

TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY

Patriarchal Representation in Lil Bahadur Chhetri's *Mountains Painted with Turmeric*

A Thesis

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Supervisor's Recommendation

This is to certify that Mr. Prakash Tiwari has prepared this thesis entitled "Patriarchal Representation in Lil Bahadur Chhetri's *Mountains Painted with Turmeric*" under my guidance, complying with the format as specified by the Research Committee of the Department of English, Prithvi Narayan Campus, Pokhara. I, therefore, recommend Mr. Tiwari's thesis to be accepted for defense.

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Approval Sheet

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Prakash Tiwari

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Abstract

In the patriarchal-feudal social scenario depicted in Chhetri's Mountains Painted with Turmeric, women are subjected to control and domination. Such control and domination is sustained through the construction of such binaries: masculinity/femininity, reason/emotion, culture/nature, superior/inferior, subject/object, self/other, man/land, feudal/ serfs and so on. Women like Maina and Jhuma do not have access to land, property and decision-making, so they are controlled and dominated by male intervention. They are treated as commodity to be possessed and as instruments to carry out male purposes. Their condition is totally controlled by patriarchal norms and values, thereby being confined into domesticity occupying a subordinate position to men. Such oppression of woman operates under the ideological principle of patriarchal masculinity that seeks to control and dominate women.. Therefore, females like Maina and Jhuma are not only stereotypically represented but also hegemonically subordinated. The patriarchal ideology is inflicted upon them in such a way that they are rendered completely helpless and submissive.

Chapter 1

Lil Bahadur Chhetri's *Mountains Painted with Turmeric*

Issues and Context

Lil Bahadur Chhetri's *Basain* is one of the highly read novels in Nepali literature. It was published in 1958. Later in 2008, Michael J. Hutt translated the novel into English language with the title *Mountains Painted with Turmeric*. The novel is about Nepali social phenomena during 1950s which depicts the characteristics of Nepali patriarchal and semi-feudal society. In the novel, female characters like Maina and Jhuma are represented as innocent and helpless representatives of the society at that time.

In Chhetri's *Mountains Painted with Turmeric*, the relationship between men and women is that of domination, subordination, suppression and oppression despite the equal involvement of both in the hardships and happiness. Females like Maina and Jhuma are submissive, passive, emotional and helpless while males like Dhane and Mote Karki play active roles. Women are expected to be at the feet of their husband as if they are puppets in the hands of their male counterparts. Maina dedicates herself in the service of her husband, Dhane. Jhuma, too, falls at the feet of Mote Karki after he rescues her from her attempt to commit suicide to escape from social condemnation resulted out of her physical relation with Rikute.

So women are compelled to live along the line of patriarchal mindset with the belief that "*chori ko janma hareko karma*" (to be born a daughter is to have an ill fate). And it becomes essential for patriarchal culture to define woman's role as submissive, inferior, immanent and dependent so as to ensure man's continuous independence from female. Thus oppression of woman in the feudal-patriarchal society operates under the ideological principle of patriarchal masculinity that seeks

to control and dominate woman.

In the patriarchal social structure depicted in Lil Bahadur Chhetri's *Mountains Painted with Turmeric*, women have been marginalized to maintain supremacy of patriarchs. Women are subjected to control and domination. So there lies the logic of domination and oppression of women. The social structure depicted in the novel is hierarchal in nature and the hierarchy is maintained through the construction of binaries such as masculinity-femininity, culture-nature, mind-body, landlords-peasants, high-low, reason-emotion and so on.

So far as the principal objective of this research work is concerned, it has sought to expose the male politics operating behind the stereotypical delineation of women in Chhetri's *Mountains Painted with Turmeric*. Through the critical analysis of the projection of female characters like Maina and Jhuma, this research aims at exposing the hidden motif of subjugating female with the help of the sympathetic response for their suffering. Moreover, the study aims at establishing the significance of the female characters in Chhetri's novel in a more inclusive way.

Despite the multiple possibilities of interpretation, this work is only concerned with female representation, pervasiveness of patriarchal ideology and male politics of subjugating women and it has drawn upon the basic conceptual insights of feminism, mainly third world feminism. This work provides a new way of interpreting the text for the better critical analysis. Though this study takes Chhetri's *Mountains Painted with Turmeric*, set in the late 1950s dealing with the life of hills of eastern Nepal, as a primary source of analysis to expose male politics inherent in the stereotypical representation of women, the outcome of this research can be of great value for contemporary readers because even at present the discriminating patriarchal tendency is still in practice, but the only difference is that of form and content.

Lil Bahadur Chhetri, (b. A.D. 1932/33), a descendant of emigrants from the hills of Nepal, was born and still lives in the state of Assam in northeast part of India. He started his literary career first by writing poems, and he has moved his pen in genres like poem, story, plays, novel, and essay. *Mountains Painted with Turmeric*, Chhetri's first novel, was published in 1958. He has published two further novels – *Atripita* (The Unfulfilled) in 1969, and *Brahmaputra ko Cheuchau* (On the Banks of Bramhaputra) in 1986. Due to his contribution in Nepali language and literature, he has received Diyalo Puraskar (1982), Bhanu Puraskar (1985), and Sahitya Academy Award (1987).

Chhetri is recognized as a socio-realist. He speaks through words, writes through social impressions and paints through the uprising discrimination, castes and racism. His novels deal with trials and tribulations of Nepalese people inside and outside the nation, though he never stayed in Nepal. Yuba Nath Lamsal, a journalist, describes Chhetri as a master realist by writing:

Lil Bahadur Chhetri is a successful novelist in Nepali language, who has been popular for his lucid language, clarity in thoughts and coherence in ideas and presentation. As a social realist and idealist novelist, he does not impose his thoughts in the readers but presents issues, problems and paradoxes in a way he sees and observes and let readers have their own opinion. He has exposed exploitation under feudal society and sorrow state of Nepalese people wherever they live and also the characteristics of the Nepalese society and the class system under which two categories of people- those who live by exploiting others and those who suffer from exploitation. (3)

Chhetri's works, indeed, expose prevalent forms of social exploitations by analyzing mental state of the characters and projecting the realistic picture of society, language, religion, culture and social mores and taboos of Nepalese society inside and outside of Nepal. Chhetri pays due attention to nature and tries to establish the nexus between cultural and natural world. Rustic life, social bruises of lower-class people, poverty, illiteracy, superstitions, feminine complications, trials and tribulations of emigrants, class struggle, and fatalism are some of the general issues Chhetri's works deal with.

Lil Bahadur Chhetri's *Mountains Painted with Turmeric*, set in the hills of far eastern Nepal, depicts in subtle detail the stark realities of village life of 1950s – the joys and sorrows as well as suffering that a poor family of peasants undergoes. The novel offers readers a window into the lives of the people by depicting in subtle detail the stark realities of village life. The novel is a portrayal of the suffering and sorrows endured by ordinary peasants; the exploitation of the poor by the rich and powerful; and the social conservatism that twists a community into punishing a woman for being the victim of a crime. Chhetri describes the impoverishment, dispossession, and banishment of Dhane's family in order to expose profound divisions between those who prosper and those who are slowly stripped of their meager possessions.

Dhane, a peasant farmer (which means ironically wealthy one), who struggles throughout the year to provide for his wife and son and arrange the marriage of his sister Jhuma, who ultimately stands on the verge of committing suicide being unable to face the condemnation of society resulted out of the destruction of her virginity. Dhane wants to burst through the net of his money problem and bring his little family happiness and cool shade of peace. Unable to keep up with the financial demands of the "big-men" who control his village, Dhane and his family suffer one calamity after another, and finally being disposed of house and land head towards unknown horizon.

Similarly, Mote Karki becomes ready to support Jhuma, who is on the verge of committing suicide. But being unable to stay in his homeland by marrying an “unchaste” woman, he also migrates toward foreign land. Thus this work is concerned with the sorrowful migration to foreign land. He describes why Nepalese peasants are obliged to migrate due to feudalistic socio-economic structure of the society and seeks to establish the point that it is very painful to leave their native land, identity, inheritances, culture and kinfolds. The comprehensible terminologies, lucid writing styles and colloquial languages make the novel reliable and reading worthy.

Review of Literature

This novel has been analyzed from various perspectives by various critics. Krishnachandra Singh Pradhan in *Nepali Upanyas Ra Upanyaskar* (1980-81) along the line of social realism argues that the novel is primarily a portrayal of village society and that for this reason “the social circumstances of a person’s outer life take the foreground rather than his inner life. Although Dhane is the hero, the society depicted in the novel is its central reality, and the author is conscientious in his description of it” (255). Pradhan further goes on to say that Dhane’s dispossession is the “economic aspects” of the novel, while the flight of Jhuma and Mote Karki is its “social aspects” (257). In the same line Donald Richie in “Social Realism Enhanced by the Pastoral” interprets the novel as “a real craft product, using pattern and skills honed by history, celebrating our common vision . . . engrossing, instructive and moving” (11).

By going slightly ahead of Pradhan and Richie, Rajendra Subedi in *Nepali Upanyas Parampara Ra Pravritti*(1996) describes *Mountains Painted with Turmeric* as an example of idealized reality” (91). He further argues that, though being an honest portrayal, the novel proposes no solutions for the problems it identifies:

Unable to swim in a sea of debt, Dhan Bahadur goes abroad. The soldier makes Jhuma pregnant and satisfies his selfish ends and goes abroad, Mote Karki takes Jhuma and goes abroad because he fears that his reputation will be tarnished by his acceptance of a wife who has been made unchaste by another man. Both kinds of disorder are the realities of the society of that time. But when Dhan Bahadur departs he leaves the oppression of a feudal and exploitive character like Nande Dhakal unaltered, and when Mote Karki departs he leaves an immoral philanderer like the soldier to his own devices. Both Nande Dhakal and the soldier are criminals, in both economic and moral terms, and they are spared the punishment for their crimes. (92)

Subedi shows the clear picture of the society in which many kinds of problems are interwoven. People go to abroad due to poverty and women are sexually exploited by males. Even some bad people play the role of villain and some others laugh at the difficulties of others. But the author provides no solution for the difficulties.

Like Subedi, Tim Kinseth deals with the novel from the realistic point of view. He thinks that it gives a picture of the villages in the hills of Nepal. He writes:

A well-captured docudrama-it is not plot that propels the novella, but rather the intimate, unfolding portrait of village life in eastern Nepal that Chhetri sketches in masterfully stark out occasionally lyrical prose-like a brisk, cold brook dapped with sun. Chhetri vividly conjures the social and natural landscapes in which Dhane's miserable story takes place, from trade councils lorded by ruthless landowners, to placid livestock pastures and swollen rice paddies planting the hills and Jhuma's acquiescence makes sense in a novella that chronicles life in

an isolated 1950's Nepalese village. Dhane's misfortunate, though heartbreaking, is also true to life. Readers may pity him as he and his family member run out of town and yet, as rural tragedies go, is distressingly mundane and timeless. (50)

Kinseth tries to universalize the tragedy of living under acute poverty and discriminating social structure. The characters in the novel undergo so many hardships which are heart touching.

