

I. Introduction to Chittadhar Hridaya and his Novella *Letter From A Lhasa Merchant to His Wife*

This thesis entitled the subjugation of women in Hridaya' novella *Letter From A Lhasa Merchant to His Wife* delineates the novella from the perspective of liberal feminism in which the female characters are suppressed and dominated by the contemporary patriarchal norms and values in the contemporary Newar community of Kathmandu Valley. The major female character Maim, the wife of a Lhasa Merchant, faces a lot of sufferings and discriminations created by the then existing patriarchal mentality. She is victimized by her husband in particular and by the patriarchal society in general. The biased society creates various rules and regulations to discriminate the female and exclude them from their natural rights of equality and freedom. In such society, females are treated as secondary entities having no separate identity of their own. In the history of women liberation movement, many feminist activists and theorist were emerge gives a way to this movement. Among them Simone de Beauvoir, Elaine Showalter, Rebecca West, Mary Wollstonecraft and many others are the major feminist theorist who analyze the female's sufferings and put forwards their idea about their liberation.

The Newar of Kathmandu are said to be the oldest inhabitants with their own special language, culture and way of life. Newar people are seen to be involved in diverse occupation from farming to trade. Among the different occupation of Newar people, trade is also an important one. Since the past history, they are seen to be involved in trade in Kathmandu as well as Lhasa. In the past, it was trend to go to Lhasa and town like Shigates, Gyante, Kyrong and Kuti for the purpose of trade.

Nepal-Tibet relation can be seen with the legend of the origin of Kathmandu Valley. According to the Buddhist legend, more than two thousand years ago, Manjushree, the Buddhist monk, came all the way from Chine to Nepal. He cut the mountain with his

sword in Chovar and created the Kathmandu Valley. Nepal's first recorded official relation with Tibet occurred near the middle of the seventh century. It is said that Nepal-Tibet trade was established when the princess Brikuti was married with the Tibetan king Songsten Gampo in the 7th century A.D. She was accompanied by a large number of traders and artisans. The traders were the pioneers who set up shop in Tibetan capital and became known as the Lhasa Traders. Their successor, accustomed in wearing Tibetan clothes, adopted Tibetan way of life, kept long hair and some even married Tibetan women. In time, people referred to these traders as Lhasa Traders.

Letter From A Lhasa Merchant To his Wife (Mimmanahpau) is a novel length letter from a Merchant in Lhasa to his wife in Kathmandu. Published in 1968, it describes the cultural and social observation of a Newar trader in the Tibetan capital and his feeling for his family separated by a great distance. It has been translated into English by Kesar Lall. Chittadhar's inspiration for this work came from unlikely corner. At a formative stage, he read Stefan Zweig's well known "Brief Einer Unbekannten" and took this novella as the model for this book. Chittadhar went on to have along and impressive literary career, receiving the title Kavi Keshari from the king of Nepal, and publishing over a hundred works before his death in 1982. He called two of his major works his children: the 350 pages poem *Sugata Saurabha* was his son, while the 114 pages *Mimmanahpau*, which he has dedicated to his mother-in-law, whom he barely knew, was his daughter.

The central conceit of *Mimmanahpau*, a novel-length letter, is that it is meant to be read by one reader only, the scribe's wife. The narrator's account interweaves emotional entreaties to his distant spouse with culture, historical and social observations on the traditions of both Newars and Tibetans living in Lhasa. That is, the present novel is in letter form written by a Lhasa Trader addressing to his wife Maim in Nepal. In it the narrator delineates his experiences of Tibet along with the cultures and tradition of Newar

community of Kathmandu. So, it is an anthology of the Newar's typical culture and way of life in which women are not treated as equal as the male in the family and in the society too. In this way, the present novel includes the suffering of women and their victimization in the Newar community of Kathmandu.

Maim is a major female character in the novel *Letter From A Lhasa Merchant to His Wife* who endures a lot of sufferings as per the patriarchal rules of the Newar society. It is the tradition of Newar community of Kathmandu that men go to Lhasa for the purpose of trading goods and merchandise; and females live in the house involving on household chores. As the member of the Newar community, the husband of Maim also goes to Lhasa leaving her in the home after their marriage. In this sense, in the very beginning of the novella, he writes:

Perhaps, you would wonder at the mention of china and misread that I have gone beyond Lhasa to China itself. These days, it is required to mention China as well whenever you write about any other place in Tibet. So we are carrying on our trade these days under a new treaty with the government of the friendly, neighboring china. (11)

The present extract from the novella clears one thing that it was a tradition in Newar community to go to Lhasa for the purpose of trade and exchange different goods and merchandises. Here begins the discrimination between the male and females. The females are not allowed to go to Tibet. They remain in home by waiting their husband arrival. But in the Tibet they are engaged with another wife forgetting their Nepalese wife. "To be quite frank, most Newars had wives here. The only difference was that some had them openly, others in secret." (74) It shows the pathetic condition of the Newars women in the time china trading.

Being a woman, Maim suffers a lot throughout her life. Her husband goes Lhasa remaining her in home with her mother. She must do all the domestic chores. She gets marriage with his in her childhood age and become sister-in-law in her early ages. In the Newar society the sister-in-law must have performs all the work without compiling anything. She follows strict rules and regulations. In the patriarchal society, it has created a lot of artificial rules and regulations and imposed upon them. The Newar community of Kathmandu is rich in its religious activities and different tradition. The writer says; "we were proverbially entangled in so many social and religious affairs in Nepal related to our Guthi that we never had time to do well in other activities. Here too at a time when we were much occupied with our trade we, as new arrivals were obliged to hold a feast" (32-3). Here, the given extract from the text shows that the Newar community is rich in cultural heritages. Females are compelled to follow such tradition strictly. But male are free to do so. Unlike female in the family, male are not restricted. That is females in the community are suffered a lot by means of socio cultural conventions in the society and in the family.

Pema Dolma is another female character in the novel also endures pathetic condition in the Tibetan territory Lhasa where she loses her husband and her daughter. Being a woman she faces a lot of problem and exploited physically mentally and sexually. In our society females are treated as the secondary entities having not their own personal life and feelings. In this way, the novel *Letter From A Lhasa Merchant to His Wife* is captures the female's sufferings both in the Newar community of Kathmandu and in the Tibet too.

