

## The world citizens

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### Abstract

The migrations are common around the world, but these migrations pave way to create a cosmopolitan society. “Transnationalism to Cosmopolitanism: A Journey of the World Citizens” concentrates on the various works of immigrant writers, who believe in the growth of the world citizens; and also gives the reasons for the multiple migrations and analyse the growth of transnationalism and cosmopolitan world.

**Keywords:** diaspora, transnationalism, cosmopolitanism, post colonialism and multiculturalism

### Introduction

As the river flowing east and west  
 Merge in the sea and become one with it,  
 Forgetting they were never ever separate rivers,  
 So do all creatures lose their separateness  
 When they merge at last into pure being.  
 (Violatti1-3)

Why not can one assimilate two worlds? What is wrong in accustoming a ‘new’ home? Who can stick to one corner, if an opportunity welcomes from another corner? When can one see the ‘world citizenship’? Where can one stay permanently? How can a ‘single world’ be even made? Today, these are the common questions can one hear from this cosmopolitan world. The hybrid population celebrates a cosmopolitan life crossing the boundaries of their culture, community and country. This paves a way for the cultural fusion and introduces the concept of “East meets West, there can be world citizens” (Neera 140). The competitive world demands a cosmopolitan life that makes one think ‘Home’ is no more a permanent ‘Home.’ It also makes one explore the world by gaining experience, knowledge, different cultures and languages and be a ‘world citizen.’

It would be pertinent to remark right away that diaspora is no longer an expression that surprises or startles; its reasons may be more than one. The first is that diasporic movements and migrancy beyond national borders is now something given and usual; second, the multiple locations that characterize the collective mobilization around the tension between home(s) and abroad(s) are now more or less defined around challenges to a notion of settlement and fixity. Third, this questioning of singular location becomes a foil for various conceptualization such as diasporic consciousness, multivocality, and deterritorialization. (Singh 51)

Manjit Singh points out that the diaspora or migration has become a transnational process, in which people have a multiple belonging around the world. Many other critics have argued about this multiple migration as the hybridity fermentation with “cultural creativity” (Singh 51). In another way, it can be seen as a step towards a cosmopolitan life beyond home, identity, culture and location. In *Cartographies of Diaspora: Contesting Identities* (1997), Avtar Brah narrates that the different diaspora

societies are formed from the “‘confluence of narratives’ of different journeys from the ‘old country’ to the new which create the sense of a shared history...all diasporas are differentiated, heterogeneous, contested spaces, even as they are implicated in the construction of a common ‘we’” (184). The diaspora societies may differ, but the life in a host society mingles all the people as Brah adds, “Difference of gender, race, class, religion and language (as well as generational difference) make diaspora spaces dynamic and shifting open to repeated construction and reconstruction” (207) which eventually construct a common ground for the world citizens.

The diasporic life of immigrants creates a common relationship between the immigrants and the host society. The process of generational transition and assimilation can make the immigrants feel at home in a foreign community. But when people migrate to a particular place, they do not stay bound within that society. They again start moving out of the place which paves the way for double migration or more. The series of migration results in the bloom of the cosmopolitan societies by increasing the globalization, hybridity and transnationalism. These multiple migrations have produced many immigrant writers who share and explore the problems and possibilities of a transnational life.

In *Beginning Postcolonialism* (2000), John McLeod points out V.S. Naipaul’s multiple migrations, “Now living in Britain, Naipaul grew up on the Caribbean island of Trinidad and came from a family descended from Indian migrants to the Caribbean” (208). V.S. Naipaul explores the transnationalism by writing his own experiences. For instance, in his memoir *Finding the Centre: Two Narratives* (1984), Naipaul writes about his family who has done the works of indentured labours in Trinidad and his routes of migration. He tries to find the reasons behind his transnational life which point out the sense of loss, alienation, location, relocation and assimilation. Similarly, Salman Rushdie writes:

It may be that writers in my position, exiles or emigrants or expatriates, are haunted by some sense of loss, some urge to reclaim, to look back, even at the risk of being mutilated into pillars of salt. But if we do look back, we must do in the knowledge - which gives rise to profound uncertainties - that our physical alienation from India almost inevitably means

that we will not be capable of reclaiming precisely the thing that was lost, that we will, in short, create fictions, not actual cities or villages, but invisible ones, imaginary homelands, Indias of the mind. (10)

Rushdie's words mirror the immigrant's isolation and alienation which make them look back at their homeland in a form of writing that has given birth to Immigrant Literature. This concept of writing showcases the migration history, settlement, displacement, alienation, acculturation, relocation and assimilation in their 'New Unaccustomed World.' The sense of loss slowly gets faded as the multiple migration and accustomedness route to root the cosmopolitan ideologies.

