Chapter One

Introduction

India has made marvellous development both in education and in literary creation. The twenty first century is the period of transition, which means change, from medievalism to the modern age. There are a lot of changes in India, especially in the Indian writing in English after Independence and it brought new self-reliance to Indian writers. Till the end of nineteenth century, most of the fiction were written basically in vernacular language but today, fiction has become the leading literary form and Indian writers fit in themselves to the sensibility of English for creative writing.

Indian English Literature represents a large body of literary works created by Indian writers in English. It has somewhat recent history; it is merely one hundred and fifty years old. It is a thought-provoking creation of an eventful encounter in the late eighteenth century between an energetic and innovative Britain and a motionless and confused India. It can also be defined as literature written originally in English by authors who are Indian as birth, ancestry or nationality however some Indian settled in other countries who still followed the style of Indianness in their writings. According to K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar, “Indian writing in English should project a total vision of India which interprets her aspirations and hopes and records her ardour of defeats and her partial relationship just not before the outside world alone but even before the diverse linguistic regions within the country” (77).

Indian Writing in English is also considered as an extension of British literature, because, for a long time India was under the control of the British and India was in the situation to educate the Indians in the western way. The paraphernalia of present-day Indian society is being continuously intertwined with the features of
native ethnicities and introduced western notions. Every single educated Indian has become a product of encounters and compromises of this dual culture. The Indian writers in English, by their very choice of the mediums, point out their consciousness and exposure to a culture other than their traditional Indianness. Their intimation regarding the experience of the alien culture makes them more aware of their own Indianness. R. A. Singh and V. L. V. N. Narendra Kumar says,

The Indian writers of Post-independence era adopted English as a tool and employed it in diverse ways to express widely differing cultural experiences. Their creative imaginative use of the colonizer (as illustrated in Rushdie’s *Midnights children* and Arundhati Roy’s *The God of Small Things*) is akin to Caliban’s poetic gift. They use it as a dynamic medium to explore the complex Indian reality. (2)

Fiction widely depicts the narrative of human activities and involvements, ironic and wide-ranging, telling views and state of mind and thoughts, down the ages. Human activities and experiences are the results of communication among people in the society. Robert B. Henkle rightly states, “Fiction and drama present men and women reacting to each other in the way that is closer to real life” (1). Fiction is a Latin word meaning ‘to form’ or ‘to make’. A Fiction is a made story, an imagined and invented literary composition designed to entertain and sometimes instruct to make readers feel and think. Today, the term ‘fiction’ is usually applied only to short stories, novels and novellas, but other literary forms such as plays also have fictional elements.

Stories are a very ancient human product, preceding the invention of writing, and there is no identifiable ‘first’ storyteller or work of fiction. The modern novel and short story were preceded by many earlier forms of fiction such as myths, legends,
fables, fairy tales, parables and allegories. Over the course of centuries, writers in many languages began to focus more on the artistic and entertainment possibilities of prose, to explore human character without the need to preach and moralize. Though the native languages of India were rich in its varied genres of literature, fiction as a pioneering genre of literature gained popularity in the post-colonial world.

Though the Indian novelists wrote in English by getting the inspiration of British novelists, story-telling was not new to India. The stories about avatars of Hindu gods and goddesses were handed down the generations through oral traditions. The epics like the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*, which deal with the stories of avatars of Hindu gods, were in the form of written practice. Indian fiction in English denotes both the short and long stories written by Indian writers in English. *The Upanishads, Panchatantra, Hitopdesh* and *Jadaka tales* bear testimony to the fact that India has been the cradle of fascinating folklore, mythical tales and magical fables dating back to some five thousand years. Indian fiction writers made fruitful attempt to exploit the themes of our rich cultural heritage in their writings particularly in their novels and short stories.

The first Indian writer to produce the novel in English is Bankim Chandra Chatterjee. He wrote *Rajmohan’s Wife* in 1864. After that numerous Indian fiction writers appeared and published novels and short stories in English. There are three leading stages in the Indian fiction in English. The first stage is the appearance of the ‘Big three’ such as Mulk Raj Anand, R. K. Narayan and Raja Rao in Indian fiction in English. In 1930s, they were considered as the strong roots of the Indian fiction in English. Mulk Raj Anand published his first novel, *Untouchable* in 1935, R. K. Narayan published his first novel *Swami and Friends* in 1935 and Raja Rao published his first novel, *Kanthapura* in 1938. The ‘Big three’ deals in their novels about the
Indian social problems and opinions that their depiction has a trace of authenticity. The ‘big three’ dominated the Indian fiction in English for more than five decades and they made the real beginning of Indian English novel.

In the second stage, after ‘the big three’, in the middle of 1950’s and 1960’s, a numerous of writers came into the field. Among them a few women writers also started to write novels. Most of the women writers like Kamala Markandaya, Anita Desai and Shashi Deshpande deal with Indian feminism and also with the Indian social problems in their fictions. The appearance of women writers took a new dimension. They, with the help of feminine sensibility, revealed the nature of women and importance of man-woman relationships. Kamani Dinesh, in this regard, says:

It is heartening, however that Kamala Markandaya, Anita Desai and Nayantara Sahal and new young women like Gauri Deshpande have created female characters from deep empathies. I feel that perhaps, only women can feel intense pain . . . that woman is unworthy to be trusted to live her own life, but has to be under the care of the father when young, the husband when married and son when widowed. (2)

Indian fiction in English received an international recognition through the writers of Indian origin who have settled abroad. This development begins in 1980s. In 1981 Salman Rushdie won the Booker prize for his novel *Midnight’s Children*, Arundati Roy’s *The God of Small Things* won many awards and Arvind Adiga’s *The White Tiger* won the Booker Prize Award. These awards and honours created a new landmark in the history of Indian fiction in English. In addition to the above mentioned writers the other twentieth century writers such as Sunil Gangopadhyay, Maheswata Devi and Asha Purva Devi also helped a lot for the major developments of Indian fiction.
When comparing to the first two stages, in the development of Indian fiction in English, the third stage plays the most prominent role. Especially in the third stage, the writers who were born in India and settled in America paved way for getting a world-wide recognition. These writers are specifically called ‘Asian-American writers’. Asian-American literature is a developing new field. This literature is also considered as one of the sub-divisions of multicultural literature. Today, the population of the United States continues to rapidly increase by the appearance of Asians and 4.8% of the total American population were occupied by Asians. It is also essential to note the history of Asian immigration to the United States. While looking over the Asian-American literature, many critics are of the view that the history of Asian-American literature started nearby the 1940’s or before. So many books regarding Asia or Asian-Americans were written by outsiders such as Pearl Buck. It takes a lot of history to produce the flowering of literature.

‘Diaspora’ is a displacement from geographic place of origin and repositioning in another fleeting country. Diasporic literature highlights the best of a homeland, a place from where the dislocation of people happens and their tough voyage, physical or mental sufferings undertaken on account of the economic pressures. The minority community existing in exile is mostly known as Diaspora. Manju Jaidka quotes, “The word ‘diaspora’ today confronts us with its concomitant concepts of exile, emigration, nationality, ethnicity, marginality, hybrid, and all the other ideas exposed to in recent years” (11). Literally diaspora means scatter or dispersion or exile. In the study of cultural movements it refers to a loss of homeland, or a shifting of population from one locale to another. Manju Jaidka also says, “the term ‘diaspora’ to expatriate minority communities which have dispersed from an original ‘center’ to two or more
‘peripheral’ or ‘foreign regions’ who retain their myths about their homeland, and feel
alienated in the new land” (12).

