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Counter-Hegemonic Consciousness in Nepali Poetry: A Comparative Study of Mukarung’s “Bise Nagarchi’s Explanation” (*Bise Nagarchiko Bayan*) and Devkota’s “The Lunatic” (*Pagal*)

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Abstract:

This article attempts to explore and analyze how Nepali poets Shrawan Mukarung and Laxmi Prasad Devkota promote counter-hegemonic consciousness in their poems “Bise Nagarchi’s Explanation” and “The Lunatic” respectively. It shows that the former exposes the hegemonic attitude and consciousness of monarchy presenting an imaginary dialogue between Bise Damai and King Prithvi Narayan Shah and the latter depicts the poet’s anger, hatred and super-consciousness against the hegemonic structure of the society, leaders, rulers and the intellectuals and their hypocrisies, atrocities and immoralities whereas the latter attacks upon the so-called powerful people through the use of self-irony. Both Mukarung and Devkota use madness metaphor to dismantle the so-called civilized superior and powerful hegemonic culture and consciousness and thereby amalgamating politics and aesthetics. Mukarung raises the voice of the voiceless and choice of the choiceless through an untouchable who rejects the hegemony of monarchy disobeying the king and his orders whereas Devkota raises voice against social follies forcefully established. Both of them explode as volcano, fire and storm against discriminatory and dehumanizing practices prevailing in the society. To justify the argument, Antonio Gramsci’s idea of hegemony and Jane Mansbridge’s ideas of counter-hegemonic consciousness have been used.

Keyterms: counter-hegemony, super-consciousness, resistance, identity, politics, aesthetics.

Introduction

Hegemony refers to the control by consent. The state, rulers, intellectuals, lawyers, journalists and also the writers attempt to create hegemony upon the people through different discourses turning them ultimately to knowledge and truth. "Hegemony is often seen as an act of domination of ideas, without the use of violence, but this limits it to some kind of political project taking place between different social groups (Joseph "Hegemony" 1 qtd. in Bernardi 375) There is no use of direct force or power in hegemony. Generally, those who have control over economy can hegemonize the world through the economic resources. "Hegemony has economic grounds" (Im "Hegemony and Counter-Hegemony" qtd. in Bernardi 378) Therefore, the root of hegemony is economy itself. Economically powerful ones always try to control the whole society inferiorizing others but tactfully convincing them. Society, economy, politics, culture, law and son are under their control. "The theory of hegemony combines the political moment of agency with the structural nature of social reproduction" (Joseph "Hegemony" 161). The theories of hegemony focus on political, social and power structures.

The creators of hegemony establish different structures in order to convince the people and show dominance over them. By nature, human beings want to be rulers not ruled which is the superiority complex inculcated in the deep core of human mind and heart. Therefore, anti-hegemonic and counter-hegemonic consciousness arises in the mind of the people when hegemony dominates too much crossing the boundary. In anti-hegemony, the people singularly raise voice against hegemony whereas in counter-hegemony, the hegemonized collectively fight against the mainstream hegemonizing force or center. Counter-hegemonic consciousness refers to the consciousness emerged as a resisting force to the hegemonic force. "Political engagement can help to fight the hegemonic forces and to work toward developing new imaginings and practices for resistance" (Shear 65 qtd. in Bernardi 380). To resist the hegemonic control, political consciousness plays a role of counter-force. Talking about counter hegemony, William Carroll in the article "Hegemony, Counter-hegemony and Anti-hegemony" depicts: "A viable *counter*-hegemony draws together subaltern social forces around an alternative ethico-political conception of the world, constructing a common interest that transcends narrower interests situated in the defensive routines of various groups" (21). Such spirits are depicted in the literary contributions. Sometimes, the writers counter the hegemony directly and some other times indirectly amalgamating the aesthetics and politics in the texts.

Counter-hegemonic consciousness plays a vital role in making people with the interest of liberation for hegemony. Such counter-hegemony “has to adopt the organizational capacity to establish a rival historical bloc to the prevailing hegemony by sustaining a long war of position” (Morton 261; qtd. in Carroll 21). This consciousness, in order to win, must form a bloc or group to fight against the powerful hegemony. For new order and system in the society, promotion of democratic culture through rise of counter-hegemonic consciousness is necessary. “Counter-hegemonic politics aspires to build consensus around an emancipatory project – to go beyond the fragments of resistant subcultures and movements, to make political unity across cultural differences” (Sanbonmatsu, 130; qtd. in Carroll 30), supporting an alternative social vision.

