Chapter II

Theme of Racism in Works of Neil Bissoondath

2.1 ‘Racism’ a prominent aspect of Bissoondath’s works

Canada legitimately approved the policy of multiculturalism in 1971 and naturally, due to this immigration patterns have altered. Due to this factor English Canadians visage a dispute in melding diverse cultures into a unity. The strength of immigrants has enlarged and the major source has shifted from Europe to Asia, Africa and their diasporas. However, from the observations of writers on multiculturalism suggest that admirable ideal of multiculturalism has neither prevented racism nor helped English Canadians to establish an identity. Public opinion polls in Canada indicate racism may be rising. Some of the people in these kinds of poll believe that the presence of people from different races made Canada a better country. A survey in 1985 believed racism is a disturbing factor amongst Canadians especially in Montreal, Edmonton and Vancouver. People having fear that Canada’s primarily Anglo-Saxon and European culture would be gulped down by the increased immigration from Third World countries.

Racism, the word itself gives rise to a multiciplity of reactions. Racism can be alleged and interpreted in numerous ways as people certainly intermingle with one another in a pluralist society. Neil Bissoondath as a Canadian or Indo-Caribbean obviously has experienced intercultural contacts, more or less pleasant one that is, as he lived his
“Canadian experiences”. He provides us his vision of the matter in the essay *I’m Not Racist But...*

In his brief essay, author has an undeviating way of advising his readers to be cautious with use of the term “racism” since many people use it for practically any incident encompassing people of different colour without really knowing what it involves. When some person calls it “as Canadian as maple syrup”, Bissoondath reverts by saying that it is also “as American apple pie, as Chinese as chow mein [...]” and so on. The person has to be acquainted with the fact that it is intentionally the gloomy side of human nature and using obnoxious racist terms during an argument regrettably turns into outmost convenience while it appears to call out whatever is most perceptibly distinct about a person [in majority cases, colour]. Usually, offensive words do not always come from racial hatred. They merely appear from unawareness. When persons candidly state “I’m not racist but...”, and strictly consider they are not, they noticeably portray a lack of experience and render themselves to justifiable indictments. In addition, suppose these charges in fact appear, they would be positioned in total perplexity as disclosing one’s own misapprehension is complicated or not easy.

Bissoondath affirms that, though true racism is real, it is a “rare commodity”. Pure racial hatred is anchored in intentional ignorance and consoling consent of stereotypes. Having conscious or aware about it, it is accountability of every one of us to pose the accurate questions and to resist against stereotypes. According to Bissoondath, no government’s multicultural programmes will change anything. Every one of us has to be cynical about
those who take gain out of playing racism’s victims and those who need to feel they are the suppliers of it. Primarily, one has to be alert or cautious not to generate a racial problem while trying to address it. To exemplify this, Bissoondath reminds of the diverse associations of Black Nurses, Black Artists, etc. and asks how the person would consider if there was a “White Nurse Association”. In a nutshell, the person should not neglect or abuse the word itself since “racism” for one is also “racism” for others.

Here, Bissoondath seems to remind us that as racism is a common reaction for anyone of us, regardless of our skin colour or cultural orientation, it is essential to consider our own responses to it and remember that “racism for one is racism for others”. Bissoondath does not characterize racism exclusively to this country.

2.2 Is it applicable to all his works?

Bissoondath declares an unhyphenated Canadian identity and affirms the validity of universal values, however like his uncle V S Naipaul, he is indicted with anti-black prejudice and siding with oppressor. Bissoondath renounces regarding his roots in Trinidad, which he long looked forward to leaving, a stance or outlook his fiction approves. In A Casual Brutality, author’s first novel, the Riots on Casaquemada on a very candid note is remembrance of 1970 race riots in Trinidad. The protagonist of the novel is able to fly back to Canada; however, Bissoondath was then just 15 years and intensely recollects the fear of riots and army rebellion. In his short story Dancing he indicates that the sour repercussion of colonization must also be faced in Toronto. There, a dreadful
altercation happens between partying West Indians and a Complaining White neighbour, whom they humiliate. The narrator, Sheila, a young black woman who has just arrived from Trinidad, is so frustrated that she craves to go back, however her brother reprimand her not to think on it and believes they deserve every right to be in the country and people are obliged by them. The racist conduct in Dancing is West Indian, and Bissoondath mentions it as exhibiting that “not only whites are racist”. (Srivastava 1990, p.319)

Nourbese Philip while assessing A Casual Brutality bothers him for creating “Immoral fiction” that ponders to “white supremacists” and for his “Social amnesia” which masks the brutal colonial history that made the Caribbean islands what they are (Bissoondath 1988, p.196). In the novel Bissoondath reviews his viewpoint that continuing “to blame the colonial powers... is not good enough any more... You must start looking inside yourself, at yourself. And until people are prepared to do that nothing will change.” (Lakhani 1993 p.13) Philip, by visualizing the works of Bissoondath digs out only what offends her. However, when Bissoondath was interviewed for other solitudes, he comments, “I’m fearful of people overreacting: Screaming racism simply because the two people involved happen to be of different races or different colours. Whenever there’s a problem in Toronto between the police and a black man, it’s always claimed to be racism.” (Srivastava 1990, p.315).

The answer to the question is Racism is a prominent aspect to almost all works of Neil Bissoondath.
2.3 Review of Bissoondath’s works in the light of Problem of Identity and Racism

Neil Bissoondath regarding his identity admits that he is neither Indian nor Carribbean, about his hyphenated identity he considers himself simply as Canadian. *A Casual Brutality* (1988) happens to be Bissoondath’s first novel, set upon the fictive Caribbean island entitled as Casaquemada [Spanish for Burnt house] which closely resembles Trinidad. Readers are acquainted to the book in flashbacks and flash-forwards which enable them to learn about circumstances that have compelled Raj to leave the island as well as his present life on the island as a doctor and past life, first as an island child, then a student’s life in Canada including the traditional life of Indian immigrants on the island. Bissoondath in this novel tempts the reader to accompany his narrator Dr. Raj Ramsingh into the corrupt and violent world of Casaquemada. Raj finishes his medical study in Canada, a place where he meets his life partner – Janet Linda and later on becomes a father of a son – Rohan, and revisits his native land, partially for materialist and partially for idealist reasons. He again gets familiar with that culture in which he grew up, in other terms he is compelled to face that culture to which he wanted to remain aloof. When Raj at an early age left his homeland, Casaquemada was enriched with an oil boom, the economy was safe and very few people were tensed about their future, however it turned into disaster at the time of Raj’s arrival. Raj’s agitation on Casaquemada turns to be farsighted, since his stay in the Caribbean costs him upheaval or devastation terminating with the sad demises of his wife and son. The representation of Casaquemada during the whole course of novel is presented as deeply disturbing. Its portrayal is one of “decay and
disintegration, and the recurrent images in the novel are those of brutality, insensitivity, forlornness and annihilation”. (Birbalsingh 1988 p.163) Here, through the character of Raj, author attempts to provide glimpse into his evaluation of difference and sameness. Bissoondath’s conduct of ethnicity and community difference provides this novel a controversial text resembling with *The Innocence of Age*.

At the beginning what follows is that Raj’s perspective of Caribbean nature will be reviewed as an example of his detachment from his country of origins. His perception of nature, that ultimately exhibits his cultural postulations, uncovers its objectification in an analysis of the political situation, which will be evaluated consequently. For Bissoondath and his alter ego Raj Ramsingh Caribbean/ Casaquemadan society befalls guilty of inflicting a collective identity on the individual. It eliminates deviating opinions or individual transgressions discursively or punishes them by inflicting violence.

Narration of the story from the standpoint of a character, who is in the procedure of changing a Casaquemadan ethnicity for a Canadian one, author defines his perspective regarding arbitrariness, and in fact arrogance, of an obsession with community difference. From the endeavour to empower, his character with intricacy, Neil Bissoondath comes across that he must also write back to the former colonized rather than to the former colonizers exclusively. What succeeds Bissoondath as a postcolonial writer is his effort to come to terms with the interrupting experiences of colonialism and its consequences. Bissoondath in his narratives is keen in dealing with his characters and how they deal with rather than setting against political and historical events. From Raj’s perspective,
Caribbean nature is perpetually cultivating but never changing, a truth that preoccupies Raj since it has importance for his analysis of the stasis and sluggishness of the political scenario on Casaquemada in general. The nature of Canadian and Casaquemada are dynamic. However, Canada possesses an organic nature, where as Casaquemadan nature is demonic.

Bissoondath has represented Casaquemada as an island deprived of hope in the context of stars and stargazing. These things appear conventional signs of transcendence and hope as the craving for it, in *A Casual Brutality* hope is forbided or discarded for Raj and his family. Asha substantiates that the future for Raj, Jan and Rohan is dreary. The intuition of Asha for Raj’s family is that nature is not only indifferent to their fate but is out to harm them. It is essential to admit that whereas both the lack of stars and threat of lightening on the Caribbean island of Casaquemada are bestowed with connotation for the individual, both finally also connected to the public sphere, since it is the latter that brings the former. Since the political situation is weakening to offer its population hope and security, life on Casaquemada appears disheartening and governed by fatal dangers. So, it appears quite appropriate to depict the plot of the novel metaphorically in this way: death of Jan and Rohan is concerned with [the darkness of] a post colonialism that is nothing but a light at the end of the tunnel [of colonialism]. Raj, Kayso and Jan are to be blamed since they are not able to evade this darkness in the first place: “You tell me, Raj, What the hell are [sic] you doing here? Why the hell did you come here? Didn’t anyone ever tell you the new motto of the place – If you’re out, stay out; if you’re in, get out?”
(Bissoondath 1988, p.209) On a tragic note the temperament of Raj averts him from recognizing the signs of warning. He is not insightful enough to follow the understated traces that his surroundings have provided for an exact evaluation of the situation.

With the misfortune of death of Raj’s wife and son, he alludes to T S Eliot’s famous poem *The Hollow Men* with reference to Casaquemada’s political and existential crisis. Partly covered modernity and post-coloniality in a way conceptualized as wastelands by Eliot and Bissoondath respectively. Apart from it, the common aspect, both the hollow men of modernity and the hollow men created with reference to the postcolonial experience on Casaquemada, share the fact that they do not seem to expect a grand finale at the end of the world. From the Biblical sense the last part of the hollow men in Eliot’s poem is not destructive revelation about the end of world since it is unable to provide the hope [of resurrection] that world collapse also required, Bissoondath foresees a source of hope for Raj in the prospect of a new beginning, though such a new beginning is not to be predicted on Casaquemada. Since Casaquemada is perceived as a place that depletes the matter of essence, hope for Raj can only rest on migration. With the purpose to live, but also to keep its essence as a human being, he has to discard his old civilization and escape. At the end of novel Raj provides a reason or a way to his feelings: “I go like my forebears, to the future, to the challenge that lies elsewhere of turning nothing into something, far from the casual brutality of collapse, far from the ruins of failure, across thousands of miles of ocean.” (Bissoondath 1988, p.378) By exhibiting characteristics of the postcolonial migrant as theoretically mentioned by Bhabha and others, Raj leaves
with a positive approach which even the denial of looking for a permanent home can come true, one cannot get away with it. Canada is a place where lucidity of thought is possible, whereas Caribbean island seems a deceptive place. In a complete contrast to Canada, the Caribbean is a place where illusions obtain the status of facts and certainties become ambiguous. The unpredictability of perception is so persistent on Casaquemada that reality becomes unreliable. The outcomes of a distortion of reality are disorientation, confusion and instability, which can be realised at many levels.

Bissoondath brings on the ancient concept with the symbol of air in context of society and politics. The air in Casaquemada is confining whereas Canada signifies freedom. To be specific, Canada assures freedom to the individual, a notion intimated by a liberal-humanist thinking. On metaphorical level, Canada allows the individual to breathe, Casaquemada’s tyrannical or suppressive ambience is smothering. The basic fundamental right, i.e. human rights, are not identified, as it is evident in the case of Kayso. Kayso’s arrival in Casaquemada is intimated or considered as a sense of responsibility to his homeland. This particular sense of commitment for community is generated through liberal education as a lawyer in Canada. Although to fight for the right of equal justice and appealing for human rights in court seem to be moralizing standpoint, which is not considered appreciative on Casaquemada. Kayso becomes a casualty of his own illusions about Casaquemada. His apparition of modification is disillusioned in Caribbean land as not keen for betterment or change. It appears as if human rights and Casaquemada appear colliding with two different worlds. Kayso’s humanism is awfully the probabilities in
context of Casaquemada’s greed and corruption. The important aspect, although, is in
dispute with Casaquemada’s tribalism. For, paradoxically, it is specifically a kind of
commitment Madera insists from Raj that is behind the murder of Kayso.

