

**The Contours of The Ethno-Racial And Historical Relationships Between People  
From Different Cultures and Backgrounds in *The Inheritance Of Loss***

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**Abstract:**

The aim of this paper is to present ethnic – racial of Gorkhas in Darjeeling District, West Bengal, *The Inheritance of Loss* (2006) is the second novel of Kiran Desai. In this novel Kiran Desai portrayed different ethnic people in Darjeeling district, Kalimpong Gorkha people, Jemubhai Patolal Patel, Nonita (Spinster), Lolita sister of Nonita, married woman both are French people lived in Kalimpong little distance for Cho Oyu, house of J.P. Patel. Gyan mathematics tutor for Sai, whose origin is Nepal. J.P. Patel birth place is Phiphit village, Gujarat. Biju son of cook living in America, Manhattan, where people from different countries worked for different companies, the two different places Manhattan in America and other places in India like, Darjeeling, Delhi, Phiphit in Gujarat. All these places have been beautifully handled and portrayed by Kiran Desai, she wonderfully describes the culture, language of ethnic people in the novel *The Inheritance of Loss*.

**Key Words:** Jai Gorkha, Cho Oyu, Darjeeling, Kalimpong, Gymkhana Club, GNLF etc,

**Introduction:**

The Second novel of Kiran Desai is *The Inheritance of Loss*, the novel has been published in the year 2006. Here Kiran Desai traces the Colonial and Post-Colonial India through the character of Justice Jemubhai Patolal Patel, who lost his wife Nimi and daughter, now he lives only with his grand-daughter Sai. J.P. Patel lives Kalimpong after his retirement. One cook was living with him, who prepares morning breakfast, tea, lunch for afternoon, evening tea and night meals etc., setting of the novel is 1986 at Darjeeling district West-Bengal. When Indian born Nepalis asks separate state for them, they are Gorkha people, the insurgency takes place in significant parts of insurgency takes place in significant parts of this novel *The Inheritance of Loss*. Those Indian born Nepalis are speaking Nepali language ninety percentage of people in Darjeeling, Kalimpong and Siliguri Subdivision people were speaking Nepali language, they are claiming Gorkhaland for Gorkhas. Biju son of cook went to America by tourist visa, then who was unable to get green card, Biju can't get proper job at Manhattan in America. Finally he returns to India and joined with his Father. In one side of the novel there was a Romance between Sai and Gyan Mathematics tutor for Sai. Gyan's origin is Nepal. Their love became failure, Kiran Desai used

flash back technique in this novel several times J.P. Patel recalled his past life, when he was a school student at Victoria Mission school later he went to London for pursuing higher studies Law etc., Kiran Desai portrayed beautifully Colonial, Post-Colonial India, particularly the Darjeeling and its tourist places. While reading this novel *The Inheritance of Loss*, the readers can get wonderful experiences of Darjeeling's Natural Beauty and its tourist places etc.,

**Ethnic:** Ethnic Studies deals with understanding the world from the perspective of groups that have historically been marginalized. An ethnic group, a social group that shares a common and distinctive culture, religion, language or the like

**Race:** Race is a belief that one race is superior to the other or the practice of treating a person or group of people differently on basis of their race.

### **Cho Oyu at Kanchenjunga:**

Cho Oyu is a beautiful house constructed by Scotsman near the Mountain Kanchenjunga. After India gets political Independence, the Scotsman has to leave India, before he leaves the Scotsman handed over this house to Justice Jemubhai Patolal Patel in the year 1957. J.P. Patel was not interested to get this house, because it has been located far away from the city. "It is very isolated but the land has potential", the Scotsman had said, "Quinine, Sericulture, Cardamom, Orchids". (*The Inheritance of Loss*, 28) after his retirement, Justice J.P. Patel was living with his grand-daughter Sai and Cook. The Cook was staying outside of this house in a small hut. In the conversation between Sai and Cook, Cook comes to know that Sai lost her parents both Mother and Father in a flight accident both were died at Russia. Sai's mother was studying at Delhi one of the colleges. She met Mr. Mistry an Orphan, who has been taken care by Zoroastrian Charitable Trust since his childhood days onwards Zoroastrian Charitable Trust offers fund for Mr. Mistry's education, while was pursuing higher Education, he comes to meet J.P. Patel's daughter at public park in Delhi. Both are fallen love. Finally they married themselves, J.P. Patel was not interested in this marriage because Mr. Mistry belongs another religion. "They became acquainted in this grassy acre, cows tethered to enormous rusty lawn mowers slowly grinding back and forth before a crumbling Mughal tomb (Page, 26)

