

Tribhuvan University

Bhupi Sherchan : A Rebel in Nepali Poetry

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Declaration

I hereby declare that the thesis entitled

“Bhupi Sherchan : A Rebel in Nepali Poetry”

is my own original work carried out as a Master’s student at the Department of English at Ratna Rajya Laxmi Campus except to the extent that assistance from others in the thesis design and conception in the presentation style and linguistic expression are duly acknowledged.

All the sources used for the thesis have been fully and properly cited. It contains no material which to a substantial extent has been accepted for the award of any other degree at Tribhuvan University or any other educational institution, except where due acknowledgement is made in the thesis.

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Letter of Approval

This is to certify that the thesis entitled “**Bhupi Sherchan : A Rebel in Nepali Poetry**” submitted to the Department of English, Ratna Rajyalaxmi Campus, by Manoj Lama, has been approved by the undersigned members of the research committee:

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Abstract

The major thrust of this research is to look at Bhupi Serchan's selected poems from the perspective of modernity. In order to look into the issue, the research primarily tries to see Bhupi's position in the Nepali poetry through the analysis of some of his selected poems. How Bhupi stands as a rebel Nepali poet has been seen with the theoretical tool of modernity.

In Nepali poetry also the writers have tried to make various experimentations as efforts to break away from the burden of tradition. They also have advocated freedom and have expressed their desire for change. Humanism, freedom and change have been some fundamental characteristics of Nepali modernity. Although there are various common aspects of modernity in the world around and the Nepali modernity, Nepali modernity is not the copy of the Western modernity. Depiction of local hue and metaphors in literary creations makes Nepali modernity unique. Nepali poets express their consciousness with the mass poverty and illiteracy, the play of foreign powers and existing oppression through their poetry. Within a short period of time, undergoing through various stages of development, Nepali poetry has been developing with various experimentations.

In Nepali modern poetry Bhupi Sherchan is one of the prominent figures. He is a rebellious and satirical voice of Nepali poetry. He laments on the loss and desires for betterment. Through his poetry, he ridicules the so called bravery of Nepali, mocks at the youths who gets enrolled in foreign army and expresses his contempt on those who enjoy the money they have got at the loss of their family members. Expressing such bitter reality of time, Bhupi gives a rebellious voice to modern Nepali poetry.

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Bhupi Sherchan as a Modern Poet: Rebellious Voice of Nepali Poetry

The present thesis entitled “Bhupi Sherchan: A Rebel in Nepali Poetry” is centered on the analysis that how can we say that Bhupi Sherchan is a rebel in Nepali poetry. Hence, the solution comes with the theoretical research and poems analysis of Bhupi Sherchan.

Bhupi Sherchan is one of the influential Nepali poets who emerged during the first half of the 21st century of Bikram Sambat. He was born in 1937 (1992 BS) in Thakkhola of Mustang district as the youngest son of Hitman Serchan, a wealthy business man who had a link with the ruling elite of the time and died on the eve of the declaration of multiparty democracy in 2046 BS. Bhupi was brought up in abundance but he died poor. His life had various phases. In the article “*Bhupi Sherchan: From Schoolboy to Sarvahara*” Michael Hutt writes:

His short life resembles a journey through a series of Nepali archetypes: the sharp-dressed son of a millionaire trader, the firebrand revolutionary student, the litterateur moving from one literary function to the next, the author of grandly ironic poetry, the angst-ridden sleepless soul, the heavy-drinking socialite and raconteur, the seeker of royal favours, the tragic invalid.(166)

Bhupi lived a short life when the society he lived underwent unprecedented social political and cultural change and got involved in the commotion of changes actively. He got his education in India like many of the Nepali elites’ sons used to go there for their education. When he was in Banaras in India as a college student, he came under the heavy influence of communism. Publishing an article in *The Rising Nepal* “*Bhupi Sherchan: Master Satirist in Nepali Poetry*,” Yuba Nath Lamsal writes: “As a rebellious boy right from the childhood, he then turned to be a revolutionary supporter of the communist ideology”. Similarly, Michael Hutt also verifies his youthful adoption of communist ideology. He asserts in *The Life of Bhupi*: “Bhupi’s conversion to communism is described as a decision that signaled his rejection of his family and its expectation of him”(176). This

communist ideology can most apparently be discerned in his early works which he brought out with the pseudo-name of *Sarvahara* means proletariat. His first work, *Parivartan* a play, was published when he was just 17 years old. He then brought *Nayajyaure*, a collection of folk lyrics. Both of these works were printed in Banaras in 1953 AD.

Parivartan was a play which out poured communist ideology. The play tells a story of a poor girl who suffers a lot of hardships due to social construction. Chandra, the heroine of the play is a naïve girl from a village. She is persuaded by Naval Bahadur, a man who works in the foreign army as a *Lahure*, to leave her village and elope with him. Chandra, deceived by his false love, follows him and as they reach Indian boarder Naval Bahadur feeds her a hallucinating drug and flees after looting her jewellery. Then being desperate, she tries to kill herself throwing under the train but an elderly man comes and persuades her to fight against the world which has done such an injustice upon her. Actually, the man appears to be a pimp. The pimp makes her take up prostitution. He tells her “Turn your beauty into a shop and shows this capitalist world: in your world, it is money who is the mother, a mother is only a plaything that can be bought with money” (qtd. in Hutt, *Bhupi Sherchan: From Schoolboy* 178). The play also makes a reference to political change undergoing in Nepal. It expresses concerns over communists’ distrust upon India as a negotiator. At the end, and all the characters return Nepal with changed mental set up. The play valorizes the working class and highlights the communist ideology.

