

THE CANONS AND INTELLECTUAL MILIEUS OF INDIAN DIASPORIC FICTIONS: A CRITICAL STUDY

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Abstract: *The present stature of Indian English literature is far away from its earlier image of being 'derivative' and 'imitative'. With its own 'independent' and 'distinct' identity it poses certain ambiguities. Especially, the migrant writers claiming, to be Indians or included in the Indian English literature, have settled somewhere else, away from their homeland or prefer to be divorced from their ancestral being, and yet their works have deeper links with their roots. Indian writers grouped under 'expatriate', and 'diasporic' writers reflect certain exclusive trends that are altogether different from the major stay-at-home writers. In this context, the connotation of these words such as 'expatriate' and 'diaspora' have undergone a sea-change with its expectation and reinterpretation as 'common phenomenon' all over the globe. There has been a distinct change in the psychological architecture of traditional man and modern man. It is a transition from a familiar frame of reference and relationship, and it needs a reorientation of the entire social being. The reason attributed to such dramatic withdrawals and sensational callings are manifold such as the freedom from political repression, angst, loneliness, existential rootlessness, dissatisfaction and search for identity. This paper aims to investigate/examine the aesthetic implications of the dimensions of diasporic Indian English fictions and their achievements.*

Keywords: *Alienation, Diaspora, Identity, Immigrant, Globalisation, Multicultural*

Introduction

Etymologically, the term 'Diaspora' originates from Greek word *diaspeirein*- “to scatter about, disperse”, from *Dia* means 'about, across' *speiren* means 'to scatter'. It was used by the ancient Greeks, to refer to citizens of a dominant city-state, who immigrated to a conquered land with the purpose of colonizing it to annex the territory into the empire. During the ancient times a large number of Indians migrated to East and South East Asia to spread Buddhism. During the colonial period, the migration was marked by a history of misery, deprivation and sorrow. The third wave of migration in the 19th century was mainly to the industrialized and developed economies. Consequently, 'Indian Diaspora' is a generic term to describe the people who migrated from territories of the republic of India.

Indian Diaspora

Indian Diaspora can be broadly divided into two groups. The first one refers to forced migration which began in Africa, Fiji and the Caribbean countries on account of slavery or indentured labour in the eighteenth century; secondly, the voluntary migration to USA, U.K. Germany, France or the European countries for professional or academic purposes. The first Diaspora consisted of the unprivileged and subaltern classes. In the earlier days, the return to homeland was impossible due to lack of proper means of transportation, poor economic status, and vast distances, so the physical distances became a psychological alienation and the homeland became the sacred icon in the diasporic imagination of the authors. But the second diaspora emerged as a result of man's choice and inclination towards the national gains, professional and business interest. It is particularly, the representation of the privileged classes who gained skills of modern advanced technology and communication. Here no dearth of money or means is visible,

rather economic and life-time advantages are facilitated by the multiple uses and frequent flyer utilities. Broadly speaking, V. S. Naipaul is the founding father of the Old Diaspora and Salman Rushdie is the representative of the Modern Diaspora.

Postcolonial Term

In recent years diaspora is used as a postcolonial term to include all kinds of people: exiles, expatriates, and immigrant writers who live in other countries away from home. Diasporas are pulled by two forces: centripetal and centrifugal and are torn between two worlds. They face two cultures, two languages, two countries, and remain suspended between them. The diasporic writer is neither here (i.e., the place of present living) nor there (i.e., the place of origin or birth) and like the mythical “Trishanku” is suspended between the two worlds. This is what Homi K. Bhabha calls 'a third space' in his *The Location of Culture* (1994).

