This chapter recapitulates the whole study in brief. The origin of Zoroastrianism and its tenets, their uprooting from Persopolis, their migration to India in search of refuge to safeguard their religion and culture, and subsequent cultural annihilation is studied. The study has focused on various issues which are interrelated with their past-present status in Indian subcontinent. The Parsi migration to India has caused great upheavals and the research focused on the issues related with Diaspora: exile, memory, nostalgia, homelessness, uprootedness etc. It discusses the resultant problems of diaspora like ethnicity and various factors related with ethnicity like culture and transculturalism, marginalization, nation and transnationalism, and intricacies of adjustment (assimilation, acculturation, alternation, multiculturalism and the fusion). Their reluctance to assimilate within the Indian milieu caused various problems and resulted into their ethnic anxieties. The community has suffered from within as well. So these factors and problems have been dealt in precision.

Ethnic group can be defined as a group which had common modes of behavior, belief system, taboos and physical as well as psychological characteristics. In USA, ethnic group is considered as non-American or non-European. In America, ethnic group is often called by the nation to which it belongs. It suggests the national aspect of the ethnic group. It connotes the cultural, racial, and spatial difference. It refers to the superiority of Western/Occidental (European and American) culture to Eastern/Oriental culture and raises uncertainties about cultural identities. Ethnic group is referred as a tribe which leads towards the primitiveness suggesting the unrefined, uncivilized, violent, harsh and coarse type of life and patterns of behavior. It is exotic symptomatic of the grandeur of cultural or racial traditions or social mores of one’s ethnic group. The original meaning of the term ethnic is heathen which implies the pre-Christian pagan people and connotes the inferiority providing derogatory sense. In Greek, ethnos nation indicates the national aspect of identity and
existence and emphasizes on a person’s belonging to the particular country/area by origin or family history rather than by NATIONALITY. It suggests the importance of space where one is born, and lineage to which one belongs. The definition reduces the importance of the nationality, since one can find ethnic variety within. It also shows the superiority of one’s own culture or race over others which germinates into the existence or survival or identity struggle and results into ethnic anxiety.

Contemporary literature strongly reflects these ethnic anxieties. Writers like Toni Morison and J.M. Coetzee have dealt with the black ethnicity. Writers like Mistry, Bapsi Sidhwa, Farrukh Dhondy, Ardshir Vakil, Boman Desai, and Dina Mehta continue themselves to Parsi ethnicity. There is not a great deal of focus on the Parsi ethnicity in the literature written by Parsis during the early and middle years of Indian-English Fiction. The Parsi identity as a separate ethno-religious minority in India is not recognized. It is only in the latest fictions by Parsis that one comes across an explicit declaration of ethnic identity. Writers like Bapsi Sidhwa, Farrukh Dhondy, Rohinton Mistry, Firdaus Kanga and Boman Desai, Meher Pestonji, Thrity Umrigar, Homi Sohrab Fracis focused on the ethnic distinctiveness of the Parsi community in their writings. They raised numerous significant issues asserting Parsi ethnicity.

Certain questions emphasize the need for distinct Parsi ethnic identity. If there is a Parsi identity, does it differ from an Indian identity and how? The affirmation of an ethnic Parsi identity also raises the associated links to assimilation into the Indian situation or in the context with Parsis living in the West, in an expatriate location. Essential sameness of the Parsi identity comprises its religious conviction, its ethnicity, its history and its perception of an elite status. It is in such a life-and-death circumstance that the Parsi community is making its final magnificent stand, affirming its splendid Persian past and its 1300-year-old Indian alliance. It is this contention of Parsi identity that is reflected in
recent Parsi fiction. Parsis have preserved their ethnicity, racial uniqueness, in spite of their 1300 years on the Indian sub-continent. Even today, most Parsis desire to ‘look different’ from their fellow-Indians.

In addition to these traits, Parsis share a collective elite consciousness, which has developed from the colonial epoch when the Parsis were intimately allied with the British rulers of India. This Parsi identity compiled of religious exclusivity, ethnicity, common past and elitism has brought Parsis into divergence with the Indian identity. Even if Parsis like Dadabhai Navroji and Phirozsha Mehta joined the mainstream, the greater part of Parsis throughout the national movement in India experienced alienation from the India and sought an identity outside the Indian society. This quandary had not occurred earlier as a normally spelt out Indian identity. It was forged by Indian nationalists only towards the end of nineteenth century. After freedom of India, the dignified social position enjoyed by Parsis during the Raj, has been thrashed and Parsis have been marginalized as a whole as its elite perception has not been accredited by the new leader of India.

