

Diasporic Literary Influence on World Literature

Mohira O'tkir Qizi Yusupova

Second-year MA student of Uzbekistan State University of World Languages

Dilnoza Ramatshanovna Ruzmatova

PhD, Associate Professor, Uzbekistan State University of World Languages

Abstract: The article reflects the most critical facts about Diaspora Literature. It also analyses the central concept of 'Diaspora'. The main concern focuses on Afghan-American literature, its evaluation and its representatives.

Keywords: Diaspora, Greek, emigration, nationality, Jewish, Afghan-American literature.

Introduction: Diaspora is a Greek word derived from the verb *spiro*- to- sow and the preposition *dia*-over. The term was initially used for Greeks who lived outside of Greece for reasons of colonization. But today, it has gained the connotation of the traumatic Jewish experience, mass exodus, and the following aspiration of return. The Jews were the most ancient and known diaspora people who had no country. For a long time, diaspora meant almost exclusively the Jewish people.¹

The terms deal with many connotations like diaspora, emigration, nationality, ethnicity, marginality, hybridity, etc. An expatriate focuses on the native country that has been left behind. The expatriate dwells on the "Ex status of the past, while the immigrant celebrates his presence in the new country. Expatriate sensibility is a widespread phenomenon in this century, and George Steiner describes the expatriate writer as "the uncontemporary everyman". The Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary defines "Diaspora" as the movement of the Jewish people away from their own country to live and work in other countries"²

Diaspora Literature involves an idea of a homeland, a place from where the displacement occurs and narratives of harsh journeys undertaken on account of economic compulsions. Basically, the Diaspora is a minority community living in exile. The Oxford English Dictionary 1989 Edition (second) traces the etymology of the word 'Diaspora' back to its Greek root and to its appearance in the Old Testament as such it references. God's intentions for the people of Israel to be dispersed worldwide. The Oxford English Dictionary commences with Judic History, mentioning only two types of dispersal: The "Jews living dispersed among the gentiles after the captivity" and The Jewish Christians residing outside Palestine.³

A diaspora (/daɪˈæspərə/ *dy-ASP-ər-ə*) is a population that is scattered across regions which are separate from its geographic place of origin. The word is used in reference to people who identify with a specific geographic location but currently reside elsewhere.⁴

¹Braakman, Marije. "Roots and Roots: Question of Home, Belonging and Return in an Afghan Diaspora, M.A Thesis, Aug. 2006.p-139

² Moinzadeh, Teymour. "Afghan Diaspora: Relationship with homeland". (p-17)

³ Dickinson, J. Articulating an Indian diaspora in South Africa: The Consulate General of India, diaspora associations and practices of collaboration. *Geoforum*, 61, 79-89. 2015.

⁴ www.qantara.de.

The term "diaspora" is from the Greek verb διασπείρω (*diaspeirō*), "I scatter", "I spread about", which in turn is composed of Δίας (Dias=Zeus), and σπορά (sporá) f sowing of the seed (like Zeus Georgos seminated his sons and daughters all around the world.) The term became more widely assimilated into English by the mid-1950s, with long-term expatriates in significant numbers from other particular countries or regions also being referred to as a diaspora. An academic field, diaspora studies, has become established relating to this sense of the word.⁵

The term was initially used for Greeks who lived outside of Greece for reasons of colonization. But today, it has gained the connotation of the traumatic Jewish experience, mass exodus, and the following aspiration of return. The Jews were the most ancient and known diasporic people who had no country. For a long time, diaspora meant almost exclusively the Jewish people.

Diaspora may also be defined as the migration of population or a section of it, along with their ways of life to the place of destination or the receiving nation. They generally maintain their ways of living and cultural patterns, and get integrated into the host country. Studying the literature of diaspora means to pay attention to how the old country, land or nation still has some claim or hold on those who have migrated to another place. Due to the continuous foreign invasions and internal clashes between different warlords has made the land of Afghanistan as a hotbed of wars between world powers or colonizers.⁶

Methods: Studying the literature of diaspora, we can see the huge of information related to the Afghan–American literature, so we sorted these facts are required to follow certain rules, criteria and principles when researching these kinds of information. The methods used for researching are divided into two basic categories:

- Gathering information about Diasporas Literature.
- Analyzing the facts related to the Literature of Diasporas
- The collection of information about Diaspora literature includes inscriptions, documents, manuals, dictionaries, books, monographs, and websites, which are used afterwards for mapping purposes.

