

Tribhuvan University

Construction of 'Kathmandus of Mind' in Upadhayay's *Arresting God in Kathmandu*

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By

Lokendra Yonghang

Symbol No.: 280863

T.U. Regd. No.: 6-1-1-107-2003

Central Department of English

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Tribhuvan University
Central Department of English

Letter of Recommendation

Lokendra Yonghang has completed her thesis entitled “Construction of 'Kathmandus of Mind' in Upadhyay's *Arresting God in Kathmandu*” under my supervision. She carried out this research from January 2016 to December 2017. I hereby recommend this thesis to be submitted for viva voce.

Prof. Dr. Jib Lal Sapkota

Supervisor

Date:

Tribhuvan University
Central Department of English

Letter of Approval

This thesis entitled “Construction of 'Kathmandus of Mind' in Upadhayay's *Arresting God in Kathmandu*” submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, by Lokendra Yonghang, has been approved by the undersigned members of Research Committee.

Members of the Research Committee

Internal Examiner

External Examiner

Head

Central Department of English

Date: _____

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Abstract

This research concentrates on the diasporic depiction of Nepalese society and how the characters are engulfed by homesickness on Samrat Upadhyay's *Arresting God in Kathmandu* by applying diasporic perspective keeping the identity crisis at heart. A key characteristic of diaspora is that a strong sense of connection to a homeland is maintained through cultural practices and ways of life. Cultural change is another major problem faced by the diasporic community especially by the diasporic people. When they try to settle in a new place they find several changes in the new society. It shocks them and they try to cling to their homeland culture by following it strictly. Dislocation causes severe problems to the diasporic people. When individual moves from his home country to a new land, the foreign atmosphere makes them sick. Based on the reasons for dislocation, the suffering faced by the diasporic people too changes. The gap of studying the feelings and emotions of expatriate writers is filled by the present research work.

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I. Diasporic Representation in *Arresting God in Kathmandu*

This research work makes an attempt to explore the issue of transnational migration that causes the problems of identity in Samaat Upadhyaya's *Arresting God in Kathmandu* by applying Diasporic perspective. Love and matrimony are as complicated in modern Nepal as anywhere else, as depicted in this debut collection of stories from one of the first Nepali authors writing in English to be published in the west. In only one of the nine stories does the focus waver from the tensions inherent in a class-conscious society where most marriages are still arranged, despite the fast-forward of globalization and a younger population used to traveling abroad or at least hearing about it? Parents such as the mother in "The Room Next Door" are angry and confused when their children are reluctant to conform. This mother is shamed when her college-age daughter becomes pregnant; girl then marries the only man who might have her- an unemployed simpleton who has appeared on their doorstep. Young couples at a loss to articulate submerged desires find it difficult to communicate in times of stress. In "The Good Shopkeeper," an accountant who loses his job drifts away from his wife and into an affair with a servant girl; the dissolution of another man's marriage to an American woman gives way to an unusual rebound relationship in "Deepak Misara's Secretary." While all of the stories are set in Nepal, one, "This world," also dips into New Jersey and explores the ambivalence of a young woman deciding her future and by extension, her identity. Those seeking the exoticism so often found in contemporary Indian fiction will not here there are no lush descriptions or forays into spirituality. In an assured and subtle manner, Upadhyay anchors small yet potent epiphanies in a place and Kathmandu, and quietly calls it home. The collection of short stories by Samrat Upadhyay, *Arresting God in Kathmandu* unfolds the story of Nepali people living in Kathmandu valley. Being a Nepali born writer

Upadhyay migrates to the United States of America and picks up the issue of the Nepali society in his writing. While picking up the issues of the Nepali society he sometimes partially misrepresents and at the same time partially represents in Nepali society and culture. He has presented negative aspects of the Nepali society. This becomes just a support for westerners who believe that people of orient are rustic, uncivilized, irrational and ignorant and so on. Why Nepali born writers like Samrat Upadhyay partially misrepresent Nepali society and culture vice-versa. And at the same time, why he revisits and projects about his native land through his creation? What is the intention behind his emotional attachment to his origin?

Samrat Upadhyay himself represents the ethos of expatriate writer and people living in western metropolitan society seeking for own identity living in diasporic stance facing the problem like dislocation, disjuncture, identity crisis and fragmented self. There could not be any other reason behind projecting native land through his creation besides love for his nation and nationhood. In diasporic saturation a writer or character always feels some sort of lack and to fulfill such lack writer creates his native state through his memory which is fragmented in nature.

In postcolonial theory we have now reached a new stage in the succession of key concepts. After the celebrations of hybridity in the work of Homi K. Bhabha and Gayatri Spivak, it is now the concept of diaspora that has sparked animated debates among postcolonial critics. *Arresting God in Kathmandu* intervenes in the current discussion about the new diaspora by placing the rise of diaspora within the politics of multiculturalism and its suppression by a politics difference and cultural right theory.

Diaspora and hybridity are the acute result of transnational migration. The divided identity of the characters, the incapability of the characters to experience the freedom, the excrements of the colonial culture and the nostalgia of the homeland of

origin experienced by the characters in *Arresting God in Kathmandu* tempts the critics of cultural hybridity and diaspora which deals the dialectics of American society in terms of the color and race.

In name of the opportunities and rights non western existence is always keep in the pedestal. It will also explore non-westernness that has been thwarted with the absolute power and sense of superiority exercised by the western power. It will also try its best to display how the prevalent grand narrative of equity and equality western democracy makes the miserable condition of the people.

The term Diaspora comes from the Greek translation of the bible meaning " to scatter about, " from dia-" about, across", and, speirein " to scatter". Safran argues that the term 'diaspora' has its western beginnings in the Jewish diaspora communities, extending to groups " such as the Armenian, Chinese, Greek, Indian, Kurdish, Palestinian, Parsi, and Sikh, whose experience of expatriation, institution building, cultural continuity, and refusal to relinquish their collective identities have demarcated them from mere immigrants.

