

**“Socio-Cultural Profile of Asian Indians in the  
United States of America, 1947-1994—A Survey”**

*Dissertation submitted to  
Jawaharlal Nehru University in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the award  
of the Degree of*

**MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY**

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1998**



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## **CERTIFICATE**

Certified that the Dissertation entitled "**SOCIO-CULTURAL PROFILE OF ASIAN INDIANS IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, 1947-1994 — A SURVEY**" submitted by Ms. **PARAMA SINHA** in partial fulfilment for the award of the Degree of **MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY**, has not been previously submitted for any other degree of this or any other university. This is her original work.

We recommend that this dissertation be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

**(Prof. R.P. KAUSHIK)**

**Supervisor**

**(Prof. Christopher S. Raj)**

**Chairperson**

To  
My Manini

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would always remain indebted to you all for the love and assistance you have extended to me in the course of my writing my dissertation.

Prof. R.P. Kasushik

my guide, my philosopher and mentor who was always there whenever I needed his help and guidance. I can never thank him enough.

Prof. Christopher Raj

our chairperson has shown concern and interest in my work. I thank him for his kind help.

Prof. K.P. Vijayalakshmi

has not only been my teacher but I have time and again found her more than helpful.

Pankaj

has been a support block for me all through. Without him my dissertation would have never been complete. He has inspired and motivated me throughout my work.

Ruchira and Panda

have indeed been true and good friends. Their contribution has been immense and they deserve more than a simple thank you.

Arpita, Reji, Saurabh, Pari and Mathew deserve a big thank you.

Sharmila and Mamta

need to be mentioned specially because each of them have helped me in their own unique way.

A special thanks to Bapi and Ma.

Mamoni, Papa and Roopam have always meant a lot in my life. Without my parent's support, my dissertation would have never been successful and my words fail me at this point.

New Delhi

21<sup>st</sup> July 1998

(PARAMA SINHHA)

# **Chapter -I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The socio-cultural profile of the so-called new emerging immigrants in the United States (US) viz., the Asian Indians, has drawn increasing attention from scholars both sociologically, politically as well as culturally. Several studies have explored changing phases of immigrant integration and assimilation into a new society in the United States. The present study explores the placement of a minority— that of the Indians within the larger context of their socio-cultural background.

### **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF INDIA IMMIGRANTS**

A cursory reading of the history of Asian immigration to the United States suggests that either it did not exist or that it was too insignificant to deserve mention. However, upon closer scrutiny, one notes that US immigration policy towards Asians was characterised by ethnocentrism, racism, xenophobia, chauvinism and exclusion.

At the outset, it is necessary to discuss definitions. The word 'immigrant' may be defined administratively because of the wording of a law or of convenience in administering it, or theoretically with regard to the real nature of immigration. There is a tendency to increase the emphasis upon two characteristics of an immigrant : change of place, and

accompanying that change an intent to change the residence. This intent is closely connected with a plan to seek a livelihood in the new abode.

Emigration and immigration by their prefixes imply the existence of an organised state in which the migrant has resided or intends to reside. The words are different names for one, and the same change of place regarded from the point of view now of the state which is left and now of the state which is entered. They are narrower in meaning than migration because they exclude all forms of life except mankind and exclude also the many cases of migration, a large majority of the entire number in which the change of residence does not take the individual out of one state or into another.

Francis A. Walker had stated way back in 1891 that "Foreign immigration into this country has, from the time it first assumed large dimensions amounted not to a reinforcement of our population, but to a replacement of native by foreign stock."<sup>1</sup> He also added that "as the foreigners began to come in larger number, the native population more and more withheld their own increase"<sup>2</sup>

The spirit of international cooperation which pervaded the country during the war and immediately afterward led many people to believe that the time had arrived for a liberalization of the immigration laws. American participation in the U.N., and later the development of foreign policy which placed the first line of defence in Western Europe

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<sup>1</sup> Walter, F. Willcox, 'Immigration into the United States', *International Migrations*, vol. 2 (New York, 1931).

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*



encouraged those who feel that international considerations should dominate in the formulation of immigration policy. On the other hand the growing severity of the Cold War with Russia stimulated a concern for national security among many Americans. The restrictionists resisted all efforts to liberalize the immigration laws, in the belief that such action would only weaken the nation during a critical period in its history. The final clash between these conflicting viewpoints occurred in the debate over Mc Carran omnibus immigration bill in 1952.

Some critics of immigration, most notably John O' Sullivan, the editor of *National Review*, and Peter Brimelow, author of the *Alien Nation* believe that national identity must be defined explicitly in racial and ethnic terms, and that the current high levels of non-white nation will drastically alter that identity. O'Sullivan argues : A nation is an ethno-cultural unit - a body that begins its life as a cultural in - gathering but, by dint of common history, habits, tastes, shared experiences, tales, songs, memories, and above all, intermarriage, becomes progressively more like an extended family-that is, more ethnic over time.

Both O'sullivan and Brimelow fear, however that the large numbers of non-whites who are now coming in will undermine the assimilative capacity of the nation; they both cite Census Bureau projections that the majority of the US population will become non-white by the year 2050, and they both blame current immigration policy for this portentous outcome.

There are four shared concerns that have informed recent studies of immigration. One theme has been the impact of various structural factors on the immigrants' movement

from their home countries to the US, and on their subsequent economic and social adaptation. The second has been the collectivists, i.e., socially embedded and group-sustained, means by which the immigrants<sup>3</sup> confronted the new environment. The third theme has been the resilient character of ethnicity, which the immigrants and their families used as an adaptive tool to cope with the constraints and challenges encountered in their American experience. And the fourth theme has been the modes and functions of their relationship between class `ethnicity in influencing the immigrants' positions in American society and the group identities and interests they have formed in this country.

The quotas granted to India, China and the Philippines inevitably led to demands for the enunciation of the entire policy of oriental exclusion. In 1947, Representative Walter Judd of Minnesota introduced a bill to repeal the Asiatic exclusion laws and extend the quota system to Asia. The Justice Department endorsed Judd's approach in 1948 when it objected to a bill providing a quota for Siam on the grounds that a complete re-evaluation of policy, not another special exception, was required.<sup>4</sup> Judd proposed to solve the problem by setting up an Asian Pacific triangle which would encompass all the countries inhabited by oriental peoples. His bill provided a racial quota of one hundred for the entire region to take care of people of mixed oriental ancestry and inhabitants of colonial dependencies. This ingenious scheme achieved the major goal of eliminating outright racial exclusion of

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<sup>3</sup>     ibid.

<sup>4</sup>     'Authorizing the Admission into the United States of Persons Indignities to Siam,' House Report, no. 1432, 80th Congress, 2nd session (Washington, 1948), p.2.

Asians and yet at the same time severely restricted oriental immigration. By employing quotas based on race rather than on country of birth, however, Judds' measure did not provide for complete equality of treatment between European and Asian immigrants.

Congressional consideration of the Judd bill began in 1948, when the House Judiciary Committee conducted hearings on the measure. Representative Judd explained the purpose of the bill, stating that it "will work to remove the stigma that at present attaches to complete prohibition of immigration of certain races, and yet will make sure that there will not be any flooding of America with people of lower economic standards or other cultural patterns".<sup>5</sup> Representatives of the State Department strongly endorsed the bill. They pointed to the damage which the exclusion policy had caused in the past and stressed the need to win Asian friendship in the struggle to contain Communist expansion. Joseph Grew, former ambassador to Japan, claimed that the small size of the quota was unimportant in winning good will, asserting, "the question is one of principle, of recognition of the innate equality of people, of giving force to our own domestic beliefs."<sup>6</sup>

The Judiciary Committee issued a favourable report on the Judd bill at the close of the hearings, and in March 1949, the House began discussion of the measure.<sup>7</sup> Not one speaker opposed the granting of quotas to all Asian nations with Judd slating that the bill

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<sup>5</sup> Robert, A. Divine, *American Immigration Policy, 1924-1952* (Oxford University Press, New York, 1957).

<sup>6</sup> *ibid.*, p.155.

<sup>7</sup> 'To Make Immigration Quotas Available to Asian and Pacific Peoples,' House Report No. 65, 81st Congress, 1st session (Washington, 1949).

would 'influence greatly the battle for men's minds and hearts that is going on between the two philosophies of life and government that are locked in mortal struggle in our world. There were no objections from liberal quarters to the use of racial quotas for Asians, and indeed one champion of minority rights exclaimed, "I have never seen such a fine atmosphere of good will and brotherhood in terms of race since I have been in Congress."<sup>8</sup>

Though there was some heated debate, harmony prevailed and the House passed bill by voice vote in March, 1949<sup>9</sup>. The advocates of the Judd bill hoped for prompt consideration of their measure in the Senate, but other factors prevented the consummation of the movement to end oriental exclusion at this time. In 1947 the Senate had authorized a sub-committee headed by Pat Mc Carran to conduct a complete investigation of the immigration laws. This investigation was still in progress when the Judd bill reached the Senate in 1949 and the Judiciary Committee decided to table all immigration measures until the sub-committee reported its findings.<sup>10</sup> The final report delivered in 1950 accepted the basic principles of the Judd bill and incorporated this measure into an omnibus immigration bill that was the forerunner of the Mc Carran Act. Thus, the question of terminating

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<sup>8</sup> Robert. A. Divine, *American Immigration Policy, 1924-1952* (Oxford University Press, New York 1957).

<sup>9</sup> Congressional Record (March 1, 1949), 1e 1980, 1988, 1991-2. The only controversy was over a provision to limit all immigration from colonies to 100 of the mother country, quota Representatives from Negro districts of the North East objected on the grounds that this pervasion discriminated against immigrants from the West Indians.

<sup>10</sup> Interpreter Releases (18 April, 1949), p.137.

exclusion became involved in the larger problem of re-evaluating the overall immigration policy of the United States.

The Mc Carran bill was a complex and highly technical measure which codified the entire system of immigration laws, which had developed in a haphazard fashion since the late 19th century. For this reason the debate over the bill covered a wide range of immigration problems, some of primary significance, others of much more limited importance. The principal issue was the retention of the national origins quota system. The antirestrictionists hoping for a modernization of immigration policy bitterly protested the continuation of a method of choosing immigrants which they believed was basically discriminatory and therefore inconsistent with the principle of numerical restriction and refused to consider any modification of a system which they felt had become a vital national institution. A second important issue was the question of limiting Asiatic immigration by means of racial quotas. The restrictionists defended this formula on the basis of protection against an inundation by oriental peoples, while their opponents advocated a policy of complete equality of treatment between Asia and European immigrants. Other controversial issues of lesser significance included the broadening of exclusion provisions with regard to subversives and the extent of power wielded by administrative officials.

Behind all these specific issues lay the fundamental divergence in view points between the two opposing groups. The restrictionist believing that immigration was a source of potential danger to the nation, and argued that the basic aim of immigration policy should be to protect the institutions and traditions of the US. Their opponents denied

the pleasure that immigration might weaken the country and contended that immigration might weaken the spirit of friendliness and generosity to the less fortunate people of the world. The conflict between such diametrically opposed conception of immigration policy formed the core of the debate over the Mc Carran bill.

The origins of the omnibus immigration bill date back to the summer of 1947 when Senator Champion Rever comf introduced a resolution authorizing a subcommittee of the Senate Judiciary Committee to investigate the immigrations laws. The Senate approved the resolution with little discussion, thereby establishing the first through congressional study of immigration problems since the investigation by the Dillingham Commission near the turn of the century.<sup>11</sup>

The subcommittee report contained both a sociological survey of the effect of immigration on American society and a detailed discussion of the various features of existing immigration policy. The report discussed the question of population growth at considerable length, warning that many experts placed the optimum population of the United States at less than the existing number. Though the subcommittee did not formulate any final conclusions on the relationship between immigration and population growth, there was a clear implication that an increase in population due to heavy immigration would run counter to the national interests.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Congressional Record (26 July, 1954). pp.10, 352.

<sup>12</sup> *ibid.* pp. 231-5, 241, 284-5.

The most significant section of the subcommittee report dealt with an evaluation of the national origins quota system reviewing the statistics of immigration. The subcommittee concluded that insofar as the quota system was designed to restrict the number of immigration, it had proved successful. However, the members of the subcommittee felt that there was a second and more fundamental objective, the preservation of the ethnic composition of the nation which had not been fully achieved.

The members of the subcommittee agreed on the need for a greater degree of positive selection of immigrants, and they recommended a system of economic selection within the quotas. Instead of granting priority to relatives of citizens and resident aliens, the report suggested that the first 30 percent of the quota be reserved for immigrants whose services were needed by industries, universities or governmental agencies in the United States. The rest of the quota would be allotted to relatives of citizens and resident aliens, with only 10 percent to non preference applicants. This plan, which secretary of Labour James Davis had suggested back in the 1920's represented a practical approach to the problem of selecting immigrants in line with the restrictionist's belief that immigration should be regulated so as to further the economic well-being of the country. In the words of the subcommittee report, "more emphasis should be placed upon the interests and needs of the United States in determining who among the applicants for admission should be admitted."<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> ibid. pp.449, 456-7, James, J. Davis, *Selective Immigration* (St. Paul, 1925), pp. 209-12.

