

Common Sense and Cultural Hegemony in Ram Shekhar Nakarmi's *Pa:khaa*
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Abstract

Caste system, in Nepal, has helped maintain a definite social structure. In contrast, the system also created a social barrier separating 'higher' and 'lower' castes. However, so called 'lower caste' are considered lawfully equal in all the accesses since more than a decade. Nevertheless, unavoidable prejudices still exist in the society regarding identities and capabilities of these 'outcasts'. So, this paper is an endeavor to identify such causes through the content analysis of Ram Shekhar Nakarmi directed Newari movie, *Pa:khaa* (literally meaning, the wall), released in 2012. In this article, I have analyzed the representation of the status of the protagonist, her failure to redeem herself from the destitution and the state of her being an outcast in the primary text under scrutiny. In this attempt, I have tried to examine traces of resistance against 'cultural hegemony' and finally inferred that 'common sense', which is the manifestation of 'cultural hegemony', is indeed a powerful tool that infuses in the both the higher and lower caste people and letting the barrier of caste discrimination pertain in the communities. I have analyzed the primary text by applying the basic theoretical framework envisioned by Antonio Gramsci's notion of cultural hegemony.

Keywords: Cinemas, caste, marginalization, Newars, cultural hegemony, resistance

Introduction

In its basic sense, caste system refers to a social institution which classifies people into endogamous categories that is determined by one's birth. In other words, caste is a social group, whose membership is based on birth and many restrictions are imposed on its members in food, marriage, occupation and social relations (Chalaune, 2022). As caste is a social entity, it is influenced by many aspects such as religion, economy, political power, societal structure etc. So, the caste system is a complicated classification of humans and thus it is one of the manifestations of human culture and civilization.

Initially, the caste system is believed to have originated in Hindu culture. Chalaune (2022) exposes that the caste system started around 1500 BC with Aryans' entry into the Indus valley. Gradually, the system got shifted in Asian societies through Vedic, post Vedic and theological period till the 11th century. In this reference, the caste system in Nepal was first introduced in Lichchhavi era during the 1st century (Chalaune, 2022) but "It was King

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Jayasthiti Malla who, with the help of five Brahmins from the Indian plains, organized the society of the Valley into four Varnas and 64 castes on the basis of hereditary occupations and genealogies” (Nepali, 1965). Specific to Newars (the indigenous inhabitants of Kathmandu valley), it is he who reconstructed the caste system in Newar society in the 14th century that divided Newar society into 64 sub-castes. Jayasthiti Malla laid a strong foundation to legalize caste system and further Ram Shah, a 17th century king of Gorkha, followed Jayasthiti Malla and hardened the caste system (qtd. in Chalaune, 2022). In short, caste is a historical and cultural unit of Nepali society.

Tracing back history, one of the implicit objectives for the introduction of ‘caste system’, colloquially termed as ‘*Jat*’ in Nepali societies, was to maintain a dialectic social structure as a whole, creating a link between traditional occupations and inheritance. In the past, *Jat* was highly valued, and social and economic relationships were maintained accordingly (Subedi and Maharjan, 2021). According to Nepali (1965), various castes were demanded to follow specific rules related to occupation, residence, dress, house and a number of social and ritual matters. So, the caste system is supposedly one of the significant social and structural reforms that intended to form a precise template in the context of Nepal. Although initially these 64 castes were horizontal, the process of Hinduization and Sanskritization transformed these castes into a hierarchy, giving birth to Newar Dalits such as Pote, Chyame, and Kusle at the bottom and Rajopadhyaya at the top (qtd. in Nepali, 2021). Accordingly, Newar Dalits who were stratified at the bottom of the caste hierarchy were considered as ‘Untouchables’ with the promulgation of *Muluki Ain* (the National or Civil code) of 1854 by Rana prime minister Jung Bahadur Rana. This led to the exclusion and marginalization of ‘untouchables’ in the mainstream approaches.

