

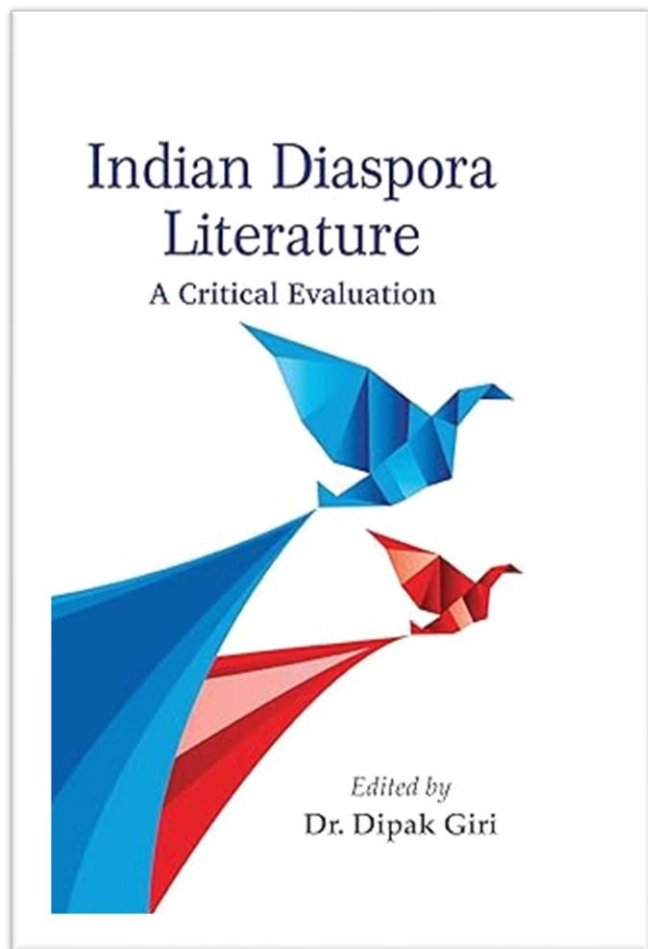
**Dipak Giri's *Indian Diaspora Literature: A Critical Evaluation*, Published by Malik & Sons Publishers & Distributors, Delhi, ISBN 978-9392459504, Price- 700/-, 2024, Pages: 220.**

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*Indian Diaspora Literature: A Critical Evaluation* published in 2024 is in continuation of the series of books published by its editor Dipak Giri who has made remarkable efforts in gathering and publishing scholarly research on Indian English Literature on diverse themes like subaltern studies, gender studies, queer sexualities, Tribal culture, Dalit literature etc. His latest book is in line with his efforts to document Indian English Literature and attempts to present a comprehensive analysis of Indian Diasporic literature. The scholarly articles in the book attempt to analyze almost all genres of diasporic literature from poetry, drama, novels, short stories, folklore, film/media and testimonial

literature. In addition to covering almost all the genres, the book offers interesting presentation of diasporic themes ranging from voluntary migrations, forcibly displaced partition diaspora, Girit diaspora and second-generation diasporic dilemmas.

As the editor states in the introduction of his book, it covers works of prominent contemporary writers like Jhumpa Lahiri, Githa Hariharan, Anita Desai, Kiran Desai, Amitav Ghosh, V S Naipaul, Uma Parameswaran, Rohinton Mistry and Shauna Singh Baldwin. A total number is twenty articles that analyze range of issues and concerns like alienation, displacement,



resistance, assimilation, hybrid identities, trans-cultural identities and the struggle between tradition and modernity. The articles document Indian Diasporic experiences from colonial India to Independent India. In addition, various historical, social, and economic factors that have prompted migrations for the past two centuries and the struggles of these diasporic communities are vigorously analyzed through various scholarly articles

The pre-independent India's diasporic migration of Girmitya Indentured labourers from central India are the highlight of this book. The genre of autobiography is analyzed to understand the firsthand account of the Girmitya experience as well as the genre of folklore exposes the pain and suffering such migrations unleashed on the local population. The Folklore analysis reveals the plight of women in villages of UP and Bihar who were separated from their men in promise of urban employment. It explores various themes of longing, betrayal, and suspicion towards city life from the authentic experience of rural female populace. Further, analytical reading of Totaram Sanadhya's autobiographical work *My Twenty-One Years in the Fiji Islands* examines various factors like poverty, emancipation and traps set by contractors as main reasons prompting migration of indentured laborers. It exposes the grim reality of corruption, suffering, exploitation and social ostracization faced by these laborers. Hence, offering a comprehensive coverage of diasporic struggles of the rural population.

The diasporic migrations are often inspired by an ambition seeking improved economic and social life. However, the journey is filled with unimaginable struggles and dilemmas in contrast to the imagination. The 'Greener Grass Syndrome' where the immigrants undertake the journey in search of better lifestyle and economic prosperity is explored as the characters embark on diasporic journeys exposing many ugly issues raise their head debunking the myth of better life in west.

Another noteworthy theme extensively covered in this book is multiculturalism. The articles shed light on various perspectives in multiculturalism. Character's dilemma over assimilation and ownership of cultural identity, cultural shaming, complexities of inter-cultural exchange, and reconnecting with their cultural roots are brought to the fore. The diasporic struggles and how the metamorphosis of linguistic and cultural habits leads to formation of new diasporic cultures. These hybrid cultures are based on mutual respect of unique indigenous traditions of each culture.

The articles also delve into the themes of food studies. It examines various perspectives where food transforms into a tool for exploitation as well as resistance in various diasporic contexts.

The central India's rural energy boosting drink 'sattu' becomes a symbol of exploitation as Girmitya laborers are fed sattu to extract maximum labor from them whereas the contemporary diasporic experience documents food as a symbol of resistance, assimilation and marginalization.

Analysis of humanistic concerns and economic marginalization in the works of Rohinton Mistry, offers reflection on the social dynamics of race, caste, class, religion and culture on diasporic communities. An analysis of *Such a Long Journey* examines the doubly displaced Parsi diaspora and their continuous struggle to assimilate culturally and economically at personal and national levels. The theme of transcultural identity is explored in Jhumpa Lahiri's *Namesake*. It uncovers the challenges the characters face as they strive to maintain their cultural identity in a foreign nation and shows how it causes friction between cultural and diasporic identities. The book also examines the diasporic experience of Indian women as they adapt their traditional beliefs to fit in the foreign lands. The emotional and social struggles from feminine perspective shed further light on the unique diasporic experience and its adaptation and resistance at domestic level.

Thus, this book offers an exhaustive coverage of diasporic themes spanning the last two centuries documenting multiple perspectives (urban/rural), eras and themes of diasporic studies through well researched articles. A reading of it would give a comprehensive understanding of Indian diasporic literature and its major themes to students and researchers alike. It spans 220 pages and is published by Malik and Sons Publishers and Distributors and is available on Amazon.

**Reference:**

Giri, Dipak, editor. *Indian Diaspora Literature: A Critical Evaluation*. Malik & Sons Publishers & Distributors, 2024.