
The Thematic Dimensions in the Novels, “The Inheritance of Loss” and “Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard” of Kiran Desai: A Study in Critical Perspective

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Abstract:

As a modern international Indian immigrant, Kiran Desai, the most influential global woman novelist in modern era, has experienced ethnicity, gender, and cultural identity. Fiction of Kiran Desai is internationally acclaimed fame with multiple themes such as exile, alienation, identity, colonial baggage and dislocation so fascinatingly into the vast canvas of contemporary society. Kiran Desai’s works are about the difficulties of modernity, the little struggles, contradictions, the daily humiliations, inevitability oppression, communities struggling and paradoxes of growth and injustice with the abundant violence and pain. Kiran Desai’s magnificent novel, “*Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard*”, won Betty Trask Award is magic-realism in style, with hints of the scrumptious fun and humour that is hall mark in her narration. The debut novel, “*The Inheritance of Loss*”, won the Man Booker Prize, is story richness with sadness to the subject matter about Globalization and with joy at the small surviving intimacies of Indian village life. This article investigates the crumbling of colonialism in the name of modern civilization and the intricacies of relationships and the impact of Post-Colonial India, England and America. In this paper, I wish to showcase the multiple themes of Kiran Desai in her fiction.

Key words: Exile, Alienation, Multiculturalism, Globalization, Identity, Diaspora, Post-Colonialism.

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Introduction:

Kiran Desai is ingenious and insightful Indian writer has been accolades heavily as well as applauded by the critics worldwide in her fantabulous ongoing journey with her outstanding novels. Kiran Desai inherited genetically creativity as daughter from mother Anitha Desai, a renowned Indian modern novelist. With this throwback experience she has imbibed the insightful characters and multiple themes in her arena of fiction. Kiran Desai's applicable technique in plot construction from present to past in her novels exhibits the feast to eye and inner soul. Kiran Desai would have been taken the too much span to originate plot, characterization, diction and themes. Kiran Desai said, "I'm a slow writer", and she explained, "it takes me time to find my characters, their histories, and their voices" "I like to let the story unfold". This article examines and access Kiran Desai's creative multiple themes in critical perspective way such as deep insighted frustration with exile and alienation; deteriorate with the modernity of globalization, consequences of post-colonial circumstances and elements diaspora are highlighted in her fiction.

Thematic Dimensions:

A term, theme is a central idea of an author in a story and an abstract notion of a novel. Who tries to convey to an audience. Themes are to be categorized as two: a work's thematic idea is what readers "*think the work is about*" and its thematic account being "*what the work says about the subject*". A theme may be exposed by the actions, words said, or thoughts of a character in a novel. Kiran Desai's picturization can offer a different thematic perspective dimensions on people beyond their labels in her fictional world. Post-modern writers expose the various concerns of themes that are intertwined in their novels. It is to be said that Kiran Desai is no exception from the selection of elaborate ever thinking thematic concerns in her works in the post- modern era. Kiran Desai's fiction contains the multiple thematic dimensions; sensitive social issues, pain of immigration, crisis in isolation, racial discrimination, inter cultural communication, dislocation of individuals etc. This article highlights the selected thematic dimensions of Kiran Desai's novels as above shown.

The theme of Exile and Alienation:

A term 'exile', is derived from Latin word 'Solum', means soil, to be exiled in the sense was to be taken away from one's soil or land. Exile had been considered in law as ultimate as capital punishment where as literary sense vital character exile for the purpose of education or finding work since ancient times. Since ancient times to present, the culture and tradition of exile has being an offered punishment to a victim. In Roman law, exile offered an alternative to death to a prisoner, recent days Donald Trump

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subjected to the modern version of exile in the dying days of his presidency. The theme of exile and the chaos of characters with their exile are being portrayed by Kiran Desai in both the novels as follows;

“The Inheritance of Loss” deeply enlightened novel of the depth pain and emotion of exile, the main characters ambiguity and hilarity of post-colonial circumstances. The old Judge revisits his past and his role in Sai and Biju’s intertwining lives .Cook is witness India’s hierarchy being overturned and discarded. Biju, Cook’s son, is hop scotching from one miserable New York restaurant to another trying to stay a step ahead of the INS. During Nepalese insurgency Sai’s romance with her handsome tutor later descend into chaos, *The Inheritance of Loss*, *“Of love, longtime, futility, and loss that is Desai’s true territory”* (O: The Oprah Magazine).

