

## **I: Transformation of Identity and Cross-cultural Encounter in Anita Desai's**

### ***Bye-Bye Blackbird* and Ruth Praver Jhabvala's *Heat and Dust***

This research focuses on the transformation of identity in *Bye-Bye Blackbird* and *Heat and Dust* through the study of cross-cultural encounter, where the characters have problems of adjustment in two different societies and cultures. In Desai's *Bye-Bye Blackbird*, Indian immigrants - the 'blackbirds' in England- struggle hard to find their proper identity and home in new society and culture whereas in Jhabvala's novel *Heat and Dust* the characters visit in India, leaves an impact of inferiority to western culture, while comparing their own culture with Indian culture and consider India as 'other'; no matter, they found the land exotic. Acculturation captures a sense of insecurity, alienation, loss of identity and defenselessness all at once. The cultural clash and quest for identity have become crucial issue of discussion in *Bye-Bye Blackbird* and *Heat and Dust*. In this regard, these two books portray loneliness, alienation and immigrant's existential problems. So, this study aims at establishing transformation of identity and cross-cultural encounter in terms of common set of experiences.

Desai's novel *Bye-Bye Blackbird* explores the transformation of identity and cross-cultural encounter, the simultaneous attraction and repulsion of Indian immigrants to the west. At first, Dev's experience was quite fascinated when he saw the different scenario in London market, which was drastically contrasted with his Indian experience as:

Super-markets with their pyramid of frozen food packets, delicateness with their continental fruits and wines and cheeses, the clothes shops with their waxy, surprise -eyed models in windows starred with gloves

and lace handkerchiefs, the pubs and -fid-and chips shops the Welter of high, aristocratic perambulators and hairless, pudding faced, lollipop-stoppered babies, the well-groomed dogs on leashed, the trim nylons on the women's stout legs, the red umbrellas and blue mackintoshes, the drizzle and the sunshine, the high prices and the easy trade. (14

Despite having some excitement, Dev feels difficult to adjust himself with the new environment. Everything is different from the point of view of Indian imagination and experience. He was there in England for his education but the situation made him sad so, Dev did not want to live England where he was not accepted. At the same time, Adit (his friend) told him rudely in his Indian way: "When you go back ... they will award you the Padma Bhushan, Class II, on Republic Day. How fine you will look with it shining on the front of your dirty purple pullover"(17).

Desai captures the hope and despair, pain and suffering and agony of the Indian immigrants. Similarly, Jhabvala in her novel *Heat and Dust* maps the cross-cultural encounter from a different perspective. In her narrative, western women characters are placed at two intervals amid Indian *Heat and Dust*. As in Desai's text Jhabvala's characters also go through hope and despair and other diasporic experiences in India. The main character of the Jhabvala's novel *Heat and Dust*, Olivia comes to stay in India with her husband Douglas after her marriage. She found herself more than excited as it was her first arrival in India. But, it couldn't last for long, since the environment heat and dust made her turn somewhere in disparity. The Indian heat makes Olivia stay indoors almost all the time, making her lead a life of seclusion and mere loneliness. Olivia is aware of the fact where her loneliness might lead her to: "Just sitting inside her house and imagining things. I don't want to become like Mrs. Saunders. But if I go on sitting here by myself, I shall" (130).

During her stay in India, she comes to meet the Nawab and is inadvertently drawn towards him and it was Nawab who makes her pregnant that ultimately brings about her tragic end. India was ruled over by the princes and the town around sprouted up just to serve the needs of the Palace. Satipur, an adjoining town had its slummy lanes, but the Khatm had nothing else. As her excitement about India dissolves as she finds the land somewhat different; the land, may not last with spirit as she says:

The town huddled in the shadow of the Palace walls in a tight knob of dirty alleys with ramshackle houses leaning over them. There were open gutters flowing through the streets. They often overflowed, especially during the rains, and were probably the cause, or one of them, of the frequent epidemics that broke out in Khatm. If it rained rather more heavily, some of the older houses would collapse and burry the people inside them. This happened regularly every year.

(165)

With the end of the Moghul rule in this reason the development of the town was totally neglected. The same landmark stood barren as a testimony to it: “Khatm huddled in the Nawab’s Palace. No one lives there; it seems to have been built only to serve the Palace. The streets are dense, run down and dirty with many beggars” (11). In this connection, this research tries to probe in to the dynamics of two different cultural communities (India in Jhabvala and England in Desai) and the types of experiences of immigrants which are largely shaped by cultural differences. Cultural encounter deals with a pattern of mutual adjustment and reciprocal give- and-take by offering a space for meaningful identity between cultures. When two or more cultures come together, the struggle takes place that matches the tensional relation between

absence and presence, emptiness and affirmation because of the distinct cultural qualities of the respected cultures. The juxtaposition of two cultures that is; alien and native culture generate a moment of self-transformation or the re-evaluation of prevailing patterns in the light of newly experienced insights of life. Transformation of identity and cultural encounter are the process in which various modes take place like interaction, acculturation, assimilation, adaptation, cultural and dialogical engagement to form identities.

The encounter between ‘Easterners’ and ‘Westerners’, especially, India, on the one hand, and Britain, America and Europe, on the other, is a recurring theme in Indo-English literature. The encounter is viewed from different perspectives by Indo-English writers, and possibilities of mutual understanding between the two sides have been explored in their works.

Anita Desai depicts the problems of the immigrants in a new culture where her protagonist strives for an order. Sometimes they succeed and most of the time the new culture, custom and language and value systems of such society becomes hostile to them. Because of this hostility, they strongly feel the need of their home— the native land. Characters’ longing of native land drags into their past where Adit makes an imagination about his presence in India, ". . . my mother will cook hilsa fish wrapped in banana leaves for me. My sisters will dress Sarah in saris and gold ornaments. I'll lie in bed till ten every morning and sit up half the night listening to the shehnai and sitar"(48). In the analysis of mentioned abstract, it is found that the characters are overwhelmed by their past which is rooted in their every spur, proves that they are not able to form any identity in foreign land so they desperately seeking their identity in their own land and culture; which is the major thrust of the diaspora writing that is depicted in Desai and Jhabvala.

Similarly, sometimes she depicts the eastern and western cultures and protagonist's attempt to survive in a new land simultaneously and at other times the analogy of two cultures through the characters occupying two different cultural spaces.

*Bye-Bye Blackbird*, the first novel to deal with such problems arising from cultural difference, tells the story of Indian immigrants to England, their problems and their desperate longing for home-native land. The novel covers different aspects of the Eastern-Western encounter between the British and the Asiatic immigrants in England. AditSen, a young man from India, lives in England with his English wife, Sarah. For few years he has been there working as a travel agent. Like his fellow immigrants, he quietly pockets insults and humiliations to which he is continually subjected. Fed on English literature in school back in India and exposed directly to English life and manners for years, he feels a sense of cultural affinity. This closeness however, does not destroy the sense of own 'cultural identity'. He secretly longs for Indian food, music and friends. This longing suddenly grows intense during one of his visits to Sarah's parents and Adit. From then, he feels panic and isolated in the alien land. Finally he leaves for India with Sarah. Though, he regards England as a land of infinite opportunities, and condemns the poverty and misery of his own countrymen, "England does not, however, accept him. He is like others, abused, insulted and humiliated all the time even by school children" (Aithal 98).

Similarly, Ruth PraverJhabvala portrays the picture of contemporary India in the novel *Heat and Dust* during her stay in India. Almost all her works are set in India focusing middle class people. Her writings present the conflict of cultures at political and racial level with emphasis on the difference between past and present. Her

writings show her exploiting at her best the possibilities of the Indian people's life and places for her fictional focus.

A profound and powerful novel, winner of the Booker Prize, Set in colonial India during the 1920s, *Heat and Dust* tells the story of Olivia, a beautiful woman suffocated by the politeness and social constraints of her position as the wife of an important English civil servant. Longing for her passion and independence, Olivia is drawn into the spell of the Nawab, a minor Indian prince deeply involved in gang raids and criminal plots. She is intrigued by the Nawab's charm and aggressive courtship, and soon begins to spend most of her days in his company. But then she becomes pregnant, and unsure of the child's paternity, she is faced with a wrenching dilemma. Her reaction to the crisis humiliates her husband and outrages the British community, breeding a scandal that lives in collective memory long after her death.

Jhabvala's positions as insider and outsider as well as detached observer allowed her a unique, sometimes a satirical perspective when describing Indian family life, India's struggle to adapt to new social mobility, and clash between Western and Eastern ideals. In most of her novels, as Anju Sharma believes "She presents only the darker sides of the Indian society, thus ignoring the brighter aspects"(83).

The growth of life according to set traditions and values of the land is the culture of the country. It is the sum total of the way of living built by a group or groups of human beings and transferred from one generation to another. When two human beings with diverse ethnic backdrop of heredity, conventions and a way of life, come into contact with each other they are bound to act and react with each other which can be defined as cross culture conflicts. The conflict can operate as social as well as personal level. In fact, the clash of cultures has been quite pronounced theme

of the Indo –English novel. Ruth PraverJhabvala’s fiction *Heat and Dust* and Anita Desai’s novel *Bye-Bye Blackbird* fit into this context.

Jhabvala has been variously categorized as an Indo-Anglian, an Anglo-Indian writer, an inside-outsider and outsider- insider. Ruth PraverJhabvala was born of German-Polish parents, grew up in England, married an Indian Parsee architect, lived in India for more than two decades and has now moved over to New York. Jhabvala’s mixed cultural heritage is a special boon to the literary world. Cultural tension has always been a rich source of creativity as it involves significant issues like alienation, isolation, dislocation, identity etc.

This research seeks to explore the complexities and the dilemma of the immigrants in these texts by focusing on attraction, repulsion and their exploitation by the vested interests. The study shows how Indian diasporic literature, and novelists have chartered this very crisis tormenting the sensitive soul of immigrants. The research also attempts to highlight, through an intense study of the novels *Bye-Bye Blackbird* and *Heat and Dust*, how Desai and Jhabvala have delineated the problems and plights of exile and the diasporic individuals caught in the crisis of a changing society. Jhabvala and Desai try to capture the confusions and conflicts of the exile and show how their novels simultaneously picture a holistic view of the exile literature and the Indian diaspora literature at the same manner.

