

Tribhuvan University

Representation of the Subaltern Subjects in R. Jan Mukherjee's *Hetichh kup* and
Binod Thapa's *Yambunera*

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Declaration

I hereby declare that this dissertation entitled “Representation of the Subaltern Subjects in R. Jan Mukherjee’s *Hetichh kup* and Binodini Chatterjee’s *Yambunera*” submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, is an entirely original work prepared under the supervision of my supervisor. I have made the acknowledgements to all the ideas and information consulted from various sources in course of writing this dissertation. The results presented in this dissertation have not been presented or submitted anywhere else for the award of any degree or for any other purposes. No part of the contents of this dissertation has ever been published in any form before. I shall be solely responsible if any evidence is found against my dissertation.

.....

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Abstract

The present study argues that R. Jan Mukherjee and Binay Chandra represent the subaltern people as mute, muted, and unheard characters. This study applies the critical perspective of subaltern studies as furthered in postcolonial India to rewrite the social history in the post-independence period. The major theorists beginning from Ranjit Guha to Gayatri Chakravarti Spivak state that the people at the bottom tend to get misrepresented and termed inaccessible for the people at the top. However, this study assumes that J. Magio helps us understand the premise that the people express their voice through aesthetic works. Mukherjee's *Hetchh kup* focuses on the cultural, indigenous identity and lends a voice to the sufferings and marginalization of the characters. It implies that the subalterns are silenced due to the context of socio-political structure so their voices are unheard and ignored. Similarly, Chandra's *Yambuner* deals with marginalization, poverty, illiteracy, subjugation, domination of subalterns and envisions their subsequent resistance. Using the critical perspective of Gayatri Chakrabarty Spivak, Ranjit Guha, Partha Chatterjee, Dipesh Chakravorty, and J. Magio, this study analyzes the fictions to conclude that the contemporary Nepali fiction depicts mute, muted, and unheard subjects in it.

Keywords: Nepali Fictions, Subaltern, Indigenous People, Representation, Voice from the Margin

Chapter I. Representation, Subaltern, and Literature

This dissertation studies R. Jan Mukherjee's *Hetch kup* and Bin Th ng's *Y mbunera* exploring the subaltern representation from the critical perspective of Subaltern Studies. *Hetch kup* and *Y mbunera* identify issues of sufferings, oppression, resistance, and discrimination because most characters such as Sangan, Diwahang, Maila deva's son and Nusan in *Hetchh kup* experiences sufferings, oppression, and discrimination and cannot resist against such a condition. Moreover, the Lahure culture is one reason that makes the people backward and denies the poor ethnic communities an access to the state. The text rejects the idea of oppression on his ethnic community. Racial liberation and consciousness is the focus of Mukherjee's writings. The subaltern subjects are silenced. Their representations are severely distorted. These subjects search their voices. They lack social, political, and economic power so the representations are constructed in the way that social, political, and economic framework influence them. They are identified in terms of race, gender, class, and religion, which define the subaltern consciousness. Peasants, workers and other subordinated groups are denied access to hegemonic power. The state power of the rulers hegemonizes the subalterns. Cultural hegemony constructs the subaltern consciousness. Hegemony is legitimized power and authority. Besides this, patriarchal ideology is another factor that stimulates repression originating in politics and economy which the men mostly occupy.

Similarly, Bin Th ng is a young, Nepali writer, who writes about the indigenous Tamang women from the margin. Th ng's *Y mbunera* shades light on the troubles of the Tamangs in Yambu because these Tamang people were perceived as being

uncultured, savage and uneducated. In most selected stories for the study, Yambu, a term in Tamang, represents the state's pride, arrogance and glory. *Y mbunera* argues that the Tamangs were made a puppet, had no voice, and were made to obey the orders in history. Furthermore, *Y mbunera* is a tale of the oppressed women from the Tamang community and reveals how their lack of financial means and education has brought these people to the margin. The text suggests that the monolithic narratives ignore the labor and wage of the indigenous community. Viewed from the critical perspective, *Hetchhakupa* and *Y mbunera* reveal several issues about subaltern classes, their consciousness and voices but these factors need a strong agency.

In *Hetchhakupa*, Sagen experiences several difficulties while traveling from his birthplace to Kathmandu in search of better opportunities. The protagonist moves into the crowded metropolitan city with infinite dreams but he has to struggle constantly. As an editor, he had to provide for his family in the expensive city yet his life does not thrive. Similarly, the subaltern subject is Chhampeni Didi in *Y mbunera*; she suffers from the hand of the powerful as she is a woman. Gangaram and Junedo are prejudiced in the name of religion, color, caste, geography, language and culture. The Lahure culture and the foreign employment disorient Bhagawan whilst patriarchal society neglects and abuses Sapana. Due to their culture, poverty, lack of knowledge, and the structural barrier, Sommaya and Pyakhule become the subalterns. Although the texts are interpreted from other perspectives like gender studies or Marxist ideology, the present study examines how the characters in these texts are marginalized, discriminated against and oppressed in society. Thus, the study tries to

explore the literary representations of the subaltern characters from the perspective of subaltern studies in the two texts.

Research Problem

The study examines the representations of characters as the subaltern in these selected texts and looks at the persistent resistance against the main Nepali cultural structure through literature. In the selected texts I have found that characters seem to compete against the ideological and cultural hegemony, creating strong subjectivity positions by ways of knowledge and resistance. Both the writers refer to the culturally hegemonic practices such as language policy, influence of religion and exclusion of indigenous issues. The study examines ethno-aesthetics of literary sensibility, cultural diversity and socio-political conditions as approaches of cultural hegemony and subaltern subjects in the selected texts. In Mukherjee's *Hechhakuppa* characters comprise of indigenous, the women, the Dalit and even the poor Aryan who have been subordinated from the perspective of the elite discourses. On the contrary, Thakur's *Yambunera* includes the women, the indigenous, the Madhesi and mostly the Tamang people and it portrays how these characters suffer due to discriminatory social, cultural, and political practices. Examining this literary representation of characters as the subaltern in Ranganatha's *Hetchakup* and Binodini's *Yambunera*, the researcher argues that the authors draw upon the ethnic consciousness as a way of undermining the hegemonic structure by creating an alternative discourse. Subsequently, the authors advocate for an equal recognition of marginal literature and culture. They endeavor to publicize how representations of the subaltern subjects are

made in literary works and why they become the subalterns. Both writers show how the subalterns become silenced and discriminated in their own land.

The study has the following research questions relating to the selected literary texts:

- a. What are the factors that contribute to formation of the subaltern characters and what compels them not to assert their voice against the dominant ideology?
- b. Why do the subaltern characters fail to speak against the hegemony in the mainstream Nepali literature and culture?
- c. How are representations of the subaltern subjects constructed in the selected texts?

Objectives of the Study

The study has the following objectives:

- a. to identify the factors that contribute to create hegemonic fences among the characters concerning dominant ideology and ethnic identity,
- b. to examine historical, traditional, and socio-cultural elements which cause the subaltern characters to remain muted, and
- c. to analyze the constructions and representations of the subaltern subjects in the proposed texts.

Model of Interpretation

The dissertation has adopted a qualitative method of analysis of the primary texts to collect comprehensive concepts and to understand the representations of the subaltern characters. Likewise, the researcher collected, reviewed, and analyzed the insights on the major issues such as the subaltern voice, cultural hegemony, identity

and marginality from relevant study reports, journals, periodicals, and newspapers, research reports from the libraries, from print and online sources. Particularly, primary texts, methodological and the secondary sources written or printed in Nepali use my own translation. The framework of interpretation includes the critical insights developed in Subaltern Studies. The selected texts under the study present the features of subaltern issues in literary discourses. To examine the two texts, perspectives of these critics namely, Gayatri Chokravorty Spivak, Ranajit Guha, Partha Chatarjee, Gyan Prakash and Dipesh Chakraborty have been instrumental and helpful. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak records that the Indian histories were told from the vantage point of the colonizers and presented a story of the colony. Similarly, Ranajit Guha wanted to give voice to the subjected peoples. The word "subaltern" is roughly taken from the writings of the Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci and Spivak who says that the subaltern is a "nonelite or subordinated social groups. It is at once without any particular theoretical rigor and useful for problemizing humanist concepts of the sovereign subject" (213). Spivak stresses that the subaltern means a subject of lower rank. For her, the subalterns cannot speak or are mute, so she wants to lend voice to the muted people within the national boundaries. Gyan Prakash argues that colonialism started stable hierarchies between the colonizer and the colonized, the occidental and the oriental thus producing a subaltern class (3). The westerners view the easterners as the others within the framework of colonization. In the selected texts characters of lower classes and social ranks are the colonized as the elite groups or the ruling classes of the society. Hence, subaltern studies is concerned with the interplay of dominance and subordination in a colonial system. For Guha, the subaltern subjects

are such social groups who are excluded from the hegemonic ruling classes.

In Postcolonial theory, the subalterns are described as lower class social groups who are in the margin of a society. For Partha Chatterjee, "...the subaltern classes inhabit an autonomous domain", and this domination has been conceptualized as a relation of power (59). Even though the subaltern groups are colonized, they act as a source of force and power independently. Hence, the radical possibility of subaltern consciousness in a hierarchical social structure.

To cite the instances from the selected texts, fictionalized characters namely Sangen, Chhapeni Didi, Nusan and Kamansing are colonized because they lack agency and the state dominates them by not paying attention to their calls. But if they can organize independently and form an organization, they create and recreate power of resistance and revolts. Modern social critiques of caste, oppressions of women, the lack of rights for laboring and subaltern classes, as Dipesh Chakrabarty suggests, in India are unthinkable except as a legacy of how Enlightenment Europe was appropriated in the subcontinent(4). He stresses a legacy of Enlightenment Europe which was appropriated in the case of subalternity. He means to point out caste-based discrimination, women exploitation and denial of human rights to the marginalized in society.

Organization of the Study

The study has been organized into four chapters. The first chapter introduces the background of the dissertation, the problem/research question, objectives, and hypothesis, summary of the primary texts and methodology. The second chapter offers the critical reviews of the primary, methodological, and secondary texts. It includes a

critical response to *Hetchh kup* and *Y mbunera*. The third contains the textual analysis that incorporates interpretations of the data collected from the primary, methodological, and secondary texts. Finally, the fourth chapter includes a conclusion of the thesis.

Chapter II. Critical Response to *Hetchh kup* and *Y mbunera*

R janMuk rung's *Hetchh kup* and Bin Th ng's *Y mbunera* are the primary two texts that explore the ethnic experiences, the situations of the marginalized, and representation of the indigenous communities. Thus they have begun to write creatively bringing cultural dissimilarities that existed in Nepali society long ago into the mainstream literature. And at the same time they have picked subjects, discussing the ethnic identity issues, marginalization, discriminatory social practices and subordination to the rulers. The study aims at critiquing the texts from the perspectives such as injustice, prejudice, protest, and resistance, and intends to shed light on the just documentation of the indigenous, the women, the untouchable, Madheshi and minorities across the nation. Bin Th ng contends that *Y mbunera* focuses on the plights of the Tamangs in Yambu as they were perceived as being uncultured, savage and uneducated. As a result, they were made a puppet. They had no voice. They were made to obey the orders. Similarly, R janMuk rung's *Hetchh kup* exposes sufferings, oppression, resistance, and discrimination of not of the indigenous people but of other races. In the novel, the writer calls pride in the Lahure culture as the reasons behind backwardness of the poor ethnic communities.

Several commentators, reviewers and scholars have expressed their views and interpreted the texts. The texts have been examined through multiple perspectives that include prejudices against the community, indifference to the minorities, protest and resistance of the characters as depicted in the stories. The following are the commentators, reviewers and critics who have given the different views and comments.

Richa Bhattarai writes that *Hetchh kup* is a character from the sacred Mundhum of the Kiratis. Muk runghas created a parallel to this mythical hero in his protagonist Sangen. He is a representative of numerous faceless and voiceless Kiratis. Years of Sangen's life begin from the quiet village of Dilpa and get caught in the brutal environments of Kathmandu (n. pag). As she remarks, characters get intermingled with his life and journalistic profession but they enjoy organizing rallies, complaining about the political environment and its indifference, discussing the plight of ex-gurkhas, complaining of being marginalized and expressing their complaint (n.pag). Moreover, she adds that in the village of ancient Dilungpa, the planting scene, the gossip at the water-tap, rituals of returning an eloped bride or asking for the hand of a daughter, the myth of Bakhamma woven seamlessly into the narrative, and the conversation about lahures among the young girls have been elaborated intimately. In this sense, the events get narrated through the eyes of the protagonist in a novel.

Rajit Ojha states that Muk rung's novel depicts the painful plights of the exploited groups of the nation and represents the ethnic voices and their culture-based consciousness describing most characters with their distinct traits (n.pag). The social, economic, cultural and political aspects of the contemporary period of Nepal are presented clearly in a text. He exposes the oppression and discrimination over the marginalized.

Similarly, *Hetch kup* raises ethnic identity issues and explores the root of the indigenous ethnicity. It indicates the discriminatory social practices that existed in society (n. pag). However, R jan Muk rung expresses that he breathes with his Mundhum culture. His novel conveys society, culture, civilization, and Mundhum in

the national geography and his power of his poetical style arises from these aspects (Back cover). Muk rung's *Hecchakuppa* represents those who share tales of sufferings, oppression, resistance, and discrimination no matter which color, race or religion they belong to. Since sufficient scholarly readings have not been done on Muk rung's *Hetchh kup*, some information is collected from the personal interview. In a personal interview with the novelist, Muk rung observes that *Hetchh kup* is a text about the kirati myth but he argues issues such as color, race or religion (personal interview). Thus, the text illustrates the ethnic sensibility and cultural significance from the perspective of the protagonist Sangen.

Basanta Basnet writes that *Hetchh kup* stands against racial discrimination in the nation. Characters are anarchic and creative. On the whole, *Hetchh kup* is a total sum of what Muk runghas experienced in his life. In contrast, characters in a novel are racists in a sense that they together fight back for identity against hominization in the name of globalization (npag.). In this way, indigenous characters are illustrious examples of experimentation of an alternative debate in Nepali literary discourse. In Annapurna Post, 13 Phalgun, 2068, R jan Muk rung states that he has written in opposition to oppression in his racial community. Moreover, racial liberation and racial consciousness is the central focus of his writings. This is what he has written. If it is called 'racist work', it is not a fault. He is a full-time author of Nepali literature (n pag). The fiction- writer agrees to write work of literature to represent his community and their voices and faces in writings of this kind.

Arun Baral regards *Hetchh kup* as the ethno-aesthetics and he writes that *Hetchh kup* is a novel of new kind, and it is a fine art work and literature, depicting

the ethno aesthetics. In artwork and literature, the term ‘ethnoaesthetics’ bears its existence and significance as an alternative discourse (Interview). In a similar way, in the published interview with the Post, Muk runglaves books, and the Nepali works of literature which is becoming diverse and inclusive. He and his teams (also known as ‘creative anarchy’) intended to introduce the “culture, philosophy and lifestyle of Janajatis to mainstream literature”. He spoke to the Post with strong conviction: “Our identities’ narratives were missing in those stories, and our experiences had no mentions. And this wasn’t just about our representation; it was about the need to work on literary works that accepted diversity” (Interview). Literary texts, which accept and represent cultural diversity, should come through the perspectives of the indigenous.

In the collection, *Y mbunera* narrates an event. One of the policemen shouted, “Sir! The jar is full of *jaand*[liquor made from boiled rice]. Wine is not discovered inside” (59). The fiction writer describes the protagonist’s basics of source of income though not legalized. Obviously, illiterate women like Sommaya living in Yambu have no other options except trading alcohol. *Gangaram’s Bicycle* shows prejudice on the basis of color, race, religion, geography, culture, boundary and language. Saiko 5, another narrative depicts the plight of a woman who earns her livelihood by trading the local wine with the village customers. The story features many characters among which a woman named Chhampeni is an inferior character. In Saiko 5[a wrist watch], Th ng alleges that yet another character, Ramsharana works as a laborer in the textile’s. Otherwise who would feed his mouth? He owned a bicycle. As soon as the duty was over, he cycled toward Chhampeni Didi’s wine shop. Such was his regular activity: home to the factory, then factory to wine shop and factory to his home

(*Y mbunera* 29). *Y mbunera* is a common saga of all of those who are left behind by an authority. It is not only the description of witnesses but also story from the victims (n.pag). In this way, the text recounts stories of all the characters, who had to suffer significantly.

