicultural and multi-ethnic voice. In a poem 8 January 1993 (Post Cards from God), she describes Bombay riots after the assault on the Babri Masjid. In a poem 'Minority’, she writes:

“I was born a foreigner,
I carried on forms there
To become a foreigner everywhere
……...
I don't fit,
like a clumsily – translated poem.” 28

Dharker feels that she will continue to face identity crisis and marginalization in Bombay. She is a ‘Nowhere Person’ who regards herself as a citizen of the world but never completely at home anywhere in it.

Chitra Banerjee Divakarnni was born in Calcutta in 1956, she studied in Calcutta and then in the USA. She started writing poetry moved by the dual forces of pre-immigration and post-immigration conditions and sufferings of women in patriarchal society. Later she moved to short story writing and
novels. Her collections of poetry are *The Reason for Nasturtiums* (1990), *Black Candle* (1991) and *Leaving Yuba City* (1997). *Black Candle* Chronicles scorched lives of women. It is a collection of poems about women of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. She depicts the sufferings of women in purdah, out-cast or widowed women. Women married against their wish, childless women tortured by their husbands and in-laws and women forced to die on funeral pyres of their husbands. Chitra is a crusader who fights for the cause of women. She says that her living in the USA made her more aware of the sufferings of women in Indian subcontinent. She believes that double standards for men and women prevail both in to the East and the West. As a diasporic woman poet, Chitra portrays the sufferings of women in male dominated society. Her works have been critically well-received especially in the USA. She has won many awards for her poetry and fiction. She fuses lyricism, realism, myth and emotional drama very deftly. However, she often denigrates the Indian society and its traditions glorifying the American way of life. She says that it is not enough for women to have a room of her own to write. She needs to prioritize it. She says that women should look out for each other and draw strength from each other.

Moniza Alvi was born in 1954 in Lahore, Pakistan. Her father is a Pakistani and her mother is English. Moniza was taken to England when she was only a few months old. Moniza never learnt her father’s language and she always feel sad about it. She felt that her origins were invisible. She feels alienated in England. Neither could she feel at home in Pakistan when she visited int. She felt that she was not the part of Asian community as her mother was English. As she had written a few poems with Asian background, she was taken as a black writer. Her collections of poems are: *The Country at my Shoulder and A Bowl of Warm Air.*

Her poem *Presents from My Aunt* is fairly autobiographical. The girl in the poem is the poet herself at the age of thirteen. The girl says that she is of mixed race. She receives a gift of clothes and jewellery from her Pakistani
aunts. She is fascinated by these gifts but she feels awkward and uncomfortable when she puts them on. She feels more comfortable in denim and corduroy. She tries to connect with her roots in Pakistan but she fails to do so. In her fourth collection Souls (2002), she deals with larger Thomas and landscapes. She says,

“And perhaps we are all immigrants
In these towns and villages
and all strangers to ourselves.” 29

These poems present the sense of lack of belongingness and fragility of relationship with the self. Her fifth collection How the stone found its voice contains poems about her childhood, morning poems about her own experiences of motherhood. These poems are full of diasporic tone of nostalgia, search for her roots and profound sense of displacement and alienation.

Jean Arsanayagam is a very powerful woman writer and poet from Srilanka. She holds that poets have ‘magic’ in their brain. She was born in a Dutch Burgher family in the hill town of Kandy in Sri Lanka. She thought English at a convent school and later at a college in Sri Lanka. She is married to a Tamil Hindu, another minority community in Sinhala-dominated Srilanka. She too also belongs to Dutch Burgher minority who are the offspring of inter-marriages between Dutchmen and women of indigenous communities. Thus she too possesses a split inheritance. She says,” I have suckled on a breast shaped by the genetics of history”.

Lanka. She calls herself an outsider and therefore she looks at the events very objectively. Amidst chaos, horror, humiliation and loss of home and safety, she experiences a paradoxical sense of freedom, she writes,

“Someone smashed in the door
And gave me my freedom
To walk out into the world
Free, free from the prism of myself.” 30

Arsanayagam has faced threats to her life due to her marriage to a Tamil. The nationalist violence seeks to keep minorities like hers’ in their place’ she says.

‘It’s all happened before and will happen again
And we are the onlookers
But now I’m in it
It’s happened to me
At last history has meaning” 31

Jean Arsanayagam’s poems depict futility of violence and her later poems dwell more intensely on the themes of identity. Her works do not shy away from exploitative accounts of history of colonialism. They show that her birth is not just accidental also inevitability but also something miraculous that hints not at destruction but creation. Her writings reveal a process of ‘becoming’ which destabilizes the unitary concept of identity but it stresses the value of cultural identity.

