

“A STUDY OF FEMINISTIC APPROACH IN KIRAN DESAI”

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ABSTRACT:-

This paper is focus on Kiran Desai Novel from Post Colonial Perspective. Kiran Desai, the Indian American writer whose novel *The Inheritance of Loss*, 2006 opens with teenage girl an orphan Sai, who is living with Cambridge educated Anglophile grandfather, who is a retired judge in the town of Kalimpong on the Indian side of Himalayas. Sai gets involved romantically with her tutor, Gyan, the descendant of Nepali Gurkha mercenary, but he eventually recoils from her obvious privilege and falls in with a group of ethnic Nepalese insurgents. On the other side, Biju, the son of Sai’s grandfather’s cook, who belong to the shadow class of illegal immigrants in the New York. Desai shows how the lifes of Gyan and Sai and her grandfather along with their cook and his son intertwine before and after the horrible turning points. The multicultural societies of today has been challenged, prejudice and intolerance, especially in connection with differences in race and ethnicity, have been demanding and becoming problematic. Due to variations in culture and religious background, gender roles have been proven difficult in relation to western ideas and other cultures. Finally, the question of class has been of significance not only in respect of professional skills and social status in the country of origin, but also regarding how immigrants settle and integrate into a new country. The problem of alienation is a recurrent theme in many of the post-colonial Indian English writers. In this paper the researcher’s prime focus is to evaluate in this novel by Kiran Desai, the problem of cultural identity which is illuminating the pain of exile, the ambiguities of post-colonialism and the binding desire for a better life. The researcher’s main objective in this paper is to explore the similarities and differences between the theme of homelessness and gender discriminations. The themes of homesickness, rootlessness, patriarchy, oppression will be seen through the lens of migration and multiculturalism in a postcolonial setting, which is prevailing in this novel. In particular, the researcher is interested in investigating why some people are discriminated against, and how literature represents this discrimination. The researcher’s emphasis will also be on the tense relationship between the East and the West and how the connection between the colonizer and the colonized has influenced this situation.

Keywords: - Multiculturalism, Immigration, Patriarchy, Translocation, Investigating, Oppression, Alienation and Homelessness.

FEMINISTIC APPROACH IN KIRAN DESAI

The conjuncture between, post colonialism and feminism is indeed an emerging scenario in the contemporary critical practice. Chandra Talpade Mohanty observes the function of Western imperialism itself and the feminist willy-nilly enacting the problematic role of the feminist-as-imperialist. In her paradigmatic essay, *Under Western Eyes; Feminist Scholarship and Colonial The Location and Struggles of the Third World Women*, Postcolonial Feminist explorations in Kiran Desai's *Discourses*, she locates in the recent Western feminist scholarship a play of discursive colonization linking it to imperialism and its production of the, Third World Women as a singular monolithic subject, an always already constituted group, one that has been labeled as powerless, exploited, sexually harassed and so on. The Third World Women as a monolithic analytic category, according to Mohanty, denies any historical specificity to the location of women as subordinate, powerful, marginal, central, or particular social and power networks. This reductive approach on the part of the liberal Western feminism leads not only to much binary opposition but also to a self-representation of the European middleclass women superior, educated and modern as against the projected view of the Third World Women as ignorant, poor, uneducated, tradition-bound, domestic and victimized. Thus in comparison to the superiority of the Western feminists, the Third World Women rise above the debilitating generality of their object status. This Western feminist approach thus manifests humanism as a Western ideological and political project that involves the necessary recuperation of the East and Woman as others.

Thus from a postcolonial point view gender, class, caste and race gets interlinked. These issues of intersection of gender, race and so on is pursued at length because it is here that critics like Sara Suleri made their sharp attack on what they implied to be a dangerous coalition between post colonialism and feminism. Suleri demands historicity for the postcolonial and hence its disjunction from feminism, critics like Mohanty, Trinh and hooks demand historicity on the part of feminism and hence its inevitable intersection with post colonialism as no one becomes a woman purely because she is female. The woman as subject in any literary discourse is written primarily in the masculine form and interpreted in patriarchal terms. Towards the last decade of the twentieth century, however, a gradual change started creeping in, unobtrusively

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trying to produce a blend of Indian tradition and Western modernity in the conditioning of women. With the emergence of several Indian English women writers the representation of women and fiction-making also underwent a substantial change. Indian women novelists started exploring the problem of East-West confrontation while analyzing the response of women and children towards migration, displacement and cultural encounter. In their searching for their own identity in their writing, novelists like Anita Desai, Jhumpa Lahiri and second generation immigrants like Kiran Desai, incorporated a psychological journey to selfhood, towards a critical understanding of feminine aesthetics and about their situation in cross-cultural contexts states of in between's and border-crossing.

They never strive to learn the ways of their adopted country. As Pramod K. Nayar writes in his essay Hybridity, Diaspora, and Cosmopolitanism; Exiles tend to hold on to their traditions in an almost desperate effort to retain/reclaim their original culture. Thus the two Afghan princesses stick to their own cultural code and when the reality invades their lives; they become disillusioned and aware of their insecurity and vulnerability as females, unprotected in an alien land among alien people. Desai's novel suggests that the global call for melting borders that became the political statement of the Indian nation in the last quarter of the 20th century, also created its reactionaries in the localized spaces of the land, and the contending forces generated narratives that challenged not the phenomenon of globalization per se but the politics of exclusivity that invariably conditioned the countries vision of melting border. This condition of displacement challenges the Diasporas to negotiate his gender identity in ways that will allow him to survive in the newly constructed spaces and gender becomes, as Judith Butler argues, a dramatic and contingent construction of meaning.

CONCLUSION:-

Desai offers little possibility of redemption to her women characters although Sai, at the end of the novel is allowed to transcend her homelessness. The strength that she derives comes from this resolve to cross the boundaries of life; and she felt a glimmer of strength of resolve she must live. Thus ultimately the novel reaffirms faith in relationships and sustainability of life as Sai recovers her home. She witnesses the reunion of Biju and his father against the background of, the five peaks of Kanchenjunga, turned golden with the kind of luminous light that made you feel, if briefly, that true was apparent. Actually the novel is about patterns of loss the loss of selfhood, identity, nationality and loyalty and loyalty. The Indian immigrants in America long for home, the root itself and they long for love and acceptance. She witnesses the reunion of Biju and his father against the background of; The five peaks of Kanchenjunga, turned golden with

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the kind of luminous light that made you feel, if briefly, that true was apparent. Actually the novel is about patterns of loss the loss of selfhood, identity, nationality and loyalty and loyalty. The Indian immigrants in America long for home, the root itself and they long for love and acceptance. New identities are generated into new spaces of knowledge that one has experienced. These identities born in such interactive spaces, inevitably retain influences not only from memories of origins or roots, but also absorb influences of the new culture in the transnational space.