

## Deliberation On Emigrant In Manjushree Thapa's Seasons Of Flight

**S.Deviga**

*Research Scholar  
E.R.K Arts and Science College  
Erumiyampatti.  
Dharmapuri.*

**Dr. B. Visalakshi**

*Assistant Professor  
E.R.K Arts and Science College  
Erumiyampatti.  
Dharmapuri.*

### **ABSTRACT**

*Literature has turn into an important appliance to understand the culture and the society. The Nepali language has developed from Sanskrit. Most of the scholars of Nepali literature wrote in Sanskrit language. However, Nepali scholars are rapidly traveling around the globe and many books of Nepali literature are published from different corners of the world. The paper centers the argument of adapting the self by an emigrant woman from Nepal in Manjushree Thapa's novel Seasons of Flight which published in 2010. The Tutor of History is her debut novel. Her best known book is Forgot Katmandu: An Elegy for Democracy published just weeks before the royal coup in Nepal on 1 Feb 2005.*

**Key words:** *culture, emigrant, adapt, migration, democracy.*

In *Seasons of Flight*, Manjushree Thapa portrays the story of a Nepali girl Prema who wins the Green Card Lottery and goes to America. The story starts with Prema settled in America and her past is recollected through memories. Prema does her schooling in a village. She comes to Kathmandu and studies forestry. Prema's early years were full of worries as her mother died after the birth of her younger sister Bijaya. In Nepal the Maoist revolution drafts one member from each family. Later Bijaya joins in it. Prema's father is a dynamic man who asserts her to go College and so joins forestry. Primarily, Prema joins NGO to hoard forest atmosphere programme. She works with a senior forester, Trailokya, to balance the carbon footprint of a British Association. Rajan who works in poverty-alleviation programme of a non-government organization was captivated by Prema. After the completion of her college, Prema joins for the American Green card lottery. Later she wins the lottery. Through that the middleman named Harihar-dai, gets help in settling America.

The middleman's nephew made an arrangement for Prema in Little Nepal, a ghettos were Nepali emigrants live. Prema lives in a residence room, Sushil and Neeru as her colleague. Gradually, Prema assumes to leave this Nepali ghettos and goes to live with Meg and Susan. She comes in contact with Andy and has had sex with him. Prema feels she is very far from native in USA. In Los Angeles she works as a homecare worker for an old lady, Esther King. In Nepal, Prema spent her childhood by no means visited a sea beach. But now near Los Angeles she visits the beach regularly with Esther.

At Meadowvale, Prema meet Luis who is from Mexico. During her relationship with Luis, Prema makes an effort to recognize American culture. So she buys a red bikini of \$24.99 and flip-flops for \$ 4.47. She moves to LA beach. During their dates, Luis brings her to Thai, Mexican, Indian, and Korean restaurants all over the metropolis. Prema moves to live with Luis at his flat. Prema gets herself worried in family worshippers at Luis's parent's home. Prema goes to Luis's ex-wife's home for Christmas. Luis works as a Meadowvale's Head of Human Resource as one man renounce from there to join opponent group. Prema tries to learn Spanish. Luis tries to learn Nepali.

Nevertheless, making pains to make integrate in America, sporadically Prema worries reminiscence. She remembers the time that she has spent with her parents, sister, Rajan and at the Hill Bazaar in Kathmandu. She reaches at Meg and Susan's place and thinks Asians are predictable in appraisal to Americans. Even though Prema pursuits to forgot Nepal and the Nepali ghettos, she visits little Nepal and likes her language. She departs from Luis's home and takes her belonging – ammonite etc. and goes to Long Beach with Neeru and Sushil.

Prema reaches Wetland and enjoy nature of beauty with plants and animals. Prema visits a woman Fiona-an environmentalist, stabbing butterfly El Segundo Blues – a butterfly on the central endanger list. She lives in Neeru and Sushil's home after the death of Esther. Prema has already found her relationship with the environmentalist list. She feels happy in the group with activities of her choice. At the end she decides not to marry anyone or have kids.

As an immigrant cannot clear the self to the other people in mother tongue as language is one of the barriers in pains for accepting a foreign culture. Before departing for America, Prema starts learning English language and make hard work for driving car, read about the United States from the books. She also visits cyber – café and reads Los Angeles Times online. So that she may have accustomed in America. Prema visits at LA airport and on the way to 'Little Nepal', she is fascinated by the broad roads and traffic lights in America. During her stay with Neeru and Sushil her meeting with Andy and Luis visits many places of America and as well as explains the rich life style and luxuries.

