

The Inaudible Skirmish of the Undocumented Expatriates and Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss*

Soumen Mukherjee

Associate Professor of English, School of Social Sciences & Languages
Vellore Institute of Technology University, Vellore, Tamil Nadu-632014, India
Email: soumenprl@yahoo.co.in

Abstract Kiran Desai's Booker award winning novel *The Inheritance of Loss* concentrates on the fate of a few vulnerable undocumented expatriates. The void which Biju, an Indian émigré, senses in USA in the story and his fracas for co-existence and quest for distinctiveness represent the fight of all those marginalized people, who, in the deficiency of a sound pecuniary condition are under the clemency of the overriding class. Desai farsightedly exposes the inconsistency between superficial ingresses of extravagance and majesty and the self-effacing genuineness of mistreatment, predominantly of the expats. The present research tries to portray this very battle of an expat against the age old despotism of the privileged people in an altogether extra-terrestrial country. The current investigation has highlighted the everyday life of the émigrés, their calamities, tirades and ignominies, their imaginings and longings, fears and interruptions through the folios of the novel.

Key words expat; struggle; void; overriding class; extraterrestrial country.

Author Mukherjee, Dr. Soumen, is Associate Professor of English at VIT University, Vellore, Tamil Nadu, India. His primary research interests are in Subaltern Literature, Feminism and Cultural studies within the realm of neo-colonial English Literature. His secondary research propensities are in multi-cultural communiqué and Kinesics.

Introduction

Social marginalization is both an ontological and epistemological wrongdoing that is usually assumed as the socio-economic side-lining of certain groups of

people, their distortion in or comprehensive omission from the inclusive systems of social-strata. The concept of marginality is vital in sociological thinking and has a multiplicity of meanings (Billson 31). Ontologically, it is a method of endurance of the destitute, a survived involvement on their part of existential deprivation, indignity, antipathy and most ominously, an excruciating sagaciousness of their breach from socio-economic extension process and sectarian politics. Further, they are debarred from the knowledge producing contrivance imbricated in explicit power relations, political conditions, economic processes and practices, at par with Foucault's "genealogy", which as a particular investigation into those elements which "we tend to feel [are] without history" (148), elucidates intensely.

Epistemologically, the openly erroneous are deprived of the means to verbalize the modalities, as to how to differentiate the others and be ostensible by the others, since they cannot design the template of their own rational sovereignty. Meanwhile from the year 1928 onwards, there have been three practices of marginality: cultural marginality—it is identified by variances in terms of race, ethnicity, religion, and other cultural indicators; social marginality -it ensues when an individual is not considered part of a beneficial reference group owing to age, timing, situational constraints, or occupational role; and structural marginality -a condition that results from the political, social, and economic ineffectiveness of explicit underprivileged groups in societies (Billson 41). As cooperation, acclimatization and multiculturalism undertake a legal basis to humanity and the acknowledgment of shared political values and a respect for national unanimity, marginalized people are often stigmatized, leading to a vicious circle marked by a lack of reassuring associations and the ability to participate in community life, resulting in further isolation (Burton and Kagan 297).

Among the marginalized people, workers face many difficulties: cultural differences, low motivation and self-efficacy, difficulty in accessing organizational resources, difficulty in identifying and taking advantage of developmental opportunities, and work-family conflicts (Maynard and Ferdman 19) Among these marginalized workers, undocumented, i.e. those who are unauthorized or proscribed immigrants, are outside of the legal basis of society and the lack of legal status creates marginality within the society at large.¹ These peripheral émigrés are even less likely than legal immigrants to be able to attain the economic and social skills that will head to integration or enable them to participate in a multi-cultural society—they are more likely to live distinct lives and thus escalate the dissections within

1 A recent news note, NYT March 2, 2007, p.A6 estimated that 200 million urban migrants within China are marginalized because they are ineligible for residence permits.

culture.

Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss* (2006) is a poignant demo of the scuffle of the marginalized expats in the richest country of the world. It fervidly analyses present day assorted issues such as imperialism, discernment, and insufficiency, by hobbling back- and- forth between India and the USA. Inadvertently, one of the most revealing occurrences of the story encompasses Desai's bizarre construal of the fortitude of an Indian illegal migrant Biju, who fights against all mishaps in the cosmopolitan epicenters of the deep-seated entrepreneurial demesnes. His know-how in America reiterates how the glitches in the impecunious undeveloped domain are knottily perceptible to the contest for excellence by the

superseding classes. Here we must keep in mind that people who are obligated by vigor to leave their homes face two options. Either they can abscond to another milieu within their home country, in which case they are known as *Internally Displaced Persons* (IDPs), or, they can flee to another country, becoming "undocumented expatriates", when they cross an transnational boundary. Those who travel directly to the country in which they seek "safe- haven" are referred to as "asylum seekers," while those who flee to another country and wait there for an opportunity for resettlement in a third country are called "refugees for resettlement."¹ In the novel *Inheritance of Loss*, Desai's characters commendably portray erratic kinds and echelons of disgruntlement at their own level, to the extent that it becomes an assortment of pitiable misapprehensions of being part of an ethos that is outlandish.

Aim of the Research Paper

The Research Paper while dealing with the modern-day concerns like proscribed migration, ethnic hodge-podge, bucolic skirmishes, monetary discrepancy, class hierarchies, unlawful actions under the camouflage of modern day radicalism, globalization and multiculturalism, aims to render the anguish and standoffishness of the undocumented expatriates, as depicted in the novel *The Inheritance of Loss* by Kiran Desai. The study under discussion centers on unlawful evacuees like Biju and how their 'blinding desire for a better life' steer to their eventual segregation, which somehow reflects the responsiveness of what Kiran Desai has experienced in the USA. As the critic Sara-Duana Meyer opines:

Surely there is a lot of Desai's own experience of moving and living in between several worlds and histories in her second novel that addresses themes

1 <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/overview-us-refugee-law-and-policy>

like the colonial past of India, the legacy of class and more recent history of separatism, but also migration, economic inequality, hybridization and the question of the nation-state. (175)

The research paper under discussion, reconnoiters the reasons that led to the exodus of the migrants; their happenstance with the extraneous ethos and their scuffles for co-existence in an unconventional terrestrial. It also reveals the chance meeting of Eastern and Western culture that brings hitches in the life of the proscribed émigrés and their endeavour for a healthier living. The crunch for inimitability, which arises as a consequence of this indigenous clang, has also been highlighted to make the populace conscious about the conceivable difficulties associated with the unlawful trespassing to an extraterrestrial realm.

The conjectural exploration attempted to answer the following three research questions:

To what extent the resonating American dream of an unrestricted society has been proliferated especially among the emigrates from the third-world countries?

How the evolution of culture has been made possible through communiqué, and by what method it is through communication that the values are reassigned from one cohort to another?

In what manner, the everyday life of the émigrés, their misfortunes, invectives and disgraces, their imaginings and longings, fears and hindrances have an uninterrupted effect on their essence?

The Elusiveness of the American Dream and the Aimless Expatriates

Academic concerns about assimilation or multi-culturalism are a far cry from putting bread on the table and most immigrants do not think in these abstract terms, rather they think in terms of survival and “getting on” a subject, which will be central in this discussion of integration and marginalization. Desai prudently exposes the discrepancy between superficial ingresses of extravagance and majesty and the unobtrusive veracity of mistreatment, predominantly of the expats. As a downgraded status leads to lower earnings, when there is work, raises the question of how these migrants will participate in either an assimilative or multi-cultural society. A convergence of postmodernist technique and Post-colonial measures makes Kiran Desai proficient at frolicking with the epitomes of power arrangements of west that are reinforced and depended on the assumes of Third World and commotion of which “might upset the balance” (Desai 23).

