

Research Article

**Diasporic Subtlety And Pursuit For Home In V. S. Naipaul's 'House For Mr. Biswas'**

**Seerat Munir**

Research Scholar

Department of English

Glocal University, Saharanpur U.P.

Email: seeratmuneer23@gmail.com

**Dr. Abrar Ahmad**

Assistant Professor

Department of English

Glocal University, Saharanpur U.P.

Email: [abrahamad.aligarh@gmail.com](mailto:abrahamad.aligarh@gmail.com)

**ABSTRACT**

Self-narratives driven by the mission for identity and self-exile from a heartless world of colonialism and colonial subjugation are contained within the Diaspora's multifaceted collection, a kaleidoscope of artistic works. Constrained and deliberate migrations, including easy requesting and reordering, have provided form to creative portrayals. The series of battles, self-attestation, and linguistic resilience in another home stewed in de-historicization and cultural abrogation cannot be unraveled in Diaspora literature. It aims to uncover the challenges that postcolonial individuals encounter as they begin to quest for self-identity and self-regard in Caribbean society in the light of Naipaul's book, *A House for Mr. Biswas*. Naipaul tries to deny a recycled custom pushed onto any semblance of him by retreating provincial powers, as well as reproduce for himself an identity, a door to door the cultural uniqueness and identity of the Trinidadian Indian dispossessed, exiled, and displaced, through the quest for identity and attempts of his nearly picaresque legend, Mr. Biswas, to fabricate a house for himself by dismissing a readymade family. This paper is an exploration of the Diasporic nuance and quest for home in VS Naipaul's 'House for Mr. Biswas.'

**Keywords:** Diasporic writers, V. S. Naipaul, Subtlety, multiculturalism, ancestral homeland, westernization, displacement, quest for Home etc.

**I. INTRODUCTION**

V.S. Naipaul is an eminent English diasporic author whose prestige as a novelist and travel writer has often been tainted. Naipaul is a Trinidadian expatriate whose main business as a writer is to meticulously project the dynamic destiny of individuals in a multi-cultural society. His works take the reader on a voyage of encounters from the local to the global, from a limited viewpoint to a wider and all encompassing view. He is a writer of Indian origins who is Trinidadian-British. He is a second-

generation Indian, whose grandfather was an indentured laborer taken from India to Trinidad in the 1880s. Though his writings were universally praised, his opinions occasionally sparked debate.

For example, *A House for Mr. Biswas* transcends regional borders and evokes widely relevant human principles. This book has been dubbed an adventure, and the author has been dubbed an Everyman. *A House for Mr. Biswas* represents the pinnacle of Naipaul's creative growth. Naipaul's creative outlook had broadened and he grew more optimistic as a writer after effectively converting his intimate knowledge into books with a global appeal. However, personal knowledge has its limits, this is where, as he recalls, travel came to his rescue:

'Then, by accident, I was saved. I wanted to go on a trip. I moved across the Caribbean and knew a lot more about the imperial structure of which I had been a member. I spent a year in India, my ancestral homeland; it was a life-changing experience. The books I wrote on these two adventures brought me to new emotional heights, presented me with a worldview I'd never had before, and stretched me technically.'

Mr. Biswas' life story was shunted from one crumbling hut to another in V.S. Naipaul's novel *A House for Mr. Biswas*, a microcosm of three hundred years of West Indian culture. Biswas is a descendant of indentured peasants, who were regarded as prisoners and were exposed to a century of dispossession, crushing hunger, and uprooting trauma. This book has two main concepts. One is Mr. Biswas' struggle to reclaim his legitimacy in a hostile world, and the other is the fall of Hinduism as a result of westernization. "According to Naipaul, his writing is aimed at social commentary and critique." Many of the protagonists in the book seem to be residing in a state of discord. They are also hybridized in terms of community, faith, language, schooling, identity, and lifestyle, taking just what they need from each creed.

## II. 'DISPLACEMENT' AND DIASPORA

The word 'diaspora,' which was used to describe the expulsion of Jews from their homeland, is often used to describe expatriates, refugees, exiles, and newcomers. It applies to the work of exiles and expatriates, as well as all others who have endured global and existential unrest and dislocation. Significantly, diasporic Indian writing in English can be found on every continent and in every corner of the globe. It's an intriguing mystery that so much Indian writing in English is created outside of India, in widely dispersed geographical areas of indenture ('Girmit'), such as the Indian diaspora in the South Pacific, the Caribbean, South Africa, Mauritius, and contemporary Indian diasporas in the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia. To be frank, the very definition of 'India' needs to be better interpreted when put in the sense of a cultural analysis of the Indian Diaspora. The diasporic perspective may be seen as a means of transcultural criticism, allowing one to read one culture's space and time through the lens of another culture's space and time.

