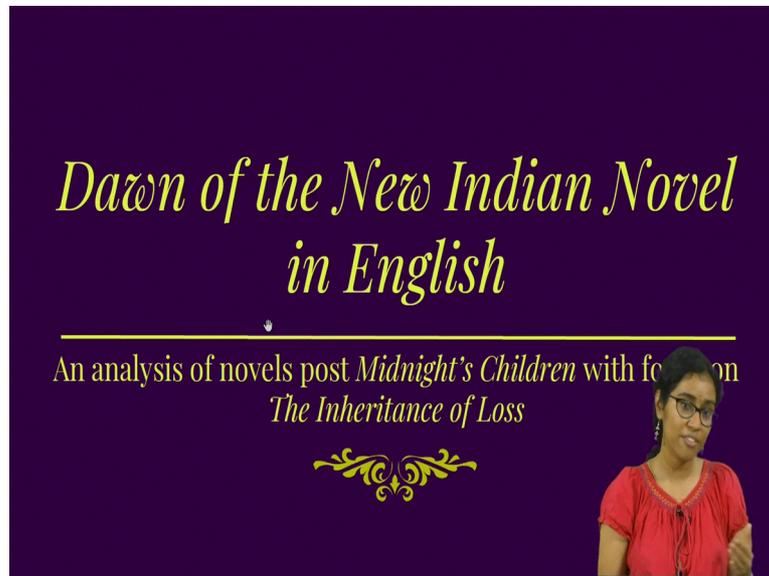


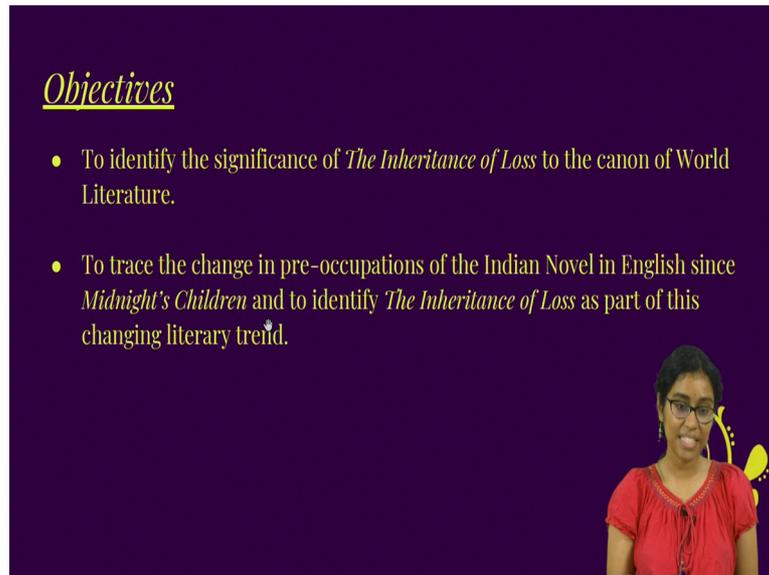
Introduction to World Literature
Indian Institute of Technology Madras
Department of Humanities and Social Sciences
Dawn of the New Indian Novel in English

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Hello and welcome to a lecture on dawn of the new Indian novel in English, my name is Ranjani and I will be running you through the course of the presentation, the presentation seeks to provide an analysis of the novels post midnights children with a focus on the inheritance of loss, the primary object of the presentation is to assess the role of the Indian text in the canon of world literature, however this is different from the endeavour undertaken with respect to silence the court in session and other works before midnight children because this works primarily, a work written in English and not a translation from another language, so endeavours also unique for the matter of fact that it post-colonial in nature and does not have any bearing with earlier nationalistic endeavours of the previous writings, so let us get into the objectives of this presentation.

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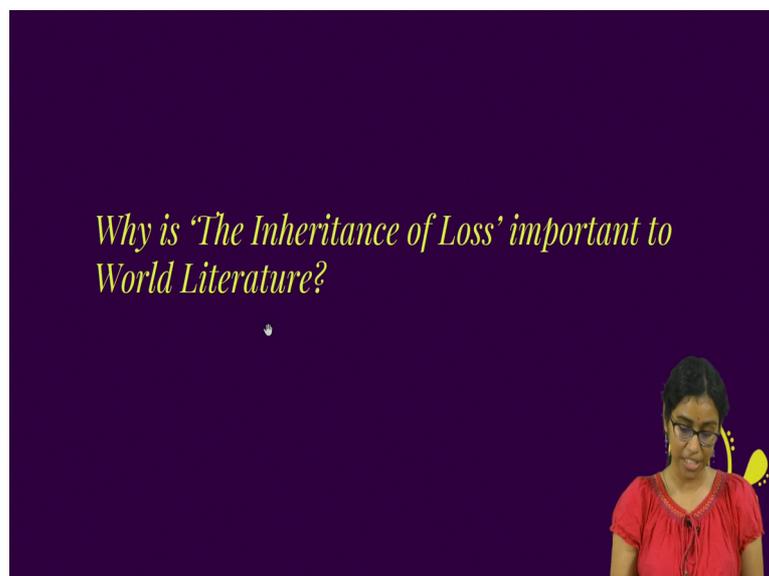
Objectives

- To identify the significance of *The Inheritance of Loss* to the canon of World Literature.
- To trace the change in pre-occupations of the Indian Novel in English since *Midnight's Children* and to identify *The Inheritance of Loss* as part of this changing literary trend.

