

Chapter One

A Reading of National Imagination of Citizenry

in School Level Textbooks

A few educational and pedagogical researches have been attempted regarding the nature and design of the school texts in Nepal, and few efforts have been made to critically analyze how the curriculum and its textbooks aim to construct the children for the future. However, education is taken for granted as a facilitator of promoting different aspects of a nation. For example, education is taken as a prominent aspect of development; it is pervasively deemed as the backbone of any nation's national progress. As nation imagines its progress, it simultaneously imagines of citizens what they should be like. However, what kind of values and perceptions the school textbooks try to implant in the minds of students is a rarely contested site. Therefore, how textbooks of school curricula reflect the national imagination on citizenry is the basic contention of this research.

Textbooks have always been a major force of standardizing the curriculum and the activities of the students. The standardization happens through the values. The values are the beliefs about certain aspects such family, society or nation, aimed to be taught in school, and inculcate in the minds of students. The individual texts in the textbooks contain diverse values, for example, related to good citizen, good boy and girl, and citizens and so on. The research will explore such values, the exploration follows the analysis.

The values are transformed as discourse. Discourse is defined as communication of thought by words in a given situation and context provided with

the specific speakers and listeners and encouraged the presuppositions held by the speakers and the listeners. Linguistically, it is a treatment of any subject orally or in a written forms. The enactment of, in other words, the teaching of values embedded in texts of school books, is much facilitated by the "felicity conditions¹" of teaching learning activities. Communication between the teachers, who feel the urge to teach the texts, and the learners, who should learn, is warranted by the presupposition that education holds a humanistic importance of emancipation and liberation from obscurantism and ignorance. The interaction between the learners and the teachers is dictated by the urge: what should be taught and what should be learned in the process of socializations. The serene goal and benefits of having education is transplanted in the learners' mind in their early age. And, what is to be taught and learned is determined by the education system and the designation of the curriculum.

After exploring the values and examining them, I am basically concerned to delineate the significance of including certain values and importance of pedagogical implications of those values. By and large, following are the questions on which the research will concentrate on: primarily, how the school becomes an opportune place for such a project of nation; what does nation imagine of the children through school education? Secondly, how children psychology is deployed?

As an effort of cultural study, the research is informed by the insights basically founded in Critical Discourse Analysis, this research tries to explore the values in school level textbooks, of Nepali and Social Studies, and attempts are made to reveal that the textbooks prescribed by this education system are cultural production at large. Keeping in perspective, the nature of inquiry, accessibility, time, availability of resources, my research design basically is limited to two subjects: Nepali and Social Studies, taught at school level (1-10) in government schools. However, each book is

not the object of analysis. As a qualitative dissertation, I am particularly influenced by ideological interpretation and analysis, especially and specifically put forward by Siegfried Jager, and sometimes, by Teun A. van Dijk, two prominent CDA theoreticians and practitioners.

The inclusion of values in school texts books raises a critical question regarding the connection between the discourse and knowledge, or specifically, formation of knowledge for the students. The values in the texts in fact are the template to pass certain kind of knowledge to the students. The imparted knowledge is of diverse kinds according to the values the textbook writer wants to address. Regarding the nature of knowledge, Jager in his essay "Discourse and Knowledge" deals primarily with the following issues:

- a) What knowledge (valid place at a certain time) consists of;
- b) how this valid knowledge evolves;
- c) how it is passed on;
- d) what function it has for the constitution of subjects and the shaping the society;
- e) what impact this knowledge has on the overall development of society²

According to Jager, here knowledge means "all kinds of contents which make up a consciousness and /or all kinds of meanings used by respective historical persons to interpret and shape the surrounding reality (33)." Further, people derive this "knowledge" from the respective discursive contexts into which they are born and in which they are involved for their entire existence. Therefore, discourse analysis aims "to identify the knowledge (valid at a certain place at a certain time) of discourses and/ or dispositives, to explore the respective concrete context of knowledge/power

and to subject it to a critique. Discourse analysis pertains to both everyday knowledge that is conveyed via the media, everyday communication, school, and family and so on, and also to that particular knowledge (valid at a certain place at a certain time) which is produced by the various sciences, including social, cultural and natural sciences.

According to Jurgen Link, discourse is "an institutionally consolidated concept of speech inasmuch as it determines and consolidates action and thus already exercises power" (qtd. in Jager 34). Jager further extends the arena of discourse as he argues, discourse as "flow of knowledge – and/or all societal knowledge store – throughout all time which determines individual and collective doing and/or formative action that shapes society, thus exercising power. Discourse can be understood as material realities *sui generis* (34-35)." Though much concerned with power structure and power politics, basic tenet of Critical Discourse Analysis, lies in its linguistic orientation that it analyzes language.

For CDA, language is not powerful on its own; it gains power as powerful people make use of it to perform particular ends. This idea invites a discourse analyst to be a keen observant in investigating linguistic use. Language is "problem" because it is a social phenomenon, not only individuals, but also institutions and social groupings have specific meanings and values, that are expressed in language in specifically systematic ways (Wodak 6-9). Therefore, it explains why CDA chooses "the perspective of those who suffer, and critically analyses the language use of those in power who also have the means and opportunity to improve conditions" (Wodak 10). Wodak perspective on CDA concentrates on interventionist approach of investigating language use to explore the relations of power and ideology.

From Discourse to Function: Shaping the Knowledge for Students

Regarding the school education, interesting question arises: why does school period become important in shaping the behaviors of the children and learning values? One of the most plausible facts about schooling is that children spend a great deal of time in school. During this time, “the student has been immersed in a culture that is so natural a part of our way of life that it is almost taken for granted. In that culture called schooling there are certain publicly explicit goals: teaching children to read and write, to figure, and to learn something about the history of the country, among them. There are, of course, other aims, many of which are associated with the explicit curriculum that the school offers to the students” (Eisner 87). Moreover, looking from CDA perspective, language users [the learners] are unable to memorize and manage all the meaning details of discourse. The interpretation of meaning is encouraged by the "text-context" interrelations and more importantly by "the socially shared beliefs of the speaker" and the listener (van Dijk 98-103). The schooling then becomes an opportune time for *schooling* the ideologies and set of values ingrained the nation's policies thus execution of the national thinking.

Over the past few decades education has been deemed as one of surest viable means of forming the ethos of democracy or the particular geopolitical discourse adopted by the nation, in the people. And it starts from the early childhood, in fact, from school education. Apparently, this question is seen on both the sides: from the perspective of the educators and educationists, and also from the side of policy makers and the politicians (Biesta 9). These discourses of educators and educationists, aimed to be practiced, are "not interesting as mere expressions of social practice, but because they serve certain ends, namely to exercise power [knowledge], the official knowledge, with its all effects. They do so because they are institutionalized and

regulated, because they are linked to action" (Jager 34). In this context, democratic republic of Nepal may not be seen as an exception in forming the educational discourses and texts in order to produce "democratic" citizenship. How this notion of democratic citizenship embraced by the policy makers and the educationists can be found in school texts produced by government of Nepal and how is the role and position expected from the young minds is the issue of this research.

In the context of linking discourse to power and action mentioned above is, however, very complex because a discursive practice exercises power with all its effects in various respects. For Jager, this is intersection between and among "special discourses and interdiscourses" of cultural sciences, and, of course, "discourse strands" (47-48). In simple terms discursive formation can be known as just the field of accumulation of utterances, for example, the values of cultural integrity in the texts. However, opposite of it is also true, that is, exclusion of other possible other utterances, questions, points of view, problematic issues that obstruct the easy implementation of the issues designed and imagined by the educationists and educators, or for the matter, the entire system of stakeholders of existing curriculum system. Such exclusions which necessarily result from the structure of special discourse can be institutionally reinforced (35). The power is exercised over the selection of discourse and issue to be set in the texts of school level.

Jager views that it is necessary to deal with the relationship between discourse and social reality first, and second, to ask precisely how power is anchored in this societal reality, who exercises it, over whom and by what means it is exercised, and so on in more detail to illustrate the problem of power/ knowledge (36). We will see later

on in analysis, importance of Nepal being dominated by middle class values largely as the opportune context exercise of official knowledge, significance of current social and political order of the nation, and also why school education is best forum/medium to exert knowledge.

It is very hard to find that nations being value neutral in terms of school education. Though it basically seems to be the prevalent condition in developing and under-developing countries, it is not always the case. Torney-Putra and Schwille argue “Western nations, like non-Western states, have spent substantial portions of their budgets and devoted extensive attention in curriculum guidelines to social education with explicit value goals” (30). Moreover, the school’s role in teaching values is not limited to such explicit intent. Education by its very nature implies the taking of stands laden with values. Teachers consider some things worth learning and others not, some student behaviors constructive and others not. They opine that “even in the most concerted attempt to practice neutrality, values are assumed” (Torney-Putra and Schwille 31). To be value neutral for a national educational system is a difficult project to adopt. Implication of those values that is pedagogical should be the contention of analysis.

As the values might differ from countries to countries in terms of the phase of the development they have paved and the progress they have made, accordingly values are taught and learnt, and practice may also vary. This evokes a little comparative concern with values in education. In 1899, for example, the Committee of Seven of the American Historical Association conducted a study of education in Europe. Although they identified some promising practices, they concluded, "German and French schools regard pupils as subjects rather than citizens,

while English instruction was chaotic and entirely lacking in attention to civil government" (33). Similarly, no western industrialized country may have a uniformly high level of success in transmitting civic values, perhaps because subtle incompatibilities between goals exist.³

One of the explicit directed manipulation in the school textbooks can be found regarding the history, or historical facts, in fact, the representation and dispersion of history. Noah, Prince and et al. argue that history is found to be distorted in school texts books. After observing the curricular books in the United States, they argue there exists ambiguity regarding the historical matters such as Russian-American relations before Bolshevik Revolution, Cold War, American War and even on depiction of Lincoln. For example, they point out "A good example of the distorted legend of the Founding Fathers in high-school textbooks is the treatment accorded Robert Morris, known as the "financier of the Revolution." Although there has been considerable distortion of the images of most of the Fathers, Morris represents an extreme illustration" (419). Could this sort of distortion be the case in Nepal's school textbooks of after 1990s? As Nepal does have ethnic, historical, traditional and national, cultural values, the freedom of preference, choice to represent and selection process on the part of the writers of the textbooks and also of the designers of curriculum leave a space to the possibility of the distortion of such values.

In the outset of all most every book that the government of Nepal prescribes it is prefaced that the primary goal of the books designed according to the policy of the Curriculum Development Centre and approved by it, is to teach proportionately the four skills of learning: Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening. And secondarily, the writers of the books also prelude the assumption that the books designed in accordance with the psychology, multicultural environment and learning capacity of

the students in order to facilitate the teaching- learning process. This objective coincides with Russel's formulation of what education aims at. Chomsky cites the objective of education, as Russel believed, in following way:

[. . .] to give a sense of the value of things other than domination, to help create wise citizens of a free community, to encourage a combination of citizenship with liberty, individual creativeness, which means that we regard a child as a gardener regards a young tree, as something with an intrinsic nature which will develop into an admirable form given proper soil and air and light. (qtd. in Otero 3)

Russel treats the children as "young tree" to be reared up for the best as able citizens. And the goal of education is to develop the internal faculty of the children so as to prepare them for nation.

The “Framework of Primary School Curriculum” developed by CDC, Nepal, frames the objectives in quite different way. It aims at strengthening “nation, nationality, democratic culture, and salient features of the Nepalese society;” reducing prevalent poverty and unemployment by making education more relevant, skill-based and professional;”developing human resources according to the country’s demand and competitive world market; help in the creation of an inclusive society by developing mutual trust; encourage students towards human rights, child rights, and against violence by eliminating superstitions, untouchability and other types of social evils (Primary Education Curriculum 1). The policy making initiatives are informed by the

state and national policymaking efforts. This discrepancy between the goals stated in the prefaces of curricula books and the objectives mentioned by the CDC informs a gap in meting out the goals of education, that is, to enlighten and make the learners conscious.

The gap between the information set in the prefaces of the books and the goals set by the CDC informs that beside teaching the students the four skills of knowledge in order to be educated, the nation or the stakeholders want to endow them with something more – teaching some values which are pertinent to the progress, development, history, national objectives of the nation, and values concerned with civic life and citizenships. I in this research aim at exploring the treatment of those values embedded in schoolbooks and revealing the implication of those values. In other words, I intend to focus on the politics of the textbooks which moreover, can be called as the politics of the nation. Tentatively, the school texts proposed by the Government of Nepal exhibit values related to democracy, republicanism, ethnicity, nationality and so on.

No curricular textbook's primary aim can be value neutral. However, school textbooks and teachers can be neutral only in circumscribed areas. The textbooks, along with their primary objective of teaching the students, are designated with intention of teaching something more. They are found laden with implicit values of different nature, however, the values implicitly surface enough. The values may differ in terms of the political and cultural changes the nation has undergone. However, they characterize the political cultures and their stated educational goals of the nation.

It is clearly, for example, stated in the preface of *Our English Grade 6*, that the aim of developing “the school curricula and textbooks is to give students the

knowledge and skills they need. These include values and moral standards such as honesty, integrity etc.” Moreover, it also proclaims that these values contribute the development of individuals and national life. More importantly, “they encourage national unity, patriotism, and truly democratic society. Students need to be prepared for future work and family responsibilities.” (Preface n.pag.). The study will reveal that the education system and its textbooks are the cultural production at large. They claim to be neutral, objective, realistic, impartial, and guided to instill the sense of unity, equality, justice, and harmony in society and across nation. They do not put the political intention in the straightforward way. Equally, there are cultural expression embedded in the texts that mark the respect of traditional Nepalese values for helpfulness, cooperation, and social harmony, and the respect for frugal life without any political intention.

From very beginning of the school grade, the motto: education is not "solely for you but it is for nation," has been indoctrinated in the texts. It is interesting and important to note the imprint of this motto in early school age. For example, in *Mero Nepali* of grade two, the first chapter, which is a poem entitled "Nani Babu" written by Kshetrapratap Adhikari, explicitly dictates that students, the Nani Babu (the students), should read for the nation because when they read, the nation becomes "larger" and Himalayas become "higher". The Himalays here are projected as the national pride, and heightening national pride is the responsibility of [would be] citizens, that is only possible only through "good" education. Translation of the poem goes like this: "Study well today/[because] Tomorrow will be better; If you become better, nation becomes better" (1 *my trans*⁴.) And the last stanza is: Nepal will be even larger/ when you grow up; The Himals will be taller, when you climb up them (1 *My Translation*). This ethos of nationhood is implanted in order to create

the citizens for the nations. This can be characterized as the politics of nation or imagination of the education rather than educating students for their holistic development.

Regarding school's efficacy in developing countries, Fuller views "much less is known about the school's efficacy within developing countries" (224). An early review of his research in the Third World, based on just nine empirical studies in the Third World, concluded that schools hold little influence on achievement, net the effect of family background. His empirical work suggests that "the school institution exerts a greater influence on achievement within developing countries compared to industrialized nations, after accounting for the effect of pupil background" (Fuller 255). Therefore, education remains the backbone in carrying out the national agendas in near futures. What can be predicated, though not be sure at the preliminary stage of my research, is that educational institutions through the deployment of designated textbooks one way or other way carry out certain values which are pertinent to national objectives and inherent to politics of nation.

Regarding the politics of the official knowledge, Apple argues education is deeply implicated in the politics of culture. In his words, "The curriculum is never simply a neutral assemblage of knowledge, somehow appearing in the texts and classrooms of a nation. It is always part of a selective tradition, someone's selection, some group's vision of legitimate knowledge" (Apple *Culture and Education* 223). It is produced out of the cultural, political, and economic conflicts, tensions, and compromises that organize and disorganize people⁵. Apple's notion of developing curriculum suggests the design of texts of is already always influenced by the official [national] culture.

Moreover, Althusser's notion of education as state apparatus adds a credential delineation to this logic of Apple. In his book *Lenin and Philosophy*, he argues that education is the most important ideological state apparatus. He further explains, the education system teaches the students the dominant discourses, techniques, and the customs of the society from four to above years, from nursery to the university classes, for several hours a day. The students learn the ruling ideologies directly in the form of morals, religion, and philosophy. The schools and colleges teach both the values and knowledge and necessary skills to support the existing political and economic system (144-146). If looked through the Marxist eyes, reproduction of middle class propriety is the basic concern of the school texts. The values of honesty, income, consumption in suitably way, ethics of cleverness, ethics of propriety are the dominant concerns for teaching-learning activities.

Reviewing ideas explored by these multiple prominent thinkers of academia yields a presumable fact that there is a substantive transformation in education from what meant to be "humanistic education" to "values education". Thinkers like John Dewey, Bertrand Russell speak of education, as means of transformation and transmission of society, the surest means of liberating humans from the web of obscurity and ignorance and lead to the path of enlightenment and progress. In Dewey's words, education is "necessity of life, "the necessity of teaching and learning" is required "for the continued existence of a society" (Dewey *Democracy and Education* 3). But he emphasizes, education as "a means of getting us away from an unduly scholastic and formal notion of education. Schools are, indeed, one important method of the transmission which forms the dispositions of the immature; but it is only one means [. . .]" (4). The continuity of any experience, through renewing of the social group is a literal fact. Education, in its broadest sense, is the

means of this social continuity of life. Every one of the constituent elements of a social group, in a modern city as in a savage tribe, is born immature, helpless, without language, beliefs, ideas, or social standards. Each individual, each unit who is the carrier of the life-experience of his group, in time passes away. (Dewey *DE3*) However, Dewey's thinking of humanistic education has undergone a massive change over the time. Education is directed to values education, crudely speaking, to the state sponsored project.

Darom in their article "Humanistic Values Education Personal, Interpersonal, Social, and Political Dimensions" perceives the change that there is an arrival of values education too. In their words the distinction is:

Humanistic education and values education have often been considered antagonistic to each other. Humanistic education stresses personal growth, [. . .]; it focuses on the individual whose growth and development, needs and aspirations are considered paramount in all educational processes. Values education, on the other hand, emphasizes involvement with others—individuals, communities, society— commitment and social action. (196)

The main contention is that the value matters and concerns are now so important for our community's life. Schools have a positive responsibility to undertake the education of the community's young in preparation for engagement in those valued activities that will play a pivotal part in their lives as private individuals and as citizens. According to him, education is bridging the gap existed hitherto between self and society.

What about the role of education, that is, regarding the connection between self and society, in changed scenario? Biesta argues that the education system prevailing in this era is not only "teaching" the values of democracy and inculcating them in the minds of the student it is also maintaining it. In his words, "in new and emerging democracies the focus has been on how education can contribute to the formation of democratic citizens and the promotion of a democratic culture, while in established democracies the focus has been on how to nurture and maintain interest in and engagement with democratic processes and practices" (9). Such education now shapes the democratic values in the mind of the people that can astutely be called "political socialization" of the learners.

What education imagines, or in other words, what a nation imagines through the education, has been an important matter of academic exploration⁶. In his much celebrated book, *The Educational Imagination*, on what is imagined out of education, Elliot E. Eisner, provides a conceptual framework that shows learners the different ways in which the aims of education can be regarded, and describes their implications for curriculum planning and teaching practices. His argument is based on the assumption that the correctness of any given academic practice depends on the characteristics and context of the school program and the values of the community that program (education practice) serves. Out of the three curricula, he describes, regarding the implicit curricula, he argues:

The implicit curriculum of the school is what it teaches because of the kind of place it is. And the school is that kind of place through the ancillary consequences of various approaches to teaching, by the kind of reward system that it uses, by the organizational structure it employs

to sustain its existence, by the physical characteristics of the school plant, and by the furniture it uses and the surroundings it creates. (97)

He believes that the features of implicit curricula are seldom made public. They are intuitively recognized by parents, students, and teachers. And because they are salient and pervasive features of schooling, what they teach may be among the most important lessons a child learns” (98).

Similarly, in an article entitled “Globalization, Neo-liberalism and the Limitations of School Effectiveness Research in Developing Countries: the case of Nepal” Stephen Carney concludes “an example from Nepal illustrates the pervasive influence of neo-liberal tendencies [values] in education” (88). He further mentions schooling plays a key role in the process of modernization in developing countries and the focus primarily on student's cognitive achievement creates an unnecessarily narrow definition of ‘good’ schools, and undermines the role of schooling for societal change (100).

At this point, some of the researches and studies carried out pertinent to the topic of my study, I think, should be summarized so as to both highlight the progress of research in this area, and more importantly, to demarcate the direction and course of my study. Pertinent to the subject and area I am trying to focus, very little research has been carried out about the school texts books, in the discipline of Humanities and Social Science. Nonetheless, whatever has been done is worth mentioning.