Every time this very commotion of individual, non-customary, ‘extra-national’

imitation dictates over mere community simulations or the ersatz of the ‘national idea’, local witnesses become trans-nationally pertinent, probed, disputed and altered.¹ Immigration is as old as civilization, because human beings have always moved in search of better living situations for themselves and for their loved ones or dodging histrionic circumstances in their native country through ages. These two major drivers were the fundamentals of the ‘push and pull’ theory that was first proposed by Lee in 1966,² incorporating economic, environmental, social and political factors pushing out from the individual homeland and attracting him/her towards the terminus country. Further to this distress, there may be the supplementary burden on the “have-nots” to earn enough to live and send back meager savings to their disadvantaged or even ravenous kindred. Desai in her novel shows that Biju is being treated as a slave in America and consequently, he becomes a quarry of racism. The cynicism and disarticulation of Biju actually represents the agony of all the expats, struggling hard to make life in an alien culture! In fact, his reverence for the fascination of the west, without knowing the real scuffle of those who have already settled there, climaxes the concerns of western cultural grumble among the emigrants.

May be exclusively for these reasons, the ascent for the American Dream had begun very early. Numerous people have been enthused by the belief that in the United States, hard work leads to prosperity and social mobility (Lee 47). Since 1970, the share and number of immigrants have increased rapidly, mainly because of large-scale immigration from Latin America and Asia, with the foreign-born population standing at 44.7 million as of 2018. Important shifts in U.S. immigration law (including the Immigration Act of 1965 that abolished national-origin admission quotas, the Refugee Act of 1980, and preferential treatment of Cuban immigrants); the United States’ growing economic and military presence in Asia and Latin America; economic ties, powerful immigrant networks, and deep migration history between the United States and its southern neighbors; and major economic transformations and political instability in countries around the world, all have helped usher in the vast diversification of immigration flows (Khandelwal 107).

1 Tarde has described as “European equilibrium” as published in New York Times in 2006.

2 Everett Spurgeon Lee, Professor of Sociology at the University of Georgia is known for his pioneering theory of migration, which is known as the Push and Pull Theory, or also as Lee’ Theory. Lee first presented his model at the Annual meeting of Mississippi Valley Historical Association, Kansas City, in 1965. Everett Lee has conceptualized the factors associated with the decision to migrate and the process of migration into the following four categories: (1) Factors associated with the area of origin; (2) Factors associated with the area of destination; (3) Intervening obstacles; and (4) Personal factors.

Nevertheless, the Indian immigrant often faces ethnic discernment amounting to even psychological aggravation. In *The Empire Writes Back*, this particular ordeal of the Indians has been revealed in an unmistakable way: “a major feature of post-colonialism literature is the concern with placement and displacement” (Ashcroft 169). The connotation of these two terms, “placement” and “displacement” are appropriate in deliberating the plight of Biju, who is an archetypal representative of the marginalized section of the society. In fact, the expatriates depicted in this celebrated post-colonial work, are the typical residue of the countries undergoing financial catastrophe in one way or the other. While fortuitously called for an interview for a position of an unskilled staff in the US, Biju observes that “a crowd of shabby people [that] had been camping, it appeared, for days on end” (Desai 105). The very disgraceful conditions of these applicants create a feeling of disrepute and manipulation in the mind of Biju: “Whole families that had travelled from distant villages... some individuals with no shoes, some with cracked ones; all smelling already of the ancient sweat of a never-ending journey” (105). He is, in fact, traumatized to see the mammoth number of people vying with each-other to go to the US with the vague hope of altering their prospect.