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The first objectives of the representation is to identify the significance of the inheritance of loss to the canon of world literature, secondly to trace the change in pre-occupations of the Indian novel in English since midnights children and to identify the inheritance of loss as part of this changing literature trend, so in this presentation I try to provide a non-traditional analysis and it largely, significantly from the work of Rajeshwari Sundararajan and other post-colonial theories from whose works I derived lot of mine main arguments, also it will extra a lot of parallel question with regarding other works of literature such as a midnights children and the God of small things and it tries to provide the inheritance of loss may not establish itself as one of the more popular works within the canon.

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Why is 'The Inheritance of Loss' important to World Literature?

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The Inheritance of Loss

- *The Inheritance of Loss* is the second novel by Indian author Kiran Desai. It was first published in 2006.
- It is the recipient of a number of awards, including the Man Booker Prize for that year, the National Book Critics Circle Fiction Award in 2007, and the 2006 Vodafone Crossword Book Award.
- The novel articulates the exile experience and the consequences of globalization from a post-colonial perspective.



So let us get into our first objective with why is the inheritance of loss important to world literature? For a basic introduction to the inheritance of loss, the inheritance of loss is the second novel by Indian author Kiran Desai, it was first published into 2006, so this happens to be second novel, the first novel written by her *Hullabaloo in the Guava orchard*, which was published in 1998 and it is a very popular and widely recommended novel in its own right, it is a recipient of number of awards, including the Man Booker prize for that year, the National book critics Circle fiction award in 2007 and the 2006 Vodafone crossword book award.

The novel articulates exile experience and consequences of globalisation from a post-colonial perspective, so our analysis of this novel will largely concern itself with the last point mentioning the presentation, which is the novel concern itself with the exile experience and the consequences of globalisation from a post-colonial perspective and we also try to draw analysis, comparative analysis between the other booker with his *midnight's children* and this booker itself.

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The Inheritance of Loss

- The story is set in the village of Kalimpong, in the 1980s.
- The novel explores the lives of characters who are trapped in India's class system—both the lower class and the upper class.
- The characters' hopes and dreams are conveyed in the novel, along with their ultimate dream of immigrating to America and finally escaping the rigid caste system of their homeland.



More about the novel, the story is set in the village of Kalimpong in the 1980s and novel explore the lives of characters who are trapped in Indias class system, both of the lower class and the upper class, the characters, hopes and dreams are conveyed in the novel, along with their ultimate dream of immigrating to America and finally escaping rigid caste system of their homeland.

So some things that of significance here is a unusual setting itself increase the novel is located, it happens to be located in the foothills of Darjeeling and explores the unusual theme across different generations, Kalimpong happens to be at the foothills of the Himalaya and the story itself opens and unfurls in a small village of Cho Oyu in Kalimpong.

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<p><i>Sai (16 years)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Comes to live with Judge Jemubhai Patel when she is orphaned at nine - parents died in Moscow• Becomes close to Gyan, a Nepali mathematics tutor who is hired to teach her	<p><i>Judge Jemubhai Patel</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• An Anglophile• Cambridge-educated judge, is left to care for the child he has never fully known• Has a tortured marriage, is alienated from his world - is only close to his dog, Mutt• Is never friendly with the Cook
<p><i>The Cook</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lives in a hut near the judge's house - kept on meager wages• Is tremendously proud of his son, Biju, whom he imagines to be wildly successful in America	<p><i>Biju</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Struggles from job to job as an immigrant in New York City• Suffers a series of humiliations as he tries to survive in New York• Returns to Kalimpong when the political disturbance



Will now have a brief overview of the characters involved in this novel, our primary character is Sai who is a young girl of 16 years, who comes to live with Jemubhai Patel when she is orphaned at nine that her parent died in Moscow in an accident and she became close to the Gyan, Nepali mathematics tutor who is hired to teach her, so Sai is a character who is located at the conflict of identity, adolescence and personal questions that arise at the intersection of woman who would and teenage hood, so she becomes a very interesting character and is very centred to the plot point of this novel.

Next character is Judge Jemubhai Patel, who is an Anglophile and who can be said to have a sort of a colonial hangover from whatever remains of the British past, he has a Cambridge educated judge in his left to care for the child he has never fully known, has a tortured marriage, is alienated from his world to such an extent that he is only close ally to his dog Mutt whom he treats with affection and he has never seen to be friendly with the cook,

Coming to the cook, the cook lives in a hut near the judges house and his kept on meagre wages and is tremendously proud of his son Biju whom he imagines to be widely successful in America, so this happens to be another very crucial plot point in the novel because it sets its stage for how the American life is commonly perceive by Indians as a stated here, he imagines his son to be widely successful in America, it is the character of Biju that we see this very popular myth is disproved, Biju struggles from job to job as an illegal immigrants in New York City and suffers a serious of humiliations and trials as it tries to survive in New York and finally returns to Kalimpong, when he here is the political disturbances in his hometown.

