

Gaining New Nationality

In The inheritance of Loss (2006) by Kirain Desai

Thesis

*Submitted as a partial fulfillment of the requirement to obtain
the strata one (S1) degree*



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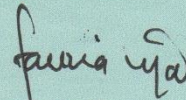
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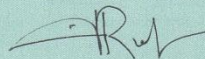


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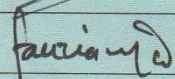
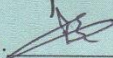
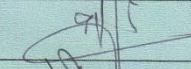

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ABSTRAK

Gusneldi Andrya Putra. 2016. “Gaining New Nationality in Kirain Desais Novel *The Inheritance of Loss*”. Thesis. Universitas Negeri Padang.

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Skripsi ini merupakan analisa dari novel *The Inheritance of Loss* (2006) karya Kirain Desai. Masalah yang di angkat adalah sejauh mana tokoh utama berusaha merubah dirinya agar bisa diterima sebagai bagian dari warga sipil. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk menemukan sejauh mana kontribusi elemen- elemen fiksi; karakter, seting dan plot (konflik) dalam mengungkapkan isu tersebut di dalam novel. Analisa dilakukan dengan cara menginterpretasi teks, konteks, dan meanganalisa keterkaitan elemen fiksi satu sama lain. Elemen fiksi tersebut dianalisa dengan mengimplementasikan teori *Mimicry (Postcolonial)* yang dikemukakan oleh Homi Bhaba. Tokoh utama novel ini adalah imigran yang berasal dari India dan menetap di Inggris. Ada beberapa cara yang dilakukan untuk bisa diterima sebagai bagian dari warga sipil yaitu beradaptasi dengan budaya lokal, meniru gaya hidup orang Inggris dan merubah pola pikir dengan menjadikan pendidikan sebagai prioritas utama. Hasil dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa karakter mampu merubah dirinya menjadi seperti orang Inggris pada umumnya.

Kata kunci: *Mimicry, adaption, culture, imitation.*

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

Some people choose to live in developed country. Even though they are living in the new country, they cannot be accepted by citizens. The citizens still consider them as “the others” because they have different culture, rule, language or physical appearance. Therefore, they will settle themselves to be accepted by the citizens in that country. They have to be able to adapt the new cultures. They imitate the other’s people behaviors, manners, attitudes and even they will change their own identity in that country. The effort of people to be accepted by the citizens as a part of the members in new country is called by gaining new nationality.

Gaining new nationality is the issue about someone’s desire to be a real citizen of the new country. In American Heritage Dictionary (2014), *gain* is defined to obtain or acquire the goal which is something desirable or valued with effort. According to James Bryce (1858: 6), *nationality* is a population held together by certain ties, for example language and literature, ideas, costumes, and traditions in such a way as to feel itself as a coherent unity. People who gain new nationality have to put more emphasis on similarities with others. Gaining new nationality refers to the struggle of someone to be accepted as a new member in a new country.

The phenomenon of gaining new nationality often happens in colonized country. Some colonized people believe that the colonizer's culture is the superior and their own culture is inferior. According to Homi Bhaba (1984: 14), people of colonized country start imitating the behaviours, attitudes, languages and cultures of the colonizer. This statement signifies that the colonized people want to improve themselves to be like colonizer by imitating the colonizer's lifestyle. The imitation toward the colonizer is a way to be a part of the colonizer. The colonized people accustom themselves with some new cultures of colonizer.

Adapting the culture is another way to be accepted as the member in the new country. Edward Tylor (1871: 9) says that culture is a complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, language, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society. It means that culture is the characteristics and knowledge of a particular group of people which is defined in the form of language, religion, social habits, manner, and etc. Thus, culture can be learned by people. Some people adapt the culture to settle themselves with others. Adapting the culture is needed by people who live in new country.

Another way to be accepted as a new member is by changing the way of thinking. The way of thinking of colonized people is influenced by the colonizer. It can be influenced by the family, groups, friends, or environments people live. For example, an Indonesian man comes to Netherland as a university student. He will have a good education, a job with high salary, adequate facilities, and etc. It makes him feels comfortable living in Netherland. Moreoever, he is amazed toward the culture where he lives. He decides to live there as part of the new

society and start to imitate the culture, behavior, language of the native. His goal is to get a new identity by gaining new nationality. He derives himself to gain new nationality for it.

The issue of gaining new nationality is also discussed in many literary works of literature such as poetry, drama and novel. Kirain Desai's novel entitled *Inheritance of Loss* (2006) reflects this phenomenon. The protagonist in this novel is an immigrant from India to Britain. The protagonist's passion to be accepted as Englishman indicates that he gains new nationality. It can be seen from how he adapts the new cultures, imitating lifestyle and changing his mindset.