Manjushree Thapa in "Bookself" writes about the novel focusing on Hutt's skillful and sensitive rendition of the Nepali reality. She argues:

Michael J. Hutt's contribution as a translator and critic of Nepali literature has been invaluable. With *Mountains Painted with Turmeric*, he brings to the light an iconic Nepali novel: the story of sheltered villagers faced with harsh, hanging world. Hutt's rendition is sensitive and skilled. Through this translation he shares with us his deep empathy for a fine understanding of Nepali reality. (5)

Thapa praises Michael J. Hutt for his contribution in translating this novel into English. It has reflected the miserable life of rural Nepal. His translation has played great role in getting empathy for the poor people of Nepal from all over the world.

Unlike others, Ann Hunkins, a poet and translator, analyzes the novel from Marxist perspective by linking the social injustice and exploitation "This is a moving story, depicting... village life; the daily farm works and chores, the gossip chain, the weekly market, the limited opportunities, the rapacious rich preying on poor, and women's particular vulnerabilities. Reading this story could contribute to understanding why poor villagers would join Maoist cause" (5). In this way, he tries to bridge the gap between the actual time of the novel and contemporary Nepalese

society. There were many factors in our society that forced poor people to join Maoist insurgency.

From the above-mentioned reviews about the novel, *Mountains Painted with Turmeric*, it becomes clear that the text has been analyzed from various perspectives like social realism, Marxism, translation and so on, but the feministic perspective has not been applied yet. Hence, this study focuses on the issue of female depiction in the feudal-patriarchal society in order to expose the male motives to subjugate in their sympathetic treatment of women. And the women, too, take their tragedy for granted due to hegemonic influence of the patriarchal ideology.

Organization of the Study

This research work has been divided into four chapters. The first chapter is the general introduction of the thesis that introduces the issue and the argument along with the scholarly interpretations and criticism on the novel. The second chapter introduces “feminism” as the theoretical tool for conducting this study. In the third chapter, the text has been analyzed on the basis of necessary theoretical insights of feminism so as to expose the latent male impulse to exploit woman behind the sympathetic response to women suffering. The ultimate fourth chapter states the finding of the research work summarizing the third chapter.

This project is basically concerned with male politics behind stereotypical representation of women and the pervasiveness of patriarchal ideology in Chhetri’s *Mountains Painted with Turmeric*. The social structure depicted in the novel is patriarchal-feudal one; thereby there is dominance of patriarchal power structure. In patriarchal social structure male supremacy is maintained through the exercise of masculine power over female. Female characters like Maina and Jhuma are stereotypically represented as innocent, helpless, submissive, passive, emotional,

mere recipient and inherently inferior to male characters like Dhane and Mote Karki, and hegemony subordinated to male authority.

Female characters are not only unable to protect themselves against the suppression and oppression but also unable to resist due to the hegemonic influence of the patriarchal ideology thereby they happen to take for granted that resistance is useless and being a woman is to be relatively powerless than man. Jhuma, a girl of marriageable age, after being impregnated by a cunning soldier, Rikute, suffers from social condemnation and reaches on the verge of committing suicide. Maina is dedicated in the service of her husband and household. Though she is sister-in-law, she acts as a mother figure for Jhuma. However, she cannot help Jhuma in her pathetic and helpless condition with the fear of losing her family's unblemished honor and dignity. The ideological influence is so pervasive that all the characters along with the authorial persona turn toward fate rather the discriminative social structure. The women seem to have no voice as if they do not have their independent existence. It is the male who offers a few words of sympathy and tries to act as the advocate of the woman since they are too weak to speak for and decide for themselves. So beneath the depiction of woman as inherently “poor, feeble, and submissive” there lies the male politics to further subjugate woman in the society.

Chapter 2

Feminism and Female Representation

Role of Women in Patriarchal Society

The man-oriented traditional society has always discriminated women on the basis of their gender and they are regarded as dependent. Thus, we find the women as the subject of men. They have passive and subordinate role in the society. The bitter reality is that women have been commodified in the society. That is why, they have never lived a dignified human life. Even in the name of women emancipation, British colonizers were strengthening their colonial interest. Women were never emancipated in reality. On the surface the colonizers were working for the women's betterment.

In reality, women were manipulated according to their interest. They were never emancipated in real sense. Margrit Shildrick and Janet Price say:

The manipulation of cultural code, the remapping of British concern into the Indian body, could in any case hardly result in any authentic freedom for women. Rather women remained throughout simply the ground on which the colonial discourses were imposed. They were the currency of the discursive exchanges but never the subjects. And whether they were involved in purdha practices or not, women's space was, always confined and manipulated by others. (394)

Similarly, the patriarchal society has taught women to be devoted toward her husband blindly in the name of god and religion. They are expected to serve their husband as God so that they can secure their position in another world. But such type of devotion is one-sided.

The women, in turn, get nothing except domination and exploitation from

their husbands. Ray and Subramanian present their opinions regarding the relationship between husband and wife as, "To the conventional Hindu women, the husband was not just a person; he was an ideal living god on earth whom the scriptures enjoined her to serve and worship for her won spiritual fulfillment. The subservience inherent in the relationship need not necessarily impair her personality" (245). So structurally, the Hindu family is patrilineal in descent, patrilocal in residence and patriarchal in authority. In the patriarchal society, sons are supposed to be liable to get inheritance whereas the daughters are given away in marriage to their husbands.

A girl's marriage is taken as the part of the parents' religious obligations along with a dowry. Arranged marriage and pre-puberty marriage for girls were obligatory. A woman's position is always subordinate to her husband. She is not permitted to earn her living by working outside the house. Partha Chatterjee in *Postcolonial Discourse: An Anthology* says, "Now apply the inner/outer distinction to the matter of concrete day to day living. The world is the external, the domain of the material; home represents our inner spiritual self, our true identity. The world is a treacherous terrain of the pursuit of material interests where practical consideration is supreme. It is also the typical domain of the male" (156). In this way, the society has prescribed the woman's role model. They are confined only in the domestic activities.

Chastity, obedience, politeness etc. are the essential qualities of a woman. The denial of the right of the education, and extremely rigid dichotomization between public and private sphere assure the continuance of their prescribed roles. It ultimately removes the possibility of any challenges from them. The contemporary Nepalese society the birth of a daughter is very miserable. Still the society considers the birth of a girl child as burden. Since childhood, girls are induced to internalize an ascribed

inferiority and are prepared only for the life after marriage. The girls have no choice since they are given only elementary education at a primary level before they are married off. The primary motivation of most parents is to make their daughters more eligible as prospective bride.

Feminism demands that woman should not be discriminated on account of sex, and should ensure equal opportunities to women. In the contemporary world, formation of women's groups has challenged people's views about male and female roles. Geraldine Forbes in *Women in Modern India* cites:

The women's movement continued to focus on traditional practices, beliefs, and institutions as the source of oppression. It also attends to violence against women, the institutional framework for the maintenance of gender differences, and the impact of the economic situation on the day to day lives of women. (244)

In the present time women have been participating in different sects of life, however, they are not free of tendency of dominating women as inferior being. Social reformers have done a lot in the field of women's rights. They work by organizing different movements such as widow remarriage, anti-polygamy, and female education, which are concerned with the position of women. The participation of women in political movements has given them a kind of confidence that has to remove the stigma of inferiority. Similarly, Kumari Jayawardena in *Feminism and Nationalism in the Third World* opines, "Even the most ignorant and worthless men have been enjoying a superiority over women which they do not observe and act out to have" (95). Thus patriarchal society is inherently male-friendly that always creates dichotomy between male and female where the former is always empowered and the latter is always disempowered.

In short, feminism speaks against the unjust practices of men over women. It tries to establish equality, freedom, and welfare of women in the society. Patriarchal society has been exploiting women from centuries in the name of this or that. Women have been treated unjustly in social, political, cultural, financial and even in the artistic sectors of the society.

Certain binaries have been created and circulated in the society in which women are always placed in the secondary position. That is why, feminism tries to blur all the boundaries and binaries to establish justice and equality in the society in general. Moreover the problems of women that cannot be addressed by the general feminism are addressed by multicultural feminism. Third world feminism deals with the problems of women of the third world countries with their different cultural, economical, geographical, and other typical experiences.

These binaries are biased and coloured with politics of segregation. Woman's oppression is legitimized and perpetuated by a hierarchical social structure that allows one group to dominate other. Rosemary Radford Ruether, in *New Woman, New Earth: Sexist Ideologies and Human Liberation*, argues that hierarchical social structure is rooted in dualistic ideology "transcendental dualism," (194) which stresses separation, polarization, and detachment between sexes, classes, and human and nonhuman beings. In these binary oppositions, man, upper-class and white human beings are considered superior to woman, lower-class and people of colour.

Thus patriarchal ideological constructions grant self, activity, rationality, creativity and assertion to men as the masculine potentials; and other, passivity, emotionality, obedience and nurturance to women as feminine potentials. Patriarchy operates under similar kinds of dualistic framework – mind/body, culture/nature, men/women, landlords/peasants, and superior/inferior – where one side of binary is

privileged to define and construct social, political and cultural discourses. Patriarchy always defines women with reference to man and male is always preoccupied with the notion of supremacy. These patriarchal myths demand women to be silent and subservient to men. If a woman fails to accept assigned roles, as Beauvoir opines “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” (1994). These discourses in the network of power relationship turn out to be ‘truths’ and then legitimize and perpetuate the domination of women.

Feminism is a divergent collection of social theories, political movements and moral philosophies, extensively with social, political, religious, racial and economic inequality between woman and men. Some have argued that gendered and sex identities, such as masculinity and femininity are socially constructed. Feminists differ over the sources of inequality, how to attain equality and the extent to which gender and sexual identities should be questioned and critiqued. Variations in the issues of feminist are because of their distinct belonging and upbringing to and in diverse culture and societies. Therefore, this research work mainly uses theoretical insights of Third World feminism, however many conceptual frameworks of Western-European feminists like Simone de Beauvoir, Val Plumwood, Kate Soper, Mary Wollstonecraft and so on are consulted. Besides this, through textual analysis, internet, library consultation, guidance from respected lecturers and professors and wide range of other pertaining reference materials are of great significance to carry out this research work.

Tenets of Feminist Criticism

Feminism is a socio-cultural and literary movement. It especially advocates on behalf of women rights and tries to dismantle the female stereotypes constructed by

the patriarchal society since the beginning of human civilization. In other words, it is the struggle for equality and freedom of women. Feminism includes socio-politico-economic-cultural equality of women with men. Women are suppressed and oppressed in every aspect of their lives. They are unable to develop their creative potentialities. Therefore, feminists have been speaking for the equality and freedom of women from time to time. Feminism is a great movement and it has brought gender awareness exploring women's position in the society, culture and in the literature.

