

Tension between Traditional and Modern Cultural Practice: A Contextual Reading of Rabi Thapa's *Nothing to Declare*

The aim of this research is to explore the conflict between traditional and modern cultural practice of middle class family in Kathmandu valley focusing on the impact of globalization. Today's world is undergoing such kinds of changes which transcend all the boundaries. This is the century of globalization where all the society with different culture live together. One's culture affects the other culture and mostly western is sweeping away the tradition of eastern culture which has affected the behavior and thoughts of people in the east. This process is marked by the common consumption of culture that has been diffused by the internet, popular culture, media and international travel. The circulation of cultural enables individuals to partake in extended social relations that cross national and regional borders. And this scenario is depicted in one or other way in Rabi Thapa's Nothing to Declare. So this thesis argues that globalization is one of the cause of tension between traditional and modern cultural practice. The harmony is only possible when both the generations acknowledge the necessity of the both faith and reason as essential to lead a healthy life and agree to come near, by respecting the opposing views.

Key Words: Globalization, modernity, cultural flow, migration, cultural admixture

This research paper focuses on the study of the tension between traditional Nepali values and global, modern values in Rabi Thapa's story collection *Nothing to Declare*. In the process, this research also sums up the writer's perspective on the cultural impact of globalization in his stories. To support the claim that the global cultural flow is fast eroding Nepali cultural values, the researcher draws the theoretical insights forwarded by globalization expert Arjun

Appardurai's theory of five scapes of global cultural flow and insights of some of the leading thinkers.

Nothing to Declare is a collection of stories which consists of sixteen stories which are passionate, pensive and at time unhappy. They mirror the experience of the middle class youth of Kathmandu as they build lives, trying to make sense and pushing the limits of a rapidly changing but ever conservative society vividly imagined and deeply felt. Among these sixteen stories, the researcher studies only ten stories (“Initiation”, “Nothing to declare”, “Night out in Kathmandu”, “Desire” “After Party”, “Arranged marriage”, “Angles” “From the Road” “Aryaghat” and “No smoke without Fire”) for the research. All of them are the stories of middle class youths in Kathmandu and about enforcement of artistic presentation of the illusionary suffering of these youngsters, who are unable to escape from the better truth. Middle class youths are the main characters in the story which helps to understand the contemporary modern generation. They mirror the experience of middle class youth of Kathmandu as they build lives, trying to make sense and pushing their limits of a rapidly changing society.

Nothing to Declare is set in Kathmandu, the capital city. It makes the reader wonder about the place and can get a little confusing. However, over a period of time while reading it, the reader gets used to the style and involved in the book. Rabi Thapa's stories are descriptive, bold and try to break the mold of what Nepal stands for- conservative Nepali society. The collection seems to document Kathmandu, not in an attempt to hold into the past, but in an attempt to collect the understanding it for present and future generation.

Nothing to Declare centers on the experience of Nepali middle class youths in and around the capital. They follow a loose chronological progression, starting with initiation ceremony, moving through to boarding school experience in Angles, to college, moving abroad and

returning, to exploring on arranged marriage. It's a series of characters in transition against the backdrop of the city and country in transition. It's about their aspirations, their disappointments, and their revelations.

Thapa's *Nothing to Declare* has received several critical appraisals since the time of the publication. Different critics have analyzed the fiction from multiple perspectives which proves the univocal nature of the book. Some critic have questioned whether the content will appeal to an international audience. "Any one of us could have written it", believes Paavan Mathema writing in *Wave* magazine (June 2011). While it's certainly true that anyone who has ever spent time in Kathmandu feel a stab of nostalgia for the characters portrayed and the places described. Rabi's primary attention is to deal with vivid depictions of the more mundane aspects of Kathmandu life. There's a feeling as if many of the experiences expressed in his stories are deeply personal, such as those of boarding school life in Angles. The stories that are presented in the book give the glimpse of one's life story. One can remember their life's event in any of the story. One can memorize the events after reading the stories which are written chronologically.

There are sixteen stories in the collection and each of them is able to capture the life of Kathmandu. Mostly, the stories are successful to capture the life of the middle class youth. It can be taken as the stories of commoners. Collection does not enter into the politics of the country to describe the events nor is it able to capture mythical aspects of Kathmandu valley in the story collection. We have many more things which can be the subject of stories like that of Maoist insurgency, bad traffic system, stinking rivers, various cultural Jatras and rituals of the valley and many more that could also become the main concern for the foreigners when they visit Nepal. But Thapa has left those areas untouched.

