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## CONCEPTUALISING HOME IN THE COVID 19 SCENARIO : AN ANALYSIS OF INDIAN DIASPORA

Dr. Jibhi Bhattacharya

### ABSTRACT

Home, for diasporic communities is a matter of identity and belongingness. The nomenclature 'diaspora' is associated with any type of human mobility that results in settlement in different region. Human mobility is not a new phenomenon. People have moved from one place to another for various reasons from time immemorial. The diaspora encompasses different generation of immigrants who immigrated under various and different circumstances. They differ in age, education and social status. Some became members of diaspora out of their choice while others out of compulsion. The first generation immigrants have a strong affinity for his/her roots. It remains as the focal point of their existence. The second generation diaspora however distances themselves from Home. For them, the homeland of their ancestors remains as a mystery that casts shadow on their psyche. They have visualized this home through their parents' perspective. The perception of changing idea of home is also a resultant of Postmodernism and globalization. However the recent pandemic has redefined the idea of home.. The concept that was abstract till then suddenly became a concrete image. This paper is an attempt to look at the trajectory of the evolution of the concept of home for a displaced Indian and how it concertizes suddenly in the form of nation in the context of the fear and isolation created by the pandemic.

**Keywords :** COVID19, home-homeland, Diaspora, Postmodernism, globalization.

#### Homeland and Home

According to Merriam Webster's dictionary, homeland refers to "a state or area set aside to be a state for a people of a particular national, cultural, or racial origin." The idea of homeland gains its significance in two contexts; war and displacement. In the situation of wars, boundaries become so prominent that the concept of homeland assumes geographical dimension, a space which needs to be protected from the other by ardent measures. Thus, the idea of homeland becomes the central discourse for the Defense; the Army, the Navy and the Air force of any nation. Similar is the case with cross border terrorism that upholds any specific fundamental ideology, be it religion or race. In the case of displacement, either exile or migration, homeland represents the land that is left behind. Human mobility is

not a new phenomenon. People have moved from one place to another for various reasons from time immemorial. In the biblical terms, the exodus of the Israelites from slavery in Egypt in the 13th century BC to the Promised Land signifies the expectations and dreams associated with it. The Promised Land assumes the position of the homeland that assumes security and belongingness. This security and hope of the Promised Land are carried over in the modern discourse in a new dimension where the roots of an individual are determined by the modern concept of nation and geographical boundaries that found new meaning in colonization.

The concept of home however is more complex and multidimensional in the sense that it varies from individual to individual with various