

Tribhuvan University

**Modernist Imagination in Nepal: A Study on Nepali Modernity in the First Half of
Twentieth Century**

**A thesis submitted to the Central Department of English for the partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of
Masters of Philosophy in English**

By

Deepak Kumar Pathak

Central Department of English

Kirtipur, Kathmandu

April 2017

Tribhuvan University
Central Department of English

Letter of Recommendation

This is to certify that Mr. Deepak Kumar Pathak has completed this thesis entitled "Modernist Imagination in Nepal: A Study on Nepali Modernity in the First Half of 20th Century" under my supervision. He has prepared this thesis for the partial fulfillment of the requirement for the Master of Philosophy in Arts (English) from Tribhuvan University. I recommend this for viva voce.

Dr. Abhi Narayan Subedi,
Professor
Central Department of English
Tribhuvan University
Kathmandu, Nepal

Tribhuvan University
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Letter of Approval

This thesis titled "Modernist Imagination in Nepal: A Study on Nepali Modernity in the First Half of Twentieth Century" submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, Mr. Deepak Kumar Pathak has been approved by undersigned members of the research committee.

Members of Research Committee:

Internal Examiner

Dr. Abhi Narayan Subedi,
Professor

External Examiner

Dr. Ananda Sharma, Professor

Head of Department

Central Department of English, TU

Dr. Ammaraj Joshi, Professor

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to my Guru and supervisor Professor Dr. Abhi Narayan Subedi for his support and love which is always a gift to me. My sincere thanks to Professor Dr. Ammaraj Joshi, Head of Department, for allowing me to undertake this project and for his liberal heart that helped survive and complete this project.

I am indebted to the Central Library of Tribhuvan University and Martin Chautari which provided me books and space to work. Similarly I am thankful to Professor Pitambar Sharma, Dr. Devendra Raj Panday, Khagendra Sangraula and Rajendra Maharjan, the public intellectuals of Nepal who gave me their precious time and knowledge which always remains instrumental for my study on Nepali history, society, economy and culture. I am equally indebted to my friends Sangeet Srota, Anubhav Ajeet, Ujjwal Prasai, Basanta Basnet, Naresh Gyawali and many as their support meant a lot in writing this dissertation.

Finally, my warm love and respect to my mother Bhagawati, father Mohan, wife Kalpana and son Ishan for their precious support at all walks of my intellectual life.

Deepak Kumar Pathak

April 2017.

Abstract

This dissertation aims at exploring the major ideas of Nepali modernity that took shape in the first half of Twentieth century, tracing the root of those ideas, comparing them with the ideas of European modernity and seeking the local version of Nepali modernity.

The ideas of European modernity are deeply rooted to the capitalist venture and the Eighteenth century Enlightenment movement. Scientific and rational thinking, capitalistic mode of life, bureaucratization, education system, concept of nation-state, democracy, alternative ideas of socialism etc are the major concepts of European or Western modernity. In Eighteenth and Ninetieth centuries, European Imperialist missions spread throughout the world. The Imperialism remained instrumental to export these ideas of modernity to the colonies and the world.

Nepali modernity, flourishing in the first half of Twentieth century, instigated its first moves from Indian territories. Calcutta, Banaras and Darjeeling were major hubs for the expatriate and migrant Nepalis. Nepali print capitalism, literary and political movements, and publications all began in those cities. Nepali activists' ideas of modernity were deeply ingrained in the Indian nationalist movement as well as the Western ideals of democracy, liberalism and capitalism that Nepali activists had learned in India.

Nepali modernity hence being shaped in the first half of Twentieth century had its own mode of mimicry, innovation and localization. The shared feeling with Nepali diaspora in Indian territories and the ideas being employed in Nepal through literary, social and political movements and uprisings give a distinct character to the Nepali modernity. Today Nepal still breathes in the same ideas sowed in the first half of the Twentieth century, yet inventing its own dimensions freshly arising in recent movements and uprisings.

Contents

Letter of Recommendation

Letter of Approval

Acknowledgements

Abstract

Introduction: Modernist Zeal in 1950s	1
Chapter 1: Romancing with Risk: Movements and Uprisings	22
Chapter 2: Bikas: The Magic Mantra	42
Chapter 3: Singular Narrative: Historicity and Nationalism	60
Conclusion: Reformulating Nepali Modernity	78
Works Cited	84

Introduction

Modernist Zeal in 1950s

1950 is the hallmark year in the modern history of Nepal. That was the year when Nepal experienced a shock-and-shift effect in its national life. Suddenly the Rana Maharaja was gone! The powerless Shah King became powerful. Democracy was believed to be on its offering. Political parties took the political stage for the first time in history. Most importantly the fall of a century long Rana Regime was not just a crown-in-a-different-head phenomenon. This falling of a rock-solid autocratic family rule was experienced as a big shift in Nepali polity.

Historians call it 'The 1950 Revolution'. Rana period is interpreted as 'closed' society and the 1950 revolution as breaking blow that had set Nepal open to the world. What was closed then and what did open in 1950? This question aptly leads us to the understanding of the kind of modernity which was imagined and cultivated in Nepal in the first half of twentieth century.

Ranas maintained Nepal as a 'closed society' in many respects. Kathmandu (popularly known as Nepal valley till 1950s) was not linked by any motorable roads. One interesting example of this 'closedness' is the fact that motor cars were transported to Kathmandu from Bhimphedi by the human carriers. Education was not allowed to the broader public. Publications were strictly prohibited. A few state-sponsored or closely scrutinized literary journals and newspapers, such as *Gorkhapatra* and *Sharada*, were the only intellectual food for the Nepal valley elites. Public participation in politics was beyond imagination.

Three political events of 'The 1950 Revolution' are remarkable to note here. First is the political formation in the people's front. Praja Parishad was the first political party

organized secretly in Nepal valley (Gautam 253). Nepali Congress Party was organized and flourished in the Indian cities of Calcutta and Banaras. Nepali Congress formed a voluntary army 'Mukti Sena' in the Indian territory and launched attack at the border towns like Birgunj, Biratnagar and Bhairahawa in 1950 (Gupta 44). The second remarkable event was that King Tribhuvan took political asylum in the Indian embassy. Soon after an Indian Air Force airplane lifted him to Delhi (Joshi and Rose 73). This incident created a big political havoc in Nepal valley. Then the third significant event took place. That was the unprecedented public demonstration against the Rana regime in Nepal valley. Joshi and Rose note:

Massive demonstrations in the capital, on November 26 and 28, demanded the restoration of King Tribhuvan and an end to Rana tyranny. The government had to resort to gunfire, and two demonstrators were killed. The mass protest exposed the falseness of the Rana claims that the Nepali Congress rebellion was manned and engineered solely by foreign elements. (75)

The ball was in the Delhi court now. Indian premier Jawaharlal Nehru had set the table of negotiation among the Rana, the King and Nepali Congress in Delhi. The famous Delhi Agreement was the outcome of that negotiation. The three negotiating parties agreed the power sharing deal in the new government (Gupta 48-49). According to Gupta:

On 12 February a settlement was finally reached to the satisfaction of all the parties. According to the terms of the agreement, the number of ministers in the proposed interim council was brought down from 14-10 of whom half were to be Congress nominees and other half the Ranas. Three days later King Tribhuvan returned to Kathmandu amidst scenes of great popular festivity. On 18 February 1951, a new government was installed by a royal proclamation.

(49)

Thus King Tribhuvan returned home assuming the role of a political guardian, in consequence the royal palace was to become the de facto power-center.

Whatever the political equilibrium of the time, a profound sense of freedom was in the air. A sense of opening was remarkably felt and lived at that time. Political parties started working among the people. Newspapers, magazines and different other publications made their way to everyday life. Schools and colleges were established in different parts of the country. Aspiration for education was seen in all village communities. Radio Nepal was established and now people didn't need permission to have a radio set at home. Different political ideas unprecedentedly swarmed into the public life.

Not only the society opened for new ideas and innovations, the state itself did open for all the influences of foreign powers. India was there from the very beginning. India's role had increased significantly even in the domestic political affairs after the Delhi Agreement. United States Operations Mission (USOM) entered with the idea of 'development'. Economic and educational planning began with the foreign assistance and guidance. The bureaucracy was rudimentary till then, a new plan for modernizing the bureaucracy was put to work again with the foreign assistance. All consequent governments were eagerly seeking foreign aid for road and other infrastructural construction immediately after the 1950 revolution.

Till 1950 the catchword was *unnati*, now a new word paved its way into the political as well as social discourse- *Bikas*. *Unnati* meant progress in all fronts of national life. In political, literary and journalistic discourse, *unnati* frequented significantly. Each and every political leader, writer, poet, editor etc used the word *unnati* with great temptation. When *Bikas* stepped into the scene, it performed not only with temptation but also with glamour. *Bikas* is a Nepali word of Sanskrit origin for development. The displacement of *unnati* by *Bikas* is what counts for the modernist imagination budding in the 1950s Nepal.

Modernity: Imagined and Enacted

Modernity, as is well known, is a western concept. It is much defined yet vague term in the theoretical discourse. However modernity can be understood by three familiar concepts: rationality, scientificity and democracy. Modernity celebrates innovation and change. Rational thinking is important for change. Rational thinking is possible only when one breaks free from dogmatic views. This is impossible without scientificity. Scientific method is key factor to any innovation and change. According to the ideals of modernity, innovation and change can be flourished in the political atmosphere provided by democratic principles.

The duality of traditional and modern is much emphasized in the discourse of modernity. The break from the religious dogma, customary solidity and the god-centered idea is understood as the break from the tradition. Modernity fosters that break by free thinking, experimenting and finding the rational truth.

It has been repeatedly reminded that modernity's root lies in the 18th century European intellectual movement called Enlightenment. Enlightenment entails the use of reason, skepticism, and breakaway from the traditional way of life. As Habermas informs:

The word 'modern' was first employed in the late fifth century in order to distinguish the present, now officially Christian, from the pagan and Roman past...It was only the French Enlightenment's ideal of perfection and the idea, inspired by modern science, of the infinite progress of knowledge and the advance toward social and moral improvement that gradually lifted the spell exercised on the spirit of these early moderns by the classical works of antiquity. (39)

Following Habermas we can infer that the idea of being modern has always been the idea of discovering the present on the relic of the past. European modernity paved way for capitalistic venture, inspired by the scientific innovations and objective outlook. Along with the technological and industrial development, intellectual as well as political quest to define and redefine the socio-political order too continued. Avijit Pathak summarizes:

It was often said that Enlightenment philosophers were laying the foundation of a liberal/rational/secular order. And sociology as it evolved- from Comte's law of three stages to Marx's historical materialism- taught us diverse ways of looking at the post-Enlightenment era. Durkheim saw growing differentiation, specialization, division of labor and resultant organic solidarity in modern industrial societies. Weber saw the process of rationalization, or the emergence of a bureaucratic form of authority in the new age. (11)

Capitalism, consumerism, individualism, economic development, techno-culture, industrialism, democratization of society, forms of nation and nationalism all signify the modernity. It is argued that the European powers used the same concept of modernity for their colonizing mission to legitimize their imperial interests. Peter Childs informs:

Defended as a universal endeavour which leads to the gradual emancipation of all human beings, its adversarial critics contend that reason and knowledge are merely used to enslave and control people in alternative ways to premodern society, which employed coercion, religion and 'natural' authority to achieve social domination. (16-17)

They produced the antagonistic dichotomies like West/Non-West, Colonizer/Colonized etc in the same line as tradition/modern, customary/scientific etc.

It's the historical fact that the Imperial powers were successful to export European modernity to the rest of the world. Industrial capitalism, consumerism, forms of democracies, high-tech innovations, economic planning, bureaucratic institutions etc have prevailed throughout the world. But then, is the European modernity a universal one? Can all the cultures, peoples and nations see their image in the mirror of European modernity?

Recently the European concept of modernity is under critical scrutiny. Scholars have rejected the idea of universal modernity. Contemporary theorists and scholars like S. N. Eisenstadt, Arjun Appadurai, Dipesh Chakrabarti, Partha Chatterjee, Charles Taylor, Zygmunt Bauman etc have strongly rejected this idea. On the other hand post-colonial theories have identified and refuted the Western 'eyeing' system that has represented and recreated the image of Non-West or the (once) colonized world.

Throughout the colonial era "West became the looking glass for the imagining of universal history" (Dube 7). This concept of universalism was the hegemonic view of Western powers to represent and recreate the Non-West (mainly colonized world) in and against its own image. Saurabh Dube further writes:

In this scenario, the blueprints of modernization actually distilled the designs of modernity, the aggressive assumption of the latter holding in place the schematic prognosis of the former. Taken together, modernity's discourses and modernization theories, inextricably entwined, the one with the other, have articulated an imaginary but palpable, distended and aggrandizing West/Europe as history, modernity, and destiny- for each society, culture and people. (7)

The whole discourse of imperialism entails the story of the colonizer setting out to modernize the colonized peoples. Hence the modernization project became the integral part

of modernity. The imperialism distributed a mirror that successfully showed the image of the West/Europe as the image of modernity to the colonized peoples around the world. That was how the colonized peoples were taught to see their own image in the Western mirror, i.e. colonized people were made to see themselves with the Western eye. I call this phenomenon the 'western eyeing'.

Second World War fueled the decolonization process. It was the time when anti-colonial nationalisms flourished all over the world. Newly independent nation-states rediscovered their own 'eye' to look at their own histories, strongly asserted their own cultural roots and invigorated their own independent political identities. The colonial discourse of universal modernity and modernizing projects to homogenize the Non-Western cultures was denounced and rejected in a quest to find their own discourse of resistance and resurgence. In his seminal book *Orientalism*, Edward W. Said has laid foundation for the study of Western hegemony and its discursive domination of representing Orient as its Other (1995). He suggests:

I consider Orientalism's failure to have been a human as much as an intellectual one; for in having to take up a position of irreducible opposition to a region of the world it considered alien to its own, Orientalism failed to identify with human experiences, failed also to see it as human experience. The worldwide hegemony of Orientalism and all it stands for can now be challenged, if we can benefit properly from the general twentieth-century rise to political and historical awareness of so many of the earth's peoples. (328)

Said's elucidation of Orientalism is the apt example of 'western eyeing' system that sought to modernize the colonized peoples. Denouncing the western hegemonic discourse, Said has denounced the 'western eyeing' system to invoke the discovery of indigenous 'eyes'.

Contemporary discourse of modernity has taken up this task to challenge the Western hegemony. It has said no to the homogenizing, universal plethora of European modernity. There cannot be singular modernity. Or so to say modernity can't be singular. For Eisenstadt, modernity and Westernization are not identical and European patterns of modernity are not only 'authentic' modernities (2-3). Elucidating the idea of 'multiple modernities' he says:

The idea of multiple modernities presumes that the best way to understand the contemporary world- indeed to explain the history of modernity- is to see it as a story of continual constitution and reconstitution of a multiplicity of cultural programs. These ongoing reconstructions of multiple institutional and ideological patterns are carried forward by specific social actors in close connection with social, political, and intellectual activists, and also by social movements pursuing different programs of modernity holding very different views on what makes societies modern. (2)

Eisenstadt's concept of multiple modernities dismisses the idea of universal modernity. When multiple cultures write their distinct codes of modernity, multiple modernities are equally authentic in their own ways. The European patterns of modernities can't be universal and standard yardsticks to judge multiple modernities around the world.

Modernity is defined in terms of 'multiple modernities', 'our modernity' (Chatterjee), 'modernity at large' (Appadurai), 'liquid modernity' (Bauman) etc. Similarly Dipesh Chakrabarty talks of 'provincializing Europe' as a project in his own fashion of *Subaltern Studies*. One can't erase or dismiss the modernity originated and extended from Europe. So, for Chakrabarty, 'provincializing Europe' is to see Europe itself as an imaginary and hyperreal entity. Whatever is said to be the European modernity is not the work of the Europeans only. When modernity was backed by Imperial power, the colonized peoples too contributed to it

with their own struggle and resistance. Therefore the idea of 'provincializing Europe "is to write into the history of modernity the ambivalences, contradictions, the use of force, and the tragedies and ironies that attend it" (43).

Eisenstadt, Chatterjee, Pathak all agree on not rejecting the rationality, scientificity and liberal values of modernity. They all seek to redefine the modernity against the so-called universal or homogenizing project of modernity and discover the alternative narrative of it. Referring Dipesh Chakrabarti, we can say that not only the modernity's narrative but Europe itself should be rediscovered while taking up the task to understand and explain the experiments and experiences of alternative modernities.

