

## **Chapter-1**

### **Introduction**

Man, from the very origin of his being, has been wandering like a pilgrim on this earth. It is believed in the Indian tradition that the whole earth is a sacred temple where man goes out in the wild and searches for his inner self by sitting and praying in meditation. In this sojourn, he contemplates over various tensions and conflicts between body and soul, mind and matter, past and present, and memory and desire. In this context it is useful to make outer journeys in order to make inner journeys. In our great epics, the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabhartha* also we come across such kind of journeys in which Prince Rama and the Pandavas had to undergo this chastening experience of outer world. Though it was a forced exile yet it contributed in their spiritual and intellectual making. There is no doubt that when man/woman moves away into the forest from home and family and from culture and civilization, it becomes a training ground for him/her in which trees, birds, beast, flowers and rivers become his companion, bring changes and strengthen his life for better. Similarly, this exile immensely affected Prince Rama and Pandavas and shaped them to be stronger kings while they returned back to their lands to rule over their kingdoms. But in the contemporary world the major question is that whether it also happens to those visa-glued immigrants or NRI's who either don't find their home anywhere on earth after leaving their homeland. This is one of the most haunting questions of our times and two outstanding exponent diasporic writers, Uma Parameswaran and Anita Rau Badami, who have been residing in Canada for many years addressing this very question in their fiction. In the present research, an attempt has been made to explore

the various issues of expatriates, in the fiction of Anita Rau Badami and Uma Parameswaran and paying a close attention to the notion of ‘Ambivalence’ and their literary meditation between the real and imaginative world depicted in their fiction.

Uma Parameswaran, like every diasporic writer attempts to ‘grab the best of two worlds’ in her literary works by presenting the Canadian sensibility with Indian historic past and culture. Most of her plays are enriched with Indian past, mythology, legends, the gods and goddesses. In her play *Sita’s Promise*, she attempts to link the epic India with modern Canada by depicting the forest exile of Rama, Sita and Lakshmana. When one arrives in a new land, one has a sense of wonder and adventure at the first sight of a landscape so different from what one has been accustomed to and there is also a sense of isolation, fear and intense nostalgia for the land that has been left behind. An expatriate leaves his homeland and settles down on some foreign land for better future prospects but he always remains in an animated suspension, feels insecure in his new environment, the loss of geographical boundaries haunts him and alters his sensibilities. He wants to grab both the roots and fruits together. Moreover, he becomes a Trishanku, the legendary king who is hung between heaven and earth. Ms. Manju Jaidka in her paper “Expatriate Writing from India: So What’s Indian About it?” elaborates the mythical story of Trishanku and explains its meaning as far as the situation of an immigrant is concerned. This story has been taken from the *Baal-Kaand* of the *Ramayana*. Trishanku, was a legendary king of Suryavanshi clan and he was deeply in love with his body. He had a strange wish to ascend to the heaven in his mortal form. His desire was brutally thwarted by Guru Vashisht and his sons who turned him into a monster, a *Chandaala*. When the sage Vishwamitra saw him in this situation, he took pity on him and promised to help him achieve his lifelong ambition. Vishwamitra, with his great powers and prayers,

helped Trishanku ascend to the skies. However, when Trishanku reached the portals of heaven in his monstrous *Chandaala* form, the gods together pushed him out and sent him spinning back to earth. But Vishwamitra not only prevented Trishanku from falling headlong back into “*prithvi-lok,*” he also created another heaven, complete with a constellation of stars, so that Trishanku might have his heart’s desire. And there Trishanku was said to remain- suspended upside down, in a heaven created especially for him. The name ‘Trishanku’ would denote a triangle. In fact he got suspended in the centre of a triangle formed by the three worlds, sea- earth- sky: the heavens, the earth, and the underworld. Hanging in between these three worlds, in the alien form that was thrust on him, he became the master of a new world, not the one he aspired for, but one that was created for him. (Vinoda, Shailaja, 36)

Incidentally, Uma Parameswaran has taken *Trishanku* as the title of her collection of poems, though she has not elaborated the idea but Trishanku metaphor is well applied to the condition of expatriates. This human predicament like Trishanku is negative and creates a situation of non- belongingness but writers like Uma Parameswaran does not believe in close doors and keeps her doors of hope open to survive on alien land. This Trishanku syndrome is found in most of the works of Indian expatriate writers who try to express the suppressed feeling of Diaspora through their writings.

In contemporary world, Diaspora literature has been expanding its span to various fields of studies. It is assumed that this literature mainly focuses on those writings which depict the ambivalent feelings of diasporic community and their oscillating condition between home land and the settled land. These diasporic writings also raise questions of identity and belongingness which remain latent in the heart of diasporic community.

To discuss the research topic analytically, it is imperative to define the term 'Diaspora' which has varied definitions and connotations associated with it. Etymologically, the term Diaspora is derived from the composite verb 'dia' and 'speirein', literally meaning 'to scatter', 'to spread' or 'to disperse'. The first mention of the word Diaspora was used as a result of exile, which was found in the Septuagint. Later, it began to develop from this original sense when the Hebrew Bible was translated into Greek. In ancient Greece, the term Diaspora meant 'scattering' was used to refer to citizens of a dominant city-state who immigrated to a conquered land with the purpose of the colonization, to assimilate the territory into the empire. The term derives from the verb 'diaspeiro', 'I scatter', 'I spread about' and that form 'dia', 'between, through across' and the verb 'speiro', 'I sow, I scatter'. After the translation of the Bible into Greek, the word diaspora then was used for dispersion of Jews after the Babylonians exile in 586 B.C. and an aggregate of Jews or Jewish communities scattered 'in exile' outside Palestine or present-day Israel.

