Chapter -5

Romen Basu’s Achievement through Diasporic Dilemma

5.1 Romen Basu as an Indian Diasporian:

Diaspora is a subject not just related to literature but on the contrary it also relates to Philosophy. Thus speaking diaspora philosophically it is a literary study, which has arrived from the Greek word dispersion. Etymologically it means dispersion as well as scattering and metaphorically means scattering and sowing of seeds across which literary means giving something yours to the newland. As it started with Greeks later on referred to Jews and considering the literary form. It strictly refers to the Jewish people who lived outside their country, which led to cross cultural agglomeration with those residing in different countries and mixing with them. These days diaspora has become a very important as well as academic topic of discussion, this is because it is just not confined to literature but it has spread its wings to other fields of study like sociology, philosophy etc it is a process where people migrate from one place to another due to various reasons. It may be due to unemployment, business and trade. Originally diaspora was for expansion with wider horizon as it had been used for expatriates, refugees, immigrants and exiles. But later on it spread its wings with different aspects like business and trade as well.

Indian diaspora as discussed has become a very interesting subject these days; Indian writers no doubt have given it a different term like migration, immigration, dispersion, refugees, and so on. As we say diaspora is dispersion or scattering it isn’t just scattering of people but as people scatter along with them they will carry their social and culture patterns, which has its roots in India. This leads to revival of renaissance of Indian culture. Though the writer has experienced certain things in different manner but they all have a common experience in life, they have a feeling of being away from homeland, and creating an imaginary homeland which they will have to return one day. With this they always try to relate their arbitrary communal consciousness and feeling of acceptance which can be defined by the existence of such a relationship. Even though the feeling of acceptance is fulfilled but these protagonist are themself in dilemma as their people back home would accept them or not on their return therefore to fulfil their needs and satisfaction they have poured their
dilemma on their partners by imposing on them their religious and cultural taboos like forcing them to wear a saree cover their heads in front of elders so on and so forth. These things were also prevailing in the writer's mind as he too had married and outsider, therefore he portrays by force through his protagonist on the female characters. This is a true Diasporic dilemma as per the researcher, no doubt all the female characters are drawn from different religions and each one abides to the Bengali custom without arguing with any of the protagonist and each one accepts it readily. This is nothing but truely Indian culture as for Indian women wherever she may be she will always try to make her man happy no matter whatever be the situation. This shows Basu’s all female characters wherever they are residing whether it be east or west once they get married they become so much dependent on their male counterparts even if they are cared by them or not they do perform their rights for their husband this is again the caring nature shown by the Indian females in the Indian scenario as well as their Indianess.

As the researcher speaks about Indian Diaspora it is about those who have migrated and settled in foreign land, but for them it is very difficult to be apart from their homeland and form a different group of their own and preserve their culture. As such Indians have travelled all over the world and have formed substantial minority communities in Asian countries as well as in other countries like Canada, Australia, the U.K and the U.S.A. in fact settling here has made them mingle and interact with different cultures and understand its dynamics. These things have helped to create Indian Diaspora and this has helped the writers to create a new literature as Diasporic literature. Discussing about diaspora as a researcher, would like to give an account as to how Indian immigrants gave more preference to economic integration rather than cultural assimilation, among these many gave up their things and adjusted with the host land so as to be accepted by the host country. This has made the writers to speak about the dynamic culture, for those who easily accepted the host land. But for those writers who couldn’t adjust with the host land or in fact not ready to leave their culture have created new literature the diaspora writing. Trying to remember their homeland and have written stories about either people who are residing their and searching for their roots or written about homeland as they missed those things in the host land. The most important thing they miss is their language; therefore they speak in their mother tongue considering it that they are preserving their culture. But soon they realize that there is no connection between language and culture, thus they then start searching for something new where their feelings and desires are explored and that is in literature which is called Diaspora literature. This is the way they started projecting their agony as well as anger towards the new society which they accepted and it gave them the feeling of rootlessness, dislocation,
disillusionment and many other things. Behind all this their main purpose was to show that they felt as they were accepted by the host society. It also proclaims that the Indian diaspora is sweat and toil which brought them tears, as they had achieved a lot through education and progressed economically. The Diasporic writers are no doubt creative, but in their writings one feels the anguish and pain yet they speak with openness, about two things their joy for achieving many things and a pain of being away from their home land.

As we look back to the dawn of Indian English literature the pioneers of this were R.K.Narayan, Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao, Nirad Chaudhari, among these we can even consider R.K.Narayan and Nirad Chaudhari as diaspora writers for they too had lived abroad whatever be the purpose and can be called as expatriates only difference was R.K.Narayan didn’t stay back long as an expatriate and start his writing there. But he returned to his homeland after completion of his work tenure, and on his return he began to write in his homeland about the things that had happened in the past during the time of, Britishers therefore he isn’t considered as a diaspora writer. Whereas Nirad Chaudhari he didn’t returned to his homeland but on the contrary lived in United Kingdom and did write from there itself about the pre independence times, therefore he was different and his stories were also different which cannot be labelled as Diaspora writing.. Whereas my author is the writer of late sixties therefore he belongs to the third generation writers and as he stayed abroad but wrote about his homeland therefore the researcher would very excitingly like to lable him as a diaspora writer of second generation which no one has called him till present time. No doubt he belongs to the group of writers like Arun Joshi, Bharti Mukherjee, M.V.Rama Sarma, Ruskin Bond, Chaman Nahal, Raji Narasimhan, Sasthi Brat and Veena Paintal.

As far as the on going research is concerened, no doubt prior to this research on Romen Basu researchers have done research on him and he has been labelled by them as a writer of domestic novels, psychological study writer or study on human relation. This can be considered because during their time may be the word diaspora was not in vogue, though there are writers of his time. Like Bharti Mukherji and Sasthi Brat who are considered and even labelled as writers of diaspora thus the researcher would like to call him a diaspora writer. This is because after doing a thorough study based on his selected novels the researcher came to a conclusion that many things stated by the author resemble the Diasporic writing. Besides this the writer has moved a lot at international level and many things and from that prospects he has stated certain things in these novels which resemble a lot to diaspora literature.as well as a diaspora writer is the one who lives abroad and concentrates
on the problems and situations which he has come across and experienced that have a tinge of cross-cultural or cross civilization passage, besides only such type of crossing would result into uniqueness as diaspora. Not only had this taken place, in his life as revealed so openly through his characters, even if there is some sort of tension between the source and the cultures of those targeted. Then only displacement and conflict which is considered as diaspora is brought forth. Here Romen Basu has shown this among the people of one nation itself, the people have come out of their country and are residing in a foreign land where they are very much involved with other country’s culture, social setup as well as language. But on the other hand they don’t tend to leave away their culture. No doubt their purpose of coming is different as we see in *Your life to Live* Ashoke and Zarine who are in the west for a different reason. Ashoke has come to settle and earn a lot of money. Indeed it happens he becomes a very good business man, but not the case with Zarine she has come to acquire higher education and then return home after achieving it. She wants to return so as to create a different society a changed society, as she is again and again saying from the very beginning. Even her parents agree that she wanted to give a new outlook to the society. That is what she even tells Ashoke when she meets him in fact she had made a challenge with Ashoke, from the beginning when she had met him. Saying I would create in you a changed Ashoke, therefore the purpose of the writer Romen Basu was just not cross culture among different civilizations but on the contrary to show cross culture among the people of same country. Coming from different parts of the country having different religion and how do they differ. This type of achievements are really great with Romen Basu, for he might have never ever thought of it to give it a name as diaspora for he wrote novels so as to give pleasure for reading and it has turned out as a different form.

