CHAPTER I THE INDO-CARIBBEAN PRESENCE IN CANADA

I. THE INDIAN DIASPORA IN THE CARIBBEAN ISLANDS:

Indians in the Caribbean islands are the descendants of the indentured labourers who migrated from India in 1838. Following the abolition of slavery in 1834, severe labour crisis prevailed across the British colonies in the Caribbean islands that could have paralysed the sugar business. The British colonial government could not afford it. It invited labour from India, China and other Asian countries to recoup the labour shortage. Labourers were thus brought from India on indentureship specifically to work on sugar plantations. They were given tempting offers with a promise of a free piece of land on completion of the labour contract. Much afflicted by desperate living conditions under the age-old feudal system with exploitation, brutalities and extreme poverty farmers in India saw the offer as a viable option to improve their predicament. They chose to migrate in search of a better opportunity.

In the British colonies in the Caribbean islands like Guyana, Trinidad, Surinam, Fiji, etc. Indians were made subjects to the British plantocracy. Their migration from India was like a transfer from one imperial pocket in India to another imperial pocket in the Caribbean islands. The passage proved to them like the "Kala Paani", journey over black water with sickness and deaths during the voyage. Further, living in dark gloomy barracks on sugar plantations and bullied by white and black overseers and bosses, Indian labourers were gradually reduced to a state of invisible sufferers with symptoms of amnesia and aphasia. Since the indenture was a temporary five years' contract, about one third of the indentured Indians returned to India,

whereas about two third of them chose to stay back with a free gift of small pieces of land. Possession of land, though a small piece, was for them an impossible dream coming true. They toiled on this piece of land to grow rice, fruits and vegetables. Hard labour enabled them to buy more land and expand businesses of agricultural produce. As a result their financial conditions improved. With consistent success and prosperity, Indians built up a level of confidence to survive as significant segment of the Caribbean population. Frank Birbalsingh reports in his recent book, *Jahaji* (2000) that three hundred thousand Indians settled in Guyana forming significant majority of fifty one percent (51%) of the population and significant forty percent (40%) of the Trinidad population (viii-ix). In view of the concentration of the Indian population, Guyana and Trinidad form the central focus of the Indian presence in the Caribbean islands.

Frank Birbalsingh remarks in the "Introduction" to the book, *Indenture and Exile* (1988) that Indians were not "explicitly forced into indenture" and so their motives of this venture may wonder one. In this light he quotes from Neil Bisoondath's novel, *A Casual Brutality* (Toronto, 1988) the protagonist, Raj Ramsingh's reflections on the experiences of most Indo-Caribbean people. Ramsingh reflects on the adventure:

> What had driven them, these *faceless* ancestors of mine, to undertake a journey that, for them, must have been courageous in the way of Columbus? For they could have known nothing of Casequemada beyond what the British colonial officers, *indenture paper in hand and promise of land and money in mouth,* had been willing to be able to tell them. What irreparable poverty had they fled? What desperation had driven them? What ignominy? What fear? What hope? (312-313)

Ramsingh further reflects on a Hindu-Indian's experiences in a Caribbean land:

> The *urge to work*, to education, to wealth, came couched beside notions of race of hierarchy, of caste that would colour more and more over the years our views of ourselves and of those around us. Blacks we wrote off as lazy, Chinese as dirty, Moslem malicious, mulattoes impure. We retained the idea of ourselves as racially superior, an arrogance reinforced by the success of our efforts, proof presenting itself in every new lawyer, new doctor, every burgeoning business. (313, emphasis added, 9-10)

Birbalsingh believes that Ramsingh's reflections help "to capture the sense of challenge, adventure and danger that the earliest immigrants might have felt" (9). He further says that they focus on the fundamental concerns of Indians' experience like physical dispossession and cultural loss, psychic alienation and social fragmentation (10). He spells out certain historical phases or categories that Ramsingh's reflections suggest. He considers these phases or categories as basic to the understanding of the Indo-Caribbean experience. They may be summarised as: the indentured labour as a victim; his relationship with the people in the Caribbean, the Creoles, of ambivalence, part cooperation and part rivalry and with common resistance against colonialism; the Indian response to Westernization or Creolization; the internal division of community and the impact of independence with expectation of relief from exploitation.

Indians' expectations for a better home in the Caribbean land were met with frustration when they realized that the Indian presence in the Caribbean was utilized as a mere political tool by the two potent rival races, the British and the African. It was perceived against the most potent British presence at the seat of political power and the most influential African presence in the broad socio-cultural milieu of the land. The British saw the Indian presence, Birbalsingh points out, as a tool of imperial strategy with twin blades to be employed to suspend the economic ruin of the country by rescuing the sugar industry on one hand and to strengthen the

imperial base in the country by curbing the bargaining power of the majority African population on the other. Governor Frank Hincks of St Vincent, however, expressed his doubts at the success of the imperial strategy, whether Indians were a blessing or a curse and would be a probable cause of racial animosity in the land (2000, xiii). Africans too saw them as unwanted rivals damaging their interest of prosperity. Over three centuries' long slavery since Africans' captivity at the beginning of the sixteenth century till their emancipation from slavery in 1834, Africans had laid a strong base in the local culture capturing the centrality of the focus. Indians' material prosperity in the land aroused envy in their minds. Out of envious rivalry, Africans betrayed them despite being partners in the resistance against the British. In Guyana particularly, they denied them any share in power or in public employment. "Such ironic consequence", as Birbalsingh calls it, shocked Indians to feel alienation.

Whether utility viewpoint or envious rivalry, Indians in the Caribbean islands nonetheless suffered "disorientation". Birbalsingh views the reasons in his introduction to *Jahaji* (2000) like: a). longer and more tiring voyage from India; b). insecurity, alienation and homelessness due to their social and linguistic incompatibility to the prevalent living conditions in the land under the white and the black dominations; c). "the coolie stigma" attached to them by the British colonial government and "enforced continuously and indiscriminately" by African politicians and writers and d). double antagonism of being caught between competing interests of the white and the black (x-xii). Yet they survived with strength of their love for labour, or "urge to work" as Raj Ramsingh puts it in his reflections. George Lamming gives his observations about Indo-Trinidadian farmers in his essay, " The Indian Presence as a Caribbean Reality", "If labour is the foundation of all culture, then Indian in Trinidad was part of the first floor on which the house was built". He pays tribute to them, "these invisible hands which fed us" and in this context he

calls the Indian presence as "central and informing influence" in the creative discovery of the Caribbean civilization. He however records Indians' absence from the workplace in certain areas of public life and their concentration in peasantry and businesses (46-49).

Frank Birbalsingh's book, *Indenture and Exile* (1988) thus seeks to define the Indian presence in the Caribbean islands through essays of eminent Indo-Caribbean scholars presenting factual records of Indians' experience. The short stories in the two collections edited by him, *Jahaji Bhai* (1988) and *Jahaji* (2000) serve imaginative recreation of Indians' experience at two different points in time, first on the completion of one hundred fifty years and then one hundred sixty years of Indians' arrival in the Caribbean islands. The stories voice their preoccupations and concerns in the Caribbean reality. These books form a valuable source to formulate the Indo-Caribbean history. It can be said that the history of Indo-Caribbean is not a recorded history over generations. It is more like imaginative reconstruction though non-fictional and fictional writings. Frank Birbalsingh outlines those non-fictional and fictional writings in his introduction to *Jahaji* (2000) and acknowledges the writers' share in the making of the Indo-Caribbean history. He records writing on Indians by English writers in the later part of the nineteenth century followed by African writers in the first half of the twentieth century providing glimpses of Indians' life and Indo-Caribbean writers of non-fiction and fiction writing. He further records that Indo-Caribbean writing began actually to be written from 1943 with Seepersad Naipaul's collection of stories, *Gurudeva and Other Indian Tales* (xxii). George Lamming too acknowledges Seepersad Naipaul to initiate the literary dynasty in the form of his two sons, V. S. Naipaul and Shiva Naipaul and his grandson Neil Bisoondath. He acknowledges V. S. Naipaul's novel, *A House for Mr. Biswas* as a book of "enduring importance" to give "some glimpses of the movement and the substance within that Indian world" (47). This brief record of Indo-

Caribbean literature shows that when these descendants of Indian indentured labourers speak they speak vibrantly to make their stories echo distinctly in the alien land with alien socio-cultural milieu. They sound like the "whistling thorns", as Suvanda Sugunasiri defines the stories in the collection, *The Whistling Thorns* (1989), "to serve as thorns in the flesh of the Canadian literati" (The Preface). Their speaking or writing works as "resistance" to the conditions prevailing in the Caribbean reality. Bhikhu Parekh too in his essay, "Some Reflections on the Indian Diaspora" acknowledges Indians in Guyana and Trinidad as most imaginative to produce a rich literature on their experience of migration and settlement" (105).

The Indian presence in the Caribbean Islands took the shape of a tale of resistance. Indians were confronted by two-fold antagonism: exploitation inflicted by British imperialism and plantocracy and indignation and envy of Afro-Caribbeans. The very entry of Indians in the Caribbean Islands was looked upon by the Afro-Caribbeans as Indians' support and acclamation of the exploitation that the British were practicing against them. As discussed earlier, the Indians were brought from India in 1838 to replace African slaves. They were preferred for labour contracts on the sugar estates for qualities of industry and loyalty intrinsic to their character. The Africans in contrast earned notoriety for their lethargy. They were widely despised for this. David Dabydeen's essay, "Indo-Guyanese Resistance" notes reflections of African leaders like J. H. Bistow who calls the Africans' lethargy as "chronic lethargy", in his public speeches during 1920s to evaluate his own people against their Indian counterpart (30). Dabydeen also cites from the government records of 1915 in which Walter Rock, the Commissioner of the Pomeroon District noted, "On the whole the Indians are an admirable example to those many Black people who though owning only comparatively larger and excellent agricultural land, are too lazy to work it or too selfish to lease or sell it" (29-30).

Such a comparative reading of the British authorities in fact annoyed Africans. In addition, the Indians were paid in cash for their labour on the estates, while Africans did not receive their wages in cash. Hence, they viewed the Indian presence in the Caribbean Islands as encroachment on their rights and the very means of livelihood and eventually to drag them to conditions of starvation and misery.

Further, Dabydeen cites the official records of 1919 in which Governor Punnet described Indians as "hard-working lot of families". It makes another point that the Indians held an idea of saving for a family after spending very little on their needs. "They would rather starve, sacrifice their health and nutrition so that their children could thrive". He notes, "Now the quality of thrift was not a sign of meanness", as the African lot used to read, and, "it was derived from a strong sense of family" (29). Such open approval and appreciation of Indians' virtues by the British rulers added fuel to Africans' envy and indignation. The British condemned them as mean and miserly in front of Indians and that they lacked a sense of family. Dabydeen also cites "The Daily Argosy" of March, 1921 that bemoaned the fact about Africans: "The men lack settling in marriage and fatherhood, children are from birth deprived of the benefit of a father and depend entirely upon one parent to be the wage earner". In reference to such statements he remarks, "strong, explicit and to my mind unfair statement by Black leaders revealed Black fear of the rising prosperity of the Indian people" (30). The third virtue of Indians that earned appreciation was their love of land. Dabydeen admits: "Ownership of land was the greatest desire of our ancestors" (31). Roy Neehall points out in his essay, "The Creation of Caribbean History", "They not only survived, but took hold of the land and carved out a new history for agriculture in the Caribbean region" (5). It contributed to their prosperity and added fuel to Africans' antagonism.

Africans in the Caribbean Islands perhaps were unaware of the gruesome and treacherous conditions that the Indians faced back home in India. They were not willing to migrate but for the hopeless conditions in their homeland and a little promise of livelihood in the Caribbean Islands forced them to migrate. They were compelled to escape their miserable lots. Africans forgot, or rather ignored, one more fact that in the Caribbean islands Indians were sufferers just like them under the British plantocracy and faced a similar fate of the underprivileged. They were subjected to similar exploitation, malnutrition, humiliation and imposition of foreign Euro-centric cultural norms. If one fell sick, for instance, it meant for both the communities as beginning to die. In his essay, Roy Neehall cites an Indian girl child who developed a psyche in condition of sickness that she would die soon. It got reflected in her answers to the grammar of comparative and superlative adjectives. Her answers were: "good, better, best; beautiful, more beautiful, most beautiful; sick, dead, buried" (2). The same would be the response of an African girl child. Africans also forgot that Indians shouldered with them the political, social and economic responsibilities and they endeavoured with the equal spirit and dedication to build up the Caribbean nation. Indians attempted to erase the memory and attachment of their motherland. They nonetheless submerged their Indian identity in the new Caribbean identity. Roy Nehhall says he once met a friend from India who remarked, "Roy, you are a hybrid". Roy's response to this remark echoes the sentiments of the Indians in the Caribbean Islands. He says:

> Then I realized what a compliment I had been paid by my friend from India. For I think what he was saying was not acceptable to those who form part of the great motherland of India: what he meant was that the Caribbeanization of our Indianness has given us the

possibility of becoming a new variety of orchid. This fact illustrates the role we are called to play in the world society. (2)

Such sentiments echo Indians' wish to submerge their Indian pride in the interest of the Caribbeanism. They reflect their positivist outlook with honesty and sincerity.