The relation of Parsi people with their ancestors severed due to their migration to India. Today, Parsis are taking efforts to reorient themselves. Some pursue to assimilate themselves into Indian mainstream by espousing Indian culture and abandoning their Parsi identity while others in a bid to escape this new changed status move to West.

The Parsis of India are the only existing Zoroastrians who accepted the ideas of Zarathustra. The Parsi Zoroastrians in India or the Western diaspora possess the similar ethnic group as the present day Islamic-Iranian but they are estranged by their religions and different civilizations. For the Parsis in Indian diaspora the fact of being a Parsi Zoroastrian is a racial as well as a religious identity. It is for this reason that their identity at once becomes national as well as transnational. These identities come in conflict with one another and could be placed within private and public spaces.
Such overlapping of spaces could cause clashes between private and public histories as Chandra points out:

**Ethnic anxieties arise out of a sense of ethnic identity. Such identity may be religious or secular. Anxieties, however, are compounded when the secular interests of two differing identities are seen to be divergent or threatening to one another. The threatening aspect of the ‘other’ or majority community becomes more pronounced in the case of economic or social backwardness. [Chandra, 1989:398]**

In this context, it seems that Parsi community has less ethnic anxiety. It is economically and socially most advanced community in spite of its minoritarian existence. Their religion is not under threat from the majority community or from any other community in India. But still a fact is that it is a dying community.

A well-known Parsi scholar Nilufar Bharucha [2003:28] has pointed out the diverse Diasporas that Parsis run concurrently. According to her, first migration/diaspora was from Iran under the shelter of Hindus, as a result of Muslim oppression. Then in Mogul era they once again felt threat of conversion. It was a double edged era; one of fear of renewed religious oppression and another of some regain of language and culture, as Moguls introduced Farsi as the major language. In British colonial rule they acquired the elite status, but it was the phase where they were alienated from India. Next in course of time after the Partition they were divided across new borders. Later in Postcolonial phase they lost the elite status, as well as social and economic status. Then they suffered once again in Post-Ayodhyian India which was the direct result of increasing fundamentalism and terrorist activities in Kashmir by Pakistan and resultant anguish of Hindu fundamentalists.

The successful Muslim conquest in the seventh century was not immediately disastrous for the followers of Zoroaster. They were given
refuge in India on certain conditions. Parsis sincerely accepted all the conditions. Parsis adapted Gujarati language faithfully, forgetting their traditional language. Parsi women adopted Sari as the dress of the community. This sartorial custom has also been faithfully followed. Parsis respect cow and due to this tradition, Parsis still do not eat beef. Though there are no religious taboos against eating the beef. However, poor Parsis prefer beef as it is cheap. Parsis perform their ceremonies at night. This condition was imposed to distract local population from such a ceremony and hence the danger of conversion is reduced. Parsis do not allow outsiders in their Fire Temples, which is a further guarantee that they will not attempt any conversions to their religion. They do not allow insular marriage. The wedding ceremony is performed even today after sunset, and at least a part of ceremony is repeated in Sanskrit. Loyalty to the ruler of the day was a strong trait among the Parsis. They could preserve their faith due to the tolerant attitude of the Hindus, and they could maintain their identity because Hindu caste system prohibited insular-marriage.

These restrictive conditions have greatest impact on the Parsi psyche resulting into ethnic anxieties till now, even after 1300 years of their arrival in India. This led to a feeling of estrangement among them. It gave birth to ‘the refugee and minority complex’ and the resultant aggravated enthusiasm to achieve rigid religious identity. Adopting new cultural environment of the host country under the name of refuge and the act of benevolence was cultural persecution. Thus Parsis became ‘a cultural hybrid minority community.’ These uneven circumstances supplied fertile proliferation ground for the feeling of ambivalence, and isolation became exacerbated in the colonial period, when the Parsis were amid the first to cuddle education in English and became the most westernized Indian community. They became an intermediary linkage between the Indians and the Britishers. It divided their loyalty to India and the British. They settled down in Bombay which was more westernized and the center of British
administration. Bombay, being a cosmopolitan town, provided them the correct surroundings to prosper and got freedom to practise their religion and customs. But independent India period, they suffered a remarkable social and economic humiliation directing them to the west. They migrated shedding off their Indian identity. Several migrated to the west in the 1950s and 1960s.