Counter-hegemonic consciousness can be defined as the resisting spirit dismantle any kind of hegemonic power- cultural, political, economic, military and technological. This consciousness confronts and fights to the prevailing status quo and its dominant supremacy hierarchizing the whole system. “Counter-hegemony is a creation of an alternative hegemony on the terrain of civil society in preparation for political change” (331). Counter-hegemonic consciousness is an alternative to the political change within the individual. Theodore H. Cohn defines Counter-hegemony as “an alternative ethical view of society that poses a challenge to the dominant bourgeois-led view” (131). Such consciousness challenges the bourgeois ideology. The theorist Gramsci recognizes that counter-hegemonic resistance necessarily involves struggling over the hearts and minds of people, their attitudes, beliefs, and emotions about the world (Reed 3 qtd. in Zembylas 8). Counter-hegemonic consciousness counters the regressive forces within the human beings and encourages for resistance. “The understanding of subaltern feelings and how they are embodied in ideology is central to the very unfolding of counter-hegemonic practices (Zembylas 10). Such practices focus on how the downtrodden people feel about the society, politics and change. “Counter-hegemony is a political and affective practice with transformative implications” (Gramsci 157). The major motive of counter-hegemony is to transform the thinking of the people first and the structure of the society second attacking upon the hegemonic structures.

Modern Nepali poetry plays a significant role in promoting the counter-hegemonic consciousness in the society. The poets like Bhupi Serchan, Laxmi Prasad Devkota, Gopal Prasad Rimal, Lekhnath Paudyal, Siddhi Charan Shrestha, Shrawan Mukarung and so on fight against different hegemonic rulers in the history of Nepal. Shrawan Mukarung and Laxmi Prasad

Devkota give counter to the hegemonizing structure of the society in their poems. In the poem "Bise Nagarchi's Explanation", Mukarung challenges the hegemony of the monarchy presenting a *dalit* character Bise Nagarchi who speaks to King Prithvi Narayan Shah proving that he has been mad. His logic shows that he has been mad due to rise in counter-hegemonic consciousness within himself. In "The Lunatic", Devkota attacks upon the so-called civilized intellectuals and rulers proving himself to be lunatic. He claims that he is lunatic as he is different from the ordinary self-centric people. Both of them generate and promote political consciousness preserving aesthetic quality of literary piece in their poems.

Objective of the Study

The objective of the study is to find out Mukarung's and Devkota's attempt to reflect counter-hegemonic consciousness in their poems "Bise Nagarchi's Explanation" and "The Lunatic" respectively. It also tries to explore how they generate and promote political consciousness to challenge the hegemonic domination of the rulers together with preserving aesthetic quality of literary piece in their poems.

Methodology

This study is a library-based literary research and therefore, textual analysis method has been used here. "Bise Nagarchi's Explanation" and "The Lunatic" by the Nepalese and writers Shrawan Mukarung and Laxmi Prasad Devkota are the basic texts for analysis. Both texts attempt to destabilize hegemonic consciousness and structure prevailing in the Nepalese society and thereby promoting counter-hegemonic consciousness through their poems in order to advance human society and civilization bringing to the track from corrupt deviation.

Theoretical Background

Counter-hegemonic consciousness refers to the consciousness emerged as a reaction to the hegemonic exploitation of the people by the hegemonic oppressors. It also can be taken as oppositional consciousness. In the issue, quoting from Jane Mansbridge's book *Oppositional Consciousness: The Subjective Roots of Social Protest* (2001), Genevieve Negron-Gonzales in "Hegemony, Ideology and Oppositional Consciousness" (2014) writes: "Oppositional consciousness is an empowered mental state that prepares members of an oppressed group to act

to undermine, reform, or overthrow a system of human domination...”(5; 2). This kind of consciousness counters all kinds of dominations upon the marginalized common humans.

It is sure that, in hegemonic (reactionary) ideas and counter-hegemonic (progressive) ideas, the progressive, counter-hegemonic ideas win sooner or later.

