
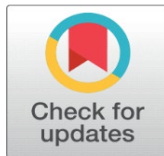
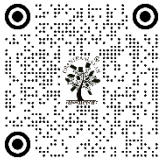


ALTERED ROUTES: A JOURNEY FROM FIRST GENERATION TO SECOND GENERATION

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ABSTRACT

This article deals with a thematic analysis of the works of the first and second-generation women writers in the Indian diaspora. It will examine how the first generation tries to hold on to their roots and the sense of being Indian and how the second generation tries to articulate their identities as not being Indian while adhering to the host country and their culture. It will examine the differences between the first and second-generation migrants in the specific works of the notable diasporic writers. It will also bring into focus the varied styles of writing noticed in the writings of the first generation and the second generation writers respectively. The essential rationale of this article is to look into the process of identity articulation of the migrants and how the cultural and social changes are also observed in their lives after migration. The study has been done by referring to the primary sources including the short stories of eminent writers and the secondary sources that are critical studies on the works of the same.

Keywords: Indian Diaspora Writers, First Generation Migrants, Second Generation Migrants, Identity Articulation, Immigrants

1. INTRODUCTION

The term “diaspora” refers to scattering. Other terms associated with scattering, are “immigrant”, “exile”, and “refugee”. These terms generally indicate ideologies, choices and compulsions that may have governed the act of relocation. The term “immigrant” means location and physical movement, and “exile” suggests isolation under compulsion. Sireesha (2009), 17 observes that in the context of India, all meanings are true with respect to migratory movements as they may have been governed by different reasons at different times, but for littérateur it is different.

This article attempts to compare and contrast the first and second generations’ relationship with home and the problems associated with identity. As has been pointed out, even if the coordination of the two generations remains the same, the experience and responses do not. In this article, we have analysed the difference in the works of Chitra Bannerjee Divakaruni and Bharati Mukherjee as the first-generation writers and Jhumpa Lahiri and Neela Vaswani as the second-generation writers.

2. DIASPORIC LITERATURE

Migrant writing can be seen as the literary articulation of the displaced who have experienced geographical dislocation at the existential, political and metaphysical levels. For instance, much of Mukherjee's fiction engages with the idea of "home" and explores the interplay between spatial location and dislocation.

The "Indian" domiciled in a foreign land persists in living in a hybrid space. Unwilling and refusing to totally sever connections with the cultural roots but yet aspiring to integrate and assimilate in the host land. In general parlance, diaspora suggests a homogenous substance of geographically dislocated individuals, and diasporic literature has reflected the experiences of alienation and isolation due to spatial dislocation. For the most part, diasporic writing has addressed problems that are fall-outs of displacement, such as existential rootlessness, often lapsing into nostalgia. The diasporic writer is caught between two worlds and negotiates a new space. Therefore, an anxious sense of dislocation characterises the writings. As Abraham notes, "home" is a shifting designator and the associated anxieties about homelessness and the impossibility of returning to the country of their birth are perennial themes.

3. FIRST-GENERATION VS. SECOND-GENERATION MIGRANTS

Before proceeding any further, the study would like to engage briefly in problematising the terms 'first generation' and 'second generation'. It may be noted that there is a widespread disagreement about the usefulness of the very understanding of the concept of 'generation' as a demographic and sociological concept among sociologists. Experts on urbanisation and immigration, like Susan Eckstein, remark that a much deeper historical reconceptualisation is necessary to demarcate the 'old' and the 'new' generations of immigrants in America. Going by Eckstein's observations, biologically first and second generations of the earlier generations of immigrants have not remained immune to similar conditions of assimilation and integration [Wanjarri \(2021\)](#), 118.

In immigrant writing, the expression 'first generation' refers to those who have migrated to a foreign country, while the expression is used to indicate the children who are born to immigrant parents. The first-generation immigrants' experience of the diasporic condition differs from that of the second generation. The first generation harbours very strong feelings about the country of their birth, which is not the case with the second generation. For the latter, the bond with the homeland of their parents is replaced with the country of their birth.

Home for the first generation, by default, implies India. The notion of home in the minds of the first generation is encapsulated as a frozen and photographic image of their home which rarely changes with time. But for the succeeding generations, the idea of home is envisioned in accordance with their experiences and life in the land of their birth, which is, in most cases, invariably the United States of America. A very strong sense of disjuncture permeates the consciousness of the second and third generations. Memories of India constitutes home for the first generation, whereas the second generation constructs the notion of India based on the stories they hear from their parents.