The well known diasporic critic Gabriel Sheffer in the work *Modern Diasporas in International Politics* takes a primary focus on 'the relations between the homelands and host countries', in this respect he defines it in the following words "Modern diasporas are ethnic minority groups of migrant origins residing and acting in host countries but maintaining strong sentimental and material links with their countries of origin -their homelands. (3)". In all these years, diaspora has also undergone various classifications wherein it has generally seen as old and new diaspora in studies. However "Diaspora Criticism" an essay by Sudesh Mishra in which he describes diaspora as the classical, the modern and the postmodern phenomenon. In literary studies this concept has been used for those people who migrate from the pleasant shelter of their homeland and seek a place on the foreign

land to call it a home. But unfortunately, they not only lose their home but also their identity which is shown through the reflection of their language, culture and heritage. When we analyze and go deep to make a distinction between homeland and host land, we come to a conclusion that it is a border that makes all differences; it separates a nation into two distinct entities. It defines our nationality, social identity and moreover, it elucidates where our feet lie is our 'homeland' or a 'host land'. The term border not only signifies physical or geographical boundaries but it also connotes different culture and tradition, language, history and heritage. When this border is traversed by a group of natives voluntarily or involuntarily and stepped down on a foreign land for better educational and economical pursuits, are put under the term "Diaspora". It carries a sense of displacement, nostalgia and a hope or desire to return to their homeland which always exists in their memories.

In spite of a number of discussions about Diaspora, this term has got so much popularity from 1960s mainly when Shepperson used this term in reading of the African Diaspora. With the growth of technology, media and communication, the word Diaspora is no longer a single meaning but it also expresses notions like hybridity, identity fragmentation, and fractures of memory, double consciousness, ambivalence and many other connotations. Many diasporic individuals try to maintain their ethnic, religious and cultural identity and sometimes sustain the desire to return to their native land. William Safran in his article, "Diaspora in Modern Societies: Myths of Homeland and Return" provides some of the major experience of the diasporic community that they and their forefathers have been scattered from one centre to some foreign regions, they preserve an impression and a collective vision of their homeland, its history, geography and its pride. They share a common fear that the hostland may not assimilate them into its fold and feel themselves to be alienated.

Their homeland remains their true and ideal home, to which they truly belong and they collectively lay great emphasis on the restoration of their homeland, its pride and prosperity. Further, they emotionally relate to that homeland in one way or another, and their ethno communal consciousness and solidarity are importantly defined by the existence of such a complex relationship. (Safran, 83-4)

Regardless of these above definitions the diaspora has been used as the synonymous with the terms like exile, expatriate, migrant and transnational. Exile is a forceful or a compulsory isolation from a country and one has to reside on an alienland wherein there is always a feeling of being a foreign element. Although diaspora means the notion of displacement yet it cannot be equated with exile. Many diaspora emerges due to voluntary movements from one place and settle down at another place of their choice. On the other hand transnationalism is the result of mainly globalization and global capitalism which leads to migration from nation to nation. All these definitions and explanation reveal that diasporic experience is not homogeneous in nature. It is defined and recognised by heterogeneity, diversity and by *hybridity*. The diasporic identities are constantly changing, producing and reproducing themselves anew. And basically it is through transformation and difference. So it is understood that the term diaspora has moved from the simple ancient Greek definition and therefore it must be read through the notions of heterogeneity and difference. The term diaspora also carries within it ambiguous status of being both an ambassador and a refugee. One is expected to represent the culture or tradition to which it belongs and the other always seeks protection and security. A refugee struggles hard to get assimilated into the culture and tradition of the foreign country.

Migration and dispersion are natural phenomena for plants, animal kingdom as well as for human beings. They keep migrating from one place to another from their original habitat and consequently bring some negative connotations such as forced displacement, victimization, alienation and loss. People belonging to diaspora have different lifestyle because they are often torn between two cultures and two nations. As a result of this they live in a constant state of anguish and continuously strive to return to their homelands from where they derive their identity. This kind of situation has been put down as a sense of doubleness and in-betweenness filled with alienation and nostalgia. Moreover, Sudesh Mishra says that these diasporic communities are afraid to practice their own tradition and cultural norms in the hostland for the fear of repression. In some cases they feel inferiority complex due to colour, race and socio-economic conditions of their native place as they compare it with the settled countries.

Diasporic writers express the suppressed feelings of these people who are sandwiched between two cultures, nations and two identities. They become the mouthpiece for such immigrants who try hard to merge into a foreign culture but unfortunately remain isolated and their desire to return to homeland fulfils only through their memory. Hence diasporic writing is an attempt to negotiate between these two polarities: hostland and homeland. The writers generally undertake two moves, one temporal and other one is spatial. In the temporal move, the writer keeps going back into the past and always lives in the memory of the homeland, it is called 'analepsis'. When the writer looks forward in the future and hopes to get acculturated is known as 'prolepsis'. Analepsis includes romanticizing the past days spent in native land. The customs and traditions are kept intact in their memory and the migrant want to follow them on the land of a foreign country. But in prolepsis, the writer has a forward looking attitude with new hopes to survive on the alien land. It creates

chances of cultural assimilation. The spatial move involves a de-territorialization and a re-territorialisation. The term de-territorialization means the loss of territory both geographically and culturally but the lost territory always accompanies with gaining of the new ones. Similarly dislocation *from* is always followed by a re-location *to*. The expatriate writing deals with space that moves between 'home' and 'host' country, between eastern and western culture. Home and eastern culture is always constructed out of memories from childhood days, festivals and customs, traditional dresses and mainly through food but this home is just an imaginary and mythic place to go. So in this way, it seems difficult to return. It is only through the memories of an expatriate, it can be retrieved, reached and returned again and again. An immigrant is the person who traverses not only the physical boundaries carrying his socio-cultural values and customs on his shoulder but also his psyche and imagination to the land of a foreign country. According to N. Jayaram, as he says in *The Indian Diaspora: Dynamics of Migration* that the immigrants carry with them: "...a socio-cultural baggage which among other things consists of (a) a predefined social identity, (b) a set of religious beliefs and practices, (c) a framework of norms and values governing family and kinship organization, and food habits and (d) language" (16). In addition to this, an immigrant carries with him an idol of *Ganpati*, a family frame, a jar of mango pickle, *papad* and some homemade spices. It shows that the immigrant does not want to cut off completely from the land of his birth. He is aware that the host country will provide every possible amenity of a luxurious life for which he is leaving his own homeland, but the fact is that he is destined to an ambivalent life. His relationship with the host country will be like love and hate simultaneously. He celebrates all his festivals like Holi and Diwali with all pomp and show but he always yearns for that energy and enthusiasm which used to be there in his childhood days.



