

INTRODUCTION

Statement of Problem

Research into the sources and establishing a relationship between the poets, dramatists and novelists of British literature and those of Nepalese literature have started only recently. In particular the influence of the poetry of the major British Romantic poets of the nineteenth century on the poetry of some Nepalese poets has been traced. Laxmi Prasad Devkota, one of the major Romantics in Nepalese poetic literature has not been excepted from the criticism. He was, in some instances, even charged with borrowing and translating from the works of those British poets. The purpose of this thesis will, therefore, be two-fold — first, to find out whether the treatment during research into sources had been superficial, nominal and incidental in the light of the modern comparative literature, and, secondly, to establish a genuine relationship between the works of Laxmi Prasad Devkota and those of the major British Romantics of the nineteenth century by comparison.

Limitations

This research project, then is limited to the study of the works of Laxmi Prasad Devkota and that of the British Romantic poets of the nineteenth century including William

Wordsworth, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Lord Byron, Percy Bysshe Shelley, and John Keats. Devkota's entire literary corpus in general and selected poetical works in particular will be compared with selected works of the British Romantic poets under the sub-headings given in the Chapter Scheme for the thesis below.

Bases of Comparison

Quite recent in its origin, comparative literature has not any agreed methodology. The opposing views of the two well-known schools of it represented by the 'French School' and the 'American School', along with ideas¹ expressed to reconcile them, will be taken as the guidelines while comparing the works of Laxmi Prasad Devkota with those of the British Romantic poets of the nineteenth century. The transliteration of Nepali or Sanskrit words which seem to be unfamiliar for easy reading follows the system adopted by the Indian Standards Institute (ISI), and the International Organization for Standardization (IOS). While comparing the works of Laxmi Prasad Devkota with those of the British Romantics, his works will be in the Devanagari script, and a version of it in English will immediately follow it. The translations, if no acknowledgement is cited in

¹ H.M. Block, "The Concept of Influence in Comparative Literature", rpt., JJCL, 7, 1958, pp. 31-7.

the footnote, mean that they are rendered by the researcher himself. While dealing with the Nepalese section in the thesis, most of the dates will be given according to the Vikram Era following the sources, from which fifty seven should be deducted to get an approximate date according to the Christian Era. Such dates will be followed by V.S., the abbreviated form of Vikram Sambat, i.e. Vikram Era.

After this brief information dealing with technicalities, the background of the project will now follow.

Brief survey of the Nepalese literature previous to Laxmi Prasad Devkota.

One of the members of the Indo-European family, Nepali has been used in inscriptions mainly in the forms of metal plates and stone slab since medieval times. But the use of it initially in a literary form is still shrouded in mystery. According to Dr. Taranath Sharma, the first use of it in book-form started in 1649 V.S. (1592 A.D.)¹. Gradually, it was adopted in literary forms. Much later people like Pandit Daibagyankesari Aryal, Gumani Panta (1847-1904 V.S.), Indiras, Veershalī Panta, Vidyaranya Keshari, etc. - most of them poets - used it in their works². Their poetic works are religious and heroic in character. The religious works were translations of Sanskrit prayers into

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1 नेपाली साहित्यको इतिहास दो (History of the Nepalese Literature) (Kathmandu : Sankalpa Prakashan, 2039 V.S.) p. 3.

2 Ibid., pp. 18-3.

Nepali, whereas the heroic ones were songs about the national heroes who had sacrificed their lives to preserve the independence of the country. As is the case with any growing language, the form used by the poets and writers then was different from the present one at various levels, such as, spelling, inflection, and meaning.

Serious literature in Nepali began after the unification of the country by King Prithvi Narayan Shah (1722-1775). The credit for using it as a vehicle fit for poetry goes to Bhanu Bhakta Acharya (1814-1868), who leaped into fame as a result of his translation of the Adhyatma Ramayana into Nepali. Unlike his predecessors he used very simple words free from Sanskrit, and his Ramayana, popularly known as Bhanubhaktiya Ramayan, is often heard being recited even by illiterate persons. Besides translating the Ramayana, he wrote minor miscellaneous poems dealing with patriotism, social responsibility, philosophical thoughts, etc. He also wrote some other poems such as बुद्ध शिक्षा (Instruction to Daughter-in-laws), प्रश्नोत्तरी (Questions and Answers), भक्तमाला (Necklace of beads for Devotees), and रामगीता (Ramgita). Though a devoted and religious poet, he did not renounce the world. He had a family life, and was employed in an office for sometime. He was even jailed for miscalculation in the official accounts. Even there he did not stop writing. In fact, he wrote poems in a satiric vein on the misconduct of government officials in

delaying the moving of files. He even wrote some portion of his Ramayan in jail; and through the Ramayan he has been recognized as the first poet of Nepal.

