

## **Diasporic Writings: A view**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*This Paper is an attempt to describe Indian writing, governing term 'Diaspora', which has become an informing principle for exploring works from a variety of geo-political locations. Reading texts in relation to a diasporic context is useful since it points to interrelatedness across geographic boundaries. Here it is referred to the work of art generated as a result of the diasporic experience of various literary figures.*

### **Introduction:**

It is universally accepted that all literary theories and terms have single sole object that they help in understanding a work of art or serves as tools to fathom the meaning of the text or human expressions. Shakespeare's heroes died being dominantly governed or (mis)guided by supernatural powers or elements in his fame earned tragedies. In the same way, we see an impression or rather reality that most of Indian writers like Roy's or Rashdie's etc. characters growing or surviving in the environment of an element called diaspora. It very much peeps out of their characters while reading them.

### **Origin of the term 'Diaspora':**

'The term *'diaspora'*, originally used for the Jewish externment from its homeland, is now applied as a "metaphoric designation" for expatriates, refugees, exiles and immigrants. It refers to the work of exile and expatriates and all those who have experienced unsettlement and dislocation at the political, existential or

metaphorical levels. Significantly enough, the Diaspora Indian writing in English covers every continent and part of the world. It is an interesting paradox that a great deal of Indian writing in English is produced not in India but in widely distributed geographical areas of indenture ('Girmit') i.e. Indian Diaspora in the South Pacific, the Caribbean, South Africa, Mauritius, and the contemporary Indian diasporas in the U.S.A., the U.K., Canada and Australia. Frankly speaking the very idea of 'India' needs to be understood properly when contextualized in the backdrop of cultural study of the Indian Diaspora.

### **Aims of studying the term diaspora:**

While studying, we will examine how the diasporic experience can serve as a form of transcultural critique, offering the possibility of 'reading one culture's space and time from the space and time of another'. We will also look at the strategic value of 'doubleness' in terms of identity constructions and self-(re)inventions, and also the concept of creolisation as a strategy for cultural resistance/It has been argued that comparative approaches (including the transdisciplinary) are inevitable in the study of post-colonial literatures. Since fictions produced in these contexts themselves transform languages and cultural traditions, reading from a cross-cultural perspective can thus become a way of discovering productive new modes of thinking and expression.

### **Roots of Diaspora:**

Globalisation has produced new patterns of migration and provoked divergent, responses worldwide. The seemingly homogenising effect of globalization cannot hide the different responses it has prompted in the various regions within its reach. Questions of diaspora arise with particular force: tensions between internationalism and nationalism; the relationship between place and identity; and the ways cultures and literatures interact. New patterns of mobility are being drawn on the familiar landscape of migration and exilic exclusions.

Migration from centres of capitalist economies to cosmopolitan pockets in the margins ('first' to 'second' or 'third' worlds), migration from deprived economies to lands of opportunities ('third' and 'second' worlds to 'first' world, or margins to the cosmopolitan centres within the 'third' world), seem fertile ground for new forms of identity politics. New articulations of diaspora, necessarily overlapping with familiar ways of conceptualising it, have found their way to literary writings.

### **Migration as one of the major elements of diaspora:**

Different responses to migration, whether as an attendant phenomenon of globalization or a consequence of political persecution, ethnic cleansing or natural disasters are articulated in literature produced in places where diasporic communities exist. The interaction between the 'host' and 'immigrant' cultures, complicated by translation, asks new questions of identity politics and the issues involved. It also problematises conventional notions of literariness, bringing to the fore an urgent need to re-explore the ways in which aesthetics, politics and ethics intersect, and cultural differences delineate patterns of such intersection. It also asks new questions of how culture and literature interact, more particularly, how the overlapping of old and new patterns of voluntary and forced migration is re-mapping cultural and identity politics, literariness, and literary texts. Questions of identity politics arise out of migration, diaspora and exile. Identity politics driven by migration, diaspora and exile have in turn mapped literary imagination and produced literary writings of distinct characteristics.

### **Conclusion:**

With more and more writers of Indian origin settling abroad and engaging themselves in creating writing in the countries of their domicile, the theoretical problem is that of the critical parameters by which their works have to be defined and assessed. Although there are certain common resonances in the literary representations of the experience of the writers of the 'indenture' and the 'new'

Indian diaspora, the responses and the narratives of the individual writers vary greatly. Writers like A.K. Ramanujan, Agha Shahid Ali, Bharati Mukherjee, David Dabydeen, M.G. Vassanji, Meena Alexander, Rohinton Mistry, Salman Rushdie, Satendra Nandan, V.S. Naipaul, to mention a few, differ from each other not only in their socio-cultural backgrounds and literary ancestries but also in their thematic preoccupations and literary styles. Further, the responses of the diasporic writers to India are also varied and not always adulatory; they range from sentimentality and nostalgia to a cynical celebration of their coming of age. However, their diasporic condition, their sense of exile and alienation and their efforts to seek replenishment by making symbolic returns to their origins bind all this writing into a unity.

### **Diaspora as informing principle:**

The concept of diaspora has become an informing principle for exploring Works from a variety of geo-political locations. Reading texts in relation to a diasporic context is useful since it points to interrelatedness across geographic boundaries while simultaneously foregrounding the discreteness of linguistic, cultural and geo-political contexts, traditions and experiences. Rather than focusing on the familiar crises of alienation and globalisation, the focus here will be on exploring 'the in-between spaces' opened up as a result of the diasporic experience.

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