Anne Ranasinghe, a Jewish girl from Germany arrived in England, Five years later; her parents were murdered in Chelmno, Poland. She trained to be nurse and married a Sri Lanka on Post graduate and later settled down in Sri Lanka. Her husband was appointed as a professor in Medical faculty at Colombo. She studied journalism and in 1971 made debut with a slim volume of poems titled And the Sun that Sucks The Earth to Dry. Her other works are Against Eternity and Darkness (1985) collection of poems, another collection of poems Not Even Shadows (1990) and a collection of
short stories titled _Desire_ (1994). She often deals with Nazi Persecution of Jews. In her poem _July 1983_, she alludes to the violent persecution of Sri Lanka’s Tamil Minority. She is free from all kinds of illusions and she thinks that there is no safety for human beings anywhere.

“That anything is possible
Any time. There is no safety
In poems or music or even in
Philosophy. No safety
In houses or temples
of any faith.”  32

She says that for her writing a poem to an act of losing herself into the caverns of the mind.

Yasmin Goonratne’s poetry is the most technically accomplished among all Sri Lankan poets writing in English. Her first collection _Word, Bird, Motif_ appeared in 1971. Her second collection was _The Lizard’s Cry and other Poems_ (1977). She migrated to Australia in 1972. She explores socio-cultural issues in her poems. In _Lizard’s Cry_, she denounces disorder and decay in Srilanka, which she calls “ravaged, looted Kingdom.”

Suniti Namjoshi is an Indian poet and writer born in Bombay. She studied in Poona and then in the USA. She married Gilian Hanscombe and settled in Britain. She is a great champion of minorities who are discriminated against by the society at large. Her allocations of poetry include: _From the Bedside Book of Nightmares_ (1984). _The Jackass and the Lady_ (1980), _The Authentic Lie_ (1982) _Flesh and Paper_ (1989) and _Because of India_ (1989). She is better known for her tables _Faminist Fables_ (1981). _The Conversations of a Cow’_ (1985), _The Blue Donkey Fables_ (1988) and so on. Her fables are feministic in tone. They are about women’s degraded position in the male dominated society. She has taken up the cause of woman emancipation and woman empowerment. As a diaspora, she is
more concerned about women’s problems. Her works are replete with irony, sarcasm, allegory, fables and humorous narratives.

In regional languages of India also, remarkable diaspora literature has been produced. The Punjabi diaspora poetry is quite wide enough to be reduced to be reduced to a particular kind. It has also a variety of tone and approach that we come across in Indian diaspora writing in English. The Punjabis have migrated to Britain, Canada, Sweden and the US in a very large number. Diasporas face alienation for two reasons, displacement from home land and cultural differences that they face in an alien land. In the post-Ghadar phase. Pravasi Punjabi poetry is full of existential angst and sense of desolation and dejection. Later Punjabi Diaspora is primarily economic in nature and therefore their poetry loses much of its patriotic favour and gives way to existentialist concerns. However, it is more academic than poetic. The imagery of ‘a bird in the wilderness separated from its flock’ is often invokes. Amarjeet Chandan writes,

“All of Sudden the window of the cage opens itself,
The bird stepping outside, sitting at the window starts brooding,
Has it forgotten to fly?
Or did as the sky appears to him a cage?” 34

Punjabi diasporic is cited apologetic in nature and guilt ridden. It expresses a sense of remorse and guilt for not being able to stay in their nature land. Many poets sea their diaspora state as a journey into a different culture. Amarjeet Chandan, Surjeet Kalsey, Gurcharan Saggy, Shivacharan Gill, Balder Doohere, Avtar Jandialvi, Darshan Dulandavi, Navtej Bharati, Amjer Rode, Gurcharan Rampuri are the major Punjabi diasporic voices writing in Punjabi. However, poets like Amarjeet Chandan hint at post-colonial internationalism where all people mingle as a modern kitchen is an assortment of different things from different places. In spite of global outlook of the modern Punjabi literature, its authenticity lies in its provincial touch and the longing and nostalgia for the homeland make it very appealing.
The Marathi literary diaspora is comparatively educated and high profile group in the developed countries like England, the US or Canada. The Maharashtrians wherever they are make efforts to preserve their language and culture. They hold literary meets and festivals regularly and run some magazines and periodicals. These effects have inspired writers and poets like Shobha Chitre, Meena Prabhu, Asha Damle, Mukund Sonpatki, Dilip Chitre and others. Their writings of course express a sense of dislocation and ‘Trishanku’ syndrome. Meena Prabhu has settled in England as a doctor. Ajita Kale writes about her experiences and interactions as an observer in the USA as she works as a social health counselor. Shobha Chitre who has settled in the US delves deep into cross-cultural expenses. Her works present nostalgia and also the joys of freedom. The gradual erosion and eventual loss of the mother tongue is a matter of serious concern for many Marathi diasporic writers. Shobha Chitre’s writings are deeply reflective, analytical and sometimes autobiographical. In a nutshell, Marathi diasporic literature is analytical, bifocal, reflective and argumentative.

