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**Nepali Nationalism Vis-a-vis Sylvain Levi's *Nepal: Hindu Adhirajyako Itihaas*
(*Part II*) and B.P. Koirala's *B.P. Koiralako Adalatko Bayan***

**A Dissertation Submitted to the Central Department of English in
Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Philosophy in English**

By

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Letter of Recommendation

Tulsi Ram Rijal has completed his dissertation entitled “Nepali Nationalism Vis-a-vis Sylvain Levi’s *Nepal: Hindu Adhirajyako Itihaas (Part II)* and B.P. Koirala’s *B.P. Koiralako Adalatko Bayan*” under my supervision. He carried out his research from October 2010 to September 2013. I hereby recommend that his dissertation be submitted for viva voce.

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Approval Letter

This dissertation entitled “Nepali Nationalism Vis-a-vis Sylvain Levi’s *Nepal: Hindu Adhirajyako Itihaas (Part II)* and B.P. Koirala’s *B.P. Koiralako Adalatko Bayan*” submitted by Tulsi Ram Rijal to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Philosophy in English has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

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Abstract

This research work is a study on nationalism. It briefly reviews the western interest on Nepal and analyzes western scholars' contribution in the formation of modern Nepali nationhood in the light of the theories on nationalism propounded by various scholars such as Earnest Renan, Benedict Anderson, Partha Chatterjee, Mike Featherstone, Gopal Balakrishna, Jose Itzigsohan, B.P. Koirala etc. It mainly focuses upon Sylvain Levi's *Nepal: Hindu Adhirajyako Itihaas (part II)* and B.P. Koirala's *B.P. Koiralako Adalatko Bayan*. Levi portrays several signs, symbols, memories, myths of Nepal in his book. In this modern era, since the dynastic and religious allegiance declined, and language became a weak means of national integrity, these signs, symbols and imageries presented through print contribute its people to imagine their nationhood. Thus, by recognizing and spreading those imageries to all the people who own them he contributes to strengthen Nepali nationalism. Similarly, B.P. Koirala forwards the alternative national narration that stood in contesting relation with state led discourses even in the time when most of the people were illiterate. His idea on nationalism is very modern or convincing-and it helps us to understand the dynamics of Nepali nationalism.

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Chapter I: Nepal and the West

I. 1 Introduction

Nepal has remained as an independent nation. This may be why its cultural heritage remains vibrant and alive. In the ancient times the low-lying Tarai, plains of Nepal contained several well known centers of Vedic and Buddhist learning like Janakpur, Niglihawa, Kapilvastu, Ramgrahm etc. “The Kathmandu valley itself has since time immemorial been subject to influences coming from the north and the south” (Shaha 38). It has been mentioned in the great Hindu epic *Mahabharata* and other Hindu as well as Buddhist religious scriptures. However, “our information about the very ancient history of Nepal is confined to a number of *Vamshavalis* or chronicles” (38). In the ancient period various dynasties ruled this country, among them the Licchavi period is known for its architectural and sculptural achievements. In fact, from this period onwards we have got the material proofs to understand its history. In medieval period the kingdoms in Kathmandu valley further enhanced the artistic zeal but outside the valley art, in its any form, has not as developed as in the valley. There were Baise or twenty two and Chaubise or twenty four states formed in western part of Nepal. These states would always engage in warfare practices to protect themselves from each other rather than social welfare. Numerous nationalities were formed. The situation became chaotic particularly at the later part of the medieval era .Till this time Nepal’s contact to the rest of the world was limited to a few Europeans who sometimes would visit Kathmandu valley for commercial purpose. At that time Nepal was regarded as a vibrant place for Hinduism. We do not have any concrete evidence of peoples’ participation in any social organization.

“The conquest of the Kathmandu valley in 1769 marked the beginning of Nepal’s history as a unified state” (Whelpton 1). This task of unification of Nepal was

carried out under the leadership of Prithvinarayan Shaha, king of Gorkha, and from then onwards the modern era in Nepal's history is supposed to have begun. Nepal got a large territory, social mobilization was a little bit high in comparison to earlier period. Prithvinarayan Shaha had recruited men from various ethnic groups who would speak different dialects in his army. Despite this, hardly did modern sense of nationalism penetrate in Nepali society. In contradiction, in the western world nationalism based on modernity was flourishing. The nations were developed neither in any dynastic realms nor in a religious ideology, rather developed on the basis of feelings of joys and suffering shared together. When Nepal became in the grip of Rana family rule, neither intellectual practices were conducted nor any social organization were formed. Nepali people were deprived of foreign contact and modern development. People did not take part in nation building process since decision making practices were limited on a few people of Rana family. Though a few interested western scholars would visit Nepal, they were limited in the valley

Particularly, in the last decades of the eighteenth century, the British interest to expand its trade towards Nepal, via Nepal with Tibet needed a comprehensive study about Nepal, thus scholars from various European countries were sent to conduct the study. Those research works conducted by them on Nepal portrayed the particular images to imagine the nationhood as the secret religious land, as the land of Mountain, as the land of diverse people and languages etc. In the course of time western interest shifted towards its militant people living in the hilly area because they needed such people to win the battle that East-India Company was fighting to conquer the South Asian sub-continent. After Nepali people were recruited in the British army force, the foreign scholars started producing lots of literatures on ethnography in the form of books, booklets, pamphlet etc. and people living in the

country and outside the world began to imagine it as the land of militant people, the Gurkhas.

During the process of modern nation formation people living in it began to imagine their nation with those common images, and they shared the common feelings which were the concerned subject of western interest. Western scholars have produced lots of literature on Nepali history and society which catch our emotions and sentiments. Thus, they have helped us imagining our nationhood. In this regard western interest has played a vital role among its inhabitants in imagining the nationhood in the process of modern nation formation. This research will briefly review the western interest on Nepal and find the memories, signs, symbols and sentiments of this country depicted by western scholars in their books focusing upon Sylvian Levi. Then an attempt will be made to show how these imageries have contributed to strengthen Nepali nationhood in the light of theories on nationalism. Similarly B.P. Koirala's ideas on nationalism will be analyzed to understand the dynamics of Nepali nationalism. However, the main objective of the research is to show how western interest has contributed to strengthen modern Nepali nationhood.

I. 2 A Brief Review of Western Interest on Nepal

From the very beginning Kathmandu Valley or Nepal Desa was considered as one of the sacred regions in 'Hindu Geography' (Liechty 10). Within this sacred place, as Mark Liechty quoting Hamilton notes, "were believed to live 5,600,000 *bhairavs* and *bharavis* - Male and female spirits of Shiva and Shakti" (10). Both the Mallas and Gorkhali kings, as protectors of Nepal Desa, conceived of their territory as a bonded ritual 'realm' (Burghart 15) which could be defined by either immorality from within or by persons bringing impurity into the realm. In such a strict condition a few foreigners would get a chance to visit the realm. Though Nepal was a sacred place of

Hindu Geography, in seventeenth and eighteenth century few foreign people visited Nepal. Among those visitors merchants and the Christian Missionaries were the people who had got a little bit interest on it. In the last decades of the seventeenth century Capuchin fathers would frequently stay in the Valley. These fathers would send the letters to Europe describing the foreign merchants visited in the Valley.

Liechty points out:

In a letter from 1715 one of the Capuchin fathers stationed in the Kathmandu mentions a Christian Armenian Merchant who had lived in Kathmandu for many years . . . By the 1760s however due to disruptions caused by the Gorkhali conquest father Giuseppe noted the presence of only one Cashmirian Merchant. (15)

Malla kings of the Valley had an interest about European goods and technology. In fact, it is argued that from the Malla kings onwards Nepali rulers showed their interest in European goods. Tracing out the history of Kathmandu's first contact with Europeans Liechty says that "Portuguese Joao Cabral passed through the Valley while scouting out possible trade routes from Tibet to India" (10). These references show that the European and other Muslim merchants, and Christian Missionaries would frequently come to the Kathmandu valley and their interest was of commercial and conversion.

The commercial interest of the Europe further flourished with the colonial mission of Britain in South Asian subcontinent. East-India Company that was established to enhance the commercial interest expanding its territory in India was interested to expand its trade towards Nepal, via Nepal with Tibet. William Kirkpatrick, an English scholar was sent to Nepal to gather all kinds of possible information that would further the commercial interest as Onta writes "Kirkpatrick

was given a new remit for the mission which was to gather all kinds of possible information that would further the commercial interest of the company in Nepal and Tibet” (vii). With such mission Kirkpatrick arrived in Nepal in March 1793. He stayed in Kathmandu for two months and was somehow successful to gather the information about the resources, agricultural practices, military service, history, languages spoken, commerce, government etc. about Nepal. Kirkpatrick was the first foreign scholar on Nepal who had conducted a systematic study about above mentioned topics. However, his sole purpose was to give the possible information to his government. Following the 1801 treaty of friendship between Nepal and East-India Company "Francis Buchanan Hamilton arrived in Nepal as a member of the British team led by W.D. Knox" (Onta viii). As per the treaty a British Residency in Kathmandu was established and Knox was sent as the first British Resident. Like their predecessor Kirkpatrick, Knox and his team members including Hamilton were asked to gather accurate information regarding the mineral, botanical and agricultural products etc. Like Kirkpatrick, Hamilton also provided detail information about the resources, geography, government, military, people etc. of Nepal.

By the instructions given to Kirkpatrick and Knox's team it is clear that the East-India company was obsessed with Nepal to expand its trade and scholars were sent to gather the information and their role was as just a mere informants. East-India company was seeking those information which could further the commercial interest when the company was fighting several battles to control the South Asian subcontinent. In such scenario, Hamilton's observation about the Gorkhali militant people paved the way to East-India Company to recruit these people in its army force. Hamilton's successive study about the small kingdoms conquered by the Kingdom of Gorkha "proved that the earlier perceived potential of trade with Nepal was greatly

exaggerated and . . . coincided with the new-found British obsession with Nepali labour mainly in the form of Gorkha Soldiers" (Onta xiv). So with the Hamilton's declaration of Nepal as a non flourishing zone for goods trade British East-India Company further harbored the idea of labor trade. At that time, Britain was fighting the battles in South Asia to conquer the land and expand its trade and these militant Gorkhali people would win the war for East-India Company. Thus, East-India Company was interested in labour trade than the trade of goods. Indicating this change in British policy Mark Liechty further lights:

Yet through the nineteenth century British policy towards Nepal shifted from one which viewed the country in terms of trade (as a source of Nepali goods, a market for European products, and a route to markets in Tibet), to one which saw Nepal as the source of an important 'raw material' - in this case "native soldiers". (9)

Along with the changing perspective of East-India Company the scholars' perspective also got changed. The military connection gave way to the newer type of literature, a type of military ethnography. In the issue of recruiting Gorkhali people in British Indian Army they conducted lots of studies. In this regard quoting Hodgson, Onta informs that "Not all inhabitants of Kingdom of Gorkha could become a British Gorkha. He identified the Khas, Magar and Gurung as the Martial classes of Nepal and compared them favorably with soldiers recruited in India" (Onta, xiv). Nepal was forced to accept a permanent British resident in the Kathmandu valley in 1816. As a result more Europeans started visiting Kathmandu. In the evidence of knowledge production lots of hand books on the Gurkhas were produced for the preparation of their recruitment in the late 1880s and early 1890s. "These hand books were versions of military ethnographies whose are in the long run clearly superseded their initial

objectives of serving as handy manuals for recruiting officers" (Onta, xv). These types of writings were continuously produced throughout the twentieth century and still being produced as the Gurkha soldiers in the British army still exists.

From the last decades of the nineteenth century onwards British mountaineering interest in Nepal began to grow. Onta further writes "serious expeditions to climb Mt. Everest, although initially from the Tibetan side, were organized from the early 1920s and British literature related to climbing in the Himalayas grew exponentially from that decade" (xv). Literatures related to mountaineering were produced massively. Scholars were interested to explore the new-geographical area. Nepali mountains became the place for retreat for the foreigners. Along with the interest of Mountains, people living in the mountain area, their cultural, language, customs etc. were other interesting area that drew the attention of the scholars. Nepal became the best place for anthropological study. In addition to sociological and anthropological studies, scholars' interest grew for Buddhism, Hindu law and legal practices extent in Nepal. Similarly, succeeding the formal colonial interest in South Asia, British political interests in Nepal from the middle of the twentieth century was gradually articulated around the agenda of development aid. This interest was formed with the 'Gorkha' connection and British development aid or projects in the main Gorkha-catchment area, especially eastern and central western Nepal, needed a good understanding of the culture and society. To quench that thirst, a comprehensive study was needed so the British scholars of the universities would be granted fund for such research. And academicians were sent to conduct the study.

For academic transaction, at the school of oriental studies in the University of London 'Sanskrit' was taught. Around the end of the Second World War, British

scholars encouraged to the government to set up a commission "to enquire about the status and future of oriental and African Studies (SOAS)" (Onta xvii). The expansion of the oriental studies in the late 1940s gained a favour for the future of Nepal studies. Then onwards trained academicians chose Nepal for their academic research because mostly expense would be beard by the government. These academicians were interested about the tribal culture, development agenda, environmental impact, cultural practices etc. Lionel Caplan, a Nepal researcher who did his Ph.D. research on the Kipat system of land tenure among the Limbus answers the question why did he choose Nepal for his study, "[. . .] because the staff of the anthropology department at SOAS was predominantly focused on South Asia, and because at that time funding was available for research in Asia" (Onta, 1). For thematic perspective his view is "it might be interesting to explore, among other things, the Kipat system of land tenure among the Limbus. I spent several months reading whatever I could find about Nepal and learning Nepali" (Onta, 1). Through these sayings it is clear that Nepal was the best place for anthropological research and other scholars were also interested about Nepal. Another scholar Alan Macfarlane, who did his Ph.D. research on Nepal was interested about the Gurung culture and made the Gurung village of Thak, north of Pokhara, a place for his research. His interest was also to explore the tribal culture in Nepal. This interest was formed because of the military connection with Gorkha. According to the earlier notion Gurungs were the militant people who were massively recruited in the British Indian army and lots of projects ran by British development aid were lunched in this area.

As Nepal was explored as a fertile land for anthropological research, lots of scholars from Britain, other European countries and America made it their destination for cultural study. So in 1960s and 70s lots of researchers carried out their researches

about the different tribal groups or ethnic groups of Nepal. Nepali diverse culture drew the attention of foreign scholars. Macfarlane responding the question what is the attraction to study Nepal says "so all one can say is that, as all we know it is a fascinating intersection of cultures, wonderful people, wonderful scenery. In particular, for me, it is special because of the people I work with (the Gurungs) and their amazing shamanic tradition" (Onta, 17). During this period, in British Academy, lots of scholarship schemes and fund were available for Nepal study and scholars were attracted towards the ethnic groups of Nepal and the Newar culture of Kathmandu Valley.

