

Ritual transition and repatriation Crisis in Post Conflict Scenario: Ethno-Nationalistic dilemma of Bhutanese Magar Ethnic Refugee commune in Nepal

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Abstract

This anthropological study sets its prime concern with the problem that if the host country has genuine cultural patterns of expatriate mass, then they will show their resistance to return their home country and wishes to integrate with the hosting community. This descriptive study is the outcome of field work on Magar ethnic group in Bhutanese refugee camps in eastern Nepal. Origin of Magar cultural identity is rooted in Nepal demography and in Tibetan Buddhist tradition. But Magars in Bhutan practiced Brahministic ritual tradition before they were exiled. After they found refuge in Nepal, they changed their ritual practice from Brahministic one to their original Lamastic tradition of Bonbo sect. Even though actions taken by authorities to repatriate these refugees to Bhutan and the expatriate extremists in refugee camps also compel them to return to their national homeland, Magars refuse to return there and stipulate to reintegrate within Nepalese population. This study focuses on how this ritual transition made the resolving strategies of refugee crisis difficult and on how their stand in repatriation made them susceptible to the violence directed by expatriate Bhutanese extremists. This study is mostly based on qualitative method and relied to some extent quantitative one. The study finds that as exiled Magars found their refuge in Nepal, they have changed their ritual tradition in order to adjust their way of life consistent with the Nepal's Magar communities. Such change has its reflections in ethno-nationalistic stand of this community and it eventually let them to stay firm in reintegration strategy among three enduring resolving strategies of refugee problem.

Keywords: Ethno-nationalism, reintegration, repatriation, resettlement