The theme of exile and cultural alienation is common in the 20<sup>th</sup> century literary scene. Exile and cultural alienation has become a universal phenomenon. Anita Desai and Ruth PraverJhabvala give a graphic picture of the exile and alienation of uprooted individuals in the novels. Desai and Jhabvala read the minds and understand the fact that they are suffering from alienation. The characters in these two novels become victims of such feelings. The purpose of this thesis will seek to

answer these highly focused issues basically in terms of cultural identity, cultural difference and cross-cultural encounter of the immigrants.



## II. Cultural Encounter and Identity Crisis

The term culture has been acquired a certain sensation of disgrace in social anthropological circles because of the multiplicity of its references and the studied vagueness with which it has all too often been invoked. In any case, the cultural concept to which this thesis will refer to has neither multiple referents nor any unusual ambiguity. It will denote to historically transmitted pattern of meaning codified in symbols. This system of inherited conceptions is expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate and develop their knowledge about and attitudes towards life. Culture is the fabric of meaning in terms of which human beings interpret their experience and guide their actions. Such actions then take the forms of social structure, the actually existing network of social relations. Culture and social structure are then different abstractions from the same phenomena.

The idea of culture as people's 'whole way of life' first arose in the late 18th century. Culture for Arnold was the best that has been 'thought and known' in the world. Along Arnoldian line, E.B. Tylor defined:

Culture in an ethnographic way. Tylor was more original in his definition of culture. For Tylor, culture or civilization, taken in its wide ethnographic sense, is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society. (1)

By mid 20<sup>th</sup> century such ethnographic definition of culture has undergone great change. Raymond Williams contrasts this anthropological meaning of culture, denoting the whole way of living of a people, with the normative meaning of culture. In normative usage, culture still claims to represent the organic voice of people. Out of this conflict between culture in the anthropological sense and culture in the

normative sense, there emerged a third way of using the term, "One that refers neither to a people's organic way of life nor to the normative values preached by leading intellectuals but to a battleground of social conflicts and contradictions" (Graff and Bruce 421).

From the theoretical perspective one cannot assume a single entity, but it can be linked with the personal identity by sharing the common sets of behavior. It delivers individual experience coherent and meaningful, for it is inescapably different, divisive and dissonant. The emergence and dissemination of postcolonial criticism and the postcolonial theory of discourse, made culture a most contested space. Culture is borrowed the terminologies of other fields of criticism. Often cited terminologies, these days in the study of culture are Foucauldian notion of 'Power' and 'Discourse' and Gramsci's concept of 'Hegemony'.

Postcolonial perspectives emerged from the colonial testimony of Third World countries and the discourses of 'minorities' within the geopolitical divisions of east and west, north and south. They formulate their critical revisions around issues of cultural difference, social authority, and political discrimination in order to reveal the antagonistic and ambivalent moments within the 'rationalizations' of modernity. Postcolonial criticism incorporates witness to these unequal and uneven forces of cultural representation involved in the contest for political and social authority within the modern world order. It forces us to engage with culture as an uneven, incomplete production of meaning and value often composed of incommensurable demands and practices, produced in the act of social survival. Culture reaches out to create a symbolic textuality to give the alienating everyday an aura of selfhood, a promise of pleasure. As Bhabha rightly states:

Culture as a strategy of survival is both transnational and translational. It is transnational because contemporary postcolonial discourses are rooted in specific histories of cultural displacement... It is translational because such spatial histories of displacement... make the question of how culture signifies, or what is signified by culture, a rather complex issue. (438)

The transnational dimension of cultural transformation and identity – migration, diaspora, displacement, relocation – makes the process of cultural translation a complex form of signification. It is from this hybrid location of cultural value – the transnational as the translational - that the postcolonial intellectual attempts to elaborate a historical and literary project.

Edward W. Said is interested in studying the relationship between the east and west, which is governed by discourse, from the cultural dimension standing in a position of a cultural critic rather than a radical political theorist. On the one hand, he sees the 'scope of Orientalism' as matching with 'the scope of empire'; on the other hand, he focuses on cultural representation as well as functioning as a form of hegemony. Said in this connection finds Mathew Arnold as using culture as a powerful means of differentiation. Culture is an ideal for Arnold but Said argues:

Culture with its superior position has the power to authorize, to dominate, to legitimate, denote, interdict and validate: in short i.e. the power of culture to be an agent of and perhaps the main agency of powerful differentiation within its domain and beyond it too. (9)

Culture, for Said, is not only the positive doctrine of the best that is thought and known but also a differentially negative doctrine of all that is not best. This double

faceted view of culture makes one aspect of culture more powerful than the other. Culture, thus, becomes a powerful means of domination and appropriation.

Thus it can be said that culture is a concept that includes a refining and elevating element, each society's reservoir of the best that has been known and thought, as Mathew Arnold put it in the 1860s. In time, culture comes to be associated, often aggressively, with the nation or the state, which differentiates 'us' from 'them', almost always with some degree of 'xenophobia'. Culture, in this sense, is a source of identity, and a rather combative entity. Culture is a sort of theater where various political and ideological causes engage one another. Far from being a placid realm of 'Appollonian gentility', culture can even be a battleground on which causes expose themselves to the light of day and contend with one another.

### **Identity and Culture**

Identity has become the central area of concern in cultural studies during the 1990s. Identities as perceived within the domain of cultural studies are not things which exist; they have no essential or universal qualities rather they are discursive constructions. The product of discourses regulates the ways of speaking about the world. In other words identities are constituted, made rather than found, by representations. In Balibar's words "Identity is never a peaceful acquisition: it is claimed as a guarantee against a threat of annihilation that can be figured by another identity or by an erasing of identities" (186).

Every identity that is elaborated as a function of the other, it would be more precise to say that identity is a discourse of tradition. It is a 'production' which is never complete, always in process and always constituted within, not outside representation. Hall argues that there are at least two different ways of thinking about 'cultural identity'. The first position defines 'cultural identity' in terms of one shared

culture, a sort of collective 'one true self' which people with a shared history and ancestry hold in common. Within the terms of this definition, as Hall argues:

Our cultural identities reflect the common historical experiences and shared cultural codes which provide us, as one people, with stable, unchanging and continuous frames of reference and meaning beneath the shifting divisions and vicissitudes of our actual history. (111)

Cultural identity along with the points of similarity also has the critical points of deep and significant difference which constitute 'what we really are' or rather what we have become. One can't speak for very long, with any exactness, about 'one experience, one identity, without acknowledges. Such is the second notion of cultural identity for Hall. Hall argues:

Cultural identity, in this second sense, is a matter of 'becoming' as well as of 'being'. It belongs to the future as much as to the past. It is not something which already exists, transcending place, time, history and culture. Cultural identities come from somewhere, have histories. But like everything which is historical, they undergo constant transformation. (112)

Far from being eternally fixed in some essentialized past, identities are subject to the continuous 'play' of history, culture and power. Far from being grounded in a mere 'recovery' of the past, which is to be found, identities are the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within, the narratives of the past. Indian experience, Indianness, Africanness, Carribeanness, and other such identities are constituted out of the traumatic character of the colonial experience. The way in which these identities were subjected and positioned in the dominant regimes

of representation was the effects of a critical exercise of cultural power and normalization. The dominant or superior culture has the power to influence or dominate the other.

Nevertheless this idea of otherness as an inner compulsion changes our conception of 'cultural identity'. As Hall writes, "Cultural identity is not a fixed essence at all, lying unchanged outside history and culture. It is not some universal and transcendental spirit inside us on which history has made no fundamental mark" (113).

Thus, identity is neither once- and- for- all nor is a fixed origin to which we can make some final and absolute return. But identity is not a mere phantasm either. It is something which has histories or past, which continually speaks to us. Identities are constructed through memory, fantasy, narrative and myth. Cultural identities, thus, are the points of identification, the unstable points of identification or future, which are made, within the discourse of history and culture. Not an essence but a 'positioning', where there is always a politics of identity, a politics of position which has no absolute guarantee in an unproblematic, transcendental 'law of origin'. With the dissemination of democratic politics of modernity and with the rise of postcolonial theory aggressive assertions of cultural identity frequently come in the way of wider international solidarities. The meanings of different aspects are changing but never finished or completed. According to Hall:

Persons are composed not of one but of several, sometimes contradictory identities. The subject assumes different identities at different times, identities which are not unified around a coherent self. Within us are contradictory identities , pulling in different directions , so that our identifications are continually being shifted about if we feel

that we have unified identity from birth to death, it is only because we construct a confronting story or “narrative of the self” about ourselves.(The Question 277)

Thus, identities are wholly social constructions and cannot exist outside of cultural representations. Identities are constructed through memory, fantasy, narrative and myth. Cultural identities, thus, are the points of identification, the unstable points of identification or future, which are made, within the discourse of history and culture. After colonialism, there emerged a new transformation of social consciousness, which exceeds the rectified identities and rigid boundaries invoked by national consciousness. The claims of these larger and more expansive solidarities are finally more compelling than those of national culture. National consciousness paved the way for the emergency of an ethically and politically enlightened global community. The consciousness of the self, Fanon writes: "is not the closing of a door to communication... National consciousness, which is not nationalism, is the only thing that will give us an international dimension" (Fanon 199).

After colonialism, there emerged a new transformation of social consciousness, which exceed the rectified identities and rigid boundaries invoked by national consciousness. In other words; post colonialism, facilitate the emergence of, what Said called an enlightened 'postnationalism' where there is the possibility of a more generous and pluralistic vision of the world. Postnationalism follows various indeterminacies in the colonial encounter in order to bridge the old divide between westerner and native through a considerably less embattled account of colonialism by depicting how the colonial encounter contributed to the mutual transformations of colonizer and colonized. The phenomenon is viewed as a transaction as an interactive, dialogic, two-way process rather than a simple active- passive one, as a

process involving complex negotiation and exchange. Because of the globalization process set in motion by modern imperialism in this 'postnational' era, each society is carrying the 'melting-pot' syndromes. In this way they are becoming hybrid social spaces and are characterized by 'cultural-encounter'.