From the metaphorical perspective, *A Casual Brutality* passes indirectly refers to the
political, social and cultural crisis on Casaquemada in the context of illness and disease.
By depicting the symbolic aspect of society as body, author portrays Caribbean society a
kind of creature suffering from an illness which is almost incurable. As the name of city
of Salmonella suggests, the body politic in author’s novel is sick and in requirement of
treatment or cure. Since the society in general endures or undergoes from structural
issues, the individual residing in such society develops into flat sickness. The place and
environment appear chiefly unfavourable to psychological fitness or strength and that is
exemplified in case of Surein having Paranoia, Jan and Raj expand or build up
claustrophobia. Surein’s paranoia indicates a problem of identity formation. Surein is
such a weak persona to allot with a discriminatory outlook of an Other; he requires an
enemy against whom he can raise an adequate sense of self. In this context, Othering
happens to be a reimbursement for deficiencies or limitations of his personality.
Claustrophobia is one more significant indication of sickness or ailment of the body of
politic. Besides, claustrophobia also relates to the absence of rest in a country that
compels, steady alertness and caution. The consideration of a society that turns out to
scare the individual with its problems (paranoia) confirms as alarming as the
consideration of a society that allows no space to withdraw to [claustrophobia].
It cannot be considered mere coincidence that Bissoondath has represented Raj as a doctor. Being a doctor, the power to sure illnesses and diseases of body politic is limited. The political predicament of Casaquemada is critical. As Raj advocates that there happens to be only one remedy of cure is allowing the illness or ailment to run its track and hold the belief that body politic to cure itself. Grappler’s verdict or judgement indicates a therapy more radical. To his thinking, Casaquemada is rotten, corrupt and self-deceptive. It is a place not multicultural by heart but merely celebrates the “carnival of intolerance” (Bissoondath 1988, p.201). From Grappler’s perspective, Casaquemadans are reluctant to convey sacrifices for their country. Grappler blames Casaquemadans for immaturity and believes they neglect hard work and have not understood to accept criticism.

In the novel Raj comes across with past also involves an encounter with his former schoolmate, Doug Madera, who has not gone outside or elsewhere for his career. The assemblage of Raj – Madera is not only suggestive of two diverse traditions or customs in the world, however is of vital significance for an ample perceptive of Bissoondath’s text, too, since the fundamental clash between Raj (as the hero) and Madera (as the opponent) is also essential concern of the novel as a whole. Casaquemada as a society or civilization depicted as racialist and racist. Caribbeans from or of African – American, East Indian and European fall combine in a way enjoying of the social condition at large. From metaphorical angle, Casa-quemada indicates that the manner of a multicultural society is set on fire. One person accountable for burning down the house, i.e. for failure of
multiculturalism on Casaquemada, is Surein who wants “to do something to keep the niggers out”. (Bissoondath 1988, p.81) Another character in this prospect is Madera for whom racial difference is a fundamental aspect in shaping one’s cultural identity. Raj, the complete contrast, cannot neglect the humanist values underlying his professional training as a doctor. From medical perspective where on man admits no crucial disparity between diverse races and ethnicities, Raj denies any adherence to a group. His inclination to make lives safe completely differs and contrasts with Madera, who once tortured pupils as a teenager and from that phase is involved in organized killings. For Raj, the scheme of novel develops into or turns out to be in employing to know himself. Madera’s faults are irreversible since he does not consider them as faults as such. While Raj endures an expansion as character, Madera stays on with the absurd and militant sense of violence. The path of the novel’s dispute permits or allocates for the conclusion that this is so because of the uncomplicated motive that for him violence seems a good and essential thing and not renowned as unscrupulous. Whereas Raj’s mistakes have ramifications on his family unintentionally, Madera deliberately hurts other people. His hostility against others is defensible or reasonable or indicated under the title of a community ideology extremely at probabilities with Raj’s humanism. It is captivatingly adequate that both Raj and Madera have crucial ideas regarding the connection of the individual and the community. Put it concisely, Madera believes there is a secure connection between the individual and the community into which he took birth. For Madera, group identity overrules personal identity, whereas Raj denies with this argument. For Raj, growing up together does into instinctively formulates Madera and
him as friends, so their similar place of birth does not involuntarily lead to the same community loyalty. On the effect level, Raj’s denial of racial loyalty considered in a reshuffling of self-other dichotomies. In his essential deprecation or condemnation of the individual under the title of a necessary idea of community belonging, Madera seems the other for Raj. Madera’s rejection of the individual counteracts to Raj’s belief of a human essence overriding community identity as well as difference between communities. In spite of the reality that Madera experiences underlying and victim of colonialism, post-colonialism and neo-colonialism but without a doubt from Raj’s perspective he happens to be a suppressor copying the old in the use of his cunningness. Raj believes changing relationships or connections is not immoral since an individual commits to his own self and not to a group. Whereas the concept of betrayal according to Raj is betrayal of the individual not of community. Here one can visualise Raj’s approach as that of a liberal humanism, while Doug Madera’s thinking is communitarian, or rather totalitarian who believe in collectivity of community and welfare of the group. From this context, individual seems irrelevant. It is essential not to neglect the fact that both Raj and Madera characterize optimist positions however implication in their own ways do vary contrastingly or greatly. Since Madera’s idea or visualization violates on others and demands lives, Espinet being a case in point. In complete contrast, Raj’s condition signifies morally acceptable solution or option.

Raj’s family drives or functions with a myth of racial spotlessness. Raj resists with his grandmother and her panic of miscegenation by marrying a white woman. The path of
miserable marriage of Jan and Raj appears to push Grandma’s segregationist credo, however their marital catastrophe is not disguised criticism focused against racial intermarriage. The novel does not foster the belief that their different racial backgrounds have anything to connect with their marital problems. In fact, Bissoondath’s novel disagrees that as marriages do not work according to their pact because of the racial characteristics of the partners, so marriages do not involuntarily be unsuccessful when member of diverse races marry. On a nonfigurative level of surface, race stops to be of significance as a problem as well as a solution, what matters is the individual not community. Jan and Raj visages a miserable marriage since they reject to identify the absence of communication that defies their relationship. As individuals, they are liable for their miseries, while only they as individuals could have sorted out them. An equivalent case can be raised for Raj and his grandmother’s long-time servant Wayne. As the example of Raj and Jan indicates how individual difference can be considered more of an obstacle than racial/community difference, in case of Raj and Wayne it displays how compassion between members of different races can elide the difference of community. The fact that Wayne helps Raj defend his property at the dawn of the coup seems to be indicative of an interracial understanding between East Indians and African-Americans (Malak 1991, p.198). As Wayne clarifies that he helps Raj and his family due to individual commitment to Raj. His helping out is not chiefly a cohesion surpassing racial segregation but to be implicit with reference to give and take between two individuals who co-incidentally were born with distinct colours of skin. So, rather than having a relationship exceeding racism, theirs is a relationship that excels race as a
category. The rigorous efforts of Wayne and Raj to restrain brutality and violence is less enlightening as an illustration of two legislatures of different communities functioning mutually than as a consideration between individuals who sense that they signify more than their respective community membership. In its intricacy, the individual defends against any classification based on only race.

Reading can be identification of culture in the novel, as if the lack of desire to read indicates the opposite. Apart from it, by good value of its cultural propositions, reading happens to be a type of travelling. If it is argued by Raj that the only hope for the postcolonial Casaquemadan subject is migration, one can also escape by way of one’s imagination. (Bissoondath 1988, p.107, 108) Bissoondath demonstrates that ethnic divergence is an approach, which establishes disparity between communities while assembling equivalence within a community. Bissoondath makes it clear that the “racial brotherhood” (Bissoondath 1988, p.192) pouncing from such a politics is functioning on racialist suppositions. It is a “form of racism, not once that rejected but one that claimed” (Bissoondath 1988, p.162). Though similarity is argued to be an indispensable by postcolonial Casaquemadans who complain “the brotherhood of skin and race” (Bissoondath 1988, p.230), Bissoondath raises an issue particularly such a statement by pointing to its constructedness. The incantation of community for Bissoondath is a generalization of a reality that is too intricate to be unstated in other than individual constraints or considerations. So it is not a dismay that the hero of this novel in due course locates himself yearning for the lack of community in Canada. A craving for
community in context of identity and the communitarian is exposed as a reward for a meagreness, may that persona – the drill – Sergeant who unites with army, Madera who connects with the police, Nadan who joins a monastery, or the members of a family who reside by the law of the family. Since a man is a certainty too multifaceted in its individualism, Casaquemadan (but also parts of Canadian) society depends on the collective. Merely not colonial discourse but also multiculturalism that Bissoondath comprehends as effort at subjecting the individual by underlining the collective.

Bissoondath deconstructs group dissimilarities as in dispute a case in support of the distinction between individuals. A nice instance for this is discussion regarding the game of cricket between Surein and Raj. As Surein deprecates that West Indian team does not possess adequate Indian players to convert it in West Indian, Raj preserves or upholds that the team may have been selected on the basis of the class of the individual player and not according to community/racial criteria. (Bissoondath 1988, p.88) Multiculturalism in Casaquemada [Canada] is a policy of scheme notified by the significance of community though it disregards the responsibility of the individual. On Casaquemada, individual differentiation are not endured but fought. The battle against the individual is connected with an infringement of civil rights and the cruelty used to impose it.

Violence and violation in context of racism and identity can be visualised as theme, indication and leitmotif in A Casual Brutality. These aspects appear in Raj’s Caribbean experience in addition to during the span of his residing in Canada. While violence and violation are less significant of value in Bissoondath’s depiction of North America, the
co-occurrence of the casual [connected with peace and harmony] with brutality [connected with demolition and hostility], verifies not as much of troubling ‘here’ than ‘there’. Both violation and violence seem as disobedience or misbehaviour to the humanist Raj. What seems as behaviour for Raj and Jan is indeed ethnically suitable or satisfactory to Casaquemadan society; what seems rude to Jan is gracious to Surein; what may seem illustration of divergence is, actually, the custom in a Caribbean society that Raj is increasingly estranged from. Once the cultural breach between the Caribbean and Canada is realised/ felt by the vital characters of the novel, Jan cannot help but feel “fucking helpless in this place” (Bissoondath 1988, p.140), while Raj deplores the lack of control by imagining a time when “everything had at least seemed manageable”. (Bissoondath 1988, p.33)

The often encountered violence in Neil Bissoondath’s first novel is already specified by the title. The initial illustration of a combination of the harmlessness and cold-bloodedness of ‘casual’ with violence and aggression of ‘brutality’ is the risk or hazard supported by Espinet: “But, of course, that was what had been intended: a veiled promise of violence delivered with carefully weighed calculation, an offering softly spoken of a casual brutality” (Bissoondath 1988, p.23). The occurrence of incidence of casual brutalities in the text specifies that Espinet is gifted with an implication that excel the individual. Author presented a society where hope is restored by illusion, the apparently oxymoronic develops into ironic, i.e. ultimately explainable regardless of its apparently contradictory character. For what seem deviant – the bond between casual and brutal – is,
indeed, naturalised as a diverse custom within which violence, and, by expansion, the merciless, happen to be cultural. Bissoondath speculates indispensable humanity that the Caribbean fails to come to term with life. Two characters Kayso and Raj perceive violence as completely Other as a liberal/humanist background. With good value of their derived socialisation in Canadian academic as medical doctor [Raj] and lawyer [Keyso] both share or participate in a conversation that accentuates anthropological constants. Raj is conscious of the fact that any human body bears from similar illnesses despite of racial difference. Kayso considers in the similar rights for anyone in spite of altered racial connection. For both of them, violence and culture eliminate each other. The perception of culture for Raj and Kayso not only learned by cultural anthropology that pretence to situate regulations providing orientation in a provided environment, but also by a humanist custom that emphasizes the moral proposition of a normative concept of culture, i.e. civilization and retirement. Raj, Jan and Kayso as migrants to the Caribbean, violence turns into the locus where two classifications of culture collide. It is with this reason that for both Kayso’s and Raj’s meet with island of their birth must finish catastrophic. Jan, Kayso and Raj happen to be central characters in an ancient story. As their choice of error in judgement resides in a compliance to be maintained by a tradition to which they are unfamiliar to or estranged from, it captures the climatic scene of Jan’s and Rohan’s murder to convey regarding a peripetia. Raj realizes that to revisit his Caribbean homeland is a lethal mistake. His inner conscience makes a break out or flight from the Caribbean land unavoidable or predictable and a return improbable.
The death with violence is tragic in case of Raj’s wife Jan and a child – Rohan, however it is valuable in serving Raj draw closer provisions with his own situation in the world. The abnormalities of casual brutalities formulate the Caribbean culture Raj has been brought up on weird to him. The purpose of casual brutalities resides in providing objectivity to Raj’s variance of clash between Canadian and Caribbean culture. Violence demands the disarray of Raj’s identity and diminishes the intricacy of his circumstances by re/portrayal of a boundary between Self and other. Voyaging to the birth island takes on the superiority or eminence of a journey into the heart of darkness. The optimistic outcome of journey is that it generates a progression of learning that is precious and unalterable. In getting familiar with the gloomy aspect of Casaquemada as the violence or hostility of the Other [as well as the Other as violence], any adherence to genesis will finally be discard for good. Raj will never come back to Casa- quemada, the place of parched earth and the burnt house, the place where multiculturalism demonstrates to be sweltering, i.e. hurtful but also cauterizing and thus purifying. As Raj feels the harm and remedial or heal implicated in any refinement, so does Casaquemada at large. The awaiting rebellion emerges as a reprimand for the sins of the recent past in that it asserts casualities. Hence, the end of the novel validates Raj’s private reflections on a public level. In Raj’s journey from innocence to experience, the message to be learned connects with the deixis of time and place. Raj needs to distinguish that the history and the Caribbean as his place of origin can be crippling and that any type of reminiscene (Kayso) or exoticism (Jan) is mislaid or vanished. Merely after realising for Raj, the community, family and roots apprehends the expansion of the individual or entity, has he
reached a higher ontological level? A similar consideration can be said about Casaquemadan society in general. Multiculturalism on Casaquemada endures from racial as well as class tension, and Bissoondath entails that this condition is treacherous, as social/racial resentments can provide way to political wavering or insecurity. As adhering to one’s people hamper overcoming dissection and discord in a society indicated by prejudice and isolation, Bissoondath seems to propose that multiculturalism can be remedied by encouraging individualism. As the relationship between Wayne and Raj epitomize, discussion and interaction, communication and consensus on a one-to-one basis can protect the project of multiculturalism that is reckoned crucial for organizing of Caribbean [as well as Canadian] society in general.