Bhupi’s second work *Nayajyaure* is the first poetic work by him. He wrote the collection of lyrics in a folk meter called *jyaure* like Laxmi Prasad Devkota did while writing *Munamadan*. Bhupi’s communist ideology continues to appear in this collection, too. The ten poems collected in this slim book present Bhupi as anti-capitalist, anti-imperialist and a staunch supporter of communism. In *Kabi Bhupi: Visleshan ra Mulyankan* (*Poet Bhupi: Analysis and Evaluation*, Krishnahari Baral says: “The main objective of writing poetry for Bhupi at the beginning of the career seems to lead to the society for

change.”(6). Baral, specifically talking about *Nayajyaure* writes, “In *Nayajyaure*, there is more communist ideology rather than poetry. In his early works, Bhupi looks more like a politician than a poet.”(6) His highly critical views towards America and India in international level and Congress in national level have got an outburst in his early poetic works. For example, in “Beware, do not come to Nepal” he shouts, “Beware, American Jackal (*bwanso*), do not come to Nepal!” (qtd. in Hutt, *The Life of Bhupi* 28). In his poem “*It is Coming, the Time of the Poor*” the voice against imperial power becomes even stronger. He writes:

In Nepal, the black cloud of the American has spread
 But do not fear, the sun has burst through the clouds,
 Let us not sit in silence and be wasted by hunger and disease,
 It will not be long before they drink *raksi* and sell off the country (1-4)

Above quoted lines show Bhupi’s disgust over American involvement in Nepal’s internal affairs. Besides, he calls people to work together to fight against imperialism and the disparities of life before the country is sold. The last line in the quote expresses an intense distrust of the political leaders who might sell off the country in a fit of drunkenness.

Similarly, his anti-American sentiment gets a voice in *I Have a Plea* when he suspects that the Americans are trying to loot the wealth from our country. He writes, “The Americans have laid out their mission net in order to steal our wealth” (qtd. in Hutt, *The Life of Bhupi* 28). He even perceives the opening of cinema halls and dance clubs as the symbols of capitalist intrusion that will destabilize the moral and social values in Nepali society. Bhupi writes in *The Life of Bhupi*, “Instead of schools dance clubs have opened, and open are cinema halls too.”(28). Along with the anti-American sentiment, his anti-congress sentiment also gets a large space in his early poetic works. He accuses Congress Party of looting country and continuing the legacy of the Ranas. In the *Red Flag* he writes,

“Wealth that was left by the Ranas/ The Congress has acquired” (qtd. in Hutt, *Bhupi Serchan: From Schoolboy* 184, 1-2). Bhupi does not find any change in the life of people even after the political change. He stands as a rebellion in another poem “Summoning Song” as well. Bhupi writes in *Bhupi Serchan: From Schoolboy*: “The Ranas sucked us dry/ The Congress sucked dry.”(184). His anti-congress sentiment even comes to personal level. He scolds the two leaders of Nepali Congress Bisheswor Prasad Koirala and Matrika Prasad Koirala, who were brothers, for quarreling for power. In *I Have a Plea* he writes, “Koirala Baje do not destroy Nepal in a fight between brothers!”(184)

Some critics don't take Bhupi's these early works as poetry. For example, Bharat Mani Subedi writes, “At that time while writing *Parivartan* and *Nayajyaure* Bhupi did not realise that merely presenting a feeling or opinion in simple terms is not poetry” (qtd. in Hutt, *The Life of Bhupi* 29). Similarly, Krishnahari Baral characterizes this work as a speech of a political leader (13). However, the cultural wing of Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) considers these early verses are truly pro-people and revolutionary (Hutt, *The Life of Bhupi* 30). In the next phase of his poetic career, he comes with *Nirjhar* in 1958 (2015 BS), five years after his first work. The book consists of fifteen poems. Writing in book *The Life of Bhupi*, Michael Hutt writes:

This thirty-five-page booklet still display a streak of socialist rebellion here and there, but “Sarvahara” is no longer Bhupi's pen name and the poems are whimsical and romantic, revealing a new aspect of his poetic character.(60)

Analysing all the works by Bhupi, Baral describes, “*Nirjhar* is the midpoint in his poetic career as the many of the themes presented in *Nayajhyaure* continues to appear in it and it also laid the foundation for *Ghumne Mechmathi Andho Manchhe*” (*The Blind Man on a Revolving Chair*). With the publication of *Nirjhar*, a shift in Bhupi's poetry can apparently be seen. Baral confirms the shift and says, “Poems in *Nirjhar* indicate that Bhupi was now beginning to turn away from progressivism toward critical realism.”(16). Talking

about his poetic theory, Bhupi once said to Pradip Upadhya in an interview, “Cursed be the poet who does not write about the problems of the people but writes instead only about kisses. In the current lamentable situation, anyone who writes about wine (*suras*) and beautiful women (*Sundari*) has not fulfilled the duty (*dharma*) of a poet”(qtd. in Hutt, *The life of Bhupi* 61). However, Bhupi wrote about human love and passion later. His "Flame of Candle (*Main Battiko Shikha*)" and “My promise” can be seen as erotic poems.

