

**TRAPPED IN THE ABYSS OF DARKNESS:
CONFRONTATION WITH EXILE AND
MARGINALIZATION IN THE SELECT NOVELS OF
VLADIMIR NABOKOV**

A Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
award of the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

English

By

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Abstract

The present research entitled “Trapped in the Abyss of Darkness: Confrontation with Exile and Marginalization in the select novels of Vladimir Nabokov” explores the traumatic experiences of characters who suffer due to exile, otherness, marginalization, and psychological anguish. The study examines and investigates the moral strength of the Russian émigrés who have suffered from the darkest and most dazzling hours of existence. Nabokov in his works depicted the dehumanization, demonization, demoralization of Russian émigrés who are trapped in the abyss of darkness, the darkness of war, exile and multiple displacements. The various novels written by Vladimir Nabokov portray a galaxy of characters who confronted the repressive reality of existential terror, brutality and torture propagated by the Bolshevik revolution. As a result, millions of innocent people have lost their lives. Russia was never a colony under the British Empire, but it was colonized by its Tsars who colonized the subjects. The Russians revolted against the policies of the Tsars, and as a result, they had to face exile. Nabokov depicted the struggle of the Russian émigrés who experienced exile and faced multiple displacements.

The present thesis attempts a close study of Vladimir Nabokov’s *Mary*, *The Gift*, *Pnin*, *The Real Life of Sebastian Knight*, *Laughter in the Dark*, and *Lolita*. The works have been analyzed from a postcolonial perspective. The major postcolonial issues such as exile, otherness, and diasporic issues are explored.

Chapter first, "Postcolonial Theory: Issues and Perspectives," deals with post colonialism's historical growth. Postcolonial theory is a discourse that deals with the political, social, and historical impact on the mind and sensibility of the colonized ruled by the imperial rulers. The postcolonial theory assumes many shapes, but the basic idea is to explore the relationship between the colonial rulers and the colonized. The colonial powers oppressed them for centuries. The socio-cultural, political, and historical standpoint helps to understand the different ideas discussed by HomiBhabha and Edward Said in their postcolonial theories. Multiple diasporic issues, such as exile, otherness,

marginalization, etc., have been discussed in detail. The ideas and views of famous critics such as Edward Said, Homi Bhabha, Gayatri Spivak, and Griffith are discussed and used for subsequent chapters. Postcolonial theory depicts the plight of the Russian émigrés who were internally colonized by the Russian Tsars and experienced exile after the Russian revolution.

In addition to this, chapter second, "Vladimir Nabokov: His Life and Achievements," discusses the life and the philosophical vision and the impact of the Russian Revolution in his life. Vladimir Nabokov was born in 1899 in St. Petersburg, Russia. His mother was the daughter of a millionaire philanthropist and father Vladimir Dmitrievich. Nabokov belonged to the ruling class. He enjoyed a luxurious cultured life as his family was connected with prominent generals, writers, actors, musicians, and opera stars. Nabokov was a voracious reader, and at the age of fifteen, he had read all the great British writers, including Pushkin, Chekhov, and Gogol. Nabokov had witnessed evil forces that destroyed his peace of mind. In his *Speak Memory*, he narrates his harrowing life experiences; his childhood, his home, a fabulous inheritance. He witnessed war and revolution. His father was killed, and his mother died, and the entire family was in the grip of abject poverty, depression, and forced exile. The Nazis were decimating the Jews from Europe, and his wife was a Jew. He had to move from one country to the other for survival, and he evoked in his novels the feelings of pain, exile, and death. His family fled to Paris in 1937 and then fled to America in 1940. Nabokov, in his novels, depicts the pervasive vogue of evil forces in a lyrical style. He narrates the events of utter degradation, ridicule, and horror of being homeless. Nabokov evolved his technique of narration as his characters uncover the mask of reality. Nabokov's main focus in all his major novels is to depict the darkness of exile and the existence of death and fear of survival in contemporary society.

The Russian writer experienced the plight of the migration himself while he stayed in Germany and other parts of Europe during his exile. But Nabokov was different from other migrant writers. Like other migrant writers, he was not beating the bush about his problems in the foreign country. He adopted the culture and language of the alien

land. He was happy about his exile as he was familiar with the English language. Nabokov embraced his exile positively and grew as renowned literary excellence. Although he has depicted the plight of the émigrés who faced multiple displacements, characters like Pnin, Fyodor and Ganin show some positivity as they wish to settle in the distant country. It made Nabokov stand different from the other migrant writers.

Nabokov spent several years in America and died in Switzerland. His life was impacted by the strictness and rejection of individual freedom. He could not revisit his native country, but in his imagination, he enjoyed the bliss of his homeland and depicted the haunting memories of the émigrés in his novels. In his novels, Nabokov presented the life of Russian émigrés who experienced exile, displacement, alienation and led a horrible existence in the alien land. Nabokov experienced this disruption. He created many characters in his novels to depict the plight and shattered life of the Russian émigrés and their chaotic existence in the alien lands. Nabokov portrays how a common person's life goes through inevitable ups and downs during exile. The entire journey of the exiled is full of sacrifices and changes in his character. He described the painful condition of the émigrés to give a vivid picture of displacement and disruption in the life of his Russian émigrés.

Nabokov argues that memory plays a dominant role in the life of the émigrés. He is uprooted from his native land and leads an exiled existence. His nostalgic past helped him stay alive among unknown people. He portrayed the same in his works. As he describes, memory is an essential part of the life of an émigré. Memory allows the émigrés to enjoy the bliss of home in imagination. His attachment to his native cities brings psychological anguish to him as disconnection from the homeland disturbs him throughout his life. Nabokov accumulated multiple experiences as he migrated to Germany, France, and America. Nabokov's formative development as a trilingual and a migrant had shaped his literary imagination as his novels depicted the issues of transnational identity, cultural fusion, alternate identity, and marginalization in Europe and America. Nabokov believed that, in the alien world, man is ignorant, directionless, and confused as he is the victim of socio-political situations of the time. His novels dealt

with the issues of the uncertainty of life, chaos, disorder, and death. He wrote in *Strong Opinions* his modern views on existential reality and the human struggle for survival. In this Chapter, Nabokov's literary journey is traced. He began his writing with *Pnin* in Berlin to survive being penniless in his exile. The critics have remarked that the novel is straightforward as compared with the other books of Nabokov. The book consists of several episodes, each showing Pnin's pathetic condition in an alien land. And this unknown land was a place where he had spent almost a decade. In his novels, he has explored the psychological agony of émigrés.

Furthermore, chapter third, "Home, Dispossession, and Otherness," expounds the tragic experiences of the émigrés who were confronted with the problems of losing home and otherness. The chapter discusses in detail the binary of home and otherness. The binary of 'home' is 'alien land' and 'other' is 'self.' The Chapter discusses how the émigrés were treated as others in the alien land. The characters like Ganin, Pnin, Fyodor, Sebastian, and Lolita were the Russian émigrés living in the foreign land. The kind of problems all these émigrés underwent have been depicted vividly. Émigrés remained attached to their homeland psychologically, even though they knew the very fact that it was impossible to return home. Nabokov discussed in detail the concept of "Otherness" in his novels. It has been observed that an immigrant living in an alien land is not given equal rights. He is treated as an "Other." Nabokov's protagonists, such as Ganin, Pnin, Fyodor, Lolita, experienced homelessness and were treated as 'the other' by the local people.

Moreover, away from their homeland, Russian émigrés felt nostalgic. Their treatment in the foreign country was the primary cause of their homesickness. Characters like Ganin, Pnin, and Sebastian Knight tried to assimilate into the foreign culture and with people, but they were never welcomed. This made them think about the life they were leading in their homeland. When thrown away from Russia, the people came to Berlin for shelter; they were given nasty pension houses to live in. These pension homes were away from the main locality. It was dirty and filthy. The natives were not ready to

keep any social contact with the people living in these pension homes. It showed the severe condition of the émigrés.

Furthermore, the language was one of the main problems confronted by the Russian émigrés as they failed to develop intimate relations with the local people. They were cut off from their roots, and the locals did not respect or recognize them. They led a lonely and isolated life. In his novels, the problems, uncertainties, and dilemmas of the Russian émigrés have been explored. A migrant felt uprooted in the alien society. Their diasporic experiences were harrowing as they were subjected to humiliations, indignations, and discrimination throughout their life.

Similarly, chapter fourth, "Exile and Marginalization," discusses the impact of exile and marginalization experienced by the Russian émigrés. This chapter investigates the destructive effects of exile on the life of the characters. The issue of exile persists in Nabokov's several works, which portray the hellish life of the émigrés thrown out of their native country. Exile is a very tormenting experience of man. It leads to all forms of suffering and torments that are unimaginable. The fiction of Nabokov deals with the psychological and physical tortures of the people in exile. It is the painful experience of a man leading him to the loss of self. There are various forms of exile; the forced exile and self-imposed exile. The literature is packed with the adventures and heroic and romantic episodes in the life of exiled people. The novels of Vladimir Nabokov are social and historical documents of the culture of dislocation and exile. The worst condition of the Russian émigrés is the main focus of the study. The anguish of the Russian émigrés and the impact of exile on their social and personal life have been observed through the postcolonial lens. The migrants experienced uprootedness and alienation in their life, and how this condition of the immigrants affects their psyche has been analyzed vividly.

Besides this, Nabokov's characters like Ganin, Fyodor, Pnin, and Lolita were all exile victims. Exile threw them out of their homeland. It affected their social and psychological health. They were not connected to the alien community. They felt alienated. They were living in isolation. Their life was full of problems. They were treated as others in the alien country. Certain stereotypes were attached to them, which

made them stand different from the locals. Their identity was in a critical state. Almost all the major and minor concepts have been explored in this study.

Chapter fifth, "Psycho-Social Anguish and Trapped in the Abyss of Darkness," analyzes the psychological pain of the émigrés. The psychological impact is defined as the inhibiting effect caused by an oppressive environment on an individual's social life. The severe psychiatric disorder may affect an individual's life, and the symptoms of anguish may lead to the disruption of his family life. Russian Émigrés' social-psychological anguish affected their social, cultural, and personal life as well. They were not connected with the alien community. They were leading a lonely life. Exile was the main cause of their plight. Away from home, they were so disturbed that they could not maintain any healthy relationships. Their personal life was also disturbed as their social circle was not accepting them, and they were not given any social status. They were not given equal chances for the jobs or to grow. This was the prominent cause of émigrés' dilemma and psycho-social anguish. And Nabokov's novels are full of episodes that show the pathetic émigré life of the Russians among aliens.

This study has explored the value of liberty, individuality and democratic freedom and the impact of exile on the lives of the people. Emigrés experience the trauma as they are the victims of exile, but they used the art to get a release from the tensions and anxieties caused by their exile. They must adopt a positive attitude to life and use their exiled experience as a safety value for moral and social satisfaction. But at the same time, this is to keep in mind that this is not possible for every individual. They all became the victims of exile and later affected their personal and social life. To treat every individual equally has become the need of the time. It is one universe and must be a living place for everybody. And mockery must be demolished as it attacks the psyche of a person, which can be fatal.

Furthermore, exile, marginalization, and otherness must be the concern of all the governments. Migration is happening since time immemorial, so does the biasness and problems of the émigrés. There must be universal laws for migrants living overseas. There should not be any kind of discrimination with the immigrants based on color,

creed, religion, or language. The government should consider émigrés the citizens of the country. There must be equal policies for the natives and émigrés. Émigrés settle down in an alien country and work for the same, but their bad treatment in the alien land decreases the level of their morale. Along with this, émigrés too should not indulge in immoral acts. They must try their utmost to get settled in a foreign land. Initiatives from both sides will make even the alien land a better living place.

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Introduction

The present thesis entitled “Trapped in the Abyss of Darkness: Confrontation with Exile and Marginalization in the Select Novels of Vladimir Nabokov” deals with the issues of exile, otherness, displacement, alienation, homelessness, up-rootedness, and marginalization of the Russian émigrés. In its multiple forms of political banishment, exile has been a popular topic since antiquity. Russian people faced internal colonization of the tsars that forced them to leave their country and settled down in different parts of Europe. They had to face forced exile that ruined their life completely. In the novels of Nabokov, the issues of exile, otherness, and alienation are of paramount importance. His protagonist such as Ganin, Fyodor, Sebastian Knight, Pnin and Lolita suffered a lot in the alien land. In this study, such concepts have been explored to peep into the life and struggles of the émigrés living in alien lands. It has been observed that in the alien country, characters like Ganin, Pnin, Fyodor, Sebastian, and Lolita led a pathetic life as they were exiled from their homeland. They were treated as others in alien countries. And the worst part was that they had to face multiple displacements. They had cultural assimilation issues. They were not given equal opportunities to succeed, that made their life drastic and pathetic. In the foreign land, émigrés' strength shattered into pieces as they were considered just objects. Their ill-treatment in the alien country forced them to indulge in immoral activities and show the negative side in their characters.

Moreover, away from their homeland, Russian émigrés felt nostalgic. Their treatment in the alien country was the major cause of their homesickness. Characters like Ganin, Pnin, and Sebastian Knight tried to assimilate into the foreign culture and with people, but they were never welcomed. This made them think about the life they were leading in their homeland. Russian émigrés were not only socially marginalized in Berlin, but they were geographically marginalized also. When thrown away from Russia, the people came to Berlin for shelter; they were given nasty pension houses to live in. These pension homes were away from the local locality. It was dirty and nasty. The natives

were not ready to keep any social contact with the people living in these pension homes. It showed the drastic condition of the émigrés.

The present thesis attempts a close study of Vladimir Nabokov's *Mary*, *The Gift*, *Invitation of a Friend*, *The Real Life of Sebastian Knight*, *Laughter in the Dark*, and *Lolita*. The works have been analyzed from a postcolonial perspective. The major postcolonial issues such as Exile, Otherness, and Diaspora are of paramount importance.

The chapter first, "Postcolonial Theory: Issues and Perspectives," deals with the historical growth of post colonialism. Postcolonial theory is a discourse that deals with the political, social, and historical impact on the mind and sensibility of the colonized ruled by the imperial rulers. Postcolonial theory assumes many shapes, but the basic idea is to explore the relationship between the colonial rulers and the colonized who were oppressed by the colonial powers for centuries. The socio-cultural, political, and historical standpoint helps to understand the different ideas discussed by Homi Bhabha and Edward Said in their postcolonial theories. The worst condition of the émigrés, especially the Russian émigrés, is the main focus of the study. The anguish of the Russian émigrés and the impact of exile on their social and personal life have been observed. The migrants bear up-rootedness and alienation in their life, and how this condition of the immigrants affects their psyche, has been analyzed vividly.

The ideas and views of the famous critics such as Edward Said, Homi Bhabha, Gayatri Spivak, and Griffith are discussed, and in the subsequent chapters. Postcolonial theory is used to depict the plight of the Russian émigrés who were internally colonized by the Russian tsars. And when the people of Russia protested against the tsars and revolted, they were thrown out of the country. Their treatment in the hands of tsars was not more than the slaves. They had to take shelter in different parts of Europe. It was a hard step for anyone. They had to face exile. During exile, the kind of problems these émigrés had to face in the alien country is the basis of this thesis.

Chapter second, "Vladimir Nabokov: His Life and Achievements" discusses the life and the philosophical vision and the impact of the Russian Revolution in his life. The Russian writer wrote in various languages, and he experienced the plight of the migrants

himself while he stayed in Germany and in other parts of Europe during his exile. Nabokov was different from other migrant writers. Like other migrant writers, he was not beating the bush of his problems in the alien country. He adopted the culture and language of the alien land. He was happy about his exile as he was familiar with the English language. Although he has depicted the plight of the émigrés who faced multiple displacements, characters like Pnin, Fyodor and Ganin show some positivity as they have to wish to get settled in the alien country. It made Nabokov stand different from the other migrant writers.

Nabokov spent several years in America and died in Switzerland. His life was impacted by the strictness and rejection of individual freedom. He could not revisit his native country, but in his imagination, he enjoyed the bliss of his homeland and depicted the haunting memories of the émigrés in his novels. In his novels, Nabokov presented the life of Russian émigrés who experienced exile, displacement, alienation and led a horrible existence in the alien land. Nabokov experienced this disruption, and he created many characters in his novels to depict the plight and shattered life of the Russian émigrés and their chaotic existence in the alien lands. Nabokov portrays how a common man's life goes through certain ups and down during exile. The entire journey of the exiled is full of sacrifices and changes in his character. Nabokov described the disheartened condition of the émigrés to give a picture of displacement and disruption in the life of his Russian émigrés. In each chapter of this study, the impact of exile and displacement has been explored.

Nabokov argues that memory plays a dominant role in the life of the émigrés. He is uprooted from his native land and leads an exiled existence. His nostalgic past helped him stay alive among unknown people. He portrayed the same in his works. In his novel *Mary*, Ganin experienced a sense of loss. Memory is the most important part in the life of an émigré. Memory helps the émigrés to enjoy the bliss of home in imagination. His attachment to his native cities brings psychological anguish to him as disconnection from the homeland disturbs him throughout his life. Nabokov evolved his own technique of narration as his characters uncover the mask of reality. Nabokov accumulated multiple

Experiences as he migrated to Germany, France, and America. Nabokov's formative development as a trilingual and a migrant had shaped his literary imagination as his novels depicted the issues of transnational identity, cultural fusion, alternate identity, and marginalization in Europe and America. Nabokov believed that, in the alien world, man is ignorant, directionless and confused as he is the victim of socio-political situations of the time. His novels dealt with the issues of the uncertainty of life, chaos, disorder, and death. He wrote in *Strong Opinions* his modern views on existential reality and the human struggle for survival.

In this chapter, Nabokov's literary journey is traced. He began his writing with *Pnin* in Berlin to survive being penniless in his exile. The critics have remarked that the novel is exceptionally simple as compared with the other novels of Nabokov. The novel consists of several episodes, each showing Pnin's pathetic condition in an alien land. And this alien land was a place where he had spent almost a decade. In his novels, he has explored the psychological agony of émigrés. Nabokov has portrayed the fascinating characters of Ganin, Fyodor, Pnin, Sebastian Knight, and Lolita, who were Russian émigrés struggling in the alien land for survival. They were treated as the 'Other' by the local population. They were always under stress that they would never be treated equally in the alien land. Nabokov used the literary devices of black humor and comedy to present the ridiculous situation of Pnin, Ganin, Fyodor, and Sebastian. All these characters were longing to go back to their native homeland. Nabokov has depicted that longing for home is very strong among the migrants.

Furthermore, language was one of the main problems confronted by the Russian émigrés as they failed to develop intimate relations with the local people. They were cut off from their roots, and the locals did not give them any respect or recognition. They led a lonely and isolated life. In his novels, the problems, uncertainties, and dilemmas of the Russian émigrés have been explored. A migrant felt uprooted in the alien society. Their diasporic experiences were harrowing as they were subjected to humiliations, indignations, and color discrimination throughout their life.

Chapter third, "Home, Dispossession, and Otherness," explores the tragic experiences of the émigrés who were confronted with the problems of home and otherness. A home is a place, a man is attached psychologically. The chapter discusses in detail the binary of home and otherness. The binary of 'home' is 'alien land' and of 'other' is 'self.' The chapter discusses how the émigrés were treated as others in the alien land. The characters like Ganin, Pnin, Fyodor, Sebastian, and Lolita were the Russian émigrés living in the alien land. The kind of problems all the émigrés underwent have been depicted vividly. Émigrés remained attached to their homeland psychologically, even though, they knew the very fact that it was totally impossible to return back home. Nabokov discussed in detail the concept of "Otherness" in his novels. It has been observed that an immigrant living in an alien land is not given the rights the local people enjoy; he is treated as the "Other." The protagonists of Nabokov, such as Ganin, Pnin, Fyodor, Lolita, experienced homelessness and were treated as 'the other' by the local people.

Chapter fourth, "Exile and Marginalization," explores the impact of exile and marginalization experienced by the Russian émigrés. This chapter investigates the destructive effects of exile on the life of the characters. The issue of exile persists in several works of Nabokov, which portray the hellish life of the émigrés thrown out of their native country. Furthermore, Nabokov was able to adapt to the foreign soil by escaping the two totalitarian regimes. In his success story, we have to add on his knowledge of the English language and literary excellence. This literary excellence helped him come out the psychological pain he experienced during exile. Moreover, this expression of his pain is uniquely characterized by Nabokov. His characters like Ganin, Fyodor, Pnin, and Lolita were all the victims of exile. Exile threw them out of their homeland. It affected their social and psychological health. They were not connected to the alien community. They felt alienated. They were living in isolation. Their life was full of problems. They were treated as others in the alien country. Certain stereotypes were attached to them, which made them stand different from the locals. Their identity was in

a critical state. Almost all the major and minor concepts have been explored in this chapter.

Chapter fifth, "Psycho-Social Anguish and Trapped in the Abyss of Darkness," analyzes the psychological pain of the émigrés. The psychological impact is defined as the inhibiting effect caused by a stifling environment on the social life of an individual. The severe psychiatric disorder may affect the life of an individual, and the symptoms of anguish may lead to the disruption of his family life. Émigrés' social-psychological anguish affected their social, cultural, and personal life as well. They were not connected with the alien community. They were leading a lonely life. Exile was the main cause of their plight. Away from home, they were so disturbed that they could not maintain any healthy relationships. Their personal life was also disturbed. As their social circle was not accepting them, they were not given any social status. They were not given equal chances for the jobs or to grow. This was the prominent cause of émigrés' dilemma and psycho-social anguish.

The last chapter that makes the conclusion of the thesis analyzes the concepts and issues discussed in the previous chapters. After discussing all the things in detail in the previous chapters, we come to the conclusion that exile is never a boon to anyone. Although there are literary persons like Nabokov who consider exile a blessing for themselves, it is not the same for all the common people. Exile is a drastic experience for anyone. Leaving one's home is never easy for anyone. It shatters their strength into pieces. They feel nostalgic as they are deprived of basic human needs in the alien country. It made them think of their past life in the homeland and gave them a psychological pain that made their life pathetic.

Furthermore, we all need to ponder on one thought that nobody should be considered as other. It is the worst feeling ever, especially for the people who are living overseas. Émigrés must be treated as equal to the locals. Nobody wants to leave one's home intentionally. There are, definitely, some reasons behind ones' migration. Immigrants must not be treated as objects. It ruins a person psychologically, which later results in their indulgence in wrong actions or negative behavior. We all need to

contribute to make this world a peaceful place worth living. There must not be any place for otherness among people on the basis of caste, color, creed, or nationality. We all need to live in harmony.

In contemporary time, the world is dividing and fragmenting and different blocks are formed. As a result, the mobilization of the people is being limited due to cultural, political and geographical differences of the countries. Hence, the author can be explored in terms of power politics and resistance from Michael Foucault's perspective.

Though, this is an extensive study of the author from the diasporic and post-colonial perspective. Yet, the study can be designed in terms of multi-disciplinary approach. Moreover, it was not possible to visit and take interview of the personalities who were close to the author because through this we should have retrieved more information about the issues and problems discussed and explored by the author. Furthermore, the scholar should have met experts in the field of diaspora and post-colonial study and interview them and discussed the scope of the present thesis.

Chapter I

Postcolonial Theory: Issues and Perspectives

Postcolonial theory deals with the political, social and historical issues that affect the mind and sensibility of the colonized ruled by the imperial rulers. Post colonial theory assumes many shapes but the basic idea is to explore the relationship between the colonial rulers and the colonized who were exploited and oppressed by the colonial powers for centuries. The imperial rulers passed indiscriminate laws to rule the colonies; to exploit and plunder their natural resources and to impose on them the policy of divide and rule. Bill Ashcroft defines Post colonialism as:

Post Colonialism deals with the effects of colonization on cultures and societies. As originally used by historians after the second world war in terms such as the post colonial state, 'post colonial' had a clearly chronological meaning, designating the post independence period. However, from the late 1970s the term has been used by literary critics to discuss the various cultural effects of colonization. (Ashcroft 181)

Ashcroft et.al described post colonialism vividly that this theoretical concept forces the readers to visualize the after effects of colonization and imperialism. It is a historical period that describes a particular period of time. It displays the picture of the colonies or the people of the colonies. The main focus of post colonial theory is to study the kind of life people of the former colonies were leading and certain trends that affected their life. And as we know that post colonialism was a period of migration, so how migration affected their life is also one of the concepts to be kept under consideration. In the 1980s the postcolonial theory became popular with the scholars and professors and emerged as a wave of new historical and political areas of research endeavoring to imagine a world after colonialism. In America and in England this theory got momentum and many books were written on the aesthetics of post colonialism. It has been explored

that without understanding the post colonial theory, it is not possible to understand the exile literature. According to Ashcroft Post colonial theory emerges “from the inability of European theory” (11-13). In this regard Robert Young has defined post colonialism as, “a body of writing that attempt to shift the dominant ways in which the relations between western and non –western people and their worlds are viewed” (R.young 2). No wonder, the cultural theorists explore the problems and sufferings of the expat, homeless, needy, women, and subalterns. The issues of exile, marginalization, acculturation, and alienation are discussed intimately by Bhabha and Edward Said in their post-colonial theories. The migrants suffer up-rootedness, fragmentation and alienation in their life. Indian migration is one of the examples that show the drastic condition of the immigrants. The Indians moved to the different places in the world. Their experience of displacement and alienation is an example of the worst condition of the people in exile. They had to face humiliations, abuses, and physical tortures. This shows the brutality of the very self thrown over the others. This harsh treatment with the expats affected them psychologically that resulted into suicides, murders, and rapes. The psychological implications of this harsh treatment were severe, and there were many cases of suicide, wife murder and mental derangement among the émigrés. In this regard, Tyson has expressed his views beautifully. According to Tyson in *Critical Theory Today*, diaspora is a population of the colonized descendants who are separated from their native homeland (Tyson 421).

Postcolonial theory modifies our way to read texts. As we know that postcolonial period is time of displacement that has its merits and demerits, it has its effects on the very life of the people. It opened up a new world to the people and at the same time made them the victims of alienation and otherness which affected their life drastically. So we can aver that colonization gave birth to post colonialism. And to understand Postcolonial theory and post colonialism we need to trace the history of the same. Colonization gave birth to this prominent theory. Colonization literally means the policy to expand one’s authority over the other people. It is a kind of domination to exploit the subjects of another territory for the sake of power and economic dominance.

Ania Loomba's *Colonialism/ Post colonialism (1998)* explains, colonialism affects the relationships between the colonizer and the colonized. Same is the case with Russia but here the matter is a bit different as it was not colonized by any outer power but by its own imperial Tsars. Ganna Grebennikova states in his review paper of Alexander Etkind's book, *Internal Colonization: Russia's imperial Experience (2011a)*, "simply said, the people of Russia were the objects of colonization and the state acted as the colonizer". It is concluded that nowadays colonization is not studied just as British colonization of the entire world but different concepts are available like internal colonization. And this type of colonization is found in so many parts of the world even today. North Korea is the recent example. It is, too, internally colonized. People are being treated as objects. They are not considered human beings. The country is not colonized by any outer power but by its own rulers. Although imperialism and colonialism are two different terms as imperialism refers to a large empire's dominance over the weak country and colonialism means direct control by aggressive and military subjugation but in Russian context both run parallels as it was imperial colonization of the tsars that led to the exile of the people and intellect from the country. Internal colonization works on the same mechanism as does colonialism. Capturing the rights and the minds of the subjects is the main aspect of both the terms.

Decolonization led to the migration of the people forcefully or as a voluntary decision. And to its opposite, in the colonial/internal colonial period the migration took place due to imperial subjugation, war or slavery. Migration in the post modern period is totally different as it took place due to economic reasons. It does not matter what is the reason behind migration, the after effects are always severe, leaving the migrants socially and psychologically stressed. Keeping in mind all the problems of the migrants, such as alienation, up rootedness, isolation, identity crisis, and nostalgia, the literature dealing with the migration and identity shall be studied as post colonial literature.

Decolonization influenced the life of the colonized people a lot. It increased the forced and voluntary migration of the people. Displacement happened in a large scale and

people scattered over various parts of the world. War, slavery and imperial subjugation are the basic reasons of migration during colonial period and industrial revolution, economy and study are the basic reasons of migration during post colonial period. As indentured labor, they moved to other countries. In recent times people migrate to other countries for economic reasons. The people who migrated to other countries underwent harrowing experiences of exile, alienation, marginalization, otherness, nostalgia. They feel homesick. They carry a psychological burden over their head.

It is pertinent to note that the field of Postcolonial Studies has been gaining prominence since the publication of Edward Said's book, *Orientalism* (1978). The term "postcolonial" became more popular with the appearance of *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literatures* (1989) by Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin. Since then, the use of terms "Commonwealth" and "Third World" that were used to describe the literature of Europe's former colonies has become rarer. Although there is a considerable debate over the precise parameters of the field and the definition of the term "postcolonial" but in a very general sense, it is the study of the interactions between European nations and the societies they colonized. Post-colonial theory is about the social, political and historical impact of the colonial imperialist rule on the life and sensibility of the people. The imperialists colonized the people and destroyed their culture, history and social set up; they followed the policy of divide and rule and sapped their natural resources by force.

Post-colonial theory explores the issues of subalterns, marginalized, victims of socio-political turmoil, exile, home, and cultural dislocation. Displacement of immigrants pushes them to get settled in the alien country. After a span of time they make a community of their own which is later recognized as Diaspora. Diaspora is a group of people living overseas those who have left their countries to reside some other places. Tyson in *Critical Theory Today* describes the difference between the native land and alien land as, "Diaspora is a population of the colonized descendants who are separated from their native homeland" (Tyson 421). And in post colonial period exile and diaspora

are highly significant as they are related to each other. Exile is one of the migrations that led to the production of the diaspora. It is one of the major causes of displacement in the whole world which later affected the life of the migrants. Bhabha's *The Location of Culture*, "explore the complexities of a world marked by colonial and neo-colonial wars, counter-globalization movements and widespread cultural confrontation. We are faced with a world seemingly polarized and divided into discrete cultures" (Bhabha 3). Frantz Fanon expresses his view on the same as:

Every colonized people ... finds itself face to face with the language of the civilizing nation; that is, with the culture of the mother country. The colonized is elevated above this jungle status in proportion to his adaptation of the mother country's cultural standards (Fanon 18).

Doreen Massey states that "globalization has dissolved geographical boundaries and has dispensed with the idea of 'place as a source of belonging, identity and security'" (Massey 14). Massey's idea is highly significant as one's own place is the only source of identity for a person. Although globalization has changed one's life economically but the feeling of otherness and alienation in the alien country is much more severe. We feel safe and secure in our own land but this feeling lacks when we are at alien land. Rosemary. J. George in *Politics of Home* (1996) depicts the issues of "home and belonging" that are highly important with other post colonial critics. She argues that in literature "imagining a home is as political act as is imagining the nation", as both are a "display of hegemonic power" (Rosemary 9).

Edward Said is a renowned name of the Post colonial era. He gave new dimensions to the postcolonial theory. Edward Said wrote his trilogy *Orientalism* (1978), *The Question of Palestine* (1979) and *Covering Islam* (1981), and he demonstrated the often paradoxical nature of identity in an increasingly migratory and globalised world. Edward Said's identity and his cultural theory, shows something about complexity of cultural identity itself. Orientalism demonstrates the nature of power structure and the processes by which the West 'knows' the Orient. Orientals' texts give a different

meaning of identity shaped in complexities. Edward Said's cultural analysis is based on the fact that while post-structuralism dominated the Western intellectual scene, he clung to a determined and unfashionable view of the ways in which the text is located materially in the world. Said's *Culture and Imperialism (1993)* explores the political realities of imperialism in the real form. In exile novels one can find the issues of cultural dominance. Said has given a significant view of imperialism and the nature of relations between the colonial powers and the colonized people. Said argues that the imperial powers dominated and oppressed the colonial people; exploited their resources and their main motive was to rule them. They were least bothered about their welfare or their growth as their profit motive was the main consideration. Edward Said's *Culture and Imperialism* also reflects on the power dominance and states, "How should the post-colonial world react to the dominance of imperialism?" (47).

In the Post-Colonial theory, issues such as 'Otherness', 'Exile' and 'Dispossession' have historical and cultural significance. The critical theories of Bhabha, Gayatri Spivak and Edward Said explore the cultural and political tensions of the Diasporas living in the alien lands. Bhabha begins by contending that colonial discourse focus on the "concept of 'fixity' in the ideological construction of "otherness" (Bhabha 18). This fixity is the "sign of cultural/historical/racial difference" (Bhabha 18). Its major discursive strategy is the stereotype which Bhabha defines as a "form of knowledge and identification that vacillates between what is always 'in place,' already known, and something that must be anxiously repeated" (Bhabha 18). First, in trying to define the other, it is necessary to articulate difference in racial and sexual terms. "Not everyone is the same," is what this discourse wants to make clear. "Blacks are savage brutes," is one of these differences that are produced by discourse. In other words, through the discursive production of differences, "the other" is constructed. It is this ambivalence that is integral to the stereotypical structure of colonial texts and ensures the stereotype's "repeatability in changing historical and discursive conjunctures; informs its strategies of individuation and marginalization; produces that effect of probabilistic truth and predictability which, for the stereotype, must always be in excess of what can be

empirically proved or logically construed" (Bhabha 18). For Bhabha, the stereotype is a "complex, ambivalent, contradictory mode of representation, as anxious as it is assertive" (Bhabha 22). Colonial discourse is an apparatus of power that turns on the "recognition and disavowal of racial/cultural/historical differences" (Bhabha (23)). It subjects peoples by producing "knowledge in terms of which surveillance is exercised" (Bhabha 23), "knowledges of colonizer and colonized which are stereotypical but antithetically evaluated" (Bhabha 23). According to Bhabha in colonial discourse the colonized people are depicted as the 'other'. In the imperial rule the colonized people were subjected to all forms of oppression. The migrants were treated as the "Other" in the colonial societies ruled by the imperial powers (Bhabha 23).

Franz Fanon, a renowned critic of post colonial era, gives details of the power status, concepts, and ideologies which mark a line between colonizers and migrants. It is recognized that colonial power carefully establishes highly-sophisticated strategies of control and dominance. According to Fanon, the imperial rulers started the policy of divide and rule and destroyed the history and culture of the colonized. They lost their national identity and culture. He avers, "Colonial domination, because it is total and tends to over-simplify, very soon manages to disrupt in spectacular fashion the cultural life of the conquered people" (Fanon 236). Culture is to be found operating within civil society, where the influence of ideas and of institutions, works not through domination but by what Gramsci calls consent. Certain cultural forms predominate over others in a civil society, just as certain ideas are more influential than others. This cultural leadership is what Gramsci has identified as *hegemony*, an indispensable concept for any understanding of cultural life in the industrial West. It is cultural hegemony at work that gives Orientalism the durability and the strength. Colonialism is not only satisfied with emptying the native's brain of all form and content but it "distorts, disfigures and destroys" the history of the colonized people. Therefore, colonial rulers propagated a false belief that colonialism came to "lighten their darkness;" the colonizers focused on convincing the colonized that if the settlers were to leave, the natives would at once fall back into barbarism, degradation, and bestiality.

