CHAPTER II
Chapter: II

_Diasporic Literature: Meaning and Matter_

Diasporic literature is a very vast concept and an umbrella term, which includes in it all those literary works written by the authors outside their native country, but related to the native culture and background. In this wide context all those writers can be considered as diasporic writers, who write outside their country but remain related to their homeland through their works. Diasporic literature is not a very old term to begin with. After 1970's, the new wave of development and globalization, which came across the world, created a way for migration and expatriation and new settlements. Diasporic literature has its root in the sense of loss and alienation, which emerged as a result of that migration and expatriation. It won't be out of the way, if we say that diasporic literature is a kind of psychological attempt to regain that which the writer has lost at the level of reality. The driving force for this kind of literature may be to derive solace or to experience affinity with the homeland or a strong longing to regain the lost paradise – homeland.
Diasporic writing, in its theory and practice, is the work of the exile who has experienced unsettlement at the existential, political and metaphysical levels. With this experience, he/she has unsettled the philosophical and aesthetic systems. The phenomenon of exile has emerged in our times due to uneven development within capitalism, and due to the movement forced by colonial powers. The uneven development has led to unprecedented migration of the Asians and Africans to the West. The imposed, and indirectly hegemonising shift from territories, has occurred within Asia, Africa and the Middle East, and also from these continents to the West. This movement has produced a new person whose mind works at least two epistemologies. He/she has lost the centre that used to unify. Contingencies of history have affected to the extent of dismantling the comforting and stable perspectives. The dismantling has led to some unknown and intermingled visions. The hybridity experienced is not just philosophical; it is also local and existential. At a very fast pace, literary aesthetics has leaped toward an abyss in which the Parmenidian and Apolonian sort of poetic principles that are non-contingent and
logical, but shaped by the enlightenment, have ceased to
matter. Theory is being re-cast with a non-theoretic or
unfoundational stance to keep the contingent and existential
under focus.

The migrant existentiality that is determining this specific
aesthetics without making itself a lasting essence is faced with
two centers: the external colonial or modernist, and the internal
or national filtering into a personal identity. The chief feature of
the poetics of exile is the trial during which it deals with these
centers, sometimes rejecting and sometimes accepting them.

Edward Said’s writings are a very interesting example of
this trial. As a Palestinian, born in Jerusalem and self-exiled to
the U.S.A., he has always aligned himself with the Palestinian
movement for liberation and sovereign state. The experience of
movement that is partly self-chosen and partly imposed on him
by history has become very important to him. His way of looking
at culture and creativity has been altered. In an interview with
Salman Rushdie (Said 1995-122) he says:
The whole notion of crossing over or moving from one identity to another is extremely important to me, being as I am— as we all are, a sort of hybrid (1).

The significant expression here is “as we all are” (2) in which he generalizes hybridity, the intermixing that he believes shapes all of us. From his personal existential situation he universalizes. But what appears to fascinate him in this “crossing over” (3) is a demoralizing or de-essentializing. The discourse of the disunitive subject recently initiated by Lacan and extended to the “differential” (4) linguistic (dis) unit not accomplishing the will or desire implying both Nietzschean and Freudian notions, shapes the “hybrid” (5) of Said. The “crossing over” (6) and contaminated para-subject of exile that he theorizes is in resistance to the colonial center that marginalizes. It prevents “counter narratives” (7) from emerging, says Said. Elaborating the relationship of the imposing center and its affective narratives he comments on the American context:

The exclusive presence is central in American culture today, the president, the television, commentators, the corporate official, celebrity. Centrality is identity, what is powerful, important and ours ... And centrality
gives rise to semi-official narratives that authorize and
provoke certain sequences of cause and effect, which
at the same time prevent counter narratives from
emerging (Said 1994:393) (8).

Said's "counter narratives" (9) are those of repressed
cultures that are either subsumed by the meta-centre or
threatened to subsuming. In this statement Said appears to be
arguing with the notions of Lyotard elaborated in his The
Postmodern Condition (10) and a later essay "Universal History
and Cultural Differences" (11), although there is also a point of
difference. Whereas Said looks at the hegemonising centre
from the standpoint of a political exile, and Lyotard from the
angle of an "amnesic" (12) located in the modernist pathology.
Centre, to Said, generates a strong sense of "identity" (13) on the
part of those in power. By quoting Adorno from his Minima
Moralia, Said points out the manipulative and totalizing danger
of this "identitarian" (14) politics. His exile subverts this "logic of
identity" (15) and represents what he calls, using Immanuel
Wallerstein's phrase, "anti-systemic forces" (16).

