



Krantiguru Shyamji Krishna Verma
KACHCHH UNIVERSITY

Web.:- kskvkachchhuniversity.org

Dr. Sridhar Rajeswaran
Professor and Head, Department of English

Mr. Anil Gor
Registrar

CONSTRUCTS OF HOME

JOINT INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
24-26 NOVEMBER 2009

KSKV KACHCHH UNIVERSITY, BHUJ, INDIA
WW UNIVERSITY OF MUENSTER, GERMANY

In a time characterized by globalization and preoccupied with questions of migration and cultural exchange, conceptions of 'home' in the form of local cultures and long-term geographic positioning have become highly unstable, uncertain and ambivalent. This has led to cultural deficits, but also created new opportunities in fundamentally changing the lives of large parts of the world population. At the same time, points of reference which can be recognized as 'home' and which foster associations of stability, for the individual as much as for social groups and for entire cultures, have retained their significance; in some instances, they have even acquired new importance in shaping the way people organize their lives and make their decisions in politics, community life, cultural practice or in forming their general outlook.

Geographically, the study of various traditional concepts of home in the global context can be a point of departure. The British tradition for instance is epitomized by the much-quoted phrase "My Home is My Castle", or in Germany one has the culturally almost untranslatable idea of *Gemütlichkeit*. More recent developments as analysed and presented by migration studies in an increasingly multicultural and politically changing Europe might be taken into account. In the USA the concept of home has been constructed around migration, displacements and frontiers.

In the context of India the concept of home is traditionally a much idealised and sentimentalised one, which has been portrayed in literature. Oral literature too has engaged at length with home and the notion of 'homeland' or in dialect 'muluk'. This notion was even carried by the diaspora to distant lands during the indentured labour period in the British colonisation of India phase. In more contemporary times with colonisation and then industrialisation of modern India, the concept of home has been displaced as large groups of people for economic or social reasons have moved from one part of India to another. Then there are postcolonial diasporas and transmigration trajectories too. In most of all such cases home is invoked in different ways through religious texts, oral literature, letters, diaries, folk theatre, television series and films.

Thus this conference will explore in the context of the West and India, 'Constructs of Home' and how these concepts have always already been part of interrelationships through travel or trade, a colonial past and many other channels of cultural exchange. It will also focus on the most recent departures in highly mobile, flexible and culturally diverse societies, in transnational and

Mundra Road, Bhuj-Kachchh 370 001 India. Ph: (02832) 235 032. Fax:(02832) 235 011
E.Mails: srajeswaran@hotmail.com . only_yeats@yahoo.com . Mob: (0091)9099026571

The Department of English, KSKV Kachchh University has signed MoU's with its counterparts in the Universities of Muenster, Cologne and Bonn, Germany and the Saurashtra University, Rajkot, Gujarat

transcultural situations, and on the question how rootedness and 'home' can be experienced and constructed in these rapidly changing environments.

The conference will mainly but not exclusively relate itself to

- architecture and design
- environment and geography
- legal/social/political/economic issues
- literary, linguistic, cinematic and cultural studies

It will also deal with the following issues:

- How to define 'home'?
- What are the delimitations of home in various contexts?
- Which strategies or material constituents are used in constructing concepts of home?
- How are aspects of home re-defined and utilized in mobile cultures?
- How can home be imagined in inter- or transcultural contexts? Which aspects of home lend themselves more easily to 'translation' and exchange than others?
- What are the main challenges to any given constructs of home in a globalized society?
- Is 'home' becoming an anachronistic concept?
- What is the impact of an ever increasing technological progress on conceptions of home?
- What influence can be observed by geographical discoveries and social developments?
- How are constructions of home characterised by notions of permanence or transience, and how do they reflect a given attitude towards time?
- How are environmental givens (e.g., geography, weather) integrated in constructions of home (aspects of ecocriticism)?

Participants: This international conference is by invitation only and will have keynote papers, roundtable discussions and thematic sessions by noted scholars from Britain, the USA, Germany, Australia and India. There will also be short presentations by research scholars in the 'In-progress...' section of the conference.

Venue: KSKV Kachchh University, Bhuj, India

Accommodation: The Kachchh University, Bhuj will accommodate all the invited keynote speakers, roundtable/panel discussants and thematic session speakers at their University Guest House and take care of their hospitality on the days of the conference. Research Scholars will have to make their own arrangements for accommodation in Bhuj but they will be provided with hospitality during the conference. If international speakers would prefer to stay in a hotel during the conference they will have to make their own arrangements and the organisers will not be responsible for this but could provide them with contact addresses and phone numbers for the bookings.

Dr. Sridhar Rajeswaran
Conference Coordinator

Mr. Anil Gor
Registrar

Mundra Road, Bhuj-Kachchh 370 001 India. Ph: (02832) 235 032. Fax:(02832) 235 011
E.Mails: srajeswaran@hotmail.com . only_yeats@yahoo.com . Mob: (0091)9099026571

The Department of English, KSKV Kachchh University has signed MoU's with its counterparts in the Universities of Muenster, Cologne and Bonn, Germany and the Saurashtra University, Rajkot, Gujarat