

# Poetry as Resistance: Hybridity and the ‘third Space’ of Indian Diaspora

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*So,  
here you are  
too foreign for home  
too foreign for here.  
never enough for both.*  
Ijeoma Umebinyuo, “Diaspora Blues”

*they have no idea what it is like to lose home at the risk of never finding home again  
have your entire life split between two lands and become the bridge between two countries.*  
rupi kaur, “first generation immigrant”

At the heart of the concept of diaspora resides an imagery of a ‘remembered home’, a place of origin which stands afar at a distance both spatially and temporally. The pain of this displacement forms the memory of that ‘remembered home’, it can still be considered home or can be belonging entirely to the past, one may have left it recently or generations ago, it may still exist in the form of regular ‘home visits’ or may not exist all together. It may be a nostalgia of a safe space or a memory of a nightmare, but it is in a way imagined, remembered, recreated and longed for through diasporic imaginary. The migrants’ dream of home and perceptions of belonging are grounded in memories of prior home and by the notions of “where ‘we’ have come from” (Stock, 2010: p. 24). This idea of ‘remembered home’ gets further complicated in second and third generation migrants, who have no direct prior memory of home and for whom ‘new land’ was never completely devoid of belongingness. It is this domain of tension which is more evident in the extended generations of migrant, i.e. the feeling of being at home while not entirely belonging, which forms the locus of this paper. To further ground my analysis, I will look into the works of two contemporary second generation Indian immigrant poets: Daljit Nagra and Rupi kaur.

Daljit Nagra is a London born poet whose Sikh Punjabi (Indian) parents migrated to the UK in late 1950s. Nagra got involved in poetry in his early 20s and most of his poems are inspired by stories, sounds, smells which invoked memories within him. In 2004, he released a debut book containing collection of his poetry called “Look We Have Coming to Dover!”. This collection consists of poems which connects to the experiences of British-born Indians caught up in the ‘double-ness’ of their lives. More often than not, he writes his poems in ‘Punglish’: which sounds like English spoken by Punjabi Immigrants but is more about a kind of neologism infused blend of English and Punjabi. It is this feature of his style that gains attention in regards of this paper which will be discussed ahead. Comparably, Rupi Kaur writes about similar topics, describing her experience and pain of migrating to Canada along with her parent’s struggle. She was born in Punjab, India and immigrated to Canada

when she was three. Although she recently published her collection of poetry called “Milk and Honey”, she had started publishing her poetry online (Tumblr and Instagram) and continues to do so. What is noticeable in the style she writes in, is that she never uses any uppercase letters or any kind of punctuations. These minute details are important to keep in mind here because they have a very distinct characteristic that brings forth a kind of resistance in amalgamation which forms the core area of analysis for this paper.

Both poets have a distinct style which takes inspiration from their dual cultural backgrounds which is evident in their writing, both in terms of style and content. This amalgamation can be seen in terms of ‘hybridity’ as critical cultural theorist like Homi Bhabha would put it as an ‘in-between-ness’ referring to a ‘third space’ (Hutnyk, 2010: p. 60). Although this paper will prescribe this characteristic of hybridity to the works of these poets, keeping in mind simultaneously that the term should not be taken for granted on its face value. In order to arrive at that point, I will first try to analyze in detail the present discourse around the concept of ‘Home’ and how it is reworked when we look it with regards to the works of poets mentioned above. There upon, I will try to comprehensively outline the career of the term hybridity, also in the context of these poets and how their works justifies the values of hybridity. Finally, I will explore how the contemporary moment of neoliberal multiculturalism poses a challenge to the transformative capacity of hybridity to overcome the politics of recognition. In doing so, I will establish the importance of hybridity in today’s world to keep the struggle of resistance continued in order to attain a productive mode of transformation.

