

I. Koirala and His Concept of Nation

Bisheshwar Prasad (BP) Koirala's career as a politician is known as a pioneer of democratic movement. He spent most of his life against totalitarian political regimes of Nepal. He has suffered from cruel treatment given by both Rana and Panchayat regime. In fact he spent a long period in jail and exile. He spent a significant portion of his career raising persistent voice and showing firm conviction in 'consensus' among the stake holders of Nepalese politics. He has always been guided by the belief that a democrat should never have sense of revenge. Pluralism, a guiding principle of democracy, is part of human society and the voice of the opposition should always be heard. That is why he has always favoured compromise, instead of negating any power in the country.

His political career has revolved around 'consensus' and 'reconciliation.' Time and again, either in speech or in written forms, he has advocated for the need of democracy and consensus. To understand why he has voiced for 'consensus' and 'reconciliation' and his daring attempt to go even with his oppositions, it is necessary to understand what he means by a nation. In an article entitled "Rastriyata : Nepalko Sandarbhamā," he states: 'a country or nation is not geography, not soil. That in reality is people' (My Translation 174). In the same writing, he says nationality comprises 1) people, 2) problem before the people, 3) collective effort to solve that problem 4) and the feeling of unity experienced during that effort.

On the close inspection on his definition, 'people', their 'collective effort' and 'feeling of unity during that effort' are the major factors that construct a nation and develop a sense of nationalism. Territorial geographical demarcation remains valueless in nation formation in the absence of collective sense of oneness among the

people. The sense of collectivity can only lead to the solution of problems. 'Feeling of unity' is another key element in that definition of nation offered by Koirala. This feature of nation attracts the concept of spirit. Nation is matter of spirit as well. The connective factor among the people should be the feeling or spirit. From one angle, it may seem that feeling or spirit as key element may mystify the notion of nation. But pondering on this notion of nation, one can comfortably argue that the feeling of collective unity plays a key role in the formation of nation. The populace of a nation may not know everyone but still they can identify themselves with each other. As the people have sense of collectivity, they create shared identities which act to give them sense that they belong to same identity. Shared identities create spiritual connection. Spiritual connection binds people more tightly than any other elements. It unites the people from heart. Despite some external differences, people realize they are one.

Koirala's notion of nation demands the people having qualification of human desire to live together and have respect for pluralism, democratic spirit of respecting opposite voices. Koirala rejects ethnicities and geography as the basis in the construction of nation. His view closely resembles Ernest Gellner's view that "Men differ in their externals not their internals" (109). Since Koirala desires internal connection or spiritual connection, he clearly refutes ethnic basis. In his *Jail Journal*, his understanding about caste and ethnicity is: "there is not any social or scientific basis of ethnic supremacy. That is why the sooner it is extinguished, the more welfare humans will have" (My Translation 178). His idea of nation forwards the need of equal treatment among the people of a country. Discrimination based on factor like ethnicity among the people generates spiritual gap that ultimately hampers the unity of the people.

Koirala has an experience of this demarcation of ethnicities. In his *Atmabritanta*, he shares a situation related with ethnic tension and people's strong desire and effort to overcome the tension as well. In a constituency of Terai of Nepal, Koirala was in dilemma as to who should be made a candidate for parliamentary election in 1958 AD. The constituency was madhesi dominant. But a madhesi cadre, in a meeting, stood and asked Koirala to give a candidacy to a popular leader who was of hill origin, but a madheshi resident. With a human spirit, he questions Koirala "If candidacy is given on the basis of ethnicity, why have you made Nepali Congress?" (My Translation 205). Similar sort of voices and experiences Koirala had in other parts of the country as well. He was so happy with the spirit of his cadres. But he still paid attention to the representation from every part and ethnicities to give the sense of belonging to the nation.

Particularly in Nepalese context, he has always opposed politics based on ethnicities. In *Rajnitik Abhilekh*, he argues "this is the country of minorities" (My Translation 260). In the same book, he has given an analogy of travelling on a boat. He asks: "this country is like a boat. On that, people get across the river. What happens if the passengers fight against each other? Who can survive if the boat sinks?" (My Translation 27). This example and above mentioned experience in the life, Koirala makes it easy to come to the conclusion that Koirala wants humanitarian and spiritual relationship among the citizens of a country. At the same time he rejects treatment of superiority and inferiority on the basis of ethnicity; he actually desires elimination of it.

The analogy of travelling on a boat is an example of Koirala's view that the people of a country should have desire to live together. He is aware of the Nepalese

facts that it is a country of multi cultures and multi ethnicities, and none of them is in majority. Apart from cultural and ethnic diversities, human beings themselves are the creatures having pluralism. To bind these diversities and pluralisms in the single rope of nation, nothing can work except the people's desire to live together.

The notion of desire to live together is evident in Koirala's political thoughts and activities. After the revolution of 1950 A.D., he accepts the leadership of Mohan Shamsheer, the same ruler against whom he and his party launched the revolution. This is because of his firm belief that by negating the existence of any group or factor of the country, formation of a nation-state is impossible. It looks unbelievable but is true that Koirala always wanted the relationship of coexistence and desire to live together even with the factor that considers him and his party the enemy. He has been imprisoned by King Mahendra and put in jail for long, and even he has lived in exile for long, but he has still advocated for national reconciliation, the reconciliation with the monarchy. His notion is that monarchy of the country cannot be negated as it is a powerful stakeholder of Nepalese politics. Similarly the monarchy should not discard the democratic voice of the people. The country can go ahead only if these two forces -the monarchy and people agree to go together. In the book *Rajneetik Abhilekh*, he clarifies: "we stand together with the king to protect the nation" (My Translation 271). His proposal of reconciliation has been taken in a mixed way. People have taken it as an amazing step since the reconciliation is with the enemy force, but his firm belief in nation as a desire to live together has inspired him to do so.

Democracy has been the primary requisite, for Koirala, to form a nation. Democracy respects pluralism. Democracy urges to respect the opposite voices. Everyone has pride in one's thought. Koirala argues a democratic character has a

sense of respect for the opposite side. In *Jail Journal*, he states: “sense of revenge does not have any place in democracy” (My Translation 155). Koirala has always fought for democracy because it can only incorporate diverse ethnicities, cultures and thoughts to form a nation. Since he has always believed in coexistence and desire to live together as the basic requisites of a nation, he further believed that only democracy can construct a nation and thus strengthens the feeling of nationalism. He opines: “democracy without nationalism and nationalism without democracy is not possible...” (My Translation, *Rajneetik Abhilekh* 283). It is because democracy ensures the participation of people in the politics and governance of a country.

In a country like Nepal where there are multiple ethnicities, all in minority, with a possibility of ethnic tension, there is strong reason why Koirala urges for democratic system for the construction of nation and for strengthening the feeling of nationalism. Writers on nation and nationalism believe that democracy can solve this tension. In the opinion of Jurgen Habermas “...constitutional principles of human rights and democracy ...” (287) can solve this ethnic tension. Koirala’s life long fight for democracy and nationalism has been always with the aim of strengthening the nation by providing equal rights and thus keeping harmony among the cultures. Pluralism, the basic nature of human character can only be addressed by democracy. In *Jail Journal*, he further tells: “a nation without liberty cannot be a nation with character” (My Translation 209). In short, Koirala has never imagined the existence of nation without freedom and democracy.

Koirala has stressed on reconciliation and working together for the development of a country. Many theorists such as John Bruelly and Liah Greenfield have argued that the concept of nation and nationalism is a modern concept. Bruelly

argues the function of “nationalism is to promote modernization” (156). Close to the idea of Bruelly, Greenfield states: “the emergence of nationalism is seen as tightly connected to the modern phenomenon of state-formation, and as related to the trend of the secularization of culture”(68). He associates nationalism with industrialism and capitalism to argue the rise of nationalism as the prerequisite of modernization. The terms development and modernization can be understood as closely related.

Development is the key to modernization. Understanding in such a way, it will not be unfair to say that Koirala’s notion on nation as collective effort of the people and the feeling of unity during that effort aim towards the development and ultimately the process of modernization. In other words, he believes unless and until the country cannot include all people in the mainstream development and politics of a country or unless and until this country gets the form of a nation, the development is impossible. In his view, the lack of “people’s active participation in governing system and people’s collective campaign in attempt to abolish poverty” (My Translation, *Rajneetik Abhilekh* 179) has caused the backwardness of the country. Koirala’s clearly states that if a country does not get the form of a nation, development is not possible. In the same book, he further argues Nepal is a country but is not able to be a nation because only a family has ruled the country. Before 1950A.D. Rana family ruled the country and after the royal coup of 1959A.D. the monarchy ruled under the name of Panchayat system. Both the regimes were autocratic and thus excluded people’s participation in governance. Their voices were suppressed. The tragic part of those regimes was the activists demanding democracy were either hanged, or imprisoned, or exiled. He believes the revolution of 1950 A.D. is the ‘rise of nationalism” (My

Translation, *Rajneetik Abhilekh* 179), because the revolution is marked by collective raise of voice from people of different sectors, religions and ethnicities.

Koirala's focus on supremacy of people in the construction of nation indicates that his view on nation has connection with the process of modernization in Nepalese context. He rejects supremacy of a family, kingship, religion and ethnicity in the construction of nation. He rather wants to see active role and effort of people. Rejection of the supremacy of monarchy and religion and acceptance of the supremacy of people are guiding principles of Enlightenment, a pioneer movement of modern world.

Since Koirala has understood the concept of nation as a modern phenomenon, he has rejected supremacy of any particular ethnicity or family. The supremacy of any ethnicity puts other ethnicities in inferior position and thus blocks the participation of all the people. But he has even understood the possibility of conflict of identity in the construction of nation. In his autographical works, the examples of giving candidacy in the election and the inclusion of personalities from different regions and ethnicities to form the government suggest his attempt of making the situation inclusive and participatory. But, as I have earlier mentioned, he has always been in favour of abolishing this barrier of ethnicities.

Koirala's idea of nation, based on new possibility of Nepalese politics and development, looks aware of dangerous consequences of ethnic nationalism. Ernest Gellner, in his essay "The Coming of Nationalism and Its Interpretation: The Myths of Nation and Class", talks about self-defeating and terrible aspect of ethnic nationalism namely Irredentism and *Nacht und Nabel* in European politics. Irredentism refers to the ideal of "One Culture, One State" (115), prevalent in many

European countries from 1815 to 1918. Nacht and Nabel is the term employed by Nazis “demanding compact homogenous ethnic groups within given political units, is implemented by new ruthlessness...by mass murder or forcible transplantation of population”(112). Gellner argues such types of nations were “created not woken” (117). Lack of humanitarian ground and feeling of coexistence in such nationalism caused the crumbling. Increasing pluralism and commercialism in modern European countries then looked for new nationalism that could bind the people together.

Concluding the above discussion, nation is the concept that focuses on people. The concept, as forwarded by Koirala, should take together all the population of a country. Collective feeling to go, work and live together gives rise to the feeling of unity that ultimately is the feeling of nationalism. The feeling of nationalism can only form a nation. Formation of a nation asks people of a country to rise above human boundaries like ethnicity, culture and religion. They should have feeling of being human. People should have respect for each other’s views and identity. Such democratic feeling can only create harmony so that people of a country will be inspired to develop the desire to live together. They should develop not only collective feelings but also collective and shared identities.

