

**Revisiting Nepali Identity through Nature: A Cultural Reflection in “Nepal Calling You”**

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**Abstract**

The present research paper explores the representation of nature in Suresh Jung Shah’s poem “Nepal Calling You.” Shah, in this poem, integrates nature, culture and national identity to create a ecofriendly bond among them. The main objective of this paper is to reflect the cultural awareness and ecological bond that regenerates national identity and ecofriendly awareness. Shah personifies glaciers, rivers, fields, trees, and birds, generating a romantic awareness as well as a national identity. Shah, in his poem, evokes his love and dedication towards his motherland, exploring the natural beauty of Nepal. Through the lyrical repetition, rhythmic structure and vivid imagery, Shah encapsulates the natural organs into metaphors of belonging. This poem is an ecological and cultural meditation that creates cultural nostalgia. Shah, in this poem, reveals that identity is built on embedding with natural awareness and cultural memory. This paper concludes that identity fosters the harmony between culture and nature. The study incorporates ecocriticism, romanticism, and cultural identity as a theoretical framework advocating the scholarly ideas of Glotflety, Hasan , Coleridge and Wordsworth.

**Keywords:** *culture, eco-friendly, Nepali identity, nature, revisit, etc.*

**Introduction**

Suresh Jung Shah is a prolific Nepali poet who integrates nature and culture in his writing. He has composed many poems about nature, culture and local subjects. The present poem, “Nepal Calling You”, is originally written in the Nepali language and later translated into English by Sangeeta Swechcha. Shah, in his lyrical contemplation, highlights Nepali landscape, flora and fauna, Nepali culture and tradition, which ultimately generates collective cultural consciousness. Shah, in his major poems, celebrates nature and Nepali culture, which evokes cultural as well as ecological awareness among the Nepali identities at home and abroad. In “Nepal Calling you”, Shah personifies nature and celebrates local Nepali culture and tradition to create a collective bond between human beings and nature. In some literary creations, human culture is presented as a destroyer of nature and environment but Nepali

literature always presents nature as an inspirer, friend and guide for humanity. In the creations of Lekhnath Poudyal, Laxmi Prasad Devkota, Madhab Prasad Ghimire to Suresh Jung Shah, we find nature – culture harmony.

Shah in “Nepal Calling you” evokes a romantic bond between nature, Nepali culture and national identities scattered all over the globe. The use of the personal pronoun “you” in the title of the poem and the repetition of “you” in all the stanzas create ownness and romantic sensibilities among the readers. The personification of mountains, hills, plain land, rivers, and forests binds all the readers in a tight knot of emotions. In the same token, personification of living beings and non-living things generates deep contemplation among all the Nepali nationalities in specific and foreign visitors in general. The tone of the poem creates a deep emotion and national connection when a Nepali diaspora living in another part of the world reads this poem. The poem is a plea of Mother Nature to the collective identities of the world to come to Nepal and enjoy the natural beauty of Nepal. This poem is a profound note to the visitors to visit different parts of Nepal and celebrate the beauty of all the natural bodies. The enchanting beauty of hills, trees, mountains, plains, stones and rivers is aesthetically painted in a lyrical tone.

This paper explores how “*Nepal Calling You*” revisits Nepali identity through the lens of nature, examining how Shah’s poetic strategies interconnect ecological imagery with cultural reflection. By applying theoretical frameworks such as Romanticism, Ecocriticism, and Psycho-emotional Poetics, the research seeks to illustrate the ways in which the poem constructs a holistic vision of Nepal that is at once emotional, cultural, and ecological. Moreover, the poem addresses a critical gap in Nepali literary scholarship, where studies on the fusion of natural landscapes, cultural heritage, and identity remain limited. By analyzing these elements, this paper highlights this poem as a medium for exploring collective identity, environmental consciousness, and cultural memory.

