

**TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY**

**Quest for Nirvana in *Kim* and *Buddhacharitam***

**A Thesis submitted to the Central Department of English, TU in partial fulfillment of  
the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in English**

**By**

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**Letter of Recommendation**

This thesis entitled “Quest for Nirvana in *Kim* and *Budhacharitam*” submitted to the Central Department of English Tribhuvan University by Niraj Dahal has been completed successfully. He carried out this research seriously by being devoted for a year. I therefore recommend him to submit it for the final Viva Voce.

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**Letter of Approval**

This thesis entitled “Quest for Nirvana in *Kim* and *Budhacharitam*” submitted to the Central Department of English Tribhuvan University by Niraj Dahal has been approved by the undersigned members of the research committee.

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## Abstract

This dissertation compares the quest for nirvana, the supreme state of bliss, the main characters the Lama in Rudyard Kipling's *Kim* on the one hand and the Buddha in Ashwaghosa's *Buddhacharitam* on the other. In both texts the protagonists the Lama in the novel *Kim* and the Buddha in biographical text *Buddhacharitam* are in the quest for nirvana despite the fact that there is a vast gap of time of the publication, location of the authors and other issues between these texts. There are some distinct features of these characters and texts as well. Kim's quest is a journey to fulfill his worldly ambition and confined with the pursuit of his identity in comparison with the quest of the Lama who is detached from the worldly attachments and indulged in the journey for finding out the 'river of arrow' in order to clean his sins and to transform him from ignorance into the 'fountain of wisdom'. The quest of Buddha as it represents in Ashwaghosa's *Buddhacharitam* is much wider and meaningful to talk about the journey of nirvana in the sense that he gets nirvana through the self-meditation, and enlightenment attained through transcendental meditation has been further used for liberating the mankind from sufferings. The quest for the nirvana and its achievement in *Kim* is particularly in order to get our body or life released from the sins which is closer to the Christian narration of sins associated to the Adam and Eve. Both texts are closer to the Mahayani cult of Buddhism that tells that nirvana is not only for the one who attains it, it is for others as well as Buddha in *Buddhacharitam* and the Lama in *Kim* believe and get inclined to this mission of enlightening others too after attaining the nirvana.

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