*The Innocence of Age (1992)*

The second novel of Neil Bissoondath *The Innocence of Age* (1992) is set in Canadian backdrop in terms of characters, approaches and every aspect. Few critics believe that author has purposefully crafted this setting to regard himself as a Canadian author as he does not consider his identity as hyphenated and he would like to be considered as a Canadian author. Bissoondath’s second novel is related with multiculturalism in Canada and its predicaments. It is quite interesting to note the fact that though, the novel is written by an immigrant, it is narrated by a member of the dominant ethnicity. In fact, Bissoondath writes about multiculturalism from such a perspective can be interpreted as a perception into the prospect, conceivably obligation, of exchanging ethnicities in a
dia|pora situation. Taking into account himself a Canadian rather than an immigrant, Bissoondath declines to allow his writing to be categorised as stereotypes.

The novel deals with multiculturalism in a figurative or symbolic way by considering remedy or alternative to the design of the house. House and images of housing flourish in this novel of Bissoondath and turns out to be influential in constructing a point regarding the way people live together in a multicultural society. In his novel, Bissoondath’s metaphors indicate what he is keen on, what bounds a multicultural society together, and what sets it apart. As such, he is apprehensive with the centripetal as well as centrifugal forces at work in Canadian society. The essential significance of the house as a symbol is already exemplified by the profession of one of the central characters, Daniel Taggart, who works for Mr. Simmons, a real estate agent in Toronto. During the course of the storyline, Daniel is provided to renovate a flat of Mr. Simmons; however, the duty of refurbishing the house in accordance with his employer’s desires seems tough. Daniel is deficient in the stimulation to meet Mr. Simmons’s demands as the portions of the house declines to develop into a good gestalt in his mind. Daniel’s basic manifestation is the nexus between the basics or fundamentals of the house and the basis of multiculturalism. On a more precise note, the intricacy of refurbishing Simmons’ house also suggests that Canada’s multicultural policy requires rethinking and alteration. The problems Daniel faces in renovating the flat are not only concerned with a visual metaphor but also by referring to Daniel’s inner conscience or sense of hearing. The house opposes Daniel not only in requisites of its gestalt but also by desirable quality of its relentless silence. If it is
interpreted that the house denotes the Canadian polity, the silence encompassing the house suggests at an unnatural or immoral environment under its roof. Specifically, the silence of the house tends to get intimately related to the silence of its [illegal] tenant or occupant Sita, a 19 years old girl from the Caribbean land, who is physically or sexually oppressed by Simmons. It is her existence that composes the house unheimlich i.e. both unhomely and uncanny. The outcome connects with that on overhearing how Sita is raped by Simmons, Daniel considers “as if the house itself were smothering him” (Bissoondath 1992, p.235). From the standpoint in the novel, the silence of Sita reluctantly inflicts on the house is lesser amount of suggestive of her cultural marginalization than of her marginalization as an individual. This point is fundamental for the consideration of the text in terms of its handling of cultural difference. Unable to visualize her indispensable humanity, Simmons considers her as an Other that has to be utilized sexually as well as financially. It does not seem that her crucial cultural difference were not identified in the context or with reference of the text’s allegorical or metaphorical representation of Canadian society, in contrast, Sita feels too much of a gratitude of disparity and that too with a problematic type. The novel, to a certain extent, indignantly indicates the recognition of difference or disparity as an Othering that has incurable penalty for the subject.

To the similar extent that Sita is condensed to her product significance and ignored as a complete human being, Daniel’s renovation of the house, which indicates at an alteration or modification of Canadian multiculturalism, is predestined to fall short of success. To
think distinctly, a disappointment to contain Sita, replicates a disappointment to contain the immigrant in his/her identicalness relatively than in his/her diversity. The house and to a larger extent, Canadian society cannot be entrusted with encouragement and courage or fortitude until the Other is incorporated, or moderately until race and gender as groups of dissimilarity finishes to be the all-informing matrix essential for Canadian multiculturalism. If Sita’s mysteriousness formulates itself felt as “the demons of Mr. Simmons house” (Bissoondath 1992, p.237), then the only prospect of exorcising these ghosts resides in a politics of verbalization that permits Sita to speak. Though, on the contrary to an exclusively postcolonial apprehension, giving voice is not piece of an attempt to pull through a native identity here. The brutality of Simmons connects not so much in his malfunction to recognize Sita’s cultural identity but in his insensitive and spiteful conduct of her as a human being. And it is as a human being relatively than as an issue dogged by racial/ethnic and sex/gender distinction that Sita wants to be heard.

Bissoondath recommends a glance into family composition and the complications of sustaining family bind caused by collide of generations within two families respectively. Subsequently we wish to squabble through representation of family in the novel is a narrative technique used to write in opposition to a fascination with racial disparity. The novel can be interpreted as a dispute against multiculturalism in which it reinstates the disarticulation felt by the immigrant disconnected from his community or society, history and custom with the separation of a family, i.e. of a father from his son and vice versa. To make it clear, Bissoondath destabilises the genre of migrant writing by reversing or
swapping the migrant’s passion with freedom onto the generation gap between Pasco and his son so that movements in freedom figure as movements in time. The outcome is that Bissoondath makes the migration experience in a universal manner. By representing father and son dwell in two different worlds, reside in distinct emotional milieus, and articulate two diverse languages, author ethnifies constituents of the foremost crowd in Toronto society and exposes the exasperation and separation felt by the immigrant. Within his global standpoint, both turn out to be part of human condition. Moreover, by endorsing a resumption of harmonious relationship between father and son, author also absolutely formulates a point about the prospect of connecting cultural differences, to the amount that they happen to be inappropriate.

It is certain that both father and son are reasonably diverse characters. In compliance with his realist viewpoint or stance on life, troubles for the striving Daniel, on the contrary to his father, emerge as opportunities rather than obstacles. What appears as improvement or modernization for Daniel, is in reality an offensive for Pasco; Daniel welcomes new, his father contends with old. If Daniel has purely career in his mind, Pasco demonstrates philanthropy when he helps out prostitutes and provides meal free to the homeless people. Besides, whereas Daniel estimates the real estate cost of his father’s house, the house has an emotional worth for his father, since Pasco feels the sentimentality of Edna’s inhabitance in the house that they both spent together for years. Daniel even calculates the costs of a one-night stand, and he, contrary to his father, incapable to outline an enduring relationship as he is not capable to love. Daniel’s cupidity and his
cunning or manipulative conduct differ pessimistically with Pasco’s idealism. While Daniel’s societal interactions remain shallow, Pasco’s communal or social life is defined by legitimate warmth. Both father and son are estranged from each other, is also emphasized with the use of names. When Pasco addresses his son “Danny”, he fails to perceive that his son fancies to be called as “Daniel”. Hence, though Daniel is not successful to recognize the substance of Pasco’s meeting with his friends, Pasco falls short to craft an attempt at learning what kind of a person his son is. There should not be any uncertainty that at that juncture in the novel, their individual inspections for each other are contrary and that is a basis for conflict and squabble between them.

Daniel is also eager to refurbish his father’s house while he is working on to renovate Mr. Simmon’s flat. Considering sufficient, the one task confirms as sturdy as the other, that is emphasized by the truth that both assignments engage bothersome surmounting of a silence. If Simmons’ house stay silent for Daniel since Sita’s existence is not taken into consideration, his [Daniel] home is silent as his father is unable to bear the loss of his mother – Edna. From the standpoint of the novel, duo father and son can be condemned for not demanding the silence into sensitivity of their troubles. Pasco’s unmitigated phase of bereavement turns troublesome as it averts him to getting back to his normalcy of life; rather, it influences his relationship to his son. Similarly, Daniel is witnessed from a pessimistic outlook in that he categories too readily with the ethics of Simmons that, with the outlook of the novel, are nothing small of inhumane.
Daniel’s condition is intricately related to the perspective of intertextual context. This novel intimates that Danny reminds you of Daniel from Bible, who is transmitted into lion’s cave for devoting an incorrect divinity. As a result, absolutely Daniel Taggart’s work is looked at as a kind of retribution or reprimand for devoting the wrong god, i.e. Mammon. Daniel Taggart is fascinated in an industrialist and egotist world outlook as signified or embodied by Mr. Simmons whose initial name is Leon, i.e. literally, the lion. His menace and gluttony is also emphasized by his status as a “money making machine”. (Bissoondath 1992, p.57) Whereas Pasco and his friends exhibit compassion and tenderness towards others, Simmon is allied with a machine, or complimentarily, with an environment that is infertile. As Simmons’ end comprises a type of poetic justice estimation of his rape of Sita, Daniel at the completion of the novel reforms and reserves himself from the ethics of his boss. Undoubtedly, Sita’s rape is symptomatic of a social melancholy; however, it also has solid outcomes in the context of father [Pasco] and son [Daniel] relationship. In an epiphany prompted by Sita’s rape, Daniel commences to comprehend his father. While Daniel happens to overhear Simmons’ cruelty on Sita, the words he has talked to his father in a dialogue about their particular visions of the world rise one more time, this time, nonetheless, with a distinction in that they disclose that his scepticism or scorn has specified approach to mercy and repentance. “Everything’s a product, Dad. Everything can be bought or sold. Even people. The words materialized by themselves in Danny’s mind rising without warning”(Bissoondath 1992, p.237). Probing in to Simmons’ as well as Daniel’s connection of love with sex and sex with race [Simmons] or money [Daniel], the novel consents to Daniel to get familiar to which side
his philosophy can be applicable. Hence, after Sita’s vengeance on Simmons’, Daniel helps her to go back to her Caribbean home. The alteration in his persona is indicated by the reality that at the completion of the novel he aids the homeless in quite similar kind as his father does. One of the key aspects of *The Innocence of Age* is that the text no longer discriminates between homelessness in a social and homelessness in a cultural/ethnic sense of the word. Daniel, at the ending of the novel, has discovered to view at people as human beings in its entirely, that is also the procedure of wisdom that author strives to instigate in his readers. In that context, his style may be called moralistic.

The novel reforms or renovates Pasco’s troubles with his son in a way Montgomery has with his daughter Nutmeg. However, as the solution of generational clash between Pasco and Daniel finishes on a happy note, the very similar clash turns on a dreadful side in the case of Montgomery and Nutmeg. By depicting that generation divergences or clashes are not weird to a particular civilization, Bissoondath deconstructs race as the exclusive rationalisation of human behaviour. In spite of Montgomery’s optimism that Nutmeg “can’t be so different from her family” (Bissoondath 1992, p.15), his daughter verifies him incorrect. Altering her name from Nutmeg, the family’s name of generosity, to Spice, she emphasizes that as a persona she wilfully chooses to rebel her family. Structurally, Nutmeg is a thwart for Sita. Whereas Sita may be compelled to prostitute herself, Montgomery’s daughter escapes and develops into a prostitute of her own deal. If Nutmeg’s age firmly indicates that her decision is to be interpreted as the rebellion of a teenager, it is considerable that in the novel structural restrictions persuading her are not
social. Further, specifically, anything resolves her course of action, it is not racism. Bissoondath in his conduct of multiculturalism demonstrates that social relations cannot be confined by race as a theoretical device, and that clashes between different civilizations cannot be depicted or portrayed meticulously by racism. As will be indicated, this is an incisive assessment of multiculturalism as a view of society that diminishes the density of life to matters of civilization. By maintaining steady the similar occurrence for two civilizations, *The Innocence of Age* disregards [racial] disparity as theoretical outline for considering human behaviour. As per Bissoondath’s perspective, individual intricacy should restore the abridging label of racial or cultural dissimilarity. An apparent outlook of a human being as fitting into a racial or cultural cluster averts a dynamic commitment with the individual under the title of a group. Besides, it may direct to a social anxiety or strain since if [racial] disparity stays as the solitary source of social discrimination, a society turns out to level to the chanting of racism, rather than to racism proper. Though the society or culture in the novel is indicated as being racist for killing Montgomery, one should not neglect that from one perspective it is Montgomery himself who has been unsuccessful and not the society that has failed him. The death of Montgomery connects with the act of self-defence by a young and excessively edgy police officer, Kurt, who sardonically adequately, in an earlier incident of the novel has vigorously combated racial violence.

The aim of this occurrence is that not each squabble between people of diverse skin colour can be elucidated by a racial logic. This aspect is also made overt by
Montgomery’s son. Indeed, the one individual who could have a rationale for posturing a resent or bitterness clears one’s modest viewpoint:

These people, they won’t leave us alone. They see a racist under every bed. One of’em even told my sister that having white skin automatically means you’re racist. Guilty until proven innocent. Well, just saying that is racist, if you ask me. They say they’re on our side, but there’s only one side as far as I can see, and that’s their side. If they didn’t have us, I don’t know what they’d do. They’d be nobodies. Well, I want no part of it. I have a life to live (Bissoondath 1992, p.306).

