

# **Human Values in the Novels of Kiran Desai**

**Sasikala M.**

**(12PEN012)**

**Thesis submitted to**

**Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education**

**for Women, Coimbatore – 641 043**

**In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the**

**Degree of Master of Arts in English**

**March 2014**

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# **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

# Chapter I

## Introduction

Indian Writing in English secured a significant place in world literature by contributing to the various genres and forms. It is after the departure of the British from India that Indo-Anglian literature achieved universal respectability and rapid development in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Indian English literature was called by various terms. Indo-Anglian or Indo-English was used to denote literature produced by Indians who used English as a natural medium for expressing themselves. Indian English Literature arose out of an indigenous cultural situation that at times negated, altered, assimilated and recreated through the inevitable logic of a distinct period of colonial encounter.

The rise of Indian English Literature occurred at a time when the Indian regional languages and literatures had made a remarkable growth through a period of four or five centuries. The influence of the Western world and presence of the indigenous social condition give life to Indian Writing in English. Gauri Shankar Jha remarks in his book *Current Perspectives in Indian English Literature* that it has a “mystical structure,” and “Strategy to blend the factual and the fabulous, sustaining at the same time reality consistently” (10). Indian writers have the tremendous power to establish them as an independent and an accomplished entity.

Indian women novelists constitute a sizeable portion of Indian English Literature. Women novelists’ appeared on the Indian English literary scene during the last quarter of the nineteenth century (1874-1900) and showed a great promise. The emergence of women writing in English marked the birth of a new era which held out for the Indian women opportunities for dynamic participation in the social life of the

country. There are many women writers in English producing many novels related to women's issues effectively and persuasively. They started to write with the influence of western women struggling for identity, right and freedom.

Indian women writers who emerged to challenge and change tradition face violence in the male-dominated society. Their works deal with the most prominent themes such as patriarchal dominance, alienation, identity crisis, immigrant experience, transculturalism, displacement and subaltern issues etc., There are new novels published in the period of post modernism. Writers like Kamala Markandaya, Ruth Pravar Jhabvala, Anita Desai, Arundhati Roy, Chaman Nahal, Attia Hosain and Nayantara Sahgal contributed their mite to the growth of Indian Writing in English. Anita Desai's novels deal with immigration and transculturalism. She is a very popular and prolific Indian woman novelist of the Post-Independence era.

Desai's eleven novels and two collections of short stories and three children's books, spanning a writing career of forty years deal with a wide variety of characters and locations, reflecting her own multi-cultural experiences. She is also recognized as the pioneer of psychological novel in modern Indian English literature. She is influenced by Virginia Woolf and James Joyce whose famous techniques are introduced into her novels. The complicated relationship of women with others and their individual life in the society with various hurdles and experiences are found in her novels.

Another prolific writer in the Post-Independence era is Kiran Desai, daughter of Anita Desai. She stands unique following the footsteps of her novelist mother. But her talent is entirely different from her mother. She is a diasporic writer whose origin is India. Anita Desai is a prolific writer of many books and novels. Her three novels

shortlisted for the Booker Prizes *Clear Light of Day* (1980), *In Custody* (1984) and *Fasting Feasting* (1999). Her novels deal with women's aspirations, their difficulties and issues like colonial experience, homelessness, multiculturalism, globalization and communalism.

Kiran Desai's two novels *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard* (1998) and *The Inheritance of Loss* (2006) are based on immigrant experience and alienation. She got the Man Booker Prize for her second novel and Betty Trask Award for her first, fresh and funny novel. Her portrayal of characters in the first novel is done in a realistic manner. She eye witnessed the power of globalization which is brought out through her illustration of mountain Himalayas and Nepal in the second novel. It is also based on Indo-Nepal partition and expression of immigrant's values. Desai secures a remarkable place in the Indian English literature through her two novels.

Another highly significant feature of the new fiction is the way these women writers handle the English language in the post colonial world. The new novelists are part of the Indian Diaspora who have not carried the colonial baggage for them. Women writers from several regions of India have written evocatively about their society and the treatment of women. Even though the male writers deeply talk about Indian women and show their power using techniques like magic realism, women novelists writing about these issues is quite different.

Anita Singh opines in the book *Trends and Techniques in Modern English Literature* "The contemporary literary stage of Indian English Writing is agog with women writers who have made significant inroads in world literature, winning top women are giving voice to their concerns and experience and creating a body of

literature of their own” (85). It is obviously shown that women writers with their empowerment created a stable place for themselves.

The arrival of Diaspora writing into the literature of Indian writing in English brought a violent upheaval rather, a sort of antagonism between the East and the West, between the cultures and between the identities. Above all, these features become an integral part of the bulk of Indian writing in English. The most important concept of diaspora discourse is dislocation and homelessness. Diaspora begins with loss of home, belongingness and identity. It takes its root with exile and identity finds a safe place in an alien atmosphere. It also brings out the problems of locations, dislocations, placement, displacement, habitation and inhabitation.

A prominent diasporic writer, Kiran Desai, daughter of Anita Desai was born on September 3, 1971 in India. At the age of 14, she went to England, before her family moved to the USA. She finished her schooling in Massachusetts. She got her undergraduate degree from Bennington in Vermont; later on she attended a creative writing programme in Virginia, where she planned to introduce her first debut novel, *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard* (1998). It made the author an instant success at the age of twenty-seven. She is the voice of a younger generation of Indian writers who write in English, many of whom live in self-exile.

Kiran Desai's work is known for its rich and colourful language, and detailed presentations of setting and character. *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard* presents a fictitious small town called Shahkot in North India. The town has a mixed culture of traditional Indian social norms and of modern life, wherein the runaway Sampath Chawla, who just wants to be left alone, is forced into being a holy man in spite of

himself. Given its popularity, the novel was reissued as an Anchor paperback in 1999; It was still in print as of 2008.

Kiran Desai shared her experience and entered the literary field. She got inspiration for the story of her first novel from a report in an Indian Newspaper about a hermit who wanted to live in a tree. She started to write about these facts in her novel. She took two years to finish her first novel *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard* which was published in 1998 by the magazine Faber and Faber. She won the Betty Trask Award by the society of authors for the best novel written by a commonwealth citizen under the age of 35. An excerpt of the novel was published by the most notable writer Salman Rushdie in his anthology *Vintage Book of Indian Writing*.

Kiran Desai's first novel *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard* is a fresh, funny and delicious read. She contrasts the two different types of invisibility that of the protagonist Sampath, and his mother Kulfi in the sight of the other characters in the novel. An inventive, fast moving and richly descriptive novel it is a profound study of the grief of familiar misunderstanding and commercialism. Desai is a masterful dialogue writer, and she uses this skill to great effect in *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard*. It is vibrant with creative imagination.

Desai infuses the dialogue with local idioms and paints a vivid portrait of life in a small city in India. The hypocrisy of social expectations and the absurdity of bureaucratic red tape show themselves through the language and conversations of the people. She proved her efficiency through the critical and commercial success of her novel. Her second novel *The Inheritance of Loss* was published after eight years of her first novel in 2006. While the first novel introduces social problems, it does so in a light comic or satiric mode and does not linger on them.

The second novel takes up the more tragic theme of the loss of tradition, and the difficulties faced by immigrants who try to make a new life. It won Booker Prize award in 2006. She secured the most prominent place in Indian Literature to receive the youngest women writer honour -50,000 pound award. Nilanshu Kumar Agarwal in the article “Accomplished versus Jeopardized Literary Excellence: A Comparative Study of Amitav Ghosh’s *The Hungry Tide* and Kiran Desai’s *The Inheritance of Loss*” in the book *Glimpses of Comparative Literature* quotes the words of Pankaj Mishra regarding the issues dealt by Kiran Desai in her novel *The Inheritance of Loss*:

Although it focuses on the fate of a few powerless individuals, Kiran Desai’s extraordinary new novel manages to explore, with intimacy and insight, just about every contemporary international issue: globalization, multiculturalism, economic inequality and fundamentalism and terrorist violence. Despite being set in the mid-1980, it seems the best kind of post-9/11 novel. (32)

This novel deals with two colonial countries of South Asia.

Post colonial literature is rich and varied in the sense that all contemporary writers belong to separate cultural identities and originate from different regions and states. The term post-colonial deals with personal circumstances like myth, dreams, kinship, relationship, traditional and personal struggles. But in relation with Indian English literature it analyses, human identities, nation hood and socio-economic problems. It emerged in different forms of writing which explores literary convention to adopt the culture and tradition. The gender perspective is the central theme of their writing. A positive approach to Indian literature leads to the realization that post-colonial literature needs individual and national attention.

Sheetal Y. Thakore in the article “Critical Perspectives on Kiran Desai’s *The Inheritance of loss*” quotes from “Time out Mumbai”:

Kiran Desai’s novel bounces between an insurgency in India and the immigrant experience . . . Desai sheds light on the tribulations of all Indians abroad and these scenes will resonate with anyone who has felt compelled to compromise their heritage . . . Desai details (her) characters’ hardships head on and her elegant prose makes their experiences hard to forget. (225)

The words of Chitra Banerjee Divakarunai quoted by Satendra Kumar in his article “Kiran Desai’s *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard: An Expression of Indianness*” are quoted here extensively:

A delicious blend of humour and magic, hilarity and wisdom-and unexpected poetry. Kiran Desai’s language will continue to delight you long after you turn the last page. With this radiant novel, Kiran Desai parts the waters. She’s a very talented writer-natural comic writing, very gentle humour. I fear this book paints a picture of a largely imaginary India, or an India long since passed, but I greatly enjoyed the characterizations and the situations. The first 50 pages in particular are first class. (80)

Desai artistically weaves the events in her fiction. Her style is so fresh, and funny and subtle that it defies comparison. None of Kiran Desai’s outrageous characters goes unaffected. She uses highly polished and refined language, sometimes tinged with emotions when she describes the dignity of her characters and when she

describes the under-dog. Written with compassion, humour and insight, her fiction is a vivid, rightly textured and powerful fiction written by one of the most gifted writers of our time. Her prose is alive with enduring images and a cast of unforgettable characters.

What Salman Rushdie states about the style of Kiran Desai and her mother Anita Desai is quoted by Satendra Kumar in his article “Kiran Desai’s *The Inheritance of Loss* And Manju Kapur’s *Home: A Similarity of Theme*” in the book *Glimpses of Comparative Literature* :

Anita is a deceptively quiet writer. ‘Kiran is a little bit more showy as a writer. There is a little more flamboyance in the prose.’ Unlike her mother, Desai said she doesn’t think of marrying or having children. ‘The isolation of writing settles in too deeply. It becomes part of your personality and your life.’ She said. ‘If I had a child, I’d have to break out of it and be sweet. But as a writer I am trying to understand hate and anger.’ Lately, Desai said, she has been longing for the solitude of writing to pull her back in. She glanced wistfully outside at the rain and the wet landscape, reminiscent this afternoon of Kailmpong. (18)

After completing her education from Columbia University, Kiran Desai started writing. Being a member of the upper class society, it is very difficult for her to experience the pains of the underdogs of the society. Even though it may be contended that her response to the predicament of the poor Indians in the West will be considered out of place, as she has not possibly felt the same pain, which Biju in her novel feels her deep insight into human nature helps her in the realistic portrayal of characters.

Mala Pandurang in her article “Loss and Longing” gives a clear justification for the title of the novel: “This is a story as much of loss as it is of bitter longing for a world that eludes each of the characters, as a consequence of their class backgrounds and postmodern legacies. They thereby become the inheritors of loss” (94).

The researcher has taken up the works of Kiran Desai because of their contemporary relevance. The present study entitled “Human Values in the Novels of Kiran Desai” in an analysis of Kiran Desai’s novels *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard* and *The Inheritance of Loss*. The study is divided into five chapters. The first chapter- introduction gives an overview of Indian Writing in English and discusses Kiran Desai place in it. The second chapter- Human Predicament deals with the problems faced by the characters which in turn reflect the problems faced by human beings in the society like loneliness, loss of dignity, loss of human values, alienation and terrorism. The third chapter- Loss of Human Dignity analysis how the characters lose their dignity because of their materialistic attitude, class, caste, creed and gender discrimination. The fourth chapter- Need for Human Relationship deals with the way the characters maintain relationship with others. The fifth chapter- Conclusion summarises the points discussed in the previous chapters along with the point that unless human beings maintain a proper relationship with others, they cannot have a meaningful existence. Moreover self-realization and the all encompassing love crossing the barriers of class, caste, creed would help man lead a fruitful and purposeful life.

## Chapter II

### Human Predicament

Indian women writers have contributed their mite to world literature and in their works they explore human emotions and conditions. Their originality and resourcefulness are reflected in their works. They have mainly focused on women's issues, freedom struggle, human predicament and east-west encounter. Kiran Desai is one such woman writer who deals with issues like globalisation, racism, fundamentalism, economic inequality, marginalization, alienation and violence. She is influenced by her mother Anita Desai, another renowned Indian woman novelist.

Kiran Desai's second novel *The Inheritance of Loss* deals with various themes related to modern or contemporary Indian society such as multiculturalism, modernity, dislocation and immigrant's experience, impact of globalization, insurgency, changing human relations, post-colonial chaos, love and longing and losses which are skilfully handled.

Kiran Desai's personal experiences with multiculturalism, displacement and dislocation are presented through the characters, footlessness, and loneliness. The novel not only shows the struggles of the people who migrate from India to other countries like America and Australia as they feel rootless and alienated in a strange land but also explores the life of people who feel isolated in their own native land and suffer from loss of identity.

Desai's mother's influence can be seen in both her novels, *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard* and *The Inheritance of Loss*. Regarding her first novel, *Hullabaloo in*

*the Guava Orchard*, Deshpande in the Book *Indian Novelists in English (Critical Perspective)* opines about Desai in a review, “I think my first book was filled with all that I loved most about India and knew I was in the inevitable process of losing. It was also very much a book that came from the happiness of realizing how much I loved to write” (47).

Desai tries to explore the mysterious underworld of the human soul. The most besetting problem that man faces today is the problem of purposelessness and rootlessness. The theme of this novel in general is the human predicament and emptiness. Her works are so dedicated to affirm the values of life by pointing out the meaningless existence of man and bringing him to an awareness of it. Such awareness is one of the ways of saving man from the terrifying humiliation and purposelessness of the contemporary disgusting and meaningless world.