Shreya Thapa in her article "Not Much Declared" writes that the collection is not too far

from other story collections which are already in the market - such as the stories written by Samrat Uphadya, Manjushree Thapa and others. The issues author portrays in the story collection, the issues related to middle class youth in Kathmandu, are already captured in the story collection of those authors. Talking about this commonplace viewpoint of the writer in *Nothing to Declare*, she writes:

Perhaps if Thapa had been the first Nepali to write and publish a collection of short stories, *Nothing to Declare* has been more ground breaking. But if one has already experienced, the likes of Manjushree Thapa, Samrat Uphadya and Sushma Joshi, this collection is not too far from the other books that aim to portray the modern day, middle class, “average” Nepal of today. (2)

This collection of stories aims to portray the middle class life of the modern generation but as the subject has already captured by other writers. Thus, this book has not been successful to capture the new events and subject matters that can make the readers curious about the subject and really attract them.

This book can also be taken as the satire on the contemporary politics of Nepal, where frustration in youth can be seen in the stories. The unemployed youths with the desire to go to the foreign land depicted in the book have taken the story towards the way of the contemporary problem of Nepal. In the title story “Nothing to Declare,” Thapa tries to show the condition of Nepali youth who wants to go abroad for higher study and job opportunity. In this story, Bikram migrates to London to stay with his friend Ragahav. They enjoy a lot forgetting their responsibilities and studies there. They drink and smoke freely, they also go to the bars. For that Thapa writes,

“Nepal suddenly felt far away and perhaps not at all. Sure his parents were thousands of

kilometers away, and so was the dust of Nepal, but his own Nepal, smoking and drinking with friends was right here” (49)

For Nepalese student in foreign countries, it is a great opportunities indulge into smoking and drinking enjoying the freedom and lack of control. Though they earn money there, they spend it all on food, rent, booze, cloths etc. because they want to enjoy their life in carefree way. In this connection Tristan Brusel writes:

Young adults do not hesitate to spend money on alcohol, cards or clothes. Being aboard makes them more affluent and freer to spend money as they wish. Thus, the dilemma of a ‘useless ’or not so necessary consumption may be summed up rapidly as a chose between saving for the family and spending on oneself. As we will see, those two types of behavior are not such contradiction as they may seem, given the transnational features of the migration studied. (63)

Young adult do not know what is necessary and what is useless that is why they do not hesitate to spend money on oneself rather than saving money for families. They spend money on useless things such as alcohol, cards cloths, just to mixed up with the new environment and be a part of modern world as being abroad makes them more free to take decision and act accordingly.

Young adults want to enjoy their lives on their own way. Their journey starts from Nepal with lots of hope and expectations about the foreign countries. When they go abroad, they struggle with their studies and work trying to be independent from their family. Everyone lives their life on their own way. They also feel that they are totally free as they are far away from their family. In this issue the staff reporter of *The Rising Nepal* writes in these words:

The collection does not pretend to be representative of the totality of Nepalese society, or even Kathmandu society. But these young men, despite the changed circumstances of

modern-day Nepal, still represent to the large degree the future of the country. *Nothing to Declare* is their story, one that is inextricable bound up with the valley around which the so-called 'Naya Nepal' continues to perform a dance of exaltation and frustration. (3)

It is real that the story collection does not represent the totality of the Nepalese society. Even it is not the totality of Kathmandu valley but it portrays the changed circumstances of the contemporary youths of the Nepal. Youths are taken as the future of Nepal but due to political instability, they are frustrated and just wander here and there with no work. It symbolizes the so called 'Naya Nepal.' It is the irony present in the story collection.

The tales in this volume are arranged in an age-related progression, starting with stories of childhood and moving into adolescents to the youth. This type of age-based chronology succeeds to give new taste to the reader of the present society. In this regard Vidyadhar Gadgil writes about the story collection:

This sparkling debut, with self-assured prose and convincing narratives, contains a number of gems – notably “The Trial” and the final story of the volume, ‘Valley of Tears’. There are some weak one like “Home for Dashain”- about Maoist violence an almost mandatory strand in any book on Nepal. Thapa sticks firmly to the world he knows, which is at one and the same time the strength and weakness of this collection. Nonetheless, the volume leaves one looking forward to Thapa’s next work, when his ambition will hopefully expand to give full scope to his ample talent. (7)

The analysis shows the weakness and strength of the story collection. The main aim of the collection is to focus on the middle class youth in and around the valley though it has also captured the lives of the rural area and the Maoist-related incidents. Since all the stories are convincing, it proves author’s success in narration. In the collection, “The Trial” and “Valley of

Tears” are praised on the other hand “Home for Dashain” is condemned. However the volume leaves the way for the author’s further step to work. It will help him to improve in his upcoming works.