### **Critical Scholarship in “Nepal calling you”**

Many scholars have reviewed Shah’s poems in numerous ways. Some critics appreciate the romantic flavor of his poem, and others have highlighted his unique style of presenting cultural elements. Upadhyay and Sharma note that contemporary Nepali poets, like Shah, “use natural landscapes not merely as decorative imagery but as active agents shaping romantic consciousness” (603). They emphasize the natural beauty, the calls of birds and the beautiful staples of the temple. Upadhyay and Sharma argue that Nepali poetry often uses environmental imagery to convey ethical consciousness and cultural identity, presenting that care for nature is integral to cultural preservation (603). Similarly, Critics like Hasan highlight the role of repetition and lyrical musicality in creating the utmost emotional experiences. Hasan interprets the integration of nature and culture as a “method of intertwining personal yearning with collective cultural memory” (91). He viewed the cultural representation of different traditional practices of Nepal in Shah’s poem. None of the scholars has reviewed this poem, highlighting the integration of ecological elements and cultural aspects in “Nepal is Calling You.” So, this paper fulfills the research gap that is missed by the other researchers. The spotlight of this paper is to explore the evocation of Nepali identity through the natural appeal.

Shah’s poetic engagement is crystal clear in creating a romantic feeling. Romantic theory posits as mentioned in Wordsworth and Burke, “landscapes and natural phenomena are not mere backdrops but active participants in shaping thought, feeling, and moral

reflection” (47). In Shah’s poem, lines such as “*Glaciers of the mountains / Whistles of the green hills / Calling you*” (Shah, lines 1–3) exemplify this interconnectedness: nature’s play evokes awe while continuously reflecting human longing. The personification of hills and glaciers as “calling” shows an emotional dialogue that echoes the romantic feeling that nature is obediently expressive of human thoughts and sentiment. By weaving ecological substances as interlinked, Shah intertwines with romantic principles while fostering them within the Nepali setting and cultural awareness.

### **Ecocriticism, Romanticism and Psycho-emotional Study**

Ecocriticism is a broad way for literary and cultural scholars to investigate the global ecological crisis through the intersection of literature, culture, and the physical environment. Ecocriticism originated as an idea called “literary ecology” (Meeker 1972) and was later coined as an “-ism” (Rueckert 1996).

“Nepal Calling You” combines romantic awareness with an eco-cultural web to launch Nepali identity to the globe. Glotfelty talks about the relation between nature and its representation in literature. He states, “Ecocritical theory examines the relationship between literature and the natural environment, highlighting how texts reflect, critique, and influence human engagement with ecological systems” (15). As Shah foregrounds diverse landscapes and agricultural practices, “*Millet field of the high lands / Paddy field of the low lands*” (Shah, lines 21–22) to illustrate the integration of human life and environmental context. By portraying rivers, forests, and farmland as active agents in human experience, Shah’s poem valorizes the ecocritical principle that literature can communicate ethical and effective engagement with the environment.

Psycho-emotional concept emphasizes the lyrical structure of the poem and its impact on the reader’s engagement. This concept highlights how formal elements and poetic styles generate romantic sensibility among the readers. Hasan opines, “repetition, parallelism, imagery, and rhythm—produce emotional resonance and psychological immersion” (91–92). Shah’s repeated phrases, “*Calling you / Oh my darling / Where are you?*” (Shah, lines 3–4), are the best examples of Hasan’s scholarship. The repetition evokes the sense of intimacy and longingness, while multisensory imagery “*Melodies of the singing birds / Art of the dancing peacocks*” (Shah, lines 5–6) activates readers’ sensuality, generating romantic feeling, emotional and cultural consciousness. Psycho-emotional concept evokes that poetic structure helps to generate thematic content, leading to the interconnection among nature, culture, and identity more effectively.

The present paper interrogates these three theoretical lenses, to study Shah’s “Nepal Calling You” and the study argues that this poem constructs Nepali identity, fabricating ecological awareness, cultural mastery and emotional experience. Romanticism accelerates the deep relationship between human emotion and natural elements. Ecocriticism posits the poem within ecological and ethical awareness, and Psycho-emotional scholarship defines how poetic styles create expressive emotional situations. For example, the lines “*The beauty of nature / The beauty of the culture / Calling you*” (Shah, lines 15–16) fuse ecological beauty which evokes romantic sensuality, represents eco-cultural consciousness, and qualify readers through poetic structures.

