



Art and Characterisation in the Works of Kiran Desai

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ABSTRACT

The great canvas of our modern civilization, in which the themes of alienation, cultural conflicts, displacement, and exile are presented in the broad context of globalisation, is what draws readers into Desai's fictions. Within the scope of her novels are also expressed the delicate socio-political concerns of hybridity, insurgency, immigration, intercultural communication, identity crisis, loneliness, multiculturalism, poverty, racial discrimination, social realism, and the desire for home. In her novels, Kiran Desai has employed the techniques of magic realism and socio-cultural realism.

KEYWORDS:-Arts and Humanities, immigrant, marginalized

INTRODUCTION

'Could fulfillment ever be felt deeply as loss? Romantically she decided that love must surely reside in the gap between desire and fulfillment, in the lack, not the contentment. Love was the ache, anticipation, the retreat, everything around it but the emotion itself'

The lines quoted above by Kiran Desai not only made the researcher open a dialogue but also served a purpose to prefer Desai as one of the novelists to pursue his research work. These lines not only suggest but also project Kiran Desai as a novelist of a great understanding of the human psyche. She restlessly experimented with several themes in her second novel and became the youngest novelist to achieve the Man Booker Prize, a literary sensation in 2006 when her name was announced as the winner for the greatest literary award. It explains the dynamism and substantiality of her work. It is fascinating and surprising that she developed her art and vision in the gap of eight years, a period from the publication of her first novel and her second novel. She certainly took a break for almost seven years, developing her writing skills through hard work and devotion and appeared on the literary scene with a mature work. Her critically acclaimed two novels got the attention especially in 2006 and brought fame to her all over the world for her works. It is almost the desire of any novelist to bag the Man Booker Prize, but she never thought to make it only with her second novel. It is apt to note the encounter of the researcher with Kiran Desai's novels stimulate great curiosity and made him pursue his Ph. D research study. Having multiple themes, her novels exhibit individual identity crisis, mundane life experiences, escapism, multiculturalism, political turbulence, problems of the immigrant, racism, etc. which have a great scope to examine and analyze with the help of textual criticism the true state of humankind and their existence with fragility. Very little research has carried out on the works of Kiran Desai, seeking a scope for research to expose to the literary world that Kiran Desai's novels portray a real picture of India and the outer world where the very existence of humans being is marginalized in one way or the other.

Daughter of the renowned novelist, Kiran Desai had a chance to see her mother, Anita Desai, engulfed in her study. Reading and writing, the forced habit of her mother had a great impact on Kiran since her childhood. She was naturally caught up in the web of literature by the literary environment in the house. Commenting about her literary development, P. D. Nimsarkar praises, 'It is reading of the classic as well as contemporary greats that sharpened her literary taste, shadows her mind and molded her style. All kinds of books she read without any clarification for that matter such as novels, poetry, and other genres. Kiran Desai's works are a revelation of her personality. Her first novel, being all immature one, stole the hearts of the readers. There is the absolute presence of the novelist and her personality, which stands out of clearly from her works. The long break between the two novels suggests that she is wise enough to her mother's advice going for the Creative Writing course. She felt her first work hullabaloo in the guava orchard is an immature product of an immature writer. She decided to learn skills and returned with a surprise in the form of her second novel *The Inheritance of Loss*, which brought laurel winning the Man Booker Prize of 2006. It made her popular in a day.

ART OF CHARACTERISATION IN KIRAN DESAI

Kiran Desai's art of characterization has one important aspect; the immense vitality and variety of characters. Her characters are drawn from all walks of society. She wonderfully visualizes her characters through well-chosen words, phrases, and sentences. Her characters reveal themselves dramatically through their actions and interactions. She wanders and probes into the psychological depths of her characters frequently. Her characters can be viewed in isolation as individuals because they are socially alienated creatures. They undergo psychological change when it comes to diverse circumstances. Her personages are realistic as well as imaginative living ordinary way. They are real human beings with flesh and blood. They are presented with their social

