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THE VALUE OF SONS AND DAUGHTERS AMONG THE GURUNGS IN NEPAL

Narayani Tiwari

Introduction
This paper addresses the issue on the value of sons and daughters in the Gurung village where the fieldwork was carried out. The conceptual framework of this paper is based on theoretical literature about the fertility transition. In the literatures, questions are raised about the relationship between fertility and value of children, as well as the relationship of high fertility with preference for sons or daughters. In this paper, the value of children and the preference for sons or daughters is placed in the context of household activities and the role of sons and daughters in those activities.

Literature review and conceptual framework
The value of children in Nepal involves certain socio-economic, cultural and religious factors, which sometimes conflict with the interests of the family and the inheritance rules. The values attached to the role of sons and daughters can influence fertility trends. Various factors are responsible for the fertility patterns and changes in Nepal and elsewhere. Many demographers (Davis and Blake 1956; Bongaarts 1978; Freedman 1987; Jones 1990; Caldwell 1996; Cleland 1993; Voland 1998; Crow and Allan, 2001; Singh et al, 2003) have noted factors affecting fertility through proximate variables (Bongaarts 1978) or intermediate variables. These can be clustered into three groups: first, variables relating to contraception; second, variables relating to the preferences of the family for sons or daughters; and third, variables relating to pregnancy outcome (Jones, 1990). Age at marriage is an important variable in the first cluster, the use of contraception is an important one in the second cluster and socio-economic and cultural factors affecting fertility are placed in the third cluster.

Authors like Karki (1988), Niraula and Morgan (1995) and Riley (1999) have reported that the meaning of masculinity and femininity in patriarchal society is often such that it contributes to the population growth. The meanings and value attached to masculinity and femininity will influence parental investments in sons and daughters. While the latter should be equal, this is often not the case (Steff, 1990; Casimir and Dutilh, 2003). Also the status of women, their fertility choices and gender preferences have direct effect on fertility trends in any country.

Due to socio-economic and cultural differences, the demand for and the value of children vary between the developing and developed countries. Freedman (1974) observed that the preferred number of sons is relatively low in the industrialized countries with a high culture of family planning, whereas in the developing countries it is high due to the high rate of population growth.
the parental household and kinship group. The exchange of wealth is stretched over a longer period of time. Parents provide economic and educational support to the children first and then the children are expected to support the parents in old age.

While looking at the fertility transition in Asia, several demographers use cultural and institutional factors as explanatory variables for fertility behaviour (McNicoll 1992; Dahal and Frick; McDonald 1993; 2000). McDonald (2000) notes that the particular social and cultural values that play a role in using contraception, timing of first marriage, timing of first birth, and status of women, determine the fertility transition. The fertility intervals between births, and using contraception, which prevents women from having children determine the number of children that a women may have during her lifetime (McNicoll 1992; McDonald 2000). The fertility decline relates to different associations between socio-economic and demographic variables that help to stop child bearing after the birth of son (Leone et al., 2003).

Fertility decline often depends upon prior institutional change of gender equality in a particular society (McDonald 2000: 403):

Firstly, fertility in a society falls as a result of the cumulative actions of individual women and men to prevent birth. Secondly, sustained lower fertility in any society will lead to fundamental changes in the nature of women's life. Thirdly, in pre-transitioned societies, high fertility was socially determined, not naturally determined. Lastly, the transition from high fertility to fertility around replacement level is accompanied by an increase in gender equity within the institution of the family.

Freedman (1987) mentioned that many countries that face a long uphill struggle for development should reduce fertility levels. In this context, the status of women determines the conditions for success of family planning.

Another approach that could explain fertility patterns and levels is to examine the value of children in society. Caldwell (1996) and Cleland (1993) noted that changes of fertility patterns from Europe to Asia resulted from the decline of infant mortality and the transformation of illiterate agricultural societies to literate industrializing societies. The high value attached to children leads to mortality reduction, raises aspirations, and reduces child labour. It also leads to emergence of the conjugal family, and weakening of cultural props for high fertility (Bulatao 1979; Bongaarts and Greenhalgh 1985; Caldwell 1996).

Parental preference for a particular gender of child, or preference for a balanced number of each gender exists throughout the world (Krishnan 1993). Demographically, a strong preference for sons may lead to higher fertility, as exemplified by the case of the patrilocal Batak in Indonesia (Tan and Soeradj 1986). The higher values attached to sons than daughters in India as compared to a greater gender equality in Indonesia partly explains high in many Asian countries. The decisions on whether to have a child and on how to share education, food, work, health care and local resources are in large measure made locally at the household level (Dasgupta 1995). Children are needed for household chores, but sometimes they are also regarded as a nuisance because they put emotional strain and an economic burden on their parents (Bulatao 1979). Bulatao further added the demands of more work create problems for disciplining children and worrying about their future increases parental aspirations to make good provisions for their children or to make them more successful in the family.

Demographic transition is one of the most important theories in demography. It was developed in relation to the European demographic history before being applied to recent population change in the Third World (Jones 1990; Caldwell 1991; McDonald 1993). The demographic transition theory describes the change from high levels of fertility and mortality to low levels of birth and death rates as a traditional, rural or pre-modern society develops into an urbanized and industrialized modern society (Caldwell 1991; Jones 2003). The goal to reduce fertility in many developing countries resulted in strengthening family planning programs (Cleland 1992). Fertility regulation has thus been an important element of population policy throughout the world (Alam 1993).

Caldwell and Mackensen (1980) observed that the high fertility has greatest economic value in family-based production, like traditional agrarian subsistence farming. On the one hand, children are costly to feed and educate and need to be looked after. On the other hand, children are important for family welfare and can contribute to the household economy. Once a traditional society changes, family-based production becomes less important, and the value of children declines. In a modernizing society parents have to invest in their children's education. What happens then is a reversal of the wealth flows: changing from flowing from children to parents to flowing from parents to children. Children become a net loss instead of a net gain. In another way children also can give economic support to the family by looking after their parents in their old age. This is why Caldwell and Mackensen (1980: 172) note that the benefits and disadvantages of high fertility, must be measured over the rest of a person's lifetime. This means that the value of children includes their perceived future contribution to a secure old age of their parents.

Edmondson (1992) tested the theory of the reversal of wealth flows in a rural area in Bali (Indonesia). She looked at an intergenerational exchange and the fertility transition over for a period of more than a decade. She found a relationship between economic change and family size. The economic transition (from a traditional rice-growing economy to an economy with an important services sector) stimulated the fertility transition. The study showed the importance of the economic responsibilities of male children for
the persistent higher fertility in large parts of India in comparison with substantial fertility decline in Indonesia (Niehof 2001). For the case of Indonesia, the significant fertility decline has to be placed in the context of comparative gender equity and ongoing social change, leading to different reproductive choices of women (Niehof 2003; Niehof and Lubis 2003).

**Value of children in Nepal**

In this study, the value of children approach was applied to the Gurung community, looking more specifically at different values attached to sons or daughters. Generally, the Gurungs prefer to have equal numbers of sons and daughters (Macfarlane 1976). In this paper, specific attention is paid to gender preferences. Son preference is an important determinant of fertility in Nepal (Karki 1988; Niraula and Morgan 1995). Preferences for sons and daughters and their social and cultural relationships to values of masculinity and femininity in society make a difference for fertility patterns. In Nepal, fertility regulation started through family planning services (MOH Nepal 1986). Son preference is far more prevalent, especially in South and Central Asia than a preference for daughters (Freedman 1974; Niraula and Morgan 1995). Gender discrimination and son preference are key demographic features of South Asia, from which Nepal cannot escape (Leone et al. 2003).

Nepal is an agriculture-based traditional society. There is a strong preference for sons, which can be attributed to the patriarchal norms and values among the Gurungs nearly the same as “Hindu” and the cultural and economic roles, the sons play in the family and society. For example, they continue the family name and the use of parental property and provide support to their parents during their old age. Although different ethnic groups and communities have their own socio-cultural traditions and practices with regard to gender preference, some surveys and micro-level studies have proved that there are strong preferences for sons (MOH/Nepal 1976; MOH/Nepal 1986; MOH/Nepal 1981; MOH/Nepal 1986; MOH/Nepal 1991; MOH/Nepal, 1996).

During the 1970s, the value of children in Nepal was studied at the community level (Karki 1988). In spite of the general preference for sons, daughters are also valued for their religious and cultural roles in relation to certain social practices. Son preference affects fertility regulation because a couple stops child bearing only when they have one or more sons. To have one or more sons and at least one daughter is perceived as the ideal family in large parts of Nepali society (Karki 1988). In Hindu cultue the birth of a daughter is considered to be fated. The expression “late birth but son birth” proves that in the Nepali culture a family does not exist without a son. Some people in Nepal still think that children are God’s gift and it is immoral to interfere with the *Will of God* (Karki 1988). This expression is also exists among the Gurungs.

The level of son preference in Nepal is substantial (Leone et al. 2003). Rural women in Nepal frequently express a strong preference for sons, mostly for economic reasons, which reflects women’s subordinate position in society and the low economic value placed on women’s work (Winkvist and Akhtar 2000). Mothers of sons have higher status in the family and society. They even get more attention with respect to their nutrition and health during the pregnancy and child-rearing period than mothers of daughters. Table 1 below presents some gender and fertility indicators of Nepal in the Asian context.

**Table 1: Gender and Fertility Indicators in Nepal**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender Disparities</th>
<th>Nepal</th>
<th>South Central Asia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary school enrolment M/F</td>
<td>126/112</td>
<td>92/97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illiterate percentage &gt;15 years M/F</td>
<td>37/65</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mortality under-5 years M/F</td>
<td>78/83</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reproductive health and fertility

| Births per 1000 women aged 15-19 | 113 | 72 |
| Contraceptive prevalence modern methods | 35 | 41 |
| Total fertility rate | 3.50 | 3.04 |

Source: UNFPA, 2005: 108, 112

There are clearly gender disparities in Nepal, as can be seen from the male-female differences with regard to schooling and illiteracy in the table. The table also shows that the female mortality below five years old is higher compared to that of males. Fertility birth per 1000 women aged 15-19 is much higher in Nepal compared to the Asian average, which indicates a very early start of the childbearing period in Nepal. Likewise, contraceptive prevalence is relatively low and the total fertility rate is high in Nepal compared to the Asian averages. The sections below briefly discuss the Gurung community of Lamjung district and values of sons and daughters within their community.

**The Gurungs**

The Gurungs belong to the Tibeto-Burman group of the Himalayans region. They live predominantly in the Himalayan range or high hill region in central Nepal, in closely tied communities surrounded by other groups (Macfarlane and Gurung 1990). According to Macfarlane (1976), almost certainly many thousand years ago their ancestors lived in the high mountain of western China and their language is still variation of Chinese and Tibetan. Gurung caste system has been fragmented into two parts: the four-caste (*Charjat*) and sixteen-caste (*Soraja*) systems. Donald (1976) and Macfarlane (1976) report about the conflict inherent in a dual social organization in this case consisting
of two Gurung sub-tribes called Sorajat (coming from south) and Charjat (coming from North), each comprised of many clans and lineages. In the research area the Gurungs of both groups can be found. The common belief is that Charjat is supposed to be superior to Sorajat.

Many Gurung men join the Indian and British army or in the UN peacekeeping forces. If the family has a son with a job in the army, the parents feel proud of their son and are financially secure in the present and the future. Mostly, the wives of men in the army or in other employment stay at home as housewives while their husbands are away. In this way women are the main household managers and look after the house, the farm, their children and other members of the family. Gurung women are rarely employed and are generally minimally educated. Gurung women's opinions and attitudes towards having sons and daughters and fertility-regulating behavior seem to be similar to those of other ethnic groups in Nepal.

Kinship and marriage

Marriage among the Gurungs within the same caste (jat) has traditionally been important. Marriages between Charjat and Sorajat are not accepted. There is a fair amount of cross cousin marriage where ego (male) can marry the daughter of the maternal uncle (MBD) or the daughter of the paternal aunt (FSD) (Bhattarai, 2003). These types of marriages are still common among the Gurungs, but individual selection by boys and girls and love marriages are increasing these days. Gurung girls are taking initiatives and decisions for postponing marriage, freedom in mate selection and changes in the attitude towards marriage. Religious culture and taboos still have a strong influence on the marriage ceremony. Formerly, it was customary for the father's sister's daughter (FSD) to tie a knot with the mother's brothers' son (MBS). However, this custom is dying out now. The kinship system is patrilineal with virilocality residence.

Importance of sons and daughters

Sons are the inheritors of parental property and the representatives of Nepali orthodox Hindu culture that exists among the Gurungs as well. Also in Gurung society, traditionally, culturally and by law property rights family-formation inheritance goes from the parents to the sons. The recent law on property rights (2003) indicates that daughters can acquire parental property up to the marriage. Once married, she loses all her property rights. In this way, sons are the link for the continuation of family property. Furthermore, the sons have to take the dead body of the parents to the place of cremation.

Daughters are also important in the family in different ways. A daughter is needed during the funeral ceremony. Unlike in many other communities and ethnic groups, among the Gurung sons and daughters hold equal importance and have equally important ritual functions at the time of a parent's death. Gurung daughters are allowed to participate in the funeral ceremony like their brothers. Without the presence of a daughter and son-in-law, the funeral cannot proceed. The daughter has to leave her hair loose and uncovered and has to stand in front of the corpse and put some money to the corpse before it leaves the house. The Gurungs believe that they will not reach heaven if they fail to continue these practices.