We used comparative method and historical, socio-linguistic methods while we researching these facts.

Results. The diaspora community has also made a substantial contribution to economic reconstruction. Other than international aid, diaspora channels have been an important source of investments and capital. The Afghan diaspora has made numerous business investments in sectors such as telecommunications, banking, civil aviation, and real estate. The best example is in the mobile communication sector, where diaspora members own or govern the three leading companies—Ehsan Bayat, Amirzai Sangin, and Karim Khoja. Ehsan Bayat runs Afghan Wireless Communication. Similarly, Sangin and Khoja are heads of Afghan Telecom and Roshan (telco) (Oeppen, 2010).⁷ The contribution of the diaspora in economic and social welfare sectors also highlights their participation.

However, the political narrative of the involvement of Afghan diaspora is not complete without consideration of the political implications. In terms of power structure, highly educated diaspora members have risen as a new power group. It is estimated that around 80% of the present Afghan government Ministers and officials are members of different diaspora groups. The political elites inside the country view the occupation of important positions by diaspora as a challenge to their own authority.⁸

⁵ www.qantara.de.

⁶ Kazem, Abdullah. "The role Of Afghan Diaspora for the future of Afghanistan.(p-1)

⁷ Kouser, Fatima. "Afghan Diaspora and Post conflict state building in Afghanistan. Aug 21, 2014.

Pirkkalainen et.al *The Diaspora- Conflict-Peace-Nexus: A Literature Review*, Diaspeace Working Paper, Diaspeace. 2009.

Diaspora participation has failed to produce significant positive impacts, due to the individualistic attitude of the diaspora leaders. It is important to note that it is the nature of constitution that has allowed the pursuit of individualistic agendas by these individuals. The presence of leaders who are often driven by personal agendas of business interests and profit from short-term projects, at the cost of larger or broader community concern, is an expected feature of most political systems. However, in the case of Afghanistan, the constitution encouraged an over-centralized government run from Kabul, depriving the country's provincial and district-level governments from receiving aid and development packages. This led to an increased sense of resentment amongst them regarding central government. The constitution also facilitated corruption: whilst the international community's attention shifted to the central government at large, a small number of elite members of the Afghan central government machinery became ever richer, leaving very little for their constituents, government departments, and other areas of the country.⁹

The dispersal (initially) signifies the location of a fluid human autonomous space involving a complex set of negotiations and exchange between the nostalgia and desire for the Homeland and the making of a new home, adapting to the power, relationships between the minority and majority, being spokes persons for minority rights and their people back home and significantly transacting the Contact Zone - a space changed with the possibility of multiple challenges.¹⁰

- People migrating to another country in exile home
- Living peacefully immaterially but losing home.
- Birth of Diaspora Literature

However, the 1993 Edition of Shorter Oxford's definition of Diaspora can be found. While still insisting on capitalization of the first letter, 'Diaspora' now also refers to 'anybody of people living outside their traditional homeland. In the tradition of indo-Christian the fall of Satan from the heaven and humankind's separation from the Garden of Eden, metaphorically the separation from God constitute diaspora situations. Etymologically, 'Diaspora' with its connotative political weight is drawn from Greek meaning to disperse and signifies a voluntary or forcible movement of the people from the homeland into new regions." Under Colonialism, 'Diaspora' is a multifarious movement which involves: The temporary or permanent movement of Europeans all over the world, leading to Colonial settlement. Consequently, consequently the ensuing economic exploitation of the settled areas necessitated large amount of labor that could not be fulfilled by local populace.