Koirala’s Literary Career, *Sumnima* and *Narendra Dai*

Koirala has written most of his literary works while he was in jail. His stay in jail has been very much productive in terms of his literary and biographical works. His busy life as a political activist got some respite as a prisoner. His biographical works have both political and literary significations. His three autobiographical works *Atmabritanta*, *Jail Journal* and *Pheri Sundarijal* not only have generic features of autobiography, but are also thought provoking. His thought on politics, political

principles, revolution, society, individual relationships are revealed in those texts. An analytical description of Nepalese politics plus his and his party's involvement in the struggle for democracy in those three works reflect different critical modes that this country had to go through and make the works matter of study for new generation Nepalese youth.

Those three texts portray Koirala as a multidimensional personality- a politician, a thinker and a literary artist. A man with full political vigour and vision makes a truthful analysis of his life events. Moreover his memory of minute details and his interest in national and international political matters, individual relationships, and deeper analysis of individual and societal entities make the texts rare biographical productions.

Despite the beginning of his literary interest since his youth that he had to spend in India, his remarkable literary productions came a lot later. His friendship with many litterateurs of India germinated a character of literary artist in him. It cannot be unfair to say that had he not been put in jail, perhaps we would not have known him as a novelist. All his novels have been written in his stay in jail. The same novels have given him a respectable position. One remarkable point about his novels is that none of those novels talks about Nepalese politics. Many critics dissociate his literary and political career for that reason. Whether one can escape from unconscious/subconscious while creating a literary text is a matter of debate. Moreover one politician, imprisoned after royal coup must have been persistently thinking about political matters. Can such character dissociate himself completely from his political belief and create literary texts? Dissociation of Koirala's ideas from his literary work is impossible. Koirala himself confesses in the background of his

novel *Narendra Dai* that even a dream needs the base of reality and despite his “effort to distort a story or to polish a story by imagination, the truth becomes clearer and clearer and the story takes the form of reality” (My Translation 1). Koirala’s this confession indicates it is fair to associate his literary creations with his political ideas and life events.

This thesis focuses on Koirala’s two novels *Sumnima* and *Narendra Dai*. *Sumnima* is a story of two different cultures- Kirat Culture represented by *Sumnima* and another is Khas/Aryan Culture represented by Somdatta. Sumnima is presented as an open minded and open hearted lady whereas Somdatta represents orthodox rigid Hindu culture. Though they are childhood friends and have both attraction and desire for each other, cannot go together as the rigidity that Somdatta has acquired from his culture always forces him to hate the culture that Sumnima belongs to. He gets divided between his rigid culture, his ascetic character and the biological need that his body asks for. His repression of biological desire and the rigidity that his culture has taught him lead to his psychological disturbance and indifference to family. But the scene changes in the next generation. The failure that Somdatta faces in his life no more continues to the next generation. After his death, his son gets married to the daughter of Sumnima. The daughter of Sumnima and the son of Somdatta are no more concerned with their cultural distinctions and develop desire to live together. This reconciliation of two cultures turns out to be a success.

On the other hand, the story of *Narendra Dai* is the story of a man who leaves his own wife because of confrontation with his father. Neglecting a worshipping wife, Narendra Dai, the central character of the novel lives an irresponsible life. His lack of seriousness towards the life and family leads to immoral relationships, develops

relationship with a married woman and elopes with her. They go abroad but very quickly the relationship starts to get loose as it is more physical. He cannot stay there and comes back to his own home. His wife waiting for him for long welcomes him. The relationship develops strong. Narendra Dai gets the delight and pleasure of his life. It is more spiritual and less passionate. As Narendra Dai has already been infected by disease, he cannot live for long. But his wife does not live the life of a widow even after his death. The spiritual love with her husband makes her feel that Narendra is living in her.

Plenty of criticisms have appeared on *Sumnima* and *Narendra Dai*. In the preamble of *Sumnima*, the novelist has opened the floor for criticisms. The novelist says: "...this story is an account that cannot be measured in the balancing scale of truth or untruth. Its importance is mythological, symbolic, indicative (1). So, critics have attempted to analyse the novel. Many critics have analysed the novel in terms of Somdatta's psychological condition in general and his repression of sexual desire in particular.

Gyanu Pandey analyses *Sumnima* as the expression of existentialism. She opines that *Sumnima* has existential meaning since the novelist has forwarded "existential approach on existential relationship" (My Translation 207) between body and soul.

But some critics have also analysed the novel in terms of the country and its cultural basis. Taranath Sharma, in the foreword of the novel gives his view in relation with the novel's connection with the history of this country:

It is an attempt at re-interpreting the development of the modern Nepalese nation. The novelist is firmly convinced that the Nepalese

people of modern times are a historical product of the physical and cultural amalgamation of various communities, particularly the Kirat and Khas races.

Sharma's argument hints at the novel's connection with nation. But it does not involve serious study. Rather than analyzing through any theoretical model or serious investigation, he seems to have hurried to come to the conclusion that Nepalese people are product of Kirat and Khas races.

Another writer and a prominent literary critic Krishna Dharabasi, in his book *Bishweswor Prasad Koiralaka Upanyasharu*, argues the novel tries to depict the background of Nepalese culture. According to him, the novel "shows that this country has its own cultural and ethnic combination even before this country was named" (My Translation 32).

In the same book, Dharabasi, in his attempt to analyse the novel *Narendra Dai*, argues the novel's characters are known characters to the novelist in real life and thus the novel has autobiographical elements. Dharabasi says the novel is "close to life" (My Translation 30) and destiny plays important role. Pandey's analyses is the novel to be thought oriented and "focused on the questions of human and what this life is in reality" (My Translation 141). Pandey's idea is Koirala through this novel gives his view on being human.

There have been attempts to analyse the novels from psychoanalytical and existential perspectives. Critics like Sharma and Dharabasi have also looked at the novels from the perspective of nation and nationalism but they lack serious and discursive interpretation of the novels.

The attempt of this thesis is to analyse the above mentioned novels in terms of narrative and symbolic construction of nation. My claim in the thesis is Koirala, a politician as well, had his vision on nation. Since he has not been in executive power for enough time to bring his vision in reality, he narrates his vision of nation in the novels *Sumnima* and *Narendra Dai* suggesting that formation of nation is possible with co existence, unity and collective effort of different cultures and ethnicities and a person can ultimately feel one with the situation where one can have shared and spiritual connection.

In this thesis, the presumption is that though the novels do not directly talk about Nepalese political matters, it is impossible for a politician to make complete escape from his political thoughts and vision in his literary creations. Despite not having direct talk of Nepalese politics in the novels, this thesis is guided to analyse the novels *Sumnima* and *Narendra Dai* because of the novelist's hints in the preamble of *Sumnima* that it has "mythological, symbolic and indicative" signification. His hints encourage thinking the novels in terms of the significance with Nepalese history and political matters. Symbols used in the novels connote something else than the literal meaning of the plot of the novels.

The next chapter of the thesis will be a critical overview on some theories on nation and nationalism. The critical overview will be followed by connection between those theories and view on nation as forwarded by Koirala.

II. Nation as Imagined Community, Spiritual Principle, Collective Effort and Feeling of Unity

The term 'nation' does not have any unanimous definition. Moreover the notion of nation varies with country, cultural groups and even ethnicities. Its connection with Roman's classical usage of the term *natio*, having the meaning of "communities of people of same descent" (Habermas 282) makes us confuse with cultural and ethnic groups and at the same time the term also refers to a homogenous group. But in the modern usage of the term 'nation' has political and legal significance. About the formation of nation, Habermas states: "members of a state form a 'nation' in terms of a particular form of life" (282). In this sense, nation has close link with 'people' and their choice of life within a system that is politically and legally valid.

Many other theorists on nation and nationalism have focused on the role of people and their choices in the formation of nation. In this chapter, I shall discuss the idea of 'nation' offered by Benedict Anderson and Ernest Renan followed by a connection between modern theories on nation and Koirala's notion of nation discussed in the first chapter. Relating the concept of nation narrated in literature, the discussion will be upon the ideas given mainly by Anderson and Homi K. Bhabha in the next chapter. These two chapters collectively will be theoretical tool to analyse Koirala's two novels *Sumnima* and *Narendra Dai* in terms of narrative and symbolic construction of the nation.

Anderson's definition of nation has anthropological spirit. He defines it as an "imagined political community and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign" (6). Anderson himself clarifies why he calls the nation 'imagined' and

‘community.’ According to him, “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 idea of nation is conceived as “a deep, horizontal comradeship” (7).

Images, shared identities that link the people play crucial role in giving impression that the people of that ‘limited’ community imagine each other as members of the same community. The developed relationship of fraternity ultimately binds all of them in a strong emotional rope. They even get ready to die for each other.

Anderson’s notion of nation as imagined community does not argue every nation has same type of imagination. The type of imagining differs from each other. Culture plays determining role in the imagination. Anderson recognizes the role of culture as the artifact of nation. He rejects nation as invention. It rather has imagination and fabrication. Because of role of history or culture as the artifact of nation, Anderson argues the imagined nation is limited “because even the largest of them, encompassing perhaps a billion living human beings, has finite, if elastic, boundaries, beyond which lie other nations” (7). His idea of culture as the artifact of nation does not mean that people of diverse cultures cannot imagine as the members of a community. People of different cultures can be the members of same imagined community but they will be tied by new shared identities. Anderson does not plead for homogenous culture; he rather calls for ‘homogenous empty time’ that, in modern time, print capitalism helps to create this process of imagination.

Anderson traces the history of development of nation and argues this process of imagination, in the past, was due to religious community and dynastic realm. Religion was the earliest factor that motivated people to imagine themselves as the

members of a community. The mediums to connect were “sacred language and written script” (13). He further explains: “all the great classical communities conceived of themselves as cosmically central, through the medium of a sacred language linked to a superterrestrial order of power” (13). This means the religion, in the ancient time, worked not only as connective between people but it was able to keep people at the same place by giving the impression they are being connected to divine force.

Religious community was then replaced by dynastic realm as the actor to ‘imagination.’ The legitimacy was derived “from divinity, not from population, who, after all, are subjects, not citizens” (19). The monarchical states expanded by warfare and sexual politics. People’s choices were not valued. Monarchy was taken as the power centre that had connection with divinity. Such states were defined by centres.

In the definition of nation given by Anderson, a nation is sovereign. Being sovereign, a nation is free in itself. It is inspired by Enlightenment that destroys “the legitimacy of the divinely-ordained, hierarchical dynastic realm” (7). It rejects the central supremacy. The supremacy in a nation is of people. A state is a nation if the people can imagine themselves as the members of the same community. When this nation is given political expression, it gets the name of nation-state.

Anderson argues the novel and the newspaper provided “the technical means for ‘re-presenting’ the *kind* of imagined community that is the nation” (25) after the eighteenth century, beginning from Europe. Three fundamental cultural conceptions- religious community, dynastic realm and a conception of temporality in which cosmology and history were indistinguishable provided meanings to almost every act

of human life. But those three conceptions started to lose its grip and people looked for new ways to connect them:

The slow, uneven decline of these interlinked certainties, first in Western Europe, later elsewhere, under the impact of economic change, ‘discoveries’ (social and scientific), and the development on increasingly rapid communications, drove a harsh wedge between cosmology and history. No surprise then that the search was on, so to speak, for a new way of linking fraternity, power and time meaningfully together. Nothing perhaps more precipitated this search, nor made it more fruitful, than print-capitalism, which made it possible for rapidly growing number of people to think about themselves, and to relate themselves to others, in profoundly new ways. (36)

Anderson states this print capitalism has laid stage for the modern concept of nation. Reading a novel or a newspaper, a reader, in imagination, thinks about other possible readers and identifies with them. Furthermore, news in newspaper about different localities and events establishes linkages among them. Thus a reader identifies with other readers. In such way imagination is possible through print-capitalism.