Gujarat is one is one of the most progressive state in India and Gujaratis have been entrepreneurs from ancient times. Basically Gujaratis are traders and businessmen. They migrated to countries like Africa, England and some Far-East countries. The recent immigration is mainly prompted by education abroad, lucrative jobs and entrepreneurship. Non-Resident Gujaratis have carved a special riche wherever they have gone. Gandhiji in fact became the Mahatma in South Africa where he made his remarkable experiments of truth and non violence. Gujaratis in Britain, US or Africa continued to have strong links with their country and the state. Even today, Gujarat is amply benefitted by the Non-Resident Gujarati’s (NRGs) and their active interest in the economy, culture and development of the state.

There are active writers and poets who live abroad and write in Gujarati. Panna Naik, Preeti Sengupta, Vinod Kapasi, Ashraf Dabawala,
Jagdish Dave, Vipul Kalyani and Natwar Gandhi are some of the powerful writers and poets. It is heartening that Gujarati diaspora write poetry rather than fiction or prose. Many Gujarati diaspora writers/poets lived and studied in Gujarat and then moved to England or the USA for better prospects. Some even went to Britain by Africa where their parents or forefathers had settled. Yogesh Patel, Prafull Amin, Jagdish Dave, Panna Naik, Adam Tankarvi, Dayabhai Patel, Jigar Tankarvi, Adil Mansoori, Bharati Vora have contributed remarkably to Gujarati Diaspora writings. Jagdish Dave describes a foreign country as a threatening forest. Memory of homeland plagues the Gujarati diaspora poets quite intensely. They recall the memories of their days in their hometown of friends and the games they used to play. Bharati Vora says that in trying to make ‘home’ in alien land, she feels that her real home has become alien.

Jagdish Dave says that the Sun has become cold in Britain. The heat and brightness of the Sun is missing in England. It is often very cold and there is snow all around. The Indian weather is nowhere seen in these countries. Jagdish Dave says;

“The sun is half seen, unseen,
Black sun, white sun
Never seen the red sun
Never there is that intoxicating sun.”

Haroon Patel says very painfully that there are so many good things in the UK but where is love? Where is that intimacy? Adam Tankarvi satirizes the people who imitate the British ways of life and language. He says, “Don’t say ‘Goodbye’ / In Gujarati ‘Aavajo’ (come again) is spoken.” He says that in England people wipe their tears with tissue papers. In one of his gazals, he says that as soon as Arvind got US visa, his Khadi cap turned into a hat.

Panna Naik writes highly lyrical poetry in free Verse. She is a highly sensitive Gujarati women poet who has voice both diasporas as well as feminist concerns. Her collections of poetry include: Rang Zarukhe and
Cherry Blossoms. Her poems have visual as well as sensuous appeal. In one of her poems, she expresses the life of a displaced immigrant in the USA. The poem is titled A foreigner.

“A foreigner tells newspapers on pavement
in the middle of the city.
He sells newspapers for eighteen hours.
He sells newspapers in alien language
He sells newspapers ignoring the noise of the trains.
He sells newspaper without looking at the faces of the people around him.
He sells newspapers to earn dollars.
He sells newspapers to educate his children in his homeland.
He sells newspapers to make ‘American Dream’ come true
He sleeps for two-to four hours a day –
on unsold newspapers on the pavement.” 36

Madhu Rye is a prose writer, dramatist and novelist. His prose is remarkable. He lives abroad but his works are full of nostalgia about his childhood, youth and friends in India. His novel Kimble Ravenswood has been made into a film What is Your Rashi?. Adil mansoori was born in 1936 in Ahmedabad. He wanted to live in India but a time came when he west almost compelled to leave India for Pakistan. His famous gazal Male Na Male shows his deep love for the homeland than is Ahmedabad. However, in 1985, he went to the USA and lived in New York. Adil died on November 6, 2008. He wrote gazals both in Gujarati and Urdu. His poems express deep anguish of alienation, emptiness and boredom. His diasporic voice is clearly heard in these lines:

“Born in Ahmedabad, Childhood spent in Karachi
In Ahmedabad again, and year passed in Jersey.”

And,

“New York, a big city and stress number forty two
But former Bhathiyar Gali of Ahmedabad is the best”
Again he says,
“It’s not difficult to meet Adil,
If he is not in Jersey, he is at certainly at Sarkhej.”