Modern Diasporic Indian Fiction

The modern diasporic Indian fiction writers can be grouped into two distinct classes. One class comprises those who have spent a part of their life in India and have carried the baggage of their native land offshore. The other class comprises those who have been bred since childhood, outside India. They have had a view of their country only from the outside as an exotic place of their origin. The writers of the former group have a literal displacement whereas those belonging to the latter group find themselves rootless. Both the groups of writers have produced an enviable corpus of English literature. These writers while depicting migrant characters in their fiction explore the theme of displacement and self-fashioning. The diasporic Indian writers' depiction of dislocated characters gains immense importance if seen against the geo-political background of the vast Indian subcontinent. They have generally dealt with characters from their own displaced community but some of them have also taken a liking for western characters.

National Identity

Traditionally, the root of one's identity is derived from one's past education, and socio-cultural environment in which one matures, where we come from and who our ancestors and the foundation upon which we are nurtured. But what does one do when society and the culture of one's grandparents and great grandparents disappear under the pressure of a disparaging and disrespectful colonizing force? What does one learn when the available education system is dominated by a foreign culture? How does one conceptualize one's identity? How do politics, history and the influences of foreign culture define that identity? Is it possible to stand solitary and independent? These are the dominant strands of diasporic situations. The writers of Diaspora are influenced by the global paradigm shift. These shifts suggest, “That it is from those who have suffered the sentence of history-subjugation, domination, Diaspora, Displacement that we learn our most enduring lessons for living and thinking (Bhabha 172).”

Cultural and Social Representation

The diasporic writers interweave the Indian and the global strands that mark the emergence of cultural mix largely due to globalisation and unprecedented growth in the field of technology and communication. Their writings provide an inside view of the problems faced by the displaced people in their adopted homes in a way that questions the traditional understanding of the concepts like home, nation, native and alien. They often contest fixed notions of identity and stable norms that govern life at home and abroad. They raise questions regarding the definitions of 'home' and 'nation'. Schizophrenia and/or nostalgia are often preoccupations of these writers as they seek to locate themselves “in new cultures”. They have explored their identity crisis, racial and cultural conflicts, ethnicity, and the sense of belonging. The loneliness and alienation among the immigrants provide a new focus for their narrative perspective. Thus, the history of migration is the history of alienation and its consequences. They always try to maintain ethnocentricism and social and cultural space.

Writers of the Indian Diaspora

Anita Desai is one of the major voices in the modern Indian English. She dives deep into the psyche of her characters and externalizes their passive reaction. She is sensitive in portraying the diasporic sensibilities in the characters of her fiction, *Bye-Bye Blackbird* and *Baumgartner's Bombay*. Though the novels vividly represent emigrant situations, and the treatment of different issues related to diaspora, they significantly contribute to diverse interpretations of postmodern fiction. The migrants are from middle-class families, highly skilled and are settled abroad. Professional migrations into the USA, UK, Europe and Australia are common. *Bye-Bye Blackbird*, written on the Indian diaspora, revolves around two friends, Dev and Adit, in London. Adit has been in London for quite some time now and is married to Sarah, an English woman. Dev is in England in search of a degree and subsequent employment. Adit was disappointed with his job in India. This has forced him to leave his homeland and settle abroad for a decent income. Adit, in the beginning, has a blind liking for English country and people like a colonized Indian who has internalized the colonial attitude and believes in the supremacy of the western culture. But soon he realises the fallacy of his supremacy and starts feeling 'un-homed' on the occasion of a party at his in-law's home where he faces the insult as a coloured individual and gets disillusioned about his country. He learns that an Indian is often considered an inferior being by the racially biased white people. Adit says:

My mother-in law hates and despises me. They make fun of the life I lead and the ideals I profess. Therefore, I am angry I am hurt. These fleeting moods of anger are now to him and... faced with one, he was unable to deal with it he merely stood still and felt his leaden feet sink in as though in quick-sands. (*Bye Bye Blackbird* 176)

Adit realizes that he has to escape from England 'and he began to tell Sarah of this nostalgia that had become an illness, an ache' (183). He tells Sarah "Sarah, you know I've loved England more than you, I've often felt myself half-English, but it was only pretence, Sally, Now, it has to be the real thing. I must go. You will come? (204)" Sarah is happy that Adit has finally taken a decision and condescends. Under the pretext of the war between India and Pakistan, Adit resolves to return back to his homeland. When Sarah announces her pregnancy, Adit is delighted and tells her that the kid would be born in India. When she migrates to India it is a challenge for her to merge her identity into the identity of another culture for reshaping it. Desai's novel thus gives the message that inequality of class, race, and unrest brings stress upon relationships.

