

Diasporic Sensibility in Manju Kapur's *The immigrant*: *An Analysis*

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Abstract- *This paper attempts to study the diasporic elements in Manju Kapur's the immigrant, particularly Nina, an Indian woman, who is the protagonist of this novel. she migrates to Canada after her marriage with NRI dentist Ananda, where she struggles to adapt the Canadian culture that alienates from the society. Her loneliness and emotion uprooted in entire character and, on the other hand the post-colonial ideology also plays an important role in life. Nina's struggles, cultural identity and transformation after her migration were clearly picturized by Manju Kapur in the immigrant. In Canada, their food style, outfits, culture, and the approach for sexuality were different from Indian culture, so at first Nina struggled to adapt their culture but later she changed herself as a Canadian. This Diasporic transformation made her a strong women in the alien country and also she learned to survive alone.*

Indexed Terms- *Diaspora, Ideology, Immigrant, Migration, Struggles, Transformation*

I. INTRODUCTION

The term "Diaspora" derives from a Greek term meaning Dispersion. In Jewish history it represents a concept which has meaning for different periods in the millennial existence of the Jewish people. Diaspora plays a vital role in literature, especially in Indian writing in English. Diaspora deals with the immigration, the movement, and the people away from their homeland. The author has shown diasporic experience through the character Nina in *The Immigrant*, which was her fourth novel. In this novel, she speaks about the two migrated characters from Indian to Canada. The main theme of the novel is loneliness, nostalgic, and longing.

Every literature serves as a mirror that reflects human life. Manju Kapur is not an exception to the post-colonial era's abundance of diaspora authors who have been effective in conveying the various colours of human life via their characters. When it comes to Indian women authors who write on women and their pressing issues, Manju Kapur stands out as one of the most well-known English writers, she started writing as a campaign to challenge the standards and rules of conduct for women in the patriarchal Indian culture. She has written the following novels *the married woman, the immigrant, the home, the custody*, and most recently published *Brothers*.

Manju Kapur travelled to Halifax, Canada, where she encountered several issues as an outsider. When she attended Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, where she earned her Master of Arts in English, she herself was a part of the immigration process. Manju Kapur meticulously portrayed the struggles of her female characters as they attempted to define themselves in the face of intense patriarchal pressure. In order to discover who they are and achieve independence, each of her female characters goes through a similar mental and emotional struggle.

The focus on the female character's experience in a foreign nation is significantly influenced by the Indian Diaspora. In *The Immigrant* Manju Kapur also discusses the difficulties Nina, the female heroine, faces. Her displacement and her longing for her native country are what lead to the issues. In a distant country, she finds it extremely difficult to establish her identity. In her book "*The Immigrant*," Manju Kapur uses the character Nina to depict all these issues.

She views tradition as a system of laws that define morality and values. Nina perceives the regulations of the male-dominated society as discrimination,

assault against her body and intellect, and an abuse of her rights as well as exploitation of her body. As Nina's mother tries to lock her daughter up in the past by instilling traditional beliefs, Nina seeks to escape the societal constraints and dares to come across as an immigrant of Indian descent in Canada. Nina is a good example of commitment and giving.

In the portrayal of the inner nuance of a woman's thinking, the author demonstrates a sophisticated comprehension of the feminine brain. Nina is perplexed and in a pickle over the possibility and difficulty of getting married to an NRI candidate. The idea of constructing a new house 10,000 miles abroad, in Canada, and quitting her teaching job at Miranda House to pursue an independent life disturbs her. Under persuasion from her mother, she agrees to the semi-arranged marriage with Ananda, as would any young lady of her age and station.

Any foreigner who spent the most of his childhood in his original country would naturally experience a sense of love for that country and its culture. Ananda is no different from other aliens who desire to maintain their local culture by getting married to women from their home country. Nina receives a marriage proposal from Ananda, and the ceremony is conducted according to custom. In order to avoid any type of dispute at the time of their immigration to Canada, it is also followed by a judicial marriage. Ananda, a diplomat, works hard to ensure a smooth journey to Halifax with the aid of his brother-in-law. Unfortunately, Nana's visa application was turned down. Nina had really fantasized of moving abroad and getting married to an NRI. As she went for Canada after three months of marriage, she had to face reality. Manju Kapur shows how Nina must work harder since she feels lonely as a result of Ananda's hectic work schedule. Due to Ananda's hectic schedule and lack of attention, she is forced to learn about the unique difficulties that other immigrant spouses encounter and the exiled lifestyle they lead.

