CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Oscar Handlin in his work The Uprooted made the classic statement that "immigrants were American history" (3). His statement is suggestive of the central feature of American identity being the experience of migration; that Americans are in fact all descended from immigrants, and that American selfhood is based on a seemingly paradoxical sense of shared differences. This inherent tension of a shared national identity, as well as ethnic differences, account for the richness and complexity of American literature and culture. The understanding of ethnicity is a crucial aspect of American identity.

The word "ethnicity" is derived from the older adjective and noun form "ethnic," which in turn can be traced to the Greek word "Ethnikos". In the Greek Bible, ethnikos refers to non-Israelites or gentiles. In the Christian era (after the fourteenth century) "ethnic" came to be defined as "pagan, heathen or non-Christian." Only in the mid-nineteenth century did the more familiar meaning of
ethnic as "peculiar to a race or nation" emerge. However, the English language has retained the meaning of "ethnic" as heathen, often secularised in the sense of ethnic as "Other" or in the United states, as somehow un-American. Today ethnicity is defined as "differentiation based on nationality, race, language, or religion." In this sense W. Lloyd Warner first used it in Yankee City series. He used ethnicity as a category, which along with age, sex, and religion separated the individual from some classes of individuals and identified him / her with others. In 1953, David Reisman extended the dimension of the word "ethnicity" in a famous American scholar debate about McCarthyism.¹

Etymologically ethnic means "other," "they" as opposed to "us." Ethnicity as Otherness refers to self-definition of one group of people through an opposition against other groups. In the United States today, the ethnic is the un-American, or immigrants from non-European countries. The American’ at first referred to British immigrants and their descendants. Later it came to include the white ethnics from Eastern European countries such as Poland, Yugoslavia, and Russia, Northern Europeans, such as Norwegians and Scandinavians. This was because the white ethnics did not possess the racial cultural diversity, which coloured ethnics manifested. Today the coloured races- Africans, Red Indians and
Asians, constitute the ethnics in the United States, and they belong to the minority group.

America is a continent that has been peopled by immigrants from all over the globe. The majority population being of White Anglo Saxon Protestant stock (WASP), the culture of America came to have an Anglo Saxon character. American sociology followed the "Order perspective" where it was assumed that the minorities had to accept the cultural norms of the majority (white) culture. Noted social scientists Robert Park and Milton Gordon argued that there was a long-term trend towards assimilation of racial and ethnic minorities in modern societies. Park and Burgess in their *Introduction to the Science of Society*, define assimilation as "a process of interpenetration and fusion, in which persons and groups acquire the memories, sentiments and attitudes of other persons or groups, and by sharing their experience and history, are incorporated with them in a common cultural life" (760). The assimilation proponents followed the theory of Social Darwinism, which perpetuated ideological racism. Readings from Pierre L. Vanden Berghe's *Race and Racism*, explains ideological racism in terms of the theory of Social Darwinism whereby, intellectual superiority is assigned to races based on their physical characteristics such as skin colour, kind of hair and shape of the eyes (11). The negative attitude of the dominant majority towards
the coloured minority became manifested through prejudice and stereotyping. This developed in the ethnic minority a positive ethnocentrism; a loyalty to one's ethnicity, culture values, beliefs and ethnic groups.

The power conflict operating between different ethnic groups as well as between the majority and minority groups, together with the cultural diversity of coloured ethnics subverted the assimilationist dream of forming a monocultural Anglo-American society by "melting" the ethnic differences of minorities through the process of contact, communication and education. The coloured ethnics, especially the Asians became the "unmelted ethnics" of American society. Ethnic revivalism, a backlash of the "melting pot" assimilationary measures, became an uncontrollable phenomenon in the United States in the 1960's and 1970's. African Americans celebrated their negritude through movements such as The Harlem Renaissance. The decade also witnessed the Civil Rights Movement as Third World Students went on a strike in white dominated America. These events necessitated a re-examination of the race relation theories of Park and Gordon. Hayner and Reynolds were two social scientists, who acknowledged the fact that, racial-cultural barriers prevented the Chinese Americans from total assimilation into white American culture. Newspaper reports affirmed the hypothesis that prejudice and
discrimination could pose serious deterrents to assimilation. Lucie Cheng Hirata in an essay included in the book titled Counterpoint asserts that while assimilation was held to be the ideal outcome for European immigrants it was not the same for coloured people (23). It was finally contended by sociologists that cultural pluralism was the better prospect for the inassimilable races especially in multiethnic America, as adherents of this alternative seek only to legitimise the maintenance of minority cultures and institutions without challenging the fundamental structure of the American society.