Desai’s first novel is a fresh and funny novel set in the town of Shahkot in India. The novel revolves around the central character of Sampath who spends his life on a tree without any concern for his family and the people of the town. He wants to escape from the monotonous, dull and boring life. Even his birth is strange as he was born during the worst drought around the fictitious village of Shahkot. His birth comes with a long-awaited heavy rain, and it is obvious from the beginning that there is nothing ordinary about Sampath. Kulfi about the way he is born.

She looked at the tiny creature in her hands, a creature that looked as if he had come from another planet altogether, or had been discovered in the woods, like something alien and strange. The baby’s eyes were closed and his fingers were tightly curled. His face was red and his skull pointed. She looked at his

strangeness and felt a sense of peace and comfort descend upon her. (12)

After years of his failure at school and work Sampath spends his days dreaming in the tea stalls and singing to himself in the public gardens, longing for a peaceful simple way of life. Even though his eccentric family doesn't show any love towards him, his grandmother is quite confident about him. " 'But the world is round,' said his Ammaji, pleased by her own cleverness. 'Wait and see! Even if it appears he is going downhill, he will come up out on the other side. Yes, on top of the world. He is just taking the longer route' " (26).

In *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard*, Kiran Desai compares and contrasts two different types of characters - the protagonist Sampath and his mother Kulfi. The protagonist, Sampath Chawla decides to live his life on the tree and makes the tree his abode. "I am not going to live anywhere but in this tree," said Sampath (127). After making the tree his abode, he feels very happy with the monkeys in the guava orchard. He continues to enjoy with the monkeys and gets the name "Godman"- "Monkey Baba" or "Tree Baba". He fears when the government forces him to leave the tree. Even the people of Shahkot wondered at the strange ways of Kulfi during her pregnancy and the birth of Sampath. Desai highlights the behaviour of both these eccentric characters in the novel.

Sampath is not happy and satisfied with his job as a clerk in a post office. He has been leading a purposeless life. He desires to escape from the routine lifestyle and repeated failures. He wants to get new identity as a popular person. He hopes that such escape would help him to come out of his middle class situation and give a better and peaceful life. His condition is described by the author in the following manner:

In his mind the days, his work, his life and even his thoughts all whirled . . .

He did not want another job.

He wanted open spaces.

And he wanted them in large swathes, in days that were clear stretches he could fill with as little as he wished. Here a person's experience of silence and space squeezed and warped into underground forms that were forced to hide found in only a few places that Sampath could discover. (44)

His search for identity leads him to the guava orchard on the outskirts of town followed by his family. In this new context, Sampath's constant daydreaming is interpreted as a life of spiritual meditation and he swiftly develops the local reputation as a holy man. For a while it seems that Sampath's escape has been a solution to everyone's problems as he settles happily into the life of a spiritual leader. His rising reputation is given in the following lines:

In February, this picture was even printed in the *Times of India*, together with the headline 'The Baba of Shahkot in his Tree Abode.' *This peaceful orchard outside Shahkot, it read, has been transformed by a glut of visitors rushing to see the hermit of Shahkot, whose rare simplicity and profound wisdom are bringing solace and hope to many who are disheartened by these complicated and corrupt times. . . . She professes herself a frequent visitor to this hermit, whom disciples affectionately call*

*'Monkey Baba' or 'Tree Baba' in reference to his fondness for animals and the simplicity of his dwelling place. (119)*

Sampath is much more engaged with the people around him; even while he is likened to a “vegetable” (26) a lazy dreamer lacking the common sense that would undoubtedly drive him up from the bottom of the social ladder. His innocent cross-dressing and stripping antics the strangeness of his way of thinking at the wedding reception harden the minds of both the townspeople and his family. His efforts to evade the questions, the demands, and the noise of his family and the town are made in vain. In his own words he is “found out and turned away from every refuge” (44) he seeks. And thus a guava explodes in his hands, and he is transformed: “Sampath felt his body fill with a cool greenness, his heart swell with a mysterious wild sweetness. He felt an awake clear sap flowing through him, something quite unlike human blood . . . He could have sworn a strange force had entered him, that something new was circulating within him” (46-47). At this point, Sampath becomes well and truly exiled beyond the reach of societal limits, both physical and those founded on expectations; his escape to the guava orchard is merely a small portion of his journey to a new state of mind. He has determined to go in search of his freedom far from the madding crowd. This search for freedom is an indication of his longing for a permanent place. Sampath has a definite alliance with the sky, and the heavens.

An important idea of this novel is the human impact on the animal world. The monkeys found five bottles of rum in the bag of man in the orchard after a month of their first appearance. They drank it all and behaved in a strange manner. This first experience leads them to go in search of alcohol which they are able to get somehow or other. The “dark faces full of determination, wild, liquid eyes” (124) of the

monkeys show how the alcohol from humans has affected the monkeys and their behaviour. The people of Shahkot want to get rid of the monkeys because they threaten the peace of the people.

Moreover “when the pilgrims shook their fists at them, they shook their fists back and jeered loudly” (124). Because all the visitors are disturbed by the presence of the monkeys, the people of Shahkot would like to get rid of the monkeys. Apart from natural disasters and afflictions of their own making, people suffered due to the trouble given by the monkeys.

The town people suffered because of the monkeys and Mr Chawla tries to protect his son from the dangerous animals. Even though he faces many troubles, Sampath is very firm in his decision not to leave the tree any more. “ ‘Don’t touch the monkeys.’ Mr Chawla yelled, waving his arms, trying to snatch slingshots from the hands of the devotees. ‘They are very dangerous. In this state, they will turn on you.’ But at present even he was unsure of exactly what to do. He should have taken precautions’ ” (130).

Sampath’s mother Kulfi is very plain in nature. She is never the centre of attention, like Sampath is. She represents ancient knowledge, and the lost art of sensing the world through her hunt for the ingredients that bring life to her enchanting cooking skills.

She was producing meals so intricate, they were cooked sometimes with a hundred ingredients, balanced precariously within a complicated and delicate mesh of spices - marvellous triumphs of the complex and delicate art of seasoning. . . . Some

that were delicate, with a haunting flavour that teased like the memory of something you'd once known but could no longer put your finger on. (101-102)

Kulfi's transformation is worth notice. She plays her earth mother role being the guardian of its bounty. Her easy change from a trapped muttering eccentric to a frenzied driven, brilliant chef gives the sense that she is grim with the power of a memory not her own but the accumulated wisdom of all human consciousness that has preceded her.

Sampath was safe and he made sure nothing would change when it came to his food; whenever he heard his father muttering about other cooking arrangements, he threatened to go on hunger strike. He had never eaten so well in all his life! His growing plumpness proved how well the meals agreed with him. Pink-cheeked and in an injured tone, as if he were being done out of his birthright, he said: 'Every son knows there is no cooking like his mother's cooking.' (103)

Being outside of society begins the exile of Sampath and Kulfi from the noise and this in turn reflects their symbolic invisibility to the other characters. "Joyfully, he had missed a whole week of school. Looking at her he felt a pang of tenderness. His mother, the monkeys and himself, he thought, they were a band together" (128). He wants the monkeys to behave in a proper way without being a nuisance. " 'You had better change your ways,' he warned the monkeys. 'There will be trouble for all of us if you don't behave better' " (129).

This tension spread out in every part of the novel, and Desai uses the marginalization and invisibility of both characters as a medium for its expression. Kulfi tries in all possible ways to detach herself from the life of norms specified by the town, seeking solitude. Even during her starving and hard pregnancy, she has not twined to her mother-in-law or her husband, but rather to the walls that cage her, drawing out her frustration, her dreams, with the bars of her prison serving as her canvas. “As her husband and mother-in-law retreated in horror, not daring to upset her or the baby still inside her, she drew a parade of cooks beheading goats” (7).

Kulfi also welcomes the grand and thunderous sounds of the storm that herald the imminent fruition of her painful development, suggesting that there may be an aural hierarchy, in which the sounds of nature do not interrupt on silence and solitude, but those of human companionship do.

It was this year that Sampath Chawla was born to his mother, Kulfi. She was twenty-one years old, newly married to Mr Chawla, and pregnant. By late September the heat and lack of rain had combined to produce terrible conditions of drought. She grew bigger as it got worse. It got to be so bad that famine-relief camps were set up by the Red Cross to the west of Shahkot. (3)

Singh in the Book *The Great Indian Women Novelists in English*

*Literature* states:

Thus with Kulfi as well as Sampath; Desai confounds the distinction between solitude and silence, silence being the

necessary absence of verbal communication. This physical, oral and aural isolation is only heightened in the orchard, where Kulfi bustles about on her own terms, marching to her own drummer: ‘Here, in the orchard, the hold of other people on Kulfi and her awareness of them retreated even further and, like Sampath, she discovered the relief of space.’ (131)

Kulfi and Sampath reside in a state of being that is unapproachable and inconceivable to the townspeople. Their status as outcasts might have rendered them free to explore such “higher” planes which combined with their eccentricity resulted in societal marginalization. Kulfi is able to mould a position for herself in the wilderness bordering the orchard, one in which she can enjoy both solitude and self-realization as a brilliant chef. The bond between them is also strengthened:

Desire filled Sampath as he waited for his meals. Spice-laden clouds billowed forth and the clashing cymbals of pots . . . Kulfi served her son with an anxious look, watched his face like a barometer . . . with tears pouring from his eyes, his ears exploding, barely able to breathe, Sampath would beg: ‘More! Please, some more.’ And triumphantly Kulfi would rush back to get another helping. (102)

However, Sampath faces many struggles in his life as he stumbles in a vague, insecure manner as he is not very clear about what he is escaping from and towards which he is marching. “Sampath realized that he himself could speak out in a crowd only if he were happy; sadness or fright made him quiet” (166).

Both Kulfi and Sampath, migrant like shadows across the awareness of the rest of the characters, present the background but for the most part actively masking their true selves, because they realize that they can never conform, and thus will never be understood. Neither family, nor friends, nor devotees consider making a sincere attempt to go through the protective barrier that both Sampath and Kulfi force between themselves and society.

The devotees made their way back down into Shahkot only to continue their arguments there, the sounds of their raised voices buzzing over the valley, rising from tea stalls, balconies and street corners.

. . . The police superintendent spent his days rushing about with his stick trying to break up the terrible fights that were taking place. There was no longer any peace in Shahkot. (160)

Thus their invisibility to the rest of Shahkot, and the resulting mysterious personae they acquire, is rendered from both sides, highlighting the tensions between noise and silence, society and isolation.

As Desai describes Sampath's actions which are done in a "sleepy" or "drowsy" manner, it becomes evident that Sampath's lifestyle has changed from the stressful work life of the village to a much more relaxing and calm life in the orchard. While Sampath entertains himself by making animal and plant life shapes out of the shadows he creates, the author portrays how he is deeply absorbed into the wildlife as he imagines about the plants surrounding him.

The monkeys become close to him as they share the surrounding. Sampath's sympathies for the monkeys are shown when he says " 'Oh, they are only monkeys.' . . . 'What can they possibly know?' " (123). This action of affection portrays how Sampath once used to be in this situation of being a nuisance and now feels sorry for the innocent monkeys as they do not know the problems they are creating. Desai is able to construct the image of Sampath clearer than before:

He had not been moved to laughter or shouted slogans like the other fools during the day's earlier meetings. The orchard had disintegrated into a sorry state and he knew his life there was in danger of drawing to a close. . . . There were no more talks, no more gentle evenings; there was no more laughter. Sampath sat miserably, as if hiding now, in his tree. (178-179)

Sampath's life becomes miserable and his enjoyment with the monkeys is over. He loses his name "Monkey Baba" when the liquor drinking monkeys are driven into the forest. "If he climbed down, somehow, he was sure, he would not get to climb up again. No doubt they would try to bundle him into some outrageous hermitage. Any way: 'I will not live without the monkeys,' he said firmly, holding on to his initial position and not in the mood for compromise" (181).

Sampath's life has changed so much. His mother, before his birth, does not bother about anything. Half-maddened by heat and hunger she can think of nothing but food:

Her stomach grew larger, her dreams of eating are more extravagant. The house seemed to shrink. All about her the summer stretched white-hot into an infinite distance. Finally, in desperation for another landscape, she found a box of old crayons in the back of a cupboard and, . . . she began to draw . . . As her husband and mother-in-law retreated in horror, not daring to upset her or the baby still inside her, she drew a parade of cooks beheading goats. (7)

Sampath's father, Mr Chawla is a man for whom "Oddness, like aches and pains, fits of tears and lethargy" (6) is a source of discomfort; he fears "these uncontrollable, messy puddles of life, the sticky humanness of things" (6). This distaste for sticky humanness will prove problematic for Mr. Chawla later in life when his son grows up to become a young man obsessed with a great deal of feeling and very little common sense or ambition. Mr Chawla's frustration comes to a head when Sampath loses his unskilled job at the post office after performing an unplanned strip-tease at his boss' daughter's wedding. Confined to the house in disgrace, Sampath runs away from home and takes refuge in the branches of a guava tree in a deserted orchard outside of town.

At first the family and townsfolk think that Sampath has gone mad; but in an inspired moment of self-protection Sampath, who had spent his time in the post office reading other people's mail, reveals some choice secrets about his persecutors and convinces them that he is, in fact, a spiritualist. It isn't long before Mr Chawla sees the business possibilities of having a holy man in the family, and very soon the guava orchard has become the latest spot along the spiritual tourism path. Thus people do

not care for real spiritual matters but are concerned with materialism. The common people easily believe things once they perceive something extra-ordinary.

In attempting to cover all of India, Desai recreates a society that may be representative of a section but is not necessarily all that is India. Hence, the picture of East as a land of snake and snake charmers, of the rope trick, of godmen and native and easily be-fooled common people. The easy reputation and fame that comes to Sampath, the crowds that queue up to have a glance of the Monkey Baba, the offerings of coconuts and sweets, the setting up of stalls to cater to the needs of the visitors, the business expertise of Mr Chawla to make some quick money all bring to mind many a newspaper report that one reads in India about small time godman who appear suddenly and vanish just as quickly. The ability to cash in on the naiveté of simple people has always been the trademark of all such instantaneous gurus all over the world.

Desai tries to depict a society where the managerial equipment is examining in the dark, where each person or official is paying attention only to taking care of his own interests, where there is no concerted effort to address a common problem or find a solution, where no one has the will or the aptitude to undertake the situation. This is best seen in the effort to find a resolution to the monkey hazard.

Government service! People thought of the afternoon siestas . . .  
 They thought of free medicines at the dispensary and pensions. . .  
 . Of gas connections that could be had so easily . . . thought how  
 this was a country with many festivals and holidays. . . Really it  
 was a fine thing to have a son in the government. (23)

Desai's characters are not ordinary, average, everyday persons. They may not be clinically insane but they certainly are not normal. These characters fail to come to terms with the reality around them; they are troubled by societal expectations and demands, are tormented by their inability to live life as they wish to and finally meet ends which are truly painful and tragic.