Findings from the field

In this section, the results from the survey of 350 households and the focus group discussions and case studies are presented and discussed. First, we will look at the expressed desire for (more) sons or daughters. The data in Table 2 shows that the expressed desire for more sons or daughters of respondents who have either no sons living with them or no daughters living with them.

Table 2: Expressed desire for sons or daughters in relation to having sons or daughters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not having sons or daughters</th>
<th>Expressed desire for more sons or daughters in percentage</th>
<th>Total Numbers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No sons</td>
<td>Desire for more sons(1) 36 (35 %) Desire for more daughters(2) 30 (29 %) Neither sons nor daughters 7 (7 %)</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No daughters</td>
<td>40 (27 %) 39 (40 %) 47 (32 %)</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>99 (40 %) 95 (38 %) 54 (22 %)</td>
<td>248</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1) The respondents include only wishing for more sons and daughters. Son preference is significance on Chi-square 31.4 (P < 0.01).

Table 2 shows that of the 102 respondents who do not have sons living with them (only daughters), 59 desire more sons and 36 desire more daughters. However, of the 146 respondents with no daughters living with them (only sons), 59 desire more daughters and 40 desire more sons, in spite of the fact that they have no daughters. Only 54 respondents both with no sons and no daughters desired neither sons nor daughters. The table indicates that for people who don't have sons they desire to have a son is more important than the desire to have a daughter for people who don't have daughters. Hence, the significant chi-square value (p<0.01) seems to indicate a slighter preference: for sons than daughters, in spite of the more or less equal cultural value attached to sons and daughters in the Gurung culture. The important role of both sons and daughters in the funeral ceremony of their parent is clearly visible in Figure 1 below.

Activities of sons and daughters

There are some common activities in the Gurung households that involve a gender division of labour. The activities of sons and daughters in the household are described in Figure 1 below.
The importance attached to sons for looking after their parents in old age is related to the pattern of virilocal residence. Traditionally, the son stays with the parents because of the patrilineal society while the daughter follows the husband. Because the son stays at home and inherits the property, he is obliged to look after the parents in old age. The daughters follow their husbands. There are some common activities in the Gurung households that involve a sexual division of labour. Figure 1 shows the different activities of sons and daughters in the household. Sons are highly involved in fetching water for the household and also participate in agricultural work. Notably, almost an equal number of respondents said that their sons also do cooking and go to the market or the shop. Daughters, on the other hand, are involved more in food preparation, washing clothes and cleaning the dishes. But just like the sons, daughters also fetch water. The daughters work more in the house and reflect women's reproductive role. Sons do more work outside the house and in agriculture, which reflects their future role as provider.

The main reasons for wanting sons are that they are supposed to look and their role in after the parents at their old age and the funeral ceremony. The main reasons for wanting daughters are for their role in the funeral ceremony in the household, and for love and affection. The important role of both sons and daughters in the funeral ceremony of their parent is clearly visible in the figure above. The importance attached to sons for looking after their parents in old age is related to the pattern of virilocal Gurung residence. Traditionally, the son stays with the parents because of the patrimonial society while the daughter goes to her husband's house when married. Because the son stays at home and inherits the property, he is obliged to look after the parents in old age.
Personal statements by respondents about sons and daughters

The birth of a daughter is welcome because of religious, cultural, and social values. Daughters are valued for their help with housework, taking care of younger children and companionship with the mother. Sons and daughters are valued equally because of their importance during the parents' funeral ceremony. The ceremony is not conducted unless a daughter is present. This is not the case in some communities where daughters are not allowed to attend the funeral of their parents.

One case study shows that Shreemaya, who has two sons, desires a daughter. She has a strong desire for a daughter in her family which is a wish of almost every Gurung family. Shreemaya prefers a daughter to a son because she believes that daughters give more love and care to their parents. She also considers them a source of inspiration and crutch for old age. She expressed her wish as follows:

If I would have a daughter, she would give me deep love, care and affection until old age. I love to hear a lovely voice of “Ama” from my lovely daughter now and in my very old age. She would be looking after my health and help me address female-oriented personal problems. Unfortunately, I do not have a daughter in my life.

Shreemaya is not sure whether her sons love her. Neither son shows love and care to her. Hence, she feels insecure now as she is getting old. She is worried about her future, particularly about her funeral where a daughter is needed to take the dead body from the house to place of cremation. Her husband had a vasectomy in Chitwan without informing her. She laments that all she has left is the dream of having a daughter.

Kumari Gurung, another respondent who is a mother of four daughters, was married at the age of twenty-two years with a young man of the Indian army. Her husband remarried another wife when she was thirty-five years old. Her children were all below twelve years old at that time. The eldest daughter was eleven year old, the second was six, the third was four, and the youngest was only one year old. She has fourteen stepchildren with the second wife of her husband. Kumari’s husband has now eighteen children all together. Kumari feels rich because she considers her four daughters her wealth. Hence, she does not desire a son. She also doesn’t care for her husband and the co-wife anymore.

Being a mother of four daughters makes me feel proud of them and I never feel something is missing because of having no sons. I am enjoying my four daughters and I did not like to maintain a male partner after separation. The males always want to take advantage of the women. I could remarry if I wanted to but I did not because I want to give my attention to my four daughters. I also do not wish to have a son because I am happy with my four daughters now. Sons and daughters are equal in my two eyes.

Another respondent, Ashimaya, does not expect to have more children. She has already a son. Her husband married a second wife when she was pregnant and now she is separated from him. Being a single mother it is would be difficult for her to look after her child because of financial constraints. However, she wants to give a good education to her son.

I simply did not marry again for the future of my son. If I remarry and have another children, that will affect my son’s economic security and education as well. I do not have the capacity to provide all the needs of my son. His father does not give me any money for his education. My parents-in-law would like me to remarry so that they can get back the land from my son and me. I did not remarry for my son’s future.

Rukumaya has different views of sons and daughters. Rukumaya likes to look after her children and think their future. She expressed this as follows:

I have twin sons and two daughters, who I consider my precious property. Actually I wanted only two children but because my first two children were daughters I waited for sons and had twin sons. Hence, I now have four children. Gurung families do not have any preference for sons or daughters. We provide education to our daughters and sons equally, if daughters like to have education. However, daughters marry at an early age without completing their education. Daughters feel life is better after marriage. This is the case for myself; I also did not continue my education. Anyway, we treat our daughters and sons equally in my family and in the community. We value our sons and daughters equally especially for their role in the funeral ceremony.

In Ratampur, a thirty-one year-old male respondent, father of a boy, disclosed that he had a vasectomy a year ago without his wife’s permission. He inherited limited land from his parental property and now he has no source of income to continue livelihood. He is worried about the production from his parental land, which is not enough to feed his family. He said that his land is already small since his grandfather’s property was divided into parts for him and his two brothers. Later his father’s brother divided the land into four small parts. His father gave him one part of the land among the three of his own brothers. This is the case when there are more sons in the family so that at least part of the land will be theirs. Therefore, he thinks that it is difficult to maintain the livelihood and produce enough food from decreasing land resources. He said:
I have no regular job and even no enough parental property either. I, therefore, did a vasectomy after birth of my first son. I am sure, one son gives every good value as a single moon giving light at night all over the world.

The case studies show that mostly women strongly feel about contributing their life to their children. They feel a great responsibility for the children's welfare, education and future. This is illustrated by the case of the single mother who does not intend to remarry and have more children. She is happy remaining single and looking after her child. The women are very affectionate with the children. Women's feeling is that either sons or daughters are their wealth and source of happiness.

Conclusion
Among the different demographic theories with regard to the fertility transition the value-of-children approach proved to be fruitful for looking at the Gurung community. The Gurungs seem to prefer slightly sons to daughters, mainly because of the importance of sons for the security in old age. However, both sons and daughters are important in the funeral ceremony. There does not seem to be a great gender disparity to the effect that people want sons and will not stop childbearing until they have a son. Hence, the Gurung son preference is not an issue and a cause of high fertility. On the other hand, the necessity to have at least one daughter might influence fertility. The need for having a daughter would require a gross reproduction rate of at least one.

Based on the statements of the informants a picture of masculinity and femininity among the Gurungs can be constructed. It seems that masculinity is associated with providing for the family and providing for the parents at old age. Femininity is associated with nurturing and duties to family and household, as well as with giving love and affection to children. Contributing to the funeral ceremony of the parents is part of both masculine and feminine roles. National legislation with regard to inheritance in Nepal still favours sons. The fact that parental property goes to sons rather than daughters influences the value attached to having sons and daughters and discriminates against women, also among the Gurungs. Thus, although there is a great measure of gender equality among the Gurungs, they are also affected by discriminatory national legislation.

Note
1. This paper presents the partial findings of a PhD research project on "Women's Agency in relation to Population and Environment in Rural Nepal". The fieldwork was done in October 2002-December 2003 in Bhoteadar and Udipur, Lamjung, Nepal. The data were collected using both qualitative and quantitative methods. The quantitative data are derived from the household and fertility survey conducted by the author in February 2003 (sample size 350). The respondents were married women between the ages of 15-49 years. The qualitative statements in this paper are taken from the results of the focus group discussions and case studies that were conducted. The given names of the respondents are pseudonyms.

References


THE EFFECTS OF SOCIAL AUTONOMY ON BMI 
SCORES: A STUDY OF WOMEN IN NEPAL

L. Allen Furr 
Nandita Das

Gender differences in health and health care services have become the focus of an unprecedented mobilization of social resources and research in South Central Asia. Women in Nepal, India, and elsewhere in the region experience poorer health than men, and social factors, particularly inequities in status, account for these differences (Dreze and Sen 2002; DeRose, Das, and Millman 2000; Gittelsohn 1991). Accordingly, women’s autonomy and self-empowerment have been central concepts in researching the relationship between women’s social status and health.

Although research in both western and non-western societies has demonstrated the positive effects of women’s autonomy on quality of life in general and health in particular (Jun, Subramanian, Gortmaker, and Kawachi 2004; Kalipeni 2000), these studies have not defined autonomy consistently. Women’s autonomy is often described operationally without consideration of autonomy as a broad, multi-dimensional concept. Studies typically have relied upon a varied number of indicators of autonomy without clarifying which facet of women’s agency may be most salient in predicting women’s quality of life. With this in mind, the purpose of this paper is twofold: first, we want to investigate the relationship between autonomy, using a broad operationalization of the term, and a specific and objective measure of health status (Body Mass Index (BMI)); and, second, we will compare the effects of different indicators of autonomy on BMI.

Autonomy and Women’s Health
At the core of the international women’s movement has been efforts to invigorate and enhance women’s autonomy and reduce women’s dependence on and vulnerability to men (c.f. Nelson, et al., 1996). Empowerment is both mantra and strategy to individuals, groups, and societies that strive to reduce gender-based social, economic, and political divisions, and has considerable influence over health and health behavior. For example, increasing women’s social agency in westernizing cultures has positive results on self-reported health (Berhane, Gossage, Emmelin, and Hogberg 2001), antenatal care (Bloom, Wypij and Das Gupta 2001), and contraceptive use (Al Riyami, Afifi, and Mabry 2004), and a negative impact on fertility in India (Murthi, Guio, and Dreze 1995) and Nepal (Axinn and Fricke 1996; Morgan and Niraula 1995).

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Although enhancing women's agency in both western and westernizing societies has a positive effect on health and health behavior, the causal mechanisms linking autonomy to improved health intersect in a complex web of factors that bridges all levels of social life, albeit with cultural variations. In essence, raising women's social capital reduces dependency and heightens both status and bargaining power. In taking control of their economic and political lives, women are more likely to invest in themselves and their daughters and lessen their dependence on sons for security in old age (MacCormack 1988). As an example of cultural specificity in this process, increasing women's labor force participation in India lowers dowry levels, which has reduced the cost of raising girls (Murthi, Guo, and Dreze 1995). Given the weight of the findings of the studies cited above, among others, it is clear that empowerment improves women's health and well-being. Based on these ideas, the research hypothesis driving the first part of the present study predicts that among women in Nepal, greater autonomy will contribute to the effects, and a certain degree of meaning is lost.

A problem in this literature, however, is that studies lack consistency in defining what is meant by autonomy. Autonomy is a complex, multifaceted concept, yet studies rarely include more than a couple of autonomy's attributes in their operationalizations. Consequently, when a study concludes that autonomy influences health, it is not clear which facets of autonomy are contributing to the effects, and a certain degree of meaning is lost.

Agency and autonomy refer to individuals' ability to act independently of the constraints of social structure. For Giddens (1984), agency is equivalent to power and is behavior that leads to changes in social outcomes from what may ordinarily be expected given knowledge of structural conditions and history. Specific to women, autonomy is typically framed in terms of structural norms, particularly power dynamics, governing women's associations with men. Therefore, a definition of women's autonomy should include the many forms in which gender-based power relations can take.

Jejeebhoy's (1995) definition is among the most thorough in the literature and serves as the basis for the present paper. Jejeebhoy suggests that autonomy is a reflection of women's degree of freedom, relative to men, along five structured dimensions: access to economic resources (economic autonomy); freedom of movement (physical autonomy); opportunity to participate in decisions (decision-making autonomy); freedom within intimate relationships (emotional autonomy); and freedom to learn and possess knowledge (knowledge autonomy). In order to maximize content validity in an operationalization of women's autonomy, all five of these dimensions should be considered.

What is not apparent in the literature on the effect of women's autonomy on health, however, is the relative influence of the various attributes representing the autonomy concept. Operationalized indicators of autonomy have not necessarily been derived from a central and agreed-upon definition. For example, Table 1 shows a number of operationalizations of autonomy in the literature on health among women in South Asia and indicates considerable variation in conceptualization.