Furthermore, Indians tried hard to overcome the pain and frustration of their predicament in a foreign land. They cultivated in their character virtues of industry, dedication, work ethics, loyalty and social sense. Eventually, they emerged as a significant section of the Caribbean community whose value could not be undermined. In the pre-independence times, the discrimination and denial to the Indians was not so acute because Africans were their co-sufferers in the experience. Ramesh Maharaj informs in his essay "Challenges to East Indians in Trinidad and Tobago", "both Indians and Africans hold the view that they are the victims of latent but deeply entrenched hostility expressed in discrimination, Indians being discriminated in the public sector and Africans in the private sector" (35). Both the races held hopes that with independence they would have due and equal shares both in politics and in various sectors of employment. But when the independence was announced for Guyana in 1963, the Africans captured the reins of the political power in their hands and denied Indians any share in the political power and in job opportunities in the government and public sectors. Ramesh Maharaj cites Selwyn Ryan's article of 1987 titled, "Where the PNM Failed and Succeeded" (*Sunday Express*, 17th January, 1988) in this regard:

> While the façade of multiracialism was officially maintained, and while there was no open or official discrimination against or on behalf of any ethnic group - it is clear, at least to me, that people of African descent enjoyed easier access to legitimate public sector resources than did Indians...Persons who were in a position to make recruitment

decisions, and these were mainly non-Indians, exercised discretion in favour of black and mixed elements where possible. (34)

In view of apprehension of Indians by non-Indians, the Croele and the British, Victor Ramraj's essay, "Needs and Directions of Indo- Caribbean Studies" throws light on the scant attention and peripheral status assigned to Indo-Caribbeans in the Caribbean society. He also accounts for the lack of scholarly recognition of Indo-Caribbeans' contribution to Caribbean life and its exclusion from the mainstream research and scholarship. He explains the reason by analysing the apprehension. Indians perceived themselves as "temporary dwellers in an alien environment" ever eager to return to India. They closed them in a "fortress"- like closures, like the Tulsis' Hanuman House in V. S. Naipaul's *A House for Mr. Biswas*, "to isolate and insulate themselves against Croele society". It gave an image of "the closed front" to outsiders. The British administrators held preconception of Indo-Caribbeans as "intractable Orientals". It was perpetuated through a popular comparison of the Croele with "clay", soft enough "to be easily moulded in to a Christian and Western shape"; and of Hindus (and Muslims) of India with "stone", so hard that "could only be worked painfully and with much toil", not easy to convert (Donald Wood, *Trinidad in Transition*). With the 1890 perception -or misperception- of the Indo-Caribbean as "an interpolar and intruder", arrived in Trinidad "to make money", "takes work cheaper" and "hence he must be ill-treated", "The Croele, as a rule, looks down on the Indian", states the report. (R. H. Moore, *The Mission Report for 1887-88*). Ramraj suggests a two-pronged approach "to rectify this exclusion of Indo-Caribbeans from the mainstream". On one hand, he suggests to examine the portrayal of Indo-Caribbeans by others and, on the other, he identifies a need "to recreate" the Indo-Caribbean identity through scholarly texts and studies and "to reintegrate" it in immediate context of the Caribbean society, in remote contexts of

Indian diasporas across the world and in a still larger context of universal human experience. At the end, he calls for Samuel Selvon's awareness, "this insidious facet of our colonial education and with readiness to unlearn much of what many of us have learnt" (67-78).

That Indians created a distinct space with their sense of community and unshaken faith in the religion and culture that was ingrained in their psyche. They clung on to the Hindu religious practices, rituals, and prayers and the sacred book like the *Ramayana* so steadfastly that they were safeguarded against strong influence of the Euro-centric Christian missionaries in the British Guyana. Vijay Mishra's gives a term "Hindu toolbox" for such things that old diaspora carried with it from India "to Indianize its new surroundings" - "a Ganapati icon, a dog-eared copy of the *Gita* or the *Quran*, an old sari or other *deshi* outfit,..." (Quoted in Paranjape 9). Roy Neehall remarks that the religion put the exiled Caribbean-Indians to their ethnic roots and that although "Ethnic origin had not saved many Indo-Caribbean people from knowing what it's like to feel small and vulnerable" certainly "their spirit of resistance, fed by their sense of family and religion as the root of their community life, did not protect them from being knocked down, but it saved them from being knocked out" (4).

Revival of the association with India remains a constant need of Indians abroad. The very fact of the formation of Indian Diasporas abroad speaks of their need to return to roots. A diaspora allows a transfer the burden of alienation from an individual to a community. It, thus, dilutes the resultant psychological burden caused by alienation, frustration and despair to cloud an individual's mind. It also allows a person to share his grief and sorrow and obtain emotional support from his fellow-countrymen. Such an arrangement is mutually beneficial. Hence, it receives wide approval among Indians abroad. It gives them a new vigour to survive in alien conditions. Bhikhu Parekh remarks that in the case of Indian diasporas "a far greater intra-

diasporic movement" is witnessed and "the process of diasporic integration among the Indians has gathered considerable momentum." Calling a diaspora a "globally extended Indian family", he further points out that as being its part an Indian feels emotionally secure. He, however, clarifies, "this does not mean that the diasporic Indian is rootless; rather it means that like the bunyan tree, the traditional symbol of the Indian way of life, he spreads out his roots in several soils, drawing nourishment from one when the rest dry up. Far from being homeless, he has several homes, and that is the only way he has increasingly come to feel at home in the world" (106). The support and solace that one receives by belonging to a diaspora generate confidence and strength in them to survive cultural shocks and pains of alienation and discrimination in an alien land. Additionally, he acquires a unique identity from a diaspora to which he belongs. He relates him to India through a common diasporic culture. Diaspora indeed serves him like an oasis.

Vijay Mishra, a Fijian- born Indian serves an elaborate explanation of the word "diaspora" in his essay, "Diasporas and the Art of Impossible Mourning". He lays down its application since its earliest reference as "the dispersion of the Jews" (*Oxford English Dictionary*), "the Jewish experience" of "retribution and loss" as an "unspeakable intertext" in Maturian's Gothic text, *Melmoth the Wanderer* (1820), and its use in the English language as "a culture-specific term" entailing the original sense of "the dispersion" and recently to signify the lives of "any group living in displacement" (Clifford). He draws a sketchy summary from chief theorists like Stuart Hall (black hybridity and diasporic empowerment), Paul Gilroy (diasporic flows and spaces), Homi Bhabha (diasporas as sites of a postcolonial counter aesthetic), Rey Chow (the Chinese diaspora and questions of translatability), Gayatri Spivak (subalternity and transnationality), Edward Said (exile as intentional condition of being 'happy with the idea of

unhappiness"), the Boyarian brothers (Diasporic deterritorialization as the exemplary state of late modernity), William Safran (diasporas as part of narrative of center and periphery), James Clifford (diasporas as double spaces/ sites), Appadurai (diasporic mobility and migration as the condition of the future nation-state) and Radhakrishnan (the presencing of a double consciousness in the ethnic definition of diasporas)" (24-25). Finally Mishra offers a three-tier definition that Makarand Paranjape cites in the introduction, "Displaced Relations: Diasporas, Empires, Homelands" to the book, *Indiaspora* (2001):

1. Relatively homogenous, displaced communities brought to serve the Empire (slave, contract, indentured, etc.) co-existing with indigenous/ other races with markedly ambivalent and contradictory relationship with the Motherland(s). Hence the Indian diaspora of South Africa, Fiji, Mauritius, Guyana, Trinidad, Surinam, Malaysia; the Chinese diasporas of Malaysia, Indonesia. Linked to high (classical) Capitalism.
2. Emerging new diasporas based on free migration and linked to late capitalism: post-war South Asian, Chinese, Arab, Korean communities in Britain, Europe, America, Canada, Australia.
3. Any group of migrants that sees itself on the periphery of power, or excluded from sharing power. (3)

Paranjape calls Mishra's definition as "a corrective" to earlier definitions and "very apt" in describing the Indian (diaspora). It relates it to the three phases of the economic history like: an old diaspora linked to "high classical capitalism"; a post-war diaspora or new diaspora linked to "late capitalism" emerging from free migration and any group of migrants that sees itself on the periphery of power (3). Both Paranjape and Mishra strive to arrive at a point to view diaspora as a culture-specific term. They refer to Benedict Anderson's theory of diaspora as "imagined

community" that is free of politics of earlier religious empires and imperial dynasties. Paranjape refers to Homi Bhabha's term "dissemination" that refers to communities living on the periphery of a nation-state. The spaces they occupy are "interstitial spaces" (Bhabha) that gives rise to counter-narratives that "'continually evoke and erase' the totalizing boundaries of the modern nation-state" (4). Paranjape further refers to Chris Berry who views it as "fourth kind of imagined community" that takes shape beyond "the horizons of nations" and calls it "a discordant and dynamic conjuncture" that is shaped when "different culture, histories and trajectories meet, intersect, overlay, fragment and produce hybrid forms within a certain geographical space" (4). Paranjape views William Safran's models of diaspora and the Indian diaspora "oversimplified" (4). He rather prefers to dwell on Vijay Mishra's theoretical stance, "diasporic epistemology locates itself squarely in the realm of the hybrid, in the domain of cross-cultural and contaminated social and cultural regimes" (4).

The terms "hybrid" and "cross-cultural" draw attention of these three theorists, Misha, Bhabha and Paranjape, to view that diaspora "elevates the hybrid to the level of a new consciousness" (5). They, however, acknowledge the danger of romanticizing diaspora as "the ideal social condition". Like Roy Nehhall, a Caribbean writer of Indian origin, was once called "hybrid" to which he responded as "the possibility of becoming a new variety of orchid" (qtd. in Birbalsingh, 1993 2). They emphasize that it has to be based in the real. The reality demands that "diasporic experience must involve crossing of borders of a region or a language" and there in lies its importance and potential to create "a new kind of culture" to involve "cross-cultural or cross-civilizational passage". Paranjape says that "the passage must involve some significant tension between the source culture and the target culture" in view of "a source country and a target country, a source culture and a target culture, a source language and a target language, a

source religion and a target religion, and so on". The passage is a kind of "an enactment of desire-fulfilment", he says (6).

Vijay Mishra elaborates on the point of desire-fulfilment with reference to a nation-state. He views the Indian diaspora in light of construction of a nation. Quoting Slavoj Zizek he explains that the nation is created out of one race's or community's desire to enjoy the "Nation as the Thing". It involves "proprietorial" sense of enjoyment. It is a structure of feeling, a construction with a foundation in the real. A dominant community views the Nation Thing as its property and the other as wishing "to steal [the nation's] enjoyment". "Enjoyment is therefore always of the 'imaginary'", says Mishra, or "the fantasies of our own enjoyment". Mishra views that diaspora as other functions significantly to construct the fantasies of the Nation-state as a Thing to be "enjoyed" (26-27).

Paranjape theorizes postcolonial diaspora as "a sort of dialectical Other of colonialism" that shows reverse spread in which the former empires have to "play host to their colonial chickens". In his introduction, he says that empires and diaspora "reflect and interpenetrate" each other. In this respect, diaspora is viewed as "a disturbing force, a magnetic power" (Eric Stokes) produced on the periphery of the empire and the "milling crowds of diasporic people gatecrash their way in to metropolitan centers" (7). Mishra says that diaspora "mirrors a democratic process" reminding the empire that plays the nation-state its loss in the pasts. When the nation-state denies diaspora enjoyment of the Nation Thing, it gives rise to a sense of exclusion of the diaspora from the national imagery. Reflecting on the psychology of diaspora Mishra says that the psychology that underlines the enjoyment is predicted upon "melancholia and loss" (28). In this light he relates "mourning and melancholia for a homeland as the lost object" as prior to the moment of trauma. In the present, since the new object of love in the nation-state cannot replace

the primal loss of the homeland, a state of melancholy sets in. Traumatic moments simply heighten the sense of mourning occasioned by a prior "death" of the homeland. The loss is internalized as the emptiness of ego itself that leads to "retreat". Mishra calls it "the diasporic imagery" that is a condition of "an impossible mourning". He cites from Darrida's *Memoires for Paul de Man,* "Since the 'truth' of the mourning never arrives, all that is left is memory which, of course, can only be structured as a trope of absence, the ghostly trope of prosopopeia, the trope of autobiography, by which memory is given a voice". In this light he remarks, "True mourning becomes impossible because we do not accept the truth, the textuality, of impossible mourning" (30). He refers to V. S. Naipaul's *A House for Mr Biswas* that delineates the dilemma of old men gathered in the arcade of the Hanuman House, "They continually talked of going back to India, but when the opportunity came, many refused, afraid of the unknown, afraid to leave the familiar temporariness. And every evening they came to the arcade of the solid, friendly house, smoked, told stories and continued to talk of India" (193-94). For such beauty of delineation he calls Naipaul "a founder of the indenture Indian discursivity" (45). One wants to return, but he cannot return and he mourns over his inability to return. Mishra calls it "pathology that transforms mourning in to melancholia" and that in diaspora "both mourning and melancholia persist, sometimes in intensely contradictory ways at the level of the social". In this light, he calls the "diasporic imaginary (and 'imaginary as the key concept here)" a condition of impossible mourning (36).

In the context of the postcolonial diaspora, Mishra sees a need for intense self-reflection for its consciousness. Referring to the Indian diaspora, he finds it necessary to keep their specters of slavery and coolie life firmly in place. For them a plantation history is a lived memory that hovers their minds "like the ghost in *Hamlet*". It causes trauma. The diaspoic consciousness has

to keep these specters alive to relive the trauma. Secondly, reflection demands that we constantly revisit our trauma "as a part of ethical relationship to the ghosts of diaspora". He says that this condition is "realistic" and it is contrary to the idealist formulations presented by some theorists. It demands that the past has to be kept "constantly in focus". One wants to mourn over trauma, but since the truth of mourning never arrives, it remains a memory. Memory gives voice to "an impossible mourning of the moments of trauma" and the diasporic imagery embodies that memory. There remains its decisive center. Mishra speaks about "the necessity of recalling specters, of being reminded, as Hamlet Senior did about the unspeakable moments behind Hamlet's melancholia" and calls trauma a key term as it "is deeply tied to our historical realities (Cathy Caruth)". Diaspoic writing recalls moments of trauma in the homeland. He also quotes Juliet Mitchell's definition of trauma as "catalytic event in the present" that "triggers" an earlier occurrence to become traumatic. In this light, Mishra says that in the old Indian diaspora the long period of Indian indenture and plantation experience gets transformed in to "a collective trauma" (26-34).

There are several other perspectives on 'diaspora'. They help to focus on other facets of the community formation as diaspora. Referring to the ethnic identity, T. John Samuel calls it "a private space", "In many modern multicultural societies driven by technology, information, intermarriage and globalization, ethnicity is becoming more of a private space, depending upon the individual and his or her choices, wishes and relations". He quotes Lieberson on the point of identification, "Racial and ethnic groups are not mere static entities, but are also products of labeling and identification processes that change and evolve over time" (11). Quoting Homi Bhabha's term "the third space" (*Location of Culture*) to describe categories of works of fiction Uma Parameswaran explains it as a realm or "a geographical and historical space outside the

direct experiences of the author and which gives the author freedom from the constricting cultural baggage of his own personal identities" (18). In view of the cultural baggage that a diaspora carries to work as knitting the community, she calls diaspora an "ethno-centred fabric" (*A Meeting of Streams*, quoted in Pandya 83). In view of the identity crisis and split identification that a diasporic Indian confronts, Coomi Vevaina calls a diaspora a "hyphen society/community" (109).