Pratyoush Onta in his article “Ambivalence Denied: The Making of *Rashtriya Itihas* in Panchyat Era Books” analyzes Panchyat era textbooks in order to carve out the sense of history ingrained in Panchyat era books. Nationalistic pride and feeling of sovereign past, he views, dominate the texts in which history is an issue. Nationalistic

pride and biased high opinion regarding Nepal (and its sovereign past and all) were so deeply implanted in us that even before our mind gets enough time to evaluate issues concerning Nepal's pride, our so called 'pride for being Nepali' gets in the way, Onta argues. Pursuantly, my analysis will also focus partly on how this ambivalence is still denied in the texts that were produced after a couple of great historical and political changes from 2046 BS to 2062/63BS. The dependency for national pride for being Nepali still seems to be the legacy of *bir itihās* created the ancestors.

Furthermore, Onta states the Nepali language, Hinduism and the monarchy constituted triumvirate of official Nepali national culture. When history was the case to be mentioned in the school texts of Panchyat era, Onta argues they denied the ambivalence – what was not in terms with the national thinking about the particular event or idea or ideology was circumvented, any ambivalence and disagreement was denied, so as to ensure the *bir* (brave) history. The writing of history as RI and its teaching in schools through standardized textbooks – a key means of its dissemination – were at the center of the state-sponsored effort to make students into citizens socialized and loyal to a particular image of the nation” (215). The shaping of history in the mind of the school children yields to the nationalistic pride and ethos of nationalism.

Furthermore, Mahabir Paudyal reviews how this notion of nationalism was implanted in the textbooks of Panchyat era textbooks in his M. Phil. dissertation, “Notion of Nationalism in Panchyat Era Textbooks”. He primarily focuses on the issue of representation of nationalism through the school textbooks with an attempt of historical analysis exploring its development from Prithvi Narayan Shah to Bhimsen Thapa to Junga Bahadur Rana and then onto king Mahendra. He basically centers on Panchyat era, and he argues, Panchyat system “takes a recourse to history

in defining and creating its own version of nationalism reusing, recreating, galvanizing and also misrepresenting and omitting some aspects of history while retaining and promoting less threatening contents and fact from it” (2). He further concludes the subjects “coalesced on the theme of history, past, Nepalization, Hinduization and cult for monarchy [. . .] Nepali nationalism as projected through and disseminated by school agency, faithfully shares the stand of Prithvi Narayan Shah, Bhimsen Thapa and Junga Bahadur” (89-90) while the subject English was not yet the key ally to disseminate the nationalism but to maintain the foreignness.

Similar in its nature but slightly different in its purpose, a research about school textbooks has been pursued by Yadu Raj Acharya in which he argues on the reproduction of middle class ideology in school textbooks. Acharya tries to map out the reproduction of "cultural values of consumption and individualism that entail obsession for white collar job, submission to hierarchy and consumption, narcissism and other expression of individual ethics by dismissing the socio-economic context as a whole" (1-2). Furthermore, he contends that ideological reproduction is not only produced by the discourse, the contents and the moral lesions of the textbooks but also by the schools themselves as they institutionalize the discourse in the daily basis. With Marxist orientation, his argument exerts a logic that the school textbooks imbibe the ideology of middle class, the people's expression to values and beliefs of middle class found in society.

However, the cult of monarchy, Nepalization and Hinduization do not primarily exist constitutionally⁷ in Nepal as nation. Unlike argued by Onta and Poudyal, the school textbooks have transformed as socio-historical condition of the nation has. Therefore, the textbooks imbibe new values and beliefs. Here, exploration of new values and beliefs becomes key to this research. Distinct from

the summarized literatures, my research explicitly concerns with the exploration of the values pertinent of history, culture, nationality and civic life delineated in school texts books. Specifically, throughout this research, I will take a detour to the notion of formation of citizenship attempted by the school education.

In this research, analysis of the textbooks the basic method because the textbooks are the basis of the all types of the teaching learning activities at schools and colleges. They are central to academic activities and the discourse practices. On the basis of them, the students have to cultivate and practice on the daily basis during their school period. The textbooks become the instrumental as a part of academic ritual, for daily exercises, homework, class works, question answer sessions, terminal and annual exams, board exams and several other assessment procedure. The centre of these performances is the textbooks.

If curriculum is the political designation of the existing society, it should speak through the textbooks. Not to confuse, I am not going to compare the compatibility between the textbooks and curriculum. The textbooks should reflect the aims and objectives of the curriculum by accommodating different subject matters. From *Hamro Nepali* to *Social Studies* to *Our English*, the textbooks reflect the curriculum in the practical way. So the textbooks are microcosm of the existing society. As the crux of education system, the textbooks too work ideologically in conscious and unconsciousness ways. The process of education begins with the textbooks. They are the ways to materialize the curriculum goals and the measure the national standard by the government and the public. Marks, grades and divisions get the social currency, and there is always the least effort for the critical understanding.

The analysis of the textbooks suggests that they bear the ideological imprints of the existing society. Being the cultural product that textbooks contain the different opinions, ideas, values, as I already mentioned as the fundamental aspect of the overall education system. On one other hand, the textbooks claim to be neutral, objective, realistic, and impartial and guided to instill the sense of unity, equality, just and harmony. On the other hand, we can find the contradictory values of class consciousness, competition and hierarchical reality, consumption and unitary family and some other values that suggest strongly that imprint of national agendas and imagination of the nation that how the students should be like and how they should develop in order to accommodate with the national official culture.

The fact that education has been an important catalyst to radicalize the historical political movements of the past cannot be denied. Despite having higher level universities degrees, the frustration and dissatisfaction, especially among the youth is dire reality, and also indication to the (in) efficacy of the current education system. Given to its dominant role in the society, education is politically contestant space and it can function to liberate people from the oppressive ideological point (Freire 64-65). As Freire makes the point clear that humans can learn to be critical when they apply problem posing method of thinking to their ideology and learn the knowledge through their existential experience (64). Nepali students are forced to learn its drawbacks through existence later in their life.

Rather than claiming of the total effectiveness of the education, I am more interested about the imagination of the education of Nepal at school level and tentative revelation of "future" citizens as conceptualized in the textbooks by curriculum, thus nation. Though there are ideological contents in the system, education teaches them also the values relate to health and neatness, the sense of

truth and beauty and so many other things necessary to the student life. Despite these facts, it is claim of this study that education system is politically motivated to a large extent by the dominant values of the existing social order.

The projection of "future" citizens in this project have been looked on the basis of the discourses and issues embedded in school texts. The discourses have been analyzed in large three categories: Values and discourses related to Nation and/or Nationalism, Past or Reconfiguration of History and Democratic Morality. Successive Chapters take account of the values of different discourse and inter-discourse, discourse strands separately. A short forecast to the tentative chapter division sounds reasonable at this point.

The chapter first, entitled " A Critique on Discourse of Nationalism" concentrates on exploration of values concerning to nation, national pride and glorification of national ethos, and analysis of the those values. In the chapter I argue that the discourse of nationalism has been initiated, as commonly agreed, the with unification of Prithvi Naryayan Shah, continued to spread in the Rana regime, through Panchyat system, and it also remains important issue of endorsement in modern school texts. Though the lessons are not too ignorant to the fact that Nepal is emerging as a modern state, explanation and analysis of the texts books reveals an arguably important fact that nationalism is inflicted by the nostalgia for the past. Recognition of the differences in cultures, values, beliefs is not easily acknowledged, and differentiation among the diverse group of people relegated. Within the larger theme of nationalism, I have tried to document the specific issues while critiquing the discourse of nationalism. The official ideals of curriculum system claim to be value neutral in the process of teaching and learning activities. This seems to be an ambitious project to adopt. For the education, it is impossible; it has to tilt to some

direction. For example, in our society the influence of past is traceable. Moreover, in the sub chapter to it, I have tried to examine how the images of wholeness, harmony, mutuality, and literal appreciations of indivisibility of nation keep the people [the young minds] in illusion by lurking the essential disparate lifelike experiences.

Next, in second chapter, I put forward that the education system is trying to "Historicizing the nation and Nationalizing the History." History has always been mainstream subject to popularize the knowledge, significantly the official knowledge, and history has been living with ambivalence. Facts about history are prone to manipulations. Mere assemblage of facts does not turn out to be the real teaching of history. Glorification of the past, and reimagining the past in the textbooks does not fulfill the responsibility of teaching history in school level. The chapter also includes the dialectic sides/facts about the historical Nepali heroes, however, those dialectical facts, I am aware, are also prone to interpretations and manipulations. And I readily confess the dialectics to the historical information I attempt to uncover can have further dialectics and reasonable infiltration as the interpretation of historical facts is much informed by postmodernist bent of thinking and knowledge cultivation.

The subsequent chapter, " The Projection of Civic and Moral Duties", I have attempted to explore the moral values and analyze them. Moral values here do not only include concerning the right and wrong, but also particularly how politically and democratically right and wrong. An attempt has been made to distinguish the school textbooks from law books. That is to say, sometimes the individual texts seem more like legal orders, detached solely from the pristine objectives of educating the young people. In addition, I also explore the paradox of political socialization: democratic education or educating democracy. The analysis reaches to a conclusion: school textbooks practice the values-loaded education in which certain values are

foregrounded at the backdrop of other some values. This foregrounding is of certain values is not without motives and political intention. I found that some lessons prescribed in the textbooks are simulation of Moral Education which previously taught in Schools. However, despite the elimination of Moral Education, it resurfaces like Lazarus in various forms in the name of making the learners educated and conscious. Myth has been a great tool of practicing moral education. I have tried to explore how the agency-less existence of students obstructs their pursuit and access to critical knowledge about these myths and values. And that gives rise to the absence of critical pedagogic virtue to the students. In the final chapter, after the diagnosis of the situation school textbooks, attempts have been made to draw conclusions. The research tries to give a corrective response to the mainstream education culture by showing the contradictions embedded in it.

Finally, I have come up with the conclusion that my understanding of school texts books shows our education system still delves much into preponderance on how to produce naive and "dedicated" and "heroic" citizens, rather than practicing more recent phenomenon of critical pedagogy. It has not been able to detach itself from the past. And similarly, the diabolical and ambivalent position of education policy makers is explicit. This seems not strengthening the education system of the nation as very little space is allocated for critical pedagogical practices.

Chapter Two

A Critique on Discourse of Nationalism Through School Textbooks

The oft-quoted statement: Nepal is bestowed with a gift of multiple tongues, cultures, rites and rituals, ethnicities, religion, diverse geography (CBS 2011), in not only thought and internalized but also and politically endorsed and constitutionally written. Its geographical variations and languages have made significant contributions to its diversity (Bista 1991; Acharya, 2002). The Interim Constitution of Nepal also constitutes this diversity and defines Nepal as "Having multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, multi-religious, multi-cultural characteristics with common aspirations, and being committed to and united by a bond of allegiance to national independence, integrity, national interest and prosperity of Nepal, all the Nepali people collectively constitute the nation" (IC: Preamble 1).

This diversity is a characteristic feature of Nepal, which is clearly visible in IC's characterization. As multilingual nation, Nepal presents a unique case for its education policies and practices. And, such policies and practices are attributed to several background factors. These factors are crucial for the understanding of Nepal's diversified construction. In this regard, multiplicity and pluralism (in geography, people and their ethnicities, society, economy, religion and ecology) has been claimed as the basic and defining national feature of Nepal.

And, mostly the knowledge of what is nation and how the feeling of nationalism is generated is largely subjected to pedagogical maneuvering and operation. It means the cultivation of the nationalistic feeling in the citizens is largely done through the education. Through the pedagogical implications, the behaviors, habits and thinking of students is shaped and determined. In turn, the future citizens

are imagined. In other words, the government curriculum designs a course of study under the objective of how and what kind of citizens could be produced, or at least imagined. And, according to the objectives of curriculum textbooks are designed. In the textbooks are certain values are projected that conform the objectives of the teaching the designed curriculum.

The social harmony and unity imagined and scripted in the school textbooks comes in sharp contrast and contradiction with the notion of nation depicted in the Interim Constitution. This is my assumption. Therefore, in this section of the research, I concentrate on exploration of values that give rise to the sense of nationalism, and the breach between the nationalism epitomized in Interim Constitution and the national thinking that the school texts try to spread or evoke or cultivate in the young minds. In other words, the research questions focus how nationalism has been tried through the incorporation of some values and the pedagogical implications of those values. The issue of multicultural nation and inclusive nation as outlined in the Interim Constitution in contrast with the cohesive nationalism depicted in textbooks is the contended issue.

As note in introduction, the current school curriculum does not assume political affiliation. This neutrality is questionable. First, as the global education system is barely expected to be truly purely humanistic. Second, one can argue why it is wrong to imagine social harmony by emphasizing this value in education. Here, it is not the problem. Harmony becomes problematic when it becomes homogenization, and hegemonic. It is important to note the praxis of these values, the appropriation of praxis that stands up to the existing socio-political and economic system. It is interesting to consider how the present education gets fit into the existing social order.

From this perspective, the fundamental question is- does it stand up to its neutral claim it supposedly *claims*? The claim of this neutrality first is undercut by the discourse of nationalism.

The concepts of nation and nationalism are at once cohesive and divisive: cohesive in the sense that they bring together peoples of one part to unite with another and create a sense of solidarity in them; divisive because they thrive by sustaining differences form a sense of competition and antagonism to each other. Vijasree's notion of nationalism is worth citing here: "nationalism is progressive as well as regressive. It is primordial yet modern: primordial in that it is expressive of the innate human need for collective existence, and modern as it is indeed linked with the passing away of the old order – be it religious or dynastic (x)." In addition, recognition of identity of multiple groups is the modern which demands a peculiar differentiation from other groups. Similarly, Pfaff's definition of nationalism also coincides with this: "Nationalism is a profound, if often malign, expression of human identities, a negative force, but also a positive one. It is an expression of love as well as of hate. It is a fundamental element in modern political life and international relations. It demands to be better understood" (13). Following analysis, however does not contend if the nationalism is progressive or regressive, but looks at how the values of nationalism has been embedded in the lessons and exercises in the prescribed textbooks. Put it other way, what kind of nation has been textualized or narrated in the school texts.

Nation Narrated: Textualization of Nation

Education has been used as an easy means of arousing national consciousness. Arousing national consciousness in during the school years has been the political propriety of the education system and national education designation. School texts, Nepali and Social Studies textbooks, are rife with the lessons that aim at building and promoting national ethos – the love for nation. Loving the motherland has become the primary topic of "preaching". Epstein (1985), has contended that education has the potential to promote national consciousness, or sense of being part of a nation. National consciousness gives meaning to citizenship (50). This, in turn, contributes to national identity. Liberal educationists⁸ too believe, teaching nationalism is not always a progressive direction. This section explores how the circumstance of students affects their attitude toward national loyalties and tries to unfold this aspect: you should love your country to be citizen of the nation.

To begin with, "Aahwaan Geet" (An Invocation Song) (76), by Yaadav Kharel, in *Hamro Nepali Kitaab Kashaa Saat*, invites all the learners to take part in the process of nation building. This characteristics of nation building is tainted by the process ethos of brave history that comes from the Anglo-Nepal war in which *bir* Nepali are accounted of being so brave against the soldiers of East India Company. In the song, a poem, the writer pleads to the learners to work for nation and die for nation, for today's diligence will be mirrored in tomorrow's future world. Therefore, "we" should work for it. The pleading goes to the extent that it even demands the body and blood from the learner to irrigate the nation. A couple of stanzas are worth mentioning:

Deshko shakti maanis ho, maanis laage bandachha
Charitra haamro bane po jagatle raamro Bhandachha
Deshko laagi marneko amar naam lekhinchha
Sabaiko man mile po ujyaalo aakaash dekhinchha

Ekataabhitra jutemaa sansaar saara haankinchha
Aapsama haami futemaa sapanaa hamro maasinchha
Tarai pahad yautai ho ekataa bhitra fulidyau
sanko saajaa Neapal ris rag bhukidhyau.

Translation:

The power the country is people, people can make it
If we have good character, the world will say us good
Dying for nation will have their name eternal
If all comply, the sky will appear bright.

Unity can drive the world ahead
The division among us will spoil the dream
Let's bloom in unity, Terai and the Hill is the same
Nepal is everyone's, let's forget the anger and greed. (76)

Morale of these two stanzas formulates a discourse about nationalism: it is your country, you have to work for it. The true citizen is ready to irrigate nation with blood. This kind of fixated characteristics of being citizen is taught. The "Charitra", the character, insisted here ideologically refers to the moral character demanded by the nation, the character that was displayed by *bir Gorkhali* in the First World War and in the Anglo-Nepal war.

The "Chartra" here is not a normal moral integrity or rational thinking about what right and wrong. Instead, it is about how "you" are rational about the nation in relational to your moral propriety, the propriety of being a *gorkhali*, morale endowed with the *gorkhali* vibrancy, militancy and dedicated soul. Vansittart observes how this ethos of being *gorkhali* has historically been characterized and descended to the coming generations. He writes in *Gurkhas*, "The Gurkha, from the warlike qualities of his forefathers, and the tradition headed down to him of their military prowess as conquerors of Nepal, is imbued with, and cherishes the true military spirit" (Vansittart 62). And this moral character is not complete unless it is character of yielding some sort of significant contribution to the nation. This moral character only is the good character that is praised by the world.

Similarly, another significant line in the poem is the line: *tarai, pahad eutai ho*. The writer of the poem does not perceive the difference between what is meant to be a resident of Terai and Pahad in the politically and culturally changed context of nation. Moreover, deconstructively seen, the poet also implicitly assumes inherent discord between Tarai and Pahad. However, the harmony between Madhesi and Teria is not as comfortable as it is textually imagined.

The recent history of Nepal has been fraught with the civil violence. "After a peace agreement was signed to end a 10-year civil war between the government of Nepal and the Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist in 2006, new fighting erupted in southern Nepal, within a region known as the Terai (Miklian 3). The violence, however, was initiated not by either party to the civil war but by groups fighting on behalf of those who profess a Madhesi ethnicity. These groups targeted both the state and the Maoists, polarizing Terai citizens along ethnic issues that were largely unaddressed during the civil war.

Frederick Gaige in his acclaimed book *Regionalism and National Unity in Nepal* observes the historical geographical, geopolitical as well as cultural distinction and difference between Tarai and Pahad. In his words, "Nepal is a culturally heterogeneous polity with dozens of ethno-linguistic groups scattered across its rugged and sprawling territory, but of all that heterogeneity, but of all that heterogeneity, the most significant to the state has been the Tarai region and its people" (Gunaratne xvii). Further, "the Tarai is geographically and culturally a transitional region between the hills and the plains. The plains features predominate, but the hill features make their impact. The transitional nature of the Tarai creates for Nepal problems associated with integration of the region into a national economic and political framework" (11). By and large, currently the unifying force between the hills and terai has most significantly the Hinduism; Hinduism of both regions has many features in common, for example worship of many god, celebration of common festivals etc. However, the Hinduism is also the barrier to interaction between them since there are specific differences between the forms of Hinduism they practice. For example, Hinduism in its orthodox form has never been accepted by many people (Gaige 13).

The dream so underscored in the poem is the dream of glorifying the unity. The Himali region has been submerged with Pahadi (the Hill). As Frederick observed, the only binding force among this disparate regions is Hinduism. However, The Himalaya region of Nepal has a different history because of geographical and ecological conditions compared to the Hills and Tarai. "[. . .] the family and nobility [for example] in Mustang, located in high Himalayan region, are the only people who did not adopt Hindu high caste status. The local culture too rich and colorful to abandon in favour of Hindu caste rituals, and the Raja of Mustang (Bista 49)." The

poem does not give an ontological existence to Himali areas. And, at the backdrop of poem what governs is the supposed unity, necessitated ideal wholeness but impossible harmony. To enforce the "character", the values of eternity is emphasized. The name of the person who sacrifices oneself will be written in the golden letters in the pages of history and will eternally, be monumental and remembered throughout the generations. Therefore, Hinduism and Nepali language have mostly been deemed as the unifying forces in the backdrop of the poem.