The post-colonial fictions, too, depict the plight of the emigrants who suffer marginalization and are treated as the other and are considered diasporas by the European people. Diaspora, generally, means a group of people who have left their homeland for some reasons and living overseas. In Greek language the term means “a scattering or sowing of seeds”. It refers to the movement of any population sharing common ethnic identity that were either forced to leave or voluntarily left their homeland in search of money and prosperity. Diaspora cultural development follows a different course since the migrants belong to different countries. They have to assimilate in the local culture to survive in the alien society. Bhabha observes that the evolution of a hybrid culture is inevitable in colonial societies. It has different culture, and different ways of living. The first translation of the Hebrew Bible marked its way to start Diaspora. Its usage began to develop from this original sense when the Hebrew Bible was translated into Greek. And after Jews’ migration from Israel, the community was given a name of Diaspora. Then the word Diaspora came to be used to refer to the historical movements of the dispersed ethnic population of Israel. Diaspora means “the scattered” and refers to the people of a place who immigrated to a colonized land. Robin Cohen’s *Global Diasporas* defines Diaspora as “communities of people living together in one country who acknowledged that the old country always has some claim on their loyalty and emotions” (Cohen 1). In the post-colonial theory, “Diaspora” is used generally for a displaced from homeland or emigrated ethnical group, typically having a minority status in the host country and at least keeping their ethnical identity. Some more basic concepts of the common understanding of Diaspora are: “the strong concept of a homeland, often idealized, collective ethnical identity and group consciousness, e.g. collective memory, myths and group solidarity” (4). Diaspora is a dispersion of people from their original homeland, likewise expatriation, extradition, migration, separation or displacement. Diaspora is a group of people who suffered displacement; the inhabitants are thrown away from its own region. The cultural historians are of the view that Diaspora may result in alienation and meaningful displacements. In this sense, individuals lose their identity and remain homeless. Diaspora Literature is all about the memories of homeland; a place that gives

rise to some nostalgic sagas. Diaspora literature, that gives us all details about the life of the migrated people, is significantly popular in the world nowadays. Critics are eager to write about the life and experience of the exiles. Émigrés are the people those who have left their countries or have been forcefully thrown out of their homelands. Migrants are defined here as people who have left their home to settle in countries or cultural communities which are initially stranger to them. Although any experience of migration would qualify an author to be classed under migrant literature, the main focus of recent research has been on the principal channels of mass migration of the Russians. As per 1993 edition of Shorter Oxford's definition, "Diaspora now also refers to 'anybody of people living outside their traditional homeland.'"

Diaspora is portrays the affections of the émigrés with their native land. Their longing for the place of birth , love for the culture, people, religion, language, community, nature and every single thing give rise to Diasporic literature. Diasporic literature focuses on the social contexts in the migrants' country of origin which prompt them to leave, on the experience of migration itself, on the mixed reception which they may receive in the country of arrival, on experiences of racism and hostility, and on the sense of up-rootedness and the search for identity which can result from displacement and cultural diversity. The migrant runs from pillar to post crossing the boundaries of time, memory and carrying history always with them with the vision and dreams of returning homeland as and when likes and finds fit to return. Emigrants' desires to go back to their homeland are resisted by their will to settle down in a new country.

As Elleke Boehmer avers thus:

The postcolonial and migrant novels are seen as appropriate texts for such explorations because they offer multi-voiced resistance to the idea of boundaries and present texts open to transgressive and non-authoritative reading (Boehmer 243).

The term diaspora refers to emigrant marginal population who have affinity some content. They never forget their homelands, nature, location, environment, culture and the people. They are willingness share beliefs and culture with the exotic countries, therefore, they feel alienated. Their ancestral homeland is a true and ideal home for them. At that time, it was totally impossible for the migrants to return back to their homelands. The reasons are different. It created a very special place and honor for the homeland in the mind of migrants. In the postcolonial aesthetics the emotional, cultural and psychological identification is often related to difference, distance and dislocation. Diaspora does not merely refer to a wandering journey, since it enacts a process of mutual translation and interaction, in which place has been translated into plural interrelationships that bridge and abridge different cultures. As Homi Bhabha in *Location Of Culture* aptly describes displacement as a “disorienting condition: the borders between home and world became confused and uncanny, the private and public become part of each other forcing upon us a vision that is as dividing as it is disorienting” (Bhabha 4).

Robin Cohen asserts that diasporic communities are committed not only to the restoration and maintenance of the homeland but to its very creation. Cohen emphasizes that globalization has radically expanded the scope of the study of modern diasporas. In the contemporary world diaspora have the historic opportunity to create tolerance for plurality in host countries. Globalization has in many ways created opportunities for diaspora to emerge, survive, and thrive. Diasporic literature can be termed as an interpretive task that attempts to explain a complex cultural equation subject to the changing fortunes of time and place. Diasporic narratives represent a conscious effort to transmit a linguistic and cultural heritage that is articulated through acts of personal and collective memory. In this way writers become chroniclers of the histories of the displaced whose stories will otherwise go unrecorded. Literature tends to record what history and public memory often forgot. As important social documents of the culture of dislocation and exile, literary and critical texts of diaspora serve as condensed archives of national, ethnic and linguistic memories. Diaspora implies people who are “scattered” away from their original homes. It does not mean that people are dispersed in different

places but that they congregate in other lands forming new communities and assimilating with others cultures. Scattering, as Homi K. Bhabha observes, becomes a gathering:

I have lived that moment of the scattering of the people that in other times and other places, in the nations of others, becomes a time of gathering. Gathering of exiles and émigrés and refugees....Also the gathering of the people in the diaspora; indentured, migrant. (Bhabha 21)

The socio-political and educational policies must evince cultural recognition because cultural misrecognition may prevent individuals from being capable of finding value in their identity. It must be admitted that cultural misrecognition results into cultural displacement and alienation. People who lived in colonial plantations had to struggle to emerge, survive, and thrive. Post-colonial fiction transmits a linguistic and cultural heritage that is articulated through acts of personal and collective memory. In this way the writers become chroniclers of the histories of the displaced whose stories will otherwise go unrecorded. Thus the Post Colonial novels are social documents of the culture of dislocation and exile. These texts serve as condensed archives of national, ethnic and linguistic memories.

The word 'exile' evokes multiple meanings which cover a variety of relationships with the mother country- alienation, forced exile, self imposed exile, political exile and so on. In the Indian context perhaps all meanings are true with the migratory movements having been governed by different reasons at different times of history. Economic reasons governed the movement of indentured labor and of trading communities. John Simpson in *The Oxford Book of Exile* writes that exile "is the human condition; and the great upheavals of history have merely added physical expression to an inner fact" (Simpson 2). Simpson's statement shows exile as merely human situation which affects their life drastically. It is a historical movement that shows only the physical movement but affects the migrants internally. Anita Badami observes thus: "I was 29 years in India and 10 years here (Canada), so I have one foot in India and a couple of toes here". Badami's views about exile shows the drastic and poor condition of the

migrants. Migrants living in exile never feel attached with the host country. They always have feelings for their homeland. In an interview Edward W. Said reflected on the condition of exile:

I think that if one is an intellectual, one has to exile oneself from what has been given to you, what is customary, and to see it from a point of view that looks at it as if it were something that is provisional and foreign to one self. That allows for independence—commitment—but independence and a certain kind of detachment. (Said 13)

The post colonial fictions are full of the events of exile and displacement of the characters leading to their physical and psychological anguish and nostalgia. They are forced to live in the changed environment of Europe far away from their hometown and like diasporas they suffer the pain of cultural disruption. Their literary arts are the ways to escape from the continuous haunt of the old memories and painful experiences while living in the alien society. Writing becomes a safety valve to release the pent up emotions of trauma and psychological pain. According to *The Oxford Dictionary*, exile is a “banished person; one compelled to reside away from the native land” Edward W. Said in his book *Reflections on Exile* writes:

Exile is strangely compelling to think about but terrible to experience. It is the unbearable rift forced between a human being and a native place, between the self and its true home; it's essential sadness can never be surmounted. And while “it is true that literature and history contain heroic, romantic, glorious, even triumphant episodes in an exile's life, these are no more than efforts meant to overcome the crippling sorrow of estrangement. (Said 5)

In the post-colonial study exile has great significance as the colonizers accepted the exile and migrated to the different countries. Said also discusses the nature of a

voluntary exile to escape from the oppressive imperial rulers, policies of Stalinism. Anita Badami's book *The Hero's Walk*, portrays her sandwiched condition in the foreign land, "we are both doomed and blessed, to be suspended between two worlds, always looking back but with two gorgeous places to inhabit, in our imaginations or our hearts"(20).

An émigré living in an alien land assimilates the alien culture and his language also changes in course of time. An émigré has no sense of belonging since he lives with a fractured identity. This leads to the change of his style as many foreign words entered in his communication with the alien people. Kathy Stolley (2005) in her book *The Basics of Sociology* observes that "identity has a lot to do with socialization and socialization is the process of learning cultural patterns, behaviors and social expectations placed on the individual" (Stolley 61). Personality of an individual defines identity and an individual acquires cultural values; performs various roles in society. An exiled person is considered as an outsider as he is denied participation in the social activities. Hence he lives with fractured identity in an alien land. In his essay, '*Cultural Identity and Diaspora*', Stuart Hall avers thus:

That one version of cultural identity - identity defined as an essential 'oneness', as 'a sort of collective "one true self", hiding inside the many other, more superficial or artificially imposed "selves", which people with a shared history and ancestry hold in common'- has played 'a critical role in all post-colonial struggles. (65)

But he discusses the different aspects of Identity. In this perspective he avers, "Cultural identity is not a fixed essence at all, lying unchanged outside history and culture. Cultural identities are the points of identification, the unstable points of identification or suture, which are made, within the discourses of history and culture. Not an essence but a positioning. Hence, there is always a politics of identity; a politics of position, which has no absolute guarantee in an unproblematic, transcendental 'law of origin'" (223-226).

The migrant characters suffer from the identity trauma. The poignancy of displacement and identity trauma is discussed in Said's book on *Palestine, After the Last Sky*, (1986) when he says, "Identity—who we are, where we come from, what we are—is difficult to maintain in exile...we are the 'other', an opposite, a flaw in the geometry of resettlement, an exodus. Silence and discretion veil the hurt slow the body searches, soothe the sting of loss" (Said 16-17). Said was himself the victim of alienation and his identity was ruptured because of the colonization of Palestine, he was to examine the imperial discourse of the West, and to weave his cultural analysis with the text of his own identity. Said in all his works demonstrates the fractured identity in a migratory and globalized world. Said has exposed the truth of the colonized society, each migrant feels dislocated, exiled from his homeland. Said's cultural theories observes that "all cultures are changing constantly, that culture and identity themselves are processes." (Said 5)

The term dislocation refers to cultural and psychological effects of displacement. The abolition of slavery led to the shortage of labor in imperial colonies. There was a great rush of migrants who worked as indentured coolies and dislocation describes the experience of those settlers who left their "home" in order to live and work in the colonies. Ashcroft et al call "cultural denigration", referring to practices that make the colonized feel marginal in power, social and cultural relations" (Ashcroft 75). The migrant often suffers because of lack of stability, security, and belongingness as they are displaced. They don't enjoy happiness and tranquility. They feel orphaned, defrauded and at a bay in the foreign land. Alienated from their immediate environment, feeling lonely, isolated and unhappy, migrants, constantly search for belongingness. A migrant feels uprooted in the colonized society. His diasporic experiences are harrowing as he is subjected to humiliations, indignations and color discrimination throughout his life. Fanon expands dislocation as, "Every colonized people ...find itself face to face with the language of the civilizing nation, that is, with the culture of the mother country. The colonized is elevated above his jungle status in proportion to his adoption of the mother country's cultural standards" (Fanon 18).

Furthermore, Fanon writes about cultural and racial displacement and Edward Said has given details about geographical displacement. He writes in *Out of Place* (1999), “Along with language, it is geography –especially in the displaced form of departures, arrivals, farewells, exile, nostalgia, homesickness, belonging, and travel itself – that is at the core of my memories” (Said 16). The colonized people and the migrants feel uprooted in the alien society. The migrants are subjected to humiliations and discriminations in the foreign land. Physically the migrants are away from their home but their heart is always there in the homeland. They feel nostalgic. In the alien land they search for their homeland and this make the base of their memories.

The postcolonial fiction deals with the issues of up-rootedness and homelessness. The main trauma experienced by an exile is the loss of home and their up rootedness in the alien countries. Away from home, leading the life of migrants was never easy for the émigrés. They suffer accumulation problems. In the foreign land they don't feel belonging to the host country. As they do not share culture and language, they feel up-rooted in the alien country. They are the victims of discrimination. It leaves a permanent mark on their psyche. Homelessness drags them towards immoral acts such as adultery, rapes, conspiracy, and drugs etc., which are not the part of their character. This negative side in their character is not a permanent feature of their character but the mental anguish they were going through is the basic reason behind the same. The loss of home is very painful and this is an important characteristic of the life of a migrant or an exiled person. He leads the life of a slave as Martin Klass observes: “The slave in his circumstances had to learn that there was no possibility of return. But the indentured laborer could dream of going home some day or of otherwise living again according to the patterns of his original culture”. (Klass 20). The irony is, in a so called modern world, these are just words. They are totally meaningless to the migrated people as they never taste deliciousness of freedom and equality. *The Wretched of the Earth*, by Fanon, describes the senselessness of decolonization as, “Decolonization, which sets out to change the order of the world, is, obviously, a programme of complete disorder.

Decolonization, as we know, is a historical process: that is to say that it cannot be understood, it cannot become intelligible nor clear to itself” (Fanon 27).

Alienation is also the most prominent issue of post colonial literature. It is a psychological and social state of being of a person and very common among immigrants. The immigrants living in the alien society were treated as others which forced them to be separated from the society they were living in. *Oxford Dictionary* defines alienation as “an act of estranging or state of estrangement in feeling or affection; and also a withdrawal of the individual from a group/ larger society” (219). In Marxism terminology alienation has different meaning as Marx sees alienation in the light of relations “between the labors working under the capitalist mode of economic production” (Bloom 3). But in the postcolonial theory alienation means the disconnection from the society. When an exiled person lives in an alien land he is disconnected from his original home. The memories of his native home haunt him and he feels nostalgic and suffers from psychological pain. In social psychology the alienation leads to withdrawal and isolation resulting into the loss of the self of the individual. The physical uprooting of the individual in the alien society becomes a major cause of his dislocation from his original home. He feels disturbed and alienation manifests in his actions and state of being.

Nostalgia is a common feature of the postcolonial theory as emigrants experience harrowing nightmare of leaving their homeland. But they always try to or think of coming back to their birth place. Our physical alienation from the native country means that though we think of our homeland all day long but it is something impossible to happen. It is a kind of dream that will never come true. Exiled experiences are expressed in writings in response to the lost homes and depicting the issues of dislocation, nostalgia, marginalization, survival and identify crisis. When the exiled or diasporic people find themselves dislocated and uprooted from the home society they are mentally upset and struggle to locate them in the nostalgic past. They try to escape from the reality through the nostalgic remembrances.

Psychological anguish is also one of major issues we discuss in post colonial theory. All the biasness, homelessness, nostalgia, discrimination, treatment as others, marginalization the émigré suffers from result into psychological pain of the victims. Psychological anguish of the émigrés speaks volumes about the kind of social and personal life they lead in the alien country. Émigrés' indulgence into drinking, adultery, rapes, killing, conspiracies and drugs depicts the picture of their mental health. It is difficult for the émigrés to maintain healthy relationships because of their mental stress. Émigrés were marginalized on the basis of color, caste and creed. They are always away from the mainstream. This condition of them is extremely painful for them.

To conclude, the postcolonial theory defines the relationships between the colonial and the colonized. The traumatic experiences of the emigrants and the exiled people are investigated through the lens of the postcolonial theory. Its approach is cultural and social depicting the realities of the diaspora who struggle to settle in an alien land. It creates anxiety and frustration in their life. Exile makes their life pathetic and shatters them internally. Émigrés tries to find a home in the land they do not belong to but natives' biasness with them creates dilemma in their lives. They live in isolation which affects their social and personal life as well. They experience worst psycho social anguish and make them psychologically sick. The emigrants can never forget the loss of their homeland and are bound o suffer cultural dislocation, homelessness, alienation, fragmentation and the loss of identity as they are always treated as the "Other."

Chapter II

Vladimir Nabokov: His Life and Achievements

Vladimir Nabokov is a renowned name in the history of Russian-American literature. He was a great novelist of Russian as well as English language. The life of Vladimir Vladimirovich Nabokov is full of romance, wonder, enchantment and adventures. He led a life full of trials and tribulations and many scholars and critics have taken keen interest in the history of his life. He was born on the 23rd April 1900 to the parents Dmitrievich Nabokov. His father worked as a criminal law teacher in St. Petersburg, Russia. Nabokov belonged to the ruling class. Nabokov enjoyed a luxurious cultured life. His family was connected with the prominent generals, writers, actors, musicians and opera stars. He loved studying and searching about butterflies and all this started when he became seriously ill with pneumonia. He studied the behavior of butterflies when he recovered from illness. He believed in multiculturalism and when once at the airport he was asked his identity he replied thus: “The writer’s art is his real passport. His identity should be immediately recognized by a special pattern or unique coloration. His habitat may confirm the correctness of the determination but should not lead to it” (*An Interview* 127). He graduated in 1922 and received his first project *Alice in Wonderland*, to translate in Russian. It was the beginning of his literary career. Nabokov moved to Berlin and published some of his works. His biographer, Boyd observes that Nabokov got a job in the newspaper *Rul* and this provided him the platform to try his writing talent. He met a girl Vera and married her. His wife gave birth to a son named Dmitri. During these years the Nazi took control of Germany and the country became dangerous for Vera who was a Jewish girl. Nabokov was forced to leave Germany as he mentions in his memoir *Speak, Memory*: “At a certain night in 1922, at a public lecture in Berlin, when his father shielded the lecturer from the bullets of two Russian Fascists and, while vigorously knocking down one of his assassins, was fatally shot by the other” (Nabokov 146). The assassination of his father and the release of his murderer was a big shock to Nabokov. It was obvious that the life of his family was not safe in Berlin so he decided to leave

Berlin. The Nazis had started registering all Russian émigrés in Germany and this forced Nabokov to leave Berlin in 1937. Nabokov now thought of shifting to America. He got the visa but the boat fare was still a problem but he was lucky to get the financial support of his Jewish friends who raised money for him and he was able to land America safely with his family. He couldn't find a safe home either in Germany or in Paris due to the German invasion. The theme of identity of the Russian émigrés captured the imagination of Nabokov as he found the local population treating him as the "Other". He describes the local population as "perfectly unimportant strangers, spectral Germans and Frenchmen in whose more or less illusory cities we, émigrés, happened to dwell" (*Memory, Speak* 209). Nabokov describes his traumatic experiences of Germany thus:

Our utter physical dependence on this or that nation, which had coldly granted us political refuge, became painfully evident when some trashy "visa" or some diabolical identity card had to be obtained or prolonged. (*Memory, Speak* 210)

In his *Speak Memory* he narrates his harrowing experiences of life; his loss, his childhood home, a fabulous inheritance. He witnessed war and revolution. His father was killed, his mother died and the entire family was in the grip of abject poverty, depression and forced exile. The Nazis were decimating the Jews from Europe and his wife was a Jew. He had to move from one country to the other for survival and he evoked in his novels the feelings of pain and death. His family fled to Paris in 1937 and then fled to America in 1940. Nabokov depicts in his novels the pervasive vogue of evil forces in a lyrical style. He narrates the events of "utter degradation, ridicule, and horror of having developed infinity of sensation and thought within a finite existence" (Vladimir Nabokov, *Speak Memory* 109). Vladimir Nabokov witnessed the mass killing of the innocent people by gas vans and the policy of the Purge launched by the totalitarian regime. Nabokov found himself trapped in the abyss of darkness; the darkness of protest, oppression, exile and multiple displacements. The socio-cultural perspective has been taken in many of his novels to study and explore the various cross-currents and ethnic pluralities experienced by Nabokov in Russia, Europe and America. The exiled

characters are lonely individuals. It is highly difficult for them to find affinities with other migrated people. Ivan Bunin is another émigré writer who highly praised Nabokov for his serious concern for the pain of the Russian émigrés. He recognized his talent in documenting the struggles of the émigrés. There is no doubt in the fact that Nabokov was an exile writer. And in his fiction and he explains his views about his exile from Russia as, “The type of artist who is always in exile even though he may never have left the ancestral hall or the paternal parish is a well-known biographical figure whom I feel some affinity. But in a straighter sense, exile means to an artist only one thing- the banning of his books...Its Russia’s loss, not mine” (Strong Opinions 118). Nabokov holds his past in dearest esteem. This could be found in the autobiography of Nabokov, *Speak Memory*. Out of the many personal circumstances and experiences that helped in shaping Nabokov's artistic conceptions, his childhood was the most important out of all. Thus, it can be seen that his post-exile story is not concerned so much with the political episodes of his life, but is somewhat highlighting his quest for the long lost, atmosphere of his childhood. His hunt is for the poetic environment which exists no more and was the arousal of his sentiments and that generated a feeling of security and moments of sublime.

The Bolshevik Revolution changed the entire course of life of Nabokov. He had to leave his country with his family leaving all his palaces and libraries. He wrote the book *Speak, Memory* to give an insight into all the ugly events of Russian Revolution of 1905. He has depicted the hellish condition of the time that led to the Revolution and industrialization was a major cause of this historical Revolution. October 1917 Revolution was led by the Bolsheviks who used their influence to organize the armed forces. They raised the slogans in favor of the Bolshevik party and started the Red Terror and a period of political repression began. Large numbers of people were killed and millions of the Russian rushed to Europe and America to save their lives. Nabokov’s wife was a Jew so he fled to Germany to escape the political repression since he belonged to the aristocratic class of Russian society. In 1926 Nabokov rented a flat in Berlin and started staying there. He was quite dissatisfied there as he realized that he does not belong

to the place and the people do not find love and affection with each other. He was penniless and had no job in Berlin. He started writing novels to get freedom from the traumatic experiences of loss of home and country. He used creative writing as a medium to earn and to get peace of mind. However, Nabokov observed in his *Strong Opinions* that his alienation in the alien land was an opportunity to enjoy “freedom and discovery” (Nabokov 139). He experienced sleepless nights because he was treated as an “Outsider” in the alien society. He suffered from the psychological ailments because of his loss of identity in Europe and America. Nabokov was exposed to naked repressive reality in his life. The real world was exposed to him in the form of terrifying absurdity as he observed: “I was no longer a man, but a naked eye, an aimless gaze moving in an absurd world” (141). Barbara Wyllie and Brian Boyd have discussed in detail the impact of the totalitarian regime on the mind and sensibility of Nabokov who wrote *The Gift*, *Invitation to a Beheading* and *Bend Sinister* to indict the totalitarian tyranny. Therefore, Nabokov is seen expressing sympathy towards his countrymen by depicting their inner struggle. He states:

The type of artist who is always in exile even though he may never have left the ancestral hall or the paternal parish is a well-known biographical figure whom I feel some affinity: but in a straighter sense, exile means to an artist only one thing the banning of his books Its Russia’s loss, not mine. (*Strong Opinions* 118)

These were the years when the Russian government had become totalitarian and tyrannical. Hitler had captured Austria and had started his march to capture the entire Europe. Stalin had consolidated his dictatorship. Nabokov had witnessed all these political events very closely and his poetic powers were fertile to write about the cruelties and tyranny of the rulers who had blatantly demolished the principles of democracy and human life. The Great Trial of March was the culmination of “The Purge”. It led to the repression of the peasants. The wholesale massacre of the poor and the innocents by the mobile gas vans were the horrible incidents. The entire Russia was infected with the deadly virus of suspicion, uncertainty and the fear of survival. The Purge was the

greatest crime on humanity but the West remained detached from all these scenes of cruelties. The Spanish War supported by Hitler, Mussolini, and Stalin further unleashed the forces of repression and totalitarianism. The critics of Vladimir Nabokov say that there are two important phases of his writing career: the Russian years and the American Years. Vladimir Nabokov was not any common émigré; he migrated from Russia and in marked his identity in different parts of the world. Nabokov belonged to a larger emigrant form of group. Twentieth-century literature is of exiled writers, mainly depending on the circumstances, thereby leading to their departure. Even in Nabokov's autobiography, his affection for the past is widely evident, that is full of nostalgic reminiscences for a longer time.

It is very important to understand the concept of home given by Nabokov in his *Speak Memory*. He had been separated from his ancestral homeland Russia and was forced to move from one country to another in search of home and identity. Most of his characters suffer alienation and displacement because of forced exile. No wonder, his protagonists have suffered a lot as they find themselves poised between an affirmation of the world and a longing to transcend it. Barabra Wyllie (2010) observes that Nabokov was a voracious reader and at the age of fifteen he had read all the great British writers including Pushkin, Chekhov and Gogol. Nabokov is a prolific writer who used his creative talent to survive and to get release from the psychological anxieties. The prominent books of Nabokov like, *Mary* (1926), *The Eye* (1930), *The Defense* (1932), *Laughter in the Dark* (1932), *The Gift* (1932), *Despair* (1934), *Invitation to Beheading* (1935), *The Real Life of Sebastian Knight* (1941), *Lolita* (1955), *Pnin* (1957), and *Pale Fire* (1962) depict a galaxy of characters confronting with the repressive reality of existential terror and disorder propagated by the German forces. The novels of Nabokov generated a lot of interest among the critics and the reviewers.

Vladimir Nabokov is the most perceptive writer in American fiction. His world is populated by a galaxy of characters trapped in the absurdities of life. His famous novels *Mary* (1926), *The Gift* (1932), deal with the themes of displacement and marginalization of the Russian émigrés. Nabokov's novel *Mary* (1926) presents the protagonist Lev

Glebovich Ganin is a Russian émigré struggling to survive in Berlin far away from his Russian society. He is haunted by the old memories of his pre-Revolution Russia and experiences the psychological anguish as he has to live with his fractured identity. He has no social circle as the locals treat him as the “Other” The Berlin émigré Ganin who was separated from his first love Mary by the October Revolution and Civil War suddenly learns of her coming to the very Berlin pension where he now lives.

M Keith Booker (1993) in his *Literature and Domination* discusses the Marxian approach of Nabokov observing that his famous novel *Lolita* is a “Neo-Marxist Critique of Bourgeois Subjectivity”. The hero of the novel Humbert Humbert expresses his disgust for the adult women.

Timothy L Parrish in her article “Nabokov, Dostoevsky, and Proust: *Despair* (2003) finds the influence of Dostoevsky, Proust on the fiction of Nabokov. He had read Proust, Gogol and Dostoevsky and evolved a modern philosophical vision of life. He found modern man trapped in the abyss of darkness. Nabokov worked really hard to find any job in the countries he migrated to but could find peace and satisfaction in any job rather than writing.

William W. Rowe (2004) in his latest book *Nabokov's Deceptive World* discusses in detail the use of images, symbols and literary allusions by Vladimir Nabokov in *The Real Life of Sebastian Knight* (1941), *Lolita* (1955), *Pnin* (1957), and *Pale Fire* (1962) to depict the themes of deception and double dealing of his protagonists. He observes that Nabokov is the master of conjured art.

L. S. Dembo (1967) in his *Vladimir Nabokov: Introduction* contends that in the last forty years Nabokov published over a dozen novels; he borrowed the techniques from Dostoevsky, Pushkin, Gogol and other famous Russian writers to document his harrowing experiences of Russian émigrés. His novels are historical documents and belong to the domain of cultural history of Russia. He touched upon the themes of oppression, violence, absurdity, displacements in his novels *Laughter in the Dark* (1932) and *The Real Life of Sebastian Knight* (1941).

Leslie A. Fieldle's (1966) *Love and Death in the American Novel* observes that Nabokov has depicted the scenes of marginalization and displacement in his novel *The Gift* to dramatize the psycho-social anguish of his characters.

Brian Boyd (1991) in his book *Vladimir Nabokov: The American Years* discusses in detail the traumatic experiences of Nabokov when he migrated to America. Nabokov had fled from Russia with his family to protect his life and had to struggle hard to get French visa. He was penniless and his son was suffering from fever. Boyd's approach is auto-biographical. In this study the main focus is to investigate the issues of displacement, marginalization and cultural disruption experiences by the migrants. Nabokov was greatly impacted by the forced exile from Russia.

Nabokov evolved his own technique of narration as his characters uncover the mask of reality. Nabokov collected multiple experiences as he migrated to Germany, France and America. Nabokov's formative development as a trilingual and a migrant had shaped his literary imagination as his novels depict the issues of transnational identity cultural fusion, alternate identity and a marginalization within Europe. Nabokov believes that in the current society of great upheavals, man is disturbed, confused and bewildered. His novels deal with the issues of uncertainty of life, chaos, disorder and death. He writes in *Strong Opinions* his modern views on existential reality and human struggle for survival. He believes life is a "very subjective affair with endless false bottoms and unreachable layers" (10). The thesis entitled "Trapped in the Abyss of Darkness: Confrontation with Exile and Marginalization in the Select Novels of Vladimir" explores the philosophical vision and his traumatic experiences of "physical danger, psychological anguish and death" depicted in his novels. The present study examines and investigates the moral strength of the Russian émigrés in confronting the darkest time of history. Nabokov believes that only an artist enjoys the divine power to explore the reality of life. Nabokov led a terrifying life when he fled to Germany; it was like grappling with the dark as he found himself in the dark tunnel of life. He was forced to live in abject poverty haunted by the reminiscence of his palaces and lawns and spacious library of Russia. The

artist in him woke up and he used the power of the pen to articulate the reality of exile, marginalization and the miseries of the émigrés. His art penetrated to the true reality of things and he struggled to get the answers to the philosophical questions. Nabokov is a great artist since he has used contemporary techniques such as absurdity and ambiguity following the style of Thomas Pynchon, Vonnegut and John Updike. Nabokov used comic devices such as parody and irony in his quest to explore the existential reality like the postmodern novelists. Nabokov's (1989) *Invitation to a beheading*, "the question whether or not my seeing both (the Bolshevist and Nazi regime) in terms of one beastly farce had any effect on this book should concern the good reader as little as it does me" (Nabokov foreword). Nabokov has typically refrained from being extremely explicit about his views. The use of parody in most of his forewords such as in *Lolita*, his strong opinion that art is completely detached from social and moral norms is worth considering (Walenda 2). Nabokov continually expresses his stance of detachment from political and social scenarios as seen in *The Real life of Sebastian Knight*, *Invitation to a Beheading*, *Pnin*, *Pale Fire*, and *The Gift* where his literary connections with female poets of his era such as Anna Akhmatova, Zinaida Gippius, and Marina Tsvetaeva are reflected (Lomakina Abstract viii). His style of writing and parodies are illustrated in all his novels when he evaluates and critiques some of the prominent women writers of his times. His belief that artistic value is considered regardless of gender is elucidated in his Meta literary use of women as primary characters in his novels (Lomakina ix). Wayne Booth in, *The Rhetoric of Fiction*, observes, "We have seen that the author cannot choose to avoid rhetoric; he can choose only the kind of rhetoric he will employ. He cannot choose whether or not to affect his readers' evaluations by his choice of narrative; he can only choose whether to do it well or poorly" (149). Nabokov breaks down the traditional notion of the character and creating a different kind of characters by exaggerating, parodying and further distorting the traditional form of characters. Additionally, the purpose of exploring and highlighting these characters is not to entertain satirize or parody the society. When asked about this in an interview (1973), Vladimir Nabokov explained "give a damn for the group, the community, the masses and so forth" (*Strong Opinions* 33). In one of his

interviews (1966) with Alfred Appel, Jr., Nabokov expressed, "I have despised ideological coercion instinctively all my life" (21). In general, Nabokov's novels are of great narrative techniques and rhetoric in order to depict psychological trauma of émigrés treated as the "Other." That strikes the characters of Nabokov who are his real stories portrayed in his fiction. The focus is shifted towards him when he writes limitlessly. To quote with an example Humbert the protagonist of *Lolita*, Humbert is obsessed with a twelve-year-old "nymphet". Because Humbert was physically attached to Lolita, society discerns him as a criminal and pedophile. Another example of his work is *Pnin*; a Russian Professor, in love with his native heritage and language. Therefore, there is a cultural advantage in belonging to the dominant culture. Furthermore, acting within it also ensures an individual's acceptance. However, it further imposes restrictions on people. The literature thereby does not say the alternate world of Nabokov's character exists separate from the shared universe. The alternate world, on the contrary, is very similar to the norm, overlapping in many areas. Throughout his work, Nabokov invents a "work" of literature in the postmodern nature rather than creating a work, in a traditional and realistic sense.

Nabokov has expressed his belief that only artists can truly venture into the in-depth reality of a situation. Nabokov also believed that only a true artist can answer all philosophical questions by delving into the various aspects of the world. The primary reason for this was that an artist is able to perceive the world without any preconceived notions or biases. Most people with ordinary thinking were influenced by the various customs, philosophies, and scientific awareness that they have learned over the years. Nabokov was well-known for his satirical approach of the world and the various political and social constructs. Nabokov's prominent style includes that of parody where he uses an effortless device of comedy. He was an unconventional writer and digresses sufficiently from the conventional and serious approach that most writers adopt, He deviated his approach from the predictable responses that were adopted by writers in general. This allows "for the amelioration of the genuine truth of life" (Walenda 3).

Nabokov has, on several occasions, expressed his perceptions of art implicitly or explicitly. It was possible to ascertain his views on the artistic medium of depicting life through his interviews, forewords etc. He made his most unvarnished confessions of truth, perception, and reality in the foreword of *Lolita*. His novels themselves provide great insights into the life and outlook of Nabokov. He discerned facts from an artistic viewpoint and allows the reader to understand his attitudes, beliefs, and thoughts. His perspectives on art and artistic creations illustrate his opinion that the creation, evaluation, and entertainment must be used specifically for their core values rather than underlying impressions, covert intentions, or political or social manipulations. He briefly ideated his scornful resentment towards the attachment of morality as - "...with the same scorn that he once made use of when a clubwoman asked him what butterflies were for." (Walenda1). Nabokov has always refrained him from the attachment of social utility and morality to his works of art. His expression "Nothing bores me more than political novels or literature of social intent" (Nabokov *Memory Speak* 21) clearly elucidates his apolitical and highly pronounced artistic principles. This is a true trait of Russian émigrés. His resentment of politics made his thoughts and ideas of post colonialists. The unbiased opinions that are obtained from his literature give an unmasked picture of the postcolonial era to the reader. Nabokov has repeatedly asserted in the forewords of most of his novels about the misconceptions that the reader must avoid whilst reading his novels. He has expressed that "I have no social purpose, no moral message I have no general ideas to exploit and a work of art has no importance whatever to society" (Walenda 1).