Contemporary theories of modernity have taken into consideration in great deal the phenomenon of globalization. Globalization is the product of modernity and modernity gets reshaped and revitalized by virtue of globalization. Extraordinary mobility of people, cultural artifacts, information and knowledge has left no corner of the world untouched. Global cultural exchange, experimentations, hybridization etc are going on and on. On the other hand local/national cultures do not just fade away; they interact, innovate and survive. In the words of Avijit Pathak, "In the domain of culture 'old' and 'new' often co-exist" (86). Appadurai, examining the global cultural economy, identifies the heterogeneous, fluid, complex and irregular nature of modernity. He explores two important features of the globalized world-media and migration. He posits, "The new global cultural economy has to be seen as a complex, overlapping, disjunctive order that cannot any longer be understood in terms of existing center-periphery models" (32). On the other hand Bauman explores the liquidity of modernity:

Modernity starts when space and time are separated from living practice and from each other and so become ready to be theorized as distinct and mutually

independent categories of strategy and action, when they cease to be, as they used to be in long pre-modern centuries, the intertwined and so barely distinguishable aspects of living experience, locked in a stable and apparently invulnerable one-to-one correspondence. In modernity, time has *history*, it has history because of the perpetually expanding 'carrying capacity' of time- the lengthening of the stretches of space which units of time allow to 'pass', 'cross', 'cover'- or *conquer*. (8-9)

Hence modernity is a continuous, flowing phenomenon. Its characteristic tempo of fluidity allows us to think it as an ever changing process. It can be global, and at the same time local. As Chatterjee prompts for 'early modernity' of India (76-77), modernity can be reinvigorating the 'pastness' in present forms too. Global connectivity is not a recent phenomenon. Civilizations, cultures and societies had connectivity in the remote past too.

One can't deny the recent fact that the distance is extraordinarily shortened, borders are blurred and cybernetics has created phenomenal shrink of time and space. Yet again modernity of any historical period is the outcome of same connectivity and negotiations between and among cultures and peoples. If modernity is the fluid thing, ever renewing, modernizing and re-modernizing itself, it can be explained as continuous negotiation of human knowledge and social practices. While studying Delhi's architectural history, Jyoti Hosagrahar points out:

Indigenous modernities are expressed in built forms prompting ambivalent readings and reactions. As socially constructed identities, buildings and spaces cannot be labeled as inherently 'modern' or 'traditional' on the basis of their visual characteristics at a moment in time. Nor can the form, use, and significance of a space be understood in isolation of the cultural processes by

which they are produced and consumed. In the tumult of cultural change, customary spatial practices and social institutions are in flux. The spatial experiences of *indigenous modernities* are marked by the presence of formal contradictions and the absence of coherence. For those who expect unity, and those who imagine 'modern' and 'traditional' to be complete, visually identifiable features of a built form, *indigenous modernities* are disturbing in their discontinuity and incompleteness. (7)

Hosagrahar's study shows that architectural modernity of Delhi doesn't fit the traditional versus modern dichotomy. Take Eisenstadt's 'multiple modernities' or Hosagrahar's 'indigenous modernities, the point to note is that the world is full of different modernities. This dissertation follows this line of thought to study the indigenous Nepali modernity in the first half of 20th century. As has been already noted, 1950 was a breaking point of Nepali modern history. What doors and windows were opened up in that year and the years following 1950 are significant to understand the sort of modernity we are living in now.

This dissertation attempts to trace the modernity's negotiations- political, cultural, literary, social and economic- induced at that particular time. To do so, it will revisit first half of 20th century to find out the connectors and prompters. The influence of European modernity in Nepal is not unknown. The question is- how the actors and agents of modernity coped with these influences?

To set the scene, let's briefly discuss the historical indications of Nepali modernity's negotiations with the outside world.

Historical Indications: Mimicry and Negotiations

As already noted, till 1950s the word Nepal meant only today's Kathmandu valley in popular imagination. Prithvinarayan Shah, king of a tiny state Gorkha, conquered Nepal valley in 1769. Till then Malla kings were the rulers of Nepal valley. Malla period is famous for its thriving culture, art, architecture, sculpture, trade, cottage industries, handicrafts and artisans. Nepal had trade linkages with Tibet at the north and Indian towns at the south. Italian Capuchin Mission was already present in the valley. They had converted some local Newars into Christians. Malla kings too had benefitted from Capuchin Fathers' medical techniques.

Prithvinarayan had begun his conquest in 1744. By 1774 Prithvinarayan had extended Gorkhali rule to the eastern Hills and eastern Terai including Nepal valley (Stiller, *Nepal* 21). Gorkhali mission of conquering small states scattered throughout the Mahabharat hills didn't stop there. It resumed after the death of Prithvinarayan and by 1809 the boarder of Gorkhali rule extended westward up to Satlaj River. Anglo-Nepal war (1814-1816) finally demarcated Nepal's modern boarder. The Treaty of Sugauli, signed by Nepal and East India Company, put the Gorkhali military mission for conquest into dead end.

Till then British colonial capitalism was well flourishing in India. As early as 1793 Nepal was importing English broad cloth for military uniform as well as the silk and cotton clothes manufactured in Banaras and Bengal (Kirkpatrick 212-13). During Prime Minister Bhimsen Thapa's rule, the British style military designations and titles like General, Colonel, Captain were adopted (Stiller, *The Silent* 92). After the War, Bhimsen Thapa started modernizing the army, established a regular barrack at *Chhauni* and fondly adopted the British style military uniform.

After the Treaty of Sugauli, a British residency was established in the Valley in 1816. This incident marked the significant rise of European goods in Nepali market (Hodgson, quoted in Liechty, *Suitably Modern* 42). Bhimsen Thapa himself fashioned in British style military dress and Valley elites too consumed European goods to exhibit their modern mood. As Mark Liechty puts it:

From velvets to chintzes to imitation scarves to homespun, various types of European fabric (or their absence) had become important elements in the language of status and social rank in Kathmandu... In addition to fabrics, Bhim Sen Thapa and other elites also imported a host of other European goods. From sport rifles, glassware, and crockery to mirrors, plate glass, and lightening devices, Nepali elites were not simply consuming foreign goods but beginning to make significant concessions to foreign cultural practices.

(Suitably Modern 43)

In 1846 Junga Bahadur Rana seized power through bloody Kot Massacre. He began the Rana family rule soon after he became Prime Minister. The Rana regime lasted for 103 years. During this period, mimicry of the European lifestyle and consumption of European goods in Nepal valley rose to highest point. Jung Bahadur's Thapathali palace was one of the dazzling examples of such mimicry. One English observer Daniel Wright, present in the Valley at the time, notes:

The four public rooms are large, lofty, and ornamented with pictures and carvings. They are full of curiosities of Nepalese, Chinese and English manufacture. Of the last it is difficult to say what there is not. From a baby's frock to a reflecting telescope or an Erard's piano, there seems to be a specimen of everything, all jumbled together. The Durbar-room is beautifully

furnished with satin sofas, mahogany and ivory chairs, pianos, etc. The walls are graced with pictures of Her Majesty Queen Victoria and Prince Albert, which are given as presents to the King, besides full-length portraits of Sir Jung Bahadur, his brothers and other relatives, which were painted in England and France. In the center of the hall stands a crystal chandelier some thirty feet in height, which was also brought from London, and cost, it is said, £ 500. (13-14)

The pictures of British queen and prince in Jung Bahadur's Thapathali palace are interesting to note here. This scene describes how Rana Maharaja was hell-bent not only to mimic the European culture and lifestyle, but also to establish a shadow of British imperial power inside his palace. Importing the luxury items from European centers and installing them in the palaces had the huge prestige value established as a vital part of ruling culture in Rana rule.

Lavish luxury the Rana rulers and elites enjoyed was deemed to be the status of modernity. Common people were not allowed to have horse, elephant or motor cars, even to build any roof-tiled building. This prohibition, although, couldn't stop the middle class to enjoy other foreign goods like cups, pots, clothes etc. Traders and merchants enjoyed the flourishing market. After First World War, in 1923, Treaty of Friendship was signed with British Raj. The treaty entitled Nepal to import, free of Indian custom duty. The economic consequence of the Treaty was devastating:

In 1923 Japanese manufacturers were searching for buyers. Their industrial plants were new, their prices far under Manchester prices, and export was their business...Cheap imports from Japan flooded the small market of Nepal... Small cottage industries that had survived in Nepal against all the persuasions

of British entrepreneurs, crumpled under the tide of Japanese imports... Village cottage industries had been effectively destroyed. (Stiller, *Nepal* 159-60)

19th century Nepali economy is characterized by inadequate capital formation, low productivity and general poverty. On the one hand there were mimic men who enjoyed the mimicry of European modernity; on the other hand majority of population were peasants who suffered extreme poverty. Nepali economic historian Mahesh C Regmi remarks:

A significant portion of the income that the landowning elite derived from rents was thus spent not on indigenous goods and services but on imported luxuries... The contrast between the thatched huts of the peasantry, and the stucco palaces of *rajas*, *birta*-owners, and *jagirdars*, and the economic and psychological gulf that separated them, are accordingly a characteristic feature of nineteenth century Nepali economy and society. (*Thatched Huts* 178-79)

The then Nepal valley was the exemplary scene of blend between blistering palaces and old-styled neighborhoods. Different towns and settlements of Nepal valley still had been breathing the smell of Malla Period. Ranas not only mimicked the English style modernity, but also made it their private affair restricting general public from taking it up. The stark difference between the stucco palaces along with their hybrid culture and lifestyle on the one hand, and that of town's common culture and economic standard on the other was enough to shock any visitor.

European modernity was being mimicked, envied and enacted, that's true. But it was not the singular reality. The Newar culture, architecture, art, sculpture; as a whole Newar civilization was still alive and vibrant. When Prithvinarayan conquered the city, he had accepted the civilizational superiority of the Valley people (Acharya, *Hamro* 44). Ranas

definitely couldn't do it otherwise. Valley continued breathing with its festivities, *jatras*, art, music, artisans etc. Ranas prohibited the use of Nepalvasa (language of Newar people) in official documents, repressed its literary activities (Maharjan, *Linguistic* 6), and yet couldn't outsmart the Valley culture with their mimicry of the European image.

Therefore one could observe the negotiations of different modes of life, culture and understanding in the Valley. Mugal influence was an old story as Prithvinarayan and other Shah Kings used to decorate their names with Mugal style titles, clothing and lifestyle. The negotiations among indigenous Newar art, Mugal and European styles were best exhibited in the architectonic history of Nepal valley. Identifying the features of Singha Darbar's Gaddi Baithak (throne hall), Niels Gutschow writes:

The early reconfiguration of the palace by Janga Bahadur Rana in the late 1860s amalgamated Lukhnavi stucco and sgraffito with Newar woodwork. Completed in 1908, the new throne hall exclusively features neoclassicist details, and faces onto the square in the fashion of a triumphal arch with colossal Ionic columns. (858)

The architectonic amalgam of Mugal, English and Newar architectural ideals is important to note here. The idea of modernity mimicked by the Rulers was being confronted by the hybridity in the actualization of indigenous modernity.

English rule in India was on the one hand a traumatic historical experience to the colonized people; on the other it had provided an opportunity of cultural encounters too. Though the Imperialistic definition of modernity targeted to 'know' the local people and map them, there were wonderful sharing between Indian modernity and Western modernity. One of the prominent negotiating spaces was architecture, thereof inspiring the activities like city planning, mapping and designing. English style mansions stood straight negotiating with

wonderful local architectural endowment (Hosagrahar 190). Very soon such negotiations gave way to hybrid designs of architectures and cityscapes. Such hybrid architectonic fruitions exhibited the true face of the modernity's shaping and reshaping.

Kathmandu's architectonic history too tells us the story of such negotiations. Lucknow remains the important destination from where architectural peculiarities travelled to Kathmandu sticking to the minds of rulers as well as architects. Niels Gutschow has studied Newar architectural traditions of Nepal and identified the history of Nepali architecture as a history of regular improvisation, innovation and creative hybridization. He explains how architecture of Lucknow provided a prototype that intermingled with local Newari architectural motifs and thereof developed the 'modern' forms:

The first building to incorporate pointed arches crafted in plaster was introduced at the end of the 18th century, probably based on prototypes Bahadur Saha encountered in North India. No further dates are available, but later on Bhimsen Thapa may have started to build his own palace in a similar fashion after his rise to power in 1806. A more decisive change must have taken place a decade later, when he added a new palace, plastered fully in white, a nine-storeyed tower, and finally in the palace's garden to the west, the *janaral bag*, a temple. All of these had details carved in stone and wood, demonstrating the continuity of Newar craftsmanship. But the design now incorporated fluted pilasters with acanthus leaves moulded after prototypes from North India, namely the palaces of Lucknow, the flourishing center of North India. (793)

Here Gutschow provides us the information about how our modernity in terms of architecture was negotiated with Lucknow models, and more interesting fact is that Lucknow

itself was improvised by European models of architecture. A building doesn't only remain a building, but it defines the place, enters into the psyche of people and provides a solid background for particular sets of subtle behaviors of people. Different place in Kathmandu today are named after such buildings built in Rana time, almost all of them are still bearing the improvised underlying structure of the then modernity.

Another important issue is of the negotiations between architecture and urbanism. Particular architectural setting of a city gives particular opportunity or blocks others so as to mold people in its own ideology, spoken silently. Jyoti Hosagrahar observes:

Cities become the sites for the modernist enterprise, the most visible expression of the cultural upheaval in all its destructive and creative glory. They become the locus for both the disintegration of inherited traditions and for building anew. It is from this perspective that I study the landscape of a city in the throes of turmoil: imagined and lived, planned and perceived as a theater for the enactment of a modernity particularly to its context. (5)

Jyoti's idea of cityscape as a modernist enterprise can be applicable to Bir Shamsheer's building projects in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century. Most importantly the designs of Bahadur Bhavan, Lal Darbar, Phora Darbar, Seto Darbar and Singha Darbar bore European neo-Gothic and neo-classical influence (Gutschow 854-857). We can imagine the time when those buildings and others were being built in Kathmandu. The enchantment of these building activities must have had great impact upon the mindset of people of Nepal. Still today these buildings define Kathmandu along with the ancient temples, *stupas* and different palaces. One facet of the picture shows the architectural influence European models and Nawabian models of Lucknow, the other facet shows the continuity of native

architectural motifs. Gutschow analyzes the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century architectonic ideology of Ranas as:

Similar to the cast-iron details, which were incorporated as authentic objects from a foreign world, details of Newar architecture were likewise incorporated. Whether the Rana builders wished to demonstrate the high standards set by the local craftsmen, or whether carved woodwork was supposed to root imported ideas and materials in local traditions is open to speculation. The Ranas at any rate wanted to be of the world and at the same time sovereign rulers of the Himalayan kingdom in which only the Newars provided the framework for architectural articulation. (859)

The burden of mimicry was soon coming after the Rana regime itself. The economy of the country deteriorated during the Rana period. Indigenous cottage industries crumbled down. Vast sum of national income was misused by Rana rulers for their personal benefits. Two third of the agricultural land was under *Birta* tenure that directly benefitted the nobility (Regmi, *Thatched Huts* 176-179). Good part of import was luxuries goods and its symbolic value was isolating the Rana rulers and nobility from rest of the society.

Indigenous art and culture was looked down upon by the Rana nobility. Rana palaces had personal theaters that showed plays in Persian and Hindi languages. One noted Nepali writer Bal Krishna Sama, who came from the Rana nobility, talks of how English language and education was the symbol of prestige in Nepal valley at that time. He tells us how Rana palaces preferred English culture and civilization to indigenous one and still used Persian words and phrases in formal durbar language (333-42).

The rhetoric of ever-independent nation, a pure country untouched by Imperial power, was just an illusion. Ranas placed every resources of the country, including the young

'Gorkha fighters', at the disposal of the British Empire. During the First and Second World Wars, large number of 'Gorkha Soldiers' served the Empire by blood and toil. Rana rulers also sent native troops to serve the Empire. In the true sense of the term, Nepal remained a semi-colonial state during the Rana period. The British-Nepal trade relations too exhibit the same characteristics:

The policy of monopoly trade was also favoured because of the high profit derived from the lucrative Indo-Nepal trade in which senior civil and military officials were engaged. The rulers sold monopoly rights to merchants who remitted a share of their profit to the Prime Minister. The system of monopoly also served to divert the attention of the elite (Sardars, nobles, officers, intellectuals etc.) from politics to commerce, which brought them handsome profits. Fearful of political and territorial designs characteristic of the British imperialism, the rulers of Nepal refused to be beguiled by the prospects of material prosperity dangled before them by the British. They preferred freedom of the country to enslavement and colonization as had happened in India. (Singh, *Nepal and* 316)

The national elite benefitted a lot throughout this period. By the same token, the peasants and commoners suffered a lot. A large chunk of the youths either joined the British regiments or went to different Indian towns/cities in search of job. They were commonly called *Lahure* at home, referring to Lahore. A surge of emigration across border into Sikkim, Bengal, Assam, Darjeeling, Bhutan and Burma happened throughout 19th century. Majority of the migrants were slaves and debtors who left the country to escape compulsory unpaid labor demand, stern harassment by their owners/creditors in the hill villages. Moreover they were stripped off their lands (Shrestha, *The Political* 87). Nanda R. Shrestha analyses the

economic consequences of the migration and labor flight (to British Army as well as the Southern Cities/Towns) as 'migration-dependency trap' (*The Political* 93-95).

Second World War fueled the anti-colonial, national independence movements throughout the world. India became the hotspot for its vibrant national independence movement. Nepali youths, mostly educated in Indian cities like Calcutta and Banaras, were greatly influenced by the nationalistic movement of India. They themselves took part in the Indian Independence movement and admired Mahatma Gandhi a lot. They imagined their own 'national independence' as the end of Rana family rule. They formed political parties in India, launched newspapers and organized anti-Rana movement.

