Chapter Two

Issues of Expatriation

Bharati Mukherjee, a supporter of expatriate writing, is an Indian settled in America. The female protagonists of her earlier novels are characterized by their rootlessness and their incapacity to belong either to the homeland and the host land. Her protagonists are either Indians living abroad or Indians who have come back home after a period of staying abroad. The terms such as ‘immigrant’ and ‘expatriate’ in general refer to persons who live outside their own country either by choice or else by situation, but in her works these two terms assume different effects.

‘Expatriation’ emphases on the native country that has been left behind, because they are just living in a foreign country while ‘immigration’ highlights the country into which one has moved in as an immigrant because they are the permanent settlers. The ‘expatriate’ gives importance to his ‘ex’ position of the past, while ‘immigrant’ rejoices his present in the new country. The ‘expatriate’ is more an unenthusiastic participant into the new culture and finds it hard to let go a familiar way of life. The ‘immigrant’ willingly transforms himself to fit in and fascinate the best in the host culture. Therefore immigrant experiences a transformation in the society.

An analysis of the works of Mukherjee discloses a movement from expatriation to immigration. It resembles with her migration from Canada to the United States of America. She led to see herself as an expatriate and the theme of expatriation is reflected in her writings in Canada because of her experience as an expatriate in Canada. She was not attached to Canada, but in the United States, there was a growing acknowledgement of herself as an immigrant with an increasingly
strong attachment to the United States and this experience of immigration is reflected in her writings in the United States.

Expatriation is relatively an extensive phenomenon in this century and is largely a problem of an individual’s attitude and ethics. In the process of ‘expatriation’, people suffers from the issues such as longing for the past. It is often symbolised by the ancestral home, the pain of exile and homelessness, the struggle to maintain the difference between oneself and the new unfavourable environments, an assumption of moral or cultural superiority over the host country and a rejection from cultural dilemmas and from the experienced hostility or unfriendliness in the new country. The expatriate writer expresses the above mentioned issues in their writings. George Steiner describes the ‘expatriate writer’ as “the contemporary everyman” (10).

Mukherjee has taken Naipaul as her role-model when she was an expatriate. Unlike Naipaul she left India by choice, but she is the author of the Third world who experienced racial discrimination in Canada. She says in Darkness, “Like Naipaul, in whom I imagined a model, I tried to explore state-of-the-art expatriation” (DN 3). Mukherjee stayed in India from 1973-1974 and during this period she moved from the stage of expatriate to immigrant. In Days and Nights in Calcutta, Mukherjee says, “The year in India had forced me to view myself more as an immigrant than an exile” (284). She rejected Naipaul as her model when she becomes an immigrant and chose Bernard Malamud as her model.

Mukherjee experiences a racial discrimination in Canada because her husband’s writings were recognized and her own writings were ignored by the Canadian people. She experienced herself as a ‘psychological expatriate’, an Indian expatriate in Canada and she undergoes a ‘double consciousness’ being an Indian and Canadian, also her caste, religion, race, colour and culture. She acts as a Civil Right
activist in Canada and wrote about the harsh effect of racism on individuals. The issues of Expatriation is reflected in her personal life as well as in her writings both fiction and non-fiction. The non-recognition of her writings and Canada’s hostility to Indians made her to write about the theme of expatriation.

The frequent question arises in the mind of the expatriate is ‘who am I?’ because they are caught between two countries and cultures, feeling as a stranger in homeland and a foreigner in the adopted country. This is clearly shown in Mukherjee’s fiction by the protagonists such as Tara in *The Tiger’s Daughter*, Dimple in *Wife* and the protagonists of the short story collection *Darkness*. These two novels and the short story collection were written when she was in Canada so they have rich elements on the issues of expatriation. Her own sufferings and the cultural conflicts were reflected by the protagonists in an effective way. They felt uncomfortable both in the alien and the native culture and it is the characteristics of the expatriates. Both the protagonists such as Tara and dimple are expatriates in mind and spirit. Jasbir Jain says in *Foreigness of Spirit: The World of Bharati Mukherjee's Novels*, “Mukherjee’s novels are representative of the expatriate sensibility” (12). In an interview with Ameena Meer, Mukherjee says, “. . . for me and perhaps of other immigrant writers, there is death and a series of rebirths. It is very painful and traumatic, letting go of the old self. *The Tiger’s Daughter* was written while I was still an expatriate. Then comes a reconstruction of one self, which is very difficult” (27).

To understand the issues of expatriation in Mukherjee one should make a deep study on the novels such as *The Tiger’s Daughter* and *Wife* and the collection of short stories *Darkness*. In the novel *The Tiger’s Daughter*, Tara returns to India after seven years of stay in the United States of America. She intertwines with the political situation in Calcutta and West Bengal. She experiences the alienation of an expatriate
who senses a gulf between herself and her native people and traditions. Dimple also experiences intense loneliness as an expatriate in the novel *Wife*. These novels represent the issues faced by expatriates when comparing to the other novels of Mukherjee. Sivaramakrishnan is of the opinion about Tara and Dimple, “the retention of their identity as Indian is in constant tension with the need for it renunciation if they have to acquire a new identity as immigrants” (74). In the Introduction of *Darkness*, Mukherjee writes that the stories depict, “a movement away from aloofness of expatriation to the exuberance of immigration” (DN 3). Each story in this volume deals with issues of expatriate experiences like discrimination, isolation, crisis of identity, cultural clash, etc., famed by the Indian diaspora community in Canada and the United States.

The expatriates are outsiders in a no man’s land when they visit the unknown land. They suffer and struggle a lot for their survival in the host land and they become an expatriate. They undergo a new feeling called nostalgia and they shape out a new area and surround themselves totally with the temptation of the west. They recreate themselves into a new personality and form emotional ties with the place they live in. The discovery of new self slowly make them forget their own native culture. When they return to their native land they find that their native taste and touch have turned alien to them. Their mind are again torn apart between the cultural clash of the two environments and split personality. This is conveyed in Mukherjee’s novel, *The Tiger’s Daughter*. Tara, the protagonist, comes across a similar kind of issue on her visit to India after seven years.

Tara Banerjee Cartwright is an Indian diaspora and is an autobiographical presentation of Mukherjee herself who is also married to an American. In 1968, she migrated to Canada with her husband and became a naturalized citizen in 1972. She
spent fourteen years in Canada and those years were some of the hardest times of her life, as she found herself discriminated and she described herself as a member of ‘visible minority’. She has spoken in many interviews about her difficult life in Canada. She says that Canada is a country that shows unfriendliness to the immigrants especially the Indian immigrants so she herself was isolated in that country.

She wrote her first two novels *The Tiger’s Daughter* (1971) and *Wife* (1975) while she was staying in Canada. *The Tiger’s Daughter* illustrates the uprooted condition of Tara and it tells the story of an East Indian immigrant who is unable to adjust in North America, the host land, but who at the same time is painfully aware that she will never again belong to the culture she has left behind. Tara is considered as the mouthpiece of Mukherjee. She is the only daughter of a wealthy Bengali Brahmin, who is known as Bengal Tiger in the higher gentry of Calcutta. He belongs to a mercantile aristocracy with its root in the Victorian age. Thus Bengal Tiger stands for the upper strata of the society, whose existence is under threat from the forthcoming social upheaval through socialist and communists uprising.

The Tiger’s Daughter is Tara Banerjee, the only daughter of Bengal Tiger, a tobacco monarch. Dr. Banerjee is a westernized industrialist. Tara was schooled at Pough Keepsie, New York. She marries David Cartwright, an American and settles down in New York. After seven years she returns to Calcutta to locale her ‘home’, to trace her cultural roots and to reclaim her inherited identity as the daughter of Bengal Tiger and as the great granddaughter of Hari Lal Banerjee of Pachapara. Here, Mukherjee is forecasting a social movement which is about to take place in the West Bengal. The fact also reflects in Mukherjee’s awareness regarding political and social activities.
Tara Banerjee Cartwright, the name itself reveals her in-between position as an expatriate. Tara’s father name is Banerjee and her husband’s name is Cartwright. Tara is caught in a situation where old values and her choices are being re-examined because of her several identities acquired and lost. Tara becomes Tara Banerjee Cartwright. The protagonist’s habit of retaining her maiden surname after marriage symbolically reflects her subconscious mind which she is still deeply rooted in her native land and has not been able to forget it in spite of the changed identity of a European adopted by her. Ram Sharma rightly says in his article, “There is a strange fusion of the Americaness and Indianness in the psyche of Tara and they are always at a note of confrontation with each other” (274).

Tara Banerjee Cartwright is a sensitive person, sensitive especially to places, makes a trip home to India for a much-anticipated reunion with her family after seven years of stay abroad. Indeed the returning immigrant discovers that she is no more ‘at home’ in India than she was in a racist New York, where “girls like her were being knifed in elevators in their own apartment buildings” (TD 34). When she visits India, the alien western culture which has almost become a second self to her is constantly in clash with the culture of the native soil. Tara finds it difficult to adjust with the traditions of her own family. She feels lonely in her own native land. Tara expected that her return to India would remove her displeasure of staying abroad.

Tara undergoes into the important issue, alienation, of an expatriate who senses a gulf between herself and her native people and traditions. She moves between Calcutta and New York, straddling Indian and American cultures. In the process she is caught between two worlds, two ideologies, two ways of life and two ways of facing reality. She finds in India nothing to her liking. However, she cannot escape from Calcutta. Tara is the only problem of her parents and she is sent to
America for higher studies barely at the tender age of fifteen. Her seven years long stay at Vassar made a sea-change in her attitude regarding life and her native country. It even changed the very course of her life, as she married an American David Cartwright. Initially, she is awe-struck to find herself among aliens and America did not fascinate her:

New York, she thought now, had been exotic. Not because there were policemen with days prowling the underground tunnels. Because girls like her, at least almost like her . . . . Because students were rioting about campus recruiters and far away wars rather than the price of rice or the stiffness of final exams. Because, people were agitated about pollution. The only pollution, she had been warned against in Calcutta had been caste pollution. New York was certainly extraordinary and it had driven her to despair. (TD 34)

When Tara, the Indian girl moves towards American life, her reactions are fear and anger. She feels homesick. She feels discriminated when her roommate refuses to share her bottle of mango chutney. It is an act of racial discrimination. “Little things pained her. If her roommate did not share her bottle of mango chutney she sensed discrimination” (TD 11). She cannot share her Camac street thought with the pale dry skinned girls in the same way as she shared with her friends in Calcutta. In fact, she has to bear the jokes of ill-tempered girls and clerks in line at the post office. She creates little India physically and emotionally without any communication with the host country. It is true that it is extremely difficult to come in terms with American life at the age of fifteen for her studies.

The motives for that decision remained his secret, but its consequences were terrifying. It had put a rather fragile young woman on a jet for
Poughkeepsie, and left out of account the limits of her courage and common sense. For Tara, Vassar had been an almost unsalvageable mistake. If she had not been a Banerjee, a Bengali Brahmin, the great-grand daughter of Hari Lal Banerjee, or perhaps if she had not been trained by the good nuns at St. Blaise’s to remain composed and ladylike in all emergencies, she would have rushed home to India at the end of her first week”. (TD 10)

A thoughtful feeling of nostalgia overpowers her. She was so heartbroken that “she prayed to Kali for strength so she would not break down before these polite Americans. And Kali, who was a mother nursing her infant, serene, black, exquisite, and Kali, who was a mother devouring her infant, furious, black and exquisite, who sat under silk saris in a suitcase at Vassar, smiled out at her mischievously” (TD 11).