In *Ours Social Studies and Population Education-6*, under a unit, "Nagarik Chetana" (Civic Consciousness), a lesson, entitled "Rastra and Rastriyata" (Nation and Nationalism), overtly embodies this theme of completeness and unity. The essayist, after giving a brief geographical sketch of Nepal, quotes definition of Nepal for Interim Constitution 2063 BS. According to it, Nepal is "multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, multi-religious, multi-cultural country." Further, it is said, "Nepal is an autonomous, undivided, sovereign, secular and inclusive federal republic state." After this, the concern for nation, what is called nationalistic feeling, is explained. It asserts, to love and fight against the forces that hampers the national unity is the sole responsibility of people living in the territory, for if there is not nation, "we" cannot be Nepali. According to the poem, the single most prominent feature of being Nepali is *birata* (bravery) that is ultimately required to fight against the encroaching foreign force. For the nation-lovers this constructed *birata* as glorified character. *Birata* cannot be a single most requirement to be defined as Nepali citizens. However, if someone has it, it is commendable. However, there are claims among the intellectuals of Nepali nationalism. Here is one observation:

Nepalis of two geographical locations differ in their thinking. In this sense, a man is primarily a cultural creature. How does a person go under socialization, acculturation or is cultured? These three things make difference in the apprehension of people. And socialization, acculturation, and being cultured are determined by the environment in which a person lives in" (Dhakal "We Nepali, What Kind of Nepali?," para. 6 and 7).

A person's habit and nature is determined by how the person tries to adapt with the ecological system in order to survive. In a certain environment, a certain kind of behavior and nature is built up. And, a person acculturates oneself according to the struggle the person makes with the environment. Therefore, for every Nepali citizen, coming from different geographical and cultural orientation, means differently what the nation is, even without having the ethos of bravery or so.

Further, it argues, it is the civic responsibility to warn against the any encroachment to the nation from external forces and help in selecting a good leadership. In addition, "we should be united when the country is about to be divided (57)." Sloganeering against the foreignness has historically been one of the sure means of arousing national *consciousness* in Nepal that began mainly with the attempted encroachment of East India company. The aversion for foreignness became more stark in Panchayat era when King Mahendra attempted to strengthen nationalistic fervor of solidification of all the hitherto existing differences under the rubric of *ek bhash ek bhes ra ek desh* (One language, one dress and one country). In this poem too, the feeling of nationalism is guided by the aversion for foreignness. However, this aversion in the changed context, changed because the arrival of many Communist Parties in mainstream, refers also the Indian expansionism. Later, this

foreignness, for the revolutionary forces, was particularly that of threat from Indian politics, extended and advocated by CPN-M. Therefore, in the poem, the partial enactment of nationalism as a kind of hatred towards foreignness that seems to divide and transgress the nation can be seen. This hatred comes as fear of transgression and division of the nation.

This lesson tries assumes that Nepal has always been a unified nation and is autonomous in itself, and will/should remain the same. And, as it dictates, the citizens must realize the importance of unity and harmony and must try to maintain it in future for the nation. Spatially, a text box has been created in which this theme more strategically reinforced in the form of poem. Two lines from the last stanza embed the ideology of national unity and harmony: "Bhasha ra Bhesh yeutai ho, maaya ra mamataa yeutai ho/miler haami hurkeko aamako kaakha yeutai ho" (*language and dress are same, love and affection is the same/ together we were brought up, mother's lap is the same*) (57 my trans.). This sounds a peculiarly a homogenizing generalization. Though the texts acknowledge Nepal as multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, multi-religious, multi-cultural country, the endorsers do not realize the fact that there are different aspects of multiculturalism. Moreover, people living in Nepal do not have same dresses and languages. Certain communities and ethnic groups deem the ethnic dress and language more vibrant and important than the national dress and language. Mother's lap here refers to the nation; nation is considered as mother. Mother's lap can be the same but not the feeling of the citizen living in the lap. As feeling of living in the mother's lap is different therefore different sorts of riots and social tensions and upheavals are underway.

This *eutai* (sameness) implanted in the text has a historical and temporal legacy to the nationalism developed by King Mahendra in order to empower and

sustain the then created Panchyat system. One of the most significant ways of centralizing the power of monarch and Nepalization King Mahendra practiced was language. By dictating one language, he enforced unity among people. The constitution held that "the national language of Nepal is the Nepali language in the Devanagari script" (Grover Appendix VIII 766). Similarly, another enforcement was dress; Panchyat polity made *daura suruwal* a national uniform; it was mandatory for government officials. Most of king Mahendra's Panchyat ideology is reliant on the sources from the past. Declaring nation a Hindu state, legalizing Hinduization, monarch as the incarnation of god all echo the nationalistic project of Nepalization. Looking at this, the present poem is heavily stimulated by this nationalistic project. This projection contradicts with the aim and objectives of Interim Constitution which respects not only the Nepali language but also other languages; Nepali language is deemed as the official language. There are voices that seek their ethnic languages to be included in national curriculum as core subjects of study.

Theme of self-esteem attached to nation's past also governs the selection of lessons in the prescribed texts. One the text in which this theme is rigorously promoted is "Nepali", by Chandra Neupane, in *Mero Nepali Kakshaa Three*. In the poem, the pride and glory of being a Nepali has been expressed with some important terminologies to which nation's glory has historically been attached. Again, this character of self-esteem echoes the characteristic of bravery shown in Anglos-Nepal war. The poem overall insists on the virtue of "cleanness". And the cleanness refers to the fact [narrated] that Nepal has been untouched by the "dirty foreign hands". This has been described more succinctly in the following stanza:

Haree Bhage Samrajya ti haare maile kata ?

Utai Pharke pardeshi khukur hun ma taa !

Kodaliko Binda mero raiphalko naal

Pasinaako kheti mero jiwanko dhaal

Translation:

The imperialism was chased away, did I lose?

Foreigners, turn toward you country, here I am with Khukuri

The handle/stalk of spade is scape of your rifle

The diligence I cultivate is the shield against you. (55)

A citizen persona is described as "clean (*sawachchha*)" as Buddha in terms of feeling, his head is held as high as that of "Himchuli", not to be reached by anyone else, she/he is inherently known "self-esteemed peace-lover " (*swabhimaani shantipremi mero pahichaan*) Nepali, and he/she always sings a song of Nepal to be Nepali (55). These virtues only become defining features of being Nepali. Divergent to these, a person is unlikely to be assumed a proud Nepali.

This stanza typically summarizes the past of the nation, in fact a strand of past when the Nepalese, as it is said, fought bravely with the British while they tried to encroach the territory of Nepal. Officially, it was an unsuccessful attempt to encroach into the land of sovereignty. On the basis of only this instance, self-esteem citizen has been "promoted" as the defining characteristic of Nepalese people. Further, in following stanza, it is also claimed that, the most self-esteemed/self-respecting citizen in the world is Nepali; and, the citizen is also "manly", intrepid and gallant, for he

fights for the nation only to make it recognized in the world. Here one can also intrude for negating the female's contribution in nation building. This manliness is merely the masculine characteristics, which necessarily comes from the bravery of the past, hence neglects the feminine aspect. That is to say, according to this poem, what is feminine cannot be a feature of Nepali pride.



Figure 1 Illustration that emphasizes the theme of peace lover: *Haamro Nepali*
Kakshaa Teen: 55

However, the Nepalese were never required to fight for independence against the foreign power, British colonialism, the then ruling over India. A small encounter between Nepalese soldier and British is narrated elsewhere wherein history is the subject as the instance of national glory, for chasing way the imperialism. Nevertheless, some astute observations dub this case an instance of rise of nationalistic feeling.

In fact, Nepal was never politically colonized. Therefore, the rise of Nepali nationalism has peculiar impetus in its orientation. However, during Rana regime, Nepal was kept completely insulated from the foreign influence. Industrialization is

prevented to enter to Nepal's territory, and rise of the middle class and market economy were developed very slowly and late. Rise of the middle class and market economy are considered, by Sashi Prabha Mishra, as two essential conditions of nation building. It is this lack that makes the Nepali nationalism in South Asia (110). Mishra makes a compelling observation about the nature of Nepali nationalism:

The rise of Nepalese nationalism defies the general pattern of nationalistic upsurge all over Asia. The feeling of nationalism in other Asian countries emerged as part of their struggle against the colonial powers. The multi-religious and multiethnic societies in these countries attained a degree of territorial and administrative unity as a result of colonial rule and started a search for their identity and freedom with the help of an ideology inspired by western socio-political thought.

(26)

Actually nationalistic upsurge in Asia was part of the Asian renaissance⁹ ushered in by a western educated middle class, which also was a creation of colonialism, industrialization, and capitalistic economy. Though weak, the middle class helped the development of nationalistic feelings. The course of historical developments in Nepal has been altogether different mainly because this country never underwent colonial experience. The result was Nepalese people never required to fight against a foreign force.

Another text reinforcing the theme of completeness, uniformity, and homogeneity is "My Country", a poem by Sophiya Baano, prescribed in *Mero Nepali Kaksha Dui*. The assumed "unprecedented" harmony among, which is not there in reality, looms large in the poem. Everybody acknowledges the geographic, regional,

social, cultural, and even ethnic variations and differences between and among these three geographical regions of the nation. Nonetheless, the poem speaks the voice of national harmony that it is our country, therefore, there is unity in diversity. What is not accepted is the difference. In my translation some the last stanza reads:

Pahaad, Madhesh, Himal sabai mero gharbaar

Sabai jaat, sabai warga mero pariwar

Nepaliko aanshu puchha, deshale malai bhanchha

Nepallaai birse bhane kasale malai ganchha ?

Translation:

Hills, Madhesh, Himal, all are my home.

All the castes, all the classes are my family

The country asks me, wipe the tears of all

Who will care me, if I forget the Nation [Nepal]. (1)

There is nothing wrong with pride attached to glorification of national unity and completeness. If one looks at Benedict Anderson's definition of "nation" is suitable to draw a relationship between the nation and the citizen. He defines, "it is an imagined political community– and imagined both inherently and sovereign" (*Imagined Community* 6). The imagined integration, according to Anderson, is possible because they live in each other's mind the image of the solidarity though they never meet, hear them. It is limited because beyond this geography lies other nations; it is sovereign because it hold its own legitimacy; it is community because, regardless

of inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship (6-8).



Figure 2 An Illustration Showing Horizontal Comradeship among the People: *Hamro Samajik Adhyayan ra Janasankhya Siksha*: 22

However, unity and completeness may not always give rise the pride of nation.

Rather, recognition of diversity, differences, heterogeneity too lies inside the nationalistic pride. Therefore, nationalism is not only the universalistic coming from outside, and binding together in a chain of wholeness. It also evolves from within, from the *spiritual* realm, in fact from the minor chunk of social realities that the gives certain identification of the existence of the people to which they belong to (Chatterjee¹⁰ 115). However, the difference between the inner and outer nationalism became a contested space, with the tension being held by the elites.

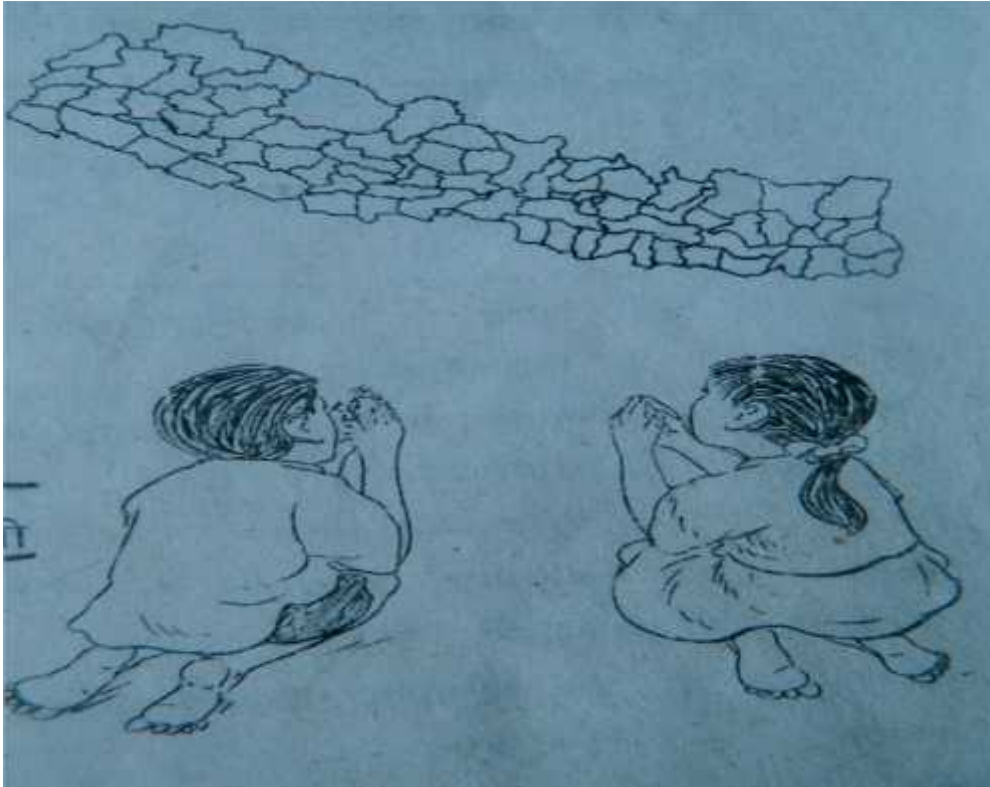


Figure 3: An Illustration that aims as instilling a sense of almost Worshiping Aptitude in Learners

Besides the reading texts, there are exercises in the school textbooks that trigger children's psychology to arouse feeling about nations, the feeling of love for nation (I am here taking example from class two). Sense of love for nation is indoctrinated in the very beginning of school education. Child education becomes appropriate forum in order to practice the official knowledge. In the second exercise of *Mero Nepali Grade 2*, the students are asked to speak the following sentences loud, making sure that other will listen to it.

Ma Neapli Hun. (I am a Nepali.)

Mero Desh Nepal Ho. (My country is Nepal.)

Nepal laai maaya gara . (Love Nepal.) (6)

It is not so easy and not difficult to predict the efficacy of such academic exercises. Moreover, the students of this level begin their learning activities by an invocation to the nation, Nepal, a class-national song. The song given at the back of each subject text book is filled with national sentiments, encouraging them to be nationalistic, progressive and patriotic. A few lines of the classroom song go like this:

Aaja Hami Saana-Saana fulakaa Kopilaa

Bholi parsi bir banne, hami josilaa

[. . .]

Paurakhi yi haamra saana-saama hat re

Ful ropchhaun dhesbhari, ekai saath re

Translation:

we, the small buds of today

will bloom brave tomorrow, we are enthusiasts

[. . .]

With labourious small-small hands of ours

we will plant the flowers across the nation.

This song is dictated to sing before the formal teaching and learning activities begin. This is the first step that materializes the ethos of nationalistic feeling. Recitation of this song has been ritualized as some sort of invocation that is performed before any worship of God begins. At this stage of childhood, this act in school is psychologically relevant to instill and embrace the values that are aimed to teach to the learners.

Inclusion of such kinds of lessons gives nationalism a political legitimacy assuming that the all the citizens of diverse background come in terms with the national imaginations. This imagination requires ethnic, religious, territorial, and

other relevant boundaries should not cut across this political one. The nationalist principle can be asserted in an ethical, 'universalistic' spirit (Gellner¹).

This sort of imagination leads to the falsity of imagination, for there is not completeness or harmony in it; it is just the mental enactment of the people. Our country, moreover, is defined by differences and diversity, rather than unity. In the following portion, I will discuss how this assumed unity and harmony is echoed in individual texts.

Falsity of Sameness and Unity: The Divided Reality

In the previous section, I described how the national history/nation has been "narrated" in textual mode by showing the difference between what constitutionally has been said about nation and what has been textualized about nation. In other words, I argued textual nationalism diverges from the constitutional definition of nation, Nepal. The textual understandings and imaginings of Nepal were increasingly influenced in forging an image of the country that is more exclusively "Nepali" in terms of "sameness". In this section, I will look at the another strand of nationalism, namely, the issue of unity or reinforced theme of sameness, that further adds some more credence in critique of nationalism. Specifically, I will argue the lessons in the texts textually enact this unity and ideology of unity. The projection of social harmony has artificially been constructed; masking the existing social reality of class, gender, caste, ethnic disparities, and propagate this theme of national harmony and completeness. Having acknowledged the theoretical insights explored by Antonio Gramsci, the notion of hegemony; Eagleton's formulation of ideology, and Freire's notion of pedagogy of the oppressed, I ultimately argue that the texts (school) texts produce the ideology of unity or sameness.

In the prefaces of almost every textbook, the editors and compilers conspicuously state that the book is designed to address the learners who have been brought and reared up in the modern multicultural society. However, this assumption of this multiculturalism, which means the variety of aspects, has been downsized and the multiculturalism has just been a mild yet sharply perceptive slogan. Ironically, rather than giving different perspective to a text, same perspective: we are Nepali and we are unified, has been reinforced time and again. No doubt, every person living within the recognized national boundaries is Nepali but more credible sense of Nepali

comes with the recognition of differences. The diversity that multiculturalism brings, the differences it evokes, differentiation it causes, individual identities it posits, have been undermined and they are astray.

The national indivisibility is the recurring theme, from small grade to lower secondary to higher secondary level. With the higher grade, the theme echoes more astute and sharp. In *Hamro Nepali Kitab Grade Six*, "Rashtrako Akhandata (Indivisible Nation), a poem written by Madhab Ghimire, recurs with more content loaded message. The poem begins with the glorification of the labor of the ancestors who created it with their much sweat and toil. The persona in the poem asserts, even though the nation has been used for long lime but it has a sweetness like one contained in ambrosia which will not be emptied at all. The diverse nature of nation has been compared with the fountains and springs which have to do with the same origin, the source of origination – the nation. A stanza is worth quoting which emphasizes the ideology of unity and harmony and tries to convey message the students not to divide the nation:

Parinchha satta sab khanda khanda

Rahanchha ke raashtra tyahan akhanda

thuthinchh patta jab khatkhaat

sidinchha shobha ani fulbaat

Translation:

When the polity is divided into fragments

The nation does not remain undivided

When the petals are pulled off incessantly

All the beauty is gone all from the follower. (74)

In this particular poem, the text rather being motivated by the existing ideology of nation of unity and completeness, it produces a kind of ideology itself. Here, the text is not expression of any ideology; it rather creates an ideology in the mind of the readers that if we divide the nation into fragments. In other words, if we give rise to any sort of conflicts among us, our nation, the sovereign nation, no longer remains the emblem of the beauty [as it has been called *dibya desh* (the excellent, flawless)] it has now. In the poem, the definition of nation, Nepal, is inflicted by the thinking of Mahendra's kind of Nepalization, and ethos of Prithvinarayan Shah's process of unification.

King Mahendra in his regime directed the Panchayat polity as concept of nationalism, institutionalized his version of nationalism through constitution, language, religion, dress and education system and dissemination of Panchayat literature like *sawais*. King Mahendra constitutionally promulgated the slogan, we are all one; we have same dress, and same language. This assumed solidarity of nationalism was consolidated and synchronized with the Hindu ethno-religious order on which his whole regime depended upon (Grover 5-6). However, the modern state is not the product of imagined solidarity but the recognition and prioritization of differences and diversities. Differences and differentiation of differences hold a key importance in formation of nation. Without recognizing the differences and variations in capacities, nation cannot be formed. The indivisibility echoed in the poem echoes the nostalgia for the past or the reflection of panchayat's important feature. This also reflects the Panchayat's attempt to create dream land, in Abhi Subedi's words, "Panchayat Utopia" (Subedi 83). Subedi observes likewise "panchayat evoked nostalgia of the past; the very name Panchayat would make people feel nostalgia for the past, the golden period (83). However, it is difficult to specifically locate which period of

Nepali history was golden. The horrendous consequences like, strikes, revolutions, and bandas, which have been the markers of acquiring identity and existence and recognition of people's difference from rest of the others, are excluded in the texts so as to reproduce a harmonious society. Texts like this enact the aspect of being united and having unity. In other words, the texts form ideology of unity. "[. . .] text [. . .] produces ideology (itself a production). Text's internal relations to its world under the form of its own constitution of them, so the literary text's relation to ideology so constitutes that ideology so as to reveal something of its relations to history" (Green and Lebihan 124-25).