Feminist critics also engage with how a power imbalance results due to gender bias in a given culture and it is reflected in the works of literature. Most feminists believe that our culture is patterned in accordance to the male interest. Feminist critics attempt to expose the patriarchal premises and resulting prejudices, examine social, cultural, and psychological context of literature and literary criticisms. Moreover, these critics attempt to point out the patriarchal domination and commodification of female body and emotion. So, feminism has direct association with social, cultural, and political movement of the world. Women roles are restricted within unproductive domestic activities. As a result, they have been financially dependent on the other male members of the family. From the very beginning of the human civilization women have been treated as valueless beings without any volition of their own.

Patriarchal society is the main cause of female subordination, suppression and oppression. Since the time immemorial men have been dominating women. The society has kept women in a state of ignorance and inferiority. In every aspects of social life women have been kept in the secondary position. It is because men exercise power in male dominated society. Sheila Ruth in *Issues in Feminism* states, "Women are expected to serve men; physically, taking care of their homes, property, clothing or persons; economically, doing countless jobs for which women are ill paid or not

paid at all; sexually, as wives, mistress or prostitutes; and reproductively, assuring means of paternity through female chastity" (86). Thus, we find the exploitation of women in each aspect of their life. They have been given the unproductive activities. They have to invest their whole life in domestic activities like child caring, washing and cleaning, preparing foods, serving to the male members of the family and so on.

Women in a patriarchal society have been exploited sexually, too. A wife is considered a sex object. She has to satisfy her husband according to his interest. A wife's interest is neglected. Similarly, a wife has to maintain her chastity though her husband can enjoy extramarital relationship. A widow is not allowed to marry; a widower can marry immediately after the death of his wife. A man can keep more than one wife, whereas a woman has to remain as widow throughout her life if her husband dies. Thus, the women in patriarchal system have no self-identity; they are supposed to serve men by all means. They have been exploited physically, socially, economically, and sexually as well.

Moreover, the society has created male hegemony against women to maintain the status quo of men. To strengthen the network of domination, men have been formulating certain stereotypical images of women. These images have shaped the identity of women in the society. Man-made norms and values determine the status of women in the society. Plato, Aristotle, Milton, Pope, and Lawrence can be taken as some of the examples of men who have created negative images of women in their works. Such gender discrimination has century-long root. For instance, Plato's philosophical theories have glorified women for their physical beauty only but not for their adventurous works. He relates man with "form" and woman with "substance." Similarly, Aristotle, the disciple of Plato, considered women as second class citizens. For him a woman is an "unfinished man" (Gaarder 116). Such devastating idea of

Aristotle has long lasting negative impacts on the human civilization.

Similarly, the literary discourses written by different male writers have institutionalized and helped to continue the conventional patriarchal stereotypes against women. Mary Wollstonecraft opines that writers like John Milton, Alexander Pope, Jonathan Swift and other male writers have presented negative images of women. John Milton has considered women as submissive and docile. For Alexander Pope, “every woman is at heart a rake” (396). In the same essay, Wollstonecraft has quoted Jonathan Swift’s view on woman as “a passion for a scarlet coat” (396). Similarly, D.H. Lawrence believes that a woman should have demure quality rather than dauntless quality. In his essay “Cocksure Woman and Hensure Man,” he says:

The tragedy of cocksure woman is that they are cockier, in their assurance, than the cock himself. They never realize that when the cock gives his loud crow in the morning, he listens acutely afterwards to hear if someone other wretch of a cock dare crow defiance, challenge. To the cock that it allows defiance, danger and death on the clear air, or the possibility there of. (12)

It means that a hen can never be a cock; women can never be equal to men. The patriarchal society believes that cocksure woman is dangerous and devastating. So a woman in a society should not cross the boundary of home. If she does, it creates disaster. In short, it shows how the society creates ideology and prevents woman to go beyond it. So, male writers create binaries between male and female. They have charged women as passive, emotional, sensual, irrational and helpless creatures. Such types of stereotypes have been circulated in the society from the very beginning. So the first duty of a feminist is to blur such stereotypes for the sake of woman’s emancipation.

Women are equally intellectual but their intellectuality is suppressed by patriarchy. They are not less intellectual. If they are so, it is not because of their fault but because of discriminating attitude of the society, which intentionally makes them weak, frail and inferior. According to Mary Wollstonecraft the society has limited women only in the private sphere. They have no access to public sphere; thereby they are labeled as sentimental, emotional, irrational, weak, docile and subordinate. One of the most dominant causes of women's backwardness is the lack of education. If they are educated, they can improve their situation themselves. It helps them to be conscious about their pitiable situation in the society. It helps them to maintain proper relationship with the male members of the society. Wollstonecraft has highlighted the importance of education for woman as:

Were women more rationally educated, could they take a more comprehensive view of things, they would be contented to love but once in their lives; and after marriage calmly let passion subside into friendship- into that tender intimacy, which is the best refuge from care; yet is built on such pure, still affections, that idle jealousies would not be allowed to disturb the discharge of the sober duties of life, or to engross the thoughts that ought to be otherwise employed. This is the state in which many men live; but few, very few women.

(397)

She means that mind does not know sex. So she locates all the stereotypes created by masculine society under cultural construct. So such images about women are groundless and false.

The images of women in masculine are bifurcated. Women are attributed either by divine qualities like that of goddess or by evil qualities like that of witch.

But they are never represented as they are. According to Sheila Ruth, "Woman is represented as being at once a manifestation of the divine and an incarnation of evil (87)". So, the representation of women has been made according to men's interests. On the other hand, they are worshipped as goddess; they are badly treated as witch, evil and ogress. That is why, they are never represented as human beings. In reality they are neither the manifestation of the divine nor the incarnation of the evil. These images are based on binaries.

Through the system of binaries men have reserved privileged term for them and all the negative terms are given to female. For instance, men are considered as rational, brave, strong, superior etc. whereas women are considered as irrational, coward, weak, and inferior and so on. In *Issues in Feminism* Sheila Ruth points out the stereotypical images created against women as "Misogyny includes the belief that women are stupid, petty, manipulative, dishonest, silly, gossipy, irrational, incompetent, dependable, narcissistic, castrating, dirty, overemotional, unable to make altruistic or moral judgments, oversexed, undersexed and a host of other rather ugly things" (89). All socially constructed images serve to maintain the status quo of patriarchy. In reality man and woman are equal except in some biological aspects. These images are based on social, political, economical and cultural factors. Through the circulation of such stereotypes patriarchy has shaped the women's mind in such a way that the stereotypes have been taken as truth by them.

There is imbalance of power between man and woman in our society. Patriarchy has hindered or prevented women from realizing their productive and creative potentialities. Woman has no access to social, educational, and financial aspects of the society. As a result they seem to be dependent, weak, sentimental, and subordinate. If the society provides equal status to women they can perform the equal

role as men do. According to Virginia Woolf, men are the "opposing faction"; men are hated and feared, because they have the power to bar her way to what she wants to do - which is to write (818). So a woman cannot develop her potentialities in such restrictions and dominations. Such situation only damages one's creativity and potentiality. That is why, women have been lagging back in the society.

It is obvious that women's activities and behaviors are restricted and regulated through patriarchal ideology. Patriarchal society has hindered or prevented women from realizing their true potentialities. Woolf hopes to achieve a balance between a 'male self realization' and 'female-annihilation'. Her ultimate belief is that women can freely develop their artistic talents if they achieve social and economic equality with men. She says:

It was a thousand pities that the woman, who could write like that whose mind was turned to nature and reflection, should have been forced to anger and bitterness. But how could she have helped herself? I asked, imagining the sneers and the laughter, the adulation of the toadies, the skepticism of the professional poet. She must have shut herself in a room in the country to write, and been torn asunder by bitterness and scruples perhaps, though her husband was of the kindest, and their married life perfection. (819)

In the above mentioned lines we find women being cheated even in artistic realm. They could not write freely. On the other hand, they had no time and proper place to write. All the time had to be spent in the household activities. They could not get a separate and peaceful room for their creations. In spite of all these obstacles if they were able to create something, their creations would be discouraged by the mainstream writers. The male writers had created the image that woman could not

create any worthy text because they were inferior in terms of intellectuality. In fact, such images are no more than the narrow patriarchal concepts. Women could not be great writers not because of their inferiority but because of the social construction.

The inferiority in women is not inborn but the construction of patriarchal ideology that treats women as secondary. Patriarchy always creates binaries so as to sustain its dominance over women in the society. Such binaries include the pairs like self and other, rational and emotional, active and passive, assertive and submissive, enduring type and vulnerable and etc. In such dichotomy, male is always assigned to former and woman is with latter. Regarding the patriarchal construction of binaries, Simone de Beauvoir in her book *The Second Sex* argues that patriarchy has constructed notions about women's 'essence' stereotypically and such notions are myths created to dominate and inferiorize female. Patriarchy always creates dichotomy between male and female and in such dichotomy male is always defined as one, first sex, primary, subject, self, transcendental, and with soul; while female is defined as other, second sex, secondary, object, immanent, inessential and without soul. And women come to internalize and live out these feminine attributes based on binaries.

In the patriarchal society, for a woman's essence precedes existence but in reality existence precedes her essence. As Beauvoir writes, "One is not born, but rather becomes a woman" (295). Gender is not something biological or natural or innate but a social construct, a learned behavior; and a product of language, culture and institutions. Patriarchy presents woman as naturally inferior and considers its ideology as the truth. Simone de Beauvoir has portrayed the condition of women in the male dominated society as:

For motherland the transcendence is a situation: he is the transcendent, he soars in the sky of heroes; women crouches on earth, beneath his feet; it amuses him to measure the distance that separates him from her; from time to time he raises her up to, takes her and then throw her back; never does he lower himself down to her realm of slimy shadows. (994)

From the very beginning patriarchy has been treating women as second class human being. Accordingly, it has constructed the privileged position for men. Men have falsely considered themselves as transcendent, free, powerful and rational whereas women have never been equal with them. For them, women are only the sex object; whenever they want to enjoy with women they can do. That is why, in such societies women are used according to men's interests. When men fulfill their interests they neglect women as an object. Such relation is nothing but inhuman and irrational practice against women for the sake of male ideology.

Thus, the patriarchy presents the cultural identification of women as other and negative object. Beauvoir subverts the myths of such negative images created by patriarchy questioning the logic behind these dichotomies. The images of women are the result of construction. All the myths have been created to dominate and exploit women. The contribution of women in the society is always forgotten. Marilyn Frye in *The Politics of Reality* (1983) points out that "woman's experience is a background against which phallocratic reality is a foreground . . . it is essential to the maintenance of the foreground reality that nothing within it refers in any way to anything in background, and yet it depends absolutely upon the existence of background" (167).

