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Ecocritical Consciousness in Futuristic Nepali Climate Fiction*In 100 Years*

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Abstract

'In 100 Years: An Anthology of Climate Fiction from Nepal' is a collection of Nepali climate fiction, edited and published by Evan Tims in 2022. The anthology features eight short stories and a poem by eight emerging Nepali writers, envisioning extreme climate change scenarios and their impacts on Nepal a century from now.This study explores these climate narratives through an ecocritical perspective, assessing the plausibility of the climatic situations imagined to occur in Nepal over the next hundred years. For this, it reviews recent news reports from national and international media, government and non-government reports, and relevant journal articles on the issue of climate change and makes a textual analysis of the climate fiction narratives under study.The findings suggest that severe climate hazards projected in the narratives, such as unbearable heat, prolonged droughts, the disappearance of mountain snowcaps, and glacial floods forcing mass migration, are plausible within this timeframe. However, the occurrence of the three districts of Solukhumbu, Sankhuwasabha and Okhaldhunga turning into a gigantic lake, a decade-long drought, and instantly-burning acid rains may not yet be a reality.This study is expected to benefit anyone interested in ecocritical readings by deepening their ecological awareness and encouraging thoughtful reflection on the possibility of even more severe effects of climate change in both the near and distant future.

Keywords: climate change, climate fiction, ecocriticism, ecocritical consciousness, global warming

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Introduction

In 100 Years: An Anthology of Climate Fiction from Nepal comprises futuristic (relating to future happenings)short climate fictions written by emerging Nepali writers and edited and published by Evan Tims, a Henri J. Luce scholar, with the support of Quixote's Cove. It all started with the vision of Evan Tims, an American climate fiction-enthusiast. In 2022, every Friday at 5 p.m., he organized a workshop in Kathmandu for the interested young Nepali writers, challenging and encouraging them to write a climate fiction. The participants were asked to think what would happen in next 100 years in Nepal and write a story on the theme of climate change. Altogether eight young people participated and produced stories worth telling by the end of the workshop. Evan Timsedited and published them in the form of an anthology of climate fiction from Nepal.

The anthology begins with a poem*Where Does It End* by Shranup Tandukar.Thepoem criticizes human greed for causing environmental degradation and the eventual extinction of humanity. Tandukar has written a story too. In his *Rain and Sky*, he depicts a world plagued by acid rain, where people live under a massive protective ceiling. Sajeet M. Rajbhandari's*Kimbu* reflects on the oppressive heat waves, with the taste of kimbu offering the only relief though temporary. AasthaGhimire's*7866 km²* portrays the catastrophic consequences of glacial outbursts and the vanishing of mountains towering over 8,000 meters. *PaniManche* by PrajwalDhungana depicts a decade-long drought, leading to severe food scarcity.

The remaining four narratives are not directly centered on climate change. Deepali Shrestha's *11,757 kg of Poop* explores artificial insemination, while AnupaKhanal's*Duty* addresses the replacement of human jobs by artificial intelligence. Shrijan Pandey's *BadalkoSahar*imagines a futuristic city suspended in the air, and P.S. Luitel's*Kalki* presents a dystopian society where robots have taken over all jobs except prostitution, compelling humans ultimately to sell their own body organs or steal for living.

Glotfelty (1996) defines ecocriticism as "the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment"which"takes an earth-centered approach to literary studies" (xviii).According to Garrard (2012), ecocriticism has a distinct place "among contemporary literary and cultural theories because of its close relationship with the science of ecology" (p. 5). Eco critics are primarily literary or cultural theorists and may not possess enough knowledge and expertise to deal with ecological issues, nevertheless,they must "transgress disciplinary boundaries and develop their own 'ecological literacy' as far as possible," says Garrard (2012, p. 5).