The term has come to mean group of people were expelled or migrated from their historic homeland out into different parts of the world. Further, it implies that they established new political communities in those places, making contact with the people of the receiving lands for various purposes, but generally remaining closely together as communicates of religion, culture and welfare.

Alison Blunt defines the term diaspora through the words scattering, transnational, migration and resettlement. Within the field of geography, these terms are used, alternately, to describe very specifically, but also generally, the various circumstances of migration people. However, this muddle of language also points to a different phenomenon- the practice of geographers to describe patterns of human

migration as well as the social identities and political constructions that are created by diaspora population around the places they call home.

The term 'diaspora' is inherently geographical, implying a scattering of people over space and transnational connections between people and places. Geography clearly lies at the heart of diaspora both as a concept and as lived experience, encompassing the contested interplay of place, home, culture and identity through migration and resettlement. (282)

Descriptively, diasporas have been presented as a set of social spheres (Safra, a mode of categorization and typology (Cohen and a distinct social form type of consciousness, and mode of cultural production (Vertovec). Butler argues that rather than being viewed as an ethnicity, diaspora may be alternatively considered as a framework for the study of a specific process of community formation. However, for the purpose of literature, the focus is on theoretical and empirical contributions within the discipline of geography. (194)

Beginning in the early 1990s, there has been increasing attention drawn to the topic of diaspora. In addition to individual books devoted to the topic (Brah, Kalra et al. 2005) there are several academic journals, such as *Mobilities and Diasporas: A journal of Transnational Studies*, where the study of diasporas flows across sovereign borders (Basch, Glick Schiller, & Szanton Balanc, Smith and Guarnizo, According to Nagel.

If the international signifies relationships between states or actors representing different states, then the transnational refer to linkage forged by social groups who exist seemingly in spite of the nation-state and who, through their transnational activities, undermine state sovereignty and the hegemony of national borders and ideologies. (248)

The language of 'behaviors' or 'a practice' is also common in transnational discourse, indicating a spectrum of transnational types among diasporic communities. For many authors, the term is tied up with ideas about the agency of migration people, often described as hybrid transgressive, or translocal.

Transnationalism, can be thought as political dialogue between nation-states. Much of the transnationalism discourse aims to disrupt the 'bipolar' conception of emigration, in which one breaks with the home country and arrives at the host country (Bailey, Burrell, Dosi, Rushubriwa, & Myers Staeheli and Nagel Drawing largely on ethnography (Christou, Veronis, Walsh, to support their theories, Some geographers describe transnational 'behaviours' and 'practices' that challenge the attachment of a population's relation to a single nationality that does not allow for the in between ness that many migrants experience.

In some of the transnationalism discourse in geography , these practices and the people that produce such practices are constituted by hybrid understandings and identities. In fact, transnationalism and hybridity often seem to be a necessary pairing in this literature.

Jackson, Crang, and Dwyer posit that "Geographies of transnational space must clearly recognize the continuing power of nation-states in defining the framework and setting the terms within which transactional social relations take place" (5). Indeed critiques of these positions are many; citing a romanticized notion of hybrid people and spaces as somehow liberated in the literature, but under theorized on the ground. Peach writes,

The fashion for postmodernism in human geography is that cultural Geography, with emphases on hybridity, in-betweenness and flexibility, has claimed the epithet of 'new' while social geography,

with its engagement in the 'real' world, with numbers and census categories, seems to have become, by default, 'the old'.

Bailey echoes this sentiment, noting that in the rush to theorize the hybrid, space-time relationship plays no explicit role in, for example, cross-disciplinary investigations, and tying together work from sociology, political science, anthropology, and cultural studies. Ostensibly, geography stands to fill the 'spatial' gaps in both of these discourses, but more specificity with regard to theorizations and methods are needed.

This study on *Arresting God in Kathmandu* is intended to indicate how a damaged self-information which befalls on the main character. Since its publication different critics have analyzed it from multiple perspectives. In this point Edward Julian claims:

Arresting gold in Kathmandu primarily explores the articulation of Diaporic statements of writer himself and the scenario of story itself. From the first publication of the book, it has received diverse criticisms. The following are some of the important critics who try to explore Upadhyay's *Arresting God in Kathmandu* in their own words.

(12)

Mark Liechty, one of the prominent literacy critic and writer introduces Upadhyay as a first Nepali born fiction writer writing in English in the west. He views as : "Samrat Upadhyaya is the first Nepali born fictin writer writing in English to be published in the West. His first book is the short story collection *Arresting God in Kathmandu* (32). Liechty does not make any significant remarks about the book but he introduces Upadhyay. The inauguration of writing in English by the Nepalese writer has been credited to upadhyah. As liechty goes on writing like this me find him boasting on

being westerner. He ignores the orient as he says so because he intends to explore the fact that orient lacks capable writers writing in English language.

Arresting God in Kathmandu frames Nepali culture according to the dichotomy of tradition and development. As Nanda Shrestha remarks, "since the onset of Europe's colonial expansions there has been a colonial plan of one type or another" guiding the development of what the west considers underdeveloped countries (37). While most of the physically obtrusive elements of European imperialism have been removed the psychological colonization of these nations remains in the people's strong desire and conform the European standards and system, which they identify as being superior to their own traditional culture. Another literary scholar Stan Goldberg finds Nepali culture odd and different form the western culture. He even quotes the Nepalese have arranged marriages, dalhat, Hindu deities, tika, saris, rupees, and odd names, he asserts:

The colorful kaleidoscopes of people that inhabit this city are more than just moving filler between the objects of our attention. The lives of these mostly Hindu people are filled with a potpourri of common events that together make lives that are at once so similar to our own and at the same time because of their cultural base, so different.

Nepalese have arranged marriages, dal bhat, Hindu deities, tika, saris, rupees, and really odd names. (5)

According to Goldberg the oriental culture is not civilized one. He intends to inferiorize the Nepalese culture on the basis of his observation. He finds that arranged marriages are odd, dal bhat and tika, saris are odd. These are some of the instructure that Goldberg brings forward to prove his logic. The criticism as proposed by Goldberg not only carries the inferiorizing motif but superior feeling of his own culture.