The foot-steps of Bhanu Bhakta Acharya were followed by Lekhnath Poudyal, Chakrapani Chalise, Shambhu Prasad Dhungyal, Dharanidhar Sharma Koirala, and many others. Of them, Lekhnath Poudyal (1884-1965) made distinct contributions to the history of Nepalese literature by writing innumerable lyrics, and the noted narrative poem entitled तरुण-तपसी (The young Ascetic). He was the first poet to bring a new refinement and grace of expression, to the language¹. Bala Krishna Sama (1902-1981), a dramatist and narrative poet followed in the footsteps of Lekhnath, and yet showed his unique originality, for the first-time, in the field of drama. He used his new style, rhymeless anustup² chanda, like the blank verse of English literature. It gives more freedom of expression like the latter in English. Moreover, by using it the dramatist wanted to impress in his readers that they were reading poetry like conversation.

Lekhnath and Bal Krishna were followed by a galaxy of authors with new ideas and style. There are Madhav Prasad Devkota (1903-), Laxmi Prasad Devkota (1909-1959), Siddhicharan

1 David Rubin, Nepali Visions, Nepali Dream: The Poetry of Laxmi Prasad Devkota (New York : Columbia Univ. Pre., 1980), p. 4 . This work of David Rubin will be referred to hereafter as The Poetry of Devkota.

2 See V.S. Apte, Sanskrit English Dictionary, 1979, p. 645.

Shrestha mainly in poetry, Bhavani Bhikshyu mainly in narrative and Gopal Prasad Rimal mainly in drama channelled the movement in different directions.

Characteristics of Nepalese literature previous to English influence

Before comparing the works of Laxmi Prasad Devkota with those of the British Romantics of the nineteenth century, it seems essential to point out, briefly, the general characteristics of Nepalese literature. The characteristics of it before Nepal came in contact with western literature, particularly British literature, were different from the ones after it; but it should be noted that literary tastes and fashions keep on changing, and it is quite difficult to describe all the characteristics, because in literary phases there is always overlapping; but the dominating ones will serve our present purpose. They are, therefore, briefly, described below.

It is a fact that all the literatures of the world began with the scriptures and books of religion. Nepalese literature was no exception. Along with religious feelings, some of the world literatures are marked by those of heroism. Because of the fact that Nepal was defeated by the East India Company in 1815, and that period, incidentally, happened to be the initial period of Nepalese literature, heroes and heroic action were the demand of the nation¹. It is found, therefore, that religion

1 Dr. Taranath Sharma नेपाली साहित्यको इतिहास (The History of Nepalese Literature), op. cit., p. 10.

and heroism have been mingled in it in profusion. Though mainly regarded as a religious poet, Bhanu Bhakta Acharya used a heroic tone in his Ramayana everywhere. It is said that Sita, for instance, uses heroic words in speaking with Ravana in his Ramayan unlike the original text. In the subsequent phases of Nepalese literature, the same trend has been carried on because of the world-famous heroism displayed by Nepalese soldiers in the two great World wars. It was sung by almost all the poets of the country with patriotic fervour. Along with it religion has been given a distinct role, because the influence of Hinduism had already long pervaded Nepal.

Another dominating characteristics of Nepalese literature is that it has been based on the daily life of the common man. Almost all the popular poets have come from the common people and have written for the good of the people since the very beginning of it; and Bhanu Bhakta continued the same trend. The beginning of his Ramayana is, therefore, consonant to national sentiment:

एक दिन् नारद सत्यलोक पुगिगया लोकको गरु हित् भनी

(One day Narad went to Heaven for doing good to the people of the world).

The wish of doing good to the people is found in the poets who followed him. Though associated with the palaces of the autocratic Ranas, Lekhnath Poudyal gave an expression of the

aspiration of the Nepalese people through his poem, "पिजराको सुगा" (The Parrot in a cage'). Bal Krishna Sama - though descended from the Rana family - introduced characters in his dramas, who are social outcasts. Bhimnidhi Tewari's "काम्यो लुगलुगत्यो" ('He Trembled with cold'), a poem which reminds the readers of the biting cold, to which the poor by the side of road are exposed in Kathmandu in winter, depicts the true picture of the common man. At this point it should be noted that these poets were not rebellious. Even Laxmi Prasad Devkota did not describe the condition of the downtrodden in a more revolutionary way, as he was to do later. They had to write overtly, and painted the suffering of the common man against a religious and philosophical background indicating that suffering was to be endured as it was predestined, and, therefore, they indirectly supported the oppression and the tyranny of the rulers.

At the initial stage of Nepalese poetic literature, the dominating models were adopted from Sanskrit without any distinct change. They were used by Bhanu Bhakta Acharya as had been done by his predecessors. They were strictly followed by the poets who belonged to the 'Lekhnath School'. Regarding the poetic practices of the poets of this period, particularly of Lekhnath and Bal Krishna Sama, Prof. Yadu Nath Khaanaal observes:

Poetry to both Lekhnath and Sama [Bal Krishna] is basically a discipline in the classical sense, to be acquired and cultivated diligently as if at the feet of a master. The need of genius is recognized, but its rough edges should be smoothened and polished by technical skill acquired and cultivated. In other words, poetry to both of them is the art of maintaining a balance in a fully integrated form between the technique that should be learned and cultivated as a discipline and inspiration that comes to poets at a certain moment of their lives¹.