The memories of the first generation are passed on to the next, in most cases, orally. As a result, the memories of the abandoned home constantly surface in the lives of the first generation and impart a strong impression on their children. Thus, the second generation inhabits the two worlds that are often diametrically opposed but forward-looking in the sense that there is a strong urge to seek assimilation in the land of their birth. As they do so, they move to the inevitable third space in order to harmonise the two worlds, but this is not without its attendant complications.

Often the second generation's search for assimilation lands them in a clash with their parents. Moreover, this generation lives life embroiled in several issues that have a deep effect not only on their lives but also on their parents' lives. Thus, the American-born second generation immigrant's relationship with their parents becomes a significant aspect of their existence. Handling the children is extremely difficult for the parents as they are exposed to liberal society outside their homes. This generation refuses to accept and live by the conservative social codes that the parents impose. The source of friction and conflict can be found here.

In many cases, it can be noticed that the second generation may accept India as their home, but the nature of belonging is not the same as that of the parents. The following remarks made by Lahiri lend credence to this observation:

I'm very fond of Calcutta. I have been coming here since the age of two. I have been learning about the city where my parents were born and still have a vital connection with. It's been a wonderful part of my life. But it's not home. [Wanjarri \(2021\)](#), 151.

As can be inferred from the above, for Lahiri, the homeland of her parents is not home, and she sees it as a detached outsider. Further, it is clear that the second generation's relationship with the land of the parents' birth forms an essential facet of their lives. It may be pointed out here that Lahiri, who was born in England and later moved to America, considers herself a product of three countries. Thus, her fiction engages with the strong bonds that connect her to three countries and make her experience as the state of homelessness.

Her two collections of short stories, especially *Unaccustomed Earth*, fictionalise the clash that ensues between the two generations. A close reading of Bharati Mukherjee's "A Father" and Lahiri's "When Mr. Pirzada Came to Dine", brings this out clearly. In "A Father" Mr. Bhowmick is confused in finding a balance between the old and the new, and he is happy to learn that his daughter is pregnant but is aghast to know that his daughter has conceived through artificially inseminated. His outburst directed at Babli, the daughter who despises men, is born out of his inability to expunge in himself the expatriate, which comes in the way of his reconciliation with his rebellious feminist daughter.

Mr. Bhowmick's wife and daughter are depicted as transformed individuals. Though they can be seen to be Americanized to a higher degree than him, they have not totally expunged their homeland. The inference that may be drawn is that they are good examples of migrants who are not impacted by the host country totally as they retain their native cultural norms with pride.

Lahiri's short story "Mr. Pirzada Came to Dine" presents people at different phases of assimilation and acculturation. Mr. Pirzada clearly is an expatriate ridden with anxiety and hence unable to stave off the homesickness, while Lilia, a second-generation American becomes a representative of her generation, which is in the process of assimilation. She finds it difficult to appreciate the cultural complexities of her parents, which suggests that she is on the way to eventually becoming distanced from them, paving the way for assimilation in the host culture. Two details in the story strongly indicate this. The first is her knowledge of American history and geography, and the second is her immersion in American rituals such as Halloween.

Thus, one of the prominent themes in the writing of diasporas is the exploration of inter-generational conflict. The second generation refuses to abide by their parental expectations, and the parents are not representations of reducible flat personages of static cultures. Parents are individuals who have skewed off from their cultures of birth in migrating to alien shores. Thus, it is common to find that second-generation writers portray complex parental characters who are themselves double figures.

It is true that one writer is different from another, making attempts at generalisations risky and untenable. A comparison between the two second-generation writers chosen for examination in this study proves this point. Lahiri and Vaswani are second-generation writers and contemporaries of each other. However, their preoccupations as writers are different. Lahiri's writing fits the description of the classic diasporic themes such as anxieties of home, cultural hybridity and identity that have so often been theorised. Vaswani's writing, on the other hand, barely articulates these concerns. Much of her writing steers clear of the standard notions of expatriate writing.

The adherence to the culture of their country of birth is very strong in the first generation immigrants, and they steadfastly insist upon observing it in their homes. Their children are initiated into the practices right from birth by insisting that their mother tongue be spoken at home. In this context, [Judge \(2015\)](#) observes that the older generation begins to look upon itself as custodians of cultural mores, customs and values, which the younger generation deems outdated. In other words, while the first generation is finding a space that can accommodate the two worlds, that is, the world inside their homes and the world outside their homes, with the world inside their homes controlling their lives, the second generation too straddles between these two worlds but with one difference, the world outside becomes the controlling agent.

