

## Chapter-3

### Pastness of the Past

The main purpose of this chapter is to investigate in detail about memories, past, imaginations, culture, heritage and homeland which play vital roles in providing peace and solace to outraged minds of all generations with specific reference to Indian diaspora in fictional works of Uma Parameswaran and Anita Rao Badami. The works of both the writers categorize the cross-cultural, traditional conflicts and express the consciousness of diaspora. Furthermore, they also depict an intimate access to the characters inner thoughts and feelings, their enrichment with Indian mythology, poetic colloquial language and other metaphors.

The novel *Mangoes on the Maple Tree* is a diasporic text of Uma Parameswaran, which deals with nostalgic memories of Bhave and Moghe families who left their homeland seven years back. They have been trying every possible way to get rooted in Canada, the land of their choice but always get disheartened to face discrimination and the denial of their rights. Due to the result of this uprootedness, marginalization and cultural dilemmas the immigrants feel alienated which forces them to isolate themselves from the society of hostland. Gradually, the memories and imagination of their homeland becomes an intimate companion for them to survive on the alien land. This is the presence of their remembered homeland in their life. The expatriates construct their home out of the memories of the past days spent in their native place. It also becomes a source of their cultural identity but the fact is that this home is just an imaginary home, a mythical place to which it is difficult to return. It can only be retrieved and regained in memories of the expatriates. But the point to be noted here is that the immigrants rejoice to remember their past, which is a source of

inspiration for them. They seem to celebrate the pastness of their past in order to live in present happily.

The present work, *Mangoes on the maple Tree* illustrates this celebration of pastness by the expatriates. In the novel, the first generation immigrant, Savitri Bhave is a forty-two years old woman with beautiful smooth skin and petit figure. She is a very responsible mother of three children-Jyoti, Jayant and Krish. Simultaneously, she devotesample time to her professional life as well as to some voluntary works. She always feels delighted to see young crowd coming from India, gathered in her house every week. She loves to cook Indian food for them. Sometimes she rushes back into her past memories of her childhood days spent with her siblings in India. She had lost her mother at a very young age but there were so many mothers, sisters and aunts around her to fill the empty place of her mother in her life. Savitri got so much love and affection from them that she never remembered her own mother. Being an affectionate and emotional person, she takes care of Priti and Vithal as her own children and also has a deep concern for those children who become the victims of the flood.

Being the first generation immigrants, Savitri has to face many problems in Canada. She is very well aware of her diasporic consciousness but always tries to be optimistic for future. She says that they have already built the temple because they take Gods within their heart and carry them anywhere they go, they will remain inside of them forever. It means that she carries her cultural values and tradition even in Canada. She would never forget them with the any sort of displacement. While talking about Veejala, Savitri claims that she has never been a good house wife since she never bothered about household chores. When she used to live in Delhi, she was always surrounded by many servants and maids. She had the most fabulous and the

most furnished house with all gadgets and equipment which Savitri had seen only in movies and magazines. Having heard about aunt Veejala's luxurious life Jyoti feels that it is her mother who has a bad deal. She left granddad's enormous property behind in India where she could also have lived like a mistress of the house rather she chooses to do three-full time jobs, her school, house and some volunteering tasks. Being a strong woman, she elucidates her strong trust and faith in her cultural value which she does not leave even with dislocation from one place to another and that is very essential. She does not care about the property that has been left behind but she is afraid of losing her God, heritage and ancient values which are present inside her in the form of a spirit and makes her a true Indian. Furthermore, Savitri has expressed the mental trauma and entangled life of the diaspora in which they try to avoid answering many questions and keep themselves busy all the time. Similarly, Savitri also keeps herself busy all time doing household chores, school and some voluntary activities, so she might not get enough time to think over some brutal truth of her diasporic identity. The lives of diaspora community seems smooth and very easy but actually they indulge themselves into rat race by being busy all the time and never get enough time to think about the problems. It is just their escape route from present situation either to live a busy life or remembering the past which has been left behind. They find their ultimate happiness in their memories and want to relive again the life of their past but that is impossible to retrieve. In this context, Savitri remembers a powerful poem of kamala Das, in which mother feels sick like a patient in the hospital and wants to run away to her home where her son is waiting for her. Similarly Savitri also feels sick on this alien land and wants to go back home to her ancestral place which represents the love and affiliation. On the other hand, Savitri's husband, Sharad Bhave is also an important character to discuss about older generation

immigrants. He left his job as an nuclear scientist sever years back and shifted to Canada to give better education and economic perspectives to his children. In Canada, he works as a real estate broker. Having spent so many years in a hostland, he realizes that everything is flying off centre in this culture. He feels alienated and isolated from the society. It appears that he is not able to cope up with this white Canadian culture. He no more wants to be a part of the white crowd which stares at him with strangeness.

He is nostalgic about his past days and does not want to connect himself with Canadian liberalism. His lecture on trust and responsibility and good moral background reveals his contempt of Canadian culture. He never forgets his own Indian values and the background from where he draws his cultural identity. His son Jayant is a second generation immigrant. He lived his childhood in India and had seen Indian society and heritage. But now, he has been in Canada for many years, he wants to be a Canadian, like his other white friends. He just wants to shed off his Indianness completely. But his father still finds his roots from past culture. For him roots are very important for survival for any living being. He gives an example of plantain tree which always leaves “a young sapling before it dries up” (31). This tree is considered as a holy and pious in Indian culture and it symbolizes continuity and usefulness. On every festive or auspicious occasion, a strap of plantain tree is used on the doors of houses and on wedding 'Shamiana'. In addition to it, every part of this tree like flowers, trunk, leaves is useful in some way or other. But this tree belongs to Indian soil; it cannot survive if it is planted in Canadian soil. It will grow and bloom where it belongs. Sharad compares plantain tree with an Ontario poplar which is not Manitoba soil tree. He says that Ontario poplar cannot survive in Manitoba soil as it is a foreigner, not native to it. Such elaboration and vast knowledge of Indian trees

and plants, discloses Sharad's intimate relationship with Indian culture and heritage. He seems to be deeply rooted to it. His situation is like a plantain tree which cannot survive on a foreign land; similarly, he does not find a suitable soil for his survival.

Sharad pays frequent visits to his past through memories to make his present alive. He has a vast knowledge of historical and mythological stories of Indian Origin and whenever he is surrounded by his children especially Priti and Krish, he tells them these stories in order to make them aware about their culture. He narrates *Gopala's* and *Panchali's*(148) stories in such an expressive way that children find so exciting and interesting. They always request him to tell these stories whenever the opportunities come. In this way, Sharad keeps the young children in touch with their culture and roots. Moreover, He wants to give them the same kind of love, affection and the homely environment in which he had been brought up. In contrast to her brother, Veejala has a different perception of living Canada. She is an elegantly dressed, good looking woman and works as an Assistant professor of Astronomy in a prestigious university of Canada. Since childhood, she has been a bold and stubborn child. She had what she wanted in her life. Being a career oriented woman, she never pays attention towards her children Priti and Vithal. She hardly gets time to cook for them and this distance from children leads to a huge communication gap between them. As far as Veejala is concerned, there should only be one home at a time and one should not live in the past which has been left behind. She firmly states that the burden of past culture makes them handicap and creates many obstacles in moving ahead in present life. Furthermore, she completely disagrees with Sharad who firmly believes that past is essential in order to have a sense of identity of pride. According to her views, only those people who cannot cope with the present, they tend to live in the past. And romanticizing the past all the time is just an escape route to forget the

present sufferings and sorrows". It is like a crutch and tonic for her which becomes an obstacle in merging into the new culture. But later in the novel, it is Veejala herself decides to return to her native place from where she draws her identity. She wants to go back to India because she has got tired of carrying around that crutch of the past, the memories and longing for the homeland. With all these feelings, she is not able to get rooted in Canadian soil which always remains a hostland, not her own homeland. It reveals her diasporic consciousness like other character of first generation. Having heard her firm decision of going back to India leaving behind her husband and children makes Sharad worried and angry. He is deeply bothered and assumes that she might be having an extra-marital affair otherwise no woman would take such harsh decision in her life. But Savitri is calm and more understanding than him. She blames western culture of Canada which has made Sharad to assume such reason for Veejala's decision. Sharad has always been a family man and it is the only reason for him, to come and settle down in Canada in order to be in touch with his sister throughout his life. Even she has complete faith in him and always needs her brother in every decision of her life. But in this matter, Sharad feels betrayed. Seven years back, he decided to abandon his job as a nuclear scientist and moved to his place and now Veejala is committing the same mistake by resigning from a respectable post of a professor. Actually, Veejala is also sandwiched between the two cultures and notions. She pretends to be a Canadian but her heart lies in the past, in India. When she is asked in an interview about her resignation, she answers in a straight way that she would like to waste her life in her native country than in these backwoods of Canada, where she has to face racial and as well as gender discrimination.

The first generation immigrants suffer a lot due to their displacement. They

have to face tough competition and racial discrimination wherever they go. The idea of assimilation seems a farfetched one under these circumstances. Many people like Sharad tolerate everything silently by escaping into old memories but some rebellious like Veejala prefers to suffer in their own native place than the alien land.