Counter hegemony struggles over the established hegemonic structures. Gramsci says that “the critical understanding of oneself takes place through a fight of political ‘hegemonies’, of contrasting directions, first in the field of ethics, then in politics, to finally reach a higher processing of one’s conception of the real” (1385 qtd. in Bernardi 377). He argues that the first step is to be politically conscious and then theory and practice unite. For the non-dominant classes to achieve hegemonic power, they have to organize themselves counter-hegemonically. He suggests a strategy of ‘war of position’, which implies constructing a different historical bloc, and detaching the intellectuals from the other bloc. A war of position opens space for new spatio-temporal totalities creating the conditions under which a democratic culture and new social order can prosper.

Textual Analysis

Nepali poetry challenges the established discourses in different periods of history. The Nepalese poets Shrawan Mukurung and Laxmi Prasad Devkota stand as the major figures in Nepalese history to dismantle the traditionally established hegemonic structures, norms, values, beliefs, political ideologies and social practices through their poems. The former represents the counter-hegemonic consciousness of the marginalized people in the monarchy-led Nepalese society whereas the latter depicts the voice of the good-hearted extraordinary intellectuals contributing for social transformation though charged as mad by the society through their poems “Bise Nagarchi’s Explanation” and “The Lunatic” respectively. Though the former’s issue is more political and the latter’s is more intellectual, they raise voice against dominating hegemony in order to establish a just, moral, equal and humane society which they do combining the politics and aesthetics.

“Bise Nagarchi’s Explanation” questions upon the powerfully established monarchy system and its discourses through a *dalit* representative Bise Nagarchi, a tailor of King Prithvi Narayan Shah in Gorkha Kingdom two and half centuries ago who mentions that he has been mad with rise in consciousness. This poem is an imaginary dialogue between King Prithvi

Narayan Shah and Bise Damai but it seems as if they are having conversation 250 years later, in present-day Nepal. Addressing the King as *Maalik* (master), Bise attacks upon Shah's autocracy proving himself to have gone mad but it is an irony towards the so-called powerful and democratic ruler considered to be the father of unified Nepal. Mukarung projects the untouchable Bise helplessly crying before the king proving himself to have gone mad but actually he creates a counter-discourse inculcating resisting consciousness and spirit within the lower caste tailor. The poet utters: "Master! /In this Gorkha Kingdom I/ Have gone mad after two hundred and fifty years. /My head is whirling /Land seems to be in the sky/Sky seems to be in the land /My eyes are dazzling /I have been seeing your heads ten/Oh! Where are my soles? /Where is Bise Nagarchi? / Master! /I've gone mad" (1-12). It is highly ironical to show that Bise has been abnormal. Actually, he has been aware and because of his anger and hatred towards the king's oppression and exploitation of the whole history of Nepal and Nepalese society. "Oppositional consciousness is an empowered mental state that prepares members of an oppressed group to act to undermine, reform, or overthrow a system of human domination..."(Mansbridge 5) He doesn't see anything normal in the kingdom and, as claimed by Mansbridge, counter-hegemonic spirit rises within himself.

Mukarung contributes to raise resisting consciousness to the marginalized people of the Nepalese society through the character Bise Damai in his poem. "A viable *counter*-hegemony draws together subaltern social forces around an alternative ethico-political conception of the world, constructing a common interest that transcends narrower interests situated in the defensive routines of various groups" (Carroll 21). Similar to Carroll, Mukarung attempts to bring the downtrodden people together in order to fight against the hegemonic force of monarchy. Presenting the matter so much sarcastically, he questions upon the hegemonic establishment and practice of the monarchy. In the poem, Bise glorifies his own issues and sufferings belittling them and presenting himself as inferior and wrong. But, it is the aesthetic quality of the text to highlight on the political issue of power, domination, repression and expression. He depicts the serious issues of rape, murder, ravage and dehumanization so simply that the lines carry the aesthetic beauty. In the poem, Bise speaks:

Nothing but only my wife has been killed
Nothing but only my daughter has been raped
Nothing but only the hut of Bise has been burnt

Should I have to go extreme? Spit on your face Bise....

I've gone mad, master!