1.2 Gaining New Nationality

There are two main terms in this study. They are gaining and nationality. Gaining derives from the word gain. In the American Heritage Dictionary (2014), *gain* is defined to obtain or acquire the aim which is something desirable or valued with effort while *nationality* is the status of belonging to a particular nation or ethnic group whether by birth or naturalization. James Bryce, a British politician, (1858: 6) says a nationality is a population held together by certain ties, for example language and literature, ideas, costumes, and traditions in such a way to feel itself as a coherent unity. It means that people who belong to a nationality put more emphasis on similarities among themselves. Nationality also can be defined as a large aggregation that being organized.

Gaining new nationality in this analysis refers to the struggle of someone to achieve his goal in order to be accepted by the citizen or ethnic group as a member in the new country.

1.3 Kirain Desai

A&E Television Networks (12 July 2015) reports that Kirain Desai is an Indian author who was born on 3 September 1971 in New Delhi, India. In 1977 she moved to England. She educated in John Cannon School. She studied creative writing at Bennington College and graduated in 1993. She received two MFAs, from Hollins University in Roanoke and Columbia University in New York City. Now she lives with her family in the United States as a permanent resident.

In the report of Guardian (September 2014), Kirain Desai has written two novels. Her first novel *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard* published in 1998 by Hamish Hamilton Ltd. She received the Bette Trask Award from British Society of Authors in 1999. Her second novel *The Inheritance of Loss* published in 2006 by Faber and Faber Ltd. It won the Man Booker Prize Award and the National Books Critics Circle Fiction Award in 2006, Vodafone Crossword Book Award in 2007 and Orange Broadband Prize Award, in also 2007.

There are some comments about Desai's novel *The Inheritance of Loss*. First comment is stated by Sukturi Anah Stanely in the journal of politics and culture (2014). She states that the *inheritance of loss* captures what it means to live between East and West, to be immigrant, and what happens when western elements are introduced into nonwestern country. She claims that migration is the essential component in Kirain Desai's novel. Most of the characters of novel displace from their native land and undergo a sense of loss.

Another comment about the novel *Inheritance of loss* comes from Desai's fans. In New York Times (6 Nov 2007) Sandip Roy, a librarian, praises the *Inheritance of Loss* as one of a good novel to be read. As he says:

It's a clash of civilizations, even empires . . . The idea of an old empire, the British one collides. The story ricochets between the two worlds, held together by Desai's sharp eyes and even sharper tongue. . . . This is a . . . substantial meal, taking on heavier issues of land and belonging, home and exile, poverty and privilege, and love and the longing for it. —Sandip Roy, San Francisco Chronicle (New York Times)

The quotation above shows that Roy considers Desai work has some good points. For the theme, the character and setting can make the reader become interested in the story. The way Desai presented this novel with its limitations gives the reader new view point about the life.

Idea is important thing in doing the work. Kirain Desai often does some research that she conducts to draw the idea. In the radio interview with Random House(17 February 2006), Desai affirms:

Pretty much none for this book--it was all made up. But I can imagine it would be fun to write about another place and time and do something different. I'm trying to do some research now for the next thing I want to write. I imagine it's a difficult balance--I'm sure you can over-research something and have your fiction not really be fiction anymore. It would be hard to know when to stop

The quotation above explains that idea is discovered from the research to develop the story of the novel. Kirain Desai tends to do research for her work. She has done some research by reading and analyzing the relevant information. With the research she did, she is able to get the whole idea and information about what she is going to write and what kind of work that she will do.

1.4 The Inheritance of Loss

A novel entitled *The Inheritance of loss* (2006) written by Kirain Desai reflects gaining new nationality. Gaining new nationality in this analysis refers to the struggle of someone to achieve his goal in order to be accepted by the citizen or ethnic group as a member in the new country. Gaining new nationality in this novel is represented by the protagonist, Jemubhai. He is an immigrant who moves from India to England to continue his study at Cambridge University. In this new environment, he wants to be considered as Englishman. He adapts all the culture in that society. He considers that the culture and the manner of England people are better than his own. He tries hard to imitate the manner, behave and the role of England people. Gaining new nationality can be seen through the way of protagonist in adapting the culture, imitating lifestyle and changing his mindset.

The protagonist adapts the culture of England. He married an Englishwoman in order to be able to socialize and learn some England cultures from his wife. He celebrates Christmas Eve with the native. He learns table manners.

The protagonist imitates the lifestyle of Englishman. The food that he consumes commonly from England. He imitates the way of Englishman wearing dress. Go hunting with the native is one of his sports for once a week.

