I

This chapter aims at comparative study of the two Parsi writers - Bapsi Sidhwa and Rohinton Mistry. Both differ from each other as they belong to two different geographical locations, Pakistan and India respectively. However, both are now settled in Canada. Since they belong to the sub-continental countries which were once united before acquiring their status as independent states, they share the common element of religion and culture. Bapsi Sidhwa and Rohinton Mistry are the two crucial Parsi writers who focus the problems of their microscopic community. They highlight the problems of survival in the cultural milieu they live in. Bapsi Sidhwa confronts the Muslim society in Pakistan and Rohinton Mistry experiences the Hindu ethos in India. The discussion here is aimed at the vivid facets of their skills as writers and the issues they dealt with. Both the writers write about their community at different point of time. So the problems faced by them are also rather different though not completely.

II

Every creative artist reflects his/her own world-view in his/her works. His treatment of his socio-religious, cultural, political, economical and environmental surroundings of his/her contemporary society contribute to the development of his/her fictional world. The artists’ revelation of life aids him/her to recognize the things or incidents he/she faces in his/her life. Their treatment may differ regarding the similar tribulations. The thematic of the work can be dealt with several ways. The narration can either be in a tragic or a comic way. It is affected by the writer’s feeling of endurance in the unsympathetic surroundings and recognition with the troubles and concerns following the resentment. Simultaneously, an author is considered in a way in which others identify him/her and situate him/her in a particular socio-cultural milieu. So the characters shaped by the author
are fictional realities. If the writer belongs to a marginal ethnic group living on the periphery, indeed his/her fictional world is engaged with the tribulations that his/her ethnic group confronts. S/He handles the ensuing angsts of his ethnic group and obviously reveals the need for the continuance of the race of that ethnic group. Here the discussion is concerned about two Parsi writers. So their world view clearly mirrors the Parsi community. It highlights the various anxieties --- psychological or existential that Parsi community undergoes.

The world views of Bapsi Sidhwa and Rohinton Mistry are quite contrasting. However, the genderic difference is, to a large extent, responsible for their different outlook. Sidhwa analyses from the feminist point of view where as Mistry’s work delineates the patriarchal ideology. Both have portrayed the public as well as private lives of their protagonists in accordance with their Parsi ethnic identity. Some times they are genuine representations, some times exaggerated exuberance of their Parsi psyche, and some times treated in ironic-satiric way or in realistic tradition. In this regard David Stouck has pointed out various modes of narrative. He writes:

Mode is a way of describing motivation in a work that is not contingent on time or place, that remains stable across the centuries and from culture to culture. It provides a basis from which we can relate to the experiences of people who lived hundreds of years ago or in totally different cultures at great distances from our own. One can identify four different modes. Briefly, romances are stories of individual adventures …while pastrols embody the individual’s experience of remembering and sometimes grieving. Satire and epics, on the other hand, serve the communal interests, epic celebrating the history of a community or nation, satire criticizing its practices and exposing its shortcomings. [Emphasis added] [David Stouck, 2003:64]
It seems that the community as represented in Bapsi Sidhwa’s fictional world has rather different problems than Mistry’s depiction of his community. It may be because of the different dimension of their temporality. Some novels of Sidhwa display the traits of Mennippean satire. Mennippean satire is defined as:

… a form of intellectually humorous work characterized by miscellaneous contents, displays of curious erudition, and comical discussions on philosophical topics. [Baldic, Chris, 1990:132]

Some of the features of such satire are varied as pointed out by M.H.Abrams:

A major feature is a series of extended dialogues and debates…in which a group of loquacious eccentrics, pedants, literary people, and representative of various professions or philosophical points of view serve to make ludicrous the attitudes and viewpoints they typify by the arguments they urge in their support. [M.H.Abrams 1993:189] (Emphasis added)

Bakhtin too points out that Mennippean satire:

…is characterized by an extraordinary freedom of plot and philosophical invention… [while its] bold and unrestrained use of the fantastic and adventure is internally motivated, justified by and devoted to a purely ideational and philosophical end: the creation of extraordinary situations for the provoking and testing of a philosophical idea, a discourse, a truth, embodied in the image of a wise man, the seeker of this truth. [Cundy 134]

Mennippean satire can easily be discerned in Bapsi Sidhwa’s ground breaking Parsi novel *The Crow Eaters* which highlights the Parsi
idiosyncrasy and paradoxes. The protagonist Freddy Junglewalla preaches the philosophy of survival to his young listeners.

In his prosperous middle years Faredoon Junglewalla was prone to reminiscence and rhetoric. …‘The sweetest thing in the world is your need’… Need, I tell you – will force you to love your enemy as a brother! I followed the dictate of my needs, my wants- they make on flexible, elastic, humble. (TCE, 9-11)

At the same time he talks about ‘tiny spark’ in every pure race, for the sake of racial purity. He debates over this issue with his son.

I believe in some kind of a tiny spark that is carried from parent to child, on through generations… a kind of inherited memory of wisdom and righteousness, reaching back to the times of Zarathustra, the Magi, the Mazdiasnians. It is a tenderly nurtured conscience evolving towards perfection. (TCE, 128)

In Ice-Candy Man too, she highlights how Godmother talks philosophically on the feminine predicament on the eve of partition. At the same time, various characters from different ethnic groups discuss the survival in the frenzy of ethnic angst. An American Brat discusses the problems of insular-marriage where Sidhwa through Zareen’s character wanted to prove the cultural dissimilarities by giving the horrible details in a comic and satiric way. On the other hand, Mistry’s world view is very gloomy and tragic. He can be called as ‘cynic’ who believes that ‘everything ends badly’ and “there is a tiny piece of justice in the universe” (AFB, 680). Mistry’s ideas about destiny are akin to Thomas Hardy. Hardy opines that man is bound to the wheel of destiny and therefore has to continuously struggle against the dictates of fate. Mistry’s vision of life is dark and gloomy. For him, this cosmos is an unfriendly mechanism, heading for by some automatic principle of life, mysterious end, utterly uncaring to the feelings of human beings. One can say that human beings
are toys in the hands of fate in his fictional world. Their actions are
determined by fate, by an automatic and unsympathetic principle of life.
Human action is not free but determined by the external forces acting on
the will. Life to him is a lost, inglorious battle. His characters resist in vain
against overpowering odds. His world is not the anvil whereon souls are
beaten into shapes; rather they are crushed out of shape and broken. He
bears a grudge against the universe which he could not throw off; he has a
feeling of resentment at injustice and wanton cruelty heaped on human
beings as Glouster in King Lear says:

As flies to wanton boys, are we to the gods,
They kill us for their sport. [Act IV, Sc.1, line 43-44]

The fictional world of Mistry created in Such a Long Journey is thus
no utopia of any kind. It is a picture of the fallen world. Again, it is a world
in which all forms of corruption, knavery, hypocrisy, tyranny, ugliness and
decay have become the order of the day. The society depicted is
completely deprived of resilience. Mistry’s shock at the sight of stinking
human condition and rampant corruption turns him into a realist, who is
obliged to expose the world around him. His celebrated novel, A Fine
Balance, is often called as cosmic tragedy, where all the characters are
brutally crushed by the destiny. Honore de Balzac, Le Pere Goriot quoted
at the beginning of the novel:

‘Holding this book in your hand, sinking back in
your soft armchair, you will say to yourself: perhaps
it will amuse me. And after you have read this story
of great misfortunes, you will no doubt dine well,
blaming the author for your own insensitivity,
accusing him of wild exaggeration and flights of
fancy. But rest assured: this tragedy is not a fiction.
All is true.’ (AFB)

In Family Matters, too, harsh realties compel the characters to shed
off the innocence. Yezad engages in a fraud scheme, Jehangir is initiated
into the world of crookedness and corruption. Thus, both the writers vary in their world view.

III

Literature serves both the purposes of delight and instruction. Sometime it delights through instruction and some time it instructs through entertainment. This edification and amusement is done through various characters that are situated in a particular socio-economic, culture-religious, national-political milieu. Hippolyte-Adolphe Taine realized that a literary work is “a transcript of contemporary manners” and from such “monuments of literature” one can understand “…knowledge of the manner in which men thought and felt.” [1976:309]

Thus fiction, as a branch of the literature, is the expression of the most intimate social awareness of the society in which it is born and nurtured. As a creative process, fiction records the creative evolution of the society itself. Bhabani Bhattacharya highlights his view of the social consciousness in the novels. He says, “I hold that a novel must have a social purpose. It must place before the reader something from the society’s point of view. Art is not necessarily for art’s sake. Purposeless art and literature which is much in vogue does not appear to me as a sound judgment” [V. Venkata Reddy 1999:01]. Shyam Asnani finds that a writer is always “…seeking the strength and fertility of his own cultural sensibility and socio-cultural experience” in the literature [1985:4]. Literature highlights various social evils and problems like superstition, casteism, poverty, illiteracy, and many others. Society is torn by political maneuverings, social disparities, communal frenzy and corruption in bureaucracy for the thematic treatment by the writers to stir the imagination of the people to new awakenings. In such a way, writers give artistic articulation to the problems that beset the common people and their joys and sorrows, the crusade against the tyranny of poverty, illiteracy, suffering, superstition, caste and sex, farmer, laborer, a factory worker, a
Fiction is not only a representation of social reality, but also a necessary functional part of social control, and also, paradoxically, an important element in social change. It plays a large part in the conduct of politics and, in general, gives symbols and modes of life...in those less easily defined, but basic areas such as norms, values, and personal and interpersonal behaviour. [1974:4]

The social paradigm in the fictions of these two writers, Mistry and Sidhwa, is completely different from each other. Their fictions deal with different time and locations their community is placed in. Sidhwa highlights the law and order in Pakistan:

The Hadood Ordinance had been introduced by General Zia in 1979 without anyone knowing what they were. The Federal Shariat Court, to oversee the Islamic laws, had also been established... Zina Ordinance... required the testimony of four "honorable" male eye-witnesses or eight female eyewitnesses to establish rape (emphasis added) The addition of zina altered the entire legal picture of sexual crime. The victim of rape ran the risk of being punished for adultery, while the rapist was often set free. Yet there were many apologists, upright men learned in jurisprudence, who agreed with the letter of the law, if not its spirit. They produced a litany of precedent and dire argument to support the verdicts. The gender bias was appalling. (AAB, 236-237)

As Sidhwa herself worked on many committees’ with Begum Bhutto, she had undergone so many experiences of poverty and the social-strata in Pakistan. Her shift to USA had opened the new world which also had its own ‘dark-zones’ or ‘weak-pulses’ where she found the Pakistan in USA with its disturbing conditions of Black, Hispanics and poverty:
They had their own vistas of uncompromising poverty and could not feel compassion for people in a distant, opulent country that had never been devasted by war, that greedily utilized one fourth of the world’s resources and polluted its atmosphere and water with nuclear tests and poisonous pesticides that could serve as well obliterate Third World pests like themselves. Poverty had spread like a galloping, disfiguring disease. Every kind of poverty in the United States paled in comparison. Yet it did not mean that the condition of the poor in America was trifling, or the injustice there less rampant. Poverty, she realized, groping for expression, was relative. (AAB, 238)

Sidhwa highlights the socio-economic conditions in Pakistan with a racist tone. Manek came back, on the way home driver applied his brakes behind a cyclist and blazed with anger,

“If you want to die, you black man, go and die beneath some other car!” The sun had set, and in the lingering afterglow made opaque by the dust and sooty emissions from the buses and mini-buses, it was impossible to tell the cyclist’s color. But, then, had Snow White been the cyclist she would have been called “black man” also. The comment was not pertinent to color or sex. In the hierarchy of Pakistani traffic, truck and car are king; the cyclist, as possessor of an inferior vehicle, is treated with contempt. By the same token the pedestrian, whose only means of locomotion are his shoes, is more lowly. The lowest are the shoeless beggars who skip nimbly from the path of Toyotas driven by snobbish drivers. The racist overtones were provided by the legacy of the Khan’s service in the British army during the days of the Raj. (AAB, 196)

This reflects the social strata in the Pakistani society and how the whole nation was disillusioned and betrayed after the freedom. Mistry’s world too had such undercurrents, especially, in his cosmic tragedy *A Fine Balance*. Mistry portrays the socio-religious scenario in the Indian villages:
…there are four varnas in society: Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya, and Shudra. Each of us belongs to one of these four varnas, and they cannot mix. (AFB, 138)

Sidhwa portrays the Parsi community in its highest development: Raj- The Crow Eaters), on the verge of Partition (Ice-Candy Man), community which faces the fundamentalism in free Pakistan (An American Brat). Mistry comments upon the Parsi community after 1960s - when large numbers of Parsis were migrating to the West. During post-Raj India, they were categorized as ‘minority’ and ‘other’. He portrays the society which is threatened by the majorities like Hindus, (Maratha) in Such a Long Journey and Family Matters. The Prime Minister is held to be responsible for the increasing fundamentalism in India:

At once she began encouraging the demands for a separate Maharashtra. How much bloodshed, how much rioting she caused. And today we have that bloody Shiv Sena, wanting to make the rest of us into second-class citizens. Don’t forget, she started it all by supporting the racist buggers. (SALJ, 39)

Sidhwa portrays the Parsis having dignity, respect and awe in society- Godmother in Ice-Candy Man and Freddy in The Crow Eaters. In Ice-Candy Man, Sidhwa portrays Godmother as a kind of community chief who controls the nerves of the community. By her name only she commands respect from the community members and she is always taken seriously. Lenny talks about the arena and sphere of influence of the Godmother:

Over the years Godmother has established a network of espionage with a reach of which even she is not aware. It is in her nature to know things: to be aware of what’s going on around her. The day-to-day commonplaces of our lives unravel to her undercurrents that are lost to less perceptive humans. No baby- not even a kitten- is delivered within the sphere of her influence without her
becoming instantly aware of its existence. (ICM, 210)

On the other hand, Mistry portrays the Parsis who are considered as clowns and have become a butt of ridicule, who are losing their self-respect and dignity which have resulted into the westward migration. Mistry portrays Rustomji (Tales from Firozsha Baag, ‘An Inauspicious Occasion’) who is humiliated publicly because he abuses the bus as well as the crowd when someone spat betel leaf juice on his white shirt:

‘Arre who does he think he is, abusing us, giving such bad bad ghali?’ some one pushed Rustomji from behind. ‘Bawaji, we’ll break all your bones. Maaro saala bawajiko!’ ‘Arre your arse we’ll tear to shreds!’ People were jostling him from every side. The pheytoe was plucked from his head, and they tugged at the bows of the dugli. (TFB, 17)

To save himself Rustomji made clown of himself. He removed his denture, “Look, such an old man, no teeth even” (TFB, 18). Mistry describes him as, “Rustomji the clown was triumphant. He has restored to himself the harmlessness of the original entertaining spectacle, pheytoe back on head, teeth back in mouth” (TFB, 18). In this reference Bharucha writes:

It is this tragedy of shattered dreams and socio-political downgrading that lurks beneath Rustomji’s comic mask and scatological humor, that ultimately makes the story come across as tender and sensitive discourse. [2003:78]

Dinshawaji’s character portrayal by Mistry is caricaturesque. Laurie complains Gustad about his attitude and verbal nuance: “You know how he carries on all the time, playing the fool” (SALJ, 175). Gustad too calls him as “The stupid fool. With all his idiotic-lunatic nonsense. The bloody fool” (SALJ, 177).
In this manner the social status of the Parsi community is incorporated in the fictional worlds of these two writers.

**IV**

The political predicament in the novels of these two writers should also be taken into consideration. Literature is and always has been a social activity in reality. It is one aspect of the cultural superstructure which has its basics in the economic, political, social, philosophical and religious patterns of the time. It unravels multidimensional conscious and unconscious cravings of a society which are seeking happiness and realization in the world of actual reality. It can be said in the words of N. Shamota:

*The soil which nurtures artistic talent is the culture of the people, the tastes spiritual demands and life of the artist’s contemporaries. In other words, the artist is only the co-author of a magnificent creation known as the culture of the people.* [1966:106-7]

Stephen Spender opined that the political consciousness is aroused through the fiction. He was expected to do: “if he is not to be destroyed, he must somehow connect himself...with...political life and influence it...” [1935:19]. It suggests that literature can be used as a tool to preach the political ideologies. It helps people to understand the political turmoil in the specific country. According to Benjamin Disraeli, such consciousness is shaped by “a variety of influence- the influence of original organization, of climate, soil, religion, laws, customs, manners, extraordinary accidents and incidents in their history and the individual character of their illustrious citizens” [1967:21]. Thus literature can be seen as an organic part of the total cultural-complex in which it takes its origin. The organic nature of art makes it draw nourishment from diverse sources including politics, taken in its wider, elemental sense, as embracing the multiplicity of the contemporary scene with its economic, social, cultural and governmental aspects. Thomas Mann’s growth from
Reflections of an Apolitical Man to Kultur and Politiik depended on realization that:

What is political and social is an indivisible part of what is human and enters into one problem of humanism, into which our intellect must include it and...in this problem a dangerous hiatus destructive for culture may manifest itself if we ignore the political, social element inherent in it. [1977:46]

There could be isolated a number of factors which ‘ politicize’ literature and lend to the relationship between literature and politics a sharp possessive character. Jean Paul Sartre also thinks that literature is increasingly difficult to separate from the historical and the political events of its time.

