

Conclusion

The advocates of Internationalism in Diaspora Studies argue that diaspora communities allow for a rise in prosperity, business skills and networks, and have a willingness to collaborate with the home country. Thus Indo – Canadian communities' relationships should play a vital role in Canada – India economic relationships. The final report in 2006 of the National Diaspora Strategies: India, China and Canada workshop:

There are over 20 million Indian people in the diaspora across 110 countries, and they play five significant roles as investor, customer, supplier, ambassador and philanthropist. The Indian Diaspora has experienced a considerable growth of capital formation, and major investment in the future can be in social infrastructure, business expansion, new venture funds and diversity portfolio investment. The India diaspora could be an attractive market segment for Indian exports.

This means the immigration process does not conclude in permanent settlement, integration and citizenship in the host country anymore. The “development of communities, facilitated international travel, liberal host country policies, and changes in the structure of international finance and politics” has helped diasporas to simultaneously integrate into the host country and to maintain their links with their countries of origin as well as with the members of the same ethnic groups dispersed around the world. In this sense diasporas can be an influential force within Canada and in various parts of the world and can act as ‘cultural brokers’. Communication highways, politicians, and transnational citizens, besides being ‘economic investors’, diasporas as ‘cultural brokers’ too with the

knowledge of their home country can help Canada improve its internal and international affairs'. Former Prime Minister Jean Chretien wisely took a number of Sikh cabinet members with him on his visit to India. With internet and communication technology, members of Diaspora communities within and across groups behind national borders and transcend those governmental states that restrict freedom of speech, expression and communication. They participate in international protests, human rights movements and carve more democratic spaces. Diasporas in Canada 'exert tremendous effort to raise awareness about issues and injustices in their source countries'.

It is this ability to interrogate the nation and its quotidian regimes of normalization from within rather than against their global, cultural, and political discrepancies that makes diaspora a productive category of cultural knowledge production and literary analysis. Characters in Indian English writings are therefore far less likely to be in the mould of the hero single-handedly charting his course in life and being the master of his fate and captain of his soul, defying the norms of his community in the process. Characters in these novels are portrayed to be deeply embedded in their community, often seen to be wrestling with multiples ties of duty, tradition, expectations and familial claims, and their own culturally instilled passivity. This, of course, is in stark contrast to "the classical Bildungsroman plot which posits happiness' as the highest value."

The fast-growing literary subculture of Indian women's literature in English has not enjoyed unimpeded development. The very act of writing in English, the connotations of such a choice, its implications on authorial intent and readership, all

render this literary subculture particularly susceptible to controversy, quite apart from the literary and linguistic problems of expression experienced by writers. The resultant hybridity of language produced in the works of contemporary Indian women writers is perhaps the medium evolved to cope with the interrogation of patriarchal expectations and traditional norms, and self-redefinition. It is undeniable that there is a degree of exotica in both the language and the content of some Indian English writings, but as has been illustrated, there is also a tremendous contribution both to English and to Literature in English on the part of the women writers. Such writers continue to grapple with the challenge of expressing an Indian reality in the English language.

Contemporary Indian women writers have come a long way from the classical Bildungsroman plot of the western novel. There are now certain identifiable defining characteristics of this literary subculture, one of which is the focus on women. Another defining characteristic which has been discussed is the inclination to a homogenized portrayal of the Indian subcontinent. Certain words, objects and concepts are associated with India in the popular imagination outside the country, which the writer in English may be tempted to deploy as short-cuts to create an ambience. Such 'short-cuts' may undermine the development of the language in Indian Literature in English, but there is a still more serious consequence of the over-usage of short cuts -the limitation of themes and topic to those which can be readily identifiable as belonging to this genre, at the expense of other themes which become sidelined or neglected because they do not provide such convenient literary short-cuts. A third defining characteristic of Indian women's literature in English is its inclination to posit protagonists as victims. The writings of Indian women writers