Letter From A Lhasa Merchant to His Wife, a classic novel of Nepal Bhasha, has received a number of criticisms from divergent critics. This book has been analyzed and evaluated from multiple perspectives-national, political and cultural parameters. Different

critics have viewed it from different perspectives. Some of them defines it as the history of the Lhasa trading and some others defines it as the collections of Newar's ritual and tradition where women are subordinated and marginalized because of the existing norms and values of the patriarchy. Kesar Lal is one of the critics and translator of the Nepal Bhasa who comments on the book *Letter From a Lhasa Merchant to His Wife*. On his translator note, he argues:

Many of the merchants stayed for some years and were replaced by their brothers or sons in turn, so that there was always a member of the family to run the business in Tibet. The Newars never took their wives to Tibet but many of them openly or otherwise also took Tibetan women as wives, and by law the sons born to them became Nepalese citizens while the daughters remained citizens of Tibet. (2)

In his translator note, Kesar Lal explores the condition of Newar women in their respective family. He also clarifies the attitudes of Newar people to their sons and daughters. The Newar merchants go to Tibet for the purpose of trade. They never took their wives there in Tibet. The Newar women only remain on their house engaging on household task. But their husbands do not believe on them and brings the second wives from Tibet. That is, it was the pathetic condition of female on the Newar community of the Kathmandu valley. The Newar people do not have the equal attitudes towards their children. They give more priority to the son rather than their daughter. For them only son can give the continuity of their family heredity.

Furthermore, another critic Mark Turin comments on the book *Letter From A Lhasa Merchant to His Wife* in his article "Lovesick, Homesick or Simply Sick of Tibet" published on the "Nepali Times". In his essay, Mark Turin examines the changing attitudes of Lhasa Merchant to his wife. At begin, the Merchant shows his intimacy to his

wife but on the development of the novel, his sincerity towards his wife is loosen. In the journal “Nepali Times”, he argues:

Mimmanapau is all about change and transformation. While the writer takes great pains to articulate his undying devotion to his wife in the first fifteen pages of the letter, by the page 25 the reader begins to doubt his sincerity. His description of meeting the locals of Lhasa is particularly revealing. There were many women among the visitors, some of them quite young. "A slight tremor went all over me when they sat close to me". This aside is prescient, and a small but perceptible change in tone marks the narrative from this point on. (13)

In this statement from this essay, Mark Turin clears that the protagonist of the novel, Lhasa Merchant is not sincere towards his wife. When he comes into contact with the Tibetan girl, he does not care his wife’s devotion towards him in Nepal. Mark Turin further clears that: “Without divulging the dramatic conclusion of his letter, in the course of writing, the trader develops from an earnest and lovesick husband into a bitter, confused and uprooted man, deeply suspicious of organized religion” (13). That is, according to Mark Turin, the Lhasa traders are not faithful towards their wives in Nepal. Their wives wait several years in the name of their husband but their husbands get another marriage with Tibetan girl. Ultimately, the condition of female is like an object only as the means of fulfilling their husband’s desire.

The feminist issues came into practice after the civil rights movements and the 1960s movements on social, economic, and cultural freedoms and equalities between men and women. It studies women as other who are either oppressed or suppressed or suffered from the freedom of personal expression. All women writers who struggle against patriarchy in favor of womanhood are generally considered as feminists. Feminists

demand for their liberation from the patriarchal society. They want to get political, cultural, literacy, spiritual, economic, legal and other equalities and freedoms. Rejecting the tradition of masculinity, feminist writers regard women as human beings and debate for the equality of sex. Taking pride in their femaleness, they make writing as a main tool for the struggle to get rights of emancipation and equality.

In all society, irrespective of religion, country, race, tradition and the period in which they live, women have always been considered inferior and incapable of any serious thinking. Men are those who establish the norms and women are always defined as the other with reference to those norms. In this regards, in her book *Second Sex*, Simon de Beauvoir argues: "History has shown us that men have always kept in their hands all concrete powers since the earliest days of the patriarchate they have thought best to keep woman in a state of dependence; their codes of law have been set up against her; and thus she has definitely established as the other" (171).

According to Beauvoir, male dominated patriarchal society by creating different code of conducts to be followed by women. They create different myths inferiorizing women to dominate them. And slowly and gradually, the women have been established as the 'other'. Such types of inequality between male and female create the sense of hatred towards male and the victimized one starts rebel against the victimizers.

The feminists reject the centuries of male dominated cultures in which women were only valued for the work they produced, they do not accept the cultural and traditional images of women as petty, irrational, silly or even weak. Rather they affirm their capacities to be capable, strong, intelligent, and successful and ethical human beings. The feminist demand the political, social, economic as well as personal independence for women. They have directly and indirectly started revolting against the patriarchy.

Feminist theory helps us to reveal the importance of female's personal and common experiences and struggles. It analyses how sexual difference is constructed with male created discourse in different patriarchal societies. The phrase 'feminist theory' suggests only one unified theory ignoring a range of several feminist theories or perspectives. Feminist theory is not one but many theories or perspectives.

In the history of human development, female have been suffered a lot. They are abused sexually, mentally, and physically by the male in the patriarchal society. But now, they are more conscious. They truly know their past and present status in the society. So, female do not want to repeat the pathetic past at present. They want to save their children from such inhuman practices. In this context, in the book *Black Feminist Politics From Kennedy to Clinton*, Duchess Harris argues:

One thing that I think we all had in common was again, we were all, it seemed like almost all of us were women who never quite fit any sort of stereotype about wherever we were. We weren't appropriate little girls, necessarily. And if we were appropriate little girls, we weren't very appropriate teenagers. We were girls who were rebellious and if we weren't rebellious in act, we were definitely rebellious in thought. We were girls who early on either had been sexually abused or physically assaulted and never wanted that to happen to us again. So we were bringing a sort of reality politics, like you know I don't want this to happen to me or my children. There must be a way to walk about this. (24)

In this way, in the given extract, Duchess Harris analyzes the women's conditions in the past and present. She argues that though the patriarchal society attributes the different negative stereotypes to women, they never fit any sort of images, because the patriarchal mindset never realizes the women reality. She also argues that women are more rebellious

in acts or even in thought for their freedom or liberty. So, they don't want to repeat the history when they were assaulted physically, mentally and sexually. They want the bright future for their betterment.

The term feminism was first used by the French dramatist Alexander Dumas in 1872 in pamphlet "I" to designate the emerging movement for women rights. The term feminism gradually emerged to be world-wide cultural movement to secure a complete equality of women within the enjoyment of all human rights in moral, social, religious, political, educational, legal, economic and many others equalities. It studies the domination of women in many fields from different perspective thereof. In this regard, in her book *Feminist Thought*, Rose Marie Tong states: "Feminism is not one, but many theories or perspective and that each feminist theory or perspective attempts to describe women's oppression to explain its causes and consequences and to describe strategies for women's liberation" (16).

According to Tong, though it is in various forms the ultimate objective of feminism is to bring the women with the equal status of men in the society. For her, each and every perspective of feminism should concern with the women sufferings and their victimization in the male oriented patriarchal society. She argues that feminist movements plays a role as catalyst to rise the women voices against the bias rules and regulations of society and develops the sense of resistance against the male domination.

