


A Companion to Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

Edited by

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Dislocation, Cultural Memory
& Transcultural Identity in Select Stories
from *The Thing Around Your Neck*

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From the very beginning of human civilization, from the day man had built the first shelter and a society to live in, the concept of 'location' became relevant to his existence on this planet. Religio-philosophical ideas like the 'great chain of being' or the 'ladder concept' in medieval and renaissance Europe also insisted on the very similar concept of location of the human being in the hierarchy of existence. The issue of location is relevant for everything which is derivative of spatiality, and also to some extent, of temporality. A kingdom, a country, the modern day nation – everything is subject to a boundary, and therefore, a location. In this context, it may not be a digression to remember the lines of King Lear spoken to Goneril during the division of his kingdom, just to insist on the relationship between location and the boundary that determines the spatiality of location: 'Of all these bounds, even from this line to this / With shadowy forests' (I.i, lines 70–71). One easily remembers that at that time Lear was still the King, demonstrating his division, holding a map of his kingdom. We use this reference just to point out that the concept of location is interlinked not only with kingdom, country, sovereignty or a map on a spatial level, but also with the issue of identity on a purely cognitive level. The politics of location and 'dislocation' has many more things to do with the boundary of a country, a cultural space and most obviously, with identity in this twenty-first century probably as never before.

In this paper our primary objective is to focus on the interplay of the politics of location and culture and the resultant formation of a transcultural identity with particular references to some dislocated

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