So political aspect covers various issues related with the subjugation of Parsi community in the novels of these two writers. Both the writers have discussed the subaltern status of their community in the mainstream politics. The severity of the problems is sometimes exaggerated. The Parsi community in Sidhwa suffers the dilemma of political alignment whereas Parsi community in Mistry suffers the marginal existence on the periphery resulting into alienation from the national identity. Sidhwa’s fiction has political overtones. She has positive approach in her depiction of Jinnah and Bhutto and she has tried to (re)construct ideal images. She assumes satiric tone while portraying the political figures such as Gandhijee and Nehru. She has tried to (de)construct them as common human beings having their own follies and at the same time she criticizes the fundamentalism in Pakistan. Sidhwa describes Gandhijee as:

...a mythic figure... surrounded by women... small, dark, shriveled, old... He is a man who loves women. And lame children. And the untouchable sweeper - so he will love the untouchable sweeper’s constipated girl best. (ICM, 85-87)
Sidhwa further supports Pakistan’s demands on Kashmir. While comparing Nehru and Jinnah in all their mannerisms and personality facets, Sidhwa writes, “the British favour Nehru over Jinnah. Nehru is Kashmiri; they grant him Kashmir” (ICM, 159). Sidhwa has compared Nehru and Jinnah:

Nehru wears red carnations in the buttonholes of his ivory jackets. He bandies words with Lady Mountbatten and is presumed to be her lover. He is charming, too, to Lord Mountbatten. Suave, Cambridge-polished, he carries about him an aura of power and a presence that flatters anyone he compliments tenfold. He doles out promises, smiles, kisses-on-cheeks. He is in the prime of his Brahmin manhood. He is handsome, his cheeks glow pink. (ICM, 159)

Where as Jinnah is described as:

Jinnah is incapable of compliments. Austere, driven, pukka-sahib accented, deathly ill: incapable of cheek-kissing. Instead of carnations he wears a karakuli cap, somber with tight, grey lamb’s-wool curls: and instead of pale jackets, black achkan coats. He is past the prime of his elegant manhood. Sallow, whip-thin, sharp-tongued, uncompromising. His training at the Old Bailey and practice in English courtroom has given him faith in constitutional means, and he puts his misplaced hopes into tall standards of upright justice. The fading Empire sacrifices his cause to their shifting allegiances. (ICM, 159-160)

Sidhwa also lashes the unfair portrayal of the Jinnah by the Western and Indian historians. Sidhwa as omniscient narrator writes:

And today, forty years later, in films of Gandhi’s and Mountbatten’s lives, in books by British and Indian scholars, Jinnah, who for a decade was known as ‘Ambassador of Hindu-Muslim Unity’, is caricatured, and portrayed as a monster. (ICM, 160)
In *An American Brat*, Manek calls Bhutto as a “socialist bastard” (AAB, 100). Zareen calls him “... hero ... The champion of the poor, of women, of the minorities and underprivileged people - of democracy” (AAB, 175) and “a martyr!” (AAB, 21-22) “massiha” (AAB, 178) General Zia is described as ‘the murder’-er and “a political rival” (AAB, 21-22)

Mistry’s stance on politics has a satiric or to certain extent negative approach. He portrays the political figures such as Nehru, Indira Gandhi, and Balasaheb Thakrey in negative light. The approach must have been determined by his minority status and the exploitation perpetuated by these leaders on the community. He criticizes the corruption in Indian politics and its side-effects on his tiny endangered community. (Nagarwalla Case - Major Billimoria in SALJ). Dinshawji described Indira Gandhi as “a shrewd woman”, “Saali” (SALJ, 38). Major Billimoria refers Indira Gandhi as “spy”, “blackmail”(-er), “control”(-er), “very strong woman... very intelligent” (SALJ, 270) controller of “RAW, the courts, broadcasting... everything is in her pocket, all will be covered up.”(SALJ, 278), “our leader” (AFB, 325), “mother India” (AFB, 329). Inspector Bamaji abuses the Pakistani leaders who are waging war against Bangladesh as, “Bastards”, “Bloody bahan chod bhungees”(SALJ,295), Yahya Khan is “Drunkerd” (SALJ,307) LalBhahadur Shastri is “a short man”(SALJ,114) who “command respect on the world stage”, “Short in height but tall in brains is our Lal Bahadur” (SALJ,114) and “big little man” (SALJ,311). Sanjay Gandhi is “the car manufacturer” (323), “Son of India” (AFB, 329). America is “maader chod” (SALJ, 76). President Nixon is “chootia …licking his way up into Pakistan’s arsehole” (SALJ, 76). Mistry describes politics as a “circus” (AFB, 324) and politicians as, “clowns, monkeys, acrobats, everything” (AFB, 324). Mistry very minutely describes the habits of famous leaders and their interpretations by common people:

… Prime Minister tossed her garlands, one by one, out into the audience, ‘Her father also used to do
that, when he was Prime Minister’, Ishvar said. ‘Yes,’ said Rajaram, ‘I saw it once, but when he did it, he looked humble.’ ‘She looks like she is throwing rubbish at us,’ said Om. (AFB, 324-325)

Mistry comments how popular leaders lost their image and worth in the eyes of common people due to their dictatorship. The big cutout of Prime Minister falls down:

**Those in the vicinity of the cardboard-and-plywood giant ran for their lives. ‘Nobody wants to be caught in the Prime Minister’s embrace,’ said Rajaram. ‘But she tries to get on top of everyone,’ said Om.** (AFB, 330)

Balasaheb Thakrey in *Family Matters* is portrayed as “Senapati” (FM, 32) and “the crackpot” (FM, 32). Further he is ridiculed and made as an object of the joke:

**“If the Senapati gets gas after eating Karela, the gourd will be declared an anti-Indian vegetable.” “Let’s hope his langoti doesn’t give him a groin rash,” said Jal, “Or all underwear might be banned.”** (FM, 32)

In *A Fine Balance* he is hailed as, “Thokray is the one in charge of this. He is wearing a badge, Controller of Slums. And Navalkar is Assistant Controller” (AFB, 364). Mistry shows the anger of suffering Parsi against the majority in Maharashtra. Dinshawaji calls the dubbawalla as “low-class people? No manners, no sense, nothing” (SALJ, 73). He holds “that bastard Shiv Sena leader” is responsible for this “who worships Hitler and Mussolini” (SALJ, 73). The cry “Maharashtra for Maharashtrians” of Shiv Sena is considered as “nonsense” and “Maratha Raj” is hailed as “real Gandoo Raj” (SALJ, 73-74).

Mistry expresses the predicament of India and Maharashtra under BJP and Shiv Sena coalition government:

**“Those two parties encouraged the Hindutva extremists to destroy the Babri Mosque. “And what about all the hatred of minorities that Shiv Sena has**
spread for the last thirty years” ...Senapati... accuses people left and right of being anti-this and anti-that. South Indians are anti-Bombay, Valentine’s Day is anti-Hindustan, film stars born before 1947 in the Pakistan part of Punjab are traitors to the country.” (FM, 32)

For Jal “Corruption is in the air” (FM, 31), and “nation specializes in turning honest people into crooks” (FM, 31). The country is governed by “pariah dogs” (FM, 31). Mistry calls the BJP - Shiv Sena coalition government as “a poisonous snake” (FM, 31).

Sidhwa sets her novel against the backdrop of politics - Raj period or colonized India in The Crow Eaters, freedom struggle and independence and consequent partition in 1947 in Ice Candy Man, fundamentalist and military-Raj of Pakistan and Bhutto’s trial in 1970s in An American Brat whereas Mistry sets the background of his novels against the very crucial political phases of India: India-Pakistan war and independence of Bangladesh in 1971 in Such a Long Journey, tyranny of Indira Gandhi, emergency up to the riots after her assassination from 1978-84 in A Fine Balance and post-Ayodhya India of Hindu-fundamentalism after Babri Mosque demolition in Family Matters where each time his miniscule community suffered bitterly.

In Sidhwa’s fictional world, Parsi community suffers the Prufrockian dilemma of politics in The Crow Eaters and Ice Candy Man but at the same time has the assurance of peace and prosperity as well as threat of Islamization as in An American Brat. Freddy assures the children about their safe future:

‘But where will we go? What will happen to us?’... ‘Nowhere, my children,’ ...‘We will stay where we are.... let Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, or whoever, rule. What does it matter? The sun will continue to rise - and the sun continues to set - in their arses!’ (TCE, 283)
Whereas Col. Bharucha in *Ice Candy Man* cautions all the Parsis about miniscule nature of their community and instructs them to maintain low-profile:

‘We must tread carefully... We have served the English faithfully, and earned their trust... So, we have prospered! But we are the smallest minority in India ...Only one hundred and twenty thousand in the whole world. We have to be extra wary, or we’ll be neither here nor there...’ We must hunt with the hounds and run with the hare!’(ICM, 16)... *As long as we conduct our lives quietly, as long as we present no threat to anybody, we will prosper right here.*’ (Emphasis added). (ICM, 40)

All the adverse effects of General Zia’s Islamization and Bhutto’s hanging were described and Feroza wanted to know all these things to keep in touch with her own country which raised questions about her national identity:

“You should have sent me newspaper clippings,” Feroza said to her mother. “I want to know what’s going on here. After all, it’s my country!” Zareen did not mention the innuendo, the odd barb, that had suddenly begun to fester at the back of her consciousness. The insinuation that her patriotism was questionable, or that she was not a proper Pakistani because she was not Muslim. What was she then? And where did she belong, if not in the city where her ancestors were buried? She was in the land of the seven rivers, the Septe Sindhu, the land that Prophet Zarathustra had declared as favored most by Ahura Mazda. (AAB, 237-238)

On other hand Parsi community in Mistry’s fictional world suffers the identity crisis and the sheer existential problem. In one effective instance, he voices Gustad Nobel’s acute pain with his son’s disrespect for his helpless status as a minority in an ethnically chaotic society:

What kind of life was Sohrab going to look forward to? No future for minorities, with all these fascist
**Shiv Sena politics and Marathi language nonsense.**
(SALJ, 55)

Dinshawji expresses his frustration of being classified as ‘other’, “Today we have that bloody Shiv Sena, wanting to make the rest of us into second-class citizens.” (SALJ, 39)

In Sidhwa’s fictional world Parsis never suffer socially, politically, and economically. In all the facets of life they enjoyed the privileged status. Freddy who made the fortune by traveling from north-India to Lahore enjoyed the high-status on all levels in *The Crow Eaters*. Mr. and Mrs. Sethi and Godmother in *Ice Candy Man* have great respect and awe in the society. Zareen Ginnawalla herself has worked on many committees with Bhutto’s wife in *An American Brat*. She had worked on many committees with Begum Bhutto for disadvantaged people, orphanage, “Destitute Women’s and Children’s Home” (AAB, 175). In this way both writers have described their tiny community under the political ethos of their respective countries.

V

Literature deals with various economical strata living in the society. According to such economical status, characters fight against the financial inequality, poverty, subsequent subjugation which may result into the maladjustment of the characters trapping their lives in fraud, corruption, cheating etc, shedding their valuable innocence. Even writers are highly concerned about this social evil of poverty. It is aptly described in these words as:

*In these days of acute political awareness the love theme has lost its popularity. Readers tend to think that all love stories are deceptive and that their authors are enemies of the society. These are days for critics of institutions who condemn the feudal values in our society. ...People have found out that it is the economic system that is at the root of all evil and that it can be corrected by collective action.*

[Buchibabu 1978:94]
In this way, readers are also interested in the social realities of their times. It is necessary to see this economical aspect in these two writers. Parsis were considered as the most prosperous and rich community in the Indian sub-continent during the colonial India. But due to the loss of the elite status in post-colonial India and Pakistan, Parsis suffer from the severe problems of poverty and financial crisis. Both these aspects are highlighted by these two writers.

Sidhwa portrays the Parsi community which was on the peak of prosperity. At that time Parsis afforded the royal mansions as Sidhwa describes Easymoney’s bungalow in *The Crow Eaters* and Feroza’s haveli in *An American Brat*. Here Sidhwa presents the past glory of Parsis, especially in the colonial period, when they enjoyed the royal status, and were hailed as the nearer friends of the rulers. Easymoney’s stately mansion is described as:

Rodabai led them into a handsome drawing room. It was a vast, cool room, lighted by crystal lamps and the sunlight that filtered through brocade curtains. One wall was hung with a huge French tapestry, and the dull gold furniture was of Louis XIV style. Carpets spread out beneath their feet a soft garden of Persian hunting scenes and flowers. (TCE, 199)

On the other hand, Mistry’s novels lack the royal descriptions of places. Mistry portrays the Parsi residential complex, bungalows in dilapidated conditions and adverse housing conditions as Parsis are downgraded financially in the post-colonial India. His descriptions of Parsi flats in *Tales from Firozsha Baag (An Inauspicious Occasion)*, Khodad Building in *Such a Long Journey* (the wall, open public lavatory) the Chetau Felicity in *Family Matters* aptly reflects the Parsi status in the post-colonial India. At the same time his descriptions of slums in *A Fine Balance*, prostitution in ‘The House of Cages’ in *Such a Long Journey* and the flat of Roxana and Coomy in *Family Matters* gives nausea and the
typical middle-class sense respectively. Mistry portrays the poor and unhygienic conditions of living in the Baag. It is the result of lost glory of the Parsis in Post-Raj India where they became minority, and middle-class who suffer from so many problems. As Rustomji complains about WC, “That stinking lavatory upstairs is leaking again!” (TFB, 04) Mistry describes Rustomji’s flat,

The copper vessel was already filled with water. But someone had forgotten to cover it, and plaster from the ceiling had dripped into it. It floated on the surface, little motes of white. …Plaster had been dripping for some years now in his A Block flat. The building had acquired an appalling patina of yellow and gray griminess…during the monsoon season beads of moisture trickled down the walls, like sweat down a coolie’s back, which considerably hastened the crumbling of paint and plaster. (TFB, 5-7)

In Lend Me Your Light, like most immigrants, Kersi experienced the culture-shock after reaching Bombay: “He felt the contrast between the lush greenery of the West and ‘the parched land, brown, weary, and unhappy’ in India is striking” (TFB, 186).

In Sidhwa’s works Parsi community is prosperous, economically. Freddy (The Crow Eaters) is a business tycoon and has a chain of stores through the north India. Mr. and Mrs. Sethi (Ice Candy Man) can afford many servants. Feroza (An American Brat) is sent to USA for vacations and then for education.

On the other hand, in Mistry, Parsis suffered on all the fronts. Socially they are turned into the clown and buffoons (Rustomji in Tales from Firozsha Baag), politically they suffered being the minority community, (Major Billimoria as the victim of Indira’s corruption in Such a Long Journey), economically too they went under drastic changes (Cavasji’s complains to God are aptly comments on their poverty in Such a Long Journey). The nationalization of banks too is one of the major causes
of their downgraded economical condition. Dinshawji expressed sorrow for the present condition of the Parsis and remembered:

‘What days those were yaar. What fun we used to have. Parsis were the kings of banking in those days. Such respect we used to get. Now the whole atmosphere only has been spoiled. Ever since that Indira Gandhi nationalized the banks.’…‘Nowhere in the world has nationalization worked. What can you say to idiots?’ (SALJ, 38)

Bharucha expresses the poverty among Parsis:

The Parsis in Firozsha Baag are middle class and like other middle class persons in Bombay have to engage in daily battle with intermittent water-supply, dilapidated homes, peeling paint, falling plaster and leaking WCs. [2003: 73-74]

The troubles middle class and poor Parsis suffer from are also grudged through the complaints of Cawasji. Mistry’s comments on the financial disparity among rich Parsis and poor, middle class Parsis are aptly put forth in the yelling, cursing and complaints of old Cawasji at his second-floor window who used to yell through the window:

‘To the Tatas You give so much! And nothing for me? To the Wadias You give, You keep on giving! You cannot hear my prayers? The pockets of the Camas only You will fill! We others don’t need it, You think?’ (SALJ, 87)

Gustad had to sell his “camera” (SALJ, 219) for Roshan’s “medicine” (SALJ, 219). Dinlavaz sold her “two gold wedding bangles” (SALJ, 219). In Family Matters, Yezad indulges himself in Matka game, plans for fraud scheme; Murad walks to school to save his bus-fare to purchase Christmas-gift for Jehangir. Jehangir also engages himself in corruption by taking bribes to mark the homework. In A Fine Balance, Dina Dalal hires two tailors for her garment factory supply and accommodates a student- Manek to run the household budget.
Sidhwa comments on the American policy. She also highlights the status of Parsi in Pakistan.

…the zealous Islamization fostered by General Zia, which encouraged religious chauvinism and marginalized people like her- the minorities- and made them vulnerable to petty ill will. (AAB, 238)

Feroza compared the poverty in America and Pakistan. She found the “Poverty… was relative” (238). She compared the minorities in USA (“the blacks and Hispanics” (238)) and Pakistan. Feroza criticized the policies of America but defended it for “Which other country opened its arms to the destitute and discarded of the world the way America did? Of course, it had its faults-- terrifying shortcomings-- but it had God’s blessings, too” (239).

Parsi community in Sidhwa’s fictional world is blessed with plenty. It never suffered financial anxiety. Sidhwa narrates the grandeur of the Parsis who lavishly spent money on their celebrations. Easymoney gave the grand party:

It was a memorable wedding. Years after people still talked about it. Hedges had been leveled in the compound of the Taj Mahal Hotel to clear parking space for carriages and limousines. Openings were dug in the walls dividing the banquet rooms, reception rooms, and lobby of the Hotel to accommodate guests and facilitate the flow of service. Flowers were commissioned from Bangalore and Hyderabad, cheeses from Surat, and caviar from the Persian Gulf. There was lobster and wild-duck and venison. There was a bottle of Scotch and Burgundy for each guest; and ambulances, their motors idling, stood ready to convey the inebriated or overstuffed to their homes or to the hospital. Two hundred Parsi families living in a charitable housing scheme and not invited to the party were each given a sack of flour, a ten pound canister of rarefied butter, lentils and a box of Indian sweets. There was a Police Band, a Naval Band, a dance orchestra and an orchestra that played chamber music. There was singing. (TCE, 224)
In this way these two writers displayed the financial anxieties of their ethnic community.

VI

Religion is another important aspect which the creative artist deals with. Sculptor, paintings are other mediums where such creativity can be expressed. It is very difficult for the writer to write about another religion or culture without deep insight and insiders’ perspectives. It may cause the religious blasphemy resulting into the ethnic and religious anxieties. For the same reason, generally Christian writers deal with the Christian religion, African writers deal with their tribal religion, Muslim writers highlight Islam, Indian writers focus various religion like Hindu. Literature by Zoroastrian writers have focused on their tiny endangered community in their fictions. Here Mistry and Sidhwa, being Parsi and dealing with Parsi community in particular highlight many religious rituals and related issues in their fictions. Both the writers highlight various controversial issues like burial of the dead, fading away of the vultures, reciting of the prayers in English and so on.

Parsi community does not allow insular marriage. In this regard, Sidhwa shows the orthodoxy in Parsis and appeals for reformation in her community. Zareen understood that the debate over reforms was inevitable. Zareen realized the wave of fundamentalism all over the world:

These educated custodians of the Zoroastrian doctrine were less rigid and ignorant than the fundos in Pakistan. This mindless current of fundamentalism sweeping the world like a plague had spared no religion, not even their microscopic community of 120 thousand. (AAB, 305-306)

Later on, Zareen ponders over the need for reform in her community,

Zareen wished David was a Parsee -- or that the Zoroastrians would permit selective conversion to their faith. Zareen found herself seriously questioning the ban on interfaith marriage for the
first time. She was not so sure anymore and felt herself suddenly aligned with the thinking of the liberals and reformists. It eased her heart to think that a debate on these issues was taking place. (AAB, 287-288) (Emphasis added)

Parsi community in Sidhwa’s fiction pants for Tower of Silences, as these are not available in cities like Lahore. In *The Crow Eaters*, Jerbanoo expressed the deep regret for the vultures on the top of a green tree: “What a pity. What a shame. These poor birds are permitted to starve despite all the Parsis we have in Lahore... all these vultures are going to waste - such a pity”(TCE, 50). Freddy described this absence of Tower of Silence as: “Vultures, vultures everywhere and not a body to share!” (TCE, 51) Mistry highlighted the low population of vultures as a cause of concern for Parsi community. The most important problem related with the *Dokhma* is the littering of the flesh by the vultures which troubled the clerk a lot as tenets from “luxury high-rises proliferating around Doongerwadi’s green acres” (SALJ, 316) had often complained against vultures as it is described below:

‘Your vultures!’ the tenants complained. ‘Control your vultures! Throwing rubbish on our balconies!’ They claimed that the sated birds, flying out from the Tower after gorging themselves, invariably snatched a final bite to savour later. And if the tidbits were lost in mid-flight, they launched on the exclusive balconies. This, said the indignant tenants, was absolutely, intolerable considering the sky-high prices they had been charged for their de luxe flats. (SALJ, 316-317)

On the other hand, relatives of the dead read about the skyscraper scandal and so they complained:

…they were not paying funeral fees to have their dear departed ones anatomized and strewn piecemeal on posh balconies. The bereaved insisted that the Punchayet do something about it. ‘Train the vultures properly,’ they said, ‘or import more
vultures, so all flesh can be consumed in the well. We don’t want a surplus which can be carried off and lost in impure, profane places.’ (SALJ, 317)

Sidhwa in *The Crow Eaters* shows that Parsis suffer due to the want of Tower of Silence and excess of the vultures. They have to compromise with mere burial. Modern day Parsis don’t believe in ‘nirang’ bath of the dead. Alamai argued with the men who came to perform Dinshawaji’s *suchkaar* and sponging the corpse with *Gomez*: ‘All this nonsense with bull’s urine is not for us,’ she said. ‘We are modern people. Use water only, nothing else’ (SALJ, 246). Mistry also highlights the rigidity of Parsi community as Ghulam, being a non-Parsi, was denied entrance into The Tower of Silence: “Your Parsi priest’s don’t allow outsider like me to go inside” (SALJ, 322). These writers also focus the issues related with the prayer. Parsis think that Zoroastrian prayers are so strong and sacred that non-Parsi can’t hear them. So they are not allowed inside the Fire Temple. Prayers are written in Avastan language and modern day Parsis don’t know it, Gustad contemplates on his Kusti prayer in the Fire Temple “All his life he had uttered by rote the words of this dead language, comprehending not one of them while mouthing his prayers” (SALJ, 247-248). Feroza said tandarosti prayer- the happy little Jasa-me-avanghe Mazda prayer in Avastan language of the Gathas. She knew its meaning from the English translation in her prayer book:

**Come to my help, O Ahura-Mazda!**
**Give me victory, power, and the joy of life.** (AAB, 42)

In Zoroastrian religion common Parsis are not allowed in *Dungarwari* because, “only professional pall-bearers are allowed to witness the gory spectacle inside the Tower” (TCE, 46). But these people are treated as untouchables. Gustad points out this: “Silly customs, to have professional pall bearers. And on top of that, poor fellows treated like outcasts and untouchables” (SALJ, 252). Mistry talks about the continuous battle between the reformists and the orthodox Parsis. They
fought over any topic with community interest like “the chemical analysis of _nirang_”, “the vibration theory of Avesta prayers” (SALJ, 317). Dokhma is considered “both practical and hygienic” (TCE, 46). Parsi population is concentrated in the cities of Bombay and Karachi. There the Parsis have Doongarwari following traditional _dokhma_, but Parsis living in “far-flung areas have to be content with mere burial” (TCE, 46). At the same time tradition bound Parsis prefer dokhma irrespective of wants of the tower of silence. Slave-sister (Mini aunty) ridiculed such religious stands and retorted satirically: “…being devoured by vultures has nothing to do with the religion... Surely Zarathustra had more important messages to deliver” (ICM, 114).