Natawar Gandhi is an income tax expert and an able finance management specialist. He has held a very prestigious post in the US government finance and tax administration. Hailing from Savarkundla, small town in Saurashtra, he had imbibed Gandhina Values from childhood. He is a voracious reader. His favourite writers are Umashankar Joshi and Darshak. He writes in compact metres and mainly practices sonnet from. In the USA, he is known as ‘Nat Gandhi’ but as Suresh Dalal puts it, he can be called ‘Sonnet Gandhi’ of Gujarati literature. His sonnets have appeared in a collection titled *America, America*. As a diaspora, his voice is entirely different. In spite of sentimental display of longing for the homeland, he has witnessed the USA objectively and glorifies it as ‘a cradle of modern prosperity, democracy and equality’. In one of his sonnets, he calls him ‘a child of a city’. He has written a group of sonnets on cities like Washington, San Francisco, Las Vegas, New Orleans, Pittsburgh and New York, Boston, Philadelphia and Chicago. He eulogizes Washington as a seat of power and neo-democracy. He calls it the center of arts and culture. In a sonnet on *New York*, he says that all immigrants ultimately become Americans here. It is a city of multicultural, multi-ethnic life.

In another group of sonnets on great personalities of the world, Gandhiji, Lincoln, Churchill, Thoreau, Frost, Emerson, Wallace Stevens, his deep study and knowledge of these great people can be seen. He says in the final complete on Gandhiji that,

“Self-respecting and proud, I bow to none
But I bow to you, on lofty savior of mankind.” 37

He pays a rich tribute to Lincoln calling him a great liberator. He calls Churchill ‘an exhibitionist, master of eloquence, warrior, cruel and gigantic’.
He regards Emerson as the great seer and saint of the New Age for the new men and Thoreau, the guide and teacher of Gandhi. In a Sonnet on *After Watching a Play from India*, he criticizes its shallow humour and perverted presentation depicted in the play. In another group of sonnets on America, Natwar Gandhi says that in the entire world, he likes the USA most. However, he criticizes American history that colonized other countries, trampled the weak under its feet and enslaved the Negroes for hundreds of years. He also criticizes American lust for sex and money. Yet, he says that evils are everywhere and so are they in the USA but the people from different countries in the USA are busy experimenting with peace, coexistence and harmony. Decade after decade, new identity of the USA is emerging with the advent of new technology, new knowledge and new experiments. The USA is guiding the entire world in technology, trying to bring happiness and prosperity in the lives of entire mankind. Natwar Gandhi says that the USA is a new destination of a new culture of new humanity. Like Uma Parmeswaran, Natwar Gandhi believes in better assimilation and acceptance of multi-culturism. Uma Parmeswaran while disclosing the *Indian Diaspora in Canada: An overview* offers chronological description of South Asian Diaspora that applies to all diaspora of South Asian origin in the USA, England and Canada. She talks of two distinct phases of emigration: one which took place during colonialism and the other after independence. The second wave immigrants were educated, upwardly mobile people with professional expertise. Many of them wrote in English and some like Natwar Gandhi or Panna Nayak wrote in their mother tongue. There are writers and poets today among the South Asian diaspora who write in their regional languages. This new vernacular literature also needs to be critically evaluated.

At present, there are writers/poets who are born and brought up in England, USA or Canada. Their links with their countries is quite weak and fragile. They form a distinct voice within the multicultural mosaic of the host country. Among the diasporic writers thus, there is an astounding variety with variety of shades. One thing seems to be quite clear that by and by
these writers merge happily with the countries of their adoption and call themselves Americans, Canadians, British and so on but still they write about India or the subcontinent in a very large number. In fact, no writer has produced a major work that can be called the part of mainstream literature of the host country. Whether they accept of adopt the host country or treat it as hostile alien country, they inevitably turn to India either with nostalgia or love for homeland or for critical, satiric denigration of the country they have left behind. Sometimes, they do not celebrate their homeland but mourn its poverty, anarchy, atrocities and innumerable sufferings be it communal riots, earthquake, public scams and so on. These writers draw their raw materials for their writings from India which is and will remain inexhaustible box of chaotic life, sufferings, uncertainties and accidents and also of love, longing and joys.

Lakshmi Gill who lives in Canada writer in her poem *Out of Canada* that she cannot die in Canada but she would like to “sit at the foot hills of the Himalayas / and leave hard Canada for the hardy Canadians” The USA, Canada and England may provide financial security, order and safety, even economic prosperity but they fail to provide the traditional support that family and faith bring and the consequence is obviously the sense of isolations and alienation. This way or that, the sense of exile is perceptible in all diasporic writing and it is the key ingredient of the diaspora.
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