Cultural encounter supports a pattern of mutual adjustment or reciprocal give-and-take by offering a space enough for coexistence. But all the time it is not necessary that cultural encounter promotes blending or merging of perspectives. The meeting of cultures is likely to be marked by contestation struggle and agonism that matches the tensional relation between absence and presence, emptiness and affirmation. Such an encounter takes place when one culture is introduced to the other culture, which is different from it. Such exposure to alien culture initiates a moment of genuine self-transformation, that is, a reassessment of prevailing patterns in the light of newly experienced insights or modes of life. Cultural encounter does not take a single mode rather it is a process and can be clarified on the basis of various modes it takes. Acculturation is one of the prominent modes of cultural-encounter in the context of shifting global tendencies. It indicates to that process where diverse cultural traits and complexities are modified because of the continuous contact by making the cultures and cultural identities; hybrid and multicultural society.

Acculturation comprehends those phenomena which results when groups of individuals having different culture come into contact for a long time, with subsequent changes in the original cultural patterns of either one or both groups. The history of each society is characterized by a set of values beliefs and practices and each culture has a codified exhaustive set of instructions concerning behavioral issues. Cultural interactions stem from the prolonged contact between two or more sets of values, norms which can be extremely different from one another and such contacts



may extend "from domestic contacts to global interactions", and "between hegemonic western culture and developing non-western societies" (Dallmayr 14).

This can be resulted in cooperation or competition between cultures. In the first case exchange and mutual support can take place while in the second case hostility and conflict may arise. The second alternative is most frequent one. Acculturation only seldom occurs as a bi-directional process. More often, cultural modification concerns the changes a cultural group has to introduce in collective as well as individual behavior, in order to coexist and interact with the norms and habits of a dominant social system. It usually applies to ethnic minorities' immigrants, indigenous people exposed to colonization, refugees, which can be globally considered as acculturating groups. Because of the involuntary character of the acculturation process minorities are mostly forced to adapt to the cultural system they live in, in order to cope with the dominant environment and become active part in it.

People belonging to the acculturating minority maintain strong relationship within their group. They keep their own traditions, behaviors, and values. They create a separate sub-culture, which is minimally influenced by the dominant group. In such situation the contacts between the two social systems are subsequently very restricted. Individuals originating from the acculturating group are not accepted as member of the dominant culture. They are marginalized or segregated by the dominant group regardless of their wish to integrate to assimilate. Acculturating individuals manage to acquire values and behaviors characterizing the dominant culture in which they live, at the same time preserving their own traditions and habits. This kind of interaction with a dominant culture has also been labeled as 'biculturalism'.

A bicultural individual knows and understands two different cultures and he/she is able to show dual modes of social behavior that can be alternately used depending upon which culture the individual is interacting with. It not necessarily means that a bicultural individual daily comes into contact with the dominant culture, nor that the two cultures share a common geographical area. But bicultural competence is a laborious task. It requires the creation of effective interpersonal relationships with both groups without losing personal identity. It implies knowledge of the dominant values, positive attitude toward both cultural patterns, communication through the use of the dominant language, sense of being grounded in both cultures. Not everyone is able to acquire this competence.

However, the effort an individual has to perform in the acculturation process is too often not rewarded. In several cases integration remains a remote goal or even an unrealistic ideal. It is very difficult to estimate the intrinsic absolute value of one cultural system as compared with others. As a matter of fact, depending on the historical period and the geographical location, each model of social structure offers some advantages and imposes some constrains on individuals.

Cultural encounter does not always entail merger or fusion, but may lead to partial adaptation or assimilation, through a process of cultural borrowing. This happens when the respective cultures face each other on a more nearly equal or roughly comparable basis. Assimilation as Dallmayr quotes Robert Park and Ernest Burgess as:

A process of interpretation and fusion in which persons and groups acquire the memories, sentiments, and attitudes of other persons and groups and, by sharing their experience and history, are incorporated by them in a common cultural life. (14)

Assimilation is the process whereby individuals or groups once dissimilar becomes similar, share the same sentiments, values and goals and whereby attitudes of many persons are united and develop into a unified group. It results because of the functional relation of the diverse cultural elements.

Assimilation is closely affiliated to the process of acculturation. Within the acculturating group, individuals lose their ties with the original cultural background, and acquire values, habits and behaviors from the dominant culture. It is usually applied to policies in some western or westernizing nations. In the post-imperial era assimilation is greatly abetted and intensified by nationalism and the idea of the nation-state. As Fred Dallmayr quotes Rupert Emerson:

In the contemporary world, the nation is for greater portions of mankind the community with which men must intensely and most unconditionally identify themselves... The nations are today the largest community which... effectively commands men's loyalty, overriding the claims both of the lesser communities within it and those which cut across it... In this sense the nation can be called a "terminal community." (15)

The hegemonic influence of nationalism and the nation-state is not only confined to advanced western countries but extends to non-western, postcolonial societies. While initially opposing the 'state' as an alien, colonial apparatus, independence movements quickly adopted a nationalist rhetoric geared toward the acquisition of state power. Every nationalist assertion of independence urgently needs to reconstruct the nation through collective imagination.

In the western orbit, the most frequently discussed example of cultural assimilation is United States. In this case large numbers of immigrants from many

parts of the world were progressively integrated into dominant social and political fabric. This is true even for the many postcolonial non-western societies. Like USA they too carry the 'melting-pot' rhetoric. Wave after wave of immigrants are steadily socialized or assimilated into the prevailing way of life of the nation states like India, Africa, Caribbean Islands etc. with their accent on individual initiative and the profit motive. But the 'melting-pot rhetoric' alone cannot truly depict the cultural clash of these societies, because it is difficult to find a homogeneous cultural coexistence. Rather the notions like 'cultural pluralism' or 'rainbow coalition' of cultures are sustaining a broader social synthesis.

Cultural borrowing is a continuous process characterized by the fusion and adjustment of various cultural traits. It facilitates partial adaptation and finally assimilation. Partial adaptation, in any case, involves a greater subtlety in self-other relations. Rather than self-imposition of hegemonic situation, selective borrowing requires a willingness to recognize the distinctness of other culture, coupled with a desire to maintain at least some indigenous preferences. That means the result of such borrowing that is assimilation, is not always motivated by the hegemonic influence rather it may turn otherwise. To quote Fred Dallmayr:

Assimilation is not only or exclusively a policy imposed from above, that is, a process whereby a hegemonic culture is disseminated by an elite to subordinate segments of the population. Sometimes..., the hegemonic culture holds a powerful attraction for subordinate groups eager to gain social acceptance or recognition and thus to terminate discrimination. Where such acceptance is pursued deliberately and with some promise of success we are in the presence of acculturation through upward mobility. (17)

This is to say that the assimilating groups while acquiring new cultural values or making adjustment with the alien cultural milieu, still maintains an indigenous solidarity. Thus, cultural difference never becomes 'complete' and 'univocal' because it moves in symbolic Transformation from one enunciatory position to another leaving it further open to cultural translation. Any demand for the full representation of cultural difference is bound to lead to the loss of meaning because it involves interdisciplinarity and the emergent cultural forms can't be contextualized in terms of some pre-given or already existing frame of reference.

Most genuine and normatively most commendable of modes of cultural encounter is 'Dialogical Engagement' and interaction. In the process of acculturation, when two diverse cultures meet, there emerges an initial stance of conflict. As a mode of social and cultural interaction conflict occupies a prominent place in the annals of human history. Conflict and mutual enmity are the chief trademarks of human relations through which communication or dialogue between cultures is possible. It is the dialogue of cultures that characterizes our age, which is incarnated by ethnology.

The notion of dialogical engagement is very similar to what Gadamer says, 'fusion of horizons' and Bakhtin's notion of 'dialogical exchange'. 'Fusion of horizons' for Gadamer is an interpretive-dialogical engagement between cultural life-forms. However, later Gadamer is distanced from mere fusionism to a stronger recognition of otherness in the context of reciprocal encounter. 'Dialogical exchange' of Bakhtin involves an affirmation of the other's 'exteriority' which goes hand in hand with recognition of the other as subject. This 'exotopic' relation is 'non-unifying', that is, an engagement which preserves reciprocal freedom where no one has the last word and neither voice is reduced to the status of a simple object or elevated to the status of a

superior subject. Such exotopic engagement has been espoused in cross-cultural encounter along Bakhtinianline. William Connolly has endorsed an ethic of 'cultivation' which involves "both distance and engagement, both recognition of inalienable otherness and genuine care for difference" where identity remains open to "loose strands and unpursued possibilities in oneself" (Connolly 160-61). Such openness can generate and sustain an attitude of agonies interdependence, an ethic in which adversaries are respected and maintained in a mode of agonistic respect for the difference that constitute them, an ethic of care for life.

Intercultural engagement is equally prevalent in contemporary societies as it was in course of the development of human civilization. Though relatively intermittent in the western setting, examples of cross-cultural dialogue are more numerous in the non-western post-colonial societies. The crux of post-colonial debates about cultural authenticity, hybridity, and resistance is most prominently drawn at the point of language in this part of the world. Post-independence societies established new metaphors of nationhood not only to rewrite history, but to create and to frame defining symbols for the purpose of imagining the nation. Using conceptual structures drawn from local tradition they therefore tried to integrate the cultural life of the past with their post-independence, westernized realities. Along with the process of indigenization they began to manipulate English language to suit their own needs.

By the time, it was important to encourage a situation in which multiplicities of English are able to co-exist as opposed to a world in which one metropolitan English was dominant. English language has attracted support in the postcolonial societies because of its perceived malleability. Far from "enforcing the cultural centrality of its historical homeland, the language has proved to be a generous and

accommodative traveler" (Boehmer 210). By adopting local idioms and cultural referents, English in the non-western world is acclimatized, made national. This is evident in postcolonial narratives. What began in postcolonial writing, as the creolization of English language has become a process of mass literary migration, transplantation and cross-fertilization. The postcolonial text generally is a hybrid object, a hybridity which is form giving, lending meaning to the bewildering array of cultural translations.

With the process of indigenization of English language, cultural traits are homogenized in which writers and texts from different continents, nations and cultures are often indiscriminately blended together as being migrant or polyphonic, by recognizing the difference of self and the other. In our rapidly shrinking global village, cultures are willing to become more genuinely engaged with one another, that is, to undergo a mutual learning process while simultaneously preserving the distinctiveness or difference of their traditions. Needless to say self-knowledge develops through knowledge of the 'other' where 'other' can be understood by creating contact zones.