Simone de Beauvoir, another twentieth century feminist writer, established the principles of modern feminism in her most notable book *The Second Sex* (1949). It appeared as an encyclopedic in its coverage offering historical, biological and psychological perspective on women, a consideration of prevailing patriarchal myth about women, and as an account of female love and sexuality in virtually all of its forms. In this

work Beauvoir uses existentialist nature of the relationship between masculinity and femininity. She writes:

“He” is the subject or “she” is the object or other. In this sense she states: But if she declines this role, she is seen forthwith as a praying mantis, an ogress. In any case she appears as the privileged other, through whom the subject fulfills himself. One of the measures of man, his counter balance his salvation his adventure, his happiness. (199)

In these lines, Beauvoir argues that the male dominated society presents male as the subject or having separate identity rather females are portrayed as the commodity having no separate identity and personal desire. The male writers create myths which restrict the freedom of women as men have. According to Beauvoir, our language conditions us to speak of mankind instead of humankind and to use the masculine pronoun “he” to represent both men and women. So, to break the patriarchal dominance upon women, it is necessary to challenge men at the level of theory for feminists but without entering into the necessary domain on men’s terms.

That is, feminism is the lens that sees the female's sufferings and it causes. The feminists also find out the way through which females can be release from the long term domination and discrimination. Female's suffering is pervasive all over the world whether it is developed or under developed. The different is only the degree of domination. Nepal is not exception of such female's subjugation. It is country of multicultural and multi ethnic community. The each and every ethnical community has their own typical rules and regulations which one or another way marginalize the females. Such type females domination can be observed in the Newar community of Kathmandu valley which the present thesis work analyses based on the novel.

In this purpose, the present thesis is divided into three chapters. First chapter is about the general introduction to the text, writer and the concept of feminism. It also creates a background of the thesis. The second chapter is textual analysis which analyzes the text through the lens of feminism. Finally, third chapter is the conclusion of the overall thesis which gives a short outlook to the thesis work.

II. Subjection of Females in *Letter From A Lhasa Merchant To His Wife*

The present research work aims to explore the subjugation and sufferings of female characters in Chittadhhar Hridaya's novella *Letter From A Lhasa Merchant To His Wife*. In the novella, the major female character or protagonist Main and other female characters are victimized and suffered by the than existing patriarchal ideology in the Newari society of Kathmandu valley. The patriarchal society creates different artificial code of conduct and imposed upon them hegenomically. In the novel, the females like Maim, Dolma and Bhamula are behaved as if they are not human being and treated as the saleable commodity. The society considers females as the means of fulfilling desire of male. That is, the female characters in the novella are suffered and marginalized because of the concept of so called male superiority and their exploitative nature.

Feminist theory, which emerged from the feminist movements, aims to understand the nature of gender inequality by examining women's social roles and lived experience. It has developed theories in a variety of disciplines in order to respond the issues such as the social construction of sex and gender. It is a collection of movements and ideology aimed at defending, establishing and defining the equal political, economic and social rights for women. In addition, feminism seeks to establish equal opportunities for women in education and employment.

The concept of feminism mainly focus on the women's rights such as contract law, property and voting rights and also promoting bodily integrity, autonomy and reproductive rights for women. Feminist have worked to protect women and girls from domestic violence, sexual harassment and sexual assault. They have also advocated for work place rights, including maternity leave and against different forms of discrimination against women. Feminism seeks gender and their equal representation in the all spheres of socio-political sector. In this sense, feminism is a perspective or a political theory and practice

for the break of social bondage of patriarchy. Analyzing the history of female's condition, it puts forward a reasonable way of female's liberation from the long term bondage and domination. Focusing on the silencing and marginalization of women in a patriarchal culture and criticizing on other modes of criticism, Wilfred L. Guerin in his *A Handbook of Critical Approaches of Literature* argues:

Indeed, feminism has often focused upon what is absent rather than what is present, reflecting concern with silencing and marginalization of women in a patriarchal culture, a culture organized in the favor of men. In its diversity feminism is concerned with the marginalization of all women that is with their relegated to a second position. (219)

According to Wilfried L. Guerin feminism brings forth the hidden truth of the society where females are treated as not the human rather the secondary entity. She further argues that the main concern of feminism is to expose women's sufferings in the male dominated patriarchal society which creates artificial boundary between male and female giving female as secondary position. That is feminism came in existing with the aim of analyzing the females statues in the patriarchal society with the slogan of their liberation

The protagonist of the novel *Letter From A Lhasa Merchant To His Wife Maim*, is the wife of a Lhasa Merchant. It was the culture in the Newar community of Kathmandu that the male went to Lhasa for the purpose of trading different merchandises such as gold, fur, shawl, yak tail and so on. Similarly, the husband of Maim also goes Lhasa to replace his father and conducts trade between Nepal and Tibet. At that time, Tibet was only the trading center of Nepalese people because it is nearer than the other place of the neighbor country. Interestingly enough, women are not allowed to go to Lhasa with their husband. So, they must remains in their house performing all the household activities. Maim, also does all the household chores, remembering the arrival of her household From Tibet. In

this context, Chittadhar Hridayaa writes about the sufferings of Newars women in the Nepalese society. He says:

But it would be remembered that have been trading in Tibet since the days of Simhasarthabaha and continued to do so under treaty by king Pratap Malla and Pratap Simha, it would also be noted that the Merchants were recognized as official representatives as well as for there was no diplomatic or commercial mission in those days. During this long period in the past, many Merchants had died in Tibet itself while their wives waited in vain at home. No one knew how many have suffered in this manner. Even now, we are simply carrying on the tradition that began long ago. (12)

In the given statement from the text, Chittadhar Hridaya delineates the history of Lhasa trade and the suffering of female together. According to him, the tradition of Lhasa trade goes to the reign of Pratap Malla and Pratap Simha. Since then, the tradition of Lhasa trade is continuing till now. And he clearly indicates the sufferings of the wives of Lhasa trades when they are in the Tibet and their wives awaited them enthusiastically. Sometimes their wait becomes vain because either their husbands get another marriage in Tibet or they never returned to their home country Nepal.

Moreover feminism is generally concerned with the women's issue that is sufferings or suppression or subordination of women in patriarchal society. As the movements there are many forms of feminism such as radical feminism and liberal feminism. Likewise, it can be categorized as the black feminism, non-western or third world feminism and so on. That is, varieties in its form and strategy, its main purpose is to deal with the women's suffering and the voice against the gender discrimination in the patriarchal society.

