

Inclusion-Exclusion Dynamics: A Comparative Study of Nepal's National Anthems “ShreemanGambhira” and “SayaunThunga”

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Abstract

This article attempts to critically analyze the inclusion-exclusion dynamics in two Nepalese National anthems “ShreemanGambhira” and “Sayaun Thunga” using Michel Foucault’s ideas of social inclusion and exclusion. It explores how the old national anthem and the new national anthem of Nepal picturize such dynamics in melodious tunes. It also projects how the former deifies the monarchs and monarchy, and the latter glorifies the sacrificial contribution of the Nepalese people from diverse nationalities and geographical regions. This research shows that the former, military-tune-changed king’s song ultimately turned out to be national anthem, centers on the monarchy singularly focusing on the longevity, sovereignty, ancestral glory, grandeur and supremacy of the king only excluding the pluralistic voice of the nation and people whereas the latter represents the nation and people highlighting the unity in diversity, people’s and nation’s sovereignty and longevity, equality, people’s democracy, inclusiveness and proportional representation as it is the achievement of People’s War of ten years and People’s Movement II. The old one promotes the exclusionary philosophy whereas the new one the inclusionary philosophy of true patriotism and humanism voicing even the voiceless people. This study clearly reveals how the nation-and-people-representing national anthems can be both inclusionary according to the political necessity after the people’s movement and the political interest and exclusionary concealed in the melodious tune and deceptive voice of patriotism. The research is significant for critical analysts to look at the exclusion within inclusion and inclusion within exclusion even in the national anthems and patriotic structures which can be only the discourses.

Key Terms: national anthem, inclusion, exclusion, discourse, dynamics, politics

Introduction

National anthems are symbols of the nations and the people inducing and glorifying the histories, cultures, traditions, norms, values, ethos, logos, pathos, identities and natural beauties, and raising the patriotic feelings of the people towards the nation with the message of unity, harmony, sovereignty and equality. They are the musical compositions representing the nations and the national voices honouring the nations themselves. National anthems are alternatively termed as state anthems, national hymns or national songs voicing the various historical and social sagas of the nations. They attempt to create emotional integration within the people of different cultures, origins, regions, ethnicities, classes and castes with the empathetic feeling of nationhood. The melody-tuned national anthems orient

the people towards struggle and even sacrifice for the sake of nation deifying their struggles, contributions and patriotic feelings. They always heighten the concepts of nations' and peoples' self-reliance, self-esteem, self-confidence, self-hood and self-existence which endeavor to cherish and nourish the nation-loving emotions and sentiments of the people. Therefore, national anthems are the greatest properties for the nations like Nepal having historical significance of national unity and sovereignty.

Nepal, an ever-sovereign nation, holds two national anthems up to now after its geographical unification by King Prithvi Narayan Shah. The first of the anthems is "ShreemanGambhira", written by ChakrapaniChalise, officially declared as the national anthem from the *Shree PaanchkoSalaami* by the constitution in 1962. The second anthem is "SayaunThunga" written by Pradeep Kumar Rai, aka ByakulMaila, officially declared as national anthem on August 3, 2007 suspending the old one by the House of the Representatives. The former is the transformed form of the *salaamidhun* ('salutation melody'), *SherePanchkoSalaami*, originally the military tune and so it is called the king's song. The latter is the song written by ByakulMaila and composed by AmbarGurung as a representative voice of the Nepali people during the People's Movement II. The old one highlights only the king deifying him and presenting the people only as the well-wishers of the longevity of the king and monarchy whereas the new anthem glorifies Nepal, people's sovereignty, natural beauty and national unity indiversity including people's voice. Thus, the old national anthem and the new national anthem can be comparatively studied through internal-external dynamics.

Objective of the Study

The objective of the study is to find out how Nepal's old national anthem and the new one, directly or indirectly, promote inclusion-exclusion dynamics with the political voice. It also attempts to explore how the former excludes the people and nation centralizing everything on the monarchy and the king, and the latter includes the voice of people and nation glorifying the cultures, natural beauties, unity and the sovereignty of the people.

Methodology

To prove the inclusion-exclusion dynamics in Nepal's old national anthem and the new one, Michel Foucault's idea of social inclusion and exclusion has been used. It is the power of the society, nation and the rulers that does the politics of inclusion and exclusion. Foucault's *History of Madness* examines the history and means of exclusion, a history of the ostracized and the confined according to the hierarchy of sanity and insanity, reason and unreason. In 'The Order of Discourse' (1981), Foucault talks of exclusion and exclusionary procedures:

In every society the production of discourse is at once controlled, selected, organized and redistributed by a certain number of procedures whose role is to ward off its powers and dangers, to gain mastery over its chance events, to evade its ponderous, formidable materiality. (210)

Foucault uses the term ‘procedures of exclusion’ (210) meaning that the avoidance of talking about particular issues containing sexuality and politics ‘very soon reveal discourse’s link with desire and with power’ (211) showing ‘discourse is not simply that which translates struggles or systems of domination, but is the thing for which and by which there is struggle, discourse is the power which is to be seized’ (211). He also talks about the system of exclusion of true and untrue that might also vary according to historical period, and the ‘will to truth’ which he calls ‘that prodigious machinery designed to exclude’ (214).