The report dealt briefly with other aspects of immigration policy. The subcommittee accepted the reversal of policy towards oriental immigrants embodied in the Judd bill, including the racial quotas. The most significant feature was the retention of the national origins quota system as the basic method of limiting immigration. Though the bill did introduce several major changes, the new feature did not represent a liberalization of policy, but instead harmonized with the restrictionist conception of immigration control. The system of economic selection within the quotas, together with the tightening of the exclusion provisions, furthered the goal of protecting the economy and the social structure of the nation. Even in the case of granting quotas to Asian countries, although basically a liberal proposal, the fact that these quotas were based on race rather than nationality, reflected a desire to keep oriental immigration at a minimum. The most liberal change was the granting of non-quota status to alien husbands of American citizens, but this new provision affected only a few hundred immigrants a year.

While the Senate subcommittee was formulating the Mc Carran bill, antirestrictionist groups were putting forth their own programmes for the modification of the immigration laws. The most significant of these originated with the National Committee on Immigration Policy, an organisation formed by a group of citizens in 1945 to study immigration problems. Early in 1950 William Bernard reported the findings of this group in a book entitled *American Immigration Policy -- a Reappraisal*. The major portion of the book was devoted to a survey of the influence of immigration on economic, social, and population trends in the United States. In contrast to the Senate subcommittee report, this



study suggested the need for increased immigration to prevent a future decline in population growth. From the standpoint of the internal factors stressed by the restrictionists, Bernard concluded that a more liberal immigration policy would be beneficial to the nation.<sup>14</sup>

The section of the Mc Carran bill dealing with Asian immigration received a good deal of attention during the hearings. All the witnesses, including representatives of patriotic societies, expressed approval of the decision to end the policy of oriental exclusion. Representative Judd testified in support of this long sought goal, stressing the need to win the friendship of Asian peoples in the struggle against Communism which by this time had broken out into open warfare in Korea. "In the fierce contest for peoples' loyalties," he declared "this is a step of the utmost importance."<sup>15</sup> However most witnesses felt that the Mc Carran bill did not go far enough towards granting equality of treatment between Asian and European immigrants. They contended that the use of racial quotas continued a policy of discrimination towards the Asian peoples which would prevent any rise in American prestige in the orient. Even the AFL representative who approved the retention of national origins expressed dissatisfaction with the quota formula for Asia. "This form of discrimination may still be a serious impediment to good diplomatic relations with Asian countries and could be used by the communist to great advantages to hurt our position in

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<sup>14</sup> Bernard, pp. 107-8, 176-98. This book was a collaborative work with Bernard, who was the executive director of the Committee acting as and editor. There were evidently close links between this group and the Citizens Committee on Displaced Persons, since Earl Harrison was chairman of both organisations and Bernard served on the staff of the two Committees.

<sup>15</sup> This bill also dealt with deportation and naturalization.

Asia."<sup>16</sup> he asserted. Rejecting the notion that the country might be flooded with oriental peoples born in the Western Hemisphere, the critics of the bill urged the extension of the country of birth formula to Asia.

The final version of the Mc Carran Walter bill contained three major sections dealing with immigration. The first pertained to European immigrants. Secondly, the bill extended quotas of one hundred to the countries of Asia, stipulating that these quotas include both people born in the Asian countries and those born elsewhere of oriental ancestry. To provide for people of mixed oriental and for Asian immigrants from European colonies such as Hong Kong, a special Asia-Pacific triangle quota of one hundred was established. Finally, the Mc Carran-Walter measure broadened the grounds for exclusion of applicants with criminal records and chronic diseases. The bill continued the prohibition on entry of subversive aliens contained in the International Security Act, making a special exception for nominal members of totalitarian parties and those who for the last five years had actively opposed their former party.<sup>17</sup>

The Humphrey-Lehman bill differed radically from the Mc Carran Walter measure. Though retaining the basic principle of national origins, the liberal bill provided for the pooling of unused quotas which consisted chiefly of numbers assigned to Great Britain and Ireland. At the end of the year, these quota numbers were to be distributed equally among four classes of immigrants - refugees, relatives, skilled labourers and special hardship cases-

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<sup>16</sup> House Report No. 1365 (1952), pp. 37, 39, 45, 49-50.

<sup>17</sup> Interpreter Releases (26 April, 1952), pp. 104-5.

without regard to national origin. Further more. the bill provided for redetermining the quotas on the basis of the 1950 census. which would increase the total quota limit of 154,000 by approximately 60,000 because of the growth of the American population since 1920. In regard to oriental immigrants, the Humphrey-Lehman measure eliminated the Asia-Pacific triangle and established regular country of birth quotas of one hundred for the Asian countries. Finally, this bill modified the exclusion provision by stipulating that an alien could be excluded only on the basis of the factual evidence, not merely on the opinion of administrative officials. To prevent the arbitrary exclusion of immigrants, the bill established a central board to review the decision of consular officer in denying visas to applicants for admission.<sup>18</sup>

The differences between these two measures indicate the gulf that separated the restrictionists from the advocates of a liberal immigration policy. The basic points of divergence were the national origins quota system, the racial quotas for Asia, and the power of administrative officials to exclude undesirable aliens. Behind these specific issues lay totally different conceptions of the fundamental objectives of immigration policy. The final showdown between the opposing groups brewing since the end of the war, arrived with the emergence of omnibus legislation on the floor of Congress.

With regard to the provisions of the Mc Carran bill dealing with Asiatic immigration, the antirestrictionists advanced the same argument they had employed in

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<sup>18</sup> Robert. A. Divine, *American Immigration Policy: 1925-1952* (London, Oxford University, New Delhi).

criticizing the retention of the national origins plan. By establishing an arbitrary quota formula for Asian peoples the critics of the bill contended that the "the key and heart of the democratic philosophy is recognition of the dignity of the human kind, and of the brotherhood and fraternity of mankind."<sup>19</sup> This is how Senator Humphrey pleading for immigrants equal treatment of all immigrants. Denying the danger of any inundation of the country by oriental immigrants, the opponents of restriction claimed that the continued discrimination against Asian would give the communists a valuable propaganda weapon in their attempt to win all Asia. The restrictionists answered this criticism by charging that their opponents were arguing on idealistic grounds completely divorced from the realities of the situation.

The Mc Carran bill was passed both by the House and the Senate. Though the opponents of the bill persisted in their agitation for a liberal policy, the passage of the Mc Carran -Walter bill by decisive majorities made any major revisions extremely unlikely in the near future. Thus, the long postwar debate over the nature of American immigration policy terminated in a complete triumph of the restrictionist viewpoint.

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<sup>19</sup> On 4 September, 1952, President-Truman issued an executive order establishing a special Commission on Immigration and Naturalization. Composed of seven men, the presidential Commission held hearings in the major cities of the US during the fall of 1952 at which the overwhelming burden of the testimony was in favour of the liberalization of immigration policy. The Commission recommended sweeping revision of the immigration laws, including the elimination of the national origins system, in its report submitted in January, 1953. Despite Presidential Eisenhower's concurrence with these views, no legislative action has yet resulted. Hearings before the President's Commission on Immigration and Naturalization, Washington, 1952; President's Commission on Immigration and Naturalization, whom we shall welcome. Washington, 1953.

The controversial nature of the Mc Carran-Walter Immigration Act makes it difficult to assess the significance of the legislation. The critics of the law interpreted it as a denial of democratic beliefs and an expression of a racist philosophy alien to American ideals. The restrictionists viewed it as a beneficial measure which dealt realistically with the dangers inherent in immigration.

In the debate over the Mc Carran bill, the nationalistic emphasis on security received a broader application. The suspicion with which the restrictionists regarded all immigrations implied a belief that loyalty to the nation stemmed from birth in the US and could not be easily installed in the foreign born. Alarmed by continuing intensity of the Cold War with Soviet Russia, the supporters of the Mc Carran bill believed that strict control of immigration was essential for the preservation of national security.

The formulation of immigration policy indicates that the motivating force behind the Mc Carran Act was a concern for the integrity of the nation during a critical period in its history. The passage of the Mc Carran bill was in essence an act of conservatism rather than of intolerance.

In the last analysis, the Mc Carran Act represented the triumph of nationalism over international consideration in the determination of American immigration policy. Both restrictionists and antirestrictionists agreed that immigration legislation should be framed in reference to the ideological and power conflict with Soviet Russia which dominated the minds of all Americans in the middle of the 20th century. The opponents of restriction believed that the expansions of Russia could be halted only by combating the doctrines of

Communism throughout the world and therefore they advocated an immigration policy designed to foster good will in foreign countries. Thus, in his final plea in the debate, Senator Humphrey declared that the issue is whether America shall have the respect of people all around the world. On the other hand in his concluding speech, Senator Mc Carran exclaimed, "if we destroy the internal security of this country by opening the floodgates of unlimited immigration without screening and without curtailment, we will have destroyed the national security of the US"<sup>20</sup>

Convinced that the maintenance of the US as a bastion against Communism was of paramount importance in the Cold War. The restrictionists insisted upon an immigration policy which sought to protect the internal strength of the nation. By casting their votes for the Mc Carran bill, a majority of Congressmen recorded their conviction that the primary objective of immigration policy was to preserve the national integrity of the US.

Since the first Congress debated the issue, immigration policy in the US has been bound up with some of our most basic concerns-economic well-being, national identity, internal stability, and the American role in the world. Through two centuries, public opinion on immigration has been marked by ambivalence. Some see immigrants as productive workers who can be absorbed into the national mainstream without much disruption. Others take a much dimmer view, regarding immigrants primarily as economic competitors or as foreigners with alien values.

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<sup>20</sup> Congressional Record (27 June, 1952), p.8267.

The nation will continue its search for legislation aimed at balancing the economic benefits to be derived from immigration with the perceived threat it poses to ethnic and cultural identities.<sup>21</sup>

As a senator from Massachusetts in 1958, J.F.Kennedy wrote '*A Nation of Immigrants*.' to show the contribution of foreign born residents in an effort to sway legislators to vote for immigration reform. As president, he asked Congress to eliminate the injustice of the quota system and endorsed legislation to accomplish this objective in what would have been his 1964 state of the Union message. But with Kennedy's assassination, legislation to reserve the eugenics derived principle that immigrants from other than West European nations were not desirable had to await the presidency of Lyndon B.Johnson.

The new Immigration Act of 1965 came at a time when postwar liberalization hit its zenith. With unemployment an all time low and economic prosperity in one hand, the national mood was upbeat. The Vietnam conflict, still in its early stages, had yet to temper the climate of optimism. More critical for the immigration debate than the economic state of the nation was the growing commitment to racial equality, evident in the passage of the Civil Rights Act in 1964. The 1965 Act phased out the national quota system and gave preference to highly trained professional and their families. This gave the much needed opportunity to engineers, doctors, scientists, professors and businessmen from India to enter the US.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Congressional Record (13 July, 1963), p.7234.

<sup>22</sup> Ramesh Babu. 'The Indian-American : A Minority in The Making', *Minorities and the American Political System* (1989), p.141.

At the time of the passage of the Immigration Acts, few in Congress thought it would make for any fundamental adjustments in immigration patterns. Infact, the measure opened the way for a surge of immigrants from the region. It rose from about 150,000 in the 1950s to more than 2.7 million in the 1980s.<sup>23</sup>

Looking back, Americans should not have been surprised by the rise of non European immigration. In countries like India, the Indian population faced pressures due to limited opportunities which existed for the rapidly growing middle class which pushed many to leave. The US already had well established communities of Indians, Chinese, Japanese mainly in California, which attracted new comers. These communities provided an essential economic and social link in the process for absorbing immigrants into their new environment. Meanwhile few nations other than US were willing to accept Asian immigrants.

Since the 1970s, illegal immigration and nonquota legal entries have essentially reduced the global limit to a symbolic number. This marked a new period in which most persons, regardless of national origin, who were strongly motivated to enter, live and work in the US, could do so without having to wait for years to be admitted legally.

By the mid 1970s, Congress recognised that the 1965 Act fell short in the area of illegal immigration. The House passed a measure to fine employers for hiring illegal aliens, but a similar bill could not overcome opposition from the agricultural interests in the Senate and the measure languished. Frustrated by its inability to deal with the issue, Congress in

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<sup>23</sup> US Wireless File (8 May, 1979).



1979 appointed a Blue Ribbon Group, the Select Commission on Immigration and Refugee Policy to evaluate existing laws and policies governing the admission of both immigrants and refugees to the US.

The Commission's report delivered in March 1981 had numerous recommendations to overhaul immigration including the two dealing with the undocumented population. The Commission favoured legislation similar in form to that passed by the House in the late 1970s, making it illegal for employers to hire undocumented workers. A programme to legalize undocumented alien workers residing in the US prior to 1980 was also proposed. This idea was suggested earlier by President Carter and introduced in Congress but it failed to pass.

In March 1982, Republican Senator Alan K. Simpson from Wyoming and Democratic Congressman Romano L. Mazzoli from Kentucky introduced bills in each chamber that were generally consistent with the Commission's recommendations. The bills called for sanctions against employers who hired illegal workers as the chief weapon to stem the transborder tide.