The term ‘Diaspora’ is an umbrella term and the term drawn from the Greek which means forcible or non-forcible displacement of people from the homeland into new regions. The separation of God and mankind due to the fall of Satan from the heaven and mankind’s separation from the Garden of Eden, are also considered as the symbolical representation of diasporic situations. ‘Diaspora’ is derived from the Greek verbs such as ‘dia’ and ‘speirein’ which exactly means ‘to scatter’, ‘to spread’ or ‘to disperse’. Actually, for Greeks, these words were used to refer the settlement of Asia Minor and Mediterranean dislocation of the ancient Greeks to Asia Minor as a cause of poverty, overpopulation and political war. Fundamentally, ‘diaspora’ had a positive meaning. Robin Cohen says, “Expansion through plunder, military conquests, colonization and migration were the predominant features of the Greek diaspora” (508). In the way Jasbir Jain understands regarding the numerous responses to ‘diaspora’, he writes:

The word ‘diaspora’ is literally scattering carrying within it the ambiguous status of being both an ambassador and a refugee. The requirement of the roles are different. While one requires the projection of one’s culture and ability to enhance its understanding, the other seeks refuge and protection and relates more positively to the host country (Writers of Indian Diaspora: Theory and Practice 11,12).

In the chain of knowledge of human accomplishments, the desire to travel has been most important to man. Traditionally the entire process has been bludgeoned under two broad classifications ‘migration’ and ‘immigration’. However the ‘migration’ simply means moving, the ‘immigration’ means moving across national
boundary. There are a wide-ranging reasons for these kinds of migration and immigration. Some of the most important reasons are the propagation of trust, new market places to purchase and sell, the desire to triumph over and take possession of the lands, movements to harmless habitation from the violence of nature and man, political harassment, spiritual narrow-mindedness and hunt for improved financial meadows etc. From centuries-old, the people had migrated and they had reason for that migration.

Exile is also connected to diaspora and in this displacement there is some compulsion. The political or social pressure, a set of strange environments that compel one to move. There is also a desire to move as well as there is no possibility to come back to their homeland. Diasporic writing has established its own hypothetical place benfitting a dual vision and these hypothetical examinations work in different ways. There is a necessity to realise the importance of the cultural encounter which takes place in diasporic writing and the bicultural pulls the creation of a new culture which finally develops.

Trishanku, the king of Suryavanshi Clan, taken from “Balkand” of the Ramayana is compared with the writers of Diaspora by Jaidka. Trishanku wants to go up to the heavens in his early form and it is his one and only ambition in his life but his ambition was let down by the guru Vasisht, who turned him into a Chandaala of terrible form. Trishanku roamed in the forest for some years and there the sage Vishwamithtra helped Trishanku to go up to the heaven. Once he entered the gateway of heaven in his Chandaala form which was given by Sage Vasisht, all the Gods in the heaven pushed him out and again he was sent to earth in the form of ‘prithvi-look’ whose head seems down and sage Vishwamitra also created another heaven for him.
It is said that still Trishanku keep on suspended upside down in a heaven created especially for him. Manju Jaidka says,

The Trishanku metaphor may well be applied to the plight of expatriate writers in many ways. One, in their desire for a new world . . . . Secondly, there are always forces pushing them out from all sides, to keep them in a suspended state . . . Thirdly, just as Trishanku’s appearance undergoes a change and is no longer recognizable, so is the sensibility of the immigrant changed in the process of relocation. And finally, like Trishanku, the world they ultimately call their own may not be the one they longed for, nor the one left behind, but a vague, uncertain territory of the mind which they rule, whether, rejoicing at their fate or lamenting over it. Such is the plight of the expatriate writer. (10,11)

For the contemporary diasporic communities, the term ‘diaspora’ signifies much more than the above said definitions and explanations. Nowadays, in the age of globalization they are no more seen as causalities of misfortune and forcible dispersal, but has enhanced the practical, economic and effective roles of Diasporas, showing them to be particularly adaptive forms of social organizations. Some Diasporas appear to have mutated across several phases and assumed different forms. For instance, the Indians decision to emigrate at the turn of the nineteenth century was influenced by the financial hardships caused by British Colonial oppression in India. Another factor was the movement of lower case individuals and their subsequent placement in the United States. Yet, others point to the general displacement of traditional economics in colonies leading to emigration as people’s livelihood was challenged.
Although the immigrants have travelled to the unknown land, they cling to their language, religion, cultural aspect and they do not wish to lose their identity. There are two types of migration such as involuntary and voluntary. The migration of the Africans to America due to the slave trade are considered as forcible migration and the professionals search for good pastures are considered as voluntary migration. Indian Diaspora can also be categorised into two types: forced migration to South Africa, Fiji and the Caribbean Islands on account of slavery in the eighteenth and nineteenth century and voluntary migration to United States of America, United Kingdom, Germany, France and other European countries for the sake of professional or academic purposes.

The United States Diaspora is a general term refer to the society who migrated from regions that are presently within the boundaries of the United States. Together the multifarious literature written by these traditional societies are acknowledged as a hyphenated, hybrid variety. These hybrid literature express the diasporic consciousness of the people who have been relocated in new lands. As in the case of diasporic writing, it is regarded as by a varied visualisation, on the one hand, the world left behind is all together seen as a place of violence, poverty and penury. On the other, it is flawless.

The intra and intergroup dynamics of the Indian immigrants in the United States, can be considered as a traditional circumstance. Immigrates from India, as a component of the American ethnic mosaic come to be enumerated as an ethnic group for the first time in the 1980 United States Census as Asian-Indian. The awkward term Asian Indian was adopted by the Census Bureau for the 1980 census at the urging of the immigrant community, this was to avoid confusion with Amerindians on
the one hand and Pakistanis and Bangladeshis on the other. Previously the
government used the term East Indians.

The history of people from India in the United States may most readily be
divided into three parts. First is mostly around the turn of the nineteenth century, a
thousand persons, comparatively small number, came to United States from India
when it was a combined colony of Great Britain. Second is during India’s and
Pakistan’s independence in 1947 and much larger number of persons moved from
India to United States. Third, came after the enactment of the 1965 immigration laws.
Fourth, in the 1990’s with the information technology boom in United States. This
section of migrants is mainly computer engineers.

In 1790, an unnamed man from Madras arrives in the streets of Salem,
Massachusetts and his arrival was recorded first in the history. After him so many
Indians followed and entered the United States. There were three divergent groups of
elite migrants-Swamis, Students and merchants. During the late nineteenth century,
the Hindu missionaries, the Swamis, began to enter America. Historians of religion in
America views that among these Hindu missionaries the most important Swami was
the Swami Vivekananda, who spoke at the World’s Parliament of Religions, part of
the Chicago Worlds’ Fair in 1893. Vivekananda founded the Vedanta Society in the
United States and he stayed there for two years and returned to India in 1895. He
brings two ranks with him to preside over societies in New York and San Francisco. It
is sure that Swami Vivekananda was not the first such spiritual leader to go to the
United States. Before him, in 1884, Pratap Chander Muzoomdar went for missionary
works. In nineteenth century, American thinkers such as Ralph Waldo Emerson and
Henry David Thoreau had been influenced by Indian thought, while Thoreau has a
significant influence on Mahatma Gandhi. Other Indian religious influence came via
Western supporters and translators of Indian religious thoughts such as Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (1831-91) and the theosophy movements.