The burden of mimicry (of the European modernity) finally ignited the idea of freedom from the same burden. A new sense of modernity was in the offing. The modernist zeal that culminated to a workable dream in 1950 was against the 'closedness' of Rana regime. This 'closedness' proved to be so 'closed' that Rana regime itself started suffocating when the British Raj left India. Politically Rana regime was the satellite regime of the British Raj. So it mimicked the modernity the British brought forth. When the mirror was gone, mirror-image too was lost.

Anti-Rana political, social, cultural and literary movements imagined new dimensions of modernity against the 'mimicked modernity' of the Ranas. What movements and imaginations signify that modernist zeal? What were the ideologies of modernity at work? Were they free from European modernity? What was the role of modernist actors to formulate and enact the upcoming phase of modernity in Nepal? The following chapters will devote to answer these questions.

Chapter 1

Romancing with Risk: Movements and Uprisings

Father, it's unbearable! How can I just live? You have five sons. You Sacrifice me. I will sacrifice my life for the country.

(Martyr Gangalal, to his father. Quoted in Sarubhakta 133)

At the dawn of 20th century Chandra Shamsher assumed power. He proved to be one of the most powerful and long reigning (1901-1929) Rana Prime Minister cum *Shree 3 Maharaj*. And it's important to note that anti-Rana sentiments started taking political forms in his ruling period. However, political parties took shape in the latter part of Rana period. Different Hindu and indigenous religious movements, linguistic and social reform movements also sprang up.

These social movements and political uprisings had deep rooted modernist ideals. All the actors of these movements and uprisings wanted change in the society. They all saw Rana regime a hinder to the change, so they were motivated by the contemplation of overthrowing it. In their opinion, society was stopped at some point centuries ago and time had been counting its dead end since then. They wanted to run the clock again.

In the first half of 20th century, many middle-class Nepali youths went to Calcutta and Banaras for their study. Those cities were vibrant intellectual hubs. Furthermore they were vibrant spaces for Indian nationalist movement. Political struggles used to intermingle with intellectual enthusiasm there. Those Nepali youths were dumbfounded by the ideas and ideals, struggles and excitements, thriving print capitalism, education system as well as the infrastructural development activated in these cities (Joshi and Rose 50-56). Besides Nepali

diaspora, settled in Darjeeling, Sikkim, Deharadun etc, had been keenly working in publishing newspapers, literary magazines that inspired the youths to die for country's *unnati*.

The Hindu reformist movement in India too contributed to the social reformist movements in Nepal. Josmani Santa (Saint)'s reformist movement, Arya Samaji movement, Yogmaya's revolt etc took inspiration and ideals from Indian Hindu reformist movements. Likewise political party formations and their shaping of agendas and nationalist ideals were directly inspired by Indian movement for Independence. Let us briefly discuss about these moments and uprisings.

Social Movements

The 'closedness' of Rana rule had deposited layers of despair, anger and anxiety in the mindscape of Nepali population. The youths educated in India had felt the burden of this 'closedness' very severely. They used to compare the thriving intellectual and political scenario in India with their own village situation at home. The pain they felt remembering the downtrodden situation of their own homeland had a lot to do with their initiation of social movements. They were not extremists but reformists.

Josmani Santa Tradition:

According to Janaklal Sharma, Josmani Santa (Saint) Tradition was originated in Nepal and it is one of the oldest Hindu Saint traditions in Nepal. Some evidences show that this tradition was already present before Prithvinarayan Shah (1-5). Josmani Saints didn't believe in Caste hierarchy. They denounced *Karmakanda* (Hindu ritual acts) and Brahmanism. In addition, they used to condemn the idol worship. They severely criticized the discrimination against women and said that the women and *Shudra* (low caste people) also can read the *Veda*.

Josmani Saints were against any forms of discrimination. They used to live in a secluded place outside the general society. Their language was poetry. With their radical views against conservative Hindu Brahmanism, they had attracted disciples from all caste and race. Their social reformist motive was not unknown to the regime. As they were already Saints, they had secured benefit of doubt and some sense of fear too. Therefore they were vocal to criticize the corrupt Rana administration and their village agents.

Lakhan Thapa, a Gorkha resident and Josmani Saint, planned to revolt against Jung Bahadur's regime in 1876. The plan was revealed and Lakhan Thapa was killed together with his seven disciples (Gautam 19-20). In that episode, Josmani Saints in the eastern Nepal too were arrested, including Saint Dildas (Sharma, *Josmani* 63).

Josmani Saint Tradition not only created reformist vibrations in different hill societies ranging from East to West, but also inspired different other social reformists like Mahaguru Falgunanda and Yogmaya. They provoked people against ill customs like *Sati Pratha*¹ and Slavery, caste discrimination, bribery etc. Likewise they aroused consciousness of social change among different communities. Interestingly Josmani Saint Tradition had saints and disciples from different ethnic communities like Rai, Limbu etc.

Satyahanma Pantha:

Satyahanma Pantha (Satyahanma Sect) was founded by Mahaguru Falgunananda. A member of Limbu ethnic community, he was born in Eastern district Ilam. He was inspired by Josmani Saint Tradition. He established schools in different villages of Eastern districts and taught people to send their boy as well as girl child to school. His mission for educational improvement of people was outstanding. He spoke in poetry and used the indigenous Limbu

¹ *Sati Pratha* was a Hindu custom, now obsolete, where a Hindu widow immolates herself on her husband's funeral pyre.

language. His lifetime (1885-1948) is considered as Renaissance of Limbu community (Kainla 7).

Yogmana's Revolt:

Yogmaya was a self-styled saint located in Arun Valley in the eastern district Bhojpur. Her independent movement (in 1930-1940) was also inspired by Josmani Saint Tradition (Sharma 94-96). She strongly denounced the patriarchal order of society and demanded equal rights for women. Caste discrimination, bribery, Brahmanism, and injustice against the common peasants by the Rana administration were the targets of her hit. Barbara Nimri Aziz writes:

Yogmaya was asking her nation to challenge the wealth of the powerful. Confront injustices, she told them. For her, enlightenment was social awareness, awareness of the causal relation between the privileges of the few and injustice for the rest (62).

Yogmaya advocated for widow marriage, denounced child marriage and polygamy of men and asked what if women too start polygamy? She urged for gender equality. Her verses were crystal clear about social change and women rights. Aziz further writes:

Eventually, Yogmaya's teachings became comprehensive utopian ideal, linked with a non-violent political strategy she devised to bring it about. It began four decades before the United Nations sponsored an international convention on women, before the current generation of American feminists was born, and even before Mahatma Gandhi's non-violent Quit India movement was underway, a campaign to rid India of British occupation. But Yogmaya's

movement went further because it included a call to end injustice against women and girls. (41)

Yogmaya eventually visited the then Nepal valley to meet the Prime Minister (to whom she addresses as '*tin sarkar*' in her poetry) with an appeal to end injustices to poor and establish *dharma raj* (rule of justice) in the country. The then Prime Minister refused to meet her. Then she returned to Majhuwa, her hermitage at Arn Valley and prepared for a *Yagya* for self immolation. The news spread very fast. A government troop from Dhankuta (Eastern administration center) came to Arun Valley and intervened. The troop arrested Yogmaya and her followers and took her to Dhankuta prison. Shortly she was released as her popularity grew significantly and her followers crowded the prison area. She was firm in her belief to self sacrifice as an eternal call for *Dharma Raj* (Aziz 71). In 1940, Shaktimata Yogmaya (as she was popularly addressed) entered the roaring Arun River and sacrificed her life. A band of her followers too stepped into the River following her footstep. It was not just an act of '*Jal Samadhi*' (seeking eternity by immersion) as some historians call it (Nepal 407), but a revolt against the prevailing rule of injustice.

Arya Samaji Movement:

Madhav Raj Joshi initiated the Arya Samaj movement in Nepal as early as 1896. It was Swami Dayananda Saraswati's Arya Samaj movement in India that influenced Madhav Raj while he was in Banaras. Arya Samaj denounced Brahmanic interpretation and ritual practice of Hindu priests and reinterpreted Vedic texts. Child marriage and restriction to widow marriage do not follow the spirit of Veda for Arya Samaj. Such ideas were sheer threat to the orthodox Brahmin priests who had occupied high positions in Palace and were enjoying privileges, economic and social, on the basis of orthodox Hindu rule.

Joshi was called for a debate in the court of Chandra Shamsher, beaten severely and socially disgraced by parading through the streets of the city. Then he was thrown to Jail. His sons Amar Raj and Shukra Raj were expelled from Darbar High School (Gautam 30). Arya Samaji movement was the first social movement that inspired Nepali youths for organized opposition against Rana regime. To quote Bhuwan Lal Joshi and Leo E. Rose:

The Arya Samaj Movement, although suppressed by force in Nepal, had some far-reaching consequences. It created a social and political ferment among the previously inert middle-class families of the capital, and by exposing the social and religious hypocrisy institutionalized by the Rana government, it produced a new awakening among the people...The seminal influence of Madhav Raj's introduction of Arya Samaj ideas later sprouted into many social and political movements. (51-52)

Valley society was first thrilled by any oppositional idea when Arya Samaji movement was brutally suppressed. It had posed threat to the Rana rulers as well as the elite class aligned with Rana rule. Moreover it sowed the seed of oppositional politics in Nepal valley that finally took the shape of social and political movements, one prominent example being the formation of Praja Parishad. Therefore Arya Samaji movement had far reaching consequences that finally culminated at the elimination of Rana rule.

Nepal Bhasa Movement:

The indigenous Newar community of Nepal valley had discontents with Gorkha rule from the very beginning. Newars had resisted bravely against Prithvinarayan's invading forces, one significantly known example being the Kirtipur's resistance. Prithvinarayan's victory over the Malla rule came heavily to Newar community too. Newar language (*Nepal Bhasa*) was the state language in the Valley till then. It was a thriving language in literature

and everyday use. Some Malla kings too had written poetry and plays in this language. Now suddenly it became a second class language in the newly born Gorkhali state system.

The development of Nepal Bhasa further deteriorated in Rana rule. Rana rulers banned the use of Nepal Bhasa altogether in court of justice and administration in 1905. After a long period of stagnation, Arya Samaj movement gave new impetus to this language. The poets and writers like Nisthananda and Siddidas wrote significant number of books in Nepal Bhasa and inspired new writers to write in their mother language. Shukra Raj Shastri, son of Arya Samaj leader Madhav Raj, wrote *Nepal Bhasa Grammar*. Rana rulers were suspicious not only of Arya Samaj's motif, but of flourishing literary activities of Nepal Bhasa. Even a liberal Rana writer Bal Krishna Sama was unhappy about 'Renaissance of Nepal Bhasa'. He thought Shukra Raj's intention of writing *Nepal Bhasa Grammar* was to play communal politics (Sama 308).

Repressive measures of Rana rule are well known. It couldn't let go of Nepal Bhasa movement too. History knows the *1997 Sal ko Parva*. It happened in 1940 (1997 BS) intermingled inseparably with the repression of Praja Parishad, first political party organized in Nepal. Along with Praja Parishad activists, the Nepal Bhasa writers like Siddicharan Shrestha, Chhittadhar, Phattebahadur Singh, Yogbir Singh and Shukra Raj Shastri were also arrested. Writer Sama himself was in-charge of the case from the government's side who proposed punishments for the activists to Judda Shamsher (Sarubhakta 73).

Nepal Bhasa movement was 'renaissance moment' in reinvigorating the literary activities in Nepal Bhasa. It not only inspired a new generation of Nepal Bhasa writers, but also rediscovered the self-respect and dignity in Newar community. This movement was directly indirectly interconnected with Arya Samaji movement and Praja Parishad as well. Its

historical role in revitalization of society against the Rana rule and imagination of free society was significant.

Ranas were so fond of their idea of 'closedness' that they became hostile to almost all initiatives that would bring people under some influence. In 1930, some energetic youths like Krishna Prasad Koirala, Jogbir Singh, Chittadhar, Harsadash Tuladhar etc initiated a signature campaign to establish a public library. Some 45 people signed it and petitioned to the government (Gautam 35, Banskota and Sharma 94). However they were all arrested and fined 100 rupees each. Another notable incident was the persecution of Subba Krishna Lal for his book *Cultivation of Maize*. Some Rana aides had misinterpreted some sentences of the book as anti-Rana. He was sentenced to 9 years jail term; he eventually died in the jail (Joshi and Rose 53).

Similarly Tulsi Mehar was persecuted for promoting Charkha (spinning wheel) as a nationalistic movement in the fashion of Mahatma Gandhi's Charkha movement (Gautam 36). Another noteworthy initiation was the establishment of Mahabir School. It was established in Gandhi's indigenous school model, but the main aim was to promote education and secure a place for political discussions. It was established in 1936-37 and forcibly closed in 1940 when the Rana regime arrested twenty eight of its teachers (Gautam 40-41).

These social movements were liberal ones, reformist in motif and strictly set to suit the milieu of the Rana polity. Yet some of them were brutally suppressed and some of them remained isolated in the remote hills. But they had important role in generating the consciousness for change.

Political Uprisings

The educated elites in Nepal valley were increasingly being restless for change in the first half of 20th century. They organized different oppositional groups and initiated various organizations to enlighten people. Shukra Raj Shastri had formed a group called Nepal Nagarik Adhikar Samiti (Nepal Civil Rights Committee) in 1937. Joshi was the president of the Committee. Other members were Kedarman Byathit, Gangalal Shrestha, Muralidhar Sharma etc (Gautam 41, Banskota and Sharma 96). Joshi and Rose state, "[The committee] sought to promote public enlightenment by undertaking seemingly innocuous welfare activities such as the holding of prayer meetings and the organizing of relief societies in support of religious programs." (54).

First organized attempt to overthrow the Rana regime was initiated by *Prachanda Gorkha*. The main objective of this organization was to overthrow Rana regime by force and establish a parliamentary democracy, a constitutional monarchy. Khanda Man Singh was the main leader and founder of this organization. He was former Captain in Nepal Army, World War veteran and a prestigious soldier. Other members were Maina Bahadur, Khadga Man Singh Basnet, Umesh Bikram Shah, Ranga Nath Sharma and Laxman Raja. They had a plan to kill all the first rank Rana rulers in a regular meeting. But before they had initiated any action, their secret was revealed. They were arrested and sentenced to prison terms (Gautam 36-38).

Praja Parishad

Different social and oppositional movements in the first half of 20th century were severely suppressed. Liberal minded educated elites were those few in the Valley who could be easily spotted. However, truth of the human mind is that suppression ignites even stronger opposition. It was the same case in 1935. The nucleus of of the first political party- Praja

Parishad- was secretly formed (Joshi and Rose 54). The party was formally established in 1940. Five youths who established Praja Parishad were: Tanka Prasad Acharya, Dasharath Chand, Dharma Bhakta Mathema, Ramhari Sharma and Jibraj Sharma (Gautam 53).

The Parishad members wrote articles against the tyranny of Rana regime in an Indian newspaper *Janata* based in Patna. They distributed pamphlets and leaflets secretly in the Valley streets. Not a strange thing, Rana rulers were alarmed by those activities. Without any delay, Rana government published a notice in the government mouthpiece *Gorkhapatra* declaring a 5 thousand rupees reward for the informer who could lead the arrest of Praja Parishad members (Gautam 115).

At the end of 1940, Rana administration launched an intense search operation. Around five hundred suspects were arrested in the Valley. Amidst all these arrests, a member leaked the information about Praja Parishad. That led to the arrest of almost all Praja Parishad members too. Then a Rana tribunal declared a verdict in January 1941. Dharma Bhakta, Dasharath Chand, Ganga Lal and Shukra Raj Shastri were sentenced to death and a range of prison sentences were declared for 36 others.

Praja Parishad members resumed their political activities in the prison too. There were two attempts to break the prison. Ganesh Man Singh succeeded to escape the prison. He later on became a veteran leader of Nepali Congress. The suppression of Praja Parishad was a disturbing political moment for Valley people. It generated torrent in the public mindset and aroused great disorder in the Rana rulers' ruling tempo.

Nepali Congress Party

Banaras and Calcutta were the major hubs for Nepali expatriates, exiles and students for oppositional politics in 1930s and 40s. Before a political party took shape, there were

different student organizations, such as *Nepali Sangha* (Nepali Association), *Chhatra Sangha* (Students' Association), *Himanchal Vidhyarthi Sangh* (Association of Students from the Himalayas). The intellectual and political atmosphere of these cities was enthusiastic. These organizations were strongly influenced by the vocabulary and methods of Indian nationalist leaders.

Among those students was Bishweshwar Prasad Koirala (BP Koirala in popular diction) who first published an appeal in 1946 stressing on urgency to establish a people's government in Nepal. Encouraged by this appeal some youths formed Akhil Bharatiya Nepali Rastriya Congress party in Banaras (Banskota and Sharma 103-104). First general convention of the party was held in Calcutta in 1947. The convention named the party as Nepali Rastriya Congress (Nepali National Congress). Famous Indian socialist leaders like Dr. Ram Manohar Lohiya, Jay Prakash Narayan and Kripalani addressed the convention.