The colonial, imperial totalizing or homogenizing centre is
what Said's exile aims at dismantling. But the exile's
problematic is how? Through constructing the small identity that is native or national which has been contaminated or eaten up, or through a lasting disunitive consciousness? About this Said takes two positions. In conversation with Rushdie on the Palestinian Identity Said emphatically stated:

> Whether in the Arab world or elsewhere, twentieth century mass society has destroyed identity in so powerful a way that it is worth a great deal to keep the specificity alive. (17).

Only a year earlier than this conversation, Said had talked about the dangers of difference around identity even if it was small. What he means is that an exile in his battle against the meta-centre can use his mini but distinctly grounded cultural – historical centre as an armament to liberate. Using small identity to privilege oneself or one's community over others is not creative; it is for that reason that this identity is to be refused. In his Reith lectures delivered in 1993, Said devoted one lecture to the theme of “Intellectual Exile” (18), although all the six lectures build up a theory of the intellectual enterprise around the expatriate's experience. In this lecture III, that is six years after his above conversation with Rushdie, Said
emphasizes the exile's "dyspepsia" (19) or in his own words "a kind of curmudgeonly disagreeable" (20) that makes him dislike the trappings of accommodation and national well-being.

If Said's exile is constantly disagreeable or dyspepsic, he also gets pleasure in his venture. At the end of his work *Culture and Imperialism* that he published in 1993, he supportingly quotes a 12th century monk from Saxony, Hugo of St. Vicar where he elaborates the journey of the exile from his 'homeland' to the globe. The exile first becomes 'tender,' then strong and finally perfect:

The person who finds his homeland sweet is still a tender beginner, he to whom every soil is as his native one is already strong, but he is perfect to whom the entire world is a foreign place (21).

In the last paragraph of this book Said says:

...there seems no reason except fear and prejudice to keep insisting on their separation and distinctiveness as if that was all human life was about. Survival in fact is about the connection between things... (22).

Working through attachments is alright but it is more meaningful and evolutionary to interrelate. Said ends up at a
Bakhtinian kind of heteroglossal dialogue of different identities in which they connect with each other and become hybrids. If he rejects the meta-identity of the centre, he also belittles the small national identity of a battling community. In his view, the small identity tends to separate and privilege itself and thereby alienates from the inter-community mosaic. Said's exile appears to be moving from hybridity to heteroglossia of the world.

But the problem with Said's exile is that while he/she gets pleasure from this doing he/she enjoys the experience of instability and surprise especially the juxtapositional double perspective. The person does not know how to stay in the unstable world. He/She does not get to an ungrounded multilogne whose differences could be pleasure some in their meaning and aesthetic relationships. For this lacuna and philosophical-poetic inadequacy, Said takes the exile back to a Universalism or the kind of meta-centre that he had earlier rejected for its hegemonic and manipulative power, probably under the influence of Gramsci and Marx. A fanonized national
specificity that Said had asked for keeping alive, he also abandons. In the "introduction" to the Reith lectures he says:

The attempt to hold to a universal and single standard as a theme plays an important role in my account of the intellectual... Universally means taking a risk in order to go beyond the easy certainties provided us by our background, language, nationality which so often shield us from the reality of others. It also means looking for and trying to uphold a single standard for human behaviour when it comes to such matters as foreign or social policy (23).

Said's exile defines himself/herself in a very dignified schizophrenia in which he/she subverts the manipulative meta-centre but also accepts to legislate a single behaviour. It again minimizes specificity that privileges over others and generates identitarian politics, but also accepts it to resist the meta-centre. I have called this schizophrenia dignified because it is influenced by the intention to be maximally, human and other-oriented. The schizophrenia of this exile is parallel to the schizophrenia of the Capitalism's resistive schizo who is
pushed to the borders of rebellion in Deleuze's and Guattari's Anti-Oedipus.