He craves for his mother's home cooked *curry rice, aloo ka paratha* and many other things which he never finds in the host land at any cost.

As soon as a migrant leaves his national territory and settles on some foreign land he becomes an NRI to his own nation and a foreign element to the nation where he lands to make new home. He loses his original identity and gets ready to adopt a new identity but finds it difficult to do either of them. This detachment from his people, culture and tradition leaves a deep scar on his psyche and he finds himself in a painful statement of duality. On the one hand he wants to preserve his ethnic-religious identity and communal solidarity and on the other hand he also tries to merge into the alien culture and tries hard to assimilate into it. But the fact is that the people of the host land tend to frown at him and do not adopt him as a part of their land. In this context, they are oscillating between these two worlds- one he has left and one does not accept him wholeheartedly. He wavers between two cultures. The condition of these immigrants can be compared with Janus- a roman god "having two faces, one looking forwards and one back" (Dresner, Avison, 567). This ambivalent condition of diasporas is aptly derives from Janus. Edward Said also adds to the definition and classification of diasporas in his *Culture and Imperialism*: "The person who finds his homeland sweet is still a tender beginner, he to whom every soil is as his native one is already strong, but he is perfect to whom the entire world is a foreign place...and a survival in fact is about the connection between things. (407)"

Some of the defining features of diasporic writing are like: Nostalgia, dislocation, discrimination, cultural change, survival and gender equality. Dislocation is one the first problems that haunts a diasporic community. There can be several reasons for movement from homeland to hostland. It could be voluntary as well as non voluntary movements. There are mainly two reasons for voluntary movements

like: 1) educational need and ii) economic need. On the other hand non-voluntary movement is basically a forceful movement and it can occur due to some political and national reasons and in case of a woman, it could be marital causes. When diasporic communities are dislocated from their homeland, they find themselves lonely and a kind of trauma captures their mind. They strive to locate themselves in past where they find peace and a sense of belongingness. In this way, they try to escape from the reality of life in the settled land. This problem of loneliness and alienation is graver for first generation immigrants who do not try to mingle with society of host land. Even if they try to but find it more difficult as they feel themselves discriminated among them. But at the same time, they do not follow the new land's culture completely. Even after spending many years in settled country, the first generation immigrants take discrimination as an ordinary way but the second generation who consider it as their own birth country are not able to face such kind of discrimination. They follow its culture and tradition as their own. Therefore, such racial discrimination hurts them psychologically and raises questions regarding their identity and roots. Cultural change is yet another major problem of diasporic community especially for the first generation; it becomes an obstacle in their assimilation with the new culture. Generally the cultural differences are too big to handle for them. Moreover they think that the practices of the new culture in which they are settled are not good enough and they wish to bring up their own children according to their own cultural values and teach them their customs and traditions. But second generation, who believes in hostland as their own home, adopts their culture and tradition. They are not happy about the way their parents live and it leads to several kinds of family conflicts in family. With all these problems of diasporic community, it becomes very difficult to survive on a foreign land.

Before analyzing the extended span of Indian diaspora all over the world, it is important to know how this wave of immigrants started from India to different parts of the world. In 1492, a Spanish expedition headed by Christopher Columbus reached America, after which European exploration and colonization rapidly expanded. When India was discovered by Vasco-de Gama, it was seen as a big source of raw material and spices for European businessmen and traders. There are some indications that show that Buddhist '*bhikkus*' also used to travel the remote areas of central and eastern Asia in ancient times. Some historical evidences prove that there were continuous contact between the kings of the Coromandel Coast and the islands of South- East Asia. People from India would go to East Africa for business and trading purpose and later it became permanent settlement for merchants. In the year 1600 B.C, The British Empire established "The East India Company" in India with purpose of trading but gradually the rule over it grabbed India in its clutches.

There are different kinds of diasporas based on their ethnicities or nationalities. They are mainly Greek, Jewish, African, Chinese, Indian, etc. This distinction is made in terms of their different cultures, customs and life styles. This thesis discusses South Asian diaspora, a brief historical tracing is undertaken herewith. People who move from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Maldives, Sri Lanka, come under the term South Asian diaspora. In the beginning of nineteenth century, the South Asians migrated to the US and Canada and other parts of the world for various reasons like they wanted freedom from bondage, liberation from slavery. But immigration of people during twentieth century was for different reasons. They were educated and wanted better standard of living and infrastructure, so their main reason was just a better quality of life. As far as Indian diaspora is concerned, it is divided into two phases of emigration- the overseas emigration during colonial rule in

nineteenth century and the post colonial phase in the twentieth century. In the wake of new geographical discoveries, large number of merchants and traders migrated to different parts of Europe through the Suez Canal. Gradually, Europeans were enhancing strength and emerging as powerful rulers. They started bringing the people of third –world nations as slaves to work on sugarcane plantation and in mines. These poor people were uneducated and poverty led them to be slaves to these Europeans. In the first quarter of nineteenth century, the demand for cheap labour increased in ever expanding colonial Asian countries especially in India and China. These countries were an extant reservoir of cheap, docile and dependable labour to work on the plantations. But Slavery Abolition Act was passed by British parliament in 1833; slave labours got freedom from never ending brutal slavery and led to an extreme shortage of labour force in many colonies. Later, this problem was resolved under ‘Indenture labour emigration agreement’. In this contract, labours signed to work on the plantation for a specific period of time and it was officially sponsored by the colonial government. It began in 1834 and ended in 1920. The rustic innocent illiterate labourers could not pronounce the work ‘Agreement’ and they called it as ‘*gimit*’. During colonial phase, Indian immigrants were addressed as *Coolies, Girmityas*, East Indians and Asians. Even Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was called as ‘the first coolie lawyer’. Even after the abolition act of indenture labour did not cease export of labour to other countries. There was steady flow of emigration of trading communities from Gujrat and Punjab to South Africa and East Africa. Most labourers went to East Africa to work on the construction of railroads. They were neither officially sponsored nor came under any contract.

