

**Tribhuvan University**  
**Central Department of English**

**Ideological Operation of Othering: A Postcolonial Reading of Mary Shelley's**  
*Frankenstein* **and Charlotte Bronte's** *Jane Eyre*

**A Dissertation Submitted to the Central Department of English Tribhuvan University,**  
**In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the**  
**Degree of Master of Philosophy in English**

**By**  
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**Tribhuvan University**  
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**Letter of Approval**

The dissertation entitled “**Ideological Operation of Othering: A Postcolonial Reading of Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* and Charlotte Bronte’s *Jane Eyre*”** submitted by Bhabi Lal Neupane to the Central department of English, Tribhuvan University for the partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Philosophy in English has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

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### Abstract

This thesis studies *Frankenstein* and *Jane Eyre*, two crucial nineteenth century works by two prominent writers Mary Shelley and Charlotte Bronte. Both these works belong to the era of high colonialism. This study brings into communication the pervasive form of colonial desire and its operation through the ideology of othering which is subversive in the novels. The operation of othering is shown in the form of binarity in which metropolis is presented as the 'home' and 'colonies' the 'mistress'. Regardless of the people in colonies, people within the colonizing country are oppressed as other.

This study applies the postcolonial approach of othering in order to demonstrate how the resistance to empire and its imperial desires emerge out of the imperial culture of othering in the novels. Contrary to the existing readings of the novels from the Marxist, feminist and postcolonial perspectives which largely draw upon the theme of resistance in literary texts, this thesis deals with resistance on the part of the marginalized characters. As a result, it presents how hysterical, slave and monstrous [colonized] concomitantly exhibits colonizers [civilize, imperative and rational] are rude, brutal, and monstrous in attitudes and behaviors. Mr. Rochester, who assumes an English gentleman in *Jane Eyre*, is rude; for he denies freedom to be given to wife Bertha Mason. Likewise, Victor who owes European humanism characterized by science becomes monstrous when he refutes love and care to his own child for an instance.

By subverting the ideological operation of othering and colonial desires in the novels, this study comes up with the point that desire of the marginalized people to be emancipated is muted. By reading the muted voices of socially excluded characters in the thesis, it argues that British empire's social mission of civilizing others based on the idea othering subverted in texts like *Frankenstein* and *Jane Eyre*.

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