From the 1980s decade onwards foreign scholars turned their attention towards the Newar culture of the valley, ethnic group in general and the Newar culture in particular. Declan Quigley, who did his Ph.D. research on the Newar culture of Kathmandu valley recounting his interest in the Newar culture says "my initial question, following on from Fustel's 'ancient city' idea, was to examine why the Newars were urban when most other groups on the sub-continent, at least in pre-colonial days, were organized in villages" (Onta, 56). Quigley's interest about the Newar culture of the valley was followed by several western scholars. Now onwards previous perspective about Nepal got slowly changed. Now scholars began to explore the Newar cultural of the valley. In this regard, Mary Shepherd Slusser published a book entitled *Nepal Mandala: A Cultural Study of the Kathmandu Valley* and this book presented tremendous information about the Newar culture from past to the present. In this book she traces out the history of Newar culture, its development and present scenario of the culture. Western scholars have explored different aspects of the Newar culture and lots of researches were carried out about it. Now Newar culture of the valley has become interesting subject for the western scholars.

During the Panchayat era, though scholars were interested about the political situation of Nepal, Nepal was politically less exposed to the rest of the world. Because of internal tensions a few foreign scholars would reach out of the valley and they were quiet about the state policy. But after the restoration of Democracy, in 1990s decade foreign scholars began to visit outside the valley especially in the Tarai region to understand the culture. When Maoist led people's war began Nepal became the important topic for international media. Lots of media researches were carried out about the insurgency. Restoration of democracy had opened the way to the foreign scholars. Previous notions on Nepal: as a place for European goods, as a country of militant people, as a mountaineering place, as a place for diverse ethnicity got slowly changed. Now scholars are attracted towards Nepali literature, modernity, changing perspectives of culture through media and media itself etc.

Rhoderic Chalmers, who did his Ph.D. research on the Nepali literature produced in Banaras, giving importance to his research work says:

It proposes that an analysis of the national critical modes of discourse adopted by this sphere, and their extension into areas of social, cultural and political institutionalization offers the best way of understanding the formulation of a modern Nepali identity which has proved persuasive to this day. (Onta, 179)

Now almost older notion of Nepali culture and history have changed. Newer way of knowledge formulation has emerged. Emphasizing on the importance of his research Chalmers further emphasizes that "It challenges many or the presumptions which underline traditional approaches to the areas studies and offers specific critiques of a number of influential theorizations of Nepali history and society" (Onta 179).

Now stereotypical notion about Nepali culture and history has got changed among the resent foreign scholars. For them, Nepal is an important place for cultural study.

Nepali modernism and Media have drawn the attention of foreign scholars. After the restoration of democracy in 1993 Nepali government adopted the concept of free journalism and the CPN Maoist led people's war drew the tremendous attention of international media.

People's movement of 2006 drew their attraction because it became the subject of international interest. James Shrock studied how Nepali blog sphere helped to spread the information when all Nepali media was facing strong censorship in its history. Even he tried to explore how Nepali blog-sphere helped to inform Nepali Diasporas about the situation of their mother land. Sharrock describes how Nepali blogs helped to spread the information saying "Nepali blogs, in this vain, were the latest vehicle for spreading news in times of political strife as well as developing a Nepali identity only now the medium operates worldwide and out to the diasporas" (61). Though there are very few users of internet in Nepal but still it can be helpful to form the public opinion. Now scholars are interested about this aspect of modernism in Nepali media.

Though various western scholars from several European countries and America have conducted their research on various subjects on Nepal for a long span of the time, they do not have uniformity in their interest. Along with the time their interest has changed. First it was in commerce and conversion then gradually it shifted towards its geography specially mountains, people and their culture, history, politics etc. and lots of books and articles were written on these diverse subjects. Whatever their interest may be, they have created certain imageries about Nepal on their books and stirred the memories in its people about the nation that help us to imagine our

nationhood. Thus, they have contributed for the formation of modern Nepali nationalism. This proposed research will be limited on Sylvain Levi, a French scholar and his book entitled *Nepal: Hindu Adhirajyako Itihaas (part II)* written on Nepali history and culture in the Rana regime along with B.P. Koirala's *B.P. Koiralako Adalatko Bayan* to look at contemporary issues on Nepali nationalism. However, my attempt will be to find out those imageries, sentiments, signs, symbols and memories of Nepali culture and society that have helped us to imagine our communities as well as contribution made on the formation of modern Nepali nationalism. Moreover, these things will be analyzed in the light of modern theories on nationalism developed and facilitated by various scholars interested in this area.

Chapter II: Nation State and Nepal

II. 1 Emergence of Nationalism

The concept of nationalism is essentially a modernist idea that spread from Europe to all over the world since nineteenth century. The French revolution paved the way for the modern nation state. Across Europe radical intellectuals questioned the old monarchical order and encouraged people for the development of a popular nationalism redrawing the political map of the continent. The concept of nation exists from the beginning of the human civilization. In the ancient and medieval period people were united under certain dynastic realm or religious community and the monarch was holding the order. All those kingdoms were able to sustain their rule over a large population that may be heterogeneous, for a long period by using warfare and other politics like marriage. Similarly, the great sacred cultures were another factor that united the people in a nation or community. Such classical communities were linked by sacred languages like Latin, Greek, Arabic, Sanskrit etc. Evoking this foundation of community, Anderson writes “all the great classical communities conceived of themselves as cosmically central, though the medium of a sacred language linked to a superterrestrial order of power” (7). In contradiction to imagined communities of modern nation, such classical communities linked by sacred languages had had a distinct character as they confidence in the unique sacredness of their languages. After the late middle age all the grandeur and power of such great religious communities gradually declined. In Western Europe, eighteen century, the century of the enlightenment or rationalism, brought an end to religious mode of thought and encouraged people unite in the newer dimension. In such desperate situation the sense of nationalism worked as the cement that held modern societies together in the age when dynastic and religious allegiance declined.

The sense of nationality become strong in the nineteenth century and modern nation emerged with new value. It is true that the majority of modern nations were made by family of feudal origin but they exist without a dynastic principle and “even those nations formed by dynasties can be separated from them without therefore seizing to exist” (Renan 13). In his essay “what is a nation?” Ernest Renan, a French scholar, defines nation as “[. . .] a spiritual principle, the outcome of the profound complications of history, it is a spiritual family not a group determined by the shape of the earth” (19). He argues people to come together and look to common bonding experiences that do not stifle progress and unity because of the difference in race language, religion and geography. His central argument is that our nation as such is a spiritual bonding and conglomerates of people who shared a common past and have derived a strong bond, with an agreement to stay together and be governed by mutual consent in the future. As he says:

A nation is a soul, a spiritual principle. Two things, which in truth are but one, constitute this soul a spiritual principle. One lies in the past, one in the present. One is the possession in common of a rich legacy or memories; the other is present day consent, the desire to live together, the will to perpetuate the value of the heritage that one has received in an undivided form. (19)

Renan’s argument required that people who wish to become nations must be governed by consent. He focuses people having shared common feelings in the past make consent to be governed and unite.

Renan does not take race or language as ingredients to constitute a nation. His idea is that though language invites people to unite, but it does not force them to do so since “the United States and England, Latin America and Spain speak the same

languages yet do not form single nation” (16). He says that there is something in man which is superior to language, namely the “will”. And the will comes not from language and race but from common feelings shared by the people; this sense of sharing is at the centre of his concept of nation. As he says, “[. . .] the fact of having suffered, enjoyed and hoped together. These all are kinds of things that can be understood in spite of differences of race and language. I spoke just now of ‘having suffered together’ and, indeed suffering in common unifies more than joy does” (19). He means that a nation is an aggregate of people, unified by joy, grief, national sacrifices and triumphs in the past. Similarly, Renan states that people who show willingness to live together in present in harmony are a nation. As he states:

A nation is therefore a large-scale solidarity, constituted by the feeling of the sacrifices that one has made in the past and of those one is prepared to make in the future. It presupposes a past; it is summarized, however, in the present by a tangible fact namely, consent, the clearly expressed desire to continue a common life. (19)

According to Renan a nation is an expressive agreement of the inhabitants to have a preexisting bond to live together upon their consent. Renan does not take the idea of language, religion, race etc. as permanent feature of the formation of nation. His argument is that language is not an indication of the nationality, neither is the religion or race. Shared feelings like being suffered, enjoyed and hoped make consent among the people to live together and that consent forms the nation. By divorcing the idea of nationhood from those of race, religion or geography, Renan provides a strong basis for geographically extensive citizenship. As he points “Man is a slave neither of his race nor his language, nor of his religion, nor of the course of rivers nor of the

direction taken by mountain chains. A large aggregate of men, healthy in mind and warm of heart, creates the kind of moral conscience which we call a nation”(20).

Emphasizing on consent and heart, Ernest Renan redraws the concept of nationalism. Before enlightenment era a nation was defined under certain dynastic realm or religious community having sacred language and tradition. People would define nation with certain race, religion, language or geography but Renan came up with newer concept. For him certain language, race, religion do not necessarily make a nation. His argument is that shared joy, common suffering or common hope and consent to be governed together unite people in large aggregate. People healthy in mind and warm of heart create a kind of moral conscience and that is a nation. Likewise, he rightly points out that “Human wills change, but what is there here below that does not change? The nations are not something eternal. They had their beginnings and they will end” (20). Renan does not believe in the eternity of a nation. Nations are formed on the basis of human will and it’s natural that human wills are not constant. Since people withdrew their consent to be governed together, the continuity of any nation comes to an end and newer concept can be emerged. In such changed circumstances newer nations can be formed. He views that the disintegration of nations will be the outcome of the system that keeps wills at the centre which are often none too enlighten.

Another scholar Benedict Anderson defines nation as an “Imagined Community” as he says “[. . .] it is an imagined political community –and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign” (6). To clarify how a nation is an imagined community he further says “it is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion” (6). Anderson’s

view is that a nation is an imagined community since the members of a nation will never know most of their fellow members, however, they may have their similar interests or identify as part of the same nation. In developing his theory, Anderson observes that the concept of “nation-ness” is, in the recent years, becoming a principle force in many aspects of modern thought. He provides two evidences to recognize nationalism as modern political moral hegemony first in the rapid expansion of the United Nations another is the political unrest caused by conflict between and within “sub-nations” (3). Yet he finds the origins of the concept inadequately explained and recorded. Similarly, he says nation is “always conceived as a deep horizontal comradeship” (7). Regardless of the dissent and inequalities within the nation, the imagined alliance among people of the same imagined nation is so strong to drive men to heroic deaths in nationalistic sacrifice.

In conjunction to the concept of origin of nation Anderson further offers certain bases historically made possible the imagining of the nation: First is decline of belief that there is a sacred text that irrevocably embodies truth. Changes in the religious community gave rise to the belief that nationalism is a secular solution to the question of continuity that has been answered previously, by religious faith. The decline of religious dominance led to the demotion of the sacred languages. The growth of secular languages lowered the status of Latin as the only sacred script language. As a result the older communities lost confidence in the sacredness of a particular language. Likewise, second is decline of the belief that “society is naturally organized around and under high centers monarchs who [. . .] ruled under some forms of cosmological (divine) dispensation” (36). And the third is the development of the idea of homogenous empty time in which” a sociological organism moving

calendrically through (it) is a precise analogue of the idea of the nation, which also is conceived as a solid community moving steadily through history” (26).

Along with the above discussed historical happenings that paved the way to the consciousness of nationalism, the practice of print capitalism facilitated the imagining of the nation. The expansion of media and the book market contributed to the vernacularization of languages. Print languages created unified fields of communication, which enabled speakers of the diverse variety of languages to become aware of one another via print and media (paper). These people, consequently, become aware of the existence of the millions who share their nation and language. According to Anderson the media has got vital role to create imagined communities through usually targeting a mass audience or generalizing and addressing citizens as the public (24). Even though the members of a nation may never see anyone in their imagined community, they still know that they are there through communication.

According to Anderson creation of imagined communities became possible because of print capitalism. As he argues:

Why this transformation should be so important for the birth of the imagined community of the nation can best be seen if we consider the basic structure of two forms of imagining with first flowered in Europe in the 18th century: the novel and the newspaper. For these forms provided the technical means for ‘re-presenting’ the kind of imagined community that is the nation. (24-25)

His claim is that the print capitalism helped to imagine the nation. Capitalist entrepreneurs printed their books and media in the vernacular in order to maximize circulation. As a result, readers speaking various local dialects became able to

understand each other, and a common discourse emerged. His belief is that the first European nation- states were thus formed around their national print languages.

Anderson views that people lost their faith on sacred script and language at the same time, large number of people got united under the vernacular language that they speak in instead of sacred one. Print capitalism helped them to understand their fellow beings through vernaculars since lots of books were printed and newspapers were published. People consumed them and they began to share the feelings, sympathy, and empathy, through newspaper although they did not know each other. Borrowing Renan's idea this type of 'sharing' through print capitalism aroused the feelings of being in the same community as Anderson believes that is the root of nationalism. As he points:

The revolutionary vernacularizing thrust of capitalism was given further impetus by three extraneous factors, two of which contributed directly to the rise of national consciousness. The first and ultimately the least important, was a change in the character of Latin itself. (39)

He also points out certain drawbacks of print capitalism as well. Anderson believes that "Print capitalism created languages of power of a kind different from the older administrative vernaculars. Certain dialects inevitably were 'closer' to each print language and dominate their final forms"(45). Although there are certain drawbacks of print capitalism but from nationalistic point of view they are limited and vernacular languages explored the nationalistic psyche of human being living in the same community. Anderson's main thrust is "[. . .] that the convergence of capitalism and print technology on the fatal diversity of human language created the possibility of a new form of imagined community, which is the basic morphology set the stage for the modern nation" (46).

Anderson arrived at this conclusion because he felt that neither Marxist nor liberal theory adequately explained nationalism. He falls into the historicist or modernist school of nationalism because he points that nations and nationalism are the product of modernity and has been created as means to political and economical ends just opposite to the pre-modernists who believe that nation if not nationalism has existed since early human history. His concept is that the main causes of nationalism are the declining importance of privileged access to particular script languages like Latin because mass vernacular literacy; the movement to abolish the ideas of rule by divine right and hereditary monarchy and the emergence of printing press capitalism laid the foundation of nationalism where people were united under certain symbols, feelings and emotions.