The idea of 'contact zones' was first developed by Mary Louise Pratt in her seminal book *Imperial Eyes*. Contact zone is a social space marked by the spatial and temporal co-presence of subjects previously separated by geographic and historical disjuncture and whose trajectories now intersect. "Contact zones", writes Pratt:

. . .are the social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination- like colonialism, slavery, or their aftermaths as they are lived out across the globe today. (4)

A contact perspective emphasizes how subjects are constituted in and by their relations to each other. It treats the relations among colonizer and colonized, self and other, native and the non-native, not in terms of separateness or apartheid, but in terms of co-presence, interaction, interlocking understandings and practices, often within asymmetrical relations of power.

Though, characterized by the asymmetrical relation of power, along with rage, incomprehension, and pain, contact zone, at the same time offers moments of wonder and revelation, mutual understanding and new wisdom. In such spaces people historically and geographically separated come into contact with each other and establish ongoing relations, usually involving conditions of coercion, racial inequality, and intractable conflict. Number of other vocabularies is closely related to the idea of 'contact zone' like 'transculturation' 'auto-ethnography' and 'safe houses'.

'Transculturation' aims to replace overly reductive concepts of acculturation and assimilation. The term refers to a process whereby members of subordinated or marginal groups select and invent from materials transmitted by a dominant or metropolitan culture. While subjugated peoples cannot readily control what emanates from the dominant culture, they do determine to varying extents what they absorb into their own. Transculturation not only refers to the metropolitan modes of representation of its periphery but also to the Transformation of metropolis by the subordinated periphery. But the bitter fact is that while the imperial center tends to understand itself as determining the periphery, the metropolis habitually blinds itself to the fact that it was constructed from outside in as much as from the inside out.

The term "auto-ethnography" refers to the process of using the vocabularies and idioms already used by others while representing the self. To be precise, auto-ethnographic texts are representations that the so-defined other construct in response



to or in dialogue with those representations. Such texts are merged or infiltrated to varying degrees with indigenous idioms to create self-representations intended to intervene in metropolitan modes of understanding. They often address to both metropolitan audiences and the speaker's own community and constitute a group's point of entry into metropolitan literate culture.

Along with 'transculturation' and 'autoethnography', 'safe houses' is the phenomenon of the contact zone. The term refers to the "social and intellectual spaces" Pratt writes, "where groups can constitute themselves as horizontal, homogeneous, sovereign communities with high degree of trust, shared understandings, temporary protection from legacies of oppression" (Mass Culture 71).

Where there is a legacy of subordination, groups need places for healing and mutual recognition, safe houses in which to construct shared understandings, Knowledge, claims on the world that they can bring in to the contact zone. However, the idea of 'contact zone' denies the homogeneous, sovereign 'community' embodying values like equality, fraternity and liberty, which the societies often profess but systematically fail to realize.

Contact zones include identifying with the ideas, interests, and histories of the other. It involves transculturation and collaborative work, comparison between elite and vernacular cultural forms, offers the spaces for people to uncover confront and reflect on suppressed aspects of history, ways to move into and out of the rhetorics of authenticity. It provides ground rules for communication across lines of difference and hierarchy that go beyond politeness but maintain mutual respect; a systematic approach to the concept of 'cultural mediation'.

Identity is a topical issue in the contemporary study of culture with many ramifications for the study of ethnicity, class, gender, race, sexuality and subcultures.

Identity becomes an issue when something assumed to be fixed, coherent and stable is displaced by the experience of doubt and uncertainty. Globalization has increased the migration rate and has altered the relations between western and other cultures by taking the sense of identity of individuals, across the national border. Contemporary identities are therefore fluid or consciously delimited. Various factors like nation, religion, language political ideology or cultural expression are likely to be under negotiation. Being a black, lesbian born in New York and living in Paris, for example, suggests a fluid personal ethical, linguistic and cultural identity, where one factor may be predominant at a given time, but is not a permanent, fixed or unchanging.

Contemporary cultural theory has challenged the 'essentialist' or 'fundamentalist' identities. Rather, concepts like 'difference', 'hybridity', 'diaspora', 'representation' are preferred over conceptions of settled ethnic, national, or geographical identities. Notions of hybridity and creolization cross national and colonial boundaries. The resurgence of narrow nationalisms, minor ethnic regionalism and new postnational identifications, however has foregrounded the fragility and pertinence of hybridity as critique of 'fixed' unchanged identities. By foregrounding modernization and development, the impact and growing complexity of the resultant new secular identities that are spawned by the globalizing tendencies through which they are mediated can now be read as new hybrid identities in the context of shifting global tendencies. Identity as West conceives is the 'matter of life and death.' For he writes:

Identity is fundamentally about desire and death. How you construct your identity is predicated on how you construct desire, and how you conceive of death: desire for recognition; quest for visibility; the sense

of being acknowledged; a deep desire for association— what Edward Said would call affiliation. It is the longing to belong, a deep, visceral need that most linguistically conscious animals who transact with an environment participate in. And then there is a profound desire for protection, for security, for safety, for surety. (15-16)

So in talking about identity, we have to look at the various ways in which human beings have constructed their desire for recognition, association and protection over time and in space and always under circumstances not of their own choosing. From the above proposition it becomes clear that the notion of identity is elusive and often raised when it is in crisis. Crisis in identity results from the sense of belongingness to a specific culture, in a specific time and place. Such sense of belongingness has become the site of conflict because of globalization and the politics closely associated with it. Such global politics of 'difference' makes this very notion of identity 'hybrid', not a 'fixed', 'autonomous' but a cultural 'representation', and not 'central,' or 'metropolitan' but 'marginal' and diasporic'.

As understood within the domain of postcolonial criticism, hybridity is the result of the orientalist project of the west. The term has something to do with the traumatic colonial experience, since it is the 'ambivalent relationship' of the colonizer and the colonized. The colonial settlers, once they arrived in an alien land, they felt the necessity of establishing new identity since they were displaced from their own point of origin. In a colonized society there emerged a binary relationship between the peoples of two cultures, races and languages and such relation produced a hybrid or cross-cultural society.

The foundational discourse of heredity lies in the anthropological and biological discourses of conquest and colonization. The modern move to deploy

hybridity as a disruptive democratic discourse of cultural citizenship is a distinctly anti-imperial and antiauthoritarian development. The antecedents for this discourse lie in an intricate negotiation between colonial objectness and modernity's new historic subjects, who are both colonizer and the colonized.

Hybridity at best can be understood by referring to Bhabha's notion of 'ambivalence'. For Bhabha, it is the 'cultural cross-overs' of various sorts emanating from the encounter between colonizer and the colonized. Ambivalence is the mixture of the colonizer and the colonized, where colonized people work in the consent of the colonizer. Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin had defined ambivalence along Bhabha's line as, "It describes the complex mix of attraction and repulsion that characterizes the relationship between colonizer and colonized. The relationship is ambivalent because the colonized subject is never simple and completely opposed to the colonizer" (12). Hybrid culture do exist in colonial society where people occupy an 'in-between' space by the 'mimicry' of the colonizer.

Hybridity, thus, is an expression of everyday life in the post-imperial era. It continuously alters the national and international. Hybridity draws on local and transnational identifications and generates historically new mediations. Such 'mediations' are new because they are located outside the official practices of citizenship situated in the interstices of numerous legal and cultural borders.

Irrespective of its traditional meaning, with the emergence and dissemination of the postcolonial theory of discourse, the term 'Diaspora' was commonly applied to cover a range of different cultural and ethnic groups held together by shared cultural or religious commitments and having some sense of 'exile' from a place or state of origin and belonging. Within cultural studies it is used to describe a dynamic network of communities without the stabilizing allusion to an original homeland or essential

identity. That is, Diaspora, these days has been used in the studies of race and ethnicity to describe a range of cultural affiliations connecting other groups who have been dispersed or migrated across national boundaries. People of the diaspora have access to a second tradition quite apart from their own racial history. To live in diaspora is to experience the trauma of exile, migration, displacement, rootlessness and the life in a minority group haunted by some sense of loss, some urge to reclaim, to look back. As Rushdie writes, "I've been in a minority group all my life— a member of an Indian Muslim family in Bombay, then of a Mohajir- migrant – family in Pakistan and now as a British Asian" (Rushdie 4), creating an 'Imaginary Homeland' and willing to admit, though imaginatively, that s/he belongs to it. People in the diaspora have been forced by cultural displacement to accept the provisional nature of all truths and their identities are at once plural and partial. Though, people in the diaspora feel torn apart between two cultures and though the ground is ambiguous and shifting, it is not an infertile territory to occupy. As Hall argues:

The diasporic experience... is defined, not by essence or purity, but by the recognition of a necessary heterogeneity and diversity; by a conception of 'Identity' which lives and through, not despite, difference; by hybridity. Diaspora identities are those which are constantly producing and reproducing themselves anew, through trans. Transformation and difference. (119-20)

Thus, the concept of diaspora helps critique the essentialist notion of identity in the name of innovation and change by promoting ethnic sameness and differences- 'a changing same.' Moreover, it is used to describe a dispersed intellectual Transformation or the spread and interlamination of ideas. Because of this the global

development and variety of forms of cultural studies itself has been described as 'diaspora story' and cultural identities are represented as hybrid or Diaspora identities.

Identity reinforces representation of one's own culture which plays a key role in the transformation of cultural identities, is bound up with the object of study (texts, events, and social processes), the preferred conceptual framework (discourse, ideology, institutions, economy) and the methods of investigation which maps out these changing fields. However, it also carries a series of more specific and problematic implications. Representation is a symbolic practice by which 'meanings' are the major sites for conflict and negotiation, a central goal of which it is the definition of what is taken as real. Representations and meanings have a certain materiality (they are embedded in sounds, inscriptions, objects, images, books, magazines and television programs) so they are produced, enacted, used and understood in specific social contexts. In contemporary postcolonial theory, 'representation' is closely related with the Foucauldian concept of 'discourse as representation.' Foucault takes discourse as inseparable from power. And the knowledge of the other according to Foucault, is a form of power over that other. Following Foucault's point, Said argues that images and stereotypes about the east are formed by western discourses aimed at governing and controlling the orient. Said's *Orientalism* explores how the east—the 'Orient', is created through western discursive practices, which can however, be known by the dominant discourse of the west and thus assimilated in practices pronounced as inferior or as 'the Other' as it does not come up to these representations. As Said argues:

Orientalism can be discussed and analyzed as the corporate institution for dealing with the orient- dealing with it by making statements about it, authorizing views about it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it,

ruling over it: in short, Orientalism as a western style for dominating restructuring, and having authority over the orient. (Orientalism 3)

Orientalism is a discourse by west about the east, a discourse that does not find truth but rather creates the truth of east or orient. Orientalism, according to Said, is not an airy European fantasy about the orient but a created body of theory and practice in which, for many generations, there has been considerable material investment.