United Nations (n.d.) defines climate change as "long-term shifts in temperatures and weather patterns" (para. 1). Such shifts can be caused by natural factors like solar activity and volcanic eruptions. Or, it can be induced by human activities, especially the burning of fossil fuels like coal, oil and gas (United Nations, n.d.). But the recent changes are anthropogenic rather than natural. According to National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), "changes observed in Earth's climate since the mid-20th century are driven by human activities, particularly fossil fuel burning, which increases heat-trapping greenhouse gas levels in Earth's atmosphere, raising Earth's average surface temperature" (NASA, n.d., para. 2). This rise in Earth's global temperature is called global warming. "Global warming is the long-term heating of Earth's surface observed since the pre-industrial period (between 1850 and 1900) due to human activities, primarily fossil fuel burning, which increases heat-trapping greenhouse gas levels in Earth's atmosphere" (NASA, n.d., What Is Global Warming section, para.1). NASA further clarifies: "Since the pre-industrial period, human activities are estimated to have increased Earth's global average temperature by about 1 degree Celsius (1.8 degrees Fahrenheit), a number that is currently increasing by more than 0.2 degrees Celsius (0.36 degrees Fahrenheit) per decade" (What Is Global Warming section, para. 2).

Nepal has been experiencing rising heat waves for several years now. The 2024 summer of Nepal witnessed temperature rise above 40 degree Celsius in several Tarai districts (Poudel, 2024 April; Subedi, 2024; Bhuju, 2024). A 2024 report of Nepal Governmenton national temperature and precipitation reports that "most parts of the country recorded above normalmaximum temperature while a few parts across the country recorded near-normal to below normal maximum temperature" (Ministry of Energy, Water Resource and Irrigation, Nepal, Maximum Temperature section, para. 1). The report's Table 1 presents a list of 10 temperature recording stations in 10 different districts that broke their own historic record of maximum temperatures. The data indicates the yearly rise in the temperature of Nepal. The same report reports the highest daily maximum temperature of 44.6 degree Celsius recorded at Nepalgunj station on June 13. It states that the country's average maximumtemperature was "the second highest since 1981" (Maximum Temperature section, para. 2).Just a year ago in 2023, the "average maximum temperature was above 30°C in the southern part of the country"(Ministry of Energy, Water Resource and Irrigation, Nepal, 2023, para. 4) making it "one of the warmest years since 1981" (para. 5).

There is direct connection between high temperature and heavy precipitation: the hotter the days, the heavier the rainfall. And then, heavy and continuous rainfall

leads to floods and landslides. A news article in Climate Home News states: "The high heat levels of 2024 also translated into record-breaking downpours, as warmer air holds more moisture and hotter seas cause increased evaporation. As a result, devastating floods hit many places worldwide, from Dubai to Kathmandu and Brazil's Rio Grande do Sul" (Rowling, 2024, Flooding: Be Warned section, para. 1).Nepal has been experiencing heavy rainfalls in recent years. Just recently in the year 2024, Nepal witnessed excessive rainfall and huge damage to lives and national economy (Prasain, 2024; "Nepal Experienced Record-breaking", 2024; Khatri, 2024). A news article in Reuters (Sharma, 2024) reported on September 30 that at least 192 were dead and 32 were missing after heavy rains in Nepal. Kathmandu Valley alone saw 56 deaths, severe flooding and damage. The experts blame poor urban planning and climate change for the exacerbating disaster, according to the news.The incessant rainfall and the ensuing floods and landslides also damaged several highways connecting to the capital and obstructed the transportation for several weeks. Newsweek reported on September 30: "A landslide killed three dozen people on a blocked highway about 16 kilometers (10 miles) from Kathmandu. The landslide buried at least three buses and other vehicles where people were sleeping because the highway was blocked . . . Throughout the weekend, the capital remained isolated as all three highways leading out of Kathmandu were obstructed by landslides" (Daftari, 2024, para. 3-4). The 2024 report of Nepal Government reports that during the monsoon season "some parts over Kaski district recorded precipitation above 3000 mm" (Ministry of Energy, Water Resource and Irrigation, Nepal, 2024, Precipitation section, para. 1). The report's Table 2 lists out 26 precipitation recording stations in 15 different districts that broke their own historic record of maximum daily precipitations (Table 2). The data indicates the increasing trend in the amount ofprecipitation in Nepal.

Heavy rainfall combined with several other factors caused Melamchi flood disaster in 2021. The disaster was reported in several news media(Hyolmo, 2021; "Melamchi Flood", 2021; "Destruction Caused", 2021, etc.).Later, the damage was assessed and the cause of the disaster was investigated at various national and international levels. One such report presented by the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) mentions "5 deaths and 20 missing persons along with heavy damageto the Melamchi water supply project while cutting off road accessto several villages" (Maharjan et al., 2021). The reportattributes the disaster to multiple factors: heavy rainfall, glacial lake drainage, old and new landslides, river damming and outburst flood, and river bank erosion and debris

deposition, all occurring in a cascading effect, where one hazard triggered another with a cumulative impact. Baniya et al. (2024) concludes that heavy rainfall and temperature-induced snow melting played significant role in causing Melamchiflood (p. 24).

