

## Chapter I

### Introduction

#### Nationality in the Transnational World

This research work based on Hiranya Bhojpure's *America! Oh America!!* and Broughton Coburn's *Nepali Aama* basically attempts to depict how the consciousness concerning nationality resides in the minds of the nationals of a particular nation in this transnational world. In particular, this thesis emphasizes how a sense of nationality remains in the psyche of the immigrants who have been highly affected by the globalization and mobility, and manifests when favorable situation crops up. In this regard, this thesis primarily focuses on the study of the people's mobility from spiritual, rural life to materialistic, urban life world; and examines how the concept of nationality forms, modifies and manifests in varied forms in the behavior of those people living inside and outside Nepal. Thus, this study tries to show how the concept of nationality manifests in the life of rural people especially Vishnu Maya Gurung, popularly known as Nepali Aama, and immigrants like Bhojpure from the perspective of mobility and nationality.

In *America! Oh America!!*, Bhojpure represents himself as a national character who wants to transmit the Nepalese national and cultural values to the people of succeeding generation living in America. When the Bhojpure couple gathered in America with their kith and kin, they intended to sing a national song so as to arouse the sense of nationality in them. They sang a song entitled "*Lahara Pahara Chhaharako Desh and Tyamke Danda* / the country with creepers, rocks and falls and Tyamke Hill" (my trans.19) after the dinner. At

that moment not only the singers but also the audiences forgot America for a while and got assimilated into the Tyamke Hill.

Similar sort of attachment to the nation is portrayed in *Nepali Aama* as well. Vishnu Maya Gurung or Aama expresses that “no matter where I go, I can’t leave home for long. My parents and their parents were born, raised and lived their lives here. Their sweat watered the crops”(2). This expression suggests that Vishnu Maya Gurung is not influenced so noticeably by the modern trend of global migration, and hence wants to live and die in her own native village. Nation can exist where the people have “the desire to live together, the will to perpetuate the value of the heritage that one has received in an undivided form”(Renan 19). Aama also does not want to leave her homeland where her parents were born and lived their lives. She is seen to have nurtured a strong sense of nationality though her life in that village was full of hardships and difficulties.

This research attempts to show that the sense of attachment to the national and cultural values intensifies when one experiences hardships and difficulties in the alien countries. Bhojpure happened to observe the turbulent life experiences of the migrated nationals like Nirmala, Sane, Aashish, etc. in America. Having seen such difficulties, he was impacted so greatly that he urged them to return to Nepal where they could enjoy the dignified human life much better than they have been living in America. In this regard, this text can be regarded as the best text that vividly portrays the problems and discriminations endured by the Nepalese immigrants in the western world, especially in America.

Thus, both these two texts depict the difficulties, hardships and challenges one has to endure in the course of his or her life wherever he or she goes. If one has to endure hardships in life, why not to endure such hardships in the native land? Vishnu Maya Gurung in this text

is presented as a person who does not desire to leave the homeland to escape such difficulties. Similarly, Bhojpure also urges those who have been tolerating the discriminations and exploitations in the foreign land to come back to Nepal. This suggests that if one has to endure the difficulties in his/ her destiny, he or she should bear such difficulties in his or her own native land not in foreign lands.

In this contemporary world, people are often indifferent towards the concept of patriotism, and hence the love for national and cultural values is withering slowly and gradually especially in the mindset of youths. With the wake of multinational companies and their worldwide expansion, most of the people tend to think that the charm of nationality began to decline because the project of multinational companies is underlined by the objective of making the world a miniature society.

Nowadays, the use of new technology has made the communication between the people of different regions easier and faster. This makes people tend to forget what is happening on their doorstep and turns their attention to what is going on thousands of kilometers away. Today's people are more linked to what is distant and alien, and more detached from what is near and familiar. It is all the result of mobility and the trend of globalization due to which the national agenda and culture are often being pushed into shadow. As a result, people have started to mimic foreign cultures at the cost of their own.

However, a sense of nationality intensely appears when one feels to be dislocated in a foreign culture and /or country. In today's global scenario, nationality should be understood in terms of its diverse forms but not in a myopic way as it was understood in the past. One can study how these national values manifest in diverse forms in the behavior of people who are living in different regions of the world. The process of migration itself can often give rise

to the sense of nationality. Sometimes, immigrant people manifest nostalgia for home and home country; as a result, nationalist sense will appear in them strongly.

This research contends that the concept of nationality has not died and does not also die in the days to come. There is an imperishability of a concept “nation” even though the world is transnational. The more the world moves towards globalization, the stronger the sense of nationality becomes. Rather, one can reflect nationality in different forms and appearances in the everyday life experiences. Today, the national values and cultures should be explored in terms of the occasional responses of the people, not on the total way of life. In this regard, nationality is now modified and somehow challenged but it always exists in the minds of those concerned people and manifests when the situation props up.

To dig out such traces of nationality manifested in the behavior of people living in and out of Nepal, I will make a critical analysis of the rural and urban life styles of the characters in the books by deconstructing the parochial concept of nationality. Moreover, the study also aims at showing how the concept of nationality differs from one sort of person to another, from a person living in one sort of geographical and cultural region to a person living in another sort of region.

This study makes significant contribution to unfold the various ways of understanding the nationality and nationalism. At first, this study brings about the issue of nationality in the mobile and global world and tries to study how the traces of nationality emerge in the behavior of those who are living inside and outside Nepal. This study tries to study the everyday behavioral practices of people in which the traces of nationality can be felt. It tries to understand the nationality not in whole but in parts and particles.

*Nepali Aama* and *America! Oh America!!* are appropriate texts for the critical readers to study how cultures have been influenced, and hence affected by the recent trend of mobility and globalization. However, very few critical readings are found on these texts from these perspectives. In *America! Oh America!!* Hiranya Bhojpure portrays himself and some of his characters as unhappy victims in the alien world from where they want to escape but could not. He has also made a vigorous attempt to depict the disintegrated and dislocated condition of the migrated people from Nepal to America. On this backdrop, the nostalgic responses of the characters living in America with excessive hardships are truly and minutely observed in this thesis.

Bhojpure endeavors his best to depict the inner drive of the people living in America especially his own which always reminds them of the nation and national customs and values when they live in the western countries especially in America. Many a time he compares the life style of his relatives and the acquaintances living in America with their previous life in Nepal. Sometimes he is satisfied with what they have been doing in America but most of the times he is shocked by the hardship and difficulties tolerated by them in the foreign world so as to please their bosses just for the survival.

In America, Bhojpure sees that almost all characters are driven implicitly by the inner Nepalese cultural values and instincts though outwardly they are seen running after money and property. So, when they meet any person from Nepal, they become more sentimental and sharing rather than just rational and individual as American society prompts them to do. So, this research endeavors to expose the devotion to the national and cultural values manifested in the diverse forms in the behavior of those migrated nationals.

Nepal, in the past, was not noticeably affected by the colonial and western tendencies. Nepalese used to carry out their livelihood on their own devoid of any imitation of the outsiders. Referring to the local rural lifestyle of Nepali woman Barbara Nimri Aziz reviews *Nepali Aama* that “if a woman does not pierce her ears, she will become deaf! It makes us wonder how far beyond colonial anecdotes we have progressed” (128). However, nowadays people have become more detached from their own cultures and attached to the alien cultures and customs due to the impact of globalization.

Globalization now has made the world a miniature society where the peoples from different regions of the world meet one another and try to adjust in the foreign milieu. However, when the sentiments of nation and nationality appear in them, they become somehow exclusive in order to create their own imagined community which is expected to be limited and specific. Regarding the imagined community, Benedict Anderson views, “The nation is imagined as limited because even the largest of them, encompassing perhaps a billion living human beings, has finite . . . boundaries” (viii). The people, wherever they live, want to create their own group which has common human, cultural, and national values. Based on such commonality they want to assert their identity in the foreign world.

Anderson further views that "nationalism is not the awakening of nations to self – consciousness: it invents nations where they do not exist"(vii). This statement points the fact that the nation can exist in any place where the human beings share the same socio- cultural sentiments. In the similar mode, B. P. Koirala also adds that "a nation is not some geographical entity; it is a place which is loved and liked by the people"(289). Therefore, it can be averred that nationality can manifest in diverse forms in the activities of people living all over the world but it does not perish easily from the mind of those migrated nationals.

Thus, the concept of nationality resides somewhere in the psyche of the people. Regarding the psychic residue of nationality, Partha Chatterjee cautions that “the greater one gets success in imitating western skills in the material domain, the greater the need is to preserve the distinctness of one's spiritual culture”(27). It is the inner domain of a person that urges the cultural and national identity to him or her. However, the concept of nationality and humanity embodied by a foreigner has rarely obtained the prestigious status in alien world or territory.

The people advocating territorialism are more concerned with capitals and profit making business than the issues of humanity and nationality. The “. . . powerful people in richer places use their increasing command of the world’s wealth to acquire more assets, not only with money but also with force and with knowledge” (Ludden 1066). The stronger the capitalism, the weaker the nationalism becomes, but it does not disappear totally. It remains dormant in the mind of the people and reveals in the behavioral practices of the people when the favorable situation triggers their mind.

Despite all these facts, why the generations after generations have moved and resettled over centuries in urban and richer places? Why have millions become foreigners in the national territories? The answer is simple because all human beings desire the affluent life with economic and academic strength. People want to have a good social life and “. . . social mobility typically leads people from poorer to richer place, on routes from village and town to the city” (Ludden 1065). Mobility elides border and transforms territory intra-nationally and internationally. Mobility has made whole regions and countries immigrant homelands because of their desire of having a prosperous life in the city.

Therefore, on this backdrop, nowadays the concept of nationality has somehow changed and such nationality focuses on the people's sentiments and attachment in nation formation rather than the rivers, mountains and/ or border. The modern nation- state in this view grows less out of natural fact – such as language, blood, soil, and race – and more out of a quintessential cultural product, a product of the collective imagination (Appadurai 161). The nationality as such can exist outside the particular periphery or territory of a specified nation state. In this regard, these two texts can be the good sources in order to show the traces of nationality in the behavior of the globally mobilized people.

The western leaders and political analysts have declared the birth of nationalism on the rise of capitalism and the collapse of the communism especially in the United States of Soviet Russia. When there was a formal demise of the communism, the western thinkers basically the capitalists had another fear of the resurgence of the nationalism in the different parts of the world in a sense that nationalism would weaken or threaten the world peace. It expanded its existence along with the wake of area studies in the western academia. Regarding the nationality Chatterjee views that "whether of the good variety or the bad, nationalism was entirely a product of the political history of Europe" (24). He further views that nationalism is Europe's one of the magnificent gifts to rest of the world. Non west received it greatly and developed its own form of nationality to hit it back.

But now the west itself does not entertain the concept of nationality as such and is found to view ". . . nationalism as dark, elemental, unpredictable force of primordial nature threatening the orderly calm of civilized life"(Chatterjee 24). It has become one of the products of third world citizens and thinkers which the westerners dislike but can do nothing



against the nationalistic sentiments of the third world people. As per the rapid development of capitalism, the agenda of nationality has fallen in shadow in western countries.

