The title Karma Cola is in itself quite suggestive. It refers to the worthless mingling of East and West in connection with cultural heritage and spirituality. In our country *karma* is very refined action of one which may lead him to the ultimate reality and spirituality following truthful path. Cola represents West with its essential tendency. India is known for its cultural heritage and spirituality. The people from other countries want to know the Indian philosophy and attain spiritual richness in their life. The whole world expects us to share these mystical qualities. Gita Mehta presents the vast canvas before us where she draws all the drawbacks and false actions both by East and West. She largely satirizes the fake *gurus* of India who trick innocent foreigners in the name of providing them spiritual peace and salvation. In actual, they recreate India where they defile their own dignified culture. The attainment of salvation is turned into a mere commodity which could be bought and sold with the power of money.

Gita Mehta is quite satiric and poignant in the depiction about *karma* in the novel. The novel largely deals with the theory of *karma* and its misinterpretation by people. In Indian culture karma is very dignified doctrine by Lord Krishna based on the values the Indians inherit from generation to generation. A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada interprets the lines said by Lord Krishna to urge Arjun to action:

\[
\text{'Yajnarthat karmano 'nyatra loko 'yam karma-bandhanah}
\]
\[
\text{Tad-artham karma Kaunteya mukta-sangah samacara}
\]

*Yajna-arthat*--done only for the sake of Yajna, or Vishnu;
*karmanah*--than work; *anyatra*--otherwise; *lokah*--world;
*ayam*--this; *karma-bandhanah*--bondage by work; *tat*--of Him; *artham*--for the sake; *karma*--work; *kaunteya*--O son
of Kunti; mukta-sangah--liberated from association; samachar--do perfectly.

Work done for sacrifice has to be performed; otherwise work causes bondage in this material world. Therefore, O son of kunti, perform your prescribed duties for His satisfaction, and in that way you will always remain free from bondage.' (154)

But today the meaning of karma has changed. People have distorted the noble karma philosophy to attain their purpose which results into 'bad karma', 'heavy karma' or 'karma game'. karma is not felt as a sort of vibration and Krishna is a doe-eyed pinup.' (100) The ideology of Lord Krishna is changed and modified up to the comfort level and need of the people who use it. Now 'Coincidence, chance, déjà-vu, anything goes as karma.' (100).

Karma Cola depicts the brutal reality of the deceiving people and polluting our religion and culture. The novel allows us to see the changing as well as changed India, her beliefs, practices, purposes and actions which are beyond our imagination. Foreigners neither are able to understand the deep spiritual concepts of Indian philosophy nor are Indians tending to make them understand and attain salvation which is desired by them. The position leads them to endless chaos and illusion. Guy Du. Bose observes: 'The chapters abound with portrayals of everything from followers physically beating each other to attain self-realization, to others worshipping the urine of sage. Because the seekers have an inability to decipher complex philosophical language, along with only a precarious grasp of what they initially want, many become duped, confused and eventually totally dejected.' (60)

An American who was 'tired of sex' was healed by a sadhu on the banks of the river Ganga who also had been a doctor of medicine once in his life. Being a true holy man he gives only profound knowledge and thoughts rooted in Indian culture. Instead of smearing or other such thing, he says 'Desire is the seat of all confusion, my son. It clouds the reason. It produces the immoderate response. The body is exhausted
unnecessarily.’ (58) He is of the opinion that the bodily ailments and problems can be
cured by the spiritual powers only. A sensible man understands his own nature first to
understand the mystery of Nature: ‘the flesh is the only battlefield. Wars are won by
the soul. The mature man seeks to understand his nature until her understands Nature.’
(59) Mehta shows us real meaning of the teachings of Indian spiritual guru and ways
of enlightenment.

But the long and hard path of salvation is difficult to attain. It gives way to
short-cuts and easy ways to attain such dignified priceless possession. But spirituality
can never be bought and sold. As a result people suffer and lead life full of
artificiality. Right from the ashram to market places Mehta provides sharp, biting but
ture portrayal of the tricks and deceits of false gurus through vivid incidents. Guy Du.
Bose states rightly: 'She (Mehta) takes us on a witty, sardonic journey through Indian
streets, beaches, bazaars and ashrams, focusing on one thing: the occidental who has
come for, as she puts it, karma &or more precisely, a means to abolish it.' (59) The
deceitful and wicked people of India deceive foreigners in many ways—by sexual
harassment and spiritual malpractice, plundering their money or overcharging in
selling the things. The multiple narrators are engaged in telling their stories at their
turn. They have their stories to reveal something about India and their understanding
which result the incident they experienced.