Vladimir's departure from Russia was a great loss to the country. Nabokov uses language to express disillusionment and subvert stereotypes. Moreover, Nabokov reflects the common problems of reluctant and unsuccessful emigration through the characters of his novel. Therefore, Nabokov is seen expressing sympathy towards his countrymen by depicting their inner struggle. He expresses his views about exile as:

The type of artist who is always in exile even though he may never have left the ancestral hall or the paternal parish is a well-known biographical

figure whom I feel some affinity: but in a straighter sense, exile means to an artist only one thing the banning of his books Its Russia's loss, not mine. (*Strong Opinions* 118)

Nabokov showed a great literary excellence though grown up in a disturbed environment. Once he was asked about his nationality, his answer won the heart of his readers as he said: "I am an American writer, born in Russia and educated in England where I studied French literature before spending fifteen years in Germany" (*Strong opinions* 26). According to Nabokov, the creation of *Lolita* is reported to be excruciatingly painful. In general, Nabokov works effortlessly to depict the sufferings of the migrated people. Wayne Booth in *The Rhetoric of Fiction* explains "We have seen that the author cannot choose to avoid rhetoric; he can choose only the kind of rhetoric he will employ. He cannot choose whether or not to affect his readers' evaluations by his choice of narrative; he can only choose whether to do it well or poorly" (149). Nabokov breaks down traditional notion of character and creating a different kind of characters by exaggerating, parodying and further distorting the traditional form of characters.

In his interviews, essay, lectures and memoirs he gave his view of life and his vision of art which give valuable insight into the plots of his novels. He believes in depicting the real miserable life of the Russian émigrés in his fiction. His vision of life and his commitment to the art of writing was influenced by the Bolshevist revolution and the Nazi-German regimes. He had seen death very closely and witnessed the brutality of the rulers. His stay in Germany helped him to form a view of life and art. He dedicated his art of writing to get release from the psychological anxieties and tensions and to depict the reality of the struggles of the émigrés.

Nabokov has depicted the exile characters in his novels who are the victims of Bolshevik revolution and later discrimination in the alien land. His prominent works are *Mary*, *The Gift*, *Invitation to a Beheading*, *The Real Life of Sebastian Knight* and *Lolita* depict the harrowing experiences of the Russian émigrés.

The plot of the novel *Mashenka Mary* is set in 1924 Germany when Hitler was in the height of power and the Jews were being decimated in the concentration camps of

Auschwitz and Buna. The main image in the novel is of train, it plays a significant role in the novels. The plot of the novel revolves around the Russian émigrés who were forced to flee Russia following the Bolshevik Revolution. These émigrés are always haunted by the old memories and feel nostalgic and experience alienation. Freud talks about screen memories of individuals that bring mental disorder. In all his novels Nabokov depicts the plight of the Russian émigrés who suffered cultural dislocation, homelessness, loss of identity and alienation. The plot of *Mashenka Mary* begins on a Sunday morning Lev Glebovich Ganin is an émigré living in a Berlin boarding house. It is a chance that Ganin is stuck in the lift and meets Aleksey Ivanovich. He is excited to reveal that his wife will arrive soon. Alfyorov showed the picture of Mary to him, who happens to be the first love of Ganin. The picture of the pre-Revolutionary Russia is revived again. Ganin plans elopement with Mary before Alfyorov encounters Mary at the railway station. But he changes his mind at the last moment and ironically he leaves Berlin. Nabokov has depicted the turbulent and restless inner world of the émigrés who suffer from alienation and displacement. They always feel rootless and feel disconnected from the old and new lives. The main focus of the novel is displacement of the characters. The words displacement, dislocation, homelessness and exile have special significance in Nabokov's study. Robert Hamner is of the opinion that "his society was a society without heroes. It was a multicultural, immigrant, slave colonial society with the "drive and restlessness of immigrants" (27). The characters of Nabokov are always in search of a more dignified life. This search becomes a trap as the form it takes is repetitive of the power drive which enslaved them earlier. His hero is a man without a core suffering existential despair. He lives in the world of illusions and he realizes that the core of life can never be touched and ultimately he finds himself cut off from all traditions and myths and accepts the futility of life. Nietzsche, in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* says: "In each now, being begins: round each here turns the sphere of there. The corner is everywhere. Bent is the path of eternity" (122).

The theme of exile is predominant in his novel *Pnin*. Nabokov has depicted the comic and pathetic troubles of Timofey Pavlovich Pnin, who is a Russian émigré. He is a

solipsist and a gentle scholar. He seeks to adapt himself to his American environment when he was lonely and displaced. He finally rents a house feeling that his life in America as a college professor is essentially no different from what it would have been in Russia had there been no revolution. His hybrid language is an indication that true naturalization is not possible. He remains alienated from the American community and all treat him as an outsider. His marginalization in the American society as an émigré is vividly portrayed by Nabokov. In this novel of Nabokov the issues of otherness, fragments, and cultural clash are depicted vividly. Pnin was the victim of the repressive totalitarian forces of Russia and the same happened with him everywhere he went. Nabokov gives a detailed description of the sufferings of the Russian émigrés. He adds in this regard, “I have in view, you know, adviser to the tsar or something” that American clubwomen immediately think of whenever “White Russians” are mentioned”. It is a vivid depiction of the sufferings of the Russian émigrés as Nabokov, too, belonged to the royal family. The misapprehensions of the American natives about the Russian émigrés, and the desire to correct them are evident in all his novels. Nabokov has extensively talked about the sensibilities and predicaments of emigration and its effects on the lives of émigrés. The tone and his opinions seem to concur considerably between *Speak, Memory* and *Pnin*. This indicates the possible dilemma that Nabokov experienced - a decision of keeping his ‘Russianness’ intact or to transition into an American personality. The technique of parody that Nabokov uses is distinct in illustrating the de-familiarization that the émigré experiences. The implied original roots of Russia combined with approaches that may regard formalist (Besemeres 392). Nabokov explores the extent of Russianness and the adaptations to the new culture, English language, and to perceptions in a manner that includes all minute observations in *Pnin*. He also describes his longing of the Russian environment and Russian glamorous life. Nabokov had given the images of “lilacs and the Russian gardens “to depict the nostalgia of the exiled hero” (Nabokov 145).

Barbara Wyllie and Brian Boyd have discussed in detail the impact of the totalitarian regime on the mind and sensibility of Nabokov who wrote *The Gift*, *Invitation to a Beheading* and *Bend Sinister* to show oppressive regime of the Russian tsars.

Nabokov's last novel, written in Russian, was *The Gift*. Nabokov took shelter in Menton on the French Riviera with no money and no future. Nabokov sought refuge in the world of art that provided him an antidote to the disintegration around him. He wrote *The Gift* and the plot documents the traumatic experiences of Fyodor and his vision of existential absurdity; loss and death. Nabokov's novels disclose his desires for the welfare of the mankind. Boyd states that Nabokov's *The Gift* is the most inclusive novel. It is full of rich episodes and packed with heart rending images and symbols. It depicts the great efforts of the Russian émigrés. Nabokov deals with shifting identities, roots, homes and changing realities of Russian émigrés struggling in Europe and America for settlement. All the major novels of Nabokov reveal his quest for a symbol to restore the faith and hope in mankind through art. In *Speak, Memory* Nabokov gives the images of broken pottery discovered by his son Dmitry. He struggles to reconstruct the broken pieces into a complete earthenware bowl symbolizing the triumph of art over the material breakdown. In his novels the sense of fragmentation comes across his deep and unshakable sense of loss, of being the "Other". The main episodes of his novels highlight fluid identity of the protagonists. The plot of most of his major novels record exiled life from Russia, Germany, France and America to rediscover and affirm identity. Nabokov gives the image of chess to describe the dual role of Fyodor. The creative technique of Fyodor is described thus: "The true creative technique; the fine fabric of deceit, the abundance of insidious tries, the false carefully prepared for the reader" (114). Chess plays very important role in the novels of Nabokov. "Everything had acquired sense and at the same time everything was concealed. Every creator is a plotter; and all the pieces impersonating his ideas on the board were here as conspirators and sorcerers. Only in the final instant was their secret spectacularly exposed"(159). Kath Woodward in his study *Understanding Identity* (2002) states thus: "Identity is closely linked to place, to key places and often to the place that we call home. In this sense the map is a useful metaphor

for understanding the formation and representation of identity in relation to location and situation as well as movements and translation”(65).

Nabokov's *Laughter in the Dark* (1932) depicts the atmosphere of darkness, uncertainty, ambiguity of life and death. Nabokov depicts the themes of obsession, blindness, manipulation and ambiguity of life in *Laughter in the Dark*. Iain Lauchlan (2005) in his novel *Laughter in the Dark: Humour under Stalin*, argues that, “in the Soviet Union, State-approved merriment was an act of responsibility with the Soviet tyranny because it signified a belief in the beautiful lie, a state of blissful ignorance. Meanwhile genuine comedy was repressed because it was a malcontent's expression of the ugly truth” (123). The opening section of the novel introduces Albert Albinus who lives in Berlin with his wife and daughter. The death of Irma and of Albinus symbolizes the nihilistic vision of Nabokov. Albinus experiences two deaths after the death of his lovely daughter Irma. He grows pessimistic and nihilistic as he also feels the “sense of dirt” (*Speak Memory* 23) pervading all around him. He starts living with Margot. Irma's death does not bring any change in the life Albinus. As he goes home he looks at his watch “It was past midnight. Had he really been there five hours?” (97). In a nutshell, the novel is packed with the images of darkness and despair and Margot symbolizes vulgarity, deceit, “egotism, falsity and hypocrisy”. (*Speak Memory* 34) Nabokov's *Laughter in the Dark* has historical significance since it was written at a time when Russia was passing through a turbulent phase. In 1932, the Reichstag had collapsed and violence started in Russia. The democratic principles were scrapped and the totalitarianism became popular.

Nabokov's *The Real Life of Sebastian Knight* (1941), is the very first novel in English. Nabokov employs subtle irony to deal with the theme of violence, murder, darkness and exile. The plot begins with the guilty consciousness of the narrator who arrives too late at his brother's death bed and soon after the death of his brother he decides to explore the absolute meaning of life. Nabokov is seriously concerned with the quest of the patterns of meaning in his novels and the narrator whose name is V begins his quest “the plausible trail” to get awareness of the truth of life. The plot of the novel is

about the quest of V and of Sebastian to “find out the real human truth” (*The Real Life of Sebastian Knight* 12). The chief concern of Nabokov is thus the quest and the relationship between V (the narrator) and his brother. In the first section of the novel, Sebastian Knight is depicted as the object of desire for the characters that are in his contact. Irina Marchesini, critic of Nabokov, in her article *A Conjuror’s Smile* avers that she doesn’t find any meaningful theme in the novel and observes that the role of irony in the novel enhances the interest. Nabokov gives the history of V and Sebastian in the early part of the novel. Sebastian was the child of a Russian father who had married an English woman, Virginia Knight. His mother had deserted her father when he was just a toddler and married a new lover. V and Sebastian are half brothers and the age gap is of six years. They spent their childhood and adolescence together. “Sebastian’s image does not appear as part of my boyhood, thus subject to endless selection and development, nor does it appear as a succession of familiar visions” (15). Nabokov uses the images of “hollow cheek”, “water-spider” “withered leaf” “the crumpled dark hair” and “mysterious blue sky” (15) to dramatize the alienation and despair of the émigrés.

Vladimir Nabokov’s novel *Lolita* (1955) excited a lot of interest among the critics and reviewers of Nabokov. Much ink has been wasted on the treatment of taboo issues depicted in the plot of the novel and the western critics condemned the novel in the most critical and disparaging language. Nabokov wrote *Lolita* when he was on his butterfly-collection trips. Nabokov was not satisfied with the outcome of the novel and he even wanted to burn it. In many countries the novel was banned as the society didn’t like the taboos like paedophilia. F W Dupee (1959) published his famous article *Lolita* in America and Mark Slonim (1959) published *Doctor Zhivago and Lolita*. In all these articles the deceptive nature of Humbert is explored who rapes and sexually assaults Lolita in the novel. Both the critics observe that Lolita is depicted as a salable commodity by Nabokov in his novel highlighting the oppressive nature of the male dominated society. Humbert sees Lolita for the first time and is spell bound by her virginity and beauty: “A polka-dotted black kerchief tied around her chest hid from my aging ape eyes, but not from the gaze of young memory, the juvenile breasts I had fondled one immortal

day. He is an enchanted hunter”(150). He exploits Lolita saying that “I am going to tell you something very strange: it was she who seduced me” (150) Amit Marcus (2005) in his *The Self-Deceptive and the Other-Deceptive Narrating Character* avers: ‘The Case of Lolita’ contends that, “Humbert is self-deceptive because he is mainly attracted to the aesthetics of Lolita” (Marcus 190). Arthur DuBois (1964) in his famous article *Poe and Lolita* provides a comparative study of Poe and Nabokov. Both the novels depict the scenes of horror, incest, fantasy and male domination. In Gothic novels the Bluebeard is destructive and oppressive and women are subjected to all forms of oppression and marginalization. The textual analysis of the novel *Lolita* reveals that it is a true story of exile of both Humbert and Lolita. Humbert acts as a colonizer, who has full control of the life Lolita. He exploits her, uses her, make her work and act as per his wishes. “For Humbert, Lolita is a commodity and she can be “purchased with money to gratify the sexual desires” (184). He uses words and myths to 'immortalize' her naming her as the nymphet (134). Humbert gives her a romantic name expressing his mania for her: 'mine, mine, mine' (161). Humbert lives in a delusive world of fantasy as he distorts traditional values to fabricate his own fantastic vision of Lolita. She is positioned as a passive agent in the novel and he tries to justify his carnal pleasures alluding to the man’s blissful pleasure before the fall from heaven. His seductive images and allusions in his speeches are unrealistic; mythical and fantastic. Humbert sees Lolita for the first time in the garden calling her an 'immortal demon' (139). Humbert uses allusions to describe her innocence, and Eve like tempting beauty. He is sure that his winning of Lolita would mean magic wisdom, youth, freedom for him. The novel *Lolita* is complex and even after fifty years of its publication it still presents a story that depicts an abnormal behavior of the characters. The tone of the novel is saddening, repulsive since both Lolita and Humbert are in exile. The novel is not about the incest and sexuality but about the psychological exile of both the major characters. Lolita’s mother Charlotte Haze is presented as living in darkness. Many jokes are used to expose her comicality. The portrayal of Charlotte Haze in the novel is ambiguous. When Humbert comes to the room of Charlotte, he states that he is not going to have the offer “there was no question of my settling there” (37). But

when he sees Lolita he changes his opinion and accepts it. He says “No” to Charlotte and “yes” to Lolita. Nabokov has described how he comes into the contact with Lolita through her mother. Nabokov had lived in many countries and his exile greatly impacted his style and language. No wonder, the novel is full of sarcasm, mockery, jokes and verbal games reminding

Vladimir Nabokov was one of renowned exile writers. His contribution to English literature is highly recognized by his critics. His narrative style elaborates vividly the cultural, political aspects of the Russian émigrés. His novels are the clear picture of suffering of the Russian émigrés. He clearly depicts the socio-political plights such as home, alienation, otherness and other exile related tribulations. He was the owner of two homes; one in Russia and the other a rented apartment in Berlin. The loss of his home in Russia always tormented him. Its sweet and blissful memories gave him psychological anguish and the house in Berlin gave him fractured identity. The galaxy of characters of Nabokov is the Russian émigrés who are at odds with their hostile environment. Ganin in *Mary*, Fyodor-Godunov Cherdyntsev in *The Gift*, Humbert Humbert in *Lolita*, are some of the examples. Brian Boyd observes that “whether as real as Fyodor’s Berlin or as fanciful as Kinbote’s Zembla is described in simple style but the hero suffers disintegration” (Boyd 33). In his 1966 interview Nabokov remarked that the émigré community had its own world with a greater internal freedom. He tried to be happy in his rented room; in his desk he evolved his own vision of life and his commitment to articulate the real challenges of the émigrés. “But then, of course, I am not a typical émigré. I am a very non-typical émigré, who doubts that a typical émigré exists” (Boyd 162).

To conclude, the world of Vladimir Nabokov is dark, dreary and destructive. All the protagonists of Nabokov are trapped in the world of darkness and their quest is to survive in the alien society. They find that it is very hard to survive in the harsh alien society where the migrants are treated as outsiders and marginalized. They are treated as the “Other”. Nabokov was a victim of the forces of violence, tyranny and injustice. He had witnessed the gas vans running in the towns of Russia killing millions of innocent people with the rise of totalitarianism in Russia, He was fled from Russia. All these

events of death and uncertainty impacted the sensibility and vision of Nabokov who depicted the forces of evil of violence and destruction. Interestingly, most of the novels of Nabokov are full of violence, destruction, forced migration, conspiracy, murders, rapes and emotional disturbance. The Russian émigrés of his novels desperately struggle and feel alienated as they experience the loss of identity in the alien land. Nabokov published over a dozen novels. He borrowed the techniques from Dostoevsky, Pushkin, Gogol and other famous Russian writers to document his harrowing experiences of Russian émigrés. His novels are historical documents and belong to the domain of cultural history of Russia. He touched upon the issues of oppression, violence, absurdity, displacements and incest from the post-modern perspective. His several collections of short stories, a number of plays, two volumes of poetry, a memoir, and a study of Gogol make Nabokov a versatile genius and the most popular American novelist. His novels chronicle the struggles of the Russian émigrés struggling for survival in the alien lands.

Chapter III

Home, Dispossession and Otherness

A home is a place one feels safe and secure. A person has a psychic investment with his home. The importance of a home can be understood by anyone who is away from home. And leaving one's home is the most drastic experience for anybody. Unfortunately, the postcolonial era is a period of displacement. In the period mass migration took place, which is closely related to Diaspora. People away from home or without a home are treated ill. In the alien land, they are considered outsiders. They are deprived of basic human needs. And this kind of treatment of them affects their psyche. It makes them more nostalgic, or they indulge in immoral activities. Homi Bhabha, in his article: "The World and the Home" (1992), observes that Henry James in his novel *The Portrait of a Lady* and V.S. Naipaul in his novel *A House for Mr. Biswas* realistically depict the meaning of "home," "homeless" and "unhomely." The heroine of Henry James, Isabel Archer, leaves America and goes to Europe and finds her homeless. Bhabha says: "In that displacement, the border between home and world becomes confused; and, uncannily, the private and the public becomes part of each other, forcing upon us a vision that is as divided as it is disorienting" (Bhabha 2). Edward Said also talks about the geographical displacement in *Out of Place* (1999), he observes thus: "Along with language, it is geography –especially in the displaced form of departures, arrivals, farewells, exile, nostalgia, homesickness, belonging, and travel itself – that is at the core of my memories" (Said 16). Said took up the theme of the quest for the home of the migrants in the alien society as he was, too, living abroad. He believes that colonizers treat the colonized in such a way that they never feel free or enjoy freedom. Colonial ideology is such a trap for them from which they never come out.

Avtar Brah (2012), in his book *Cartographies of Diaspora: Contesting Identities*, argues, "The question of home, therefore, is intrinsically linked the way in which process of inclusion or exclusion operate and are subjectively experienced under given circumstances"(14). Avtar Brah's "concept of homing" desires refer to migration. When a

person longs for his 'home; it is different from his "desire for a homeland"(15). It depicts that émigrés' will to move back to their homeland does not mean they are really going to move back. It is just a desire, a dream that never comes true. A home is a precious place for anyone in the world. It is appreciable for the Russian émigrés tried their utmost to be one with the alien land and the strange people away from home. Feeling abandoned in unknown countries affected their psyche and made them nostalgic. In this regard, talking about the will of the diasporic community, William Safran in *Diaspora in Modern Societies: Myths of Homeland and Return* traces features of Diaspora as:

1) they, or their ancestors, have been dispersed from a specific original "center" to two or more "peripheral," or foreign regions; 2) they retain a collective memory, vision or myth about their original homeland- its physical location, history, and achievements; 3) they believe that they are not- and perhaps cannot be- fully accepted by their host society and therefore feel partly alienated and insulated from it; 4) they regard their ancestral homeland as their true, ideal home and as the place to which they or their descendants would (or should) eventually return-when conditions are appropriate. (83-84)

Furthermore, we come to know that home is a desirable place for émigrés. It is really hard for the immigrants to survive in the alien land as every bit of the alien country and culture are different. Leaving ones' homeland due to exile distorts an individual and shatters his psychic health. In this regard, Dr. Gowher Ahmad Naik avers, "especially, for an immigrant, it becomes challenging to survive in a different nation because one is not able to adjust and integrate with another's system and cultural values" (71). In the postcolonial context, the binary of home is alien land, which is the reason for all the sufferings of the émigréfor In the alien land, the émigrés feel nostalgic. Their life becomes pathetic away from home, and they are treated as an outsider that later give birth to a prominent postcolonial concept that is Otherness. Said depicts the loss of the émigrés, who had to leave their homeland and find a place in the alien country. According to him, the exiles' heroic stories, the tales of their strength, are all false as they

are just to give solace to ones' heart and nothing more. No one can understand and share the feelings of the exiles that leave their birthplace. Said explains the loss of home due to exile thus:

It is the unhealable rift forced between a human being and a native place, between the Self and its true home: its essential sadness can never be surmounted. And while it is true that literature and history contain heroic, romantic, glorious, even triumphant episodes in an exile's life, these are no more than efforts meant to overcome the crippling sorrow of estrangement. The achievements of exile are permanently undermined by the loss of something left behind forever. (145)

Otherness or treatment as others has been viewed as the most important issue in postcolonial literature. Treating immigrants as others is a common thing in the postcolonial world. There are different reasons for immigrants' migration from their homes. But there is only one reason behind their treatment as others that is their foreign identity. Their identity makes them stand different from the locals. Homi Bhabha, in his book *The Location of Culture* (1994), discusses in detail his concept of 'Otherness.' Interestingly, Bhabha borrowed the concept of 'Otherness' from Jacques Lacan's 'Other' and he took inspiration from Fanon's theory of the 'Other.' In his book *The Wretched of the Earth*, Fanon talks about the differences and similarity that is known as a binary opposition. These binaries are the basis of prejudice among people. It shows how whites are different from blacks. Bhabha argues that an immigrant living in an alien land is not given the local people's rights; he is treated as the 'Other.' In his essay, *The Other Question: The Stereotype and Colonial Discourse*, Bhabha discusses the construction of 'other' by the colonizers.

Interestingly, 'Otherness' is investigated and discussed by the theorists such as Sartre, Lacan, and Derrida. It is a useful construct in understanding the identity of an individual. Gaytri Spivak coined the term 'Othering' to investigate the place and status of a subaltern. Homi Bhabha observes that in the colonial discourse, the understanding of

the concept of 'otherness' is highly important lays down the foundation for making 'the stereotype' Bhabha comments thus:

An important feature of colonial discourse is its dependence on the concept of

'fixity' in the ideological construction of Otherness. Fixity, as the sign of cultural/historical/racial difference in the discourse of colonialism, is a paradoxical mode of representation: it connotes rigidity and an unchanging order as well as disorder, degeneracy, and daemonic repetition. Likewise, the stereotype, which is its major discursive strategy, is a form of knowledge and identification that vacillates between what is always 'in place,' already known, and something that must be anxiously repeated... (18)

Bhabha's concepts are highly significant as they peep deep into matters. All the issues and concepts are well visualized. All the concepts given by him are interrelated. They work as the links of a chain to connect all the rings together. He has given a vivid description of the construction of the Otherness. According to Bhabha, Otherness is an idea that has been constructed intentionally. It works on the idea of fixity. It is based on the idea of stereotyping. A particular targeted group of society is stereotyped by fixing some features with their identity, and these features are repeated continuously to make them permanent. In Vladimir Nabokov's fictions, the concepts of Home and Otherness are quite significant as Nabokov depicts the struggles of the Russian émigrés to find a home in the alien lands.

The European era of exile and the consequent dislocation that most people experienced have been one of the most poignant issues in literature. Authors have discussed the issues of art, culture, gender, age, and race among several variegated themes that go beyond the boundaries of exile. The Russian context of exile is particularly interesting as the formation of the new Soviet and the occupation of Bolsheviks is a crucial event in Russian history. The implications that it had on the well-being of the populace and the subsequent displacement caused by emigration are

important indicators of the situation. The predicaments of the Russian émigrés in their homeland and in the new countries, that they moved to, have been evaluated greatly in literature. The implications of emigration on human dignity and emotional status are an undeniable consequence. Most émigrés have experienced the feeling of loss of home and agony due to displacement. In Nabokov's age, exile was not something new that happened with the writers, ever since the time of Pushkin. "The notion of exile has become an integral part of the Russian literary tradition ever since Pushkin articulated his anxieties as a writer banished from the glittering capital" (Bethea, Frank 196). The émigrés had a difficult time when they fled from Russia to escape from the Bolshevik militants' oppression. The émigrés had belonged to various backgrounds. They had different educational and professional backgrounds. They led a temporary life as they had to move between different places. They had different belief systems and schools of thought. Most of them had art, cultural, or educational backgrounds. They were considered important contributors to the literary repertoire. A vast majority of the émigrés was classed intelligentsia and had an aristocratic lineage and lifestyle. The common feature among all those who immigrated to foreign lands was their political stand. They had a direct conflict with the core ideology of the Soviet. The individuals who emigrated had apolitical stances. They were inclined to feel that the new regime of the Soviet was overtly political in its framework. There were also individuals whose political ideologies were in strong opposition to the doctrine of the Soviet (Gordon 4). The political situation in the Soviet grew to be extremely political and advocated strong feelings of uncertainty. The émigrés were all mostly artists, poets, actors, painters, writers, dancers, etc. Russia's intellectual populace, who chose apolitical and neutral stances, was put into a situation of threat and unrest. An air of uncertainty chased them, causing them to move to foreign lands.

Most of the émigrés chose to flee to Paris, Germany, and China, among others. The numbers of emigrants to France were relatively higher. The reason for choosing Paris as their next home was evident - the abundance of historical affinity between Russia and France. Most of the émigrés were artists and intellectuals, which provides a compulsion

to the sensibilities of a researcher. The group of émigrés offers a rich collection of resources to understand society's undercurrents, which have social, political, economic, and cultural shades. The situation of the emigrant population was tense and unpredictable in their homeland of the new Soviet. They chose to flee from their homeland to make a living. They found themselves experience a crisis of identity and conflicts. The émigrés faced the dark times of war, exile, and severe political unrest in their homeland. Owing to the nature of their political ideologies and professions, apart from reasons unknown, they were ousted from their homeland. They were left homeless and displaced. The territorial and civil boundaries that emerged on the emigrant populations were contributors to Russia's literary canon. They were important because of their contributions to the restructured perceptions of modern Russia. Additionally, they were also crucial to the preservation of the imagery of the pre-revolutionary times of Russia. The basic identities of Russian émigrés were put into crisis "when the nationality, genetic lineage, civic, and territorial overtones to their identities emerged" (Gordon 5). Gordon suggests that the dilemma of these connotations change continually in situations that are complex in a political sense. The "ethnicity and the cultural nuances which are present in the country can lead to disparaging conflicts in émigrés" (5). According to Anderson (1991), the framework of a community is decided by the style in which it is "imagined rather than the extent of genuineness or falsity of their principles and ideologies" (Gordon 5). The concept of community, as described above, reflects the national construct of community. It suggests that nationality and communities are formulated only socially and are not a natural occurrence. Additionally, it skims upon the various facets of imagination for the style in which a nation can be imagined. There is no specific distraction from the genuineness of the concept. Alongside, the extent of the realness of its existence is not measured in the formation of a community. Therefore, the situation and emotional status of émigrés are greatly influenced by their opinions of the community. It also decides the likelihood of their ability to adapt to the foreign nation of their migration. The treatment they receive is also dictated by the implicit tendency to be rigid about their emotional and communal framework (Gordon 5). The predominant characteristic of nationality is also

debatable. It is unknown if the most important determiner of nationality is ethnicity or race. It is arguably an indeterminable factor. The factors of language, belief systems, religion aid in the determination of nationality. The dimensions of cultural adaptations are also important for the adaptation of nationality. This is in direct "correlation with the path that Russian émigrés took to rebuild their imagination of "Old Russia" in their new home of Paris" (Gordon 6). Russian émigrés had a complex and emotional understanding of nationality, belongingness, politicization, values, and beliefs. The reasons for the migration of the Russian people are a matter of great interest. It is important to understand the reasons for their being expelled from their homeland. The class of Russians who were in the intellectual and artistic arenas of profession either fled or were expelled from Russia. Their imagination of "Old Russia" and their grapples in their new homes in Europe and America are important benchmarks of study. The comprehension of this concept is adequate for the estimation of the literary range of Russia. It also provides a fair realization of the dilemma that they faced in their homeland. The Russian émigrés all belonged to professions of a "passionate or intellectual nature; this makes the study of their predicaments in their homeland and the post-revolutionary emigration both intriguing and profound" (Gordon 6).

Nabokov is regarded as a crucial émigré writer from the post-1917 era. His novels deal with the Russian émigrés and their social, emotional, and intellectual perspectives about their new homes. Nabokov's perspectives and thoughts have been examined in specific reference to the lifestyle and emotional adaptations of Russian émigrés to foreign countries. The influence of American culture and a colonial value system has been observed by several critics of Nabokov. Boyd (1991) provides a detailed outline of Nabokov and his family following emigration to America. The impact of displacement of Nabokov and his family, apart from the agony of war, was discussed elaborately in Boyd's *The American Years*. Also, the trauma of moving from his homeland for the protection of his family is a major concept. The painful years that followed are the main focus of Nabokov.

Edward Said, in his *Orientalism* (1978), gives a colonial discourse based on binaries. His basic argument is that “Orient” and “Other” are two different terms that make binary of “Occident” or the “Self.” Said argues that the “Other is rational, mature, normal, and virtuous” (Said 40). The other is a group of people that consists of the poor, women, and people who are mentally disabled. Said has investigated that white people are intellectually superior to non-whites. For example, in Vladimir Nabokov's novel *Lolita* (1955), Humbert is the main narrator representing the Self of the whites.

Vladimir Nabokov wrote his first novel *Mary* (1926), depicting the issues of displacement and loss of home. In this novel, he also depicts how the émigrés are treated as others in the alien land. Ganin is the main protagonist who suffers alienation because of his homelessness. Ganin is a Russian émigré living in a German boardinghouse with other Russians. In German society, he is considered an outsider. He is hunted by the loss of his home and country. He is so much stressed that he spends seven days, "remembering the name of Mary, who will soon arrive in Berlin." Nabokov himself had experienced the pain of displacement just like Mary, Pnin, Ganin, and Fyodor, who suffer the anguish of exile and displacement. The issues discussed in these novels are exile, displacement, and homelessness.

These novels also depict the psychological impact of exile in the life of Nabokov's characters. Nabokov has depicted the confusing state of mind and wrong actions of Ganin. He always thinks of his life in Russia. He tries to get rid of the current situation by recalling the time in his homeland. For Ganin, memory is the only vehicle to visit his country. He feels nostalgic. Recalling his life in Russia became a part of his daily life, and this is the story of every Russian émigré in Berlin as "they become traumatized because of homesickness and rootlessness as chaos exists in their lives" (Naik 71). Lev Ganin belongs to a rich family in Russia, and he is accustomed to living in big rooms where he can enjoy privacy and can dream undisturbed, but in Berlin, he has to live with other people in shared premises. He stays outside his apartment. The Russian émigrés live in Pension as aliens:

The *Pension* was both Russian and nasty: It was chiefly nasty because all day long and much of the night trains of the Stadtbahn could be heard, creating the impression that the whole building was slowly on the move. The hall, where there hung a bleary mirror with a ledge for gloves, and where stood an oak chest so placed that people naturally barked their shins on it, narrowed into a bare and very cramped passage. (*Mary* 5)

According to Edward Said, it is through binary construction; the production of 'otherness' is completed. In this context, geographical imagination is used to the construction of the occident that is Self and knowledge, too, is used to portray them different from the orient that is other. This power dominance and knowledge is used to rule them to gain benefits from them. Said states, "Knowledge gives power; more power requires more knowledge, and so on in an increasingly profitable dialectic of information and control" (*Orientalism* 36). This is what happened with Russian émigrés in the alien society. Natives of Berlin and America used the binary of Otherness for the Russians as they were different from them that portrayed the natives as Self and dominating. Many of the Russian émigrés were living in the same condition as does Ganin. In this regard, Said in his essay "Reflections on Exiles," avers, "No matter how well they may do, exiles are always eccentric who feel their difference (even as they frequently exploit it) as a kind of orphan-hood. He states "Anyone who is really homeless regard the habit of seeing estrangement in everything modern as an affectation" (145).

According to Bergson, there are two types of memories, habit, and pure memory. As the novel progresses, Ganin goes from habit to pure memory, and he never emerges as a man of action. At the very outset of the novel, Nabokov depicts the troubled mind of Ganin, who finds life meaningless in Berlin. He is cut off from the native home and lives in the world of memory. Henri Bergson (1919) observes that, like animals, some people proceed on impulse (198), and Ganin is such a man of desire when he is introduced. He thinks of the dressing room for yet another day in exile; he thinks that he is a poodle. Nabokov observes thus depicting his turbulent mind: "Ganin felt that neither this week nor the next would change anything. Meanwhile nostalgia in reverse, the longing for yet

another strange land grew especially strong in spring" (Nabokov 8). Ganin has no company in Berlin. He does not have any social circle as all treat him as the "Other." He is shocked to know that his old love Mary had married another émigré Alfyorov. Alfyorov shows Ganin her picture, and Ganin recognizes Mary. He had a plan to elope with Mary. He is disturbed by the haunting memories of his first love Mary. Ganin feels displaced in Germany as he cannot celebrate Russian festivals and rituals. He feels nostalgic recollecting the "trees, romance, and long carefree walks" that he enjoyed in Russia. His treatment as 'the other' in the alien land during exile made him think of his past frequently. Bhabha comments thus: "Otherness is at once an object of desire and derision, an articulation of difference contained within the fantasy of origin and identity" (Bhabha 2). He took shelter in Berlin's pension house, "his dream life in exile" (52). His alien surroundings appear unreal to him as "Riding on a bus was nothing but a moving picture" (52). It let us know the value of one's home. Away from home, no one is treated as desired. As the new place does not belong to them, so are the people. His discovery that Mary is coming from Russia is "a Proustian act of recreation." (52). Ganin realizes that his romance for Mary has been exhausted because of his exile status in Germany.

