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**"ELEMENTS OF DIASPORA"**

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**Abstract:**

This paper explores the concept of diaspora in the works of Kiran Desai, examining the intersections of identity, belonging, and displacement in diasporic writing. It highlights how the traditional notions of center and margin, home and exile, and familiar and strange are increasingly being deconstructed in the contemporary world. As boundaries based on geography, culture, and ethnicity give way to power, community, space, and time, the role of the citizen transcends national borders, calling for new frameworks of engagement with difference and justice. The paper also critiques the prevailing theoretical frameworks that often neglect literature's aesthetic and moral dimensions, stressing the need to restore comprehensive readings of literary works that engage both the political and the artistic. In the case of Desai, diasporic narratives provide a creative response to the complexities of migration, cultural assimilation, and the evolving dynamics of identity. The paper concludes that despite its socio-political underpinnings, diasporic literature remains inherently concerned with the human experience's universal aspects, offering artistic and critical insights into the nature of belonging and transformation.

**Keywords:**Diaspora, migration, postcolonialism, cultural assimilation, transnationalism, diasporic literature, exile, culture, ethnicity.

**Introduction**

The present paper deals with the elements of the diaspora in the fictional Kiran Desai Diasporic writing, drawing our attention to an important aspect of our era in which the responsibilities of citizens go across national boundaries. The earlier modernist notions of center and margin, home and exile, and familiar and strange are falling apart. The borders defined in terms of geography, culture, and ethnicity are being replaced by configurations of power, community, space, and time. Citizenship can no longer ground itself in forms of Eurocentricism and the language of colonialism. In our time, new spaces, identities, and relationships have to be created that permit people to move across boundaries and engage difference and otherness as part of a discourse of justice, social engagement, and democratic struggle [1].

### **Concept of Diaspora**

Derived from the Greek word *aspirin*, meaning to disperse, the term "diaspora," since the nineteenth century, has been widely applied to the dispersal of the Jews throughout the Gentile nations and to the Jewish community that lives outside the frontiers of biblical Israel. The term now has been extended to include other displaced populations due to slavery, colonialism, or forced migrations. The Jewish diaspora followed the black or African diaspora to describe the history and experience of black people living outside Africa, especially those in America. We in India now have drawn attention to the experience of the dispersed Indians in America, England, Canada, and elsewhere. A sizeable stock of Indian diasporic creative and critical writings has piled up over the years to merit serious critical attention, at least in our own country [2].

### **Theoretical Framework: Demystification and Critical Inquiry**

The most illuminating mode of theoretical inquiry in our era has, of course, been the demystification of the established canon and its critical credo. All those who promote the new cultural politics of difference must perforce adopt the demystification mode of critical inquiry and interpretation. The stable springboards for the most desirable forms of critical practice that take history seriously include political and social analysis of empire, determinism, class, race, gender, nation, and region. This mode attempts to trace the complex dynamics of institutional and other related power structures for disclosing options and alternatives in the service of transformational praxis. It also tries to grasp the manner in which representational strategies become creative responses to changing circumstances and conditions. No doubt, this method is partisan, partial, engaged, and crisis-centered. But it also keeps a skeptical eye open so that it can avoid dogmatic traps, formulaic formulations, or rigid conclusions. It is decidedly anti-canonist and anti-essentialist. It is, however, not without attendant dangers or traps, the most formidable of which is reductionism, be it sociological, psychological, or historical sort. One way to avoid this trap is to stay attuned to the best of what the mainstream has to offer in terms of its paradigms, viewpoints, and methods and yet to maintain an orientation in affirming and enabling subcultures of criticism. The demystified critics must be models of what it means to be intellectual freedom fighters, striking their position within or alongside the mainstream critics while clearly aligning with those who vow to offer resistance to the homogenizing discourse of globalization and the like [3].

### **The Role of the Diasporic Writer**

Diasporic writing brings into focus, as a matter of act, not merely the role of the intellectual or the relationship of teaching to the evolution of democracy but also the intellectual's need to move away from a mere language of critique for a redefinition as part of a language of transformation and hope. It is only on this premise that the struggle against racism, class structures, sexism, and other forms of oppression would gather new momentum. This necessary and inevitable shift indicates that literary writers and critics combine with other cultural activists to invent languages and provide critical spaces that offer new opportunities for the coming together of different social movements [4].

### **Literature and the Aesthetic Dimension**

However, after we have said all this, it seems equally necessary to emphasize here

that literature like the diasporic does not perforce anti-universal or anti-value. Any art, if it is great and good, would transcend the transient and rise to whatever is universal and valuable in man and life.

What is being insisted upon here is the fact that despite our cultural concerns and political polemics in the study of literature, more so the diasporic, the aspect of literariness or artness of literary work would always remain a relevant and valuable consideration [5]. Equally relevant and valuable will remain the concept of good and great art as against bad and frivolous art. No amount of deconstruction can demolish the difference between a Shakespeare and a Shobha Dey [6].

### **The Need for a Comprehensive Literary Criticism**

The problem with theory is that even though it is high-sounding, higher than even philosophy, it confines literary criticism to the surface of whatever is expressed in art. The questions being addressed today by the theory of difference and deferring, of otherness and oriental ism, of politics and ideology, are not, in fact, new; they have always been addressed by creative writers as well as critics from the time of Homer and Plato to our own time. The only difference is that while earlier than the advent of theory, literary criticism was inclusive of all questions arising out of literary work, including the political, moral, and aesthetic, the theory prefers to remain confined only to the political and ideological, disdainfully excluding the moral and aesthetic [7]. We need, therefore, to restore to our reading or criticism of literature the earlier comprehensiveness of concerns, subjecting them finally to the moral and aesthetic. To do this, we have to admit that literature, including the diasporic, is art, not journalism or politics, sociology or psychology, nor linguistics or anthropology, but a combination of all these, brought under the laws of poetic beauty and poetic truth, as Arnold puts it [8].

### **Conclusion**

The term 'diaspora,' from Greek, meaning dispersal, distribution, or spreading, has been applied for many years to the worldwide scattering of the Jews; in more recent times, it has been applied to a number of ethnic and racial groups living distant from their traditional homelands; and it has been used With particular application to people from the former British India-a result of the colonization, though of late one occasionally hears or reads of the African diaspora [9]. When we speak of the Indian diaspora, writers generally refer to persons of Indian birth or ethnicity living abroad. Emmanuel S. Nelson defines the Indian diaspora as the "historical and contemporary presence of people of Indian sub-continental origin in other areas of the world." Many are first generation expatriates who continue to consider India their true home, the place of their nurture, values, and extended families as well as their deepest sympathies and attachments. However, this is not universally the case; accommodated to overseas lifestyles, many members of the diaspora experience a distinct dissonance when reintroduced to their former subcontinental culture [10].

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