Thus, the technique and inspiration - the form and content - were to be controlled. A balance between these two was a must for the poets belonging to that tradition, i.e. Neo-classical conviction. In other words, they had to observe clarity, objectivity, and rationalism as the guidelines for their works.

After the brief survey of the general characteristics of Nepalese literature from its initial period to that immediately before Laxmi Prasad Devkota, it will not be out of place to trace the impact on it from sources which are linguistically and culturally related to it. A great literature like Sanskrit can be compared to a tree with several branches, which

1 'Nepalese Literature', in Kamal P. Malla ed., Nepal: A Conspectus (Kathmandu : The Preparatory Committee 26th Columbo Plan), p. 109.

form a literary community. The process of receiving and emitting influences within that community is a continued process. This idea was expressed by Dr. K.M. George when he said: '... it is hard to find a literary work which is completely original, in the sense that nothing of it has been taken from other sources. Equally rare is a great literature which has not been influenced by other literatures'¹. The suggestion of this is this that there are some dominating elements shared by different literatures. This is particularly true of those literatures within a community of common cultural and linguistic heredity. As has already been mentioned, Nepali belongs to the North Indian group of the Indo-European branch and has intercultural relationship with the literatures of that region. The impact of them on the Nepalese literature is, therefore, quite obvious, and will be dealt with, rather briefly, in the following section.

The Impact on Nepalese Literature

At the outset, Nepalese literature received influences from the immediately contiguous literatures, such as Bhojpuri, Avadhi, Maithili etc. The fountain-head of the influence on them together with Nepalese literature was, of course, Sanskrit. The influence of Sanskrit will, therefore, be dealt with first.

1 Western Influence on Malayalam Language and Literature (New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 1972), p. 53.

The Impact of Sanskrit on Nepalese poetry.

Unanimity is found among authors and critics as regards the impact of Sanskrit on Nepalese poetic literature. It has had a much more direct bearing on Nepalese culture as a whole than any other influences. In this context it should be noted that Nepal had been a soil in which the Aryan tradition flourished since the very beginning of the Aryan culture in this part of the world. Balmiki, who wrote the Ramayana was born in Nepal. The influence of Sanskrit could be gauged by the fact that all the writers during the initial period of its literature, particularly the poetic one, were directly motivated to write by it. Its influence is distinctly noticeable in two broad ways - one at the formal level, and the other at the content one. The subject has been received scholarly treatment from Prof. Yadu Nath Khanal in an essay entitled 'The Influence of Sanskrit on Nepali Literature'¹. In fact all writers from the beginning up to the forties of the present century had, in one way or another, a background of Sanskrit. After that Nepalese literature was exposed to other literary traditions, including the Western; and a distinct decline in its influence is noticed.

At the beginning there were no books of grammar in Nepali. The 'gurus' wrote them in Sanskrit. The students were

1 Literary Studies, 2 Feb., 1983, pp. 1-9.

supposed to study them, and apply them to compositions in the vernacular. The poets modelled their works on Sanskrit poetics as well. The extent of its influence can be traced if we look up Kulchandra Gautam's Alankarchandrodaya, exclusively used by the poets writing under the influence of Sanskrit. The result was that a heavily Sanskritized diction was in vogue. That tendency of the poets then has already been referred to in discussing the general characteristics of Nepalese literature.

The themes on which the poets wrote during that period were the usual ones of Sanskrit literature. In other words, the notions such as transmigration, justice in the moral government of the world, the ethical principle which makes man the maker of his own fate, the present life as the result of an action done in a past life, the cycle of birth, emphasis on Karma (action), etc. were dealt with. It is obvious that they received them from the Vedas, the Upanishad, the Ramayan, and the Mahabharata. However, when the influence of Sanskrit was in its decline, the writers took themes related to the daily life of the common man rather than those abstract notions.

The Impact of Buddhism

Before writing anything on the impact of Buddhist literature on Nepalese literary tradition, it seems essential to describe briefly how Buddhism flourished in Nepal first.

The first inhabitants of Nepal were the Kiratis, who lived in the north-eastern Himalayas. Gradually, they spread

throughout the country. Their culture, in whatever form it had been, melted into the Aryan and the Buddhist cultures. Though the history of Nepal at the period of its beginning remains still unexplored, it was ruled by the Lichavis, a dynasty of Indian origin from the middle of the fifth century A.D.¹ The historical records, such as inscriptions and stone pillars, reveal that Hinduism and Buddhism mingled in such a way that the rulers as well as the common man have been the ardent worshippers of both. According to Babu Ram Acharya, the historian Laureate, the rule of the Lichavis lasted till the twelfth century A.D., and on its collapse that of the Vaisyas was established². Hindu Tantrism had been flourished here for a long time, and the Buddhists adopted it. Gradually, Buddhist Tantrism and Mahayana Buddhism spread in Nepalese society. However, they got mixed up with Brahmoism, and developed together with it. This view had also been supported by the descriptions of the Buddhist pilgrim from China, Hsuang tsang (637 A.D.), who said that Buddhism and Hinduism in Nepal had progressed side by side.