In the course of defining nationalism or nation Anderson also shares Renan's idea but in various juncture he departs. Like Renan he also believes that human beings feel to be in the same community that is the root of nationalism. Unlike Renan, he focuses on the print capitalism that printed books in vernacular and people began to imagine their community through them. Anderson's thrust is the language but Renan departs from this idea. His concept is having a glorious history, common suffering, joy forms consent to be governed together and that is the feeling of nationalism. For him race, geography and language do not play vital role in the formation of nationhood rather the "will" to be governed together is the main thrust. For Anderson print capitalism plays the vital role. He argues that the sacred language could not hold the feeling of all the people. Since the print capitalism developed it printed books and newspapers in vernacular, circulate them to the mass and people began to understand their fellow beings, their geography without seeing them face to face. The print capitalism helped people to imagine their community and for Anderson, that is

nationalism. Though these two scholars have got differences in their idea on the formation of nation, however, both of them have the similar understanding of the history. Both Renan and Anderson believe that in the past nations were defined under certain dynastic realm or religious community having sacred language and tradition. In the past people defined nation with certain race, religion, language or geography. And both realize that older definition could not hold the people together in the same nation. Monarchs were not the symbol of nationalism neither was the sacred language like Latin.

Though Anderson defines nations as imagined communities, there are various criticisms on his theory. One of the critics is Partha Chatterjee who points out certain shortcomings in Anderson's theory. Chatterjee's view is that if nation is an imagined community then whose imagined community it is. Certainly, it is imagined by Europeans and Americans. Then how has the nation imagined by the Europeans arrived in the colonies? Chatterjee's answer is that the nation imagined by Europeans came in the colonies as a 'Modular' forms and there was nothing left to the colonies to imagine. At this juncture Chatterjee differs from Anderson's concept of imagined communities. As he questions "If nationalism in the rest of the world have to choose their imagined communities from certain 'Modular forms' already made available to them by Europeans and Americans, what do they have left to imagine?" (Whose Imagined Community 216). According to Chatterjee, Anderson's concept of nationalism is 'Modular' in so far as it was developed in Europe and America, and then is adopted by colonies, leaving nothing left for them to imagine. In this regard he talks about colonies versus colonizers and reminds us how nationalisms were seen as emancipatory in their struggle against colonial powers in parts of Asia and Africa. Nationalism whether they are good or bad were seen as one of Europe's gift to the rest

of the world that can easily be exported and appropriated in the post colonial world but modular forms of nationalism fails to consider the dynamics of anti-colonial nationalisms. As he says:

History, it would seem, has decreed that we in the post colonial world shall only be perpetual consumers of modernity. Europeans and the Americans, the only true subjects of history, have thought out on our behalf not only script of colonial enlightenment and exploitation, but also that of our anti-colonial resistance and post colonial misery. Even our imaginations must remain forever colonized. (216)

According to him anti-colonial nationalism creates its own domain of sovereignty within the colonial society before it begins its political battle with the imperial power. The question comes how it creates its own domain of sovereignty within the colonial society? He answers that “It does this by dividing the world of social institutions and practices into two domains –the material and the spiritual” (217). By the material domains he means outside of the realms like economy, state craft and technology. In material domain west has proved its superiority and east has succumbed. In this domain western superiority has to be praised and studied and by spiritual domain he means “an inner domain bearing an essential mark of cultural identity” (217). Charttejee’s point is that in the spiritual domain nationalism needs to preserve the distinctness. In material domain, it is greater to imitate western skills of statecraft and technology but in spiritual domain distinctness of native culture needs to be preserved and according to him this formula is a fundamental feature of anti colonial nationalisms in Asian and African countries. In this domain nationalism refuses to allow the colonial power to intervene and declares the spiritual sovereign territory.

As discussed above, Chatterjee critiques Anderson's "Imagined Communities" asserting that he makes two large errors. First Anderson focuses on the material, outside domain of the state and ignores the spiritual, inside domain. Second is Anderson's concept of nationalism is 'modular' insofar as it was developed in Europe and the Americas, and then is adopted by colonies leaving nothing left for them to 'imagine'. Chatterjee introduces a new idea of nationalism; that it is inner and spiritual, and positions itself against the imposed outer and material nationalism of the state. In the application of the outer material realm of the state Chatterjee agrees with Anderson but in the inner spiritual realm he differs. His idea is that Anderson cannot be broadly applied to the inner spiritual realm that is tradition, family and culture. Although the 'communities' Anderson speaks of may be synonymous with the 'state' in a western context, this is not the case in the colonial world. He argues that it was in this inner spiritual realm where communities were imagined first, not in the outer material realm.

Similarly, Latin American critics Jose Itzigsohn and Matthias vom Hau trace certain shortcomings in the literature of nationalism. They say:

Theories of nationalism have developed a sophisticated set of arguments linking the emergence of nation as imagined communities to the rise of industrialism, the spirit of print capitalism, and the consolidation of modern states. These theories, however, do not address historical transformations of nationalism. (193)

Their argument is that theories on nationalism remain silent in the case of explaining national discourses and national inclusion like who is a member of the community and who can claim rights because answering these questions- evolves over time.

Although a growing literature explores the changing nature of citizenship and national

identity, in the context of migration there is lack of general theoretical work on changes in the definition of national membership. They propose a “state focused” approach to study transformations of nationalism. As they say:

Transformations of nationalism are closely related to struggle over political order. [. . .] States play a central role in establishing and maintaining national discourses. Yet states do not act in a vacuum social movements and excluded elites advance contending national narratives that challenge established ideas about national membership.

(212)

Their concept is that within a nation the nationalities are in collision course. State establishes certain imageries, however, as earlier stated it cannot work in vacuum as a result certain social movements and excluded elites forward certain national narratives that stand in contesting relation to the narratives established by the state. Thus, in turn states respond to these contestations with attempts to construct hegemonic national discourses. The struggles over national belonging may lead to the establishment of pervasive and long-lasting national imageries, or to discursive formations characterized by continuous instability and contestation. For them these tensions between state and oppositional social forces are situated in larger geographical, demographic, economic and cultural context. Therefore, theories of nationalism need to address this situation properly. Likewise, second shortcoming they point out is similar to Chatterjee’s point that these theories are grounded in European case studies. Although, Benedict Anderson in his book *Imagined Communities* presents the case studies from various countries within and outside Europe but as they say,

His argument about the Latin American origin of nationalism did not work out. Critiques were quick to point out that idea about popular

sovereignty and citizenship employed by insurgent creoles originated in Western Europe and that Anderson's elite centered arguments ignored that agency of subaltern actors. (212)

Though they find certain shortcomings in Anderson's theory of nationalism, they follow it to trace transformations over time. While discussing transformations they view nation as limited communities experience the ongoing construction of internal and external boundaries and is therefore based on a constant conflict between inclusions and exclusions. In such situation nations are crossed by internal gaps that determine degrees of belonging and exclusion of different groups. By excluded groups they mean ethnic or racial minorities or immigrants. Their argument is that such excluded groups often "put forward alternative vision of the nation that aim to reshape established national imageries and to expand its internal boundaries" (196). In this ground nations are then intrinsically unstable political and cultural constructs, subject to renegotiation and change.

In this context these critics distinguish the concept of citizenship from the national inclusion. Regarding this issue they view:

Inclusion in the nation involves access to all the political, civil and social rights granted to the particular imagined community. Yet access to citizenship is not the same as national inclusion, as citizenship may coexist with symbolic forms of exclusion, which in turn affect practical access to political and civil rights. (196)

Thus contestations over national belonging are both struggles for access to citizenship and struggles for recognition in the symbolic imagery of the nation. They have conceptualized nations as contested imagined communities but the question arises how certain ideas about national belonging become hegemonic and how their

hegemony is challenged by alternative national narratives. To answer these questions nationalism plays vital role. Nationalism is involved in drawing the boundaries of collectivity by creating sentiments of belonging and establishing the principle of mutual understanding and relation within the national communities. Nationalism is an evolving process, certain imageries and sentiments that helped to form a nation in the past may not work as intensely in the present situation as they did in the past. It is an ongoing process of reshaping and redrawing. Therefore these scholars view nation as an unfinished imagined communities that harbor within continuously changing characteristics and theories of nationalism need to address this evolving nature of the nation.

In a similar way, another prominent critic Mike Featherstone further elaborates Anderson's concept of nation as an imagined community. His discussion point is how we can imagine a local community as a nation. While discussing local community we usually have in mind a relatively small place in which everyone can know everyone else. That means in local community social life is based upon face to face relations. In such community everyone is intensely involved and this intensity of the day to day contact will generate a common stock of knowledge which is carried on by the generation as their culture that unifies them within a circle. But as Featherstone points out "over time the intense sense of involvement and excitement which bound people together tends to diminish; the use of commemorative rituals and ceremonies can be understood as acting like batteries which store and recharge the sense of communality" (345-46). There are certain ceremonies that reinforce our family, local and national sense of collective identity that is drawn from collective memories. By talking about collective memories, that "[...] refer to group contexts in the past which are periodically reinforced through contact with others who shared the

initial experience” (346). Featherstone’s concept is that the sense of local community defused into the boarder dimension of nationalism. Now the face to face contact community is narrowed and broader community has been emerged on the basis of collective memories, which is imagined. Therefore the nation itself is an imagined community.

Featherstone derives the idea of Anderson that nation is an imagined communities, his logic behind this is “it provides a quasi-religious sense of belonging and fellowship which is attached to those who are taken to share a particular symbolic place” (336). He regards the place as symbolic because it is sediment with symbolic sentiments and “configuration of landscape, buildings and people has been with collective memories which have sufficient emotional power to generate a sense of communality” (346). Here, Featherstone’s logic is that the creation of a national community is invented. Then question comes how it is invented. Is it invented out of nothing? Answer will certainly be no, it is not invented out of nothing. To invent a nation we need to have as Anthony Smith says “common repository of myths, heroes, events, landscapes and memories which are organized and made to assume a primordial quality” (qtd. Featherstone, 346). Thus to invent a nation we need to collect and weave the popular cultural sources into a coherent form that could be used to give the past a sense of direction and construct a national identity. At this juncture whole process of the construction of nationalism largely depends upon the availability of print culture which can interconnect people over time and space as Featherstone says “The possibility of the nation therefore depends upon the development of the book and the newspaper alongside a literate reading public capable of using these sources throughout the territorial area and thus able to imagine themselves as a community” (346). Regarding print culture Anderson’s and Featherstone’s ideas are

based on the same ground. Both of them strongly agree that print culture helps people to imagine their nation. For Anderson the circulation of the newspaper and books written in vernacular helps people to imagine their nation. Moreover, for Featherstone the possibility of the nation somehow depends upon the development of the books and newspaper alongside a literate reading public capable of using them and to imagine themselves as community.

As discussed above, a nation gets its foundation on the collective memories of the people who experience and are involved in the community. The memories are based on certain images and events experienced in the past. Thus “the nation becomes represented through a set of more or less coherent images and memories which deal with the questions of the origins, difference and distinctiveness of a people” (Featherstone 346). People sacrifice and suffer for the sake of the nation, this willing to sacrifice and suffering should be understood as a respect to the capacity of discourses, images and practices that sustain the nation and signifies subsuming the individual under a sacred totality therefore it is meaningful. This gives the sense as if the nature of the social life is unified one; however, it always is not. Social life is multidimensional within itself. When the time of power struggle with its neighbors comes formation of a local culture with its own identity is emphasized. “This does not mean that inside the locality social differentiation has been eliminated and relationship are necessarily more egalitarian, simple and homogeneous; rather its internal differences and discourses may very well be complex”(347). Internally we may be able to consider the community incorporating all sorts of rivalries, power struggles and conflicts, however, there are certain circumstances under which such struggles may be forgotten. “For example when the locality is brought into conflict with another locality or the region is involved in inter-regional disputes [. . .] one’s

own particularity is subsumed into some larger collectivity and appropriate cultural work is undertaken to develop an acceptable public face for it” (347). This process is important in the mobilization of entire communal symbols, sentiments and collective memories. Within a nation there are various groups to create new symbols and sentiments that seek the affiliation for belonging as well as struggle to reshape and rework the meanings of existing one. In such situation it is difficult for those who are in dominant position to ignore them. Such struggle within the nation gives way to the newer symbols, signs and sentiments. However, the process is long and difficult. The newer symbols, signs and sentiments should be incorporated by all the people of the community. Featherstone’s point is that the national images, signs, sentiments are alterable, they are not static one. In the course of time older signs, symbols and sentiments may not be enough to imagine a nation therefore newer are incorporated.

Although there is struggle within the communities for symbols and signs to imagine a nation, in bi-lateral interaction we must have unified image that is presented to other, in bi-lateral interaction a nation must have coherent identity. A nation is a unanimous entity. In internal presentation a nation has multi-dimensional aspects but in external presentation it is unanimous. The particular groups in the nation will mobilize different aspects these all things will help to form a strong national culture. Featherstone argues:

They (the groups in a nation) will endeavour to mobilize different aspect [. . .] to suit their own particular interest and aspiration; in effect the process of cultural formation of a national identity always entails a part being represented as a whole: a particular representation of the nation is presented as unanimous and consensual. (348)

Featherstone focuses on the unanimity of the nation though there are certain groups subjected to a continuous process of struggle to develop and impose alternative formulations. At this point Featherstone's idea is same to Jose Itzigsohn's idea of transformation as both of them focus on the nature of nation as continuous conflict between inclusion and exclusion, however, Featherstone stands on the unanimity of the symbols and signs that help to imagine a nation.

Featherstone regards images constructed through print like newspapers, books and media like television, cinema are necessary part in the process of the formation of a nation. He says:

A nation is an abstract collectivity which is far too big to be directly experienced by people. Hence it is not only the existence of civil rituals such as Remembrance Day that provide the sense the sacred which binds the nation together; increasingly it is the representation of these events which is crucial. (348)

In this sense, books, newspapers, television, cinemas do not merely represent the images and events but they also construct them. In this modern time a nation does not remain in isolation. Certain images, signs, symbols, culture, sentiments that construct a nation are in interaction to another nation which has got the same ingredients. The culture of one nation state must be recognized by others. He says:

It is not the isolation of the nation which is the crucial factor in developing an image of itself as a unique and integrated national culture. Rather, it is the need to mobilize particular representation of national identity, as part of the series of unavoidable contacts, interdependencies and power struggles which nation-states become locked into with their significant others. (349)

Featherstone emphasizes that we should not just focus on bilateral relations only. Nation states just do not interact. They also form – they form a world.

Featherstone strengthens Anderson's notion that a nation is an imagined community and books newspapers and other media help to construct nationhood. In this modern age face to face relation community is impossible hence people imagine their nation through certain images, symbols and signs. Like Renan his ideas are that common sufferings and joys form a nation because it is unanimous and consensual, however, it has got certain collective memories in its genesis.

Anderson's concept of nationalism as in imagined community emerged when Marxist idea of communism based nationalism was losing its faith mainly in Russia and other countries like Vietnam, China, Cambodia, etc. Evoking this, Balakrishna writes, "Anderson has an almost uniformly positive view of nationalism, maintaining that it is political love and solidarity which sustain it, not hate and invidious comparison to the Enemy" (206). If we take Marxist concept of classes as groups they take shape round the dominant relations of exploitation which divides the society whereas for Anderson nationalism is a particular culture which an entire community can assume. Anderson's theory of nation as an imagined community addresses the people correctly in the vacuum after Marxism's failure to address the sacred dimension of the nation. The sacredness is constantly held in an organized social life, this is not exception in modern world, however, its novelty that consist the national form assumes as secular. "While the sacred and the secular might seem to be antithetical orders, for Anderson they strikingly intersect in the peak symbolic artifact of the nation-state [...]" (205).