Salman Rushdie refers to the fictional aspect of diaspora in his essay titled, "Imaginary Homelands" (1982). He calls it "an imaginary homeland". Rushdie views himself as an Indian in exile and says that for him "the past is home, albeit a lost home in a lost city in the mists of lost time". He says that writers, exiles, emigrants or expatriates like him are "haunted by some sense of loss, some urge to reclaim and to look back". Their "physical alienation from India" inspires them "to create fictions about their homeland" and the result is "the imaginary homelands, Indias of the mind", one of which is "my India". This "my India", he says, is "a novel of memory about memory". This "my India" is a version, one of the possible versions. It does not give a whole or true image. It projects a fragmentary image like that of "a broken mirror, some of whose fragments have been irretrievably lost". It is not a "total recall", says he, but "fragmented memory", "the shards of memory", like "remains". But this fragmented memory has archeological value in the sense that the past can be reconstructed from these remains. The reconstruction of the past renders excitement of discovery. Diaspora, as Rushdie views, bears all these attributes of archeology of memory and the result is "imaginary homeland", a replica of the past, of lost home, of homeland in India in the manner the story reconstructed by an archeologist turns out to be the replica of the historical past (10-12). A metaphorical entity of diaspora that Rushdie talks about can be further explained in relation to psychology of displacement.

In this context, Rushdie further views an Indian writer, looking back at India as viewing through "guilt-tinted spectacles", like that they have crossed the black waters, or eaten pork, etc. They have straddled two cultures or fallen between two stools. Such "broken mirror spectacle" of his homeland through memory is different from a mere "mirror of nostalgia". It is rather a "useful tool" for him to work in the present. In the process, he finds him "a translated man" whose something is lost in translation. However, it helps him to give a "double perspective", both as insider and outsider and offer a "stereoscopic vision" of his homeland (12-16).

Indians in the Caribbean Islands could survive against all odds because of their social unity and economic strength. Indians in Suriname, however, confronted least threat to their cultural and religious identity, because it was a French colony and the French rulers allowed cultural differences to flourish freely. In the Caribbean regions other than Suriname, the conditions of the Indian community remained almost identical. Like the policy of the British rule in India, in Trinidad and Guyana too the British were out and out to diminish (exert coup de grace on) the Indian existence through Euro-centric cultural encroachment. In addition to the British, Afro-Caribbeans' treacheries against the Indian existence increased the risk factor. In such threatening conditions, the diaspora served them a shield to protect their culture and religion.

The diasporic bond among the Indians generated in them a sense of belonging to the common roots and common cultural heritage in India. M. G. Vassanji's novel, *The Gunny Sack* (1989) describes an Indian diaspora in a foreign land. It is spread over a number of towns and villages in East Africa. A reputed and honourable person who acts as a local chief heads it. The Indian community in each town or village has an appointed chief. He helps a new migrant to settle in a foreign land. He helps him set up his household and arrange for his needs. He also

supports him to set up a business to raise his livelihood on considerable and reasonable grounds. Vassanji describes the experience of a narrator boy, Salim who goes from Kutch in the Gujarat region of India to a village in East Africa. What the boy informs perhaps may also apply to the Indian diaspora anywhere in the world.

The Indian diaspora in the Caribbean islands follows a structure similar to that of the communities living in India for ages. In that structure, the Indians have a basic pattern of local administration that has been practiced in India for ages. As a result, a sense of community and protection of family remain basic considerations of the Indian existence. Bhikhu Parekh provides an extensive analysis on the Indian diasporas in his essay titled, "Some Reflections on Indian Diasporas in the World". Emphasizing the role of the family, he remarks: "When people migrate abroad, the institution of the family comes under great stress. It is embedded in the wider way of life and requires readjustment when transplanted into a different environment" (112). The Indians in the Caribbean Islands are over conscious about the possible threats to the institution of family and the consequences. So they seek to tighten security of their families. Such an overconscious concern on their part gives to their systems of family and society an added strength to struggle against "ironic consequences" (Birbalsingh) causing out of strategic discrimination by the British and the Africans. They adopted firm and steadfast self-defensive strategies.

Africans, therefore, applied another strategy against Indians. Ignoring the Indians' sacrifices and endeavours in the cause of the nation building, they denied them right to belong to the land on a ground of different skin and origin. It caused greater disgust, frustration and feeling of hopelessness among educated Indians. Ramgoolam in Neil Bisoondath's story, "Insecurity" echoes their frustration through feeling of insecurity in a condition of 'left behind':

> He now saw himself as being left behind, caught between the shades of his father and, unexpectedly, of his son. And he knew that his insecurity, until then always in the land around him, in the details of life daily lived, was now within him. It was as if his legs had suddenly gone hollow, two shells of utter fragility" (36).

In the process of being left behind, insecurity gets internalized. He finds his house like the one that Cyril Dabydeen describes in his poem, "Poet Speaks To The House": "the poet speaks to the house on fire/ the house speaks back"... "and flame, words and trees./ Etching on the memory- / all voices, all words, tongues of fire-/ until a man hacked his way/ through a door to make/ a solid entry" (5).

Educated Indo-Caribbeans could have tolerated the conditions and stayed on like their parents and other Indian relatives did. They could have closed them in their well-protected self-reliant domains of the business world. They could have earned lots of money and improved their economic conditions caring little for the discrimination and indignation in their lots. They could have even carried on their fight on the political front as strong opposition and got in to powers some day. But the education and training that they had received through the British education system run by Canadian Christian missionaries made too sensitive to the situation to compel them to find an option that would ensure equality in life. At last out of intolerance, they decided to migrate to Canada where their qualifications and eligibility would find due recognition. The business community, however, remained contented with their self-protected systems in the Caribbean islands as stands Ramgoolam's case in the story, "Insecurity". These people seemed to live in vacuum floating in the air of insecurity with feeling of hollowness and fragility of life. Loss of footing in the land characterized their experiences. Such internalization of insecurity reduced them to a mass of invisible sufferers with symptoms of amnesia and aphasia. These facts

reveal that unfulfilled aspirations of educated Indians formed the chief factor to enforce on them a second migration further to North America and Canada. It was a second exile for them, says Cyril Dabydeen, in which the Caribbean was "a mere stopover" for them. Birbalsingh refers to V. S. Naipaul's depiction of his hero protagonist, Biswas in *A House for Mr Biswas* as "born 'unnecessary and unaccomodated'" that gives a sharpened insight into the universal predicament of people (1989, 10-11).

II THE INDO-CARIBBEAN DIASPORA IN CANADA:

The presence of India in Canada is seen in many colours and moods. It is so because it stems from many soils, roots and climates. Considering the roots, the soils and the climates from which they originate, these varied colours and moods of the presence of India in Canada may be perceived in the ways Indo-Canadians see themselves. They are of two types: a) expatriates or self-exiled and b) double-exiled. They always feel the presence of India in their minds. India, as is the case with many of them, looms large on their imagination. The impact is so strong and deep that many writers like Rohinton Mistry prefer to write fiction dealing with India alone.

Exile is a universal experience. It stems from one's staying away from his motherland, and his need to survive and grow in the west. In either case, whether it is imposed or self-exile, or "indentured" or "free" exile (Dhiru Patel, 28), or "push" or "pull" exile (Satyantan Dasgupta, 85-6), it certainly connotes displacement, uprootedness and feeling of loss. It carries pain of loosing one's roots. However, when a case of "pull" exile is an outcome of one's own choice the pain may be mitigated or compensated by the gains of material prosperity, academic excellence or professional accomplishment. It, therefore, may not cloud one's psyche. It is rather perceived

as a price that one pays for material growth, self-accomplishment, or advancement. It may as such be seen as fulfilling, desirable and even inevitable in some cases.

Forced exile or "push" exile carries with it a legacy of pain and loss. From such a predicament there emerge conditions of helplessness and dependence that the exiled are destined to experience. This predicament grows all the more acute in the case of people like Indo-Caribbeans in Canada. They were tossed away twice: first from India and then from the Caribbean Islands. Eventually they echo the pains of the hearts storing in them suppressed desires and aspirations. Those who are destined to such an exile live with the psychology of a victim and carry with them, wherever they go, a bundle of haunted memories. They long for a home that they would never reach. Or even if a home is realized by chance it is never a happy home. It rather proves a house where haunted memories of the past collide with pains of the present. They cause a climate of suspicion and despair. Such climate lays deep impact on their existence, growth and perhaps accomplishment too.

The second migration of Indo-Caribbean people took place in two phases: the early phase occurred in 1950s when V. S. Naipaul and others of his generation moved to England and America. The latter phase occurred in 1970s when the second generation Indians migrated to Canada. They too wanted to emigrate to England and America as they thought those lands would fulfill their aspirations. However, following the independence of the Caribbean countries in 1962, England and America denied any more entry from the Caribbean counties. Hence, the Indo-Caribbeans had no choice but to migrate to Canada. In this sense, the second migration too may be considered an "exile" as it was against their choice. Canada remained their second choice, generally.

One point needs to be mentioned about the Indo-Caribbeans who migrated to Canada. Most of them were educated and financially capable enough to travel overseas. Like their ancestors who had to accept indenture on economic grounds, they did not have financial constraints and situations of starvation and exploitation to enforce exile upon them. As Roy Neehall, David Dabydeen and many immigrant writers confess, it was voluntary and of their own choice. Secondly, unlike their predecessors like V. S. Naipaul and others, they did not grow impatient at the discrimination and indignation from Africans. They rather showed patience to wait till the independence of the country with the hope that the independence would bestow upon them better living and working conditions. They also hoped that they would derive benefits for better future in the land of their birth on equal grounds. It was young Indo-Caribbean persons who grew impatient with the experience of betrayal from none other than their fellow sufferers Africans realized that the land was not meant for them. The conditions in the land grew too hopeless for them to stand with. Hence, they decided to migrate.

Indo-Caribbeans in the multicultural mosaic of Canada constitute a significant part of the visible minority of the South Asian origin in Canada. To focus on the South Asian immigration, T. John Samuel cites the *Census of Canada, 1986* from the Statistics Canada to states that "South Asians accounted for 1.2 percent of the population of Canada in 1986, say 314,045 South Asians among total Canadian population of 25,021,915 (5-6). The latest issue of 2001 Census states that in 2001 the population of Canada has reached 29,639,030 and the visible minority population has marked three-fold increase since 1981, say from 1,131,825 out of total of 24,083,495, i.e. 4.7 percent in 1981 to 3,983,845 out of total of 29,639,030, i.e. 13.7 percent in 2001 (Catalogue no. 93F0053XIE, Issue of 2001 Census, June 27, 2002). Again as modified on April 23, 2003, the census shows the total Canadian population of 29,639,035 of which the visible minority

population stays at 3,639,035 and that of South Asian community at 917,075. This shows that South Asians form about 3.3 percent of the total population of Canada. The census also states that among the non-white and non-aboriginal population, both foreign born and native born, South Asians are the third largest visible group after Chinese (Statistics Canada, *Immigration and Citizenship*). Such statements reflect that South Asians have marked considerable increase in the population by 2001 that is good enough to continue asserting their visibility. Although European white population and non-white population like Chinese outnumber them, they are capable of asserting them in the socio-cultural and political fields by strength of their attributes. T. John Samuel states that the South Asian labour force participation was higher (5) and that the group was relatively well educated with a portion with a university degree twice as that of the national average (6). A South Asian immigrant exhibited capacity of earning very close to that of a white Canadian, viz. Samuel states, "While an average Canadian male earned $ 30,504 per year in 1985, a Canadian or immigrant of south Asian origin earned slightly less, $ 30,260. For women, the earning levels were $ 19,995 and $ 19,170 respectively"(6). In this light, he notes three attributes that count for South Asians' assertive presence. They are education, income and their concentration in major Canadian cities (9).

Among South Asians in Canada, the people of Indian origin who migrated to Canada from the Caribbean countries like Guyana, Trinidad, Tobago and Fiji, collectively constitute the second largest immigrant community. These Indo-Caribbeans are the most assertive in character. The reason for their assertive and aggressive character is rather psychological than physical. T. John Samuel quotes Ramacharan's observations in this regard:

> In Guyana, while the numerical majority, the group formed the political minority, and faced with a racist government policy of intimidation, hostility and coercion, many

thousands of East Indian Guyanese have fled from the country to secure a more secure political and economic climate. In Trinidad, Tobago, while the racial prosecution is not as blatant, being both the numerical and political minority, many East Indians perceive the political and economic environment of insecurity and have migrated to Canada in the hope of fulfilling their economic aspirations and as well to achieve a social environment that allows them opportunity to live free from political conflict and racial tension. (4).

Canada proved no better home to Indo-Caribbean people. All their hopes of a more secure home were shattered gradually. They were hurled into a political oblivion to suffer insecurity. They were not readily accommodated in the Canadian mosaic. They had to push them through it to create a space for themselves. They received cool treatment from their Canadian counterpart, as if they were refugees or unwanted guests. It is despite the fact that Canada earned international reputation in the form of the Nansen medal from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) for generously admitting immigrants, especially refugees. Ironically enough Shreesh Juyal remarks in "Canada's Immigration Policy: A Case of Discrimination Against the Third World", "Canada prides itself for having a compassionate and humanitarian traditions" (58). Ravindra Kanungo too quotes Jim Fleming, Minister of State for Multiculturalism articulating the policy addressing the National Conference of Ethnocultural Organizations, Toronto on April 26, 1980:

The policy of multiculturalism is the Canadian Term for what is commonly described in the social science disciplines as a policy of cultural pluralism. The policy that looks at each and every cultural grouping in this country and gives them an equality of status. It states quantitatively that the culture of each segment of the Canadian Mosaic is just as

valuable as the next- no matter the numerical strength of those Canadians belonging to that community.

Kanungo observes in this context, "Underlying the above policy statement, there is an assumption that the worth of every member of the society is equally valued" (6).

Deliberating on the issue of the Canadian policy of multiculturalism or pluralism or poly ethnicity, T. John Samuel quotes the Canadian Ethno cultural Council (1992) stating that among the population of Canada "78 percent of Canadians believe that multiculturalism enriched Canadian culture. Despite the rising voices of the critics of the multiculturalism policy, support for this very Canadian ideal remains high. A significant majority view multiculturalism as an enriching factor in the Canadian society. They also understand this to be a policy and an ideal that is aimed at respect and tolerance, as sharing and exchanging, and as integrating and building the Canadian identity" (14). He further states: "Multiculturalism facilitates the integration (not assimilation) of immigrants". He explains integration as a change in cultural element by association or interaction without losing one's own cultural identity (15)..