Table 1: Previously Used Operationalizations of Women's Autonomy with Author, and Asian Countries Sampled

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authors &amp; County Studied</th>
<th>Operationalization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Axin &amp; Fricke (1996)</td>
<td>ties to natal kin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balk (1997)</td>
<td>freedom of movement; household decision-making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bloom, Wypij, &amp; Gupta (2001)</td>
<td>control of finances; decision-making power; freedom of movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dyson &amp; Moore (1983)</td>
<td>freedom of movement; postmarital residence; behavior (India) norms limiting natal contact; freedom to inherit, control, and sell property; control over own sexuality; choice of mate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghuman (2003) (India, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand)</td>
<td>freedom of movement; discretion over income; economic decision-making; freedom from violence and intimidation; decision-making power concerning ill children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morgan &amp; Niraula (1995) (Nepal)</td>
<td>freedom of movement; household decision-making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morgan, Sath, Smith, &amp; Masis (2002) (Thailand, Philippines)</td>
<td>freedom of movement; economic decision-making; interpersonal controls e.g. free from domestic violence and (India, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand) free to disagree with husband</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murthi, Guo, &amp; Dreze (1995) (India)</td>
<td>education; literacy; labor force participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rani and Bonu (2003) (India)</td>
<td>health care decision-making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rayman &amp; Rao (2004) (India)</td>
<td>household decisions-making; freedom of mobility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pohukuchi (2001) (India)</td>
<td>freedom from family networks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Previous uses of the autonomy concept in quantitative analyses of health have demonstrated poor content validity because studies have used a number of combinations of the various dimensions of the term. Autonomy has been
identified as predicting health and certain health behaviors, yet not all dimensions of the conceptual definition of the term have been included in studies' measurements. Although it would seem intuitive that various indicators of autonomy would predict health similarly, this question has yet to be tested. Therefore, the second objective of the present study was to determine if the various qualities of autonomy have common variability on an objective health measure.

**Body Mass Index (BMI)**

Body Mass Index, a computed number based on height and weight, BMI is a widely used anthropometric indicator of health, especially regarding nutritional status and nutrition-related disease. Designed primarily for public health studies, the BMI allows researchers to determine nutritional correlates in health outcomes and is used as both independent and dependent variables. BMI is not an absolute measure but is best understood if employed as a general guideline for assessing nutritional status, especially at the extremes. Because differences between any two particular BMI numbers is of limited value, BMI’s use is most appropriate in public health and sociology of health studies for identifying individuals and population groups within the established ranges defining malnutrition and adiposity (obesity) in adults. Conventional health standards specify BMI at 18.5 or below as malnourished, with 15 indicating near starvation; 30 and over are considered obese. Body Mass Index, the dependent variable in this study, is calculated by dividing weight by height squared, multiplied by 703.

Because of its strong reliability and validity as a measure of nutritional status, BMI can be found throughout the medical and public health literature. The measure has been used successfully in health studies with Asian samples. Examples of its recent use in studies of south Asian samples include Reddy, Reddy, and Rao’s (2004) finding that lower BMI correlated with lower self-reported health among Indian elderly; Hutter’s (1996) study that found that BMI is a key measure for identifying chronic energy deficiency among pregnant women in rural south India; an assessment of Nepalese refugees (Anonymous 2000); and Misra, Sharma, Pandey, and Khanna’s (2001) work that BMI predicted atherosclerosis among economically deprived Indian urban residents.

Some health researchers have questioned the application of universal standards of BMI to Asian populations, citing cross-ethnic variability in BMI’s reliability in classifying risk of metabolic disease. The BMI threshold for predicting these disorders is not consistent when comparing ethnic groups in Europe and Asia (Shiwaku, Anuurad, Enkhmaa, Kitajima, and Yamane 2004). This reliability matter, however, seems to be limited to the identification of metabolic disease and is not a concern in the present study.

**Methods**

**Study Population:** The data used in this study come from the 2001 Nepal Demographic and Health Survey (DHS), a nationally representative survey of 8,726 women aged 15-49 years (Ministry of Health [Nepal] 2002). The DHS is an extensive data set focusing on women and children’s health, family planning, fertility, and nutrition. The data set includes variables that allow us to compare several dimensions of autonomy, although these terms do not correspond exactly to Jejeebhoy’s scheme. Interviews were conducted in Nepal and several local languages, and informed consent was obtained from each respondent. The data were used with permission.

Because BMI was not adjusted for pregnancy, pregnant women were eliminated from the final study sample leaving 7,989 cases.

**Variables:** The DHS allows us to compare four of the five dimensions specified by Jejeebhoy. Economic autonomy is represented by two variables. First, having income paid as cash rather than “in-kind” (I-cash) provers recipients greater discretion, hence power, over their personal and household resources. The second variable, the percentage of household income contributed by each respondent, was used to indicate relative household economic power.

Physical autonomy, the freedom of movement, was indicated by several variables. Because of the predominance of traditional sex roles in Nepalese households, we centered this concept on family composition variables. Assuming that in households women generally carry a greater work burden and hold lower status, we sought to identify markers in the DHS of these concepts. Three variables were selected: sex of the head of household (1-female), household size, and fertility. To tap into women’s immediate child-bearing burden, fertility was indicated by the number of births in the last five years. It must be noted, however, that child-rearing is not the only factor in the relationship between fertility and BMI. Because of the impact that rapid serial pregnancies can have on women’s bodies, this variable may act independently of the other variables in this group.

Decision-making autonomy was represented by two variables. First, health care autonomy was measured by summing two items that asked for respondents’ freedom to seek medical treatment. The DHS asked women in the sample how big of a problem they have getting permission to seek treatment and knowing where to receive treatment. The two items loaded together in a factor analysis (data not shown) and were positively correlated ($\tau = 0.231; p \leq .01$).

Second, household decision-making autonomy was measured by indexing the following five items: Who has the final say on: (1) your own health care, (2) large household purchases; (3) making purchases of everyday household items, (4) making visits to family or relatives, and (5) what food is to be cooked? The response options reflected an ordinal ranking of distance
from autonomy each respondent had in making these decisions. A high score reflected greater social distance from making decisions (low autonomy). The items demonstrated strong reliability (alpha = .867).

Next, knowledge autonomy was represented by two variables. First, literacy level, which was operationalized by respondents' demonstrated ability to read four standardized statements, was used to indicate ability. Second, formal education was measured as years achieved. Education, however, was excluded from the final analyses because of high colinearity effects with literacy ($r = .716$), and the relationships between them and BMI were very similar. Of the two, literacy was preferred in light of prior research that has suggested that literacy competency rather than school attainment is the pathway through which education affects women's health behavior in Nepal (LeVine, LeVine, Rowe, and Schnell-Anzola 2004).

Jejeebhoy's measure of emotional autonomy could not be represented by DHS data with satisfactory validity and was excluded from consideration. Lastly, age and marital status were originally included as control variables, but were parsimoniously eliminated from the final analysis because they contributed little of consequence to the models.

The dependent variable for this study was BMI. To enhance reliability in measurement, the DHS interviewer's manual provides detailed instructions for obtaining height and weight data from respondents. Both measures required the interviewer and a health technician to use a measuring board to determine height and a solar powered scale to determine weight. In addition, the manual provides instructions for calibrating the scale.

For the present purposes, BMI was operationalized in two ways. First, we used BMI as the interval variable in which it is usually reported. Using BMI in this manner allowed us to study the associations of independent variables on the full range of BMI values. Second, for reasons to be described below, we dichotomized BMI into two groups: malnourished ($\leq 18.5$) and non-malnourished (U.S. Centers for Disease Control, 2005).

Results
As can be seen in Table 2, the bivariate analysis indicated that all of the measures of women's agency were associated with BMI in the predicted direction. Household decision-making autonomy, freedom to seek medical care, literacy, and percentage of income were significantly related to higher BMI. Respondents living in households headed by women and having a cash income had higher BMIs as well. Household size and the number of births in the last five years had statistically significant negative correlations with BMIs. From the bivariate coefficients presented here, the argument that women's autonomy has an impact on an objective health measure was sustained.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BMI</th>
<th>Household Size</th>
<th>Sex of Head of Household</th>
<th>Births</th>
<th>5 Year Income Share</th>
<th>Literacy</th>
<th>Dec-Mak Auton.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-0.92**</td>
<td>-0.27**</td>
<td>-0.90**</td>
<td>-0.90**</td>
<td>-0.90**</td>
<td>-0.69**</td>
<td>-0.86**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)
- * Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)
Although BMI has been widely used as a health indicator, the findings presented thus far should be interpreted with caution because fluctuations in BMIs do not necessarily reflect meaningful differences in health status. A number of factors contribute to height and weight ratios that render many distinctions between BMI levels irrelevant at the interval-ratio level of measurement. For example, the difference between a BMI of 21 and 22 is of no particular interest in that the "22" does not necessarily reflect better health status, which is implicated by rule in an interval or ratio measure. In addition, the distribution of BMI values in relationship to quality of health is not linear; values of 30 and over are considered indicators of obesity (Centers for Disease Control, 2005).

On the other hand, categorizing BMI is both a suitable and reliable indicator of extreme conditions of nourishment status (Nube and Van Den Boom, 2003). With this scheme, an ordinal or even nominal BMI becomes a meaningful biosocial marker of health status in populations, which separate women in the sample into groups according to real and valid health conditions.

With a dichotomized BMI, however, the pattern of the bivariate relationships changes. As Table 3 shows, both autonomy in decision-making and the freedom to seek health care were unrelated to BMI categories. Household factors and fertility, which correlated with the interval measure of BMI, were not associated with the dichotomous version of BMI. The strongest predictors of malnourished status (low BMI) were literacy, percentage of income, and having cash income.

The hierarchical regression models reported in Table 4 show the results of regressing BMI on the various dimensions of autonomy; Model 1 included the economic variables; Model 2 added the physical autonomy factors; Model 3 decision-making; and Model 4 knowledge. As the table shows, the tangible assets (income share and having a cash income) remain significant predictors of BMI when all other autonomy variables are added to the model. Similarly, decision-making autonomy and the number of births in the last five years were strong predictors. The medical autonomy variable, however, was marginally significant when other factors are controlled. Each of the four dimensions of autonomy produced statistically significant gains in the amount of explained variance in BMI values.

| Table 3. Bivariate Analysis of Associations between Categorical BMIs and Indicators of Autonomy (Spearman's r). |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Autonomy                      | Income Share    | Cash            | Rec-Mak          | Med.            | Literacy        | Maturity        | Household Size   | Sex of Head of F. |
| Decision-Making               | -0.062**        | -0.289**        | 0.003           | -0.163**        | -0.199**        | -0.158**        | 0.003           | -0.003          |
| Physical Autonomy             | -0.106**        | -0.153**        | -0.135**        | -0.135**        | -0.118**        | -0.109**        | 0.003           | -0.003          |
| Medical Autonomy              | -0.097**        | -0.141**        | -0.135**        | -0.135**        | -0.141**        | -0.109**        | 0.003           | -0.003          |
| Autonomy                      | -0.062**        | -0.289**        | 0.003           | -0.163**        | -0.199**        | -0.158**        | 0.003           | -0.003          |

*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
**Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
The Effects of Social Autonomy on BMI Scores

Finally, the same analysis was conducted with dichotomized BMI as the dependent variable. To compare the impact of the four dimensions of autonomy on $R^2$ changes, linear regression models were run. As Table 5 shows, the same variables accounted for most of the explained variance as in Table 4; however, the physical and decision-making equations did not contribute to a significant change in $R^2$. Once literacy entered the equation, only the economic and knowledge dimensions of autonomy were significant. Births in the last five years was also significant, but as stated earlier, it is not clear if this effect is due to the physical limitations of child-rearing or the pregnancies. Logistic regression models were run on the dichotomized BMI variable and produced similar findings (data not shown).

Table 5: Dichotomized BMI Regressed on Indicators of Autonomy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>Beta</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Income Share</td>
<td>-0.034***</td>
<td>0.010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cash Income</td>
<td>-0.221***</td>
<td>0.027</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(constant)</td>
<td>0.463***</td>
<td>0.033</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$R^2$</td>
<td>0.085</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Income Share</td>
<td>-0.031***</td>
<td>0.010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cash Income</td>
<td>-0.213***</td>
<td>0.027</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(constant)</td>
<td>0.004</td>
<td>0.009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$R^2$</td>
<td>0.092</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Income Share</td>
<td>-0.030**</td>
<td>0.010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cash Income</td>
<td>-0.209***</td>
<td>0.027</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(constant)</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$R^2$</td>
<td>0.095</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Table 4: Multiple Linear Regression of BMI on Factors of Autonomy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>Beta</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Income Share</td>
<td>0.327***</td>
<td>0.084</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cash Income</td>
<td>2.541***</td>
<td>0.235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(constant)</td>
<td>18.719***</td>
<td>0.293</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$R^2$</td>
<td>0.132</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Income Share</td>
<td>0.288***</td>
<td>0.084</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cash Income</td>
<td>2.453***</td>
<td>0.235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Household Size</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>0.038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sex of Head of Household (1=male)</td>
<td>-0.007</td>
<td>0.293</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Births Last 5 Years</td>
<td>-0.653***</td>
<td>0.142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(constant)</td>
<td>19.284***</td>
<td>0.544</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$R^2$</td>
<td>0.150***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Income Share</td>
<td>0.247***</td>
<td>0.084</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cash Income</td>
<td>2.312***</td>
<td>0.236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Household Size</td>
<td>0.046</td>
<td>0.039</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sex of Head of Household (1=male)</td>
<td>-0.354</td>
<td>0.303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Births Last 5 Years</td>
<td>-0.579***</td>
<td>0.142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Decision-Making Autonomy</td>
<td>-0.086***</td>
<td>0.023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Medical Autonomy</td>
<td>0.171*</td>
<td>0.087</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(constant)</td>
<td>19.790***</td>
<td>0.761</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$R^2$</td>
<td>0.167***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Income Share</td>
<td>0.183*</td>
<td>0.082</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cash Income</td>
<td>1.766***</td>
<td>0.243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Household Size</td>
<td>0.038</td>
<td>0.038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sex of Head of Household (1=male)</td>
<td>-0.399</td>
<td>0.296</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Births Last 5 Years</td>
<td>-0.593***</td>
<td>0.139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Decision-Making Autonomy</td>
<td>-0.090***</td>
<td>0.023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Medical Autonomy</td>
<td>0.069</td>
<td>0.087</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Literacy</td>
<td>0.843***</td>
<td>0.120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(constant)</td>
<td>20.279***</td>
<td>0.746</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$R^2$</td>
<td>0.207***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** p ≤ 0.001  
** p ≤ 0.01  
* p ≤ 0.05
Discussion

This study sought to investigate the relationship between four dimensions of women's autonomy (economic, physical, decision-making, and knowledge) and Body Mass Index, an objective health outcome measure, on a national sample of non-pregnant Nepalese women. As expected, greater autonomy correlated with higher BMI. All variables representing the four aspects of autonomy produced the predicted correlations in the bivariate analysis. When BMI was dichotomized to separate the sample into two groups, malnourished and all others, however, only the market-related qualities of autonomy were significant predictors of BMI: literacy and the two income variables.

