CHAPTER II

Look Homeward Expatriate

This Chapter will remain focused on understanding the nature of expatriate in term of their cultural and emotional compulsions. A study has been done of expatriate psyche torn between the nostalgic memories and longing, and his love of comforts affected by an opulent society with a high degree of advancement in Science and Technology. The writers of expatriate nature have a tremendous tormenting experience to undergo, the one of not belonging to anywhere and the other of alienation. There are so many factors that govern the sensibilities of the author, as historical, personal or social that they remain sounding alienated in their works. While doing so they themselves remain away from the centre, while they are themselves in search of root. When V.S. Naipaul first visited India in 1962, he had a sense of associating himself with India and it was trying to identify himself with Indian community. From here onwards he started unfolding history of his ancestors who left India as emigrants. Naipaul in An Area of Darkness says:

“That had been a special journey for me: I had gone as a descendent of 19th century indentured Indian emigrants had been recruited from the 1860’s on, mainly from the eastern Gangetic plain, and then sent out dents in Calcutta to work on for five year in industries on plantations in various parts of the British Empire and even elsewhere. People like my ancestors had gone to Fiji in the Pacific; Mauritius in the Indian Ocean; in West Indies, principally the Guineas (British
Guyana and Dutch Guiana) and Trinidad. It was to Trinidad that my ancestors went, sometime in 1880s, as I work out”. (AAOD 135)

In each of the books Naipaul writes on India. In *An Area of Darkness* (1964), *India : A Wounded Civilization* (1977) and *India A Million Mutinies Now* (1990), he portrays a very depressing picture. However there are times when his fondness for India gets exhibited and he cherishes love-hate relationship with India. He does not turn his back on to the growing affluence in a particular sector after Independence. But he keeps himself rotating around the world of have-nots who are very large in number. He realizes that the privileged class has turned their eyes away selfishly, from the underprivileged. He gets drawn towards this section of society to which he seems to belong. With Naipaul the case of exile or homelessness has an undercurrent. But of the two types of exiles voluntary or a forced one it is really very difficult to distinguish between the two, as he is an Asian living in Trinidad. Yet he has worn a duel identity although it may be on margins. When Pearl. S. Buck wrote about China *Good Earth*, the Chinese critics decried her novel and presentation of Chinese Life for they believed that a writer who had not grown up in China could not understand its culture and hence misrepresentation especially poverty, bandits, polygamy these practices did not prevail in China. But Americans protested that Chinese have presented the life of the few in order to present rosy picture. However Naipaul was born in Western society, a part of western world. Richard C. Morais in his article *Tribal Tribulation* in *Forbes Magazine*, 1998 asserts : Naipaul has lived the contradictions that arise when cultures collides. (Richard C. Morais in his article *Tribal Tribulation* in *Forbes Magazine*, 1998)
It is for this reason that he is disgusted at seeing the dismal picture of India. He does not remain at home with Indian Hindus in Trinidad, from the English in London and from Indians in India. Although Naipaul is seen as a globe trotter, he seems to be gaining knowledge and experience about places when he moves from one place to the other, but it seems that he is essentially searching for identity. He remains conscious of his Indian identity from the very beginning. In an article in English Daily *The Times of India*, 1994 he confessed:

“As a child, I was surrounded by people who had come from India. When I was born it was so much a living presence. What came first was the realization that India was a dependent country. That was shocking to me, very shameful. The local cruelty was a later discovery”. (TTOI)

Naipaul had zeal to know about his past. He realized that knowing it was like entering into an area of darkness, without time. In all his books he does not seem to becoming one with them, whereas he arduously tries to establish his roots in the country. He exhibits a divide with the Indians and the rotting of things in absence of any change. Naipaul balances the thing with a wounded civilization. He tries to attach himself with country of his forefather but not with the people. In fact his childhood quest for India was a result of his association with the old lady in Trinidad who spoke only Hindi and was addressed as Gold Teeth Nance. The commonality that Naipaul witnessed in his early life was the caste system, especially which gets manifested in his professional skills. For Naipaul it was a more difficult to know history, which is rather easy in England and France. He confesses in an interview given to *Random Magazine* on internet:
“When you are born like me in an agricultural colony far away, you have to learn everything; the writing has been the process of inquiry and learning”. (Ibmpc/linux/docs at random magazine)

Naipaul admits his burning ambition of becoming a writer right from the age of ten which took him to England. In fact it seems that there was a hidden desire of becoming famous. Expatriation for Naipaul is a vague term, as he is Trinidadian born, lives in England and is of Indian origin, but another reason of cherishing love-hate relationship with India is that he is in quest for identity on one hand and at the same time is disgusted with Indian traditions being followed in his family as they were reminders of oppression done by colonialists. In an interview with Tarun Tejpal at Random Magazine on internet he answers:

“But that is how I came to England, with ambition, ignorance, and there is something else too which is very important. I was oppressed by the pettiness of colonial life. I was also oppressed by something else about it which relate more particularly to one’s Indian-Hindu family background. The intense family disputes. These disputes were full of moralizing, lessons people were judged and condemned on moral grounds. It was not a generous society – neither the colonial world nor the world in which I grew up, I wished to get away from that. I had a vision that in a larger world outside people would be appreciated for what they were. People would be found interesting for what they were”. (Ibmpc/linux/docs at random magazine, 3)
After Naipaul won scholarship at Oxford in 1950 and left Trinidad for good, his disillusionment with England grew on seeing the aspects of the western way of life that made him feel physically lost. After a nervous breakdown he tried to commit suicide, but luckily gas meter ran out. He was forced to review his position in the context of the Hindu view of life as Gautam Buddha had to do.

In an interview with Tarun Tejpal at Random Magazine V.S. Naipaul says:

“The world of illusion, the Hindus say we talk of despair, but true despair lies too deep for formulation. It was only new, as my experience of India defined itself more properly against my own homelessness, that I saw how close in the past year I had been to the total Indian negation, how much it had become the basis of thought and feeling. And already with awareness in a world where illusion could only be a concept and not something felt in the bones, it was slipping away from me. I felt it as something true which I could never adequately express and never seize again”.

(Interview with Tarun J. Tejpal file lbpmc1/linux/docs/at random magazine V.S. Naipaul html, 3)

It’s really worth noting that V.S. Naipaul who in order to look through the area of darkness in India travelled India to search his parental lineage in India but ended his journey as a perplexed man with his moorings belonging to nowhere.

Although Naipaul had come to India in 1962 to look for his parental lineage, he visited village Dubes and Tiwaris with an IAS officer but was not contended on finding that there was no communal living. The village had propriety but Ramchandra, Naipaul says in the novel: The present head of my grand father’s branch of the Dubes, lived in a small thatched hut. (AAOD 268)
Naipaul had no hesitation in accepting that this disappointment led him to reject Ramchandra. Naipaul had affluence provided to him by his mother’s family. But Naipaul’s disillusionment can be traced back to his childhood experience which made him react against Dubes and Ramchandra in particular. Naipaul had lived in community in Chaguanea and later in Port of Spain as an extended family on his mother’s side, but in contrast there was no such type in his ancestral village. There is yet another reason for his disillusionment and that he expected his grand father’s family to be affluent as others in village. To his disenchantment, the poverty he witnessed and Ramchandra Dube’s inclination to utilize him pushed him away to be recognized with his family. However, there is a perception that Naipaul rejects everything – India. His visit with an IAS Officer is taken as an effort of distancing himself with the roots. He severed his relation with his village but remained clung to Indian connections. He could not identify himself with India. He indicated this in An Area of Darkness of being a commoner: “There was nothing in my experience on dress to distinguish me from the crowd eternally hurrying into Churchgate station. In Trinidad to be an Indian was to be distinctive”. (AAOD 45-46)

