

Perspective Study of Rootlessness and Diasporic: Rootlessness but Green Are the Boulevard Trees by Uma Parameswaran

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Abstract

The term "Diaspora" refers to the relocation of a community from one province to another. Diaspora maintains a strong sense of motherland through cultural practises and lifestyles. Diaspora is legitimate since displacement has no proxy. Common diasporic literature describes how some Indian emigrants prioritised economic unification over cultural unity and how others mingled with host country culture after acclimatisation. In her unique fiction, Uma Parameswaran seeks to understand diasporic sensibilities. This article depicts diasporic rootlessness, estrangement, and assimilation. The expatriates must thrive in the host country while having different roots. They must defend the land and their beliefs as renters. The boulevard tree provides the same idea of success wherever you dwell. Though it lacks space to grow, it thrives and feeds anyplace. Despite their diasporic perspective, immigrant settlers aim to integrate into the host country. Many Indians migrate abroad and confront diasporic issues. Most people discuss their immigrant experience. Few express through words and art. The imaginative writing of Uma Parameswaran made her stand out in literature. Born in Chennai, she grew up in Jabalpur and Nagpur. Later, she emigrated to Canada. *Rootless yet Green are the Boulevard Trees* (1998) reflects her immigrant experience. This play depicts emigrants' struggles in their host country. Play characters are divided into two groups. One group wants to migrate. The second group is mixing with the host country's natives. This dissertation examines Uma Parameswaran's *Rootless but Green Boulevard Trees*' portrayal of diaspora.

Keywords: diaspora, rootlessness, alienation.

Long before the emergence of civilization, migration started. Man started to wander about in quest of food and shelter, which led to the creation of civilization. By adopting a nomadic lifestyle, which led to the formation of towns and cities, the first phase was successful. Later, man developed beyond the prehistoric lifestyle of hunting animals for sustenance and felling trees for shelter. The

ultimate stage of human migration, which included the pursuit of knowledge, material gain, racial and religious discrimination that led to imperialism through military conquest, and other factors, was attained. The Diasporas began to exist in that place.

Numerous writers from the Indian diaspora have written plays that discuss their concerns with being in the diaspora. Their literary works, which expressed their love for their native country while living in an unfamiliar land, brought them acclaim and notoriety. Their interactions with locals and the sensitivity with which they respond to the situation are extraordinary. Few authors, meanwhile, have attempted to explore the theatrical representation of Diasporic peoples' issues. One of these writers with extraordinary potential is Uma Parmeswaran. Her birthplace is Chennai, and she was raised in Indian towns including Nagpur and Jabalpur. She moves to the United States in 1963 to pursue higher education, giving her first-hand knowledge of the diaspora. She attempts to explore the sense and sensibility of the Diasporic people in her creative work as an immigrant living in Winnipeg, which leads to great success in her profession.

Rootless but Green are the Boulevard Trees (1987), a drama by Uma Parameswaran, is divided into three acts that explore the themes of rootlessness, alienation, the yearning for a brighter future, and the difficulty in assimilation in the host country. Indian immigrants experience identity difficulties and strive for their true selves. It analyses from several angles that are related to the individual's personal experiences. Since the beginning of time, immigrants have struggled with the distinct identity development and preservation that follow from survival impulses. They believe they are an inferior race. This home play centres on the family Bhav and Moghe's sentiments and experiences related to their diaspora. The play's plot switches back and forth between Fort Richmond and Winnipeg. The Bhav family consists of five members: the father Sharad, the mother Savitri, the two older children Jayant and Jyothi, and the younger son Krish. Jyothi develops feelings for Andre, a white lad. The Moghe and Bhav family's relocation alters the lives of every member. These members have a strong predominance of rootlessness. It describes in great detail how rootlessness affects the play's characters.

A historical analysis of Uma Parmeswaran's works reveals the contemporary problems that emigrants in the host country face. Sharad's personality is dominated by a sense of isolation. In Trombay, India, he was a scientist. He resigns from his position and moves to Winnipeg as a result of the unethical politics at the institute. He feels isolated by his unemployment, and things have gotten worse for him in Winnipeg. After being sent to Winnipeg, he starts working as an estate broker. He expresses his complete unease in the host nation and his sense of isolation as

"It upsets me profoundly to find myself in a crowd. All those alien faces staring at... who are these faceless people among whom my life is oozing away? Each so self-contained, so complete, look at me as though I shouldn't be there" (82).