Kshitij Chauriel writes that the anthology of short stories is a way of understanding and experiencing a varying dimension of the Tamang community that are left behind the state and the authority. Among the anthology, most stories are worth reading yet some lack a proper development of both plot and character and characterization (n pag). Similarly, the critic Prakash Thapsuhang writes that the power motif ignores the culture of the marginalized community, and the anthology intends to depict the situation. Sommaya is a character and her adamant nature is a strong resistance against cultural invasion (n pag). Babu Saheb writes that there are many people who are socially oppressed, subjugated and repressed. All these communities share their own rhythms of life. Pains and complaints about social injustice get told in the anthology. The state mechanism that believed in monolithic narrative in the case of discriminatory acts continued to oppress in stories of other races. Forgotten and unheard people must be mentioned in a narrative not written for ages. If not, it will never be written. *Y mbunera* is conceived when the storywriter feels the same vibe (n.pag). Obviously, Th ng's *Y mbunera* documents the accounts of forgotten and unheard people with long stories of sufferings in Nepali literary texts.

Another critic Ramchandra Shrestha observes that *Y mbunera* connotes Kathmandu in Tamang. Kathmandu is a symbol of resource, means, power, reign and dream. It is quite appealing and enticing. However, the people living a life near

Kathmandu have been excluded from the state. The marginal suffer and cannot separate themselves from the center yet are not included. The base supplies pride, glamor, and luxurious life (n. pag.). In the same fashion, Gauri Tamu states that as an endangered species, a tale of the sufferings, exploitation, oppression and discrimination the Tamang have experienced, is long and profound. *Y mbunera* depicts the plights of the Tamang women who are being doubly marginalized from the state and the community (n pag). In contrast, Praju Panta in a published interview with the writer says that the writer almost always digs out pain, struggle and the state's domination in her story but she agrees to express anger and the characters' uneasiness. These characters have suffered a lot (Interview). So, the text emphasizes the continued struggle of the marginalized communities and highlights sufferings every character experiences.

The reviewer Tulsi Acharya states that the story presents human nature, emotion, and instinct artistically; these stories are excellent as per the subject matter. Their voices would never be heard and read. Its society and characters would not be visible. It is based on the realistic portrayal of society and characters ignored by the state power (n pag). Yet another reviewer Anvesh Thulung states that in the anthology, *Yambu* in former times meant Nepal for Tamang. The Kathmandu valley used to be called *Yambu* which from the Tamang's view would appear to be another world for the other people. Calling such people a vulnerable race, the rulers continued to exploit these folks socially and economically for centuries (n pag). He concludes that if such people are vulnerable races they are far likely prone to exploitation. In a reader's comment, Janak Karki points out social realism as one of the features seen in a story.

The storywriter has portrayed the situation of the past and present. Her stories deal with the voice of the marginal and helpless, society, religion and culture, tradition and rituals (n pag). He intends to portray voices of the marginal and helpless.

Bhatrai and Ojha view Muk rung's *Hechhakuppa* as a narrative of sufferings, oppression, resistance, and discrimination. She comments, "Every single difficulty of existing in Kathmandu is exhibited through Sangen's eyes: a grouchy landlord, professional insecurity, and superficial relations" (n.pag). In a similar tone, Ojha claims that Muk rung' text presents a painful plight of the exploited and the oppressed in society (n.pag). However, Bin Th ng's *Y mbunera* is perceived as a saga of the oppressed women from the Tamang community whose lack of economy and education has certainly pushed these people to the margin. Th ng's *Y mbunera* tries to subvert the monolithic narrative which ignores the labor and wage of the indigenous community. In the monolithic narrative they become the second citizen on their own territory (back cover). In the anthology, as Ashma states, Champeni didi's wine shop, Aani Pema's life and her decision, Sommaya's struggle, Shermo's life story, Syammhendo and Yangji's courage and Sita and Sabin ' selfishless interest clustermost women characters and valorize the problem of these women characters (n. pag.). It is viewed that her anthology presents women as valiant, self-assured and meek in society. To cite a few examples, the protagonist's basic of source of income though not legalized is described in *Y mbunera*. "Gangaram's Saikal" shows prejudice against the Madhesi community, and *Saiko 5* depicts the struggle of a woman trading the local liquor for survival.

The multiple issues have been identified in the readings, and simultaneously they indicate struggle of woman identity, and prejudices shown towards other people. Likewise, Karki states that the voice of the marginal and helpless, society, religion and culture, tradition and rituals have been dealt with in the text (n pag). On the contrary, Acharya views that the realistic portrayal of society and characters ignored by the state power has become the central theme of the text (n pag). In this connection, Thapsuhang writes that the power ignores the culture of the marginalized community, and a strong resistance against cultural invasion is expressed in a female character (n pag). Stories of sufferings, oppression, resistance, and discrimination are inscribed inside a novel, *Hetchh kup* and it deals with issues such as culture, race or religion.

Both Muk rung's and Th ng's texts support cultural and indigenous identity, and their writings reflect interpretations of their history then and now. According to Bhattarai, Muk rung's text discusses the political indifference, the plight of ex-gurkhas, and complaint of being marginalized (n.pag) whereas Th ng's text describes how the Tamang community is exploited socially and economically even though they are close to the Kathmandu valley. They were made to bow and obey the orders of the rulers. The similarity between the texts identifies the marginalization of the ethnic community, women, and the untouchable. *Hetchh kup*'s protagonist is a male member from indigenous group but *Y mbunera* uses women characters as the protagonists who strongly speak for their community and individuality. All these texts create the lens to look at the conditions of the people from the margin, and explain how their religion, culture, origin and race would be addressed and valued across the nation. To cite here, the Tamangs are such people as vulnerable race, so these folks are

exploited socially and economically for centuries in the hands of the rulers (n pag). On the whole, the two texts build the connections among representations, cultural identities, relational realities of people of diverse ideologies and social status, discrimination and hegemony of high culture over the others.

The voice of the marginal and helpless, society, religion and culture, tradition and rituals is asserted in Bin Th ng's *Y mbunera*. Furthermore, the text portrays a community where the Tamangs are oppressed by the rulers in the past history and they are still backward economically. Likewise, the texts recognize the marginalization of the ethnic community, women, and the untouchable. Society and characters are ignored by the state power, and portrayal of this kind has come to be the dominant theme of the text. However, a grouchy landlord, professional insecurity, superficial relations are revealed through the protagonist's eyes in Muk rung's *Hetchh kup*. The two texts try to exhibit and reinforce the cultural and indigenous identity, and at the same time their writings reflect interpretations of their history, sharing sufferings and continuous struggles faced by the different communities. The similarity of the texts is that the characters are marginalized and exploited. On the contrary, Muk rung's text displays the Lahure culture whereas Th ng's reveal the traditional trade of liquor among the Tamang community.

In summary, most characters *Hetchh kup* and *Y mbunera* have been identified as the marginalized, exploited and discriminated people from the indigenous and other communities. The critics indicate that marginalization is based on the state mechanism, patriarchy and hegemony. Characters that try to speak their voices are the people considered as the subalterns because the ruling classes ignore them. Some may

in *Y mbunera* resists strongly but her dissenting voice is unheard and ignored. In the same way, Sangen's voice in *Hetchh kup* is ignored despite his education. From the critical readings on the two texts, most characters are identified as the poor, illiterate subalterns who are marginalized in the state. The subaltern groups cannot organize and unite themselves because of lack of strong agency which develops from the political power and knowledge. Subalterns in Nepali do have their voice but the ruling classes subdue them. Writing the voices of the margins is a new trend in Nepali literature and an alternative discourse of dissenting voice.

Departure

Considering the reviews and comments on the two texts, the commentators, critics or reviewers have interpreted these texts from other perspectives such as basic themes, historical and political record, culture and language; however, they have not studied the primary texts from the perspective of subaltern studies. According to different scholars and reviewers, R. Jan Mukherjee's *Hetchh kup* highlights the Kirati myth and the plights of the marginalized groups who struggle endlessly for livelihood and survival. Besides, ethnicity, marginalization and subjugation are some of the issues that the text attempts to spotlight. In a similar way, Bin Thang's *Y mbunera* depicts exclusively the subjects related to women's struggle, love and protest. Intermarriage is another aspect discussed in her story. Primarily, *Y mbunera* deals with the cultural aesthetics of the Tamangs living in Yambu yet these people have not significantly prospered and still are working hard to regain pride of Tamang history. Anvesh Thulung argues that in the past history, people were a vulnerable race, so the rulers exploited these people continuously.

Critics or reviewers have not examined these texts from the perspective of Subaltern Studies or Subaltern Theory. From the critical readings of the texts, they have reviewed these two texts through the themes, literary artifacts and the contemporary issues. Subaltern Studies as an alternative perspective allows the broad readers or critics alike to understand the representations of the fictional characters from the margin in literature and the rebellious voice of the subalterns as the marginalized, socially excluded groups. The subaltern perspective can aid in understanding the literary debates or critical observations on the representations of the marginal groups in the texts. Generally, writing about the voice from the margin lends the voice to the silenced subalterns. Although the texts are interpreted from different perspectives, the present study examines how the characters in these texts are marginalized, discriminated, and oppressed in their own territory. Therefore, the present study explores the representations of characters as the subaltern in the selected texts. In discussion of “Representations of Subaltern Subjects,” I propose to study the selected texts, applying the Subaltern perspective as a framework of interpretation.

Chapter III. Representation of the Subaltern: Critical Standpoints in South Asia

Subaltern Studies tries to explore the voices of the marginal groups and examines how these voices are represented in the literary discourses. The Subaltern denotes the social groups of low rank in a social hierarchy and lacks access to the hegemonic power in a post-colonial discourse. The study intends to highlight the contributions and the academic debates over the subaltern issues from the perspectives of mostly the critics from South Asia. These critics and scholars gathered to discuss why and how the subaltern politics was impacted by the elite politics in the national historiography of India and wanted to reexamine the history below from the margins. The method adopted to interpret the text embarks upon the secondary sources.

This study has analyzed the critical insights on the subaltern voice, cultural hegemony, identity and marginality from relevant study reports, research reports from the libraries, and from print and online sources. The framework of interpretation includes the general concepts of subaltern studies from overall Indian critics in South Asia. The Indian scholars, historians and critics devoted enough time in reinterpreting history from below and debated the subaltern issues. They wrote their reviews on subalternity in South Asia.

The framework of interpretation included in the textual analysis is based on the general concepts of subaltern studies and the Indian critics in South Asia. The Indian scholars, historians and critics began reinterpreting history from below. Subsequently, these critics debated the subaltern issues and explained why the subaltern has become silent. Subaltern is a political domain. Whenever the uprisings occur, such

organization becomes violent and spontaneous. Appropriation of the subaltern aspects begins especially during the social movements for social change.

Antonio Gramsci proposed the very idea of the subaltern. They are the people of the underclass in society. They were the subordinated social groups as the dominated power exerted its hegemonic power on these people. As Guha writes, the subalterns do not assert their voices because of elite domination. On the other hand, they try to regain their voices through social movements. They appear to strongly resist hegemonic supremacy. Such critics as Ranajit Guha, Gyan Prakash, Gyanendra Pandey, Partha Chatterjee, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Dipesh Chakraborty and many more recommended the active participations of the subordinated social groups whose forces converted into social and political transformation through social movement namely peasant uprisings or war of independence. Spivak's notion of the subaltern reflects significantly on the inability to assert the voice, referring to the women in terms of gendered discrimination. An example of self-immolation (Sati tradition) in the Indian context is sufficient to prove that the subaltern women cannot speak.

The subalterns are regarded as social groups excluded from dominant power structures. In the European view, the subaltern subjects are termed as the subordinated subclasses because the lower social groups do not gain access to hegemonic rule. The very idea works well in the colonial discourse. If, for instance, we evaluate the socio-economic structure in the state in the Nepalese context, the working class people, the workers, laborers and farmworkers never achieve the political power and reach the state power because only the elite classes rule these weak people by using the state

mechanism and political influence. Guha characterizes the subaltern subjects as the socially excluded groups. They are defined as lower classes and social groups in Postcolonial theory. They are at the margin of a society.

Readings of subaltern studies began in India when the Indian authors wrote subaltern issues in their reviews. As such, Antonio Gramsci suggested the very idea of the subaltern in his article "Notes on Italian History". He noted that the people of underclass in a society constituted the term "subaltern", and they were the subordinated social groups on whom the dominated power exerted its hegemonic power and impact. Subaltern studies tended to be viewed through colonial discourse. A number of the Indian scholars, historians and critics invested a great amount of time in reinterpreting history from below/margin and discussed the subaltern issues. The following subalternists cum scholars contributed to subaltern studies and wrote their reviews on subalternity in South Asia.

The subaltern emerges from the two extremes: subaltern politics and elite politics. As Ranajit Guha comments, in the domain of subaltern politics, mobilization was achieved horizontally while the same was recognized vertically in the field of elite politics. Subaltern mobilization was rather intense and spontaneous. It was understood in the peasant revolts (Aspects 4). Thus, Subaltern is a political domain. Whenever the uprisings occur, such organization becomes violent and spontaneous. On the other hand, Guha holds that an idea of "resistance to elite domination" remained as an unchanging characteristic despite variety. Subalternity indicated the shared social elements of this field, and the form of subalternity was different from elite politics (5). Therefore, the subalterns do not assert their voices because of elite domination but

they break the silencing of their voices through social movements such as resistance to hegemonic supremacy. Similarly, Guha writes that combining the two aspects of “elite and subaltern politics” regularly steered the “explosive situations” where the elite mobilized the masses for their own goals but the masses failed to get hold of their control over the movements. Consequently, they lost the representations, and print of subaltern politics on campaigns which the upper classes started (6). In this sense, although the subaltern groups actively participated in the nationalist agenda, they did not get the representations in Indian historiography intently influenced by the Indian elite groups.

Gyan Prakash, an Indian historian and critic, produced his internationally acclaimed work “After Colonialism: Imperial Histories and Post-colonial Displacements”. The subalternists analyze the binary social relationships and look at the subaltern studies. Gyan Prakash argues that modern colonialism founded permanent “hierarchies of subjects and knowledge“. Othering the self from the other social groups was instituted in the past. We see or draw the dichotomies between the colonizer and the colonized, the occidental and the oriental, the civilized and the primitive, the scientific and the superstitious, the developed and the underdeveloped (Colonialism 3). It is debatable that a line of demarcation is drawn between the westerners and the easterners. The westerners are the colonizer, the occidental, the civilized, the civilized and the developed whereas the easterners become the colonized, the oriental, the primitive and the superstitious. It is nothing more than a politics of differences. Always such grand narrative operates for hegemony. As seen from colonialist approach, in the same fashion, “The scholarship in different

disciplines”, as Prakash agrees, “has made us all too aware that such dichotomies reduced complex differences and interactions to the binary (self/other) logic of colonial power” (3). Prakash says that binary logic of colonial power structure determines the subaltern groups, For instance you distance your “self” from “other” and build your superiority and supremacy over the subordinated social groups in society. However, erudition and education can help minimize differences through the dichotomy in postcolonial discourse. In stark contrast, Prakash challenges that the colonial outcome does not act as a narrative outlined by the “hierarchical knowledge and subjects instituted by Western domination” when in the colonial agenda the colonialism’s functioning rearranges and renegotiates the binary oppositions (Prakash 3-4). Colonial agenda functions like rearranging and renegotiating the oppositions. Western domination affects hierarchy in knowledge and subjects, but a narrative does not appear as expected. Subaltern Studies views ‘the demographic difference’ as the process of recruiting or branding the population.