Nevertheless, with the proclamation of *New Legal Code 1963*, the restoration of multi-party democracy in 1990 and the ultimate realization of consciousness in people, the structure of caste system has been condemned regarding issues of marginalization. People from Dalit community are also engaged in profuse vocational activities and professions and improving their lifestyle nowadays. Consequently, Dalit participation is increased in various wings of nation, e.g. civil service, security forces etc. gradually (Nepali, 2021). However, this communal group still remains a social outcast, at least amid the human psyche in the societies. Unavoidable prejudices still exist in the society regarding their inclusions, identities and capabilities. Numerous unseen barriers remain in place to prevent them flourishing in the ways that members of other castes frequently can (Gellner, et al., 2020). An absolute reason to the failure of completely erasing discriminatory line between two binary classes has always been in my mind. Hence, in spite of the indiscriminatory law of our country regarding caste bases, are the exclusions still prevalent there? If so, what might be the factors that are hindering for the absolute inclusion of all category of people? So as to

address this research question, this paper is an endeavor to identify such causes through the context analysis method in analyzing Ram Shekhar Nakarmi directed Newari movie, *Pa:khaa* (literally meaning, the wall), released in 2012.

No doubt, the caste system of Nepal is superficially divided into four types as a whole. Among these four, an ethnic group called Newars belongs to *Baishyas*. Yet, it is quite strange to know that Newar further categorize themselves as many higher- and lower-class stratifications. For instance, *Shrestha*, *Pradhan*, *Bajracharya* and *Shakya* are considered as the highest of all Newar castes and *Kasai*, *Khadgi*, *Dyola*, *Kapali* etc. are considered as the lowest castes, in fact considered the untouchables. In this sense, the Newar community with “a unique case of intersectionality of ethnic, caste, and Dalit identity” (Maharjan, 2012) is such a large area in terms of caste varieties where intensive research can be carried out. Also, regarding identity politics, after the two major people’s Movement in 1990 and 2006, particularly Janajatis, Dalits and Madhesis have been defining and redefining their identities and demanding for inclusions (Maharjan, 2012). This is the main reason why I have chosen a Newari movie *Pa:khaa* (2012), having the vivid images and issues of social inclusions and exclusions, as the primary text for my study. Furthermore, the movie I have selected has been directed by a very talented actor cum director in Nepal Bhasa late Ram Shekhar Nakarmi who is also the script writer of the popular Nepal Bhasa movie *Rajamati*. The difference between film and literature is that of visual images which stimulate our perception directly. Film provides more direct sensory experience than reading (Totawad, 2019). Also, “competency across the media is beneficial in understanding the breadth of media influencing the particular object of study” (qtd. in Longfellow, 2015). This way, visual communication can be a complete blend of ethos, pathos and kairos.

***Pa:khaa* in the Backdrop of ‘Film as a Literary Genre’**

'Film' and 'movie' are most often interchangeably used terminologies because they both refer to moving pictures projected onto a screen in such a way that viewers see an illusion of motion in front of them (Brown, 2020). Films have the ability to make the audience use all their sensory implications that includes seeing, hearing, feeling and savoring to understand the theme it can provoke intellectuality; it is a medium of intellectual, creative and aesthetic conveys (Aryal, 2020). Though the audience knows that films are screened with imaginary and fictious presentations, they get the impression of reality in films.

Films, synonymously used as cinemas have their origin in history before the twentieth century. Cinemas are evident to have its systematic and technological origin in Paris, France but, within the hundred years of its origin the film genre became a popular culture all over the world. Following the end of World War Second in the 1940s, the following decade, the 1950s marked a 'golden age' for non- English world cinema, especially for Asian cinema

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(Kevin, 2002). In this reference, Nepali cinemas are also one of the important parts of Southeast Asian cinemas. Even though Nepali film industry flourished far later, in comparison to that of other Asian countries, the industry also has a distinct feature and importance of its own in terms of economic, social, cultural and entertaining and recreational dimensions since its' establishment (Maharjan, 2020). Thus, Nepali films hold their own importance and diversity.