Arresting God in Kathmandu explores the nature of desire and spirituality in a changing society- a - society which both love and family are becoming modernized. Here are husbands and wives bound together by arranged marriage but sometimes driven elsewhere and wives bound together by an intense for connection and transcendence.

Sajan Kumar writes:

One of the most admired critic Karn state that *Arresting God in Kathmandu* carries some of the names which are amazing for the westerners. This confirms that oriental culture carries nature that is inferior to the occident. It proves that Karn also advocating the westerner's view toward East.

Another critic Richard Bernstein argues that Upadhyay's Stories connctet to reader with the world that is somehow very far away and very familiar. This view of Bernstein somehow supports the feeling of expatriate writers and people's feeling of love towards their root in depth. As Richard Bernstein writes, " Mr. Upadhyay's stories bring us into contact with a world that is somehow both very far away and very familiar" (3).

The above mentioned criticism and observations are merely surface studies and do not explore the feeling and emotions of the expatriate writers and people living in metropolitan society with disaporic consciousness suffering from issues like dislocation, disjuncture, hybridity, and identitiy crisis which has been explored in the text.

This thesis is a library-based research; it uses a close, discursive analytical style which draws on the non-western concepts and vocabularies. The research is based on the authentic cites. Guidance from the lecture and professors is taken as the supportive tool. In addition to it the texts on the issue of non-western studies are taken as the tool in making the application of the novel from the viewpoint of non western studies the different extracts of the novel are taken to prove the hypothesis.

II. Construction of 'Kathmandus of Mind' in Upadhyay's *Arresting God in Kathmandu*

The term diaspor carries the essence of identity nationality and sense of locality. It is homesickness due to which a person always feels lonely and isolated. Because of physical distance to his motherland diasporic person couldn't direct his imagination out of his nation and nationalities. Samrat Upadhyay Nepali born writer lives in USA and writes in English but his almost all writings are based on Nepal geography and even the circumstance. Events and strokes are all founded in Nepali phenomenon. In *Arresting God in Kathmandu* there is no direct linkage between Upadhyay's writing and diaspora. But personalities of his characters, stories and their circumstances let no one to feel the writer's sense of diasporism. The stories collected in the novel "Arresting god in Kathmandu" incorporate almost all aforementioned characteristics. Upadhyay's intense fondness in giving Nepali names to his characters displays his diasporic sensation. The settings of the stories are all taken place in Nepal surroundings. Their actions, dialogues and circumstances highlight Nepalese essence.

The very first story of the novel "the Good shopkeeper" vividly shows the diasporic sensation of the writer through the characters and their familiar problems. A couple named Pramod and Radhika lives in a clumsy room of Kathmandu valley. Their location gives close attachment of the writer to his nation. They are living a very obstructive life with a small seven-month baby. The word used in their dialogue too redirects the heartily relation of his own mother and sentiments. When Pramod is dismissed from his job because of bankruptcy of the office Radhika says, "Hare Shiva," she said. "How are we going to pay the next month's rent?" her eyes filled with tears. "What's the use of crying now? That's why never tell you anything. Instead

of thinking with a cool mind, you start crying. " (1)

'hare Shiva is typical Nepali word -prayer to God people use in their hardship in order to grand blessing and help. Along with this, tearful eyes of Radhika in the

conversation with his husband exhibit the emotion of soft-hearted eastern woman.

Upadhyay remembers every the tears of woman in their hardships. They think themselves that they can do nothing instead of following the perennial drops of tear.

This conversation makes us feel that we are not more far than our surroundings.

Upadhya, while swimming in the pool of concrete and brawny dark life o Pramod forgets to use English style of praying and dialogues which is very important to proves his stance as a diasporic write.

Through the heart rendering depiction of Radhika and discloses the painful and difficult living situation of Nepalese people. He has also localized the effects of advanced science and technique upon the people who are deprived of. In the story Pramod tries to convince his wife because of lack of computer knowledge he has to left the job at office where he has been working for past three years. Radhika gets irritated to his point so annoyingly says

"So only you should suffer? why not one of the new accountants ? What about Suresh?" "He knows computers," Pramod said. "He also knows influential people." She wiped her eyes with the back of her hand, and then opened the bedroom door to check on the baby. (2)

Radhika does not believe that the new accountant is skill employed not only because he can cope with advanced technology but he also knows influential people. Here Upadhyaya depicts the role of nepotism in Nepalese context. It seems that he is just comparing the job opportunities in Nepalese and American context. In America people get chance to meet the job opportunities according to their qualification but in

Nepal educational qualification lags behind to know some of the influential people. He seems critical to his own national rude and impractical and unequal, unjust practices. "Shambhu-da" is also another typical character in the story. He is depicted in the story as a person who ever makes action according to his voice. He assures Pramod to get job every time when they met but it becomes only the way of ship in the water.

The next morning, while it was still dark, he went to the Pashupathinath Temple, made a slow round of the temple complex, and stood in the line to get tika from the priest in the main shrine. After putting the paste on his forehead with his third finger, he prayed that Lord Shiva's blessing would help him. (2)

Abovementioned activities of Pramod in the early morning show his theism and drag us to the point of nationality at the same time. Nepalese people traditionally and culturally have belief of the existence of god. We worship Pashupatinath as our "Grnad Temple" whose little grace upon us helps to overcome the hardships of life easily. In such desperate situation too, Pramod visits Pashupatinath and keeps strong believe that lord Shiva surely listens his voice and would help him in days to come.

Pramod becomes penniless from the lucrative job in the finance company. Though he admits bankruptcy of his office as the reason of his dismissal but in reality it is his lack of computer knowledge. He tries his best to lure Shambhu-da in order to him get the job only because he knows many influential people in the city. Sensing no any sign of job in the city Radhika weeps and lese her strength but Pramod showing cherished appearance gives rays of hope to Radhika. Radhika germinates an idea of opening a shop selling their land in the south to finance shop but Pramod dislikes her idea and says.