Prema finds multinational society in America. The family system is entirely different from her homeland Nepal. In the family of Esther and Luis, divorces with life partner, re-marriage and step relations are very usually found. The social life and married life in America is explained during Esther's life. In America Thapa describes free life style. In Nepal, she also has relationship with Rajan. But she has to keep privacy of relationship. But in America the circumstances is very distinguishable. Meg Williams, Prema's housemate is an African American. She has devoted relationship with a man named Luke. Susan Kitterow is another housemate of Prema who moves on dates, staying out all night or carrying back a man who would continually depart early the next morning.

People from different country of America have relationship with Prema. Chiefly, she scared of these people. She also feels language may be an obstacle to her. But abruptly she comes in relationship with Andy and Luis. She exaggerates American relationship with Luis. Prema make efforts to get into the likings of Luis. Prema moves the home of Luis parents as well as his ex-wife's home and visit his relatives. During Christmas she likes family worshippers. Prema likes to be included in the celebration of an American festival. As Prema tries to comprise her in the life style of America and she receives positive support from the host land people. Peggy, the mother of Luis, says, "namaste", I salute the god within you" (*SOF*, 123). Nevertheless, Prema finds something absent in her life and quits them.

The issues of emigrants in a weird land are adorned in the novel. Prema put efforts to integrate in American life style. She starts buying cloths suits on beach at LA. She mimics American style of dressing. She buys a red bikini of \$24.99 and flip-flops for \$4.47. She goes to LA beach. At Esther's home Prema feels shocking and does not like to continue her job. She finds Natalie has free life and is difficult in obligations of Esther. Once she thinks about separating Esther and the job. Later on she feels that it would be unfortunate to surrender Esther on civilized ground. After moving to Luis' home and visiting Nepal, Prema puzzled and becomes worried. But lastly, the group of people working and makes the life of Prema stimulating there.

Though, one tries to adopt a foreign unknown culture, ones native identity pulls her. Prema has to live by alone after departing village. As a god and memory of her dead mother Prema keeps an ammonite with her. Primarily, Prema joins forestry and visits Trailokya in Kathmandu. She has friendship with Rajan. After moving from her father in a village, Prema finds her as poor. But increasingly she finds herself tranquil in the surroundings. She recollects her days in village. But she does not find racially weird within her country. Prema has sustained from the people of her own country who have settled in America. She lives in a charter room, Sushil and Neeru as neighbor. In a new land, Neeru supports Prema dramatically and adjusts her at a job in Shalimar eatery where women from India and Nepal are working.

She needs to recreate herself in America and thinks “but-What is there to being human? The body which desires, persistent and unreasonable; thoughts and temperaments. Instincts. A capacity to harm. And history, which lingers as a specter” (*SOF*, 3). Prema makes risk to hobble herself all over her memories of temple, ammonite, village, food and language. She works hard to be an American by adapting American life style with her Latino – American boy friend Luis. But she feels strange, something is missing. Johann Gottfried Herder, an eighteenth century philosopher, argues “the foundation of construction of identity rests on the perceived ‘wholeness’ of a community derived from the totality of its expressions – language, customs, dress, architecture, religion (Kerr 362)”.

After managing in America, Prema disengages her relationship with her father and not at all thinks about her sister. She needs to be an Americanized, and so, she destroys her relationship with Sushil and Neeru in Little Nepal, LA. In the specification of homelessness and segregation, Prema reinterprets her national identity as a person from Nepali origin by following Hinduism.

One can unite the self with the past, but the most important is recollecting. Remembering the objects and photographs on exhibit or people can meet extensive links to the past. In LA, Prema visits Mata Sylvania, a priest of Hindu religion. She recites lines from Hindu scriptures, like *the Mahabharata*, *the Bhagavad Gita*, *the Ramayana* and the books about Osho Vivekananda etc. this takes back Prema to “Nepali home” away from her “present home”. She remembers her mother’s bedroom holy place, and idols of the gods: Krishna, Parvathi, Shiva, Lakshmi, which her mother used to keep at her home in Nepal. She recollects her mother with blankets stressed over her, a coal-fire by her bedside. At this time, Thapa mentions for Prema, memory makes her slight sense of belonging on a foreign land. Prema is an emigrant woman searches her rigid cultural identity in America. *Steward Hall in Cultural Identity and Diaspora* states, “ ‘cultural identity’ can be thought in terms of one, shared culture, a sort of collective ‘one true self’, hiding inside the many other, more superficial or artificially imposed ‘selves’ which people with a shared history and ancestry hold in common” (234).