In the context of analyzing the present text, the third world feminist comes into fore where there is the own type of domination and issues of races and ethnicity. By challenging the monolithic notion of western feminism, third world feminism focus on the issues of race, class, gender sexuality in different communities of women along with mutuality and complication which suggests attentativeness to the interweaving of the histories of those communities. In this context, talking about the concept of Third World Feminism, Uma Narayanan writes:

Forms of violence against third-world woman such a dowry, murders get represented as instances of death by culture. Women like my mother grew up with awareness that problems such as dowry related harassment and mistreatment of daughter-in-law were fairly common place . . . Issues that feminist engaged with include problems of dowry- murders and dowry related harassment of women, police rape of women in custody, issues of relating to woman's poverty, work health and reproduction and issues of ecology and communalism that affects women's lives. (13)

Uma Narayanan, here in the given piece of extract, shows the different images of female's sufferings in the third world countries like Nepal where the problems faced by females is slightly different from the problems faced by the western women. He also argues the attitudes towards the sister-in-law are also different in that region. The problems of dowry also become the cause of female domination and violence. So, it clears that there are the unique problems in terms of the socio-economic structure of the society.

In this novel, *Letter From a Lhasa Merchant to his Wife* Chittadhar portrays the pathetic condition of Newar women who are compelled to be used for the sack of their male relatives. The Newar community of Kathmandu valley has different culture, traditions and codes of conducts to be performed by women. They are not allowed to go to

outside and concern with the political and other social affairs. They are made as the domestic dumb cattle within the four wall of patriarchy. The women remain in house are engaged with different household activities. These poor women stay with the hope of the arrival of their husband. But it is not sure of their husband's arrival, they may die in Tibet but their wives waited in vain at home. That is, females of the Lhasa merchant are suffered a lot since the long time.

The male dominated patriarchal society has created different artificial rules and regulations to be followed by the females only. The society has given the upper position to male who use power to create such artificial rules and makes boundary between male and female. In our Hindu culture and tradition, there are several rites to be performed by the females only. In the novel, *Letter From A Lhasa Merchant To His Wife*, Maim is compelled to be confined in a dark room after her first menstruation. "You were actually taken to your thachen and confined in a room" (14). Here, our society misinterprets the biological difference between male and female and forced female to follow what the tradition says. In this, regards, the narrator of the novel *Letter From A Lhasa Merchant To His Wife* remembers his wife's first seclusion. He mentions:

One day, I overheard mother mention that you were to be seclude for the barhataya rites. I didn't know anything then about the rites nor the reason for them. I had only heard of my friends' older sisters going into seclusion by themselves but you were to be secluded from the purpose. I did not know the difference between the voluntary and forced seclusion. (14)

The above mentioned statement, from the novel, shows how the females are victimized in the Newar community of Kathmandu valley. They are discriminated and suppressed in the name of culture and tradition. The culture in the society is also guided by the male ideology. There is not any appropriate reason to follow such rites. One must follow such

tradition because another one has applied in his life. That is, the Newar females are victimized and suppressed mercilessly in the name of culture and tradition.

As a movement, feminism assumes that women are also human beings like men. It takes the voices against the inadequacy as well as ideologies of the males. Therefore, feminism is a complaint against patriarchal monopoly and is a commitment to eradicate the ideology of domination to establish a healthy and equal society for both male and female. As such feminism is a movement for the creation of new society in which there will be no forms of discrimination. So, the major focus of feminism is on political, economical, psychological and religious equality. It opposes gender stereotypes and discrimination against women based on the assumption that women are passive, weak and physically helpless. In this context in her *Young Rebecca*, a British author and critic Rebecca West forwards following opinion on feminism:

I myself have never been able to find out precisely what feminism is. I only know that other people call me a feminist, whenever, I express sentiments that differentiate me from a door mate or prostitute to that of a woman of voice and status. To be called feminist is ok, but what actually it stands for, is a challenge that has been a query to me. (219)

In this way, Rebecca argues that the concept of feminism itself is very vague. It is not easy to define “what feminism is” and who are the feminist. According to her the person who stands for the female rights and in favor of female sentiments is actually the feminist. But feminism has a lot of challenge to be faced. Feminism has been often focused on what is absent rather than what is present, reflecting concern with the silencing and marginalization of women in patriarchal culture- a culture organized in favor of men unlike the other approaches for their false assumption about women.

Females in the patriarchal society are deprived from the different opportunities which they must have required. The girls are not free to do something what their brother can. Females are deprived of the basic needs of educations. Their parents need not to send them school because they have the thought that females must know only household activities rather getting formal education. Because after their marriage they must to do the entire household task in their husband's house.

Similarly in the novel, *Letter From A Lhasa Merchant To His Wife*, the wife of the Lhasa Merchant could not read and write. In this sense, he writes: "You were illiterate, someone else had read the letter for you and there was no privacy between you and me" (12). Maim is illiterate. She cannot express her inner thought and desire with her husband by writing letter. In this sense, from the given example of the text, we can generalize that females are deprived of basic needs in the patriarchal society.

In the male dominated patriarchal society, females are considered as weak, inferior and unintelligent than their male partner. It is the convention in the society that women should respect their husband. They must bow their head in front of their male relatives. In the novel, *Letter From A Lhasa Merchant to His Wife*, The protagonist Maim does the same in her marriage. She is made compelled to touch the feet of her husband. But her husband is free to do anything according with his will. In this sense, the Merchant further writes in his letter to his wife:

Hardly had I touched you, I felt an electric current all over me. I withdrew my hand hastily only to be told the box to you. Then it was your turn to be told, you have to touch his feet with your head.' Accordingly you lowered your head and touched my feet. You had gone through that ritual before at the wedding and again at the temple of Vijayaswari when I put the red

power on your head. Mother also made you touch my feet with your head every morning before taking your meal. (15)

In the male oriented patriarchal society, females are considered inferior in front of their husband. The society makes the artificial rules and regulations to be followed by women and discriminate them in the name of rituals. In the novel, Maim as a newly married daughter-in-law downs her head and touch her husband's feet, but her husband never touch her feet. That is, in the name of culture and tradition, the females in the Newar community are victimized and dominated pathetically.

Women are deprived of getting equal rights and opportunities in the different society of the world. The patriarchal society creates different codes of conducts and myths that explain women as inferior and secondary human being only the complementary part of the man. In this context, talking about the role of myth in the domination of female, Simon De Behavior argues:

A myth always implies a subject who projects his hopes and his fears towards a sky of transcendence. Women do not set themselves up as subject and hence erected no virile myth I which their projects are reflected; they have no religion or poetry of their own: they still dream through the dreams of men. Gods made by males are the gods they worship. Men have shaped for their own exaltation great virile figure. No doubt there are conventional figures of man caught in his relations to woman: the father, the seducer, the husband, the jealous lover, the good son, the. (174)

Here, from the time memorable or from the time of creating myth women are marginalized and presented as semi human position. Male created myths which are not in the favor of women rather gives male to higher position. She further argues that male presented themselves as subject position and behaved women as late comers. The patriarchal

practiced such myth as the convention and culture. As a result women got these as the natural division between male and females and behave accordingly.