Though widely accepted, the idea forwarded by Anderson is not free from criticism. Partha Chatterjee charges Anderson’s idea as ‘modular’ and attempting to treat “the phenomenon as part of the universal history of the modern world” (216). His argues the model prescribed by Anderson might work in Europe but does not work in colonized place like India. Similar view is also given by John Breuilly. He regards Anderson’s ideas brilliant and persuasive but still argues it cannot be applicable in countries like Russia and India. Gopal Balkrishnan comments on

Anderson's idea as "modern counterpart to kinship" (203) but rejects the idea as an ideology.

Though Anderson's study is based on Europe, the rationale behind the selection of his idea as the theoretical model is the model's applicability in Nepalese context. Nepal has been imagined on the basis of monarchy after King Prithvi Narayan Shah conquered many small states and before that religion used to be a dominating factor in the imagination of community. At present, print capitalism is rising as a determining factor to link all Nepalese people.

Ernest Renan's views on nation is close to Anderson as both of them focus on common spirit in the construction of nation. To Renan, a nation is a soul or a spiritual principle:

Two things, which in truth are but one, constitute this soul or spiritual principle. One lies in the past, one in the present. One is the possession in common of a rich legacy of 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)

In Renan's definition of nation, memory and present day consent are equally important. Past is summarized and desire to live together give the expression that the populace gets ready to live their future together. He further argues nation encompasses "large-scale solidarity, constituted by the feeling of the sacrifices that one has made in the past and of those that one is prepared to make in the future" (19). He focuses on the supremacy of people. Modern nation is people centred. In this respect, Renan is close to Anderson though Renan does not talk about the role of print capitalism in forming the stage for modern nation. The supremacy of people in the

construction of nation suggests that the concept of modern nation is an outcome of Enlightenment. Both the theorists have mentioned it in their writings.

Renan considers human beings essentially the same. For him the human characteristics like reason, justice, the truth, and the beauty are same for all. He argues: “the zoological origins of humanity are massively prior to the origins of culture, civilization and language”(15). His strong rejection of race, language, religion and geography as the basis of nation is because he believes people are at first human.

According to him, race and ethnicity are “made and unmade” (15) and “there is no pure race”(14). For Renan, primordial right of races is narrow and perilous. He finds this ethnographic politics a dangerous politics because if one uses it against others, tomorrow another will use it against the one. Regarding the role of ethnicity, it might be suitable to draw upon the ideas of Anthony Smith whose ideas John Breuilly cites in his essay. Smith’s idea of *ethnie* refers to human population having shared ancestry myths, histories and cultures, specific territory and a sense of solidarity. He does not see any determinist links between these *ethnies* and modern nations because “modern nations possess, in addition to the characteristics of *ethnies* identified above, legal, political and economic unity”(150). The argument of Smith not only complements Renan’s idea but also strengthens.

Renan thinks language “invites people to unite but it doesn’t force them to do so”(16). He argues there are many countries like America and England speaking the same language but cannot be united just because of same language. But in Switzerland, many languages are spoken but still the country is one. Language’s inability to unite people makes it less important factor in nation construction. ‘Will’ is

more important. Furthermore a nation is also a matter of feeling and sentiment. Same sentiment can be expressed and understood in different languages.

Renan rejects religion because it is an individual matter. According to him “religion has become an individual matter, it concerns the conscience of each person” (18). Different citizens of a nation may follow different religions. Regarding geography, he opines geography may play an important role in the division of nation but strongly rejects geography as the basis of nation construction. He focuses on the consent and will of people.

The term ‘forgetting’ is crucial in the construction of nation, in Renan’s view. He argues: “the essence of a nation is that all individuals have many things in common, and also that they have forgotten many things” (11). This idea indicates the need of feeling and sense of coexistence that contribute to development of consent, will or desire to live together. Many other theorists on nation have also talked about the need of compromise among the cultures. Compromise pleads for forgetting the forgettable past and accepting coexistence to develop consent to live together. Ernest Gellner calls this construction of nation a minus-sum game because “the majority of cultures-participants is bound to lose” (127). The notion of nation as minus-sum game focuses on shared culture.

Shared culture is a key factor in construction of nation because it minimizes likely racial, ethnic and cultural friction. Habermas calls for “constitutional principles of human rights and democracy” (287) for the institutionalization of shared culture. In his view, giving up is also important in this process of coexistence. He makes it clear:

If, however, different cultural, ethnic and religious subcultures are to coexist and interact on equal terms within the same political

community, the majority culture must give up its historical prerogative to define the official terms of that *generalized* culture, which is to be shared by all citizens, regardless of where they come from and how they live. (289)

The idea of shared political culture seems logical and mandatory as well considering the process of globalization marked by inflow and outflow of people. No country at present is free from immigrants. Likewise the cultural globalization or exchange of culture, cities and states being the dwelling of many cultures ask for cultural coexistence, shared identities and in fact consent or desire to live together.

Pondering on the theories on nation prescribed by Anderson and Renan, it can be argued that their models are pleading for modernization, especially political modernization. Anderson forwards print capitalism as the actor to help people get associated as the member of same community and rejects religion and monarchy as the basis of nation for imagined community. Renan rejects race, ethnicity, language, religion, and geography as the basis of nation arguing they are narrow concepts whereas the notion of nation is above such human boundaries and can only be based on consent and desire to live together with a noble thought that “man is a reasonable and moral being before he is cooped up in language...race...and culture” (17). Both focus on the role of only and only people in the formation of nation. Rejection of human boundaries, divinity, supernatural power and focus on humanity and active role of citizens are modern phenomena.

Both Anderson and Renan accept existence of emotional part in nation construction. Anderson argues that the imagination of community has emotional attachment. That is why the members of the community or nation are “willing to die

for such limited imaginings” (7). On the other hand, Renan’s idea on nation fosters a large-scale solidarity. The members get emotionally attached to each other. In view of Renan, all human beings are internally the same, that they are ready to make sacrifice in the future.

Relating Anderson and Renan’s notion of nation with that of Koirala discussed in the first chapter, the connection is in three main areas i) focus on people ii) spiritual or emotional connection and iii) feeling of unity and sense of belonging to the nation or in the word of Anderson, ‘community.’

Koirala rejects the supremacy of monarchy and speaks for participation of people in the main stream politics. He has always argued that unless and until people get participation in the governing system, this country Nepal cannot be a nation. Koirala’s notion of nation comes in connection with his individual involvement in Nepalese politics. But the idea of nation by Anderson and Renan do not focus on any specific country, they rather focus on European context but their idea of nation as will and supremacy of people is similar to that of Koirala. Both the European theorists have refuted the divine and monarchy centred nation in modern context.

Spiritual and emotional connection among the citizens to form a nation is another similarity found in all those three writers. Renan gives the names ‘soul’ and ‘spiritual principle’ for the nation. He views that spiritual or emotional connection that might even be handed over by forgettable past inspires people to develop consent or desire to live together. The connection gets so strong that they even get ready to make sacrifice in the future. Even in the view of Anderson, there exists emotional connection, otherwise imagination of community is not possible. Anderson clearly mentions print-capitalism as the connecting medium, of which Renan does not talk

about. Renan talks about shared culture and identity that, in my view, is supplemented by print-capitalism. Koirala also gives a high focus on feeling of being one among the citizens of a country. In Koirala's view, nation comprises people and feeling of being one. The separation and sense of division cannot form a nation. Anderson's idea of shared 'images' increases the emotional connection, Renan talks about 'forgetting' and Koirala talks about 'reconciliation'.

Since all these three thinkers offer feeling and spirituality as a key to construction of nation, they refute human boundaries like religion, race, and ethnicity as the basis of nation formation. Renan and Koirala clearly state those as negative factors. Renan calls them 'narrow and perilous.' Koirala thinks of the end of ethnicity and race for 'welfare of humankind.' Though Anderson does not clearly talk about race and ethnicity but talks about religion, his focus on people imagining as the members of the same community signifies that he is even against race and ethnicity as the basis of nation. The strong presence of racial and ethnic sense cannot put together people of diversities in the same community. All these three writers agree on a point that humans are internally the same; they are capable of being one and forming a nation.

Sense of unity and belongingness to the state or community is another similarity. Without sense of belonging, unity is not possible. The focus on people by Anderson, Renan and Koirala indicates people focused system guarantees people's participation that ultimately gives the sense of belonging. People take the community as their own. Though the members may not know each other, the tie of nationalism knots them. Koirala pleads for inclusion of people in the governing system through democracy, that, he believes, can give the sense of belonging. To Anderson, print-

capitalism gives sense of belongingness to the members of a community. To Renan, both past and desire to live together act as indicators of sense of belonging.

Apart from above mentioned similarities on three issues, the view expressed by them on nation is a modern phenomenon. The ideas developed by Renan and Anderson are clearly inspired by Enlightenment. Koirala urges for the need of nation construction for development and progress. His fight for democracy, people's participation in governing system and his urge to make the country a nation are politically modern phenomena.

A nation then is a matter of common spirit. The concept of nation receives significance in order to tie the people of modern society. Secular nature of nation has power to encompass people of diverse background and identities. Equal treatment, position and rights mark the formation of a nation. Backing compromise and forgetting as requisites to nation construction, it aims at establishing humanitarian values by rejecting ethnic, religious, and linguistic supremacy.

III. Nation and Narration

This chapter focuses on theoretical aspect of narration of nation. The discussion will be again around Anderson and Renan. Apart from them, Homi K. Bhabha's idea on the narrative of nation will also be the subject of discussion. Despite anticolonial tone in narration of nation, Bhabha agrees with nation construction as a modern phenomenon and the need of national discourse to incorporate diverse cultures in one.

Anderson's argument on the narration of modern nation begins from eighteenth century by two representing forms: the novel and newspaper. These two forms were the actors that made the anonymous people imagine the members of the same community. This time Anderson calls "homogenous empty time...marked by temporal coincidence, and measured by clock and calendar" (24). This "homogenous empty time" replaced mediaeval conception of simultaneity-along-time (past and future in an instantaneous present). His idea of imagination of community through novels and newspapers can be understood with some key words that he uses: "image", "interior time of the novel" and "exterior time of reader's everyday life." According to Anderson, in a novel or the narrative of nation, the author uses some images and events that refer to a time. Those images and events should not be limited to the novel only. In fact those events and images should have a sort of connection with the daily life of people so that the readers can identify themselves with the images and events in the novel or in the words of Anderson, the connection between interior time of the novel with the exterior time of the people's life "gives a hypnotic confirmation of the solidity of a single community, embracing characters, authors and readers, moving onward through calendrical time" (27). From this idea, it can be understood that

‘images’ work to make people of diverse backgrounds imagine as the members of same community. What sort of images can bind such people in the same imagination? No doubt shared images and identities can make the time ‘homogenous’.