The second most important missionary went to United States was Swami Yogananda. He first went in 1920 to attend the Pilgrim Tercentenary Anniversary International Conference of Religious Liberals held in Boston, sponsored by the Unitarians. He too stayed in United States and establish a religious organization, the Togoda Satsanga Society in Los Angeles. The most popular leader to visit the United States was the Nobel laureate, Rabindranath Tagore, who came several times in 1916.

The early students in the United States were essentially rebels with expressive connections to the Indian Freedom Movement. Usually, most of the Indian Students went to England to study but one by one started to discontinue their studies in London and joined in the United States. For example, Lala Hardayal, an Indian revolutionary who dedicated to the removal of British influence in India and founded the Ghardar Party in America, resigned a fellowship at Oxford to go to the United States in 1911 to do revolutionary works and although he was primarily interested in freedom for India, had time to become an official of the Industrial Workers of the World.

Therefore the Indians choice to migrate at the turn of the nineteenth century was due to variety of reasons and improvements. Some of the people immigrate in the individual level, for them the caste and better livelihood were chief factors. Some immigrates at national level where in the developments of Indian independence movement influenced them. Manju Seth says as celebrated by forecasters, “although small, the early middle class played a significant role and the struggle for Indians rights in America” (169).

Indians started to migrate to the United States and Canada a lot and to stop the migration of poor Indians, numerous genuine measures were adopted by the United
States and Canada. The first naturalization law was enacted in 1946 and until that law, the immigration door was opened to all the people especially to the Asians and in 1790 some regulations were made in the law and it was somewhat discriminatory to the Asians. According to the Naturalization law of 1790, the honour of citizenship was given only to ‘free White persons’. Asians, with the exclusion of Indians, were denied citizenship because they were not regarded as white. Apart from the Europeans, Caucasians who were considered to be appropriate to the similar racial standard as Europeans, regarded as white. Asian Indians were considered as Caucasians whereas the Chinese and Japanese were considered Mongoloid.

After the enactment of Mc Carran Walter Act of 1952, ‘Race’, which is considered as a qualification or a barrier to immigration, was abolished to make the Immigration and Naturalization laws to be civilized. Through this act, Immigration regulations for all the Asians were relaxed. The 1965 Immigration Act encouraged renewal of Indian immigration regulation and thus has shaped a flourishing and varied community that has a small number of understandable relations, other than nationality influence with the earlier settlers. A decent number of Indian professionals, primarily engineers, doctors, scientists, educationalist were benefited by this laws and entered the United States. It is expected that the major number of outstanding Indian talent outside India is in the United States, which is regarded as the land of opportunities, and it attracts the best, the cream of the society in India.’

By way of highlighting on the idea of cultural pluralism in America, the discriminations of individual cultural distinctions, outstanding to race, gender, ethnicity, language, religion are combined into the numerous hyphenated groups. Amongst them, the United States diasporic literature reveals the diasporic experience in the United States right from the beginning of Chinese immigration in the mid
nineteenth century to the present. Diasporic literature delivers unique access to understanding the social history and awareness of this developing minority group. Early immigrant arrived in the United States in successive waves, Chinese in 1850, Koreans in 1903, Indians in 1904, and Filipinos in 1907. The early twentieth century Asian-American literature emphases on autobiographies that tell the story of immigration to the United States and the memories of the homeland, such as Lee Yan Phou’s *When I was a Boy in China* (1887), Etsu Sugimoto’s *Daughter of the Samurai* (1925) and Younghill Kang’s *Grass Roof* (1931) and *East Goes West* (1937) are the best examples of the genre. Most of these books emphasise on the author’s ancestral lands, a trend that seem to reflect the taste of the American Public.

The books written on portraying Chinese-Americans was also read outside of their traditional group of people. Sui Sun Far, pseudonym of Edith Eaton, a Eurasian whose tales are collected in *Mrs. Spring Frangrance* (1912), sketches characters that populated the Chinatown of San Francisco, Seattle and Los Angeles. Carlos Bulosan depicts the struggle of Filipino immigrants who worked as farm labourers and experienced harsh discrimination. These books depicting Chinese life in the United States were followed by Lin Yuntag’s *A China town Family* (1948) and Diana Chang’s *Frontiers of Love* (1956).

Toshio Mori and Hisaye Yamamoto wrote tales dedicated to the inner lives of Japanese-Americans. Toshio Mori was one of the first Asian-Americans to write fiction about Japanese American life. His collection of short stories *Yokshama, California* appeared in 1949. Hisaye Yamamoto published five stories in national journals between 1949 and 1952. The harsh treatment of Japanese-Americans during the Second World War greatly affected the literary production of Japanese-Americans. The literature encouraged Asian- Americans not only to write about their
experiences but also to see their writing as a contribution to American literature and to popular culture.

Writers of the Indian diaspora form just one of the many patches in the multi-ethnic make up of Asian-American literature. Amit Shankar Saha in the article entitled “Exile Literature and the Diasporic Indian Writer” categorises the Diasporic Indian writing into two distinct groups:

The modern Diasporic Indian writers can be grouped into two distinct classes. One class comprises those who have spent a part of their life in India and have carried the baggage of their native land offshore. The other class comprises those who have been bred since childhood outside as an exotic place of their origin. The writers of the former group have a literal displacement whereas those belonging to the latter group find themselves rootless. (193)

Among the Indian diasporic writers, the most important is Ved Metha. He went to the United States from India, to attend the school for the blind in Arkansas. His several works comprise the autobiographical tale, *Face to Face* (1957), a novel, *Delinquent Chacha* (1996) and a book of short stories, *Three Stories of the Raj* (1986). Agha Sahid Ali is a famous poet in Indian Diasporic writing. He teaches creative writing at the University of Massachusetts. He feels that America, even though it has influenced his writing, has not done much to change his thinking or personality. He feels that he has been able to absorb both Indian and American experiences.

Vikram Seth, who has chosen to settle down in California, is a diasporic poet and novelist. His first publication was a collection of poetry called *Mappings* (1982) which records his dual feelings of nostalgia for India after studying abroad for many
years. His second work published when he was a student at Stanford, *The Humble Administrator’s Garden* (1985) won the Commonwealth Poetry Prize for Asia. This was followed by the publication of his *The Golden Gate*, the great California novel (1986). Much earlier, he had published a travel book about hitch hiking through Western China, called *From Heaven Lake*. He won a Guggenheim Fellowship and returned to India in 1986. His critically acclaimed novel *A Suitable Boy* (1993) is the longest single volume novel published in English.

Siddharatha Mukherjee was born in New Delhi and now he is an assistant professor of medicine at the Department of Medicine (Oncology) of Columbia University in New York City. He won the National Book Critics Award and Puliter Prize for his work, *The Emperor of All Maladies*. Amitav Ghosh is the author of *The Circle of Reason* (his 1986 debut novel), *The Shadow Lines* (1988), *The Calcutta Chromosome* (1995), *The Glass Palace* (2000), *The Hungry Tide* (2004), and *Sea of Poppies* (2008), the first volume of *The Ibis* trilogy, set in the 1830s, just before the Opium War, which encapsulates the colonial history of the East. Ghosh's latest work of fiction is *River of Smoke* (2011), the second volume of *The Ibis* trilogy. The third volume, *Flood of Fire*, completing the trilogy, has been published 28 May 2015 to positive reviews. So many Indian Diasporic writers who lives in America like Vijay Seshadri, Rajiv Joseph, Dhan Gopal Mukerji contributed a lot for the development of Indian diasporic literature.