Thapa portrays the incidences in the life of Prema such that she feels her physical location in LA but her geographical roots lie in Nepal. Prema longs for her new identity. She worries something which was sheltered in Nepal as lost in America and that is her roots and belonging. Giddiness in Modernity and Self Identity; Self and Society in the late Modern says, “Globalization tends to breakdown the protective framework of the small community and of tradition replacing these with many larger, impersonal organizations. The individual feels berift and alone in a world in which she or he lacks the psychological support and the sense of security provided by more traditional settings” (33). During a fictional character Prema, Thapa has depicted an emigrant woman who has made her life ever – changing from her original social milieu of Nepal. It is her undertaking to reinstate a lost sense of cultural identity. Even after numerous years of stay in America, living with Luis and helping at Esther’s home, Prema feels strange. She visits Nepal after the Maoist ceasefire and she begins finding her relationship and about of Rajan and Trailokya.

Divergence to foreign culture creates worries of nostalgia; depressed helps in bridging a gap between the past and present. Memories of the past help one to run away from the thoughtless legitimacy of the present. Prema searches nostalgically to suggest her “happy days” of childhood past in her thoughts. She remembers memoirs of food and celebratory meals; recollection of those gastronomic pleasures that brought her such moderate attitude of satisfaction, shelter and even love as a child.

Thapa uses food as a gauge of identity. Sporadically a tool is to feel privileged in an indefinite land. In this observe, Gayathri Chakravarthi Spivak says, “in the field of rational analysis, a feeling of recognized kinship is more desirable than nationalism” (773). When Luis says:”Hey Prema, know what I had for dinner last night?” “Dull – bath. A kind of Nepalese, I mean, Nepali food” (61), she is very happy and she says she cooks it often but “just – the ingredients. I don’t know where to buy them” (61). The immediate she discusses about the Nepali cookery, she feels like eating them and being very near to her ‘home’, a secluded place. Pensiveness emerges as a form of cultural disagreement. Memories can help to sustain and build cultural identities by regarding the present to the past, by articulating past experiences and their meanings at present. Prema feels enormously joyful when Neeru offers her Nepali food. She exclaimed with happiness when she finds two dishware of hot dumplings before them: “Momos! Can you believe? Momos in America (171)”. Prema thinks about her continuation. Thapa explains her quandary thus:

She thought of her movements from her present life with Luis to her life on the dry, grassy hill and her life in Little Nepal, and her life farther back... her birth village, her school and her college years, her years in the hill bazaar. Her attachments to Rajan. The town at the base of the hills, the bus ride to the capital. Her weeks in limbo in Kathmandu. Her flight to America. Her time in transit at the Bangkok airport. She had passed the gates for Osaka, Dubai, Paris, Ankara, Melbourne, Amsterdam. She had taken the flight to Los Angeles. She had lost her way. (161)

Language is a way to join up the feelings of yearning. Prema teaches Nepali to Luis. She wishes to establish her linguistic with him. In case of rushed connubial change and factual or perceived genealogical and geographical in fairness, Prema involves amalgamation of a local identity – based group that seems to give her answers and protection. As Appadurai says, “Identity are increasingly luminal and hybrid as capital, commodities, information, technologies, images and ideologies circulate across the borders due to enthoscapescapes, technoscapes, financescapes, ideoscapes and mediascapes” (31).

In the period of globalization, when the people are losing their sheltered and animated support from the relatives, being faces difficulty of lack of moving reinforcement. At this point, Prema likes the friendship of Luis but her insight of improbability in multicultural America continues all over the novel. Prema persistently dwindles between attendance and absence. In the company of Luis, Prema feels as if she finds herself assimilated to American multiculturalism but the minute she idealizes her lost monarchy of geography, culture, purity, innocence and happiness; she is inundated by absence. Her explore for incidence continues throughout the novel. People like Prema who find themselves both structurally marginalized and ontologically anxious regularly give enhance to a politics of resist and the growth of local identities.

The complexity of Prema compared with Nehru says about mingling of foreign and native culture. Nehru says, “I cannot get rid of either the past inheritance or my recent acquisitions. They are both part of me, and though they help me in both the East and the West, they also create in me a feeling of spiritual loneliness not only in public activities but in life itself” (*SOF*, 596). Religious aloneness, cultural in – between’s, and psychological ambivalence, resulting from cultural and educational hybridist, made him say, “In my own country I have an exile’s feeling” (*SOF*, 596). It created a cultural limbo in him – neither here nor there. The novel gives voice to the impasse of an emigrant for integration in a foreign land.

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