The characters in this novel show that life is a struggle. As Desai has stated in one of her interviews how the depiction of such characters was a big challenge to her and when she was brushing up the final draft, she was internally disturbed and restless. When the novel was ready to be sent to the publishers, she felt comforted but at the same time she was terribly tired and needed a long rest.

After eight years, Desai published her second novel, *The Inheritance of Loss* which is based on her own life experiences. Deshpande in the Book *Indian Novelists in English (Critical Perspective)* Desai expresses about the characters: "The characters of my story are entirely fictional, but these journeys (of her grandparents) 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 is no accident. It was my inheritance" (47).

*The inheritance of loss* is set partly in India and partly in US. Deshpande in the Book *Indian Novelists in English (Critical Perspective)* says that Desai

'tries to capture what it means to live between East and West and what it means to be an immigrant,' and it explores in deep level, 'what happens when a Western element is introduced into a country that is not of the West' - which happened during the

British colonial days in India, and is happening again 'with India's new relationship with the States.' 'What happens when you take people from a poor country and place them in a wealthy one? How does the imbalance between these two worlds' change a person's thinking and feeling?' (47)

Desai shows the plight of India in her novel. Poverty is the main problem of GNLFF movement and Gyan's involvement in GNLFF movement and feelings of dissatisfaction due to the extreme opposition that he evidences between the poor and the rich brings about a strong change in his thoughts and feelings. He feels sad to take the long journey to the cool place of Kalimpong for the sake of the little work given by the judge Jemubhai Patel. The writer describes: "people lived here (Cho Oyu) in this enormous house and property, taking hot baths, sleeping alone in spacious rooms, and he suddenly remembered the cutlets and boiled peas dinner with Sai and the judge, the judge's 'Common sense seems to have evaded you, young man' " (162).

Not only cook Panna Lal but Biju also is affected by the same condition of poverty; Biju moves to America for the sake of money. The judge Jemu treats him not like a servant but as an animal. The loss of his pet dog makes him to react in such a way against the cook that he feels miserable. Desai describes the judge's reaction when he has lost his pet dog:

He couldn't conceive of punishment great enough for humanity.

A man wasn't equal to an animal, not one particle of him.

Human life was stinking, corrupt, and meanwhile there were

beautiful creatures who lived with delicacy on the earth without

doing any harm. 'We should be dying,' the judge almost wept.

(292)

He kicks him and that affects Sai's mind; she feels for the poor condition of the cook:

A poverty- stricken man growing into an ancient at fast-forward. Compressed childhood, lingering old age. A generation between him and the judge, but you wouldn't know it to look at them. There was age in his temperament, his kettle, his clothes, his kitchen, his voice, his face, in the undisturbed dirt, the undisturbed settled smell of a lifetime of cooking, smoke and kerosene (19).

Many of Indians and third world citizens face the problem of getting citizenship in Europe and America. Desai's own experience gets reflected in the novel. They bring out the bitter experiences faced by the immigrants in the society. Biju's life is the best example of the immigrant life in New York. He has spent his early days as a waiter in the restaurant where he was forced by the manager to leave the country.

The painful experiences of the immigrant's life and the racial discrimination are revealed in the following lines: He enlisted as "shadow class," (102) finds out the real colonial experience and how third world natives are destroyed and humiliated in the foreign countries: "They drew the lines at crucial junctures" (23). "Above, the restaurant was French, but below in the kitchen it was Mexican and Indian. And 'On top, rich colonial and down below, poor native' " (21).

Biju's early days in a foreign land are really difficult as he flies from one job to another, meets and interacts with people of all races and of various types but with one common problem which was that not one of them had any legal documents or papers. Hence everyone he comes into contact with feels a sense of bonding and Biju is less lonely among these aliens than Jemubhai Patel.

Biju has to face remarks like "he smells" and frequently attempts to acculturate him. He picks up words which he thinks are commonly used by people on the streets of the US. The emotions that he feels are always a mixture of hunger, respect and hatred. Very often he feels that almost the residents of big cities like New York have their own sense of loneliness which may be different but equally miserable.

Jemubhai Patel is lonely during his stay in a foreign country. He is unable to interrelate with locals. The suffering of the diasporic is similar whatever maybe their social status. The England he sees to be totally different from what he had read and heard. "The England in which he searched for a room to rent was formed of tiny gray houses in gray streets, stuck together and down as if on a glue trap. It took him by surprise because he'd expected only grandness, hadn't realized that here, too, people could be poor and live unaesthetic lives" (38).

Jemubhai, the retired judge leads his life in alienation from his native culture because of his experience in foreign land. He also is alienated from his wife, Nimi. Marie Nelson in the article "Treatment of Dogs and Men in Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss* and Coetzee's *Disgrace*" states as: "his encounter with the English culture is so humiliating and filled him with resentment and anger making

him into neither European nor Indian and becomes an immigrant within himself' (132).

The judge would teach her same lessons of loneliness and shame that he had learned himself. He hates her behaviour, attitude and mocks at her appearance. They develop "a limitless bitterness carrying them beyond the parameters of what any individual is normally capable of feeling" (173). He calls his wife a country bumpkin, stupid and coin of playing games, when she replied the same word towards him. He hits her and throws things on her face. She would think of committing suicide.

Poverty does not distinguish countries. It is prevalent everywhere. Desai symbolises the immigrant experience by the character of Biju who presents himself as a typical Asian. His intention is going to America and earning money for the sake of his father and also for his future; unexpectedly he is disgusted because of the treatment given to him by the Americans and he becomes a hopeless man in the "city without horizon" where the houses are "like jungle creepers, starved for light, holding a perpetual half darkness congealed at the bottom" (189). He is not alone to suffer. "But it *WAS* so hard and *YET* there were so many here. It was terribly, terribly hard. Millions risked death, were humiliated, hated, lost their families-YET there were so many here" (189).

Sai loses her native cultural worthiness in the society. She suffers identity crisis and she feels that the biggest loss in her life is love for Gyan. Biju also loses hope in Western country. He finds the real colonial experience oppressive and that the third world poor people are destroyed and cheated in the west. He also fails to get green card due to racial discrimination.

Biju faces loss even in his own country where he discovers the loss of peace, law and order. He is captured by GNLFF terrorists and treated like a dog. Lola advises her daughter to leave India because it sinks her future. She is a reporter: “ ‘Better leave sooner rather than later,’ . . . ‘India is a sinking Ship. Don’t want to be pushy, darling, sweetie, thinking of your happiness only, but *the doors won’t stay open forever. . . .*’ ” (47). Lola and Noni who are ashamed of Pradhan the leader of GNLFF, who violate the dignity of polite women protest against the intruders in Mon Ami.

The novel explores the condition of society where people are not safe and secure in their life. It also focuses on the impact of globalization and multiculturalism on the human lives. The characters are expressive and portrayed vividly in her novel. It is also conjoined with effective narratives and techniques. It shows the different cultures and backgrounds of people in Kalimpong.

The setting of the novel pictured by Kiran Desai who focused on the enlargement of the problematic society of Kalimpong. It presents the hot place of insurgency after the wake of the Nepalese movement during the 80s. The people of Darjeeling and the surrounding area, Bengalese felt that, they were stateless and tortured by the Nepalese. They swore to fight against the Bengalese and gain their own homeland of Nepal. They captured many building and seized all property from the people. They were attacked by the Nepalese movement GNLFF.

Desai highlights the process of globalization and the poor people of the third World countries who dream of a better life in the American society. They are compelled to suffer in their homeland and the exile they opt for only increases their suffering, while a small number of the immigrants manage to earn a sufficient

amount. The majority of the immigrants are humiliated and compelled to live a life of disgrace.

Desai also expresses the sufferings of innocent people in the society, who are tortured by the police who fail to arrest the real culprits, who robbed rifles in the judge's house. "It was the impoverished who walked the line so thin it was questionable if it existed, an imaginary line between the insurgents and the law, between being robbed (who would listen to them if they went to the police?) and being hunted by the police as scapegoats for the crimes of others. They were the hungriest" (282).

Sai, the protagonist of the novel is distressed by the loss of her parents; she also experiences cultural estrangement. She faces difficulties when she adopts the eastern culture in Kalimpong. She hates her life in her grandfather's house. Desai deals with the themes of dislocation and multiculturalism through Sai.

Biju who tries to connect with the American people and their way of life hates the people "who give up Indian style for Hybridised habit." His painful experience come to end by his getting the return ticket to his own mother land. He can move from the place being frightened or feeling lost. "Biju stepped out of the airport into the Calcutta night, warm, mammalian. His feet sank into dust winnowed to softness at his feet, and he felt an unbearable feeling, sad and tender, old and sweet like the memory of falling asleep, a baby on his mother's lap" (300).

In *The Inheritance of Loss*, Desai highlights the effects of colonialism and their colonial experience through the characters Jemubhai and his granddaughter Sai. Before he goes to America, he lived as an Indian in his village Kalimpong, India, but

after his education, his entire lifestyle has changed. He hates Indian people who behave like an uncultured. His desire and tenderness towards the western culture make him stay away from his own native land and also change his behaviour. He also symbolizes the poverty of postcolonial nations in Kalimpong. He has no financial support to go to England for his higher studies. His parents gathered money for his studies by getting dowry from his marriage. For the sake of money, Jemu marries the village woman who is an illiterate. The marriage is not a happy one to him.

Ajit Kumar in his article “Consequences of Globalization in Kiran Desai’s *The Inheritance of Loss*” quotes

‘like other postcolonial writers highlights the sufferings of the third world nations at the hands of European powers.’ She describes the agony of racial discrimination and colonial encounter on the European natives by brings out the expression of Hardless in *Inheritance of Loss*. She fights against the colonial representation of worthiness and norms to the judge the humans on the basis of their identity or race. She criticizes the racial statement of Hardless the division of Europe/white and African/East, Asian/Black, Brown. (157)

As Ford said, “Earlier the natives of Asian /African suffered at the hands of colonial rulers.” Kiran Desai focuses on the cultural difference between East and West and the evils of globalization. “Now in the postcolonial period Globalization/Neo-imperialism dominate the third world nations economically and culturally.” Globalization leads to clash between cultures, religions, moral and ethical values of one nation with the other.

Desai highlights the predicament of human beings in the contemporary society. Chaturvedi his article “The Theme of Poverty in Kiran Desai’s *The Inheritance of Loss*” opines about Desai’s second novel

‘A single shelf of a good European library is worth the whole native literature.’ While, *India Today* describes the novel as ‘a delightfully original book, a triumph of the story teller’s art, nuanced and even worthy of the most overworked term: luminous,’ speaking about the wide spectrum of its content *New York Times* states: ‘Kiran Desai’s new novel manages to explore, with intimacy and insight, just about every contemporary international issue: globalization, economic inequality, fundamentalism, and terrorist violence.’ (50)

The novel revolves around Jemubhai who lives with his granddaughter Sai. But this life is not with fulfilment or happiness or joy because Jemu and Sai don’t lead a wonderful life. The cook is a sincere and honest man who obeys his master Jemu even though he is old. Another remarkable character in the novel is Biju who is talked about by Salman Rushdie as “hop scotching from one gritty New York restaurant to another on an elusive search for a green card” (51).

Chaturvedi in his article “The Theme of Poverty in Kiran Desai’s *The Inheritance of Loss*” talks about the cook’s condition:

It pained Sai’s heart to see how little he had: a few clothes over a string, a single razor blade and a silver of cheap brown soap, a Kulu blanket that had once been hers, a cardboard case with metal clasps that had belonged to the judge and now contained

the cook's papers, the recommendations . . . And, in the sateen elastic pocket inside the case, there was a broken watch that would cost too much to mend, but was still too precious to throw away-he might be able to pawn the parts. (51)

The cook recalls his cruel treatment of his wife. Her death makes him more miserable Desai says: "She had died seventeen years ago, when Biju was five, slipping from a tree while gathering leaves to feed the goat. An accident, they said, and there was nobody to blame-it was just fate in the way fate has of providing the destitute with a greater quota of accidents for which nobody can be blamed. Biju was their only child" (14).

The judge doesn't show any sympathy towards his servant cook, who has worked for him for several years. At the end of the novel, the judge's life ends with futile a search for his pet dog Mutt. He loses his love for Indian culture and fails to understand the need for happiness in his life. Till the end of his life, he too faces only the miseries in his life because of his inhuman attitude and materialistic life. He does not show any affection towards the cook because he is very poor.

Even though he is very perfect in his work, he gets only a little amount of money from the judge. When his pet dog is missing, he is beaten by him harshly. The cook puts up with all these torments because he has no money. He rightly remarks, "Terrible to be a poverty-stricken man, terrible, terrible . . ." (34).

Desai represents the Nepalese impoverishment in Kalimpong. The Nepalese are ready to work for the sake of money. Gyan, Sai's tutor and one of the members of the GNLF movement which is entirely devoted to the poverty stricken, earns his

living by teaching. He is not able get any job even though he has been searching for one. Some people join the coolies; others get involved in antisocial activities like preparing guns to kill people and other criminal activities. They stay even on the platforms. Sai talks about Gyan's house because, it is made up of thatched roof. Sai remarks: "the house didn't match Gyan's talk, his English, his looks, his clothes, or his schooling. It didn't match his failure" (256).

Lola is terribly humiliated and deeply hurt by the words of Pradhan, when he, without looking at the document of Lola's property becomes angry. " 'In fact,' he said, 'as you can see,' he gestured out, 'I am the raja of Kalimpong. A raja must have many queens.' . . . 'I have four, but would you, 'he looked Lola up and down, tipped his chair back, head at a comical angle, a coy naughty expression catching his face, 'dear Aunty, would you like to be the fifth?' " (244).

Santwana Haldar in the review "Exile in Kiran Desai's *Inheritance of Loss: A Study of the Subaltern as Opposed to the Higher Rank*" rightly points out: "The humiliation Lola had to face was more painful than death and insurgency was at the root of her humiliation. Lola's social status and her assets do not save her from an insecurity that is usually attached to exiled condition" (93).

Desai highlights the fact that a life of poverty and their miserable condition make the people hate their country, some people who become desperate engage in antisocial activities. By presenting India as it is beset with so many problems Desai included various issues and themes which invite the attention of people in the world. She is highly concerned about the immigrant's life, their native land and their future. Some people need to change their way of life according to the western culture but others remain unchanged.