have been undervalued initially due to patriarchal thought processes and male experience has always been given more importance. One factor contributing to this prejudice might be that most of these women used to write about the female world only and women's perceptions of their experience within it. Consequently, it is assumed that their work will automatically rank below the works of male writers who deal with 'weightier' themes. Additionally, Indian women writers in English also suffer from a second prejudice, vis-à-vis their regional counterparts. Since proficiency in English is available only to writers of the intellectual, affluent, educated classes, a frequent judgment is made that the writers, and their works, belong to a high social strata, and are cut off from the reality of Indian life. The majority of these novels depict the psychological suffering of the frustrated housewife, this subject matter often being considered superficial compared to the depiction of the repressed and oppressed lives of women of the lower classes that we find in regional authors writing in Hindi, Bengali, Malayalam, Urdu, Tamil, Telugu, and other native languages. The establishment of English colleges in India led to the creation of an English-educated, and predominantly Hindu, elite, who eventually became critical of both their own religious orthodoxies, such as the caste system and child brides, and of British rule. Western education also had the effect of linking Indian writers to literary traditions of the West, enabling Indian writers writing in English to reach an audience in Europe as well as in India.

In the nineteenth century, both progressive and orthodox reformers supported female education in India, believing that social evils could only be eliminated through education. Christian missionaries and British rulers, especially in Bengal where the British had made their first inroads in the mid-nineteenth century, started

girls' schools, and in the 1880s, Indian women started to graduate from universities. The vast majority of girls, however, did not attend school, as education for women was mainly confined to the larger towns and cities. Prior to the rise of the novel, many Indian women composed poetry and short stories in Hindi, Punjabi, Bengali, Urdu, Tamil, Malayalam and Kannada. Women were the chief upholders of a rich oral tradition of story-telling, through myths, legends, songs and fables. Once literacy began to filter through society, those stories were transformed into poetry and drama. The novel was not at first a common form, perhaps because the majority of women had less access to education than men. It was not until prose began to be used in the late nineteenth century by Bengali writers who had been exposed to European culture that the novel form took hold in India.

The volume of Indian literature written in English is smaller than that written in the various regional languages, and spans a smaller range of time, having only commenced with the spread of the English language and education. But in the last two decades there has been an astonishing flowering of Indian women writing in English, the literature of this period being published both in India and elsewhere.

Indian women novelists explore different nuances of female consciousness, hence establishing an identity apart from patriarchal standards. Thus, the theme of growing up from childhood to womanhood, that is, the Bildungsroman, is a recurrent strategy. Santha Rama Rau's *Remember the House* (1956), Ruth Pravar Jhabvala's first novel *To Whom She Will* (1955) and her later *Heat and Dust* (1975) which was awarded the Booker Prize, and Kamala Markandaya's *Two Virgins* (1973) are good examples. Sex is implied in these novels, but depicted more

explicitly in *Socialite Evenings* (1989) by Shobha De, in which she describes the exotic sex lives of the high society in Mumbai.

As in poetry, the image of the New Woman and her struggle for an identity of her 'self' also emerges in the Indian English novel. Such a struggle needs support structures outside the family to enable women to survive. Nayantara Sahgal uses this theme as the nucleus of *Rich Like Us* (1986). Other novels, such as Rama Mehta's *Inside the Haveli* (1977), look more towards issues of traditional Indian culture, particularly the debate on female education. Another example of the western educated female protagonist's quest for her cultural roots is Githa Hariharan's *The Thousand Faces of Night* (1992).

Many of these authors, such as Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni in *The Mistress of Spices* (1997), use magic realism in their novels. Suniti Namjoshi stands out for her use of fantasy and surrealism, and Anuradha Marwah-Roy's *Idol Love* (1999) presents a chilling picture of an Indian dystopia in the twenty-first century. Other novels deal with various aspects of college life, such as Meena Alexander's *Nampally House* (1991), and Rani Dharker's *The Virgin Syndrome* (1997). Another theme to emerge is that of the lives of women during India's struggle for independence, as seen for example in Manju Kapur's *Difficult Daughters* (1998).

In the field of regional fiction, four women writers, Arundhati Roy, Anita Nair, Kamala Das, and Susan Viswanathan, have put the southern state of Kerala on the fictional map, while the culture of other regions has been represented by other women writers.

A number of Indian women novelists made their debut in the 1990s, producing novels which revealed the true state of Indian society and its treatment of women. These writers were born after Indian independence, and the English language does not have colonial associations for them. Their work is marked by an impressive feel for the language, and an authentic presentation of contemporary India, with all its regional variations. They generally write about the urban middle class, the stratum of society they know best.