Expatriate’s loneliness is reflected when her roommates have vacated for summer. Tara suffers from headaches and nightmares. Her academic advisor suggests her to join summer school at Madison. In Madison, she is seized by visions of terror. She complains homesickness in her letters to her parents. The letters from home bring tears from Tara’s eyes. It is the pain of expatriation.

Dearest Mummy and Daddy, she began a hundred times. But there was no way she could confide to her parents the exquisite new pains, no way dared she explain that in Poughkeepsie her love of Johnny Mathis was deep and sincere. As each atom of newness bombarded her she longed for Camac Street, where she had grown up. Tara’s Camac Street friends did not forget her. They wrote the long and beautiful letters, meticulously addressed with periods and commas”. (TD 10)
After a long period, sitting by the window in a cosy apartment in 20th street, New York, Tara dreams of Harilal, her great grandfather and wonders at the gulf that separates her from him. As an expatriate, Tara sticks on to Camac Street and does not consider 20th street, New York, as her home. On certain days when she cannot possibly survive, she shakes out all her silk saris, irons them and hangs them to make her apartment appear more Indian. This is a fine example of an ‘expatriate’. Tara creates a ‘little India’ physically without any communication, what so ever, with the host culture. As Tara’s relationship with India is fragile, she becomes homeless.

To overcome from her isolation during the summer vacation the advisor of Tara says, “I think you better go to a summer school” (TD 14). On her way to summer school at Greyhound station she is knocked down by a young man, to whom finally she gets married. Tara recalls how she was fearful to fall in love. In Madison, in an elevator, Tara finds her thinking “how easy, I’m in love”. She loves David who knows nothing about her Calcutta. Her thoughtless marriage to David bristles with a lot of problems. The sharp contrast between Tara’s outlook and David Cartwright’s wholly western point of view is used creatively by the novelist to highlight the cultural differences and the complex problems of communication. Doubt, fear, suspicion and misunderstanding surface in their personal relationship. He is entirely western and she is at all times worried of this circumstance. Shoba Shinde remarks, “Her husband asked native question about Indian customs and traditions and she felt insecure in an alien atmosphere. Madison Square was after all a foreigner (50).

David had brought books on India and this incensed Tara. She thought that her husband was really trying to tell her that he had not understood her country through her and that probably he had not understood her either. She became afraid that David “no longer wanted to make her over to his ideal image, that he- no longer loved her”
She cannot communicate with him the finer nuances of her family background and life in Calcutta. Moreover, the concept of marriage in India is entirely different from American concept of marriage. Nagendra Kumar observes, “Her failure to do so is rooted in their cultural differences. In India, a marriage is not simply a union of two individuals; it is a coming together of the families as well, but in the western countries like America, a marriage is simply a contract between two individuals” (30). Marriage is not only a union of two bodies but a fusion of two souls into one. The cultural differences between Tara and David give her the feeling of insecurity. To overcome from these feelings she plans a trip to India after a gap of seven years.

Progressively she is able to complete seven years in America, in the company of her American husband. Tara longs and dreams of going back and to visit her native country. At last, seven years later, at the age of twenty two, she is capable to achieve her desire. The novel deals with her return journey, her homecoming which turns into an uneasy one. It proves to be futile and a great disappointment for Tara. For years she has been dreaming to return, but on returning she finds herself filled with the ‘foreignness of spirit’ which was the result of not only her American home but also due to her early education at private school run by Belgian nuns in Calcutta. Tara’s return journey stands for the literal journey commenced upon by Mukherjee to describe how Tara is pushed to the edges of her old world, and yet exiled from the new, and how she tries vainly to reconcile the two worlds in her heart.

Tara is unable to communicate with her friends, parents and even with her husband, David. She recalls how it was impossible to share her past life with David, a foreigner. Lack of communication is the cause of alienation. Here, Tara is incapable of communicating with both the countries. This shows that she is alienated equally in
her motherland as well as in the adopted land. She is neither a ‘native’ nor ‘a foreigner’ but the ‘nowhere woman’. She is nobody. This is the identity crisis feeling of an expatriate.

Tara becomes outsider and alien to her friends, relatives and even to her own parents and they are stranger and alien to Tara “strange girl” (TD 67). She returns to India for reunion with her family and to relieve from hopelessness and homesickness of her expatriation and alienation in America. Her entire outlook has changed. Her father does not come to receive her at Bombay airport because of the general strike in Calcutta. She is greeted at Bombay airport by relatives with “garlands and sweetmeats to put her at ease” (TD 17). Tara’s response is unfriendly and unemotional. As her relative worry over her in Bengali and calls her by her childhood nickname, Tultul, Tara’s feeling of anxiety strengthens: “She had not remembered the Bombay relatives’ nickname for her. No one had called her Tultul in years; her parents called her Taramoni when they wanted show special affection. It was difficult to listen to these strangers” (TD 17). They introduce her as “the American auntie” (TD 17). Everything was strange to her American ears and she does not like their conversation and their approach towards her.

Tara’s return journey from New York to Calcutta through Mumbai gives us the hint of a changed Tara. Her visit in the America made her a woman of different attitude. Once she used to “admire the houses on Marine Drive but now their shabbiness appalled her” (TD 18). According to her, “Bombay’s railway station appears more like a hospital” (TD 19). Her relatives does not allowed her to travel alone in the train because of her gender. In Indian society the girls will be accompanied by man even in their travel but in the United States of America they will not restrict them so she travels alone in the train. This event is an excellent example
for the cultural clash. Her uncle and aunty were very much worried about her travel alone in the train and asked “But how will I explain to the Bengal Tiger we’re sending you alone? (TD 19).

In “Catelli-continental Hotel” (TD 1) Tara finds protection, as it offers escape from Calcutta and its confusion, but she realized that it is impossible for her to escape from Calcutta or harsh realities of life. To her, Calcutta seems to be a city with disturbances; class-struggles, employment conflict and workers snatching the storerooms. That’s why Tara witnesses, “Calcutta is as good or as bad as over. Newspapers are full of epidemics, collisions . . . . Calcutta is a deadliest city in the world” (TD 33).

Tara’s return fails to relate the childhood memories and adolescent wholeness that was sustained in the United States of America. Returning home is unsuccessful to teach sense of belonging. She thinks “perhaps I was stupid to come without him, David” (TD 21). David is a symbol of her American self.

She had not thought that “seven years in another country, a husband, and a new blue passport could be easily blotted out… The darkness outside the window deepened, giving Tara time for unhappy self-analysis. For years she had dreamed of this return to India. She believed that all hesitations, all shadowy fears of the time abroad would be erased quite magically if she could just return home to Calcutta. But so far the return had brought only wounds. (TD 25)

After reaching Howrah railway Station, Calcutta, she is astonished and irritated by its uncleanliness, confusion, crowd, dirt and noise. She is surrounded by the mass of relatives, vendors ringing bells, beggars pulling at sleeves, children coughing on tracks, she feels alone in the crowd. “Coolies in red shirt broke into the
compartment and almost knocked her down in an effort to carry her suitcase. The attendant sneezed on her raincoat and offered to wipe up the mess with his dusting rag. A blind beggar who slipped in and had begun to sing and rattle his cups was thrown bodily out the train by Tuntunwala” (TD 27). Tara expected to find life at its most constant, as the fixed form of identity as an Indian. Calcutta is a place in which she can secure her identity, but she fails in it. She sees Calcutta like a foreigner. She is isolated here being a foreigner in her homeland.

In Calcutta she discovers everything different and deteriorated. In the presence of family and friends, Tara herself finds “cut off” (TD 89), unable to connect with them. Tara learns that they are not the people she can talk about her feelings of being irritated by Calcutta. In fact it is in their company, her loneliness is increased. Her old Calcutta friends make it clear to her that is being away in America that had eroded all that was fine and sensitive in her Bengali nature. Tara, the expatriate, swings between the two identities, do not remain stable either at the one or the other, it is her split personality, double consciousness. She does not decide herself whether she is Bengali-Brahmin-Indian or American-Christian-White/brown. This is also an important issue of expatriation.

When her friends accuse her of leaving her Brahmin caste by marrying an American, who is taken a Mleecha, outsider, she finds that she is respected neither by her family nor by friends and relatives. Her friends call her Americanwali. She traces her alienation in the company of her friends. She remembers “seven years ago she had played with these friends, done homework with Nilima, briefly fancied herself in love with Pronob, debated with Reena at the British Council” (TD 43). Here is the difficulty – how to respond to the changes in her friends, city and school. She treated as an expatriate, being the guest for some days at her home. It is a tradition of India-
the married girls is treated as the guest at her parents’ home. She turns as an outsider for the maternal relatives. After marriage whether they are in native or in foreign, the daughter is considered as a diaspora at the family level. So, due to this tradition there is change in her own people and herself. She observes this through the friends and relatives. She herself is an ‘other’, ‘a marginal’, ‘outsider’. Tara has experienced this change. Mukherjee wants to present this position, hence she has drawn Tara as an expatriate in her mother country, who is alienated and isolated. Tara is unable to keep the solidarity in this society. She surprises at the foreignness of her inner self which does not permit her to establish an emotional kinship with her old relatives and friends.

In America, Tara is always under stress, as she is always aware of her foreignness. She feels herself rootless but things do not change in India also. In addition she becomes aware of the fact that she is in touch with her native tongue ‘Bengali’. She has fails to recall Indian English words like ‘fuss pot’ and the common idiom of her friends and this leads to a break in communication. Thus she does not belong here as she does not share their language. In the process of acquiring a language, one takes in the culture too because culture is transmitted through language. So when she loses her language, she loses her culture too.

During her visit to India with the compulsion of her mother Tara went to see Aunt Jharna’s child who was attacked by polio. Tara’s visit is mistaken by her aunt and she insults Tara a lot. She enquires “have you tried plaster casts and special shoes, aunt Jharna?” (TD 36). She replies Tara, “You think you are too educated . . . have you come back to make fun of us . . . what gives the right? Your American money? Your mleccha husband?” (TD 36). Aunt’s hurts made Tara disillusioned and Aunt’s reaction is considered as a typical reaction of an Indian. Tara was depressed by the
fierce charges made by her aunt and questions her, “Why do you hate us? She is unable
to communicate her tender feelings towards her. While on the one hand she cannot
sympathize with the aunt’s religious attempts to heal her child, on the other hand she
thinks: “I don’t hate you, I love you, I love you all” (TD 38). According to Tara, her mother changes a lot towards her. She has distrust towards her mother’s love
for daughter. She considers that the changes in her mother is due to Tara’s marriage
with a foreigner, who is not Brahmin, by abandoning her caste and so “perhaps her mother . . . no longer laced her either” (TD 50). Tara does not have religiousness
even while she sits in front of the God and Goddess in the Pooja room during the
prayer time every morning and often she feels guilty when she enters the Pooja room.
While she stays at the United States she often recollects the prayers which is practiced
by her mother but now Tara forgets the lines of the prayer rituals and she finds
difficult to sing the bhajans which she sung during her childhood days. In the prayer
room when she grows nervous over her mother’s she feels “. . . a cracking of axis and
centre” (TD 57).

Renu Josan reflects the same idea thus: “These lines symbolically point out the
loss of cultural heritage in Tara. It is the American culture that had covered Tara like
a skin or an invisible spirit” (58). An effect of this loss is ironically reflected in her
inability to sing bhajan which she sang in her childhood and it is American skin that
covers Tara like an invisible spirit or darkness.