Other Indian Diasporic writers from other countries like Shashi Tharoor, born in London, is recognized for achieving excellence in his chosen fields and for enhancing the profile and the image of the Indian Diaspora. He has written several novels including *Riot* (2001), *India: from Midnight to Millennium* (1997), and *Show Business* (1992). Shashi Tharoor has lived away from India all his adult life. His idea
of home is India, even though he had led a nomadic life. V. S. Naipaul is another notable diasporic writer. V. S. Naipaul is a descendent from Hindu Indians who had immigrated to Trinidad to attend the University of Oxford in 1950. He subsequently settled in England, although he travelled extensively thereafter. His earliest books such as *The Mystic Masseur* (1957), *The Suffrage of Elvira* (1958), and *Miguel Street* (1959) are ironic and satirical accounts of life in the Caribbean. His fourth novel, *A House for Mr. Biswas* (1961), a much more important work won him major recognition. It centres on the main character’s attempt to assert his personal identity and establish his independence as symbolized by owing his own house. Naipaul’s subsequent novels used other national settings but continued to explore the personal and collective alienation experienced in new nations that were struggling to integrate their native and Western-colonial heritages. *Half a Life* (2001) is a novel about an Indian immigrant to England and then Africa.

Women writers are also seen in the diasporic literature and their works became a great success. Among the women writers of Indian origin in America, the most important writers are Jhumpa Lahiri, Chitra Divakaruni, Kiran Desai, Anita Desai, Meena Alexander, Jessica Hagedorn and Bharati Mukherjee. Chitra Divakaruni is an excellent South Asian writer and poet. Her subject matter is about diasporic men and women. Much of her work is semi auto biographical. Her well-known writings are *Arranged Marriage, Black candle, The Reason for Nasturtiums* and *Dark like the River*. Chitra Divakaruni’s characters are mainly Indo-American, there is a tendency to see them not as individuals so much as representative of the Diaspora the average North American reader has of Indian life and culture. Divakaruni lives in San Francisco Bay area where she teaches creative writing. The poet, fiction writer and
essayist Meena Alexander has published a novel, *Nampally Road* (1991) and a memoir of family, migration and memory.

Anita Desai is a diasporic writer who practised a mixed cultural background. Her father D. N. Mazumdar, a Bengali, and mother Toni Nime, a German, provided a multicultural atmosphere at home. Her early experience of living in dual cultures, altered into a cross-cultural encounter with her migration to England and then to the United States. She now divides her time equally between India, England and America, and successfully manages to unite the fragments of her memories and express them comprehensively through the experiences of culturally uprooted characters of her works. The later works of Desai such as *Bye-Bye Blackbird, Games at Twilight*, a collection of short stories, *Baumgartner’s Bombay, Journey to Ithaca, Diamond Dust* a collection of short stories deal with the theme of intercultural interaction and the resulting synthesis between two cultures.

Jessica Hagedorn is a poet, playwright and screenwriter whose works include three novels: *Dog Eaters* (1987), *The Gangster of Love* (1997) and *Dream Jungle* (2004). Her first novel, an unflinching portrayal of Philippine life, was nominated for the National Book Award. In 1993, she edited *Charlie Chan is Dead: An Anthology of Contemporary Asian American Fiction*. Vietnamese American novelist and law professor, Lan Cao has drawn her heritage to write both fiction and non-fiction. Her novels distinctly mirror her experiences; her family was among those anti-communist Vietnamese airlifted to safety.

Bapsi Sidhwa has been called Pakistan’s leading English novelist. Her first three novels – *The Crow Eaters* (1983), *The Bride* (1983) and *Ice Candy Man* (1989) take place in her homeland, exploring the post-colonial Pakistani identity. Anita Desai has said that Sidhwa has a passion for history and for truth telling and this is exhibited
in each of her first three novels as she tries to understand the dramatic events leading
to the partition of the Indian subcontinent in 1947 and the subsequent birth of Pakistan
and Nepal.

Bharati Mukherjee has been an Asian-American writer, Indian diaspora writer,
Indo-American writer, writer of immigrant fiction and non-fiction and typical
American writer. She is one of the noteworthy women novelists of twenty first
century. Her own biography foot path spans India, Canada and the United States and
the themes of this courageous and easy going author are displacement, traditional
isolation, continued existence and adoptability. Mukherjee displays the North
America immigrant’s lives, their trials and sufferings as well as their eagerness for
existence, longing for reflectiveness and unexperienced means of self-refashioning.
As a writer she has occupied a place for herself in the emergent field of Indian writing
in English. She connects various cultures, mingling history, myth, values and beliefs
with uncompromising social criticism.

Bharati Mukherjee was born in Calcutta, India, in July 1940. She was the
second of the three daughters. Her father, Sudhir Lal Mukherjee, was an esteemed
chemist who had done advanced research in FGF Germany and earned a doctorate
from the University of London. He encouraged his three daughters to study and
actively helped his daughter’s interest in creative writing. Her mother, Bina
Mukherjee, like many Bengali women of her time was not highly educated. Although
apparently quiet, her mother care for a life time carving for the education that had
been denied her and did not want her daughters to be in the same way deprived. She
also wanted to protect her daughters from the limitations suffered by many middle-
class Indian women locked in orthodox arranged marriages. She was strongminded to
make sure that her daughters were well educated so that no one could ‘make them suffer’.

Mukherjee’s father had a difference of opinion, in 1947, with his business friend and after that her father relocated the family to England where he was busy in chemical research. The scientific work later took the family to Basal, Switzerland. Mukherjee’s childhood was partially spent in London, Germany and Switzerland. In 1951, Sudir Lal Mukherjee returned to Calcutta with his family and after her return his business was flourishing. So she and her sisters were taken to the Loreto Convent School. In 1959, she obtained B.A. degree in English from the University of Calcutta and in 1961 she continued her studies at the University of Baroda in western India, receiving an M.A. degree in English and ancient Indian Culture. Her education at Baroda provided her thorough foundation in Indian tradition and heritage, balancing the inspiration of her earlier Anglicized education, and also enhancing her accepting of the Hindu religious principles she had obtained from her parents.

From an early age, Mukherjee had showed an attention in writing. While in London, she had begun writing a novel about English children. As a student at Loreto Convent, she published short stories based on European history in the school magazine. At the college level, she decided to become a writer, a decision her father encouraged. In 1961, she was admitted to the Writers Workshop at the University of Baroda. The following year she received a P.E.O. International Peace Scholarship. In 1963, she was awarded an M.F.A. and her thesis, a collection of short fiction, helped a lot for her admission to the doctoral programme in English.

At Writer’s Workshop, University of Iowa, Mukherjee met Clark Blaise, a Canadian American and fellow student, only two weeks before they got married, during a lunch hour and they married one day in September 1963. She has described
their relationship in an interview with Carb Alison as “an intensely literary marriage” (30). She says in *American Dreamer*, “Until my lunch-break wedding, I had seen myself as an Indian foreign student who intended to return to India to live. The five minutes ceremony in the lawyer’s office suddenly changed me into a transient with conflicting loyalties to two very different cultures” (1). She further says in *American Dreamer*,

> Before that moment in time I had no identity of my own; my identity was viscerally connected with ancestral soil and genealogy. I was who I was because I was Dr. Sudhir lal Mukherjee’s daughter, because I was a Hindu Brahmin, because I was Bengali-speaking and because my death was an East Bengal village called Faridpur. (8)

Being forged to negotiate the no man’s land between the country of her past and the continent of her present, she struggled for the cultural assimilation and acceptance after her whirlwind marriage. She admits in *Days and Nights in Calcutta*. “While changing citizenship is easy, swapping cultures is not” (169). Blasie asserts “All three daughters of S.L. Mukherjee have made headstrong love matches, and the two who live outside of India- cruel irony- earn more than their husbands” (29).