Foreigners are attracted towards the spiritual heritage of India and they try to
attain it at any cost. They initiate in the game of marketing the mystic East, and
Indians take advantage of it. A certain kind of competition is held to get this
possession soon among people all over the world. People of different country try to
attain the ultimate serenity by chanting holy mantras or meditating out at the top of
Himalayas. Germans, as narrated by a person, tried to be supermen as they wanted to
attain ultimate reality of life by giving themselves pains and troubles. He said, ‘They
(Germans) are like vampires. Waiting, waiting for the twilight of the gods. You know
sitting alone in the Himalayas a man can believe the gods are dying. The wind is so
shrill. And the Germans, wait. To take the place of the gods.’ Their chanting is
mechanical as either they donot know the real meaning of it or they misinterpret it.
For instance, the meaning of ‘Shiva-o-ham, shiva-o-ham’ is 'I am Shiva' for a French man. Lack of knowledge may lead to such worthless practices.

It is painful indeed that some Indians are defaming the country and its reputation. Karma Cola is a satirical portrayal of Indian people and their practices, especially of feigned gurus. Gita Mehta gives us a keen insight into the modern modes and manners of these ashrams in modern age without concealing any brutal reality. Her novel largely deals with the malpractices of false gurus who mislead foreigners’ life and make them self-annihilated. Bose rightly observes: 'Although there are no doubts God realized masters, one would think that a sophisticated, educated occidental would be in a better position than a Hindu to differentiate a truly liberated master from one who has impressive siddhis (powers), but no divine realization. Just the opposite appears to be true.' (60)

The foreigners come to India in search of spiritualism and to find right guru. But these false gurus cheat them by showing some of the surprising (miracles) activities. In long turns they certainly should have been disgusted to see the infatuation of their gurus to materialism. The novel is replete with the glaring issues of deceitful behavior which is usually seen in reality. There is a narrator in the novel who tells a surprising incident which happened with an Indian boy. His guru repaired his watch, adding some extra latest fuctions too in a minute. This surprising incident is suggestive of the multi-talents of guru, beyond spiritualism, and solely is related to the material world. The added luxury features are the symbol of materialism of which the guru is infatuated with. Though he is famed as an efficient and knowledgeable guru, he leaves us in a doubtful position regarding his profound spiritual knowledge and understanding of religion. The novel abounds in such type of fake gurus. Their practices are far from spirituality and divine joy and rapture.

The foreigners have the same experience of Indian gurus, showing supernatural power and yet fascinated to materialize things. An American finds a guru ‘always materializing things for people. Rings, watches, holy ash.’ (47) Their practices and manner of living are acutely materialistic and show how they are fascinated to physical comfort. ‘Finally the guru rose from his leopard skin covered armchair and
walked serenely over the rose petals which marked his path, towards the members of
the diplomatic corps.’ (48) People may be surprised when they look for spiritual
enlightenment and some materializing thing could happen. But stark materialism of the
gurus should certainly depressed them. Lorna Sage observed: 'While feeding the
western travelers, ranging from wealthy business to 1970s hippies to poor students,
with wisdom, mantras and ashrams, India's yogis are revealed to prefer dollars to
namastes.' (360)

Sometimes Indian fake gurus claim to provide instant nirvana in the same
hasty manner it is desired by foreigners. People rush towards India for learning
spirituality, and find themselves caught in a dilemma. Spiritual path and salvation is
thus reduced to mere commodity by these chaters. They could neither attain nirvana
nor go back. The feigned gurus turned practicing nirvana into a kind of flourishing
business so rapidly that even an airport there is an advertisement saying “Nirvana for
$ 100 a day.” (102) Westerners spend money for it and Indian misuse of their
innocence. In the novel a woman provides levitation with money back guarantee. It
symbolizes how superficial and mechanical these things are. She says ‘It costs fifteen
hundred dollars if they make the levitation. Or you get your money back.’ (53) It only
excites them.