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Gyan

- Gyan begins the novel as naïve as Sai, but eventually he matures due to the GNLF movement that arises in Kalimpong
- After this political awakening, Gyan becomes frustrated at Sai's innocence and cultural elitism

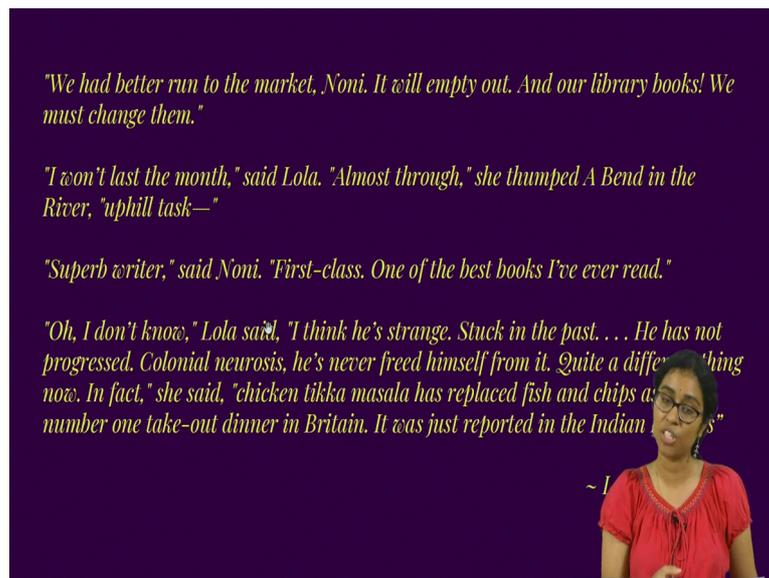
Lola and Noni

- Lola and Noni are upper-class women
- They have assimilated many parts of British and Western cultures, such as celebrating Christmas, reading Jane Austen, and listening to BBC

Our next to characters also crucial to the plot Gyan, Gyan begins the novel as naive as Sai, but eventually he matures due to the GNLF movement that arises in Kalimpong, Gyan is 20-year-old mathematics tutor who is Nepali in origin, so this is an intersection of different variables in his character that is not commonly seen in a novel, Nepali is not usually seen to be as well educated or capable of educating others, but Gyan in this novel is a young man of 20, who is not only well educated and well-read in mathematics, but it is also taking the effort to educate our young girl who is Sai, after the political awakening Gyan becomes frustrated at Sai innocence and cultural elitism, it was not mentioned here that Sai and Gyan get romantically involved, but this changes in the later stages of the novel as a story unfolds.

Lola and Noni, Lola and Noni are upper-class Bengali woman who similar to the judges Jemubhai Patel, also suffer from a British hangover, a colonial hangover. They have assimilated many parts of British in Western cultures, such as celebrating Christmas, reading Jane Austen and listening to BBC, we can also being seen to be extremely proud of their relatives who work in the BBC and are very showing of their contacts within the BBC whom they can connect with when he need any favours. But whether these flavours, whether this contacts actually come to their use is a different question altogether, but the mere relationship that they bear with the people in the BBC are with anybody in that part of the world. They seem to set them apart from the other people who do not have relationships with people living in the West.

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Here is an excerpt from a conversation between Lola and Noni, this is particularly significant because it is Chegi Jaibe at another popular Indian writer of Trinidad in Tobago origin who is V S Naipaul and his book is also referenced here is a bend in the road, so let us go through this excerpt.

They have better run to the market, Noni, it will empty out and our library books we must teach them. I would last the month, said Lola almost through she thumped a bend in the river uphill task. Superb writer said Noni, first-class one of the best books I have ever read. Oh I do know Lola said, I think he is strange, stuck in the past he has not progressed colonial neurosis, he has never freed himself from it, quite a different thing in now. In fact, she said, chicken tikka masala has replaced fish and chips as the number one take-out dinner in Britain. It was just reported in the Indian express.

So this conversation is an encapsulation of what this novel attempt to do with either replaced the colonial neurosis of the past with the new post-colonial analysis, also signified the metaphorical statement which she makes saying, chicken tikka masala has replaced fish and chips, so one dominant mode of analysis is now being replaced with another mode of analysis where people of Indigenous regions are finally being an original voice.

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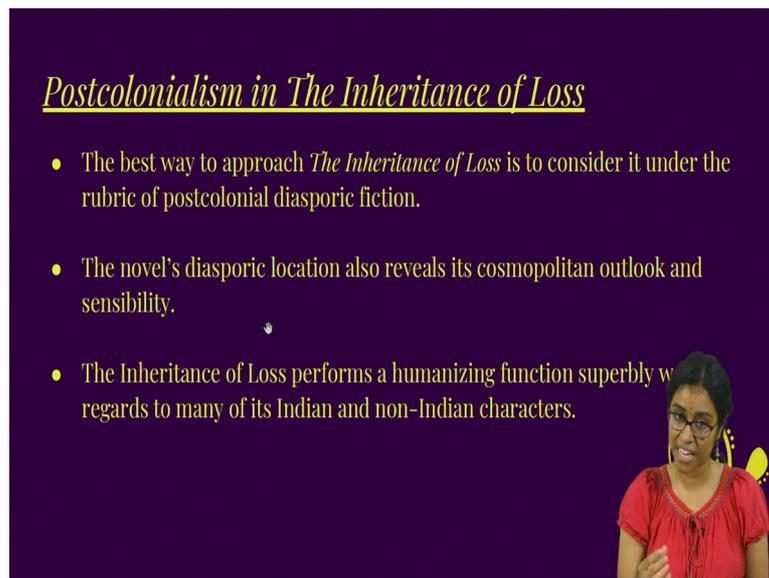


