

MISS LILLIAN HELLMAN'S LITERARY FRAMEWORK: A GLIMPSE ON SOCIO-CULTURAL, ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL ETHOS OF THE 1920S AND 1930S IN THE HISTORY OF AMERICAN LITERATURE

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ABSTRACT

A fearless and self-reliant lady, Miss Lillian Hellman (1905-1983), was a leading voice in the American theatre in the 1930s. She is by birth a southerner, a Jew, and female; by profession a playwright, memoirist, essayist, and teacher; by political persuasion a liberal, a controversial one. She is an often angry, ironic, and witty commentator on her time. This paper is devoted to explore the socio-cultural, economic, and spiritual milieu in which Lillian Hellman was placed and which shaped her mental make-up. The formative influences as a woman and playwright have also been taken into consideration. Miss Hellman, Perpetually concerned with the problem of human in her writings, tries to reveal the major miseries, sufferings, and tragedies in human life. They are engendered by evil. To make an in-depth study of Hellman's plays, first it warrants me to fashion a viable survey of the socio- cultural, economic and political ethos of the 1920s and 1930s, which formulates and shapes the literary framework for her. An editorial of the London Magazine pointed out that during the thirties "it was widely held view that poets, novelists and playwrights should be closely concerned in their writing with the fundamental political and social issues of their time."¹

KEYWORDS: Socio-Cultural, Economic