As Nepal lies on the lap of Himalayas, it has many glaciers at different altitudes in its Himalayan region. Due to global warming, these glaciers are melting and flooding causing huge damage to villages lying below. A BBC news report(Khadka, 2024) reports about a glacial outburst of August 16, 2024 that flooded a Sherpa village lying below. It says, "The village was engulfed by icy flood waters after a glacial lake burst its banks, displacing some 60 people and destroying more than a dozen houses and hotels along with a school and health clinic" (para. 3).No human death or injuries happened as the event took place during the daytime and the villagers got the opportunity to run away. But the threat is far from over. There are still three more glacial lakes above the village, which can burst out at any time as "global warming is accelerating the melting of glaciers which can fill up the lakes to bursting point" (Small Lakes, Big Risks section, para. 3). Around two dozen glacial lakes across the Nepali Himalayas have been listed as risky by the authorities, mentions the news report. Due to the global warming, the mountains in Nepal are also losing snow and turning into barren rocks. DrGhanashyamGurung, a conservationist and Chief of World Wildlife Fund in Nepal is quoted as saying "Owing to global heating, mountains are losing snow cover. It will turn mountain climbing to mere rock climbing" (quoted in RSS, 2023).

Thus, various national and international mediaand reports mentioned above and many others, including Poudel (2023) and Nepal (2024), report about Nepal experiencing an escalating climate crisis, with extreme weather events causing unprecedented disasters, economic losses, and environmental degradation. The country recorded its hottest summer in history in 2023, with extreme heatwaves, wildfires, and drought in the Tarai, leading to widespread crop failures and water shortages, while heavy rainfall triggered devastating floods and landslides in the mountains (Poudel, 2023). In 2024, record-breaking rainfall caused severe flooding, killing over 228 people and damaging hydropower projects, infrastructure, and agriculture (Nepal, 2024). Increasingly frequent disasters, including glacial lake outburst floods, highlight Nepal's extreme vulnerability to climate change. Despite having policies to address these challenges, weak implementation, inadequate monitoring, and limited early warning systems further exacerbate the risks. With

rising global temperatures, Nepal's fragile geography and scarce resources make its future increasingly uncertain (Poudel, 2023; Nepal, 2024).

There are not many notable works of climate fiction by Nepali writers that portray the worsening climatic conditions in Nepal. Climate fiction is a relatively new and emerging genre in Nepali literature. *In 100 Years: An Anthology of Climate Fiction from Nepal* is possibly the first of its kind.In light of the documented effects of climate change in Nepal - both current and anticipated - this study critically examines four climate fiction narratives from the anthology: Tandukar's*Rain and Sky*, Rajbhandari's*Kimbu*, Ghimire's *7866 km²*, and Dhungana's*Pani Manche*, with the primary aim of assessing how these literary works align with existing ecological evidence and logical projections. Furthermore, the study evaluates the plausibility of the future scenarios these narratives imagine for Nepal a century from now. The findings of this study are expected to benefit readers and researchers interested in ecocritical interpretations by deepening their ecological awareness and encouraging thoughtful reflection on the increasing severe impacts of climate change in Nepal, both in the near and distant future.

Climate change is a global issue that encompasses several aspects, from environmental effects to socio-economic consequences to political agendas.Since a comprehensive exploration of all these aspects is beyond the scope of this research, this study focuses solely on the environmental effects of climate change. It does not examine the socio-economic or political dimensions of the issue. Furthermore, the study is limited to the specific impacts on Nepal as represented within the selected climate narratives analyzed here.

Method and Materials

This research presents a textual analysis of futuristic Nepalese climate stories featured in *In Hundred Years: An Anthology of Climate Fiction from Nepal*, a collection book inspired, engineered, and edited by Evan Tims. As these fictional narratives depict climate change and its potential effects on Nepal over the next 100 years, this study explores them through an ecocritical lens, and analyzes them in light of available information on the recent effects of climate change in Nepal. It also evaluates the plausibility of the extreme climatic conditions as projected in the stories to occur a century from now in Nepal. For this, recent news reports from national and international media, government and non-government reports, and relevant journal articles on the issue of climate change are reviewed. Extensive reading is conducted to develop a clear understanding of Nepal's current scenario of climate change, and

textual analysis through ecocritical lens is done to show whether or not the extreme climatic situations are realistically imagined and portrayed in the fiction.