After his first visit to India Naipaul had accepted that this country could not be his home. Naipaul visited India in 1971, 1975, and 1976. When Naipaul writes about his impressions of Indians in India: A Wounded Civilization, he realizes that the book does not have sense of anxiety as it was there in his visit in 1962 and then in An Area of Darkness (1964). Naipaul could not reject India out rightly. But his impressions of India are in a more relaxed mood. His description of Bombay is more analytical. Naipaul in India: A Wounded Civilization says:
The Indian Victorian Gothic city with its inherited British public buildings and institutions – the Gymkhana with its wide veranda and spacious cricket ground, the London style leather chaired Ripon Chub for elderly Parsi gentleman (a portrait of Queen Victoria as a youngish widow of Windsor still hanging in the Secretary’s office) – the city was not built for the poor, the millions. But a glance at the city map shows that there was a time when they were invited in. (IAWC – 59)

Naipaul’s relaxed musing in his words: “I can not travel only for the sights. I am at once too close and too far”. (IAWC 60)

Another sense that made Naipaul come back to India was his growing of interest in Indian political set-up. However, he was much opposed in views about Emergency imposed by Mrs. Gandhi. His support for the Emergency was a necessity to break with the decadent past and start a new. He assessed political moves Jaya Prakash Narayan and Morarji Desai. He found Morarji Desai’s Gandhian exhibitionism as without substance. Naipaul understood Jaiprakash Narayan and said in *India: A Wounded Civilization*:

> Who has assembled his facts and references”, and fault in JP’s appeal ‘Swaraj means Ramraj’ contradictory. The irony that the Indian tyranny against which Jaya Prakash Narayan is protesting, and the identity of contemporary Indian political life – immemorable power on one side, and on the other side, frustrated and obsession at ‘Gandhian’ protest, mixing political and historical fantasy with religious exaltation – the irony is that both tyranny and political sterility were caused by the very success of Gandhi. (IAWC 145-146)
Naipaul’s flying back from India and coming back shows his sense of attachment of viewing a country which should try to forget its past and should look forward in the future. This becomes very evident as he keeps coming back to India to find yet new India, which he does in *India A Million Mutinies Now* (1990) is more mellowed and analytical. It is a summarizing approach to separatist movements.

V.S. Naipaul is certainly among a few expatriates of present time, who has emerged as an eminent writer in English in the West. He has contributed substantially to Post-colonial literature or Common Wealth Literature. It is, however, in his non-fictional works that he appears to shake the world with his highly controversial views, stark and naked expositions of the countries he has visited and the realistic pictures of these countries with his high pitched tone of anger, harshness and severity of his statement, as well as a brilliant, dazzling and engaging style. His works have raised doubts among critics regarding the veracity and authenticity of his views. Naipaul’s true assessment can be made under two headings, one under novels of fictions, and secondly under the non-fiction heading. For it is in his non-fictional works, particularly on India that Naipaul lashes out most vigorously, blasting institutions and puncturing Indian ego. He appears most critical, controversial as well as thought provoking. To have a consolidated Naipaulian view of India his three non-fictional works, *An Area of Darkness, India : A Wounded Civilization* and *India A Million Mutinies Now* are of immense help for the writer has in which he systematically and realistically expresses his views. One can be slightly skeptical about his intentions when he discovers that more than travels and sojourns that it
describes the narrative technique which he adopted is fascinating. It is perhaps the technique that has popularized Naipaul more than his views expressed therein. The mode is an apt example of perfect craftsmanship. Hence, there are three aspects to the study of Naipaul: Naipaul the writer, Naipaul’s contribution to English literature and Naipaul’s place in English literature.

The novel, *An Area of Darkness* (1964) published after Naipaul’s first visit to India in 1962, is an exciting and traumatic encounter with the country. A casual reading of the book might give an impression that Naipaul went away from India with an overwhelming critical attitude towards the homeland and his ancestors. He had come to India with a sense of belonging and attempts to identify himself with Indian community. It is from here that he starts unfolding the history of his ancestors who left India as emigrants. Naipaul in *An Area of Darkness* confesses:

That had been a special journey for me: I had gone as a descendant of 19th century, indentured labour. Indian emigrants had been recruited from the 1860’s on mainly from the Eastern Gangetic plain, and then sent out dents in Calcutta to work five years in industries and on plantations in various part of the British Empire and even elsewhere. People like my ancestors had gone to Fiji in the Pacific, Mauritius... (AAOD 107-111)

Some of his later impressions of his second visit are recorded in his next book entitled *The Over Crowded Barracoon* (1972). The writer records his impression of modern India particularly in *A Second Visit* and *The Election in Ajmer*. The novel is an endorsement of the worst impression that a visitor might
have had. All that is unwanted and all that the media loves talking about, gains authenticity in these chapters. In a chapter entitled *The Last of Aryans* Naipaul appears to have shared many similarities of temperament and outlook with *Nirad C. Chaudhary*, in having passionate love for India tempered with a vehement refusal to allow that love to blind him to India’s very serious shortcomings.

Gandhian philosophy and Gandhians are closely analyzed vis-à-vis Indian society. He accepts that Gandhian thought - complete in itself, has failed to keep pace with industrialization and has also failed to establish an economy which is that of a modern industrialized state. Likewise in the chapter *The Election in Ajmer* projects the frightening political affairs of the state with consequence to the split in the Congress party in 1971. Naipaul underlines trivial personal issues being sorted out and battled out in the election under the guise of political commitment. There is the ridiculous personal posturing of the Gandhians, never rising above the roots of caste and clan, thereby ridiculing the vital Gandhian ethics.

With the death of Mahatma Gandhi, Gandhism has dwindled into the notion of service for its own sake, sacrifice for its own sake. For Gandhi, means led to a constructive political end. For instance, the fast unto death which he undertook on September 20, 1932, was a protest against a provision of the proposed new constitution for India which, among other things, granted the untouchables separate electorates, permitting them to elect untouchable representatives to the provincial legislatures. *Ved Mehta* in outlining Gandhi’s method as a constructive worker discusses the fact and its consequences in his book *Mahatma Gandhi and His Apostles*:
The Government, Gandhi followers, and the leaders of the untouchables were all surprised at his opposition to the provision, since, as a renowned champion of untouchables, he was expected to applaud favoured treatment for them. All three groups condemned his fast, which they felt would play into the hands of orthodox Hindus who wanted to perpetuate the old religious and social disabilities of the untouchables, Gandhi, however, saw in the constitutional provision a further British attempt to stoke minority discontent in order to keep India subjugated. (MGAHA 160-161)

In the Gandhians of today, the fast has been reduced to a private fad. The means are everything. The ‘Symbolics’ of action are worshipped. The election candidates deal with, ‘Symbolics’ and boast about them, and the split groups are united in their worship of the past. Hence the forged political alliance is confusing to party members and to voters alike. Naipaul’s despair is that India is in the hands of decadent Gandhi and politicians. Dispite his criticism of Gandhism, Naipaul praises it when praise is justified.

*The Over Crowded Barracoon* contains a large number of essays written between 1958 and 1972 in which Naipaul expresses his views on India, which have stirred up passion both for and against them. In these essays he gives a vision of India which appears rather dark and dismal, while in others he raises the problems that modern India has to face. However, in his later writings he has coloured them and presented them on a large canvas with more details. *The Over Crowded Barracoon* does take a step forward to another minor non-fiction. *India : A Wounded Civilization* (1977). In *The Return of Eva Paroh*, with the
killing in Trinidad Naipaul has expressed his impressions on India more sharply and vividly. *The Return of Eva Paroh* with killing in Trinidad is an artistic preoccupation with and surroundings of his parents who spent their live as emigrants, whereas *A Turn is the South Bears* testimony to the fact that Naipaul in order to present his impression and reactions willfully deviates from his natural instinct for fiction and ventures into the new technique of narration for non fiction novels. He tries to overplay his role. He presents the serious concerns of India as a motion with great intensity. But underlining these problematic areas he fails to suggest any solution to it.