Gyanendra Pandey argues that because colonial rule functions by enrolling a “section or sections of the local elites as collaborator”, the word ‘subaltern’ can be used in a situation of colonial rule by a distinct group of foreigners. Instead, the subaltern comprises “subjects, working people, and the lower classes”. This is because the demographic difference occurs between the subaltern and elite population (community 411). Thus, in colonial discourse the subaltern subjects are made distinct in the way that they are ruled, oppressed and discriminated against by the elite groups. In line with above logic, Pandey comments that the term ‘people’, the root of ‘popular’, usually denotes the working men and women. These subaltern people are

the unemployed, the disprivileged and the marginal. Those who are not the elite or members of the dominant classes belong to the subordinated social groups. Basically, the same signifies the population of a territory on the whole (411). Pandey suggests the three moments in this subalternist usage. The first relates to the importance of the (peasant) collectivity and the primacy of the collective bond. The second results from the deconstruction of a long-established nationalist discourse. ... The third shares a description of the fragile, unstable, shifting character of people's multiple community affiliations. People's multiple community affiliations occupy the diverse, overlapping, converging or polarizing assemblages, networks, solidarities and aspirations. The third functions with the projection of this multiplicity and changeability as the ground for conversation or negotiation between different religious and cultural communities, and communities and the state (412). However, in the Indian national historiography, the peasants who had occupied the special positions were included in the subaltern classes but their contributions were significantly ignored in the national or official history or archives.

The subaltern classes inhabit an autonomous domain; it does not imply that they are not dominated. This domination operates as a relation of power. Hence, the autonomy of the subaltern classes takes its origin in the power structure (59). Chatterjee's view here is: socio-political matrix of the nation characterizes the autonomy of the subaltern classes in an opposition to the elite classes. Similarly, Chatterjee quotes Javeed, who "gives subaltern consciousness the peculiar construction of an "intermediate mental space" which lies between "the world of politics on the one hand and the economic processes of capitalist transformation on the

other'' (59). Javeed's claim that subaltern consciousness is constructed via the world's politics and economy justifies Chatterjee's argument of the subaltern issues. Chatterjee views differently that the various ideologies stimulate the subaltern consciousness and it changes in complex ways in the age of capitalism (Peasants 62). In this respect, ideologies continue to shape and construct either the subaltern or the elite autonomy in society.

The most significant outcome of this revision or shift in perspective is that the agency of change is located in the insurgent or the "subaltern." (Spivak 215). As Spivak postulates that the "bourgeoisie's interested" rejection to know the significance of a "politicized peasantry" considered for the "failure of the discursive displacement"; this dislocation activated the peasants' politicization (217). A subject-effect, as Spivak contests, can be momentarily designed as follows. The disjointed network/ text of features may be termed as politics, ideology, economics, history, sexuality, and language (223). The task of the "consciousness" of class or collectivity within a social field of exploitation and domination is thus necessarily self-alienating. (224-25). Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?" is probably the most influential work in the field of postcolonial theory. In the essay, Spivak questions the notion of the colonial (and Western) "subject." She argues that European intellectuals have assumed that they know the "other" and can place it in the context of the narrative of the oppressed: "Intellectuals must attempt to disclose and know the discourse of society's Other." (Maggio 419-20). Still Spivak emphasizes, "Through this act of epistemic knowing/violence, the essentialization of the other is always the reinforcement of the menace of empire" (20). Principally the notion of subaltern

subject is positioned in the Western discourses. In the metropolitan academia Spivak seeks to locate the representation of the subaltern in the discourses of the West. The subaltern issues emerge from the way the Western perceive the Easterners as other groups. In the entire India through the discourse of dominant Hindu culture the women are denied the existence. Hindu men allegedly use and conceal patriarchal strategy for repression.

As Dipesh Chakravorty argues, “Modern social critiques of caste, oppressions of women, the lack of rights for laboring and subaltern classes in India, and so on—and, in fact, the very critique of colonialism itself—are unthinkable except as a legacy, partially, of how Enlightenment Europe was appropriated in the subcontinent” (4). Chakravorty argued that the European intellectual tradition, which stretched back to the ancient Greek, is a fabrication of reasonably recent European history. However, the claim of European thinkers has been rightly criticized. Some scholars emphasized that such an unbroken tradition always existed and it could be called European tradition (*Provincializing* 5). Chakravorty strongly endorsed that this “first in Europe, then elsewhere” structure of global historical time was historicist, different non-Western nationalisms would later produce local versions of the same narrative, replacing “Europe” by some locally constructed center (*Provincializing* 7). In logic, global historical time was historicist, local version of the narrative had been constructed from non-western nationalist perspective, and Euro-centric narrative was replaced and provincialized. The author states that the national politics, the body politics, the subaltern politics in social movements and the dissent of the peasants for

their representations are nothing more than a political drama as the parade continues. The powerful recreates history, not the inferior.

In colonial discourse, the Europeans view the subaltern subjects as the subordinated subclasses lacking the social-political access to hegemonic rule. Here the logic goes. The Subaltern Studies Groups question and expose their patronizing attitude. In the words of Antonio Gramsci the subaltern belongs to those groups in society who are prone to the hegemony of the ruling classes. Strongly, Spivak asserts: "... the construction of a consciousness or subject... coheres with the work of imperialist subject constitution, mingling epistemic violence with the advancement of learning and civilization" (295). Someone who has been marginalized or oppressed is a subaltern. Someone with a low ranking in a social, political, or other hierarchy constructs a subalternist voice. Critics view the subalterns as social groups excluded from dominant power structures. Guha argues:

But we are also convinced that elitist historiography should be resolutely fought by developing an alternative discourse based on the rejection of the spurious and unhistorical monism characteristic of its view of Indian nationalism and on the recognition of the coexistence and interaction of the elite and subaltern domains of politics. (7)

In this sense, elitist historiography has to be adjusted by means of an alternative discourse. Such a discourse must arise from interaction of the elite and subaltern domains of politics. In the same fashion, "The scholarship in different disciplines", as Prakash contests, "has made us all too aware that such dichotomies reduced complex differences and interactions to the binary (self/other) logic of colonial power" (3). In

contrast, Gyanendra Pandey comments that these subaltern people are the unemployed, the disprivileged and the marginal. Those who are not the elite or members of the dominant classes belong to the subordinated social groups (411). Notable examples of such new articulations are that of the all-India collectivity called outcastes, untouchables, Harijans, Scheduled Castes or Dalits (414). In fact, these social groups have continued to suffer injustice and repression; they are treated as inferior beings in society. The critic presents the examples of the social outcasts in societal structure. These social groups have been suppressed and humiliated for centuries. In the matter of subaltern autonomy, Partha Chatterjee writes, "...the subaltern classes inhabit an autonomous domain", and this domination has been conceptualized as a relation of power. That's why we must recognize the independence of the subaltern classes (59). The subaltern groups are colonized but act as a source of force and power independently. They are autonomous. Their autonomous sphere should be recognized in nation building campaigns. He stresses a legacy of Enlightenment Europe which was appropriated in the case of subalternity. He means to point out caste-based discrimination, women exploitation and denial of human rights to the marginalized in society.

For Guha, the subaltern subjects are such social groups excluded from the hegemony of the ruling classes. In Postcolonial theory, the subalterns are described as lower classes and social groups who are at the margin of a society. The 1980 intervention of the subaltern studies group was a key movement in postcolonial studies. A term first used by Ranajit Guha was the word "subaltern" within subaltern studies. It stands for the general attribute of subordination in South Asian society as

we communicate the concept of subaltern in terms of class, caste, age, gender and office or in any other way. It analyzes the binary relationship of the subaltern and ruling classes. Hence, it studies the interplay of dominance and subordination in colonial systems. Likewise, Gyan Prakash argues that colonialism started stable hierarchies between the colonizer and the colonized, the occidental and the oriental (3). Thus, the subalterns are colonized and oriental for him. They are inferior. Subaltern Studies emerged around 1982 as a series of journal articles. A group of Indian scholars were first educated in the west and sought to reclaim the national history of India where historiography was heavily dictated with the elite influence. These scholars intended to retake history for the underclass, and for the voices that had not been heard previously. Scholars expected to break away from histories of the elites and the Eurocentric bias of imperial history. Class, caste, gender, race, language and culture are the influencing factors in understanding the subaltern. In this respect, the Indian scholar, Spivak uses this term “strategic essentialism”. The word denotes the strategy. Gayatri Chakraborty analyzes a working-class consciousness working upon the rural subaltern and the urban proletariat only in a colonial context but its imposition on these terms happens within confrontation, and it is illogical (226). In this logic, the subaltern aspect is a matter of class consciousness that has a driving force. Nationalities, ethnic groups or minority groups use the approach to present themselves. Spivak agrees that essentialization builds solidarity, a sense of belonging and identity to a group and instigates the group for a social action.

Subaltern Studies group was headed by Guha and Spivak. Subaltern Studies seeks to revisit the history of British occupation and intends to proclaim versions of

cultural identity that can be free from imperial constructions. The Oriental other was given form through writing. The postcolonial subject seeks expression through literature. The word “postcolonial” briefly describes any national literature if it is written after the nation gets liberated from a colonial power. Spivak stresses that the subaltern means a subject of lower rank. For her, the subalterns cannot speak or are mute, so she wants to lend voice to the muted people within the national boundaries.

The subaltern subjects are muted, and they lack the audible voice.

Representations of their voice are twisted in society. These subjects are in search of their voice. They lack social, political, and economic power so the representations are constructed in the way that social, political, and economic framework influence them. As Ranajit Guha comments, Subaltern mobilization was rather intense. It was spontaneous. It was understood in the peasant revolts (Aspects 4). Moreover, the subaltern subjects are mute and silent on the agenda because they are poor and uneducated. They are identified in terms of race, gender, class, and religion. For instance, race, gender, class, and religion determine the subaltern consciousness. Thus, peasants, workers and other subordinated groups are denied access to hegemonic power. They are hegemonized through either the state or power of the rulers. Gyanendra Pandey argues that because colonial rule functions by enrolling a “section or sections of the local elites as collaborator”, the word ‘subaltern’ can be used in a situation of colonial rule by a distinct group of foreigners (community 411). The subaltern subjects are made distinct in the way that they are ruled, oppressed and discriminated by the elite groups. The subaltern perspective can be depicted through many more factors such as the caste, race, occupation, class, age, and color. It usually

means subordination in any field. It indicates features of dominance and submissive behaviors. Numerous people give their own subaltern perspectives.

Cultural hegemony helps construct the subaltern consciousness. Hegemony does not just mean being powerful. Hegemony is legitimized power and authority. For example, a group of the ruling class has direct influence and authority over the citizens of our nation. The United States government functions as hegemony in the geopolitical contexts. Supposing if the political party is hegemonic today, it is so because its physical power enjoys popular endorsement. The prime minister captures national imagination like few leaders in our country. He is popular as most prime ministers before their tenure expires.

The subaltern wants their voice heard and represented appropriately but they become muted. They do have low esteem and self-respect in society where people of dominant culture exert their authority on subaltern classes. Patriarchal repression originates in politics and economy which the men mostly occupy, so women in their cases do not get the privileges as opposed to the males. This is because of patriarchal ideology buried deep in the human psyche. The representation of the subaltern is the Western discourse because the Western perceive the Easterners as other groups. However, Dipesh Chakravorty considers the social critiques of caste, oppressions of women, and the lack of rights for subaltern classes in India could not be questioned and it was nothing more than a legacy of European explanation. Furthermore, in democracy the politics has become a discussion of revolts, demonstration, world cup soccer, and voting rights, which are the tools in securing the power, and we use this power to recreate the oppressive narrative of the subaltern representatives. The peasant

or the subaltern politics rose as participations in the nationalist movement against British rule. On the other hand, Partha Chatterjee observes that the nation's socio-political conditions describe the individuality of the subaltern classes as opposed to the ruling classes. Gyan Prakash argues that it is important to examine the binary social relationships in the discussion of the subaltern studies. In doing so, an act of othering the self from the other social groups was started. For him, ideology fuels the subaltern consciousness. In a similar tone, Gyanendra Pandey approves that colonial rule situates the word 'subaltern' from the perspective of a different group of the colonizers. Instead, subjects, working people, and the lower classes constitute the subaltern.

Cultural hegemony, subaltern consciousness, ideology, patriarchy and the others are the factors that help construct the subalterns. The subaltern represents the colonized peoples of the Indian subcontinent if one takes a perspective of the colonized peoples. The subalternists state that if subaltern mobilization occurs it is intense, spontaneous, and unorganized. The peasant revolts exemplify a form of resistance against the elite feudalists. The subaltern subjects are muted. They search for their voice. They do not enjoy social, political, and economic power so the representations are fabricated in the influence of social, political, and economic structure. The subaltern subjects are governed, oppressed and victimized by the elite groups so are made distinct. It is in the structural paradigm that the elite groups rule the oppressed. The Indian scholars make a detailed study of the national historiography and have wanted to reexamine the subaltern history from the margin. They intend to assess the subalterns' participatory contribution in the Indian

historiography which were dictated and written by the elite groups in the interest of the British. The marginalized groups can be understood in terms of class, gender, social structure, religion and race in our national chronicle.

The subalternists believe that the national historiography was biased since it has never included the narratives of the subordinated social groups. For example, it skipped the participatory contributions made by the peasants in the Indian War of Independence. The Nepalese political history forgets to mention the indigenous people and their vital roles in the decade-long people's war. Rather, it narrativizes the powerful and dominant class instead. I believe that the subaltern studies as an approach helps explore the class consciousness of the people, their representations in the spheres of the mainstream literature and politics and the discriminatory social, political and cultural practices within society and the state. Writing about the voices of the social groups from the margin is an exemplary step of resistance literature in the form of the narrative. In this respect, Mukarung and Thing have moved in this direction, talking about the ethnic experiences and cultural identities in the case of Nepali literature. Finally, this subaltern approach assists other critics or readers to understand the indigenous voices, their experiences and representations in the social, political and cultural structure, including Nepali mainstream literature.

Chapter IV. Representation from the Margin: Subaltern Subjects in *Hetchhakup* and *Y mbunera*

Rajan Mukrun and Bin Thng present the subaltern as muted and unheard group in Nepali literature. Sangeen in *Hetchhakup* is a young, educated person who is marginalized by the dominant groups in the state. Kaman Singh, Rithum, Nusan, Maila deva, Geeta, Tara and Newarni didi are some of the characters who suffer from marginalization and oppression. Rithum, for instance, discontinues his further education because of the Lahure culture while Kaman Singh loses identity due to his long engagement with the British army. Similarly, in Thing's *Y mbunera*, Sommaya does not continue her education and has to take care of rest of her sisters because of poor, sick parents. She provides for her family by cutting the firewood and adopting the traditional alcohol business. She has to struggle with the government officials in the forest. Another character is Sapana, who is badly oppressed by patriarchal ideology and gets beaten. She suffers from her in-laws' humiliation. Thus, the present study argues the representations of the subaltern subjects and the representation in literary textbooks and examines how the subaltern agency can be constructed in the selected texts. The study concludes that the characters depicted in the texts are labeled as the subalterns that result from socio-economic and political conditioning.

The study argues that the texts have shown the representations of the subaltern subjects. The texts use the subaltern perspective as a methodological framework for a textual interpretation. Furthermore, the two texts depict marginalization, domination, oppression and resistance of the characters. *Hetchhakupa* and *Y mbunera* exhibit various issues in relation to subaltern classes, consciousness and voice that require

their strong agency. Sagen is the main character of Mukarung's *Hetchhakupa* and he experiences several trials and tribulations traveling from his birthplace to Kathmandu for his better opportunity. The protagonist, Sagen enters the crowded metropolitan city, Kathmandu with infinite dreams at his heart but he struggles constantly. The protagonist becomes an editor and runs his family in the busy but expensive city yet his life does not prosper adequately. Nusan journeys from his ancestral hometown to Kathmandu and faces various difficulties in the city where he finds unsympathetic people towards the poor. The indigenous youths like Riddum devote much of their golden time for an army, but they miss opportunities. They get no access to the government or organizational sectors easily. Sagen and Sabitri have limited sources and must supply the needs at any cost. This makes them suffer. Diwahang is a subaltern subject but his singing taste allows him to become a singer after he joins the British army. The subaltern consciousness is constructed based on the politics and economic structure. It is viewed that the subalterns are decided by politics, ideology, economy and consciousness of the self in the power structure.