The newly founded party emphasized on non-violent movement against Rana regime to establish a democratic government in Nepal. Praja Parishad president Tanka Prasad Acharya, still in Rana prison, was declared Chairperson of the party and BP Koirala the executive Chairperson. It started publishing *Yugbani*, a mouthpiece newspaper that proved to be instrumental in rising awareness among Nepali students, expatriates and exiles against the Rana rule.

The labor strike at Biratnagar Jute Mills began in 1947 March 4. Nepali Rastriya Congress leader BP Koirala came from India to join the strike. It was the highly publicized incident that had lasting impact on anti-Rana uprising. The Rana troops arrested BP Koirala, labor leader Manmohan Adhikary and several other strikers. That ignited anti-Rana public demonstrations in different towns around the country. Most striking was the demonstrations

in capital city. Thousands of people marched in Valley streets shouting anti-Rana slogans. It was never-before incident that griped the Rana rulers in surprise and uncertainty.

In 1948 another political party was formed in Calcutta- Nepal Prajatantra Congress (Nepal Democratic Congress). Subarna Shamsheer, an expatriate Rana, had leading role to form this party and its first general convention elected Mahendra Bikram Shah its Chairperson (Banskota and Sharma 107). Its mouthpiece publication was Nepal Pukar, a newspaper that urged for an insurrection to overthrow the Rana rule.

Two parties formally merged in 1950 giving birth to a new party- Nepali Congress. Soon after the merger, Nepali Congress started preparations for armed insurrection against Rana regime, whereas publicly it kept emphasizing on non-violent movement. On November 6, King Tribhuvan took political asylum in Indian embassy and next day was taken to Delhi by Indian Air Force aircraft. That incident dramatically changed the political scenario of Nepal. Nepali Congress hastily launched attacks against Rana troops at different boarding towns. Indian premier Jawaharlal Nehru facilitated the talks among King, Rana and Nepali Congress, that ultimately ended the century long Rana regime.

Nepal Communist Party

Nepal Communist Party was established in Calcutta in 1949. Pushpalal Shrestha, a former Nepali National Congress activist, had initiated the formation of a communist party. Four persons- Pushpalal, Niranjana Gobinda Baidya, Narabahadur Karmacharya and Narayanbilas Joshi- were there in the first meeting that formed the Party. Duga Devi, who came from Kathmandu, happened to be there in the meeting. So the five persons became the founding members of the communist party (Pushpalal 35).

Before the establishment of the Party, Pushpalal had translated the world-famous *Communist Manifesto* by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels into Nepali. It was published on April 5, 1949 in Calcutta (Pushpalal 29). Along with its formation, Nepal Communist Party published an appeal that emphasized on the role of workers and peasants in crafting the revolution and overtly appealed the peasants and workers to overthrow the Rana regime (Pushpalal 36-39).

Shortly after the formation, Nepal Communist Party started its activities of propaganda and extension of the organization. It played considerable role to spread the Marxist ideas in Nepal. The early programs and policies of the Party show explicit concern on the wellbeing of the workers and peasants. Later on, the communist party became instrumental in organizing peasants and workers movements in different parts of the country.

Political Ideas and Ideals

As mentioned earlier, Rana rule maintained a closed society for a century. It was really a long suffocating period. Economically it was a period of sheer depression. 'Closedness' characterized the social life. Hindu dogmatism had serious negative repercussions in everyday life of the people with diverse cultures. The political economy of the Rana period forced people for out migration and rendered many peasants landless. Educational institutions were rare. Therefore growing discontent was the true sight where oppositional politics would emerge.

Needless to say, the first and foremost agenda of all political parties and groups organized in the first half of 20th century was to abolish the Rana rule. Important question is- what were their political ideas and ideals? If the oppositional forces wanted to overthrow Rana rule, what was the role they had conceived of the King? What sort of political system they had in mind? Either Praja Parishad or Nepali Congress or Nepal Communist Party, all

referred Rana period as 'dark period'. What was the light they were seeing at the horizon then?

From the earlier discussion, it is clear enough that different social movements evolved in the first half of 20th century Nepal offered reformist ideas. Take Josmani saints or Arya Samaj, they opposed the orthodox codes of Brahmanism, caste hierarchy and gender discrimination in terms of learning etc that had brought misery to the life of poor and lower caste people. Josmani saints had garbed themselves in mysterious veil that had religious aroma, so they were generally left untouched. Although not always. On the contrary Arya Samaj members were suppressed. Because, unlike the Josmani saints who used to live in secluded hermitage, they used public space for their speeches and challenged the highly placed priests like Rajguru (a high status religious adviser of the Palace and top executive of rudimentary judicial system instituted at that period).

Josmani Saints and Yogmaya had one explicit similarity. Both spoke in spontaneous verse and harshly criticized the administrative ills of the time. Their concern for the poor peasants stemmed from their principle that the government should be responsible and accountable for the wellbeing of the marginal people. They were against all kinds of injustices and coercion brought forth by the high status administrators (like *Bhardar*, *Mukhiya* etc), so they vocal against it. Their implicit idea was to free people from the chains of oppression and religious dogmas. Comparing with Gandhi's procedures Barbara Nimri Aziz writes:

Gandhi, when he was mobilizing his followers in the early stages of his Quit India campaign, advocated dropping caste rules. The great Indian reformer sought to unite his people by calling on his followers, many of whom were high-ranked people, to perform what they considered unclean acts: to take

food from anyone, and to clean their own latrines. Those were profound acts of defiance, and difficult enough for Gandhi's closest associates to accept.

Yogmaya went further than Gandhi. She instructed high-caste men and women who joined her to cohabit as they wished, to remarry, to accept food from any hand. Hers was a formidable proposal, so anathema to the society around her, that onlookers denounced her for advocating prostitution. (50)

Yogmaya was a rebellious feminist too. Her principle of gender equality still serves well. She drew examples from Limbu community's ideals of gender roles. Limbu and other ethnic communities of Nepal have democratic socio-cultural principles in gender relations. To denounce the orthodox Hindu codes like child marriage, widowhood, she urged people to learn from ethnic communities. This is the most important principle to bring about the harmony among peoples in a multi-cultural country like Nepal. Yogmaya's modernist idea is impressive in this respect.

Language provides space for ideational experimentation. Language is also the most effective tool for exerting revolutionary zeal. In a multi-lingual country like Nepal, indigenous languages can be the powerful means to raise awareness and enlighten people. When single language is ruling language and the ruling system suppresses the use of multiple other languages, the oppressed languages can perform revolutionary role. Nepal Bhasa movement should be analyzed in this light. Mahaguru Falgunanda's movement too used the Limbu language that stimulated a cultural revival in Limbu community.

Political uprisings generally can't confine themselves in reformist role; rather they exert enormous pressure to alter the political system. The political uprisings against the Rana regime too aimed at abolishing the Rana rule to establish a parliamentary system. The first political party Praja Parishad had the following objectives:

1. To end the Rana rule.
2. To establish democracy in the country and the king's position to be secured as Constitutional King.
3. To secure birthrights (civil and natural rights) for the people. (Gautam 57 *trans. mine*)

Nepali National Congress too had the single focus since its inception- to abolish Rana regime. The document of its First General Convention stresses on the wrongdoings of Rana rule. It talks about the luxuries life Rana nobles were enjoying with the expensive goods imported from abroad. It says, "What loot! What injustice and what abuse of people's treasure!" (Thapa, Poudel, Tiwari and Rijal 3). The document emphasizes on the contrast that where Ranas were living extraordinarily lucrative life, common people were living in extreme poverty. If the ruling class doesn't consider people's happiness and progress, people should rise against them and seize their rights from the oppressive rulers. The imagination of free society with a responsible ruling system based on people's wish is implicit in the preliminary documents of Nepali Congress.

Yet, Nepali National Congress hadn't put forward the sketch of what 'responsible government' really means. It seems as if it had obvious formulations about the future political system they had in mind- a parliamentary system just like India's. Later in 1948 BP Koirala wrote an article 'Our Aim' in Yugbani, a mouthpiece publication of Congress. This article describes what political system Congress really wanted to establish. It talks about parliamentary democracy, Constitutional Monarchy (just like Britain's) and rule based on people's will. To establish such a democracy and draw a constitution accordingly, Koirala urges to form a Constituent Assembly (11-12). When Nepali National Congress and Nepal Democratic Congress united to form Nepali Congress party, they reiterated the same ideals in the first manifesto (Thapa, Poudel, Tiwari and Rijal 30-35).

On the other hand, Nepal Communist Party analyzes the class relations in Nepali society in the same fashion as communist parties around the world do. It demands total civil freedom; rights to speak, education, organize and demonstrate. The main concerns of this party are the rights and facilities of the workers and peasants (Bhusal, *Pushpalal* 25-32). The manifesto, dated 15 September 1949, emphasizes on the following points (in summary):

1. To liberate Nepal from feudal autocratic regime as well as foreign oppressors.
2. To lay the foundation of a democratic government based on the will of workers, peasants, Dalit and oppressed people.
3. To draw a constitution that guarantees total freedom, democracy and economic rights of the people.
4. To abolish all the customs that privilege landlords, feudal and redistribute all the agricultural lands to the tillers.
5. To nationalize all the industries, banks, transportation system etc.
6. To guarantee the free education.
7. To insure equal democratic rights to the women. (Bhusal, *Pushpalal* 41-42 *trans. mine*)

Pushpala, the first *Mahamantri* (Chief) of the party, wrote this manifesto. His concept of the democratic state is what he calls 'New Democracy'. He follows Lenin and Mao's model of new democracy that ensures democratic rights but ensures a state-controlled system that supposedly paves way for socialism.

Political Modernity

Modernist zeal is not an isolated emotion, it always emerges when ideas meet, negotiate and reinvent themselves. In the modern history of Nepal, the modernist zeal in the

first half of 20th century is phenomenal. While leafing through the literature- political, literary, social etc- of that period, one can easily smell the redolence of that zeal.

Where was this zeal coming from? As noted earlier, all the modernist ideas and ideals were coming to Nepal from India. From the social activists to political ones, all were influenced by different social and political movements of India. Mahatma Gandhi used to be seen as the source of aspiration, vigor and change in South Asian region. The ideals of parliamentary system, rule of law, freedom of speech, civil and political rights, anti-colonial drive and nationalism were so dreamy for the students and activists of the then Nepal who were residing in different cities and towns of India that they couldn't be patient without initiating anti-Rana movement to make such ideals real at homeland.

The ideology and policies of Nepali Congress were largely influenced by the ideology and policies of Indian National Congress (Giri x). Indian socialist leaders Dr. Ram Manohar Lohiya and Jay Prakash Narayan had direct connections with the leaders of Nepali Congress. Indian government too used these leaders to provide policy suggestions to NC (Giri xii). The idea of democratic socialism was promoted by Jawaharlal Neharu in India and these leaders were influential socialist thinkers of India at the time. NC leaders had drawn the principle of democratic socialism from these leaders.

There were historic changes in the world order after the First World War. Soviet Union was already a powerful block that had shown an example of communist world system. European empires were falling down. The capitalist world system led by those empires was not less influential though. The so-called Third World was emerging as another world system where many dominant leaders were opting for a mixed system of parliamentary democracy with socialist ideals. Neharu had maintained the same principle. On the other hand, Chinese Revolution led by Mao became victorious in 1949.

Pushpalal was overwhelmingly influenced by the Chinese Revolution as well as the Soviet socialist system, so was his principle of 'New Democracy'. His idea of 'New Democracy' was preliminary phase of the future socialist state. As Indian cities provided the opportunities for education, innovative ideas and ideals of nationalist struggles, Nepali activists were utilizing those opportunities (Joshi and Rose 55-56). They were publishing newspapers and books, organizing public meetings and gatherings, and taking parts in Indian nationalist movement. Therefore almost all political leaders, emerged out of that atmosphere, fashioned themselves as socialist.

Praja Parishad president Tanka Prasad Acharya too was of the opinion that his party would follow the path of democratic socialism. In a letter, he wrote to literary and political activist Shyam Prasad Sharma from the prison in 1949, he opines that political party is always instrumental to bring about the change but that should be based on people's will. He states that Lenin too formed a party to make the revolution possible. So, in Nepal also, a socialist party rooted in the people's power can be formed. He further says, "Praja Parishad is established in the same principle" (Gautam 55-58).

Either socialist or democratic, all these principles are of Western origin. European idea of political modernity was, hence in consequence, making its way to Nepal via India in the first half of 20th century. Besides the words in documents and articles and speeches, can any idea be mimicked as such in practice? When put to practice, any idea can take multiple shapes and fruitions depending on the material conditions in which the idea is sown. Nepal too was to experience the unique consequences after the 1950 revolution.

To conclude this chapter, I would like to focus on what Martyr Gangalal said to his father. A young man was so much suffocated by the 'closedness' of Rana period that he was ready to sacrifice his life to free the rest of the fellow people. One can remember Yogmaya

for same sort of self-sacrificing motif, or the Mukti Sena (Liberation Army, a voluntary army organized by Nepali Congress) fighters.

Liberating the country and people was such an idea that motivated the activists and revolutionaries to take all kind of risks. Is risk taking to change the prevailing socio-political order not modernist idea in itself? Romancing with risk is not easy task and it is historical in nature. History takes a turn when it prepares people to romance with the risk. Romancing with risk was the remarkable phenomenon of the first half of 20th century Nepal. And it was a form of modernity itself, in its own rhythm.

Chapter 2

Bikas: The Magic Mantra

Interestingly, the word, Vikas, sells well in the country- as a dream, as an occupation, and as a weapon to beat one's political opponents with.

(Devendra Raj Panday, "Nepal's Failed Development" 6)

Bikas is still a haunting dream being pursued in everyday politics. It sold well in 1950s and sells well today. The word *Bikas* entered into the political scenario replacing another dreamy word *unnati* in 1950. *Unnati* used to signify a great variety of changes- political, educational, literary, social etc. It meant progress in all fronts of national life. When *Bikas* flew down to Nepal from abroad, it had mysteriously shining wings all with promises and dreams of economic development.

The slogan to make Nepal an Asian Switzerland is a cliché now. But when this idea was first articulated, it sounded really comforting and attractive. In 1946, Sardar Bhim Bahadur Panday, a Nepali diplomat in Europe, took a task of study trip of the the industrial development of Europe. He visited different European countries like Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Germany, Czechoslovakia, Austria, Italy, France, Switzerland etc and put forward his conclusion that Nepal should follow the development model of Switzerland (Panday, *Tyas Bhakatko* 321). Immediately the phrase 'to make Nepal an Asian Switzerland' took to the everyday public discourse.

The word *Bikas* was still not popular. When Nepal signed the Point IV Agreement for Technical Cooperation with United States Operations Mission (USOM) on January 23, 1951, the newly vitalized English word 'development' was translated into Nepali as *Bikas*. Since

then *Bikas* became a haunting dream for Nepali minds. Thus began the eternal waiting for *Bikas*.

After the Second World War, United States of America (hereafter referred as US) had emerged a superpower. US launched Marshal Plan to help recover the East European economies and succeeded. World power equilibrium had changed and America had become a new power-center substituting European empires. Decolonization was the speedy fact and different new countries were making their mark in the global map. The newly independent countries were being branded under umbrella term- 'Third World Countries'. And US had just formulated 'Point IV Program' to lure these countries into its economic program.

When 'Point IV Program' was signed, Mohan Shamsheer was the Prime Minister and Rana regime was counting its final days. The 1950 revolution had already shaken its foundation. Technically it was in power. Royal palace was about to secure its long lost power. Public life was stirred by the revolution. The public psyche was so ready to consume the words like *Bikas* and phrase like 'making Nepal another Switzerland'. Any wishful thinking would catch fire in no time.

Before the '*Bikas* Age' Began

I briefly discussed in the "Introduction" chapter how the national economy during the Rana period was in sheer depression, even if the import business was at the peak. The household political economy was characterized by oppression of the peasant, extraction of free labor by the state apparatus as well as the village and national elites, and the benefit of surplus production being spent on luxuries of the Rana nobility and their close aides. To

quote economic historian MC Regmi's conclusion:

Under the agrarian system that existed in Nepal during the nineteenth century, resources were extracted from the peasant without any compensation, and neither the state nor the elite groups who absorbed these resources took serious interest in the lowly occupation of tilling the land and raising crops... Low productivity due to inadequate capital investment in agriculture, the mainstay of Nepal's economy, was, consequently, the key link in the chain of historical causation that explains why Nepal remained a poor country during the nineteenth century. (*Thatched Huts* 179)

More or less same economic stagnation continued during the first half of 20th century too. But everything was not the same. A surge of emigration from the villages of Nepal to India was already a significant trend of 19th century. Different push and pull factors were responsible for this, yet the Gorkha recruitment in the Imperial forces was remarkable one (Regmi, *A Study* 194). Meanwhile, more than 100,000 youth of Nepal served as Gorkha soldiers in the British war effort during the First World War.