What made Bhupi a real and popular poet is his third work, his magnum opus, *Ghumne Mechmathi Andho Manchhe*, which consists forty-two poems written between 1959 (2016 BS) to 1969 (2026 BS). For this collection, he was awarded Sajha Award- 1969 (2026 BS). Many critics agree that this is the best work by Bhupi. This work depicts him as a prominent modern signature in the cannon of Nepali poetry. Baral says in comparison to *Nirjhar* and *Nayajhyaure*, *Ghumne Mechamathi Ando Manchhe* is much better. At the same time, it is also true that in his fourth work *Bhupi Sherchanka Kabitaharu* his ideological base has shaken so starkly. In his last collection, Bhupi even wrote some panegyric verses valorising King Birendra who offered him a chair in the then Royal Nepal Academy. His “*Long Live Birendra*” which was published in the then Royal Nepal Academy poetry journal *Kabita* in October (*Kartik*)- December (*Poush*) issues 1986 (2043 BS), is an example of his shift in political ideology. Exceedingly worthy, in his poem *Birendra Zindabad*: “The hero of Nepal: Birendra Zindabad/ Peace giver, the hero of earth and heaven: Birendra Zindabad” (153, 1-2) shows his abandonment of his communist philosophy.

So Bhupi’s career as a poet and philosophy underwent a drastic change like the country he lived saw a massive social, political and cultural change. Although as a poet he brought four collections and his third one seems more mature and most influencing. So here we will look Bhupi as a modern poet in reference to his magnum opus, *Ghumne Mechamathi Ando Manchhe*.

Question of Modernity in Poems of Bhupi Sherchan

Through a short survey of his work, it becomes clear that he stands as a modern in his real life as well as in his poetic career. His adaptation of communist ideology at his early age can be seen as his attempt to rebel against his feudal family values. In his literary works, he gives the voice of down trodden people for an attempt to bring changes in society. His poems collected in *Nayajhure* and *Nirjhar* have an explicit voice against the establishment. He shouts against the imperial powers like America for having malignant interest and tells them to be aware. Similarly, he criticizes the ruling Congress parties for looting the nation. He expresses the disgust against the problems faced by people in modern time. He talks about victims of wars, particularly Nepalese who have been badly entrapped in the lasso of imperial powers. Like many modernist in Europe, he also expresses pessimism in many of his poems collected in his third collection. More importantly, his poems give a loud rebellious cry and satirical criticism of contemporary society.

Before Bhupi came very strongly in Nepali poetry, third Dimensionist poets Bairagi Kaila, Ishwor Ballav, and Mohan Koirala and his contemporary were in vogue. Their poems have been characterized as difficult one, which fact has been already established in this paper. In that pretext, Bhupi comes with very simple language and overhauls Nepali poetry from the den of difficulty. Hutt puts this fact. During the 1960s many Kathmandu writers adopted a self-conscious modernist style. Many of their poems were an articulation of individuated, even isolated, voices, focused increasingly on the subjective experience of social dilemmas, political contradictions, and distortions of culture. The writers of this period demolished the simple picture of the individual, their society, and their country and replaced it with one filled with complexities and contradictions. The freedom of speech they had lost under the Panchayat Regime was replaced by allegory, irony and symbolism. Unfortunately, however, they left ordinary Nepali readers behind, Bhupi Sherchan's great achievement was to restore the like between Nepali poetry and its readership. In this regard

Bhupi symbols are local; his poetry gets shape in contemporary events that happen around. Michael Hutt in *The Life of Bhupi* describes Bhupi's simplicity in other words: "Unlike his modernist contemporaries, Bhupi's poems did not require their reader to hold a university degree." (90) In this regard, Bhupi even revolts against the tradition of writing poetry itself.

Bhupi believes that the life in Nepal had not been modernized during his life time. In an interview with Bharat Mani Subedi, he says: "If we have reached the limit of modernity at all, it's only our mind that has got there." (qtd. in Hutt, *The Life of Bhupi* 99). Bhupi endows dual roles to an author. He says, "The writer is more intellectual and discerning, and is not only a creator but also an observer". That is why he opines that writers could have a better idea than any other ordinary people but he despises to present the problems of New York and Tokyo as if they are our problems too, that's certainly not our genuine form at all. He is to say that these kinds of far-fetched symbols make the poetry obscure. So he suggests the writer use local symbols. To quote Subedi's interview with Bhupi, "If you're going to use symbols, then it is more meaningful to use symbols that many of the people of your own country understand." (qtd. in Hutt, *The Life of Bhupi* 99). This idea has been apparent in many of his poems. For example, in "*Mero Chok (My Court Yard)*" he describes a familiar court yard that is encountered by many of us on many occasions in our life. In "*Hami (We)*" he presents our history and national concerns. He shows how our sovereignty has been manhandled by the foreign powers. How we have misrepresented ourselves on the pages of history. Thus his rebellion in the field of writing poetry has brought Nepali poetry to the mass and it has turned easy.