Anderson’s reference of Hegel’s remark that newspapers serve modern man as a substitute for morning prayers helps to better understand how newspapers and novels connect people who do not know each other to a single community. Anderson takes newspapers and novels synonymously as he calls newspapers “extreme form of book and ...one-day best-sellers” (34-5). He argues reading newspaper gives a feeling to a reader that the same act is being done by many others and thus they have a connection:

Yet each communion is well aware that the ceremony he performs is being simultaneously by thousand (or millions) of others of whose existence he is confident, yet of whose identity he has not the slightest notion. Furthermore, this ceremony is incessantly repeated at daily or half-daily intervals throughout the calendar. What more vivid figure for the secular, historically clocked, imagined community can be imagined. (35)

I agree with the remark of Habermas in connection with Renan’s idea of nation that forgetting or minus in origin “constitutes the beginning of the nation’s narrative” (310). Renan’s notion of nation does not exist if the people of a territory do not agree to live together. To develop Renan’s ‘will’ or ‘desire’, coexistence is must. Everyone has to forget the bitter past or the history that is likely to invite conflict. Nation as minus-sum game believes in oneness of people with expense of forgettable past. From this point, the narrative of the nation begins. Nation encompasses

diversities and rejects superiority of any ethnicity, religion or race. Humanitarian value becomes dominant. Everyone agrees with the concept that citizens are at first human. Only after people realize first being human, the formation of nation is possible, if there still comes the issue of superiority based on what Renan calls 'narrow and perilous' demarcation of humanity namely ethnicity, race and religion, 'will' or 'desire to live together' is not possible.

Renan obviously is against race, ethnicity and religion as the basis of writing the narrative of nation, but he does not talk about abolishment of those. He just speaks for shared identities that can only ensure will or desire to live together. Accepting another's existence is the key. The concept of coexistence protects own identity, and doing so encourages the sense that one's identity exists under the condition that another's identity is safe. Now there develops the need of some collective identities that everyone can be proud of. Sense of the need of collective identities also motivates to forget and the desire to live gets strengthened.

Bhabha's essay "DissemiaNation: time, narrative, and the margins of the modern nation" presents how a modern nation is narrated in literature. He views writing of nation ambivalent. According to him, cultural difference overlaps the process of writing. Bhabha's idea of nation writing has much to do with cultural identification. The process of nation writing, in his view, moves through "liminality of cultural modernity"(292). It is marked by temporality. The people cannot be measured simply by historical events. The problem in fact lies in "rhetorical strategy of social reference" (297). The issue of representation or identification invites crisis. The birth of contested cultural territory goes through the tension between pedagogical and performative dimension of nation. Pedagogical dimension refers to the past. It

“claims a fixed origin for the nation and asserts a sense of continuous history which links the nation’s people in the present to previous generations of national subjects” (McLeod 118). On the other hand performative dimension talks about present and future. Performative dimension refers to nationalist discourses. National icons, symbols, cultures are created to make the people perform together as a unified whole. Bhabha’s idea is unless people are imagined through this double-time, nation cannot be written:

... the people are the historical ‘objects’ of a nationalist pedagogy, giving the discourse an authority that is based on the pre-given or constituted historical origin or event; the people are also the ‘subjects’ of a process of signification that must erase any prior or originary presence of nation-people to demonstrate the prodigious, living principle of the people as the continual process by which the national life is redeemed and signified as a repeating and reproductive process. The scraps, patches, and rags of daily life must be repeatedly turned into the signs of a national culture, while the very act of the narrative performance interpellates a growing circle of national subjects. In the production of the nation as narration there is a split between the continuist, accumulative temporality of the pedagogical, and the repetitious, recursive strategy of the performative. It is through this process of splitting that the conceptual ambivalence of modern society becomes the site of modern nation. (297)

Bhabha’s writing of nation also focuses on people. The fusion of people both as ‘object’ and ‘subject’ writes the narrative of a nation. People’s historical

signification should be represented. History plays important role in forming people. They have learnt much from their past; they are affected by the past. In this sense they are the 'objects.' But the present situation gives the people certain roles. They have to act. In this sense they are the 'subjects.'

Bhabha clearly mentions that modern society is the site of writing the nation. Modern society is marked by diversity and pluralism. Bhabha, Anderson and Renan meet at the same point regarding the need of bringing together the people of diverse identities and backgrounds. Anderson talks about imagination of people of diverse backgrounds as the members of a single community and Renan has talked about the need of 'will' and 'desire to live together', it is not difficult to assume that Renan is aware of the existence of people of diverse identities in a society. Then how can diversity and pluralism be addressed? Bhabha has the solution of it. In his words "once the liminality of the nation space is established, and its 'difference' is turned from the boundary 'outside' to its finitude 'within', the threat of cultural difference is no longer a problem of 'other' people" (301). One has to understand in a modern society that one's cultural identification is never fixed. It is always at liminal stage. One has to take one's cultural identification as personal or internal matter. It should never come as outside boundary.

Another feature of Bhabha's writing of nation is the 'split' of subject. The splitting of subject is loss of identity. He argues "cultural identification is poised on the brink of loss of identity" (304). In a complex, plural and diverse modern society, the full recognition of subject's entire pedagogical culture is not possible in public sphere. In a modern society, the signifier fades or subject has to compromise with other's identities. The mandatory need of the articulation of both pedagogical and

performative compels the subjects accept the fact that they should now move with collective identities.

Yet the splitting of the subject should never be understood as the negation of history of a subject and homogenizing the cultural differences. If done so it is not the sign of modernity. In Bhava's words "the nation reveals, in its ambivalent and vacillating representation. The ethnography of its own historicity and opens up the possibility of other narratives of the people and their difference" (300). How would be other narratives as Bhabha has suggested? No doubt they would be grand narratives of the modern nation and they should be able to represent all the subjects.

According to Bhabha, in national narratives, there will be representation of "diametrically opposed world view of master and slave which between them account for the major historical and philosophical dialectic of modern times" (295). Despite my agreement with what Bhabha has said, I want to make slight change in this quote. My attempt is to add the terms 'two opposite political forces, or 'two opposite cultures' along with 'master and slave.' The construction or writing of the nation requires the identification of both the opposite sides. The double narrative movement of both the sides should be given attention. Moreover they have to perform together despite their pedagogical dimensions being different.

Before concluding the discussion on nation and narration so far, let me briefly talk about Koirala again given his definition on nation in relation with narration of nation. When does his narrative of nation begin? It is obviously with the 'collective effort of people'. His narrative must be the site of the unity of the people of diverse backgrounds. The 'feeling or spirit of unity' must dominate the story. Success should come up at the expense of collective effort and unity.

Concluding the above discussion, it can be argued that the narrative of modern nation begins with the supremacy of people. The discourse should be people centred. Bhabha says national narrative represents diametrically opposed world view. In case of Anderson, Renan and Koirala, nation represents diversities in culture. But in the opinion of all these four authors, a modern nation should have discourses, narratives, images and identities that can encompass the people of different background and identities.

Forgetting works as key element in the construction of narrative. Bhabha, Renan and Koirala clearly mention about it, the same can also be understood even in the case with Anderson. Bhabha's 'splitting' of subject, Renan's 'forgetting' and Koirala's 'reconciliation' indicate the sense of the need of forgetting the bitter past and develop new ways through which everyone can walk on without any feeling of inferiority. Anderson's focus on print-capitalism as the actor to help people imagine as the members of same community through images and shared identities tells us national narrative demands new narratives. In his narration of nation, internal world of narrative should identify with the external world of people's life.

Spiritual connection or the feeling of unity is another essential part of the narration of nation. Diversities and pluralism among human beings can be linked only with spiritual connection. Renan has given the names 'soul' and 'spiritual' to the nation. In the case of other three writers, the unity that they want among the people asks for relationship of feeling and spirit; new narratives help the people to get tied by feeling or spirit.

None of Anderson, Bhabha, Renan and Koirala rejects the role of culture in the narration of a modern nation. They accept that people have their cultures that they

have acquired from the past and they can exercise those cultures in private life. All of them focus on humanitarian value of being human. Only if people get above race, ethnicity, and religion, new narrative of nation is possible. Cultural coexistence gives the sense of solidarity and unity. Koirala particularly wants elimination of race, ethnicity and religion for the welfare of humanity.

The discussion on nation up to now has focused on supremacy of people. The concept of nation has actually come into existence to incorporate the people of modern society. The failure of religion and monarchy to tie the people in 'imagined community,' has given rise to the notion of nation to ensure the people live in community that guarantees emotional connection through symbols and images, equal status, coexistence and harmony to move ahead for prosperity. Supremacy of people makes it possible. Such supremacy is participatory, gives rise to sense of belonging and inspires to face the problems with collective effort. A national discourse uses 'images' reflecting 'pedagogical' and 'performative' dimension, 'the interior life' of the discourse matches with 'the exterior time of reader's life,' the pedagogical dimension of people does not remain fixed; it 'splits' or changes with the demand of new time, people respond each other on humanitarian ground and they ultimately are ready to go ahead with collective effort.

The next chapter shall be the analysis of Koirala's two novels *Sumnima* and *Narendra Dai* in terms of construction of nation and its narrativisation. *Sumnima* begins with 'pedagogical' conflict between the Aryan and the Kirat culture resembling cultural combination of Nepalese society. By shattering the Aryan's sense of ethnic and religious supremacy, by making the voice of humanity, spoken through *Sumnima*, victorious and ending the novel happily with commitment between the

two cultures to go ahead with collective effort, Koirala tries to awaken Nepalese people to the significance of coexistence, reconciliation and cultural harmony in the construction of nation. On the other hand, *Narendra Dai* moves around the central character Narendra whose comeback from foreign to his wife connects with the idea of nation. His flee to India and coming back to Nepal or the 'imagined community' where he can share the 'images' 'history', his readiness to 'split' and live the life of 'joint effort' with his wife whom he hated reflect the features of nation. At the same time the use of symbols like Nepal, the Koshi river and *Holi* give the impression that the 'interior life of the novel' matches with 'the exterior life of the reader's life.'

IV. Narrative and Symbolic Construction of Nation in *Sumnima* and *Narendra*

Dai

In the lines of the prologue of *Sumnima*, Koirala clearly states the novel has ‘mythical, symbolic and indicative’ significance. This means the novel has other meanings apart from what clearly seems in the novel or the characters, events and objects in the novel also act as symbols. This indication of Koirala has prompted to come to the idea that the novel might have connection with Koirala’s political career and especially with his idea of nation.

Every expression of a subject is associated with psyche. In this respect, it can be argued that Koirala’s narrative construction of nation in his narratives is the expression of psyche. But this argument should not be confused with psychoanalytical perspective on a literary work that dream works or literary works are expression of unconscious desires. The thesis does not aim to make psychoanalytical analysis of Koirala’s narratives. But still the analysis may reflect some analytical modes of psychoanalysis. The thesis assumes the novels are his expression of conscious mind. By employing ‘condensation’ meaning “representing dreams, that is, into images, symbols and metaphors” (Barry 95), Koirala expresses his thought of nation. He does

not express them in apparent manner but through symbols and images. This research moves with the claim that the novels are narrative and symbolical construction of Koirala's notion of nation.

The analysis of the novels will not go simultaneously. Rather the analysis will be done one by one. *Sumnima* covers up various dimensions of nation but *Narendra Dai* does so in a few areas.