This change in the attitude towards ethnicities, which were diverse from the dominant culture, was substantiated by Andrew Greely, Michael Novak, and more recently by Pierre Van Den Berghe who stressed ethnicity as a profound "socio biological" force. (Sollers, Beyond Ethnicity 23) Michael Novak in his book The Rise of the Unmeltable Ethnics states that descent is crucial in shaping character:

Emotions, instinct, memory, imagination, passions, and ways of perceiving are passed on to us in ways so thick with life, that they be far beyond the power of consciousness (let alone of analytic and verbal reasons) (Intro xxviii).
This argument is also supported by Jungian theories on the Collective Unconscious. According to Carl Jung, individual psyche possesses a racial memory, which cannot be erased by immigration to an alien land or culture. Race consciousness persists in an ethnic even after long years of alienation from his ethnic country. It is often perpetuated through cultural practices and in-group interaction. Ethnicity came into vogue in America in the 1970's as descent affiliations became fashionable for creating identities. Thus 'ethnicity' was transformed from a heathenish liability into a sacred asset, from a trait to be overcome in a conversion and rebirth experience, to a very desirable identity feature to be achieved through yet another regeneration (Sollers, Beyond Ethnicity 33).

The rhetoric of ethnicity is a pervasive theme in American literature. It simultaneously reflects and questions the notions of national and individual identity, interrogating the relationship of self and society. Ethnic literature is a part of American writing from the colonial period. As Werner Sollers states in his essay “Literature and Ethnicity,” “American literature as a whole can be read as the ancestral footsteps or coded hieroglyph of ethnic group life of the past and ethnic tensions in the present" (HEAEG 647). Narratives of conversion, from criminal to social hero, from ethnic to American, or from shallow assimilationist to reborn ethnic, have
been popular in classical American ethnic literature. The list of transformation stories, describing changes in place, status and personality includes - Mary Antin's *From Plotzk to Boston*, Edward Steiner's *From Alien to Citizen*, and Michael Pupin's, *From Immigrant to Inventor*. These conversion stories celebrated the rebirth of the ethnic from his un-American past to an American identity. It was a recurring motif in classical ethnic literature.

Mary Dearborn in her work *Pocahontas's Daughters* opines: "a study of ethnic women writers in America can reveal the female version of the American national character" (Intro 4-5). Substantiated by Beauvoir's theory of alterity as being primordial to human consciousness itself, the category of the Other has important ramifications for the negotiations of identity undertaken by ethnic women in America. According to Carolyn Heilbrun the ethnic woman is twice marginalised. The ethnic woman writer creates texts that become sites for many layered subjectivities of race, culture, class, and ethnicities. Following Dearborn's argument, the study of ethnic women writers becomes an important part of reading American literature and culture. Asian American literature has since the 1960's produced a corpus of women's writings, that includes Amy Tan, Maxine Hong Kingston, and Jade Snow Wong.
The term "Asian American" was coined in the 1960's to categorise Asian immigrants. It was aimed to promote national solidarity and cultural nationalism between ethnically different groups from Asia. Originally the term included the Japanese, Chinese, Philippines, Koreans and Vietnamese. Later it was extended to include the countries of the Indian sub-continent, Burma, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, the Asia-Pacific Islands and other smaller groups. Among these, the Chinese have the longest history in America.