Mr. Mistry got a chance to go to Moscow for space, he feels himself that he was a lucky person, he invites his wife also come along with him to Moscow, Mr. Mistry convinces his wife, and finally she accepts his request because both are astronauts. They admitted their daughter Sai at St. Augustine's Convent School at Dehra Dun. Mrs and Mr. Mistry paid school fee for Sai. Sai was staying in school hostel sister Caroline takes care on Sai. One day she received news that Sai's parents Mrs and Mr. Mistry were died in flight crash at Moscow, immediately Sister Caroline passed this new to J.P. Patel. Initially he won't accept his grand-daughter Sai finally he accepted her. "There was only a single listing in the register under, "Please contact in case of emergency". It was the name of Sai's grandfather, the man who had once paid the school fee" (Page, 28)

Sai said good bye to everyone in the St. Augustine convent school, because she is going to leave this school. She will be live with her grand-father. J.P. Patel at Kalimpong, one day evening Sai was observing the mountain clouds and natural sceneries, she would be very happy then she enters Cho Oyu house Gyan Mathematics tutor Nepali arrived here for evening class, cook offered tea biscuits etc., after the maths class, Gyan leaves the place that same day evening 7.00 PM itself a group of Gorkha's arrived at Cho Oyu house, they hold weapons like Kukri Sickle, Axes, Kitch Knives, spades etc., they claimed money, eatables like biscuits snacks etc., finally they took J.P. Patels double-barreled rifele, Holland & Holland. Then they left with the noise

“Jai Gorkha, “Gorkhaland for Gorkhas”. “Jai Gorkha, said the cook and Gorkhaland for Gorkhas”, said Sai, although they had not been asked to say anything” (Page, 7)

#### **Piphit:**

Piphit is a small village in Gujarat, where Jemubhai Patolal Patel was born in an agriculture family. He was very much interested in studies. J.P. Patel was studied at Victoria Mission School, where Queen Victoria’s Portrait has been fixed on the wall while entering the school Administrative Block, whoever enters the Building, and they can see Queen Victoria’s Portrait. After completing the School Education, J.P. Patel went to London for higher studies, he studied Bachelor of Law in London. After five years back J.P. Patel returned to his native village, he is the first graduate in his village Piphit. Then he marries Nimi, a rich land owner’s girl. When he was Twenty, Nimi is just fourteen years old. “So shy, so shy” – the delighted crowd was sure of having witnessed the terror of love” (Page, 165 – 166) After his marriage with Nimi, long years back one day, Mrs. Mohan a congresswoman invites Nimi to join with her for one historical event because Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru is going to visit in their living. For this reason every congress members, leaders formed a group to invite first Prime Minister of India. Nimi also joined with Mrs. Mohan. After the meeting would be over Nimi, delayed to reach her house, when Jemubhai Patolal Patel becomes very anger, he doesn’t allow Nimi into his house. Then Nimi went to her father’s house she delivers a female child, that child was the mother of Sai. “We’re part of history being made, Mrs. Patel Today you saw one of the greatest men in India” (Page, 302)

#### **Death of Indira Gandhi:**

In one side Gorkhas are asking separate state for them in another Sikhs are asking Punjab should be separated for them. But Prime Minister Indira Gandhi didn’t accept their request. Because of this reason our Prime Minister Indira Gandhi has been assassinated by her own security guards sikh soldiers. The violence takes place every in many places Sikhs have been killed by congress party members etc., “Police unearthing militants in Assam, Nagaland and Mizoram; Punjab on fire with Indira Gandhi dead and gone in October of Last year” (Page, 108)

#### **Gorkhas:**

Around 1800 onwards many Nepali people have arrived at Darjeeling place for their survival, they are speaking only Nepali language. Gyan’s grandfather also one among them, they were doing all kinds of odd jobs peasant work, labouring work, working in tea estates etc., During the time of WWI and WWII these Gorkhas were serving as a soldiers of British regiment. In August is, 1947 India got political freedom from British, all ICS officer can remain the same position and serve for the Nation. But these Gorkhas have been left alone. “By and by along came the Imperial Army, measuring potential soldiers in villages all over the hills with a measuring tape and ruler” (Pae, 141) In the time of India’s Independence the Communist Party of India demanded a Gorkhasthan, but their request was ignored later, Gorkha people have united themselves formed a team, they call them under the name of Gorkha National Liberation Front GNLF. Ninety percentages of people in Darjeeling, Kalimpong and Siliguri Sub-division people are speaking Nepali language, they were demanding a separate state for Gorkha. “The GNLF would offer jobs to its own and a 40,000 strong Gorkha army, universities and hospitals” (Page, 160)