The protagonist changes his mindset like an Englishman. Education is his priority. He likes to read books in library. He works hard to finish his study quick. He gets a job right away after graduation.

1.5 Problem of the Study

This study focuses on the way of someone gaining new nationality. There are two research questions that give contribution to reveal the issue. They are:

1. How far does the character gaining new nationality exposed in the novel *The Inheritance of Loss*.
2. To what extent do setting and plot in the novel *The Inheritance of Loss* contribute in revealing the issue about gaining new nationality?

1.6 Purpose of the Study

The aim of this study is to find out how far Kiran Desai's novel *The Inheritance of Loss* (2006) exposes gaining new nationality. Furthermore, this study is going to investigate to what extent the character, setting and plot(conflict) in revealing gaining new nationality.

1.7 Previous Study

There are some studies about Kiran Desai's novel *The Inheritance of loss* (2006) that has been analyzed. The first study is focused on social exclusion by Ashok K Mohapatra and the other one is about loss of human value by A.K Thakur. In addition, there is also a study from V.S Naipaul's novel *The Mimic Man* (2002) that has been analyzed by Zorreh Moghimi which is focused on search identity. These studies give contribution and inspiration in analyzing this novel.

A study about the novel *The Inheritance of Loss* (2006) has been done by Ashok K Mohapatra (2011). It is entitled *Social Exclusion in Postcolonial Fiction: A Reading of Kiran Desai's The Inheritance of Loss*. The study deals with the problem of social exclusion characterizing. The analysis is focused on element of fictional devices character, setting and plot. It is represented by the

character who lives in West. He is being excluded, marking off for themselves an inside space. He lost the opportunity for self representation in his own rights. The result of this analysis shows that the character faces social exclusion from others when he lives in foreign country.

The other study that analyze the novel *The Inheritance of loss* come from journal written by A.K Thakur (2010) entitled *Loss of Human Value in the Inheritance of Loss*. The study enlightens about human beings, human predicament and how to make people realize the intricacies of human life. The study is focused on characters. They are immigrant who live in precarious conditions in the Western countries and feel unsafe and insecure. They separate themselves from inseparable human qualities either in disgust or in irreparable damages to their own existence and to the fabric of the nation. The conclusion of the analysis exposes that the characters feels lack of human value when he is being an immigrant.

Another study that have given contribution and inspiration is a study about V.S.Naipaul's novel *The Mimic Men* (2002) by Zorreh Moghimi, in his journal entitled *The Mimic Men: A Man's Search for Identity and Home by Zohreh Moghimi*. The study shows the representative of displaced and disillusioned colonial individuals, and colonization is depicted as a process that takes away their identity, culture, history, and sense of place. Thus, the analysis considers the relationship between the socio political and the psychological consequences of imperialism. The character is an Indian, forty years old colonial minister who is exiled in London. He tries to impose the order on his life and reconstruct his identity. He changes his name from Ranjit Kripal Singh to Ralph Sing, in the

process of becoming like an English man. He fails to reconnect himself to India, his homeland, or to connect himself to London. The inference of the analysis, the character finally takes control of his sense of dislocation as he realizes that there is no ideal place with which he can be himself.

Those three analyses have inspired and given contribution to this study. The studies above show about the problem of social exclusion characterizing in *The Inheritance of Loss*, loss of human value in *the Inheritance of Loss* and the representative of displaced and disillusioned colonial individuals in *The Mimic Men*. Unlike the previous studies above, this analysis is focused on how far the character uncovers gaining new nationality through devices such setting and plot.

1.8 Theoretical Framework

Gaining new nationality is related to the concept of mimicry by Homi Bhaba. Bhaba in his essay *Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse* (1984: 14) states that mimicry in colonial and postcolonial discourse is defined when people of the colonized country start imitating the behaviors, attitudes, language and culture of the colonizers. This statement signifies that imitation of colonized toward the colonizer is a complex phenomenon. Thus, behavior is related to lifestyle, language is a part of the culture and attitude shapes the mindset of someone. The colonized people want to improve themselves like colonizer by imitating western lifestyle, adapting the culture and changing the mindset.

Lifestyle closely relates to the behaviour of someone. Van Vliet (2000: 5) in his journal *Lifestyle, Consumption and the Environments* says that the term lifestyle can denote the interests, opinions, and behavioral orientations of an individual or group. He claims that a lifestyle typically reflects an individual's way of life, values or world view. Lifestyle can be defined as a function of individual characteristics that is formed through social interaction or action. People imitate others lifestyle to get attention and impression. They settle themselves with western lifestyle in order to be accepted in new environment.