The concept 'displacement' is closely associated with diaspora literature, which examines diaspora people's feelings of pain and enjoyment. People living in the diaspora may not have an easy existence. It is impossible for them to incorporate into the modern mainstream culture when they are isolated from their homeland. They will have problems in the host country due to a variety of factors such as language, history, customs, faith, ideology, and so on. They experience a sense of loss as a result of isolation, homelessness, and identification crises, many of which are intertwined throughout the diaspora. V. S. Naipaul grew up in a family of indentured labour immigrants, and he has passed through painful encounters that are conveyed implicitly in the lives of the protagonists of his fiction.

While reading about Naipaul's life and Mr. Biswas's in the novel *A House for Mr. Biswas*, it's simple to note how close they look. In the book, Naipaul depicts how Mr. Biswas, and others from the generation of indentured labour immigrant parents in Trinidad, face homelessness, displacement, isolation, and other issues.

One reality of diasporic existence is that people cannot avoid experiencing migration, loneliness, rootlessness, identity crisis, and other negative emotions. Mr. Biswas often struggles from similar thoughts of 'out of placeness.' 'In pursuit of his own identity, Mohun Biswas moves from village to town and from joint family to nuclear family but struggles to locate his own origins amidst socio-cultural change,' writes Leela (2012). He goes to Port of Spain and starts living with his family on rent in Mrs. Tulsi's house. He already works as a writer for the 'Trinidad Sentinel,' where he earns a decent wage. He also gets along well with Mrs. Tulsi. He constructs a house in Tulsi Estate in Short Hills to be more satisfied and autonomous. He is happy in his own home, but this happiness is short-lived since his home is still devastated by flames. Mr. Biswas sacrifices his sense of location over and over again as a consequence of his 'sense of relocation.'

Naipaul has written extensively on various facets of post-colonial culture as seen through a post-colonial lens. The novels of Naipaul transform into a fascinating examination of diasporans, with 'their feeling of loss and gloom contributing to unhappiness.' Yet, when writing a travelogue or a book, he continues to track a self-conscious symptomatic reaction to the need to find a suitable literary medium to frame a 'psychic and symbolic meaning of homelessness,' whether consciously or unconsciously. There is a longing for a whole state of being in Naipaul's poetry, but this longing is tempered by the realization that such purity has been shattered by colonialism's past, and that it is difficult to return to some pure cultural or historical origin or wholeness. Naipaul talks about migrants' changing cultures, origins, families, and realities. The feeling of fragmentation pervades Naipaul's profound and unshakeable sense of loss, of still being on the outside. Naipaul's confidence in a different kind of individual sovereignty is liberating. He is a writer who constantly challenges us to think, to write about the world with the independence of someone who has no family, nation, or affiliations. He portrays individuals who were compelled to leave their homelands and find themselves in unfamiliar areas, without acquaintances, little loyalties, and a sense of trespassing. Worse, their worlds have been completely changed; they have escaped, each to his own limbo, and their fate is similar to that of souls in a classical underworld. The West Indies, according to Naipaul, are made up of races who have been uprooted from their initial cultures and are yet to create a modern civilization to substitute what has been lost.

Though the novel's primary emphasis is on Mr. Biswas and his kin, other characters such as Seth, Mrs. Tulsi, Govind, W. C. Tuttle, the widows of Hanuman House, and others are also present to witness migration, loneliness, and rootlessness in an environment other than their native India. Indentured laborer immigrants had brought their parents or ancestors there. The majority of them do not have their own home, as Bruce King (1995) points out:

Naipaul investigated the challenges faced by Trinidadian Asian Indians in obtaining the financial resources to become self-sufficient. They could not really be part of the New World without such freedom, symbolized by Biswas' desire for a house or his own position in society, and would remain homeless, angry exiles relying on a decaying history.

From the period of their parents and ancestors, they have been displaced and deprived of their land. To ease the pain of being displaced, they founded an Indian community in Trinidad and preserved Hindu culture, values, and rituals. In Trinidad, there is a diaspora, specifically an Indian diaspora. There is a dispersion of Indian immigrants, and they are all striving to develop a home and identity amid the host-difficulties. Furthermore, in honor and remembrance of their ancestral birthplace, India, they are continuing their Hindu cultural practices.

As a consequence of its rich exposure to multiculturalism, diaspora literature has made a major contribution to Indo-English literature. While a sense of relocation is a central state of Diaspora literature, not all experiences it in the same way; it varies depending on time and location. The spirit of exile and isolation inspires diaspora authors to pursue redemption through their works and to secure a lasting position in readers' minds. Naipaul, in particular, is renowned for depicting the destitute man in a bleak wasteland. Individual efforts to resolve 'homelessness' are thereby represented by *A House for Mr. Biswas*. The protagonists, according to the author, are casualties of their surroundings. Their urgency stems from their attempts to get people to accept them so that their human necessity can be justified. Mr. Biswas will move the house on to his relatives as a legacy. Just as Naipaul attempts to salvage his own family history and the history of the Trinidadian Indian community through his writing, the protagonist of his novel makes a final effort to create a new world out of nothingness, thus leaving his mark on history, avoiding annihilation, and achieving fulfillment..