The western nationalists like Anderson assert that the west developed some models about nationality and spread them to the east via print capitalism. The westerners created some "set of modular forms from which nationalist elites in Asia and Africa had chosen the ones they liked" (Chatterjee 24). But the non western nationalist thinkers did not follow the western models rather they developed their own models of nationality. "The most powerful as well as the most creative results of the nationalist imagination in Asia and Africa are posited not on an identity but rather on a difference with the modular forms of the national society propagated by the modern west" (Chatterjee 24). The concept of nationalism as developed and purportedly spread by the western thinkers to the rest of the world is, thus, seen to have functioned ineffectively in the non- western nationals.

On these backdrops, these two texts *Nepali Aama and America! Oh America!!* can also be interpreted from the perspectives of nationality in relation to mobility. However, these texts are not found to have been studied from these perspectives by the earlier reviewers and critics. Though there were some critics and reviewers to study these texts, they have missed the issue of nationality. Therefore, I am trying to study those everyday behavioral practices of both sorts of people those living in Nepal and those in America in terms of nationality. I will try to explore how such occasional behavioral practices of those people display a sense of love towards nation and national values.

This present research is divided into five different sections to explore the concept of nationality, spirituality, communality, etc. seen in the characters of the texts. The first chapter

includes a general introduction to the study; and it also presents the hypothesis, a general introduction of the texts against the backdrop of different critics' commentaries on the texts. The second and third chapters elaborate the methodology employed to study the texts along with the extensive study of *America! Oh America!!* by Bhojpure and *Nepali Aama* by Broughton Coburn from the point of view of nation and nationality.

These chapters present the detailed textual analyses to reveal and prove how the texts document the instances of nationality portrayed in the behavior of different characters of the texts. The fourth chapter makes a contrastive study of *America! Oh America!!* and *Nepali Aama* in terms of spirituality and materiality. And the final chapter concludes the research with a brief synopsis of the work while simultaneously concluding the research.

## Chapter II

### **Sense of Nationality in *America! Oh America!!***

#### **Nation and Nationality for the Immigrants**

It is very difficult to define the concept of nation and nationhood succinctly because it has remained for long as one of the most debated issues in the world history in which we can find a lot of dissimilar ideas asserted by different persons in different periods of time. Once we make an extensive study of the work of these scholars, some ideas about nation and nationality could be drawn. Is it a common language that creates a nation or the same descent that helps to establish this entity? Or the fixed territory and sovereignty of the people are the fundamentals of a nation? Or is a nation just an entity which is owned by the particular imagined group, it does not matter wherever they have been living? It is important to consider some genuine arguments to have a clear view about the subject.

To establish a nation there must be the presence of some national characters that should have a relative commonality of the traits. Nation can exist anywhere but there must be the sharing of the common traits. As Otto Bauer views that “the nation has a national character. But this national character only means a relative commonality of traits in the mode of behavior of particular individuals” (41). The individuals of a particular nation are supposed to have been brought up or cultured in the same socio- historical context. Common traits of the people help them get united one another even in the foreign land where also they can create their own sense of national belongings.

Nation as such can be the output of cultural and natural community. Bauer opines that “nation can be considered on the one hand as a natural community, on the other hand as

a community of culture”( 43). If the individuals from the same cultural background meet one another, they may have a kind of intimacy that helps them to establish their own distinct sense of national belonging. This intimacy is vividly explained by Bhojpure when he went to Situ and Prasanna’s residence in San Francisco where Bhojpure couple were heartily welcomed with Nepali courtesy and etiquette by Situ, Prasanna and Mala’s family members.

Bhojpure recalls this incident in this way. “We have realized ,for the first time, such an intimate relation between Nepalese – Nepalese more in America than in Nepal in the nice familial environment . . . Nepalese embodies Nepal wherever he or she lives”( my trans.17). There is an imagined nation amongst the Nepalese who had been brought up and cultured in the common socio-cultural backdrop. From this perspective, nation can be an entity which is shared and owned by the people who constitute it.

When one is asserting himself or herself as someone belonging to a particular nation, he or she is expected to follow the common cultural values transmitted by the ancestors. Bhojpure, as a national character of Nepal always wants to transmit the national and cultural values to the succeeding generation living even in America. Once at Situ, Prasanna, Prabin and Mala’s apartment, Bhojpur couple intends to sing a national song so as to arouse the sense of nationality in them. For this, purpose they sang a song entitled “*Lahara Pahara Chhaharako Desh and Tyamke Danda / the country with creepers, rocks and falls and Tyamke Hill*” (my trans. 19) after the dinner. At that moment not only the singers but also the audiences forgot America for a while and got assimilated into the Tyamke Hill. The common national and cultural values of the Nepalese are to valorize the mountains, rivers, falls and jungles which are exactly what this song does.

It seems that Bhojpure couple had intentionally sung the songs to transmit the Nepali feelings and sentiments to those who have been living long in America. Regarding the issue of the cultural transmission, Bauer states that “. . . nation as a cultural community is to show how national character is determined by the common cultural values transmitted from earlier generations. . .”(43). So nation exists where the culture is transmitted by the ancestors to the successors and where the successors are also intent on preserving the transmitted heritage.

To make the concept of nation clear, Bauer further views that “ the nation is not the product of mere similarity of destiny ,but that it arises from and consists in the community of destiny, which distinguishes the nation from all other communities of character”(52). Nation can be defined as a community of those who grow out of a community of destiny not merely out of a similarity of destiny. Community of destiny means that the individuals of the community should make frequent interconnections among one another. Only the people having similar destiny does not pave the way for the creation of a nation. And it is the language that eases the communication process between and amongst the people of same community. Language is, in nation formation, the greatest instrument that marks the possibility of good understanding amongst the people.

Nowadays, it has become a cliché that the world is becoming smaller and smaller day by day because of the easy mobility of people from one country to another and fast interconnection of different nations within a few seconds via electronic media. The world is becoming a transnational world where the citizens are no longer the citizens of particular nation states; rather, they are the citizens of the entire cosmos. However, even in this globalized world people want to create their own small community which is based on common base; a commonality can be established in terms of education, work, and culture or

among other things. These commonalities also form the sense of belonging to a nation. In this regard Bauer views:

It is no longer common descent, rather common education, work, and cultural enjoyment that compose the nation. This nation, therefore, is no longer threatened with the danger of decay, but community of education, participation in cultural goods, close connection in the common life and in social labor give the nation secure guarantee of national unity (56).

Thus, nation is no longer a rigid phenomenon and it is always in a process of becoming. A group of people can create nation when they feel there is the necessity but there must be the same spirit of the people, that is, they should have the commonality of traits.

In this globalized world, almost everything concerned with human and human activities are transferred from one place to another. Globalization process tries to make the world a single place with increased and unavoidable contact of the people who came from different parts of the world. But there in the foreign land also people seek the cultural and sentimental attachment in order to form their own distinct identities. For this, they create a community which can be regarded as a nation. For Renan and Kirchhoff, "the nation is a totality of people who seek to live together in an independent community, to defend this community, and are ready to sacrifice for their community"(qtd. in Bauer 71). It is the same community that helps them to affirm their identities in this globalized world. From this perspective, we can assert that the sense of nation and nationality is even more intensified in the era of globalization.

In this scenario the desire to return home can function as a powerful desire. It is better to look at localization and globalization not as the dichotomies but as something inextricably related in our time. It is also the fact that no people can remain untouched by the current trend of mobility and globalization. Bhojpure visited many places in America which were really beautiful. Aspen was one of them which he compares with Mustang by evoking the figures of an artificially beautified girl, in contrast to Manang, a naturally beautiful girl. Bauer views that “. . . nation is a natural creation, but the state is an artificial product . . . to be constructed by human will according to the demands of reason . . . .”(76). In Aspen’s beauty, Bhojpure could not see the natural creation, so he disliked that. He wants to visit different regions of the world, some of which he likes and some he does not. However, what is interesting is that he expresses his likes and dislikes by comparing those foreign spaces with places seen in Nepal. In other words, memories of Nepal shape his perception even when he is visiting foreign lands. It happens in Bhojpure because his interest resides somewhere in the in-between space of globalization and localization.

He does not like both Aspen and Mustang because, in both of them, a sense of trade and commerce stinks. “I did not like that place though that was beautiful”(my trans. 2). He could not own that beautiful place and said, “that was foreign to me”(my trans. 2). This suggests that the migrated people always have the desire to return home and home country, though they have the chances of visiting more beautiful place in the foreign land. The foreign space cannot be as powerfully attractive as the native land.

In this globalized world, wherever people go, they want to remember home, the natural and cultural beauties of the birth place and the childhood images they spent in their birth place. These images help to foster the sense of belonging, warmth and togetherness. In

this regard, Mike Featherstone states that “there is nothing so powerful as the image of an integrated organic community . . . one has left behind”(51).In the same vein, one could argue that people feel to be more secured and happy in his or her own surrounding . Bhojpure came back to his apartment in Nepal after visiting many places of America but none of those magnificent places of America could stand stronger than a simple apartment in which he lives in Nepal.

He thinks that he has been living in such a civil home which is made of gold because from that civil home the Himalayas, which look like gold in the morning sun rays, could be clearly observed. He is thankful to his country and says “here in Nepal everything seems mine, even the dust, fume, and pollution are mine. Many things can be easily owned. The splendid beauty of the alien world does not seem mine, they look beautiful but artificial”(my trans. 140). Here, we can see the abundant sense of love towards nation and national heritages. Almost everything existing in Nepal gives him a kind of sense of attachment, ultimate fascination and happiness. But the man made beauties of the foreign world, even when they are splendidly constructed, give him no charm, no fascination, nothing at all.

When people are out of their particular native country, they nurture a sense of nostalgia and become more emotional and sentimental when they remember the bygone days and activities done in their native culture. As Bryan Turner remarks “nostalgia or the loss of a home is a potent sentiment in the modern world”( qtd. in Featherstone 51). In a foreign country one tries to affirm his or her identity anchoring himself or herself in a specific locale which he or she feels emotionally attached.



Referring to his own sentimentality, Bhojpure expresses that he sees Nepal wherever he sees beauty. “First of all I see Nepal where I see the beauty. I saw Nepal in Chhu at San Francisco. Even in the grandma of Chhu and in her mother Nila , I saw Nepal” (my trans. 24). It is the beautiful image of Nepal that resides strongly in his psyche so he happens to see Nepal everywhere when he becomes sentimental.

People in the foreign countries want to remain in the regular contact with other people who are identical to them. It is the regularity and frequency of contacts with a group which paves the ways for the establishment of a common culture in the foreign land as well. And for this the most appropriate means to evoke a sense of such common culture are the festivals and other cultural occasions. Regarding the festivals and ceremonies, Featherstone further views “. . . the use of commemorative rituals and ceremonies can be understood as acting like batteries which store and recharge the sense of communality” (52). Such festivals and ceremonies reinforce the familial, local and national attachment, and hence proliferates the collective memories and identities which ultimately reduce the nostalgic agony of the immigrants.

