

Rootlessness and Globalization: Exploring the Universality of Nations and Cultures in Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss*

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ABSTRACT

Kiran Desai's The inheritance of Loss is a superb novel highlighting a particular thought of history and culture thereby presenting a postcolonial theme. The novel shows the personal and public note. The novel chiefly surrounds the theme multiculturalism, globalization and identity loss in the world of terror. The struggle of the minorities for its stand and identity is visible in the protest of Gorkhas. The novel develops around the lives of Jemubhai and his granddaughter, Sai who live with a cook. There are other characters like Gyan, Sai's Maths tutor, Biju, the Cook's son and some of their neighbours who negotiate the issue of individuality. Each of them is presented to have left his/her homeland and settled at a different land which is completely strange to them. It is at these lands where they have to prove themselves and find a voice. Culture is set up as a nonorganic that frees scholars and theorists from their consolidation of interests to their regional patterns of being.

Key words: Globalization, Rootlessness, Multiculturalism, Westernized Indian Pace.

It is within this transcendental status that postcoloniality is actively cultivated as the corner of cultural theory Ella Shohat comments:

Echoing "post modernity", "post colonial" marks a contemporary state, situation, condition or epoch. The prefix 'post', then aligns "post colonialism", "post Marxism", "post-feminism", "post-deconstructionism"- all sharing the notion of a movement beyond. Yet while these "posts" refer largely to the supersession of outmoded philosophical, aesthetic and political theories, the "post-colonial" implies both going beyond anti-colonial nationalist theory as well as a movement beyond a specific point in history, that of colonialism and third world nationalistic struggle.

(Shohat 101)

But it is also confirmed when the endorsement is in opposition to what Homi Bhabha summons "the pedagogical plenitude" of a uni-linear historicism. The postcolonial hunt for individuality in the third world is the besetment specially with the trouble of location which gets a faithful delineation in *The Inheritance of Loss*. Globalization is connected with defining shapes of social and cultural organization whose chief goal is to transcend the domains of the nation state and searches to give new vistas for knowing cultural flaws that can no longer be narrated by a homogenous Eurocentric narrative of the advancement and social alteration. Gikandi also focusses to Pieterse who states that globalization fetches the local and the universal together in a moment of conceptual renewal. He also states that Appadurai's global mediascapes and ideoscapes which have happened the site of conflict between cultural homogenization and culturalheterogenization.

Globalization also spreads the transnational circulation of thoughts, renowned culture through acculturation or languages. Migration, racism, identity, hybridity are all an effect of globalization. *The Inheritance of Loss deals with the idea of ethnicity, cultural identity and race, it*

concentrates chiefly on Indian Cultures and how it has both united with and affected by western culture. When characters encounter a foreign culture they experience negative ideas. Every experience presents the cultural identity that an individual carries always influence their opinions of others. However, the story also highlights by the end that is possible to alter an identity in one with esteem and praise for all people. As the world continues to unite and the boundaries of nations and cultures vanish through Globalization, it is happening more and more unbearable and politically wrong to make difference based on wealth, origin, race, religion, gender, language, race or any other distinguishing human characteristics.

The writer reveals the pain of exile and the uncertainties of post-colonialism through characters; the old judge, Jemubhai; Sai, his sixteen years old granddaughter a chatty cook and his son, Biju, who keeps switching service from one restaurant to another in order to become rich. The story presents the results of culture clash. People are full of prejudice and behave differently to race, class and culture. The novel is set in lands like Kalimpong India and New York City. Although the story is set chiefly during the 1980s, it frequently weaves in and out of a variety of time frames as far back as the 1940s. It illuminates that the novel is just not core fined to a single location or a particular time span. Through the great framework it shows to us a wide panorama of people and places but undergoing the same condition.

Culture is nothing but the representation of lived observations, thus all what men have felt is his/her culture. It is chiefly influence of globalization that different cultures mingle together. Although this blending up may not be completely positive or negative in effect. Most of the characters in Desai's novel, including the Judge Sai Gyan, Noni, Lala and Biju, all have observations where their identity comes in contact with a western culture. Unfortunately each of observations culminates in a strong negative ideas, highlighting the separation between cultures that are still capable of being perceived by the sense. Sai is real representative of the globalized world. She is westernized Indian grown up by English nuns. She represents a kind of estranged Indian living in India. She pronounces English as her first language instead of a more indigenous Indian language. Although there are numerous characters in the novel but it is very much concentrated on a main theme, rather than a chief protagonist. To evaluate the story's interest in cultural separation, the novel develops by showing glimpses into the conscious existence of each character. One of the major characters of the novel is Jemubhai Patel, the Judge. He was born in India but went to England to adopt the college education. The life of Judge in London was humiliated:

....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.
(Desai, 39)

The Judge had no actual friends in England. He was completely alone as the huge squid which Sai read about in the first part of the novel:

...there was a solitude so profound they might never encounter
another of their tribe.
(Desai 32)

He experienced himself to be commented by the English who said, "Phew, he stinks of curry" (Desai 39) and he happened so introvert that he began hating himself, his skin complexion and anything that created him Indian, his real individuality. He began escaping away from it. Thus he used powder to conceal his actual self and to lighten his colour. The Judge hatred developed to such an extent that:

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.
(Desai 119).

The Judge's higher studies in England caused him so much suffering that he desperately attempted to happen as English as possible, and despised anything Indian, including his family and spouse who brought the money which could send him to England. When the Judge returned to home, it happened clear how terribly his encounter with the English changed his cultural individuality. Nimi, his spouse whom he rarely embodied everything that was Indian that he hated he seduces her after she is trapped to have stolen his valuable powder puff to:

....teach her the same lessons of loneliness and shame he had
learned himself
(Desai 186)

Finally, the Judge sent Nimi back to her family where she provided birth to a daughter before she ceased. The Judge's encounter with the English Culture is so embarrassing with such strong passions of dissatisfaction and wrath that he happens doubly displaced when he returns home. He is neither European nor-Indian, and happens one who immigrates in his own self.

Sai too happens a westernized Indian developing up in the house removed from mono cultural influence, which the Judge makes. Sai was sent to survive with the Judge after her parents ceased when she was only seven years old. Before that she lived in a convent. An example of cross cultural influences is observed when Sai comes in contact with Gyan. Sai and Gyan both are Indian, but belong to different castes and are culturally very different. By birth Sai is the member of the upper class or at least upper-middle class. She speaks English, follows Christian religion by celebrating western holidays like Christmas, eats English food and lives in Cho Oyu, which is completely nice place with some modern comfort. Gyan, however, does not belong to the same class as Sai; he has a separate mother tongue and eats more indigenous food. He is Nepali, which is a minority group in India, but a majority group in Kalimpong. He hates her celebrating festivals like Christmas. During the mid- 1980s in the border region of India, including Kalimpong, there were various scenes and some violent riots by minority groups who aspired better demeanour. The issue of racism and the need for a new Gorkhland is an influence of globalization. Due to dissimilar distribution of wealth and strength the rich continued to happen richer while the lower class remained unaffected. The Nepalese too:

...want to rise above the level of servants ... in our country, the
country we fight for, we are treated like slaves, we must fight to
manage our own affairs' thus to have an identity of their own
was their motiff.
(Desai 159)

It is this motion which separates Gyan and Sai. At the beginning of their relationship they did not appear to care or even observe that they were opposite and

...the political trouble continued to remain in the background for
them.
(Desai 156)

However, soon Gyan finds trapped in the motion, and their relationship declines. Gyan observes Sai as part of the rich society westernized India who is accountable for the misbehaviour of the Nepalese. Referring to the oppressive higher-class Gyan shouts at Sai summoning her a slave who was willing to clasp the Western way of living as her grandfather. Sai later states that there was one cause why he will not find anywhere because he does not depend on anyone. After Gyan scolds her as her a mere imitator, she yells that there were numerous greater reasons for his contempt for her. Instead of observing the individual, people are lumped together in individuals and groups are criticized for things that they themselves are not openly attached with. At first, Gyan and Sai appear to or may have even knowingly attempted to overlook their cultural boundaries, but even these young men cannot escape their history and individuality. These men do not have just a singular individuality but from part of numerous groups and express ideas about their identities. Amartya Sen talks:

Ours is a world of dreadful poverty and appalling deprivation. An astounding number of children are ill-fed, illclad, illtreated and needlessly ill. Due to such sort of situation and the rising differences between the two classes there arrives at a situation of clash and conflict and demand for one's own state, nation and Identity. (Sen 120)

The struggle for Gorakhaland is an influence of such distinctions. Before she meets Gyan, Sai's first teacher was Noni, the spinster who lives with her widowed sister, Lola. Both Loal and Noni are well-popular in Kalimpong for appertaining to the same westernized Indian class as Sai. They are rich women who live in spacious cottage with all sorts of comfort, and hire many servants including, gardner, sweeper, maid and watchman. The sister highly appreciate British and perceive as many English customs as possible. They develop western vegetables like broccoli in their garden, they only wear Marsand Spencer attires like queen wears. They drink English tea, jam, pastries and have the complete writings of Jane Austen. Part of their obsession with the Britishers is due to Lola's daughter, Pixie who lives in England and offers services for BBC. Lola beams with pride when her daughter's voice comes over the radio. Lola and a neighbour Mrs. Sen, whose daughter Munmun lives in the United States and works for CNN, 'participates in fight over which America or England is superior. Instead of recognizing with their Indian culture, these females can take on western individualities so totally that they fight against their fellow Indians in fovour of the western cultures they never really join. They are forgetful to the fact that Americans and the British barely reciprocate the emotions Lola and Mrs. Sen express.