Orientalism is rather a distribution of geopolitical awareness into aesthetic, scholarly, economic, sociological, historical and philological text. This geopolitical awareness is distributed through multiple texts or representations about the orient.

Postcolonial criticism, which attempts to re-examine the colonial relationship, emerged in resistance to colonial perspectives employed in discourses of cultural representation and the texts dealing with colonial relations. "From post-colonial perspectives," Selden argues:

Western values and traditions of thought and literature, including versions of postmodernism, are guilty of repressive ethnocentrism" because "models of western thought and literature have dominated world culture, marginalizing or excluding non-western traditions and forms of cultural life and expression. (189)

This is to assume that oriental cultural representation, through the western discourses, contributed a great deal in the process of colonization. 'Imaginative Command' over the 'Other', in this sense becomes more powerful than the enforcement of economic and political power. But representation in this context does not merely denote to the mimetic view of literature; that it reflects actual historical identity; rather, representation, here, itself becomes an ideological construct. To enjoy the privilege to

describe something else, by this same token, is to exercise some sort of power over that thing.

The theme of conflicts and reconciliation of cultures has often been a repeated issue in the Indo-English novel. Anita Desai and Ruth Praver Jhabvala, too have treated this complex issue in their novels through the vivid character portrayal against the backdrop of specific socio-cultural milieu. In their novels most protagonists are alienated from society, from families, from parents and from their culture. As discussed above, they are not average people but individuals who are unable to communicate and to identify themselves with the people around. They are unable to relate themselves with the milieu, they drift into their own appropriated world where they spin their dreams which never materialized, that's why they are longing for their own identity in alien land but unable to find their proper identity which reinforces them to leave the alien land and ready to return to their native land with their transformed identity. It is their sense of alienation and a haunting past that motivates them in their quest for identity, for a meaningful present.

The above mentioned theoretical ideas will be helpful to find out the cross-cultural encounter and transformation of identity in the novels of Desai's *Bye-Bye Blackbirds* and Jhabvala's *Heat and Dust* which I will be discussing in upcoming chapter.



### **III: Cross-cultural Encounter and Transformation of Identity**

This chapter is the exploration of Jhabvala and Desai's deliberate attempt to treat the issues of cultural encounter and transformation of identity through 'Diaspora writing'. The plots of their novels, *Heat and Dust* and *Bye-Bye Blackbirds* revolve around the theme of alienation, displacement, loneliness and immigrant's existential problems. Characters are desperately longing for their identity, try to settle them in alien land but fail to do so and plan to return to their native land for their identity; which brings a kind of transformation.

Within "multicultural ethos" the texts are analyzed, to what extent Desai and Jhabvala have brought the spirit, norms and values of various cultures. Similarly, under "acculturation" the texts are analyzed to reveal the complex negotiation between cultures through various characters. For an outsider in an alien land and for the marginalized within the homeland, it becomes extremely necessary to develop a tie of mutual understanding. In the subtext "contact zone", an attempt has been made to depict India as a hybrid social space, a site for cultural mediation where a person from different racial and cultural past comes in contact. Though the initial phase of such contact is marked by conflict and contest, subordination and domination, in time the groups develop a bond of mutual relationship. Since India is the setting of these two novels, the place has been depicted with its beauty and filth, spirituality and materiality, the serenity of nature and the commercialized mega-cities as it is portrayed in the novels. And finally the issue of 'cultural identity' is focused. Identity, here, is associated with the human desire; desire for recognition, safety, security and above all to live. Identity is perceived and discussed not as 'central' or 'once for all' but as essentially 'hybrid and representational'. On the basis of the character's inclination to create group solidarity in a hostile milieu, the issue of

identity, at times is treated by relating it to the notion of diaspora. The conclusion that Jhabvala's and Desai's transformation of identity in cross-cultural encounter is a deliberate literary aesthetics will be elaborated and sought.

Though Jhabvala has reiterated that she should be considered "as one of those European who have written about India" She is definitely different from the Anglo-Indian writers like Forster or Kipling. She has lived in and known India for a long time and has seen generations of Western seekers flocking to India. She knows India from the inside and therefore has the advantage of looking at it with the right mixture of detachment and involvement without sentimentalizing the problems. But in *Heat and Dust*, the general tone is certainly not one of impartiality and the operative sensibility is essentially alien. East-West relationship is not a new theme in Indo-Anglican or Anglo-Indian fiction; it is as old as the Indo-Anglican novel which was itself a by-product of Indo-English relations. But what is significant about *Heat and Dust* is that it deals with the experiences of two socially very different western generations in India. A young unnamed Britisher who narrates the story comes to India to solve the enigma of a scandal associated with her step-grandmother, Olivia Rivers. The narrator presents her bitterness towards the Indian climate that seems, for her, is little more than heat and dust. At first, she mentions:

Once a town is left behind, there is nothing till the next one except flat land, broiling sky, distance and dust. Especially dust: the sides of the bus are open with only bars across them so that the hot winds blow in freely, bearing desert sands to choke up ears and nostrils and set one's teeth on edge with grit.(11)

It could be a more absolute description of the Indian atmosphere where the immigrants have to face. Olivia comes to India in the traditional role of a life partner

to the Sub- Collector of Satipur, Douglas Rivers. She loves him deeply but gets bored just keeping home with servants at her beck and call. She finds it difficult to hobnob with the other western women around and feels totally cut out. Olivia is aesthete, idealist, romantic and sentimentalist but these different aspects of her personality fail to act harmoniously. In the next part, Douglas always stands for uprightness, importability, English solidness, strength, manliness, for everything that is right. Douglas, who spends very little time with Olivia where he is the right kind of man: “As a soldier ever ready where Duty called him, a dutiful son... but most conspicuous in the endearing character of Husband” (105).

In such situation how an idealist Olivia could fall for the Nawab. Olivia is affected with Nawab because of his charm. Olivia feels drawn to him even at the first meeting as he alone gives her sense of belonging and the kind of importance that flatters her ego. “She felt she had, at last in India, come to the right place” (15). She does not talk to Douglas about her picnic with the Nawab or her frequent visit to the palace. In this sense Jhabvala mentions, “Not that she didn’t want to tell Douglas- of course she did! - but he was always home so late and then with so many preoccupations of his own, she never seemed to have an opportunity to tell him” (56).

The romantic mode in her is irresistibly drawn towards the Nawab. It is her desire to be confident that sets her revives regular correspondence with her sister, Marcia. While Douglas always talks about his works the Nawab keeps boosting her ego. She pays no head to the bad reports she hears about him and even ignores his association with the dacoits. It is not the love for Douglas that keeps her back “in the ordeal of fire” as Major Minnies puts it, from the revitalizing trip to Simla but it is the heat of emotions that the Nawab exudes that makes the external “heat and dust”

bearable. The Nawab's puzzling nature poses a challenge to her power of understanding. Olivia is highly sentimental and romantic and is ruled by her emotions.

Jhabvala points out that though attempts are made on both sides, it is next to impossible to cross all cultural barriers. Even the narrator who feels absorbed by the society is happy to be with InderLal in the dark as darkness obliterates their differences. Despite all social cordiality the Westerners have their preconceived set notions about the East and vice-versa. This comes out their private conversations or heated arguments. That accounts for the artificiality that characterizes their social contacts. Jhabvala has absolutely no sympathy with the young generation of the west that turns to the east in search of answers. Her contempt for them is clearly revealed when she talks about the European derelicts in A's Hotel, their heads full of lice. Once you get disillusioned with your own culture, you are naturally attracted by anything that is exotic. Unless one has strong roots in one's own culture, it would be hard to absorb the good in another culture. The spiritual quest of the modern west that starts due to disillusionment with own culture often results in a worse disillusionment.

Jhabvala's exploration to visualize the differences which time has brought about on the social, political and cultural fronts, the geographical conditions remaining the same. In this way the past is brought in close proximity with the present, strikingly bringing out the differences between them. The environment at the time when Olivia stayed in India was entirely different from the time of the independent India that the narrator visited years later. India was ruled over by the princes and the town around sprouted up just to serve the needs of the Palace. Satipur, an adjoining town had its slummy lanes, but the Khatm had nothing else.

The town huddled in the shadow of the Palace walls in a tight knob of dirty alleys with ramshackle houses leaning over them. There were

open gutters flowing through the streets. They often overflowed, especially during the rains, and were probably the cause, or one of them, of the frequent epidemics that broke out in Khatm. If it rained rather more heavily, some of the older houses would collapse and burry the people inside them. This happened regularly every year.

(165)

With the end of the Moghul rule in this reason the development of the town was totally neglected. The same landmark stood barren as a testimony to it: "Khatm huddled in the Nawab's Palace. No one lives there; it seems to have been built only to serve the Palace. The streets are dense, run down and dirty with many beggars" (11). But the other adjoining town began to develop. Satipur had expanded according to its own needs and towns like Khafarabad were also growing because of the textile mills.

The heat and dust remained the same. Olivia used to shut all the doors and windows of her big house to keep out the heat and dust. At the moment Douglas suggests Olivia to go to Simla, a cold place "Oh goodness, let's go. This place is getting me down. Douglas got up and dusted the knees of his trousers. Now he looked rather offended" (111). There was nothing much around except vast stretches of barren land. It was the period of the sinking excitement of the Moghuls. In pre-independent India, were ruled by the Nawabs who found life boring as they had nothing to do and could not exercise their powers because money was limited and they were getting bankrupt. But they were managing for European bureaucrats in their spacious palaces for their entertainment with grand services, "Olivia's eyes lit up as she was let into the dining room and saw beneath the chandeliers the long, long table laid with a dinner service, silver, crystal, flowers, candelabras, pomegranates, pineapples, little golden bowls of crystallized fruits" (15).