## Ontologies of Home

In the case of diasporic subjects, the conception of Home happens to have diverse meanings which are sometimes even contradictory (Stock, 2010: p. 25). The two domains where the enquiry lies to be examined are the relationship of the migrants or descendants of migrants to the/an ‘Originary Home’ and to the ‘feeling at Home’ at the new home. The former deals with the focus on the material and symbolic notions of transnational ties or on the dreams of returning to Home, while the latter traces the (im)possibility of making oneself at Home or integrating in the different spaces diasporic subjects inhabit in the place of residence (Ibid). In other words, the link between these two conceptions of Home is the relationship between the ties to the homeland and successfully making Home in the new land. Rupi Kaur addresses this distinction in her poetry when she writes about her mother:

“leaving her soil earth and roots  
was not easy for my mother  
i still catch her searching for them  
in foreign films and  
the international food aisle” (Kaur 2014)

The experiences of integration have more evident effects on the lives of first generation migrants. The distinction and complexity of the conception of home differs in the descendants of migrants who have no memory or direct experience of the “Originary Homeland”. This forms the problematics of the dichotomous conception of ‘what Home is’ i.e. it takes for granted the complex dynamics of longing for and belonging to multiple places

at the same time in diverse ways. It takes for granted the complexity of the idea that Home is more than and not limited to the physical places and encompasses symbolical places of belonging, for example finding comfort in writing in a language which is foreign by making it your own or as Kaur puts it “in foreign films and the international food aisle”.

In the previous section, I discussed about the symbolic or metaphorical home. The trauma and social pain of disintegration caused by diasporic movements ignites a creative expression as a way to grapple with and transcend the material consequences. It is a way to take refuge from the social trauma and find solace there, as Hanif Kureishi (A British born writer of Pakistani and English descents) very well puts it “the only way I could make sense of my confused world was to write.” (J. Kabir, 2010: p. 145). Diasporic writers wrote about their “confused worlds” in order to find what Home meant for themselves. Rupi Kaur explored this idea of Home and what it meant for her. She goes on to write:

“so when I first started to travel to perform spoken word poetry.... family and friends always ask me don't you ever get homesick? And on the plane rides to and from i ponder that question because the truth was i never really got homesick.... the reason i never felt homesick was because for me home was wherever i was. so let me explain I'd moved over a dozen times in my short life so this concept that home is some physical structure just stop making sense a long time ago. how can i place the idea of home on places that kept on changing, on temporary roofs, houses were structures, home was here (refereeing to herself) .... and then the dozen plus moves that followed that. the only constant I had under each of those roofs was my art, it was my writing, my expression. so naturally writing became like a limb. it became an extension of my being.” (Kaur 2016)

The effects of diaspora, what this excerpt also seems to suggest, is on the body of the diasporic subject and this body simultaneously inhabits several times and spaces. The vivid literature written by the diasporic subject, always aware of this slippage between origin belonging and location (in the present), emerges around the question: ‘Who am I, and what has formed me?’ (J. Kabir, 2010: p. 146).

Many scholars tried to explore this layered-ness in the conception of Home, one such scholar is James Clifford when he writes about the ‘empowering paradox of diaspora’ (Clifford as cited in Stock, 2010: p. 26). The mobility between multiple spaces which contains “the experience of ambivalently belonging both here and there, can open up new spaces to reflect on and critique the essentialist discourse of ethnicity, nation or origin and to creatively construct new Homes and identities that are deemed hybrid, syncretic or fluid.” (Ibid). Although this hybridity is celebrated in its creative potential to mix cultures and identities, however, one must take into account the power relation which is involved in such an amalgamation. There are disparities in opportunities, accessibility and power in terms of the class, gender and race between different migrant groups and individuals. Attachment and belonging to both here and there might be liberating for some or can be the experience of social pain of not belonging anywhere completely. Descendants of migrants may sometimes feel a lack of a collective identity or everyday experience where at some spaces or the other they are bound to be stuck in the grids of exclusion because of their ‘in-between-ness’. Brah explains it very well when she wrote, “It is quite possible to feel at home in a place and, yet, the experience of social exclusion may inhibit public proclamations of the place as home.” (Brah, 1996: p. 193). One can argue on both sides and still not acquire a conclusion as the

new place of residence can bring both a source of positive identification and of negative experiences of othering, but what is essential here is to look at the possible challenge this tension brings to unsettle the dichotomous and conventionally binding meanings of concepts like 'Home', 'Identity' and 'Recognition'.