I'm not going to become a shopkeeper at this stage in my life, he said , I am an accountant , do you understand? I have worked for many big people. Later, while she slept, he regretted having snapped at her. For one thing, he doubted whether the land would fetch much money, because it was getting swampier every year. (8) Pramod becomes boastful and takes the job of shopkeeper as inferior one. He could never imagine as a shopkeeper. He imagines that it would be humiliating if he opens as shop and his friends like Hemraj comes to buy things.

Gallivanting Padhupatinat and City Park has become daily routine of Pramod after losing the job. He ceased believing in the sticky words of Shambhu-da but still has hope that lord shiva would help him. Once when he was sitting on a bench in the city park, there comes a women to sell peanuts. The small , pulp woman started hobnobbing with him. Though he is jobless he tells her "in an office" (9) as a reply of her question "where do you work? " (9). The simple way of young woman attracts Pramod very much, when she says:

Not me. I don't think all that much. What's there to think aobut? Life is what God gives us, my husband says it to any of our relatives who is unhappy and comes to him for advice. In this city I see so many worried people. They walk around not looking at anyone, always thinking.

Upadhyay seems to be missing his simple way of life in Nepal. Here 'city people' in their dialogue for busy and uncaring people where he has been living. He hates the way people think and act forgetting their actual role to play as a human being on the earth. The simple words of woman divert him to the happier world relaxing problems and hardships of life. The formality between them changes into informally so he follows her to her room for a nice cup of tea. In a cozy room Ashan with a sip of tea it

becomes an inevitable act to make love. Pramod expenses whole day with a woman. He forgets his duty towards his wife and newly born child. They ate, slept and then he felt removed from all obligations and responsibilities. Visiting a servant girl becomes daily routine and one day he even stayed whole night with her leaving Radhika alone full of tears in the room with a child. When he returns to his room Radhika tries her best to get him in track. She tries her best to feel him his responsibilities. Conforming whether he's drunk or not after his arrival living a night out she says "what happened to yo? Don't you know that you are a father? A husband?" (14).

In this embarrassing situation he directly goes to the servant girl at Aasan. This is the last time when he becomes able to rejuvenated his strength and hope. Playing with his baby-doll, Pramod sings a very popular song and said to Radhika "maybe we should start a shop. What do you think? "I think ;you would make a very good shopkeeper. (19). At last Pramod realizes his mistakes and believes that being a shopkeeper is not a humiliating job. So , in the night both of them slept with a beautiful dream of becoming a very successful shopkeepers in the future.

Most of the diasporic writings share the same theme of nostalgia, dislocation and longing for the motherland. Toloyan, a diasphoric critic, hints at an additional factor in this aspect:

A corollary of this points is that the object of knowledge in area studies is also always in some sense a given and always , in another sense, created. For example, the territory and populations of the middle east existed as sociopolitical domains before orientalism , and then middle eastern studies, represented and transformed them into disciplinary objects. They continue to exist, but in sublte ways how they think of themselves, how they act what they are, is altered by the dialectic

between self-study and the disciplinary and are studies emanating from powerful quarters. (655)

In spite of these kinds of differences most diasporic writing reveal certain feature that similar. Many of the works discuss the individual / communities attachment to the homeland and the urge to belong in the settled land and as a result of this they reveal a hybrid existence as stated by Lau:

They are people who are as multicultural as they are multi-lingual. They do not regard themselves as fully belonging in either culture, and have practically evolved a sub-culture peculiar to themselves. They try to take the best from both worlds, but suffer the sense of hybridity and cultural entanglement. (241)

The Cooking Poet is another story collected in the book. The background of the story clearly opens the diasporic sense of vision of the writer. He places his all characters, setting and incidents in Nepalese context. He has presented the drowsy hangover of Rana regime in Nepal that lasted for one hundred and four years. Through a presentation of Nepali contextual circumstances in stories, Upadhyay disperses his sense of diaspora. He relates almost all incidents that has happened in foreign land to the Nepali context. We also can observe the mixture of culture and its effects in his writings and even in the presentation style.

"the cooking Poet" has presented Acharya as a famous poet who has taken nations's foremost awards. Now he is at the age of sixty living with his wife and two children in a comfortable house. Over the years he had also been mentor to those whom his friends recommended as serious young writers. One young man " Giri " impressed him much through his writing. He is impressed by the way Giri has expressed his insights with subtle echoes of the classical tradition, infused with

rigorous quality of modernity. So Mr. Acharya allowed him to visit him as his precious guest and welcomes him very magnificiently:

"come in, come in", Acharya shouted when he saw Giri standing hesitantly at the gate, as if afraid to break into this family scene.

"make yourself comfortable ; don't be shy, " Acharya said, " Consider yourself family." He had never before offered such hospitality to a pupil and he detected a note of awkwardness in his voice. (24)

Acharya welcomes Giri so formatively before reading his newer poems. Once, the poem of Giri was so imaginative. He was lost somewhere in the fictive world. He was flying being weightless over the crowded streets. Acharya appreciates the poem as "this is good " (24) trying to calm Giri's excitement. Acharya showed some of the areas of improvement so that poem itself can be improved but he knew that they were only faults seem to add dimensions rather than lessen it.

Days were passing frequently acharya started to become furious towards Giri. He accused Giri that he couldn't flow with the timing of tide. Ocasinally Giri missed his schedule of weekly appointment. He sometimes scolded him too but when he reads his poems he could feel foolish because they were as good as ever. Acharya managed the time for Giri to read his peom in the auditorium. While Mr. Giri was continuing reading his poems the auditorium was filled with silence. Giri was reading the poem enthusiastically raising his hands in the air and sometimes his eyes to see the audiences Acharya felft pride of Giri and he also felt the Giri needs protection although form what he don't know.