Racism inhabits a significant place in works of Neil Bissoondath, however, the aforesaid passage indicates, his situation or arrangement is confrontational. Bissoondath makes Montgomery’s son as his mouthpiece in stipulating that racism is a term that should be used cautiously since it is too frequently raised with the aim of reimburse for a feeble topic spot that depends on a problematic perception of [racial] disparity so as to build an identity. Somewhere else Bissoondath intricates on this point from a somewhat diverse viewpoint. The Innocence of Age seizes to view that racism is frequently an insufficient, naïve approach of unfolding argument. The novel also figures out how people involuntarily depict on racism with the intension to clarify social clashes between two ethnicities. Racism in the novel is an affair of thoughtful social interferes too simplistically. The novel projects a viewpoint of Canadian multiculturalism as a policy that in its moderation and forbearance encourages rather than hinders racism. The novel also condemns the nearly collective or widespread applicability of racism as a marque for some incongruity or variance concerning diverse ethnicities.

Bissoondath at the commencement of the novel has depicted a place entitled as Starting Gate, a restaurant or pub and the owner is Lanny, a retired army personnel, where few
middle aged people – Pasco and his friend circle – Cruise, Pushpull or Manfred, Marcus and Montgomery see one another quite habitually for liberating themselves. All are articulating their admiration for Canada, the country in which they reside and on the contrary, revulsion for America excluding Montgomery who is not prepared for hatred toward America since it is that country who facilitated Montgomery and his people to get freedom. Certainly, the name of Montgomery’s country is not disclosed as manifest in Bissoondath’s style, however from some depictions, one has to consider that he belongs to Grenada and works as a mailman in Canada. Besides, Cruise is another character after completion of university education and working as a lecturer for quite some time, is compelled to be a bookseller who has to sell used books. Another person Pushpull – original name Manfred, frequently happens to be a centre of attraction for jokes owing to his peculiar name, by profession an electrician. Marcus is a cab driver who transports the people without any biasedness in the context of race or colour. In the midst of the cluster, Montgomery is the sole immigrant, unable to regulate himself much in Canadian culture or society suitably; however, he admits it as a type of conciliation which he has to visage as an immigrant in a new country. The motive behind his migration seems to be like any other migrants is for job and money, not admiration for the place. In order to build the future of children both husband and wife take lot of trouble. Pasco admires Montgomery’s perception. Bissoondath has projected Pasco and Montgomery as disillusioned category of father in case of their children – Danny, a son of Pasco and Charlene, a daughter of Montgomery whom he calls Nutmeg.
Another perspective which Bissoondath attempts to highlight in the context of identity is Pasco and his failure to be in touch with Pigeon Lady – a middle aged partly canopy lady who frequently visited the park to offer food to pigeons but Pasco is unable to contact her as she appears outsider and stranger not uttering English, seems quite mystifying in her exterior. Pasco’s lament for invasion in Pigeon Lady’s solitude and his futile endeavour signifies the existence of outsiders in the city. The other derivatives concerning change is that people/immigrants need to mislay their original personality or survive their life on liquefied personality or identity like Gilbert Taggart develops into Pasco and Montgomery whose last name ‘Bird’ has vanished in the procedure of acculturation to his new country that is also perceptible from the illustration of CN Tower which was misapprehended as ‘seeing tower’ by Montgomery who intimates Cruise: “When you adjustin’ to a new country, it have a lot of things you doesn’t connect”. (Bissoondath 1992, p.124)

*The Innocence of Age* also exhibits the weird way of perceiving racism with the tragic death of Montgomery. Pasco’s friend one day brings along a news that Montgomery was shot by a cop – Kurt – under the title of self-defence in the corridor of Montgomery’s apartment. The alleged reports depicted that Montgomery appeared with knife in front of cops so they had to shoot him. Pasco is aware about the fact that Montgomery is a kind of person who would by no means harms any person. However, Pasco feels that Montgomery was mentally upset as her daughter ran away from the home to live life according to her terms and turned into prostitute. Apart from that his mental aggravation
comes on surface at his job when he injured the representative of trade unions with a punch that turned out into his sacking as a mailman. Montgomery seems to protect himself by declaring that he was purposefully or deliberately stressed at office and not drunk on job, the cause of his dismissal however as Cruise pointed out that the unions hold authorities and power so they can tailor the story and can have their own way of highlighting the reality or fact. At last, he got fed up to prove himself guiltless and understood that for trade unions he seems guilty until proven innocent. Pasco feels quite gloomy about Montgomery as he was a fellow sufferer in similar problems regarding their children and at present, he thinks himself lonely in the world to visage such type of setbacks in Canadian society. Pasco even does not become part of Montgomery’s funeral after Lorraine’s [his wife Edna’s friend and at present her comfort partner] efforts since he believes everyone has his own perception regarding mourning. He mourns the death of his friend by remaining alone in home on working days and not eats anything as he felt alone after the death of his wife Edna. During night, he happens to visualize the report of Montgomery’s death on TV wherein he is acquainted that his best friend Montgomery who always maintained a safe distance from any kind of race, colour and skin portrayed as victim of dirty politics. His death is provided a political colour under a few pretend-racist and opportunists by intimating that he was shot merely since he was ‘black’ – a racial attack. Pasco is perturbed and traumatized as the usage of dead body of Montgomery for intention of widening racial hatred. Sardonically, the daughter of Montgomery sturdily sustains simulated claims of racism, as she prefers to be the centre of attention. The novel seems to end with a note that Cruise aspires to write a novel
regarding Canadian society and desires to dedicate it to his late friend Montgomery for
sacrifice of his life.

*The Unyielding Clamour of Night* (2005)

Neil Bissoondath’s *The Unyielding Clamour of Night* (2005) narrates a plight of the
young protagonist from North – Arun Bannerji (21 years) who by following his
conscience wants to make a striking difference by performing his ‘duty’ to teach the
children of ‘South’ the end of the country, the ‘two – percenters’ or marginalized or
minority children of the country who are destroying their lives in consuming Ganja and
partly due to disturbance in the south part of country. Arun craves to testify his ideals in
the real world and wants to visualize whether by teaching these children he can perform
any miracle or difference to that world. It seems that Bissoondath has written this novel
in Conrad’s style as the depiction of expedition of Arun to South portion of country,
residing there and the changes that he experiences. Arun belongs to a prosperous and
wealthy family who owns a business of printery in the Capital, north of the country look
alike Sri Lanka from its portrayal. Arun’s parents wanted him to be a part of their family
business, however Arun denies by saying that his intuitions are to perform his task of
teaching ‘rikshas’ – two percenter of the country. It seems his efforts are going to be in
vain, however he has resolved to go to South, the abandoned portion of country, to
inculcate or impart education to the children of minority people whose dire demand of
education for enlightening prospect and the way to be a part of main-stream of society.
People acknowledge Arun’s resolution as a step of wisdom at his farewell function
planned by his sister – Joy and her husband – Surein. Arun’s parents were not so hopeful about him as they consider him as a ‘living skeleton’, who could be used as a model for medical students. Even they considered that Arun does not even hold these intuitions, he is instigated or motivated by his history teacher Mahadeo. In fact, Arun wishes to perform some sturdy task by providing teaching to disruptive students, as his accomplishment would be considered merely ‘two-percent’.

Arun before the commencement of his journey to Omeara in South, happens to see to the ministry office to have the ‘key’ of the school, coincidently visualizes a scene where officer is maltreating his assistant – a southerner as ‘rikshas’ for his lethargicness and slams him as worthless. He mentions that these ‘rikshas’ – callous words for southerners, are more futile than a stone which can be utilized as paperweight. Author provides us a kind of perception towards these people as deprivations of human beings to Stone-meaningless and static. Apart from it, he candidly admits his vulnerability or partly owing to government policies, he bears them, or else he would not employ these kind of people for his office and intimates Arun that the school does exist and it symbolizes as deserted place. Farewell of Arun indicates that from a safe place as if he is embarking on a journey of exile to an apprehensive place where uncertainty of future prospect anticipates him. Arun voyages to Omeara by train that includes much more army wagons compared to passengers and several other things under the title of national security. The existence of civilians disheartens the army. Departure of train at dawn signifies new dawn in the life of Arun, as few people turn to south during those days. Certainly, Arun’s
wagon is well-crafted to accumulate him from bomb attack which is a kind of life in Omeara.

Arun is ignorant about the land where he is heading, may be a land torn with racial and political disturbance, except he is conscious about the fact that children of Omeara are without a school and a teacher for several months now. During the expedition in the context of his search for identity, Arun realizes the disparities of place and situation. Earlier location of north having sight of rich earth and vegetable plantation with rows of plants on the contrary in south the images are hazy, uncertain and all shadows, not cleanly seized. At the outskirts of town large troop of army base is visualised. Arun seems to be unaware about military condition at this place except that army and some dissatisfied boys from the similar place have a violent confrontation with each other and according to government reports – army has been found victorious in majority cases. Arun feels he should not consider these issues in detail as such this place is facing troubles like – poverty, racism, unequal social status, etc. Bissoondath has presented Arun as a young and excited person to strive for betterment of downtrodden people in south wherein he will encounter characters like – Jaisaram, Mrs. Jaisaram, Anjani – daughter of Jaisaram, Kumar and few other characters. Out of these, majority characters face problem of identity and racism which plays a pivotal role in our research arena. In his journey in train Arun happens to meet Seth, who appears as – a close assistant cum Major General Theodore’s a kind of wife, a commanding officer of the Southern Military Region. Seth intimates Arun regarding school in Omeara, rebuilt by Army to win the
favour and trust of people and also declares the place as having no entertainment – no cinema, no music, occasional cricket or football match. Even people of Omeara feel uncomfortable in getting close proximity to anyone specially army. Arun’s curiosity gets a reply from Seth that it is a place of uncertainty and even Arun’s refusal to hold himself at base camp suggests eagerness of the central character to perceive things in town. However, Seth notifies Arun to be cautious since he is not in ‘north’ now and a part of down ‘here’ so he has to be decisive in terms of selection of friends. The quarter of Arun in Omeara hardly possesses few ‘basic’ facilities – unpainted, dark and sluggish interior, seem like dog’s kennel, no electricity, tarnished water, however he fancies himself with a positive outlook for a greater scope of enhancement ‘here’. He has come here with a wish to do something worth proving for his life. On the first morning in Omeara Arun happens to know some grief stricken aspect when he sees Madhu – a cab driver and owner of Café sum shop who intimates him regarding children busy at milking, weeding, tending goats, so unable to come to school. The trajectory is more severe as he is disinterested in knowing the name of a new school teacher as he will not stay longer at this place – it is as if a mockery of the protagonist [Arun]. With shaken confidence and bearing with nervousness Arun happens to see Mr. Jaisaram, a butcher who is aware of the fact that army dropped Arun last night which surprises Arun that people had an eye on him. Anjani, daughter of Jaisaram responds casually – the town as a small family having secret of everyone is familiar to everyone. Jaisaram, a mysterious character, is sceptical about Arun’s compliance to stay at this place as he feels government frequently sends ‘dejected’ candidates in Omeara and with recent bomb explosion on school and teachers,
the conspiracy of dissatisfied Boys, who would like a job of a school teacher. He is amazed as Arun having prosthesis in left thigh that allows him to walk like a normal human being. Jaisaram though not literate but smart enough to be cautious in dealing with Arun, as government employee has many friends and on the very first day Arun is alleged as an army spy. Jaisaram is illiterate but careful for education of children so he allows her daughter to show the path of school to Arun. Anjani monitors Arun as an immature guy who can be befooled by anyone although his background is from Capital. Since the past of school life – Anjani is also connected with capital. Initially we feel author has crafted this character with secret as she does not reveal the real reason of her expulsion from school. After sometime getting familiarity allows herself to reveal the dark truth of her life to Arun. She narrates that in reality the magazine ‘Playgirl’ was revealed or found in her roommate’s drawer, however girl’s parents were among patrons of the school and backbones of community, accordingly school authorities – the nuns – the Catholics ended up Anjani a victim since she happens to be in the category of ‘two – percenter’ a marginalized community in South. She faced marginalization and inequity at the tender age where it is complicated to disregard or pardon the people who accused forged allegations on her. The worst aspect in this context, that she does not protest like other unlucky two-percenter, as per belief of north people, although she discloses the truth that received punishment as a mercy! Here it is how she voices out regarding it:

She [Anjani’s roommate] herself wanted to prove how cool she was by rooming with me [Anjani, a minority girl]… The nuns used the magazine to send me packing and hushed everything else up. They said they were doing me a favour, saving my reputation. They never mentioned the school’s reputation, or my
roommate’s, or her family’s. They said they had to protect the school’s two-
percent program, because they were just as cool as my roommate was, you know?
Other parents would’ve used me as an excuse to throw out all the other
southerners, to save their little princesses from our perversity. All in all, a typical
Here Bissoondath seems to portray perfect example of racism and problem of identity
through this character Anjani who hates Capital for obvious reasons. Arun’s encounter
with another character – Prakash Kumarsingh, sole proprietor of Kumarsingh Enterprises
International Ink in Omeara who has arrived to Arun’s home with men for wiring for
electricity. Another caricature of Bissoondath who fancies to chase his dreams and gives
us the feeling of a restless thinker. In his case, tragic part connects with his brother’s
death owing to poverty and poor medical facilities available in town. Kumar proves to be
a reliable service provider of all types to Army, to those people who once asked bribe
from him for the treatment of his brother in nearly town. Here we visualise Kumar who
intimates Prahib – a salutation for Arun that Capital was a nice place for each person
except those two-percenter like him who visualised removal of poverty and to be a part of
mainstream society. The character craves more as per talent, skills and business
intuitions; however, people in capital consider him only for odd jobs like office boy or a
cleaner or a night watchman that would never facilitate him to fulfil his dreams. He also
happens to be the victim of marginalization in the context of identity construction.