Though the cultural baggage that the diasporic writers bear varies from writer to writer and generation to generation, they are unanimous in articulating the nostalgic outpourings. The strategies that they devise to adopt and adapt are also dissimilar. The first-generation migrants are more attached to the land of birth that they have left behind. This makes them vulnerable to experiencing an intense feeling of uprootedness which operates as an obstacle in the process of their adjustment. For these, the difference in the cultural fabrics of the two lands is easily apparent.

The first generation's process of settlement in an alien land forces them to experience the throes of displacement as it invariably demands a severance with an identity conferred by the country of their birth. The experience of forlornness that the dislocation brings in its wake is exacerbated by the ethnic discrimination that they face in the host country. In Bharati Mukherjee's short story collection, *Darkness*, "The World According to Hus" Ratna's anxiety is contrasted with

her husband's refusal to acknowledge the prejudice harboured by the white populace. Her anxiety is not an isolated one, as it is the experience of most Indian immigrants. Ratna's understanding of what constitutes "home" is also a typical immigrant's notion of home. For "home" means a space where one feels secure and is bereft of conflicts, then the conclusion that may be drawn is that she will never be home anywhere. The short story "Isolated Incidents" by Mukherjee also reveals the racial bias that harbours towards the diaspora.

The analysis of the first-generation diaspora writing reveals isolation, alienation, sense of loss and nostalgia, which makes it difficult for them to intermingle with the people of the host country. Consequently, more than the spatial displacement, it is the reluctance to accept the new geography that surfaces in their writing. The works of Kamala Markhandaya and Anita Desai bring out this dilemma. Mukherjee and Divakaruni's writings too show evidence of this.

Jhumpa Lahiri's fiction brings out the travails of both generations of migrants settled in America, which largely is made possible because the issues of racial discrimination are no longer major issues. However, the increasing acceptance into the host society does not necessarily indicate that the diaspora has found a congenial space in the alien land since alienation of a different kind often replaces social alienation.

Most diasporic writing has identified a new way of entering reality; the geographical and cultural displacement imposes a restructuring of perceptions. Immigration into America upsets the traditional social arrangements as the conventional roles assigned to men and women acquire fluidity. Consequently, the family becomes a battlefield with tradition represented by Indian culture, taking cudgels with modernity that American culture brings in its wake. It must be noted that for the first generation, American social norms become the basis of interaction outside the home. Within the confines of their homes, this generation persists in preserving the culture of their land of birth. Blending with people of other cultures is often a traumatic experience as they are confronted with discrimination. Thus, the mixture of feelings of alienation and discrimination meted out makes the quest for self and space difficult. This also shapes their sensibilities.

The search for self-identity surfaces frequently in most diasporic writing, this search comes to the fore in the narratives that can be seen as semi-autobiographical as Mukherjee, Divakaruni and Lahiri's fiction shreds of evidence. For first-generation immigrants, the process of assimilation at any given time is incomplete, and they inhabit an in-between space since they exhibit a tendency to hold fast to their roots. This is in contrast with the assimilation process of the second generation, which shows a strong inclination to break away from their roots. Vaswani's writing is an example of this as she focuses more on experimenting with narrative modes, as in stories like "Five Objects in Queens" and "An Outline of No Direction".

It may be noted that even when Vaswani engages with patriarchal issues and conceptions of home, as in "Domestication of an Imaginary Goat", she is more preoccupied with the narrative devices. In contrast, the mode of narration of Lahiri is not a major consideration as she is content with deploying conventional strategies. It may be pointed out that the unnamed female protagonist in "Domestication of an Imaginary Goat" is desperate for a home and does not imagine "home" in the same terms as Lahiri does. For Vaswani's protagonists, the obstacle that comes in the way of finding a home is not the same as for other diasporic writers. What proves to be an impediment for Vaswani's character is the operation of the patriarchal codes embedded in men across cultures, which can be seen as a problem that women face all over the world. Thus, Vaswani's writing is moving beyond the narrow confines of genre and may be inferred as her attempt to assimilate and situate herself as an individual and a writer in a broader context.