At this point it should be noted that the use of Sanskrit in lieu of Prakrit, or Pali, for texts defending Buddhist principles had been in vogue probably since the third century A.D.³

1 K.P.Malla, 'Introduction' to Nepal : A Conspectus, op. cit., p. 1.

2 Ibid., p. 11.

3 A. Berriedale Keith, A History of Sanskrit Literature (Great Britain: Oxford University Press, 1966), p. 491.

The rituals, spells of all kind, mysticism, etc. in both Hinduism and Buddhism are so similar that the latter may be regarded as a reformed form of Hinduism. This is why those two religions have no distinct border-line in their practices in the Nepalese context. Thus, for obvious reasons, the Buddhist literature mainly adopted both form and content from Sanskrit literary tradition. The Pancatantra fables which are rooted in the Ramayana and the Mahabharata are also found in the Jatak, the Birth Stories¹. Eventually, they crept into the Nepalese Pancatantra. It is, therefore, possible that the influence of the Buddhist literature might have been of a wide nature but how much and in what respects it was influenced has yet to be explored. Unless that field is investigated, its influences will remain shrouded in mystery.

The Impact of Indian Literature

Nepal and India have always been in close contact for geographical and social reasons. It has already been mentioned that the literary tendencies of Braja, Bhojpuri, Avadhi, Maithili etc., and those of Nepali at the beginning of its literature were very similar. In its developing stage, the Nepalese poets freely used the words of those languages in their

1 A.A. Macdonell, A History of Sanskrit Literature, 3rd ed. (Delhi: K.M. Lal Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1975), p. 373.

poetry. Later the influences from them were more visible. For instance, religious books such as Indiras's Gopikastuti Bidyaranyakeshari's Jyugalgit and Draupadistuti, and Basanta Sharma's Krishnacharitra were the products of inspiration from them. Both the themes and diction were adopted from the literatures of those Indian languages¹. Gradually the influences from Indian literatures were widened as more and more Nepalese people went to the universities and colleges, particularly those in Benares and Calcutta. Benares, a noted centre of Sanskrit studies, attracted Nepalese. Moreover, the Schools of Sanskrit studies in Nepal were affiliated to the institutes there. The students' return home facilitated both Sanskrit and Hindi influences in Nepalese literature.

The influence from Bengal had been slightly different in nature in the sense that it flowed into Nepal with Western influence, particularly British, which had already been firmly rooted there with the establishment of Fort William College in 1800. At the college English as well as Indian scholars worked together to produce books in Indian languages as well as Nepali. J.A. Ayton's Grammar of the Nepalese Language (1820) is particularly noteworthy in this context. The influence of this joint scholarship inspired Nepalese enthusiasm for western types of education. In this context, it should also be remembered that

1 See Balchandra Sharma, "इन्द्रस, विद्यारण्यकेशरी र वसन्तशर्मा" Indiras, Bidyaranjakeshari, and Basanta Sharma) in K. J. Pradhan ed. साझा समालोचना (The Common criticism) (Kathmandu: Sajha Publication, 2034 V.S.) pp. 41-53.

Durhar School in Nepal was affiliated to Calcutta University for many years. The aspiration of the Nepalese for the western type of education can be known from the fact that Shrinivas Giri and Chandra Shamshere, the first and the second to pass the matriculation examination from there were warmly received in public in Kathmandu. Eventually, the number of students - in particular the sons of the Ranas and other rich people - getting their education in Calcutta increased; and it widened the Bengali influence. Moreover, when the number of schools and colleges was increased in Nepal itself, teachers, along with some doctors, from Bengal were employed by the then Nepal Government apparently seeking a better relationship with the British power in India, which had firmly established itself in Bengal. They were the promoters of the Bengali influence in Nepal. Along with these influences some books including Rabindra Nath Tagore's Gitanjali have been translated into Nepali.

It will not be irrelevant to write a few sentences about the influences of religious and social movements in India, and their impact on the national reawakening in Nepal. The Brahma Samaj, which was started by Ram Mohan Roy and developed by Devendra Nath Tagore and Keshav Chandra Sen, and the neo-Hinduism of Shri Rama Krishna, Swami Vivekananda, Tilak and Mahatma Gandhi, were increasing in momentum in India. Both these trends inspired the young Nepalese who had come to India for education, and, on their return, they engaged themselves in forming their social life

on the same principles. In this context, the attempts made by Madhav Lal Joshi, Dasharath Chand, and Tulsi Mehar are memorable. Also the political parties in India then played a significant role in establishing Nepalese political parties with parallel objectives. In fact, the Nepalese political parties against the Ranas' autocratic rule were formed in India. Thus the impact from India, be it literary, social, or political, played a significant role in bringing about renascent ideals in Nepal.

