

Tribhuvan University

**Critiquing the Utopia of the Norm: Reading Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The Idiot***

A Thesis Submitted to

The Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Tribhuvan University,

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts in English

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**Tribhuvan University**

**Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences**

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**Approval Letter**

This thesis entitled “Critiquing the Utopia of Norm: Reading Fyodor Dostoevsky’s *The Idiot*” submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, by Mr. Subash Kafle, has been approved by undersigned members of the Research Committee.

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## Letter of Recommendation

Mr. Subash Kafle has completed his thesis entitled “**Critiquing the Utopia of the Norm: Reading Fyodor Dostoevsky’s *The Idiot***” under my supervision. He carried out his research from March 2008 A. D. to December 2008 A. D. I hereby recommend this thesis be submitted for viva voce.

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Shankar Subedi

Supervisor

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Subash Kafle

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## Abstract

This research makes a study of interweaving issues of disability—instances of epilepsy and derision in the major characters, and the subjugation of Myshkin in Russian Aristocratic class, in particular – in Fyodor Dostoevsky’s novel *The Idiot*. Together with investigating the ways in which Myshkin and Nastasya Filippovna are represented in this Russian text written at the high time of Russian aristocracy, principal focus has been to bring into light the Russian aristocratic culture that subjugates peoples who slightly disagree with the then social values. In particular, my attempt has been to scrutinize *The Idiot* that emerges as a ruthless commentary over Russian aristocratic culture. Whereas Dostoevsky chronicles the marginalized ‘abnormal’ voices on literary disability studies, the novel comes to put the characteristic features of Russian aristocracy in the pretext of so called disabled people’s degradation. This research follows the latest contributions on Fyodor Dostoevsky’s work. Dostoevsky delves in the life of Myshkin and Nastasya Filippovna to expose the sufferings and contingencies in that they had to carryout solely because of their so-called physical and psychological abnormality.

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