The findings presented here suggest that while decision-making autonomy and physical autonomy at home contributed to higher BMIs, they had small and not significant utility in predicting women who fell into the malnourished category. Other autonomy factors, literacy, income conditions, and fewer recent births, however, do contribute to women staying out of the lowest range of BMIs. What may explain these differences?

Perhaps the single most important factor influencing women's well-being in Nepal is the control of property and market assets. Increasing women's control of market tangibles promotes women's ability to bargain, both within and outside the household. These assets work independently of household and decision-making autonomy, especially in terms of women avoiding malnourishment. With the exception of the fertility variable, the qualities of autonomy that predict non-malnourishment were those that link women directly to social systems outside the family.

The research question driving this study was rooted in the concern that women's autonomy has not been considered in its broadest depth. Previous research has used an array of operations but has not attempted to explore the various dimensions of autonomy. The present investigation found that while autonomy was a critical variable in understanding women's health in South Asia, the concept was multi-faceted and particular indicators should be justified in the context of their usage. The data presented here are sufficiently robust to indicate the lack of equivalence between the terms if used individually without first having been subject to a factor analysis.

This being said, the study had limitations. First, the measure of physical limitations is not hardy and does not exactly correspond to Jejeebhoy's concept. Second, we could not include emotional autonomy in the models. Third, pregnant women, who are often vulnerable to nutritional inequities in Nepal, were excluded from the study.

To conclude, this research finds that while autonomy is a critical variable in understanding women's health in South Asia, care should be taken to specify what aspects of autonomy are at work under specific circumstances. Given that the content validity of the term has yet to be established, these data suggest that researchers should, in future, generate a standardized and indexed operationalization of autonomy that includes all five of Jejeebhoy's dimensions.

References


SOCIAL NETWORKING AND THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS AMONG ACTIVISTS IN NEPAL

Mrigendra Bahadur Karki

As a result of the signing of the 12-point agreement between the seven-party (parliamentary) alliance and the Communist Party of Nepal, Maoist, from the 6th to the 24th of April, 2006, for the first time in Nepal's history, millions of people marched on the streets of entire cities and most of the villages of the country. They crossed all state coercive measures, defied curfew, and cleared security barricades, all the while chanting 'Loktantra' (democracy). People from to all walks of life took part, at their own high risk. These demonstrations were not merely a coincidence or a form of spontaneous mobilization; they were a manifestation of undercurrent activism, contentious politics, collective action, and social movements. Over the last 200 years, Nepal has changed considerably (Gellner 1997a) and in recent decades the rate, intensity, and spectrum of change has been noteworthy. This may be compared to Tarrow's (2003) "movement society" concept, which he created for contemporary global contexts. In the same vein, in the 1960s, sociologist Daniel Bell proclaimed the "end of ideology" (Lloyd 2003); following his footsteps many social scientists predicted a stage of societal development where ideological conflict would gradually be translated into a more pluralistic, pragmatic consensus (McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald 1996). This seems to ring true for Nepal, where ethnic organizations, regional movements, civil societies, Dalit groups, and women movements, to name a few, are proliferating as new alternative intermediaries, somehow challenging/replacing political parties in mediating between people and the state. All these mobilizations are triggering social scientists to ask some serious questions: why have the collective actions, mass mobilizations (movements, revolution) come into being? Why do people join these mass mobilizations? What are the motivating and networking patterns of activists? What recruitment technologies and processes are being deployed by activists?

Social Political Upheaval 1990

Almost every day from the 1990s onwards, particularly post 1996, after the introduction of the Maoist insurgency, both printed and electronic media have been cultivating column and airing news on various levels, forms, types, and natures of collective actions, protests, activations, movements, insurgescies, and counter insurgencies as well as their strategies and tactical repertoires. The promulgation of the new constitution of the Kingdom of Nepal in 1990 produced avenues for the mobilization of all sorts of activism...
in the country—both individual and collective. From that time onwards, activism, movements, and collective actions became a perennial and routine part of Nepali life, especially in urban areas (nevertheless the Maoist insurgency has emerged from rural areas). Enormous public discourses were initiated and organizations materialized; activists, academics, and intellectuals began to engage in the expression and exchange of views in a way that had previously been banned. As noted earlier, varied forms of activism took place as political groups, cultural nationalists, Dalit, women, Madhesi, etc., asserted their ethnic and territorial autonomy, the right to self-determination, linguistic revitalization, and so on. Dalits, women, the disabled, and numerous social organizations and religious groups have since advocated their rights and identities as Weigert, Smith, and Teitel state, “social organization is the principle of self-organization, and both together explain social action” (1986: 5). Lesbian, gay, and sex worker movements started up. Many of these have or seek links with International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs). Activist organizations have a key role in the ongoing transformation of Nepali society. Since 1990 it is estimated that more than 30,000 Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) have been registered in Nepal, focusing particularly on development, awareness, advocacy, civic and human rights, the environment, children, women, peace, and so on (Gellner and Karki forthcoming).

Modern Nepali political activism can be divided into five generations by key historical events: prior to 1951 Rana Regime, 1952-1961 multiparty system, 1962-1979 party-less political Panchayat system, 1980-1990 reformed party-less Panchayat system, and the post-1990 reinstallation of multiparty system. These events have offered opportunities for contentsions, oppositions, and original activist dynamics, producing new generations of activists. One major outcome of mobilization is the formation of a political generation, a cohort of activists who are committed to the cause in enduring ways (Mannheim 1928 quoted by Whitier 2004: 541). Cultural nationalist, Dalit, women’s, social, and Tarai activists, are also seen to be analogous to political events (religious activism may be a partial exception here). The 2001 census recorded over 100 castes/ethnicities and 92 mother tongues, each of which could be said to constitute separate cultural entities. Cultural nationalists have claimed that the original culture of those units goes back to the period prior to the modern administrative unification after 1769 initiated by King Prithivi Narayan Shah.

Many of the existing studies have focused on identity formation or reformation as well as agenda production (Gellner, Pfaff-Czarnecka, and Whelpton 1997; de Sales 2000; Lecomte-Tilouine and Dollius 2003; Fisher 2004), ideology and agenda building through the process of grievances construction (Bhattacharan 1995, 2000), and issue claiming and counter-claiming (Dahal 1995; Adams 1998; and Shah 2005). Hachhethu (2002), Rawal (1990), and KC (2001) have focused on political party/institution building through political process perspectives. Dahal (2004) analyzes an emerging new social movement in Nepal from a western theoretical position. Even if social movements are not acknowledged as such, they are a vital social force in mass mobilizations and socio-political change in general, as is evidenced by the last seven-eight decades. Although many activists have greatly contributed to these movements, the sociological study of their recruitment process in Nepal has been neglected, with the exception of de Sales (2003), Lecomte-Tilouine (2006), Gellner and Karki (2004, 2005), who have produced two preliminary articles addressing motivation and trends in recruitment.

Opposition to existing (unequal) social conditions was revealed to be a major motivation for activism, as the single biggest first response (21.6%) to the direct question on this matter, going up to 35.3% when up to three responses are allowed. ‘Ideology’ is given as a first response by only 12.5%, though this increases to 34% when up to three responses are included. Once the responses are broken down by type of activist some perhaps predictable regularities can be observed: political activists are much more likely to have been influenced by an ideology or a text than others; Janajati, women, and Dalit activists are much more likely to be influenced by a desire to resist social evils or by events than others; and business or commercial activists are influenced by neither, with over 50% saying that the advancement of their professional interests was their motivation. (Gellner and Karki 2005: 14)

In this article, I attempt to further explore a) how individuals become involved in/recruited for activism, b) what types of social and political process one needs to undergo to be an activist, and finally, c) what motivations are affective during the recruitment process?

**General Literature**

The growth of social movements is a global phenomenon these days (McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald 1996), which has come to be regarded as permanent components of western democracies (Porta and Di Piani 2004), but I think these are omnipresent. However, movement has been variously conceptualized in different eras and places. Zirakzadeh (1997) states that immediately following the few decades after the Second World War, social movement theorists of Western Europe and Northern America had negative associations with social movements due to their painful memories of National Socialism in Germany, Fascism in Italy, and McCarthyism in the United
States. These theorists therefore depicted social movements in a derogatory way and dwelt on their childish, immoral, and anti-democratic features.

Initially during the last century, sociological theories of ideology and later, theories of organization and rationality dominated as perspectives from which to address issues of social movement (Johnston, Larana, and Gusfeld 1994). In the late sixties and early seventies, two principal theoretical models in particular evolved: the Marxist model and the structural-functionalist model. However, reactions to those theoretical lacunae developed in both settings, collective behaviour (in its interactionist version), resource mobilization, and the political processes perspective developed in response to structural-functionalist model in the United States and the "new social movement" evolved in response to the Marxists model in the Europe (Porta and Diani 2004). Garner and Zald (1985:138) and Diani (2004:341) claim protest and contentious collective action are ultimately "polities by other means", and social movements were merely one of the options that challengers could draw upon to pursue their policy outcomes and their quest for membership in the polity.

It is difficult to grasp the nature of social movements, neither they could be reduced to specific insurrections or revolts, but rather resemble strings of more or less connected events, scattered across time and space; they cannot be identified with specific organizations either, rather, they consist of groups and organizations, with various levels of formalization, linked in patterns of interactions which run from the fairly centralized to the totally decentralized, from cooperative to the explicitly hostile. In another word social movements are complex and highly heterogeneous network structures. (Diani 2003:1)

It has been observed that modern social movements developed with the creation of the nation-state (Porta and Tarrow 2005). Nepal too has followed the same trajectory, where modern forms of activism began from the 1920s with action against the Rana regime (Gellner and Kurki forthcoming). However, it is equally true that contention, opposition, grievances, collective action, and movement in any form are ubiquitous throughout space and time (Klandermans 2004a). To complicate matters, everywhere movements as ideology and instrument (ibid) have been mobilized on the basis of various social and ethnic groups, castes, and geographical markers. It is very difficult to measure their scale and scope because of the changing face of transnational activism, which complicates the local processes of the diffusion of movements with crosscutting trends of internationalization (Porta and Tarrow 2005). In addition, Matsuda (2001: 128) points out, that human beings are active subjects with creativity and initiative in the existential world.

Many theorists have concentrated on exploring how movements and revolutions emerge and develop. McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald (1996) tease out three factors: firstly, the structure of political opportunities and constraints confronting the movements; secondly, the form of organization (formal and informal) available to insurgents; and lastly, the collective process of interpretation, attribution, and social construction that mediate between opportunity and action. In same vein, Klandermans and Oegema (1987) claim four stages of social movements: forming mobilization potentials; forming and motivating recruitment networks; arousing motivation to participate; and removing barriers to participation. Chung (1991) observes that in every social movement some proportion of the activists primarily seek immediate gratification and private benefits such as an increase in local prestige, and are neither steadfastly not deeply committed to long term social change. People who do not become activists are those for whom the costs is too great, they tend to have little economic security and few, if any ties to a political base from which they may be granted political protection (Migdal 1974; Piven 1976: 316-18; Scott 1988 quoted by Zirakzadeh 1997).

Undoubtedly, activism and social movements share more or less the same trajectories, and overlap their meanings and conceptualizations to a great extent. However, implicit differences in the recruitment pattern exist. Essentially, social movements recruit participants not members (Porta and Diani 2004); participants in social movements do not make up a collectively activists and may not follow the same recruitment processes as activists. Participants in social movements are recruited at any point of time across a given society through the intense interactions, fusions, conflicts, collective identities, and resources of activist organizations. In answering the question of why participation in movements is appealing to people, various factors have to be taken into account. "People may want to change their circumstances, they may want to act as a member of their groups, or they may want to give meaning to their world and express their views and feelings" (Klandermans 2004b: 361). Hirsch (1990: 243) has developed the steps to recruitment and commitment to protest movements: consciousness-raising, collective empowerment, polarization, and group decision-making.