The Senate passed the bill by a wide margin but the House Democratic leadership balked.

In the mid 1980s the scales were tipping in favour of concerns over ethnicity, but as the unmet demand for labour mounted and immigrant groups flexed their political muscle, pressure for more open entry laws emerged in Congress culminating the 1990 Immigration Act. This suggests that the third phase of American immigration history-limited entry

controls has not run its course. The public continues to hold easing entry in disfavour, but this majority view appeared too shallow to elicit opposition to softening the terms of the 1986 Act.

Nonetheless, elements within the conservative movement led by Patrick Buchanan began in the early 1990s to capitalize on fears associated with the social consequences of non-white immigration. This nativist ground swell followed on the heels of electoral success of the European far right wing taking a cue from its anti-immigrant rhetoric. These concerns also surfaced at a time when the American public facing economic uncertainty, discontent with the political system and calls for recitative trade policies appeared to be turning inward.

In 1986, the House took up an immigration bill. At this point the differing perspectives on immigration in Congress and the White House, apparent so often in the past, surfaced once again. On the one hand the Reagan administrations pro-business, free market philosophy placed it on the side of those who favoured unlimited immigration as a valued source of labour. Thus, in January 1986, the presidents' Council of Economic Advisers in a draft of its annual report to Congress stated that employer sanctions would reduce employment and output.

The Council also remarked that the difficulties associated with enforcement would represent a 'labour market cost' that would hurt native minorities and youth the most. Other currents in the administration however ran counter to such a position.

On 6 November, 1986 about six years after the Select Commission on Immigration and Refugee Policy had submitted its initial report-President Ronald Reagan signed the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 into law.

As happened so often in the past, the 1986 law bore little relationship to economic realities. The primary goal of the new legalisation to sharply curtail the illegal inflows is not succeeding for the simple reason that demand for low-wage workers remain high.

No sooner are the immigration bill passed then several members of Congress began drafting legislation to deal with the issues reflected in the 1986 measures. The measure provided a dual preference system : one for family members already in effect and a second for the so- called independent immigrants— those without close relatives in the US.

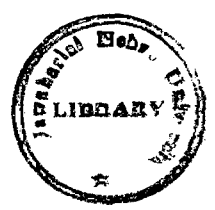
An important provision of the bill was to place for the first time in American history, a cap or maximum on the number of visa issued annually. Under current law, the limit is 270,000 and all immigrants who are close relatives or who qualify because of their skills are included within this limit. However, those denied as immediate relatives (sponsor, children and parents of US citizens) are outside this numerical constraints. The Kennedy-Simpson bill would have represented a change in current policy by imposing a global cap of 600,000 including relatives. The only exclusion from this would have been refugees who are admitted under separate legislation.

The most controversial element in the new bill was a section that set aside some 4,800 visas annually for persons who would each invest atleast \$2 million in the United States.

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The Kennedy-Simpson immigration bill contained none of the more divisive provisions of its predecessors—no amnesty was offered, no sanctions imposed!

The passage of the bill in the Senate marked a significant shift. In 1987 and 1988, Ted Kennedy lacked sufficient votes for the admission of independent immigrant without agreeing to an overall immigration cap—hence the cosponsorship with Senator Simpson who insisted a limit as the price for his support. The passage of the more liberal 1989 immigration bill in the Senate suggests the congruence of several events, most notably the growing political strength of Asians who lobbied for removing the cap and the nullity of those opposing changes in immigration law to arouse public opinion during a period of economic prosperity. Regional voting blocks have also weakened. Opposition to higher immigration levels continue to be concentrated in south and rural states.

Economic forces, internal migration and shifts in racial attitudes have contributed to these changes. For example Virginia, an economic stronghold in the antebellum era but long in eclipse afterward emerged during the 1980s as one of the most prosperous states in the nation. Both the domestic immigrant and unimmigrant populations have grown rapidly, with Northern Virginia currently a major centre for Asian enterprises.

The Family Unit and Employment Act of 1990 (HR 4300) expanded annual immigration (other than refugees) from the current 540,000 to 775,000. The numerical rise was attributed primarily to boosting the number of legal entrants based on their skill from 54,000 to 188,000.

H.R. 4300 was debated on the floor for several hours on October 3 and 4, 1990. The final bill enacted by Congress refilled the Immigration Act of 1990, set the new level of immigration at 675,000 (700,000 for the first few years) almost exactly the midpoint between the House and the Senate ceilings.<sup>24</sup>

Rita J. Simon very rightly has stated that the future assimilation of the new Asian immigrants is not likely. They will most probably, she remarks always be hyphenated Americans. Their future acculturation into American society is totally dependent upon the orientation and aspirations of the new Asian immigration themselves, but it is also dependent largely on the ebb and flow of the United States societal tides.

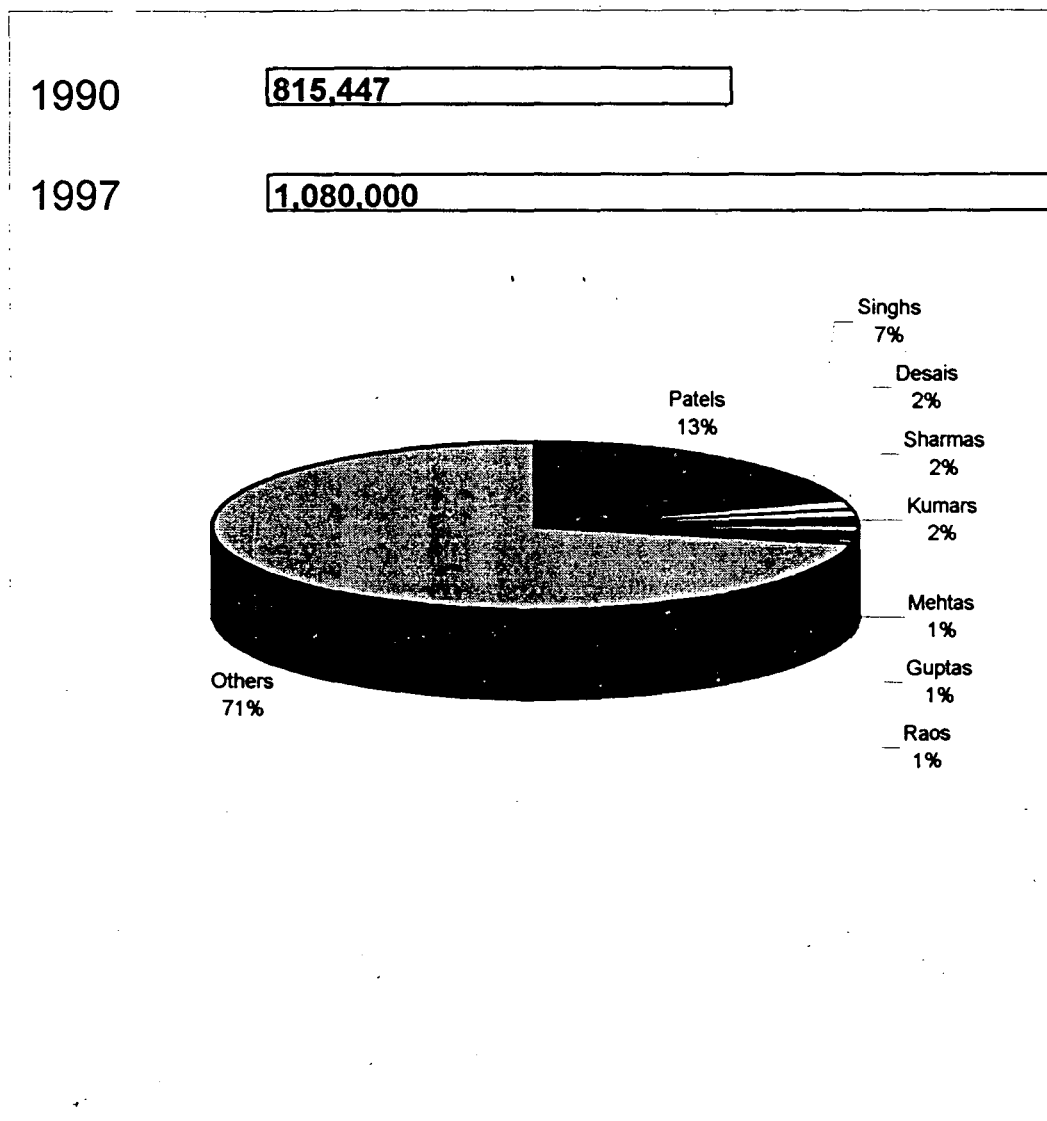
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<sup>24</sup> US Wireless File (12 March, 1994).

# SNAPSHOT USA

## INDIANS IN USA

The number of Indian-origin people in US has increased by 33% compared to 1990



Source : 1997 Census

## Chapter II

### RELIGION AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

Since the Immigration Act of 1965, immigrants from throughout the world have entered the United States in greater numbers than before. According to the 1990 census, the Asian and Pacific Islanders population is by far the fastest growing, having increased more than seven fold since 1965. This group includes Hindus, Sikhs, Muslims and Jains from South Asia. From refugees to voluntary immigrants, from unskilled workers to highly trained professionals, these newcomers have changed the cultural and religious landscape of the United States (US).

The religio-cultural profile of the new emerging immigrants in the United States, viz. the Asian Indians, has drawn increasing attention from scholars. Several studies have explored changing phases of immigrant integration and assimilation into a new society in the United States. The present chapter explores the placement of a minority - that of the Indians, within the larger context of their socio-cultural background.

The interreligious encounter that was engineered by visionaries in Chicago in 1893 is today an American main street affair. A parliament of sorts could be duplicated in almost every major American city. There are five mosques in Oklahoma city along with four Hindu temples, one Sikh Gurdwara, and Oklahoma city is far from unusual !! Denver has eleven Buddhist temples serving its immigrant Asian population. Denver also has three

Mosques, two Sikh Gurdwara, two Hindu temples. All of these new diversity burgeoned in the years between 1970 and 1990.

One of the questions raised in the study of Indian immigrants is what happens to Hinduism and religiosity of Hindus as they immigrate to the US. There are many ways of looking at this phenomenon. Here we could choose to focus on both formal and informal religious behaviour of Hindu migrants.

There are atleast five temples in the Queens, New York area. One of them, a Hindu Temple, has a large membership and has been able to raise over one million dollars for the construction of a new temple.

Many social and cultural organizations are very particular about observing religious festivals and see it as good strategy to attract more people and increase their membership. There is a committee based in New York which draws more than 10,000 people to celebrate Durga-puja (the festival of the goddess Durga). The Sikh Gurudwara also draws large number of people during their annual feast.

Also, on the individual level, Indians remain religious. Their religiosity has not declined in any way because of Western influences on the country. There are more religious activities in many families than in India. In certain communities, organizing private services at homes by inviting a priest and friends to participate is more frequent than in India.



In the past, America was much influenced by Indian philosophy. The renowned American philosopher and distinguished member of the Transcendentalist group, Ralph Waldo Emerson was an avid reader of Indian philosophy. As early as 1818, Emerson had written a poem called *Indian superstition*. He was the first major literateur of America to read and appreciate the anonymous authors of Hindu scriptures<sup>1</sup> The impact of Indian philosophy is visible in his short poem *Brahma*, which could have been lifted bodily from the *Gita*. Paying tribute to Emerson's writings, Rabindranath Tagore said, "In his work one finds much that is of India. In truth he made the teachings of our spiritual leaders and philosophers a part of his life."<sup>2</sup> Mahatma Gandhi, on reading his essays remarked that they contained teachings of Indian wisdom in a Western Guru.

The other most important Transcendentalist who came under the spell of Oriental philosophy were Henry David Thoreau and Walt Whitman.

It was Thoreau who brought both India and America politically and ideologically together. The theme of his famous book *Walden* seems to be imported from Indian philosophy which is dedicated to persuading unhappy men to give up their attachment to possessions in order to free themselves. Thoreau's contributions have been derived from his careful study of Indian scriptures like the *Manusmritis*, *the Upanishads*, and *the Gita*.

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<sup>1</sup> Dale Maurice Riepe, *The Philosophy of India and Its Impact on American Thought* (New York : Thomas, 1970). pp. 12-19.

<sup>2</sup> Mohinder K. Manchanda, *India and America : Historical Links, 1776-1920*, (Chandigarh : 1976).

Walt Whitman, the celebrated and most original American poet was also very much interested in India and Indian thought. His poem *Passage to India* deals with the progress of a soul towards an identification and interpreter of India to the west.

Swami Vivekananda who attended the World Parliament in Chicago left a deep imprint in the minds of the people. Harriet Monroe, who attended the Parliament, wrote in her autobiography, *A Poets' Life*, that it was "Swami Vivekananda, the significant who stole and captured the town".<sup>3</sup> *The New York Herald* reported, 'He is undoubtedly the greatest figure in the Parliament of Religions. After hearing him we feel how foolish it is to send missionaries to this learned nation.'<sup>4</sup>

Swami Vivekananda undertook a number of lecture tours in the United States. Eminent writers of philosophy have classified Swami Vivekananda's lectures in the US into three categories. The largest number of lectures dealt with India, the Hindu way of life, the life of the Hindu women and the religion of India. The second category belongs to lectures dealing with the harmony of religions. In the third category are the few lectures that Swami Vivekananda delivered on Buddha and Buddhism. Hence, it will be appropriate to say that Swami Vivekananda was the early stalwart to carry Indian culture to the United States.