In this way Rohinton Mistry and Bapsi Sidhwa have focused various religious issues concerning Parsi community.

**VII**

History is often the subject of narratives. There is a whole array of historical novels. Histories are used as the source material for fictions. For instance, J.M. Coetzee’s Booker winner book _Life and Time of Michael K_ traces the history of its central character Michael K whereas Australian novelist Peter Carrey writes real life history of Kelly gang and its struggle under colonial rule in Australia in his Booker winner book _The True History of Kelly Gang_. Salman Rushdie’s _Shame_ is called fictional/real history of Pakistan. Such fictions are called as historiographic metafictions, which can be described as graphical history of imaginary country resembling real nation/state in fictional narrative having the real/lifelike records. Rohinton Mistry and Bapsi Sidhwa have also used ‘history’ as a subtext in their fictions. They also have discussed the history of their ‘Parsi ethnic’ group on various occasions in their novels. Further one can say that both the writers have traced the history of their ethnic group in the background of national histories of their two nations. Analyzing the text of these two writers, it can be said that Bapsi Sidhwa’s fictional world deals
with the national history of undivided India in *The Crow Eaters* (colonial rule and Parsi community) and *Ice-Candy Man* (predicament of Parsi community with its ethnic counterparts i.e. Hindu and Muslim on the eve of partition). *An American Brat* deals with post-independent state of Pakistan. Sidhwa maintained the link between the private and national histories in her fiction. At the end of *The Crow Eaters*, Freddy curses Parsi leaders like Dadabhai Navroji for leading the freedom movement. In *Ice-Candy Man*, Sidhwa arranged a scene where Lenny meets Mahatma Gandhi, who was the leader of freedom struggle. In *An American Brat* too Zareen and Feroza visit Bhutto’s sister. Mistry too, has utilized the history as a subtext in his fiction. His novels deal with the Indian history - *Such a Long Journey* (Nagarwalla Case, war with East Pakistan (Bangladesh freedom) in 1971); *A Fine Balance* (Internal emergency to assassination of Prime Minister and consequent anti-Sikh riots, 1978-1984) and *Family Matters* (Post-Ayodhya/post Babri mosque demolition riots in India, 1993). Mistry’s characters were directly influenced by the contemporary historical events. Historical events are interwoven with personal events. In *Such a Long Journey*, Major Bilimoria is the fictive representation of Parsi RAW agent Nagarwalla, through whom Gustad’s family is connected to the turmoil of Bangladesh freedom war led by Indira Gandhi. In *A Fine Balance*, all his characters suffer due to the emergency. Om and Ishvar were forced to attend the public meeting of Indira Gandhi (A Day at Circus…). In *Family Matters* his characters suffer the Hindu fundamentalism of Shiv Sena leader Balasaheb Thakare and his *Maharashtra for Maharashtrians* agenda. A. Alvarez focuses the nationalist concern of the writers: “nationalism becomes a preoccupation of the writers… helping the nation to an awareness of itself, its aspirations, its troubles” [1967: x]. It highlights the writer’s picturization of his nationality and its people. Sidhwa asserts her national identity as a Pakistani. Her positive affirmation of her Pakistani identity is clearly
mentioned in *Ice-Candy Man* and *An American Brat* but at the same time she raises question over this national identity. Mistry is in conflict with Indian identity and has tried to escape it with unsuccessful attempts of migration to the West in *Tales from Firozsha Baag, Such a long journey,* and *Family Matters.*

Sidhwa portrayed the independent state of Pakistan as a drifting nation which has lost its ideals. Its growing fundamentalism is exactly contradictory to the ideas of Jinnah, who was “pukka-sahib” (ICM, 159) and advocated for the secular democracy. It was a utopian dream for future Pakistan and great disillusionment to Jinnah and Parsi community too, as Sidhwa exclaims, “Jinnah, too, died of a broken heart” (ICM, 100).

Mistry directly comments himself as a ‘Tyresis’ who suffered due to the guilt of migration (*Lend Me Your Light* in *Tales from Firozsha Baag*). The same vein was echoed in Kersi’s preparation to immigrate to the USA. It is fully supported by his parents as foretold given his “education, and ...westernized background, and fluency in the English language” (TFB, 178). The night before departure Kersi suffered from a searing pain in his eyes and wondered if he was being punished for his sin of migration:

…*the sin of hubris for seeking emigration out of the land of my birth, and paying the price in burnt-out eyes, I Tiresias, blind and throbbing between two lives, the one in Bombay and the one to come in Toronto.* (TFB, 180)

Mistry’s protagonists always plan for migration for better future prospects (*Such a Long Journey,* Gustad’s dream plan of IIT for his son and then future migration, *Family Matters,* Yezad’s dream to migrate to Canada, and final 3 stories of *Tales from Firozsha Baag*) are related to the problem of migration. But their migration brings failure which resulted into the loss of both ‘homeland’ and ‘host land’ (*Squatter* in *Tales from Firozsha Baag*). Nilufer Bharucha comments:
One can say that all of the Mistry’s Canadian stories sketched “an unrelentingly dark and gloomy picture of Canada and even caution reader/listeners against the act of immigration.” [2003:117]

Sarosh returns home after his failure to cope with Canadian surroundings and mannerisms. But Sarosh once again uprooted from Canada was searching his roots in India where he was unable to find them:

Weeks went by and Sarosh found himself desperately searching for his old place in the pattern of life he had vacated ten years ago. The old pattern was never found by Sarosh; he searched in vain. Patterns of life are selfish and unforgiving. (TFB, 167)

Sarosh himself talks to the listeners via the narrator/story teller Nariman:

‘Tell them,’ said Sarosh, ‘that the world can be a bewildering place, and dreams and ambitions are often paths to the most pernicious of traps...’ ‘When you shall these unlucky deeds relate, speak of me as I am; nothing extenuate, nor set down aught in malice: tell them that in Toronto once there lived a Parsi boy as best as he could. Set you down this; and say, besides, that for some it was good and for some it was bad, but for me life in the land of milk and honey was just a pain in the posterior.’ (TFB, 168)

In *Family Matters* too, Mistry comments that, “…emigration is an enormous mistake. The biggest anyone can make in their life. The loss of home leaves a hole that never fills.” (FM, 254)

Sidhwa explores the new possibilities of new life, new world when migrated. She discusses this aspect in her novel *An American Brat*, as:

From her visit to Lahore, Feroza knew she had changed, and the life of her friends there had also changed, taken a different direction from hers. Although the sense of dislocation, of not belonging, was more acute in America, she felt, it would be more tolerable because it was shared by thousands
of newcomers like herself. It was not only that, Feroza thought in mild consternation. Like Manek she had become used to the seductive entitlements of the First World. Happy Hour, telephones that worked, the surfeit of food, freezers, electricity, and clean and abundant water, the malls, skyscrapers, and highway. (AAB, 312)

Thus these novels turn up as a parallel history of the subcontinent - modern India and Pakistan. It is history from a writer’s point of view that tries to (dis/un)cover the suppressed or neglected chapters of Indian history. By re-narrating history, the novelist constructs his/her story of his/her community and national-truth.

VIII

Every writer has his/her own style of writing. It varies from writer to writer, shaped by influences on him/her and socio-political, culture-religious, economical atmosphere. A writer employs various devices of narrative structure as per his understanding of the surrounding. There are varieties of narrative techniques that a writer uses in his/her narrative like linear narrative where narrative develops in straight forward way. There is no interruption in between the narrative, whereas non-linear narrative allows a writer to shift his focus from past to present or from present to past. In such a case a writer uses techniques like Omniscient point of view, intrusive narrator, analepsis, prolepsis, “Flashback” “Anamnesis” “entrelacement”, and intertextuality, story-telling. A brief look at these terms is imperative.

According to M.H. Abrams, the term Omniscient point of view is: “a common term for the large and varied works of fiction written in accord with the convention that the narrator knows everything that needs to be known about the agents, actions, and events, and also has privileged access to the character’s thoughts, feelings, and motives; and that the narrator is free to move at will in time and place, to shift from character to character,
and to report (or conceal) their speech, doings, and states of consciousness.” [M.H. Abrams 1993: 166]

Within this mode, the intrusive narrator suggests the narrator/writer’s peeping in the narrative to give his opinions, or comments on the happenings in the novel. So it can described as “one who not only reports, but also comments on and evaluates the actions and motives of the characters, and sometimes expresses personal views about human life in general. Most works are written in the convention that the omniscient narrator’s reports and judgments are to be taken as the facts and values within the fictional world.” [M.H. Abrams 1993:166]

Sidhwa sometimes peeps into the narrative (Ice Candy Man, when Lenny speaks about the Jinnah and An American Brat, the talk with an American who speaks with Zareen as genderless, etc.) Sidhwa as omniscient narrator writes:

‘But didn’t Jinnah, too, die of a broken heart? And today, forty years later, in films of Gandhi’s and Mountbatten’s lives, in books by British and Indian scholars, Jinnah, who for a decade was known as ‘Ambassador of Hindu-Muslim Unity’, is caricatured, and portrayed as monster.’ (ICM, 160)

Mistry, too, very rarely peeps into the narrative, (Family Matters, where one of Yezad’s friends comments on the Australian writer/critic Germaine Greer who in her interview on the BBC loathed the book and added that she did not find the India as portrayed by Mistry. She hailed A Fine Balance as a “Canadian book about India”. Mistry peeps in the narrative as in Family Matters a character says:

“A while back, I read a novel about the Emergency. A big book full of horrors, real as life. But also full of life, and the laughter and dignity of ordinary people. One hundred percent honest- made me laugh and cry as I read it. But some reviewers said no, no, things were not that bad. Especially foreign critics. You know how they come here for two weeks and become experts. One poor woman whose name I
can’t remember made such a hash of it, she had to be a bit pagal, defending Indira, defending the Sanjay sterilization scheme, defending the entire Emergency- you felt sorry for her even though she was a big professor at some big university in England. What to do? People are afraid to accept the truth. As T.S. Eliot wrote, “Human kind can not bear very much reality.” (FM, 210)

While using nonlinear narrative writer uses flashback or flashforward techniques to shift the time in past and present. Flashback has been part of the narrative technique at least since Homer composed the Odyssey three thousand years ago. Linear narrative is so integral to our idea of a ‘story’ that we sometimes fail to realize we are not reading a beginning, middle, and end. This technique is popular in motion pictures and literature, narrative technique of interrupting the chronological sequence of events to interject events of earlier occurrence. The description of this technique goes as in:

The earlier events often take the form of reminiscence. The use of flashback enables the author to start the story from a point of high interest and to avoid the monotony of chronological exposition. It also keeps the story in the objective, dramatic present. In motion pictures, flashback is indicated not only by narrative devices but also by a variety of optical techniques such as fade-in or fade-out (the emergence of a scene from blackness to full definition, or its opposite), dissolves (the gradual exposure of a second image over the first while it is fading away), or iris-in or iris-out (the expansion or contraction of a circle enclosing the scene). [Encyclopedia Britannica 1994-2002]

Flashback technique is also known as Analepsis which described as “…a form of anachrony by which some of the events of a story are related at a point in the narrative after later story events have already been recounted. Commonly referred to as retrospection or flashback, analepsis enables a storyteller to fill in background information about characters and
events. A narrative begins in medias res will include an analeptic account of events preceding the point at which the tale began.” [Chris Baldic 1990:09]. In flashback technique ‘memory’ is used as the mode of going into the past or present. Anamnesis is the technique which is “‘a recalling to mind or reminiscence.’ The word is from the Greek anámnnesia ‘to recall or remember’” [Encyclopædia Britannica 1994-2002]. Anamnesis is often used as a narrative technique in fiction and poetry as well as in memoirs and autobiographies. Memory, nostalgia, remembering are the modes used by diasporic writers. They are very useful in picturizing the various issues related with their homeland. Opposite to analepsis narrative technique, we have Prolepsis. It is often called as flashforward. It is described as: “…a ‘flashforward’ by which a future event is related as an interruption to the ‘present’ time of the narration” [Chris Baldic 1990:178]. A writer intermingles many stories at a certain point in time in their narrative but before this writer presents a single story one by one. Then writer begins a major story. For this “entrelacement” is an apt term. It is described as “a literary technique in which several simultaneous stories are interlaced in one larger narrative. This technique allows digression and presents opportunities for moral and ironic commentary while not disturbing the unity of the whole.” [Encyclopedia Britannica 1994-2002].

Sidhwa uses linear narrative where she tells the story in linear progression without shifting it often into past and present. She tells one story at a time. Her novels always contain one important story without the major interruption in the narrative. It is described as:

**Bapsi Sidhwa does not follow the non-linear, non-realist narrative forms. The influence of Dickens and the nineteenth century novelists is obvious, as Bapsi Sidhwa firmly believes in the importance of a sound plot and gripping story in her novels. [Eds. R.K. Dhawan, Novy Kapadia 1996:13]**

She defends the importance of the linear realist narrative in the interview with David Montenegro:
In the West storytelling has been lost in the byways of verbal acrobatics and the need to be smart and innovative in writing. The story element is very often lost in what they call ‘literate fiction’ in these parts of the world. [1989:47]

Mistry uses nonlinear narrative. All his novels contain multi-stories. *Such a Long Journey* contains the story of Gustad as well as Major Billimoria connected together. *A Fine Balance* contains three major stories of Dina Dalal in Mumbai (“City by the Sea”), OM and Ishvar in the village (“In a village by a River”) who suffered the problem of caste, Mike who lives in the hill station (“Mountain”) and finally all these major character in Mumbai together (“Sailing Under One flag” and others). *Family Matters*, too, contains the story of Nariman Vakil’s youth and his affair with an Anglo-Indian girl (which is given in flashback (Analepsis) and Mistry used italics mode for the writing) and the same Nariman with his old-age, and story of Yezad and his family. In *Tales from Firozsha Baag*, ‘*Ghost of Firozsha Baag*’ the narrator is a Goan ayah, who narrates two stories at a time about Seth from childhood up to present ghost and her own story from childhood to present time (prolepsis). Jaakaylee narrates the ‘ghost’ story in past which is given in ‘normal’ print:

**But he did not come. Why, I wondered. If he came to the bedding of a fat and ugly ayah, now what was the matter? I could not understand. But when I said to myself, what are you thinking Jaakaylee where is your head, do you really want the ghost to come sleep with you and touch you so shamefully? (TFB, 50)**

She narrates the present events in italics:

**Time to cook rice now, time for seth to come home. Best quality Basmati rice we use, always, makes such a lovely fragrance while cooking, so tasty. (TFB, 50)**

In the *Swimming Lesson, Tales from Firozsha Baag*, he reversed the technique. He uses normal print for present tense, “He does not call again.
My Surf King is relegated to an unused drawer. Total losses....” (240) and italics for past events, “The postman did not bring letter but a parcel, he was smiling because he knew that every time something came from Canada his baksheesh was guaranteed.”(240)

Sidhwa has used flash back technique in The Crow Eaters. Here she begins the story of Faredoon Junglewalla, as a man of great honor and respect in Parsi community who preach the truths of the world to his young listeners:

In his prosperous middle years Faredoon Junglewalla was prone to reminiscence and rhetoric. Sunk in a cane-backed easy-chair after an exacting day, his long legs propped up on the sliding arms of chair, he talked to the young people gathered at his feet. (TCE, 9)

On the next page only she begins the story of the novel with Freddy as a twenty three year old Parsi:

Faredoon Junglewalla, Freddy for short, embarked on his travels towards the end of the nineteenth century. Twenty-three years old, strong and pioneering, he saw no future for himself… (TCE, 12)

Story-telling is an ancient narrative technique. While telling the story the attention of the reader is grasped totally by teller, who very interestingly orates various details with twist, turns, suspense etc. engaging the reader in the story completely. The listener is curious to know what will happen next. This suggests the total involvement of the teller and listener regarding the story. This is popular in the television world where daily soaps are eagerly watched by many. In such serials viewers are left with the frozen-screen at the end of the serial, to keep their interest for the next episode. This “what-nextism” [Rushdie 1983:39] is the secret of the popular Alf Lyla Wah Lyla, 1001 Arabian Nights stories. The female narrator interwoven one story into another and saved her own life as well
as many others. The narrator was Scherazad, the queen of the king of Arabia. So this narrative technique is called as Scherazadic.

Mistry is a story-teller who follows the Alf Lalyah wa-Laylah, 1001 Nights, the Scheherazadic tradition of narration where story-teller always makes listener guess what next and prolongs the interest of the reader. This ‘whatnextism’ is the crux of this narrative technique. Storytelling is obviously a phenomenon of the oral tradition. In *Tales from Firozsha Baag*, Nariman Hansotia, a story-teller, of the story ‘Squatter’ tells the stories to the children of building. But Hansotia did not complete the tale nor did he take it up at another story-telling session. Later he asked children the moral of Savukshaw’s story, Jehangir provided it, “He was a man searching for happiness, by trying all kinds of different things” (TFB, 153). Then Nariman comes to the point for the beginning of a new story after arousing their interest by telling the moral of the last story, “Remember this, success alone does not bring happiness. Nor does failure have to bring unhappiness. Keep it in mind when you listen to today’s story” (TFB, 153). The stories of the collection may not be a nostalgic writing but Mistry used the memory and remembering as a narrative techniques. In *Such a Long Journey*, Peerbhoy Paanwalla also grasps the attention of his listeners with his ‘paan-stories.’ ‘Squatter’ in *Tales from Firozsha Baag* is narrated by the master story-teller of Firozsha Baag, Nariman Hansotia in the Scherazadic narrative mode of the Arabian Nights. All the children of the Baag were always eager to listen to his well-told stories. Mistry describes him as a story-teller,

Nariman liked to use new words, especially big ones, in the stories he told, believing it was his duty to expose young minds to as shimmering and varied a vocabulary as possible; Jehangir, Kersi, and Viraf were familiar with Nariman’s technique… Unpredictability was the brush he used to paint his tales with, and ambiguity the palette he mixed his colours in. Nariman sometimes told a funny incident in a very serious way, or expressed a significant
matter in a light and playful manner. And these were only two rough divisions, in between were lots of subtle gradations of tone and texture. Which, then was the funny story and which the serious? Their opinions were divided, but ultimately, said Jehangir, it was up to the listener to decide. (TFB, 146-148)

Sidhwa is a story-teller but does not follow the oral tradition of the Scherazadic tradition of narration. Though the stories of Freddy preaches the truths of the way of the world which are kind of edification for his listeners. He tells his young listeners:

I have never permitted pride and arrogance to stand in my way. Where would I be had I made a delicate flower of my pride- and sat my delicate bum on it? I followed the dictates of my needs, my wants- they make one flexible, elastic, humble. “The meek shall inherit the earth”, says Christ. ... There is also a lot depth in the man who says, “Sway with the breeze, bend with the winds.” (TCE, 11)

Mistry describes Peerbhoy Paanwala as a story-teller who has a paan for all occasions with an interesting story for each: “to ward off sleep, to promote rest, to create appetities, to rein in an excess of lust, to help digestion, to assist bowel movements, to purify the kidneys, to nullify flatulence, to cure bad breath, to create seductive breath, to fight failing eyesight, to make well the deaf ear, to encourage lucidity of thought, to improve speech, to alleviate the stiffness of joints, to induce longevity, to reduce life expectancy, to mitigate the labour of birthing, to ease the pain of dying…”(SALJ,158).