Baumgartner's Bombay traces the journey of the Jew, Hugo Baumgartner, in India; his land of refuge from the Nazis. Desai has etched out the life of a Jew, whose escape from Germany during the Second World War has cost his identity and nationality. Suffering internal exile, the Jews stay in their own country and feel alienated. The novel brings out diverse interpretations on the Jewish diaspora and its problems like migrations, suppression, resistance, representation, difference, race, culture, gender nationality, and place. As the story commences, Baumgartner, who has been in India for fifty years, remains a firanghi to his friends. His only acquaintances, he claims his own are his homeless pet, cats and lotte, a run-away German Cabaret singer. He recalls the years he has spent in India and the desolation that he feels now is the result of his inability to assimilate the Indian culture. Anita Desai explores it as follows:

He had lived in this land for fifty years or if not fifty then so nearly as to make no difference-and it no longer seemed fantastic and exotic, it was more utterly familiar now than any other landscape on earth. Yet, the eyes of the people who passed by glanced at him who was still strange and unfamiliar to them, and all said; Firanghi, foreigner. (19)

This novel depicts the plights of Hugo Baumgartner who remained a wandering Jew all his life. He had no sense of belonging to anywhere or anyone, and finally died a tragic death. The quest for identity is the main theme of the novel.

Two of Vikram Seth's novels *The Golden Gate* and *An Equal Music* have as their subjects exclusively the lives of Americans and Europeans respectively. Seth's *An Equal Music* (1999) deals with a turbulent love story against a dominant background of music. In fact the main characters Michael and Julia are drawn to each other by music and their passion is nurtured by it. Music also plays a vital role in their separation, chance reunion leading to temporary reconciliation and final resignation to their tragic life. The book has nothing Indian about it-except the author-but the contents of the book have a universal appeal into human emotions, pain, tenderness, memory, guilt, passion and despair.

Vikram Seth's *The Golden Gate* (1986) is a novel in verse about the lives of a number of young professionals in San Francisco. The novel is written entirely in 'Onegin stanzas' after the style of Aleksandra Pushkin's *Eugene Onegin*. This verse novel received wide acclaim (Gore Vidal dubbed it "*The Great Californial Novel*") and achieved great success. It contains a strong element of affectionate satire. The diasporic Indian writers have generally dealt with characters from their own displaced community but some of them have also taken a liking for western characters and they have been convincing in dealing with them. Two of Vikram Seth's novels *The Golden Gate* and *An Equal music* have as their subjects exclusively the lives of Americans and Europeans respectively.

Salman Rushdie's *Satanic Verses* approaches the allegory of migration by adopting the technique of 'Magic Realism'. The term is usually applied to novelists Gabriel Garcia Marquez, John Followers, Gunter Grass, Salman Rushdie and Kiran Desai. Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses*, explores the difficult and ambiguous evolution a migrant undergoes in the transformation from East to West, from purity to hybridity. Many of its characters are British Asian-immigrants from South Asian nations-who are making new lives for themselves in London while simultaneously attempting to determine their cultural identity. The journeys of the two protagonists Saladin Chacha and Gibreel Farishta particularly illuminate the difficulty migrant faces when coming to terms with their place in between cultures. The two names are symbolic in the sense that 'Gibreel' which is 'Gabriel', and represents the angel in Islam. 'Saladin' recalls Sultan Saladin, whom the Christians regarded as the evil enemy against whom they fought the crusades.