They were fine jobs, Prahib [Arun], for some people. But that was the problem,
you see. These good people looked at us and saw only two-percenters. And they
had their own ideas about us, ideas that had nothing to do with being a go-getter.
They spoke of us as being the ‘real’ people, Prahib, people who spend their day
working in the sun. Somehow this back-breaking work made us real to them. They
saw us the way some people in rich countries see organic vegetables (Bissoondath
Apart from migration issues, he has been also a victim similarly like other people of town who shifted to other countries for good prospect. The group of revolutionary boys demolished nightclub began by Kumarsingh, that aloof him to achieve his dream of success. While Arun in the company of Anjani reaches at school, he visualises the dilapidated condition – door open, school having few basic things similar to Arun’s quarter. Arun appears contended with the thought that his life would be unlike his parents. Anjani provides him ‘Nawaal’, which signifies ‘rod of authority’. In Omeara, the myth of Nawaal connects with a woodcutter from village who used to take his victims in ox cart and in deep forest; he would kill them with axe. This was the prime reason of revolt for army to deploy in Omeara, which indicates after the death of Nawaal; army began to exert viciousness on people to accomplish their professed peace over rebellions of Omeara, indicates that viciousness never ends. Arun believes ‘Nawaal’ as a device of physical punishment not superstitions or myth of southerners and with a positive outlook, he breaks the stick into two, since he is not in favour of exerting viciousness on innocent children who are in requirement of teacher and education, however Anjani at present considers there are two Nawaals! On third day in Omeara Arun visualised an explosion of a boat at beach. Arun feels perturbed with the incident, whereas people of this place react casually on the incident with normalcy.

Jaisarams invite Arun for a dinner where he feels some comfort of capital place and in his conversation with Jaisaram, the butcher Arun feels he is interrogated in a very gentle manner. Arun seems to understand the theory of Omeara as this place includes resistance
of mind and declared themselves with the gut. Jaisaram reveals some similar memories of his visit to Capital – flooded with streets, cars, many people and noise. Arun also seems to check his decision of teaching Omeara as an act of bravery or foolishness. Arun opens up about his life in capital, about his inspiration – Mahadeo and rest of the things of his life, family’s advice not to opt for teaching. Through the conversation, Jaisaram considers Arun a man of conviction in terms of action, in his willing desires or ideas pertaining his life. The revealing aspect for Arun is that Jaisaram’s feeling of marginalized in the capital and he declares, “I believe I am a two-percenter in your [Arun’s] country.” (Bissoondath 2005, p.100)

Jaisaram also admits the fact that this breach can be abolished with the help of development and education, however he seems uncertain which kind of advancement is significant – the efforts of Army constructing new houses or the dissatisfied group of Boys craving to have ‘freedom’ in Omeara from the clutches of army for improvement of people. And in this pursuit under the title of creating advancement there happens to be stable conflict amongst the army and dissatisfied Boys – never ending procedure and someone has to forfeited in battle and these are no one else but the people of Omeara – Southerners. In Jaisaram’s dialogue regarding depiction of the dissatisfied Boys, he appears to praise them for mystical supremacy and their leader. The response of Jaisaram is unable to provide any path to Arun who holds the belief that education has a transformation command to facilitate marginalised and downtrodden, however conversation between Arun and Jaisaram leads Arun sceptical regarding his individual
sanguinity. Arun’s annoyance and vulnerability heightens, as so many efforts turn futile to cater the needs of education for interested or needy students. For example Indira, a six or seven years girl having one leg lost, Hari whose father abducted by men with guns etc. Arun comes to realize now that he received only lame students who are unable to perform work of tending animals, weeding, and watering plants apart from their parents. This blots the zeal of Arun and irritation is apparent even when Seth is willing to facilitate him with any type of help for school children. Seth also recognizes that Arun is annoyed with leisurely business of teaching, however for Arun; it is unfair to get disheartened being a teacher. He is sceptical and feels dejected for the prospect of these children from marginalized community who are victims of terrorism and rough treatment of army. Seth advises with optimism to Arun that do not get too concerned about the better prospect of children and educate them to revere Army alongside with symbols to defend themselves from the bomb/mines fixed by the dissatisfied Boys. To combat against this mess Seth who is having hidden agenda as an army person, instructs him to see his general, a visionary person who believes advancement is the approach to battle against terrorism through education and thereby protecting the lives of naïve in the war.

Arun’s meeting in base camp with General – Ashok, who initially behave in a gentle way, slowly turns superior believes Arun as interloper who does not reside ‘here’, where the environment is different. As he is also cynical about Arun’s idealism of teaching minority people or students from South with holistic approach in which he supposes ‘South’ as a portion of his country and intimates him that situation is perplex and full of
vagueness prevails in South. Besides, he considers Arun’s task of teaching as imperative and calls him ‘a natural soldier’ who can execute his duty in better prospect by educating the children how civilization can be essential in their development as human beings. However, for Arun it is tough to educate half-truths having no historical base. The explanation of General and Arun’s ideal and history teacher Mahadeo seems in disagreement, who [Mahadeo] believes use of history should be to outline today and alter tomorrow as it’s a weapon to be handled carefully. For Arun, it is uncomfortable to admit it however he has to admire General’s viewpoint that nobody can validate terrorism and their confrontation against terrorists or rebellious group, is a spot on ‘duty’ to their country. Arun discloses similar troubles with Army and people of Omeara that he is not receiving what he craves. Army desires to deploy Arun as a kind of ‘bet’ [gamble] to search a ‘fish’ [probe] amid masses and they certainly hold a belief that this rebellious group of Boys like a ‘fish’ require support of people to vanish amongst them and look for nourishment. Arun being an ignorant person has to perform a job of lifesaver by providing right kind of education and the loss these people will bear if they support these terrorists. General also recommends Arun some compensation to educate some countryside soldiers who are illiterate and Arun is unable to deny it. Hence, we can predict that the plan of army of making Arun in their favour has got authentication.

In the meantime, Arun gets too familiar with Jaisaram family and especially through Anjani that provides him the information which is in reality fake, about Jaisaram’s son who happened to be the victim of illegal immigration. As he was aspired to go abroad, he
left the town six years ago with some stolen money and after that, no news of him came whether alive or dead. The incident brought disgrace for Mrs. Jaisaram so she shut her lips and Mr. Jaisaram who is unhappy that his legacy will not go forward. However, the story does not have a correct version as the family is having lots of secrets. Besides, Army is also keeping an eye on Arun, as he is told by Seth to have caution not to have thoughts of intimacy to allow in his mind or else he will have to face tough time in the world of uncertainty in Omeara. Even the General intimates Arun that they have enough explanation to have suspicion about Jaisaram family involved in Bomb blast that happened in the capital. Author has also described the scene of cremation ground through Arun’s eyes that they consider their fellow soldiers dead bodies as martyrs and on the contrary the portions of bodies of dissatisfied Boys – terrorist are flung into drainage like ravage [waste] and they illustrate no reverence for flesh of ‘humans’! The stink of festering flesh compels Arun to vomit since he is soared to regulate to the milieu, which appears frequent to townspeople. The incident might indicate the fact that it is the attempt to Arun to be connected with the soil of Omeara, turns into failure. It is also evident in his case when he endeavours stimulating his kitchen garden although stimulating was not a type of his upbringing. Arun’s effort of plantation in uncertainty world – Omeara does not get triumphant and it appears factual when his only aspiration – Shanti, the scholar student, for whom he fancied job of Journalist in Capital, lost the life in bomb blast on Market day – Saturday morning in Kumarsingh’s bus – ‘Rainbow’.
The detonation has a radical impact on Arun’s life in Omeara since it dashes his hope of teaching into sheer darkness or gloom. The classes will not run now for schoolchildren and army men for indistinct time. After the mishap exploration grabbing the ‘bomb maker’ awakens rapidly and in his conversation with Arun, Seth intimates Arun the truth of Jaisaram’s son as ‘fidayeen’ who ran away from the place with some other boys few years ago and declares his suspicion on Anjani as a bomb maker to which Arun guards her as innocent. Seth does not consider his opinion, informs him to be vigilant, and recommends him to facilitate army. The situation brings Arun in dilemma to consider townspeople or army, with this perturbed mind he happens to see his new student – Saman – son of poor farmer but lethargic and obstinate. Naturally, annoyance heightens in Arun’s case when he beats Saman for his dumbness and failure to learn some basic things. Later on, it is obvious that Arun laments over his deed as Saman does not turn up to school again. Besides, while the army made invasion in each and every home except Arun’s for receiving the trace of the bomb blast incident. Arun gets stunned with army’s approach and style of working in that they were even harsh on women, for example, Anjani was compelled to be naked in the presence of her mother for soldiers, indication of a type of disgrace or mortification coupled with marginalization usually left. Additionally, by not inspecting or examining Arun’s home, the army has aroused distrust amongst the people in Omeara, who now consider Arun not merely a teacher but a devotee of army and rightly predicted they were maintaining a safe distance from him and it is quite evident the age old trick of ‘divide and rule’ has been employed to know the truth. For baffled Arun the case seems serious in terms of loyalty since he is aware of
his perspective in the whole scenario. Bissoondath has attempted to project Omeara as a place wherein people have only past and no future [prospect] since the current situation seems a cat’s tail on fire. Even Arun, being a hopeful person in this negativity, appears helpless to envision any prospect for the people like Anjani, Kumarsingh who possess relentless visions to form their lives exterior or far away from the small town – Omeara, still Kumarsingh who has suffered a lot in Omeara cannot move outside since he does not look certainty of posh welcome as an ‘outsider’, so ultimately he has to envision his dreams only in Omeara.

Arun’s abhorrence for army appears strong when he becomes aware that nothing has been conceded in the search and the worst thing on top of that Army presages him not to get too familiar with local matters and confine himself to teaching. Arun slowly becomes aware of the fact that Army abducted Anjani for interrogation, much tormented resulted in her death. Arun stays quiet about the incident since Army intimidates him with the narrative of his father who was engrossed in smuggling of instrument for persecute exploited by the Government to have information from the weathered criminals under the title of national security like Anjani. For Arun, it seems everything has altered since he has endowed much optimism in Seth for facilitate but turned into failure, together with the people of Omeara developed hatred for deceiving them. He appears in the state mind as if all his postulation or supposition regarding the place and people of Omeara has turned false. His visions smashed owing to callous realities. He plans to depart from Omeara. He senses compassion for southerners who are befalling as the prey of grimy
politics. A blast and assault on Arun directs him into unconsciousness and the tragic aspect that his prosthesis sliced and cut into pieces. Certainly, he acquires treatment or healing from military base hospital, however it appears a type of sympathy of the army in return of favour of facilitation from Arun. General of Army makes a final attempt to convince Arun to work in their favour by an emotional angle recalling him how his father used to perform his ‘duty’ for them. The General detects that like his father, Arun complicated to get persuaded for professed ‘duty’ to his country as Arun strongly admires his father’s thinking that there has to be a demarcation amongst loyalty and responsibility and he seems to remain aloof from Army’s thinking for whom sloppiness is not entertained in their field. They hold a view that merely probable efficacy matters and the person who is not functional, should be considered as rebuked like Arun whom army has commanded to abscond Omeara as soon as things get normal. Army hold an opinion regarding Arun that he would favour Army to look out the ‘fish’ – bomb maker from the masses, however they were incorrect in their perspective.

Contrasting with other people, Arun on a candid note does not have an alternative but to depart from Omeara. Arun considers that he would be despised, for escaping from a place of great despair. Even the defence of disappearing from the town to buy a new prosthesis seems futile for others and him, as he is feeble, Omeara has begun to smother where even Kumarsingh cannot fancy about any delusion anymore. Before departing from Omeara, Arun’s puzzled mind requires precision regarding few unforeseen queries. In order to pacify his mind, he turns to Jaisaram family, in return Mrs.Jaisaram discloses series of
secrets since she trusts Arun that now he is not merely a teacher from North, but a person who has experienced the life-style of Omeara people, had enough time to realize the fact that Southerners fear reality like fish is scared of the net. She reveals the bitter truth of her life – her son – Nagarat lost his life in bomb explosion when he was transferring it and it happened accidentally since Mrs.Jaisaram committed blunder in time-setting of bomb that turned into the death of her son, so she shut her mouth readily as a type of self-declared reprimand for carelessness in preparation of bomb. She also declares the fact that she is a real bomb maker not Anjani as people doubted, she acquired this knowledge from Capital when she along with her husband had visited to see Anjani. She very innocently also exposes the fact that she and Jaisaram only prepare bombs, and not every time aware of the aims and motives behind it. The soreness behind turning into a ‘fish’ – the follower of rebellious group appears tyranny, agony and a type of marginalization when she voices out: “I did not grow up a two-percenter. I was made one.” (Bissoondath 2005, p.318) The sentiment of vengeance in front of the torment of army is quite sturdy that even Mrs Jaisaram has not prevented the preparation of bombs though the unbearable lose of own son and daughter that directs to everlasting anguish. Arun being thoughtful regarding the scenario appeals or pleads to end the war as Government also wishes ‘peace’ – the rebuke of Mrs Jaisaram that many people desire to persist the ‘war’. Arun seems to feel that everyone is making an effort to compel him to leave – army, people of Omeara, Mrs.Jaisaram, etc. Arun considers himself vulnerable and loss of freedom to mould his life as a liberated person who embarked his journey in train from the capital to Omeara, without being conscious of it, he has turned into a ‘fish’ entangled in net. Mr
and Mrs Jaisaram are so kind to gift him a carved clubfoot as an appreciation of love and also disclose the place where they prepare bombs. Arun’s dream to see Omeara as a problem free land seems futile or a kind of fancy notion. Arun gives back the crutches to Seth indicates figuratively that he ultimately discards support of the army before leaving Omeara.