McAdam (1988) observes that structural availability is more important than attitudinal affinity in accounting for differential involvement in movement activities. Ideological disposition towards participation matters little if the individual lacks the structural contact to "pull" her or him into protest. Consistent with this argument, a number of studies have demonstrated the decisive role of structural, rather than attitudinal, factors in encouraging activism. Very few would disagree that social network analysis facilitates the study of social movements through individual embeddedness in
the Study

The impact of activism in Nepal: an anthropological and historical study. This study attempts to investigate the underlying social and political mechanisms and ultimately become involved in activism. How have motivational, networking, and recruitment processes worked and what types of techniques (physical, non-physical) are being adopted? Even though the political, ethnic, and religious organizations deploy their member activists for different goals, are the basic mobilization and recruitment technologies similar or not? This project and its resulting publications endeavor to check the ways in which political parties and ethnic and religious institutions contact, influence, recruit, and organize activists in their cause. This article excludes from its quantitative survey activists who discontinued their activities or were expelled from their organizations. Primarily, it focuses on activists and does not look at non-activists or regular individuals.

As noted above, Nepal has faced several political movements/revolutions so this research has attempted to cover the activism of each generation and a great diversity of movements from different political, social and cultural domains. As a consequence of this diversity of activists and movements, the project has also included analysis of many different environments or motivational contexts because of the vital role they play in generating the requisite networking that ultimately leads to the recruitment of activists. Fararo and Kosaka (2003) say “structure itself is as networking”. However, structural motivation and inter-structural/inter-organizational networking are not my only focus and I try to explore other possibilities. Structural choice (opportunities/obstacles) and rational choice networking may create possible spaces in which individuals may be led into recruitment through networking, nonetheless, one needs to overcome some barriers. Additionally, motivation gains momentum from structural opposition and contention. One important question is how these forces, as well as ‘positive’ networking factors, result in the production of activists. I have found that activists are recruited through various situations, environments, and prevailing knowledge. As our research has shown, an individual becomes an activist by borrowing from various concepts and existing theoretical. It would therefore be inappropriate to overlay a unified theoretical position with which to analyse their networking and recruitment on to their activities. Instead, I will present their various perspectives and begin to chart a course for an analysis based on their recruitment processes as they identify them.

Research Design

Urban-based activism is very common in Nepal. This may be due to the availability of modern infrastructures, which provide multiple means of disseminating ideology choices, and access to international links to advocacy and lobbying; consequently, cities are in focus. This does not mean, however, that activists are totally absent in the rural areas. Most eminent activists live in cities and conduct most of their activism within cities (national, regional, zonal, district, or rural-urban). Activism draws upon potentially mobilizing structures (McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald 1996) and resources, which are located in cities. Therefore, most activists commence their activism in urban areas and then diffuse their activities to villages. During the survey conducted as part of the ‘Impact of Activism project’, I found that just as up-grading occurs in a promotional system, if one gets good expertise, name and fame, a migrant will migrate to cities to do more. All of the central offices of national political parties, NGOs, and NGOs are located in Kathmandu. In other words, almost entire prominent activist leaders stay in the capital city. For example, of the fifty member organizations that are members of NFIN (Nepal Federation of Indigenous Nationalities), thirty are based in Kathmandu, including its central office, three are in Pokhara and one in Janakpur (Gellner and Karki 2005). Additionally, the Maoist insurgency has compelled opposing activists to migrate to the cities. Realizing this hard reality and high risk, our study excludes the country side and declined to survey Maoist activists (this decision was also taken out of concerns over the state, because at that time the Maoists were declared terrorists and all their activities were banned by the government of Nepal).

Taking into consideration those facts, the ecological setting and the location of the major concentrations of activists, from late 2003s to early 2004s, 109 pilot questionnaires were filled out. These covered three districts, namely Kathmandu, the capital city, Kaski (Pokhara), the western regional development center, and Dhanusa (Janakpur), the zonal headquarter of Sagarmatha. From December 2004 to April 2005, of 800 quantitative interviews, fifty per cent (400) were obtained from Kathmandu, and twenty five per cent (200) from Pokhara and Janakpur, the district head quarters of Kaski and Dhanusa districts respectively. A questionnaire schedule containing 38 questions and divided into three major parts (organizational, personal, and political ideology inclination) was used for the quantitative interview. Respondents were selected through ‘snowball sampling’ from several types of activist groups, namely political, ethnic, Dalit, religious, Madheshi, caste, women, social, and economic. Of the 200 respondents in each area outside Kathmandu, 30 respondents were from political parties, 30 from women’s organizations, and 20 each from indigenous/nationalities, Dalit, economic, social, and religious activities. Within Kathmandu this number was doubled for each category.
An activist is a person who is consciously and voluntarily engages (full time or part time) in at least one organization that has certain end goals, whether those be halting or changing extant authority whatever its form: culture, institution, group etc. It is not simple, however, to depict the concrete definitional boundaries of an activist and any such project must acknowledge their overlapping meanings, conceptualisations, and shifting positions. For the sake of the study's feasibility, we do not include participants 'of the moment' or claimants in our definition of activists. However, in general, one could identify and claim that an activist is an individual who is just participating in any protest, movement, or collective action.

In this article, I defined the recruitment of an activist to be a state of recognition of involvement in an organization, either legally (formal membership) or socio-politically. The ties between individual or collective emotions and the end goals of any organization are an essential component in activism recruitment but this is not a formal requirement. I have observed cross directional processes in recruitment where legal (formal) recruitment motives, which I will here refer to as object-driven recruitment, and individual or emotional motivations, here referred to as subject-driven recruitment, can predicate one another, depending on the activist in question. For this study, an activist is the unit of analysis. A network is a set of nodes connected by specific types of relations. The very network helps an individual to participate in an activism. A node could be a person, a society, a cultural meaning, an organization, an ideology, protest tactics, etc. Side by side, the dependent variable would be a multiplicity of causes: against social evils, an ideology, a person, an ego, a family, a work or body of literature, etc., across the context and type of activism. In this quantitative survey, the operational definition of an activist is inseparable from 'the organization'. Activists who are members (executive or working committee) of mono or multi-level organizations were respondents. Nevertheless, movement veterans who had a key role in past but were retired were interviewed for qualitative purposes in order to access the feelings, emotions, life histories, and interpretations of this complex phenomena (Klandermans and Staggenburg 2002) even if they were no longer affiliated with an organization.

The processes of individual recruitment are relative phenomena that may occur variously because of several factors under different regime models over time (Passy 2003). The questionnaire was designed to generate personal information about activists, focusing on individual profiling (involvement history, overlapping membership commitments, family history, location of ancestral home, family migration patterns, birth, education, etc.), formation/networking/recruitment on activism, socio-metric choices (motivation and intermediary agencies), and political ideological inclination. Generally, it took about 25 minutes to fill out a questionnaire. However, the qualitative interviews took an average of 2 hours. The interview included asking in detail about life history (motivation, networking, and recruitment) depending on the activist's level of activism.

**Discussion and Analysis**

**Social Status and Recruitment**

The social activist (reformer) category is the most popularly preferred identity marker amongst activists, irrespective of what type of activism they are involved in, be it political, ethnic, Dalit, women, religion, etc. The very category captures first and third largest position securing 27.3 and 21.5 per cent in the father's and grandfather's generation respectively (Table 1). Thalu/Mukhiya decreases by 10.8 per cent and is pushed down into fifth rank in the father's generation although it occupied the second position in the grandfather's generation. This is unlike the teacher/Karmachari category which, in the grand father's generation emerged with 11.8 per cent, replacing the Thalu/Mukhiya as a new local elite group in the father's generation. These days, the tag of Thalu/Mukhiya is politically constructed to mean a member of the exploitative class and is now a derogative status. As a result, activists who would formerly have belonged to this group have been intentionally exchanging this identity with that of 'social reformer'. Even though during the Rana regime their very name was supposed to be a prestigious social status. Along with the end of Rana regime such state- economic structures legally also came to an end. The new democratic movement has changed the social subjective consciousness, plotting society into two major camps: feudal (in a relative sense) and general. Groups like the Thalu/Mukhiya have been placed in domain of traditional forces and have been labelled 'Samanti' (local feudal). To a great extent activism recruitment processes evolve in the relationships (ties or conflict) between those two groups particularly political activism is produced and reproduced.

**Table 1: Social status of activist's father and grandfather**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Status</th>
<th>Father</th>
<th>Grand Father</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Per cent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social activist</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>27.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General people</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>25.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political leader</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>15.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karmachari/Teacher</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>15.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thalu/Mukhiya</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ex. Army/police</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>11.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchant</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious activist</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Only 25.6 per cent of activists' father's social status is identified as 'general people', while it increases to 38.6 per cent in the grandfather's case. This clearly indicates that the majority of activists (the single largest position in the grandfather's generation and second in the father's generation) belong to locally well known or respectable elite families including (Thaliu/Mukhiya/Jimawal), merchant/trader, priest/astrologer, social activist, ethnic leader, etc. The 'general people' category decreases by 13 per cent in the most father's generation compared to that of the grandfather, which reveals that in a democracy and a more open/modern socio-political environment, general people were able to earn a good social position. Nevertheless, even in a democracy, the recruitment from the 'general people' sphere is still tends to be low; only one fourth of the total. Interestingly, few degrade to 'general people' in the father's generation, whatever their grandfather's social status, and indeed regained the title of activist in third generation, suggesting that such a commitment 'missed a generation' in terms of activism recruitment. It also indicates that structural potentiality might be an eminent factor in recruitment containing pre-existing social capital.

Of the total 800 respondents, 45 per cent of activists replied that they have elite relatives within their circle of core relations (uncle, aunt, brother and sister-in-law, and sister and brother-in-law). Out of them, 59.2 per cent belong to government offices as section officers or above, 41.4 and 33.3 per cent are to be found in political, military, or police professions (as senior officers including second lieutenant and inspector) (Table 2).

Table 2: Activists and their core relatives' occupational position

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field of recognized post of the close relatives – combined</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Politics</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government office, officer level</td>
<td>213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police/Army officer level</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrialist/Businessman</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International service</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>360</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Percentages based on multiple responses.

Overwhelmingly, 66.8 and 11.6 per cent of activists are sending their children to private school, college, or university, and to foreign countries respectively, as compared to the 27.8 per cent who have their children in government school/campus (Table 3).

Table 3: Educational institutes where activists' children are getting education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place of educational center of the children – combined</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>27.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>375</td>
<td>75.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>11.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No where</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>561</td>
<td>116.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Percentages based on multiple responses.

These results may appear unusual according to Marxist theory concerning which groups lead and dominate class conflict and class struggle, but activism in Nepal is generated and sustained by elite groups because of the social movement culture of each elite activist family in which family and individual identity asserted through participation in activism. The term 'political dynasty' is used both in practice and academically in the context of describing the 'political landscape'; however, it applies to the rest of activism too. Those members who are socially recognized as 'Khandanya Kulin/Gharany' (aristocratic or blue-blooded) (relative to their socio-political-economic milieu) might be able to leverage their power in the name of recruitment to activism. Generally, one would proudly claim, 'Hing Narayanepani Hing Badheko Tal' which literally means that presently one may not have noble social status now, but he or she can still claim a noble family lineage. Similarly, another very popular idiomatic expression is 'Mud Ko Pani Kul Ko Chhori', 'drink water from the spring and choose a girl from a noble family (for marriage)'; implicitly those social meanings express a message about the socio-psychological importance of family capital. In the context of activism recruitment, such social capital is particularly valued and given special credibility regardless of the type of activism. Furthermore, one may observe a trend of formerly elite status-gaining members seeking more power through inventing a new identity or involving themselves in an organization.

Ethnicity/Caste and Recruitment

Few would deny that ethnicities are not new entities; however, the very term 'ethnicity' was coined early in the 1950s and was slowly shaped on the
categories: endangered, highly marginalized, marginalized, disadvantage, and

Which places them well above the average national level. The hill ethic
third position in the human development index ranking (NESAC 1998),
recognized indigenous nationalities groups are divided into a further five
ranking. Here, the question arises about whether there is
betwe~n
per cent. The remaining groups cover only 6.8 per cent.

The Newars are one of the enlisted indigenous hill nationalities groups of
national population of 17.27 per cent. The Chhetri (15.80) are the single most
reported 13.6 per cent activists, which is an extremely low representation but
representation since their percentage of the total population is 27.39 per cent.

They make up 12.74 per cent of the national population. The Newars are 15.1
per cent among the activists, about triple the size of their total national
population, resulting in over representation compared to the Hill Brahmans.

Table 4 shows that the Hill Brahmans constitute the single largest
percentage (21.5 per cent) of the total number of activists surveyed, whereas
they make up 12.74 per cent of the national population. The Newars are 15.1
per cent among the activists, about triple the size of their total national
population, resulting in over representation compared to the Hill Brahmans.
The Chhetris/Thakuris occupy 12.8 per cent, quite a bit less than their
national population of 17.27 per cent. The Chhetri (15.80) are the single most
populous group in Nepal (CBS 2001). The Hill and Mountain ethnic groups
reported 13.6 per cent activists, which is an extremely low representation but
if the Newars are included it increases significantly to 28.7, giving them over
representation since their percentage of the total population is 27.39 per cent.
The Newars are one of the enlisted indigenous hill nationalities groups of
Nepal. While the Dalits constitute 9.3 per cent of all activists, all of the Tarai
groups together secure 17.1 per cent, excluding Musalmans who maintain 1.6
per cent. The remaining groups cover only 6.8 per cent.