Vaswani's writing, as observed above, differs from her contemporary Lahiri's. In certain ways, it is possible to find some similarities between the first-generation writers and Lahiri in that they do not try their hands at experimenting with modes of narration and exploration of the diasporic predicament. As a case in point, the study would like to compare two short stories, one by Bharati Mukherjee and one by Vaswani. The two short stories proposed to be laid side by side are "The World According to Hus" and "Domestication of an Imaginary Goat". In both these stories, the situation is more or less similar. Ratna is married to a Canadian, and Vaswani's character is contemplating marriage to an American. Both are confronted with the same problem; they are forced by the two men respectively to do things against their wishes. Ratna does not want to relocate to Toronto from Montreal as she is apprehensive about racial prejudices, but her husband, Graeme Clayton, has already accepted the teaching position at a university in Toronto – a decision which he has taken without consulting her and Vaswani's protagonist resents being bought a mauve coloured sweater. Thus, it can be seen that things are imposed upon them by men with no regard for the women's feelings. However, Mukherjee chooses to highlight racial prejudices, while Vaswani makes it a feminist issue.

The works of Divakaruni and Lahiri bring to the fore the inter-generational gulf, which arises from the insistence of the older generation that their children adhere to the norms and value systems of India. The second generation finds it

difficult to be comfortable in the kind of in-between space that their parents have conditioned them to live in. Sandwiched between the two cultures, they are confused for being unable to decide which of the two is their real home, India or the land of their birth and upbringing.

A basic truth about the first-generation diaspora is that they are bi-lingual. Having had access to English medium schools in India, the English language is almost like a native language to them. The works of the second generation Diasporic writers like Lahiri and Vaswani depict the distinct mindset of the second generation. In their works, there is a confident assertion of their ethnic identity in a multicultural setting. Their works reveal the deployment of neat language and engrossing narrative techniques.

Lahiri's characters are mostly Indian Bengali immigrants who are seen to be navigating the in-between space. Her writing, like those of Mukherjee and Divakaruni, is mainly autobiographical. Lahiri's fiction frequently draws sustenance from the blending of her own experiences with those of her parents and acquaintances. Her writing is an exploration of immigrant behaviour and sensibility through the travails and dilemmas of her characters. Her first short story collection *Interpreter of Maladies* focuses largely on efforts of the first generation diaspora to raise a family in a country that is diametrically different from their own.

The stories document their attempts to instill in their children the cultural norms and values in an alien land. However, the stories in the second collection, *Unaccustomed Earth*, engage with the destiny of subsequent generations. It can be noticed that as the generations become more and more integrated into the culture of their land of birth (America), they are more at ease in constructing identity, space and perspectives. Nigamananda Das (2008), in this context, notes that Lahiri's understanding of the first generation is that they consider their past lives as valuable and form an integral part of their existence. On the other hand, her depiction of the subsequent generation shows them as musing over the nearness and distance from the values cherished by their parents. This generation, as a part of their assimilation, views and explores new dimensions through which they can enter into the reality of their present lives.

A part of the above observation is true of Vaswani. As a second-generation writer, she shows less inclination to engage with the stereotypical notions of the immigrant condition that is manifested in the writings of the diaspora. Her way of entering reality as a writer is to strategise her narrative modes, which appear esoteric in contrast to the writers investigated in this study. Most of her stories in the later part of *Where the Long Grass Bends* bear testimony to this claim.

The issues concerning the relationship with home and identity cut across genders. However, with women writers, there is an additional component, the manifestation of feminine sensibility that impinges on their articulations which may be unconscious or unobtrusive. The question of whether they are unconscious or unobtrusive may be open to debate. What is certain is that women experience diasporic conditions very differently from men. Sireesha (2009), 15. points out this:

Most of the writings of Indian diasporic women attempt neither to fight male domination nor to compromise themselves. But they portray the reality of what we call "femaleness" – marriage, sex, children and the socially acceptable position of being a woman.

It is possible to see diasporic writings as a kind of self-introspection, a strategy devised to survive in the Darwinian global village where survival is dependent upon one's adaptive fitness. In this context, it is possible to examine the dilemma of women and issues associated with women of the South Asian diaspora. The predicament of women characters portrayed in the writings of the women diaspora may be studied from different perspectives, for instance, from cultural, biological or geographical points of view.

One of the themes that crop up regularly in the writings of diasporic women writers is the tales woven around the theme of marriage and family matters. One of the titles of the short story collection of Divakaruni is *Arranged Marriage*. A typical marriage in India is largely an arranged marriage and is seen as a union not only of two individuals but as a bonding of two families. In contrast to this, marriages in the West are rarely arranged and seen as a union of two families, as Sireesha (2009), (32-33) observes in her study *Diasporic Indian Women Writers*.