### Nature Culture Association and Identity Formation

Shah in “Nepal Calling You” minutely observes the romantic beauty of hills, mountains, and plains. At the same time, he worships the unique culture and traditions of Nepal, where people are deeply associated with the natural habitats. So, Shah reveals the interplay between ecological elements and humanity. The repetitive words such as “darling”, “...calling” and “you” create a deep unity with the readers which recollects human emotion and generates the feeling of oneness. American ecocritics and biologist, Berry Commoner in *The Closing Circle*, mentioned that “Everything is connected to everything else” (108). Commoner’s this scholarship is believed as the first law of ecology. This concept is clearly visible in Shah’s “Nepal Calling You.” In the poem, natural bodies like hills, glaciers, mountains, bells, temples, fields etc. are calling and want to communicate with us. The poem opens with the chilling quality of the mountain that is calling us telling “darling” which invokes a very close relation. This word arises a close association between mountains, glaciers and human beings. The word “darling” indicates ‘the loved one.’ The phrase, “Oh my darling”, generates deep emotion and a romantic environment in association with ecology. It exemplifies the deep interplay between ecology and human beings. The speaker in “Nepal Calling You” invites all the readers to enjoy the enchanting beauty of glaciers and the mountains covered with snow. The speaker speaks:

*Glaciers of the mountains*

*Whistles of the green hills*

*Calling you*

*Oh my darling where are you? (Shah, Stanza 1st)*

Shah’s poetic engagement in these opening lines is mixed with romantic sensibility. The sensus quality and beauty with it’s quality is clearly waved together. The quality of the mountain is valorized with glaciers. The glaciers are personified who is calling his darling. Similarly, green hills are also personified with the human quality of whistling. The word “calling you” closely engages with the intimacy between the ecosphere and humanity. The longing of the mountain to its darling reveals that there is a deep love between the mountain and the human beings, so mountains and hills are calling the darling. The poem creates awareness of the nature-culture relationship. Cheryll Glotfelty says that ecocriticism talks about the representation of nature and its deep relation with human culture in literature.

Likely, Wordsworth emotionally opines, “Nature is not a passive background but a moral, spiritual, and living force that shapes the human spirit. Romanticism sees nature as a teacher, healer, and source of inner renewal” (26). Shah, in this poem, embeds the nature-culture interrelation, which is essential for both of their identity. The identity of mountains and hills is incomplete in the absence of human beings and human beings are incomplete without nature. So, in the lines of this poem, nature is “calling” and seeking its “darling” continuously.

Abram, in his book *The Spell of the Sensuous*, offers, “human perception, language, and consciousness are entangled with the ‘more-than-human world’ — the living world of animals, plants, land, ecosystems” (7). In the second stanza of “Nepal Calling You”, the speaker personifies peacocks and singing birds with their complete quality of dancing and singing. The nature and its natural habitats contain the human quality and call us “darling” to celebrate the beauty. They are continuously searching for us to demonstrate their art. The speaker utters:

*Melodies of the singing birds  
Art of the dancing Peacock  
Calling you ( Lines 5-7)*

The singing birds and peacocks are the beautiful creatures of this ecology. Their art of singing and dancing evokes a romantic atmosphere. They are calling us ( darling) and inviting all of us to observe their art which intoxicates us with aesthetic quality. It interlinks us with the ecological web. In this web, one is incomplete without another. Shah portrays nature as it is with its original qualities. The roaring sound of the rivers, charming sound of the flora and fauna, ringing bells, millet of the highland, paddy of lowland etc. are fostered naturally with their original qualities. “Nepal Calling You” draws the picture of Nepali identity linking Nepali landscapes with Nepali culture. The poet beautifies the beauty of mountains, hills and terai with the speciality of those lands. If we read this poem focusing on the ecological beauty, it arises consciousness. If we read it focusing on the joyful things of nature, it generates emotion and if we try to understand it focusing its stylistic pattern, it makes us psycho emotional. In all the stanzas, Shah repeats three lines:

*Calling you  
Oh my darling  
Where are you?( Shah, Stanza 1st -5th)*

The repetition of these lines makes this poem melodious and the rhyming word “ you” shows closeness between ecology and human beings. The phrase “ oh my darling” reveals that there is an inseparable relation between nature and the human being. The psycho-emotion theory advocates that the poetic style of the poem creates emotion and a psychological connection which leads us to romantic sensibility. Shah in “ Nepal calling you” uses this repetitive style which proves the close association between nature and culture. Shah uses the word “my darling” which creates a sense of togetherness between nature and culture. In these repetitive lines, nature is presented as a beloved who is constantly seeking its lover (darling). The repetition of the phrase “ where are you?” indicates that the ecosphere is hurried to meet us. The following lines further evoke the nature culture connectedness in this way:

*Ringing bell of the temples  
Roaming sound of the monuments  
Calling you  
Oh my darling  
Where are you? (Shah, lines 16–20)*

Shifting from natural to cultural imagery, this stanza situates the poem within cultural eco-criticism, where nature and heritage are inseparable aspects of identity. The “*ringing bell of the temples*” and “*roaming sound of the monuments*” represent Nepal’s sacred geography where religion, architecture, and landscape form a holistic worldview. According to Cultural Identity Theory (Hall 1990, p. 226), identity is constructed through shared symbols and collective memory. Shah uses these sounds to evoke the spiritual and historical presence of Nepal, suggesting that both natural and cultural heritage are calling the absent “darling” symbolizing citizens moving to modernization. The repeated question “*Where are you?*” grows heavier with cultural and emotional urgency, turning nostalgia into a collective longing. Here, cultural heritage intersects with natural imagery, emphasizing the

interdependence of nature and human civilization. Romantic theory interprets the inspiring effect of historical monuments as part of the sublime experience (Burke 56).

The interconnection of nature and human beings is discussed by many ecocritics and nature lovers. Glotfelty, in his book *Ecocriticism Reader*, talks about this connection as “literature is not just about human affairs, but about the embeddedness of human culture in ecological contexts” (xv). Shah, in “Nepal calling you”, fabricates nature as an agency to imprint the colors of Nepali identity. After reading this poem, any reader can easily define Nepalese identity and its unique association with nature. This poem exemplifies that our ecosphere is filled with human qualities. The poet uses words like: roaring, charming, melodious, whistles, dancing, calling etc. practiced by ecological organs and calling us to enjoy those qualities. In the poem, nature is practicing the sense of sight, the sense of smell, the sense of hearing, the sense of touch, and the sense of feeling. All these human senses are actively functioning.

Immanuel Kant in *Critique of Judgement* states, “Nature becomes a pathway to something larger than the human mind” (87). This concept shows the unique relationship of human beings with nature and beyond it. In “Nepal Calling You”, Shah compares Nepal to paradise. He further mentions:

*The beauty of nature*  
*The beauty of the culture*  
*Millet fields of the highlands*  
*Paddy fields of the lowlands*  
*Treasure of peace*  
*Treasure of paradise*  
*Calling you*  
*Oh my darling*  
*Where are you?* (Shah, Lines 16-35)

Shah compares Nepal to paradise and the land of peace. It is full of the beauty of nature and culture. He talks about the beauty of the mountain with glaciers and the beauty of nature with the dancing of peacocks and singing birds. Similarly, the beauty of hills and plains is associated with paddy and millet which gives an organic flavor in the poem.

### **Findings and Conclusion**

The poet intends to surpass the secret message of the enchanting beauty of natural Nepal and its organic fragrance to the globe. Nepalese identity is intertwined with the vastness and greatness of nature. It shows that Nepalese life is deeply intertwined in the ecological web, which is also the main principle of ecology. The research finds a strong interlink of eco-humanism, where “the beauty of nature and the beauty of culture coexist in balance” (Buell 89). Shah’s juxtaposition of the *millet fields of the highlands* and *paddy fields of the lowlands* (Shah, lines 26–30) celebrates not only the country’s topographical diversity but also its human labor and unity.

In a nutshell, “*Nepal Calling You*” stands as a lyrical composition with the fusion of ecology, culture, and emotion in modern Nepali literature. Through the repeated lines, imagery, and musicality, the poem constructs an ecological patriotism that is a call for spiritual and cultural renewal through a reconnection with the land. By engaging romantic

emotion, ecocritical awareness, and cultural identity, Shah's work portrays a unique Nepali form of literary environmentalism. It reflects an impressive message where nature is not separate from human existence but is the very soul of it.

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