**5.2 Romen Basu’s Dilemma**

According to the researcher no doubt this is diaspora but it seems to be in a dilemma, as the writer speaks about his first novel *House Full of People* we find there is dispersion and displacement within the family, within the country. Here the dispersion and displacement is of different type. Dispersion is about the families being separated from the big joint family which is full of brothers and their children and uncles and aunts and nieces and nephews, there is a crack developed among the people of the house as no one wants to take the burden of the other member as the elders had maintained the culture of joint family system. This happens after the death of Mr. Sudhin the head of the Roy family. And displacement where the two male characters leave the home, so as to achieve something in life and later on they return but with a dilemma as to whether their family would accept them or not. The
characters disintegrate for the good of the family, as they were totally under the influence of the British society and English education. They wanted to bring a change in the family, as this is writer’s first novel as he says this has a lot of resemblance with his own family like joint family system, and it is run by the head of the family. Besides girls not being educated but when they are got married it should all be in traditional way and the groom should belong to reputed family as well as highly qualified. This shows though he has moved to the west and sitting there he can’t forget his home therefore a diaspora novel but in dilemma as he couldn’t change the society but through the characters he is trying to change the society, therefore the researcher calls it a Diasporic dilemma. At last he has shown the change in the family through the younger generation but they too seem to be in dilemma, as they even can’t bring a change directly but they ought to go beating round the bush from the beginning of their life till the end. Indeed the culture and social set up is too much it shows the writer himself is into it as seen for diaspora writing. It revolves round the characters. There are a series of setbacks and lot of disunity among the characters which gives rise to failure of joint family, in spite of being bounded in culture and tradition throughout the passages at every step but a mutual bonding among the present generation with a spirit of mutual support. The manner in which the writer has narrated each incident in the novel it shows that he himself has under gone the pain of Mr. Sudhin or may be some of his near and dear one has suffered that pain. Besides he has tried to show as a predominant character in thematic way as well as structurally. For throughout the novel he tries to take each and every member together and go ahead, he doesn’t bother to carry the burden of the entire family and go ahead. At several instances his wife Prabha even warns him but he always consoles her and goes along with each and every member of the family. He is the sole predominant force of unity in the family. He devoted his life to sustain the prestige of the family and even infused good manners in the younger generation. The presentation of two generations shows the struggle between the forces of unity as well as disruption. The first part reveals about the force of unity and tradition till Mr. Sudhin’s death which dominates and the second part narrates about the force of division after Mr. Sudhin’s death. There are lot of setbacks and crises leading to disunity and division. No doubt it does teach the readers a lesson about living in joint family is like a support, with security and the spirit of mutual support. In fact we can say that Basu probes into the minds of his characters and presents them thoroughly, rather than leaving it to the reader to probe into imagination. He also confines himself as if he has even experienced thought or felt by a single character or by most of them. One can even say that he traces them of their thoughts, especially when they are in some sort of conflict, hesitation, dilemma
inability to communicate with others or introspection. This isn’t the situation in his another novel *Your Life to Live* on the contrary in this he isn’t dramatic at all he has tried to show standing beside them and tries to divert the mind of the reader between him and his characters. Basu has used the devices of recollection, flashback and memory digression so as to give instances of the past and connect it with the present. No doubt he is so much into his characters such that he makes them look real with the setting and atmosphere. As such he has used characters from the western set up as well as eastern background but each of them fits so well in its place making his narration so real like. Each of the characters Western as well as Eastern all are well placed in their own way without disturbing the other as and when they need to be spoken about they speak accordingly as for the poor girls belonging to different parts of the society like Kajali, and Indu but they always know their limits and never try to break their barriers. Same is the westernised society we have Nell and Shirley they are also aware about their standards and what to do they never cross their limits but Basu has always tried to maintain the standards. Besides maintaining the standards he has also tried to show two types of forces like unity and disruption. In the first part he has shown and maintained unity and tradition which always dominates the novel while Sudhin is alive. Whereas in the later part we see there is disruption throughout the novel leading to division of the family. His style is very apt to discuss its plot construction; there are series of setbacks and crises which lead to disunity and division. Through the joint family system he is trying to represent tradition and the values of group living- unity security and the spirit of mutual support.

Coming to the second novel *Your Life to Live* this is another diaspora novel in great dilemma from the very beginning; it is located in the west with the eastern characters. The characters though deeply rooted in their own culture and society; don’t want to mingle with outside world. Even though they are far away from their society and culture but from the very beginning of the novel we find the protagonist as he meets the heroine speaking about religion and culture. As such it should be the female characters who would be speaking about culture and religion, but it is other way round it is the male character that is bounded into culture and religion trying to impose his feelings and customs upon the girl. This shows his dilemma of not being deeply rooted into his culture, therefore searching for it the other way round. There is such a lot of conflict between the two as such the entire novel revolves round the two characters only. It is only at some instances we see family members involving but that is very short lived. Even there are good friends who give good guidance with respect to changing the personality of the protagonist. Here there is a boyhood friend of the protagonist who has acted as an eye-opener and even helped him in overcoming his limitations. There is
separation than reconciliation and cribbing over their return to homeland, thinking it would have been better if they wouldn’t have come back to home land they then realize that west was far better. Here it seems to some extent it focuses on the author’s dilemma also as to return or not to return after retirement. But through the characters reconciliation it was clear that he had found his answer as he writes about their accepting their mistake would have been better if they had stayed back. This also shows that there is ideal harmony between husband and wife and one should look at things from other person point of view. Even one can say that Romen Basu for sure is at dilemma for at every instance we find him trying to convince people from delineating specially at social level. From this his answer that he was not the person to return after his retirement. The greatest dilemma that was clear through this novel that he was not suppose to leave the west but stay back. The entire situation portrayed in the novel is also very situational as well as very realistic. The story is created in such a manner as the characters delineate giving rise to the scope of conflict between the Eastern and Western values, besides it also shows the husband wife conflict which had developed in American setting is resolved in the Indian setting. Their separation leading to erosion of their relationship and reconciliation getting self educated. We can also say this novel is least dramatic as the writer is continuously standing beside his characters therefore this way the reader’s attention is also divided between the characters and the writer. He uses flashbacks and memory digressions not only to give a glimpse of past events but also to connect the past with the present. One can say that the writer is in true sense a realist as in the manner he narrates his novels. He is purely a story teller for he fuses the documentary approach, his characters, settings, and atmosphere look very real like which makes his essence of realism. Though his characters come from different backgrounds like some belong to highly educated class and some to normal middle class, where as some from the lower middle class yet all present themselves as very realistic.

The third novel *Hours Before Dawn* is similar to the second novel this is also again a dilemma novel shifting from one country to another. When the story begins we find the hero and the heroine have come to London to acquire higher education and become something and return to their country for both are shown to have an aim in life. The heroine Kabita is a doctor and she wants to do something good for her country, while Mrinal too had interest in politics and wanted to do something good for his country. As the story revolves round the two characters they come close to each other get married there itself, they don’t have any issues related to marriage as previous novels also. Yet they are shown to be in dilemma as Mrinal’s mind changes and they return from the homeland considering it to be a better place.
Again as the writer has moved in real life from London to U.S.A. for betterment he implies the same to his characters in his novel. Only difference shown here is the heroine is very clear in her decisions. There are situations of jealousy by the protagonist which is a bitter part of the novel; this throws light towards being in dilemma. It is clear from my point of view this can happen only when a person doesn’t have faith in himself. The protagonist is never clear in his thoughts and words always shown to be jumping from one place to another in job, as being dissatisfied this again shows his dilemmatic nature. Whereas even when there are instances where the protagonist tells the heroine about his jealousy but it doesn’t affect her. This leads the researcher to call it a pure Diasporic dilemma novel. The end of the novel revealing the heroine’s words about not returning also gives a clear picture about its being a diaspora novel. These novels can be labelled as more of familial set up in diaspora as they speak about family and husband-wife relationship and moving from one place to another in search of family bonding. They are not in search of roots but the characters are given freedom at a very young age or they have acquired freedom, which they are not able to decide as to what they should do and how should it be done. Therefore we have a different type of diaspora as they want to have a new environment, new ways of life and new setting and create a new society of their own. Not only society in fact a new identity of their own in a new environment, to be called by their own names rather than go along with their family names and culture. Besides this one can even say that it always stands for positive values of life as love, harmony, hope and deep understanding but at some instances one can even say it lacks conception of form as the plot looks contrived, and moralizing loses its effect. Even the characters themselves reveal not through the fabric of the story, but due to long and dull monologues. This third novel of his *Hours Before Dawn* has a lot of resemblances with his second novel *Your life to Live*, as both have a single plot and scene of action, the couples undergo self education. The two Vietnamese women in *Hours before Dawn* prove as a help to the protagonist to overcome his problem of jealousy by looking at it with a different prospective. Also by portraying these Vietnamese women a little historical touch is also shown in the novel by bringing them he speaks about the Vietnam War, even the title suggest the heroine Kabita’s affirmation of life and her hope of having harmony between the two Mrinal and herself. By showing the East-West encounter and internationalism Romen Basu testifies that human contacts across cultures are one of the major concerns and has always been a state of dilemma which is the major concern of the researcher.