In *Midnight’s Children* Salman Rushdie is highly autobiographical and exposes the tortures felt in Indian national consciousness due to sufferings of freedom struggle of India. To add to the tragedy of partition imposition of emergency did the worst damage. He comingles history from 1916 to 1980. But the major part of it hovers around Mrs. Indira Gandhi, who on one hand is portrayed as lady with iron fist and on the other hand a woman with bloated ego who did not even trust her own men. Salim Sinai embodies dispossession that prevailed during the rule of Mrs. Indira Gandhi. Surprisingly Rushdie assigns her the status of Bhadra Kali figure – a motherly status. The *Moors Last Sigh* is an allegory of the Jewish and Goan – Christian ancestry of Abraham Zogoiby, a very rich resident of Bombay and his wife, Aurora (Da Gama) Zogoiby. Their’s is the story of earning riches and name from their pepper business in Cochin. They rise to such heights that Zogoiby Corporation becomes the third richest enterprise in India. There are Oedipal mixing up in which Aurora Zogiby, her son Moreas (Moor) Zogoiby, and his mistress Uma Saraswati. There are gang wars,
wars among business houses, and there is involvement of underworld in it. In the novel one can see the colonial rise of fundamental groups between Hindus and Muslims that harp on communal notes. This has a damaging which has an overall impact on the society. It does not spare arts, sports, business and politics.

The *Moor’s Last Sigh* is disenchantment of a person from marginalized group, where after the apocalyptic events of Ayodhya the clouds of hatred are hovering all over. But he doesn’t portray to mingle the hatred of this marginalized group. Instead, he expresses his worry over the devastating state where the country is heading. Rushdie through his characters portray a point of view which is not dogmatic and has multicultural stance.

Rushdie takes the readers to the changes that have occurred in the past few years. The mosaic of various cultures has gone a radical change. He portrays the character of a mother who is in a more vibrant colourful, fiery manner as compared to that of 50s and 60s. The Moor says:

> The year I was born, Mehboob production all conquering movie Mother India – three years in the making, three hundred shooting days, in the top three all time mega grossing Bollywood flicks – hit the nation’s screens. Nobody who saw it ever forget that glutinous saga of pleasant heroinism, that super-slushy ode to uncrushability of village India made by the most cynical urbanites with your shovel over your shoulder and your strand of black hair tumbling forward over your brow! She became, until Indira-Mata supplanted her, the living mother – goddess of us all (TMLS 137).
This particular incident makes us believe that the Indian woman are idealized as a bride, mother, a congenital sufferer, and a compassionate person ready to maintain order in the society. This particular image gates more explicit in Mehboob Khan’s Hindi movie Mother India. Since ages writers and artists have moved their creativity around the ideal woman. The image of ideal woman was escalated to the image of Goddess Sita or Savitri in various myths. In contrast modern Indian women are rejecting and protesting against all the set codes which do not keep them in an archaic strait jacket. There is Aurora Zogoiby which learns that Abraham is fooling around with other ladies, retorts exactly in a similiar manner by entering into extra-marital relationships. Then there is Uma Saraswati who tries to cause a divide between the mother and the son but she doesn’t succeed - she is a Hindu fundamentalist. The presence of figures like Uma Saraswati can be catastrophic for the nation. However, after Ayodhya issue, Rushdie rests his hope on the marginalized and oppressed women of India. He is of the view that one evil cannot be rectified by another evil. Rushdie’s disillusionment with India seems to be very temporary as he keeps coming back using India as the backdrop in his novels. But then the scars of being rejected seem to be healing.

Salman Rushdie’s Midnight’s Children is often treated as an allegory moulding India and its history into an imaginative form. This novel is a serious commentary on the fading glory of India, which has bewildered people all over the world. Some feel that it crosses confines of nationalism, and acquires a universal dimension. It can also be said as a lamentation of Rushdie for the loss of paradise. This novel also reminds us of a nation which is trying to find its voice. An element of anxiety prevails throughout the novel, whether the
“Midnight’s Children,” both masters and victims of their time will retain their voice, or will it be lost in the whirlpool of multitudes. Rushdie intentionally uses Kashmir with contrasted images of bounteous beauty and the military trucks moving all around, which strangely says about the neglect of politicians and bureaucrat, who have converted this paradise into a dungeon hell. Rushdie remains very sensitive towards the growing fundamentalism in Kashmir, the paradise. The acquiring of a foreign degree by Adam Aziz doesn’t win admiration of Kashmiris, rather he finds their horizon narrowed down. The element of communal hatred troubles him to the extent that he speaks through a character Narlikar, who questions Ahmed Sinai, whether India deserved to be called as a secular state. Then there are electoral frauds, murders, conspiracies, and corruption. He calls Nehru as master conjurer, and this trait gets furthered by the arrival of Indira Gandhi. Rushdie seems to have taken a very serious note when he points out at the blunder of overlooking five year plan. Such a lapse brought devastation in this beautiful state. Rushdie is autobiographical in his tone when Salim Sinai realizes that he had been very passive towards national issues. He goes to the extent of begging apology. By writing “Midnight’s Children” he has tried to reconfigure the relationship between the self and the nation. Despite painting gloomy picture he ends his novel with an optimistic note, with its focus is on boy and the future.

Salman Rushdie is a writer whose sensibilities were nurtured. His insight of understanding cultures and peoples took shape in his initial fourteen years of stay in Bombay. A city with multicultural mosaic gave flight to his fantasy. Contrastingly he could never adapt to Karachi and its monotony, when he was
compelled to return in 1964. This was all the more felt as it was a comeback from an intellectually vibrant society (background) of Cambridge. However, what enchants him to come back to India is its habit nature that constitutes India. Rushdie assigns the richness of Indian Heritage to the multiplicity of cultures. In *The Moors Last Sigh* the arrival of the Moors, Catholics and Jews on the coast of Kerala provide ancestry to the hero. Rushdie repeatedly begins his novel by going back to the Indian history of fifteenth century. He believes that the encounter of India with the west through spice trade has brought cultures together, enriching Indian culture further. Rushdie remains obsessed with identifying himself with Bombay in *The Moor’s Last Sigh* he says: The city of his joys and sorrows (TMLS 161)

Rushdie further says: “I mushroomed into a huge urbane sprawl of a fellow, expanded without time for planning... How then could I have turned out to be anything but a mess”? (TMLS161-162)

In *The Moor’s Last Sigh*, the story begins in Cochin and ends in Spain, as the Moor forcibly leaves Bombay for its growing intolerance towards minorities.

Salman Rushdie prided in communal harmony of India. This he once again boasts of in the early part of *The Ground Beneath Her Feet*, but his disillusionment grows further to see the fault line widening. He remains nostalgic about India and feels that it is his home; although the most severe treatment is meted to him by banning. *The Satanic Verses*. In an interview with Vijay Kumar in March 10, 1983, he confesses that every visit to Bombay for him was like ‘homecoming’. Till 1983 he does not lament very much about the solidity of India as a nation. On being questioned by Vijay whether it gave him pain to see Bombay not the one of his childhood. In an interview with Vijay Kumar in the
English daily *The Hindu* he answers: “Yes, I did have those feelings. But that’s true of any place of one’s childhood, whether it is in the same country, or in a different one”. (An interview with Salman Rushdie by Vijay Kumar in *The Hindu* on March 1983)

Despite rejection by India for not permitting him entering into the country, he kept fighting a legal battle to get possession of his ancestral property at Solan, close to Simla. But then this sense of belongingness did not long much and was dejected of being rejected by India to the extent that he was denied to attend international literary summit at Jaipur in the year 2012. With every action of rejection by India his bafflement grew. It reached its height when his request to film *Midnight’s Children* was turned down. He then pledged that he would write next novel which would be about leaving India. He stuck to his words by writing *The Moor’s Last Sigh* in 1985.

