PREFACE

In the post-modern time, the era of literary globalization, most of the authors tend to focus on the motif of crisis of migration and their quest for identity in the newly stepped world. In the cosmos of Indian Writings in English, migration has shaped new literary ways. The multiple experience and identity of migrant and his sensibility that deals with his old world and his new one, gives birth to Diaspora Writings. BHARATI MUKHERJEE, the well known icon among modern generation, has also constructed her works through selected incidents of life around her own. In this respect, she is quite proficient as the art management of her novels is so wide and invaluable that she has left no aspect of female world untouched. She has given new prevalence and identity to Indian English Literature of Diaspora. The clash between the intimate and the wider world is apparently being discussed in all of her works of fiction.

The in-depth study of Bharati Mukherjee’s fiction clearly shows that it is full of DIASPORIC CONSCIOUSNESS. Bharati Mukherjee, as a diaspora novelist, is treated by most of the critics as an autobiographical writer but Jerry Pinto, in an interview with her, feels that she, artistically, moves from “particular autobiographical concern” to larger issue of “multiculturalism/diversity”. Her conflict of biculturalism and that of multiculturalism leads her to conflict between ‘Indian ethos’ and that of ‘foreignness’ of alien land. Malashri Lal feels that Bharati Mukherjee has “deliberately problematised her identity” by separating ideologically “from her chosen home and citizenship”. As a diaspora novelist, she has nurtured a natural conflict of search for identity, the
conflict of soul and mind, homeland and foreign land that Mukherjee as an author and characters as human beings encounter, react and experience the Diasporic Consciousness in her novels.

In the ongoing thesis, an humble attempt is done to present Diasporic Consciousness in the Novels of Bharati Mukherjee. The work is divided into six chapters where first chapter ‘Introduction’ is divided into two sub parts. Second chapter highlights ‘Diaspora’ with all its aspects. Next three chapters of the thesis are to comprise Mukherjee’s all eight novels, analyzing and displaying Diasporic Consciousness in her penmanship. The last chapter of the thesis is to conclude the findings of my study.

The first chapter of the thesis, entitled ‘Introduction’ deals with Bharati’s biographical details and her literary contribution, followed by formative influences. In the second chapter, ‘Diaspora: History and Contemporary Milieu’, an attempt has been made to define the concept of diaspora with some contemporary diasporic writers of Indian origin. The third chapter deals with ‘The First Phase’ of Mukherjee’s literary career. In this chapter, her two early novels- The Tiger’s Daughter (1972) and Wife (1975) which were written during her stay in Canada, are discussed in detail, revealing Mukherjee’s development of diaspora. The fourth chapter discusses in detail ‘The Later Phase’ of Mukherjee’s career, known as the transitional stage when she moved to the United States in the beginning of 80’s and was in process of settling down in a new milieu till 90’s. This chapter discusses Mukherjee’s later four novels- Jasmine (1989), The Holder of the World (1993), Leave It to Me (1997) and Desirable Daughters (2002). By now she travelled a long distance in
terms of thematic perception and character portrayal. The fifth chapter deals with ‘The Latest Phase’ of Mukherjee’s literary career where her two latest novels—The Tree Bride (2004) and Miss New India (2011)—are discussed in detail notwithstanding that the latest novel Miss New India does not show so deep diasporic consciousness as her other major novels had done. The last chapter entitled ‘Summing Up’ concludes the findings of the thesis and then a detailed bibliography has been added for kind acknowledgement.

Thus, we see that the fiction of Bharati Mukherjee is full of diaspora. In her novels, the multiple experience and identity of migrants and their sensibility that deals with their old world and that of their new one have given birth to diaspora. Here, we are to undertake the project to explore Diasporic Consciousness in the Novels of Bharati Mukherjee and to assess her place in Writings of Indian Diaspora.