In sum, it can be said that Bhupi establishes himself as a rebellious poet by giving voice to the people and criticizing severely to the people in authority like in his poem "*Sarpako Khoji (Search of Serpent)*". In the poem, he calls people to go and search the serpentine heart which is looting the country. He shouts against the overwhelming corruption, tyranny and skyrocketing price. He terms the people involving in such

corruptions snakes and opines that unless such people are annihilated the country will continuously suffer.

As Bhupi advocates using familiar symbols, he has passed a lot of satirical remarks on contemporary society. There are many instances that Bhupi depicts a realistic picture of contemporary society.

Modernity in Making: Theoretical Perspectives

In the quoted verses from *The Waste Land*, modernist poet T. S. Eliot shows the disillusionment of modern man:

Son of man,
 You cannot say, or guess, for you know only
 A heap of broken images, where the sun beats,
 And the dead tree gives no shelter, the cricket no relief,
 And the dry stone no sound of water. Only
 There is shadow under this red rock,
 (Come in under the shadow of this red rock.),
 And I will show you something different from either
 Your shadow at morning striding behind you
 Or your shadow at evening rising to meet you;
 I will show you fear in a handful of dust. (21-31)

It states that modern man lives amongst the broken images where the dead tree cannot give shelter. The time shows him only shadows of constantly changing images of the life, a montage of life constantly fleeting. He has no idea of what is right and wrong. Rapidly changing images have created a kind of labyrinth and he cannot find his escape. However, he is conscious about his plight.

In his poem *The Second Coming* another modernist poet W. B. Yeats describes the sheer anarchy of the modern world. He writes: “He falcon cannot hear the falconer / Things

fall apart; the centre cannot hold / Mere anarchy is loosed up on the world.”(2-4) The centre has lost its power to hold things together and anarchy is loosed. Modern man has moved away from tradition and every moment new things are coming up.

Different scholars have located the origin of modernity differently. Marshall Berman in *Modernity- Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow* writes: “The birth of modernity in the beginning of the industrial revolution that had its root in Europe and North America.”(34) Some saw the birth of the modernity with the development of other socio-political situation at the end of the eighteenth century like American independence and the French revolution with its invocations of equality and human rights and consequent revolution and war that engulfed the Europe for some time. Some critics like Homi Bhabha and Edward Said identify the beginning of modernity much earlier at the time of European expansion and the colonial conquest and imperialism. For some other like Martin Heidegger and Jean Baudrillard, the key period of transition to the modernism is the Renaissance, which got its birth in Italy and got spread throughout Europe culminating with the birth of modern subject, capable of knowing the absolute truth through rational faculty of brain, in the philosophy of Rene Descartes, and invention of perspective in artistic representation.

Nevertheless, behind the scene, there are various factors that have helped to give birth to anarchy. There are certain awakenings and outburst of knowledge that framed the modern world. Jurgen Habermas claimed in *From Modernity: An Incomplete Project*: “Although, every generation has claimed to be modern contrasting with the previous one; the Christian claimed themselves to be modern contrasting themselves with the heathen past of Greco-Roman legacy; with the advent of renaissance, people claimed themselves to be modern, putting themselves in contrast with the mystical Middle Ages, most scholars agree that the project of modernity.”(26) This project of modernity began with much hope considering man as an agency to decide his future. Many of the writers, like T.S. Eliot, James Joyce, and Ezra Pound, felt keenly the loss of a sense of community in modern life.

Modern literature is the response to the conditions resulted from the project of modernity. The persistent philosophy behind the project of modernity is the desire for change and to see the possibility of change. Being modern means to embrace the changes and be updated with the time. In course of history, people brought new ideas and they broke away from the past; explored the future, and they preserved the continued longing for change. While defining modernity Marshall Berman says : “The body of modernity is the experience of space and time, of the self and others, of life’s possibilities and perils.”(15). For Berman: To be modern is to find ourselves in an environment that promises us adventure, power, joy, growth, the transformation of ourselves and the world and at the same time, that threatens to destroy everything we have, everything we know, everything we are.

In the globalized context adopting human rationality rather than religious faith and appraising secular temper rather than mythological and religious imagination have been the major tenets of modern world view. Professor Sanjeev Upreti, in *Nepali Modernities and Postmodernities: Theatre, Culture and Politics* shows the three aspects of western modernity states: “Capitalist/technological modernity referring to development of science and technology, politico-ethical modernity referring to secularization of politico-ethical sphere of society, and cultural aesthetic modernity.”(226) bringing the experiences of common people in the aesthetic and cultural realms. He notices romanticism as the point of departure in the modern literary experience that tried to bring the life of common people in the literary works. Then realism came for the same purpose during the nineteenth century Europe. This breaking away from traditional style and bringing forth new stylistic representation became part of modern cultural dimension.

Since the beginning of the project of modernity, it has been redefined and revised. The artistic experiments of romanticism and realism were later revised and new isms flourished. Upreti characterizes the artistic movements of late nineteenth century and the

early twentieth century as aesthetic imperatives of modernity. He claims same revisionist attitude is continued by even the postmodernist thinkers. For Uprety, “Just like romanticism, realism and modernism, postmodernism, too, is a still newer form, and a revision of modernity.”(229).