In the patriarchal society, sons are given more priority than the daughters. In such society, it is considered that only son can continue their family's heredity. For them, son is only the right successor of his father. In the novel, *Letter From A Lhasa Merchant to His Wife*, the Lhasa Merchant is considered only the real successor of his father. So, he goes to Lhasa to replace his father. His mother also wants a male child from Maim but Maim does not success to become pregnant that makes her family unhappy. In this context, in the novel *Letter From A Lhasa Merchant to His Wife*, the Lhasa Merchant states:

Before there was time enough to give much thought to our new life together. I had to leave for Lhasa to replace father, who had become quite old. Mother had intended that I should go only after the birth of a child. But you had not given up bathing every month. I was fully aware of the fact that mother's face became dark when you did not enter the shrine room.

Anyway, because of the numerous letters that came in quick succession from father. I had to leave for Lhasa. (17)

In this way, the above mentioned statement from the novel, *The Letter From A Lhasa Merchant to His Wife*, clears two things together. First thing is that Maim's family is highly guided by the patriarchal ideology. For them, only the son can walk behind his father's steps and he is the only means to continue their heredity. Because females have to go to their husband's home. And the second thing is that females are considered only the child bearing machine. The patriarchal society never concerns on the females emotions and feelings rather it forces them to involve the work without their desire. They are considered only the provider of happiness but never give attention to their feelings. They are used as the means of entertainment who labor to entertain other without concerning

their own needs. Maim, in her family also used for the sack of other. She works in her house all the day and satisfies other members of her family.

In the male dominated patriarchal society, women do not have their own separate identity as the male have; rather they must be identify with their male relatives such as a wife, daughter of her father, sister of her brother and so on. They are used only the supporting part of male rather as a separate human being having their own identity. In this sense, talking about the identity of female, John Stoltenberg writes in his essay “Towards Gender Justics”:

Women are programed to refer to men for their identities as well, but the program is seriously stacked against them. In the heterosexual model, a woman’s ‘knowledge of who she is’ cannot be separate from her relation to an individual man. The only validation of her selfworth to which she is entitled is whatever identity she gets from being supportive to, and the property of, a man. (41)

John Stoltenberg argues that female’s identity in the patriarchal society is never identifying separately rather they are only recognized with their male relatives. She is considered as only the supporting part of her husband and the special property of man. In such society, male are considered as superior, more intelligent and powerful than the women. But females are assigned certain task to be performed without any complain. In patriarchal society, all the people internalize such already prescribed role for male and female. Their duty and responsibility is already shaped as the convention and culture.

When he is in Tibet, the Lhasa Merchant is suffered from the homesick and lovesickness. He remembers his wife very much. He cannot see any alternatives than his wife Maim. Though he is far from his wife Maim, the Merchant seems sincere to his wife Maim. He expresses his sincere gratitude to his wife, mother and sister. But with the

development of the letter, the Merchant becomes crueler towards his wife. In Tibet, he comes contact with different women and falls in love with a Tibetan girl named Bhamula and later forgets his Nepalese wife. In the letter, he writes:

My Maim, I know how you would feel now, even if you had taken me as an obstacle in your path. You would still be shocked and your heart would beat fast as when you first heard that I had taken another wife. Is that right? What shall I do Maim? When I came home and remarked that your attitude somewhat lacked the arbor of your earlier love for me, you brushed it aside with the words. (84)

The above mentioned extract shows how females in Newar family are treated. As a wife of the Lhasa Merchant, Maim waits his arrival in Kathmandu. But her husband gets another marriage in Tibet without concerning about the existence of his wife in Nepal. Instead, he charges her for not being faithful towards him. It is the nature of male who charge females as unfaithful, whore, prostitute and so on if dislike her. Here, the patriarchal society forgets a bitter reality that to be prostitute, it requires the involvement of the both male and female. But our females biased patriarchal society never mentioned the prostitution of male.

Culturally, the male dominated society has created many tasks to be performed by females. Menstruation is the natural process of women which is necessary for the reproductive system. But in the period of menstruation, especially in Hindu society female are considered as untouchable and impure. In this sense, Beauvoir further writes:

In many primitive societies her very sex seems innocent; erotic games are allowed from infancy between boys and girls. But on the day she can reproduce women become impure; and rigorous taboos surround the

menstruating female. Many primitive societies have similar rules regarding isolation and purification. (180)

Here, Beauvoir clearly argues that the male oriented patriarchal society creates many rules and regulation to prevent females from different opportunities. For her, marriage is the tool to dominate women in the society since marriage comprises bond between husband and wife. In it, society's traditional faith, rules, conventions etc. are included through which women must be obedient towards these rules and regulations whether she likes it or not and also she must her husband whether he is suitable to her or not. As a daughter-in-law in the husband's home, she must perform a lot of work without any objection. In the Nepalese society too, the daughter-in-law are bounded with different rules in the family.

In the male dominated patriarchal society, females are considered as the means of entertainment. They are behaved as an object to be used to entertain the male. Their body is used as the means to please to other. Here, the society ignores their emotions, feelings and experiences. They must involve in physical relation whether they are interested or not. If the males do not like them, they get another marriage. That is, such kind of treatment to women oblige them to live like a cattle like life. In this context, the Merchant further writes in his letter to his wife Maim:

You acknowledged that your body rightly belonged to me and it made me shut my mouth. Today you may say to me. Now you accuse me all sorts of things while living comfortably with another woman. Yes I have another wife and it is unjust to you. But I have not done so intentionally- not because I did not love you or nor make you feel sorry. Think of my situation too, my Maim. When I first came to Lhasa, I was hardly twenty five years old, an ignorant and inexperienced person with nearly a decade of my youth before me. (84)

That is, the Merchant directly states that his wife's body is belonged to him. Here, he considers his wife as an object and a personal property for his personal use only. He refuses her existence as a human being having her own feelings, intention or passion. It shows how Maim lives her life in such oppressive environment in her house when he dislikes her and gets another marriage with a Tibetan girl.

The feminist activist aware of the ideology constructed by male dominated patriarchal society. They argue that women are victimized by self-perpetuating myth, a mystique so pervasive that woman's live are controlled and shaped by it. In the same way radical feminist like Kate Millet take patriarchal ideology as the main cause of women's subordination. She says that patriarchal ideology always encourages women for traditional roles as wife daughter and mother as ideal ones. In this sense Millett states:

Exaggerates biological differences between men and women making certain that men always have the dominant or masculine roles, and the women always have the sub-ordinate, or feminine ones. This ideology is particularly powerful because through conditioning men usually secure the apparent constant of the very women they oppress. (Tong 96).

According to her, patriarchal society misinterprets the biological difference of women and present as weak and emotional than male. All the positive features are given to the male and females are excluded from many opportunities in the society. For her, sex is natural whereas gender is constructed later to discriminate female considering them as secondary things.