In America Bhojpure remembers Nepal and national customs when he happened to attend such festivals, occasions and ceremonies. Such occasions provide him a kind of sense of attachment to the native culture, festivals and collective images which he enjoys enormously in the foreign land. Once, one of the popular heroes of Nepali film industry named Sudhanshu invited Bhojpure family to Tibet Hotel at Barbeque in New York for a program. There they enjoyed the Tibet food that exactly looked like momo once he ate at New Road, Kathmandu, so he enjoyed the dinner.

After the dinner, having the communal spirit they started singing the Nepali songs walking freely on the street of New York. "*Malai pyaro lagchha /, Malai ramro lagchha /, Lahara , pahara , chhaharako desh*. It's lovely to me /, it's beautiful to me /, the country with creepers, rocks and falls" (my trans. 35). Such occasions functioned like battery which recharged the sense of communality and love towards the nation in Bhojpure and some others. Then they started rambling on the street freely as if they were rambling on the streets in Nepal.

While rambling on the street after dinner , they even remembered the "Deuda dance"(36) danced by Dotelies at Khula Manch (Open Square) in Kathmandu on which the dancers dance together on the same beat keeping hands in hands. There was a total sense of harmony and communality between and amongst the participants. He even remembered the "Chandi dance"(36) danced by the Rai of Nepal. From this, it can be averred that the immigrants have kept the communal and national values and cultures intact somewhere in their psyche and when they happen to come across appropriate environment evoking communality, they easily manifest such cultural values and feelings associated with nation.

People want to cultivate and elaborate the sense of communality amongst the people from different parts of the same nation. Such national community can be invented by taking recourse to the national and cultural myths, legendary figures, events, national and cultural heritages, etc. Regarding the nationalism , Featherstone views that " there was a deliberate attempt by cultural specialists to discover and record the vernacular customs and practices, legends and myths, the culture of the people, which it was assumed was fast disappearing"(53). Today's youths who have been living in America have almost forgotten the cultural things but Bhojpure always pray to the "Sun God before starting any work"(my trans. 21); a

cultural practice that many people perform in Nepal. He wants to keep the mythical beliefs and cultural practices of Nepal intact even in the foreign world.

The cultural specialists try their best to preserve the culture by producing a large numbers of books, novels, and many other documents. In this regard, Gellner, Anderson and others view that the construction of nationalism is highly dependent on the “availability of a print culture which can interconnect people over time and space”(53). The possibility of the nation therefore, depends upon the development of books, novels, and newspapers expressing the life of a nation.

Nowadays, the sense of nationality and nationalism is more reinforced and enticed by the documentaries and films because they provide immediacy in arousing the cultural and national sentiments in the beholders. Visual texts can even generate more power and sense of attachment in the people as compared to the printed books and/or texts do. So process of nationalism can be faster and easier through such visualized documents. “ The development of film industry facilitates this process even better, as film provides an instantiation and immediacy which are relatively independent of the long learning process and institutional and other supports. . .”( Featherstone 54). Most of the people now do not bother at reading voluminous books; rather, they want to enjoy watching the visualized documentaries.

Bhojpure also remembers the remarkable presence of the Nepalese –American in New Jersey on the occasion of New Year to enjoy “Bhedako Unjasto”, a very popular Nepali documentary ( my trans. wool like that of sheep 51). He could not enjoy it fully there in the mass so looked it up later and he evoked “I was lost with that documentary for a while”(my trans. 51). From this what one can conclude is that the visualized documents have more

power in enticing the emotional attachment of the people especially when they are out of their own nation and living in the foreign lands.

Thus, the sense of nation and nationality does remain strongly in the minds of migrated nationals. The immigrants have kept the national and cultural values and cultures intact somewhere in their psyche and when they happen to come across appropriate environment evoking communality; they easily expose or manifest such cultural values and feelings. Such values are generally aroused by the festivals and ceremonies, books, films and documentaries which proliferates the collective memories of the migrated nationals. It is the collective memories of the migrated nationals that ultimately pave the way for unity and even identity in the foreign land.

### **Desire to Return Home from Alien Culture**

As a traveler, Bhojpure visited many parts of America. He also got a chance to reach the summit of the Rocky Mountain on motor. Being a developed country, America has also developed the motor road even up to the summits of the high Rocky Mountains. It is a matter of the delight to the travelers to have an opportunity to reach on the summit of the great mountains on motors. On arriving the summit, Bhojpure remembered Mt. Everest and imagined that if Mt. Everest were in America, they would drive the motors on its summit as well. Bhojpure instantly denied such easy access to the summit to say “I don’t need such America that drives motors on Mt. Everest. America! Go to Nepal just to visit it; if you want to live, live here, enjoy here”(my trans. 10). It is suggestive of the fact that Bhojpure does not want such extremity in materialistic development which devastates the natural beauty of the national and/or international heritages.

Addressing his sister-in-law named Nirmala, Bhojpure again reminds her that “those who were not in necessity to go to America should not have gone to America” (my trans. 12). Nirmala had managed to establish a kind of good image in the field of music in Nepal but after reaching America she could not affirm the valued identity and hence has become just like the Bagmati of Kathmandu, almost always motionless, always contaminated. She was also exploited and used like Bagmati.

Multinational companies are seen to have misused the immigrant labor in the foreign country by a number of ways. Such exploitation is more directed towards females as compared to the males. In regard to the issue of female labor, Masao Miyoshi views that “. . . female labor is abused everywhere, the wage difference between the sexes is still greater . . .” (89). Transnational companies always want to use the cheap labor. Nirmala would also work in the most discriminatory wage in America. By seeing all these, Bhojpure insists Nirmala to “return home on the remembrance of her 87 year old father”(my trans. 15). Bhojpure is seen to have cajoled her to return home and become somebody in her own country instead of being ruined in the foreign land.

Bhojpure further wants to depict the idea that the sense of nationality equally resides in the mind of the youngsters living in America. Only the difference is that they do not easily show the love towards the nation as compared to the elderly people. As Bryan Turner remarks, “nostalgia, or the loss of a sense of home, is a potent sentiment in the modern world. Particularly so for those groups who are ambivalent about modernity . . .” ( qtd. in Featherstone 51).The nostalgic youngest son of Bhojpure named Sane has developed an excessive desire to return home after spending six years in America and once expresses his feeling to his father. He says thus, “Papa I cannot exist in America, I really become mad if I

live some long time here . . . I will come back to Nepal”( my trans. 57). It is the cultural unconscious of Sane that prevents him from living in America because he knows that he cannot enjoy that foreign culture and life style, so he decided to return home. From this sentiment, we can avow that the love towards national and cultural values does not perish easily from the minds of the migrated nationals.

But such cultural and national values are now under threat. Regarding the threat to the culture, Featherstone views that “the culture which was made and reproduced by the people was seen under threat from the mass media and commercialization” (50). Their significance and influence are weakened by the commercialization even though their existence never perils. Bhojpure also agrees that because of the modern trend of globalization and trans-nationalization, the national and cultural heritages are being challenged but he signals that such cultural and national values will not perish.

By comparing the vast geography of Nebraska with that of Nepal, Bhojpure thinks that Nepal can easily lie in that land. However, he instantly denies his own view and asserts that “Mt. Everest does not lie anywhere except in Nepal. Many things can get away from Nepal, even the temple of Pashupatinath, but the essence of Pashupatinath never expunges from Nepal”(my trans. 75). This sentiment and feeling raised in Bhojpure suggests that sense of nationality does not evaporate from the mind of the true nationals wherever they live.

Bhojpure spends some of his time in Nepal and most of his time in America visiting the beautiful cities and mountains of America. But he sees Nepal and parts of Nepal time and again even in America. People want to remember the past and past places when they become to be nostalgic in the foreign world. Bhojpure is also seen to have become somewhat

nostalgic there in America. Regarding the nostalgia, Margaret E. Farrar views that “Nostalgia results in the impulse to preserve, maintain, or create a sense of place in one's surroundings”(727). Washington DC for Bhojpure is no more different from the Tarai of Nepal. Only the difference is that Tarai is natural but Washington DC is artificial.

At a glance, Washington DC is splendid and marvelous because of the artificial beauty; otherwise, there is no fundamental difference between that city and the Tarai of Nepal. That's why Bhojpure likes Washington DC. “I liked it because of its similarity with our Tarai, otherwise. . .”(my trans. 89). To see Nepal in foreign countries indicates that he has cultivated a strong sense of nationality in his mind and when similar surrounding happens to occur in his sight, the sense of nationality instantly evokes.

Normally immigrants are not treated fairly in the foreign lands. Even after getting green card of America, the Bhojpure couple were also bitterly treated under the accusation that they did not enter America as stipulated in the brochure. But that couple did not show up their instant fury in front of those immigration officials, but when released from there Bhojpure makes a commitment that he will throw the green card to Tukucha or Dhobikhola in Nepal. He promises, “I will sweep your green card in Tukucha or Dhobikhola of Nepal”(my trans.133). This indicates that material prosperity is not everything for the migrated nationals; they also want to live the humanly dignified life which is lacking in the alien world.

### **Human Mobility and Hardship in the Foreign Country**

As the world entered the process of globalization, there has been the remarkable flow of goods, capitals, and other human and non- human machinery from one particular territory or nation to another territory or nation. The developed countries have become the commercial

hub from which commercial activities, economic transactions, etc. are being conducted throughout the different nations of the world. On such backdrop of the economic history of the world, the people of underdeveloped countries also aspired to go to the developed commercial hub and /or nation.

The mobility of human resources has become unstoppable and inevitable. No one could control or check the flow of people and goods from one nation - state to another nation- state. "National territories depend on mobility that they cannot control. Mobility is always at work. . . "(Ludden 1065). Social life of a particular country comprises different sorts of people from different regions of the world. Mobility as such has become a kind of opportunity to the nation - states and at the same time a challenge or a threat to the national territory. The trend of mobility leads people from poorer places to the richer places in search of better life style.

But mobility does not always herald a sweet fruit for the immigrants rather it also brings in a harrowing and harassing effect in the life of those people. Their dream of spending the prosperous life in the alien country has been shattered by the hardship and discrimination they have to face there in unknown territory. " Millions become foreigners in the national territories where the joys of independence still mingle today with pains of alienation , marginality, victimization, expulsion, exodus, dislocation and assimilation " ( Ludden 1065). The national territory produces the marginal and vulnerable people. Such marginality and vulnerability of the immigrants have been conspicuously portrayed in *America! Oh America!!* This text depicts how these people are treated differently in the strangers' land and hence, they have to tackle with unexpected hindrances, hardships and discriminations there.