Anderson attempts to resolve the theoretical tension between two conflicting images of the nation. As Balakrishnan rightly points out:

[...] with the term ‘imagined community’: society is by necessity both a social structure and an artifact of the imagination, and not even the arrival of capitalism extinguishes this equation. From this, the significance of the term ‘print capitalism’ becomes apparent: it is both general structure- a capitalism- and a unique culture, one moreover that is imagined as sacred. (205)

Anderson makes his point on the basis that bureaucracy and capitalism both have failed to analyze why people have been rather willing to die for their nation. He argues from the point that the modern social order can evoke powerful sacred imaginings. The national imagination deals in high stakes but the immortality it offers is not the same in comparison to religion. In this regard Balakrishnan notices, “unlike prophets, nationalists cannot actually promise immortality. It might be thought that an immortality which is only figurative, insinuated but never actually promised, could not really motivate sacrifice” (206). As discussed above that Anderson’s concept of national sacrifice is not the same as religious sacrifices because in one nation there might be more religious groups therefore the root of nationalism is not in religious basis, it is in political basis, however, most of cultural practices are developed from religious belief. Similarly, it is also not based on particular race as well. In this modern era a community can be the inhabitant of multiple races and they have their own cultural practices, however, one particular race of people finds it hard to distinguish whether that is his or not. The reason behind this is that all the cultural practices are incorporated by all the members of the society; it has been intermingled and has developed a solid uniformed culture that is embodied by all and that is an imagined community - a nation. ”For Anderson, it is modern nations which rejoice in a sort of imagined mixture of races” (207). To prove the idea that a national

community does not base upon one single race Anderson draws the numerous examples of Creole revolts that took place in America in eighteen and nineteen centuries with their constitutions and high republic ideals. American society is multi-ethnic and multiracial therefore imagining nation on the basis of one race principle would be impossible. But in contradiction to this racial and ethnical conflict such societies form solid foundation of nationalism. Analyzing such situation Balakrishnan says “These were societies which despite tremendous ethnic and racial diversity and division were imagined as national communities and invented broad and inclusive genealogies to match their civic and territorial dimensions” (207). Therefore, according to Anderson nations are not conceived in religion and race.

Along with the religion and race nations are also not conceived in language as well. Throughout the world the boundaries of the nation states and the boundaries of the linguistic distributions rarely overlap. Many nations share the same language and many states are officially multilingual, however, language is stressed by Anderson. His focus is on language “[. . .] because it defines membership in ways that are fundamentally connected to his specific conception of the nation. Language is intimate and natural; it is thus very deeply associated in the minds of an overwhelmingly monoglot humanity with who one essentially is” (207). We can further add to this that the fixity and palpability of these cultural formations generate an image of the nation as an eternal collectivity. Very few people can imagine that in the future their language would not be spoken. In the same way it is very difficult to imagine a past in which their language did not exist. Similarly, despite this intimacy of language, it defines a form of collective membership which unlike race and religion can be acquired. “more than even our position in the relations of production, it is language which circumscribes our existence, and it is for this reason, Anderson argues

that print-capitalism has been the principal determination of social being in the modern world” (208).

As discussed above, the concept of nationalism is a modernist idea that emerged in Europe and rapidly spread all over the world. In Europe radical intellectuals, questioned the old monarchical order and encouraged people for the development of popular nationalism. Moreover, French revolution paved the way for this development. In the eighteenth century, the century of enlightenment or rationalism, intellectuals heavily criticized the religious mode of thought and urged people to get united under newer dimension. In such situation, sense of nationality functioned properly separating people from religious and monarchical shadow. After the failure of communist nationalist idea to address people properly the cultural nationalism flourished in newer dimension. Since then many scholars have contributed their thought in the development of nationalism and this became a burning issue in today’s world. Though nationalism has been defined from various points of view like geographical, ethnical etc., this present research has focused on the cultural nationalism propounded and facilitated by various scholars as discussed above.

II. 2 Nationalism: an evolving process in Nepal

Nepal has remained politically uncolonized, geographically carrying long history and culturally vibrant zone. It has been mentioned in the great Hindu epic, the *Mahabharat* and in the *Puranas* and also in Buddhist and Jain religious books. “Kautilya’s *Arthashastra* of the 4th century BC takes notice of Nepal as a country famous for its woolen blankets of a black colour, which were known as Bhingisis, served as excellent waterproofs or raincoats” (Shaha,38). The ancient history of Nepal is confined in number of vamshavalis or chronicles like *Gopalaraja vamshavali* etc. Though these chronicles were written later, they contain record of Nepali history of

the earliest time. It is only after the fifth century A.D. onwards we have got the material proofs like epigraphy coins etc. to get authentic understanding of Nepali history and culture. In recent time private and personal diaries of events, contemporary accounts of travelers, foreign documents are available as an additional source of information to understand its history and culture.

There are various interesting myths on the origin of the country or Kathmandu valley. Kathmandu is supposed to have been a lake and god Visnu or Manjushree is credited of cutting a deep gorge in the mountain to drain away the lake water to make it fit for human habitation. Then “ Ne Muni, a sage appears upon the scene as the protector of Nepal and the founder of a ruling dynasty, and his successors are named as Gopalvanshis or the members of the family of cowherds” (39). According to William Kirkpatrick this dynasty ruled over the period of four hundred and ninety one years and was followed by the rulers of the Mahispalbansha or the dynastic family of buffalo herds. This dynasty is supposed to have ruled for eleven years and seven months. Rishikesh Shaha mentions that “The village of Matatirtha, situated four miles south west of Kathmandu, was the seat of the government of the rulers of the cowherd and the buffalo herd dynasty” (40). The last ruler of buffalo herd dynasty was overthrown by the Kirati army of Yellung and began to rule over it, according to Kirkpatrick, “Yellung Kirat was succeeded by twenty six rulers of the Kirat dynasty, whose rule covered a total period of one thousand five hundred eighty one years and one month”(qtd. Shaha 40). After Kirat dynasty Licchavi dynasty began to rule in Nepal and there is consensus among historians that this dynasty must have begun ruling from first or second century of the Christian era. Among the Lichchhvi rulers Mandeva, son of Dharmadeva (464-505 AD) is important in Nepal’s history because he left behind him inscriptions and coins. His inscription on the Changunarayan pillar

is the earliest historical inscription so far available in Nepal. This dynasty rule in Nepal for a long time but there are not enough evidences to say how this dynasty was fallen. Rishikesh Shaha says that “the lichchhavi period after Jaydeva II shrouded in obscurity and the period between his death and the rise of Raghavdeva, the founder of Nepal or Newar sambat (879 A.D.), was regarded as the dark period of Nepali history” (44). The Licchavi period was followed by a relatively dark period that lasted for two centuries because we do not have any evidence for this period. However, we can say that Nepal suffered a decline in territory and the power during the next period in its history. Historians agreed that after the dark period Medieval period comes with full of complications.

In Medieval period the present territory of Nepal was divided into several kingdoms. The valley had split into a number of political units after the reign of Yaksha Malla (1428-1482). In Kathmandu valley by the end of the 15th century there were three independent kingdoms: Kathmandu, Patan and Bhadagaon. There were kingdoms like Banepa, Nuwakot in the east and west respectively. In the Karnali region a powerful kingdom was established which disintegrated later. In the Gandaki region there were Chaubise or twentyfour states. Similarly, the powerful kingdom of Karnali ruled by Malla dynasty was disintegrated and Baise or twentytow principalities were formed. Beyond the Mahakali river there were kingdoms like Kumaun and Garhwal. In the South east, the kingdom of Makwanpur, Chaudandi and Vajaypur emerged under the rulership of Shen dynasty that comprised the tribal communities of the Kiratis in the eastern hill region. These all including Baise and Chaubise states were independent and continuously engaged in warfare. It is said that after the Muslim invasion in India Hindu chiefs came to the Hill area of Western Nepal and began to reside there. Local communities learn the knowledge of statecrafts

from them and began to be united under particular community giving it a state status.

In this regard Rishikesh Shaha says:

Following the successive waves of Muslim invasion of India, immigrant Hindu chiefs from Rajasthan are said to have made their way to the hill areas of western Nepal. Over a period of time they carved out principalities for themselves and their progeny in the area which was inhabited by various indigenous tribes. (49-50)

Whatever the things might be we can say that the states outside the valley were not economically and artistically as developed as the kingdoms in valley. Likewise, in statecraft as well other kingdoms were not as strong as the kingdoms in valley.

However, the chaotic relations among those mushroomed states paved the way for the rise of Gorkha, one of the Chaubise states and ultimately for the formation of modern state of Nepal in the leadership of Prithvinarayan Shaha. The Medieval period in Nepal's history sustains up to the middle of the eighteenth century begun from eleventh century or after the two centuries' dark period.

Prithvinarayan Shaha played an important role in bringing about the unification of Nepal. At that time Gorkha in comparison to other kingdoms was insignificant in respect to population, geography and resources but it was due to his thought whole kingdom was possessed by a new spirit on the need for unification of all these states for their future survival. As soon as he became the king of Gorkha kingdom in 1743, he began to prepare for the conquest of Nuwakot learning useful lessons from the failure of his father Narbhupal Shaha's attempt to conquer it. He was aware of Gorkha's limitation therefore he immediately made plan for enhancing its military capacity. From Varanasi he brought some rifles and a few experts skilled in making traditional weapons. He managed the expenses and increased number of

troops in his military force. After well preparation he attacked Nuwakot and conquered it easily thus paved the way for the valley. Malla kings of valley were not inferior to him in any respect. Moreover, their geographical location was advantageous. It was surrounded by hills in all the directions thus was safe from any outer attack. Prithvinarayan Shaha applied all the warfare techniques he possessed. He was a great warrior by instinct and had a good head to use all warfare techniques to fulfill his mission. On the one hand Prithvinarayan Shaha was fighting with internal forces to unify them, which was not easy for him and on the other hand he had to fight with two external forces. First was the fight with Mir Kasim the Nawab of Bengal. On the request of displaced king of Makwanpur Kasim sent troops in the leadership of his general. Prithvinarayan Shaha destroyed his military force, however, many men were lost in this war. Second clash was with the British. Jaya Prakash Malla, the last king of Kathmandu requested help from the East India Company and on his request soldiers were sent under the command of captain Kinlock. Prithvinarayan Shaha defeated them at Sindhuli in 1767. When he conquered Kathmandu in 1768, he took the possession of Patan and Bhadgaon as well. He made Kathmandu the capital of Nepal and began to rule from there.

Although Prithvinarayan Shaha was mostly involved in war and did not get time for other social welfare, he was equally respected by the people of the states he conquered. By unifying Nepal Prithvinarayan Shaha did the historic job in the formation of modern Nepali nationhood. Interesting thing is that he recruited people from diverse ethnic groups in his military force with equal respect that strengthened the nationalistic feeling among all the people. As Rshikesh Shaha points out “it was in this manner that the various races and tribes, all speaking different dialect and observing different costumes, were able to partake of an equal sense of pride in the

name of tradition of Gorkha” (56). After Prithvinarayan Shaha all the people living in this community began to imagine their nation with certain memories, patriotic feeling helped to fight upcoming war with East India Company. He expanded and continued the Shaha dynasty all over the nation which was limited only in Gorkha.

After Prithvinarayan Shaha his daughter- in- law, queen of Pratap Singh, Rajendra Lakshmi and youngest son Bahadur Shaha further expanded Nepal’s territory as we see present day, however, Nepal lost some of its land when it was defeated in 1814-1816 war with British India and compelled to accept the treaty of Sugauli in 1816. The important thing this history teaches us is that the sense of nationalism was gradually evolving in Nepal.

After Prithvinarayan Shaha, Nepal entered in the dark cave of internal conflict and eternal instability. For his successors it was very difficult to manage the internal conflict. Likewise, East India Company was another force that Nepal had to fight with for its sovereignty and unfortunately most of the kings were minors, regency was taken by others. There were different groups formed in the palace to handle the administrative power. Nepal was fighting the losing battle with East India Company as a result Nepal accepted humiliating 1816 Sugauli treaty, then onwards East India Company got greater influence on Nepal. Following the 1801 treaty of friendship a British Residency in Kathmandu was established and number of European entered in this country for various purposes. The condition of palace was getting worse. The disputes between rival groups formed in the palace occurred frequently as they wanted to fulfill their interest first. In such chaotic situation Kot massacre occurred, lots of important men were killed and paved the way for the emergence of Jang Bahadur Rana and his family rule that ruled Nepal for one hundred and four years with a succession of kings as mere figure - heads. In this regard John Whelpton writes,

“Unlike the ministers who had preceded him, Jung Bahadur not only managed to hold on to power for the rest of his life but ensured that it remained with the Kunwars afterwards” (185).

At first Jung Bahadur Rana began to rule as the prime minister but later he received title of Maharaj from king Surendra and sovereignty of two districts Kaski and Lamjung. Likewise, he also acquired power over the king himself. Then Jung Bahadur started a system of semi-hereditary Rana prime ministers. This Rana family ruled over Nepal with semi-hereditary prime ministers establishing good relation with East India Company to sustain their power. During this period, apart from a few developmental works, all Nepali people were deprived of the influence of Western idea and discouraged from any contact with neighboring people of India. This family rule stunted the growth and development of nationalism by limiting the decision – making power to a few members of the family. “The people in general were denied opportunities or encouragement to cultivate any interest in national history, tradition and culture” (Shaha 106). For mass people Nepal was an isolated zone.

This Rana family rule suffered a great set back after the British withdrawal from India in 1947 and the establishment of Chinese authority in Tibet. Few political parties emerged and at this period Nepali Congress conducted the movement for democratic rights in Nepal from its base in India and inside Praja Parishad, a new party was established. Now peoples’ movement was frequent in political and social sphere. These parties had launched the movements against Rana reign advocating democracy. In such unfavourable situation Rana rule could not sustain thus, it was thrown over. Again Nepal suffered intra-party, inter party and parties versus king conflicts. After a decade’s confusion the first general elections were held in the spring of 1959 and Nepali Congress led by B. P. Koirala won the majority and formed an

elected government under his prime ministership. By then, there was certain improvement in people's conscience, they would interact on certain issues, and the sense of nationalism was flowering. The society was formed on the basis of Hindu religion. Certain religious practices based on Hindu religion were strongly rooted in society. However, other religions like Buddhism and Islam had also strong effect on the society. Politically the nation had not attained stability.