Salman Rushdie inaugurated the field of post-colonial diaspora in his famous novel *Grimus*, which was an experiment to show the effects of estrangement and alienation. The story of the novel deals with immorality, generated worlds, and surreal things. The novel apparently demonstrates that migrants have no future, neither on Mortal Island nor on immortal one. They could wonder wherever they wish but without having their heart with them. *Midnight's Children* (1981), paved the path for post-colonial literature in India. Like Salman Rushdie, the protagonist Saleem Sinai wanders among three countries i.e.; India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh but is unable to find a proper place to live in. *Midnight's Children* is a narrative of displacement and rootlessness that is caused by relocation. Many of its characters are migrant drifting from shore to shore in search of some "imaginary homelands", and obviously, the author identifies himself with his migrant personae. As Pramod K.Nayar opines "Much of diasporic writing explores the theme of an original home. This original home as now lost-due-to their exile-is constantly worked into the imagination and myth of the Displaced individual/community (PLA 191)."

Shame, is a novel about migration. At several places, Rushdie emerges as the narrator and narrates the deplorable conditions of migrants. Like all migrants, Rushdie has not been able to shake off the idea of roots and identity. Roots, as he says in *Shame*, are 'designed to keep us in our place' (860). These roots help the migrant to be in touch with his/her nativity and the effect of these pedigrees can't be eradicated easily. One is bound to have an origin without that one's 'derivation' is meaningless.

Rushdie's novel, *The Moor's Last Sigh* (1995) has all the ingredients of Rushdie's fiction: "a large canvas; a narrative covering several generations, characters sporting different kinds of eccentricities, employment of thing disguised real-life personages, magic-realism, a conscious attempt to allegories, East-West encounter, individual hybridity and constant word-play"(Naik and Narayan, 44). Salman

Rushdie won the *Man Booker Prize* in 1981 for his novel *The Midnight's Children*. He got universal recognition as an innovator and pioneer of diasporic fiction.

Arundhati Roy is one of the most outstanding Indian English novelists of the post-colonial period. She has astonished the literary world by winning the *Booker Prize* for her novel *The God of Small Things* in the year 1997. The novel depicts the life of Keralite society and its rites, customs, traditions, and patriarchal domination, caste apartheid and discrimination. Consequently, Kerala has been in the national and global limelight. *The God of Small Things* deals with dominant diasporic themes. The marriage of Rahel and the American Larry McCaslin brings a symbolic appearance in the novel which shows the typical exposition of diasporic literature. Rukmini Bhaya Nair aptly makes the following observation:

He [Larry] was exasperated because he didn't know what that look [in Rahel's eyes] meant. He put it somewhere between indifference and despair. He didn't know that in some places, like the country that Rahel came from...Nothing mattered much.... It was never important enough. Because worse Things had happened...So Small God laughed a hollow laugh, and skipped away cheerfully. (GST, 19)

Upamanyu Chatterjee was catapulted to International fame with his very first novel *English August: An Indian Story* (1988). Agastya Sen, the protagonist, is fondly called 'English August' by his friends 'August' being the Anglicization of 'Agasty', and 'English' because of Agastya's preference for everything English. As a probationary officer in the I.A.S, Agastya is posted to a small town, Madna. There he finds life utterly boring, his colleagues dull and the system corrupt to the core. Being painfully aware of his inability to bring about any change in his drinking a habituate he often tells absurd lies about himself as a source of amusement. But restlessness keeps mounting and finally he quits his job to return to Calcutta where his father, Madhusudan Sen lives as the Governor of West Bengal. Into his narrative, Chatterjee brings a variety of issues like politicians versus bureaucrats, relevance of English language and literature in our country, standard of teachers recruited at present, religion, conversion, of the Hindus and sombre themes like loneliness of man and identity crisis.