In *Imaginary Homelands* (1991), Rushdie writes about his childhood days in Bombay which he can remember partially like "broken mirrors, some of whose fragments have been irretrievably lost" (11). This partial memory makes the immigrants to see their home as the "fragments and fissures, full of gaps and breaches" (McLeod 211). The migration process secures a fair portion in cosmopolitan life, because migrants move from one country to another, set up the new home, mingle with the new culture and get accustomed to the host society. It makes migrants go through the hybridity and also makes them create their multiple new homes around the world.

Hanif Kureishi's "The Rainbow Sign" vividly narrates the 'in-between' space that immigrants keep pondering in the migration process. Kureishi thinks of his father who poses as a young boy in his uncle's house which is located in Pakistan. But he can never think of Pakistan as his home, but generational bond makes him write, "A house full of stories, of Bombay, Delhi, China; of feuds, wrestling matches, adulteries, window broken with hands, card games, impossible loves and magic spells. Stories to help me see my place in the world and give me the sense of the past which could go into making a life in the present and the future" (35). The migration from one's 'home' sets a base for further migrations to create new homes in a foreign land. In *The Black Atlantic* (1993), Paul Gilroy does not have strong roots to fix himself in a country, which McLeod points out, "he must continually plot for himself itinerant cultural routes which take him, imaginatively as well as physically to many places and into contact with many different people. This forges a relationship between past, present and future, but does not presume an even, continuous passage through time. The grounded certainties of roots are replaced with the transnational contingencies of routes" (215). Thus, the past always stands as a backbone of the present and the future migrations that route to the cosmopolitan world.

Braziel and Mannur give an interesting perspective of the diaspora/migration and transnationalism in *Theorizing Diaspora: A Reader* (2003). In their opinion,

Diaspora refers specifically to the movement – forced or voluntary – of people from one or more nation-states to another. Transnationalism speaks to larger, more impersonal forces – specifically those of globalization and global capitalism. Where diaspora addresses the migrations and displacements of subjects, transnationalism also includes the information through cybernetics as well as the traffic in goods, products and capital across geopolitical terrains through multinational corporations. While diaspora may be regarded as concomitant with transnationalism, or even in some cases consequent of transnationalism forces, it may not be reduced to such macroeconomic and technical flows. It

remains, above all, a human phenomenon – lived and experienced. (8)

The technology and international market also play a vital role in multiple migrations, but a scrutinized analysis can clear that the migrants are who choose to migrate and live in a foreign society. They route themselves to the cosmopolitan life as the transnational world makes to get accustomed for new cultures and multiple migrations. In the book *Culture and Imperialism* (1994), Edward W. Said writes, "No one today is purely one thing" (98). He also criticizes the twentieth century as, "one of the unhappiest characteristics of the age to have produced more refugees, migrants, displaced persons and exiles than ever before in history" (332). But he optimistically ends the book by suggesting that multicultural world may enable people to live without nationality, religion, class, race and ethnicity. Similarly, Caryl Phillips' *New World Order* (2001), comments on the twenty-first century as "These days we are all unmoored. Our identities are fluid. Belonging is a contested state. Home is a place riddled with vexing questions" (5). The transnational life of people makes Phillips see people as refugees who never "feel fully at home" (Phillips 5) and he also thinks, "As the laborious certainties of the old order continue to fade, and the volume of the global conversation increases, ambiguity embraces us" (Phillips 6). Said and Phillips suggest the transformation of the world as people turn to be cosmopolitans and multiple migrations make people lack home roots. But people can be optimistic like Said who suggests the world as people's common ground without limits and differences.

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