Indian diasporic writers have contributed significantly to the evolution of English in Indian English Literature. Undoubtedly, the male pioneers of Indian English Literature have also made huge contributions to the development of this comparatively young branch of literature, but Indian women are in the unique position of having been “doubly colonized”. Their contributions are particularly valuable as contributions from those who have twice been forced into the role as “the other”, first as the colonized, and then as women. Having been “doubly othered”, Indian women writers are therefore inclined to avail themselves of the strategies of subversion, deconstruction, and reconstruction in order to break their silence, retell tales, and recount their point of view. At every stage, the woman writer had to negotiate patriarchy in complex and often circuitous ways. For Indian women writers, the negotiation is not only with language, but also a negotiation of a space for women writers, to write, rewrite, re-define, re-name and re-invent, in a traditionally and proudly patriarchal society and culture. Living as they did on the edge – they developed a particular way of seeing reality. We looked both from outside and from the inside out.

Like the rabbit to Australia, the novel to Indian literary scene is an imported latecomer which has flourished in its new habitat. The novel is not an art form intrinsic in the Indian literary tradition, and the novel written in English is an even younger branch of its literature. As for the novel written in English by Indian women writers, this represents a very recent development on the Indian English literary scene. The recent phenomenon of Indian women writers producing novels which have exploded onto the literary scene and have been prominent in the public eye is in part thanks to the celebrity status of several women writers who have recently won prestigious and high-profile international literary awards. Its male writers have long been celebrated by the literary world, with Rabindranath Tagore winning the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1913 and V.S. Naipaul winning the same in 2001, and Salman Rushdie winning the Booker Prize (in 1981 for *Midnight's Children*). Indian male writers have also featured amongst Commonwealth Prize Winners, the ones of the last decade include Rohinton Mistry (in 1992 for *Such a Long Journey*, and again in 1996 for *A Fine Balance*) and Vikram Seth (in 1994 for *A Suitable Boy*). Joining this prestigious list of writers have been Arundhati Roy, winner of the 1997 Booker Prize with *The God of Small Things*, and Jhumpa Lahiri, winner of the 1999 Pulitzer Prize with her collection of short stories, *Interpreter of Maladies*.

The publicity of the successes of Roy and Lahiri on both sides of the Atlantic has brought world recognition for Indian women writers across the borders too and encouraged aspiring writers who are currently more prolifically published than ever before in the history of the genre. Indian women's writings have become more popular and widespread as a consequence.

Like Australia, Canada is a country of immigrants. Canada's social democratic political culture has encouraged immigrants to maintain and nurture the ethnic and religious traditions they bring to their new home, rather than to abandon them in the name of a more homogenizing nationalist myth. The difference is enshrined in the Canadian Multiculturalism Act, which was passed into law 21st July, 1988. Among other things, this act declares that Canadian Federal government policy will 'recognize and promote the understanding that multiculturalism reflects the cultural and racial diversity of Canadian society and acknowledges the freedom of all members of Canadian society to preserve, enhance and share their cultural heritage, what Canadian social philosopher Charles Taylor calls a 'politics of recognition informs this position –a public recognition of the creative possibilities and ethical prerogatives of difference, including religious difference. Ironically, however, precisely because new Canadians enjoy the freedom to maintain living connections with their countries of origin, the process of settling and making a home in a foreign country becomes more complex and potentially more traumatic.

In the wake of colonialism and neocolonialism large numbers of people all over the world have turned their backs on their home countries and migrated to flee either persecution or poverty. The large scale wanderings of people from Africa, the Caribbean and the Asian subcontinent into the Anglo- American diaspora have altered the composition of western societies profoundly. The point here is that the changes which these immigrants to Britain, Canada or the United States have initiated have not only been sociological but also cultural. In as much as both the Western host culture and the respective culture of the migrant are challenged and

therefore raised to new level of consciousness and awareness, the cultural implications of globalization demand a double perspective.