The history of Chinese Americans begins with the emigration of unskilled labourers to work on the Hawaiian plantations in 1840, followed by the demand for miners in the Californian gold mines and railroad workers to build the transcontinental railway system. From their arrival in 1840 to the temporary stop in migrations (due to the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882), the Chinese have been victims of anti-Asian hostilities, racial discrimination and racial violence. Americans also manifested their xenophobia towards Asians through negative stereotyping, calling them names like "Chinks," "Heathens," "mice eaters." After the repeal of the Exclusion Act, when the waves of migrations increased at a stupendous rate, educated and professional Chinese became the new immigrants in America. Better education, employment and sophistication created the label of "model minority" for the Chinese
in America. Today the demographic pattern of the Chinese population in America follows two categories: the unskilled, uneducated, poorly educated worker who works for low wages especially in restaurants and garment factories; and the highly professional educated, wealthy Chinese Americans (like Amy Tan) who inhabit affluent neighbourhoods and hold important positions in society.

Asian Indians or Indian Americans as they are called, first arrived in America during the period following the Chinese Exclusion Act. The immigrants were mostly agriculturists: Sikh farmers from Punjab. Some were veterans who had served the British army. Like the Chinese, the early Indian Americans were mostly unskilled and poorly qualified, and they worked mostly on farms or in factories for low wages. Migration from India followed two distinct phases: from 1904 to 1924 and after 1965. The post 1965 Indians comprised largely of students and professionals in search of higher education, better wages and an affluent lifestyle.

America is a multi-ethnic society today. It contains people from all over the globe - Africa, Asia, Europe, and Britain. Upon arrival into the new country, some of them retain their cultural values while others adapt and assimilate to new ways of their American lifestyle. It has been stated that:
One's own vision and voice are shaped by the special history... and thought, of a region and a landscape, by the race, gender, and ethnic group one is born into; and with varying degree of intensity, depending on the vagaries of history and social circumstances, of one's ultimate fate (Our Decentralised Literature Intro 5).

Asian American writers voice the myriad experiences and concerns of their ethnic community. They endeavour to portray the immigrants as human beings through stories that have autobiographical echoes. Asian American literature differs from other ethnic literatures such as African-American, Native American, Latin American or Chicano Literature, by its heterogeneity and variety. This is because unlike the other categories, Asian America is itself made upon of subcultures and different racial groups like Pakistanis, Nepalis, Bangladeshis, Indians, Chinese, Japanese, Cambodians, Vietnamese, Philippines, etc. The writers under the category of Asian American, despite their racial-cultural differences, share similar concerns and perspectives due to their common experience in a racist society.

Chinese American literature and Indian American literature are two of the sub-categories, which constitute Asian American Literature. Chinese American literature has a longer history and was born out of the struggle for an ethnic identity during a period of
profound demographic, social and political change. At the same
time, the motive of cultural nationalism and national solidarity was
accompanied by a concomitant urge to challenge canonical
literature by inscribing ethnicity into the narratives. This is what
Maxine Hong Kingston, Amy Tan, Frank Chin, Shawn Wong and
others of the group set out to do. Five of them collaborated to bring
out the first anthology of Asian American literature titled *Aiiieeeee!* 
*An Anthology of Asian American Writers*