The Impact of Islam

According to Babu Ram Acharya, towards the end of 1349, Sultan Shamsuddin of Bengal attacked Nepal, and burned towns and villages in Kathmandu valley¹. But his army could not stand the cold climate there, and returned within a week. Nepal was never ruled by the Islamic power, or any other foreign power for that matter. However, Nepal came in contact with Islamic culture through traders after the first half of the fifteenth century. Kashmiri Muslims would vend their goods in Nepal. The Nepalese people had a passionate liking for foreign goods, specially Kashmiri shawls. They would barter them for Nepalese goods, and sell them in India and Tibet. Usually, they would travel from Kashmir to Ladakh, and then to Tibet. From there they would go to India via Nepal. During the first half of the sixteenth century Ratna Malla, the first king of one of the

1 'A Brief Account of Ancient Nepal', in Nepal: A Conspectus, op. cit., p. 12.

principalities in the Kathmandu valley after its division, permitted them to establish their Kothis (trade marts) there¹. Later some of them settled in Nepal. Those Muslim traders used to compete with their Newar counterparts who had a strong hold on the Tibetan market; but they were forced to carry on their trade only by barter in the absence of a medium of exchange. To overcome that difficulty Mahendra Malla, who ruled in one of the principalities in Kathmandu valley from 1564-1574, met the Emperor Akbar, and consulted him over introducing coin to facilitate the trade. After that coins, popularly known as 'Mahendra Malla' after his name, came into circulation. They were used in Tibet and Bhutan, and in some business centres in India. Gradually, the Islamic population spread throughout Nepal. Their main occupation has been selling 'Chura and Pote' (glass bangles and a straight bar kind of necklace made up of glass) together with cosmetics.

It is said that Prithbi Narayan Shah was much impressed by the Islamic administration in India, particularly by matters relating to court and military rules. He even sent a man to study Urdu there. On his return, Prithbi Narayan Shah ordered him to incorporate some words from the Mogul administrative system for the Nepalese court and military ranks². He treated the Islamic population in Nepal as his own subjects, and let them keep their

1 Surya Bikram Juyawali, पृथ्वीनारायण शाह ('Prithbi Narayan Shah') (Darjeeling: Nepali Sahitya Sammelan, 2033), p. 204.

2 Gopi Nath Sharma, School Curriculum in Nepal (Kathmandu: Hem Kumari, 1980), p. 76.

own cultural identity. Later Durbar school was opened in Kathmandu; and Urdu was incorporated into its curriculum with the provision of two posts of teachers to teach it.

Gradually, the rulers in Nepal, particularly the Ranas, were attracted by the luxurious mode of life of the Delhi Durbar. It is a popular belief that the Ranas would speak Nepali heavily influenced by 'Musalmani Bhasa' (the Muslim language), and their way of living was like that of the British. Though alien in its character, the effect of the Islamic culture is discernible in many items of daily life, such as speaking, cooking, dress, etc. As was obvious its effect was more prominent in court life than in the life of the common man. In decorating the palaces of the Ranas, miniature paintings - special creations¹ of the Islamic culture - and portraits of rare animals and birds were extensively used. The court life of the ruling people then in Nepal was, therefore, congenial to Bacchic poetry, the poetry of wine and love, glorifying the joys of worldly existence, because it gave them the means of indulging in their over-luxurious life.

There has been established a tradition in Nepalese literary history that is popularly known as the gazzal tradition. This had long since induced the poets to use words from Urdu in their poetry. Even Bhanu Bhakta Acharya used such words in

1 Chambers' Encyclopaedia (1957), Vol. VII, p. 765.

his poems, and this trend has continued since then¹. However, that tradition was mainly initiated by Motiram Bhatta, and was developed by poets such as Bhimnidhi Tewari, Nirvikram Pyasi, and others. The outcome of that tradition is that Omarkhaiyam and Iqbal are quite familiar to the circle of Nepalese poets. The witty stories of Akhbar Birbal and the romantic story of Laila-Majnu have become a part of light entertainment in Nepalese life. It also should be noted that there are some 'Madarsha' schools currently running in Nepal and established a long time ago². They are affiliated to the Aligarh Board in India. This shows that Islamic culture is deeply rooted in Nepal, and is developing side by side with the Nepalese.

Contact with the West

The Contact between Nepal and the West was established mainly through India for geographical reasons. The chronology³ of events shows how Western influence entered and took root. It seems, therefore, essential to write first on the establishment of a relationship between India and the West, and then deal with it in the Nepalese context.

India came in contact with Europe for the first time when Vasco da Gama reached Calicut in 1497. He, therefore, opened a glorious chapter in the history of India and Europe by establishing that contact. As the Portuguese tried to establish

1 See P.L. Gurung, "हाम्रो भाषामा उर्दूको छाप" (The Imprint of Urdu in our Language) in Dr. Iswar Baral, G.N. Pradhan, Ram Lal ed. रुनावली ('Racanawali') (Shillong: Dil Bahadur, 1983), pp. 266-70.