Tonight we’ll have extra special bhajan. Come back tonight. Come and
sing again. It will really be extra special if you come. Very fine bhajan
. . . And sad, Tara thought, in spite of the promised bhajan. As a child,
Tara remembered, she sung bhajans in that house. She had sat on a
love seat beside a very holy man with a limp and had sung Raghupati
Raghava Rajaram. But that had been a very long time ago, before some invisible spirit or darkness had covered her like skin”. (TD 54)

In the development of every individual’s character and personality, religion and rituals play a significant part in constructing a specific cultural identity. These are the indicators of religion and culture. Tara is ‘Hindu’ by origin and ‘Christian’ by marriage and migration and she is caught between two religions. After her migration and marriage, Tara tries to kill the old self, being a Hindu, to follow the Christian religion. But instead of killing the old self she should have created the new identity by integrating the two into one new self. Tara is an expatriate, so she does not respond in this way. Tara, being an expatriate does not integrates the two selves into one new form.

According to Tara, Calcutta slowly becomes a nightmare to her. Her dream more rapidly to Satyajit Ray’s Bengal is comprehensively crushed. She thinks of “the Bengal of Satyajit Ray children running through cool green spaces, aristocrats despairing in music rooms of empty palaces” (TD 105). In the political side also, Calcutta is drifting in the direction of the “left-of-leftists” (TD 44). There are disturbances more or less every day. She sees in the streets of Calcutta witness burning of cars and trams. Not even a single day passes without shouting slogans, robbing of shops, and distribution of burgled things, breaking of window panes and attacking of upper class people. Calcutta is on the very edge of a class war. R.K. Dhawan says, “Tara’s journey to India proves frustrating, slowly leading to disillusion, alienation, depression and finally her traffic end” (17). In India she sees sickness, misery, disturbance, poverty and the children eating yoghurt off the sidewalk. Now she has started looking at unpleasant features of India. Always in her
mind there is an ongoing conflict between her old sense of perception and her changed outlook on Calcutta.

Tara comes across her out of control in two more incidents. First incident occurs in the course of her visit to Darjeeling. Her mother accompanies with her, she makes her thunderstruck and Tara undergoes a state of delight, which is inexpressible. Tara meets Mata Kanankala and she is impressed by her activities and Mata left an unforgettable impression in Tara’s heart. “Like her religious mother she too believed in miracles and religious experience” (TD 136). The first incident at Darjeeling is the most memorable and sweet occasion in the life of Tara but the second incident is somewhat heart-breaking and distressing occasion in her life. Tuntunwala forces sexual violence upon Tara.

According to the Indian culture, seduction and extra-marital relationship by force or by choice are shameful actions and they are also considered as immortal. Even though the intention of seduction is man, the blame goes to the woman. Due to her Indianness, she doesn’t share this seduction with her friends or parents. To keep the secrets of seduction is a way of Indian life. In the depiction of this seduction scene, Bharati Mukherjee clearly shows that the Diasporas are helpless and insecure in their homeland and the host land is the only source for this alternative.

Tara decides to leave India and plans to go the United States again because she is not able to settle herself to the altering face of Calcutta. The novel ends on the final symbolic image of Tara suspended in a state of panic and hesitation. She is locked up in a car outside the Catelli-Continental Hotel and she is surrounded by a ferocious mob of Naxalite protesters who have just attacked the old noble, Joyanto, and killed her friend, the businessman Pronob. Locked in the car she only thinks about her husband David. The novel ends with these lines: “And Tara, still locked in a car
across the street from the Catelli-Continental, wondered whether she would ever get out of Calcutta, and if she didn’t, whether David would ever know that she loved him fiercely” (TD 210). Tara does not find anything to her liking at Calcutta and in such an annoying state she finds herself at home nowhere.

Mukherjee clearly shows the misunderstanding, distrustful and confusion are unavoidable in the cross-cultural relation. She shows this through the other foreign characters in the novel such as Washington Mc Dowell and Antonia Whitehead. Mcdowell is a student who comes to Calcutta to take part in a programme and is supposed to stay with Reena’s family. Antonia comes to do some missionary service in Calcutta, India. Indians distrusted and misunderstood both the characters. Their presence makes ample confusion in the Indian Community.

Journey is a recurrent theme in The Tiger’s Daughter as in other expatriate novels. The basic motif of Tara’s journey is search for her identity. She travels from India to the United States and again after seven years travels back to India. After reaching India, she travels to various places such as Bombay and Calcutta, her aunt’s house, the Catelli-Continental, Mr. Worthington’s council, the charity carnival, and the finery banks, Tollygunge, Darjeeling and Mayapur. There is also the temporal movement from the old Indian to the New India. The old India suggests ‘command’, ‘security’ and ‘ease’ and the New India suggests ‘threat’, ‘sickness’ and ‘misperception’. So the search for identity point towards a journey and temporal movements. In the past Calcutta was the capital of British India, the city of Joy, cultural capital of India but it transformed and turned into the city of beggars, pollution and diseases. The Tiger’s Daughter depicts the change in Calcutta city where the traditional standards and ethics of Brahmin family have been shattered forever and it is a kind of social revolution.
Tara discovers herself a misfit in all places she travels. With her lifeless temperament she attempts to look at Indians and adjust with her friends but there is an undistinguishable gap between them and so she feels broken down. She is compelled to look at her inner world made of two cultures and the two different beliefs which are the two worlds wide apart. Tara feels to go back to David Cartwright after understanding the reconciliation is not possible. To entertain and to relax Tara, her father, Bengal Tiger, sends her to Darjeeling for spending the summer like upper class people but Tara does not find comfort and peace anywhere. Tara decides to go to the United States and goes to the office of Air India and reserves a seat on a flight to New York. Tara returns to her home for getting comfort and shelter but unfortunately she undergoes shock, uneasiness and hazards of an exile. Post-colonial Calcutta again appears in front of Tara, with all signs of decline and supports Tara to decide that she must escape from her Calcutta to avoid the scarcity, starvation, dirt and ferocity of this post-colonial city.

In Calcutta, though she tries to adjust, everything seems annoying and horrifying to her. Her journey is decided but after a short time of this reservation Tara becomes a victim of violence, causes by the marchers who are proceeding towards the Catelli-Continental in Mob. The dear native land cannot give her the pressure of violent revolutionaries and deceptive politicians. The result is economic stagnation, class conflicts, political chaos and insecurity in every sphere of life. At the end of the novel, Tara is in a dangerous situation in which Joyonto Roy Chowdhury is brutally beaten to near-death. Pronob, Tara’s business friend, tries to save him, but is himself injured in the violence. Hence, Tara’s trip to Calcutta, her ‘home’ after spending seven years in America, her ‘exile’ brings her only ‘wounds’. As Avter Brah, says,
‘home’ is a mythic place of desire in the mind of diasporic individual. Actually it is a place of no return” (192).

Thus, by frequently associating belongings and individuals in India to those in America and by stimulating her own boldness in the direction of them, Tara fails to place herself in any of the two challenged cultures. She discovers herself hypothesised in an in-between space which needs her to re-negotiate her identity in order to hold this process of change. The husband, family members and friends are deeply rooted in one culture and fails to understand her sense of alienation and rootlessness.

Tara’s position is similar to that of an expatriate who stances at a distance from the expressive and divine mood of the country that had once been her own. So disrupted by her return she imagines her husband’s face, not fully and whole but in bits and pieces. She is unable to write a letter to her husband about the experiences in India because of the unrealism of spoken voice. Even though it is challenging for an Asian to adapt into American culture, it is likewise hard for an Asian-American to adapt back to their native country. In a contradictory situation, Tara in The Tiger’s Daughter is alienated in her American set of connections and then alienated from her roots of aristocracy. She understands that she is neither an Indian nor an American.

Mukherjee in The Tiger’s Daughter discovers the circumstances of being an Indian expatriate and being an American immigrant. It presents a bold new voice in diasporic literature that originates from a woman of India who settle down in the west and redefines her connections to her husband. Having been uprooted from her native soil through an accidental affair with a man of different roots, Tara like her creator, swings between her homeland and her new found homeland. It is like choosing the better part of her freedom of choice and lastly plumps for the new found homeland for reason known such as responsibility, safety and realism.
There are a lot of similarities between Mukherjee’s novels such as *The Tiger’s Daughter* and *Wife*. The common terms or relationship terms like ‘the daughter of Bengal Tiger’ or ‘wife of Amit Basu’ shows the dependent identities of both the protagonists. Mukherjee has attached her own frustration as an Indian settler in Canada in the novel. Even though the setting of *Wife* is New York, in the mind of the novelist it is certainly Toronto. Like similarities there are a lot of dissimilarities too among the two protagonists. Tara and Dimple journeys toward opposite directions. As Jasbir Jain in her article “Foreignness of spirit the world of Bharati Mukherjee’s Novels” says, “*Wife* does not begin where *The Tiger’s Daughter* ends, but it progresses in the opposite direction” (15). To get better her roots, her past, after seven years of stay at the United States, Tara comes back to Calcutta, her homeland but, Dimple journeys to the United States, her host land, in search of her forthcoming.

*Wife* is a diasporic novel which is rich in elements like dislocation and alienation. It conveys the story of Dimple, the protagonist of the novel, who travels to the United States with Amit Kumar Basu, her husband and becomes uncertain between cultures of the Indian and the American. She is certainly the wife upon which the title of the novel is based. The novel deals with her stable preparation into a woman ready to complete the wifely acts and trying to develop out as a perfect wife.

*Wife* goes around the personality of Dimple who raises, recognises, rebels, murders and as an end point pass away in this novel. Dimple is trapped in a dilemma of stress between American ethos and civilization. She is in the situation not capable to strike a sense of balance between the two juxtaposed worlds: the one is India, the land which she left behind and other is the United States where she has come to live in. *The Tiger’s Daughter* ends with protagonist, Tara’s locking herself into the car amid political revolt signifying Tara’s captivity in an expatriate’s identity dilemma,
however, *Wife* (1975) portrays Dimple stuck in the similar but in a dangerous situation.

There is a significant occasion regarding the creation of the novel *Wife*. While spending the vacation, Mukherjee and her husband Clarke Blaise writes a non-fictional work entitled *Days and Nights in Calcutta*. It is a combined work of Mukherjee and her husband. At that time, a history professor from Columbia University arises a question to Mukherjee, “What do Bengali girls do between the age of 18 and 21?” (212). Her novel, *Wife*, is a sort of reply to that question arises by the professor. The expatriate Mukherjee has written the novel *Wife* in the confusing temperament of irritation in ambiguity of the dilemma of Indian women and Canada’s racial discrimination because she herself was displaced from the native land, rootless, alienated, unfriendly, unpleasant, annoyed and homesick and was facing discrimination in Canada. *Wife* is devoted to her friends such as Bart, Bernard and Leonard Garden, American novelists, who wondered about Bengali women.

Dimple Dasgupta Basu, the protagonist of the novel, is a nineteen years old young Bengali and the daughter of Mr. Dasgupta. Dasgupta “calls himself as a high-tension man” (WF 3). She lives in a house at Rash Behari Avenue.

Dimple Dasgupta had set her heart on marrying a neurosurgeon, but her father was looking for engineers in the matrimonial ads… Dimple wanted a different kind of life- an apartment in Chowringhee, her hair done by Chinese girls, trips to New Market for nylon saris- so she placed her faith in neurosurgeons and architects. She fantasized about young men with mustaches, dressed in spotless white, peering into opened skulls. (WF 3)
Dimple lost in day-dreaming all the time about her marital delight. She has confidence in marriage and it is the only way to escape from the sufferings. It is also a means to attain freedom, cocktail parties, love and life style and so she longs for marriage to achieve her dreams. Amit Kumar Basu, son of late Ajoy Kumar Basu, is a twenty nine years old man. He is a suit selected by her father to Dimple. Amit Kumar Basu is a consultant engineer with seven years’ experience. He stays in an apartment with his widowed mother and his younger brother named Pintu, who is studying Physics Honours in Presidency College. His elder sister, Mrs. Grose, is married to P. K. Ghose, a Chartered Accountant. Amit is fascinated to settle either to Canada, the United States or Kenya.