Though some of the plots are interesting, the style falters sometimes. Some stories have been presented in tough sentences in some places as in the story “Valley of Tears.” He writes, “the endless stream of humanity sobbing through their towns and village were testimony to the utter and complete dissolution of the old order” (163). Similarly in the story “Desire,” it is narrated, “her black, black hair swept clear of her face, smooth-complexioned and perfectly proportioned, her startling eyes reflect his” (31). Such complex descriptions make the expressions redundant and clumsy for the common readers. The stories span the spectrum of experiences of the middle class educated young men of Kathmandu, alternately, disenchanted, passionate and pensive, as they move from high school to marriage. The stories are also the symbol of the moving society from the conservative one.

Some critics have questioned whether the content will appeal to an international audience or anyone else; it is not clear. But its truth that anyone who has spent his/her life in Kathmandu will certainly feel nostalgia for the character portrayed and the place described in the collection. Rabi’s attention to detail and vivid depiction of the more mundane aspects of Kathmandu life make the stories fascinating for reading.

Arjun Appadurai’s the five scapes of global cultural flow theory is applied to prove the hypothesis. Different extracts from book related to the notion has been brought to discussion. McLuhan, Waters, Roland Robertson, Gidden Homi K. Bhabha and Leela Gandhi are some of the leading thinkers and some of whose insights are brought to prove the mentioned aim of the research.

Globalization has got its own historical development. Along the route of free trade as ushered by the GATT, the conscious worldwide efforts started for the combined economic activities outside the national boundaries. Later, this was continued along the establishment of the Brettonwood Institutions. These combined efforts of the actors beyond the national actors for the cause of economic prosperity and security was natural and a new phenomenon at that time because of the huge recession in Europe after World War-I. Though interconnectedness among the rulers and nations was as old as nations' history, it came with an amazing intensity in the 19th century. Proper understanding of the growing interconnectedness of this century was more than just capturing the event of Trojan War and role of princes from the various cities.

After observing the complexity and intensity of the worldwide changes in the various spheres of the society that are consistently contributing to the worldwide interconnectedness, McLuhan proposed a new phrase to denote this phenomenon, global village. Later, as a derivative of this word, came the term globalization. It brought not only the worldwide concerns over the various spheres of contemporary society but also made a fertile land for growing this concern. Though the root-term to globalization was a common word for about 400 years to its present intensity, came into academic debates only during 1980s. The dictionary definitions of global is extended to a certain variation while defining the term globalization, such as, to render worldwide or the act of diffusion throughout the world. Now, the question arises; what is it that is rendered worldwide? And what is it that is diffused throughout the world? Answering these questions is not just answering with one-word answer but with a reference to a certain set of socio-economic and politico-cultural variables.

According to Waters, globalization is “a social process in which the constraints of geography on economic, political, social and cultural arrangements recede, in which people

become increasingly aware that they are receding and in which people act accordingly” (5). This definition of globalization, as given by Waters, presumes globalization as a social phenomenon in which the ever existing barriers in socio-economic or the politico-cultural aspects of living are constantly moving back and, more importantly, people are aware of this fact. Another aspect implied in this definition is the people’s activities, which is harmonious to the change brought by the process of globalization. In this respect, Waters’ definition has a clear proposition that globalization is reflexive phenomenon, too.

Similarly, Roland Robertson’s definition of globalization can be worthwhile. According to him, the concept of globalization incorporates “both to the compression of the world and the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole... both concrete global interdependence and consciousness of the global whole” (8). If we observe this definition, we find the concept of diffusion in his phrases “compression of the world” and as he says the “global interdependence,” he gives us the sense of rendering something worldwide. Though the world has been undergoing the social compression since the beginning of the 16th century as the European explorers started to find out their nation’s economic opportunities by the use of resources from the countries other than their own.

More interesting thing about Robertson’s definition is his contention on people’s consciousness about this phenomenon, which he calls the “consciousness of the global whole” (8). According to him, globalization is not merely a process of compression of the world but also a consciousness of the world as a whole entity—not in terms of any other boundaries. His definition of globalization, that takes the people's consciousness of the interconnectedness, has remarkably the common thing with that of Waters’ views that globalization that makes the socio-cultural and politico-economic barriers among the people recede, and make them aware of it.

Thus, the ancient interconnectedness among the 'cities' (understood as the present nation-states) can be excluded from the process of globalization, as suggested by Waters and Robertson because neither the people of that time had a consciousness of interconnectedness nor they were aware of it.

Similarly, Giddens's definition draws the similar lines along the definition of Robertson. He defines globalization as following: "Globalization can be ... defined as the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities Local transformation is as much a part of globalization as the lateral extension of social connections across time and space" (64). Here, Giddens's definition brings the notions of time and space as the two variables of globalization in his definition. His definition emphasizes on the territoriality in which he means globalization not merely a process of the center-stage activities of the corporate mega-mergers but also the automatization of local-stage behaviors of the life-worlds. Thus, his definition of globalization seems to be arguing on the expanding nature of globalization in which distant localities undergo the process of transformation and appropriation. This leads to the proximity in economy, culture and polity of the people around the globe, and eventually to globalization. However, his argument equally admits the other side of this process, in which entities of one locality not necessarily transform the other locality but help them to consolidate and crystallize as an autonomous life-world, and thus, localize.