Khadgi (2017) showcases the diversity in Nepali film industry by presenting five of the most awesome Nepali films cinematographed in ethnic background – *Silu* (Newar community), *Numafung* (Limbu community), *Caravan* (Dolpo community), *Rajamati* (Newar community) and *Takasera* (Magar community). In all these beautiful movies, ethnic aestheticism of each of the related cultures and ethnicities is delightfully presented. Being specific to the ethnicity of the Newari community, critic Shyam Smrit observes that the contribution of Newar actors in the entire seventy- two years history of Nepali film industry remained incredible. He views:

...the major role in the first ever made Nepali movie *Aama* (2022 B.S) is played by Chaitya Devi Singh who is a Newar. Also, the role of hero in the movie was played by Shiva Shankar Manandhar. In addition to this, Chaitya Devi Singh also played the main role in the first ever made colourful Nepali movie *Kumari*. Commercially hit movie during the beginning days of Nepali film industry *Jeevan- Rekha* has the lead role of Shiva Shrestha. (translated, 2017)

Among the list of Nepal Bhasa movies, *Pa:khaa* plays a significant role in the film industry. The director of the movie, Ram Shekhar Nakarmi (1994-2074 B.S.) was a multi-talented literary figure in Nepal Bhasa literature whose contributions are prominently counted in the field of short stories, drama, script writing and novels. Besides many of his famous literary creations, *Simaa:ta Fafa Swo* and *Agati* are two of his novels that are prescribed by Tribhuvan University in the Department of Nepal Bhasa. He had the great capability of changing brass- like literary piece of writing into giving golden spark. One of his exigent contributions is his script writing of popular Newari movie, *Rajamati* (1995). Despite the fact that Nepal Bhasa, being an indigenous language of Nepal, stands quite different from the national language, his writings could not meet the horizon of success in Nepali literature but his literary creations in Nepal Bhasa reflect a realistic picture of Newari society. Through his writings he seeks to eradicate rooted evils of the society that have resisted 'change'. This peculiar feature of his writing is exhibited in *Pa: Khaa*, directed by himself. Cinematographed on the basis of Shrestha Award winner Purna Pathik's (1985-2054 B.S.) narrative fiction *Andhakar ra Pa:khaa*, this neo-realistic movie got honoured as 'Future of Asia' in the Asian T.V. conference.

Recognizing Dyolas as Dalit

Depiction of the bitter reality of social outcast Dalits among the Newar community becomes a major concern of the movie. Besides, uprooting the barrier that divides one human from another also captures vital significance in the movie. Before the story opens, the narrator elaborates:

'Pa:khaa' is a rebel against the wall
that separates human beings in
the name of caste (You Tube, 2012).

A number of interpretations can be found from the history of origin of caste to the present regarding Newar caste classification. David N. Gellner (1986) further elaborates the categorization by writing that Newar caste was classified during Malla reign by Jayasthiti Malla as Newar Brahmins (Vajracharya), Shrestha (Civil servants, business), farmers (Jyapu), various artisan and civil castes and lastly unclean castes (butchers, sweepers and death specialists). So, the classification of Newar caste is based on the same Hindu principle which stipulates the four fold division of society. On the basis of this classification, the unclean castes are those who are categorized as they are as per their occupation, such as 'Pode' is derived from the hereditary calling of public executioner. Fishing, basket making and cleaning are regarded as the main occupations of 'Pode' castes. Since ancient times, people belonging to this caste have settled around the outskirts of the main settlement. This is one of the huge instances that they have been a marginalized group since history.

However, culture is a changeable process and caste system, being an appendage of culture, is inevitable to change. Due to the simultaneous ethnic activism with the caste system and untouchability, this division of caste has become controversial. In recent years, the so-called disadvantaged or marginalised groups have emerged as a subject in Nepalese development discourse (Gurung, 2008). Maharjan (2012) identifies that the outward manifestation of this controversy began in 1997 when Newar castes such as Khadgi, Kapali, Dyola and Chyamkhala were regarded as Dalits. He further elaborates-