The male dominated patriarchal society creates the artificial rules and regulations to dominated female in the family as well as in the society. Females are considered as weak, passive irrational as well as coward. By creating such stereotypical images the male oriented society imposed the male hegemony upon female. On the other hand male are

considered as bold powerful, patients as well as rational. In this context, the Merchant says: “After all men are men. Even the common folk seemed to know that we need diversion from our sorrow” (19). Here, the Merchant presents himself as a bold man having the capacity of tolerate all kind of sorrow. Here, such kind of masculine attitude of the Merchant can be found throughout the novel. In this sense, he further writes:

They appeared like the Jamaduta, the messengers of death, in their dreadful headless. In great fear, I cried, what are you going to do to me? The Gubhaju said: a son must not lose heart so easily. It is at such times that you should be strong in your mind. With these words, he slowly opened an envelope, tied with a cotton thread. (59)

Nepalese society, specially the Newari community of Kathmandu valley is guided by the concept of male superiority. All the domestic affairs and responsibility are attributed to female where as outside jobs are given to male. Females are presented as weak and less active where as male are able to solve all the problems. So, in Lhasa, his relatives argue to become bold because he is a male. They request him not to become like women. That is, the people from Newar community are guided by the patriarchal ideology and tries to apply on their life knowingly or unknowingly.

Male dominated society has constructed many binaries between male and female and the negative stereotypes are attributed to females. These representations are produced by the mass media- advertisement, magazines, television, and cinemas as well as emerging in other aspects of culture, such as myths and fairy-tales art and literature, and religion. Women are represented in the text by creating their certain images and stereotypes. So, men made the certain images and stereotypes of women in order to generalize their behavior.

In this way, certain generalizations are made about the role and nature of female. That is, women are presented as weaker, less intelligent, more connected to nature and biology than men, and they are considered to be inferior creature. However, masculine characteristics have been defined as more valuable and desirable than feminine characteristics. By creating such binary opposition between male and female, people impose the artificially constructed masculine power upon female hegemonically.

In the male dominated patriarchal society, women are used only as the means of fulfilling sexual desire. Their emotions, feelings and experiences are ignored by the male in the family as well as in the society. Females are deprived of minimal requirements for their life. So, they are even compelled to apply the prostitution as their profession for the survival in the capitalist society. But their obligation to be prostitution is defined as the sin and they are excluded from the society. In this context, Rosemary Tong argues:

There is a bourgeoisie demand for prostitute and as long as most women are paid no wages or inadequate wages economically dependent women will sell their bodies to men in order to support themselves and in some instances, to their children. Thus, to fight capitalism is also to fight prostitution- whatever form it takes, including marriage because most women will not have access to meaningful work at a decent wage until the capitalist system what depends upon their exploitation is smashed. (65)

In the third world country like Nepal, women are marginalized in the name of tradition and religion. In the Hindu religion, in the period of menstruation, women are considered as untouchable and kept in separate place. They endure a lot of sufferings in the society.

In the novel, *Letter From A Lhasa Merchant to His Wife* the female characters are presented as the supplement of male having no leading role for their own. They are limited only within the four wall of their prison like home. The female members in the Merchant's

house remain within their home. They are engaged with the household chores day and night. They are not aware of the outside activities in their society. The Merchant and his father are in Tibet to earn money. But the females are allowed to go to outside activities in their society. But the females are allowed to go to outside to earn money. The patriarchal society always keeps them in the state of dependency. The females are so engaged with the house keeping that they never have time to think about their rights and equality.

The male dominated patriarchal society takes females only as the plaything and the means of entertain others. Their value is only recognized with their physical beauty and the ability of attracting others. Shyness, beautiful, attractive, cowards and such words are attributed to the females characters. In the novel *Letter From A Lhasa Merchant to His Wife*, all the females characters are shown as the fond of beauty and they are interested with different ornaments for their physical beauty. Because our patriarchal society has taught them to become beautiful for other not for themselves. In this sense, the Merchant says:

There were also many women, gorgeously dressed and decorated in costly ornaments. They appeared to be very rich indeed. I saw some women of apparently Chinese parentage who looked like Newar women. One of them was so beautiful, my Maim, I could not gaze long at her but had to turn away blushing, only to seek her again involuntarily. She was arranging her merchandise on the ground but having noticed me, she looked sideways at me. (36)

Here, the Merchant present women as the means to attract others. In china knowingly or unknowingly, he compares different women with his Wife Maim. He searches beauty on them and except such in his wife face too. That is it shows how the Lhasa Merchant is guided and for him physical beauty is everything for women.

Patriarchal social system is mostly based on primarily upon male violence and of women's sexuality which foregrounds the domestic violence and sexual violence of women and children. Many women face male power in its crudest and most aggressive form. In this regard a prominent 20th century feminist critic Simon de Beauvoir in her book *The Second Sex* says:

As a matter of fact, the privileged position of men comes from the integration of his biological aggressive role with his social function as leader or matter. It is an account of this social function that the psychological differences take on their significance. Because men are ruler in the world; he holds that the violence of his desires is a sign of his sovereignty. A man of great erotic capacity is said to be strong, potent epithets that employ activity and transcendence. But as, warm and rigid, which is to say that she will never manifest other than passive qualities. (397)

Patriarchal society gives all power to the male and weaknesses to the female. In the patriarchal social structure, men were taken as rational, active and superior beings whereas women were regarded as inferior, passive and kind. Such types of discrimination compelled women to accept sexual abuses and harassment as well as subordination as natural without objection. Beauvoir accuses men for their belief that transcendence can only be attained by man. Men project women as an inherently demure creature and men as powerful and virile so that can achieve transcendence.

In the novel, *Letter From A Lhasa Merchant to His Wife*, the Lhasa Merchant are not sincere towards their wife. When they go to the Tibetan territory, they involve in various activities in Tibetan and apply the Tibetan life style. In this way, they come contact with the Tibetan girls and makes as their wives. But in Nepal, their wives wait them in vain. In the novel, the Merchant again writes:

To be quite frank, most Newars had wives here. The only difference was that some had openly, others in secret. But believe me, my Maim, although a man is said to be like the big black bhambha bee, that tasted every flower, I had worn a virginity belt for five long years. All that time, every single day, I kept thinking of you. I remembered how sad you looked when we were separated even for a single night. (74)

The given extract shows the real nature of newer Merchant who keep another wife in Tibet. In Nepal, their wives wait their arrival involving with housekeeping. They have a great deal of sincerity of their husband but their husband become so irresponsible that they may not return Nepal and live forever in Tibet. That is such greedy nature of male makes women's condition miserable. Similarly, in her *Sexual Politics*, Kate Millet views that male-female relationship is the paradigm of all relationship. She says: "Social caste supersedes all other forms of in egalitarianism: racial, political or economic, and unless the clinging to male supremacy as a birth right is finally forgone all systems of oppression will continue simply by the virtue of their logical and emotional mandate in primary human condition" (96).