The sufferings of second generation immigrant seems worse as they think Canada is their land and they try to get assimilated but the hostland compels them to give up this idea as it does not treat them with equal bases. Jayant is a true example of it. He is very hopeful about alien soil. He compares the immigrants to the tall Ontario poplar trees that look evergreen and beautiful though planted in Manitoba. But Sharad tells him that Ontario tree cannot survive as it is not native to Manitoba. It gets dried up very soon. The situation of immigrants is just like the tree. In order to save himself from the psychological crisis of his identity, Jayant is compelled to cling to his own values and tradition and to mix with his own people and friends rather than suffer from total rootlessness and isolation from both the cultures. Though he tries hard to get acculturated in alien soil yet his beautiful memories of his childhood spent in his ancestral house, mesmerizes him all the time. His relationship with his native culture and house is so intimate that he still remembers each and every minute thing of that house and daily activities of his grandmother. He recalls his grandmother seated in the large, rectangular courtyard of their ancestral house which had a *bakul tree*, flowers of jasmine, *raat-ki-rani* and some banana trees. On the left side of the wall some patches of coriander, mint and fresh okra were also grown. The servants' quarters and latrines were separated from their house. The ground was usually plastered with the cow-dung water which was as hard as tennis court. At the centre, there was a planter of whitewashed bricks for *Tulsi* plant with a space for niches where the clay lamps and incense sticks were lighted. And near the *tulsi* plant, there

was a *parijata* tree under which his grandmother used to sit with her violin. This indelible impact of his ancestral house seems still fresh in his memories. His visit to his grandparent's house is still intact in his mind. He remembers his Aji used to play her violin under the same tree every morning. Being conscious of his Marathi, he tried to avoid taking the initiative to go and speak to her. He says that his last four years away from India rusted his Marathi. Though his parents communicate in Marathi at home but he and his sister had switched to English completely and his younger brother Krish hardly knows a word of it. So, without knowing the meaning of her song, he only enjoyed listening to well trained and melodious voice of Aji. But once, she made him sit beside her and persuaded to sing a song he avoided as he could not enunciate even familiar daily routine Marathi words. Then, she started teasing him for his calloused hands which he got from woodcutting. She showed her intention to use those hands in playing violin so that she could leave violin for him as a heritage after her death. She told him that she had been the only violinist in the family and wanted him to become her descendant in this art. As a young child, Jayant got really excited having heard her promise that she would teach him to play violin and her only violin would be bestowed to him. Within two months, he could learn the basics of this beautiful musical instrument. After two years of this incident, his grandmother died and he still does not know whether she has left her violin for him or not. Due to this deep knowledge of his ancestry and sharp memory of his childhood days reveals his attachment to the heritage and moreover, he feels proud to be a part of it.

Although Sharad Bhave along with his family migrated from his ancestral home which gave birth to a great number of warriors, patriots and legends yet he had always kept the history of his ancestral home alive in his bedtime stories which he used to tell to his children especially to Jayant when he was a kid. Because of these



stories, Jayant has got a profound knowledge of his heritage which has been passed on to him by his father. He is so inspired and proud of it, that sometime he reproaches his father for being so impatient leaving India and abandoned all their ancestral property. He feels betrayed by his father as well as by his grandmother.

Jayant feels that treachery has become his companion for life because this time his sister betrayed him by choosing Pierre, a white Canadian, not from their own. Earlier there was a time when he could have asked some personal question to Pierre as a friend but since the day he comes to know his relationship with his sister, he hates him so much that he wants to kill him by running a sword through his neck. But the indelible influence of Indian culture does not allow him to hate the man with whom your sister wants to get married. This is an unavoidable bond of brother and sister which is expressed only in the symbol of *Rakhi* (111). On the occasion of *Rakhi*, sister ties *rakhi* on brother's wrist and wishes for his long life with good health. Brother also gives promises to be with her and protect her from all the hurdles of life. He would always stand by her in all decisions. In a *Rajput*(111) wedding also, brother of the bride challenges the bridegroom before entering the gates. It is a symbolic duel, then, they embrace each other and move forward to the bride who is waiting with a garland. The significance of the duel is that it provides an opportunity to the brother who wants to know the physical and mental strength of bridegroom. It proves his strength, courage and suitability for the bride. The fight continues till the brother is contented that his sister is safe and protected with the man and then, he welcomes the bridegroom with open arms to finalize his wedding with his sister.

Jayant can accept Pierre and eliminate his hatred towards him because Jyoti loves him very much and her family can sacrifice anything for sake of her happiness. Again, old memories flash before his eyes, some recognizable faces, Ajoba's library,

her scented sari with fragrance of Jasmine and the mesmerizing smell of camphor in the niche of the *tulsi* plant at the centre of his ancestral home. He is ready to perform all the rituals with due grace and honour which has been performed since ages.

The darkness around him seems to fade away gradually and a new day with sparklingly sunlight would soon arise and that would bring new hopes, desires and a new way to survive on alien land with the mingling of two cultures.

The story "The door I shut Behind Me "is also a true description of diasporic community and it slowly explores the layers of self-doubt and anxiety that exist in the mind of the first time immigrants to a foreign country through the character of Chander and Kishen Agrawal. Chander, the protagonist of the story, is an introvert, well educated, sophisticated and unmarried young man of twenty five years. He has got a doctorate degree from Madras University and presently he has a two-year contract with the University of Madras at an annual salary of \$ 8,500 and for only this purpose, he is moving to Canada. While sitting in the plane, his eye focuses on two books which his mother gave at the last moment of departure. The first book is a translation of our epic " *The Ramayana* "into English by Kamala Subramaniam and another book is a translation of *BhagavadGita* by Annie Basant. His mother has always been undemonstrative of her emotions but this time she could not control her heartache and it spurted out of her eyes. She wished him for his safe journey and requested him to visit home occasionally in order to get wisdom and spiritual solace. Chander has got another book, named "*Chandraskher's Radiative Transfer*"(93). Though this book is not his field of study yet he bought it with an urge to take before leaving Indian Soil. Inside the plane, he comes across with a character Kishen Agrawal, who is a complete contrast to him. Agrawal exudes friendliness, perfumed hair oil and has a very loud voice. He starts to make a kind of acquaintance with

Chander but he does not like to disclose his personal and professional life to a stranger. He is such an annoying man for him and not able to avoid him for long. So, reluctantly submits before him by revealing his purpose of moving to Canada. Having heard this, Agrawal gets astonished that Chander has a two years contract with the University of Madras and would have a luxurious life there but unfortunately, he cannot enjoy such life being a student in Canada.

The rustic and ill behaviour of Agrawal can be seen when he comments on the air-hostess. It reveals the mentality of middle class society where people are not used to it such modern young women. They usually pass lewd remarks whenever opportunity comes. He reminds Bihari in *Trishanku : A cycle of voices* who also wonders at the new environment and comments some lewd remarks, seeing the half naked foreigners in Canada. Furthermore, the lack of knowledge of Agrawal, using westernized toilets and culinary art while having his meals, surprises Chander and becomes a laughing stroke for him. Agrawal keeps criticizing the western culture throughout the meal and peeves Chander who is already fed up of him. Agrawal's shining rayon suit, ornate watchstrap, his plastered hair with fragranced oil, loud noise, his egoism, his boosting nature and shallow generalizations becomes a matter of disgust for Chander. The author has portrayed these two characters in this story which are completely different from each other. The common thing they share is that they both come from a same nation and heading towards the same destination.

After landing in Canada, The helpless Chander has to share a room with Agrawal. He seems exhausted by this annoying man and starts contemplating over his tolerance as a weakness. Then he compares his situation with India which allowed Britishers to dominate over them since ages. He finds that people generally praise of their strength of tolerating injustice without uttering a word but the fact is actually

their weakness that dominates over them and does not prompt them to fight back. Similarly, Chander is not able to rebuke Agrawal. In *Trishanku : A cycle of voices* Uma has depicted the same nostalgic feelings for the past through the words of young boy, Suri. He asks his father why he cannot do toilet on the grass, against wall of garage or behind the apple tree or in any open place like he used to do in India. It explicitly reveals the restrictions of hostland for cleanliness and hygienic environment. The residents have to abide by the rules of the alien country even at nature's call. But in their own homeland, they do not even care about such things.

Chander's hatred for Agrawal turns into fascination because of his utter lostness in new surroundings and irrational onslaught of nostalgia for his own people and place. As far as Chander is concerned, he does not feel or remember anything for home, family and friends. Another major problem that the most of the immigrants face is language problem; it becomes a big barrier for diasporas which prevents them in mingling with native people. Simultaneously, they also urge for their own people to talk to them in their own mother tongue. But soon, it is realized that there is nobody around them of their own and they start feeling isolated and alone. Similarly, Agrawal is caught in the same situation in which he longs for his mother tongue. Having met so many people of Indian origin, he feels delighted and greets everyone with enthusiasm but Chander shrinks away from them due to his introvert nature. He notices Agrawal, who was so desperately missing his linguistic community a few hours before, now he hardly uses or utters a word in Hindi in communicating with them. As the people present in the party, they all come from different sects of Indian society so English become a medium of conversation and Hindi phrases are occasionally used. Their children are fluent in English and hardly know a word in their native language. This linguistic issue becomes a matter of discussion among the

gathering. Gradually, Chander observes that these people gathered here are together not only because they belong to same nation and ethnicity but also they have similar problems regarding their children and these same problems, anxieties and worries unite them. Although the problems of their own country mentioned by Chanderlike drought, famine, long queues for grain, fuel, milk, medicine, electricity and many more do not affect them. They only sympathies with him as if he is narrating his own grief and they are not concerned about it. Furthermore, he continues to speak on other major issues like black money, corruption, bribery, are still so prevalent in the country that its growth seems stagnant. But Chander soon realizes that nobody bothers in listening to such boring talks and very politely they change the topic of discussion. It is observed that Indo-Pakistan War, drought problems, long queries for fuel are just a matter of social bash for them. In a nutshell, they don't want to listen to the sufferings and anxieties of those people or nation which has been left behind by them. His efforts to sensitize them by showing a devastating picture of their homeland result nothing. They disperse in different small group and start talking on the topic which interests them. Chander observes that these diasporic communities just want to see the positive aspect of India which refreshes them from their hectic schedule of their routine life and makes them feel proud of being a part of it.