Like Beauvoir and Frye, Val Plumwood in her "The Blindspots of Centrism and Human Self-enclosure" argues that the overall effect of hegemonic centric

conceptual structure erected on the foundation of dualism is not only to justify oppression by making it seem natural but also to make it invisible, by creating a false universalism in culture in which the experiences of dominant 'center' are represented as universal, and the experiences of those subordinated are rendered as 'secondary' or 'irrational.' In the andocentric dualism, Val Plumwood, writes, "Men are stereotyped as active, intellectual, inexpressive, strong, dominant and so on, while women are represented in terms of complementary polarity as passive, intuitive, emotional, weak and submissive" (103). She further argues that in andocentric context, that woman's tasks in house like labour and child raising are treated as inessential, as natural involving no special skill or care, as the background services that make 'real' work and achievement possible, rather than as work themselves.

However, the issues and resistance that feminism has raised cannot address the women's diverse problems along the line of class, region, culture, ethnicity, politics, sexuality, education etc. As feminism as such harmonizes the women's problems, multicultural feminisms emerged as the alternative to address such heterogeneities of women's problems. For example, Marxist feminism deals with the problem of women along the line of their class differences while third world feminism deals with the problems of third world women with their different cultural, economic, geographical and political setting.

Third World Feminism can be defined as a group of feminist theories developed by feminists who acquired their views and took part in feminist politics in the so-called third world countries. Since the speech of Sojourner Truth (1851) non-western women have proposed alternative feminism Third World Feminism. This trend accelerated in 1960s with the Civil Right Movement in United States, and with the collapse of European colonialism. Since that time women have proposed third

world feminism. These third world feminists argue to avoid universal claims about women and situate feminism in a specific social, cultural, and political context for analysis. Third World Feminism is strongly related with both African feminism and postcolonial feminism. All these trends strongly protest against ethnocentrism, racism, and homophobia and universalism of Western Feminism.

The third world feminism can be analyzed in context of Hindu patriarchal society of Nepal, India and many others. Third world societies are mostly postcolonial and developing countries. They are situated at the juncture where legacies of old traditions and influences of Western ways of life create fusion that continually shapes the structure of the societies. Each third world society is distinct and is shaped by its cultural tradition, religion and social norms. Moreover, there is the difference among the women from different socioeconomic backgrounds even within a country or a region. Women from different class, culture, race and religion face very different challenges and can experience even contrasting outcomes of the same social phenomena.

The third world countries are known as underdeveloped, developing countries, and least developed countries. On the contrary, the first world countries consider themselves as developed, civilized, modern and advanced. They have created stereotypes about the third world countries. People in the first world often describe third world countries as underdeveloped, overpopulated, backward, uncivilized, helpless and with other derogatory terms. So, the third world feminism challenges the hegemony of the western canon. According to it, feminism developed in the west claims to be universal, bias free, or objective but in fact it is hegemonic and biased.

“Western intellectuals”, as Ketu H. Katrak in *Decolonizing Culture: Toward a Theory for Postcolonial Women’s Text* says, "are unconsciously complicit in an

endeavor that ironically ends up validating the dominant power structure, even when they ideologically, oppose such hegemonic power"(256). Thus, the third world feminism opposes the hegemonic concept of universalism claimed by the Western feminism. From the very beginning of patriarchal system women have been exploited in the name of womanhood, motherhood, chastity, dowry, bride-price, widowhood and so on. In the capitalistic economic system they are used as cheap labor. Women especially working in the factories are sexually exploited by their male counterparts. On the other hand, women from rich economic background treat women from poor economic condition as other.

The Third World women have been exploited economically, socially, politically and culturally from the very beginning of patriarchal system. Patriarchy has been using women for its interest. The society has placed women in the position of subordination. In this context, the third world feminism challenges such kinds of exploitations over third world women. The women of the third world have to live within the framework of the society designed by the patriarchy. Their voices and ideas are neglected and silenced in the society. The equality and freedom are far beyond their access. No woman can flourish her skill, creativity, and authenticity in such traditional patriarchal society. In *Writing Postcoloniality and Feminism* Trinh T. Minh-HA says:

In trying to tell something, a woman is told, shredding herself into opaque words while her voice dissolute on the walls of silence. She has been worked of the risk and incurs by letting words ruin of the rails, time and again tempted by the desire to gear herself to the accepted norms. But where had obedience led her? At best, to the satisfaction of

a made-women, capable of achieving as high a mastery of discourse as that of the male establishment in power. (264)

The above mentioned quote shows the condition of women very pathetic, miserable and powerless. They have willingly or unwillingly to perform the role assigned by the society. They are the puppets in the nexus of patriarchy.

Though man and woman are considered two sides of the same coin, patriarchy does not care all about this. The society has tamed women only to be obedient to men. But the obedience of women led them nowhere except to the affirmation of patriarchy. In other words, the male dominated society treats women as if they were born to serve men. Darshan Trivedi in *Shakti* says, "The place of women is inferior and subordinatory to men (250)". Though Hindu philosophy considers a wife as 'ardhangini' or the half part of her husband, the society always put women in subordinate position. In Hindu patriarchal society women get their identity through their husbands. The Hindu woman adjusts herself to the life of her husband and does not think of her own rights and choices.

The society has tamed woman to be obedient to man and such obedience contributes to the affirmation of patriarchal norms and values thereby female disempowerment. Similarly, a wife is expected to be obedient and submissive and she has to acquiesce every demands of her husband as if he were an ideal living god on earth so that she can secure her position in heaven. The repressive western and patriarchal ideologies considered women as sexual object women in the non-western countries like India and Nepal.

The westerners used to consider the third world women as impetuous, emotional, and oversexed. The notion of "the sexual body" of (Shildrick and Price 288) of Indian women was necessary ground for the imposition of colonial state

power. In order to circulate power nexus in colonial countries the colonizers had also created and reinforced the stereotypical images of women. Shildrick and Price further say:

Further, the construction of meaning through which we know the body consistently privileges the male for his supposed capacity to transcend his embodiment, to become the subject in rather than of, discourse. Men then give both in and out of their bodies, which women simply are their bodies to be subjected, used transformed and improved. (389)

In this way, males get benefits due to their body than females. On the other hand, females are impressed by the body of males and take their body as the means of their protection.

Feminism seeks equal rights and opportunities to all, opposing the traditional values which always keep women in marginalized situations. So, the issues raised by feminism are used as the methodological tools to justify subordination of women in Chhetri's *Mountains Painted with Turmeric*, which is discussed and analyzed in the following chapter.

Chapter 3

Patriarchal Representation in the Novel

Mountains Painted with Turmeric concerns the domination of the female characters as the plot of the novel centers on their feminine activities and inferior position in relation to male characters. Male characters are found lacking in showing genuine love and respect towards women. The former never try to understand latter. Instead men enjoy the freedom, plunge themselves in drink and expect women to silently receive them. Women have suffered in silence waiting patiently for the day to come when they will be treated with respect and love in the true sense. Maina and Jhuma suffer a lot being tied with male domination but do not get proper place to live happily in the society. So they are the most sufferers in the novel. The female characters do not have their independent self from the beginning of the novel. They are known in connection with their father, husband, children, family and kinsfolk. Their identity is constructed by the patriarchal society.

People's lives are governed by social conventions that are almost inescapable to have meaningful relationships with marriage, language, law, family, class, money. Indeed, according to the social contract theory, human civilization depends on the mutual adoption of these laws. Lil Bahadur Chhetri's *Mountains Painted with Turmeric* is a story of such conventions, but on a more personal level - in the domestic sphere, it is of lower class Nepali family. It is the story of how female characters lack freedom. All the traditions, cultural practices, rituals, taboos, prohibitions and customs are made by male and women have to follow them blindly to make their life happier. These practices never assign women central role but make them mere objects

In a patriarchal society, for years the women have lived under protection of

either parents or husband or their sons. This pattern of life outwardly makes women's lives safe and smooth but actually slavish and dependent on men. Now along with other various factors such as modernism, changes in belief of gender role, the new education have awakened women. They have started thinking about independent and self-reliant life. But in Lil Bahadur Chhetri's *Mountains Painted with Turmeric* the female characters seem to be totally disempowered. They are never seen trying to go against patriarchy.

The female characters like Maina and Jhuma are both stereotypically presented and hegemonically exploited by patriarchal norms and values. They are regarded in the inferior position to male counterparts like Dhane and Mote Karki respectively. Patriarchy always creates binaries so as to sustain its dominance over women in the society. Such binaries include the pairs like self and other, rational and emotional, active and passive, assertive and submissive, enduring type and vulnerable, etc. In such dichotomy, male is always assigned to former and woman is with latter in the binaries.

Patriarchy

Regarding the patriarchal construction of binaries, Simone de Beauvoir in her book *The Second Sex* argues that patriarchy has constructed notions about women 'essence' stereotypically and for her such notions are myths created to dominate and inferiorize female. Patriarchy always creates dichotomy between male and female and in such dichotomy male is always defined as one, first sex, primary, subject, self, transcendental, and with soul; while female is defined as other, second sex, secondary, object, immanent, inessential and without soul. And women come to internalize and live out these feminine attributes based on binaries. In patriarchal society, for a woman essence precedes existence but in reality existence precedes her essence. As

Beauvoir writes, “One is not born, but rather becomes a woman” (295). Gender is not something biological or natural or innate but a social construct, a learned behavior; and a product of language, culture and institutions.

Patriarchy always defines woman with reference to man and man is always preoccupied with the notion of superiority. As Val Plumwood quotes Beauvoir, “Humanity is male and man defines woman not in herself but as relative to him; she is not regarded as an autonomous being . . . She is defined and differentiated with reference to man and not he with reference to her; she is the incidental, the inessential as opposed to the essential. He is the Subject, he is the Absolute, she is the other” (104). Thus patriarchal tendency of creating binaries between masculinity and femininity contributes to the female subordination in the society.

Modern women who have grown along with their consciousness find futility and emptiness of these long-preserved notions and taboos. Thus the modern women are striving to be free and self-reliant. To fight against the established old systems and liberate them, they apply different methods and strategies. But the patriarchy always dominates them, their rebel confronts a sense of failure and they suffer infinitely. This suffering and alienation have become the condition of women during their life. Our culture never tries to liberate them because all the cultural values are determined by males. When women remain silent, they are following these male determined values.

The environment that women characters get in the novel is totally male dominated. Maina and Jhuma can never raise their voice against male domination. Jhuma being an unmarried girl has to suppress her feelings because she is dominated from her childhood. It is difficult to get away from the oppressive patriarchal society because of cultural norms that snatch away women's rights. A man and woman are

two wheels of a cart. They have equal roles in making the cart move properly. If one of the wheels is weaker, the cart cannot move as needed. A woman cannot complete her duties if she is not provided her rights. We can realize existing prejudice in our society. All the women are not provided with their rights. We can see discrimination between men and women.