Gender stereotypes, in particular, include assumptions about male and females' traits, behaviors, role and so on. Gender stereotypes are perspective as well as descriptive: that is they instruct males and females about how they should look, behave and feel as well as how they actually do appear, act feel and so on. In addition, representation provide woman with images and stereotypes of how to be feminine, and thus succeed of being real women. Because, they internalize the images and stereotypes that culture expects them to conform.

Women are paid less because of the interest and self protection of male superiority. They evaluate women as if they were commodity because their sex differs from male sex.

Women take domestic responsibilities and outward work is generally supposed to do males which is categorized as hard work. By this cause also females are treated as weak. Women's domestic responsibilities do mean that they are less able than men to defend their own economic interests. Therefore women's interest, vigor etc. are neglected because for male women are commodity as the workers for capitalists.

The multiple marriage system by men is another huge problem in our society. When a husband second marriage, one should be outcaste from his family. They become helpers but could not do anything against her husband. In the novel, the Newar traders got another marriage with Tibetan women but later they abandon them and leave carelessly. "Only a few those women were able to keep their business going when abandoned by their Newar husbands. Any of them found Tibetan husband or become nuns" (75). That is, females are victimized in all spheres of life even in Tibetan society too. The Tibetan society, in that time too is guided by the concept of male superiority and the practice of male domination is prevailed there. In this context, talking about the abusive nature of Newar trader, the Merchant further writes in his letter to his wife in Nepal:

Thus there were many Newars who were supported and helped by their Tibetan wives. But unfortunately these good women were left uncared for and even unacknowledged by ours Newars when they left for Nepal. Even if a few women came to Nepal, the first wife and other members of the family treated them very badly. Some eventually returned to Tibet while others did not survive the ordeal they were subjected to. As a result, any Tibetans had little respect for those women who became the wives of the Newars. (75)

Though the Tibetan women have played an important role for their Nepalese husband, they are left uncared by their husband after fulfilling their desire. Hence, females are

behaved as if they are not human being rather they are only the thing for entertain others. The Tibetan women are used for this purpose. This incident shows how the females are compelled to endure the pathetic life in the patriarchal society. The patriarchal society itself set the females biased rules and regulations which help male to dominate females mercilessly.

In the patriarchal social system, the status of women is no more than that of a mute animal. The women are dictated to follow the hierarchal norms of the society where they cannot find their respectable positions. The patriarchal society regards female-sex as secondary to mal sex. Regardless of caste, class or religion women are subjected to gender discrimination and are differentiated as secondary objects. The society keeps them aloof from social matters like decision making, participating in political matters, problem solving, social and familial discussions and financial issues.

Elaine Showalter in *A Literature of Their Own* (1977) expresses that the female psyche is influenced by general culture but in the general culture there is their own subculture which forms a collective experience of women. She thinks women are naturally different from men since they have their own type of body, language, psyche and capacity to behave and think. She invented the term gynocritics to describe the study of women as writers in which they are invited to speak for themselves. She divided women feminist critics into two groups: women as readers and women as writers. The first mode offers feminist reading of texts which considers the images and stereotypes of women literature and the second mode is the study of women as writers. In the essay, she examines the British novelists from Bronte to Lessing from the point of view of women's experience. She takes the view that while there is no fixed or innate female sexuality or female imagination, there is nevertheless a profound difference between women's writing and men's. She thinks that the new language or the language with sexism can integrate

women's intelligence, experience, reason, suffering, skepticism and vision. She further writes:

The task of feminist critics is to find a new language; a new way of reading that can integrate our intelligence and our experience, our reason and our suffering, our skepticism and our vision. This enterprise should not be confined to women. I invite Criticus, Poeticus and Plutarchus to share it with us. One thing is certain feminist criticism is not visiting. It is here to stay, and we must make it a permanent home. (123)

Here, Showalter argues that females need separate language to express their own feelings, attitudes and emotions. Showalter and other feminist have the strong vision about the necessity of the separate language. For them the present existing language cannot be sufficient to grapes their emotions and feelings because, for them, it is guided by the male dominated ideology. Here they argue that females have different sufferings and problems which male cannot understand and feels. Menstruation, child bearing etc. are the distinct experience which women to have endured and male cannot feels about it.

Maim the major female character in the novel *Letter From A Lhasa Merchant to His Wife* is a traditional figure who is an example of how patriarchal society treat women and how they are separated from the world outside. She is married with Lhasa Merchant at the childhood age. She does not have any chance to get any formal education from the school. But her husband is sent to school and can read and write. Maim is learnt only how to manage domestic activities. She is the victims of the patriarchal norms and values which imprison her within the four wall of patriarchy. The patriarchal society only teaches her to adore male. So, every morning, she goes to temple for wishing the betterment of her husband regardless her own poor condition in her family. In this sense, Chittadhar Hridaya, writes:

I came away with tears in my eyes. And until you received my letter, you too visited the temples with sister and offered lighted wicks to the gods with tears in your eyes. You kept me in your mind as if I was in Nepal itself. You prayed for my safety during the journey. You prayed for success in everything that I did. Did not you? Later, you got up early in the morning and visited the temples at Swayambhu, Janabaha, and sometimes went as far as Guheshwari. On these occasions, whenever your companions met their husbands you felt a pinch in your heart. To avoid the embarrassment, you accompanied widows or women whose husbands were also in Tibet.

To be frank, you became obsessed in your devotions to the gods. (78)

Here, the above mentioned statement shows the conditions of females in the patriarchal society. When her husband leaves his home, Maim goes to different religious places to pray for his betterment. But it is not guaranty that either he keeps her forever or not.

In the male oriented society, patriarchy set up the rules and regulations that make women submissive. The patriarchal society creates the symbols, images and many ideologies to dominate females and keep them within the periphery of male ideology. In such society, females are not allowed to go to outside without taking permission from their husband. They are bound with different artificial rules and regulations which are imposed upon them hegemonically. Females have not any right to choose their husband too their marriage is already fixed with an unknown man to whom they must keep please to live with him. But males are not bound with any rules and regulations. They are presented as if they are the real owner of the females.

In the male dominated capitalist, women are not only discriminated socially and sexually but also politically too. They, are not allowed of different political rights in the society. Before 1960, women were not allowed the voting rights. They did not take parts in

the election. They are supposed to be only concerned in the household work and the machine for child bearing and rearing. In the patriarchal society their role is considered as pleasing others; their husband, father, father-in-law, children and other male member in the society. In this regard in her essay “A Vindication of the Rights of Women”, Mary Wollstonecraft further argues:

Females, in fact, denied all political privileges, and not allowed, as married women, expecting in criminal cases, a civil existence, have their attention naturally drawn from the interest of the whole community to that of the minute parts, though the private duty of any member of society must be very imperfectly performed when not connected with the general good. The mighty business of female life is to please, and restrained from entering into more important concerns by reflection and civil oppression, sentiments become events, and reflection deepens what it should, and would have effaced, if the understanding had been allowed to take a wider range. (398)

Here, for Wollstonecraft females lack all the political rights in the patriarchal society. Their roles and opportunities are limited and suppressed by creating artificial code of conducts to be followed by women only.

