



# DIASPORIC DILEMA IN INDIAN WRITINGS

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## Abstract

The term Diaspora is derived from the Greek word 'dia' means through and 'speiro' means scatters. Originally the term Diaspora referred to the Jewish Diaspora for the dispersal of the Jews from their motherland back in the sixth-seventh century B.C. and later in the second century A.D. from Jerusalem. During 200 A.D. to 900 A.D, there was migration on a large scale in most of the countries for trade and business. Religion was also one of the reasons for migration. During Colonial period it was due to war, slavery and exploitation of one community to another in case of majority and minority.

**Keywords:** - Identity, Diaspora, Migration, Nostalgia, Homeland, Host Land, Diaspora Writers and Indian immigrants.

**Introduction:** - The writers of the diaspora desired to keep alive their traditions in their writings; their basic inspirations are their memories of the past from the motherland. When the immigrants recollect their past, they are not only nostalgic about their memories but about their geographical place which is not only a geographical physical space but also the mentally conjured psychological cultural space. The paper attempts to show how an immigrant writer creates a third space in order to escape from the conflicting situation of choosing the host culture and the native culture as foundation for identity construction. In this new identity, s/he precipitates the past as well as present cultures, showing the diasporic literature as highly vibrant and expressive of the split self of an immigrant. The concept of Diaspora in Modern time has undergone a change. Time and space have shrunk on account of technological inventions and development of communication tools. Modern Diasporic Indian writers can be divided into two groups. The first group is that writer who has spent some part of their life in India and rest of life spent in outside and nostalgic for India. In second group are those writers who have been raised since childhood outside India. They have had a vision of India, from the outside as an alien place of their origin.

Literature of old generation of diasporic Indian writers like Raja Rao, G. V. Desani, Santha Rama Rau, Dhalchandra Rajan, Nirad Chaudhari, Ved Metha,, mainly look back at India and hardly ever record their experiences away from India as expatriates. It is as if these writers have discovered their Indianans when they are out of India. Evidently, they have the benefit of looking at their homeland from the outside.

Modern diasporic Indian writers can be grouped into two different classes. One class includes those who have spent a part of their life in India and have carried the baggage of their native land offshore. The other class comprises those who have been raised since childhood outside India. They have had a vision of their country only from the outside as an alien place of their origin. The writers of the previous group have a factual displacement whereas those belonging to the latter group find themselves rootless. Both the groups of writers have created an enviable corpus of English literature. These writers while portraying migrant characters in their fiction investigate the theme of displacement, alienation, assimilation, acculturation, etc. The diasporic Indian writers' portrayal of dislocated characters gains immense significance if seen against the geopolitical background of the vast Indian subcontinent. That is exactly why such works have an international readership and a lasting appeal.

**Gayatri C Spivak** gave the name this migration of people to as part of **'brain-drain.'**

**Diaspora in Indian Writing:** - It is very interesting that the history of Indian Diasporic writing is as old as the term Diaspora itself. The first Indian English novel Bankimchandra Chatterjee's 'Rajmohan's Wife' was published in 1864.

**V.S. Naipaul's** Mohan Biswas from **'A House for Mr. Biswas'** and Ganesh Ramsumai from the **'Mystic Measure'** are away from their original home land, India. They are living always in the memory of their homeland which they had left generations ago. Mohan enabled to make a house for his and his family in whole life.

**Salman Rushdie says:** - **"The past is a country from where we have all emigrated, that its loss is part of our common humanity."**

**Anita Desai's 'Bye, Bye Blackbird'**, 'Bye Bye Blackbird' by Anita Desai is a psychological analysis of the immigrants who suffer a mixed feelings of love and hate towards the country of their adoption. The title 'Blackbird' used for the immigrant, whom London says goodbye. Desai highlights the physical and psychological problems of Indian immigrants and explores the adjustment difficulties that they face in England. The author gives beautiful descriptions of the busy London and the quite retired life in countryside, which is totally opposite to one another.

**Kamala Markandaya's 'The Nowhere Man.'** Focused on the life of Indian who settles in London. The rootless brought them back home by the display of naked racialism in the English Community. They tried to find out their identity in foreign lands unable to do so and return back. In this novel characters show the reality of isolation and displacement.

**Amit Chaudhari** in his novel **'Afternoon Raag'** shows the lives of Indian students in Oxford. Amit focused on the dual identity of their characters. He said that the second generation of migrant Indians has to face the dilemma of dual identities.

**Anjana Appachana** is a novelist of Indian origin who lives in the United States. She has written a book of short stories titled 'Incantations' and a novel titled 'Listening Now' a novelist of Indian origin who lives in the United States. Her debut work 'Incantations and Other Stories' was first published in England, in United States and was translated into German language. Anjana Appachana is the recipient of O. Henry Festival Prize and National Endowment for the Arts Creative Writing fellowship. Her first novel 'Listening Now' based on the themes of female bonding, female sexuality and mother-child relationships spans three generations in a narrative that is not sequential, elliptical.

**Bharati Mukherjee's 'Ved Mehta'** is in quite different ways. Her **'Days and Nights in Calcutta'**, here she portrayed her character in nostalgic feeling for her home city. Her novel 'The Tiger's Daughter' portrayed a young woman who is unable to settle in abroad and returned to her home Calcutta after so many years. Bharati shows that society structure of foreign countries is sometimes make unfit or nostalgic for homeland.

**Jhumpa Lahiri** was born to Indian parents from London, who settled in the USA after her birth, Lahiri's debut collection of short stories '**Interpreter of Maladies**' (1999) brought laurels to her by clinching Pulitzer Prize for fiction. In her first novel '**The Namesake**' and her short story collections, she is successful in presenting discontentment at the core in the families she portrays. Her '**Low Land**' is the story of blood relationship that was brutally spoiled by politics, which got shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize.

If we talk about Indian writers like Raja Rao, G.V. Desani, Nirad Chaudhary, Ved Mehta, they are attached so much to India, they only look back at India and rarely ever record their experiences away from India. They show Diaspora feeling when they are out of India.

**Bhiku Parekh** who states: The diasporic Indian is **“like the banyan tree, the traditional symbol of the Indian way of life, he spreads out his roots in several soils, drawing nourishment from one when the rest dry up. Far from being homeless, he has several homes, and that is the only way he increasingly comes to feel at home in the World.”**

**Conclusion:** - Diaspora writing occupies a well known place through countries and cultures. The list of Diaspora writers is very lengthy and elaborative. Most of the writers wrote in relation with the culture of their homeland as well as show the adaptation and negotiation for the host land. In this way, Diaspora literature on a broader level helps the readers to know and understand the different cultures, breaking the barriers among countries and spread livelihood and universal peace. Diaspora is a journey towards self-reorganization, self-realization and self-knowledge. Migration takes place due to many reasons. But it can't be denied that Indians show greatest sense of adjustments in foreign countries. An immigrant consciously or subconsciously tries to adapt the host country's culture to prosper and develop in the new culture. Indians who migrated to other countries for economic betterment, now with increased economic strength, play a crucial role in emerging trade, investment, technology and tourism. The people of Indian diaspora carry conflicting contradictory irresolvable cultural codes and pale images of civilization, and when these people are forced to be absorbed into the host country, they manifest maladjustments, because of the social hierarchies and racial, ethnic and cultural differences present within the settler country.

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