In the short story "A Wife's Story" from the collection *The Middleman and Other Stories*, Bharati Mukherjee explores the changes that come over an immigrant through Panna Bhatt, the protagonist of the story. Panna is a married woman pursuing her PhD at an American university. Her past (in India) and present lives (in the host country, America) alternate, revealing her broken immigrant American life. In the course of the narrative, the reader understands that she was far from being happy with her married life, primarily because of the dominating mother-in-law. Her migration to America is an excuse to escape from her suffocating marriage. Far away from all the bonds, she finds imprisoning. She is happy

when she meets the Hungarian Imre, a married man. She feels so comfortable with him that she hugs him on the street. In India, she would not have dared to hug her husband in public. She would not even have dared to call her husband by name.

The change that the American way of life brings in her is clearly indicative of the change that comes over immigrants. The impact is not felt at a superficial level, but in fact, extends from changes in her vocabulary (from “lorry” to “trucks”) to far deeper, her morals and attitudes. Panna is happy with the transformation. The story ends on a note of freedom for an Indian woman in America, which leads one to infer that for women, migration is an escape from their claustrophobic lives in a conservative patriarchal society that stifles them.

One can notice something similar in the short story “Tenant” by Mukherjee. This story is narrated in the third person and features Maya Sanyal, who is a first-generation immigrant to America. She teaches at Northern Iowa University and seeks independence in America. Her idea of experiencing freedom is by free association with men.

Another first-generation writer, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, examined in this study, also addresses the issue of marriage consistently in her short fiction. In the story “Clothes”, Divakaruni explores the husband-wife relationship in “Clothes”. There are frequent confrontations between the American social behaviour and the prescriptions of the culture in which Sumita, the protagonist, is raised. In her country of birth, consumption of alcohol is forbidden for women, while there are no taboos for men. For Sumita, it comes as a shock when she discovers that no such taboo on alcohol consumption by women exists. When her husband suggests that she taste wine, Sumita obeys him since she has been taught that a wife’s duty is to comply with her husband’s wishes.

Sumita’s life in America is not different from other Indian daughters-in-law who go to America after their marriage and live with their in-laws. She is convinced that what comes her way of truly experiencing the American life that promises freedom and liberty is being forced to live with her in-laws.

The prospect of moving out of the in-laws’ house on their own needs money. This means her husband will have to work the ‘graveyard shifts’. On one of these graveyard shifts, Somesh is gunned down by burglars – a common occurrence in America. His death is followed by the traditional ritual of the widow being asked to dress up in a white sari. This helps Sumita to resolve her plans for her future. She decides that she will never come to India in spite of the fact that she does not have the wherewithal to survive in America on her own.

For Sumita being a widow in America is preferable to living in India as a widow. In America, she would not be faced with the stigma of being a widow, whereas in India, she would be like a dove whose wings are sniped off.

The study would like to cite another short story from *Arranged Marriage* titled “The Disappearance”, which also makes a similar statement. The disappearance in the title alludes to the mysterious disappearance of an Indian-married woman in America. The use of a male narrator, which is unusual for Divakaruni’s style, and the fact that the characters are unmanned could be interpreted as the husband representing India’s patriarchal society, especially because the wife’s side of the story is not provided.

The wife’s disappearance though inexplicable to the husband, can be seen as an attempt on the part of the wife to break free of the cage that an Indian marriage can put a woman into. In a situation like this, the only option available to women is to walk out of the marriage as the wife does in the story.

It may also be pointed out that it does not even occur to the husband that his overbearing mindset could have been the reason for the woman to leave him in a land that is alien to her is in itself a telling remark that the author makes.

Most stories revolve around the theme of marriage and family relationships. One of the striking features of diasporic women’s writing is the engagement with women’s attitude to marriage. There are two kinds of women based on their attitudes to marriage.

The formation of these attitudes seems to depend upon the circumstances of their migration. The first type of women who accompany their respective husbands or children and are homemakers present a different mindset on the question of marriage and family relationships. These may not always be the major characters in the story. For instance, Mrs. Dutta in Divakaruni’s short story “Mrs. Dutta Writes a Letter” is the focal character, while the mother-in-law is only a marginal character, but both illustrate a mindset that refuses to shake off the Indian upbringing.