Rights are basic requirements for human beings to enhance the status. In order to promote women status, women have to be provided all rights. Women of the world are not enjoying rights practically in reality. Many dead traditions and concepts stop the women from practising their rights. The women who are uneducated or illiterate feel that they are not capable as men. They feel themselves weaker. They depend on male members of the family. They cannot enjoy any rights and freedom. Some of the conscious and educated women enjoy different modes of freedom and rights but in reality, they facing the same condition as female characters are facing in Lil Bahadur Chhetri's *Mountains Painted with Turmeric*. Due to lack of right, Maina and Jhuma remain in darkness.

Patriarchy is a social structure based on the authority of male head of the household. It is a power relation in which women occupy subordinate status as workers whose production is exploited and appropriated by male. Historically, women under patriarchy, whatever their class and race, have been assigned to household, childbearing, child rearing, housekeeping, food preparation, care of ill and dependent, emotional and sexual service. In such social system, men exercise power over women and work as the central figures because they financially support their family, while women stay at home to care for the children and household affairs.

Patriarchy is both structure and ideology or a belief system according to which men are superior to women. Ideology plays an important role in perpetuating social

systems and controlling people's mind. Normally, women's productive labor power, reproduction, sexuality, mobility, property and other economic resources, as well as social, cultural and political institutions are controlled by men. Thus patriarchy means the manifestation and institutionalization of male dominance over women and children in the family.

In a patriarchal society, women are disciplined and controlled with the help of different discourses that includes stereotypes. These discourses rule over women hegemonically. It has seen women as the passive victims rather than the co-workers of society. As a result, they have been considered as objects rather than human beings and they are forced to occupy secondary space in the society. In this context, the relationship between man and women is that of domination, suppression and oppression despite the equal involvement of both in the joys and sorrows. Man is always at the center of social system as definer and woman has to accept silently all the definitions propounded by male as something absolute. In the patriarchal social scenario, a man enjoys all kinds of privileges and it is considered that he deserves those privileges only by being male member of the society. So the patriarchal power structure is hierarchical and in that hierarchy male is always on the top and female on the bottom. Such hierarchy is something like pre-existing entity and women are compelled to live with the belief, "choriko janma hareko karma" (to be born a daughter is to have an ill fate). Hence, in the world governed by patriarchy, women struggle to win a game that they lost at the time of their birth.

Certainly the world of human being is characterized by the man-woman relationship regarding many social institutions like marriage, family, and kinship. This relationship stands as a stamp that features the world of satisfaction and dissatisfaction. However, being unmarried does not work to eradicate this deeply

rooted discrimination between man and woman. Because marriage is a necessity as Levi-Strauss regards it as a form of human communication through which social communities come into being.

Similarly Alka Saxena observes women's position, in the following words:

"Women are indeed living at the mercy of men at present a woman's identity depends on the men who come in to the life lies in the hands of her father, husband or son, depending on whether she is unmarried, married or widowed. The men determine her fate, make decisions on her behalf and decide what is good or bad for her "(23-24).

Since our society is patriarchal, it locates a man to a higher position than a woman. It exists in two levels that constitutes either before or after marriage. Before marriage, her father and brother guide her and practise the hierarchical relationship. After marriage, it becomes the matter of practice for the husband and other members of in-law family.

Of course, marriage marks a turning point in the lives of any man or woman. In patriarchal society women are not empowered to decide the destiny of marriage that is getting married, coping with marriage and denying the marriage. It happens because of the inferior social status and restricted access to education and employments that they are given to women. Maina's position in her family too as a wife and mother to serve the members of her house reflects her miserable situation. The married woman comparatively suffers more than the unmarried ones. Thus marriage becomes not a fulfillment of the self but a symbol of their confinement within the boundaries marked out for them by men through centuries.

Really, this earth is being covered by the relation of men and women. The combination of men and women in separated relation is a kind of institutions where lots of activities are going on just like marriage, family and kinship. Without such

relation the world cannot exist because these things create satisfaction. But, since the society is male dominated it locates male being as first position and female is taken as second position. By changing these values society can be made a better place and women can be liberated.

Representation of Maina and Jhuma

Maina is the central female character in the novel. She is the wife of Dhane and mother of her only son. She is very simple, laborious and lovely woman who is always busy in domestic work. Being tied with traditional values and norms, she does not have courage to oppose the male domination. She remains busy with her small son because child bearing and rearing are considered to be the liabilities of a mother and she cannot freely express her feelings with others. She always thinks that her family's happiness is her own. So, she is marginalized in terms of gender.

The society has tamed woman to be obedient to man and such obedience contributes to the affirmation of patriarchal norms and values thereby female disempowerment. Similarly, a wife is expected to be obedient and submissive and she has to acquiesce every demands of her husband as if he were an ideal living god on earth so that she can secure her position in heaven. Maina in the novel appears to be an ideal Hindu wife who never crosses the boundary constructed by patriarchal norms and values, and she has completely devoted herself towards her husband as well as her household "liabilities" disregard of her desires, wishes, feelings, pains and suffering. Chhetri writes:

Maina hurried to give him some water to wash himself with, so that he could eat. When he had eaten, Dhane lay down on his bed. Maina finished her chores and then filled a wooden pot with oil and sat down at his feet. Jhuma was already asleep on her own bed. Gently, Maina

began to massage Dhane's feet; this was virtually a daily task for her.

(22)

This is how women are supposed to be at the feet of their husbands who are given the position of god and women are taken to be devotees at the service of god and the female devotion, in patriarchy, is colored with religious zeal.

A man always dreams to have a wife similar to Maina. In the context of the novel Dhane too feels proud of Maina's devotion and her submissiveness and thinks himself to be lucky enough to get a wife like Maina and never bothers to know what she wants and feels, rather thinks her to be content despite her dedication in solving his troubles and burden of the whole house. He becomes full of compassion and sympathy for her because of her hard works and contention at a time when he has been unable to give her anything good to eat during her pregnancy and childbirth; and a single piece of nice jewelry except those made at the time of marriage. Dhane thinks, "But even so, how content she is! She always attends to my troubles. She bears the burden of the whole house. It is a matter of fate: karma joined this flower to a poor man like me "(23). Though Maina works hard all the day, she is considered to be "poor" one. But Dhane is unable to fulfill his "manly" roles as expected from a husband, while Maina is really hardworking and laborious. Despite the lack of sufficient food to eat, she is managing her domestic chores and sharing hands with her husband too.

The Hindu woman adjusts herself to the life of her husband and does not think of her own rights and choices. Her submissiveness and lack of full personal development are closely related to family and social system in which a woman is mere a member of a group, rather than an independent individual. Ranjana Kumari, in *Religions and Status of Women*, argues that people's notions about the proper role of

woman in the society and social restrictions on woman are all rooted in religious conceptions regarding women. She writes:

A woman's husband is her lord and it is her religious duty to see that he is happy and comfortable by yielding to every wish. The woman is defined primarily in relation to her husband and her household, and her interest and active participation in domestic matters is expected to her. The role of wife and mother is the optimal, singular and essential role through which a woman fulfills herself. (9)

The society is full of dos and don'ts for women and women have to perform the assigned roles irrespective of their likes or dislikes. They are like puppets in the nexus of patriarchy. Maina is the representation of Hindu woman.

In the novel, Maina never speaks of her own desires but it does not mean that she does not have any desire; rather she suppresses those desires since she is well aware of the poor economic condition of her family. And Dhane feels guilty at being unable to give her a single piece of nice jewelry as if Maina did want nothing except jewels. Instead of being thankful towards Maina, Dhane ends up by saying, "it is a matter of fate "(23). Thus, in the patriarchal society women have no authority. Here, Dhane sympathizes Maina and speaks for her and being a male member of the society, he cannot escape patriarchal mindset that has the sense of male supremacy over female submissiveness and vulnerabilities. He too compares Maina with a delicate object like flower. In this way, the female characters in this novel are victimized by male domination. They are only assigned the role of housewife and they do not have their own identity. So, they seem submissive. They cannot cross the boundary of patriarchal domination. They think that their destinies are tied with male superiority. Maina being a very good wife of Dhane does not get any freedom. All her

life she has to struggle to make her husband happy. She does not have any access to property, decision making etc.

Maina is tormented by her husband and to do domestic work since she entered Dhane's house as a new bride. It is difficult for her to get away from the oppressive patriarchal society because of the cultural construct. Similarly Jhuma cannot escape from the bondage of patriarchy and becomes the victim of it. But in such society men consider themselves rational where as women are sensitive and emotional. Women characters are shown to be dependent on many ways. When any sort of disruption or detachment occurs in relationship that results in a total loss of women's self. The women are abused and neglected both by the family and the society. Thus, Chhetri's *Mountains Painted with Turmeric* shows the miserable condition of women.

Because of the infliction of patriarchal ideology, women are rendered completely helpless and they accept the position of subordination as the result of their fate; they try to live happily within that limited space of submission to patriarchal norms and values as Maina does in the novel. Dhane tells her that massaging is enough and she can sleep since she is tired of doing that for a long time. In such pathetic condition of subordination, subjugation and dependency too women seem to be quite content in being a figure of sympathy, it is because of the hegemonic influence of patriarchal ideology. Maina replies, "Am I doing because you order me to? Shall I stop because you say it's enough or carry out until you do? No, I do this because it pleases me "(23). Though it apparently seems that Maina has the sense of independence, it is the projection of the internalization of social norms and values and Maina is such because of her upbringing and schooling in patriarchal society. Maina has been completely hegemonized by the spell of patriarchal ideology and she, as a moral guide, always tries to inflict the same ideology into Jhuma too.

Such hegemony of patriarchal ideology ultimately contributes to the helpless and submissive status of women where they want to remain under the shadow of their husband's protection being unable to question their position in the society. In the society a wife is expected to treat her husband with reverence just as Maina after finishing massage of Dhane's feet touches Dhane's feet with her head and then only goes to sleep. In the patriarchal society, women are treated as objects to be possessed, enjoyed over and controlled. Women are defined in accordance with the desires of male.

In the novel Maina has been compared with "jewel" that Dhane possesses. As Chhetri writes, "Although he was poor in material terms, God had given him this priceless jewel. It was many times better to be a beggar with a life companion like Maina than to be as rich as Kubera but have no one to share your sorrows "(24). Such openhearted appreciation of Maina's dedication finally contributes to her disempowerment in the family in particular and in society in general. Her feelings, emotions, desires, wishes, likes and dislikes are not counted.

The situation is such that Maina gets her worth only in relation to her dedication towards her husband. She has been treated as if she did not have her own independent existence. Dhane appreciates Jhuma saying, "How hard it is to understand the games the gods play! Although I am poor, the lord gave me a wife that not even a king could get! I am poor, but I am fortunate to have a wife like you! "(24). This is how a woman is always expected to live for someone else and for that she is openly flattered in big words like Dhane does here. What Maina really wants, no one bothers to notice. Dhane only thinks of himself and finds to be fortunate, but the question comes, "What about Maina? Is she ill-fated then to be assigned to Dhane, a poor one?" Thus, in the patriarchal society woman occupies none or less space.