So this is another excerpt from Homi Bhabha's *Freedom's Basis in the Indeterminate* (1992), which I believe summarises all the characteristics that this novel has, so let's go through this.

Postcolonial criticism bears witness to the unequal and uneven forces of cultural representation involved in the contest for political and social authority within the modern world order, postcolonial perspectives emerge from the colonial testimony of 3rd world countries and the discourses of minorities within the geopolitical divisions of East, West, North and South. They intervene in those ideological discourses of modernity that attempt to give a hegemonic normality to the uneven development and the differential. Often disadvantaged histories of nations, racist communities, people. They formulate the critical revisions around issues of general difference, social authority and political discrimination in order to reveal the antagonistic and ambivalent moments within the rationalization of modernity.

So this novel is an undoing of the dominant discourse is mentioned here and the hegemonic normality is being undone in many ways, so let us have a look at that.

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Postcolonialism in The Inheritance of Loss

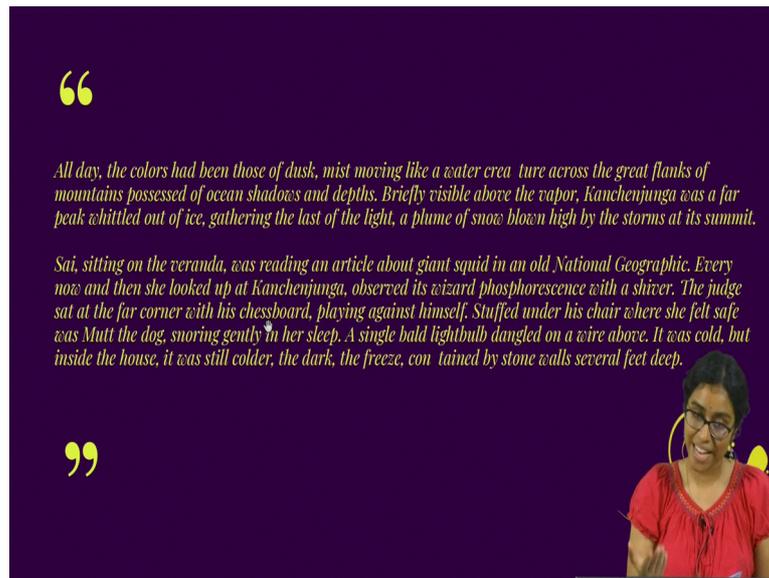
- The best way to approach *The Inheritance of Loss* is to consider it under the rubric of postcolonial diasporic fiction.
- The novel's diasporic location also reveals its cosmopolitan outlook and sensibility.
- The *Inheritance of Loss* performs a humanizing function superbly well as regards to many of its Indian and non-Indian characters.

Post-colonialism in the inheritance of loss, the best way to approach the inheritance of loss is to consider it under the rubric of postcolonial diasporic fiction, the novel diasporic location also reveals its cosmopolitan outlook and sensibility, the inheritance of loss performs a humanizing function superbly well as regards to many of its Indian and non-Indians characters.

So this tells us that inheritance of loss is perfectly conducive to a postcolonial analysis, not just because of its characteristics, but also because of the very things from which it draws heavily, and as stated previously, the geography location of this novel is unlike any other, located in the foothills of the Himalaya, how often we come across a book that is located not just away from the political centre, but also the political centre of the country, coming to the third point on the slide, the inheritance of loss performs a humanizing function, so what is this humanising function?

Traditionally Western novel has sort to will enlarge the humanistic sensibility of its readers and many works of canonical English fiction effortlessly engaged in what may be termed as a humanising mission, as I see to bring members from a formerly overlook national gender or social type or niche within the sphere of literary representation and one could argue that the inheritance of loss continues this function extremely well, not only there is being marginalised people into the dominant discourse, but also traced them with a unique respect and regard, it helps you connect with people from distant locations and helps you empathise and sympathise with the situations.

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So I like to evoke the opening paragraph of this novel to state how the geographical location is evoked perfectly in this statements.

