

IMAGINATION OF HOME IN THE DIASPORIC LITERATURE.

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Abstract

Globalised 21st century has made easier the process of migration and immigration from one country to another country. In this process of migration many immigrants leave their native homeland for various reasons but when they leave for longer period they start imagining of their own home. This trace of imagining of home is reflected in many diasporic literatures. In fact home is very much rooted in idea of what it means to think and to remember. The imagined construction of home is very much different from its material reality in real life experience. In diasporic literature 'home' is redefined and filled with the objects and thoughts that they need to recall. In true sense home is a space of freedom and power of the self to move within it. Diasporic literature tries to bridge the gap between past and present or tries to make a compromise between the old and new situation by imaginary homes.

Key words: *diasporic, imagination, home, migration, immigration..*

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Diasporic literature refers to people who are dispersed and displaced from their native homeland. These people own and share a collective memory and life stories that are emotionally linked to their homeland. The notion of home is concrete in the lives of immigrants though migrating from own country to another. They are no longer rooted in one location but try to cling the roots of ancestor homeland based on sentimental and nostalgic recollections of the myth of a homeland. This sentimental bonding and affinity towards family members and imagined home becomes part and parcel of their lives. In fact this issue of imagined home is highlighted by many diasporic writers in their works. The diasporic writers feel insecure in the new environment, uncertain of their affiliation and their roots in new land. So immigrants try to create imaginary homeland due to changed geographical places. They are unable to forget the loss of home. Therefore imagination plays a vital role in recalling their memories of the homeland and reconstructing new home in their minds. Salman Rushdie uses the word 'exile' synonymously with emigrants and expatriates: "Exiles or emigrants or expatriates are haunted by some sense of loss, some urge to reclaim, to look back. [But when we look back, because of our physical alienation from India, we] create fictions... imaginary homelands, India of the mind" (15). Immigrant's finds caught in difficult situation to return back to native homeland after taking decision of quitting or migrating from homeland. The home left behind for various reasons is recreated through memories and imagination. Homi Bhabha says "Nations, like narratives, lose their origins in the myths of time and only fully realize their horizons in the mind's eye".(1). Arjun Appadurai says about diasporic imagination that "imaginary" as a "constructed landscape of collective aspirations the key

component of a new global order”(4-5). This new global order becomes part of immigrant. However diasporic writings always reflect the individual’s attachment to the ancestral homeland. The feeling of attachment differs among the diasporians and it depends on the depth of willingness of individual to assimilate or to be part of their new environment or remain attached to native customs, traditions, languages and religions. Therefore, imagination helps to give traces of geographical boundaries and cultural experiences in the form of their thoughts, feelings and memories of the home.

Home occupies an important place in the lives of immigrants. The place [home] tells us about family roots and national identity. It can be defined as a place of shelter, security, comfort and warmth. Therefore, home can be considered as heart of an individual. Home serves the places of bonding between our own family members. Home is place where we can see familiar spaces, food habits, customs, and traditions which are part and parcel of our life. In true sense our early development of identity takes places in home. Thus home becomes a sensuous, emotional and geographical space. But the idea of home creates a problem in the lives of immigrant due to migration from one place to another. This creates sense of unhomeliness and feel outsider from their familiar members. For instance Salman Rushdie tells the fact in his essay ‘Imaginary Homelands’. In this essay he tries to restore his childhood love [Bombay] while living in London. This realization of childhood home can be traced in the novel ‘Midnight Children’ set in India and Pakistan. According to Rushdie, it is very difficult to feel home through writing. He argues that “the writer who is out of country and even out of language may experience this loss in an intensified form. It is made more concrete for him by the physical fact of discontinuity, of his present being in a different place from his past, of his being elsewhere” (12).He says that writer can fill the gap of past home with new home only through imagination. This imagination is mentally constructed with fragments of past memories. When an immigrant tries to recover past memories clearly suggest that a sense of displacement in new country. In true sense this memories cannot substitute real home feelings experienced by the immigrants in new

homelands. Therefore an immigrant goes to live in new place but unable to forget ancestor home. Thus immigrants feel and sense their native home through their past memories and imagination.

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