

## Farrukh Dhondy's Bombay Duck: A Study of Diaspora and Parsi ethnicity.

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### Abstract:

*Diasporas live in one country as one community but they also look across time and space towards another country. The migrants' Diasporas and their descendants in life experience the marginalization, fragmentation, discontinuity and displacement in the cultural "discourse" of their subject countries. Farrukh Dhondy as a typical representative of expatriate Parsi writer depicts through his 'Bombay Duck' his views on the history and culture of his demographically decreasing community. The novel brings about the bi-cultural identity of expatriates and has fast shifting scenes from one country and continent to another -Bombay and London, India and Europe. It is a story of two roughly equal parts addressing among much else the issues of religious fundamentalism. My purpose in this paper is to shed sharp lights on Parsi Diaspora and Parsi ethnicity.*

**Keywords:** Diaspora, Ethnicity, expatriates, alienation, religious fundamentalism, harmony etc.

### Introduction:

The diasporic literature of the post independence India is continuously enriched by the issues of Diaspora, transnationism, cultural mongrelization, hybridity and identity crisis. A complex framework in the field of global migration is formed by the cultural transaction, multiculturalism topographical shifting and fluid identity. Apart from these, the concepts of root, home nostalgia, memory, alienation, hybrid identity are interlinked with the diasporic phenomenon.

The arrival of the Parsi writers in a big way during the post 1980s on Indian literary scene has certainly added a new dimension to Indian writing in English. Parsi people of India immigrated first time in between 8<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> century from Khorasan Province of Iran to Sanjan area of Gujarat .They are a minuscule ethno religious community .The forced Islamaization of Iran compelled Parsis to flee their homes and sought refuge in India. The Parsi writers fall into two categories: The writer who lived and wrote in India, and expatriates. Dina Mehta, B.K.Karanjia, Keki Daruwalla can be cited

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as an example of stay at home writers. Farrukh Dhondy, Firdaus Kanga, Rohinton Mistry, Ardashir Vakil and Boman Desai are expatriate writers. The Parsis carry their ethnicity to the lands they move to. The Parsi Diaspora writers have contributed to fiction quite substantially both in quality and quantity.

Farrukh Dhondy is a multifaceted artist, a filmmaker, columnist, novelist, children's writer and an editor. He was born in Pune in 1944 and was raised in India till the age of twenty when he went to study abroad. He is a Parsi writer with westernized education and outlook. His novel 'Bombay Duck' (1990) is a diasporic novel with several cross cultural identity. The novel is divided into two parts. The two principal narrators of 'Bombay Duck' are a black English man, Ali Abdul Rahaman and the Parsi Xavaxa. In the first part the novel gives us the story of a strange family, life of Rahaman whose wife is in love with a Pak weapon supplier. The greatest moment comes when David Steam choose him to play the role of Lord Rama in his dream project, a stage adaptation of the epic "The Ramayana". In the first part of the novel, the focus is on India's rich cultural heritage and a messy present of communal tension and riots. Dhondy criticizes Rahaman for treating Indian culture as a commodity for commercial purpose.

In the second Part, the Parsi protagonist Mr.Xavaxa's involvement in the international traffic of babies is a serious offence from criminal point of view. The novel ends with Mr.Xavaxa's retrospections as he counts his days for deportation to India. In this part Dhondy explains the rituals, customs, and various ceremonies of the Zoroastrian religion. Along with these Dhondy depicts the painful issues of religious fundamentalism and intolerance. It provides almost factual, unsentimental portrayal of multi –culturism of England. His voice concerns over the loss of culture in the Indian context. Xerexes is a marginal man who is in search of his roots. From thematic point of view the novel presents a harmonious blending of country with Parsi community. His focus does not remain on one particular point of the novel but he deals with culture, religion communal disharmony, politics, child smuggling, Parsi theatre, sex, religious fundamentalism and overall Parsi ethnicity. In this way Dhondy highlights the voices of Parsi ethnicity by mingling the East and the West.

### **Conclusion:**

Diasporic writing across the world, to make a sweeping generalization, is concerned with spaces, landscapes and journeys. Since Diaspora involves a change of place through a journey, this is a self evident literary theme. The novel 'Bombay Duck' brings out so vividly the bi- cultural identity of expatriates and has fast shifting scenes from one country and continent to another Bombay and London, India and Europe. For thematic reason ethnocentrism gives voice to the marginality of the community which are probably strong motifs in the Post –Independence Indian Parsi

writing in English. Thus the work 'Bombay Duck' well illustrated the minority 'discourse' in Indian diasporic literature.

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