Homi Bhabha shifts this conflict to a theoretical gain, he transforms the diasporic scattering to a gathering," Gatherings of exiles and émigrés and refugees, gathering on the edge of 'foreign' cultures, gathering at the frontiers; gathering in the ghettos or cafes of society centers" (24), and thus he shifts the focus from nationhood to culture, from historicity to temporality, a hybridity which cannot be contained either in hierarchical or binary structures. Others like Rushdie turn to India, to a mythologizing of history. Naipaul transforms his sensibility to a perpetual homelessness while Bissoondath rejecting the homogenization of ethnicity, projects immigration as"essentially about renewal" (25), about change. It is unjust, he points out to expect that the communities from which the immigrants emerge be required to stand still in time, to do so is "to legitimize marginalization ; it is to turn ethnic communities into museums of exoticism "(Bissoondath,111) (26). Ashis Gupta in an interview turns the discussion to the insider/outsider syndrome and points out that acceptability or rejection by a host culture depends
upon the value of the person, his use to the new society, his educational level and his social milieu.

Abdul Jan Mohammed describes the expatriate’s position as being one of either the “specular border intellectual” (27) or the “synergetic border intellectual” (28). The latter is more at home in both cultures and reaches out to both simultaneously, combining and synthesizing them while the specular border intellectual “finds himself or herself unable or unwilling to be ‘at home’ in these societies” (29). Such intellectuals are engaged in defining other possibilities, and in their position as exiles they are likely to be critical of the new culture. Citing the example of Edward Said, Jan Mohammed comments:

Quite often his position, which allows a kind of distance from Western literature and discursive practices, permits Said a specular role – that is, he is able to provide in his writing a set of mirrors allowing Western cultures to see their own structures and functions (30).

Thus immigrants and expatriates define their positions variously but there is something more to it. The important questions which are often relegated to the background are how
is the home country affected by diasporic space and does it, in anyway, assist the process of decentring? The Special Fiction Issue of *The New Yorker* (June 23 & 30, 1997) is a clear indication of the manner in which the stay-at-home writers are affected (one would soon have to coin a term for them like NEI- Non Expatriate Indian or RI- Resident Indian as opposed to NRI- Non Resident Indian). Of the dozen or so writers represented, Salman Rushdie, Amit Chaudhuri, G.V. Desani, Kiran Desai, Amitav Ghosh, Vikram Chandra, Jhabvala, A.K. Ramanujan, all live or lived abroad. To balance this there is a solitary article on R.K. Narayan, and a couple of poems. Bill Buford in his editorial asks the question “What does it mean to be an Indian – to be citizen of a country that for thousands of years was no country, that has not one language but at least eighteen, and that no single race or religion or culture but many races, many religions, many cultures” (31). *The New Yorker* Rushdie’s “Introduction” to the Viking edition is reproduced here and is entitled “Damme, this is the Oriental Scene for you!” (32) G.V. Desani’s piece represented here is “India, for the plain hell of it” (33). The special Granta issue on India is somewhat more
representative. Focused on India it has several contributions by foreign correspondents and journalists, other contributors are Nirad Chaudhuri, Ved Mehta, Amit Chaudhuri, Suketu Mehta and the twice removed V.S.Naipaul. Of the writers in India are R.K. Narayan, the writer-publisher, Urvashi Butaliya and the Britisher Mark Tully. The Viking anthology concentrating on creative writing spans a longer period but is both unsatisfying and incomplete. Works like these provide ample evidence of the fact that diasporic space is pressing on the space of the home country. It is not that the centre has shifted; only the margins have expanded to push the home cultures further to outer space. The West continues to be the place for exhibition, recognition and judgement.

There is need to realize the significance of the cultural encounter which takes place in diasporic writing, the bicultural pulls and the creation of a new culture which finally emerges. It is equally important to understand the dynamics of reception at both the ends for reception is also rooted in cultural contexts. This double discourse of reception needs to interact not only throw light on the meaning of this writing, but also to throw light
on the non-diasporic writing and the formation of cultural theories. Diasporic writing exists and it cannot be wished away. Given the fact of its existence and its occupation of the intervening space, it is perhaps necessary to create another centre, another subjectivity. Reviewing and critiquing diasporic writing is part of this process, for it should relate and reflect and not transform and absorb.