The immigrant who comes as a wife has a more difficult time.... at present all she is a wife, and a wife is all alone for many, many hours. There will come a day when even books are powerless to distract. When

the house and its conveniences can no longer completely charm or compensate, then she realizes she is an immigrant for Life (The Immigrant, 124).

Manju Kapur tries to portray the negotiation Nina must do when dealing with the issue of cultural differences in a foreign country. She is really bothered by the disparities in diet and attire. She starts to feel dislocated. She gradually abandons her traditional sari and adopts shalwar kameez and western clothing, changing from a staunch vegetarian to an omnivore. When it comes to giving up her habit, style, and self-perception, Nina takes a very long time. When immigrants cross seas, she makes the following resolution: "Clothes maketh the man, and new ones help ease the transition" (The Immigrant, 152). She is quite angry about this.

Manju Kapur is the female author who first ventured to discuss the taboo subject of male sexual inadequacy in her book. Nina demonstrates a typical female yearning. Like any married woman, she aspires to have children, but she finds it deeply upsetting that she has been unable to conceive because of her husband's inadequate sexual prowess. Nina wonders, "Sex was a form of communication, and if they couldn't communicate on this most basic level, what about everything else?" (The Immigrant, 186). Nina exhibits the characteristics of a typical Indian lady in that she never informs her husband of her marital struggles, and he, too, is oblivious to her dissatisfaction and sorrow. She understands how difficult it will be to adapt to her husband's and a foreign culture.

Nina violates Indian custom by having an adulterous connection with Anton, a student in library science, by not paying enough attention to her conventional marriage. Marxist feminists contend that achieving economic independence women to their freedom from toxic masculinity and empowerment. Nina is aware of the significance of financial independence and believes that it is a woman's first step towards freedom.

She learns from Anton that having sex is a fundamental human right in North America. She had a right to it as well, and "for the first time she had a

sense of her own self, entirely separate from other people, autonomous, independent." (The Immigrant, 264). She feels a certain level of happiness from her extramarital connection, which she has maintained for a very long period while going unnoticed. She didn't have a sexual relationship with Anton. It was just a gathering of bodies with a positive give-and-take dynamic. She disregards other people's opinions because "her life was her own, she did not owe anybody any explanation," she says (The Immigrant, 270). But Nina feels insecure in her heart. She needs her husband's protection in the distant country because he is the only one. She learns that a classmate had raped her and that her own marriage did not shield her. She sank onto the bed as one of many variations-less beings in an indifferent metropolis after her sex encounter, which sadly resulted in punishment and rape by her adoring boyfriend.

When Nina learns of her mother's lonely death, she is completely overcome with uncontrollable grief. Being the only child of her parents, she must travel back to India from Canada to complete her sad religious ceremonies. The emotional bond she once had with her motherland and her spouse in a different country has now entirely deteriorated. Nina feels as though her ambition has failed her in light of this terrible incident since "her life was now completely her own responsibility, she could blame no one, turn to no one" (The Immigrant, 326). Her ideas that her spouse would be her anchor in a distant nation quickly vanished once she felt betrayed. According to her, "One needs some purpose in life. One needs to give back" (The Immigrant, 331)

Nina grows increasingly assured in her ability to live her life as she sees fit. She acquires the fortitude of a traveller to break out of the frame of mind that most immigrants were raised in. She finds strength and decides on her own to travel alone. Nina finds that she is no longer an Indian. She gradually transforms into a Canadian or Westerner in every way. Every migrant has a unique experience when they relocate to a new country. Similarly, when Nina relocated to Canada, she noticed some differences in her society and personality. She gained fortitude and learned to live on her own as a result of this ordeal and she progressively adjusts to the strange traditions of the

West throughout the novel, and by the end, she is a completely different person. Thus, it is proved that migrants' life and characters are unveiled as a result of their experience in new land.

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