Now modernity can be defined as a perspective. It is a consciousness of time and its perils and prospects; it is the attitude of capturing fleeting present and making it sublime. A modern subject always keeps on questioning at his plight, scrutinizes his time with his intellect and adores the present. This attitude lets him to break away from the past and lets him his own world of prospects and problems. The eternal longing for change and desire to break away from normalcy is the prime concern of modern literature. A modern artist tries to invade the unknown territory and create a newer world. He gives a Promethean cry to rebel against oppressive traditional structures, becomes restless in the quest of human freedom, fulfillment, and becomes bold to explore the new.

Modernity as a tool of literary analysis emerged in the West. Scholars have diverse views regarding what modernity is. Some believe in provincialized modernity and some do not. However, they agree that the desire for change and consciousness of present is one of the major characteristics of modernity. Besides, aesthetic modernity has to be able to pick both the flitting moments and eternal values. Moreover, literary modernity also tries to rebel against existing values and break away from the past. A true modernity despises his past or existing and wants some changes so that something good may happen. Values like humanism standing against blind faith, freedom standing against tyranny and desires to be away from bondages are closely associated with the modernity.

In Nepali poetry also the writers have tried to make various experimentations as efforts to break away from the burden of tradition. They also have advocated freedom and have expressed their desire for change. Humanism, freedom and change have been some fundamental characteristics of Nepali modernity. Although there are various common

aspects of modernity in the world around and the Nepali modernity, Nepali modernity is not the copy of the Western modernity. Depiction of local hue and metaphors in literary creations makes Nepali modernity unique. Nepali poets express their consciousness with the mass poverty and illiteracy, the play of foreign powers and existing oppression through their poetry. Within a short period of time, undergoing through various stages of development, Nepali poetry has been developing with various experimentations.

In Nepali modern poetry Bhupi Sherchan is one of the prominent figures. He is a rebellious and satirical voice of Nepali poetry. He laments on the loss and desires for betterment. Through his poetry, he ridicules the so called bravery of Nepali, mocks at the youths who gets enrolled in foreign army and expresses his contempt on those who enjoy the money they have got at the loss of their family members. Sometimes, Bhupi in his "*Ghumne Mechama Ando Manchhe*" like Eliot does in his *The Waste Land*, weeps on his plight and expresses the meaningless of life and powerless plight of living. The speaker in the poem says he is just like a man on a revolving chair placed in an exhibition. It is an exhibition and he cannot see as he is blind but he is placed there for others' entertainment. For the speaker, the life is so futile that it has just turned a matter to be kept in an exhibition. Similarly, in his poem "*The New Road at Dusk: A Carnival of Life*" he bitterly criticizes the cultural decadence and blames people of practicing free sex. Expressing such bitter reality of time, Bhupi gives a rebellious voice to modern Nepali poetry.

Bhupi Sherchan as a Rebel in Nepali Poetry

In the first poem in the collection *Ghumne Mechamathi Andho Manchhe*, "*Mero Chok* (My Courtyard)" gives a sardonic picture of a courtyard which in wider view represents the country. He mockingly starts saying my courtyard has everything in abundance but when he illustrates what he has in his yard makes a grim picture:

“My courtyard is on a narrow street. What do I lack? / Everything’s here: Countless diseases, Unending hunger, Boundless grief; / Only joy is missing – Here it is banned.”(1-3)

Bhupi characterizes the yard devoid of happiness and filled with sickness, hunger, and grief. In further reference, he dismantles the traditional religious belief that God made human. The courtyard is inhabited by humans made by gods and gods made by humans but both of them are in despair. “The humans are in despondency because they are bitten / By fleas all night, by rupees all day.”(15). This shows the stark poverty in people’s life and sorrow invited by the materialist world. The moral and spiritual decay in modern society is depicted when he says the gods are in dejection because no one worships them or bows down on their feet.”(17). This courtyard is a typical modern space where men and gods are cursing each other (Translated by Hutt, *Mero Chok* 18). The courtyard which boasts having everything is hollow because of shifting values and norms.

Third poem in the collection *Ghumne Mechmathi Andho Manchhe*, “Always Always in My Dream (*Sadhai Sadhai Mero Sapanama*)” criticizes bitterly over the practise of Nepali young people being enrolled in the foreign army. This poem gives voice to the disapproval of Bhupi over the deployment of Nepali soldier by the British government to suppress the communist insurgency in Malays (Hutt, *The Life of Bhupi* 133). He is to opine that due to war Nepalese are fighting for other people, many women are wailing for their sons and many wives are rendered widow and many children have turned orphans. His disapproval comes in the form of wailing mother who cries in *Sadhai Sadhai Mero Sapanama*: “Now my milk is worthless / My motherhood has no meaning.”(4-5). In his dream the poet sees the mothers suckling what seems to be ugly, dirty piglets. Here the Nepalese who are working for British are characterized as dirty piglets. The young mothers in the poem beat their breasts, which are full of milk, and wail for their lost child. In the second stanza of the poem, the poet draws how old men and women are wailing for their lost sons. The poet, throughout the poem, shows how devastating the death of Nepali soldier

in Malaya is. The poem shows the pathetic plight of helpless old people, hopeless, helpless and tormented widow and abandoned children who have no future. The pathetic scene of hopeless future comes when he mentions in *Sadhai Sadhai Mero Sapanama* :