Intertextuality is another narrative technique used in modern fiction. In this technique allusions to other literary works are given to underscore the meaning or otherwise to make reader aware about the scholarship of the writer. Sometime such use of intertextuality shows the influences of those writers on the subject writer. These influences are no more called as
plagiarism. Post-structuralism claims that a text cannot exist without a pretext. Every text is an intertext. But to establish their inter-relationship is the major difficulty of the writers. This ‘intertextual’ influence is aptly described as:

“...All literary texts are woven out of other literary texts, not in the conventional sense that they bear the traces of ‘influence’ but in the more radical sense that every word, phrase or segment is reworking of other writings which precede or surround the individual work.” [Terry Eagleton 1993:138]

Mistry gives references of Western classical music to heighten the poetic effect of the narrative. Mistry uses British and European poetry like “The Rime of the Ancient Mariner” (FM, 55), “Human kind cannot bear very much reality” (FM, 210). While talking about the present scenario on Indian society, Mistry gives the various examples from European literature. Vilas talks about some actors who are “blind to real life with their intellectualizing. Stanislavsky-this and Strasberg-that, and Brechtian alienation is all they talk about” (FM, 211). To express his love for music he quotes: “If music be the food of love, play on, give me excess of it” (FM, 239). Coomy dreamt of “dancing in the ballroom of the Taj Hotel, a band was playing old-time favorites, “Fly Me to the Moon,” “Tea For Two” in Latin rhythm, “Green, Green Grass of Home” (FM, 74). When Roxana worries about the home budget and think on cut-down on some items Mistry expresses her anxiety as, “The distant violin was now weaving mist and melancholy in minor scales” (FM, 94). Daisy wanted to be “a world-famous virtuoso.”(FM, 100)

To express the anxiety and nausea of nursing an ailing old man full of dirt and filth, Mistry (as Coomy and Jal talk) uses the Eliot’s master metaphor **objective correlative** from Macbeth:

“If it is in your head, nothing will get rid of it. Like the damned spot on Lady Macbeth’s hand, remember? All the perfumes of Arabia, all your
swabbing and scrubbing and mopping and scouring will not remove it.” (FM, 109)

Yezad wished that Mr. Kapur should contest the election. So he discussed it with Gautam who expressed it in literary language by mixing quotations of W.B. Yeats’ poem *The Second Coming* and mixing it with the traits of Aristotelian tragedy:

Understood… Basically, Mr. Kapur needs to experience an epiphany. So we must convey more than just present danger to him and his shop. We must transcend the here and now, move beyond this bank and shoal of time, and let him glimpse the horrors of a society where the best lack all conviction while worst are full of passionate intensity… We must move him beyond catharsis, beyond pity and terror, to state of engagement into the arena of epic realism, where the man of action… (FM, 332-333) (Emphasis added)

The music was a blessing in disguise when Nariman was having a bad time- and when he heard Daisy’s violin he felt calm. The moment her violin started, he grew calmer, as though he had taken a dose of medicine. Daisy provided the information about the music-therapy:

“*I read a book about music therapy. It prescribed specific compositions for things like migraine, high or low blood pressure, stomach cramps… Bach was the one prescribed most often…from the Well Tempered Clavier.*” (FM, 239-240)

Daisy played Mendelssohn’s “*On Wings of Songs*” (FM, 240). Such influences of western literature can be described in following words:

*There is the mushroom growth of so called ‘influence’ studies mainly dealing with Euro-American influences on Indian literatures. But the network of indigenous and alien ‘texts’ in a work of art remains still unexplored. Much fuss is made about alien allusions and quotations. In fact, over weighing alien allusions and quotations in our text should be considered a symptom of the alien
oppressive forces in our literary culture. [Patil Anand B. 1999, 84]

There are various examples of such influences in Rohinton Mistry’s *Lend me Your Light* in *Tales from Firozsha Baag*, Malcolm and Gustad’s reminiscence of their past in *Such a Long Journey*, Nariman’s memories of violin and western classical music in *Family Matters*.

Memory is another mode of narration used in the narratives especially for the purpose of remembrance of the past. Mistry has brilliantly used “memory” and “remembering” as a narrative technique in his novels to express the nostalgia of beloved, happy past of his character. His writing can be called as ‘Nostalgia Writing’ [Bharucha 2003:73]. These techniques- memory and nostalgia – are used for what Craig Tapping has said: “Mistry is engaged in identity construction through the location of the present in the past” [Tapping 1992:39]. All his characters relished their sweet memories of the past. He aptly describes this reliving of the past as well as the nature of the memory:

> How much Dina Aunty relished her memories. Mummy and Daddy were the same, talking about their yesterdays and smiling in the sad-happy way while selecting each picture, each frame from the past, examining it lovingly before it vanished again in the mist. …Memories were Permanent. Sorrowful ones remained sad even with the passing of time, yet happy ones could never be recreated - not with the same joy. Remembering bred its own peculiar sorrow. It seemed so unfair, that time should render both sadness and happiness into a source of pain. (AFB, 412-413)

Mistry questions the existence of the memory and its fruitlessness:

> So what was the point of possessing memory? It didn’t help anything. In the end it was all hopeless. …No amount of remembering happy days, no amount of yearning or nostalgia could change a thing about the misery and suffering-love and concern and caring and sharing come to nothing,
nothing. Everything ended badly. And Memory only made it worse, tormenting and taunting. Unless. Unless you lost your mind. Or committed suicide. The slate wiped clean. No more remembering, no more suffering. (AFB, 413)

On mountains, Maneck with his mother and family friends went to climb the hills. Here Mistry describes the past as the ghost. He writes, “The ghost from the past was greeted with delight by all who met it on its journey. Many decided to tag along, swelling the ranks of the spontaneous celebration” (AFB, 722). In *Family Matters*, Mistry has nicely woven the element of memory in the narrative of the text. Roxana observed Jehangir feeding his grandpa. Roxana captured the picture in her memory as “The balcony door framed the scene, nine-year old happily feeding seventy-nine” (FM, 113). Her eyes refused to give up the precious moment, for she knew on impulse that “…it would become a memory to cherish, to recall in difficult times when she needed strength. ... And for a brief instant, Roxana felt she understood the meaning of it all, of birth and life and death.” (FM, 113)

Thus, one can say that Mistry is experimental while using the narrative techniques and Sidhwa is traditional in using linear narrative.

IX

According to E.M. Forster, character is a crucial aspect of the novel. The writer develops the character according to the plot. While dealing with human lives, writers focus on the human characters, male or female, at the centre of the discussion. In course of action character develops and helps reader to understand the developments in the narrative. Many writers have written the character novels which picturized their journey of life. The narrative takes many turns as the character faces many troubles, changes and harsh realities and overcomes many hurdles. So these predicaments of the character differ from their gender. Writing about male hero was the trend followed by many of the narratives. But with the
change of time, the literary scenario has also shifted its limelight from male to female protagonists. After recognizing the capability of women to join their counterparts in their fight against ignorance, superstition and backwardness, novelist instigated the reader to consider women as valid subjects for their purposeful social novels. Their effort was to be relevant to their culture by presenting characters and situations rooted in life. This is made clear by what Nayantara Sahgal proclaims:

    To be relevant to his culture, a writer’s imagination has to be able to create men and women and situations of the Indian environment and the Indian reality. If a writer can do this, make people feel with him, stimulate thinking, and inspire action because of what he writes, then he is fulfilling his function. [1971, v:5]

Bapsi Sidhwa’s main concern is with her female characters in almost all her novels except in The Crow Eaters. Mistry’s main focus is his male characters in all of his novels. Sidhwa depicts the predicament of women in male-dominated society; her female characters strive for existence like Zaitoon in Bride, Feroza in An America Brat and sometimes just as the shadow of males like Putli, Tanya in The Crow Eaters and Mrs. Sethi and Ayah in Ice Candy Man. At the same time she portrays the female characters which are powerful and dominating like Godmother and caricatures like - Jerbanoo in The Crow Eaters. In Ice-Candy Man, Lenny’s mother, and aunty rationed petrol and smuggled it to help those who needed timely help:

    ‘We were only smuggling the rationed petrol to help our Hindu and Sikh friends to run away... And also for the convoys to send kidnapped women, like your ayah, to their families across the border.’ (ICM, 242)

Sidhwa portrayed her female character as Messiah of Hindus and Sikhs trapped in the burning city. Sidhwa also focuses on gender bias and related issues. Lenny enquired about the women in her courtyard. Hamida
described them as “fallen women” (ICM, 214). Lenny innocently inquired about Hamida and Godmother explained that now she is a destitute as she was kidnapped and raped by Sikhs. Lenny said, “It isn’t her fault she was kidnapped!”, so Godmother answered, “Some folk fell that way - they can’t stand their women being touched by other men” (ICM, 215). Sidhwa describes Godmother as powerful and all-knowing which means in real sense she is the Godmother who is controller of so many things around of her:

And this is the course of her immense power: this reservoir of random knowledge, and her knowledge of ancient lore or wisdom and herbal remedy. You cannot be near her without feeling her uncanny strength. People bring to her their joy and woes. Show her their sores and swollen joints... She has access to many ears. ...Godmother can move mountains from the paths of those she befriends, and erect mountainous barriers where she deems it necessary. (ICM, 211)

Sidhwa in *The Crow Eaters* tells about women’s status and position in India of those days:

In the India of Billy’s days, girls, like jewels, were still being tucked away and zealously guarded by parents, brothers, grandparents, aunts and uncles. Everyone kept a sharp eye out. Even the innocent horse-play of children was savagely punished, and a baby boy caught with his hand there, was promptly spanked on the hand. There were no salesgirls in shops and few women were to be seen on streets. There was but one co-educational school in Lahore and the only women a young man could talk to were those of his family. In this repressed atmosphere love grows astonishingly on nothing. It sprouts in the oddest places at oddest times and takes the most bizarre forms. This is most so among the Muslims and among the majority of Hindus who keep their women in purdah. There is no purdah at all among the Parsis- but the generally repressed air in India envelopes them. (TCE, 205-206)
Sidhwa also points out the paradox of modern people like Billy who allowed their wives to interact among their friends but at the same time felt jealous and insecure as the result of their inferiority complex but a girl like Tanya retorts the suppression, “O.K., so you don't want me to look at their eyes! So where do you want me to look? At their balls?” (TCE, 246) But later on as he tames her she accepts herself as the shadow of her husband and follows the “commandments” (TCE, 278). Sidhwa writes, “Soon Tanya learnt to accost Billy directly. He forced her into adopting the strategies of a courtesan” (TCE, 278). Sidhwa also catches the veins of woman power where she can be ‘durga’ the warrior goddess who destroys evil and claims to be superior. It can be aptly described in Iqbal’s couplet which she quotes in ‘The Pakistani Bride’:

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Khudi ko kar buland itana
ke her takdeer se pahele
Khuda khud bande se puche
bata teri raza kya hai. (TPB, 229)
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This aspect of ‘self-knowledge’ of one’s progress is portrayed in An American Brat, Zareen sent Feroza to USA where she enjoys the freedom and wants to live the life of her choice. She found herself misfit in a country which fitted her so well before coming to America. There would no going back for her, but she could go back at will:

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If she flew and fell again, could she pick herself up again? Maybe one day she’d soar to that self-contained place from which there was no falling, if there was such a place. (AAB, 317)
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Sidhwa comments on the financial empowerment of the women that gives them the sense of power and control over their lives. Feroza expressed her enjoyment in earning money. Whereas Zareen, her mother, had never worked, so she was robbed of this thrill. Zareen understood the “thrilling” as “a sense of control over her life, a sense of accomplishment” (AAB, 240) where as Mistry’s canvass is fully occupied by the male
protagonists except Dina Dalal in *A Fine Balance*, but she too is a victim. Roxana, Coomy from *Family Matters* are in contrast, where as Roshan and Dilnavaz, her mother, are shadows of Nobel in *Such a Long Journey*. Roxana, *Family Matters*, can be seen as the grown up Roshan who always acts as a peace-maker. Gustad Nobel (*Such a Long Journey*), Nariman Vakeel and the Yezad (*Family Matters*), Om, Ishvar, Mike (*A Fine Balance*) are the major male characters who overshadowed other characters in the respective novels. Mistry sketches Roshan as ‘peace-maker’ when her parents quarrel:

‘Go kiss Mummy’... ‘No, no, no. I cannot sleep till you kiss. Mummy will come here.’ When Dilnavaz did not move, she went and began tugging at her arm, leaning on it with all her meager weight. Dilnavaz gave in. She looked coldly at Gustad and brushed his cheek cursorily. ‘Not like that!’ said Roshan, frustratedly, pounding the arm of the chair. ‘That’s not a real Mummy-Daddy kiss. Do it like when Daddy goes to work in the morning.’ Dilnavaz rested her lips against Gustad’s. ‘Eyes closed, eyes closed!’ yelled Roshan. ‘Do it properly!’ They obeyed, then separated. Gustad was amused. ‘My little kissing umpire,’ he said. Roshan somehow sensed that it took more than the joining of lips and closing of eyes to get rid of anger and bitterness. (SALJ, 167)

Roxana has always worked as a peace-maker between Coomy and Jal, Yezad and Coomy. Dina Dalal (*A Fine Balance*) wanted to throw away the havoc of patriarchy and create a niche in her own life. She tries to grow independently without any help of her brother. But ultimately she has to return back to her brother after her loss of home. It destroyed her home and self-dependence was also snatched. Nusswan found her very calm and submissive. Nusswan teased her but she did not retaliate:

There were times when he sat alone in his room, recalling the headstrong, indomitable sister, and regretted her fading. Well, he sighed to himself, that was what life did to those who refused to learn its
lessons: it beat them down and broke their spirit. But at least her days of endless toil were behind her. Now she would be cared for, provided for by her own family. (AFB, 702)

Mistry describes Nusswan as a dominant patriarch who controls everything very crookedly. Nusswan believed in discipline as his father did. He wanted to control and discipline everything in his house after his father, especially Dina. He scolded her:

...‘You have always had the habit of blurting whatever comes into your loose mouth. But you are no longer a child. Someone has to teach you respect.’ He sighed, ‘It is my duty, I suppose,’ and without warning he began slapping her. He stopped when a cut opened her lower lip. (AFB, 25)

In *Family Matters*, Roxana is completely devoted to her family. She acts as the peace-make between the quarrels of Coomy and other members. Whereas Coomy is shrewd, calculated and talks with Nariman in terms of “flesh-and-blood” (FM, 07) terminology. Here one should note that the character of Jal has feminine overtones in terms of nature and thinking pattern, who very submissively acts on the whims of other’s, first on Coomy’s and later on Yezad’s.

In this way, Sidhwa and Mistry have portrayed their characters according to their understanding of the world.

X

Space is an important concept in post-modernism. Locale is often important character in the fictions of many writers like Thomas Hardy. A sense of place is one of the essentials of a writer’s being, in imperative, increasingly being dislocated through extra-territoriality. Nineteenth century writing had privileged the sense of rootedness. Locating the site has become a narcissistic obsession with the postcolonial writer, especially the postcolonial immigrant writer. Exiled by choice or circumstance, the immigrant finds himself removed from his roots, his predecessors, and his
Centre. He discards his colossal national and regional identity and becomes a storehouse of dualities and multiplicities. His position as the Outsider in the country of his adoption escorts him to create a discrete geographical and textual space that is contrary to the colonial discourse. These writers have consciously created a space that is rooted in a kaleidoscopic projection of the history and culture of the countries to which they belong to. Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, has pointed out that the creation of such a space disrupts “the logics of synchronicity and evolution which traditionally authorize the subject of cultural knowledge” [Bhabha, 1994:6]. Literary creativeness depends on the unconscious accumulation of local knowledge and the writer has only one source of unconsciousness material from which he has to accumulate the information about his cultural locale. Similarly Barry Lopez commenting upon “A Literature of Place” writes:

> I want to talk about geography as a shaping force, not a subject... A specific and particular setting for human experience and endeavour is, indeed central to the work of many nature writers, I would say a sense of place is also critical to the development of a sense of morality and of human identity. [1996:7]

Natural surroundings influence artist’s mind as well as his sense of identity. A sense of place that the imagination encounters imparts a sense of belonging and reduces the sense of being isolated. The expatriate writer moves from one kind of association (culture of origin) to another kind (culture of his adoption). When the writer creates a third space (memoryscape of his/her (imaginary) homelands in fictions), that is because he wants to escape from the conflict of situations and self-division, or may be as an attempt to negotiate alternate realities. Soja attracts the attention to the “ambivalent spatiality” of Foucault which was interconnected into “brilliant whirls of historical insight”. Space and time
are interrelated. History unfolds itself through constructions of space. Foucault explained that Heterotopia is to be distinguished from utopias. Heterotopia is a countersite like a resting place, a sanatorium, a prison or a theatre, a countersite where “all the other real sites that can be found within a culture are simultaneously represented, contested and inverted” [Foucault 1986:24-25] and where a juxtaposition of the otherwise incompatible can take place. The formation of this third space mirrors all these complexities. Thus, space offers in itself a dynamics for history. Writers from colonized countries and marginalized or interiorized societies are absorbed in a process of reconstructing both national and personal histories with the objectives of analyzing and understanding of their own past. As Edward Soja has pointed out, “The historical imagination is never completely spaceless and critical. Social historians have written, and continue to write, some of the best geographies of the past” [Soja 1997:14]. In order to test this hypothesis Abram’s following definition of ‘the regional novel’ is of some help:

The regional novel emphasizes the setting, speech, and social structure, and customs of a particular locality, not merely as local color, but as important conditions affecting the treatment of characters their ways of thinking, feeling, and interacting…[1993:134]

Parsis are always associated with Bombay, Karachi and Lahore. So it is also important to focus on the cultural locale of these writers. Sidhwa’s cultural locale is Lahore in The Crow Eaters and Ice-Candy Man. She shifts her locale from Pakistan to USA in her novel An American Brat. Mistry’s fictions are preoccupied by his home city ‘Bombay’. It is almost nostalgia and love for Bombay which compels Mistry to write about the Bombay and predicament of the minority community of Parsis in Bombay.
Sidhwa’s fictional locale is historical city of ‘Lahore’, where she portrays the various parts of the Lahore with vivid details like Hira Mandi, Warris Road, Garden, Mosque etc., as well as her fourth novel which is partly set in USA pictures the details of U.S.A.