When India got independence in 1947 from British rule, it was a historical moment for everyone but it also brought partition of the nation. Pakistan got separated

from India. With this painful incident of partition, there was a mass exodus from India to Pakistan and vice versa. After this incident, a new and significant phase of emigration emerged and it can be divided into three patterns. The first phase was of Anglo-Indians to Australia and England. They were basically the descendants of intermarriage between Indians and the English. Finding that they would be accepted neither in India nor in Britain, they left for Australia, which had become the second home for them. The second large scale of emigration was of doctors, engineers, teachers, scientists and other semi professional particularly in the late 1960's and 1970's. This pattern of emigration is called as 'brain drain' and it is basically voluntary and individual in nature. The third pattern of emigration is of skilled and unskilled labourers to West Asia in the wake of the 'oil boom'. This migration is also voluntary in nature but the rules and regulations are determined by labour market. Due to this displacement and detachment of people from their homeland took them to a land completely different from their own gave birth to diasporic literature. During this post colonial era, intellectuals paid heed towards the anguish, sufferings and the psychology of the colonized people of the third- world and got it manifested in the works of various post- colonial theorists.

Postcolonialism is the term which refers to a set of theories in philosophy and literature which has a direct bearing on the legacy of colonial rule. It refers to the literature or writings of those countries which were once under the colonization of European rule. It reveals tools, methods and ideologies of Europeans to exploit the poor countries both economically as well as politically. In general sense, it is a study of relations between the colonizers and the colonies. Postcolonialism is a discourse which deals with unequal distribution of power and relations existed between the colonizer and the colonized. It also explores the strategies and ideologies of resistance

undertaken by subjugated men and third world nations for their independence and freedom. Primarily, the post- colonial literature depicts the dreadful experience of natives who were the citizens of colonized nations. It is in this sense that the term postcolonialism not only analysis the psychological struggle of natives to get emancipation from the clutches of rulers but it is also associated with how the colonial power used cultural apparatus to colonize the mind and body of the people. Dennis Walder's views in *Post- Colonial Literature in English: History, Language, Theory* add to this discussion when he says:

‘Postcolonial’...demands a double awareness: of the colonial inheritance as it continues to operate within a specific culture, community or country; and of the changing relations between these cultures, communities and countries in the modern world. . . the colonial experience persists despite the withdrawal of political control, as a result of the continuing strategic and economic power of the former colonizers,...however minimal the impact of empire upon a particular people in the long perspective, it has always left its imprint.(2-3)

The psychological colonization of natives has been so grave and the scar is still indelible that even after independence its effects can be seen in varied forms. This psychological entrapment is far more dangerous than any political colonization. O. Mannoni's *Prospero and Caliban* was one of the earliest attempts to analyze the psychological process of colonialism. In this work, he depicts that the colonizer has firm belief that the mentality of the natives is degraded and incomprehensible to understand and they must follow the European way of thinking which is clear, explicit and correct. Even their thinking is so right and correct and it should be followed by the whole world. Frantz Fanon is considered as one of the earliest writers of

postcolonialism. In his first work, *Black Skins, White Masks* Fanon depicts that white skin colour is the representative of completeness whereas blackness of the skin suggests that it is dark, ignorant, and it represents incompleteness. Fanon says that this kind of ideology Postcolonialism is the term which refers to a set of theories in philosophy and literature which has a direct bearing on the legacy of colonial rule. It reveals tools, methods and ideologies of Europeans to exploit the poor countries both economically as well as politically. In general sense, it is a study of relations between the colonizers and the colonies. Postcolonialism is a discourse which deals with unequal distribution of power and relations existed between the colonizer and the colonized. It was adopted by colonizer to weaken the black native. It implies that the black native can put all his efforts but he can never become white in his life. He can never be a civilized like the whites. All blacks are destined to be slaves to them and will always remain slaves throughout their life. The colour of their skin symbolizes incompleteness, ignorance and incivility. This relationship of European colonizer with native black is represented through binary oppositions, all of which treated the native as the dark shadow of his master: civilized/ barbaric, positive/ negative, white/ black, mature/ immature, masculine/ effeminate and progressive/ primitive. Here the first term signifies the whites or the Europeans and its opposite are applied for negative which means for natives. European appearance and culture is assumed to be so superior and perfect that others are judged as abnormal and inferior. It is a psychoanalytical study to understand the causes and effects of racism and colonialism on the black people. Fanon says that the blacks are not considered as men by whites. They have to prove about the richness of their thoughts, culture, language and intellect to the whites. In his book, Fanon deals with the dehumanizing aspect of colonialism. This is an indelible scar on the psyche of the colonized people. He

continues his psychological study of colonized and colonizer in his second book *The Wretched Of The Earth* (1965). He states that the 'Others' are denied of all rights as human being. It was assumed that Europeans brought civilization, progress and history to colonized countries like Africa, India or Ireland. At the same time, colonised people are supposed only to do menial labour works or routine clerical position. Moreover, they were considered incapable for any self government in their own country. Ashis Nandy argues that:

This modern colonialism colonizes minds in addition to bodies and it releases forces within the colonized societies to alter their cultural priorities once for all. In this process it helps generalize the concept of the modern west from a geographical and temporal entity to a psychological category. The west is now everywhere, within the west and outside, in structures and minds. (11)

The psychological entrapment of Europeans makes the natives weak and they feel inferior to them. With this suppression, they start imitating the footsteps of their master whom they consider superior. They imitate their language, education, traditions and customs and European style of living. Edward Said focussed mainly on the relationship between colonizer and the colonized in Asia, including India and the Middle East. Fanon said that the West had created the Manichean society but Said went a step ahead and proved how that society has been created through European discourses. *Orientalism* (1978) is his most influential work in postcolonialism. In his book, Said emphasis on the ways adopted by European to govern over knowledge in order to reinforce their power. They refuse and dismiss the knowledge and the intellect which natives claim to have. This work of Said is very much criticised as a limited text because it does not accommodate the possibility of difference within



Oriental discourse. Another influential postcolonial theorist is Gayatri Spivak. She writes as a feminist, Marxist or postcolonialist, her works are always characterized by deconstruction theory. *Can the Subaltern Speak?* is certainly her best known and the most controversial essay. In this context, the most prominent figure in postcolonialism is Homi K Bhabha. He has extended the works of Said and Spivak, and also deconstructs the dichotomies of the West and the East, the centre and the periphery, White and Black, Superior and inferior, the colonizer and the colonized, the oppressor and the oppressed and the self and the other. He is impressed by Derrida's analysis of how binary oppositions structure western or colonizer's thoughts. However, besides all these thoughts and ideas of postcolonial theory, Bhabha has propounded the terms like 'ambivalence', 'mimicry' and 'hybridity' through which the fractured nature of the colonial condition has been analysed.

Thus, the various crises like in-betweenness, ambivalence, culture and identity, unhomed or houselessness are further elaborated through the concept of 'Diaspora'. The term Diaspora connotes the traumas of human dislocation. It brings alienation, loneliness, double consciousness, multiplicity of cultures and identity.

Multiculturalism is an ambiguous term. It means a cultural pluralism in which there is collaboration of various ethnic groups and they dialog with each other without sacrificing their particular identities. It is like *tutti* fruity cocktail of cultures, language and art form. In the political context, it extends equitable status to different ethnic and religious groups without promoting any specific ethnic, religious, and cultural values as central. Multiculturalism as cultural mosaic is often contrasted with the concept assimilation and social integration and it is beautifully explained as a "salad bowl" rather than a "melting pot". This policy has been officially accepted as a policy in several western nations since 1970. First it started in Canada in 1971, later followed

by Australia and many other countries of the world. Due to the open policy of multiculturalism in Canada, the Indian culture which is an amalgamation of diverse cultures has been able to flourish. Every individual has freedom to practice his culture and establish its religious institutions. The notable influence of Indian culture, music and cinema can be seen all over the world. The melodious voice of Lata Mangeshkar has been mesmerizing the people of other countries. Our great singer A.R. Rahman has won laurels by giving incredible music for the song “jai ho” in Danny Boyle’s movie ‘Slumdog Millionaire. Many NRI’s like Lakshmi Mittal, Bobby Jindal, Nikki Haley and others have brought name and fame for the country. To give respect and honour to these expatriates Indian government celebrates Pravasi Bharatiya Divas in January each year and it is sponsored by Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs for those who mark the contribution of Overseas Indian community in the development of the nation.

With multiculturalism, the host country also becomes enriched with diverse nature of Indian culture. In the context, it can be said that Indian Diaspora is like a banyan tree which represents its culture and Indian way of life. As the our great Indian poet Rabinranath Tagore says in *The Banyan Tree*

To study a banyan tree, you must not only know its main stem in its own soil, but also must trace the growth of its greatness in the further soil, for then you can know the true nature of its vitality. The civilization of India, like a banyan tree has shed its beneficent shade away from its own birthplace....India can live and grow by spreading abroad –not the political India, but the ideal India.  
(Vinoda, Shailaja, 11)

Even our film industry is also very much influenced by the diasporic Indians living in abroad and it portrays their dilemma through films, like *Purab Aur Paschim* in the 70s, *Dilwale Dulhania Le Jaenge* and *Pardes* in the 90s and recent movie *Namaste London*. In these super- hit movies, the first generation immigrants find it difficult to cope up with the new culture and remain in the state of in-betweenness. They long for the day when they would go back to their own home. Though their children are brought up in western culture but parents still want them to get married in their own community with the customs of their own culture. That is reason that most of the NRI's come to India in search of Indian life partner. Furthermore Indian women do not forget wear *bindi* and *sindur* as mark of *suhaag*. Though they can wear western dresses all the time, vibrant Indian dresses are always their favourite at the time of occasions and festivals. Even names of these foods like *chole- rice*, *khadhi*, *aam ka achaar*, fills mouth with water. Diasporic community keeps remembering their food habits back home and tell their younger generation about them. Their situation reminds us the statement of Anita Rau Badami in which she expresses her crises of being diasporic in Canada. She says that she left India when she was 29 and since 10 years she has been living in Canada. Further, she eloquently claims in her affirmation of the blessing of double vision: "We are both doomed and blessed, to be suspended between two worlds, always looking back, but with two gorgeous places to inhabit, in our imaginations or our hearts."(Paranjape, 161)

