

Research Articles

**SOCIAL WELFARE AND UPLIFTMENT THROUGH
LITERATURE:WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO
KIRAN DESAI “THE INHERITANCE OF LOSS”**

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ABSTRACT

Literature is the mirror of society and a form of art. This allows people to develop new ideas and new way of thinking about the society. It helps individual to present themselves as educated members of society. Understanding how literature motivates the individual and how it is reflexive of the individual's society is something that ought to be given more attention and consideration. It is capable of bringing about different emotions and a general sense of “Spiritual” well-being. Literature is also crucial to learn stylistic and artistic conventions for communication and writing. This paper seeks to explore the theme of social welfare and upliftment through literature with special reference to Kiran Desai's novel *The Inheritance of Loss*. Kiran Desai is an Indian author who wrote two novels, *The Inheritance of Loss* and *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard*. Through these two novels she has depicted the view of Indian society. These novels deal with a multitude of interests, of which cross-cultural discord and symphony, gender relations and conflicts, political interests and Diaspora are foremost. As a modern international expatriate Indian novelist, Kiran Desai experienced displacement, dislocation and cultural clash. In her novel, she writes about the cultural hybridity of the postcolonial migrant and the deplorable condition of the individuals. Through the characters, she gives how her own dual Indian-American upbringing which results in despair living between East and West and the introduction of western elements in a country creates a cultural clash. The diasporic

Indian writers have generally dealt with characters from their own displaced community but some of them have also taken a liking for Western characters and they have convinced in dealing with them. This paper is concerned with searching for how social hierarchy, class and culture as well as political and social issues may contravene into gender relations and distort them.

Key Words: *multiculturalism, gender inequality, social upliftment, feminism, culture*

INTRODUCTION

Literature is an interesting topic and has an overwhelming approach in this 21st century era. Studying literature allows us to understand the philosophical movements and ideas that permeated a particular culture at particular time. It has shaped civilizations, changed political systems and exposed injustice. Commonly, most people have their own ideas of what literature is? Literature is a form of demarcation, however fuzzy, based on the premise that all texts are not created equal. What purposes does literature serve? What distinguishes literature from non-literary works? What makes us treat something as literature? In exploring ideas about what literature is, it is useful to look at some of the things that literature does. Literature is something that reflects society, makes us think about ourselves and our society, allows us to enjoy language and beauty, it can be didactic, and it reflects on "the human condition". It both reflects ideology and changes ideology, just like it follows generic conventions as well as changing them. It has social and political effects: just ask Salman Rushdie or Vladimir Nabokov. Literature is the creation of another world, a world that we can only see through reading literature.

KIRAN DESAI WORK TOWARDS SOCIETY:

One of the most tremendously popular women writers in the modern Indian English literature is Kiran Desai, whose name and fame celebrates beyond the horizons of the world. Kiran Desai's debut novel, *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard*, made her popular at the age of twenty-seven. She is the voice of a younger generation of Indian writers who write in English. *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard* reflects the world culture, also represents India as a home of many religions, cultures, community, language, and castes. Her novel *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard* is known for its rich and vivid language. She has a peculiar intelligent for creating humor of small town Shahkot life

without reproachful it. The novel has been painted beautifully with the different kinds of colours, and her ironic reflection of the family and responsibility resound broadly. The reflection of the town Shahkot presents multicultural tradition with modern life style of the people. Huntington also states that, "Civilizations and culture both refer to the overall way of life of a people, and a civilization is a culture writ large. They both involve the values, norms, institutions, and modes of thinking to which successive generations in a given society have attached primary importance. The present age extremely known as the age of technology, network, and globalization in which writers are writing about varied themes like fame, gorgeousness, and strength of India. However, Kiran Desai's first novel *Hullabaloo in The Guava Orchard*, shocked the reader by the reality being presented in the novel. It is realistic in nature which has very interesting life story, also explored the realities of mother India. Subha Tiwari writes about it in his paper named Kiran Desai's *Huallabaloo in The Guava Orchard* as a Satirical Novel. "In the age of television and information explosion, much is said and written about the glory, beauty and spirit of India. We perpetually mention and refer to the Vedic Myths, the incredible Ayurvedic cures and our centuries-old yoga. We tend to get euphoria about India's greatness. We also tend to get oblivious of our weakness. The novel can best be described as a catechizing process for the Indian reader. It compels us to face the realities of our motherlands. Kiran Desai entered in the world of Indian English literature with her first novel *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard*, which is set in the village named Shahkot, located in the states of Punjab, India. The story reveals around main protagonist Sampath, a young boy, born with brown birthmark on his cheek. One of the main focuses is given on deeply rooted superstition and laziness in the people of Indian society. Only Sampath is responsible for all causes and troubles for his family. Kulfi plays very significant role in the novel, a wife of Mr. Chawla and a mother of Sampath. Her representation in the novel is nothing but enormous image of craving for food but nothing more. Mr. R. K. Chawla, forty years old person, father of Sampath Chawla. He is head of the family having B.A. degree and working in the Reserve Bank of Shahkot as a head clerk. He becomes very upset in his life due to nonsensical activities of his son. His frustration rise when his son loses his job at the post office after performing his unexpected behavior in the wedding of his boss's daughter. After that, he runs away from his responsibilities as well as home and takes shelter in the branches of guava tree.