Bharati Mukherjee is one of the major novelists of Indian diaspora who have achieved enviable positions within a comparatively short creative span. As an expatriate in The United States, she has captured evocatively the predicament of Indian immigrants. She is a notable novelist of these novels: *The Tiger's Daughter* (1971), *Wife* (1975), *Jasmine* (1989), *The Holder of the World* (1993), *Leave it to Me* (1997), *Desirable Daughters* (2002), *The Tree Bride* (2004), and *Miss New India* (2011).

Her two novels *Jasmine* and *Wife* deal with gender portrayals in diasporic situation. *Jasmine*, a young Punjabi girl migrates illegally to America in order to fulfil her deceased husband's dreams. Being a victim of gender and race she transforms herself totally and changes her identity from a docile Indian girl *Jasmine* into *Jane Ripple Mayer*, an adventurer in the American world. Her portrayal is one of self assertion and transformation in an alien world. *Dimple* is another transformed woman who changes her identity from the dutiful Indian housewife to a killer of her husband-a negative transformation. As her motherland does not promise these things, she hopes that migration to America, the land of opportunities will bring her prosperity and happiness but her expectations fail, because American life demands hard work and patience which *Dimple* does not find in her nature. Besides, racist views towards the third world aggravate her pitiable condition when she tries to ape the American culture.

Looking at the past ('origins') and at the future involves a process that Bharati Mukherjee in *Jasmine* described as 'adventure, risk, transformation' ('A Four Hundred-YearOld Woman', 1991:240). Looking backward at 'home', such writers also look forward to 'transformation' of identity, which accompanies a change of place. You might lose a home but never gain one. Or you might set up a new home

in a space which will continue to treat you as a foreigner. She described her stories as reflecting the 'hurly-burly of the unsettled magma between two worlds'. The violent imagery in both the above examples centres round re-territorialisation.

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni is another woman writer of the first generation who brilliantly portrays gender in an authentic manner. Her female protagonists are memorable and powerful representations of diasporic Indian women. Her major novels include *The Mistress of Spices* (1997), *Sister of My Heart* (1999) and *Queen of Dreams* (2004). Tilo, in *The Mistress of Spices* is a genuine representative of diasporic identity. Born on India, lived on seas, educated to be a mistress in Spice Island, finally lives in America on her vocation, ultimately merges herself into its culture. Tilo represents all diasporic paradigms. Banerjee's women characters represent vivid identities of diasporic life like marginalised, rebellious, docile, traditional and modern.

America is a land of consolation for the characters like Malathi in the novel, *Sudha* and the old woman Jiang in the novel *Sister of my Heart*. America provides a new lease of life and freedom as they have to escape from the tyrannies of their native land. Malathi, the youngest beautician, who works in a parlour in Chennai has to run away from India when she becomes the target of a rich woman's fury for knowing her secrets, finds a secure place in America as an Indian embassy employee. Jiang has to leave under traumatic conditions of her diasporic home, India, during the Indo-China war, and opt for another diasporic home, America, which gives her a lease of life and new identity. Similarly, *Sudha* enters America to escape the patriarchal oppression of her native culture biased towards men, and she faces pressures from her mother-in-law and husband, to abort her female child detected through ultrasound. From a cowardly, obedient woman *Sudha* becomes a bold independent person in America to take the decisions of her life on her own, first time without even consulting her sister Anju.

Identity crisis or search of identity has received an impetus in the post-colonial literature. Indian English fiction deals at length with the problems, arising out of multi-cultural interactions. Man is known as a social and rational being who needs home, love of parents, friends and relatives. But when he is unhoused, he loses the sense of belongingness and thus suffers from a sense of insecurity or identity crisis. Identity crisis is the central theme of the novel *Queen of Dreams*. Divakaruni's novel *The Mistress of Spices* was released as a film and her novel *Sister of my Heart* was made into a television serial in Tamil. Her literary output treats all shades of identity crisis such as alienation, marginalisation, despair, nostalgia, readjustment, assimilation and adaption. Her other novels are *Neela; Victory Song* (2003), *The Mirror of Fire and Dreaming* (2005), *The Palace of Illusions* (2008), *Amazing Thing* (2010).