The rejections could not cut Salman Rushdie’s umbilical cord with India. In *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* he returns with a greater sense of urgency to jolt the Indian masses suffering from amnesia, the amnesia of multiplicity. Although he keeps sounding pessimistic with the growing intolerance towards minorities, he finds that the entire ground is shaking. But then he does expose his idea of leaving India when he makes an observation somewhere in *The Ground Beneath Her Feet*: “The only people who see the whole picture are those who step out of the frame”. (TGBHF 28)

The Indian expatriate writer steps out of his frame work of Indian traditions and values and looks homeward from a newly acquired perspective which he would like to describe as objective and dispassionate. Salman Rushdie
describes the expatriate conflict as: “As fantasy of home and the fantasy of away”, the dream of roots, and the mirage of journey”. (TGBHF 55)

He is not totally uprooted or alienated himself from his native grounds, nor has he integrated himself into the culture of his immigration, and that is the real source of conflict or dichotomy of the expatriate’s view of India. Written on scale of epic, to be reminisced, proportions, *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* appears to be a story of love, death and rock ‘n’ roll. This novel exhibits skillfully crafted tale of higher though wholly earthly, love. Rushdie grippingly takes tantalizingly into an alternate reality and lets the power of the narrative wash over. The author while keeping it gritty adds a mystic colour, which makes it appear to be real and something from the other world.

The story is narrated by a journalistic photographer Rai, is the story of Vina Apsara and Ormus Cama, 20th century Rock stars and pop icons. Vina Apsara who dies in an earth quake, Rai, who was always behind her for years together as friend to both Vina and Ormaus narrate their thus everlasting love stories, in which he does not want his love story to be heard anywhere. He announces that Vina is the sign of humanity.

Rushdie schematically starts his novel with the last day of Vina’s life, and the image of love and death keeps looming over the novel. The novel narrates, a fifty year pop culture through the turbulent careers and the love story of Vina Apsara, named for Venus, an Ormus, referring to Kama, God of love. They are two entity drenched in love and miseries. Vina’s heartfelt voice invokes the musical genius in Ormus Cama that would take them to be reckoned in the world’s best rock band, and the story of a love full of complication. The two begin
their musical odyssey, wrapped in love, from Bombay to the U.K., to the U.S., and this rock ‘n’ roll brings them closer. And they necessarily abandon their roots but the only binding factor is music. There is a love that takes them to high, echelons with divinity wrapped all around and as if an incarnation of Kama and Rati. They live amidst conflict and separation, Ormus’ years of sworn chastity and Vina’s promiscuity. There is yet another love which remains in the background and that is of Rai who stands next to Ormus.

Rushdie has tried to mingle mythology and history with twentieth century pop culture. Rushdie seems to be nostalgic at moments when any mention about Bombay, makes him feel like as if he is floating in the amniotic flood of the past. Certainly Bombay is not the Bombay of 50’s and 60’s with diversity. People not just from all over India, but from minor countries have given it cosmopolitan culture, which he laments is fast vanishing.

Rushdie has always been concerned with giving a voice to the voiceless, with giving the power of description to disenfranchise and today, Rushdie is renowned for his brilliantlgy vicious political satire. However, on a deeper level, his books for transcend the ephemeral relevance of political satire. Rushdie aims to give the power of description to the migrants, a personage who is often described into a course to those around him, in Satanic Verses, a character with whom Rushdie can easily identify. Three of Rushdie’s most important works, Midnights Children, Shame and The Satanic Verses draw beauty of the theme of migration. By examining the life of migrant Rushdie explores the universal mystery of being born and the puzzle of which one is. One can understand Rushdie’s quest for identity by examining his life, his deliberately chosen style of prose, the
theme of double identity, divided selves and the shadow figures in his novels and in his personality and the benefits that many characters reap from being migrant.

It is important first to study Rushdie’s life because many of his life experiences tend to seep into his works. Salman Rushdie is the quintessential migrant and has gained a unique prospective from his rather unique life. Rushdie was born in India, schooled in England, forced by his parents to move to Pakistan and finally exiled back to Britain (Hamilton 95). Rushdie has never been truly accepted in and off his homes in England he was considered very foreign and exotic in Rugby Public School and subsequently at Cambridge. Back in India he was ridiculed by his peers for his perfect British accent and considered brainwashed and corrupted by the materialistic west. In Pakistan he is still considered an infidel and a blasphemer (Hamilton 96). In The Satanic Verses, Rushdie weaves one of his school day’s experiences into the plot of his novel. He recounts how on the first day of school he was given a Kipper for breakfast and not told how to eat it in The Satanic Verses this plight of his is expressed when he tells:

He sat there staring at it, not knowing where to begin. Then he cut into it, and got a mouthful of tiny bones and after extracting them all, another mouthful, more bones. His fellow pupils watched him suffer in silence; not one of them said, here, let me show you, you eat it in this way. It took him ninety minutes to eat the fish and he was not permitted to leave to rise from the table until it was done. By that time he was shaking, and if he had been able to cry he would have done so. Then the thought occurred to him that he had been taught a
valuable lesson. England was a peculiar tasting smoked fish full of spikes and bones, and nobody would even tell him how to eat it. He discovered that he was a bloody minded person. “I'll show them all”, “he swore”, “you see if I don’t”. The eaten kipper was his first victory, the first step on his conquest of England. (TSV 137)

Despite the trials Rushdie has to undergo, he maintains that there are distinct advantages to being a migrant for both the writer and the person as a whole. In a BBC taped interview Rushdie stated in BBC “Convrsation series”:

“To migrate is to experience deep changes and wrenches in the soil, but the migrant is not simply transformed by his act, he also transforms the new world, Migrants might well become mutants, but it is out of such hybridization that newness can emerge”. (BBCCS)

Rushdie explains in Imaginary Homelands that migrant writers have: “A double perspective; they are both insiders and outsiders in the world they describe”. (IH 19)

Rushdie also believes that: “Redescribing the world is a necessary first step to changing it”. (IH14)

In all three of his novels, this re-description is the prerogative of the migrant narrator. Migration is a painful but emancipating process in Satanic Verses he confesses: “To be reborn, first you have to die”. (TSV 6)

Finally, Rushdie explains that the literary migrant is able to: “choose his parents”. (IH 21) He goes on by including: “Cervantes, Kafka and Melville along with reams of Muslims and Hindu poets and Eastern oral myths”. (IH 21).
Rushdie admits that after leaving one’s homeland for a long time, one has a tendency to romanticize, over emphasize, or even forget completely, certain details. However, Rushdie also maintains that there is an advantage to this filtering of experience. In *Midnight’s Children*, Rushdie uses the metaphor of a movie screen to explain the perception of migrant:

“Suppose yourself in a large cinema, and gradually moving up... until your nose is almost pressed against the screen. Gradually, the star’s faces dissolves into dancing grain; tiny details assume grotesque proportions;... it becomes clear that the illusion itself is reality”. (MC 394)

Although migrants may not be able to determine the precise historical truth of their past, they are able to ferret out what is important in the shaping of their lives: This selective filtration of memory is made most apparent in *Midnight’s Children*. Much has been made by critics of the unreliable narration of the protagonist, Saleem, in this novel. Saleem gets numerous historical events and dates muddled up as he tries desperately to convince his readers that he is at the centre of India’s history. In an essay subsequent to the book, *Errata* Rushdie reveals that these mistakes were inserted on with purpose. He claims to have chosen to insert: remembered truth” rather than “Literal truth”. (E24)