An obvious but a reverse process called 'localization', according to Waters, "implies a reflexive reconstruction of community in the face of the dehumanizing implications of rationalizing and commodifying" (5). He means that there will be an increase in the tendency of making their own conscious decisions by the people in the local life-worlds regarding the value systems, amenities, and practices according to their priorities in their communities and that such

decision will obviously look against global activities.

A process of interconnection of the world's people and their practices, globalization is among us since long past. However, this worldwide interconnectedness obtained a new dimension when this interconnectedness among people of the world was associated with the consciousness about this relationship. In fact, in the later part of the twentieth century, the worldwide connections have come to intensify, in which people have become conscious of this intensification along with the multiple relations among localities around the globe. Thus, globalization is such a social process in which traditional barriers of geography in relation to people's lifestyles recede and people become aware of it and act accordingly.

The effects of globalization are visible everywhere. The mixing of culture and races throughout our society is everywhere, it's on television, in our homes and woven into our workplace. Globalization ebbed and flowed through the centuries and now is in full swing. Technology and transportation has made the interconnecting of cultures possible and rapid. Media has made people accept the idea of mixed culture society. Globalization has created positive and negative effects on society depending on the attitudes of people within the society.

Regarding ,culture, theorist Raymond Williams (1976) once described ' culture' as one of the most complex words in the English language, and one of the most difficult to define. He linked the cultural activities and interests of the masses, particularly with the working- class and rural communities, and hence declared that "culture is ordinary: that is the first fact. Every human society has its own shape, its own purposes and its own meaning. Every society expresses these in institutions, and in arts and learning" (Williams 1958:4). He described culture as meaning "a whole way of life - the common meaning" and 'the arts and learning- the special processes of discovering and creative effort.

Thapa is considered as writer of Nepalese voice in English. Nepali writing in English (NWE) is generating interests at home and in the world, especially in India and the West. Rabi Thapa has helped this trend to get some extra traction. In his another work *Thamel*, Dark Stare of Kathmandu he has address the issue of conversion of Thamel from cultural neighborhood of Kathmandu into glamorous refreshment zone. He points out the issue of sexual exploitation of children (Especially street children) by tourists, the stories of gangsters, hippies and tourists. The book gets better and deeper when we go in with its descriptions of local strongmen, aimless children, prostitutes and entrepreneurs looking to turn big in no time. To complete a finely detailed portrait of the place, and the whole city, Thapa beautifully includes all sorts of western and local 'fantasies' about Kathmandu, the place which he calls his "half-home". *Nothing to Declare*, *Thamel*, *Dark Star of Kathmandu* are his notable works.

Nothing to Declare is galvanized by the ongoing process of globalization. It has incorporated the features of worldwide migration, presence of international organization, consumer culture, electronic gadgets, international transaction, universally dominant political thoughts and ideologies etc. As a whole, it contains all the five dimension of global cultural flow. The theory of global cultural flow is a theory coined by Arjun Appadurai which demonstrates the definition of effects of cultural flow in five distinct scapes; “ethnoscape,” “technoscapes,” “financescapes,” “mediascapes” and “ideoscapes” (33).

Ethnoscapes refer to the shifting landscape of people across cultures and borders such as tourists, immigrants, refugees, guest workers, students studying abroad. As people move around for any reason ideas and information gets wider and deep.

Technoscapes are the transmission of cultural through the flow of technology. New types of cultural interaction and exchanges are brought about by technology, particularly the internet.

The globally integrated information network has become a powerful tool in shaping how culture and communication are transmitted across the globe. The internet connects people across the globe without the matter of distance.

Financescapes refer to the global movement of money, including currency, trade and commodity. Now a day countries are free to exchange goods and services.

Mediascapes refers to the electronic capabilities of production and dissemination of information through media.

Ideoscapes are global flow of ideologies. Mediascapes and ideoscapes have a close relationship as they usually work upon the reliance of the other scape. Idea can be present through media platforms.

The characters in the stories are affected by globalization, we can see a conflict between localization and globalization or the conflict between tradition and modern. In these stories though his characters appear to be dismantling traditional value system existing in our society, at the same time, it gives a full glimpse of globalizing Nepali society. Though, the stories revolve around the middle class youth in and around the Kathmandu. It also portrays the mirror of modern middle class of Nepalese society. Nepalese society which is feudalistic, Hindu patriarchal, has a culture based on those notions to have dominant role.