In more accessible terms, the central concern for many who feel themselves uprooted is how to make life in the diaspora 'livable'. My phrasing here is deliberately vague. 'Livable' can refer to an attempt to reproduce the old country of origin is happily discarded in favour of the country of adoption. In general, the implications of what 'liveable' entails will be negotiated along a spectrum of possibilities ranging from assimilation in a new culture to the retention of the old, or, put differently, along a continuum from sameness to difference. It will be eventually argued that the search for a personal/cultural identity enacted in immigrant fiction opens up perspectives for reconfiguring Canadian national/multicultural identity. While the aspect of 'construction' implies that a self-image does not rely on essentialist formulations but is in need of a difference against which it can be defined, 'functional' here means that the kinds of difference together with the purposes towards which difference is invoked will be analyzed in particular. It is striking that immigrant writers such as MG Vassanji, Neil Bissoondath, Rohinton Mistry, and also Michael Ondaatje, Nino Ricci, and Joy Kogwa do not simply negotiate identities in a globalized world by exploring Canada and its multicultural society but also come to an understanding of themselves by directing their attention to their respective countries of origin and working through their attention to their past and histories.

In the delineated place whether a global region, a nation state, empire or kingdom, or a small locality – the people involved have recognized the existence of

different internally organized cultural sets of practices. And these sets of practices are denominated by their practitioners or others as belonging to sects, whether these sects have religious (“communal” in Indian parlance), caste or other bases. Multiculturalism is what we are able to detect different cultural patterns distinguishing people into groups. Whether multiculturalism “hides” or “encodes” hegemonizing tendencies depends upon particular circumstances that would severely qualify the term. But a society is not significantly multicultural if its distinct parts relate mainly through assimilation or “civilizational blending” or are dominated in some way, for example, by a “mainstream”, or are otherwise hegemonically organized. Like democracy, multiculturalism is not a yes-or-no, here –or – there situation, but a generally nonviolent way in which different people relate to each other, a mode of interrelating, moreover, that is never, that is never static nor everywhere true to the ideal of mutual tolerance. Diaspora or Diasporic Writings are not a new trend but an exemplary feature of transnational movement which gets manifested into written words. The term ‘diaspora’ was once used to describe Jewish and Greek scattering but today it has become an umbrella term that harbors all geographical cartographic shifts from one nation to another and reinscribes the psycho cartography that constructs a new space. If colonization gave rise to forced expatriation then post colonial times intensified willed migrations of people.

‘Home’, ‘Roots’, ‘Belonging’ are some of the primary concerns of the immigrant community and diasporic writers. The basic issues and the common themes are nostalgia for homeland, pain and agony of homelessness, displacement and relocation, the split between the native homeland and the adopted nation, the bicultural pull between the donor and recipient cultures and the emotional

fragmentation between two identities, two mindsets. If experience of migration and exile is painful and emancipating then its challenges lie in hybridization, acculturation, and assimilation despite fragmentation. Landscape of memory carries the 'Imaginary Homelands' as frozen pictures, but at the same time it gives a new dimension to rethinking of concept of home. For home it gives a new dimension to rethinking of concept of home. For home is where your feet are.

Expatriation poses problems of greater magnitude for Asians and Africans who emigrate to the western world because there are profound differences between the non-white culture they enter. One of the recurring themes in expatriate fiction is the problem of rootlessness, the search for identity. This problem lies at the centre of modern life and literature.

In the 1970s Canada and the United States opened their doors more widely to immigrants from the developing regions and these countries replaced Britain as the destination of English speaking immigrants. North America had long attracted immigrants from the south Asian region. There are such women writers from the United States and Canada, like Ramabai Espinet, Jhumpa Lahiri, Amulya Malladi, Sujata Massey, Bharati Mukherjee, Uma Parameswaran, Kirin Narayan, Anita Rau Badami, and Vineeta Vijayaraghavan who write on south Asian diasporic experiences. Writers like Uma parameswaran, Surjit Kalsey, Lakshmi Gill and Himani Benerjee articulate the interplay of race and gender impending the growth of Indian women in Canada, in number of their works. There are many Indian women writers based in the USA, Canada, Britain, and other parts of the world. Some are recent immigrants, while others, such as Jhumpa Lahiri, are second generation

immigrants. These authors write about their situation in cross-cultural contexts - states of 'in-betweenness' and explore their 'imaginary homelands' with a very fond eye. But Diasporic representation has also been questioned on several counts. Critics argue that most diasporic writers have a weak grasp of actual conditions in contemporary India, and tend to recreate it through the lens of nostalgia, writing about 'imaginary homelands'. Distancing lends objectivity, but it can also lead to the ossification of cultural constructs, and even if memory is sharp and clear, the immigrant is not directly in contact with the reality of India. But when as readers we read their literary attempts, we smell India, we breathe its air, we eat its food and we never feel, not even once that it's 'some outsider who is portraying India'. Because their association with India has been continuous. They are part and parcel of their 'homeland' as much as they are of their 'adopted land'.