The experiment of parliamentary democracy proved to be short-lived when king Mahendra dissolved both the houses and imprisoned B.P. Koirala on 15th December 1960. Then king Mahendra banned all the parties and introduced the Panchayat system which was overthrown by mass movement of 2046-47 B.S. Similarly, in 2047 multi-party parliamentary system was restored for 16 more years. The mass movement of 2062-63 B.S. dethroned the Shaha dynasty and Nepal is declared to be a republic country.

This brief history of Nepal gives the glimpses of nationalism as an ongoing process. When Europe had begun to unite under the nationalistic principles, Nepal was far back from such practices. As Anderson and Renan see the ancient nation Nepal was confined under dynastic rules and religion which certainly were not modern ingredients of nationalism. The practice of imagining nation through dynastic and religious symbols lasted longer in this country than other Asian and European countries. Modernism entered in Nepal after two centuries delay than in Europe. Though western concept of nationalism may not fit exactly as it is in this country, there are certain things needed for modern nation building process. In modern nation formation there should be various social organizations along with political. These organizations have their interest in the society and "capable of formulating public policies by reconciling conflict interest as far as practicable, and casting them in a

coherent from within a view to providing guidelines to the organization of the state itself” (213). To achieve modern nationhood in the economic sphere there are several organizations like factories, commercial and industrial concerns, communications, transportation, market etc. Similarly, in the social sphere there should be organizations where an individual gets opportunities to develop his skills and realize his potential as a human being. These all people’s movements, organizations contribute to generate the sense of nationhood in human being. These all practices are only in emerging phase in Nepal thus its attempt of building the modern nation is still in process. In Rana family rule these all modern practices were not introduced and concept of nationhood was confined in Rana family only.

In contradiction, in Panchayat era the sense of nationalism was vibrant, however, the Panchayat elites had not grasped the essence of nationalism. Moreover, they had coined this notion to gain favour to the Panchayat system. The concept of strengthening the process of nation formation was in traditional lines. Regarding this issue Rishikesh Shaha rightly points out:

The adoption of national symbols including the flag, flower and the animal, and the patronizing of Nepali songs, dances and dramas at the state level may also be mentioned as symbolic moves to promote national unity and integration. However creative, Nepal’s efforts at strengthening the process of integration have proceeded along traditional lines and have so far been symbolic rather than real and earnest. (219)

Borrowing Lucian Pye’s idea Shaha lists six characteristics which a country must resolve to achieve modern nationhood. They are identity, legitimacy, penetration, participation, integration and distribution (213-14).

While talking about the concept of nationalism in Panchayat era we should keep in mind the way they defined a nation. For them a nation is a geographical unit and the rivers, rivulets, mountains, plains, lakes etc. form a nation. In conclusion, for them the soil was the nation. However, there was another ideologue who conceived nation in different way in comparison to Panchayat elites led by king Mahendra. That person, Bisheshwor Prasad Koirala, was imprisoned and deprived of mass contact. His party Nepali congress was made passive since all the parties were banned. Bisheshwor Prasad Koirala defines nation as he says:

Native country, nation means people, not soil. [. . .] Rivers, rivulets, all these are nothing, peoples are what a nation means. If people disappeared by certain miracle from Nepal, Nepal does not exist. Nation does not mean a geographical unit, it is a popular unit. (My translation 317)

Though there were tremendous criticisms on his opinion. All the Panchayat elites were against him. Moreover, they were politically influenced by king Mahendra and bias toward Koirala. Nonetheless, if we analyze Koirala's opinion, we find that his idea is based on the ground of contemporary nationalistic thought as discussed in previous chapter. Peoples living in the community form a nation. When we talk about people we mean their culture, tradition, sentiments, etc. because human beings are not only physical entity rather they are a cultural unit.

In today politics of Nepal, though nationalism has drawn tremendous attention of political leaders, there is still need for scholarly discourses so that people could be able to consume it. This is the land of diverse ethnic groups who have different tradition, costumes, and speak different dialects, dynastic rule has disappeared and the Hindu religion has become so weak that it cannot hold the centre. In this situation,

nationalism can be the only hope that can unite people in a single community. In Nepal, modern nation formation and nationhood are in evolving process and hope that nationalism will create a bright prosperous future of Nepali people uniting them in a country. The next chapter of this present research will analyze how western scholars have contributed to strengthen Nepali nationalism and their role in the formation of modern Nepali nationhood with focus upon Sylvain Levi's book *Nepal:Hindu Adhirajyako Itihaas(part II)* along with B. P. Koirala's *B.P.Koiralako Adalatko Bayan* to understand the role of alternative national narration on the issue of nationalism in its evolving process. My sole attempt will be to find out certain signs, symbols, sentiments and memories which have contributed imagining modern Nepali nationhood.

Chapter III: Nepal from Levi to Koirala

Nineteenth century was historically important period in the formation of modern nation state in the western world. The age of enlightenment spread the wave of rational and logical thinking pattern to all over the European continent. People began to question the old monarchical order; in fact they did not see a monarch as a symbol of nation though most of the European countries were formed by the monarchs in the past. Neither did they see any language or religion as a symbol which unifies people in a single nation. People's thirst in scientific invention and exploring unknown areas was highly facilitated by the emergence of print capitalism. They were interested to know about other human beings living in different parts of the world. French revolution had encouraged people for the development of the popular nationalism redrawing the political map of the continent. In such rapidly changing situation old dynastic rule gave way to the modern democracy where people began to imagine their nation with the symbols, signs, memories sufferings, joys shared together in the past. The concept of nation on the basis of common feelings was stronger than the concept associated with certain dynastic, religion or sacred language in the past. Print capitalism started to flourish; lots of books on diverse subject matter were published. The circulation of news papers written in vernacular contributed to know their fellow beings whom they had never seen but shared the same feelings. Thus, the nationalistic feelings had got the strong foundation in the changed milieu.

On the other hand, Nepal's condition was totally different. In Kathmandu valley there were three states and outside several states called Baise (twenty two) and Chaubise (twenty four) were formed. Each state was engaged in war with another. When Prithvi Narayan Shaha became the king of Gorkha (one of the Chaubise states) he initiated unifying them in a large unit. These all states were run according to the

tradition Hindu religious laws. Prithvi Narayan Shaha had realized the threat of East India Company which was expanding its territory in Indian Subcontinent. Nepal's contact with Europeans was limited in few missionaries. During Prithvi Narayan's period Nepal was engaged in war and he expanded its territory and paved the strong foundation for Shaha dynasty. The formation of social organizations like schools was far from their imagination. Nepal fought with East India Company for its sovereignty and was forced to sign rather humiliating Sugauli treaty in 1816. After the rise of Jung Bahadur Rana Nepal came under the grip of Rana family rule since decision making process was limited in a few members of Rana family. Mass population was deprived of education and to take part in any social organization. They didn't know about themselves since education was limited to the Brahmin family to perform certain Hindu rites and rituals. Whole Nepali people were deprived of modern education system. Following the treaty of 1803 between East India Company and Nepal a British residence in Kathmandu was established that paved the way to western scholars to enter in its territory. They wanted to know the several aspects of Nepali culture and society. Later, after demolition of Rana regime those books written by foreign scholars helped Nepali people to know about their culture, history and society thus those books written by western scholars did help to strengthen Nepali Nationalism.

Among those western scholars who conducted their research in Nepal during the Rana regime were mostly British and their sole purpose was to help East India Company in its mission. However, there were other scholars who were really interested to know Nepali social practices to understand Hindu as well as Buddhist culture in general. Sylvain Levi, a French scholar was among them.

Levi visited Nepal three times between the end of nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth century during the Rana's rule, and between 1905 and 1911 he published three volumes on the history, the religion and the population of Nepal on the basis of earlier works by foreign scholars as well as his own research. (Toffin 266)

Those books helped us to imagine our past culture and history. Sylvain Levi, the French Indologist and Buddhologist, was professor at the Illustrious College de France, Paris. His primary interest was to understand Indian culture but later he regarded Nepal as a rich heritage to understand Hindu and Buddhist cultural practices, therefore he diverted his attention toward Nepal, particularly in Kathmandu Valley to know Indian culture in general. Levi is regarded as "a mythical reference for both Nepali and French scholars" (267). He ,in his book *Nepal Hindu Adhirajyako Itihas* portrays Nepali ancient history and culture so vividly that anyone who goes through it feels proud of understanding Nepali culture and history in depth as a proof his book has recently been translated into Nepali (two volumes), and published by Himal books in 2005 and 2007. However, my analysis is limited on second volume. Levi's main thrust was to study ancient texts, inscriptions and manuscripts though sometimes he relied on information already published by British officers. Levi's book stirs our memories, it gives us certain glimpses of our ancient culture, provides certain symbols, signs, and sentiments that have contributed to imagine our nationhood. Levi believes that history is not only the collection of the date of events, description of things, stories of war rather history should include people of the country, their life and developments of their political, economic and social practices therefore his book contributes to strengthen nationalism because all the ingredients of nationalism as discussed in previous chapter can be found in his book that ties up all the Nepali

people in a single nation. Today we imagine our country as having rich cultural heritage which Mike Featherstone regards is one of the ingredients of nationalism. Levi, in his book portrays Nepal having a rich cultural heritage. He glorifies the contemporary artists and their art reflected in the temples built in Pagoda style in ancient era as he says "There (in temples built in Pagoda style) carved things show the imaginative power, creative power and mastery over skills of Nepali sculptors or artists" (My translation 7). When a foreign scholar recognizes Nepali art and artists and glorifies them certainly we feel proud of having such artists once and that particular feelings strengthen the sense of nationalism inside us (stirring the collective memory). Levi further explains the artistic zeal of Nepali people observing the way they write as he points out:

They write erasing the old sculpture, they have written new things erasing the old scriptures written in the old stones. Though they have written this and that letters everywhere, people of this country know how to make it artistic. They write anywhere in arcs, walls, roofs, pillars everywhere they write if they get a clean place. (My translation 14)

This description of artistic zeal provides us the image that Nepal is the country of artists to imagine our nationhood. Levi saw these all arts when he visited Nepal. He was enchanted by the art and regarded it as the highest form in the contemporary world and praises the artists observing their quality. He further views that "the extreme works of Nepali artists' chisel and brush is reflected in the pillars surrounding worship room, doors, windows and other materials" (My translation 16).

Levi was a scholar and he had studied European architecture as well but when he saw Nepali architecture he was dumbfounded and claims that the architecture

found in Nepal cannot be seen in Europe. Recollecting the memory of his visit to Bungmati Levi says:

The commander needed the medicine for himself therefore he called me in the open place in front of the temple. The guard dared not to stop me. [. . .] Since I was in front of the temple and material of worship room, I got a good job to look at them. I was dumbfounded when I saw the place covered in the blue marbles and decorated by the flowers made by metals. I don't think this kind of good place exists there in Europe. (My translation 32)

Any Nepali when s/he comes across this image of his/her country feels proud and his/her spirits get heightened that is what we call nationalistic feeling and sense of nationhood gets rooted in depth in his/her heart.

Similarly, Levi describes the architecture reflected in the temples monasteries which are typical Nepali. He regards these temples and monasteries the best examples of the art found in Indian subcontinent. Though he views them as an influence of Indian style, they are not imitation. As Levi says:

There are more temples and buildings that Nepali architects got influenced by Indian style but they have not completely imitated. The beautiful temple of Radhakrishna situated in Patan Palace square is the example of this Nepali style. In the periphery of this construction of Nepali style, there are several other constructions, in such background, this temple is beautifully located. (My translation 9)

By describing the temples and monasteries Levi talks about the cultural repository of the nation. This type of cultural heritage as Anderson and Featherstone believe is needed to strengthen the concept on nationalism. This type of repository comes in

mass through the print capitalism and Levi has done this work that strengthens the sense of nationalism among its people.

Likewise, while imagining our modern nationhood we have the image of people living harmoniously in this country since the time immemorial. On the one hand Nepal is the country where Buddha was born: this is the place where Buddhism flourished and on the other hand this is the place where society is organized on the basis of traditional Hindu religious practices. Similarly, various myths of its origin suggest the Hindu influence. In such contradictory situation how was it possible to live harmoniously? Levi finds out the concept of harmonious living by giving the depth analysis of ancient practices. These people had got mutual respect to each other's sect or religion. In fact they have got common images of Gods and they worship the same images, however, with different perspectives. As Levi says, "Phallus and Vagina, among all the signs and symbols that Nepali Buddhists and Shaivies (people who follow lord Shiva) respect, are in first place, the union of these sex organs shows fertility and eternity of Natural power"(My translation 11). In fact in the ancient time the symbol of phallus was highly worshipped. Let's consider the Pashupati phallus which is mostly covered in golden and silver ornaments. In the period of religious worship these ornaments are taken out. Hindus regard the phallus as a symbol of lord Shiva which is respected by all the people. Later Buddhists also easily accepted the popularity of the symbol of phallus. However, they interpreted it in their own way. As Levi points out "Buddhists regard phallus as a form of ancient lotus flower and the place where lotus blossoms is vagina for them" (My translation 12).

In a similar way, there are various signs both Hindus and Buddhists equally respect. Levi notices, "Triangle, the symbol of Guheshwory is the sign both Shaivis

and Buddhists respect. These types of signs are carved on the stones found in temple periphery" (my translation 12). While talking about the signs both Buddhists and Hindus respect, we should discuss about Bajra, the best weapon of lord Indra. Primarily Bajra is the sign of Hindus, lord Indra is its owner and he used to use it as a powerful weapon. As Levi Points "Indra happened to use this weapon to kill his enemies, the demons but Buddhist priests used this to protect themselves from the ghosts" (My translation 12). There are various myths associated with this weapon, Bajra. Once, lord Indra had to leave this sign to Buddha enduring uncomfortable situation. Similarly, the sign of footprints are acceptable in both religions. Both of them worship these signs. Hindus regard these signs as symbols of lord Bishnu whereas Buddhists worship the footprints of Buddha carving in the metal and stones in various temples. Levi observes these traditional myths very carefully. Focusing on the relation between Buddha and Hindu Levi writes "The myth of Bishnu's coming to the place where Buddha attained enlightenment following Buddha shows the intimacy between Buddha and Bishnu" (My translation 13). By focusing the ancient tradition and myths Levi interprets the religious harmony in this country. The practice of religious harmony is in the depth of Nepali cultural psyche it started long ago and still strongly exists and it forms the concept to be governed together that is what according to Renan nationalism is. In Nepal Buddhists and Hindus live together both of them have common myths, Gods, signs and symbols. These common things are needed to be a nation. Mike Featherstone's focus was also on them. When print capitalism emerged various foreign writers were interested to know about Nepal and Sylvain Levi explaining these traditional cultural practices have stirred our cultural psyche thus he has contributed to strengthen Nepali nationhood portraying Nepal as a place people living in harmonious relation and presenting it through print.