In "Saiko 5", the subaltern subject is Chhapeni Didi. She is a woman character. She sells liquor and food to the different customers but she faces hardships in Hetauda. She returns to Nepal for security and the future of her daughter and survival. She has no distinct identity. Poverty and lack of skills force her to gather firewood to prepare liquor and earn little money. In this way, in *Y mbuner* the subaltern subjects suffer from the hand of the powerful and the state mechanism, as she is both a woman and an indigenous group. People discriminate other people if they are of different religion, color, caste, geography, language and culture. They are prejudiced to establish

hegemony, authority and dominance. The Lahure culture and seeking the foreign employment stimulate Bhawan Tamang. Language intervention is another reason why he leaves his primary school. In the anthology, Sapana Th ng fights a lot after her wedding. She is maltreated, insulted, humiliated and exploited in patriarchal society. In “GandheJhaar”, Chinimaya and Dipesh Thapa are the classmates yet the aggressive boy Dipesh resists inappropriate actions. In *Y mbunera*, culture, poverty, lack of knowledge, the structural barrier of the state make Sommaya and Pyakhule the subaltern. They sell distillery because they have low economic status. In “Ghadi Phool”, Sapana Th ng cannot resist the patriarchy. Sita a Hindu girl and Junedo a Muslim boy are both childhood friends but are severely criticized because of their different religion and culture when they share their bonding together. In “Aayam”, Shantamaya Tamang and Sanu Tamang are the subaltern subjects and they perform domestic works, as they are neither rich nor educated. Thus, the study postulates the idea of the representations of the subaltern characters and depicts elements of subaltern studies in the two texts.

Hetchhakupa and *Y mbunera* spotlight the contemporary issues: marginalization, domination, oppression and resistance prevalent in society, and simultaneously begin the debate on the representations of the communities with different ideology, culture and consciousness, and inclusiveness of the writings from the margin. So, the texts use the subaltern perspective as a methodological framework for a textual interpretation. R jan Muk rung’s *Hetchhakupa* is a novel of a mythical character observed in the Kirati Mundhum (Kirati scripture). It is believed that *Hetchhakupa* was the first man on earth who taught his future generations the art of agriculture. But the protagonist in

the novel is Sagen, who runs parallels with a mythical character Hetchhakupa and undergoes several trials and tribulations in his life, traveling from his birthplace, DilpaBhojpur to Kathmandu for his better opportunity. With infinite dreams at his heart enters the protagonist, Sagen, to the crowded metropolitan city, Kathmandu but to his surprise he has to struggle. He has insufficient means to run the two square's meals, and somehow manages to feed the hungry mouths in his family. He is a struggler like others with much liability. He works in a media house "Aawaj" run and funded by the ex-Gurkha Soldiers' Organization as an Editor-in- chief for livelihood; however it is extremely difficult to sustain in such a hustle-bustle city. To cite an example, the protagonist feels in the city while struggling: "Days were spent in Kathmandu while tutoring, reporting journalism, and proofreading. Sabitra, his spouse, followed after Sagen with her son a year later he settled in Kathmandu. Man is a creature to face a problem. Sorrows come and go in life" (*Hetchh kup* 38). When Sagen is struggling in Kathmandu all alone, his wife and son join him. As a result expenditure increases, and it is quite impossible to meet the needs. However, life passes with the trials and tribulations. In this connection, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak observes, "Loosely derived from the writings of the Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci, the term "subaltern" designates nonelite or subordinated social groups. It is at once without any particular theoretical rigor and useful for problemizing humanist concepts of the sovereign subject" (213). Non-elite or subordinated social groups are identified as subaltern but at the same time, the same term problematizes humanist concepts of the sovereign subject. Thus, the protagonist is constructed as a subaltern subject. As per Kirati tradition, all rituals are complete when people narrate the stories of

Hetchh kup . Moreover, their holy scripture Mundhum preserves these fine stories (n pag.). Like a mythical character Hetchh kup , the protagonist Sangen is a struggler but he does not get cooperation from all people and gets exploited. In short, the protagonist belongs to nonelite and subordinated group.

Nusan is another character in *Hetchh kup* , who gets married to Salmaya BK only a couple of years ago. Conversations of caste system would begin to break out in an entire village, and the racial discrimination becomes a hot debate there. He leaves his ancestral village within two weeks of his marriage. But leaving her in the village, Nusan goes to Kathmandu to avoid such social criticism. He attended the post of a peon and spent his days with much difficulty. He wanted to go overseas but he had no good educational background and no working experience at all. All he had to do was a job as a cleaner or a worker; it was not easy to make money in the foreign lands. For instance, Nusan travels from his ancestral hometown to Kathmandu and faces various hurdles in the busy, crowded city where people are not sympathetic towards the needy and the destitute. As Mukarung argues, “What’ll you do next?” asked Sangen. “You have neither any good qualifications nor a working experience. It is a job of cleaner or manual worker in a foreign land” (44). The character is not educated and he is jobless ever since he lives in the huge city. He dreams of earning money, going to a foreign country but it is impossible to find highly paid jobs because of lack of a good education and job profile. In this sense, Ranjit Guha writes:

In either case, the braiding together of the two strands of elite and subaltern politics led invariably to explosive situations indicating that the masses mobilized by the elite to fight for their own objectives managed to break away

from their control and put the characteristic imprint of popular politics on campaigns initiated by the upper classes. (*Subaltern Studies* 6)

The two elements of elite and subaltern politics provoke explosive situations where the common people fight for liberation but they break away from the authority.

Consequently, the upper classes influence these campaigns which bear the imprint of popular politics. In short, the subaltern subject is the one who suffers from the hands of the powerful agent in society. In this sense, Nusan is victimized and exploited because he is neither educated nor wealthy.

Since Mukarung's *Hetchh kup* employs various characters at random, all these characters bear resemblance to the subaltern subjects although they arrive in the busy but ruthless city with different purposes. This subaltern subject has to face a number of problems when he is living in his village, Dilpa and later in Kathmandu where he must seek his future. For example, Nusan was suspended from his school as his friend broke his leg while playing. He had to look after the domestic cattle over a period of months, and lost interest in his study. As Mukarung writes, "Nusan attended cattle for a month. He faces hardships, carrying a bamboo basket of salt from Chatara to Dilpa. He is engrossed in such an activity. His interest slowly declines in study and he does not continue reading further. The difference is that he is involved in jobs of peon or hacker while his wealthy friends have remained in high posts" (45). The writer argues that the poor are punished and exploited by the powerful. His friend's father is a powerful teacher in the district so he expels and punishes Nusan. As Gyan Prakash contends, "The scholarship in different disciplines has made us all too aware that such dichotomies reduced complex differences and interactions to the binary (self/other)

logic of colonial power” (3). In other words, othering the subjects/agents can become a tool to create divisions and easily to rule the others that do not support the power bloc. Similarly, it is learnt that an orphan called *Hetchh kup* lives with his elder sisters but one day the two sisters leave the village in grief, believing him to be dead. However, little *Hetchh kup* is still alive and looks for his family thoroughly until he discovers them. Still today the youngsters have been practicing the Kirati dance though ignorant of its roots (n pag.). Nusan is a struggler and keeps walking in search of a better life but he misses the mark. In short, the subaltern character has no alternative but must wander aimlessly in quest of fortune and self.

There are some reasons why the subaltern subjects suffer in the country. First they lack skills and abilities. Secondly the discriminatory attitude exists in society. These people are entangled in several filters of the society in such a way that the people cannot escape them even if they are capable and hold a voice. For instance, R janMuk rung’s Sangen travels from his village to Kathmandu to become an editor of a newspaper. However, he faces all sorts of noncooperation from the people. As Mukarung writes, “Sangen made his entry into Kathmandu to study. After passing BA he got a responsibility to work as an editor of a newspaper. Everybody but his mother came to live in Kathmandu. Simultaneously his relatives and friends gathered. He buried himself deep down the relation by the in-laws, affection of his son and centrality of the busy Kathmandu ” (38). The protagonist becomes an editor and runs his family in the busy but expensive city yet his life does not thrive sufficiently. He has hard times sustaining family members in a rented house. Gyanendra Pandey comments, “The term ‘people’, the root of ‘popular’, commonly refers to working men

and women; the unemployed, the disprivileged and the marginal; those who are not part of the elite or members of the dominant classes. It is also used for the population of a territory as a whole” (411). In such cases, working people are often said to be the unemployed, the disprivileged and the marginal; they are not members of the dominant classes within the territory. On the contrary, Mukarung adds, “Each of my writings is a reflection of the society. It gives voice to the marginalized communities. My writings have so far been vocal about the issues that are unheard of and yet are needed to be addressed” (Interview). Thus, the marginalized communities can gain their voices and recognition through the writings as part of literature that mirrors society. In summary, the subaltern subject has to face several barriers and tolerate noncooperation from the members of society because he is weak and voiceless.

Riddum was the only son of a British Gurkha pensioner. He spent four years’ time in an attempt to get enrolled in a British army. He spoiled his study; he failed time and again in higher secondary education. His age exceeded the age bar of eligibility in the army. The habit of study ceased and declined. Mukarung remarks, “You do not need to remain hungry; you get the share. You satisfy your hunger one or the other way round. Your self-pride does not allow you to get employed in a small post. Your ego hurts badly. Your head is held low. Rumor has it that a stupid ass cannot understand early. You will know its truth” (47). He says that the indigenous youths invest much of their golden time, trying for the British or Indian army, but they lose opportunities because of lack of education, ability and reliable contacts with the state.

The subalterns get no access to the government or organizational sectors easily. Spivak argues, "The task of the "consciousness" of class or collectivity within a social field of exploitation and domination is thus necessarily self-alienating" (224-25). The subject chooses to separate himself because of the consciousness of class or collectivity, and it is the subaltern consciousness that alienates ones from the elite ideology. In the like manner, Mukarung writes, "My writing has been recognized, and so have the characters from marginalized communities whom I write about. I feel a sense of pride. I have tried to concentrate on speaking on behalf of the excluded and marginalized" (interview). Here to explicate the logic, the writer says that the excluded and marginalized characters are indigenous, and they are more likely to discontinue education simply because they have high pride in the Lahure culture. The character Ridum spoils his study in an attempt to get recruited in the British army. Thus, the Lahure culture in the country, the class-consciousness, the elite ideology, and ethnicity has created marginalization and exclusion from the mainstream state mechanism.

The subaltern subjects need to consider the necessities for health and education and must not make any compromise with these two aspects. The stakeholders (school proprietors) know such compulsion of the parents and charge high fees. Thus, subaltern subjects are compelled to pay the huge charges and as a result become victimized. To cite here, Sangen and Sabitri sacrifice for their child and must supply the needs at any cost although they have limited sources. Mukarung complains, "His son's decision not to go to school and Sabitri's mention about school's rules made Sangen serious. The private schools are bourgeois and these proprietors know well

how to make exorbitant fees on the parents' burdens and responsibilities. The monthly fees are too high. Furthermore, additional charges for computers, music, sports, health check and what not? Tuition is mandatory" (*Hetchh kup* 59). In this perspective, the subaltern characters are economically exploited in the capitalist framework. Nevertheless, Partha Chatterjee states that the subaltern classes "inhabit an autonomous domain" (59) and subaltern consciousness is given the "peculiar construction of an "intermediate mental space" which lies between "the world of politics and the economic processes of capitalist transformation" (59). The politics and economic structure construct the subaltern consciousness, which is an autonomous domain.

Diwahang as a subaltern subject endeavors to become a singer after he joins the British army. He has a good voice but has non regular practice of singing. He tries to get his songs recorded earlier but his first album gets ready and released in an expensive hotel when he returns home on his second vacation. For instance, he manages snacks for music director, lyricist and radio program presenter and lavishes sufficiently to satisfy his hunger for musical albums. As Mukarung expresses, "The guests enjoy the party and they debate hotly in a drunken state. Breaking and smashing furniture and dishes takes place. He compensates for the loss. After that, the newspaper or magazine or FM radio writes about Diwahang's album and plays his recorded album. After some time neither the radio nor the newspaper plays the musical album and writes about his singing talent" (*Hetchh kup* 62). In this context, Diwahang is exploited just as the media powerhouse companies and their wealthy

organizers dominate the subordinated class. His talent is not given any recognition and he is discarded and humiliated in society.

The subaltern subjects comprise such characters as Sangan, Ninam, Newarni didi, Krishna KC and Sabitri, who have arrived in the Kathmandu city for a number of reasons and continue to live the struggling life in spite of the price hike, complex lifestyle and high expenditure. Mukarung writes:

When the political class division happens in the thought and doctrine of ending old feudalists and then starting the neo-feudalists, the revolution occurs. Naturally, the proletariat follows the political event. By then, when the middle-class feudalists or lower class landlords stay undecided in the course of action, they are trapped and caught in the snare of the bourgeois feudalists and lords. At some point of this time, these people have been surrounded by race, religion, culture and tradition and instantly suspect the proletariat-led revolution. (*Hetchh kup* 67)

The socio-political structure is in the influx. The political power is achieved through the interaction of the societal classes, and race, religion, culture and tradition surround the characters in the novel. In the continued discussion, as Dipesh Chakravorty argues, “Modern social critiques of caste, oppressions of women, the lack of rights for laboring and subaltern classes in India, and so on—and, in fact, the very critique of colonialism itself—are unthinkable except as a legacy, partially, of how Enlightenment Europe was appropriated in the subcontinent” (*Provincializing* 4). In the framework of India and Nepal, no one can think about critiques of casteism, oppressions of women, and the rights for subaltern classes since the idea is partially a

legacy, which is adopted or assumed in the fashion of Enlightenment Europe. Such characters as Diwahang, Sangeen-Sabitra, Ninam, Newarni didi, and Krishna KC have been subordinated and exploited in societal power structure. Thus, the media powerhouse companies and their wealthy organizers as the dominant people dominate and rule the subordinated class.

The subaltern subjects include the female characters, so in the texts Sara Tamang and Geeta are the subordinated class who are struggling for livelihood in the busy, heartless city. Sara runs a tea stall where she sells varieties of food items to earn her livelihood. Usually, the customers comprise such people as drivers, conductors and cleaners of the mini micro and gas tempo that are stationed at Koteshwor. She serves the consumers, who arrive at a stall for snacks or breakfast and liquor in the evening. In this way, she is having hard times doing the mundane job out of compulsion. On the other hand, Sara's mother waits for a due date for presence in a judicial court for her father has been accused of being a Maoist and is terribly distressed by the event. As Mukarung writes:

This is Kathmandu. At the outset, it marginalizes a lot of people. It intrudes several people. The Gorkhali Khasism scratches the other people too. It intervenes by imposing the single most monolithic laws. It segregates and discriminates the people with one race, language, and religion and culture policy in the nation, the policy of which is authoritarian and dictatorial. It is feudalist and tyrannical in nature. (*Hetchh kup* 82)

The author talks about language, and religion and culture policy in the nation, which segregates and discriminates the people so such monolithic laws are feudalist in

colonial discourse. As Spivak suggests, today's global political economy decides the family's role in patriarchal social relations, and it is diverse and challenged. Thus, it is hard to break the frame even if one tries substituting the family in this difficulty (278). The family's role in patriarchal social relations is determined by the political economy; it is varied and challenged. The marginalized suffer because of their ignorance, poverty and bad system. Therefore, the subaltern subjects are prone to victimization and oppression in societal structure.