Sidhwa describes Warris Road as the “compressed” (ICM, 1) world of Lenny. It is “lined with rain gutters, lies between Queens Road and Jail Road, both wide, clean, orderly streets at the affluent fringes of Lahore” (ICM, 1). She describes colonial rule in Garden in Lahore, “Queen Victoria, cast in gunmetal, is majestic, massive, overpowering, ugly. Her statue imposes the English Raj in the park” (ICM, 18). Sidhwa describes Hira Mandi as:

... into the blessed shade of the constricted gullies of the old city (ICM, 257) ... a bazzar with rows of shops at the ground level and living quarters with frail arched windows and decaying wooden balconies teetering above... a stall overflowing with garlands of scarlet roses, jasmine and mounds of marigolds... Except for the betel-leaf and cigarette stalls and a few eating places where meat and pakoras are being fried... the mounds of rotting fruit and vegetables and the bones picked clean by the kites, their enormous wings stirring in the garbage: and the sudden yelp of kicked mongrels and raucous flights of crows and scraps of cardboard and rusted iron and other debris even the poor have no use for. (ICM, 258-259)

Sidhwa gives the brilliant descriptions of America when Manek took Feroza on the tour of New York City. Sidhwa describes it as, “they embarked on cultural mission” (AAB, 75). They visited the Museo el Barrio, committed to Hispanic-American art, and the Jewish Museumum in the Warburg Mansion, the Museum of Modern Art and the Military Museum in the Interpid on the West side. Feroza noticed “a surrealistic impression of blurred images, a kaleidoscope of perceptions in which paintings, dinosaurs, American Indian artifacts, and Egyptian mummies mingled with hamburgers, pretzels, sapphire earrings, deodorants, and
glamorous window displays” (AAB, 76). Sidhwa narrates the poverty of the USA at Port Authority bus terminal as:

She sensed the terminal was the infested hub of poverty from which the homeless and the discarded spiraled all over the shadier sidewalks of New York. Ragged and filthy men and women were spreading scores of flattened cardboard boxes to sleep on in the bus terminal. The smells disturbed her psyche; it seemed to her they personified the callous heart of the rich country that allowed such savage neglect to occur. (AAB, 81)

At the same time she found that this dirt, filth, and poverty in USA were “alien” (AAB, 81) to her. Feroza saw the billboards as though “a stage set had been flipped around to reveal the glitzy and glamorous side of the ugliness and tawdry scenes they had witnessed on Eighth Avenue and on Forty-Second Street” (AAB, 82). Her dull heart thrilled to the rhythm of the bright lights, to the view of Japanese tourists taking photographs, the vendors showing jewelry, scarves, tacky T-shirts, and buttons. Feroza felt it all represented “a rich slice of the life and experience she had come to America to explore” (AAB, 82-83).

Sidhwa compares the two cities of pre-independent India, Lahore and Bombay. In their visit to India Billy found Bombay as “the bustling metropolis with its superb wide roads, tall stone buildings, buses and trams” (TCE, 195-96). It was the first impression of resident from the city like Lahore whose heart was “filled with awe and the beginnings of inferiority complex” (TCE, 195-96). Billy found himself “a country bumpkin” (TCE, 195-96) in Bombay. Sidhwa differentiates between USA and Pakistan in An American Brat. She calls Pakistan as “the land of poets and ghazals” (AAB, 311). USA is the land of the skyscrapers, glossy magazines etc.

Mistry differentiates Canada and India in Lend Me Your Light in Tales from Firozsha Baag. Like most immigrants Kersi experienced the culture-shock after landing in the Bombay. He felt the striking contrast
between “the lush …green …hopeful” (TFB, 186) West and “the parched land, brown, weary, and unhappy” (TFB, 186) India. He portrays the nostalgia of his home-metropolis ‘Bombay’ (Mumbai now) with its red light areas, slum areas, specially the colonies and buildings of the Parsis. Mistry describes Chor Bazaar:

...the maze of narrow lanes and byways that was Chor Bazaar. Where to begin? And so many people everywhere-locals, tourists, foreigners, treasure hunters, antique collectors, junk dealers, browsers. Away from the crowds swirls and eddies ... a little stall selling a variety of used sockets and rusty wrenches. There were other tools as well: pliers, hammers with rough wooden handles, screwdrivers, a planer, worn-out files. (SALJ, 99)

Mistry describes Dr. Paymaster’s neighborhood as:

...a neighbourhood that had changed in recent years from a place of dusty, unobtrusive poverty to a bustling, overcrowded, and still dusty, nub of commerce. Crumbling, leaky warehouses, and rickety-staired, wobbly balconyed tenements had been refurbished and upgraded, from squalid and uninhabitable to squalid and temporarily habitable. The sewer system remained unchanged, broken and overflowing. Water supply continued to be a problem. So did rats, garbage and street lighting. (SALJ, 155)

The love and nostalgia for Bombay is expressed in Family Matters when Yezad saw a man trying to enter into the running-train and endangered his life but saved by fellow-passengers. The description was in contrast to Sidhwa’s details about the social strata in Lahore in An American Brat. Mistry writes:

Whose hands were they, and whose hands were they grasping? Hindu, Muslim, Dalit, Parsi, Christian? No one knew and no one cared. Fellow passengers, that’s all they were. And I stood there on the platform for a long time, Yezad, my eyes filled with
tears of joy, because what I saw told me there was still hope for this great city. (FM, 160)

Mistry has described almost all the major places in Mumbai at length in all his novels. It shows his deep rooted love and recollection of his past life in Mumbai. At the same time he also pictured Bombay’s dark side i.e. extreme poverty in slum-areas in AFB. Mistry’s cry for his lost city can be clearly seen in Family Matters where he compares Bombay to his beloved and complains that, “My beloved Bombay is being raped” (FM, 158).

Thus these two writers have shown their concern to their places of past as an indivisible part of their life left behind.

XI

Different ethnic groups have been able to maintain their distinct ethnic identity due to the secular ethos of India. At the same time the convergence of different languages coupled with the impact of English language has led to the hybridization of language. Following is the brief analysis of Bapsi Sidhwa’s and Rohinton Mistry’s Novels. Bapsi Sidhwa is influenced by Islamic culture in Pakistan while Mistry has impact of Hindu as well as other cultures in India. This has resulted into the liberal borrowing from all the Indian languages. It has formulated into the lingual formulation. The idea that Language is the constitutive agent of human consciousness received further impetus in the last century from Structural Linguistics. Language is understood to be anterior to the world. So what we call reality is a linguistically constructed artifact. It is caused by different language systems we inhabit. Jacques Derrida’s phrase “il ny a pas de hors-texte” [1976:157] reflects his view that language cannot adequately represent anything outside of itself. Our understanding of the world is necessarily mediated through language. But it does not follow that we are trapped within the ‘prison house of language’. People of
different nationalities are connected through long distance communication on the principle of a symbiotic relationship. In India, Standard English has been decentred and gave rise to a pluralistic use of English in India. Due to circumstances, largely facilitated by the spirit of globalization, the native/non-native binary in the use of English has collapsed on the Indian soil. As a result, a new variety of English is in the making. The ownership of English has been globally distributed by the inevitable dissolution of native vs. non-native equation. Language is another aspect with which an ethnic group maintains its distinct identity as an ethnic group. So Parsis too, have their typical accentuated Parsi-Gujarati language. The English used by Mistry and Sidhwa is totally different from each other. Various ethnic groups in India have led to the emergence of a multi-cultural scenario. The hybridity of Mistry’s use of two separate discursive strategies can be read as a political act-to claim and preserve cultural territory for the Parsi. At the same time the use of specifically Parsi words has a nostalgic function of resituating the speaker in the Bombay of his childhood. The Parsi idioms then temporarily de-center the English reader from his or her own culture – insist on cultural difference- yet simultaneously they centre the reader in the universal experience of pastoral recollection. [68]

V.K. Sunwani has brilliantly highlighted on Mistry’s use of language:

His language is full of for-the-nonce words which convey the exact meaning in the situation obtaining therein. It has a liberal sprinkling of Hindi words and Indianisms which have become an established part of linguistic repertoire of an Indian, educated or otherwise...Whereas English was a sign of linguistic imperialism, Hinglish has to survive in India and will continue to evolve and we will thus get rid of our linguistic slavery,. Secondly, Hinglish is a marriage of Indian culture and a Western language. [1997:110-11]
Sidhwa’s language has a polishing touch. She uses lots of Parsi-Gujarati words. In *An American Brat*, she has given special glossary of it at the end of the novel. She uses some Punjabi, Urdu vocabulary as well. Sidhwa says, “After moving to America I realized that all my sentences in English were punctuated with Gujarati and Urdu words.” [Jussawalla 1990:214]

Gujarati is the first language of Bapsi Sidhwa and most Parsis. It is one of the many Indian languages which voluntarily allow intricate word play. Bapsi Sidhwa’s sentences in English are scattered with Gujarati and Urdu words. There are also Parsi maxim and Parsi-Gujarati modulations in her sentences. Sidhwa thinks that her technique is influenced by her manner of speaking, which she calls a “salad of languages” [Eds. Dhawan R.K. and Novy Kapadia, 1996:13]. In an interview with David Montenegro, she explains her motivations for juggling with words from three different languages in her narrative:

I think you just juggle for the best meaning, somehow. And certain words are so much more expressive in another language. Some thing that is zestful comes out so much better said in Punjabi, or something that is emotional or romantic comes out better in Urdu. Or certain Gujarati words carry so much more meaning. And you just automatically adopt this mixture to be more expressive. [1989:37]

The verbal jugglery used by Sidhwa makes her writing style modernist or post-modernist. The language in her books is similar to the rhythms, styles and nuances of everyday language in the sub-continent. For Sidhwa life is like poetry comprehended through emotions, experiences sometimes brutal and philosophical. She often quotes Urdu Poets as in *Ice Candy Man*. The last few pages contain many couplets from the poets in Urdu with English translations. In *An American Brat* too there are Urdu couplets with English translations. Sidhwa’s use of language is feminine and is very minute and brilliant whereas Mistry’s use of language is rather rough and harsh and
has masculine overtones. Sidhwa’s vocabulary depicts her Pakistani citizenship as her works are full of Urdu words and couplets of Urdu Poets whereas Mistry’s mixed code/hybrid language is, no doubt, the product of his home city, Mumbai, where a mini-India resides. His use of English poetry and songs shows his unfulfilled desire of being a singer and his degree in English Literature in Toronto. Mistry’s use of a variety of languages shows multi-religious, multi-ethnic co-existence in India. His use of Marathi language and parodied dialect in Parsi-Gujarati or English language shows his hatred for majority community and marginalized existence of his community due to the rule of Maratha center. Rohinton Mistry’s fictional world is centered on Bombay and its variety of cultural, religious, economic, and social classes. So his language is the true picture of these all classes. Mistry in his novel *Such a Long Journey* gives the reference to “Barrere and Leland’s Dictionary of Slang” (SALJ, 53). Following is a brief analysis of lingual hybridization of the language used in novels of these two writers.

**Bapsi Sidhwa**

**Gujarati/Farsi words/phrases with English meanings:**

*An American Brat* - Gathas-the song of Zarathustra (287),
boochmai, an archaic Gujarati word for ‘little girl’ (69,78,123, 133,2222)

**English word with Hindi suffix:**

*An American Brat* - lesson-walla (111)

**Hindi word with English adjectization:**

*Ice Candy Man* - goondaish (180,245)

**Hindi-Punjabi sentence:**

*Ice Candy Man* - ‘Raj Karega Khalsa, aki rahi na koi!’ (134)

**Hindi-Gujarati word:**

*The Crow Eaters* - Asha (12)

**Hindi-English word/phrase and vice-versa:**
*The Crow Eaters* - a betel nut paan (160)

*Ice Candy Man* - bodhi-hair (95), Paan spitting (245)

**Urdu-Hindi words and vice versa:**

*The Crow Eaters* - Fakir (33, 34), tonga (121), mela (229)

*Ice Candy Man* - Baijee (10,27,28,29,226-27,259,262), palloo(28,46), Angrez (28,63,129,92), bibi(29)

**English-Urdu sentence:**

*The Crow Eaters* – we were original non believing kafirs! (221)

**Verbification of Hindi, Urdu words in English:**

*The Crow Eaters* - salaamed (121), salaaming (235)

*An American Brat* - khoos-poosing (193)

**Punjabi sentence with English meanings:**

*Ice Candy Man* - ‘O kee? What’s that?’(96)

*An American Brat* - ‘O menu ghoor-ghoor ke vekh raha see. He was making big, big eyes and staring at me.’(106)

**English pluralization of Hindi-Urdu nouns:**

*The Crow Eaters* - Toddywallas, Bankwallas, Bottiwallas and Chaiwallas (21) pyals (133) dains (159), patris (172,175), Mandirs (237)

*Ice Candy Man* - kebabs (44), tongawallah’s (48), parathas (52,57,109), Congresswalahs (75), jalebis (106), pakoras (105,258), Mussulmans (122,128), ladoos (168-69), bodhis(175), haramzadas (180,249), kirpans (204), melas (209). Karmas (222) goondas (248,272), Shaitans (250)

*An American Brat* – mullahs (10, 11, 13), burqas (10), goondas (11,135,223), dopattas (19,48), gurudwaras (19), shalwars (21), Yathas (47), pakoras (36,38), heejras (78,79), gora-chittas (141), dhotis (106,217), jhuggees (238,239), mushairas (311), ghazals(s) (311)

**Parsi/Gujrati with English plurals:**
**An American Brat** - Ashem Vahoons (47), navjotes (204, 293), pareekas (224)

**Hindi-Urdu words/phrases/sentence with English meanings and vice versa:**

*The Crow Eaters* - janam patris birth sheets (160-76), Agni puja (fire worshipping) (163), monkey-god Hanuman (237)

*Ice Candy Man*

‘Langer deen! Paisay ke teen! Tamba mota, pag mahin!’
‘Lame Lenny! Three for a penny! Fluffy pants and fine fanny!’ (3)
electric aunt- bijli(21), a pahaliwan – a wrestler(27), ‘Save me! Save me! Bachao! Bachao!’ (30) Bitch! Haramzadi (45), Haramkhor! Slut (45), masti- a bit of naughtiness (48), phulkas (miniature chapatties) (49, 50, 58), Sikh priest, a granthi (54), ‘Hasi to phasi! Laugh (and) get laid!’(55) Chaudhary, a village leader (55,56,57,196-99,202),
Janoo(a variation on Jana)(65,69), naswar (mixture of tobacco and Opium) (74), “Salaam-alekum mamajee [uncle]” (77),
‘Siski hawa ne lee: Har Pati Kanp oothi.
The breeze sucked in his breath…
The leaves trembled, breathless (119),
putch-putch- kissing noises used to wheedle children dispatch on trivial errands(112), ‘Pakistan Murdabad! Death to Pakistan’ (134,144) tobacco-naswar (149); Kullah/kulla – around which turban is wrapped (152), achkan coats(160),

‘Mere bachpan ke sathi mujhe bhool na jana
Dekho, dekho hense na zamana, hanse na zamana.
Friends from our childhood, don’t forget us.
See that a changed world does not mock us. (159)

“Ghar ki murgi; dal barabar. A neighbour’s beans are tastier than household chickens.” (233) khut-putli- puppets (222), Hira Mandi
means Diamond Market(240), Trouble Easers, the angels Mushkail Assan (241)
‘Tum aye ho na shab-e-intazaar guzri hai-
Talash main hai seher baar baar guzri hai!’
You never came… The waitful night never passed.
Though many dawns have passed in the waiting.’(245)

‘Kiya mujh ishq ne zalim ko aab ahista ahista
Ke aatish gul ko karti hai gulab ahista ahista.
Slowly, my love has compelled her, slowly-
The way the sun touches open the rosebud slowly.’(248)

‘Hai ashqi ke beech sitam dekhna hi lutf
Mar jana ankhe moond ke kuch hunar nahin.
‘Tis nothing… to roll up one’s eyes and die.
endure my lover;s tyranny wide-eyed. [263]

‘La Ilaha Illallah, Mohammad ur Rasullallah.’
(There is no God but God, and Mohammad is his Prophet) (181)
*An American Brat* - heejra- a fifty-fifty (79), “Khush ho- Happy?” (241),

“Ulfat kee Naee manzil ko chalay:
Embarked on a new mission of love” (311)

**Punjabi words/phrase with English meanings:**

*Ice Candy Man* - kirpan-daggar (144)

**Farsi with English plurals:**

*The Crow Eaters* - kustis (56, 176)
Hindi and Marathi words made into English noun:

A Fine Balance - fakeologist (345) fakeology (599)

Mixture of Sanskrit and Hindi/slang:

A Fine Balance - ‘Goluma Ekdama Tajidevum Chuptum Makkama Jhaptum (139)

Marathi, Hindi, English wording in the sentence:


Marathi sentence with Parsi accent:

Family Matters - Tumse lok aykat nai! Bai tumhala kai saangte? (389), Ai baba! Assa nako ghay (391), Assa Kai, Ganpat (392)

Gujarati asmai-kasmai code:

Such a Long Journey - “Masmaybisme hisme wasmas skasmeepismo” (135)

Gujarati-English words/phrases:

Such a Long Journey - A single paasri (240)
A Fine Balance - carrot-salad, carrot-ma-gose (252), prawn patia (734), Sudra and Kusti (712)

Marathi sentence with English word:

Such a Long Journey - Umcha section nai (132,330), O baba, arya ghay! Carefully, arya, arya (338)

Indianized spellings of English word:

Tales from Ferozsha Baag - phoren (183)

Gujarati sentences with English meanings:

Tales from Firozsha Baag - ayah no chhokro, ayah’s child (46), “burgee nay dhoor thai gaya-corrupted to become useless as dust” (81)

English words/phrases with Parsi variation:
**Tales from Firozsha Baag** - Easy chairs-igeechur (44), French beans-ferach beech (44)

**Hindi-English words and vice versa:**

*Such a Long Journey* - Angrezi books (102), Head maalis? (102), jasmine and chamayli (157)

*A Fine Balance* - bulky samosa(38), shahenshahi calendar(31), No baba(82) twenty-five paisa(84), Two annas(129), One anna(129), drama and naatak(576), dal and chapati(151,407), earthen matka(203), open-air sundaes(205), The nussbandhi (215-16), Bhaji and chapati(220), Revolver Rani(344,346,348), Machine Gun Maharani (344,351,349), fifty paise(476), Two paisa(458), Maharishi carrot Baba(420), copra and kothmeer-mirchi(491), licence permit quota raj (501), saala idiot(515), Bilkool correct(521), Okay, batcha(526), Laddoo and jalebi, ras-malai(562), Saala murderer (607), ice-gola(629), the darkness of Kaliyug (636), karai chicken (746), a single paisa(752)

*Family Matters* - soup-chaaval (97,112) soo-soo bottle (119)

**English sentence with Hindi/Marathi words:**

*Tales from Firozsha Baag* - “…middle class people like us get the bamboo, all the way.” (131), ghati-mentality (181)

*Such a Long Journey* - twenty naye paise (59), two paisa clerk (69), Ice-cold Paani, sweet-sweet paani(59), Spitting or playing satta prohibited(75), the all-clearfying testicular golaas(76)

**Hindi sentence with English words:**

*A Fine Balance* - Aray babu! O big paisawalla babu (341), Aray, hero ka batcha (425), saala shameless budmass (445)

*Family Matters* - chalo, sign ko string lagaake fix karo (363)

**English - Parsi word and vice versa:**

*Tales from Firozsha Baag* - Chicken-dhansak (151)

**Verbification of Hindi/Marathi in English:**

*Family Matters* - miaowing (489,550,555)
English Pluralization of Hindi/Marathi nouns:

*Tales from Firozsha Baag*- dharamsaalas (126), harijans (204), mawaalis (218), ghatis (17,35,176,178,183), ghatons(177)

*Such a Long Journey*- jhopadpattis(4), goondas(39), tohruns(284), devdasis(287), rundees, vaishyas(287); jhaarus(292), bahlen-chod bungees(295), kholis(155), hijadaas (160,326)

*A Fine Balance*- pyjamas (21,65,66,138,305,585), kholis (81,499), beedis (94,98,100,102,345,379,382,484), gutters(103), jyotshis(105), pujas (122,381,675), zamindars (126,182), puris (487,492), chapatti(s) (135,172,187,362, 408, 427,487,489,490,492,599,609,644,750), kurtas (585), ladoos (167), goondas (179,180,308,364,499,525,528,534-5,538, 543,549, 555, 599, 658, 694-95, 698), mullahs (181), coolies (186), pao-bhajis(478), massagwallas(508), jhopadpatti(s) (215,322,394, 398,465,676), jhopdi(s) (215,365), mathadis (319), sadhus (439), mohallas(445), wadas(491-92) Chawls (499) dhotis(501,641) Harijans (712)

*Family Matters*- mavaalis (23), chapatis (33), ghatis (52,389,395), chappals (74), goondas (144, 150, 334, 326), raakshas(204), sainiks (405)

English Pluralization of Parsi/Gujarati nouns:

*Such a Long Journey*- ghailchodias (214), khandhias (244),

Marathi with English meanings:

*Such a Long Journey*- asafoetida –hing (23)

Urdu with English Meanings:

*Such a Long Journey*- taveej, a protection (150)

Hindi with English meanings:

*Tales from Firozsha Baag*- garibi hatao-eradicate poverty (98)

Sukhi Sooraj, the strident paean to the rising sun (135), Sukhi Sooraj, the fervent tribute to sunrise (129)
Such A Long Journey- ‘Humko kuch nahiin maalom, we don’t know anything’ (14),

“Mere sapno ki rani kab ayegi tu, O
Queen of my dreams, when will you arrive” (165)
‘Dil deke dekho,dil deke dekho, dil deke dekho…
Try giving your heart, give your heart away and see.’(201)
“Muncipality ki dadagiri nahi chalaygi- muncipalitys bullying will do not do” (325), Jis Deshme Ganga Bahti Hai-: the land where the Ganga flows and the Gutter overflows (325), palung-tode- bed breaker-paan (158,157,159, 160,192,306)
A Fine Balance- Meri dosti mera pyar…love and friendship (213), Sagar-Darshan Ocean View Hotel (376), you are mad! Bilkool paagal (639)

Farsi with English meanings:
Tales from Firozsha Baag- “manashni, gavashni, kunashni, - good thoughts, good words, good deeds” (236)

English sentences with Gujarati meanings vice versa:
Tales from Firozsha Baag- a quiet good boy, aitlo dahyo (211), sidho-paadhro, to   speak clearly (212)
Such a Long Journey- alive and squawking, jeevti-jaagt (19), fikko-fuchhuk,   white as a ghost (35), “fire! fire! ‘Aag laagi! Aag laagi” (168), “Kaakerya Kumar, ketlo bhaar? ‘Munno bhaar’ ‘Ek uteri nay bagalma maar, taking turns and coercing each other with dire threats to retract the fists and stick it in an armpit” (191)

French with Gujarati meaning:
Such a Long Journey - fait-accompli. Jai thayu tay thayu (196)
Following is the languagewise distribution of the vocabulary used by these two writers.