The East/West confrontation, or the clash between tradition and modernity, is the impulse behind the works of acclaimed migrant writers, such as Meera Syal, Anita Rau Badami, Shauna Singh Baldwin, Uma Parameswaran, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, Anjana Appachana, and Kiran Desai. The decision of migration that leads to self-discovery, sense of dislocation, musings and probing into the history of their homeland, the experiences of second generation immigrants and clashes between first and second generation immigrants, their daily lives balancing both worlds and assimilation process are some of the recurrent themes among diasporic authors.

The Hindu moral code known as The Laws of Manu denies woman an existence apart from that of her husband or his family, and since the publication of

Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's *Rajmohan's Wife* in 1864 a significant number of authors have portrayed Indian women as long-suffering wives and mothers silenced by patriarchy. The ideal of the traditional, oppressed woman persisted in a culture permeated by religious images of virtuous goddesses devoted to their husbands, the Hindu goddesses Sita and Savitri serving as powerful cultural ideals for women. In mythical terms, the dominant feminine prototype is the chaste, patient, self-denying wife, Sita, supported by other figures such as Savitri, Draupadi and Gandhari. When looking at these narratives silence/speech can be a useful guide to interpreting women's responses to patriarchal hegemony. Silence is a symbol of oppression, a characteristic of the subaltern condition, while speech signifies self-expression and liberation. The image of women in fiction has undergone a change during the last four decades. Women writers have moved away from traditional portrayals of enduring, self-sacrificing women toward conflicted female characters searching for identity, no longer characterized and defined simply in terms of their victim status. In contrast to earlier novels, female characters from the 1980s onwards assert themselves and defy marriage and motherhood and diasporic narratives by these women writers have played a very significant role in bringing this change.

Recent writers from Indian Diaspora all across, depict both the diversity of women and the diversity within each woman, rather than limiting the lives of women to one ideal. The novels emerging in the twenty-first century furnish examples of a whole range of attitudes towards the imposition of tradition, some offering an analysis of the family structure and the caste system as the key elements of patriarchal social organization. They also re-interpret mythology by using new symbols and subverting the canonic versions. In conclusion, the work of Indian

women writers is significant in making society aware of women's demands, and in providing a medium for self-expression and, thus, re-writing the History of India.

The popular myths of India contribute to the mindset, attitudes and expectations of Indian men and women, relegating women to specific positions and roles in the society. In rewriting and deconstructing myths, Indian women play their role in creating and highlighting certain elements of Indian identity and positionality. They also play their role as storytellers, contributing to the telling and retelling of tales, telling the tale-within-the tale, creating multiple layers of stories told by multiple narrative voices. It is particularly interesting that although the myths do not portray the women characters as victims (in fact, they present them as paragons), diasporic women writers have mostly picked up on the inherent or implicit devaluing of women in the myths, questioning the roles women play and the expectations women are permitted to entertain, which conspire to the victimizing of women. Women writers have long highlighted the fact that the Indian woman is customarily defined in relation to others and most frequently, in relation to her men folk. These women writers have consistently highlighted the struggles of women to define themselves and achieve greater degrees of autonomy, while continuing to hold fast to family ties, traditional codes of ethics, and even to myths of womanhood. Most diasporic women writers have written emphasizing the individuality of women, attempting to give their women protagonists the power of the self-definition, or at least self-redefinition. However, at the same time, many women writers posit their female protagonists as victims in their societies, seeming almost to equate the very position of women with that of victimhood.

The writings of Indo- Canadian women writers clearly demonstrate that notions of identity are intimately bound up with concepts of home and place. Their

writings also suggest that these notions, as conceived of by the women characters, change over time, and significantly, change depending on their location and environment. Diasporic women writers, almost without exception testify to a sense of dual or multiple identities. Many hint at a 'double consciousness'. Many go on to perceive the East and West as being in cultural conflict and/or opposition, and set up their stories accordingly, always emphasizing the sense of being torn in two directions.