In the story "Initiation," Ashok who is ten year old, is enforced to have Initiation ceremony. In Hindu culture it is believed that after the initiation ceremony boy is supposed to become a man. A man is taken as bold, strong, courageous, strong sensitive and well-cultured. This portrayal of story is an exaggerated condition of phases of Nepalese life. It is suggested that enforcement to have initiation ceremony is the outcome of the culture that we have to follow it without question. These lines of Thapa in the narration of the first story of the collection reflect

the culture to enforce it through role of Ashok:

‘But Mom, Sachin wore a dhoti’-----

‘*Chup!* That’s enough, I have so many things to worry about and all you can do is whine.

It’s a big day for you- you’re going to be a man once your bratabhanda is done. Why should a real man be ashamed of wearing a loincloth like his father and his father before him?’ (1)

These lines indicate that despite Ashok protests against wearing a loincloth, he was forced to wear it on his bratabandha as it has to be done according to the culture. Nepalese men do not become men unless they perform certain rituals, in a sense: they are slave of conventions. So a boy undergoes the rites of passage ceremony to become a man but he was on other hand, dreaming of going to America to become "modern" and "upper class" man.

In the title story, Bikram achieves his most urgent middle - class dream, to immigrate to London. Young foreign-returned Nepali youths hangout in the bars of Thamel. In “Night out in Kathmandu," there is a sharing of tables between the foreign-returned and those who could not go abroad. They talk about pretty much the same things; visas, music, booze and so on .These all shows how ethnoscaapes have affected in today’s youngsters. At the beginning of “Arranged Marriage,” a grandmother tells her narrator’s grandson;

‘Those oranges are good only when they are ripe. That rayo saag is good when it’s in season.’ .

‘Do I look like an orange to you? You know those films; if they are good, they really run for a long time. People come and see them over and over again.’(146)

Grandmother was trying to convince her grandson to get married in time, alluding to the important of young marriage but her grandson took it to other side. The joke works like so much

of Monty Python on the disregard of the Metaphorical for the literal making what was said appear absurd. This shows the ideological difference between yesterday and today, as globalization has affected the thoughts of today people and today they do not think marriage must be done in young age or the young people do not give importance to marriage as the old people give.

In the same story, the narrator finally agrees to marry a girl shown by his parents due to background circumstances created by his parents which was not an easy task for parents as the narrator thought himself to be Westerner. He himself gets surprised with the conditions and writes to his friends via email;

‘I never thought I’d agree to see a girl because my folks wanted me to, but in the end I was curious enough not to refuse a bit of singledom, age and the right sort of pressure does that to you, is all I can say. And then I was open-minded enough, ha, ha to recognize what was good for me when I saw it. Nisha, I should say but it almost didn’t happen . . . anyway, let’s not get all *senti* here eh? just thought I’d let you know, since in my mind I’d already sent you that email, and I guess I found the answers myself.’(156)

The narrator of the story himself is surprised and shocked to see the changes on him regarding his marriage. He had never thought of marrying a girl shown by his parents at that age. It was totally unexpected that he would try out the Nepali way as he thought himself to be westernized but it did happened in a normal way and he got engaged to Nisha Pandey, a doctor. He wanted to share this unexpected experience to his friend so he writes an email and shares. Here we can see how cultural admixture appears in Nepalese society.

The ways the protagonist s presented in a central story “From the Road.” The story has a series of snapshots of Nepali life. The narrator, a Nepali travelling abroad, recollects, the

ceremonial run up to Dashain, having described the events ponders;

What does it mean that I have willingly joined in these rituals when I do not believe they are any more than just that? I have no antagonism towards these gestures, these gods- in fact my renewed, outsider's gaze grants me that curiosity and patience for them, though I may well tire of even this. Will I pass on these rituals to my children, albeit mediated by society and the priesthood, as mere shells of what they are meant to be? Would it not be dishonest for me to tell them, 'will, I don't believe in any of this, but culturally speaking it's great? (96)

The above lines show the admixture of culture where a narrator attends a ceremony physically but mentally he has got thousands of questions. The questions resound throughout the stories, seeking to gain perspective to form an answer. Thapa draws on dislocation to represent the cultural ground in currently changing Nepali society.

It is assumed that Thapa exposes the ground reality of Nepalese society as it enforces certain norms and values through culture and religion which ultimately enforces them to have role in society that is superior in nature, yet that is the overestimation and a preparation of downfall for instead due to their misrepresentation in society.