The immediate economic consequence was that villages in the hills suffered shortage of workforce; hence the agricultural productivity climbed down. Nevertheless the return of the surviving Gorkha soldiers was to bring economic and social upheaval in Nepali society. Consequently, cash activities soared in the hill villages, land price rise in the hill villages resulted in inflation (Panday, *Tyas Bakharko* 119-120). The socio-political impact the returnee Gorkhas made was even more effective. Historian Ludwig F. Stiller interprets the pressure the then Maharaj Chandra Shamsher had to face as:

Chandra was equally concerned about the flow of new ideas into Nepalese villages. If 100,000 men had served outside Nepal, many of them outside the

subcontinent, 100,000 men would be returning to their villages with ideas that might generate dissatisfaction and unrest. Even members of the Rana family had enjoyed the taste of freedom outside Rana Nepal. To satisfy some of the more obvious needs of the villagers and to put his returning Rana officers to work at challenging tasks, Chandra resumed his development program.

(Nepal: Growth 153)

A road from Birgunj to Bhimphedi, a ropeway from Dorsing (near Bhimphedi) to Kathmandu, an irrigation canal in Eastern Terai, a Amlekhgunj-Raxaul railway were Chandra Shamsher's development achievements. But they were not enough to arouse hope in people's mind. The stories of Imperial capitalism's industrial effort and infrastructural development in India had already reached to the hill people's ears. The people in the Terai region, on the other hand, were the victim of internal colonization and they knew what was happening just beyond their villages across the border.

Juddha Shamsher came to power in 1932. He was the first Rana Prime Minister who took interest in industries. A researcher Devi Prasad Sharma states, "He [Juddha Shamsher] encouraged the industrialists by providing maximum concessions and free loan to start enterprises" (263). It was the high time any Rana ruler would think of doing something to dispel the rising discontent in the society. Yet the idea of Bikas was to make its debut in the political discourse. To quote from Juddha Shamsher's speech:

The happiness of the people is bounded up with the prosperity of the mercantile commodity. The people of Great Britain, Germany and France enjoy a large measure of happiness, owing chiefly to the fact that the merchants of those countries own huge capital and carry on industrial pursuits and trade on gigantic scales and have opened avenues of employment for their

countrymen. It follows therefore that trade and industries are essential for national welfare and happiness. We must have machines and other accessories of manufacture to start indigenous industries and derive produce. There should be a steady increase in the volume of exports and corresponding reduction in the imports of finished products (qtd. in Sharma, *Trade & Industry* 263).

The happiness of the people, as stated by Juddha Shamsher, lies on the industrialization. He fondly refers to the 'happiness' produced by the capitalists of European countries along with their industrial efforts. This is one of the elementary components of the European modernity. But the development ideology engineered in the 1950s is quite different. Juddha's policy helped flourish some of the industries and factories in the Terai region. The capital for those Industries too was heavily invested by Indian capitalists. But those industries were already being obsolete in 1950s. Only the small scale factories like oil mill, grinding mill, rice mills etc endured. A different development scenario was to emerge along with the 1950 revolution.

F-Aid Syndrome

When the Rana-Nepali Congress coalition government was formed in 1951, the administration system inherited from the Rana rule was not fit to the ministerial system. Almost all scholars have been in agreement that the Rana administration was rudimentary-designed just to collect the revenue and maintain law and order. Communication system was very poor. The capital itself was isolated as there were no roads to link the capital with rest of the country. Nepal was still waiting to see its annual budget or planning system in any development sector. Analyzing the district administration system in the transitional phase,

Stiller and Yadav remark:

Since the district administrator played such a vital role in the Rana administrative structure, he might seem an obvious choice for introducing change at the district level once the development era began. This was not true. As an agent of change in a development-oriented government, he was a misfit. Two centuries of tradition directed the district administrator's functions and made him conservative, resistant to change, and confused by the new ministerial approach to government. Whereas previously he had simple, direct lines of communication with the Center, he now found himself answering in one way or another- if he found time to answer at all- to ten different ministries. He was supposed to keep things running smoothly, which in his mind was translated as "no change from the traditional pattern". His office thus became a potential bottle-neck for any change the new government hoped to introduce. (16)

Bureaucracy was rudimentary and infected by the *Chakari Pratha*². The Rana regime had formulated the law, but it was largely run by the will and wish of the powerful elites. *Chakari* was so institutionalized that any bureaucrat would put his/her effort rather to make the superior happy by all means than to perform better in the job. And there were no statistics or previous budget to calculate or formulate economic indicators. Therefore 'development-oriented' government had to face hurdles at each and every step.

As in the political system, Nepal was ready to embrace the Western ideals and methods of economic development. The first development donor USOM (now United States

² According to Dor Bahadur Bista, " Within Hinduism, *Chakari* is an essential concept which means to wait upon, to serve, to appease, or to seek favour from a god...*Chakari* was officially introduced into secular life during the Rana period" (89-90). Hence *Chakari Pratha* means the ruling custom where a less powerful person pays visit to the powerful ones to serve, appease, seek favour or make the powerful happy.

Aid for International Development) provided its first aid- 22 hundred Nepali rupees. But development constraints were abundant. In an official history of USAID, *Four Decades of Development: The History of US Assistance to Nepal 1951-199*, it is stated that:

The legacy of the Rana regime was a static, highly centralize government administration whose functions were primarily confined to maintaining law and order and collecting taxes; a subsistence economy overwhelmingly dependent on agriculture and controlled by large landowners preoccupied with maintaining the status quo; and a near-total lack of physical infrastructure, including roads, telecommunications, hospitals, and schools; there were very few development oriented activities. In 1951 there were very few skilled personnel capable of formulating and directing policies appropriate for Nepal's new identity, and a lack of administrative machinery capable of translating King Tribhuvan's political vision into economic and social reality. Approximately 98 percent of Nepal's eight million people were illiterate, with only 300 college graduates in the entire country. (Skerry et al. 6)

Nepal made its first budget public in 1952. A team of Indian experts came to Nepal in the same year to assess the needs and background of Nepal's economic development. The team's report emphasized on the lack of data and advised to create a sound administrative and financial system, collect basic data and survey important resources (qtd. in Mihaly 52). Consequently, Indian military mission constructed Gauchar Airport (now Tribhuvan International Airport) and Tribhuvan Rajpath (a highway that links Indian town Raxaul and Kathmandu) in the following years.

The economic planning hadn't been conceived yet. The administrative hurdle was in place coupled with poor communication system. Meanwhile USOM and Indian government were trying to 'help' Nepal develop. After all, to formulate administrative reform program, an Indian commission came to Nepal. Stiller and Yadav state:

Besides the administrative confusion, they found the various ministries singularly barren of anything that might be used in constructing a planned program. They wanted data, statistics, and some idea of the needs of the country. They found no data at all nor anyone who could supply the overall picture that they, as planners, felt necessary...The only real remnant of the whole advisor-episode was the Buch Commission Report, based on a short, on-the-spot survey of the Nepalese administration and later elaborated in India, proposed a complete reorganization of the administration. (58-60)

The concept of planned development was already adopted by Nepali rulers just after the 1950 revolution. Yet the Ministry of Planning and Development was established for the first time in history in 1955. The ministry published Nepal's First Five Year Plan in 1956. The matter of fact is that the first Five Year Plan was heavily influenced by donors:

HMG's priorities at the time mirrored those of the donors, as it was forced to rely on their data collection and field activities for planning information. As the primary donor to Nepal, USAID strongly influenced early HMG development priorities in the First Plan. (Skerry et al.: 12)

Who launched the first major rural development program in Nepal? The evident answer is- Indian and US aid. It was called- Village Development Program. The first experience of Nepal with the planning began with US assistance which was for National

Education Planning Commission formed in 1953. Thus the so-called '*Bikas* age' began indispensably with foreign aid in Nepal. The influence of foreign aid on ideals and methods of development was so immense from the very beginning that Nepali state forgot to ground the *Bikas* on the actual material and social scenario. I call it F-Aid Syndrome. To explain further the F-Aid syndrome I quote Devendra Raj Panday, a former high ranking government official who dealt with development efforts in the high time of *Bikas* and later on an became an activist and thinker, who wrote in 1999:

Nepal is at present a victim of its own non-performance; but...there is also the contribution of bigger external forces, adding to the country's predicament. The influence of this external impetus emerged and grew as foreign aid entered and expanded its role, fortunately or unfortunately, together with the national campaign for development...Later, as international interests of various forms, commercial being the most important of them, made their inroads into the management of the aid system, we became even more incapable of looking at development in disassociation from foreign aid...This syndrome has affected not only the physical process called development but also the way we mentally appreciate this term. (155)

F-Aid Syndrome is so powerfully ingrained in the mind of the rulers that *Bikas* seemed inseparable from foreign aid to them from the very beginning. The dependency on foreign aid for *Bikas* is conceived as inevitable factor. To the alluring power of *Bikas*, Foreign aid developed its own sub-economy, its own culture and its own elitist domain. One example is Kathmandu valley itself. Since 1951, as the foreign aid marked its debut, the Valley's economic activities were largely influenced by the foreign aid presence. Stiller and

Yadav aptly remark:

A complete sub-economy has grown up around the foreign aid presence in Kathmandu. Real estate is the most readily recognized part of this sub-economy. As donor agencies proliferated, the demand for suitable buildings to house their administrative units and provide offices for their projects steadily increased. The demand for housing has been even greater. A whole housing industry has developed to satisfy it...In addition to office and housing requirements, donor agencies needed office staff: typists, filing experts, program officers, consultants, secretaries, drivers, and the support staff...On the domestic side, the demand for cooks, bearers, gardeners, nurse-maids for their children, watchmen, and other domestic staff was equal, if not greater. The market also reacted to the foreign stimulus. (52)

Bikas always talked of improving poor people's lives. But ironically it joined hand with the traditional elites of the Valley from the very beginning. The biggest consumer of the foreign aid has been the elites- who were member of the ruling elites or had ties to the ruling class and access to the foreign aid administration; consequently those were the ones who got selected for foreign aid sponsored abroad education, and hence in return secured lucrative posts in governmental as well as foreign aid administration- since then. To quote Mishra and Sharma:

The first and the very obvious political role of foreign aid consists in its overall support of the traditional power structure to the benefit, by definition, of the upperclass...Foreign aid, in particular, has played the predominant role in the rise of the urban administrative, technical and business "middle class". This "immediate" and visible beneficiary of foreign aid- who also reaps major

benefits from the liberal, welfare state-pattern of governmental expenditure, e.g. that spent on education, health and other mass programs- as the major carrier of the donors' cultural-technological complex if characteristically qualified to serve as the support staff for the donors and as sometime *bikas*-wizards and sometime fellow conspirators for the rest of the upperclass native. (7-10)

For foreign aid administration, poor were the targets and the traditional elites were the means. The officers of F-Aid themselves imitated the lifestyle of the traditional elites- luxury homes, servants etc- while influencing significantly the lifestyle of the elites on western consumerist fashion. Here was the interesting conglomerate between the two. Rest was the story of Foreign aid itself turning into an instrumental development industry.

Ideology of *Bikas*

The emergence of the idea of *Bikas* in Nepal was landmark incident of 1950s. It was no coincidence that the so-called 'development age' began in the same decade. The much hyped document to inaugurate the 'development age' was the Truman's Point Four; an extract from US President Harry Truman's inaugural speech. Here is a portion of The Point Four:

Fourth, we must embark on a bold new program for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas. More than half the people of the world are living in conditions approaching misery. Their food is inadequate. They are victims of disease. Their economic life is primitive and stagnant. Their poverty is a handicap and a threat both to them and to more prosperous areas. (qtd. in Rist 71)

Accordingly US administration engineered the 'Point Four Program' which was designed to provide technical assistance to the poor, so-called 'underdeveloped' countries. But the question is- was it so generous a proposal? Was it just a document to formulate the programs of economic development as in the previous decades or a germination of new World-view? In this regard, Gilbert Rist provides a helpful interpretation:

The adjective 'underdeveloped' appears at the end of the opening paragraph of Point Four. This was the first time it had been used in a text intended for such wide circulation, as a synonym for 'economically backward' areas.

Subsequently, the noun 'underdevelopment' was introduced. It was this *terminological innovation* which altered the meaning of 'development' itself, by relating it in a new way to 'underdevelopment'. (72)

What new world view was being projected with the 'terminological innovation' of underdevelopment then? It was the redrawing of the relationship between powerful and newly emerged poor states. With the innovation of this new relationship, colonizer/colonized dichotomy of the era of Imperialism got replaced by a new dichotomy- developed/underdeveloped. So now the developed world is generous as well as powerful to be generous, whereas the underdeveloped world must be at the receiving end with thankful gesture.

Cold War era was about to begin. Soviet Union was already a powerful socialist block in the world order. And US were to lead the capitalist block. The Point Four Program was so designed to ensure the blockade the communist ideology to flourish in the poor countries. US administration explicitly documented, "The weaknesses of the present economies of South Asia bear most heavily upon the agrarian population and under current conditions, the agrarian sector offers a major target for communist subversion" (qtd. in Mihaly 32). For their

conception, Nepal was such a vulnerable underdeveloped country. Therefore US was hasty enough to inaugurate its aid mission during the time of the 1950 revolution.

The new dichotomy- developed/underdeveloped- forcefully suggested a new sphere of thinking in the development discourse. Now the world was virtually divided in two parts: developed and underdeveloped, modern and traditional, technologically advanced and backward and so on. This virtual division engraved a new mindset that would view the world accordingly. As the dictum of *Bikas* entered Nepal, such a world view spread very quickly along the towns and villages. Anthropologist Stacy Pigg observes:

Bikas has become the idiom through which the relationship between local communities and other places is expressed. In Europe and North America, the paired labels developed/underdeveloped, First World/Third World, similarly serve as social categories, providing both a way of naming identities and understanding global social relations...Notions of *bikas* form, quite literally, a worldview. It is highly polarized way of seeing the world. This understanding of the difference between 'developed' and 'underdeveloped' places holds such sway that many Nepalis are unable to believe that poverty exists in so-called developed countries. (49)

The polarized worldview not only dichotomized developed/underdeveloped worlds in the global power order, but also created domestic substitutes- *bikasi/abikasi*. Peasants, workers and villagers in general were labeled as *abikasi* or underdeveloped. The label *abikasi* didn't only mean underdeveloped in economic terms, but also uncivilized or vulgar in the hierarchical social stipulations. The result was the dehumanization and downgrading of peasants and workers who were the backbone of the economy. In the similar vein, average villagers were supposed by the *bikasi*- the agents of *Bikas* which constituted ruling elites,

foreign development officers, bureaucrats, educated elites etc- to be conservative, traditional minded and deprived of western lifestyle and knowledge.

Such a process of dehumanization reiterated the hierarchical caste system. In the Hindu caste system, Brahmins are on the top of the hierarchical ladder. And the caste roles for the Brahmins are assigned the role of reading, writing, learning and teaching. Education conferred status and prestige in Hindu tradition based on the values of Brahmanism. Manual labor is what the lower caste people do. Such caste stratification was revitalized by so-called modernist *Bikas* ideology. To quote Pigg again:

Bikas offers a powerful social ideology because its terms are compelling within the Nepalese context. They fit with tacit social knowledge reinforced in the course of everyday life. The notion that some people are inherently more "developed" than others echoes Hindu concepts of caste superiority. In multi-ethnic Nepal, Buddhists and other Tibeto-Burmese speaking ethnic groups are widely considered by the high-caste Hindu elite to be less civilized and less refined...Because *bikas* takes on its local meaning through its extension and transformation of existing forms of social differences., the idea of "development" and the ideology that defines it travels further, more quickly, and more successfully than actual development initiatives. (54)

When schools and colleges were opened immediately after 1950 and many students were sent to foreign lands on the privileges of foreign aid, new educated elite emerged. The polarized conception of *bikasi/abikasi* instantaneously calculated the prestige value and categorized the educated as *bikasi*, civilized and modern, whereas uneducated as *abikasi* and barrier to development. Due to this formulation, manual labor suddenly became the task of uncivilized and underdeveloped people. As Nanda R. Shrestha emphatically remarked:

The new education gave us the impression that even our parents' labor-manual labor- was antithetical to *bikas*. So the educated children started sneering at manual labor, treating it as something that only an *abikasi*, intellectually underdeveloped mind would do. The colonial conception of manual labor as something to be done by inferior natives was thus revived. The new educational system was producing a whole new thinking on the value of labor. There was a clear demarcation between non-manual labor and manual labor. In this sense, *bikas* meant denying as well as uprooting the existing labor use system, traditional bonds, and knowledge base, rather than building on them. (*In the Name* 46)

Since the '*Bikas* age' began and development discourse proliferated in thousands of pages, Nepali economy is understood as an agricultural economy. In the very general sense, it's clear enough that the peasants and workers are the backbone of such an economy. If *Bikas* culture downgrades the very people who serve as basis of the economy, how can that economy grow? As it has been repeatedly said, foreign aid system via ideology of development was formulated to stimulate the growth of the poor economy. On the contrary, the *Bikas* ideology resides in the domes of the power elites. Why? Mary Des Chene aptly gives the answer as follows:

Let us redefine *bikas*, for a moment, as a capitalist enterprise. A transnational capitalist enterprise, and Nepal's main gateway to both the riches and the ruthlessness of global capitalism. From this perspective we may better understand some of the gaps between rhetoric and reality...Like any capitalist enterprise, the *bikas* industry is in the business of turning a profit and ensuring its own survival. Like any capitalist enterprise, achievement of those goals entails the reproduction of social inequality. (261)

Do the poor produce poverty? Is the peasant's folly that the agrarian economy stagnates? Are the hybrid seeds and chemical fertilizers liberators that boost the agricultural production? Is it a personal question or a politico-economic reality? Is the phenomenon of development or underdevelopment just a technical question or a political one? The rhetoric of development cleverly hides the real politics implied in its own body of discourse. For James Ferguson, development ideology depoliticizes the political problem:

The short answer to the question of what the "development" apparatus in Lesotho does, then, is found in the book's title: it is an "anti-politics machine", depoliticizing everything it touches, everywhere whisking political realities out of sight, all the while performing, almost unnoticed, its own pre-eminently political operation of expanding bureaucratic state power. (qtd. in Fujikura 58)

If *Bikas* depoliticizes the issues which are inherently political, it in reality is doing some other kind of politics. As a capitalist venture, it is extending its market and indirectly controlling the resources of the poor countries. As an ideological tool of US hegemony (consequently Western), it is controlling the economic policies and interfering into the everyday politics of those countries which were manipulated into the dependency trap of the foreign aid and international aid-system in the 1950s.