*Heat and Dust* presents the conflict of cultures at political level with emphasis on difference between past and present. The central characters are two ladies, each very own English in her own time, each allowing her India to captivate her. The dilemma of these two is her own, Jhabvala admits, "I don't know India." The leading problem for her "is to show how a European adapts to India." It is possible not by conquering but by getting conquered. That is why Olivia and the narrator stay back in India. Jhabvala employs the fictional flashback between 1923 and 1970 to bring out the cultural clash.

The first part of the novel shows the clash of personalities who belong to the two races and had different cultural heritages. The Nawab has a dominating personality, no one can resist him and his commands. Harry's impression of the Nawab mesmerizes Olivia and when he informs her that the Nawab "most particularly wants you to come," (38). Olivia's mind is psychologically conditioned. And when she visits the Nawab's house for the first time she feels that "she had, at last come to the right place" (19). It becomes apparent that Olivia liked India and its people, the restrictive influence of the British Raj notwithstanding. She aspired to present a symbol of cultural unification and never subscribed to the opinion of other Europeans who say that they have come to India to find peace "but all they find here is dysentery" (21).

Olivia is invited again and again to Khatam, a car is sent by the Nawab to take her. Douglas, her husband, is ignorant about her visits to the palace, though her love, affection and regard for him are intact, in spite of her attraction to the Nawab. Her dislike of Anglo-Indian official stereotypes is apparent. She does not go to Simala along with Mrs. Crawford and Mrs. Minnies to escape the heat and dust of the unbearable Indian Summers because she wants to be with her husband and also to

attend the Nawab's parties. After a picnic at the shrine of Baba Firdaus she finds herself irresistibly attached to the young Nawab, thereafter she is ever eager to go to the palace. One day Harry arrived with the car sent for Olivia. He deliberately delays her but Olivia "was impatient to be off" (132-33). The dilatory tactics on Harry's part to hold her proved irritating to Olivia, she was agitated, and something disturbed her. She was seized by an irrepressible passion for the Nawab. It brings them together; it is the common ground for the interaction of the two cultures. In spite of her admiration for Douglas for his English solidness and strength, his manliness, she wonders "he can't even get me pregnant.... No English woman is meant to stand it" (121). It is the inborn maternal instinct that drives her to the arms of the Nawab.

The Nawab's attraction to Olivia is based on his passion and is revengeful attitude towards British officialdom. It seems on different occasions that he made Olivia a tool in his hands and seduced her. The Nawab "like many Indian rulers, was fond of entertaining Europeans" (15). The Nawab organizes dinners to Europeans with a view to ingratiating himself to them. He felt delighted with her pregnancy and often stroked her slender hips, her small flat unmarked abdomen and wondered if she would do that for him. But there was hardly any doubt in his mind that the child was not his. His distrust of the English is complete and irrevocable. He strongly feels that they are very cunning and conspirators. On the other hand everybody in the European camp forms the opinion that the Nawab had used Olivia as a means of revenge. Even the most liberal and sympathetic Anglo-Indian, as Major Minnies, was convinced of it.

The narrator, an English woman in her twenties, who has come to India in the hope of finding out more about life led in India by her grandfather's wife. She accepts the sick and deformed citizens of Satipur as part of the landscape. There are many

things that attract and disturb Europeans about India. They feel intrigued over Indian's response to magical incantations, superstitions, Suttee system and sturdy-looking Sadhus. They are inspired by visiting Swami in London, "It was an ocean of sweetness that lapped around all humanity and enfolded them in tides of honey" (22). They are there in India to find peace but they found: "but all I found was dysentery" (22). The narrator is surprised to see people's habit of sleeping outside; the town seems to her a communal dormitory. In a symbolic gesture of merging with the spirit of the city, the narrator drags her bed outside in the open space. As her intimacy with InderLal grows, the Cupid strikes, they tie strings; the narrator gets pregnant like Olivia. Unlike Olivia, the young narrator is determined to have her baby after whom she hopes to go up to the mountains and join an Ashram. European people come to India for more natural way of life but they find nothing good coming into contact with Indians. As Jhabvala mentions:

They had been robbed of their watches in a house of devotion in Amritsar; cheated by a man they had met on the train to Kashmir who had promised them a cheap houseboat and had disappeared with their advances; [ . . . ] they got cheated again in Delhi where a tout, promising them a very favorable rate of exchange for their money, disappeared with it by the back door of the coffee house; in Fatehpur Sikri the girl had been molested by a party of Sikh Youths; the young man's pocket was picked on the train to Goa; in Goa he had got into a fight with a mad Dane armed with a razor. (21)

Because of these features the Indians are, for them, considered to be something different to the Europeans which echoes Said's notion of "Other". Sex provides a flimsy meeting ground of two cultures; it creates a temporal and temporary relation.



Olivia seeks merger into India through sex but remains to suffer. She does not return to England but stays in a house upon hills where she hoped to find the resolution of conflict of two cultures. But the same is not true of the young narrator, though it is not the intention of the author to suggest resolution through passion. The young narrator imbibes the spirit of the land, identifies herself with India and determined to have her baby, unlike Olivia who consents to abort the child in her. One learns that Chid wants to go back, Harry returns to England.

The inability of the Europeans to create lasting ties with the Indians and vice versa, their distrust of each other's intentions, their misreading of each other's motives, their predilection with their notions of ethnic superiority and above all their differing cultural modes and perceptions, all these factors inhibit a meaningful dialogue between them and proverbial gulf between the East and West yawns at them, in spite of Ruth PraverJhabvala's stature as "outsider-insider".

Similarly, Anita Desai's novels are materially different from those of the other Indian women novelists writing in English. Her novels are concerned mainly with social and political themes of East-West encounter. Anita Desai's serious concern is with the cross-cultural consciousness of her characters. The novel *Bye- Bye Blackbird* is based on the theme of immigration of native Indians to England. There are clashes of ideas, traditions and cultures. This theme of the novel is simple rendering of emotions of Indians who face abnormal situation in living and partly living every moment of life in foreign land. The novel highlights the problem of the Asian immigrants in the Britain often complicated by inter-racial marriages. Anita Desai being an expatriate writer often raises the issues and the problems immigrants have to face. She depicts the cultural displacement, cultural encounter, existential dilemma and economic domination in the foreign land. In *Bye-Bye Blackbird*, she focuses the

color immigrants and their difficulties in the foreign land. The colored immigrants have hard time in England. Many are partly rejected, others totally but the follow continues. Desai raises these issues in the novel. She touches on a very real problem of 'east is east and west is west'. The problem of cultural difference becomes great issues where immigrants have to face inside- outside pressure in the foreign land. This cultural issue depends upon the love-hate relationship and the psychological effect upon the immigrants.

In the novel *Bye-Bye Blackbird*, Desai observes the psychological symbol that is related to Sarah when Adit for the first time announces his decision to leave England and declares that his son will be born in India, Sarah finds herself in a psychic turmoil.

Adit, I think I'm going to have a baby. He abruptly let go her knee, threw himself back in his chair and shut his eyes. She stopped crying and brushed the hair out of her face to see the advent of the notion of fatherhood on his face but he kept his eyes so tightly shut, for so long that she had to look away, turning cold, thinking- he doesn't want it, and beginning to feel the wave of anger lap at her. But then he reached out for her hand and his eyes were open, on fire "He will be born in India, Sarah" He said "My son will be born in India." (204)

This is the result of cultural displacement, identity crisis, cultural conflict, racial conflict, love-hate relation, social relation, political relation and cultural encounter. Desai has treated different aspects of immigrants' life in her novel, to achieve the goal of this research; her novel will be studied by including these mentioned aspects on the basis of cross-cultural encounter. Desai's novel *Bye-Bye Blackbird* is an authentic study of human relationship and cultural encounter. It depicts circular journey of a

soul searching for a perfect life, where immigrants are in confusion to live or not to live in England. The novel mainly focuses two groups of characters- AditSen, his English wife Sarah, the Indian friend Dev, Jasbir- Mala, Sammar- Bella etc. There has been no problem in the rehabilitation of Sammar, a doctor, and his sweet wife Bella, Jasbir, an anesthetist and his good Punjabi wife Mala. Their life is happy there but the problems arise between Adit, Sarah and Dev.

Adit is the chief protagonist in the novel who has been settled in London and finds London as the land of opportunities. Dev is his friend who has come to England to study at the London School of economics. He has confronted with an initial problem of adjustment in a foreign land where he is taken as a blackbird at first. When Dev “pulled out his watch from under his pillow he was disgusted to find it was barely five O’clock. He wondered if it had died in the night of an inability to acclimatize itself” (5). In fact, it is not the watch but Dev, (who has come to England as AditSen’s guest) who has failed to adjust. That the west has its own ways different from the Indian habits is made clear immediately when he longs for a cup of tea “that would have been brought to him if he were at home in India, by a mother fresh from her morning prayers, or a servant boy” (6). Here, he has to go out and find the kitchen to make himself a cup of tea. This turned out to be the first lesson London taught him. Dev looked around to see that everything was beyond his Indian imagination and experience.

Adit, the hero in *Bye-Bye Blackbird* is born in a middle class family and he had come to England to enjoy the freedom and he fell in love with an English girl Sarah, and got married to her. He also finds himself lucky to have Sarah as his wife. He is happy with his job and aspects to be director one day. Adit holds quite opposite view of India. Sometimes back before being engaged to Sarah, he had been India for a

job. But in four months' period he could find only 'a ruddy clerking job' at the salary of two hundred and fifty rupees and possible rise to five hundred after thirty years, "All I could find was a ruddy clerking job in some Government of India tourist bureau. They were going to pay me two hundred rupee... I said, no thank you, I'm not made for this, and I came back and told Sarah we'd stay. I'm happy here...I like the girls here... I like thatched cottages and British history and reading the letters in *The Times*" (18). He also likes the freedom a man has in London - economic freedom and social freedom among others. Besides, he hated the laziness of the clerks and the unpunctuality of the buses and trains, beggars and the flies and the disgusting odor and the boredom in India. On the other hand, Dev is longing for living with its variety and multiplicity remains unsatisfied in the new atmosphere where everyone is a stranger and lives in hiding. It is a world, which makes him nostalgic about India – Indian of familiar faces, familiar sounds and familiar smell.