Countless orphans come before me,
 Bearing the germs of tuberculosis.
 They beg me for school fees,
 Money for books,
 Cricket bats,
 A father's kiss.
 They ask for protection
 And a night filled with sweet sleep.(25-33)

The poet does not praise the Nepalese's bravery; rather he becomes sad looking at the destroyed dream, lost peace and lost life. He pours out the biting truth of time in *Sadhai Sadhai Mero Sapanama*: "Whatever he sees in the dream are rather the reality of the land, the history of waking hour."(42). His loathsome attitude to the history and depiction of Nepali persona as a brave one becomes most prominent in *We (Hami)*. At a time there were attempts to create a history of Nepalese as Birjati, Bhupi questions that attitude. Pratyoush Onta has illustrated how brave history was being constructed in his research article "Creating a Brave Nepali Nation in British India: The Rhetoric of *Jati* Improvement, Rediscovery of Bhanubhakta and the Writing of *Bir* History". Onta states, Even as the first of the many five year plans was being drawn up in the mid-1950s, *bir* history ... was adopted by this state as the dominant mode of the national history of Nepal."(37-76). Bhupi has an intense disagreement with the national history adopted by the state. Going in contrast with the Nepali subject, Bhupi writes in *Hami*:

We are brave
 but we are stupid,

we are fools

so we are heroes

we could never be brave without being stupid.(91-95)

Bhupi uses various symbols to indicate Nepali subjectivity. “He looks Nepali subject as a fragile droplet of water.”(5) which gets evaporated with the heat of the sun and gets adrift in the air and comes down as it gets cooled. Actually, he criticizes Nepali people who have reach at a height for neglecting their own foundation. He uses another dehumanized image of Nepali subjectivity as a domesticated dog/ that barks at the street dogs through the window.”(15-16). He finds meaninglessness in every activity done by Nepalese although we shout, thunder, rise and run in *Hami*:

We are hollow within

Our rising has no importance,

Our running has no aim,

Our thunder has no more weight.(29-32)

Bhupi does not deny that there was a proud history but he thinks the height that was acquired by Nepalese have been lost away. Now the height has remained as an illusion or false one as stated in *Hami*:

We have lost our memories,

Forgotten our former height,

Forgotten the ordinary height of a man.

And so when an ordinary man,

Comes to lie down on the island of our belief

We look at him in astonishment,

We are men of Lilliput

We are dwarves.(43-68)

Bhupi terms Nepali subjectivity as feet that move on another's commands having no will power of its own. This particular context is relevant in the present political context of Nepal. The leaders here time again talk about foreign intervention, however, in each time, they themselves go to ask for international help to address the internal affairs. Approving this fact Binod Bista presenting a paper in a national level seminar says the practice of weak government leaders seeking foreign advice and support in petty internal matter such as resolving political disputes among nationally elected representatives of political parties has largely eroded Nepal's sovereign status hard earned by predecessors at a great cost and sacrifice (34). Bhupi has expressed his disgust to this kind of self-surrendering attitude of politicians which has grown as a national characteristic. To satire this attitude, he terms Nepalese as Eklabya who is denied being taught by a royal teacher, Dronacharya. Like Eklabya, Nepalese are also seeking a guide who has spoilt them. The foolishness of Nepali characters come from not being able to recognise ...capabilities ...power...very existence in *Hami*. He satirizes the politics :

We can never come to an agreement on our own accord

Someone has to broker our agreement

We can never put our disagreement to each other

Someone has to put that for us

We can never go ahead on our own.(99-103).

We are to be pushed from behind just like carom coins being dependent on a player. This particular part of the poem is still relevant at that context. The peace process of Nepal that took place after second people movement was negotiated by India. The whole peace process was headed by United Nation. Few years ago, *ekantipur.com* has published a news on September 28, 2013 that ...the CPN-Maoist led by Mohan Baidhya has written a letter to the United Nations (UN) Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, stating that the Nepal

Government has decided to mobilize the army in the upcoming Constituent Assembly (CA) election against the spirit of the Comprehensive Peace Accord.

These all show the lack of capabilities of our leaders to manage our internal affairs at which Bhupi mocks with self-critical portray.

A similar type of pathetic condition of Nepali subjectivity has been depicted in *Galat lagchha Malai Mero Deshko Itihas* (My Country's History Seems Wrong to Me). In the poem, the poet poses a contradiction between history and reality at present. In history, Nepali pride can be found but at present, the crisis has engulfed humans as well as God. The temples have been damaged and humans are helpless as they are unable to do anything despite being aware of the fact. In *Galat lagchha Malai Mero Deshko Itihas*, Bhupi writes:

When I come and stay over for a few days
And look at these courtyards steeped in hunger,
These alleyways like wilted flowers,
My country's history seems wrong to me.(1-4)

The poet's disgust to the history is intensified with the repetition of line, "My country's history seems wrong to me for three times." He says he has heard about the history but he does not believe because it has never been a reality. In the lines of *Galat lagchha Malai Mero Deshko Itihas*: "I hear, I always hear, I only hear, / but I doubt it." (30-31) poses the contrast between past and present clearly as the poet only hears about the history but it has never been materialized.