**Bapsi Sidhwa**

1. Hindi

**A) The Crow Eaters** - Parsi natak (Author’s note), babooji (35), a biri,(49), pyjama (56); sahab (79), Bania (81,82,86), thana (118), Hai Bhagwan (88), Matka (105, 106), Memshahib (119,120), pucka sahib (120), lungi (120,151,171), Paan (131,152,155), baboo (161), pipal (161), sethji (174), canister (224)

**B) Ice Candy Man** - khaddar (4), Jana (10,68,69) (dear), mai(13), badmash (30), malida (33), Swaraj (36,61), Shabash! (39,245), darbar (40,222), Hai (46, 197,198, 214,78,124,253,273-74), sheesham (54,257), Sarkar (131,55,90), Granthi (56,106-8), Banya (62), yaar (63,89,91,117,129-32,135,1226), bazaar(74), Arrey Bhagwan (76), Hai Ram (77,89,134), tamasha (78,136-37), malijee(90), choorail (91), Lat Sahib (91), baba (91), jharoo (94), Aiiay jee, aiiay (100), kaan kaan(100), zamindar(105), churidaar (105), Ghadka (105), gulab-jamun (106), Chachi (94,108, 203, 205,107,208,230), pahilwan (108,175), Hawaldar Sahib! (110), Dungarwadi (113-14), bodhi (117), hulla-goolla (122-23), paan (126,135), ‘Jai Hind! Jai Hind! (127), chaprasi (131), kurta (133), kirpan (133), mohalla (134), Mozang chawk (139), Kali yuga (148); rug (151), masala (167), Chuddar (190-91,222,237), jee (191), chacha (194,208,205), Baiji (246,248)

**C) An American Brat**- gora (26,84,147), bus kar (26), Hai (48), baijee(33), Jee (52,53,122,223), police-thana (106), desi (73,74,101, 199,230), dal (112,142), whisky-pani (124), paisa (134), afeem (84), baba (86,100-02, 192,197), yaar (97,194,196), Memshahib (97), Hai Bhagwan (252), parjat(271), Khandaan(277)
2. Urdu

A) *The Crow Eaters* - Hai Allah! (88,202) hazoor(121), burqa(240),
B) *Ice Candy Man* – Vazir (38,40), Shaitan (46), Choorail (46), salaam (53), Barey Mian (56, 182), hookah (58), ‘Oye, uloo!’ (69) ‘Ullu-kay-pathay’ (85), Ya Allah! (97) Allah (98,111),Wah Allah! (99) ‘Ya Allah! Ya Rahman! Ya Rahim!’ (107) oof(126), ‘Pakistan Zindabad’(127) janab(129), buckwas (130), Kotha (131,246-47, 250,266-67,275), Allah-o-Akbar! Ya Ali (135); Allah-o-akbar! (154,199) saalam ailekum (150), ‘Toba! Toba!’ (171) nimak-haram (180, 248), kalma (181), meri kasam (262), Allah-ki-kasam (182), baraat (185-86); ghoongat (186-87,260,261), sehra (186-88), doolha (186-188), Ufeemi! (188), Amma (207), takth (223), billa (224,225), nikah (250), garara (260)
C) *An American Brat* - shalwar-kamiz (42,45,72,122), sufi (19), lungi (19), roti, kapra, makan (21), maulvi (45), Aa-meen (46), Allllh-ah (134), gup-shup (53), Choop kar (65), izzat (66,111) uloo(66), kamiz (74), shalwar (86), baap (193), sala badmash (196), khandani (222), Zina (236,237), mehfil (311)

3. Punjabi

A) *Ice Candy Man* - O vay (45), Wah Guru! (107,203,204) Sat siri Akaal! Bolay Se nihal!’ (134,154,199) ‘O yay nai!’(181) ‘O, mekiya’ (208)
C) *An American Brat* - ‘Vekh! Vekh! Sher-di-batian’ (67)

4. Gujarati

A) *The Crow Eaters* - mathabanus (23, 59, 273), Dungerwaree (46), Sudreh (110)
B) *An American Brat* –tanchoi (43), dhan-dar (44), sudra (31), 164,220, 278,317), Kusti (31,41,164,278,317), kaka (50,134), doria (50), agyari(40,41,278), pora-chora (68), madam-ni-mai (121), kaki (134), mahara baap!(19,40) gangee (98), thaan (220), feta (248)
5. Farsi

A) *The Crow Eaters* - jashan (17), Atash (50), Navjote (124), Shikasta Shikasta Sehtan (139)

B) *Ice Candy Man* - Kusti (173)

C) *An American Brat* - sagan (44) pahi (43,304), atash (40, 41, 47, 257,317) Tandaroosti (41), mobed (40), madasara (223, 297), dokhma (269), uthmna (270), Anjuman (268,288), naffat (272), Atash Behram (278), Panchayat (287), adarnee (297)

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*Rohinton Mistry*

1. Hindi

A) *Tales From Ferozsha Baag* - pyjama (5), gudh-gudh (5), dustoorji (13,53, 54,63,64,130), paan pichkari (17), paan (18,67,86,156), choli (9,10), Dada Ormuzd (10,125), Bawa (11,138,74), Bawaji (17,35), Dustoor (13-4,19,20), Saala gandoo (17), saala chootia (17), ghali (17), Maaro saala bawajiko (17), Arre…yaar…Jaane de yaar (18), bunya (35,37,46,109), Matka (35,36), Chor! Chor (36) Kaun hai? (31,44) kya bhai? (44) budmaash (37), bhoot (43-50,52, 53,55,56,150), masala (44,45,47), seth (45,46,50,51,53,55), chai (45) Bhoot Bungala (47), mai-baap (47), chappal (51, 102,188), charas (48), ganja (48), lotta (54), soopra (55,56), pugree (67,68,75), sahibji (83,84,85,126,117,146), Saala (83, 133), jungle (83), baap (86,95), Patla Babu (89,94,97,98), Jhaaria Babu (89,94, 97,98), Kuchrawallli (81,114,161,230), jeeragoli (89), supari (89), aampapud (89), muchhiwalla (96), lathi (98), moothya-maroo (93), safed paani (96), Mamaiji (108-11,115,119-20,231), samosa, bhajia, sev-ganthia (111), agarbatti (134,135), Chingo-mingo (136), sadhu(150), Kassum Kha(155), bhelpuri, panipuri, batata-wada, kulfi(182), chapatti(187), mithai(199), Jana gana Mana (203), kurta-pyjama (210), choom-
B) *Such a Long Journey*- Malik (2), Hindi-chini Bhai-bhai (9), bhaiya(1-5,14, 51, 62,77,273), daeken (2), chawl (7,65), kutchoomer (18,97), masala (19,68, 132,282), goaswalla (21,26,118,180,201,220-21,318), seesum(23), murgi(22,29), bajar (28), Seth (29,33,103,135,137-140), Chee-chee (26-27), sabaash (32), Sev-ganthia (35), yaar (36-39,42,70,77,144,146,172,179-80,209,326), bas (38,194, 214,218), morcha (39,313,325-333, 337), chowki (39), Sahibji (40), Bhum(40), Saali (51), Paapud (56), Theek hai! Theek hai (59), paaniwalla (59), Tehmul-lungra(61), jaadumantar (63), dubbawalla (70,72,73,147,177), dubba (70), meherbani (73), Bawaji (71,83), Gandooraj (73), Arre (75,99,135, 145,200,204), Saala (73), Kuchrawalli (78,134,136), dogwalla (79,83), Chor Bazaar (91,103, 119,122), Chumcha (99,260), Bazaar (99), sahib (100), Chumpee-malis? (102), Paan (107,192-93,200,313-14,325), boni (103), Sabaash (107), puja (138), Gurakha (140), rugda (174), paani-kum (174), morcha (191), Ekka-per-Chaar (190), punoti (198), baatli (201), ‘Sau saal pahalay, mujay tumsay pyar tha, mujay tumsay pyar tha, aajbhi hai, aur kalbhi rahayga’(205), agarbatti (212,286), maaderchod (213,295,330), yaar (217,218), saala (213), maali (241), maiji (244), payte (244), dustoorji (247,251,252,316,318), sooverka batcha (256), Ek do teen chaar (257), choop re (260), khaali-pili (261), khabardaar (265), gulgota (286) gooichadi (286), mogra, chamayli, goolbahar, bun gasha, surajmukhi, bukayun, nargis (286), rajai (302), jhopadpatti (298), hafta (205), Seth (311), Jai Jawan Jai Kisan (298), sabaash and Bharat Mata ki Jai (308), janta (312), charkha (325), “Nahi
chalygi! Nahi Chalyagi" (325), ‘gully gully may shor hai, Congress party chor hai’ (325), ‘Havaa-paani laingay, Ya toe yaheen maraingay (325), Mukti Bahini (144), vanaspati (147), chawl (147), paan (158,195,196,205,308)

C) A Fine Balance- Darji (3,353,422), dhaba (4), Paanwalla (7), O babu, ek paisa day-ray! (7,495,607) O babu! Hai babu! Aray babu, ek paisa day ray! (08), yaar (9,236,291,323m344,354,355, 475,484, 503, 507,511,512,518, 546, 555, 573, 640), sherbet (9,195), Hanji (9, 93,339,362,448,467,470,495,517,569,599), paan (11,317,524, 526, 638,639), ayah (21), Dustoor (22,31,45,48,702), Daab-chaab (23,45,702), Dadaji (24), kya karta Hai? Chalo jao! (33) karai (34), pagoda (44); chhee! (50,171,484) babu (440), pulao-dal (54,57), bazaar (59,105,233, 450,579, 589, 590,634,635,646), Ma-ji (77,78, 676), okayji (574), ghee (101), nirvana (589), kutt-kutt (103), karma (589), addaa (589), chamaar (115,116,121,123, 134,139, 145, 161,162,165,,183,643), masjid (105), hashish (589,590), Yoga (398), Dukhi Mochi(115), sanyasi (583,592,593,594), bamboo (118,616), kaliyug (122), sahib (129,215,275,389,440,441, 453,535, 708-11,745-48), Aray (124,129,139,513, 518,645,711), Hai Bhagwan (125,230), Oiee (127), chappal (129,439,579,683); ahimsa (130), nah (131,132,144,630,633), masterji (135), achhoot (135), Bhungi (136,163), Hai Ram (127,164,186,229,332,472,517, 575, 637,647,657), Brahmin, kshatriya,Vaishya, and Shudra (138), Chitpavan Brahmin (139), Oyeh (139), Goo-khavan Brahmin (139), Bhaiya (139), chikna (574), Bas (569,575,636,655), pujari (139), chacha(ji) (144,146,149,151,152,182,184,187,188,191,193,196, 203, 205, 365, 389,439,472,503,525,569,571-75,629-35,639-40, 644,646, 648, 657,658-59,664-65); chachi(144,152,159-60,187,472,631-32,634,665), Bapa (140,144,148, 172,174), choli (147,148,165,
D) **Family Matters** - Senapati (32); maharaja (28), falooda (40), chalo (40,49, 292,367,150), bavaji (44), Darvaja Kholo! Jaldi Kholo! Koi gharmay hai kya?(48), choli kay peechhay kya hai (43),
sofa ki oopar rakho (49), Theek hai (49), Bhaisahab (43), khadda (49), mehetrani (76), pyjama (63,64), bai (75,76), bazaar (82,101,198,205,467,300), Matka 105,124,125,167,203, 206,212,257, 271,272), Hai, mua eedavala (116), Sisypheus (116), chee(119), pukka (127), Maiji (126), ayah (131), Ekta Samiti (143), sahab (155,157,264,295,360, 367,369, 382-83, 386,402-05), paobhaji (150), Beer laayega (155), Jaldi(156), goonda raj (151) hanh (156), Ao, Hussain, dekho (153), svavlumban (176), Belgaum ghee (198), maaderchod (205), chootiya (205), bhai (206), bun-muskaa (204,205), Hamaara Bharat Mahaan (210), Chai (213), Hey sala (218), yaar (220); Baag (226), Adha Bolla Catayla (227), pukka (229), Bhaago, sahab, bhaago (233), kurta (251), bunya (262) chamayli (264), memsahab (264), sub kootch hai (277), miyan (277,292); jhopadpatti (283,284), soo-soo (285,308,311,432), sahibji (306,308), chanjibhai (331), Dadaji (339), veranda (339,437), dustoorji (340,342,437), chiinaal (349), Aray (360), miyan (360,386), Humko bhi mazaa ayega (363), Hai sala (367), Haath mut lagao (367) bachchay(369), buddhoo (369), ma-baap (380), ayah (380), seth (380,390), AO BACHCHAY, SANTA CLAUS KO MILO (363) chaal, Ganpat (391), khichri (391), sunta nai kya (391), Jor lagao (392), sabaash (392), bakshis (392), Masalavala (397), phir kya hua (403), Hanh achha (404), bibi (405), chappal (405), Panchayat (414,467), Masalavala (414-15,417,487-88), Chhaiy Hamay Zarathosti (415), dosaji (416); paisa (425-26), chawl (430), O Dada (436), Lakdavala (451,453), Hanh baba (457), Doongerwadi (476), Ka Kha Ga (484)

2. **Urdu**

**A) Tales From Ferozsha Baag** - loban (7,54), parvar Daegar (72), tamasha (137), Shik-kabab (219)
**B) Such a Long Journey**- salaam (33,135,139-40), Bismillah (21), Bay-Sharam (50), kothaa (73), namaaz (99), huddi (182,256), Jumma Masjid (183), mia-laanda (193), sharam (199), Budtameez (198), tamasha (204), loban (247,248,286,315), taveej (273), jhaanum (142), buryani (145), dojukh (153), zanaankhana (159).

**C) A Fine Balance**- kabab (47), shish kabab (747), biryani (53,746), Sahibji-salaam (69), Kismat (575), Inshallah (153,157,160,182,632,643,645); Ya Allah(164), Toba, toba (164), salaam alaikum(187), Haramzadi (190), salaam, bibi (194), burkha (194,199), khuda hafiz (195), tamasha (319), salaam (32), Salwar Kameez (379), sherwani(432,699), fakir (439,479),

**D) Family Matters**- loban (25) Husain miyan (150,155), shukriya (156), Salaam sahab (402), salaamati(412)

3. **Marathi**

**A) Tales From Ferozsha Baag**- gunga (4,7-9,11,174,213,219), gunga-bunga(4), “Sakubai la zaoli/Dadra chi khalti”(10), bai (27,31,36,37,44,46, 47,50,51,52,54-56,76,96), maaidaan (28,116,117,175), bidi (219)

**B) Such a Long Journey**- maader chod (76,126), maaidaan (160), maanja (162), papee (163), gherao (314), mukaadam (325,327,328), bundobust (325), kholi (298)

**C) A Fine Balance**- morcha (66), Namaskaar (204, 317,477, 603)

**D) Family Matters**- sarpanch (142), sooss (310), Shakha (322,385,386), naatak (331), khabardaar (331), Marathi (389)

4. **Gujarati**

**A) Tales From Ferozsha Baag** - Behram roje (3-7,11-12,11,12, 15,20); dugli (4,7,12,16-19,67), pheytoe (4,16,18), Navjote (4,67), chasniwalla (20,130), kusti (67,110,120,221,236), dhandar-paatyo (7,20,32), Sali-boti (7), tohrun (7,11,20), ailchee (9), mori (9,10),
chasni (12), paadmaroo (30,47,80,150,174,202), pupeta-na-gose (32), muluk (43), saierunjee (45,51), essky-messkey (47), taverna (52), mathoobanoo (55,56,84,85,95,141,178,205,204), dusmoo (59,62,64,71), maasis (59), dhansak masala (62,68,73), O baap re!(63), Sataans(83), Arre Choosya (84), naargolio (84), Sapaat(89), “Khoedai Salaamat raakhe” (85), khoedai (85,100), roje (109), afargaan (113), duleendar (109,110), bajaar (109), chori-chhooopi (111), botch (112), shaik-chullee (113), thali (113,180), “Mua ugheerparoo!” (112) dhansak (151), muskaa-paalis (151), daarroteli (126), kaakhajuro (127,131,138), soosoo (127), dikra (131,137), ‘Saala ghela’ (131), dhur-dhur, dhur-dhur (149), Mua (159,160), lufraa (138), Chaalo ni (151), teelo (180), kayrawali (207-9), kissie-koatie (217)  