Agrawal has all the latest records in his collection but people around him are more interesting in listening to old classical records of songs of Pankaj Mullick, which they don't get in his collection. Then, a young man finds Saigal's album and starts it. As soon as the music of Saigal starts, there is a deep nostalgia prevails in the air and everyone goes in his past days spent in India. They romanticize the boyhood days or even earlier of that time. They go in flashback and remember the old trams of Madras, some of them recalls anti-British slogans and some rejuvenate themselves

with the greatest event in cricket history when Lala Amarnath scored a double century against Don Bradman's team. All of them seem so excited and pleasant to remember those golden moments of their past life. Chander is observing everything with patience and comes to a conclusion that they have made some nostalgic idealism in which they indulge in beautiful and peasant past. They don't even want to recall any unpleasant incident of their past. Moving back in past is like an escape route to run away from their diasporic conscious life. They find their true happiness in these memories and make their present alive to survive on alien land. They just celebrate the pastness of their past.

It is very strange that when these people are given a chance to relive those golden moments of their life, they hesitate and refuse to enjoy. When Agrawal serves them his *paan-beedas* to them, most of them refuse to take and it vividly reveals their indifference towards the same pleasures if they are given a chance to enjoy. Actually, they just want to enjoy this pleasure only in imaginations, dreams and memories not in real life. Though betel roll packets reminisces them to the betel-area shops at the street corner of their house, where they used to gather as Romeos for eyeing on college girls. Having seen and observed these people, Chander feels disgusted and annoyed that he doubts on their identity. He thinks that they are neither Indians any more nor able to merge themselves in Canadian soil to become true Canadians. They are just hanging between these two nations and cultures which neither belong to them. And such meeting at every Saturday evening reflects that they don't want to maintain their cultural ethos by meeting the people of their own community but it is their common problems of nostalgia, alienation and their diasporic consciousness that unite them. These gatherings and communal solidarities give them strength and eliminate their psychological crises of loneliness to an extent. They remain in ghettos in order

to maintain a distance from alien culture which does not allow them to assimilate into it.

Chander compares the condition of these people with the mythological king Trishanku who remains suspended between the two worlds; neither belongs to him and finally lives in his own world. This attitude of these people makes Chander feel isolated and alone, his head is heavy with a kind of burden and it gives pain to him. This weight is actually in his heart that makes him feel alone and lost even being in a crowd of so many people. Now, his situation seems to be like Agrawal who felt nostalgic in hotel room. He sits quite and silent on his chair for some time. Then, a pale short man in thirties comes to him and starts making fun of Agrawal who got Saigal's album by mistake. Initially, Chander finds some positivity and gets impressed by this man whose name is Hari Bahl but as soon as he knows the fact he has got married with a white Canadian woman, again the same burden in his heart is felt. And he bursts out his anger saying that he hates this connection with western culture. In his frustration he says that he would gain some experience of this country and would go back to his nation as soon as his work get finished. But Hari Bahl remarks that initially every immigrant has the same feelings like him but gradually, with the passage of time he also becomes brain-drain causality. Having heard this fact, Chander feels accused that he is also contributing in the brain-drain and leaving his poor nation behind when it utterly requires him. Very soon, he overcomes his nostalgic feelings and thinks in a rational way that it is an age of individualism that is all important in contemporary world. One must do what one intends to do without thinking about abstract ideologies of patriotism and nationhood. At this stage, Chander feels a pull towards the new country where he is standing and where he is destined to do his work. Hari Bahl says that when they leave their country behind

they shut many doors behind themselves. To this reply, Chander says that there are many doors ahead of them.

Uma parameseuaram has taken Trishanku as the title of her collection of poems. She has not elaborated the idea but its metaphor is applied to the polarized condition of expatriates. Uma begins her poem with an innovation and talks about displacement and dislocation, which leads to psychological as well as biological stress to an individual. She has presented some women characters, who migrate from their own homeland to another. It can be voluntarily or involuntary but the sufferings and pains remain the same for all women universally. She introduces the first woman Ushain Trishanku, who is a victim of child miscarriage. This universal pain is common for all women, whether living in their own country or any other country of the world. Usha's unbearable pain of losing her child in womb is expressed in her voice where she says that even the thought of her unborn son being dropped in the white lid jar brings many horrible notions in her mind. As she could not become a mother of her child, this incident makes her life miserable full of sorrows and sufferings. Her negative ideas and pessimism re-echoes throughout her thought process. On page forty and forty one, she again recollects how she lost her child and could not get a chance to rock him the cradle. She even could not make small promises to take him for shopping and walking with through Christmas stores in Canada. Even the child could not get a chance to cry over some toy or ice-cream. Neither could she make big promises to offer him the heritage of the solar kings nor did her eternal and infinite love and affection hold him to stay with her. She is left with soundless womb with gurgles of pain.

Another woman voice is of Savitri. She runs a school for toddlers in the hostland. She keeps herself busy all the time in order to avoid her feeling of



alienation and lostness in the new culture. She is not able to cope with it and wonders her own identity. She seems lost and suppressive all the time. It is ironical that a lost soul like Savitri, is trying to become a support for tear shedding white children, who always seek caress of their parents. Her love and care for their children is also representative of universal motherhood love. Both these women narrate their experience of outer world and that is completely distinct from each other. On the one hand, Usha is longing for her lost child throughout her life while on the other hand; Savitri reveals her love and affection for those children of settled land, who seem to be craving for the caress of their parent's love. But they don't get it in response. The poetess Uma parameswaran has beautifully presented the modes of two different cultures through these two women characters. Though she is a mother of three children yet considers herself as the mother of all these twenty-four children of her class and she says that they all are nine years old. Every year children pass on to another level of class but she will always be the mother of these little ones continuously.

Another female voice that is heard by the readers is the voice of Chandrika. She is a strong character, who expresses her sense that her soul is detached from the native place. She feels nostalgic of her homeland and expresses her loneliness by saying that the hostland is beautiful with so much greenery and plantation all around but her heart is still barren and dry. She is not happy to see the wonderful weather of Canada. The people of this country are warm hearted and friendly but she still feels lonely and isolated even to be in the crowd. She is not able to adapt herself with the new cultural environment and homesickness and alienation overcome her all the time. She has lost all ideas, wishes, tensions, sorrow and pain. She has lost her people or the society in which she used to feel happy and pleasant. She does not find any

companion to share her feelings of tensions and sorrows. It seems that she is so depressed and having so much psychological crises that the situations becomes grave to an extent of numbness, even her heart does not feel anything. It appears her heart has lost its voice and become numb. She expresses her pain to her brother and says that this place is not suitable to them. This is not their land where they can merge themselves. It is always a foreign land for them.

Furthermore, Chandrika describes the setting of Indian household in Canada. They keep holy water of Ganga sealed in copper pots and place them above the fridge, since they don't have any other place to keep their idols. Due to insufficient place in the small house in Canada, they don't have a small temple or any particular corner, only made for idols and God. So above the fridge become an ultimate place for worshipping. When her father asks for Ganga water, he can take it from there. When he leaves the house, he wishes his daughter with a blessing that is given by elder of the family to every married woman. It is actually a blessing for her husband to have a long and healthy life. It can be seen as a sign of marginalization in which woman is supposed to carry the fortune of her husband, good and healthy life. But in a patriarchal society like India, husband is not at all responsible for his wife's health and life. Hence, the pious wedding bond is not a mutual bond between them. In Indian cultural system, the husband always carries a superior position, the first place and wife comes after him. She is considered subordinate to him. This character of Chandrika presents that no matter where the Indian woman lives, the cultural and social bondage would always pester her. Ironically, it is the woman only, who is supposed to carry those rituals and customs along with her to every place of dislocation. Her home society wants her to follow those traditions even at any cost even on alien land.

The other minor characters, like Poornima, Tara and Tara's mother-in-law in the poem. Tara and her mother-in-law present the voice of those women who come from little less educated class and they speak in broken English. These women are literally shocked to find such an open and advanced culture, which is completely different from their own. Their English has more Indianness. When Tara goes with her Italian neighbour to the super market, she is shocked to see the flesh of animals hanging like bananas. She cannot bear such picture of flesh and rushes from there immediately. She accepts frankly that her English is not so good and her lack of knowledge regarding the language is seen through her broken English.

The lamentation of Tara's mother-in-law evokes both laughter and pity. She is not able to adapt herself with new culture and environment. She does not like confined house with close doors and window all the time, especially in morning hours. As it is considered the time of Goddess Lakshmi enters your house through the rays of sun light. But with closed doors and no *rangoli* on the porch steps, how she would come in the house. According to Indian rituals, open doors and windows in the morning brings fresh and positive energy in the house and *rangoli* symbolises that goddess Lakshmi pours blessings of richness and happiness on the family members. But in Canada, it seems impossible as all doors and windows remain closed all the time. Hence, Tara's mother-in-law is worried about it. Even the canned and ice-cream food is not liked by her and she questions her son how goddess would bless the three days old food. She declares that she does not like the way her daughter-in-law holds some other man's hand and her son holds the hand of some other women. She really does not understand this western culture. Although she does not like this new culture yet feels proud of the achievements of her son, who has got himself settled in a foreign country. He owns his own car, home and a good salaried job.

When she thinks of his accomplishments, she feels happy and proud but still cannot bear the smell of previous day cooked food. According to her, the smell of the food should be filled with leaping aromas of spices like turmeric, green coriander and mustard seeds, popped in the hot oil. She is an astute enough to accept this alienation because of better financial conditions of his son but she hates to be confined with doors and windows rather prefer to be in nature. She wants to hear the sweet voice of birds, soothing sound of rain instead of loud and irritating noise of washing machine. She seems frustrated and lost in the new surroundings and longs for the dust, hot air and flies of her own land.

In Trishanku, the male psyche is represented by the characters like Vithal and Jayanth, and for the young generation like them burst out their anger for the kind of racial discrimination they experience in host land. Acculturation and assimilation seems very farfetched ideas for them. Vithal wants to hit back at this discrimination. He asks other immigrants to show their strength against such acts as they also have the rights to live on this land. On the other hand Jayanth is soft-spoken and not so aggressive like him. He is fully assured that expatriates have a rightful place in the geographical as well as cultural environment of Canada. These two characters are the two facets of the poet's personality and show a transition from aggressiveness to calm elevation.