Neil Bisoondath is a critic of multiculturalism. Frank Davey quotes his complaint from his book, *Selling Illusions· the Cult of Multiculturalism* (1996) that the policies of multiculturalism "are based on group identities rather than individual identities and are designed to maintain cultural differences between groups" and that they "operate to reinforce cultural prejudices and to constrain or perhaps even ghettoize individuals within group identities". In this light, he notes in his essay, "Globalization's Fractures: The Multiplying of Canadian Literatures" that Bisoondath has repeatedly affirmed against such identities "the individual, of whatever colour or ethnicity, as citizen or artist" (8). Evelyn Kallen refers to a few white critics as opponents of the multiculturalism programme who viewed the dimension of ethnicity as

impeding the development of national unity. He cites specifically Howard Brotz, a political scientist, who viewed that multiculturalism programme "fostered the conception of Canada as a kind of *ethnic zoo*" and the Government of Canada as acting "the zoo-keeper" "to accumulate all varieties of ethnic exotica and to exhibit them publicly once a year" (emphasis added, 64).

It is a historical fact that Canada is basically an immigrant country and the first immigrants to arrive and inhabit it were Europeans, chiefly the British and the French. Following the imperial expansionist policy they pushed the aboriginal peoples of Canada into forests to capture land to set up their colonies. Since then, Canadian culture has remained under European dominion. The early rulers of Canada wanted the country to become "a melting pot" into which every immigrant would melt to adapt and assimilate into European culture. European rulers of Canada welcomed immigrants of European origins and restricted those from non-European origins. The logic they put forth for the restriction was their unsuitability to conditions and requirements of Canada, their undesirability owing to their peculiarly strange customs and habits. Discussing Canada's immigration policy in view of discrimination against the Third World immigrants, Shreesh Juyal quotes from clause c of the amended 1919 Immigration Act that the immigrants' "probable inability to become readily assimilated" was the most important of all reasons (58). The comparison of Indians with "stone" (Donald Wood) seems to have traveled with them from the Caribbean to Canada. It is understood that the 'concept of control' remained an implicit character of the enactment of Canada's immigration policy, although it is not expressed explicitly anywhere in the policy in any form. Each amendment on the 1881 Act affected in 1906, 1910, 1919, 1927, 1952 or 1976 in fact calls for non-discrimination on the grounds of race or ethnicity. In all these, multiculturalism or poly-ethnicity is held high as the

Canadian ideal. Such a contradiction in the policy and its enactment reveals hypocritical character of the Canadian government's immigration policy.

The history, however, records several incidents that made Canada to ease its restrictions against the immigration from the Non-White countries. At the close of the nineteenth century, Canada faced a serious problem of decline in population growth. This gave rise to serious labour crisis in the Canadian industrial sectors. At the same time, developed countries in Europe too faced the problems of decline in population growth and the consequent labour crisis. As a result, these countries that remained traditionally the chief source of immigrants discouraged emigration of their people to Canada or to any other country. Hence, in order to recoup the shortfall in its labour requirement, Canada had to open its gates to receive immigrants from the Non-White countries. Thus, the reason for Indians' entry in Canada too remained labour crisis. It may be noted that identical reasons would lead to identical living conditions in both Canada and the Caribbean.

Once the restrictions were eased, East Indians and Japanese started flocking in great numbers in the beginning of the twentieth century. As the number of immigrants increased year by year, the government of Canada grew anxious. It had to look for ways to curtail this 'Asiatic invasion', as they termed it. This gave rise to a series of events like the 1884 anti-Chinese bill, the gentlemen's agreement between Canada and Japan and the 'Komagata Maru' episode of 1914 that banned the Sikhs' entry. Additionally, the government of Canada banned the non-white immigration by enacting the 1901 and 1910 amendments in the Immigration Act. These were clear acts of discrimination against the Non White immigrants. They were continued until the post-War times. In the post-War times, the urgent need of labour in primary industrial sectors compelled the government to gradually ease the restrictions on immigrants from the Non- White

countries. However on the pretext of climatic conditions, the Canadian government sought to lay restrictions on the 'Asiatic invasion', however, Shreesh Juyal quotes from the Bred Bosworth document, "colour was the main reason for exclusions" (64). In the post-War times, the declarations and amendments affected seemed to operate in the interest of the policies of non-discrimination and also to affirm the official ideology of multiculturalism. Yet the element of bias still prevailed. Despite the proclamations of multiculturalism, Juyal notes, the actual practice of Canadian immigration views Asian applicants as against Canada's interest. He quotes from the policy statement; "their personal qualifications and attributes are found to be meeting the needs and interests of Canadian society in any of its diversities- economic, social or cultural" (66).

In the light of Canada's recent interests, the most readily received immigrants from South Asian countries are those with the Indian origin. In other words, immigrants of the Indian origin excel over other South Asian immigrants to attract Canada's attention, as they possess the very strength of "attributes like education, income and preference for Canadian cities for settlement", according to T. John Samuel (9). The capabilities of entrepreneurship and self-employment, higher level of education in them and their higher standard of living give enough proof of their utility and suitability. These attributes however do not make difference in their status as immigrants as it still remains second to that of European immigrants. They still face bias and discrimination. Constantly they confront Canada's expectation of getting assimilated into a European melting pot, or otherwise a danger prevails of being excluded from the mainstream participation and the benefits thereof.

Indo-Caribbean immigrants in Canada certainly belong to the Indian immigrant community in Canada. However, they have a different mindset and psychology from their Indian

counterpart. Frank Birbalsingh enumerates the reasons: When Indo-Caribbeans stepped on the Canadian soil they brought with them a tale of betrayal, hopelessness and unfulfilled aspirations. Their experiences of betrayal in the Caribbean Islands aroused in them mixed feeling of suspicion and hope for their future. The denial of their entry in England and America at that point of time caused a typical feeling of hopelessness that forced them to accept Canada as their new home, though not their first choice. On their arrival in Canada, the host country treated them as unwanted refugees. Such a treatment sharpened their sensitivity. They felt that the reality was conspiring all the time against them. They, being educated and trained, bore a creative zeal and potential. They wanted to operate it significantly to create something excellent and unique. They thought it would earn them recognition and a space on a list of mainstream creative artists in Canada and America. But their predicament was different. To quote one of them complaining, "the angst over lack of acceptance" affected their creativity adversely and the "major energy to imagination goes, not in creating works of art, but to overcome the frustrations of discrimination" (1989 ix).

Suwandá Sugunasiri, in his editorial write-up, "Selections Introduced" to the anthology of South Asian Canadian fiction, *The Whistling Thorn* (1989), designates the characters in the stories as the whistling thorn tree in the African bush. He explains: "they live their quiet ways in the wilderness of life, whistling paeans of joy and bearing the thorns of pain, roots reaching out to wherever they would find sustenance". These characters are none other than Indo-Caribbeans in Canada. Further, he designates the authors of the stories: "Our authors, too, show that they can sing in the face of any wind, be they Canadian or other, but be sharp as thorn". "South Asian Canadian literature", he asserts, "finally can also serve as a thorn in the flesh of the Canadian literati, unless their songs are listened to with the seriousness they deserve" (Preface).

Since Indo-Caribbeans in Canada still continue to live an experience of hope and betrayal and they still have to struggle against odds to survive in an alien land, their struggles and pains signify them as different and distinct from their Indian counterparts who migrate straight from India. It is in this sense that theirs is a struggle operating chiefly on psychological level. Their aspirations attain intellectual soundness. Their hopes are directly focused on their recognition in the circles of intellectuality and creativity. They had a different beginning operated on different levels and looked forward to having different future in Canada. Theirs is a space of different nature. They take Canada as home. With full heart and dedication, they want to involve their energies to the cause of their country of adoption. In return, they expect that they be treated at par with others in Canada, as country's own people to enjoy equal rights, respect and recognition. But the stories that emerge from their literary writing speak of the otherwise, i.e. of hearts tormented, wounded and pained at continued utter discrimination and denial of recognition by the host.

Since Indo-Caribbean people in Canada are those transferred from one diaspora to another, viz. from the Indian diaspora in the Caribbean Islands to the Indo-Caribbean diaspora in Canada, they carry haunting memories to distort their identities in respective countries. The factors that operated against them were chiefly economic, political and cultural. The economic factors comprised of exploitation and mal-nutrition inflicted by the British plantocracy. The political factors comprised of discrimination and betrayal of political right under the British regime followed by the African regime. The cultural factors comprised of threats of extinction from the rival African culture and its racism. Indians sought to consolidate their cultural base and faith in Hinduism through awareness programmes and training in Indian art and culture conducted by religious organisations and Indian cultural centers. Rituals, pujas, prayers,

celebrations, community gatherings and celebrations of Indian festivals like the Diwali, the Holi, the Tadja, etc. were the different forms The Tadja emerged at one point of time as a potent medium through which the Indians could assert their position in the political spheres. Frank Birbalsingh notes in his "Introduction" to *Indo-Caribbean Resistance* (1993): "It (tadja) is significant not merely as an expression of Indian cultural solidarity, but as a vehicle for communicating Indian social and political interest, and thereby offering resistance to colonial oppression" (x). The result was the most notable Indian in the British Guyana, Dr. Cheddi Jagan, rose to the first premiership. But the ties of the Indian community leaders and religious leaders with the Burton government too stirred anxiety within the community particularly among the Indian youth. A protest arose from those who could not agree to the prevalent conditions. They suffered despair and alienation. They eventually decided to leave the land and migrate to Canada. The factors that work in Canada against the Indo-Caribbean people may be summarised as: Canadian Immigration Policy attempt to exert 'concept of control' through discrimination of Indians and South Asian immigrants against White immigrants. Canadian policy of multiculturalism guided and controlled by the Euro-centric power projects thwart the ethnic or cultural identity of immigrants from the Third World countries expecting them to merge their identities in to the American "melting pot". It results in fragmentation and negation of their cultural self. The Indo-Caribbean people are found to be extremely sensitive to this issue of identity crisis.

III. THE PSYCHE OF THE TWICE-EXILED INDO-CARIBBEANS IN CANADA:

When Frank Birbalsingh was in Vadodara, India in January of 1997, a question was put to him out of curiosity and concern, "How do Indians in Canada feel about their conditions? Do they still feel being discriminated and ignored?" His reply was: "They still do feel so. And why Canada, it is the story of the coloured, Black or Brown, everywhere in the West." *The Times of India* of 21 February, 1998, published an article titled, "Home, at last" by Purnima Sharma in which she quotes Poonam Chandra who says: "Despite all the good things the West has to offer, people there make you feel like outsiders. There are strong undercurrents of resentment. They hint at it and make sure that you feel the pinch - all because you don't have white skin" (1).

The above references focus on the fact that Indians in Canada suffer from discrimination. The condition of Indo-Canadians is even worse than the Indians because of a different history at their back. Further, as indicated earlier, the level of education and urge for creativity add a feature of high sensitivity and sharpness to their reactions. They do not want to end up as dumb sufferers like they were in the Caribbean Islands. They rather wish to sharpen their cries of pain and suffering like the whistling thorns to prick the thick flesh of the Canadian people. They raise their voices to assert their presence and identity. They do it too aggressively to be ignored. They demand with considerable boldness due attention and recognition to their creative potentials from the circles of mainstream artists. They employ all their creative energy and skill of imagination to resist and to the cause of creating awareness. They claim a space for themselves in Canadian literary circles.

Like other Asians in the west, Indo-Caribbean immigrant community in Canada is reduced to an 'Invisible Minority'. Calling them as 'the anguished other', Harrichand Itwaru laments on their invisibility in his essay, "Visible Invisibility: the Anguished Other, and the

Canadian Discourse": "Out of palpable zone of silenced Otherness among many Indian peoples resident in Canada today, a few have begun to speak with an incisive clarity, but it is as if no one hears them. This is one of the workings of the culture of Multiculturalism"(100). Arnold Harrichand Itwaru is known to have criticised multiculturalism vehemently. Curiously enough he has dropped the name 'Arnold' and prefers to be known as Harrichand Itwaru since as recently as 1996. The question is, why is the name, 'Arnold' dropped? Is it deliberate and intentional? The answer is perhaps yes. It seems that the name, 'Arnold' is dropped, rather deleted, primarily as a mark of Itwaru's resistance to the Euro-centric connotation that it carries. Attacking multiculturalism in Canada, he comments that it works discrimination subtly under the guise of equality and brotherhood. The reason is that the dominion there again is in the hands of "EuroEgoism" which has reduced Canada to be a part of its larger project. He says that the new world of Canada is to be owned by the Old world and the history of the Raj in India and that of the plantocracy in the Caribbean Islands gets repeated in different contexts and in more subtle forms. Multiculturalism allows every one to speak, but only a few chosen are listened to. Indians do not fall in the category of the chosen because of their coloured skin. The space meant for them is only peripheral. Realisation of such discrimination sharpens the cries of the Indo-Canadian writers and artists. They prefer to write about the Indian community in exile that is treated as ethnic minority by the Euro-centric humanism.

Further, from among the Indian literary writers and artists, the cries given out by the writers of the Indo-Caribbean origin are the sharpest. Referring to the literary creation of the Ind-Caribbean diaspora, Bhikhu Parekh remarks: "Indians in Trinidad and Guyana produced a rich literature on their experiences of migration and settlement...Only Trinidad threw up an Indian in the person of V. S. Naipaul with a deep and anguished curiosity about his ancestral civilization"

(105-106). Indians in Canada use writing as a tool to resist, to raise their voice and to carve out a space for them against all resentments and denials in the Canadian multicultural milieu. They suffered displacement, loss of roots, invisibility, split identity, threatened survival and shattered ideologies that resulted from their double exile. Kamala-Jean Gopie raises this issue in the light of the Indian identity in her essay, "The Next Indo-Caribbean Generation in Canada". She asks:

> Are we still an invisible people? What role are we currently playing in our new home? Is the ethnic and cultural legacy that connects us to both India and the Caribbean valued? Do we find ourselves caught in a labeling dilemma of being neither fish nor fowl, that is not really "South Asian", Canada's term for people who come directly from India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, etc., yet falling outside the West Indian label, which refers usually to Afro-Caribbeans or blacks? Until we define ourselves, and accept that our culture, ethnicity and nationality all play a role in shaping identity, to speak of the future is rather absurd. (63).