A guru from west part of India who has many ashrams says in an interview
Time Magazine “My followers have no time. So I give them instant salvation. I turn
them into neo-sanyasis.” (102) The disenchanted disciples are disappointed at seeing
their guru in the grip of illusion and obsessed with materialistic things like golden
toilet seat. It is disgusting why the guru has such an absurd materialistic possession. A
disciple states, ‘well, if he’s an ascetic and above earthly desire and stuff, what is he
doing with a golden toilet seat?’ (187) Fake gurus differentiate among the disciples on
the basis of their economic status.

Politics prevail throughout these ashrams. The rich disciples were given the
front seats before the fake gurus. A seeker is highly disappointed at the politics and
double-standard practiced in the ashram. The only rule of the ashram was to gain
profit, and give profit to those who could enrich the wealth and treasury: ‘There’s
more politics in one Indian ashram than in the whole of the Western Hemisphere!’ (183) It was distressful for disciples why the guru manipulated his ways and plotted like politicians. He wonders: ‘Can the gurus be dismissed as con men, manipulating their way to great fortunes? Or is the plot in fact thicker than cash?’ (183)

The foreigners want to attain something new in their life i.e. spiritual enlightenment. It flourishes the business of marketing mysticism. Indian gurus make certain arrangements to make their customers feel the same through money instead of sacrifice and penance. Such a fake guru in Madras allured nuns, dragged money from them, and ran away to act ritual murder. Not only money was taken away but also the innocent nuns were used up by him for the sake of his own benefit. It all became commercial. He was a kind of tantric, a black magician. A journalist said, ‘He will reappear as a sadhu from a different valley, and more good and silly people will follow him to their death.’ (171)

These gurus sexually exploited women disciples and deviated the path of religion. In the name of importing enlightenment and providing spiritual peace sexual lust is quenched. Their other disciples also follow the same. The environment of ashram in which some Indian gurus live and claim spirituality is shocking. A female guru, who runs a kind of spiritual beauty parlour, is herself attended by several devotees who make-up her. It is ridiculous where devotees, instead of indulging in spiritual enlightenment, are seen massaging and plucking eyebrows the woman, famously known as Ma. She appears to be sick. The people who call themselves devotees or are there to gain ecstasy in their life are devoid of it. They move towards physical approach rather than spiritual one.

Her degraded behavior does not stop here as she has political connections as well and knows well how to handle each one of them. Devotees are disillusioned as they are sexually exploited in the name of peace and enlightened satvik energy (pure energy). Guy Du. Bose is of the opinion, 'One interesting result of the Western devotees' joining Hindu sects is that some teachers give different spiritual instructions depending on the face of the follower.’ (60) She is familiar with the land distribution
officer, the Secretary of the Finance Ministry and officials at the External Affairs Ministry and also with the ways to handle each of them:

‘Waist deep in devotion Ma spoke into the telephone, juggling the ashram’s large and dicey reputation, talking the role of the humble, uneducated Hindu woman with one caller, the arrogant spiritual leader with another, and the flirtatious woman of the world with a third.’ (145)

All the plans are set at prior to deceive innocent female figures. Sometimes Indians are silent witness of it all. They know how they are made fool and their body is enjoyed by Indian gurus without even making them know. One such foreigner is used to feed the lust of guru in the name of ‘Bathing in the guru’s energy.’ (148) In real, ‘her strong well-shaped body clearly visible through the flimsy cotton she had wrapped around herself as a sarong’ (147-8), she is looked closely and lustily by her own guru as he has lust for her. Even the sweeper, a localide, is well aware of the hidden reality and says, ‘He (the guru) is playing games with these people. Look at this girl. Has he given her peace or has he just made her desire stronger?’ (148)

