Tribhuvan University

Culture Versus Psychological Ambivalence in Vijaya Malla's *Kumari Shobha*

A Thesis Submitted to the Department of English, Faculty of Humanities and Social Science, Ratna Rajaya Laxmi Campus, Tribhuvan University in Partial fulfillment of the Requirement for the Degree of Master of Arts in English

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Letter of Approval

This thesis entitled **"Culture Versus Psychological Ambivalence in Vijay Malla's *Kumari Shobha",*** Submitted to the Department of English Ratna Rajaya Campus by Rajan Kumar Shivakoti, has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

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Sunkhani-1, Dolakha

Abstract

Vijaya Malla's *Kumari Shobha* is depiction of Newari culture associated with Kumari Pooja. Traditionally a girl of Shakaya caste is selected to be installed in the Kumari House as goddess. She stays at Kumari House until her menstruation. Then she is returned to her home and another virgin girl replaces her. There is a belief that because she has received veneration as a virgin goddess the man who may marry her dies an untimely death. In reality however it seems that most Kumaris do eventually marry.

In the story, while Shobha hesitates to marry because of the persistent belief, the young man who loves her does not entertain the belief and he wants to marry her. The conflicting thought in her mind as well as in the minds of other characters dominates the course of the novel.

After analyzing the text using psychoanalysis as a tool, the conclusion is drawn that the major character, Shobha, is in great confusion and dilemma primarily because of the psychic fear originating in cultural myth. The thesis finds that because of her being in mentally disturbed position, Shobha can neither assimilate nor ignore cultural belief .The unfounded cultural belief that Kumari would lose her husband if she gets married becomes an unresolved tension for her. The ambivalence here lies in her oscillating between the cultural myth and personal desire.

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