

Acknowledgements

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ABSTRACT

This research explores the intersections of multiculturalism, diaspora, and cultural identity in Nepali-English literature, and how select literary works mirror the changing representation and reimagining of Nepali communities within and beyond national boundaries. The research examines how Nepal navigates identity through the tropes of migration, nostalgia, memory, and affiliation. The thesis also demonstrates the political metamorphosis of Nepal through the stages of royal autocracy and hierarchical system from the 18th century down to the emergence of multicultural democracy in the 20th century. At the same time, it also links this evolution to a much wider international dialogue on multiculturalism and transnationalism.

The primary focus of this research is the understanding that multiculturalism is a policy and an everyday phenomenon that however is negotiated, contested, and hybridised. The study incorporates theoretical concepts such as Homi Bhabha's notion of the "third space", which he discusses in *The Location of Culture* (Bhabha 36), and Charles Taylor's "politics of recognition", introduced in his essay "The Politics of Recognition" (Taylor 25), to define identity in a multicultural society. The research views identity as not stable but as an ongoing process which is not fixed but fluid.

The selected texts of Manjushree Thapa, Samrat Upadhyay, Shradha Ghale, Greta Rana, and Buddhisagar Chapagain portray extensive, vivid, and diverse insights into the vibrant life and varied migration patterns of Nepali society. Manjushree Thapa's novels *Tilled Earth* (2007), *Seasons of Flight* (2010), *All of Us in Our Own Lives* (2016) depict the effects of migration on development and culture. Samrat Upadhyay's *The Royal Ghosts* (2006), *Buddha's Orphans* (2010) and *Mad Country* (2017) highlight the contradiction between the past and the present, along with the repression and the fight of the social classes. Shradha Ghale's *The Wayward Daughter*

(2018) is a critique of the caste and gender system. Greta Rana's *Hostage* (2018) is a portrait of the repetitive and dehumanising aspects of economic migration, and Buddhisagar Chapagain's *Karnali Blues* (2012) portrays rural-urban divides and intergenerational shifts in identity.

Several themes emerge in the analysis of the selected texts when seen through the lens of multiculturalism and identity politics. Firstly, the conflict between cultural preservation and assimilation is one of the major themes that the characters keep on experiencing, where they grapple with retaining cultural values while adapting to host societies. Secondly, the issue of belonging and otherness appears in the contexts of the characters who exist in the liminal spaces between derived traditions and the pressures of integration. Nostalgia and memory serve as emotional and narrative tools. They provide the feeling of security to the displaced people, simultaneously evoking pleasure and pain. The research also deals with the theme of nativisation. The selected writers nativise their texts employing Nepali names, local idioms, greetings, and code-switching. This transformed literary voice that combines two different elements encourages linguistic plurality, at the same time, it bears a deeply rooted cosmopolitan nature of the Nepali diasporic identity.

This study asserts that Nepali English literature provides a critical perspective to view multiculturalism not merely as a celebration of diversity but as a site of struggle over recognition, equity, and voice. The texts demonstrate that multicultural societies tend to conceal structural inequalities, marginalise minority cultures, and exert assimilative pressures. Literature becomes an effective tool to critique these contradictions, humanise the migrant experience and subvert dominant socio-political narratives. The texts also demonstrate that cultural identity is not monolithic even

within Nepal itself—caste, gender, class, and rural-urban divides are actively negotiated and complicated in diasporic retellings.

Through the analysis of selected literary texts, this research enhances the developing field of South Asian diasporic literature and positions Nepali narratives in the larger context of global literary and academic discussion. The research illustrates that Nepali English literature provides a critical observation of the process of identity construction in the modern global world—where the tension between tradition and change continues, and cultural hybridity is not only a survival strategy but also a resistance method. As globalisation redefines cultural borders, Nepali English literature highlights the continued human search for belonging, dignity, and expression in more plural societies.

The study concludes by asserting the necessity for further studies on Nepali-English diasporic literature, especially in comparison with other South Asian diasporic canons, and how digital technology, gender, caste, and ecological crisis affect emerging narratives. This thesis demonstrates the empowering power of fiction and how it can criticise, connect, and redefine the cultural lives of a diasporic world.