## Hybridity in Difference

When it comes to diaspora, the most conventional account of hybridity argues that it is a process of cultural amalgamation where the diasporic subjects adopt facets of the host culture and rework, reform and transform it, creating a new hybrid culture and identities (Hutnyk, 2010: p. 60). Before going further into detail about the role of diasporic subject in creating a transformative hybrid space, I want to discuss briefly about what I mean when I use hybridity in the context of this paper. Hybridity is a term coined by Homi Bhabha to demonstrate the 'third space' or 'in-between-ness' and to ambivalence and mimicry in the context of the colonial cultural interface (Ibid). Since then various scholars have developed their own take on the notion of hybridity, for instance Stuart Hall, James Clifford, Paul Gilroy, etc., and consequently, it is in the dialogue between these works that hybridity came to mean all sorts of things concerning mixing in the context of cultural exchange. This 'third space', understood in terms of Bhabha's conception, is not a ground for mediation between the two original positions creating a new stable meaning combining aspects from the original discourses. Bhabha sees hybridity as a critical force that unsettles or subverts, from inside out, dominant formations through the incorporation of the "different", the "other" or the "marginalized" into the very fabric of the dominant. Moreover, Stuart Hall describes hybridity in the context of diasporic experience as:

"The diaspora experience as I intend it here is defined, not by essence or purity, but by the recognition of a necessary heterogeneity and diversity; by a conception of 'identity' which lives with and through, not despite, difference; by *hybridity*. Diaspora identities are those which are constantly producing and reproducing themselves anew, through transformation and difference." (Hall, 1990: p. 235)

Hall acknowledges that difference is essential in order to represent but how that difference manifests itself, as either a static way of being or as a category which is always transformative and becoming, makes the concept of hybridity essential for him. Hall theorizes identity as constituted from within representation, and hence from different modes of representation (poetry, in this case). Hybridity in his conception gives the possibility to develop the "form of representation which is able to constitute us as new kind of subjects and thereby enable us to discover places from which to speak." (Ibid: p. 236-37).

Coming from such a position, Daljit Nagra writes his poems interweaving canonical literary inheritances of like George Orwell, Rudyard Kipling, etc., with British Punjabi cultural aspects i.e. writing in 'Punglish', to engage with the contradiction of multiethnic Britain (Hena, 2015: p. 122). Nagra extends the lineage of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) writing that has historically questioned the dominant discourse around what constitutes 'Englishness'. Creolization of English is one such practice which was undertaken by quite a few BME writers like Linton Kwesi Johnson who wrote 'Inglan Is a Bitch' and John Agards' 'Listen Mr. Oxford Don'. These works made an effort to assert the politics of solidarity

against the white racism and exclusionary practices of the Thatcher era, at the same time deploying carnival dub rhythms to give voice to the Black British experience (Ibid: p. 122-23). Stuart Hall argues that BME authors and artists across genres of literature, visual media and music sought to resist and challenge wherever possible the dominant regime of representation while simultaneously sought to re-constitute nationhood through diverse rewriting and renovation, subversion and at times outright rejection of the British and European discourses. Nagra, following this tradition into this contested terrain, questions the available space for reworking the discursive limits of Englishness amidst the continued racial and economic inequalities faced by the ethnic minority groups. Alongside, he comprehends the state sanctioned literary institution and the demands that it creates in a neo-liberal setting which involves cashing in on art works that especially promote canonical English cultural traditions. Nagra takes forth this contradiction by writing about the unequal structures in a way that is encased within British literary inheritances braided with Punjabi idioms (Ibid: p. 125). One such instance comes from his poem “Look we have Coming to Dover!” In the final two stanzas, he invokes the readers to imagine the speaker and his fellows living the dream of self-sufficiency and political accommodation in Britain, he writes:

“Swarms of us, grafting in the black within shot of the moon’s spotlight, banking on the miracle of the sun— span its rainbow, passport us to life. Only then can it be human to hoick ourselves, bare-faced for the clear.