Kamala-Jean Gopie expresses her deep concern over the issue of the Indo-Caribbean identity in Canada. She addresses specifically to their experiences of uprootedness and the identity crisis they passed through. She speaks about the case of the second-generation immigrants in Canada for whom a matter of relating to any root is crucial. Even if they want them to relate to any particular root or origin they are denied that right. That happened in Guyana and other Caribbean countries. In Canada, it occurs in a different context. Purnima Sharma takes up the issue in her article in the *Times Of India*. She quotes Poonam Chandra, one of the immigrants whom she interviewed, "They grow up in the West, but the parents often want them to impose a set of lifestyle and values that's so alien to them. The result is they can't decide where they belong" (1).

The sense of belonging is a crucial question that puzzles the second generation of immigrants. Poonam Chandra, however, refers to Indians abroad who experience single exile

from India. But the same may be related to the second generation of Indo-Caribbeans in Canada. They in fact face the question with greater intensity. The reason is that they experience double exile and double rootlessness, from their double origins, their homeland Caribbean Islands and their ancestral land India. Kamala-Jean Gopie in her statement above refers to the plights of the double-exiled Indo-Caribbeans that they confront the problem of double displacement from double origins and the identity crisis caused out of it. The identity crisis puts them in the dilemma of the "Trishanku" or the "Tiresias", neither 'here' nor 'there'? "Trishanku" and "Tiresias" are the metaphors that may stand for a condition of dilemma or indecisiveness that an Indian in exile faces. Indo-Canadian writers like Uma Parameswaram and Rohinton Mistry use the metaphors in their stories to highlight the psyche of their Indian characters in Canada. Uma Pamareswaram writes about them in her story, "The Door I Shut Behind Me", "What were they? Indians or Canadians?...Like the mythological king, Trishanku they stood suspended between two worlds unable to enter either, and making a heaven of their own" (45). Rohinton Mistry, on the contrary, narrates the dilemma of the central character of his story, "Lend Me Your Light": "I saw myself on trial, guilty of hubris in deciding to emigrate, paying the price in burnt-out eyes: I, Tiresias, blind and throbbing between two lives, the one in Bombay and the one to come in Toronto" (75). At a later stage, Mistry's character speaks, "I mused, I gave way to whimsy: I, Tiresias, throbbing between two lives, humbled by the ambiguities and dichotomies confronting me..."(85).

Both Uma Pamareswaram and Rohinton Mistry focus on the dilemma that an Indian willing to migrate or migrating to his dreamland Canada faces. Both the writers employ the archetypes of "Trishanku" and "Tiresias" respectively to evoke the experience of dilemma. The "Trishanku" is an archetype from the Indian mythology that suggests a position in between two

worlds waiting to be accepted in either of the worlds. The dilemma is evoked through metaphors of 'waiting', 'throbbing' and non-acceptance' on the part of one who is in a hanging position. An Indian immigrant also confronts such dilemma in the course of his settlement in Canada. It is a dilemma of slightly different kind. To evoke it, Rohinton Mistry employs the "Tiresias" archetype. Earlier to him, T. S. Eliot's employed the archetype in his epic-poem, *The Waste Land* (1922). Eliot views the Tiresian sensibility in "Unreal City" in the west that is Dublin. He states his words, "I Tiresias, though blind, throbbing between two lives, / Old man with wrinkled female breasts" (217-219). He describes him walking among the lowest of the dead (246). It means that he has seen and known the grim reality of the world. Despite his knowledge and wisdom, he is incapable of acting. He is impotent belonging to neither of the sexes (68). Jessi L. Weston notes about the character of Tiresias that he is "although mere a spectator, and not indeed a character", "and the two sexes meet in Tiresias". She says that he acquires significance in the poem, because "What Tiresias *sees*, in fact, is the substance of the poem" (Eliot 76). His character evokes the sense of dilemma through metaphors of 'waiting', 'throbbing in between two lives' and 'impotency' that are operative in him. Rohinton Mistry views similar dilemma in his Indian characters in exile in Canada as being posited in an unreal city in which they suffer impotency through denial of participation by the host country. Both these images help to generate a sense of futility of existence, "Trishanku" through his uncertainty of waiting and the "Tiresias" through his blindness that is impotency. Both represent the eternal waiting on the part of immigrants, waiting to be accepted and waiting to be incorporated in the participation. In both the cases, the dilemma springs from the denials: denial of being accepted and denial of participation through voice.

The case of Indo-Caribbeans in Canada is radically different, although it bears the same imprints of the Trishanku or the Tirasias psyche. Material gain is not the priority they look forward to. They have already attained material prosperity in the Caribbean lands through hard labour and sincerity. The priority of living that drags them to Canada is indeed to find a new home and to earn recognition in the world dominated by the Whites by virtues of their intelligence and creative urge. This is an impossible ambition to see realisation in the white dominated world, as the whites are known for their strong racial biases. In this context, Indo-Caribbeans have to resist. Their resistance is two fold: a. that against the racial discrimination by race and colour and b. that against the discrimination by origin. They suffer the former in Canada, while the latter was inflicted on them in the Caribbean Islands. Both these intensify their dilemma. They are in fact the coloured Trishankus suspended between the two worlds: the white world and the black world. They are denied inclusion in either, despite whether willing or eligible. The only caution they wish to take is to retain their basic culture and unique identity as Indo-Caribbeans. They perceive that on their part this very wish prevents their inclusion in the mainstream, it becomes the chief cause for Canadians' resentment to accept them.

It is a fact that as long as one enjoys being in a foreign land, his motherland does not figure in his memory. He leads a busy life over there getting and spending. When the host people treat him like a foreigner or a refugee, he starts feeling alienation. There arises in his heart pining for his motherland. Purnima Sharma quotes a US immigrant Sunil Varma's saying, "The sights, sounds and colours of India were all I pined for" (01). He spends his day pampering his success-dream, but at the fall of evening nostalgia grabs his heart, "pining for friends back home". "Their family ties pulled them back", says Purnima Sharma citing an immigrant named Tara, "We realised that it's so important to be with your own folks, not just in times of crisis, but

otherwise". Vibha singh, another immigrant in Nigeria says, "Although I enjoyed myself there, I missed the camaraderie of festival times, especially Holi and Diwali and yes, the weddings that are such fun here" (01). Indian immigrants now are becoming aware of the dilemma that their children are facing. Purnima Sharma notes Poonam Chandra's reflections, "The result is they can't decide where they belong" (1). Such are the cultural shocks that they receive in the west. When they confront cultural crisis in an alien land, they find no one to help them or rescue them. This poses another threat to them.

IV. "SAMSKARAS" OR THE MEMORY OF INDIA:

Indo-Caribbeans in Canada have no such reasons either to compel them or to relate them to India. They look at India from a different perspective. To Indo-Caribbeans in Canada, India has been a source of inspiration and strength in their present predicaments. Going back to India for most of them is as good as 'homecoming' or going in to the mother's lap. They cannot be designated as prodigal sons, as it may be said of immigrants wanting to reverse their decision to settle abroad and return to India. Indo-Caribbeans in Canada are in fact long departed sons of mother India and in fact are too remote from her to see her physically in their lifetime. This features their urge and fascination for the motherland to grow more intense and more urgent. They had left their motherland on economic compulsions to save them from starvation and exploitation. Hence, they cannot be offended for leaving the motherland. Their craving and pining for the motherland in fact acquire a genuine character.

Coomi Vevaina refers to the problem of identity or labeling as a mark of identification of diasporic people when she calls diaspora as "Hyphen society/community". Quoting Nourbese Philip, an Afrosporic writer who describes his identity in her poem, "What's in a Name" as "a

chameleon of labels", she remarks, "the hyphen problemetizes the situating the subject both 'here' and 'there'". She also refers to Misra's observation that under the guise of empowering people coming from different ethnic backgrounds and encouraging them to preserve their culture, the hyphen also 'disempowers them, it makes them, use a hyphenated term, empoweringly-disempowered". At the outset of her discussion, Vevaina quotes Carmen Rodriguez's poem, "What Does Not Exist" to illustrate 'the politics of the hyphen', "who'll pay for/ the injury and the loss/ roots in the air and/ all crushed up/ / my job is to walk briskly/ as if I knew where I was going" (109).

The issue of alienation experienced by diasporic people from both the ends, the country of their adoption and the country of their origin acquire intensity when the diasporic voices are 'unheard' in the west. Both Uma Parameswaran and Coomi Vevaina make pertinent remarks to explain the issue. Vevaina says, "Literary critics belonging to the country of their adoption desire 'cultural authenticity' while those from their original homelands feel that the writers are distorting, even prostituting their culture in order to cash in on recent interest in ethnic writing. To them even their nostalgia rings false" (109). Uma Parameswaran remarks in her article, "Fellow Canadians, Please Come Home" that in the west publishers' hold on the marketability work rightly or wrongly to assume what readers want to hear. She also gives an India born Indian's response to a diaspora text as, "You can't write about anything else, mainly, we are only your bread and butter" (17). Makarand Paranjape's observation about the diasporic representation of India is noteworthy for his annoyance to diasporic writers when he says, "The diaspora not only opens up a certain gap between the real and the imaginary, but also inserts an epistemic distortion into its narratives" (240) and "The position of such diasporics is akin to that of African middlemen who sold slaves o the white traders" (239)

The exile sensibility is one, says Krishna Sarbadhikary, which is inevitably obsessed with a question of identity. In her essay, "Second Migration and After: Indo-Caribbean Women Writers in Canada" she quotes from Ramabai Espinet's interview in "Pillar to Post" to present her views on identity, "It is vital to remember that we are travelers with a lot of 'cultural baggage'. We have not properly assessed this baggage.... We need to continue the efforts made by pioneers such as V. S. Naipaul and Sam Selvon to make sense of our existence" (Pillar 178). Asserting the need for construction of a self "to ward off the danger of an all embracing regional and national identity", she says, "(it) was important to *reassess our Indianness*" (Pillar 167). She describes invention of an identity as a political need and says, "You can't live in a place without being *political*" (Pillar 170). She also hints at the inconspicuous fear of any assertion of "Indianness" that Birbalsingh calls "an imported one, imported from the Caribbean, an old fear...of being obliterated" (emphasis added, 121-4).

T. S. Eliot too in his "A Note on Culture and Politics" in the book, *Notes Towards the Definition of Culture* (1948) refers to Leon Trotsky's essay, "Literature and Revolution". It evaluates working of culture as shaping politics in one's mind. Eliot notes in this regards, "the conviction, which seems to be deeply implanted in the Muscovite mind, that it is the role of the Mother Russia to contribute not merely many ideas and political forms, but a total way of life for the rest of the world, has gone far to make us all more politically culture-conscious" (89). The "politically culture-conscious" is the phenomenon that both Ramabai Espinet and Frank Birbalsingh expect to occur in the context of the Indianness. Indo-Caribbean writers like Sasenarine Persaud value the memory of India, may be to echo the sentiment of loss of the motherland or to carry a sense of nostalgia. But more importantly the memory of India operates in their writing as a tool to convert the sentiment of loss or nostalgia into a source of inspiration.

Through strong affiliation and identification with India they further seek to employ the Indianness as weapon to resist foreign influences, to revive their spirit and strength and to assert a space of confidence for them in a multicultural milieu. The Indianness turns out for them what Eliot means by the phrase "politically culture-conscious". When these writers write with political consciousness, writing becomes a kind of discourse for the minority. JanMohamed views minority discourse as "the product of damage" caused to one's cultural identity by the western hegemony. It adopts as "a mode of ideology", he says, "the sublimation and expression of misery" to become "a strategy for survival, for the preservation in some form or other of cultural identity, *and* for political critique". In this context, the minority literature has to be "necessarily *collective*" from which there emerges the possibility of collective subjectivity, says Janmohamed, to become a basis of minority coalition, a formation like the "Rainbow Coalition", "coerced into a negative, generic subject position inflicted by the western hegemony" in spite of enormous differences between them. Further he says that the minority's preoccupation with identity and non-identity is strategic in nature to involve attempts to "negate the prior hegemonic negation of itself" and it becomes one of its most fundamental forms of affirmation (8-10).

Identity can be asserted by associative and organizational activities. Frances Henry views these activities as 'institutional completeness' with the idea of 'ethnic community closure'. In her "Preface" to the book, *The Caribbean Diaspora in Toronto* (1994), she, however, discusses the issue of ethnicity in relation to Afrosporic immigrant community. But it counts equally on the Indo-Caribbean community that survives as "a substantial and very active" community in Canada (x). She counts institutional completeness of ethnic groups as "Coping Mechanisms" and "Strategies of Adaptation" and remarks, "The degree of institutional completeness of an ethnic group reinforces their ethnic identity and interpersonal ties. The more institutions an ethnic group

is able to develop in the new context, the more organized it is, and the greater is its chance of maintaining ethnic identity". She further says, "When applied to ethnic communities, ethnic community closure attains or maintains a positively esteemed form of ethnic identity" (232-3).

Since most ethnic organizations are formed more on the basis of the religion of the community, and less on other considerations, Henry's observation on the role of religion is significant. She says, "Religious institutions play a significant role in providing support services to the migrant community. They do this in two ways. First, the solace of religion is maintained for people accustomed to defining their religiosity. Second, religious institutions within the community also provide networking and other support services to their members" (240-1). Religion plays a greater role in an individual's life to allow him to define his religiosity, build up network of communication with his people and derive solace and support to help his existence. She therefore notes, "Religion also interacts with identity as a person's world view and sense of self are often tied up with his or her self-definition as a Christian. Henry puts this view most succinctly when she says, 'I would like to identify myself by that which I preach, which is God'" (243). This may be applied to the Indians in the Caribbean islands. Religion works as agency to arouse in them a sense of Indianness. Summing up the debate on the coping mechanisms, Henry counts religion as a part of "a need to develop organized, collective strategies in the new society" and that the need is "created" and severely felt under "the combined stresses of migration and racism" (247). Since, the Indians share the stresses with the African immigrant community, the observation held in the context of Afrosporic community may go along the same line of the Indosporic community. The Indian community holds the concept of 'Indianness' as a vital component of their organized and collective strategies to survive.

High consciousness of Indianness that is reflected in immigrant Indians' diasporic experiences may also be understood as Indians' determined and persistent step in the direction of nation building. Frank Birbalsingh borrows George Lamming's words, "an external frontiers of the Caribbean" to define the Caribbean community and writers in Canada (1996 ix). Since the Indo-Caribbeans form a significant part of the Caribbean community in Canada the term may also be applied to them, though in a different context. It has an additional reference to India. According to it, it may be stated that an Indo-Caribbean immigrant in Canada serves as an external frontier to two cultural origins: the Caribbean and the Indian. His sensibility stretches back to the Caribbean and beyond it to India. As an external frontier to two cultures, it is rather engaged in building two nations in his psyche.