From the beginning of the novel, Dimple longs and waits for her marriage and at last in the month of February, on the roof of Dimple’s house in Rash Behari Avenue, the marriage of Dimple and Amit takes place. She is very cheerful on the wedding day because she considers that she has been set free from the all kinds of bondage from that day.

It was a perfect wedding. There were one hundred and five photographs to prove that it was perfect. Mrs. Dasgupta’s youngest brother, who was a photographer for a Bengali newspaper, had taken pictures of the old men chewing betel leaves and red juice on rented mattresses; young women braiding the bride’s hair with traditional red ribbons and tinsel; the bride trying to conceal her bandaged finger behind the folds of her red, bridal brocade; children sleeping on sofas; women on the roof blowing conch shells; and groom stepping out of a green Fiat decorated with red and white garlands. (WF 16)
Dimple is not satisfied by the appearance of Amit but she marries him as her father has seen the great future predictions in him. According to her, he does not have the standard of movie stars:

In those hours that he was away, any face in a magazine was fair game. She borrowed a forehead from an aspirin ad, the lips, eyes and chin from a body-builder and shoulder ad, the stomach and legs from a trousers ad and put the ideal man and herself in a restaurant in Park Street or by the side of a pool at a five star hotel. He wore blue bating trunks, there was no ugly black hair on his back and shoulder blades as he leaped feet first into the pool. (WF 23)

According to Indian culture, after the marriage the girls should leave their parents’ home and they should live in their mother-in-law’s home. As a usual Indian bride, Dimple moves to her mother-in-law’s place. She does not like Basu’s house on the top floor of a three-story apartment on Dr. Sarat Banerjee Road because it is “h-o-r-r-i-d” (WF 18) and not attractive. Dimple provides the complete portrayal to Pixie, her friend, over phone concerning the apartment of Amit Basu.

Dimple dislikes her mother-in-law and sister-in-law and so she does not feel comfortable in their house. To an extent, Dimple’s mother-in-law desires to change her name and Amit declares to Dimple, “My mother wants to, call you Nandhini. She doesn’t like Dimple as a name” (WF 17). Dimple is a non-Bengali name and so her mother-in-law changes her name into a traditional Bengali name, Nandhini. After her name changes, her role and position also changes. From the position as a ‘daughter’ she moves to a new position as a ‘wife’. Now she is not ‘Dimple Dasgupta’, she is ‘Mrs. Nandhini Basu’. It is a sort of losing the old identity and an endeavour to achieving the new one. Dimple has thought of herself as someone going into exile.
She confuses herself and the casual things in the apartment of Basu such as the broken tap, darkness at staircase, carrying up water, Pinter’s coughing, and spiders behind the kitchen door irritates her a lot. She complains about her new name and in-laws apartment. Unreal seems real to her and real unreal. She thought that these problems are temporary because they are waiting for their immigration. She frequently talks with her husband about foreign trip though “Thoughts of living in Africa or North America terrified her” (WF 17).

Although she dislikes her mother-in-law’s house, her husband is very kind, caring and loving towards her and as an outcome she turn out to be pregnant. She vomits frequently and misses a period. She is not able to do any work day and night. She senses a peculiar sensation. In Indian society, Pregnancy is considered as the greatest gift from God. Indian women think that if a woman fails to reproduce a child she finds guilty and becomes an object of hatred in society, but Dimple hates pregnancy.

She thought of ways to get rid of . . . whatever it was that blocked her tubes and pipes. Her insides were like a clogged drain. She would pour some cleaning powder down her throat – if the powder was advertised as destroying rotting food, fallen hair, grease, it could surely burn its way through muscle, fibre and tissue? She spent her time cataloguing ways to rid herself of it”. (WF 31)

She hates those changes which undergoes in her body. She dislikes to give birth to a baby but Amit expects a lot about the baby. He says, “It’ll be a boy. He’ll be a doctor and mint money. Only businessmen make money. Bengalis make bad businessmen, Dimple said . . .” (WF 33). Dimple kills a mouse that looked pregnant,
One morning when she was sitting on the floor of the balcony and picking dead bugs and stone chips out of rice . . . she heard soft, scurrying noises behind her. It could come only from mice . . . She stood up nervously and grabbed a broom as a weapon . . . She hit the toilet seat viciously with her broom . . . I’ll get you! A mice . . . It had a strangely swollen body. A very small creature with a fat belly. To Dimple the dead mouse looked pregnant. (WF 34-35)

Now, according to Dimple, marriage took her off all passionate longings which is so tastefully nourished. One evening by taxi, Amit takes her to Kwality’s and orders chilli chicken, chicken fried rice and chicken spring rolls. She feels nervous and uncomfortable to handle the chicken pieces with fork and knife and thinks that it would have been better if Amit had taken her to Trinca’s instead: “He should have taken her to Trinca’s on Park Street, where she could have listened to a Goan band play American music, to prepare her for the trip to New York or Toronto or to the discotheque in the Park Hotel, to teach her to dance and wriggle” (WF 21).

Dimple mainly thought of immigration and going to America and to get freedom from all customs and ethnicities. To start a new life after their immigration she prepares herself and gets ready. She does not need to take any memory of her old life and does not want to lose a chance of showing off herself as an exciting person. Dimple expects that her new life will begin in the new world. “I want everything to be nice and a new, Dimple whispered on the phone to Pixie. I’m not taking any of my old saris when we go to America or Canada” (WF 41). “She began to think of the baby as an unfinished business. It clutters up the preparation for going abroad. She did not want to carry any relics from her old life; given another chance she could be a
more exciting person, take evening classes perhaps, and become a librarian. She had heard that many Indian wives in the States became librarians” (WF 42).

She thinks that a child will be a disturbance to her migration to America. So she attempts miscarriage,

It’s not like murder, Dimple said one afternoon in June. I could never commit murder . . . She had skipped until her legs grew numb and her stomach burned; then she had poured water from the heavy bucket over her head, shoulders, over the tight little curve of her stomach. She had poured until the last of the blood washed off her legs; then she collapsed. It was Pintu who carried her to bed and summoned the doctor. No one noticed the skipping rope, coiled under the plastic pail.

(WF 42)

To Manju Sharma, “Dimple’s act of abortion is a sacrament of liberation from the traditional roles and constraints of womanhood” (15).

She starts imagining about her stay abroad without knowing the practical problems she is going to face there. One day Amit resigns the job due to his bribery case. After his resignation he stayed on the sofa all day but soon he heard that they could immigrate to the United States. Dimple’s happiness is inexpressible. Soon the couple, Dimple and Amit immigrate to New York, where at first they stay with Jyoti and Meena Sen’s house in Queens which can be called a little India. Regarding this trend of immigrants, Van der Veer remarks, “Those who do not think of themselves as an Indians before migration become Indians in the Diaspora” (7).

Jyoti Sen is a chemical engineer and Meena Sen is a thirty five years old woman. They both has a girl child named Archana. Dimple sees the television for the first time in the house of the Sens. Amit and Dimple also stay with them. Amit says
the story of his last Calcutta job. Jyoti congratulates him but tells him it will not help in New York. Here, you cannot afford to sound like a troublemaker, especially if you are an Indian. Work twice as hard, your mouth shut, and you’ll be a millionaire in fifteen years. Jyoti is talking like a big brother, and it make Amit seem like a child. Stay with us till you get a good job. Dimple and Amit quarrel frequently because Amit does not get a job for more than four months and the economic condition becomes very weak.

In the United States, Dimple practises her culture, the independent domestic world of Indians in Queens and the adopted culture, the sophisticated account increasing parties of the comfortable and Americanized Indians in Manhattan. Dimple loves and tries her best to learn more and more from Meena Sen, the manner of shopping, cooking, and the way of talking mainly speaking English fluently. She gets confused because she is in the position of an expatriate who is not fluent in English and unknown to the laws of Dreamland.

In the course of her shopping with Meena Sen, Dimple adores to buy cheesecake for night’s desert because her husband loves it. She enquires for a cheesecake in a beef shop instead of enquiring in a cheese shop, she asks, “Excuse me, please. I wish to purchase five hundred grams of cheesecake. Do you have it?” (WF 59). A fat shopkeeper understands her unawareness of the laws and starts examining in the drawer. Dimple feels annoyed, insulted and misunderstood that the shopkeeper is searching for a gun to shoot her. Her first experience of shopping is unpleasant and left a deep impression in her heart forever. She feels inferior and alienated. She feels that she is caught in the conflict of American communication. She compares her Calcutta shopping. Her confusion with America is due to her comfortable childhood she had hardly ever been out of Calcutta. Recovering from the
frightening encounter with the Jewish shopkeeper, she remembers angrily how Calcutta salesmen would do anything to please her.

This is the first incident, she understands the difference between Calcutta and New York. This very first experience to America leaves a shocking result on her mind, she fails to realise the reason why a man selling beef etc. cannot sell cheesecake. She wonders that what the law of America is. Dimple, in her effort to be ‘American’, innocently tries to buy cheesecake and is terrified by the owner’s difficult response and feels certain that she will pay for her imperfect English and cultural ignorance by being shot on the spot. She observes her to put forward into America proper as being met with the penalty of death, as warned by Meena. She thought: “She was caught in the crossfire of an American communalism she couldn’t understand. She felt she’d come very close to getting killed on her third morning in America” (WF 60).

All her dreams are crushed and she is not capable to investigate her own reality. She faces cultural encounter between India and America. Her immature mind is not capable to decide which culture she has to choose. She is aware of American surroundings and pressures which she is facing in the alien land. Linda Sandler is of opinion, “Dimple suffers from a subterranean streak of violence. She is displaced from her family and her familiar world is projected into a social vacuum where the media become her surrogate community, her global village- New York intensifies her frustration and unhooks her further from reality; she kills easily, like a sleepwalker” (76).

Frequently, Dimple came across the old and the new life however wishing for assimilation in America. She is so often recalled her Indianness which she finds problematic to shed all her efforts to Americanize and Dimple is at marine in her
‘adopted culture’. The substitute of adopting American values, clothing and thoughts of personal happiness, as one of the young wives does, is not something Dimple can consider either:

I’m sorry, Dimple whispered. There are some things I can’t do.

Wearing pants is one of them. I couldn’t walk down the street in your pants and sweaters. Why are you whispering? Ina demanded. Why are you acting so guilty? Amit won’t see you, if that’s your main fear . . . .

If I want pants to eat pizza in the winter, who knows what I’ll be wearing to eat at the Dairy Queen next summer. (WF 154-155)

Amit and Dimple were introduced to Vinod Khanna by Jyoti Sen. Vinod Khanna is a prosperous businessman in the town. He also offers a job to Dimple but on her husband’s advice she rejects the offer in spite of the fact that the Basu’s were in opinion of honest earning. Amit rejects it by declaring “One breadwinner in the family is quite enough” (WF 61). He shares the old-fashioned patriarchal mind-set of an Indian husband who thinks it a shame to allow his wife to be a bread winner. Hence he doesn’t allow her to take a job.