In this time, Acharya himself was trying to write and epic but he was well acknowledged that it was not going well. Often when acharya sat doen to write, he was best by anxiety. It pushed him to doubt the quality of this past works. He went

most of his poems and found lacking. Now he was making Giri ideal of the epic unknowingly.

As already mentioned, diaspora takes the identity in its core. Whether it is national or personal identity. Upadhyaya's almost all stories included in "*Arresting God in Kathmandu*" deals with national identity but writer shifted towards personal identity crisis. Because of the enthusiastic and stout personality of the newly borned poet "Giri", Acharya shadowed his own identity. His writings where his pure identity but he started doubting his own past poems he himself had created. So, this story becomes one of the milling stones to prove the diasporic conception of Samrat Upadhyay in his book *Arresting God in Kathmandu*.

Although the diasporic life portrayed to some extent is realistic, yet it is also fictionalized due to the type of imagination that is indulged in diasporic writings. Emphasizing this point, Jasbir Jain refers to it as a 'split' narrative'. She further discusses the past and present of diasporic literature as being different -the past has different 'history', 'tradition', 'regional and colonial memories and political equations' and the present has different kinds of 'loneliness, isolation, social ghettoisation, success, affluence and recognition'. Even though they live in the present they co-exist in the past too (76). Yet another point of interest is that of Ramraj in his article "Diaspora and Multiculturalism" wherein he discusses the difference among immigrant, exile and expatriate writing.

According to him "exile and expatriate writing is more immersed in the situation at home and the circumstance that prolong the individual's exile or expatriation" more than with "the émigré's or émigré's community's relationship with the dominant society" (229). Therefore he thinks that diasporic writing is often about "people who are linked by common histories of uprooting and dispersal, common

homelands , and common cultural heritages", but due to the political and cultural particularities of the society, on the other hand it develops different cultural and historical identities (229).

Diasporic condition compels one to roam own alive land and its culture and tradition mentally if not physically. Though one pretends to be native lander where he's living his thoughts and actions are always represents towards his own motherland and culture that had flourished over there. The story " Deepak Misra's Secreteray" is a symbolic of this condition.

The left out husband Deepak enrolls in trouble once again when he was informed that his wife living the same city. Along with the information about his wife he was checking the files given by his secretary Bandana. He has rambling in his past memories of his wife rather than checking the files. It was believed that his business would collapse after departure of his wife. He would plunge into ' raksi ' and his world would break apart (35).

Memory and nostalgia have also pious importance in Diaspora. Diasporic figure is always haunted by the memory. In this or that way, they are linked with their nationality. Here in this story too, Bandana-ji and Jill can be taken as the true replication of mother land and foreign and respectively. Though, one pretends to be stick with foreign land but his heart always thumbs for own nationality. Deepak Mishra's longing for Jill- foreign wife-is nothing more than the superficial attachment but longing for Bandana-ji though she was ugly and pregnant looking woman- is the true sense of love. Cultural and ethical difference always drags us toward our homeland.

Some of the words used in the story also give the sense of diasporic conception. While Deepak meets Jill in the bar he describes her as "she was wearing a

'phuli' on her nose, its diamond glittering and her beauty syung him as it had when they first met" (39). Instead of using the word alcohol Upadhyaya used the word 'raksi' and 'phuli' are also the part of diasphoric reading.

Smarat Upadhyaya becomes more diasphoric in his presentation itself. He has set almost all the stories in the different places of Kathmandu, the capital city of Nepal. Most of the names of the characters are also Nepali. It clearly shows that though his is living in America hi cannot detach his mind and soul from Nepal the native land.

Through the same story the fluctuation of the diasporas mind of smart Upadhyaya can also be observed. He is ticked between two cultures. The love making scene described in the story has nothing to say more than disclosing the acquired culture. Through this depiction Upadhyaya is contrasting the two cultures. Outwardly he is trying to adopt the culture where he is living by depicting the sexual scene so vibrantly but at the same time he is stuck by the culture where he was born and brought up. While describing the love making scene Upadhaya writes:

On Saturday when Bandana secretary girl- visits office for some important work to be done, they fall in love making act. But at the time of sex too, Upadhyaya relates the word pronounced by Bandana to the Eastern religious holy word. This is also another proof for Upadhaya to be diasporic writer because he acts physically as if European but mentally he is stuck for the tradition of his own motherland and unknowingly he is posing the value over it.

Setting words, circumstances and even characters used in the stories are good enough to hint his diasporic intention in writing. Almost all the stories take place in Nepal. Not only that he has used some exact Nepali words in the stories though he is writing it for international domain. After realizing the fake relationship with Jill

Deepak prefers bandana to Jill. This win over Jill valuing Bandana symbolizes nothing more than his failure to adopt foreign culture. At this moment he also becomes the follower of fate. Outside the bus shop he listens the song of Jagjit Singh and Chitra Singh lining:

This night I have to stay awake. Till dawn :

My fate is etched like this

Sorrow has entered my heart.

Stars why don't you fall asleep?

Deepak closes the eyes while listening to the song and in a moment he realizes the voice he was hearing was bandana's not those of the famous singer's his believe in fate simply clarifies his diasporic sensibility.

Arresting God in Kathmandu is the true replica of diaspora. The book measures the diasporic condition of the writer. All the setting and character of novel are set in the periphery of Kathmandu and its surroundings. No nay literacy critics has let their eye out critics the book in different layer of standard. In this respect Amitav Ghos states , "the arrival of a major new talent. A terrific book full of tenderness, compassion and rare insight" (7). Ghos has taken Upadhyay as a major new talent.