Dyahlas are the principal, and more numerous, group among the untouchables, with population of less than 3 percent of the total Newars. They live outside the city walls, with no agricultural land. Presently, most of the Dyahlas do cleaning job in municipality garbage collection centres and public and private offices. Economically, they were the poorest sections of Newars, though mainly due to the cleaning jobs they are now non-poor. They were fishermen and basket-makers, used to rear pigs, and were executioners. They also serve as god-guardians at shrines or temples of Mother Goddesses. They have important —ritual functions as accumulators of pollution (Levy 1990: 85). Most Dyahlas use —Dyahla or —Deula or —Dyola as their surname; some use —Pode and —Pujari; and some use —Matangi. (2012)

He concerns upon the ambiguity of Newar activists towards the sweeper caste who still face caste-based discrimination in their everyday lives.

Geiser (2020) examines some of the apparent reasons behind Dalits being marginalized. He mentions that the term 'Dalit' itself is prejudicial which is used to describe the untouchables as explained in the legal code of 1854 as the caste from whom water is not accepted and whose touch requires the subsequent sprinkling of holy water. The second agenda he mentions is that the social activists put Dalits under a homogeneous group which is a hindrance for the upliftment of the status of Dalits. In addition, Dalits themselves practice untouchability among themselves. Owing to these grounds the gains have been minimal, despite all efforts.

Nepali (2018) figures out several significant reasons for the prevalence of deep-rooted “caste-based” practices in Nepal such as poverty, situation of traditional occupation, education, lack of consciousness, lack of leadership quality, political backwardness etc. Further discussing the impact of these factors upon the discrimination in Dalits, he elucidates:

Dalits do not have proper knowledge about their health and sanitation as well as quality of life due to the lack of education and awareness. They still have old beliefs, tradition, values, and go blindly with superstition. Literacy rate is very poor among the Dalit population. They do not know the importance of education. They utilize their indigenous skill and knowledge to fulfill their domestic requirements since the skill of these people do not play significant role to bring change in their economic status. (2018)

For Chalaune (2022), the caste system in Nepal has been going on since ancient times and the main reason behind this is the exclusion of Dalits in mainstream education system including Puranic period, religious period and modern period.

Rao (2010) indicates that the reason why Nepal is not able to move away from caste system despite its numerous efforts is because of job segregation that leads to high poverty. Dalits are assigned to low-income jobs, including blacksmiths, goldsmiths, tailors, shoemakers and street cleaners. Also, it is often the case that Dalit women and Dalit children are forced to work as servants for their landlord without much of a wage.

Several national and international critiques seem to present a deep concern for assembling social outcasts particularly Dalits, under a single umbrella of 'humanity'. Possible implementation of their avenues could be one of the ways for addressing those people, marginalized in the name of caste. However, cinema has been seen as a narrative media, similar to literature, so marginalized voice can be represented through films.

Caste, Culture and Hegemony

The ambiguity and complexities of Newar caste system is perplexing. Despite the Brahminical basis of the Newar caste structure, it is difficult to apply the four hierarchical orders of Brahman, Kṣetri, Vaiśya and Śudra to the Newars (Shrestha, 2007). This aroused in me an instinct to conduct research in the area. In this reference, I have tried to look upon this issue through the theoretical implications of a prominent Italian Marxist thinker Antonio Gramsci, focusing on his concept of 'cultural hegemony' and 'common sense'.

'Hegemony', a term developed by Gramsci during his imprisonment in Fascist jail concerns with "how power works; how it is wielded by those in power and how it is won by those who want to change the system "(Doncombe, 2012). Brons (2017) views that hegemony is the people's spontaneous consent to and adoption of the values, desires, ideas, beliefs, perspectives, knowledge claims and so forth that serve the interests of the state and / or ruling elite. He articulates-

... hegemony is (usually) not planned or actively organized— it is not some kind of conspiracy. (And of course, it cannot be if the hegemonies are not organized.) Rather, hegemony is a more or less automatic social process. Gramsci suggests that the “spontaneous consent” is caused by the prestige and confidence that the socially dominant group(s) (i.e., the hegemonies) enjoy(s), but also that “the intellectuals” and the “organs of public opinion” play an essential role in spreading the worldview of the ruling group(s) to the ruled. (2017)