Sumnima

Narrated by the omniscient narrator, the novel actually is the story of two families of different ethnicities. The main character of the novel, Somdatta, belongs to Aryan culture whereas another main character, Sumnima, belongs to Kirat or Mongolian culture. The country Nepal itself is basically composed of Aryan and Mongolian group of people. Arguing from this angle, both Somdatta and Sumnima represent Nepalese people or in another words Koirala here is symbolically representing Nepalese culture and people through these two characters.

The novel is about dominating attitude that Somdatta shows upon the culture of Sumnima, but ultimately his attitude gets defeated and Sumnima's voice based on humanitarian ground wins. Somadatta grows up in a family that cannot see other than religion, divinity and religious scriptures. Somdatta's parents aim to provide him with "true religious culture appropriate to a Brahmin as well as instructions to lead a higher way of life" (3). But their vague and unclear understanding of 'higher way of life' appears as a problem. They just have the thought that this higher way of life is connected with the god, of whose existence only imagination can argue. In the quest of this ambition, they leave their village and live in a hermitage in a jungle in present eastern part of Nepal. Somdatta's school is his own hermitage. His father teaches him religious values and ways of life . Bound by strict rules and regulation, Somdatta gets up early in the morning, goes to Koshi River for bath without uttering even a single word. He would then pray to the sacred river Ganga, sitting on a kush grass and repeating the sacreds words of Gayatri for a long time. The act would be followed by returning home and creating "fire by rubbing and churning wood and placed it at the sacrificial place and by uttering sacred words in a loud voice put the oblation of rice,

barley and sesame mixed with clarified butter to the fire” (6). In this way the schooling of Somdatta given by his father aims to make him an ascetic. His knowledge is totally based on religious scriptures.

Another problem with the schooling of Somdatta is narrow attitude towards the people of other cultures and ethnicities. Especially to the Kirats, he understands them as “wild Kirats, devoid of any good culture” (7). He criticizes the non-vegetarian character of the Kirats. He draws differences between the Aryans and non-Aryans to show his superiority. He believes: “Non-Aryans follow the religion of beasts, but whereas we believe in the religions propounded by gods” (8). Here lies the fault in Somdatta’s thought. He does not look at the Aryans and non-Aryans from humanitarian ground. He considers the Aryans and particularly him and his family above the level of human and the non-Aryans at the level of animals or beasts.

On the other hand, the novelist presents Sumnima very favourably, speaking the language of humanity. She belongs to Kirat\Mongolian descent. She speaks the voice of nature and humanity. She has learnt this voice of humanity and nature from her family. She meets Somdatta at Koshi Bank as he often comes there for the purpose of grazing his cow. She wants to develop a friendly relationship with him. For her, he is also a human and thus they can be friends. But Somdatta time and again tries to show the difference, he belongs to superior culture and Sumnima the inferior. He says he speaks the language of god and it makes difficult for her to understand him. But Sumnima does not like this superior attitude shown by Somdatta. She replies: “Then, why don’t you speak in a human language being a human yourself? In my view being human beings we should not follow god’s behavior. Somdatta, we should practise human customs as we are human beings” (8). This urge of Sumnima

to Somdatta is very similar to Koirala's stress on abolishment of race and ethnicity and urge to behave on the basis of humanity. Sumnima's urge to behave like human leads to the idea that the novelist expresses his views through Sumnima in the novel.

Sumnima is infused with humanitarian values. She quickly forgets the debate with Somdatta and comes to compromise. She has very good understanding of Somdatta and his family that "they are the creatures of air-trying to move about in the air" (114). Such evaluation made by Sumnima gives us hint to her character that despite being uneducated, she has strong wisdom. On the other hand, Somdatta is always after the ambition of getting close to god, leaving behind his standpoint of being human. Due to this nature of both the characters, Sumnima wins the battle and Somdatta loses.

The novel features theoretical aspects of nation and its narration. Renan argues a nation cannot be based on religion, race, ethnicity and language. Similar views are given by Anderson and Koirala, the novelist as well. Anderson has argued a modern nation can no more be based on or imagined through religion and monarchy. Likewise Koirala has spoken against religion and ethnicity as the basis of nation.

Religion's inability to bind the people within the rope of unity and nation is exemplified in the novel. Somdatta quits the childhood company of Sumnima as both of them tread on youth. As he feels being tempted by the youth of Sumnima, he realizes getting diverted from his aim of becoming an ascetic. His religion has taught him to overcome physical desires and passions. He tries to develop hatred attitude towards the body of Sumnima. Moreover as once he feels defeated by uneducated Sumnima, he leaves his hermitage and goes on penance with the aim to control his senses fully. In fact religious pedagogy that he has acquired create distance between

him and Sumnima. The knowledge that he acquires regarding human body is unnatural one.

Somdatta's schooling is responsible behind his hatred towards the cultural and religious practices of Sumnima. Along with religious supremacy, he also has sense of male supremacy. He knows what his culture has taught him. He understands a mother as a field and the father as the master of that field. He argues a son is known by the father, the master. Sumnima refutes what Somdatta says. She argues mother has prime position, the father is the man shown by the mother. Somdatta defends saying: "the system of introducing oneself from mother is beastly. Due to the absence of virtues of chastity and fidelity in females of brutes (beasts) their children are introduced through mother" (8). The pedagogy taught to him has Brahmin sense of superiority along with derogatory attitude towards other cultures. He views Brahmins as those who can achieve divinity by the power of penance but the Kirats are those who follow the religion of beasts.

In the relationship between Somdatta and Sumnima religious practice has been the dividing force. Both of them have different cultural or religious practices. Due to cultural differences they cannot go together. But the later events of the novel especially the married life between Somdatta and his wife Puloma depicts it cannot be guaranteed that religion can be a binding force. After a hard penance, Somdatta feels he has overcome his sensory organs and they are in full control of him. He declares: "my penance has proved meaningful. I'm able to conquer my sense organs" (38). He feels he is devoid of passion and desire. He can now remember Sumnima but without desire for her. This Somdatta now gets married with a Brahmin girl who is also religious oriented and devoid of any passion. Their only purpose of the marriage is to

have a son who, they think, can salvage them and their ancestors, according to their religious belief.

But the sexual intercourse without any emotion and desire cannot give them any son. Both of them start to suspect each other for having committed any sin as the cause of not being able to have any son. Their suspicion is due to what they were taught by their religious practices. Logically we do not see any connection between the birth of a child and any sin having been committed in one's life. The religious connection in relation with not conceiving now initiates a gap of communication. Only after they get emotionally excited, a son is conceived, but the excitement comes when they imagine someone else as sexual partner. Somdatta imagines Sumnima as the partner. On the other hand Puloma imagines a Villa boy who used to be her childhood friend as her partner. Even after the birth of the son, the couple lives in the state of huge communication gap. Occasionally they attempt to talk to each other but the talk ends in a row. The row gets out of their control. The row gets so hot that they use intolerable expressions for each other. Puloma calls her husband "vulgar" and "lascivious" (95) whereas Somdatta charges his wife to be "shameless", "uncultured" and "savage" (95). In their case, the relationship is not strengthened despite being strict followers of the same religious and cultural practice. In fact it is proved that religion does not guarantee the unity.

Both Somdatta and Puloma get happy in their imagination rather than in each other's company. He enjoys the imaginary company of Sumnima, so does Puloma imaginaing the Villa boy. Both Somdatta and Puloma belong to same Brahmin community. But still they cannot be united. Both of them enjoy imaginary company of the person of another ethnicity. Then where is the position of this ethnicity in the

imagination of nation? Renan is right in his comment on ethnicity as narrow and perilous. If the above mentioned event is studied in connection with Koirala's view on ethnicity that the abolishment of ethnicity for the welfare of human kind, it can easily be concluded that Koirala in this novel speaks against the demarcation of ethnicity in human relationship. It can further be proved by other two events from the novel. One is Somdatta's talk with Sumnima after both of them have been married. In reply to the question of Somdatta that if she is happy with her marriage, she confesses: "when I spend my night with him (her husband), I feel that I am with you" (69). Sumnima, though married to the man of her own ethnicity, is not happy. The case of ethnicity cannot unite the individuals. Being one with someone else is beyond ethnic or racial issue. The ending of the novel also has similar sort of significance. It ends with the marriage between Sumnima's daughter and Somdatta's son. The novelist says this union of the individuals has been a success. He focuses on the importance of spiritual connection. The relationship tied by love and spirit gets stronger than the relationship of ethnicity and religion.

The pleasure and identification received by both Sumnima and Somdatta in imagination reminds Anderson's notion of nation as imagined community.

Anderson's argument that a nation is imagined because though the members of a nation do not know each other, yet they imagine each other as the members of the same community. But this does not mean that people who know each other cannot imagine belonging to the same community. Somdatta imagining Sumnima, Puloma imagining Villa boy and Sumnima imagining Somdatta reveal that imagination of being close to each other turns out to be a very strong binding force. People may be far from each other, yet they can feel close and belonging to the same through this

process of imagination. Religion cannot be barrier in this imagination, nor can be the ethnicity. Emotional connection is important. Anderson talks about shared identities to connect people of diversities emotionally. Renan talks about shared memories. In the above description of imagination, shared memories emotionally connect them.

Regarding language, Renan argues language can invite people to get united but it cannot force them. Renan is correct in the case of this novel. Same language cannot unite Somdatta and Puloma. Despite differences in language, he gets attached with Sumnima, Puloma with Villa boy and Sumnima with Somdatta. Moreover Somdatta's son's successful married life with Sumnima's daughter clearly tells us that language cannot ensure unity. People can share same emotion and thought despite difference in language whereas still there can be gaps in understanding and sharing though the participants speak the same language.

The above discussion about imagination has negated ethnicity, religion and language as the basis of nation construction. Then what constitutes a nation? Based on the discussion carried in the previous chapters, soul, spiritual principle, collective effort, compromise and the feeling of humanity constitute a nation.

The marriage between Sumnima's daughter and the son of Somdatta can be argued as a miniature nation. This couple is not tied on the basis of religion or ethnicity or caste or language. They are tied by love and feeling. They wrap each other, do not utter even a single word but still communicate their feelings. They communicate from their heart. They have strong emotional communication that they do not need to utter anything. Apart from emotional connection, the desire to live together brings them closer and closer. Sumnima cannot reject the desire expressed by Somdatta's son after the death of his father that he wants to "live with *Yawa*

(Sumnima's daughter)" (108). The desire to live together also comes from the side of Sumnima's daughter. By narrating a successful married life of this couple, the novelist expresses his notion of nation that a nation can exist if people in the country have spiritual connection and desire to live together. The couple symbolically stands for people of a country and their successful life stands for a united nation.