Imagine my love and I, our sundry others, Blair’d in the cash of our beeswax’d cars, our crash clothes, free, we raise our charged glasses over unparasol’d tables East, babbling our lingoes, flecked by the chalk of Britannia!” (Nagra, 2007: p. 32)

Inspired by Mathew Arnold’s ‘Dover Beach’, Nagra hints at the xeno-racism, making visible the inequalities faced by Bangladeshis, Pakistanis and Indians in the areas of employment, education and police discrimination. “Swarms of us, grafting in”, at first the reader might take the speaker to represent his British Punjabi community but when closely analyzed, the speaker ironically plays with the dominant stereotype of the “swarms” of minorities, refugees and migrants which come to profit from the welfare state and bask in the multicultural inclusiveness (Hena, 2015: p. 127). The economic language throughout the above lines hints towards this xeno-racism and the human costs minority or diasporic subject must pay before they become recognized citizens. Nagra’s moneyed moon and sun would seem to naturalize the link between economic ability to pay debts (“in/black”, “banking on the miracle”) and political citizenship (“passport us to life”) (Ibid). Across these lines, his neologisms renew English language poetry through his insertion of Punglish, he repeatedly uses nouns as verbs (“graft”. “bank”, “passport”, “Blair”) in a way to mock the economic and corporate discourses or preconditions (“only then”) through which the diasporic life can lift (“hoick”) themselves to the status of the human.

Nagra’s other works goes on to explore the life of a diasporic subject, often in second or third generations, who are being caught in two different worlds. In his case where he was brought up in a white neighborhood, the performance of being Indian at home and English outside which characterizes his life with a double-ness of being two different people in the same body. One such poem which evidently shows this tension is “In a White Town”:

“She never looked like other boys’ mums.  
No one ever looked without looking again  
at the pink kameez and balloon’d bottoms,

mustard oiled trail of hair, brocaded pink  
sandals and the smell of curry. That’s why  
I’d bin the letters about Parents’ Evenings,

why I’d police the noise of her holy songs,  
check the net curtains were hugging the edges,  
lavender spray the hallway when someone knocked,

pluck all the gold top milk from its crate  
in case the mickey-takers would later disclose it,  
never confessing my parents’ weird names

or the code of our address when I was licked  
by Skin-heads (by a toilet seat)  
desperate to flush out the enemy within.

I would have felt more at home had she hidden  
that illiterate body, bumping noisily into women  
at the market, bulging into its drama’d gossip,

for homework – in the public library with my mates,  
she’d call, scratching on the windows. Scratching again  
until later, her red face would be in my red face,

two of us alone, I’d strain on my poor Punjabi,  
she’d laugh and say I was a gora, I’d only be freed  
by a bride from India who would double as her saathi.

Nowadays, when I visit, when she hovers upward,  
hobbling towards me to kiss my forehead  
as she once used to, I wish I could fall forward.” (Nagra 2007)

In an interview, Daljit Nagra explains that this poem was an autobiographical account where he wanted to document this tension of everyday experience of second generation in Britain (Fairweather). In the above poem, Nagra implicitly shows his attempts to hide his mother’s Indian-ness in order to integrate better in the English society. The implicit attempts of his mimicry (as understood by Bhabha: when the colonized attempts to behave or mimics the colonizer), whereby he tried to contest the fact that his mother is different from the mothers of his friends (“No one ever looked without looking again at the pink kameez and balloon’d bottoms”). But his act of mimicry here is pierced by the pain and anxiety of being alienated in the eyes of both his family (“my poor Punjabi/say I was a gora” (white)) and English. In the words of Bhabha, “almost the same but not white: the visibility of mimicry is always produced at the site of interdiction” (Bhabha, 1994: p. 89). This double prohibition or interdiction, this double alienation comes from his confusion over where his belonging which divides him between two cultures, making him at home in neither (Hena, 2015: p. 132).

While on the one hand, Nagra demonstrates his conundrum in the above poem, gradually coming to terms with it. Rupī Kaur, on the other hand celebrates this duality bringing a hybridized account of her expression taking from both her Canadian self and Punjabi self. In her poem “Accent”, she goes onto write:

“my voice is the offspring  
of two countries colliding  
what is there to be ashamed of  
if english and my mother tongue  
made love

my voice is her father’s words  
and mother’s accent  
what is the matter if

my mouth carries two worlds” (Kaur 2016)

Rupī Kaur absorbs the ‘in-between-ness’ both stylistically and in content, Nagra, however very stylistically inhabits this celebration in his writings by incorporating Punjabi. In both of their works, Bhabha’s espousal of hybridity is evident in their own unique ways. Bhabha’s ideation of hybridity was not limited to the discussion of diasporic subjectivities rather it privileged ‘in-between-ness’ as an ideal position from which to posit a liberating and powerful destabilization of binaries (J. Kabir, 2010: p. 148). Diasporic subjects themselves embody the messy dichotomies between home and host land, migration and diaspora, the refuge, the exile, the artist and intellectual all collapsed under the ‘third space’. This coalition became the most influential model for considering the productive capacity of diasporic existence which also manifest itself in literature (Ibid). In explaining why, she always uses lower case letter without punctuations, Rupī Kaur said:

“although i can read and understand my mother tongue (punjabi) i do not have the skillset to write poetry in it. to write punjabi means to use gurmukhi script. and within this script there are no uppercase or lowercase letters. all letters are treated the same. i enjoy how simple that is. how symmetrical and how absolutely straightforward. i also feel there is a level of equality this visuality brings to the work. a visual representation of what i want to see more of within the world: equalness.

and the only punctuation that exists within gurmukhi script is a period. which is represented through the following symbol: |

so in order to preserve these small details of my mother language I include them within this language. no case distinction and only periods. a world within a world. which is what i am as an immigrant. as a diasporic punjabi sikh woman. it is less about breaking the rules of english (although that’s pretty fun) but more about tying in my own history and heritage within my work.” (Kaur 2015)

Her attempt to bring her cultural history and background into the English language resonates with Bhabha’s conception of what hybridity entails. The diasporic space contains the possibility of writing new narratives and unsettling old meanings as Kaur attempted to do above. The diasporic subjectivities display a state of liminality of being neither here or there but belonging to both at the same time. The diasporic subjectivities serves as a space for intervention which has the potential to overturn power structures and changing the dynamics of representation.

Jasbir K. Puar writes about the concept of being and becoming, as devised by Deleuze to show that the ‘becoming’ refers to the indiscreet subject whose identity is constantly shifting. Her idea of this ever becoming subject, in my reading, speaks to the concept of diasporic ‘third space’ put forth by Bhabha. The indiscreet subject, that she talks about, is porous and characterized by the material and social environment. That subject according to her is not a

fixed entity but one which is constantly changing and dissipating (Puar, 2007: p. xxiv). She further defines this subject as an intersectional assemblage which takes the intersectionality of identities and show how their material environment constantly shift their paradigms of identification. This concept of intersectional assemblage speaks directly to the ‘third space’ which a diasporic subject inhabits, the constant negotiation of identities in regard to their mobility in the new cultural space: there was a time to act Indian at home and time to act English outside. Such assemblages are evident in Nagra’s work, although often in tension but it reveals his negotiations of identities in relation to his environment both at home and outside as shown in “The Man who Would be English”, where in the last stanza he wrote:

“I was one of us, at ease, so long as I passed my voice into theirs – I didn’t bud-bud ding-ding on myself for dropping the asylum side to sign up for the bigger picture. I wasn’t Black or Latin or managed by a turbaned ghost. No distant land forever with rights to my name... At an own goal, I pitched up, caught my mother on the screen, as keeper, in our net gloving the ball with lard, from the Mutiny, launching it into my hands, ticking, at the end of the day, as I walked alone to my wife – outside on a sideline of frost, kicking off:  
D-d-doze err shrubby peeepall... !!! D-d-deyy sprayyy all um ourr vall...!!! Venn hmmm veee g-gobbackkk...!!! Lookk lookk ju nott British ju rrr blackkk...!!!” (Nagra 2007).

He establishes in the poem an apparent unity with all things “English” which seemed to make him a “local” and “at home”. The dream of ethnic-national cooperation works out in the first stanza where he adopts the first person plural “we” (“then we chanted with heart and soul for God and Queen!) to describe his amalgamation in the English life. However, in the subsequent stanza as quoted above, the first person singular subject “I”, when his historical subjectivities come to play a role. Towards the end, he experiences a kind of double alienation from both English and Indian cultures, his hybrid-assemblage rendering him as an alienated subject. In that moment, he was failed by the dominant regimes of representation while as the same time failed to recognize with his ‘originary culture’.