Dimple needs freedom but it is the limited freedom given to her by Amit. In the party, Dimple feels an outsider. “Dimple tried to smile brightly and look happy. She found an armchair in one corner and spoke only when people came up to her and addressed her so directly that she couldn’t pretend they were talking to others behind her” (WF 62). She feels nervous and alienated in the crowd of Indian immigrants who hate and are disgusted at the Americans. “They are so dirty . . . They bathe only once a week. Rest of the week they just take two-minutes showers and use a lot of perfume.” (WF 62).
In America, the people used to go out with any and everyone, even Africans. Ina and Bijoy Mullicks are very modern and Ina “blew cigarette smoke her nostrils and led them into the living room. Her lipstick was the brightest red, Dimple had ever seen. Amit seemed uncomfortable” (WF 75). Jyoti Sen informs Amit that Ina will misguide Dimple and it is time to save his wife. Meena Sen also warns Dimple not to pay attention to Ina. Jyoti also tells Amit “. . . when a woman starts going wrong, it is usually because her husband did not look after her enough” (WF 68). This is because of Amit’s doubt about Khana’s character.

Sexism is very common in the United States. Though Ina Mullicks is an Indian, living in America, like the Americans she possess and imitates all bad habits. She smokes, drinks and possesses post-marital relationships. This influences Dimple badly and leads her to fall in love with Milt Glasser, an American. Dimple hates Amit as he fails to fulfil her dreams. He is not the man of her dreams. Dimple realizes that Amit is a misfit to succeed in America. Likewise, she finds herself a misfit woman of her nature born to adjust to American ways. She realizes that her dream world is shattered. Unemployment makes Amit angry and bitter to himself and Dimple and he remains out of home. Dimple watches the television programmes all the day and does not even enquire him out of fear that he won’t like to be asked. Her time pass is the kitchen work, Meena Sen and television all the day. She gets sentimental over Amit in his absence.

Television is the guide for her to understand the complicated life of American women. Through media she is introduced to violence. Added to this she hears about more murders through the conversations with Jyoti Sen. There were frequent announcements of murders in newspapers, car, and radio. She constantly lives in fear of the unknown. Talking about murders in America was like talking about the
weather. She contemplates violence and killing. An American divorces her husband for snoring. Even the American cinema displayed only sex and violence.

The party at Mullicks gives Dimple an opportunity to interact and face to face communicate with Ina Mullick, a smoker, drinker, more American, modern, a post graduate, M.Sc., Physics from Calcutta University, who wears pants and shirt that ended in a large knot, and uses English fluently. Ina is more American than Americans. Dimple speaks in Bengali, “her English had grown less confident since she’s arrives in America” (WF 74). Ina has a particular theory of Indian immigrants: “It takes them a year to get India out of there system. In the second year they’ve bought all the things they’ve hungered for. So then they go back, or they stay here and vegetate or else they’ve got to live here like anyone else” (WF 76).

Ina asks Dimple for a soft drink, Seven-Up in a blue glass with ice cubes and a twist of lemon but Amit prohibit by saying, “She does not like alcoholic beverages . . . doesn’t even like Coke” (WF 77). Like an Indian husband, he always decides in public what Dimple can do and say. He limits her gently and Dimple cannot react. It is Indianness of a Hindu Bengali wife. She fears that, “ If she took a drink she knew Amit would write it to his mother and his mother would call the Dasguptas and accuse them of raising an immortal, drunken daughter” (WF 78). She is anxious of losing her identity as Dasgupta’s moral, disciplined daughter and Basu’s ideal wife. She does not like to lose her identity because alcohol is not to be appreciated by women in India. Dimple would echo her husband - “I do not need stimulants to feels happy in my husband’s presence . . . my obligation is to my husband” (WF 78).

Dimple and Amit meet Milt Glasser, a young gorilla, Prodosh, a match-maker and Marsha, who is tall, slim and intelligent, for the first time in that party. They were not Indians but Americans. Milt Glasser mingled very closely towards Ina and Dimple
is puzzled by Ina-Milt relationship. Very free and frank Milt’s activities is a surprise for Dimple. Due to Ina’s influence on Dimple, her character starts changing.

Dimple’s confusion quickens further when she finds her incapability to speak the language either of the Americanized Indians or the Americans. Ina Mullick tells her that talking to her is like “talking to a . . . porpoise” (WF 136). Dimple says, “I like porpoises . . . They’re so nearly human, aren’t they?” (WF 136). She says that they are like human, flipping and screaming in a kidney-shaped swimming pool in a suburban backyard but she has seen only one porpoise in her life and that too was on television: “When Ina spoke in English, her words are predatory, Dimple realized” (WF 136).

Feeling insufficient and incapable to attain the relationship between her experience and the language satisfactory to its expression, Dimple is both culturally and linguistically silenced. Dimple’s incapability to answer to Ina recapitulates her narrow-minded life and even her fears. She responds to her situation in a way as natural and expectable as to be considered a tropism. Later one finds her talking to Amit, she attempts to picture how Ina would have pronounced the word supportive. Amit takes out a writing pad out of his paijama pocket and writes it down, she imagines that he would show off this new world to his colleagues in work place. The language was insufficient to express her views and she remains silence. She is denied expression and is unable to validate her experience or her identity. So she forsakes the real world and retrieve into a world of her own an imaginary world.

In contradiction, the protagonist’s meetings with other women, American as well as Indian, add to her social and psychological alienation even more than the contacts with strangers. When she meets one of their Indian acquaintances and his self-confident academic American wife, Dimple cannot engage in any real interaction.
with the American woman but responds with helpless fury to the couple’s careless indifference to the usual Indian family conventions that Dimple had to observe, such as marriage negotiations and duty to parents-in-law.

For the marital happiness, the art of communication between husband and wife is important but Amit and Dimple fail to communicate with each other after getting exposed to the alien culture. The communication has an effective outcome upon their relationship but the failure in communication grows a break between the couple which broadens day to day and eventually wrecks their relationship. Once Amit gets a job, the situation get worse and he fails to understand Dimple. He has faith that to make happy providing material comforts is enough. So he decides to move to a well furnished apartment which has all sorts of modern appliances. There too she feels lonely and alienated.

Dimple undergoes isolation at every single minute of her life and she is wrapped up by the sense of nostalgia because America has outwitted her. It is away from her understanding “how could she live in a country . . . where every other woman was a stranger? (WF 112). Dimple’s hatred with American English and American system becomes emphasised even by small things. She is frightened to function the self-service elevators. Within the four walls of the apartment she has to live. She is trying to cover herself off sensitively. This kind of isolation is a common feature of the Diasporas in the United States. Television is all her outer space where she lookouts boundless ferocity and killing. According to Sivaramakrishnan “Dimple’s loss of identity is due to her being an exile” (74).

Dimple’s hatred with Amit and America develops progressively. As she is an expatriate, she is aware of conserving her identity in the greatest annoying situations of life. She creates a fuss in a feel of nostalgia recollecting her life at Calcutta
especially with her friends. Dimple does not share her inner feelings not even to her husband in America and due to frustration she undergoes some disorder in her mind.

In the Indian culture, people give much importance to religion and it has become a part and parcel of life. As an expatriate she recollects the Durga Pooja and due to her religious beliefs she is not able to assimilate to the American culture. Before coming to America she dreams and wish to live in America but now she is alienated and this made her to realise how easy it was to live, to communicate and to share with people in Calcutta. In Calcutta the policemen are friendly and not even a single day she gets afraid at the sight of the Policemen but in America she is scared at everyone and everything such as self-service elevators, policemen, devices and machines. “She does not want to wear Western cloths as she does not want to lose her identity but feels isolated, trapped, alienated, marginalised” (WF 84).

She shares her inner feelings with Meena Sen while she was staying at Queens. Meena Sen understands her mind which has Indian touches but after she comes to Greenwich she feels that she is alone. Here, her hopelessness establishes itself in different ways. Dimple finds herself isolated even in the company of Indian immigrants too because most of the Indians in America have adjusted themselves to the American ways of life and this make her feel an outsider. In her own community too she fails to relate and experiences rejection. This is obvious at Vinod Khanna’s party where Dimple feels agitated about the food that is prepared. At night after the party, she could not sleep. She starts hating everything in Meena Sen’s flat where she is staying temporarily. It is suggestive that Dimple and Amit do not find a flat of their own. After leaving Sen’s apartment, they shift to the flat of Marsha, who is on a long vacation. If Dimple has to live in America she has to live in a borrowed flat and clothes and also culture for that matter. When she fails to relate to the real world, she
tries to relate to the unreal world shown on the television, but this provides wrong solutions to the real problems.

Amit may also be responsible for his unawareness of the female psychology. He thinks that providing creature comforts is enough and hardly worries for her emotional needs. He takes her out of four walls very rarely and goes in warning instead: “You must go out, make friends, do something constructive, not stay at home and think about Calcutta” (WF 111). But nowhere in the novel Amit appears to have abused her by brutally either troubling her with household work or by ignoring her desires in life. He is all the time anxious about her well-being. Therefore, they converse without communication; live together while remaining strangers.

Dimple has some relationship with the American people, who are not considered as actual Americans. According to her, those Americans are considered as a patchwork of violence and rudeness. The Americans remains her the Indian film stars because there activities, dressing and manner are not casual. Therefore, the inconsistency between the class and gender agreements which have formed the foundation of her self-image and reality of Dimple’s psychological isolation. The restricted contact to the outside world leaves her in a midpoint between the immigrant community and American society. In every beginning there will be pain and sufferings. Though Dimple predicted some difficulties in the American setup while planning to come to America, she did not expect like this loneliness among the crowd.

The television serial induced the plan of killing her husband. Paradoxically, it makes Dimple to feel somehow very American. She is similar to the television serial character and her American anger achieves her wish. Dimple’s expectation is different from the present familial circumstances and she does not able to adjust with that kind of life with her husband. She is alienated from him, who is a single-minded and longs
after profitable jobs. Amit does not allot time for spending time with Dimple and she is “bitter that marriage had betrayed her, had not provided all the glittery things she had imagined” (WF 101). Dimple wants to live a dreamy life and her husband fails to give such a life which was imagined by her. Amit thought that she is a good and fit husband because he provides all the material comforts by earning money but those things do not satisfies her need and feelings. These made her angry and in the frustrated Dimple’s mind springs seven different ideas to murder her husband. She imagines her life when she marries some other person and feels that she would have been happy when he shows love, care and affection towards her and in return she too would have make him happy.

This loneliness and emotional starvation start the process of her psychological breakdown which had been developing even when she was in Calcutta. She worries about her sitar-shaped body and her undeveloped breasts and makes nervous and passive temperament. She envies her friend Pixie who works in the All India Radio, and also longs for the outside world, but does nothing in transform her wish into action. She has a goal in life and does nothing to do something with it. She has no understanding of the past, and can do nothing to make the future meaningful. This inherent instability in her personality is intensified by her isolation in the new environment. In this state of psychological drift, she hits upon the idea of violence against herself as well as Amit. She is constantly hitting upon new ways of committing suicide or killing Amit, though she never considers murder seriously.

The latest prosperity for violence in her, manifested in her Calcutta days in her killing the rat in her husband’s house, and in her skipping rope to kill the foetus in her womb, is brought out and activated under the pressure of new environment. Sometime
after her sojourn in New York, we are told, “setting fire to a sari had been one of the seven types of suicide Dimple had recently devised” (WF 115).

Dimple is left to her own plans to fight the breakdown of her personality. She is trapped in the bog and cultural uncertainties signified by the conduct of Ina Mullick, Marsha Mookerji in order to save herself and her identity, she routes to passive protest. When Ina and her hunchback friend, Leni falls out in her apartment and Leni throws an ashtray at Ina and casually adds, “It’s only a lousy kitsch ashtray, for God’s sake. I’ll go down to Khanna’s India Emporium and buy a dozen, okay?” (WF 148). She does not know what to make of such brazen conduct, and in silent revenge, keeps pouring tea over their cups and onto the carpet until they stop her. Dimple’s overexcited imagination is in a spin all the while: “After Leni removed the cup Dimple kept on pouring, over the rim of Leni’s cup, over the tray and the floating dentures till the pregnant-bellied tea pot was emptied and Leni and Ina were standing and shaking her, Dimple, Dimple, stop it!” (WF 152).