Maina is worried about Jhuma's condition and the threat on her family's prestige and dignity. And she thinks of finding Rikute and forcing him to accept Jhuma as his bride so as to keep the social honour of the family heritage intact. For that purpose, she sends Thuli, Jhuma's friend, towards Limbugaon to check the whereabouts of Rikute. In the society depicted in the novel, it is only Rikute, who has seduced Jhuma and left her helplessly to face the condemnation of the society, can save her along with the family's dignity in the society. Maina thinks if she manages to make Rikute marry Jhuma, everything will be settled, and if not everything will be collapsed along with the life of Jhuma. The tragedy of such conservative society is that while the real culprit, Rikute, escapes safely and nobody thinks of him, if any, they will just throw some words of curse at him.

Jhumavati is the sister of Dhane. She is quite simple and innocent village girl. She is a beautiful, unmarried girl. Being an adolescent girl she cannot freely express her feelings. Her beauty is compared with budding flowers in the novel. She is sexually exploited by Rikute who pretends to be a soldier. Due to male dominated social structure she comes to a state of committing suicide in the novel. She is the most vulnerable female character who suffers a lot.

In the novel when Jhuma encounters Rikute's forceful gaze, it is said, "natural womanly modesty appeared on the girl's face, and sweat glistened on her brow. She lowered her eyes, sat down to one side of the spring, and began to wash out the various implements her family used in religious rituals" (12). This shows that patriarchy always demands women to be modest, less talkative, unable to look directly at someone especially male other than near and dear ones.

If a woman speaks frankly with a male, she is thought in negative terms. Jhuma reacts exactly the way a woman is expected to behave in the society. She

glances at the youth, then looks down again right away and she blushes when Rikute addresses her using the politest word for “You.” Here the problem does not lie in being blushed at first sight but in the way patriarchy defines female act of being blushed to be natural feminine attributes. Similarly, Jhuma, while talking with Rikute, finds him staring at her loveliness without blinking his eyes and she is “gripped by her natural shyness ”(33). Karki too behaves shyly with Jhuma and in his case such shyness is not natural manly attribute but in case of Jhuma it is natural womanly attribute. Moreover, Jhuma appears to be emotional in the sense that even after short encounter with stranger she gets attracted toward him and feels as if her heart were walking away with him.

In the patriarchal society women are often considered as vulnerable and sensible like the delicate flowers so as to sustain male assertiveness in the social circumstances. Regarding the encounter between Rikute and Jhuma Chhetri writes:

The young man reached the spring and stopped to gaze at a girl who was there. She was just like a budding flower. He had seen many such beauties wrapped in silk blouses and blue saris, and he had thought them to be real nymphs. But how could he have imagined such a flower in an ordinary hill village wearing a common calico skirt, a dirty white cotton waistband, and a blouse torn in three places?[. . .]

The only difference was that those flower buds in the towns watered their roots themselves while nature itself watered this one. In the town, they wore rouge and fake roses, but the goddess of nature had endowed this one with every adornment. In the town, the whole environment had been artificial, but here everything was just as it should be. (12)

Here, the overall attitude towards female is derogatory or negative one though village girl seems to have been praised than those in the city. Woman is woman after all; she is a human being like every male in the society disregard of class and gender but behind such images there lies the politics to subjugate woman just as in the novel Jhuma is described as a budding flower and those girls from the city as real nymphs. Jhuma is represented as being close to nature.

Patriarchy always demands a woman to be beautiful, affectionate and innocent. In the novel, Jhuma presents herself in the similar fashion. Mote Karki likes Jhuma and wishes to marry her if he can get her hands from her brother, Dhane. But Jhuma does not pay attention towards him. Mote Karki is not particularly handsome or cheerful, however, he admires her simplicity and loveliness and it is because of her loveliness and simplicity, as Chhetri writes, "he was drawn to Jhuma" (28). Here, Mote Karki, who has been presented as highly helpful person in the village, as member of same patriarchal society, demands physical beauty in woman. In the patriarchal society, a woman is expected to care for her physicality rather than other intellectual activities. In the novel, Mote Karki's heart, as Chhetri writes, "was pure" (28). And in case of male in the society the physical decorum does not matter as much as it does in case of female.

Thus in the patriarchal society female is always associated with body whereas male is with mind thereby such dichotomy contributes to the male supremacy over female inferiority. For the women like Jhuma and Thuli, Jhuma's friend, it is necessary to beautify their bodies not for themselves but for someone else. They have internalized the belief that female beauty gets its complete meaning only if there is some male to appreciate it. Here, Jhuma and Thuli think in the same line patriarchy has drawn. Thuli says, "Well, I might be. But even if I am, who do I have to show

myself off to that I should bath so early? Who have you got at the market to do yourself up for?" (25) In a patriarchal society, there is sexual division of labour where women are restricted to private sphere and male to the public sphere. That is to say, women without any significant rights and roles are confined within unproductive domestic activities and they do not get any chance to share hands with males in the public sphere that are basically concerned with economic and decision making activities.

Historically, women under patriarchy whatever their class and race have been assigned to the tasks of social reproduction which are considered as worthless activities. So women have to spend their whole lives in those domestic chores like washing, cooking and serving food, child bearing, child rearing, care of ill and dependent, and emotional and sexual services. These chores are considered as typically feminine liabilities, as natural thereby inessential. Regarding woman confinement within such domestic sphere, Sheila Ruth in *Issues in Feminism* writes, "Women are expected to serve man; taking care of their homes, property, clothing or persons; economically doing countless jobs for which women are ill paid or not paid at all; sexually as wives, mistress or prostitutes; reproductively assuring means of paternity through female chastity"(86). Hence, women have to be dependent on male members for the fulfillment of their financial needs.

In the novel, when Jhuma prepares food, she tells Maina to serve food to guest and Dhane, and Maina lovingly replies, "Will you issue orders like this where you are married and you have your home "(18)? This makes clear that in patriarchal society a woman is expected not to issue order in any case but once she gets married and has her own home, issuing order is something insensitive and uncultured. Chhetri writes, "Jhuma approached the soldier with pitcher in her hand, bowing her head as low as

she possibly could"(18).This is how patriarchal ideology passes through generation to generation contributing in the perpetuation of female inferiority and subordination.

The case is more severe in case of female like Maina, who loves Jhuma but remains helpless in front of her husband. So she is worried thinking about the condition of Jhuma after her brother knows everything about her illicit relation with Rikute. While talking with Thuli, she says, "What else can I do! When I look at her face, I do love her so (75)." Being a woman in the patriarchal society, she has internalized that she is helpless and powerless in comparison to her husband. Maina, in her anger, abuses Jhuma, "What will happen when your brother finds out? You have rubbed soot in all our faces, where can we hide them now? Tomorrow, when word gets out, all the villagers will spit on you and then where will you hide? It would be better for you to die before that happens: now you have no choice but to die ..." (79). Similarly, Jhuma too does not see any alternatives for her and she hegemonically believes herself to be sinner and deserving punishment.

In the patriarchal society it is believed that the husband should be protective and wife should be submissively protected occupying their space as a mere recipient in the society. They are expected to be content with their domesticity than trying to be thinking individual. Similar is the case with Maina, who sobs hiding her face in Dhane's lap because of death of Nande's pregnant buffalo out of Dhane's beating and she is worried regarding the outcome of this incident. Dhane consoles her saying, "Oh, why do you cry like this? Your husband has not died! Why worry when I am still with you "(61)? But the question comes, in time of bad days, "How can a wife remain silent?" It is only extension of the belief that as long as women are with their husbands they do not have to worry about anything for everything will be done by

their husband. Such privilege on the part of women ultimately paralyzes women's assertive role and it results in their disempowerment.

When Dhane's family is moving towards the unknown horizon leaving their ancestral land forever because of the feudal exploitation, Maina becomes full of tears and it is Dhane who wipes her tears out. And Chhetri writes, "He consoled Maina, wiping away her tears with his hand. Who was there to wipe the tears that fell from his eyes onto her hair? Dhane was there to comfort Maina; as long as he remained, Maina did not have to take responsibility. But to whom could Dhane turn? There was only the Creator for him to place his hopes in" (101). Actually, in patriarchal society women do not deserve any responsibility. Maina, who is totally dedicated in the service of her husband, supports him through his times of sorrow and rejoices when he is happy. However, she has been presented as if she did not deserve any responsibility in front of Dhane. Her presence has been left unnoticed despite the fact that she dedicates her whole life in the service of her husband as if he were her only living god on the earth.

Most of the time, Maina remains busy with her small son. Child bearing and rearing are considered to be of a mother's liabilities in the society. Dhane cries at Maina when he sees his son's vest torn at both shoulders and says, "Why didn't she tell me about his vest? She could have mended herself; it's only torn in two places. How stupid she is" (43)?

The feudal-patriarchal social structure deprives women of their rights on property and other economic resources like land and restricts their role as child-producing factory and unpaid domestic laborers. Women lack the agency to bring forth their voices both in the families and society and nowhere in novel a female voice is heard raising their issues; even woman like Maina cannot freely express her

feelings with her husband and she has to gather courage enough to speak with her own husband.

Maina, as a mother figure and a moral guide for Jhuma, inflicts patriarchal norms and values that she has herself internalized. Mary Wollstonecraft, in her essay "A Vindication of the Rights of Woman", exposes the situation of women in the patriarchal society and examines how woman is registered to the status of secondary being regarding the upbringing and schooling of female. A woman is perceived as a pack of emotion and passion but the sorry thing is that the woman who is denied independence views herself through that very image. She writes, "Females, who are made woman of when they are mere children, and brought back to childhood when they ought to live the go-cart forever, have not sufficient strength of mind to efface the super inductions of art that have smothered nature"(395). As a result, a woman is confined into the vicious circle constructed by ideas of male. Similarly, woman in patriarchy is forced to live a life of double existence: existence of woman and a child at the same time.

Women in patriarchy have a disciplined mind. According to J Krishnamurti, a disciplined mind is never a free mind. He argues, "Discipline always limits the mind to a movement within a framework of a particular system of thought or belief; discipline brings about submission to authority. It gives capacity to function within the pattern of a society which demands functional ability but it does not awaken the intelligence which has its own capacity"(3). That is why, women in patriarchy have to remain passive, subservient, docile and obedient. While urging women to challenge the patriarchal assumptions of female inferiority and to create their own identities and roles in society, Wollstonecraft argues that mind does not know the sex and minds of women are not different from that of men, but men and women only differ in bodies.

Their intellectuality is suppressed by patriarchy. So if they are less intellectual, it is not because of their fault but because of biased attitude of patriarchy that intentionally makes them weak, frail, inferior, sentimental, emotional, irrational, docile and subordinate.

From the very beginning of patriarchal system, women have been exploited in the name of constructs like womanhood, motherhood, chastity, virginity, and traditions like dowry, bride-price. Jhuma becomes the victim of such social norms and values because of which Dhane is unable to get his sister married. Girls of marriageable age are thought to be parents' liabilities and that becomes more severe in case of poor peasant's family like that of Dhane. So Jhuma's marriage has been a cause of worry for Dhane and Maina. Those social traditions add to the suffering of female. The finance is one thing but the value the society has given to that finance is something that troubles the family like that of Dhane. More than the poor economic condition of Dhane, patriarchal conceptions behind the custom of marriage is the cause of problem.