When we trace the growth of Chinese American literature
from the *Songs of the Gold Mountains* to Sui Sin Far, from Lin
Yutang through Jade Snow Wong to Louis Chou, we see diverse
concern and structures of sensibilities. Contemporary Chinese
American writing is witnessing a plethora of women writers who are
articulating female subjectivities that have remained ‘silent’ till
now. Amy Ling, Maxine Hong Kingston, Amy Tan, Jade Snow Wong,
Nellie Wong, Ruthanne Lum McCunn, Genny Lin are among the
notable feminist voices writing in this genre. In *Thousand Pieces of
Gold*. Ruthanne Lum McCunn portrays a female protagonist, Lalu
Nathoy who is kidnapped from China, shipped to America, and sold
at an auction to be a slave. The novel depicts the extreme courage
and resourcefulness of this woman whose inner strength helps her
to survive through her hardships until she is married to the man
who has bought her. Maxine Hong Kingston’s *The Woman Warrior*
portrays a Chinese American girl growing up in an immigrant family. She is puzzled by stories about China, where there were woman warriors as well as woman victims of feudal patriarchy. This autobiographical novel has become a literary masterpiece, canonised as representative of Chinese American writing. Similar strong women characters can also be found in Amy Tan’s novels *The Joy Luck Club* and *The Kitchen God’s Wife*. All the mothers in the two novels are early Chinese immigrants who have undergone great hardships in China, such as wars, abandonment, and abuse by men they have married. They survive and come to America to start a new life. The novels open up a space for many feminist concerns, such as motherhood, mother-daughter relationships, status of women in Chinese culture, and the problem of identity for the American-born daughters caught between two countries/culture, diverse and opposite to one another.

A corpus of criticisms in Chinese American literature started with the publication of *Aiiieeeee!*. Other critical works that soon followed include Elaine H. Kim’s, *Asian American Literature: An Introduction to the Writings and their Social Context*, Amy Ling’s, *Between Worlds: Women Writers of Chinese Ancestry*, and King-Kok Cheung’s *Articulate Silences*.

Until very recently, most scholarship encompassing the term “Asian” in America tended to exclude Indian presence and identity.
"Asian Indians" as a separate category came into existence with the 1986 U.S census, and only in the 1990’s have Indians, whether as South Asians or as diasporic Indians acquired a distinct literary identity. The volume *Writers of the Indian Diaspora* by Emmanuel Nelson has brought together writers of Indian origin dispersed throughout the globe. From 1989 to the present six significant anthologies have been published: *Our Feet Walk the Sky: Woman of the South Asian Diaspora*, *Desh Videsh: South Asian Expatriate Writing and Art*, and *Speaking for Ourselves: American Ethnic Writing*.

Indian American literature has the uniqueness of being more heterogeneous than Chinese American literature because of the multiple cultures existing within India. Most writers who are first generation Indian Americans are bilingual, if not multilingual. Nevertheless, English has remained the dominant language of educated Indians of postcolonial India. It is the preferred language by South Indians even more than the national language Hindi. India is also the land of different religions - Hinduism, Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, Jainism, Islam, Christianity and Sikh religion.

The literature by Indian Americans primarily reflects the conflicts and aspirations of its middle- and upper- class writers, mostly first generation and predominantly Women. Alpana Sharma Kippling in her critical work *New Immigrant Literatures in the U. S.*
differentiates between immigrant writers such as Meena Alexander, Bharati Mukherjee, Indu Krishnan, and writers who have been residents in the United States and are now settled elsewhere, like Anita Desai, Amitav Ghosh, Sudeep Sen, Sujata Bhatt, Vikram Seth to name a few. The immigrant Asian writers are concerned with translations and transformations in ethnic identity. Cross cultural issues become subjects of thematic concern. The native writers such as Anita Desai, or nomadic writer such as Vikram Seth are on the other hand writers writing in the exile paradigm.

One of the abiding concerns for most first generation immigrants poised between living “back home” and the present is how to balance their dual affiliations in a country with the myth of the melting pot. “On one end of the spectrum is that “need to claim one cultural identity, singular and immovable,” a position critiqued by Meena Alexander in Fault lines (Foreword xiii) and on the other is the shedding of Indianness, as in Bharati Mukherjee’s positioning of her character in the introduction to Darkness: “Indianess is now a metaphor, a particular way of comprehending the world” (3). Between these two positions lie a range of identities and affiliations, worked out in the genres of memoir, short story, novel, and poetry.