## A Challenge to Hybridity: Neoliberal Multiculturalism

As discussed above, these diaspora poets are prone to being appropriated by the dominant structure which can be defined in terms of ‘Neoliberal Multiculturalism’. Neoliberal Multiculturalism can be defined as, Charles R. Hale conceptualize it, “the central tenant of neoliberalism, like the unadorned cognate from which it derives, is the triumph of an aggressively individualist ideology of “economic man”. In contrast.... collective rights, granted as compensatory measures to “disadvantaged” cultural (or ethnic) groups, are an integral part of neoliberal ideology...To emphasize the integral relationship between these new cultural rights and neo-liberal political economic reforms, I use the term “neoliberal multiculturalism” (Hale, 2005: p. 10). In other words, neoliberal multiculturalism entails a kind of economic exploitation (which also goes beyond to socio-cultural exploitation) which make use of ethnicity in order to stabilize the veiled exploits of dominant structure. Neoliberal taking advantage of “new cultural rights” to perpetuate the age old violence of keeping difference intact in the name of multiculturalism i.e. a false politics of recognition. Nagra, in his poem “Kabba Questions the Ontology of Representation, the Catch 22 for ‘Black’ Writers.”, in a very complex way address this particular issue to expose the politics of neoliberal multiculturalism which renders the speakers position uncertain. He tries to bring forth this false politics of recognition in which he and his speaker are trapped. The poem reads as:

“Vy giv my boy  
dis freebie of a silky blue  
GCSE antology with its three poets  
from three parts of Briten – yor HBC

of Eaney, Blake,  
Clarke, showing us how  
to tink and feel? For Part 2, us  
as a bunch of Gunga Dins ju group,

“Poems from Udder Cultures  
and Traditions”. “Udder” is all  
vee are to yoo, to dis cuntry –  
“Udder”? To my son’s kabbadi posseee, alll

yor poets are “Udder”!

Vut free-minding teecher  
are yoo to luv “our” poem  
ver a goat’s neck is cut for blessing  
new house. “Our” bastard poet saying such houses  
same as Dachau.

My boy, vil he tink ebry new  
Barrett-home muslim hav goat blood-party  
barbeque? All vee do yoo tink is pray for di curse  
of incarnations as in dat scorpion stinging  
“poem”, ver di mudder is mantra’d to death?

Dat writer not know vee hav doctors and rocket  
rickshaw ambulance?  
Yoo teachers are like  
dis Dalgit-Bulram mickeying of me as Kabba.

I say for di garment  
of my voice may be sestina, sonnet, tanka,  
tum-ti-tum  
wud best vurds please! A dictation  
of the vay I lecture Punjabi  
to my boy after school.

So vut di coconut do - too shy to uze  
his voice, he plot me  
as “funny”, or a type, even vurse –  
so hee is used in British antologies –  
he hide in dis whitey “fantum” English, blacked,

to make me sound “poreign”!” (Nagra 2007)

In the first few stanza of the poem, Nagra (through his speaker ‘Kabba’) in his Punglish dialect attacks the composition of the GCSE Anthology which forces his son to segregate representative poets of ‘Britishness’ (“yor HBC”, “of Eaney, Blake, Clarke”, “showing us how to tink and feel”) from the poets who are “from udder cultures and traditions” who are grouped together, implicitly positioning them as ‘other’ by establishing how they differ from the British canonical tradition. Nagra’s selection of Irish poets here such as Heany, Austin

and Clarke hints at his satirization of how non-British poets repeatedly become absorbed and domesticated within the “national heritage” (Hena, 2015: p. 138). The reader realizes this when Kabba exclaims: as far as he is concerned “all yor poets are Udder!”. In the second section, Kabba shows his concern that his son will take as truth the (limited to Nizim Ezekiel and Taufiq Rafat) poetic representation from other cultures as he mockingly refers to the poems “Sacrifice” by Taufiq Rafat and “Night of the Scorpion” by Nizim Ezekiel, both of which are a part of GCSE syllabus. Nagra seems to suggest here that the GCSE turns poetry into a political tool for the sake of national subject formation which is not very different from the colonial education as a “mask of conquest” in nineteenth-century India (Ibid).