Postcolonialism which is often referred to as the "theory" of migrancy, does not necessarily equip one with adequate means of approaching and interpreting diasporic writing for two very important reasons (i) writing generates its own parameters for esthetic evaluation as the act of writing itself is a negotiation with cultural constructs; (ii) postcolonialism is variously defined through political and historical conditions as well as aesthetics, and its legitimacy needs in itself to be questioned. The whole question of postcolonial aesthetics needs to be subjected to a careful scrutiny. Critics have located its beginnings in Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961), its theorizing in Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978), critical assessment in Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin's *The Empire Writes Back* (1989). Critics
have occupied contradictory positions and rightly so for contradictions beset its application. Meenakshi Mukherjee located in India views it as an “emancipatory concept” (34). In Arif Dinlik’s view postcolonialism is the child of postmodernism and it marks the arrival of the third world intellectuals in First World academic. The transition is viewed from ‘colony’ to ‘Third World’ to ‘postcolonial’ societies. In all such perceptions the margins are underscored, the affiliations with postmodernist aesthetics bypassed, and the world situation perceived through fragmented approaches rather than locate the beginnings, of both postmodernism and postcolonialism in the post-World War II political situations. The point of origin is not power, but the collapse of empires, not the West but Asia and Africa.

There are some other dimensions and fessex of the diasporic literature. It aims at examining the loss that has occurred, the gain that has been accumulated, acceptance and refusals suffered and an everlasting struggle to prove identity there, and to preserve the lost contact. When we think in the light of diasporic literature, we have to take into consideration certain issues, because those issues have their influence on
the Indian diasporic literature. The first issue is that all those who write this kind of literary works can be put into two categories: (i) those who were born and brought up here and migrated to later on, in search of better future and (ii) those who were born and brought up abroad only and who know India through their several visits. If we examine the literary works of both the categories, we notice certain remarkable differences. The writers of the earlier category at least possess the understanding about Indian culture and its ethos. They do know the limits of this country and also the reasons for those limits. So they are considerate in their works. Writers of the second category know India only through their visits, or readings, or through their stories, which they have heard from their forefathers. Naturally when they write about India, a different picture of India would emerge. The element of bias and sometimes even a strong dislike is to be found in their works, because they do not have the first hand information or experience about the Indian culture and society. Their mindset is already treasured in such a way that the attitude becomes
negative, when they think about India. V.S. Naipaul's *An Area of Darkness* or *Many More Mutiny* are the best examples of it.

One more issue, which demands attention in the matter of the Indian diasporic literature, is that, all those who migrate are in search of better future. What they achieve there is realized by them soon, because it is in the form of material prosperity but what they lose is realized by them very late. It causes such a sense of loss and agony in them that they try to justify their step uprooting from the native land and settling abroad by highlighting the negative side of India in their own works.

The third issue, which demands a special attention, is the psyche of the Indian diasporic writers, no doubt they are intellectuals and they have the capacity to write, but the question which arises here is, why do they write to highlight certain dark sides of their native land. They focus invariably on the Indian poverty, corruption, population or caste and communal clashes. It seems that there is a subtle motive working behind it and the motive is to get recognition as well as appreciation from the reading class and the government of that
host country. That proves to be the easiest way for them to establish themselves with acceptance.

The cross-cultural relationships in diasporic Indian English fiction, is also found in recent times. With the outward mobility of Indian fiction writers in English from the subcontinent and back, especially over the last two and a half decades, the zone that has expanded the most in scope and effect in the diaspora is that of intercultural friendship and social relations. This division of cultural loyalties has altered their conceptions of what constitutes their Indianness vis-à-vis the East-West encounter and has done away with the earlier formulations offered by Kipling, Forster and Raja Rao. For these writers, who hop, skip and jump continents at will, the tendency to merge the local and the global results in depicting characters bearing the concept of double consciousness – two cultures, two world views, two languages, two mindsets, two different kinds of experience. As their world shrinks, so initially does space across continents. At the same time, living across boundaries can be an expansive affair, hence an empowering act too. This transnationalism further results in two opposite tendencies-

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experiences of estrangement on the one hand, which are usually negative, as well as experiences of multi-locality that are more positive.

Multiculturalism and vision of new society are the recently developed concepts of the human civilization as a result of the socio-economic development during the last two decades of the twentieth century. It is a never ending process of development which has been going on even now. The new technologies have made this earth a smaller place and the emergence of multinationals and corporate life has given a push to mobility, interaction and migration from one corner of the earth to another. It has become almost impossible for a man to confine himself in the rigid boundaries of his limited caste or community or pattern of thinking. He has to accept and be a part of that mobility and interaction to satisfy his needs as well as to update himself. The result of this is the new concept of multiculturalism and vision of new society.

