

## UPROOTEDNESS AND ALIENATION OF V.S. NAIPAUL'S *A HOUSE FOR MR. BISWAS*

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### ABSTRACT

The novel *A House for Mr. Biswas* is written by Trinidadian born British Writer Sir Vidiadhar Surajprasad Naipaul and it was published in 1961. Trinidad and Tobago's post-colonial environment provides the backdrop for the novel's focus on identity, relocation, uprooting and aloofness. Being of East Indian descent, the story's protagonist Mr. Biswas faces cultural displacement in Trinidad, an ethnically diverse post-colonial country. He experiences as an outsider in his own family and culture are the cause of his coldness and sense of estrangement. Besides the titular character Biswas feels alienated because of uprootedness. He faces lot of challenges to define who he was. His life is marked by constant moves to achieve his dream by owning a house.

**KEYWORDS:** Identity, relocation, uprooting, aloofness, post-colonial, and alienated

### FULL PAPER

Vidiadhar Surajprasad Naipaul was born in Chaguanas on August 17, 1932 in Trinidad. He had left India in the 1880s to work on sugar plantations as an indentured servant. He spent the majority of his career producing a book every year or two. His fourth novel, "*A House for Mr. Biswas*," which is joyful and profoundly autobiographical, was his breakthrough (1961). The novel, which is set in Trinidad, tells the story of a middle-aged journalist's attempts to break free from his dependence on his wife's wealthy and controlling family and claim his own niche in the world. From a diasporic perspective, *A House for Mr. Biswas* is frequently referred to be a novel. Indians were brought from their own countries to others during the early days of colonisation to work as labourers. They moved to those nations, yet the thought of their native land never completely left them.

*A House for Mr. Biswas* is regarded as V.S. Naipaul's masterpiece. The protagonist of the novel is Mr. Biswas. The author of the novel describes Mr. Biswas's difficulties in obtaining his own home. The life of his father serves as the basis for the book. It chronicles the East Asian immigrants' attempts in Trinidad to integrate with society. Mr. Biswas' life narrative exemplifies a self-respecting person's rebellion against exploitation. His life's objective is to possess his own home. Exile, dispossession, and many disillusionments follow from it. He makes troubled attempts before finally buying a property and yet he still feels uneasy in his own home. Becoming the owner of a private residence is the ideal aspiration for a Trinidadian due to the city's crowded conditions and lack of security. The numerous locations where Mr. Biswas meets people all have their shortcomings. He wants to construct a residence that will be removed from the turmoil of the crowd. The Hanuman House treats people in a harsh and dictatorial manner. Because of the unreliable environment in which they were built, the homes of Chase and Greenvale are intolerable burdens. Buildings in Port of Spain and Short Hills are depressing because of the way the Tulsi family's exploitation has caused them to deteriorate.

*A House for Mr. Biswas* articulates colonial displacement in terms of a situation of marginalisation and subalternity, which is a significant component of the novel. Naipaul is not a writer sympathetic to the subalternist cause by philosophy or temperament, which indicates that the colonial oppressed must resist their oppressors by creating around a common cause. While he moves from one source of income to another and tries to find some stability and meaning in his work, Biswas's life continues to be really disturbing and unsettled. Although not all instances of displacement in the novel are equally subalternizing for Biswas, both his recent and localised uprooting and his ancestral expulsion from India represent dispossession without the glory.

Mr. Biswas was born with bad luck. His bad fortune follows him from birth and even causes his father's demise. He does not let this dissuade him, though. He resembles the biblical figure of Job in many ways, for whom everything that might go wrong does. Despite being in a largely unhappy marriage to a woman called Shama whom he had never met before, he eventually finds happiness in the successes of his two eldest children. His lifelong ambition is to possess his own home, which is uncommon on Trinidad, a small, predominately underdeveloped island.

Mohan Biswas is continually both excluded from and included in new situations. Due to the indentured status of his

parents, he has inherited displacement from his nation of origin. To discover his identity and establish a permanent home on earth, he must run from pillar to pillar. He then travels to Port of Spain to live as Mrs. Tulsi's renter there with his family. In Tulsi Estate in Short Hills, he constructs a home. Yet when the house is destroyed in a fire, he feels dislocated once more. He once again makes his way into Mrs. Tulsi's home in Port of Spain. Again, he had move out of the rooms he was occupying to make way for Owad in the other room.

The novel's characters are firmly embedded in Indian society. They attempt to preserve their own Indian identity while residing in a foreign country. The culture of Trinidad has an influence on some of them. The clearest illustration of this is Mrs. Tulsi House, where some people preferred servitude and others adopted dictatorship. Several of the characters were opposed to slavery and desired to build their own independent society. As a person of Indian descent, Mr. Biswas wished to create his own sense of Indian identity and did not enjoy losing it.

Mr. Naipaul himself has lost his sense of self as an Indian and was unable to acquire Trinidadian when residing in the West Indies or English while residing in London. He was unable to get a new identity after losing his old one. By owning a home in a foreign country, Mr. Biswas hoped to establish his own identity. The "home" is also symbolic. Mr. Biswas will benefit from its legitimacy and security.

Mr. Biswas longs for freedom. His battle represents both the West Indians' fight for independence from colonial subjugation and his escape from the harsh world of Tulsis. The only thing keeping Mr. Biswas alive is his daughter, Savi. Born an alien, Mohun Biswas struggles and lives as one. He hasn't totally succeeded in forging his identity or becoming a Trinidadian even in death. His heart is filled with memories of the country where his ancestors lived. The fact that Anand refused to go back to the country of dilemma amply demonstrates that Mr. Biswas' attempts to address identity issues have failed.

The main character in the novel *A House for Mr. Biswas* is exiled and feels alienated. The immense potentialities and ramifications of this issue of exile and alienation have been thoroughly examined by Naipaul in his writings. The search for a house and the search for an identity seem to be close at hand. It is still an illusion, though. Even though it can be pointless, reality is a laborious endeavour. The enormous region of the human condition in exile lies in the space between certainty and delusion.

In the novel, Naipaul discussed uprootedness and alienation as themes. The author of the novel has effectively depicted life while addressing these subjects through autobiographical elements. He argues that even though many Mr. Biswas desired to acquire a home, their plans fell through. These unfinished homes symbolize futility, unfulfilled hopes, and incomplete lives. The word "house" connotes stability, identity, and tranquility. Mr. Biswas achieves his goal of owning a house. Due to the stress of the debt, it does not bring him joy or calm. The quest for a home is a search for a sense of identity for Mr. Biswas.

Thus V.S.Naipaul himself feels alienated and uprooted from his own community. Through the character of Mr. Biswas in *A House for Mr. Biswas*, Naipaul clearly picturized the extirpation and estrangement elements in the novel. As a result, Biswas, his family, and future generations of Indian indentured labourers are dealing with problems including displacement, eviction, estrangement, and others. Naipaul's diasporic experiences and those of others, after all, fully reflect his own life experiences because he was born into a Trinidadian family of Indian indentured immigrants. Biswas experiences all kind of challenges, including uprooting, deracination and identity crises from infancy to till death.

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