

ENG 182 K: SA2 Cultural Artifact

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Dear Future Generation,

I was born and raised in Nepal, which means that it holds a special place in my heart. After leaving Nepal to come to the United States, there were days when I would look out the window of our apartment in Baltimore, MD and reminisce about my childhood. For the 9 years I lived in Nepal, I made lifelong memories with my cousins and grandparents because they were the ones I missed the most. Although my childhood was filled with exciting memories like playing cricket on the terrace with my cousins and going to the local convenience store to buy my favorite candies, I do not remember ever learning about the Nepali flag, its meaning, nor its history. I realized this last year, while I was preparing supplemental essays for colleges, I came across a question that took me by surprise because it asked, "If you could witness a historic event first-hand, what would it be, and why?" I thought long and hard about this question until I remembered the unfortunate truth that I knew nothing about the history behind the Nepali flag. After watching an interview with my father, who translated the complicated Nepali words in English, I was ready to write my short supplement. Looking back at that experience, I appreciate the curiosity I had to learn, but I am saddened by the fact that my school taught me nothing about our unique flag. The process in which our ancestors decided to design our nation's flag is important because it keeps us connected to our ethnicity. Dr. Jagman Gurung, the spokesperson in the video, explained the meaning of the flag through a modern scientific lens. The three sides of the triangle depict electrons, neutrons, and protons, the components that make up an atom, which in turn makes up all the world's matter. Driven by astrological and occultist knowledge, where the two triangles meet, called the absolute voidness represents how the world today depends on technology. The blue border around the triangle represents the sky that is not limited to just Nepal but extends to all countries. The crimson color symbolizes world victory and peace. The half-moon illustrates knowledge and wisdom, while the sun indicates natural power that needs to be tamed. The flag does not only acquire a unique shape but holds a philosophical

meaning that we need to remember and pass on to future generations. It is important to me that we understand the meaning of our flag and carry it on because it will help us preserve cultural values like familial unity and balance of power within our community.

Composer's Memo:

I started off by sharing that I moved from Nepal to the United States to give background information about myself and why this topic matters to me. I decided to write a traditional letter because although this message is directed towards the future generation, I wanted to use a traditional form of communication to go with the theme of preserving cultural values. I wanted to focus on the future generation and direct this message towards them because the main point of the letter is to not forget about the Nepali values and culture. My motive for using the flag as the cultural artifact was to talk about something that is different from other countries. Since every nation and the people that reside in that nation think differently from other places, the flag was a great artifact to use for this letter. By incorporating what I had learned into the letter, I hope to captivate the reader's attention and demystify the meaning behind the flag because when I first watched the video, I thought the meaning behind the structure of the flag was unconventional.

The meaning of flag is abstract because it incorporated science, astrology, and occultism, which made learning about the flag more compelling to me. The Nepali flag in particular highlights unity through the two triangles and the blue lining around them, and balance, through its depiction of the sun, which are a part of the cultural values. In Nepali culture, family and togetherness is the most important aspect of life and that is seen through the large number of joint families in Nepal. Balance of power especially is a key component because in a household, the elders are always the leaders of the family. The elders are the ones who provide wisdom, teach lessons, and forgive us when we do wrong. In my experience, I tend to forget about familial unity and balance of power practiced in a Nepali household because I grew up in the United States, but when I remember the meaning behind our flag, I am reminded of those values. I would like the future generations to also remember and cherish these Nepali values in the coming years.



Picture of Nepali Flag.

Citation:

STV Chat With Prof.Dr.Jagman Gurung [Interview by 983333842 761318298 J. Bhandari].
(n.d.). Retrieved 2020, from YouTube.