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<sup>3</sup> Harriet Monroe, *A Poets' Life : Seventy Years in a Changing World* (New York, 1938).

<sup>4</sup> R.K. Gupta, *The Great Encounter: A Study of Indo-American Literature and Cultural Relations* (New Delhi : Abhinav Publication, 1986).

Swami Vivekananda made two important contributions to American understanding of India. His most important achievement was to change effectively and with considerable success the mistaken notions about Indian society and people which were widely prevalent in the US.

Vivekananda's second contribution was to bring forcefully to the notice of thinking Americans the spiritual dimensions of human life as enshrined in Hindu religion and philosophy "By uniting the materialism of the west with the spiritualism of the east, I believe much can be accomplished."<sup>5</sup>

Burke has suggested that in the US there was a new religious revival after the Parliament. Such power as that of Vivekananda's message, she commented, "moved silently and invisibly but surely, working on all levels, churning the surface into a foam, as well as altering forever the deep hidden currents of the spiritual life of a whole people"<sup>6</sup>

A number of Vedantic centres sprang up in the US largely as a consequence of Swami Vivekananda's teaching and influence.

During this century a phenomenal American interest in Hindu cults and religion grew. One of the most important factor behind this growth of Hindu cults was a disenchantment with the prevailing values and life styles in America, and desire to explore alternative modes of life and avenues of experience. Numerous Hindu cults developed in

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<sup>5</sup>     ibid, p.257.

<sup>6</sup>     ibid.

the United States. Robert and Elwood, author of *Religions and Spiritual Groups in Modern America* remarked, "there are atleast 500,000 members of various Eastern Religious Groups in the US. not counting the practitioners of Transcendental Meditation"<sup>7</sup>. The most popular form of Hinduism in America today is Swami A.L. Bhativedanta Prabhupad (1896-1977) who found Hare Krishna Group whose saffron robed chanters can be seen at street corners in many American centres. Swami Bhaktavedanta set up in 1966 the International Society for Krishna Consciousness in New York which grew within a decade into a world wide confederation of temples, ashrams and centres of meditations.

Members of the International Society of Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON), the Hare Krishna Movement are believers in a personal deity to which they give daily devotion. The philosophy of Krishna consciousness is that the Absolute Truth is present in all the world's great scriptures, particularly the ancient vedic literatures whose Bhagvad Gita records God's actual word.

Maharishi Mahashyogi transcendental meditation - "the signs of creative intelligence" - attracted a large number of adherence in United States.

Swami Chinmoy's Bhaktiyoga was also an influential force in America. Radha Ramachandran in her article on Chinmoy has remarked, "he became the founder, foremost practitioner of a new 20th century style Yoga which used the power of spiritually not only

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<sup>7</sup>        ibid.

to illuminate the consciousness of seekers, but also to reveal and manifest the Divine in the outer world through art, music, poetry, sports and all aspects of life".<sup>8</sup>

Stressing 'love, devotion and surrender to the Almighty Supreme. Sri Chimoy won dedicated following and established a number of Sri Chinmoy centres across the US.

Another spiritual leader to make considerable impact in America was Jiddu Krishnamurti whose appeal, however was at a highly intellectual and sophisticated level. Among his admirers counted, Aldous Huxley who wrote in 1961 that one of Krishnamurti's talks has been "among the most impressive things I ever listened to; it was like listening to a discourse of Buddha."<sup>9</sup>

Though the Hindu cults attained such popularity, the movements at times by their excesses and eccentricities bred among Americans distrust and at times contempt towards Hinduism. They also tended to reinforce the stereotyped image of India as a country of yogies and ascetics. At the same time many distinguished Americans gave eloquent and unquestionably sincere testimony to what they gained from their encounters with Yoga and other spiritual disciplines of India. A Yale social scientist testified that meditation dissipated his tensions and made him more relaxed and energetic. Herbert Benson, Harvard Cardiologist, who studied in detail the psychological changes brought about by meditation,

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<sup>8</sup> K.K. Madhan Nayar, 'Hinduism in America', *Illustrated Weekly of India* (14-20 February, 1987), p.9.

<sup>9</sup> Radha Ramachandran, 'Sri Chimmoy', *Illustrated Weekly of India* (February, 1983), p.13.

commented in his best selling book *The Relaxation Response*, described transcendental meditation as an effective relaxation technique. It was estimated at that time that as many as 500,000 Americans might be practising Indian religions as members of organised groups and that the number might well run into millions if one counts students of Yoga and meditation.<sup>10</sup>

Hindu cults undoubtedly provide valuable spiritual experiences and prove physically and mentally invigorating to a large number of practitioners. To a frantic industrialized society, they offered simpler values and a more relaxed rhythm of life as a possible alternative to the extent that eastern religiosity had become one possible option for Americans, and that its study was... a permanent part of the academic scene.

In the late 19th century and early 20th century, Indian religious movement had influenced American culture. The two most significant influences were theosophy and Hinduism. Theosophy is a mystical philosophy which asserts that there is one God and that all nature is spiritual.

There is a lack of ethnic concentration or ethnic neighbourhood development of the Asian Indians in American cities and this is due to the very limited role of Hinduism as a religion. The majority of Asian Indians are Hindus but Hinduism has a very different religious organization from Christian denominations, Islam or Sikhism.

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<sup>10</sup> 'Asian Religions in America', *Span* (January, 1975), p.15.

Hinduism has no Church hierarchy and in essence it remains to a great extent an individual oriented rather than a congregational religion.

In contrast to the major American cities, the Hindu temples exhibit a clear distinction between the Northern and Southern Indian cultural tradition, symbolised by their distinctive architecture, deities, mode of worship, language and even the organizational style of temple management.

However, Indian temples are probably proliferating more rapidly than Islamic mosques, though with less publicly and without the foreign subsidies that the latter enjoy as Japanese. Buddhist temples once did.

In Cincinnati, some 400 largely well to do, middle class India families had pledged to raise \$700,000 in three years to build a temple that will serve as a community centre as well as a place for religious observances. In Artesia, a suburb of Los Angeles, there is a four block stretch that some residents now call 'little India'.

It seems that religion and religious activity are perceived as very important aspects of life for Indian immigrants, and it is likely they will grow even stronger.

## **Culture**

At the outset, let us define 'culture'. Sociologist, Prof. Yogendra Singh refers to 'culture' as "a sum total of all contributions of a group of people in a designed area within a given time. It represents, more specifically, the aesthetic or intellectual achievement or

appreciation of an individual or a society and also the life style of a society as passed on from one generation to another. Sociologists and experts have suggested that culture is a unique human reality. It emanates from the unity of human kind in nature, but it situates itself as a meta-natural reality. It is manifested in the technological, mental, moral, social, aesthetic and spiritual achievements of human kind. Culture gives meaning to our relationship with the other, as it forms our subjective identity . Culture, therefore, enters into the processes of social change in many forms and at various levels. It defines the quality of social change as its indicator. By selective adaption to outside cultural forces, culture has a large measure of resilience with all its institutional pervasiveness, it has a core which acts as a filter or a moderator to the outside forces of cultural contact and change. This also explains why in each mainstream culture, one may find the existence of subculture and counter-cultures."<sup>11</sup>

### **Ravindranath Tagore**

Besides Swami Vivekananda, the other most distinguished early visitor was Tagore, the famous Indian poet and philosopher who made a considerable impression during a visit to the US just before the First World War.

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<sup>11</sup> Yogendra Singh, 'The Significance of Culture in the Understanding of Social change in Contemporary India', *Journal of Peace Studies* (New Delhi, March-June, 1995), vol. 2, Issue 9-10, pp. 3-13.



Tagore was perhaps the first Indian writer who attracted serious interest in America. He was deeply fascinated by American life and culture. He found in America "a wonderful hunger and aspiration and described the country as 'the last refuge of spiritual men'".<sup>12</sup> His overwhelming concern was to bring the East and West closer in a mutual gesture of wealth and understanding. Like Vivekananda before him, Tagore tried to bring India and the US closer together and was a means whereby an unprecedentedly large number of Americans became exposed to Indian thought and culture.

During the 50s and 60s many Indian musicians and dancers visited the United States. Their performance contributed immensely to the growth of American awareness about India's cultural heritage.

Among the artists who made tremendous impact upon the Americans were Ravi Shankar and Bala Saraswati. Ravi Shankar taught Indian music at the City College of New York and established his Kinnara school of music in Los Angeles. He received an honorary doctor of Fine Arts Degree from the University of California in 1968 and was in the same year named Artist of the Year by the *Billboard Magazine*, a leading publication in the world of music and entertainment. The distinguished US violist, Yehudi Menuhin has made two albums with Ravi Shankar, 'West meets East'. In his autobiography, *Unfinished Journey*, he has paid tribute to Indian music in general and Ravi Shankar, Ali Akbar Khan, specifically.

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<sup>12</sup> R.K. Gupta, *The Great Encounter : A Study of Indo-American Literature and Cultural Relations* (New Delhi: Abhinav Publications, 1986).

He commented that "... such a recital is an experience more magical than almost any in the world. It feels as if one is in the presence of creation".<sup>13</sup>

Ted Shawn, the maestro of modern dance introduced the noted Bharatnatyam dancer Bala Saraswati to Americans at the Jacobs' Pillow Dance Festival in Lee, Massachusetts. Bala Saraswati's performance at Jacobs' Pillow, Richard Happell, the dance critic remarked that her "delicate and beautiful art, which is timeless and evocative of the long cultural history of India cast a hypnotic spell over the audience."<sup>14</sup> Subsequently, Bala Saraswati visited the US a number of times and performed in many major American cities.

Faubion Bowers, an American expert in Asian Dance, commented in a review of her art in *Dance Magazine* that her images are replete with the passions of human experience and that watching her perform is a supreme moment of aesthetic realization in her numerous visits to the United States. She has given lecture demonstrations, taught scores of American students, inspired raved reviews, charmed dancers of all styles and promoted Indo-US goodwill as few individuals have done.<sup>15</sup>

Another noted artist who made a vivid impression in the United States was M.S. Subbulakshmi. "Her vocal communication transcends world", remarked *The New York*

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<sup>13</sup> Yehudi Menuhin, 'Understanding Indian Music' (Excerpted from his autobiography *Unfinished Journey*), *Span* (June, 1978).

<sup>14</sup> 'Bala Saraswati, The First Lady of Bharatnatyams', *Span* (May, 1978), p.32.

<sup>15</sup> Yehudi Menuhin, 'Understanding Indian Music' (Excerpted from his autobiography *Unfinished Journey*), *Span* (July, 1978).

*Times*, while the *San Francisco Chronicle* described her performance as 'a series of miracle.'<sup>16</sup>

In 1977, she visited United States and held a number of concerts to raise funds for the Hindu temples at New York and Pittsburgh. She gave concerts at New York, Washington, Boston, Detroit, Pittsburgh, Dallas and Houston. The climax of her visit was reached in her memorable farewell concert at Carnegie Hall which John Rockwell of the *New York Times* described as 'one of the finest concert in living memory'.<sup>17</sup>

Many other distinguished Indian artists have visited the United States at various times— some of them repeatedly to give performance to large and appreciated dance lovers.

Among the Indian dancers and musicians who have visited the US and produced a memorable impression are Uday Shankar, Indrani Rahman, Shanta Khan and Nikhil Bannerji (musicians) to mention just a few.

A substantial awareness of India art developed in the US and many American Universities began to offer courses in Indian music and other art forms. Winthrop Sergeant, music critic of *New Yorker* said, "the music of India through such musician as Ravi Shankar is becoming more and more influential in the West"<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Mabai Sheshadri, 'Singer Extraordinary : M.S. Subbulakhsmi', *Span* (October, 1978), p.29.

<sup>17</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> R. K. Gupta, *The Great Encounter. A Study of Indo-American Literature and Cultural Relations*, (New Delhi : Abhinav Publication, 1986).

One consequence of this exposure of the United States to Indian music and dance and particularly the heartening development in Indo-US cultural relations was the adoption and assimilation of Indian dance and music forms by a number of American artists.

John Higgins, who spent over five years in Madras became an expert in the *Sapta Swaras* of Carnatic music and gave concerts in India, US and Canada, 'The fusion of the aspects of Raga and Bhava was seen at its best', remarked Pushkala Gopal of *The Hindustan Times* about one of his recital.<sup>19</sup> Another artist Philips Glass met Ravi Shankar in Paris in the winter of 1965-66, later studied with Tabla Maestro Alla Rakha, and travelled extensively in India. He composed an opera *Satyagrah* on Gandhi which played in New York Brooklyn Academy of Music<sup>20</sup>.