Addressing Nirmala, his sister-in-law, in the first chapter of the text entitled “Bagna Nasakeki Bagmati”( Bagmati, incapable of flowing), Bhojpure writes that she managed to survive in the alien land after her absconding from Nepal. She escaped Nepal so as to live a more meaningful and secured life in America but her life now in America is also no more different from her previous life she lived in Nepal. Her condition there in Aspen is also exactly identical to the Bagmati of Nepal which is incapable to flow freely on its own motion because human beings exploit it in different ways. Bhojpure remembers “I think that you survived due to your absconding, but there also you are struggling like a ‘motionless Bagmati’”(my trans.2). There is no progress in her life though she is living in Aspen, one of the developed cities of America. Nirmala could not keep herself away from exploitation and discrimination wherever she goes. Mobility could not harbor the expected outcome in her life.

In Nepal, she was identified as having almost parallel status like that of the great composers and lyricists such as, Ambar Gurung , Natikaji, etc. in the field of music. It suggests that she had become somewhat successful in establishing her distinct identity in the field of music; but there in Aspen nobody knows her now. Her identity is almost mixed with dust. She has become a threat to the civilized world and to herself. Mobility of the non-western people to the western people can be taken as a kind of threat to the civilized national territory. “You are walking on the civilized world even being a threat. You always kept your own life at risk and now you are signaling a risk even to Colorado”(my trans 3). The writer suggests that mobility of the people can bring a catastrophic result not only to the immigrants but also to the regions where they reside.

In this regard, David Ludden views that “the authors of territorialism have long described their own sublime domain as the enclosure of civility, outside of which fearsome people and demons lurk. . .” (1061) .The outsiders are regarded as a threat and/or a sign of danger to the territorial harmony. Nirmala is also a kind of threat to the so called civilized national territory of America. She could neither be of native country nor of that foreign country but becomes a fearsome demon to the locals of Aspen. She loses her own identity and also threatens the identity of Colorado locals.

The mobility of the people from one place to another is not always voluntary. Sometimes, people are compelled to move from their native places because of the discrimination and partiality shown upon them. Nirmala was a good singer in Nepal but her talent could not foster in the field of music because of the treacherous surveillance of the so called great singers and their assistants in Nepal. Bhojpure remembered “you were great vocalist in the field of songs and music but you were not allowed to own this field as a devotee of music by the so called great vocalists”(my trans. 4). It is the partiality and discrimination that compelled her to leave the home country and become a person of nowhere with uncertain identity in the foreign land.

In Colorado, Nirmala is living a life devoid of music. With the loss of nation, she is losing her real identity and now surviving in an artificial world. Bhojpure remarks, “You have become a poor pathetic lady whom mercy and pity is shown but not love” (my trans. 4). Nirmala escaped from Nepal to get rid of the social trap but in actuality she fell down in such an abyss of exploitation from which she could hardly come out. Bhojpure further cautions her that “the fleas will again jump over, and you poor louse will be the scapegoat in the

mass” (my trans. 5). People move from one place to another so as to get rid of problems but in reality they have to tackle even more problematic situations in the foreign world.

Bhojpure indicates that people have not realized the necessity of returning to the home land from the foreign country after earning some amount of money. He wishes Nirmala would come back to Nepal where she could still create her dignified identity but she has not come back to Nepal yet and neither is she in the mood of returning back. “Though you could not become a ‘Rockefeller’, you could have become a billionaire here in Nepal if you had brought the money that you had earned in America”( my trans 7). She did not come back to Nepal, and hence now she is lost in the foreign world.

Nirmala expresses her Nepali-ness living in the foreign country by being pitiful and sentimental to the plight of others. And she easily supports immigrant Nepali people by every respects, but such innocent helps turn out be the powerful means of deception, and consequently she is deceived by almost all those whom she helped once. “You are cheated by your own Nepali brothers by enticing your Nepali sentiments”(my trans. 7) but you are ignorant of this fact. Her practices of Nepalese sentiments and values living out of Nepal make her the most vulnerable character in the world of strangers. She could not keep hold of her identity in the native country let alone in the foreign countries.

The foreign world is the world of death of humanity and affection for the immigrants because the immigrants are not even treated as human beings. In the course of his travel once Bhojpure went to Estes Park where his youngest son named Sane used to work at Furniture Company. Due to his greed for earning more dollars, in every summer season Sane used to shoulder the loaded furniture items from one place to another. Sane narrates, “Papa and

Mom, my waist started giving me trouble from that time onwards” (my trans. 8). His waist is still troubling him. Listening to the pathetic anecdote of the son, Bhojpure becomes somewhat sentimental and utters “Look! We have been giving comfort and happiness to America by getting troubled ourselves” (my trans. 8). Western capitalists have been promoting the business by disseminating the dream of material prosperity to the immigrants at the cost of humanity and sentimentality.

Bhojpure has also brought forth the next more heart rendering incidence that he happened to see in Colorado where maximum Nepalese youths used to live. Most of the Nepalese living there looked like the people who were from the sophisticated families in Nepal, but in Colorado their condition was very pathetic in a sense that many of them were compelled to perform any sort of lowly works which they used to hate in Nepal. Amongst many Nepalese working at Colorado, Bhojpure happened to see a very tenderly young girl whose complexion and behavior displayed total despair and dissatisfaction with her work. Bhojpure instantly guessed that she was from an urbane family of Nepal but in Colorado she was just a waitress serving others embodying a total sense of despair in her complexion.

Bhojpure wanted to ensure her that his sons, who also worked there in the past, have become capable of helping her. “That girl gave no reply and went to a corner and started sobbing. By seeing this, I was defeated by myself, by that girl, and by America”(my trans, 9). The elite of Colorado live in the center of social and economic life, possessing the means of production and make the immigrants victims of partial treatment. In this regard, Ludden argues that “. . . elites typically live in central territorial sites and spread their influence over networks of mobility with combination of coercion, adjudication, patronage and persuasion”(1063). The advocates of territorialism do not let the immigrants enjoy and

exercise the charm of living human life in its entirety; rather, they are frequently coerced to work on their favor, often with nominal wage.

People in that foreign land were compelled to do any sort of work for their survival. In search of better life people migrate from one country to another legally and sometimes illegally also; and since the immigrants could not get the expected jobs, they have to be involved in any sort of work that they can get. In this regard, Masao Miyoshi views, “Cut off from their homes, migrant workers disappear into huge urban slums without the protection of a traditional rural mutual dependence system. The struggle for survival does not allow any leisure . . .”(95). The workers in America hardly get the leisure time as can be observed in the textual discussion.

Referring to the parents of Yahabi, Bhojpure writes that they hardly manage the time for the family at their house. They could not even manage the time to look after their small child Yahabi who is crying in the family room most of the time. Shirish, the father of Yahabi, works at consultancy, and mother works as a nurse and comes home at around seven or eight pm. They do not look after the child not because they are indifferent to her but because they do not have leisure time. Bhojpure writes that “it is also the nurse who must sacrifice lot of time in America”(my trans. 121). For those exploited immigrant workers, it is only the consumerism that seems to offer solace. Humanity is withering slowly, and ultimately it vanishes from their hearts and minds.

Similarly, Nirmala is also in compulsion to do any sort of work she finds in America. Remembering the hardship tolerated by Nirmala, Bhojpure writes that “she still does any work she gets”(my trans.121). Migrated workers do not have any time to think about their

bygone days and cultures, let alone to practice them. Regarding the endurance and hardships of the migrated workers, Masao Miyoshi further views that “Neither nativism nor pluralism are in their thoughts, only survival. Multiculturalism is a luxury largely irrelevant to those who live under the most wretched conditions”(95). Most of the migrated workers are forced to live such a pathetic life in the alien world where there is rare chance of remembering and practicing the native culture and practices.

### **Local and Global not in Dichotomy but in Harmony**

The ongoing flow of commodities, people, images, and information has created mingled cities in many developed and even under developing countries or nations and hence the nations have become transnational. In such transnational world, it is sometimes very difficult to distinguish that people are becoming multinational or multi-local because even in the foreign world, they want to globalize the local phenomena. According to Rob Wilson and Wimal Dissanayake “all that was local becomes increasingly globalized, all that is global becomes increasingly localized” (Intro. 2). People living in the foreign world practice the native cultures and even spread them by institutionalizing them.

The Nepali immigrants living in America are seen to have founded some social institutions there and conduct the cultural programs time and again. By remembering the dance of Nikki at the cultural program conducted on the occasion of Lhosar 2011 by the Gurung society named Tamu Dhin , Bhojpure compliments that Nikki’s dance is unique. He thinks that “even in Nepal it is very difficult to see such dance that gives the flavor of pure Nepali-ness”(my trans. 127). But also living in America, she has demonstrated such Nepali-ness in that dance that Bhojpure frequently remembers. By institutionalizing the local

festivals, they want to globalize them in this transnational world, not only for promoting the local cultures, but also for ascertaining their own identities and existence in the foreign lands.

Nikki also demonstrated the same expertise on the next dance at another cultural program conducted by Rocky Mountains Friend of Nepal. From this, it can be believed that the immigrants do not forget their cultural and national values, mores, and practices, wherever they live. Rather, they want to promote such values and practices by institutionalizing them as much as they can. Regarding the localism, Arif Dirlik views that “localism as an orientation in either a traditional or a modern sense has never disappeared. . .” (23). People living outside Nepal are thus found to have institutionalized the cultural activities in different ways. As a result, the local phenomena are today no longer local; rather, they have become global because they are being celebrated in many parts of the world.

Henry Lefebvre predicts that “the production of everyday space is binding together the global and local, the city and the country, the centre and the periphery, in new and quite unfamiliar ways”(qtd. in Wilson and Dissanayake Intro 3). Now it has become very difficult to distinguish between the local and the global. Foreign cultures and practices have been localized, and similarly the local activities have been globalized because of the technological advancement and the human mobility. Pointing to the western practices, Bhojpure indicates that “some elites celebrate New Year even by exchanging the wives in Nepal also, and some others enjoy local whiskey in Thamel and celebrate New Year” (my trans. 50). Today different nations of the world are bound so intricately that anything practiced in one corner of one nation-state can be easily mimicked and practiced in another part of another nation- state.

Now, the world has become a miniature society where every local thing has become global and every global phenomenon has become local because of exchanges and commodifications of cultures. Once in Los Angeles Bhojpure couple visited a children park called Nauka Bihar where they happened to see different cultures of the nations of different continents. In this regard, Masao Miyoshi opines that “culture will be kept to museums, and the museums, exhibitions, and theatrical performances will be swiftly appropriated by tourism and other forms of commercialism” (94). Culture has become a means of earning in this commercial world. In that park, which the Bhojpure couple visited, cultures are kept safely and shown to the visitors or tourists and the sole purpose behind this is to accumulate money.

On the background setting of that park, the song entitled “it is a small world” (my trans. 100) was being played. Images of different human figures decorated with local costumes, artistic creations, dances, etc. of different countries were there for exhibition in order to suggest the culture of different countries. Bhojpure couple happened to see many cultures, belonging to various countries, in one place. The local practices of many countries are brought together in one place and shown to all. In such situation, it is very difficult to distinguish local from global so today’s world is neither global nor local but it is glocal, and this glocality of the world does sustain due to the commodifications of cultures.