Desai's main intention is to bring about changes in the attitudes of the people. Jemu the retired judge, who is educated in Cambridge, is estranged when he returns to India. However, this estrangement helps him to discover himself. Every one of the characters passes such a phase in his life. Self-discovery comes only later in life.

Biju had, in his innocence, done just what his father had, in his own innocence, told him to do. What could his father have known? This way of leaving your family for work had condemned them over several generations to have their hearts always in other places, their minds thinking about people elsewhere; they could never be in a single existence at one time.

(311)

Desai's characters have suffered in many ways; they are affected by many problems. Sharma in his article "*The Inheritance of Loss: Kiran Desai's Exploration of Multiculturalism, Globalisation, Postcolonial Chaos and Despair*" says about the judge as one of those "ridiculous Indians" "who couldn't rid himself of what they had broken their souls to learn" (205). Desai's novel seems to be combined with multiculturalism and also reveals the effect of extremism and violence in the modern world. "Profit could only be harvested in the gap between nations, working one against the other" (205).

Biju's loneliness makes him leave the US and concentrate more on becoming a wealthy person in Asia. He wants to live a life of fulfilment in his own country. Though one part of him undergoes pain in knowing things, "another part of him had expanded: his self-consciousness, his self-pity" (268).

Desai writes about the state of immigrants in an ironic tone, because they either “churn money or die illegal waiting for green card” (99). Hundred and millions of people become migrant labourers to work in other places and manage from the alienated place bearing all such inhuman conditions. Biju leads his life going to Gandhi Cafe kitchen, attracted by the “free housing” (146) system like all other low workers such as Jeeve, Rishi, Lalkala and Saeed, who pretend themselves to be a “happy family” (146). Through this novel Desai presents the universal human predicament- man’s alienation, social inequality, violent political situations and the beastly side of man.

An expatriate Kiran Desai accurately portrays how the poor and the jobless migrate to America for a better life but suffer a lot due to racial prejudice, social and cultural oppression, exploitation, displacement, inequalities, alienation and disillusionment. The novel has two elements of narratives: On one hand, it deals with the socio-political problems of the people of Kalimpong and also the maturation of Sai into womanhood and on the other it depicts the painful and alienated existence of Indian Diaspora in New York. Through the character of Biju, Desai illustrates how the illegal immigrants undergo agonizing experiences in an alien environment.

The novel analyses how even in the post-colonial era people from colonized countries face insurmountable hardships in America which is known for its celebration of human rights and democracy. While discussing Desai’s treatment of the theme of immigration, Hirsh Sawhney in the review “In the Wide World- *The Inheritance of Loss*” quotes “Desai portrays migration as a universal, multifaceted experience, rescuing it from the clutches of myth and fetishism. Almost fifty years

after the judge went to England, Biju, the cook's son, leads a gruelling existence as an illegal immigrant in New York" (22).

Through the character of judge Jemubhai Patel, Desai satirizes people who, being indifferent to one's own culture and traditions, are wilfully trying to ape an alien culture. By using a pessimistic and witty narrative tone the novelist also satirizes people who are devoid of humaneness and concern for others. The novelist portrays various losses inherited by almost all the principal characters in the novel. While analysing the thematic concerns in the novel *Ragini Ramachandra* in his article "Home, Immigration and Fractured Identities in Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss*" observes: "Made up of various strands the novel presents not merely a kaleidoscopic picture encompassing different countries, continents, climes, cultures, peoples, their struggles and their conflicts, their dreams and their frustrations but also a mature understanding of life itself at various level" (19).

Desai second novel *The Inheritance of Loss* depicts the immigrant life of Biju and Sai both in native and foreign land. These two characters are involved in the internal conflicts of religions in Indian society and mostly the rejection of westernized way of life. Many Indians including the characters of the novel forget the traditional Indian way of life and tend to follow the western culture.

The novel describes the losses and how the characters are trying to cope with them in their life. Desai portrays not only the characters effectiveness but also their failure to communicate disappointments, dissatisfactions. Biju fails in his attempts to lead a successful modern life but is united with his father whereas Sai fails to win the love of Gyan who joins the GNLF movement to support the Nepalese.

Jemu was an intelligent boy in the village—the Outskirts of Piphit. His education compelled the presence of haughty and proved a flawless mixture which moulded him into a dislocated alien and unable to connect with anything native and Indian. His father's aim is to make him a judge which was fulfilled by Jemu Patel, so he went to finish the ICS exam but during his stay in England he never opened himself to the world; instead he is like a dead bud, unacknowledged and unable to connect with other foreign people in the country. A deep crack developed between him and his family: "Jemubhai looked at his father, a barely educated man venturing where he should not be, and the love in Jemubhai's heart mingled with pity, the pity with shame. His father felt his own hand rise and cover his mouth: he had failed his son" (37).

Jemu's real complexity started in England where he joined the college; He kept himself away from the society and worked till late into the night. His unfriendliness and solitude " 'became a habit, the habit became the man, and it crushed him into a shadow . . . despite his attempts to hide, he merely emphasised something that unsettled others. . . . his throat jammed with words unuttered, his heart and mind turned into blunt aching things' " (39) Thus eventually he felt barely human at all. In this way, Jemu is alienated from the society.

The other way of his loss comes through his hatred of his wife who is illiterate and ignorant. He makes her to speak among the people but nothing comes of that. He loses everything, even his wife who makes efforts to speak in English. It makes him lead a worthless life in the family and society. He has lived a false life from the beginning to the end of the novel. His ideals and ambience is as much false as the unsocial life he has been trying to live in his fear and bad temper. Jemu is equal to

Nandakaul who is the character in Anita Desai's *Fire on The Mountain*. Both the characters lead the same way of life. They are not ready to accept outsiders in their life including their relatives.

Shameem in the article "Postcolonial Intervention of Cultural Hybridist of the Diaspora as portrayed in Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss*" quotes Mala Pandurang's views about the novel: "This is a story of as much of loss as it is of bitter longing for a world that eludes each of the characters, as a consequence of their class backgrounds and post modern legacies. They thereby become the inheritors of loss" (53).

Thus the novel establishes Kiran Desai essentially as a writer of social and historical vision. As an accomplished writer she portrays the post - colonial situations both in India and America objectively and comprehensively. She handles the material in her hand with artistic perception and as one who is aware of various issues which affect the modern contemporary society. She seems to advocate a new world order which should be devoid of unnecessary tensions and conflicts. Though she presents the problems of the socially oppressed sect of the Gorkhas with genuine compassion she does not fail to admonish severely political violence and loss of human lives.

## Chapter III

### Loss of Human Dignity

Every human being has his own dignity. Man should have self-respect, before he is respected by others in the society. Kiran Desai's first novel *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard* is a satirical novel which criticises the Indian mentality. The focus of the satire is the Indian sense of religiosity. Shubha Tiwari in the article Kiran Desai's "*Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard* as a Satirical Novel" quotes: "Men never do evil so completely and cheerfully as when they do it from religious conviction" (134). Man is by nature infallible and he makes mistakes without thinking of others.

The protagonist of *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard*, Sampath Chawla is a strange youth who works in a post office; but his job is lifeless and vague. He spends his time by reading other's letters and by enjoying the afternoon rest time. But then fate has something else in store for this unpredictable boy. One day, on behaving wildly at the marriage of his boss's daughter, he loses his job at the post-office and also his dignity. Although he is delighted to be free from the dull job, he is continuously tortured by his father's cynical remarks:

Sampath lifted the ruddy globe of fruit to get a better view of its long-snouted face when, right by his nose, there was a whoosh of movement and Mr Chawla, taking notice of his son's distressing lack of initiative, brought down the rolled-up newspaper - Boom! - hard on the fly, leaving nothing but feeble legs waving above a dirty, jammy mess and a blur of iridescent wing.

“Where is your common sense these days?” said Mr Chawla. . . .

The reply irritated Mr Chawla. (22)

Sampath has failed as a postal clerk and flees from his work and his cruel family to live in a guava tree. There he spends his life in a cloud of meditation and eating the ever-more unusual meals cooked for him by his sociopathic mother Kulfi. There is no hope for Sampath regarding his future. Unless the monkeys leave him, he may get the name of Godman. Till the end of the novel he is not confident in his life but loses his dignity.

Sampath surprises his fellow townspeople by revealing personal details about them collected from bits of letter opened while he worked at the post office. Before long he is known as a local guru and attracts such a large group of visitors that opening hours have to be recognized in the orchard to allow him to rest.

These Godmen have the power, but they are not responsible to anyone. Their authority, therefore, stands as an unchallenged fact to the people. They bathe in milk, eat rich food and maintain heavy bank accounts. Even they can occupy the government land and use it at official cost. There are business tricks involved in the trade just like any other trade. One feels that spirituality is the most profitable business in India and most of the criminals adopt the same concept of Godmen to cheat the people.

Sampath's dignity doesn't work out in the novel despite Sampath considering himself as a Godman at the town of Shahkot. People blame Sampath's activity: “Only Sampath had been left idle, spending many blissful hours dreaming in the tea stalls

and singing to himself in the public gardens, until at last Mr Chawla had found a suitable job for his son” (23).

Even though he is considered a Godman, he has lost his dignity; they seek help from him and people spin their heads in getting at the meaning and the Monkey-Baba is regarded as a great mystic. This novel exposes the blind faith and extreme beliefs of superstitious people. Everything goes well until the arrival in the orchard of a group of lazy monkeys who have developed a taste for alcohol and begin to terrorise the town. The tale continues, with a growing sense of impending doom, as the family and the various officials of the town try to resolve the monkey problem.

As each day passes he seems to think of himself being different from the rest of humanity. “He thought of human beings with bird-beak noses, people with swan necks, cow eyes, bird-heart terror or a dolphin’s love for the ocean. People with sea-water tears, with bark-coloured skin, with stem waists and flower poise, with fuzzy-leaf ears and petal-soft mouths” (122-123).

Even in his family Sampath lost dignity because of his sister . Pinky Chawla, when he is adamant to leave from the tree. She doesn’t allow anyone to advice her or intrude in her privacy; Sampath considers his sister as a child.

One could illustrate the end of Sampath’s actions that are not the result of deep consideration or even passing thought. But, they are rooted by a desire for fulfilment, oblivious of consequences. If it can be called uncontrollable desire, it may even lead to self harm. Sampath seems to be constantly living in a world of his own. “Leave his tree? Never. Never ever, he thought, his body trembling with indignation. . . . He and

his father were as different as black from white, as chickens from potatoes, as peas from buckets. . . . He had left Shahkot in order to be alone” (127-128).

Desai tries to portray the violence of animals and people in this novel. When Sampath considers this tree as his abode and his name becomes “Tree Baba”. People start believing his speech, meaningless. For example, a lady is worried about the bad company of his son. She asks for a solution. His solution is “Add lemons to milk and it will grow sour” (74) he keeps on pronouncing crazy sentences like one mouse is different from the other or one can digest fish or moth will go to the lantern etc. These things show clearly that he is different from others. His behaviour makes others think him as a madman or an eccentric.

Alcoholic monkeys terrorize the pilgrims who gather around Sampath’s tree; after the dreaded monkeys of the town also join him in the tree, Sampath Chawla is re-christened as “Monkey Baba.” Attracted by the taste of liquor, the monkeys create confusion in and around the orchard in their hunt for more liquor. It is then that the hullabaloo begins with everybody from the common inhabitant to the standing military, to the paunchy police trying to get rid of the monkeys menace.

Dark faces full of determination, wild, liquid eyes, they ran with great leaping strides to meet each bus that arrived, each scooter that drove up, searching for liquor of any sort, inspired, no doubt, by the memory of a certain race to the blood, a mysterious lift to the spirits. They grew bolder and bolder, rifling through the contents of bedrolls, grabbing hold of shopping bags and chasing away the owners, who ran off screaming in horror. (124)

The people in the town of Shahkot, feel bad about their condition because of the continuous trouble made by love liquor monkeys around the place. It is also a kind of violence created in this novel. “These monkeys are a terrible business, sir,” said Mr Gupta, pretending hard to be unhappy, but looking, despite it all, very happy indeed” (170). Later on the monkeys create chaos in the orchard. Sampath’s father, Mr. Chawla wishes to get the orchard, the place of his great business free from monkeys. But then passion runs high on all sides. A Monkey Protection Society is formed to save the animals as they are considered sacred in Hindu religion. Indians are wasting their time and energy in useless fights losing their dignity and reduced to the level of animals.

‘They refuse to have their liquor licenses revoked, and also we have received threats from all the surrounding towns saying if we revoke the licenses, the monkeys will simply shift their focus and carry on being a nuisance in their vicinity. . . . monkey populations in other towns if they are thrown out of this one. . . . whole state of drunken monkeys. You yourself are familiar with the adage “One bad apple spoils the others.” In this case we might say, “One bad monkey spoils the others”’. (173-174)

Sampath enjoy his life with the monkeys on the tree. “The man they were trying to reach was at the moment studying the morning papers with great interest. *Monkeys cause menace in holy man’s retreat. Last night drunken monkeys went on a wild rampage, causing people to flee the scene*, he read with unnatural delight” (135).

Sampath’s behaviour makes people think about him sometimes as a God or Crazy man. The spy giggled at Sampath’s appearance in the tree like an animal. Every

human being has his own dignity because God has created them to live a holy and honest life. But, people change their attitude at times and behave like strange persons. Here Sampath's character is completely different from others, which is described through the character;

‘Did you see the newspaper article about the Chawla case? It is completely outrageous. Even the press in this country goes along with this rubbish. In fact, they are the ones who propagate it. They take a rumour and put it into official language and of course everybody who reads it promptly swallows it as the whole truth. This madman belongs in a lunatic asylum and just look at how everybody is running to him bringing him presents.’ (119-120)

Desai explores the ways in which a person loses his dignity and spoils his individual life, hope and confidence. From the beginning of the novel, it shows clearly that his birth is not connected with human but beyond the worldly things. In this novel the spy who cheated or judged the qualities of Sampath in a ridicule way that:

‘Hmph,’ snorted the spy, who was, to tell the truth, a little unsettled by this new occurrence ‘No doubt it is just well-developed human-monkey interaction,’ he said.

