

Diaspora Literature | a world beyond home

The term migration is not new to human civilization as spread of our species to all the continents was made possible because of travelling to different lands. The literature that has arisen due to these travels, under special circumstances, is placed as Diaspora literature. As with the colonial and postcolonial literature, this form of literature is wide spread, complex and provides a different perspective of life.

In general, Diaspora is a term used to define the migration of people from their homeland to another country or continent due to several intentional or unintentional circumstances. People who undertake such migration feel the difference between their new home and old one. Diaspora might occur due to victimization, trade culture and need of labour.

African people are a perfect example for victim Diaspora as many of them are taken back as slaves to America. Asian people sought the interest of the West in their resources and started to trade things, leading many of them to settle in foreign lands. Labour Diaspora is common across the world as people who do not find work in their homeland seek opportunities in other nations to earn. These people who settle down in other nations group together in a community where they try to build their place in the liking of their motherland.

Characteristics of Diaspora Literature

The people who get dispersed in other nations experience more or less similar conditions. The writers representing such conditions give out characteristics that are true to Diaspora literature and the community/communities the writer represents.

Cultural displacement

Migration itself is a loose string between acceptance and rejection from the foreign nation. This leads to anxious moments and a strong feeling of displacement. The feeling intensifies when people experience cultural gap between them and the locals. Writers represent this displacement in both ways i.e. journey through acceptance and journey through rejection.

Memory and alienation

In Diaspora literature, the psychological journey of the person is as important as the physical journey. This complicated journey creates a vague memory of the homeland and the reminiscences are based on the settlement of the people in the foreign land. If the people encounter problems, they immediately get a sense of alienation and rue the fact of leaving the motherland.

Identity

As mentioned above, problematic situations can strand the individual disabling him/her to go forward or backward. A sense of identity that the individual creates start to change and in few cases

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the person has to act out of his/her boundaries to survive. This forms a web of thoughts that are sad, interesting and unique to the literature of Diaspora.

Some of the most exemplified works of Diaspora literature are V S Naipaul's *A House for Mr. Biswass*, *The Mimic Men*, Anita Desai's *Bye Bye Black Bird*, Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses*, Amitav Ghosh's *The Shadow Lines* and Michael Ondaatje's *The English Patient*.