Diasporic writing mostly becomes a response to the lost homes and to issues such as dislocation, nostalgia, discrimination, survival, cultural change and identity. Dislocation is one of the first feelings that haunt a diasporic community. There are several factors which are the reasons for the dislocation of a community from their home country to foreign land. These can be broadly divided into two such as voluntary and no-voluntary movements. Voluntary movements, can occur due to two reasons namely i) educational need and ii) economic need. On the other hand, non-voluntary movements occur due to political and national compulsions and in the case

of women, it could be marital cause. When diasporic people find themselves dislocated from the home society, they are upset mentally and strive to remember and locate themselves in nostalgic past. Through nostalgia they try to escape from the reality of life in the settled land:

Nostalgia, by its very nature, often produces a romanticized perspective of the homeland. Indulgence in these illusion evokes a pseudo comfort and security which sustains the individual away from home, the motherland configures into a phantom of displaced paradise. (Sheik: 189)

Most often the first generation of a diasporic community face loneliness and alienation in the new country and due to this they do not mingle with others in the settled society. Even if they try to blend with the other community people, most of the settled society. Even if they try to blend with other community people, most of the time they find it difficult as they find and that they are discriminated. A sense of alienation, loneliness, and feeling of loss are inextricable for the diasporas people. Even though they face external problems like discrimination and identity crisis, their own inner problems like loneliness and alienation cause more suffering to them.

The story titled "the Limple Bride" also gives the picture of western view of orient where savage people, poor people and uncivilized people live, and where most of the people keep wasting time involving in sexual activities which is not socially accepted. The relationship between Hiralal, Rukmani, father-in-law and daughter-in-law show the obscure and social relationship whereas Moti spends his life sinking in sexual alcoholism.

The diasporic sentimentality of Upadhyay has also been disclosed in the novel through his sub-titles in the novel. He gives the title "during the festival." Festivals are

mostly celebrated in Asia context rather than American or European, each and every time when he describes anything. Undoubtedly give the picture of own home land for example in the story 'During ' the festival while Ganesh the main character of the story describes his wife he says:

Her neatly combed hair pulled back a tika on her forehead. He could imagine the taxi driver peeking at her in the rear view mirror unable to take his eyes off her faintly powdered face, wondering what kind of husbands she went home to how it would feel to lie to her and hear her sigh under his caress. (84)

The very word "tika" on her forehead clearly shows the diaphoric sensibility of Upadhyay. He describes his wife as if we are seeing in Nepali lady ready to go somewhere to celebrate a festival. At first Ganesh seems to appreciate his wife but in the span of time he starts to doubt each and every action of her wife, he even doubts when she is happy or sad. He hates all the female gender except her mother. Ganesh happens to see an old photograph of her mother in the camera. At the same time he was reminded the people in the neighborhood whispering he was the child of her union with her lover, not with his father. Sometimes, Upadhyay seems to be guided by oriental discourse too it can be because of his long term contact with west. He seems to be mocking the orient culture of purity. While Ganesh accusing her wife as "My wife is having an affair" (91). He didn't know whether that was true but he wanted to reach the truth, no matter what it was, even though a lie. Being very distressful, he started to roam Durbar square, a small boy face painted white, taunted a large man wearing a mask with wide, thick lips and large glaring eyes (91). Started to make a peacock dance. He used to fly every direction. This masked man swooned with the power of deity and the onlookers gave him wide breath.

Upadhyay shows that he has strong belief on power dity, though he was living in the land of science and technology. When some spiritual questins arises , the writer firmly puts his soul in reason tradition. Ganesh , the protagonist of the novel feels relief when he spends his panic heart with that little boy and masked man performing a chance. So, during the festival levels Upadhyay longing for his own culture i. e. culture like that of Indra Jatra. He can be happy even in the belief of his people whether they are only family or imaginary.

"The Room next Door" is a family story. The condition and mentality of the family members if a daughter give a birth before her marriage is shown in the story. Sakuntola and Mohand were having a good life with their son and daughter. Their children used to go different colleges in different cities; Sakuntola was very kind, lovely and caring whereas she is not so satisfied with her husband. Most of the time he use to remain idle and had not managed the family time.

Shanti, the daughter of family used to write a letter frequently but it had been four month she hadn't written a letter so mother was very happy unstill . They wanted to know about her but she remained shadowed.

She could not sleep well. Once a night she managed to sleep when she has gone through a ugly dream happening to her daughter. She dreamed that Shanti had fallen into well and was shouting for help. (102)

The very dream drags the writer to his homeland. It is believed eastern world that dream is the reflection of ongoing reality. Believing the fact, sakuntala also believes that her daughter has also got some kind of misfortune.

Mohandas takes helps of Rabindra lives at Kathmandu to know her daughter's condition. After three days Rabindra opened the curtain stating that "she is pregnant"(105). It was said that it was already four months. Shanta was so scared so

she stopped writing to her family. She said that the boy would promised to marry her but he run away when she was impregnated. Shanty was taken back to home and kept hideously by her mother. The mother repeatedly used to say that she has cut her family's name, fame and prestige. People were taking about the family havig bastard child. Nandani one of the neighbors daughter that Oh yes everyone knows, it was a bus driver, you know now that Bijaya was, sashaying her helps for every low life in town. I used to tell her mother: watch your daughter. Now I say they deserve it. But to kill the bastard baby; chee chee. Whole family name down the drain. Who would marry her now?

The mentioned sentence states the reality of eastern tradition. No one accepts 'kumari ama' sakuntala is rigid/ firm not to accept the baby but Nandani indirectly motivates her not to get abortion. Mohandas seems little but frank and understanding in this matter so he dares to face the truth. Sakuntala gives 'Santa no change to visit anywhere. At laboring late, she orders 'lamfu' to fetch midwife from another village so no one knows her daughter's delivery. As soon as she gave birth to a child, the child was taken to another room letting his mother see him for the first time. Sakuntala wanted to take her to orphanage but father and shanty strongly rejected the idea. So the marriage between 'Lamfu' who was roaming the house nearly for an year and shanty was arranged. After the guests left shanty and lamfu went to their room. Sakuntala confronted that she can't see them together, so Mohandas says:

The problem is solved. She is your daughter and that the child is your gradson. His eyes softened,"Sakuntala, what is written in fate always happens, why do you fight so hard? "What is written in fate always happens, why do you fight so hard?"what did I do to deserve it" sakuntala questioned it's always about you, isn't it"

Sakuntala is not satisfied with the present condition. She neither can accept Lamfu as son-in law or she can accept her gradson. Mohandas becomes fatalist. He has a strong believe that whatever is writer in fate cannot be changed. Both Lamfu and Shanti seem contented with their roles in family. But it had created torture to mother so he couldn't sleep one night that is why she happened to see the next door where Lamfu and Shanti were sleeping. She knew that they were making love nearly at 2 o'clock happily. It is stated as:

Aunt Sakuntala woke up late that night to the sound of laughter from the other room. First it was Shanti's voice squeling, followed by a low heh, heh, from computer. Then, after a short silence, Aunt Shankuntala heard a shuffling horse. She glanced at the clock beside her bed, it was two o'clock.