‘Human-monkey interaction,’ said Miss Jyotsna, highly offended by this disrespect being paid to her old colleague. ‘Go ahead, brother, you try your hand at human-monkey interaction and get sent to hospital covered with monkey bites’. (109)

At the end of the novel, Sampath has lost his dignity when people realized the truth. The great name of Monkey Baba and his popularity sustained by the monkeys' population and his power as Godman are reduced to nothing. His relationship with the monkeys gave him only everlasting pain. Sampath's life ends in a meaningless way because he seeks the forest as his abode and the monkeys as his companions, which symbolically represent the reduction of his status from a human to an animal. Hence the loss of his dignity as a human being. When the spy speaks ill of Monkey Baba and the monkeys,

Miss Jyotsna turned around ferociously to face him. The two-faced hypocrite! Here he had been coming to the orchard every day, professing his affection for Monkey Baba, noting down everything he said, and now he was advocating something that could only bring Monkey Baba pain. In fact, if the monkeys were removed they would not even be able to call the Monkey Baba Monkey Baba any more, for there would be no more monkeys.

(159)

Soon after the departure of the monkeys, people are not ready to pay any attention to Sampath's speech. They think that his power has left him. He loses his dignity and hates people who are filled with dirt and suspicion. He wants to escape from people who mock at his behaviour and blame his spirituality. His mind is filled with darkness and he dislikes everything in the world. He feels sick-physically and mentally.

Sampath leant over the edge of his cot and threw up. The vomit burnt him like acid, leaving his insides corroded and empty. Only

the black hole of horrible anticipation he had felt for the past few weeks was left intact.

When the visitors were finally made to leave by Mr Chawla, they retreated not quiet and ashamed-looking, but shouting even louder to claim that the Baba's indigestion was the fault of whoever was arguing against them. (167)

However, Sampath loses his self-respect also if he will take a remedy to preserve his dignity, he would hold the name of Monkey Baba. Even Chawla thinks that the family will come to shame by Sampath's actions and he thinks that his dignity must be saved without thinking about Sampath. He says: "They are making a mockery of us," . . . his sense of dignity hurt. 'It is getting too much. People will think you are a circus act. Sitting in the tree with drunken monkeys! We must put you in a proper building immediately'" (127).

Kiran Desai's *Inheritance of Loss* which won the prestigious Man Booker Prize express same cause of immigrant life and presenting the loss of identity, and loss of history, background and belonging. Indian writers in English have mainly contributed to current fact of life all along with postcolonial historicity. Aysha Vishwamohan in the article "Home, Immigration, and Fractured identities in Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss*" quotes Salman Rushdie's remarks in his *Imaginary Homelands*: "We are not gods but wounded creatures, cracked lenses, capable only of fractured perceptions" (259).

*The Inheritance of Loss* expresses in a powerful way the meaning of colonialism and its effectiveness, its focus, highlights and impact. Her novel deals

with the issues globalization, multiculturalism, and terrorist violence and the characters express their dreams, loves, hopes, challenges and longing for happiness.

The old, rusty gun in the bungalow of the retired judge is symbolic of this crude and heavy power which has somehow found its way into the hands of the educated and stylish anglicized and partly-anglicized who were close to the passage of power than those who were strike and gasping for breath in violent poverty. “Those who could see a difference between a holy cow and an unholy cow would win.

Those who couldn't see it would lose” (136).

Individuals like Jemubhai, the retired judge and Lola or Noni, who, though the colonizers have departed, still suffer from a colonial hangover, find their position undermined and also openly challenged as the action of the novel unfolds. The incidents that take place due to the Indo-Nepali insurgency in the area are largely instrumental in doing this.

Right at the beginning, upsetting the existing equations of power, young Indo-Nepali insurgents enter Cho Oyu, the judge's residence, in an open challenge to his authority and power and take away his guns. Not only this, they also insult and humiliate the judge instructing him to lay the table since they are hungry and wish to have snacks. He is even made to say that Jai Gorkha and that he is a fool. At this moment the judge, his granddaughter Sai and his Cook fear that “. . . the world was upside down and absolutely anything could happen” (6). The Indo-Nepalese feel that they are treated like a minority in their own area where they are in majority. They want at least their own state if not their own country.

Though the judge has retired now, his position still gives him authority and power as can be estimated from the remark of the police officer who opines that the robbery of guns from a retired member of the Indian Civil Services cannot simply be ignored. But as the protest for the Gorkhaland continues to be more serious, leading even to bloodshed, the established chain of command is leftover and the judge, as part of it loses his power. Sanjay Solanki in the article “Glittering ruins of the Past in *The Inheritance of Loss*” talks about the effect:

Jemu is completely othered: from his own country, race, culture and even his own self. He trips off the center so violently and completely that he never for once tries to fit back into the most naturally ordained place for him by birth. His alterity is so deep that immediately after his retirement he flies for a faraway place to settle in with his pet, far from anyone who could claim an acquaintance or even hint recognition . . .

(140)

His typical dislocation into the nowhere region of psychedelic landscape where recognition or familiarity become displeasing, uncalled for and even dangerous.

This is clear from the response that he gets from the police when he reports the theft of his dog. Not only do they do anything about it, they also laugh at him, ridiculing him, something that they could not have done earlier. Once again in India’s history a man from the lower castes is put down due to no fault of his own. This exposes the vagueness of post colonialism.

Desai’s novel develops clear parallels between these two types of violence, suggesting the danger inherent in any easy dichotomy that pits the human against

nature, society against the environment. This comprehensive view can also illuminate other texts from India or from anywhere where populations are exposed to relatively harsh environmental, economic or political forces such as parts of China and Africa.

One of the most horrific acts of violence in the novel is perpetrated against the town drunk, whom the police treat as a scapegoat for the Cho Oyu robbery. They brutalize the man, and “The more he screamed the harder they beat him; they reduced him to a pulp, bashed his head until blood streamed down his face, knocked out his teeth kicked . . .

His were the first screams and they heralded the end of normal life on the hillside” (226).

The only grace was that he wouldn’t see them recoiling and would disappear entirely inside the alcohol that had always given him solace” (227).

Desai vivisects the judge’s cruelty to his wife in the past and to the cook in the present with harrowing details that are not overly sentimental, but merely repulsive in the calmness of its retelling:

One day he found footprints on the toilet seat- *she was squatting on it, she was squatting on it!*-he could barely contain his outrage, took her head and pushed it into the toilet bowl, and after a point, Nimi, made invalid by her misery, grew very dull, began to fall asleep in heliographic sunshine and wake in the middle of the night. (173)

Again “Biju thought of Saeed . . . who still refused to eat a pig,

Biju left as a new person, a man full to the brim with a wish to live within a narrow purity” (136-137).

The force of narrative voice seems to approve of this self-satisfied clarity of Biju. It implies the personal beliefs; ethical stand and moral concerns that can obtain as one grows up in a specific atmosphere need to be absorbed into a solidly fixed structure of conscious or sub conscious value system. A partial or complete want of this system results in moral isolation. An extreme instance of this privacy exists in this novel itself in the form of Jemubhai. His seclusion is more of this moral seclusion than a physical one.

This stygian condition is no different from those of refugees in the war-torn territories, quite like the helpless mouse that Saeed catches at the Queen of Tarts and makes a plaything of. Saeed “kicked it up with his shoe, dribbled it, tried to exchange it with Biju, who ran away, tossed it up, and as it came down, kicked it squeaking up again . . . it came down” (94).

This image of a helpless rodent is emphasized, telescoped and qualified by the image of a miniscule dead insect seen by Biju in the sack of basmati rice that had been introduced all the way from India. It overcomes Biju’s emotion and “he almost wept in sorrow and marvel at its journey, which was tenderness for his own journey” (191).

It carries Biju over to grieving for the deplorable poverty in his own country: “In India almost nobody would be able to afford this rice, and you had to travel around the world to be able to eat such things where they were cheap enough that you could gobble them down without being rich; and when you got home to the place . . .”

(191) Their rootlessness and loneliness even reduced them to a less condition of hope that might have humiliated on them in their native lands. Hence: “you saw more buildings going up like a jungle creepers, starved for light, holding a perpetual half darkness congealed at the bottom” (189).

The judge’s past reveals him to be a young man, alienated by the coldness of Cambridge people. “despite his attempts to hide, he merely emphasized something that unsettled others. For entire days nobody spoke to him at all . . . elderly ladies . . . moved over when he sat next to them in the bus, so he knew that whatever they had, they were secure in their conviction that it wasn’t even remotely as bad as what *he* had” (39).

The judge’s return to India makes him think about the cultural divergence during his life in England. Through he learnt about the western culture, he does not know how to but manage or live in the western country. When he comes back to India, he feels that the English culture is very humiliating and he is filled with disgust and anger. He faced many difficulties that he is unable to contact foreigners whose culture differs from him. It is one of the harshest experiences revealed in this novel. He loses his dignity when he is living in England. He has many bitter experiences in his life without gaining any success.

Kiran Desai mocks at the characters of Jemubhai and his friend Bose because they long for ‘dignified personality’; they avoid other Indian students and places frequented by them because they think that such things may not help them in this regard. These people who long for a dignified life suffer from colonial hangover and find their position very feeble and also challenged because of the terrorists. The terrorists largely conquer the upper class society with their violence. They take

everything from their house without any concern for them. From the beginning of the novel itself the novelist portrays how violence has been rampant in Kalimpong.

Desai realistically shows how a peaceful march goes terribly wrong when violence suddenly erupts. No one knows the source but things get worse when the police open fire and thirteen local boys are dead. The riot continues; jeeps are pushed into the ravine; buses are set on fire and all suffer –the police, the unwilling participants like the cook and the rebels. The fact that saddens the cook the most is that instead of fighting their enemies or building hatred against them they are fighting against their own people. The novelist describes the horror of the situation. The roads are closed, and there is curfew every night.

Jemu recalls his memories of the past-how the guerrilla outfits came to steal the gun from his house “screamed like a bunch of schoolgirls, retreated down the steps to cower behind the bushes blurred by mist” (4). Desai highlights the violent power of Nepal insurgents which revolve around the novel.

The rise and fall of the final are difficult, mingled with negative thoughts and minimal directness to the possibility of hope, of bringing back the confidence among the people. There is no declaration for the Nepal insurgents but to abandon everything in Kalimpong getting used to the violence, surprised by the dull of it all, upset by scattered of missing hope, neighbourly irritations. “The most ordinary swept up in extraordinary hatred, because extraordinary hatred was, after all, a common place event” (295).

When judge’s pet dog misses, people mock at his behaviour. He loses his dignity and in his anguish he orders the cook to leave the house. He beats the cook

cruelly which act brings out the fact that he does not behave in a dignified manner; nor does he understand that everyone has his own dignity.

Jemu loses his balance when he gets low marks in the Indian Civil Service exam and thanks the Indians for supporting his studies. Though he studies very hard for years in England, he fails in exams. However, he achieves his goal of passing the ICS examination anyway. He is considered an Anglophile who admires England and adopts the western mannerisms and avoids everything from India, even his wife.

The judge starts thinking about himself as a victim of racism and colonialism when he is in England, but on his return to India, he distances himself from his family and indefinitely dominates the people around-his wife. Desai writes about this aspect thus:

He found he began to be mistaken for something he wasn't- a man of dignity. This accidental poise became more important than any other thing. He envied the English. He loathed Indians. He worked at being English with the passion of hatred and for what he would become, he would be despised by absolutely everyone, English and Indians, both.

(119)

Here Desai explores that the judge's present state brings shame to the cook, and the rich households of neighbourhood. The cook was ashamed by his poverty and by the financial collapse of his employer, the cook becomes a repository of prejudices that he passes onto the younger generation such as Sai, Gyan and Biju. The cook believes. "Nepalis make good soldiers, coolies, but they are not so bright at their studies. Not their fault, poor things" (73).

Biju's experience with other fellow human beings in America, make him think that people with their American dream may be drawn towards America like a magnet but for him, it is a rude experience. Desai portrays the harsh reality; the way the Americans treats the immigrants: "Above, the restaurant was French, but below in the kitchen it was Mexican and Indian. And, when a Paki was hired, it was Mexican, Indian, Pakistani" (21). Her depiction of two different cultures makes Desai's writing more effective as it expresses the painful situations of the immigrants. The Indians are accorded only a low place in America.

Another example for the loss of human dignity can be taken from the life of the Judge. Nimi the uneducated woman becomes Jemu's "other." For Jemu, Nimi is the unknown or third world woman, rigid in time, space, history with no will power and mind of her own. He considers Nimi and her relatives as unworthy people without any self-respect or affection and he feels disgusted by her appearance "The pungency of her red hair oil" (172) The relationship is described as "rage with enough muscle in it for entire nations coupled in hate" (173).

After passing his exams Jemubhai continues to be in Cambridge on two years of probation. Paid three hundred pounds a year by the Secretary of State for India, he tries to rise above his earlier sense of inadequacy. To overcome his self-hatred, Jemubhai begins to wear around himself an aura of dignity. He works at his pronunciation, acquires British habits and begins to hate everything Indian. But ultimately he belongs to neither England nor India and is hated by both the English and the Indians. His character sinks low because he never treats his wife with dignity.

The worst outcome of the monster that the judge has eventually become is his mistreatment of his wife Nimi, on his return to India. She becomes an essence for

everything he hates about India. “He did not like his wife’s face, searched for his hatred, found beauty, dismissed it. Once it had been a terrifying beckoning thing that had made his heart turn to water, but now it seemed beside the point. An Indian girl could never be as beautiful as an English one” (168).

Desai pays more attention towards Jemu and his estrangement from his wife; it can be learnt from his appearance among the people. He uses the English language, use the powder puff to his face and he has brought back from England that sisters are remark that they send her abroad to become gentleman, and instead of her has become a lady.

He conceals his own sense of inferiority and inexperience under a garb of fury and hatred. “. . . any cruelty to her became irresistible. He would teach her the same lessons of loneliness and shame he had learned himself. In public, he never spoke to her looked in her direction” (170).

Totally ignored and neglected, Nimi lives for weeks without speaking to anyone. If she could not get the name of a food item in English it was removed from her plate. Even her expressions would fill him with fury. Finally due to constant abuse she grows to be a dull, lifeless woman with her beauty destroyed their relationship a mass of bitterness and hatred. The strangely violent relationship between the judge and his wife is a powerful comment by the writer on the status of women in India and the way women are treated without dignity.

Later, the judge, in fear that he would kill her in a fit of rage, sends her back to Gujarat where she gives birth to their only child. When the judge refuses to let either his wife or his daughter return to him, the daughter is sent to a boarding school and

Nimi is forced to reside with her sister. The novels of Kiran Desai approach the problem differently but all the protagonists seek a life of dignity. Nimi in Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss* not only fails to assert herself in any way but is also a victim of circumstances which eventually defeat her.