In *Midnight Children* the theme of the blurred remembrance has been build upon that of the: “perforated sheet”. (MC 15) in the same novel.
At the beginning of the story, Saleem’s grandfather Aadam, falls in love with his future wife only by seeing her piece by piece through a perforated sheet. This theme of the fragmentation of vision recurs throughout the novel. Although his perception is somewhat unreliable in apprehending literal fact, the migrant is able to gain truth from his illusion. Migrants can find meaning in existence by situating themselves in history. Indeed, it is quite clear in Rushdie’s novel that migrants gain insight from their plight. Unfortunately, however such insight is often silenced and devalued. By successfully blending English in Indian voices, Rushdie manages to empower the migrant. In *Imaginary Homelands*, he writes: We can’t simply use the language the way the British did; it needs remaking for our own purposes. To conquer English may be to complete the process of making ourselves free. (IH 17)

In Rushdie’s fictionalized immigration office: A woman is by now mostly water buffaloe, businessman from Nigeria have sturdy tails, a group of holiday makers from Senegal… have been turned into slippery snakes… (TSV 92)

When asked how this can be, Saladin answers: They describe us… That’s all. They have the power of description and we succumb to the picture they create. (TSV 167-168)

In his books, Rushdie attempts to give a voice to the voiceless. The theme of multitude voices is pervasive in many of the Rushdie’s novels. In *The Satanic Verses*, Salman becomes a Radio celebrity and is known as the: Man of thousand voices and a voice. (TSV 60).
The psychic circumference of *Midnight’s Children* contains one thousand children with a plurality of different languages, cultures and beliefs. R.K. Dhawan in his book *Three Contemporary Novelists* says:

Rushdie’s most powerful tool for re-description, and hence, re-creation, is his magnificent prose. With his brilliant word plays and supreme command of the language, he fuses his Indian childhood with his Cambridge education. Rushdie recreates the English language by combining it with Indian colloquialism and Urdu and Hindi words. One of his techniques is to “(insert) Indian vernacular habits into flawless English intoned sentence…” (TCN 191)

An excellent example of this occurs in *Shame*: Barles we flung through the lattice; Oh, Madam! Where do you think he gets your grand clothes? From handicraft Emporia. (S 67)

Another technique is the literal translation of Indian vernacular idiom in *Shame*: May your grandparents urinate upon your pauper’s grave. (S 17)

Rushdie displays his erudition with the use of numerous literary allusions in his novels. By way of parody, *Midnight’s Children* contains the time: Telepathy set me apart; telecommunications dropped me down. (*MC 118*)

Third parodies the lines of T.S. Eliot’s, *The Wasteland*: Highbury bore me. Richmond and Kew, undid me (TW 292-293).

By combining the oral and literary traditions of east and west, Rushdie legitimates the migrant experience and allows the migrant the opportunity to: ...describe himself back out of corner. (IHL 16)
The duality, and eventual fusion, in Rushdie’s prose is mirrored in his migrant protagonists. The identity of the migrant is such that he is torn into opposing directions. In all of Rushdie’s novels, protagonists have alter egos, or what Jung would refer to as shadow figures. In *Midnight’s Children*, the introspective prophet, Salim, is paired with evil of Machiavillean Shiva. These two characters are switched at birth at the beginning of the novel and live with each other’s families for the rest of their childhood. In *Shame*, the army general Raja Haider is paired with the civilian politician Iskander Harappa: Haider and Harappa be my leading men, immigrant and native, godly and profane, military and civilian. (S 283)

In *The Satanic Verses*, the vulgar self important Gabriel Farishta, who believes he is the next prophet is paired with the stiffly anglophile Saladeen Chamcha. The wistful and hedonistic Gabriel annoys Saladeen to no end with his resolute Indianness:

Mera Joota Hai Japani\Yeh Patloon Inglistani\Sar Pe Lal Topi
Rusi\Phir Bhi Dill Hai Hindustani. (IHL 11) In which translates roughly as “O my shoes are Japanese\If you please\On my head, red Russian hat\My heart’s Indian for all that. (*TSV* 10)

Each of these paired characters is chained extricably to his alter ego throughout his life.

James Harrison in his Book *Salman Rushdie* says: The phenomenon of dual identity which is so prevalent in the migrant protagonists of Rushdie’s novels, also occurs in Rushdie’s own personality. There is a clear discrepancy between Rushdie, the angry, vitriolic, blasphemous, infant terrible, and Rushdie and introspective, sensitive and vulnerable migrant. (SR 105)
Jan Hamilton in his book *The First Life of Salman Rushdie* says: Also, Rushdie has always considered the writers role as antagonistic to that of the state. In 1986, however, he found himself backing the *Sandinistas* in the Nicaragua (TFLOS 107)

...which is yet another contradiction.

Despite the confusion and ambiguity that the migrant’s existence entails in Rushdie’s novels, it forces the character to search for self-identity, to search for the things that make him. This is the blessing of the migrant. Each of the migrant protagonists has a very special talent that allows him to clearly view himself and the world around him. *In The Midnight’s Children* Saleem is born on India’s Independence Day and hence has power of telepathy. *In the Satanic Verses*, Gabriel believes he is the prophet and is blessed with fore knowledge of future events. *In Shame*, although Omar complaints bitterly that he is a peripheral man. He is able to connect many different characters and becomes what Robertson Davies might term Fifth Business. Indeed Rushdie himself embarks on a journey of self discovery when he writes and the talent that propels him toward self knowledge is his brilliant creativity and skilful writing.

Many migrant writers seem to experience the same emancipation and insight that Rushdie does. *In Borderlands*, Gloria Anzaldua writes:

It is not a comfortable place to live in this place of contradictions. However, there have been compensations and certain joys. Living on borders and in margins, keeping in touch with one’s shifting and multiple identity and integrity, is like trying to swim in a new element, an ‘alien’ element. I have a sense that certain ‘faculties’ and dormant areas of consciousness are being activated and awakened. (Unpaginated preface)
Rushdie’s message does not apply solely to the literal migrant. It is universal in so far as we are all, in a way, migrants. In *Imaginary Homeland*, Rushdie writes:

> It may be argued that the past in a country from which we all have immigrated that its loss is part of our common humanity, which seems to me evidently true; but I suggest that the writer, who is out of country and even out of language may experience this loss in an intensified form… (IH 19)

This may enable him to speak properly and correctly on a subject of universal significance and appeal. Just like migrant protagonist in Rushdie’s works, all human beings have hidden sides to their personalities. One must all search for the roots and meaning of an existence, one must cling to ones roots for emotional empowerment.

In conclusion, *Shame, Midnight’s Children* and *The Satanic Verses*, all deal with the death the migrant dies, the agony of mutation, and the emancipation and self knowledge of rebirth. One can understand this unifying theme in Rushdie’s works by examining his life, his deliberately chosen style of peace, the theme of double identity in his novels and his personality, and the benefits that many characters reap from being migrants. In order to appreciate fully the works of Salman Rushdie, one must look into the past politics which surround his novels and also study Rushdie the artist. Only then can the reader develop an appreciation for his brilliance and examine his universal insights into the human experience. Anything less is denying his work the credit it deserves.
Unlike other writers, things with Bharati Mukherjee are slightly different. She hails from wealthy background. She left India to acquire academic and creative writing ground. It appears treasure hunt was not her motive initially. In her early childhood she shuttled between India and Britain (Europe). Infact it was only coincidental that on Sept. 1963 she met at Harvard, Clark Blaise, and in two weeks courtship they entered into matrimony. This transferred her into a split world, a transient with loyalties to two cultures. In a book review by Ashfaq Swapan of *Leave it to Me* it says:

Mukherjee’s works deals with the phenomenon of migration, the status of new immigrant to, and the feeling of alienation often experienced by expatriates, as well as an Indian women on their struggle. (A book review by Ashfaq Swapan of *Leave it to Me*, San Francisco [http://www.the week.com](http://www.the week.com)

Bharati Mukherjee’s earlier works, such as *The Tiger’s Daughter* and parts of *Days and Nights in Calcutta*, are attempts to find her identity in her Indian heritage. The novel, *The Tiger’s Daughter* is about a girl Tara who after spending many years abroad goes back to India, a country of deceit, disturbances and struggle. This has an autobiographical element a parallel with her visit with Clark Blaise in 1973. Her return to India led her to witness the chaos and utter poverty and tradition that lead women to dire state: “What is unforgivable is the lives that have been sacrificed to notions of property and obedience”. (DANC 217) Clark Blaise on coming to India was thrilled to witness the myth and culture of Bengal. The two impressions that he had was, one, he was aghast to see reality of India, and at the same time he was wonder struck.
This can be seen in this *Days and Nights in Calcutta*, a joint work of Clark Blaise and Bharati Mukherjee.