Similarly, oft quoted saying about nation Nepal – unity in diversity, which has origin and legacy to Prithvi Narayan Shah's *dibyaopadesh*: Nepal Chaar Jaat Chhattis Warnako Saajha Fulbaari ho (Nepal is the garden of four races and thirty six castes), has explicitly been in the next stanza of the poem. The stanza explains the nation having diverse arts, cultures, social rites and rituals, traditions, and so on. However, this diversity is not damaging at all. This diversity in the poem is compared with the many petals of the same bouquet. The stanza goes like this:

Naana kalaakaushal sabhyataako

bichitra tar ekataako

Aho himali fool lyun ki haat

ekai thungamaa saya laakh paat

Translation:

It contains civilization of different arts and cultures

Diversified yet unified

Oh! should I take the Himali flower on my hand

Thousands of leaves in only one bouquet. (74)

Literally, this stanza epitomizes Prithvi Narayan Shah's famous *dibyopadesh: Nepal chaar jaat¹¹ chhattis vurnako phuihari lto* (Nepal is a garden of four jaat and thirty-six varnas). This concept of national integration had a single meaning until 1990. This fact has been hegemonically interpreted so as to glorify the "holy" aim of Prithvi Narayan Shah's for unifying the then diverse and fragmented states. One strong prescriptive reaction on the part of those who study the politics of ethnicity and nationalism in Nepal since 1990 has been to attempt to remold this kind of dominant national narratives so that somehow they can encompass all claims to cultural distinctiveness within Nepal while serving, like past narratives, to inculcate loyalty to the Nepali state. Such narratives have been questioned on the basis of recent changes that took place in Nepal's political historical junction.

First, it cannot be denied the disorder that existed before the Shahs of Gurkha tried to unify them. Similarly, it should not be forgotten that due to the unification/expansion feudal monarchical system gave rise to the centralized administrative system and military structure (Gurung 420). Moreover, Mahesh Chandra Regmi views that the economic reason of unification/expansion of Shah was to confiscate the treasuries of Tarai including the forest, and to control the land of Tarai in order to maintain the Tibet-Nepal-India business route (Regmi 9). Finally, after the unification/expansion, as B.P. Koirala says "Nepal became country but not a state; the biological anatomy was built but spirit was not bestowed" (90). Unlike the nationalist historians claimed and propagated, therefore, this expression of *claimed* "Unity in Diversity" was not only a holy project of building nation. Instead, the unity remained slogan to fulfill the objective of supplying the required income that was necessary to meet the expense of military and arms to expand the state, to fulfill the luxurious lifestyle of elites and royals (Adhikari 59).

Looking into these illustrations yields a conclusion: these individual texts are not only abided by the existing ideology, both promoting the official knowledge about the social reality and directing education systems to a targeted teleological point—producing "sound" citizenships, but they themselves have produced certain ideological texts, coming embedded with the lessons, the ideology of sameness. At this, Terry Eagleton's idea of ideology is worth mentioning:

The [literary] text is not the "expression" of ideology, nor is ideology the "expression of social class". The text, rather is a certain production of ideology, for which the analogy of dramatic production is in some ways appropriate. A dramatic production does not express, reflect or reproduce the dramatic text on which it is based; it produces the text transforming it into a unique and irreducible entity. (197)

The text does not merely reflect some obvious and open ideology and betray its historical context. Contemporary Marxist thinking does not consider history and ideology to be background against which a text must be read. Rather, the texts themselves can create certain kind of ideologies. Moreover, ideology is a system of representation— how certain ideas are represented relating to material practices. Ideology therefore is a system which offers the individual a framework of assumptions through which the self is realized.

Neglecting this fact and preaching only for social harmony present the discourse artificially distorted. It does not insist the situation to change but prefers to keep the same other. So here we find the logic of harmony ideologically motivated. It might be true in assertion but it is false in its political intention.

They assert that there are social problems of inequalities but they are not much tough and unmanageable as people face really in real life outside the classrooms. According to Freire, the discourse to seek harmony and hierarchy and equality can only serve as the hegemonic designation. This inherent inequalities create social tensions. However, the they [oppressors] keep alluding the harmony. In his words:

Class conflict is another concept which upsets the oppressors . . .

Unable to deny, try as they may, the existence of social classes, they preach the need for understanding and harmony between those who buy and those obliged to sell their labour. 124.

Freire himself, argues, the unconcealable antagonism which exists between the two classes, however, makes this "harmony" impossible. The elites call for harmony between classes as if classes were accidental collections of individuals in a society. The only harmony which is viable and demonstrable is that found among the oppressors themselves. Although they may diverge and upon occasion even clash over group interests, they unite immediately at a threat to the class. Similarly, the harmony of the oppressed is only possible when its members are engaged in the struggle for liberation (Freire 124-25).



Figure 4 Illustration Emphasizing Demographic Unity of Caste, Language and Culture: *Haamro Samajik Adhyayan Kakshaa Saat: 28.*

These examples of selected lessons illustrations make clear that school level textbooks interested in maintaining the status rather than in changing it. They try to construct a harmonious world for the students by masking the grave social realities that instead should tell about the powerful narratives of inequalities as they exist in the society. It helps in proliferation many other political, religious, economic and social powers in many other fronts. The social values like help and love count very little in the hierarchical society. Indeed, such a practice of humanitarianism, according to Freire, is dehumanization to the "unfortunates." Pedagogy which begins with the egoistic interests of the oppressors (an egoism locked in the false generosity of paternalism) and makes of the objects of its humanitarianism, itself maintains and embodies oppression. It is an instrument of dehumanization.

Freire argues, if having is a condition of being, the social harmony with liberal humanitarianism is only the instrument of hegemony to delude the poor, the disabled, the helpless and the marginal, which is useful only to create a sound illusion. The textbooks teach the students that the people in the society are and should be virtuous, careful, conscientious and helpful. There might be social hierarchy but it is not the important problem. They forcefully maintain that society must retain united just to

function in the usual way. The people should be harmonious because all of them are necessary to do different jobs. The textbooks are eager to convince the students, that is the only social reality, and the hierarchy due to power and resources are not important in the fundamental way.

The ideological designation of the texts is asserted as, on closer examination, school textbooks are found to have not informing existing social realities and inequalities. They rarely pin down the grey areas of exploitations, dominations, inequalities and injustices. The issue in the textbooks is that they erase the socio-economic context and try to convert this reality into the subjects of interpersonal relations and codes of ethics. They bear ideological faults for distortion of social reality and for not letting the students to scrutinize the matter critically and for refraining them from the action to change the unequal situation. The denial is pervasive.

It is also possible to argue, as that the very fact of a national curriculum encourages both the formation of intense public debate about whose knowledge is declared official and the creation of progressive coalitions across a variety of differences against such state-sponsored definitions of legitimate knowledge. All students are to be given the values of a specific group – usually the dominant group – does not concern a common culture at all.

More starkly the nationalistic feeling aroused in the text "Jhanda Farar" (Flag Flapping), written by Madhav Prasad Ghimire, in *Hamro Nepali Kitab* Grade two (26). The poem in a very common language, easily construed by the students, implicitly explains the virtues of the sun and the moon, the two emblems of national flag. The last line: "See Nepal's flag Flapping" working as the refrain of the song is to

be stylistically repeated at the end. National flag in the poem suggests the completion and unity. For example, the sun and the moon, which are the only two complementary aspects to each other, have been metaphorically used to denote the day and the night respectively. And the construal is that "our" national flag has both of them, thus complete in itself, unified inherently. Furthermore, the sun embraces the masculine features as the brother and moon the feminine feature, the sister. And masculinity and femininity completes the circle of human society. Similarly, at next level, intellect is associated with the sun and virtues with the moon. This values of national unity and harmony has been instilled in the learners by making them recite the poem. The last stanza of the poem reads following way:

Diunso laagne Gham raati laagne joona !

Ekaichoti laage kasto hunthyo bhana

Yati kura herna kati rahara

Nepalko jhanda pharara !

Gyaan jasto ghaam gunjasti joon

Ekaichoti paaye kasto hunthyo bhana

Yati kura herna kati rahara

Nepalko jhanda hera Pharara !

Translation:

The Sun shines in the day and Moon in the night

How beautiful it would be if they shine together !

How desirous it is to look them together

See Nepal's flag Flapping !

[. . .]

The sun is like Knowledge and virtue the moon

Say, how it would be when we get them together

So desirous to see this thing

See that flapping flag of Nepal. (26)

Subsequent to this topic, an exercise is given to read loud and imitate in their exercise book. The last strand of the exercise is: "There are many countries in the world. All of them have national flags. Almost all the counties have the flag having rectangular shape. Nepal's has triangular shape. We love the flag of Nepal" (28) (*My Translation*).

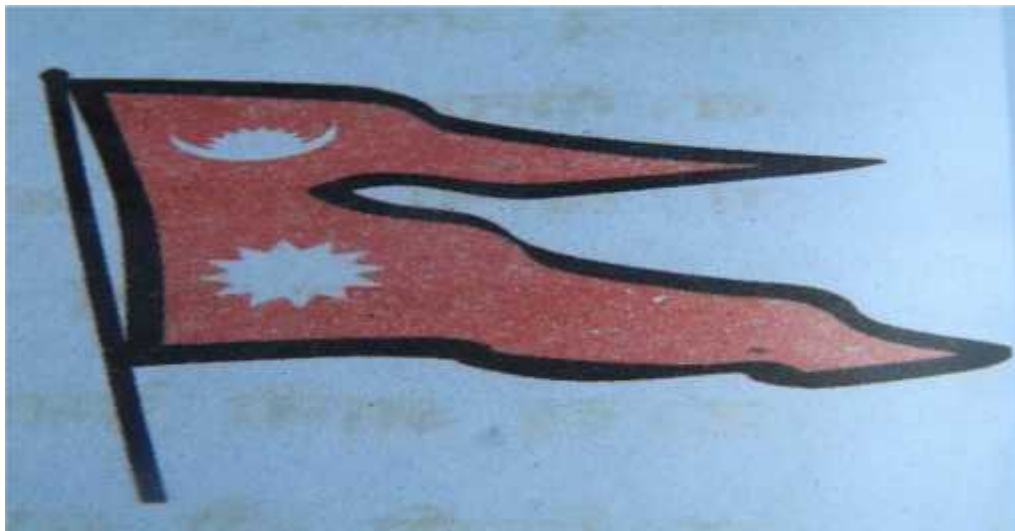


Figure 5 Nation Flag, used as a Symbol to keep Everyone under the Umbrella of Unity: *Hamro Nepali Kakshaa Dui*: 26.

Attempts have been made to create a homogenized culture, curbing the differences aside. Such an approach to education hardly penetrates the surface of the

political and educational issues involved, and does not recognize the identities constituted by the geographical, cultural, and social differences. A common culture can never be the general extension to everyone of what a minority mean and believe. Rather, it requires not the stipulation of the facts, concepts, skills, and values that make us all “culturally literate,” but the creation of the conditions necessary for all people to participate in the creation and recreation of meanings and values. It requires a democratic process in which all people, not simply those who are the intellectual guardians be involved in the deliberation over what is important.

Same sort of nationalistic pride of having unity and completeness has been reinforced with the embodiment of accounts of geographical and political division of nation. In an anonymous piece "Hamro Desh Nepal" (Our Country Nepal) of the same book, unified imagined community has been configured. The positive descriptions of the geographical and botanical features of all the three geographical regions constitute the nationalistic pride of being one despite whatever heterogeneity or difference exists between and among them. This concept of public education and the designation of the curriculum that allows this education respond to the cultures and histories of large and growing segments of the nation's population.

In *Hamro Samajik Siksha ra Sirjantmak Kala Kakhsa Teen*, the lesson "My Neighborhood, in the Past and Now" under the unit larger unit "Our Past" asserts, though in the past there were instances of social disharmony, discriminations in equalities in terms of caste, religion, class and ethnicity, now they no longer exists. The narrator in the text assumes the "the comfortable" solidarity and harmony. The character, Tenjing, the maternal uncle of Aangchhiring, has been featured as a transformed personality, who previously did not come in terms with the other neighbors, he only ate foods grown up in his field, and wore only those clothes made

in his house. Now, he also wears jackets, pants and other edibles popularly available in the markets. Moreover, the narrator also *assumes*, the communal solidarity while celebrating the festivals. However, this may not be the case in social reality. The text here dictates the learners to follows the assumptions the promote this "false solidarity".



Figure 6: Picture Portraying the Sense of Solidarity, Unity and Harmony: *Samajik Adhyayan Kaksha Nau: 68.*

The writer of the lesson might have tried to project the fulfillment of the social dream of Nepal though in the unreal form. Mere wishful imagination may not be ideologically important, but the real problem lies in the distortion of the social reality. On the one hand the lesson approves the traditionally designated works by the caste system; on the other hand, it does not fail to wish well equality in the works. It easily hides the point that hierarchies in the works are heavily guided by the caste ideology from the past. Moreover, the project of the text is to inherently produce the ideology of the assumed unity, harmony and completeness in the text so the students are abide by this virtue and learn it in their real life.

In the same text, the lesson, a poem, entitled "Asahaaylai Maddat Garaun" (Help the Helpless), the text argues that the discrimination between the old and the young, orphan and children with parents, able and disable, is not the product of social reality but the problem out of interpersonal relationships. So the solution exists there in a humane treatment of the helpless and the disabled people. The lesson argues, we should make them (the old and the helpless and the disabled) our friends and try to understand their problem (20). And in the final stanza, it gives the solution "we must love, help and respect all the disabled people (literal translation) (22).

It may not be wrong to urge on the part of the people to treat them humanly. But the problem lies in the distortion. Offer of mere love, sympathy and personal help can make the people feel better for a while it does not help them to live an equal and meaningful life. At times, love and sympathy becomes mockery to both. It is not possible to love or help to helpless the disabled and the poor in capitalist system, as people are largely guided by the socio-economic thinking and for the second, these are economic issues rather than mere a moral and ethical ones. The society, where the powerful people "naturally" enjoy better life and the powerless suffer, the logic of making the "weak" people's life dignified simply appears to be ironic.

Charity to the differently able people as promised by the aforementioned textbooks is not perennial solution to existing problem. The rhetoric of love, help and compassion under the guise of humanity merely promotes the status quo. Therefore equipping the differently able people with suitable and practical skill, education and participation in the social affairs, and what Marxists call, in the means of production may address the problem.

The analysis yields a conclusion that the learners in these texts are simply manipulated with moral or ethical issues. Rather than, familiarizing the students with the real socio-economic problems, the textbooks are merely introducing those moral codes and values which land the learners nowhere. By deploying these sorts of individual texts, they imagine the student having only these naive ethical values but not realizing and understanding the really critical sort of things during their learning.

Pro-nationalistic may not always be regressive. However, this is not unity at all political, social and cultural level. It is not necessarily unnatural to take place different kinds of social discords and disagreement amidst the attempts of restructuring the nation that previously largely remained a state of single or handful of castes (Maharjan 11). However, "it unnatural to make Nepali society as "a beautiful utopian society" without any diversity, inter-discords, conflicts and struggles" (Maharjan 12). This is an ideological reflection of orthodox and apolitical mindset. For regionally, culturally, linguistically people are diversified. By pitting the students against these sorts of lessons, the current education system is trying to prepare the learners to unite the nations, undermining the differences.

Appearance of discourse of Nationalism is largely manifested as "cultural artifacts"¹². Though Benedict Anderson, concedes that "Nation, nationality, nationalism– all have proved notoriously difficult to define, let alone to analyze (3)." Anderson holds that prior to eighteenth century tow cultural system namely "religious community" and "dynastic realm" preceded it or the pasts of modern day nation. The concept of "religious community" seems to be reflected in the characterization of Nepali nationalism. However, this solidarity is not the produce without any political infiltration.

This "imagined community" is in fact is the textual imagination of the curriculum. However, it does not mean that the people in real life cannot have this solidarity. So far the textbooks show, the community is the textual that is produced by eliminating the differences. Emerged especially after the modern Nepal, when the slogan of Prithvi Narayan Shah's *dibyopadesh*: *chaar jaat chhattis Varna*, was ringing high, modern nation developed, and with it national consciousness, and eventually nationalism. The textual consolidation of the differences reflects the nostalgia for the past, namely, the constitutional endorsement of King Mahendra in which, he tried to merge every difference in terms of language, ethnicity, culture, geography and so through the process of Nepalization.

Chapter Three

Nationalizing the History and Historicizing the Nation

In the previous chapter, I tried to look at the depiction of nationalism from two perspectives. First how the nation is narrated (characterized) in school level textbooks. In other words, the textual narration of nationalism indicates few handful of characteristics to be *true* Nepali. Second, how the textbooks do not reflect the ideology of the existing social order but create an ideology of unity or sameness themselves. Much of Nepali nationalism erupts from evocation of *bir itihās* (brave history) depicted in textbooks. History is an important building block of Nepali nationalism that claimed to have emerged after the unification/expansion¹³ process of Prithvi Narayan Shah. In fact, according to Koirala, during that time, there was not something called nationalism. It is the historical element discovered later (Koirala *BPko Baad* 87).

History has always been dominant mode of knowledge making. Many who call themselves "historians" do, indeed, use "history" as a vehicle for expressing their own political commitment. That is sheer is self-indulgence. However, history is a scholarly, not a political, activity, and while, as citizens, we certainly should act upon our political views, in writing history. Most historians, like, most scientists, are motivated by the urge to *find out*. Yet, postmodernist and new historicist claims pin down historians inevitably being "subjective" (Foucault 1986; Carr 1961; Veaser 1989). The real point is that, being mere human beings, they are "fallible", and subject to many kinds of career and social pressures, or indeed common incompetence. Historians do disagree with each other in their interpretations, as do scientists. Therefore, historical *facts* are facts. The problem lies deploying of the historical facts

so as to reconstruct the past – value of the past, serenity of past, idealistic past. Therefore, the modern critical thinkers of history, in fact, consider, history is a primarily a textual phenomenon, invented, constructed, and written by human beings, viably contingent to the social and historical parameters and cultural forces in which they are nourished.

By the same token, inclusions of the text that involve the portrayal of history or historical issues give rise to reconstruct the past, and history as a political enterprise. Historical evidence is fragmentary, intractable, and imperfect. Individual books and articles may clash with each other; there will always be areas where uncertainty persists. However, attempts are made to steadily agreed knowledge that emerges in textbooks. Such texts from history tend to glory in their own subjectivity. By all means, they tend to enjoy their literary flourish. Teaching history is not at all an incorrect pedagogical function. There are significant merits of teaching history.

Teaching History provides identity. Studying history improves our decision making and judgment. History shows us models of good and responsible citizenship, and also teaches us how to learn from the mistakes of others. Making us understand about change and societal development, it provides us a context from which to understand ourselves and others. Historians also provide the contextual knowledge for great works of art and literature, thus enhancing our enjoyment of these. In addition, the study of history offers to individuals major utilitarian learning outcomes.

Teaching history is also a training or empowering the students in analyzing, evaluating, and interpreting the historical sources that can be both secondary and primary. It is also a motif leading towards the history as part of cultural knowledge. It develops an understanding that everything written pertaining to history, and must be

approached with skepticism and caution. The skills and learning outcomes rising from historical study are invaluable in a contemporary world which is dominated by information and communications.

Notwithstanding, problem is not in teaching history; it is on depicting history and teaching the depiction of history. Three main motives seem prevalent in teaching the depiction of such history: the reconstruction of past as pristine and ideal, bravery of *Braves*, denial of the opposite side, in other words the denial of the ambivalence. It must be made clear here that whatever dialectical reality is uncovered regarding the construction of historical knowledge on the basis of the literature and other critical and academic writing on history is also subjected to further manipulation and interpretation for political purpose. Therefore, the research is not concerned to pass a judgment on them whether they are politically tilted toward certain kind of ideological direction. The only purpose of the study is to project and juxtapose the other version of the same or related historical knowledge on the subject matter given in the school textbooks.

Historical Justification: The Slogan of Bravery and

Concealment of the Uncomfortable¹⁴

In this segment, my analysis concentrates on how *bir* history, history of bravery has been constructed and applauded, and how it is made to be acknowledged by the students. More concretely, it stipulates over Nepali nationalism built on eulogized appraisal of *Jatiya quality*¹⁵ of being Nepali. Secondly, it focuses about the elision of what is ambivalent, the facts that do not come in terms with the existing thinking and counter the projection of Nepali nationalism. In this segment, three historical figures will be taken as representative of personification of *bir gorkhali*, Bhimsen Thapa, Balbhadra Kunwar, and Prithvi Narayan Shah. Not to be confused, I do not seek to throw a moral jurisprudence whether their conducts were right and wrong. Merely, I intend to analyze how they are represented in order to teach the students the history of Nepal, and discover what is the probable dialectical side. However, the explored other part of historical knowledge is not ideologically free, the researcher professes. This is also subject to further exploration and interpretation. Moreover, I aim to point out if the students are informed about contradictions that have resurfaced about the historical facts and events of Nepal over the times. Then, question concentrates: Are the students to be expected the responsible and critical reader of the history or opposite of it, the shallow or sketchy readers?