Interestingly, these results match the national human development
ranking. Here, the question arises about whether there is any correlation
between the level of human development ranking and activist recruitment
potential. The Newars, Hill Brahmans, and Chhetris secure first, second, and
third position in the human development index ranking (NESAC 1998),
which places them well above the average national level. The hill ethnic
groups maintain the average national level, but this does not mean that all
indigenous nationalities occupy the same status. The 59 government-
recognized indigenous nationalities groups are divided into a further five
categories: endangered, highly marginalized, marginalized, disadvantage, and
advanced groups, based on literacy rate, housing, land holdings, occupation,
language, education level (graduate and above), and population size. Here, apparently, the Dalits are highly overrepresented in respect to the human
development ranking, but this results from our project's intentional sampling
in which we set a compulsory 10 per cent Dalit respondents (see research
design). However, their low status implicitly indicates by the decreasing
order of allocated 10 per cent respondents to Dalit that decreases to 9.3 per
cent in absence of their involvement.

Table 4: Ethnicity/Caste and Activist

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity/Caste</th>
<th>National Population and Percentage</th>
<th>Activist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brahmin-Hill</td>
<td>2896477</td>
<td>12.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newar</td>
<td>1245232</td>
<td>5.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Groups- Hill and Mountain</td>
<td>4983957</td>
<td>21.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chhetris-Hill and Thakuri</td>
<td>3927816</td>
<td>17.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yadav and other Tarai Castes</td>
<td>2409075</td>
<td>10.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hill Dalit</td>
<td>1605248</td>
<td>7.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brahmin-Tarai</td>
<td>134496</td>
<td>0.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dalit-Tarai</td>
<td>674859</td>
<td>2.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musalman</td>
<td>971056</td>
<td>4.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kayastha/Rajput</td>
<td>94525</td>
<td>0.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Groups- Tarai and Inner Tarai</td>
<td>2225593</td>
<td>9.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanyasi</td>
<td>199127</td>
<td>0.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>1369673</td>
<td>6.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>22736934</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Survey 2005 and 2001 census.

Numerically, the Newars are the dominant community of the Kathmandu
valley and have migrated to other major cities as a successful business
community. The survey was carried out in cities/urban areas so a possible
argument could be that it is natural for there to be overrepresentation of this
group. Nevertheless, cost benefit ratio, potentiality, and future visibility
factors do play prominent roles in activism motivation and recruitment.
This seems to ring true in terms of ethnic activism too; out of government
recognized 59 groups, only 50 groups have succeeded in forming their own
community organizations. Of 59, very few have envisioned their own current
and future programmes and policies and have succeeded in setting up branch
offices or holding periodic elections following their own organizations'
constitutions (see Gellner and Karki 2004). The remaining groups are mainly quite behind on several political and economic measures and in their ability to access power. They are adhering to Tilly’s ideas on how people may be divided into three camps: “idea people, behaviour people, and relation people” (2003: 5-6). Those groups that have not been successful in these areas follow the leading ethnic activists and organizations activism and create opportunities for themselves under the banner of indigenous nationalities recognition and identity. Those groups lack intellectual, political, and financial resources. In other words, conducive and fertile contexts exist in abundance but most of the requisites for subjective consciousness and actions have been lacking.

Resource mobilization theorists, McCarthy and Zald (1977) claim a group or person who has the appropriate political experience, vision, and/or resources to help an aggrieved constituent may be termed an ‘issue entrepreneur’. Significantly, in all national political parties Hill Brahmins and Chhetris are in control, regardless of whether the party is extremist, centralist, or liberal, which clearly indicates that social capital, education, and family background, and recruitment opportunity are strongly interrelated and have been so since the inception of the state. Similarly, all eminent indigenous nationalities leaders come either from the Newars or a few hill ethnic communities who had traditional access to the British/Indian army. Of all five general secretaries elected to the Nepal Federation of Indigenous Nationalities (NEFIN, earlier called the Nepal Federation of Nationalities, NEFEN) three are meant to represent groups from the disadvantaged category. In fact, only one belongs to a highly marginalized group, and even he is an academic and therefore relatively privileged. None comes from the Tarai and Mountain regions or women’s groups. Within ethnic groups who have traditionally had access to the Indian and British military, ex-army members have been greatly mobilized in the lower levels of organizational formation. Almost all eminent activists are from the upper strata of the indigenous nationalities whether their group is itself categorized as disadvantaged or advanced.

It is common in Nepal for activists to hold overlapping memberships. In most cases, an activist is a political activist, an academic, a civil society leader, an ethnic activist, a human rights activist, a development activist, and usually this state of affairs would be articulated as a form of coalition building. I argue that just the hill Brahmins and Chhetris dominate the state and its mechanisms of power, a few ethnicities and a handful of activist families have a monopoly over the cultural nationalist activism of their constituency. Through social networks, cultural capital, size of population and social, intellectual or economic resources these groups have had control over identity production and reproduction, policy and strategy formation, as well as the benefits of activism. In other words, few are the core actors in activism and the remaining people are just allies.

Activists who are directly involved in the indigenous nationalities movements claimed that they were motivated 47.7 per cent by opposition to social evils, 27.5 per cent by ethnic causes, and 22.2 percent by families. Although it might seem contradictory, the high hill Hindu caste activists as a group, reported deriving 66.7 per cent of their motivation from the opposition to social evils category. However, it must be said that the ‘opposition to social evils’ response included a variety of meanings. In the case of indigenous nationalities, Dalits, and women, high percentages of ‘opposition to social evils’ suggest discrimination from the state and the high caste people in legal, public, and private spheres, whereas the high caste hill group also reports high numbers of this response, but in their case they explained this choice a reaction to the decrease or diminishment of their own sociocultural values and identities. I argue that there are basically two types of motivating philosophies guiding recruitment which may be divided into two broad categories of activism: a) identity seeking activism and b) identity preservation activism.

Identity seeking activism envisages a twofold aim, firstly to regain their own autonomous identity from a subordinate position, and secondly to fight against the state for some direct political ends, i.e. autonomy, right of self determination, the secular state, etc. The second type of activists are campaigning for the status quo (according to their sociocultural meanings); they demand nothing of the state. Those activists are much more concerned with preserving and protecting their decaying identity and “dignity”. They seem on a defensive mode, which I observed in the Khety Mahasang [Khety (Chhetry) Federation] assembly and during interviews with high caste Hindu activists. They feel loyalty to their historical role, identity, and culture values, excluding direct political ends.19 In other words, the two types of activism being discussed here, might generally be termed right-based activism and duty-based activism. Within these, the motivating categories of ‘opposition to social evil’ and ‘family’ are factors in identity seeking activism and identity preservation activism respectively.

Religion and Activism

Resource mobilization, new social movements, and ethnicity theories strongly propose religion as one of the most powerful allies that shapes the identity. It has been an effective and most convincing resource with which to construct the grievances that recruits an individual into an activism. Nevertheless, some ambiguities exist in the analysis of religion as a context of activism recruitment. ‘Preservation’, ‘conversion’, and ‘retention’ are frequently used terms and tendencies, those multiplicities of position would be difficult to assimilate into an analysis of activism. In this article, therefore,
I restrict myself to the meanings of activism and activists defined in the research design. Respondents were found from almost all nationally recognized religious beliefs: Hinduism, Buddhism, Muslim, Christianity, and Kirat are 70.1, 17.0, 2.5, 2.0, and 2.5 per cent respectively. Hindus are 10.5 per cent less than as recorded in the national census. However, Buddhists are 6.3 per cent more compared to 10.7 per cent in the 2001 census. Compared to dissatisfaction with the continuation of the official declaration of the country the official size of the population, Christians represent more than double but recognized religious beliefs: Hinduism, Buddhism, Muslim, Christianity, and as a Hindu state in the constitution of Nepal 1990, accelerated that just as the British found ‘Sikh Hindu’ or ‘Hindu Sikh’ in India during nationalities’ activism demanding the then secular state. However, I argue that just as the British found ‘Sikh Hindu’ or ‘Hindu Sikh’ in India during their eighteenth century survey (Brass 2005), during my field work I also encountered some dilemmas within activists when asked to point out their religion. The performance of multiple religious rituals and practices during a single individual’s lifespan prevail. Religio-politicians impose and claim identity from a top down perspective, the Vishwa Hindu Mahasang (The World Hindu Federation) and its Nepal chapter advocate membership across ethnicity and caste through the concept of “Sanatana Dharma” and ‘Omkar Pariwar’22. As Geliner observes “the state was still proud to call itself the only Hindu kingdom in the world, and the official doctrine was that Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism were ‘branches’ of Hinduism; only a minority of Buddhist activists were seriously offended by this” (2001: 194). On the other hand, NEFIN creates these boundaries stating that those group are indigenous nationalities who do not belong to the four fold Varna system of Hinduism. Nonetheless, in 2001, in Dhanusa district some Tarain activists have formed a separate federation with which to pressure the state called ‘DKKA’23,4 claiming that they are a Tarain federation of nationalities opposed to the defining criteria of NEFIN24.

During the 2001 census, NEFIN summoned its member organizations to campaign within their communities toendorse their own ‘original’ religions other than Hinduism. Consequently the number of Hindus decreased by 5.9 per cent in the 2001 census compared to the 1991 census. Whereas 3.4 per cent of activists reported their religion ‘others’ (Animism, Bon, etc.), 2.5 per cent of activists intentionally refused to associate themselves with any religion. It is quite a precarious position; on the one hand, in a country that states religion as the foundation of ethnicity and caste identity or as a key property that shapes the ethnic and caste boundaries, activism flows from religion. On the other hand, some activists are entirely denouncing religious recognition. Fundamentally, the confrontation occurs between two basic principles; individual identity (autonomy) and collective identity, or whether an individual is a socialized product or is capable of or wholly constituted by subjective meaning, all of which has been at the core of sociological debates for some time. Political (communist) cadres and members of the younger generations in particular have refused to associate with any religious position, arguing that we are just human beings may choose to be independent from the human construct that is religion. This may be partly true at the macro level where we can say that communists are non-religious. Nonetheless, in Nepal it is wrong to generalize about communists in this way. Activists of the Ekata Kendra Nepal and Janamohra parties were surveyed as 16.7 per cent non-religious compared to activists of the communist party of Nepal-United Marxist and Leninist of whom 11.5 per cent responded that they were non-religious25. The remaining political parties’ activists were entirely linked with religion.
per cent amongst the total 15 per cent of ethnic female activists (excluding female activists, with men claiming 8.8 per cent in this area compared to 3.2 reporting of ethnic causes is highly dominated by male activists rather than demands a different set of subjective, motivational mechanisms. The 33.0, 20.0, 16.2 and 16.2 per cent respectively for male activist. Those family, ideology, and person occupies first to fourth position, comprising into women's activism the major categories of opposition to social evils, essential in order to evaluate each case. In the process of recruiting women to a great extent. Some sort of agencies and mechanisms are needed to join this I. Few would deny that no one could recruit activists in a state of isolation. By women and Activism Recruitment constructivism.

Some key variables, namely opposition to social evils (35.8%), ideology (34%), family (22.1%), and events (14.8%) are dominant across the religious groups in aggregate. Undoubtedly, compared to inter-religious groups those variables contradict each other in their rankings (Table 5). Nonetheless, these figures demonstrate these motivating factors are essential across all types of activism recruitment. Sometimes, religious activism might seem the sub-field of national political and cultural nationalist activism. I find commonalities with Paul Brass's perspectives on northern Indian political development, when he writes that "political elite choose the cultural symbols upon which they wish to base their claims for group rights, that they make a determination as to which symbol is decisive, and that they make other cleavages congruent with the primary cleavage. Therefore, political conflict may induce cumulated cleavages just as the reverse process may occur in which cumulated cleavages produce political conflict" (Brass 2005: 28). The same is true in Nepal, where ethnic activists have been claiming religion as an inseparable component in cultural nationalist activism or movement emergence. Reversely, adherents of certain religions and languages are now capable of (and are) generating activism based on their own needs and agendas. Language is used as an instrument in the mounting ethnic activism. For example, now within the Rai community, a new language-based identity has emerged. The criteria (material or philosophical) which was formerly used to define activism, now becomes the basis of activism itself; what was initially an object or goal has become the subjective purpose of activism. A major question then becomes how to define ethnicity and caste, whether it be on the grounds of the primordial or based in social constructivism.

**Women and Activism Recruitment**

Few would deny that no one could recruit activists in a state of isolation. By this I mean that rational choice theory fails to include the recruitment process to a great extent. Some sort of agencies and mechanisms are needed to join any activism. Consequently, an examination of social networks and ties is essential in order to evaluate each case. In the process of recruiting women into women's activism the major categories of opposition to social evils, family, ideology, and person occupies first to fourth position, comprising 42.9, 37.9, 32.9 and 24.7 per cent respectively for women activists.

It is interesting to compare those motivations with the highest ranking ideology, opposition to social evils, person, family and events securing 34.4, 33.0, 20.0, 16.2 and 16.2 per cent respectively for male activist. Those interfacing facts clearly express that every case of activism recruitment demands a different set of subjective, motivational mechanisms. The reporting of ethnic causes is highly dominated by male activists rather than female activists, with men claiming 8.8 per cent in this area compared to 3.2 per cent amongst the total 15 per cent of ethnic female activists (excluding...
female Newar activists). However, in total, ethnicity as a motivating variable claims about half (7.3%) of the total respondents (15%) from ethnic groups. It communicates how perception and meaning are constructed through the nearest environmental corolla. It means that each salient level of an individual's identity may be invoked by activist recruitment and its multiplicity of issues and agendas. Women seem greatly engaged in social disparity issues; that is, towards gender sensitivity. Conversely, males might be involved in societal and state discrimination issues rather than be aware of gender inequality. Even though both may share the same treatment and identity at a macro level, i.e. ethnic, caste, etc., the ‘opposition to social evils’ category does not denote the same meaning to women as it does to men or concerns, i.e. one Dalit woman might be dominated by high caste/ethnicity gender inequality. Even though both may share the same treatment and women. ‘Family’ appears as second vital recruitment factor for women while individual category gender multiplicity of issues and agendas. Women seem greatly engaged in social claims about half (7.3%) of the total respondents (15%) from ethnic groups. However, male activists who are engaged in specifically feminist organizations suggest different motivational factors. For them, ‘opposition to social evils’ is 10 per cent more in this category than among the total, women activists (Table 7). Further other agencies – family (7.0) ideology (12.3), and person (5.6) – are found less than the other motivating factors among the women activists. The ‘events’ variable increases by about 5 per cent, which indicates structural reasons, and events are more responsible for encouraging activists to become feminist in orientation.