I've gone mad. (20-25)

Bise asks question to himself why he is abnormal after two hundred and fifty years as nothing wrong has happened. The murder of his wife, rape of his daughter and ravage of his home are nothing at all but why he goes to the extreme. He proves that he has gone mad. He spits on the face of himself for his disgusting activities. But, reversely, the poet attempts to show the anger and hatred towards the oppression of the marginalized people by the king and its structure. Bise has gone mad not because his mind gets cracked but because the volcano of resistance has exploded within himself. Now he can no more tolerate the perpetual exploitation and dehumanization of the innocent dalits by monarchy. He is mad due to the revolutionary spirit and consciousness emerged in his mind and heart. By asking himself what has happened to him after two hundred and fifty years as he is not willing to serve the king as before, Bise dismantles the superiority and feudal culture of the king which has flattened the people preventing rise in critical consciousness. Bise expresses: "I must have served the king of the king/To safeguard the history/Touching feet of Gorakhkali/I must have paid back your mercy (Nunako sojho)/What happened to me after two hundred fifty years?/This Bise has suffered digestive ailment, *Maalik* (master)!/I have gone mad" (13-19). Using the ironically powerful words and expressions, the poet attacks upon the hegemonic rule of the king in Nepal.

Resistance is not only the right but also the duty of the conscious and honest people. Since Prithvi Narayan Shah's time, the monarchy in Nepal has made the people only subjects born to serve the king worshipping them as god. This institution has promoted only the singular exclusive ideology, culture and identity marginalizing all the dalits and janajatis and using them only as the weapons to protect the throne. After two hundred fifty years, the voiceless and choiceless have developed courage to negate the order of the king breaking all the loyalties and associations to the monarchy. It is possible due to rise in consciousness of self-identity, humanity, democracy and the human rights. Such consciousness has strengthened the resisting spirit of the marginalized and exploited people and so they have started speaking against cruelties, hypocrisies, atrocities, dishonesties, immoralities and discriminations. Bise Damai is a representative voice against the autocracy of monarchy. In the poem Bise speaks:

My hand splintered

Now I can't sew clothes for your courtiers
To blow *Narsinga* and *Sanai*
Or I can't sing the song of either good luck or death
My leg broke
I can't guard your kingdom
My mind is not in right condition
Now I can't speak right
Master! I've gone mad. (26-34)

When the counter-hegemonic consciousness rises as madness in the person, s/he disobeys all the orders. In the poem, Bise says that he can't sew clothes for the king as his hands are broken. He can't guard the kingdom as his legs are broken. He can't speak and sing the song of life and death for the king. It means that Bise totally disregards the king. He doesn't support the king as the king has demolished his life forever. This is the spirit of resistance developed within the untouchable who has always supported the king in the past. The voiceless is raising the voice of disobedience which is resistance of the autocratic rule of the king. The hegemony of the king has been challenged by the disrupting voice of the marginalized Bise. Through the lines, Mukarung glorifies the counter-hegemonic consciousness lately developed within the down trodden people of Nepal.

The critical consciousness encourages people to challenge the hegemonic structures and practices. When the counter-hegemonic consciousness rises, all the illusions get removed and people get disillusioned; everything gets clear. Then people start questioning the power-established knowledge and truth. They put questions upon the facts which they have ever imagined. The questions to the self-declared divine gods are the results of the courage developed upon the marginalized and suppressed people. "Political engagement can help to fight the hegemonic forces and to work toward developing new imaginings and practices for resistance" (Shear 65 qtd. in Bernardi 380). In the poem, Bise attacks upon the power, ideology, culture and truth of the monarchy raising political consciousness of the people as mentioned by Boone Shear. All the ups and superiorities have been downsized and brought down to the earth through the questions put forward by the untouchable. The political and cultural supremacy of the monarchy has been mocked at and demolished through the critical consciousness of the dehumanized human. Bise asks:

Master!
 Does your sword now chop heads, or petals?
 I've been in illusion.
 Does your rifle shoot down ideas, or people?
 I've been in illusion.
 Did your subjects make this kingdom, or you?
 I've been in illusion.
 Master, I've been with you now for 250 years,
 How can I be a terrorist?
 I've only gone mad, Master!
 Have gone Mad. (43-53)

Bise challenges upon the claim of the monarchs that the nation Nepal is formed and earned with great effort by the king. He mocks at the sword and rifle of the king asking whether his sword chops heads or petals, and whether the rifle shoots down ideas or people. The meaning of the question who made the kingdom-subjects or the kings- is that the nation is made by the effort of the people not the kings. Bise's questions are rhetorical which destabilize the monarchy established truth and history and focus on people's real truth and history. The monarchs have the trend of declaring terrorists to the freedom fighters and voice raisers. Therefore, Bise counters the king how he can be terrorist as he has been living with the king for two hundred fifty years. Reversely, the king himself is a terrorist spreading horror and terror to the common people misusing the power. Bise claims that he is not a terrorist but has gone mad only. It's a mockery upon the sane king.