After efficacious accomplishment of all the processes, Biju hovers to America, as he is hardheartedly destined by the encumbrances of economic scarcity and knows inside out that in his realm, he singlehandedly cannot prizefight with inadequacy. Hence, willingly or unwillingly, he bears every kind of aggravation for earning his livelihood, like working unlawfully, and thus grossing sloppily in a multiplicity of New York bistros. Prior to January 1986, the Census Bureau’s post-censal population approximations included no allowance for undocumented immigration.¹ In fact, after entering the alien land on a Tourist visa, Biju has to live like an animal in the outlandish city, miserably in ragged and inhuman conditions in the basement of a building, with many other immigrants, where he endures every kind of anguish. Despite the fact that there was extensive obligation of the spectacle, the only appraisals of the magnitude of undocumented immigration, particularly of the annual flow, were based on little more than speculation. Investigation directed at the Census Bureau over the last several years has shown that undocumented extraterrestrials appearing in censuses and surveys can provide a basis for measuring

1 Various terms have been used to refer to this group of noncitizens present in the United States who entered illegally or who violated their conditions of entry. In addition to undocumented immigrants, some examples include illegal aliens, undocumented workers, non-legal residents, and illegal entrants.

at least a portion of undocumented migration to the United States.¹

In order to emphasize the American belligerence to the Indian immigrants, the novel hints at the forfeits of the late 1980's US precincts with respect to the admittance of professional south Asian émigrés. The latter arriving after the 1976 *Immigration and Reform Control Act* were mostly recognized for family reintegration tenacities, being little proficient in English and unqualified for white collar jobs (Brown 122). Although Biju protracts than the legitimate limit of a sojourn, outlined by a tourist visa, he experiences the defies of acknowledgement, given his pedigrees and lack of educational qualifications.

In actual fact, the stratum of prosperous Indian immigrants in the US has been paralleled by a category of urban workers, i.e. taxi drivers, hotel, restaurant, factory workers or clerks, etc. who has not realized the American dream. These individuals, experience lack of security and receive low incomes (Batalova 122), and what is pathetic, undocumented immigrants like Biju face inimical retorts while in the US, like more than a few of his proprietors express their disgruntlement with respect to his debauched redolence. In point of fact, expatriates, asylum-seekers and migrants with undocumented status have particularly challenging migration trajectories. They may have suffered abuse and trauma pre- and during-migration and are more likely compared to other migrants, to be exposed to unfavorable and stressful conditions in the receiving-country, which puts these families at risk of marginalization (Bornstein et al.)

The novelist has tried to pin-point the unconstructiveness predominant among the poor people from the developing countries, where they actively participate in the exportation of the false American dream, throughout the whole world. Naturally, with the increasing craze for Americanization, the migration from Third World countries to economically advanced America also increases. The random flow of capital is accompanied by an unprecedented movement of people, technologies and information across previously impermeable borders-for one location to another (Nadia 17). Once these immigrants enter their trance terminus, soon they twig the uselessness of the American dream. Undocumented refugees like Biju realize very

1 Robert Warren and Jeffrey S. Passel, "A Count of the Uncountable: Estimates of Undocumented Aliens Counted in the 1980 United States Census, forthcoming in *Demography*"; Jeffrey S. Passel and Karen A. Woodrow, "Geographic Distribution of Undocumented Immigrants: Estimates of Undocumented Aliens Counted in the 1980 Census by State," *International Migration Review* 18, Fall 1984, pp. 642-71 ; Passel and Woodrow, "Growth of the Undocumented Alien Population in the United States, 1979-1983, as Measured by the Current Population Survey and the Decennial Census," paper presented at the 1985 annual meeting of the Population Association of America, Boston, MA, March 1985 .

snappishly that America provides in many ways, a far more upsetting and appalling way of life than he had ever experienced in India. But, the irony is that, even after enduring so much humiliation and suffering at the hands of an atrocious American society, these undocumented migrants are gratified because of the vast array of occasions available in the alien country. Biju's strain in winning of a green card exemplifies the Indians' limited reception in the American space regardless of their eagerness to belong to it. He spends his initial days working in the restaurants, but soon there is a "green card check" (16) on the employees. His manager instantaneously dismisses him and advises him to "just disappear quietly..." (16). According to Triandis, the market is the prototypical relationship in highly idiosyncratic cultures like the American one (368). In a context of this kind, people consider themselves distinct individuals whose association revolves around delivering and paying for services. Biju is frightened to see the lot of immigrants: "...there were those who lived and died illegal in America and never saw their families, not for ten years, twenty, thirty, never again" (Desai 99).