The Boulevard Trees are rootless but green, according to Uma Parameswaran's symbolic performance. The play Mangoes on the Maple Tree, according to critics, is an outgrowth of the play Boulevard Trees: Rootless but Green. Uma Parameswaran employed symbolism as a tool to emphasise the challenges faced by immigrants, such as their goals, struggles, and sorrows. Sharad perceives a lack of roots in the following generation and fails to pass along their culture. Jayant is attempting to persuade his dad:

Jayant: *Our people, our old country. Dad there's no our people and no old country for anyone in the world anymore. Least of all for us. This is our land and here we shall stay.*

Sharad: *Roots, son, roots. Can we really grow roots here?*

Jayant: *Sure Dad. (34)*

Jayant and his father Sarad are engaged in an acrimonious quarrel. Jayant is at ease in the host country because he was raised there. Sarad misinterpreted his emotions. High levels of contestation follow. Sarad believes that roots cannot spread to other places. While they can adopt, roots cannot develop in host soil. Sarad is unable to comprehend reality. The roots were chopped by the native emigrants. Even those roots are unable to develop as well in the native land.

JAYANT: *opines that our people, our old country.*

Dad: There's no 'our people' and 'Our country' for anyone in the world anymore, at least all for us. This is our land and here we shall stay. When the father distressingly points out the absence of roots, the son assures him that they can grow roots in their adopted land

JAYANT: *Sure, Dad, just look outside. The monstrous new apartment block out there – they have twenty-foot trees around the patio and there five footers inside the quadrangle, all set up overnight and flourishing like crazy.*

VITHAL: *If the temp. Goes up to zero degrees midweek, as they expect, that would be the end of that (He waves at the tree)*

JAYANT: *so, what? (Vehemently) what does it matter how long it stands? The point is that it is there, beautiful and green for the length of its life? A day, a hundred thousand days, it is a question of what we do and are, during that time. (54)*

Intensely expressing the rootlessness emotion is Sharad's character. "Can we really grow roots here?" he asks his son Jayant. This shows his predicament—that as migrants they face many difficulties and that he is unsure of his continued existence in the host country. However, in the play's subsequent pages, he comes across as fairly upbeat and uses the example of a banana tree, which spreads its roots widely and raises its young in its shade. Vithal, the Moghe family's son, is informed by Dilip that they must adapt to the customs and way of life of the host country. Dilip has a mindset of fully assimilating into the host culture. "... this is your country, the only place you've ever known..." You must make an effort to absorb. That effort would be valued by the whites (97). Vithal, however, holds a different viewpoint. He believes that white people don't let immigrants blend in with them. They oppose assimilation. They want us to leave. Now since they don't want us, we pose a threat to them. We must maintain our distance from them in order to demonstrate that we are just as welcome here as the irate white people. We must be separate while remaining a unit (98). The preceding quotation emphasises the plight of the Diasporic population in the host country. They are anxious and uneasy since integration is their fundamental issue.

She focuses on how characters in the current play change from Diasporic people to reconciled members of an ethnic group in the host country. Even though they do not have all of their roots in the host country, immigrants must prosper there. They must accept the new territory and the locals' ideologies. The drama that best illuminates the Diasporic sensibility of the immigrant characters is *Rootless but Green Are the Boulevard Trees*. It primarily emphasises the sense of disconnection from one's roots, alienation, and the desire for a better future and assimilation.

On the other hand, they also have a strong sense of ethnic group. We are different, and no matter what we do, we will never fit in here, Jyoti once told Jayant. (RBGABT76) Later, Savithri moves into her house wearing "a pantsuit" and boots, but as soon as she gets inside, she changes into a saree and decorates her forehead with kumkum. Vithal yearns for a decent Indian lunch of puris and raita despite the fact that the Bhaves and Sharads like eating western cuisine. While Jayant makes mango sundae, Jyoti prepares matter paneer for all of her brother's Indian friends. So, even their clothing and diet convey a "rootlessness."

The contradictory and frequently at odds philosophies of the motherland and the host country rib the diasporic caprice. In his seminal essay *Imaginary Homelands*, Salman Rushdie asserted that the Indian Diaspora's identity problem is "at once plural and partial." We occasionally feel as though we are caught between two cultures, and other times we feel as though we are perched on two stools (Rushdie 227). The play concludes with the suggestion that people who reside in foreign nations can be happy and in a peaceful state like the Boulevard trees, which persist for as long as they do regardless of how long they live. Conversely, in this age of globalisation, talking about one's original country's cultural roots will make one suffer psychologically. One can live a tranquil and harmonious existence by accepting reality and learning to see the bright side of everything.

Despite not all of their roots being in the same country, the expatriates have thrived in their new home. They must reconcile their tenants' beliefs with the land's. The boulevard tree actually allows the same idea to thrive wherever you live. The boulevard is viewed as a representation of assimilation in this play. Even though it lacks enough room to spread its roots, it thrives and grows anywhere. Although the immigrants begin to recognise their roots, they gradually try to integrate into the culture of the host country. One's quality of life is much more important than how long they are alive for. The drama emphasises the importance of integration, immigrants' alienation from assimilation, and awareness of the diaspora as a result.

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