Another subaltern subject has to transport herself into her usual destination as always and finds it too tough to travel and live her life in the crowded city. Geeta struggles alone in the Kathmandu valley, renting a house and working at a restaurant. Kathmandu is the commercial hub for many who aspire to make it their destination. She always escapes the male gaze as the bystanders view Geeta as a sex object. For instance, Geeta does not need to pay the travel fare as the driver refuses, saying she is a useful person. Nevertheless, at Koteshwor, Geeta and Mr. Pokhrel are found guilty of having an illicit relationship. Society criticizes Geeta and humiliates her severely more than the male members (Mr. Pokhrel). Equally, another character is affluent and a male member of the community, so Geeta is found guilty of the same immoral act. She bears bitter consequences alone in patriarchy. As Mukarung writes, "Why shall I spare you for this act of wrongdoings? Shame on you! You are tempted to sell your body as you cannot work to earn" (*Hetchh kup* 96). In this sense, Geeta is a subjugated woman whom patriarchy dominates. As Spivak asserts, "the construction of a consciousness or subject" adheres with the effort of "imperialist subject constitution", and associates "epistemic violence with the advancement of learning

and civilization” (295). The subaltern subject is constructed in association with epistemic violence, which comes from knowledge and development. In contrast, as readers, academic books and popular literary texts do not mention the narratives of our identities and our experiences rather than the completely generalized identity so literary works need to accept diversity (interview). The diverse identities of the people should be stated in literary discourse but should not be generalized.

Similarly, Kaman Singh is an ex-Gurkha soldier. He has served the British army for many years. He is a retired pensioner. He realizes that he has been cheated by the British regime. He has bitter experiences. The Gurkha soldiers are merely the fighters and they do not receive the highest promotions. They win the medals instead.

Conversely, the British are only promoted to the higher ranking posts; the Gurkha soldiers are either brainwashed or discriminated against in the case of military facilities and pensions. There has been a discriminatory practice when both the parties receive unequal distributions. Mukarung writes, “And you didn’t protest, did you?

Who dared in a battalion? Kaman Singh blinked his eyes and said. Editor! A Lahure is like an old, blinkered horse. He follows what the white instructs” (*Hetchh kup* 112).

Gyan Prakash, an Indian historian and critic, argues, “Modern colonialism, it is now widely recognized, instituted enduring hierarchies of subjects and knowledges—the colonizer and the colonized, the Occidental and the Oriental, the civilized and the primitive, the scientific and the superstitious, the developed and the underdeveloped”

(3). Colonial rule distinguishes between the colonizers and colonized. In the colonial framework, the colonized is identified as primitive whereas the colonizer is civilized. Thus, colonialism creates hierarchies among the subjects.

Y mbunera is a collection of 13 stories written by Bin Th ng, but it incorporates a variety of themes and issues prevalent in contemporary time and space. Altogether seven stories have been selected for the textual interpretation. Th ng's *Y mbunera* presents most women characters as the protagonists in the leading roles whose voices are audible. Interestingly, the events get told through the women's perspectives or views. This is one of the features that make it distinct from the other stories. In Saiko 5, the subaltern subject runs a shop that trades liquor illegally and faces a number of hurdles in her life because she has a daughter who is weak and meek. She is more concerned about the daughter and her secure life. To cite an example, Chhapeni Didi is a woman character who sells the different customers liquor and other foodstuffs in the evening and lives her life. She avenges the man called sriman budha who has exploited her daughter sexually. Beena Th ng writes, "The watch is lost. But do not tell anybody. Chhapeni didi makes Ramsharan swear" (*Y mbunera* 28). She hides out the truth about the lost watch in connection with the incident and instructs the man to keep silent. Spivak writes, "A subject-effect can be briefly plotted as follows: that which seems to operate as a subject may be part of an immense discontinuous network ("text" in the general sense) of strands that may be termed politics, ideology, economics, history, sexuality, language, and so on" (223). Factors such as politics, ideology, economics, history, sexuality, and language determine the construction of the subject. Thus the woman character's representation is the result of these factors.

The subaltern subject faces hardships in Pashupatinagar, Hetauda ever since she has returned to Nepal for security and future of her daughter and survival. She has no distinct identity. Because of adverse circumstances, she punishes the culprit who

exploits her daughter sexually forcibly and abandons her liquor business and the locality along with her daughter. Th ng writes, “How would I save this innocent child? I should not have traded in the liquor shop. Chhampeni Didi expressed her woes and shared with Ramsaran. She felt pain because of the compulsion to run the distillery” (*Y mbunera* 38). In this context, she thinks the obligation to run the distillery as the reason for her sufferings and her lonely daughter who is literally vulnerable in society. Chakraborty analyzes a working-class consciousness working upon the rural subaltern and the urban proletariat only in a colonial context but its imposition on these terms happens within confrontation, and it is illogical. Thus, Champeni didi is typical of subaltern and proletariat in a colonial framework.

In another story “*Y mbunera*”, Sommaya has several obligations in her mundane life. First she has parents who are weak and poor. She has many younger sisters so she cannot complete her education. Instead, she sacrifices for her sisters. Poverty and lack of skills compel her to collect firewood in the forest and prepare liquor so that she can earn little money and meet the daily needs. She has no other options. She cuts down the trees for firewood in order to distill. In this sense, the subaltern subjects suffer from the hand of the powerful and the state mechanism because she is both a woman and an indigenous group. She is doubly marginalized. Th ng writes:

All her friends who accompanied her in collecting firewood either went to the foreign countries after obtaining the visa or got married. Sommaya was left alone as she neither married a man nor went to a foreign country. Her marriageable age exceeded. All her friends left her alone. However,

responsibilities gripped her. All she had to do was collect firewood, prepare liquor, sell them, purchase the rations to feed and buy medicine for sick parents. (*Y mbunera* 46)

The plight of the protagonist is unbearable because poverty grips her and forces her to suffer. Guha holds, “elitist historiography should be resolutely fought by developing an alternative discourse” but the same discourse should be based on the “recognition of the coexistence and interaction of the elite and subaltern domains of politics”

(7). The subaltern subject is the result of interactive forces of the domains of politics. Power displaces the culture and marginalization so resistance should begin against cultural attack. The female character is forcefully ignored and subjugated in the text. Thus, poverty, tradition, cultural practice and lack of knowledge in the Tamang community make Sommaya a subaltern character.

Yet another subaltern subject trades distillery as a source of income because of his low economic status. For instance, he is a male character and accompanies Sommaya to the forest. Pyakhule and Sommaya are good friends and neighbors but they meet the same fate and have to struggle all their life. As Th ng mentions, “You are highly paid for liquor. I get paid Rs 800 on liquor. Pyakhule, you just manage such a contract like yours for me. Sommaya said and entered the house” (*Y mbunera* 49). In this context, the subaltern subjects namely Sommaya and Pyakhule take a contract on liquor all the time so that they can fulfill the needs. They are unskilled, uneducated and poor so they need to depend on the act of distillery. In fact, they are subordinated people. They are indigenous; they are economically and educationally backward and left behind the other races. Quoting Dipesh Chokravorty, Spivak argues, “The self-

consciously socialist discourse of the left sector of the indigenous elite is attempting to displace the discourse of feudal authority and charge it with new functions'' ((215).

An attempt to displace feudal authority by the socialist discourse is the subaltern consciousness of the indigenous community as discussed from the text. The marginalized but indigenous people suffer and then are excluded from the mainstream texts. Lastly, characters like Sommaya and Pyakhule are made the subaltern because of culture, poverty, lack of knowledge, the structural barrier of the state.

Likewise, some characters such as Poonam and Sanu enter the National Park in order to collect firewood, which helps them to distill and earn little money. Say for example, Poonam expresses her complaint about not being able to get firewood and sell liquor because of strict surveillance of the Forestry officer. As Th ng writes, "Sommaya! I think I'll go abroad. These criminals won't allow us to cut firewood. How shall we prepare liquor without firewood?" (*Y mbunera* 53). Poonam looks concerned about her upcoming future. In a similar way, Sanu supports Poonam's thought and Th ng writes, "I go to a foreign country, Poonam because I have no good education for the government employment" (53). Unlike Sommaya, the other characters in the text show dependency on the foreign employment and they are tempted to go to the foreign nations with the view of economic benefit yet ultimately their choices make them voiceless and unheard in their own country. The history of social movement documents rebellious accounts of the women as the fighting mother but their participations are uncounted and ignored so the women are not heard. These social events force the women to bear the sufferings. On the whole, the subaltern characters Sommaya, Poonam and Sanu are the excluded people because they are

indigenous, women, poor and poorly educated. These characters cannot claim the agency.

Another story “Bhagawan Niwas” presents the protagonist whose name is Bhawan Tamang. His father tells him to build a house of his own. He makes money, going to Saudi Arabia as if he had no other alternative. Finally, he builds his house with money he has saved up by working in the foreign land. But, unfortunately the house he builds collapses into debris, and is completely destroyed by the quake. There appears to be a nexus between education, skills and wealth without which Bhagawan Tamang becomes the victim and cannot assert his voice. As Th ng argues, “I have studied in grade III from this school. I quit school because I neither speak nor understand Nepali” (*Y mbunera* 67). The Tamang people cannot complete education because of language policy in the state. Dipesh Chakravorty observes, “Different non-Western nationalisms would later produce local versions of the same narrative, replacing “Europe ” by some locally constructed center” (*Provincializing* 7). The eastern nationalist agenda replaces the term Europe with a locally constructed center and creates the local narrative. Cases of discriminatory acts continue to happen because of the monolithic narrative. Thus, the character in the text is Bhagawan Tamang, who unnecessarily bears sufferings as he loses property from the foreign employment. His condition is bad due to his destroyed house in the disaster.

The subaltern subject has had to work in the foreign lands for different reasons. First, he lacks skills, abilities and a good educational background. Second, he does not possess wealth and property sufficiently. Finally, he believes in the Lahure culture and seeks the foreign employment. For instance, Bhagawan Tamang quits his primary

school due to language interference. When he grows up to be young enough, he works in Saudi Arabia, returns to Nepal after six years of working, and builds a house of his own with his money he has earned from foreign employment. The Tamang community has their distinct language, culture and religion. They are docile, meek and straightforward races. However, they are poor and uneducated. They are backward. As Th ng argues, “Toil delights you. Bread, cloth and shelter satisfy you. I have experienced the scorching heat in Saudi Arabia for six years” (*Y mbunera* 66). The subaltern character is under compulsion to seek foreign employment because of poverty and lack of skills. As Guha argues, “Elitist historiography helps us to know more about the structure of the colonial state, the oppression of its various organs in certain historical circumstances, and the nature of the alignment of classes which sustained it” (Subaltern 2). Particularly, the Tamang community has experienced sufferings, exploitation, oppression and discrimination for ages.

In the story “Ghadi Phool”, Sapana Th ng is a most attractive character but she has to struggle unimaginatively after she has got married. She is maltreated, insulted, humiliated and exploited in her in-laws house only because she is a woman, a daughter in-law and a housewife. She has differences with other members but she does not resist the patriarchal practice in society. As Th ng writes, “Putali didi was four when Maiyaphupu got married. She had appeared in District Level Examination the day when the multiparty system was restored. She eloped with a Newar boy from Birgunj before the result was published” (*Y mbunera* 81). She marries a man without completing her higher study and her early marriage is the cause of her sufferings as she has not attained her maturity. Spivak writes, “To question the unquestioned

muting of the subaltern woman even within the anti-imperialist project of subaltern studies is not, as Jonathan Culler suggests, to "produce difference by differing" (Subaltern 295). The subaltern and woman are inherently muted so there is no difference between the terms used. If a subject has a woman-like quality, she is identified as a subaltern as she fails to literally resist against the socially constructed traditions in patriarchal society. Hence, Sapana suffers from oppression and marginalization because of female qualities, and tolerates injustice without protest as she lacks knowledge.

Similarly, Sapana has a daughter. However, her husband suspects her fidelity and blames her for an extra marital affair. She has a cold relationship with her husband, who beats her out of jealousy and anger. She is a pathetic character. The subaltern subject faces domestic violence not from husband but from her in-laws. For example, Sapana suffers from injustice and oppression in the notion of patriarchy. As Th ng writes, "The daughter does not resemble her father. Moreover, he is eying his wife suspiciously and questions fidelity. These days he beats me by asking "whose child have you conceived?" (*Y mbunera* 85). It is the patriarchal mindset in Nepali society that victimizes the weak women so Sapana bears sufferings.

In another story "Gangaramko Saikal", the narrator of the story, SaBin Tamang, gives an account of Gangaram Chaudhary. He is a young man of 21. He works in a textile mill at Hetauda. He rents a room. He lives in that house alone. He is a dark-complexioned man. The narrator has to encounter him all the time as they live under the same roof. The subaltern subject suffers from prejudices on the basis of geography and color of the skin. As Th ng remarks, "Whether he was a villager or I had a

problem with the color of the skin, I did not want to make friends with him at all. I thought as though he were not a Nepali either at that time” (*Y mbunera* 104).

Gangaram cannot be imagined in the national framework in the perspective of the hilly people. Culture and geography alienates Gangaram from the other nationalities.

Chatterjee quotes Javeed, who “gives subaltern consciousness the peculiar construction of an "intermediate mental space" which lies between "the world of politics on the one hand and the economic processes of capitalist transformation on the other"(59). Politics and economy influence the construction of subaltern consciousness. In this connection, Gangaram’s subaltern consciousness is shaped by capitalist notion and political maneuverings.

Likewise, people harbor evil thoughts about other people of different religion, color, caste, geography, language and culture. They develop such prejudices against the other people simply to establish supremacy, superiority and domination. It is purely political. In the story, Gangaram cannot be accepted as a national identity because of geography, culture and language. He lives in the terai, adopts traditions and rituals and speaks his own native language. In “Gangaram’s Saikal”, Sapana and Gangaram are the subaltern characters as these two subjects are not imagined in nation-building and mainstream politics. For example, Gangaram faces prejudices from the hilly people and the perspective of the rulers in the capital. The narrator Sapana who is a female and a true representative of the indigenous community cannot imagine Gangaram in the nationalist paradigm. Gangaram’s image does not fit within the framework of the national identity. As Th ng writes, “When Gangaram left our house, I was elated. I was saddened by this flash of idea. I used to call him a Madhesi

and frequently insulted him. I scarcely respected him utterly” (*Y mbunera* 110). The hilly people formulate the idea of prejudice on the basis of geography and the color discrimination. Sapana’s inability to respect his (Gangaram’s) existence results from her prejudiced mindset.

In “GandheJhaar”, Chinimaya Lama is the narrator of the event. Its story is told from Chinimaya’s perspective. Chinimaya and Dipesh Thapa are classmates and they go to school together. Dipesh is an aggressive boy in school and he opposes and resists inappropriate actions of the school managing committee. He wants reformative works in the system of education. He joins the Students' Organization, gets responsibilities and is keeping busy. He attends several meetings. Dipesh and Chinimaya infrequently meet each other. During the agitation or internal conflict, the police administrator is in search of Dipesh’s arrest. He looks depressed with the news about the student leader’s death. In such cases, the subaltern character faces multiple troubles such as social criticism, ridicule by the neighbors about his father’s disappearance, economic crisis, school drop-out, his sudden escape to the foreign county and his active involvement in contemporary politics. These conditions transform Dipesh entirely. He is a vocal critic of societal paradigm. Th ng writes, “His sister placed the pan on the stove early in the morning. She baked dry bread and grinded chilies and salt on the slate. She rolled the baked bread in soft cotton cloth. Then she went to the farm field. She grew corn and millet and then plucked them seasonally” (*Y mbunera* 114). It depicts the social and economic status of the subaltern subject. This makes the character harbor his dissatisfaction. He complains. He gets angry. Spivak comments:

Confronted by the ferocious standardizing benevolence of most U.S. and Western European human-scientific radicalism (recognition by assimilation), the progressive though heterogeneous withdrawal of consumerism in the comprador periphery, and the exclusion of the margins of even the center-periphery articulation (the "true and differential subaltern"), the analogue of class-consciousness rather than race-consciousness this area seems historically, disciplinarily, and practically forbidden by Right and Left alike. (Subaltern 294-95)

In this way, Right and Left alike historically, disciplinarily, and practically prohibit the similarity between class-consciousness and race-consciousness as far as the difference of the subaltern is concerned. Thus, in "GandheJhaar", Dipesh and Chinimaya are brought to the margin in the socio-political power structure; the consequence of this is that both characters need to antagonize the existing standards and conventions in society.