## JAZZ

The influence of Indian music can be seen most clearly in Western Jazz. By the late 1950s Jazz musicians feeling at a dead end began to turn to Indian music for fresh and novel sources of inspiration. Ever since the work of Yusuf Lateef in the late 1950s, Jazz increasingly tended to incorporate Indian music. In 1961 Bud Shank, the Californian Alto Saxophonist and flutist, and Sitarist Ravi Shankar released an album of duets— a remarkable product of Coltranes' attempt to fuse Jazz and Indian classical, so much so that

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<sup>19</sup> Pushkala Gopal, 'Raga-Bhava Fusion at its best in Higgins', *Hindustan Times*, 15 April, 1982.

<sup>20</sup> 'Opera on Mahatma Gandhi, Satyagraha,' *Span* (January, 1982), p.5.

it sounded like 'My favourite things' in which the Sopra Saxophone sounds like a Shehnai. The famous trumpet player Don Cherry studied Drupad with one of the Daga brothers in Bombay.

Discussion of Indo-American relations in the sphere of music would be incomplete without a mention of the internationally known Indian born conductor Zubin Mehta. After conducting in Vienna, he became musical director of the Montreal Symphony in 1961 at the age of 24. "In a year he took us to international class", remarked Pierra Beique, the then Orchestra's Managing Director.<sup>21</sup>

Zubin Mehta rose to conduct some of the most reputed orchestra's in the world including the Los Angeles Philharmonic and the New York Philharmonic. Aubert Seal who wrote in the *Reader's Digest* described him as "the world's most visible conductor".<sup>22</sup> In Zubin Mehta, remarked Yehudi Menuhin "the marriage of Western and Eastern thought has produced a musician of uncommon sensitivity."<sup>23</sup>

### **Sculpture and Painting.**

It will be relevant to have a brief review in spheres other than music and dance in which Indo-American cultural ties grew to a considerable extent. Hence, while music and

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<sup>21</sup> Hubert Saal, 'Our Maestro in New York,' *Readers' Digest* (May, 1980), p.51.

<sup>22</sup> *ibid.*, p.50.

<sup>23</sup> *ibid.*, p.51.

dance occupied the attention of American audience, also in Fine Arts such as sculpture and painting American awareness of India grew to a great extent.

Among those who have made outstanding contributions to the promotion of Indian art, the two names which stand out are Anand K. Coomaraswamy and Stella Kramrisch as creator-curator of the Indian collection at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts from 1917-47. Coomaraswamy has produced an enormous number of studies on such wide ranging topics as philosophy, religion, music, iconography, art history and art criticism and became in the process perhaps the most influential interpreter of Indian art in the United States. As S. Durai Raja Singma has remarked : Perhaps the most imposing and firmly based bridge of Indo-American understanding was built by Ananda Coomaraswamy who devoted himself to the cause of learning and the unity of mankind. Coomaraswamy interpreted the West to the East and the East to the West and in the process strengthened the ties between them.<sup>24</sup>

Coomaraswamy tried to identify the inner quality of Oriental art which he felt could play an important role in the spiritual life of the West. So he built up a great collection of Indian art at Boston and encouraged the development of substantial collection of Indian art at New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, Washington, Cleveland and Kansas City. He believed that the East could contribute the quality of civility<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> S. Durai Raja Singma, 'Coomaraswamy in America', *Hindustan Times Magazine* (27 November, 1979).

<sup>25</sup> *ibid.*

Stella Kramrisch, Professor and Curator of Indian art at the Philadelphia Museum of Art and a recipient of Padmabhushan made an enormous contribution to the growth of awareness to the appreciation of the Indian art in the United States. In a distinguished career of writing (including the classic two volume. *The Thunder Temple, The Art of India : Tradition of Indian Sculpture, Painting and Architecture, Manifestations of Shiva and The Presence of Shiva*), lectures and exhibitions, she did more perhaps than any other American to interpret and popularize Indian art in the United States.

The Arthur M. Sackler Gallery is a museum of Art at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington D.C. A Gallery of such kind is crucial to American efforts to educate local, national and international audiences about Asian art and culture. Among the exhibitions shown at the gallery are 'Buddhist and Jain Sculpture from South Asia.'<sup>26</sup>

Indian born Vidya Dahejia has been appointed curator of South and Southeast Asian Art at the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery and Freer Gallery of Art. The two museums of Asian Art are a part of the Smithsonian Institute in Washington D.C.

Dahejia's work involves overseeing collections that included nearly 4,000 paintings, manuscripts, sculptures and metalware from South and South East Asia from the 2nd to the 20th century.

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<sup>26</sup> 'Buddhist and Jain Sculpture', *Span* (February, 1993), p.34.

Her work involves making the collections available through exhibitions, publications and scholarly research and seeking outstanding works of art to augment the galleries' holdings.

## **Movies**

Indian cinema was virtually unknown in the United States before the 1980s, except for the films of Satyajit Ray which were screened since the 1950s and attracted an appreciative but largely academic audience. In 1981, a major landmark was reached in American exposure to Indian cinema when a film festival - Film India- was organised under the joint sponsorship of the Asia Society and New York Museum of Modern Art. Designed to create a creative awareness of Indian cinema in the US, Film India was a massive undertaking, described by the press as the "most ambitious and comprehensive presentation of Indian films in the US"<sup>27</sup>

The presentation was in three parts - the first was a Ray Retrospective comprising films covering the span of his entire career, beginning with 'Pather Panchali' (1956) and ending with 'Pikoo', a 27-minute short film made for French TV. The second Retrospective consisted of 20 historical films hardly known outside India but regarded as landmarks of Indian film history between 1956-58. These included 'Light of Asia' (1926), 'Devdas' (1935), 'Achhut Kanya' (1936), 'Duniya Na Mane' (1937), 'Dr. Kotnis Ki Amar Kahani'

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<sup>27</sup> R.K. Gupta, *The Great Encounter. A Study of Indo- American Literature and Cultural Relations*, (New Delhi : Abhinav Publication, 1986).



(1946), 'Aaraiyyar' (1953), 'Do Bigha Zameen' (1953), 'Mother India' (1957) and 'Meghe Dhaka Tara' (1958).

V.K. Karanjia remarked that without the Historical Retrospective, 'the American viewers would not have got a true picture of Indian cinema : besides they would have missed many fascinating parallels between the cinema histories of the two countries'.<sup>28</sup>

The third and perhaps the most significant part comprised of 22 contemporary films by 19 directors - including stalwarts like Mrinal Sen, Shyam Benegal, Basu Chatterji, Girish Karnad and Govind Nihalani. Arthur Penn, the distinguished film director who inaugurated Film India spoke of classic distinction and the uniquely universal appeal of Rays' films.

An important contribution of Film India was to make American viewers realize that Ray was part of a rich and complex tradition and not a solitary figure. The section on contemporary Indian cinema was widely appreciated. These films 'presented a picture of India trying to understand and come to terms with her problems, her own being as it were'<sup>29</sup>. Mrinal Sen, the noted Indian film director remarked 'the best way to interest foreign audiences is to be strictly national and really capture the national milieu.'<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> B.K. Karanjia, 'Film India : Historical Retrospective', *Span* (December, 1998), p.49.

<sup>29</sup> C.D.G. 'India's New Cinema in America', *Span* (January, 1982), p.48.

<sup>30</sup> *ibid.*

The new film makers sought to present the reality of social Indian life in all its complexity, without distortion or exaggeration. Muriel Paters, director of Film and Broadcasting Asia Society remarked, "Film India produced a better understanding of India in the US which was going to change the perception in this country not only of Indian films but of India itself."<sup>31</sup>

In October 1989, the First Asian Film Festival was held in New York. Of course, one of the problems of such national displays is that the immigrant from the country from which the films come is hungry for spiritual contact with what was once home. But the American participation at Asia Society was quite formidable and in no way could it be ignored.

Kamal Hassan's antics in the Tamil film 'Pushpak Viman' won great admiration from Americans.

For the opening films, Satyajit Ray's 'Ganashatru', there was not even standing room available. Reaction to the film was uncertain; nobody quite knew how to react without feeling guilty. 'Ganashatru' was too different from the Ray they had known and adored for so long.<sup>32</sup>

Apart from a number of feature films, there was the 'Tribute to Doordarshan', which was a first for any Film Festival. This brain child of India - born Somi Roy took the

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<sup>31</sup> 'Ray's Retrospective Draws Crowds in New York', *Span* (January, 1988), p.45.

<sup>32</sup> Chidananda, 'Window on India Film and TV' *Span* (April, 1990), p. 14-15.

audience by surprise. Episodes from popular Television serials - including 'Rajani', 'Malgudi Days' and 'Satyajit Ray presents' - went of well enough, but the surprises lay in tele films such as 'Aravindan Marattam' that called for an audience response of very high quality, and are therefore limited in their appeal as far as numbers go. The selection gave this impression that all Indian Television programmes were oriented towards art and social purpose in the way that the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) is in the United States.<sup>33</sup>

A delightful movie was Pradip Krishen's 'In which Annie Gives it those Ones', a skilful exploration of a highly culture specific milieu peculiar to India's 'convent' or public school educated English-speaking crowd.<sup>34</sup>

An Indian film 'Birth', had won top honours at the Hawaii International Film Festival 1990. The first directorial effort of cinematographer Shaji N. Karun. 'Birth' had won the East-West Centre Award for the films that best promoted understanding among the peoples of Asia, the Pacific and the US.

Culture has definitely gone a long way in bringing India and United States together. India is known for its rich cultural heritage and has influenced many a nation such as America.

It is a noted fact that Indian cultural and religious milieu has affected the United States but whether this could forge better relationship between the two countries remains to be seen.

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<sup>33</sup>     ibid.

<sup>34</sup>     ibid.

## CHAPTER - III

### SOCIAL AND FAMILY PATTERNS

According to Nathan Glazer, the Asian Indians are characterized as a population as being "marked off by a high level of education, by concentration in the professions, by a strong commitment to maintaining family connections, both here in the United States (US) and between the US and India".<sup>1</sup>

The Asian Indian population in the United States is rapidly growing (34.9 thousand as of the 1994 Census). Yet, the support resources available to these immigrants as they continue to struggle, survive, and succeed in their new environment still remain unknown. According to Eisenstadt (1954, 1967)<sup>2</sup> an individual's 'readiness for change'<sup>3</sup> is a function of socio-psychological support received from his primary groups. This in turn facilitates economic adjustment and adaptation to the new society. Besides, immigrants generally rely more on their 'ethnic resources' than on external institutional agencies or organizations. Identifying the need for a critical appraisal of their adjustment experiences for the formulation of effective programmes was necessary. The following chapter would throw light on the following objectives:

1. to evaluate the comparative availability of social support to Asian Indians from four primary sources- siblings, other relatives, friends and neighbours.

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<sup>1</sup> Nathan Glazer, "Foreward" in P. Saran & E. Eames (Ed.), *The New Ethnics : Asian Indians in the US* (New Preager, 1976), pp. 6-7.

<sup>2</sup> Eisenstadt, S.N., *The Absorption of Immigrants* (Connecticut : Greenwood Press, 1954).

<sup>3</sup> V. Nandini Rao, V.V. Prakasa Rao and Marilyn Fernandez, 'An Exploratory Study of Social Support Among Asian Indians in the USA', *International Journal of Contemporary Sociology* (1990), vol. 27, no. 3-4, 1990, pp. 229-243.

2. to assess the need for specific types of social support and the extent to which support needs have been met by each of the primary sources, and
3. to determine the subjective appraisal-degree of satisfaction of support provided by each of the primary sources.

V. Nandini Rao, V.V. Prakasa Rao and M. Fernandez carried out an exploratory analysis of pilot data on the availability of and reliance on primary social support among a sample of 236 Asian Indian immigrants in the US. They were selected non-randomly through friends in 10 states during the fall and spring of 1986. Self-addressed stamped envelopes along with questionnaires were mailed to these contact persons who distributed them at ethnic association meetings and social and religious gatherings. The sample consisted of 68 percent males and 32 percent females with the average age being 35.74 years.

### **SOCIAL SUPPORT MEASURES**

Since a multi-method assessment of support has distinct advantages over single item approach (House and Kahn, 1985)<sup>4</sup>, two measures of social support were included.

#### **(a) Structural Dimension : Availability of Social Support**

Three questions were used to measure the availability of support. The first asked "How many relatives and friends do you think you can count on for help." The respondents were required to provide the number of 'relatives', 'Indian friends', 'American friends', 'Indian neighbours', and 'American neighbours' they could rely on. The second question

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<sup>4</sup> House, J.S. and Kahn, R.L., *Measures and Concepts of Social Support*, Chapter 5 in S.Cohen and S.L. Syme (Ed.), *Social Support and Health* (New York, Academic Press, 1985).

was "how often do you visit your siblings, relatives, friends, and neighbours?" The third question posed was "how often do you talk to your relatives and friends on the phone?".<sup>5</sup>

**(b) Functional Dimension of Social Support**

The social support items were grouped into three categories: (I) instrumental help, (II) information help and (III) emotional help. The respondents were asked about the frequency with which they received help on each of the items over the last one year. The respondents were also requested to indicate separately the degree of help provided by their brothers/sisters, relatives, friends and neighbours.

**FINDINGS**

**Structural Dimension of Support**

The respondents had on the average 2.5 siblings and 3.4 relatives in the US. The number of friends reported by the respondents exceeded the number of siblings and other relatives. Among friends, Indian friends were more numerous than American. Further, Indian friends also predominated among those who could be relied on for help.