Dimple often remains her Indianness when she is in company of Americanized Indians. She tries to experience a different kind of life and live a life which is not like the life in Calcutta. She herself wants to lead a free life-style but when that expected life comes true to her vision she hates that kind of life and often recalls her life in Calcutta. She finds everything odd and alien to her. Marginalized by the patriarchy of Indian culture, Dimple is equally at sea in her ‘adopted’ culture. Meeting their Indian friends, Dimple is struck by their talk and social fancy behaviour, so ‘untypical’ of the Indians she knew in Calcutta. “Jyoti told Dimple not restrict herself to Bengalis, or else she would miss a lot of experience of being abroad” (WF 67).

Dimple gets totally cut off from the outside world. This situation starts thwarting her life. The isolation and powerlessness is so acute that other potentialities
such as sensuous, emotional and intellectual ones which are essential for life and evolution of personality cannot be realized by her. The lack of inner security and spontaneity blocks this relation. This blockage increases with the shock of another culture. With this total severance of the primary bonds, Dimple faces the outside world as a separate entity and two courses are open to her-to relate to the world spontaneously and progress to ‘positive freedom’ and secondly to fall back and to give up freedom by eliminating the gap between the individual self and the world. The contemplation, dreams and hallucinations about death start expressing themselves in action. She starts hating everything around her because she lacks the capacity to change it. Her hatred starts destroying things around her. The first victim is the inanimate plastic flower in Sen’s house.

As the stay in America becomes longer and indefinite, the mental distance is created from the home country. Initially the reminiscences about Calcutta could act as an elixir and revive her spirit whenever she felt lonesome but as the uncertainty about her return to home country grows, she finds herself trapped in the uncertainty. The burden of the feeling of being trapped weighs on Dimple’s mind which is manifested in her hysterical behaviour. She starts sleeping during the day and skips her lunch, and when she feels hungry, she eats the leftover of curry and rice straight from the fridge. She loses hold on herself.

Dimple, who is shut in the room all by herself from morning till night, misses the social life which is very important for individual’s growth. She starts talking to herself and writing imaginary letters. The fear of losing her identity grips her. She too would wear T-shirts and blue jeans and sit on an unmade bed tell an immigrant wife her pitiful story. It is obvious that the stress caused by displacement is too strong to withstand for Dimple who develops the symptoms of insecurity. For Dimple, the
future is bleak, the present dull and boring, and the past too remote to be connected. The continuous pressures of fear, hatred and anger lead to nausea. The alien circumstances accentuate her hypertension and drive her to the brink of regression and abnormality. She had shown potential signs of alienation in Calcutta before embarking on her voyage to America, and now the alien environs prove to be inexorable. As a result, she finds herself ill at chances to “suffer the terrible assaults of lonely existence” in America. Even her own body seems to be “curiously alien to her, filled with hate, malice, an insane desire to hurt, yet weightless, almost airborne” (WF 117).

Thus, Dimple is allowed to her own plans of existence in the new environment. This development is revealed in the tone of her answer to the conduct of Marsha’s brother, Milt Glasser, who hugs, embraces and even lifts Dimple onto the top of the kitchen counter as their social contact progresses. She is at first embarrasses and uncomfortable with him, but slowly she discovers in him a source of emotional support and even a recognition of her identity, which she misses in Amit. Monika Gupta comments in the following manner: “Dimple’s sense of self-esteem has been crushed beyond measure and she plunges headlong into the depths of despair” (120). It is his protracted indifference to her plight that makes her turn Milt as lover and seduces him one afternoon in their flat.

Frequent visits of Ina and Milt make easy to Dimple attract Milt. Milt’s reactions are desired by her. She feels inferior herself to them. It is an expatriate’s attitude in the adopted land but she is engaged in differencing Amit and Milt. Milt alone at her home cooks for her chocolate mouse and even he takes her out in Marsha’s clothes, sweeter and blue jeans. “He was to her America” (WF 174). In her borrowed clothes, she feels, she can risk anything and get away with it and thinks: “. . .
Amit is suspicious of transformation and tries to identify the cause. She is different, looks altered, television expression becomes the voice of madness for her. She openly questions Amit now. However she is stimulated by the seven ways to die. She says that Amit “is . . . waiting for me to die” (WF 177). In the month of January, during a heavy snowfall Dimple waits for Amit on the public bench. She is more or less freezing in the cold park bench and it is a sort of attempt to die because she is very upset, tired and depressed. On seeing this Amit literally has pulled her and says that he does not like to talk over private problems in the public and has taken her home. Dimple shouts very violently to leave her alone.

Dimple attempts to list the causes of her sadness: “1. The plants were dying. 2…” (WF 180). She flops in discovery the causes of her unhappiness. Amit concludes that Dimple is shocked by the American culture. He thinks “Instead of trying to work things out for herself, he said, she should have unburdened her worries to him and he would have explained that it was culture shock and that culture shock happened all the time to Indian wives; it wasn’t one of those famous ‘breakdowns’ that American wives were fond of having” (WF 180). Amit guesses that if Dimple returns to Calcutta she will become normal and she will refresh herself by sharing her thoughts with her friends and family members so Amit promises her to arrange a trip to Calcutta even though it is expensive. Usually the expatriates longs to visit their homeland because of their sufferings and quest for identity. They feel that they will be recognized in the homeland and will not be accepted in the host land. Regarding the Indian culture and society the wife is totally dependent towards her husband, in the same way she expects a lot from Amit but when she fails to get the care and affection
from Amit, she changes a lot. Amit does not considers her changes very serious and thought that she will be changed after her visit to Calcutta.

E. H. Erikson described identity as “a subject sense as well as an observable quality of personal sameness and continuity, paired with some belief in the sameness and continuity of some shared world image” (13). The immigrants usually suffer a lot due to identity crisis and the Indian immigrants arrange the religious rituals like Durga Puja, Saraswati Puja, Ganapathi festival etc. in the host land to cling with cultural identity. Two days after Dimple’s attempt on the cold public bench, to forget the incident, herself and her husband attend a Saraswathi Puja conducted by the immigrants. She looks at the best in the Bengali gathering by wearing a Banarsee silk and gold choker. She is happier than early. In that puja, the women talk over regarding the return to homeland but Dimple thinks “… dying would be just as senseless and unfair in Calcutta; it would be just as horrible and scary to be carried on a flower-strewn bed in a procession, to cause small traffic jams and impatient honking on the streets, to have Amit bend over the corpse?” (WF 184). She is in the situation by not accepting both the cultures and beliefs. She is in the state of dilemma.

She gives a lot of interest and allows her mind totally towards the advertisements in the television and magazines which made to distinguish the difference between the world of reality and fantasy. She is torn between these two worlds. She takes the advertisement as the role-model for her life and as a result she has an illicit relationship with Milt Glasser. By having an affair with an American, she is passionate attempt to find an identity in America. She enjoys all the prohibited freedom with the frequent visit of Milt to her house and she changes a lot. Milt satisfies her and comforts her emotional feelings which was not given by her husband.
She enjoys going out with Milt without the knowledge of her husband. She is impressed by the character of Milt and feels safe in the hands of Milt.

Again the Indianness inside her makes her uncomfortable because having an affair after the marriage is considered as a sin in the Indian Culture. She hides from her husband, the extra-marital relationship with Milt and so she feels guilty. The violence which she sees in the television starts inside her. She attempts to disclose the extra-marital affair to her husband so one night, after watching television programme, Dimple accompanied Amit to the kitchen but she gets irritated while he sat on the counter and spilled sugar on the counter. This again gives her an impression that it is impossible to live with him. She murders her husband as she is misled by the popular American culture. A sense of guilt is missing from Dimple’s thoughts when she thinks of Amit’s murder. In fact she looks for a defence for the act.

Thus, she turns a rebellion and interrupts all stereotyped behaviour of Indian womanhood. When Dimple is seduced by Milt, her isolation and hopelessness becomes even more severe. At last Dimple frees herself from the marriage bond by stabbing Amit seven times. Her illicit relationship with Milt seems to find an identity in America or in other words, her Americanised identity. Thus it is the cross-cultural confrontation which strengthens her confusion and turns the violence inside out and she ends up as murderess. Jasbir Jain comments: “It is difficult to treat the novel as a study of cultural shock for even while in Calcutta, Dimple is an escapist and lost in her private world of fantasy” (9).

Once Dimple somewhat purposely engages in the romances not only with Milt but with the liberty and uniqueness he signifies, she is very obviously breaking away from the Indian middle-class gendered separation of the public and the private, male and female spaces. To get the identity of America and to adopt the culture she
walks, eats and sleeps with Milt. By crossing the limits she kills her husband and loses her sanity.

She kills her husband to escape from her sense of guilt at her adultery and with an awkward logic she decides to hide his body in the freezer. Her collected complaints against the world, of which Amit is the visible symbol, release the unhelpful dynamisms in her. She wavers between killing herself and killing Amit, and give importance for the latter. Swain says, “The murdering of Amit is an assertion of her American identity” (125).

It remains undoubtedly that the massive changes between the pulling out of Dimple from one culture and putting in of her in another created a sense of instability and insecurity in her which incited her to this surprising act. There is a huge difference between revenge and justice. Mukherjee speaks in an interview with Hogan “... in order to make my concept of divine justice, which sometimes involves great violence, understandable to the reader, I’d have to dig into and share the Hindu mythology of the Goddess Devi worshipped in Bengal who was created by the cosmic spirit...” (Hogan)

The end of the novel is twisted into a tragedy. Dimple with a lot of expectation and hope enters into the new world but everything is upside down in the new world. Her dreams shattered and becomes neurotic. An unexpected ending came to the protagonist. Many critics understand the final act of murder as an ironic twist of ‘sati’, the traditional self-sacrifice of an Indian wife on the funeral pyre of her husband. Actually, Dimple wants to be like a Sita in her teenage. She wants to be the ideal wife but becomes diverse wife because the diverse attitude in cultures makes her to take a violent action. The process of self-devastation is slowly acquired by the protagonist due to the external forces of ‘cultural Diversity’ in an alien country. According to
Nagendra Kumar, “Thus it is America which intensifies her confusion and turns the violence inside out and she ends up as a murderess” (59).

Concerning the murder of Amit, K. S. Narayan Rao postures a very appropriate question: “The novel raises an important question was the Indian wife happier with her limited freedom and greater docility or does she achieve happiness in her painful search for more individual freedom and in the process of murdering” (475). Many critics have seen Mukherjee’s protagonist is a tragic on the other hand unavoidable victim of the psychological lack of confidence of immigrant life and the passionate contact with American society.

C. L. Chua refers to “Wife as the story of weak-minded Bengali woman who migrates to New York with her engineer husband in search of a better life; but her sensibilities become so confounded by her changing cultural roles, the insidious television factitiousness, and the tensions of feminism that, ironically, she goes mad and kills her husband” (54-55). Chua supervises the fact that it is not really the contact with these American social phenomena that cause Dimple’s insanity, but her reactions to them merely reflect the vast contrast between American images of home, femininity and individuality and the socially accepted female identity. Dimple has to maintain to be able to identify with her peer group.