It is widely accepted that one of the characteristics separating humans from other animals is the development of culture. A contemporary definition of culture is that, it is "the shared ways in which groups of people understand and interpret the world" (Grewal 178). Culture is also a contrivance toward all-encompassing social conscience, one in which all populaces, present and future, permanent and temporary, are equally considered. Nevertheless, Biju's working experience at the Gandhi Café reveals the shortcomings of the American capitalist society, which unpleasantly disturbs its culture. The boss of the Café, allows the workers to sleep in the basement, sparing them the costs of the rent, but paying them only a quarter of the minimum wage and thereby promoting racial discrimination. No doubt, it is a matter of fact that culture and ethnic multiplicity is critical for promoting a healthy society, where there is no discrimination of any kind.

The Cultural Vacillation and the Origination of Miscommunication

The development of culture is made possible through communication, and it is through communication that culture is transmitted from one generation to another (Jensen 151), thus proclaiming that both are two sides of the same coin; the understanding of one stresses the thorough knowledge of the other (Gudykunst and Young 133) and the changes to one will cause changes in the other. As Samovar and Porter propelled that when culture changes, communication practice also oscillate (183). Hence, as cultures fluctuate, misapprehensions and complications in intercultural communication are inevitable. This largely arises among the

undocumented immigrants, when there is slight or no sentience of incompatible cultural ethics, ideologies, and endeavors and so Biju and other illegal immigrants in New York are unable to communicate meritoriously with the immigration officials because of the language problem. This incompetence aggravates the situation and they are further downgraded to the so-called “shadow” class for which they show an ephemeral endurance, spending their nights in damp basements, dark alleyways, and uncouth kitchens of the apartments and restaurants.

Once, when he delivers food to three Indian girls of the immigrant “middle-class,” Biju feels as if he is “standing at [a] threshold” enduring ambiances of love, compassion and fondness all mixed together, but it is not responded by the other side. David Spielman points to the issues of identity and the depravity which the asylum seekers face (77), as has been vividly described in Desai’s novel, where the commemorative attitude towards hybridity and immigration has been ridiculed in unambiguous terms. In reality, “*The Inheritance of Loss* shows us a radical postcolonial subjectivity in which flexibility, assimilation, and multiculturalism are preferable to maintaining difference” (Samovar & Porter 128), and therefore, the three Indian girls are cognizant that they belong to the fortunate segment of the civilization and, consequently, uphold disinterestedness with the marginalized Biju.

All societies are multicultural in nature. Everyone today lives in a global village. With the passing of the days, Biju started considering himself merely one amongst many others who are struggling for their day-to-day existence. Biju’s routine job delivering General Tso’s chicken and Szechuan wings to city residents has him “on a bicycle with the delivery bag on his handlebars, a tremulous figure-between having buses, regurgitating taxis-what growls, what sounds of flatulence came from this traffic. Biju pounded at the pedals, heckled by taxi drivers direct from Punjab...” (49). In one of the most poignant jiffies in the novel, Biju on his bicycle “beg[ins] to weep from the cold, and the weeping unpick[s] a deeper vein of grief—such a terrible groan issued from between the whimpers that he was shocked, his sadness was so profound” (51). The sordid tale of Biju points to the hard-reality that it is high time that the regularity authorities must not only sign and endorse accords guaranteeing cultural rights and diversity to the immigrants, but implement them by enforcing regulations to ensure ethnic miscellany.