Desai talks about human dignity and the loss of self respect by the protagonist Jemubhai Patel from Piphit, Gujarat. He is called by Desai as "a Lizard man". The novelist sums up the brutal picture of Jemubhai that: "Now Jemubhai wondered if he had killed his wife for the sake of false ideals. Stolen her dignity, shamed his family, shamed hers, turned her into the embodiment of their humiliation" (308).

Desai is concerned with the darkened side of globalization which creates a great division between the rich and poor. She criticizes the contemporary socio political situation and their resolution. It gives birth to class-differences, inequality, and insurgency. It also pictures how the person faces difficulties in his life by the terrorists. When his pet dog Mutt is lost, Judge Jemubhai cries as if his own very heart was gone. His desolation may be due to his unfulfilled longing for company.

Gyan's involvement with separatist group reflects the young Indian's deep rooted involvement Gyan is ready to sacrifice the love for Sai. "A feeling of martyrdom crept over him" (175) and he is buried and slowly changed by his forgetfulness from his mind. Setting fire, strike, stealing goods and the violent reactions were the general protest of the time.

Sai becomes an embodiment of colonialism and racism for Gyan. He considers Sai as upper westernized Indian who is responsible for the mistreatment of Nepalese.

Sai at Cho Oyu also sat contemplating desire, fury, and stupidity. She tried to suppress her hunger, but it kept bubbling up; she tried to compromise her own feelings, but they wouldn't bend.

. . . After all, one could then logically continue the argument and make a case against speaking English, as well, or eating a patty at the Hasty Tasty-all matters against which Gyan could hardly defend himself. She spent some time developing her thoughts against his to show up all the cracks.

. . . she said to the emptiness. 'My dignity is worth a thousand of you.'  
(175)

Sai declares "there is exactly one reason why you will get nowhere because you don't deserve to" (286). Gyan calls Sai as a duplicate of the west. Sai and Gyan's relationship ends as they have been conscious of the cultural differences between them. Desai's asserts that even young people can never escape from their past and identity.

Gyan considers that love is not suitable to him because he is from poor background. However, their love dies before it fully blossoms. Even when they are in love, Gyan hates her for imitating the western manners and for celebrating Christmas. He shouts her: "I am not interested in Christmas". "Why do you celebrate Christmas? You're Hindus and you don't celebrate Id or Guru Nanak's birthday or even Durga Puja or Dusshera or Tibetan New Year" (163).

He called her a "copycat"- "Don't you know, these people you copy like a copycat, THEY DONT WANT YOU!!!!" (164). Due to her convent education, Sai

has taken to the western manners, whereas Gyan wants her to follow Indian manners. So he blames her and her like for the condition of India: “You are like slaves, that’s what you are, running after the West, embarrassing yourself. It’s because of people like you we never get anywhere” (163).

Inhabiting the land of Kalimpong where the national border is indistinct, the Indian-Nepalese community appeals to live with dignity, forty years after independence and partition. Desai points out the radical blood of separation that the Indian Nepalese community, GNLF adopts in the revolution. The love of Sai and Gyan is sacrificed at the altar of this insurrection. After attending a GNLF political campaign by accident, Gyan joins the nationalist movement for an independent Nepalese State.

The origin of GNLF movement is narrated thus:

‘In 1947, brothers and sisters, the British left granting India her freedom, granting the Muslims Pakistan, granting special provisions for the scheduled castes and tribes, leaving everything taken care of, brothers and sisters-

‘Except us. EXCEPT US. The Nepalis of India. At that time, in April of 1947, the Communist party of India demanded a Gorkhasthan, but the request was ignored. . . . We are laborers on the tea plantations, coolies dragging heavy loads, soldiers. And are we allowed to become doctors and government workers, owners of tea plantations? *No!* We are kept at the level of servants. (158)

Gyan joins the movement and he makes himself informer to the group of insurgents who plan to steal the gun from judge's home at Cho Oyu, and seize his rifles. However, he realizes that there is a difference between his life styles and the movement and hence wishes that he did not belong to this community. This leads him to the point of self reproach and hatred. The elderly sisters who are tutors at the judge's house Noni and Lola also find that they are harmed by the mindless act of violence when they are forced to give shelter to the terrorists who build huts over their land, supporting the destructive activities. All these happenings show that man becomes equal to an animal when he loses his dignity.

Father Booty, the Swiss Christian, has been living in Kalimpong for nearly forty five years. He has become of a victim of insurgency, is running a milk dairy for the people in Kalimpong and in the words of Sai he "had done much more for development in the hills than any of the locals . . ." (223). Since he has no plan to go back to his native country he did not bother about renewing his residence permit. "He knew that he was a foreigner but had lost the notion that he was anything but an Indian foreigner" (200). Because the Gorkhas do not want outsiders to continue to live in Kalimpong the local administration takes steps to deport the priest to his native country.

He is shown no humanity, his selfless service to the community vanished, and he is forced out from the position or job as a "foreigner." The world is made up on a strange aspect of innocence, changing colonial tastes, using English instead of mother tongue in a colonial attitude when all these break up in the society. Sai becomes very upset at the violent change that gave the painful experience of love in her life, she admits herself into an unpleasant situation.

Kiran Desai explores the past life of the judge, Lola and others, displacing them from their comfort zones of alternate secondary worlds which they had made to bury their past memories of insecurities and failures. She also portrays the world of reality where the Nepalese face insecure and unhappy. The political unrest shows the way the shattering of the peace in the society as sections of people involve in disloyal activities.

The Cook is yet another character who does not give importance to human dignity as he always begs and seeks mercy from others. The cook is indifferent to life and he has no high expectations from life. He keeps begging for mercy and pity without ever sensing his own importance and self-respect. He had never learnt to live life with dignity and responsibility even among his own people: ““*Ai aaa, ai aaa,*” he joined his palms together, begging them, “please, I’m a poor man, please”” (5). His only expectation is the settlement of his only son, Biju. For this, he sends him to the U.S, but his migration is the result of globalization. Tessa Hadley observes in the article “Exotic to whom?” “Kiran Desai addresses herself to an Indian culture in which globalization isn’t imagined but experienced, whether in exile abroad or as a result of painful social and cultural displacements within the country itself.” (25) Like the judge’s father, the Cook too sends his son, Biju to a foreign land. The Cook dreams of a better standard of living after Biju returns with riches. But Biju is disillusioned after experiencing life in America.

The Cook’s son Biju is an honest man in the village of Kalimpong. He also longs for relationship with the west as it represents an ideal world of wealth and luxury. When Biju gets the green card, he goes home with “assets” and symbols of

growth only to be trapped by the terrorists, who robbed him of all his earnings and threaten to kill him.

When Biju is trapped, he is forced to wear a night dress which is type of cloth worn by woman during night time. It means a loss of human dignity. The surrounding environment threatens Biju to surrender “the nostalgic and immigrant experience that he spent in his New York days and in their place is the hostile space of the fresh landslide,” evoking the same feeling of dread which is echoed in *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard* when the down pour makes Kulfı Chawla feels as through “she might herself turn to storm” (10).

The young people Gyan, Sai and Biju achieve self-realization. Biju who gives up his American Dream and returns to his native when he feels himself to be “a fake version of himself” (268), like Harish-Harry. In the character of Indian Restaurateur, Harish-Harry with his co-workers, “Biju was learning, indicated a deep rift that he hadn’t suspected when he first walked in and found him, a manifestation of that clarity of principle which Biju was seeking” (147).

The entire novel deals with the background of insurgency raised in the North East region that is GNLf movement which destroyed the normal life of people, business and peace. A dismal picture of the region with its poverty, unemployment, socio-economic backwardness, fear of people discriminatory policies and the government’s attempt to find remedies are deeply rooted in the separatist movements.

Desai holds the policy makers responsible for such risings: “This state-making,” Lola continued, “biggest mistake that fool Nehru made. Under his rules any group of idiots can stand up demanding a new state and get it, too. . . .

“it all started with Sikkim. The Neps played such a dirty trick and began to get grand ideas-now they think they can do the same thing again” (128) “Gorkhaland for Gorkhas” (7) is the only intention of the GNLF movement; the activists work on universal guerrilla fashion. Indian Nepalese are annoyed for being treated like the minority in place where they were the majority. They want their own state so that they could manage their own affairs.

Desai brings out in graphic manner, Jemubhai’s distressed attempt to avoid his Indian connection: “Jemu picked up the package, fled to the deck, and threw it overboard. Didn’t his mother think of the inappropriateness of her gesture? Undignified love, Indian love, stinking, anaesthetic love-the monsters of the ocean could have what she had so bravely packed getting up in that predawn mush” (38). This above quote not only clears about the author’s sympathies, but also an eloquent exploration of Jemubhai’s physic near-sightedness.

In 1980s Gorkhas demand that they want their own state at least. Their motive to plan for strikes, explanations and violence which frequently overstated the human life in Kalimpong and other parts also reflects the same kind of anger, hatred and homelessness. They protest against the government to give their own land for Gorkhas. Noni felt about sufferings of Gorkhas and remembers that the people were taken it from other states like Assam, Meghalaya. The story tells how Gyan has suffered by the inhuman treatment. Desai’s novel is concerned with the cultural difference and deals with terrorist violence in the contemporary society.

Jemu’s treatment of cook considers inhuman behaviour which violates himself than his wife. His behaviour is almost like his pet dog Mutt who sits in the same place, he sits before his Chess. The sadist attitude of Judge’s real character revealed

when the dog is missing: the cook fails to catch his pet dog but judge beats cook very cruelly and torture him kill an animal. “He wants to *kill me*. *Let* him kill me. What is my life? . . . It’s useless to you and to me. Kill me! May be that will give you satisfaction” (320). After beating the cook, “The judge lye exhausted in his bed. The cook sat hunched in the kitchen, his face still in the grip of a nightmare” (323).

There is something about Desai’s description that touches on humour, yet it is much too painful to be funny. Even the judge’s dog is wrong-footed: “Mutt began to do what she always did when she met strangers: she turned a furiously wagging bottom to the intruders and looked around from behind, smiling, conveying both shyness and hope” (4).

Desai takes a sceptical view of the west’s consumer driven multiculturalism, noting the “sanitized elegance of Lola’s daughter’s British accented voice, which is triumphant over any horrors the world might thrust upon others” (209). Desai carefully threads the private and personal into a wider political framework. The hostility between a husband and wife becomes globally proportioned.

Desai portrays how the loss of human dignity leads people to that human relationship and other valuable virtues. Silambarasan in the article “Theme of Colliding Cultures in Kiran Desai’s *The Inheritance of Loss*.” quotes:

As a twenty-first century novelist, Kiran Desai has tried to explore into the sense of new postcolonial India struggle with problems of ethnicity, religion and representation, and to stick down the depression of post-modern capitalist societies seeking to balance the demands of

their new citizens, the novel magnificently reminds the readers there are several scope of experience to stake. (209)

Kiran Desai's the post colonial world is depicted with frightening intensity. The scars left by centuries of subjugation cannot be wiped out so easily. As India stands on the crossroads, there is need to reconsider, to address the issue of globalization, and rethink how far immigration is the panacea for the ills of the downtrodden.

Jandial in a review "Towards Emancipation: Feminist images in the Novels of Anjana Appachana, Kiran Desai and Kavita Daswani" states: "Finally as the novel draws to a close, Biju returns home, shedding for the first time in many days the unbearable arrogance and shame of being an immigrant. With a sense of resolve, Sai decides to leave Cho Oyu. Gyan dissociates himself from the Movement. With the reunion of the cook and his son" (91).

Desai describes, "The five peaks of the Kanchenjunga turned golden with the kind of luminous light that made you feel, if briefly, that truth was apparent" (324). The title of the book, says these little failures, in a way, are passed down from generation to generation. These may be the loss of childhood, or the loss of innocence in the face of a brutal life, or the loss of human dignity and hope—hope which is knocked down bit by bit.

## Chapter IV

### Need for Human Relationship

Man is a social animal and every human being depends upon others for their survival and for sharing their emotions and experiences. Without relationship with others man would be alone in the world. Even in the family, people need to maintain relationship with others so as to live a happy and successful life.

Sampath feels trapped in his life and hence wants to escape from the boring and dull life. He is not satisfied with his job at the post office nor does he try to make it interesting. His father, Mr Chawla is an average middle-class man, who, though dominant and hard, cannot have joy because of his son who never obeys his father. Being a business man he is able to derive the maximum benefit through his efforts to make Sampath a “godman”.

When the family does not leave him, Sampath is not ready to join his family. He wants to live alone in the forest with the monkeys. His behaviour is entirely different from other human beings. His father tries to counsel him on how he could get a better job or at least a raise in his salary at the post office where he works. He pays no attention to his father’s advice.

‘Oh, leave him alone,’ said Ammaji. ‘His stars are good. This is just a temporary phase. Give him a good head massage every day and the obstruction to his progress will go away.’

But the world is round, said Ammaji, pleased by her own cleverness.

‘Wait and see! Even if it appears he is going downhill, he will come up

out on the other side. Yes, on the top of the world. He is just taking the longer route.’(26)

He spends his time reading through the letters and getting to know about others’ personal details. He derives cheap pleasure out of this and uses the information gathered while talking to others in the proper place whereby others consider him a ‘fortune teller.’

Sampath decides to run away from the house and take his abode in the guava tree near the small town of Shahkot. The novel clearly shows that Sampath has been affected by the country life and his family. His parents decide to consult an astrologer and arrange his marriage to bring about a change in his attitude. But the marriage ends up only as a failure, because the bride tries to climb Sampath's tree, but falls down and runs away to her parents.

Sampath feels that he has gained complete freedom from all forms of pressure when he arrives at the orchard. He seeks his identity through preaching people about their secrets and future actions. He is called “Monkey Baba” or “Tree Baba.”

In February, this picture was even printed in *Times of India*, together with the headline, ‘The Baba of Shahkot in his Tree Abode.’ *This peaceful orchard outside Shakhnot, it read, has been transformed by a glut of visitors rushing to see the hermit of Shahkot, whose rare simplicity and profound wisdom are bringing solace and hope to many who are disheartened by these complicated and corrupt times.* (119)

Sampath's birth also was not one of the usual ones and his birth has been considered magical. Sampath's mother, the "enormously large" Kulfi attracted the entire Shahkot's attention during her pregnancy. Desai writes: "People stopped short in amazement as she walked down the street. How big she was! They forgot their dealings in the almost empty marketplace. They teetered on their bicycles as they looked around for just another sight of that stomach extending improbably before her like a huge growth upon a slender tree," (4) and "Meal after meal of just rice and lentils could not begin to satisfy the hunger that grew inside Kulfi" (5).

