

Central Department of English Faculty of Humanities

Tribhuvan University

Ambivalent Political Position in Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss*: A Rhetorical Study

A thesis

submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

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The faculty of Humanities and Social Science, Tribhuvan University

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Letter of Recommendation

Ms. Bima Joshi has completed her thesis entitled “Ambivalent Political Position in Kiran Desai’s *The Inheritance of Loss: A Rhetorical Study*” under my supervision. She carried out this from October 2016 to December 2016. I hereby recommend her thesis to be submitted for viva voce.

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Date: 28 December 2016

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Letter of Approval

The thesis entitled “Ambivalent Political Position in Kiran Desai’s *The Inheritance of Loss: A Rhetorical Study*” by Bima Joshi, submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

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Abstract

This research work examines canons of rhetoric in Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss* by applying theoretical frame based on Steven Lynn's rhetorical strategies. The researcher explores the rhetorical strategies such as invention, arrangement, style, memory and delivery, in framing a discourse on Indians' loss of human dignity and cultural values. In Desai's novel, her use of regional varieties of languages and handling of code mixing in multilingual communicative contexts becomes the major tool of representing ambivalent and hierarchical political condition of the then society. The writer's own experience as a migrant and her cultural memory gives her writing an authenticity to be an example of the humiliating experiences Indian migrants face in west. In the same way, painful cultural memory of humiliation of Indians from colonial to the post-colonial era, results in the dissatisfaction of her audience from the imaginary, idealized illusion of west indicating the hope of new Indian reality based on their own culture and identity. The return of migrant character, Biju, to India, puts the impetus of the writer in action and the novel has been rendered as the declaration that the imposter west of the reality has to be brought out of the imaginarily romanticized garb of Indian perception. Desai, with her handling of rhetorical devices in her novel, has created an ambivalent political position from which the delivery of the discourse becomes effective. It disrupts the authority of the colonizer over the colonized. Precisely, this present thesis explores the Desai's choice of rhetorical devices, her targeted audience and her argument in the novel.

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