Results and Discussion

Textual Analysis of *Kimbu*

Sajeet M. Rajbhandari's story *Kimbu* opens with this statement: "You don't often see the sunrise these days. The rising sun is usually hidden by a thick brown wall of clouds . . . . Nowadays, you can barely make out the sun until it's high noon" (Tims, 2022, p. 12). A hundred years from now in the decade of 2120s, the sky remains clouded almost everyday. It is the cloud of water vapor forming continuously due to continuous heating of the water bodies as well as of black smoke continuously coming out from numerous factories all over the city. But even when the sun is hidden behind the thick wall of clouds, "you can still feel its heat on your skin though" and you usually wake up "drenched in sweat" (p. 12). The narrator's father often longs for cold *kulfis* he used to have when he was young. The rich people of Kathmandu have air conditioner and freezer at their home, but the poor people who can't afford such things will "have to make do with whatever temperature the day has decided on" (p. 12). The narrator lives in the city outskirt where they can't afford to have such luxuries.

The agro-crisis has happened in 2057, and ever since, the government of Nepal has been providing ration to its citizens. The rich people do have options but the poor people will "just have to make do with the bland pasty oatmeal blend that comes to the ration post each week" (p. 13).It doesn't taste good, but the people have to eat it anyway. The narrator is used to such things. He says, "Those who lived through the big shiftin the city tend to be more sensitive about smaller things like food and heat. After all, for kidslike me, this is all we've ever known" (p. 14). He has never had anything sweet and refreshingly cold. One day his neighborhood friend Ravi comes and takes him out into the forest behind old school compound. There lies a mulberry tree where upon ripe black berries (kimbus) are growing. Ravi makes the narrator taste it and to his surprise it tastes heavenly. He says, "For the very firsttime in my life, my palate learns what sweetness feels like. I don't need to be told that this isindeed sweet, my body just seems to know. I neverimagined anything could taste this good" (p. 16). That whole summer Ravi and the narrator keep going to the tree to eat kimbus, and for them: "It was our little secret garden, our little safe haven, from the putrid brown skies of Kathmandu, from the hot dry summer wind, and especially from the tasteless oatmeal goo that all of us on the outskirts call food everyday" (p. 17).

The situation of agro-crisis and food scarcity will not be addressed by this study. But just to slightly touch the issue in context, such situation can be considered

a plausible consequence of climate change in the long run (EPA, 2025). As for the excessive heat mentioned in the story, it is a direct consequence of global warming and ensuing climate change. According to World Meteorological Organization(WMO) (2024), Asia is world's most disaster-prone region in terms of climate crisis. It reports, "Asia is warming faster than the global average. The warming trend has nearly doubled since the 1961-1990 period" (para. 3).The report concludes that the warming trend is accelerating at an alarming rate in Asia with extreme heat becoming more severe and melting glaciers threatening future water security. Similarly, World Weather Attribution (WWA) (2024) reports, "From Israel, Palestine, Lebanon and Syria, in the West, to Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam and the Philippines in the East, large regions of Asia experienced temperatures well above 40°C for many days . . . hundreds of deaths have been reported already in most of the affected countries, including Palestine, Bangladesh, India, Thailand, Myanmar, Cambodia and the Philippines" (para. 1-2). WWA further reports that "Extreme heat in South Asia during the pre-monsoon season is becoming more frequent. . . making them around 30 times more likely and much hotter" (para. 3). A South Asian country, Nepal too is experiencing excruciating heat in recent years with several Tarai districts reaching temperature above 40 degree Celsius.It is said to be having temperature rise by 0.05 degree Celsius per year (Poudel, 2024 January; "Nepal Records Rise In", 2023). An article in Nepal News reports "Between 1971 and 2014, Nepal's temperature increased by 0.056 degrees Celsius every year. By the 2080s, the temperature in Nepal is projected to increase by 1.2°C to 4.2°C" (Ayadi, 2025, Climate Change Vulnerability in Nepal section, para. 2). If this trend of rising temperature is to continue, then certainly in one hundred years from now, we will be suffering from unbearable heat as depicted in the stories.

