



# Displacement in Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss*

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## Abstract

The title *Inheritance of Loss* was chosen to reflect the generational Continuation of Loss that these immigrants have faced. This narrative takes a look at immigration, identity, and relationships on a personal and worldwide level. The novel, set in India, England, and the United States, depicts the clash between traditional Indian ways of living and the gleaming wealth of the Western world. Several accolades were given to this work, including the Man Booker Prize in 2006 and the National Book Critics Circle Fiction Award in 2007. Desai wrote the novel after her 1998 debut, *Hullabaloo in Guava Orchard*, which took her seven years to complete. Kiran Desai is a well-known Indian-origin diasporic writer who uses Indian characters as protagonists in her stories. Her books are mostly about Indian immigrants who are trying to make a new life in a strange land, usually America. In Desai's famous novel *Inheritance of Loss*, this study examines the diaspora's fragmented identities.

**Index Terms** – Migration, displacement, alienation, fragmentation and diaspora.

## I.INTRODUCTION

The word 'diaspora' comes from the Greek origin, which means "to disperse." The voluntary or forced migration of individuals from their homelands to the New World is known as diaspora. It's also arrived in a new geographical and cultural environment, serving as a crossroads for two cultures. Both the migrant and the host are involved. A member's loyalty to the diasporic community is indicated by their recognition of an unavoidable relationship with their past migratory experience and a sense of co-ethnicity with others with a similar historical background. People from the first generation of migrants tend to remember the former country more than children born to migrants. Diasporic groups are formed by the mixing of narratives about journeys from the old nation to the new one. A diaspora is a dispersed population with its origins in a smaller geographic area. Diaspora can also refer to a population's departure from its native country.' Some diasporic communities have significant political ties to their home countries, while others do not. Many diasporas share characteristics such as the desire to return, relationships with other diaspora communities, and a lack of full integration into the home country. The most recent and most significant diasporas have been those of colonised people returning to urban areas. In countries such as the United Kingdom and Sweden, the population is now significant in terms of diasporic ex-colonial people. Many writers have recently embraced the concept of "diasporic Identity" as a positive affirmation of their hybridity. In diasporic writing, the concept of identity is more than just an exercise in exploring multiple locations; it also illuminates bigger socio-

political, economic, and religious themes such as global justice, cultural rights, self-determination, and cosmopolitanism. In this regard, Desai's *Inheritance of Loss* reveals the diasporic vestiges. Identity is an important component of people's personal life in society, according to the novel. It develops identity in terms of ethnicity, linguistics, caste system, or sectarianism, and finally, it concludes. It examines the divided identities of people from the middle and lower classes of society.

Kiran Desai's novel, *The Inheritance of Loss* (2006), is set in Indian society and is based on her personal experiences of navigating between diasporic identities and relocation. Rather than writing in Indian English, she wrote the novel in English. In her novels, she embodies the fresh voice of current English fiction and depicts something completely unique to her. Salman Rushdie, a well-known Indian English writer, has stated on social media that she is a fantastic writer when it comes to expounding on the agony of humans. She belongs among the contemporary Indian authors who examine Indian life and society. In *The Inheritance of Loss*, Kiran Desai tackles a wide range of identity concerns, including cultural hybridity, nationalism, identity, and the relationship between place and culture. The novel's main characters are heavily influenced by non-native culture. The author depicts numerous topics such as split identities on various life shops faced by people flying to face significant foreign influences and the characters in the novel discussing uncertain identities.

The novel's second chapter discusses the formation of Indian Diasporas. It depicts the diasporic formation of Judge and Sai, two characters. By focusing on three crucial features, the Judge's diasporic thought resides in alienated from mentally numb, emotionally paralysed, and spiritually dead. Sai's diaspora was formed, however, as a result of her British schooling. Her native identity is lost in the information of the Indian diaspora as a result of her colonial schooling. The creation of diaspora in New York is discussed in Chapter 3. This chapter is divided into three sections. The first section of the story follows the development of Biju, a diasporic character who is an undocumented immigrant in New York. The second section depicts Saeed's development as a diasporic person. The diaspora Harish-Harry, a lawful permanent immigrant, is defined in the third part. Biju is the son of a cook who leaves India in search of a better life in America, only to discover that he is unable to comprehend the foreign culture, and is eventually relieved to return to India, where, despite his flaws, he finds security in well-established traditions and customs.