In this globalized and modernized world, almost all people are affected by the trend of mobility. They live with their parents only when they are small. But when they are grown up, they flee from their home, society, culture and ultimately from the country. T.K. Oommen views that “the processes of modernization and globalization are accelerating the spatial movement of people everywhere. Thus, an increasing proportion of people are living



outside their ancestral homeland”(272). It is the reality in today’s world where the succeeding generations are highly different from their ancestors who have been living in their ancestral homeland.

By remembering this dreadful situation, the Bhojpure couple also became sentimental because their children are also living in the foreign world being indifferent to their ancestral homeland. Bhojpure becomes sentimental and evokes:

Look! Our life is America! Oh America!! We give birth to our children. They grow up, study and become mature. Their life is on their own pace. Until grown up, they depend on parents; but when grown up, they flee away. They are powerful on their own briskness. They do not have time to look back . . .

The elder we become, the lonelier we have to be. What to do? We have to endure just as many others have been enduring (my trans. 141).

This flow of youths from one country to another country is unstoppable and endless.

Nowadays, most of the youths do not want to live in their own homeland; rather, they live in the foreign countries expecting the prosperous life and hence, they become alienated from their co-nationals, who continue to live in the country of their origin.

Thus, the mobility is today an indispensable and inevitable phenomenon which is not in an individual's control. People have become alien to their own country and culture but familiar to the foreign countries and the cultures. In course of human mobility, there is also the mobility of goods, economy and the culture as a whole. The migrated people carry their culture to the place wherever they go and at the same time they adapt there by adopting the foreign culture and in consequence the cultural practices of those people get mingled

together. Eventually the culture of the whole world has become local and global at a same time.

## Chapter III

### *Nepali Aama* and Attachment to the Native Culture

#### **Intactness of Nationality even in Hardship**

The life in the village is comparatively difficult than that of the city or urban centers because in the village most of the people live the agrarian life with minimum use of technological amenities. The difficulties of rural life style are typically portrayed by Broughton Coburn in *Nepali Aama* by representing the misery and hardship the villagers have been enduring for a long time in remote villages of Nepal. Notwithstanding such difficulties, many people do not try to escape from that surrounding; rather, they stay in their own homeland because of their emotional and ancestral attachments. The ancestral homeland is a nation for the people living in particular rural locations.

Nation can exist where the people have “the desire to live together, the will to perpetuate the value of the heritage that one has received in an undivided form”(Renan 19). *Nepali Aama* or Vishnu Maya Gurung also does not want to leave the homeland where her parents were born raised and lived their lives. She expresses thus: “No matter where I go, I can’t leave home for long. My parents and their parents were born, raised and lived their lives here. Their sweat watered the crops”(2). This expression suggests that Vishnu Maya Gurung is not influenced by the modern trend of global migration, and hence wants to live and die in her own native village.

Vishnu Maya states that life in the poor mountains involves a great deal of work with little comforts. She does not have anyone to help her when she is tired because she does not have her own son and her son-in-law is a gambler and drinker. She expresses her

dissatisfaction in this way “Hare Ram, I come home at night and who can I say I’m tired to, who can I say I’m hungry to” (2)? There is no one to understand her elderly ethos. Referring to such desolate situations, sometimes, she becomes somewhat emotional and thinks of selling everything and travels around the places where her footsteps lead.

However, despite such momentary temptations, she cannot escape from her birth place by selling her properties, and thinks she would suffer this situation rather than leave the homeland and stay somewhere in the foreign land. Her attachment to the nation is still stronger despite such sufferings. As Renan views “where national memories are concerned, griefs are of more value than triumphs, for they impose duties, and require a common effort” (19). Aama also wants to endure such sufferings and grief rather than leave the ancestral homeland. She articulates, “I can’t leave the homestead where I’ve spent my life. Maybe because I know I could never return once I left”(2). Despite enduring a life full of loneliness, she wants to live in her own native land. This suggests that she has a kind of attachment to the homeland despite the fact that she has to live the desolate and lonely life in a rural setting.

In her village, most of the people are farmers but their farming system is only for subsistence and not for professional advancement. They must be dependent on the nature to cultivate and harvest the crops. Being a farmer, she also regards the farming as an honest profession in which one cannot bribe the weather to produce the crops in his or her favor. There is no certainty that at what time one’s efforts will be destroyed by the single stroke of hailstones and hurricane. Still farmers do not lose their hope and cultivate the land seasonally. She asserts that “farmers live a painful life (61)” as they have to depend on the nature. In contemporary world, there have been many changes even in the farming system in

the developed countries but in Nepal the farmers are still dependent on the rain water to grow their crops.

In the spring of 1977 Aama and her 65 –year old sister Chyaure set off on a religious pilgrimage to visit the Hindu and Buddhist temples existing in different regions of Nepal. In course of their travel, they also went to Muktinath where Aama met other farmers, porters and pilgrims from various places of Nepal. They talked to one another in terms of customs, farming practices or simply about their reasons for being where they were. There was commonality in the views of those people though they arrived at Muktinath from various places. Also they had similar thoughts about the love of their origin homeland. “All agreed about the hardships of life in the hills, but with twinkles in their eyes confirming their attachment to their mountain homeland”(98). All the pilgrims agree that their life is full of hardships but they do not want to escape such hardships; rather, they want to remain attached to their mountains and the native cultures. This indicates the love and attachment of the poor farmers to their national and cultural heritages.

When the consciousness of nationality appears in the mind of the people, they become united under the “name” of the nation, relegating the religious, ethnic, regional differences. In this regard, Ashis Nandy views that “Nationalism insists on the primacy of national identity over identities built on sub national allegiances - religions, castes, sects, linguistic affiliations and ethnicities”(3502). No religion, no caste, no ethnicities affect the people in their thoughts concerning the nationality. The people living in village are cooperative and helpful in the times of calamities to their close neighbors and/or relatives. Referring to the help offered by the village people, Aama says “relatives are generous in times of hardship, and this generosity is expected to be reciprocal” (146). If one of the village

members falls into financial difficulty, the close relatives are ready to provide monetary and non-monetary help for the affected one.

In such communal village life “wealth is never a private affair”(146). In a community, people often invoke shared feelings that help to build a kind of communal identity; a shared identity that one can call a nation. In an attempt to clarify the concept of nation, Ernest Renan writes : “ a nation is therefore a large- scale solidarity, constituted by the feeling of the sacrifices that one has made in the past and of those that one is prepared to make in the future”(19). The people in the community are mostly conditioned by the shared spiritual principles in which things become common not private. Everyone living in the village is ready to extend the helping hand without any selfish interest. This can also be the reason behind the reluctance of the village people leaving their homeland easily.

### **Mobility and Desire to Return Home**

Mobility is a socio-cultural phenomenon that has been working in this world since the time immemorial. In the past, people used to move from one place to another as nomads, they did not have any specific purpose for wandering except sustaining their lives. However, nowadays people move from one place to another for various purposes. Amongst them, one of the purposes is to promote the standard of life by earning more money and live a comfortable life. One of the easiest means of earning money for the Nepalese youths is to get recruited in the British army as Gurkha soldiers. Vishnu Maya’s husband was also recruited in the Indian army. With her husband, Aama also went to India and lived in many places. “There Aama stoically remained as an estranged foreigner in an exotic land, spending the bulk of her time among other Gurkha wives from Nepal”(138). It is the mobility that

makes people foreigners in alien nations, and being the foreigners, they want to recreate a sense of community in which they share and/or converse their feelings and sentiments.

In this regard, alluding to Ernest Renan, Satish C. Aikant views that “communities often invoke a shared past or a cultural essence that is regarded as synonymous with a religious or racial identity”(170). Aama also searches for the community of the Gurkha wives in order to share her feelings and experiences while living in India. During her stay in India, she could not enjoy the foreign land. She also became sick there because of severe headaches and fever; which she had never experienced while in Nepal. Remembering such dreadful situations, Aama remarks “When we were stationed near Calcutta I was sick for over a year with high fevers and chills—malaria or something”(22). She could not sustain herself in the foreign land and ultimately came back to Nepal after which her fevers and chills went away. Home became a panacea to all problems for her.

Today along with the mobility of the people, there is also the mobility of the goods, resources, properties, money, etc. from one nation to another. The continuous flow of Indian currency from India to Nepal is just one example of such global flows across national borders. Referring to her childhood, Aama mentioned that if a letter arrived from India or Malasiya, there was a rush to receive it. “An elder brother sends money to his family from India or Malasiya, and it’s a race to the post office to pick up the registered letter with money in it”(29). In course of globalization many things get transferred and/or move from one territory to another. Regarding the flow of the global capital Arjun Appadurai remarks that “. . . global capital is now a more mysterious and rapid . . .” (34). This all became possible because of the excessive development in the field of technology. The world became a miniature society where everything can flow from one place to another within few minutes.

Mobility is mostly for better purposes and /or for better life. Mobility of people occurs not only from poor regions to rich regions but also from rich region and/ or country to poor country in the contemporary world. It does not matter from which direction the mobility occurs. What matters is the motive behind the mobility because in all sorts of motilities, the people desire the accumulation of money, property and comforts. “Tibetan nomads from the north come through here each winter and pay money for them, to grind them into powder and use them for medicine. In fact, anything that has been charred by lightning will make good medicine”(77). Tibetans also used to come to Nepal, but their sole purpose was to earn money by using the charred stones found in Nepal to make medicine. Their mobility from Tibet to Nepal did not give anything to the Nepalese but merely strengthened the Tibetan economy. Their mobility was for their own nation not for the benefit and development of others.

Aama had also been to many places of India in the course of her pilgrimage. She went to Benares where she bathed at Ghats, lit lamps as offering, and gave money to Brahmin priests to perform rituals. She had gone there in order to conduct the funeral ceremony of her dead husband but she did not hold the program there. She wanted to conduct such ceremony in her own native country and came back to her house. Aama says, “I had gone to Benares on my own. I returned to the village and we held his funeral ceremony” (89). Benares is regarded as one of the popular and sacred holy shrines by the Hindus in Indian subcontinent. The descendants of the dead ones go there in order to perform rituals with the aim of paving the way for the salvation of the spirits of the ancestors. But Aama did not perform such ceremony there. Instead she came back to Nepal and conducted the ceremony of her husband in her own homeland.



In Nepal, especially Gurung youths have the trend of leaving their hilly homeland and getting recruited in the Gurkha regiments of the Indian and British Armies. They spend their youth in the foreign land and work for the defense of the foreign countries. It is all done by the Gorkha soldiers with the purpose of earning some money and living a comfortable life in the old age. When they get retired from the army, they want to live not in the foreign country, but in their own country. Referring to the retired life of those Nepali sons recruited in the foreign armies, Aama points out that “all Gorkha armies agree that the water is cooler and the breezes crisper in their hills than in the malaria- ridden valleys and plains to the south, and that their “lightweight heart” is a product of their simple lifestyle” (132). Ultimately people wish to go back to their native land and native cultures to live the retired elderly life with their descendants sharing a communal environment.