Meditation, in India, is one of the mediums to get the inner meaning of the world and significance of life and action. It may lead us to the path of knowing the supreme soul and the profound knowledge essential for self-enlightenment. Today even meditation is commercialized, misinterpreted, and is deviating people. For instance, in Swami Muktanand’s camp, the pile of devotees’ shoes outside the camp on the road creates ‘a traffic hazard.’ Though the technology is used, it does not give clear view of the movie to anyone as some could not watch the movie and others could not hear it. But the real odd thing in the whole scene was the intimacy of the swami with the Bhagwan Rajneesh who is the king of the Tantra teachers as ‘Both gurus were renowned for their cosmic energy vibrations.’ (14) The intimacy of the Indian guru with a tantric guru is doubtful. A female German economist from Hamburg also worries about deceitful behaviour by such local and fake gurus of India. She thinks of this country “should definitely have a quality control on gurus. A lot of my friends have gone mad in India.” (18)
The refined significance to attain self-consciousness is also misused. The *reincarnation meditation* is another practice which may be dangerous if not practiced under trainer’s care. It involves staring of self in a mirror so that one could know how he/she had been in his/her past life. The Indian *gurus* usually do not make aware people of possible perils and it may result into embarrassment. ‘The guru who teaches the technique has been at pains to point out that it is a dangerous meditation, and requires great training and self-knowledge before the devotee may safely embark on it.’ (39) Its incomplete and loose learning not only restricts them to achieve their aim but also lead them to feel ashamed. Such is the case with a woman; ‘Nobody, not even the guru, could make her snap out of the guilt of how she was an incestuous mother, having children by her own son.’ (40) Such was the guilt in her heart that she never got back to normal life after learning ‘what happened to him or the kids.’ (40)

A *guru* is supposed to have healing powers. He makes others practice rolling eyeballs in a certain way they are told to acquire power essential to heal them. The *guru* brought changes in their life as at least ‘twice a week these sophisticated urbanities would shed their brushed denims for badly tied saris and come and roll their eyeballs at each other for an hour, in deadly earnest.’ (54) It was assured to all devotees that ‘if they rolled their eyes long enough they would like the guru, acquire heading powers.’ (55) The real motive behind all is to collect money and commercialize it thoroughly in a humble and noble manner: ‘It was now administration time. Notices were produced and functionaries read them out. How much money had been collected last week.’ (55) Though there was a ‘demure rustle of expectation’ in the audience the *guru* hardly provided any consolation or enlightenment to his devotees. Mehta describes how commercialization of meditation and shallow practices ruining the true Indian practices of spirituality. Some Indian *gurus* (true) have powers of healing and soothing based on natural self control over desire but it is mistaken by foreigners as miracles because they can not understand the importance of self-control.

*Ashrams*, a place of peace and spirituality, are converted into violence-creating place only in which severe end of human life is hidden. People are thrown into regular
sessions/practices of anger and violence to get rid of anger, which is very ironical. A matriarch of the *ashram* provides brutality and wounds in the name of healing and uplift. She says, ‘Hai Ram, what simple pleasure they get from hitting and thrashing.’ (36) To reduce anger, anger in itself is evoked and heightened irrespective of the fact that people may be habitual to it or injured by it as happened with a boy. Instead of mitigation it enhances the violent and destructive tendency. The people are engaged in practicing trifle and making their life equivalent to a riddle: ‘until they are finished with these childish pastimes, how will they have the concentration to learn about *Dharma*?’ (38) It is also shocking to note that such *ashrams* are irresponsible for the damage done to any disciple. If any devotee is addicted to violence or mad they are sent to hospitals for treatment. In case they do not respond to medicines or show any sign to be cured ‘they put them on a plane and send them back to their own countries.’ (39)

Sometimes *gurus* are very conscious and aware about the loopholes they might leave while doing wrong to foreigners so they train themselves to be extra conscious and achieve their target to deceive foreigners. One *guru* is aware of not to add Indians while giving wrong training to foreigners: ‘The guru is banking on the Indians’ indifference to what foreigners do among themselves, and the only Indians who are allowed to bask in the warmth of the ashram’s sexual liberation are those who have a vested interest in maintaining the discretion.’ (150)