In the first phase of migration, the immigrant is a stranger to the host land and being an expatriate, he shows a kind of wonder, fear and curiosity about the new culture and new land, which is completely different from his own. The deep rooted nostalgia for the past echoes through the sentiments of Dilip, Suri, Sharad and Bihari. The young boy Dilip makes an urgent plea to his mother to make his skin fairer like his white friends. It would be very nice for him and then, he would not be

differentiated from his white friends. Sharad laments over everything that is in contrast to his own culture and country. Being a first generation immigrant, he is not able to cope with the new western way of Canadian culture and he finds himself isolated and alienated all the time even in crowd. Another boy Suri complains about why he is not allowed to obey nature's call in public. Though it is unhygienic practice yet he used to do it in India but not allowed in hostland due to certain laws and hygienic rules in the country.

Anita Rau Badami is one among the popular diasporic writers who presents Indian orthodox Community and her conflict to acclimatize her way between East and West. Her works deal with the complexities of Indian family life and with the cultural difference that emerges when people move to the West. The second novel of Anita Rau Badami, *The Hero's walk*, is about the unexpected things, difficulties, problems and disasters in the typical and traditional life of the protagonist, Sripathi Rau, who lives with his mother, sister, wife and children. The novel depicts India in microcosm through life in a small fictitious town, Toturpuram near Madras. It traces the lives of ordinary impoverished Brahmin family through extraordinary times of political and social transformations in power in southern India. Sripathi Rao is a middle class press reporter, struggling to fulfil his social, economic and family responsibilities. He is fifty seven, living in his ancestral home with his widow mother Ammayya, unmarried forty years old sister Putti, his better half Nirmala and his social activist son Arun. After six miscarriages, Sripathi is the seventh child out of eight children and only son to Ammayya. So the family astrologer was called to predict infant's birth chart. He declared that the boy had favourable stars shining on him. He would always be one step ahead of life and one step behind death. He had a younger sister putty, but being the only surviving boy in the family, Sripathi always got much attention and affection

from everybody. Ammayya took utmost care of him in his childhood by feeding him fresh buffalo butter, basmati rice, almonds in milk. His grandmother used to tell him many gallant tales of heroism of Arjuna, the great archer. His father Narasimha Rao emphasized on his studies and brought the complete encyclopaedia Britannica for him. He wanted him to read and learn it by heart. Later on, his father, Narasimha Rao became irresponsible for his family obligations and had an extra marital relation with another woman. Then, he betrayed his wife and left his two kids. After his death, the family faced financial crises and sought help from relatives. Ammayya always had a desperate desire that his son Sripathi would become a doctor one day. To fulfill her wish, he got admission in medicine but did not like to work with dead bodies. He felt that even the hostel food was polluted by human blood. Being a fragile Brahmin, he couldn't continue his medical studies and left his degree in middle. Later on, he got a job as a reporter and the financial condition of the family improved.

Sripathi got married with Nirmala. She was a beautiful woman who took care of his family. She was very submissive and lived calmly with her orthodox widow mother-in-law. Sripathi had a daughter named Maya and a son Arun. After three years of their wedding, Sripathi got an opportunity to work as a newspaper reporter in Delhi. He wanted to resign his present job and planed to go to Delhi. Nirmala was also very excited because it would mean a house of her own and moreover, she would get freedom from Ammayya. But Ammayya trapped him emotionally and persuaded to refuse that offer. Being a responsible son and brother to his mother and sister, respectively, he was supposed to take care of them and couldn't abandon them like his father did. Consequently, he rejected good job offer and decided to continue to live with his poverty in Toturpuram.

Badami narrates the story of Sripathi and his friends Raju Mudalar and

Kashyap and how they get success in their career. Raju feels alone because his wife dies leaving their abnormal daughter Ragini. His two sons are living in abroad and they never come back to see their father and sister. Political events of the society are described through Munnuswamy, who keeps cattle in the residential area and becomes MLA later on. He instigates Hindu and Muslim voters on communal issues during election. His son Gopala and Putti fall in love with each other. Ammmayya has rejected many marriage proposals for putti on several grounds and now her age has crossed forty and still she is alone without any companion. But this time Putti seems adamant to get married to Gopala as she is attractive towards his physique.

Sripathi's daughter Maya got a golden opportunity to study on fellowship in an American university. She studied there for three years and received a degree. Soon after, a marriage proposal came to Sripathi's doorsteps for his eligible daughter. Without any delay, Maya was engaged to Prakash before her leaving for America. In the first year of her dislocation from India to America, she wrote many long letters to her family frequently. In her writings, she would give a description of her roommates, her professors and the long hours of her college classes she has to attend. She was worried about her assignments and it was very astonished for her to see the library system in America. She wrote to her mother that she hated the food she had to eat and thought that she should have taken a few bottles of pickle because she really yearned for her mother's spicy food. Furthermore, she felt alone and isolated in the beginning and hated the smell of the meat when her roommates cooked in the shared kitchen. Her letters were full of events and the family would discuss every detail of these events until her next letter came. She sent photographs also which were clicked by her old Agfa camera. This camera was Sripathi's gift to Maya. But soon from the second year onwards, the frequency of her letters seemed to decrease and even the

replies had also been shortened. She sent just a new year's card with a few hastily written lines and hardly called her family. Later on, after completing her degree, one day Sripathi received a letter from her informing about Alan Baker, with whom she wanted to get married. She also added that her engagement with Prakash could no longer be continued and wanted to break up with that long distance relationship. She declared that her true love was Alan Baker, who was perusing his Ph.D. All this came as a shock to the family, especially to Sripathi. He was not able to tolerate the betrayal from his daughter and disowned her with contempt. He neither received her phone calls nor read her letters. That brave decision of Maya had created great upheaval in the house of Sripathi as well of Prakash. Even Ammayya blamed her for Putti's spinsterhood and that incident had defamed their family's reputation. Badami gives a miserable condition of Nirmala - the Indian mother. She doubted on her own upbringing of her children and which had made them to behave like this. According to her, the temptation of western culture had led her astray which was very difficult to resist for a girl brought up in Indian society. Sripathi believed that Maya had strained his as well as Parkash father's reputation and threatened her never to show her face in the house again. He considered her to be dead. In spite of all this, she sent her wedding invitation card and photograph of her and Alan that she had captured outside the Registrar's office. After one year, she became mother of a beautiful daughter Nandana and she sent her photo to her parents in order to seek their blessings. She requested her father to be a legal guardian of Nandana as Alan had no immediate family. Initially Sripathi refused it but with the intervention of his friend Raju Mudaliar and continuous pleadings of Nirmala made him sign the documents. Gradually seven or eight years passed away without any communication between father and daughter but she kept in touch with her mother and brother during this long



period.

During her eight years of stay in Vancouver, Maya writes letters to her mother and calls her every week. But Sirpathi being adamant in his decision, he never attends her calls and never ever tries to read her letters. When Maya and Alan go for job, they leave Nandana at uncle Sunny and aunty Kiran's home as a child day care. One day Sripathi's receives a call from Dr. Sunderraj from Vancouver, he informs him that Maya and Alan has died in a car accident. Their daughter Nandana is safe as she was not with them. Having heard this disastrous news, the whole family is shocked especially Nirmala, being a mother, she is not able to control her emotions and behaves like an insane. She blames Sripathi for this catastrophe as he never accepted Maya's relationship with Alan. It is only because of him, Maya never came home and now they have lost her forever. As appointed legal guardian of Nanadana, Sripathi has to go to Vancouver to bring her back to India. He makes all arrangements of passport and money for this purpose. After his one month stay in Vancouver, he is allowed from social science department to take the child to India. Due to this incident in her life, Nandana is portrayed as a bewildered child remains silent all the time and believes that her parents would return someday. As she had never met her grandfather in her life but her mother had told her about his stubborn nature. So, she is unwilling to come with him but seeing no other option for her. She reluctantly comes to a land which is completely different from Canada, her birthplace. After her arrival, she is not able to adjust with Indian food, environment and social surroundings. Through Nandana's character, it is narrated the difficulty of adaptation of foreign culture to an alien like Nandana. At the time of departure from Vancouver she takes her mother's red winter coat and her fathers' grey coat as a piece of memory. She feels so alone in India that she does not utter a single word even after one month of

her arrival. Nirmala takes care of her more than anyone else and she becomes so strong saying that past has gone. They cannot help it and they should stop worrying about it as this child's future is more important than past sorrows and pains. She expresses her grief that she would always miss her daughter but to give good upbringing and healthy environment to her child, is the only way to repent for their misconducts in the past. Being a religious woman, Nirmala is worried about post-death rituals of Maya. She asks Sripathi whether her eyes were closed with coins and put one in her mouth. She further asks that her daughter has gone like a beggar without any proper funeral rituals and in result of that her soul would not rest in peace; it would float like Trishanku between worlds.

Nandana is admitted in a convent girl's school. At school also, she does not mingle with her class-mates and remains isolated in this different atmosphere. She likes the company of Arun, her maternal uncle and a bit inclined towards Nirmala also because of her love and affection. But still does not like Sripathi. She remembers Halloween festival which she used to celebrate it in Canada but here in India, there is no such ritual. She comes to know about Deepawali and other Indian festivals. She does not like Indian fruits and food but gradually, adapts herself to all these things. She has not seen electric water heater in her life in Vancouver and here, she wonders how bathing water is heated with it.

Badami's novel, *The Hero's walk* does not focus more on Maya, who leaves her birthplace and settles down in Canada. She is the most conventional diasporic subject to deal with. The author hardly mentions about the issues of identity, alienation that Maya faces in a foreign country. She never mentions the feeling of nostalgia, isolation, any incident of social discrimination in her letters which she kept writing back to her family. There is no mention of her dreams, past memories and nostalgia

feeling about her homeland. In contrast of all this, Badami emphasis more on Sripathi's multiple displacements and rerootings. The novel depicts Nandana's reversed journey to the old world which her mother had left. The difference between hostland and homeland is depicted through the memories and comparison of the little child Nandana who comes to India as an Orphan. Maya's Canadian daughter Nandana comes to India as a second generation immigrant who has never seen her ancestral homeland. Unlike her mother, her immigration is involuntary from Canada to India. Prior to that, she heard about poverty and life style in India from her another. She also knows that her grandfather did not approve to her parent's marriage. So, she has a kind of hatred for him and due to this, she does not even utter a word before him. It is only at the end, she consoles him on the death of Ammayya saying that her mother has also died.