Sampath Chawla doesn't do anything strange in his childhood but suddenly he has greatness thrust on him. Sampath is a typical young man who daydreams; he feels lost in his family. He longs for space and silence which is difficult to achieve in the noisy household and noisier town in which he lives. He has an indistinct desire for all things beautiful which triggers all his troubles.

Every action of Sampath shows him to be different. When Dr. Banerjee tries to convince him to come down from the tree he is not ready to do so. He remarks about him: "He is a crazy person," beaming, the mirth of the entire situation too much for him. "Nobody except God can do anything about that" (56).

When Sampath shocks the townspeople by revealing their secrets (he has collected by reading the mail while in the post office), they think that he has divine powers. Word spreads about the new Godman who can answer all questions. Kulfi roams around in her own way and helps him by supplying him with food. Kulfi is the defining factor in Sampath's journey towards a simpler lifestyle. From his very beginning, he is influenced by a kind of other-worldliness, a carelessness of thought

that is typified by constant dreaming and disconnectedness and inability to function within civilization's norms.

Sampath shuns noise, but until the end he cannot manage to find the silence he craves for. Rather than the easy calm that Kulfi is able to crave out of her surroundings, Sampath unsuccessfully flees the sounds of society, which he finds demanding and invasive. He, unlike Kulfi is forced to make compromises to navigate the dichotomy of intrusive noise and exquisite silence: to find peace, he must first disturb it. Freedom is his ultimate goal, and that freedom constitutes a kind of anti-being, a stillness that is one with nature and in harmony with the warm murmurs in its depths.

The irritating sleep sounds of his family cause him to run to the roof; the clamor generated by their harping causes him to flee to the crown of a tree, overlooking the ensuing hullabaloo below. Sampath is able to save the monkeys and find a new home for himself; His dream is to become an important part of nature which becomes a reality. "How beautiful it was here, how exactly as it should be. This orchard matched something he had imagined all his life: myriad green-skinned globes growing sweet-sour and marvellous upon a hillside with enough trees to fill the eye and enough fruit to scent the air" (50). He enjoys his life with the monkeys but not with human beings.

Sampath and his mother Kulfi engage with their reality in highly artistic ways. Kulfi does so vibrantly, Sampath more weakly, as if his claim to artistry is genetically diluted. When Desai draws the curtains back so that the reader can peek into Sampath's mind, the readers are taken to a different realm. They would tiptoe in to a portal to an ante-chamber cut off from the din of the outside world leaving behind the

alternately persistent, prodding, and angry voices of Mr Chawla, the mob, and government officials. So very concrete is the transition from the noisy, crowded reality of the devotees surrounding him to the limpid, dreamy, underwater stillness of his own mental processes:

Sampath looked at the tree that was such a good home . . . here, sitting not too high and not too low, he had seen the world in a absolute clarity for the first time, the days emerging as if purified from nights of a clean and brilliant blackness. The sunlight coming in through the leaves at daybreak, shifting and flickering, breathing its fire breath upon the bark, falling now and then upon Sampath, whom it treated as if he were not the solid being that he was, scattering him like water . . . he felt weightless here, rocked by this lambent light, lapped by the swell of flower and grass, of leaves as rich as fruit being warmed to their different scents.

Desai's depiction of the guava orchard and, specifically, the guava tree which Sampath Chawla climbs in an effort to escape is lush, ripe with fruit, and perfect for perching on in peace. Sampath wittingly goes towards this tree and, in fleeing civilization; he is landed in a fruit-bearing, sheltering tree that gives him a newfound sense of peace and simplicity. Both Kulfi and Sampath are, in a sense, traders in the commodity of the unseen. Kulfi buys her life's purpose with the lavish meals she prepares exclusively for Sampath, made with ingredients mysterious to the rest of the world. From the outset of the novel, Sampath's mother, Kulfi, is depicted in magical terms. Throughout the novel, she expresses a sense of vague longing, that lonely sensation one has when it is clear that there exists some purpose or plan for one's life but the plan is not at all clear. Kulfi's "house was small for her big desire" (4).

With the advancement of her pregnancy, Kulfi becomes heavy and uncomfortable; “she seemed to be claiming all the earth's energy for herself, sapping it dry, leaving it withered, shrunken and yellow” (3). Kulfi represents the incarnate desire for meaning in life beyond the daily drudgery of going to work and returning home again, of going through the motions of a well-meaning life. Kulfi leaves the townspeople to their own doings. She neither integrates herself into the life of the bazaar; nor does she ingratiate herself to any of the people in town who hold positions of relative power. She keeps to herself, chin set straight ahead, mind clearly focused on “a point invisible to everybody but herself. She walked through Shahkot like this, as distracted as this, as strange as this” (4).

Despite the drought that has overcome Shahkot, Kulfi is determined to supply her rapacious desire. She bribes the vegetable and meat sellers at the bazaar as she is always driven by a brutal hunger. When she begins to feel the movements of the baby inside of her, her hunger seems to be ever-increasing; Kulfi reacts by drawing pictures of eating scenes and pictures of food all over the walls of the Chawla family home “in desperation for another landscape” (7).

Kulfi's isolation from society is established at the outset; her blossoming pregnancy is borne alone, in rooms cut off from the worried whisper of her husband and mother-in-law. The eccentricity of her character becomes the talk of the townspeople: ‘Oh dear, what is going to become of this woman?’ said Laksmiji, the Raipur, the Bengali teacher, and all of the others when they looked out of their windows, when they gossiped at the tea stall or sat in each other's eating peanuts together. There was always something odd about her,’ they said” (5).

Kulfi's hunger during her first pregnancy and then another has settled into a permanent obsession with food. As the years progress, she grows more peculiar. Ignoring completely the hullabaloo created by her husband, she continues to stare out of the window while her daughter complains about the choice of news items being read aloud. Desai presents Kulfi and Sampath as eccentrics involved with strange actions in their life. They want to live their life without any concern for others and also different from common people. They need to live alone in their own world without being disturbed by the noisy world.

Kulfi's genius does not become a cause for reverence, yet Sampath's "gift" for inscrutable wisdom does. Within the theme of noise and silence, it becomes evident that Kulfi can never be the centre of attention, for she is already too invisible, too far beyond the grasp of the crowd; her culinary activities engage no one but Sampath. On the other hand, when first confronted by the mob when he was on the tree, Sampath cowers into the corner that initiates his meteoric rise to holiness, blurting out their epistolary secrets.

Both characters represent an exaggeration of the extreme desire to stand alone, to have one's way on one's own terms. Sampath's mother, meanwhile, finds in the orchard relief from traditional Indian family life and middle-class respectability by devoting herself to creating increasingly mysterious curries. Sampath longs for a little silence and some time for himself, both of which are difficult to come by in a small Indian town. He seems out of touch with reality going on these wild day dreams just like his mother Kulfi did when she was young.

For Pinky Chawla too, there is no special emotional bonding with her brother. She spends her time below the tree where Sampath stays but she has no idea why he is

up there. She makes no attempt at understanding him; in this she is like the rest of her family. In the initial stages, she was intensely embarrassed by her brother's antics. Later she wonders why no one sympathizes with him. Pinky develops relationship with Hungry Hop Ice Cream Boy but after facing many obstacles she joins him..

In the meanwhile she realized her life that, This was a not a feeling she had ever before; it was different from the exasperation or amusement she had usually experienced in relation to him . . . now she felt she too understood the dreadfulness of life, recognize the need to be by herself with sadness, and from this moment of realization onwards, she spent hours sitting under Sampath's tree. (109-110)

However, her close relationship with him is let off immediately by her.

*The Inheritance of Loss* is a conjoined narrative structure covering in its fictional frame work socio-political situations marked by class differences, inequality, insurgence and terrorist violence which break the individuals' lives. The tragic fate of human lives is performed against the backdrop of historical forces which are clearly powerful and not under individuals control.

Even at a young age Jemubhai was sent to England for his higher studies. His sufferings and humiliations in an alien land make him feel lonely. When he comes back the only solace during his loneliness is his pet dog Mutt. Sai remarks on him that, "*Oh, Grandfather more lizard than human. Dog more human than dog. Sai's face upside down in her soup spoon*" (32). Jemu does not realise the importance of human bonding. Desai depicts the life of Jemubhai in Cambridge where he suffers from isolation. He grows a "stranger to himself." His mind is withdrawn from reality

as he “found his own skin odd-colored, his own accent peculiar. He forgot how to laugh . . . he held his hand over his mouth, because he couldn’t bear anyone to see his gums . . . would prefer shadow to light . . . he was suspicious that sunlight might reveal him, in his hideousness, all too clearly” (40).

Jemu considers himself a colonial king or master and he is disgusted with everything Indian and of his own land Piphit. He becomes an alien in his own country because of this attitude. Jemu’s life in his motherland makes him miserable. He wants to live a life of solitude with his pet dog Mutt. His mind reveals his embittered heart: “The judge could live here, in this shell, this skull, with solace of being a foreigner in his own country” (29). His continuous pain of dispossession makes him disgusted. “He retreated into a solitude that grew in weight day by day. The solitude became a habit, the habit became the man, and it crushed him into a shadow” (39).

Desai’s sketch of the judge as a fragmented unfinished human being is complete when he is revealed as someone who longed to live in a world where, “cake was better than *laddoos*, fork spoon knife better than hands, . . . English was better than Hindi” (30). He completely isolates himself from his relatives and family. When his granddaughter arrives at Kalimpong, she appears very strange to him and she does not seem to develop any bond with him easily. They both behave as if they are strangers to each other. Because of his hatred for his wife, even his daughter’s birth does not give him any happiness. He does not like to see either his daughter or his grandchild. Jemubhai does not mingle with the society casually because he hates the Indian culture and wants to adopt the western culture.

Jemu was alone without any human relationship and insulted his parents whose love, care and sacrifice made him judge.

The Patels (parents of Jemu) had been dreaming of sending their son to England, but there wasn't enough money no matter how much Jemu's father worked, so they visited the moneylenders, who surveyed father and son with the sleepiness of crocodiles and then pounced with an offer of ten thousand rupees At 22 percent interest. (89)

Bela who is later called Nimi is very innocent and tolerant. Her life ends in a sad way due to her husband's cruelty. He treats her as a housemaid and humiliates her but she tolerates everything. But one day when she is tried beyond the level, she calls him stupid. Then he hits her for the first time. “. . . when this wasn't enough to assuage his rage, he hammered down with his fists, raising his arms to bring them down on her again and again, rhythmically, until his own hands were exhausted and his shoulders next day were strained sore as if from chopping wood. He even limped a bit, his leg hurting from kicking her” (304).

Jemu treats the Cook and his wife very rudely because of their poverty and physical appearance. But at the end of his life he is filled with sorrow. A victim of his father's ambition, the judge, Jemubhai Patel, originally belonging to a small town Piphit, is packed off to England to study law. A misfit in a foreign land, unaccustomed to British ways he gradually retreats into a solitude from which he could never return. One time Jemubhai loses his self- esteem to such an extent that his personality is completely warped. He begins to find his own skin colour odd. For days nobody speaks to him. He begins to hate himself: “To the end of his life, he would never be seen without socks and shoes and would prefer shadow to light, faded days to sunny, for he was suspicious that sunlight might reveal him, in his hideousness, all too clearly” (40).

Jemubhai is a self-centred man and he has been leading a life of loneliness. Sai has understood that he is too insensitive and inhuman to love his own kith and kin. To her, the cook is more humane and loving than her inconsiderate grandfather. Since her grandfather has lost touch with the human world she tries to establish her emotional ties with the cook. But unfortunately Sai can never create a true bond with the cook because of the class barrier.

Both, Sai and the cook cannot understand each other because she speaks only English and the cook only Hindi. Whenever she visits the outhouse of the cook the latter “was ill at ease and so was she, something about their closeness being exposed in the end as fake, their friendship composed of shallow things conducted in a broken language, for she was an English speaker and he was a Hindi speaker. The brokenness made it easier never to go deep” (19).

Sai is a beautiful, kind and soft person but her fate leads her to live as an orphan in her own grandfather’s house in Kalimpong. She longs for her relationship with other people in the family by recollecting the memories of her past. Sai becomes an immigrant in her alien land. Even though she lives with her grandfather, she feels lonely in the family. She connects with cook, Lola, Noni; but all these characters are balanced. She finds it difficult to adjust with the Indian culture. Sai and Gyan’s relationship also does not bloom but is cut as a bud itself due to several factors.

At the age of eight her parents died in an accident leaving Sai. She comes to India and her new relationship with her grandfather starts; but she feels lonely and the judge is not considerate. Till the end of the novel, there is no connection between Sai and Jemubhai. They are living in an isolated world of their own. His inhumanity and

meanness does not help him to develop any kind of relationship. There is no bond of love between granddaughter and Jemubhai.

Sai and Gyan's last meeting erupts into an encounter between two communal forces, rather than two lovers who had once tenderly touched each other. Desai writes that Sai "found a new attack and went after it even though she grew steadily more horrified by the vermin that coursed from her mouth, but it was as if she were on a stage; the role was more powerful than herself" (261). Gyan faces bitter experiences with Sai because of her westernized attitude and he ignores her passionate love. "I am not interested in Christmas!" he shouted. "Why do you celebrate Christmas? You're Hindus and you don't celebrate Id or Guru Nanak's birthday or even Durga Puja or Dussehra or Tibetan New year" (163). He maintains the distance from his community, religion, class, and seeks out those "Pleasures that existed in the world intense tiny pleasures that nevertheless created a feeling of space on all sides" (273).

Desai depicts the gender relations through the character of Sai, Noni and Lola who are harmed by the male dominated society and experienced isolation or loneliness. The situation of women in Kalimpong is illustrated by one incident Pradhan, the GNLFF leader criticizes the widow Lola; he uses rude words cruel manner and she becomes a victim of cruelty.

Sai comes to realize that: "Life wasn't single in its purpose," awakening from her self-absorption; "The simplicity of what she'd been taught wouldn't hold. Never again could she think there was but one narrative and the narrative belonged only to herself, that she might create her own mean little happiness and live safely within it" (323). It is after she has lost Gyan-the knowledge allegorically embodied in a science

tutor, a tortured and confused youngster himself fraught between competing visions and worlds- that she really and finally looks at the world around her.

Biju, the cook's son is an illegal immigrant to America a land "where every nationality confirmed its stereotype" (23) and where the hellish image of New York is reinforced as a place that "excludes a nature, except for the cockroaches and rats" (39). He realizes that even in highly developed countries there is poverty, when he locates rat-infected dirty basements in New York. He meets several immigrants from Asian and African countries who all share his American dream.