G.M. Hyde, in his book *Vladimir Nabokov*, observes that "his future cannot be founded on the image of Mary, which belongs to the past" (Hyde 43). As Ganin walks down at the railway station, he realizes his exiled status:

Alone, Ganin settled more comfortably in the old green armchair and smiled reflectively. He had called on the old poet because he was probably the only person who might understand his disturbed state. He wanted to tell him about many things – about Russia, about birch groves. (40)

Nabokov has depicted the psychic pressures of Ganin since he feels displaced and treated as the "Other" in the alien country. Ganin finds himself alone in the alien land and feels he lost everything. His country and future are bleak for him. He is an outcast in German society and is thriving on a small pension. At the end of the novel, he has gained a new awareness: "And just as the sun rose higher and the shadows dispersed to their

usual places, so in that sober light the world of memories in which Ganin had dwelt became what was in reality: the distant past” (113). Ganin's move from Berlin for a new place shows the endless displacement of the émigrés. It gives a picture of the predicaments of the émigrés who do not belong to any place now. They had left everything in their homeland and possessed just one wealth: the memories of the homeland. Ganin stands at the window for four days and thinks of Mary to recollect the old days of love and high romance, but he discovers not Mary but his own Self. He feels "light and free as though he were about to fly away” (115). Nabokov describes his inner world thus:

As Ganin looked up at the shelter roof in the ethereal sky, he realized with merciless clarity that his affair with Mary was ended forever. It had lasted more than four days- four days which were perhaps the happiest days of his life. But now he had exhausted his memories, was stated by them, and Mary's image, together with that of the old dying poet, now remained in the house of ghosts, which itself was already a memory. Other than that image to Mary existed, nor could exist. (116)

Ganin and Mary got separated in the October Revolution and Civil War of Russia and had no contact with her for the last five years, but he has faith in his romantic love and believes that "Mary still loved him" (93). When he was fighting with the White Army in Crimea, she used to write letters to him. Nabokov builds the suspense as Alferov, in drunkard condition, tells Ganin that his wife is "pure" (107). He is aware that Ganin and his wife once were thick with each other. He expresses his inner heart by saying that he "enjoyed filth which was delicious” and blames his disloyalty on having been “so many years without his wife” (122). Ganin plans to elope with Mary on the next day, and this is a top-secret of Ganin. But Ganin abandons his plan and decides to leave Berlin forever. In the course of time, Ganin realizes that in the alien land, old adventures of love are fruitless and insignificant. He is obsessed with his displaced status and becomes aware of the real situation, time, and place. The past cannot be retrieved, and this awareness comes

to Ganin in the last pages of the novel. And this realization of the émigrés is the need of the time. No realization of the time and place would throw them towards destruction.

It is explored from Nabokov's novel *Mary* that it is the first novel dramatizing the scenes of homelessness, dispossession, and Otherness. The debut novel of Nabokov evokes the pain of his homelessness. His characters from Russia reveal the pain of displacement and anguish caused by the locals treating them as the "Other." Ganin was a Russian émigré who had started living in Berlin's pension house. He was living with a false identity in Berlin. While living in Berlin, he always remained in the memories of his beloved Mary. Ganin and other characters in the novel suffered a lot in the Berlin pension house. Ganin was a homeless, marginalized, other, depressed, and psychologically anguished protagonist. The internal conflict in the mind of Ganin is the product of his status as an émigré. He fails to get peace of mind since he is subjected to humiliation in the alien society and is forced to live with a fractured identity.

Nabokov's novel *The Gift* marks the end of Nabokov's Russian phase of writing. This novel also depicts a clearly painful condition of the Russian émigrés who are away from their homeland. Nabokov took shelter in Menton on the French Riviera with no money and no future. So is the story he presents. The protagonist, along with other characters of the novels, is leading a life without a future. Nabokov sought refuge in the world of art that provided him an antidote to the disintegration around him. He wrote *The Gift*, and the plot documents the traumatic experiences of Nabokov and his vision of existential absurdity, loss, and death. All the major novels of Nabokov reveal his quest for a symbol to restore the faith and hope in humanity through art. In *Speak, Memory*, Nabokov gives the images of broken pottery discovered by his son Dmitry. He struggles to reconstruct the broken pieces into a complete earthenware bowl, symbolizing art's triumph over material disintegration. Boyd observes that Nabokov's *The Gift* is the most comprehensive novel, rich in thrilling episodes and packed with heart-rending images and symbols depicting the struggles of the Russian émigrés. Nabokov writes about the suffering of the Russian émigrés struggling in Europe and America for settlement. Homi Bhabha argues that the space of Diasporas intensifies the discourse of nationalism in its

search for coherence in the alien country. In his novels, the sense of fragmentation comes across his deep and unshakable sense of loss, of being the "Other." The main episodes of his novels highlight the fluid identity of the protagonists. It reveals the planning of the natives who, with the power and dominance, create binaries to give an image to the immigrants. The plot of most of his major novels records exiled life from Russia, Germany, France, and America to rediscover and affirm identity. For Kath Woodward in his study, *Questioning identity: gender, class, ethnicity*, avers thus:

Identity involves: • a link between the personal and the social; • some active engagement by those who take up identities; • being the same as some people and different from others, as indicated by symbols and representations; • a tension between how much control I have in constructing my identities and how much control or constraint is exercised over me. (5)

Nabokov's *The Gift* is a novel that depicts the struggles of the émigrés in Germany's alien society. Nabokov's *The Gift* is the story of the traumatic experiences of an artist, Fyodor Godunov-Cherdyntsev, ready to fulfill his girlfriend's prediction that one day he will be "such a writer as has never been before" (376). Most of the events of the novel are concentrated on the depression and disgust of the artist because of the marginalization he faces in Berlin. Nabokov has depicted the turbulent emotional life and the harsh environment of Berlin, where he leads the life of an outsider. Nabokov was confronted with the problem of representing life in exile and carrying the torch of Russian culture during the crisis. The worst of the tendencies in the novel is the loss of personal freedom and artistic independence symbolizing the gloomy sociopolitical realities. Fyodor expresses his psychological anguish thus:

Everything has duped me –all these theatrical, pathetic stuff-the promises of a volatile maiden, a mother's moist gaze, the knocking on the wall, a neighbor's friendliness, and finally, those his which broke out in a deadly rash. (Nabokov 204)

The novel features the development of a young émigré author Fyodor. Each chapter of the novel is devoted to the development of his latest work: a collection of early poems, a biography of his late father, and a tragic romance. It depicts the émigrés' wish to be one with the locals. But the failure of the immigrants to receive any love or recognition shows their fate. Émigrés deal with broken and unhealthy relations. It shows their mental status. They are not able to develop healthy relationships due to their social and psychological tensions. Fyodor, too, finds it difficult to maintain a good relationship with his girlfriend. Their relationship underwent so many ups and downs. The plot reveals the practical and selfish relationship between Zina Mertz and Fyodor. She knows that she was quite unhappy with Fyodor, and thus, "she is prepared to face it" (377). Fyodor is an alien in Berlin, and people around him are unwilling to give him fame and recognition. The main focus of the novel is his relationship with the environment. Chernvesky's wife Alexandra develops a friendship with Fyodor because he reminds her of her late son Yasha. Community friendship remains the only option with the emigrants to get rid of their daily problems and tensions. And later on, this type of friendship becomes a big problem for them as they are not able to come out of that circle to open up with other communities. Fyodor is embarrassed by Alexandra's behavior and feels sorry for the death of her son. He tries to win her confidence since everything in "her soul is alien to him" (48). She is an old woman, "she was seized with a fever of activity, with the thirst for an abundant response. Her child grew within her and struggled to issue forth; the literary circle newly founded by her husband jointly with Vasiliev in order to give himself and her something to do seemed to her the best possible posthumous honor to her poet son" (49). He fails to understand his real intentions, but he is overwhelmed by her grief. She is able to win the confidence of Fyodor by her shattering grief. Fyodor tries to develop relations with her in the alien land, being alienated and rejected by all in Berlin. For the first time, she "confesses to Fyodor that when she goes shopping in familiar stores, she grows intoxicated from the wine of honesty, from the sweetness of mutual favors, and replies to the salesman's incardinate smile of radiant rapture" (17). Fyodor shares the grief of many émigrés to cope with his displaced and disrupted life in Berlin.

Nabokov has depicted Fyodor's harrowing experiences, who are leading a defeated and stressed life in Berlin. He is a total failure. He is feeling homeless and always nostalgically recalling the days that he spent in Russia. There are numerous examples in the novel *The Gift* depicting Fyodor's sense of homelessness and his failures in life. Fanon defined colonized people as "is not just dominated person" (*The Wretched* 182). Nobody should be colonized; they can be "dominated but still considered human, although a colonized people are considered subhuman by their colonizers" (182). The same is a condition of Fyodor in the alien land. He was treated as subhuman. He was insulted by the natives as well as by the well-settled immigrants. Everything goes against the émigrés. Nothing is in favor of them. His poems about childhood are defective. His later poems are dubbed by Zina as "never quite up to his measure" (206). Fyodor was told to write the life story of Yasha Chenyshevski but he could not. Everything is defective and incomplete, symbolizing his incomplete and broken career and defeated life as a migrant. Away from home, Fyodor was disturbed. He could not maintain good contact with his mother. Fyodor's story shows the significance of home in the life of the émigrés. Avtar Brah discusses the significance of home, thus:

When does a location become home? What is the difference between feeling at home and staking claim to a place as one's own? It is quite possible to feel at home in a place and, yet, the experience of social exclusions may inhibit public proclamations of the place as home. (Brah 193)

In her book *Desire and Domestic Fiction*, Nancy Armstrong claims that the "most powerful household is the one we carry around in our heads" (251). Nabokov dramatizes an interesting event highlighting the empty and futile life of Fyodor. He finds a hole in his footwear. He says: "a chill leak in his left shoe" (52). He goes to the cobbler to mend the shoe, but the cobbler refused to repair the shoes, which motivated Fyodor to buy a new pair, and Fyodor contemplates buying a new shoe. He visits the Berlin shoe store, where he feels distracted and is overwhelmed by alienation and loss of home. Here in the store, he feels lonely as nobody bothers him, and he is just a stranger moving around in

the streets like a lost animal. Nabokov has depicted Fyodor's Otherness in the novel, who struggles to survive and writes poems but has no readers. Nabokov's *The Gift* presents the scenes of Otherness experienced by the characters of the novel. Fyodor is a Russian émigré living in an alien land and subjected to discrimination and indignation. He is haunted by the memory of his native land. Nabokov's treatment of memory is that of a careful owner who knows every item in his treasure chest:

I keep the tools of my trade, memories, experiences, sharp shining things constantly around me, upon me, within me, the way instruments are stuck into the loops and flaps of a mechanical's magnificently elaborate overalls. (*Strong Opinions* 155)

The novel *The Gift's* main action is the outcome of the disgust of Fyodor with the native population of Berlin and the nostalgia of the protagonist recollecting the happy life of Russia. Nabokov depicts the inner conflict of Fyodor, who experiences the pain of Otherness and homelessness. Fyodor was traumatized by his treatment at the hands of the natives of Berlin. He was drastically disturbed, but he remained integrated with his Russian identity. Literature was a remedy for him to feel less nostalgic. He could not complete anything in his life. His writings were imperfect. His love relationship was imperfect. His desires to get settled in the alien country remained unfulfilled. He was tormented, living as a strange in the alien country, unrecognized for his literary works. He confronted nostalgia, cultural clashes, Otherness, and marginalization.

Nabokov's *The Real Life of Sebastian Knight* gives a comprehensive understanding of exile's effects on Nabokov's life and family. The novel depicts the Otherness of the protagonist and some other Russians in the alien land of Germany. Exile is such a drastic social and psychological change in a person's life, with the start of which optimism leaves and pessimism joins the company. This one change is the reason for all the major and minor problems in the life of an émigré. One is never happy to leave the place he belongs to, but if the homeland becomes a place of danger and death, one has to leave to protect his life. In this regard, Cook avers that the "crude organization of their

newfound lives contributes to upsetting their happiness” (Cook 5). The same was the case of Sebastian Knight, who has to leave his homeland in order to save his life as there was chaos in Russia due to revolution. The chief narrator in the novel is V, who observes thus: "In the November of 1918 my mother resolved to flee with Sebastian and myself from the dangers of Russia. Revolution was in full swing, frontiers were closed" (18). The smuggling of refugees was natural in the period of disorder in Russia. People didn't hesitate to take any wrong way to get rid of the dangers that prevailed in Russia though leaving all the wealth and property was never ever easy, but it was the only way left out for Russia's natives. Sebastian and V's mother, too, took the same wrong way to save the lives of his sons. "She got in touch with a man who made smuggling refugees across the border his profession, and it was settled for a certain fee"(18). Sebastian, who was a writer in the novel, had given a description of the anarchy in Russia in his last published book, *The Doubtful Asphodel* (1936), "I was born in a land where the idea of freedom, the notion of right, the habit of human kindness were things coldly despised and brutally outlawed” (19). *The Real Life of Sebastian Knight* is Nabokov's first English novel, which marked his exile from his native language too. Switching to the alien language was definitely extremely painful for him, and he stood strong as he said: "My private tragedy, which cannot indeed should not, be anybody's concern, is that I had to abandon my natural Language, my natural idiom, my rich, infinitely rich and docile Russian tongue, for a second-rate brand of English" (23). Sebastian Knight's struggle with the alien language has vividly been described in the novel. His only brother V reveals Sebastian's acquaintance with the English language. Both the brothers were so closed that V was aware of Sebastian's psychological topsy-turvy situation while dealing with the foreign language. He knew it very well that it was not at all easy for Sebastian to switch to English easily as he says:

This, however, was not all. I know, I know, I know as definitely as I know we had the same father; I know Sebastian's Russian was better and more natural to him than his English. I quite believe by not speaking Russian for five years; he may have foreseen himself

into thinking he has forgotten it. But a language is an alive physical thing that cannot be so easily dismissed. Moreover, it should be remembered that five years before his first book- that is, at the time he left Russia – his English was as thin as mine. (73)

Furthermore, *The Real Life of Sebastian Knight* displayed a crystal clear picture of the marginalization, their traumatized life, and pathetic condition of the Russian Diaspora. Sebastian knight's suffering is no less harmful. Dr. Gowher Ahmad Naik avers, "Especially, for an immigrant, it becomes challenging to survive in a different nation because one cannot adjust and integrate with another's system and cultural values" (71). Sebastian left his country to get settled in the English speaking country. He was the writer of a few numbers of books, but his work went in vain in the alien land as he could not get the kind of name and fame he deserved as Bethea and Frank discussed that '*The Real Life of Sebastian Knight*' is "about a writer caught somewhere between a Russian and an English cultural and linguistic legacy, one who remains ultimately unknown, with an uncertain identity and uncertain literary and biographical roots." V, the stepbrother of Sebastian, sat on a long journey to know his brother's life and cause of death. V's struggle to get knowledge about his brother, a writer of some books under his name, showed Sebastian's position as an émigré. In the alien land, he could not make that social status or friends who know about Sebastian knight's life. But because he was a Russian, his art, too, was underestimated and remained unknown in the English speaking society. The same happened with the Russian writers. During exile, nobody recognized the works of émigré writers, and willingly or unwillingly, they had to switch to the alien land language in anxiety. They experience indifference and treatment as the 'Other.' They are stereotyped; certain features are attached to their character and anxiously repeated to make that rigid. *The Location of Culture* gives a description of stereotypes as, "Likewise the stereotype, which is its major discursive strategy, is a form of knowledge and identification that vacillates between what is 'always in place,' already known, and something that must be anxiously repeated" (94-95). Sebastian was so disturbed in the alien country that this feeling killed him with a major heart attack. People

facing exile are more likely to become prey to fatal diseases. Sebastian had gone to the foreign land for a better future, but he did not gain anything. He was a literary person. He penned a number of books, but he could not taste fame on the alien land. He had to suffer isolation. He was so much traumatized by his life, leading away from his homeland, that everything got ruined in his life. V explained the loss his brother had undergone as, "His dark youthful broodings, the romantic- and let me add, somewhat artificial- passion for his mother's land, could not, I am sure, exclude real affection for the country where he had been born and bred" (21). His nostalgic condition was forcing him to stay isolated from others. Nabokov has vividly explained the condition of Sebastian as:

It is obvious that the picture of nostalgia could thus tempt only one who has known what it is to leave a dear country. I find it impossible to believe that Sebastian, no matter how gruesome the aspect of Russia was at that time of our escape, I did not feel the wrench we all experienced. All things considered, it had been his home, and the set of kindly, well-meaning, gentle-mannered people driven to death or exile for the sole crime of their existing was set to which he too belonged. (20-21)

Nostalgia is really gruesome for a person who experiences it. It affects the psyche of a person. One never feels content away from their homeland. So was the case of Sebastian. He was such a disturbing cause of exile. Nostalgia can be defined as "a yearning for the return of past circumstances, events." It is a "pleasure and sadness that is caused by remembering something from the past and wishing that you could experience it again" (Merriam-Webster Dictionary). It does not matter how worst the condition of a person in his country; he always feels secure and bound to the place he is born. In his autobiographical book *Lost Property*, Sebastian writes that "I always think", he writes, 'that one of the purest emotions is that of the banished man pining after the land of his birth" (20). The Russian émigrés all belonged to professions of a "passionate or intellectual nature; this makes the study of their predicaments in their homeland and the post-revolutionary emigration both intriguing and profound" (Gordon 6). Sebastian was traumatized by the kind of life he was living in London. He always wanted to be in his

country, but at the same time, he tried to escape from his own brother he spent his childhood with. V was not at all aware of the kind of life he was leading overseas. V was highly disappointed when, "on a dull grey afternoon in November or December 1924, as I am walking up... I suddenly caught sight of Sebastian through the glass front of a popular café ..., so pained was I by the sudden revelation that having arrived in Paris he had not communicated with me" (61).

This novel deals with the marginalization of the characters, death, and exile. Nabokov's irony and cynicism are very subtle as he exposes the cruelty and indifference to dictate the course of the life of the protagonist, an émigré, Sebastian Knight. The narrative commences with a deepened sense of remorse for arriving late to his brother's funeral, following which, he begins a quest to understand the reality of life. His narrator is called 'V,' and his quest remains as charming and fascinating to the reader as his name itself. He chose to be isolated in London as he didn't have any friends there. Émigrés face social issues like this, and his brother V was very much aware of the situation. V explained it as, "He did not make friends readily, did he? I asked with sham casualness. 'He was always alone?'" (107). 'His pursuit of the "plausible trail" and to "find out the real human truth" tie in with the issue of exile in a smooth and effortless force. V, the narrator, is the half-brother of Sebastian, the protagonist. Their relationship and Sebastian's lineage (born to a Russian father and an English Mother) form the novel's core concerns. Nabokov's unabashed use of psychological tools of narration adds drama to the loss, pain, darkness, mystery, joy, romance, and duality of his plot. Sebastian is depicted as an insufferable introvert through his craving for isolation. His childhood remains adrift in isolation while going through the channels of death, despair, and loneliness. Nabokov's imagery of "hollow cheek," "withered leaf," "water-spider," etc., are clear indications of his isolation. Sebastian's crisis of identity is continued when he immigrates to England, much like Nabokov himself. The journey is described as being "hellish," and his occasional interactions with his half-brother V seem like the only connection Sebastian shows to life. Nabokov takes the reader through an enchanting ride of his life before merging V and Sebastian into a single person — with a cold diagnosis

of a multiple personality condition. Nabokov makes it clear in the introduction to *Bend Sinister* (1960) the reader that although the political regimes of Bolshevist and the Nazi-German eras may be regarded as prototypes of the society in several ways, his work must not be connected with the political ideologies of either state when he says that "the influence of my epoch on my present book is as negligible as the influence of my books, or at least this book, on my epoch." (Nabokov 2)

Nabokov's *The Real-life of Sebastian Knight* is a typical exile novel dealing with the problem of homelessness and Otherness. Artists have been regarded as having a more elaborate and relevant perspective about exile in comparison to writers. Most writers perceive the loss of homeland and native language as a frustrating separation. Nochlin observes that "Expatriation and Exile were chosen by or conferred upon many artists owing to their apolitical and artistic belief systems" (Nochlin 317). Most of Nabokov's characters are regarded as a projection of his own personality (Wu 2). V has been regarded as a 'self-conscious' narrator. The flexibility of his writing is rendered from his self-conscious attributes. Sebastian suffers alienation and isolation as he lives alone, friendless being haunted by the memories of the past. He has explained very well all the minute details related to the sufferings of his half brother in a land he does not belong to. He depicts Sebastian's love for Russian as:

It did thrive wonderfully, but still, I maintain that had he started to write in Russian, those particular linguistic throes would have been spared him. Let me add that I have in my possession a letter written by him not long before his death. (73)

In the life of émigrés communication barrier plays a significant role. Language is one of the prominent features of one's identity. Social communication is highly important for a person to survive in society. Social isolation can lead to psychological disturbance. Sebastian was extremely disturbed by this situation. He was not so good at English when he went to London. Later he became so fluent in English and started writing in the same language but leaving his mother tongue was awfully painful to him. V explains the tragic

psychic condition of his brother Sebastian who had left his mother tongue unintentionally:

I know, I know as definitely as I know we had the same father. I know Sebastian's Russian was better and more natural to him than his English. I quite believe that by not speaking Russian for five years, he may have forced himself into thinking he had forgotten it. But a language is an alive physical thing that cannot be so easily dismissed. It should moreover be remembered that five years before his first book- that is, at the time he left Russia- his English was as thin as mine. (73)

Nabokov's *The Real Life of Sebastian Knight* displays the pathetic and struggling life of the Russian émigrés. Émigrés are so much traumatized that made their life a real hell. In this novel, Nabokov has nicely depicted the socio-political upheavals of Russia and its effects on the life of the émigrés. Nostalgia and isolation created conflicts and dilemmas in the relations of the two brothers. Sebastian confronted language and alienation problems in London. But away from home, Sebastian remained integrated with his mother tongue. The novel is a beautiful creation of Nabokov that depicts the sufferings and pathetic life of the émigrés.

Nabokov's novel *Pnin* is a classic exemplary work depicting the 'Otherness' of the Russian émigrés and their plight away from their homeland. The main protagonist, Timofey Pnin, is described as a Russian immigrant of White ethnicity exiled from Russia in his youth. He is living in America. Pnin is a professor of Russian literature at Windale College. He is leading the life of an immigrant who is considered an outsider in the alien land. There are so many happenings in the life of Pnin. He is an émigré. He does not know English. He faces multiple displacements in the same country. He is insulted by his colleagues. He had a broken relationship with his wife. His son is not living with him. He is marginalized in the alien country. So there are hundreds of problems in the life of Pnin. He was considered inferior by the native colleagues, and that's how ultimately they were portraying themselves as superiors, just as Said states about the occident who were considering the Orient as inferior. Said explains this in his renowned book *Orientalism*

that orient can be shown as inferior by “dealing with it, by making statements about it, authorizing it, by teaching it, setting it, ruling over it”(3). With these words, Said makes it clear that in certain ways, others can be put to the category of inferior. They are marginalized by justifying through these works of the colonizers. So the main cause of Pnin's marginalization is his language barrier. His struggles with the English language, "the gap in communication that weighed on him are predicaments experienced by Nabokov himself" (Besemeres 390). However, the primary reason for a reader to be unable to connect Pnin to Nabokov is that the latter was an impeccable bilingual writer (Besemeres 391). Nabokov observes that "a special danger area in Pnin's case was the English language" (Nabokov, *Pnin* 14). No wonder, Pnin's English emerges as a character in itself. Pnin struggles to express his inner Self in his own unique style. Boyd writes about Pnin that he was a "noble, generous heartbeats within the body of a clown whose every phrase in English is an unwitting joke” (Boyd 274). Alien language increases the difficulty level of the émigrés. For example, Pnin’s friend, too, is the victim as depicted in the novel, "it would be hard to say, without applying some very special tests, which of them, Pnin or Komarov spoke worse English; probably Pnin” (72). *Pnin* is full of stances as:

He looked very old, with his toothless mouth half open and a film of tears dimming his blank, unblinking eyes. Then, with a moan of anguished anticipation, he went back to the sink and, bracing himself, dipped his hand into the foam. A jogger of glass stung him. Gently he removed a broken goblet. The beautiful bowl was intact. (172)

Nabokov discusses the dilemmas of the Russian émigrés in his *Speak, Memory* thus: “Russian émigrés formed colonies of culture that greatly surpassed the cultural mean of the necessarily more diluted foreign communities among which they were placed” (*Speak Memory* 23). Nabokov depicted, "I have in view, of course, Russian intellectuals not the flashier kind of person who "was, you know, an adviser to the tsar or something" (*Speak Memory* 23). Close connections can be made between Pnin and Nabokov due to the similarity of the narrative style followed in both (Besemeres 391).

Nabokov has extensively talked about the sensibilities and predicaments of emigration and its effects on the lives of émigrés. The tone and his opinions seem to concur considerably between *Speak, Memory*, and *Pnin*. This indicates the possible dilemma that Pnin experienced - a decision to keep his 'Russianness' intact or transition into an American personality. Nabokov has used derogatory epithets for Timofey Pnin. He is called a "joke", "freak," "pathetic savant," "cracked ping-pong ball," "Russian," and "the foreign gentleman." All these derogatory references symbolize his foreign identity and the loss of home. He is treated like "an outcast identity"(Besemeres 391). Most of the conversations of Pnin are in Russian, only occasionally interrupted by the local English dialect. The minute disparities of mispronunciations of his name and similar cultural differences are highlighted in *Pnin*. These incidents are in close correlation with the emigration period. Nabokov describes the regions of habitation of Russians in the foreign lands as "illusory cities." These were the expatriate communities where the Russian émigrés were settled. This term connotes a sense of separation and lack of belongingness in a foreign land (Besemeres 391). Nabokov refers to a feeling of similarity between his American home and his academic background from Russia prior to the destruction caused by the Revolution. This is clearly elucidated in his quote from *Pnin*: "With grateful surprise, Pnin thought that had there been no Russian Revolution, no exodus, no expatriation in France, no naturalization in America, everything — at best, Timofey!" (Nabokov 123) Timofey is all the time haunted by his home of Russia, and he feels humiliated when the locals laugh at him. He remembers his home and is overwhelmed by a sense of loss:

A Professorship in Kharkiv or Kazan, a suburban house such as this, old books within, late blooms without." "It was — to be more precise — a two-story house of cherry-red brick. A curious basketlike net, somewhat like a glorified billiard pocket — lacking, however, a bottom — was suspended for some reason above the garage door, upon the white of which it cast a shadow as distinct as its own weave. (123)

These lines of Nabokov's in *Pnin* are regarded as being most richly written as they elucidate the protagonist's Otherness and alien identity. Pnin's breakdown is described by the metaphor of a "bottomless billiard pocket". He leads a directionless and being bewildered; he moves to Berlin. In Germany, he is a displaced individual and experiences cultural dislocation. He cannot understand the culture of Germany and finds difficulty in communicating his feelings to others. Pnin recalls the sweet memories of Russia all the time. In the alien land, nothing happens good to him. He lives in a confused state. His confused state of mind is shown in the very first chapter of the novel. Nabokov explores the extent of Russianness and the adaptations to the new culture, English language, and perceptions in a manner that includes all minute observations in *Pnin*. Nabokov depicts the longing of the home of the protagonist, thus:

Lilacs — those Russian garden graces, to whose springtime splendor, all honey, and hum, my poor *Pnin* greatly looked forward — crowded in sapless ranks along one wall. And a tall deciduous tree, which Pnin, a birch-lime-willow-aspen-poplar-oak man, was unable to identify, cast its large, heart-shaped, rust-colored leaves and Indian summer shadows upon the wooden steps of the open porch. (Nabokov 145)

In the foreign land, language is the biggest obstacle to growth for the émigrés, and it is the main cause of his alienation. Pnin's love for his native language was so deep that he could never be able to leave it. Unfamiliarity with the language makes émigrés life pathetic for him, and he is treated as the "Other." Pnin underwent the same problem when he was on his way to deliver a lecture but boarded the wrong train just because he was not familiar with the language. "And he still didn't know that he was on the wrong train. A special danger area in Pnin's case was the English language. Except for such not very helpful odds and ends as the rest is silence; nevermore; week-end, who's who and a few ordinary words"(7). Language became a communication barrier for him that restricted him from making any good friends in society. He leads an alienated and friendless life. In the alien country, the business starts with the odds. It is something

natural to happen with the émigrés in the land they don't belong to. Pnin experienced the fact "odd one out." Émigrés didn't hesitate to learn the alien language and settle with the unfamiliar people, but it was not easy to learn a foreign language at the age of 40 or 50. However, Pnin tried very hard to learn English, all in vain. After spending years, he could learn only a few words and some wrong pronounced sentences. Whosoever is different has to stay out of the group. Pnin was different in the English speaking society. He was a professor of Russian literature. He was unable to speak English as fluently as the native speakers. That is why he could not receive any love, friendship, sympathy, or kindness. Nabokov made plentiful use of "pidgin" English through which shows language as a barrier for the émigrés. Nabokov depicted the endeavors of Pnin to learn English as:

Stubbornly he sat down to the task of learning the language In 1941, at the end of the proficient enough to use glibly terms like 'wishful thinking' and 'okay –okay'. By 1942 he was able to interrupt his narration with the phrase, 'To make a long story short' but the progress seemed to have stopped despite all his efforts, and by 1950 his English was still full of flaws. (7)

Thus, Nabokov depicted love for Russia and the Russian language through the character of Pnin. It was shown in a different way. Love for the Russian language was shown through their inability to learn the English language. Pnin was so deeply in love with the Russian language that he couldn't learn it thoroughly after so many efforts. Nabokov described it as If his Russian was music, his English was murder. The sufferings of the Russian émigrés are also marked by the memory of the native land and native people. The very term memory has been vividly used by Nabokov in this novel. Whenever Pnin doesn't feel at home in the alien land, he found himself indulged in the home and memories. Though he tries to get settled in the new society, it is the misfortune of the émigrés that the new society is not willing to accept them as one of the members of their group. And after a days' effort, in the end, the émigrés are left with grief just like the hero of the novel, Pnin.

Nabokov's *Laughter in the Dark* depicts the homelessness of the émigrés. The main plot deals with the relationship of Albinus and Margot, the obsession, blindness, and morality of the émigrés who forget their values living away from their culture and community. Albinus forms the core of the novel. Albinus is an émigré. He is a rich man, and Margot is homeless. She left her parents as she wanted to enjoy all the luxuries of life. Nabokov has depicted the games of love, sex, and betrayal through the characters of Albinus and Margot. She belongs to the second generation of migrants. She is shown as the flapper in the novel. Margot is a poor girl but has desperation to lead a luxurious life. She is an expert in manipulation and vulgarity. She likes seducing and provoking men and is crazy to make money selling her body, making nude poses. She posed naked models and decided to make up her face "for the sitting, painted her dry, hot mouth, darkened her eyelids, and once even touched her nipples with her lipstick" (19). She did not need money; she has a lust for money. Margot prostituted for the sake of money; she fulfills her desire to lead a luxurious life. Nabokov depicted the character degradation of the second generation émigrés or the people living in Diaspora through Margot. She has been described as:

One day, as she was standing at the corner of the street, a fellow on a red motor-cycle, whom she had observed once or twice already, drew up suddenly and offered her a ride. He had flaxen hair combed back, and his shirt billowed behind, still full of the wind he had gathered. She smiled, got up behind him, arranged her skirt, and next moment was traveling at a terrific speed with his tie flying in her face. He took her outside the city and there halted. (15)

Nabokov has depicted the pathetic and morally degraded life of the émigrés away from their culture and country. Margot's parents were not that rich to provide her all luxuries of life that why she had started selling her body to fulfill her dreams. She had lost her way of life. She had forgotten all the Russian values. She was not aware of the bad deeds she was becoming a part of. And all this happens with second-generation

immigrants who sandwich between two cultures. They are not aware of their own culture, and they find comfort in the environment they live in.

Albinus even betrays his wife to enjoy the sexual pleasures of Margot. She tries her best to destroy the marriage of Albinus and looks happy when she comes to know that his wife Elizabeth is leaving him. Paul hears: “a vulgar, capricious, feminine voice” (51). Albinus does not have good feelings for her. He uses her just to satisfy his lust. Margot was for him, “a little harlot, who ought to be in a reformatory” (62). He develops a sexual relationship with Margot to escape from the alienation of life. The sexual passions blind him as he doesn’t see her vulgarity. “He started at her face almost in dread; it was a pale, sulky, painfully beautiful face” (14).

Nabokov has depicted well Albinus as a colonized victim in the hands of Margot. Margot was somehow capturing the soul and body. He was totally in control of her. And later on, she became the main reason for Albinus' homelessness and ultimately his death. Albinus was so much indulged in Margot's sexual pleasure that he had lost his senses to think independently. Whatever Margot was saying to him, planning against him was absolutely right for him. The degraded life of the émigrés is always full of conspiracies and lies. Margot is such a liar who uses Albinus like a puppet in her hands. Nabokov states this situation as:

Believe me, Albinus, I liked you well, more than I ever showed; but if you had told me in plain terms that my presence had become irksome to you both, I should have prized your frankness highly, and then the happy recollections of our talks about painting, of our rambles in the world of color, would not have been so sadly darkened by the shadow of your faithless flight. (166)

Nabokov has depicted the human degradation of Albinus thus: “he looked at her face in which everything was so charming; the burning cheeks, the lips glistening from the cherry brandy, the childish solemnity of the long hazel eyes, and the small downy mole on the soft curve just beneath the left one” (32). Margot was an infatuation for Albinus, “even that vulgar Berlin slang of hers only enchanted the charm of her throaty

voice and the large white teeth" (34). Albinus lives in Berlin as an outsider, but his wealth attracts Margot who brings sufferings to him. Albinus had a damn attraction towards her, "perhaps for the first time in the course of the year he had spent with Margot, Albinus was perfectly conscious of the thin, slimy layer of turpitude which had settled on his life" (114). Albinus' disturbed family life forced him to get any closer to Margot, but there was a connection of lust that stopped him. He is not able to break up with Margot because of his carnal desires. He concentrates on her erotic body as she is compared to a snake, "she is a torpid lizard" (57). "She shuffles off her swimming suit snake-like" (82). She draws "herself higher and higher, like a snake when it coils" (139). Margot was very disloyal to Albinus. She mocks at "Albinus's blindness and has relations with Rex in front of him. She doesn't leave him and uses his money to enjoy and to survive. Albinus becomes a victim of carnal desires and becomes a slave to Margot, who uses her body to destroy the happiness of Albinus and "His life ended in disaster"(5). It is the fate of all émigrés in a strange country.