The geographical location of the women characters in the novels of diasporic women writers largely fall into three broad categories: Indian women who were born and bred in a Western country and have subsequently either been sent back to India for a prolonged stay or to be married, or have simply chosen to 'return'; Indian women who were born and bred in India and subsequently have either been sent or have chosen to live in the west, and Indian women who were born and bred in a Western country and continue to live there. Diaspora brings to mind various contested ideals and images. There can be assimilationist or traditionalist stances, but Indo-Canadian Diaspora, like other diasporas is for mutual assimilation and acculturation of the dominant and the immigrant communities, seeing the process as a two-way metamorphosis.

Through their writings, Indo- Canadian Diasporic Women Writers have certainly reinterpreted India not only for themselves but for larger readership all around the world. Diasporic writers have revisited sub continental history, as each ethnic, immigrant and second generation group has done for their 'Old countries'. They have offered Canadians, contemporary and historical comparisons between the

two post colonial societies. And the works of these writers create grounds for further negotiations in various diverse fields. We are living in the decade of globalization and multiculturalism, so it gets more weight age when we talk of or study such diverse literatures. And as a large number of Indians are living in Canada, it's relevant to study how they are assimilating and acculturating to the adopted county and the how they feel about the country and culture that they have left behind. Since writers from India who have settled abroad are being recognized as cultural ambassadors who, despite being assimilated into mainstream 'Other Culture' are still preserving their Indian Identity, it becomes important to see how they negotiate their aesthetics within the dualities of 'Janam Bhumi' and 'Karma Bhumi'. Assimilation and Acculturation in themselves are difficult acts to manipulate while living in a multicultural society where the forces from within are always in opposition to those without.

Is the concept of the Asian Canadian still relevant? Diasporic writers and critics answer this that how increasing interest in Asian and Asian Canadian culture has forced Asian Canadian cultural activities to renegotiate their relations in the new local and global conditions but concludes that while there will be change, the Asian Canadian cultural activists will continue to redefine cultural identities—not just their own but also that of Canada. The continued success of Asian Heritage Month and the government's recognition of it are evidence for that prediction. Scattered through the interviews are comments, both favorable and not, on the value of the government's multiculturalism programs. Relegated to the periphery by the mainstream English-French centrality, these grass-roots community artists and activists (it would not be wrong to use this term for our women writers) utilized their

creative agency as a liberating tool to engage in the production of new consciousness, and actively sought to intervene and challenge injustices and disrupt the hegemonic social relations and power structures existing in society. Their efforts have contributed to the betterment of racialized communities, but more importantly, they have informed the democratization and transformation of Canadian society itself.

Many critics argue against the tendency for Canadian literary criticism to be over determined by nationalism, stating that during an era of intense immigration, emigration, and an abundance of overseas publishing, it is essential to situate the national in relation to the international. It is also important to note that despite an acknowledged tendency to focus on works written in English, Canada still manages to show an awareness of the development of print culture among Francophone women. Beginning with an examination of the ways women were actively involved in fostering and controlling access to print through work in the print trade and the establishment of public reading rooms, Canadian history then moves on to reflect upon the importance of the periodical (especially those run by women) in helping construct an early literary culture. An interrogation of the female author's self-representation in early Canadian prefaces allows us to explore a trend of affected modesty that enabled these writers to invoke moral and national imperatives.

After almost half a century since Canada re-imagined itself as 'race less', many of us, no longer look at foreign foods with apprehension, instead we now explore opportunities to fuse the myriad available cuisines. Where we once shied away from participating in unfamiliar cultural rituals, many of us seek opportunities to

mix and match cultural rites, fulfilling the post-modernist's dream. Yet, amidst this sharing of culture, we maintain ideas of belonging that relate to phenotype. Certain skins are deemed more Canadian, Indian or Jamaican than others. At the same time, rather schizophrenically, our multiculturalism policy pushes us to abandon these essentialist notions and engage in the unknown. With an influx of immigrants whose skin is not white, whose religion is not Christianity, we are faced with questions relative to the limits of cultural sharing. Canadian multiculturalism proposes that Canada is a place where one may choose who he or she wishes to be rather than be imprisoned. The lived experience however, illustrates a post-modern thought caged within a modernist script. If we believe, we are a nation of minorities who desire to live in a land where all peoples are recognized and included, this means bringing our whole selves (our cultures and symbols) into the public sphere at one point or another. In course of doing so, these symbols become open source to institutions attempting to include newer cultures and enjoy economic gains by employing newly marketable symbols. Though the joy of having one's culture recognized as part of the Canadian landscape is undeniable yet so too is the pain of seeing one's culture represented in a manner that one might conceive of as degrading.

