



## Kiran Desai as a Modern Writer

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**Abstract:** Kiran Desai novels manage to explore with intimacy and insight, just about everything related to contemporary issues globalization, multiculturalism, economic inequality and fundamentalism. She has an artistic power to express the invisible emotional reality. She has experimented with varied forms of narrative techniques in fiction. Her talent in the use of irony and humor make her novels worth reading. There is no doubt that, she is an outstanding and iconic writer of the contemporary age.

**Key words:** fiction, fundamentalism, globalization, multiculturalism,

**Narration :** Today, Indian writing in English has come to occupy a respectable position in the global village. A new breed of writers is emerging, who are multi ethnic, multicultural and multiracial. The trend is new and infectious successful, because they bring about a gust of freshness in fiction and in English Literature. They form the new generation of the global village, born in one continent, raised in another and living in another. They have a large following and a very wide readership around the world.

Among them is the Indian born, 43-year-old Kiran Desai, daughter of Anita Desai. she was born on 3 September 1971 and part of her early life was spent in Chandigarh. Pune and Murabai in India after which she migrated to Great Britain at the age of 14 and then to the United States. She studied at Bennington College, Hollins University, and Columbia University. Due to her rich cultural background, Kiran Desai, is a born story teller.

Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard (1998) and The inheritance of Loss (2006) are the two novels by Kiran Desai, which make her representative of South Asian Diaspora literature and a trendsetter in narrating identity conflict by people who live in two sets of cultural spaces in their imaginary world after migrating from their motherland. Published in 1998 Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard unfolds in an Indian village Shakkot in Punjab and

narrates the story of a man Sampath Chawla, who escapes from his responsibilities. He starts living in a guava orchard in a tree and spreads rumour about himself that he is a holy man. This is a hilarious story of life, relations and love portrayed in the cultural spectrum of Indian subcontinent and touches many global complications that are associated with human beings. Desai became a celebrity with her first book and her second creation is another highly acclaimed example in literature setting up many milestones with praises from all over Asia, the United States and Europe winning prestigious awards.

Desai's very first novel Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard put her in the whim of famous South Asian Diaspora writers. The story depicts illusion of identities, voice of resistance to assimilation with different culture by migrants, and correlates historical changes in motherland with traits and behaviour of migrants in the countries of their new residences.

Sampath Chawla's story is narrated with a background with drought, which ended with his birth. This makes his villagers believe that he was born to be a great man. He is considered auspicious and this makes his parents proud. However, they get disappointed when he fails in "School and does not do anything significant except getting a government job in the postal department. He-



spends most of his time dreaming and wandering around in tea stalls and gardens. He is lazy loves gossiping and tries his best to escape from his responsibilities. Despite, all his sullen, life, his grandmother retains, the belief that Sampath would be a great man some day. She says, Wait and see! Even if it appears he is going downhill, he will come un the other side. Yes, on top of the world. He is just taking a longer route.

One day Sampath runs away to a Guava orchard just to take a nap without disturbance and settles in a guava tree. However the incidents which occurred after this, made him famous as a holy man without actually doing anything. Sampath Chawla become famous suddenly but his new popularity puts entire Shahkot in chaos. His sister becomes fond of Hungry Hop Tee Cream boy. Sampath's guava tree becomes a holy place but a huge crowd of monkeys surround it always. Sampat's father tries to take advantage of his son's sudden fame and transforms his guava orchard into a place of benefit. Majji people of Shahkot become jealous of Sampath's popularity and some of them start spying to know the truth. This novel evokes interesting images with good sense of humour that makes readers laugh loud. Kiran Desai, through this novel depicts daily life of an ordinary man unlike many Diaspora writer, who spend pages and pages describing Indian culture and traditions due to their nostalgic addiction to homeland.

In the novel *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard*, Kiran Desai's scene description is marvelous. That summer the heat had enveloped the whole of Shahkot in a murky yellow haze. The clutter of rooftops and washing lines that usually stretched all the way to the foothills at the horizon grew blurred and merged with the dust-filled sky. In the story Sampath reads from newspaper citing the drought as a result of volcanic ash thrown up in the latest spurt of activity. Later he starts another gossip that the drought in his village.