In the alien land, as the émigrés forget their moral values, they indulge in illegitimate relations, extramarital love affairs. Albinus left his Russian traditions and had integrated with the lifestyle of Berlin. Though at the end of the novel Albinus becomes guilty conscious, after getting in touch with Margot, he enjoys every bit of her body. He plans some long trips with her. He takes her on long vacations as well. Albinus spends an abundance of money on Margot and, in return, used her body to the fullest:

Albinus let a handful of sand tickle, as from an hourglass, on to her indrawn stomach. She opened her eyes, blinked in the silver-blue blaze, smiled, and shut her eyes again. After a while, she drew herself up, clasped her arms around her knees, and remained sitting motionless. Now he could see her back; he bared to the waist with the glitter of sand grains along the curve of her spine. He brushed them away gently. Her skin was silky and hot. (72)

Nabokov's *Laughter in the Dark* is an important novel dealing with the issues of Otherness and homelessness. Albinus is not only away from his home but also away from

his Russian values. He experienced exile by leaving his home with his own wish and suffered the worst. He stayed away from his wife and child. He stayed away from his moral values and followed lust. All his bad deeds led him towards his pathetic ending. He became the victim in the hands of Margot, a flapper. Albinus gets entrapped by Margot to grab his property in alliance with Rex as the sexual adventures of Albinus bring moral and spiritual degradation.

In his novel *Lolita*, Nabokov continues the issue of the "Otherness" of the characters and their loss of home and marginalization. The characters in *Mary*, *The Gift*, and *Lolita* are displaced characters struggling in the alien land for survival. For example, in *Lolita*, Humbert Humbert was a man born in Paris and lived in America. His father was a Swiss citizen of mixed French and Austrian descent. Nabokov's writing is full of episodes of migration, pain, exile, nostalgia. Nabokov even represents the homeland as an unfamiliar and dead land that becomes the exiled foreign land. In *Lolita*, the culturally hybrid character, Humbert, frequently changes his residence before he is attracted to the house of Charlotte Haze, driven by a lust for Lolita. Humbert drags Lolita out of her home and takes her on a long highway journey around America. Through the poignant voices of the characters in the novel, Nabokov expresses his agony. The poignant experiences of the Russian émigrés are depicted in the novel. All the main characters feel the utter frustration and pain of exile in his personal life. Nabokov has used exile for a negative attitude, pain and pessimism, denial, hardships, reluctance, and refusal. A remarkably powerful impression of exile on the language employed by Nabokov in all his novels is worth considering:

My private tragedy, which cannot, and indeed should not be, anybody's concern is that I had to abandon my natural idiom, my untrammelled, rich and infinitely docile Russian tongue for a second-rate brand of English, devoid of any of those apparatuses the baffling mirror, the black velvet backdrop, the implied associations and traditions which the native implied associations and traditions which the native illusionist, frac-tails flying, can

magically use to transcend the heritage in his own way. (*Lolita* 316-317)

Both the protagonists Lolita and Humbert Humbert are portrayed as victims in *Lolita* and are literarily alienated from their societies. In addition to this, Lolita and Humbert Humbert both differed in the cause of exile. Although exile of Humbert was his very own decision because he himself left Europe, however, the death of Lolita's mother led her to exile and thereby leaving the territory of Ramsdale. Moreover, Lolita joins Humbert for an obvious eternal journey. Both kept moving from one place to another on the roads and hence belonged to no fixed place. Their endless journey has been depicted by Nabokov thus:

We are now setting out on a long, happy journey. I remember"...Again we were welcomed to wary motels by means of inscriptions that read:

We wish you to feel at home while here. All equipments were carefully checked upon your arrival. Your license number is on record here. Use hot water sparingly. We reserve the right to eject without notice any objectionable person. Do not throw waste material of any kind in the toilet bowl. Thank you. Call again. The Management. P.S. We consider our guests the Finest People of the World. (238-239)

Humbert was capturing the soul and body of Lolita. He was not less than a colonizer, who keeps an eye on every movement of the colonized. He was tracking each and every movement of Lolita. Humbert stated, " I plumped down my heavy paper bag and stood staring at the bare ankles of her sandaled feet, then at her silly face, then again at her sinful feet." He continues, " You've been out, I said (the sandals were filthy with gravel)" (243). And just as a slave, Lolita was so much afraid of her that she clarified, "I just got up," she replied, and added upon intercepting my downward glance: "Went out for a sec. wanted to see if you were coming back" (243). Furthermore, exile's impact on both is severe as their amorous journey with erotic undertones leads them completely severed from any society. Consequently, both of them fail to accept their amoral and depraved course of actions during their exiled journey, with Humbert leaving a blind eye

on his lechery and monstrosity while Lolita hardly shows any signs of acceptance and awareness of being a victim of both exile and prey of Humbert.

Furthermore, Humbert, just like the colonizer, blamed Lolita for all the wrong things that happened to her. He never takes any blame on himself. By relation, he was Lolita's father, but he had quite wrong, immoral intentions for her. He took her on an endless journey just to satisfy his lust. Being a colonizer of Lolita, Humbert never respected her. He never tried to understand the feelings and desires of Lolita. She was just an object for Humbert. Humbert always blames her for tiny things as he said:

You are a funny creature, Lolita," I said- or some such words. "Naturally, I am overjoyed you gave up that absurd stage business. But what is curious is that you dropped the whole thing only a week before its natural climax. Oh, Lolita, you should be careful of those surrenders of yours. I remember you gave up Ramesdale for camp, and camp for a joyride; I could list other abrupt changes in your disposition. You must be careful.
(237)

Leaving one's home is considered one of the most tempestuous times for anyone. Nabokov has depicted the plight of the émigrés who suffered homelessness and were treated as the "Other" by the locals. They were denied rights and liberty as they were often humiliated. The language was a great barrier for them. They couldn't express their problems and feelings because of the lack of free communication. As Elleke Boehmer states thus:

The postcolonial and migrant novels are seen as appropriate texts for such explorations because they offer multi-voiced resistance to the idea of boundaries and present texts open to transgressive and non-authoritative reading. (Boehmer 243)

Lolita is Nabokov's finest creation. It depicts the sufferings of émigrés who lose their home and are treated as others. *Lolita* is one of the best novels displaying postcolonial concepts like exile, Otherness, marginalization, and homesickness. Lolita

suffers at the hands of Humbert, who treats her as an object and uses every bit of her body to satisfy his lust.

In a nutshell, the period of exile was the real reason for the displacement of the Russian émigrés, their marginalization, and their loss of home. This was regarded as an era of dark humiliation of humanity. Purely owing to the political certainty of the intellectuals of Russia, they were exiled. The loss and dispossession of their homeland and subsequent ambiguities in their identities have occupied one of the most poignant literature places. Vladimir Nabokov, a salient writer in Russia's émigré community, is considered one of the greatest contributors to Russian postcolonial literature. A considerable portion of his oeuvre, especially the English work, is focused on the period of exile and its impact on the lives and cultures of émigrés. The concepts of his novels are concentrated on protagonists subjected to or suffering from exile and expatriation. His cynical views and severe condemnation of the exile and postcolonial period of Russian émigrés' lives is clear from his rare interviews and forewords in almost all of his novels. The emigration and exile period followed by the postcolonial situation is reflected in the literature related to the Russian era of emigration and exile. The margins of Russia due to the New Soviet politicization have current implications for the contemporary Russian political scenario. The ideology of exile and postcolonial effects remain the highlighted themes of Russian history. Loss of home, dispossession, and Otherness in the alien country left the Russian émigrés psychologically depressed and anxious.

Chapter IV

Exile and Marginalization

Exile is considered the worst experience of the human race. To be away from one's country is called exile, and it usually happens because of political upheavals in a country. And unfortunately, the postcolonial era is full of episodes of exile. *Oxford English Dictionary* defines exile as a "banished person; one compelled to reside away from his native land" (233). The etymology of the word suggests that exile originates from the Latin word '*exsul*' where the 'ex' is "out," and *sal* means "to go" exile is a very harmful process in people's lives forced to leave their homeland. There are mainly two types of exile: volunteer exile and forced exile. Volunteer exile is the result of the economic needs of the people. For a better life abroad, people choose to leave their homeland and settle down overseas.

In contrast, when in any country, the social-political situations are against the wishes of the masses, and people protest against the government's policies, they are thrown out of the country. In his essay 'The Mind of Winter' (1984), Said describes his personal views about exile. He depicts exile as "the unhealable rift forced between a human being and a native place, between self and its true home" (49). Forced exile is a kind of punishment given to a person or the people who are not happy and against the government's policies. Edward Said was perhaps the first professor of literature at Columbia University who gave his theory of exile in his essays "Reflections on Exile" and "Criticism and Exile." He writes in his essay "Reflections on Exile," "Exile originated-old age-old practice of banishment. Once banished, the exile lives an anomalous and miserable life with the stigma of being an outsider"(145). All these essays develop a consistent theory of exile, which became widely popular in postcolonial times. Said's ideas developed in his *Orientalism* inspired and motivated other prominent postcolonial theorists Homi Bhabha, Gayatri Spivak, and Said explored the impact of exile on the mind and sensibility of people ruled by the colonial powers. He highlighted the colonized's plight by the oppressive powers, which destroyed the life and culture of

the colonized. In his book *Wretched of the Earth*, Franz Fanon further explored the destructive impact of the colonial powers' domination, which destroyed the history and culture of the colonized. In the very beginning of his book, Edward Said begins to explore the difference between earlier exiles and those of our own time and says: "But the difference between earlier exiles and those of our own time is, it bears stressing, scale: our age with its modern warfare and imperialism of totalitarian rulers is indeed the age of the refugee, the displaced person, mass migration" (Said 174). Muronz (1980) observes that "exile may be defined as a bereavement for the loss of land" (227). Espin (1987) and Perez (2016) identified the exile as "a lifelong ambiguous loss since the event happens suddenly and the reason why questions are asked frequently" (324). The exile people have often experienced trauma and psychological anguish because of their bitter experiences in the alien land. Thus, Edward Said observes: "A life of exile moves according to a different calendar and is less seasonal and settled than life at home. Exile is a life led outside habitual order. It is nomadic, decentred, contrapuntal; but no sooner does one get accustomed to it than unsettling force erupts anew" (Said 12). Said wrote the first book *Joseph Conrad and the Fiction of Autobiography* (1966) and investigated the exiled people's plight. Conrad suffered psychological anguish as he got settled in England and became a victim of alienation; he was psychologically disturbed. The English humiliated him though he wrote in the English language. Said has given the example of Conrad to describe the plight of the people who leave their motherland. Said argues that exile is an uncommon situation, and when he is forced to leave for political reasons or as a punishment. Since exile is an involuntary movement to another land and includes the prohibition to return to the homeland, Miller (2002) observes a growing population of immigrants and the exiled persons around the world, leading a miserable life in the alien lands. Many scholars have investigated the psycho-social consequences of exile experiences.

The Russian émigrés were forced to leave the country because of the Russian Revolution. Nabokov and many intellectuals left Russia because of the reign of terror unleashed by Stalin and his supporters. The mobile gas vans were used to destroy the

Jews and those who belonged to the aristocratic class. They suffered trauma, depression, anxiety disorder, and other adjustment problems. Vladimir Nabokov is famous as an exiled writer in most of his novels. He created a galaxy of characters that are Russian émigrés struggling in the alien land for survival. Stuart Hall defines it as, “Cultural identity is a matter of becoming, as well as of being. It belongs to the future as much as to the past. It is not something which already exists, transcending place, time, history and culture” (225). He wrote *Pnin* (1957) and *Pale Fire* (1962), which became very popular in America. Both these novels are his English novels depicting the psycho-social anguish of Pnin and Kinbote, who are true exiles. They serve as a model for other exiled émigrés responding to their mournful situation. Nabokov makes it clear that “the stress is not on Russian Revolution. It could have been anything: an earthquake, an illness, an individual departure prompted by a private disaster. The stress is on the abruptness of the change”(Nabokov, *Strong Opinions*148). Edward Said observes that exile evokes negative and depressive ideas such as loss, refusal, denial, and life hardships. Edward Said observed that exile is like a prison sentence as he argues that those who face exile "lend dignity to a condition legislated to deny dignity; to deny an identity to people" (175). One can see the pain in the eyes of the émigrés who are marginalized and treated as the "Other" in the alien society. Marginalization is an important aspect of postcolonial theory. Exile and marginalization are inter-linked as the exiled people are forced to experience the pain of marginalization. According to Bhabha, those who migrate to other countries voluntarily or involuntarily are bound to experience the pain of marginalization. According to Ms. Rodriguez Pizarro:

Marginalization comprises those processes by which individuals and groups are ignored or relegated to the sidelines of political debate, social negotiation, and economic bargaining- and kept there. Homelessness, age, language, employment status, skill, race, and religion are some criteria historically used to marginalize. Marginalized groups tend to overlap; groups excluded in one arena, say in political life, tend to be excluded in other arenas, say in economic status. (107)

Marginalization traumatizes the life of the émigrés as it sweeps them away from their political and economic rights. Von Wethern (2018) contends that "exile brings tremendous changes in the life of the people forced to leave their homeland, exile includes lots of changes that appear before and after the event" (201). They are denied any social or political rights and have to live and struggle with fractured identity. Franz Fanon, in his book *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961), depicts that "colonization is a source of destruction and trauma for colonized peoples who are taught to look negatively upon their people, their culture and themselves" (227). Fanon strongly observed that the colonized people and the émigrés are bound to suffer the psychological pain being treated as the marginalized. Ganin, Pnin, and Fyodor are treated as the "Other" in European society. Postcolonial theorists such as Bhabha, Said, Ania Loomba, and Spivak highlight the pain of marginalization suffered by the migrants and the émigrés. Postcolonial theory portrays a better way to read any exile text which talks about the marginalized condition of the people. In his book, *Culture and Imperialism* (1993), Said discusses how the plight of the migrants living under the marginalized condition denied all human rights. The psychological pain of an émigré is expressed since he is marginalized and treated as the "Other" in the alien society. Nabokov expresses his dilemma, thus in *Lolita*:

My private tragedy, which cannot, and indeed should not, be anybody's concern, is that I had to abandon my natural idiom, my untrammelled, rich, and infinitely docile Russian tongue for a second rate brand of English, devoid of any of those apparatuses; the baffling mirror, the black velvet backdrop, the implied associations and traditions, which the native illusionist, frac-tails flying. Can magically use to transcend the heritage in his own way.
(317)

Nabokov's first novel *Mary* (1926), is a touching tale of exiled and marginalized Russian émigré Lev Glebovich Ganin who is duped by his beloved Mary. He lives in Berlin as an émigré far away from his home and country. His separation from Mary took place at the time of the October Revolution and Civil War. Both Ganin and Mary have

had no physical contact for the last seven years, and they have not seen each other, but Ganin is still haunted by the belief that "no doubt that Mary still loved him" (Nabokov 93). Nabokov uses memory as a tool to depict the heart-rending experiences of Ganin, who lives in the pension in Berlin. In his book *After the Last Sky* (1986), Said avers that "exile is a series of portraits without names, without contexts" (12). Nabokov has depicted the worst marginalized condition of the Russian émigrés as:

The pension was both Russian and nasty. It was chiefly nasty because all day long and much of the night the trains of the Stadtbahn could be heard, creating the impression that the whole building was on the move. (*Mary* 5)

In exile, the émigrés live in a very confused state. Their alienation directly affects their psyche. Their loss is irreparable. Leaving all the wealth, property, relations, and memories behind is not easy for anyone. It shakes a person internally and externally as well. Sometimes it is hard to relate with a person if we never lost anything. The same is the condition of Ganin in the novel *Mary*. Ganin lost everything during exile. But his love for his beloved is something that shattered him. He thinks of the passionate letters of Mary written to him when he was on the battlefield. Mary's husband, Aleksei Alferov also arrives in Berlin and starts living in the same boarding house as Ganin and occupies an adjacent room. He is waiting impatiently to enjoy a reunion with his wife in Berlin after a long separation period. He shares a drink with Ganin and ironically remarks that his "wife's pure" (107) in a drunken condition. He blames himself for living with a "filthy woman" (107) though she "had been delicious" with a "foxy looking thing" (107). Nabokov has given the metaphor of a fox to describe Mary's cunning and foxy nature, who becomes the main source of the trauma of Ganin and Alferov. He blames her for her disloyalty for having been "so many years without his wife," Ironically, he discloses this personal secret with his rival Ganin. He is not fully aware that his wife and Ganin had been lovers in pre-revolutionary Russia during World War 1. They continued their love affair through letters during the Civil War. Ganin enjoys the sadistic pleasure when he listens to the remarks of his rival. He doesn't tell him his plan to elope with Mary the next

morning. Nabokov gives a triangular love story of Mary, Ganin, and Alferov. Nabokov builds the suspense in the novel as Alferov doesn't realize that his "pure wife" is not entirely pure. In his meeting at Poltava, he calls her "queen of the festivities" in a romantic mood, creating a smoke wall to escape life's absurdity. Mary learns about Alferov's disloyalty when he is intoxicated and confesses to her his love affairs. Ganin is under acute depression because of his alienation in Berlin. Nabokov describes the oppressive environment of Ganin's apartment, as "Meanwhile nostalgia in reverse, the longing for yet another strange land, grew especially strong in spring. His window looked out onto the railway tracks so that the chance of getting away never ceased to entice him" (9).

Exile and marginalization in the alien country affected the relations of the émigrés dreadfully. As they are marginalized, cultural assimilation becomes a major problem for them. They observed difficulties in post-migration life, such as living and resettlement problems, the pain of marginalization, and up-rootedness. They are so involved in their basic tensions that were leading a healthy love life is impossible. So is the condition of Ganin. After leaving Russia, he could not maintain a strong relationship with his new girlfriend, Lyudmila. His German mistress Lyudmila was also a source of great tension to him as he says: "Everything about Lyudmila he now found repulsive; her yellow locks, fashionably bobbed..." (10). Ganin was depressed by the presence of Lyudmila, and he wanted to get rid of her. Ganin recollected his rosy past when he enjoyed Mary's real love, who is far away from his dull and boring world. Nabokov vividly expresses the dull and dreary existence of Ganin thus, "Bored and ashamed Ganin felt a nonsensical tenderness-a melancholy trace of warmth left where love had once fleetingly passed by-which caused him to kiss without passion the painted rubber of her proffered lips, although this tenderness did not succeed in silencing a calm, sarcastic voice advising him; try right now to thrust her away!" (11).

Ganin and Alferov drink together and discuss their marginalized condition while living in Berlin. The very first thing which displays the inequality of the Russian émigrés among the locals was their residences. They had been given different pension houses to

live near the railway station. These pension houses were too nasty to live in. They were not allowed to live with or like the locals. Describing these mean pension homes at the beginning of the novel shows Nabokov's main motive as well. Undoubtedly he wants to attract readers' notice towards the worst circumstances émigrés go through. These dirty residences show that Russian émigrés were geographically marginalized. In these pension homes, they live without any identity. Alfeyorov expresses his anguish; he finds the Russians neglected and humiliated. In a mood of despair, he expresses his loss of identity; thus:

None of your Russian inefficiency here. Have you noticed, for instance, what's written on the front doors? For the gentry only; that's significant. Generally speaking, the difference between our country and this one can be expressed like this: imagine a curve and on it. (15)

Suspicion and disbelief are also the factors which affected the life of the Russian émigrés. Living in an alien country, they don't believe the locals and have the same feelings for their countrymen. Although Alfeyorov and Ganin were living in the same pension house, they knew nothing about each other. They belonged to the same country. They share the same culture, but they don't share love and trust. Till the end of the novel, nobody knows that Ganin was a white guard officer in Russia. Even Alfeyorov, who was very close to him, did not know this truth about Ganin. It is the plight of the Russian émigrés. Alfeyorov boasts of his knowledge about Ganin, who is his neighbor, but in reality, he knows nothing about Ganin, who abandons his plan of elopement and leaves Berlin. Alfeyorov takes pride in telling Mary that "this Ganin was a real Bolshevik" (17). He suspects that he is a former tsarist officer and White Guard living in Berlin. Alfeyorov is surprised to know the radical views of Ganin on Russian history and politics. He firmly believes that Ganin is a political agent disagreeing with him about Russia not yet having been "wiped off the blackboard of history like a funny face" (17). Nabokov has introduced another character Klara always dressed in black. She is passionately in love with Ganin. She believes that Ganin is a thief. She has seen Ganin opening the desk drawer of Alfeyorov and assumes that he is stealing money from the drawer. In fact, Ganin

wants to look at the photo of Mary hidden in the drawer of Alferov. Ganin has a mistress in Berlin whose name is Lyudmila. She suspects the conduct of Ganin and believes that he is deserting her for a "German girl" (76). It is the dilemma of the émigrés in the alien country. They are so distracting, confused, and suspicious of one another. Nabokov has described the false assumptions of Mary, who is an idealized dream girl of Ganin. She represents Russian beauty, love, and romance, but he is overwhelmed by his former love's existential anguish. He feels guilty since he no longer loves her as much as he once imagined. She is no his old Mary but a Berlin-bound wife of Mr. Alferov. Ganin is under acute stress; he experiences psychological anguish. He loves Mary. She has been his ideal love, but she belongs to someone, and she is no longer his old soul mate. The glorious days of love and romance are gone with the wind of revolution, and in Berlin, he is an émigré having no identity and free time to make love. Recollecting the past, he begins facing reality. He comes to understand that while he cannot recapture the past, he is free to remember and rearrange his old memories. Ganin confronts reality and realizes that they cannot retrieve the past, and he is free to both remember and rearrange his old memories.

He walked slowly along the street, smoking as he went. The day had a milky chill about it; ragged white clouds rose before him in the blue space between houses. He always thought of Russia whenever he saw fast-moving clouds now he needed no clouds to remind him; since he had thought of nothing else. (30)

Dolinin (1999) observes thus: "Ganin yearns not so much for his Beloved from whom he parted some years ago...as for space and period he has been deprived of". He further observes that "Mashenka is but a part of replacing for a while...a sign of irretrievable loss, the loss of his Russia" (11). Ganin looks confused and bewildered because he cannot decide what to do. He suddenly gave up the idea of meeting with Mary. He changes his mind to meet Mary at the last minute realizing that Mary must have changed since he met her last time. He confronts the truth that his present status doesn't allow him to meet Mary. He has no home, no identity, no solid plan to cope with

the present situation. She is a beautiful lady, but she has no charm for him. The émigré Ganin is a man without nationality, and he is experiencing alienation in Berlin. Nabokov has depicted his alienation and the psycho-social anguish. It shows the mental disturbance of the Russian émigrés. According to Boyd (2011), "Ganin is described as an ex-officer living "in a cramped pension" (Boyd 171). The economic condition of the émigré was also very poor. As they are not allowed to assimilate with the locals, they are not given good opportunities in the alien country. They faced racism in every face of life. Just because they were émigrés, they were deprived of good jobs. That is why they had to do lower-level jobs to earn their bread and butter. Ganin is living in abject poverty. He did a variety of jobs, including being as extra in films.

He is sick of life as he remembers the "deathly brightness" of the image of huge lamps "aimed like cannon, at a crowd of extras illuminating the painted wax of motionless faces" (9). He believes that he is a shadow among fellow shadows living an unnatural life. Ganin leads a hollow life and at the end of the novel. And this is the fate of every émigré. Ganin is feeling the hell of life in his dreams. He recollects his past where everything not just made sense but was full of magic promise, is returning in the form of Mary. She hides in the mists of the past, like one of those "saying shapes." Mary is revitalizing the inner world of Ganin. Nabokov depicts the breakdown of self of Ganin, who spends a four days journey roaming the streets of Berlin, recollecting his good old days of high love with Mary. Ganin is a lost soul as he weaves a world of illusion and romance. He plays tricks on Alferov with a strong drink preventing him from meeting Mary. Ganin observes changes in Mary's behavior; he notices that her "tender neck bears livid marks like a shadowy necklace" (74). He is shocked to discover that she has a new lover, and Ganin is jealous of him. Ganin remembers how one day he planted "vampiric kisses on Mary's frail neck" (74). Mary and Ganin's affair is the main source of psychological tensions and anxieties for him.

Nabokov's *Mary* depicts the existential problems of Ganin, who is forced to live in Berlin for survival. Nabokov is an exile novelist who had experienced the traumatic experiences of exile. He used his art to dramatize the psychological anguish born out of

exile and marginalization. Ganin was an exiled character in the novel. He was living with some other exiled Russians in the Berlin pension house. Exile made their life pathetic. They led a drastic, depressed, and marginalized life. They stayed isolated as they were geographically marginalized and were not allowed to live among the natives. Bhabha observes that those who are in exile are subjected to discrimination and marginalization. Cultural displacement is inevitable as the immigrant writer is forced to accept the truths of their exile status. This fragmentation conditions the perception of the past, history, memory, and fractured identity.

Nabokov's novel *The Gift* is an interesting case study of the life and struggles of the Russian émigrés, who are the novels' main characters. The plot of the novel is set in Berlin in the 1920s. It is the last novel of Nabokov written in the Russian language and is also called *Dar*. The plot depicts the story of an aspiring émigré Russian writer, Fyodor Kostanttinovich, covering the life span of thirty- three years. He is an exile living in the memories of his homeland. Nabokov has described the hero's growth as an artist; his greatest undertaking is the satirical biography of Cherenyshevski. The novel's major issue is to express the disgust of Fyodor with the "native population of Berlin and a fellow writer's nostalgia for the better days of the émigré literary society" (29). He devotes himself to making his beloved's dream come true and that he will be "such a writer as has never been before" (76). Maurice Beebe (1964) observes that in "the journey of Fyodor, Nabokov has depicted his sense of divided self, striving for immortality" (13). The atmosphere is of disgust, and melancholy prevails. Nabokov discussed his mood of nostalgia and melancholy when he wrote *The Gift*. He says in *Speak, Memory*, "The nostalgia I have been cherishing all these years is a hypertrophied sense of lost childhood." His characters experience psycho-social anguish as they feel rootless in Berlin and express their longing to retrieve their past. The sense of loss haunts them. "The mirror brims with brightness, a bumblebee has entered the room and bumps against the ceiling. Everything is as it should be, nothing will ever change, nobody will ever die" (*Speak Memory* 77). Fyodor interacts with the local people of Berlin, and this experience gives him a sense of alienation as he recollects the city and Russia's glamour. The

cultural divide is established at the very outset of the novel. Nabokov dramatizes a scene of Fyodor's internal hostility towards a Berlin commuter who bums into him on a crowded tram. Just like Nabokov, Fyodor was the victim of socio-political changes of the time. He belongs to Russia's elite class but is a poor man in Berlin earning private lessons and publishing twelve books about childhood in Russia in a Russian newspaper. He is bored with emigrant gatherings, and his only idol among contemporaries is the poet Koncheev. He enters into a dialogue with him in the language of imagination.

In each novel, Nabokov shows his characters' nostalgic feelings towards their lost motherland; the theme of lost paradise is the main issue depicted in each novel. The enforced exile shattered the lives of his characters as they long to go back to their motherland. Nabokov's characters experience their forced exile's psychological impact as they suffer up-rootedness, otherness, and alienation in their life. According to Tyson in *Critical Theory Today*, émigrés "is a population of the colonized descendants who are separated from their native homeland" (Tyson 421). The émigrés had no identity in the European countries and America. They were subjected to all forms of humiliations as they led the life as outsiders. The plot of the novel *The Gift* is set in Berlin in the 1920s. It unfolds the heart-rending tale of an aspiring, Fyodor Konstantinovich, the émigré Russian writer. The novel depicts Fyodor's life over three years with a focus on his growth as an artist. The novel also deals with Fyodor's obsession with his mortality, cultural disconnection, and relationships with the Russian émigrés living in Berlin. His daily interaction with the local people of Berlin brings out his sense of alienation. At the very outset of the novel, this cultural divide is established. Nabokov remarks thus in his "Introduction" to the novel *The Gift*:

Fyodor's attitude towards Germany reflects, too typically, perhaps the crude and irrational contempt that Russian émigrés had for the natives. Moreover, my young man is influenced by the rise of a nauseous dictatorship belonging to the period when the novel was written and not to the one it patchily reflects. (*Introduction 2*)

His greatest achievement is the biography of Chernyshevski. Fyodor is in Exile from Russia and lived in Berlin, leading a lonely and anxious life. His consciousness of displacement is at the root of all his psycho-social anguish. Leon Gottfried explains the whole situation of the exiled and displaced émigrés in simple language thus:

In a century marked by political upheaval, mass migration (forced and otherwise), colonization, revolution... it is inevitable that much modern literature should be a literature of exile. Most poignant within this category is the literature of exile *pur sang*, of the displaced or dispossessed who do not have, never have had, and, by the nature of things, never could have a home against which their condition of exile can be assessed. (Gottfried 442)

The novels of Nabokov cover both Russian and American literature. He is prominently a bilingual novelist who chronicled the aspirations of the Russian émigrés who lived with fractured identities in the alien land. They were subjected to all forms of humiliation and marginalization. *The Gift* depicts the experiences of alienation and trauma in the life of the characters. Fyodor can never forget that his native land and childhood have gone. It is simply heart-rending that he is living in a country with unknown people. Nobody can recognize him because of his depressed mood and feelings of uncertainty. Being fear-ridden, he has started writing to escape from the oppressive and dull environment of Berlin. Andrew Field, in his book *Nabokov: His Life and Art* (1977), observes:

Nabokov shows immigrant communities, their environment, and their relations with the citizens of the new host country. Being a member of the first wave of mass emigration, he held up a mirror to the Russian community's life in exile. Fyodor is mentally disturbed to observe the marginalization of the Russian émigrés. (Field 123)

He has two problems to solve; first, he is worried about the future of his writing career as he feels directionless. He is also confused to decide what sort of life he should live in an alien city. The émigrés had a reason to stay united. They wanted to be the

support system of each other. It created one problem for them as they were unable to communicate with the locals. The Russian émigrés couldn't assimilate into the local culture and remained alienated. They become hybrids as they lose the shine and splendor of Russian culture. These cultural differences have been largely influenced by the work of Homi K. Bhabha, who has encouraged writers to "think beyond narratives of originary and initial subjectivities and to focus on those moments or processes that are produced in the articulation of cultural differences" (Bhabha 1). The entry of Alexandra Yakovlevna in Fyodor's life is a source of his alienation and mental disturbance. She is almost 'alien to him" (48), but her active energy motivates her to follow him. She is forty- four years old, but the death of her son virtually shakes her:

She was seized with the fever of activity, with the thirst for an abundant response; her child grew within her and struggled to issue forth; the literary circle newly founded by her husband jointly with Vasiliev, in order to give himself and her something to do, seemed to her best possible posthumous horror to her poet son. (49)

Émigrés are always disturbed because of their social status that they never accelerate in life. Fyodor is a total failure in his life; he could not complete Yasha's biography, and his monograph of his father remains unfinished. His biography of Nikolai Gavrilovich is referred to as "firing practice" (208). It is just because he is living in an alien country. He was trying his utmost to mingle in German society, but all in vain as the alien society didn't accept him. Fyodor was insulted by the locals. His literary works were not given any recognition. Fyodor experiences psychological trauma as the Berlin locals humiliate him and treat him as the "Other."

Nabokov's *The Gift* is a poignant tale of traumatic experiences of Russian émigrés lost and bewildered in the alien land. Fyodor has to confront the existential realities far away from his native land, and his struggle for survival is poignant. He is an artist, a poet, and a writer but all his endeavors end in failure as he remains directionless, leading an alienated life. He tried his utmost to assimilate into Berlin's culture and social circle, but the natives did not accept him as one of the members of their society. His life

was a tale of imperfect events. He could not accomplish anything in his life due to his marginalized condition in the alien land. He was marginalized, treated as an outsider, could not succeed as a writer, did not receive any love from the locals. All this affected his personal life as well, for he could not maintain a good relationship with his beloved Zina and decided to leave her to start a new life at the end of the novel. Through this novel, Nabokov has portrayed a perfect example of the suffering of the émigrés.