In the novel *Letter From A Lhasa Merchant to His Wife*, Chittadhar Hridaya includes the condition of females from Nepal to Tibet. He makes compares the situation of women in Newar community of Kathmandu with the states of Tibetan women. And we can observe that states of Tibetan women is little better than the states of the Nepalese’s women. The women, in Tibetan society, are somehow conscious for their rights and equality. In this context, the Merchant writes:

The Tibetan woman did all they could to raise the status of their men. Being physically strong, they did anything that required strength- fetching water,

working in the kitchen and carrying goods. If necessary, they did not hesitate to stand up against an enemy. (87)

Though, the Tibetan have somehow better life in Tibet, they are not totally free from their traditional roles and responsibilities. They must have limited with the domestic task such as fetching waters, working in the kitchen and carrying goods.

After getting married with the Tibetan girl Bhumala, the Lhasa Merchant declares not to care his wife in Nepal. But his wife maim is very dedicated to her husband. She waits him a long period of time but at last she hears the news of another marriage of her husband in Tibet. In this sense, in his letter, the Merchant writes:

I am telling you the truth, my Maim but do not take it too much to heart, if sometimes I forget your very existence in Nepal, for Yesho Lamo had substituted you for me here. As you had loved me before, so she loved me here in Lhasa. To be honest, it seems that our Newar women were not equal to Tibetan women as far as the care and concern for the family were concerned. Once they have found a husband they did not behave like the mistress kept by man in Nepal. (87)

Here, after married with a Tibetan girl, the Merchant declares that he no more loves his former wife Maim. It shows how the females in our society live their life. They are behaved as if they are not human being rather the salable commodity. Their duty is only to satisfy their husband and other male relatives in their family. They are considered as an object without having their own identity. Here, female lose their identity in their husband's house where they are recognized with their husband name. That is maim, the protagonist of the novel live a cattle like life with miserable conditions.

Patriarchy gives masculinity discourse a prominence valorizing male chauvinism and male superiority. It creates a gender hierarchy between male and female and creates

norms of do's and don'ts, while putting females in disadvantaged and marginalized position. Patriarchy as the producer of discourse produces the concept of masculine superiority and controls and distributes the meaning of being male on the basis of his powerful mastery over them. Moreover, masculinity discourse makes a man to desire a son also play the role of male. In this context, Tim Carriagan, Bob Connel and John Lee argue:

What does it means to be masculine? It means, obviously, holding males value and following male behavior and norms. Male norms, stress, values such as courage, inner direction, certain forms of aggression, autonomy, mastery, technological skill group solidarity, adventure and a considerable amount of toughness in mind and body. (104)

In the mentioned extract, the theorists clearly define the concept of masculine thought in the patriarchal society. In the male dominated patriarchal society, males are considered as superior and rational than the females. Females are behaved as if they are not human beings. They are considered as weak, emotional, imaginative and talkative.

The male dominated society never gives the upper hand to females who are always excluded from the mainstream role in the family and in the society. The male oriented society never accepts the equal status of the females in the society. It tries its best to limit their role only within the household activities. The females share their own interest, their own emotion, feelings and sentiments but they never get success to express their inner feelings because the patriarchal society always forced them to remain silently. In this sense, in the novel, letter from a Lhasa merchant to his wife Hridaya includes the voice of a women missing with protest. He writes:

Men only know how to take, not to give, she explained, they never try to understand women. The men here, two or three brothers, sharing one wife among them, may be excused for their ignorance, but how was it that you

do not know better, how deep women's love could be, how imbued they were with spirit of service! It is this spirit that enabled women to suffer the atrocities of two or three men. (88)

Here, the above mention extract indicates the two things at a single time. Firstly, it shows how women are compelled to sleep with two or three man together. According to Chittadhar men are selfish and they never tried to understand the feelings and sentiment of the females. In the name of love, male exploit female mercilessly. The second things we can analyze from this extract is that females are conscious for their pathetic condition in the society.

After hearing about her husband's second marriage, the protagonist Maim decides not to wait her husband. She decides to become nun and leaves her house. At the end, Maim also realizes the pathetic condition in her house. She is conscious for her role in the society. She feels the loss of her separate identity in the patriarchal society. So, at the end of the novel she leaves the house for the search of her separate identity and the sense of dignity. That is, at the end the novel captures the sense of resistance against the exploitative nature of patriarchy.

III. Patriarchal Rules and Regulations are the Main Cause of Female Domination

The present thesis entitled “The Subjection of Females on Chittadhar Hridaya’s novel *Letter From A Lhasa Merchant to His Wife*” explores the victimized and marginalized condition of female characters in the contemporary Newar community of Kathmandu valley. In the novel, particularly the protagonist Maim is victimized and dominated by the existing female bias attitudes of the patriarchal society. Her husband, the Lhasa Merchant dominates her and behaves as if she is not human being. Like her, the two other women Bhamula and her mother are also suffered because of the dominating mentality of society.

In the novella, the protagonist Maim lives like a cattle like life in her house. She is behaved as if she is not human being having her own identity rather she is treated as the means of entertainment. Her husband never values her role in her family rather he leaves her when he gets another marriage with a Tibetan girl in Tibet. Here, identity of the females in the patriarchal society is not noticeable. They are confined within the four wall of domestic affairs and not allowed to be involved in the outside activities. Maim waits her husband’s arrival in her house but her husband engages with a Tibetan girl named Bhamula in Tibet.

The patriarchal society creates a lot of stereotypes to dominate and suppress the females in the family and in the society. The females are considered as the secondary human being having not their own separate identity. They are commodified and used as the means to entertain others. Their emotion, feeling and sentiment is always dominated. They are presented as weak, emotional and irrational creature. They are prescribed only for domestic task and behaved as if they have no life. In the patriarchal society, to be involved in political as well as economic matter is not allowed for female. They are treated as the child bearing machine.

In the novel, *Letter From A Lhasa Merchant to His Wife* the female characters like Maim, Bhamula and her mother are the escape goat of the patriarchal norms and values. In the beginning of the novel, the Lhasa Merchant loves his wife Maim but when he meets Bhamula in Tibet, he charges her as unfaithful woman. So, at last she understand her pathetic condition on her house and decides to leave her house and became nun. Here, because of the lack of consciousness for their rights and equality, the female characters in the novella are victimized and dominated mercilessly.

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