His *Ghumne Mechma Andho Manchhe* (A Blind Man on a Revolving Chair) "makes a cruelly satirical depiction of a man in a position of authority who is corrupt, narrow-minded, and insensitive." (121). Baral also sees this poem in the same light as Hutt has depicted. Baral cites in *Ghumne Mechma Andho Manchhe*: "When Nepal gets squeezed with in Kathmandu / Kathmandu shrinks to New Road / and New Road gets trampled by numerous feet." (19-21) to highlight Bhupi's satire on the development planners who

consider Nepal within Kathmandu only. Bhupi blames them for being oblivious to the plight of the people who are living in the remote villages of the country. Baral presents the poem as a depiction of the apathetic condition of people in the far away village where they cannot find their Lethe River which Baral interprets as a symbol of affinity or kinship (114).

Nonetheless, this poem can be interpreted from another angle, too. This poem which has the honour to get in the title of the collection itself can also be seen as a representation of horrific life in modern cities. The person in the poem is tormented. He is hollow within; he dozes all day long and like a sick bird *Malewa* he is tormenting himself by poking at his own chest. He sobs like a pine forest. He thinks his life is as unworthy as a mushroom which can never realize the enormity of the earth and the sky. When the persona reaches to New Road and happens to see so many people buying and selling things, he gets frightened because of the problems that come like a swarm of bees to bite him. Even the light of motors frightens to him. All these images in the text create a frightening modern city where this persona has been entangled in. Like sinners on the Judgement Day, he desperately searches the River Lethe. However, he does not find it and takes refuge to drunkenness to be away from the torment of the realities around him. As he has been in drunken fit all the time he has been pathetically oblivious about the changes. The persona compares himself with a blind man who has been forced to sit on a revolving chair that has been kept for exhibition.

The person in the poem cannot be a powerful officer. He has no power rather he is trying to run away from the realities of life. He wants to get cut off from the past. He compares himself with the sinner on the Judgement Day and he is desperately seeking the Lethe River. According to western myth on the Judgement Day, dead souls will be judged by God according to their work on earth. The dead souls after they leave the world will send to hell where people will forget everything they have done on earth. To forget the earthly life every soul has to take a bath in the River Lethe. Lethe, according to Greek mythology,

is a river in underworld whose waters caused forgetfulness. Till the dead souls can drink from this reviver they get tormented by the memory of their earthly life but once they drink from the waters of Lethe, they were left with nothing to reminisce about for eternity. Here, in the poem, the person does not get it and so he begins his day with a cup of tea and ends with a glass of *raksi* (wine). The wine in the cup has made him so oblivious of everything around him. He says:

I am the only one who is unaware
Of the changes,
The vistas,
The pleasure around me
Like a blind man at an exhibition,
Forced to sit on a revolving chair.(41-46)

The man who is sitting on the revolving chair cannot be an officer who is arrogant but he is forced to be there and the chair also does not have any power because it is in an exhibition. Instead, this poem presents a person who is devoid of pleasure or joy of the world because he has not been able to cope with rapid changes that are coming in front of him. Thus his life has been as meaningless as a blind man in an exhibition. Actually, an exhibition is meant to be observed with eyes. There no meaning in going to an exhibition without having vision. The lack of happiness of the person comes being out of context at one place, at the same time it comes for being forced to do what he does not like. So, this poem is depiction of a modern man who is forced to live in this constantly changing world without being able to grasp the pleasure it provides.

In “*Yo Hallai Hallako Desh Ho* (This is the land of Heresy and Rumour)” like many modernist poets in the West, Bhupi comes to sharp criticism of the existing political dishonesty, corruption, and intellectual and moral decadence. Here, Hutt points out Bhupi’s vision of Nepal as a land of wasted lives and wasted potential. Bhupi raises questions on the

way things are done. He criticizes the singing competitions for one who needs a hearing aid to listen are the judges; he criticizes the athletics competitions for wooden legs win; he criticizes the way creations of writers are judged for heartless or feeling less person becomes a judge. He finds spiritual decadence as people are ready to sell their souls and the leader is the one who can trade on human souls. The political dishonesty that he mentioned is still relevant in Nepali society. There is a mass distrust of our political system. Through this poem, the poet mocks at every terrain of social follies.

Bhupi feels sad for the pollution in holy rivers the Bagmati and the Bishnumati. As the people have forgotten the sacredness of the temples and stupas, they are busy in the sexual union on these sites rather than paying homage to god. He expresses his anger for poets of this country who went sick due to problems of this country are treated in foreign hospitals and some poets die due to lack of medical attention. In this context, he is making the reference in regard to Devkota and Rimal. Devkota died as there was not timely treatment and Rimal was treated in India for his mental problems. He also pours his anger at the enrollment of Nepali youth in a foreign army and expresses his disgust here where free mothers give birth not to a son but a *lahure*.