Textual Analysis of *7866 km^2*

AsthaGhimire's*7866km^2*featuresKunsang, son of Nepali migrant parents living now in the USA. Kunsang's parents were Sherpas of Solukhumbu and had a thriving tourism business back then in their village, but unfortunately, in the glacial outbursts of 2040, they lost their home and everything, and then had to migrate to America, where Kunsang got born after five years.

It was South Col ablation that caused the flood outburst. The narration goes: "The depletion of the snowpack at South Colwas the first signal to evacuate people in Solukhumbu, but only the ones who could charterprivate helicopters could move out of the region as quickly as possible. Everybody else perished" (Tims, 2022, p.

28).Kunsang's father was among the few rich people who could charter the helicopter and save his family's life just in time. Soon after, three more glaciers, namely, ImjaTsho,Khumbu, and Ambulapchaburst and flooded the three districts of East Nepal: Solukhumbu, Sankhuwasabha, and Okhaldhunga, rendering them unsuitable for human settlement. Avalanches and more floods followed the disaster for the next three weeks destroying the districts completely, and in 2040"Solukhumbu, Sankhuwasabha, and Okhaldhunga turned into a lake of 7866 km²" (p. 30). The tragedy continues. Nepal was compelled to let China annex the three districts "to build a dam in a way that the remaining districts would be saved . . . And that was how Sagarmatha, once the pride ofNepal, now belonged to China" (p. 30).

By the time Kunsang grows up to be a young mountaineer, there exists no more mountains above 8,000 meters high."In 2068 A.D., . . . Mount Everest couldn't be climbed because it was no more a snow-capped summit. It was a half-barren pinnacle used as a military camp byChina" (p. 29).Kunsang knew all this from his parents, and whenever he is reminded of it, he feels very much sad for all this loss of his country Nepal.

This extremely grim picture of future Nepal projected in the story – how much of this is actually possible? In 2022 a team of climate experts published the results of their study on the loss of ice mass in the South Col Glacier (SCG), a small body of ice and snow lying at an altitude of 8220 meters above sea level on the southern ridge of Mt. Everest. They (Potocki et al, 2022) found melting and sublimation to be the reasons for the mass loss. Suggesting the global warming as the driving force, they concluded, "the increasing ablation of snowpack identified here is, in the absence of other changes in meteorology, the expected response to greenhouse gas forcing" (Result section, para. 6). They also found the rate of mass loss to be very alarming and warned that "at an estimated thinning rate . . . even glaciers such as SCG that are above 8000 m may disappear by mid-century" (Discussion section, para. 3). Based on this report, The Kathmandu Post reported on February 6, 2022: "Human-induced climate change is causing the highest glacier on Mt Everest to melt at a rapid pace which may lead the South Col Glacier to be completely wiped out by the middle of the current century, a new study has found" (Shrestha, 2022, para. 1). If this is the case with Mount Everest, then it is the same with other high-peaked mountains too. A climate change expert ManjitDhakal is quoted by the Post: "We can generalise that the glaciers in other Himalayan mountains are also depleting fast" (Shrestha, 2022, para. 12).

Paul Mayewski, the director of UMaine Climate Change Institute and a co-author of the aforementioned report has said in an interview: “People who go to climb Mt. Everest in the coming decades will not be climbing through snow, during the climbing season, at least. They’ll be climbing either ice, and as the decades go on, they’ll be climbing on a rock instead” (Lisnet, 2022, para. 3). Climbing on the rock has, in fact, already begun. Kami Rita Sherpa, an experienced mountain guide and many times’ record breaker says, “Nowadays we observe more rocks in the Himalayan mountains and rock falls instead of snow falling down” (Quoted in Shrestha, 2022, para. 18). In line with these recent developments, new rules have been made for the mountain-climbers by the Government of Nepal. One of the rules is that the climbers have to “take excrement bags up the mountain, use them and bring them back down again” (Nestler, 2024, Tracking Chips and Poo Bags section, para. 3). It is to prevent “the smell of human feces”which smells “when unfrozen” due to rise in temperature (Nestler, 2024, para. 1).It may sound disgusting but the truth is “between Camp One at 6,100 meters and Camp Four on the South Col at just under 8,000 meters, there is a total of around three tons of human excrement – half of it at the South Col . . . . As the snow cover is increasingly disappearing, it literally stinks to high heaven, threatening to turn the South Col into a ‘ballroom of feces’” (Nestler, 2024, Tracking Chips and Poo Bags section, para. 4). Inlightof the above-mentioned information, it seems very plausible that in one hundred years from now, there will be no more mountains of above 8,000 meters to climb, as climbing the mere rock will be far more difficult and far less charming (Bate, n.d.). There will have been many glacial outbursts too. As for China overtaking Mt Everest or annexing the three northern districts of Nepal, it is a political matter, which cannot be counted on the mere effects of climate change. The three districts of Solukhumbu, Sankhuwasabha, and Okaldhunga turning into a gigantic lake also seems toohypothetical.