In a similar vein, Levi observes the religious festivals and ceremonies of Nepal. These religious festivals and ceremonies are important entity to imagine a nation. Anderson and Featherstone have discussed about these entities that help to strengthen nationalistic feeling among the people living in the country. Levi also believes that religions may get declined but religious festivals and ceremonies exist, these are the cultural repository of a nation. In Nepal there are various festivals that originated long ago and still exist. We have several temples and in various temples people sacrifice animals. This tradition of sacrificing started long ago while worshipping Goddess Durga. The common belief is that if people sacrifice animals to the goddess they will gain power. Levi also writes about this tradition. He points out focusing on Gorkha

Gorkha's tradition of sacrificing is not that much barbaric everything gets completed fast. They cut the throat of animals at once by the knife (Khukuri) however in some of the festivals the stream of blood flows. Fifty years ago in the presence of Jungabhadur nine thousand buffaloes were killed within ten days of Gurga worship. (My translation 26)

Levi inspects the various temples and portrays them like a butcher's shop because he saw stains of blood everywhere in the periphery of temples and in the images of gods themselves. In fact, this sacrificing tradition creates the image of Nepal as distinctive one and this tradition still exists in Nepali culture. In certain festivals sacrificing animals is part of their culture that helps people imagining the nation. Levi also comes to the conclusion as he says "though Pashupati is highly popular, according to my observation the real god in Nepal and India is blood eating terrible goddess Durga "(My translation 244).

Along with this sacrificing tradition, chariot pulling procession (Rathayatra) is another traditional culture. That still exists in our country and in various festivals these travels are organized. Several myths are associated with this tradition. Festivals are organized in the memory of certain religious or historical events. These festivals are the history of people in which their forefather took part in the past, and these are the common memories that create emotional attachment to the people. This common joy experienced in that past forms the will to be governed together that is what according to Renan nationalism is. In one festival various cultural activities are performed. Levi says that the cultural performances conducted in the ceremonies gave the form of Hindu drama, though based on religious activities and characters. Levi's claim is that these religious performances performed in the occasion of festivals helped to restore the Hindu drama in Indian subcontinent as he points "in the ceremony to show a symbolic couple of god and goddess a boy and girl are kept. Everything has been managed before. In such ceremonies where divine lust is at centre, the feelings and emotions are shown through the eyes of the living people symbolized as gods. From its influence Hindu drama has been restored in Bengal" (My translation 27). Levi analyzes older tradition of performing these types of drama in Nepal and makes Nepali people aware of their cultural heritage. Now we imagine Nepal having such rich culture and myths from where whole Indian subcontinent would learn. When Levi was in Kathmandu to learn the older inscription of Hindu culture in general and Nepal's practice in particular he saw these types of lyrical dramas performed in several places as he says "Nepalese are the priest of songs and dance, they all continuously involve in dancing and singing. Today I saw so in Lain, these types of singing and dancing I saw everywhere in Kathmandu" (My translation 274). He compares the songs and dance of Kathmandu to the 6th century's Greek

poetry. The tragic and comic effect of the performance for Levi was not less than the Greek tradition of poetry. In the dance, he saw in Kathmandu, the life of cowherd was portrayed so lively that influenced him to come to the conclusion that from this tradition the whole Indian theater was originated. In Levi's words:

In that dancing and singing the life of the cowherds, their eternal love and true things were presented in short. Before too, I had thought that this was the origin of Indian theater, and this is real. The interesting and happy life of the cowherds gets spent becoming older and older in such sunny and colourful environment. (My translation 274)

This assumption of Nepali drama by Levi helps us to imagine our nation being rich in art and creative innovation. The depiction of the life of people helps us imagine the history of people. The emotional attachment of its people gets strong when they share the common memories through books.

Similarly, Sylvain Levi discusses the various aspects of Nepali history and culture in his book. He points out several myths associated in its historical course that evoke the emotional sentiment among its people whose forefather shared it. As discussed in previous chapter, till the end of the 18th century Nepal was divided into several small independent kingdoms. Prithvi Narayan Shaha initiated the task of unifying them being inspired by his father Narabhupal Shaha who had attacked Nuwakot to expand Gorkha's territory when Prithvi Narayan Shaha began unifying them we can sense that the inhabitants of those states were losing their country. In contradiction to this assumption those people living in other states had imagined Prithvi Narayan Shaha as their future king. The people did not have the sense of losing their country though they had the sense of losing their present king which was the established phenomena at that time of historical course. Undercurrent sentiment of

people was that Prithivi Narayan Shaha would be their future king thus they had formed the will to be governed by Gorkha king, to form this sentiment various myths had played vital role and Levi discusses some of them as he says:

There is a myth that at the beginning years of the birth of this hero of Gorkha the strange light would be seen in the sky, once in a dream of a Newar farmer god Machhendranath told that now the invading army of Gorkha would come. That means there was an early assumption that three Malla states of Kathmandu valley would come at their end. (My translation 179)

This undercurrent sentiment of the people helped Prithivi Narayan Shaha in conquering the states and recruiting those people of conquered land in his army force and he faced very little public protest as well.

In conjunction to this myth, Levi collects other myths that helped to form the public opinion that Prithivi Narayan Shaha would be their future king and that expresses the common will to be governed by Gorkha king. As Levi states:

In his youth when Prithivi Narayan Shaha had been staying as a guest in the palace of the king of Bhadgaon Ranjit Malla, both Ranjit Malla and Prithivi Narayan Shaha were watching Dashain festival. Kumari the virgin Goddess had to give flower to the king but she gave it to Prithivi Narayan instead of the king, Bhairava, the god of terror did the same. This was like a divine selection that Gorkha would be the king of all. (My translation 28)

This action of these two honoured deities had won the sentiment of the people that they would be governed by Prithivi Narayan Shaha in the future. Therefore when later Prithivi Narayan Shaha conquered Bhadgaon, the public did not protest as intensely as

they could do. Moreover, the people of these states did not have sense of losing their country rather they were worried only of their present king which would be altered. Then the society was highly religious and the Gods themselves had selected Prithvi Narayan Shaha as a king, though symbolically, from their own hand. That was enough for them to make consent to be governed together and psychologically they were ready to accept Prithvi Narayan Shaha as their king.

Talking about the public consent the best example Levi offers is the incident happened on 29th September 1768 when Prithvi Narayan Shaha captured Kathmandu State without any bloodshed. Levi says:

On 29th September 1768 all the people of Kathmandu were enjoying the feast on the occasion of Indraajatra at night. Prithvi Narayan Shaha attacked, there was not any resistance. [. . .] Prithvi Narayan ordered not to stop the feast, and received Prasad (religiously offered flowers and sweets), and the status of the king from the hand of Kumari , the living Goddess. (My translation 186)

This statement clearly says that there was not any resistance from public side. Though the historical books including Levi himself tell that some Gorkha military men were killed, it was because of their misjudgment of the place. Many books offer the analysis that Jayaprakash Malla, then king of Kathmandu had spread the gunpowder while he was running away to Patan to protect himself. But there was not any incident of public displacement. The reason behind this is the undercurrent psychology of the people that they were ready to be governed by the Gorkha. In fact, at that time except the people of Gorkha state who were very few in number all people had lost their state but the feeling of lost was not in their psyche, rather they had just altered the king. The common will was that they wanted to be governed in large

country and that was just an internal conflict only the kings and bureaucrats who were holding administrative power and of course military men and directly benefitted were affected. Publically there was not any serious effect. The common 'will' which Renan says the most powerful aspect of nationalism was in practice in Nepal in the period of Prithvi Narayan Shaha. By offering this situation Levi helps us to understand the historical events of our country that we share in common. The common sharing of the history strengthens the sense of nationalism in us. This is only possible through print capitalism. In this regard Levi's attempt is really praiseworthy. Thus, he has contributed to strengthen Nepali nationalism by explaining the myths and historical events that we share in common. As far Featherstone and Renan are concerned, these myths and events are the necessary ingredients to imagine a nation. Today we imagine Prithvi Narayan Shaha as a great national hero who unified all the states and made us imagine our country as a large unit; a modern Nepal and western scholars have also recognized him as a hero of this country.

After Prithvi Narayan Shaha, Nepal continuously involved in series of internal and external war. Internally the task of unifying was going on and externally Nepal had to fight with East India Company. Now Nepal had got large geographical unit. Its territory was expanded up to Tista in the east and Kangda in the west. In this regard Levi says "Now Nepal was expanded from Bhutan to Kashmir" (my translation 191). Nepal's military force was large. It needed more resources to keep that large force functioning. Even Nepal attacked and expanded its territory in Northern part as well. In Tibet there were famous and rich monasteries to get wealth from. At first Nepal was successful but later when China supported Tibet, Nepal could not win the battle therefore it returned back. In Southern border of Nepal East India company had captured all the land and there was not stable border system. Sometimes Nepal would

expand its territory and East India Company would also prove its authority in some of the villages Nepal had taken. This misunderstanding was the main cause of Nepal British war that started in 1814 and ended in 1816. For the cause of this war Levi writes “Nepal had captured more than two thousands villages raising unnecessary issues from 1786 to 1813. Lord Hestins send a message to leave those captured villages within 25 days in response, Bhimsen announced the war” (My translation 196). Then the East India Company accepted and then on 1st November 1814 the war started and it lasted till 4th march 1816. Explaining this war Levi writes “Nepal had only twelve thousand military men to face British thirty thousand military men and sixty cannons. Even though Nepal had far less military power, the war extended because of Gorkhas’ bravery, their way of fighting and their typical habit of not leaving anything till they come to the conclusion” (my translation 196). In this war Nepal fought bravely Nepali military men killed thousands of British military men. Nepal had applied all the warfare techniques to defeat East India Company. Company’s several commanders and people like major Hearsay, General Marley were killed. But Nepal could not do anything to overcome the war techniques applied by Octarloni and it suffered a great setback. Finally, Nepal palace requested East India Company to maintain peace. Levi describes the war between East India Company and Nepal as he says “In 1815 AD Nepal’s battalion of hundred men had chased two thousand military men of East India Company” (My translation 196). The war techniques of Gorkhas were praised by all, even by the people who defeated Gorkhas. As a result of this war, Nepal was forced to sign a rather humiliating treaty. Nepal lost its larger territory in Tarai. Stating this loss Levi writes “Sugauli treaty was signed on 4th march 1816 and Nepal accepted its defeat. According to the treaty Nepal lost

Sikkim, Kumau, Gadhwal and Tarai of western part of Gandaki. Nepal had to accept a condition of keeping British resident in Kathmandu” (My translation 197).

From nationalistic point of view this Nepal British war did play important role to imagine their nation for its future generation. Though Nepal was defeated, the way Gorkhas fought was praised by all. Internationally Nepal was recognized as a land of brave Gorkhas. This incident paved the way to Nepali people to get recruited in British army. At that time British East India Company was in need of such militant people to conquer the south Asian subcontinent and for this task they needed brave people who could win them the battle to expand its territory and trade. They did not have trust on the capacity of Indian people recruited in British Company. Their distrust on them is revealed in a secret letter written by Octarlony to Lord Hestines. Levi had read the letter and he writes as it was written “The Indian men of the company could never stop the brave men of the hills” (My translation 197). Therefore, Lord Hestines had ordered Gardener to try to make Nepal as a soul friend, at least to make it a peaceful neighbour. The news of British Nepal war was all over the western world. Lots of people were interested to know more about them, lots of books and pamphlets were written about them. Later, British East India recruited them in their army and they fought bravely, to win the battle for them. Now not only us, but whole world imagines Nepal as a country of brave Gorkhas. Internationally we are recognized as brave Gorkhas, we share the history that helps us to imagine our country. Thus it develops the sense of nationalism in us since these things come through print capitalism from western perspective as well. In this regard as well Sylvia Levi helps to strengthen Nepali nationalism.

Likewise, the sense of lost or the sense of suffering is another factor that unites people in a single nation. As Renan focuses the sense of common suffering in

past develops the will to be governed together and that is what nationalistic feeling means. Before 1816 Nepal had got the larger territory, as discussed above, its eastern border was up to Tista River and its western border was up to Kangada. But this large territory was snatched by East India Company in 1816. Nepal suffered a great setback and today we own that lost. This sense of suffering creates an emotional attachment to all the people living in this country. Levi describes the lost Nepal bore in his book. Thus, the book helps us to imagine our history and provokes the certain will to be governed together. He presents the events from various perspectives. He views from western perspectives and Nepal's perspective as well. British had won, it had settled down the border dispute for forever but Nepal had lost, it suffered. Today too while imagining our country we remember this evident and print capitalism has helped for this task. We imagine our forefather who fought bravely, we imagine the lost. This sense of loss makes us stand in one circle, forms the common will to be governed together. The sense of suffering strengthens the nationalistic feelings in us. Sylvia Levi's attempt of representing the event in his book from multiple perspectives is really praiseworthy. In any regard it contributes to strengthen Nepali nationhood.

Likewise, while imagining Nepali nationhood we have the image of Nepali people being honest and hospitable and western people also regard Nepali people to be honest and hospitable. Various western people and scholars have contributed to form such image of Nepali people. Sylvain Levi is one of them who regard Nepali to be honest, helpful and hospitable. Levi had visited Nepal in 1898 to study Hindu and Buddhist cultural practices. He was interested to know Nepal's history and his sole purpose was to study the old scriptures written in paper or carved in stones and other metals like copper etc. To facilitate his work a team of Nepali people was appointed. Levi finds them very helpful and truly honest. In his own words:

The members of my team are interested in scriptures. While sitting and talking at Bhadgaon at night members of my team; policemen, army men, coolie and clerk were debating on who brought the good stamp of stone scripture. Yesterday, poor coolie prayed in Suryabinayak for my betterment. Poor! He had fasted for one day without eating anything.

(My translation 226)

This description of Nepali people show how helpful and hospitable they are. They are ready to do anything for the betterment of their guests. Sylvain Levi brings out this image of Nepali people to public consumption through print capitalism. That suddenly creates peculiar sentiment about its people. This sentiment strengthens the sense of nationality in the modern era.

