Diaspora studies, though a comparatively new discipline, has gained tremendous impetus in the recent years both in public discourse as well as in academia. There has been a proliferation of scholarly assessments and critical inquiry on the South Asian as well as Indian diaspora studies in recent years. Situated within the corpus of the ever-growing academic inquiries like Vijay Mishra’s *The Literature of the Indian Diaspora: Theorizing the Diasporic Imaginary* (2007), Susan Koshy and R. Radhakrishnan’s *Transnational South Asians: The Making of a Neo-Diaspora* (2008), Rajesh Rai and Peter Reeves’s *The South Asian Diaspora: Transnational Networks and Changing Identities* (2009), Om Prakash Dwivedi’s *Literature of the Indian Diaspora* (2011) or Rita Christian and Judith Misrahi-Barak’s *India and the Diasporic Imagination* (2011), Om Prakash Dwivedi’s edited collection of essays on the contemporary representations of the Indian diaspora makes a significant contribution to the growing critical discourse on diaspora.

Wide-ranging in scope and scholarly in outlook, *Tracing the New Indian Diaspora* offers an important and timely exploration into the complex and dynamic nature of the Indian diaspora. It tries to re-examine established notions of identity, home, location and/or belonging and search for newer paradigms for the concepts of hybridisation, dislocation and/or alienation and their myriad representations within the global Indian diaspora. The book is graced by a scholarly introduction by Om Prakash Dwivedi that sets out to introduce the new Indian diaspora and gives a critical overview of the evolving notions of the diaspora so as to contextualise the complex global nature of Indian diaspora. It foregrounds the evolving changes in contemporary times and contexts and gives a clear indication of the themes the essays follow. The book consists of two sections. The first section, ‘Tracing the Indian Diaspora,’ is made up of nine essays. The opening essay by Pierre Gottschlich discusses the socio-economic and political aspects of the Indian communities in Mauritius, Fiji, Singapore, Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana, Suriname, the UK and New Zealand, and as such provides a broad overview of the cultural and geopolitical diversity of the Indian diaspora, its history and developments, specific circumstances and periods of settlement.

This transnational trajectory of the Indian diaspora is further traced in the next few essays. Brij Maharaj’s essay examines the condition of the Indian community as an ethnic minority in post-apartheid South Africa and observes how the community’s rigid conservatism of cultural identity might be a factor in exacerbating racist tensions and consequently giving rise to feelings of marginalisation and disillusionment. Amarjit Kaur’s essay, however, tries to reconnect contemporary Indian migration to Malaysia with the late-nineteenth century Indian migrations to the Malaya. In his essay, Louis Harrington analyses how the Indian community in Ireland, through their multifarious interactions with the Irish community, recreates not only a new ‘homeland’ but also a new cross-cultural identity. Anjali Sahay examines the Indian diaspora settled in the USA and the potential economic and political roles the NRI community can play in the development of their ‘homeland’ India. The complex nature of experiences pertaining to the ethnic minorities in Indian diaspora is brought out succinctly in Meena Dhanda’s essay that spotlights the identity and rights of the Dalit community in Britain. Wardlow Friesen’s essay takes the queue from the experiences of the Indian diaspora in New Zealand to theorise on the representation of diaspora in media and its significance in the construction of diasporic identity. Sunil Bhatia’s essay grapples with the experiences and autobiographical representations of the Indian community in suburban USA post-9/11, while Brij V. Lal’s essay-cum-travelogue uses personal memory as a tool to reconnect with his lost ‘home’.
The second section, ‘Literary Representations of the Indian Diaspora’, has six essays that examine the complex appropriations and negotiations at play in the literary and/or cultural texts of the Indian diasporic community. The section begins with the eco-critical analysis of Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni’s One Amazing Thing by Chitra Sankaran, followed by Lisa Lau’s essay that makes a comparative study of two distinctly different novels – Kavery Nambisan’s The Scent of Pepper and Sarita Mandanna’s Tiger Hills, both set in Coorg and depicting the distinctive flavour of the locale, customs and community of the region. Their differences of location – one a home author and the other a diasporic one – give rise to a differential perspective, as Lau so astutely notes, in the projection and contextualisation of their setting. Maria Ridda’s essay focuses on Vikram Chandra’s Love and Longing in Bombay and links it to the contemporary Hindi cinema and its representations of the diasporic themes. For Ridda, Bollywood cinema not only showcases India as part of a global culture but also serves as a mode of connection to the homeland as well as a repertoire of ideal Indian values for the diasporic Indian community to emulate, providing, as it were, ‘a visual and “emotional” archive to connect with’ (232). Judith Misrahi-Barak draws on The Swinging Bridge, a novel by Ramabai Espinet, a ‘double-bound’ diasporic writer born to Indian parents in Trinidad but now settled in Canada, to theorise on an alternate and creative perspective to account for the experiences of ‘double-bound’ diasporic communities and individuals. Uma Jayaraman’s essay examines Rohinton Mistry’s novel Family Matters to foreground how a gendered diasporic identity can challenge and disrupt the normative codes of identity formation and generate complex, non-normative and hybridised identities thus ‘negotiating possible meanings of what it means to be Indian in the newly generated spaces of the global arena’ (253). This notion of hybridised identities reconstructed by women in Indian diaspora is continued in Pranav Jani’s essay that serves as a fit conclusion to the volume because it brings together the much-debated issues of identity, gender, family and nation in diaspora. Through a detailed examination of Indian-American texts such as Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni’s novel The Mistress of Spices, Nisha Ganatara’s film Chutney Popcorn, Jhumpa Lahiri’s short story ‘Mrs. Sen’ in The Interpreter of Maladies and Mira Nair’s film The Namesake based on Jhumpa Lahiri’s eponymous novel, Jani spotlights the negotiations of ‘various boundaries dividing “East” and “West” and even questioning their validity’ (272).

Overall, this collection offers a range of significant, thought-provoking and scholarly contributions that provide insightful interpretation and analysis of the complex phenomenon of the Indian diaspora in contemporary times. By employing different theoretical approaches and analytical frameworks, the essays expand both specialist and lay readers’ understanding of the diversity of the Indian diaspora and the complex nature of literary and cultural texts of Indian diasporic communities. One of the major strengths of this volume lies in its concurrent grappling with the ever-evolving social and political contexts, as well as with the literary and cultural texts that articulate the diasporic imagination. Alongside an exploration of the historical and socio-political evolution of the complex identities, there is an examination of the literature and cultural texts of the Indian diaspora in which these diasporic identities are produced or contested in diverse ways temporally as well as spatially. This technique lays bare the multifaceted nature of Indian diaspora – the complex positionalities and the subtle negotiations at work in the politics of the Indian diaspora today. This insightful foregrounding of the multidimensionality of Indian diaspora is vital in understanding the lived realities of Indian diasporic communities.

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