In the subsequent story "Junedo", Sita a Hindu girl and Junedo a Muslim boy are both childhood friends and study in the same school. They appear in the SLC examination and soon after that, they go on an excursion to different locations. They have a photograph taken together. But, the photograph invites severe criticism of the two because they both are like lovers. This relationship rumors spread in the entire area. They are criticized severely for their bonding. It is not accepted as per the religion. Religion, culture and tradition restrict such marriage institutions. A Hindu girl cannot marry a Muslim boy in society. Society does not allow the two persons to tie the knot according to religion, culture and ritual. They separate from each other.

Once again they meet after a long gap of time and share their stories during absence.

Th ng writes, “They are best friends, no doubt. They have faced ups and downs of life till date. They break off the relationship and move ahead of their destination. Quite a new relationship is beginning to develop. They meet several bends in the long journey of life; now these complexities and bends link with their fate” (*Y mbunera* 128).

Spivak argues, “... whenever it might become apparent that the story of capital logic is the story of the West, that imperialism establishes the universality of the mode of production narrative, that to ignore the subaltern today is, willy-nilly, to continue the imperialist project”(Subaltern 298). Imperialist agenda institutes the universality of the method of production narrative. Ignoring the subaltern issue in the present time is like continuing the imperialism as the narrative of the West goes. Junedo and Sita are the subalterns since religion and culture colonize and dictate them. According to Kaki, Th ng’s *Y mbunera* depicts not only two races but also the love angle between inter religions (n pag). Man and woman are the two races but Junedo and Sita are entangled in inter religions because they cannot break the barrier.

In the same way, the subaltern subject cannot tolerate severe criticism. Her family members are badly affected. Love affair of a Brahmin girl with a Muslim boy spreads in the village. The boy abandons the village to avoid allegations. On the other hand, Sita completes her Master’s Degree and works in the NGO. She earns a good amount. Surprisingly she lives a simple life. Thus, the subaltern subject is marginalized and dominated by patriarchal mindset and religion. As Th ng writes, “When I come across women like me I grieve a lot. I try to lessen their pains, with ointment, of the women who suffer from inferiority complex for being the women”

(*Y mbunera* 134). The character sympathizes with the other female character with inferiority complex for she is a woman. It is a case of gendered subaltern. Patriarchy, culture, and religion exclude and marginalize the female subject like Sita in “Junedo”.

Yet another story “Aayam” presents Shantamaya Tamang, aged 30. She is a married woman. She visits the Domestic Employment Office and applies for domestic work. She starts working in a house of the retired Dr Couples. She has to work from morning to evening. She is happy about getting remuneration from the couples. During the festivals, she receives additional money and clothes to wear. The character is compelled to accept domestic work because she is uneducated and poor and her husband dies when she turns 23. She is a worker. Unlike her, Sanu Tamang, aged 41 is a widower and drives for Dr Couples on wages. He is from Nuwakot and his former wife dies of liver disease. He remarries Shantamaya, a widow the second time. In this sense, the subaltern subjects are seen to be preoccupied with manual works as they are neither wealthy nor educated. As Th ng writes, “I got married, Miss. He loves me passionately. He is a driver in the same house where I work as a helper” (*Y mbunera* 76). Both characters live a happy married life in the same house so their second marriage brings joys and happiness to these newly married couples. Spivak observes that they are considering consciousness in the case of the subaltern and culture, and the subaltern is operating in the theater of “cognition in the case of the elite, culture and manipulation” (218). Class consciousness is the resulting factor of the subaltern but the subaltern functions in the form of the elite, culture and influence. Shantamaya and Sanu are culturally the indigenous and economically disadvantaged social groups.

They are marginalized because of factors: education, economic status, cultural diversity and the cultural hegemony over the vulnerable community.

Different characters presented in the two texts share tales of pains and sufferings that dehumanize and brutalize the subjects/agents and at the same time they continue fighting against domination and discrimination. Sangen, the protagonist, is a representative of the indigenous and subaltern as he is marginalized. Similarly, Sommaya is marginalized because she is a woman, indigenous, and she suffers from marginalization and domination. Nusan is victimized and exploited because he is neither educated nor wealthy. The Lahure culture in the country, the class-consciousness, the elite ideology, and ethnicity has created marginalization and exclusion from the mainstream state mechanism. Riddum was an only son of an ex-British soldier pensioner. He wastes four years' time. Diwahang as a subaltern subject is exploited just as the media powerhouse companies and their wealthy organizers dominate the subordinated class. Characters such as Sangen, Ninam, Newarni didi, Krishna KC and Sabitri have been subordinated and exploited in societal power structure. Sara Tamang and Geeta are the subordinated class and the subaltern subjects/agents are prone to victimization and oppression in societal structure. She as a female character does not claim her strong agency and it labels Geeta as a subaltern in the text. Kaman Singh is an ex-Gurkha soldier but is discriminated against in the case of military facilities and pensions.

Chhapeni Didi is a woman character whose daughter is exploited sexually. Because of adverse circumstances, she abandons her liquor business and the locality along with her daughter. Like Sommaya, the subaltern subjects suffer from the hand of

the powerful and the state mechanism because she is both a woman and an indigenous group. She is doubly marginalized. Poverty, tradition, cultural practice and lack of knowledge in the Tamang community make Sommaya a subaltern character.

Bhagawan Tamang unnecessarily bears sufferings as he loses property from the foreign employment. He believes in the Lahureculture and seeks the foreign employment. The Tamang community has experienced sufferings, exploitation, oppression and discrimination. In *Ghadi Phool*, Sapana Th ng is maltreated, insulted, humiliated and exploited in patriarchal society. In “Gangaram’s Saikal” Gangaram faces prejudices from the hilly people and the perspective of the rulers. In “GandheJhaar” father’s disappearance, economic crisis, school dropout, his sudden escape to the foreign county and his active involvement in contemporary politics change Dipesh completely. It depicts the social and economic status of the subaltern subject. In ‘Junedo’, Religion, culture and tradition limit such marriage institution between Sita a Hindu girl and Junedo a Muslim boy as childhood friends.

Aayam presents Shantamaya Tamang is forced to take a domestic job because she is uneducated and poor and her husband dies. Thus, from the discussion above, all the characters have become the paramount/epitome of the subalterns because of a number of reasons such as ideology, cultural hegemony, structural barriers, subaltern politics and consciousness.

Quest for Self and the Politics of Identity

The representation of the subaltern is a focus of study in the two texts by R janMuk rung and Bin Thing. Subaltern classes are inclined to the control of the ruling classes. So peasants, workers, women and other groups are denied access to

hegemonic power. Similarly, the subalterns are oppressed. The study of social groups excluded from dominant power structures is a point of focus, because socio-economic, patriarchal, cultural or racial factors have impacted on these characters delineated in the texts and they are required to seek identity.

Hetchhakupa and *Y mbunera* describe various issues like subaltern classes, consciousness and voice. These characters cannot claim strong agency; therefore, they have to struggle for the quest of the self and seek identity. In the two texts, the characters resist marginalization, domination, and oppression. At this point, the characters such as Sangen, Nusan, Kamansingh, Rithum, and Maila Deva in *Hetchhakupa* and Sommaya, Bhagawan, Chhapeni Didi, Gangaram, Dipesh, Sita and Sapana in *Y mbunera* are the colonized and represent the marginal and exploited groups. Their voices remain unheard and ignored so these characters seek agency in manifestation of identity. Moreover, the ruling classes hegemonize and ignore the self of all the characters in these texts. The characters in the texts are the subalterns who are faced with the problems of cultural identity because socio-economic and political circumstances are the structural barrier.

The quest of the self and identity dominate Mukarung's *Hetchh kup* and Th ng's *Y mbunera*. Their search for the self is an attempt to reclaim their identity by way of ideology, culture and resistance throughout the text. Furthermore, it aims at revealing their interactions, conversations, social movement and outpourings of resentful remarks as opposed to the existing body of narrative and the power bloc. For the textual discussions, I use the views and perspectives of the subaltern studies. *Hetchh kup* raises ethnic identity issues and simultaneously discusses the ethnic

identity issues, marginalization, discriminatory social practices and subordination. Kamansingh serves in the British army but returns infamous and feels he has lost the self. In a similar way, Sangen, a protagonist, spends his life doing several jobs like working in the daily newspaper as an editor but he views that the Lahure culture creates this abyss in the lives of the indigenous communities. Also, Rithum spoils his maiden time in the prospect of joining the British army.

Because of the service in the foreign military force, they have to accept hegemony and domination. Like Kaman Singh, the ex-British soldier accepts that he seldom claims his recognition since he has obeyed to the foreign hegemony. In contrast, these indigenous people are compelled to adopt one language policy so the right to speak their native language is denied. This dichotomy between colonizer and colonized creates hierarchies among the subordinate and elite people in society. The power holders and rulers have caused the indigenous community to feel excluded as second-class citizens. The ex-soldier with indigenous origin has been easily bamboozled and dominated so he becomes conscious of his real identity.

The Khas-Brahmin communities eye the posts of the government seriously but the indigenous people do not compete on such secure posts. Class consciousness distances his self from the others in the case of domination and exploitation so he finds himself an inferior being. The Lahure culture, absence of access in the state mechanism, and attraction for INGO or NGO projects turn the indigenous away from the high posts. The prejudiced policies and behaviors of the state hurt the sentiments of the people so dignity and self-respect urge them to search for self and their cultural identity. The media does not give equal space to other native cultures and is

manipulated by high culture. Discriminatory practices are seen so the subordinate people are oppressed and dominated. Discriminatory practices portray these social evils as the obstacles. This hierarchy arises and generates domination. The socio-cultural situations are some reasons in the case of prejudiced mindset of the powerful villagers who discriminatorily exploit and subjugate the powerless in the villages. Maila Deva and his son are the working people who are vulnerable and victimized in society. His voice is unheard and his self-respect is ignored before the powerful.

The characters in Mukarung's *Hetchh kup* strive to project their search for the self and attempt to reclaim their identity by way of ideology, culture and resistance all throughout the text. The text reveals their interactions, conversations, social movement and outpourings of resentful remarks as opposed to the existing body of narrative and the power bloc. Mukarung's *Hetchh kup* discusses the ethnic identity issues, marginalization, discriminatory social practices and subordination to the rulers. It raises ethnic identity issues and identifies the indigenous ethnicity. Kamansingh is a character who has served the British army for long but returns infamous and feels he has lost self, as it would dim radiant if he were living in his land. He realizes his age is spent abroad. For instance, he is deprived of better education and now he does not get recognition of his self-esteem. Rather his friends and people around him bully him. As Mukarung writes, "Surely, include my article in this edition. Do not feel irritated with the handwriting of Lahure. The British just taught how to fire a gun and have a parade on the ground. Yeah! That hurts and aches me now. I cannot sit upright" (*Hetchh kup* 111). His recruitment in the foreign army force has reduced his stature

in the case of self-esteem, cultural identity and social standing so this character has been excluded in the nation-building campaign.

Guha writes that combining the two aspects of “elite and subaltern politics” regularly steered the “explosive situations” where the elite mobilized the masses for their own goals but the masses failed to get hold of their control over the movements (6). At this point, Kamansingh has definitely worked elsewhere and represents his nation; however his service fails to get recognition. In contrast, Bhattarai observes that characters get intermingled with his life and journalistic profession but they enjoy organizing rallies, complaining about the political environment and its indifference, discussing the plight of ex-gurkhas, complaining of being marginalized and expressing out their complaint (n.pag). Specifically, the ex-Gurkha soldier argues about his predicament and complains of the political indifference to his present situation and the marginalization. Thus, Kamansing’s national identity is stimulated and he seeks his existence as an important figure in the nation despite his service in the British army. He is aware of his identity without which he feels absent in his territory.

Sangen as a protagonist of a novel faces several hurdles while he spends his life doing several jobs like working in the daily newspaper “The Voice” by the ex-Gurkha soldier as an editor and struggling in the Kathmandu valley with much difficulty when he has no job in hand. He reminisces with the other three persons_ Rithum, Diwahang and Ambar, who accompany him and assist him most of the time throughout the novel. Mukarung states:

The lahure has their own grief and agonies no matter what class these people divide themselves and no matter how prejudiced they are. Who desires to

spend life in a foreign land all the time? On returning to their homeland on vacation, they lavishly spend money on relatives, peers, bosom friends, childhood friends and acquaintances when they meet one another in the village. (137)

As the people need to meet the dire needs of the family and spend the youth in the foreign country working for the greener pastures, in the course of time they appear to have lost the opportunities to establish their secure positions. The foreign employment and the Lahure culture in the indigenous communities essentially have created this abyss in the lives of these people despite the needs. In this sense, Partha Chatterjee holds that arguably this domination operates as a relation of power. Hence, the autonomy of the subaltern classes takes its origin in the power structure (59). The subaltern people are dominated within the frame of the power structure because the subordinate people do not empower themselves by educating and filling in the posts in the government sector.

Now it requires them to identify who they really are and why they are falling behind. It is essential for these indigenous communities that they start recreating the unheard voices writing in the indigenous literature. In doing so, they can represent the voices and consciousness of their own both in the state polity and the literary discourse. Quest for the self is a matter of politics. It is apt to cite what Ojha says about the novel. The painful plights of the exploited groups of the nation are depicted in the text and in the same manner, it represents the ethnic voices and their cultural consciousness of most characters with their distinct traits (n.pag). In fact, the author pinpoints the realistic picture of those who after going to the wonderlands for

employment lose much of the political spaces and regret the loss. Thus, they need to fight back for the lost glory as the first class citizens of the nation although they are trying hard in search of identity.

Referring to Rithum another character in the text, Sangen tells us about Rithum, who spoils his maiden time in the prospect of joining the British army but he might have acquired the higher degrees if he concentrates on his study single-mindedly.

Mukarung writes:

What respect does one get here? We are second-class citizens, are we? One is compelled to accept the boss's command and obey the hegemonic power of the white. Slavery and the concepts displaying 'Left-right, Attention, and Stand at ease' like a slave or serf make Sangen reject the idea of becoming a Lahure from his childhood. (138)

It indicates that those who serve in the foreign military for finance have to accept hegemony and domination. The character like Kaman Singh as an ex-British soldier accepts that he seldom claims his recognition since he has obeyed to the foreign hegemony. He feels that it is like losing self-respect inland once he retires and returns to his own country. Nobody recognizes him in his own territory as a worthy citizenry. In addition, he feels excluded. He understands how important his recognition matters now. Here, Spivak suggests that the rejection to know the significance of a "politicized peasantry" is considered for the "failure of the discursive displacement". This dislocation activated the peasants' politicization (217). The substantial contribution of the people like the peasants in the context of the Indian war of independence parallels with the sweats and labors of the Nepali ex-British army. These soldiers suffer from

the politicization, as they do not claim their distinct identity. In this perspective, *Hecchakuppa* shares accounts of sufferings, oppression, resistance, and discrimination irrespective of color, race or religion. Inside a novel, the protagonist is a struggler. He symbolizes Kirati civilization. He is a character that helps find paths of life and a guide (*Hetchh kup* 45). The protagonist Sangen and the other characters are constantly striving for existence and seeking their identity just as Hetchhakupa, the first man and the mentor in the Kirati myth begins his persistent search for the self in modern society. Therefore, when the people either migrate to foreign lands or settle in such places for foreign employment, they need to make perpetual search for their identity. Unless they are politically aware of their existence and occupy the highest political posts and powers, they cannot subvert the existing situations. Rather, they become the subordinate people obeying the powerful elitists.