Data on frequency of visits reported that friends were the most likely to be visited, followed by neighbours.

Although neighbours were visited less frequently than friends, nearly a third of the respondents claimed to do so at least once a week or once a month. In contrast, siblings and other relatives were visited far less frequently, say once in six months or once

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<sup>5</sup> V. Nandini Rao, V.V. Prakasa Rao and Marilyn Fernandez, 'An Exploratory Study of Social Support Among Asian Indians in the USA', *International Journal of Contemporary Sociology* (1990), vol. 27, no.3-4, pp.229-243.

in a few years. Geographical proximity to friends and distance from siblings and relatives may be one reason for the closer contact with friends than with relatives.<sup>6</sup>

### **Functional Dimension of Support**

With regard to instrumental, emotional, informational support, it was observed in the study that the support was the highest for friends, followed by brothers/sisters, relatives and neighbours.<sup>7</sup> Thus, not only did Asian Indians in the US have more friends than siblings and other relatives as possible support resources, friends had also been the most frequent providers of support.

Descriptive and qualitative studies done by Saran (1980), Amarasinghem (1980), Desai (1980) and Desai and Mehra (1979) also suggest that the gap and discontinuity in familial support faced by Asian Indian when they immigrate were patched by their friendship is not only a major mechanism of adaptation but also helps compensate for the loss of support inherent in uprooting.

The findings for the informational and emotional support dimensions were similar to that of instrumental help where friends have been the most frequent sources of support. The most common type of emotional support provided by all sources was to let the respondent know that the source would always be around if he/she needed assistance. Again, friends were most likely to offer this type of support, followed by brothers and sisters, relatives and neighbours.

Thus, Asian Indians appear to be less self-sufficient in their emotional and informational support needs than in their instrumental needs.

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<sup>6</sup> *ibid.*, pp.259-270.

<sup>7</sup> *ibid.*

Other similar studies have also shown (e.g., Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswick, Levinson and Sanford, 1950, Lipset, 1960)<sup>8</sup> That these characteristics, to a large extent, facilitate learning of new roles, create an openness to change, and increase the chances of successful adjustment. Asian Indians migrating to the US came not as refugees but as deliberate seekers of economic gains difficult to attain in India. Since many of them occupy higher rungs of the economic ladder, their dependence on friends, siblings, other relatives and neighbours for instrumental support appears minimal.

In contrast, the relatively greater need for emotional and informational help may reflect feelings of uprootedness despite their long duration of stay in the US. Thus, Indian immigrants although successful in material terms, need the emotionally supportive networks that characterize their life back home. Besides, seeking information is an important mechanism for coping with not only the psychological stress and strains of uprooting but also with practical problems like better housing, children's education and employment.

### **Subjective Dimension of Support**

Regarding satisfaction with help provided, the respondents were equally, if not more, satisfied with the help received from their relatives than from their friends. This is despite the fact that respondents had more friends than relatives and friends were more often sources of support than siblings and relatives. The mean satisfaction score for siblings support was the highest, followed by relatives and friends. The lowest mean satisfaction score was for neighbours. It has been observed that despite the relatively limited availability of support from relatives, the greatest satisfaction is derived from familial support.

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<sup>8</sup> Adorno, T.W., Frenkel-Brunswick, E., Levinson, D.J. and Sanford, *The Authoritarian Personality* (New York : Harper and Row, 1950).



On the other hand, the lesser satisfaction with friendships, despite being the Indian ideal of friendship in their immigrant lives. To Indians, an ideal friendship is enduring and inclusive, suggesting interdependence of interests and respectively of obligations (Desai and Coelho, 1980).<sup>9</sup> Given their busy schedules, many immigrants possibly find it difficult to sustain friendship at the intensity that they find nurturing. Such unmet needs of satisfying support relationship are potential sources of strain in the Indian immigrant community.

A study undertaken of such kind suggests that Asian Indians are fairly self-reliant in different aspects of their immigrant lives. For example, the majority of the respondents claim they generally have not needed or used help from their siblings, other relatives, friends and neighbours over the year. Such perceptions may perhaps explain why Asian Indians are considered to be well adjusted to life in the US.

Privacy can be defined as an outcome of a persons wish to withhold from other certain knowledge as to his/her past, present or future experience and action. Privacy is concerned with (1) self-definition and self-identity, (2) the interface of the self and others, and (3) relationships between and person or group and others (Altman, 1974)<sup>10</sup>.

The notion of self-identity is central to human social behaviour (Altman, 1974)<sup>11</sup>. To function effectively with others requires some understanding of what the self is, where it ends and begins, and when self-interest and self-expression can be exhibited. Privacy

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<sup>9</sup> Prakash N. Desai and George V. Coelho, 'Indian Immigrants in America : Some Cultural Aspects of Psychological Adaptation', pp.363-386 in P. Saran and E. Eames (Ed.), *The New Ethnics : Asian Indians in the United States* (New York : Preager, 1980).

<sup>10</sup> Altman, I., 'Privacy : A Conceptual Analysis', pp.3-28 in D.H. Carson (Ed.), *Man-Environment Interaction : Evaluations and Applications* (Stroudsburg, PA : Dowden, Hutchinson and Ross, Inc., 1974).

<sup>11</sup> *ibid.*

mechanisms serve to define the limits and boundaries of the self. By being able to change the permeability of the boundaries around oneself, a sense of individuality develops.

Post research on privacy has concerned itself with the changes in an individuals definition of privacy as a function of development (Wolf and Laufer, 1974)<sup>12</sup> and changes in privacy preferences as a result of environmental variables like family size and crowding (Marshall. 1972)<sup>13</sup>.

The Asian Indian culture emphasize the group and togetherness while the American culture emphasize individuality and privacy.

Individuals, raised in India value the group over the individual, are less mobile and emphasize self-sacrifice for the sake of the group (Khatri, 1983, Lamb, 1975).<sup>14</sup> In India, the individual is usually thought of in a family setting (Lamb, 1975).<sup>15</sup> Contacts are maintained regularly with kin and obligation is owed even to distant kin. The kinship group has a closeness which is inconceivable in the American culture. This type of kinship or family is called the 'joint family'.

In the Indian culture, most individuals grow up in this type of extended family. For the purposes of this chapter the terms joint family and extended family will be used interchangeable. A joint family includes kinsmen, and generally embraces four to five living generations. It is a group composed of a number of family units living in separate rooms of the same house. These members eat the food cooked at one hearth, share a common income

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<sup>12</sup> Wolf, J., and Laufer, 'The Concept of Privacy in Childhood and Adolescence', pp.25-64 in D.H.Carson (Ed.), *Man-Environment Interactions : Evaluations and Applications* (Stroudsburg, PA : Halsted Press, 1974).

<sup>13</sup> Marshall, N. J. 'Privacy and Environment', *Human Ecology* (January, 1972), pp. 93-110.

<sup>14</sup> Khatri, A. A., 'Some dimensions of Asiatic Family : A Quantitative Evaluation', *Journal of Comparative Family Studies* (1988), no.19, pp.261-272.

<sup>15</sup> Lamb, B.P., *A World in Transition* (New York : Preager Publishers, 1975).

and common property and are related to one another through kinship (i.e., a father and his sons or grandsons or and set of brothers with their sons and grandsons (Gupta, 1974)<sup>16</sup>. According to Murdock (1961) an extended family consists of two or more nuclear families affiliated through an extension of the parent -child relation, rather than that of the husband wife relation, i.e., by joining the nuclear family of a married adult to his/her partner in the joint family. an older man, his wife, his unmarried children and his married sons and their wives and children live under a single roof or in a cluster of dwellings.

Being raised in joint families, Indians may be expected to be more family-oriented and less individual oriented. (Dhruvarajan, 1988).<sup>17</sup> Indians are more familial and more involved with their kin than Americans sometimes, these family ties even interfere with the Indians' individual achievement and impedes their nobility (Medora, Woodward and Larson, 1988)<sup>18</sup>. In the Indian joint family many people live and eat together in one house. Family life is characterized by closeness, mutuality of interests strong primary group controls and mutual assistance in time of need (Conklin, 1988)<sup>19</sup>

In addition to differences in cultural norms and family structures. Indians and Americans may experience different levels of crowding in their social environments.

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<sup>16</sup> Gupta, G.R., *Marriage, Religion and Society : Pattern of Change in an Indian Village* (New York : John Wiley and Sons, 1974).

<sup>17</sup> Dhruvarajan, V., 'Religious Ideology and Interpersonal Relationships within the Family'. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies* (1988), no.19, pp.273-285.

<sup>18</sup> Medora, N., Woodward, J.C. and Larson, J.H., 'Adolescent Loneliness : A Cross Cultural Comparison of Americans and Asian Indians', *International Journal of Contemporary Sociology* (1988), no.28, pp.204-211.

<sup>19</sup> Conklin, G.H. 'The Influence of Economic Development on Patterns of Conjugal Power and Extended Family Residence in India', *Journal of Comparative Family Studies* (1988), no. 19, pp. 187-205.

Compared to most Americans, most Indians grow up in relatively large families and dense neighbourhoods (Chekki, 1974).<sup>20</sup>

It was concluded through various researches that Americans would have a significantly greater need for privacy than Indians. However we must bear in mind that social, cultural and economic forces have effected the nature and quality of family life in India. These factors are responsible for introducing new elements of self-centredness, independence and individuality in Indians. According to Lamb (1975) :

The young have traditionally been expected to confirm, to obey authority to submit to rigid, to adapt themselves to the customs and mode of living of the group to which they belong. Today, students are beginning to think of themselves as individuals rather than as members of a group. A new concern with ambition, initiatives, self-development and social justice is challenging the old respect for established order.<sup>21</sup>

Therefore, it can be concluded that the modern Indian college students show lot of similarity to American college students than ever before and hence, have more similar needs for privacy.

In contrast to other types of privacy, it has been observed that Indians would have higher need for anonymity than Americans. Since most Indians reside in large metropolitan areas and live in relatively crowded home and neighbourhoods for Indians the best way to have privacy is to 'blend into a crowd'.

Indians residing in the US also report a lower need for reserve. The Indian need for a lower degree of reserve could be attributed to other characteristics of Indian culture, i.e., the

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<sup>20</sup> Chekki, D.A., *Modernization and Kin Network* (London, E.J. Brill, 1974).

<sup>21</sup> Lamb, B.P., *A World in Transition* (New York : Preager Publishers, 1975).

tendency to be relatively closed, secretive, non communicative and reserved compared to western culture (Ramu, 1977)<sup>22</sup>. Thus, Indians may more naturally desire and expect to communicate less about themselves than Americans. In contrast, in the American culture, there is relatively more emphasis on openness and self-disclosure.

Indians also reported a significantly lower need for intimacy when compared to Americans. The Indian culture does not emphasize open communication, intimacy and self-disclosure as much as the American culture (Yelsma and Athappilly, 1988)<sup>23</sup>. Intimacy is a measure of "size of unit" for which privacy is desired. Since Indians value the larger family or group over the individual, they may be expected to have a lower need for an intimate relationship with a single person.

Indians reported a "significantly lower need for seclusion when compared to the Americans. Most Indians are raised in urban areas in relatively small homes with several family members residing in the same household. Since most Indians are raised in dense environments where seclusion was not likely to be available, they were not expected to need seclusion as much as the Americans.

Indians reported a significantly less need for solitude when compared to Americans. Most Indians are raised in a joint family system which values togetherness and companionship and a crowded community environment and thus seeking solitude may be difficult. Thus, solitude like seclusion is not greatly valued or needed in Indian families.

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<sup>22</sup> Ramu, G.N., *Family and Caste in Urban India* (Delhi : Vikas Publishers, 1977).

<sup>23</sup> Yelsma, P., and Athappilly, K., 'Marital Satisfaction and Communication Practices : Comparisons Among Indian And American Couples', *Journal of Comparative Family Studies* (1988), no. 19, pp. 37-54.

These differences appear to reflect cultural values, differences in family structure and value. the density of the home and community environments of the Asia Indians who have immigrated to the US in the past few decades.<sup>24</sup>

The Asian Indians who came to the US as immigrants starting in 1968-69, tended to be between the ages of thirty and forty. Those who came as students, and then changed their status to permanent residents, were in most cases below 30 years of age. The majority of them came from middle class backgrounds, and lived in urban sectors. At least 90 percent had college degrees or professional diplomas. While wives tend not to have the same educational background, they do have some college education, in most cases.

It must be pointed out that, because of the immigration laws, Indians who come here are professionals or atleast skilled people. The largest number of these immigrants are engineers and physicians, among other professionals are professors, accountants, and businessmen. In many cases, wives and adult children also work. Some Indians are in skilled or semiskilled jobs. By these occupational indices, the Indian community can be distinguished from may other ethnic group in New York City. The average family income is above fifteen thousand dollars per annum.

The profile of Indian immigrants provides an interesting phenomenon in the context of their structural assimilation perhaps, because of their educational background, it was much easier for them to fit into the structural part of American society. For example, their earnings are high, they own property, live well and gradually, through their organizational strength, are also trying to exert themselves politically, as noted in the 1992 presidential election.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>24</sup>     ibid.