**Table 7: Factors inspiring to various activities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inspired from</th>
<th>Q1: Name of the associated organization – grouped</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Political</strong></td>
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<td><strong>No. %</strong></td>
<td><strong>No. %</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Opposition to social evils</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ideology</td>
<td>57</td>
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<tr>
<td>Family</td>
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<td>Person</td>
<td>51</td>
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<td>Social service</td>
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<td>Self awareness</td>
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<td>Social environment</td>
<td>8</td>
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<td>Ethnic cause</td>
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<td>Others</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>Educational institute</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peer association</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>Promotion of professional/group interest</td>
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<td>Social exclusion</td>
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Note: Percentages based on multiple responses.
Despite 15 per cent allocated to female respondents in the study and the tradition of the dominating patriarchy, 27.6 per cent of women activists were surveyed in the study (though this still under represents women’s 50 per cent of the total national population). Nevertheless, we felt that our sampling of women was reasonable and appropriate to the context of Nepal, particularly in the field of activism. Among women activists of Tarai origin, we were able to maintain just the allocated 15 per cent though a deliberate attempt was made to include the maximum number of Tarai women activists (women originating from the hill and mountain areas who were resident in the Tarai were intended to exclude). On the subject of low participation, some educated Maithili women activists commented:

I am 21 years old but I have not graduated. I fear if I graduate my husband choices would be fewer so an intentional consensus has been reached within my family for me not to participate in further study before marriage. If one is under SLC [School Leaving Certificate], an SLC holder a boy would be eligible to marry you but if one holds an MA it is not easy to get a partner because he has to pay a high dahej (dowry). On the other hand, traditional parents feel that it is their attributive social, cultural, and religious responsibility to give their daughter’s hand in marriage both socially as well as religiously. So sometimes when a husband’s family assassinates a girl [because her family did not provide enough dowry], the girl’s parent’s side are compelled not to report them to the police because they believe their remaining daughter will not get a husband for herself if they do. Once the killing is publicized no one will come to ask the remaining daughters to marry them because they will assume that they too will not be able to negotiate a good price for dowry. [She adds that such events happen in the Mithila region so it is very challenging to find women activists before they are married or get permission from a husband’s family to participate in outside activities after marriage.] A 21 year old Maithali women activist

Putting these issues to one side, the nature of the state is equally catalyzing for networking and the recruitment process. A leading political and development activist describes it is a result of centralized system:

Kathmanduites provide all the resources to the rest of the country. In Dhanauli, Mahattari, Sarlahi, and other few hilly districts, the NGO network has been captured by one hill Brahman family in which the husband had a key government position and his wife founded one of the leading NGOs in Kathmandu. She is also a central member of the Women Pressure Group, while their remaining family members are running NGOs in about five districts including three in Tarai. They have good connections and networks with INGOs and international agencies. Consequently, we Tarai people are discriminated and left out of the power structure.

A leading political and development Tarai women activist

Political Generation and Activism

As examined earlier, many organizations emerged after the reinstallation of multiparty democracy in 1990 or just before (see also Gellner and Karki 2004). The new constitution created a platform for political opportunities and the possibilities of organizing for diverse causes. Individuals, even those belonging to the ‘older’ generation, joined organizations in the democratic period. An 81 year old person joined an organization post 1990, which unambiguously indicates that political opportunities have been and are integral to the emergence of organizations and the production of a conducive environment that leads to individuals becoming involved in activism. It also reveals that activists capitalize on an individual’s social capital to influence and establish the organization itself. Initially, this man was a Pancha Pantha (elected chief of the Panchayat or Nagar Panchayat) in his municipality and later joined the community organization, Ksheetri Mahasang, all of which expresses the shifting trend of activism. This also presents an account of how one may be motivated to follow a new, even contradictory form of activism on the basis of common identity. Technically, activists are generally defined as occupying an executive position of any functioning organization or movement, however, in some cases those activists are not personally or intellectually committed to the end objectives of a particular cause or movement, but instead are compelled to accept the activist role by their community, neighborhood networking, and moral pressure. In turn, the activist recruiter utilizes the social capital of the organization’s members to communicate and address their goals as well to attract new activist members.

Formal and informal organizations (indigenous socio-cultural institutions) have directly and indirectly supported activism and mass mobilization. Earlier the Tharu Kalyan Karini Sabha, the Thakali Sewa Samiti, and the Tamang Ghedung were formally organized, side by side in the local teashops, schools, colleges, at bonhej (picnics), Tiz (Hindu women’s festival), and other ethnic and caste ritual assemblies, these being places where there were opportunities to exchange views and to convince and consolidate individuals in the non-democratic era. Table 8 shows that almost all activists above 18 years of age have become active since 1990. This explicitly demonstrates that low risk/cost environment is conducive to galvanizing the activism, both in terms of individual recruitment and mass mobilization. In general, it has been claimed that historical exclusion,
alienation, and poverty produces activism. Table 8 communicates that political opportunity structures are the most important agencies to recruit individuals. Without opportunity structures the activism recruitment level stays in the low numbers. In the following cases, all social, economic, cultural, and political causes were in abundance in all generations but created mounting activism in fifth generation (1991-05).

Table 8: Cross-sectional cohort of activists

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Source: Field Survey 2005.

After 1990, a rigorous current of diverse activism and movements gained a significant advancement including the 'recognition' (self, social, and political) of traditionally subordinate groups including Dalit, women, indigenous nationalities, etc., and formation of other organizations. Consequently, political parties and social organizations have been compelled to endorse those new identities formally in their agenda and have introduced new departments (ethnic, Dalit, social issues) into their own organizations organizational structure. Now, all political parties have introduced those departments as part of their integral wings. Previously, those ethnic, Dalit, and regional movements were supposed as communally and sectarily motivated tendencies and it is interesting to note that those political activists who are now in their parties' front organizations and central committees, were previously hesitant to reveal their involvement in and commitment to the previously independent social and ethnic concerns. Activist organizations or groups that have served as gateways into the necessary networks that promote the mobilization and advancement of activism, but which are also activism groups in their own right, including women's associations (Ama Samuhah), clubs, and developmental organizations.
The deployment of ideology (as a dependent variable in the recruitment of an historically popular procession), in their use of the public tap etc. particularly in rural areas. The trend in Nepal. Generally, even from the first encounter, leading activists attempt to create an optimum level of moral outrage and anger against oppositional camps to obtain their end goals. Immediately after the 1990 people's movement, oppositional political activists were cut off from each other even in their day to day lives and socio-cultural interactions i.e. the historically popular Parma (labor exchange) system, Malami (funeral procession), in their use of the public tap etc. particularly in rural areas. The following cases indicate what types of instruction and indoctrination are being offered to a new recruit at various political camps and how sentiment is constructed and accumulated to create an ideological space.

`Would you mind telling me about your father and family background?`

My father was in the British Gorkha army but later he came back to the village, resigned from his job, and studied. He became school teacher in the village and became known as social worker. I remember when I was a child, I visited villagers with him on two missions: first, to request that the villagers enroll their children in the school, and second to beg for votes for my uncle as part of his local election campaign. Both times after he won the election, my uncle arranged a huge feast at his house honoring his supporters, we had goat, chicken, and pork, managed in separate kitchens for high caste Hindus and others. He [uncle] used to address supporters in different places during the victory procession on the way back home. They used to offer him lots of flowers and smeared red powder (Abhiri) on him. Having had such experiences, I used to repeatedly imitate the mass addresses alone, even after several days following him (uncle). In my child psychology those were very wonderful, heroic, and glorious events.

`When and where did you hear the word communist?`

In childhood, I first heard word 'communist' in my house, my acquaintance as well as through my social surrounding (samajik mahaud ra sampark), particularly consolidated at the school. I received the ideological [communist] classes in the village. Instructors used to attempt to convince us by making aggressive statements and telling interesting stories. Yi Haat Pani Ke

Communistka Haat Jun Haat Samanika Rato Raagute Narangiya Hun. [What are these hands of a communist which are not ‘tinted with the blood of feudals’?] He adds, I was also very much impressed by listening to a very exciting dialogue between two leaders who were farmers and also cadres of Chinese Communist Party, the Maoist.

A group of farmers smashed a huge, hard rock that was in the way of the path from one village to another. Generally, that was assumed take ten days to clear out but they finished it within four days. Very inquisitively, another friend [group leader] asked what techniques were used to achieve such great success. The leader of the first group replied, “We used chisels and hammers to hit the rock, at that moment, you know, we saw our enemies’ head instead of the rock. So we then started to charge again and again and again. We neither knew where we got the energy from or how fast it fell apart.

Actually, these days, I realize it was a story to encourage ideological plotting for the production of motivation and cadre recruitment. Now, Maoists are also repeating the same thing, dividing friends alliance and from enemies’ cluster (Mitra Sakhi Ra Sara Barga), which ultimately produces a deep gap within the social landscape that consequently, a future impact of which, will be an obstacle in the route to consensual democracy.

An educated young leftist activist

I was influenced by kin who used to convince me, saying that the communist destroys our social and cultural heritage, faith, and values; i.e. that they force us to marry within our core kin [blood] members, destroy temples, monasteries etc. They kill older generations; our parents and grandparents who are above a certain age, and support a one party autocracy. In the communist regime all basic human rights like freedom of reading, writing, and speech would be totally prohibited. It is an anti-human and anti-nature political ideology.

Congress supporter woman activist, aged 54.

`Were you politically active from your school days?`

In school I was not involved in politics is there was no political activity either. I joined politics in Dehradoon, after my school life finished in Gronahpur. This [Dehradoon] was where, I met Puspa Lal and Yek Dev Aale and then gradually became active in
politics. My acquaintances urged me to politics. Initially, as new political recruits, we had very strict rules, regulations and timetables. Usually we faced three sessions in the holidays and two sessions a day during college days, not like today. In the morning between 4-6 am instructions class used to be held, focusing on national and international scenarios and books. From 2-4 pm they used to teach about various historical and contemporary political issues. Puspa Lal, Yek Dev Aale, Hikmat Bhandari, and others were our instructors.

They used to teach all the cadres together but a few of them were selected for further special classes. However, everyone started from general classes and then were promoted into higher positions, Prarambhik Sadashya, Sadharan Sadashya (initial or primary membership and general membership). One comrade was teaching at the Butwal campus but had joined the communist party, who was initially affiliated with the Congress Party. Therefore, our leaders doubted him. However, he didn’t know about it though they [our leaders] used to talk about it with us. Puspa Lal looked upon him with doubt. An internal hierarchy existed; one Brahman comrade held an education in Sanskrit therefore they did not fully trust him. Comrades like those had less powerful departments in the party organization.

The respondent later became a politburo member in the party and visited various villages as a school teacher in order to organize the people in their party. He said that by capitalizing on a teacher’s social status he was able to influence people and to recruit them into leftist political activism.

“What strategies did you use to convince people during the underground period?”

I used to visit students’ houses, try to explore their psychology during the conversation, and decide whether it would be useful or not to talk with them about our political mission. In some cases I had to make four or five visits, walking for three or four hours to evaluate a single family. I used to wake up before the rooster crowed and come to school for teaching. It was necessary to judge people because once one was politically exposed the state would arrest them.

Janajati Leader, aged 61, (Formerly-Communist)

Actually, I was influenced by the 1980 (VS 2036) student movement. I used to hear on the radio that policemen had physically attacked students and in response the students resisted and beat policemen; such news impressed me. I was very impressed by the information about the fight between students and police reported by villagers who used to go to the district headquarters to bring the daily necessities like and clothes. I used to imagine how those students were bravely and honestly fighting for us and the nation. Even when in police custody and bearing intense torture, they did not disclose their friends’ names and organizational secrecy. Later, I joined Akhil Panchau. I was studying in class seven. Some senior colleagues (Dai-haru) came from the nearby school, Khong Ling High School. Those seniors gave us political instruction classes, focusing on existing social discrimination and inequalities. Their progressive songs motivated me, and sometimes I used to think of them as cunning elders during their instruction (Prasikshan). Anyway, their teachings gave me a political direction. Later they used to visit our school regularly.

He too turned to ethnic activism:

I have an interesting story. I do not know how important it is. I am the first person to come to Kathmandu from the Tokpegola community and anyone who moved to or visited Kathmandu before was supposed to be a wealthy, Thulo Manche [big man]. One of the villagers belonging to the Tokpegola community came after a while but I was quite busy with my business; I had opened a carpet factory, therefore we did not have frequent contact. Unfortunately, his wife suffered from a brain tumor and he failed to contact me so our neighboring community Olangehunge, who were living and doing business in Kathmandu helped them, but after many days of care in the hospital she did not improve so they stopped caring for her. Then her husband brought her back to a room in Daikhu where she died. The Newar house owner pressured them immediately to take away the dead body but the husband had not contacted anybody about a funeral procession, so he asked his brother-in-law, though he also belonged other than outside the Tokpegola community. Anyway, they carried the dead body on a motorcycle, putting it in the middle between two people like a cooking gas cylinder, wrapping it in a huge jute bag [Bora]. They rested three times on the way to a crematory for cremation. That became an anecdote within our neighboring communities. During our participation in any function like a funeral procession, marriage, and cultural activity, that event became the song [Geet];
a satirical story about how Tokpegola lived in Kathmandu, about how we bury dead bodies. They (members of other community) used to laugh at us, talking about the cremation, and that used to pinch me, used to give a heat to me (humiliate me).