Each and every time, Upadhayay relates the sexual sound with eastern sacred religious hymning sound. Ohmn The very incident show the content life of Lamfu and Shanti. Lamfu seem happy playing most of the time with child. The story ends with the silence of the mother at the act of daughter and son-in-law.

The story entitled "This world" has got the setting of both Nepal and America. Upadhayay, through this story tries his best to disclose the cultural differences prevailing in the societies of Nepal and America. Representing Jaya-missing at the end and kanti's unfading love to Jays simply reflects the sense of effect of own cultural and traditional values. Whatever and whatsoever environment we grew up, we will have the effect of our own culture and true identity. Diasphoric people have the sense of in betweenness and no whereness, the sense is clearly shown up by the actions of Jaya and kanti through the story. Jaya has adopted the American culture and wants the same whatever he is. Having alcohol and changing and playing with

girlfriends is simple thing for him. Whereas Kanti at first has got different view. She has respect towards her nation best when the story proceeds forward, she keeps her mind changing fluctuating. The very starting of the story shows however and whatever people can do to get green cards. It narrates: They met in New Jersey at a wedding party. Jaya knew the bride, a young Brahmin woman of twenty four from Kathmandu, and Kanti was taking a course in economics at New York university with the bright groom. A Nepali professor twenty years old than the bride. It was an arranged marriage, and Kanti heard that the bride's parents have given away their daughter to the older professor in order to get their green cards.

Here Upadhyay is of the opinion that of anything to get green cards. They even don't think twice to get their daughters marriage with the man having double age of the girl. The marriage has come only as the background action for meeting of Jaya and Kanti. Because of this ceremony the intimacy grows up between them that ultimately provides evidences for proving the diasporic sensibility of the writer, Kanti was taking a course in economics in New York University. She met Jaya at same marriage ceremony who spoke so familiarly with her, his frankness really attracts her. He seems to be American itself through she likes him. They were hanging the wine a cup once and again. They were laughing and making loud sound. Kanti became so close to him that she even told him that how alienated she was at Kathmandu. While she told that how "she was a restless ghost in my own country"

From the very of celebration they couldn't make their meetings frequent. In some of the short meeting they exchanged their numbers and Jaya told her that when she will be at Nepal not to forget make call to him because he is also going Nepal I may. In the same month Kanti completed the course so planned to go back to her own country homeland. She had made her mind that she is not going to live in Nepal for a

long time. As soon as he stepped in Tribhuwan International Airport. She made a call to Jaya and planned to meet at a hotel. While they met, he was with Jack Daniel's: in the talking Jaya said that he was fed up with this country and wants to return America as soon as possible. In the evening they roamed the city using ring road twice and thrice. Jaya started to pick up and leave Kanti from her home as Kanti also started to visit his man's son frequently. Families, neighbors and relatives were skeptical about their relation but they gave no attention to them and they kept on doing their business.

Homesickness is the crux of diaspora. The actions of Kanti in the early years of America really show the sense of homesickness she always used to long for her home. She missed childhood friends with whom she would already have lost touch. She missed hot-hot momos and touch of her mother. No one understood why she stopped gathering with her friends at college. She received no phone calls except of her mother. All this is narrated as:

By her fourth year in college, though, she began to pine for home. For the smell of garlic on her mother, the gossip with childhood friends with whom she's already lost touch, the taste of hot-hot momos, spicy Nepali dumplings. Her American friends didn't understand why she stopped trudging across the campus to go to class, why she stayed in her room all day with the curtains drawn, why she stopped answering the phone unless the call was from her mother. (146)

As the diasporic sensibility, aforementioned quote displays the real pain and anguish of Kanti while living in foreign land. The desire for small and minute things of the mother and reflection of present life is the true display of diaspora. The step hill and garlic smell also reminds her own country. Heart-rendering nostalgia of her homeland is shown also through the image of her mother and importance of her phone calls to

Kanti. She couldn't feel close to anyone at America. These all evidences show her homesickness.

Kanti flew back to Nepal as soon as she completed her last exam. She couldn't think twice for getting back to Nepal. She sees no way in America but returning back to own country is every way to her. But two weeks after her arrival in Nepal, she began to feel dilapidated. She felt that Kathmandu is changed of lot in these years. She felt irritated seeing "so many houses with their ugly television antennas, so much dust, the way people spat on the street, phlegm shooting out of their mouths, the way people looked at her when she walked on the street wearing pants" (147). Realizing these misbehave and misdeeds of the people she felst that taking her own people and country wrongly. She cannot be convinced with her own critical attitude towards them. So she thinks:

She became convinced that she couldn't live here, and she despised Herself for this, for her consistently critical attitude towards her own people. I live in two worlds; she though, perched, halfway between them. In her restlessness she applied for the master's program at new York University and was accepted. (147)

The aforementioned monologue of Kanti is the crystal mirror of dislocation and anguish of living in two different worlds. For time being people who try to settle in foreign country may see their homeland rustic, barbaric and traditional but in long run they are bound to realize their misinterpretation. Feeling to living in the two worlds means the losing of pure identity. So the writer through the mental representation of Kanti is able to disclose the diasporic feelings in his write-ups.