2 Gopinath Sharma, School Curriculum in Nepal, op. cit., p. 75.

3 Appendix no. 1

their supremacy in India, other European countries followed suit - the Dutch, the British, and the French in that order. The British, among the European maritime powers, had the far-sighted ambition of establishing a deep-rooted political system together with trade and commerce in that country. To achieve their objective, they first entered into the sphere of education with a change from the traditional system of Indian education to its western counterpart. As has already been mentioned, it was in attempting this that Fort William College was established in Calcutta. After this the influence of the West on Nepal can be dealt with.

According to John Macgregor¹, the first European to enter Nepal was Joao Cabral, a Jesuit Father, who came with a letter to the then Nepalese king, Shiba Singh, from the King of Utsang Tibet in 1626 A.D. The traveller recalled that the King 'very kindly directed me to Patans (Patna)², a town near India-Nepal border. Gradually, the missionaries established their centre in Tibet, and they would go there through Nepal from Patna, where they had already been settled. It is recorded that King Pratap Malla (1641-1674), a great scholar, married two daughters of a

1 Tibet: A Chronicle of Exploration (Delhi: Bikash Publishing House Pvt. Ltd., 1972), p. 41.

2 Ibid.

king of Cooch Behar¹. He had a passion for learning languages, and knew as many as fifteen including Urdu, English, and French². During his reign two Jesuit Fathers, Johann Grueber and Albert d'Orville journeyed from Lhasa to Kathmandu on their way from China. Leaving Peking in April 1661, they reached Kathmandu in 1662³. The King, who was a tolerant man, encouraged them to establish a mission centre in Kathmandu. At this point it should be remembered that there were three principalities within the Kathmandu valley, and the rulers of them, eventually, permitted the missionaries to open their centres in their states. The Jesuits as well as the Capuchins wanted to have a foot hold in Nepal. There was, therefore, competition between them in their activities in Nepal as well as in India⁴. But the Christian missions were formally opened only at the beginning of the eighteenth century. And they could not convert many Nepalese people, their number being only fifty nine⁵. The liberal policy followed by the rulers then was not allowed by Prithvi Narayan Shah (1722-1775), who defeated them, and ousted the missionaries, because of his intense suspicion of European influence⁶. He

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- 1 Balchandra Sharma, नेपालको ऐतिहासिक रूपरेखा ('Outlines of Nepalese History') (Benares: Krishna Kumari, 2022 V.S.), p. 167.
 - 2 K.C. Surendra, नेपालको शैक्षिक इतिहास (The Educational History of Nepal, unpublished M.A. thesis, Deptt. of History, T.U., 2038 V.S.) p. 40.
 - 3 Ed. H.K. Kaul, The Travellers' India : An Anthology (Delhi: OUP) 1979, p. XXV.
 - 4 P. Landon, Nepal (Kathmandu: Ratna Pustak Bhandar, 1976, p. 66).
 - 5 Surya Bikram Gyawali, नेपाल उपत्यकाको मध्यकालीन इतिहास (The Medieval History of Nepal Valley) Kathmandu: Royal Nepal Academy, 2019, pp. 162-63.
 - 6 Ibid., p. 265.

even wrote to the Heads of the Indian states, and of Tibet about his reaction. It should be noted here that that kind of antagonistic attitude towards the influx of European influences had also long since been shared by Japan and China. The sainted Jesuit, Francis Xavier, arrived in Japan in 1549, and began to convert the Japanese; but in 1587 Hideyoshi, the military ruler then in that country, proscribed Christianity. Moreover, with the accession to power of Tokugawa Ieyasu in 1598, an era of persecution of the converts began with the result that Japan practically remained closed to the west for two and a half centuries (1600-1850). China also followed suit, though not as severely as had been the case in Japan¹. Prithvi Narayan Shah, therefore, was not the only Asian ruler to nourish a suspicion of the European influence. The result was that in those countries it could not affect the common man as it did in some other Asian countries, like India, where special privileges had been offered to converts, particularly since the sixties of the sixteenth century, when they were protected by law:

1 S. Miner, The Japanese Tradition in British and American literatures, (New Jersey: Princeton Univ. Press, 1958), pp. 6-8.

... converts were to be provided with posts in the customs, exempted from impressment in the navy, and supported by the distribution of rice - the first record of what have been called 'rice-Christians'. In 1560 the Inquisition was introduced and an officer of that body was posted ... with the special power to arrest any person who said or did anything opposed to the Catholic faith, and send him to Goa, where he was tried by the General¹.

This explains the growing influence of the west in India; and its impact in Nepal was unavoidable. However, Prithvi Narayan Shah's historic role to oust the missionaries from Nepal closed it to all kinds of channels of western influence for some years; but after the death of Prithvi Narayan Shah, the political situation in Nepal changed, and people from the west were allowed to visit the country. First of all Colonel Kirkpatrick of the British army under the East India Company opened the first chapter by publishing his historic book entitled An Account of Nepal, A Mission to that Country in the year 1793 (1811). It was illustrated with a map of Nepal and other engravings of the varied cultural life of its people. After that Francis Hamilton wrote An Account of the Kingdom of Nepal (1819). In that book he mentioned that some vocabularies of Nepalese languages had been collected and preserved in the library of the East India

1 L.S.S. O'Malley, ed. Modern India and the West: A Study of the Interaction of their Civilizations, rpt (London: OUP, 1968), p. 45.