On the day of Arun’s exit from Omeara, nobody turns up to wave him, similar kind of approach when he was heading towards Omeara that indicates completion of a circle – what commenced with an astonished stare would conclude in the similar system. The army gets him for the base camp before departing on train, wherein a great facilitation function is organized for Army along with some great dignitaries including Mahadeo; as a Cabinet Minister and some officers and surprisingly Arun is asked to honour the stage by having a place of chair with them. Accidentally before getting on stage Arun stumbles or stoops indicates a type of submission of ideals from him holding to the dogma of politicians who allege that whatever they act is beneficial for everyone in society. Sardonically these policies create revulsion rather than synchronization and force the mass two-percenter or minority to submit themselves to their notion. The novel appears to provide Arun the probing intuition that his world of holistic perspectives is lessening.
The novel – *The Soul of All Great Designs* (2008) portrays the tale of two characters – Alec and Sue or Sumintra, who pretends something else in real and reel life that they inhabit secret in society in order to accomplish their so-called desires. Alec is depicted as a young entrepreneur or businessman ensnared with vintage cars, fanatical regarding interior decoration, constructed fake personality as a ‘gay’ in order to achieve proficient triumph in the sphere of fashion where it is predicted that only ‘gays’ are apt for fashion designing. Alec’s life or existence is covered with lies and he craves to carry on those elements as ‘secrets’, that directs him to compromise or conciliation with normal feelings of any human being including libidinal desires. His perspective towards living a life with impulses and aspirations, sharply contrast with his parents’ lifestyle which had occurred due to situations, allows him to deceive his parents and his love interest – ‘Sue’ or Sumintra. On the other front if, we analyse the character of Sue or Sumintra – she represents typical Indian immigrant girl to Canada, torn between Western and Indian culture and traditions. In order to surmount solitude of teenage and feel of adventure like other Canadian youngsters, Sue falls in love with Alec and have physical contentment, however when time demands to disclose the truth of their relationship in public, both feel reluctant. Ultimately to Sue’s dismay Alec does not react optimistically to her proposal of marriage as that would destroy his career – his persona of a pretended gay in his field. By employing voices or tones of two diverse narrators, Bissoondath intermingles extremely compound and multifaceted narratives in which dual lives of Alec and Sue, indistinct
rapport and similar approach for mystery or secrecy, densely crafts the novel float between fact and fantasy, fancy and realism.

Bissoondath seems to construct this novel with a type of worldwide fact that it is a ‘secret’, which every person holds in this world and makes his/her best efforts to keep the secret from other people. And when it crosses the boundary of imagination, it happens to be the lifestyle of the central character of this novel in which his fascination to hold the secrets merely to himself has surpassed all limits or edges of having something to the person merely. Bissoondath’s viewpoint of secret allows the readers on a journey with their souls in company with the panic of not being rendered opposite one another since they happen to be concealed or unscathed spots of their hearts. Even Bissoondath appears to be in agreement with opening lines – bit sceptical – be it for central character or for himself – that “I have a secret. Don’t you?” (Bissoondath 2008, p.3), indicates that Bissoondath expects to ascertain familiarity with readers believing that he is with purity in his heart willing to open his secrets in his work of fiction, on condition that he creates a central character who can cross any limit to uphold his secret. Alec, a young man around thirty is spending a kind of airtight life, since his gestures, speech and above all his delicately manicured hands indicates femininity that allows people to consider that he is disinterested in women and he is a gay. To have the clients, Alec pretends to be a gay although he happens to be an interior decorator and designer; everyone believed that merely gays are apt for these jobs. The entire tale revolves around the pretended personality crafted by Alec, and his resistance to uphold it alongside with events.
Bissoondath has depicted the problem of identity through Alec by keeping secrets with people and it is quite evident in case of two ladies encounter with Alec – Caroline and Sue or Sumintra. At times the emotions of a normal man comes on surface and as if smothering simulated personality and at last he deals with these aspects with his terms and conditions to live a life. The novel can be categorised into three sections – First regarding Alec: his childhood, his interest, his parents and his professed success in the sphere of interior decoration, the next one deals with an Indian immigrants’ daughter – Sumintra or ‘Sue’ who believes constrained amid Indian thoughts and Western culture. And the final section where both – Alec and Sue meet, fall in love, barter physical gratification – all woven into secrecy and effort to conceal their bonding from the world as they can mislay many things if they happened to get uncovered. The entire novel expands with enchantment of mingling one secret to others and the feeling to have the excitement of replacing it with one another and at last it finishes with the efforts to cover those ‘secrets’ from others, and to maintain that only to their ‘soul’ which propels the readers to acknowledge that such souls have ‘great designs’.

Bissoondath is sceptical for readers with the original name of Alec as Cal – only once mentioned by his mother in the novel. The element of ‘secret’ is endowed with chief character’s name as ‘Cal’ has numerous implications. The one connects as ‘devotion’ from Hebrew etymology which combines with Alec’s devotion and loyalty to the sphere of interior decoration while the next meaning is ‘dog’ indicates quite offensive and can be preferred with reference to his over commitment to his interest. Alec loves to live life as
per his own terms and conditions whereas he thinks his parents live as the life has offered to them. He is fascinated for the sphere of interior decoration. His parents had initially a vision to make him Pianist, Athlete or Olympic Champion subsequently. During his teenage – 14 or 15 he wished to find his career in car renovation, which was turned down by his parents’ incapacity of financial condition. At last, his parents were impressed with his skills of renovation of his [Alec’s] bedroom with some waste. They were at ease and paid the fees for a ‘home renovation’ course in college, however he did not intimate anyone that his father paid the fees for interior decorating and not for ‘home renovation’. He scored in the concept of ‘secret’ with betraying his own parents. After the completion of his desirable career – Interior decorating with flying colours, his father found a job for him at large hardware store. He very tactfully commenced slipping business cards to customers providing his services; the fact is evident that his parents are not aware regarding it. Unfortunately he did not receive positivity out of this task, in fact one of the clients used the word ‘fag’ – a derogatory word for ‘gay’ looking at his feminine quality of physique that perturbed him for few days and at last he made up his mind to be a ‘gay’ for having proficient triumph. Indeed, it was not easy to pretend a ‘gay’ so even he visited ‘gay village’ in order to learn mannerism, however he was not welcomed with open arms. With intense scrutiny and after much assessment he could sense that he has to form a technique to be a gay with a kind of gentleness. Besides getting familiar with approaches, he seems to have reservations regarding blow of such approaches on his individual existence, that creates apprehension in his heart as well as panic of being trapped as participating in this ‘game’. In his public appearance, he has to be vigilant like
a ‘gambler’ who plays a game only to be victorious while he is unaccompanied he can be at ease.

In the midst of struggling conditions, Alec creates his own company – New World Design and he received his first assignment from a Gay – Ian, who works in financial services for multi-national company. Alec gets pleased with the news that Ian offers him limitless budget for renovating his home for his gay-friend – Manuel, happens to work in Mexico City. Ian loves Manuel, who craves to be with him in Canada, however since gayness is not a common approach for these kind of people like Ian and Manuel in Canada, they are having immigration issue for past two years. Ian happens to be a huge opportunity for Alec as he is contented with work of Alec and desires that Manuel would certainly like it. Through this particular incident Bissoondath seems to manifest Canada’s immigration policies in context of multiculturalism that on the larger extent distinguishes amid Straight and Gay.

Gradually fortune favours him, he received good amount of work within past half an year, so he craves to commence his own business and yearns to depart from job at hardware store, however his father provides him a reality check difference of Job’s Security and threat of loss and uncertainty in business. In the interim, Alec has gathered fair amount of money in this business. He was planning to buy an office and house for himself. Alec fortunately bought a house and his parents on the other hand give him a surprise by revealing the fact that they have made up the mind to proceed to a small place, near factory plant of Alec’s father. Alec feels indignant with this secret revealed by
his parents. However, unfortunately they lose their lives in a car accident when returning from the new site of their small house. Alec gets a support of his relatives in the tough time – Aunt Ella, his father’s elder sister and Peter, his maternal uncle, but Alec feels loneliness due to the death of his parents. When Aunt Ella advises Alec to get married and settled, he recognizes the requirement of girlfriend or woman. Since, now the survival in the world of fancy for longer span is tough because his fake personality is befalling profound on his real self as he sums up his feeling: “I hadn’t been acting, not even a little. My persona – marked by that gentleness that had begun as a marketing ploy – had come naturally” (Bissoondath 2008, p.48-49). As a normal human being he has his sentiment and passion however he maintains a safe distance from women in society in order to maintain his success ratio in the field though it is a risky thing to have a hold over sentiments in confrontation with women. Since life happens to be with full of astonishment, similarly it occurs with Alec while he chooses to bid farewell to Tawny – a receptionist at his company office, who believes Alec as a ‘gay’ provides him some gracious instruction or suggestion – excellent marketing tactics to hasten his company and its business.

The boredom of Alec’s life gets faded when he happens to see Caroline, a real estate agent who appears quite certain and assured however in fact she enacts all these things as piece of her work. Alec’s suppressed libidinal desires get an outcome in the presence of Caroline, unable to hold on it he posts her the intimation regarding the impact of her beauty on him and anticipating physical contentment from her that evidently specifies to
Caroline that Alec is a straight man and not a ‘gay’. She is also having similar feelings for him, however she is aware about his fascination regarding his work, accordingly she is curious to what will be her relevance in his life if she admits that post. Caroline expects a longer span of commitment from Alec. Nevertheless, it formulates Alec vigilant regarding his façade or personality, and ultimately he is willing to drop the idea of having sensual pleasure with her and he alters his way of pleasing his libidinal desires by employing call-girls from agency, so that he does not get exposed or trapped in any type of long term commitment and he can enjoy the flavour of his life with different lady.

As Caroline’s episode is over Alec has been quite frequent in taking the help of some agencies for sensual pleasure whenever he was in requirement. He maintains a fair amount of distance between his professional life and sensual pleasure life. He frequently enjoys his weekends at remote places in comfortable inns and habitually voyages to look out for some antique pieces at low cost for future decoration. Alec’s life takes a decisive turn when he happens to visit Lambton – for the Classic Car Association wherein he sees Sue who has come with her father – Manohar in a Van – having food and refreshment for people. In the first sight, they develop fondness for each other and decide to meet next Friday. Sue’s parents – Manohar and his wife immigrated to Canada from Calcutta in India, and they had to tolerate quite a lot in their adopted country since Manohar in spite of having qualification of a civil engineer, seems useless in this country. In such perturbed condition, he developed the habit of smoking, unfamiliar to his wife, but known to her daughter – Sumintra, who likes to have alcohol. Similar condition is also
experienced by Sumintra’s schoolmate – Rima’s parents – Mr and Mrs Prasad. Bissoondath also introduces original Canadian flavour with the character called Kelly – Ann or Kelly, Sue’s friend who adopted a condition, having graduation in architecture but to satisfy her inner self – design shopping malls merely. Sue happened to be Kelly’s friend at university, that place where Sumintra gave up architecture to study English literature. They have been known for each other almost four years now. It is quite evident that ‘Sue’ or Sumintra’s parents did not like her decision to leave architect for studying literature. Bissoondath here appears to have presented the life of youth in Canada in a contrasting manner – like Kelly happens to manifest typical Canadian carefree youth, willing to have her personal choice in living life and on the contrary, Sumintra and Rima depict typical Indian girls in Canada suppressed with Indian parents’ traditional mindset. Mother of Sumintra possesses characteristic or archetypal Indian mother anticipating her daughter to act as a genuine girl who requires to acquire high qualification like Rima – daughter of Dr and Mr. Prasad, intellectual and bright students who is supposed to work on intense research in Chemistry or to have degrees from University of Toronto, supposed dual pressure from parents and Indian immigrants community. Moderately, Rima and Sumintra symbolizes Indian origin girls in Canada, who are constrained under the pseudo prejudices of family and community honour and compelled to lead a life with suppression of their wishes, under the consistent command of their parents similarly like a ‘prisoned innocent’. It appears as if lack of right in terms of choice or freedom in Canada and quite evident in case of Indian girls, for example, Rima happens to love a
Jewish – a white boy, while her parents get aware about it, they deport her back to India and also snatched her passport so that she is unable to come back to Canada.