Looking at Yalumbar's portrait, Sangen utters some words inaudible to the others. The protagonist thinks that the state language policy displaces the offspring and colonizes the ethnic communities by imposing the laws. Consequently, the other language, culture and religion associated with the public naturally are impacted and become endangered. Mukarung states, "The descendants of Yalumbar are unaware of their own language and culture today. Being the ruled subjects from the lords and feudalists, these indigenous people are compelled to adopt one language policy that denies them the rights to speak their native language" (48). At this point, these indigenous people lose the language sentiment and they do not learn to speak native language as one language policy prevails in the state. Gyan Prakash argues that modern colonialism founded permanent "hierarchies of subjects and knowledge".

Othering the self from the other social groups was instituted in the past. One perceives the dichotomies between the colonizer and the colonized (Colonialism 3). That is why; indigenous people become colonized while the powerful people are the colonizers. This dichotomy brings about the hierarchies among the subordinate and elite people in societal structure. Thus, language that reflects culture and religion is a key factor for sustaining identity but the implementation of language policy displaces other native languages naturally. Correspondingly, the protagonist observes that the children of Yalumbar (ruler in Indigenous history) are ignorant of their own language and culture and they are in constant attempt to seek the self.

Likewise, again Kaman Singh tells Sangen that the power holders and rulers in this territory have caused the indigenous community to feel excluded as the second-class citizen within the national boundary and something has to be done. Mukarung writes:

Editor, when have we been the real citizens of our country? We are being deceived right after landing at the airport. Even the peon cheats us with clever tricks. The officials in the government sectors consider us the milky cow as the source of income. We are to bribe one or the other official to get just a small citizen issued. We cannot have work done without having to pay for the service provided. (114)

The character like the ex-soldier with indigenous origin is easily bamboozled and dominated so he is aware of his real identity. It logically follows that Kaman Singh like many of his fellow men has a realization of identity as a first class citizen. In this way, Partha Chatterjee views differently that the various ideologies stimulate the

subaltern consciousness and it changes in complex ways in the age of capitalism (Peasants 62). The character realizes a sense of the subaltern consciousness and ideology that enable him to know how he can situate his position in the framework of politics and society. In such a juncture, as Mukarung observes, “Much of the work published represented identities and culture in Hinduism, and at the time our movement was questioning our representation in the stories that were coming out” (Interview). At this point, the state policies of religion seem monolithic, prejudiced and biased so the indigenous representations are shadowed literally because of high culture and religion. Hence, a question of true representation and identity of the indigenous should be debated in the literary and political discourses.

It is learnt that the Khas-Brahman communities are mentally prepared to be employed right from the post of a peon. They are eyeing the posts of the government seriously if it is government-based employment but the indigenous people do not possess a sense of competition and concentrate on such secure posts in the government sectors. Sagen states that if one strives it is possible to find the jobs. People do not understand the facts. As Mukarung asserts, “There are some psychological reasons. First, our people have no access to the state mechanism. Secondly, our men take pride in the Lahure culture. Thirdly, people are fascinated by the INGO or NGO dollars” (Hetchh kup 140). In this context, pride in the Lahure culture, absence of access in the state mechanism, and attraction for INGO or NGO projects are some reasons for turning the indigenous away from the high posts that connect with overall state structures and help promote national identity. Here, according to Spivak, the task of the "consciousness" of class or collectivity within a social field of exploitation and

domination is thus necessarily self-alienating. (224-25). The protagonist's class consciousness distances self from the others in the case of domination and exploitation so he finds himself an inferior being as opposed to the high class people. Thus, the indigenous people harbor a thought of threat and fear of contesting against the people under power and political high posts for these posts and powers are controlled by the elite but power holders. It is a hegemonic practice. The character constantly strives and claims the identity and a comfortable position in the state mechanism.

Sangen reacts to the prejudiced policies and unequal behaviors of the state influenced by the super powerhouse and he attempts to situate his positions in the state because his sense of dignity and self-respect allows him to search for self and his cultural identity. Mukarurung asserts:

The Teej songs are played on the air over a period of months. The hymns are sung all day along/ daily. Glimpses of the Hindu festivals such as Shivaratri, and Ram Navami are aired and telecast/ live cast. The headlines in the news cover such euphemistic news- national or local. Whether it is the case of the radio or television, all it does is it exaggerates the monolithic religion.

However, when our festivals in connection with the indigenous culture and religious faith are to be highlighted either on air or on television, they look unconcerned and negligible in such tasks. What about the Lhosar, Dhaan Naach, Maghi, Sakela and so on? (158-59)

The mass media has been manipulated in highlighting the festivals in connection to high culture and the ruler rather than the indigenous festivals. It does not seem to favor and promote the other ethnic festivals so the media should give wide spaces to other

native culture-based festivals in the mass communication fraternity. Again, Spivak emphasizes, “Through this act of epistemic violence, the essentialization of the other is always the reinforcement of the menace of empire” (20). The identity reflecting festivals are sidelined and shadowed literally as a result of epistemic violence as suggested by the critic. Sangen and his wife have conflicting views regarding race and religion. Equally, writing about the voices of the excluded and marginalized is the quest of self and cultural identity. Thus, if the media supports and promotes one kind of high culture and religion-based carnivals, it is a politicization of identity argument. It never harmonizes the clusters of the people.

Discriminatory practices are the reasons why the subordinate people unnecessarily are under oppression and domination. The protagonist sees these social evils as the obstacles in the case of the entire nation- building campaign. He is confident that every single hand of the completely common people must unite and develop the nation together. But he doubts ‘What else shall we do instead?’ The state mechanism and the structural framework is just so as if carved by the elitists or the power centers previously. Mukarung reflects on the socio-political situation, “All the highest posts are controlled and held by the upper class of people. The political posts are given to the upper-class people. It does not matter whatever the ethnic communities contribute to the nation; still, the indigenous have had to compromise and satisfy with the post of the State Ministers (*Hetchhakupa* 159). When the indigenous cannot hold political posts, they fail to assert their positions and remain inferior. The character Sangen fights hard and makes several attempts to disseminate the information of consciousness raising. Prakash writes that the “hierarchical

knowledge and subjects are instituted by Western domination” but the colonialism’s functioning rearranges and renegotiates the binary oppositions in the colonial agenda (3-4). Hierarchy between the powerful and the oppressed arises because of knowledge that generates domination. The protagonist is the oppressed because he does not occupy the political but high posts. As Mukarung asserts, “Each of my writings is a reflection of society. It gives voice to the marginalized who need to be addressed” (Interview). Work of art raises the voices of the marginalized and it should address the issue of inclusiveness in literary texts. In summary, political power, cultural hegemony and structural network result in hierarchy between the people and they are the proofs about why some are advantaged while some are inferior in socio-political pattern.

At this time, it is appropriate to reflect on the socio-cultural situations as some reasons in the case of prejudiced mindset of the powerful villagers who discriminatorily exploit and subjugate the powerless in the villages. For instance, there are several characters in the text, and Maila Deva is the one who recollects an event in the homeland. His son leaves the village because his son is punished. Mukarung writes, “What can I do now? The poor suffer for no apparent reasons in spite of hard work. My son opposes it when he does not receive his wages for constructing the walls. The ward commissioner reports and incites the police personnel to arrest the innocent. My son is imprisoned for months” (177). The powerful dominates, exploits and subjugates the innocent and subordinate villagers by exerting political power. Such is a practice of atrocity but the son of the peasant cannot resist. Gyanendra Pandey argues that a distinct group of foreigners situate subalterns within a colonial rule. The subaltern encompasses “subjects, working people, and the lower classes”

(411). Maila Deva and his son are the working people who are vulnerable and definitely victimized in society. Obviously, his voice is unheard and his self-respect is ignored before the powerful. In this logic, Mukarung believes that “bringing the culture, philosophy and lifestyle of Janajatis to mainstream literature” is the one and only purpose of his writings. A “generalized Nepali identity” is expressed through academic books and popular literature books (Interview). The indigenous literature aims to reflect culture, philosophy and lifestyle that generate full identity and representations in Nepali literature. Thus, the subordinate people such the indigenous, the peasant, and the disadvantaged are the victims of the oppression from the hands of the power holders and consequently such social groups should struggle for existence and identity.

In “*Y mbunera*”, poverty and lack of skills compel this character to collect firewood in the forest and prepare liquor. For example, Sommaya has several obligations. She has weak and poor parents. She has many younger sisters so she sacrifices her personal desires for her sisters. She earns little money to meet her daily needs. Chopping the trees for firewood and distilling is her compulsion. In this sense, she is both a woman and an indigenous group. She is doubly marginalized. The subordinate character suffers from the hand of the powerful. As Th ng writes, “Brick-built house. Clay-joined house. Tin-roofed house. Wide courtyard. Houses that flap the colored handlooms belong to the Tamang. The remaining houses belong to the hilly Chhetri-Brahmin community who occupy the largest territory. The Tamang people are few and populated sparsely” (*Y mbunera* 50). The Tamang people are economically crippled so these Tamang women maintain life, cutting trees for

firewood so that they ferment liquor and sell. Sommaya as a female character suffers from humiliation and ridicule by the officials and she struggles several times to resist the system. The framework of the buildings indicates the cultural identity of the Tamang community that uses the indigenous words and icons, representing its indigenesness.

As Spivak contests that a subject-effect, which operates as a subject, may be part of a huge “discontinuous network of strands” (223), but in the writings of the Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci, the "subaltern" designates non elite or subordinated social groups (qtd. in Spivak 203). Sommaya belongs to the non-elite or subordinated social groups but she is operating as a subject. Here her efforts indicate her strong assertion of existence and individual identity when she effortlessly protests against power. In this respect, Kshitij Chaurel writes that the anthology of short stories is a way of understanding and experiencing a varying dimension of the Tamang community that are left behind the state and the authority(n pag). The indigenous literature offers an overview of broad aspects of the Tamang community because these people are ignored, unheard and disadvantaged behind the state. In short, despite the difficulties the protagonist Sommaya appears to have maintained the self, cultural identity and existence both as a woman and ethnicity in the form of resistance.

In “Bhagawan Niwas”, there appears to be a connection between education, skills and wealth without which Bhagawan Tamang becomes the victim and cannot assert his voice. For example, He quits studying in primary school because of language intervention. Bhagawan speaks the Tamang but hardly understands Nepali. Thus, this compels him to work in a foreign country. As Th ng says, “I have studied in

grade III from this school. I quit school because I neither speak nor understand Nepali” (*Y mbunera* 67). The subaltern subject has to work in the foreign lands for different reasons. First he lacks skills, abilities and a good educational background. Second, he does not possess wealth and property sufficiently. Finally he believes in the Lahure culture and seeks the foreign employment. Similarly, Guha writes that the elite mobilized the masses for their own goals but the masses failed to get hold of their control over the movements. Consequently, they lost the representations, and print of subaltern politics on campaigns which the upper classes started (6). Bhagawan Tamang works in the foreign lands but his service is not recognized in his country and he suffers domination. Still, his active participation in the case of the foreign employees cannot be rewarded. The representation is lost because of the Lahure culture and interest in the foreign employment. The character lives in melancholy in spite of his great culture. Thus, lack of education and the cultural tradition causes his voices of representation to decline yet his efforts continue. Two forces are at work; the powerful oppress the powerless.

In “Saiko5”, Chhapeni Didi is a woman character who sells the different customers the liquor and other foodstuffs in the evening and lives her life. The man called Sriman Budha exploits her daughter sexually. The subaltern subject runs a shop that trades liquor illegally and faces a number of hurdles in her life because she has a weak and meek daughter. She is worried about her secure life. Th ng writes, “If multi-party triumphs, we the subalterns have the favorable day. It means that we can live fearlessly. We are free to walk both in the light and the dark. Greatest of all these, we are free to live like humans” (*Y mbunera* 38). In the case of gendered subaltern, this

character tries to maintain life with the distillery business which offers her the basis of livelihood, and still her struggle to manage a secure life for the daughter reveals her resolution about her distinct identity in patriarchal society. As a lonely mother, she wants to bear huge responsibility for educating her but she fails. Spivak observes, “How should one examine the dissimulation of patriarchal strategy, which apparently grants the woman free choice as subject?” (299). Chhampeni Didi has to suffer due to patriarchal approach so normally she becomes the victim and receives oppression and exploitation in society. Praju Panta says that pain, struggle and the state’s domination are reflected in the text so it is an expression of anger and the characters’ uneasiness (Interview). The text describes society and characters that state power remains muted in sensitive events of the people within the parameter of societal frame. On the whole, the protagonist attempts to assert her women identity and her self-image, fighting against evils and incongruity of society to some extent.

In “Gangaramko Saikal”, Gangaram suffers from prejudices on the basis of geography and color of the skin. People harbor evil thoughts about other people of different religion, color, caste, geography, language and culture. They develop such prejudices against other people. Instituting supremacy, superiority and domination is a kind of politicization in a colonial context. In a story, the geography, culture and language of Gangaram cannot grant him an acceptance as a national identity. As Th ng remarks, “I did not want to make friends with him. I thought as though he were not a Nepali either at that time” (*Y mbunera* 104). The narrator of the story, SaBin has identified a threat from a stranger coming from the village in the terai because he is a Madhesi from a different language and culture. SaBin has some kind of prejudices

but toward the end she realizes humanity. This is because the narrative of the so-called rulers creates the subjective meaning of the other races and cultures. According to Dipesh Chakravorty, the democratic processes such as uprisings, dissent, and the right to vote project the national politics; the body politics of the subalterns contributes to the nationalist movement against the colonial rule without strategy if they participate as middle class citizen (Provincializing Europe 11). SaBin and Gangaram are both the subalterns and middle class citizens but both of them become the victim of the body politics and dissent within the existing system. Arguably, these two characters seem to support and represent themselves, referring to regionalism as every single person possesses either of ethnic and Madhesi metaphors. Accents and diction used exemplify their identities. SaBin and Gangaram are the marginal and helpless, and they strive for the voices of the politically sidelined communities. Eventually, although both persons are the representatives of society, religion and culture, these components constitute overall national identities as the forms of politicization. Debates on religion, culture, tradition and rituals make somebody politically aware or active.

In “Ghadi Phool”, Sapana does not resist the patriarchal practice in society. Her husband suspects her fidelity. Her husband beats her out of jealousy and anger. The subaltern subject faces domestic violence not from husband but from her in-laws. For example, Sapana suffers from injustice and oppression in the notion of patriarchy. As Th ng writes, “I have contracted TB for 4 months. Everybody at home hates me. Besides, I have no permission to go near my daughter. I think I will die so soon” (*Y mbunera*86). In the text the female character becomes the muted subject within the framework of patriarchy and her voice is suppressed in the name of culture, religion

and custom. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak writes, “It seems, however, that the problem of the muted subject of the subaltern woman, though not solved by an “essentialist” search for lost origins, cannot be served by the call for more theory in Anglo-America either” (Can Subalterns Speak? 295). Sapana is a subaltern as she is a woman and as a result it problematizes the position of the subject. No theory can aid in its self-defining subalternity of the female character of the text. Domination and mistreatment result in socio-cultural conditions of the Tamang race. These communities are living below dignity and continue searching identity for culture, language and religion. Thus, the character Sapana suffers from masculine bullying and does not defend her position and resist its pace of domination just because of her timid nature, submissive temperament, dependency and lack of education.