Those Parsis who have gone to the West also face problems. In the land of whites they are classified as the other brown races-the Asians. They tried to avoid this identity in India and it generates confusion and postpones assimilation into the new western context. The Parsis attempted to adapt the realities of the postcolonial India, but most of them experience a social and psychological alienation. They can not forget their Persian glory and their colonial privileges. They are too sophisticated and think of themselves as too cultured to mingle with the down-to-earth Indians. For them Indians are ‘ghatis’, people from the lower-society, who are coarse, unrefined, barbarians. Their Anglo maniac tendencies called as “anglophilia” persist strongly. Their Parsiness is fast dying out as the young generation prefers mixed marriages and migration to the West but there too they were not accepted in the mainstream. So one can say that migration is not the solution to escape the realities as it is described as:

**Man, this dialectical phenomenon, is compelled to be always in motion. Man, then, can never attain a final resting place and take up residence in God… How disgraceful, then, are all fixed standards. Who can ever fix standard? Man is a ‘choice’, a struggle, a constant migration. He is an infinite migration, a migration within himself, from clay to God; he is a migrant within his own soul. [Ali Shariati: 1979:92-93]**

Even today, Parsis, as minority, are striving for the survival. They took efforts to cope with time. They have maintained their special ethnic identity, as a miniscule ethnic group.
The novels of Bapsi Sidhwa and Rohinton Mistry deal with various ethnic anxieties of the Parsi community. It may be external conflict of co-existence with other ethnic majority and its cultural milieu like Mistry’s Hindu and Sidhwa’s Muslim or community’s own internal conflicts and anguish related with its survival and continuation in the future. This study has covered both the anxieties, psychological as well as physical. The physical anxieties comprises political passivity, subaltern status of Parsi community in the mainstream politics as well as in the context of ethno-religious, political-cultural existence. The psychological anxieties involve the downgraded condition of Parsi community in post-colonial era, superiority complex of the Parsis, financial poverty of the community, problems of inter-faith marriage and its increasing fad among young Parsis, debates over dokhma and other religious rites. It can be pointed out:

The factors which contribute to … ethnic atrophy are the Parsis’s single-minded pursuit of prosperity, extreme individualism, craze for urbanization, late marriages, low birth rate, the rather high incidence of cancer, Alzheimers disease, osteoporosis, mental illness, and low fertility rate. [Eds. Novy Kapadia, Jaydipsinh Dodiya and R.K.Dhawan 2001:101]

In *The Crow Eaters*, Bapsi Sidhwa depicts Parsis as cultural hybrids, sharing the traditions, languages, moral codes and cultural life of the Indians. The emphasis of Parsis on charity finds vivid expressions in the novel when Freddy preaches the importance of charity. Freddy and Yazdi indulges in every possible kind of charity. The virtue of cleanliness which is an important aspect of Parsi religion creates problems for Parsi characters in the novels during their visit to London. The unhygienic conditions in London detested Jerbanoo which indicates their inability to adopt to the new culture as well as their rigid observance their religious values. Parsi people adopted the ways of the British people as they were intimately associated with them. This is evident Freddy’s character when he wanted to encash the insurance policy after setting his store on fire. The
Parsi customs, ceremonies and beliefs also find a vivid reference in the novel. Parsi women were confined to the separate cells during their menstruation. In the Putli retires to the other room respecting the tradition. Religious tolerance of Parsis is discerned as Freddy is shown to possess religious scriptures and literatures of most of the religions. Parsi marriage ceremonies, particularly of Billy and Tanya’s showing the blend of Hindu and Muslim culture are colorfully described in the novel. Sidhwa also depicts the Parsi methods of cremation called as dokhma in the novel. Their benevolent attitude of offering their dead bodies to vultures and their rigidity to strictly follow religious funeral rites is mildly criticized. It is exemplified when Jerbanoo becomes restless and frustrated as she could not find Tower of Silence in Lahore. Sidhwa also deals with the issue of insular marriage. Yazdi’s desire to marry Rosy Watson is frowned upon by Freddy. The opposition of the Parsis to insular marriages is depicted for the cause of racial as pointed out by Freddy. The depiction of the Parsis as an elite class who imitates their British Masters is hinted by Sidhwa in the novel as Parsis Freddy along with Putli attends the parties, as well as Billy and Tanya’s mixed parties at home. However, Putli tries to preserve certain Parsi customs; she is labeled as backward by her own daughter. The demographic status of Parsi community is also highlighted in the novel. Freddy understands this harsh reality and made friendship with local people. He considers this as “a need to exist” (TCE, 12). Freddy’s and Billy’s recognition of their ‘otherness’ and as an ethnic group led them to be loyal to the rulers and ensure the security, peace and economic prosperity. Their alignment with the British emanates from their realization of their existence as minority. Freddy’s abuses to patriotic Indian Parsis suggest his inclination with the Parsi neutrality towards politics. Freddy also assures his listeners about the future survival.