Inconspicuous Legitimacy of Exploitation and the Ensuing Identity-Crisis of the Undocumented Emigrants

In his writings, Homi Bhabha deliberates this spur-of-the-moment linking of

the suffering man to memory. Nervousness over one's self and identity as an individual links one to the memory of the past, while s/he fails to choose a path in the abstruse present (204), and hence, despite the fact that Biju spends unsleeping nights in the stained cellar sculleries; he gets sentimental about his wistful past in the lap of nature. Predictably, his calamity as a proscribed immigrant finds a reverberation in the ordeal of several emigrants who come from different parts of the world. Apparently, there are few immigrants, who pose to be affluent, but in reality, they are the same as that of their compatriots. Such as, a boy from his Zanzibarian friend Saeed's neighbourhood that Biju sees with a "gold chain as fat as a bathtub attachment, his prosperity flashing out," is not a typically "successful" or "productive" member of American society, but is, rather, a street hustler (Desai 17; 84; 110). Further, Biju's anxiety about telecommunication itself also speaks of the truculent ways in which the undocumented immigrants experience life in America quite inversely than do those who are legitimate holders of the green card. Nevertheless, what is more pathetic is the fact that their panic for the immigration hotline makes them an easy prey for the American officials who consider them mere illegal immigrants. As a consequence, instead of conferring legal citizenship to these people, it prompts the officials to deport them. Hence, apart from the manner in which Biju feels that he becomes "the only one displacing the air" in a space which should have "included family, friends," his lack of access to communication and information in New York is another exceptional example of the ways in which the "benefits" of modern technology are strictly limited to the creamy layer of the society. In reality, far from relishing the recompenses of a global village by the much hyped technical advancement that helped Biju to go to New York for his livelihood; it further creates the distance between the near and dear ones (Desai 18).

The firm perception of the native country is a familiar and conventional view, human beings hold distinctively in their realization. It indicates the obvious need for home/motherland in human life as a place of origin and means of alignment to the world. This idea considers home a single and territorially fixed place, a center of one's private and personal life over which one has full control. This home is described as a safe and secure haven to belong to and to live in and also to leave and return to if necessary (Loomba 112). Hence, Biju is no more excited by the glamorous image of the west; rather he begins to develop a repugnance for its subsistence. Mortification, sequestration, estrangement, and bone-chilling frost, all contributed to the sense of utter solitude experienced by Biju in America. His father's friend, Nandu, on whom he had been contingent upon for all kinds of help, is unpitiful enough to give him the cold shoulder and terminates him with the

advice that he should go back to his homeland (Desai 98).

He senses waylaid among workers from incalculable nations and twigs to his long-held predispositions about the Pakistanis as “paki” and fights the “old war, best war” (Desai 23) with him without a second thought. He is also habituated to calling the blacks “hubshi” and “*bandor*” (monkey) (Desai 185), and to venerate whiteness as the standard of sanitation and gorgeousness and hate blackness as representing foulness and ugliness. Even though his co-workers goad him visit brothels, for one motive or another, he circumvents going there; because furtively he loathes the black woman who “smell[s] awful” (Desai 101). He feels an insightful seclusion in this big city like the destitute man or the displaced chicken which in the park scratches “in a homey manner in the dirt and felt a pang for village life” (Desai 81), and comprehends clearly that in America, only those expatriates get a pie of this “American Dream” who is parsimoniously sound.

Rodney Benson noted that since the mid-1970s and mid-2000s, U.S. immigration news coverage shifted from a focus on jobs and the global economy to an accumulative focus on racism, threat to public order, and humanitarian concerns about immigrant suffering (McLeod 77). He also observed that government administrators and unaffiliated personages were profoundly trusted on as sources. Nonetheless, foreign governments and international organizations conscious of the deep-rooted immigration issues are hardly used as sources in U.S. immigration news (Benson 278), and the so-called subaltern-class of the society have to verify the usefulness of their existence, in the face of newer and newer version of societal atrocity, assailed upon them with an authoritative vigor. Illegitimate migrants heralding from Africa, Latin America and Asia, working in the USA, represent this neglected fragment of the society who are not only helpless, but are rather tortured by the privileged lot. However, in lieu of an enthralling future, all these so-called proscribed immigrants endure every type of societal atrocity. Biju realizes it very well that though the racial discrimination and inequality torment his soul, and he lives a secluded life in America, but at the same time, the multiple prospects of earning a decent livelihood are missing in his own motherland. It is mainly, due to this contradiction of thoughts, that “Biju could not help but feel a flash of anger at his father, for sending him alone to his country, but knew he wouldn’t have forgiven his father, for not trying to send him, either” (Desai 82).