B) Such a Long Journey – mua (2), matloo(12), dholni(8), toati (10), subjo (16,77,87,127-128,163,208,299), dhansak (18,170,270), tohrun (19), bhup(21), Mua lutcha (31), sapaat (35), oollu (40), dustoorji (39), Goover-Ni-Gaan (39), billus (40), goteloo (42), Gilly-gilly-gilly (44,46), Chaamray-Chaamra (50), Sojjo (56), Navjote (56), Dhandar-paatyo (70), tandarosti (78), jaripuraniwalla (83,167), bakulyoo (80, 167, 170), farus (86), guna (85), ma-kapao(99), Choolavati (94,122, 125, 142), Ghumsaan(111), Owaaryoo (120-21,146), Paadyari (123), thaali (123), Chammat (126), lorri (126,146,172,176), buberchees (130) duglo (130), Arre baap (135,167), chana-mumra (163), murumbo (164), lubbhai-laivraas (166), boombawalla (168), sethiyas (168), budmaas! (182) Khumchaas (183), tapaylis (183), Thussook-thussook (185), Arrung-Darrung (190), Choolavati (186,207), Bhoom dai nay bhooski! (190) Kaakerya kumar (190), kaarestaan (206), jhabbho (210), goo-mooter (216), futaakro (218), chaalo (218), bhustaigayo (232), ghaylaa-chayraa (218), sataan (232), mua (231, 244,273), lumbasoo-
baywakoof (240), mai-issi (243), beekun-bylo (244), bawa (244), bugalee (245,246,248,252,255,315), gomez (246), suchkaar (246), kusti(246,269), Marey-em-no-em (246), char-chassam(251), dugli (251,328), nasasasalers (252,253,255,316), Budmaas(256),sudra (265,293), cheepro (265), subjo (269), charbee (270), Bilimoria chaaval chorya (269), Kunkoo morcha, marcha ni bhulumi, harad, dhanajira, papad khar, shahjira, tuj lavang, mari, ailchi, jyfer, sarko, garam masalo, andoo, lassun. (273) Junglees (274), march ni bhukti, andoo, lassun, garam masalo (274), parinaam (276), dholni (276,294), Mari chaalyo (275), aantardo (294), butaaras (292), nirang (317), pydaust (318), behesti (318), ruvaan (334,335), Ahiyo-tato! Tahi to tato (338) Billimoria chaaval chorya/Daando lai nay marva dorya (135), raakh-bhoosa (147,290), bhakras (148)

C) **A Fine Balance**- Sataan (26), soros-na-paatriu (45), afargan (45), baaj (45), faroksy (45), ashirvaad (45), kaaj (63), Kaana-sori (69), bhakras, vasanu, …coomas (79), Kakka (257), soo-soo (256), soosoti (256), keech-keech (267), alayti-palayti (416), Saala bhikhari(547), Aga-ni-dadhi! Aga-ni-dadhi (645,646)

D) **Family Matters**- keech keech (23), sarbut (25,26,30), chaavat (26), dikra(29), dhandar paatiyo (38,39), goo-mooter (76), aachhumichhu (61), akoori (95), papayta-noo-gose(99), kakka (122,432), bilaari (127), dhansak (127), tapayli (146), karko (205), saalo maaderchod (204), bhonsrino (204), batchar-batchar (204), raanwada (234), zapato (240,247), sapat (240), cheecheepopo (331), Khassar khassar (338), dhansak dhandar (414), Patra-ni-machhi (415), margi-nofarcha (415), lagan-nu-custard (415), Ek Pila Ni Ladai (415), dusmoo(418), karasio (436), ravo (487), jalebi (488,496), Sooterfeni (496), burfi (496), malai-na khaja (496)
5. Farsi/Parsi
   A) *Tales From Ferozsha Baag* - afargaan (13), jashan (54), saykaste saykaste sataan (53)
   B) *Such a Long Journey* - Kusti (1,4,5,14,15,39,137), Sudra (15), atash-dadgh (254), afargan (251,315)
   C) *A Fine Balance* - Navroze (53), khordad Sal (53)

1. Konkani
   A) *Tales from Ferozsha Baag* - Konkani songs-Mogacha Mary, Hanv Saiba (45)

2. Tamil/Kerla:
   A) *Tales from Ferozsha Baag* - Tamil and Keralites- illay illay poe poe (46)

3. Bengali
   A) *Tales from Ferozsha Baag* -Sonar Bangla (271), Joi Bangla (271)

4. French
   A) *Tales from Ferozsha Baag* - mélange (275), piece de resistance (283)
Language is also an ethnic marker. It contributes to the ethno-culture ethno-religious connotations. Each ethnic group has its own vocabulary regarding the culture and religion as well as dressing and cuisines as a part of ethnic identity. In this way language signifies the typicality of that particular ethnic group. As these ethnic groups co-exist with other ethnic groups, the intermingling or exchange of habits, dressing code and cuisines is imperative. So vocabulary may belong to more than one ethnic group. Following is an approximate attempt to categorise the words within the ambit of particular ethnic group.

_Bapsi Sidhwa_

**Edible items:**

*The Crow Eaters:*
Paan (131,152,155)

*Ice-Candy Man:*
malida (33), kebabs (44), phulkas (miniature chapatties) (49,50,58) parathas (52,57,109), pakoras (105,258), gulab-jamun (106), jalebis (106) ladoos (168-69), paan (126,135)

*An American Brat:*
dhan-dar (44), pakoras (36,38), dal (112,142)

**Dressing:**

*The Crow Eaters:*
lungi (120,151,171)

*Ice-Candy Man:*
kurta (133), khaddar (4), palloo (28,46), churidaar (105), rug (151), achkan coats (160), ghoongat (186-87,260,261), Chuddar (190-91,222,237), garara (260)

*An American Brat:*
burqas (10), dopattas (19,48), tanchoi (43), shalwar-kamiz (42,45,72, 122), lungi (19), shalwars (21,86), sudra (31,164,220,
Hindu:
*The Crow Eaters:*
Hai Bhagwan (88) Mandirs (237) Hanuman (237) janam patris (160-76)

*Ice Candy Man:*
Arrey Bhagwan (76), Hai Ram (77,89,134), bodhi-hair(95),
bodhi(117), karmas (222), bodhis (175), Kali yuga (148)

*An American Brat:*
Hai Bhagwan (252)

Muslim:
*The Crow Eaters:*
Hai Allah! (88,202), kafirs! (221) burqa (240) Fakir (33, 34),

*Ice Candy Man:*
Salaam (53) “Salaam-alekum mamajee ’ (77), Ya Allah! (97)
Allah (98,111), Wah Allah! (99) ‘Ya Allah! Ya Rahman! Ya Rahim!’ (107) Mussulmans (122,128), nikah (250), Shaitans (250),
Allah-ki-kasam (182), sehra (186-88), doolha (186-188), kalma (181), ‘La Ilaha Illallah, Mohammad ur Rasullallah.’ (181) Allah-o-Akbar! Ya Ali (135)
Allah-o-Akbar! (154,199) saalam ailekum (150)

*An American Brat:*
mullahs(10,11,13), sufi(19) maulvi(45), Aa-meen(46),
Alllllh-ah (134), mushairas (311), mehfil (311)

Sikh:
*Ice Candy Man:*
Sikh priest, a granthi (54), granthi (56,106-8) Wah Guru!
(107,203,204), kirpans (204), takth (223), kirpan (133), ‘Raj Karega
Khalsa, aki rahi na koi!’ (134), Sat siri Akaal! Bolay Se nihal!’ (134,154,199) kirpan (144)

An American Brat:
gurudwaras(19)

Parsi:
The Crow Eaters:
Asha (12), jashan (17), mathabanus (23, 59, 273), Dungerwaree (46)
Atash (50) kustis (56, 176), sudreh (110), Navjote (124), pigani (52), rehra (67)
Ice Candy Man:
Dungarwadi (113-14), Shaitans (250), kusti(173)

An American Brat:
pahi (43,304), Yathas (47), Ashem Vahoons (47), agyari (40,41,278)
atash(40, 41,47,257,317), sagan (44), madasara (223, 297)
navjotes(204,293) dokhma(269), uthmna(270), Atash Behram(278)
adarnee (297), pareekas(224)

Rohinton Mistry

Dressing

Tales from Firozsha Baag:
dugli (4,7,12,16-19,67), pheytoe (4,16,18), pyjama (5), paan ((18,67,86,156), kusti (67,110,120,221,236) choli (9,10), pugree (67,68,75) kurta-pyjama (210)

Such a Long Journey:
Kusti(1,4,5,14,15,39,137), Sudra (15) rajai (302), Duglo (130), jhabbho(210)

A Fine Balance:
sherbet (9,195), paan (11,317,524,526,638,639), pyjamas (21,65,66, 138,305,585) choli (147,148,165,345,502), kurtas (585) Salwar Kameez (379), ghaghra-choli (379), dupattas (683), Sherwani
(699,432), sudra and kusti (712), kashmiri shawl (730), dhotis (501,641),

*Family Matters:*
pyjama (63,64) kurta (251) kusti (306-07,339-40,375,436,445)

**Edible Items**

*Tales from Firozsha Baag:*
dhandar-paatyo (7,20,32), Sali-boti (7), ailchee (9,) chasni (12), pupeta-na-gose (32), ferach beech (44), chai (45), dhansak masala (62,68,73)
jeeragoli (89), supari (89), aampapud (89), samosa, bhaijia, sev-ganthia (111), Chicken-dhansak (151), dhansak (151), daar-roteli (126), bhelpuri, panipuri, batata-wada, kulfi(182), chapatti(187), mithai (199), Shik-kababwalla (217), Shik-kabab (219), lungoatee (219),

*Such a Long Journey:*
subjo (16,77,87,127-128,163,208,299), kutchoomber (18,97),
dhansak (18, 170, 270), Sev-ganthia (35), Paapud (56), Dhandar-paatyo (70), Paan (107, 158, 192-93, 195-96, 200, 205,313-14, 325, 308), buryani (145), bhakras (148), chana-mumra (163), murumbo (164), sataan (232), subjo (269), charbee (270), march ni bhukti, andoo, lassun, garam masalo (274)

*A Fine Balance:*
bulky samosa (38), soros-na-paatru (45), kabab (47), shish kabab (747), biryani (53,746), pulao-dal(54,57), bhakras, vasanu,…coomas (79), ghee(101), puris(487,492), dal and chapati(151,407), ladoos(167)
pao-bhajis(478), Bhaji and chapati(220) carrot-salad,carrot-ma-gose (252), samosa (305), chutney (305), Burfi(397), Tamaater (431), masala wada (490,599), dal (491-92), wadas 491-92), chutney
(491,492), copra and kothmeer-mirchi (491), paneer masala, shak-bhaji, aloo masala (492), Laddoo and jalebi, ras-malai (562), pakora (629), ice-gola (629), Unjir (629), bhajia (683), prawn patia (734), karai chicken (746), pakora, chutney, puri-bhaji(746)

**Family Matters:**
sarbut (25,26,30), chapattis (33), dhandar paatiyo (38,39), falooda (40), soup-chaaval (97,112), papayta-noo-gose (99), dhansak (127), pao-bhaji (150), Belgaum ghee (198), bun-muskaa (204,205), Chai (213), khichri (391), dhansak dhandar (414), Patra-ni-machhi (415), margi-nofarcha (415), lagan-nu-custard (415), ravo (487), jalebi (488,496), Sooterfeni (496), burfi (496), malai-na-khaja (496)

**Parsis**

*Tales from Firozsha Baag:*
Behram roje (3-7,11-12,11,12,15,20) Navjote (4,67) dustoorji (13, 53, 54 ,63,64,130), agyari (13,123,124,126,129,130), afargaan(13, 113), Dada Ormuzd (10,125), Bawa (11,138,74), Bawaji (17,35), Dustoor (13-4,19,20), jashan (54), Mathoobanoo (55,56,84,85,95,141,178,205,204), dusmoo (59,62,64,71), maasis (59), parvar Daegar (72), Sapaat (89) khoedai (85,100), roje (109) teelo(180) ghatis (17,35,176, 178,183), ghatons (177), loban (7,54),

*Such a Long Journey:*
sapaat (35) bawaji (71,83) dustoorji (39), Navjote (56)khandhias (244), bawa (244), bugalee (245,246,248, 252,255,315), gomez (246), suchkaar (246), kusti (246,269), loban (247,248 ,286,315), dustoorji (247,251,252, 316,318), char-chassam (251), dugli (251, 328), afargan (251,315), nasasasalers (252,253,255,316), atash-dadgh (254), nirang (317), pydaust (318), sudra (265,293)

*A Fine Balance:*
Dustoor (22,31,45,48,702), Sataan (26), afargan (45), baaj (45), farokey (45), ashirvaad (45), Navroze (53), khordad Sal (53), kaaj (63) nirvana (589)

*Family Matters:*
Navroze (25), khordad Sal (25), loban (25), Navjote (28) bavaji (44) ghatis (52,389,395) manashni (307,340,375), gavashni (307,340,375), kunashni (307,340,375), Ahura mazda khodai, az hama gunah, patet pashemanum (307), navjote (339), Ahura Mazda Khodai (340), dustoorji (340,342,437), geh (342), atash-bahram (344), salaamati(412), Kem na mazda! Mavaite payum dadat, hyat ma dregvao (445), dusmoo (418), Pa name yazdan Ahurmazda khodai (446), Fravarane Mazdayasno Zarathushtrish (446), Ahunem vairim tanum paiti (447), Yashemcha vahmemch aojashca zavarecha afrinami (447), Kerfti mozd gunah guzar eshna kunam (447), Khshnaothra Ahurahe Mazdao! Ashem Vohu Vanishtem asti (445), Doongerwadi (476), afargaan (483), Avan Yazat (491), Komm (495)

**Hindu**

*Tales from Firozsha Baag:*
sadhu (150)

*Such a Long Journey:*
hing (23) boni (103) puja(138)

*A Fine Balance:*
karma (589), jyotshis(105), Yoga (398), sanyasi (583,592,593,594), pujas (122,381,675), kaliyug (122), Hai Bhagwan (125,230), Bhungi(136,163)
Hai Ram(127,164,186,229,332,472,517,575,637,647,657), Brahmin, kshatriya, Vaishya, and Shudra (138), Chit-pavan Brahmin(139), pujari (139), Sadhu (151,644) sati (175) Namaskaar (204, 317,477, 603)
This brief lingual analysis of novels of Rohinton Mistry and Bapsi Sidhwa suggest that Mistry’s fictional world depicts the multi-religious and various ethnic groups whereas Bapsi Sidhwa’s fictional world suggests the Islamic atmosphere in her novels.

When a writer overcomes the boundaries of ethnicity, race, religion and nation the work has a universal appeal. Every work of art reflects human life in the abstract or concrete form. It appeals to various emotions of human lives. Literature attracts human beings all over the world apart
from its lingual, regional, ethical, religious, national, cultural differences because it has certain universal appeal in it. This contains a variety of factors like philosophy of life, attitude towards a fellow human being. Though they differ in matters of culture, religion, color, race, geographical locale, they are connected at the level of emotions and thoughts. So literature has such universal appeal sans ethnicity or culture. It can be seen aptly what Bhabani Bhattacharya says, “Art must teach, but unobtrusively, by its vivid interpretation of life. Art must preach, but only by virtue of its being a vehicle of truth. If that is propaganda there is no need to eschew the word”[1955:394]. For Romen Basu, “Fiction is a human document. For me, unless it has some bearing on real life it cannot be taken as a work of creation.” [1922] Chaman Nahal is of the firm view that a novel must possess ‘synchronic relevance,’ and it must concern itself with “a specific community” a specific class, a specific society”. He says:

The main point is that an artist should be able to associate himself with an identifiable community, or what Raymond Williams has called ‘a knowable community’ [1985:110]

One can claim that there is a universal appeal in the works of Rohinton Mistry and Bapsi Sidhwa. Rohinton Mistry deals with human destiny and infinite injustice of the lord of the life as well as the destruction of the natural resources and natural wealth. Bapsi Sidhwa concerns with the feminine predicament and their upliftment appeals the universal reader.

Sidhwa talks as a woman first and then as a Parsi. Her pleas for women’s emancipation and freedom of ‘choice’ and a call for women’s upliftment is clearly seen in all her novels especially in An American Brat when Zareen ponders over the need for reform in her community, But “she argued this from a purely feminist and academic point of view.” (AAB, 288) (Emphasis added).
Mistry talks more as a Parsi first and then as a ‘Mumbaikar’ who suffers from the nostalgia of his lost home, where he is left with a status of writhing insect striving for life and survival. Dinshawaji expressed his grief and rage against parties like Shiv Sena and its policies of renaming roads and cities:

‘Why change the names? Saala sisterfuckers! Hutatma Chowk!’ ‘What is wrong with Flora Fountain?’ ‘Names are so important. I grew up on Lamington Road. But it has disappeared, in its place is Dadasaheb Bhadkhamkar Marg. My school was on Carnac Road. Now suddenly it’s on Lokmanya Tilak Marg. I live at Sleater Road. Soon that will also disappear. My whole life I have come to work at Flora Fountain. And one fine day the name changes. So what happens to the life I have lived? Was I living the wrong life, with all the wrong names? Will I get a second chance to live it again, with these new names? Tell me what happens to my life. Rubbed out, just like that? Tell me.’ (SALJ, 73-74)

Dinshawaji’s anxiety and anger aptly reflect the suppression of the marginal and minority communities under the majoritarian fundamental rule.

Sidhwa is never blasphemous though she is ironical/satirical. She highlights Parsi paradoxes with subtle humor: “Notorious misers, they are paradoxically generous to a cause” (TCE, 21). Sidhwa shows respect for the priests as in An American Brat, when Feroza while praying observes the priests in the Fire Temple:

Feroza also liked to watch the priest, luminous in a forth of starched white robes, decorously feed the fire with offerings of sandalwood from a long-handled silver ladle. (AAB, 41)

Where as Mistry underscores the satire of human life in a very serious way though sometimes critically and comically. He turned to be a blasphemous sometimes as in Tales from Firozsha Baag, ‘An Inauspicious
Occasion’, when Rustomji talks about dustoorji’s habit of passing comments on women between the prayers:

**Ashem Vahoo,**

*See the tits on that chickie-boo...* (TFB, 14)

Rustomji charged all the dustoors as “masked bandits” (TFB, 14). It conveys decline in the religious ethos and increasing indifferent tendencies toward the religious cult among the Parsis living in the metropolis like Mumbai and abroad.

Mistry’s characters fight against destiny, they strive for achieving something. They live in perfect dystopia where everything is unjust and merciless, full of chaos, wants and starvations. Mistry’s narration is like a ‘skull beneath the face’. Mistry’s attitude is shaped by the experience he had from the majority community. He paints the grim realities in a straightforward manner.

Gustad Nobel in *Such a Long Journey* fights against the financial crisis as well as indulges himself into the scheme which might result into disaster in depositing money in his own bank. On family front too, he is not happy with his elder son’s decision of not to opt IIT who leaves home afterwards. He suffers from the threats of Ghulam when money was not properly deposited in and withdrawn from the bank. The major emotional trauma he suffers from is that of Major Billimoria’s betrayal who without informing anything has left home and later on caused all the troubles in his life. Gustad’s journey from Mumbai to Delhi is called as ‘Such a Long Journey’ where he witnesses Billimoria’s cathartic physical as well as mental conditions. But after all he bounces back and overcomes as a victorious hero.

*A Fine Balance* is full of tragedies of Dina Dalal, Om & Ishvar, Manek Kohlahs and so many *common human beings* who are striving for the mere survival while living on edge. Their tragedies are such that one can not forgive the writer for his realism in life where happiness is a rare
dream. But after all the hurdles and tragedies, Dina Dalal, Om and Ishvar, tailors turned into beggars, still live a happy life because they maintained a fine balance in their life but Manek who could not put up with these tragedies commits suicide. What Mistry suggests is life is full of tragedies, compromises, and horrors but full of life. One has to live because it is not meant for making an end of it. Family Matters brings the typical family stories from every common man’s life. Yezad and Roxana fight against all odds and come to terms with life.

Sidhwa’s fictional world is Utopian, full of bliss and harmony. Sidhwa paints realities. Sidhwa’s fictional world is full of happiness, celebration, relatives enjoying each other’s family bonds, standing by each other during crisis. In The Crow Eaters, Freddy develops from nothing to a leader of his community. His next generation too, enjoys all kinds of pleasure without any difficulty. There are no financial crises or other problems related with family happiness. In Ice-Candy Man too, apart from the partition riots, there are no problems in the life of Mr. & Mrs. Sethi, and they did not even suffer directly from the partition riots. An American Brat portrays the Parsi family which is quite respectable without any suppression; it just suffers the problems of insular-marriage.