5.3 Romen Basu’s Diaspora and Society
This is very clear in the very first novel *House Full of People* Arun the eldest and Ranjit the youngest as they never keep on about the Roy family. But on the contrary always wanted to create a different form of society, a society which must have everything culture to religion but with a different outlook. As to be allowed to have freedom to do what one wants according to their own wish and will rather than being something imposed upon them. This is because if something taken up without force goes on and on for life time. With the second novel *Your Life to Live* there is domestic disharmony later reconciliation of values and attitude. As the two characters delineated there was a scope of conflict between Eastern and Western values which they represented in the setting similar to Indian. As they try to separate it makes their relationship weaker but is saved through the help of friends. Third novel again a domestic novel *Hours before Dawn* has also a different diaspora point along with culture and society at times it may affect the mentality of the people as staying away from home, this gives rise to psychological aspect in diaspora. There is different type of psychology shown here by Romen Basu there is jealousy hidden in man’s nature. According to him males are free where as females are to be caught up and kept in cage, though living in western society but the eastern thinking has not gone. Through this he has shown wherever man will go but his narrow minded taboo will not go or rather say you can’t change the mentality of a person. Mrinal and Kabita till the end didn’t come to terms with Mrinal his jealousy is the stem from his love. Human relationships are very well brought out in the novel.

In his third novel *A Gift of Love* here he has also shown East-west encounter as well as internationalism in human, social, religious, cultural and political spheres. Besides this he even portraits wanderings of true love in man woman relationship. There he is showing four stages from sexual escapades to physical love where even minds don’t meet, which further leads to mature love involving spontaneity as well as selfless sacrifice ending in defiant wedlock facing barriers of caste and community courageously. The author has very well openly spoken about love relationship how the protagonist doesn’t have any barriers even with a prostitute who is a foreigner, besides this he has also shown relations with English ladies and that tries to prove East-west encounter. “Don’t you have any ambition?” “Come to think of it, not really. I just want to be loved.” Pg 123 This shows the protagonist finds true solace in English ladies, this takes place as the protagonist didn’t get actual parentally love as his mother had passed away while he was a kid and father had spoilt him in his very childhood. Here the writer has shown love affairs in different ways first to satisfy the protagonist craving of what he didn’t get, later his motherly affection in his childhood. First he finds this with the English lady whom he abandons when he comes to know about her
getting pregnant. With this the writer has also tried to speak about the protagonist same like him first goes to London and from there he moves back to India and again back to London, while in India he falls in love with maid servant and announces of getting married to her. He is opposed which makes him depressed but the protagonist is shown to be very adamant from his very childhood, which keeps himself firm in taking his decisions. Later on in spite of everyone saying a no and even the maid saying a no towards their marriage as the maid was aware about the consequences, that she wouldn’t be accepted by the family he gets married to her and along with her flies back to London. But before he gets married to the Indian maid servant girl the protagonist Sukumal is shown to have lot of buts’ and if’s he is not as orthodox regarding religion and social life. As he falls in love with Nell as she gets pregnant being unaware of the situation gets scared leaves her and runs away, being love hungry finds Shirley a prostitute and later on with Shirley who force her to acquire a degree in law, but poor Shirley who is also unfortunate of the consequences gets succumbed to deadly diseases and passes away. As he was forced to do something in life by a person, whom he loved and also received love cannot face the situation gets baffled and returns to homeland again in search of true love. Here again he meets a maid servants daughter who is very understanding towards him and supports him, therefore he even proposes her, this is not acceptable by his elder brother who abuses him a lot by saying, “You are a scoundrel of the worst type. You should be horsewhipped. You should be thrashed from head to toe. You are a disgrace to the society, a disgrace to the human race. You were low to begin with and now you have brought with you from the west, their worst filth” pg 203-204. Again his father is worried about him for he new whatever came to his son’s head would fulfil it being headstrong therefore he also tries to stop him by telling him what is good and what isn’t, as he also says, “Tell me, why is it so difficult for you to live a normal life? Where did you get these eccentricities? From the time you were seven, no one had a moment’s peace with you” Pg 150. This was not enough even his sister-in-law starts humiliating him by saying bad words “You are a misfit everywhere. Your impulses are abnormal. You have a special talent for annoying those who love you because you have never learned to see anything from the other person’s point of view.” Pg 192. Being an adamant person without having feelings for anyone he puts into his head that he was going to get married to the maid servant’s daughter therefore before he gets married to Kajali he transforms her from an illiterate maid to an educated young girl like a polished diamond. And when he asks her about getting married to him, she is nervous for him but ready for herself as she says, “Yes I am nervous for you and happy for myself” pg.205 Here again the writer shows his
dilemma, though he has transformed a maid servant to a perfect young girl of high society but he himself is not very sure as to how a girl of lower class would incorporate with the higher class and if she is adjusting and coming up to the mark would the joint family of Sukumal accept her. He then goes on to make his dilemma stronger for the family members for the sake of their prestige and fame they may not be ready to consider Kajali as their family member. Sukumal’s father and elder brother admonishes Sukumal and even tell him that he had acquired this sort of filth from the west. This has a lot more to convey about the writer himself, as he was in the west to acquire and pass it on to his country to change his country through his ways and does so through his novels and its characters. But we can see real part of dilemma as of society not accepting it in the name of religion and prestige of the family. Here we can even see that the woman who should be orthodox is not so, for the elder sister-in-law of Sukumal is shown to be very extrovert and outspoken who stands by the side of Sukumal has also changed who was trying to support him going against her husband and father-in-law has gone against him.

With such things the researcher would like to contemplate that the author was realistic person at times for he expresses his feelings like the western society, through his excellent way of assimilating the meaning into form. His novel can be claimed as a real book in the sense of the term of realistic picture of the domestic as well as social scene of Indian society with political outlook of the west. He begins this novel also with a huge mansion of twenty three rooms and family of three brothers and eight servants, a chauffeur run car. As the protagonist’s mother had passed away he was deprived of love and feels lonely in the house. Hence to achieve those deprived things he tries to make friends with street urchins, through this Romen Basu shows that the joint family does not necessarily always provides one what he needs. One can also say that joint family is just a symbol of tradition and any act of defying the joint family is not acceptable by the members though certain things are never up to the mark, in fact it is a joint family for namesake. As first he has shown Sukumal falling in love with a prostitute is not acceptable even by the servants of the house. And later on even the prostitute, she rejects the plea this was a real dilemma according to the author as well as the prostitute girl this was the prevailing society in those days. Besides this the author can be called very realistic for the way he describes the streets and paints the canvas on them is very close to the fact in true sense as the way he narrates can’t be shown by anyone else. As he speaks in his novel *A Gift of love* about the gardens and house and people walking in the streets of Liverpool is very natural. He tries to compare streets of Calcutta with those of Liverpool where the protagonist has stayed and returned in search of true love this is pure
dilemma about the protagonist. There are other instances of historical touches so as to make it a pure east-west encounter; there are other instances of pure love as well. The language used is also not verbose or embellished; it is rather transparent, effective and probing. No doubt Basu has used British slangs also while talking about British characters this shows a clear picture of east-west encounter.

As we speak about diaspora and society there are four female characters two from the first novel Sheila and Chitra both coming from a different caste and society, then we have Zarina and Kajali who also belong to different strata of society. No doubt some belong to higher class and some to lower class, yet as per diaspora whatever may be the situation the author has very easily shown these female characters accepting the religion of the protagonist. They readily bring a change in their lifestyle by agreeing to clad as per the attire worn in the Bengali families covering their head in front of the elders and following the culture without question anyone. Whereas the male characters are shown so much stubborn in spite of their saying that they are modern and westernized then why this double standards of life style for the male characters this shows the dilemma of the male characters. This is according to the researcher a feeling of non acceptance of the male by their families or losing their Bengali identity. In fact as such the male are even not very religious minded yet Romen Basu through their behaviour towards their female partners shows how dilemmatic life these characters lived, in spite of being so well educated yet they had a fear in their mind of losing their identity, this makes the writers work as a pure diaspora literature, which is one of the major features of diaspora literature.

5.4 Romen Basu’s Diaspora and Culture:

The writer always uses different ways of expression like old and new, traditional and modern, rich and poor, love and hatred, etc. But the title suggest there is predominance of love in the novel, which in contrast turns to kaleidoscopic love as there are various characters with whom the protagonist falls in love but the circumstances are developed that each is denied of it by each of them. Only at the end he receives it from Kajali which in true sense was a gift of love, a love which can be said attained without any returns for he has moulded her from giving her education to bringing her out from that society where she wouldn’t have stood up on her own. Both the protagonist as well as the heroine has achieved that love which they wouldn’t have even thought of.

The fifth novel *Candles and Roses* also speaks about the east-west encounter in the realms of form and human relationship. Here again we have the protagonist who has moved to the west being a civil servant in an international organization, but is obsessed by the beauty
of a Parisian girl Monique, though he is married but his wife is not good at looks and therefore he gets attracted towards Monique. While he goes shopping and finds her, therefore he visits her work place again and again he goes where she is employed at Galerie de Paris. She is pursued by him, in spite of her ignoring him and not responding to him. Yet he visits her again and again and it is then they come close to each other. After coming close to each other they reveal their backgrounds about their family, their married life and many such things. This novel is a love triangle as on one side of the story is Pramila who represents the East, Samir’s wife and on the other side we have Monique a Parisian lover of Samir who represents the West. Samir stands at the centre and finally he is shown as typical Indian male chauvinist who abides by the eastern values of life which overcomes the western attraction. Romen Basu once again drifting towards the social culture as he finds affirmation in life through religion and culture, researcher would love to call a dilemma for whenever he has spoken about culture may be it is for himself or with his protagonist he proves weak and always drifts from his love affairs getting attracted towards Hindu views of life and always succeeds in glorifying the essence if Indian womanhood.