After migrating to America, Maya keeps writing long letters to her mother about education system, food and western culture of America. Nirmala is sympathetic and emotionally attached to her daughter. Maya meets Alan in a foreign land. She falls in love with him and wants to marry him. But unfortunately, her father disapproves this proposal and disowns her as his daughter. Maya wants her parents to bless her on her wedding but Sripathi's stubbornness, detached her completely from her ancestral home. Later on, after her child's birth, she requests her father to become legal guardian of her daughter. She keeps writing letters to her mother and calls her weekly. She remains in touch of her brother Arun. This shows that just by migrating to a foreign country, one cannot leave one's bonding or attachment to native land. It continues through different forms letters, phone calls, celebration of festivals and food and cultural dresses. On the other hand, for Nandana, Vancouver is her birth place and Canadian culture is her culture. She is born in that

society. Her migration to India is a compulsion. India is the host land for her and she feels really awkward to see the hustle-bustle of railway station and over crowded trains, and their foul smell.

Badami has discussed the issue of Hindu and Muslims on homeland. India is a secular country in which every individual has a right to worship his/her gods in their religious way. Through the disliking of Sripathi the author has described the secular Indian society where Hindus worship with the loud sound of Krishna temple bell every morning. On the other hand, Muslims make loud nasal call of Mullah from their Mosque. The sound of temple bell as well as sound of mega phones of Mosque has become so deafening that it irritates Sripathi. He complains about it but nobody does anything about it. Being a secular country, all Hindus and Muslims live with equality and harmony. Apart from this, the Hindu-Muslim relationship has always been a political issue in India for many years.

Anita Rau Badami's third novel, *Can You Hear the Nightbird Call?* is a story about three women who share the same experience in love and tragedy over a long period of time. The novel begins with the time before the partition of India and Pakistan, leads to a series of actual violent events which devastated the lives of these three women characters. Finally, it ends with the explosion of Air India flight 182 off the coast of Ireland in 1985. The present novel presents a kaleidoscopic picture of daily sights and events, past and present, culture and society of both India and Canada. The author combines fictional world with real historical events and presents a masterpiece before the readers, in which there is an integration of past memories of the characters living in India and Canada. The plot of the novel revolves around the after effects of the partition, particularly on the Sikh Community, in India and the Sikh Diaspora in Canada. Their struggle for identity and political unrest in the

country, leads to the demand for Khalistan a separate land for Sikh. The major historical and political events happened in India and Canada are depicted in the present novel. As the story commences with Komagata Maru incident and the partition of India, then it proceeds to the two Indo- Pak wars, imposition of a state of Emergency in India in 1975, Operation Bluestar, the assassination of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, the Anti-Sikh Riots and finally the Kanishka Aircrash. All these incidents, past and present are narrated through the memories and experiences of the characters in the novel.

The partition of India and Pakistan is one of the most horrific events in the history of the world, which resulted into the bloody massacre of innocent people, rape, and abduction of women, children become orphans in large numbers. It was an involuntarily and forced migration, which led to uprootedness of mass exodus from their impoverished culture and heritage. The present novel describes the post partition period, where innocent people became victims and their lives were ruined for generations.

The novel revolves around the three major women Characters, Bibi ji (Sharan) Nimmo (Bibi ji's niece) and Leela (Babi ji's neighbour in Canada). Badami begins her novel with social and religious conditions prevalent before partition. She mentions how the houses of Hindu, Sikh and Muslims were located. There was a cluster of Sikh and Hindu houses on the one side, separated from the Muslims area by fields of Sugar cane as some barrier. This indicates that even before partition, though Muslims and Hindus lived together and with communal harmony, yet separated by some barriers. On the other hand, Sikhs and Hindu lived together as one and there was also a kind of respect and awareness of the religious duties for each other's religion. This consciousness of religious harmony is very well depicted through Gurjeet (Sharan's

mother) words, when she says that all religions are equal and holy. Badami also gives us information indicating that before partition, religious differences were not so powerful and were hardly any such dominant obligations about it. She tells it through Sharan's husband, Paji (Khushwant Singh), who wants her wife (Sharan) to learn both English and Gurbaani. Also, Sharan secretly breaks the rules of her religion by cutting her hair, which is against the Sikhism. And more importantly, Paji celebrates all the festivals whether it is Baisakhi, Diwali, Eid and Chirstmas, with full enthusiasm and happiness. In addition to this, Lalloo also cuts his long hair and wears a hat instead of turban. He too rejects his religious tradition. These examples are from pre-partition period, which shows that people are conscious about their religion, but it remains latent in their lifestyle. They are not so obstinate about it. When Sharan and Lalloo reject their religious customs, they feel free and emancipated. They are not guilt-ridden and remorseful of their action. This displays liberal and open-minded approach towards religious customs.

Paji and Bibi-ji run a restaurant named 'the Delhi Junction'(120) and have an open house named "Taj Mahal"(121) in Canada in which they welcome any young new immigrant from India with open arms. Anyone can come to their house till they do not find a permanent house to stay. They all are ushered in. Paji gives a reason for this generosity saying that when he came here, so many people helped him at that time and now he is just paying them back because they are all strangers in this land and have nobody but their own community to turn to. It seems that customs and religious traditions are not so extreme here, yet the affinity and sense of pride for Sikhs is very much present in Paji. He really feels so happy that Sikhs are scattered each and every part of the world and due to this their religion is flourishing as well. His love and affection for his community is not just a passive emotion of satisfaction.

He is very much active on the religious front, as he sends out petitions to the fellow Sikhs for funds for Gurdwaras, temples and Mosques and gets involved in other Charitable causes. He also works on his book "The popular and True History of the Sikh Diaspora"(200). In spite of all this, he is a global citizen of the world and wants his wife to know English to survive on this land. As a true human being, he is always ready to share sorrows and happiness of others.

About the partition of the country, Kanwar (Bibi ji's sister) writes a letter to Bibi-ji (Sharan) in Canada that there is unrest and conflict between Hindus and Muslims for the division of land. She does not mention about the Sikhs, as till that time, they were supposed to be on the same side with Hindus. It is clear that Muslims are 'other' at this point whereas the Hindus and Sikhs are on the same side. But after few days, the second letter of Kanwar creates terror among the Indians living in Canada. The minor unrest has now become a heightened animosity between Mussalmans and Sikhs. She stated that her husband was still hopeful and believed that Muslims of his village were his neighbour and long-time friends; they would protect his family from all kinds of violence. However, at this stage, when partition draws nearer day by day, religion becomes an important aspect of life for every individual. Violence erupts due to religious affinity and political upheaval which leads to division of geographical boundaries between the two nations. The repulsion for each other's faith and religion becomes so greve that they all fall prey to collective gruesome violence. In addition to this, Nimmo's mother is raped in her house. It is very important to note here is that the agent of this heinous crime is not disclosed. The reader is not told about the identity or religious inclination of the rapist. It may be because this is an act of violence due to communal perception that the political events of that time, had unleashed. Therefore, there is no purpose to identify the

culprit of collective consciousness except that it is a non-Sikh man. At this point, it can be said that woman's bodies become a battle ground which has to bear innumerable incidents of atrocities and brutality. Nimmo's mother commits suicide because she is not able to survive with such shame and humiliation. She tries to wash away the disgrace again and again but the scar of such violent acts is so deep and indelible that it leads to psychological and emotional trauma for life-time. The veracity of this cruel act is demonstrated by its outcome, when she pushes herself to suicidal death after this tragic incident. Even Kawnar's daughter, Nimmo cannot get rid herself of that horrible memory of dangling feet above the floor, which smells delicately of lavender soup. This violent past haunts Nimmo's mind throughout the novel.

Like Nimmo, there are thousands who lose everything including their families' relations and identity during the partition. When she joins the *Kafeela*(53) and walks away for days in that endless ragged line of people, where they were crying and weeping for their losses and begging for food and water. She saw bloated corpses floated in the canals that run along the fields and young children like her were begging for food. All shows that the passion for religion can destroy and devastate the lives of ordinary people. The violence in the name of religion starts in India, gradually, reaches to Canada, as Bibi-ji learns of it only through letters, newspapers and Television. But in Canada, minimal effects of partition can be seen. As far as, the Muslim customers like Hafeez Ali and his friend, Alibhai come regularly at the Indian restaurant called "The Delhi Junction Cafe"(122) run by Paji and Bibi-ji. In spite of violence and partition back home, in the early years of the restaurant's life the Indians and Pakistanis sit on the same table and share their food. It may be because they are living in diaspora and both the communities are strangers to this land



and their common food and cuisine habits keep them united. So, they meet regularly and exchange pleasantries. This shows that the politics of homeland does not affect them so strongly in Canada. When these two newly formed nations are at war with each other in 1965, the split consciousness that was fired with the partition reaches all the way to Canada and divides the people according to their religion and nations. This battle reaches to Delhi junction where Hafeez and Ali Bhai alter their seating places. They move defensively over to a separate table away from Indian groups and hardly speak to them. But as soon as, the war between the two nations ends, their antagonism for each other is also forgotten and both sides share the same pleasantries and camaraderie that existed earlier between them.

Bibi-Ji decides to rent out her house to her Indian Hindu Friend and she feels happy about it. She thanks her stars for her Hindu friend. Gradually, with the course of time, consequences of political events in India become so aggressive and adverse that it lead to emergence of a militant movement among Sikhs and ultimately, the massacre of Golden Temple, in which, she loses her husband. Due to such incidents in her life, the same Bibi Ji revises her opinion about Hindus. This time the Sikhs and Hindus are in opposition. Thus, the political upheaval in homeland does not cause a conflict between nations but it also causes enmity internally among the citizens of the same nation and identity.