*Ice Candy Man* depicts the neutrality of Parsis and their Prufrockian dilemma to which community they lot their vote on the eve of partition.
This is exemplified when they gather for the Jashan prayers at the Fire Temple in Lahore to celebrate the British victory in Second World War. This behaviour arouse from their recognition as a minority and subsequently their fear of being suppressed by Indian due to their loyalty to the British rulers. They could not rely on either the Hindu or Muslim rulers as they were oppressed by both. Col. Bharucha narrates the story of uprooting of Parsi people from Persia and subsequent settlement in India where their cultural annihilation was executed by the Hindu king by imposing certain conditions on Parsis which they followed sincerely. The constant fear of subjugation haunted Parsis so Col. Bharucha advised his community to align themselves with the people in power. The collective subconscious ness of Parsi community is revealed in the character of Lenny who lame which indicate the political passivity and neutrality. Thus ethnic anxieties are predominant in the novel. However, Sidhwa also describes some Parsi ceremonies, beliefs and prayers. The characters in the novel believed in God and would often conduct prayers. The final rites of Parsis are also discussed here. Orthodox Parsis Orthodox Parsis are reluctant to abandon their traditional dokhma where as modern Parsis are flexible. Godmother favored dokhma on ecological as well as religious grounds. Parsi community faced problems in Lahore as there was no Tower of Silence. Their insistence on getting dokhma in the tower of silence as per their religious rites is satirized when Slave-sister (Mini aunty) ridiculed this tradition. The discussion of dinning table is an important instance where Mr. Rogers, Mr. Singh and Mr. Sethi highlight the various facets regarding the partition of Indian subcontinent. In the heat of discussion Mr. Singh highlights the demand of Home-rule first and then the settlement of their ethnic quarrels. Mr. Rogers underlines the need of British government to keep the India together.

Lenny’s identity as a distinct Parsi indicates ethnic group of Parsis as harmless. Lenny is appreciated by Sikh, Muslim and Hindus. Lenny as a
member of Parsi ethnic group witnessed the harmony and peace in Lahore. She saw Ayah’s group as a formulation of composite culture of India which includes Sikh, Muslim, Parsi, untouchable etc. Ayah is considered as the symbol unity. The group gathers in Lahore Garden in the beginning indicating the religious harmony in India. But as the waves of partition enveloped the whole country, the pattern of communal harmony is disturbed and there is gradual rising of ethnic anxiety among the members of group. It is symbolized by the shift in their meeting place. Later on group gathers in Wrestlers Restaurant which suggest that different ethnic group are at each others neck to hold the power. Sidhwa also highlights that hatred destroys all the human relations. Ice Candy Man to take the revenge of sister’s killings, killed his friends. In course of action, he kidnapped Ayah, a Hindu, as well as murdered Masure his co-religionist. Through Ranna’s story, Sidhwa also highlights that Muslim, too, suffered during partition. Parsi community in such communal rage has worked like ambassador of peace. Godmother rescued Ayah from prostitution and sent her across the border. Lenny’s mother and her aunty helped their Sikh and Hindu neighbors by supplying petrol to send them India safely. Here, Parsi community is shown as a synthesizer between various ethnic groups of India. Parsi community accepts the change easily as they accepted the new Muslim, rulers of Pakistan. Thus this policy of acceptance of change has survived them.