In the 18th century, Jean de Crèvecoeur (1981 [1782]) observed that in America, “individuals of all nations are melted into a new race of men” (192). More than two epochs later, the American experiment of *E Pluribus Unum* lingers with one of the most generous immigration policies in the world, one that includes

provisions for diversity, refugees, family reunification, and workers who bring scarce employment skills. The United States is home to almost one-fifth of the world's international migrants, including 23 million who arrived from 1990 to 2013 (United Nations Population Division, 2013).¹ Nonetheless, this predisposition has given rise to more multifaceted socio-cultural problems. In the new cultural and social set up, immigrants have to re-establish their cultural and historical distinctiveness, by compromising with their morality, ethical values and religious sentimentalities.

The concepts like social insecurity, socio-ethnic practices, sense of self-respect assume new proportions. Values and ethics are often compromised for the sake of obtaining asylum in the First World countries (Levitt 233). Biju's edginess upturns, and scuffs a sentiment already sternly mugged by the parched, transitory and practical human affiliations in New York. The white men are not diffident in battering the brown colour Indians: "*Uloo ka patta* son of an owl, lowdown son-of-a-bitch Indian" (Desai 23). Open to contemptuous annotations that pierced his heart, Biju had to toil under embarrassment, as his hopes are utterly horrified and he recognizes that the people from the unfledged or emerging economies are affianced in a mislaying combat for survival (Desai 102).

Most immigrants (77%) are staying in the USA legally, while almost a quarter are unauthorized, according to new Pew Research Center estimates based on census data adjusted for undercount.⁷ Biju soon comprehends the predominance of a profound division between the documented and the undocumented settlers and realizes that unless and until his immigration was acknowledged and specified a legitimate endorsement, he stands nowhere. He spends thirty years of time fiddling the establishments, moving from one ill-paid job to another and craving for the "Green card" (Desai 75), but slowly and surely, he draws three inferences of his migrant status. First, having no family and friends here, he is the only one who suffers the pain of displacement. Therefore his life in the US is void and hollow. Secondly, it will not be conceivable for him to "manufacture a fake version of himself" (Desai 268) like other fellow Indians (undocumented expatriates) in America. And finally, he senses that he cannot bear the encumbrance of his enormous droning self-consciousness and depression to any further extent. Like a giant-sized monster, it has been escalating day-by-day and cannot be abridged. So

1 The most controversial aspects of the new population projections are the impact of immigration on population diversity and the prediction that the U.S. population will become a majority minority population; that is, non-Hispanic whites will be less than half of the total population by the middle of the 21st century (Colby and Ortman, 2015, Table 2).

he desires to relocate to the national space, where he will never be “the only one in a photograph” (Desai 270).

An expectant Biju consumes a share of his life-long earnings in purchasing monies for his father and other relatives and close- consociates and ultimately returns to his motherland in the Gulf Air Plane with a newfangled conviction. He is also in a home-making imaginary planning to buy a taxi with the secreted money in different parts of his clothing and to build a house with solid walls and a well-made roof that will endure cyclical deluges. Once he gets -off the plane in Calcutta, its dust appears to him “warm, mammalian” (Desai 300). An assorted compassion of wretchedness, soreness, nostalgia and saccharinity greets him, and he senses like a baby falling asleep in its mother’s lap. The acquainted surroundings full of indigenous dialects diminish his “enormous anxiety of being a foreigner, the unbearable arrogance and shame of the immigrant” (Desai 300) and sedately provides him the obligatory coziness, which was so much missing in an alien country, like the US. Biju cherishes the acquainted rapture and tries to entomb his unabashed past!