This leads to: The Diaspora resulting from the enslavement of Africans and their relocation to places like the British colonies.¹¹ After slavery was outlawed the continued demand for workers created indentured labor. This produces:

Large bodies of the people from poor areas of India, China and other to the West Indies, Malaya Fiji. Eastern and Southern Africa, etc. William Sarfan points out that the term Diaspora can be applied to expatriate minority communities whose members share some of the common characteristics given hereunder:

1. They or their ancestor have been dispersed from a special original 'centre' or two or more 'peripheral' of foreign regions;
2. They retain a collective memory, vision or myth about their original homeland-its physical location, history and achievements;

⁹ UNDP United Nation Development Programme, "Transfer of Knowledge Through Expatriate Nationals in Afghanistan", URL: <http://www.afghans4tomorrow.com/pdf/TOKTENBrochure.pdf>. 2005.

¹⁰ Farred, G. *Midfielder's Moment: coloured literature and culture in contemporary South Africa*. Routledge. 2019

¹¹ Farred, G. *Midfielder's Moment: coloured literature and culture in contemporary South Africa*. Routledge. 2019.

3. They believe they are not- and perhaps cannot be- fully accepted by their lost society and therefore feel partly alienated and insulted from it;
4. They regard their ancestral homeland as their, true, ideal home and as the place to which they or their descendants would (or should) eventually return- when conditions are appropriate;
5. They believe they should collectively, be committed to the maintenance or restoration of their homeland and its safety and prosperity; and
6. They continue to relate, personally and vicariously, to that homeland in one way or another, and the existence of such a relationship importantly defines their ethno-communal consciousness and solidarity.¹²

Discussion: Diaspora writings are, to some extent, about the business of finding new Angles to enter reality; the distance, geography and culture enable new structures of feeling. The hybridity is subversive. It resists cultural authoritarianism and challenges official truths."¹³ One of the most relevant aspects of diaspora writing is that it forces, interrogates and challenges the authoritative voices of time. The Shadow Line of Amitav Ghosh had the impulse when the Indian States were complicit in the programmes after Indira Gandhi's assassination. The author elaborates the truth in the book when he says:¹⁴

The diasporan authors engage in cultural transmission that is equitably exchanged by translating a map of reality for multiple readerships. Besides, they are equipped with bundles of memories and articulate an amalgam of global and national strands that embody real and imagined experiences. Suketu Mehta is an advocate of the idea that the home is not a consumable entity. He says: You cannot go home by eating certain foods, or by replaying its films on your TV screens. At some point, you have to live there again."¹⁵

Diaspora is an old phenomenon, signifying dispersed people outside their homeland, who sustain their ties with homeland. In other words we can say Diaspora is an ancient social formation, comprising people living out of their ancestral homeland, retaining their loyalties towards their co-ethnics and their homeland from which they were forced off. We cannot speak only of the old diasporas like Jewish and African. But in the recent years there are diverse diasporic communities coming throughout the world mostly from China, Ukrainians, India, Mexican, Bangladesh, Russian, Srilanka, Turks and now Afghanistan. Diaspora is a Greek word, derived from the verb speiro- to- sow and the preposition dia-over.¹⁶

People who migrated to other parts of the world either forcibly or voluntarily from Afghanistan are known as Afghan Diasporas. Afghanistan has experienced one of the largest migration flows of any country in the world over the last three decades. These flows have been multifaceted but have been primarily driven by conflict and insecurity and the vast underdeveloped of the country, through the periods of war and now in a time of reconstruction, migration continues to be a key livelihood strategy of Afghan families. Afghanistan is one of the poorest countries in the world and has been challenged by decades of war, civil strife and poverty. Afghans who are living outside of their country of origin faced many obstacles to assimilating into a new land and felt the trauma of losing everything they had in their homeland. Despite many difficulties the Afghan people faced outside their homeland, they tried to assimilate into the culture of their adopted land. Still, they maintained their identity and were proud of being Afghan. It is just like the Afghan culture injected into their blood; their love for their country can continue no matter what cruelties and injustices are taking place in Afghanistan. Afghan people realized their identity while dealing with non-Afghans.¹⁷

¹² Dickinson, J. Articulating an Indian diaspora in South Africa: The Consulate General of India, diaspora associations and practices of collaboration. *Geoforum*, 61, 79-89. 2015.