Here the plot is such it juxtaposing as well as contraposition the values of east and the west in all manners as in values of social life, romantic as well as philosophical life. Further we can also call this as a novel of character, where the characters do not be carried away by the plot but on the contrary they exist independently. They are not for the story but the action they undergo in the story is all by itself as if the they have created the story rather than story creating characters. It is a triangular relationship. We can say this for when Samir tells his wife Pramila about his love affair with Monique she is least disturbed, hence some reviewer has also commented that Basu’s hands have come warmly to life. We as readers also get engrossed to find the outcome of the novel.

After having physical relation with Samir, Monique getting very much attracted towards him and his Hindu philosophy, therefore, she has totally submitted herself to Samir as he had shown lustful behaviour towards her, she moves in an apartment by herself and there is a different type of behaviour of Samir which symbolizes a soul caught in the rose-mesh ever pulled on the earth. This is the second part of the novel. Soon Samir’s family comes to know about his affairs they send his wife Pramila to Paris. After Pramila comes to Paris a different type of behaviour is seen in Samir or rather we see him as a different person. This different person is created by Monique herself for she forces him to behave normal with his wife when he tells her he can’t stay as a stranger under one roof, at this Monique calls him a ring master and she a curator. She even forces him to get closer to her and know her for she
is his wife and hence he can’t be a stranger to her as she says “why should you be a stranger to your wife? Have you tried to understand her? Now that it’s just the two of you away from the circus tent in Calcutta, why don’t you try?” pg. 112
Basu has shown here the dilemma of Samir though he wants to get closer to his wife but as he has developed closeness with Monique therefore his conscious is biting and he can’t get closer to her. But as he is true to himself he can’t conceal anything from Monique and even Monique is shown to be open minded she also never stops him for she has undergone the pain when her husband left her. This shows both the sides of diaspora as well as dilemma, the researcher has minutely observed the protagonist feelings with his wife as well as with his lover. One can say he is a true man for he is neither concealing his feelings for love as well as he doesn’t want to hide anything from his wife. Here the writer is also very true to himself as well as to the readers in portraying the Indianness of the novel. Both the faces are very open to the readers the Diasporic dilemma for he is deeply rooted towards the Indian society as he also reveals to his wife about his love affair with Monique, while she also doesn’t have any objection towards it because for Pramila doing sex was unclean and unnecessary in the beginning when he had got married to her and before moving to Paris. After maturing and coming to Paris having affair with Monique we also find Samir a changed man he was no more a boyish type in fact he is also shown to have open mindedness in front of both his lover as well as his wife and that is how we find in the end a totally changed man in his thoughts words and deeds as well. As Monique forces him to have a word with his wife his thinking changes towards his wife, “Could be appealing, once you overcome your obsession with beauty.” Pg 147
and while he speaks to Pramila his wife who is an Indian in pure manner suppose to change him in his words as she tells Samir “There are so many paths of truth, isn’t it?” “Yes, but one can find out the absolute proof that life is above thought through experiences.” “May be some day you will find out that enjoyment of food and wine and physical pleasures is not the road to your salvation.”
Realization to the self is the ultimate preparedness.”

48 To this Samir also replies “Perhaps that is true for Samir,” hence to this Pramila replies “There are so many paths of the truth” Pg. 137
and later he also being an Indian as other protagonist as discussed earlier in other four novels he too is thinking that he can’t have children with Monique for she is a Christian thus his deeds too change and he comes back to Pramila so as to form a family. With this the researcher would say the entire protagonist in the selected novels of Romen Basu for the research though they are away from homeland but have always wanted to have a social life
with a social setup of Indian behaviour without losing the Hindu culture in which they have been born and brought up.

Further to discuss is the heroin of the novel *Hours before dawn* she is also like other heroines shown as true Indian daughter in law who has great inner strength to overcome the suffering. She is shown to endure affliction without complaining. This shows the great strength of Indian women, Romen Basu’s all female characters or rather heroines in all his five selected novels are created in such a way that they bear the pain with a laughing face without any complain. Starting from *House Full of People* we have Prabha the eldest lady of the house, who comes from very affluent family bears the pain without any complains till the end she stands by the side of Mr Sudhin Roy the head of the family saving the prestige getting the young girls married in spite of having debts upon his head this all happens only by the support of Prabha. Then we have Sheila who is a Punjabi girl coming from a very well to do family marries Arun the eldest child of the Roy family, Sheila is also shown to be bearing the pains of his good for nothing husband and tries to maintain the relations in the Roy family without any complains further more we have Chitra who is also an outsider to a Roy family like Sheila she even doesn’t complain about anything in the Roy family. So are his female characters, later on in his second novel *Your Life to Live* we have Zarine and her mother who also bear the pain without any complains, on the contrary Zarine is shown in such a manner she is even ready to accept whatever treatment is meted to her by Ashoke and his family without any complains it is only when Ashoke is least bothered about her she leaves the house and goes away in search of love with full faith that someday Ashoke would realize his mistake and go back to fetch her. Leave aside the major female characters Basu’s minor female characters are also the same they too bear the pain as we have Anuradha, Zarine’s friend who is trying to console Zarine as she tells her about her husband “I wanted to marry a man who would go on being my teacher for the rest of my life. Instead I married a police officer. All he talks about is crime...I have the same problem as anyone else with the servants, high cost of living and my mother-in-law.” Pg 149  

Similarly we have Sukumal and Kajali in his third novel *A Gift of Love* here again Kajali the female protagonist who belongs to a lower class but she gets transformed into a lady of an upper class society, though she is aware about her status and standards being mistreated by her in-laws she even tells Sukumal not to bother for her sake yet he tries and brings all the respect from his family members, she even never complains about anything. Then the fourth novel *Hours Before Dawn* we have Kabita and Mrinal another suspicious person who always suspects Kabita but she even never complains about anything in her life nor does she run away from him on the
contrary each of them play their role very coolly and calmly in their life. In this way Romen Basu portraying female characters all very strong headed, ready to bear the pain and face the society as it comes and even don’t allow anyone to harm their self respect. It shows that Romen Basu though lived in the west but didn’t give up his traditional values of respecting the women. This also makes the researcher’s view point very clear that in spite of his become a little westernised by allowing his certain female characters like Zarine, Kabita, Sheila who belong to higher class they have had a different type of upbringing, not only getting educated but they have even moved abroad on their own without being escorted by any one. Yet they don’t let down their standards nor have they fallen in trap with any other foreigner other than Indian counterparts. Here also the researcher would like to say they seem to be in a dilemma, and this type of nature shows Diasporic Dilemma because having friendship with any foreigner counterparts would lead them to some type of difficulty hence that is the reason why Romen Basu has created his stories in such a way. They are full of freedom and flawless in narration and very scenic. Ultimately it is the female character who are preserving the culture, though they have come to different affluent families leaving their homes and their culture without saying a word readily accept the burden imposed on them in the name of culture and the male members who are shown to be deeply rooted don’t even bother to turn back and see what in true sense according to them was culture for they are the ones to impose on their wives to follow what was being done in their homes and they are left free to do what they want.