India resides in the psyche of Indo-Caribbeans who are twice exiled. Though India is remote to them both physically and mentally, yet they cannot escape the memory of India. It works in an Indian in exile with the undercurrent of the cultural heritage. The cultural heritage comes down to an individual through the collective memory. A family, a community and a diaspora are the possible channels through which collective memory flows. The collective memory then gets shaped in his early age as "samskaras" or the impressions that he gathers during his life. The "samskaras" then operate as propelling force to pull him back against the forces that push him forward. The 'pull' force thus forms the past while the 'push' force forms his present. Through an operation of memory, interplay between the past and the present occurs. An expression generates through this interplay. The psyche of the Indo-Caribbean seems to operate through such interplay. In his essay, "Here and There", Cyril Dabydeen applying the metaphor of a pendulum to define 'here and there' psyche of the Indo-Caribbeans says,

> If you've spent your early years in a third world country, and have come here as an immigrant, you just can't deny the existence of that former part of your psyche. I often use the swing of a pendulum to reflect what happens to the imagination: I could be sitting here in Ottawa, but at any moment my mind can go back there. Images and echoes come from there- Guyana of the Caribbean - then you're here again. A certain kind of symbiosis takes place between here and there; it takes place continually, I feel: and it is reflected in any creative or imaginative work that you produce (109).

Elaborating further on the process of memory of an artist's creative imagination, Cyril Dabydeen states that recollections from one's place of origin and one's current experiences here mix continuously to give way to one's creative energy: "It has to do with the power and recall of imagery. Something may trigger off the imagination, and set off echoes; it may be something from there, for instance; then by chiseling away at it, the amorphousness begins to get less, and the poem, or story, or novel begins to take better shape" (109-10). Cyril Dabydeen terms creative endeavour of an artist in Canada as his "exploration in an imaginative way in Canada" (110). It arouses in him interest in psychology that extends the flavour and fragrance of his native land. Salman Rushdie too refers to the problem of definition faced by an Indian in exile. In his essay, "Imaginary Homelands" he considers writing as creative act in which "fantasy, or the mingling of fantasy and naturalism" gives an artist one way of dealing with these problems (19). He speaks about his version of India, "I tried to make it imaginatively true" (10).

It is generally observed that one cannot escape the influence of his roots. He may, like a lotus, manifest his creative energy in the world as multi-coloured, multi-focal and multi-faceted expressions, but his roots are deep buried in his land of origin. He may soar high in the sky, like an eagle, to surpass the world of the sun even, but he is as well tied to his roots through an

invisible thread of memory. The roots are the "samskaras" in the case of an Indian in exile. T. M. P. Mahadevan in his essay, "Social, Ethical and Spiritual Values in Indian Philosophy" views samskaras as "accumulated impressions (samskaras) of previous states of existence" that "influence the mind-stuff" and this 'mind-stuff' is the vehicle that carries the soul from one body to another, from one location to another. Further he says that they are "residual impressions" left on the mind-stuff by one's deeds (actions). In this, they become a part of the 'law of karma' in which "the chain revolves, character informing conduct, and conduct in turn moulding character". In this respect, he refers to what the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishada* states in this respect, "A man becomes good by good deeds and bad by bad deeds". He also refers to S. Radhakrishnan who calls the chain of karma as a game of cards in which one has freedom to call cards and use them to "gain or lose" (159-160). Mahadevan rests his thinking on what the *Bhagavadgita* states in respect of the soul, samskaras and their relation to the law of karma. The basic Hindu thinking considers "samskaras" or impressions as vital component of the unconscious that remains with the soul as its integral part. The *Bhagavadgita* states on samskaras in the context of:

a). The soul:

> *Na jayate mriyate va kadachit naayam bhootva bhavita va na bhooyah, ajo nityah shashtvatoyam purano na hanyate hanyamane sharire* (II.20)

means, this (soul) is never born nor does it die; or it did not exit before, will never exist, it is not like that. This is without a birth, eternal, immortal and the ancient. Therefore, it never dies though the body perishes

> *Vasansi jirnani yatha vihaya navani gruhnati naroparani, tatha sharirani vihaya jirnanyanyani sanyati navani dehi* (II.22).

means, like a man puts off old cloths and puts on new cloths the soul too puts off old bodies and puts on new bodies.

The *Gita* describes the human soul as immortal and eternal and that it keeps on changing physical bodies over births and deaths.

b). A physical body:

> *"Mahabootanyahamkaro buddhiravyaktameva ch, indriyani dasheikam ch panchchendriyagocharaha.*
>
> *Ichchha dweishah sukham dukham sanghatshchetna dhrutihi etatkshetram samasena savikaramudamyaham"* (XIII. 6-7).

means, (five) elements of life (*mahabhoot*), ego, intellect and the unconscious (the basic instincts), ten senses (five physical senses and five mental senses), one mind, five subjects of the mind and desire, jealousy, pleasure, pain, the composite (of body and senses), the spirit and patience, these (thirty one) elements constitute body. It is a field, "kshetra" in which the soul performs tasks.

The *Gita* describes a constitution of a physical that serves as a field to the soul to perform various tasks during life. It serves as a medium to perform and perceive to accumulate impressions about the world as the samskaras.

c). Samskaras:

> *"Mameivansho jivaloke jeevabhootah sanatanah, manahshashthanindriyani prakuti-sthani karshati.*
>
> *Shariram yadavapnoti yachchapyutkramatishwarah, grihatveitani sanyati vayurgandha-nivashayat.*

Shotram chakshuhu sparshanam ch rasanam ghranameva ch, adhishthaya manashcha-yaam shayanupasevate" (XV. 7-9).

means, in this world of living beings my spark (*amsha*) becomes the soul and it attracts from nature five senses and mind (towards it). When the soul leaves one body and enters in to another body, it carries with it remnant desires and mind and senses of the abandoned body in to a new body like the wind carries with it fragrances of surrounding objects. There it bears senses like ear, eyes, touch, tongue, nose and mind and enjoys worldly objects.

The *Gita* describes how the soul carries with it residual impressions of actions and passions accumulated during life over births and deaths. These impressions are invisible like fragrance that the wind carries with it. They eventually formulate as samskaras that enwrap the soul and affect the mind. A person's actions and thinking are mere reflections of his samaskaras

Patanjali too offers a yogic view on samskaras in his *Yoga Sutram* through his analysis of human mind:

Aubhootavishayasampramoshah smritiih (I.11).

means, memory is revelation of samskaras that are caused by one's experience of the world.

Abhyasavairagyabhyam tannirodh (I.12).

means, they (samskaras) are to be restricted with practice and detachment.

Kleshamoolah karmashayo drishtadrishtajanmavedaniya (II.12).

means, these five troubles are the root cause of samskaras and they cause suffering in the present and the future of one's living.

Sati moole tadvipako jatyayurbhoga (II.13).

means, the result of the troubles is three-fold: birth, living and suffering.

Te hladparitapafalaha punyapunyahetutvat (II. 14).

means, these three –birth, living and suffering – are experienced as happiness or pain as the outcome of one's good deeds or sins.

Tasya prashantavahita samskarat (III. 10).

means, that (nirodh-avastha or the samadhi) can be attained when one's mind stays in peace with calmness of samskaras.

Samskarsakshatkaranat poorvajatijnanam (III. 18).

means, a yogi acquires the knowledge of earlier births with the revelation of accumulated samskaras.

Karmashuklakrishnam yoginastrividhamitaresham (IV. 7).

means, a yogi's deeds render no result, positive or negative, as his mind is free from any samskaras or impressions of the deeds he performs.

Tatastadvipakanugunanamevabhivyaktirvaasanam (IV. 8).

means, while a common man's deeds binds his mind with passions that reflect his impressions.

Jatideshakaalvyahitanampyanantaryam smritisamskarayorekaroopatvat (IV. 9)

means, memory and samskaras have similar forms and they are never interrupted with birth, place or time.

Tatchhidreshu pratyayantarani samskarebhayah (IV. 27).

Menas, in the stage of realization, a yogi attains knowledge and wisdom with his samskaras accumulated over several births.

Hanamesham kleshavayuktam (IV. 28).

Means, these samskaras need to be destroyed or eradicated in the manner troubles are eradicated.

Charles A Moore defines the Indian mind in his book, *The Indian Mind* (1967) as having intimacy of philosophy and life, with deep-seated ideas and ideals with philosophic patterns of

India deeply engrained (1-2). He points out through major movements and period of Indian philosophy that a system was evolved in the course of time through which philosophical thinking may be injected in an individual's mind. It is the system of the samskara rituals that are enveloped in to religious faith to motivate people to imbibe basic values of life furnished in the form of samskaras. This system sought to address to the spiritual dimension of the Hindu philosophical tradition in order to elevate social, cultural and psychological aspects of man's living.

P. V. Kane and Benjamin Walker throw light on the system of 'samskara'. Walker's work, *Hindu World* (1968) is an encyclopedic survey of Hinduism. It explains the term commonly translated as "consecration" or "sacrament" as codified in ceremonial observance called rites or rituals. Focusing on the Hindu way of living he says that practically every sociological event in one's life is accompanied by a ritual (302). He further views that samskara refers to the ritual that was observed during the transitionary phases of life of a Hindu and they were viewed as essential to ward off or counteract occult danger of attack by demons and sorcerers or the baleful flash of the evil eye that a Hindu feared to affect his life adversely (315).

P. V. Kane offers an elaborate explanation of the term 'samskara' in his voluminous work in series titled, *History of Dharmashastra* (1941). In the volume II, Part I, he cites Hindu scriptural reference since the Vedic writing to define the term: 'samstrita' as "garma", a vessel (the *Rigveda*); as "preparing offering for gods" (the *Shatpath*); "the sacrifice of two kinds, by mind and by speech" (the *Chhandogya Upanishada*) (190). Then he derives the meaning from the *Sutras of Jaimini* to acquire "a sense of purificatory act in sacrifice". For Jaimini, the 'samskara' stands for upanayana- *samskarasya tadarthatvadvidhyam purushshrutihi* (VI. I.35) means, (the upanayan) samskara makes one eligible for knowledge through listening. Shabar

explains that samskaras affect to make a certain thing or a person "fit for a certain purpose". In the *Tantravartika* he states, "samskaras are those actions and rites that impart fitness" which is of two kinds, "it arises by removal of taints (sins) or by generation of fresh qualities". In this light, Kane says "samskaras generate fresh qualities, while tapas brings the removal of taints" (190-191). Kane cites yet another source, the *Viramitrodaya* that defines samskara as "a peculiar excellence due to performance of rites ordained (by the shastras) which resides either in the soul or body". The excellence is of two kinds, "one kind making a person eligible for performing other actions (e.g. upanayana renders a person eligible for Vedic study), while another kind removes taints...(e.g. Jatakarma removes taints due to seed and uterus)" (191).

The view of a purificatory dimension of the word 'samskaras' is related to the life of a Hindu in actual. In this reference, Kane derives further explanation from the texts called *Samritis* and the *Parunas*. The *Smritis* view the upanayana samskara as attributing the second birth to a child after his physical birth. The *Manusmriti* describes the upanayana as the foremost of the samskaras upgrading the child as 'dvij' or 'dvijati'. It speaks of three births in case of a man, first birth from his mother, the second when the girdle is tied on his body (i.e. on upanayana) and the third when he is initiated into an act of a Vedic sacrifice. Atri says, "a person is known as brahmanya by birth, he is said to be a 'dvija' (twice-born) on account of samskaras, he reaches the position of a 'vipra' by learning (study of Veda); he is called 'shrotriya' on account of all these three" (189). In this relation, Kane refers to a ritual of Baptism in Christianity about which St John says, "except a man is born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God" (3.3). Further he cites Parashara who gives a fine image, "just as a work of painting gradually unfolds itself on account of the several colours (with which it is drawn), so brahmnya (the status of brahmana) is similarly brought out by samskaras performed according to prescribed rites'" (189-190).

About the purpose of samakaras, Kane says that it is manifold. In this respect, he considers the socio-cultural, psychological and religious dimensions of samskaras in relation to the life of a Hindu. The first eight samskaras - the 'grabhadhana' (impragnation), 'pumsavana' (at the third month of pregnancy to ensure a male child), 'simanta' (the parting of hair), 'jatakarma' (delivery at childbirth), 'namakaran' (the naming ceremony), 'annaprashana' (food-eating), 'karna-vedha' (ear-boring) and 'chuda-karma' (tonsure or taking off hair) - are meant to wipe off impurity. They are the ones by which "purity arises" in a child to render him "fit" for study and other acts. "Some like the upanayana served spiritual and cultural purposes" says Kane, in the sense that "they brought the unredeemed person in to the company of the elect, they opened the door to Vedic study and thus conferred special privileges and exacted duties". Further he adds, "They have also psychological values impressing on the mind of the person that he has assumed a new role and must strive to observe its rules" (193). Kane considers some samskaras like 'namakarana', annaprashana' and 'nishakarma' as popular to "afford opportunities for the expression of love and affection and for festivities". Other samskaras like 'garbhadhana', 'pumsavana' and 'simantonayana' have also "mystical and symbolical elements", says Kane. He views 'vivaha' samskara (marriage) as having social value as sacrament to bring about a union of two personalities in to one for the purpose of the "continuance of society" and for the "uplift of the two by self-restraint, by self-sacrifice and mutual cooperation" (193). The 'antyesti', the final rite performed at the time of death is the last rite in life to acquire mystical and spiritual dimension relating the soul to the cycle of rebirth. The reference in the *Bagavadgita,* cited earlier addresses to the spiritual and mystical dimensions of samskras. In this way, Kane counts sixteen basic samsakras as vital to the shaping of human personality. They are ingrained, implanted and inculcated through a series of ritual assimilated in the actual living from birth to death. He says

from birth to death. He says that the exact significance of samskaras is "the development of higher human personality". Although no elaborate or exhaustive treatment is given to this point in literatures of authority, the traditional view holds them as necessary "for unfolding the latent capacities of man for development and as being the outward symbols and signs of the inner change which would fit human being for corporate life and they also tended to confer a certain status on those who underwent them", says Kane (192).