In *An American Brat*, Sidhwa discusses the predicament of Parsi community in Pakistan. Parsi community was affected by fundamentalism in Pakistan. The novel also deals with Americanization of young Parsi girl, Feroza. Sidhwa deals with various Parsi beliefs, customs. Feroza visited fire temple regularly. Zareen’s inability to visit the temple due to menses shows her belief in Parsi values. Feroza committed a sin of smoking and later on realized her guilt and offered prayers to purify herself. Zareen’s worshipping of a Muslim saint Data Gunj Baksh reveals her effort to
conform to religion of nation she lives in as well as the religious tolerance of the Parsis. Sidhwa also mentioned Parsi ceremony in the novel. The community’s belief of the presence of a widow as inauspicious compels Khutlibai to remain behind when Good Luck ceremony is performed for Feroza. Sidhwa has given the detail of Manek’s marriage ceremony. The problem of insular marriage is revealed in the novel. Feroza’s education in America was opposed by Khutlibai as fears that Feroza would be Americanized and would probably choose a non-Parsi husband. The dilemma of Khutlibai show the rigidity of Parsi community who are tradition bound and do not marry out of their community. Feroza’s decision to marry David is opposed by Manek as well as her family member. The refusal of the Parsi community to perform the final rites of Perin Powri who married a Muslim further highlights Parsi rigidity over marriage issue. Passion for racial purity of Parsis and opposition from Feroza’s family led Zareen to seriously reflect over the reformation in Parsi Anjuman laws about marriage and conversion. Sidhwa also highlights the double standards of Parsi regarding the marriage of a Parsi male and a Parsi female to a non-Parsi. Zareen humiliated David because of his non-Parsiness by underestimating his Jew culture. The culture othering and differences led to the breakup of Feroza-David love affair. Zareen convinced him that cultural differences mattered. Parsi community severely felt their identity fractured in Pakistani society. Feroza’s making of Muslim friends suggests the attempts of minority to assimilate into majority culture. It depicts the marginal existence of Parsis amid Islamic majority in Pakistan where Feroza faces the problems of backwardness as well as of national identity. Feroza was not informed the details about Bhutto’s death. She reminded her family that she too is Pakistani. Sidhwa highlights the question identity based on religious chauvinism. Feroza being Parsi has been doubtful about her Pakistani national identity because she was not Muslim. Sidhwa has also highlighted the east-west cultural
encounter in the novel. Feroza during her stay assessed the American ways of life and found herself misfit in the country where she was fitted so well. Sidhwa focused various problems regarding the Americanization of Feroza. The novel also depicts the identity crisis of Feroza when she migrates to America. She sheds her Parsi identity as well as Pakistani cultural identity. She adopts the American way of life and even defends it.

Thus, Sidhwa has focused various issues regarding her miniscule community i.e. insular marriage, dokhma problems, conversion, minority, subaltern status, political passivity, post-colonial crisis of identity etc. which caused the ethnic angst for her community.

Rohinton Mistry has also depicted the problems and predicament of the Parsi community in his novels. His collection of short stories Tales from Firozsha Baag depicts the idiosyncrasies of Parsis in Mumbai. Auspicious Occasion highlights the identity construction of the Parsis. The religious festival day of Behram Roje is described where Mehru is shown to celebrate it with great devotion. The Parsi ceremonies are also described in detail. The attitude of the Parsis towards the Indians and their superiority complex, which reflects anglophile ten dencies, is also portrayed. One Sunday shows the Parsi community’s effort to merge with different subaltern group in India. The Boyce family eats beef which align them with Muslims. Tehmina drinks wine which associated them with Christians. The humiliation of Parsi boys in the story further suggests that the Indians still recognize them with other ethnic group. The Ghost of the Firozsha Baag highlights the hybridity of language used by Parsi. It also shows the influence atmosphere on Jaaklee and other characters. Next story Condolence Visit deals with the beliefs related with final rites of the Parsi. Daulat decided to donate all the items of Minocher after his death which is in accordance with the Parsi tradition of charity. It also highlights the decadence of Parsi culture regarding the traditional dressings of Parsi as a result of westernization. Of white hair and Cricket highlights the
gluttony and other Parsi issues. Grandmother of Kersi, like other Parsis, is convinced that hair is evil and source of Black magic. She thinks that Kersi’s father is committing a sin by forcing Kersi to pull his hair. She is a devout Parsi who spun wool for Kusti. The game of Cricket brings forward the colonial association of Parsi with British rulers and their royal stature. It is contradicted by the present poverty of the Parsi families in Firozsha Baag. Paying Guest deals with the problems of evacuation of the paying guest the space trapped Bombay. Boman and Kashmira suffered due to their paying guest. No Parsi family is ready to help him in court. Only a Muslim tenant offers himself readily. But Boman avoids his help for the reasons of inherited enmity. The Exercisers highlights the inscription of Hindu spiritualism in Parsi community. Mr. & Mrs. Bulsara seek the help of family guru Bhagwan Baba to convince Jehangir how unsuitable the girl was for him. Squatter reflects the pride of Parsis and their contribution to modern India. This is evident in Savukshaw’s behaviour when he single handedly won the match for Indian Cricket Team. The eating habits of Parsis people are also focused as Mrs. Savukshaw is shown to be a master in cooking Parsi dish dhansak. The inability of Sarosh to assimilate in Canadian culture and his identity crisis is also depicted. Lend Me Your Light focuses on complex issues related with Parsi diaspora, identity crisis and assimilation. The three Parsi protagonists show different dimensions of these problems. Jamshed’s character portrays the alienated Parsi who desires for elite status and hence migration to West. Kersi also migrates but he is confused with his new host land. He does not want to lose his identity and always feels guilty of living India. Percy shows the complete assimilation into Indian milieu as he works for the betterment of the villagers. Swimming Lessons reflects the dilemma of Parsi immigrant. Kersi’s failure to swim in beach of Bombay chowpatty and swimming pool in Canada shows his inability to assimilate into either Indian or Canadian
culture. It also highlights the various issues regarding the diasporic writers need to be different. It shows the rising Hindu fundamentalism in Mumbai.