Broughton Coburn, the writer of *Nepali Aama*, came to Nepal in order to study Nepal and Nepalese cultures because people from Europe and America used to think that the third world is the space of vast knowledge from which many things related to culture could be learned. The sub-conscious motivation for many, if not for all westerners, could also be that with the knowledge gained thus, they could hegemonize such non- western locals culturally and economically, if not politically. Referring to the motive behind such kind of mobility of the people, David Ludden remarks that “European and American interests moved into Asia, as materials for Asian studies moved out of Asia and into Europe and America. Asia, thus, became a vast, mobile corpus of knowledge, whose elements traveled among producers, learners, and users on several continents”(1059). This is how, Asia emerged as a space of “knowledge” for the westerners; a place where they could expand their business and

religious, cultural interests. By writing about the typical Nepali Gurung culture, the writer in this text produces a kind of knowledge for those whose interest lies in the third world.

Aama welcomed the writer Broughton Coburn in her household and kept him as a surrogate son because Aama had no son of her own. Being a surrogate son, Coburn also used to help her in many domestic works, and slowly and gradually there developed a close affinity and /or intimacy between these two individuals who were from two totally distinct cultures and nationalities. They started sharing many things with each other and this relationship lasted at least for two years. Lastly, Coburn took Aama even to the United States of America in 1988 and guided and/or helped her by every means to visit various places of that country. Aama could have lived in America but eventually came back to Nepal at the time of her death. “On January 29, 1991, Aama died in her home at the age of 87”(155). This incident of coming back to Nepal at such an old age even United States indicates the fact that the sense of nationality remained intact in Aama. In this regard, Aama can be regarded as a representative figure to for many others who came back to their own nation during the last stages of their lives.

### **Waning of Cultural Values in Modern Nation-states**

Nowadays, national and cultural values are in shadow even in the villages because of the high influence of capitalism and modernity in the thought of people. The society is moving ahead not in terms of communal harmony but in terms of the material prosperity. In pursuit of material advancement, people are running after the money or property due to which the native culture and national values are undervalued in the modern societies. Regarding the pace of social modernization accelerated by the capitalism, Jurgen Habermas

views that “. . . the modern state, that is, the tandem of bureaucracy and capitalism has turned out to be the most effective vehicle for an accelerating social modernization”(282). In modern nation- states people’s first focus is on material accumulation by even forgetting the native cultures and relations.

In the past, people used to live in communities which owe their identity to the organizational unity. There was a kind of nation which would govern all strata of human activities in the society. Referring to such time period, Habermas further opines that “ nations are initially communities of people of the same descent, who are not yet integrated in the political form of a state but hang together just by settlement, common language, customs and tradition”(282). The people of a particular community used to celebrate the cultural programs in unison with the use of different musical instruments during various cultural programs. Rodi is one of the popular cultural programs in Nepali culture, especially in Gurung community, in which the young unmarried boys and girls gather together after their meal at night at a particular house and start singing in verses with fierce competition.

According to this custom, if the girls fail to respond wittingly to the ‘musical’ questions posed by the boys, they have to marry the boys. Referring to this cultural practice Aama says, “. . . if the girl could not respond to all of the boy’s parries, she was obliged to marry him. One of my nieces found her husband this way”(10). In the past, it was the Rodi culture of the Gurungs that helped boys and girls to find their life-partners. However, nowadays such practices are withering because of the influence of modernization and westernization brought by mobility of people from one place to another caused by the trend of global migration.

In the past, if the villagers thought that there was a need for the developmental works or construction in the village, they used to perform some cultural programs in order to collect the money. In such programs the typical village drums were played to accompany the devotional songs, not cinema songs as they are being played nowadays. Aama remembers, “We sang devotional songs, not cinema songs as they do nowadays . . .” (8). And the collected money was used to repair the trails, make the pots for village feasts, etc. But nowadays, many youths migrate from their ancestral homeland and get adjusted in the city areas. Along with the mobility of the peoples, such cultural rituals and gatherings also got weakened and are gradually fading away.

Lamenting on the loss of such performances, Aama indicates that from time to time they used to “put on performances for the rest of the village as well, to raise money for repairing the trails or to make large pots for village feasts. . . Now, the drums are gone and the songs are gone”(8). The village people are found to have nurtured a kind of moral conscience that helps them to unite with one another during the times of need. It is the moral consciousness that emphasizes the advantage of the community at the cost of the individual benefit.

The nation exists where the community flourishes with collective efforts. Regarding the moral consciousness that creates nation, Ernest Renan views that “a large aggregate of men, healthy in mind and warm of heart, creates the kind of moral conscience which we call a nation”(20). But according to Aama, now such common moral conscience is fading along with the movement of the people to foreign lands. People hardly unite one another in the society for communal work as they did in the past; rather, people have become more individualistic as compared to the previous era.

Transnational element sometimes brings in harrowing effect in the life style of the people living within a national territory. Once one of the Gurkha Army pensioners from Simli sacrificed a small blacksmith caste child and then escaped to India from Nepal. Had there not been the easy access to India, such inhumane activity would not have occurred. “He escaped to India, and the police and officials from all over the district interrogated the village”(35). But the criminal had already escaped from this village to the southern borderland. The easy mobility of the people is always not good for the society for its smooth functioning.

Thus, mobility as one of the main factors of globalization does not always cater to the positive outcome; sometimes, it is detrimental to the harmonious existence of the nation and nationhood itself. Regarding the danger to the national territory brought by mobility, Ludden views that “mobility is a threat to the territorial harmony and civility” (1062). One must take into account the fact that easy means of mobility can also help those who can cause a potential threat to the nation and national territory.

Mobility is generally for better jobs and life in the city and that is why, nowadays the youths do not want to live the meager life in the village because rural spaces do not provide good sources of income to them. City has become the commercial hub where better jobs and facilities are available for those who can struggle to deserve them. Though there is often deception and treachery in the urban centers, the young generation people prefer to go to the cities from their ancestral villages. “With many of the city jobs now, you earn money only by someone else’s loss, sometimes by unfair means or trickery”(57). Along with the mobility of the youths from village to the cities, the village cultures and practices are also gradually waning and disappearing.

Nowadays, most of the youths do not know their rural customs, and practices. They have become oblivious towards the old practices because most of them are driven by materialistic urban lifestyles of the city. Along with the intrusion of the products of the new technology, the older cultural elements are getting vanished from the rural villages. In the past, villages were often identified by the thatched roofs which would be more durable as compared to today's tins. Now people use tin to roof the rural houses and, as a result, the thatched houses have disappeared even from the villages.

Remembering her earlier life period, Aama asserts that "knowing how to roof a house with slate is out of the question for today's youth. Most of them don't even know how to thatch a house"(57). Almost all from the younger generation want to roof their houses by tins despite the fact that tin roofs are expensive and last only for a few years. The traditional practices and cultures have been highly affected by the modern products; another change that has been brought by the mobility of the people from rural to urban spaces and from those to foreign lands. The village mingles with the city in many respects whether such mingling is positive or negative.

Power, property and deceptions are rampantly working in the city areas, and slowly and gradually, spreading to the village spaces as well. Theft, robbery, deception and murder have become the everyday and commonplace phenomena not only in the cities, but also in villages. Regarding the social unrest and instabilities in the contemporary world, Arjun Appadurai views that people "from one nation move to another, creating new instabilities there that causes further social unrest and thus further social exits. Thus, the people production needs of one can mean ethnic and social unrest for its neighbors . . ." (191-192). Nowadays, people have become threat to their own neighbors but in the past such kinds of

malpractices were not seen to have impacted the society that much. People used to help one another if the problem occurred in one house, the rest of the house members united together and helped voluntarily.

But nowadays the rural scenario has also got changed and the neighbors sometimes turn out to be the cheaters and/ or looters of their own neighbors. Once in the village of Simla, there was a robbery by the outsiders. “The leaders and masterminds had come from India, but two of the gangs were recent Seti high school graduates; most of them are educated. These are our sons, educated and unemployed, turning on their own villagers”(74). People migrated to another region and allied to the group of the strangers and came back to attack their own fathers, mothers, brothers, and sisters. Such a disgusting state of affairs is one of the consequences of the negative impact of the modern trend of mobility.

As per the change in time and circumstances, there is also the change in thought process even in the people living in the villages. In the past the villagers would sacrifice the animals in the name of dharma in order to appease the god. With regard to the animal sacrifice, Aama points out that “originally, all the relatives who came to funeral ceremonies were fed buffalo, goat and especially mutton. Now the lamas say that no animals should be sacrificed for reasons of dharma”(80). In Gurung community animals were sacrificed even in the death rituals in order to feed all the relatives in the past. But nowadays the Gurungs themselves have given up such unreligious activities of sacrificing the animals in the name of god and dharma.

There were many ill practices similarly sanctioned by the lamas and witch doctors in villages in the past. If anyone fell to be sick, they used to say that he or she was caught by the

witch who should be bitterly punished. It was widely assumed that if a witch does not like someone, she chants a special witch mantra onto a piece of food, and somehow gives it to the person to eat. The belief was that the person then becomes sick and it is only the shamans who can reverse such hex and cures the patient spiritually. But nowadays, such malpractices based on conservative traditions have been discouraged and hence diminished from many societies.

One has to have sufficient proof to accuse someone of being a witch. “Accusations of witchcraft can easily divide the village into arguments. No one wants to admit that she is a witch”(93). However, such traditional practices of the villagers are also being affected and changed by the modern belief systems developing and spreading from the urban milieu. “In Nepal it is illegal to openly accuse anyone of being a witch. . . Aama thinks there are currently no witches in Danda. . .” (147). As per the change in time, there is also the change in the life of villagers and Aama could not remain unaffected by such modern consciousness brought by the process of globalization and industrialization.

Industrialization has brought many changes in the life of the globally mobilized people ranging from the urban people to those living in rural places. Mobility has also brought many negative impacts in addition to the positive ones, in the environment and the long practiced traditions of the village life. People start to behave as if they are the citizens of the cosmos not of a particular nation or nation- state. With regard to the waning of nationalism, Ernest Gellner views that “nationalism receives diminished impetus during the later and prosperous stages of industrialism”(124). Western values are undermining the typical village identities of people because of the influence of industrialism.



In search of better life people started migrating from their birth place to the national cultures of the strangers. Aama views that “emigration to the southern borderlands and an attempt to start life over has been the only alternative for some”(148). Once they leave the village, they rarely come back to their native land and culture from foreign land. “In Nepal, young trees – and Aamas like Vishnu Maya – are endangered, and they face an uncertain future”(148). Industrialization and globalization harnessed not only development, consciousness, and comforts, but also brought uncertainty, fragmentation and dislocation in the previously harmonized communities where people had been living with the shared consciousness of true brotherhood.