Like her father, the life of Bharati Mukherjee shifted from place to place. In 1966, after her marriage with Clark Blasie, she migrated to Canada and became a naturalized citizen in 1972. They survived there for fourteen years from 1966 to 1980, first in Toronto, then in Montreal. She says in *American Dreamer*, “The first ten years into marriage, years spent mostly in my husband’s native Canada. I thought of myself as an expatriate Bengali, permanently stranded in North America because of destiny or desire” (8). She says in numerous interviews about her life in Canada and the sufferings she undergoes there. She had thought of herself as an expatriate in Canada,
she was frequently taken for a prostitute or shoplifter, domestic crippling assumptions about her. She powerfully specified in *Days and Nights in Calcutta*, “over the years I spend in Canada, I experienced racial harassments in increasingly crude forms, they included removal to a seat in the back of an inter-city bus, not being served in stores, and racial slurs in Toronto’s Rosedale Subway station” (302). Nourished up with Canada, she took a brave choice to migrate to the United States in 1980, she says in *American Dreamer*, “After a fourteen stay in Canada I forced my husband and two sons (Bart and Bernie) to relocate to the United States… I am a naturalized citizen and I take my American Citizenship very seriously… I became a citizen by choice, not by simple accident of birth” (5). Mukherjee is currently a distinguished professor of English at the University of California Berkeley. Her husband, with whom she shares a literary marriage teaches at the University of Iowa and they have two sons, Bart Anand, and Bernard Sudhir, the latter named Bernard Malamud, a celebrated writer and valued friend to whom she dedicates *Darkness*.

Mukherjee’s narrative mirrors the nature and temperament of the contemporary American society as experienced by immigrants in America. Her works are the best instances of the diasporic writing and it depicts issues such as sense of alienation, love for native land, depression of the dispersed, a dual identification with original homeland and adopted country, crisis of identity, mythological memory and the objection against discrimination in the adopted country. They obviously shows her diasporic consciousness.

Mukherjee can also be seen as a leading writer of the Indian diaspora. She wishes herself to be regarded as a most important traditional woman writer of contemporary America so she refer to herself as an ‘Ellis Island Writer’. Her novels and short stories are mostly around the immigrant experience. Alam writes,
“Mukherjee’s works focus on the phenomenon of migration, the status of new immigrants, and the feeling of alienation often experienced by expatriates” (10).

All of Mukherjee’s creativeness is concentrated with razor-sharp accuracy on a diasporic imagination and depicts the political and cultural significances of this very imagination. She admits in one of her interviews with Connell Micheal, “I have been murdered and reborn at least three times, the very correct young woman I was trained to be, and was very happy being, is very different from the politicized, shrill, civil rights activist I was in Canada, and from the urgent writer that I have become in the last few years in the United States” (Michael, Jessie and Tom 38).

From the point of critical evaluation, Gita Rajan writes, “Mukherjee’s novels have been recognized as recounting the shades of her diasporic experiences. Mukherjee has fascinated readers with varying portraits of immigrants self. All of her works recapture and reiterate the experiences of immigrants to the United States from Asia, Europe and the Caribbean islands” (240). However not any of the narratives is in fact autobiographical, the writer’s immigrant experience first in Canada and then the United States have coloured the awareness of her characters. Mukherjee’s novels deal with Americans of South-Asian ancestry but Mukherjee’s comfort with determining her uniqueness as a typical American, her ability with exchange of ideas and events, aware to the prevailing society, her refusal to be marginalized and her entire mastery of English are not astonishing when one looks at her biography.


The Tiger’s Daughter (1972) is a novelized story portrayal from Mukherjee’s peculiar primary years of marriage and her return home for a visit to a world unlike the one that lives in her memory. It tells a tale of a young Bengali girl named Tara, born in Calcutta, studied and married in the United States. She returns to India after seven years of her migration and finds the city in political turmoil. This first novel addresses Mukherjee’s personal difficulties of being caught between two worlds, homes and cultures and is an examination of who she is, and where she belongs.

Mukherjee’s second novel, Wife (1975) is a psychological study of Dimple, a young Bengali Brahmin girls who settle down in New York with her new husband, as a young wife in an arranged marriage. Again, in this novel, Mukherjee deals with the issues that come from being thrown between two worlds and the strength and courage takes to survive and ultimately live.

Darkness (1985) is her first collection of twelve short stories. It is dedicated to Malamud, which do justice to both Mukherjee and Malamud. The stories are about
the degrees of acculturation of South-Asian immigrants in North America. *Darkness* focuses on the natives of South Asia who want for success and stability, but are held back by their histories and face the problems of bias and mistake. *Darkness* reminds Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness* (1899) and V. S. Naipaul’s *Area of Sadness* (1964). India, the country of his origin, is the area of darkness for Naipaul; but Mukherjee’s husband’s country, Canada, with its racial discrimination works darkness. “The World According to Hsu” was mainly from the expatriate’s point of view. The story elaborates the problems and sense of dislocation faced by the protagonist. “Isolated Incidents”, the expatriate is viewed from the point of view of a native Canadian – whose job is to file complaints from Immigrants on problems concerning Human Rights. In “Hindus” Mukherjee juxtaposes an expatriate against an immigrant to draw out the contrast. Leela Lahiri, the narrator of this first person narrative reveals an immigrant’s fluid identity. In “Angela”, the protagonist is a well-settled immigrant with no nostalgic longing for her native country, Bangladesh and no hatred for it. In “The Lady from Lucknow”, both Nafeesa a titular lady and her husband Iqbal are successful immigrants to the core. They share a contempt for whining expatriates who keep looking back. In “A Father”, the culture clash is faced by Mr. Bhowmick in the new land. News of his daughter’s pregnancy tears him between new-world reasonableness and old-world beliefs. His action of beating his daughter indicates his inability to assimilate with the American culture. In “Nostalgia”, the expatriate element of nostalgia as a flaw, a chink in the immigrant armour of the protagonist, Dr. Manny Patel. “Tamurlane” is set in Canada, focussing on the illegal immigrants at the Mumtaz Bar B-Q. Here Mukherjee reverts to the violence that Indians are subjected to in Toronto. In this story there is a regression. It is as if the author has been unable to fully exercise the pain of the Canadian expatriate experience. Vinita, a young Bengali
wife in “Visitors” is caught in the horns of the expatriate dilemma of being transfixed between two worlds. “Saints”, “The Imaginary Assassin” and “Courtly Vision” focus on natives of South Asia who crave success and stability, but are burdened by their histories and face the difficulties of prejudice and misunderstanding.