#### **Tutors for Sai:**

Justice Jemubhai Patolal Patel has arranged tutors for Sai. A cottage named Mon Ami, where two sisters were living, Noni (Spinster) Nonita, Lola (Lolita) sister of Noni, weekly three days

they are teaching French and English to Sai. One day Uncle Potty and father Booty arranged a Library Trip to Gymkhana Club, when GNLFF protest was very high, but these people never bothered about that. They visited several places in Gymkhana Club and Darjeeling tourist places. Each of them carries their own favourite Novel Books, Noni had the book of Mahesveta Devi, Father Booty had books of Agatha Christie's *Five Little Pigs* and Sai had *Wuthering Heights* in her bag. When police suspected them and made an enquiry finally they released them, because of GNLFF pressure. "But officer, you only have to look at us to know we're hardly the people to waste your time on". (Page, 218)

The tutors take care of Sai, they visited several tourist places in Darjeeling District. While in the discussions, the Darjeeling, District is famous for Three T's, "Tea! Timber! Tourism!" (Page, 225), particularly Assam, Arunachal Pradesh and some other North East states in India are very famous for Tea Estates, but Darjeeling has something special than above mentioned places in those places Gorkhas are working as a wages. During their tourist visit in middle of their tour camp the strike takes place all over the Darjeeling District in many places shops have been closed No, Vehicles, No power supply, No Gas, No Kerosene etc., the people of Darjeeling come back to cooking on wood. No Communication facilities were available, Telegram, Telephone etc., "Finally, the shops and offices didn't open at all-the – the Snow Lion Travel Agency and the STD boot, the Shawl shop, the deaf tailors, Kanshi Nath & Sons Newsagents – everyone terrorized to keep their shutters down" (Page, 236)

While seeing these strikes, people will have no doubt that tomorrow they may burn The Indo-Nepal Treaty (1950), Peace and Friendship, "The Indo-Nepal treaty is being burned tomorrow" (Page, 272), it has been signed by Prime Minister of Nepal and Indian Ambassador to Nepal on 31<sup>st</sup> July 1950, which came into force the same day, which has ten articles. Lots of people arrived from different places not only from Kalimpong but from nearby villages, towns around, Mirik, Pasumbeng, Soureni Valley, Alooari, Labons Valley, Kerseong and Peshok etc., Already Kalimpong police have registered case against some Gorkhas they created trouble at Cho Oyu J.P. Patel's house. A large group moved towards some Government Offices at Darjeeling, Police Station, Post Office etc., they wanted to tore FIR Copies and documents they throw stones on Police Station and Post Office. "The stones hit the rooftops, BANG BANG BANG BANG, then they came flying with greater momentum, bounced down and injured some of the people" (Page, 275) The boys of GNLFF protested against in many places of Darjeeling Districts, they shouted Gorkhaland for Gorkhas, they burnt down the Government Rest Houses which have located near the bridge, and the Kalimpong was transformed into a Ghost Town. "The GNLFF boys had burned down the Government rest house by the river" (Page, 280)

### **The arrival of Biju:**

Biju son of Cook was working in hotels, Restaurants and Bakeries at Manhattan by tourist Visa only he went to America, where he was unable to get proper job for getting Green Card he must have regular job in America and spent extra four year. It was highly impossible for Biju, so he decided to come back to Kalimpong, after he reaches Calcutta Air Port, there is no buses available for Darjeeling. Biju comes to know that there is a huge strike in Darjeeling District, GNLFF boys are conducting this strike, and they shouted Gorkhaland for Gorkhas. "No bus to Kalimpong". It was in the newspaper, wasn't it? The man at the Siliguri bus station had been surprised at Biju's ignorance". (Page, 310) No town buses are available at Siliguri bus station with help of GNLFF vehicle, Biju spent huge amount to reach Cho Oyu house.

### **Summing UP:**

Kiran Desai discussed the issues of Gorkhaland and what are the demands of Gorkhas? She concluded the novel *The Inheritance of Loss* with no solution for the Gorkhaland issue. But, she gave the solution for the Life of Biju and Sai, Sai's romance with Gyan would become fail, but finally Sai joins with the hand of Biju son of Cook. The result of GNLG issue the Indian Government and West Bengal Government has formed Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council (DGHC) on 1988, it is an autonomous administrative division, no elections for local bodies, state assembly and parliament will be conducted. The leader has been appointed for DGHC, who has the power to rule and control over on education, sports, agriculture and hospitals etc.

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