Apart from desire to live together, collective effort, likely to develop only after compromise, is another factor to establish a nation. The relation between Sumnima/Somdatta and Somdatta/Puloma do not succeed or let's say they cannot go collectively because of lack of compromise. Somdatta's dominating attitude has always led him away from compromise. He does not accept even the strong logics given by both Sumnima and Puloma during his debates with them. Once Sumnima and Somdatta fall in a debate on what is violence and what not. Sumnima argues natural killing like a hawk kills a bird for food is not violence. But hunting in the name of sports is violence. War described in Hindu religious books like Mabharata is real violence. Somdatta cannot tolerate it. In a calm voice he replies:

Hey, ignorant Kirat girl! This is the result of your lack of cultured upbringing that you don't have any knowledge of the difference between violence and non-violence. Therefore, without comprehending the essence of non-violence as accepted by religion you insult it and don't regard the violent beast's behavior incited by savage instinct blamable. That is why you say slaughter of cows is acceptable. (21)

In this reply of Somdatta, his use of the words like 'ignorant', 'lack of cultured upbringing' makes it easy to understand that he wants to defeat Sumnima not by logics but by hurting her culture and lack of attending any school. Somdatta gets

uncompromising. He rather prefers to keep the distance rather than accepting his mistake and coming to compromise.

Uncompromising character of Somdatta continues to even in relationship with his wife. His sexual relationship with his wife (as already mentioned, it happens as he imagines Sumnima in the place of his wife) arouses emotion in him though for lifelong he has worked hard to overcome sensual pleasures. Later again he wants to have intercourse with his wife. He tells her he is “desirous of love” (94). But Puloma refutes. She has also been taught that there is no place for love in their relationship. This makes Somdatta angry. In angry tone he claims “his right of sexual union” (94) with her. Puloma also gets angry, unties the knot of her cloth. Displaying the naked body, she angrily invites him to quench his thirst. The environment get so fierce that the emotion aroused in Somdatta gets down and returns to his room. Puloma quickly realizes she should not have behaved with her husband that way. She wants to make him happy. She puts oil in her hair, combs it, inserts a fresh flower into her hair and goes to the room of her husband. Somdatta sees realization in his wife but does not cool himself down. He does not forget the event happened just before. He rather starts to attack Puloma verbally:

Contracting his lips a bit Somdatta said in a satirical tone, “What kind of dress is this today Puloma? And what type of hair style is this? This red flower! I see that someone has inserted a red azalea flower into a dry tree.”

Somdatta kept on his attack and said, “You have lost all the sense of propriety. The feeling of sin has awakened in your old body, Puloma, sin!” (97)

The uncompromising nature of Somdatta is responsible behind his failure in his relationship. Had he forgotten the row with his wife and understood the realization of her, their relationship could have taken a decisive turning to happiness and unity. In fact his own nature becomes his enemy.

Another important factor in the construction of nation is humanity. Renan has called for the realization among the people that they first are humans. Human originated first in this world before other demarcations like religion, race, or ethnicity. Koirala has also spoken for the need of same realization. One of my arguments in this thesis is that Koirala expresses his thought of humanity through the voice of Sumnima. Her dialogues pleading for humanitarian values match with the ideas of Koirala.

During the conversations and debates with Somdatta, Sumnima cannot understand the words used by him. Asking for the reason behind using such words, he replies the words belong to “the language of gods” (8). Disliking the use of such words, she asks him:

“Then, why don’t you speak in a human language being a human yourself? In my view being human beings we should not follow gods’ behavior. Somdatta we should practice human customs as we are human beings.”

“...it’s not good to try to become god being human being. It’s not the duty of a man. No human behavior remains with you, and your habits are corrupted. If we try to live like gods we don’t remain human...”

(8)

This prediction of Sumnima turns out to be very true. Living away from human society in search of “salvage from weaknesses” (8) takes him no where nearer to the god. Rather he lacks normal human courtesies, characters and behaviours, due to which he even cannot live with his wife. Ignoring humanitarian values and focusing only on religious ethos keep him in a ‘narrow’ space from where he cannot come out.

In the novel, Koirala expresses his stress on human essence through symbol. The symbol of ‘human pond’ reveals people should behave like humans. The context of the ‘human pond’ in the novel comes when Somdatta visits the father of Sumnima, Bijuwa, who is a shaman of his community. Somdatta’s purpose of visiting is his suspicion that there might be role of Kirat gods behind his wife’s inability to conceive a child. He wants to please the Kirat gods. But Bijuwa understands the actual reason that both Somdatta and his wife have killed the pleasure senses of human body, devoid of which conceiving a child is almost impossible. In the name of pleasing Kirat gods, Sumnima takes him to the ‘human pond’ located in a jungle surrounded by bushes and trees. Sumnima does not worship any god there but massages oil in his body, gives him a bath and changes his form. The reason behind doing such things is to arouse in him sense of pleasure. The result comes out positive. The intercourse with his wife later that night makes her pregnant.

The symbol of the ‘human pond’ criticizes Somdatta’s attempt of overreaching. Being a human he has ambition of being above humans. In the name of religion, he attempts to get divine bliss. He does not understand human limitations. He makes effort to have divine features but in vain. Only before his death, he realizes that “all his life he ran after an illusion” (107). The realization after spoiling the total life is of no avail to him. Conclusion can be drawn from this event that Koirala is telling

us humans should behave like human. The attempt to be superior to other humans or the attempts to show one having linkage to divine or supernatural powers is always against human essence that only creates gaps.

A modern nation has the character of 'cultural liminality.' Two other phrases 'nation as 'minus-sum game' and 'cultural reconciliation' are worthy to be drawn in relation with 'cultural liminality' with this. These phrases, discussed in previous chapters, are linked with construction of a modern nation.

Cultural aspect is a key to construction of nation. Human beings, though argued to be same internally, but ,in reality, they are identified by the factors such as race, ethnicity, caste, culture, religion etc. They have their own history and background. But a modern nation cannot belong to any particular ethnicity, religion or race. Human movement like immigration is leading countries to pluralism in terms of culture. Moreover though basic natures of humans are called to be same, their thoughts are marked by pluralism. Given the existence of the modern world, nation based on homogenous cultural background cannot be imagined.

Then what should be the position of culture? Bhabha has talked about 'cultural liminality' that means cultural existence marked by temporality. It ultimately asks for recognizing the cultures but not in rigid form that might divide the people but in such a way that the people can practice their culture in their private life and they together develop a new national culture that can belong to all of them in public sphere. In the words of Ernest Gellner, construction of a nation is a 'minus sum-game'. The people move to win by losing. What do they lose? It is their cultural identity but in partial form. They cannot be known only by their ancestral cultural identities. They have to participate in new national identity. They have to accept the

reality of difference in identities of people provided by their history. Koirala's notion of 'cultural reconciliation' has signification in the construction of nation, especially to win by losing. For him, cultural reconciliation is so important. Koirala has given the analogy of 'travelling in a boat' for nation, particularly Nepal which is a multicultural and multiethnic country and all of them in minority. He wants cultural coexistence and reconciliation among the cultures, if not, the boat sinks. Somdatta remains unhappy throughout his life due to his inability to have reconciliation with Sumnima but in the next generation his son gets happy as he gets reconciled with Sumnima's daughter.

Sumnima's experience that she delivers to her daughter and Somdatta's son on the verge of their marriage clearly reflects Koirala's notion of cultural reconciliation and compromise. She reminds her daughter about the cultural differences between the Kirats and the Brahmins:

...His blood is different. His mind is taken by some unknown things. They are the creatures of air-trying to move about in the air. They are never satisfied with the fullness of life. They are attracted by its emptiness....We Kirats are creatures of soil, we love the soil. We are fully absorbed in the enjoyment of the pleasures of life, we don't see its lack. For us our body alone is the most loving thing. We regard the Brahmins like the kites with broken strings and they may think us like the earthworms...(114)

The difference between two cultures described by Sumnima reveals these two cultures as the poles of two different sides. But she still thinks the union is possible. She believes humans are internally the same. She thinks her daughter and Somdatta's son

can live a happy life. But for that they should realize the difference and should accept each other's existence. They should realize the liminal character of cultural identity that culture cannot be fixed ever. Every culture is subject to change. Gradual change is inevitable. They should understand cultural coexistence as a minus-sum game. In an attempt to win by living together, they might have to lose something. Only then cultural harmony can be established. Sumnima goes on giving advice based on her experience:

Today, you have made a Kirat's daughter your wife. Her Kirat character is vivacious. She doesn't recognize anything except her body. I don't know how far could she give you company in your flights. But, if you understand her ethnical tradition and see the way she is traversing, you can understand my daughter very well. The daughter, too, by understanding your ideas must be prepared to abandon her path somewhat. In the same way, you must also try to compromise, being prepared to abandon some of your ways. May you prosper! May your descendants be such to be able to find out the ways of compromise! (114)

'Compromise' is the word Sumnima focuses. The word asks for giving up something to gain something. Sumnima's request to both of them to understand each other's ethnic traditions, in broader level, suggests cultures and ethnicities have to understand each other's past and background to develop the environment of harmony, to imagine as the members of the same community and to develop desire to live together.

The sense of compromise or accepting another's existence is something Sumnima has acquired from her culture. Once the Kirats as well as the Villas are

ordered by the Prince of that area not to make any slaughter and sacrifice in that land. The order comes because Somdatta's father complains his penance is getting disturbed by the slaughter and sacrifice made by the Kirats and the Villas. The Villas are in mood to declare war rather than accepting the royal order. But Sumnima's father who is the head of the community decides to change the place of sacrifice and slaughter rather than inviting the conflict. Sumnima, small girl then, becomes so happy with the decision of her father. The possible danger is thus wiped away with compromising nature of the members of the Kirats.

Along with the features of nation, the novel *Sumnima* has use of narrative techniques to make the novel writing of a nation.

Anderson's argues the narration of a nation uses 'images' that connect the 'interior' time of the novel to the 'exterior' time of the reader's everyday life. The connection makes the readers imagine themselves as members of the same community. The novel has certain features that stand for Nepal and its people. First, the setting of the novel, the present eastern part of Nepal makes it visible that it is the story of this particular territory. The territory symbolizes shared 'history' and 'image.' Two cultures described in the novel represented by Sumnima and Somdatta symbolically stand for people of this territory. This territory is basically composed of Aryan and Mongolian descendents. The Aryan culture represented by Somdatta and Mongolian culture represented by Sumnima, in larger scale, is the reflection of the basic situation of the territory.

The debates and conflict between Somdatta and Sumnima have connection with what Nepalese people or the readers feel in reality. People of Brahmin community argue themselves as superior among Nepalese people. This debate and

conflict is given a positive turn at the end of the novel. By tying Somdatta's son and Sumnima's daughter in a nuptial knot, the novelist gives the message that the ethnic distinctions are human made and they can be unmade as well. Through the voice of Sumnima, Koirala presents the solution of ethnic friction that it can be solved by trying to understand each other's tradition and coming to the point of compromise. The solution is an attempt to arouse a feeling of solidarity among all the Nepalese people of Aryan and Mongolian descendents, this feeling of solidarity invites people to imagine as the member of the same community. The novel tries to awaken all the people to the fact solidarity and togetherness are possible with reconciliation and compromise among cultural groups.

'Forgetting' is necessary to come to the point of compromise. In view of Renan, forgetting the forgettable past is the departure point of nation's narrative. Sumnima forgets the past, the humiliation given by Somdatta in the name of her origin. Her daughter and Somdatta's son also forget the extreme cultural differences between their families. This forgetting only makes their union possible. The forgetting germinates the 'desire to live together'. They commit to make 'collective effort' to face the life ahead. This collective effort creates a 'feeling of unity' that ultimately makes their life successful.