The novels of Amy Tan and Bharati Mukherjee illustrate the heterogeneity of Asian American Women’s Writing. Yet they also show a unique ‘unity in diversity’ in the treatment of ethnic culture,
subject and genre. Both these writers are preoccupied with their class, gender and ethnicity. Racial differences and geographical locations give dissimilarity to their treatment of the immigrant Asian women living in a culturally diverse society such as that of America.

Amy Tan is a second-generation Asian immigrant born to early Chinese immigrant couple John Tan and Daisy Tan. Amy was born in Oakland, California in 1952, the second child in a family of three children. Growing up in San Francisco in the 1950's and 1960's she and her brother felt the generational conflict, which second-generation Asian immigrants felt with their traditional first-generation immigrant parents. This feeling of dislocation with her ethnicity persisted until Amy Tan visited China with her mother to see her stepsisters. She tells Jonathan Mendell afterwards: “it was instant bonding” (CBY 136:88). It kindled within her an interest for her ethnic heritage. In a Bestsellers Interview, Tan remarked that though she once tried to distance herself from her ethnicity, writing *The Joy Luck Club* helped her discover “how very Chinese [she] was and how much had stayed with [her] that [she] had tried to deny” (414).

The Joy Luck Club is the name of a club formed by four elderly Chinese women in San Francisco in memory of a similar club began in Chungking, China during the Second World War by
wives of air force officers engaged in fighting the Japanese. The club meets every week and the members play a Chinese card game, mahjongg, eat Chinese food, tell stories and talk of their past life in China. The second novel *The Kitchen God’s Wife* is titled after a Chinese deity, the Kitchen God. The story is not about the philandering deity and his faithlessness towards his devoted wife; on the other hand it is about the faithful wife portrayed by the protagonist Weili / Winnie. The third and most recent novel *The Hundred Secret Senses* is about the ‘Yin’ people or the spirits of dead people. Tan locates the novel in eighteenth century China, in a remote mountain village named Changmian. While in the earlier novels memories serve as the link between past and present, in this novel ghosts replace memories. Tan who herself lost her father and elder brother Peter, in the space of a year, admits to have been interested in the world of the dead. She says:

*It's been a part of my life for at least the past twenty years. I've had a lot of death in my life, of people who have been close to me. So I've long thought about how life is influenced by death... Yes, I think I was pushed in a way to write this book by certain spirits—the Yin people—in my life. They've always been there...* *(Salon Interview)*.
Tan's fiction reveals her Chinese ethnicity in its, milieu, character, language and spirit. The history and culture of China pervades all her novels. At the same time she herself being American as well as Chinese, the American -born daughters in her novels illustrate the tensions of second-generation immigrants- of being caught between cultures.

Bharati Mukherjee an Indian Bengali Brahmin, born in Calcutta in 1940, came to the United States in 1961 for higher studies. Born of upper middle class family Mukherjee settled in Canada in 1968 and married a Canadian named Clark Blaise. However, she was unhappy with the socio-political scenario in Canada and left for America where she is now settled in Iowa with her family since 1980.

Mukherjee's novels and her characters are like Tan's novels, taken from personal experiences and real-life acquaintances. Her first novel *The Tiger's Daughter* is about Tara, a Bengali Brahmin married to an American. Just like Tara, Mukherjee felt unhappy with her visits to India after ten years of sojourn in Canada. Tara too feels the "foreigness of spirit" amidst familiar faces and scenes during her visit to India. Mukherjee’s next novel *Wife* is about the despair of an immigrant woman of middle-class Bengali origin, who, shorn of her support structure in an alien country, succumbs to culture collision. It has been stated that: "Depicting psychic
violence in the lives of transplanted women is a speciality of Bharati Mukherjee...” (*The Critical Perspective* 99). Among the five characters in Mukherjee’s fiction, it is the protagonist Jasmine who best exemplifies Mukherjee’s ethnic position. Jasmine who is determined to survive in America, changes selves and identities; from Jyothi-Jasmine she becomes Jase and Jane to different partners. In *Jasmine* Mukherjee explores the promise of American-style individualism and female liberation alongside “the burden of Old World responsibilities and cultural ties signaling female oppression” (240).