Samskaras are capable of bringing about growth in a man through "inner change". It is indicated in the stages viewed in a Hindu person's life such as 'brahmanya' (physical birth), 'dvij' or dvijati' (twice-born) and 'vipra' (graduate or man of knowledge). This explains that culture channeled through samskaras work invisibly yet subtly to upgrade the human consciousness from its basic form of instincts or impulses to a refined form of knowledge and awareness. Sasenarine Persaud, a Indo-Caribbean Canadain writer seeks to view this process in the life of a Hindu in exile with utmost curiosity. He is a Hindu in exile. Hence, when he writer about a Hindu in exile his writing takes a reflective or self-reflexive mode to make it an autobiography or a biography of a Hindu in exile. An autobiography or a biography begins with socio-cultural dimensions, then, it goes into the psychological dimension and finally explores mystical and spiritual dimensions of a Hindu's life.

Socio-cultural and political dimensions are popular with writers across cultures and origins. They seek to view proliferation of culture through diaspora that serves as external frontier of the culture at home. It ingrains culture into a child's psyche through traditional patterns and processes of rituals commingled with religious ceremonies. The Hindu theory of samskaras intends to achieve objective that the Christian Baptism intends to work out in a Christian individual, "(to) see the kingdom of God" (St John, 3.3). It seeks to implant the culture

through institutions of society or community or diaspora. A family comes first in the list. It allows a child's first contact with the world through care and support of a mother and a father who happen to be the first humans in a child's life. His psyche falls to deep impact of samskaras affected through prescribed rituals of the Hindu religion called the *shodashsamskaras* or the rituals of sixteen kinds as listed earlier.

T. S. Eliot views a family as "the primary channel of transmission of culture" when he imparts his views on culture in his, *Notes on Definition of Culture* (1948) (43). He says that culture is "a product of a variety of more or less harmonious activities" (15) and it cannot be viewed in "isolation", but in three "different associations" like "an individual, a group or class and a whole society" and "in the pattern of the society as a whole", as "interrelated'. In this light he defines culture as "a way of living" and as "creation of the society as a whole" (23). He says that, "the culture of an individual is dependent upon the culture of a group or class, and that the culture of the group or class is dependent upon the culture of the whole society to which group or class belongs." Thus he considers the culture of the society as "fundamental" to the meaning of the term, "culture" and says that an individual's perfection, in Matthew Arnold's sense of "refinement of manners- or *urbanity* and *civility*", "*learning*", "*philosophy*" and "*the arts*" (*Culture and Anarchy*) is "a phantasm". It has to be viewed "in the pattern of the society as a whole" (21-23). When Eliot views a family as "the primary channel of transmission of culture" (43) he views a family's role in imparting culture to an individual to work to shape his memory. It provides a protected environment and close affinity to religion through traditional practices, rituals, ceremonies and festivals that are intertwined with normal living in a family and a diaspora. In this respect, Eliot further views culture and religion as "interrelated products of each other" and that a balance of "universality of doctrine and particularity of cult and devotion", in

the sense of unity by religion in general and diversity by faith in a person is one of the important conditions to flourish culture (15). He says, "Yet there is an aspect in which we can see a religion as the *whole way of life* of a people, from birth to the grave, from morning to night and even in sleep and that way of life is also culture" (31). Eliot seems to be reiterating what a Hindu theory of samskaras intends to work out in an individual through ingraining, implanting and inculcating culture. The Hindu thinking on life in fact exerted good impact on his mind. It is distinctly visible in his epic-poem, *The Waste Land* (1922) that ends with the "Da-Da-Da" that Buddhist thinking imparts, "Datta, Dayadhvam, Damyata,/ Shantih shantih shantih" (142-433/ 75). It is a Hindu prayer that concludes with faith in peace. It seems that Eliot expects a solution to a modern man's 'Tiresian' dilemma in a Hindu way of praying. He admits it while concluding his discussion on culture in his *Notes Towards the Definition of Culture* (1948), "Long ago I studied the ancient Indian languages, and while I was chiefly interested at that time in Philosophy, I read a little poetry too; and I know that my own poetry shows the influence of Indian thought and sensibility" (113). This may explain the point that the Hindu philosophy influenced a western intellectual of T. S. Eliot's calibre. Likewise, it certainly influences a person in exile who has his roots in India. A sensible Indian mind cannot escape its impact.

Sasenarine Persaud views religion as embodiment of the Hindu thinking on life. It sounds reasonable. He views religion as vital source of inspiration to help inculcate culture in a person. His first novel, *Dear Death* views the role of a family in this respect. His second novel, *The Ghost of Bellow's Man* views how diasporic institutions like temples, the Indian Cultural Centre and Classes in Hindi Language and Indian Classical Dance operate as support systems and contributory set ups in an alien land to help the transmission of the home culture to a Hindu in exile. He views the role of education as vital to cultivate in one language skill that may further

give him expression to talk about his culture. T. S. Eliot considers language, "a poetic one" as "a more reliable safeguard" for the transmission of culture and a poet's role as vital to the purpose (57). "Art", according to him, serves as a kind of "synechdoche" or "evidences" of culture (15). Most writers in exile share such socio-cultural and religious dimensions on more or less similar grounds.

However, Sasenarine Persaud has something more to view. He wants to go beyond the realistic dimensions using them as launching pads to explore further more subtle psychological dimensions of mysticism and spiritualism in relation to growth and evolution of human soul. The formation of individual memory in lieu of the collective consciousness or memory does not restrict to the limits of realism. He seeks further to explore the limits of yogic perception that is more subtle and mystical with spiritual value. Therefore, he looks at yoga of his ancestral tradition to provide him a way to explore reality beyond the hard realism that is illusive. Aurobindo's definition of yoga impresses him, "a progressive comprehension of self/Self". A process of refinement envisaged in a Hindu theory of samskaras looks to generate progressive comprehension of the world in an individual's mind through effective inculcation of samskaras. As result, he moves through stages like naiveté, fear and confusion, curious observation, comprehension, understanding, awareness, discriminating between good and bad, reacting and resisting the bad, depression and despair caused by futility of resistance, and understanding real life experience as mere illusory. But Persaud does not want to stop with these stages and end up in a gloomy vision of despair and confusion about life. He finds a way further to a more meaningful solution in the *Bhagavadgita*. Through a symbolic delineation of Arjuna's dilemma and Krishna's counseling in a poetic dialogue, the book shows one a way beyond despair and confusion. Persaud views the knowledge of the *Bhagavadgita* in the light of Auribindo's

definition as a way leading to mystical and spiritual dimensions of growth and evolution of a human soul. Based on it, he has formulated his theory of 'yogic realism'. Accordingly, he views a writer engaged in efforts to explore this realm of mysticism and spiritualism through writing and through meditation on a word that he writes. He views writing as yoga that leads a writer through progressive comprehension of the world through a word. He writes to cultivate true knowledge and understanding of self/Self. He views writing as "cross-over to self/Self" ("Kevat" 2). For his views on writing, Persaud keeps a base in philosophical, mythological, spiritual and aesthetic traditions of India.

The contemporary Indian philosophy imparts psycho-spiritual dimension on the subject of samskaras. Charles A. Moore discusses the essence of the Indian mind and the Indian philosophical perspective in his book, *The Indian Mind* (1967). He stresses on the need of 'moral purity' for further growth. He refers to the traditional view on the purpose of samskaras to make one 'fit and eligible' for further learning. Samskaras impart values of social life in the form of ethics, morality, codes of conduct and behavioural practices that were expected by the tradition. They help one to move on the path of spiritual progress. Moore holds them as "instrumental", "a means" and yet "subordinate" to the ultimate spiritual goal of emancipation (mosksha) or spiritual realization (15-16).

P. T. Raju relates his views on samskaras to the Buddhist concept of human being as "psycho-physical individual". He says that this "psycho-physical individual is an aggregate of five aggregates: matter, feeling, ideas, instincts (vasanas, samskaras) and consciousness" (178). Aurobindo views samskaras as a part of the waking (external or surface) consciousness as "an obscure mind full of obstinate samskaras, impressions and associations, fixed notions, habitual reactions formed of our past" (Lal, 180). J. Krishnamurthy in his *The Way to Intelligence* (1993)

relates samskaras to human consciousness as a part of 'the whole spectrum of movement of thoughts, belief, movement, becoming, identity" (113) and also views them as related to memory, "We are always responding from memory. That memory is in the cells of my brain, derived through tradition, education, experiences, perception, hearing and so on" (72). Moore talks about the process of getting knowledge by referring to the Upanishadic statement that says that we should attain insight into reality by hearing (shravana), reflection (manana) and meditation (nididhyasana). He quotes S. Radhakrishanan's definition of religion as "insight in to reality" and says that it may be considered as the goal of life that every Indian individual aspires to attain (181).

There is another view on samskaras. T. R. V. Murti relates samskaras to salvation or emancipation as the highest goal of life. He says in his essays, "Individual in Indian Religious Thought" that Samskaras are "dukhata" – the root cause of 'klesha' (passions). One has to practice spiritual discipline that serves as "the path of purification, 'vishuddha-marga'" and also "a catharsis or eradication of passions". The goal of the exercise is "salvation, or rather freedom from moral evils, from passions and their defilement (samskaras)" (326). Swami Vivekanand too views the Raja-Yoga of Patanjali's *Yoga-Sutra* as "yogic exercise of psycho-physical nature" that "moves the mind to transcend the limitations of senses" (Lal, 36-42).

Samskaras are viewed as 'spatio-temporal' formations in the human mind as a result of one's contact with the world through senses, environment, exposures, knowledge and thinking. One receives them partly through heritage in the form of collective memory and partly through his personal growth in the form of his personal memory. They occupy one's mind as "deep-seated ideas and ideals and cultural formation" out of which his 'being' emerges. They inspire one and provide him directions for upliftment of soul. As a result, he rises to the stages of

'believing' and 'becoming'. This may correspond to the way to knowledge that S. Radhakrishnan defines as "Sense-experience (sense-perceiving), Intellectual cognition (analysis and synthesis) and Intuitive Apprehension ('yoga', realisation', 'dhyana', 'intuitive apprehension' etc.)". The stage of Intuitive Apprehension is the stage of "insight in to reality" and that of "knowing by becoming", by establishing "an identity with the known". Religion is that way of life, says Radhakrishnan, which enables man to "make change in his own nature to let the Divine in him manifest himself" (Lal, 292-299). The way is that of transcending the limitations of senses that prevail in the form of obstinate samskaras, rigidity of traditional morality and egotistical apprehension of the reality. They are mere obscurities that blur one's vision of the real. Therefore, samskaras have to be viewed as 'instrument' or a 'means' to attain spiritual progress and hey should never be taken as an end of it. They serve as ladder or a staircase to rise high. They are capable of making one fit and eligible for learning and following the path of spiritual progress with the help of knowledge. Hence, they should be taken as a launching pad for the further flight of the soul. They help to bring about transformation of mind as Redhakrishnan spells out, "Every doctrine turned in to passionate conviction, stirring the hearts of man and quickening his breath and completely transforming his nature". He views the process not just as "intellectual exercise", but as an experience of "realized". W. H. Sheldon too calls the process as "to be the truth" (Moore, 12). Samskaras of particular religion and culture impose on man transcendence of spatio-temporal limitations. Rising beyond them to the eternity of knowledge is the purpose that the Indian philosophy conceives about the working of samskaras in life. Hence, one has to be aware and alert that samskaras do not bind his mind and soul to prevent his further progress. Culture and religion indicate a way of life to lead a man to grow mentally and spiritual. In this, samskaras play as mere agency of religion and culture.

Beyond it they should not be held important otherwise they would generate rigidity of mind and strong ego as it may happen in cases of men of action or men of knowledge. Therefore, both the *Bhagavadgita* and the *Yogasutram* impart counseling on how to use samskaras as a positive means and restrict them to exert adverse impact on mind. This can be done with knowledge and wisdom. One has to go beyond samskaras to attain freedom from attributes of satva, rajas and tamas as samskaras attach these attributes to one's action and thinking. It is a stage of *trigunatit*, a man free from the three attributes hat the *Gita* talks about. Thus, Samskaras should be viewed as laying good foundation for further growth through consolidation of ideas and ideals. Since samskaras form a source and an integral part of memory, memory may also be viewed as allowing association with one's cultural past through telepathic links. But one has to be alert not to get entangled in its complex web. He has to transcend its limits and move further to self-realisation.

For a clear understanding of the theory of 'samskaras', Harold Coward recommends a reading of sutras 12 to 14 of Book II and sutras 7 to 9 of Book IV of Patanjali's *Yoga Sutras*. They are mentioned earlier in the discussion of the concept. In his book, *Life After Death in world Religions* (1997), he interprets samskaras as "the karmic memory traces" that the subtle body (shukshma sharir) carries from one life to the next after it leaves the physical body at death. The subtle body is self or the consciousness that gets affected with samskaras. The soul carries the subtle body like the wind carries the fragrance when it leaves one body and enters another body, the *Gita* states. Coward then raises a question, "how does one escape the treadmill of endless rebirths?" There are two ways, he says, one by enjoying their fruits and second by getting free from them (7). Anantanand Rambachan discusses Hinduism in the light of the question, "Is there life after death?" In his essay, "Hinduism", he views that the atman is

associated with the subtle body even after it leaves the physical body after death. The physical body is "the psycho-physical apparatus" in which sense organs and organs of actions are located. It is "the repository of individual karma and of the tendencies and characteristics that make up individual personality. Each thought, desire, or action creates an appropriate impression on the subtle body which determines its character and influences its journey in to the future" (73). In this light he says, "Moksha, in Hinduism, is consequent upon the right understanding of the nature of self", and "moksha in all cases implies the recognition of self to be different from the psycho-physical apparatus, to be free from limitations of time and to be blissful. Such an understanding of the self's essential nature brings an end to the cycle of birth, death and rebirth". He explains, "moksha implies freedom from suffering, desire or want, and mortality"(71).

Rambachan discusses the kinds of bodies that the soul inhibits as: a). five sheaths like the physical, the vitality, the mind, the intellect, and the bliss (The Vedantic anthropological analysis offered in the *Taittiriya Upanishad*); or b). "city of nine gates" (the *Bhagavadgita*); or c). "essentially inert body that enables the sense organs to function (the *Ken Upanishad*); or d). the sthula sharir, the shukshma sharir and the karana sharir. He presents observations on the dying process offered by the *Bhagavadgita*, and the Upanishads. He cites Shankaracharya's view that one's consciousness at the time of death is a consequence of past work, meritorious (devas) for good deeds or low being (bhutas) for evil deeds (78). Rambachan relates samskaras as "the karmic memory traces" to influence the soul to determine its character and concludes his discussion indicating the fifth possibility of freedom from the cycle of birth and death. It is "to know the identity of the atman and the brahman". "Such rare persons", he says, "are considered to be liberated even in the body" (85). Harold Coward too views this possibility and states that "under the guidance of a teacher pursue the spiritual discipline taught in the Upanishads

(knowledge and meditation) until one realizes the identity of one's self with God (Brahman), the essence of all things, and is released from further rebirth (moksha)" (7). It is yoga.