¹³ Ahmad Aizaz, In Theory: Classes, Nations, Literatures; OUP, 1992,p.126

¹⁴ Ghosh, A. The diaspora in Indian culture. *Public Culture*, 2(1), 1989,73-78

¹⁵ www.ijellh.com

¹⁶ www.ijellh.com

¹⁷ www.ijellh.com

“Identity and connections between people and place can neither be seen as primordial and unchanging, nor as infinitely flexible. Claims of roots play an important role among Afghans in diaspora,”¹⁸

Afghans living as immigrants has faced much turmoil as they try to settle down in an alien land. Since the Soviet invasion from 1979, Afghan refugees escaping the horrors of war have migrated to many countries in search of safety and economic opportunities. Afghans, living as expatriates, they have collective commitment to return and rehabilitate their country of origin which had been made a land of hell by foreign troops and armed militias. Nevertheless, the Afghan diaspora is living a better and more luxurious life as outsiders, in spite of all that, they want to come back to preserve their heritage, which they had lost. Afghan diaspora could play a vital role in rebuilding if they are welcomed without any past prejudice.¹⁹

Afghan American literature is surprisingly unlike the majority of Asian American literature. Even Iranian American literature (Iran and Afghanistan share a language, Persian), which bestselling female authors spearhead; its literary renaissance has featured mainly male authors. However, there is a growing movement of women authors who left Afghanistan as children whose narrative styles are fragmented and intermingled with Afghan folktales. Fitting within the rubric of American multicultural literature, these narratives are about growing up in America. These women writers are Wajma Ahmady, Sahar Muradi, Khaleda Maqsudi, and Zohra Saed. Many are also filmmakers and video artists such as Lida Abdul and Sedika Mojadidi. This generation of writers has developed a new kind of narrative structure, poetic nonfiction at the cusp of memoir, fiction, and folktales. Their works can be found in recent anthologies about Muslim American or Asian American women writers.²⁰

Afghan American literature is at its nascent phase. With the catapult of master storyteller Khaled Hosseini, the publishing world has taken notice of this new face in the larger American tapestry. The maturation of the second generation of Afghan Americans and the new relationship between Afghanistan and the United States promise a new literary genre within American literature.²¹

Diasporas are involved in state building, economic reconstruction, rehabilitation and private sector for the development of Afghanistan. Major rebuilding and renovation is happening in Afghanistan, because of Afghan diasporas. A bulk of the active members, who are involved in rebuilding process and transfer of knowledge are among diasporas, like majority of the Afghan cabinet members including senior government officials, prominent civil servants are members of diaspora. Hamid Karzai himself had spent significant time in Pakistan and the U.S. Members of diaspora received position in the interim government established from the Bonn Agreement. In addition, the current presidential candidate, Dr. Ahsraf Ghani Ahmadi should also be seen as one of the most influential of the returned diasporas's. Hosseini through his works seems to be well aware of his journey back home. He seems to seek satisfaction in a more humanistic way through his activism and social responsibility.²²

This is the reason why he has molded his characters who wish to come back in his novels and to become the part of reconstruction of Afghanistan with a sense of responsibility and rehabilitation. Being away from homeland from many decades of war, he feels a sense of guilt. Now he wants to reconnect and be part of the reconstruction of Afghanistan through his novels.

“Afghan-Americans contribute back to the „homeland “on a macro level partly because of feelings of guilt.” The Afghan diaspora has also played an important role in different fields. The most influential role of the diaspora played was in health and education. Different influential

¹⁸ Kouser, Fatima. “Afghan Diaspora and Post conflict state building in Afghanistan. Aug 21, 2014.

¹⁹ Braakman, Marije. “Roots and Roots: Question of Home, Belonging and Return in an Afghan Diaspora, M.A Thesis, Aug. 2006.p-139

²⁰ Husain, Sarah, ed. *Voices of Resistance: Muslim Women on War, Faith and Sexuality*. Emeryville, CA: Seal Press, 2006.

²¹ Nazemi, Latif. “A Look at Persian Literature in Afghanistan.” (Online 2007) *Art & Thought* section in www.qantara.de.

²² Kazem, Abdullah. “The role Of Afghan Diaspora for the future of Afghanistan p-1

personalities are working as volunteers in diverse agencies and are active in reconstruction process.²³ For e.g. „Token“ is a special volunteer program that calls on expatriate nationals to volunteer in their country of origin for a short period of time. The program allowed the Afghan diaspora to participate in the exercise of knowledge transfer and skill development on tenure basis.