as well as economical milieu with aptly describing their living conditions; their homes, rooms, bathrooms, veranda, toilets, terrace, and their possessions. Her characters are individual ones because of their names too. They are mentioned by their features and roles. It is her sharp skill to invent them by their peculiarities. Broadly, her characters fall into two categories; privileged and underprivileged; the rich and the poor; representatives of humanity. Desai emphatically brings forth their weakness by showing particular aspects of human nature entirely. Some certain qualities and motives are present in humans. They are self-absorbed and self-deceived. They follow unworthy objects, pursue their ambition, and find themselves dejected at the end. Desai's characters are individualized and typify with the prevailing society. They are life-like characters representing her notions placing them in concrete social and physical surroundings. She often comments adding to the readers' knowledge. The characters epically represent the prevailing society. She has a good knowledge of all the classes and they exist in reality. Her characters have certain traits of temperament, appearance, and manners representing the era of postcolonial society marking them in the process of globalization. 'After years of colonization transforms a post-colony's original culture, the hybrid postcolonial subject becomes a luminal figure between multiple sets of traditions. Globalization further intensifies this cultural imposition'. Affected by the process of globalization, they inherit the characteristics of a globalized world. They come before our eyes vividly. She introduces each character neatly with their peculiarities. Her selection of characters deserves attention with the major and minor ones. She adds irony, humor, and satire to her characters. They have certain instincts and explicitly reveal them through their acts. Though they belong to the same nation, they stand out by their acceptance of different cultures. She won accolades for creating living characters one can find in his surroundings. They make us laugh; cry and sometimes they leave us dejected. To bring into light the various aspects of her novels, Desai colors her characters with varied traits. Hers is the most vivid and impressive characters reveal themselves with some specific events.

CONCLUSION

The thorough study of Kiran Desai's two acclaimed novels makes the reader feel to be a part of it with each page. Though broken but united in the end, both stories reflect her consciously intellectual mind. The novelist tries to show the apparent vicissitudes prevailing in the Indian continent. The sharp attack that brings out to the notice of the literary world may frame a dim picture but what is real is real in the opinion of the author. The overall study of the novels marked Desai a realistic novelist who keeping aside her love about her motherland show what is prevalent. Both novels contain various universal themes and project life with utmost realism. Her skillful presentation of events, characters, and geography make her novels gigantic. She bagged the Man Booker Prize not because of being a daughter of an acclaimed novelist but because of her talent. Her versatility in painting various themes collected in two novels has a certain significance. Globalization, multiculturalism, colonialism, post-colonialism, feminist touch, masculine strengths, and weaknesses, a sharp biting realism, satiric vein, etc. are some of the characteristics of her novels. It is plausible that her works are written with individual perception. Kiran Desai through her novels raises the national issues on the international level. It is most striking to note that both stories do not fail to draw the attention of the world. The internal issues should be kept internal but it is important to bring them forth to get noticed by internationally when it becomes tyrannical for those who are going through them. She widely and broadly accepts that she was criticized and her books were burnt down because of its negativity, on the other hand, one cannot deny the fact that it plays a crucial role in framing the policies with international level to which if it fails to solve them on the national level; it can be solved on the international level. There is a great deal of social, economic, and emotional values which should be maintained and re-structured. We are still a developing nation after seventy-three years of independence. There must be reasons behind it. They may be political, social, economic; but certainly, they are not so difficult to overcome and resolved. The novelist Kiran Desai belongs to an Indian Diaspora community who with her acute descriptions of events and characters provides a detailed narrative to be focused. She does not linger and sticks to only to the problems of Indian soil but she progresses on to raise the questions on a broader scale. She attempts to show the globalization, the post-colonial ambiance, multiculturalism, etc. to justify her broad intellectual perspective about India. The underprivileged, the aristocrats, the government officials all are presented with a realistic touch. With an eye of a human, Desai tries to infuse humanism by presenting and telling her stories to the outside world. An individual who is caught by the circumstances must get freedom and relief from his/her pain. It is the human will to help the underprivileged and bring back them into the mainstream. In her first novel *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard*, Desai depicts an alienated soul surrounding by the burdening people who do not let him live his life according to his own will. It is the world outside which is meant for humans and not our self. She succeeds in making a humanistic point 'live and let live'. No doubt, Desai is an exceptionally a spontaneous writer; she narrates what she comes across through her journey. It is her philosophical mind that makes her reveal in the form of literary works. There is no scope to degrade but to eulogize the author on every note. Her affluent narration with its peculiar style defines her characters and themes to shine brightly and to bag the most coveted prize in literature. It is an honest appeal by the author to be human while treating a human crossing all the borders made by humans for themselves that do not unite but divide on the name of caste, creed, religion, race, class, etc. Morality is on its last leg which can be resurrected only with developing a sense of empathy and sympathy with fellow humans. Desai is succeeded in bringing the world of marginalized and a class of suppressed people. It's her sincere effort to give voice to their questions. It is a humble attempt of the researcher to get through the stated aims and objectives of the present thesis and give appropriate justice to its title through discussion in all the four chapters. One can find a fine balance between manner and matter of the author which reveals her art and mind being a Diaspora author.

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