Indian fake *gurus* and their different practices are revealed to us telling why they do particular things. Spiritual gurus who are considered God by people rarely provide salvation or upliftment of soul. Instead they may cause self-annihilation which results into devoid of self-identity and keen desire to acquire alien identity of which they are not familiar. For instance they acquire ‘Abhimanyu’ or ‘Yudhistra’ as their own name as some promises are made by *gurus* but, in real, they do not know that Abhimanyu was the person ‘who knew how to enter the circle but not how to leave.’ (35) The same happens with them for they could choose to come to India or to be taught by guru but they could not leave it even if they wished. The intellectual gurus are also capable enough to answer and soothe their queries rationally. The novel gives
an ugly but true reality of the modern India and its people. Some deceitful people employ all vicious practices to fulfill their mischievous aims. Guy Du. Bose's comment proves here right: 'Karma Cola left me reflecting on the common maxim, "gurus are many, but true seekers are rare." (60)

The various narrative stories the glaring variety of tactful and shrewd Indians revealed out. 'With razor-sharp observation Mehta wittily dissects the adventures of those eager western travelers in search of Eastern spirituality who do not find enlightenment in India but are instead ripped off.' (Lorna Sage 360) Deceitful behaviour of Indians against foreigners is another major issue elaborated in the novel in detail. It reveals how foreigners were deceived in the name of religion, profound peace, spiritual enlightenment and other such things. People led foreigners in the dark instead of long-lasting ecstasy and energy they ask for. The experience of the travel-expert clearly shows what the expectations are of foreigners even from our hoteliers. He thinks when foreign delegates come to India, the acute traditional culture of India full of variety, colours and richness should be made familiar. Whenever India is concerned, all the glory, richness, perfect hosting comes into mind while, in actual sometimes things are contrary to it.

Two such Canadians in What You See Is What You Are look very frightened as they feel people are ripping them off. They are fearful and paranoid up to the level that they have ‘little black notebooks’ always which “tells them how much a ricksaw costs, what you should pay for a room, for a coconut.” (75) They live a very tyrannical and frightened life. And American thinks that they should better go back to their country where they could live at least a normal life. The stories narrated in the novel show how foreigners might have seen bad consequences of the frequent or constant contact with India or Indians. A woman shares her experience of Poona city-- the city has bewitching power which could mesmerize anyone to be permanent resident of it which lead to dangerous life. “Don’t stay more than a couple of days or you might end up staying her the rest of your life.” (27) In the name of popularizing culture and giving foreigners special consolation, traders materialize culture and Indian values.
‘The traders (Indian/foreigners) offered cut price tours to India with names spanning all seven chakras of human possibility…’ (68)

Gita Mehta illustrates poignantly the real scenario of India where people have lost their valuable culture. They mock at it and are involved in cheating people. Guy Du. Bose observed well:

'Gita Mehta spends most of her time on the more capricious and fanatical cultists. Although this arguably makes for a more interesting and comical narrative, the unsuspecting reader may draw the unwarranted conclusion that all Western devotees in India are suffering from a form of mental malady.’ (60)

Actions of hoteliers projected this notion as they ‘didn’t try to make India was infinitely more glamorous than anything at home.’ (16) Traders also took full advantage of the innocent foreigners. They befooled them by selling what is useless to Indian people. They could sell a broken ivory bangle of widow or by offering 'cut price tours to India': 'They patched together the broken ivory bangles of Hindu widows with silver ornament and sold them to the travelers.' (68)

In an ashram a Parsi woman who is a book seller of the ashram suffers from the sexual harassment by a young sardar who ‘longed for the narrow hips and heavy breasts of an Australian nymphet.’ (145) The Sikh entered into the ashram in the name of buying books but in real he wanted to quench his sexual thirst lying deep in his heart and mind. His training on cosmic energy was going on. Meanwhile he tried to exploit the woman: 'the youth’s lust, straining too long against her trousers, could contain itself no longer…thrown the nymphet under the nearest bougainvillea bush and attempted to get in touch with her body any philosophical preliminaries.’ (146) It is ironical that this molestation and humiliation is welcomed by the fake guru of the ashram. The accused enjoys membership of the ashram.