In the patriarchal society, a woman does not have the sense of independence and she has to acquiesce the decision of her destiny made by their parents. She does not have right over her own life and freedom of expression. A woman is not expected to talk openly with a male other than family members and relatives because society condemns such act as an illicit act or guilt. In the novel after Mote Karki sees both Rikute and Jhuma talking together, he asks her about him and says, "It does not do to trust these soldier's corpses "(38). Then, Jhuma becomes angry at him and says, "Do you lose your caste just from chatting to someone" (38)? In her response she seems to have a sense of critiquing but after a while she happens to be ashamed of her harsh reaction due to Karki's humility. Here her sense of critiquing gets

overshadowed by Karki's humility and Jhuma is not expected to make such minor reaction. Here, Jhuma's act of talking openly with Rikute and her reaction to Mote Karki can be taken as her attempt to go against the patriarchal norms and values, and her ultimate helpless condition when she is on the verge of committing suicide after being seduced and impregnated by that soldier and her surrender before Mote Karki can be taken as her submission to authority where she laments over her past did to Mote Karki and hegemonically suffers from inferiority complex.

In the patriarchal society, there is restriction on the freedom of expression on the part of female like Jhuma, while there is none or least restriction on the part of male like Rikute. During the time of Dashain, a rotary swing has been erected and people from three or four villages on hillside have gathered there at night. In the midst of crowd, Rikute and Jhuma are a little far away sitting under an old tree and enjoying beauty of full moon. Though she is full of emotions and feelings, she cannot express because of sense of guilt and sin, and fear of brother. In this respect Chhetri writes:

Jhuma is more afraid than shy. Guilt, sense of sin, and her fear of brother force her to bundle up her emotions inside her. She is a village girl: what right does she have to make an independent expression of her affection? Her overriding duty is to massage the legs of the man with whose shawl her guardians bind her. But why does the soldier hesitate? (36)

Thus, it is clear that a woman like Jhuma is not expected to talk like that with a stranger alone at night, while on the other hand Rikute, since being a male, does not hesitate to express his emotions and feelings boiling up inside his heart and it is all because he is male. So he expresses his desire to marry her but Jhuma, being a girl, cannot choose the one whom she loves. Then she says, "It does not matter what I say,

you'd have to go and talk to my daju"(37). She does not have control over her own body and life and she has to acquiesce what her brother does for her and her only moral duty is to be content with the decision elders make for her.

Similarly, Jhuma has been sexually abused by the cunning soldier Rikute, who lures her showing the vision of charismatic Mungalan and promises to marry her.

Jhuma too shows her interest in his story of Mungalan in which he says:

Ay, what tales I could tell you of that! [. . .]. There are electric lights so bright it seems like the sun is shining in the night. And the shops aren't on open hillsides like this! The bazaar stretches as far as you can see – proper big roads with cars, trams, and rickshaws running along them. You don't have to walk a step, a rickshaw will always run you along. That's how it is there. I was fed up when I realized how things were here. (32)

After frequent meetings Jhuma really falls in love with Rikute, although Rikute is only physically attracted towards her. One day in Magh, when Jhuma is collecting fodder in the forest and Rikute comes there and, with the help of his flowery language and dreams of Mungalan, succeeds to molest her sexually, even if she tries to avoid him helplessly. After her virginity gets spoilt, she returns home with remorse because she is aware that she has committed a crime of illicit sexual relation.

It is patriarchy that always creates discourses like chastity, virginity, and dignity; and it is believed that the prestige and esteem of the family heritage is in the hands of a girl who is expected to keep herself away from the touch of other male so as to protect their virginity, chastity and dignity. Chhetri writes:

Today she had been forced to give up the virginity that young girls secure in their status, and now even it regarded her with contempt.

Until this day she had had courage to face society without fear, but now she felt that she had fallen very low.[. . .] tying the soldier's promise into a firm knot in the headscarf of her trust. What else could she have done, after all? (71)

Thus patriarchal construction of such discourses of virginity and chastity contributes to the subjugation and subordination of women in the society. In the network of patriarchal power structure, such discourses become "truths" and hegemonically rule over both man and woman. So the soldier, Rikute, spoils her virginity and impregnates her, and finally leaves her to face the condemnation of the conservative society that considers her solely responsible for such helpless condition.

Jhuma's condition becomes more severe when slowly and slowly the news of her "illicit" relation with Rikute and her pregnancy get spread in the village. When Maina learns everything regarding Jhuma's affinity with Rikute and her pregnancy, she becomes angry at her Jhuma's foolishness. But it is the society that has made Jhuma a foolish one. Her upbringing and schooling in the traditional norms and values that contributes to the female disempowerment has made her so simple and innocent that Rikute like rogue could exploit her sexually. This sexual harassment ultimately leads to social harassment.

Thus patriarchal society is inherently male-friendly that always creates dichotomy between male and female where former is always empowered and latter is always disempowered. Regarding the duality between male and female as sustained by patriarchal social system Vivienne Kondos, in *On the Ethos of Hindu Women*, argues:

In patriarchal society there is echoing of the conception of two bodies – the masculine one which is supposed to be hard and enduring type,

and the one that determines; while the other which is supposed to be of soft nature and comparatively short-lived is also immensely vulnerable to the masculine force which enters into it.[. . .]. It is repeated in everyday homily about the daughter which distinguishes her position from that of her brother: the daughter is the one who is to go to prop up another man's wall. (8-9)

In the novel, Jhuma's condition is exactly similar to that as argued by Kondos where Jhuma is vulnerable to Rikute's masculine force that ultimately succeeds to exploit her virginity. After such act of seduction, Jhuma is thought to be Rikute's responsibility and Maina speaks to Thuli, "Child, please do take the trouble. It would be best to get that corpse committed to marrying her and make him shoulder his responsibility "(75). So a girl before marriage falls under guardian's responsibility that they want to handover to her husband through formal arrangement of marriage.

The case of Jhuma is more complicated because she has been seduced and left helplessly, and the condition in society is such that Jhuma might resume her self-esteem only if she is married to Rikute, who spoils her virginity, otherwise Jhuma along with her family has to undergo social condemnation. Patriarchy considers a daughter to be destined to go somewhere else and prop up another man's wall, while on the other hand a son becomes would be family head who is expected to carry out family's traditions, gives continuity to family tree, look after old parents, and performs various rituals and rites before and after death of parents. A son becomes the star of family's future as Chhetri writes, "In Maina's lap there plays the star of Dhane's future"(3).

Thus women in the patriarchal society are like just pawns in the game of exchange organized by male where they are mere play things of men as if they were

the object of possession. As Kondos argues, "It is the notion of possession that seems to be at play here. Even if a man had abducted the woman, once sexual intercourse has occurred, became possessor of the woman's sexuality "(109). So, Rikute becomes the possessor of Jhuma's sexuality after seduction, and Maina hegemonically thinks in the same line that patriarchy has paved so as to sustain male supremacy over female vulnerability. Similarly, Jhuma has to suffer from the sense of castelessness, homelessness, thereby alienation and inferiority complex.

Rituals of marriage in the Hindu society, too contributes to the subordination and disempowerment of woman in the society. Before marriage she is assigned to her parents' caste and after marriage her caste gets converted into that of husband. As Vivienne Kondos argues that woman's condition is initially open because once she gets married she is to acquire membership in the husband's 'gotra'. So there is no fixity in the woman's line of ancestry but a man has fixity and he stays with his 'gotra' category throughout his life continuing his 'gotra' line in the male offspring. But for a woman such membership is actualized through marriage, thereby the nature of a woman's being is accorded a kind of plasticity. Kondos states, "This process, it should be added, is comparable to the way conjugality is conceptualized: a woman, Nepalis emphatically state, acquires her caste at marriage"(113). But in the text, Jhuma, as being sexually harassed and helplessly abandoned, has to undergo through the trauma of being outcasted not only in the society but also in her own home until Mote Karki accepts her as his wife and leaves the village forever.

Similarly, Jhuma's situation of being socially outcasted, sexually exploited and hegemonically deceived by patriarchal social norms and values illustrates the fact of bitter social reality on the part of female whose life deserves far least value in comparison to the 'unblemished honor' of the family line. As Chhetri writes:

For a devoted, simple-hearted woman like Maina, the crisis that had arisen in Jhuma's life, the calumny that would now be heaped on her husband, and a stain that would now mark a family that had never bowed to anything before were not petty matters. Perhaps she would have been less worried by the prospect of everything they owned being taken away from them than by the threat of damage being done to the unblemished honor of their line. (78)

Here, Maina has been projected as devoted and simple-hearted woman and she is much worried regarding the threat of damage being done to her family's hitherto unblemished honor. That's why, she too considers Jhuma's foolishness to be the cause of her suffering and possible damage of family's prestige.

In patriarchal society women have to be conscious about the prestige of family. Chhetri writes, "There is a stain on his family's reputation, and the world would mock them"(83). This shows that in the name of family's reputation, girls like Jhuma helplessly suffer a lot in patriarchy. Thuli, Jhuma's friend, considers that there is no way out for Jhuma since Jhuma has lost everything by giving away her virginity. As she says, "It's a complete disaster. You did what you did, and you trusted such a corpse of a man you did not even know. They say he left in Phagun"(77). Because of infliction of patriarchal ideology, her parents-like brother and sister-in-law wish her to be dead. Though they love Jhuma, they cannot sacrifice their prestige in the society.

As a result, Jhuma develops a sense of inferiority complex and suffers from the sense of alienation amidst their near and dear ones. Again and again, her own heart tells her, "You deserve to be punished. You are a sinner "(80). Jhuma's brother Dhane thinks his poverty and helplessness as cause of his sister's pathetic condition and his conscience, after Jhuma leaves home with decision to commit suicide, as

Chhetri writes, says, "If society had not been so ready to mock Jhuma's small misdemeanor, would she had left the house today in such desperation? Was the fault hers alone? Was it not the fault of the soldier, who had taken advantage of an innocent girl to gratify his desires? But it is the helpless girl and her family who are punished by society "(86-87). Instead of his conscience, Dhane listens to the ruling ideology and in response of his wife's request to search for Jhuma, he answers, "If she is dead, we will hear of her" (87). Thus this shows that in patriarchal society family reputation counts more than the life of woman like Jhuma, who was sexually ravished by Rikute and later on socially harassed.

Jhuma comes to a state of committing suicide due to the patriarchal system. That has also caused problem for her to find a suitable male. She is sexually harassed by Rikute. In that society, males have the right to decide about the fortune of females but females seem inferior. Only Dhane has the right to decide about the life of Jhuma but she lacks freedom to decide for her own future. In the novel, all the housework, as Chhetri writes, "falls on Jhuma's shoulders. The baby makes many demands on Maina, so she cannot offer to help with many of the domestic chores. She helps her husband's sister to wash the pots and to mill and pound the grain. Otherwise, all the cooking and serving food is Jhuma's responsibility" (18). In this way, females have to be busy and responsible in different household chores and cannot think about other things.