Canada is the most northerly country in the commonwealth. It is the land where every adventurous individual can realize his dreams without any kind of restrictions from conventional society. There were mainly three distinct waves of emigration to Canada from India. The first wave initiated in the latter half of nineteenth century when indenture labour was abolished, so to fill this gap of labours,

agents stared at Indian subcontinents where cheap labours were ready to go anywhere for the sake earning. But these illiterate and trusting labours had no clue how far they had been taken away from their home. The first Indian immigrants entered Canada in the year 1890s. Around 1905-08 approximately 5000 Indians entered Canada, including 700 who had been expelled from Washington State. In September 1907, a large segment of white population attacked on the Asians including 5000 Indians. These settler colonies like Australia and Canada put restrictions on the coloured people to land on their shores in order to protect their working class and they wanted to build a western country with white people. Some orders were implemented to curtail Indian immigration. Meanwhile, many Punjabi peasants and army men opposed this exclusions and racism. There was a Sikh, Gurdit Singh, he gathered the support of Indians and challenged the exclusions by transporting them to Canada through a ship, named Komagata Maru, which was renamed as Guru Nanak Jahaj by the passengers. When this ship Komagata Maru reached Vancouver harbour on May 23, 1914, it was quarantined off the coast for two months along with passengers. This incident was a great humiliation for Indians but Canadian government found a way to get rid of the brown people and later the ship was sent back. The story of Komagata Maru incident entered the lore of the overseas population. The doctors, Engineers, Lawyers, scientist and businessmen started the second wave of immigration and they migrated to Canada to try their fortune in a technological advance country. The third wave of immigration includes those people whose forefathers had left India during 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century to different countries like Africa, Caribbean and Fiji islands and then these descendants had moved farther northwest to Canada. With the influx of South Asians, Canada became a multicultural country and simultaneously racial discrimination also got rooted in it. However, Canadian Human Right Act and other

Acts have been implemented to prohibit any kind of discrimination on the grounds of nationality, ethnic, origin and language yet every individual immigrant in Canada is a hyphenated Canadian like an Indo- Canadian , Ukrainian-Canadian or a French-Canadian.

In the first phase of Diaspora people were hardly educated and they could not express their immigrant experience through words but later after 1960's educated class of Indian society tried to strike their root in the literary field of Canada by depicting their 'in-Canada' or immigrant experience through their writings. There are many eminent writers Himani Bannerji, Surjeet Kalsey, Saros Cowasjee, Bharti Mukherjee, Sunita Namjoshi, Uma Parameswaran, Anita Rau Badami and many other notable writers who are preoccupied with complexities, contradictions and ambivalence which are closely associated with homeland, culture and heritage. The famous Indo-Canadian writer Stephen Gill in his novels likes *Why, Immigrant*, and *The Loyalist City* has depicted the characters that are estranged and they feel lonely, isolated in the settings of big cities such as Ottawa and Montreal. The central themes of his works are alienation, racial discrimination and otherness. Whereas, Himani Bannerji, shows a kind of hope and positivity to survive on the alien land, inspite of all the problems of lost home.

During the last two decades, there has been works in abundance on Indian diaspora and most of the Indian writers have achieved great success in this field of literature. The foremost writers at international level are Salman Rushdie, Chitra Divakaruni, Amitav Ghosh, Rohiton Mistry, Bharti Mukherjee, Jumpa Lahiri and many others. Even the directors of films industry have tried this subject of diaspora in their major works and claimed a great success at international level. There is long list

of movies like *Bhaji On the Beach*(1993), *Chutney Popcorn*(1999), *Monsoon Wedding*(2001), *Bollywood/ Hollywood*, *Bend It Like Beckham*(2002) etc.

Diasporic writing is the reflective of the individual's sense of ethnic identity as s(he) comes in contact with a new identity on hostland and this quest for identity leads to a sense of dislocation , isolation and displacement. The other term for diasporic writing is immigrant writing which attempts to capture the cosmos which is considered as chaotic. There is no doubt that the writing is just an escape route from this love- hate relationship. Many diasporic writers become the voice of the people, they relate the two lands- one they have left behind and the one to which they are accommodated but neither of the land belongs to them. They are stranded between two cultures which push them into experiencing a double alienation. Among the best writers who opt for permanent exile are Rohinton Mistry, Bharathi Mukherjee, Uma Parameswaran, Anita Rau Badami.

Among the exponents of Indo-Canadian diasporic writers, the name of Uma Parameswaran is always listed foremost because of her major achievement in the works like *Trishanku*, *Rootless but Green are the Boulevard Trees*, *What Was Always Hers* and *Sons Must Die*. She is an author and editor of several books of poetry, fiction plays and criticism. She has won '1999 New Muse Award' and the 2000 Canadian Author's Association 'Jubilee Award' for her fiction- *What Was Always Hers* (collection of short-stories). Uma Parameswaran is also known for the contribution to the emerging field of South Asian Canadian Literature. Parameswaran's creative writing explores the challenges of Indian Diaspora in coping with ambiguous identity; she deals with the issues of assimilation and racism in her short stories, plays, and poems, shares a common theme and at times even the same characters.

Uma Parameswaran has been living in Canada for past forty years and she is aware of the dilemma that an immigrant feels on alien land. In the essay, “Ganga in the Assiniboine: A Reading of Poems from *Trishanku* which is contained in the book *Writing the Diaspora: Essays On Culture and Identity*, she talks about this experience and observes that “though the landscape around me is cedar and pine, there are other sights and sounds in the landscape of memory- mango blossoms, monsoon rains, and temple bells” (85). In her another essay “Dispelling the Spells of Memory: Another Approach to Reading our Yesterdays” she says that the people who leave their native countries and come to foreign land with some good hopes, they always occupy a liminality, an uneasy pull between two cultures. She calls this pull Trishanku’s curse, a king who was denied by both heaven and earth in mortal form and later he was given his own constellation. Parameswaran gives her own example that as a Canadian she believes in borders but as a member of Indian Diaspora she sees that strength lies in the erasing of borders. As a Canadian, she becomes a part of the oppressor group which dominates the rest of the world by Coca-Cola, McDonald’s empire and multinational companies. Simultaneously, she also feels as a victim being a Canadian because there is always a threat to Canadian sovereignty by the United States for acquiring its industries, cultural properties and natural resources. It seems that the history of his native land is being repeated in her new homeland. But when she takes herself as a literary member of the Indian Diaspora she actually feels a strong bond with her fellow Indians friends who come from the same country and culture. As far as the meaning of Diaspora consciousness is concerned she states that it is positive and celebratory linking across political borders of the people who come from the same home culture and heritage. Many writers, publishers and editors are also contributing their efforts in making this bond strong but this literary and social