### III. HOME

Since the second half of the twentieth century, the ideas of 'identity' and 'home' have become the focus of serious controversy and lively conversation, with recent discourses on diaspora, postcolonial theory, and cultural studies adding new facets to these main concepts. As it extends outside the interpersonal and physical zone, home has spiritual, symbolic, and psychological significance. The definition of home expands beyond the four walls to include the community, area, country, and country, offering security and reducing environmental risks and hazards, as well as a sense of safety and belonging. In the diasporic nation, home is a complicated and challenging domain to navigate. For both diasporic communities – refugees and exiles – home is an unfixed and insecure location that reflects their homelessness. Home has historically held a key role in our psychological lives. Its relationship to the outer environment is often used to interpret it. Via a constructive sense of connection, the concept of home is revamped. Home functions as an intimate and private realm within the public domain, a place of affiliation, intimation, belonging, and protection that serves as the center for all of our personal and public benefits and losses.

In today's world, according to Papastergiadis, the concept of home is completely dangerous. Traditions and rituals became dispersed, fragmented, and lost as a result of modernization, as well as an increased alienated and individualistic position. The conventional idea of home embodies peace, reflects unchanging and timeless traditions, functions as a source of pleasant memories and dreams, and serves as the supreme satisfaction of our wishes. In contrast, a drifter, transient, or displaced person's current situation is fully deterritorialized and determined for mobilization, fresh translocal relations, and unending rediscovery. Home is not just a place to live; it is woven with mental and psychological thread, and it has symbolic and creative connotations. Only such investments would ensure that a home remains a home. Only through investing emotional and psychological meanings can it be made into a house.

The ideas of home, dislocation, and distribution are being restated and rearranged in the diasporic room, which is inhabited by refugees, expatriates, and exiles. The ideal and correct notion of home in a diaspora, according to R. Radhakrishnan in one of his articles, 'Adjudicating Hybridity, Coordinating Betweenness (2003),' is paradoxical. Through describing the state of a migrant being 'caught up in a constitutive 'between-ness,' diaspora's imaginings of home contain discourses beyond the conceptions of private acceptability and ontological precision, he claims that diaspora changes and bends the meaning of home. The concept and images of home in the diasporic region express absolute and irreversible displacement.

Mr. Mohan Biswas' struggle to own his own house is chronicled in the novel *A House for Mr. Biswas*, which he eventually achieves after sacrificing the security of an extended Indian family in the process. Biswas' life is the tale of an Indian immigrant's dilemma, depicting the exile's need to establish roots and find true selfhood. In the meantime, the novel exposes a community's racial and social roots..

#### IV. PURSUIT FOR HOME

V. S. Naipaul's novel *A House for Mr. Biswas* seems to express the novelist's personal desire and search for an anchorage in his unique Caribbean Post-Colonial legacy's never-ending flux. Naipaul seeks to both renounce a second-hand tradition thrust upon the likes of him by receding colonial forces, as well as recreate for himself an identity, a house to house the cultural uniqueness and identity of the Trinidadian Indian exiled, through the quest for and endeavors of his almost-picaresque hero, Mr. Biswas, to construct a house for himself through rejecting a readymade household. The house metaphor takes on new meaning not only as a material possession that can offer protection and comfort, but also as a representation of success – a feeling of making a mark on history, a way to avoid the vacuum. Naipaul discovers a house and a family, or a literary custom, through his story that his exilic lineage had refused him.

*A House for Mr. Biswas* is the West Indian novel of rootlessness par excellence, as Kenneth Ramchand points out, and part of Naipaul's re-achievement is that these themes act on several levels for different subjects at the same time. Naipaul builds an environment in which his protagonists travel and encounter unease, a feeling of not belonging at home, or, in author language, 'familiar temporariness.' He discovered them haunted by the indenture syndrome of 'unnecessary and unaccommodated' ancestors. In the same way, his protagonists inherit a kind of 'past neuroses' insecurity, madness, anguish, dislocation, defeat, and rootlessness. 'Self-disgust contributed to rage, screams, tears anything to add to the concentrated hubbub of the evening, the nerve broken helplessness,' writes Naipaul in *A House for Mr. Biswas*. Mr. Biswas' state is so pitiful, when he finds himself absolutely submerged in anger and disgust:

Everything he now saw become sullied by his fear, every field, every house, every tree, every turn in the road [ . . . ] so that by merely, looking at the world, he was progressively destroying his present and his past.

