

Tribhuvan University

Politics of Suicide in William Styron's *Sophie's Choice*

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the

Degree of Master of Arts in English

by

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Letter of Recommendation

Mr. Pradip Rimal has completed his thesis entitled "Politics of Suicide in William Styron's *Sophie's Choice*" under my supervision. He carried out his research work from August 16, 2009 to July 19, 2010. I hereby recommend his thesis be submitted for viva voce.

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This is to certify that the thesis entitled “Politics of Suicide in William Styron's *Sophie's Choice*” by Pradip Rimal submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

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Abstract

William Styron's *Sophie's Choice* revolves around the death wish of Sophie, its central character. Sophie is a beautiful but fragile Polish Catholic, and is living under the horrible past of ghastly experience of the World War II. Sophie shares a flat with a fiery Jewish intellect, Nathan who abuses her verbally and physically because she is obsessed with the feeling that she deserves the same. Stingo, the narrator and a freelance writer by profession, is drawn into the heart of their passionate and destructive relationship as witness, confidant and supplicant. Ultimately, Stingo arrives at the dark core of Sophie's past: her memories of pre-war Poland, the concentration camp and the essence of her terrible secret when she was forced to choose between two of her children. Sophie then let die her physically challenged young daughter in exchange of her son and self. This horribly painful decision has engulfed from leading a meaningful life, and the only final solution as 'self-killing.'

Contents

Acknowledgements

Abstract

I. Contextualizing Holocaust Literature and <i>Sophie's Choice</i>	1-8
II. Trauma: A Holocaust Perspective	9-23
III. Traumatic Experiences in <i>Sophie's Choice</i>	24-47
IV. Outcome of Traumatic Experience	48-50
Works cited	