Discussing Indian values the researcher would like to bring the attention towards socialism. The author’s social realism logically leads to a discussion on the juxtaposition and contraposition of the values of east and the west in all his selected novels but it is very prominent in Hours before Dawn and Candles and Roses. In these two we find it in increasing measures with a penetrating analysis when it comes to philosophical comparison between the values of east specially India and when it comes to the West he says about the U.S.A, London, lately and France. To this Meenakshi Mukherjee has said in her book “The Twice Born Fiction” that the metaphysical, spiritual and romantic have been very well explored by the indo-Anglicans each in their deal own way. Even when the novel doesn’t deal with those themes which are personal or those related with western education or western life style related with the hero or the heroine yet it becomes very much inter-cultural in nature. The connotation of East- West varies in all his novels, not only this their achievements also vary.
Further we can also say the Indian values presented in one character are such that the main character has to abide to them and even that person has to follow accordingly. If we speak about *Hours before Dawn* as Samir has got married to Pramila who is very much self centred and rather very religious person, for she was not very good at looks and before getting married to Samir she had been rejected by many people due to her looks. After getting married to Samir and sent to Paris by force as Samir had fallen in love with a Parisian girl, after Pramila coming to Paris she also changes and even Samir changes. Same is the case with other heroes and heroines in other selected novels. This is pure form of dilemma for the heroine has no choice as she has landed in a foreign land and if she doesn’t do so she would land nowhere hence she changes. Now speaking about religion according to Hindus husband is considered as God and at some instances it has also been said by some of the heroine that service to husband will glorify the women after her death. Even if she maintains husband’s welfare she will be happy throughout her life and all her wishes be answered. Let alone this it is also been taught from the very childhood a girl has only duties and no rights. Even if a girl comes to know about husband having external affair yet she cannot question or inquire about it. It is also made clear by Samir to Monique that in India first marriage takes place and later love is developed as love is considered as worthy and divine. “In India we first marry. Then we work always to be worthy of love... Our religion speaks of the woman as a Devi, a Goddess man worships a woman also” Pg 59 51 And women is given more importance as she is considered as Goddess, in spite all such things known by Samir yet he is shown to be in dilemma when it come in front of him in reality as he is already fallen in love with beauty. It is then we see Monique who makes him realise the truth about his life that it is wife Pramila, who needs him more than her and thus he then drifts towards her. This true dilemma a Diasporic one for the roots may not be strong of Monique but she has the essence of it to realise the inner feelings of a woman and make her lover Samir realize about it.

Romen Basu besides being a diaspora writer he has also related philosophy of life along with it. He has very well spoken about the Hindu Philosophy related to views of life. As he says philosophy forms the bitter sweet part of life here Basu is trying to mingle the East and the West for he doesn’t want the lover to leave his first love neither does he want to be away from his so called wife Pramila who according to Samir is not very attractive nor very impressive like who can be taken to parties and moved around. His thoughts and words are very lucid the way he portraits his characters shows that he was very true to himself also. His mannerism and conversation is very natural only at instances he becomes philosophical and that make him a rigid expressionist. The way he tells Monique at their first meeting that
she is like a stroke of lightening, like a Hindu goddess and she is inspirational as well as creative. All such philosophical description inspires Monique and she feels that Samir can’t forget his wife and therefore she helps him in coming closure to Pramila.

Thus in Candles and Roses Basu has given interesting glimpses of the values of east and the west which vindicates the former over the latter. There is also an inner search though in dilemma for Samir is himself not very confident about accepting Pramila in his life, it is only after losing his first child and Monique telling him about her not very confident about accepting the Hindu religion it ways and its truth therefore in true sense we also see that there is search for inner truth which makes it more of Diasporic dilemma in clear manner. With this one can also say that this novel is capable of showing ideal harmony between husband and wife and need to look at things from the point of view as others like it. Also the protagonist manner not to desert his wife as in the end after his lover Monique out rightly tells him, she can’t fit in the Indian scenario and he would have to give space to his wife this shows the author’s firm belief in Indianness. No doubt there are many instances where he is seen in dilemma and later comes back where he was. The more we read we come across many instances, which make him a dilemma writer of diaspora. For he has lived in the west experienced it and hence make his heroes and heroines feel the situation, about the west creating such situations that even they can’t come out of it. Even if they want to move away from them they can’t, such is his art and creativity making the reader feels as if the story is real in true sense.

5.5 Conclusion

Basu’s merit as a novelist lies in his keen and close observation about his heroes and heroines he doesn’t allow them to delineate from their words and deeds at every social level. As he has lived outside and undergone the problems of social setup and its adjustment, but he has never delineated in life after moving away from the country for the purpose of job and acquiring better life. Similarly here in his selected novels the first one House Full of People all his characters starting from Sudhin Roy the head of the family to Arun and Ranjit when it has come to social life they have never compromised, may be their ways have been different but when it came to preserving their social status they have never compromised. Though they have brought girls from outside or rather married to girls from different culture yet they have tried to maintain the social setup of Bengali culture. There is a disintegration of families in the first novel but ultimately the social status has been well maintained even by the younger generation. The second novel Your life to Live is setup in the west with Indian characters who have travelled to the west with different purpose both coming from totally different
environment and culture as well as religion yet we find Basu trying to create in them that social bonding which is very difficult to attain in any of the characters or writers. We have the hero Ashoke belonging to very high class Bengali family and the heroine Zarine who belongs to rich Muslim family, both fall in love with each other at first sight and even get married. Here again the hero is shown to be a very staunch follower of social customs, when it comes to religion he doesn’t budge an inch nor does he negotiates for anything according to him ideal Hindu wife should be one wearing a saree and covering her head in front of her elders. These sorts of instructions he had given to Zarine before returning to India, he had even discussed about the children following Hindu religion and giving them Hindu names. Such are Basu’s characters though they live in the west but not least ready to give up religion and social customs. There are various such incidents which can’t be left out when we speak about social life in Basu’s novels. Leave alone this and he achieved them even when Zarine has left his home and gone to her parents place, here when Ashoke goes to bring her back on his friend’s request he has won his game. For his in laws accept him and he is given a grand welcome as per his social feelings and tradition, isn’t this a great dilemma a Diasporic one.

While speaking about social achievement again in his third novel the protagonist knew about buts’ and if’s getting married to his English lovers was easy, but to carry along with them having a social status wouldn’t have been easy. For the writer is shown to have always thought about the society in which he had lived and was brought up. Going to the west and settling was not easy for him to maintain a social surrounding, these thing have given him a good record it seems that the writer too had experienced such situations, hence as per Diasporic dilemma he has here brought a servant girl in the life of the protagonist and married her to him. In this way the researcher is feeling proud to show his achievements as a very staunch social life follower and biding by its rules, being an Indian has always tried to show that his protagonist get married to Indian girls only. Basu then doesn’t bother if his protagonist gets married to a lower class girl or a maid servant. On the contrary it seems he is feeling proud to reveal the truth about the social taboos and how they are trying to be firm when it comes to religion and society.

Social when seen in his fourth novel Hours before Dawn also there is little dilemma for we have a very suspicious protagonist, who falls in love with a Bengali girl who is a doctor by profession even gets married to her. Being a journalist by profession he doesn’t have faith in his doctor wife, though she is a very good looking caring and loving wife. The social status is such the heroine is very caring and loving towards her patients this is what her husband doesn’t like, he suspects her and leaves and goes away to Vietnam as he gets an
opportunity to go there and write about the Vietnam war and seeing the situation then realises his mistakes and comes back to his wife. No doubt being an Indian lady as per social conditions she is shown to accept her husband, it was too late twenty five years had passed yet she readily accepted without any conditions. It is very clear a reader as well as the writer, though he is living abroad he cannot forget certain Indian social setup and he has penned down very clearly in his novel. We find the protagonist Mrinal a very stubborn strong headed person. He had promised Kabita to return to India on completion of their studies, but in his mind behind he had decided not to stay back in India hence with the help of his father-in-law he returns to the west and even makes his wife agree to it with the help of his father-in-law. They then come back but socially he remains very strong in his values and customs, thus maintains them and follows them.

Similar is the case in Candles and Roses socially this novels setup is also very much deep into it. First of all the name itself is suggesting philosophical meaning candles which stands for light and roses stands for fragrance each one is enhancing the value of the other. The need of Indian values and its importance is underlined and a need for the depth of its truth should be realized. Romen Basu is also not free from certain limitations. This shows his weaknesses in fictional artistry and in handling the themes. He is even at times showing his characters with betrayal attitude as in Candles and Roses Samir Sen is behaving as per his convenience he even betrays certain rituals when it comes to marriage he has also taken dowry in spite of his being so modern. This makes him lose his credibility being so westernized with a progressive outlook. He is again shown to be more theoretician than a staunch Hindu religious follower. Same is the situation with Kabita and Mrinal in Hours before Dawn first they were suppose not to return but after she comes to know about Mrinal getting a lucrative offer in a News Agency she readily agrees to it and return to U.S. Further discussing about their marriage also it is made clear that they both come from the same caste, as Brahmans and with same sect or goutra there occur no hurdles and they readily accept each other without any demands.

As such in diaspora novels there is no such method of narration nor dialogue method or story telling manner. It is simple for diaspora writer; they go on to search for roots whatever they remember they coordinate and link with incidents and try to create a story in searching the roots and put it down with certain coordination and connections. But this is not the case with Basu he has a different method of conveying the message in his novels. With every novel he has a different message, as for the first novel House Full of People which at first instance would feel like drama but it is not the fact here at the opening he doesn’t show
the cracks in the joint family through the mouth of the characters but through their actions it is shown. Secondly he could have made Sudhin Roy’s death very effective but instead made it dramatic, further he has certain characters like Ranjit who has a Christian wife their conversation is also very lengthy and dramatic. Even Ashoke the eldest nephew, who is shown to behave in a very weird manner with his wife in front of the family, is very unromantic. Certain dramatic traits are there but not very clear so as to label it as with dramatic monologues. Further in *Your life to live* the explicit form of moralizing it loses its effect. The characters reveal themselves in the form of long and dull monologues rather than in the fabric of the story.