Jaya has assimilated the American life totally even in Nepal. Playing cricket her lives with beers and whisky with his friends' whole day. Her first call to jaya from

TIA has made them live together most of the the time. They started to visit different places of Kathmandu and its surroundings. People talked so many things about them the give no heed to them. Once in Gokarna they have a misbehave by the group of the boys. Jays had to bear wound too. In a fight, he has said, " I remember their face, I'll take care of them" (149). The rumor and taling about the relationship of Jay and Kanti strted to spread in the city. Kanti's family includelatives were shocked about their relation because they have known Jaya as hoodlum. So many boys and their photographs come to Knait's home but she shows no interest to them. One of the boys having PHD from America has come to see her but for him to she gave no eyes so her mother seaid, "just have one look. You'll like him. I don't know that you see in that hoodlum" (50). The word hoodlum touched Kanti and she spoke loudly, " he is not hoodlum, his life is more interesting that yours. You with your' what will the neighbors say, what will the neighbors think. I want to marry only Jaya mother. I want look at anyone else" (150)

Kanti is badly toched by the mother's word 'hoodlum'. She insists that his life is more interesting and beautiful that of others. She says firmly that if she has to marry, there will be no other than jaya.

After a week, when she caught Jaya kissing a woman at Thamel. She became so frustrate and planned to visit India. She spent more than two weeks visiting Taj mahal its surroundings. When she returned to Kathmandu, she pushed herself to find a job. As a result she started to work in a dilapidated offece, right in the center of the city. She started to keep herself busy as her office work. She was trying her best to forget his keeping herself busy at anytime. After departure they met twice in social occasions but they greeted as if they were strangers. Kanti heard that Jaya has become the hard drunkard and chair smoker nowadays.

A marriage proposal came to her once again by her mother. Prakash was arriving to see her mother has the sole believe that after their marriage they cold settled in America itself. When he arrived, Shanti found him easy to talk to. They kept themselves busy a talking. While they left mother praised him a lot and wanted to know the decision her Kanti says:

He is nice man but I can't make such momentous decision after just one meeting. 'How many meeting do you need?' her mother tone was somewhat harsh. This is not American, you know, where you sleep together before marriage. (156)

In the words of mother also we can feel the sense of diaspora. Upadhyia has not left any character untouched by the love and respect towards the motherland. While talking with Kanti she comparatively gives more priority and respect towards Nepali culture, tradition and code of conducts. Her personal desires and wishes become secondary mater in people's life.

The conversation started and Prakash said that he had already made his mind to marry because he was a bit lovely too. In which she dinied his idea. In the rest of the hours, she observed him minutely where she found him engrossed in music with stadness in his eyes. In the meeting and frequent talks, she knew that he was also in blind love with a girl from another country. They were in pure love but they couldn't change it into marriage. Culture and traditional difference curtained their relationship.

After few days she was roaming at Durvar marg where she nearly bumped upon Jaya. They exchanged some formal talking and departed. Though Jaya wanted to love date with her but he couldn't tell. The same has happened to her also. She swallowed everything that has come in her heart nearly in the find meeting with Prakash, Kanti had an intimate conversation. Both of them talked freely about their

past love. Prakash said she abandoned him because of family obligation. In this matter Prakash says;

Who knows maybe she didn't love me. Maybe she realized the difficulty - I mean getting intimate with someone from a different culture, maybe she has happily married now with a black man, has kids.

I don't know why she left me. (161)

The feeling and wordings Upadhyay gave to Prakash really weigh his diasporic condition. Through the representation of Prakash, Upadhyay has given focus to nationality, culture and tradition. He has created a sense that enough love is same and equal to all but it has got its foundation in its own root.

Now, the day has come to give the final decision to her mother regarding the marriage with Prakash. She gave her decision to her mother that really surprised her. The mother remained cold to her. Now she is ready to go North Carolina. At airport Kanti was talking with everyone but mother was not speaking to her. But while she turned to the next side Kanti saw that her eyes were filled with tears.

III. Formation of Diasporic Cultural Identity in *Arresting God in Kathmandu*

Arresting God in Kathmandu written by Samrat Upadhyay explores the diasporic sense in changing a society. With the assurance and unsentimental wisdom of a long-established writer, Upadhyay records the echoes of modernization throughout love and family which is always characterized by diaspora. Here are husbands and wives bound together by arranged marriages but sometimes driven elsewhere by an intense desire for connection and transcendence. In a city where gods are omnipresent, where privacy is elusive and family defines identity, these men and women find themselves at the mercy of their desires but as the will of their society. Psychologically rich and astonishingly acute, *Arresting God in Kathmandu* introduces a potent new voice in contemporary fiction.

Love and matrimony are as complicated in modern Nepal as anywhere else, as depicted in this debut collection of stories from one of the first Nepal authors writing in English to be published in the West. In only one of the nine stories does the focus waver from the tensions inherent in a class-conscious society where most marriages are still arranged, despite the fast-forward of globalization and a younger population used to traveling abroad or at least hearing about it. Parents such as the mother in "The Room Next Door" are angry and confused when their children are reluctant to conform. This mother is shamed when her college-age daughter becomes pregnant; the girl then marries the only man who might have her unemployed simpleton who has appeared on their doorstep. Young couples at a loss to articulate submerged desires find it difficult to communicate in times of stress. In "The God Shopkeeper," an accountant who loses his job drifts away from his wife and into an affair with a servant girl; the dissolution of another man's marriage to an American woman gives away to an unusual rebound relationship in "Deepak Mishra's Secretary." While all of

the stories are set in Nepal, one, " This world, " also dips into New Jersey and explores the ambivalence of a young woman deciding her future and by extension, her identity.

In this way, almost all the stories in one or other way relate the sense of identity crisis and belongingness to the motherland. Upadhyay connects all his stories to the Nepalese context. Whatever the facilities and services people are having in foreign land are not happy by heart because their soul is filled with the memories of motherland and its culture. His characters in all of the mentioned stories hover in search of their nationality, identity, culture, customs, and sense of belongingness. The very manifestation of lack is the proof of Upadhyay's sense of diaspora.

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