Textual Analysis of *Pani Manche*

In PrajjwalDhungana’s*PaniManche*, the period is post-World War III.The war between Russia and Ukraine ends up in World War III, where powerful nuclear weapons are used destroying entire human civilization. After that war, a decade passes without a single drop of water, and every place turns into a desert owing both to the destruction of war and a decade long drought. Now people live on sand and they feed on cactuses for food and water. But since rich people are buying and hoarding them for future, cactus has become inaccessible for poor people. A few

upper-class people manage to get bottled water in black market. Majority of the common people drink distilled urine. The situation aggravatesto the extent that "A year ago, Lama dai-one of my neighbors-started eating sand itself, for he could notafford any food and neither could conquer his hunger" (Tims, 2022, p. 31). After a fortnight the man dies due to gastric pain, bleeding, constipation, etc. Seeing this man's horrifying death, the narrator decides to choose death than eat sand when no other food remains.

In the story, water becomes the most important thing in the world. People begin to worship water. Water becomes their god. But the situation keeps worsening. The narrator doesn't find anything to eat or drink for a whole week. Then, one day he suddenly hears a commotion "PaniManche, PaniManche!" Sombody has come from the sky in his ship of ice and has brought rain with him. The narrator explains how it feels to taste water after such a long gap: "After a decade of drought, drops of water fall from the sky. One of the first beads whichfall on my upper lip is more intimate than any kiss I've had before. I embrace it, pulling the dropinside my mouth. When it touches the upper part of my tongue, I experience ephemeral sweetness" (p. 33).

The god or alien-like character of PaniManche described in the story brings the element of magical realism into the story, which is not the concern of this study. The possibility of World War III and the self-destruction of human civilization cannot be ignored, but it doesn't have any direct connection with climate change. Exploring the possibility of a decade long drought as an effect of climate change falls within the scope of this study. Short-term droughts are one of the climate hazards that Nepal is witnessing in recent years. In fact, The Kathmandu Post reports that the drought has topped the list of climate hazards (Upadhyaya, 2024).Referencing a national survey report, the news article states, "widespread droughts are the foremost climate stressors affecting Nepal, hitting its agriculture the hardest. A staggering 65 percent of households and their farms have been continually affected by droughts for the last 25 years" (Upadhyaya, 2024, Extensive Drought section, para. 1).According to another news report, agricultural drought has been a big problem for farmers all over Nepal as "in recent years, there has been a trend of prolonged winters without precipitation, impacting production" (Dhakal, 2024, Agricultural Drought, para. 2). Farmers "have been experiencing a change in the rainfall pattern in the monsoon and drought in the winter" (para. 6) and "the winter drought is harsh not only in Terai but also for farmers in the mid-hills and mountainous areas" (para. 4). Seeing the current trend of occurrence of droughts in Nepal, it can be safely inferred that in one hundred years from now, Nepal will have much prolonged and severe droughts, but

onelastingfor a decade or more can't be said with confidence to occur yet – may be a case in much drier parts of the world, but not yet in Nepal.

Textual Analysis of *Rain and Water*

In ShranupTandukar's*Rain and Water*, the rain water is no more normal, it has turned into acid. The people are faced with acid rain every time it rains. "Those unfortunate enough to experience the rain would have their skin corroded off anddevelop severe burns. The most unfortunate, who couldn't seek shelter from the rain, would beburned alive by water" (Tims, 2022, p. 43). Everyone now stays indoors, that too in underground apartment buildings. The ceiling has a giant screen that shields the people beneath from acid rain. It is really dangerous outside. "If not the rainthen the air will kill you, if not the air then the heat; if not the heat then the occasional floods" (p. 44).