Glorification of *bir itihās* has been central content of the history in the school texts, especially in Nepali and Social Studies subjects. A close explication of the texts prescribed in curriculum yields that the history has been made a foundation to erect the national pride. Let's begin with stanza, written by Madhav Ghimire, mentioned above. Here it is:

Pashchim killa kaangada, purwamaa tishtaa pugethyau.

Kun Shaktiko Saamumaa Kahile Haami Jhukethyaun.

Haamile himal uthayau yesiyaako maajhamaa

Sabhyataako waas basethyaun aayera yahi sanjha maa. (86)

Translation

We reached the East fortress and Kangada to the west.

Never bowed down before any sort of power.

We succeed to create a nation amidst Asia.

We created our own civilization the very moment of victory. (my trans.)

The stanza appreciates and the praises the deeds of bravery performed by the *braves*, the national heroes, Bhimsen Thapa, Bhalabhadra Kunwar, Bhakti Thapa, and later on Prithvi Narayan Shah. Actualization of the feeling scripted in the stanza is given in historiography of Bhimsen Thapa. He is represented as the ideal governor, filled with ethos of nationalism, love of nation. He is characteristically described as courageous, daring, enduring, commanding, and militant. His major contribution is recounted as formulator of strategic military policy improvement against the probable assault by the foreign, the then residing adjacent to Nepal's territory, and modernization of military (87-89).



Figure 7: Illustration of Bhimsen Thapa. *Nepali Kaksha Nau*: 87.

However, what was unfitting and uncomfortable was always submerged and homogenized. One section of the biography in *Nepali Kaksha Nau* reads "Though Sugauli Treaty was formed in his period of reign itself, he never let to encroach into nation's liberty, freedom, and national integrity" (89, *my trans.*). The quotation assumes that something was wrong with Sugauli treaty, however, attention has been tried to fetch to the "brilliant" aspects of Bhimsen Thapa. Recent nationalist historians claim a dialectic to the much narrated brilliance of Bhimsen Thapa. Particularly with the treaty, numerous critical comments have resurrected and they have spoken (written) against the grain. This treaty, however, in Nepal's history is taken as having unbearable pain and traumatic feeling in terms of sentiment, territory and geography too, above all, national pride. It is thoroughly condemned. Here is one observation:

The treaty was signed only after a long discussion and disputes. The British creating a troublesome situation for Nepal intended to put many unnecessary and inappropriate terms and conditions in the treaty. At first, Nepal didn't accept the conditions. However, at last, to protect its independent existence Nepal accepted the treaty on 3 march, 1816 AD

as it realized if not another war may take place. East-India Company had been successful to acquire the one-sided benefits through the treaty of Sugauli. Nepal had to lose one-third of the total land under its control. It also affected the foreign policy of Nepal. Nepal was compelled to let the Residency of British Government stay in Nepal. ("The unbearable Sugauli Treaty and Nepal" para. 6 and 7).

The unification campaign of Nepal ended totally after the treaty of Sugauli. The dream of Nepal to expand its boundary up to river Ganga remained unfulfilled. Nepal was compelled to remain with constriction as the boundary of Company Government surrounding it from three sides. Because of the treaty of Sugauli, the British Government had been successful to keep its minister (residency) in Nepal. The prime objective of the British behind establishment of Residency in Nepal was to fulfill their interests through the rulers of Nepal by interfering in the politics of the country. Although they were not successful in their objective in the beginning, later the British ambassadors had been able to influence the politics of Nepal (Wright 235-36).

Before a text, entitled "Bhimsen Thapa" in *Hamro Nepali Kitab Kaskha Nau* actually begins, a stanza is given, in a highlighted color box, and after the stanza, a rhetorical question is strategically posed: " Why do you actually feel glory and pride about our history? Do you not have to credit our brave ancestors for it ? (86, *my trans.*)" Subsequently, a very positive and normative answer: yes, we should credit, is given to these questions, and the *historical* biography of Bhimsen Thapa begins. In the biography, what is ambivalent about the historical figure is deviated. Here is one chunk of the writing from the biography:

Though he [Bhimsen Thapa] during his regime, after the war with British, had to compromise with Sugauli Treaty, he did not let any trespassing regarding national sovereignty, freedom, and national indivisibility. In addition to this, he did not let be successful the Britisher's colonial and expansionist policy. (87)

Bhimsen Thapa is a never-forgotten historical icon in the consciousness of Nepali people, no doubt. However, there are claims in the academia that seek to reasonably curb this historically created aura of Bhimsen Thapa and the nationalistic feeling that is attached with him. Bhimsen Thapa's premiership contains the Anglo-Nepal, and it was fought during the same period that Nepal, according to many nationalist critics, suffers from the trauma of defeat. The reason of trauma is it lost much of its valuable territory. Much of the miseries that Nepal is facing from the issues of nationalism to the issue of economic insufficiency stems from this traumatic loss of war. In fact, the trauma later on turned into a hatred and revulsion against southern neighbor India. The defeat in the war also initiated a sense of dislike to the foreignness, which later on was capitalized as the foundation of nationalistic feeling. Pre-1816 Nepal was an empire. It had extended Kumaon and Grahwal and had expanded as far as Satlaj River. But the defeat of Nepal in 1814-1816 curtailed Nepal's territory to the present size (Stiller 232-35).

With the treaty of 1816, Nepali nation as pure Hindustan begins to thwart. By 1816, Kathmandu started to populate the "firangi" and the realm has officially been defiled for the first time after Prithvinarayan had evicted the "defilers". Bhimsen Thapa himself from this point on slowly starts becoming English friendly. He did not oppose to send the little general Mathabar Singh Thapa to London. Nor does he object talking counsels and suggestions from the resident in Lainchaur about the State of

affairs at home. When his own position started to go shaky and unsecured "general Bhimsen Thapa would tell on King Rajendra Bikram Shah to B.H. Hudson" (Acharaya *General Bhimsen Thapa* 49).

A deeply rooted name in historical consciousness of Nepali, Bhimsen Thapa has been acclaimed as defender of Nepali Nationalism. There are reasons. First, he ruled as *mukhtiyar* (prime minister) for the longest time in the history of Nepal. He ruled between 1812 to 1837 BS. During his premiership Nepal had its now lost territory: it was extended to Kumaon and Garhal and as far as to the Satlaj River. It was out of Rana Bahadur's insanity that Bhimsen Thapa uplifted to an absolute power. He ruled for three decades and during his rule he scarcely knew opposition though his end was such a tragic one that no Greek tragedy could ever surpass. During his tenure "Bhimsen was Nepal and Nepal was Bhimsen" (Landon 82). And it is upon the "foundation that Bhimsen laid that both Junga Bahadur and Chandra Samsheer built up the prosperity and sovereignty of Nepal (82)" Bhimsen on his part was always opposed to British India government. Landon further remarks "he looked upon the company as his foe rather than his friend. He was determined to see how far he could remove his neighbor's land marks to the south without encountering serious opposition" (83). His resistance against the British could not prove indefatigable but was not weaker either.

Secondly, he is reported to have said to his advisors on the eve of Anglo-Nepal war, "How... will the English be able to penetrate into the hills?"... [we] will expel them . . . Our hills and fastness impregnable. I therefore, recommend hostility. We can make peace afterwards on such terms as may suit our convenience" (Chaudhary 165). Bhimsen's aversion was to the extent he wanted to drive away the Britishers from Asia; he and Britishers always remained as foes to each other.

However, there are other discourses contrary to this claim. He rose to power in Nepali politics after the fall of his predecessors Damodar Pandey who was unseated from *mukhtiyari* following his supposed hobnob with the Britishers in the south. But Bhimsen rose to "power when he supported the British cause" (Acharya *Bhimsen* 18). As much as he is hailed for his anti-British stand he is also criticized for raising his position in the support of the very foes he wanted to chase away. He is said to have declared war in 1814 out of his arrogance. He had no war skills. When he was in the absolute power he concentrated his attention in consolidating power to serve his and his family's interest. Around 1810s, he was a skilled player of contrivances and conspiracy but lacked diplomatic craftiness (*Aba Yasto Nahos* 54). He went for war despite the advice from his countries that the controversial Terai lands, which were the bone of contention between the Company government and Nepal and on which the British raj had laid its claim, had to be left for the British so as to avoid war. But Thapa's disregard to advice made the war inevitable.

Another historical figure regularly featured in "Nepal Angrej Yuddhamaa Nepali Bir Birangganaharuko Yogdaan" (The Contribution of Nepali Brave Figures in Anglo-Nepal War), who is *made* to represent the historical glory of national integrity and bravery, is Captain Balbhadra Kunwar. He is basically an emblematic representative of brave fight against the military of East India Company, led by General Sir Robert Rolls Gillespie. He is also known for his perseverance and undefeated self, by tearing the letter sent by the general to surrender. Regarding this, his dedication and war capacity comes into appraisal, for, only accompanied by women and the children, he was not in better position to fight against the militarily equipped British troops. He is accredited for fighting against the British army even though he had a few warriors, and the battle was all fierce. Gillespie and several of his

subordinates were killed in the initial attack. The second British assault was launched weeks later after reinforcements had arrived and even then, Balbhadra and his soldiers are said to have fought admirably. When the situation inside the fort became unbearable due to lack of water and other supplies, and due to the continuous bombardment by the British, Balbhadra and some of his subordinates escaped to another location in the war territory. When the British army entered the fort, it is said, it was found dead and dying Nepali soldiers and women and children, who also had participated in the fighting. Wherever his historiography is given, his afterward venture is not mentioned. The description is cut off after his contribution is recounted. These above facts, common to most of narratives of the battle of Nalapani, are also part of the stories presented in current school textbooks.

In these lessons, the war episode at Nalapani and Balbhadra's role in it transformed as an appropriate exigency to talk and show the bravery of Balbhadra when Nepal's sovereignty was challenged by "evil imperial forces", and a chance to display independent nationhood which was made famous. It also represents an occasion in which brave Nepalis got an opportunity to prove their devotion to their nation and king (the then) and their country through their use of the Khukuri and more importantly through the ultimate sacrifice of their lives. The loss at Nalapani is explained as being possible only due to an unfair trick on the part of the British who it is said, despite winning the fort, honored Balbhadra and his soldiers with a memorial (Onta 119). Onta Reflects more clearly on this occasion:

Evocation of "Jaya Nepal" and the idea of "brave" death— death on the battlefield on behalf of the country – together elevate Balbhadra's troy to a celebration of Nepali nationhood and a reminder of one's duties as a citizen of Nepal. However, we also need to note that the ideal citizen

is the patriotic *bir purus* whose individual bravery sustains nationhood and celebration of whom is an essential part of being proud of one's nation. National identity itself is embodied in his virility and this gendered notion is the image propagated through the education system. While Balbhadra's wife and other women in the fort participated in the war, their role is marked as ancillary to the real business of war conducted by Balbhadra and his men (Onta 219).

While the details of the war are familiar, Gyawali mentions that after the treaty of Sugauli, Balbhadra returned to Nepal but soon after that went to join the army of the Sikh king Ranjit Singh. While he mentions that being aware of the demonstrated bravery of the Nepalis Ranjit Singh recruited them in his army, he does not mention what promoted Balbhadra, the hero of Nalapani and the embodiment of Nepali bravery and patriotism, to go and join this foreign army. Gyawali later mentions that Balbhadra dies fighting for Sikhs against the Afghans (13-15). Commenting on this, he writes that although this was a "brave death", it would have been even more respectable had Balbhadra dies fighting for his country. The fact that he died in a foreign country while in the service of Ranhit Sigh should teach us a lesson about how Nepali need to be loyal to our employer writes Gyawali, but it cannot serve as an example of how, like Bhakti Thapa, we need to be always ready to give up our lives for the sake of our country. Nevertheless, Gyawali writes that Balbhadra's name and work will be written in golden letters in the history of Nepal (21).



Figure 8: Illustrations explaining the bravery: Balbhadra Kunwar, General Gilespi and stone-carved writing (Shilalekh), a tribute to Balabhadra (from left to right). *Samajik Adhyayan Kakshaa Nau*: 118-23.

In the textbooks, Balbhadra's service with Ranjit Singh is passed over. This fact is omitted when British memorial placed in his honor in Dehra Dun is quoted. Furthermore while talking about his death, the textbooks, simple states that "Balbhadra was born in a brave family, he fought bravely for the country, and died fighting in a war" (118-20). It pointedly does not specify that he dies in some other battle between Nepal and the British following the one in Nalapani. Why it does so is pretty clear: one cannot make someone "one of our eternal national icons" while acknowledging that he died in some other land fighting for some other, even if he has a worshipping prior of heroism in Nalapani (Onta 20-25).

Much aura of past is created through the representation of Prithvi Narayana Shah, first as creator of modern Nepal, who unified the diverse principalities into a whole, and second, the eternal icon of nationalistic feelings. The textbooks faithfully share the stand of Prithvi Narayan Shah, in both internal feeling for nation and aversion for foreignness and ideals of Hinduism. Hate for neighbor (the then British and now India) and foreignness is strategically managed while the ambivalence regarding it is let loose by various seen and unseen channels. Prithvi Narayan had

invoked Hinduism in defining Nepal as a nation. He was the first to sow the seed of Nepali nation state as it has come down to today. Contested as faulty and debated as hegemony of nationalism though, Prithvi Narayan's version lays the foundation for later development of Nepali nationalism.

As there is always the other side of an issue. Prithvi Narayan Shah's contribution is not with a strife, the ambivalence. This opposite side, however, claimed so strong and historically evident, has not been even a strand of the official knowledge. Revisiting Prithvi Narayan Shah among Nepali intellectual circle yields following observation:

A common apprehension remains among Nepali intellectuals: whether the present political move to eliminate the rule of the Shahs will not “throw away the baby with the bathwater”, by distorting or even deleting the supposedly glorious event of unification. The glory attached to P. N. Shah so far in the history is one of the roots of Nepali nationalism for more than two centuries. This is the glory tenaciously attached to Nepal in general by the mainstream Nepali history though today's critical political scrutiny sees in it the roots of a long-standing rule of dominance over and marginalization of many ethnic communities. (Kafle 143-44).

Today's debate of Nepali nationalism is a kind of continuum between 'Ifs' and 'Buts' each time. For the issues of Madhesis, Janjatis and Newars of Kathmandu dominate the discussion on the unification and establishment of Nepal. Assumptions prevail in these communities that P.N. Shah had done injustice by colonizing the Terai, the Kirant regions and the Kathmandu valley. Some critics of history¹⁶,

especially the left wings in Nepali political parties and advocates of Janjaati and *Aadibasi*, and ethnic issues, strictly argue that modern Nepal was founded upon atrocity and bloodbath. The more stark example of atrocity is exemplified by referencing to the historical conquest of Shah over Kritipur in which he is "blamed" to have cut the noses of many people, including the women, merely to expand his regime in his state Gorkha (Kirkpatrick 164; Wright 259). In this reference, even B.P Koirala, who is supposed to have closely observed the historical and political upsurge of Nepal, also holds critical view on Prithvi Narayan Shah. He observes, "He had such strategies which were filled with blind anger and motives of revenge, he would take the help of hooks and crooks until he would get victory, but after the victory, he would launch a *tandava* (a kind dance, a religious dance that refers to the violent dance of Shiva in the Himalayan areas) of violence (Qtd in Maharjan)."

Therefore, responsible readers of history, however, should not go after one viewpoint only. To see only weaknesses of P.N. Shah by highlighting the myths of cruelties is to be deliberately blind and deaf towards his contributions. And, to see only the glory of unification, conquest and integration curbing aside the cruelties and oppression is equally false. Every Nepalese should have a foundational knowledge of Nepalese history in order to affirm one's national identity and heritage.

Our nation's history is such a remarkable story, so full of great and wonderful people, so vibrant with human endeavor and enterprise, so stirring in its affirmation of freedom and love of country. It is not as propagandistic as it is featured and maintained in Social Studies. The tendency of behooving it to learn and teach history to one's children as a means of making sure that a child understands what it means to be a Nepali. This gives rise to teaching history is a political agenda. The children,

then, happen to learn the indoctrinated history. However, knowing the truth clean is out of the reach as the many postmodernist thinkers view. Knowing history critically, having different vantage point, and evaluating the political and ideological orientation sound a better pedagogical approach to adopt. Knowing history is important part of cultural knowledge. Yet, understanding history as part of historical and cultural knowledge is better and import part of real education and learning process.

Returning to and Reimagining of the Past

What happens in the present, and what will happen in the future, is very much governed by what happened in the past. This belief becomes the basic formulation in various texts of school level. The present is contrasted with the past, and present sounds horrendous as past manifests as pristine. Analysis of *bir itihis* reflected in textbooks tried to show this aspect. Not only in the domain of history, past in other normal situations, for example, regarding the relationship between neighbors, migration, too, is construed as a harmonious reality. All the texts depicting the history have one thing in common. Basically, Nepali and Social Studies textbooks contain worshipping attitude to the past, in fact, there is sense of nostalgic return to the past, above all, to the "supposed" glory of history.

The notion of reconstruction of past holds proportionately a greater chunk of the curriculum designation. In Social Studies, beginning with the textbooks of Grade one, there is a separate chapter entitled "Hamro Vigat" (Our Past). This unit deals with a variety of sub-topics, such as, neighbor before and now, the occupation of neighbor before and now, the things to be learnt from the past, more importantly, "Hamro Vir Viranggana" (Our Brave History) etc. The section "Our Past" in the Social Studies textbooks in primary level deals with the mundane life affairs like the occupation a family, the dress, income, cultures, agricultural activities and so on; however, the section in lower secondary and secondary is transformed into "Hamro Vir Viranggana" in which recounting of brave history begins.

To begin an analysis of a text from primary level, "Mero Chhimeki Pahile and Ahile" (My Neighbor Before and Now) deals with the substantial changes that took place in Aangchhiring's uncle, Tenjing's life and his conducts. The speaker in the text clearly states there is a significant changes in the manners of Tenjing now in

comparison to the past. Tenjing previously enjoyed the foods and vegetables vegetated by himself and his own cultural dress. However, as he moved from Nuwakot to Trishuli, his consumption shifted to foods and vegetables available in market. Similarly, he began wearing the foreign made dress such as jeans and other. And Aangchhiring disapproves all this; she favors the dress, such as, *dochaa*, *bakhkhu*, *paangden*, made up of own local materials. Featuring two small kids in this text, the attempts have been made to infuse the young minds to regard the past and love the past. In addition, the sense of respecting the locale and disrespecting the what is foreign is also seen in his behaviour.

Under the same unit, in the Social Studies Grade Five, three topics: "Hamro Samajkaa Aitiharik Vastuharu" (The Historical Things of Our Community), "Hamro Samajkaa Aitiharik Vyaktitwa" (The Historical Figures of Our Society), and "Prachin Nepal" (Ancient Nepal) are crucial to observe, which preponderantly idealize the past and reconstruct the harmony of the past (66-72). The viable means of learning past and history is sketched in the first two of the mentioned texts. The sources like, Shilalekh, Tamrapatra, Old papers, Stories, money and currency, have been approved as the best means of learning about the past. Moreover, virtuous behave and morale manner of the imagined figures of the community have been emphasized in "The Historical Figure". "The Political System of Ancient Nepal" talks one important juncture, Lichchhiwi Kaal, of historical progression of Nepal, *officially*, known as Golden Age in Nepali history. To assert boldly it was golden age, the given reasons are somewhat naive and complacent.

The first reason enforced is the governance system of the time. It is claimed to have been a decentralized type of governance in whose provinces there were Landlords. However, the (ab)use of authority by the landlords is not given though

word "Saamati/Saamante" has been used. It connotes of oppressive nature and conduct. Still, it has been approved as golden age. Other reasons involve the expansion of the state by different successive monarchs of the period. For example, Mandev expanded the *state* eastward from Kathmandu and the westward from here. Similarly, Raja Janak's state is said to be famous. However, the reasons to why are obtuse, imperceptive. And Amsuwarma developed Nepal very much, and maintained the relationship with the states of the South and the North. Last not the least, the Kapitvastu state, the birthplace of Buddha, was *just* prosperous. No reasons are given. In this way, the past is naively constructed. There is no exercise or space is given to critique the past or question it. The designation is to make the students accept this knowledge in a normative sense and *feel proud* of it.

