



IDENTITY

Q U E S T
&
Q U E S T I O N S



EDITED BY

RAISUN MATHEW

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Insider or Outsider: Alienation and Cultural Identity in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's "Real Food" and "My Mother, The Crazy African"

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They'll see how beautiful I am
And be ashamed –
I, too, am America.

Langston Hughes in "I, Too"

The question of belongingness entwined with identity becomes the fulcrum of the spectrum of gender, race, culture and nation. Culture serves as a regulator of human life, continuum and relatedness to the society at large. Reinforcement of culture is transmitted through language and behaviour. Isolation and loss of contact between groups within a speech community facilitate the amalgamation of cultures, languages and food habits, thereby laying the foundation for the diffusion of diverse cultures. An individual expands his/ her cultural repertoire by replacing her ancestral culture, indigenous customs and linguistic conventions identifying him/her within the scaffolding chassis of the dominant culture or 'global culture'. This serves as the genesis of identity crisis-loss of identity, identity extinction, identity disturbance and identity isolation. The conglomeration of multiple cultures leads to a loss of identity and sense of self, pushing an individual to the verge of inexistence and detachment. A plethora of questions harbinger in this stage like – Where does my identity status lead and where I do belong to? Why do I stand aloof without any specific Identity? and Is Relocation a positive act in the multicultural context? These questions are accrued and critiqued by writers in their literary works of art and theories.

This academic edited volume analyses and interprets the constantly altering meaning(s) and expression(s) of identity in the context of rising tensions and conflicts caused by society's dominant power structures on vulnerable and victimised groups. The question of identity that arises in a person gets into conflict with the social structures that complicate the notion at every instant of developing newer definitions of existence in the multifaceted world. These social constructs, either directly or indirectly, employing persuasion or coercion, and through manoeuvre or manipulation, develop to deviate from the expected normative identity possessed to knowingly or unknowingly embrace the 'other' identity. The freedom to continue in one's own identity or freely transit between identities without the stains of society's constructs is critical, thus resulting in the debates and questions raised by/on/for identity. It is equally important to understand the theoretical and conceptual underpinnings of the notion of identity that influence and get influenced by the connected spheres of gender dysphoria, patriarchal ascendancy, cultural diversity and construction, uncertainties and conflicts of diaspora, alterity and entrapment, migration and displacement, caste oppression, vulnerability and victimisation, state apparatuses, and subalternity. Through multifarious themes and topics of discussion related to exploring the notion of identity, this book converges the diverse perspectives on various situational existences of people. Thus, an elaborate and wider angle on the transitions and formation of identity is captured to decipher the relevance and significance of identity.



Raisun Mathew is the author of *Zephyr: The Breeze of Love* (2021) and *In-Between: Liminal Stories* (2022), and editor of *Literature, Media, and Society: Scholarly Perspectives* (2021) and *The Post-Truth Era: Literature and Media* (2021). He completed his doctoral research at Lovely Professional University, Punjab (India) and currently works as an Assistant Professor of English at Jain (Deemed-to-be University), Bangalore. His graduation in English Literature, Communication and Journalism (Triple Main) and post-graduation in English are from Mahatma Gandhi

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