Biju's frustration on his experience in America is almost similar to the judge's first experience in Britain. He lives like an alien person with strange behaviour and humiliated by others in the restaurant. He lives in solitude; no one takes care of him. He leads a miserable life in foreign country. His stay in foreign for his job purpose but he learned many experience from the people. At night they could hardly sleep, plagued by rats. A spate acquaintance, his father's complete dissociation with reality, his belief that Biju was living a life of luxury in America makes Biju's life even survive in a hostile country, treated like dirt, devoid of self-respect, with no one to love- lonely, alienated and unhappy. Biju finds no proper relationship with anyone in his life even with his father; he joins him after his long journey of struggle:

This was where his father lived and where he had visited him and they had hatched the plot to send him to America, and Biju had, in his innocence, and done just what his father had, in his own innocence, told him to do. What could his father have known? This way of leaving your family for work had condemned them over several generations to have their hearts always in other places their minds thinking about

people elsewhere; they could never be in a single existence at one time.

(311)

Biju's relationship with his father ends on a positive note as he wants to come back to his own land; he reaches India but his fate does not allow him to unite with his father. When he reaches Calcutta airport, he feels "Sweet drabness of home- he felt everything shifting and clicking into place around him, felt himself slowly shrink back to size, the enormous anxiety of being a foreigner ebbing-that unbearable arrogance and shame of the immigrant" (300). He is robbed by GNLFF terrorists and "darkness fell and he sat right in the middle of the path-without his baggage, without his savings, worst of all, without his pride" he is "Back from America with far less than he's ever had" (317). In spite of that, he is quite happy with the reunion he has with his father. The novel ends his hope that he would join with his father.

Kiran Desai very aptly calls this class as 'shadow class' since they are detained to movement:

The men left for other jobs, towns, got deported, returned home, changed names. Sometimes someone came popping around a corner again, or on the subway, then they vanished again. Addresses, phone numbers did not hold. The emptiness Biju felt returned to him over and over, until eventually he made sure not to let friendships sink deep anymore (102).

Biju is apprehensive that if he continues his stay in New York, he may never be able to see his '*Pitaji*' again: "It happened all the time: ten years passed, fifteen, the telegram arrived, or the phone call, the parent was gone and the child was too late"

(233). He becomes nostalgic of his days with his father in Kalimpong, when they used to sit outside in the evenings and his father would say: “How peaceful our village is. How good the roti tastes there! . . . Fresh roti, fresh butter, fresh milk still warm from the buffalo . . .” (102).

Desai’s novel introduces the readers to the rootless, miserable existence of Biju, the cook’s son whose life is nothing but a desperate search for a “green card”, following a string of jobs in a futile attempt to make America his home. Unused to the winter, he tries to keep warm by carrying pancakes down his shirt. Biju’s loneliness is movingly described by the novelist: “But even this did not seem to help, and once, on his bicycle, he began to weep from the cold, and the weeping unpicked a deeper vein of grief- such a terrible groan issued from between the whimpers that he was shocked his sadness was so profound” (51).

Through the depiction of Biju’s life the writer draws a poignant picture of loneliness and lack of belonging. To people like the cook, life in India is one long struggle with no hope of improvement in the lot of the poor. America then seems to offer a solution to all their problems. It is in this hope that the cook with great difficulty arranges for Biju’s passage to the land of plenty little realizing that he was condemning his son to life in a hell hole. Desperate for a green card Biju moves from one job to another unable to forge a lasting relationship with anyone. His friends disappear overnight in search of new jobs.

However, Biju’s experience in foreign teaches him to live in an alien land without any relationship; the people he meets advise him to move to his own country but his main intention is to get green card. After long time or existing in US, he

returns to his own native land for gaining his own relationship with his father whose dreams about his son to secure a good position in US.

When his granddaughter arrives at his home, Jemu is not ready to accept her because of her liking of Western culture. His only companion in his home that his Dog and Chess board. He does not converse with anyone or his servant cook who comes from downtrodden area. He lives a solitary life during his stay in England, no one contacts him.

After his return home, Jemu's attitude is entirely changed and he thinks of himself as a foreigner in his own native country. He hates the Indian culture and also wants to be alone from people and his family members. Similarly, in *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard* Sampath plays the same role as that of Jemubhai that he wants to be alone from the mundane life and also not ready to communicate with anyone in the society.

The tree Sampath had climbed was a guava tree. A guava tree larger and more significant than any he had ever seen before . . . Sampath felt his breathing slow and a wave of peace and contentment overtook him . . . How beautiful it was here, how exactly as it should be. This orchard matched something he had imagined all his life: myriad green-skinned globes growing sweet-sour and marvellous upon a hillside with enough fruit to scent the air. (50)

Jemu and Sampath are extremely strange characters in the novels. Sampath who consider human life is entirely filled with suffering, loss, longing, money-minded people which is not permanent in the world. He wants to escape from all those illness

in his life. So he decides to make the tree an abode for him, continues to connect with the monkeys which are the only companions to him throughout the novel. Whereas Jemu considers his dog a solace in his depressed life.

These two novels show a clear picture of the need for human relationship in the world. Every human being needs the love, hope, and fellowship with others in the world. Even Sai lives an isolated life in her grandfather's home. Whereas Kulfi, in *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard* assumes insanity and she does not consider anyone who cares for her. Because she makes the world around her as she likes.

In Shakhkot she had cooked only now and then and when inspiration mounted somewhere out in the sea of her unconscious and rushed up to swallow her like a tidal wave. But how could she possibly have reconciled her wild dreams with her tame life in Shakhkot, with their tiny kitchen, their meals on the old plastic-covered table? Again and again, the dishes she produced could not match the visions inside her; she could not be satisfied with the ingredients that came bottled and packaged on store shelves or withered in bazaar baskets. (76)

## **Chapter V**

### **Conclusion**

As the nation is heading towards growth and empowerment it is facing a lot of difficulties coming from within and without. The effect of colonialism is still felt in its new forms and dominates the language, culture and religion reinstating its supremacy over African/Asian nations. There are many writers who emerged to focus on the impact of colonialism. The women writers like Kiran Desai, Bharathi Mukherjee and Bapsi Sidwa, and Amitav Ghosh are interested to focus on the cultural hybridist raising the issue of identity of Third world immigrants in the west.

Desai has very distinctly explained through her inheritance and experiences, the chaos and crisis of the modern times caused by the colonial subjugation, post-colonial impact, and exploitation by the West in the name multiculturalism and Globalisation, embarrassing conditions of immigrants, gender-racial discrimination, perpetual misfortunes of the down-trodden and other subalterns, extremism and terrorism-bringing about the loss of man's faith in man, loss of culture and identity, loss of rationality and logical considerations, loss of emotional bonds and longing, loss of social order, peace and harmony-resulting into the absolute loss of human values. The novel has been written by an artist of Indian cultural inheritance with a detached critical insight who has created something unique of her own.

One of the essential functions of any literary work is to enlighten human beings and make them realize the intricacies of human imagination and experience and also about human predicament with an authentic exploration of tragic awareness of life in modern times. Kiran Desai focuses on human issues- be it globalization, multiculturalism, immigration, Green card, mimicry, love sex, poverty, injustice,

insurgency, nationalism or antinationalism. Desai is a humanist, and all the episodes in her novels reflect her struggle and love for human values- love for reason, truth justice, love for liberty, equality and fraternity, love for peace and harmony, love for one's native soil, culture and identity, love for charity and mankind.

Kiran Desai's first novel *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard* can be analysed as a novel of action- a trifling event leading to unexpected consequences and these keep spreading till they become numberless. Sampath decides to or rather instinctively, without a moment's thought, climbs up the guava tree. Events prior to that are really of no significance but only help in leading up to that moment in the novel. Other related incidents create an inextricable web- the growth and popularity of the Monkey Baba, the attempts of Mr Chawla and his family to make his stay comfortable and to ensure that the number of devotees keeps swelling, the culinary efforts of Kulfi, the arrival of the band of monkeys and their antics, the Hungry Hop Boy and his romance with Pinky, the efforts of the entire administration of Shahkot to get rid of the monkeys.

This novel can be contrasted with another traditional kind of novel where the characters exist independent of the plot and the novelist probably invents his plot as he goes along. Desai is able to create the situations for satirical as well as humorous situation. Each event and character is used to either to the humour or to the satire of the novel. The activities of the spy working on behalf of the rationalist, the Brigadier, the professor-each one of them contributes to the overall effect and development of the story. Desai is able to use the minor characters and incidents to achieve this in greater measure.

Desai's second novel *The Inheritance of Loss* move into a totally different genre. This novel is able to take a wide sweep in terms of both time and space. From

the pre-independence era of Jemubhai Patel's ICS and the colonial mentality of both the colonizer and the colonized people in 1980s when the separate Gorkhaland agitation created tremendous social, political and economic problems for the country.

Both novels deal with different characters with their different attitudes. In *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard*, Desai uses exaggeration, wit and irony in her portrayal of Sampath who is presented in a satirical way. She is able to capture the absurdities of persons and institutions and portrays the disparity between their facade and reality. In character portrayal, the novelist attempts to choose from the society in which she lives and utilizes sociological and psychological facts for analysis.

In *The Inheritance of Loss* the attempts of the lower class to gain a separate Gorkha state and the resultant disturbance in society and the economy are presented in a clear way. The portrayal of the cook and his son Biju indicates the desire of the lower economic class to somehow rise in society by economic progress. Kiran Desai loses no opportunity to express her opinions as she takes in politics or the rising insurgency in Nepal as the backdrop of her second novel. In contrast, the first novel takes into its range the happenings of one single family but in doing so she is able to bring in almost every aspect of life in contemporary India. Both novels thus have widely different canvases.

Another interesting point of comparison between the two novels is their ending. In *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard*, the Monkey Baba Sampath just disappears. Since he climbed the tree on the urge of the moment, almost on a whim, as his behaviour thereafter lacked logic and direction, as godmen are made and unmade without rhyme or reason, as the novel had to reach some sort of a conclusion-logical, believable or un believable- Desai concludes with "The air was suddenly still. The birds flew back into the forest. The feathers floated gently down after them. And in

this sudden stillness, from the direction of the orchard people heard: a crack! A howl! A watery splash! . . .” (209).

*The Inheritance of Loss*, the ending is far more tragic. As Biju decides to come back home, he plans the reunion with his father. He stashes away all his savings in his socks and reaches his homeland. Within almost macabre glee, Desai describes the pitiful condition in which Biju reaches home. “Biju sat there in terror of what he’d done, of being alone in the forest, and of the men coming after him again. He couldn’t stop thinking of all that he’d bought and lost. Of the money he had hidden under fake soles in his shoes. Of his wallet” (318). Shattered both mentally and physically, his return is in total contrast to the ironic ending of the first novel. Though she presents the problems of the socially oppressed sect of the Gorkhas with genuine compassion she does not fail to admonish severely political violence and loss of human lives. While portraying characters like the cook and the wandering beggars she reveals her profound concern for the poor and the downtrodden.

Biju and Jemubhai Popatlal are ruined-one having an urge to earn dollars, and the other, though educated, falls a prey to the spurious ideal of the white race, and consequently ruins his family life and status. Instead of being a good human being by not submitting to his false pride, and by treating his granddaughter with loving care and by treating his cook as a human being and consequently, earning love, dignity and fellowship, he would have possessed the cultural inheritance, and could have attained happiness in his life. The image of insurgency is an eye opener to see how human beings turn as beasts of prey. This is the loss of inheritance. Kiran Desai not only presents in this novel bleak immigrant realities but also celebrates the union of the father and the son emphasising the need to maintain relationship and love.

Kiran Desai's novels by exposing the common themes of immigrant experience and dealing with the maladies that malaise the world, suggests that these can be cured by imbibing the values of inclusion, tolerance, and acceptance. Even though, Desai gives voice that is fixed with massive ideals and national purity finally it leads to conflicts and disharmony in nature. Though, people are from various sections of the society and from various parts of the world, they are basically human. Through her style and effective description of multiple cultures and narratives she emphasizes on the total value of things. She succeeds in presenting the socio political and socio cultural identities as well as gender issues, ethnic cultures, racism which reflect the contemporary Indian life or society.

Desai explores the value of human dignity in the modern society. With her insight and knowledge she highlights that the abuse of power and hopelessness would only lead to unconditional way of life. People have to face reality and may come across imperfection and loss in life. The corruption at the high level and the refusal to accept reality with the losses may cause unhappiness or distrust in life. The loss may be in the form of love, identity, family and country of origin.

Globalisation demands assimilating into an alien culture and not sticking to one's own native tradition. Hence Biju, a liminal character, feels pressurized to declare that he works in a place where there is "no Indian food, and the owner is not from India. He is from America Itself" (14). The Cook becomes a neo-colonised character when he believes that "since his son was cooking English food, he had a higher position than if he were cooking Indian" (17). He thought his son would make enough money and then he would retire. The Cook ignores his embarrassing present with the hope of a bright future.

Similar is the case of Gyan, who ignores his present and imagines a liminal temporal space, in which he historicizes the present from a future perspective. The cook stops bothering about the humiliation of having his house searched by the police, and considers his son's arrival in New York as an achievement. By idealizing the West, he imposes a form of cultural imperialism on himself.

Thakur in his article "Loss of human values in *The Inheritance of Loss*" quotes about the writer and her style.

In its appropriate use of colloquial words and terms, the book echoes the language of great Hindi writer Phanishwarnath Renu's writings. On the whole 'She is the mistress of engaging details and images as well as leaping lavish gifts of phrasing. The pumping heart of the novel or the tale's emotional centre is powered by a superb language-assured and eloquent, supple and elegant. With her deft touch the author has manipulated the interesting fragments of loss into a poignant story of our mixed-up times.' (302)

Through her portrayal of the contemporary India with its problems Desai talks about the human predicament and the way man loses his dignity because of his madness after power, wealth and loss of spirituality. Man, because of his attitude to life and because of the loss of human dignity or because of his failure to maintain proper relationship with others loses faith in himself. This leads to the loss of values which will equate him with animals. If man is to lead a dignified and meaningful life, he has to realise the need to love and be loved. His self-realization will help him progress towards this.

As a dedicated writer with her social consciousness Desai observes that mutual understanding between races will pave way for permanent peace and universal harmony. *The Inheritance of Loss* has become an impressive work of art because it highlights the basic human values such as love, compassion, tolerance, selflessness and respect for one another which surpass all social, political, cultural and religious barriers and limitations.

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