The fight between the human will or need for a separate identity and the persuasive will of the milieu, its obscurity of suffocating corporate identity, is the focus of Naipaul's work. The West Indies becomes a cultural desert in a 'home,' where big attempts at imagination and change are unsuccessful. In this setting, socialization entails reducing people to insignificance and stripping them of their autonomy. The home, of course, is the novel's most important metaphor, representing subtly the need for physical and spiritual 'shelter.' Mr. Biswas' 'need for shelter is felt by Hindus and Creole culture

as much as it is by Mr. Biswas himself.' The home, represented in Mr. Biswas' compassionate tones, reflects a quest for freedom from attachment. A 'home' may be a sign of the fatalistic Indian ideology as well as a metaphor for the existentialist path through existence. As a result, Mr. Biswas' persistent struggle to process his own house and escape the grasp of the Tulsi family is seen to parallel man's desire to establish a special way of existence. Apart from dwelling on the dark universe, the book often contains fleeting glimpses of racial and social past, all while keeping a harmony between Mr. Biswas' inner self and the detached outside perspective.

Naipaul's writings and interviews have often focused on his sense of isolation, exile, and separation, as well as the persistent disruption and hollow in his middle. He was born and raised in Trinidad, considering his Indian heritage. He grew up in Trinidad's 'multicultural community,' which included refugees from four continents. He grew up in a Hindu joint household, which had a strict clannish and suffocating environment. In the presence of other aliens, he was an alien.' Later, he moved to England, but he couldn't seem to find a home there. He considers himself to be 'eternally a stranger – an Indian in the West Indies, a West Indian in England, and a nomadic thinker in the nondescript third world,' as defined by men. By critics and academics in the region, Naipaul is seen as a mouthpiece for migration and rootlessness. The motif of 'displacement and exile' runs through much of his works. His preference of themes reflects his current state of mind. The recurrent themes of loneliness and exile, in reality, reflect V.S. Naipaul's nomadic feelings, who, amid his twenty-seven-year stay at Wiltshire Cottage in London, feels isolated and outsider there. Even his prolonged stay and career achievements couldn't convince him to develop an intimate connection with the nation where he was adopted. 'London is my metropolitan hub; it is my commercial center, but I realize it is a kind of italicized limbo, and that I am a refugee in the sense that I am still peripheral,' he states. One's interests are not shared by the local population.'

Because of its history of neglect, crowding, and poverty, a Mr. Biswas House achieves symbolic eminence, making the ownership of a private residence a perfect target for a Trinidadian. The different accommodation options each have their own set of disadvantages. The houses at the chase and Green Vale are intolerable burdens due to the unknowns around their constructions, and the short hills and Port of Spain buildings are depressing due to their gradual decay at the hands of the slavery Tulsi family. These lodging locations serve as a backdrop while also motivating Mr. Biswas to achieve his target. His need to find a home stemmed from his feeling of isolation. House was a great need throughout his life because it symbolized personal identity, solace, self-respect, and freedom, all of which he lacked in his life. Finally, when he bought a house on Sikkim Street, he was able to put an end to his daily struggle. "Despite the fact that the house was highly financed, he was not at the hands of anyone; rather, he was his own owner." For the first time in his life, he felt that he belonged anywhere. It gave him a sense of safety and bolstered his deteriorating friendship with his dad. He 'found himself in his own home, on his own half-lot of property, his own portion of earth' in this area. It was the culmination of his exile and alienation; he was finally at ease and in his home gracefully.

## V. CONCLUSION

Because of its rich exposure to multiculturalism, diasporic literature has rendered a major contribution to Indo-English literature. The spirit of exile and isolation drives diasporic authors to achieve salvation through their works and gain a lasting position in readers' minds. Mr. Biswas' tale is a universal one of a man tormented by communal pressure and confronted by an unstructured world. Furthermore, it depicts Mr. Biswas' and other Indian indentured labour immigrants' traumatic encounters in the modern world away from their homeland, including starvation, isolation, and other

forms of displacement. Any person on the earth, regardless of his social or economic standing, wishes to have some place that he can call his own, his house or home. This drive is more noticeable in people who have been forced from their homes for different causes and for whom deprivation is a regular occurrence. Although in a foreign country, the knowledge of their rootlessness drives them to establish a strong home-space, much like Mr. Biswas did in Port of Spain. Naipaul represents displaced citizens all over the world by him. Much as Naipaul tries to save his own family heritage and the history of the Trinidadian Indian culture through his fiction, the protagonist of his novel makes a final effort to build a modern future out of nothingness, thereby leaving his imprint on history, resisting extinction, and achieving fulfillment.

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