In the similar way, Levi further describes this image of Nepali people being helpful and hospitable in his book. When he was working hard to find the scriptures, lots of people were interested to help him and they were influenced by him as well. As Levi himself writes “A Nepali Bureaucrat was influenced when he saw me walking around the Bihars (Buddhists schools). On the wide road he came near to me and offered his help. He helped walking with me to look at the stones” (My translation 226). This description of the man shows that how hospitable and helpful Nepali people are. This quality of Nepali people has been recognized by foreign people and created such image of them. Now we imagine our fellow beings as helpful and hospitable. Some people have different images of Nepali people according to their experience. Some people may have negative experiences as well. What Sylvain Levi says is those people who have written bad things about Nepali people are wrong, they did not get the depth of Nepali people’s attitude. As he claims “ I must say one thing that those people who have written bad things about Nepali people whatever

great they might be have written wrong, I found Nepali so kind and helpful” (My translation 226). This image of Nepali people strengthens their nationhood since nation is an abstract collectivity far too big to be directly experienced. As Featherstone focuses, images constructed though print are necessary part in nation formation process. And the image of Nepali people to be hospitable, honest and helpful constructed by western scholars like Sylvia Levi plays vital role to imagine Nepali nationhood. As Featherstone further discusses that a nation cannot exist in isolation and the images, signs, symbols and culture that constitute a nation must be recognized by others as well. In this regard western scholars like Levi have recognized the image of Nepali people and through print they have spread that image to all the people living inside the nation who belong to it as well as outside the nation who do not belong to it but recognize it. In this sense, Levi’s attempt to construct the image of Nepali people by recognizing it has played an important role to imagine the nation in the modern nation formation process of Nepal.

In a same way, Jung Bahadur’s rise is another event in Nepal’s history that creates sentiments, however, slightly negative among its inhabitants. On the one hand Nepal had lost its territory in its war with East India Company and on the other hand the unstable situation of palace had created trouble to the people. In such chaotic situation Jung Bahadur grabbed the political power by killing several people including his blood lineages and manipulated king Surendra in such a way that he received the title of “Maharaja” from him with the sovereignty of two districts Kaski and Lamjung, then he started the system of semi-hereditary Rana Prime minister. In this time western world had achieved its height in education and technology development in all aspects of modernity. In contradiction to this, people’s condition in Nepal was worse. Education was out of their access, they were not involved in nation building

process since decision making process was limited to few people of Rana family. In Southern border East India Company had captured all India. In such situation Jung Bahadur had to please southern neighbor to sustain his power. In some situation Jung Bahadur seems to be worried about the people's situation. Therefore he visited England to show Nepali King's respect to British queen, to make British Nepal friendship strong and to study how education and science can be used for the development of Nepali people. The Europe visit of Jung Bahadur created certain images of Nepal to the European people. In Europe print capitalism was flourished. The description of his visit to Europe was printed in several newspapers thus certain images of Nepal were created and recognized by European people therefore he was respected everywhere he went.

Sylvia Levi describes the situation of Jung Bahadur's visit to Europe and analyses how he received that much honour in Europe. He writes:

As a supportive politician Jung Bahadur wanted to know about the strange owners of India. He visited London and later in Paris like a lion. Everywhere he got a great honour because of the description of his strange clothes, decoration in his clothes, the grandeur of his ornaments and the country where nobody could enter published in newspapers. In his honour ballets, fair exhibition, dramas etc were organized. (My translation 205)

This description of Levi stirs our collective memory that once son of Nepal visited Europe in that much honour, he was respected everywhere. A person who shares this history somewhere feels proud to be a Nepali. This sentiment forms the will to be governed together and that is the root of nationalistic feeling. Jung Bahadur in Europe was not just an individual, he was the representative of Nepali culture, history and

feelings as well. Western people had recognized his image as an image of Nepali culture. As Levi stated this description of Nepal as a country where no one could enter was because of the war Nepal fought with British so bravely. Later on when he visited Paris he was equally respected. Levi writes “In Paris, minister for foreign affairs himself had come to meet him. [. . .] There were several rumors about his kitchen made in one corner of hotel Senet” (My translation 205). The kitchen represents Nepali distinct culture of fooding behavior. Western people had recognized it and accepted that Nepal is culturally distinct one. Western media had played great role to introduce that culture to their people. Now, in the process of formation of modern nation we imagine Nepal as a land of great men like Jung Bahadur who was respected everywhere.

In contradiction to this, the image of Jung Bahadur arouses sense of suffering as well. Jung Bahadur snatched the political power of king and established tyrannical Rana family rule of which people were against. Similarly, people were deprived of participating in nation building process. Nation’s whole budget was misused. People were deprived of receiving education. They did not have any contact with the people outside the nation. They were not directly ruled by the king himself. As a result Nepal remained far back in development and waited hundred and four more years to overthrow Rana regime. This is the history of joys and suffering of Nepali people. According to Earnest Renan this suffering and joy in common in the past forms the will which is superior to race, language and geographical land and that creates the kind of moral conscience which we call a nation. Anderson argues that print capitalism helps people to imagine their nation. Levi, describing these historical ingredients through print, has contributed to imagine our nationhood thus he has helped to strengthen Nepali nationhood.

During the period of Rana rule as already discussed, people were deprived of education; they did not know the changes taking place in western world. In western world almost all the old monarchies were dethroned. Science and technology was rapidly exploited to improve human condition. Democracy was restored in all the European countries. Print capitalism was blooming. Scholars would visit other continents and countries to know about others culture, tradition, religion, history, art, architecture, literature etc. On contradiction, Nepalese were limited to their own land. No industries were established, trade was not expanded and life of people was in ignorance. On the other hand, some western scholars would visit Nepal to understand its culture, art and literature. In western world Nepal's image was high. They would regard Nepal as a sacred land of Hindus and Buddhists. There keen interest was on them therefore they would visit Nepal. However, some British scholars might have different purpose since they wanted to expand their trade in Nepal and Britain was ruling whole India. Levi was one of those scholars who were really interested to know Nepali culture and society. In such dark period he visited Nepal and wrote books that help to imagine our nation. Thus his contribution will always be remembered.

In the course of talking western interest in Nepal, Levi's opinions are interesting to be noted. Western world regards 18th century as a century of enlightenment and reasoning. Scientific invention was taking place rapidly and they were using it for the betterment of people. Older religious philosophy and beliefs had let their door opened to newer one. People would travel other continents to know about them. Whole Asia and Africa was colonized by European countries. In such situation many European scholars were curious to know about Indian culture, art and literature. But India was so large and they could not find the historical documents so easily. As Levi expresses:

I'm very pleased for sending me here (Nepal) when I arrived here. India is so large therefore it is very difficult to search and find the truth. Society is a bit closed so it is very difficult to open its door. Since Europeans live limiting themselves within European society, they do not mingle with local people. [. . .] Attempting to conduct individual research in a few months is waste of time. (My translation 240)

This expression of Levi clearly shows the interest of Western people towards Indian culture but it was too large to find all the truth therefore their interest turned towards Nepal. Nepal was small and all the historical documents were limited in Kathmandu valley itself. Therefore it was a fertile land for western scholars like Levi to quench the thirst of knowing Indian and Buddhist culture. Levi himself says:

This is the last area within India where Buddhist religion is alive and it is going to die soon. It is merging in Hindu religion like in other places. From Buddhist archeological and sociological point of view Nepal valley looks like a complete museum in itself. [. . .] Especially I have come in this juncture of India and China to research about these two worlds. (My translation 241)

Levi creates the image of Nepal as a holy land of Buddhists and Hindus; however, as a Buddhologist his concern was tilted towards Buddhist religious practices. For western scholars, Nepal was like a mythical country, like a museum. This image of Nepal as a place of western interest, as a cultural museum is helpful to imagine nationhood to its people and for the study of Buddhist as well as Hindu civilization. When Levi started collecting the historical documents in valley, as already discussed, many people were appointed in his service by the Rana authority. Many times he was

called by then Prime Minister in his office. Ranas' were suspicious though indirectly and curious about his work. In such difficult situation Levi had to convince them why Western scholars were interested to know about Nepal. When he visited Rana Prime minister Dev Shamsher he had tried to convince him. Remembering his visit to Dev Shamsher in latter's palace Levi writes:

Large furniture made in English style, the skin of dead tigers hung everywhere. These symbols are everywhere to show the characteristics of this country. Now discussion started. I tried to make him understand why people are interested to know about Nepal. Nepal is the country that joins two philosophy of Eastern civilization. There might be the large collection of Sanskrit literature. Indian philosophy is the common property of the whole world. (My translation 265)

Levi's analysis about Nepal creates its image as a cultural heritage of Buddhism or Hinduism. Whatever the western interest in Nepal might be, they have created its image as distinctive, as a place of having rich Hindu civilization. In this modern age, this image of Nepal has contributed us to imagine our nationhood. Partha Chatterjee's focus on inner domain helps us to understand our nation. For material domain western people have proved their superiority but in spiritual domain, where culture functions, Nepal is distinctive and its distinctiveness should be preserved. According to him this is the fundamental feature of nationalism in Asian and African countries. In this regard Sylvain Levi describes the spiritual domain of Nepal which should be preserved and this domain gives Nepal an image of having distinctive nationality.

We imagine our nation through several symbols, signs and memories of joys and sufferings and so on. Nation is an ongoing process of reshaping and redrawing. Those signs and symbols which are appropriate today to imagine nation may be

altered in the course of time. But the fact is that since the face to face contact community diminished, the commemorative rituals ceremonies act effectively to create the sense of community invented out of common repository of myths, events, heroes, landscape and memories. In this era whole process of construction of nationalism depends upon the availability of print culture along with literature people. In this regard Sylvain Levi presents the myths, events, heroes and common events of joys and suffering of Nepal through print thus he helps to strengthen Nepali nationalism. In the time he visited Nepal, it was impossible to write books by Nepali writers because of two reasons. First, the print culture was not established and there were very few people who could read the books and second is Rana authority would not allow people to write and publish books. Therefore, we completely depend on foreign writers and their books to understand contemporary situation of Nepal. In this vacuum, Sylvain Levi writes about the situation and other history, culture, art and literature that help us to imagine our nationhood. Though these foreign people came in Nepal to quench their own thirst, they have contributed describing myths, signs, symbols sentiments, history and cultural practices to imagine our nationhood that strengthens the sense of nationality in us. In the past, nation was defined either as certain dynastic rule or religious community and monarch was holding the order. In contradiction to this, now nation is an imagined community, it is an abstract collectivity far too big to be directly experienced. Therefore, we imagine our nationhood through signs, symbols, sentiments etc. presented through the print. In this sense print capitalism, plays vital role in the process of constructing nationalism.

As discussed above nation is an ongoing process that certainly embodies the changing nature within itself because the signs and symbols through which we imagine nation can be altered in the course of time. To analyze this changing

perspective of Nepali nationalism we must be aware of its evolving process in modern era. The oligarchic character of Rana family rule had stopped the growth of nationalism because common people were not involved, in any way, in decision making process. General people were denied opportunities to cultivate any interest in nation building process. Nation's all sources were used by Ranas for their personal benefit. In the course of time Rana regime in Nepal was becoming weak. In 1947, British rule in India was terminated and Chinese authority was established in Tibet. These two incidents in neighboring countries brought serious crisis to Rana regime. Likewise, some Nepali elites were aware of their country's political situation and wanted to alter Rana regime. In such scenario some political parties were formed inside and outside of country. The Nepali Congress was conducting the movements for democratic rights in Nepal. The party was formed in Indian and its leaders like B.P. Koirala had contributed their part to make India independent from British colonial rule. Similarly, a party Nepal Praja Parishad (Nepal's Peoples Conference) was formed inside Nepal in 1936. King Tribhuvan had established the link with it. These all parties were agitating against Rana family rule. Likewise, there were other parties formed and all of them were against Rana rule in Nepal. Ranas had lost their support from East India Company since it had lost its colony in India; undercurrent public support was to the parties. Nepal's situation was unrest; in such condition Nepali congress was involved in the Workers' Strike in Biratnagar Jute Mill in 1947. Later Nepali congress was declared illegal. The political scenario was getting changed. People had searched their role in nation building process and interesting thing is that King Tribhuvan had helped to this industry of nation building process.

Meanwhile, Nepali Congress first conducted non-violent agitation for constitutional reforms gaining inspiration from Indian leader Mahatma Gandhi. But

later they started armed insurrection against Rana government and had captured many places in Tarai like Birgunj etc. Similarly, on 6th November 1950 king Tribhuvan along with his family members sought asylum in the Indian Embassy and four days later they were flown to New Delhi. Nepal's politics was in climax, Rana regime was almost overthrown. Meantime, Ranas replaced king Tribhuvan putting his three years grandson Gyanendra on the throne. In February 1951 King Tribhuvan was restored to his throne as a result of the insurrectionary tactics of the Nepali Congress. Finally on 18th February 1951 democracy was established in Nepal, King Tribhuvan made his historic declaration avowing his intention to have country governed by the constitution made by the Constituent Assembly composed of representatives directly elected by the people themselves. This declaration had brought the hope to the people that they would directly participate in nation building process first time in its history. Unfortunately this hope was deferred and the elections were postponed for one reason or another for a total of 8 years. Situations were changing rapidly in Nepali politics. King Tribhuvan died on 13th March 1953, and he was succeeded by King Mahendra who continued direct rule for a few years.

Later King Mahendra declared parliament election in public pressure and in Nepal's history the first general election was held in 1959 under the new constitution. The Nepali Congress led by B.P. Koirala secured majority in the parliament and on May 1959 Nepal's first elected government was formed in B.P. Koirala's leadership. Nepali Congress' objective was to establish a socialistic society through democratic and parliamentary means. That was the first parliamentary experiment in Nepal which proved to be short-lived. The success of this experiment would depend between two forces: the king who derived leadership position from time honored institution of monarchy and newly elected Prime Minister who was the symbol of popular hopes

and aspirations of thousands of people and had to create popular tradition to sustain democracy, but on December 15, 1960 King Mahendra dissolved both houses of legislature and imprisoned B.P. Koirala along with other members of his elected government. Then onward Nepal's political situation become worse, king Mahendra banned political parties and introduced the Panchayat system with its unique method of representation. Then Nepal's politics clearly divided into two narratives the state narratives led by king Mahendra and the alternative socialist and democratic narratives led by former Prime Minister B.P. Koirala who was imprisoned and later had sought asylum in India along with other leaders. Both of them were inspired by nationalistic feelings, however, both of them had got different perspective to strengthen nationalism in Nepal.

King Mahendra had projected his nationalistic image by expanding Nepal's contact and relations with a number of world's major power. He introduced social and legal reforms in the country and withstood Indian pressure in various issues. Nepal adopted certain symbols like flag, flower, animal, song etc as national symbols to promote national unity and integration. King Mahendra wanted to project his image as a hardliner nationalistic figure. However, as Rishikesh Shaha points out "Nepal's efforts at strengthening the process of integration have proceeded along traditional lines and have so far been symbolic rather than real and earnest"(219). The reason behind this weak projection of the national symbols is that these all were related to sustain the political system introduced by the king. According to B.P. Koirala "the system has not been accepted by the people. It has not attained any legitimacy from people. It has sustained just because of the pressure from monarchy" (My translation *BP Koiralako Adalatko Bayan* 61). Meanwhile, king Mahendra passed away and his

eldest son Birendra Bir Bikram Shaha ascended the throne. King Birendra too continued his father's domestic and foreign policy.