Mukarung mockingly puts forward the excuses made by Bise Damai with King Prithvi Narayan Shah. But within the excuses of madness, he raises the strong questions upon the autocracy raising the voice of equality, humanity and morality. His mad voice attempts to remove all kinds of discriminations prevailing in the society promoted by monarchy. The so-called immortal morsels by the king have also been questioned by the disobedience of the untouchable. The poet expresses: "Being drunk/I may have told that I formed this nation /I may have told that my needle and Bhanubhakta's song are equal/I may have shown my naked body /To those who have worn clean clothes sewn by myself /Going mad I may have scolded my own god" (55-60). Though Bise excuses for misdoings which are the result of madness, it is in true

madness, people speak the truth. He also speaks the truth that the needle of the tailor and the song of Bhanubhakta are equal. It is ironical that one who sews clothes for others has to remain naked and it is the result of the corrupt and oppressive culture of the rulers. Moreover, it is true that the misbehaved scold themselves, their gods and all others. It is the critical and oppositional consciousness emerged that leads Bise to question upon the unjust monarchy. He further questions: "Where have the generations reached/Who have been grown on the sewn rags by me for two hundred fifty years?/I may have desired to search/The wholes on my fingers and the blood/Back supported me/I may have felt/The world of thread sewn by myself is larger than the world earned by the sword" (63-69). Actually, the world created by the honest people through their labour and sweat is greater than the world by the sword. Bise expresses his anger with revolutionary spirit that the tortures upon him really encourage him to fight against the tyranny. The madness as a metaphor is an explosion, a bursting-out of the frustration that the marginalized people have been subduing for centuries.

Similarly, Devkota questions upon the sanity and superiority of the society and the so-called intellectuals as well as the rulers in the poem "The Lunatic". It is his greatness to present himself inferior to the society and prove himself to be mad. Throughout the poem, he provides evidences which prove himself lunatic. He is different from the normal people and his world is also totally different and so he is declared mad by the society. Actually, he is extraordinary having counter-hegemonic consciousness to challenge all the follies and transform the society. It is quite ironical to the corrupt, selfish, hypocritical, pompous, and arrogant people who forcefully call Devkota mad. Through the poem, he attacks upon the persons having superiority complex and imagines of a humanitarian, moral, equal and a just society. The poet presents: "Your exact equations are right forever and ever. / But in my arithmetic, take one from one-/and there's still one left./You get along with five senses,/I with a sixth./You have a brain, friend,/I have a heart./A rose is just a rose to you-/to me it's Helen and Padmini" (26-34). Devkota is guided not by head but by heart and therefore there is no calculation of profit and loss, more and less in his mathematics. He works with the sixth sense that is the divine one every normal human lacks. He finds life even in the dead and death within the life. He holds the super-consciousness that makes him mad for the society. Here, the poet is challenging the static, lowly conscious society and people. The poet dreams of an equal, just and humane world which is non-discriminatory. The lines "harsh cruelty is real for you./I try to catch a dream" (44-45) show that

he has kind heart and loves all the people equally. But he is called mad as the society can't understand his magnificence and infinity.

Devkota ironically attacks upon those who call him mad. When he shows serious heart to decay of beauty and life-turning-to-death, people call him cracked. When his soul is touched by the enlightened soul of god and he gets divinity, people do not digest it. When he enjoys with nature, people call him lunatic. It shows that the normal people can't feel beauty and vastness of nature, divinity of god and ultimate enlightenment. They can't cross the limited boundary which Devkota has done and so he is lunatic. The society imposes the hegemonic power upon him boycotting from the normal group. Therefore, as a counter, Devkota writes the poem proving himself mad as he is different from the prevailing reality in the society. It is his counter-hegemonic consciousness that is questioning the hegemonic society. The poet utters: "When I saw the first marks of the snows of time/In a beautiful woman's hair/I wept for three days./When the Buddha touched my soul/They said I was raving./They called me a lunatic because I danced/When I heard the first spring cuckoo" (60-66). He claims that the society called him lunatic when Buddha touched his soul and he got divinity that is indigestible for the people. Here, he indirectly resists the charge upon him. The lines "One day I sang with the storm-/ the wise men/ sent me off to Ranchi" (72-73) claim that he was sent to Ranchi only for his desire to live, sing and dance together with nature. Asserting such thing, Devkota tries to prove the accusers themselves as mad.