The probable reasons behind revoking the texts that relate to past might be, without knowledge of the past we would be without identity, the citizens would be lost on an endless sea of time, the feeling of insecurity without the past. It is the belief that past or history constructs people's identity. What is the use of history? What it would be like to live in a society where there was absolutely no knowledge of the past. The rhetorical answer is that identity of human beings is construction of past too. Of course, if history has this vital importance for society, then it must be as accurate as possible, which is, however not possible. Nonetheless, it is obvious that knowledge of the past has not brought easy solutions to problems.

The evidence collected thus far suggests that a single hour of classroom activity under certain conditions may bring about a major reorganization in cognitive as well as affective behaviors. The attempt is motivated by the responsibility felt on the part of the educationists to transfer to future generations the philosophy of our founding fathers, who sacrificed so much so that their descendents could enjoy the

fruits of liberty. It is only through knowledge of history that the people of nation can make sure that their free society continues to exist in decades ahead. It is, of course, a tragedy that young learners will never learn history in their public schools in true sense. But it is the opinion of this researcher that government schools have never been compatible with the principles of a free society. It in fact gives rise to the urge that parents have the responsibility of educating their children in accordance with their own values and beliefs.

Paulo Freire thus said, education is a political act. In *Pedagogy of Freedom*, Freire states that “education never was, is not, and never can be neutral or indifferent in regard to the reproduction of the dominant ideology or the interrogation of it” (91). Freire had firsthand knowledge about the consequences of advocating for educational reform and equity issues in educational systems. He is quoted as saying, “Washing one’s hands of the conflict between the powerful and the powerless means to side with the powerful, not to be neutral” (Freire *Pedagogy of Freedom* 102). Education is a method of controlling the public discourse through the government’s institutional policies in the structure of language used to describe concepts, ideas, methods, and people.

In conclusion, since the time of the Sugauli Treaty of 1816 (3), passing through 2007BS (1950 AD) and 2046BS (1990 AD) , and coming up to the present of 2058BS (2001AD) , in the kind of intense crisis besetting the central Nepali state founded under the leadership of Prithvi Narayan Shah more than 225 years ago, it was not and is not possible for it to maintain itself in the same old form and under the same old historical knowledge. Moreover, in Nepal's special geo-political context and in the changing situation of the rapidly transforming balance of power in the world and in South Asia it was and is becoming extremely difficult to preserve Nepal's

national unity and sovereignty in the old form. Thus it is that Nepali history has witness the historical injustice done through the Sugauli Treaty, and the imperialists and expansionists have had a direct hand in practically every change of power in Nepal.

To keep clear of all the misconceptions which abound in historical epistemology, one should make a firm distinction between history as "the bodies of knowledge about the past produced by historians", and "the past" as everything which actually happened, whether known, or written, about by historians or not. Historians do not "reconstruct" the past. What historians do is produce knowledge about the past, or, with respect to each individual, fallible historian, produce contributions to knowledge about the past. Thus the best and most concise definition of history is: the bodies of knowledge about the past produced by historians, together with everything that is involved in the production, communication of, and teaching about that knowledge. The knowledge that is practice is rarely to be possible out of interests, for the matter, any strand of knowledge.

Chapter Four: The Projection of Civic and Moral Duties

This chapter deals with the moral principles and values depicted in school textbooks. In fact, when strictly observed, the ethos of nationalism too can be interpreted as the byproduct of moral principles guarded by the national education stakeholders. For nationalistic also means to be ethical in behaviour and conduct regarding the aspects of national concerns. However, in this chapter, my study concerns with the typical moral and ethical conducts that the society or family or nation, as a whole, expects from the young citizens in their coming years of lives. And, the significance of teaching those values and implications of such teaching to achieve the education on nationalistic citizenry. My analysis concentrates on the explanation of the individual texts that endorse moral and ethical type of behaviour: the acclaimed virtues of moral integrity such as honesty, truthfulness, hard work, sincerity and patient, on the parts of the learners. More importantly, it deals with how the ethoses of morality are politicized to create "democratic" citizenry. Four points are the ground of analysis in this section: exploitation of myths to raise and regulate moral integrity; middle class values to reproduce and sustain the culture of propriety; political socialization; and enforcement of rules and regulations.

The interesting part to observe in the texts I have selected is that there is a gradual transformation. The transformation can be conceived in terms of the units and the content they contain. Specifically, in Social Studies, the unit entitled "Nagarik Chetana" (Civic Consciousness) adopts the very preliminary values of civic life like honesty, loyalty, habit of waiting, preservation of public property, and mutual help and so on in lower classes. However, the values change as the unit continues to lower secondary and secondary school texts. These values are endorsed not to conduct an individual life but the national life. These values begin to get tinted by the national

ideological color and political thinking of the nation, the political thinking that I tried to carve out in previous two chapters. As they transform, they appear to be the duty of citizens in elections, duties to the nation, honesty to the nations etc.

I may not find other best way to state my agenda of this chapter, other than to quote John Dewey's views on the moral foundational principles of education. He precisely captures how [school] education diverts the boys and girls into *responsible* men and women. According to him, in the conduct of the schools, it is well for the citizens to determine the ends proper to them, and it is their privilege to judge of the efficacy of results. He further illustrates:

Upon questions that concern all the manifold details by which children are to be converted into desirable types of men and women, the expert schoolmaster should be authoritative, at least to a degree commensurate with his superior knowledge of this very complex problem. The administration of the schools, the making of the course of study, the selection of texts, the prescription of methods of teaching, these are matters with which the people, or their representatives upon boards of education, cannot deal save with danger of becoming mere meddlers. (Dewey *Book of Moral Principle in Education* 1)

Not to make the young "meddlers," teacher is abundantly used to divert the young minds to make a distinction between the behaviors of good and bad persons. The institutional and societal responsibility of not making the young minds just as the meddlers of the given society befalls on the educators. The civic education which was taught previously under the subject entitled "Naitik Shiksha" (Moral Education/ Science, *My trans.*) is not longer the curricular subject of modern education of Nepal.

However, this has not stopped to resurface in other subjects. The moral education is endorsed in modern education especially through social studies as a way of teaching the students the process of socialization and subjectification of themselves in existing social order. Therefore civic learning is not always a linear and naive process. It is often political and cultural. For the existing social order or the social system cannot be value neutral and politically unbiased. Instead, it is contingent and often dominated by certain ideologies. Regarding civic learning, Gert J.J. Biesta argues:

Civic learning is the learning which occurs in and through the processes and practices that make up the everyday lives of children, young people and adults and which is closely connected to their actual condition of citizenship, then, unlike what is assumed in much curricular thinking, we should not conceive of civic learning as a linear process moving from a situation of not-yet-being-a-citizen to a situation of fully-fledged citizenship.

As Biesta argues, civic learning should rather be understood as *non-linear*, and also as *recursive*, and *cumulative*. Civic learning is a *non-linear* process because it is closely connected to ongoing positive and negative experiences with democracy and citizenship, and thus is likely to reflect fluctuations in these experiences.

Civic learning that contributes to the reproduction of the existing socio-political order and thus to the adaptation to or insertion of individuals into this order, and those forms of civic learning that contribute to political subjectivity and agency. The reflection of existing social order of socio-political reality has been tried to reproduce through the deployment of acclaimed values of moral integrity and merits.

The merits and values first are taught with the purpose of developing moral integrity in individual life. Later on, they became the building blocks of national life or national citizenships.

Two different forms of civic learning as a *socialization* conception of civic learning and a *subjectification* conception during the process of teaching moral education. In terms of the aims of civic learning and citizenship education, the first would see the aims of civic learning first and foremost in terms of the reproduction of an existing socio-political order and thus of the adaptation of individuals to this order, while the second would focus on the emergence of political agency and thus sees the aims of civic learning first and foremost in terms of the promotion of political subjectivity and agency (Biesta 85-86).

The Psyche and Power of Mythology

Myths are powerful tools in the process of knowledge making. More specifically, the myths become more effective and impressive to demarcate the boundary between what is wrong and right, what is good and bad, what is within limit and what is beyond limit to inculcate the young minds. While adopting the stories and excerpts from mythologies, there are two ways of doing this. First, the demystification of myths. Demystifying the myth in which the author tries to make something less mysterious and remove the mystery surrounding something, e.g. by explaining it in simple language. Therefore it involves interpretation, analysis or explanation of the myths for appropriate purpose. They develop their own argument about the myth and try to illustrate it to the learners. It is a critical practice that skeptically tries to see the myths. Second, demytholization, it involves uncovering true nature of something: to reveal and understand the true character, nature, or meaning of something by ridding it of all mythical or mysterious aspects. It is a kind of submissive practice that requires not the critical insights but conformation to what the particular excerpt of myth is trying to teach.

Mythopoetic¹⁷ expression has a particular kind of power. The power derives from mythic knowing embodied in forms of human communication. Mythopoetic power represents a force that guides the reader to a vivid understanding through expression. They suggest, in order to understand the power of mythopoetic expression, one must begin to delineate particular powers of the mythopoetic, that is, powers¹⁸ that are described here as reflexive, moral, controlling, and evocative in their expression (Holland and Garman 18-19).

Myths have become a great source of teaching morality in the name of preserving them. Myths when uncritically examined make a clear distinguish between the virtuous and the vicious. The authors and the stakeholders of education can mend and bend the myths for their purpose as guiding principles in school curriculum. Regarding the process of mythopoetic¹⁹ education, Patricia E. Holland and Noreen B. Garman in their essay "Watching with Two Eyes: The Place of the Mythopoetic in Curriculum Inquiry" argue,

The authors conceptualize the mythopoetic by examining myth as a source of knowledge that shapes our routine actions, and by examining the expressive powers of language that invokes the poetic and uses it to communicate mythic knowledge. [. . .] finally, and perhaps most importantly, the authors recognize those who embody the mythopoetic in their writing, including curriculum theorists identified with both critical and interpretive approaches, as well as those who live with children in classrooms. These writers help us both to understand the mythopoetic as a force in curriculum, and to experience its power to shape our sensations, feelings, and impulses to act. (11)

As these thinkers view, the mythological content has pragmatic aspects in school teaching and learning process. The myths can be interpreted and explained to fulfill the purpose of particular values and beliefs thus shape the behaviours of the learners. The authors conceptualize this aspect of including mythological content in curriculum. Therefore, mythological stories are in abundance in school texts.

A mythological story adapted from Mahabharata "Yudhishtirko Parishaa" (79-80) (Yudhishtira's Wisdom, *my trans.*) aims at teaching the message of

righteousness and patience at the moment of difficulty. In the story, Yudhishtira is tested in terms of his wisdom and righteousness. The Pandavas become too thirsty and seek water, but, the god of Death, the Yama, in the guise of Yaksha, appears before them to quench their thirst. As they are desperately thirsty, all other four brothers of Yudhishtira do not keep patience to answer the questions of god. However, Yudhishtira holds his thirst and hails back to answer the tough, abstract uncanny questions, and intelligently solves those riddle questions. Despite his desperate breathtaking thirst, Yudhishtira is patient enough to answer.

While teaching also, this story epitomizes the common and moralistic theme of patience. Later on, highly content with the answers, Yaksha wants to reward him proposing that he could have one of his brothers get revived. Once again, Yudhishtira shows his moral integrity and righteousness by asking him to revive Madri's son, Nakula. He judiciously thinks that to extend the genealogy of Kuni, he himself will be alive but there would be no one to do so for Madri's blood line. More impressed by this virtue of righteousness and uprightness, Yaksha revives all of the four brothers and even suggests them to go to Matsya to seek the patronage and security of Virat.



Figure 9: Illustration: Yudhishtira and his Brothers, showing their bow to Obedience to the God.

Persons to allude this sort of themes in the myths or who extrapolate such moral lessons are the teachers. And, why the students have to believe what the teachers? The answer is quite obvious. In the very texts, there are some units in which the bond and sincerity between the teachers and the students is fixed and maintained. In other words, the authors have taken some excerpts again from myths to account for the bond between the guru and the disciples. Such lessons reproduce "myths" about the teachers themselves, rather than empowering critically students to examine the texts and question them. For example, in a short essay entitled "Gurushishyako Sambandha" (119-121) [Relation between Guru and Disciple, *my trans.*], the author has referred to the situation of the myths such as Mahabharata and Ramayana in which the faithful bond between the guru and disciple has been centralized. On one occasion the dialogue between Yudhishtira and Bhishma is referenced where Yudhishtira asks Bhishma what sort of person he likes. Bhishma replies, the person who has learned, who is sincere, who speaks soft and tender and whose character is neat and who has deep understanding of letters (the learned). What is deduced from this selection is of course the importance of education. However, the

project of the author is more political. Who conduct the education? The teacher. Therefore the respect for teachers, honesty with teacher is endorsed in such texts. The students are taught to follow the path of Ekalabya who in *Mahabharata*, did pay his thumb, which was crucial for archery, as guru dakshina to Bishwamitra with a humble respect (Hamro Nepali Kakhsaa Chha 119-24).

The interpretation of myth is important because it contributes to the knowledge making process of the individual. Nelson Goodman²⁰ (1978) calls this kind of pedagogic practice “world making” in the creation of language. According to him, there are ways of making world of different kinds with the exploitation of linguistic richness. According to him, it symbolically portrays some truth of human experience, or it may be the exercise of a socializing function, the setting forth of norms for belief or behavior both for the holder and the bearer of myth. In either case, myth functions as knowledge. For Lindblom and Cohen, this involves notion of usable knowledge: “knowledge is knowledge to anyone who takes it as a basis for some commitment to action” (12).



Figure 10: Illustration Showing the Bond between the Teachers and the Students, Hamro Nepali Kaksha Nau: 120.

Considerations of the interpretation of myth introduce the concept of the poetic, and its concern for the nature of the language through which mythical knowledge is construed. The association of myth with language has been a focus for scholars of myth for over a century, perhaps reaching its extreme with Levi-Strauss's (1963) structural analogies between myth and language. The linking of myth specifically with poetic language is important because it recognizes the denotative and connotative power that resides within language (Holland and Garman 17-18). The language of the mythopoetic conveys what Cassirer describes as, "the basic supposition [which] is that word and name do not merely have a function of describing or portraying but contains within them the object and its real powers. Word and name do not designate and signify, they are and act (40)."



Figure 11: Mythic Illustration Showing the Bond between the Preceptor and the Disciple

The implication of the words in action can be seen in various texts from mythology. In such works, the words designate actions, more specifically probable action the learners will possibly adopt after reading the texts. Change and transformation in existing habits and behaviour is possible if you are committed to

your will and follow the shown paths is regulated in the story "Walmiki" (7-11) of *Hamro Nepali Kitab Class Seven*. Previously known as Ratnakaar Daanku (robber), Walmiki lacked the proper parental care thus was deprived of process of socialization. He turned into a famous robber to whom robbery and trouble the travellers became simple and daily activities. Coincidentally, one day Naarad becomes one of the victims of his asocial and rude aggression. Naarad painstakingly efforts to moralize Ratnakaar and socialize him, and liberate him from the vortex of sinful and immoral activities. Stiff though, he listened to Naarad's words and words: "the bearer of outcomes of his sinful activities is only the person who commits them", seem to have effects on him. Not convinced, Ratnakaar aspires to test this logic with his family members but for his disappointment what Naarad was telling becomes a confirmed truth. Much repented and morally tumultuous, Ratnakaar seeks to improve his fate, and is suggested for penance reciting a meaningless word, "maraa", which, when its letters reversed, later meant "Ram", the hero of *Ramayana*. Ratnakaar, renamed Walmiki, is believed to be the creator of the famous holy book of Hinduism, *Ramayana*. Thus the story approves the transformation is possible: first, do not be asocial and immoral; second, if you are, then follow the precepts of learned and adopt them to be a better person.

Projection of mythological psyche in order to teach what is good (bad) and what limitation (delimitation) is and what is within (beyond) manifests in quite significant number of individual texts. There are stories ranging from "The Story Shishir Basant" (*Hamro Nepali Grade Nine* 12-20) through "The Text of Upamanyu" (*Our Nepali Kitab* 49-52) to "Nunko Sotho" (109-112) and *Hamro Nepali Kitaab Grade Eight* 86-89).

A commonly held contemporary stance that curriculum must be a process contained within mathematically measurable parameters is not neutral. It is hegemonic. It is a corollary of the view education is conducted for basic human needs and for understanding. As typical Marxist formulation, every cultural production is ideological produce, thus, education cannot be exception. Ideological reproduction is not only produced by the discourse, the contents and the moral lessons of the textbooks but also by the schools themselves as they institutionalized the discourse in the daily routines and rituals. By the dialectical interplay, they are instrumental to construct the future, dream, hope and fear, the basic projections for the reproduction of proper citizens modeled on the official knowledge and national thinking, otherwise, deemed unethical, anti-national, even, rebel.

When read the system closely, find heterogeneity and conflating values and ethic are perceived. But they are presented in the hegemonic way that puts the congenial pictures at the front and rival ideas and values at the back. Interestingly, it seems to be working to produce the citizens nurtured and nourished with the nutrition of official knowledge and thinking. Large expressions of reproducing the middle class values dominate the content of the social studies textbooks and the Nepali book readers. While the subjects like mathematics and science are neutral subject, the social studies, Nepali and literature and language textbooks should speak openly to the students about the existing society through graphic, depiction, narration, and myths, and construct a kind of moral world. They exceed in weight more for the values. Nepali education supports the existing social-political order to a large extent rather than liberating the students from the oppressions and exploitations of the dominant ideas and practices.

Nunko Sojho (True to Salt): Inculcation of Culture of Propriety

The designation of course of studies as manifest in the individual text selections informs the promotion of culture of propriety in young minds. The targeted area of implication is middle class values and conducts; this culture of propriety comes into special focus in shaping the consciousness and determining the conducts of the children. The ethics of "propriety" and "suitability" dominates the psyche of people. This logic is the effort to secure the unique cultural space through negotiation between the high and the low class in the Nepali society (Liechty 37-38). Such designation echoes the propriety in consumption or the middle path for the cultural reproduction of the middle class people. These sense of propriety is based on the tendency of confirmation to the existing culture and the social order than on the critical questions the people should ask. My take in this chapter involves designation of textbooks are in commensurate with the existing cultural practices proper, which are necessitated fundamental virtue to a national citizen. Any divergent or any kind of going beyond the set limit is construed culturally bad and improper. This kind of fixation demanded on the part of learners dubs any kind of resistance, criticism, or questioning even if at the time of need.

The culture of propriety urges people to seek for the freedom within permitted sphere of socially given. The individuals are asked to act use their freedom only the given space of consumption, fashion, celebration and other various forms of cultural practices. Liechty's formulation shows, the middle class of Nepali society tends to act, such as consumption of goods, with acute conscious realization of its own moral principles. For it, it tries to devalue two social poles of extremity: the high class and the low class. He further mentions:

The space is one separated both from the "vulgar" lives of the national elite, which distinction lies in their emulation of a foreign modernism, from the lower class trapped equally vulgar life styles of "tradition" and poverty. The challenge for an emergent middle class is to construct middle space that both adopt modernity as a means of separating itself from the national life. The experience of the middle classness lies in this uneasy relationship with the "modern" one of both emulation and distancing. (67)

Liechty makes the point further clear, the middle class is "tied down" by the restraint of social order, so to legitimize its own predicament, it makes moral stories of "proper" and "acceptable" limits between two different class positions (69). It is a modern community but highly cautious to control the evils of modernity. Modernity in my research is not matter of speculation. However, what I argue is, the ethics of propriety is pinned down to the ethos of middle class values and their cultural, conscious yet cautious moral propriety not to cross the limit, not to go beyond the given space of social and cultural freedom.

In such cultural practices, the individual subjects are not supposed, in fact, suggested not to take the risk of questioning the anomalies, gaps, incongruities, irregularities and discrepancies that lie underneath such cultural maneuverings. It does not mean that the textbooks totally lack the texts that promote curiosity and questions but the point is that – despite inclusion, they appear to be controlled by the other power lessons that suggest students not to go beyond. Moreover, education mechanism never allows the free space of/for the critical thinking.

One way of catering the moral values to the students is through the creation of imaginative and fictional stories and instances of good behaviours and good conducts. The chapters in the texts create a situation or context and imaginary character(s) to illustrative the moral principles of being good, the ethics of being good member of society.

A repetitive example of such moral text is related to work ethics, or in other words, the economic propriety. This work of ethics is found to have promoted the values of "Nunko Sotho (True to the Salt)." At large scale, the also encourages to the unbounded loyalty to the national concerns. According to CK Lal, this specific Nepalese propriety dates back to era of Anglo-Nepal war and era of Ranarchy (To be a Nepalese 12-13). This ethos, sometimes implicitly and sometimes tacitly, is endorsed as the defining features of being Nepali, one of the standardized characteristics to be Nepali. It is related to the work ethics: the propriety of paying debt to the nation which has offered "you" *Nun* (the salt), the sustenance of life.