Antonio Gramsci's notion of national-popular was conceived as part of an effort to recover the hegemonic class control in the service of the proletariat (Ramirez, 2015). Writing about Antonio Gramsci, Juan Carlos De Orellana (2015) writes that Antonio Gramsci was an Italian Marxist intellectual wrote his most celebrated and influential theoretical contributions to Marxist theory. Among these, two concepts would become most important to scholars of different disciplines: hegemony and historical bloc. Hegemony, to Gramsci, is the “cultural, moral and ideological” leadership of a group over allied and subaltern groups (Orellana, 2015). The notion of hegemony is proved to be similar to that of culture, but with added values. Through its contribution, culture embraces a specific distinction of power, hierarchy and influence (Ramirez, 2015). So, the spontaneous consent without any forceful imposition in terms of traditional cultural beliefs can be considered as cultural hegemony.

With the above references, in case of caste and culture in Nepali society, especially in the Newar communities, cultural hegemony has been in deep practice. Dalits were, for traditional caste society, a symbol of everything society rejected, a living representation of the consequences of poor *karma*. They were also a repository of blame and impurity, taking on the role of scapegoats in various rituals. Dalits were, in short, the very opposite of the dominant caste and their presence was necessary as an embodiment of non-dominance (qtd. in Gellner, 2024). Regarding the persistence of caste hierarchy in Nepali society,

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Gellner (2024) contemplates that not only are Dalits reminded of their 'lowness' in the eyes of others every time they interact in public and are forced to identify themselves but, as a minority, they also have little chance of winning power through the ballot box under a first-past-the-post system.

A Brief overview of the Movie

Pa:khaa (literal meaning, wall) is a short Nepal Bhasa movie, directed by late Ram Shekhar Nakarmi. The movie released in 2012 wonderfully executes the poignant impact of caste system in Newar community where caste hierarchy has been perpetrated since a long history. Central character 'Bishan' is casted by Surya Mala Sharma in the movie, whose livelihood is miserably poor. She belongs to the lowest strata of caste hierarchy in Newar community, 'Pode'. She lives alone with her only son and widowhood in the outskirts of main settlement. For sustenance, she does clean of the local places: altars, roads and periphery of temples and the surroundings of elites. She gets paid for her work in a very low wage. She has hard times to manage even her basic needs. Most of the nights she sleeps with empty stomach. She hardly has enough food to feed her son. The time of paddy harvesting is a bit favourable for people belonging to her caste. In that season, almost every day, she goes to fields which are done with harvesting and collect leftover strands of paddy. She raises ragged clothes that are donated by upper caste elites on the occasions of Solar eclipse. Whenever, she goes outside she walks on bare feet. Every walk she proceeds, she has to be alert so that she does not make them impure by her touch.

Bashi, a ten-year-old son of the protagonist, is deprived of all sort of child rights. The condition of his lodging and feeding is pathetic. When there are feasts in upper class people's houses, he waits for someone to come out with the remaining of his food. He is not allowed to enjoy playing with his friends. Whenever he tries to play with upper class children, they are pulled out from the squad, alerting them not to touch and play with unclean castes. Along with Bishan's family, entire group of lower caste people in the drama is wretched. Yet, not any intellectual tries to resist this hegemony and act for an equilibrium society. There is lack of consciousness among every marginalized level of people. Due to this, innocent boy Bashi, in the movie, has to be a scape-goat in the system of this "Cultural Hegemony" and faces his ultimate death due to untimely treatment for his Diarrhea.

Pa: khaa and Cultural Hegemony

Self- Representation of subalterns seems negligible in the movie. Their representative must appear simultaneously as their master, as an authority over them, as unrestricted governmental power that protects them from the other classes and sends them rain and sunshine from above (Spivak, 1988). In case of elites, a traditional Ayurvedic doctor is shown as an agent at the end of the movie. He rebels against the wall of partition that

separates one human with another but his approach is late. Though he shows his resistance lately, he can be considered a significant character who is expected to exist in very society guided by cultural hegemony, to stand as the voice of margins in the name of caste hierarchy.