The romanticized image of *Bikas* is worth noting here. The ideological foundation of *Bikas* is located in the foreign aid and mind, but local reception is overwhelmingly fantasized. The romanticized image of *Bikas* opened up all the doors and windows for the Western modernity, highly subsuming the local trends and knowledge. James F. Fisher's anthropological approach is worth noting here:

The open secret that most foreign aid benefits primarily the Nepalese elite, and one can define "development", not without reason, as the process by which the

wealth of the poor people in rich countries is transferred to the rich people of the poor countries. I offer this characterization of "development" only to show the extent to which it has become an intellectual wasteland of vast opportunities...For if we want to measure other cultures by their own standards, "development" takes on very different dimension. (31-34)

Bikas is compelling, magical and glamorous where everyone can set foot on it and dream his/her own dreams. A peasant and a politician, a capitalist and a bureaucrat, all can see their own benefits and progress in the mirror of *Bikas*. But the awful fact is that *Bikas* itself is an ideology of colonization by economic and diplomatic means. But *Bikas* is lauded just like religion, you can put faith on it but can't deny. Rist explains this new paradigm of development as:

Taking advantage of [this] structural homology with religious discourse, the new belief in 'development' had its credibility further strengthened by a naturalist metaphor so long part of the Western collective consciousness. This, no doubt, is why the same style of speech was used again and again in declarations affirming the necessity of 'development' as the only solution to the problems of humanity. (77)

Development was actually a new paradigm of Western modernity. And *Bikas* is our indigenous experience overwhelmingly overburdened by Western ways of modernity. They imposed the new forms of hierarchy such as developed/underdeveloped, and we produced and reproduced this idea in our own ways. *Bikas* remained a goal, as modernity itself remained a long awaited goal. But this goal is tempting. As a magic mantra, *Bikas* still sells. When 1950 approached Nepal, *Bikas* was new and beautiful. Now the *Bikas* has produced its

hybrid forms where you can find Western modernity at play and at the same time resistance to that play is also at play.

Hence *Bikas* is the powerful idea of modernity, still haunting the aspirations of the people. If peasants and workers were dehumanized in the beginning of this modernity, now is the time to alter this relationship. The economic modernity, riding the chariot of F-Aid Syndrome, was the only imagination in 1950. Now a search is already begun to find new forms of modernity where *Bikas* can well perform. Not like magic, but like an innovative idea.

The Nepali people who dreamt of the *Bikas* magic in the first half of 20th century, grew old, maximum of them died, waiting to see the performance of that magic. The modernist rationality, statistic ridden planning and number game all failed. This failing still reminds us of the dream of the risk takers who sacrificed their life for the birth of new modernity.

Chapter 3

Singular Narrative: Historicity and Nationalism

In contemporary times we not only reconstruct the past but we also use it to give legitimacy to the way in which we order our own society.

(Romila Thapar, "The Past as Present" 3)

History is never a disinterested pursuit. Facts get blurred when historical narrative takes certain form. It's a naive belief that history tells the truth based on facts. Certainly there are facts in historical accounts, but the so-called facts are always employed to narrate certain kind of 'story' that serves particular discourse. Nepali historiography is not an exception.

The search for history is the endeavor to construct certain kind of narrative. Such a search in Nepal began only in the first half of 20th century. Before that some European officers and enthusiasts, historians and Indologists; such as Kirkpatrick, Hamilton, Sylvain Levi, Percival Landon etc, had written volumes on Nepal, its people and history. Surya Bikram Gyawali was the first native who took interest in narrating some historical accounts. Baburam Acharya, later to become a prominent historian of Nepal, was also in search of 'history' in the same period, but got into publication only after the 1950 revolution.

The quest for modernity in Nepal, during the period this research takes into account, begins with the quest for native history. And, of course, the prelude of this endeavor happened in Banaras and Darjeeling, the Indian towns. It was the time when Indian nationalist movement was heavily producing the historical accounts of its nationalist heroes. Evidently, Nepali activists breathing in those thrilling moments would think of their own native version of national pride. As the intellectual activists were mainly literary writers, they found poet Bhanubhakta as an icon of "Nepali National Culture" (Onta, *The Career* 70). Then

they discovered Prithvinarayan Shah. Prithvinarayan's story provided them the discursive element of nationhood. For them, Prithvinarayan did not conquer Nepal valley and extended the territory of his kingdom, albeit he unified the country. Suryabikram Gyawali took the task to discover other heroes from the Anglo-Nepal War too, such as warriors Balabhadra, Amar Singh etc.

The historical writings, mainly on the brave heroes and their bravery to build the nation, influenced the Nepali Diaspora and expatriates in different Indian spaces. The political activists too were greatly influenced by this historical discourse. Slowly there emerged the common themes of 'Nepaliness' (eminence of being Nepali) and Nepali nationhood. Nepali nationalism was thus coupled with historical cum literary writing from the very beginning.

Bhanubhakta Cult

In the literary discourse, popularized in the recent decades, Bhanubhakta is the *adikabi* (first original poet) of Nepali language. Bhanubhakta Cult is so manufactured that singular discourse of Nepali nationhood is strongly fortified. Though this cult is recently challenged by the upsurge of republican ideas based on the concept of inclusive democracy, this idea still haunts the national memory crafted and carved within the maxims of modernist initiatives that had instigated the present mode of Nepali modernity.

Bhanubhakta was first discovered by Motiram Bhatta in the late 19th century. Motiram himself was a poet, publisher and a promoter of Nepali vernacular writing. He wrote a biography of poet Bhanubhakta and published his works. It was Motiram who first branded Bhanubhakta as *Adikabi* of *Gorkha* (subsequently Nepali) language. In 1920s, Surya Bikram Gyawali and *Nepali Sahitya Sammelan* (a Darjeeling based organization established to serve the Nepali mother language) 'rediscovered' Bhanubhakta (Onta, *Creating a Brave* 54). This

rediscovery was the vantage point from which Bhanubhakta Cult took shape. It was a different phenomenon than Motiram's discovery of Bhanubhakta. Pratyoush Onta succinctly points out:

Motiram did not discover in Bhanubhakta an icon of national history. Instead, what he found in Bhanubhakta's writings was flowing poetry written in an easy to understand (i.e. non-Sanskritized) Nepali. For this Motiram praised Bhanubhakta a lot. But it was the later rediscovery of Bhanubhakta in Banaras and Darjeeling that converted him into a *jati bir purus* (brave man), a legacy which the post-1950 Nepali state found easy to borrow and disseminate as part of its reification of the national *bir* pantheon. (*Creating a Brave* 54)

The Gorkha language movement in Banaras and Darjeeling has distinct historical character. This language had different names, like *Parbate*, *Khas kura*, *Gorkhali bhasa*, before it was renamed as Nepali. This language was the language of Gorkha rulers, their administration and the mother tongue of mid-hill Brahmins and Chhetries. Gorkha recruitment in the Imperial British army became instrumental to bring youths of different ethnic communities of the mid-hill Nepal to a common fore. And Gorkha language became the medium language for those youths who had multiple mother tongues.

Another factor was the surge of migration from mid-hills to the Indian places like Darjeeling, Sikkim, Manipur, Deharadun, Bhutan etc. The migrants who permanently settled in those places too used Gorkha language as a common medium of communication. Different newspapers, being published from Banaras, Darjeeling, Sikkim, Deharadun etc, also used *Gorkha bhasa*. However, the term 'Nepali' as a language was used and made popular by the missionaries and British scholars (Bandhu, *The Role* 127). Turner's *Comparative and Etymological Dictionary of the Nepali Language* (1931) was the significant work that

established the name of this language as 'Nepali' and as an important language in South Asian region. Gradually, Darjeeling became the major hub for the literary activities of this language.

Darjeeling based Nepali language activists had their identity issue in Indian context. *Nepali Sahitya Sammelan* was the powerful organizational weapon for this identity movement. As soon as 1918, Parasmani Pradhan and his colleagues succeeded in their effort to gain recognition for Nepali language in Calcutta University as a subject and medium of study in Matric, IA and BA level. At the time the name of the language was- *Nepali Pahadiya or Khaskura*. Following the *Sammelan's* urge, first the Bangal government, then Calcutta University replaced the name of the language *Nepali Pahadiya or Khaskura* with Nepali respectively in 1926 and 1932. This changing of the name of the language was not just a matter of nomenclature, but a matter of cultivating distinct identity of the Nepali Diaspora in Indian socio-political context.

Obviously, the Nepali migrants and expatriates living and working in Indian territories were of mixed ethnic origins, cultures and languages. What could be the binding factor for those people from diverse communities? History explicitly informs us it was the Nepali language. As noted before, there were different factors to establish Nepali language as a medium of communication in those areas. Once Nepali language activists took the task to promote the writing and publishing in this language, there emerged a sort of nationalism. C.M. Bandhu summaries this phenomenon as:

The Nepalese living in India were called to unite and work for the promotion of their common culture and language. The freedom movement of India was a great source of inspiration for them. The integration of the Nepalese people at the socio-cultural level has certainly helped to uplift their economic and

educational standards. Nepali language was a distinct factor in their identification, the poet Bhanubhakta Acharya remained a symbol of their identity as a *Jatiya Kavi*- a national poet. During the first half of this century important steps were taken to promote Nepali language and literature. Books, newspapers and magazines were published and circulated throughout Nepali populated areas of India; schools, libraries and organizations were established and gradually Nepali linguistic nationalism gained momentum. (*The Role* 128)

With this 'Nepali linguistic nationalism', there was one more important thing- the imaginary of *Nepali Jati*. *Nepali Jati* was conceived as a people, in the sense of nation or race, with independent and potent identity. Surya Bikram Gyawali, Dharanidhar Koirala and Parasmani Pradhan (collectively known as SuDhaPa); founders of the *Sammelan*, were the major activists to popularize and endorse this concept of *Nepali Jati*. According to Gyawali, King Prithvinarayan Shah gave birth to the Nepali Jati by putting together the Newar of Nepal valley; Gurung, Magar, Chhetri and Brahmin of Western part and the Kirat peoples of the Eastern part (14). This is interesting to note that Gyawali imagines a homogenous *Nepali Jati* constituted of diverse cultures and languages.

Although Gyawali himself identified the diversity of cultures, languages and religions inside the Nepali identity, he was convinced that the improvement of *Nepali Jati* could be realized through the improvement of the Nepali language and literature. To ascertain the *Nepali Jati* as a distinct, independent and potent *Jati*, they needed an ideal hero. So they found such an icon in Bhanubhakta who was already introduced as *Adikabi* by Motiram Bhatta. Explaining the *Nepali Jati* improvement project of Gyawali, Onta writes:

Gyawali claimed that with the larger state put together by Prithvinarayan, Nepali *jati* was created. When Hindu freedom was lost in India, it was

protected in the foothills of the Himalayas by this *jati*. But, Gyawali wrote, this *jati* was constituted by different-language-speaking Newar, Kirat, Magar, Gurung and Tamang people. Nepali *jati*-ness could not articulate itself because of the different languages and customs of these people. An empire (i.e. the Gorkhali empire put together by Prithvinarayan Shah and his immediate successors) had been built but a fire that could burn its imperial grandeur was inherently present in the above-mentioned situation. In this condition, according to Gyawali, Bhanubhakta wrote his *Ramayana* in colloquial Nepali, a work that was read by all the above constituting members of Nepali *jati*. Bhanubhakta's work plastered the house of Nepali *jati*-ness constructed by putting one brick on top of another and the Nepali *jati* found a language to articulate itself. (*Creating a Brave* 63)

One very important factor which decidedly provided the material condition for the flourishing of so-called Nepali linguistic nationalism as well as *Nepali Jati* consciousness in the Indian territories is what Benedict Anderson calls the print-capitalism. Though in very small scale, Motiram was the first activist who initiated the printing culture in Nepali vernacular in the late 19th century. Nepali public spheres located in Indian territories were the first to benefit from this printing culture and they were the ones who regenerated it with new vigor in the first half of twentieth century.

The early Nepali publishing in Banaras was effected by a limited number of individuals, yet they paved way for circulation and consolidation of ideas and identities through printed words. In this regard Roderick Chalmers writes:

As the development of print opened up new opportunities for literary production and distribution it laid the foundations for engagement in a new

public sphere. Yet at the same time it exerted a circumscribing influence, limiting the definition of literature to that which is printed and thus excluding both unprinted literature and illiterates from this new sphere. As in other societies, there was a vast difference between existing South Asian speech communities and emergent print communities, and the realm of print had its own patterns of exclusion. (66)

As Chalmers says, Nepali print community too had its own pattern of exclusion. For their *Jati* improvement campaign, they needed an *adikabi*, a literary hero; so they excluded all other realities including the poets who wrote in Nepali vernacular prior to Bhanubhakta and diverse mother tongues.

The epitomization of Bhanubhakta as *jati kabi* (national poet), *adikabi* (first original poet) and *bir purus* (brave man) of Nepali language in the first half of twentieth century was such a strong enterprise that ultimately cultivated the Bhanubhakta Cult. One very significant event engineered by the *Sammelan* was the erecting of Bhanubhakta's statue in Darjeeling. The nationalist sentiment ingrained in the symbol of Bhanubhakta was well captured by the designer of the statue, E. W. Thompson:

Superfluous resemblances or decorations mean nothing of importance to the artist. The artist goes much deeper than what is apparently visible. Sincere representation of the inner self is precisely what the artist strives for.

It has been my endeavour to present him not only as a virtuous poet, enamoured of divineness but also as a brave nationalist, pregnant with feelings of seething patriotism. (qtd. in Rai 112)

This rendering of Bhanubhakta's divine personality was already popularized by the *Nepali Sahitya Sammelan* in and around Darjeeling. According to Onta, one of the important works published by the *Sammelan* was the 1940 volume to mark the 70th death anniversary of Bhanubhakta (61). The volume contains contributions not only from the authors of Darjeeling but also from powerful personalities from the Nepal valley including a message from the then reigning Shree 3 Maharaj Juddha Shamsheer. In the editorial preface of this volume Gyawali ornaments Bhanubhakta as *bir purus* of Nepali *jati*, the *mahatma* and *mahabir* (a super brave man). He wrote:

If we cannot see and understand the greatness [of Bhanubhakta] the fault lies with us...Just because our confused and educationless status does not give us a good clear view [of our past] we cannot say Bhanubhakta was not good, not important. Bhanubhakta was good, he was big, he was majestic and since we lack those qualities we have not been able to appreciate his greatness. But time will give us eyes, power to evaluate and minds to understand Bhanubhakta. After that we will honor Bhanubhakta and understand his importance. (qtd. in Onta, *Creating a Brave* 61-62)

Thus Bhanubhakta became a saint, *adikabi*, an eternal being, a symbol of nationalism and surpassed even his own writings. He was posted in a horizon where critical appreciation too couldn't reach out to his works. He was made a Cult figure. This Bhanubhakta cult was well adopted, fabricated and manufactured in multiple ways in the post-1950 era.

Rastrabhasa

As mentioned before, Nepali language had different names like *Khaskura*, *Gorkhali bhasa* and *Parbatiya bhasa*. In 1932, Calcutta University agreed to replace these names with just one word- Nepali (Onta, *Creating a Brave* 53). Interestingly in 1933, the then Nepal

valley based government organ 'Gorkha Bhasa Prakashini Samiti (Gorkha Language Publishing Committee) changed the first word of its name and renamed it as 'Nepali Bhasa Prakashini Samiti (Nepali Language Publishing Committee). Writer and a liberal Rana officer Bal Krishna Shamsheer JBR was the president of this organization at the moment. Later on, Bal Krishna Shamsheer did change his own name as Bal Krishna Sama after the 1950 revolution. He was always a stern advocate of *Rastrabhasa* (literally 'national language').

The concept that a nation should have its own national language to be a nation was interestingly an idea manufactured in the then Nepal valley. The ruling system at the time was highly centralized and Nepal valley symbolized a power center as well as center par excellence. Darjeeling based Nepali language activists surely advocated for consolidation of Nepali *jati* and for the service to the mother language, but they never imagined the necessity of a *Rastrabhasa*. It can be deduced from the historical experience that the concept of *Rastrabhasa* needs to stand at the power hub. State power is always instrumental to kindle a particular language.