Dev is particularly happy with the treatment accorded to immigrants in England. They are openly insulted, so much that they are not allowed to use lavatory meant for the English. He tells to Adit, I wouldn't live in a country where I was insulted and unwanted. He finds it difficult to adjust with silence and emptiness of all:

Dev threw grass at him, covered him with Earth and leaves, laugh  
 "Laugh. Go on. That's all you people do- you lazy immigrants. God.  
 You should go mad – *mad*, when even school boy can call you names  
 on the streets; when you find that the London ducks have three kinds  
 of lavatories- Ladies, Gents and Asiatics. But what did you do? You  
 laughed."(17)

To him English people appear as a bunch of exhibition, flaunters of their sex, their prowess and hater of the blacks. In brief, Adit finds all gold in England, Dev sees all iron which is all dull and cold.

After sometimes, the environment totally changes the attraction for England and repulsion for India to Adit. Adit continues attachment for his motherland. Adit and Sarah have different perceptions about keeping pets in their house. Adit can not tolerate the presence of cat in the kitchen. He thinks that if his mother were to see them she would die of heart attack. But Sarah has her own views about keeping pets “You don’t go in pets much in India, do you? I don’t think I could live in a house without pets somehow” (50). Also, she reminds Adit about the sacred cows in India. But Adit sees no point in India, and no point in treating cows and “dirty cats” alike. Adit feels homesick but Dev wants to fulfill his desire in England. Dev is seeking an opportunity to do something for his future. On the other hand, Sarah tries to identify herself with her Indian husband. At the moment, Adit feels humiliation from the side of Sarah. Adit suffers from an illusion that blinds him to the attitude of the English towards him. He believes that he has realized the myth of succeeding in the land of golden opportunity. He knows within a week-end at his in-laws house about England and his home its people.

After this, we get the change coming over Adit. He is filled with depression. He longs for and all the things associated with it. A sudden clamor was aroused in him, like a child’s tantrum, to see again an Indian sunset. “When he lay in Sarah’s bed, that night, it was not the large, unhurried owl’s cry that he heard, but the raving of peacocks and jackals that make the Indian night loud with reminders of the emptiness, the melancholy of everything” (178). He finds Indian landscape in each and everything. On Christmas he would tell Sarah to cook Carrot Halwa for him as it

reminds him of being at home. And at one such instance he expresses his desire to visit India. The roots of this nostalgia are hidden in Adit's inward hatred for England and nothing but love for his native country. Another strong cause of his love to his own country is effort to raise fund during India's war with Pakistan and it is during the war that he look major decision that he would go to India along with Sarah.

For the first time, it strikes him that his position as a colored immigrant is founded on illusions and falls hopes. It creates the mood of sadness to Adit. This mood starts to enter him and it circulates to drive out him from England. He is haunted by the previous image of India. It compels him to quest for his true identity and wants to go where he belongs. With enormous hopes and desires he moves to India, his own land where none would call him a Wag or Asiatic, or look down upon him. The major symbol is that of the blackbird which a migratory bird is. The color of the bird symbolizes the colored immigrants in England who lead an insecure life. At first, Dev was marked by Adit as a blackbird but at last, Dev murmured as a kind of parting salute to Adit and Sarah and also as a prayer for himself: Blackbird, bye-bye at the time of departure to India. The encounter between East and West, especially, India, on the one hand, and Britain, America and Europe, on the other, is a recurring theme in Indo-English literature. The encounter is viewed from different perspectives by Indo-English writers, and possibilities of mutual understanding between the two sides have been explored in their works. The theme is given a rich variety of treatment in poems, short stories, novels and dramatic works.

Anita Desai in a like manner depicts the cultural encounter in her novels. Herself being a half-European descent and residing in USA, she truly captures the cultural dilemmas. She depicts the problems of the immigrants in a new culture where her protagonists strive for an order. Sometimes they succeed and most of the

time the new culture, custom and language and value systems of such society becomes hostile to them. Because of this hostility, they strongly feel the need of their home—the native land. Similarly sometimes she depicts the eastern and western cultures and protagonist's attempt to survive in a new land simultaneously and at other times the analogy of two cultures through the characters occupying two different cultural spaces.

*Bye-Bye Blackbird*, the first novel to deal with such problems arising from cultural difference, tells the story of Indian immigrants to England, their problems and their desperate longing for home-native land. The novel covers different aspects of the East-West encounter between the British and the Asiatic immigrants in England. AditSen, a young man from India, lives in England with his English wife, Sarah. For few years he has been there working as a travel agent. Like his fellow immigrants, he quietly pockets insults and humiliations to which he is continually subjected.

Dev on English literature in school back in India and exposed directly to English life and manners for years, he feels a sense of cultural affinity. This closeness however, does not obliterate the sense of own 'cultural identity'. He secretly longs for Indian food, music and friends. This longing suddenly grows intense during one of his visits to Sarah's parents and Adit from then feels panic and isolated in the alien land. Finally he leaves for India with Sarah. Though, he regards England as a land of infinite opportunities, and condemns the poverty and misery of his own countrymen, "England does not, however, accept him. He is like others, abused, insulted and humiliated all the time even by school children" (Aithal 98).

At one point Adit remarks that he sees himself as an ambassador from India showing the English what a gentleman an Indian can be. "I never called myself a prophet or a saint. I only said I would occupy India house with some style, dining on

the richest *murgamussallam and chicken biryani*, serving liquors from Jaipur brewed of pigeons' blood and pearls, and dazzling everyone with my oriental wit and fluency"(154). He describes Dev as the worthy professor on his way home to bring the light of a British education to the aborigines of Bihar and Orissa. He tells Dev that a typical Indian is one who "has illusions of grandeur, takes an enormous house and garden, then sits back, applauds while the weeds grow high and the house topples down"(155). At this point "Dev reminded Adit of having told him that he belonged to a class of persons Indian in blood and color, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and in intellect"(156).

There is a sharp difference in the attitude of the English and Indians, as has been pointed out earlier. Adit considers it a trouble with Orientals to be not in time whatever their destination is. On the other hand the English people are just their opposite as regards being on time.

We don't really believe in watches and clocks. We are romantics. We want time to fit in with our moods. It should be drinking time when we feel like a drink and sleeping time when we feel like sleeping. How is the Englishman to understand that? He's been a clock watcher since the day he was born. Do you know, English mothers even feed their babies and put them to bed according to the clock? (162)

A perceptible difference is reported in the attitude of the British and Indian servants to their respective households. Dev could not "help but notice and admire the perfect. Unplanned and instinctive organization with which she moved through the house with vacuum-cleaner, bucket and broom, leaving order and freshness in her wake". (166-167). She never treated the house as if it were an unfamiliar capricious and unpredictable mess to be dealt within an attitude compounded of perplexity and



resentment, "as Indian servants will the house and possessions of their employers, but as though she pleased herself in swiping the dust off a table-top or beating up a lumpy cushion". (167). Dev found it difficult to believe that once she had been invited by the Queen and she has responded to the invitation and had shaken hands with Princess Alexandra.

Probably his encounter with the servant girl came as a revelation to Dev which made him discover and have his adventures alone and unaided. Dev, the Indian was determined "to seek, discover and win the England of his dreams and reading, the England he had quickly seen was the most poetic, the most innocent and enduring of England's, in a secret campaign. At the end, he believed he did"(168). He was "English literature! English poetry! He wanted to shout and, instead, raised his arms to the sky, clasped them, in pagan worship, in school boy excitement". (170). The little church he saw struck him at once as being far more beautiful and more moving than the cathedrals of St. Paul's and Westminster Abbey.

Something began to draw Adit back to India. A sudden clamour was aroused in him, like a child's tantrum, to see again an Indian sunset. "When he lay in Sarah's bed, that night, it was not the large, unhurried owl's cry that he heard, but the raving of peacocks and jackals that make the Indian night loud with reminders of the emptiness, the melancholy of everything." (178). Significantly, he went to record player shehnai. Also, he rejected sweet mango chutney which was Anglo-Indian colonels and their memsahibs. Don't go offering it to an Indian"(179-180). Even in the outspread hair about Sarah's shoulder he was seeing that Indian landscape. As he left the house for work:

The shuffle of his feet, the lurch of his shoulders and the sideways look of his eyes out of an enclosed, darkened face exactly resembled

the looks and posture of those Indians whom Adit had do despised-the eternal immigrants who can never accept their new home and continue to walk the streets like strangers in enemy territory (181).

Characters are desperately longing for their homeland where Adit as a representative of Indian immigrants shows his distress about his present surroundings and imagines his solace in Indian culture where he could lead a dignified life with accommodated by the people and culture to support him. "The ferocity of his growing nostalgia broke that stone dam that had silenced him for so long and he began to tell Sarah of this nostalgia that had become an illness, an ache" (183). She spoiled the whole attitude incomprehensible. He continued to talk about everything Indian, of the pigeons that were kept on the roof top, of the puja season in Calcutta and other things. Sarah wondered "how he had kept this amount of yarning shut up and enclosed inside him for so long, releasing it now like a dam that release its water when it is full of bursting" (184). The truth was that Adit himself could not have explained it. It was placidity, the munificence and the ease of England and not the slights and insults that changed him.

September, the month of anniversaries and celebration gave Adit ample opportunity it compare "with bitterness, the rarity, thinness and drabness of such events in England with the abandon and colour of festivals in India" (184-185). The evening he spent at Bella's house turned out to be a disappointing one for Adit. Bella at one point of time reminded him that he was an Indian and foreigner which totally upset him. "Why does everything have to come to this-that we're Indians and you're English and we're living in your country and therefore we've all go to behave in a special way, different from normal people", (187-188) he wondered. Adit failed to change from the mood he was in. once a year on their wedding anniversary, the Sens

used to visit a glamorous restaurant. Though it was raining Adit asked Sarah to wear sari. When he said that it would ruin the hem he wanted to know from her whether Indian women did not wear saris in the rain. Also, he chose for her a sari that his sisters had once sent her, and refused to listen to her protest or recognize the embarrassment in her tone. She was also asked to sport on a gold necklace which was sent by his mother as a wedding present. When she remarked that she felt like a Christian tree his reaction was that in that case all Indians women should look like so. He was quite angry with Sarah and said: "You'll never accept anything but your own drab, dingy standards and your own dull boring ways. Anything else looks clownish to you laughable" (193). Sarah only replied that she never meant it to be so.