<sup>25</sup>     Paramatma Saran, 'New Ethnics: the Case of the East Indians in New York City', *Source Book on the New Immigration Implications for the US and the International Community* (NJ, 1998), pp. 303-311.

Krishna Srinivasa, owner of a computer consulting firm in Smyrna, Georgia, and Republican activist, had mobilized 128 members of the Indian community from the state to attend a fund-raising dinner in Atlanta for the Bush-Quayle campaign speaking on the occasion. President Bush praised Srinivasa 'for his wonderful contribution of energizing... the Indian community, all great, loyal Americans'.<sup>26</sup>

Asian Indians of Democratic persuasion also were actively engaged in raising funds for the Democratic presidential candidate Bill Clinton in 1992.

One of the principal organizers of the May 29, San Francisco fund raiser for Clinton was also an Asian Indian called Darshan Singh, a businessman and the city's parking commissioner. Addressing a gathering of about 100 Indian Americans, Clinton said, "the Indian community in America is a shining example of devotion to the family, work and responsibility and the whole nation should be grateful to you for the example you are setting". He added... "together we can bring the United States and India closer".<sup>27</sup>

However, their cultural assimilations are minimal. A look at the Indian community clearly suggests that there is a strong desire to maintain their cultural heritage. The nation of ethnicity remains strong and is also perceived as desirable.

It has been observed by various scholars that Indians can be put into three categories with respect to their cultural assimilation into American society.

1. those who claim to have become completely Americanized (a very small portion, though);

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<sup>26</sup> US Election 1992, *Span* (July, 1992), p.47.

<sup>27</sup> *ibid.*, p. 47.

2. those who carefully maintain their Indian heritage, and at the same time accept new values and consider themselves as part of the mainstream of American life (a reasonably large portion); and
3. those who are highly conscious of their Indian heritage and want to keep it intact. They generally resist new values and live as marginals and this constitute the largest portion of the Asian Indians.

### **ADOPTION PATTERNS OF INDIA IMMIGRANTS**

At this point we shall examine patterns of adaptation in the areas of family, economics, education and politics.<sup>28</sup>

#### **Family :**

A large number of the Indians who emigrated to the United States did not belong to the joint families. Even those who belonged to a joint family in most cases lived independently in India. Therefore, coming to the US and living in a nuclear family did not pose any serious problems for Indians. However, the lack of primary group relationship and community support did create a sense of alienation for them.

In order to examine patterns of adoption of Indians in the context of the family, we would focus on (a) patterns of relationship between spouses and (b) patterns of relationship between children and parents.

In a traditional society like India, where family structure is essentially patriarchal, marriages are arranged and the husband is the bread earner and thus, the supremacy of

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<sup>28</sup> Marshall, N.J., *Orientation Towards Privacy : Environmental and Personality Components* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of California-Berkeley, 1970.



husbands generally prevailed. The wife remained contented with supervising household activities and maintaining close ties with the husband's family and relatives as well as her own relatives, and also found herself busy with neighbours and friends within the community. This, in most cases, contributed to loving and stable relationship between husbands and wives.

After coming to the US both husbands and wives, especially waves, found themselves in a different environment. Many things which had kept wives busy and contented in India were simply not present in the new environment. This led to a search for jobs on the part of wives, most of whom found some sort of employment for example as salespersons, book keepers, or secretaries.

As a result of change in the status of wives, their roles also changed. They simply were not able to keep up with the household work and care for husbands as they had done in India.

Husbands on their part found their jobs more taxing and demanding, coupled with long hours of commuting. At the same time there was no community and social support for them. Their wives economic independence also posed some concern and threat. These are some of the factors responsible for creating strains in the relationship patterns of husbands and wives. However, their early socialization, very strong commitment to marriage and the family, and greater tolerance have greatly helped them to deal with the new realities of life. Aside from some almost negligible exceptions, we found that the relationships between husbands and wives remained amicable, and that there has been reasonable success in maintaining stability.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Paramatma Saran, 'The New Ethnics: The Case of the East Indians in New York City', *Source Book on the New Immigration Implications for the US and the International Community* (NJ, 1978), p. 279.

As we look into the patterns of relationship between children and parents, we find that it is not as smooth as those between spouses and often creates serious confrontations. This is more apparent in those families where children have attained the age of 14 or 15.

Parents want to maintain the traditional authority structure in their families and often ignore the fact that the child's socialization is highly influenced by the environment outside the family. Children are generally more reasonable in that they recognize that their parents come from a different social and cultural background. However, they do not always understand why they should act as their parents want them to rather than as their peers do. In this case, peer group influence is more dominant than the family influence. Children also face a major identity crisis and find it very difficult to preserve their Indianness. As a result, the relationship between parents and children deteriorates. Because of the excessive love and affection for their children, and perhaps better understanding on the part of mothers, and also the fact that in most of the families children are less than ten years of age, the situation remains under control. However, there are some incidents which have resulted in complete breakdown of relationships and remain explosive.

### **Economics :**

The majority of Indians are professionals, or atleast skilled. Consequently, they have been able to find reasonably good jobs in their respective professions and have good incomes.<sup>30</sup>

In terms of their economic behaviour, they retain their traditional values and greatly emphasize saving patterns of leisure activities centre around family and friends, the standard

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<sup>30</sup> V. Nandini Rao, V.V. Prakasa Rao and Marilyn Fernandez, 'An Exploratory Study of Social Support Among Asian Indians in the USA', *International Journal of Contemporary Sociology* (1990), vol. 27, no. 3-4, pp. 245-246.

of living is good but comparatively low when gauged against the American counterparts. They are also property oriented, which has resulted in the purchase of property (house, land and stores). It is very clear that, economically, the Indian immigrants are rather successful. However, because of their value system, in many way they are in an advantageous position which places them in a unique economic status. This population, in terms of economic behaviour and its economic strength, is comparable to Jewish immigrants.

### **Education :**

In the sphere of education, Indians find themselves in an advantageous position. Although the majority of them come with college degrees or professional qualifications, as soon as they settle down they go to Americans school to enhance their qualifications. Because there is no language problem they do not face any serious handicap in the educational system here. They do face some difficulties though, because of their British educational background and their cultural values which are quite distinct from those of the American system. Scholars and academicians have been observed to have performed well in their respective fields and have received appreciation and acknowledgement for their work.

Children of these immigrants are also doing well in school. Some of them have received Repeats awards and various other scholarships. However, in some quarters there is some doubt about their continued success because of the influence of external factors. As they assimilate in the new society, they become more independent and act more in terms of their even values rather than the family tradition which is very strong in India. However, there is not yet sufficient data to give a clear picture at this time.

## **EMERGING PATTERNS OF LEISURE TIME ACTIVITIES**

Patterns of leisure time activities for the Indian community centres around friends and family. The pattern of visiting friends on weekends, without prior engagement was common during the earliest phase of immigration (1969-72).

People generally make plans for the weekend and invite friends specifically for dinner or lunch. Meeting friends along with family for dinner or lunch remains the most important leisure.

In recent times, going to movies on weekends is perhaps the most popular thing to do along with shopping. Many Indian singers, dancers and comedians are frequently visiting cities in the US and this seems to be catching the fancy of the India immigrants.

Eating out and going to Broadway plays or to concerts is prevalent only among a small proportion of the Indian immigrants.

Participating in the activities of various organizations seems to be growing and is prevalent among most Indians irrespective of level of assimilation in American society.

The chapter of Indian immigrants suggests many hypotheses to be tested and to establish a body of theoretical and substantive data on the new immigration.

An examination of the Indian community in the United States gives many insights and provides a new direction in the study of ethics, their patterns of adaptation, and processes of assimilation. Unlike older immigrant groups, the structural assimilation for Indians is relatively smooth. Their behaviour patterns and attitudes suggest a strong sense of ethnicity and its desirability, and growing support for cultural pluralism.

## CHAPTER-IV

### LINKAGES WITH THE HOME COUNTRY

The Asian Indians residing in the United States continue to be in touch with India, whether it be in the field of investment, in social or cultural sphere. The bond between them and their families here is still intact, although there are sad instances where the relations have snapped. However, this chapter would focus on the ways in which they are still attached and linked to India—the country of their origin.

The air is thick with talk about NRIs these days. Not that Non Resident Indians (NRIs) have not been in the news since the early 1970s, or that the Indian public need to know any more about them in glossy and superfluous terms.

Here it is necessary to know the definition of an NRI. According to the Reserve Bank of India :

An NRI is an Indian passport holder who lives, works or does business abroad for an indefinite period. This includes students on study missions, diplomats and deputation staff from government, or public and private sectors. An NRI is also one who at any time had held Indian nationality, or persons of Indian descent and origin, now holding the citizenship of other countries.<sup>1</sup>

NRIs have till recently been India's principal source of foreign exchange. There has always been extensive talks about increasing the flow of Non Resident Indian investments since the NRIs are prospective investors.

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<sup>1</sup> *The Times of India* (New Delhi), 14 December, 1986, p.6.

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The NRIs way back in 1986 had put forward their demand for a 'single window' to deal with offers of investment to avoid delay in establishing the ventures.

An estimate of 614 applications from NRIs had been processed during 1985, a total of 305 applications were cleared and in the first six months of 1986, requests for investment by 96 NRIs was handled paving the way for implementation of high technology-oriented ventures. The total NRI investments in India amounted to Rs. 250 crores.<sup>2</sup>

The Chairman of the first Indian Venture Corporation, Mr. Rajan K. Pillai formed the corporation to promote both investments in new enterprises and start research and development activities in India. The Corporation would assist talented Indian professionals and enterprises, both in India the US to start new ventures. Major industrialists in India ever since have been included on the board of directors of the Corporation.

Pre 1986 individual NRIs and companies were allowed portfolio investment in shares and debentures through stock exchanges upto 1% of the equity to an overall ceiling of 5% of NRI investment.

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<sup>2</sup> *The Hindu* (Madras), 5 September 1986, p.6.

One proposal considered by the Finance Ministry was to allow the NRIs to apply for shares without any application amount but against bank guarantees for the amount. For this purpose new guarantee forms were devised by the Reserve Bank.

This proposal is being considered since the NRIs have complained of several difficulties in applying for allotment of shares from public issues of Indian companies. There have been complaints of inordinate delays in allotment of shares resulting in funds getting blocked.

The Finance Ministry is also considering a scheme under which deposits made by NRIs on non repatriable basis are allowed a higher rate of interest compared with the rate of interest allowed on deposits made on repatriable basis.

Another proposal is to allow the capitalization of preliminary expenses incurred in foreign exchange by the NRI promoters towards travel and total charges in India before the project is approved by the government.

NRIs are uncertain of returning to India but their effort is to something back home for the benefits of relations or community at large. They can invest in the bonds, and if for any reason, they have to drop the idea at a later day, they can transfer the bonds against US dollar to another NRI who might be needing funds for use in India. Thus, a development of a secondary market in bonds is possible.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> *Financial Express*, 5 December 1986, 40 p.c. equity state likely. New schemes to woo NRI funds on cards.

Apart from investment by the NRIs in India, education and culture is yet another field whereby Asian-Indians are in touch with the mother country and a lot of it is at the initiative of the US Government.

The Indo-US Joint Commission, along with its four sub-commissions was established in October 1974 when U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger visited India. The Joint Commission was set up to explore the possibility of fostering mutually advantageous cooperation between the two countries in the economic, commercial, scientific, technological, educational and cultural fields with the view to further strengthen the friendly relations between the two countries.

Under the aegis of the Joint Commission, three sub-commissions dealing with :

- a. Economics and commercial
- b. Scientific and technological, and
- c. Educational and cultural cooperation were initially set up.

The terms of reference of the sub-commission on education and culture were :

- a. to review and recommend programme, plans and priorities for cooperative efforts, to facilitate the interchange of people, materials and ideas in the broad fields of education, scholarship and such areas of cultural endeavour as performing art, Fine Art, libraries and museums, sports and mass communication; and



- b. to review periodically the progress and functioning of existing programmes and arrangements, making recommendations as may be appropriate.<sup>4</sup>

Later one more Commission dealing with bilateral relations in the sphere of agriculture was also set up.

Each sub-commission had a co-chairman from both sides. Initially it was proposed by the Ministry of External Affairs that the co-chairman for the Indian side might be an Additional Secretary/Joint Secretary from the concerned department dealing with education and culture. The then Indian Ambassador to US, T.N. Kaul met the then Education Minister and informed him that from the US side, the Education and Culture sub-commission would be headed by Prof. Robert Cohen, a former University President.

After consultation with the Prime Minister's Secretariat, the Ministry of External Affairs issued an Official Memorandum on 26.11.97, indicating the names of the Indian co-chairman on the three Sub-Commission as follows.

(a) **Economic and Commercial Sub-Commission**

*Leader* : Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs

*Alternate* : Additional Secretary Leader, Ministry of Commerce

(b) **Science and Technology Sub-Commission**

*Leader* : Dr. B.D. Nag Chaudhari Vice-Chancellor, Jawaharlal Nehru University

*Alternate* : Secretary

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<sup>4</sup> Details taken from Background Note on the Indo-U.S. sub-commission on Education and Culture (New Delhi, Department of Culture, Government of India), p.1.