In 1988, Mukherjee published her second collection of eleven short stories *The Middleman and Other Stories*. It gives her a major public break and it pick up her into the top ranks of all writers. She is awarded the National Book Critics Award for this work. The migrants are the middlemen. *The Middleman, and Other Stories* deals with the clash between Western and Third World cultures as technology and overpopulation join diverse peoples in tragicomic relationships. The first and the title story “The Middleman” is about Alfie Judah, a middleman, a hustler of Middle Eastern Jewish descent. In “A Wife’s Story”, Mukherjee has shown the wide-ranging boldness of an Indian wife, which presents a striking contrast with her novel *Wife*. In her novel *Wife*, Dimple’s isolation and alienation leads her in the direction of madness and violence. However, “A Wife’s Story” displays the existence and adaptive nature of an Indian woman Panna Patel. Maya Sanyal is the protagonist of the story “The Tenant”, who needs to lead her life rendering to her desire as a liberated woman, to practice complete freedom in her free relationship with men. Mukherjee has tried to display the results of total change in the sensibility of an immigrant. “Jasmine” is the story of a young Trinidadian girl, Jasmine, who is with ambitions in the United States. “Fighting for the Rebound” is virtuous tale which portrays at the finest the internal suffering of the immigrant which she goes through the development of her adjustment in the alien culture. “Loose Ends” actually mirrors the hollowness and worthlessness of human associations in American society. “Fathering” is a story about a Vietnamee, Vet Jason, who is existing an American life with his American wife Sharon and who
is unable to decide between his white wife and his own Vietnamese kid Eng from Saigo. “Danny’s Girls” is an excellent appearance of the existence nature of the immigrants, when they have to accept strange works for their survival. “Buried Lives” is a lovely effort by Mukherjee to high point the diverse problems confronted by the immigrants in their way to immigration. The story “Orbiting” brings out the American national body politic, like the immigrant’s body, the location of numerous merging and both conflictive and collaborative intermixture. “The Management of Grief” is a truthful as well as pitiful depiction of the outcome confronted by the family members of the Kanishka Air Crash sufferers, where furthermost of the unfortunate travellers were Canadian Indians.

Mukherjee’s most successful and popular novel is *Jasmine* (1989). It is a novel of migration and adaptation, both on physical and psychological levels. In this novel, she novelizes the development of Americanization by drawing a young Indian woman’s experiences of suffering and victory in her effort to forge a new identity for herself. Jasmine, the title character and narrator of her novel, was born around 1965 in a countryside Indian village called Hasnpur. She expresses her story as a twenty-four-year-old pregnant widow, living in Iowa with her crippled lover, Bud Ripplemeyer. It takes two months in Iowa to share the most recently developing events but in the course of that time, Jasmine also tells biographical events that span the distance between her Punjabi birth and her American grown life. These past biographical events let know the action set in Iowa. Her journey includes five different settings, two murders, at least one rape, a maiming, a suicide, and three love affairs. During the course of the novel, the title character's identity, along with her name, changes and changes again: from Jyoti to Jasmine to Jazzy to Jassy to Jase to Jane. In chronological order, Jasmine moves from Hasnpur, Punjab, to Fowlers Key, Florida,
near Tampa, to Flushing, New York, to Manhattan, to Baden, Iowa, and finally is off to California as the novel ends.

*The Holder of the World* (1993) is an outstanding novel where the murmur of history textures the story. The novel is a perfect unification of the past and the present where the author is seen outlining the story of Hannah Easton, a New Englander. She was eventually reckoned as the mistress to a Mogul emperor, the holder of the world. This is a novel of Bharati Mukherjee that deals with transitions in geographical and cultural space - from America to England to India, and as a result of which the personal transformations of a young woman experiences. This is also a novel that moves unremarkably through time and space. The title mainly concentrates with the theme of the story. Mukherjee experiments boldly with several elements: science fiction, historical romance, captivity narrative, framed narrative, and miniature Moghul painting. Through it, Mukherjee claims that Asia has always been important in the making of America.

*Leave It To Me* (1997) is the story of a child born to a hippie from California. This occurred on a love and peace flower trip to India. An unwanted female child is dropped like a hot brick at the nearest orphanage, where she is called Faustine. The child was later adopted by an Italian-American family, and christened as Debby Di Martino. Even though the love and affection of her adoptive family, Debby raises up with the consciousness of being different, the feeling that she is an unwanted obstacle in a world that throws on towards its secretive destinations. The feeling is sometimes melancholy when everyone is surrounded but someone is feeling alone. At the conclusion she comes to as she sets out in search of her past, her origins, and the unknown ‘bio-parents’ who had heartlessly abandoned her. Mukherjee seems fascinated with the changing identities of an individual.
Desirable Daughters (2002), Mukherjee’s sixth novel, takes up the issues of culture, identity and family loyalty. It employs unusual amounts of autobiographical material in an immigrant novel of self-discovery that combines elements of fairy-tale-like myth with a suspenseful mystery-thriller plot. This is a story of three sisters, Tara, Padma and Parvati who are born into a wealthy Brahmin family of Calcutta, controlled over by their loving father and the traditional mother. Tara, a Hindu wife, divorces her Indian husband for freedom and loves Andy, a Hungarian. She lives with her live-in partner and her gay son, Rabi. She faces the violence of a terrorist. Finally she joins her crippled husband and serves him. She becomes a mother of his daughter. Indian Tara returns to India to visit the land of her origin.

The Tree Bride (2004), sequel to, Desirable Daughters, continues to follow the life of Tara Chatterjee. She lives with her husband, Bish and research her family history. Her great aunt Tara Lata gangooly, when she was five married a tree after her fiancé was killed. She turns into a freedom fighter and a martyr, whose soul must rest in peace. Mukherjee’s novel moves back and forth across time and continents as Tara tries to find the connections and coincidence of her past and present. Like her great aunt, Tara remarks herself as new American, the blending of the Indianness and Amercianness.

Mukherjee’s latest novel, Miss New India (2011) is a tale of Anjali Bose, who set off to Bangalore from a backwater town, Gauripur, to complete her dream. Her character, Anjali Bose, is part of the change sparkling across India and it is as much about Anjali’s adventures in Bangalore, as it is about the city that has come to epitomize this new India, the nerve centre of its information technology industry. This is where the call centres created a new subculture, where small-town Indians learned
American accents, where day and night reversed, and young people were suddenly earning more than their parents ever dreamed.

Critics have compared Mukherjee to V. S. Naipaul, Anton Chekov and Bernad Malamud. As a diasporic writer, Mukherjee is writing of an unfamiliar diasporic imagination; it is equally important to trace her Victorian, intertextual repertoire. In the wording of her narratives, particularly, *The Tiger’s Daughter* or *Wife* or even *The Middleman and other stories*, she seems to replicate the techniques of Charles Dickens, or William Make Peace Thackeray or Thomas Hardy in coordinating character motives and actions. There are marked similarity ways in which Mukherjee’s characters balance between interiority /exteriority, self/society, and most importantly an archy/culture.

Alam, Mukherjee’s biographer, classifies Mukherjee’s life into three phases. “Her earlier works, such as *The Tiger’s Daughter* and parts of *Days and Nights in Calcutta*, are her attempts to find her identity in her Indian heritage” (10). According to Alam, the second phase of her writing, includes works such as *Wife*, the short stories in *Darkness*, an essay entitled *An Invisible Woman* and *The Sorrow and the Terror* and these works originate in Mukherjee’s own experience of racism in Canada. Alam says, “Where despite being a tenures professor, she felt humiliated and on the edge of being a house bound, fearful, aggrieved, obsessive and unforgiving queen of bitterness” (10). In her third phase, Mukherjee is described as having accepted being an immigrant, living in a continent of immigrant. Mukherjee continues writing about the immigrant experiences in most of the stories in *The Middleman and the Other Stories, Jasmine, The Holder of the World* and *Leave It to Me*.

Even though readers and critics can gather tracings of autobiographical examples in all her works, it is possibly more important to recognise the inscription of
alternative personalities, in dislocated cultural features in her narratives. The diasporic person undergoes a lot of issues. The most important issue is alienation. Alienation refers to the state of exclusion, which get up when an expatriate does not grow out of the phase of nostalgia. The ethnic identity haunts them continually. Aware of their differences, they cannot transfer to a new space or a new identity. Another cause of alienation is the feeling of inferiority complex generated in the displaced women as they become victims of the stings of racism.