The world which Mukherjee depicts in her novels and short stories is the realistic world of hardship and suffering, alienation and identity crisis felt by Asians in America. She herself admits her responsibility as writer in an interview with Bob Moyers: “I want to be the person who sees the problems.... Who wants to stay and fight the battle and correct the problem” (*Conquering America*).

Writers such as Bharati Mukherjee, and Meena Alexander, seem to have an acute sense of “double consciousness.” This is the tension that stimulates ethnic writers as cultural producers. As ethnic literature at the end of the century moves from “parochial” marginality to “universal” significance in the literary mainstream we have writers like Bharati Mukherjee declaring: “I am an American writer, in the American mainstream, trying to extend it.... I look on
ghettoizations - whether as a Bengali in India or as a hyphenated Indo-American in North America - as a temptation to be surmounted." (Four-Hundred-Year-Old Woman 34). American mainstream now includes more and more writers with identifiable "ethnic" backgrounds.

The United States is rapidly becoming a multicultural society. Its culture has been shaded and influenced by values / attitudes / norms and beliefs from the cultures of Europe, Asia, Africa, Pre-Columbian America and in recent times Latin America. Acculturation and ethnicity have become simultaneous and synonymous in the ever-changing social structure. Transnationalism is increasingly gaining ground as the pan-ethnic moves towards assimilation in outward life while maintaining ethnic exclusiveness in religion, rituals and practices. Asian American writers Amy Tan and Bharati Mukherjee belong to this new tribe of multicultural writers, who differ from cultural pluralistic structure in a mutual give and take. The Asian community (4% of total U.S. population) who influence American culture and people are in turn influenced by the dominant culture. Old world loyalties are accommodated with new world practices. Ethnic festivals, interest in genealogy and regional history seem to go hand in land with loss of place, abbreviation and change of religion affiliation. Ethnic literary scholarship takes cognisance of the ethnic components in
creative works produced by ethnic minorities in America. The ethnicity school of literary criticism examines, evaluates the literature of the minority group from a position of marginalisation. Apart from identifying the ethnic components, the ethnic literary scholar is also aware of the transformation on the immigrant which is created by the international character of the American society. Each culture needs to be treated with precision and depth without any attempt at erasure or cooptation in the name of national unity. There are two sides to the hyphen – the ethnic and the American as in Chinese – American, Indian American. Differences lead to similarities, which then lead to further differences. This is multiculturalism and it differs from the assimilationist dream of cultural pluralism by its attempt to be different yet identify with other minority diasporas cultures, connected in a spiritual way because of common group experiences. This is the essential spirit of the Asian American category, united yet heterogeneous.

Mukherjee is one of the Asian Indians writing from America, whose stories promote American multiculturalism. She appropriates popular American myths such as the frontier myth, and transnational dreams in the writings about hyphenated Americans. In *Days and Nights* she voices the feeling that is also shared by others in the Asian America Group:
I made my choice, I shouldered my way into the country in which I felt minority discourse empowered rather man enfeebled me... This time I was repossessing a ‘homeland’ I had willed into existence, not inherited (303).

This is the feeling/sentiment shared by the majority of Asian migrants in the U.S. today. The growth of ethnic revivalism witnessed in America in the sixties and seventies seem to have reached multicultural moorings. This means accommodation of differing ethnicities within the dominant culture, instead of exclusiveness to the margins. There is now a greater awareness and acknowledgement of the diversity in America’s past and the multiethnic nature of its culture. All ethnic writers represent important parts of American literature and culture. Their borrowings from one another and that of the dominant culture can only be understood in an American context.

Amy Tan and Bharati Mukherjee are undoubtedly the representative voices of the new generation writers in multi-ethnic America. Ethnicity and multiculturalism are two sides of the same coin. American Literature seems to be maturing to encompass immigrant voices of diverse ethnicities. The dissertation “Ethnicity and Literary Aesthetics in the novels of Amy Tan and Bharati Mukherjee” is an attempt to examine the ethnic content and context
of the novels of two women writers, Amy Tan and Bharati Mukherjee.