Almost all the stories use native as well as vulgar languages which has given the real life experience of Nepalese middle class youth in Kathmandu. It is also able to make the stories interesting to read. There is also a recurring theme of displacement, tinged with failure and disappointment in many of the stories Injustice and inequality in Nepal is still high which is very much alive in the story collection. A burden is imposed upon the followers of cultures with forceful implication. Like in Hindu culture, it is believed that to become a real man one should go from the way of Brathabandha. During this period one should wear special clothes. This

ceremony is also taken as a stage to stand, the stage of manhood. One becomes a real man when he had initiation ceremony. Society accepts people as men when one is bounded with Janai (Initiation thread); one is bounded with the duty of masculine role afterwards. In the same story Thapa writes;

As he followed the priest's instructions, he began to feel less self-conscious. Many of his relatives had drifted off into the house, where they were probably playing cards. His cousin had disappeared too. Ashok hoped they weren't messing around with the logo collection his father had brought back from England. The thought irritated him, but soon he started feeling drowsy. The priest, ever busy, suddenly broke off his incantations and blessed Ashoka. (3)

Here, the submission to the culture is clearly shown as a part of greater misrepresentation. In this ceremony, superiority is enforced in the very character Ashok as a victim of authorial dictatorship.

As it is clearly known that, some type of biological distinction is natural rather than the construction of society. However, tagging the distinction as a source of misrepresentation is a manipulation which needs serious consideration. Socially constructed hierarchy is different from society to society. Here the priest is instructing the protagonist to follow something that is guided by the religion. If we carefully observe the behavior of the characters, he looks innocent about all these instruction of the priest. He is irritated with all these activities. His relatives in his initiation ceremony reflect the social norms and values to look a boy as a powerful figure. Blessing of priest in his ceremony reflects the blessing of maturity and to become successful person in life. This ceremony is taken as to make a boy strong, bold, courageous and matured and at the same time, fragile and dependent on society and conventions.

The story entitled “Angles” and its main character Dhiraj helps us to show the impact of globalization in contemporary society. In this story Dhiraj is presented in a small hostel which is itself is taken as the symbol of impact of globalization in contemporary society. Among Boys they show the natural as well as social behavior regarding the preservation of their subjectivity. Playing cards, going to cinema, looking girls can be taken as the natural as well as social behavior of that period. This faulty line of the story helps us to understand the execution of contemporary society the character are living in the story entitled “Angles”:

They were showing Lassiter, a convoluted British thriller a ten years old could hardly be expected to follow. But in between the rapid-fire English and night scene in which a mustachioed, black-clad jewel- thief broke into the building; Dhiraj finds himself watching that particular with rather more interest. There on a big screen at the back of the hall, Lassiter was having a drink with a beautiful, curly- haired brunette. They talked a while with mysterious smile, then they moved closed and kissed. This was exciting enough. He started open mouthed as the women stripped Lassiter of his shirt and pushed him to the floor. She then dragged his trouser off roughly. The man seemed drugged; he did nothing to resist. But what happened next was most extraordinary of all. (14)

These lines derive the passion and needs of a biological being. In relation to the character, these lines indicate the fact that the very boy who was just ten years old is in the cinema house. He is looking English film with his senior mates but the interesting fact is that he is looking the film more interestingly than other. Having drink with the girls, kissing with each other is the extraordinary scene in the movie, which really touch Dhiraj.

In this narration, the heroine seems to be more emotional then hero. This scene is more interesting to the character Dhiraj. In such age and his interest on such movies can be taken as

the impact of globalization where the kids grow their interest on such thing through media as no society directly teaches anyone about the world of vulgarity, yet is enforced as the trait of boys reflected in this story through hostel society.

Globalization has impacted education which is now available to remote cultures which previously did not have access to. This has opened the doors to not only educational opportunities, but also global empowerment opportunities as well. It has created many incredible opportunities for countries to break out of the traditional models of education and work towards creating knowledge communities. The case of Bikram in the title story “Nothing to Declare” is yet another example of how Nepali youths are migrating abroad in search of jobs as they find the situation in the country quite unfavorable:

‘At least I’m independent now,’ Raghav declared, waving his free hand around for emphasis. ‘Not that living in London you can save anything working in a store. Whatever it is, it’s better than just rotting away in Kathmandu. Congratulations hai, you made it to UK! He drained his beer and stood up. ‘You finished with that?’(46)

This reminds us of the facts that the opportunities offered by the developed economies of the world are not alone responsible for Appadurai’s ‘ethnoscape’ but the pushing factors of their own domestic economy and political situation are also responsible for it. As a result of globalization, many indigenous groups are being exploited. One of the main segments of indigenous society that are specifically targeted by multinational corporations is the segment of youths. Adolescents are far more susceptible to targeted consumerism and as a result, they may find that western consumer ideals more appealing to them than their own cultural tradition. They are easier to convert because their personal identity is not as set as that of an adult in their community.