Position of Mote Karki, Dhane and Rikute

In the same manner, Mote Karki has been presented as savior of Jhuma, a helpless victim of society as if he were sent by god. As Chhetri writes, "When injustice and oppression go beyond extremes and those who suffer them need assistance, then in some shape or form, help always comes from the Lord" (90). Here

Jhuma needs an assistance and Mote Karki comes to save her life when she is about to quit her life by falling down to Rage Cliff. Jhuma is completely hegemonized by the patriarchal ideology and she tells Karki that she is a real sinner and regrets, "With what face can I live now "(91). In the patriarchal society, a woman is either underestimated as evil spirit like old woman of forest and Jhuma as shameless and overestimated as angel or goddess like Jhuma as goddess for Mote Karki. Women are not treated as human being and an independent existence. When Mote Karki becomes ready to marry her, she is overpowered by the inferiority complex and repentance for her past ill treatment and disobedience. Jhuma tells Karki, "Why should you go off and suffer with a sinner like me? I cannot throw off my sin!" (93). Then, Karki consoles her assuring her to marry and give his name to her would be child and she will live with him as his own.

In the patriarchal society only father has right to give his name to child just like only husband can give his caste to his wife. This masculine privilege has contributed to the female subordination and disempowerment of women. A fatherless child is condemned as bastard one and an unmarried mother as sinner like Jhuma thinks herself to be before Mote Karki comes in her life. Though Mote loves Jhuma, but her status in the society will be like that of object. She becomes Karki's possession. She has to be content with her position of subordination where she will be loved at and guarded around like a helpless child, thereby perpetual denial of assertion. Both male and female internalize these concepts but it is the male who benefits more and a woman suffers her status of subordination just like Maina and Jhuma. Males like Dhane and Mote Karki become the divine figures in relation to the immanence of females like Maina and Jhuma. The society is such that men are always at the centre and women crawl around the men being always in the periphery. The

existence of Jhuma depends on the presence of male like either Rikute or Mote Karki. Absence of Rikute leads her to the mouth of death and presence of Mote Karki becomes the basis of her survival, however, in a subordinated position.

Moreover, Jhuma considers herself far more inferior in front of Mote Karki, whose house, land and property deserve more material value than her life. And she says, "Why should you be pulled down into a ditch for my sake? You have such a big house and land, fields, property . . . how can it be? I will not add this sin to others" (93). At the end, Jhuma realizes the difference between Rikute and Mote Karki, and true love and adolescent delight. However, she cannot realize the value of her own life for herself and she hegemonically dedicates her whole life at the feet of Mote Karki, who considers Jhuma like goddess instead of sinner. But he too allows her to be at his feet. In the traditional social scenario depicted in the novel, Jhuma is treated as nothing in comparison to Mote Karki, who is the man in the sky for her. As Chhetri writes, "Today Jhuma saw Mote Karki as he really was. That Karki, whom she had not considered especially important, whom she thought of as a passing breeze that bore no thunder rain: how great he was! How unworthy she was of him" (94). This is how, a woman is considered inherently inferior to male who always expect a woman to be passive and mere recipient as long as he is with her.

When Jhuma thinks of possible troubles that they are surely supposed to undergo while living in the village, Mote Karki assures her, "From now on you need not worry at all. Your husband will be with you" (95). Here, Mote Karki too demands her to be passive and he does not consider her worthy to act as thinking individual, and he cannot escape patriarchal mindset that restricts woman to the position of passive recipient and advocates on the behalf of protective husband. Jhuma is also content to take the role of passivity and lies the whole load of her body at Karki's feet

which is the proper place for her she thinks. Ultimately, both Mote Karki and Jhuma prepare to leave their village forever than to face the social misfortunes. Though Jhuma leaves the village with Mote Karki, she is still in the spell of hegemony of patriarchal ideology. Wherever she goes Mote Karki remains as a god for her and her only duty is to worship him like her sister-in-law Maina. Because of her sense of inferiority complex, she can never morally rise above Mote Karki. She has to depend on Mote Karki to have the sense of her being. He becomes a savior, a transcendental figure, while Jhuma an imminent figure doomed to be subservient to Mote Karki and morally disempowered.

Thus women are denied equal opportunities and responsibilities. They lack the agency but the sorrow thing is that the patriarchal society justifies the unequal treatment of women by claiming them to be passive, innocent, weak, and vulnerable and not deserving any responsibility. The condition of women in *Mountains Painted with Turmeric* is totally controlled by patriarchal norms and values and they are confined into domesticity occupying a subordinate position to male. Therefore, females like Maina and Jhuma are not only stereotypically represented but also hegemonically subordinated. The patriarchal ideology is inflicted upon them in such a way that they are rendered completely helpless and submissive. Thus, women like Maina and Jhuma, because of their confinement into domesticity, are leading a subordinate and worthless lives being doubly marginalized in terms of gender and class.

Chapter 4

Consequences of Patriarchal Domination

This study has analyzed the relationship between man and woman in order to establish the argument that there lies the politics of subordination behind the stereotypical representation of women in Lil Bahadur Chhetri's *Mountains Painted with Turmeric*. The sympathetic response toward the suffering of women is an attempt to inflict the patriarchal ideology upon them. Thereby, they take their status as "privileged other" for granted. This study argues that the women in the patriarchal society are not only stereotypically represented but also hegemonically subordinated. Chhetri's novel has depicted the village life of 1950s in the far eastern hills of Nepal by shedding light on the burning social issues like gender, class, caste, religion, race and fatalism. This research work, going slightly deeper into the critical analysis of Chhetri's dramatization of social realities of that time from the perspective of feminism, seeks to establish an ethical relation based on mutual caring and sharing between man and woman by opposing the oppression of woman. It also foregrounds man-woman and inter-woman relationship in context of Chhetri's novel.

The social structure depicted in the novel is feudal-patriarchy that sustains through the construction of dualisms which define two categories like man-woman, self-other, reason-emotion, transcendental-immanent, definer-defined in hierarchical and vertical relationship and so on. In such binary, the former is always privileged as superior and the latter is subjected to control and domination as inferior. Hence, male control over female is legitimized and perpetuated by a hierarchical social structure that allows one group to dominate other. Patriarchal ideological constructions grant self, activity, rationality, creativity and assertion to men as the masculine potentials thereby superior and other, passivity, emotionality, obedience, and nurturance to

women as feminine potentials thereby inferior. In such binary, one side is privileged to define and construct social, political and cultural structures that other side of binary is expected to follow as something absolute because these ideologically colored structures in the network of power relationship in the hierarchical social circumstances turn out to be 'truths' thereby such structures legitimize and perpetuate double domination of women.

In the patriarchal social structure, male supremacy is maintained through the exercise of power over woman. Female characters like Maina and Jhuma are subjected to control and domination. They are both stereotypically represented as helplessly innocent, submissive, passive, emotional and inherently inferior to males like Dhane and Mote Karki, and hegemonically subordinated to male authority. Women characters are not only unable to protect themselves against the suppression and oppression but also unable to resist due to hegemonic influence of patriarchal ideology thereby they happen to take for granted that resistance is useless and being a woman is to be relatively powerless than man. And instead of cursing the exploitative patriarchal social norms and values as the root cause of their suffering, they curse their own fate and helplessly surrender themselves to patriarchal domination.

Maina, Dhane's wife, dedicates herself in the service of her husband as if he were a living god for her in this earth. She, though being tired of working all through the day till late night, always massages Dhane's feet with some oil after she finishes her chores. She does not show any sign of dissatisfaction and suppresses all her desires, likes and dislikes, emotion and feelings. And Dhane assumes her to be content in such a state of penury and feels proud of having such wife. Maina appears to be an ideal wife who is dedicated in the service of her husband along the line of patriarchal norms and values disregard of her own pain, suffering and feelings.

Females like Maina and Jhuma are limited within domestic sphere and they do not deserve to share their hands with their male counterparts in the public sphere. They are entrusted to the task of social reproduction such as cooking, serving food, housekeeping, childbearing and childrearing, care of ill and dependent, and emotional and sexual services. These are considered as typically feminine liabilities, as natural involving no special skill or care, as inessential, as the background services that make 'real' work and achievement possible, rather than work themselves.

Women work in the field as ill-paid waged-labourers. They do not have even freedom of expression as Maina has to gather courage even to speak with her husband. Despite Maina's equal involvement in hardship and happiness with Dhane, she deserves none or least value in comparison to Dhane. But the patriarchy justifies such unequal treatment of woman by claiming them to be passive, innocent, weak and vulnerable and always in need of protection from their male counterparts. Throughout the whole course of event, she is confined into the domesticity. She is represented as close to nature. That is to say, while departing from their homeland, she, with her eyes full of tears, talks with plowing oxen, goats, doves and plants like Tulsi. These activities clearly reflect the miserable situation of women in the patriarchal society.

Jhumavati is Dhane's sister of marriageable age, whom Dhane has not been able to arrange her marriage because of the traditional patriarchal norms and values that demand dowry from the side of girl. Dhane is unable to manage money for dowry and even to feed those who attend marriage. Jhuma does not have any right over her life and it is Dhane, who has the right to decide her fortune and her only duty is to be obedient and follow what her brother decides for her. Moreover, she is represented as innocent, passive, vulnerable, impulsive and emotional. Similarly, she is sexually harassed by Rikute and that sexual harassment results in social harassment. Even her

parents like brother and sister-in-law wish her to be dead, rather than to lose family's unblemished honour. As a result, she suffers from alienation and inferiority complex amidst near and dear ones. Unable to bear sexual and, thereby, social harassment she stands on the verge of committing suicide. And at last, it is Mote Karki, who emerges as a divine figure for Jhuma and acts as a protector of her life. She is represented as worthless in front of Karki. Moreover, women like Maina and Jhuma do not have access to land, property and decision-making, and her production is exploited and appropriated by men. There is no mention of any female character's involvement in public sphere such as village council throughout the novel. This leads woman to be doubly marginalized.

Finally, in the patriarchal-feudal social scenario depicted in Chhetri's *Mountains Painted with Turmeric* woman is subjected to control and domination. Such control and domination is sustained through the construction of such binaries: masculinity/femininity, reason/emotion, culture/nature, superior /inferior, subject/object, self/other, man/land, feudal/serfs and so on. In such dichotomy, woman is associated with nature thereby subjected to control and domination. In the novel, women do not have access to land, property and decision-making, so women are controlled and dominated by male intervention. They are treated as commodity to be possessed. Female sexuality is controlled and appropriated by man. Women are considered as instruments to carry out male purposes. So oppression of woman operates under the ideological principle of patriarchal masculinity that seeks to control and dominate women.

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