The character of Dr. Raghubir Randhawa is very important in the novel, as his appearance portends the commencement of Sikh revivalism. He is a Sikh scholar from South hall England and he comes to Canada to give a lecture at Sikh temple. He is Paji's guest, but after hearing his lecture, Paji discovers that he has come with extreme anger and discontentment. He is different not only in sartorial taste and appearance but the difference is ideological also. He is the utter supporter of Khalistan a separate

country for Sikhs. As Sikhism has a long and proud military tradition. It was founded by Guru Nanak Dev in the fifteenth century. Sikhs believe themselves as unique people and feel proud of their religion, ethnicity, language and way of life. So, some of them demand an autonomous land for themselves, which would be called Khalistan. The term Khalistan has been derived from the concept of Khalsa-a chosen race of brave soldier-saints.

When he starts his lecture, he finds only five people as audience and his voice echoes in the empty hall that could accommodate three hundred people. Although Paji is a sikh and gives his services for its development, he does not have extreme opinions like Dr. Randhawa. He and Bibi-Ji attend his lecture out of a sense of duty towards a visitor. Paji considered him as a historian and thought that a history lecture should not be missed. Lalloo and Jasbeer are also present as audience because Paji had forced them to do so.

Dr. Randhawa starts his lecture with stories of how Sikhs had been betrayed first by the British, who had stolen their Punjab that their great Maharaja Ranjit Singh had won for them from Mughals. He shows his antagonism towards Hindu Brahmins specifically, Nehru and his daughter Indira Gandhi. He started that they had given Mussalmans their Pakistan and the Hindus their India but Sikhs were left to die in between. He openly criticizes the political regime of the time, who takes the wheat that they grow on their lands and distributes it to all of Hindustan and diverts the flow of their water from their river to different states of the country and leave them with empty buckets. The water problem is the bone of contention of all the problems. Dr. Randhawa further blurts out his extreme views against Hindus by calling them weak, effeminate and shy, which shiver behind the door at the time of war against Pakistan. He instigates Sikhs about their foolishness and innocence who fight as brave warriors

against the enemy to save their weak co-citizens. They sacrifice their precious lives in order to save Hindus but they get nothing in return for this generosity. His main focus is to preserve the identity of Sikhs that separates them from others.

However, Dr. Randhawa's views and opinions are not common among the Sikh community in Canada. His audience has been tolerant and moderate throughout the speech. His flaming words could not lit fire in them. Badami adds some light and humorous moments as the antics of Lalloo's son. Lalloo misses most of his speech because his son keeps whispering and elaborate story of planes and ghosts into his ears. On the other hand, Paji and Bibi-Ji do not like his views of a separate nation. Bibi-Ji calls him an idiot and Paji wishes he would go away and it would be his last visit to them. But Paji has been proved wrong because after nine years, Dr. Randhawa returns to Canada with more extreme views and opinions. And this time he receives an audience that not only filled but flowed out of the hall. In this context, Badami wants to show to the readers that separatist tendencies are on the rise diaspora in Canada.

The Chapter Nineteen titled "The Return of Dr. Randhawa" is very important part of the novel as it shows how the politics of the time in India transforms and as a result of it, there is a rise of religious ideology and a separatist mentality among the Sikhs become so aggressive. This way the readers come to know that the fundamentalist ideas of Dr. Randhawa have gained support of Sikh community in large. In contrast to this, the peaceful people like Bibi-Ji and Paji, who represent the mild face of Sikhism, remain in minority. Their adopted son Jasbeer has become a staunch supporter of the militancy of Dr. Randhawa. The Omniscient narrator gives information that Dr. Randhawa is called as a chief guest at *Baisakhi* festival celebration and he shows his willingness to stay with Bibi-Ji and Paji's house. In spite

of their dislike, Paji cannot refuse and he welcomes him reluctantly.

However, Badami makes it clear that Paji and Biji are losing support of their own people. The number of guest in their house has dropped significantly. No doubt people do not like Paji's views when he openly declares at temple committee meeting that he completely disagrees with the ridiculous idea of an independent Punjab. He is the supporter of peace and harmony in all sections of the society. But now Sikh community ignores his voice and his rational outlook. His ideas prove a failure to the extent of losing his own reputation in the community. Paji is also taken aback by the people's behavior, though he is aware that the mood of Sikh community has changed considerably during past years. Now, the young immigrants come to Canada, they narrate their deep grievance against the Indian government. They demand for a separate nation of Sikhs. Therefore, being an agitator and supporter of Khalistan Dr. Randhawa, is received by a large crowd at the airport with bouquets and flowers.

Badami has portrayed the Paji and Dr. Randhawa, as two parallel characters. One is viewed as a moderate and non-antagonist and the other one is in militant and antagonist. Paji and Biji, no more remain the pillars of their community. Paji's moderate views are mostly disliked by the people. Under the new circumstances, the people who had benefitted from Paji's generosity have forgotten his service and disregard him for his polite and humble nature. However, true to his nature, he remains defiant and refuses to be cowed down and as a result of it, he has to pay the price by some fatal attacks on him and on his property. Bibi-Ji is very upset by such incidents and feels so grieved that the members of the community whom Paji had known for so many years and some of them had stayed at their home as new immigrants had boycotted their restaurant so resolutely. Their generosity has been repaid by such ill-will.

Over and above this, Paji's adopted son Jasbeer, being a true supporter of Dr. Randhawa, starts wearing black turbans like other youngsters of militancy. These young children are more conservative and religious than their parents and they behave as if they are God's personal messengers on earth. Jasbeer considers Dr. Randhawa as a great and good man and cannot tolerate any disrespectful word against him. It is only under his influence, he decides to go to India and enroll in a religious school.

Chapter twenty-two is very significant to understand the religious and political scenario of both the countries. It is set in the holy city of Amritsar, Punjab. Paji and Biji are there to pay their visit to the holy Golden Temple. The time period of this visit is may 31 - June 3, 1984. Although only these four days short period become so crucial and significant that it devastates the lives of Biji-Ji and thousands of devotees like her. There is a mention of Sant Bhindranwale who is considered as a conservative preacher and his pungent diatribes against the government of India have tempted young Sikh followers in abundance. Being an ostensible priest and holy man for his community, he is deeply involved in the politics of the moment and has built up stocks of weapons in the holy shrine itself. Satpal's sister Manpreet and her husband Balraj advise Paji and Bibi-Ji to stay in their house, as they warn them for some dangerous situation. But Paji's answer to Manpreet's fears is important to note here. He says how her house can be safer than a place of God. But the subsequent event proves that the place of god, the holiest of holy Shrines of Sikhism is more dangerous place at the time of agitation. Being a true believer of god, he ends up paying with his life in the same holy Shrine. The irony of the situation is that the combination of religion with politics is so dangerous that it can turn only safe haven into a source of misfortune.

Having witnessed the war zone like situation within the holy place, there is

also mention of the Indian army entering the Golden Temple. The author projects the picture of both sides. Bibi-Ji is representative of those people, who are against the government and questions its authority to send army inside the temple. On the other hand, Paji supports government's initiative and replies that there are extremists inside too, who has defiled their own sacred temple with bombs and guns. This discussion exposes the stances of divisive society. This chapter is significant also because Paji dies in this subdivision and his death represents one wave of optimism that ends and gives birth to self destructive anger and religious hatred in Bibi-Ji. It also signals the end of moderate and rational visage of Sikhism and the rise of an irate and militant formation that always seeks to spread violence in the society.

The massacre of the Golden Temple is a watershed event for Sikhs. They feel a sense of humiliation that the Indian army has invaded their holiest place of worship. It is a kind of sacrilege for them. The conversation between the two school teachers, who have brought a group of children to the Golden Temple on a tour, proves and represents the different perception of the people towards this incident. One teacher calls the Sikhs hiding inside the temple as extremists whereas other calls them freedom fighters.

In Canada, too the Sikhs get together and discuss about the incident in which Indian Govt. hurt their sentiments by desecrating their holy Shrine. They want a divorce from India and raise their voice for a separate nation - Khalistan. It seems that total unison of Sikh community is against Indian Govt., which can be seen from the fact that the rational and moderate elements like Bibi-Ji, becomes a part of the rebellious group of Khalistanis. In the state of emotional crises, after her bereaved husband, she finds herself restless and outcries against Hindus. Besides this, Lalloo also starts wearing an Indian *salwar* suit and turban instead of his western pant and a

hat. He also grows his beard and moustache which is a religious significance and reveals his identity as a Sikh. Soon the communal riots and political disturbance in the homeland create conflicts between Hindus and Sikhs living in Canada. This religion based division can be seen when a young Sikh uses an abusive language against Balu, Majumdar, and Sham at Delhi Junction. This shows how political event can split and create division between erstwhile friends. The people who have shared their sorrows and suffering together, enjoyed each other company on this alien land, now has become enemies. Balu is so bewildered to see the religious based segregation, and the communal riots which have been increasing so rapidly.

Once again, Dr. Randhawa visits to Canada with more supporters and followers. Bibi-Ji's attitude towards him has changed and she prepares a lavish welcome for him. In spite of her dislike of his pomposity and arrogance, she tells herself that he has been right after all. She believes like other extremists that Hindus have humiliated the Sikh and they have killed her Paji. Now, the time has come to defend their faith, their religion and their identity. In Canada, in Bibi-Ji house the atmosphere is charged for the revenge and establishment of Khalistan. The situation in India is still not so good and favourable as a letter from Nimmo tells. She writes that her son Pappu disregards Indira Gandhi. However, being a staunch admirer of Indra Gandhi, she feels hurt of her decision ordering guns and bullet into the temple.