Commenting on the concluding part that is Dimple’s violent act of killing her own husband Mukherjee explains in an interview with Connell Michael; “so instead of committing suicide, turning the society-mandated violence inward, she in a misguided act, kills the enemy. So, of course, I am not a approving of murder. It’s meant to be a positive act, self-assertive” (45). Dimple’s journeys in search of real self and freedom from the limitations of Indian womanhood is put down by traditional
patriarchal culture. Mukherjee says in an interview, “They are no longer having to do what mother-in-law’s tyrannically forced them to do” (47).

The Tiger’s Daughter (1971), Wife (1975) and Darkness (1985) signify the issues of expatriation such as an outsider, an alienated man, displaced and caught in the duality of their national and cultural identity. Mukherjee’s migration to United States has prepared her realize herself as an immigrant. She tells Alison, “It is a tremendous relief after Canada . . . felt freed . . . melting pot theory . . . healthier attitude toward Indian immigrants than Canada” (29). This involvement of immigration and Canada’s expatriation is combined and echoed in the stories of Darkness. Darkness is devoted to Bernard Malamud, guide and family friend of Bharati Mukherjee. She has declared in an interview “I see a strong likeness between my writing and Bernard Malamud’s . . . Like Malamud I write about a minority community which escapes the ghetto and adapts itself to the pattern of dominant American culture . . . I admire his work . . . (it) gave me self-confidence to write about my own community” (27-28).

In Darkness, the characters are diasporas, whether expatriate or immigrant, from different South Asian countries, especially India. They belong to different religions, races, cultures, and different languages. These characters suffer from alienation or unfriendliness of expatriation. They would like to adapt into new culture but fail. It is a common feature amongst them. Darkness displays a variety of responses to migration which labels the characters as expatriate or immigrant.

“Tamurlane”, “The World According to Hsu”, “Isolated Incidents” are stories where migration takes place from India to Canada and in “Angela” the migration takes place from Bangladesh to the United States. In the stories such as “Visitors”, ‘Father”,

“Visitor” is a story of Vinita. She is an expatriate in the United States. Vinita resembles the character Dimple in *Wife*, Like Dimple she is caught between two worlds, two identities. She travels to the United States after the marriage because her husband works in there. She is confused in the new world, due to the past cultural ethics of her homeland. There is a conflict between her old self and the new self. Sailen Kumar, her husband has typical mind setup because he specified to his parents that “(he) wanted a youngish bride (who could) speak fluent English and bear him two three children” (DN 170). His Indianness makes him consider the wife as a child-providing machine.

Sailen’s family friends such as Mrs. Mehra and Mrs. Thapar, Sailen visits the house and says her “We may have minted a bit of money in this country, but that doesn’t mean we’ve let ourselves become Americans. You can see we’ve remained one hundred percent simple and ‘desi’ in customs” (DN 167-168). She is in a new world without rules. Her third visitor, Rajiv Khanna, a graduate student in history at Columbia University, an Indian immigrant, born-Indian, surprises her by his visit without invitation. He is at her house to ask for a dance performance. She is shocked and does not welcome him being a conventional Indian wife. “In India, she would feel uncomfortable … if she found herself in an apartment alone with a man not related to her” (DN 167). She knows that she is in America, so doesn’t slam the door looking at the unfriendly fellow and thinks “make up one’s rules, one has to seize the situation?” (DN 167). She is prepared to change, transform herself because “she is cut off from her moorings” (DN 166) and ready to pave her own path in the new world, but knows Sailen doesn’t like “to be Pakka American” (DN 170). When Vinita offers Rajiv a tea
she praises her and seduces her. She is not shocked at this. Like Dimple “. . . she has put herself on the television screen in the roles of wives taken in passion. . . “ (DN 171). She is a thoroughly aroused woman. Here is the clash between two cultural ways of life and love. Her double consciousness, the two selves - Indian and American make her suffer. She manipulates Sailen’s friends with her youth, beauty and charm. But she has no idea that “she is on the verge of hysteria” (DN 174). Thus Vinita leads an expatriate life in America and she undergoes the issues of a diaspora.

The story “A Father” ventures the violence of a father in contradiction of his own daughter. He is caught between his parents’ ethnic beliefs and values that of the conventional society. For traditionally dissimilar expatriates, the difficulties of personality formation may arise as a product of diverse cultural ethics and standards, social patterns, parents’ misunderstandings and fears, language problem, skin colour etc. Mr. Bhowmick is a middle aged, middle class Bengali from Ranchi, Bihar. He is a chief engineer in the United States, a well-behaved, thoughtful, contemporary and intellectual but superstitious. He does not want to return to Ranchi, his native place because “He hated Ranchi. Ranchi was no place for dreamers . . . Mr. Bhowmick had dreamt of success abroad . . . success had meant to him escape from the constant plotting and bitterness that wore out India’s middle class” (DN 65). He is ignorant of the method of his American success, otherwise he would not venture into America.

Babli, a twenty years old girl is the daughter of Mr. Bhowmick. She is an electric engineer, cheerful, stubborn and liberated, born in Bombay but brought up in Detroit i.e. native and alien. Before her marriage she becomes pregnant and Mr. Bhowmick blames his wife for this. This made him to induce his past that he does not love his wife. Due to his fate he marries her. She is the daughter of a Barrister. She is a “plain girl with wide, flat plank of body and myopic eyes” (DN 68). The Barrister
has given “all the expenses . . . Two years study at Carnegie Tech” (DN 68). Two years in Pittsburgh on Mr. Bhowmick’s student visa they have lived there. It has transformed Mrs. Bhowmick from a flexible girl to an ambitious woman. They return to Ranchi, he has a good job in Ranchi, Government engineer, and then worked in Bombay. On Mrs. Bhowmick’s insistence Mr. Bhowmick is forced to apply for permanent resident status in the United States. With the arrival of the green card, he has left Bombay for America with his wife and daughter. It is “one more start” (DN 70). He has found a better job with General Motors in Detroit as Metallurgist but he feels lonely and uprooted there. Loneliness is the result of expatriate’s alienation and nostalgia. He is nostalgic.

After settling in Detroit too, he worships the benefactor goddess of his family: Kali Mata, “the goddess of wrath and vengeance” (DN 60). He is disrespectful of his family women – his wife and daughter. Babli cannot ease him, “she wasn’t womanly or tender the way that unmarried girls had been in the wistful days of his adolescence” (DN 63). She can sing in the voice of Lata Mangeshkar, can dance, but “these accomplishments did not add up to real femininity” (DN 63). Mr. Bhowmick is too superstitious and believes in ill-omens like sneezing at the start of journey bringing bad luck. One day, when he is ready to go to office, his neighbour named Al Stazniak sneezed and it makes Mr. Bhowmick to return home and came to know the truth of his daughter, “a woman vomiting in the privacy of the bathroom could mean many things” (DN 66). Babli is vomiting, “his daughter . . . untender, unloving daughter whom he couldn’t love and hadn’t tried to love . . . was not, in the larger world of Detroit, unloved” (DN 66). He knows the truth that his “. . . brisk, bright engineer daughter was pregnant” (DN 66). She represents the second generation diaspora. It is the way to survive in the United States, ‘native’ and ‘alien’ at a time, for whom
Mr. Bhowmick is frightened of the disgrace that has been took by Babli’s pregnancy. He think through of abortion however predicts “a chubby baby boy on the rug crawling to his granddaddy” (DN 67). He has celebrated and cursed her daughter for her illicit conception. He expects that Babli will reveal the truth so since May, he waits till July but she keeps it as a secret. One day in July Babli and her mother shouted at each other and he watches her, keeps silence, prays and expects that the son-in-law would be a ‘white’. Mr. Bhowmick blames his wife, who induces him to come to America. With the Indianness which resides inside him makes to blame others for faults, without accepting the responsibility. He thinks “Girls like Babli were caught between rules - they were too smart, too impulsive for a backward place like Ranchi, but not tough, not smart enough for sex-crazy places like Detroit” (DN 72). When Babli’s parents enquire regarding the father of the unborn girl she replies them, “The father of my baby is a bottle and syringe. Men louse up your lives. I just want a baby” (DN 72). Mr. Bhowmick turns violent, strikes her stomach hard with the rolling pin. “Mr. Bhowmick lifted the rolling pin … hard on the dome of Babli’s stomach” (DN 73). He has killed his daughter.

He had conflict between his traditional values and the new American values and he is strongly caught between the two worlds. It is his Indianness that made him not to accept the pregnancy of her daughter before marriage. This shows the helplessness of an expatriate. The understanding of these values is difficult to an expatriate because he is not willing to forget the traditional cultures. He is largely an expatriate, but his wife is half-expatriate, half immigrant and daughter, Babli is an immigrant.
In the story “Hindus”, the narrator of the story is Leela Lahiri. She is an immigrant. She adopted the western culture but H. R. H. Maharajah Patwant Singh of Gotlah, the Himalayan Princely state, now the Purveyor and exporter in New York, is an expatriate. These two persons are Diasporas from India, who migrated to North America and presently live in America. Leela knows diaspora does require cultural adaptation for survival and development. Her name ‘Leelah’ is shortened to ‘Leela’. H. R. H. Maharajah Patwant Singh of Gotlah represents his esteem being ex-Maharajah. It is the American method to use shortened first names. Likewise Patwant is shortened as ‘Pat’. He is the family friend of Leela Lahiri but she disowns all relationship with him in America. He is the victim of political changes in India, “The indignities, the atrocities, the nights in jail . . . never forget . . . death . . . The new powers-that-be are peasants . . . they cannot know . . . suffer . . . the country is in the hands of tyrannical peasants” (DN 138). He tells Leela their country is changed totally. “The dhotiwallahs . . . they would wrap themselves in lion- clothes if it got those more votes. No integrity, no finesse . . . The country has gone to the dogs” (DN 135). The communists put him in jail like a common illegitimate person for his smuggling – he has sold the family inheritances to Americans. He thinks Indians do not know the value of it. “Americans understand our things better than we do ourselves” (DN 135). But Leela does not believe that modern India should have such treatment. He bitterly tells her how he spent three nights in the jail like a dacoit. He blames his country and says “It has driven us abroad with whatever assets we could salvage” (DN 135). Pat was a juggler at one time. He parades his pain and grievance. Pat writes Memoirs of a Modern Maharajah and as an author he feels, “writing is what keeps me from going through death’s gate . . . atrocities . . . jail” (DN 138). He considers the writing as a ‘nirvan’ for him. This action of writing memoir is his
looking back, at the past, homeland, which specifies his nostalgia. Leela appreciates him declaring that his book sounds dynamite. Jasbir Jain says, this story takes “a complex view of the double vision of expatriates—both a looking forward and a yearning backward” (51).

In the story “The Lady from Lucknow” a clear idea of diasporic experiences of life is revealed. Nafeesa Hafeez is the narrator and protagonist, who is born in India to an army doctor, brought up in Pakistan and married at the age of seventeen to a good man named Iqbal from Islamabad. He works for IBM and due to his work he has travelled and made homes in Lebanon, Brazil, Zambia, and France and eventually in Atlanta, Georgia, America. They have two children, for whom India and Pakistan are “dingy cities” and it is the usual response of the second generation of Diasporas to their homeland.