*Leader* : Department of Science and Technology

**(c) Education and Culture Sub-Commission**

*Leader* : Shri C. Parthasarathy, Formerly Vice-Chancellor, Jawaharlal Nehru University

*Alternate* : Additional Secretary

*Leader* : Ministry of Education and Social Welfare.<sup>5</sup>

It would be clear from the above facts that we started with the practice of having a senior officer of the concerned department at least as an alternate leader. On the American side however, the practice of nominating an alternate leader did not exist.

At present the three other sub-commissions are headed by secretaries of the concerned departments from the Indian side as co-chairman. Sub-Commission on Education and Culture has all along been having a non-official academician as a co-chairman with secretary/Additional secretary as the alternate co-chairman.

The practice in the past was to decide the composition of the Indian delegation for each meeting of the sub-commission immediately before the meeting by the Ministries of Education and External Affairs. The composition of the delegations were decided generally on the basis of functional need as per agenda of each meeting. On the American side however, they were continuing with a majority of the same persons as member of their delegation. Therefore, in order to provide continuity, it was decided from 1981 to fix the term of the Indian co-chairman for four years and that of the other seven members of the Indian panel for two years.

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<sup>5</sup> *ibid.*, p.3-4.

The second meeting of the Indo-US Joint Commission was held in Washington on 6 and 7 October, 1975, approved the establishment of a Joint Committee on museums, holding of joint seminars, visitorships and fellowships, audio-visual and TV programmes etc. Both sides agreed to have programmes to award ten fellowships/visitorships per year to each others' nationals for two years - 1976 and 1977. The fellowships were for pre-doctoral and post-doctoral studies and the duration was between six and twelve months. The visitorships were for a short duration of three months each.<sup>6</sup> The third Indo-US Joint Commission meeting held in Delhi on 3 January, 1978, agreed to increase the number of fellowships/visitorships to fifteen per year.

The major areas of work of the sub-commission was:

- (a) Joint Museums Programme (Handled by the Department of Culture)
- (b) Joint programme for films and broadcasting  
(Handled in the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting)
- (c) Indo-American fellowship programme  
(Handled in the UGC and External Scholarships Division, Ministry of Education)
- (d) Indo-American Visitorship programme  
(Handled in the ICCR which is also the secretariat of sub-commission)
- (e) Programme for cooperation in the field of Education  
(Handled in the Ministry of Education and NCERT)
- (f) Joint Seminars Programme

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<sup>6</sup> Details taken from Annual Report of the Department of Culture Government of India (New Delhi, 1975-76), p.43.

(Handled in the concerned organization depending on the subject of the seminar. Future programmes are mainly in the field of social sciences)

(g) Arts and art studies including performing art

(Handled in the Department of Culture and ICCR)<sup>7</sup>

Of the above areas, there were two Joint Committees in respect of the first two programmes viz.:

- i) Joint Museum Committee and
- ii) Joint Committee for films and broadcasting.

The Joint Commission Agreement signed in 1974 mandated that the Indo-US, sub-commission on Education and Culture would undertake programmes in such areas of cultural endeavour as performing arts, Fine Art, libraries and museums. The Committee was involved in programmes in some of these areas, and over the years gradually expanded its purview. In order to encompass its broadening scope, the members renamed it the "Joint Committee or Cultural Heritage and Endeavour" in 1987. Its activities included areas such as :

1. Museum art, science, natural history;
2. Conservation of cultural artifacts;
3. Archaeological Science,
4. Libraries and Archives.
5. Visual and literary arts.

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<sup>7</sup> Details taken from Background note, no.1, p.5.

6. Performing Arts.<sup>8</sup>

The opening of the Indian economy after 1991 to global market forces followed by structural reforms evoked greater attention of the huge Indian diaspora. It led to intensification of commercial proposition among the Asian Indians in the US. To exploit the potential investments by the NRIs and to strengthen their bond with the home country the government of India took a lot of conscious steps. Various premiums were offered through several schemes to woo the Asian Indians settled in the US to invest directly or to create conditions for investments in various sectors.

The Government of India woke up to the massive investments made by the Chinese and Taiwanese repatriates in their respective countries, the magnitude of which crosses \$3 trillion. The same possibilities and opportunities could be created here for the Asian Indians in the US who are the richest of the Indian diaspora<sup>9</sup>. To materialise this, the Government took a number of steps since 1991.

It created conditions to provide every possible infrastructural facilities, convertibility in current account, maximum liquidity, less restriction, direct dealing in the capital market at home. This effort and the consequent follow up measures to liberalise the economy has led to a perceptible increase in the NRI investment in India.

The Asian-Indian community has also developed as a powerful forceful force in the United States to lobby for the Indian interest in varied quarters. They have

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<sup>8</sup> ibid, p.8.

<sup>9</sup> For details see *Manorama Year Book* (1994), pp.36-54.

progressively helped in image building to let the American MNCs enter into the Indian market. For many business conglomerates, India is a lucrative destination for its huge market and cheap but skilled labour force serving as the infrastructural input.

The last couple of congressional elections have brought into reckoning the Asian - Indian community as a cohesive unit successfully backing and funding the political parties, keeping in view their own interest. They have been quite successful in mobilising Senators and Representatives to protect Indian interests in vital issues like NPT, matters relating to arms supplies to Pakistan, trade sanctions, human rights, aids and cultural exchange. The Government of India has been tirelessly using the Asian-Indians to exercise their influences in their respective fields to help their home country in any possible way.

The element of nostalgia about their mother country has led to greater social, economic, cultural and religious linkages of the Asian-Indians with India. Festivities and special occasions like Vaisakhi, Holi, Navratri, Onam, Rath Yatras are celebrated with as much fun-fare in the US by the NRIs as it is here. These periods are also marked by increasing number of Asian-Indians coming back home for a family reunion which strengthens their touch with the roots.

An uninterrupted link with the home country has been facilitated by the information revolution and the vast reach of the electronic media. After most of the mainstream Indian newspapers, magazines, periodicals, business houses establishing their own websites on the Net, one wonders at the number of letters received by the newspapers via internet. These letters show concern of the Asian Indians about matters

and events of their home country. The letters received covers all the age groups and all generations.

Important in this regard is the large-scale software revolution in the country with the help of the Asian-Indians. After the economy was opened for global competition and free play by consumer driven goods, computer software has created their own ground in India, most of it is being pioneered by Asian-Indians. The American software companies have been very diligently being guided by Asian-Indian professionals in India that has led to the development of Bangalore as the Silicon-valley of India. The economic exchange has led to massive flow of foreign exchange to the Indian coffers. These factors have marked a steady linkage of the NRIs with India in the recent years.

The Non Resident Indians always come to India to look around for brides. Indian women are considered better than the Indian women born and brought up in the States. The newspapers are replete with such matrimonial advertisements. Marriages take place here where they have their relatives and friends, after which they proceed towards their country of profession.

The Asian Indians who have migrated to the United States have assimilated in the foreign society but still have tried and retained their values and ideas. The second generation Asian Indians, however, are different. Their acculturation to the foreign society is much greater than the first generation Asian Indians.

## Chapter V

### CONCLUSION

The present study has been a survey of the Asian Indians and their migratory placement in the United States since 1947. The focus is on the twin aspects of the Indian diasporic experience. One, the social and second, the cultural projections of the Indian populace. The period taken into account has been between 1947 end 1994. The years are indicative of India's independence and the recent administration of Bill Clinton.

The spirit of international cooperation which pervaded the US during the war and immediately afterward led many people to believe that the time had arrived for a liberalization of the immigration laws.<sup>1</sup> American participation in the United Nations and later the development of a foreign policy which placed the first line of defence in Western Europe, encouraged those who feel that international consideration should dominate in the formulation of immigration policy. On the other hand, the growing severity of the Cold War with the former USSR, stimulated a concern for national security among many Americans. The restrictionists resisted all efforts to liberalise the immigration laws, in the belief that such action would only weaken the nation during a

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<sup>1</sup> Congressional Record (26 July, 1947), p.10, 352.



critical period in its history. The final clash between these conflicting viewpoints occurred in the debate over the Mc Carren Omnibus immigration bill in 1952.<sup>2</sup>

Later came the Humphrey-Lehmen bill which we have seen is radically different from the Mc. Larren Walter measure.

The Humphrey Lehmen measure eliminated the Asia-Pacific triangle and established regular country of birth quotas of one hundred for the Asian countries.<sup>3</sup>

Clearly the immigration laws show a change from 'making it impossible' to 'making all Asian groups eligible'. Since the enunciation of the various immigration acts, immigrants from throughout the world have entered the United States in greater numbers than before.

In the wake of massive immigration followed by the policy of 1965, the Government came in for heavy criticism. It is feared presently that the large number of immigrants armed with professional knowledge would pervade the ever decreasing labour market, thereby curtailing the chances of the Americans. The growth of racialism and ethnic identity marked by violence for the past one decade has been alarming. Politico- economic compulsion on the one hand and the lopsided assimilation of the diasporic communities has prevented the development of the concept of 'melting-pot' in US.

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<sup>2</sup> Congressional Record (13 May, 1952), pp. 5089-90; (16 May, 1952), pp. 5330-1; (11 June, 1952), p. 1017. (26 June, 1952), p. 3215 (27 June, 1952), p.8263.

<sup>3</sup> Interpreted Releases ( 21 February, 1951), p. 67.

Warned by this, the immigration rules have been made stricter preventing the stay of the foreign students for more than the prescribed period. Indians no more can move into US at will, though professionals and business communities face little difficulties, the worst affected are the students going to the States for pursuing higher studies.

The religio-cultural profile of the new emerging immigrants in the United States. viz. the Asian Indians, has received increasing attention from scholars. Several studies have explored the changing phases of immigrant integration and assimilation into a new society in the United States.

Often questions have been raised regarding Indian immigrants like what happens to the values of Hinduism' and religiosity of Hindus as they migrate to the United States. There are many ways of looking at this phenomenon. In the chapter titled 'Religious and Cultural Activities' attempts have been made to focus on both formal and informal religious behaviour of the Asian Indians in the US.

It has been observed that religion plays and crucial role in the minds of the Asian Indians in the United States whether it is ISKCON<sup>4</sup> or Swami Chinmoya

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<sup>4</sup> International Society for Krishna Consciousness is an Organisation devoted to the promotion and propagation of the values and ideas associated with Lord Krishna. It was established by Srimad A.C. Bhakti Vedanta Swami Prabhupada. It has gained huge popularity all over the world and in the US. Many resident Americans are its followers.

Bhaktiyoga<sup>5</sup>. they have enjoyed massive followings not only from the Indian immigrants settled in the US but have to a great extent moved the Americans. Although initially the Hindu cults and practices bred distrust among American, later such Hindu Movements reinforced their faith and trust in Hinduism.

The same can be said about the Sikh community who were the earliest of the Indian communities to the United States. They have assimilated well into the American culture but have maintained their separate religious identity at the same time. The show of religiosity among them is quite prominent, as their linkages with their home country.

A few other Indian cults have had an unfathomable impact on the Americans. Bhagwan Rajnish, better known as 'Osho' alongwith his Ashram at Oregon strongly influenced many a citizen in the US and had a huge following at disciples. More recently Deepak Chopra is shooting into prominence with his cult and has disciples which reads the biggest names in Hollywood and a few top ranking politicians, industrial tycoons and top entertainers which has helped attracting the attention of the Americans to the Indian philosophy, culture and the way of living.

Indian culture has always appealed the Americans. Since 1950s innumerable Indian musicians and dancers have visited the United States. Their performance

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<sup>5</sup> This institution is devoted to the promotion of Yoga. It was founded by Swami Chinmoya and enjoys a huge following in the US.

contributed immensely to the growth of American awareness about Indians' cultural heritage.

Ravi Shanker, Bala Saraswati and Ali Akbar Khan have been showered with adoration and respect for their work in the field of music in the US, while Uday Shankar, Indrani Rehman and Shanta Khan have made their places in the field of classical dance in the hearts of the Americans.

Zubin Mehta is a name in itself and Indo- American relations received a boost in the sphere of music with his contribution.

In the field of Fine Arts too, American awareness of India grew to a great extent and so was in the sphere of movies where Satyjit Ray and Mrinal Sen have left a permanent place for themselves in the minds of the people in America.

It has been observed that Indian's report a significantly lower need for intimacy because the Indian culture does not emphasize open communication, intimacy and self disclosure as much as the American culture.

Indians also have reported a significantly lower need for seclusion when compared to the Americans. Since most Indians were raised in dense environments where seclusion was not likely to be available they were not expected to require seclusion as much as the Americans.

It has also been a noted fact that the second generation Asian Indians show trends different from the first generation Asian Indians - the former show a high degree of acculturation than the latter.

Hollace Kallen, an immigrant from Germany to the United States was responsible for enunciating cultural pluralism (1915) as an alternative to 'melting pot' theory. According to this model ethnic groups in America should retain their own identities while remaining loyal to the country and participating fully in national life. The Asian Indians have to a great extent followed his theory of cultural pluralism which set them apart from the other communities.

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