bonding result into ghettonization where one's emotional and social needs are fulfilled without going outside the ethnocentric community. But Uma Parameswaran considers ghettonization as an unhealthy element and a big impediment for the success of multicultural society like Canada. It does not allow the individual to integrate with the host society. Furthermore, she encourages and wants writers and critics of Indian Diaspora to shift their focus of their writing from homeland to host land. They should not be afraid of writing about the country in which they are presently living in. she has also suggested three main points to the writers and critics about reading their yesterdays. She says that they should introduce and establish archetypes and cultural illusions out of their historical events like Komagata Maru incident of 1914 and Air India tragedy of Kanishka in 1985.

In her famous essay "Ganga in Assiniboine: Prospects for Indo-Canadian Literature", she presents her utmost desire in which she wants to see the confluence of Ganga and Assiniboine rivers. The river Ganga is the most pious and sacred according to Hindu tradition and on the other hand Assiniboine river also represents Canadian culture and its richness, so when these two sacred river merge into each other, there would be a merger of two cultures as she says "the confluence of any two rivers is sacred for the Hindu ethos, perhaps because it is symbolic of this enrichment" (71). Thus, she is looking forward for the time when Indian immigrants see their holy river Ganga in the Canadian landscape and every Canadian citizen recognizes the importance and emotional attachment of his neighbours to this river. In a nutshell, she intends to see the combination of two distinct cultures which would lead to an establishment of a new enriched culture.

Furthermore, she identifies four phases of the immigrant experience. In the first or the primary phase, one is conscious of the vastness and harshness of the



Canadian landscape, this initially makes one feel wondered and curious at the sight of new environment. The immigrant seems to be nostalgic for his homeland and culture. In the second phase the immigrant tries to overcome his nostalgia and struggles to establish himself in society by slowly getting integrating into a new way of life and set of values. The third phase emphasizes on the second generation Canadians who live on monstrous meat, burgers and mingle within ethnocentric community. They often make mental inner and outer journeys of their idealized homeland and often burst out their frustration over the discrimination they have to face in the host country.

Finally, Uma Parameswaran says that in the fourth phase the immigrant takes an active participation in the larger political and social arena outside his own immediate community. He finds a place to call home where he can be himself and feels comfortable in assimilating into the new culture. He grows emotional roots on the soil of the new land and that becomes a home for him. Though Uma Parameswaran claims that most of the immigrants reach the fourth phase yet many critics and psychiatrist do not agree with her and believe that complete assimilation into the stream of host culture, especially for first generation is quite impossible, they might acquire a relative adjustment, that is 'acculturation', but not 'assimilation'. A critic Mrs.R.Vedavalli in her critical essay "Sending Roots: A Study of Uma Parameswaran's *Sita's Promise* and *Rootless but Green are the Boulevard Trees*" explains the meaning of the words 'Acculturation' and 'Assimilation'. The word 'Acculturation' is "the adaptation of changes in external behaviour for a smoother acceptance by the new society, whereas 'the assimilation', is the ability to react instinctively and emotionally to a culture" (Balachandran, 132). In the process of acculturation and assimilation, every immigrant has to forget all the ways of his/her own culture and has to undergo a new learning process in the host country. This

process of transplantation seems to be difficult for older generation but it becomes relatively easier for younger generation because they are not deeply rooted to their past culture and heritage. All these plights, dilemma of identity crises and the various stages of acculturation and assimilation are clearly portrayed by Uma Parameswaran in her novel *Mangoes on the Maple Tree* and some of her short stories which I intend to take in the present research work.

The novel *Mangoes on the Maple Tree* depicts the real life like characters living in Indo-Canadian community and the events, situations and experiences presented seem to be so common and typical that usually occurs in various families of immigrants in Canada. The novel focuses around two East Indian families from Pune, presently living in the suburbs of Winnipeg for a long time. The author has presented various characters belonging to two generations that represents the Indian Diaspora in Canada. The parents, Sharad and his wife Savitri Bhave, Sharad's sister Veejala and her husband Anant Moghe represent first generation. These two households left India in their adult years after marriage, for different reasons. The Bhave and Moghe children Jyoti, Jayant and Vithal are in their twenties represent the second generation as they were born and spent their childhood in India and seem to be familiar with their culture, heritage, and language. But having spent seven or eight years in Canada they are very much influenced by its culture so they can be seen as a unique blending of two cultures. The young siblings Krish Bhave and Priti Moghe who are in their adolescent years represent the generation that have never been to India and are only exposed to residual elements of Indian culture through mythical stories, food and clothing by their parents. They are deeply immersed in the culture in which they are living. So, the objective of dealing with novel is in this research is to expose the dilemma of three generations who have left their home and their struggle to get

assimilated in Canadian culture and how they make out a way to survive on alien land.

The story “Darkest Before Dawn” is taken from the collection of short stories *What Was Always Hers*. It emphasizes on the two major characters Jayant and Jyoti, portraying their life and problems being in Diaspora. Jayant loves his culture and heritage from the core of his heart which is truly passed on to him by the stories that his father usually tells him. The influence and indelible impression of his heritage can be seen through his memories in which he presents the every detail of the courtyard of his ancestral house so minutely as if he still be living there. He feels proud for his culture and heritage whenever he remembers about it but simultaneously feels betrayed and cheated because he has been moved away from it. This story deals with Jayant’s strong relationship with his home back in India.