In one hundred years from now in Nepal, shall there be such acid rain that can burn people alive? What is the present situation? Acid rain refers to"any form of precipitation with acidic components, such as sulfuric or nitric acid that fall to the ground from the atmosphere in wet or dry forms" (EPA, 2024, para. 1).Acid deposition, as it is also known, can occur not only as rain but also as "snow, fog, hail, or even acidic dust" (para. 1) Acid rain is mostly a result of human industrial activity. "While a small portion of the SO2 and NOX that cause acid rain is from natural sources such as volcanoes, most of it comes from the burning of fossil fuels." (EPA, 2024, para. 3). There aren't many studies done regarding the situation of acid rain in Nepal, which may be because of no urgency felt in this matter. Years ago, Shrestha et al. (2013) studied the rain water of Kathmandu Valley for its acidic value and found no significant impacts of anthropogenic sources on rainwater quality of the Valley.A study on the threats of climate change and acid rain to cultural heritageby the Athens University of Economics and Business says, "Four decades ago, acid rain was a profound challenge, with adverse effects on ecosystems and public health. . . . Nowadays, acid rain might have been a slightly forgotten issue, as there is an attentional shift to climate change" (Halkos, 2024, p. 2). It may be the same case with Nepal. In addition, there hasn't been lately any news report about any significant event of acid rainfall in Nepal. The 2024 report of Environmental Performance Index (EPI, 2024) ranks 180 countries on the basis of their contribution and exposure to air pollution including acid rain. In the list Nepal has been ranked at 175th position, suggesting very little contribution and exposure in comparison to other countries. Hence, in hundred years from now, the present situation of acid rain in Nepal may

most probably exacerbate, but it seems unlikely that it will exacerbate to the extent that a person can be burnt alive if exposed to the rain and so has to have protective shield always above his head.

Who is to Blame?

ShranupTandukar has also written a poem that blames human greed for all these disasters. He writes:

The greed, greed, greed
as ancient as time, as infinite as space
made the sun, the stars, the moon bow down;
flattened the hills, melted the mountains, swallowed the sea

The present situation of global warming and climate change is not natural, but is anthropogenic as NASA claims "The current warming trend is unequivocally the result of human activity since the 1950s and is proceeding at an unprecedented rate over millennia" (NASA, n.d., What is Global Waming section, para. 2).But how much greed does Nepal share in this global greed? How much does it contribute to the global warming?According to the report of Centre for Social Change (CSC), Nepal contributes "mere 0.027% to the total global greenhouse gas emissions" (Puri, 2024, para. 1), yet it ranks as "the 10th most affected country globally" (para. 1).Though many countries have committed to and have actually started to cut carbon emissions at home, at a global scale,carbon emissions from fossil fuels are still increasing, and have reached a record high in 2024 (Morrison, 2024). The human greed hasn't lessened.

Conclusion

As global temperatures continue to rise, Nepal's temperature is also rising at an alarming rate. The country is highly vulnerable to climate change and has already experienced rise in temperature and precipitation at a pace faster than the global average. Due to its fragile geography, Nepal faces a wide range of climate risks and water-related hazards, exacerbated by rapid snow and ice melt in the mountains and glacial lake outbursts. In recent years, Nepal has witnessed devastating climate change-induced disasters, such as extreme heat waves, excessive rainfall, and devastating floods and landslides. If the current climate crisis persists, in hundred years from now,Nepal may experience scenarios similar to those depicted in the climate fiction *In Hundred Years: An Anthology of Climate Fiction from Nepal*.

Thus, extremely hot weather as depicted in Rajbhandari's*Kimbu*, disappearance of mountains above 8,000 meters and glacial floods forcing mass

migrationas shown in Ghimire's *7866 km²*, prolonged droughts as portrayed in Dhungana's*Pani Manche*, and worse acid rains as suggested in Tandukar's*Rain and Water* are all very likely to occur in one hundred years from now in Nepal. However, the three districts of Solukhumbu, Sankhuwasabha and Okhaldhunga turning into a gigantic lake as in *7866 km²*, a decade-long droughtasin*Pani Manche*, and instantly-burning acid rains as in *Rain and Water* seem to be highly exaggerated cases. Apart from a few exaggerated cases as these, the climate fiction narratives under study have rightly portrayed the scenario of the climatic condition of Nepal in hundred years from now, and these narratives can befairly said to be endowed with ecocritical consciousness.

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