The story takes in Kalimpong, India, in the North East Himalayas, where the author grew up. The novel depicts not only the lives of the major characters, but also the growth of the region as a result of growing social discontent among Nepali nationalists residing in the region, as well as the influence of such developments on the region's residents. The novel begins with the introduction of a retired judge who lives with his grand-daughter and cook. The Judge is an elderly guy who was taken to Britain as a young bright man to work as a judge for the British government.

Gyan calls out Sai's belongings in the novel because she does not belong to Indian culture, but she is also not a part of British culture, which Gyan believes she will not be accepted by. Loss of cultural connections to the location generates a sense of displacement, which leads to the loss of one's identity. The novel depicts this issue through the figure of a judge who suffers from dislocation twice and has a significant impact on his behaviour both times. He encountered a multitude of events that shaped his diasporic personality and identity during his travel and stay in Cambridge. He is exposed to various social preconceptions from the outset, and he gradually begins to believe in them, which feeds his self-hatred.

The judge had a very lonely existence as a result of his displacement and lack of cultural knowledge; he had no cultural links with Britain, and because he was not recognised for his otherness, his loss of self-esteem led to his losing his self-respect. He focused all of his efforts on his studies, but when it came time for the ICS admission exam, the examiners merely mocked him. He then discovered that his performance was not good enough to qualify for the ICS. He moved to a now-boarding house with other students after being accepted for the programme, where he met his only buddy in England. As soon as the judge met someone from the same culture background, he immediately felt a kinship with him on the basis of together with base, they wanted to become as English as possible, and they avoided Indian pupils at work to develop his New Identity. The judge began to adopt the New British culture consciously, and as a result, he began to regard himself as more important than anything else. This represents his desire to belong somewhere else, to find his place in society, but still identifying with the society that does not welcome him. He despises Indians since

being Indian caused him immense pain in Britain, thus his endeavour to fit in, to blend in, to hide his exoticism (IL19) is really his attempt to belong somewhere, to blend in, to suppress his exoticism. Regrettably, this effort only makes him loathed by Indians, who perceive him as attempting to be superior to them, and by British, who do not fully accept him because he is still Indian. Desai's depiction of the post-colonial perspective of the powerful West versus the underdeveloped East, depicting various characters battling to survive in the social power structure – some for their own survival, and others in search of better living standards in other countries – requires a great deal of insight. Kiran clearly depicts the situation of the Indian diaspora in the United States by laying out the heinous betrayal of the poorest Indians in the United States by their western counterparts. "What happened to Indians in other countries was terrible, and no one knew except other Indians in other countries." It was a nasty little rodent secret" (IL 138), but they swallow any shame for the sake of survival. Biju stood in a long line to seek a visa for the United States, dreaming of leaving his father's doglike life behind. The cook fantasised about a sofa, a TV, and a bank account, as well as his daughter-in-law serving him meals, cracking his toes, and swatting his grandchildren like flies. Biju fights hard to stay afloat in the United States. Biju was surprised to discover that individuals from all over the Third World had gathered in the United States, the most of whom were illegal immigrants like him, attempting in vain to settle in their dreamland.

He was bouncing around from one restaurant to the next, living in deplorable conditions with a large group of people. He lived the life of an illegal immigration fugitive, wandering from location to location like a beast pursued by its hunter. In the United States, he tried his hand at a variety of jobs, including kitchen helper, dishwasher, and food carrier. He witnessed and experienced the West's ugliness and disarray. The Cook, unaware of Biju's hardships, writes him to "Stay there. Make money. Don't come back here." (IL 191)

He almost dies at the notion of a green card. He made the decision not to return home without a green card. "This was the absurdity," said the narrator. How he wished for the triumphant "After The Green Card Return Home," and after a while, he wistfully considered marrying a green card holder, "even a disabled or mentally distorted green card holder would be fine... The green card, green card, the machoot sala oloo kapatha char sau bees green card that was not even green. It roosted heavily, clumsily, pinkishly on his brain day and night; he could think of nothing else" (IL 191).

## Conclusion

This study has dealt with Desai's *Inheritance of Loss* as a strong source of diasporic identities within a canopy of migrant experience and sees the world in a new frame of reference. In today's globalised world, According to the researcher, this study will comprehend, interpret, and analyse the changing socio-political, economic, religious, and cultural landscape with diasporic experience. Unearthing the many global issues would also be beneficial. It will also generate a lot of discussion about national and transnational writing in social science and culture studies departments all around the world. It could be useful in a variety of social sciences from a diasporic perspective. Political science, international relations, sociology, and anthropology, among other disciplines, are all examples. It has also been discovered that the next generation has its own vision on how to realise this concept. The global community, which used to look the other way when it came to immigrants, is now paying notice to the plight of the new generation.

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