The experiences of refugees have been explored by a number of notable Afghan diaspora writers. Who have introduced the figure of the Afghan refugees across the globe. Afghan diaspora literature reflects on the horrors of war, the pains of migration and conditions abroad. The well-known writers among the Afghan diaspora are Tamin Ansary, Khaled Hosseini, Assef Soltanzeda, Nushin Arababzada, Zohra Saed, Shah Mahmoud Hanifi, Mahmud Tarzi, Mir Hekmatullah sadat, Shahiq Shamel, Azar Nafisi, Atiq Rehmani, Homaira Qaderi, Sahar Muradi, Yelda Asmatey, Wajma Ahmady etc. these all writers explore in their writings the typical elements such as isolation, alienation, nostalgia, marginalization, identity crisis, futility of war, violence, economic crisis, ethnic discrimination etc.²⁴

Conclusion: The participation of Afghan diaspora has played a financial and social dominant role in the reconstruction of their homeland. Diasporas is an integral part of the solution to Afghanistan’s current crisis. The new generation of young diaspora who are well educated and highly skilled and have returned to their country of birthplace both temporarily and permanently are assisting many projects that will directly help the Afghan people stand on their broken legs.

In contemporary times, scholars have classified the different kinds of diasporas based on their causes, such as colonialism, trade/labour migrations, or the social coherence within the diaspora communities and their ties to ancestral lands. Some diaspora communities maintain strong cultural and political ties to their homelands. Other qualities that may be typical of many diasporas are thoughts of returning to the ancestral lands, maintaining any form of ties with the region of origin as well as relationships with other communities in the diaspora, and lack of full integration into the new host countries. Diasporas often maintain ties to the country of their historical affiliation and usually influence their current host country's policies towards their homeland.

REFERENCES

1. Braakman, Marije. “Roots and Roots: Question of Home, Belonging and Return in an Afghan Diaspora, M.A Thesis, Aug. 2006.p-139
2. Moinzadeh, Teymour. “Afghan Diaspora: Relationship with homeland”. (p-17)
3. Dickinson, J. Articulating an Indian diaspora in South Africa: The Consulate General of India, diaspora associations and practices of collaboration. *Geoforum*, 61, 79-89. 2015.
4. Kazem, Abdullah. “The role Of Afghan Diaspora for the future of Afghanistan. p-1
5. Pirkkalainen et.al *The Diaspora- Conflict-Peace-Nexus: A Literature Review*, Diaspeace Working Paper, Diaspeace. 2009.
6. Farred, G. *Midfielder's Moment: coloured literature and culture in contemporary South Africa*. Routledge. 2019.
7. Dickinson, J. Articulating an Indian diaspora in South Africa: The Consulate General of India, diaspora associations and practices of collaboration. *Geoforum*, 61, 79-89. 2015.
8. Ahmad Aizaz, In Theory: Classes, Nations, Literatures; OUP, 1992,p.126
9. Ghosh, A. The diaspora in Indian culture. *Public Culture*, 2(1), 1989,73-78

²³ Moinzadeh, Teymour. “Afghan Diaspora: Relationship with homeland”. p-17

²⁴ Tamang, Ritendra. “Afghan Forced Migration: Reaffirmation, Redefinition, and the Politics of Aid.” Vol.5, No.1. January, 2009. p-10

10. Kouser, Fatima. "Afghan Diaspora and Post conflict state building in Afghanistan. Aug 21, 2014.
11. Husain, Sarah, ed. *Voices of Resistance: Muslim Women on War, Faith and Sexuality*. Emeryville, CA: Seal Press, 2006.
12. Kazem, Abdullah. "The role Of Afghan Diaspora for the future of Afghanistan p-1
13. UNDP United Nation Development Programme, "Transfer of Knowledge Through Expatriate Nationals in Afghanistan", ULR:

Internet resources

14. <http://www.afghans4tomorrow.com/pdf/TOKTENBrochure.pdf>). 2005
15. www.ijellh.com.