

**TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY**

Representation of Genocidal Violence in Robert J. Conley's *Mountain Windsong*

A Thesis Submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, in  
Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Master of Arts in English.

By

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**Letter of Recommendation**

This Thesis entitled "Representation of Genocidal Violence in Robert J. Conley's *Mountain Windsong*" has been prepared by Mr. Shyam Prasad Sharma under my supervision from June 29, 2008 to October 28, 2008. I recommend this Thesis to be submitted for the viva voce.

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## Abstract

As an oral tale told by a grandfather to his grandson, *Mountain Windsong* while representing the native American Cherokee history of removal through the perspective of the victim also portrays the act of forceful removal as genocidal violence perpetrated by the U.S. government upon the Cherokee Indians. Set against the tragic events of the Cherokee's removal from their original lands in North Carolina to Indian Territory in Oklahoma between 1835 and 1838, *Mountain Windsong* is a grotesque and tragic tale of both the Georgian history and American heritage that pushed the Cherokees West along a route they called the "Trail of Tears". During this historical event the federal government captured, herded, and forced over nineteen thousand Cherokees to travel over eight hundred miles West where over four thousands Cherokees died of hunger, disease, illness, and murder. Robert J. Conley in the novel manages to re-establish a sense of identity and a purpose with the culture and nation devastated by the genocidal violence. When people get displaced into a new physical and cultural environment, the bewilderment and profound sense of dislocation results into a deep sense of loss. However, the text can not be taken simply as a text about mourning the loss of home, culture, and nation but more than that, an attempt to relocate the 'Self' of a community traumatized by genocidal violence back to its heritage so that the bitterness of the past can be reduced to the level of meaningful present.

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