The Inheritance of Loss: Amidst the Narrative called “Life”

Without wasting any time, he straightaway proceeds to Kalimpong, totally insentient of the fact that the vicious and gratuitous insurrection of the Gorkhas, lasting two years, had left the tiny Himalayan town in total wreck and syndrome. For four days, he is crammed on the way and then, making a depraved resolution, sets out to Kalimpong with GNLf insurgents in their jeep. On the way, they rob him of all his possessions, excepting his underwear and offer him a female nightgown, picked up from a nearby bush, to conceal his manhood. The particular uniform, instead of clothing him, coagulates him substantially as well as psychologically bare femininely vulnerable. Biju is for a second time empty-handed, “without his baggage, without his savings, worst of all, without his pride... with far less than he had ever had” (Desai 317). His repugnant chronicle gets over with his arrival at his father’s timorous household. Nonetheless, Biju realizes the illusory nature of his dreams and forsakes his longing for the elusive Green card and money for his true individuality. He appreciates that: “Year by year, his life wasn’t amounting to anything at all; in a space that should have included family, friends..... Clumsy in America, a giant-sized midget... shouldn’t he return to a life where he might slice his own importance... (Desai 268).

Biju’s diffident father is, however, euphoric to accept his son after almost three decades. May be, after this long-awaited blissful re-union, the cook will fight the

battle of his life with a new gusto, because despite the backwardness, paucity, and illiteracy in one's own land, one can develop a sense of belonging and uniqueness only in one's own home land. On the other hand, his son Biju, may forget not only all the degradations at the hand of the powerful aliens, but also the sordid experience of losing his hard-earned money at the hands of aimless hooligans. Here, Kiran Desai destabilizes the notion of significant home (Frost 390) and presents her vision of lost home in *The Inheritance of Loss*. As a diasporic individual, he is dislocated twice—from Kalimpong to New York to Kalimpong again. Biju disastrously fails to grow any lasting spatial and passionate connection with any of his homes as the dislocation of wishes repeatedly occurs in his life. In reality, whether cultures are hereditary or calculatingly championed, as in the case of the migrant status, rudimentary problems of the definition of identity are inescapable.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we may say with vivacity, that Biju is the representative figure of the turmoil-torn third world minds who desire to attain the “American Dream” by any warranted or unsubstantiated means. He belongs to the “second wave of less-skilled Indian migrants” (Rangaswamy 122), and his archetypal standoffishness and estrangement in New York can be taken as an emblem of the whole Indian diasporas by postponement—the Indians living abroad. But they are not aware that such life is suspended animation and has no apparition and absolution. The novel has highlighted the everyday life of the émigrés, their misfortunes, invectives and disgraces, their imaginings and longings, fears and hindrances. This shadow class is entombed in the throttling basement: “Then, of course, there were those who lived and died illegal in America and ‘never saw their families not for 10 years, twenty, thirty never again” (Desai 99).

In their efforts to seek anchor, assimilation, their psychological pressures, their fear of racism and injustice, they behave exactly like real human beings. Biju's claims of being a civilized individual to a white person indicate his identity dilemma and reflect his failings under colonial dictation and his desperations for a privileged status. Biju's inner-conflict evokes his desires for his identity to be accepted. As such, the pains and agony which the expats endure sound reliable. They are placed in really testing and disastrous situations, from which it is very much challenging to escape. Substantially, Biju's dilemma concedes that his identity is designed and influenced by colonial impacts which presently fail his individuality. In other words, Biju is constrained as a post-colonial individual who is physically, socially and nationally under-valued, stereotyped and marginalized.

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