Modern man has become a substitute for all the issues of today; frustration, despair, boredom, isolation, rootlessness etc. In sociology, the term ‘alienation’ is used in reference to man’s profession and his relation with others. The loneliness arising out of lack of important relation with others in sociological view is called social-isolation. There are two kind of loneliness, voluntary and involuntary. In the first case man becomes an outsider by choice while in the second man feels an unnatural difference in the presence of others. The first generation of Diasporas were forced to immigrate. Their immigration are considered as an unwilling and inconvenient immigration. They were uneducated, coarse labours, whose destiny had unfortunately thrown in the claws of an alien culture and circumstances but the second generation of the Diasporas belonged to the literate, skilled and qualified class, willingly gone for the search of greener pastures. Their aspirations and their skill helped them to carve a place for themselves in the alien framework. Though it was not an easy job as they too had faced many upheavals on their part. The diasporic Indian is like the banyan tree, the traditional symbol of the Indian way of life, he spreads out his roots in several soils, drawing nourishment from one when the rest dry up - far from being homeless, he has several homes, and this is the only way he has increasingly come to feel at home in the world.
Diasporic literature mainly depicts the nostalgia, longing for the homeland of the expatriates, their struggle to adopt the new homeland and relationship between the immigrants and native people in the alien land. The expatriate writers have the capacity to overcome these personalities and express their nature through their characters in the works. Mukherjee has also this diasporic responsiveness and in this thesis an attempt is made to convey out it to the readers.

The term ‘Diaspora’ is common to all the expatriate minority communities existing in different parts of the world. They all share more or less of the common characteristics such as collective memory, dream or myth regarding their native homeland – its geographical location, history and attainments. When they return to their homeland they thought that they are disrespected, partly alienated and not fully accepted by the society. According to them their own ancestral homeland is their perfect home and after their mission gets over in the alien land sooner or later they wish to come back because they are considering their homeland is suitable to them. They often compare all the things in the adopted land with their homeland and gives a positive comments regarding their homeland. The expatriates gives much importance to their native land, tradition and culture in the same way the immigrant writers gives much importance while they create their works. Mukherjee’s novels too deal with native land, culture and tradition.

Identity, like alienation, is a fundamentally psychological concept representing a sense of ongoing continuity of one’s meaning to others as well as to the self. Anxiety with one’s identity or failure to achieve it is a kind of alienation. The issues regarding identity formation and cultural encounter form a part of diaspora literature and postcolonial studies. The diasporic women caught between opposing cultures as well as patriarchist leading to the confusion of identities they are considered
responsible for the preservation and propagation of religious and cultural traditions in the alien land. As a result, the expatriate woman tries to oppose all forms of social hierarchies and authorities in the adopted land. The immigrant women try to evade these responsibilities in order to assimilate completely with adopted culture and society and the transnational women completely accept the culture and society of the adopted land.

The word ‘culture’ having a polyvocality sense, includes the issues of race, class and gender in its domain; which further has the issues of human identity falls under its rubrics. Therefore cultural theory becomes a controversial space for matters such as representation, identity, discourse, politics, ethics and aesthetics and helps one to understand the cultural conflict that appears large, in the globalised and globalising world, in the outfit of diasporic experiences.

Dispossession, sense of loss and relocation are shared experiences of exile, expatriation, emigration and immigration. Transplantation in a new environment compels the Diasporas to define their identity in the new perspective. Thus, self-definition occupies a vital role in diasporic condition and issue of identity is at the heart of diasporic consciousness. Thus, a diasporic personality has to face three possible alternatives: one is to retain one’s own native cultural identity and remains indifferent to the other; second is to seek total assimilation and avoid all ties with one’s original identity and third is to create a balance between the new and the old world.

In diasporic writing, ‘identity crisis’ has become an important aesthetic concern and construct. Vijayasree says, “The multiple and shifting identities of the diasporic writers is very well reflected through search for home, renewal of family ties, evocation of imaginary homelands, interrogation of contemporary notions of
nation and nationalism and a dialectic of cultural difference and multiculturalism” (225).

‘Construction of home’ plays a vital role in expatriate imagination as it keeps on haunting his body, mind and soul. In this body of writing the dominant motif is the search for home as the sense of lost home produces restlessness. The expatriate writer tries to replace the adopted country for his own lost motherland thus, creating a balance between rootlessness and rootedness. The nostalgia for a home behind is reflected through a recreation of home as an image metaphor or fictional trope.

‘Journey’ is used symbolically and traveling becomes a metaphor for quest, and Usha Bande writes, “that not only presents the exile as inherent to the human condition but stands as a potent symbol for the physical and mental nomadism of diasporic life” (151). The home sickness is more intense in the case of Indian writers because they belong to the culture in which family happens to be the most helping and supporting unit. They try to narrate family sages through myth, memory and legend. Their nostalgic reminiscences help them to write about their past and in this way they eventually become the historians of their country.

By going away from the culture of adoption and the culture of origin, third space can be created. Diasporic writing, cultural encounter plays a significant role. The cultural pulls help in the creation of a new culture emerging out from the intermingling or synthesis. The cultural encounter is one of the most striking features of diasporic writing which gives birth to a new culture. This creation of new culture revealed that culture is the part and parcel of our life and every sphere of our life is being influenced by it.

Diasporic consciousness is thus the outcome of that feeling of alienation or dislocation which one goes through, when one is away from his/her own culture and
faces another culture. In this way, he/she is caught between two cultures, and this
dilemma gets expression in postcolonial literature. That is why, its popular themes
have been dislocation and consequent loss of identity. Diasporic consciousness of the
writer leaves him/her with a sense of dislocation and this sense always prevails in
their works through their protagonists. In this way a diaspora is left with the dilemma
of what to retain, embrace and what to leave? Diasporic consciousness thus, deals
with the basic issue of the diasporic psyche that is unbelongingness and rootlessness.

The Indian diasporic Postcolonial writers are writing under the influence of
colonial ideas as most of them are living away from their homeland or land of origin.
They are describing the situation with the colonial mind about their societies, material
and ideological situations. The exposer to western ideas, educational processes and
power structures have resulted in the evolution of a man, who approaches his own
society and culture through western norms. Thus, like them their fictional characters
too are on the periphery and their selves are divided. Mukherjee, too, uses this
technique for her narratives and her novels mainly deal with India, Indian mythology
and their splendid blending with history. Mukherjee being a diasporic writer crosses
the national boundaries in her narrative structure and in her works when historical and
cultural meaning fuses with the different time zones and horizons within which the
work operates.

The researcher has chosen the fictional works of Mukherjee in which she has
made an even and effective focus on the issues of diaspora. Literature cannot remain
divorced from society. The issues of Diaspora confronted by the expatriates,
immigrants and transnationals are presented with deep insight by writers like
Mukherjee. A careful study of the fiction of Mukherjee analysed in this study will
help any reader to understand the issues of diaspora. The findings and conclusion are
Mukherjee’s diasporic experience which is seen to have undergone remarkable shifts from expatriation to transnationalism and in each stage there are diasporic issues which affects the society. In *The Tiger’s Daughter*, *Wife* and *Darkness*, expatriation becomes a metaphor for deeper levels of alienation like self-negation and incertitude. In *The Middleman and Other Stories* and *Jasmine*, immigration is positive and realistic but there is a search for identity. Its admirable resilience and enthusiasm marks a distinct departure from the unfriendliness of the earlier novels. *Desirable Daughters* and *The Tree Bride* reaffirms Mukherjee’s Indianness while declaring her Americanization but there too she undergoes the diasporic issues. It shows in fact a hunger for transnationalism. Evidently, diaspora with all its plurality forms the crux of Mukherjee’s accomplishments as a creative writer and the issues of diaspora focuses in the fiction of Mukherjee gives a clear picture about the positive future of the world.