Not only is Mrs. Sen's affection of American culture unacceptable, but she also belongs to the middle class, which the sisters get to be very distasteful. Noni and Lola never wave to Mrs. Sen, but always vivaciously welcome the 'Afghan princesses' (Desai 195) and the upper class woman, Mrs. Thondup who live in Kalimpong. Its ironical to observe that the sister's rosy cottage is named Mon Ami (my friend) has very strict class demands for an ex-man to be believed their comrade. Lola and Noni consider it significant to make the separating line between the two classes else it disturbed both of them. The sisters would perhaps never believe themselves to be prejudiced against different men, yet their demeanours often say quite differently. Even though their own watchman is Nepali, it does not cease Nori from uttering, that these Nepalese cannot be trusted. Lola and Noni, continue to create similar opinions throughout the novel. They have completely no reservations about performing superior and behaving men differently based on ethnicity and class. In this connection, Robert young states:

Culture and race developed together, imbricated within each other, their discontinuous forms of repetition suggests as Foucault puts it, 'how we have been trapped in our own history'. The nightmare of the ideologies and categories and categories of racism continue to repeat upon the living. (Young 159)

The process of migration is affected by Globalization. As Ahponen states: Borders have not disappeared from the globalizing world. In addition to the geopolitical borders which mark nation- states coalitions, society is composed of numerous group formations consisting of cultural qualifications and differences. (Ahponen 285)

The story also deals with the issue of immigration as through the characters of Harish, Saeed and Biju. New places attract all. The cook expresses:

New York is a very big city. The city and buildings are nothing like here. In that country there is enough food for everybody... One day soon my son will take me. (Desai 84)

Biju, the cook son, is precisely a kind of person Noni and Lola would look down upon, not only because of his lower class level, but also for his desires to grow of poverty. For most of the story Biju lives in New York City, sent there by his father to attempt and create a better conscious existence both of them desired for. Just to obtain into the United States is a trouble for immigrants, but somehow Biju finds through the humiliating interview process to obtain a tourist visa. Biju as a fortunate lad immigrates to the U.S. but cannot obtained a green card. He suffers through year operating as an illegal cook at one paltry restaurant after another, while passing his whale nights sleeping on rat and cockroach fested floor. Biju, like Judge, is met with cruelty from other higher- class cultures. One of his white masters criticizes that he smells and even offers him shampoo toothpaste, deodorant and soap to artfully convey him. The Indian college students receive numerous American and foreign customs, including food, cloth and demeanour. However, they openly contain their Indian concept of caste and understand that they are from upper class and Biju is not. Halfway around the world, thousands of miles from India, both these people and Biju still carry their Indian individuality with them. His observation as an Indian immigrant in the US offers a comparison between the westernization of the rural Indian.

This is an international subculture which links metropolis like Moscow, Berlin and Tokyo, Paris and New York. This is a typical new global culture or also summoned as the youth culture. In this sort of order the new ones are in continuous conflict with the old ones stand in struggle with the old they themselves are not completely separate from the old patterns. Food system seen to be influenced by the globalization and so has been presented in this fictitious tale. Apart from the reference to the foods Noni and Lola adopt, these are reference to the growth of 'Chicken tikka Masala' as British national food Moreover Sai summoning the vegetables with their English words like French beans, spring onions and snap peas and being sacred by summoning tinda, Kathal, Kaddu, loki and saag, is an affect to western wave. The judge uses knife and fork even to eat parathas, puris and chapattis. Furthr it is observed that non-vegetarian food is available at the Gandhi restaurant, it can also be said as an influence of globalization.