Company. Another person to show an interest in Nepali was J.A. Ayton of Fort William College, Calcutta. He wrote Grammar of the Nepalese language (1820) in English, which is regarded as the first grammar of Nepali by Dr. Paras Mani Pradhan¹. In writing grammars of the Nepalese language Turnbull, R. Kilgour, H.G. Duncan, etc., followed in his footsteps. Some officers of the British Gurkha regiments compiled English-Nepali dictionaries and manuals; but they were compiled for the purpose of communicating with the Nepalese soldiers. They, therefore, have very little significance for the common man. In this respect the works of M.S. Dopping-Heppenstal and J...P. Money to be noticed. Besides these, the Christian missionaries in India translated the New Testament into Nepali (1902), and the Old Testament into Nepali (1914). Later a significant investigation of Nepali was made by G.I. Grierson in his memorable Linguistic Survey of India (1927) in Vols. II and IX.

After this brief survey of the contribution of scholars in revealing Nepalese culture to the west, the influence of the west since the rule of the Ranas (1846-1950) on Nepal will be examined.

The European influence, which is mainly represented by the British in the Nepalese context, had to be received by the Rana rulers for two reasons - initially, political necessity after the historic defeat of Nepal by the East India Company in

1 Journal of the Nepali Academy, 1(1), January, 1974, p.2

1815, and later to meet the demands of the people for modern education, which had to be adapted because of its impact on India, Nepal's next-door neighbour. After the defeat Nepal had no choice but to accept what the Company wanted to do in it. As for the second reason, western education in India, it seems essential to quote a passage showing how English education and, with it, new ideas spread there:

'Of all the channels through which western influences flow into Indian life, education is the chief replacing the old indigenous system of teaching by definitely western methods, and particularly in giving the English language prominence at the secondary stage and dominance at the University as the medium of instruction ... The teaching of English has deflected the Indian mind from the traditional lines of culture which an advanced vernacular education might have encouraged.

This is one side of the shield. The other is that the widespread knowledge of the English language and use of text-books has drawn the Indian mind into an entirely new line of development. Along that line lie utterly noble conceptions: freedom of speech and the pen, criticism of authority, the questioning of accepted dogmas, the insistence on the rights of man as opposed to his duties. The growing familiarity with

Eventually many English schools were opened in Nepal! The response of the common people to switching over from the traditional Sanskrit education in vogue then to the modern and Western pattern is well-expressed in this excerpt.

Among the channels of influences, the printing press plays a significant role. Its impact in India had long since affected the Nepalese people, because of geographical reasons. The Christian missionaries had used it as a tool in spreading their ideas; and its effect had been felt in many fields in Indian life:

'The art of printing had been introduced by Christian missionaries as early as the sixteenth century ... The establishment in the early part of the nineteenth century of the printing presses, which produced books in Indian languages as well as in English had an extraordinary effect ... English books let loose a flood of new ideas among those who could read them. Translations of Sanskrit works made them public property and no longer the jealously guarded monopoly of Brahmins, by whom they were held as sacred as the ark of the covenant on which no sacrilegious hand might be laid. A prose literature came into being in North India, where it was a new development of intellectual life, for hitherto literature

had almost entirely consisted of mythological in character. Prose owed its origin to a utilitarian and secular object¹.

It has already been mentioned that Nepalese students would go to India, particularly to Benares, for higher education in both Sanskrit and English, and could not remain unaffected by that pervading influence of the west. Gradually, the necessity of publishing magazines in Nepali was felt not only within Nepal but also in India, in parts of which Nepalese were in a majority. As a result, the Gorkhatri, a weekly for many years, and a daily thereafter, was started in the reign of Deva Shamshere in 1901 A.D. The same year the Gorkhe Khabar Kagat was published from Darjeeling. Eventually other magazines² in Nepali were published both from Nepal and India. Of them, the role of Sharada (1934) in spreading the nascent ideas in Nepal is significant.

The quit-India movement in India was gaining momentum, and the Rana rule in Nepal had been supporting British power there for historical reasons which have already been mentioned. It was not, therefore, consistent to its policy to send the Nepalese students to India who would sympathize with the movement there. Moreover, on their return, they would inflame the people

1 L.S.S. O'Malley ed., Modern India and the West: A Study of the Interaction of their Civilizations, op. cit., p. 65.

2 Appendix no. 2

against it. To extinguish this flame, Chandra Shamshe opened Tri-Chandra College in 1918 A.D. To attract the Nepalese students in India, free education was imparted. Qualified teachers, mostly from Bengal, were employed. As a result, some of the students returned from India. Thus, at least temporarily, the policy of Chandra Shamshe was successful.