On the other hand, B.P. Koirala had proceeded an alternative national narrative regarding the issue of nationalism. He accused that the system introduced by Mahendra has weakened the nationalism and main reason behind this was the election system of Panchayat which would not represent people's inspiration. Similarly, Koirala's next view was the ethnic conflict brought by the system. As he views:

The present condition of the nation is worrisome. Ethnic conflict is being created all over the nation. The present election system is guilty for the situation. All the process of election is oriented towards disturbing the national unity rather than establishing it. The present election will not be on the nation based. The election won't be on the basis of manifesto. Today nationalism has been wrongly defined. (My translation 69)

Though, Koirala's above opinion is directly related to the election being conducted in Panchayat system in 2034, it also speaks his worry toward nationalism. As above stated he views that nationalism has been wrongly defined in Panchayat system. He thinks when all the people understand that the nation is their own, only national unity is possible. In democracy, all people get their political right and feel being freed. Thus, nationalism flourishes. As he says "national unity is possible when all people own the country. If democracy is prevailed, all people get their political rights. Thus, nationalism depends on freedom and democracy in Nepal's context except this, no other thing can be the subject of nationalism" (My translation 70). B.P. Koirala cannot separate nationalism from democracy. His strong opinion is that only in democracy nationalism flourishes because in democracy people can enjoy their political right,

they own the nation. So, only in democracy people participate in nation building process and nationalism gets strong foundation.

B. P. Koirala's above opinion on nationalism stands on the opposite line to state-led narrative of nationalism. As Jose Itzigsohn and Matthias vom Hau while defining nationalism as an unfinished imagined community had said that within a nation nationalities are in coalition course. The state establishes certain imageries as national discourse; however, it cannot work in vacuum as a result certain social movements and excluded elites forward certain national narratives that stand in coalition to the narrative established by the state. This struggle over national belonging may lead to the establishment of pervasive and long-lasting national imageries or to discursive formation characterized by continuous instability and contestation. At this juncture of Nepal's politics the same condition had occurred. On the one hand, the state had established certain national narratives and on the other hand B.P. Koirala had forwarded alternative narrative that stood in coalition to the narrative established by the state. This struggle led towards the continuous instability and contestation. Nationalism in Nepal would be strong if this alternative narrative was addressed. Unfortunately, the struggle led towards political instability.

When B.P. Koirala was set free from the prison he had gone to India along with other leaders of Nepali congress. Nepal's political system was completely changed which was diverse for democratic thinkers. The newly introduced Panchayat system had not included the democratic forces. B.P. Koirala, a socialistic leader, had analyzed Nepal's condition and strongly believed that nationalism in Nepal was in danger. The national unity was disturbed. He was continuously struggling to reestablish democracy which could include people in nation building process. His

strong belief was that nationalism could only be strong in democracy as he insists “struggle for democracy is needed for national unity” (My translation 84).

In 2033 B.S. Koirala had decided to return back to his mother land by analyzing the international political scenario. Especially when America suffered a great setback in Vietnam War, it was sure that it would spread its influence towards South Asia. At the same time Sikkim was merged in India and in Bangladesh the political situation was worse. Thus, he came to the conclusion that the nationalism in Nepal was in danger and only the democratic political forces could help to protect its sovereignty. He says:

Because of king’s followers’ 16 years activities this situation has come. All the people including king himself have started to say that our nationalism is in danger. I completely agree with them, but from King’s side this problem can’t be solved. Democratic forces can show the way because national unity, which is needed to solve the problem, could only be gained through democracy. There won’t be any national unity from the system. (My translation 79)

He views if democratic forces did not do anything immediately within few years, the continuity of the nation would come in question and same could happen to the people. B.P. Koirala was a far-sighted politician and a visionary nationalistic thinker whose political activities were oriented to establish Nepal as a socialistic country. According to him, nationalism could flourish only in democracy. Therefore his immediate action was to reestablish democracy by overthrowing the Pantchayat system introduced by king Mahendra. When B.P. Koirala decided to return back to Nepal, his first aim was to protect nationalism and as above stated it was only possible if democracy would be restored. The nation had faced an unprecedented crisis and he wanted to contribute to

save Nepal from this crisis. He did not care all the conflict with king and his followers. Though, he was a leader of Nepali Congress party, his activities were oriented to establish democracy in which all the parties could participate in nation building process. He says:

Nepali Congress wants to establish democracy in which Nepali Congress will not enjoy any specific right that other do not, that other parties will not get. I have described the necessity of struggle, where people do not get democratic, fundamental, civil right then they take the way of struggle. People take this way if peaceful and legitimate way is not available. (My translation 20)

B.P. Koirala and his party did not advocate for getting specific right that is not available to others. His aim was to establish the democracy where all the parties would have equal right, the entire citizen would enjoy democratic, fundamental, civil rights. His main thrust was if all people enjoyed the democratic right, the nationalism would flourish and people would live a prosperous and honoured live.

The situation in Nepal was not in his favour. When he landed in Tribhuvan International airport on 16th Poush 2033 along with other leaders of Nepali Congress, he was immediately arrested and again imprisoned in the Sundarijal jail where they had been imprisoned for 8 years before. Koirala had come to his motherland to protect nationalism and reestablish democracy. This was something intolerable to the Panchayat followers. He had to face several charges imposed by the authority and in many times he was presented in the court where he described the entire situation in his and his party's defense.

Similarly, he was a visionary leader and his party Nepali Congress had adopted his vision as a guiding principle. He wanted to establish strong nationalism

through democracy and economic development. His idea was if there is economic development and democracy nationalism would be strong. As he opines:

If we say only democracy! Democracy! And did not pay any attention towards nationalism or economic development, it does not have any meaning. If we say only economic development! Economic development! Its result will be the same as what is happening now. If we say only nationalism! Nationalism! The nationalism itself will be in danger. The base of nationalism is democracy. Democracy becomes strong in socialism. (My translation 83-84)

Thus, B.P.Koirala advocated democracy to strengthen nationalism in Nepal. His concept of nationalism was the kind of civic nationalism where all the people enjoy democratic, fundamental and civil rights. He did not take nation as a property of a single group. The more people's participation in nation building process, the strong nationalism would be. If all the people own the nation then nationalism flourishes. In his time political situation of Nepal was worse. King Mahendra had introduced Panchayat system which many people had not owned. Many of them have felt being excluded, ethnic conflicts were being created and economic development was lower. King Birendra had also continued the same policy that his father had introduced. International politics was not in Nepal's favour. As stated above, when America returned back from Vietnam War it was sure that it would spread its influence in South Asia. Sikkim was merged in India and in India itself emergency was imposed by the then prime minister Indira Gandhi. In Bangladesh political situation was worse. B.P. Koirala had analyzed that the force which was not happy when India took Sikkim in its territory, it was possible that the force would react in its response. China and India were suspicious toward each other. In such diverse situation Nepal could be

another victim because nationalism in Nepal was so weak. Therefore, B.P. Koirala had taken the risk of his life to return in Nepal to protect nationalism.

However, the situation of Nepal has now been changed through continuous struggle of Nepali people. People's movement of 2046 B.S. had reestablished democracy. Still nationalism is not strong. People have been divided into several groups in the name of caste and ethnicity. 2063's People's movement has overthrown monarchy and established Nepal as a republic country. Still the great challenge is to institutionalize it. The issue of nationalism is still a burning topic and we can hope that nationalism will be strengthened in the coming days of Nepal's history. This evolving process of nationalism in Nepal has proved that nationalism is an unfinished imagine community that gets on changing, it is an ongoing process of reshaping and redrawing that aims to unite people within a circle.

Chapter IV: Conclusion

Nepal has remained as a potential zone for research in the eyes of western scholars. Especially eighteenth century onward many western scholars have conducted their research on several areas of this country. Along with the span of time their interest has been changed. First their interest was in commerce and coverage then gradually it shifted toward its geography, people and their culture, history, politics etc. Lots of articles, books are written on these diverse subjects. Whatever their interest might be these foreign scholars have created certain imageries on their books and stirred the memories in its people. These images and memories depicted in the books and articles written by western scholars have helped us to imagine our nationhood. Therefore, they have contributed in the formation of modern Nepali nationalism.

The concept of nationalism is essentially a modernist idea that spread from Europe to all over the world. Across the Europe radical intellectuals questioned the old monarchial order and encouraged people for the development of a popular nationalism redrawing the political boundary of the continent. The concept of nationalism exists from the beginning of human civilization. In the ancient period people defined nation under certain dynastic rule or religious community where the monarch would hold the central position. In Europe the century of enlightenment brought an end to the religious mode of thought and encouraged people to unite in newer dimension. The sense of nationalism worked as a great motivator to hold modern societies together in the havoc caused by the declined of religious and dynastic allegiance. In the nineteenth century, the sense of nationalism became strong and modern nations emerged with new value. Ernest Renan views nationalism as a spiritual principle. According to him past shared joys, suffering etc. make consent to

be governed together that is what nationalism is. For him race, religion, language do not make a nation, however, they might invite people to unite. He believes that there is something in man which is superior to language that is the 'will' and that comes from common feelings shared by the people in the past.

Similarly, Anderson's concept of nationalism as an imagined community addresses the development of society after failure of communism reshaping the political map of the continent. He argues that the social organizations of the language like books, newspapers, novels give rise to a belief in the imperishability of the nation. According to him, the print capitalism written in vernacular helps people to imagine their nation and understand their fellow beings. The print capitalism helps them to know about the memories, sacredness shared in the past thus it strengthens the sense of nationalism. Partha Chatterjee criticizes Anderson's concept of nationalism. For him this is a 'Modular' notion left to imagine for the colonies. For Chatterjee nationalism lies in 'spiritual domain' where tradition, family and culture function. He strongly believes that in 'spiritual domain' colonies are distinct and their culture should be preserved. Itzigsohn and vom Hau believe nation as an unfinished imagined community. Their sole interest is in transformation of national discourses. They say in a nation there are two groups excluded and included which stand in contesting relation. The state has to respond these all contestations to construct hegemonic national discourses otherwise it may lead towards discursive formations characterized by persisting instability and contestation. They conceptualize nation as an ongoing process of reshaping and redrawing.

Likewise, Featherstone also believes that when face to face contact local community diminishes the commemorative ritual and ceremonies act effectively to create the sense of communality, and on the basis of collective memories a

community is imagined therefore nation is an imagined community invented out of common repository of myths, heroes, events, landscapes, and memories. He points out that social life is multi dimensional; there are internal differences within a community. Internally a community may incorporate all sorts of rivalries but in certain circumstances, especially in bilateral interactions such struggles are forgotten. In bilateral interaction a particular nation is presented as unanimous and consensual. The nation can't exist in isolation. The signs, symbols, images and culture that construct a nation must be recognized by others as well. B. P. Koirala, a Nepali nationalistic thinker defines nation as people not soil. He views that rivers, rivulets are nothing. If people disappear by certain miracles from a country it won't exist. Therefore for him nation is a popular unit, not a geographical one.

Nepal has got a long glorious history. In modern era, especially when a nation got divorced from its dynastic rules and religious principles that started from the western world, an act of modern nation formation started all over the world. In the process of modern nation formation in Nepal the western interest has contributed a lot. The western scholars have discussed certain images, memories, sentiments, heroes, culture of this country in their books that construct a nation. Since, the face to face contact community diminishes these all things came through print that helped us to imagine our nationhood. Now, we imagine our nation through the images, memories, sentiments, traditions, culture etc. that the western scholars have brought forward through print, thus they have helped to strengthen our nationhood.

Sylvain Levi, a French scholar was really interested to understand Nepali social practices. He visited Nepal at the end of the nineteenth century and at the first decade of twentieth century. Levi's thrust was to understand Hindu and Buddhist cultural practices. His book *Nepal Hindu Adhirajyako Itihaas* is highly popular among

western as well as Nepali scholars. In this book, Levi has portrayed several imageries of Nepali history and culture that have helped us to imagine modern Nepali nationhood. Levi vividly describes the ancient art and architecture of this country and regards Nepal as a land of artists. This description of Nepali artists, their art and architecture stirs our memories that contribute to imagine our nationhood. Levi also creates the image of Nepal as a place people living in harmonious relation. He gives us a depth analysis of the religious signs and symbols that both Hindus and Buddhists worship. It makes us realize the cultural repository of our country that strengthens the sense of nationalism in us. Levi brings these things out through print for Nepali as well as foreign people. Therefore his contribution to strengthen Nepali nationalism is praiseworthy.

Similarly, Levi describes various myths related to this country like myths of sacrifice, myths of gods etc. which are the cultural repository of Nepal. He discusses Hindu dramas performed in various places of Kathmandu valley which are helpful to imagine our nationhood. These all are collective memories that form a sort of 'will' to be governed together. He gives us the glimpses of our history, he describes the past joys and sufferings shared together that unifies us in a single nation. British Gurkha War and Jung Bahadur's visit to Europe are some of the events in its historical course that Levi describes, and that help us to build consent to be governed together. As Renan opines that joys and suffering shared in the past form the will that is the foundation of the modern nation. Levi also creates the image of the Nepali people as hospitable and honest. This image also helps us to understand our fellow beings since face to face society has been diminished. As Featherstone points out that a nation can't exist in isolation and the images, signs, symbols and culture that constitute a modern nation must be recognized by others as well. In this regard Sylvain Levi has

recognized the images, signs, symbols etc. of Nepal and its people, and through print, he has spread these images to all. In this sense also he has contributed to imagine our nation in the process of modern nation formation.

Now we imagine our nation through several symbols, signs, memories of joys and sufferings and so on. Nationalism is an ongoing process, these signs and symbols may be altered in the course of time. The fact is that in this modern era the whole process of construction of nationalism depends on the availability of print culture along with literate people. In this regard Levi presents the myths, events, heroes and common events of joys and suffering of Nepal through print, thus he has contributed to strengthen Nepali nationalism.

As discussed above, nationalism is an ongoing process, the signs and symbols can be altered in the course of history of the nation. In Nepal's context especially in the Panchayat era B.P. Koirala had forwarded alternative national narrative that stood opposite to state-led narratives. When king Mahendra projected his image as a hardliner nationalistic figure, B.P. Koirala stood against it because the very projection was influenced to sustain the Panchayat system introduced by the king. Panchayat elites had focused on the geographical aspect of the country to be a nation whereas for Koirala people were the nation, and to strengthen nationalism people's participation in all aspects of the state was needed. He was critical towards the election system in Panchayat. His view was the election system in Panchayat did not include all people's inspiration since the election was not on the basis of manifesto. His view is when people do not own the country the nationalism becomes weak. In Panchayat era people had not own the country therefore nationalism was in danger. By analyzing Nepal's international affair he had concluded that nationalism in Nepal was in danger thus, taking the risk of his life he had returned back in Nepal in 2033 B.S. Koirala has

forwarded the concept of kind of civic nationalism in which all people must own their country and their participation in every aspect of the nation is necessary to strengthen nationalism.

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