Nowadays, people have become the transnational beings as they are more detached from their own cultural periphery and more attached to the foreign cultures and practices. The particular nation- state has become a “translocal space” (Appadurai 192) where people from various places meet one another in course of mobility. The typical cultural artifacts and rituals have been challenged and modified by the mobility and intrusion of people from one place to another. People nowadays have become dislocated and alienated; this has brought uncertainties in their lives and hence, they are always in process of becoming. However, as the case of Aama shows, even in such uncertainty, those migrated nationals have nurtured the love of nationality. Such uncertainty of life coupled with strong sense of nationality is meticulously portrayed in *Nepali Aama*.

## Chapter IV

### *America! Oh America!!* and *Nepali Aama*: Perusal in Contrast

#### **Spiritual Life in Dissonance with Material Life**

*America! Oh America!!* portrays the struggle of the characters who have been seeking materially prosperous life in the foreign land, that is, America. There is little description of the spiritual aspects of the people living there. It expresses how the migrated nationals have been tolerating the hardships and sufferings in the foreign land in order to earn some dollars and live the later period of life with material comfort and amenities. On the contrary, *Nepali Aama* also depicts the hardships and miseries endured by Vishnu Maya Gurung within the frame of communal, spiritual life even though there is no sense of having materially comfortable life in her old age. The text has not portrayed her as a person opting for the material prosperity; rather she is presented as a person living at subsistence level with few ambitions and desires.

The life of the migrated nationals in America turns out to be very difficult because of the western tendency of focusing on the material prosperity at the cost of spirituality. The pursuit of material enhancement at the cost of demotion of spirituality and communality further pushes the immigrants into the conditions of identity crisis in the foreign world. They could not affirm their respected human identities in the foreign land. "Cut off from their homes, migrant workers disappear into huge urban slums without the protection of a traditional rural mutual dependence system" (Masao Miyoshi 95). Nirmala is one of the representative figures alienated, exploited and lost in the haze of that exploitative milieu in America.

It is very unfortunate to know that Nirmala is exploited and deceived not only by the foreigners but also by the migrated Nepalese themselves. Her talent and expertise on music could no longer flourish in the foreign land because of the hand to mouth problems, leading to a destruction of her creative abilities. She has become a "poor desolate lady"(my trans. 4) with no respectful identity. Bhojpure recalls her dreadful situation and says "still she does any sort of work she gets"(my trans.121). Nirmala, as a migrated Nepalese national, could not affirm her dignified identity in the foreign land because of her ignorance about the treacherous and manipulative alien world.

In the beginning she is represented by Bhojpure as offering her helping hands to the poor pathetic workers in America. When Nirmala sees another co- national in that foreign land, she feels elated and becomes ready to help them in case of their difficulties. Having been moved by the contrived pathos of the Nepalese migrants, she helped many people wholeheartedly in America. But such help could never become reciprocal, rather those who got help from her turned out to be the cheaters and deceivers. Pointing out the sentimentality of Nirmala, Bhojpure cautions her and says "you never know to be envious at other rather you know how to be moved emotionally by their fabricated pathos, you know only to give dollars but not to take dollars"(my trans. 7). The western world is full of materialism and consumerism which Nirmala could not understand. As a result, she is deceived by the people whomever she meets at wherever she goes.

On the contrary, *Nepali Aama* presents the world of cooperation where the people are willing to help neighbors in case of necessity without any vested interest. *Nepali Aama* presents a communal village life style in which such helps are common and offered heartily by the village people. Regarding such generosity and mutual aid, Aama wants to share that

“relatives are generous in times of hardship, and this generosity is expected to be reciprocal . . . Those who have means are obliged to give loans to those who don’t”(146). There is a sense of spiritual kindness in the village people that if anyone of the neighbors falls into crisis, the next neighbor instantly helps him or her, but such kindness is withering in the foreign, developed countries because the sole interest of the people living in these countries is in material prosperity not in spiritual intimacy.

*America! Oh America!!* presents America in such a way that anyone who visits America once tends to get assimilated into it because of its material prosperity and advancement. “America! the most capable state to invent new things in the world. The entire world eyes at America”(my trans 25). People living in different countries tend to go to America and enjoy the physical and /or technological amenities that exist there. Bhojpure was not an exception in this regard. He visited many places of America and amongst them he likes New York the most. He writes that “New York never sleeps; never becomes tired on unsleeping; always stands; never winks its eyes” (my trans. 43). From this, it can be averred that those who have been living in New York are working on day and/or night or at any time they manage. This is how the west is enhancing its material prosperity to the zenith of world’s success.

When Bhojpure was at the apartment of his youngest son Sane, he happened to see many things especially the musical instruments in his room. The recording instruments were there in addition to guitar, keyboard, drum set, and effect instruments, etc. "but a kind of loneliness also rampantly prevailed there . . . the poor flat might have cried for Sane and Sane also cried on his loneliness" (my trans. 58). He used to play the guitar and sing songs but no one was there to listen to him in that foreign land. Because of his being thrown into the

foreign land, he could not get the harmonious conducive environment for music though there were all kinds of musical instruments available.

On the contrary, *Nepali Aama* presents the typical communal village life with cultural abundances of Nepal in a very meticulous way. The songs are sung in the villages in unison of the village members. Most often the villagers sing the devotional songs to the God and collect money from the every household in order to repair “the trails or to pay a coppersmith to make large pots for village feasts”(8). There is a sense of communality in the people and hence they take part in such cultural programs spontaneously for the preservation and promotion of the cultural practices. In such communal village life “wealth is never a private affair”(146). In a community, people often invoke shared feelings that often help to build a kind of communal identity in the community that is what one can call a nation.

However, the people in the west are conditioned to run after the matter and/or material achievement in one way or another. It is the material prosperity that provides them happiness and satisfaction. As Masao Miyoshi views, “for the exploited alien workers in inner cities, consumerism alone seems to offer solace, if they are fortunate enough to have money for paltry pleasures”(95). Most of the workers’ sole attempt living in the foreign land is directed towards survival, and not towards cultivating their thought towards nativism and pluralism. The workers from the alien world are mechanized in that mechanical world where humanity and affection rarely get space; they are coerced to work under the wretched conditions in western factories and companies.

In *America! Oh America!!* Bhojpure deftly explains how the workers are manipulated in the foreign companies and markets. Remembering the hardship endured by Aashish in

Colorado, Bhojpure writes, “that poor teen ager Nepali was working there by taking ‘Advil’ to kill his fever. Later, it was known that he was standing there for hours to earn dollars by selling the sweet chocolates to the chocolate mongers in order to please his boss”(my trans.9).The workers are not treated as human beings; they are compelled to work even under the condition of severe illness. This shows the bleak and scary situation in the foreign industries where humanity and generosity are at the bottom of the hierarchy of social values. It indicates that the western world is more materialistic than spiritualistic as compared to the eastern world and life style.

However, contemporary world is the world of mobility in which people are conditioned to move from one place to another even unknowingly and unwillingly. Vishnu Maya Gurung also happened to move towards the southern plains and then to America in the course of her life. When she was in India, she wanted to identify herself with the group of the Gurkha’s wives and felt somehow respected and secured when she would be in that group. In this regard, John Brueilly also views that “people who are separated from their families and their priests, and moved to anonymous townships, can find some comfort in the identity offered by nationality”(154). In the foreign land a trivial remark of nationality can also be the most powerful means to extend the national identity. Vishnu Maya Gurung also did not want to mingle with other people; rather, she felt herself at ease when she was in that group which was identical in terms of race, gender, language and as a whole a culture.

In the material world, people often face temptation in terms of wealth and properties from which they cannot come out easily. The western world and life style is also geared towards temptations to obtain material accumulation through commercialism. Pointing out this fact, Rabindranath Tagore views that “the west has accepted it and her civilization of

humanity has lost its path in the wilderness of machinery. This commercialism with its barbarity of ugly decorations is a terrible menace to all humanity”(152). Because of their focus on commercialism, the west is losing the charm of humanity and spirituality and hence mainly westerners have become more exploitative and manipulative to others. In such bleak scenario, the Nepalese immigrant workers have no alternative than working under exploitative hands when they are in the foreign land.

To exemplify the exploitation on the alien workers in the foreign land, Bhojpure portrays the sufferings endured by his son in America. In every summer season, Sane would shoulder the heavily loaded furniture items from one place to another. Sane narrates, “Papa and Mom my waist started giving me trouble from that time onwards” (my trans. 8). Listening to the pitiable condition Sane had to endure; Bhojpure became somewhat serious and uttered “Look! We have been giving comfort and happiness to America by getting troubled ourselves” (my trans. 8). The west gives its seminal emphasis on the matter at the cost of feelings and sentiments of the people. The west is accumulating the property at the cost of humanity and sentimentality which Bhojpure has deftly portrayed in this memoir.

But nowadays, the eastern world and life style is also turning materialistic and hence moving towards commercialism and consumerism which can appear to be detrimental to the long rooted sense of humanity and sentimentality of the easterners. Forecasting the upcoming dangers to be faced by Nepalese in Nepal, Bhojpure becomes somewhat skeptical and views that “those who reached the extremity on materiality now want to descend towards spirituality, now America is trying to do this; and we, already immersed in spirituality, are now lingering towards materiality”(my trans.10). Nowadays, the people of the eastern

countries are seen striving for the material prosperity at the cost of religion, cultures, assistance and generosity which are the typical characteristics of eastern civilization.

Bhojpure further cautions the Nepalese that they are destroying the native cultures, religions, practices and traditions in course of their mobility from one culture to another culture. “In course of pursuing material advancement, nowadays we have been running riot on our cottages, bungalows, malls, temples, mosques, and the whole rites and rituals”(my trans. 86). Most of the Nepalese youths are not aware concerning the diminution of the religious and cultural values and doctrines caused by the influences of mobility and globalization. People are moving from their country to the foreign countries for the sake of better life while simultaneously rejecting the richness of their native cultures and values. Bhojpure, through this remark, wants to urge the youths not to be indifferent and negative towards the protection of the existing native cultures, religions and practices while accepting other foreign cultures.

While foregrounding the material prosperity, the west could not safeguard the spiritual and communal life of the people who by nature want to live in community in a society. For those living in America, it is very difficult to manage time even for the house members, let alone the time for relatives and other neighbors living in the same locality. They are materially rich but communally weak; the inner cores of their being do not give them satisfaction even when they are successful in terms of material accumulation. There is everything but something is lacking and that something is the warmth of communal harmony and sharing of the cultural feelings and sentiments.



### **Love towards the Nation and/or Birth Place**

In course of mobility from one place to another an individual can go to any place in the world but ultimately he or she wants to return to his native country and or native land. Both the texts describe the intentions of the migrated Nepalese to return to Nepal after living in the foreign land. For a certain period of time, the migrated nationals become somewhat nostalgic and melancholic as they remember the native land. In *America! Oh America!!* the youngest son of Bhjopure named Sane evokes his desire in a melancholic tone to return to Nepal after living six years in America and evoked, “Papa I cannot exist in America, I really become mad if I live some long time here . . . I will come back to Nepal”( my trans. 57). Such attachment towards the nation is culturally rooted in his mind from which he cannot remain unaffected. He could not entertain the idea of living forever in the strange foreign land, so he decided to return home. From this sentiment also, one can understand that the love towards national and cultural values does not perish easily from the mind of the migrated nationals and hence, they return to their own homeland.