Meanwhile Dev got a job as salesman in a bookshop. A week after that he found himself a room in a kind of youth hostel in Battersea. He joined the Sens in the celebrations and they all did enjoy the overall atmosphere. Dev raised his eyebrows at the little bowls full of outlandish condiments-pine apple cunk and sour gherkings with which no meal in India would have been saved. He remarked that the food is authentically Angli Indian, the kind of food English people in India used to love. "They started unashamedly, played their guessing game in a kind of half-mocking reverie which might have been the distorted reflection for the kind of reverie enjoyed by the English in another land, another time"(196).

The news that India and Pakistan were at war shattered Adit. In fact, it became a nightmare repetition of what he himself had lived through as a child in Calcutta. "A furred sensation and a bitter tang in his mouth, he found himself moving, hurrying at last, with impassion and passion" (198). Adit, Jasbir Samar and all their friends lived in an excitement all the more intense for their being so far from the scene, not

knowing the exact truth of the reports, allowing their imagination and their emotions and fullest play.

They made plans. One was giving up his job and flying home to fight. Another was waiting for conscription orders to be passed. Thirds felt that at the moment the best he could do was collect funds here in England. They collected funds. They sent cheque and parcels. They waited, feverishly, for mail, for news. (200)

The significant turn in the whole situation came when Adit telephoned Sarah one evening and asked her to meet him in the city. He told her when they came back to their flat that he was finding it difficult to stand it. "I tell you. I've had enough. It's all got to end now. There, must be a change. A-a big change. I've got to do it. You-you understand? Now don't stop me, don't say anything, I've made up my mind" (202). Sarah was totally confused. She had never heard him stammer before. At first she thought that Adit had decided to part from her. Then he made himself clear. "No-England! England. I've done with England now. Sarah, I'm going black". (203). He confessed to her that he would find it too difficult to live in London any more. Everything there had been unreal to him. "It has no reality at all, we just pretend all the time. I'm twenty seven now. I've got to go home and start living a real life. I don't know what real life there will mean" (204). He declared that his feeling that he was half-English was only pretence. Sarah who was going to have a baby assured him that she would certainly accompany him to India. He expressed his desire that the child should be born in India.

As far as Sarah was concerned, it was an entirely new experience. Formerly the problem had been the emptiness of her life. "She had jettisoned most things out of it when she had married-childhood, family, friends ... with an Anglo-Saxon

composure and serenity; she had put them away from her meaning to fill her life a new, with what her husband brought her "(205-206). He seemed so rich to her, he seemed to have so much to give her. Now suddenly her life was being filled with more than she could manage. "There was the baby. There was the voyage- The uprooting. And all at a time when she felt capable of doing no more than quietly sitting down and quietly cradling her child inside the fluids that rocked and heaved inside her body" (206). She was informed that she was to follow Miss. Edwins Morris to school in Kensington to head the office. Emma tried to console her and told her to go ahead with her plans. She said that it would be interesting to have a baby in a country where she didnot have to "keep muffling it up in shawls and blankets and worrying about colds" (211).

Now,Adit found that it was somewhat difficult to equate the dreams on which he had nourished himself " as an exile with memories of the reality that had been refreshed now that he was forced to be realistic, and with his growing worries of the changes that had taken place at home since he left"(213). He became aware of the great gulf between her country home in Hampshire and his own over-filled city home in Calcutta. Even his mother's kitchen marked by noisiness and untidiness, would be quite different from his wife's, he thought. Being not a worshipper to the pregnant female, he felt that the child also would be a problem. The pleasant aspects of fatherhood were mostly overshadowed by his worries about it. " Sarah's confinement, the expenses, the problems of raising a child with an English mother to be an Indian child"(214) and so on.

Sarah told Adit about the offer she got. He looked as though he would hurl something-his hat, umbrella or newspaper-at the wall. He thought that she had decided against accompanying him to India. Sarah "felt herself as nothing more than a

chipped cup that was not worth the trouble of packing up or giving away but was best left here, like the remains of a picnic, a holiday on a lonely bank or a deserted beach"(221). It was her English self that was receding. She knew that she must say good-bye to her English self. Biding good-bye to England was not a problem for her, because England would remain as it was.

She began rapidly to draw up a mental list of the things her child would not know and enjoy and tried stop herself by attending to another list, the list of things the child would know and enjoy, but in spite of the substantial length of this list, she could not help biting her lips and casting another look at the pleasures it would have to forego.  
(223)

Then the finale, Sarah found herself beside Adit, wrapped in the customary drabness of her old mackintosh, her face green tinged with morning sickness. When the train blew steam, blew whistles, rang bells and roared, she clutched at Adit's arm and momentarily her face lit up with the thrill of a journey and the prospect of a new world. It was Dev who stood "silent, watching, for the most complex feelings of all tumbled and tossed inside him, clamoring for attention, for resolution" (228). It was difficult to answer the question why Dev was not returning to fight for India. Thinking momentarily of Sarah and Adit on their journey to India, he murmured, as, a kind of parting salute to them and also as a prayed for himself.

"Make my bed and light the light; I'll arrive late tonight Blackbird, bye-bye"(230)

To put it briefly Bye-Bye Blackbird is a very effective novel dealing with the predicament of the immigrants in the earlier part of the novel one gets the impression that the novel is basically about Dev who is after greener pastures. He gets disillusioned with the English life style and one expected him to return to India at the

earliest opportunity. But when the novel comes to an end there is a sudden twist and we find him bidding good bye to Adit and Sarah." For first time Dev felt the rapture of a Victor and over, rapture that accompanied him back to London, so that he no longer saw it with the eye of member of a once-conquered race, or an apprehensive and short-sighted visitor, but of someone before whom vistas of love, success and joy had opened"(229). That is the explanation given for his change of mind.

A remarkable feature of the novel is the two well-drawn out characters Adit and Sarah. One empathizes with Adit when he is made to undergo the turmoil's when he has to make a choice between the lives the London and India. Many times he is made to believe that he is an Indian and Indians are inferior in all sorts of ways. But to cut off the English connection was never easy for him as he was wedded to an English lady. But finally he takes a bold decision to return to his native place where he wants his son to be born. Sarah also is made to face the same kind of dilemma when her husband decides for good to return to India she did not have very many choices before her. Of course, the new job was a temptation for her. But her love for her husband receives an upper hand and the child she is going to give birth to perhaps make all the difference.

Desai and Jhabvala deal with the issue of identity crisis created by two cultural discrepancies in their novels *Bye-Bye Blackbirds* and *Heat and Dust*. Both the authors, by bringing in to the contact the people belonging to different cultures and traditions have tried to establish the mutual understanding and harmony between 'Western' and 'Eastern' from the humanistic stand point but cultural conflict remain always as a barrier to settle the characters in alien land with their proper identity and dignity. Hence, this dissertation aims at delivering the notion of transformation of identity and encounter of culture in two different cultural aspects.

#### IV: Conclusion

Ruth PraverJhabvala and Anita Desai have contributed to the literary world by investing their works with a cross-cultural perspective that widens and enlarges the frontiers of thought and which is therefore considered very important literary characteristics in the field of novel writings. The western intellectual and cultural life finds fictional reinforcement in the small world and confining spaces inhabited by Ruth PraverJhabvala's and Anita Desai's characterizations, who struggle to find identity within highly complex Indian and European cultures in Indio- European contexts. Their novels are urbanized, simplified examples of psychological depth, where emphasis is given to the interplay of strategies of characterization for the transformation of identity and cross-cultural encounter.

In Jhabvala's and Desai's novels, *Heat and Dust* and *Bye-Bye Blackbird*, both have explored the themes of immigrants about their cross-cultural marriage, love-hate relation and psychological effect within Indian and European culture. Jhabvala's attempt is to visualize the differences about on the social, political and cultural fronts where she wanted to be merged with India but the thought of her Europeanness never left her. In most of her novels, Desai deals with the ever-widening gulf between Eastern and the Western as a result of the tension created by cultural discrepancies. Desai, by bringing into contact the people belonging to two different cultures and traditions, has striven to establish mutual understanding and harmony between the westerner and the Indians from the humanistic standpoint.

From the widespread trend toward assimilation, imposed by invaders and colonizers, to the present-day effort toward integration, the relations between cultures are treated in a variety of ways in the novels of Anita Desai and Ruth PraverJhabvala. In the novels *Heat and Dust* and *Bye- Bye Blackbird*, Desai and Jhabvala treats the



cross-cultural relationship between the Europeans and the Indians, where people from different culture and race try to develop a bond of mutual understanding on a common cultural ground despite difference. At times they preserve their heterogeneity but their sole concern is to develop a reciprocal relation in order to share a common cultural way of life. Through a host of uprooted and alienated characters from their original homeland, Desai and Jhabvala beautifully observe the predicaments of these outsiders in an alien Indian culture and European culture. These characters try to replace their haunting past by the meaningful present, but most of the time they fail to materialize their dream.

The Indo-English encounter is depicted along the lines love, sex, marriage, religion, class, caste and gender. Subject to the importunities and anxieties of a fragile universe, devoid of the warmth and spontaneity of inter-personal sociability and malignantly self-absorbed, the characters exemplify the ubiquitous predicament of the modern man.

Through multi-cultural and multi-focal inter-relationships between the westerners and Indians, Desai and Jhabvala effectively unfold the socio-cultural sterility of India and Europe respectively. Through their novels Desai and Jhabvala suggest that a comprehensive and meaningful understanding of life means the genuine attempts and heroic struggles of the individual to establish human relationship with other individuals and through them with community and humanity. The future prospects of cross-cultural relations are dim unless cultures are willing to become more genuinely engaged with one another; that is to undergo a mutual learning process while simultaneously preserving the distinctiveness or difference of their traditions. No new order can endure that does not draw on the legacies of the past, but no tradition can survive untransformed in our rapidly shrinking global village.

What is at stake is the cultivation of a sense of mutual responsibility and of a shared understanding of the culture or tradition that is different. This brief study supports the hypothesis that the transformation of identity and cross-cultural encounter is favorite and deliberate attempt of the two novelists Anita Desai and Ruth PraverJhabvala.

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