During his stay in U.S. although Brju does not encounter distinction always yet he really starts to interrogate the racist thoughts he had developed with in India, In New York Biju belongs to the shadow class of illegal immigrants from all over the world. These men have no other individuality of their own other than that of the immigrants. By being continuously confronted by their variety of ethnicities Biju's faiths about distinct races start to alter. He happens good comrades with an African man named Seed:

Be Careful of the hubshi. Haha, in their own country they live like monkeys in the trees. They come to India and become men.
(Desai 76)

The requirement for comradeship between immigrants suffering the same fortune can sometimes overcome racial differences. However, it is delineated in the fictitious tale that in some instances prejudices are so profoundly ingrained that they can never be banished without aware and continuous attempt. Even in the culturally different city of New York, Biju still feels Pakistanis are one' pigs, pigs, son of pigs" (Desai 76) because of the fierce hatred he has hegemonized for Pakistanis. Both Biju and the Pakistani laborers are finally fined by continuously quarrelling with each other. Although Saeed eats cow he is his comrade because as he states he is not a Pakistani.

Biju also starts to surprise why he was scared of white people who did a big harm to the Indians. Like almost all men, Biju's inherited faiths about definite kind of men from his parents and field he grew up in. However racist understandings have happened more and more unbearable, and having a common esteem for men of every race and ethnicity is something men should strive for. Biju is one of the characters that interrogates the thoughts he was learnt and at least starts to let go of some of his prejudices Biju's encounter with western cultures is more positive than most of the other characters' encounters in the fictitious tale. After years of survival

in New York while desperately missing India and his father, Biju eventually returns home to India losing all he achieved along the way:

The novel is filled with examples of how different types of people interact mix and blend. Unfortunately, the line between cultures is not always easily blurred. Some customs and traditions transcend separate cultures-especially in today's globalized world, but prejudices and hatred based on race and class are after hard to eliminate. (Nelson: Inescapable Past)

Nepali Character Buddhu who is retired army man is hired by Noni and Lola to protect their house but the two women never trust him. There is a question mark on his national identity and they criticize:

I tell you these Neps can't be trusted and they don't just rob-
They think absolutely nothing of murdering as well. (Desai 45)

The case of Muslim who is not a Pakistani is also revealed in the fictitious tale. Moreover, the individuality of Gyan is perceived through his knowledge, he is never believed as a Nepali man, as the cook once labelled that he was aspiring for a Bengali tutor not a Nepali one because Bengalis are very genius. Moreover the instances of eating American dish presents how the Indians do not accept their Indian individuality and attempt to recognize themselves with the Americans as do Noni and Lola to some extent as well. They attempt to mimic the west due to the riches they have and the chances they give.

Due to the growth of globalization and increase in higher studies there has been a tremendous alteration in one's life style. This also influences one's individuality to great extent. Harish happens Harry, Gaurish is summoned Garry and Dhansukh, Danny. Similarly Harish's daughter discarding the ancient Indian style of living by wearing nose ring and finding herself more comfortable in western garments reveals the hybridity in these men. The issue dissimilarities is also an impact of globalization, be it getting isolated form one's parents, one's family, nation, culture, hometown and also individuality. It is moving physically and emotionally. It is defined at numerous spaces and one such instance is the difference between Biju and his father, judge and his wife and Gyan and Sai. But this difference also presents that culture, as a conceptual and social division, has avoided "the bounded nation-state society" and has happened the property of the world: (Gikandi 631)

Cultural alterations can be perceived on it, is the changing of nomenclatures. Definitions are recorded in the story. Harish is summoned as Harry, Jemubhai happens James. It also highlights that the first effect to alter one's identity is by altering one's name. Female characters too appear to undergo a tremendous alteration. Harish's daughter is told to be more congruous with combat boots and attires in camouflage print rather than nose ring. Also; when his spouse first came from India She was a submissive bride splashed with henna, so much gold that she set every metal discover in the airport-and now she was in white garments with vanity case The story is a fine mingling of the macro and micro themes to reveal how multiculturalism and connection of west and east fetch alteration which is not always a development since we are deeply connected to our past.

The reality is that the world is full of racism, segregation, and cultural divisions, but it does not mean that hope does not also exist. Change can happen if people initiate it. People will always be stuck in the same place, in the same mind set, until they decide to change, to move, to escape At the end the five peaks of Kanchenjunga turned golden with the king of luminous light that made you feel, if briefly, that truth was apparent, All you needed to do was to reach out and pluck it.(Desai 357)

The story does not signify that globalization is westernization of the world. What we obtained is the symbolic economy of a new global culture based on reciprocal rather than non-

linear relationship. (Gikandi 629) and through hybridity, globalization operates against cultural imperialism. What is required in the statement of Amartya Sen:

...institutional changes that would facilitate change needed to make globalization a fairer arrangement. Such changes range from national policies to international initiatives and institutional reforms. (Sen 182-183)

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