

Tribhuvan University

An Apartment Building as a Microcosm of Indian Society: New Historical

Reading of Manil Suri's *The Death of Vishnu*

A Thesis Submitted to the Central Department of English,

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, in Partial Fulfillment of the

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Letter of Recommendation

Mr. Moho Datta Adhikari has completed his thesis entitled “An Apartment Building as a Microcosm of Indian Society: New Historical Reading of Manil Suri's *The Death of Vishnu*” under my supervision. He carried out his research from 2065/02 B. S. (June 2008 A. D.) to 2065/07 B. S. (November 2008 A. D.). I hereby recommend his thesis be submitted for viva voice.

Dr. Rebati Neupane

Supervisor

Date:- -----

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Abstract

Manil Suri's novel *The Death of Vishnu* (2001) has tried to represent the different aspects of contemporary India. Vishnu, the odd-job man in a Bombay apartment block, lies dying on the staircase landing. Around him the lives of the apartment dwellers unfold – the warring housewives on the first floor, the lovesick teenagers on the second, and the widower alone and quietly grieving at the top of the building. In a fevered state Vishnu looks back on his love affair with the seductive Padmini and comedy becomes tragedy as his life draws to a close. By including such events within a single apartment building Suri has observed the follies and miseries of Indian society. Throughout *The Death of Vishnu* is a constant co-mingling of the physical, material and mundane with the spiritual and divine. Covering only a twenty-four hour period this “soap opera” scenario is transformed, however, into a microcosm of society that provides Hindu insights into the nature of reality. In short through the window, of a Bombay apartment building Manil Suri creates an intimate and intricate portrait of life in a great Indian Metropolis.

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