*Such a Long Journey* reflects how contemporary politics affected Parsi community in India. The novel depicts the lives of Gustad Nobel and his family who resides in Khodadad building, a Parsi housing complex. The changing behaviour of Jimmy, an honest Parsi, suggests the adverse effect of dictatorial political rule of Indians on minority community like Parsis. Parsi attitude of religious tolerance is also hinted in the novel. Mistry also focuses on religious beliefs, ceremonies and customs of the Parsis. The rigidity of the Parsi community is also highlighted as Ghulam, a non-Parsi, is denied entry into the Tower of Silence. Final rites of Dinshawji are also described. The problems related with dokhma and the suggestion of the reforms to improve it is also mentioned. The littering of the flesh by vultures troubled the tenants of flats around the Tower of Silence. Mistry also deals with religious issues and other values which are responsible for the distinct identity of Parsi as an ethnic group. Mistry also highlights Parsi paradoxes related with the ideas modernity and orthodoxy. Dinshwaji’s wife refuses to clean the body with bull’s urine and insists on the use of water only whereas she begins to cry when dog gives no hint of life. Mistry focuses the subaltern status of the Parsis in Hindu majority as Dinshawji expresses his anger on Shiv Sena’s policy of changing road names and Maharashtra for Maharashtrians.

Mistry also highlights the religious tolerance through the character of wall on which pavement artist has drawn the deities, Gods and Goddess, saints from all religions. Mistry also highlights the economical condition of the middle-class Parsis who are trapped in financial crisis. Gustad could not afford even the basic facility in life. The plight of Cawasji and his prayers to God to take care of poor Parsis reflect the financial crisis and economical problems of the poor or middle-class Parsis. Thus the novel
portrays the political financial and racial problem that Gustad Nobel and his family faces.

*A Fine Balance* highlights the emergency period during 1977 in India and it focuses on the contemporary political scenario and its adverse effects on the middle class and poor people in India. Mistry dexterously has shown the attitude of common people towards politics. In such atmosphere, Mistry has woven the four different stories into one and the tragedies of Om, Ishvar, Dina Dalal Manek Kohlah at the end of the novel. Mistry shows the Parsi patriarchy where Nusswan controls the life of Dina. Dina as a widow suffers the financial crisis and hires two tailors and a paying guest to lead an independent life. Manek Kohlah belongs to the mountain region where his father’s business is destroyed by the multinational company. The disintegration of nature and Mr. Kohlah’s family business as well as his personality results into cathartic end. Om and Ishvar challenged age-old caste hierarchy by changing their traditional profession of cobbler to a tailor. It raged great ethnic violence and upheaval in village where family is burnt out in night. Mistry critically portrays the Hindu caste system in India. He also vividly sketches the injustice done to lower caste people by upper caste Hindus.

Together in Mumbai, these all character support each other to lead a happy life. But destiny destroys their happiness. Om and Ishvar in sterilization camp were operated very badly that later they became beggars. Dina without any financial support returned to her brother and became dependent on him. Manek migrates to Dubai, but after returning could not cope with the change and commits suicide. These all characters fall prey to the political turmoil of the contemporary India.

Mistry also focuses the problems of dokhma in the far away regions of mountains where unavailability of Tower of Silence and Fire Temple result into want of proper Parsi ceremonies for Manek’s father. His father, Farrukh, wished to be cremated. It caused opposition to perform prayers
for him by Parsi dustoors. Other Parsi ceremonies, customs, beliefs are also discussed by Mistry. Dina was denied indoor cutting as it is considered sin and evil bringing bad luck. Mistry highlights the professional jealousy of Parsi priests. Dustoor Dab-Chaab expresses his unhappiness because he was not hired to perform Dina’s marriage ceremonies. Mistry criticizes the Parsi dustoors for their sensual approaches to young women. He also highlights that Parsi community is forward and modernized as it allows the remarriage of widow when Nusswan plans the second marriage of Dina. Mistry also highlights the gora complex of Parsis when Nusswan’s wife was treated badly as ayah by his grandfather because her skin was not fair. Thus novel portrays the battle of Dina Dalal, Manek and Om and Ishvar against the destiny to maintain a fine balance.