Kiran Desai’s remarkable novel, *“The Inheritance of Loss”*, involves us to think into the depths of the exile lives of the ephemeral created characters. Biju, an immigrant worker from the Northeastern Himalayas, India seems to know much better her home territory and atmosphere, the district of Kalimpong, where his father is being a Cook for a British- Educated Indian magistrate. The Judge’s probing granddaughter, Sai, goes to live after her parents die in a street accident in Moscow. The Judge is a bit of a prissy fop and ultimately quite a pathetic creature, slave to his biases in the wake of British rule and immersed in his love for his pet dog, Mutt. Sai is a glorious teenager, loving with the world around her and loving with reading faster and faster until. From the stories of the lives of the Judge, Biju and the Cook and a few neighbors and friends of the Judge, some local, some expatriates who have wedded their lives to India, we get the feel of exile circumstances of the times social as well political and so on.

“Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard”, novel is set in Shohkot, an Indian village of Punjab state. Sampath Chawla exploits avoiding all his adult life responsibilities. Sampath made his journey to settle a guava orchard there he used to listen gossip from people while he was working in post office as clairvoyant to convince and soon he became popular holy man. Kiran Desai has taken this incident as an inspiration and pictures it in the novel based on real life incident of Pradhan who lead life on the guava tree.

Karl Marx describes alienation in his theory, *“people from aspects of their human nature as a consequence of living in a society of stratified social classes”*. It is to be said that self consequence of being a mechanic part of a social class, the condition of which estranges a person from their humanity. Kiran Desai’s characters evidently caught into the series of whirlpool of alienation in both the novels such as, *“The Inheritance of Loss”*

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and “*Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard*” It seems quite oblivious the novelist is devoted to accept the social reform in her characterization with the theme of alienation in the manner of satire and humour of daily existence of post-colonial India.

Post-modern writer’s recurrent theme alienation has become the major concern in Indian English fiction. In the novel, “*The Inheritance of Loss*”, the author Kiran Desai exposes powerfully delineates how the sense of ‘loss’ has started with Jemubhai Patel, the Judge who vainly attempts to become an anglicized person and gets alienated in the process in the colonial era. This loss has been inherited to the post generations and epitomized in Sai, the Judge’s granddaughter. Her efforts to recuperate from the sense of rootlessness by having a relation with Gyan, the Nepali are severely impeded by the political, social psychological turmoil caused by Gorkhaland movement in India. Kiran Desai tries to capture what it means to live between East and West and what it means to be an immigrant through the character of Biju, the Cook’s son.

The novel, “*Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard*”, emphasizes all the prominent characters Sampath Chawla, Mr.R.K.Chawla and Kulfi his parents, Pinky his sister were suffered from alienation with their distraught life and incapability how to interact with each other in indulging their day to day life. The protagonist, Sampath Chawla is self alienated because of his father frequently rudely scolds him as “*a cross between a potato and a human being*” (9), Kulfi Chawla, a pregnant woman from famine Shahkot village, is immensely obsessed with the idea of food, but “*the house was small for her desires*” (4), is the representation of theme of alienation becomes like a “prowling animal” (5).

The theme Globalization and Multi-Culturalism:

This research paper strives to elucidate out-turn on development of Globalization and as a result, the fruitful evolution of Multi-Culturalism. Globalization being an empowering entity, it interconnects the cultural diversity causing both productive and adverse impact on the society. The adoption of western culture and ideologies has resulted in the loss of self identity with the advancement of Globalization.

The novel, “*The Inheritance of Loss*”, Kiran Desai presents key themes like Globalization and Multi-Culturalism to expose the realistic decorum of Indian migrant people. She also traces in the novel the impact of the introduction of Western cultural elements and ideologies into India and the ill effects of Globalization, Multi-Culturalism, and Liberalization which process to create wealth and improve the quality of life during the British colonial times. It seems Sai, West Indian, is the true representative of Globalization and Multi-Culturalism reared by English nuns and represents a kind of isolated Indian living in India. She tells English as her first language rather than the more indigenous Indian language. In the novel “*The Inheritance of*

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Loss”, Kiran Desai creates the first glimpse of dislocation through the Judge’s experiences a variety of events such as displacement and lack of cultural understanding. Diasporas’ self and identity are not accepted for their otherness, their self-esteem is also lost due to their lack of self respect.

While coming to the next remarkable novel of Kiran Desai, *“Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard”*, examines Sampath Chawla, a young man’s image of disappointment and dissatisfaction suffering and struggles to the impact of Globalization and Multi-Culturalism for his identity due to his mental illness. Therefore, he has no connection with his ordinary life style and his employment. Kiran Desai’s every character is suffering for identity due to lack cultural and global understanding. He determined to create modern world with fresh identity as an admired person, so he migrated to Guava Orchard and become a very famous sacred man. The mundane background and characters are transformed into something unique having their own identity and significance. It seeks to explore the backgrounds of social psychological, religious, and spiritual even that steadily moulded Kiran Desai’s fictional art.