Adapting the culture is another way to be accepted in new environment. Edward Tylor (1871: 9) says that culture is complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, language, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society. It means that culture is the characteristics and knowledge of a particular group of people, defined by from language, religion, belief, social habits, arts, etc. Thus, culture can be learned by people. Some people adapt the culture to settle themselves with others. Adapting the culture is needed by people who live in new environment.

In new environment people try to change his attitude toward the life. It will impact to the changing of their mindset. According to Carol Dweck (2006: 5) mindset is about the attitude of people choosing to adopt and it can be changed. In line with Dweck, [Gordon Allport](#) (1935: 3) states that attitude is a settled way of thinking or feeling about someone or something, typically one that is reflected in a person's behavior. It means that attitude is a part of someone's mindset that is showed from the behavior. Mindset can be defined as the way of thinking toward

the goal of life. Thus, some people change their mindset because they have to do this when they live in new environment.

Nationality is used to determine what country someone legally belongs to. According to James Bryce (1858: 6), nationality is a population held together by certain ties, for example language and literature, ideas, costumes, and traditions in such a way as to feel itself a coherent unity. Meanwhile In Britanica Encyclopedia (2010), nationality is a group of people having a common and distinguishing racial, linguistic, culture background and forming one constituent element of a large group. Thus, people who gain new nationality has to put more emphasis on similarities with others.

Therefore, the issue of gaining new nationality still occur up to now. Bill Ashcroft (1989: 17) says that the culture affected by imperial process from the moment of colonization to present day. It means that the phenomenon of gaining new nationality still happens after the colonized country get the independence.

The process to become like western is never complete. Homi Bhaba (1984: 18) states that the process by which the individual as almost the same, but not quite. The character in this novel is an Indian people who has obsession to become an Englishman. He imitates the behaviors, attitudes, language and culture of western people. Thus, he prefers change his identity to become like western in order to be accepted in new environment.

The analysis of this novel is supported by text-and context-based interpretation. According to Guerin (2005) text based interpretation is the approach that based on the analysis and interpretation to text itself and context-

based interpretation is the approach that based on the circumstances of culture, history political, and social. It means that the analysis of the novel is not only focused on the text itself, but it is also involved the phenomenon that happen in reality. Through the text based interpretation, the analysis of the novel is based on the contribution of the fictional devices such as character; setting and plot (conflict) as the devices on reveal the issue of gaining new nationality.

Character is an important element to reveal the meaning of this novel. Corner (2009) says that a character may be defined as a verbal representation of human being. In literary works, the characters help reader to understand and catch the meaning of the works. The way to analyze the character is by taking a focus on character's action, thoughts, conversations, and the reaction toward conflicts and circumstances. In this analysis, the effort of someone who gains new nationality is represented by the protagonist. The protagonist is an Indian who moves from India to England. He attempts to adapt all the culture in order to be accepted as an English man in his new environment. He tries hard to settle up himself with western people.

Another fictional device which is going to be analyzed in this novel is plot (conflict). Conflict is an important part in making up the plot. Bokeesch (2000) states conflict can be identified into four kinds; man versus self, man versus man, man versus nature, and man versus society. In order to analyze this novel, the identification of plot and conflict give contribution to find character efforts in gaining new nationality. In this analysis, the main character faces both internal and external conflicts. The external conflict is emerged when the protagonist has to deal with other characters western people still look himself as an inferior. The

internal conflict happens when the protagonist face new situation or condition which is different from India.

Setting also gives contribution in order to reveal the meaning of this novel. It relates to the circumstances, location, and atmosphere of the characters in the story. Endriga (2003) says that setting has a way of drawing the reader into a piece of literature while understanding of the characters and their actions. It means characters and settings in a story are influenced by setting. It gives contributions to reveal the meaning of story by persuading toward the characters and conflicts. In this analysis, the protagonist moves from India to Britain in order to continue his study. In the new environment, the western culture impresses him. He thinks that western culture is better. Thus, he tries to be like western in order to be accepted as part of the member of the culture.

1.9 Methodology

The analysis of novel *The Inheritance of loss* is done through text and context-based interpretation. It is done by analyzing some part of fictional devices, such as; characters, plot (conflicts) and setting. These devices are related each other. Character is used to reveal the issue of gaining new nationality by analyzing character behavior, culture and attitude. Plot and conflicts in this novel also take an important role in revealing the meaning. They are used to acknowledge the conflicts which the character faced. Setting deals with the situation and condition exist in the novel in order to reveal character attempt to be accepted in new environment. Furthermore, In addition, these elements are analyzed based on the concept of postcolonial literary approach by Homi Bhaba.