In the diasporic context, Jhumpa Lahiri is one of the outstanding novelists of the second generation of women writers. Her novel *The Namesake* (2003) explores many of the same emotional and cultural themes as her *Pulitzer Prize*-winning short story collection *Interpreter of Maladies*. Moving between events in Calcutta, Boston and New York City, the novel examines the nuances involved while being caught between two conflicting cultures with their highly distinct religious, social, and ideological differences. The novel describes the struggles and hardships of a Bengali couple to the US to form a life outside of everything they are accustomed to.

The novel, *The Namesake*, is the story of two generations of an Indian family and their struggle to accommodate themselves in the West. In this autobiographical novel, Lahiri explores the story of Gogol Ganguli, the American-born son of Ashoke and Ashima Ganguli, who arrives in Massachusetts from Calcutta. The self in the text versus the self as text in Asian-American autobiographies generally highlight the protagonist's growing comprehension of the meaning of value that society places on questions and attitudes about ethnic differences, historical reconstruction, and the place of their communities in American societies.

Through a series of errors, their sons (Ashima Ganguli and Ashoke) nickname, Gogol, becomes his official birth name, an event that will shape many aspects of his life in years to come. Contrary to popular idiom “What's in a name?”, whereas Gogol is obsessed with the idea “it's everything that matters in a name”. His hatred for his name is explained thus: “for by now, he's come to hate questions pertaining to his name, hates having constantly to explain. He hates that his name is both absurd and obscure, that it has nothing to do with who he is, that is neither Indian nor American but full of all things Russian.”

Jhumpa Lahiri largely writes about the human condition of Indian diaspora in the USA. Her focus is the 'minds cope of characters' and 'human predicament' in its wider perspective. Lahiri delves deep in to explain the labyrinths of her characters, to explore, psychologically the intricacies and complexities of human relationships particularly of a class of characters who live in the west but with parents born and raised in India. What are they? - Indians or Americans. They had not changed their habits, and they are apparently a close knit ethnic group, still far from being assimilated into the general current of life around them. Like the mythological king Trishanku, they stood suspended between two worlds, unable to enter either and making a heaven of their own.

Kamala Markandaya was a pseudonym used by Kamala Puranaiya Taylor, an Indian novelist and Journalist. Markandaya, a native of Mysore, moved to Britain, though she still labelled herself an Indian expatriate long afterwards. She belonged to that pioneering group of Indian women writers who made their mark not just through their subject matter, but also through their fluid, polished literary style. She published many novels to her credit. They are: *Nectar in a Sieve* (1955), *Some Inner Fury* (1956), *A Silence of Desire* (1960), *Possession* (1963) *A Handful of Rice* (1966), *The Coffin Dams* (1969), *Two Virgins* (1973), *The Golden Honeycomb* (1977), *Shalimar* (1982) and *Bombay Tiger* (posthumous) 2008.

Amitav Ghosh shot into fame with the publication of his first novel, *The Circle of Reason* in 1986. Apart from his Bengali background, his knowledge of Bangladesh, London and Middle East helped him to give a realistic touch to his novels. He was the first of St Stephenians to respond to the challenge of *Midnight's Children*. His second novel, *The Shadow Lines* (1988), for which he got the *Sahitya Academy Award* for the year 1989 is a good example of magic realism. If the major themes of Ghosh's first two novels are nationalism, political freedom, and international relations, the themes of his third novel, *In An Antique Land* relate to religion, its meaning and practice, various religious traditions and inter-continental cultural intermingling. Ghosh's other notable fictions are *The Calcutta of Chromosome* (1995), *The Glass Palace* (2000), *The Hungry Tide* (2005), *Sea of Poppies* (2008) and *River of Smoke* (2011).