The theme of Post- Colonialism:

The novels, *“The Inheritance of Loss”* and *“Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard”*, unanimously enriched name and fame throughout the world beyond her boundaries as Post-Colonialism fictional writings. Kiran Desai grew up and educated in India then moved to England at the age of fourteen, and then moved to United States a year later and become an eternal inhabitant of the America. This socio-cultural background helped her in shaping and developing the plots of novels and the characters, therefore, it is justified to say that Kiran Desai educational background in India, England and United States emerged in the literary arena as a typical diaspora writer in her unique Multi-Cultural themes in her fictional writings.

Based on this experience, in the novel, *“The Inheritance of Loss”*, Kiran Desai juxtaposes deprived diaspora subjects in recapture the altered perceptions of Post-Colonial India. Moreover, *“The Inheritance of Loss”*, the author depicts a group of ‘lost’ people and the state of their lives, and how they lost themselves in the course of pursuing their cultural identity in the process of Globalization. The novel, explores colonial neurosis Exile and Alienation, Multi-Culturalism, impact of Globalization. The novel, *“The Inheritance of Loss”*, shows how colonialism affects cultures and societies through generations and that’s why the characters of this novel are in a state of constant psychological turmoil searching for an identity torn between two cultures, of which one seems to be superior to the Euro-centrally. Starting with post-colonialism identity crisis, we see Jemubhai Patel, a retired Judge, an embittered person who often

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lives in the past. When he was a young man, he was sent to Cambridge by his family to study law. But in England, he was ridiculed for his accent and looks. Young English girls held their nose as he passed insisting he reeked of curry, this rejection fuelled in his soul, a shame and a dislike for his heritage, his culture and the color of his skin “he retreated into solitude that grew in weight”.

It is significant that “*Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard*”, Kiran Desai whimsically portrays the dreams and aspirations of an Indian middle-class family with a keen sense of humour. Sampath Chawla, a middle-class man, spends his free time reading the mails of the people climbing the top of a Guava tree reveal amazing facts to the people of Shahkot, The major theme running throughout the novel is one closely related to colonialism and the effects of Post-Colonialism.

Themes of Struggles and Opposition:

Kiran Desai’s novel is on Indian immigrants who struggle to still settle down in the United States. Kiran Desai remarks, “*the characters of my story are entirely fictional, but these journeys As well as my own provided insight into what it means to travel between East and West and it is this I wanted to capture. The fact that I live this particular life no accident. It was my inheritance*”. (In the Rediff Interview).

For instance, Indian settled in America is those who have an Indian identity though they live and work outside the politico-geographical territory of India. They retain their Indian identity in spite of the laws of a home land. This is probably the most curious and paradoxical theme in Post-Colonial diaspora writings.

Kiran Desai in the novel, “*The Inheritance of Loss*”, describes the themes of the historical impact of the colonialism and its effects on the social, political and cultural problems of the Post-Colonial Indian society. “*The Inheritance of Loss*”, draws Kiran Desai’s own experience of leaving India. Kiran Desai observes everything through the ‘lens of being Indian’, without that perspective she acknowledged that she can’t write. It is a novel not only shows how people who move out of India and migrate to countries like England and America rootless, struggle and opposition in a strange land but it also reveals how people in their own mother land feel isolated and suffer from loss of identity. The novelist portrays struggles, oppositions and losses inherited by all the major characters in the novel.

The novel, “*Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard*”, is a gentle comic satire offers a scrupulously witty, charming and occasionally touching insight into the absurdities of life in small town Shahkot India. Sampath Chawla is the protagonist who belongs to a middle class family. After getting experience of drastic boredom, too much struggles, oppression and opposition in his life, he decides to spend his life in Guava tree. Kiran

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Desai explains typical issues like Colonialism, Loneliness and Solitude, Immigration, Loss of Identity, Globalization, Displacement and Dislocation, the role of Indian family and the myths of Indian society. Kiran Desai's commendable effort – writing this novel took her eight years – shows us the present day problems of South Asian society and it explores how the Post-Colonial social psyche is interlinked with the imperialist rule of colonialism

Conclusion:

I have endeavored to say that this paper explores the colonial control in the Post-Colonial era based on political, social and cultural aspects with underlying concept of Global culture which is a simple transformation of a culture to consumption. Aside from the multiple themes of Alienations, Exile, Multi-Culturalism, confusion of Identity, Insurgency, Loneliness, Immigration, Loss of Identity and Globalization, search for the self, Post-Colonial fiction is also characterized by tensions between colonizers and colonized between the old colonial society and the emerging Post-Colonial one.

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