Shahkot might be because of the problems lying in the currents off the West African coastline. His gossiping reaches a climax when he blames Iraq for attempts to steal monsoon by deliberately creating low pressure over desert provinces and deflecting winds from India. Desai's sense of humour makes readers laugh their lungs out when Sampath says, "Hungarian musician offers to draw rain clouds from Europe to India via the music of his flute. As far as South Asian readers are concerned, Sampath is similar to any of them or somebody in their neighborhood. The scene of Sampath sleeping in a room with many people snoring and his father's scolding for not "doing anything significant to make his life better are very common scenes in Indian families or in the houses in neighboring countries. The specialty of this story is there is nothing so special about the characters described. Every things seems so common and so familiar that readers get connected with the rhythm of this novel and that shows Kiran Desai is successful in what she aimed by' narrating this story. The scene descriptions, the creativity with words, fiction and landscape and an equated balance in her narration, makes Desai a deserving author to be beckoned with the Betty, Trask Award, which the Society of Authors for the best novels by citizens of the commonwealth of Nations gives to young authors below 35 years.

In the novel, *The Inheritance of Loss*, Biju and Sai are two main characters. Biju is living; in America as an illegal migrant from India, His father works in Sai's home. Sai is a girl who lives in Kalimpong, the place where Desai has based this story. Sai's maternal grandfather is Jemubai. The time span showed here in the story begins from 1986. Thus, story shows two places side by, side with Biju's life in the United States as an illegal migrant and Sai's grandfather who lives in India but in very westernized way. The story also brings colonialism and its impact on characters' lives in the novel and exhibits how the Indian way of life has changed drastically, it also comments



on the English Indians who try to undermine Indian culture. Gurkha movement also comes as a background even in the novel. While Jhemubhai Patel does not like Indian ways and traditions despite living in India. He eats chapati's with knife and forks. He does not like his father and his wife and leave them. Yet he fails to impress the Englishmen. His granddaughter Sai is an orphaned child breaks the rhythm of peace in Jhemubhai's house, Desai's novel depicts families and daily events very minutely and in an elegant manner. Sai is compelled to live with her grandfather after being orphaned and had to live her convent school. Her grandfather, who lives in a crumbling house feels more British than Indian and his cook Nandu, Biju's father always lives with fantasies that Biju would bring fortunes in his family by earning in the United States. Biju's life shows the plights of illegal migrant who has no future in his own country and who survives in New York with petty jobs. Yet, the hopes of his family, friends and relatives fabricate dreamy images. Sai's boring and ignored life gets some respite due to her tutor Gyan. Sai gets emotional about him but his involvements in the Gurkha separatist movement-Gurkha National Liberation Front make her feel uncomfortable. Rest of Gyan's family members are devoted to the British army like 'Sai's own grandfather. Desai puts her best to bring all the characters of the novel in natural way, revealing minute details and intricacies of their lives without putting any individual as a hero or heroine or a villain. Her sense of humour helps a reader grasp the brutality and vulnerability of characters who 'at many times show contrasting behavior under changing cultural landscape and situations. However, same people can also take The Inheritance of Loss as an account of how all Indians struggle in the United States and as if in entire world they are just bound to suffer. Her construct on richness and poverty many times make people feel that rich are rich because they deserve to be so. Good fortune cannot be called something to replace the right of equality and Desai beautifully puts the loss

inherited from one generation to other and from one place to another place as an essential element Overall, The Inheritance of Loss is a mixture of extraordinary observation of daily life characters, comedy and satirical descriptions. She can be taken as a writer to show the realities of developing and developed world simultaneously in most natural, funniest and romantic way (Mishra,2006). Her novel explores many contemporary burning issues including conflicts of culture, inequalities between haves and have not's, globalization and insecurities about identity which make it relevant more today despite the background of 1980s set by Desai in the book. Together the combination of realities and imagination expose an intersection of socio-cultural and political Clements of India and the United States. Her style of putting prose with flexibility and poise is praise worthy.

Her novels manage to explore with intimacy and insight, just about everything related to contemporary issues globalization, multiculturalism, economic inequality and fundamentalism. She has an artistic power to express the invisible emotional reality. She has experimented with varied forms of narrative techniques in fiction. Her talent in the use of irony and humor make her novels worth reading. There is no doubt that, she is an outstanding and iconic writer of the contemporary age.

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