Bhabha speaks for the representation of "diametrically opposed world view of master and slave which between them account for the major historical and philosophical dialectic of modern times" (295) to narrate a national discourse. He talks about two opposed world views in relation with colonial setting. Not only master and slave have opposite world views, two different cultures as described in *Sumnima* also have opposed world views. Particularly in Nepalese context, the society is

constituted by multiplicity of cultures rather than the relationship of master and slave. In colonial societies, the relationship of master and slave would suit better.

Looking at the novel from above mentioned idea of Bhabha, it can be argued that the novel symbolically narrativises nation. It is the story of two cultures which have opposite practices. Sumnima is aware of such practice in her statement: “we regard Brahmins like the kites with broken strings and they may think us like the earthworms” (114). Sumnima realizes this long gap between the cultures of the Brahmin and the Kirats. As evident in the novel, the Brahmins associate themselves with divinity whereas the Kirats are associated with mundane pleasures. The Brahmins develop their thoughts on the basis of their religious scriptures. On the other hand, the Kirats develop their thoughts based on experience and wisdom.

Still the differences mentioned in the novel are not out of practice when the novel was written. Still then and even now Brahmins are associated with religion and practice of reading and writing. But the Kirats and other Mongolians are thought to be the consumer of earthly pleasures but it should be accepted that these cultures are changing. During the time of Koirala and even now, Nepalese society is moving through dialectic of historical differences between the Aryan and Mongolian cultures. Koirala in the novel tries to synthesise the dialectic by uniting Sumnima’s daughter and Somdatta’s son. Bhabha speaks for the need of paying attention on the ‘double narrative’ movement of both sides. By double narrative Bhabha means to say creating new collective narrative without ignoring the historical cultural identity. Sumnima’s advice to her daughter and Somadatta’s son before their union speaks for the same. Sumnima asks both of them to understand properly their cultural differences and

ethnic traditions. They should be able to come to the point of compromise, for that they may have to give up their certain ways of behaving.

Bhabha identifies the possibility of tension between ‘accumulative temporality of the pedagogical’ and ‘the repetitious, recursive strategy of the performative’ in writing the site of modern nation. The pedagogical is linked with the tradition of people whereas the performative is related to the construction of new national culture. Tension is likely to come up in the construction of new national culture. Bhabha argues for the need of double time narrative, the narrative that can create new national culture by recognizing the pedagogical or the history.

Accepting the above mentioned modality of writing a nation, the novel *Sumnima* resolves the tension between the pedagogical and the performative. Up to the first half of the novel, we see conflict between Sumnima and Somdatta based on their cultural identifications. She criticizes the thoughts of him as inhuman and against the nature. On the other hand, Somdatta charges Sumnima’s culture to be savage and beastly. They get stuck with their own culture, Somdatta particularly has firm belief in the culture he belongs to. Because of that they cannot perform together. Somdatta particularly does not have any respect for the ‘pedagogical’ dimension of Sumnima’s culture. The ending of the novel is the solution of potential conflict between the pedagogical and performative. Developing new ways of living by understanding and respecting another’s tradition is actually the solution.

In this process of double narrative, Bhabha argues the subject ‘splits’. In the writing of modern nation, single cultural identification is not possible. One’s identity exists along with the existence of others’ identities. The subjects have to realize that their existence is possible with collective identities. Acceptance of collective

identities compromises with one's own identity. At this point the subject splits. In the novel *Sumnima*, the actual narrative of the nation begins with the 'splitting' of both Sumnima's daughter and Somdatta's son. They accept the loss of their cultural identity. They do so to develop new collective identity. To live together, the 'splitting' has been must. Or in other words, Koirala tells through the novel that the coexistence among multicultural groups in Nepal is possible only with 'splitting' i.e. creating new shared national culture but with due respect to the pedagogical dimension of culture.

The novel *Sumnima*, based on the above discussion, can be argued as the expression of Koirala's vision of nation. The victory of humanitarian values upon the ethnic and religious discriminations and the rejection of ethnic and religious supremacy give the novel a feature of nation construction. By shattering the religious and ethnic supremacy of Somdatta and ending the novel with happy union between a couple belonging to both Aryan and Kirat culture, the novelist does not only try to match the 'interior life of the novel' with the 'external time of the reader's life' but also makes it clear that nation construction moves through, what Bhabha calls, 'pedagogical' and 'performative' dimensions. The novel delivers message to all Nepalese people that their solidarity can be strengthened only by accepting cultural coexistence, and creating new national culture.

The novel emphasizes on 'compromise' 'forgetting' and 'collective effort,' the requisites to nation formation. Sumnima and Somdatta cannot go ahead due to uncompromising nature of Somdatta. But Sumnima's daughter and Somdatta's son are able to live happy life as they compromise, forget the bitter differences between their cultures and make joint effort. They get 'split' or adjust with new identity. Their happy conjugal life is a miniature nation. The characters symbolically represent

cultural combination of Nepalese society. This nation refutes ethnic, linguistic and religious supremacy. With respect to each other's historical background, the couple creates new culture that can bind them together to move ahead. All these features make the novel symbolic and narrative construction of nation.

Narendra Dai

The background of the novel *Narendra Dai* includes confession of the novelist about the psychological dimension of every author, particularly a fiction writer. He confesses: "even a dream needs the base of reality. Despite my effort to distort a story or to polish a story by imagination, the truth becomes clearer and clearer and the story takes the form of reality" (My Translation¹). His confession clearly resembles what Sigmund Freud, from whom he is very much influenced, argues about psychological dimension of a literary work or dream work that it involves the "transformation of the latent content into the manifest dream" (Green 149). From this realization of the novelist, it is not difficult to conclude that the story of the novel has connection with his psyche and other real life events.

It is of course the matter of the job of a critic, to relate the events depicted in a novel with that of the novelist and interpret the novel. This writing assumes the story of the novel may not have link with only a particular event of the novelist's life. Some characters may resemble one part of Koirala's life, whereas some other events and characters might have equivalence with other parts of his life. But what has actually struck to write the thesis is Narendra Dai's, the central character of the novel come back to his own country, his realization of his mistake of giving up his own wife with whom he spends his later part of life with love, in fact a spiritual connection. Both of them forget the bitter past, though late Narendra accepts the existence and position of

his wife which ultimately unites the couple. My argument is the comeback of Narendra to his wife or the 'imagined community' with whom he is tied with shared images and identities, the 'forgetting' of bitter relationship between Narendra and Gauri, their 'splitting' to live a new life and 'joint effort' to go ahead mark the novel as an expression of nation.

Narendra has attractive personality- a tall figure wearing clean and white *Kurta Dhoti*, a traditional madhesi dress. People in the village admire his personality. But the character loves to fly in the air rather than realizing the ground. He once has a row with his father. In a debate, his father says to him "why do you so boast of yourself, you cannot even look after a wife" (My Translation 25). Immediately he forfeits his wife challenging his father because his marriage with Gauri is an arranged one. He does not think about the future of Gauri with whom he has committed to live the life. Only in the later part of the novel that he realizes his mistakes of life but until then he has never appeared as the person having any sense of responsibility. He discards his relationship with his family with whom he has spiritual connection. He rather gets astray and runs after passionate, in fact sexual pleasures.

The character of Narendra Dai is paralleled by a devoted and compromising wife Gauri. She does not have attractive youth but does her best to get her husband back. She loves her husband from heart. Though she has not yet got the taste of love from her husband, her want of him at the level of spiritual one does not make her tired and negative to him. She waits for him-waits for years. Finally he comes back. He has given away his youth to other women and comes back in dilapidated condition, a patient of tuberculosis. He is not in position to fulfill the biological desire of his wife. But Gauri is happy, in fact very happy with the comeback of her husband as she now

can have the relationship of love, the relationship that can quench the thirst of her heart.

Before Narendra Dai comes back to Gauri, he has been to India, in fact eloped there with a village girl, Munaria who is already married and below to his family position in the village. Though she later on, while talking to the narrator, says she is bound to him by the relationship of love, she still accepts it is sexual passion that has invited them closer and closer. She relates: "I made his maleness on the verge of dryness green by giving my love. That (maleness) was not getting any chance to grow in natural environment. That had dried in adverse condition of Gauri. As that got planted in me, it bloomed as it got suitable condition" (My Translation 48). But the situation is opposite to what Munaria claims. Their separation should not have been so easy had they been tied by strong love relationship. Her inability to come back to the village together with Narendra Dai is because of her feeling of guilt. Otherwise what would prevent them from coming to the home? Narendra could still claim right over his property and live with Munaria. He would not have to leave her in India alone and come back to Gauri. Moreover Gauri herself writes to the narrator, who then lives in India and occasionally meets Munaria, to send her back to village. Gauri expresses her will to accept Munaria as the second wife of Narendra.

The interplay among Narendra Dai, Gauri and Munaria creates national imagination. Narendra's 'imagined community' is his home where he has 'shared history', 'shared images' and 'shared cultures'. His 'pedagogic' dimension is linked with his home. In abrupt anger, he quarrels with his father, keeps distance with home and finally leaves the home with Munaria, already married woman. Munaria's acceptance that the relationship has begun with physical desire signifies Narendra's

elopement with Munaria is guided by physical and material wants. But he is spiritually connected to his home, his 'imagined community.' His 'pedagogic' dimension, the shared 'images' and 'cultures' connect him with his home spiritually. His sickness makes him realize the importance of his spiritual connection and comes back to home. Narendra resembles someone who comes back realizing only spiritual connection can construct a nation. Living together in pursuit of material pleasure or momentary interest is something that cannot last long. Division is inevitable. The relationship between Narendra and Munaria suffers from this problem. The attack of disease no more keeps him in position to fulfill his material or sensory pleasures. He now needs someone who with love and devotion can be together with him.

Narendra's comeback to Gauri is construction of 'nation' in two senses. Gauri stands for what Renan calls a nation as soul or spiritual principle, defined by 'shared history' and 'desire to live together.' She could have rejected to look after her husband who throughout the life treated with humiliation. But she does not do so. Because she is connected to him by soul or spiritual principle. She forgets all the treatments of Narendra. 'Forgetting' makes her thought and behavior humanitarian. In the absence of forgetting, unity between them would not have been possible. Forgetting from Gauri and realization from the side of Narendra develop a desire to live together or they imagine their unity. The extent of the strength of this relationship is exemplified from the behavior of Gauri. Even after the death of Narendra, she does not live the life of a widow. She contends: "Narendra is in me, he has not died" (My Translation 62). She believes he has resided in her soul that he never goes away from there. Those who see her talking like that think she has been abnormal after the death of her husband. But she is right considering her attitude

towards her husband. Her want of her husband has always been above physical desire. In the novel, we do not see any situation where her want of her husband can be associated with lust. Even after their unity, the relationship has remained always spiritual. She lives her life with the memories of her husband.

Gauri is metaphorically a nation. Nation as 'imagined community' has equivalence with the home of both Narendra and Gauri. Their home represents their shared 'history' and 'culture'. In the later part of the novel, Gauri is another name of the home. Even after all the family members leave the home either due to death or migration, she alone looks after the home, takes all the responsibility. She alone preserves all the shared 'history', 'images' and 'cultures.' Munaria has opposite character to Gauri. Munaria does not have shared 'history' with Narendra. She cannot even develop 'performative' dimension with Narendra. The sickness of Narendra makes them realize they cannot perform together as well. The realization brings Narendra back to his community.