Nafeesa’s life in Atlanta is different somehow. Her husband, Iqbal, is jealous, a typical orthodox provider, who warns her “Americans are crazy for sex” (DN 24). James Beamish, sixty five year old father of five daughters and grandfather of two grandsons, white lover of Nafeesa, a flatterer makes her feel “beautiful, exotic, responsive” (DN 25). The world appears “happy enough place” with James for Nafeesa. They meet first time at “a reception for foreign students on the Emory University Campus” (DN 25). Nafeesa has volunteered as host, receives an Indian Muslim: Amina from Lucknow. Amina a large, bold woman, whose husband works at CDC, claims Nafeesa as a country woman. She is an expatriate, who responds, “It is very odd that the pumpkin vegetable should be used for dessert no? We are using it as vegetable only. Chhi! Pumpkin as a sweet. The very idea is horrid” (DN 27). The words used in her response – ‘no’ at the end of a statement, and ‘chhi’ to express disgust and the whole response and its meaning establish Amina’s identity as an
Indian expatriate. Since James’ first meeting Nafeesa can’t get him out of her mind. He calls her, meets her, and invites her for lunch, which makes Nafeesa think – “I have seen the world but I haven’t gone through the American teenage rites of making out” (DN 29). His advanced openness in love has surprised Nafeesa. She acknowledges “Love and freedom drop into our lives” (DN 30). Being a South-Asian Nafeesa feels strange at the thought – what his daughters will say “if they knew their father, at sixty-five, was in bed with a married woman from Lucknow? I feared and envied their jealousy more than any violence in my husband’s heart” (DN 31).

The rootlessness and homelessness make her feel “at home everywhere, because she is never at home anywhere” (DN 31). She is a traveller of the world, who has to feel at home without home. Nafeesa has ventured in America by adultery. America has given her the “emotions to break though . . .” (DN 24). But Nafeesa is unsuccessful. In the process of Americanization she is neither what she was in her homeland nor quite American will she be in new adopted land due to her Islamic upbringing and her own craving for romantic and sexual fulfilment.

In “Nostalgia”, the protagonist is Dr. Manny Patel. He is a psychiatrist resident at a state hospital in Queens, New York. He is born in Gujarat and lives in the United States for the past thirteen years. He is married to an American nurse Camille. He feel bitter about being called a ‘Paki’ and “had chosen to settle in the US . . . Not one for nostalgia, not an expatriate but a patriot . . . enjoyed his house . . . car . . . loved his family . . . acquisitiveness . . . with love: . . . (his) son was at Andover costing…twelve thousand dollar a year” (DN 98-99). He thinks that America is very virtuous for him because of the things he has given up: boyhood emotions. To an extend he burnt his India society membership card after his marriage. At the hospital, he is professionally friendly with Indian doctors because he knows, “he
would forever shuttle between the old world and the new one . . . had been reborn when he became an American citizen in Manhattan Courthouse” (DN 101). He often says that he has killed his Indian self to be reborn as American self and he is assimilated to the new world. But in the inner mind he is an expatriate and longs for his parents, especially his father, and cannot explain this loss to his American wife. He is crazy for New York but lives with fear that his father would die before he could be free from New York because he is the one and only child of his parents. With the Indianness within himself made him to feels it is his duty to go back, look after the parents, who allowed him to join medical training in America. “They loved him with the same intense, unexamined way he loved his own boy” (DN 100). A Gujarati farmer’s son is now an entrepreneur, ambitious and greedy.

Dr. Manny Patel has a dream girl and named her as Padma. She is named after Lotus related to Hindu Goddess. One day he saw the girl near a park and invites her for dinner as he is suffering from anxiety and impatience for the Goddess, an immigrant from a decent Hindu family. He longs for Indian food and used to dine in the Indian restaurant, Shajahan on Park Avenue, to dine and then expensive hotel above restaurant, 7th floor room- “The Indian food, an Indian woman in bed,” the very idea made him “nostalgic . . . he wished he had married an Indian woman, one that his father had selected” (DN 111). He is a victim of nostalgia. He tried to be an American without changing his Indian mind-set.

The story “Saints” is a portrait of Shawn Patel, the only son of Dr. Manny Patel of ‘Nostalgia’. Shawn lives with his divorcee mother, in a college town Upstate, New York. His mother, a working woman, now loves Wyne Latta. Shawn feels now “At fifteen I’m too old to be a pawn between them and too young to get caught in problems of my own. I’m in state of grace” (DN 146). Shawn was sent to boarding
school for two years to improve Mr. and Mrs. Patel’s relations but they could not compromise. Shawn is the victim of their divorce, as they were of the two cultures, countries, values and different natures.

Shawn himself tries to understand the mother’s feelings. She loves and admires Wyne, a writer and janitor in the college, a clumsy man. He once has seen him with a Yugoslav woman in Upper Broadway. He feels “mom should have had a daughter. The two women could have consoled each other” (DN 153). Shawn is cut off from his Indian father, alienated and tries to join the multicultural friends like Tran, who has a step-father. Like Tran Shawn “... learned to discount homey scenes” (DN 150). Tran miserably tells Shawn that he wants to go to Houston because of the parents, “Things always go bad between parents” (DN 152).

Shawn receives his Dad’s Christmas gift - the two books - reproductions of Moghul paintings that his Dad loves, and the other is about Hindu saints. The second book is about the vision with the inscription “May this book bring you as much happiness as it did me when I was your age” (DN 153). Shawn imitates the detachment, the ‘still point’ of the saint who had seen Divine Mother in all earthly things. The saint often lives in a trance.

Dr. Patel is a mystery for Shawn as saints are mysterious. Under the impact of saints’ book his own experience makes him console Tran like a preacher. In the month of November, when Tran accompanies him to his home, at midnight Shawn becomes somebody else’s son. “In a state of perfect grace”, Shawn is disguised in his mother’s clothes, face painted with her cosmetics, ‘like the Hindu saint’, he walks in a trance, goes at Batliwalla’s home to reach out to a fellow saint. When he returns, he sees his mother and her lover Wyne quarrelling and fighting. He feels “like a god, overseeing lives” (DN 157). Then the mother asks Wyne to get out of the house and
he leaves her, suddenly the mother stares at Shawn and is surprised, “My god, what have you done to your face, poor baby” (DN 158). She scrapes the muck of cheekblush, lipstick, eye shadow etc. Shawn in a trance like a saint feels strong and says, “How wondrous to be visionary. If I were to touch someone now, I’d be touching god” (DN 158).

His search is to find the perfection, wholeness, in this quest, he is assisted by the book, the Indian book presented by his father. He has the model of Indian saints to carve out his identity, the saintly behaviour of himself. It is a reply to the broken homes, divorce of parents, false love and violence. He is sensitive; alienated near to hysteria, hence the solution he finds in the multicultural friends and the secret life. The failure to assimilate on the part of the first generation of diaspora Dr. Manny Patel can be a concern for the next generation.

Mukherjee’s characters of second generation of diaspora have different problems. Shawn is the second generation diaspora. He is born in America of mixed races (non-white and white, Indian and American, Guajarati-Christian). He is American – it is his given identity. But his spirit is Indian, in his sainthood. His attachment with the father is a metaphor for his connection with India and the impact of Indian culture. Double consciousness, duality, and double standards of lives make him complex. His identity is a dilemma for him.

The story “Imaginary Assassin” shows Gurucharan Singh, a nine year old second generation diaspora boy reporting his old Grandfather’s account of his escape from India in the stormy days after the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi. The Grandfather boasts of having killed Gandhi on October 2, 1948, which is a wrong date and makes the Grandfather’s claim dubious. The boy, however, thinks his Grandfather to be a saint. He wants to be an activist. Grandson and Grandfather both are Indian in
their spirit, victim of political situation like Jews, the Diaspora with expatriate identity. After all it is an imaginary assassin. Mukherjee, through this story, indicates the factor which convert Indians into expatriates. During the partition days like Hindus and Muslims, Sikhs also migrated to various countries. They were the victims of their national political event, though they were brave and victorious. They all hold Gandhi responsible for their dislocations, displacements, homeless situation, and the imposed othernesses. Possibly all of them wanted to assassinate the Mahatma. Their monologue is decoded in this story through grandfather’s imaginary assassin.

The stories – “The World According to Hsu”, “Isolated Incidents’ and “Tamurlane” symbolise the expatriates’ characteristics of Indians or South Asian Diasporas in North America, particularly in Canada. Ratna Clayton, Dr. Mrs. Supariwalla, chef Gupta are the sufferers of racial bias, they are unfriendly due to their expatriate consciousness in Canadian culture. These are the unpleasant stories of rootlessness. Mr. Bhowmick and Dr. Manny Patel from “A Father” and “Nostalgia” are Diasporas for material development, financial improvement but troubled by past ethos, the morals of native land. However Dr. Patel marries a white woman, needs an Indian woman. Mr. Bhowmick approves with Indian values of family life. Their children are the legitimate members of family and society. But Babli, Mr. Bhowmick’s daughter, has developed fake, fertilized pregnancy out of her hatred for male domination. Expatriate Bhowmick kills her; it is disastrous end outstanding to his situation being expatriate caught into double consciousness.

The second generation of diaspora who are American by birth, Shawn Patel and Gurucharan from the stories “Saints” and “Imaginary Assassin” are Indian in their spirit and tempted by Indian saints. Nafessa from “The Lady from Lucknow” and Vinita from “Visitors” are the two ‘mail-order brides’, Indian by birth, travel to the
United States with their husband. They are excited to come out of the limitations of
the past ethos and attempt at liberty sex, the extra-marital relationships in the United
States however are unfulfilled in their attempt. They attempt to adapt but have no
completion and therefore face reversion of an expatriate. Angela and Leela Lahiri
from “Angela” and “Hindus” are unconventional and adapted but do not separate
from their past, the homeland. These representations of expatriates and half adapted
immigrants in Darkness show the artistic vision of Mukherjee.

Each and every culture has its particular power and faults. The expatriates
frequently attempt to find sync between the native ethos and the adopted one. This has
leads to psychological abnormality that are alien to both the culture as far as possible
even while living in an alien soil. Verma says, “The Western environment with its
accelerated pace of life gives thrills sensations and excitement, but it cannot provide
happiness or peace” (56). In The Tiger’s Daughter, Tara’s efforts to adopt to an
American society are restrained by her refusal and dislike on Indian ways of life.
After her return from the United States, in India, she finds nothing to her liking. Once
she admired everything in India but her stay at Vassar has changed her attitude
towards the Indian life. The journey of Tara finally leads to her sense of isolation,
unhappiness and the tragic end. In Wife, the problem is reversed. Dimple’s problem is
not only with her husband, but also with her mind, which struggles to adapt to the
American way of life. Dimple is physically disturbed personality. To withstand the
struggle in her life, she does not have the required mental resistances. She becomes
disillusioned on all planes- physical, mental and emotional. So at the end, in the
extreme state of depression, she kills her husband. She murders him as a declaration
of her American identity. Thus, Dimple is faced with the problem of the loss of
culture due to her journey to the alien land. The murky side of expatriates’ life is
depicted by Mukherjee in *Darkness*. They have left the homeland and try to assimilate to the host land ethos but often they are interrupted with the past and fails to adapt the new land.

Truly these two novels, *The Tiger’s Daughter*, *Wife* and the collection of short story *Darkness*, deal with the issues of expatriation. The main characters are always in dilemma of two cultures. They suffer from quest for identity when they lived in alien land because the adaptation of foreign culture was not so an easy process to them. Out of fear of losing their identity they reject to intermingle with the foreign culture and to assimilate into a new culture. In their lives the cultural assimilation does not occur and so they are comfortable in the neither lands – the native land as well as the adopted land. Being an Expatriate, they had a high general risk for mental health problems, including internalizing problems, externalizing problems, cultural dislocation, stress, and high demand for adjustment and adaptation.

Mukherjee has beautifully portrayed the inner feelings of the expatriates in her fictional works *The Tiger’s Daughter*, *Wife* and *Darkness*. The expatriates undergo a lot of problems like nostalgia, alienation, cultural clash, identity crisis, double consciousness, racial discrimination which lead them to stage of Immigration.