The state power was not present in Darjeeling or any other Indian towns for those Nepali language activists who were working hard to establish their identity as Nepali *jati*. When the Nepali *jati* rhetoric started flourishing in Nepal valley, it was already infected by the rays of state power. The urge for *Rastrabhasa* explicitly had those rays. One of the powerful personalities and lecturer at the only institute of higher education in the then Nepal Valley Trichandra College Bal Krishna Shamsheer, popularly known as Bal Krishna Sama, used to say:

If we value the *unnati* (progress) of one person than the *unnati* of the entire nation, we presume every mother's language as everyone's mother tongue. So it can be the case that father's mother tongue is *Parbate* and son's the *Newari*;

or one brother's mother tongue can be *Magar* and other brother's the *Maithili* or *Limbu* or *Gurung*...Therefore common mother tongue is the mother tongue of our common motherland in the true sense. The language of the *rastra* (nation) is the *rastrabhasa* (national language). (309 *tans. mine*)

The above quote clearly shows that diversity of languages in Nepal was the well understood phenomenon. And the *Parbate* or Nepali language was not in the state of development so that the powerful elites too could designate it as *rastrabhasa* till then. The rhetoric of Nepali *jati* was so influential among the educated elites that they wanted to assign a *rastrabhasa* to this *jati*'s nation. The other influential poet Laxmi Prasad Devkota, later to be venerated as *Mahakabi* (The Great Poet), also had the same urge. He said:

One language makes one *jati*. One *jati* can build a *rastra*. When there is a nation, there is a civilization, there is a religion and there is an objective. Everything remains in the bond...And there emerges our great nation, it rises and shines. This *rastrabhasa* is our common wealth. We all should protect it. This is the resonance of everyone's heart. (Bandhu, *Devkota* 183 *tans. mine*)

Sama's idiosyncratic idea to understand mother tongue in terms of territorial boundary was funny enough. But inherent politics in this rhetoric of *rastrabhasa* did not remain within the boundary of this imaginary. Historian Baburam Acharya, later to be venerated as Historian Laureate by the state, too put together the rudimentary historical 'facts' to prove the historical continuity and power of Nepali language as *rastrabhasa* during 1940s (Acharya, *Purana* Preface). It was soon to be circulated, re-circulated, produced and reproduced through the power of newly flourishing print-capitalism.

The urge for *rastrabhasa* did not confine only inside the circle of educated elites as it was being propagated by different journals and speeches of writers, leaders and activists

during the last decades of the period covered in this dissertation. At the dawn of the 1950 revolution, this idea entered to the public debate. Arguments were presented for and against the idea. The *rastrabhasa* rhetoric was on the one hand a powerful ideological weapon of nationalism; on the other hand it excluded the diverse indigenous languages by its inherent logic.

The singular narrative of the *rastrabhasa* concept had its rivalry with the renaissance of *Nepalbhasa* writing from the very beginning. As already discussed in Chapter 1 of this dissertation, *Nepalbhasa* writing was flourishing with Arya Samaj Movement in 1930s and 1940s. Shukra Raj Shastri, the venerated Martyr, was one of the *Nepalbhasa* writers who had published a *Nepalbhasa* grammar. The point to note is that Bal Krishna Sama was not happy with the renaissance of *Nepalbhasa*. According to Sama, Shastri was playing communal politics by writing the grammar (308). He thought the Newar writers and activists were pulling the strings of communal politics by saying that *Nepalbhasa* was their mother language (338).

Ultimately Nepali language was made compulsory medium in the educational institutions in 1955 and it was designated *rastrabhasa* in 1960. There were events of opposition against this imposition of singular language by indigenous language communities. But the state power became victorious. The singular narrative of *rastrabhasa* was thought to be a modernist ideal to build a nation by the Nepali language activists. Yet the singularity of this idea ultimately had its repercussions as history proceeded.

Unification Discourse

Gorkha King Prithvinarayan's Eighteenth century campaign of conquest has, no doubt, historical consequences. The territorial boundary of present Nepal is the result of Prithvinarayan and his immediate successors' conquest campaign. There is a rhetorical

question in this regard: was it a conquest or unification of Nepal? This question leads to the examination of the mode of historiography that began in the first half of Twentieth century.

When Surya Bikram Gyawali 'rediscovered' Bhanubhakta, he had actually discovered a *bir purus* who had unified Nepali *jati* by rendering the historical service to the vernacular Nepali language. Bhanubhakta's role on the unification of Nepali *jati* was thus valorized by the early historians and Nepali language activists. The unification discourse was basically conceived in Indian space by the Nepali Diaspora to establish and expand the horizon for their identity politics. It was crucial for them to extract bir history from Nepali nation to solidify this identity. So, the early historian like Gyawali didn't confine himself within the personality cult of Bhanubhakta. Moreover he turned his attention to find more heroes from political history of Gorkhali Empire. Onta elaborates:

The desire to execute their projects of *jati*-improvement through service to the Nepali language which they saw as being key to the separate existence of Nepali *jati* made Bhanubhakta an ideal hero for their purposes. In addition, it was not the case that heroes were not found in the realm of politics. Some kings of Gorkha and certain warriors from the 'unification' era were identified by Gyawali as subjects of history and biography which he wrote in the 1930s and the 1940s as part of his effort to construct a *bir* pantheon that would provide historical depth to the identity of a free Nepali *jati*. (*Creating a Brave* 64-65)

Gyawali wrote biographical sketches of the Gorkha rulers like Drabya Shah, Ram Shah, and Prithvinarayan Shah. He valorized Prithnarayan's role in victorious campaigns of conquest that resulted the territorial unity of Gorkha Empire. He called Prithvinarayan the first unifier of Nepali nation for his bravery and historical consciousness of unifying different

ethnic peoples in one nation. Then he discovered the Anglo-Nepal War heroes like Balabhadra Kunwar and Amar Singh Thapa. Though Nepal had lost the war, he valorizes these war heroes for showing bravery and nationalistic spirit against the British Imperial force.

The imagination of *Bishal* Nepal (Vast Nepal), however, is the fulcrum of the unification discourse. The story goes like this- in the beginning there was a *Bishal* Nepal in the ancient times, then it crumbled down to the small principalities; after that came Prithvinarayan who assembled these small principalities and regained the vitality of *Bishal* Nepal (Acharya, *Prachinkalko* 153, Nepal 42-61). The inherent logic of unification discourse is the assumption that a *Bishal* Nepal existed in the ancient past. But, sadly enough, this logic doesn't properly stand at the evidential base.

The 'nationalist' historians like Baburam Acharya, *Itihas Samsodhan Mandal* (History Revising Group), Jagdish Chandra Regmi and D.R. Regmi believe in this logic. Acharya's books *Nepalko Sanchhipta Britanta* (A Brief History of Nepal), *Prachinkaalko Nepal* (Ancient Nepal), *Shree 5 Badamaharajdhiraj Prithvinarayan Shahko Sanchhipta Jiwani* (A Brief Biography of the Great King Prithvinarayan Shah) etc; D.R. Regmi's works *Ancient Nepal* and *Modern Nepal* (Volume I and II) etc are pivotal in this regard. These and dozens of other books, textbooks employ this logic to venerate Prithvinarayan as a Great Unifier.

The urgent question is- was Nepal really big in the ancient period? K.P. Malla deals with this question in one of his fierce debate with *Itihas Samsodhan Mandal*. According to him, "there is not a single piece of reliable evidence to delimit the political boundaries of ancient Nepal (A.D. 464-879)." He further argues:

To assume that they were fixed and stable for a millennium is merely to betray ignorance of the nature of ancient and medieval feudalism- a social and

political order in which fragmentation of power at home and border raids abroad were a central political reality. (4)

So-called nationalist historians have put forward some evidences to prove the boundary of ancient Nepal, but they are rudimentary. But not only Malla, but also Kumar Pradhan has refuted those evidential logic that *Bishal* Nepal existed in ancient period (228-229). Strangely enough Baburam Acharya himself is not so sure about the political boundary of that period (*Prachinkalko* 135). Again what was the intention behind this claim of *Bishal* Nepal? The answer is obvious- for the logic of unification discourse. It can be said that Nepal was unified by King Prithvinarayan only when it is proved that Nepal was *bishal* in the ancient time, then it went through fragmentation along the tide of time and Prithvinarayan was that Great soul who unified it again.

Such a nationalist ideology was heavily present in earlier Nepali historiography in the first half of Twentieth century. M.C. Regmi too is not happy with this trend of historiography that left behind the economic background of the Prithvinarayan's campaign of conquest. According to Regmi, the most important drive behind Prithvinarayan's campaign was the economic one (*A Study* 9). The 'nationalist' historians completely ignore this fact. Consequentially, the unification discourse is build just outside the territories of economic, social and cultural factors.

Regmi further elucidates, "The political unification of the country did not lead to the emergence of a nation because of a complex of political, administrative, social and economic factors (*A Study* 12). Gorkha Empire or a Gorkhali state was definitely founded by the military campaign, but by its very nature the Gorkhali state could not unify diverse peoples who came under Gorkhali control. Despite economic, the other important factor to this reality was the ethnic composition of the Gorkhali ruling class. Regmi truly points out:

The ethnic composition of the ruling class and nobility of Gorkha should also be given due importance in this context. They belonged to the same community as the ruling class and nobles of the western hill region- Chhetri, Thakuri and Brahman...Political unification thus only created the basic territorial and political framework which has been utilized in recent years to implement social, economic and administrative policies aimed at national integration. (*A Study* 13-14)

Although being critical about it, Regmi comfortably uses the term 'unification'. I have strong reservation about this usage. It is the same unification discourse and valorized use of the term 'unification' that ultimately created the loop or exclusion and delusion. The nationalistic zeal cultivated by unification discourse is actually of mythical in character. The objective reality is quite different. Kumar Pradhan succinctly captures this reality as:

In modern times strong feelings of nationalism have created movements against foreign rule. Such movements have taken place for a positive, coherent, national identity, and national feelings have been generated by binding factors like common language, culture and the feeling of a shared past. Such was not the case with Nepal. It lacked such common bonds of nationality. Nepal was neither a nation in being, nor in hope. For instance, there can be no parallel between the cases of the national unifications of Italy or Germany and Nepal. Even when Germany was divided into congeries of petty political units, a sense of unity prevailed there because of common bonds of kinship, history, culture and language. (168-169)

The multicultural, multilingual, multiethnic composition of Nepal was being bypassed by the nationalist historians for the purpose of paying visible service to the Monarchy that

came to power after the 1950 revolution. Prithvinarayan's personality was examined and venerated with the same spirit. According to Pradhan:

However, Nepalese historiography suffers from the prejudice of nineteenth-century West European and North American historians who dealt largely with governments and great men, or from what E.H. Carr described as the 'Bad King John' and 'the Good Queen Bess' theory of history. (*The Gorkha* Introduction xxix)

Therefore the hagiographic details were produced and disseminated throughout the post-1950 decades. Such a scenario manufactured a public memory that actually learnt to know history in the form of nineteenth century European and North American concept of history.

The singular narratives of historicity and nationalism can be called hegemonic narratives designed to serve the ideas of highly exclusionary Hindu state ruled by Monarchy and particularly to establish the authenticity of the Shah dynasty. Either the image of Bhanubhakta or Prithvinarayan, the unification discourse sets these images in the flight of singular and single-culture nationalism. Mary Des Chene's analysis is apt in this sense:

Let me redefine, for a moment, the First and Second *Ekikarans* [unifications] as instances of effective hegemony- the first political and administrative, the second cultural. In the late 18th century, Prithvinarayan Shah, by military means, brought under his control a variety of other small political entities and subjugated them to his rule. In the early 20th century, advocates of Hinduism and the Nepali language used the figure of Bhanubhakta to promote (or invent) a single cultural tradition as the national Nepali culture. In the both these processes, small groups became the brokers of power and influence and while

the players changed over time, these processes can be said to have continued through and beyond the Panchayat period. (263)

By and large, now we can say that Prithvinarayan definitely conquered different small kingdoms and created his Gorkha Empire, but did not actually intend any sort of unification in the real sense of the term. Prithvinarayan himself never mentioned such an intention too. But the unification discourse effectively created in the first half of the Twentieth century had different intentions and aims to meet. The influence of Indian nationalist movement and European modernity is noteworthy here.

Nepali Diaspora and the expatriates in the Indian territories had been severely under stress for their lack of history, myths, heroes and pride. On the other hand, the political and literary activists, mainly the expatriates, had the strong sense of anti-Rana polity that needed some significant narratives to effect the anti-Rana movement. For their need of nationalist narratives, the *bir* history could serve well as the British themselves had highly praised the Gorkha warriors for their bravery.

The cry for *unnati* was at the peak in the first half of Twentieth century. Lack of education, language activities and awareness among the people in the villages was strikingly sad realization for the activists living in the Indian territories. All the activists could be heard urging for *unnati* of education, well being of the people and nation. This brought about a strong sense of nationalism and this intention was well served by the early stage print capitalism flourishing in Banaras, Calcutta and Darjeeling.

Once it entered Nepal, the idea of modernity was immediately infected by the nationalist spirit. The singular narratives of historicity and nationalism could easily spark the minds of the anti-Rana nationalists as they had the thrust to open up the new horizons immediately after the fall of Rana regime. As the King was just a puppet at the hand of the

Rana rulers, the political parties forming in the same period too had soft-corner for the Monarchy. They wanted to establish a democracy with the constitutional monarch. Likewise the multicultural, multilingual and multiethnic condition of Nepal too seemed highly vulnerable in their eyes. Therefore once the singular narratives of *bir* kings, anti-Imperial seeming warriors like Balabhadra and the single language nationalism were available, they were easily got seduced.

The modernity based on singular narratives is obviously the idea of European modernity. Though the ground realities were vastly different from European realities, Nepali political and language activists comfortably borrowed these ideas. That's why the very ground reality was shadowed under the high sounding singular narratives of *rastrabhasa*, unification and *bir purus* of language, politics and war. The formation of Nepali modernity, thus, at the outset left the hardcore issues at the margin. The singular narratives cultivated a singular state, singular power and excluded the multiple modernities within its own boundaries.

It can be explained as the lost opportunity of Nepali modernity.

Conclusion

Reformulating Nepali Modernity

Thus far we have discussed the birth pangs and characteristics of Nepali modernity born in the first half of Twentieth century. The century long Rana rule had produced 'closedness' in all fronts of Nepali life. No schools, no colleges, no public services, no modern transportation system; there were a lot of Nos. Limited number of middle class based high caste Brahmin, Chhetri and Newar youths went to pursue their studies in different Indian centers like Calcutta and Banaras. These youths as well as the anti-Rana expatriates were against the 'closedness' of Rana regime and wanted a change in their country.

A surge of migration from Nepal was happening throughout the nineteenth century towards Indian territories. Darjeeling, Sikkim, Deharadun etc. were major hubs for Nepali Diaspora. These places and the vibrant cities like Calcutta and Banaras provided liberal space for the Nepali activists who were involved in anti-Rana activities as well as those who were literary activists. The cry for *unnati* of Nepali people, language and nation was heard at every corner of these places where Nepali youths would assemble.

The sentiment and ideas of modernity in the Nepali mind at the time was greatly influenced by Indian nationalist movement as many activists themselves participated in the *Satyagraha* movement called by Mahatma Gandhi. The shared ideas of modernity between Nepali activists and Indian nationalists are significant here. We come to know that the elder brother of Pushpalal, the communist leader and founder of Nepal Communist Party, martyr Gangalal Shrestha was educated in Calcutta (Gyawali 7). His sentiments of revolution in the homeland must have been significantly shaped by the then popular ideological trend in Calcutta. Gyawali talks about the significant impact of Bangali language in the educated youths of Kathmandu (8). The active anti-Rana political group Praja Parishad and Nepali

National Congress both were actively working in Kathmandu as well as in Banaras and Calcutta. Nepali Congress and Nepal Communist Party both were formally established in Calcutta.

Calcutta was important address for the worshippers of music too. Recording studios of Calcutta were the enthusing factors for Nepali musical minds. The first recorded song in Nepali was sung by Seturam Shrestha and was recorded in Calcutta (Kharel 349). Melawa Devi, another influential singer of 1930s and 40s, too was linked to Calcutta. She used to sing in the palace of Chandra Shamsher in earlier years of her career, but later on she left the palace and then chose self-exile in Indian town Allahabad. Later on she became famous as Sumalanda Devi in India and died in Calcutta. She sang songs in Bangali, Urdu and Hindi languages in India (Sayami 5-7).

Mitrasen ruled early Nepali musical modernity along with Melawa Devi. He came from Bhaksu, India. His songs had local flavor, *Jhyure* tuning and those songs became popular not only in Nepal but in Nepali settlements in India too (Sayami 7). A famous Nepali writer from Darjeeling Indra Bahadur Rai reminisces:

Mitrasen was very famous in almost all Nepali settlements in India- from Bhaksu to Imphal, from Darjeeling to Mumbai. At that time, we used to recognize him as a singer of recorded Nepali songs and as a play-artist of recorded Nepali plays. He wrote and sang those songs in a very simple manner and in local rhythmic tradition that people would easily grasp and hence those songs would educate people in a composite way. (qtd. in Sayami 7-8, *trans. mine*)

The gramophone records used to travel far and wide. Like books, journals and newspapers, such recorded songs used to create different public spheres in all quarters of

towns and homes of Nepali speaking settlements. Quoting Master Ratnadas Prakas, Prakash Sayami informs that Mitrasen was the first Nepali singer whose songs were played by All-India Radio (9).

