

A Postcolonial Reading of Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss*

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Abstract

The present paper discusses both the themes of colonial mentality in India as well as the American Dream in Kiran Desai's novel *The Inheritance of Loss*. The aim of this paper is to explore the effects and changes that happened in India in the British colonization of India. The themes of the American Dream, colonialism, race and class will be sketched out through the image of migration and multiculturalism in a postcolonial setting. Also, much attention is paid to such issues as the questions of discrimination and oppression, which are inevitably related to all of the aforementioned themes. Chapter I discusses Judge Jemubhi's colonial mentality and his attachment to the west and the causes that led him to this situation. Chapter II focuses on Biju's American Dream and his immigration experience where he faces racism and discrimination because of his eastern origin, and how he react to these issues different then the Judge did. The objective of the study is threefold. First, it aims at validating the existence of the identity problems in relation to colonialism. Second, it raises awareness and draws people's attention towards the identity crisis in modern societies. Third, writing about such issues stands as a motivation for whoever fails to pay attention to the extent of the dilemma. However, this paper

was meant to be a wakeup call for anyone who considers moving to the west. It aims to discover the proper means and solutions that would eliminate the effects of the identity dilemma to help the people under discussion realize the importance of creating a balance between their multiple identities.

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