*Family Matters* deals with the middle-class Parsi who is trapped into the financial worries due to the insufficient economic sources and burdened by the medical expenditure of old man. Mistry deals with the problems of ageing parents in the Parsi community where individualization modernization results into late marriage and subsequent problems of old age. Nariman Vakil suffers so many diseases typically associated with Parsi community. Coomy and Jal shifted the responsibility to Roxana who later suffered due to this. Mistry also highlights the insular marriage issue of Nariman Vakil with Lucy. It was opposed and caused tragic deaths of Lucy and Yasmin, Nariman’s wife. Later, Yezad also preaches the racial purity to his son Murad who has befriended with a non-Parsi girl. Mistry highlights the rigidity and orthodoxy of Parsi community. Mr. Vakil slammed the dustoor who performed Navjote to a non-Parsi. Yezad also talks about Anjuman’s policy of debarring from community. Yezad’s too much religious rigidity concerning cleanliness, purity; scripture are ridiculed by Murad as bigoted religion. Dr. Fitter, Jal and Inspector Masalavala talked at length about the future extinction of Parsi community.
and the reasons of demographic decline. They blame individualization, late marriages, westernization, diseases, and too much education for this. They also suggest some reforms regarding marriages and other rigid issues of the community. Mistry also highlights the subaltern and marginal status of Parsi community under Hindu majority in India. Yezad’s dream to migrate Canada and unsuccessful attempt is also discussed at length focusing the various aspects and tribulations concerning the migration. Mistry highlights the religious tolerance of the Parsis. He portrays the Bombay city and Hindu religion in their tolerant attitude towards all religions. Parsi community also suffers from severs economical problems. Yezad plays matka to earn extra money. Jahangir is corrupted due to financial anxieties of his parents who accepts bribe to mark homework. Mistry highlights the Parsi virtue of honesty. Mr. Kapur praises Yezad and Parsi for their honesty.

Mistry portrays the Mumbai after Babri mosque demolition and resultant ethnic riots. He portrays Hindus as fundamentalist causing pain to all the minorities in India. Muslims are portrayed as scape-goats.

Thus Mistry portrays his Parsi community under various political phases in India suffering from the marginal existence. Mistry has depicted various anguishes of the Parsi Zoroastrian community. His depiction of middle class Parsi community is a combination of post-colonial predicament of Parsi-Zoroastrians who are sidelined as a minority and ‘other. Simultaneously, he highlights the various angst of this small ethnic group related with dokhma, prayers, conflict of national identity, recitation of prayers, vulture controversies etc.

Highlighting these various ethnic anxieties, internal and external, both the writers have also given the universal truths that human love, compassion, brotherhood are the essence of life and if the people of all the religions and ethnic groups consider themselves as the citizens of the
universe shedding off the cultural, religious, racial and geographical differences there is a possibility of blissful harmonious life on this earth.

Sidhwa is meticulously feminist whereas Mistry is completely male chauvinist. Sidhwa is a traditional story-teller who uses linear narrative. On the other hand, Mistry is experimental who employs narrative techniques like multi-stories, intertextuality, Scherazadic method of storytelling. He evokes the racial pride of his Parsi community in the stories like “Squatter” using the narrator Nariman Hansotia. Sidhwa is a humorous Parsi with picaresque and ironic tone whereas Mistry is a cynic, pessimist and tragic writer. Sidhwa asserts her Pakistani identity whereas Mistry escapes from his Indian identity. Mistry indulges into the religious blasphemy as in Tales from Firozsha Baag (“Auspicious Occasion”), A Fine Balance and Family Matters. Rustomji, in Auspicious Occasion, criticizes Dustoor Dhunjisha for taking advantage of his respected image one who fondles with young women. He calls them as masked bandits. The Parsi community is endangered in coming years, as Rohinton Mistry comments in Family Matters. They are also prepared to retreat leaving back the cultural capsule to be opened in thousand years containing all Parsi cultural and religious heritage.