Nabokov's novel *Pnin* is focused on the protagonist Timofey Pnin. He is a Russian émigré of fifty-three years old and living in Berlin and working in a Windell College *teacher*. Nabokov has depicted the sufferings and psychological trauma of the émigrés through his character. He fails to assimilate into the alien culture, which is the main cause of his alienation and depression. The communication barrier is the main source of the anguish of Pnin. He knows only Russian and fails to converse with the local German or in English as he does not speak or understand English well. At the beginning of the novel, he is on his way to speak in an event, but he takes the wrong bus and finds that he has taken the wrong file of the papers that were needed in the event. Till the end of the novel, we find him in a totally confused state of mind, which is usual for an émigré. As in the novel: "Pnin, his head on his arm, started to beat the table with his loosely clenched fist; I haf nofing; I haf nofing, nofing, nofing!" (23). Just as Pnin does not own a house of his own, he is unable to create a particular identity in the alien land. Pnin was so Russian that he could not get rid of his culture and adopt a new one. His minimal communication skill shows that he is an isolated person. He has very few friends. Dr. Hegan was the only well-wisher of him in the entire department of the college. Gradually, it leads to his destruction, and he loses everything. This novel is an apparent example of the kind of life émigrés lead abroad. It shows their alienation, how they are marginalized, and their treatment as others. Throughout the novel, Pnin remains Russian and could not be American. He is treated as the "Other." The novel is a full-length account of the life of Pnin. He is in one way or another always out of step with the world around him, and there are episodes evoking "compassion, the pathetic and sad Pnin, the exile, the perpetual wanderer, battered and stunned by thirty years of

homelessness" (144). He was forced to leave Russia because of the Russian Revolution and teaches the Russian language in America. Nabokov's reference to the lives of Russian émigrés in his *Speak, Memory* is delightfully descriptive: "Russian émigrés formed colonies of culture that greatly surpassed the cultural mean of the necessarily more diluted foreign communities among which they were placed." He continues, "I have in view, of course, Russian intellectuals not the flashier kind of person who was, you know, an adviser to the tsar or something that American clubwomen immediately think of whenever White Russians are mentioned" (35). The misinterpretation of the American natives about the Russian émigrés, and the desire to correct them are evident in all his novels. Close connections can be "made between Pnin and Nabokov due to the similarity of the narrative style followed in both" (Besemeres 391). Nabokov has extensively talked about the sensibilities and predicaments of emigration and its effects on the lives of émigrés. The tone and his opinions seem to concur considerably between *Speak, Memory*, and *Pnin*. It indicates Nabokov's possible dilemma - a decision to keep his 'Russianness' intact or transition into an American personality. Nabokov's description about the perception of Timofey Pnin's among American counterparts as a "joke, freak, pathetic savant, cracked ping-pong ball, Russian, and the foreign gentlemen are all references to his foreign identity and perhaps, a crisis" (Besemeres 391). Most of the conversations of Pnin are in Russian, only occasionally interrupted by the local English dialect. The minute disparities of mispronunciations of his name and similar cultural differences are highlighted in *Pnin*. These incidents are in close correlation with the emigration period. Nabokov describes the regions of habitation of Russians in the foreign lands as "illusory cities." These were the "expatriate communities where the Russian émigrés were settled. This term connotes a sense of separation and lack of belongingness in the foreign land" (Besemeres 391). Nabokov refers to a feeling of similarity between his American home and his academic background from Russia before the destruction caused by the revolution. It is clearly elucidated in his quote from *Pnin*:

With grateful surprise, Pnin thought that had there been no Russian Revolution, no exodus, no expatriation in France, no naturalization

in America, everything — at best, Timfoey! — would have been much the same: a Professorship in Kharkiv or Kazan, a suburban house such as this, old books within, late blooms without." "It was — to be more precise — a two-story house of cherry-red brick. A curious basketlike net, somewhat like a glorified billiard pocket — lacking, however, a bottom — was suspended for some reason above the garage door, upon the white of which it cast a shadow as distinct as its own weave. (*Pnin* 123)

Pnin is another displaced and marginalized character of Nabokov, and the misfortunes and anguish of *Pnin* are dramatized. He represents all the characteristics of displaced and marginalized émigrés who are ridiculed and caricatured by Nabokov:

Whatever *Pnin* is, he is certainly least of all a clown. What I am offering you is a character entirely new to literature -character important and intensely pathetic and new characters in literature are not born every day. (*Letters* 178)

Pnin's thoughts are rooted in pre-Revolutionary Russia; he is living in darkness and chaos, being marginalized in the alien society. He recollects the days when he left Russia and of the chaos of the transatlantic crossing "that dreamlike, complex day of the departure, the panic-stricken, gaping suitcases and the whirlwind of old newspapers" (33). *Pnin's* mission is to teach his country's history and traditions and tries to connect to his country through the use of Russian. Thus, his otherness is reported by Nabokov: "If his Russian was music, his English was murder; He had enormous difficulty in understanding and speaking real English" (66). Nabokov records the homelessness of *Pnin*. He displays his traumatic experiences and the problems of marginalization and displacement of the émigrés living in an alien land. *Pnin's* anguish is depicted in a simple and racy style by Nabokov. He longs to go back to his home in Russia. He also describes his longing for the Russian environment in these lines:

Lilacs — those Russian garden graces, to whose springtime splendor, all honey, and hum, my poor *Pnin* greatly looked

forward — crowded in sapless ranks along one wall ... And a tall deciduous tree, which Pnin, a birch-lime-willow-aspen-poplar-oak man, was unable to identify, cast its large, heart-shaped, rust-colored leaves and Indian summer shadows upon the wooden steps of the open porch. (Nabokov 145)

Interestingly, *Pnin* is packed with images of destruction: physical and psychological. The issues of displacement, cultural dislocation, violence, and death are described in a very natural way. The Russian émigré struggles and feels alienated as he experiences the loss of identity in the alien land. Pnin is depicted as a comic character by Nabokov, and he is made "of a number of incongruous elements both in his facial expression and in his figure" (7). He is in the habit of making compromises to the "heady atmosphere of the New World" (8). He changes his dress and wears a trendy dress creating an impression of his changed outlook. His comic diction is the main interest in the novel as he uses the English words in Russian style. He frankly admits that he still speaks "in French with much more facility than in English" (105). In a foreign land, language is the biggest obstacle to growth for the émigrés. Pnin's love for his native language was so deep that he could never be able to leave it. Unfamiliarity with foreign language makes émigrés' life pathetic. Pnin underwent the same problem when he was on his way to deliver a lecture but boarded the wrong train just because he was not familiar with the alien language and could not read the station names displayed on buses. "And he still didn't know that he was on the wrong train. A special danger area in Pnin's case was the English language. Except for such not very helpful odds and ends as 'the rest is silence, nevermore, week-end, who's who,' and a few ordinary words" (7). Language became a communication barrier for him, which restricted him from making any good friends in society. In the alien country, the bias starts with the odds. It is something natural to happen with the émigrés in the land they don't belong to. Émigrés didn't hesitate to learn the alien language and settle with the unfamiliar people, but it was not easy to learn a foreign language at the age of 40 or 50. Pnin tried his utmost to learn English, but all in vain. After spending years, he could learn only a few words and some

wrong pronounced sentences. Pnin experienced the fact 'odd one out' in the alien land. Whosoever is different has to stay out of the group. Pnin was different in the English speaking society. He was a professor of Russian literature. He was unable to speak English as fluently as the native speakers. That is why he could not receive any love, friendship, sympathy, or kindness. Nabokov made plentiful use of Pidgin English through Pnin's tongue in the novel, which shows language as a barrier for the émigrés. Nabokov depicted the endeavors of Pnin to learn English as:

Stubbornly he sat down to the task of learning the language In 1941, at the end of the proficient enough to use glibly terms like 'wishful thinking' and 'okay –dokay.' By 1942 he was able to interpret his narration with the phrase, to make a long story short. But the progress seemed to have stopped despite all his efforts, and by 1950 his English was still full of flaws. (7)

Pnin is confused as he is burdened by his exiled life in the alien land. He boards the wrong train and is worried about his lecture notes. He is fear-ridden of the loss of his lecture notes. He discovers that he has boarded the wrong train and gets off. When he boards the bus to Cremona, he realizes that he has lost his baggage. In the lecture hall, he experiences a vision of seeing his parents, who were killed during the Russian Revolution. Vladimir Nabokov himself had experienced the psychological anguish of the loss of home as he had to shift to many countries for safety and survival. The pain of losing his motherland and homesickness aroused his strong cultural identity anxiety. He created characters such as Pnin and Ganin depicting their multicultural identity. Pnin is in Exile like Nabokov, but he is obsessed with the painful memories of pre-revolutionary Russia. He is fired by his hatred for the communist regime that denied him liberty and the right to live. Nabokov has depicted the sense of loss that grips the psyche of Pnin with the intensity of a heart attack. Pnin is an eccentric character lost in observation, introspection, and invention, doomed never to comprehend his alien society because of the language barrier. Pnin is a comedy of academic manners in a romantically disenchanting world. The

central character is our old friend, the absentminded professor, who has appeared in so many other novels, so many plays, and waggish, tweedy anecdotes.

Nabokov's *Pnin* is a beautiful literary creation. It vividly depicts the sufferings and traumatized condition of the Russian émigrés. Pnin is a tragic character in the novel who suffers a lot in the alien land. He remains integrated towards his Russianness, but at times, he is ready to mingle with the alien society and culture, but all his efforts in vain. His economic condition was worst. He could not maintain a healthy relationship with his wife and son. It affected his mental health too. And in the alien land, his life ended in disaster.

Nabokov's novel *The Real Life of Sebastian Knight* (1941) is the first novel written in English. He employs subtle irony to deal with the issues of violence, marginalization, darkness, and exile. Nabokov uses the images of "hollow cheek," "water-spider, withered leaf, the crumpled dark hair, and mysterious blue sky" (15) to dramatize the alienation and despair of the émigrés. The novel's plot is focused on the life of Sebastian, whose death is announced on the second page of the novel. Mr. Sibermann observes that the novel *The Real Life of Sebastian Knight* is a "dress rehearsal of death" (120). Sebastian lived like a slave in a "land where the ideas of freedom, the notion of right, the habit of human kindness were things coldly despised and brutally outlawed" (19). Two characters create the ambiguity in the novel: V and Sebastian, "one observing and the other observed. V described his interest in the life of his brother, but Sebastian remained "silent and distant" (15). In the first section of the novel, Sebastian Knight is depicted as the object of desire for the characters that are in his contact. In her article, Irina Marchesini, *A Conjuror's Smile* is critical of Nabokov and doesn't find any meaningful theme in the novel and observes that the role of irony in the novel enhances the interest. Nabokov gives the history of V and Sebastian in the early part of the novel. Sebastian was the child of a Russian father who had married an English woman, Virginia Knight. His mother had deserted her father when he was just a toddler and married a new lover. They spent their childhood and adolescence together. "Sebastian's image does not appear as part of my boyhood, thus subject to endless selection and development, nor

does it appear as a succession of familiar visions” (15). Sebastian expresses his anguish thus: “a dark country, a hellish place, gentlemen, and if there is anything of which I am certain in life it is that I shall never exchange the liberty of my exile for the vile parody of home” (20).

The political upheavals in the country were the major cause of the Russian peoples' exile. In this novel, Sebastian Knight and his family's exile was shown voluntarily. The country's political chaos forced the single lady with two kids to leave the country in illegitimate ways. It is the condition of people living under internal colonization. Nabokov described the failure of the Russian government as:

Now and then, in the course of history, a hypocrite government would paint the walls of the nation's prison a comelier shade of yellow and loudly proclaim .the granting of rights familiar to happier states; but either these rights were solely enjoyed by the jailers or else they contained some secret flaw which made them even more bitter than the decrees of frank tyranny. (19)

Russian people were treated as slaves in their own country. They were leading an awful life. All this was the reason behind their exile. Alexander Etkind depicts Russian imperialism as, "Russia has been both the subject and the object of colonization and its corollaries, such Orientalism. The state was engaged in the colonization of foreign territories, and it was also concerned in the colonizing the heartland” (*Internal Colonization: Russia's Imperial Experience* 2). Nabokov described the situation as, "Every man in the land was a slave if he was not a bully; since the soul and everything pertaining to it were denied to man, the infliction of physical pain came to be considered as sufficient to govern and guide human nature" (20). They are to use any kind of way to save their lives.

Exile, along with marginalization, affects the personal family life of the émigrés a lot. Due to their multiple displacements, émigrés do not get to stay together. All these traumatized situations affect their economic condition, which later results in multiple displacements and separates the family. V explains the separation of their family as, "We

did not hear from him very often, nor were his letters very long. During three years at Cambridge, he visited us in Paris but twice- better say once, for the second time was when he came over for my mother's funeral" (21). Exile always separates the families. It has been vividly shown through the characters of Sebastian and V. It is never a happy experience. Nabokov has given pictures of Russian tradition in almost all the chapters. Wherever possible, he has shown the way of life; the émigrés were living in Russia. He gave a beautiful picture of Sebastian's goodbye farewell when he left V and his mother to join Cambridge. He states, "Just before he left, we sat down, the three of us, for a minute of silence according to Russian tradition" (21). All these scenes show émigrés' love for their land, culture, and tradition. It does not matter where they live; it is hard to leave one's tradition and way of life.

Nabokov's novel, *The Real Life of Sebastian Knight*, portrays the tragedies and traumas of Russian émigrés. All three major characters in the novel are suppressed due to the political upheavals in the Russian government. And later, they suffer in the alien country. Language became an obstacle for Sebastian. He had learned well the English language and left writing in Russian, but he could not forget the language he lived with. In the alien country, due to his foreign identity, he did not receive any recognition. His works did not get the kind of appreciation he deserved. Nabokov portrayed Sebastian's traumatized situation as:

He used to spend most of the day writing, but so laborious was his progress that there would hardly be more than a couple of fresh pages for her to type in the evening, and even these had to be done over again, for Sebastian used to indulge in an orgy of corrections; and sometimes he would do what I daresay no author ever did- recopy the typed sheet in his own slanting un- English hand and then dictate it anew. (72)

The economic condition of the Russian émigré was worst overseas. They were not given equal opportunities for jobs. Their work was not given equal recognition, the jobless condition of the protagonist of the novel as, "Oh, nothing, nothing, ' he cried peevishly, ' In can't sit and do nothing, I want my work,' he added and looked away" (76).

The jobless condition of the Russian émigrés disturbed their personal and social life. They felt traumatized condition. It affected their physical and mental health as well. Away from their home, in exile, they were living marginalized conditions. In every sphere of life, they were marginalized.

The Real Life of Sebastian Knight depicts the worst condition of an émigré, who is a literary intellectual. But as he was living among unknown people, his skill was never recognized. Through Sebastian's character, Nabokov has tried to show how émigrés are marginalized in the alien country. He was a scholar. He had written a number of novels but did not get fame in the alien country. Although the reason for his death remained unknown throughout the novel, this could be considered one of the reasons for his untimely death. Sebastian was totally in love with the Russian language. His brother disclosed this fact. He died mysteriously.

Nabokov's novel *Invitation of a Beheading* presents Albert Albinus, an art critic and, like Shelley, dreams of capturing beauty. He is an art critic. He used to collect beautiful art things. Albinus observes that "hopeless sense of loss which makes beauty what it is: a distant tree against golden heavens; ripples of light on the inner curve of a bridge; a thing quite impossible to capture; impossible to capture" (10). He becomes infatuated with a vulgar woman Margot Peters. He falls in love with her and discards all the values that once ranked high in his life: his morals, his family, and his friends. Margot is a poetic young woman with "a pale, sulky painfully beautiful face" and black lovelocks on her temples" (11). In chapter ten of the novel, Margot is presented thus: "She walked up and down the room in her red silk wrapper, her right hand at her left armpit, and puffed hard at a cigarette. With her dark hair falling over her brow, she looked like a gypsy" (43). She is a sexually "liberated woman who posed nude and had a weakness for dominating men. She belongs to a poor family; she leaves her family at the age of ten. She falls in love with Miller" (Axel Rex), and one day he leaves her without any explanation. This separation shatters her world, and when money is running out, she gets another lover now and then. Albinus enters into her life. Margot wants him to divorce his wife, but Rex

appears to save him: "It's dreadful that you've come back. You're a beggar compared with him. Good God, now I know you're going to spoil everything" (72).

This novel is a clear picture of the second generation émigrés who, living in an alien country, forget their moral values. Albinus, Margot, and Rex are the best examples in the novel. Albinus is a well-reputed critic in Berlin now. Living in this new country, he had forgotten his Russian values. For a flapper, he leaves his innocent wife and daughter. Nabokov has depicted the vivid picture of the fate of the émigrés who leave their values. Albinus' pathetic end is a kind of lesson for all the émigrés who don't remain attached to their roots. Along with this, through this novel, Nabokov is depicting the plight of the émigrés of how circumstances force them to go with the flow of time. He has shown Albinus as the victim of the circumstances which he has not created. It is the fate of every émigré who is far from his home country. Same as Albinus, Margot is also the victim of the circumstances. She is a second-generation émigré who has started living like the locals now. She is not at all aware of her Russian values. And the poor economic condition of the émigrés forces them to indulge in the wrong acts. Margot is a struggling woman. She has aspirations to lead a luxurious life. She indulges in a relationship with Albinus, who is already a married man and the father of a six-year-old. Her relation with Albinus was only for his wealth. She was not at all in love with him. The moral degradation of Margot was shown in the novel as she was earlier in love with Rex. And when Albinus became blind, she again starts her relation with Rex. Margot finds an opportunity when Albinus becomes blind. She enjoys Rex as a lover and forces Albinus to sign cheques ruinously. Nabokov gives the images of "falling" thus to heighten the tragic effect: "Albinus steeped into a blood-red puddle; the snow was melting; the night was damp; with the fast colors of street light all running and dissolving" (11). He doesn't care for her but uses her for his sexual pleasures. Nabokov presents him thus:

Once upon a time, there lived in Berlin, Germany, a man called Albinus. He was rich, respectable, happy; one day he abandoned his wife for the sake of a youthful mistress, he loved; was not loved, and his life ended in disaster" (5) Albinus's infatuation with Margot shatters his life; he suffers

endless miseries; his family is shattered; his daughter Irna dies, and his illusion about the idyllic beauty and happiness is destroyed. Paul comes to tell Albinus that his “little girl is dying. (94)

Albinus found this is “a rare opportunity to raise his life to its former level, and he knew, with the lucidity of grief, that if he returned to his wife now, the reconciliation, which under ordinary circumstances would have been impossible, would come about almost of itself” (98). Margot is no more than a witch who destroyed Albinus and his happy family. She was a liar as she says: "You lie, You and that scoundrel—nothing but trickery and de-ceited”(108). Albinus becomes physically crippled and loses his eyesight, and finally, he dies. Nabokov has written this novel to depict the transient nature of things and the issue of mortality of man. In the climax of the novel, his wife reads the letter of Margot. There was an environment of chaos in his home, "His wife's evening gowns lay on the bed. One drawer of the chest was pulled out. The portrait of his late father-in-law had vanished from the table. The corner of the rug was turned up"(56). Albinus is a tragic Russian émigré, and Nabokov has given many images of death and decay and fragmentation. Like Humbert of *Lolita*, Albinus is blind to reality and is infatuated with a younger woman not for love but for sexual pleasures. He ignores his wife Elizabeth and daughter Irma. His blindness drives land him in an unstable situation, entrapping him in a prison of fantasies. Albinus becomes a perfect object of manipulation by Margot and Rex. Nabokov's novel *Laughter in the Dark* depicts the interrelationship between cruelty, suffering, and Laughter. Nabokov has highlighted the sufferings of the Russian émigrés employing the tools of parody, humor, and black comedy. The scene of cruelty is depicted by the suffering body. For Bergson, Laughter is a troubling agent for change. He argues that the cost of this transformation is to silence and suffocate emotion. There is "an absence of feeling which usually accompanies laughter" (Bergson 130). Albinus suffers greatly when he is blinded, but he is not aware of the cruelty inflicted on him. Being blind, he doesn't see Rex, the scoundrel lover of Margot. She makes faces and mimics him to amuse Rex. Elizabeth's brother tries to rescue Albinus after his wife discovers that his cheques are forged. Rex is seen slapping the knees of Albinus tickling

his face with a "grass stem" (186). Albinus is under great stress and produces "helpless movement here and there" (187).

Nabokov's *Laughter in the Dark* describes the sufferings of Albinus. He was a businessman living in Berlin. He was a well-reputed man in the city. But in the alien country, he forgot all the Russian values and indulged in an extramarital affair. He abandoned his wife and a five-year-old girl for the sake of a flapper. Albinus' indulgence in immoral acts and degradation in his character led him towards his tragic end. Margot, a second-generation émigré, left all her moral values and runs after money and luxurious life and indulged in fatal conspiracies. Thus, the novel is a beautiful portrayal of the traumatized life of the émigré who suffer because of exile and are marginalized in the alien land.

In the novel *Lolita*, the protagonist Humbert is an émigré providing minute details of his childhood days spent in Europe along with his lost love. Although his exile is not related to the Russian revolution, yet Nabokov has given details of the psyche of the émigré people who live away from their homeland. Humbert, out of the psychological shock, turns into a man who has high seductive powers. Humbert lusts and flirts with the daughter of a widower, Charlotte Haze, named Lolita. As marrying Haze was the only option left to keep Lolita beside him. Humbert and Haze get married. Lamour states, "*Lolita* is a grenade tossed into the landscape of the 1950s' culture, exploding the myth of sexless and saintly children created by Rousseau and Wordsworth at the birth of Romanticism" (79). Lolita was a careless girl. After the death of her father, he did not receive any love from her mother. All the carelessness by her mother and disturbing environment made her a "complete pest." Her mother taught the values of condemning selfishness. Also, since childhood, Lolita seems to have some loopholes in her character. It is "because she never received love from her mother or father. This was one of the most important challenges faced by the émigrés"(Xi and Yuo 759). Another important aspect is that Lolita was totally ignorant towards the lust of Humbert. This is one way of struggling to keep one's own culture. There are several confusions and challenges faced by the émigrés in the novel. Lolita, as a child, faces several issues with her stepfather.

The love she had for Humbert is fatherly love. She kept great hopes on Humbert. She was the most innocent girl when she approached him. She never understood the intentions of Humbert and eventually became the victim. The below lines clearly state the intentions of Humbert, "After picking up Lolita from the camp, when Lolita kissed him, Humbert knew that it was but an innocent game on her part, a bit of back fish foolery in imitation of some simulacrum of fake romance" (Nabokov 120).

In other words, Nabokov told us a story that a middle-aged widower fell in love with his stepdaughter and, in detail, discusses the traces of morals. And the novel also stressed the lustful nature of humans that eventually turned into a challenge. Xi and Yu remarks thus:

Nabokov's aestheticism is a strange, idiosyncratic form, one stressing careful perception and intellection, one grounding aesthetic bliss in curiosity, tenderness, and kindness. Lolita's lasting charm lies in its tracing back to the Greek original meaning of aestheticism, *aesthesis*, an activity removing the prejudice against aestheticism by making literary use of that prejudice, daring his readers to perfect the power to perceive. (Yu 761)

Nabokov, through his novels, portrayed the pain of being away from one's motherland. It has been portrayed so well that how leaving one's homeland affects the person and forces them to show the negative sides of their character. Humbert, too, experiences multiple displacements. He kept on changing homes before settling down in Lolita's house. After the death of Lolita's mother, she started living with Humbert. Humbert used her to satisfy his lust. Lolita was not at all happy, leaving her home with Humbert. It was an exile situation for Lolita. Throughout the novel, it has been shown that Humbert, too, does not have his own home. He looks for rental homes. And in the end, he leaves for the endless journey, which is not less than any exile. The works of Vladimir Nabokov expresses the pain of his exile. Through the poignant voices of the characters in his work, Nabokov has given details of the pain and sufferings émigrés go

through. The term exile is linked with a negative attitude, pain and pessimism, denial, hardships, reluctance, and refusal. Nabokov commented thus:

My private tragedy, which cannot, and indeed should not be, anybody's concern is that I had to abandon my natural idiom, my untrammelled, rich and infinitely docile Russian tongue for a second-rate brand of English, devoid of any of those apparatuses the baffling mirror, the black velvet backdrop, the implied associations and traditions which the native implied associations and traditions which the native illusionist, frac-tails flying, can magically use to transcend the heritage in his own way. (Vladimir Nabokov, *Lolita* 316 -317)

Both the protagonist Lolita and Humbert Humbert are portrayed as victims in *Lolita* and are literarily alienated from their societies. In addition to this, Lolita and Humbert had different reasons for exile. Although Exile of Humbert was his very own decision because he himself left Europe, however, the death of Lolita's mother led her to exile and thereby leaving the territory of Ramsdale. Nabokov, through the trials of the protagonists, conveys a prolonged sense of loneliness and isolation, foregrounded in the exile experience. The ultimate exile to both Humbert and Lolita comes when Lolita moves on with Dick Schiller, and Humbert reaches prison for facing trial. Furthermore, both Lolita and Humbert are already exiled from their very own selves before confronting the territorial exile. As the Exile of Nabokov, Lolita's Exile is permanent and tragic.

Moreover, Lolita starts an endless journey with Humbert. Both kept moving from one place to another on the roads and hence belonged to no fixed place. Furthermore, the impact of exile on both is severe as their romantic journey with erotic undertones leads them completely isolated from any society. Consequently, both of them fail to accept their amoral and depraved course of actions during their exiled journey. Thereby, Nabokov uses language to express disillusionment and subvert stereotypes. Moreover, Nabokov reflects the common problems of reluctant and unsuccessful emigration through the characters of his novel.

Furthermore, Nabokov depicted various situations of emigration in a disturbed environment. His characters, such as Pnin, Humbert, and Fyodor, all try to be one with alien land. But they were never accepted by the hostile countrymen. Humbert, too, did not have any identity when he was in exile. The same was the case of *Lolita*. According to Nabokov, *Lolita* is reported as a painful story. Others usually perceive his work more positively as artful, as "fluid and expandable because [they are] determined by memory and imagination, which unwind time and space as a spiral" (Paine 51). In his novel *Lolita*, Nabokov dismisses and disregards the conventions and meaning of the novel, forcing up the readers to not indulge in political reading of the novel. Exile, in the works of Nabokov, is depicted as a double edge sword, fostering the reflection on the difference between the absence and presence, destruction, and creativity in the homeland and foreign land. Additionally, it perceives the destructive choices that characters in his work opted after the exile. Nabokov's story was telling if highly different as he chose the kind of topic, people, rose eyebrows reading them. Nabokov admittedly breaks taboo to write about sexual subjects.

Furthermore, in the alien land, émigrés are always treated as others. They are considered low in comparison to the hosts. *Lolita* was one such case. She was a victim in the hands of Humbert. Just like the colonized, *Lolita* was just a puppet in the hands of Humbert. He used her as he wanted. Humbert plans everything in his favor, and *Lolita* is just an object for him. The entire novel is narrated from Humbert's point of view. Although she is the heroine of the story, she is not allowed to speak. She is not allowed to express her feelings. She is not allowed to live her life. Humbert is the colonizer of her body and soul.

Nabokov's *Lolita* is a literary sensation. It displays vividly the traumatized life of an émigré who suffers a lot in exile, in the alien, and in the hands of colonizers. *Lolita* is a victim in the hands of Humbert, who treats her as an object. Humbert is the narrator of the novel, and the entire novel displays his point of view, and *Lolita* is just a dancing puppet who suffers a lot under the rule of Humbert.

Vladimir Nabokov deals with the issues of Exile and Marginalization of the Russian émigrés. All his important novels, such as *Mary*, *Pnin*, *The Gift*, *Lolita*, *The Laughter of the Dark*, and *Lolita*, present the Russian émigrés suffering alienation, displacement, homelessness, and disintegration of the self. The language barrier is the main problem for them as under the circumstances, and they fail to get connoted with other people. The locals of Berlin hate and humiliate them and treat them as the 'Other.' They remain isolated and psychologically oppressed, and some of them resort to sex therapy, developing illicit relations with women. Albinus of *Laughter in the Dark* and Humbert Humbert of *Lolita* are such examples. Nabokov's fictions depict the issues of exile and the plight of the Russian émigrés who were forced to flee from their country because of the Bolshevik Revolution. Nabokov has depicted the traumatic experiences of the émigrés in the alien land suffering from alienation, homelessness, up-rootedness, and nostalgia. Charles Stewart states thus:

Words do change meaning over time, and hybrid has embedded within it both negative and positive attitudes toward mixture. In nineteenth-century racial thinking, the hybrid was deemed to be weak and sterile-proof that human "races" were different species that could not mix-while in the twentieth century, the new field of genetics showed how to plant hybrids, for example, could be especially fruitful and resilient. (Stewart 45)

Exile affected the lives of Russian émigrés severely. Ganin, Fyodor, Pnin, Sebastian, and Lolita suffered from exile and multiple displacements. They confronted bias and were treated as the other. They confronted cultural and language assimilation problems in the alien land. These Russian émigrés were given nasty place to live. They were deprived of equal opportunities for jobs. It affected their economic condition as well. Exile was a boon to Nabokov as he could find the real literary person within himself, but his novels are the depiction of the characters who suffer due to exile. They are marginalized socially, economically, and geographically. Their marginalized

condition in the alien land becomes the major reason for their restlessness. Nabokov dramatizes the quest of the Russian émigrés for cultural identity. Thus, the novels of Nabokov depict the reality of traumatic experiences of the Russian émigrés, their struggles for survival, the impact of forced exile on their life, and the existential realities which they were forced to confront in the alien lands.

Chapter V

Psycho-Social Anguish and Abyss in the Darkness

The psychological impact is defined as the inhibiting effect caused by an oppressive environment on the social life of an individual. A severe psychiatric disorder may affect the life of an individual. And the symptoms of anguish may lead to the disturbance of his personal as well as family life. Vladimir Nabokov wrote his novels as the voice of the émigrés and depicted his émigrés' sufferings in the alien land. Anguish an emotion; it is a feeling of severe pain, mental suffering, and sadness. Psycho-social relates to the social factors that affect the mental health of an individual. *Oxford English Dictionary* defines 'psycho-social' as "pertaining to the influence of social factors on an individual's mind or behavior, and the inter-relation of behavioral and social factors" (2012). Exile is never a happy experience. It torments the people who experience it and shatters them into pieces. It not only affects the personal life of the immigrants but their mental health as well. It is not only a matter of political and social biases but is closely related to psychological alienation and isolation. Alienation made an immigrant suffer from mental pain. It pushes them towards isolation, which drastically affects the psyche of the émigrés. According to *Merriam Webster Dictionary*, psycho-social means "involving both psychological and social aspects" and "relating social conditions to mental health." In the "Foreword to the 2008 edition of *Black Skin, White Masks* Ziauddin Sardar states:

Black Skin White Masks was the first book to investigate the psychology of colonialism. It examines how colonialism is internalized by the colonized, how an inferiority complex is inculcated, and how, through the mechanism of racism, black people end up emulating their oppressors. Fanon writes from the perspective of a colonized subject. He is a subject with a direct experience of racism which has developed a natural and intense hatred of racism. (ix-x)

While talking about the psychological effects of colonization, Fanon takes the examples from comics and magazines served to the colonized and to the entire world. He gives the entire explanation of how does this affects the psyche of the colonized or the ones who are others. Fanon states:

This is the purpose of games in children's institutions, of psychodramas in group therapy, and, in a more general way, of illustrated magazines for children- each type of society, of course, requiring its own specific kind of catharsis. The Tarzan stories, the sagas of a twelve-year-old explorer, Micky Mouse's adventures, and all those "comic books" serve actually as a release for collective aggression. "The magazines are put together by white men for little white men. (112-113)

It is not a psycho-social problem but the trap of the Self to put down the other and disturb the colonized psyche. Fanon has depicted the series of traps of the white men (Self) to create a painful life of the black men (others). He further explains that "this is the heart of the problems... these same magazines are devoured by the local children. In the magazines, the Wolf, the Devil, the Evil Spirit, the Badman, the Savage are always symbolized by Negroes or Indians" (113). Fanon has given good instances to show the condition of the others who are shown inferior compared to the Self.

Exile had different effects during different periods. Said explains very well in *Reflections on Exile* that there is a huge difference between exile of old age and our time ad, so does its effects on human life and humanity. Said states:

In other ages, exiles had similar cross-cultural and transnational visions, suffered the same frustrations and miseries, performed the same elucidating and critical tasks—brilliantly affirmed, for instance, in E. H. Carr's classic study of the nineteenth-century Russian intellectuals clustered around Herzen, *The Romantic Exiles*. But the difference between earlier exiles and those of our own time is, it bears stressing, scale: our age—with its modern warfare, imperialism, and the quasi-theological

ambitions of totalitarian rulers—is indeed the age of the refugee, the displaced person, and mass immigration. (180)

It is very much clear from Said's words that exile was never a pleasing experience, but in our times, its effects are more severe than before as it directly affects the psychic health of the bearers. When an individual is treated as an outsider, he becomes a victim of psycho-social anguish. It generates in him feelings of fear. His "fictional exiles, incurable eccentrics, this stateless wanders could not delight him to the world he was living, and thus, making him more depressed for the yearnings that were unattainable, and providing him with a comfortable world of memories that resurrects nothing" (Severina 1). The disturbed psyche of the characters forces them to indulge in immoral acts. Unfortunately, the worst part of the same is that they don't regret it. It brings out the worst in them. Their decision making power is affected. They don't feel bad about the wrong steps taken by them. It shows the negative side of their moral character as well. Psycho-social anguish snatches a person's thinking power. Wrong and right do not matter to him/her. His/her decisions and the approach to life is all that matters.

The novel *Mary* is set in 1924, Germany. This novel is a perfect example of psycho-social anger among the characters due to their alien land status. *Mary* is a story of Russian émigrés who were facing forced exile. Nabokov depicts the psycho-social anguish of the Russian émigrés representing their new lives in Berlin. In their alienated situation, they repeatedly think about their homeland. The presence of a train in the novel is highly important, and its movements emphasize the stagnation in the lives of the characters. The municipal Berlin train symbolizes the pain and poignancy of émigré life. Also, it shows the progression in the lives of Nabokov's characters, from clinging to the past to becoming present in Berlin (Nan 43). In the words of Toker:

The collapse of social barriers between exiles sharing an apartment is another expression in this model. Finding themselves in unwanted proximity, the characters are exposed to the temptation of intimacy, of Dostoevskian confidences and confessions during which the partitions

between individual identities are likewise knocked down. Such cannibalization is threatening to Ganin, as it is to most of Nabokov's protagonists and narrators: if death is "divestment" and "communion," then unrestrained communion is deathlike. Yet Ganin's uncompromising attempts to preserve the discreteness of his emotional life lead him to the opposite error: his inner life becomes hermetic, and his solipsism threatens to become as destructive to others as communion is to him. (Toker 37)

The feelings of nostalgia grip their psyche, and they are haunted day and night. Their old home in Russia as Paradise is lost. The departure of the characters from Russia is not depicted as a flight in the novels from their actuality to imagination or from the real world into the artistic world and mind. Their displacement becomes the main cause of their psycho-social anguish. They live like slaves, as the locals don't mix with them. They live alone, carrying the burden of old memories of the past. They are never accepted in the alien society, and "the individual becomes a victim of internal and external conflicts and psychological distress in the society" (Naik 71). It was not the choice of the émigrés to remain up-rooted and homeless. The reason for their wanderings was the political upheavals in their lives. The sane characters in Nabokov fiction aimed to evaluate facts and fuller comprehension of their lives and appreciate the beauty of this world to a greater extent. Often, the characters in Nabokov's works lapse into nostalgia, but usually, with their imagination, they gain deepening. Unequivocally, the exile losses are more, but their benefits from it are even much better. To be melancholic and remembering about the past means limiting the past by considering it completely over. Frantz Fanon states in *The Wretched of the Earth (1961)* that "colonialism is a source of destruction and trauma for colonized peoples who are taught to look negatively upon their people, their culture and themselves" (227).