Figure 12: An Illustration of a Story that shows the Propriety of "Nunko Sojho" in a story of Hamro Nepali Kakshaa Aath: 109.

It focuses on the importance of work performed honestly and whole-heartedly. Further, what is important is work and work alone, and respect the work. There is an interesting, musical and rhymed poem about work ethics in *Social Studies* of class six. This goes,

Who has a work in his/her hand has a meal.

Who has a work has money in pocket.

Who has a good work has a fame.

Who has a lot of work, has a queue of people for work. (97)

The representative lesson such as this suggests that hard work, integrity, and success, despite poverty and adverse condition are the results of lack of resolutions and dedication. As the American critic Louis Tyson traces the recurrent narration, they represent the middle class American dream that any kind of success is "simply the product of hard work. Therefore, if some people are poor, it is because they are shiftless and lazy (54)." In the Nepali context too, it embeds with the fact that anybody can be successful if she is laborious, hones, dedicated and patient in her aim. The fate of success will eventually turn up as an inevitable outcome of such ardor. This idea suggests that the socio-economic impact on a person is rather unreal and what are real only the labor and the other desired values to get success. In other lessons too, the importance of economic activities is emphasized.

A short text prescribed in social studies of class two entitled "Chhimekkaa Asal Maanis" (The good Neighbours, *My trans.*) evokes the values of being good neighbour along with virtue of mutual help is suggested. Mingma is a good person, who visits village in the morning so as to get informed about what is happening new

in the village. His good behaviour of being good person is illustrated as he mends the roof of school whose a tin has been blown up by very strong air; and he also mends the water-pipe where there is a leakage, and finally he mingles to a marriage ceremony in which he readily commits himself to a benevolent service of assistance (14). Though the story does not talk about the fruits of being good, it does ask students to be good enough to fit in into society. Similarly, in Social Studies of class three, the text "Aapasi Sahyog" [Mutual Help, *my trans.*] speculates over the importance of mutual help. The character, Deepa, suddenly stumbles to the ground and seems hapless and seeks the help of a stranger so as to be dropped to her school (26). The stranger being influenced by her sincerity and polite cannot ignore her. With this simple and effective example of this situation, the text seeks to implant the ethics of mutual help in the minds of young children. This kinds of imaginative stories seem quite effective to instill values of moral integrity.

Imaginative, superhuman, and magical stories are the main sources of teaching materials to talk about the moral duties and civic duties for the students. Such stories lead the children into the imaginative world and can appeal psychologically at best. For the question why there are such texts for the small children, the American educationist, John Dewey argues " [. . .] Imagination is some special part of the child that finds its satisfaction in someone particular direction – generally speaking, that of the unreal make belief of the myth and made up story. Why are we so hard of heart and so slow to believe? This is the medium in which the child lives" (Dewey 2013 42).

Besides the imagination as this famous educationist argues, the textbooks writers might hope to teach the students the sense of beauty for life, hope of good against evils and installation of justice as it finally defeats the demonic force. Despite

this fact, the much popular myths do not fail to teach the sense of tricks, cleverness and the luck for the desired victory. Furthermore, they create an eloquent sense that one can take over the conflicting world with the wit and individual heroism and that he can dismiss the socio-economic reality easily. The denial and distortion of the context suggests the ideological fault line. It is reasonable to claim, no story from the past to present does not stand alone, the overarching culture and its discourse always forces interpret it to confirm its own cultural logics. So the magical and superhuman stories appear to be powerful tools to suggest the importance of moral integrity, but ironically, also the trickery, cleverness and dishonesty, which are just opposite what it purports to install.

There are diametrically opposite lessons in terms of the themes and virtues that they try to preach to the students. Instead of virtues always emphasized, such texts emphasize on vices and immoral acts, performed and personified by the demonic figures or their representative. The aim of such lessons is that the students will learn by contrasts. To begin with, the lesson entitled "Chhattu Batuwaa" [The Cunning Wanderer] in *Mero Nepali* of Class three, the cunning behaviour of a wanderer is portrayed. No need to say, it is the story of tricks and cleverness. As the story is understood, the wanderer is cunning and should not be forgiven because he deceives the naive and complacent farmer couples who living their lives with hard work and toils. In the story, the farmer is fed up with sedentary habit of one his oxen, and is totally dissatisfied. Meanwhile a traveler comes to aid the farmer. He asks the farmer to paint the ox white with white clay. Expectedly, the farmer wants to extend his gratitude by asking him to drink a curd in his house. However, the person at home does not ask for curd only but also money. After a deceptive confirmation, the wife pays him five thousands rupees (96-100). As the story proceeds, the learners are

expected to make a characteristics distinction between the farmer couple and the wanderer, moreover, are expected to outpour their sympathy for the couple and a kind of dislike for the cunning person.

An analogy can be drawn from the story to look at the modern society of the nation. The story indirectly dictates lessons at least in two ways. Firstly, it is unethical to deceive to someone without a cause, as emotions of pity and sympathy are evoked in the mind of children. Secondly, one should be very careful about such trickster and thugs. It is fun way of learning things. Allegorically, the students are expected to deploy such lessons in their daily lives and be a good citizen for the society.

The textbooks are rife with such lessons; the number is fairly higher in the language reader textbooks, to name another, "Baandar and Gohi" [Monkey and Crocodile]. The story narrates the importance of honesty, oppositely, drawbacks of deceptions. The Crocodile wants to deceive the monkey as it thinks that monkey has been eating a varieties of fruits around the jungle and tempted to taste his hearts. For crocodile thinks, his heart must be delicious. The crocodile invites the monkey to take a tour of other side of the river. Pleased monkey agreed to the proposition. However, after reaching at the middle of the river, crocodile manifested his wicked desire: eating his heart. Clever monkey intuitively confessed that he left his heart and liver in the tree he lives. Then, crocodile, foolish enough and greedy, had to return monkey to its abode place. Then, monkey speaks a sentence, "If deceive in this way, no one will befriend you (76) *my trans.*)." Similarly, the story "Anautho Pariksha" (24-26) [Strange Test, *my trans.*] in the same book offers an explanation of honesty and faithfulness. It is about a kind of ordeal the preceptor wants to teach to his disciples. The guru states that he can no longer work; as he has taught them for long time, it is time for them to redeem the debt. He wants them to feed him then after; all of them

are ready but they do not have a slightest idea how to do it. In order to check out their learning, he suggests them to rob wealthy persons. All of them agree to the proposal but one. The disciple argues that he cannot do so because he cannot deceive his heart and the god. Even if no one can see the act of robbery but the god or his heart. Then, the guru considers him the right disciple. It delineates the common theme of respect, honesty and faithfulness.

The story "Thulay and Sanay" (39-42) in *Hamro Nepali Kitab Class Six* locates the common themes of mutual help and cooperation between and among the common ties. The ethos of sincerity is key to sustain relationship. They have a buffalo called *Moti* which poses a problem in their property allocation. However, the *Mukhiya* decides solves the issue by proposing that they would take care of the buffalo in mutual cooperation: Sanay chose the front side, and rest Thulay. Sanay cut grass and fed *Moti* well but Thulay as he chose the back enjoyed the milk without contributing any labour. This could not go for long. Sanay stopped looking after *Moti*. Divided in terms of property, Thulay and Sanay comes to compromise when Thulay does not see any possibility for the better except accepting Sanay. Thulay also remembers the message – live with a mutual cooperation and support, his father left when he was passed away. Thulay though afflicted from narrow-mindedness and cunningness, finally compromises, and agrees to live together. There is no option, so they should be ready to go along with unfailing spirit despite enmity.

The allegorical story "Duhure Musa and Seto Biralo" (56-60) prescribed in *Hamro Nepali Class Six* examines two seminal themes of civic learning: first, the lesson about unity, and the lesson about revolution when atrocities go beyond the endurance. The story is about rats and a white cat, living in same locality, around the periphery of Janata School. As the members of rat family begin to decline, an

experienced old rat has a doubt; his doubt is corroborated by a younger one. The set out for the search of white cat with the slogan the unity is power. But the white cat is so clever that he disguises himself as both white and black alternatively. He confuses the band of rats one time being white and blaming the black. Meanwhile, when they reach to the black, he blames the white. However, he is arrested of his fraud of disguise. Allegorically, it suggests the wickedness is caught anyway, and domination and cruelty lasts no longer. Further, it also alerts the students about the black lie of white cat (in Nepali, *seto biralo ko kaalo chaalaa*). This story makes it clear that the right way is always rewarded and the wrong way is punished. The cat is white in colour but black in its nature, character and habits, the virtues offensive and should be discarded.

Different forms of propriety: moral, economic, relation, work, honour, have been aimed to be inculcated in the minds of the young. Moreover, at the large scale, such values are aimed to be promoted as the ethos of national loyalty and honesty, serving the nation morally. Efforts have been made to promote these values as the defining features of being Nepali, only true citizen of Nepali. The politics of textbooks can be drawn: the bifurcation of values between to be a good citizen and a citizen. The nationality at the individual level is identified and recognized on the basis of virtues and vices that any individual succumbs to. The children at school level are taught those values that confirm them to be the citizens of the nation. This educational moral boosting is tied to the national politics of educating the children to serve the nation. However this idea contends with the changed view of nationality or the what it means to be a Nepalese.

The idea of nationality is not fixed but dynamic and keeps evolving with every cataclysmic political event in the neighborhood. The idea of cultural Nepal can

continue to exist even when there is no country called Nepal on the map of the world. However, the meaning of being a “Nepali” has to be understood in the context of a country called Nepal. That is why it would be more appropriate to identify the national characteristics of the people of country called Nepal as being Nepaliness rather than Nepalipan. (Lal "To be a Nepalese" 30-35).

Political Socialization: Democratic Education or Educating Democracy?

The process of education begins with the textbooks. They are the ways to materialize the curriculum's goals and the measure the national standard by the government and the public. Marks, grades, and divisions get the social currency and there is always the least effort for the critical understanding. The analysis of the textbooks suggests ideological imprints of the existing society in them. Being the cultural product, the textbooks *con-tain* the different opinions, ideas value as we have already mentioned as the fundamental aspects of the overall education system. On the one hand the textbooks claim to be neutral, objective, realistic, impartial, and guided to instill the sense of unity, equality, justice, and harmony. On the other hand, contradictory values regarding notion of nationalism, civic learning, and all the way about history of nation are attempted to transplant. One of the dominant values well and wide spread in the textbooks is that of democracy. This chapter will concentrate on exploring the values of democracies and orientation of students toward those values. It primarily concerns with interpretation and analysis of those texts that try to instill to internalize democracy in official way. I am concerned more about the ideological orientation and reveal its mechanism to the effects. My concern lies on explicating the how democracy is taught, or for the matter, how young minds are trained to learn democracy, rather than cultivating a democracy. Not to be confused, my attempts shall not defend or criticize the political system, democracy.

Despite the social and political eccentricities whether Nepali society is democratic or not, since 2007 B.S. Nepali society has been deemed as democratic society, and the governance since then is every busy to cultivate democratic sense and values in its citizens. On the surface, the current existing system speaks for political neutrality and social equality for all social class and people of diverse regions.

Similarly, it is also underlain that equality and cooperation, lower class concerns, critical understandings about evils of consumption etc. are keys to any democratic society. However, if critical eyes peer into the deeper level of texts, there are certain recurring themes that design some important cultural values. The democratic values are endorsed and affected by different components of cultural constellation.

One of the common problems faced by new as well as established democracies all over the world is political apathy and low levels of participation among the young generation in political affairs (Taru 19). However, this is a recent phenomenon to observe in our nation. Young people usually show little interest in social-political topics; also, casting a ballot is a more common among older people. Normally, people tend to become politically more aware and active when they grow older. In the case of disrupted democracies such as in Nepal, the situation is, however, more critical: the prospects of an evolving civic nation and participatory democracy in the society is not very promising, when a large part of the young generation displays passivity and the lack of interest in any political matters. This psychology has been seen underway in designation of school textbooks. The reading of some individual lessons digs out the prevalence of this motto of the entire education system.

The role of civic education curricula and textbooks is to prepare pupils for participation in a civic society. Civics textbooks should teach the principles of *critical citizenship* (Puolimatka, 1995; Schwoch, White & Reilly, 1992) and set models for active civic and political participation. This means that instead of a detailed coverage of particular topics such as 'The State', 'The Law', 'The Government', etc., the emphasis of civic education should be on teaching skills needed for intelligent choice-

making, problem-solving, and critical thinking, reading and writing. Moreover, civic education should encourage pupils to stand up for their rights and engage in various forms of civic and political action (e.g., peaceful protest, writing a letter to the editor, joining a political party, etc.)

In study of Social Studies texts of primary and lower secondary level, it can be noticed that the principal civic actions are discussed. And the civic virtues of civilized citizens such as sympathy, mutual cooperation, help to differently able people, while lower secondary texts work as a kind of transition from a pure moral civic lessons to political democratic civic duties, primarily taken into account in secondary level textbooks. Much discussed democratic virtue is voting, and that the texts promoted passive compliance and 'safe' political behaviours. After the study of such texts books, two encouraging differences are to be reported: first, the textbooks depict civic participation as a variety of political and social acts, and second, pupils are encouraged to see themselves as active participants in their communities now, rather than just as adults in the future. Nevertheless, the textbooks tend to support the status quo in the society. Perceived in this way, the current education system projects the role of school textbooks as a viable means of political socialisation, however, not in promoting an active and critical citizenship. More concretely, less education takes place than instruction.

In gist, a distinction needs to be made between *education* and indoctrination. To borrow Chomsky on this view, he distinguishes sharply "education" – the process of drawing out something latent in a human mind or helping it "flourish" from "instruction" or "indoctrination"– the process of pouring some concoction into a human mind as one may pour a liquid into a vessel, although the terms education/instruction are not often contrasted in this way²¹.

The exigency for me to evoke Chomskian view is that there are some texts in the school books which directly instructs, or strictly speaking, indoctrinates some values and formulae about civic learning of democracy. The text "Prajaatantrik Vyavasthaa" (34-35) (Democratic System, *my trans.*) in *Our Social Studies Grade Seven*, gives a short introduction to this political system in an epistolary form, a brother sends a letter to his sister, who is curious to know about democracy. The explanation involves its etymological Greek meaning, and the famous definition of American President, Abraham Lincoln— government of people, for the people, by the people. The author also takes pain to describe it as a system regulated by the representative system which also takes people's participation in account to a great extent. The text also controversially projects some of the demerits of democracy, such as, it lists, "the majority dominates the minority; the literature, science, and art is criticized, and the political parties' interests are more prioritized" (35 *my trans.*). At this, one may feel a little uneasy with this apparently idealized view of democracy, preoccupied as in this country with the countless distortions to which democratic governance and politics have proved vulnerable. The description sounds the utopian society, the Marxists envisaged long ago. This utopian thinking on democracy may look somewhat ahistoric in the current context of the country as it engages with increasingly blatantly forms of ideal democratic governance giving utmost precedence to the freedom of personal rights, individuality, free speaking, personal freedom, and of course, in the name of fighting terrorism. By and large, the lesson aims to impart moral inspiration to reconstruct society and maintain its order.

At the point, Dewey's formulation on the connection of education and democracy seems important. Education is a social function, securing direction and development in the immature through their participation in the life of the group to

which they belong. In effect that education will vary with the quality of life which prevails in a group. He further says, "Particularly it is true that a society which not only changes but which has the ideal of such change as will improve it, will have different standards and methods of education from on which aims simply at the perpetuation of its own customs (Dewey *DE* 87)."

The recurrent topics of units: "Aapasi Sahyog", (Mutual Help) "Asal Vyavahar (Good Behavior) ", "Saamaajik Niyamko Palanaa" (Obeying Social Laws), "Nagarik Kartabya" (Civic Duty/Responsibility), "Nagarik Adhikaar" (Civic Rights) "Ek Arkaalai Bujhau" (Understanding Other) in *Social Studies* aim at establishing democratic virtues of creating ideal citizens. The qualities which accompany these units, praiseworthy communities of purpose and welfare, loyalty to public ends, mutuality of sympathy, are emphasized. These values are made to understand with both eulogistic or normative and descriptive sense. In existing social order, the normative sense of the values always seems to work out. The social philosophy, here, how societies and its citizens should be formed is in commensurate with the political and cultural order.

The major problem lies not on emphasizing the democratic values, but on understanding the society. The texts in the book feature Nepali societies homogeneous, which is not very true. According to Dewey, " Society is one word, but many things. Men associate together in all kinds of ways and for all kinds of purposes. One man is concerned in a multitude of diverse groups, in which his associates may be quite different. It often seems as if they had nothing in common except that they are modes of associated life" (*Dewey Education and Democracy* 99-100). He further says, within every larger social organization there are numerous minor groups: not only political subdivisions but industrial, scientific, religious,

associations. There are political parties with differing aims, social sets, cliques, gangs, corporations, partnerships, groups bound closely together by ties of blood, and so on in endless variety. In many modern states and in some ancient, there is great diversity of populations, of varying languages, religions, moral codes, and traditions.

The tragedy with the teaching learning practice as it is reflected in the exercises is that it does not embody a democratic practices of teaching different difficult concepts of political socialization. Instead, it involves a thorough repetition and memorization of the democratic values, which adds no practical knowledge in the student's behavior when they grow up as citizens. Some of the representative exercises that demand students to answer are given bellow:

1. Sabaile yek yek ota raashtriya jhanda banaau. Raashtriyata jhalkine geet sangkalan gari kakshaamaa saamuhik rupmaa gaau. geet gaaundaa sabaile geetko taalmaa raashtriya jhanda hallaau. (Everyone, make a national flag. And collect the songs that reflect nationality of the nation. While singing the songs, flap the flag with the rhythms and beats of the songs.)
2. Desh Bikaashmaa ratriya swarthlaai sarwopari thaani sabai dal milera aghi badhnu parchha. Yas bhanailaai pushti gara. (Making the national interest the most prominent of all, all the political parties must go ahead together. Justify the statement.) (*Social Studies and Populaion Education Class Six 57-59*)
3. Prepare a poster related to Democracy Day. (*Social Studies Class Ten 57 my trans.*)
4. "Interim Constitution 2063BS of Nepal was a agreed manifesto." Justify this (*Social Studies Class Nine 117 my trans.*)

5. What are the characteristics of good governance? Make a list of them.

(Social Studies Class Nine 65 my trans.)

It's easy to see democratic values is often portrayed as something of a Cinderella subject in primary schools, and taught like the story is told. It is taught like something as non-statutory, mythopoetic, imaginative, and fabulous content. Explaining complex and potentially controversial concepts of democratic values to young children can be a daunting prospect.

As the aforementioned exercises reflects, while teaching complicated concepts like rights and obligation, bodies of Executive and Judiciary, participation of students is rarely imagined. Moreover, the students come from diverse and wide areas of locality, the singular method of *preaching* seems highly probable. Despite this, good practice examples prove that there's a way to provide effective citizenship teaching and make terms such as democracy, diversity and participation relevant to young people's lives.

Giving children first-hand experience of concepts, such as democracy, has also proved an effective tool, such as involving children in the small levels of decision-making that affects their immediate lives. Alongside learning about rights, the school also emphasizes children's responsibilities. In the textbooks, teaching about the process of formation of constitutional and state bodies, their works, recitations of rights outweighs the democratic values such of decision making, respecting opposite voices is lesser practiced and taught (Morrison para. 8 and 9.). Good citizenship teaching gives children a voice and creates a climate in the school where pupils can talk about issues. Pupils should be encouraged to play an active role in the life of both the school and their community, including taking part in campaigns.

Textbooks or Law Books?

A closer observation of the content reveals that the social texts books resemble civics textbooks in a number of aspects. In terms of coverage, the priority is given to various types of political systems and issues, for example, the types of government, political duties of the citizens. The principal civic activities are taking part in elections (mainly voting) in secondary level textbook, and obeying laws and rules in the primary and lower grade textbook. Moreover, the texts books insist also more on patriotic acts such as hoisting the national flag, more noticeably in the primary level textbooks. Improving society in general terms is somewhat ambivalent: in the ninth grade textbook this activity is political rather than civic; primary level such as in the fourth grade textbook, it is vice versa.

