

## BOOK REVIEW

Dr. Deepika Chaudhari, Department of English

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**Title of the book: Tilled Earth; Writer: Manjushree Thapa; Publication: Penguin Ltd., India; Year: 2007; ISBN: 978-0-14-310264-9.**

Manjushree Thapa was born in Kathmandu, Nepal in 1968 and grace up her personality by staying in countries like Nepal, Canada, and the United States. Currently, she is living in Canada. Manjushree Thapa, recognized as a South-Asian writer who articulates Nepali voice in her body of literature although she is educated in western countries. She is an emerging voice in Nepali Literature in English, more to the fact that she is the first Nepali woman writer in English.

Twenty two stories in the collection of Manjushree Thapa's Tilled Earth (2007) attempt to reveal the relationships of characters among each other and with the society and hence they give glimpses of the personal lives of the natives and foreigners in rural and urban Nepal. The stories also represent the lives of Nepalese who travel or live abroad. These Stories deal with the diversity of Nepali society and different social statuses in terms of economy, region, and education of the characters. A mixture of themes is incorporated in Tilled Earth by Manjushree Thapa with her simple and organized writing. She deals with the themes like journey motif, social, political, and cultural happenings in Nepal, anxiety among Nepali people, Nepali woman's position in host nations, husband-wife relationship, love relationship, and sibling relationship. The well-known stories in this collection are "Tilled Earth," "The European Fling," "Love Marriage," "Soar," "The Eldest Son Thinks of Home," "Friends,". The stories included in "Tilled Earth", thus, portray many social and cultural institutions in detail. Family, motherhood, man-woman relationship, education, marriage, and politics are some of the social institutions depicted, while language, religion, food, and festivals are the significant cultural institution presented in them.

In "Tilled Earth" one finds reference to the narrator who hates the Nepali education system and prefers the American one. Marriage is as a significant social institution that is accurately depicted in the narratives of Thapa. In the stories of Tilled Earth, marriage is not praised. Nadia is a single woman who privileges her career over marriage. Bimal in "Love Marriage", who is about to get married to Lalita reveals the problems in arrange marriage. This shows that arrange marriages are mostly a matter of convenience.

Women in the stories of Tilled Earth are also mostly dependent women such as Urmilla in "Nineteen Years His Junior", Shanta Khanal, and Lalita who are also, in many ways, victims of the social system and patriarchy. Women such as Nadia and Sarah, who have travelled across the world, have different experiences of society and social institutions as they have the privilege of being free and selfsufficient. Their attitude to institutions such as love, marriage, and man-woman relationships is liberal as compared to the native women in Nepal. This literary review is a record of close reading of Thapa's short story collection Tilled Earth. Tilled Earth would ultimately act as a basis for reading and reference to the research scholars working in socio-cultural institution of Nepal in English literature as the area of study.

TILLED EARTH : MANJUSHREE THAPA