He does not find anything positive in his country. For pointing out the negativity in the whole context he is ready to be labelled as a traitor. However, he claims the country belongs to him as well. That reflects poet's deep love for the country. Since it is his country and he loved his land he says he has the courage to say:

This is a country of hearsay and rumour

If one were to unearth the foundation of each house here only

Hearsay and rumour would be found heaped there

That's why this is a country of hearsay and rumour.(63-66)

“*Mardaichha Hamima Hami Bacheko Yug* (The Age We Are Living Is Dying within Us)” shows the world where people are terrified with the problems of the age they

are living. Here Bhupi sketches a man's struggle to come to this world when the couple is killing their foetus. Man is terrified by the death before they are born. The poet mentions the Nazi's concentration camp to show horrific death that the people are to face in this modern age. Since the death is so pervasive, modern man is living thinking that he has been into the world after the death. He is developing cold and unenthusiastic feelings; housing distrust against the age he is living. This poem also makes a sharp satire on foetus killing, which has been a common practise in the world.

The vicinity described in "*Sanjhako Naya Sadak Jindagiko Jatra* (New Road at Dusk: The Carnival of Life)" gives a realistic picture of a space in Nepali society which is trying to adjust with the newly familiarized western modernity. The writer sketches a picture of a woman who has left the traditional Nepali dress and finds people living a reckless life. If we are to take Baral's interpretation: "New Road stands for a lady; footprints of penicillin's journey stands for an invalid person suffering from sexual diseases and stale fruit of her youth stands for breasts of a sex worker."(115). The poem shows the moral decadence by describing free sex practised in public spaces. In addition, the lack of money in the pocket of the persona in the poem relates the problems enhanced by the capitalist society which gives the highest value to money. If one has money, he has a reputation and can feel his existence. Otherwise, he has to leave the space as the narrator leaves New Road. After leaving New Road, he comes towards open theatre to exit from the suffocation. However, he does not find a resting place. He finds emptiness everywhere like in his empty cigarette-packet. He has come to the martyrs to find some meaning in life but even the martyrs get vanished in the fog. He gets no direction and is dismayed as a representative figure of modern society.

"*New Road at Dusk: The Carnival of Life*" is also a satire of the modern society where people are advocating free sex. This also mocks at the social apathy where people are mercilessly crushed under the economic cycle of the modern world. At the same time, the

poet shows invasion on native culture by foreign culture is also shown in the poem. In New Road, in evening, Nepalese are trying to emulate westerners by wearing the western style of clothes and hippy life style. However, Bhupi mocks on the inability of people on distinguishing right from wrong.

Bhupi also satirizes the youths who get enrolled in the foreign army. Bhupi expresses his intense anger upon those youths who fight in wars on behalf of foreign powers. In his poem "*Titra, Battai ra Bhakkuko Rangoko Santanharuprati* (To the Children of Quails, Partridges and Sacrificial Buffaloes)" he terms the youths working in foreign forces as *titara* (partridge), *battai* (quail) and *bhakkuko rango* (drunken he buffalo sacrificed at a ceremony held in open theatre Kathmandu during a festival). These birds and animals die for no purpose. Like these animals, Nepalese young men are dying in foreign land meaninglessly. He angrily calls them *Goru Khali* (mere oxen) instead of saying *Gorkhali*. His anger not only falls upon the young men who are ready to die a meaningless death but also on the family members of these young men, who rejoice their life with the blood money they get as their family member or kinsmen die in a foreign land. The poet addresses them: "Don't you find the smell of the blood of your kinsmen in the money or material you rejoice with?"(26-27) With this sharp criticism, he suggests the young people not to go to get enrolled in foreign forces and encourages the family members of such young people to stop them from getting enrolled in the foreign army. Although Bhupi's tone is very sharp in the poem, he intends social reformation.

Bhupi distastes on *Panchayati* system, price hike, corruption, tyranny is manifested in *Sarpako Khojima* (In Search of Snakes) very intensely. In the poem, Bhupi terms oppressors, tyrants, corrupts and feudal lords as snakes and he opines that unless they are wiped out from the country, the country cannot progress. Talking about *Sarpako Khojima* Baral quotes:

Kathmandu in addition

The country as a whole
 day by day
 is getting poisoned
 just like a man
 bitten by a snake (19-24)

Here, the poet wants to mark the snakes that are biting the country and he wants to free it from them. He writes, "I am in search of those snakes / Who are constantly biting the country." (27-28).

Like many modernists, he also shouts at the terror of war and changing scenario in a pristine primitive world and he lamented the loss of peace in the world before. In New Year (*Naya Barsa*) people sharing their good wishes in the modern world are haunted by atomic war. In this line, Hutt says *Monkeys of the Cold War* is one of Bhupi's most original, but for some reason, the poem is rarely cited by critics as one of his most notable works. Similarly, in *Letter to Ho-Chi-Minh (Ho Chi Minh lai Chitthi)* he talks about the war and criticizes the warmongers. Along with this, his socialist ideology also gets space in this poem. Similarly, his *Bhairahawa and Pokhara* depict the invasion of modernity in the pristine space. In *The Life of Bhupi*, Michael Hutt writes: "He gives a very distorted image of Bhairahawa using the metaphors like dirty and dry...bare and deserted, like a barren women's body." (10) Likewise, he paints a sardonic picture of Pokhara. Unlike romantic poets, he does not get spellbound by the scenic beauty of Pokhara but he becomes conscious about the increasing rate of migration, the arrival of foreigners and the increasing temptation of young people to get enrolled in the foreign army.

Most of his poems collected in his master piece dwell on sharp criticism of society he lived and his bitter satire and black humour are directed with the vision of the need for change and development. So, he becomes an authentic voice of a rebel in Nepali poetry.

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