In *The Tiger’s Daughter* the Indian woman yearns for the security of home and comfort. She yearns for her own culture, which causes a struggle especially for those who are born in the third world, but are hard pressed to make their living in the west. Bharati Mukherjee in an interview by Jaydeep in internet on accepts:

“I want to write about others, who for economic, social, political, or psychological reasons have had to uproot themselves from a life that was predictable to one where you make up your own rules”. (file://ibmpc/linux/docs/Bharati Mukherjee Jayadeep’s notable writer.html)

All through her personal life Bharati Mukherjee feels that her diction has helped her shape her views of looking at the world. She had a lot of reverence for the strong family ties. She had zeal to learn more and, this ambition of hers took her to heights.

Bharati Mukherjee’s novel, *Jasmine* is based on a woman of strength who comes from a remote rural area she migrates to the United States as a very young widow who has to fulfill her late husband’s wishes. Her introduction to America is via a rapist, a Vietnam veteran who perhaps symbolizes American imperialism in the third world. Unlike other subdued Indian women *Jasmine* doesn’t commit ‘sati’. She takes up an attacking stance and takes her revenge by reincarnating as Kali, the Hindu Goddess of Destruction. While we might have sympathy with *Jasmine* who does all this for self preservation. The female
takes pride in becoming “Death Incarnate” (J 106) who directly or indirectly, has killed two men. Mukherjee says that she did not intend to write such a violent passage, what happens is that the character takes over the hold and create their own stories. She said in an interview to BBC world service:

“I didn’t know I was going to write it until I started that paragraph. Very often I don’t know what my character is going to do, I have a vague sense, when I start out with the first draft, and then when the writing is really going well I become so dead to the real world around me and so alive, alert to my character’s issue, I am so deeply inside the skin of my character, that the scenes writes themselves. I did not until I write the scene that Jasmine was going to do it”. (file\mpc\linux\doss\Her Story BBC World Service.html)

Mukherjee seems to be invoking Kali’s violence - an American feminist influence. Although Jasmine appears to be invoking violence of Hindu model, but it is not of Indian origin, rather it is of American origin, where violence is under the skin. This was not possible in India with societal restraints. She tries to liberate herself by committing murder in America. Jasmine adopts new identities from Jyoti in India to Jasmine at her husband’s place, Jazz or Jase as care-giver in New York, Jane when she lives with a man in Iowa in the Mid-West and finally Jasmine. With every identity she is a different person.

“Violence is very much connected with Diaspora and transplanting from one’s original culture into a new country, no matter for what reason we’ve come to the new country, implies or necessitates death of ones former self or mutilation of ones former self and so I
want to think that the physical violence in my novels are really metaphorical or artistic way of showing the psychic damage that takes place.” (file\mpc\linux\doss\Her Story BBC World Service.html)

On reading *Days and Nights in Calcutta*, one feels that all the energy is getting seated inside, the energy which can create and destroy, and which one acquires through arduous labour despite being oppressed. Dimple would have committed suicide had she stayed in Calcutta, but her emigration to America leads to question if she was happy or not, and many more things like progress. Instead of killing herself she kills the enemy.

Bharati Mukherjee is one of the writers who have added to the multi-ethnic literary mosaic of the United States. She is one of the writers who left India and reached America with an interval in Canada. In between one can see that she undergoes changes in such transitions. The *Holder of the World* moves silently through space and time. In geographical terms it moves between India and the United States and in historical terms between the seventeenth century and the modern times. It speaks of romantic relationships across different cultural barriers.

Bharati Mukherjee however kept using India in her fiction. She said that Calcutta would remain a habit with her. *Leave it to Me*, which is about a child, a hippie from California, who in search of love and peace makes a trip to India. This child meets a ‘guru’ who has the tendency of leaving behind a trail of used and abused women. He rapes and murders across the Indian subcontinent. This unwanted child Jasmine was adopted by an Italian-American family to be named
as Debby Martino. But the girl grows up with a sense of realization of being an obstacle to a world that is rushing towards mysterious destination. With the realization of the past and the parents, who abandoned her, she makes a journey in search of her “bio-mom”. The most significant thing about Mukherjee is about changing identities – In Jasmine the protagonist becomes Jase from Jyoti, reflecting change in attitudes of life. In, *Leave it to Me*, the names are changed from Baby Clear Water. Iris-Daughter, to Faustine to Debby to Devi. Finally Debby takes up a journey to self discovery that drives her from Schenectady to California. However, she comes across Jess who could be her Bio-mom. This gets terminated by a vengeance seeking man from India. The ending is boisterous. Mukherjee doesn’t deal with emotional sentiments and reunions. The only emotions that rule are hate and anger. Mukherjee makes us feel of using the theme of Kali, the goddess of rage or revenge; a giver of justice. But if Debby is Devi she doesn’t seem to coincide with the protagonist. Asserting herself as an American writer she ends up as the one of the Asian, American subcultures.

Bharati Mukherjee in *The Middleman and Other Stories* acts as an interlocutor who links two different worlds. She narrates stories from many angles. We see the presence of self within a large society. She tries to change the tone by assigning the role of adventurers and explorers who are a part of changing America. She does not keep them back as refuges or ostracized individuals. She feels contended when she shift the backdrop in her creative writing from India to America. She realized that in the third world she faced only despair and loss. Writing about India was like representing India without hope or a future.

Bharati Mukherjee remains an expatriate in her writing till she stayed in Canada. Here she remained focussed on her own country which had been left
behind. immigration makes her centered on the country which she entered as migrant. She moves from the expatriate status that dwells on the ex status of past, to the immigrant one where she enjoys her present in America. Bharati Mukherjee’s stay in Canada and its hostility to Indians, and lack of recognition leads to expatriation where she longs for the past, and sense of homelessness. There is also struggle of settling in unfriendly surroundings. Non acceptance by readers in Canada leads her to become Civil Rights activist in Canada to write about degenerating effect of racism on individuals.

Tara and Dimple are other two main characters of novels The Tiger’s Daughter and Wife. They are expatriates in their bearings, as well as in soul and spirit. They do not seem to be at ease with the native or the foreign culture. There is a constant conflict between the retention of Indian identity and the new immigrant one. Bharati Mukherjee remained influenced with Naipaul for quite some time and she confesses that there are traces of Naipaul in Days and Nights in Calcutta. The trauma of Naipaul is that he has to lead a life of exile and with a feeling of no country with which he can identity. She saw herself as an expatriate writer in her first novel, but the process of becoming an immigrant started when she visited India in 1973-74. This stay in India lead her to realize: “My years in India forced me to view myself more as migrant than an exile”. (DANC 284). Bharati Mukherjee had the realization of fluid identities and alienation too can be very well seen in her visit to India:

“In India, different perceptions of reality converge without embarrassing any one. My years in India had shown me that I did not discard my western education in order to retrieve the dim shape of my Indian one”. (DANIC 284)
She soon realized the limitations of the third world expatriate woman writer. In *Days and Nights in Calcutta* she changed her stance from expatriate to immigrant one. As she shifts from expatriation to immigration, it cannot be taken as her drift from nostalgia to indifference. This should be taken as denial of the past, contrastingly with having a firm grip on the past. It is a journey from alienation to reintegrated alienated sensibilities.