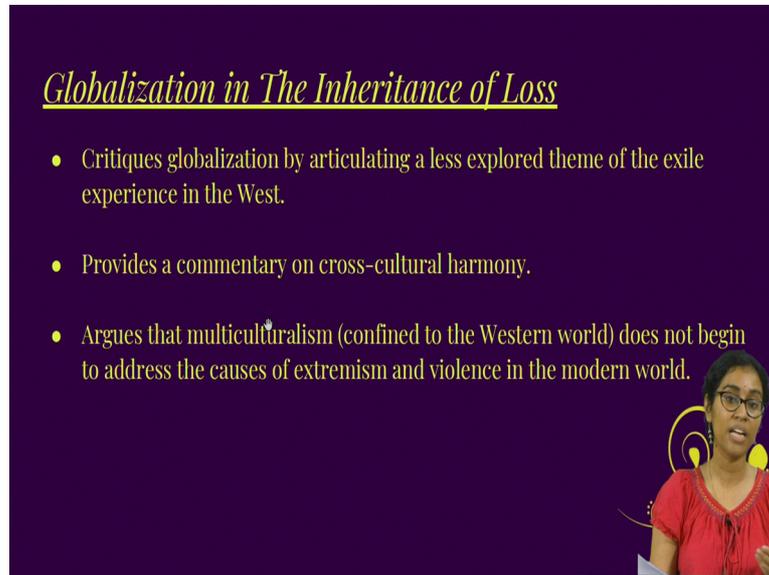
All day the color had been those of dusk, mist moving like a water creature across the great flanks of mountain possessed of ocean shadows and depths. Briefly visible above the vapour. Kanchenjunga was a far peak whittled out of ice, gathering the last of the light, a plume of snow blown high by the storm as its summit.

Sai, sitting on the veranda, was reading an article about giant squid in an old National Geographic. Every now and then she looked up at Kanchenjunga, observed its wizards phosphorescence with a shiver. The judge sat at the far corner with his chessboard, playing against himself. Stuffed under his chair where she felt safe was Mutt the dog, snoring gently in her sleep. A single bald lightbulb dangled on the wire above. It was cold, but inside the house, it was still colder, the dark, the freeze, contained by stone walls several feet deep.

So this paragraph perfectly encapsulates the whole essence of this novel by just deposing different elements against one another, for instance, in the first paragraph is a very elegant description of the mountain as a whittled out of ice and gathering the last of light and right in the next paragraph is an article about giant squid in old National Geographic magazine, so it narrates an instant of how the virtual geography presented in National Geographic is just opposed the actual geography that is right in front of the eyes, in the foothills of the Kanchenjunga.

Also present is the judge himself was engaged in the game of chess with the dog stuffed under the chair below his feet, so this provides a very good entry point into understanding how the novel takes place and how the story unfolds and what to expect itself.

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Globalization in The Inheritance of Loss

- Critiques globalization by articulating a less explored theme of the exile experience in the West.
- Provides a commentary on cross-cultural harmony.
- Argues that multiculturalism (confined to the Western world) does not begin to address the causes of extremism and violence in the modern world.

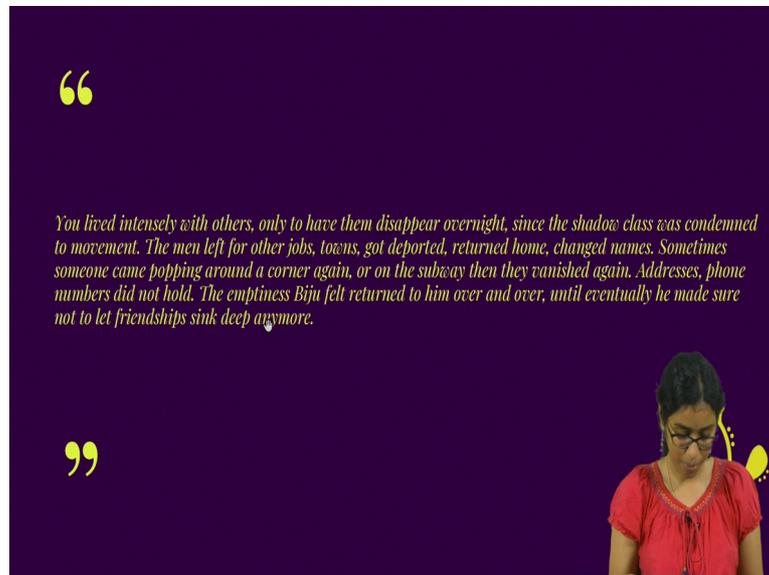
So the next thing of significance in this novel is globalization in the inheritance of loss, for the novel critics, globalisation by articulating a less explored theme of the exile experience in the West and provide a commentary on cross-cultural hegemony, so as I stated previously, a large portion of our understanding the American dream is occupied by notion of self and splendour and a good capitalist, comfortable life in the states, but this novel disproves the myth and actually explains a transition of the American dream into the American nightmare and this is evoked through the character of Biju, who goes to America as an illegal immigrant and his make to face the worst situation of his life there.

Not only does he hoop from job to job, but is also subject to the worst possible conditions that a human can be subjected to, he lived with rats in the basement of somebodies house and he stated very poorly by his own employers themselves, so through the character of Biju Kiran Desai provides a very sharp an incisive critiques to globalisation and come into the commentary on cross-cultural harmony, she provide a rendition of Gokhaland insurgency and brings to for questions of identity, loyalty, history that are entangled within the question,

So the character of Gyan becomes very significant to this objective of Kiran Desai, finally argue that multiculturalism, confined to the Western world does not begin to address the

causes of extremism and violence in the modern world, the drawbacks of globalization that the author highlights the novel.