In general, 'Subalterns' allude to category of people who are underprivileged of mainstream culture. Initially used by Gramsci (1940), this word refers to proletariats who have not been united under political parties. "For Gramsci, the subalterns are alienated, not because they are estranged, but because they are not estranged enough. They all too habitually- through a process of naturalization and ritual-locate their being in the homage neatly (Levinson, 2004). Obviously, the interpretation of 'subalterns' differs with circumstance and context but as Gramsci regards subalterns as the outcasts, 'Pode' caste in Newar community is incorporated into the subalternity concept of Gramsci. In *Pa:khaa*, 'Pode' community is isolated and let remain around the periphery of main settlement. Not only in settlement but they are isolated from every opportunity to upgrade their life. Even the innocent kids are alienated from upper class children. A scene in the movie vividly shows normalization of this alienation when conversation between Bashi's and his mother proceeds:

Son: Mother, are we 'Pode'? Really?

Mother: Yes, why do you need?

son: Then what does Uttam belong to?

Mother: They belong to 'Priests'. Why?

Son: If they are 'Priests', how are we 'Pode'?

Mother: Why do you need?

Son: Can't we also be 'Priests'?

Mother: Now you are talking un necessary. Keep quiet.

(translated, *Pa:khaa*, 28min)

This particular conversation that takes place between the mother and her son shows the common sense in the protagonist's psyche. She takes the things regarding alienation, discrimination and exclusion simply for granted when her son asks her about their identity. She silenced her son by normalizing the issue. Moreover, these subalterns are so bound by rituals that they are homogenized as under-privileged: for instance, the ritual practice of donating a pair of clothes, and 'Pode' people receiving them whenever there is a Solar eclipse and ritual of offering part of food that belong to departed spirits to 'Pode' is practiced as sacred ritual.

However, Gramsci (2005) also realizes that in order to create and maintain a new society the subalterns equally need to create and maintain a new 'consciousness'. But the repository of consciousness is 'culture' that embodies both 'aesthetic senses' and 'anthropological sense'. Gramsci re-enforces upon the fact that the resistance that you show against elites to seize power from them is worth appreciation and even possible but then it is more likely to be

short-lived unless this material power is backed up by a culture. Relating this nation of consciousness and power to my primary text, in the situation when the protagonist's son remains terribly sick at her home, she goes to an ayurvedic doctor (Baidhye baje) to plead him to come and observe her son at home. In this critical situation, she tries to create a new consciousness for prioritizing health but since culture is the repository of this consciousness, the doctor denies to come to her home as she belongs to 'untouchable' caste. Even if the doctor, at last, suddenly realizes that the culture of touchability and untouchability is human constructed system and follows his ethics to go and cure the child at protagonist's home, he is not backed up by the society; all the members of his community just witness him going to an untouchable's home, without assisting his effort. With this ending, it is highly expected to create union between elites and subalterns in the movie. However, I perceive that unless the consciousness of agent (either a subaltern of an elite) is accomplished by culture, resistance cannot be expected to produce an effective result.

Similarly, when culture becomes hegemonic, it becomes "common sense" for the majority of the population (Doncombe, 2012). Consequently, common sense become instilled in individuals psyche which make them accept all the constructed rules of society and seize them to figure out that they are actually been pushed away to marginalization due to the common sense. In this sense, Doncombe (2012) rightly mentions that, not that ideas were powerful enough to eliminate class struggle, but they were obviously capable of muting it sufficiently to allow class societies to function. Even if the concept of 'hegemony' resulting common sense' as its by-product considered a very simple one, hegemony through culture is more powerful than military force. This phenomenon, according to Bates,

creates a "false consciousness" that represents victory of ruling-class intellectuals in this struggle. Conversely, the phenomenon of the passing of "traditional" intellectuals (those of a decadent ruling class) into the proletarian camp... explained by Gramsci as a victory for the proletarian intellectuals, who are aided by the fact that their class represents the "progressive" stage of human development.(1975)

In this sense, in the movie, a mistress from elite group donates a pair of clothes to the protagonist on the occasion of her birthday and also consoles to give her son a shirt. The protagonist expresses her easy consent on it. She believes that it is the "progressive" stage of her pitiful condition. Moreover, the children from underclass society feel blessed to get food from temple, offered by the 'mistress'.