Mukherjee is the best example for the American writers of the Indian Diaspora. Her creativity is focussed with precision on a diasporic imagination and the political and cultural implication of this very imagination. The primary objective of this study is to describe the issues of diaspora by a study of the fiction of Mukherjee. The second objective is to identify the changes that her creative sensibility underwent during her literary career spanning three decades.

Canada is Bharati Mukherjee’s first phase of Diaspora and America is her second phase. Usually most of the researchers focus on Bharati Mukherjee’s Canadian Diaspora but the present researcher has focusses on her American Diaspora. Some authors has also concentrated on Bharati Mukherjee’s fiction. A few of them are discussed below. Neena, Research Scholar, Shri JJT University, Rajasthan has published a research article entitled “Feminine Sensibility in the novel *Desirable*
Daughters by Bharati Mukherjee” in an International Journal of English Language, Literature and Translation Studies, Volume: II. She focuses on sensibility exploration of women characters in the novel of Mukherjee to show various qualities in their behaviour such as modesty, piety and obedient, which highlight the moral standard of women.

Ramesh Babu and Phaniraja Kumar, Research scholar, Rayalaseema University, India, published an article “Feminist Perspective in Bharati Mukherjee’s Novels” in the International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention, Volume: II, Issue:3. The paper asserts that Mukherjee’s heroine are bold and they have potentiality for adoptability, they live in the firm ground of reality and accept the bitter truth of their life.

Ambika Sharma, Research Scholar, R. K. Arya College, Punjab and Tanu Gupta, Professor, Department of Humanities and Social Science, published an article “Bharati Mukherjee’s The Tree Bride: Assimilation of the West in the East” in the IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science Volume: 20, Issue: 10. This article aims to delineate on the different diasporic characters, the British Colonizers who come to India to rule but got assimilated in India and become more Indians than being British.

Hujula Rika Ayu, a research Scholar, University of Wollongong, done a thesis on “Past and present in Bharati Mukherjee’s Wife (1975) and Jasmine (1989)”. This thesis aims at challenging Mukherjee’s refusal of the past in the process of self-adaptation in the context of migration. Ann Maria Alfonso, Research Scholar, University of Miami, has done a thesis on “Translating Postcolonial Pasts: Immigration and Identity in the Fiction of Bharati Mukherjee, Elizabeth Nunez and
Jhumpa Lahiri. This examines how post-colonialism affects identity formation in Contemporary Women’s immigrant literature.

Unnikrishnan Kalamullathil, Research Scholar, Bharatiyar University and Dr. Vijay Nair, Associate Professor, Government Victoria College, Palakkad published a research article “Articulating the voices of Neo-nationalism: Bharati Mukherjee’s novel Jasmine” in the International Journal of English Language, Literature and Humanities, Volume: III, Issue: 3. This article offers a critical evaluation of the representation of neo-nationalism; freedom, democracy and boundless possibilities and opportunities, in Bharati Mukherjee’s Jasmine.

The researcher has made a ground study on the above mentioned works and selected the research area of the thesis. It is the Mukherjee’s protagonists who were born in India and moves to America who undergoes the issues of Diaspora. For detailed analysis, her novels such as The Tiger’s Daughter, Wife, Jasmine, Desirable Daughters, and The Tree Bride and from the short stories Darkness and The Middleman and the other stories are chosen because in these fictions, all the protagonists had born in India and they goes to America for survival. There are also references about her other fiction such as The Holders of the World, Leave It to Me, the remaining short stories from the collection such as Darkness and The Middleman and the Other Stories and the very recent novel Miss. New India, regarding the issues of Diaspora. Thus all the fictions of Bharati Mukherjee are taken for study but for detailed analysis only six novels and eleven short stories are taken.

This thesis is divided into six chapters. The first chapter, “Introduction”, establishes Mukherjee’s popularity as a diasporic writer. It also traces the history of diasporic writings in the United States, with special focus on Asian-American writers. The objectives and methodology of the study are stated in this chapter.
The second chapter, “Issues of Expatriation”, makes an analysis of Mukherjee’s earliest novels, *The Tiger’s Daughter* (1972), *Wife* (1975) and the short story collection *Darkness* (1985) while she herself led an expatriate life in Canada. In *The Tiger’s Daughter*, Tara Banerjee, a graduate married to an American novelist, revisits her native Calcutta alone. Tara is constantly overwhelmed by a sense of rootlessness. She is too western to accept life in Calcutta and too India to be happy in the United States. In the same way in *Wife*, Dimple married to an engineer and leaves in America. She too doesn’t accept both America and India. Both the protagonists suffers by the issues of diaspora. The stories of *Darkness*, which deals with the migration from India to American and Canada is taken for detailed study and those stories unfold the fates of those who have suffers and undergoes painful experiences as an expatriates. The issues of expatriation are clearly seen this chapter.

The third chapter, “Issues of Immigration”, makes an examination of the short story named *The Middleman and other stories* (1988) and the novel *Jasmine* (1989). *The Middleman and other stories* claim about the immigrant experience being a process of interaction resulting into a third thing. The stories portray the American reality, the sourcing of American Dream, fears and anxieties that the Americans are vulnerable to, and the typically American response to the emptiness and loneliness that haunts the inhabitants of this modern wasteland. Jasmine, in the novel, is a positive and the best developed character. She is truthful, ambitious and adopts herself to every changed circumstances of life. Her past is never allowed to marsh her exposed splendid flexibility as well as astonishing physical and mental strength. As a diasporic person, she proves to be a survivor in every situation and undergoes the issues of diaspora. The issues of immigration are beautifully portrayed in this chapter by the researcher.
The fourth chapter, “Issues of Transnationalism”, deals with Mukherjee’s novels such as *Desirable Daughters* (2002) and *The Tree Bride* (2008). In *Desirable Daughters*, the story of three sisters Tara, Padma and Parvati, Mukherjee shows the confirming her Indianness while highlighting her Americanization. Through this novel, the researcher brings the issues of Diaspora as well as shows how Tara assimilate the past Indian heritage and how she wants to celebrate immigration to America. *Desirable Daughters* and *The Tree Bride* are interconnected. In *The Tree Bride*, the same protagonist of the novel *Desirable Daughter* appears. She tries to celebrate both Indianness and Americanness. She returns to her great grandmother’s house to know her secrets about her ancestry. These two novels show the hunger for transnationalism. In the process of transnationalism, Tara powerfully tries to overcome from the issues of diaspora.

The fifth chapter, “Narrative Techniques”, informs the various techniques of the fiction in general and the techniques which Mukherjee has handled while writing her novels and short stories. A clear description is given by the researcher to describe each and every narrative techniques. From this one can understand that narrative techniques are important for bringing out the writer’s mind, concept and themes in the fiction.

The sixth chapter, “Summation” declares that a clear line of development is seen in the attitudes of the protagonists and the issues of Diaspora in Mukherjee’s fictions. The novels of Bharati Mukherjee that examine the three well-marked stages such as expatriation, immigration and transnationalism are discussed towards the quality of diaspora in all its multiplicity forms. This chapter ends leaving suggestions to the future researchers.