The use of language is somewhat different from usual syntax making it more puzzling, on the contrary it is infelicitous making it look odd when Bengali words are translated into English. He hardly uses humour on the contrary his novels are more serious type, as they have a message all the time for it is more of Diasporic dilemma. Conveying the message about the difficulties coming across while living in a foreign land away from home always in search of identity and its roots. These are certain limitations in his novels still it can be studied as a work of art, with true human documentation about true life. He has also conveyed this message to P. Somnath in his interview saying he pays less attention to technique on the contrary he gives more importance to the form and its substance. On writing with creativity one loses the form and its charm of free flow writing. In spite of all these limitation Romen Basu’s novels have apparently shown remarkable progress in its growth and development of Indian fiction in English. Hence each novel has a certain cause with a positive approach to life. As they represent Indian ethos and Indian psyche which is explored providing predominantly Indian values of life with a new consciousness. The author closely and convincingly gives observations which are evident and realistically show the delineation of characters as well as situations. While the domestic novels represent the changes taking place in them, which represent traditional families as *House Full of People*. Where as in novels those with East-West encounter which the researcher has labelled as diaspora novels reveal internationalism, those testifying the fact as to humans having contacts with cross cultures which can be considered as one of the major issues. Besides this he gives more importance to women characters, but they are given freedom. He shows them behaving accordingly as their wish, in spite of their being Indian and living in the foreign land but they are shown to be very firm in their values unlike the foreign women. Each one of them doesn’t leave her culture. Starting from Zarine to Kabita, Kajali, and Pramila each of them is bounded by the society and culture.
Romen Basu like few of his contemporaries can’t be labelled as sociological novelist as from no angle he has written any societal problems or any such messages. On the contrary he has everywhere tried to project positive affirmation of life, besides this where he shows husband and wife relationship which most of the researchers novel portray, both accepting each other’s faults and try to let go in the end. This type of conjugal relationship shows a purged state of as they sometimes due to temporary separation tries to bring them more closure to each other. He has also shown in these novels those with diaspora dilemma a vision of life, and while he drives them home it to bring harmony and understanding between the husband and wife through separation which is for a very short period.

While presenting the theme of disintegration of the joint family mainly in *House full of People, Your life to Live, and A Gift of Love* he excels authentically by showing the drawbacks of the joint family. As these novels have a lot of effect on the characters which uplifts them, giving rather more importance in the sociological arena of those times. Romen Basu on the other hand nowhere used any particular technique while writing his novels, besides he has nowhere used any historical evidence speaking about the time and independence movement, only at certain instances given certain passing remarks. While there are many novelist of his time who has given detail description about partition and people moving to the west. On the contrary he has just shown characters gone to the west for some social cause or get educated and return for betterment, but that doesn’t occur for they feel it to be better place. Even those who come back have a feeling why did they return and want to go back for better prospects.

Romen Basu is very much at ease in portraying with comparison the streets of Calcutta with those of west, as he find not only the streets but even people living in the surrounding similar with habits as well as the food sold there, the dirty filthy streets the quality of liquor sold. All such things make his novels more of Diaspora with dilemma for what made him compare such things so minutely.

Romen Basu has most of the time in his selected novels first coming to the west mostly come to U.K then later on shifted to U.S.A this has lot of resemblance with his own self. As he had also come to Britain first then getting a good job with the United Nations shifted to U.S.A and settled there. Here we find lot of resemblance with his personal life. Thus his selected novels have a true diaspora dilemma.

Considering his first novel with regards to Diasporic dilemma the researcher is very clear about it, though it has Indian setting and nowhere any character is shown to go to foreign land. But the disintegration in the family and its surrounding and the number of
people living together under one roof resembles the author’s family setup as well as the way it is managed the minutes details all resembling writers own family and its setup. Ashoke the eldest leaving the house and going and Ranjit the youngest of the second generation also leaves the house for a good cause such things make it a Diasporic dilemma novel.

Further the next novel *Your life to Live* is in true sense a diaspora novel for the characters meet in a foreign land and the difficulties they face while settling which all develops due to their own misunderstandings. Which are resolved by their coming back to their homeland due to their internal conflict, but then again they want to return due to certain social taboos which they both that is Zarine and Ashoke have realized their mistake. Coming to a conclusion that each one has a say for his own life as living in foreign land and one of Ashoke’s childhood friend brings forth the reality of life therefore it is truly speaking a Diasporic dilemma. Had Ashoke realized earlier he might have not lost his peace of mind and returned to India. In spite of his staying abroad for such a long time yet he had not forgotten his old social taboos, and returned to India. One of the strongest things about Romen Basu was his female character she is shown to be very head strong she didn’t budge a little or didn’t accept any nonsensical talk of her husband. As soon as she felt she was being exploited she immediately left her in-laws place and went away to her parents place to Lucknow in spite of she not talking to them. This is all what Romen Basu has shown his female characters as very strong. Similarly we have Shirley in *Gift of Love* she is also the same though she is a prostitute but never lets herself down. Being a woman she is just as much a mother, as well as a sister. After getting pregnant with Sukumal she never lets herself fall below dignity. As and when asked about bringing up children she very truthfully says she would bring them up as per her religion, to which Sukumal leaves her and walks out.

This also shows a true sense of dilemma as all his protagonist from Arun to Ranjit in *House Full of People*, Ashoke in *Your Life to live*, Sukumal in *A Gift of Love*, Mrinal in *Hours before Dawn*, and Samir in *Candles and Roses* these are the few in the selected novels, they have never been stable to their words therefore they have always suffered and made their heroine also to suffer. One can see it is always the hero or the protagonist who is not very sure of his acts as he can’t be away from his society and culture, therefore even drags his heroine into his culture. Always we find the hero who starts speaking about culture and religion; it should have been the female who should have spoken about religion and culture. But here it seems to be the other way round the heroes are shown to be little orthodox, this gives the researcher a glimpse that the writer too must have been a little on the orthodox side or he too might have remained very pious minded. Therefore he makes his protagonist to be
bending towards more of religious side or it would be better if we call them very pious, but if
his protagonist would have been pious they wouldn’t have had affairs first in the west. With
girls outside their religion and then force them to follow their religion, we also see the
protagonist immediately drifting away from western girls for they have realized, if they
married a western girl their children would have suffered and they would have been nowhere
in the society. Or like other diaspora writer he didn’t want his protagonist to be searching for
the roots. He wanted them to preserve their identity. Thus from beginning till end all the
selected novels are deeply rooted in dilemma and this has been written staying abroad
experiencing certain thing or rather undergone those things which made him put it down in
the form of novel. Therefore a Diasporic dilemma in true sense which no one has tried
showing him as a diaspora writer also.

Discussing about culture the researcher comes to the conclusion that as the writer has
lot of acquaintances with world cultures he has given a pen picture of it, when he wanted to
show man-woman relationship, again as seen man and woman relation of the world and dealt
with their problems he portrays in universal manner. As he speaks about Zarine and Ashoke
being Indians, and are residing in the United States of America, he has blended in them the
culture of east and the west. They slowly and steadily when develop clashes, but are unable to
resolve them. It is only one of Ashoke’s friend intrude and then he is made to realize his
mistake, till then he was in a state of dilemma. So is the societal effect on the minds of his
characters.

Further we can say that the problem of human relationship is also complex with
dilemma in Romen basu’s approach as we have another novel Hours Before Dawn there are
complexities of human mind as found in Mrinal and Kabita as love turns to jealousy. There is
love hate relationship and it is very well shown through them. Each one wants to resolve this
but the dilemma or the ego stops them from coming close to each other.

Further he has also shown male chauvinism which has very widely affected the man-
woman relationship in general in most of his selected novels. He shows man to be unyielding
and expects woman to compromise, at certain instances he even shows jealousy on the part of
man when woman is enterprising. As we have Ashoke in (Your Life to Live pg 175) who is
jealous of Zarine and he even feels proud by showing his jealousy for Zarine, at an instance
he has also conveyed a message “Yes I am a jealous man. I want the whole world to know it.
What man is worthy of woman’s love if he is not jealous of her.” This shows the writer also
agrees to it and wants to convey a message about Indian man who wants undivided love and
attention from a woman. To this the heroine Zarine has also remarked saying “You want to
put me in the cage as your favourite ‘Myna’ feed me and walk to me when you come home and when you ask to sing for you.” This is pure dilemma for the protagonist for he himself is not sure about him. This then further develops love hate relationship between the hero and the heroine. Such type of attitude shown by the writer can be nothing as then a dilemma in his own self.