Oppositional consciousness attacks upon the established follies and fopperies. "Counter-hegemonic politics aspires to build consensus" (Sanbonmatsu, 130; qtd. in Carroll 30), supporting an alternative social vision. Like Sanbonmatsu, Devkota reverses the world consciousness in the poem. Whatever prevails in the society of normal and selfish people that is wrong for him. He tries to subvert the negative establishments and so he is called mad by the society. His superior consciousness is forcefully tried to be inferiorized which Devkota resists through the poem. He glorifies the marginalized and ignored people and brings the superior down to the earth reversing the established norms, values, principles and practices. The poet disrupts the so-called great souls belittling them and magnifies the small and back-warded unnoticed souls. Therefore, the society of the Pandits calls him mad. But, he crosses the boundary of greed, lust, hunger and material prosperity holding the super consciousness of ultimate enlightenment. Devkota reveals:

I called the Nawab's wine blood,
The painted whore a corpse,
And the king a pauper
I attacked Alexander with insults,
And denounced the so-called great souls.
The lowly I have raised on the bridge of praise
To the seventh heaven
Your learned pandit is my great fool,
Your heaven my hell,
.....
Your whole world is a hair to me. (82-98)

Generally, the rulers are worshipped in the society. Nawab's wine is highlighted; the power of Alexander is worshipped; great souls are respected, Pandit are honoured; and heaven is glorified. But for the poet the king is a pauper, Nawab's wine is blood, the whore is a corpse, Alexander is nobody, Pandit is a fool and the heaven is hell. For super consciousness, the normally established things are wrong which can't liberate and advance humans and the society. Moreover, the whole world of the normal people is a hair to Devkota. It means he has such a sacrificial heart that except humanity everything is valueless for him. He challenges and insulted the so-called powerful rulers and magnifies the lowly to the seventh heaven throwing the superior to the hell. the poet attacks upon the hegemony created by the powerful leaders of the world through his counter-hegemonic consciousness though it is called mad in the society.

Devkota expresses his counter-hegemonic consciousness to the hegemonic supremacy of the politicians, intellectuals, media, brokers, businesspersons, leaders and the rulers who promote discriminatory practices demolishing the innocent people's dreams of free and happy life. His madness is a metaphor of his super-consciousness that attacks upon the hypocrisies prevailing in the society. He calls the intellectuals and politicians the prostitutes as they are ready to sell themselves for their benefit. The so-called superior people create discourses and mislead and misinform the honest common people to fulfill their self-interest. Therefore, the poet shows his anger and hatred towards them. He angers: "Look at the withered tongues of shameless leaders,/ The dance of the whores/At breaking the backbone on the people's rights./When the sparrow-headed newsprint spreads its black lies/In a web of falsehood/To challenge Reason-the hero in

myself-/My cheeks turn red, friend,/Red as molten coal” (112-119). The leaders are shameless as they misguide the people. The whores, politicians and the media always attack the Reason-hero i.e. counter hegemonic super-consciousness and so the poet defends it offending upon the false ideas and practices. He burns red with anger when he senses the atrocities and absurdities promoted by the so-called civilized superior people of the society. He further mentions: “When simple people drink dark poison with their ears/Thinking it nectar-/And right before my eyes, friend!-/Then every hair on my body stands up stiff/As the Gorgon’s serpent hair-/Every hair on me maddened!/When I see the tiger daring to eat the deer, friend,/Or the big fish the little,/Then into my rotten bones there comes/The terrible strength of the soul of Dadhichi” (120-129). When the common people are fed with the false consciousness, the poet gets angry like the Gorgon’s serpent hair to poison the false discourse makers. Moreover, when he notices the powerful exploiting and torturing the powerless, the strong soul of Dadhichi springs up within him to dismantle the false world. Through the wonderful metaphor of tiger, deer and fish, he attacks upon the injustice and raises voice for justice and equality in the human world.