Whereas, exile in Nabokov's fiction shows that "the real beauty and true values continue, despite spatial dislocation" (Hashem 55). But the characters in Nabokov's novels show the negative side of their character as well. And that is, definitely, the effect of their social circumstances and psychic anguish. The émigrés in Nabokov's works

Ganin, Sebastian, Fyodor, Pnin, and Lolita remember their past and experience psycho-social anguish. They can be found discussing the same seasons, colors, fauna, and flora of Russia. They speak in Russian tongue. Their sensibility is also the same, which Russia formed, which they knew in their childhood. The freedom is found by these characters in contemplating and developing the memories and images of their childhood and youth. An unforgettable impression is left on the minds of these children of the early twentieth century in the novels written by Nabokov. The collective memory of Russia, its cities and countryside, its seasons, and its citizens can be seen in these characters' conversations and discussions. All of the Pre-revolutionary children of Nabokov have good memories. Their childhood is deeply embedded in their minds. Nabokov himself says this about his Pre-revolutionary characters that are lost in nostalgia:

I would moreover submit that, concerning the power of hoarding up impressions, Russian children of my generation passed through a period of genius, as if destiny were loyally trying what it could for them by giving them more than their share, given the cataclysm that was to remove completely the world they had known. (*Speak Memory* 17)

At the beginning of the novel, *Mary*, with vivid recollections of the past, is fabricated by the novel's hero, Ganin. He depicts and fabricated the past, which is more real than the original (Sicker 253). Ganin seizes the process of forgetting the time by "practicing nostalgia." Ganin's terrifying exile is used by Nabokov to symbolically depict the inhuman, senseless, and dirty void experienced by Ganin. Escape from this consciousness is affected by the creation of another reality through involvement in some artistic venture. Ganin's act of memory is an art through which he recreates and relives his youthful years in Russia, precisely, his love affair with a young girl named Mary. As shown in the novel, the experiences recollected by Ganin constitute for him a much more pleasing and believable reality than the one experienced by him in his first consciousness in Berlin. One of Nabokov's critics, Alfred Appel, wrote:

Nabokov does not write the kind of thinly disguised transcription of personal existence which too often passes for fiction. But it is crucial to an understanding of his art to visualize how often his novels are improvisations on an autobiographical theme. *Speak, memory* rehearses the major themes of Nabokov's fiction: the confrontation of death; the withstanding of exile; the search for complete consciousness; and the free world of timelessness. (Appel 25)

Ganin can be considered Nabokov's double because, just like Nabokov, his real concern is his irretrievable past. Ganin feels disgusted and isolated from his fellow émigrés because they are stagnated and are more like ghosts than human beings. He suffers psycho-social anguish because of the indifference of the people around him. This secluded feeling pushes him toward the artistic act of recreating and reliving in memory the love affair with Mary in Russia during his adolescent years. Through this act, Ganin tries to re-establish order in his life and create a new reality. As soon as he met Alfvro and came to know that Mary would come to Berlin, he started planning to elope with her. He started creating his friend. Ganin was not at all aware that he was deceiving his friend. He was thinking about himself only. It has become the psyche of the Russian émigrés living in the alien society. Ganin's alienation in the alien country impacted his life so much that he could not maintain a healthy relationship with any girl. It shows the mental pain Ganin was going through. As clearly depicted in the novel, Mary is the embodiment of all Russia for Ganin, despite making any actual appearance in the novel. She is symbolic of Russia, Ganin's past, and his former youth. There are no political motives in Nabokov's life. The act of memory is not a communal vision but an individual vision. Throughout the novel, Ganin's newly-envisioned reality remains free from any damage or injury. This novel gives a clear picture of the psychological pain of the Russian émigrés who spend their life with the support of memory and recalling their past.

Through his novels, Nabokov aimed to portray the sufferings, predicament, and frustration of Russian émigré that were caused by unsettled life. He escaped the worst of Russia's fate. His dislocations shaped his own life. In the words of Pitzer, "He let his

characters dream helplessly of Russia, but he would not go to the Soviet Union" (Pitzer 101). Nabokov believed that one of the best ways of escaping from the harsh realities of the Russian world is through an immersion into the artistic world. Subsequently, Nabokov devoted himself to the novel as his preferred genre with situations and themes that reflected his life. Russia played a central role in Nabokov's Russian novels in which his characters shared with him the nostalgia and love for bygone Russia. Nabokov paid tribute to his beloved Russia, as many of his earlier books depict his memories and recollection of the past due to Russia's disappearance in his adolescent days (Chrenkova 26). As in *Mary*, Mary's image that is recreated by the memory of Ganin helps him get rid of his problems. But at the same time, these female characters become the reason for their frustrated mental state. It was Mary who never let Ganin have a healthy relationship. It was Mary for whom he tries to deceive his friend. Ganin was so much connected to the past love that Russia and Mary become one to him. It was Mary that brings "happiness and sunshine" to the dull melancholic life of Ganin: "It was not simply reminiscence, but a life that was much more real, much more intense than the life lived by his shadow in Berlin" (*Mary* 66). It was only Mary who brings moral degradation in the character of Ganin. He was so frustrated because of his life in the alien country, his jobless status, his inability to maintain a healthy relationship that he deceived, pretended fake love, and conspire.

Ganin feels disturbed by remembering his past and reliving his love life with Mary. Ganin finds himself upset in Germany and leaves for an unknown place. Living in the past showed the incomplete life of the Russian émigrés. They didn't get good jobs in the new country. They face language problems. They are not allowed in the social circles of the locals. They are not given good places to live in. All this pushes them to live in the past. It shows their mental pain, their dissatisfaction in the alien country. Ganin remembers and relives his days in Russia. Living with his past gives him the strength to start another day in an alien land. In the happy days of his recovery after typhus, he developed the image of the girl for the first time that he would like to meet: "Now, many years later; he felt that their imaginary meetings and the meeting which took place, in

reality, had blended and merged imperceptibly into one another; since as a living person she was only an uninterrupted continuation of the image which had foreshadowed her" (*Mary* 44). The émigrés led a life full of problems and sufferings even within their homeland. The émigrés had belonged to various backgrounds. They had to move between different places and led a transient life. Their beliefs and school of thought were different. They belonged to different backgrounds of art, culture, politics, and education. They were considered important contributors to the literary collection. The majority of the émigrés had an aristocratic lineage and lifestyle and was classed intelligentsia. And this is why their worst condition in the new country, their social status, their treatment as the other affected them a lot. Leaving their entire wealth back in Russia and leading a poor life was not easy for them. It affected their psyche. Their political stand was the common characteristic among all those who immigrated to foreign lands.

Female characters like Mary play an important role in the novel as they symbolize Russia and Russian culture. For example, Mary (Masha in the Russian version of the novel), whose name itself alludes to different heroines of Pushkin novels such as Mironova (in *Captain's Daughter*) and Masha Troekurova (from *Dubrovsky*), represents the Russianness and functions as the center of the spirituality and the noble Russian values in the novel. For Ganin, Mary is the epitome of his beloved Russia and his favorite poet, Pushkin. Ganin remembers her intellectual as: "she loved jingles, catchwords, puns, and poems." Nabokov himself admired the Russian works of Pushkin, who was a connoisseur of Russian tales" (Figs 212). Thus, in the memory of some characters, Nabokov's work holds a great place in the childhood of the exiled characters in their distant homeland. In *May*, the heroine Mary loved singing and reciting poems. For example, she repeats the same saying numerous times: "Vanya's arms and legs they tied / Long in jail was he mortified" (*Mary* 72). She loved writing lines from the poem in her letters: "How everything passes, how things change" (109). In another letter, she writes: "It's so boring, so boring. The days go by so pointlessly and stupidly – and these are supposed to be the best, the happiest years of our lives" (110). Mary used to write letters to Ganin, which are full of poems; one instance is that "But today it is spring and mimosa

for sale at all corners is offered today. I am bringing you some, like a dream, it is frail” Nice little poem (109). Ganin loved Mary as much as he loves Russia; that is why separation from Russia is considered "his parting from Russia” (83). All this shows the Russians' happy life in their own country, which intensifies their pain of staying away from their country.

The novel *Mary* of Nabokov is a poignant dramatization of the sufferings of the Russian émigrés. Ganin knows that he has lost everything. The Exile and marginalized condition of Ganin tormented him internally and psychologically. He lived with a false identity in Berlin. He was so depressed about his false identity and the treatment that he and other émigrés were receiving from the host country. It traumatized their social and personal life. Ganin and other émigrés were leading a pathetic life in the Berlin pension houses. The nasty condition of the Pension houses spoke volumes about the worst condition of the émigrés in the alien countries. This social status and living conditions, social and geographical marginalization, and poor economic conditions forced them to show the negative shades in their character, hence boosting psycho-social anguish among the Russian émigrés. He lost his love for Mary and his native land, but even then, he feels nostalgic and recollects the memorable old days when he enjoyed Mary's love. In the novel, Mary is a symbol of pure love and happy moments of life. Her loss and separation are a source of endless psychological anguish.

Nabokov's novel *The Gift* is structured across five chapters depicting the psycho-social anguish of the Russian émigrés. George Ivask (1961), in his *The World of Vladimir Nabokov* published in *The Russian Review*, observes that Vladimir Nabokov is the most perceptive writer in American fiction. His novels are historical documents. They belong to the domain of the cultural history of Russia. He touched upon the themes of oppression, violence, displacements, and psycho-social anguish among his characters. Nabokov experienced multiple displacements, but his desire to go back to Russia remains a dream. The main protagonist is Fyodor, who performs active roles as a poet and a biographer. He is anxiously waiting for the reception of his first volume of poems. He is always haunted by the ghost of his son and feels psychologically obsessed. His

psychological obsession eventually drives him insane. He is shifted to asylum, where he remains several months, as "Chairman of the Society for Struggle with the Other World" and spends time combating the multifarious spirits. He wrote his novel in jail. Chernyshevsky's novel inspired the revolutionary movement in Russia. This biography of the Russian hero and his Russian ideology consists of four chapters. In chapter two, Fyodor attempts to tackle his own father's biography. He meets his lover Zina Mertz. Nabokov describes the artistic development of Fyodor. In chapter five, Fyodor's progress and his commitment to Zina "combine all the themes and dreams of writing someday." Toker, in his book *The Mystery of Literary Structures*, observes that The remarkable feature of the novel is the narrative course of Fyodor's life is "presented in a fragmentary fashion: periods are elided; nested texts blend with the master text, and is at times allowed to eclipse reality" (Toker 149). The plot dramatizes a prevailing sense of incompleteness and fragmentation. And this sense of incompleteness and fragmentation is the major reason for Fyodor's psychological tensions. The various abandoned projects of Fyodor symbolize his psycho-social anguish. Whilst walking in Berlin's Grunewald, Fyodor notices a group of five nuns crossing the park. The vision has a staged quality, but to Fyodor, the scene reflects the absurdity of life and meaninglessness of existence. Fyodor expresses his anguish thus: "Through the glass the ashen light from the street fell on both of them and the shadow of the iron design on the door undulated over her and continued obliquely over him, like a shoulder-belt, while a prismatic rainbow lay on the wall" (The Gift 169). Fyodor aspires to a state of disintegration whereby his soul is liberated from the eye sockets of the flesh and is transformed "into one complete and free eye, which can simultaneously see in all directions" (169). He can find himself becoming "molten transparent" and experiences a bifurcation, a dissociation, and his personal I is dissolved and is "assimilated to the shimmer of the summer forest" (169). Zina appears as a ghost in a world of darkness. Fyodor expresses his anguish over the "strangeness of life" and Zina is "linked with his creative identity" (283). The "theme of the novel is that the only immortality there is exists in creative art in the gift which Fyodor felt like a burden inside him" (95). The work is filled with emotions of alienation of exile and the

final recognition of its permanence. Fyodor feels that his Self is dissolved by the sun as he experiences a unique sensation while swimming in a lake: "its warm opacity enveloped him, sparks of sunshine danced before his eyes. He swam for a long time, half an hour, five hours, twenty-four, a week, another" (62). Nabokov has used the images of dreams and fantasy to portray Fyodor's life and experiences as an émigré. *The Gift* is a treasure house of memories. Nabokov has depicted Fyodor's feelings of nostalgia as he lives in Berlin as an émigré linking past and present to the future of art and life. Fyodor expresses his longing to see Russia thus: "Someday, interrupting my writing, I will look through the window and see a Russian autumn" (199). At the end of the novel, too, he expresses his nostalgia and psychological longing thus:

And when will we return to Russia? What idiotic sentimentality, what a rapacious groan must our innocent hope convey to people in Russian? But our nostalgia is not historical-only human; how can one explain this to them? It's easier for me, of course, than for another to live outside Russia because I know for certain that I shall return first because I took away in a hundred, two hundred years; I shall live there in my books or at least in some researcher's footnote. (332)

Fyodor's biography is about the life and struggles of Chernyshevsky, who was a great political leader and who was sent to Siberia by Tsar Alexander II for twenty years. Nabokov parodies *What is to Be Done?*; depicting the alienation, psychological anguish of Fyodor. Chernyshevsky asks with heavy burden thus:

Am I condemned, in my capacity of novelist, to compromise all my heroes and heroines in the eyes of well-bred people? Some eat and drink; others do not get excited without reason: what an uninteresting set! (344).

Nabokov's *The Gift* is one of the finest literary pieces by him. He magnificently portrays the pathetic life of the Russian émigrés in the alien land. Through the characters of Fyodor, Zina, and Chervesky, Nabokov vividly depicted the hardships of émigré life. Fyodor is the protagonist in the novel, who is an optimistic writer trying to get settled in an alien country. But unfortunately, he was not welcomed in the alien land. The hostile

nature of the locals shattered the soul of Fyodor. He did not receive the appreciation he deserved for his literary talent. The pathetic conditions in Berlin affected the psyche of Fyodor and infused psycho-social anguish among the émigrés. The novel is a sequence of tragic episodes in the life of the protagonist who was trying his utmost to get settled in an alien land and how their pathetic condition affects their psyche.

Nabokov's work *Pnin* is a classic exemplary work that is a cameo of a Russian immigrant. The protagonist, Timofey Pnin, is an extension of Nabokov's own personality. Pnin is described as a Russian immigrant exiled from Russia in his youth. His struggles with the English language, the gap in communication that weighed on him are predicaments that he experienced in the alien land. Pnin, like other protagonists of Nabokov, is a psychologically disturbed character. He is highly upset in a foreign country. And this entire disturbance occurs due to his alien identity. Pnin is neglected in all spheres of life. His alien identity is the major cause of the bias he bears in America. His education, his being a literary person, his being a good human does not make any difference. The description provided by Nabokov about the perception of Timofey Pnin among American counterparts as a "joke," "freak," "pathetic savant," "cracked ping-pong ball," "Russian," and "the foreign gentleman" are all references to his foreign identity and perhaps, a crisis (Besemeres 391) and become the ultimate reason of his psycho-social anguish.

Language became the second major reason for Pnin's sufferings in the alien land. In America, he does not hesitate to speak in Russian. He was a professor of Russian literature, a learned personality. But he has been shown as a layman who could not learn any foreign language even after so many efforts. Nabokov describes the regions of habitation of Russians in the foreign lands as "illusory cities." These were the emigrant communities where the Russian émigrés were settled. This term connotes a sense of separation and lack of belongingness in a foreign land (Besemeres 391). Nabokov refers to a feeling of similarity between his American home and his academic background from Russia before the destruction caused by the revolution. This is clearly elucidated in his quote from *Pnin*:

With grateful surprise, Pnin thought that had there been no Russian Revolution, no exodus, no expatriation in France, no naturalization in America, everything — at best, Timofey! — would have been much the same: a Professorship in Kharkiv or Kazan, a suburban house such as this, old books within, late blooms without." "It was — to be more precise — a two-story house of cherry-red bricks A curious basketlike net, somewhat like a glorified billiard pocket — lacking, however, a bottom — was suspended for some reason above the garage door, upon the white of which it cast a shadow as distinct as its own weave. (123)

These lines of *Pnin* are regarded as being most richly produced as they clarify the phenomenon of immigrant experiences. His situation in the alien land was the cause of his bewilderment as an émigré when he moves to a foreign culture. The cultural shift and the attempt to understand the concepts inspired him to work on local concepts and language. For the Russian émigrés, it was the biggest hurdle to get through. No one can grow in an alien country if he does not know the language. One needs to develop his social circle, which helps them to get adjusted to a foreign place. Pnin experience the same thing. He tried but could not learn the English language. It was difficult for him to travel by bus or train. Pnin boarded the wrong train, "And he still didn't know that he was on the wrong train. A special danger area in Pnin's case was the English language. Except for such not very helpful odds and ends as 'the rest is silence; 'nevermore, week-end; who's who; and a few ordinary words" (7). It shows the psychological state of an émigré living in an alien land. The beginning of the novel displays the confused state of mind of the Russian émigrés. Language became a communication barrier for him, which restricted him to make any good friends in society. In the alien country, the bias starts with the odds. It is something natural to happen with the émigrés in the land they don't belong to. Pnin experienced the fact 'odd one out.' Émigrés didn't hesitate to learn the alien language and settle with the unfamiliar people, but it was not easy to learn a foreign language at the age of 40 or 50. Although Pnin tried very hard to learn English, he could not. After spending years, he could learn only a few words and some wrong pronounced

sentences. Whosoever is different has to stay out of the group. Pnin was different in the English speaking society. He was a professor of Russian literature. He was unable to speak English as fluently as the native speakers. That is why he could not receive any love, friendship, sympathy, or kindness. Nabokov made plentiful use of Pidgin English through Pnin's tongue in the novel, which shows language as a barrier for the émigrés. And this problem of Pnin was also because in the Alien society he did not receive any Nabokov depicted the endeavors of Pnin to learn English as:

Stubbornly, he sat down to the task of learning the language In 1941, at the end of the proficient enough to use glibly terms like 'wishful thinking' and 'okay –okay.' By 1942 he was able to interrupt his narration with the phrase, 'To make a long story short'.....: but the progress seemed to have stopped despite all his efforts, and by 1950 his English was still full of flaws. (7)

Nabokov depicted the love for Russia and Russian language through the character of Pnin. It was shown in a different way. Love for Russian language is shown through their inability to learn the English language. Pnin was so deep in love with the Russian language that he couldn't learn it thoroughly after so many efforts. Nabokov described it as, "If his Russian was music, his English was murder" (54). In this regard, Frantz Fanon's *Black Skin and White Masks* analyze the psychological impacts of colonialism in detail. He shares his own experience of bad treatment by a white man, explains:

On that day, completely dislocated, unable to be abroad with the other, the white man, who unmercifully imprisoned me, I took myself far off from my own presence, far indeed, and made myself an object. What else could it be for me but an amputation, an excision, a hemorrhage that spattered my whole body with black blood? But I did not want this revision, this thematization. All I wanted was to be a man among other men. (112-113)

The sufferings of the Russian émigrés are also marked by the memory of the native land and native people. The very term memory has been vividly used by Nabokov in this novel. Whenever Pnin doesn't feel at home in the alien land, he found himself

indulged in the home and memories. Though he tries to get settled in the new society, it is the misfortune of the émigrés that the new society is not willing to accept them as the members of their own group. And after a days' effort, in the end, the émigrés are left with grief just like the hero of the novel, Pnin. Due to the psychic disturbance, Pnin was not able to maintain any good relations with his wife. His son does not stay with him. He longs to meet his son and wife, but due to his poor economic conditions, he could not bear his wife and son's expenses, and his wife left him. This is the fate of all the émigrés away from their home. Alienation and isolation affected their social and personal life. When Pnin's wife left him, he yelled a lot, saying, "I have nothing," wailed Pnin between loud, damp sniffs, 'I have nothing left, nothing nothing!' (50). One can easily understand how painful it is for the

Nabokov's *Pnin* is a serious study of the characters' traumatic experiences struggling for survival in the alien land. Pnin arrives at Wendell and joins the college. He comes in contact with Herman Hagan, who is the head of the German Department. Laurence G. Clements of the Philosophy Department gives him accommodation. Pnin stays there for some time, but in social life, nobody likes him. He lives like an alien. Pnin was not happy to live there for a long time: "I flatly refuse to have that freak in my house" (319). Pnin knows that Clements is "considered as the most original and least liked scholar on the Wendell campus" (410). Both the scholars developed a friendship as they lived "in their warm world of natural scholarship" (325). The two men were brought together by their scholarly interests "A chance reference to a rare author, a passing allusion tacitly recognized in the middle distance of an idea, an adventurous sail descried on the horizon led insensibly to a tender mental concord between two men" (325). Nabokov portrays his depressed profile thus:

The elderly passenger sitting on the north-window side of that inexorably moving railway coach, next to an empty seat and facing two empty ones, was none other than Professor Timofey Pnin. Ideally bald, sun-tanned, and clean-shaven, he began rather impressively with that great brown dome of his, tortoise-shell glasses (masking an infantile absence of eyebrows),

apish upper lip, thick neck, and strong-man torso in a tight-ish tweed coat, but ended, somewhat disappointingly, in a pair of spindly legs. (1)

The first cause of psycho-social anguish of Pnin is his émigré status. His second problem is the language barrier, as he is unable to converse with the German professors naturally. The third problem of Pnin is his sense of inferiority and insecurity as his way of teaching in a German college is entirely different, and nobody likes his method and approach. Jim Dixon may share Pnin's view of teaching but has a very different opinion on scholarship. Dixon is highly critical of Pnin and hurts and humiliates him, and Pnin has to pocket insult being the Russian émigré. Dixon makes it clear that "well taught and sensibly taught, history could do people a hell of a lot of good. But in practice, it doesn't work out like that. Things get in the way. I don't quite see who's to blame for it. Bad teaching's the main thing. Not bad students, I mean," (214). Dixon believes in the importance of teaching, but he doesn't find a good teacher and Pnin is the worst teacher in the college. He considers Pnin as a mediocre teacher in the college. Pnin becomes an object of mockery to the people of Europe because of his broken language and rigid Russian ideology. He escaped from Russia as a youth in 1918, and his journey leads him to suffer psycho-social anguish and depression, alienation, and hopelessness. Nabokov portrays the miserable and hopeless life of Pnin when he arrives in Germany around 1925. While living in Paris, Pnin marries Liza Bogolepov, who is a medical student interested in psychiatry. Pnin is an idealistic person who is surprised to find Liza accepting his proposal when she was "recovering from a pharmacopeia attempt at suicide because of a rather silly affair with a litterateur" (238). Her friend had recommended a speedy marriage to recover from psychological illness. Liza telephones Pnin that she is in love with Dr. Eric Wind, but when Pnin is getting ready to leave for America, Liza appears pregnant in his apartment. Liza deserts Dr. Wind and develops intimacy with Pnin. Liza is leading a miserable life. She is poor and needs money for the schooling of her son. Pnin looks after her in spite of her wretched state and is in love with her at Windell. He never has any relationship with any woman as there are no women on the faculty. He is attracted to Betty Bliss, who is "a pump maternal girl of some twenty-nine-

summers" (326). Pnin is leading a lonely life. He is depressed and dissatisfied with his life, job, and domestic unhappiness. Nabokov comments thus: "In trying to visualize a serene senility, he saw [Betty] with passable clarity bringing him his lap robe or refilling his fountain pen. He liked her all right—but his heart belonged to another woman" (327). Pnin suffers from psycho-social anguish as he fails to keep his job at the university. His friend Herman Hagan had offered him his help to get a good job, but he fails to keep up the friendship with Herman, and this is his misfortune and the main cause of his psychological anguish. Herman Hagan is his benefactor, but he loses him and becomes sullen and depressed. Hagan tries to get Pnin a job at the English Department, but Pnin remains stubborn and lonely and doesn't succeed. Jack Cockerell is "unofficially but hopefully haggling for the services of a prominent Anglo-Russian writer, who, if necessary, could teach all the courses that Pnin must keep in order to survive" (398). Pnin, in desperation, kicks all the opportunities saying that he has to leave town to escape the tensions of life. The final scene shows Pnin driving away from Wendell, unsure "what miracle might happen" (455). Pnin has limited knowledge of American culture, and he talks of Russia as "the country of Tolstoy, Stanislavski, Raskolnikov, and other great and good men" (395). Pnin's friends make him a target of jokes because of his lack of knowledge of American culture. The European friends call Pnin "a joke," "that freak," "the pathetic savant" a "cracked ping-pong ball" (1). The world of Pnin is of alien people and Russian émigrés that are rootless and dispirited. In most of his life, Pnin is lonely and alienated, haunted by his old Russia's memories, sick and psychologically distracted because of his psycho-social anguish.

Nabokov's *Pnin* is an interesting study of a Russian émigré who leads a lonely and distressing life in the alien land because of his fractured identity. He lost his home, country, and everything because of the Russian Revolution. *Pnin* is a perfect portrayal of exile living in a hostile country. Pnin confronted cultural assimilation problems in a cold American society. He was a tormented Russian émigré leading a pathetic life. Nabokov has depicted the condition and living situations of the common people in the alien countries during exile vividly. Still, at the same time, he portrayed that the conditions are

not different for the literary or intellectuals. Pnin was an educated Russian. He was the Russian literature professor at American Windell college, but his sufferings are all the same as other common émigrés. He was confused, depressed, and psychologically. He tries to survive in the alien society but experiences psycho-social anguish and desperation being lonely and marginalized in the alien land.

Nabokov's *The Real Life of Sebastian Knight* (1941) is about the isolation of émigrés and their psycho-social anguish. *The Real Life of Sebastian Knight* is a mystery novel dealing with the suffering of the émigrés. Sebastian's quest for knowledge is the main focus of the novel. He feels cut off from society. The entire novel is a tale of émigrés' sufferings that leads towards psychological disturbance. Perez (2016) observes that exiled people often "suffer from the psychological anguish born out of their cultural disruption, familial conflicts, and economic problems" (245). There are two mysterious persons in the novel, V and Sebastian Knight. Knight is the stepbrother of the narrator who wanted to write the life story of his brother. V says that he was in love with him as a child, but he was "silent and distant" (15) towards him. The cold behavior of the community he was living in gave him mental stress. He was psychologically shattered. Russia's political turbulence Sebastian and his family had gone through affected Sebastian's soul and psyche very much. In London, the community's cold behavior gave mental pain to him and was the main reason for his aloofness. Nabokov portrays the psychic anguish of Sebastian from the mouth of Goodman and V as:

For Mr. Goodman, young Sebastian Knight 'freshly emerged from the carved chrysalides of Cambridge' is a youth of acute sensibility in a cruel cold world. In this world, 'outside realities intrude so roughly upon one's most intimate dreams' that a young man's soul is forced into a state of sieges before it is finally shattered...Cruelty, too; the reek of blood still in the air; glaring picture palaces; dim couples in dark Hyde Park; the glories of standardization; the cult of machinery; the degradation of Beauty, Love, Honor, Art and so on. (53)

In London society, Sebastian was very much upset because of degrading moral values. It gave him psychic anguish. Being away from his Russian language was also one of the reasons for Sebastian's psycho-social anguish. When Sebastian was in Russia, he knew English a little, but it was not that good. He used to write in Russian. But later in London, he learned English well and started writing in English as it was impossible to get fame by writing in Russian. He was extremely disturbed, being away from his homeland and mother language. His pain was depicted as, "I quite believe that by not speaking Russian for five years he may have forced himself into thinking he had forgotten it. But a language is an alive physical thing which cannot be so easily dismissed" (73). Nabokov has portrayed the twinge Sebastian was going through because of his immigration.

V had an affectionate feeling towards his brother but he "had always been crushed and thwarted" (31). While searching about the death reason for his brother, V came to know that Sebastian's life was very different, and he does not know anything about him. V remembers the time he spent with his brother as a child, "gloriously messing about with watercolors in the homely aura of a stately kerosene lamp" (15). V recollects the childhood days of Sebastian when he "wrote very romantic poems which he signed with a little black chess-knight drawn in ink" (16). Sebastian's stepmother gives the following information about him: "I knew he obtained good marks at school, read an astonishing number of books, was clean in his habits, insisted on taking a cold bath every morning although his lungs were none too strong. I knew all this and more, but he himself escaped me" (29). V decides that "information can be obtained from those persons who met Sebastian after he left for England and who lived with him, and he sets out to find it, doing exhaustive research, fairness and wisdom" (14). V explains his predicament thus: "It is as if a painter said: look, here I'm going to show you not the painting of a landscape, but the painting of different ways of painting a certain landscape, and I trust their harmonious fusion will disclose the landscape as I intend you to see it" (89). V behaves like a biographer who wanted minute details about the person he is going to write about. He collected the trivial facts and talked to hundreds of people about Sebastian. V goes to London to visit his brother's flat. He performs the role of a detective. Sebastian's father

questions V in an emotional tone as to what "all these quite things in the flat can tell him of Sebastian; they can tell nothing about Sebastian" (34). V "turns to Sebastian's desk, feeling that he is really getting down to business" (35). V thinks that he is on the right track; he continues his quest suffering psychological anguish as his project is tiring and a source of psychological stress. But when he finds something that discloses a few facts about his brother's personal life, he gets excited. He tries to get an insight into his emotions when he gets a bundle of letters; He burns all those letters. He looks at the two pictures on the wall: "the taste of their juxtaposition seemed to me questionable" (38). He meets Sebastian's friend at Cambridge, who was "the only man in Sebastian's life with whom he had been frank and natural" (44). V asks several questions that seem trivial: "And where did Sebastian sit?" (43) and "what about games?" (41). His friend tells V that Sebastian "had done his best to be a standard undergraduate" (43). His activities were an expression of his fear "of not doing the right thing" (41). He recollects when he met him in Paris "in his tweed coat, his baggy flannel trousers, his new habit of smoking his pipe in the street, his new way of standing with his back to the fire" (43). Sebastian's efforts "to be and act like other people" led to nothing. He remained different and aware of his inability to fit into the picture" (41). His friend told V that he was in the habit of making "obscurely immoral statements, related to life, Death of God" (45).

The real Life of Sebastian Knight is a novel depicting the sufferings of the Russian émigrés. It portrays the pathetic life of the émigrés in the alien land. The entire quest of V's journey is loaded with episodes giving him the eccentric nature of Sebastian. V is desperate and experiences psychological anguish when he continues his quest as the journey only gives him fruitless information about his brother. He accumulates information about the absurdity of life and the meaningless existence. V experiences chaos and disorder in his brother Sebastian's life and this awareness becomes a source of his psycho-social anguish.

Vladimir Nabokov's *Laughter in the Dark* is also one such novel that describes the mental state of the characters living in the alien country. In *Laughter in the Dark*, he employed the tools of dark comedy and black humor and parody to depict the psycho-

social anguish of Albinus. The psychological anguish of Albinus is not due to his lower status in society. He was an art critic. He was leading a lavish lifestyle in Berlin. And this glamorous lifestyle of Albinus became the reason for his mental disturbance and ultimate downfall. In *Laughter in the dark*, Nabokov focused on the nightmarish world of Albinus: "the limpidity of his style stresses the dark richness of his fantasy" (283). Nabokov's *Laughter in the Dark* was originally named *Camera Obscura* (1933), revised later on as *Laughter in the Dark*. In this novel, Nabokov depicted the psycho-social anguish of Albinus, a Russian émigré, a prosperous art historian. His life is a heartrending tale of his sexual adventures bringing in his life untold miseries. Nabokov has presented the triangular love relationship between Alex, Margot, and Albinus. The plot becomes complicated when after the car accident, Albinus becomes blind and Rex and Margot "set up house with him, letting him believe that only Margot is present. Rex moves silently about the house, delighting with Margot in their joint power to control and deceive Albinus's perceptions Rex's dangerous game" (163). It "is described by his love of poker, in which one wins by bluffing that is by tricking someone's perceptions" (148). It was game of "blind man's bluff" (186). Rex "uses Albinus as his doll" (187) to dominate him. Rex is highly witty, the cruel game-player. He plays with people to amuse himself as, "intimate conviction that everything that has ever been created in the domain of art, science, or sentiment, was a more or less clever trick" (117). Rex was not only a game player, he is "a very fine artist-indeed" (192). Axel glimpses him with intense interest enjoying the sadistic pleasure:

He watched with interest the sufferings of Albinus...The stage manager of this performance was neither God nor the devil...The stage manager whom Rex had in view was an elusive, double, triple, self-reflecting Proteus of a phantom, the shadow of many-colored glass balls flying in a curve, the ghost of a juggler on a shimmering curtain. (118)

Albinus's relationship with Margot depicts human degradation and lust for money and sexual pleasures, which bring psychological anguish to Albinus. Margot depicted the poor condition of the Russian émigrés in the alien country. She is a symbol of the moral

degradation of the émigrés who got settled in the alien countries. The economic lower standard of the Russian people in other countries pushed them towards immoral tasks.

Margot and Albinus are the perfect examples. Albinus did wrong as he possessed an abundance of wealth. And Margot did wrong as she was poor and had wished to live a glamorous and lavish lifestyle. All this shows their mental anguish due to their social life.

Albinus's infatuation with her is inspired by the place in which he first lays eyes on her. When he first sees Margot, she is described as a "creature gliding about in the dark" (23). He comes under the sensation of her in the "velvety darkness," which attracts him. Nabokov depicts the scene thus: "He stared at her face almost in dead; it was a pale, sulky, painfully beautiful face"(21). Nabokov describes the predominant aspect of her personality thus: "sulkiness" her skill in emulating screen goddesses and deluded vision of Albinus is the important characteristics of the Albinus-Margot relationship: "Margot set up and smiled plaintively. Tears only added to her beauty. Her face was aflame, the iris of her eyes was dazzling, and a large tear trembled on the side of her nose: he had never before seen tears of that size and brilliance" (119). Nabokov has depicted Margot's vulgarity, who employs all important strategies to hook Albinus to cheat him to grab his wealth. Albinus fails to understand the nature of the role-playing of Margot. He is deceived by the appearances against which Hamlet fights. He thinks that Margot's passionate role playing is genuine and overwhelming: "There were stormy scenes at home, sobs, moans, hysteria. She flung herself on the sofa, the bed, the floor. Her eyes sparkled brilliantly and wrathfully; one of her stockings had slipped down. The word was swamped in tears" (192).

Nabokov has depicted the victimization of Albinus and his slavish mentality; his devotion to a romantic ideal which destroys him physically and psychologically. D. Stuart in his article *Laughter in the Dark: Dimensions of Parody* published in his book *Nabokov: Criticisms, Reminiscences, Translations and Tributes* that "the novel is constructed to parody many of conventions of the cinema; the tools of parody are employed to depict the anguish of Albinus who becomes a victim of a cruel vampire woman in the disguise of Margot" (72). Albinus is developed into a "girl was receding

among tumbled furniture before a masked man with a gun and a car spinning down a smooth road with hair pin turns between cliff and abyss” (13). In his desperate and traumatic state, Albinus recalls a “landscape in which he had once lived, he could not name a single plant except oaks and roses, not a single bird save sparrows and crows, and even these were more akin to heraldry than nature” (55). His pathetic situation was like a, "rocking among the syrillga bushes if an unknown landscape" (56). Nabokov observes that the real cause of the psycho-social anguish of Albinus was his sex adventures and revolt against the natural life. Nabokov comments, “Had Albinus been more knowledgeable about natural life, he would have realized that the oriole's call that he hears when blind is in fact mimicked by Axel Rex, who derives pleasure from tormenting the feeble senses of the crippled Albinus." (170)

Nabokov’s *Laughter in the Dark* is a presentation of the sexual adventures of Albinus, who gets involved in the deceptive relationship with Margot. In this novel, the main cause of the anguish of Albinus is his quest for beauty and sexual pleasures. He left his moral values and suffered due to volunteer exile. Away from his homeland in America, Albinus became a victim of conspiracies. Nabokov has depicted in the novel the moral degradation of the characters. Adultery, extramarital affairs, conspiracies, murders are normal matters for the émigrés who cannot maintain their moral values. Albinus, Margot, and Rax all were instances of moral degradation. Margot is a lonely and depressed person living in poverty, and she aligns with Rex to cheat and plunder the wealth of Albinus. His lack of control of passions and directionless life leads to his psychological pain.