For Mistry life is like jig-saw puzzles which can be comprehended in fragments and difficult to transform all fragments to make it a whole. In A Fine Balance the patches of various clothes of various colors in a blanket symbolizes the life in its various colors. In Family Matters, too, Jahangir and Murad’s efforts to complete the jig-saw puzzle and their continuous efforts to complete it are described. For Mistry life is like Enid Blyton’s series of children books searching for something which is hidden, absent, mysterious, and suspense. Jehangir was searching the piece to fit the fragrance in his Lake Como jigsaw puzzle, the cardboard fragments to arrange accurately to see the beautiful complete Lake Como:

There were no pieces to fit together to make a fragrance. It was nowhere in the landscape, and
everywhere. He had to imagine the fresh air that would linger over the path inside the jigsaw puzzle. And birdsong—where there was fresh air, instinct told him, there was bound to be birdsong. Not the raucous cawing of scavenger crows, but birdsong like his father’s whistling, bold and sweet. (FM, 288)

Yezad advised his sons to enjoy their precious schools days

...Jehangir wanted to believe his father, but first the world that had fallen apart had to be pieced together again. He wished it was like making a jigsaw puzzle—open the box, reconstruct Grandpa’s flat in Chateau Felicity, fix Grandpa’s bones, patch up the quarrel with Coomy Aunty and Jal Uncle. And most important of all, piece together the lovely mornings of story and laughter and joking, which seemed to have disappeared so completely. (FM, 290)

Jehangir as a teenager recapitulates his past life. He wanted to bring back his happy days from the past, his loving father turned stranger with his non-stop praying. He wanted to put together again all the fragments of his life. But it was just not possible, “Like some strange jigsaw puzzle of indefinite size. Each time I think it’s done, I find a few more pieces” (FM, 491). Mistry heightens the present grotesque reality with the backdrop of blissful past. Mistry searches patches of beautiful life once lived in the past. For Mistry, “Life is not an Amitabh Bacchan movie? That justice is mirage?” (FM, 211) and “After all, our lives are but a sequence of accidents— a clanking chain of chance events. A string of choice, casual or deliberate, which add up to the one big calamity we call life” (AFB, 691). But he expects a kind of utopian world as expressed in *Family Matters*:

In a way, thought Jehangir, the Santa Claus story like the Famous Five books. You knew none of it was real, but it let you imagine there was a better world somewhere. You could dream of a place where there was lots to eat, where children could have a midnight feast and raid the larder that was always full of sumptuous delicacies. A place where they organized picnics to the countryside and had
adventures, where even the smugglers and thieves they caught were not too dangerous, just “nasty customers” who were “up to no good”, as the kindly police inspector explained at the end of each book. A place where there were no beggars, no sickness, and no one died of starvation. And once a year a jolly fat man brought gifts for good children. All this was what Murad wanted for him. (FM, 373)

For Mistry life is also an infinite search. In the evening, by the sea, Gustad enjoyed the talk with Malcolm about the musical past and the present full of chaos and loss of rhythm. Both of them remembered about their fathers who always tried to search something in music and books, but could not. Gustad remembered the playing of violin and piano by Malcolm and his father:

I used to love to see your father put rosin on the bow, his face was always frowning with concentration when he did that. Then he would start to play, his bow moving up and down with so much life and power - gave me a strange feeling. As if he was searching desperately for something, but always disappointed. Because the piece ended before he found it. ‘And the funny thing is my father had the same kind of look in his eyes. Sometimes, when he was reading- a kind of sadness that the book was finishing too soon, without telling him everything he wanted to know.’ (SALJ, 229-230)

For Sidhwa life is a journey, a search, which is never complete. The journey as a search for life is expressed as,

“Tum aye ho na shab-e-intezar guzri hai-
Talash main hai seher baar baar guzri hai!
(You never came - The waitful night never passed-
Though many dawns have passed in the waiting)” (ICM, 245)

For Sidhwa life is the poetry of poets who search life in the present, the seen. One can enjoy the ecstasy and intoxication of highest pleasure:

_Ulfat Kee Nae Manzil Ko Chalay_
Embarked on a new mission of love. (AAB, 311)
Mistry writes about the human life that has the same stereotyped incidents and story, only the characters and details are different:

“Everyone underestimates their own life. Funny thing is, in the end, all the stories—your life, my life, old Husain’s life, they’re the same. In fact, no matter where you go in the world, there is only one important story: of youth, and loss, and yearning for redemption. So we tell the same story, over and over, Just the details are different.” (FM, 228)

Mistry deals with the gay-homo-sexual themes also. In the story “The Collectors”, Eric promised Jehangir to give him stamps from the Patla & Jhaaria Babu stalls. For this Jehangir has to do some favor:

Eric found Jehangir’s delicate hands and finger, his smooth legs and thighs very desirable. In class he gazed for hours, longingly, at the girlish face, curly hair, long eyelashes. (TFB, 90)

The Eric-Jehangir pair earned the reputation of “moothya-maroo” (TFB, 93) in the class.

Sidhwa deals with lesbian-homosexual themes in An American Brat. Zareen appreciates Laura and Shirley as “decent girls” (AAB, 299). Feroza informed them as “lesbians” (AAB, 299) “lovers” (AAB, 300) and then explained:

Laura says, ‘If Shirley gets my juices flowing, why should I mess around with boys?’ (AAB, 300)

Mistry’s appeal to the world environment can be seen his epic novel A Fine Balance where he talks about the coca-colonization and industrialization of the hill-station. This appeal to eco-criticism makes the novel universal as the whole world suffers from the ecological imbalance and consequent problems. The following is the standard definition of the Ecocriticism:

Ecocriticism names that area of literary and cultural studies which studies the relationship between
human culture and society and the natural world. The earliest work in Ecocriticism sought to reread canonical texts with a view to consideration of textual explorations and representing of the natural world. In particular, ecocritics addressed and analysed romanticism’s textual debt to idea of nature. Subsequently, after the initial critical engagement, Ecocriticism in the last decade has attempted to expand the canon through a rereading of ‘nature writing’, typified, on the one hand, by Thoreau’s publications and, on the other, the work of Native American writers. In the analysis of the representation and construction of nature in the text, ecocritics have also turned to matters of gender and race in their relationship to the discursive mediation of the natural environment, while, at the same time, reading of the ‘natural world’ in the text as the articulation of a non-human other. [Julian Wolfreys, 2005:108]

Mistry in Tales from Firozsha Baag highlights this problem when like most immigrants, Kersi, too, experienced the culture-shock after reaching the Bombay. He felt a contrast between the lush greenery of the West and ‘the parched land, brown, weary, and unhappy’ (TFB, 186) is striking. The city also seemed dirtier and more crowded. Kersi’s reaction to a crowded railway station is given in a highly wrought passage. In A Fine Balance Mr. Kohlah was engrossed in observing the growth of development of the hills. He and his friends agreed that it was a nasty growth. The possibility of increased business at the General Store was no consolation. All his senses were being crushed by the invasion. The poisonous exhaust from lorries was burning his nostrils, and the ugly excruciating of their engines was ripping his eardrums to shreds. Wherever he turned, he began to see the spread of shacks and shanties. Mistry describes it as:

The destitute encampments scratched away at the hillsides, the people drawn from every direction by stories of construction and wealth and employment. But the ranks of jobless always exponentially
outnumbered the jobs, and a hungry army sheltered permanently on the slopes. The forests were being devoured for firewood; bald patches materialized upon the body of the hills. Then the seasons revolted. The rain, which used to make things grow and ripen, descended torrentially on the denuded hills, causing mudslides and avalanches. Snow, which had provided an ample blanket for the hills, turned skimpy. Even at the height of winter the cover was ragged and patchy. Mr. Kohlah felt a perverse satisfaction at nature’s rebellion. It was a vindication of sorts: he was not alone in being appalled by the hideous rape. But when the seasonal disorder continued year after year, he could take no comfort in it. The lighter the snow cover, the heavier was his heart. Maneck said nothing, though he thought his father was being overly dramatic when he declared, ‘Taking a walk is like going into a war zone.’ (AFB, 264-265)

For Mr. Kohlah, long, solitary saunters were the immense pleasure of his life, especially after winter, when every outing was graced by delicious uncertainty—“what lay round the next bend? A newborn rivulet, perhaps? Wildflowers he had not noticed yesterday?” (AFB, 265) But afterwards, every ramble was like a deathwatch to witness the destruction with naked eyes. Mr. Kohlah’s intimate relationship with the hill-area and the trees is shown as:

Coming upon a favourite tree, he would stop under its branches a while before moving on. He would run his hand along the gnarled trunk, happy that an old friend had survived another day. Many of the rocky ledges that he used to sit on the watch the sunset had been removed by dynamite. When he did find one, he rested for a few minutes and wondered if it would be here for him the next time. Before long they began talking in town about him. ‘Mr. Kohlah’s screw is getting little loose,’ they said. ‘He speaks to trees and rocks, and pats them like they were his dogs.’ (AFB, 265)
When Maneck heard the gossip, he felt great humiliation and wished that his father would stop this embarrassing behaviour. He also blazed with anger on ignorant, insensitive people. One day Mr. Kohlah noticed that dusk had fallen: the sunset was forfeited behind the pall. The entire scene was so mean and squalid by twilight, so utterly beyond his ability to accept or comprehend:

He felt lost and frightened. Waves of anger, compassion, disgust, sorrow, failure, betrayal, love - surged and crashed, battering and confusing him. For what? Of whom? And why was it? If only he could....But he could make no sense of his emotions. He felt a tightness in his chest, then his throat constricted as if he were choking. He wept helplessly, silently. (AFB, 266)

Then he decided to stop the walks. The construction of a road brought the complete disintegration of Mr. Kohlah who always thought of better future but now the darkness flooded the future which saw the decline in the Mr. Kohlah’s Cola. Mistry highlights the process of the coca-colonization of the hill-station and end of the local business:

…the giant corporation had targeted the hills; they had Kaycee in their sights. They infiltrated Mr. Kohlah’s territory with their boardroom arrogance and advertising campaigns and cut-throat techniques. Representatives approached him with a proposition: ‘Pack up you machine, sign over all rights of Kohlah’s Cola, and be an agent for our brand. Come grow with us and prosper.’ (AFB, 268)

But as Mr. Kohlah was so attached with his family business, he chose to fight the inglorious battle to lose it ultimately. The company applied various tactics to win the race and finally, “Kohlah’s Cola never stood a chance. The General Store’s backbone was broken, and the secret formula’s journey down the generation was nearing its end” (AFB, 269). This disintegration brought the changes in the lives of Kohlahs. Maneck is sent to Mumbai for college-studies. The group of friends just reminisced
about peaceful, happy past. But Maneck did not like to be in Bombay as it was thickly populated, polluted city. He decided to return to his home in the mountains after he finished college. Om and Ishvar are also not in favor of living in the polluted Bombay and wanted to return to their green and beautiful village by the river. Mistry writes:

‘We have also come for a short time only,’ said Ishvar. ‘To earn some money, then go back to our village. What is the use of such a big city? Noise and crowds, no place to live, water scarce, garbage everywhere. Terrible.’ (AFB, 08)

In *Family Matters* too, Mistry highlights the pollution of Mumbai as Yezad said, “They would all be living happily right now in Toronto, breathing the pure Rocky Mountain air instead of the noxious fumes of this dying city, rotting with pollution and garbage and corruption” (FM, 283). In such manner both this writers have portrayed their sentiments about their cultural locale.

XIII

Today, the world suffers from the explosion of population. Countries like China and India face the problems of swelling population. Population of religions like Hindu, Islam, Christian and Buddhism is increasing day by day whereas the population of the Zoroastrian community is drastically declining. So it is a matter of concern for the community’s survival in near future. It is the well-known fact that this community is on the verge of doom. After focusing various issues it is clear that the future of this micro-scopic community is uncertain. It is an endangered species on the verge of extinction. Both writers have shown their deep concern for the declining demographic records. Mistry, in a very comic way, has prepared his mind for the retreat of his glorious and most ancient culture from this earth. In *Family Matters*, through the discussions of Jal and other Parsi members, it is clear that in the next millennium the religion is going to be the subject matter of museums and
libraries where one can study the lost civilization and religion. On the other hand, Sidhwa is worried about the future of her community and suggests reforms for the survival of the community. Mistry in his *Family Matters* has described the future of the community very ironically. Dr. Fitter is angry over the present generation of the Parsis. He blames them as: “Parsi men of today were useless, dithering idiots, the race had deteriorated” [FM, 51]. He compares them with his glorious past:

> When you think of our forefathers, the industrialists and shipbuilders who established the foundation of modern India, the philanthropists who gave us our hospitals and schools and libraries and baags, what lustre they brought to our community and the nation.(FM, 51)

This comparison has brightened the loss of beautiful heritage of the Parsis. Dr. Fitter is worried about the demographic decline in the Parsi community. His community is about to “doom and gloom” (FM, 51). It is not sure that his community would see the next century:

> “Demographics show we’ll be extinct in fifty years. Maybe it’s the best thing. What’s the use of having spineless weaklings walking around, Parsi in name only.” (FM, 51)

Jal witnessed the discussion “about the future of the Parsi community” (FM, 412). They cover all topics regarding his dwindling community – “The orthodox and reform argument? …dwindling birth rate …men and women marrying non-Parsis, and the heavy migration to the West” (FM, 412). If Parsis would extinguish then “Vultures and crematoriums, both will be redundant” (FM, 412). Jal thought these things as “explosive topic” (FM, 412). He admits the smallness of his community “right from the beginning” (FM, 412). But still they have survived, and prospered. Inspector Masalavala didn’t want to “tolerate optimism” (FM, 412). Demographic experts are certain that after fifty years there will be no Parsis left. Dr. Fitter compares the extinction with dinosaurs. If people
want to study Parsis they will have to study the Parsi bones. “His humour epitomized the Parsi spirit, the ability to laugh in the face of darkness” (FM, 412). Dr. Fitter imagined the names given to Parsis like “Jalosauras”, “Shapurjisauras”, “Pestonjisauras”, “Whiskysauras” (FM, 413).

Next they discussed the reasons for falling birth rate- like late marriages, education, individualism, westernization, modernization and says that “These Western ideas are harmful” (FM, 413). Inspector Masalavala blamed the Parsis producing just one or two children perhaps they are the only community who follow “the family planning message” (FM, 413). Another reason for low-birth according to demographers is “the more educated the community, the lower the birth rate” (FM, 414). So they wanted to prohibit the youth to go beyond a bachelor’s degree as well as further prepare different schemes to attract them:

“Give them cash incentives to study less. And those who want to do post-graduates studies, tell them they will get no funding from Panchayat unless they sign a contract to have as many children as the number of people over age fifty in their family. Maximum of seven— we don’t want to spoil the health of our young women” (FM, 414).

If there are “medical problems, inability to conceive” (FM, 414) then use “virto fertilization and all those mind-boggling technologies that result in multiple births. We can produce six and seven Parsis in one shot” (FM, 414). But Dr. Fitter rejects it as “that the evils that accompany large families do not creep in and ruin the joy and happiness” (FM, 414). Evils like “- sickness, poverty” (FM, 414).

Inspector Masalavala rejects such possibilities as Panchayat has enough money for all the Parsis. He blames too much individualism for this. For him it is “Poison. Pure poison, that’s what these ideas are to the Parsi community” (FM, 414). He thinks that the extinction of Parsis “will be a loss to the whole world. When a culture vanishes, humanity is the loser” (FM, 415). Assuming the end of Parsis they plan for:
“…a time capsule for posterity. To be opened in one thousand years. Containing recipes for dhansak, patra-ni-machhi, margi-ni-farcha, and lagan-nu-custard… How about including the Zend-Avesta, and words and music for Chhaiye Hamay Zarathosti? …a few old issues of Jam-e-Jamshed… Also, some cassettes of Adi Marzban’s radio comedies, Complete instructions and explanations for all our rituals and ceremonies, a copy of our great Navsari epic … ‘Ek Pila Ni Ladai’ With an English translation.. As the evening wore on, the three of them filled their imaginary time capsule with their favourite items, ancient and modern, serious and frivolous, sacred and profane, till they ran out of ideas (FM, 415-16).

Inspector Masalavala sadly expressed the relation of Parsis with their beloved city Mumbai:

“To think that we Parsis were the ones who built this beautiful city and made it prosper. And in a few more years, there won’t be any of us left alive to tell the tale.” (FM, 416)

Dr. Fitter too, joined him by declaring the death of Parsis as well as Mumbai:

Well, we are dying out, and Bombay is dying as well …When the spirit departs, it isn’t long before the body decays and disintegrates. (FM, 416)

Here Mistry very comically explores the possibilities of extinction as well as suggests the alternate plan for survival. Where as Sidhwa’s concern is grim and straightforward while suggesting the reforms in the rigidity of the community. She is not ready to tolerate the romantic fantasy about her community’s survival. In An American Brat, she suggests the changes related with marriage problems for the continuity of her community. In course of her interaction with David she began to change the orthodox views and seriously thought over the reformation in Parsi Anjuman’s laws about the marriage:
At such moments, Zareen wished David was a Parsee -- or that Zoroastrians would permit selective conversion to their faith. Zareen found herself seriously questioning the ban on interfaith marriage for the first time. She had often opined how unfair it was that while a Parsee man who married a “non” could keep his faith and bring up his children as Zoroastrians, a Parsee woman couldn’t. And it didn’t make sense that the “non” was not permitted to become Zoroastrian; one could hardly expect their children to practice a faith denied to their mother. *But she argued this from a purely feminist and academic point of view.* She had accepted the conventional wisdom and gone along with the opinion of the community because she had grown up with these precepts. She had never doubted that she would marry a Parsee. Till now these issues had not affected her. But with Feroza’s happiness at stake and her strengthening affection for David, Zareen wondered about it. How could a religion whose prophet urged his followers to spread the Truth of his message in the holy *Gathas* -- the songs of Zarathustra -- prohibit conversion and throw her daughter out of the faith? (AAB, 287) (Emphasis added)

Zareen knew that there was a severe controversy surrounding these issues in Bombay, as well as Britain, Canada, and America, where the Parsees had migrated in large numbers during the past few years. Bombay had sixty thousand Parsees which is fifty percent of the total world population of her community. Zareen had all along believed that the Parsee Panchyat in Bombay was the natural center of authority on community matters. She knew it also had an inclination to be conservative. Far away from Bombay she found distanced from such community matters in Lahore. But she was dimly sure that “the controversy would be resolved in an enlightened manner (after all, her community was educated and progressive) and that she could live with its decisions whichever way they went” (AAB, 287).
At this juncture Zareen found herself suddenly aligned with the thinking of “the liberals and reformists” (AAB, 288). She was happy that a debate on these issues was taking place. Perhaps the teenagers in Lahore were right. The Zoroastrian Anjuman in Karachi and Bombay should move with the times that were sending them to the New World. Sidhwa here suggests that “The various Anjumans would have to introduce minor reforms if they wished their tiny-community to survive” (AAB, 288). Well known bollywood actress Perizad Zorabian also has expressed the same thought that if community wants to survive Parsi Anjumans have to introduce certain minor changes concerning the marriage or other important issues.

Thus, Rohinton Mistry and Bapsi Sidhwa have various similarities concerning the issues of their community and differences concerning their treatment and narrative techniques.

Note: In this chapter abbreviations are used for the titles of the novels. Abbreviations are as follow:

Bapsi Sidhwa:
1. The Crow Eaters - TCE
2. Ice Candy Man - ICM
3. The Pakistani Bride - TPB
4. An American Brat - AAB

Rohinton Mistry:
1. Tales from Firozsha Baag - TFB
2. Such a Long Journey - SALJ
3. A Fine Balance - AFB
4. Family Matters - FM