Counter-hegemonic consciousness attacks upon the dehumanizing attitude prevailing in the human world. The hegemonic desire and attitude always tries to create hierarchy drawing the dividing line among the people. It destroys humanity, morality, equality, justice and liberty in the society leading the whole human civilization to the total collapse. Devkota challenges the same attitude, desire and the practice in human world. His consciousness is stronger like the teeth of Bhima of *Mahabharata* which can challenge the powerful hegemonic world of Duryodhanas. The poet exposes:

When man regards a man
As not a man, friend,
Then my teeth grind together, all thirty-two,
Like the teeth of Bhima.
Red with rage my eyeballs roll
Like a lashing flame
Taking in this inhuman human world.
My organs leap out of theirs frames-
Uproar! Uproar!
My breathing becomes a storm,

My face distorted, my brain on fire, friend!
With a fire like those that burn beneath the sea,
Like the fire that devours the forests. (132-144)

Devkota becomes mad with anger when a man regards a man as not a man. It is the greatest crime committed against a man by a man. His teeth, eyes, breathing, face and brain become fiery in order to destroy the forest of the inhuman humans. He wants to devour the world of cruelties just like the fire which devours the great forests. The fire metaphor is so strong that it reflects the counter-hegemonic super-consciousness of the poet. The poet's consciousness and spirit attempt to destroy the ugliest things prevailing in the society. He wants to be a tempest to sweep all the corrupt cultures and practices. He wants to explode like volcano to demolish the negativities of the society. The poet speaks with rage: "Destroyer of the ugly,/Both tender and cruel,/The bird that steals the heaven's fire,/Child of the tempest,/Vomit of the insane volcano,/Terror incarnate" (149-154.). He is both kind and cruel at the same time. He wants to spread terror to the false practitioners but peace and harmony to the common innocent people. And, therefore, he is charged as mad by the so-called normal civilized people.

Devkota justifies himself to be mad because he is totally different from the normal people. He reverses the existing world and truth and tries to establish his own world with humanity, morality, equality and liberty which the society doesn't accept easily. He wants to bring change in the society but the society is unwilling to move ahead. Therefore, it declares him mad and sends to Ranchi. And, as a response, the poet writes this poem proving himself to be lunatic but ironically hitting at those who call him mad. This is his counter-hegemonic super-consciousness that resists the whole strong world. He repeatedly writes:

Surely my friend! I'm insane
This is my plight. (1-2)

The poet accepts the term lunatic given by the majority because the majority doesn't digest the new and transformative ideas expressed by him. He is trying to create a strategy of 'war of position' (Gramsci 1385 qtd. in Bernardi 380) detaching the real intellectuals from the other perverted bloc to open space for new spatio-temporal totalities for prospering a human culture. When his super-consciousness makes him differently superior to all, he is declared mad. But the poet feels that he is mad to those who can't understand the world, human civilization,

life, death, truth and reality. Therefore, the poet says surely he is insane such is his plight. This is the greatest attack upon the foolish but so-called enlightened people of the world.

Conclusion

To conclude, continuing the revolutionary trend of Nepali poetry, Shrawan Mukarung and Laxmi Prasad Devkota subvert the hegemonic consciousness and attitude of the rulers in their poems “Bise Nagarchi’s Explanation” and “The Lunatic” respectively. They amalgamate politics and aesthetics using madness metaphor in order to promote the counter-hegemonic consciousness in their texts. In the former’s poem a dalit Bise Damai is revolting against the oppression, suppression, hegemony and autocracy of the Shah dynasty in Nepal resisting the orders of King Prithvi Narayan Shah and claiming his contribution in unification of Nepal and demanding his glorious space in unified Nepal. He proves to be mad with the rise in consciousness and asks how he can be terrorist and anti-nationalist as he is together with his *Maalik* for two hundred fifty years. In the latter’s poem, the poet himself is exploding against the hypocrisies, immoralities, absurdities, atrocities and pomposities of the leaders, intellectuals and the power-holders who always promote status quo. He expresses his desire to be Gorgon’s serpent, volcano, great fire, Bhim, Dadhichi and the storm to fight against the social evils, discriminations and injustices prevailing in the society. Both Mukarung and Devkota promote counter-hegemonic consciousness through the aesthetic use of irony in the poems. The former uses the terms “*Maalik!* I have gone mad” and the latter uses “Surely, my friend/ insane I am” repeatedly to reflect the super-consciousness. Mukarung fights against the hegemonic monarchy whereas Devkota attacks upon all the kings, leaders, intellectuals, and the evil social practices. But, their mission is same i.e. to establish a just, humane, equal, moral, free and harmonious society which is really praiseworthy.

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