Nagra uses the comic persona of Kabba to make evident the British education system for (falsely) inculcating its citizens in multiculturalism: a move which ends up fetishizing and grounding cultural difference. However, Nagra also turns Kabba’s satirical critique onto himself as he has borne the consequences of being appropriated by this dominant state mechanism. Towards the end of the poem, Kabba’s “coconut” son (a slang for a black/brown person who has socialized in a way that he behaves like white, hence white from inside) stands for the poet himself criticizing poets position who puts on the voice of ‘authenticity’ in order to gain institutional recognition (Ibid: p. 139). The poem puts forth the risks of applying a ‘native voice’ that sounds politically representative of his own community and authentic when it is already doubly spoken over by what Kabba calls “dis whitey ‘fantum’ English, blacked, to make me sound ‘poreign’ (foreign)!” Entailing that behind the black mask of Kabba’s “poreign” language is the white “fantum” of standard English, itself just one dialect among many.

Here lies the conundrum or false politics of recognition instilled by neoliberal multiculturalism. The discourse which sets out the parameters of recognition of what authentic is, are hardly a depiction of different realities of diasporic populations but rather they are a representation set out by the neoliberal multicultural state. These ‘authentic’ identities are based on the discourse of difference set out by those in power. Minority communities are expected to perform a certain identity to be recognized on the basis of their difference by the dominant discourse. This creates a vicious circle of creation of diasporic and minority subjectivities on the basis of difference and their realization of such subjectivities in order to be recognized by the dominant discourse. This tension is very well depicted by Nagra’s poem discussed above. The question which is needed to be addressed here is how to work on this matrices of recognition as a result of neoliberal multiculturalism which appropriates the difference of identities in order to politically and economically validate them? I believe the answer lies in the question itself i.e. a radical reworking in the matrices of recognition. Recognition is always partial or one sided and in this lies its transformative capacities. As discussed above in lengths, hybridity has this transformative potential. Hybridity provides the possibility of taking the difference it sets out and attaching new meaning to it. Hybridity unsettles the parameters of recognition, especially in the case of diasporic subjectivities, which inhabits the space beyond the categorization of the dominant discourse and thus opens up the possibility of creating new meanings. For instance, both the poets mentioned in this paper transformed the characteristics of what written English language entails by breaking the rules of grammar. Although, there is a chance that these diasporic subjects can fall into the trap of the false politics of recognition, hybridity as a strategy to overcome this cannot be disregarded with the influential possibilities of resistance that it provides.

## Conclusion

I started this paper with an exploration of the concepts of Home. While the existing literature on diaspora suggests two meanings of Home. First, the ‘remembered Home’ which refers to

the place of origin in a material sense as well as a land to return to, in a symbolical sense. Secondly, the Home acquired through migration, the new land and a place of residence. Although, by analyzing the literature of the diasporic poets such as Rupi Kaur and Daljit Nagra, one can say that Home can be neither (material or symbolic) and both at the same time. The subject position which emerges through diaspora entails a space which gives them the liberty to belong to multiple spaces at the same time. This multiplicity in belonging comes with an opportunity to inhabit the 'third space' of socio-cultural amalgamation.

When looking at this 'third space' in terms of the works of the poets this paper takes into account, Hybridity is understood as Stuart Hall understands it i.e. hybridity as a space which acknowledges that difference is essential but how that difference manifests itself, as either a static way of being or a category which is always transformative and becoming, makes this concept stand out. Both Nagra and Kaur, showcased in their own unique styles a way to embody the 'third space' which enabled them to speak from new subject positions to speak from. Their work serves as a representation to realize that the diaspora provides a space which enables individual to ingrain a type of 'hybrid-assemblage', an ever becoming identity. However, the idea of hybridity faces a challenge from the neoliberal multicultural moment of our times. This challenge cannot be looked over when hybridity is talked about. Hybrid diasporic identities face the problem of being recognized by the dominant structure, which here means the state. And in order to be recognized by the state, the diasporic subject has to, in one way or the other, give in to the matrices of recognition. But it is the need of the hour to realize that although this violence persists, hybridity still provides a transformative capacity to overturn this violence on to itself, by taking the difference it sets out and attaching new meanings to it. By reiterating the norms in a way which is not identical to the meanings set out by the dominant discourse, one can remake discourse. Both the poets discussed in this paper, I believe, have attempted to do so in their own unique ways. Although the title of this paper reads "Poetry as Resistance: Hybridity and the 'third space' of Indian Diaspora", it is not limited and beyond the Indian Diaspora. Diasporic subjectivities characterized by hybrid-assemblage have potential across diverse migrant and minority groups and across all forms of media, be it literature, music or visual culture.

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