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Will now have looked at quote that a symbolises the kind of suffering that Biju underwent in the United States, you lived intensely with others, only to have them disappear overnight, since the shadow class was condemned to movement. The men left for other jobs, towns, got deported, returned home, changed names. Sometimes someone came popping around the corner again, or on the subway than they vanished again. Addresses, phone numbers did not hold. The emptiness Biju felt return to him over and over until eventually he made sure not to let friendships sink deep anymore.

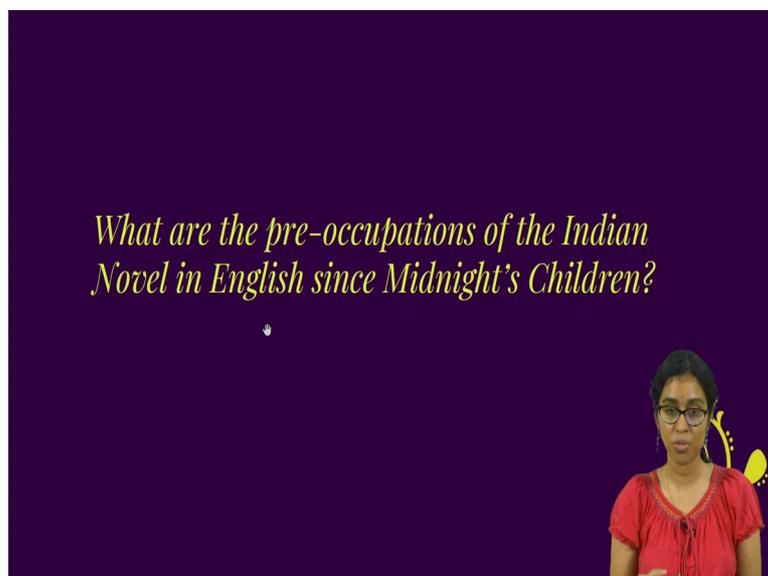
So an important that is been mentioned in this paragraph is shadow class, so not only does she evoke the immigrant experience abroad, but also brings to light the intersection of different classes and the dominance of one class over the other and the suppression of the shadow class, so now we move on to our next slide.

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So, could fulfilment ever be felt as deeply as loss? So in this one statement Kiran Desai encapsulates the whole purpose of this novel which is to say that a lot of benefits and a lot of prosperity derive from one generation by the next can never be satisfied or can never be compensated because the extent of the laws that is felt that the consequences of this is so deep as deeply as loss, while one generation inherits, characteristics, property and create from another generation, the biggest thing that the inherit happens to be loss and thus the title of this novel is justified, the inheritance of loss, the one thing that they inherit that they cannot escape, all the characters are caught in a situation of their own making, but also something that they inherit that is of no escape to them.

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So coming to the next objectives of this presentation, what are the preoccupations of the Indian novel in English since *Midnight's Children*? This becomes particularly important for us to address because before *Midnight's Children* a lot of Indian writing in English that not received much widespread attention from the West. But since *Midnight's Children* became a popular work, and after it won a Booker a lot of Indian writing began to receive global attention in Anglophone circuits, so let us get into this.

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Burden of the Nation

- Writers 'burdened' with a higher degree of self-awareness.
- The guardianship of tradition that seems to have suddenly befallen the Indian writer.
- Realignment of power in the Indian polity - and a subsequent weakening of the center.

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Burden of the nation, at this stage I like to set the context for the pre-Booker writing in India and how the transition occur between the pre-Booker writing and post-Booker writing, burden of the nation, writers of burdened with a higher degree of self-awareness and the guardianship of tradition that seems to have suddenly befallen the Indian writer was becoming evident to them and the realignment of power in the Indian polity and subsequent weakening of the center accompanying this.

So burden here refers to the content that is author engage within their novels, the question constantly bring to for the relationship between the writer and the subjects, how does the author feel about a subject that they are writing about, so they also brings to the author, or a awareness of the responsibility that they are towards the subjects and opens up a range of attitudes and ideologies with which they have to engage and which they have to address.

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Burden of the Nation - Some Examples

- The stoic diagnosis of "history is against our class" in Vikram Seth's *A Suitable Boy* (1993).
- The mocking of Oxford-educated Indians (including herself) as 'irrelevant Indians' in Sagarika Ghose's *Gin Drinkers* (2000).
- They (the writers) must yield to the new (and newly relevant) Indians who are now the 'upwardly mobile Dalit intellectuals and the vulgar entrepreneurs' (Sunder Rajan : 2001).



Burden of the nation. Some examples, the stoic of diagnosis of history is against our class in Vikram Seth's *A Suitable Boy*, so this is particularly significant after the passing of the Zamindari abolition act and a character called Nawab Sahib, in this novel talks about how the history suddenly against our class that particular novel and the mocking of Oxford educated Indians, including herself as irrelevant Indians in Sagarika Ghose's *Gin Drinkers* published in 2000, they the writers must yield to the new and newly irrelevant Indians, who are also now the upwardly mobile Dalit intellectuals and the vulgar entrepreneurs.