Rambachan's views combined with Harold Coward's western views offer a valuable perception on the Hindu metaphysics of karma and samskaras. Rambachan is an expatriate, a twice-exiled Hindu who enjoys an advantage of, to impose O. P. Juneja's term, "a nonaligned epistemological observer ambivalent in two or more cultures" and "has an ontology of an outsider insider". Juneja uses the term in his easy, "Exotopy of the Nonaligned Epistemological Expatriate writer: The Ontology of Naipaul and Mistry" to assess the positions of V. S. Naipaul and Rohinton Mistry as reflected from their books on India. He views both the positions in the light of the Hindu theory of karma and samskaras. He quotes Harold Coward's observations on karma and samskaras from his another book, *Derrida and Indian Philosophy* (1990), "Karma is described by Patanjali as a memory trace by any action or thought a person has done. The westerner should note that for yoga a thought is as real as an action- in fact, in the Yoga view, we think first and then act, and thought therefore is of primary psychological importance... The unconscious, in Yoga terminology, is nothing more than the total of all stored-up karmic traces from the thoughts and actions done in this and previous lives" (33-34). Coward is aware that much confusion prevails in the modern western thinking on the matter of Hindu metaphysics of karma and samskaras and, therefore, he make a clear address to the westerner in his observation. Juneja further observes, "In the Hindu epistemology and ontology a human being thus carries the 'karmic traces' much like the genetic code of DNA with him or her when born" (34). This may explain the process that the *Bhagavadgita* describes that the soul carries the impressions or the karmic memory traces with it after he leaves one body and enters in to another body like the wind carries fragrance along with it (XV. 7-9).

Juneja employs the concept of karma and samskaras to assess V.S. Naipaul's exotopic vision of India that his books on India project. He also reviews Rohinton Mistry's reading of India in his book, *A Fine Balance*. He says that in cases of both the readings of India is flawed with, what Antony Appiah calls, "the Naipaul Fallacy", that is "his propensity to read Third world countries by locating them in the matrix of European culture". Naipaul is preoccupied, Juneja observes, with the tools of the post Enlightenment Rationality built on the "London-New York axis" with three cardinal principles of Rationality, Universalism and Homogeneity" (27-28). Juneja further observes that Rahinton Mistry too has fallen prey to this fallacy of reading India on the "London-New York-Toronto axis" (38-39). Juneja further observes that the Naipaul persona operates on the Hindu metaphysics of karma and samskaras that he imbibed in his psyche through *Ramayana*'s paradigm of exile, suffering struggle and return to Ramarajya (34). He explains Naipaul's encounter with India, the land of his ancestors, "His metanarrative on India follows the structure of its master text. *An Area of Darkness* may be called his Book of Exile, *India: A Wounded Civilization*, the Book of Suffering, and *India: A Million Mutinies Now*, the Book of Struggle. Naipaul has yet to write a Book of Return" and for it he has to understand "the ontological process of believing, which forms the bedrock of an Indian psyche" (34). Naipaul has yet to overcome his western preoccupations with rationality as a sole criterion to examine an ancient living civilization based in spirituality. Juneja views the movement of Naipaul's psyche, "While 'darkness' suggests a detachment to the area, the feeling of being 'wounded' suggests an attachment and 'a million mutinies' suggests an engagement with India. Thus from detachment, to attachment and to engagement- Naipaul's relationship with India (his ancestral past) brings us to the central trope through which the Indian Diaspora around the world

defines itself" (32). For his skeptical reading of India. Om Juneja describes V. S. Naipaul in his essay, "Immigration in the Fiction of V. S. Naipaul" as "an unachored soul" (377).

Prasannarajan views this Nobel laureate in his series of articles in the *Times of India* titled, "About Lives Half Lived" (September 3, 2001), "A Prize for Sir Vidia" (October 22, 2001) and "The Outsider" (March 11, 2002) as a novelist of constant arrivals and departures and his homecoming as "an arrival of cathartic resonance" and "a never-ending rite of memory" (Oct. 22, 2001, 51). Naipaul's return marks from traveler's notebook to novelist's memory. In this light, he views that "But what drive the novel forward, may be backward, is the energy of ancestral memory" (Sept. 3 2001, 56). India, for Naipaul, is "an enduring idea of ancestry", "an enduring intimacy", "the great hurt- the eternity of return", "an idea that fascinated and perplexed him". At one of the interviews, Naipaul replied, "India is the eternity of return". Being asked, "Is it intellectual fascination or ancestral?" he replied, "Ancestral...ancestral. You cannot get away from it" (Sept. 1, 2001 59). This indicates that even Naipaul with his conscious skepticism about India cannot escape the samskaras that he received as a Hindu. India looms large on his psyche

Juneja refers to the philosophy of 'adhyatmavidhya' in his essay titled, "Post Modernism, Indian Literatures and the *Mahabharata*" that the *Bhagavadgita* propounds. The book being at the epicenter of the epic, the *Mahabharata* states that human soul or jivatman (the presence in here) is an amsha (an iota) of Paramatman (the presence out there) (63). Citing S Radhakrishnan he says, "the *Bhagavadgita* gives us not only a metaphysics (brahmavidhya) but also a discipline (yogashastra). Derived from the root, 'yuj', to bind together, Yoga means binding one's psychic powers balancing and enhancing them" (63). The book further states that the human soul is fixed on the web of causality called karma (61) and fulfils his destiny due to his karma of this or

previous lives (62). While discussing 'The Death of Metaphysics', Juneja refers to Harold Coward's book, *Derrida and Indian Philosophy* (1990) that discusses views of S Radhakrishnan and Aurobindo on the 'adhyatmavidhya' that is spirituality. Coward views it as "high intellectuality, a rational dialogue" (63). S. Radhakrishnan calls it "not only a metaphysics (brahmavidhya) but also a discipline (yogashastra)" (63). Aurobindo defines it, in its essence an awakening to the inner reality of our being, to a spirit, self soul which is other than our mind" (65). Both Derrida and Aurobindo emphasize the need for transformation of mind: "transdencence beyond negativity" (Derrida), "a conversion through a union of becoming and being"(Aurobindo) (65). Both advocate for the language of poetry: "the natural or inherent impulse of dialectic of the trance – difference- out of which past, present and future of language arise" (Derrida); " The state of ego-less poet" and "the absence of the poet's ego is exemplified in the Vedic poet: the Veda Vyasa tradition of creating a text like that of the *Mahabharata*- the state of ego-less poet, experiencing an emancipation and silence out of which poetic language could speak" (Aurobindo) (65). Sasenarine Parsaud perceives in his literary vision the concept of "Writing as Yoga" that is supposed to begin at the formation of samskaras in a Hindu's life that affects his memory as karmic memory traces that eventually culminates in to yoga of self-realisation. Most Indian philosophers view yoga is a state of awakening to the inner reality as a result of one's emancipation through eradication of his samskaras. Persaud views writing as a tool to operate samskaras in the form of memory to eventually transcend them through the process of yoga

Makarand Paranjpe addresses an issue of "parampara" (Hindu tradition) in his essay, "Sruti, Smriti, and the Individual: Returning the Idea of Parampara in India". Discussing the relationship between an individual and tradition, he views the role of "smriti or memory" in

constructing a tradition. He says that a society devoid of memory faces danger of moral relativism and utter confusion. He further says that memory is a vehicle of inspiration that tradition supplies through shruti or knowledge through listening, and that it "offers guidance" in one's "creative journey" (102-104). Paranjape views that smriti is "a willing subordinate and collaborator", or "a continuum", or "secondary to shruti or knowledge". He quotes from the *Bhagavadgita* to support his view. The *Gita* says, *smritibranshad buddhinasho buddhinashad pranashayti* (II. 63), that is, loss of memory leads to destruction of the intellect, which in turn leads us to total annihilation. He views memory as "seed of enlightenment" (107) and "the old, the remembered, the once contemporary, but now historical" as against shruti or knowledge that is "the modern and contemporary" and "the new and the immediate". Shruti is primary while smriti is secondary, he views. He calls the tradition a creative journey in which both commingle "to reach the goal where the received smriti, once again become shruti" (107-109).

All these different views on Samskaras- Harold Cowards's, Anantanand Ramcharan's, O. P. Juneja's and Makarand Paranjape's – offer contemporary reflections on the subject of samskaras from different positions- the western, the exotopic, and the insider or from a non-Indian, an Indian in exile, and a native Indian. Particularly Ramcharan's position is reflective of his concern over preserving Hindu samskaras among Indians in exile. In this context, samskaras as karmic memory traces of thoughts, desires and actions in the past experiences may be viewed as a force to redeem one from this dilemma with the help of his individual memory and the collective memory of his diaspora. Sasenarine Persaud looks to this role-playing on the part of samskaras, as point of initial inspiration and as force to pull one back to his roots. Further, he views samskaras as power that pushes one forth on the path of evolution through understanding of the world to acquire the true vision of Reality.

When one writes he writes out of his personal memory. In the course of the process of refinement through samskaras, his personal memory commingles with the collective memory of his community to share several general aspects. This does not restrict to just one birth or life, according to the Hindu theory of the cycle of rebirth. It brings about a formation of a collective self that operates subtly in the growth of an individual. Persaud dwells on this aspect when he delineates an evolution of soul in his writing.

Memory of one's motherland operates invisibly, yet vitally on one's psyche. It impinges at times upon his subconscious mind and unconsciously shapes his psychic responses. Memory serves as channel to bring to him his ancestral culture. As Eliot observes, culture flowing to him through memory provides him a kind of "emotional stimulant or anaesthetic" (14). An artist's sensibility that is his subconscious mind falls at times to the inescapable influence of his memory of the origin. Cyril Dabydeen views memory to swing to and fro like a pendulum in his subconscious mind. It often interferes his perception of reality (107).

Human mind is ever engaged in remembering things in the past. Memory remains an inevitable and inescapable instinct of the human psyche. Whatever one perceives or experiences or apprehends in his real life experiences gets recorded in his subconscious mind. It remains there buried for long inferring and shaping one's impulses and instincts, his attitudes and views and his perception and responses on the things in present. Peter Harriot observes in his work, *Attributes of Memory* (1974) that when one encounters a particular situation in the present, the stored information is recalled through "juxtaposition" or "Associative network" (14). The stored information then flows out through memory for further processing. This is the process of stimulus and response. Stimulus is an input and response is an output. They relate to memory of one's past and activate it to generate output in the form of human behaviour, verbal or otherwise.

Herriot elaborates certain attributes of memory by employing an analogy of the human mind and computer, a processor of information in the sense of structural emphasis (4).

The structural emphasis concerns transmission of information from its stores in the unconscious. These stores are two memory stores: primary memory and secondary memory, or short-term stores and long-term stores. Storage of information, i.e. memory occurs in three stages: (a) Registration of input by the senses, (b) Inflow of information and (c) Storage of information in the form of memory. In the new context of computer analogy, it may be explained as that from the initial information processing to the subsequent information processing (6).

The words `remember' and `memory', Harriot states, are used in ordinary language in considerably wider range. For a psychologist, they acquire specificity in the sense that to him successful recall of something also concerns how to do something, or when and where something happened. To him again, remembering is a means to an end rather than an end in itself. Psychological processes have been termed, he says, as learning processes, memory processes, or perpetual processes (21).

The structural approach of human computers has another dimension. It is the distinction between storage and retrieval. Storage is supposed to occur as the result of the selection and retention of the presented material, while retrieval from stores is considered a necessary condition for recall. Storage and retrieval further involve coding that may be the same or different for the both. Memory tasks call for the recall. A person selects certain sorts of coding to fit the demand of the presentation and the recall situation. If he is aware of when and in which circumstances he will have to recall he may adopt a specific way of encoding the material, if otherwise, the encoding may be done in different ways to allow different eventualities.

Particularly when one is daydreaming about different things, it cannot be decided whether coding is specific or variable over time.

Coding varies considerably in terms of nature and function of recall. Memory tasks refer to use of coding attributes. Those derived from episodes of presentation get one to episodic memory. They refer to personally experienced events that are unique in character. But different from it is semantic memory that refers to cognitive structure. It is a result of general past experiences and their maturation. Hence, it may be understood that episodic memory concerns basically a psychologist's experimentation, whereas semantic memory system is supposed to be concerned with general items of knowledge, logical and linguistic rule-system, and concepts and their relations (10).

When memory tasks are related to the case of Indo-Caribbean in Canada they are rendered as semantic memory system that brings in material from their past experiences. Their past is played upon with their dual origins. It further operates on their present day experiences in Canada. What is generated out of this play is a chain of responses and reactions. They bear an echo of agony and torments of betrayals and neglects that their hearts suffered and stored for long. The Indo-Caribbean literary expression happens to be the outcome of the semantic memory system that operates in the psyche of a twice-exiled Indian through his samskaras that bring about the stimulus-response process. It generates psychological responses to the Canadian experience that he encounters through his exile sensibility.

In this way, the first chapter presents a historical perspective on the Indian presence in Canada. It considers economical, social, political and cultural factors through an overview of the Indian diasporas in the Caribbean, Guyana and in Canada, as they contribute to the shaping of the psyche of the twice exiled Indo-Caribbean people in Canada. It focuses on their plights as

being immigrants in the west with a view to present the reality of their psychological conditions and to offer explanation to their lamentations, complaints and resistance. Since harmony of diasporic community and faith in religion work as defense mechanism to safeguard their existence and to keep up their spirit of survival the chapter also elaborates on the Hindu samskaras that an Indian-Hindu receive from the collective memory of his home culture in the Caribbean islands and more significantly in the Indian ancestry. Indo-Caribbeans in Canada prefer to write to register their resistance to the demeaning and dehumanizing treatment of the western power blocks to immigrant community. In it, Samskaras operate as memory out of which they write. Such is the case of writers like Sasenarine Persaud. Memory of the Indian ancestry provides him a concept, material and method to write. In this light, the second chapter shall focus on Persaud's mindset, sensibility and vision that determine his creative endeavours.