In addition, common sense is intact among subalterns in such a way that they think they must not fetch drinking water from the same tap where clean castes go. So, they must drink water from river even if it is contaminated. It is generally believed that whenever a low caste people touch any of your belonging, you become impure. Considering this belief an elite throw whole of his tobacco vessel when two 'Pode' children touch him, unintentionally.

Furthermore, instances such as Lal Sahu, an elite character contemplates that a 'Pode' has to make his surroundings clean in any circumstance. Another elite, an ayurvedic doctor is in between his thoughts of whether or not he should go to untouchables house for treating the child. These thoughts are the manifestations of 'common sense' prevailed in the society in the name of upper and lower class. This impact of common sense is the result of cultural hegemony where upper class people, with a clean consent, gets way to rule in the society grasping political, economic and social powers; depriving them with all sorts of ways to prosper their lives.

In addition, the linear trend of practising 'cultural hegemony' also acted as an obstacle to the production of an 'organic intellectual' in the movie. Characters such as Lal Sahu, a loan lender, Kharidar baje and Baidhya baje (an ayurvedic doctor can be considered merely "traditional intellectuals." They are the feudal lords who were processors of a particular technical capacity. As Gramsci claims, these various categories of traditional intellectuals' experience through an uninterrupted historical continuity. This helps them maintain their position as 'dominating class'. But one of the most important characteristics of any group that is developing towards dominance is its struggle to assimilate and to conquer "ideologically" the traditional intellectuals, but . . . elaborating its own organic intellectuals (Gramsci, 2005). An efficacious group of organic intellectuals could not be produced who could resist against the elites, in the name of caste system. Consider, this failure is also an outcome of 'cultural hegemony' that assist maintaining wall of separation between humans.

Findings and Conclusion

'Cultural diversity' is undoubtedly a notable feature of Nepalese society and Newars, the historical inhabitants of Kathmandu, are believed to pass innumerable cultural assets that define their identity. Despite the fact that there exists variation in the cultural identity of Newars, that deserves an applause, undermining people through marginalization and subordination through 'cultural hegemony' would totally be an unjust. Hegemony through consent is more dangerous than hegemony through force, which can be witnessed in the movie I refer to. In this context caste may be elusive for some who have distanced from their social and cultural roots, but for others, who continue to be there in villages and towns, caste is enduring, and it is there in practice in one way or other.

Marginalization on the basis of caste imprints negativity upon the victim in such as extent that it makes the victim nearly impossible to uplift their political, social and economic standard. This is the exact picture of lower caste people in Newar communities disregarding some negligible exceptions. Focusing upon the movie *Pa: khaa*, I come up with the conclusion that hegemony through culture; beliefs, rituals, myths are the responsible factors behind the difficulty in the upliftment of Dalits among Newars. For a balanced social

structure where every individual lives a 'livable life', there is the necessity of social hegemony contrary to cultural hegemony. Where Gellner (2024) concludes that many people asked themselves in 2020: Why was the Black Lives Matter movement so much more widespread and powerful than Dalit Lives Matter in India or Nepal? And how come many South Asians supported Black Lives Matter in the West but not Dalit Lives Matter in South Asia? The simple, crude, Dumontian answer is that the value of hierarchy is more deeply engrained in South Asia than it is in the USA or similar developed countries. The issue of Dalits is one of the dominant issues to be discussed as academic attempts and the results found out as such could be the avenues for the cultural prospects.

Most of the Newar Dalit, still today, engages in lower-level jobs as if 'these' occupations are inherited in them 'by blood'. Thus, I conclude that "common sense", deep-rooted in people could be effectively transformed from cultural hegemony to social hegemony by modifying hegemonic structure. This could be possible through the production of organic intellectuals, encouraging education that incorporates knowledge and wisdom and uplifting self-representation, which is inevitable for addressing subalterns.

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