Nabokov’s *Lolita* (1955) is a sensational and unconventional novel considered one of the best novels written in English depicting sex adventures, perversion, and moral degradation of the protagonist. He was born in "Paris to an English mother and a Swiss father” (9). He was studying in "London and Paris, first in psychology and in English Literature” (15). He moved to America in 1940; he is an artist in exile and a displaced person struggling to escape alienation in the alien country. The plot of the novel is focused on issues such as chess, murder, politics, or pedophilia. Nabokov used the

literary devices of irony, sarcasm, and ridicule to depict the moral bankruptcy of the characters.

Vladimir Nabokov's *Lolita* (1955) is a sensational novel describing the heartrending tale of the Russian émigrés Dolores Haze and her mother, Charlotte Haze. Humbert Humbert is a professor of English literature who is just after his lust desires. He begins giving tuition to a beautiful young girl Dolores Haze who he calls Lolita. Lolita is a young girl in pain, and Nabokov has named it Dolores, meaning in Spanish language "pain." He was a good planner, and he executed his plan to get closer to Lolita. The novel is presented from the narrator's point of view. Humbert is presented as a sexual pervert running after Lolita, who escaped from her former drama teacher Clare Quilty. She got sick with influenza, but Humbert takes away her from her home forever. This begins the journey of the exile of Lolita and a story of the sexual exploitation of Humbert and the consequent psychological anguish of Lolita. The exile of Lolita becomes a major cause of her psycho-social anguish and depression. Lolita is composed in jail, "a chronicle of the obsession of the protagonist with pre-and early teenage girls, his domination and loss of stepdaughter Lolita, acquired through marriage, and the murder of her subsequent abductor" (Cornwell 64). The main concern of Nabokov is to depict the traumatic anguish of Lolita, who becomes the prey of the sexual oppression of Humbert. "There has been no novel so densely packed with literary and cultural allusions since *Ulysses*" (Clancy 114). Nabokov referred to this novel as "a fruit salad," but the publication of the novel made Nabokov famous in the world. When asked if he ever regrets having written *Lolita*, Nabokov stated that "No, I shall ever regret Lolita. She was like the composition of a beautiful puzzle" (Toffer 1). Humbert fell in love with Lolita at first sight and praises her as "peering at me over dark glasses" (39). Nabokov expressed his satisfaction creating Humbert and his pedophilic desires and his pervert obsession with prepubescent girls. Lolita, her full name Dolores Haze is the main character of the novel. When the story begins, she is twelve, but at the end of the story, she is seventeen years old. Nabokov gave the alternative title for the novel *Lolita* was *Confession of a White Widowed Male*. The word confession implies that the whole story is formed as some kind of a diary, a

piece of literature that on one side presents an exuberant amount of information about a particular character and therefore offers a deep insight into his mind. The very first description of Lolita in the plot is: "Lolita, the light of my life, fire of my loins. My sin, my soul, Lo-le-ta: the tip of the tongue taking a trip of three steps down the palate to tap, at three, on the teeth. Lo, Lee, Ta (9). Nabokov presents both Lolita and Humbert, who think of Lolita only in terms of body and mind. His sin, his pervert ideas are also described in the opening pages of the novel. Humbert claims that "it was Lolita that seduced him and that she was not a virgin" (135). Humbert's perceptions are faulty and misleading; he is a psychological case pervert and unusual in social behavior. On a Sunday, a week prior to the davenport scene with Lolita half -sitting on his lap. Humbert perceives, "perhaps through some slight change in the rhythm of her respiration that Lolita with curiosity and composure is waiting for him to kiss her" (49). Humbert argues that he was "not even her first lover" (135). She was "doing it by turns with Charlie Holmes, the thirteen-year-old son of the camp mistress" (137). He "knew exactly what to do and how to do it, without impinging on a child's chastity" (55). Nabokov has depicted the stages of the psychological development of Lolita. Her teachers "note that Lolita's report card is poor (193). Humbert is informed that "the onset of sexual maturing seems to give her trouble" (193). Nabokov dramatizes the scenes of perversion and sexual oppression of Lolita, who is helpless and a victim of the cruelty of Humbert. The plot covers five years of Lolita's life. During these five years, many important things, events, and changes happen in her life. Most of the events of the novel are focused on the life and struggle of Lolita and Humbert's pursuit of his sexual adventures.

The plot is a harrowing tale of a teenage girl who leaves her home after the death of her mother. She comes in contact with Humbert, who "presents himself in human disguise, devoid of the familiar; dressed in all the attributes of cultivation; he is intelligent, eloquent, charming, witty and handsome; not plagued by fears that he is weaker or less potent than those around him" (Durantaye 13). The novel doesn't give Lolita enough voice of her own to express her emotions and presence. Humbert only gives information about her since Lolita's speech presented by means of Humbert is only

a reported speech. Her voice is suppressed and restricted since readers have no other way of knowing what kind of person Humbert prevents from speaking her mind. Lolita's voice is directly connected to the representation of her sexuality, sexual pleasures, and desires. The critics argued that Nabokov could not bring himself to represent female sexual desire. Elizabeth Patnoe writes thus: "While Nabokov avoids sustained graphic descriptions of Lolita's violations, his words throw some readers into ripping, detailed memories of their own molestations" (Patnoe 100). Various versions and comments are available about Lolita. Naiman talks of Lolita's experience of an orgasm while sitting on Humbert's lap and reading magazines. Humbert says:

I liked the cool feel of armchair leather against my massive nakedness as I held her in my lap. There she would be a typical kid picking her nose while engrossed in the lighter sections of a newspaper, as indifferent to my ecstasy as if it were something she had sat upon, a shoe, a doll, the handle of a tennis racket, and was too indolent to remove. (163)

In this part of the novel, Humbert speaks of Lolita's behavior and calls it indifference. He says that "Lolita has soot-black lashes of her pale-gray vacant eyes, to the five asymmetrical freckles on her bobbed nose, to the blond down of her brown limbs and that her hair is auburn and her lips as red as licked red candy, the lower one prettily plump" (44). Humbert is fired by his sexual passions and confesses: "What drives me insane is the twofold nature of this nymphet; of a very nymphet, perhaps; this mixture in my Lolita of tender dreamy childishness and a kind of eerie vulgarity" (44). He is only interested in the nymphet and not in other girls. He takes a keen interest in the body of Lolita as he expresses his enchantment in poetic language. In his eyes, Lolita is "very active and lively child, whenever she does something he closely watches and remarks every move of her body, her raised shoulder or incurvation of her spine, tense narrow school girls thighs" (42), or "juvenile breasts" (39). Humbert articulates his psychological experiences thus:

And I catch myself thinking today that our long journey had only defiled with a sinuous trail of slime the lively, trustful, dreamy, enormous country that by then, in retrospect, was no more to us than a collection of dog-eared maps, ruined tour books, old tires, and her sobs in the night every night, every night the moment I feigned sleep. (175)

Humbert is the entire society for Lolita. She was trying to escape from him. As we know, she was being treated as others, and she was being robbed and exploited; she wanted to get rid of him. During her exile with him, she was sexually exploited by Humbert a lot many times. She spent sleepless nights. Humbert is the eye witness of all the sufferings of Lolita as he is the only exploiter of her. She was so psychologically disturbed that she eloped with a poor carpenter without thinking about her future. Humbert is the main narrator who witnessed Lolita sobbing "every night, every night. "Phelan observes that the act of telling is by the end of part one of Lolita leading Humbert to start facing much of what he has turned away from, and the motive for his telling shifts" (Phelan 120). Lolita acts "like a stalker and is watching him work, jumping on the lap, babying him, rubbing his crotch, wrapping her legs about him" (119). Mrs. Pratt explains the behavior of Lolita to her stepfather. Lolita's father "gave me all the information he thought I need about sex; this was just before sending me, in the autumn of 1923" (4). She says that Lolita is very "bright through careless" (181) and the other schoolmates and her teachers consider her to be antagonistic, dissatisfied and cagey" (183). She is often criticized for using her obscene words and is seen as a kid having problems with sexual maturing. One can imagine the pain of a thirteen years old going through all this. When Humbert returns to visit Lolita at the end of the novel, he was surprised to see the poor condition Lolita. His approach is a human one:

You may jeer at me and threaten to clear that court, but until I am gagged and half-throttled, I will shout my poor truth. I insist the world know how much I loved Lolita, this Lolita, pale and polluted, and big with another man's child, but still gray-eyed, still

sooty-lashed, still auburn and almond, still Carmencita, still mine.
(270)

Nabokov weaves an enigmatic tale about an adolescent and “a fancy prose style.” Humbert is in love with Lolita, but he is disturbed by Quilty, who reads the mind of Humbert. He catches up with Quilty and murders him. Thomas R. Frosch (1982), in his book *Parody and Authenticity in Lolita*, observes that the protagonists of Nabokov are “failed artists who are haunted by mirrors, alter egos and anti-worlds” (184). Humbert admits that he forms his relationship with Rita to prevent relapse into active pedophilia; it is her prepubescent qualities that keep him out of trouble. He argues that “it is not the artistic aptitudes that are secondary sexual characters as some shams and shamans have said; it is the other way around: sex is but the ancilla of art” (259). Humbert says that “he amuses himself by creating false primal scenes for his psychiatrists” (34). He also observes that his mother was killed by “picnic lightening” when he was three years old:

When my mother, in a livid wet dress, under the tumbling mist, had run panting ecstatically up that ridge above Moulinet to be felled there by a thunderbolt, I was but an infant, and in retrospect no yearnings of the accepted kind could I ever graft upon any moment of my youth, no matter how savagely psychotherapists heckled me in my later periods of depression. (287)

Nabokov has depicted one of the most sensational scenes in the novel relating to Humbert and Lolita. This interesting and thrilling scene takes place at the hotel “Enchanted Hunters,” where Lolita seduces Humbert. This scene has generated a lot of heat among critics. In the fourth chapter, the scene has been briefly discussed, and the scene is presented using erotic images. The scene in the original text is longer, and the dialogues are longer and more descriptive, giving precise information about the situation of Lolita and Humbert. The seduction scene begins with Humbert addressing these words to the Frigid gentlewomen of the jury: “I am going to tell you something very strange: it was she who seduced me” (132). Humbert dominates the conversation, and Lolita is not given the voice to explain her situation. Humbert presents Lolita as a seductress, but this

allegation is challengeable as it is not based on facts. This scene is a vivid picture of the psychological pain and condition of a child whose parents are no more. She is the victim. As nothing is in her hands, she has been used by Humbert. She seduces her, for she got to know the intentions of Humbert. This seduction by Lolita was the plan to get rid of him. It clearly shows the pain of the person who is away from home. A person in exile tries to adjust to the situation he is put into. The same is the case of Lolita. The night before the morning of seduction, Humbert lies into the bed right next to Lolita, and before she wakes up, he questions what she would probably think about it. Even if this whispering of hers would not be a ciphered sex offer, the action of Lolita is erotic and sexual. Humbert describes his first intimate scene with Lolita as "the child knew nothing. I had done nothing to her. And nothing prevented me from repeating a performance that affected her as little as if she were a photographic image rippling upon a screen and I a humble hunchback abusing myself in the dark" (62). Later in the novel, when Humbert acts unaware of what she implies, she is surprised and says, "You mean you never did it when you were a kid? And afterward takes charge of the situation and says; Okay, here is where we start" (133).

Nabokov links weather with the primal scene. After the death of his mother, Humbert is discarded by his mother's sister. On the second page of his memoir, Humbert writes that his mother's sister had served as a "governess and housekeeper in his childhood home, and he argues that someone told him that his father made love to her on a rainy day and then forgot the entire matter after the storm had passed by" (10). When she is in the "Enchanted Hotel," Lolita tells Humbert that they are lovers. Humbert says: "I think we are going to have some more rain" (114). In his bed at night, it seemed to Humbert that "the enchanted prey was about to meet the enchanted hunter halfway, that her haunch was working its way toward me under the soft sand of a remote and fabulous beach" (131). Sexual intercourse with Lolita occurs at the end of the rain, "wet and windy night" (130). One rainy night was spent in a cabin with "prehistorically loud thunder incessantly rolling above them" (220). Lolita gives Humbert some pathetic solace when she declares that she is "not a lady and that she does not like lightning" (220). She calls

Quilty from a telephone booth under a "tepid rain" (206) and arranges with him to betray Humbert. After she hangs up, she informs Humbert a "great decision has been made, and he then notices that the rain has become a "voluptuous shower" (207). The entire space of Humbert's fantasy has a "cave-like quality"(320). *Webster Third International Dictionary* gives a description that "nymphet is a young nymph or a sexually precocious girl" (320). Nabokov's use of nymphet invokes that nymphs are young maidens associated with caves, sexuality, fertility, and water. When Charlotte offers marriage to Humbert, a marriage that gives access to Lolita, he is as "helpless as Adam at the preview of early oriental history, mirages in his apple orchard" (71). The "devil helps Humbert in his evil intentions" (56). He seeks help from a priest after the escape of Lolita. He hopes to turn his experience of sin into a belief in the deity. He concludes that there is "nothing for the treatment of my misery but the melancholy and very local palliative of articulate art" (283). Nabokov's images are pedophilic. Humbert reports thus: "I feel my slippery self-eluding me, gliding into deeper and darker waters than I care to probe" (308). This is all the condition of the émigrés. They are never happy. Though Nabokov, in this novel, has not shown Lolita as a Russian émigré who is exiled by the revolution, she is shown as the exiled who leaves her home at the age of thirteen and never comes back. She lived an isolated life. Humbert played as his master, who had full control over her. She was shown as an object. And the same is the condition of the émigrés. They are never treated as human beings but as objects. Humbert was the Self, and Lolita was depicted as the other.

Nabokov's novel *Lolita* depicts the plight of the émigrés who had to suffer the traumatic pain of exile. Lolita is the worst affected victim whose innocence is destroyed by Humbert. Nabokov has described the inner turbulent world of Lolita, who struggles in exile after the death of her mother. Humbert uses his power and position to destroy the chastity of an innocent girl Lolita. Nabokov has dramatized the moral bankruptcy and human degradation of Humbert, who behaves like a neurotic character flouting all the moral scruples. His obsession symbolizes his psycho-social anguish and his intercourse with Annabel Leigh in a garden and in a cave is an expression of his frustration. Nabokov

has depicted vibrantly the psycho-social anguish of Lolita, who has been exploited by Humbert.

Nabokov has portrayed the psychological anguish of the Russian émigrés in his novels. The political upheavals in the country were the major reason for their exile. They tried to get settled in America and other European countries, but their treatment in the alien countries, their social status, and their economic condition gave them a kind of mental pain that shattered their strength into pieces. They experienced psycho-social anguish, which was hard to forget for the émigrés. Psycho-social anguish affected their social as well as personal life. Ganin, Fyodor, Sebastian, Albinus, and Lolita are instances of characters who could not maintain healthy relations with their loved ones. Ganin was so much tormented due to his marginalized status that he could not love any other girl other than Mary. The same was the situation of Fyodor. He broke up with his girlfriend Zina, and Pnin could not maintain with his wife. Psycho-social anguish pushed them towards isolation and nostalgia.

Conclusion

The present thesis entitled “Trapped in the Abyss of Darkness: Confrontation with Exile and Marginalization in the Select Novels of Vladimir Nabokov” deals with issues of displacement, alienation, homelessness, up-rootedness, and marginalization of the Russian émigrés. These significant issues and problems of the Diaspora are the priority of concern. Nabokov is a renowned name in the history of Russian American literature. He was intensely affected by communism aroused in Russia. The rise of communism in Russia caused the escape of Nabokov's family from St. Petersburg, and later they migrated to Berlin and Paris. He moved to the United States in the last 1930s, where he started his writing career. Nabokov was inspired by his father, who raised the cry of the people against the oppressive forces. He was the victim of the repressive totalitarian forces of Russia. He has discussed in detail the impact of the totalitarian regime on the mind and sensibility of the émigrés to indict the totalitarian tyranny. His novels are the replica of his own life. He has depicted the same stories and the same characters in his books that suffer from exile and experience marginalization in the alien society. His novels are the model of his personal life though he denies this fact and states that his novels are not political novels and do not share an affinity with his life. Nabokov used his artistic talent to depict the plight of the Russian émigrés and wrote novels such as *Mary* (1926), *The Eye* (1930), *The Defense* (1932), *Laughter in the Dark* (1932), *The Gift* (1932), *Despair* (1934), *Invitation to Beheading* (1935), *The Real Life of Sebastian Knight* (1941), *Lolita* (1955), *Pnin* (1957), and *Pale Fire* (1962). These novels depict a galaxy of characters confronting with the repressive reality of terror and disorder propagated by the German forces. In Nabokov's novels, depiction of pathetic life of the Russian émigrés becomes the core concept.

Nabokov portrayed characters like Ganin, Fyodor, Lolita, and Albinus, who experience exile due to the social-political upheavals in Russia and seek shelters in Berlin, Paris, France, and America. His novels present the tumultuous, distressed, and traumatize lives of the Russian émigrés. Ganin was a Russian émigré living in Berlin

with a false identity. He experienced otherness, marginalization, and nostalgia, which gave him psychic anguish. Fyodor, Lolita, and Albinus, too, were Russian émigrés suffering due to exile in an alien country. Nabokov depicted the tormented and ruined condition of the Russian émigrés in a strange country.

It is concluded that Nabokov's novels dramatize the scenes of the struggles of the Russian émigrés living in alien lands. The cultural theorists such as Ruby Cohen, Homi Bhabha, and Griffith observes that postcolonial theory is a discourse dealing with the political, social, and historical impact on the mind and sensibility of the colonized ruled by the imperial rulers. In the Russian case, it was an internal colonization. The tsars were exploiting their own subjects. They were not captured by any outer power. The country was internally colonized. The rulers colonized their own people. And when the people of Russia revolted against the tsars and their ruling policies, they were thrown out of their country. Their living situations had been made in such a way that they had to speak in favor of the ruling power, or they had to leave the place if they wish to live.

The postcolonial theory assumes many shapes, but the basic idea is to explore the relationship between the colonial rulers and the colonized that were oppressed by the colonial powers for centuries. Nabokov is a writer who was the victim of the same situation that prevailed in Russia at that time. He belonged to the royal family. He was a literary person, a threat to the government. But Nabokov was such a soul who was not unhappy with the loss of the homeland, but he took his exile as a boon. He observed in his *Strong Opinions* that his alienation in the alien land was an opportunity to enjoy freedom and discovery. He experienced sleepless nights because he was being treated as an outsider. He suffered from psychological ailments because of his loss of identity in Europe and America. Nabokov was exposed to naked repressive reality in his life; the real world was exposed to him in the form of terrifying absurdity.

In the preceding chapters of the study, the concepts of stereotyping, fixity, and otherness have been discussed. The colonized people and the migrants feel uprooted in the colonized society. The Russian émigrés are subjected to humiliations, indignations,

and marginalization. The primary focus of the study is to investigate the plight of the Russian émigrés. Exile is the major cause of all their problems. The very first problem faced by the émigrés in a foreign land was unfamiliarity with their language. This was the point which made them stand different from the locals. Locals, too, treated them differently as they recognized them with their different languages. Characters like Pnin and Fyodor were treated badly by the locals because of their unfamiliarity with the English language. Because of this, they became the point of mockery for the locals. Their identity was challenged. They faced egalitarian problems in society. They were geographically and socially marginalized. They felt isolated. They have broken relations. In a nutshell, the life of the émigrés in the alien land was never a fairy tale. It was full of problems. They led a pathetic life. Language played a very important role in the life of the émigrés that it cannot be ignored. As the Russians were the speakers of a different language from the English speakers, their treatment was different from the English speaking people. *Pnin* and *The Gift* are the novels that have raised this point; though so many other aspects of the émigrés' life have been discussed, the novel and Pnin's pathetic journey started with the point that he was unfamiliar with the language of the host country. The same was the situation of Fyodor. He was a Russian writer. He was using his writing skill to get relieved from the pains of exile. But he was mocked. His journey towards perfection in writing was futile. This is the fate of émigrés.

Living in the memories of the homeland is another aspect of émigrés' life. As everyone knows very well, away from home nobody is happy. A person spends his entire life building a house and making it a home. He has so many memories attached to his home. Leaving one's entire wealth, property, and home is never easy. But the Russian émigrés left their entire wealth behind and led a displaced life. The most expensive wealth for them was their home and the beautiful memories attached to their homeland. But as they were treated badly in the alien country, it made them think more about their home country. No doubt, the kind of life they were leading in their own country was worth it. On the opposite, in the alien land, not even the half they were getting. They were socially, geographically marginalized. It affected their psyche very badly. The

mental pain they were going through was unimaginable. Ganin spends his entire day thinking about the time he spent in Russia with his beloved. In an alien country, he could never be able to feel at home. They felt nostalgic. Pnin, too, kept on recalling the beautiful places and time in Russia.

Alienation, nostalgia, cultural clash, identity challenges, and isolation affected the psyche of the Russian émigrés in a drastic way. Nabokov has given very minute details about the kind of stress and mental pain the émigrés were going through. Their broken relationships, their broken families, their inability to adjust in place after the exile all show their mental anguish they were going through. Nabokov has given minute details in his novels to depict the mental agony of the Russian émigrés in the alien land. Russian émigrés were leading a happy life in the homeland. But in the alien land, their marginalized status, their treatment as the other made their life pathetic. Exile affected them badly. They faced multiple displacements. In America, Pnin was the perfect stance of marginalization. He confronted multiple displacements. In the alien land, he was living in the rental premises. He kept on changing his residence as he was not at all satisfied in one place. Somewhere he did not like the infrastructure; somewhere, he did not like the landlord, somewhere the location and somewhere his feelings were not allowing him to stay at that place. Pnin was not able to maintain a healthy relationship with his wife in America. It showed the mental disturbance of the Russian émigrés. Ganin, too, was not able to maintain a healthy relationship with his new girlfriend in Berlin. He started a relationship with her, but he was always thinking about his old girlfriend, Mary. And because of this, he had to break up his relationship with her. The same was the case of Fyodor. Because of his circumstances in the alien land, he could not maintain any good relationship with his girlfriend. He even decided to leave his girlfriend though later on, they get united. Nabokov has given minute details of the state of the Russian émigrés, which depict their psychological anguish.

Homi Bhabha's concept of 'otherness' is highly relevant to analyze the novels of Nabokov. In his essay 'the other question,' Bhabha has given the details of the procedure to show a man as the other in society. This was happening with the Russian community

in the alien land. All the protagonists were treated as the other based on their culture, language, and race. The locals created thousands of obstacles on the way of émigrés to success. To show the Russian émigrés as the others, different stereotypes were fixed with their characters. One of the differences was that they were not able to learn the English language. This was how they were shown different from the locals. To show them as the other, these features were made rigid with the help of repetition. The émigrés were called cheap, illiterate, wreck fellows to keep them away from the local community. Same are the ideas given by Said in his book 'Orientalism.' Although these ideas were given to stereotype the Asians and the Middle Eastern people in particular, they can be applied to all those who are treated as the other. It demonstrates how the colonizers created the binary opposition to present them like the sophisticated and the colonized as savage. These binaries were used by the locals to depict them as the higher and the migrants as the lower class. And this prejudice killed the morale of the émigrés. Their handling as the other made them live in the memories of the past. The émigrés like Pnin, Sebastian, Ganin, and Fyodor became the victims in the hands of locals.

In his novel, *Mary* Nabokov has depicted vividly the predicaments and agony of the Russian émigrés. All the fine points of the wretched life of the émigrés have been given. The émigrés who came from Russia, their geographical and social marginalization, and their treatment, their psycho-social anguish towards the Berlin and American societies have been presented visibly. Ganin is the protagonist of the novel *Mary*. He has been exiled from Russia. And now he has started living in Berlin. The very first prejudice with the émigrés was shown from the place they had been allotted to live in. They were given the pension houses near the railway station. They were geographically marginalized. They could not live in the same town or city or any particular area where the countrymen lived. Ganin remained in his daydreaming all the time. He recalled the memories of the past. His beloved Mary was not with him anymore. He thought about the happiest time he spent in Russia. The kind of marginalization and partiality Ganin and his roommates went through affected their psyche as well. Ganin started a new relationship in Berlin but futile. He could not take that long. Broken relations were the stances

showing the mental stress of the émigrés. It is said that we need a healthy mind to develop a healthy relationship. But if a person is stressed, full of anguish, struggling with mental pain, he would never be able to maintain a good relationship with anyone. Ganin was so much disturbed psychologically because of his social status that he could not develop a healthy relationship with Lyudmila. His psychological tensions made him show the negative side of his character. In his anguish, he tried to deceive his friend Alfroy by making a plan to elope with his wife, who was earlier Ganin's mistress. Although Ganin left his plan of elopement with Mary but making or thinking about the conspiracy showed the negativity going inside a man.

Nabokov's novel *The Gift*, marked the end of his Russian phase of writing. Nabokov had experienced the pain of homelessness when he took shelter in Manton on the French Riviera with no money and no future. He depicted his personal experiences of cultural dislocation and the loss of identity in his novels and gave a global view of the destructive effects of exile in the life of the émigrés. Nabokov sought refuge in the world of art that provided him an antidote to the disintegration around him. He wrote *The Gift*, and the plot documented the traumatic experiences of Nabokov and his vision of existential absurdity, loss, and death. *The Gift* is the most comprehensive novel, rich in thrilling episodes and packed with heart-rending images and symbols depicting the struggles of the Russian émigrés. Nabokov deals with the misery of Russian émigrés struggling in Europe and America for settlement.

The issue of exile is predominant in his novel *Pnin*. Nabokov has depicted the comic and pathetic troubles of Timofey Pavlovich Pnin, who was a Russian émigré. He was a solipsist and gentle scholar. He seeks to adapt himself to his American environment. His marginalization in American society was vividly portrayed by Nabokov. Pnin was the protagonist of the novel. He was an émigré from Russia. He endured a lot because of his social status. He was in exile. He was being treated as an outsider in the alien land. He was an educated person. He was a Russian literature professor at Windale College. He faced multiple displacements. He was not satisfied with

the kind of life he was leading in America. All the pathetic problems came through his way as he was an émigrés. He was mocked by his own colleagues. He felt isolated as he had no friends in the alien society. This is the fate of the émigrés. Pnin was psychologically disturbed as he was marginalized in the foreign country. Everybody in the college made a conspiracy to throw him out of the college. He recalled the beauty of his homeland and the beautiful time he spent in Russia. Although Pnin recalled his past time and again, he was ready to adapt to the new culture, language, and people. But it is the fate of the émigrés that the alien country never accepts them.

Nabokov's *Laughter in the Dark* (1932) depicts the atmosphere of darkness, uncertainty, the ambiguity of life, and death. Nabokov depicts the issues of obsession, blindness, manipulation, and ambiguity of life in *Laughter in the Dark*. It is a story of the moral degradation of the people living in an alien country. Briefly stated, the novel is packed with the images of darkness and despair, and Margot symbolizes vulgarity, deceit, egotism, falsity, and hypocrisy. Nabokov's *Laughter in the Dark* has historical significance since it was written at a time when Russia was passing through a turbulent phase.

Nabokov's *The Real Life of Sebastian Knight* (1941), is one of the master pieces. It is a story of a Russian émigré who left his country for a better life and fame but unfortunately died mysteriously. The plot began with the guilty consciousness of the narrator, who arrived too late at his brother's death bed, and soon after the death of his brother, he decided to explore the absolute meaning to the meaning of life. Vladimir Nabokov's novel *Lolita* (1955), is one of the master pieces of the century. It excited a lot of interest among the critics and reviewers of Nabokov. Much ink has been wasted on the treatment of taboo issues depicted in the plot of the novel, and the western critics condemned the novel in the most critical and disparaging language. The novel depicted the torments of Lolita, who had become the victim in the hands of Humbert. Humbert played as a colonizer who colonized the body and soul of Lolita. He used her for his sexual satisfaction. Lolita was marginalized as she was not given any voice in the entire

novel. Nabokov wrote *Lolita* when he was on his butterfly-collection trips. Nabokov was not satisfied with the outcome of the novel, and he even wanted to burn it. In many countries, the novel was banned as the society didn't like the taboos like pedophilia. In this novel, the deceptive nature of Humbert was explored, who raped and sexually assaulted Lolita in the novel.

The foremost focus of the study is to investigate the dilemmas of the Russian émigrés. Following observations are made after the intensive examination of the texts of Nabokov. The texts of Nabokov dramatize the harrowing scenes of exile, dislocation, nostalgia, marginalization, survival, and otherness. The Russian émigrés found themselves dislocated and uprooted from the home society. They were mentally upset and struggled to locate themselves in the nostalgic past. They tried their utmost to escape from reality through nostalgic remembrances. In the postcolonial theory, alienation means disconnection from society. When an exiled person lives in an alien land, he is disconnected from his original home. The memories of his native home haunt him, and he feels nostalgic and suffers from psychological pain. In social psychology, alienation leads to withdrawal and isolation, resulting in the loss of the self of the individual. The physical uprooting of the individual in the alien society becomes a significant cause of his dislocation from his original home. He feels disturbed, and alienation manifests in his actions and state of being. It is found that nostalgia is common among émigrés. Émigrés are never given equality in the alien land. They live with a false identity. Their different language made them stand different from the locals. Nabokov concentrates on the sufferings of émigré living and struggling in the alien lands of Europe and America. The emigrants can never forget the loss of their homeland and are bound to suffer cultural dislocation, homelessness, alienation, fragmentation, and the loss of identity as they are always treated as the "Other."

The Russian émigrés faced discrimination by the natives. Their cultural values were not given equal respect in the alien society. They were tortured and traumatized by the Berlin and American natives that developed cultural clashes among people. It left the

émigrés psychologically disturbed and devalued. They confronted unfairness in the alien society, which developed inferiority among the Russian immigrants living overseas. Their rights, freedom, feelings, opportunities were denied in a foreign society. The entire community of émigrés was demolished, and social harmony was destroyed in the alien country.

In this study, Homi Bhabha and Edward Said's postcolonial theoretical concepts are applied while investigating Nabokov's texts, who wrote novels to depict the plight of the Russian émigrés. The study covers historical aspects as Nabokov's novels chronicle of the sufferings of the Russian people who were forced to run away from their native home. In this section, some of the important details and episodes are highlighted to reveal Nabokov's basic concerns. He begins his writing journey with the publication of the novel *Mary* is set in 1924 Germany when Hitler was at the height of power, and the Jews were being decimated in the concentration camps of Auschwitz and Buna. The plot of the novel revolves around Russian émigrés who were forced to flee from Russia following the Bolshevik Revolution. These émigrés are always haunted by old memories and feel nostalgic and experience alienation. Ganin is a distracted Russian émigré haunted by old memories and subjected to psychological pressures. Nabokov has depicted the turbulent and restless inner world of the émigrés who endured multiple problems. They always felt rootless and disconnected from old and new lives. Nabokov has depicted the plight of the Russian émigrés and their psychological trauma. The theme of exile is predominant in his novels, and exile becomes the main cause of their psycho-social anguish and nostalgia. His protagonist is a man without a core suffering existential despair, he lives in a world of illusions, and he realizes that the core of life can never be touched, and ultimately, he finds himself cut off from all traditions and myths and accepts the futility of life. These émigrés were always haunted by old memories and felt nostalgic and experienced alienation. In all his novels, Nabokov depicted the plight of the Russian émigrés who suffered a lot.

To conclude, the postcolonial theory defines the relationships between the colonizer and the colonized. The emigrants' traumatic experiences are investigated through the lens of the postcolonial theory. Its approach is cultural and social, depicting the Diasporas' realities who struggle to settle in an alien land. The emigrants can never forget the loss of their homeland and are bound to suffer as they are always treated as the 'Other.' In this study, Homi Bhabha and Edward Said's postcolonial concepts have been applied while investigating the texts of Nabokov who wrote novels to depict the plight of the Russian émigrés. The study is a historical as well yet Nabokov's novels chronicle the Bolshevik Revolution and its after effects in the life of the Russian people who were forced to run away from their native home. Through his novels, Nabokov aimed to portray the pain, dilemma, and frustration of Russian émigré that were caused by unsettled life.

The term 'postcolonial' became more popular with the appearance of *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Postcolonial Literature (1989)* by Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin. Since then, the use of the terms 'Commonwealth' and 'Third World' that was used to describe the literature of Europe's former colonies has become rarer. All the novels of Vladimir Nabokov are explored and investigated through the lens of Postcolonial theory.

This study has explored the value of liberty and individuality and democratic freedom and the impact of exile on the life of the people. Exile is cancer for the growth of a man's personality. Émigrés experience the trauma as they are the victims of exile, but they used art to get a release from the tensions and anxieties caused by their exile. They must adopt a positive attitude to life and use their exiled experience as a safety valve for moral and social satisfaction. But at the same time, this is to keep in mind that this is not possible for every individual. They all became the victims of exile that later affected their personal and social life. To treat every individual equally has become the need of the time. It is one universe and must be a living place for everybody. And mockery must be demolished as it attacks the psyche of a person, which can be fatal.

Furthermore, exile and problems related to the same must be the concern of all the governments. Migration is happening since time immemorial, so does the biasness and problems of the émigrés. There must be universal laws for migrants living overseas. There should not be any kind of discrimination with the immigrants based on color, creed, religion, or language. The government should consider émigrés the citizens of the country. There must be equal policies for the natives and émigrés. Egalitarianism must prevail in the entire world. We need to believe in human equality. There should be any difference among people on the basis of color, creed, or race. Along with this there should be multilateral corporations to work for the welfare of the immigrants. Émigrés settle down in an alien country and work for the same, but their bad treatment in the alien land decreases the level of their morale. Along with this, émigrés should not indulge in immoral acts. They must try their utmost to get settled in a foreign land. Initiatives from both sides will make even the alien land a better living place.

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