The first eight years that Bharati Mukherjee lost in Ballygunje in flat seething with relatives and friends where she had to not only share her affections with them but also equally important was her effort to retain her position as her father’s favorite daughter that she could do only by imitating her mother. Hence she could, mix clamour and family chats that she could concentrate on her being only at night where she would close the door upon them. In that small house with a large number of relatives. Obviously the only privacy that she enjoyed was her own bed cramped into a small room on which she piled her books. It was from these books that she gathered thought for her works and which moulded her being. In fact the life she spent in Ballygunje in some way or the other has crept into her novels. In *Jasmine*, Prakash lays his text book out in a row on bed. Bharati Mukherjee writes in *Days and Nights in Calcutta*: “I was taught to think of this episode as an assault on our desire to maintain slight separateness within the context of the joint family, rather than expressions of mischiefs by relatives”. (DANIC 188)

The sensitive writer here refers to the doing’s of the relatives, her cousins and the younger uncles who invaded into the room and spoilt the three sister’s toys and other things. Sometimes her wooden cabinet in which she had kept her
jewelry and small cash savings had been forced open, and some money missing. One can imagine that these normal everyday happenings left an indelible mark in her personality. In fact Bharati Mukherjee translated these thoughtless gestures into bigger forms for she would not permit anyone into the realms of her one self. She shut the doors of her affection to each and every one for she decided that if she had to retain her sanity, she had to be selective and that over populated flat, possessions like relationships could at best be fragile. She had firsthand experience of madness. Her own aunt was mentally derailed hence she had an intimate knowledge and horror of madness. It was imbibed into her being that madness in the family could cause the family considerable embarrassment and that it could ruin the future of the daughter of the family, hence another lesson that she taught herself was that family matters should be strictly guarded, and hence the iron curtain. She herself says: “To be a woman, I had learnt early enough, was to be a powerless victim, whose only escape was through self-inflicted wounds”. (DANIC 228).

There were enough stories round her, where the women were either abandoned from not bringing dowry. She had heard of them committing suicide by throwing themselves on fire, or railway tracks, or jumping into the wells. Bharati Mukherjee’s mother offered a simple solution to the miseries of woman, when she with the help of non-Brahmin youth secretly filled out application for her daughters to an anglicized Bengali school, and teaching them as well etiquette’s as were then desired by girls educated. Thus she had supervised their English reading, spelling and unwittingly engendered in Bharati’s fantasies about her British counterparts.
It was Bharati Mukharjee’s her father who rescued Bharati from the crowd of relatives. Because of certain circumstances in Pharmaceutical company that he and his partner, a Jewish immigrant had set up, he brought home their liberty and freedom and the tickets of small first class boat in which they set assail for London. Mr. Mukherjee soon tided and settled over the crisis with his partner but then decided to stay in London and worked for setting up his office there. Their first lessons as learners were in English language, which the girls quickly and skillfully registered for three years. The learners carried away most of the prized in the school. This was in 1947 and they stayed there for three years. Bharati passed her Eleven plus exam there. Mr. Mukherjee’s career graph shot up and so did the girls' academic records. Money was no problem. The feeling of alienation prompted Mr. Mukherjee to sail back to Calcutta in 1951. But he made it sure that they did not return to Ballygunje once again.

Between 1947 and 1951 Bharati basked comfortably in the glory of Bengali and English. She not only gained an equilibrium with both the languages but also soon started growing larger than size. She was not only learning the language but was also unconsciously imbibing the ideas as well. Here her nationality received a rude shock where the innocent childhood fantasies were eroded by that biased attitude which considered her as an ordinary brown girl in stiff uniform and scarred knees, who could not do cartwheels. She herself writes:

“The sense that I had of myself in Ballygunje, of being somehow superior to my cousins, was less destructive than this new sense of being a minority on account of my colour, I felt I was a shadow person because I was not white. (DANIC 182)
Bharati Muherjee and Ranu who were trying at Vassar arrived in America in 1963, once again made a futile attempt to get in the well, but then she was dismissed as an ordinary brown person. Overexerting herself, she felt isolated, separate in the vastness of this under populated country, Canada. Un-tempered and un-molested nature of Canada gave her creeps. She wrongly told herself that she would never make friends there for she was to make them nowhere:

“In Canada I am both too visible and too invisible, I am brown. I cannot disappear in a rush-hour Montreal crowd. The media had made me self conscious about racism. I detect arrogance in slow footedness of sales clerks. At lunch, in the faculty club, I am not charmed, when colleagues compliment me for not having a sign song account. I am tired of being exotic, being complimented for qualities of voice, education, bearing, appearance that are not extraordinary”. (IDANIC 169)

The first ten years of her marriage held Bharati in a sense of shock and utter despair for she was in her husband’s country, Canada. She realized that she was someone who did not matter to the natives there. So she thought of herself, just an expatriate Bengali who is permanently led herself to in a catch - North America. Probably this was the consequence of her yearning to build up her future. She suffered tremendous loneliness – the loneliness she could not keep to herself or the cup was so full that loneliness found its way through pen in her first novel The Tigers Daughter (1972). So far she had herself not thought of the force of the lingering feeling to leave aside the acknowledging part of it. She was still negotiating between two lands – the land of her roots and the land of her
husband that she was trying to strike a balance between the past and the present and in doing so she was trying to mould her own future. *The Tiger’s Daughter* is and for that matter any writing by Bharati Mukherjee shaped by memory where nostalgia is woven into fabric. She pined for a class and culture which she of her own choice had relinquished. Her maiden novel is therefore rightly called the expression of expatriate consciousness.

As with Naipaul, Bharati Mukherjee also exhibited typical Indian features which made her stand apart. Though she could not make her presence felt as a Canadian writer, she too was painfully taken as a citizen of foreign origin. A quick review at the Canadian literary environment would give a clear picture of her helplessness as it had its own priorities and preferences which were too much local in nature, moreover voicing nationalism, she was cut off from the problems of the other part of the world, and in a way to became hostile to the writers of foreign origin. As Bharati Mukherjee had nothing to offer to the Canadians other than Indian sensibilities and to add to it the publisher was of American origin, tragically she could not stir the emotions and interest of Canadian writers and readers. For Bharati Mukherjee it was tremendous battle to make her gain identity as she was recognized as wife of an eminent Canadian writer who ventured out in the area of writing in Bengali. It was a tardy task for her to pave her way into minds and hearts of Canadians, as a Canadian of Indian origin that could vehemently attack the local racism and thus could make Brown power gain importance. However, penning down about Montreal was an impossible task, as to writing movingly about it was to have had felt passionately about it. The very fact that she was neither French nor English made her task impossible. Montreal was rather tiring for her. The most
contradictory fact about her was that she tried to write in a language that was not hers. The land in which she lived was of a foreign one and strikingly her works were to be published and read in a country like U.S.A. She could be looked as an individual with Indian ground. Although she wore the appearance of it, she was quite nervous about exposing Indian psyche, as her affixation with English language had distanced her from the Indian sensibilities.

Living in missionary disallowed her to think of the stories back in India, the stories of multi-headed serpents and other Gods. She was pinned down to hear and read about Dead Sea in which the character of *New Testament* ventured out in Dead Sea. This there was locating than on the blank maps of Asia Minor. She was trained to talk and praise Michelangelo, whether spontaneously or forced out of compulsion. She had to sing in chorous. The picture that she drew of stones carvings in temples, sea was the ones that did not match with real ones and was hard to locate it on map.