So there is an evidence shift from one class to another and writers are now beginning to acknowledge that there is a disparity in class that has to be acknowledged through the characters in the novel and also brings to fore questions of one's own relevance to the nation and whether these questions need to be laid open in a more inclusive manner and some generational change is also conveyed in this novel and is also something that Kiran Desai conveys in her title within the inheritance of loss, the change conveyed by her with regard to the generation is fleshed out very well in this novel.

And the writers also internalize a sense of entitlement compounded by a previously mentioned, burden and awareness of their centrality to the nation, writers, therefore begin seeing themselves as intellectual leaders and purveyors of morality, so how does one write a nation level novel, should it naturally process a dominant perspective or adhere to things that are commonly added to the dominant class, these are some questions to consider.

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'Loss of Power of the Ruling Class' - An Overstatement?

- An awareness of change in status does not necessarily imply complete 'loss of power'.
- Can a redundancy in the task of nation-building be observed? How does this affect the 'ruling class'?
- "From its position as a 'proxy' for the nation, this class has now graduated to thinking of itself as a 'portrait' of the nation" (Deshpande: 2003)



Loss of power of the ruling class, as I stated previously that an awareness of the change in the status does not necessarily imply a complete loss of power, can a redundancy in the task of nation building be observed? How does this affect the ruling class? From its position as a proxy for the nation, this class has now graduated to thinking of itself as a portrait of the nation, so the arrival of the new Indian novel in English did not just signify a huge and for the literary trends in India but also for class in India because there is a replacement for a proxy for one class by another and there are questions coming to the fore about the task of the nation building must fall on and whether there is a complete loss of power or not.

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A New 'Patriotism'

- An 'exhaustion' with nationalist sentiments and settling into the 'bad habits of nationhood' (Sunder Rajan : 2001)
- *Opposing* the nation, or opposing *this* nation is the new form of patriotism - as said by Arundhati Roy: "I secede. I hereby declare myself an independent, mobile republic" (Roy: 2001)
- Critique of nationalism - always expressed in the voice of an individual.



A new patriotism, an exhaustion with nationalist sentiments and settling into the bad habits of nationhood, this is something that stated by Rajeshwari Sunder Rajan in her analysis, consequently, questions of opposing nation or posting this edition has prompts a patriotism are brought to the fore as said by Arundhati Roy, I secede, I hereby declare myself an independent, mobile republic and this expression of succession as seen by one other critic called Amitabh Kumar is an instance of the narrowly individualistic even selfish attitude that lives a lot of people behind, however, Rajeshwari Sunder Rajan points out that this is not a lack of identification with the nation or this identification, the term succession might throw you off, but this is in fact hyper identification with the nation, and let us also look at how a critique of nationalism is always expressed the voice of an individual, but voice of nationalism that is expressed in favor of the nation's always feel that the collective voice.

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A 'Workmanlike' Novel?

- One critic says it is "the trial of exile", while another adds: "the world as viewed through the eyes of children" and anti-Americanism (Moseley : 2008)
- Eileen Battersby (commentator at the *Irish Times*) characterizes Desai's work as "solid," "workman like," "earnest, traditional," and she judged that "this year's Booker is one of the more low-key ones".
- 'An exactitude and freshness that resist melodrama' (Moseley : 2008)



So the language of individualism is always seem to play a role in expression of dissent within the novel, so this is probably one of the reasons that God of small things also receive a large amount of attention because it brought to fore the fact that voices of dissent and disapproval can be expressed and it articulate different ways at which dissent and disapproval can be expressed and how these voices are typically framed through a rejection of compulsory nationalism.

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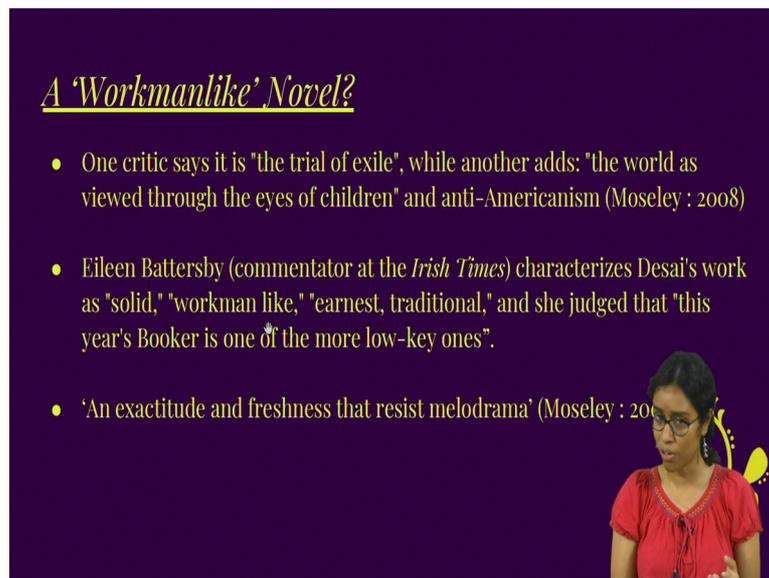
A New 'Patriotism'

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- Critique of nationalism - always expressed in the voice of an individual.