This comeback of Narendra to his own nation, in my view, can be equaled to the novelist's coming back to the country with the aim of changing the country into a nation. He had to live in India for political reasons. The totalitarian Rana regime could not tolerate the protest made by his family. He comes back to his country to establish democracy. He believed democratic system can give the people sense of belonging, a shared culture and ultimately feeling of unity of spiritual connection. In his real life, Koirala comes back to the country looking for nation and in the novel Narendra returns to live together with his 'imagined community' or Gauri.

The 'internal life' depicted in the novel matches with the 'external life of the reader's life'; this feature of the novel makes it a narration of nation. Narendra is the

character through which a reader can imagine it is the story of none but of a member of same community. A reader can associate with Narendra through his actions and movements. The novelist's description of the setting, the eastern part of Nepal, the Koshi river work as shared images the Nepalese people can identify with. Narendra's flee to India reminds movement of a member of imagined community to foreign. He has row with the members of his community, with whom he has spiritual connection and can have desire to live together. The development of his relation with Munaria is his getting away from his nation. Point to be mentioned here is had there been spiritual connection between him and Munaria or if they could 'perform', this connection would have got the metaphor of nation. Relationship based on sexual desire between Narendra and Munaria turns to its inevitable end. Narendra's come back from India to Gauri is comeback of a member from foreign to the imagined community.

Apart from another name of home, Gauri has enough features to be associated with 'imagined community' or nation. She is a nation, an imagined community where relationship is bound by love and mutuality. Narendra finally has 'desire to live' together with her. She has strong sense of coexistence. More than that, this imagined community is bound by spirituality. She love him from heart, beyond physical. Anderson and Renan agree with the point that members of a nation get emotionally attached that they are even ready to make sacrifice for each other. The sense of sacrifice is evident in Gauri. Throughout her life, she has waited for Narendra. As she gets him back she gets so happy that she does not even think about her material pleasures. She gets spiritual pleasure. This achievement makes her live the life of a married woman even after his death. Her idea is: "he has been her for many many

lives to come” (My Translation 60). Literally this is sacrifice. Throughout her life she has sacrificed her individual interests and is ready to do so in the life to come.

Right from the departure of Narendra with Munaria, a reader can guess that he will come back to his Gauri, or he will come back to the imagined community, the readers’ community or the nation. Humans can ultimately live in the community where one can live the life of unity. He can get only with Gauri. The come back of Narendra is come back to nation. This comeback becomes visible with the help of setting. Narendra’s come back from India to a part of Nepal makes the readers easy to see that it is his comeback to them.

While arguing this novel as the writing of nation, Munaria acts as the outsider who cannot ‘perform’ together with Narendra despite belonging to the same village. Question may arise- how can she be the outsider as she belongs to the same village? Here are some factors that make her outsider. She has betrayed her husband. For her passion is more important than love. As Narendra becomes the patient of tuberculosis, she advises him to go back to Gauri. Narrator’s description of Munaria living a difficult life in India obviously draws some sympathy for her but her rejection of recognizing the narrator in the end of the novel gives another impression of her. Her married and wealthy outfit suggests the departure of Narendra has not affected much in her life. On one hand, Gauri devotes all her life for Narendra whether he is with her or not and Munaria, on the other hand, betrays her husband, sends deteriorated Narendra to Gauri, and later one lives her life with another. Despite her claim to be connected with Narendra by love, the events do not suggest so.

The union of Narendra and Gauri is also the ‘splitting of subject’ that characterizes the site of writing a nation. The splitting of subject is characterized by

subject's adjustment and coexistence with other members. The members create new ways of living, new images and cultures that they all can identify with. Both Narendra and Gauri understand this dimension of 'performative'. Narendra's sickness compels him to develop consent with Gauri. But Gauri as always offers unconditional love to him that makes the performance possible. Their past, in fact their bitter past, does not come in between their living. The past becomes pedagogical in literal sense. They learn from their past. Narendra realizes his mistake and develops new ways of behaving with his wife. They forget the forgettable past. Not forgetting the past could have been barrier to their unity. Gauri does not make the past issue. She 'splits' by forgetting the bitter past and living with Narendra unaffected by his bad treatment in the past.

The realization in Narendra causes him the 'split'. He gets changed. His anger towards his own deed in the past is poured upon innocent birds. He says: "he wants to crush all the birds in his hand" (My Translation 56). But again expresses his readiness to do whatever Gauri says. The confession of the wrong deeds makes the relationship smooth. He picks up an old musical instrument and plays it. Gauri joins him by singing. They perform together. This is what a nation requires. Only collective effort by the members can take the nation ahead.

This point of both the subjects' splitting is the beginning of writing the nation. In Koirala's view, writing of a nation begins with collective effort. For the first time, Narendra and Gauri make collective effort. Narendra's playing the music and Gauri's joining the act by singing signifies the initiation of joint effort. The joint effort creates a feeling of unity that actually makes the unity strong.

The novel can be argued as the expression of nation in general and Koirala's concept of nation in particular. Narendra dai's characterization portrays him as a member of 'imagined community' who keeps himself away in abrupt anger but ultimately comes back. He comes back looking for love, coexistence and spiritual connection. Ultimately he cannot escape his 'pedagogic' dimension, comes back and 'performs' together with Gauri. The novel at the same presents the story of Gauri who symbolically stands for a nation not only because she is infused with spirituality and humanitarian feelings but also someone who preserves the 'imagined community' to which both Gauri and Narendra belong to. The use of setting and festive celebration like eastern part of Nepal, Koshi river, celebration of *Holi* act as symbols and images and relate the 'interior life' of the novel with the 'exterior life of the reader's life.' The interplay of the relationships between Narendra/ Gauri and Narendra/Munaria reveals the relationship based on spirit, coexistence and humanitarian is valuable, immortal and very capable of germinating a sense of collectivity and unity that even makes someone ready to sacrifice for others. Such are the features of a nation or a national discourse that characterize the novel *Narendra Dai*.

V. Awakening of Cultural Coexistence, Collective Effort and Unity

The concept of nation is a modern phenomenon. Its conceptual elements have made it modern. Its focus on people, their coexistence, humanitarian attitude, development of shared identities and spiritual connection to develop the feeling of unity have dissociated the concept of nation from traditional notion of people's unity on the basis of religion and monarchy. Traditional notion, though talked about unity of people, presumed the supremacy of religion and monarchy.

A modern nation rejects religion, monarchy, race, ethnicity or language as the uniting factor. Every nation is composed by people who live in societal forms. Modern societies are not homogenous. They are characterized by pluralism in cultures, religion, race or ethnicity. Moreover the people of modern society rate themselves by freedom and equal rights. Obviously now the people need some new relations that can give them equal rights, freedom. It is impossible until and unless the people themselves develop 'desire to live together'. Societies marked by pluralism cannot 'imagine' themselves as the members of the same 'community' without developing shared identities. Religion, monarchy, race, ethnicity and language are the dividing forces in human development. Everyone is human at first but people are identified by their cultures, religion or race which are narrow and perilous.

Developing shared identities is not an easy task. The people should understand that construction of a nation is a 'minus-sum game'. Nation means people's collective move ahead to win but to do so they should be ready to lose as well. Cultural identities come up as serious issue in developing shared identities. The people should be ready to lose their cultural identities in public sphere. A modern person cannot live under the identity of someone else. The people should be ready to 'split'. This

‘splitting’ of subject gives solution to people’s fear of losing identity. ‘Double time narrative’ in the writing of nation encourages the people to move ahead with new national culture but by giving respect to ‘pedagogical’ dimension of one’s culture. The new national culture should have performative dimension. People can perform together if they have sense of belonging to the nation. Only shared identities in the form of new national culture can do so.

Koirala’s notion of nation is similar to what has been discussed above. His stress is on people and their collective effort. He believed collective effort of people to solve a problem develops a feeling of unity that inspires people to live together. Like other theorists on nation, he also discards the determining role of ethnicity, religion or race. The reason behind his wish of eliminating them for the welfare of human kind is they are human made demarcations and are dividing the people.

Koirala was very much aware of cultural dimension of Nepalese people, that it is the country of multi cultural and ethnic groups, and none of them in majority. Construction of nation based on ethnic and cultural identity can create the problem of identity. Along with political sphere, even in societal sphere, he has always spoken for ‘consent’ and ‘reconciliation’. Even in his notion on nation, he has never stressed on cultural and ethnic identities. His call for ‘consent’ and ‘reconciliation’ give rise to people’s ‘collective effort’ that can take its shape after the people realize that they first are humans. Koirala narrativises this notion of nation by using symbols and images in his two well known novels *Sumnima* and *Narendra Dai*.

Sumnima’s two characters Sumnima and Somdatta not only represent the Kirat and the Aryan cultures but the conflict and the debate between them is the reflection of the dialectic of Nepalese society, that it basically is composed of two

main descendents- the Mongols and the Aryans with plenty of cultural differences. By making Somdatta bow down before Sumnima and her culture to have a son, Koirala tears away the feeling of superiority evident in Somdatta. His boasting of being close to divinity is shattered. But Koirala makes humanity and compromise the winner in this battle. The successful married life between Somdatta's son and Sumnima's daughter indicates ethnic tension can and should be resolved only by forgetting, compromise and humanitarian attitude. Through the voice of Sumnima, Koirala speaks humans should behave like human. They should have natural behavior. The nature is same to every person. Every person should be treated on humanitarian ground. Ethnic, racial or religious demarcations are artificial ones.

In connection with the construction of nation, the significance of the novel is it asks all the ethnic and cultural groups to have the feeling of coexistence. They should move ahead creating new national identity along with understanding each other's traditions. That can only develop collective feeling to unite all the people. By presenting dialectic of Nepalese society, Koirala tries to make his readers feel that the 'internal time' of the novel matches with the 'external time' of readers everyday life. This feeling makes the readers believe it is their story- the characters are from their imagined community.

On the other hand the novel *Narendra Dai* constructs the imagination of nation focusing on spiritual and humanitarian side. Like *Sumnima*, it does not reflect dialectic of historical or cultural tension. It imagines the nation through the actions and movements of Narendra and his wife Gauri. Similar to *Sumnima*, the novelist makes spiritual love and humanitarian values the ultimate winner. Gauri, who stands for nation due to her humanitarian values in general and spiritual love for her husband

in particular, gets her husband back. The comeback of Narendra from India makes the readers see the story as the comeback of a member of their imagined community back to the nation. By making the relationship between Narendra and Gauri a successful one and Narendra's relationship with Munaria a failed one, the novelist is giving the message that humans can be happy and successful in their attempts characterized by humanity and spirituality because such characteristics give the feeling of collectivity and unity.

Against the argument of this thesis, questions might arise arguing there are other factors like political system and institutions which play crucial roles in the process of nation building. No doubt political system and institutions also play role in the construction of nation. The idea behind choosing the model of Anderson and Renan is they focus on the role humanity, compromise and shared identities which I think should come before political system and institutions. After the people of a country get emotionally attached and united, they can adopt suitable political system which can institutionalize governmental as well as non-governmental organizations. But it can be an area of further research in the works of Koirala.

Finally, these two novels are Koirala's narrativisation of his vision on nation without talking directly about political matters. Through these novels, Koirala urges all Nepalese people to understand the significance of unity and new narrative that can be achieved only through humanitarian values, cultural coexistence, compromise, desire to live together, collective effort and unity.

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