The story “The Door I Shut Behind Me” has been taken from *Trishanku and Other writings* in which Uma Parameswaran has delineated two characters Chander and Kishen Agrawal. They are in contrast to each other, because Agrawal speaks in loud voice and is always open to express his feelings spontaneously whereas Chander is a well educated, sophisticated and an introvert man of twenty five years. The ambivalent feelings of new immigrants and how the Indian Diaspora living in Canada have been in a state of in-betweenness, has been wonderfully depicted in the story by Uma Parameswaran.

Another eminent South Asian Diaspora writer this paper focuses on is, Anita Rau Badami, who has been living in Canada since 1991. She was born in Rourkela, Odisha, India, and got her education at the University of Madras and Sophia College in Bombay. Badami is a strong voice of the modern Indian Diaspora and her works

also deal with this theme. She depicts the kind of problems that an immigrant Indian family has to face and the cultural gap that arises. The memory and quest for the self identity as reflected in the novels under study in the present paper and it will enable us to know the cultural distinction between the two nations.

The novel, *Can You Hear the Nightbird Call?* depicts the three women who share the same experience in love and tragedy. The starting point of the novel is the partition of India and the novel ends with the explosion of Air India flight 182 off the coast of Ireland in 1985. The novel presents the major historical and political events in India and Canada through different characters. This work embodies the unforgettable events like the Komagata Maru incident and the partition of India, the two Indo-Pak Wars and State of Emergency in India, Operation Bluestar and the Assassination of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, the Anti-Sikh Riots and the Kanishka Aircrash. Here the novelist tells the story of three women who are linked together in a common experience of violence and how pain and sorrow engulf their personal lives. Critics highly recommended Badami for taking such a bitter subject as the plot of her novel and turned it into a thoughtful, highly readable and hopeful narrative. It covers all those conflicts of past and present, which are hard to resolve.

The fiction *The Hero's Walk* is a narrative content which is obtained from imagination and in addition to the history or fact. Badami has an insightful and thoughtful voice to express cross cultural, traditional conflicts as well as the consciousness of women characters living in Canada. The novel deals with the issues of emigration since it shows the insecurity of the migrants in both the countries. The protagonist of the novel is Sripathi, who lives a typical life in Torturpuram with his wife, son, sister and mother. The story revolves around his Canadian granddaughter Nandana who lost her parents in a car accident, now she is brought to India by her

grandfather. She faces many problems in a new environment and new culture. Her grandfather had disowned her mother when she married a white Canadian instead of spending her life with the boy who had been chosen by her parents. Since that day, Sripathi had not been talking to her daughter. But after her death, he realised his mistake but he could do was just to repent throughout his life. Sripathi has many other family problems also like he has responsibility to make his forty years old sister to be married with someone. This also gives him a tough time, and on the other hand his wife Nirmala is still angry at him for her daughter's death. The author has tackled the issues of the family, love, money, motherhood and immigration problems very efficiently.

*Tamarind Mem* depicts an intricate relationship between a mother and daughter who reconstruct their past with different perceptions. The novel is divided into two parts and is described from two viewpoints. The first half of the story is told by Kamini and the second half is told by her mother, Saroja. The basic structure is very interesting because the two main characters never come face to face and their interaction is only through the narration of their past.

Though many research works have done on Diaspora writing focusing on the ambivalent feelings of immigrants and their intimate relationship with past and heritage. But the present research intends to focus on the narration of past and notion of 'Ambivalence' in the context of works of Indo-Canadian diasporic writers Uma Parameswaran and Anita Rau Badami, which has not been attempted so far. These contemporary writers have depicted the historic and mythical past of India and Canada in their writings. It also intends to explore the commonalities and difference in the treatment of diasporic themes in the works of the two authors. However, the proposed research is not an aesthetic study of any particular genre of literature-

poetry, drama and fiction; rather it is a thematic study of select works of the two authors including poetry, novels and short-stories.

The first chapter of the present research will be introductory in nature to define and elaborate the term 'Diaspora' in the context of diasporic literature. It analyses the diasporic consciousness of immigrants, their fragmented identity, feeling of nostalgia, alienation and a struggle between dislocation and the process of assimilation in an alien culture. It also introduces the two Indo- Canadian writers, Uma Parameswaran and Anita Rau Badami, who have delineated a wonderful picture of immigrant experience in their works.

The second chapter of the research deals with the concept of 'Ambivalence' which has been propounded by the prominent postcolonial theorist Homi k. Bhabha. He has used this term in connection with colonialism to explain the complex mix of love and hate relationship between oppressors and oppressed. This term has been used for those immigrants who have a simultaneous attraction towards and repulsion from their hostland. The present chapter intends to analyse this notion of ambivalence in the works of both the select female diasporic writers.

The third chapter deals with 'Pastness of the past', it means how memories of past days, place and people play a significant role in the life of an expatriate. The fictional world of these diasporic writers negotiate with the real and imaginary world, but the different worlds merge and fuse so immensely with each other that it becomes difficult to notice their distinction. Actually, these worlds are a blend of memory and desire. The memory of those golden days spent in homeland and their desire to go back to the same place or their wish to return to 'home', keeps haunting the present life of every expatriate.

The fourth chapter is a comparative study of Uma Parameswaran and Anita Rau Badami as diasporic writers and it focuses on the commonalities and differences in the treatment of diasporic themes through their works. Both are Indo-Canadian writers and they depict the saga of pain and sufferings of immigrants after detachment from their native place, mainly through female characters, which make them feminist diasporic writers.

The last chapter concludes the study with a review of the observations, findings and recommendations. It also discusses the various techniques used by Uma Parameswaran and Anita Rau Badami in order to bring out the immigrants' feeling of ambivalence, alienation, acculturation and assimilation. They use techniques like serious of monologues, dream and imagination, Indian myths, historic past and beliefs. Their language is direct, simple and conversational with typical Indian setting as well as for Canadian setting.

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