People are so morally degraded that they could eve tease even at sacred places like temples of Khajuraho. When foreigners observe here the ‘significance of
eroticism on Indian mysticism’ in deep sense without inciting any shallow feeling of sex with in them, Indians expand their minds to urge the desire with anyone they see before them in the name of eroticism. This is experienced by Elizabeth, a narrator of a story. When she was appreciating the Khajuraho temples he mistook her and revealed his evil intention saying, “Why? Why? You like! Even I like! Come back! Enjoy!” (88) It should be clear to all that ‘the motives of the foreign tourists who come to see the great erotic temples are cultural and not prurient.’ (89) It all shows the degeneration of values as well as dignified tradition India is known for.

India is famous not only for the religious or spiritual consciousness but also for the treasury of opium which was refined and modified into heroine—a form of strong drug used by people at international level. In America, China and other countries it became a centre of attraction. ‘The Americans, finding the opium they brought from Turkey too inferior for the tasks of the addicts of China, turned to the opium fields of India for the invaluable poppy’ (137) that would guarantee the qualitative opium and draw huge selling. A French Consul in India also has a strange experience which reveals the harsh reality of today’s world. He was deceived by a French couple who wanted to buy drugs in the name of cremation of their son. The French Consul laments, ‘what kind of world do we live in? Where parents sell the dead bodies of their own children for cash! And what will they do with the cash? Buy drugs. Some to use, some to sell to other unfortunates like themselves.’ (132)

It is not only Indians who deceive foreigners but also foreigners practice deceitful tasks—making them drug addicted by making their culture their weakness. The survey of the association also makes us know that villagers around major cities ‘have become dependent on drugs…The same villagers who fifteen years ago couldn’t be induced to take smallpox vaccinations because of their distrust of chemicals.’ (22) Many times foreigners are also found indulged in deceiving Indians and get profit of their own. The group itself confessed their wrong deeds saying ‘Inevitably the villagers got a taste for dangerous living, and the Europeans have for years used the villagers’ addictions to make them active collaborators in maintaining illegal border routes.’ (23) The very hospitality of Indians, their Indian culture gave way to their
destruction and downfall, ‘the guest is a god in India. If he is also a traveler and a mendicant in search of religious enlightenment, the host considers himself doubly blessed.’ (22) The exchange of women or wives for drugs between foreigners and Indians is the brutal reality which is usually hidden or concealed.

Foreigners, influenced by Indian gurus, observe their practices and use for their own welfare or profit. Many times practices are misinterpreted and mistaken by the foreign dwellers which results into badly modified version of Indian spirituality. A blue-eyed Californian asserts her reason why the Americans train homosexual to fly into another country. ‘They (Americans) got the ideas from India. Look at the Maharishi. He is offering these courses in levitation in Switzerland.’ (53) The people of different countries have intense fascination for the spiritualism and they think the miracle as part of spirituality. But spirituality is not bound to follow miracles. The course of levitation makes them feel spiritual. The Californian blue-eyed refers: When you get back in touch with yourself and the mysterious forces of the Universe. It’s like all to do with rediscovering your inner environments and your outer aura and Supreme Shanti.’ (53)

The quintessence of the Hindu religion is tried to be sold by fake gurus, and bought by foreigners. The Hindu religion is attempted to be globalized to attain the utmost benefit. Shandip Saha also observes, 'The globalization of Hinduism has served to magnify and greatly complexify certain recurring themes that have been central to the history of gurus and their sampradayas and the themes of religious competition and the quest for continued religious patronage.' (49) The famous Hindu philosophy is sometimes misinterpreted and may be ‘as lethal as cancer’. The most probable reason of the death of a foreigner (in Cowboys and Indians) is his misinterpretation about Hindu philosophy.

An incident experienced by an American and French woman is also strange and odd showing how foreigners could be mistaken. The incident is about a girl, who shows roadside shows before public and lives with her tyrant father. Being kind human beings they take her with them to make her life comfortable. But the girl mistook the exchange of money between her father and them. She thought she is sold,
and tried to satisfy the man sexually. The man became ‘celibate as a result of the child’s eagerness to please him sexually.’ (154) The relation of the couple could not remain contended as ‘the Frenchwoman finds herself in the unsatisfactory position of having neither her sexual feelings reciprocated by her lover, nor her maternal feelings responded to by the child.’ (154-55)