In “Junedo”, religion, culture and tradition restrict such marriage institutions. Sita a Hindu girl and Junedo a Muslim are criticized severely for their bonding not accepted as per the religion. Religion, culture and ritual separate both from each other. His identity has been shaped by religion, culture and ritual by which he has a distinct personality but his identity as an individual citizen is ignored as opposed to the previously established ideology and religion. For instance, both of them cannot consummate their emotion-loaded relationship. Th ng writes that Sita feels unhappy while she encounters women like her and tries to minimize their pains by applying ointment if they experience inferiority complex for being just a women (*Y mbunera* 134). The subaltern woman is Sita so patriarchal mindset and religion marginalize and dominate her. To explain the argument, Spivak believes, “Given these conditions, and as a literary critic, I tactically confronted the immense problem of the consciousness of

the woman as subaltern” (296). Sita comes from a noble family with high culture and has been raised accordingly, but she cannot escape her own identity crisis for she vehemently is faced with the consciousness of the woman as a subaltern. She cannot subvert the societal structure in which the woman is positioned in the secondary hierarchy. She resists by not abiding by the age-long tradition of marriage institutions. On the other hand, Junedo has a sense of exclusion because of different religious faith. He belongs to the Madheshi community whose cultural identity is negated and ignored in the society of the high hill people. In contrast, Janak Karki states that “Junedo” describes a tale of unrequited romance between the two from two different religions. Two different religions clash in Nepali society because marriage can never be imagined among different religions. In this way, Karki points out social realism where the real-life situation of the past and the present is depicted. Th ng’s text talks about the marginal and helpless, society, religion and culture, tradition and rituals. Junedo is characterized as the marginal and helpless; he needs to struggle for identity in society blending with the dominant culture and ideology. Sita becomes a muted subject and her voice is silenced. The separate religion and culture divide people in factions and disintegrate the several communities. Junedo gets victimized while Sita cannot break away from the patriarchal boundary.

In “GandheJhaar”, its story is told from Chinimaya’s perspective. Chinimaya and Dipesh Thapa are classmates and they go to school together. Dipesh is an aggressive boy in school and he opposes and resists inappropriate actions of the school managing committee. The subaltern character faces numerous difficulties such as social criticism, ridicule by the neighbors about his father’s disappearance, economic

crisis, school drop-out, his sudden escape to the foreign county and his active involvement in contemporary politics. These conditions change Dipesh completely. Th ng writes, “Chinimaya, I do not hold any respect for anybody in this world. I do not believe it, either. Nobody understands me except you” (Y mbunera 115).The social and economic status cause the character to form his identity because he is a vocal critic of societal paradigm. Dipesh and Chinimaya are poverty-stricken characters and are undergoing difficult situations that compel these people to take actions. Ranajit Guha writes that elitist historiography helps us to know more about the structure of the colonial state, the oppression of its various organs in certain historical circumstances, and the nature of the alignment of classes which sustained it (Subaltern 2). According to the reviewer Tulsi Acharya, the story presents a realistic portrayal of society and characters ignored by the state power (n pag).Arguably, the power structure of the state conditions the position of people and community that populates society. Discriminatory practice is observed in the case of the characters namely Dipesh, who abandons his village to seek financial security and Chinimaya being victimized because of poverty and her cultural identity and origin. In this way, these characters seem to search for identity.

In *Hetchh kup* , the author finds the realistic picture of the ex- army men after going to the foreign lands for employment but they lose much of the political spaces and regret the loss. Thus, they need to fight back for the lost glory as the first class citizens and they continue trying hard in search of identity. The people need to search for their identity when they either migrate to foreign lands or settle in such places for foreign employment. Language reflects culture and religion and it sustains identity but

the implementation of language policy displaces other native languages naturally. The indigenous community ignorant of their own language and culture constantly attempt to seek the self. The state policies of religion seem monolithic so the indigenous representations are shadowed by high culture and religion. True representation and identity of the indigenous should be debated in the literary and political discourses. The indigenous people feel a threat and fear of contesting against the people with political high posts. The elite and power holders control powers. The character constantly struggles and claims the identity. Writing about the voices of the excluded and marginalized is the quest of self and cultural identity.

Similarly, in “Y mbunera”, the indigenous literature offers an overview of broad aspects of the Tamang community because these people are ignored, unheard and disadvantaged. Sommaya maintains her cultural identity and existence both as a woman and ethnicity in the form of resistance. Due to lack of education and the cultural tradition, Bhagawan’s voice of representation declines. The powerful oppress the powerless. The state power remains muted in sensitive events of the people within societal structure. Chhapeni Didi asserts her women identity and her self-image by fighting against evils and incongruity of society. SaBin and Gangaram struggle for the voices of the politically sidelined communities. Both persons are the representatives of society, religion and culture, which found national identities. Debates on religion, culture, tradition and rituals educate somebody politically.

These communities continue searching for identity for culture, language and religion. Sapana suffers because of her timid nature, submissive temperament, dependency and lack of education so she does not resist domination. Junedo gets

victimized while Sita cannot break away from patriarchal boundaries so the marginal and helpless need to struggle for identity in society that shares the dominant culture and ideology. Separate religion and culture divide people like Junedo and Sita. Discriminatory practice is observed in society because Dipesh leaves his village to pursue financial security and Chinimaya is oppressed because of scarcity and her cultural identity. In finality, the study attempts to investigate the quest of self and argues the identity of politics in the proposed texts.

The present research study argues the representation from the margin in the two texts by Mukarung and Th ng, and identifies the literary representations of the subaltern subjects as such. In this connection, Subaltern Studies makes a study of social groups that are excluded from dominant power structures, but those groups in society who fall prey to the hegemony of the ruling classes are simply the subalterns. Subaltern classes consisting of peasants, workers, and women are denied access to hegemonic power. Mukarung's *Hetchh kup* and Th ng's *Y mbuneras* spotlight the issues such as marginalization, domination, oppression and resistance, and at the same time debate on the representations of the communities, sharing different ideology, culture and consciousness, and inclusiveness of the writings from the margin.

In the novel, Sagen, Diwahang, Nusan, Kamansing, Sara, and the others show the image of the subalterns whose voices do not reach the attention of the ruling class of people in the country. On the other hand, the anthology hints upon the plights of the indigenous, Madhesi, Muslim and women who are sidelined in the state mechanism so these social groups frame the muted subalterns from the state rule. In the anthology,

characters like Sommaya, Sapana, Sabina, Gangaram, Junedo, Bhagawan, Chinimaya and Dipesh appear to have experienced marginalization, domination, and oppression on the basis of race, color, region, culture and language.

The state mechanism and the structural framework of the state is another factor that denies the cultural identity to the ethnic people because the elitists or the power centers manipulate and exercise political power. He reveals that the socio-political situation leaves an effect in the formation of self and identity. All the highest posts or the political posts are not reachable to the subalterns as is controlled by the upper class of people. Conversely, in *Y mbunera*, Th ng points out the issues related to the women, the indigenous, and the Madhesi, who still are fighting for identity since these people cannot reach the political posts and the decision- making body. The writer identifies the root cause of the identity crisis by referencing poverty, illiteracy, lack of knowledge and consciousness of the indigenous women. Here, all the characters in the short stories struggle in their lives in an endeavor to reclaim identity.

Chapter V. Subalterns in Nepali Literature: Muted, Unheard, and Not-heard

The texts analyze and reveal three types of Nepali subalterns: Muted Unheard, and Not Heard. Some subalterns are literally silenced because the state denies them the voice. Sangen, Ninam, Newarni didi, Krishna KC and Sabitri are some unheard subalterns because the state system ignores their voices. The state does not take notice of these subalterns. In contrast, some subalterns are not heard. The Tamang community in Yambu near the Kathmandu city is not noticed by the state as the state or the government ignores their presence by ignoring to take the viable and immediate action. In Mukarung's *Hetchh kup*, Sangen asserts his voice but his voice remains unheard. Kamansingh, an ex-gurkha soldier, does not get any recognition as a first class citizen in the national geography because he is absent and the state fails to recognize his service. Sangen is a representative of the indigenous and subaltern as he is marginalized. Nusan is victimized and exploited because he is neither educated nor wealthy. The Lahurecultures in the country, the class-consciousness, the elite ideology, and ethnicity have created marginalization and exclusion from the mainstream state mechanism. Riddum is the only son of an ex-British soldier pensioner. He wastes four years' time. Diiwahang as a subaltern subject is exploited just as the media powerhouse companies and their wealthy organizers dominate the subordinated class. Characters such as Sangen, Ninam, Newarni didi, Krishna KC and Sabitri have been subordinated and exploited in societal power structure. Sara Tamang and Geeta are the subordinated class and the subaltern subjects suffer from victimization and oppression in societal structure. Kamansingh is an ex-Gurkha soldier but is discriminated against.

In *Y mbunera*, Chhapeni Didi is a woman character whose daughter is exploited sexually. Because of adverse circumstances, she abandons her liquor business and the locality along with her daughter. Sommaya, the subaltern subjects suffer from the hand of the powerful and the state mechanism because she is both a woman and an indigenous group. She is doubly marginalized. Poverty, tradition, cultural practice and lack of knowledge in the Tamang community make Sommaya a subaltern character. Bhagawan unnecessarily bears sufferings as he loses property from the foreign employment. He believes in the Lahure culture and seeks the foreign employment. The Tamang community has experienced sufferings, exploitation, oppression and discrimination. Sapana Th ng is maltreated, insulted, humiliated and exploited in patriarchal society. Gangaram faces prejudices from the hilly people and the perspective of the rulers. Father's disappearance, economic crisis, school dropout, his sudden escape to the foreign county and his active involvement in contemporary politics change Dipesh completely. Religion, culture and tradition limit such marriage institution between Sita a Hindu girl and Junedo a Muslim boy as childhood friends. Shantamaya, a female character, is forced to do domestic work because she is uneducated and poor. Thus, from the discussion above, all the characters have become the representatives of the subalterns because of a number of reasons such as ideology, cultural hegemony, structural barriers, subaltern politics and consciousness.

In *Hetchh kup* the ex- army men lose much of the political spaces and regret the loss. They need to fight back for the lost glory as the first class citizens. The people need to search for their identity when they either migrate to foreign lands or settle in such places for foreign employment. But the implementation of language

policy displaces other native languages naturally. The indigenous community ignorant of their own language and culture constantly attempt to seek the self. The state policies of religion seem monolithic so the indigenous representations are shadowed by high culture and religion. Writing about the voices of the excluded and marginalized is the quest of self and cultural identity. Work of art raises the voices of the marginalized. It should address the issue of inclusiveness in literary texts. Political power, cultural hegemony and structural network create hierarchy between the people. Consequently, some are advantaged while some are disadvantaged.

Similarly, in *Y mbunera*, the indigenous literature offers an overview of broad aspects of the Tamang community because these people are ignored, unheard and disadvantaged. Sommaya maintains her cultural identity and existence both as a woman and ethnicity. Due to lack of education and the cultural tradition, Bhagawan's voice of representation declines. The state power remains muted in sensitive events. Chhapeni Didi asserts her women identity and her self-image by fighting against evils. SaBin and Gangaram struggle for the voices of the politically sidelined communities. These communities continue searching for identity for culture, language and religion. Sapana suffers because of her timid nature, submissive temperament, dependency and lack of education so she does not resist domination. Junedo gets victimized while Sita cannot break away from patriarchal boundary so the marginal and helpless need to struggle for identity due to the dominant culture and ideology. Discriminatory practice is observed in society because Dipesh leaves his village to pursue financial security and Chinimaya is oppressed because of scarcity and her cultural identity.

In the context of socio-political structure, society is composed of three classes of people: high, middle and low class people. The middle class and lower class people consist of teachers, government and private job holders, laborers and wage earners. The landlords, business persons and industrialists make up a high class of people. These groups control and manipulate the state politics and economy. They rule, colonize and construct a narrative of power and reality so they are advantaged groups. On the contrary, in most societies within the nation there appear several communities or races that are called the minorities, the disadvantaged, peasants, working class people, the scheduled class people and the poor. There are the indigenous, the Madheshi, the dalit, the women and the sudras alongside the migrants; they are the socially excluded groups. Still, they are muted and unheard. These subordinate groups are the Nepali subalterns. In this respect, the Nepali subalterns fall into three categories: muted, unheard, and not heard. Their voice is muted because they cannot speak nor do they assert their existence. The state ignores such subalterns as they lack power, knowledge and agency. Awareness is lacking in them. They politically are unconscious and inactive. Likewise, the subalterns are unheard in the sense that the state pays no attention to some specific ceremonies in the indigenous communities; the particularized festivals like Sakela dance and Gai Jaatra in the corners and streets are not heard by the state. The state seldom addresses the issues concerning identity of the indigenous, discrimination against untouchability, and prejudices against the disadvantaged and the minority. Such social groups are not heard Nepali subalterns.

Demographically speaking, the national population divides into different clusters: Khas-Arya, indigenous, Madheshi and sudras and dalit. Are the Khas-Aryas

the subalterns in Nepali context? However, the indigenous, the Madhesi and the sudras and dalit are economically, politically and educationally backward so they are the subalterns since these groups are left behind by the state and their voices are unapproachable to the state authority. In a different note, according to the reservation policies in civil service of Nepal, the reservation quotas are allocated and stated for Adiwasi/Janajati, Madhesi, Dalit, Tharu, Muslim, and backward area. Such reservation policies indicate that the above-mentioned clusters fall under the category of the marginalized groups and then subalterns.

In the same way, various characters such as Sagen, Diwahang, Kamansingh, Rithum and Nusan are the subalterns whose voices are unheard and ignored as these groups are absent in the mainstream Nepali politics. They are the indigenous people. Likewise, the other characters such as Newarni didi, Krishna KC and Sabitri, who are marginalized for unknown reasons, are the representations of the Nepali subalterns because they are ideologically inactive and insignificant. Besides, Sara and Geeta are the subordinated class struggling for livelihood but their situations are negligible and these represent the other women across the country. Similarly, such characters as Sommaya, Sapana, Chinimaya, Sabina, Bhagawan and Pyakhule are the indigenous groups but are the marginalized and the discriminated people. All of these people become the subalterns because of ideology, cultural hegemony, backwardness, the political structure of the state, and patriarchy. Moreover, these persons are in absence of knowledge, power and agency that are the vital factors influencing the social movement but they cannot mobilize themselves as domination works as a relation of power. Therefore, the subaltern classes arise in the power structure. In the literary

texts and the Nepali politics, the subaltern representations are constructed by power and knowledge that shape a narrative of truth and viability. At this point, the subalterns in the Nepali national discourse are governed through epistemic violence since these socially excluded groups do not enjoy the political power, lack a huge amount of knowledge, and are economically fragile.

Dominant ideology contributes to forming the subaltern classes in Nepali contexts; the cultural hegemony in the construction of these social groups. For that reason, they cannot assert their presence and are structurally muted or unheeded. Similarly, the subalterns fail to assert the strong, visible representations because of the hegemony from the high culture in the mainstream Nepali literature and discourse. Representations of the subaltern groups from the literary texts show that they are backward, powerless, muted, dependent on others for their representation, excluded, insignificant, poor and illiterate. Moreover, because of historical, traditional, and socio-cultural conditions, the subalterns become silenced. Across the country, some sections or clusters of the populace that include Adiwasi/Janajati, Madhesi, Dalit, Tharu, Muslim, and culturally backward people alongside women are silenced. Some educated, intellectual indigenous groups emphasize their identity and begin resistance, writing in literature, and advocating for their equitable representations.

Borrowing the ideas of the major critics, I infer that domination and othering are the practice of subaltern politicization because the indigenous (adhiwasi), Tharu, Muslim and Dalit with special reference to Nepal and Nepali political history are oppressed and denied the identity. Therefore, the study of subaltern studies and historiography may aid in understanding the actual representations of the Nepali

subalterns in both Nepali literature and the national politics and it may make a significant contribution to the subsequent or prospective research although much critical debate about the subaltern issues has begun in the South Asian Studies. In the same manner, Mukarung and Th ng have critiqued the ways that the subalterns are discriminated against and silenced in the state mechanism. In the end, in *Hetchh kup* and *Y mbunera*, most characters are pushed to the margin and actually they are silenced by the state mechanism. Moreover, the subaltern approach is just a way of reading the social classes/groups from the margin as it studies the subaltern classes from the dominant, upper-class people.

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