The gramophone link of Nepal with Calcutta suggests that the European modernity had its technological and capitalist lure to shape the modernist thinking of Nepali mind. As we have discussed earlier in Chapter 1, the political ideas of European modernity had serious impact in the political minds of Nepali activists too. The European influence of its consumerist modernity was not the new phenomenon as it was already present in the then Nepal valley from the very beginning of Nineteenth century. When the Twentieth century approached, the economic impact of Imperialist capitalism became significant.

The nationalist movement of India had its own local dynamics, despite the fact that Indian modernist thinking too bore significant European print. The nationalist character of Indian modernist thinking explicitly came upfront with its veneration of local heroes. It had great impact on the modernist thinking of Nepali literary activists and intellectuals too. They too started searching their own national heroes to solidify their national identity.

When the development ideology entered Nepal in 1950, it reincarnated with a magical term *Bikas*. Before the entry of development ideology, the influence of capitalism had already marked its footprint in the Nepali villages. The Gorkha soldiers had brought liberal behavioral traits as well as the idea of economic development to the Nepali villages. They had fought the wars in foreign lands and seen the capitalist ventures rise and shine. Yet the cry for *unnati* was already there in the minds of educated elite. *Bikas* came not only with the idea of economic development but also with the concept of insulated state-system. Evaluating

the post-1950 scenario C.J. Wake observes:

Both the changes necessary for economic development and the growth of nationalism call for a departure from the social order of its mosaic pattern of "federation" and a tendency towards a melting-pot society. Modern development therefore has implications that are nothing short of a cultural revolution and are beginning to be felt in diverse areas. (151)

The idea of melting-pot what Wake emphasizes was, however, not an idea developed in the latter part of the Twentieth century. It was already there in the singular narratives of Nepali historiography and cultural and literary activities engineered by the educated elite. The recent writings on modernity focus on the new globalized scenario where single universal modernity is not present. To quote Homi K. Bhaba:

The borderline engagements of cultural difference may as often be consensual as conflictual; they may confound our definitions of tradition and modernity; realign the customary boundaries between the private and public, high and low; and challenge normative expectations of development and progress.(3)

Scholars and writers have emphasized on the localized modernities. For example, Marina Simic has understood the localized character of modernity in the same vein. She says, " People living in different places develop and understand modernity in different ways, with state and official institutions holding a different place in their lives than is imagined to be the case within European modernist projects" (198). Examining the recent lifestyle of Kathmandu middle-class Mark Liechty too encounters the ambivalent nature of modernity. He says:

Transnational currents of modernity have daily consequences for the lives of people in Kathmandu, with satellite television, unemployed youth, beauty

pageants, mass tourism, and countless other examples linking the city to worldwide trends. At the same time an ideologically weighted global politics of "development" and "progress" places Nepal and its capital in the structural position of modernity's opposite... Yet hundreds of thousands of people in Kathmandu lead lives riddled with both the problems and pleasures of modernity. (*Out Here* xiii)

The European concept of modernity upholds the European innovations of secular state apparatuses, technological innovations, scientific way of outlook etc. These concepts and innovations have influenced the world a lot. There is no need to discard the European innovations that benefitted the world. However, the problems and aspirations of modernity in different parts of the world can't be handled by the singular narrative of European modernity. As Sanjiv Upreti writes:

China's contemporary modernity, for example, is much different in its forms, technologies and "styles" from the modernity of Nepal; just as India's modernity is different from that of Nepal and Bhutan. Even within a nation like Nepal, Kathmandu's modernity is different from that of cities like Nepalgunj or Ilam. In other words, we are living through different and differing modernities rather than a singular, uniform modernity. (223)

The characteristics of *Bikas* discourse and the singular narratives of historicity and nationalism, which begun in the first half of Twentieth century and flourished later on under the singular vision of Hindu, high caste standards in the Shah rule exhibits the singularity of Western modernity. Did we continue the mimicry even in the formative time of Nepali modernity? The history tells us- yes, we did. Through the foreign aid, the American version of Western modernity marked its entry and captured the idea of education, bureaucracy and

bikas. The singular narratives of nationalism too had the remarkable print of European nationalism.

Now it's the high time that we reformulate Nepali modernity. Nepali modernity should consider its very ground reality of multicultural, multilingual and multiethnic composition of society. With the marginalization and exclusion, Nepali modernity will keep mimicking the Western modernity in a very bad shape. Local knowledge, local mindset and local innovations are crucial to reformulate Nepali modernity.

Works Cited

- Acharya, Baburam. *Hamro Rastrabhasa Nepali*. Ed. Prof. Shrikrisha Acharya. Kathmandu: Prof. Shrikrisha Acharya, 2070 BS.
- Acharya, Baburam. *Prachinkalko Nepal*. Ed. Prof. Shrikrisha Acharya. Kathmandu: Prof. Shrikrisha Acharya, 2063 BS.
- Acharya, Baburam. *Purana Kabi ra Kabita*. Lalitpur: Sajha Prakashan, 2050 BS.
- Appadurai, Arjun. *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. London: University of Minnesota Press, 2005.
- Aziz, Barbara Nimri. *Heir to a Silent Song: Two Rebel Women of Nepal*. Kirtipur: Center for Nepal and Asian Studies, TU, 2001.
- Bandhu, Chudamani. *Devkota*. Lalitpur: Sajha Prakashan, 2067 BS.
- Bandhu, C.M. "The Role of the Nepali Language in Establishing the National Unity and Identity of Nepal". *Kailash* vol- XV, 1989:121-133.
- Banskota, Purushottam and Niranjana Sharma. *Nepalko Rajnaitik Itihas (1846-1951)*. Kathmandu: Nepal ra Asiali Anusandhan Kendra, Tribhuwan Biswobidhyalaya, Kirtipur, 2055 BS.
- Bauman, Zygmunt. *Liquid Modernity*. Cambridge: Polity Press: 2000.
- Bhabha, Homi K. *The Location of Culture*. London and New York: Routledge, 2012.
- Bhusal, Beduram (Ed.). *Pushpalal: Chhaniyeka Rachana*. Kathmandu: Pushpalal Smriti Pratisthan, 2073 BS.
- Bista, Dor Bahadur. *Fatalism and Development: Nepal's Struggle for Modernization*. Kolkata: Orient Longman, 2008.
- Chakrabarty, Dipesh. *Habitations of Modernity*. New Delhi: Permanent Black, 2004.
- Chakrabarty, Dipesh. *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000.

Chalmers, Rhoderick A. M. *We Nepalis: Language, Literature and the Formation of Nepali Public Sphere in Indian, 1914-1940* (unpublished dissertation of Ph. D. submitted to the University of London).

Chatterjee, Partha. *Empire and Nation*. New Delhi: Permanent Black, 2010.

Chauhan, R. S. *Society And State Building In Nepal*. Kathmandu: Ratna Pustak Bhandar, 1989.

Childs, Peter. *Modernism*. London and New York: Routledge, 2000.

Des Chene, Mary. "In the Name of Bikas." *Studies in Nepali History and Society* 1(2), 1996: 259-270.

Devkota, Grishmabhadur. *Nepalko Chhapakhana ra Patrapatrikako Itihas*. Lalitpur: Sajha Prakashan, 2059 BS.

Dube, Saurabh. "Makeovers of Modernity: An Introduction." *Handbook of Modernity in South Asia: Modern Makeovers*. Ed. Saurabh Dube. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2011: 1-28.

Eisenstadt, S N. "Multiple Modernities." *Daedalus* 129(1), Winter 2009: 1-29.

Fisher, James F. "'Romanticism' and 'Development'." *Occasional Papers in Sociology and Anthropology*. Kathmandu: Central Department of Sociology and Anthropology, TU, 1987: 29-42.

Fujikura, Tatsuro. *Discourse of Awareness: Development, Social Movements and the Practices of Freedom in Nepal*. Kathmandu: Martin Chautari, 2013.

Gautam, Rajesh. *Nepalko Prajatantrik Andolanma Nepal Praja Parishadko Bhumika* (Part 1). Kathmandu: Keshab Sthapit, 2062BS.

Giri, Pradip. "Nepali Congress: Aitihāsik Pristhabhumi." *Nepali Congress: Aitihāsik Dastabejharu*, Ed. Gagan Thapa, Pratap Paudel, Shankar Tiwari and Krishna Rijal. Kathmandu: Public Policy Pathsala, 2072 BS: IX-XXXVI.

- Gupta, Anirudra. *Politics in Nepal 1950-60*. Delhi: Kalinga, 1993.
- Gutschow, Niels. *Architecture of the Newars: A History of Building Typologies and Details in Nepal (3 vols)*. Chicago: Serindia Publications, 2011.
- Gyawali, Surya Bikram. "Jat ki Jati?" *Yugbani* 27, 2005BS: 14-15.
- Habermas, Jurgan. "Modernity: An Unfinished Project." *Habermas and the Unfinished Project of Modernity*. Ed. Maurizio Passerin d'Entreve and Seyla Benhabib. Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1997: 38-55.
- Hosagrahar, Jyoti. *Indigenous Modernities: Negotiating Architecture and Urbanism*. London and New York: Routledge, 2005.
- Joshi, Bhuwan Lal and Leo E. Rose. *Democratic Innovations in Nepal: A Case Study of Political Acculturation*. Kathmandu: Mandala Publications, 2004.
- Joshi, Sanjay. *Fractured Modernity: Making of a Middle Class in Colonial North India*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Kainla, Bairagi. *Mahaguru Falgunandaka Upadeshharu tatha Satyahanma Panthaka Bhajanmala*. Dharan: Honorary Captain Tarahang Limbu and Captain Indrahang Limbu, 2047 BS.
- Kharel, Suman. "Aadhuni Nepali Sangeet Yatra." *Studies in Nepali History and Society* 12.2, 2007: 349-375.
- Kirkpatrick, William J. *An Account of the Kingdom of Nepaul*. New Delhi: Rupa, 2007.
- Liechty, Mark. *Out Here in Kathmandu: modernity on the global periphery*. Kathmandu: Martin Chautari Press, 2010.
- Liechty, Mark. *Suitably Modern: Making Middle-Class Culture in Kathmandu*. Kathmandu: Martin Chautari, 2008.
- Maharjan, Basanta. 2008. *Linguistic Movement of 2022 BS: A Case Study of the Newars in Kathmandu Valley*. Lalitpur: Social Inclusion Research Fund.

- Malla, Kamal P. *Impeccable Historiography in Nepal : A Rebuttal*. Kathmandu: Nepal Study Centre, 1984.
- Mihaly, Eugene Bramer. *Foreign Aid and Politics in Nepal*. Lalitpur: Himal Books, 2009.
- Mishra, Chaitanya, Pitambar Sharma. "Foreign Aid and Social Structure: Notes on Intra-State Relationships." *Foreign Aid and Development in Nepal*. Proceedings of a Seminar (October 4-5, 1983). Kathmandu: IDS, 1983: 1-17.
- Nepal, Gyanmani. *Nepalnirupan*. Kathmandu: Nepal Rajkiya Pragya Pratisthan, 2055BS.
- Onta, Pratyoush. "Creating a Brave Nepali Nation in British India: The Rhetoric of Jati Improvement, Rediscovery of Bhanubhakta and the Writing of Bir History". *Studies in Nepali History and Society* 1(1), 1996: 37-76.
- Onta, Pratyoush. "The Career of Bhanubhakta as a History of Nepali National Culture, 1940-1999". *Studies in Nepali History and Society* 4(1), 1999: 65-136.
- Panday, Devendra Raj. *Nepal's Failed Development: Reflections on the Mission and the Maladies*. Kathmandu: Nepal South Asia Center, 2009.
- Panday, Sardar Bhimbahadur. *Tyas Bakhatko Nepal* (Part 1-3). Kathmandu: author, 2044BS.
- Pathak, Avijit. *Modernity, Globalization and Identity*. Delhi: Aakar Books, 2006.
- Pigg, Stacy Leigh. *Unintended Consequences: The Ideological Impact of Development in Nepal*. South Asia Bulletin Vol. XIII No. 1, 1993.
- Poudyal, Madhab P. *Administrative Reforms in Nepal*. New Delhi: National Book Organizational, 1989.
- Pradhan, Kumar. *Pahilo Pahar*. Lalitpur: Sajha Prakashan, 1982.
- Pradhan, Kumar. *The Gorkha Conquests: The Process and Consequences of the Unification of Nepal, with Particular Reference to Eastern Nepal*. Kathmandu: Social Science Baha and Himal Books, 2009.

- Pradhan, Narmadeswor. "Nepalbhasako Bartaman Sahityik Awastha ra Samasya." *Rastriya Sahitya Sangosthi-2064BS*. Kathmandu: Nepal Pragya Pratisthan, 2065BS: 75-84.
- Pushpalal. *Nepalma Communist Andolanko Sanchhipta Itihas*. Kathmandu: Pushpalal Smriti Pratisthan, 2053 BS.
- Rai, Indrabahadur. *Tipeka Tippaniharu*. Darjeeling: Shiwaraj Sharma/Nepali Sahitya Sanchayika, 1976.
- Regmi, Mahesh C. *A Study in Nepali Economic History:1768-1844*. Delhi: Adroit Publishers, 1999.
- Regmi, Mahesh C. *Thatched Huts and Stucco Palaces: Peasants and Landlords in 19th Century Nepal*. Delhi: Adroit Publishers, 2011.
- Rist, Gilbert. *The History of Development: From Western Origins to Global Faith*. Patrick Camiller, trans. New Delhi: Academic Foundation, 2009.
- Sama, Bal Krishna. *Mero Kabitako Aaradhana*. Lalitpur: Sajha Prakashan, 2054.
- Said, Edward W. *Orientalism*. New Delhi: Penguin Books, 2001.
- Sarubhakta (Ed.). *Siddhicharanka Jail-Sansmaran*. Kathmandu: Nepal Rajkiya Pragya
- Sayami, Prakash. *Nepali Sangeetko Ek Shatak*. Kathmandu: Bhawak Aviyan Nepal, 2009.
- Serchan, Sanjaya. *Nepal: Modernity, Multiculturalism and Marginalization*. Kathmandu: Senfdin, 2010.
- Shah, Chandeshwor. *Mallakaalin Maithili Naatak*. Kathmandu: Nepal Rajkiya Pragya-Pratisthan, 2055 BS.
- Sharma, Devi Prashad. *Trade & Industry of Nepal during the Rana Period*. Kathmandu: Ratna Pustak Bhandar, 2009.
- Sharma, Janaklal. *Josmani Santa Parampara ra Sahitya*. Lalitpur: Sajha Prakashan, 2052 BS.
- Shrestha, Nanda R. *In the Name of Development: A Reflection on Nepal*. Kathmandu: Educational Publishing House, 2009.

Shrestha, Nanda R. *The Political Economy of Land, Landlessness and Migration in Nepal*.

New Delhi: Nirala Publications, 2001.

Simik, Marina. "The State and Modernity as Anthropological Topics." *Issues in Ethnology*

and Anthropology n.s. 3.3 (2008): 189-201.

Singh, Nagendra Kumar. *Nepal and the British India*. New Delhi: Anmol Publications, 1996.

Singh, Narayan Bahadur. *Samasaamayik Chittrakalako Itihas*. Kathmandu: Nepal Rajkiya

Pragya-Pratisthan, 2033 BS.

Skerry, Christa A., Kerry Moran and Kay M. Calavan. *Four Decades of Development: The*

History of U.S. Assistance to Nepal 1951-1991. Kathmandu: USAID, 1991.

Smith, David. *Hinduism and Modernity*. New Delhi: Blackwell Publishing, 2008.

Stiller, Ludwig F. *Nepal: Growth of a Nation*. Kathmandu: Human Resources Development

Research Center, 1999[1993].

Stiller, Ludwig F. *The Silent Cry: The People of Nepal 1816-39*. Kathmandu: Sahayogi

Prakashan, 1976.

Stiller, Ludwig F., Dr. Ram Prakash Yadav. *Planning for People*. Kathmandu: Human

Resources Development Research Center, 1993 [1978].

Thapa, Gagan, Pratap Paudel, Shankar Tiwar and Krishna Rijal (Eds). *Nepali Congress:*

Aitihāsik Dastabejharu. Kathmandu: Public Policy Pathsala, 2072 BS.

Thapa, Krishna B. *Main Aspects of Social, Economic and Administrative History of Modern*

Nepal. Kathmandu: Ratna Pustak Bhandar, 1995.

Thapar, Romila. *The Past as Present: Forging Contemporary Identities through History*.

New Delhi: Aleph, 2014.

Upreti, Sanjeev. "Nepali Modernities and Postmodernities: Theatre, Culture and Politics."

Studies in Nepali History and Society 12.2 (2007): 225-249.

Wake, C.J. *Bikas: Evolution in Nepal*. Kirtipur: Center for Nepal and Asian Studies, TU,
1980.

Wright, Daniel. *History of Nepal*. New Delhi: Rupa, 2007.