Similarly if we observe the characters carefully in another story, ‘No Smoke without Fire,’ we find numbers of impression of the phenomenon globalization in characters’ lifestyle and value system as characterized by their daily activities, thinking ideology and awareness of the phenomenon as such. Rabi Thapa presents the protagonist, a middle class boy, and his younger sister, arrange the environment to smoke. They wait for their parents to go to bed after the T.V, they had a long wait for this. They keep on looking at the TV room to see whether their parents went to bed or not. These lines show that how they were waiting for their parents to leave the T.V room and go to sleep as they wanted to smoke fast:

‘It’s about to finish. The king’s giving out awards to some old men who look like they’re just about to die. So where is the stuff?’

He looks up quickly. ‘What’s your hurry? You were watching too, right? Because of *you* mamu and papu are watching the damn news again - they must have felt obliged to sit there to keep you company. Go and have a look now, they must have switched to the teleserials . . .’ ‘*Hyeaah . . .* What are you talking about, sachin –da. there’s nothing on.

They’ll go soon . . . *ey, shhhh . . .* They’er going going’ (24)

These lines clearly show the admixture of culture where the young children try to follow the western culture by smoking but at the same time they are afraid of their parents which is the symbol of tradition norms and values.

Similarly Rabi Thapa presents the protagonist a middle class boy and his younger sister smoke marijuana in unison and then, as if the attempt to rub it in:

He puts the match to the cigarette, cupping it against the imperceptible breeze and Lights it. After a couple of short puff to make it’s lit. He drag in deeply, holding the smoke in his lungs before exhaling in to the night. The blue-gray smoke curling back and filling his

nostrils with the intoxicating musk of marijuana, he hands the joint to his sister. She pushes forward and gingerly sucks on it. Immediately, she begins coughing and the smoke escapes from her in fitful cloudburst. (25-26)

As we look at the characters in the story, all seem to be adopting a new lifestyle or practice which is categorically western. As a myth of modern and prosperous life, globalization has a lot of imprints in the lifestyle of the characters in the stories. They try to smoke without their parents' permission and they do not give any information to the family member of their secret smoking. It shows that it is not the good and suitable work for them. They smoke because they want to be different and want to show that modern youths are energetic and enthusiastic and they can do anything for their experience and they can do anything without any hesitation. It shows that the youth are in between place, having the feeling of cultural admixture and accommodative changeability. The youth are engaged actively in constructing the new cultural space; even it has been applied in the field of music, songs and every aesthetic subject. They are affected by mass media and consumer culture.

Apart from this, there are many cases in the stories that give us a glimpse of how easily a particular group of Nepali population has accepted western lifestyle like in the next story "After Party." Rabi Thapa has shown how the passive characters try to discard traditional concept of female role and challenge the outdated patriarchal social structure. We can find many girls who stand in group in Thamel waiting eagerly for some customers to approach them as they are the sex workers, cops are there patrolling, another man comes there, he seems frank and friendly, he was an interviewer. He meets one girl calls her as sister and starts a conversation:

'Sister, can I ask you if you're one who or gives it, takes it you call it thima and thimi, right? Are you thimi?'

‘Yes.....’

‘Do you use lubrication?’

‘Yes.’

‘You have any on you now?’

‘Here.’ She draws a couple of rectangular silver packets out of her back pocket. (136)

The writer has presented the conversation about sex-related materials and sexual activities. He points out by this that prostitution and sex-trade have flourished in Kathmandu even though Nepali society regards it as a social taboo related to ones’ manner and personality. The boy talks to a girl about lubricant she might use during her physical contact with customers. But she draws condoms instead. The conversation proceeds further:

‘But those are condoms, don’t you have what d’ you call it.....?’

‘No, we don’t have that these days.’

‘Why not?’

‘It’s finished at the moment.’

Why is it finished?

‘Because people don’t want to buy it!’

‘Do you always use condoms?’

‘Yes, always.’

‘How many do you do in one night?’

‘Ey..... it depends, sometime its ten or twelve. If our minds meet then I’ll go just like that.’(136)

Here the interviewer asked a sex worker many question such as ‘are you a thimi? She replies ‘yes,’ then the man start asking ‘Do you use lubrication’ and she without any hesitation takes

out the condom from her pocket and say nowadays we are using this not lubrication. Then the man ask 'how many you do in one night' And the girl frankly answered around ten to twelve. There is no fixity about, sometime if the customer is good and friendly she does not even charge any money, she goes for free. The girl here also has a boyfriend with whom she enjoy sex but the boyfriend does not mind her being with other man as she is in need of money.

This shows that the girls presents herself as a master of her body involving in sexual intercourse with multiples partners without bothering about what the society thinks of her. Here the character, called as sister, challenges the traditional norms on sexuality only after marriage and between husband and wife. Here the girl does not have a legal husband for physical relationship. She involves in sexual affair with ten to twelve men per night. Her portrait as sexual adventurous women shows sexuality and desire as a dynamic process. This dynamic nature makes her aware of her position in male dominated society and transforms her to an autonomous women. Moving from one man to another may be a negative thing for patriarchy but in doing so girl celebrates her body as per her wish. Her respect to her body affirms her right over it. Moving as per her desire and celebrating her body she challenges the gender norms imposed on her by the society.