It is very difficult to measure social inclusion and exclusion because of its multidimensional nature. Defining social exclusion in *Leaving No one Behind*, United Nations mentions: “Thus social exclusion entails not only material deprivation but also lack of agency or control over important decisions as well as feelings of alienation and inferiority” (18). Quoting Popay et al. (2008), it further presents:

Exclusion consists of dynamic, multi-dimensional processes driven by unequal power relationships interacting across four main dimensions—economic, political, social and cultural—and at different levels including individual, household, group, community, country and global levels. It results in a continuum of inclusion/exclusion characterized by unequal access to resources, capabilities and rights which leads to health inequalities. (18 Popay et al. 2)

Exclusion is multidimensional as it covers all the aspects like culture, economy, religion, politics, etc. UN further writes: “Historically, exclusion has sometimes been condoned and institutionalized by government, religious, community or other authorities” (28). Social inclusion is a response to the exclusion and a process of creating unity and harmony in the society. UN depicts: “As a political response to the exclusion challenge, social inclusion is thus a more deliberate process of encompassing and welcoming all persons and embracing greater equality and tolerance” (20).

Textual Analysis

No doubt, the national anthems not only may represent the nations and the voice of the people but also may embody the politics of inclusion-exclusion dynamics. Some national anthems include the voice of the people but some others exclude. The anthems made under the control of the kings seem to promote only monarchy and its political interest but the anthems made by people’s representatives certainly raise the voice of the nation and the people. In the same spotlight, Nepal’s old national anthem glorifies monarchy but the

new anthem represents national glory and people's sovereignty. As the old national anthem was created and declared by the monarch, it certainly worshiped the power keeping the powerful at the center without caring the real representation of the people's voice. The king attempted to fulfill his political interest through the discourse in National anthem which people could not critically think upon. The monarchs used such songs as the best tools to create center-margin hierarchy but in such a way that people could not even imagine it. Therefore, this national anthem too is the play of powers. But, the new national anthem, created and formalized by the people's representatives, represents the true picture of whole Nepal and Nepalese people with the message of unity, natural beauty and national and people's sovereignty.

The old national anthem (*RastriyaGaan*) of Nepal, "*ShreemanGambhira*", deifies the monarch making people the weak supporters and mere well-wishers of the monarchy. It appeals all Nepalese people to pray to god for the longevity and glory of the king. The anthem expresses the progress and prosperity of the king and praises his crown, courage, eminence and sovereignty. As it tries to convince people to worship the king as 'Lord Vishnu' and his incarnation, it promotes the politics of exclusion. Therefore, it is nothing more than worship of power being slave before it. The anthem speaks only for the betterment of the monarchy, not the nation and its people. It keeps the king at the center but doesn't raise the sovereign voice of the people. Talking about exclusion politics, UN in 2016 report entitled *Leaving No one Behind* asserts : "Historically, exclusion has sometimes been condoned and institutionalized by government, religious, community or other authorities" (28). This song also promotes politics of exclusion sidelining the voice of the people. The king-led government itself bypasses the people deifying the king and his contribution, and by forgetting the sacrificial contribution of the people in history of nation making. The anthem reveals:

Shreeman Gambhira Nepali (May glory crown you, the earnest Nepalese)

prachandapratapibhupati (You, illustrious monarch)

Shree-paanchsarkarmaharajadhirajakosadarahosunnati (May His Majesty King always progress)

Rakhunchirayueeshale (May god bless him longevity)

prajaphailiyospukaraunjayapremale (May the number of subjects increase, Let's pray His victory with love)

Hami Nepali saaraale (By us all Nepali).

The song appeals Nepali People to earnestly eulogize and glorify the majesty and the magnificence of the king. The words "*Shreeman*", "*prachandapratapi*", "*Shree-paanch*"