The concept of multiculturalism approves the possibility of accommodating people of more than one culture at a time. The former rigid and watertight pattern of thinking that, people of
more than one culture cannot leave or interact of past. The concept of multiculturalism finds bright possibility of living together, working together and interacting with one another irrespective of their caste, community, colour, religion and nationality. Multiculturalism in itself has emerged as a new culture of the 21st century, which accommodates every human spice in it. Multiculturalism has a better scope of understanding and acceptance of one another. But multiculturalism demands certain necessary conditions for its successful working out. The first condition is that the concept of multiculturalism becomes workable only when people part with their conservative traditional view-point and accept the new view-point of living together. It demands a forward pattern of thinking and living with others who may be of some other race or religion. The concept of multiculturalism becomes workable only when man tries to appreciate the bright side of culture of others, ignoring fully the drawbacks. In the past it was not possible to even imagine the concept of multiculturalism but now it has taken its place in a real form in many countries of the world. Many thinkers express a doubt that multiculturalism has developed at
the cost of the native culture of a human being. Necessarily it is not so. One need not part with his own native culture in order to be a part of multiculturalism. Multiculturalism does not mean abolishing one's own native culture but to find out the possibilities of preparing a link between one's own culture with the culture of others. In brief the concept of multiculturalism does not mean the destruction of one's original culture.

The vision of new society is that vision which one may call 'Utopia- an ideal which does not exist at all'. But the time demands and that new society will have to take a concrete shape. Today it may be a conceptual reality but it has to be a visible reality. The vision of new society conveys the idea of that society, where all live together, ignoring their individual differences for the commonwealth of all. Such a society does not get its recognition on the basis of its political name of geographical name. But it will get its recognition on the basis of humanity. The vision of new society has to offer certain codes of conduct and living for the whole mankind. It is that ideal society in which man has to live not as a citizen of one particular country but as a citizen of this world, because the
vision of new society neither approves nor accepts those boundaries, which we have prepared because of our traditional and orthodox.

When one arrives in a new land, one has a sense of wonder and adventure at the sight and feel of a landscape so different from what one has been accustomed to; there is also a sense of isolation and fear; and intense nostalgia is a buffer to which many retreat.

Some never grow past the phase of nostalgia. Romanticizing one’s native land has a place, so long as it does not paralyze one’s capacity to develop new bonds within one’s adopted homeland. Nostalgia as the only sustenance can become quite toxic, vitiating the living stream into a stagnant cesspool.

Nostalgia as a cesspool, might work in two ways. Those who have a propensity to downgrade and denigrate all thing North American, Canadian or any other host country culture are objects to pity at, for they can never be happy anywhere. Even more to be pitied are the ones whose over – romanticization of India throws them for a loop when they have to face the darker
side of the conditions in their ancestral homeland. V.S. Naipaul's much hated *An Area of Darkness* is an expressing of this. While expelling out the toxins from his own system and restoring a measure of health, as his later *India: A Wounded Civilization* shows, he certainly led a great many into yet another misrepresentation of India.

Writers tend to focus on the pains of discrimination and alienation, because 'our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought'. But readers have to keep in mind that such work of art or writing is a momentary flare of intense emotion or thought, and that it does not always reflect societal reality or the writer's long-range beliefs. One has to find a pattern that validates that leap into a valid generalization.

Here is where we run into practical difficulties. For Diaspora literature, not only of Indo-Canadian, but of other Asian-hyphenated literatures of North America, anthologies are often the only resources available at this stage of Diaspora consciousness. Anthologies have the imprint of the editor/s on them; and we have to be aware that editors often select texts that are poignant, for the same reason I mentioned of earlier,
"Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought" (35).

There is another aspect that is more inflammatory, and needs closer studies. We may call it New Orientalism.

Who is behind the influx of published works that highlight the experience of oppression and victimization of the diaspora? As in a whodunit thriller, everyone is a suspect:

Author? One remembers the charges leveled at Indian writers who chose to write in English in earlier decades, and between the lines was the change that the writers chose viewpoints and plots that would appeal to the English-reading world, wherein lay recognition and remuneration. Do authors, intentionally or unintentionally, assume the voice that readers wish to here?