The sense of seeking revenge against the government becomes so desperate that the next episode happens to be the assassination of Indira Gandhi by her own Sikh bodyguards on October 31, 1984. It results in the worst communal riots and bloodshed since the time of Independence and partition in 1947. Badami presents the gruesome scene when Sikhs were brutally beaten, shot and burned alive. Young girls

and women were savagely looted and raped. Badami has depicted these real life facts and incidents in the fictional world of the novel. The killing of Indira Gandhi by her own Sikh guards is such a major issue that it continues the process of animosity, hatred and suspicion between both the communities. Badami gives the horrible description of time through dreadful scene of Nimmo's family.

Badami showcases how the entire Sikh community becomes responsible of these violence and pays the price for the wrong action of some particular individuals. Nimmo thinks that the Prime-Minister has been killed by some Sikh people and she does not know them. They are stranger to her but still she feels so frightened and worried. Her daughter Kamal also says that they haven't done anything wrong so nothing would happen to them. But Nimmo's fear is all so compounded by her past events that she believes that you can lose everything your past, present and future in one single moment because you never know when this spark of anger can turn into a fire without warning.

This act of revenge by killing an unarmed woman sparks more hatred and anger in Hindu community. Now, they seek retribution in killings innocent Sikhs. As Nimmo says to her son Pappu that violence breeds more violence and nothing else so they should be conscious enough to take every precautionary measure.

Badami, again gives an intermingling of past and present, when Nimmo's daughter, Kamal is burning inside the cupboard because her mother hides her in, which she thinks that the most safest place in the world from violence. But the fire licks the cupboard and Nimmo seems helpless. In the bewildered state of mind, she rushes here and there. Nimmo has experienced the same sort of suffering when her mother hid her bin of grains in order to save her life. The author has italicized the



words of Nimmo's mother to draw the attention of the readers, emphasizing on the intermingling of the past and present. The reoccurrence of political violence in Nimmo's life suggests that the sufferings of the innocent people remain the same in all eras. Her idea of cupboard as the safest place for her daughter proves ironically wrong and blind. When religion fanaticism takes over, nobody remains unharmed out of its reach. Pappu is killed very brutally with a car tyre over his body which is set alight by the mob. His father Satpal is also killed in the same manner. He is too set alight with a tyre around his neck. Both father and son die in a tragic end. Badami has used these anti-Sikh riots and political events as the background of her narrative. The horrific sight of a burning Sikh man had been seen by Badami when she was just a newly married bride. In her novel, she has reflected the same dreadfulness in Nimmo's story.

The chapter twenty-seven of the novel is titled "Silences" which is suggestive for Bibi-Ji's silence on the matter of the sabotage of an Air-India flight and it causes the death of Leela. Leela discloses her plan to visit India after eighteen years. She telephonically informs Bibi-Ji, who has been a bosom friend to her that Lalloo's friend, a travel agent has managed to get her a seat in Air India flight on twenty-second of that month. Being aware of the sabotage in the same flight, Bibi-Ji does not reveal the fact and suddenly hangs out the telephone. She declines to speak and remains quiet leaning toward the wall. There are no personal grudges and animosity between Bibi-Ji and Leela, but it is the bitterness in Bibi-Ji against Hindus, forces her to remain silent and not to warn Leela for the mishappening. Her silence is suggestive to avenge the invasion of the Golden Temple and the killing of the Sikhs in Delhi. On the other hand, Lalloo also has an idea of this sabotage, because it is he who oversaw the arrangements to book a flight to India for Jasbeer when he intends to meet his

bereaved mother Nimmo. He specifically orders his travel agent friend not to book Air India flight as it is not safe to fly by it because of some sabotage news. As the omniscient narrator in the novel clearly indicates that Lalloo, his friend, the travel agent, Bibi-Ji and Jasbeer all are aware of the plans of sabotage in Air India flight but they say nothing to warn Leela and remain silent. It clearly illustrates that the sentiments of religious convictions and communal filial ship become so powerful that it overrules all other sentiments of brotherhood, morality and friendship. Bibi-Ji, Jasbeer and Lallo betray Leela, who still considers herself their friend. But their silence involves them in Leela's death. This silence is not just the physical lack of speech but also silencing of their ethics and morality.

The chapter twenty-eight of the novel reveals the real incident that happened on 22nd June, 1985, Air India Flight 182, on route from Canada to India got exploded off the coast of Ireland Killing all 329 people on board. This event proves that either you stay in India or Canada or any part of the world, the ties of communalism and religious concord are stronger than those of friendship and modality. The novel ends with a devastating climate when the political and religious conflicts violate the lives of all three women.

At this point of the discussion, it is very imperative to focus on Anita Rau Badami's debut novel *Tamarind Mem* (1997) in which she tries to be a true literarian by being an artist as well as a missionary in order to guide and instruct the society. As all her works are women centred and assume to project and interpret feminine perspective. In the present novel, she mainly depicts the mother-daughter relationship and the problems related to it are universal issues which attract the readers. Badami brings out these issues to the surface through this work. The novel shows the struggle of a mother and daughter to maintain their relationship even in their loneliness,

isolation, lack of love and affection. She foregrounds the homeland as the central part in all her novels. This obsession of her with the homeland is only possible through the troupes of nostalgia and memory. Initially, Badami wanted to write an autobiography, but ended up writing *Tamarind Mem* because she thought that she was not ready then to write anything about herself. When she got married, she immediately followed her husband to Canada. Even with this detachment from her native country, she kept visiting to it again and again through her dreams and memories. Her nostalgic feelings for her homeland can be seen in her present work. It has some similarities with her own life story.

The narrative of the novel *Tamarind Mem* alternates between Canada and India, between the memories of its two female protagonists, Kamini and Saroja. Through their recollections, they try to reconstruct their own past with diverse perceptions of it. It also reveals the changing relationship between a mother and a daughter and between two sisters. But pointing out these problems and family conflicts, Badami focuses on the importance of love and caress of parents, the dignity and self-respect and a balanced attitude in family and professional life with all ups and downs of life.

The novel *Tamarind Mem* is bisected into two parts in which the author depicts the past and present life of two Indian women, Kamini and Saroja. This tale of mother and daughter deals with the misunderstandings and the inner conflicts of two generations, which does not reveal due to societal pressure on them. The first part of the novel is narrated by Kamini, the elder daughter of Saroja and Vishwa. The second half is narrated by Saroja, the mother who tells her trials and turmoils of life, her estranged relationship with her own parents and later her married life with husband remain affectionless and unromantic. This sensational novel of Badami

expresses the deep bond of sweet love and bitterness of all mothers and daughters of the world. The novel opens in Calgary North pole, Canada, where Kamini is pursuing her doctorate research in Chemical Engineering. She lives here all alone and wherever, she gets time from her busy schedule she visits her homeland through her childhood memories and dreams. She calls her mother Saroja every Sunday and tries to connect with her past moments. She is reluctant to tell her about her loneliness and her utter desire to run away from this freezing cold city. If Kamini had told her mother about such feelings, instead of showing some concern and sympathizing she would definitely have nagged her for coming to Canada. She would blame her for her situation. So very early in the novel, the nagging nature of Saroja is revealed through one of the telephonic conversation. She shows her anger and argumentative nature towards her daughter. She always asks constant questions and in a nagging way blames her for making up some stories in every argument. And still, even after so many years, she does not want to change and wants to win every small argument. It is evident that she is very aggressive in nature, frustrated and disappointed with life. Her sour tongue towards her own daughter Kamini, is just to compensate her longing for a companion in her life. After her conversation with her mother, she goes back into her memory lanes of childhood days in India. She tells the readers that when she was just a kid, she found a way to spend few days in her maternal grandparents' home in. And that period of her childhood days was the most memorable and happiest for her. She said that her mother was completely a different person in her parental home, where she had so many sisters, aunts and cousins to pamper her. Saroja stayed with her parent's for three month to give birth to her second girl child, Roopa. During this critical period of before and after pregnancy, a woman can stay in her parents. But after this period, of three months, Saroja's mother no longer wanted her to stay with

them because it was against the social norms to keep a married daughter for such a long period in her father's house.

While staying in her grandparents' house, Kamini noticed that her grandmother did not show much affection and love towards her and did partiality with her. She felt that she was completely neglected by her. Moreover, Ajji accepted herself that she loved more to Aparna, because she was her son's child. She herself acknowledges her partial nature when she bought dresses for her grandchildren. Kamini's dress was less shiny than Aparna's and she couldn't help feeling a little piqued by her nature. Saroja's mother gave a reason for such difference because she believed that the children grew up and got changed, generally disappointed their parents for not fulfilling their desires and consequently after marriage, they left their house filling them with sorrows and grief. In Indian society, the male child is given much attention and priority by his parents because they believe that he would earn and bring something in the house and most importantly he would share all family responsibilities. So the discrimination between male and female children happens in India even a mother does not treat them equally. However, as far as the health of a pregnant daughter is concerned, the mother is the foremost to guide and suggest what to eat and what not to eat. Similarly, Saroja's mother also took care of Saroja for three months and suggested her to eat some spinach or a mashed food or boiled bottle gourd in order to get more milk for the child. It shows that a mother knows everything and fulfills every need of her children though the treatment for boys and girls is always different.

When Saroja comes to her husband's house, she does not seem to be happy. Kamini has been observing this changing attitude of her mother since her childhood. But she has failed to sense her mother's infuriating nature towards her. Many a times,

Kamini is not able to understand the her attitude when her Dada or Saroja's husband is at home, she keeps herself busy cutting cloths for her daughters and does not pay any heed towards him. As soon as he goes on duty for days, she starts enjoying life with her friends and plays with them like their friend. As a young child, Kamini does not understand her dual personality and compares her with the *Ramleela* drama woman with a good and a bad mask on her face and on the back of her head respectively. She changes her personality from Seetha to Soorpanakha in a single moment. Kamini blames her mother for being so annoyed with her and Dadda. It seems that Kamini is more attached with her father, who always returns with a baggage of new fascinating stories and gifts for his two daughters. In Kamini's recollections, Dadda has always been their beloved and loving father. Both the sisters adore him for his gentleness and more importantly, he shows his willingness to listen to them. But most of time, Saroja is seen annoyed with Kamini and her husband Moorthy. She either treats him with complete disinterest or with the sour and sharp tongue. The main reason for this estranged relationship of husband and wife is because of their lack of communication and misunderstanding. Because they don't get ample amount of time to spend with each other. Her husband is the kind of man who considers himself a railway officer first and a husband later. He constantly travels from place to place due to requirement of his job. He never takes Saroja and kids along with him which annoys her. They are left behind to keep waiting for him.