The second type is represented by women who migrate for their career advancements which are usually to pursue higher studies, the sense of liberation is quite high. These are more likely to be adventurous in their sexuality. Mukherjee’s Maya Sanyal in “Tenant”, who has done things that a woman from “Ballygunge Park” does not dream of

doing even her wildest fancies, is an example of this type as is the unnamed protagonist in Divakaruni's "The Word Love" and Meera Bose in "A Perfect Life". Both adopt the Western way of life and live with American live-in relationships.

In the case of first generation diasporic women, even when the migration is occasioned by a desire to advance careers, the cultural conditioning remains strong. Sireesha (2009), 119 observes:

Despite an acknowledgement of the fact that ... (the women of first generation) are now Americans, the women feel it necessary to retain their Indian heritage, both as a badge of identification in a multicultural society and as a reflection of their true selves.

In the case of Maya Sanyal, no matter how much she desires to be the owner of her life in America, she will always be a tenant. She may give up her Indian way of life and change her food habits, but she experiences emptiness and insecurity in the host land that underlines the lives of liberated Indian women in America.

The inference that can be drawn is that though the first generation is displaced and uprooted, they are ill-adapted in terms of their cultural practices and values. In this sense, for this generation that has spent most of their earlier lives in India, the feeling of "otherness" is perceived through the absence of the social and cultural dimensions that once formed part of their lives. The duality is that their experience stems from a necessity rather than choice. Ironically, the spatial distance from the land of birth brings awareness to establish a connection with it.

The second generation, too, undergoes these conflicts, as noted earlier, in a different manner. The second generation immigrants are pressured to live in two worlds. The parents impose their values and norms on their children to ensure that the children's bonds with the land of their origin are intact. The cross-cultural pressures take their toll on the second generation. However, the second generation's bond with their land of birth America is of greater significance.

The above observations manifest more frequently in the works of Jhumpa Lahiri than in Neela Vaswani. In an interview, Lahiri confesses that she has inherited her parents' predilections and that it is not easy to live with parents who, after having lived in America for three decades, view India as "home". Thus, they become what she terms the "halfway generation". This is the rationale behind the coinage of the term ABCD (American-Born Confused Desis), a neologism that has often been used to describe the generation. Usha, in the short story "Hell-Heaven", is a typical example of ABCD syndrome.

This also explains why most of her second-generation characters are in conflict with their parents, and the site of contention is the expectation of the parents in Lahiri's writing. In Vaswani, the ABCD syndrome does not surface very frequently. The only short story that interfaces the first and second-generation diaspora is "Five Objects in Queens", which does not foreground the inter-generational clash. The two daughters, Rita and Priyanka, though well rooted in the American culture rarely have any scuffles with their parents. Neither of the biracial parents, Kumar and Mary, impose their cultures.

In the search for self and identity, the first generation women writers enjoy substantial amount of liberation that follows the adoption of the western liberal mores. It becomes comparatively easier for these diasporic women to shed their monolithic national identities and acquire dual or multiple identities. Their status as outsiders in the host country ironically enables them to forge a distinct space.

Thus, as a consequence of their upbringing in India, the first-generation women in the process of adapting to the host culture are confused and find it difficult to cope. The surmise is that women with hundreds of years of cultural indoctrination and expectations respond to the condition of exile differently from men. However, it must be noted that there are commonalities and differences even among women writers in the way they perceive their immigrant status and how they conceptualise and relate to home.

4. CONCLUSION

The study reiterates that the response to the diasporic predicament is complex and straightforward at the same time. To take the second claim first, it is straightforward in the sense that certain issues, such as problems arising as a consequence of displacement, are common, like notions of and relationship with home, existential problems associated with de-territorialisation that manifest in the exploration of the self and fashioning of sensibility. What makes it complex is that while the condition may be the same, the response and articulatory practices to the experience are diverse. Thus, there are more points of divergence than heterogeneity.

Any attempt to homogenise runs the risk of making broad and sweeping generalisations. The same can be contested on the one hand and, on the other hand, the inevitable imposition of homogeneity in a selective manner for convenience that runs counter to the spirit of literary and other creative endeavours that enrich societies. This is demonstrated in the writings of the authors chosen for this study.

Bharati Mukherjee and Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni are undoubtedly first generation writers and share some common concerns but do not articulate and respond to the dilemma in the same way. Similarly, Jhumpa Lahiri and Neela Vaswani uncontestedly are second generation immigrant writers who theoretically share the problems that are typical of their generation but tread different paths. Thus, there are differences within and without the experiences of the generations of writers in their explorations, responses and articulatory preferences.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

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