An encouraging finding to mention is the representation of important civic activities such as expressing one's point of view (e.g., writing a letter to the editor), engaging the interest in group activities), educating oneself as a citizen (learning about social problems, parties, etc.), participating in civic society (non-governmental organizations, popular movements), The secondary level textbooks contain some explicit positive evaluations of participating in civic society and lobbying; also, interest and pressure group activities are relatively salient in the textbooks. Active civic behaviors are, however, oddly underrepresented compared with some passive, obedient behaviours, and political-administrative activities. Critical reading social issues or political issues are not emphasized, however. A reasonable resistance to authority is rarely encouraged in any school textbooks.

The text entitled "Nagrikko Parichaya" in *Our Social Studies and Population Education Grade Six*, takes into account the "general" definition of what means to be a citizen, and his/her role in nation building project in an epistolary form. The brother,

Dipesh, the sender, tries to *instruct* his sister about it. Paradoxically explained, a citizen needs to be healthy, morale, *not* lazy, and educated (48 *my trans.*). The individual needs to be selfless and has to give all the personal vested interests for the sake of nation building, he/she is supposed to be concerned with the preservation of public properties and assets. He also characteristically distinguishes between the resident and the citizen. To be a citizen, one has to get the citizenship, and the nation gives some criteria to be so; any person can be a resident but he/she cannot claim, as the citizens can, regarding facilities and services.

Pursuant to this, in a similar text, "Nagarik Kartavya" (Civic Duties), civic duties, moral duties, social and familial duties and legal duties, have arguably been defined and used interchangeably. The interesting thing to be reported is, the text, which is in conversational form, does not purposely deal with the topic, what is a civic duty, ends with defining legal duties, of the citizens. Interestingly, under legal duties, it includes the duties such as taxpaying, voting rights, obeying the law, serving the nation, anti-corruption spirit, rising in favor of what is truth and reality.

The predominant role model set for the readers of these textbooks is, however, that of a passive citizen (or voter) obedient to the rule of laws and institutions. The textbooks seldom comment on the dominant social order and tend to support the status quo by simply describing it. The texts present few opportunities for critical reflection, for gaining insight into social problems, or for the discussion of controversial issues. Similarly, the civics textbooks are too dogmatic, politicised or ideological depicting the Nepali society with ideal color while problems and conflicts are missing from the textbooks. There is a little space for critical questioning. The exercises after the texts are very naive and straightforward which demand nothing

critical and creative except a direct and easy quotation from reading lesson. Here goes an example of such exercise:

- Nepalko sambidhan anusaar Rastra ra Rashtriyatako paribhasha paanabhari thula aksharle lekher pradarshan gara. Jasako aakarshak ra raamro hunchha tyaslaai bhitte patrikaamaa taansa. (Write the definition of state and nationality in a bold letters covering the whole page, and exhibit it. And stitch the definition which is best and attractive.
- Rashtriyata rakshaa garne upaayako suchi banau? (Make list of the ways to save the nationality.)
- Haamile kina rastriya hitmaa kaam garnu parchha (Why must we work for national interest?)

These exercises have been mentioned and asked students of class six to perform after they are introduced with the concepts of nation and nationality. Cursorily, these kinds of exercises do not aim at sprouting any kind of creativity and critical thinking on the part of the readers, for they only demand some superficial and mundane kinds of attempts from the learners but a simple iteration and reiteration of the knowledge given to them by the teachers through the books. The problem is more stark and damaging in lower grades' exercises. Critical pedagogic insights are too dim on these occasions. Hence the students are unlikely to be citizens and students who become sensitive to the politics of representations of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, class, and other cultural differences in order to foster critical thinking and enhance democratization and pave the course of healthy democracy. Aim of education to make viewers and readers more critical and discriminating readers and producers of texts. sound a long way to go.

The urge the critical reading of these texts perceive is to promote the concept of "obedient but critical citizen-to-be". The learners in these texts too much hegemonized by the official knowledge created upon them and imposed upon them. Civic education textbook plays some role in informing the readers about possibilities for civic participation only. They never seem to be encouraging to question and critique if the participation is worth participating. The role of the textbook in forming the pupils' ideas and attitudes is more modest.

In conclusion, for most of the pupils, the civics textbook serves as an additional source of political knowledge. In the construction of pupils' political views and values, other agents of political socialisation (primarily the school and the teachers) and immediate experience play a more important role. This, however, does not imply that textbooks should neither contain more examples of active civic participation, nor offer more possibilities for critical thinking.

An ideal society cannot be set with a mere fabric of imagination and disregarding the existing social reality. But, as just has been seen, the ideal cannot simply repeat the traits which are actually found. The problem is to extract the desirable traits of forms of community life which actually exist, and employ them to criticize undesirable features and suggest improvement.

Hence, the education such a society gives is partial and distorted. The broader knowledge, social values and skills necessary for creating substantive democratic participation increasingly seem at odds with the pedagogical happenings that were discovered throughout this research. Presumably, schools currently function as a major mechanism for the development of the democratic and egalitarian social order by challenging the dominant ideology and social order. Education can work as an

interventionist mechanism against the social order that tries to keep status quo intact. However, achievement of the democratic order and concept of equal social order is rarely possible by suppressing the critical aspect of the students, not encouraging them to read the gaps and fissures but provoking them to embrace whatever taught and give is decent and required.

At this point, what radical educational theorists have argued is worth mentioning. The schools and existing school curriculum do not provide opportunities for self- and social empowerment. In short, there are many interests consciously communicated and shared; and there are varied and free points of contact with other modes of association. In the larger social context, the radical educationists' criticism of the dominant discourse is progressive and revolutionary because their contention for power with the dominant discourse is stimulated by social change and is motivated by their vision for more democratic and equal society (Gale 3).

Chapter Five: A Call for Better Imagination of Future Citizenry

Education is considered panacea for all the complex and intricate social evils and problems, as it is claimed to be emancipating the individuals, the learners, from ignorance and obscurantism, through evangelical mission of making the learners conscious and enlightened. With this fervent mission, the children are taught and prepare for better future. For example, Nepali curriculum substantiates National objective of education as to bring out "personal genius" and "personality", to respect to the socio-cultural heritage and legacy , teach skills necessary for national and international market, prepare as sound and conscientious citizen, who can work for social unity, be alert to human right and democracy and develop the values and behaviour and of social equality and justice for the information of inclusive society (9). A close reading, however, suggests this goal is tainted by the project of molding the young children of particular kind future citizens: obedient but not critical. Education ends up as a political discourse.

A reason to take Nepali education as political discourse or cultural production is that it supports a particular social-economic and political order to a large extent rather than liberating the students from ignorance, oppressions and exploitations of the dominant ideas and practices. The overall system is effective to produce the intellectuals and manpower largely to run the historical-economic system. The research, however, suggests the school textbooks cannot be value neutral. The problem arises when it becomes a project to exercise the official knowledge. For they mean to teach, impart ideas, knowledge, and information shaped by the current social and political order. In that, the textbooks try to shape the minds of children with particular form of knowledge, for example, about the nation, nationalism, history and other values of propriety, honesty, help and so on. Though the textbooks should abide

by curriculum and other mechanism and technicalities, they are free to choose the contents and lessons within the given system. However, the selection, this research deems, is exclusive in that the selection prioritizes certain kinds discourse upon other. For it envisions a particular kind of citizen. After all the textbooks are cultural produce, unlikely to be detached from their historicity and the historicity of their creator. School curriculum of government of Nepal does not explicitly profess any class bias, ideological role in cultivating the innocent minds in order to prepare them for their future, and, of course, for nation, is conceivable.

First, the traditional ways of glorifying nation as great, complete, harmonious has not been changed though so many socio-political, historical, and cultural changes took place, especially after 2046BS. Now, in the changed contexts, the nation is important for every citizen but it is important for everyone quite differently. For example, nation is epitomized as mother having diverse children. Contradictorily, the mother can be same but the feeling of mother's lap can be different. Sometimes, for example, the textbooks even long for the harmony and unity that Panchyat system propagated, which was never there. Even a cursory glance over the school level textbooks gives that fact that there are heterogeneity and conflicting values and ethic. But one finds them presented in the hegemonic way that puts the congenial pictures at the front and rival ideas and values at the back.

Putting rival ideas/ambivalence at the back more manifest in depiction of history and representation of historical information. *Bir itihās* has been pedestal to raise the nationalistic commitment in students. However, what undercuts the official knowledge of history is modified, distorted, and sometimes even not mentioned. Then history has merely remained a domain for artificial knowledge. The urge is to revision the historical knowledge if history is considered a process of acquiring cultural

knowledge from the perspective of an interpretation of the world supported by knowledge. Originally a narrative of the history of the discipline and advancements, the history of science today should view itself as a history of the development of cultures of knowledge. The history of knowledge today should not just inquire after content and people but also after institutions, facilitation processes, forms of application, and social contexts and effects of taught and scientific knowledge.

Finally, because, as John Dewey contended, “[d]emocracy has to be born anew every generation, and education is its midwife,” the quality of civic education has been a concern of those interested in the health of our system of government and the well-being of the citizenry (Dewey *School and Society* 15). For much of the nation’s history, the education system views civics education as a means of realizing the country’s democratic ideals. The government relies upon government schools as a principal purveyor of deeply cherished democratic values. So interconnected are education and citizenship and civic education is essential to sustain our constitutional democracy is thoroughly realized. However, for the sake of sustaining democracy, the school texts, as the analysis shows, try to implant a kind of monumental ideas of civic education to support the inherited rituals such as being always true to salt, not questioning the authority, praying, and being obedient to many reincarnations of organizational and institutional gods. Of course, there is no more important task than the development of an informed, effective, and responsible citizenry. Democracies are sustained by citizens who have the requisite knowledge, skills, and dispositions. Absence of a reasoned commitment on the part of its citizens to the fundamental

values and principles of democracy, a free and open society cannot succeed. It is imperative, therefore, that educators, policymakers, and members of civil society make the case and ask for the support of civic education from all segments of society and from the widest range of institutions and governments.

The textbooks materialize the curriculum. This connection between the curriculum and textbooks and ideological motifs of the nation is executed through pedagogical operation: teachers teach, interpret them, and ask students the questions, make them homework and evaluate their achievement. This systemic academic practice, during this long process, certainly leaves an imprint instilling different responses regarding to the contents in the texts. However, the aim of educating the learners is not catered properly. According, Chaitanya Mishra, the whole education system did not promote students to be "doers" but the lame "receivers." Education was made not to go for curiosity, inquisitiveness, criticality, and invention, but mingled with the established system and status quo (Mishra 165).

The school systems did not encourage the criticism but was prone to worship the power and authority instead of charging some innovation and change, it remained static and conventional. The objectives of education is to encourage the fact that the roots of democratic virtues lie on the equal rights of citizens and create a new society, and challenge to current existing education system of Nepal. Therefore, the education should play an important role to set a foundation of connection between new society and other relationships of the state.

However, the pedagogical and intentional goal of the school education which aims at producing the moral and disciplined workers and intellectuals for the market is not ideologically free as it claims. For one simple reason, it is massively affected by

global system, the present capitalist system by means of both practice (rituals) and the ideas, and values (discourse). My research attempted to put forward the argument to show how the education system is committed to this "political" end. By political, I do not mean, politics as such, but the motivation and the national desire to produce "desired" citizenship.

The present study was just a tiny attempt to look at if there was any ideological problem in present Nepali education system. Textbooks of public schools and the implementation in the practice and college and universities education system should now be part of scrutiny to analyze the ideological aspects. Furthermore, one can rethink about the textbooks destinations and publication in the market, to make them more interactive, critical, integrative, assimilative, debatable, and incorporative to different demands, problems and realities of different classes, caste and ethnicities, and gender that can ensure democracy and social inclusiveness to create a better society with the justice and equality in a true sense I can only hope this study has furnished tiny insights in the limited sense. However, in the research I never meant that school education is completely irrelevant. In fact, evaluation of the school education system was not even my project. The existing education system by and large has been effective more to sustain the a particular kind of knowledge, and less concerned in evoking the criticality and inculcating the questioning attitude in the minds of children. The textbooks are only the part of the problems though they are significant. The onus lies for importantly in the overall system. All the cultural systems function with and through ideas and prejudice – knowledge and performance. Looking in a dialectical way is an important part now. If we do not, we are prone to commit another ideological fallacy. The present education system has failed to bring

together our socio-economic context and cultural reproduction, human life and the world, body and its labor, individuals and the society, specialized subjects and necessity of the holistic understanding of the reality.

But again our primary hopes lies in education. It can work to liberate us. Globally, following types of political learning have been significant during the last three decades: political literacy, global education, and citizenship education. In Lister view that these types political literacy being concerned with skills, issues and action appropriate the operation of democratic politics: global education being characterized by affective learning and holistic approaches to world issues; and citizenship education focusing on voluntary service in a society where obligations are perhaps more important than rights (24). Education no doubt should be directed towards the goal that gives maximum benefits to the citizens encouraging them to come out of obscurantism of any kind. When the learners become able to distinguish themselves in society for their identity, there lies the prominent importance of education. Education should be able to liberate them to realize the meaning of life. This research is only a tiny effort to initiate further debate to this end.

Endnotes

¹ Introduced by Oxford philosopher J. L. Austin in *How to Do Things With Words* (1962) and further developed by American philosopher J.R. Searle, "Felicity Conditions" are conventions that speakers and addressees use as a code to produce and recognize actions. Speakers use the felicity conditions for actions as a device for encoding their actions into sentences with a particular linguistic structure that speakers then utter (i.e. they produce the appropriate utterance unit). Hearers, in turn, use the same set of felicity conditions for actions as a device for decoding the speaker's actions from the linguistic structure of the sentences the speaker produced.

² See Siegfried Jäger "Discourse and Knowledge: Theoretical and Methodological Aspects of a Critical Discourse and Dispositive Analysis", the essay is translated from German manuscript by Iris Bungler and Robert Tonks. Criticizing Foucault's notion of discourse and power and intends to materialize the concept how discourses are used to produce action, and they are not *only* the verbal composition. There are channels which actualize the discourses to elicit desired actions and shape societal knowledge.

³ See Torney-Purta, Judith and John Schwille. "Civic Values Learned in School: Policy and Practice in Industrialized Nations." *Comparative Education Review*. 30 (1) (Feb., 1986): pp. 30-49:

⁴ Unless otherwise noted and referenced, all translations for original Nepali texts, more importantly, the texts on which the analysis is based on, are mine. In the transliteration of Nepali words, I have not tried to create them as an equivalence to English pronunciation. Instead, I have translated them tentatively so as to make the reading convenience. Specific words have romanized whose literal meaning has been given in the glossary section of this study.

⁵ See Apple, Michael W. *Ideology and Curriculum*. London: Psychology Press, 1990. *Apple's Official Knowledge: Democratic Education in a Conservative Age*. London: Routledge, 1993

⁶ For the idea of Educational Imagination, see Eliot E. Eisner's books: *The Politics of Textbooks*; David Haplin's *Hope and Education: The Role of Utopian Imagination*; Karen E. Bohline's *Teaching Character Education through Literature*; Bruce Fuller, Margaret Bridges and Seeta Pai's *Standardized Childhood: The Political and Cultural struggle over Early Education*.

⁷ By this time, constitution of Nepal has been written after the dissolution of monarchical system, and Constituent Assembly has been formed twice; it is yet to formulate the law of nation. All the constitutional actions are formed under the provision of Interim Constitution-2063 B.S. Therefore, any reference made about constitution will refer to the Interim Constitution.

⁸ See Martha Nussbaum, *Cultivating Humanity: A Classical Defense of Reform in Liberal Education*, 1998, the essay by the same writer "Education for Profit, Education for Freedom", and also see Freeland, Richard M. "Liberal Education and Effective Practice: The Necessary Revolution in Undergraduate Education" in *Liberal Education*. (Association of American Colleges and Universities) 95.1 (Winter 2009): 6–13. Association of American Colleges and Universities

⁹ The East Asian Renaissance which is unfolding is also marked by the accelerated absorption of knowledge (from America and Europe), a focus on living well, and quicker dissemination of ideas due to the computer, the general purpose technology that rivals the printing press. The lesson from European history is that for a renaissance to qualify as a golden age, these changes have to be accompanied by greater social cohesion. See *An East Asian Renaissance: Ideas for Economic Growth* by Indermit Gill and Homi Kharas, published by The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development / The World Bank and The Institute of Policy Studies, 2006.

¹⁰ Indian-born postcolonial theorist Partha Chatterjee, is the most vocal critic on the idea of nationalism put forward by Anderson; he rejected Anderson's representation of nationalism as the creation of creole pioneers and argued that nationalism was an ideology imposed by the colonizing power such that "even our imaginations must forever remain colonized." See Chatterjee, Partha. *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse*. Zed Books, 1986.

¹¹ First used by Prithvi Narayan Shah during the phase of expansion/unification, this saying has been translated and understood differently and from different angles too. Sometimes, it is interpreted as slogan of unity while other times as the homogenizing and hegemonizing way. According to the Hindu Varna model developed in *Manusmriti*, there are four Varnas, viz., Brahman, Kshyatriya, Vaishya, and Shudra, and there are many castes within each of these four categories. Prithvi Narayan Shah, instead, chose to specify the situation in terms of four castes and thirty-six Varnas. Some Nepalese historians say informally that the *Dibya Upadesh* was, in fact, not written by the king but by some officials of the Gurkha palace. See also: Bhattachan Krishna B. and Kailashnath Pyakuryal. "The Issue of Nepal Integration: An Ethnic Approach." *Occasional Papers* 2.1 (2006): 16-35.

¹² Nationalism, according to Benedict, Anderson, is a cultural artifact, begot by the individuals and shared by them, even if they live in different geographical locations. See Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Community*.

¹³ The reason behind using both words: unification and expansion, is that some critics of ethnicity and regionalism of Nepal arguably claim that Prithvi Narayan Shah's attempt was not of unification but expansion of Gorkha state.

¹⁴ I have used the phrase "the Uncomfortable" here to refer to the historical "facts", information, events that are incongruous to the official knowledge about the history. Any unfitting knowledge is relegated.

¹⁵ Here *Jatiya* quality does not mean the meaning that is currently associated with federal agenda of new Nepal. It means the quality of being Nepali *Jaat*, more like what means to be Gorkhali, the brave, robust, enduring, courageous and stiff.

¹⁶ Recently emerged intellectual circle tries to revisit the contribution of Prithvinarayan Shah's contribution. This circle tries to debunk the worshiping and pedestal position given to Prithvinarayan Shah. See Ludwig Stiller, *The Rise of House of Gorkhas*, Ratna Pustak Bhandar: 1993, Rajendra Maharjan "Ma Nakati Kritipur Naak Magdaichhu" *Kantipur Daily*, Magh 19 2071.

¹⁷ It should be noted earlier, while I am talking about mythopoetic expression, neither I am defending nor am I criticizing it in the process of pedagogy. Instead, with the help of literature found on mythopoetic expression of pedagogy I seek to explain the relevance of mythic text in shaping the maneuvering of young children and their conducts.

¹⁸ Though they talk about different types of mythological powers, only moral type of mythological power will be talked throughout this chapter. See *Pedagogies of the Imagination Mythopoetic Curriculum in Educational Practice*. Eds. Timothy Leonard and Peter Willis.

¹⁹ Perhaps the best way to proceed in developing an understanding of what the "mythopoetic" means is to recognize the two separate concepts, myth and poetic, that is joined in the term, and to consider the nature of the implied relationship between them. Thus to begin with myth, the premise put forth by scholars of myth such as Campbell, Cassirer, and Eliade, is that myth is a source of knowledge (see also Garman 1983; Holland 1983). Having acknowledged its epistemological status, the difficulty of describing mythical knowledge, because it differs so radically from the knowledge of science and reason, quickly becomes apparent. Cassirer, for example, admits that Myth is non-theoretical in its very meaning and essence. It defies and challenges our fundamental categories of thought. Its logic—if there is any logic—is incommensurate with all our conceptions of empirical or scientific truth. (Cassirer 1944, 73)

²⁰ In *Ways of Worldmaking*, he develops the thesis that there are multiple worlds, constructed differently according to the categories used by a given observer. In a chapter "words, words and world" he even explains the ways of making worlds through use of style, metaphors and other linguistics stuffs. He goes against the purely objective discourses including scientific theory. See Goodman, Nelson. *Ways of Worldmaking*. Vol. 51. Indiana: Hackett Publishing, 1978.

²¹ See, Corson, David J. (1980). "Chomsky on education." *The Australian Journal of Education* (3): 1980: 176-198. In particular, see Chomsky 1966, 1969, 1994.

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