Another case Sumintra is also facing similar intricacy in residing Canada and supposed to pursue with Indian tradition and way of living. For example, Sumintra is reprimanded for calling her parents as ‘guys’. Besides, her mother has rigorously educated her to have a safe detachment from BMWs - Blacks, Muslims and Whites that indicates their narrow minded or blinkered approach. Even parents of Sue or Sumintra feel reluctant to allow ‘Sue’ to indulge in a party at Kelly’s apartment after graduation by providing defence of safety issue. In fact, the parents are sceptical that their daughter would turn into a total westernizer by being a part of these kinds of parties and for them it would be quite complicated to hold her. In order to keep the daughter safe from this professed corrupt world, they persist Sumintra to select a life partner out of existing three people – a pharmacist, an aged widower Indian professor and a son of a successful Indian immigrant businessman since they hold a perspective that she does not have much options. Sumintra on the contrary has a belief that whoever a person marries her or accept for what she is and she will find him one day and it is evidently contrasted feeling for her parents who are having Indian mindset that children have to live with parents until their marriage and selection procedure is performed by parents not by boy or girl themselves. The aspect appears as an assault on Sumintra’s liberty of selection and rights of individual, in spite of having her aspirations. She is unable to live her life accord to her desires. It seems Sumintra’s state is quite agonizing that she ragged amid the Indian world of her parents
and her own world of preference i.e. western world. Her endeavour for modification deflects her away from completing her wants, yearnings and visions and due to that at any time she is unable to hold her sexual desire, she utilizes sex toys like Kelly and other Canadian teenagers, to accomplish her sexual cravings. Occasionally she makes an attempt to feel real physical contentment as Kelly who has boyfriends and used to go for one-night stand with them and it happens one day that she accompanies Kelly at a party where Sue meets a white-British young man – Dan who abuses her by calling her as ‘Cunt’ – an extremely unpleasant or objectionable person for her reluctance to have pleasure from sex. In fact, one can feel that it’s a part of her inherent Indian mentality averts her from involving liberally in physical contentment that is why she discards sexual proceeds of Dan. The racial comment ‘Pakistani girl’ heightens the feeling of humiliation for Sumintra who deals with identity problem as her name is connected with the memory for her mother’s cousin - Sumintra who was to their family primarily when they landed in Canada and lost her life in very famous 9-11, the terrorist blow on the twin towers of World Trade Centre with her twins – Pria and Vasti. Sumintra’s mother anticipates from her to lead similar kind of life Sumintra as genuine, humble and supportive lady that perturbs Sue much more. She believes that she is unable to live her own life in entirety for ‘Sumintra’s life’ although she prefers to live as ‘Sue’. Her father calms her by intimating that she is living her life and not anybody else’s life. As per Kelly’s suggestion, she had made up her mind to accept a job in accounting department of an architecture firm. It has a handsome salary but not a quite aptly appreciated by Sue. However, she persuades her parents to be at Kelly’s apartment for the said job. The
decision has a dual imposition on her – one aspect connect with liberty in life and other guilty feeling that she becomes aware of the fact that his father borrowed the money on a quite high interest rate compared to bank for payment of fees and other expenses. In order to make her life cheerful they lead a life of denial or scarcity in their adopted country during transmission. She laments on that while her parents were having tough times, she was unable to help while studying which she could have done by having part-time job with study. In fact, she craves to escape from uncertain meetings organized for her to select her life partner, majority they do not fall in the category of her ‘type’. In Sumintra’s case, the entire query of ‘type’ seems to be obscured, as she just wants adventures in the presence of man in her life. Sumintra considers herself disregarded in terms of personal and social aspect that is figuratively depicted with dinner table scene wherein she possesses knife, fork and expected to eat Indian food. The incident clearly indicate her senses that she is supposed to pursue with Indian tradition even in Canada then what is the requirement of ‘fork’ and ‘knives’.

When Alec and Sue see each other for the first time at ‘Centennial Park’ Alec revealed about himself as a house painter, however Alec has lied about his profession, real name and identity from ‘Sue’ who considers herself partly contended in the presence of Alec, and that is why willing to pursue on a date with him. One noticeable thing here it is that Sue is the second girl after Caroline, who is able to revitalize Alec’s normal desires as the conflict of head and heart that Alec is facing in what to do and not. Bissoondath seems to project both characters with a similar approach of revelation of few things of life and
convert more pages in their unread book of secrets. It commenced with exchange of incorrect information and covert plan of dinner from Sue’s parents as she resides in Kelly’s apartment due to job. Alec was cautious to detach or remain aloof especially after Caroline episode; however, Sue happens to be fated to turn into one of his secrets, similarly a secret for Sue as well. Alec feels allured in case of Sue, though careful regarding not to lose status in business world for surrendering to his enticement for Sue. He makes efforts to move away from the excitement of Sue through agencies but receives failure, and at last sees Sue. For sue also to be on a first date with Alec, appears to be a kind of adventure in life for which she is thrilled. She feels she has every right to go on a date with Alec, since she is forlorn teenage girl like other Canadian youth. Both the characters in revelation of their introduction play a game of hide and seek with allowing only few things for sharing that indicates both are not frank or shy in revealing their secrets. The first date anticipation of Alec for enjoying the entire body of Sue, stays merely a delusion, since he is able to provide only a kiss on her cheek; however it is sufficient to evoke his libido, which get satisfied with a Call girl sent by agencies. He seems dejected, as Sue has not mailed him for two or three days. On the other side, Sue is reluctant to use the term ‘dear Alec’ after first date, indicates her Indian ancestry compels her to stay in limit however one can notice the consideration of admiration to the significance of Indian culture is more wider and less austere than her mother. She intimates Alec optimistically regarding dinner enjoyment and desires to see him again. As spending her time in reading at nearby park, the existence of unfamiliar persons makes Sue conscious and feels anxious. She begins fancying that she has been raped by
an unknown person, a clear indication of her frantic requirement for sexual pleasure, which is then assured by the sex toy. Like other Canadian youth, Sue has to remain contended with a sex toy as a familiar entity in place of making love to Alec.

On the other side Alec is also in dilemma regarding the said relationship as he has built his career with prudence and calculated manoeuvring, however he is unable to hold this relationship with Sue in a similar manner. In the interim, Sue is compelled to face a bachelor pharmacist who stares her blatantly and she believes or considers that Alec is much better person for her. She wants to pursue her relation with Alec because she senses seclusion like Alec but nobody is willing to admit the truth. Sue play the game of secrecy with her best friend Kelly and her parents, in the first case she reveals to her the name only [and that is fake] and not want to reveal anything about Alec as her parents will not like Alec’s colour i.e. white. Kelly being a concerned friend regards Sue’s parents as medieval and intimates her that she would be watchful instead of her parents when she meets Alec. For Sue, it is like another detective after her parents who will keep a close watch on her life. She believes her life has turned into a type of film to watch or visualize. The condition in which Sue restrains her aspirations and delusions from the commencement that directs her to spend a life like a drifting boat. Nevertheless, Kelly mentions that a drifting boat does not frequently turn up on some shore, since sometime it descends at the underneath of sea, however Sue desires to be confident and searching for a place where she can be real not with simulated persona and she intimates “I am looking for a place where I can be myself just myself, all the time” (Bissoondath 2008, p.174).
With the air of something inconspicuous, Kelly recommends her to be vigilant, however Sue selects to be less harmful than being so much careful every time for her life. To receive warmth and spotlight bit more from Alec, Sue fabricates and intimates a narrative to him that her elder sister entitled Sumintra lost her life in plane crash and body not found, so her parents in profound misery altered her name to hers. i.e. Sumintra and from that onwards they anticipate from Sue to lead life like her and owing to this Sue feels the loss of original identity with emptiness of life. She also intimates her parents desire to marry an Indian person, have some kids and take care of them until they turn old, similar to her elder sister Sumintra. In fact, Sue has provided outlet to her original issues that she is confronting in her life, however under the unique way of giving birth to her alter ego under the title of her elder sister Sumintra. She also intimates Alec that her parents are ignorant regarding their relationship and also will not consider it, as they are supposed to terminate their relationship. Alec presumes her parents as ‘racist’ and gets her to his home to provide some kind of certainty regarding their love but the fact is both are controlling or influencing the truth and deceiving each other in one way or other. Kelly gets suspicious regarding Sue’s advance preparation to move ahead with Alec so she intimates her to have a selection out of two – one – to have relation with Alec and inform her parents about him or another – get relieve or liberate from him and her parents will be ignorant about him in future prospect. With ‘Ice Cube’ game, Kelly presages her to suspend the drama; however, Sue appears in a quandary as Alec satisfies her all ‘desire’. She feels fanatical type of love for Alec – completely contrasting from his pretended personality of a ‘gay’, so unable to hold herself to cheat Alec for love of her parents or
vice-versa. Probably for first time, she is uncertain to have a decision from Parents or Alec, since it promises nothing to her. Sue’s fondness for Alec directs her to be decisive, not an alternative where she is catching a dicey opportunity by organizing meeting of Kelly with Alec, and afterwards she seizes him to her parents for affirmation of her love in front of them. Sue might be conscious about the outcome as inconceivable – she has suspicion of similar incident from her parents as – Mr. & Mrs. Prasad sent their daughter - Rima back to homeland and if that happens, she will not be in a position to meet Alec during the whole span of life. Even Alec seems to be sceptical of having trapped in Kelly’s existence as they both are from similar field architecture/designing and he is worried about his credit – that newspaper might have headline – a gay is having affair with a girl. Sue is perturbed and willing to consider such dicey judgment since her parents decided to marry her off to an aged professor Motilal Mukherjee, a widower, and son of Manohar’s mentor at engineering and a nuclear physicist that indicates an ideal Indian groom having good qualification and status although he is a father of ten year old daughter. Sue’s mother provides a defence for this selection comprises few or no alternatives – she remarks “Sumintra! You are running out of choice”. (Bissoondath 2008, p.193) In case of Sue, one can consider that they [her parents] are falling short in choice. In case of Alec work happens to be his priority rather than anything else, however someway Sue persuades Alec to see Kelly and her parents to intimate them that she has selected him, not her parents. Alec is sceptical in disclosing their affair publicly and Sue demands an honesty from Alec now regarding the relationship. Alec comprehends that Sue is desperate for her relationship and can perform any task to complete her love story
and while Sue inquires Alec about any inexplicable thing regarding his life to which she should not interfere, Alec responds a little bit of puzzling is essential to hold the interest. Alec with intense scrutiny becomes aware that Sue’s decision to switch over from architect to literature has degraded them or disappointed since the profession of teaching is not considered good enough in market of marriage. At present, Alec seems in a tight spot whether to be firm to his pretended personality of a ‘gay’ or acknowledge Sue’s love and abscond everything else. Indeed, it is truth that every person craves to be real, authentic, and tactful to oneself [one’s soul] but Alec is a practical person. It appears that Alec is unwilling to confront his actual personality since he happens to be contended with his forged personality. He evaluates his relationship with Sue on a grade of gratification and displeasure. On the other hand, Bissoondath has presented a character of Sue though torn between Western and Indian culture, has whipped everything – birth certificate, passport and other documents from the home and departs her house with reluctance. The other side although Alec is scared of getting fixed, he is willing to see Kelly at Den. When both meet – they identify each other – as Kelly happens to be the girl Alec asked for sensual pleasure from the agency. Kelly is not exactly a prostitute but sometimes due to unavoidable circumstances of debt used to pick up these kinds of call. Alec escapes from the location having the feeling of scratchy, as due to Sue circumstances have turned indefensible. He is seeking for an alternative. As the apprehension of Alec gets strong that Sue is desperate to reveal the relationship in public, he recommends to have a ride in his Chevy to the isolated avenues in a dark night. On the way, he conveys his vulnerability about revelation of his relationship to the world he considers he will have to
mislay too much. It is a dreadful information for Sue since she seems to have mislaid nearly the whole lot – her parents, house, friend and at present Alec. Still, Alec seems in a quandary regarding revelation of his secrets of life to Sue, up till now only familiar to him, however some concern and care for Sue, he impels to consider a dicey prospect and reveals every secret including – original name, profession, parents, his inheritance, his company, his personality, and few hotel rooms and indulging with girls from the agency, regarding appearance at Den and about her friend Kelly. Indeed, it is awful thing for Sue, however for Alec it seems a feeling of ecstasy of having come across his genuine identity after a long span.

Alec has been on an exploratory expedition with Sue, his original identity, his personality; he reveals the dark or gloomy secrets of life anticipating liberty for his nature. He also expects mercy from Sue’s side whom he presumes that she would comprehend and agree to his requirement for concealment and willing to pursue their relationship regardless of everything, as fellow sufferers in crime. Alex seems to be in delusion in this context since for Sue it is intense type of treachery from the fellow whom she loves and willing to depart from everything for him. While Alec makes an attempt to remind her guilt for deceitful to her parents, her resentment and feeling of disloyalty or infidelity raises and as a result or outcome she commands Alec to stop the car and lopes from the car in a deserted street. Alec considers the act of Sue as perverse and the panic aspect heightens in the mind of Alec that Sue might disclose his secrets to the universe compels him to kill Sue with his car.
Sardonically, the murder is considered into hit-and-run case and Alec seems carefree from the clutch of police, since his car is unregistered and the important aspect – having no eyewitness. He desperately removes the traces of any indication from his car as he does possess that talent of converting something new from old. Alec admits the fact that he will recall Sue since they seem to be identical in majority cases; for example, Alec discovers that Sue’s original name was Sumintra, the only child, no sister from Indian immigrant family who resides in suburbs, not in midtown. Alec respect Sue for the fixture she played with him.

The present novel happens to be the fiction of constructing and maintaining secrets [sins] merely to us, and not to unveil to other and yet having the delight of allocating the secrets. The secrets here might represent the problem of identity that both the characters inhabit especially and few other characters as well. In actual type, this is incredible account of fascination wherein few souls have been designed on the mode that drives them to assume or consider that they are of great design developed into their inimitable furtives.

*Doing the heart Good* [2002]

Bissoondath’s *Doing the Heart Good* at the outset reveals the tone of vulnerability of the central character – cum – narrator – Alistair Mackenzie [75], a retired English professor, who resides with his daughter – Agnes and her husband ever since past six months. The death of his wife has left Mackenzie lonely and his house has been burnt. The novel also depicts other characters like – Thrush, Mackenzie’s colleague cum friend, Frank, Boobie
and his brother, who face troubles in context of identity, racism and multiculturalism. Alistair makes an attempt to get accustomed to new location and the clothes provided by her daughter, recalling his past. With the dual misery of wife’s death and burnt house, Alistair seems to be facing monarchy of solitude and quite aptly replicated in his assertion that majority people became part of his life and dwelled for the time being, departed which created the absence of emptiness in his life to whom he is facing with great difficulty.