The world created by the recital of two ancient stories from the Puranas by her grandmother began to recede but they didn’t vanish completely. They stayed with her. Like every mind Bharati Mukherjee’s mind too was no more than an instrument of change. Slightly and treacherously it began to isolate itself from real snakes and real Gods. It learnt to dissemble and please. This was a major consequence of her long training in the west. She became exquisitely self conscious. The period between 1972 and 1973’s was marked by traumatic experience where the intensity of the accidents forced her to think of coming back to India and she felt that in India she would possibly be in the better control of the destiny. Canada had held herself absorbed and helpless. Bharati Mukherjee says:
“I was going to India, then, because I thought of myself as a careless person as a callous continent. In India I would return the precautions taken by a people fluent in self protection. I was going because I had discovered that while changing citizenship is easy, swapping cultures in not”. (DANIC 169)

after a decade’s stay at Canada, Bharati Mukharjee thought she was eventually returning to her native land in 1973. But destiny held something different for her. In April 1974 she and her husband went to Calcutta with full of expectation and hope from the native land and stayed as resident guests at Ramkrishna Mission where they received a rule shock, for India was no longer the India of their dreams, and the India of Bharati Mukherjee’s past. She found that they were less innocent than the one’s she remembered. And thus Day and Nights in Calcutta a collaborated journal of their visit to Calcutta resulted. It was the couple’s mixed or varied reactions to what they saw and experienced there. James Sloan Allen in the Saturday Review says that :

Blaise at first was aghast by the dirt and filth scattered all around; this frightened his so much that he started numbering his sensibilities. It is in this state of utter shock that he suddenly discovered the magic that unfolded reality and myth and humbled Bengali life through a love of Culture. And it is this excitement that throb the warmth of having discovered magic in his journal. (SR)

Blaise undergoes drastic transformation whereby establishing strong affinity with anything and everything that at the same decrying that tropical giant called the “West”. He punctures the inflated ego of the West. The couple as
described earlier had mixed or varied reactions. Bharati by contrast, becomes angry and sad. She is unable to free the cudgel of oppression placed on the shoulders of women in the name of traditions. She was unable to come to terms with the fear and oppression that was instilled in the mindset of Indian women. This couple had totally different point of views. Bharati on one hand saw Indians in its totality whereby smaller lapses didn’t matter. But Bharati’s view like that of Naipaul’s is guard and focused. She focuses on individuals and a class in particular. It is a hate and love relationship probably growing out of the fact that distance and time away from homeland had forced her to glamorize an Indian way of life and Indian thinking which was removed from reality. Facing reality she could not hide disgust at her own flaw. She refuses to forgive though she is sympathetic.

Bharati Mukherjee stands on a different pedestal where her life can be categorized with three distinct phases – India, Canada and America. Infact the sequence of the three countries could stand better if it were Canada, India and America. Thus India acts as fulcrum balancing her life in Canada and America. She is keener on establishing herself as an American emigrant with no attempt to underline as an Expatriate in Canada. Once having gained her pedestal as an American Emigrant that she began to delve into her and discover her being the woman in her. She eventually started settling in America and subsequently began her self-evaluation as a woman, as a writer. It was for self preservation that she had decided to migrate to the United States, for Canada held her creativity in captivity. Once in America she blossoms, like a seismometer recorded the slightest tremour that traversed through society ushering minor
changes she immediately accepted America and merged with the people there.
She also realized that it had welcomed with open arms. Not only she as a
person was accepted but Americans took-up to reading her enthusiastically.
The kinship between America and Bharati Mukherjee was found by their similar
sensitivity levels. Bharati Mukherjee now-that she had strucked the ground
began writing. She wrote for the Americans. The depiction of India in Bharati
Mukharjee’s novels on one hand is the recessive of her being, that goes in the
making of a person naturally as he or she gains on years. Part of India in her
novels is nostalgia spurt by Canadian indifference yet another part of it is that
India which annoys her and frustrates her. Lastly there is yet another India that
she depicts to the American readers. Hence if one has to have the complete
India of Bharati Mukherjee the jigsaw puzzle has to be solved. Each piece for
fitting perfectly with the other, yet the pattern is not distinct for each is hued and
marked by her earlier experiences.

Gita Mehta in her journey of becoming an expatriate remains unchanged
as her nostalgia for the country keeps surfacing in her works. She does not
hesitate once in admitting it. Some of her novels are coincidentally written but
obviously with backdrop of India. *Karma Cola Marketing the Mystic East:
Marketing the Mystic East* was an outcome of an episode in a cocktail party
where she was grabbed by her arm by someone curious to know about Karma
and the mystic heritage of India. She announced that she would be telling what
Karma is all about. And her answer was that Karma isn’t what it’s cracked to be.
To this she was asked to write down on Karma.
She knew that, even today, the life of a common Indian is influenced by beliefs like theory of Karma. The values that inspired Indians were spiritual rather than material. Infact many believe that spirituality forms the basics of Indian tradition. It is basically tying up of spirit in the bonds of love. This first novel is a series of interconnected essays. It builds up Mehta’s own construct of Indian mysticism. She satirically weaves a story of foreigners gushing to India to acquiring Karmic powers. This book is an admix of humour and wit. She has used of many others in writing this book. The article in English daily The Hindu, dated 21 September 1994 by R. Ravi Kumar who commented on *Karma Cola Marketing the Mystic East* :

“There is a Madison Avenue tongue in cheekiness about Gita Mehta’s titles. You have got to give it to her the girl who murmured a mutated mantra over the spiritually thirsty hordes flooding the sub-continent in restless streams of ochre and orange in the throes of *Karma Cola Marketing the Mystic East.*” (TH)

Probably Gita Mehta views this western new nomade as global escapists, swarming for spiritual hinger. She exposes the exploitation by gurus and ashrams in India. It is a savage exploitation that tear apart pilgrims in the name of tradition. It is a satire on those who rush to India in search of spiritual quest.

Gita Mehta confesses in an interview by Vishwanathan in Illustrated Weekly of India says :
“It was the product of my own experiences. I was at University where Ginsberg arrived and there was the business of Dharnas, Bunds. And I came back from university when John Lennon and Beatles hit India. I had been watching this whole caravan arrive and also the anticipation of India who said, at last the west is coming to us; at last the rock n roll show is on. The perplexed spiritual seekers who came from India have been discerned with worry. The westerners wanted instant solution where as the Indians were crazy after Levi’s, ghetto blasters and to zip around the car”. (TIWOI 38)

It is cultural shock for both. In fact it is cultural collision of east-west, the gurus who are materialistic. However there is no such significant under-current of nostalgia or alienation. She objectively portrays India with some human concern. The cultural decay that: “Nirvana for $100 a day”. (KCMTMME 107)

But in her A River Sutra which was published some 14 years after her first work has all the answers for questions of the life and death. Unlike gurus of Karma Cola Marketing the Mystic East, the gurus are highly knowledgeable, intelligent and admirable, lovable who have had understood the truth. They are illumined and tell that one has not to run after god for the sake of religion as it is in the human heart. The outward manifestations are the ragas. Tariq Mia, Master Mohan and Professor Shankar have found the meaning of life in love. According to them it is Karma. It solves all problems if it is an important psychic constituent.

Gita Mehta’s first novel Raj is an advancement of a young woman who is born into nativity which is under the British Raj. It gives a picture of the freedom
struggle. This novel has hardly anything that can cause concern in the minds of high-cultural society. She paints elegant pictures of life under the British from Indian perspective and her language is elegant. However she doesn’t try to display her bias nor does she provoke the readers to imbibe one. Moreover, she gives historical facts without imposing her political opinion on the readers to let them form their own. The novel Raj also is based upon the strength of character of the female protagonist. One thing which Gita Mehta seems to be obsessed is with is the richness of Indian culture which she time and again uses it either objectively or reflectively.