So then how can we move forward?? To borrow a Marxian term, Canada can be a site of "Cultural Liberty" if we abandon the notion that cultures can be owned by one particular person and agree to make cultural symbols, regardless of their assumed origin, available to all peoples. Second, trading essential renderings of culture for a model of culture where membership can be established vis a vis participation in the imagined community is vital. Third, quests for authenticity that harkens back to the "homeland" must be abandoned.

Finally, to answer the question of whether cultures can be both shared and preserved, I will take a cue from Bhabha, cultures themselves cannot be preserved as they are constantly edited by participants, and however we can preserve histories. If we are able to preserve the histories of all peoples, both in our personal locations of knowledge and in our national narratives, we begin to fulfill the promise of multiculturalism and again we can stop our deliberations here at a rather optimistic juncture like the three writers discussed here that In the end, all members of society should be sharing Canada's culture of sharing. This will be their main identity.

The writings of the Indian Diaspora are clearly so vast and varied, so diverse in form and technique, that it needs a close scrutiny and reevaluation. The writers of diaspora are scattered throughout the world and represent both old and new generations. For the diasporic writers, the gulf physically between the known world to which they can go back only in imagination and their present world is always there and always real. Exchanging one tradition for another, one culture for another, and one home for another, the diasporic writers create and inscribe alternative worlds. Hardly the twin worlds in the words of Shelley—"One dead and the other powerless to be born", these worlds are vibrant, demanding, resisting any notion of annihilation. Canada has been multicultural for over a century but only now is there a publicity of this. Social media, increasing number of success stories of immigrants, contributing the GDP of Canada can be assigned as causes. We might justifiably look forward to a time when this multiculturalism is accepted and even celebrated. But it might be a slow process. However, once we accept that assimilation is not necessarily an achievement or a laudable goal, and that pockets of distinctive language groups are not ghetto settlements but centers of living and equal cultures,

we would have multiculturalism instead of host and immigrant distinctions that sociologists unfortunately tend to perpetuate through their use of such terms as host culture for the white culture that happens to be somewhat older than other immigrant cultures of Canada. Canada has come long past the colonial phase and now it is the time to find new parameters new languages of discourse. Because it is such a rupture of history where the old ways of history have failed and we need to find new modes of representation.

We should be more concerned about how to respond to the increasing diversity of Canadian culture rather than getting moribund trends revealed. Uma Parameswaran has talked about this 'brownification' of Canada. She talks about the increasing diversity of Canada, pointing out about the presence of entry ramps but not of exit ones. She is a writer who has a vision of Pan Canadian literary and cultural archetypes. She wishes that Komagatu Maru incident of 1914 and the Air India Tragedy of June 23, 1985 should be taken up as discursive sites. And they must be discussed and documented. They must become part of the blood consciousness of every Canadian as they are of Indo- Canadians.

Asian Canadian writers are challenging the power of the nation-state to claim future textuality by claiming the right to reread the past out of its naturalized interpretations. These naturalized interpretations persist because the nation-state retains its own reading power despite its altered position amidst shifting global conditions. Writers must continue to mobilize the category to disrupt, complicate and break apart new bounded readings of the past.

The writings of the women writers focus on the construction of female identity, with the suffering, pressure and possible failure or success in the adaptation-process of their female characters in re-constructing their subjectivity, re-asserting their agency or negotiating or assimilation/acculturation. The present study aims at offering a more nuanced interpretation and focused study directed at highlighting the identity-crisis of these often unvoiced and elided diasporic female characters.