and “maharajadhiraja” all magnify the king. The king is the most respectful person of the people as he is like god almighty with the qualities of omnipotence, omnipresence and omniscience. He is the king, ruler and savior of all Nepalese people. He has majestic qualities of ruling the nation like god. These words never speak about the contributions, sacrifices, struggles and sufferings of the people except glorification of greatness of the king. Moreover, the words “chirayueeshale” depict that the song prays for longevity of the king and monarchy but not the long life of the nation and its people. Furthermore, the words “prajaphailiyos” show that the song expects for increment in the number of the well-wishers of the king. Instead of the word “janata” (people), “praja” (subjects) has been used which creates the hierarchy between the king and the people as ruler and the ruled, master and the slave and the savior and the helpless. It also creates the discourse that if there is no king, there are no people and no nation but it forcefully makes common people the praja. The words “pukaraunjayapremale” and “saaraale” project that the song pleases all the people to pray to god for the victory of the king not for the people themselves. It shows that the song focuses on the sovereignty, victory and longevity of the king but not the people. The song includes only the voice of the king excluding the voice of the people. Therefore, this is not the anthem of the people but the anthem of the king. “Exclusion consists of dynamic, multi-dimensional processes driven by unequal power relationships” (Popay et.al 2). The powerful always exclude the powerless. This song is the result of unequal power ownership i.e. the king is more powerful but the people have no power at all.

The old national anthem of Nepal doesn't carry democratic and representational voice of the people rather it holds the voice of the king and the military as it was originally the “salaamidhun” (salutation melody). The Nepali Professor of English K PMalla in the magazine Himal South Asia acclaims: “The 1962 constitution, handed down by King Mahendra after wresting power from the elected government of BP Koirala in 1960, officially declared the Shree Paanchko Salaami as the national anthem. That is when it became the ratriyagaan” (“The King’s Song”/national anthem). King Mahendra declared the military salaamidhun to the national anthem Shreeman Gambhira. It is the first stanza of the two-stanza military song. Suspending the elected democratic government, the king imposed the power upon the people autocratically. The original military tune for salaami with the word Gorkhali instead of Nepali turned out to be the national anthem. Therefore, the song voices the king serving the political power hungry political interest but it does not raise the sovereign voice of the nation and its people. Malla further asserts:

But as we have it today, the national anthem simply extols the majesty of the king. It wishes him a long life, all success, and the spread of his subject population – something that has come to pass with population explosion and the migration of Nepalis to faraway lands in

search of survival. Shreeman Gambhira has the people praying for the monarch's continuous triumph and wellbeing. (*HimalSouthAsia*)

The song centers only on the king forgetting all the sacrifices, contributions, sufferings, cultures of the people and the natural beauties of the nation and its sovereignty.

Contrarily, the new national anthem of Nepal, "*SayaunThunga*", represents the people's voice spreading the message of unity, natural beauty, cultural diversity, historical glory and national sovereignty. It voices all the nationalities, regions, classes, tribes and castes and levels unifying them in one garland inclusively. The anthem promotes the concepts and practices of inclusiveness, proportional representation and sovereignty in each and every line. It dismantles the singularly focused old national anthem and its politics of exclusion and raises the voice of Nepal and Nepalese people. The anthem promotes the concept of unity in diversity existing in Nepal. Moreover, it glorifies the innumerable heritages of both nature and culture, and also the sacrificial contributions of the martyrs and the people for ever-independence and unbreakable or indivisible strength of the nation and people's democracy in Nepal. This song is the result of people's revolution as a response to the autocratic rule of the king based on politics of exclusion. Regarding inclusion, UN in 2016 report under the title *Leaving No one Behind* depicts: "As a political response to the exclusion challenge, social inclusion is thus a more deliberate process of encompassing and welcoming all persons and embracing greater equality and tolerance"(20). This song attempts to represent the true voice of the people giving strong answer to the exclusionary practice of the monarchy. The anthem utters:

Hundreds of flowers, we are a unified garland Nepali
Spread being sovereign, from Mechi to Mahakali.

.....

Shawl of amassing nature's millions of treasures
By martyr's blood, independent and immovable.(1-4)

The discourse of King Prithvi Narayan Shah that 'Nepal is a common garden of four *Varnas* and thirty six Castes' has been revisited and re-codified in the new national anthem. Shah had made the discourse to delude the people with the message of unity for royal longevity. But, the new anthem reflects the reality of national unity for people's democracy, justice, equality, sovereignty, inclusiveness and proportional representation. The unity of diverse Nepalese from various regions, castes, ethnicities and nationalities makes Nepal a beautiful strengthened garland of flowers. It reflects the truth that Nepal is totally liberated even from the falsely symbolized emblem of unity, the internal colonizers after the victory of the people in Movement II. The martyr's sacrificial contribution, which has made Nepal

independent and immovable, is also glorified in the song. In addition, the anthem also magnifies the infinite treasures of nature gifted to the nation. Therefore, the song includes all the natural and cultural voices deserving an honour from each Nepalese people.