The girl frees herself from the bound of single man relationship. Apart from this, the story brings references of restaurant culture and consumer culture, financial transaction and globally expanding ideology of women's right. As the stories proceeds we can find many other girls dancing in a bar wearing only bikinis and the viewers are mostly males. The nakedness that women are advertising is not meant for giving pleasure to the males but they are protesting the male gaze .The women are ready to dance in bikinis not to surrender their gaze but to insult and teach them that one body is more or less like another. Moreover, their nudity breaks cultural and

political stereotypes so that each can interpret sex for oneself. They take their unclothed body to provide a platform for free speech applied to the sexual realm. This protest is especially important to those whose sexuality has been controlled by censorship through the centuries.

Nothing to Declare is an important step for Nepali literature in English. It attempts to look at the impact of globalization in Nepali society and tries to find a ways of seeing them afresh. Globalization is such a social process in which traditional barriers of geography in relation to people's lifestyles recede and people become aware of it and act accordingly.

Globalization has been affecting people from West to East, rich to poor and from urban to rural in their lifestyles and thinking pattern. People have adopted the thoughts and living patterns of the people of the locations other than theirs. This adoption and adaptation to such foreign entities has taken place in various manners, and this has taken place for the various purposes and needs. Careful observation on these Phenomena have identified that the impression of one locality over the next seem to have come along the myth of prosperity in some cases and as an indication of disaster in some other cases. But people's efforts for appropriation and adaptation have obviously helped in the expansion of the western hegemonic practices and values even in the rural villages of Nepal as west is manipulating the rest by the help of its culture, lifestyle and values.

Globalization has both positive and negative impacts .On the one hand globalization has the potential to mobilize and empower people, provide a means for self- representation and provide employment opportunities. On the other hand it has the ability to disempower people by misrepresentation, provide process for further colonization and propel the loss of individualism, self and group identity. Since these Western practices and values have intruded into our societies, people looked weary about the changes they brought in people's traditional occupations and

lifestyle. But globalization looked to be more promising expansion of the West, so it brought some opportunities that tempted people from developing countries like Nepal vary easily. Now, despite a meager voice of cultural purity and its promotion, people have given up their rituals, lifestyles and values showing complete detachment with the practices of their own for they have perceived globalization as a myth of prosperity. However, some people have perceived it as a wagon of humility at the same time. This has developed an ambivalent attitude towards the contemporary global changes. In fact, the changes have brought so strong currents that people have not been able to stay against it and have not been able to adopt it whole-heartedly as they are so humiliating that they are detaching the people of various localities from their own practices, places and value systems.

This research examines the conflict between eastern values and western perspectives within familial and socio-cultural contexts. The cultural differences individuals acquire being the member of the same family, the role of nation state on meditating between the global and the local cultural traits and the ultimate resolution to these difference become Thapa's landmark ideas in the anthology. He has done justice to it probably because he is familiar with the Eastern tradition by birth and western ideas by profession and maturity, his own experience is filtered through the consciousness of his fictional characters.

Thapa deals with the problem faced by the middle class protagonist, Dhiraj due to their differing belief and attitude. Chitra is the representative of traditional roots who respects grandma/pa and also decides her own way of treatment to her serious suspicion of her husband upon her. Krishna, her husband on the other hand is an urban-middle class person and an individual influenced by western lifestyle, considers parents merely as part of nation and they should stand on their own feet.

The psychological adjustment of the urban-middle class family paves a way to explore newness in practice, on the one hand, and on other, many characters are seen valorizing the traditional roots. The cultural connection is apparent in the lives of people. Thapa also implies the fact that fully expressed identity is not possible in such situation; his experience is seen as the experience of an emigrant. He adopts the Nepalese practices later he gives up. There is always a sense of detachment because of hybrid mentality. Such situation is often felt when the global cultural flow cuts across the race and ethnicity and interests the frontiers and when people have dispersed forever or certain time from their homeland.

To sum up, the writer has been successful to show that people of the developing countries like Nepal are embracing the global and modern values without caring for their cultural life style. Though the global values and modernity are full of problems and they create the people without ethics as Antonio L. Rappa points out, “The modern social compact is devoid of ethics and moral beings. There is a certain degree of vain pessimism about humanity that deviates from the right path and towards the bramble bush” (4), the individuals of Nepal cannot resist the impact of globalization and zeal to become modern. This inability of people to resist global cultural flow and temptation to be modern are beautifully shown by the writer in the anthology *Nothing to Declare*.

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