Same kind of sentiments can also be observed in Vishnu Maya Gurung' statement that she did not want to leave her ancestral homeland and become stranger in the foreign land, even though she received many opportunities to visit abroad. She had been to some places of India and America but she could not live there for long. Rather, she had to bear unexpected problems during her stay in India. Recalling the fever and headache that caught her in India, she said, “I didn't know what a headache was until I went on my first trip to India, when I was 18 years old”(22). She could not adjust in the foreign land and came back to Nepal where she got instantly recuperated even without the use of medicine. It could be that the psychological well being that she felt after returning to Nepal recuperated her so quickly.

Though there was difficulty and hardship in the village life, Vishnu Maya Gurung did not want to leave her native land. She expressed “no matter where I go, I can’t leave home for long. My parents and their parents were born, raised and lived their lives here. . . . I can’t leave the homestead where I’ve spent my life. May be because I know I could never return once I left” (2). She did have a strong attachment to the nation and the birth place which was toiled and protected by her ancestors. She wanted to be identified with the places and people of her life; and the places and people of her life were not the urban strangers of the foreign land but the village neighbors, sisters, brother, mothers, and fathers. She had strong attachment with the native land from where she did not want to escape despite the hardship and difficulties.

Sense of belongingness towards the native culture and land can also be clearly observed in the life experiences of the writer of the book himself as he did not stay later period of his life in Nepal. After spending fifteen years in Nepal volunteering for the Peace Corps, he went back to America. “ During the summer of 1988, the author and his companion Didi Thunder took Aama on a 12,000 mile journey around the United States”(About the Author). It does not matter how long one stays in the foreign land, what matters is the sense of nationality in the migrated people concerning the culture and people with which they were cultured and brought up. Aama came back to Nepal and author went to America to live the rest of their lives. From this also, we can conclude that people do not easily forget the culture, nation and their family members and relatives wherever they go in course of their lives.

It is a fact that the migrated Nepali nationals do not forget the national and cultural values, practices and festivities while living in the foreign land; rather, they want to

rejuvenate and spread such values amongst the non-resident Nepalese and even non-Nepalese peoples. Once, at Situ ,Prasanna, Prabin and Mala’s apartment Bhojpur couple intended to sing a national song so as to arouse the sense of nationality and for this purpose they sang a song entitled “ Lahara Pahara Chharako Desh and Tyamke Danda” (the country with creepers, rocks and falls and Tyamke Hill 19). At that moment the singers as well as the audiences forgot America for a while and got assimilated with the Tyamke Hill. They evoked a sense of patriotism through that song which minimized the agony of being far from their nation and nationhood. A sense of patriotism does not wane easily from the mindset of those Nepalese nationals who are brought up in particular socio- cultural surroundings in a home country.

A migrated national carries on the sense of nationality and cultural belongings wherever he or she goes in course of migration. It is a fact that nobody can control the flow of the culture transferred from one culture to another in course of mobility of the people. But the native culture prompts the people more effectively than others. Referring to the intactness of the culture remained in the psyche of the migrated nationals, Bhojpure reminds his cousin, Juhi, of her native culture and says “but Juhi, notwithstanding your stay in America, you are Nepal, you are Kantipuri city . . . ; Juhi ! at first, you are Nepali; and to be specific, you are Kathmandutie”( my trans. 77). By reminding Juhi of her native land, Bhojpure is trying to share with his readers that an individual is primarily identified by his or her original nationality in the alien country.

Bhojpure also urges Nirmala to return to Nepal from America because Nirmala could not materialize the American dream of life, liberty and pursuit of happiness while living there. When he saw Nirmala in a very pathetic condition in Aspen, Bhojoure also forgot all

the comforts, happiness and pleasures that he had enjoyed while visiting Colorado and other cities. “Had you not been in America, I could have enjoyed there. Why did you go there, Nirmala? Alas! Those who needn’t go to America should not go there. And you should not have gone there” (my trans.12). By urging all this, Bhojpure is enticing Nirmala to return to Nepal from the foreign land after seeing her miserable condition in America. The hardship that the migrated nationals have been tolerating in foreign land is not easily accepted by Bhojpure. That is why, he is insisting those who have been living difficult lives in America to return back to Nepal.

Once in course of pilgrimage to Muktinath, Vishnu Maya Gurung happened to visit different sorts of people who are from different regions of Nepal. They conversed with one another and “all agreed about the hardships of life in the hills, but with twinkles in their eyes confirming their attachment to their mountain homeland”(98). It clearly demonstrates their attachment towards the birth place though they accepted that they are living the life with hardships and difficulties in the villages.

As compared to other outsiders, it is the local people who have strong attachment to their place. Once in course of visiting different places of America, Bhojpure happened to be in Nebraska, a rural space, which is normally laughed at by most of the whites as well as blacks who have been living in the so-called big places. But for the local people of Nebraska, it is the most cherished place from which they cannot easily secede. Just after the airplane took off from Nebraska, Bhojpure happened to hear almost all passengers’ chorus “‘Nebraska . . .!’ Then only I knew – those who were on airplane were not international, almost all local. I thought that others cannot love the place as much as locals do” (my

trans.55). From this expression also we can state that it is the local people who have a strong affiliation to the native places where they live.

Thus, in course of mobility from one place to another individuals can go to any place in the world but ultimately they want to return to their native country and/ or native land because those migrated nationals always nurture the cultural and national sentiments intact somewhere in their psyche which pave the way for them to return to their homelands and native cultures. Nowadays, the lives of people are full of difficulties and hardships wherever they go but the difficulties and hardships endured in the homeland are worthier than those endured in the foreign land, and eventually people want to return to their own native lands. That is why, it is argued that the attachment to the native culture does not fade easily from the mindset of the migrated nationals and the reason why they want to reinvigorate and spread native cultural values in order to affirm their distinct identities in foreign lands.

## Chapter V

### Conclusion

In this thesis, the prime emphasis was to study how nationality operates and manifests in the occasional activities of migrated nationals in the contemporary transnational world through an intensive study of *America! Oh America!!* and *Nepali Aama* from the perspective of nationality and mobility. Basically, I tried to study how nationality remains in the psyche of the people who have been greatly affected by the trend of globalization and mobility and manifests in the behavior of specific individuals when the situation triggers the feelings associated with nationality. This thesis, thus, focused on the study of the people's mobility from spiritual, rural life of native spaces to materialistic urban life world of foreign lands; it also examined how the concept of nationality forms, modifies, and manifests in varied forms in the behavior of people living in different parts of the world especially in Nepal and America.

This study has asserted that emotions and feelings associated with nationality can be seen in the behavior of the migrated nationals. In order to examine such traces of nationality, I have tried to make a critical analysis of the rural and urban life styles of the characters of these two texts through an interrogation of the parochial concept of nationality. In other words, this study contends that nationality is not restricted to the particular territory, sovereignty, mountains, rivers, etc.; rather, it is intricately related to the commonality of traits of the people born and brought up in a particular socio-political background. It does not make any difference where they have been living in course of their life; nationalistic feeling comes whenever they happen to be within specific emotive contexts.

For the Nepalese people, nationality is more related to spirituality and communality rather than materiality and individuality. Nepalese want to live in the communal world even in the alien world i.e. America where almost everyone runs after money and property on their own individual way neither offering the help nor asking for the help of others. While the people in the west often live their individual lives in the pursuit of material accumulation and happiness. On the contrary, Nepalese, who have been living there, are seen willing to live the shared communal life which is clearly portrayed by Bhojpure in *America! Oh America!!* The desire of Nepalese people to live in harmony and community is also deftly depicted by Broughton Coburn in *Nepali Aama*. The national identity of the Nepalese lies in communality and harmony not on individuality and materiality.

This research also proves that the sense of attachment to the national and cultural values strengthens when one experiences hardships and difficulties in the alien world. Bhojpure happened to see the turbulent life experiences of the migrated nationals like Nirmala, Sane, and some others in America; experiences that impacted him profoundly and he urged them to return to Nepal where they could enjoy the dignified human life much better than they have been living in America. In this regard, this text can be regarded as a mouthpiece of the problems and discriminations endured by the Nepalese immigrants in the western world, especially in America.

If one has to endure hardship, why not to endure such hardships in the native land? In this regard, *Nepali Aama* also shows the attachment of villagers to their homelands even if all of them agree that the life in the village is full of difficulties and hardships. Vishnu Maya Gurung in this text is presented as a person who does not desire to leave the homeland to escape such difficulties. From this, it is understood that if one has to endure the difficulties in

his/ her destiny, he or she wants to bear such difficulties in his or her own native lands not in foreign lands.

This study has discussed the various ways of understanding the notion of nationality in the transnational world. At first, the seminal focus was laid on the issue of nationality in the mobile and global world and it was studied how the traces of nationality emerge in the behavior of those who are living inside and outside Nepal. In order to evidence such traces of nationality, this study then tried to review the behavioral practices of people wherein the traces of nationality can be felt. It also suggests that one should understand the nationality not in terms of abstract conceptualization but in occasional responses of the people.

Despite all these facts, the generations after generations have moved from those native spaces to resettle in urban and richer foreign places. Millions become foreigners by leaving their national territories because all human beings desire the affluent life with economic and academic strength. People want to have a good social life and it is the social mobility that typically leads people from poorer to richer place, from villages to cities. Mobility has made whole world as a miniature society because of which the nationality is in vortex of existence.

Because of all such cultural and social phenomena, nowadays the concept of nationality has somehow changed. Such a new perspective concerning nationality focuses on the people's sentiments and attachment in nation formation rather than on the rivers, mountains and / or physical borders of the nation. The nationality as such can exist outside the particular periphery or territory of a specific nation-state because mobility does not endanger the nationality rather proliferate the intensity of nationality in the people. Even when people start living outside the particular nation or nation-state, they always remain



attached to the national and cultural values of the nation where they were brought up and/or enjoyed their childhood. The attachment to the native culture does not wane easily from the minds of those migrated nationals and hence, they want to reinvigorate and spread such value in order to create their distinct identities in the foreign land even more.

Thus, this research has shown that the concept of nationality has not perished and does not perish from the minds of the migrated people. Rather it can manifest in varied forms and appearances in the behavior of those people who migrate from one geographical region to another in the course of their life in this contemporary world characterized by mobility. Based on the analysis of this thesis, it can be avowed that the national values and cultures should be explored not in terms of the abstract concept of a nation related to its physical borders, but in occasional responses of the people no matter where they live. And such traces of nationality always reside in the minds of the nationals whether migrated or non-migrated, and also manifest in the occasional responses of those people living in different parts of the world.

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