So it can be concluded that though these two Parsi writers belong to two different nations, these differences prove as overt because they write about their common Parsi-Zoroastrian religion and ethnicity which had suffered same problems in the Indian subcontinent and in the West with slight changes. It can also be noticed that Mistry slightly exaggerated the ethnic anxieties whereas Sidhwa has tried to put them straightly as they are. One can say that these two writers have proved to be the representatives of their tiny community, as it is said, “… Parsis all over the world find in him [Mistry] a spokesperson of their anxieties, fear, and frustrations.” [Ed. Novy Kapadia, Jaydipsinh Dodiya, R.K.Dhawan 2001:104]
Thus Parsis should forget their post-colonial grievances and merge in the national realities as it was asserted by Behram Malbari who was charged that he was only Parsi and not to meddle into the Hindu affairs like *sati pratha*, Malbari wrote in the Indian Spectator:

> If my Hindu friends take this line of argument—that I am “only a Parsi”, I will be forced to reply that I am as good as a Hindu any of them, that India, is as much my country as theirs, and that if they do not give me a *locus standi*, in the case, I will take my stand on the higher ground of humanity…

[Bharucha 2003:37]

In the end one has to agree that ethnic group of Parsi Zoroastrians is an endangered species. Aditi Kapoor writes in her article “The Parsis; Fire on Ice” in Times of India: “Unless something is done to augment their fast depleting numbers and to revive their religion, the Parsis after an illustrious past could well just fade out in oblivion” [14th May 1989]. The community has a glorious Iranian past because in those times they were the super power, a ruling class, but even in Iran today they are in minority and living on the margin so it is futile to expect them to return to their original homeland. It is debatable whether the Parsis of today are pure Zoroastrians. So Parsis should learn the following attitude:

> It is therefore, a source of great virtue for the practiced mind to learn, bit by bit, first to change about in visible and transitory things, so that afterwards it may be able to leave them behind altogether. The person who finds his homeland sweet is still a tender beginner, he to whom every soil is as his native one is already strong; but he is perfect to whom the entire world is as foreign place. The tender soul has fixed his love on one spot in the world; the strong person has extended his love to all places; the perfect man has extinguished his. [Hugo of St. Victor: 1961:101]

Parsis are stuck up with their colonial flourish. They were the pioneers in the fields of anthropology, ship building, libraries etc with
marginal and peripheral existence. If the community is to survive, it has to learn to change with changing times and mould themselves as per the requirements forgetting all those airs of colonial superiority and conditions of the refuge and allow conversions, try to mix with their national, geographical and cultural realities with active participation in all walks of the life. Infact, they have contributed in tremendous way for the development of India, coming out of their cocoon existence. They should accept the truth what Uma Parameswarn says ‘Home is where your feet are, and may your heart be there too’. It is really painful to say that people who followed the teachings of Zarathustra are in crisis. The religion of Zoroaster based on his teachings is about to disappear from the universe. The religion of Zoroaster is existential with the choice of good and evil. It can be said that it is a religion which is not limited only to those who are born out of Zoroastrian parentage but all those who choose between good and evil. As Feroza says, “as for her religion, no one could take it away from her, she carried its fire in her heart” [AAB, 317]. So we can say that the one who has girded his/her loins to serve the betterment of humanity fighting against the evil to make this world a happy place to live is a Zarathusti because the religion is based on cause and effect. It means if you choose right thing you will be benefited with goodness and if you choose wrong you will face its results. One who is carrying the fire of goodness and charity in his heart can be called a Zarathusti. It is exactly what Nargis Dalal says in one of her articles:

His (Zarathustra’s) beautiful religion was for everyone who was prepared to join the fight of good against evil and live by three guiding principles – good thought, good words, good deeds. The fire which stands at the centre of the religion was considered only as the symbol of Ahura Mazda, the light and the truth. [“The Parsis as an endangered Species”, in Times of India, 24/01/95]

It can be supported by what A.R. Wadia wrote:
During its triumphant career of over two millennia, it (Zoroastrianism) came into living contact with millions of people both to the east and west of Iran and in this period it transferred a good deal of its moral and spiritual vigour to other people. The Hebrews, the Christians and the Muslims, have all drunk deep, consciously or unconsciously at the founts of Zoroastrianism, and the best of Zoroastrianism lives in the best of other religions...A flame that has passed on its light to countless other flames must disdain so sordid a feeling of jealousy. Good thoughts, good words and good deeds are not the monopoly of Zoroastrians. In the dim antiquity Zoroaster preached it and his reward is that it has become the common inheritance of all humanity. [A.R. Wadia 1973:466]

On this note, this study concludes that though Parsi community suffers the ethnic anxieties within and without, they have to come to terms with the present realities and prosper with other ethnic groups of the world allowing certain changes in the ethnic norms if they want to survive in the next millennium.