But it is also to be noted that only gurus are not wrong always. Sometimes their teachings are misinterpreted by foreigners, and embarrassing situations take place. A guru preaches his disciples true spirituality and ways to acquire saying ‘…that they must release the love mechanism in themselves by any trigger available, that they must love him as a father, a mother, a brother, a lover, a husband, to reach knowledge of his Godhead…’ (149) But this teaching is taken literally by an American young woman who proposed the guru one night saying “Take me, Lover! I’m yours.” (149) Though the guru thrown her out of the ashram and ‘surrounded himself with a Practorian Guard of pure young men’ (149), was accused and suspected of ‘harbouring homosexual proclivities.’ (149)

There is certain degradation of values and truthfulness in the behavior and actions of people. People may cheat, tell lie or may be involved in criminal acts too. They indulge in unfair or illegal works like selling own passport for the sake of money. This forgery takes place at very wide range. One says, ‘Eighty percent of the illegal passport trade between French citizens in Asia takes place, not as might be supposed in the old French colonies of Indochina and the countries surrounding then, but in New Delhi’s Connaught place. The black market in travel documents is not limited to the French.’ (131)

Gita Mehta is also aware of the malpractices of foreigners in India. One such incident is narrated by the two American university students. They tell about a white man who ruled the whole Goa by spreading business of dope and girls. He runs Goa and all ‘the cops are in his pocket.” (171) He ruled a foreign land like a ‘feudal kingdom’. Disappointed foreigners and Indians may be seen in Anjuna Beach who tries to accommodate themselves in the odd and strange situations. Though nudity is banned by the municipal corporation yet, men and women are dressed only in
loincloths and strips to cover their sexual organs. The beach becomes a place where Indians may quench their lustful desires: 'Anjuna Beach had become to the Indians what the burning ghats were to the foreigners, mostly a place to watch others lose their dignity.' (174) Gita Mehta shows how people are attracted towards practices of other culture. They adopt opposite to what they have or are taught. Foreigners are interested in reading Indian religious books while Indian people rush towards 'hot books, about sex and other dirty things.' (77) India is not only the place to holy practice but also some glaring evil as well. If there is mantra, tantra is another form which is practiced by many to rule over the good with the help of evil powers.

Mehta has sharp look at unhygienic practices in the country. In the culture, body is thought and called 'as the temple of the soul. Phlegm and feces have no place in a temple. The man who strains towards Nirvana must be sure to void his bowels regularly.' (82) In Indian culture purification of body is considered highly but people are not concerned to keep the things around them clean. They are limited to the cleanliness of body only, and are free to spoil roads and public places. Indian culture is broad, profound and wide but Indians are seen to limit it by their narrow visions and act in the manner that it creates troublesome situations in the society. ‘Unfortunately, our concern with purification does not extend from the body to the street.’ (83) People are seen defecating at open places and creating intolerable sights without any hesitation. People usually commit nuisance even if a signboard declares “Commit No Public Nuisance” at public places.

The novel is remarkable in the literary world for its curt and crisp style of narration. Several different experiences are combined with in the flow of the novel. Short sentences, humorous tone and satirical manner are distinct features of the novel. K Hemlatha remarks on her style saying, '…Githa Mehta displays her extraordinary talent at interweaving bizarre anecdotes, history and current events into a humorous and witty documentary satire.' (255) Laxmi Parasuram considers the novelist a fine observer who could reveal us the reality of the society with 'a rare insight'. He is of the opinion:
'The form she (Gita Mehta) has chosen gives her ample opportunities to come out with biting remarks and this is mostly done through the figures of a roving observer who is always present on the scene. This observer, gifted with a panoramic vision both of space and time, scans vast areas of history with a rare insight and enables us to figure out the chaotic trends.' (237)

Mehta portrayed in the novel the stark reality beneath the fine promotion of Indian spiritualism to West. The western countries seem also in the grip of the illusion of easy and fast redemption and liberation. Both wish to attain their set goals effortlessly. As Ushas Bande sums up:

' Mehta closes her work with a toast to those who fear and also to those who are beyond fear and hence cannot hear; but in that there is subdued warning: it is not for punny man to understand 'Infinity', and by implication to comprehend India.'

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