So coming back to that one question about what makes one an Indian or what attributes rationality to one? In the age that we live, passports are what define nationality and the stage, we should address the question of how we define nationality? We must acknowledge that we live in an age where nationality is acknowledged based on our passports, but Shamphutele in her idea of India talks of all the ever thought about India, is that we have to live in it, so how do we define what it means to be an Indian, in a slightly controversial, but interesting definition Suddabrata Sengupta's peace titled confessions of the anti-national defines a nationality as a limited choice, a great deal of a coercion and considerable difference and some convenience, this is how national identity is articulated in different works.

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- 'An exactitude and freshness that resist melodrama' (Moseley : 2008)

Finally, let us come to our understanding of Workmanlike novel, one critic says it is the trial of exile, while another adds the world as viewed through the eyes of children and anti-Americanism, so these are also things that they proved when we discuss globalization and the critics of globalization in this novel. Eillen Battersby commentator at the Irish Times, characterizes Desais work as solid workmanlike, earnest, traditional and she judged that this year's Booker is one of the more key ones, another review of the novel, and exactitude and freshness that resist melodrama, so what exactly do we understand from the term workmanlike, workmanlike perhaps reverse were termed that signifies that something is competent and very efficient, but perhaps not inspiring, but why is that the case, what makes the inheritance of loss workmanlike novel.

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A 'Workmanlike' Novel? (continued)

- Removed from the 'political centre' of Indian writing.
- Elicited more response from Nepali readers.
- The novel's criticism of the Gorkhaland insurgency is fraught with difficulties.

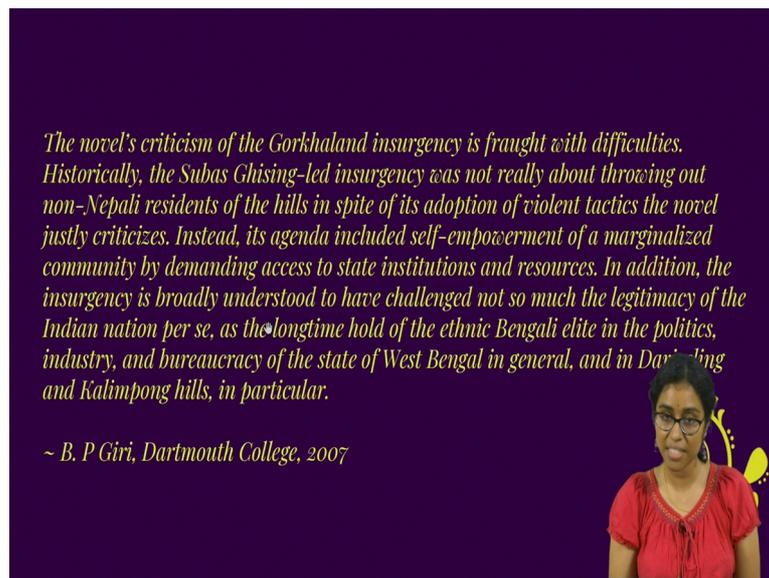


For one, it is removed from the political centre of Indian writing, it finally shift the focus from popular cities like Delhi, Bombay and the Metros to hill station and draw a parallel with the life of an individual living as an illegal immigrant in one of the more popular cities, in the country, in the world, which is New York, so the juxtaposition of the two lives land itself very well to the decentering and destabilizing of the hegemonic discourse has come to dominate, literary writing in India.

Finally it elicited more response from Nepali readers, at this point we must acknowledge that the Indian writer does hold some amount of power within the canon, it had been stated previously that if a Nepali reader want to read a novel they would have problems and issues with the novel that they would not be able to convey very significantly, if it were an Indian reader, reading the same they would not feel so strongly about the misrepresentation of Nepalese, but because the Indian readers has that kind of power within the South Asian literary scenes.

The Indian readers is able to take the liberty of talking about the Nepalese within the novel about Indians, but this is not the same kind of power that Nepali readers and writers have within the literary circles, so we were must acknowledge that Indian readers and writers have their own power, finally novels criticism of Gokhaland insurgency is fraught with difficulties.

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At this point, I like to evoke the critique by B.P Giri who written in 2007 about the drawback of the Gokhaland insurgency as portrayed in this novel, the novels criticism of the Gokhaland insurgency is fraught with difficulties. Historically, the Subas Ghising-led insurgency was not really about throwing out non-Nepali residents of the hills in spite of its adoption of violent tactics the novel justly criticizes. Instead, it is agenda included self-empowerment of a marginalized communities by demanding access to state institutions and resources.

In addition, the insurgency is broadly understood to have challenged not so much the legitimacy of the Indian nation per se, but the longtime goal hold of the ethnic Bengali elite in the politics, industry, and bureaucracy of the State of West Bengal in general and in Darjeeling and Kalimpong hills, in particular. So what B.P Giri here is trying to say is that the author should have recognized her own identity before embarking on this endeavor because it might have planned the partisan view of the events unfolding in the novel itself act.

As the Bengalis herself Kiran Desai could have perhaps provided a more irrespective analysis of what it means to be Indian, and rather not what it means to be an ethnic Bengali elite in this framework, so these are some critics of the novel.

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With that, I like to conclude my presentation, these are my references. Thank you.