Editor? Study the ratio of 'immigrant' poems to 'poems' in various Diaspora anthologies; have the writers written on other themes? A related question is not as easy to quantify: Are there writers who write about other aspects of life but never get published?

The publishing establishment? The founders? The last two are especially pertinent to the Canadian context, where the
publishing establishment depends on subsidies from “arm’s length government bodies” (36), where the money comes from the tax payers, but the administration of which is meant to be independent of government agendas. Arnold Itwaru, in Closed Entrances, comes to the conclusion that arm’s-length founders are not really so. Also, Canadian publishers have to compete with the American market, and sales revenues seldom cover even the production costs, leave alone profit. Canadian culture is kept alive through a quota system to be followed by television stations, the blocking of American super-bookstores that wish to expand into Canada, and book subsidies; the controversy over the issue of keeping Canadian culture alive on life-supporting devices paid for by the taxpayers at large, rather than by the readers and viewers, is an on going one, and there are no resolutions in sight. But what is clear is that while publishers look for marketability, reviewers and editors tend to highlight the victim or exotic (home is elsewhere) syndromes in work by Diaspora writers.

Literary texts have tended to focus more on the underside of this gargantuan experience of expatriation, alienation and
transplantation. Perhaps the only literary work that has taken a celebratory angle, Bharti Mukherejee's *Jasmine*, goes overboard in the opposite direction, validating the American dream while panning all things Indian. Chitra Divakaruni, the most recent star in the Diaspora sky, delves into darker dreams and nightmares of woman scope and has an appreciative readership among feminists, but since, her women characters are mainly Indo-American, there is a tendency to see them not as individuals so much as representative of the Diaspora, and we are back on square one perpetuation of negative stereotypes that the average north American reader has of Indian life and culture.

Within the Diaspora community, the concepts of "home" continue to exacerbate intergenerational frictions that, let us remember exist everywhere. Inter-generationality has several groupings other than the usual one depending on age. Thus we have disparate "cultures" within the Diaspora.

A new diaspora sub-group that is now emerging in Canada is that of men and women who have spent their working lives in Canada. Except for British Columbia, which has
had four generations of Indo-Canadians, in other provinces we are witnessing the first generation retirees from the Canadian workforce. Thus we have moved into a time when there are of two types of 'seniors' as those over middle age are called - those who have spent their working life in Canada, and those who have come to Canada after retiring from India to join their adult children. The cultural differences between the two could be even more problematic than those between parents and their Canadian-born children, because whereas adults can to a degree shape children's lives and attitudes, reshaping adults' by other adults is a far more contentious issue. While many writers and scholars are focusing on the first pair of generations, not much is available about the second pair of generations, Indo-Canadian youth, as discussed earlier, often feel the stings of racism (as did many central Europeans and others who did not know English when they first came to Canada). The desire to act and dress like everyone else is one way for visible minority children to make themselves invisible; and another is to downplay racial slurs as one would skinniness or obesity or various disabilities that are targets of torment.
The children of the first generation of expatriates had the added edge of their parents' work ethic and heredity to do much better academically than most of their classmates. This is true of most immigrant communities, especially from Asia. In the original homeland, education is often the means, the only means to many, of getting out of a cycle of poverty. This work ethic has had its own repercussions on the younger generation, as numerous young people have been discussing in recent years. Television documentaries (a very popular and prolific part of the Canadian art scene) are now addressing these conflicts. British Columbia, especially, is the centre of much activism and art in this area. A useful source for knowing the British Columbia diaspora art scene is a publication called *Kinesis* that has a newspaper format and is published ten times a year. The response to video documentaries and stories has been positive — that racial minority children in schools feel a surge of self-confidence when their culture is explained and validated.

We need to bring ourselves into the public arena, to place our works where they can be seen. It is not enough to cry 'wolf'
at the moon, as we all too often do in the racism issue. Minority issues need cooperation from within. To give a few examples, *Kinesis* is a nationally distributed periodical that deals with a great many dedicated workers. *Montreal Serai* is a small publication that protests political inequities. *Toronto South Asian review* now renamed *Toronto Review of Contemporary Writing Abroad* is a finely formatted quarterly. There are other more sporadic, publications that come and go. But the paid-subscribers' lists of these publications are disproportionally small for the amount of work and content each puts forward.
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