Another novel *Hours Before Dawn* we find the same situation between Mrinal and Kabita, here the writer has shown the male chauvinism and a little jealousy which has tried to break the family. This jealousy was born out of extreme love of Mrinal towards Kabita which he couldn’t tolerate as Kabita is a doctor and she is caring towards her patients whom he can’t tolerate. Here the nuance of human relationship is brought out very perfectly. This again shows the dilemma of the protagonist as he himself is not very sure of himself we can say, he doesn’t have faith on his own love. It can be said a psychological feel developed in a human being when the other person gets more attention by the outside world he loses faith on his own self.

He is totally free from the barriers of religion on what binds him is the Indian culture, which he doesn’t want to shun culture in true sense. As he is an Indian as well as an internationalist, according to him marriage and sex are not bound in narrow confines of tradition and orthodoxy. As we see in *House full of People* Arun getting married to a Punjabi girl, Ranjit getting married to a Christian girl, but when comes to getting the girls of the house married they should be sent in totally traditional manner, by giving gifts and good dowry even by making debts. This is a type of mockery one can say towards showing family values. At the same time for the same house when a boy is married there were no such rules, he could make love marriage which was at first not acceptable but later on taken in a very light manner, though the heroines had to suffer a lot in the beginning. Isn’t this a dilemma having different rules for girls and boys? Was it because the girls if got married outside their caste they would have been thrown away from the society or they would have spoiled their name in the society. No this may not be the reason but because during those times even though they were all very well educated, they still had that narrow mindedness about not sending a girl for higher education. Later on in his second novel we find Zarine going to abroad for higher education being a girl, but nota Bengali girl this shows his dilemma nature for girls being sent for higher education abroad. It is only in his fifth novel from the selected one *Hours Before Dawn* we have a Bengali girl whose parents are from higher class of society but we are shown she is brought up in a different type of culture whose father was a
bureaucrat in the British rule time working in East Bengal and after partition had shifted to West Bengal. Such things are very minutely observed and mentioned in his novels.

Though Romen Basu on one side is very clear about his independent ideas and conventional, traditional and orthodoxy. Yet his Diasporic dilemma irrupts and comes in his way. As he speaks openly about Sukumal in *Gift of Love* indulging in masturbation act and also teaches his younger cousins and how he is caught and punished for it. This shows writers openness. Here the researcher can say that the protagonist is also independent in his thoughts free from tradition and orthodoxy as he is the one who falls in love with Shirley a prostitute. Romen Basu has minutely mentioned the horrifying attitude of Sukumal’s and then is forced to leave her and returns to India and gets married to a maid servant Kajali this shows his braveness as well as Diaspora nature.

Samir in *Candles and Roses* is married yet has extra marital affair with a French girl and doesn’t feel guilty at all. In spite of his knowing that having sex outside marriage is a sin. He is least bothered about it; he even tells his wife Pramila who has just come to Paris to stay with him as her in-laws coming to know about his affair with the Parisan girl have sent her to take care of him. Samir is not at all guilty conscious on the contrary we feel that it is considered as polar and this type of polarity is treated very convincingly in the character of Samir. At one instance we are shown how bravely the prostitute girl describes Samir’s behaviour towards her to have sex with her and see her nude. This shows Samir’s inhibition attitude towards sex, religion as well as life, as if he was a liberated man. According to the researcher this shows that Samir was in dilemma for his behaviour towards sex. May be this has aroused due to his mother passing away at an early age and none of his aunts took care of him on the contrary they always complained about him therefore he might have developed this type of attitude towards female characters. In the beginning of his marriage with Pramila also he got married after taking a lot of dowry later when Pramila who was also not very good at looks refrains from having sex with him as she too is also taught as to have sex is not a good deed. This is true dilemma in both the hero as well as the heroine; it neither is orthodox nature of the writer nor is the belief to be superstitious but the complex Hindu philosophy which the writer has in his mind and makes it open in front of the readers. Samir’s discussion on religion reflects on the writer’s religious skills. It can also be called a dramatic tension between the two conflicting, traditions, families, religions and ethnic background is created along with dialogues keeping family at the centre along with religion. Further his novels endorse the notion that his interest is also directed towards peaceful, harmonious, existence in religion, sex, marriage and society. At certain stages the researcher feels this all
developed in a Diasporic dilemma for he was in the west, no doubt writing about economy and working for the United Nations organization. Also he was running a printing press, it was only here after Christen Weston author of Indigo forced him to sit and write and this developed in him eagerness to write as already he was aware about the literary works of different writers.

Residing in the west and focusing on his work in the United Nations Organisation, along with the western atmosphere Romen Basu has brought forth a number of novels. But those speaking about the west particularly and having its impact with a new vision of Diasporic literature but in dilemma the first novel of his *House Full of People* is a microcosm of disintegration of people from the house as from the country to the west in search of betterment. With this he laid the foundation of disintegration of people from the country, to the west especially to the United States for better prospects. And further he has gone to show the characters all settled in the west, but after finding life partner feel like returning home to the so called society which they had left behind. As his entire protagonist are male chauvinist and bounded in social customs but on coming back they realize the facts, their so called society would not allow them to reside as they want and have lived accordingly in the west. Now again in a dilemma even if they want to return but can’t do so, as they are bounded by the society. But some of them do return as they are in dilemma with the existing situations, of unacceptance of the society as we have Ashoke and Zarine in *Your Life to Live* who by the end of the novel come to conclusion that it is one’s own life and it can be lived as one wants. It is very well shown the positive thoughts of the writer and the two getting united shows an ideal husband-wife relationship novel with a theme of diaspora, but throughout the novel at every instance the protagonist is shown to be in dilemma. Also we have another couple Mrinal and Kabita who also return for better prospects, they are also developing ideal husband-wife relationship in *Hours before Dawn.* Though it is a very long time separation almost it was their twenty-fifth marriage anniversary yet they come together. This is Indian society as shown by the novelist in spite of his showing diaspora, yet they get united.

Romen Basu is an Indian writer though he has lived abroad, neither any one has labelled him as a writer of Indian English fiction nor a diaspora writer. As such two researchers have done work on him as P.Somnath in 1995 during that time my author was alive and he wrote his book on him titled *Romen Basu His Vision and His Art,* who has even interviewed Basu and given his complete interview in his book showing him as a writer of cause and a fictional artist. Whereas another researcher G.R. Maliga in 1998 has also done her research on him has also interviewed Romen Basu and says he has written for the cause
of the society. She also says he never wrote for fame or publicity, rather she says whatever he wrote to bring awareness towards the society. As Basu was working for the United Nations Organisation he had travelled a lot and that is what has helped him to give a clear pen picture of Indian villages specially the city of Calcutta as well as West Bengal on the whole.

I as a researcher found something different in his these selected novels as he has written about the U.S.A. In the beginning his novels are based in the U.S.A which makes me label him as a diaspora writer, had he been alive he would like other writers of his time would have given that space. As he too belongs to the group of third generation writers like Bharti Mukherji, Rohinto Mistry, Salman Rushdie and so on. Besides this I am titling him as a writer of Diaspora Dilemma, this is because any work done by any of his protagonist is never shown to be done on his own. His entire protagonist act like mere puppets, they seem to be acting or behaving as per the situations. Beginning from House full of people Mr. Sudhin Roy being the eldest of the house he is a doctor by profession but as per the tradition he has carried the burden on his shoulders in spite of his having other five younger brothers he never ever tells them a word about helping him. When time comes he calls them discusses everything with them, but however be the situation never goes begging behind them. He always taken all debts on his head and borne the burden on his shoulders, even his wife whom he calls Mrs. is also the same she too belonging to a rich affluent family never complains about anything. On the contrary always shown compromising with situations. Even when Mr Sudhin is on his death bed she accepts the situation whole heartedly without a single word. Arun the eldest boy of the house who should have borne the burden is also always protected by Prabha. So is Arun when he runs away from the house and returns also behave as per the situation, coming to know about Sheila’s pregnancy turns his back and runs away from there. Later we have Ranjit and Chitra who get married as from different caste are not accepted by the Roy family, both leave Calcutta and go and get settled in Allahbad. As and when time comes for Chitra is going to deliver the baby Ranjit informs his parents and again both are taken up with great ceremonies being performed so such are the character all acting in situational manner.