A poet does not write in a vacuum. He is influenced by the atmosphere of ideas in which he has been living, and gives an expression to his own feelings. In this regard, Matthew Arnold and T.S. Eliot, both noted poets and critics, have expressed their epoch-making ideas in their essays 'The Function of Criticism at the Present Time', and 'Tradition and the Individual Talent' respectively. Arnold remarked:

The grand work of literary genius is a work of synthesis and exposition, not of analysis and discovery, its gift lies in the faculty of being happily inspired by a certain intellectual and spiritual atmosphere, by a certain order of ideas, when it finds itself in them, of dealing divinely with these ideas, presenting them in the most effective and attractive combinations - making beautiful works with them, in short. But it must have the atmosphere, it must find itself amidst the order of the ideas, in order to work freely...¹

1 Sister Thomas Marion Hoctor, ed. Matthew Arnold's Essays in Criticism: First Series (Chicago: The Univ. of Chicago Press, 1963) pp. 10-11.

T.S. Eliot, in the same vein, says:

No poet, no artist of any sort, has his complete meaning alone. His significance, his appreciation is the appreciation of his relation to the dead poets and artists. You cannot value him alone; you must set him, for contrast and comparison, among the dead. . . . The necessity that he shall confirm, that he shall cohere, is not one-sided; what happens when a new work of art is created is something that happens simultaneously to all the works of arts which preceded it. The existing monuments form an ideal order among themselves, which is modified by the introduction of the new (the really new) work of art among them. The existing order is complete before the new work arrives, the whole existing order must be, if ever so slightly, altered; and so the relations, proportions, values of each work of art toward the whole are readjusted; and this is conformity between the old and the new¹.

The excerpts explain that a poet creates his poetry following the current of tradition. His poetry is moulded and adjusted by the works of his predecessors.

1 John Hayward ed. T.S. Eliot: selected Prose, rpt. (Great Britain: Penguin, 1955), pp. 23-4.

Against this background Laxmi Prasad Devkota's works will be compared with the works of the British Romantic poets of the nineteenth century. The thesis is entitled 'A Comparative Study of Laxmi Prasad Devkota and the English Romantic poets of the Nineteenth Century', and the chapters, followed by the headings, are divided as given below.

CHAPTER I

The Life and Works of Laxmi Prasad Devkota

This chapter will be devoted to a short biography of Laxmi Prasad Devkota. Together with that, the gist of all his available works except those selected for comparing with the works of the English Romantic poets of the nineteenth century, will be given.

CHAPTER II

A Detailed Estimate of the Selected Works of Laxmi Prasad Devkota which are distinctly Romantic in Strain

In consideration of the distinct phases of the poetic development of Laxmi Prasad Devkota, some of his works have been selected¹ for comparison with the works of the British Romantic poets of the nineteenth century. The critical estimate

1 Appendix no. 4

of all these works is given in this chapter. After that a brief reference to the sources of influences which have been attributed by critics to Devkota's poetry will be made.

CHAPTER III

Definition and aspects of Romanticism

The meaning of the word 'Romanticism' has a wide connotation. Its meanings and forms will be examined against the historical background of Europe. Its characteristics will be explained in the context of British Romantic poetry. After that the Nepalese Romantic tendencies will be detailed, with particular reference to the works of Laxmi Prasad Devkota.

CHAPTER IV

William Wordsworth and Laxmi Prasad Devkota : Comparison and Contrast of the two as Nature Poets.

In this chapter a brief biographical note on William Wordsworth will be given first. It will be followed by a passing reference to the methodology of comparative literature. Criticism laid against Devkota with reference to some of the poems of Wordsworth will follow. Then the distinct tendencies of Wordsworth regarding Nature will be traced in his poems, and the similar ones in Devkota's works will be explored. After that two poems written by them on the same theme will be dealt with bringing out similarities and differences between the two poets.

CHAPTER V

The Echoes of Samuel Taylor Coleridge's theory of Imagination in Laxmi Prasad Devkota's theory of Imagination and Poetry.

In this chapter a short biography of Coleridge will be followed by a description of the background against which he developed his theory of imagination. After that Laxmi Prasad Devkota's theory of imagination will be examined in the light of the theory of the former. Then the images used in two of their poems written against a similar background will be compared and contrasted.

CHAPTER VI

The Impact of Lord Byron and Percy Bysshe Shelley on Laxmi Prasad Devkota in respect of Humanitarianism

A brief biographical note each of Lord Byron and Percy Bysshe Shelley will be followed by a comparison and contrast of their works with those of Laxmi Prasad Devkota in respect of humanitarianism. Devkota's satiric tendencies and those of Byron will be dealt with first, then he will be compared as a revolutionary poet with Shelley, limiting the comparison to his Prometheus Unbound and to Devkota's प्रमिथस (Prometheus), a theme derived from the common Greek source.

CHAPTER VII

Sensuousness and the Cult of Beauty in John Keats and Laxmi Prasad Devkota.

This chapter will be devoted to a comparison of sensuousness and the cult of beauty of John Keats and Laxmi Prasad Devkota. After that their poetic theories will be detailed.

CHAPTER VIII

Conclusion

In this chapter the entire work with the major findings and their implications will be recapitulated. A bibliography and appendix will follow this chapter.