The new national anthem, “*SayaunThunga*”, is the achievement of People’s War of ten years and People’s Movement II and therefore, it is the newest and the most democratic anthem in the history of Nepal. Only the military songs and the king’s songs used to be national anthems before the establishment of people’s democracy. Describing the beauty of the anthem, Pratik Vaidyain “Winds of Change, Nepal’s New National Anthem” asserts:

The anthem begins with a simple “Sayauthugaphulkahami, eutai mala Nepali,” literally: “We are hundreds of flowers, the one garland – Nepali”. This one line expressed the feeling that we come from different backgrounds, each with different and vibrant cultures, ethos and beliefs, but we share the one common thing in us; we are all Nepali, and proud of who we are. This is the one thing that unites us and this is the one fact that makes us stronger. The song also illustrates Nepal’s diversity; the seventh line best describes this: “Bahuljati, bhasa, dharma, sanskrichhanbisa!”, meaning “The diverse races, languages, faiths, and cultures are so extensive.” It shows how flexible the Nepalese are. These lines also show the world that Nepal is a center of multi-ethnic tolerance and something of our participation in globalization and the unity in humanity. It shows the Democratic way of thinking of the people and their belief in pluralism.(ECSNEPAL)

The newest national anthem of Nepal speaks of the country describing it as a garland of diverse flower-like regions, languages, cultures, religions, tribes and castes advancing towards humanity, unity and sovereignty as a result of the sacrificial contribution of the ancestors. The anthem also shows deep respect to the martyrs, motherland and the laborious and democratic people with the voice of pluralism.

Nepal is rich in its natural beauties, cultures, histories, geographies, climates and national heroes who have glorified the nation throughout the world. The old national anthem even doesn’t touch/mention such issues to represent nation’s and people’s voice rather it solely glorifies the king as the ultimate hero for the nation necessitating its continuity. Defiantly, the new anthem includes all the voices to represent the true picture of the whole nation and its people. Instead of the powerful rulers, it gives space to the real powerful people from various nationalities full of cultural heritages. The old song seems to be regressive whereas the new is progressive with the true representation of the people and the nation. It honours all the castes, ethnicities, nationalities and regions equally with the message of “unity in diversity”. The anthem expresses:

Land of Knowledge, land of peace, Mountains, Hills, Terai
Indivisible beloved our motherland Nepal.

.....

The diverse races, languages, religions, and cultures so all-encompassing
Progressive is our nation, long live Nepal. (5-8)

The heroes of the nation like Gautam Buddha and other sages were born in this holy land showered us with their ever-illuminating knowledge. Gautam Buddha, who is considered as emblem of peace, was born in Nepal. Therefore, Nepal is known as land of peace and knowledge in the world. As the song includes such message in its lines, it is really an inclusive and impressive anthem for not only Nepal but also the whole world. Furthermore, it reflects the true picture of Nepal with three geographical structures: -Mountains, Hills and the Terai. The mountains are popular in the world and add glory to the nation; the Terai is the granary of the nation helping it in the survival of people with grains; and the hilly region is famous for the moderate climate. Moreover, the diverse races, languages, religious faiths and cultures making Nepal unified and prosperous are elevated in the song. It also wishes longevity of the nation not the power holders or the monarchs which the old anthem does. Therefore, the new national anthem of Nepal is really inclusive.

Conclusion

To sum up, the inclusion-exclusion dynamics can be reflected even in the national anthems though they are believed to be all-inclusive. The old national anthem of Nepal, “*ShreemanGambhira*” centers only on the monarch glorifying his greatness and appealing people to pray to god for his longevity and sovereignty intentionally excluding the true voice and picture of Nepal and Nepalese people whereas the new national anthem, “*SayaunThunga*”, reflects the real picture of the nation and its people including all the issues of unity, people’s and nation’s sovereignty, natural beauty, cultural and geographical diversities, patriotism, historical glory, national heroism and longevity of the people and the nation. The former doesn’t represent the voice, contribution, sacrifice and suffering of the people as it focuses only on the progress, prosperity, victory and continuity of the monarch and its institution. The nationalistic voice in the song is hierarchy-creating and promoting discrimination as it claims the possibility of the nation only with the continuity of His Majesty. But, the latter raises the true voice of the nation and the people focusing on the nation as the unified garden of diverse nationalities, ethnicities, languages, cultures and geographical structures, and showing respect to the martyrs and the national heroes for their sacrificial contributions for independence, glorious history and people’s democracy. Therefore, the former is all-exclusive, and conversely the latter is all-inclusive.

Lastly, the new national anthem, *SayaunThunga* is better than the old national anthem of Nepal, *ShreemanGambhira* for its all-inclusiveness, glorification of people’s democracy, magnification of martyrs and national heroes, people-centeredness, true

patriotism, proportionate representation and wish for sovereignty and longevity of the people and the nation which the old anthem excludes centering only on the king and monarchy forgetting all the people and the nation itself. Therefore, the old one promotes the exclusionary philosophical practices whereas the new one the inclusionary philosophy of true patriotism and humanism voicing even the voiceless people. This research is significant for the critical researchers to look at the face behind the curtain and make comparative study with the real front.

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