Unexpected behavior shows his madness and foolishness. Actually, his family and other people from town think he is mad person. However, his experience in the post office and he spent more time in reading mails of the people. Therefore, that he knows all secrets of the people who help him to tell destiny of people. Immediately he becomes renowned as holy man and now known as Monkey Baba all over town as well as in the world. Sampath Chawla's attitude makes people superstitious and they become strong believer of Monkey Baba. Kiran Desai reflects the attitude of the Indian middle class society, that religious superstitions also serve the purpose of commercial gains: Community difference is the pillar of Indian society, culture, and civilization. It also includes Indian caste system and diversity among them. This has a pessimistic as well as optimistic point of view in the society. Indian tradition from ancient period made up by variety of caste system. In the age of multiculturalism, people are following each other's culture and community, they are not interested in someone's caste, or community, but they only believes on humanity as a single caste system in the world. Girl's education becomes significant point, which sheds light on Mr. Chawla's view. Importance for girl's education and freedom for them also highlights in the novel through Mr. Chawla's character. At the beginning, he has given permission to Pinky for doing study. His positive attitude towards modern India is focused by saying that "it is very important for young girls to know something useful, not just sit at home and get married. This is the modern India. The modern view towards girl's education is forwarded by him. Kiran Desai is the latest fabulous name in the world of multiculturalism. She is honored by greatest Man Booker prize for her second novel *The Inheritance of Loss* in 2006. This novel chiefly deals with world issues like multiculturalism, identity crisis, isolation, nostalgia, homesickness, migration, politics, education, community differences and social problems. She explores all horizons of the world life in the novel. Her theme of the novel deals with Indian earth, Indian society, Indian culture, and people. The first multicultural conflict in Kiran Desai's novel presents in 1986, in the village of Kalimpong, located in the northeastern Himalayas. The central protagonists living here are the judge, the cook, and Sai. Desai presents that all her characters lives their life in a very difficult condition. At the beginning of the novel, it has said that revolution in the hills transformed into conflict movement stockpiling men and guns. The study aims to illustrate multicultural perspective of human relationships in *The Inheritance of Loss*.

The subject matter of the novel runs equivalent largely in Kalimpong, a small town at the foot of the Himalayas hills and New York, one of the world's big cities, in the United States of America. The novel provides focus on a realistic expression of highly variegated human association and connection that is husband and wife, father and daughter, father and son, master and servant, and a young boy and a young girl with its setting in both the places. As considers the association between husband and wife, Jemubhai Patel, the judge is an absolute failure. For him, his wife Nimi is no more than an image for the fulfillment and for the sake of social status. Realistically Indian tradition and culture of marriage system regards it as a sacred ceremony in one's life. Marriage denotes explicitly approved union, which perseveres beyond sexual fulfillment, and it deserves to understand family life. Instead of that, he throw all family bond, values, relations and love into the dust with that he ignored all Indian customs and traditions also. Such type of behavior of the people is harmful to the society and culture. Marriage is the bond of love, respect, faith, and understanding but here in the novel judge has forgotten all his duties towards his wife, running after English world and culture. Furthermore, *The Inheritance of Loss* deals with superfluity of other relationships among the people. The relationship tie of true friendship between Uncle Potty and Father Booty and the contrived friendship of Judge and Bose run parallel in the novel. Desai also creates strength analysis of relations, Sai likes, in the companionship of Lola and Noni, Uncle Potty and the cook. While describing multicultural perspective of human relations, it comes to knowledge that Kiran Desai has an exceptional extraordinary power of expressing it. *The Inheritance of Loss* attempts to show life between East and West counter and what it earnings to be an immigrant. The characters positioned in multicultural India and New York tolerates suffering because of their serious failure to preserve human relationships. Kiran Desai desires to recommend that western education may have severe outcome on human relations. The novelist has psychologically explored how human relationship runs in constantly changing Indian society. The role of women changed in history but it remains the important question in the society. Jemubhai married to Bela, her name has changed as Nimi, after their marriage. He was only twenty when he married Nimi and she was only fourteen. Actually, they were children when they got married, only because of their parent's decision, they ready to marry. Jemubhai's parents decided to send him abroad; on the other hand, they have no

money to send him. To that, they arrange marriage and money too. But Jemubhai treat her very badly when he come back from abroad after five years he completely forgot that he had wife. The first conflict occurs when she uses his powder puff and shouting in the home. He forces her to learn English but she refuses to learn. He treats her worse than his dog Mutt. The novel explores the realistic image of Indian society, which has been trapped, between poverty, illiteracy, unemployment, xenophobia, cultural conflicts, traditional values, customs, practices and multiplicity of languages, Kiran Desai has humanistic approach towards her characters –Jemu, Sai, Gyan, Biju, Cook, Lola, Noni, Booty, Potty and Nimi all are shown very helpless during their life events. The Inheritance of Loss highlights human relations, loss of culture, loss of identity, loss of security, loss of peace, loss of harmony, loss of rationality, loss of human values, loss of faith and loss of sense, which is an integral part of every character's life. Jemubhai also loses his own original culture and identity and considers foreigner himself in his own country India. He also loses peace in his life by the arrival of Sai his granddaughter. She also loses her own original cultural values in her life journey.

CONCLUSION

Of course there are myriad of other influencing factors, such as institutions, communities, and families; literature does not exist in a vacuum. However it has a unique function in shaping and teaching society at-large. Understanding how literature motivates the individual and how it is reflexive of the individual's society is something that ought to be given more attention. Through the literature the author focus on many westernized Indians like Jemubhai, Sai, the Cook, Noni and Lola. The ill treatment of Indians is depicted through the humiliation of Jemubhai in England. Through the character of Biju, the writer gives a deplorable picture of Indians living in America. As an illegal immigrant, he suffers a lot. He returns home penniless. The incorporated portrayal of India and West is clearly shown through the characters by Kiran Desai. Her characters are stubborn and arrogant, often refusing to cast off the strictures of culture, yet continuing to struggle with loss, poverty, and the trappings of their social class. The character is felt and unmoored, and frequently struggling to survive in the modern world. The meeting of the East and West brings change, but not always progress.

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