Same is with Zarine and Ashoke, both are accepted by the family though they belong to different caste and society. Here we have Ashoke who is very male chauvinist person in front of his family we are shown that he behaves in a very typical manner, earlier he is shown to be very possessive about Zarine even if she would speak to any of her friends he would spy. After returning home he shows himself as a very chauvinist person not caring for her at all, this brings separation between them and she returns to her parents.
Similarly we have Sukumal and Kajali in the third novel here both are shown to be the same, Sukumal has even not bothered about having affairs with different girls if one rejected him he caught the other and if the second left he runs after the third, but it is only when it came to getting married and having a family he realizes that the girl should be an Indian and a Hindu. But at the end he doesn’t and gets married to a maid servant’s daughter even Kajali accepts him feeling very proud about it. She has also rightly said when asked, what would be her say for getting married in an upper class? At this she replies for herself she is ready if Sukumal didn’t mind about it. This shows she was quite bold at her decisions. This shows from the higher class to the lower class all the characters act situationaly.

In other novel *Hours before Dawn* and *Candles and Roses* the situation is little different the characters don’t act or go along with the situation. But they create situations and go along with them this is all because both these novels have a lot of impact of east and the west. These two are totally bounded by the western influence as the entire situation has occurred in the west, the title also suggest about the two hero and the heroine coming closure to each other after a very long period. It was nearly twenty five years when they re-unite on their twenty-fifth anniversary. Hence it is said hours before dawn. In the other novel Candles and Roses as per the title it suggest the writer has brought forth a comparison between the place, the streets of London and Calcutta, he finds a lot of similarities as he sees Liverpool as per writers perception he had considered streets of London to be far more better than those of Bengal. But after seeing the people of Liverpool then he compares them with the works, the labour class of Calcutta he says people of Liverpool were far dirtier than those living in the busties of Calcutta. This was because he said people in Liverpool could urinate freely in the dark, and those who were drunk slept on the roadside. Even those who didn’t have enough money didn’t feel ashamed to beg for their next meal. He has even described flawlessly the dirty man unwashed in rags, he even had a fear seeing such a scene that he would be robbed, besides this even the houses described were far more in poverty than what he had seen in India. Describing all these things in detail reminds the author of his motherland and makes him feel proud by saying that streets of Calcutta were far more better that those of Liverpool.

Comparison in some way or the other shows how much the author has missed his home country. One can even say he just doesn’t miss his country but on the contrary we can say he may be feeling proud that his country was much better than this country, it was only his fate or the fashion to send children for higher education that had brought him to the west. Now this also reveals that even after coming to the west what he has achieved should be utilized to the fullest. Therefore the researcher would say that whatever the writer has written
is either to convey a message or to show the world each place has it some or the other drawbacks. Everything is not always good as we see, as the coin has two faces so also other things or places have two sides good as well as bad. Therefore whatever is good should be taken up, experience everything in life as he shows all his male characters experiencing the good side of life as well as the bad side, but then he shows each of his protagonist when nearing to something difficult side of life or entering into something which is unmanageable the writer diverts them or creates such situations which take them far apart and the protagonist is saved from doing something bad or something bad to happen in their life.

According to the researcher this is a part of life and it seems as if the writer has experienced such things in life, which has made it very realistic and allowed the writer to put it down in his novels. No doubt even the writer had gone to the west in search of something good he wanted to achieve higher education in life therefore like other Bengalis he too went to London achieved education becoming an undersecretary to Indian high commission in London V.K.Krishna Menon and finding an opportunity he shifted to the United States and worked at United Nations Organisation. He worked with the U.N.O. for around thirty five years. Later on after retiring he gained achievement by starting a printing press and from that he shifted to himself writing novels. With that he has put down more than a dozen novels with various themes, but they are not all related to diaspora writing for after understanding the reality of life of Indian people he wanted to throw light on the happenings in the Indian society as he had travelled throughout India.

The early novels which are selected by the researcher and labelled as Diasporic dilemma for in true sense the researcher has studied in depth and can label them as Diaspora Dilemma for in comparison with other diaspora writers like Bharti Mukherji, Rohinto Mistry, Salman Rushdie, and the most recent ones like Juhmpa Laheri and Kiran Desai etc. Among these the earlier ones have same like Romen Basu have been born in India and then moved to the west, where as the later ones have been born and brought up there. Each one of them have a different cause to write and show something different to the world, here my writer Romen Basu also has a different cause. He isn’t writing in search of the roots nor does he search for society and culture, on the contrary he wants to show through his novels a different society. A class of people who go to the west, how they try to adjust and come along with other people without leaving their own culture. If they feel uncomfortable in the western society they drift from them and create their own society and survive in that having their own identity. There is disintegration of families in which they move apart from each other as the definitions suggest for diaspora, then in two of his novels we see east-west encounter.
Therefore the researcher has labelled as Diasporic dilemma for the story is mainly revolving round the writer as himself says that his first novel *House Full of People* has a lot of resemblance to his own family how each member disintegrated for some good purpose. But he then doesn’t say that they had to search for the roots, on the contrary wherever they settled they created their own society and they are shown to be in a dilemma. This is because the last generation who are very clear with their values and therefore they want their society to accept them as they are. Such things of disintegration persist in his first three novels which the researcher has taken up, but in each of them in a different manner as their setting is also in different places. Only the first one is in India at Calcutta, but the other two *Your Life to live* and *Hours before Dawn* are set up in the west but are later shifted to his home land. Here after returning the protagonists are in dilemma for they find they are unfit for the Indian setup and they want to return. Therefore the researcher has given the title and proved it as a Diasporic dilemma. The remaining two *A Gift of love* and *Candles and Roses* have total setup in the foreign land, but here again the protagonists are too much in dilemma from the time of falling in love or rather try to find love as he has not achieved from his childhood. As his mother had passed away at a very tender age therefore he doesn’t get that love as a child should get, no doubt many girls come in his life and leave him and go away for he is in dilemma how will a foreigner take up his children and how would she go along with the family. At last we are shown he is least bothered about the society finds love in a poor maid servant, transforms her like a diamond marries to her and settles down with her, which was true love of Sukumal with Kajali as she also wins every ones heart. Similarly we have Samir who is also a very suspicious person in *Candles and Roses*, he has also been shown always living in a dilemma at the beginning we are told he had shun the values of the east and turned towards the west, being a civil servant in an international organization in Paris. He is a married man and is obsessed with beauty, finds a beautiful parisan who is working in a *Galerie de Paris*, who is all time after her. Again and again he visits the *Galerie* to acquire her love, this is because his wife on the very first day of his marriage tells her that having sex is unclean, therefore he had not achieved sexual pleasures with his wife Pramila. Here we find Samir who is very fun loving and enjoyable person but we are shown him to be God fearing as he knows having sex outside marriage is a sin. Therefore he persuades Pramila to have sex with him, and she is also reformed by him turning her to a smart young lady just not by looks but also in her deeds, she is taught to learn *music and French* but before she is transformed Samir is also shown to be in dilemma for he keeps on having affair with this Parisan so as to have enjoyment in life but it is only Monique who turns to be an eye opener
to Samir, for she forces him to have relation with his wife and later Pramila even turns pregnant through Samir. Had he not been in dilemma about her beauty and looks there wasn’t any need for Samir to go in search of a Parisan girl, had he not spoilt his life and the Parisan girl’s life also. The story seems to be a triangular love story and it seems to be tied up in a mesh, as he has liking for the west but traditionally he is bound to the east. His culture and religion cannot permit him to go beyond the boundaries in which he is confided. He is forced to leave Monique for she shows him the truth of life, as she wanted a person who could bare her burden and be always by her side rather than just making love. Therefore the relationship is bound to break up, we find a person who was in religion but in dilemma. Now Samir is drawn towards his wife as she has turned pregnant not only this he even comes closer to religion, as Pramila is very religious person or rather orthodox as for her religion is at every step. This even makes Samir follow her and he is even found cancelling his meetings in the name of religion. Though he is in the West but too much into religion. Through this we can say that the writer was not so much into religion but his dilemma he gives every detail of the protagonist inclined towards it with his religious wife. Thus on the whole nowhere has he kept religion and social customs aside. Nor does he feel ashamed in giving every detail about the religious ceremonies and how it is performed and what is its importance.

Thus the researcher would love to say that though living on a foreign land but his themes are Indian, as other diaspora writers he is different for others have something to search for or to connect to homeland they need to relate with. Here my writer is different in all aspects for him; he doesn’t need to go on to search for people to create a society on the contrary where ever he lives his society is formed he gets accustom to the surrounding without being disturbed at all. On the contrary as his characters are always shown to be in dilemma they themselves try and adjust with the surrounding, and if they can’t without bothering anyone move out from there. This is his real side of life, as he has moved throughout the world he has always tried and lived a free life but always remembered his homeland and religion. Because of international experience a true sense of understanding has been acquired by him, and this has helped him at every step to present the Indian milieu which has remained superstitious as well as materialistic mechanised in Diasporic dilemma on the whole.