When Kamini was a child, she came to know about Saroja's extra marital affair with Paul da Costa, the motor mechanic. He used to come every Sunday to repair her father's car. Whenever her father returned home after many days from his projects, Kamini would complain about her mother's outings with her friends. And Dadda used to get annoyed and scolded her for leaving his daughters alone and not

taking proper care of them. Unlike Kamini, Roopa never poked her nose into her mother's affairs. She never complained about her to Dadda and always maintained a secret within her. That is one of the reasons that Saroja loved Roopa more than Kamini. Due to this partial behavior from her mother's side, Kamini always felt neglected. But being a mother, Saroja replied that she loved both of them equally. After Dadda's death, Saroja brought up her girls all alone. In order to accomplice her own desires and unfulfilled dreams, she put all her efforts in her children's education. She always put pressure on Kamini for getting good marks in exams and stand first in studies. Roopa never took interest in studies and even she was hardly forced to score well in exams. Later Roopa fell in love with a boy from low caste and decided to get married to an unknown person whom her mother had never met. She left India and settled down in U.S.A. It happened during the period of Indira Gandhi's assassination. Saroja was a bit upset because of Roopa's love marriage and her decision to settle down in U.S.A , so far away from her. Few months later, Kamini also got ready to go to Canada for her higher studies. Saroja was not at all happy with her decision because she wanted her to continue her studies in India only. But Kamini did not listen to her words and firmly decided to leave India and her mother behind in order to achieve her dreams. This attitude of daughter's towards their mother reveals a sort of riftness in their relationship. For this reason, Saroja showed her anger in one of her arguments with Kamini. When Kamini asked about her unknown journey to India by train, she snapped that she would go everywhere, where would like to go without telling anyone about the names of places. Instead of giving them a reasonable answer, she herself asked them about their decision to leave her behind in India all alone without giving her any idea of their coming back. She blamed Roopa for getting married to an unknown man and ran away to U.S.A . Saroja is left all alone in the

house in India and because of this loneliness, she blames her daughters for moving away from her. She is more frustrated towards Kamini, she could continue her studies in India also, but adamantly she left, to live in the North Pole. But now, after staying thousands of miles away from her mother, Kamini feels guilty that she has left her mother alone. Even she, herself feels isolated and all alone in this new country. In order to compensate her guilt she requested her mother to come to Canada and live there with her. But Saroja refused this offer firmly. She said that her feet needed rest and she did not want to go anywhere. Her frustration shows that unfulfilled desires and unhappiness in her life from everywhere. Moreover, she has always been deprived of love and affection earlier from her parents, then husband now from her children.

Even though, Saroja's attitude towards Kamini is bitter and nagging but Kamini still feels her warmth and affection around her through past recollections and dreams. It is like protecting her from all kinds of fears and uncertainties of outer world. During this contemplation over the past, Kamini realized about her mother's condition that she was trapped by the family shackles and restrictions. She also realized that it was her father who was to blame for the person her mother had become. It was he, who left her alone in the closed houses from which there was not a small way to escape. He never took her along with him on his trips. Even he never tried to fill the gap of communication between the two of them which gradually increased with the time. The fifteen years of age gap between the two could be the reason of their lack of understanding for each other. Kamini also realized that her mother wanted to be a doctor. But the dream could not be fulfilled because of her grandparents. Later, her married life remained complicated and unstable due to constant dislocations from one place to another. Moreover, she was not able to have



any lasting friendship in her life with anyone. The second part of the novel is narrated by Saroja which reveals a diverse perspective of her past life. She narrates her story to the some unknown fellow female passengers in a train tour. Her story is highly marked than her daughter's. It might be a solution on answers to all those curious question of Kamini about her mother's past life. Kamini always wanted to know about Saroja's anger towards her. Here, in Saroja's narration the author depicts the reason of her frustration. She reveals that Saroja's life was caught in the traditional sickles of society, because of that she was not able to fulfil her dreams of becoming a doctor. Her parents made her stop her studies and got her married to a railway engineer, who was about fifteen years older to her. Even her married life remained disturbed due to the transferable job of her husband. The couple had hardly time to spend with each other; moreover, the lack of communication increased the gap between the two, which made Saroja, a frustrated and nagging woman.

Saroja started these train trips to different place after her husband's death and after her two daughters got settled down in abroad. She felt alone all the time in her house. But instead of wasting rest of her life in an abode, she decided to travel all those places which she always intended to go but her husband never took her along with him. So, she became a travelling woman and told her life's story to the fellow passengers through her recollection of past life which she spent with her parents and husband. Saroja's husband, Moorthy was a railway engineer and he had to travel constantly for his railway projects and she had to live in railway houses. Although she lived like a madam with servants and maids to work for her but without husband she always felt a sort of loneliness around her. Her husband never took her along with him to official trips, which he believed that it was against the rules of his service. Saroja hated his constant transfers from place to another because she had to pack and

move with it. Moreover, in spite of the differences between them, her husband was an introvert and he hardly uttered any word against his wife's bitter tongue. It had become her behaviours to keep complaining and nagging all the time but her husband never paid any heed towards her. He became completely indifferent towards her. Although he had so much love and affection for his kids that whenever he came home, he used to bring gifts, toys and many news stories to pamper them. But he had no time for Saroja even during these sort trips back home. Due to these transfers, she was neither able to relate to the new place so easily nor she was able to relate back to the last one completely. She remained half and half all her life. Apart from all these instabilities in their lives, the school education of Kamini and Roopa also seemed very much affected by it. They had to change their school each time according to the new transfers. As far as the education of her children Saroja had always been very concerned about it and she preferred convert schools for them rather than any government or central school. She believed that her girls should have very good command over the English language as well as they should not be confused with first, second and third language. The central government schools were established to ensure that the children of government employees do not face any problem or any sort of education disadvantages when their parents are transferred from one station to another. The large numbers of inter-state and different language speaking students are found in these schools, so mainly bilingual method is used in these schools. In this way, Saroja was adamant to send Kamini and Roopa to the nun's school.

Kamini was the elder to Roopa and it was she who witnessed this pestering behavior of her mother, especially towards Dadda. She could not understand the bone of contention between them because it had been going on before she was born. She believed that her mother was a wife of railway officer but she could not enjoy that

status in her always complaining and regretting behaviours towards frequent transfers. She could not get the caress of her husband and the stability which she had expected from her married life. Saroja said that she had been scrawling all over the country and leaving behind little trails here and there. She had been moving most of the time but not in one fixed direction. She expressed her life as a Railway memsahib when she said that the seven circles she and Dadda took around the marriage fire were like ripples, which were formed by a stone dropped in water. And each rippled circle was carrying them on wider journeys in life.

Due to the frequent transfers, there was no home, to which Saroja could relate or owe her authority over it. It was only her parents' home, where she spent her childhood days; she had been able to relate to and could call her own house. As a child Saroja seemed very caring and protective child by her parents. When she completed her high school education, she showed her keen intention to pursue her higher studies in medical field in Sri Ram College. But her Appa bluntly refused it, which was badly argued by her but her parents wanted her to get married instead of continuing with her education. Because they dropped her from her school and never allowed her to continue with studies, she disliked them, especially her mother. She expected her mother to support her but she remained silent whenever she argued with her father. Through these female characters in the novel, Badami has expressed the gap between post and present Indian culture. Many problems like misunderstanding tolerance and diminution of cultural values arise due to generation gap. Badami also depicts the older generation have strong and very firm faith in their values, custom religion and community. They cannot think beyond all this. But the younger generation is very different from them. They make amendments in past values and cultures according to their requirement and want to follow their dreams. Hence, it can

be said that the clash between conventional traditional values and modernity is very well depicted in this novel.

In the past, Saroja's academic career was dropped because getting married off, was more important for a girl of her age. As a result, she was married to a man who was much elder to her in age. The age gap and introvert behavior of her husband could not make a strong bonding between them. Saroja's disappointment and frustration increased even more when her husband never showed any love and affection towards her. He was always busy in his official trips in making railways tracks and railroads. He could not balance his professional and family life together. He had no time for his wife and children and that was the reason Saroja was frustrated and her tongue turned bitter and bitter day by day. The lack of love and affection earlier from her parents and later from her silent husband were responsible for Saroja's present nature. She vented out her frustration before Kamini and said that she got married to a man who had no feelings to spare for a wife. She called him like a dried-out lemon peel whose energies had already been squeezed out caring for a sick mother, worrying about his abnormal sister and he inherited all unfinished duties of his dead father. All his youth and strength had been eaten up.

Initially, Saroja hated to travel and her whole life got disturbed due to this constant travelling. But towards the ends, she herself decided to take up the journey from one place to another without any restrictions from anybody. She wanted to live like a gypsy. She thought that the time had come for her to pack up and go to the places where her husband never took her along with him. It was her time to become the ruler of her own life. When she got tired of being a gypsy, she would return to the little department with *gulmohar* flowers. Then, she had a house of her own that would wait for her return. At last, Saroja herself didn't know why she was fascinated

towards Paul-De-Costa and liked him. Her longing for a true companion and the deprivation of love and affection in life took her close to him. But when he asked her to come out with him she could not break that bond of marriage, leaving her two daughters behind and finally she refused him. At that moment, societal pressure as well as her priority for her children stopped her taking that critical step of her life. Hence, she refused his offer and accepted the reality of life, being a role of a wife and mother was more important for her than any other relation.

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