In the post Colonial world, highly marked by globalization, transnational migration has turned into a fact of life. Thus, there are numerous groups of people who traverse across the national borders to reach to their promised land. In order to preserve their customs and culture and to recreate the familiar sort of surroundings much associated with their idea of their homeland form communities through which they can hold on to their roots. Such diasporas then extend and expand including not only the original immigrants – known as the first generation-but also their posterity-the second generation long as they choose to or are forced to remain a separate community. It is possible though, that in the next generations to come and through the continuous process of assimilation, some diasporas meet into the mainstream culture and gradually disappear as a distinct community through time. This process, however, is a very long-lasting, slow-moving one and the first and even the second generation of immigrants those who abound these three writers' fiction in general, often have to face up to problems and to be afflicted with scars and trauma as to their national, ethnic, cultural and gender identities. What needs to be taken into account here is that the notion of identity in general and diasporic identity in particular is not a set, fixed and essential whole but is rather, “constructed, fluid and

multiple". According to the recent anti-essential theorizing about subject, and the view that identity is in fact a cultural artifact and Identities are conceived as a process of transformation and repositioning of new identities-identities which are always in the process of becoming and transition but never complete. In the diasporic experience, then, "boundaries of the self" are as fluid as ever and this is when the Post Colonial concepts of "Hybridity" and "liminality" come to the foreground.

This ongoing process of the transgression of boundaries however is an ambivalent process which is marked by "fascination and fear, confidence and insecurity, responsibility and guilt". There is no one single way of representing the diasporic trauma involved in negotiating female identities either as female immigrants or female natives. Each individual, from Bibi-Ji to Namita, has their own means of survival, one resists while the other accepts, one acculturates where as the other escapes. No doubt, all such reactions are due to the existence of negotiable identities which are always in the process of becoming and changing. Female characters negotiate their new unstable identities through their own different means, choices different from their male counterparts. What is particular here is that such stories and voices are not appropriated and homogenized but are treated as distinct and diverse. And diaspora space has given the women an alternative site for articulating their histories whose stories have been untold and whose voice have gone unheard.

This has apparently turned out to be the great mission of these three writers to create such an alternative site. Anita Rau Badami, Shauna Singh Baldwin and

Uma Parmeswaran not only do not appropriate the voice of the female subjects, each of whom lead lives that have been touched by the globalization process, but also creates the ideal fictional spaces in which the Subaltern can speak a wish fulfilled and a dream coming true once more in the fictional world. The writings of these women writers write about the experiences of diaspora and make the readers acquainted with the complexities and nuances of such an experience. The world that these writers portrays in their works is set in motion against the cultural tension, anxiety and resultant dialogues that take place when two very different sections of the World-First and Third-in general and Indians and Canadians in particular intersect due to a large-scale transnational migration-itself an after-effect of Colonialism and Globalization respectively.

Widely acknowledged since their publication, these women writers have been the centre of attention for both Eastern and Western critics whose articles talk about different aspects of these writings so passionately. These writers reveal various dimensions of adaptation as well as severe conflict in their lives consequent upon diasporic dislocation. Analytically this conflict rests upon the significant inverse correlation of solidarity and conflict between inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic relations in pluralist multicultural host societies. Refracted through the predicament of women particularly, in the whole process of migration; these texts clearly indicate how the historical experiences of Indian migrants in Canada foreground the way identity and difference were held in creative tension. Labor movement before the 20th century and individual choices primarily after, did influence the global cultural politics. Experiences of living under Multiculturalism and 'visible, invisible hostilities' of host countries comes to the forefront in face of media exposure to new

acrimonies in this field but in this context, the people who only perpetuate ‘negative stereotypes/tendencies’ should try and grasp why in the past so many Indo-Canadians did not wish to avail the facility of repatriation and today their children, grand children and great grandchildren wish to remain citizens of Canada. Indian diasporic women have no lesser role to play in creating social spaces for establishing strong diasporic ties among the Indo-Canadian community.

Lessons should be learnt through the story of their vicissitudes as diasporic Indo-Canadian women for the creation of new spaces for themselves and hence for women empowerment globally. They negotiate various critical issues associated with the sustenance of family relations which they build, nourish, shape, maintain and re-shape through social networks. Most of the time such networks include dispersed family members and creating new spaces for for diasporic households by deploying new strategies and practices. These diaspora spaces across national borders witness various issues but flexible citizenship policies, faster and easier means of transportation, new trends of commerce and trade and many other technical advancements offer them an ease to fulfill their duties, aspirations and to define and re-define established social/cultural practices.