Since 1983, Rohinton Mistry has established himself quite rapidly as an exciting new voice on the Canadian literary scene. His works of fiction are solid evidence of his prodigious talents as a writer and of the richness of language and texture he brings to his craft. He has wrestled with the issue that a diasporic writer of South Asian background must inevitably confront in his new homeland, Canada. As an immigrant writer, he has surely felt the pressure of the still nascent Canadian nationalism to write more about his new home land, but he has incorporated reflections on multiculturalism into his works of fiction. The major works are *Such A Long Journey* (1991), *A Fine Balance* (1995) and *Family Matters* (2002).

Kiran Desai is a young and vibrant Indian English novelist with innate artistic talents. Having emerged on the Indian English scene in late 1990s she has created a distinct place for herself in the galaxy of Indian women novelists in English. Her debut novel *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard* (1998) artistically presents human foibles and eccentricities in a satirical tone. She has leapt into fame and won international acclaim with the publication of her *The Man Booker Prize* Winning novel *The Inheritance of Loss* (2006) which on the one hand deals with social, political, and economic problems of the people of contemporary society in India and, on the other the social and psychological problems faced by Indian immigrants in America and England. The novel explores contemporary international issues such as globalisation, multiculturalism, economic inequality, fundamentalism, terrorist violence, immigration,

racial discrimination, post-colonialism, alienation, exile, and westernisation.

Unlike her mother, Anita Desai, whose “preoccupation is with the inner world of sensibility rather than outer world of action” and who “has tried to forge a style supple and suggestive enough to convey the fever and fretfulness of the stream of consciousness of her principal characters” (Srinivasa Iyenger, 46). Being a product of intercultural forces Desai's personal, social, and cultural shreds of her personality are very much influenced by her expatriate sensibility. Her profound sense of involvement in the cultural, social, and political life of India, her studious observation combined with great judiciousness and feminine perception set her apart from other writers. Occupying a prominent place in post-colonial diasporic literature Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss* portrays the westernised Indian culture by depicting the lives of a few Indians with fractured identities. The probing analysis of the Anglicised Indian Culture in her fiction shows the larger perspective of a globalised world.

The Inheritance of Loss is filled with examples of different types of people who interact, mix, and blend. Unfortunately, the life between cultures is not easily blurred. Some customs and traditions transcend separate cultures especially in today's globalised world, but prejudices and hatred based on race and class are often hard to eliminate. Almost the entire novel is stuffed with description of colliding cultures, but the last page in the conclusion shows a new dimension of the theme. When Biju returns home penniless and broken Sai sees Biju and his father “leaping at each other”, overjoyed by their return to Kalimpong, and in the background of Kanchenjunga appears above the parting clouds. The reality is that the world is full of racism, segregation, and cultural divisions, but it does not mean that hope does not also exist. Happiness is possible; the world is not always submerged in fog and rain. In the end, “the five peaks of Kanchenjunga turned golden with the kind of luminous light that made you feel, if briefly, that truth was apparent. All you needed to do was to reach out and pluck it”.

Conclusion:

Indian English literature is today recognised and well-accepted all over the world and has in fact generated worldwide interest in the oriental world. In the current global network of interrelations, diasporic attitudes can reverberate interest in the region of origin. The nature of contemporary diasporic experiences given the unprecedented global reach of technology and media-is also significantly more complex and ambivalent than the earlier ones. To conclude, it may be stated here that Indian diasporic English fiction has brought revolution in the whole range of Indian English literature in the choice of subjects, themes and language of expression. In this context, the role of diasporic novelists need to be evaluated with clarity and precision to bring into sharper focus the vast canvases of their portrayal of characters, plot construction, narration, images, and vision. The Canons and Intellectual Milieus of Indian Diasporic Fiction have their unique identity in today's literary arena. The diasporic writers' total experience is palimpsestically stored in their memories and only the writers' own conscious choices and unconscious energies might regulate their artistic expectations.

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