Traditionally, one of the problems facing Asian American minority writers is the danger of being read merely for the sociological / anthropological messages these texts convey. The over significance of the content is criticized by others who direct the critical enquiry on the "form" of ethnic writing. Elaine Kim in her critical work on Asian American literature suggests that both "form" and "content" are important critical strategies for this literature. According to Kim "the reader's familiarity with the socio historical context of Asian American literature cannot be assumed as it can in the case of Anglo-American literature" (Preface xvii). Hence the study of this literature necessitates a movement between socio history and literature. Kim believes that critical enquiry should also be directed on, "how minority writers express themselves instead of on what they say" (xv). Following Kim's rationale the thesis endeavours to explore the strategic deployment of both ethnicity at the thematic level and also the literary aesthetics vested in typical narrative strategies and characteristic use of language, in the fictional narratives of Tan and Mukherjee. History, culture and geography intersect the ethnic consciousness of these writers in their sociological ethnographic, literary discourses. These women-
centered works also take up the gender perspective of the ethnic problem.

The dissertation is involved in exploring the multiple modes of the understanding experience in the works of these writers of Asian origin. The aim is to move beyond the existing paradigms, which rely on the assumption of the cohesive self and cohesive nation, to a model encompassing the diversity represented by contemporary, immigrant women writers. The reading argues that Tan and Mukherjee illustrate the many layers of gendered, racial, and national identities in their narratives. The thesis is divided into six chapters. The Introduction chapter draws the parameters of the study and argue the relevance of studying American literature from the ethnicity perspective. The second chapter will explore the use of social history and culture by the writers in their narratives. The third chapter will focus on the impact of migration and cross-cultural encounters upon the immigrant psyche. The next chapter will involve a reading of literature from the gender perspective. The fifth chapter will be devoted to literary strategies adopted by Tan and Mukherjee for their creative self-expression. The concluding chapter will discuss the global phenomenon of multiculturalism and transnationalism as it operates within multi racial, multi-ethnic U.S. society today. This study aims at establishing the advantages of multi disciplinary studies for a better understanding
of émigré fiction thus rendering it a necessary tool of literary critical enterprise.
McCarthyism in the U.S. is the policy of hunting out suspected or known communists and removing them. This policy has been named after U.S. senator J.R. McCarthy who instigated the policy in 1950. David Reisman in his essay which appeared in the context of a debate about McCarthyism, loyalty, and intellectual freedom, used the term the word “ethnicity” while referring to a discussion on ethnic group life. It was Reisman who first called attention to ethnic victims in America’s past. He suggested that the struggle between “ethnicity” and modernity was the root cause of a new kind of warfare. Referring to the fears and hatreds directed against the Indians, Mexicans, Spaniards, and Japanese in America he argued that the basis of “witch hunts” was to be found not in power relationship but in a struggle between intellectual urbanity and artistic modernity on one hand and parochial ethnicity and small-town identity on the other. The above reference has been made by Werner Sollers in his essay “Literature and Ethnicity,” (HEAEG 648), and his work Beyond Ethnicity: Consent and Descent in American Culture. New York: Oxford U.P. 1986. 22-23.

Unmeltable ethnics were the battle cry in America in the 1960’s and 1970’s. Werners Sollers in Beyond Ethnicity states that while White Ethnics assimilated into an Anglo-American identity,
the coloured ethnics, the Red, Black, and Yellow Races were found to remain alien from the white majority due to their difference in physical appearances.

^3^For nearly a century the most prominent image of the incorporation of immigrants has been that of the "melting pot." Israel Zangwill made an influential statement of this optimistic idea in his popular play The Melting Pot. In that play a struggling Russian immigrant argues that: "America is God's crucible, the great Melting Pot where all races of Europe are melting and reforming!" (33)