Alistair appears to be a character connected with 1920, his birth year, which was not quite pleasant for his mother since that time, was of despair, and this aspect hurts him in present scenario that from the commencement of his life he used to be considered irrelevant. He constantly feels the panic of having ‘forgotten’, accordingly he reminisces his memory of past and attempts to have it on some paper. Mackenzie had a disturbed childhood since his parents were having differences. However, after the loss of his parents, his attention is focused towards his daughter and he enables his efforts to bend himself as per her daughter – Agne’s temperament that resembles like his wife – Mary, so compassionate and adamant. Alistair is contemptuous regarding his present as well as past; so while he sees somebody fascinating he merely visualizes that person’s defects. Even with his son-in-law Jaques, who has sphere of physics, regarding which Mackenzie is unaware, however he does not interact much with him despite having similar connection to teaching and research field that they both inhabit. Agnes being young bank manager, prefers to do some social or charitable work to render some amenities to the
girls who have turned pregnant in teenage tenure however, Mackenzie perceives the aspect erroneous approach of assistance.

Alistair Mackenzie recalls his colleague – Thrush who joined the department only one term before Mackenzie appeared. He happens to be one or two years senior and performed the duty of a gunner during the war. He seems to be astonished with Mackenzie’s student – Eliot, the blind student and his research papers. Thrush appears to be character of aloofness; however, Alistair considers his long span of unmarried persona responsible as trouble to him. Bissoondath seems to have raised the issue of real identity through tragic incident of Thrush. A girl student called – Miss R professed accusations against Prof. Thrush for sexual harassment and trajectory happens that Alistair is supposed to be one of the members of the panel with Professor de Vasconselos and Professor Goldman to ascertain fact regarding the charges. In fact, Miss R was fixed under the blames of plagiarism in essays and she admits her mistake and provides the defence that out of anxiety or stress she performed this kind of act. However, she claims that Prof. Thrush has warned her for eviction from university and demanded physical contentment in favour of kindness foe her grim fault. It appears quite deplorable or disgusting reality for the panel, nevertheless Mackenzie interprets this demand as he has visualized a person who is lonely in terms of emotional support. There comes the turn of Prof. Thrush to reveal his version of the incident, however he seems secluded and lonesome. Certainly, he was not verified as culpable, although group of his college or may be colleagues with their pre conceived judgment notion recognized him as
blameworthy. Having provided rationalization Thrush considers that panel seems to be partisan and not attempting to verify the truth about the entire case. He is unable to prove his virtuousness as the breeze is driving against him. The panel is supposed to yield a report to the higher authorities for further action. The panel seems to have alienated perspectives since Prof. Goldman, a lady faculty is unwilling to admit Thrush’s statement and wishes to have some severe action, while Prof. Vasconselos pleads everybody not to heed every word of the girl student, as at last it turns up to Mackenzie as to what to verdict he would declare that will choose Thrush’s prospect. He considers that many years of solitude has turned Thrush imprudent and he seems blameworthy of immodesty.

The incident allowed Thrush to take a decision of early retirement with immediate impact and nothing happens under the title called farewell – no speech, no thanks etc. He has resigned since he is aware that committee, department or institute, all assert themselves sanctimonious until they have not been fixed or confirmed fateful. Thrush is a gamble for fake bureaucracy who is unable to work in speed to save somebody’s status before defilement. Thrush has left an envelope with a photo, where on the backside – THE WAR is written – it seems a type of war in opposition to society to reinstate his status which has distorted due to fake assertion. Mackenzie later on becomes aware of virtuousness or innocence of Thrush when he looks at the naked photo of Thrush where penis not found that indicates Thrush was a eunuch and therefore could not have asked for any kind of physical contentment. Alistair laments on it and makes the efforts of protect by disclosing that Thrush should have naked himself in front of panel to demonstrate himself correct since the procedures were secret and nothing would have
been disclosed. Alistair misapprehends Prof. Thrush – a person who visualizes beauty in everything except himself. He laments with his suicide.

Bissoondath has represented one more character as refugee in the unknown land that is Frank, occasionally performed duty of a gardener happens to see Alistair after a long span of time. He is also aloof after the death of his wife, living at the corner outside the apartment building. Since he is in such a despair he has sold his trade since nobody is the heir to whom he can provide anything. When the building administrator is missing with illness or vacation – Frank does his work. Frank has come to Alistair to ask for help from Mackenzie for Boobie, huffy appearance 16 years old young man who has not experienced world in terms of faith and fortune or destiny to a piece of paper – passport, visa since no one can meet the expertise of that delusion in this world. Boobie is 16 years old and his elder brother as refugee possess visa or letter of rent promised for six months through church sponsors for regarding superintendent with assurance regarding work. Identically Frank seems too indifferent to both his duty and work with them, as one cannot have pay for becoming to be well mannered to someone. Boobie looks infuriated with Frank since he experiences uncovered and vulnerable in this new location that happens to be ‘second home’ for them.

Boobie and his brother have great vision as shifting to Canada from their homeland or country – the country of historical edgyness (preferably an Asian country – may be Pakistan or Bangladesh) where scarcity and battle have grown into the driving aspect. Both brother face troubles in the new land – one is – Boobie’s brother perplexed whether
to have the role of architect or actor although having spent two years in Academy of Dramatic Arts, the other one Boobie is supposed to get trained himself with new language and compelled to make multiple alteration in new country. They have encountered callous veracities of migration from their commencement of advent in the country. Although they are having adversity, they believe their ‘home’ is not better, ‘here’ better (Bissoondath 2002, p.229). Occasionally Boobie supposes that his brother was grief stricken with the demolition of their gorgeous city than by the decimation of its residents. Through the character of Boobie’s brother Bissoondath seems to consider positivity of the country when he shares his beliefs – the grass in this country is not merely for esteem; occasionally it provides protection to refugees like them. Frank facilitates them to have a small place to survive and continue with their usual aspects in a new home. Frank also seems to be perturbed with the condition of refugee – ‘gloom from one, dismay from the other, A Pathetic Sight’ (Bissoondath 2002, p.233) – since he also encountered similar issues at the time of arrival as a refugee. For Boobie, language classes and work for his brother turns to be the practice and they acclimatize to cooking. All these issues they consider since their passport – papers - visa like gold and better prospect for job and house in foreign land however in reality it is insufficient since this is a ‘second life’ for them and everyone is not fortunate enough to have whatsoever they have fancied at the time of migration as the realism tends to be constantly concrete, ruthless and entirely petrified from that everybody is supposed to awaken as it is not a ‘sweet dream’.
Boobie senses homesickness and in language classes the term ‘home’ compels him to tackle with it. Previous reminiscences like high wall from which words [new language] cannot leap, accordingly their reminiscences of his home, his friend – Ingam and girlfriend – Adriana certainly did not depart. Ingam, his best friend and at present on occasion, for whom Boobie has nothing to offer after he had selected to be part of the armed groups hunting down ‘rug-kissers’ as his motion had twisted creepy. Bissoondath here reveals the backdrop of Boobie and his motive as refugee to turn into the unknown land to achieve something. Boobie’s grandfather was a wealthy farmer, possessing many lands with wheat – requiring twenty to thirty people to perform harvest. Somehow, the land of his grandfather is taken over and ultimately it caused death of grandparents and parents, now their sacrifice to shield the land is operating like toxin in the mind of Boobie. Anyhow, he desires vengeance besides land back and for reduction of the labour of many years, that is the reason for his arrival in Canada. Moreover, the affection for the soil is a lot and the battle had generated the ambience the life turned stiff to survive in the city. In the battle span, every person from eighteen and fifty had been cleaned up with the fear of gun. The spitefulness of soldiers was apparent when they cut and played football with Adriana’s head and her whole body spreaded with their semen. The war period criminal, famous mob rouser in the town before the battle, whose people were endorsed to rape any woman to calm their poaching blood and accountable for Adriana’s brutal murder, happens to moved to the building where Frank is an administrator. That criminal is residing there with altered individuality since there are many bakers today who were once butcher. To our dismay in support of Boobie, Frank killed that man as a vengeance
for Adriana, having consideration that Boobie would face issues if found guilty that a refugee having intention of murder that will destroy his entire life in foreign land where laws and procedures have objective to maintain its own mat spotless, thus Frank made up his mind to perform the task. Alistair is dreadfully scared for Frank. At the outset it can be perceived imprudent gesture committed by an adult personality however later on we visualize the rationale for this extraordinary deed as for Frank, having no life to go back to ‘homeland’ of past tense, from where he belongs to. He has no alternative to go back; barely can he decide to set out to prospect [at present in the similar country he resides]. However, ‘here’ Frank is also tormenting from identity problem as every refugee confronts it.

Additionally, one more poignant explanation for Frank’s killing relates with his bothered marriage life as his wife was unable to conceive turns an immense blow for Frank being a refugee since every refugee expects children for prospect and this moment converted everything. Frank is a kind of person who craves to live life merely for harmony and no repentance for murder since he considers it as a duty performed for Boobie whom Frank believes as his child. So, he considers it was essential for him to proceed compared to Boobie who has yet to commence new life, so he completed his own life by putting it into trouble and acknowledges it as a parent’s surrender for their children [like Boobie]. Paradoxically, Frank has depicted immense quantity of sentiment and sacrificed his remaining life for his son like Boobie. However, the news headline intimates that Frank, a retired gardener killed the person who was tarnished in his own country for his role in
various butchery and not a one word is revealed regarding Boobie. Bissoondath also takes us into the glimpse of Mary – Mackenzie’ wife – Mary had united with a group concerning for human rights in which Windy is familiar one for Mary. Windy knows Alistair very well as she worked for few months as receptionist in his department at university. Both women – Mary and Windy depict utmost care for prisoners and plead for their early freedom. The work provides them a sense of contentment, however occasionally, they win and lose. Windy likes to live merely for victory, the intension has to be questioned in the context as Alistair also believes her idea of social work is weird since she cares for her own contentment than ultimate fate of those for whom she is expected to work for.

Another tragic aspect Bissoondath reveals that Mary’s death conveys a daylight of a new life of Alistair, a life at that time too horrible to envision since isolation is eternal for Mackenzie. Mary’s death is caused due to massive heart attack in 1988 and that changed the world of Alistair Mackenzie. Ruth-Ann- Alistair’s sister does not react with emotions in fact she wishes to have one more life partner for Mackenzie to which he denies. The life of Alistair has a drastic change after the death of Mary, since Alistair seems to be becoming even deaf from inside. His behaviour with his neighbour Tremblay is worst and intimidating. In fact, his solitude gets an outcome in the form of forceful conduct. Agnes, the daughter urges her father to stay at her home rather than the life of seclusion but Alistair having great affection for ‘home’ in which he lived for so long and craves to live up to death in the similar house. He also provides of the defence of language obstacle
between him and his grandson, which replicates generation obstacle of language and ideology. With his son-in-law Jaques’s family, he also confronts – communication gap - as having rustic aspect in their language. In fact, Alistair provides these excuses merely because having fright of being abandoned sitting in the middle of party, incapable to partake. Agnes being a careful daughter is dreadful for his father’s behaviour of not leaving apart the aloofness. Alistair happens to quarrel with Tremblay; however, Tremblay is a kind of person would like to help everyone. Alistair is on the contrary so bigoted that he is unable to comprehend Tremblay’s compassion and benevolence for him.

One night as the uncivilized youth with full of passion gathered to celebrate the victory of the baseball team – The Boston Manager, they set fire to one sheet of paper after another, having no seriousness regarding the damage of that aspect the carefree youth is hold responsible for setting a fire into Alistair’s house. At that time, it is Tremblay who rescued Alistair with his medals from the profound fire, which burnt house. The tragic incident compels Mackenzie to move to Agnes’s home for shelter that too unwillingly he had to depart from his home. After the time span of six months Agnes comprehends Alistair is not placid, she urges her father to call Mr. Tremblay and finally with the conversation between both of them had provided relief to him. Tremblay informs Alistair that both husband – wife are attempting to learn new language – Spanish for their next voyage, Alistair also feels the similar need, to which Tremblay replies – no need for it since a tiny visit to Tremblay’s place is sufficient. It appears like an attempt to do
something good for heart. Here, Bissoondath represents the loneliness of Alistair in a
perfect manner to depict the problem of identity.
End Chapter Reference:


Ibid. p. 378.

Ibid. p. 201.

Ibid. p. 81.


Ibid. p. 107-108.

Ibid. p. 192.

Ibid. p. 162.

Ibid. p. 230.
Ibid. p. 88.
Ibid. p. 140.
Ibid. p. 33.
Ibid. p. 23.

Ibid. p. 237.
Ibid. p. 57.
Ibid. p. 237.
Ibid. p. 15.
Ibid. p. 306.
Ibid. p. 124.

Ibid. p. 55.
Ibid. p. 100.
Ibid. p. 318.

Ibid. p. 48-49.
Ibid. p. 174.

Ibid. p. 193.


Ibid. p. 233.


Pandya, Chiragkumar S. *The Human Condition in the Selected Novels of Neil Bissoondath*, Thesis from Hemchandracharya North Gujarat University, Patan, September, 2014. Print