Later, many Tokpegola members came to Kathmandu saying “if Pasang could survive in Kathmandu why not?” On 1999 (VS 2056), in my initiation, we introduced Tokpegola Samaj Sewa Samiti, (Tokpegola Society Helping Committee), targeting the enhancement of mutual understanding, helping each other, and the organization of Tokpegola community members who are living in Kathmandu. At the same time, Janajati Videyak was passed by the parliament and consequently our community was also listed in the 59 ethnic communities.

An Executive Member, NEFIN

On the inspiration to join ethnic activism as well as to form an ethnic organization:

“How did you become inspired to found the community organization?”

There are several motivational tiers to form this community organization. On the one hand, [I experienced] discriminatory events, both individual and social, which have pushed me, and in another, the loss of our culture, sacraments, etc., are responsible. Outsiders’ cultures, adaptations, and ways of lives have handicaaped our community; we are living under poverty, illiteracy, and one could say in a Jangali (uncivilized) condition. I stayed in Sansishe, Morang district for about 12 years. One day, I heard someone mentioning Majhi (the community to which I belong) to a Brahman’s child who was wearing poor clothes, full of mud, and who had dust on his face. His mother maltreated him saying how he was a dirty boy, like a Majhi child. I heard this maltreatment of the Majhi community and it hurt me deeply. Such inequitable events and social practices exist in society in day to day life Uncounted, discriminatory events exist in the society.

My father was also social worker. Unoubtedly, he directly and indirectly influenced me, otherwise I would be a general Nepali Majhi as others are.

I reached Puthauli, a Majhi village in Sindhuli district in the Panchayat era. They were drinking alcohol in group under a huge tree but went away after seeing me. There, both old and many of the young men wore Laganu (a traditional, male Nepali dress). One man, from a Majhi Gaon of Sindhuli district had told me about the Majhis' social and economic condition. He had told me that at that village they would run away from seeing new visitors but then if one offered them Jad-Raksi (alcohol), they would come back again. I remembered that suggestion so I spoke to one old man who was looking at me from his nearby doorway. I called him using my finger, then he came slowly and I offered him one bowl of Jad. Gradually all the other villagers came too, even from the jungle. I spent about five hundred rupees on local Jad and Raksi. I compared them to a pig, to first run away, looking at me, and then come close when offered food. That night I went to their homes and they offered their best to be hospitable, offering Jad-Raksi, chicken, and talking a lot. That is the real position of Majhi. I don't know whether they are still in the same position. I guess they have relatively slightly changed. That event really hurt me and I committed myself to dedicating my life to the Majhi community.

‘Had you just gone there to walk or did you have any specific objective?’

I had deliberately gone there to explore the Majhis' lifestyle because I had heard about them. I felt that we Majhis are also human beings so we need to do something for us.

An Executive Member, Nepal Majhi Uthan Sang.

To a great extent, social networks facilitate as well as intervene in individual recruitment. Such stories are very common means of influencing neutral individuals for a cause. During the periods of non-democracy (I mean prior to 1951 and during the Panchayat system from 1961-1990) interpersonal contact and kin, or socio-cultural ties were popularly used methods of recruitment across the board. Those were probably the most convenient and reliable agencies with which to recruit in an isolated geographical regions, as well methods most appropriate to the socio-cultural construction of Nepali lives, where people were bound by collectiveness or community life, especially in rural areas. The formation of organizations were outlawed, with the exception of religious ones, therefore organizations were clandestine in nature. At that time, the government had a monopoly over modern facilities. Things like telephones were prestigious symbols, and were used by wealthy and government-sponsored individuals or families. Ordinary people, and oppositional activists in particular, had little access to such facilities. Newspapers were strictly censored. Consequently, recruiters played upon known and ubiquitous factors of inherited identity and socio-cultural markers to recruit into desired ends. Caste/ethnic and family background as well as
acquired social identity play predominant roles in the evaluation and selection of an individual by activist organizations and agents.

Summary and Conclusion
All types of activism are motivated by some basic variables, namely opposition to social evils, ideology, family, person, and events. Some variables dominate, which indicate that both "push and pull" factors, that is, motivations based on affinity and opposition, have a prominent role in activism recruitment. Recruiters play upon inherited identity and use ideology to create productive divisions between new recruits and the rest of society. The correlation between activism and the human development index is both evidence of this kind of manoeuvring and fodder for these tactics. As long as the cost/benefit ratio makes it worthwhile, groups that are the least developed tend to be the most active.

In this paper, the process of Nepali activist recruitment that I have described through activist's own words has demonstrated that networking is essential to activism recruitment in Nepal. This is in contradiction with Western and American processes of recruitment, which are basically evolving based on the state of individual autonomy and the grounds of secular loci. In Nepal, networks and linkages, based on not only ideology but family and socialization experiences, are an essential part of how activists describe their activism histories. During the non-democratic system (Rana and Panchayat) individual formal contacts (individual, kin, community, geographical blocks) used to be deployed more often as means of recruiting individuals because all party and community based activism were banned and organizations were in clandestine forms. Today, we still see that activist organizations are led by elites and that those possessing cultural capital are consciously targeted by recruiters and are means by which organizations attract future members and leverage power in the political arena.

Notes:
1. This article is a product of an academic programme entitled "The Impact of Activism in Nepal: An Anthropological and Historical Study" which was jointly carried out by Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies CNAS, TU and Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology, University of Oxford from 2003 to 2006. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Dr. David N. Gellner, the principal researcher of this project and Dr. Krishna Hachhethu, the country supervisor, and I was the research associate in the project. Mr. Dr. Matsuda Motoji, and Dr. Shababgra Sah for their valuable suggestions.
2. The Maoist's supreme leader, Puspa Kamal Dahal alias 'Prachanda', has proposed an innovation of the multi-party political structure other than conventional (Western) parliamentary model. 'Post: What about your goals? Prachanda: Since we belong to a communist party, our maximum goals are socialism and communism. Those are the maximum goals of all those accepting Marxism, Leninism and Maoism as philosophical and ideological assumptions. Given the international power balance and the overall economic, political and social realities of the country, we can't attain those goals at the moment. We must accept this ground reality. We have mentioned democratic republic and constituent assembly, with the understanding that we should be flexible given the balance in the class struggle and international situation. This is a policy, not tactics. This is a necessary process for the bourgeoisie and the national capitalists alike, let alone the middle-class. Post: Constituent assembly? Prachanda: Yes. Constituent assembly is not a demand of the communists. It's a democratic process established by the capitalists a long time back. We are not saying this as a tactic. We have adopted this policy due to today's balance in class powers and today's world situation so that the Nepali people won't have to endure any more troubles. (See The Kathmandu Post, February 9, 2006).
3. Phrases Bagwan, Gath-godi, Taikne, Rajdrohi, Ramadrohi, Adharmi, Arasriya Tanwa, Gobar, Kharni, Kulkshani, Samradhak, Khutsrohabadi, etc, used to hold tag to various types of activist organizations in different political regimes. Still it is conceptualized as careerists as well as interest groups to some extent to some activists. It would not be illogical to level as earliest women activists in Nepal to Yogmaya and Durga Devi, however, "even today rumours persists that Shalini Chaudhary was just a religious fanatic who chose henoacromic system (Rana and Panchayat) individual formal contacts (individual, kin, community, geographical blocks) used to be deployed more often as means of recruiting individuals because all party and community based activism were banned and organizations were in clandestine forms. Today, we still see that activist organizations are led by elites and that those possessing cultural capital are consciously targeted by recruiters and are means by which organizations attract future members and leverage power in the political arena.
4. Increasing interest in social movements is also indicated by the proportion of articles on collective action and social movement, published in four top American journals (Sociology: American Sociological Review, American Journal of Sociology, Social Forces, and Social Problems). Since the middle of the past century these subjects have accounted for 2.23 per cent of the total articles included in these journals in the 1950s, 4.13 per cent in the 1970s, and 9.45 per cent in the 1990s (Snow, Soule, and Kriesi 2004: 5). Snow, Soule, and Kriesi (2004: 3) state that "social movements are one of the principal social forms through which collectivities give voice to their grievances and concerns about the rights, welfare, and well-being of themselves and others by engaging in various types of collective actions (such as protesting in the streets) that dramatize those grievances and concerns and demand that something be done about them".
5. I worked for an academic research program entitled 'The Impact of Activism in Nepal: An Anthropological and Historical Study'. This began on 1 February, 2003, and lasted for three years. The project was a joint undertaking between my research centre, the Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies, Tribhuvan University, and the Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology, University of Oxford. UK. Dr. David N. Gellner was the principal researcher, Dr. Krishna Hachhethu was the country supervisor, and I was the research associate in the project. Mr.
Suresh Dhakal, Mr. Basanta Maharjan, and Ms. Babee Shrestha were also part of the project during the qualitative interview phase.

7. Universities, colleges, industries, business houses, religious, ethnic organizations, media (electronic and print) state facilities etc.

8. Existing organizations and institutions may be divided into major two camps according to the nature of their structure: the mono-level denotes organizations and institutions having only one registered committee, whereas multi-level contains a centre and districts or more than two branches. Political parties, some ethnic organizations, and religious organizations follow the second category, i.e., Tamu Chhoy Din, Tamang Gheung, Vishwa Hindu Mahasang Nepal chapter, Nepali Congress, and the Communist Party of Nepal United Marxist-Leninist.

Social organizations, youth organizations, women associations Ama Samau fall in the mono structure and issues like Bagmati Bachau Abhiyan, Phewa Tal Samrakshan Samiti, Rataman Ama Smaha, Bijayag Gyan Samay. In terms of membership distribution, general and active Sangharsh are those two types that are popular in political parties, however, in ethnic organizations and social organizations honorary, life-long, executive memberships are formed or elected which serves executive rights to day to day functioning, however, need to rectify from general convention along with active members or in some cases general members’ assembly.

9. Earlier the Thakali Uthang (local tax collectors) authorities were known as "Makhipa" though Makhipa was lower level state official.

10. Defining democracy may come into view to be easy, nevertheless in fact full of problems. Which deserves varieties of concept, definition and ideology therefore, here, I am intended to express for conducive environment to form the organization, to recruit member, and right of expression through the peaceful means. These rights have assured in the 'Constitution of the Nepal 1990'.

11. I take the lead here from Stryker who writes that "identities are organized as being organized into a hierarchy of salience defined by the probability of the various identities being invoked in a given situation or over many situations" (Stryker 1981: 23-24) See McAdam and Pulsen (1993) for similar.

12. Siller writes, "the Newar kings themselves made extensive use of Parbatiya and Magar mercenaries, who were quite happy to fight against Parbatiya opponents, until Jaya Prakash, King of Kathmandu, made the mistake of assassinating his Parbatiya general, Kaji Ram Thapa, and seven companions, for being defeated by Prithivi Narayan Shah. Only on one occasion during Prithivi Narayan’s campaign against the Valley did Newars from other kingdoms come to the aid of fellow Newars: when Prithivi Narayan made his first attack on Kirtipur in 1757" (1973: 111-12, quoted in D. N. Gellner 1997b).

13. "The case of multinational politics: people with distinct homelands and cultures, particularly language and religion, coexist in one polity. In contrast, multicultural politics are products of the determinization of national groups to new homelands" (Oommen 2004: 123).


15. We did not find enough independent Dalit organizations and even in their involvement in other areas of activism, however, it does not mean that Dalit Activists are absent but because of February 15, 2005, King's political move and our time schedule we covered other activists in the place of Dalit activists.

16. Zirakzadeh (1997) argues that the poorest, most socially disorganized, and most politically powerless strata in every society has a tendency to avoid participation in movements despite the daily indignities and deprivations they endure. This is because an individual immediately visualizes the avowed aims of the movement pertinent to his or her current position and calculates the cost benefit ratio of any involvement.

17. Hill Brahmins have dominated the Nepali Congress (NC) central committee: out of 19 elected posts including its president, 10 are hill Brahmins, of them, five belong to a Koirala family (a high hill Hindu caste), and only four hill Kshetries succeeded to win. The Nepali Congress Democratic (split from the NC) central committee has an equal share of the hill Brahman and Kshethry members in central committee election securing seven each of 19 seats. The NC and the NC (D) are headed by Brahman and the Kshethry leaders respectively. This may demonstrate that once the primary foundation breaks the second boundary creates or merged on other common identities sharing whatever these might be caste, ethnicity, region, etc. Even in private conversation amongst the party cadres it is usually said that they are parties of Kshetries or Brahmans, such types of politics are absent but because of February 15, 2005, King’s political move and our time schedule we covered other activists in the place of Dalit activists.

18. Academicians have been controlling general secretary of NEFIN which is most powerful post in the organization, Suresh Ale Magar, Parsuram Tamang (two tenure), Bal Krishna Mabubhang and Om Gurung all are lecturer of Tribhuvan University.

19. Here, I do not claim all members of first category entirely fall into right-based activism and vice versa, with second category it is but a general trend.

20. On 18 May 2006, a nine-point programme of the reinstated House of Representatives declared the Nepali 'Religiously Secular State'.

21. Since this religion is not only about the infinite but also about the eternal; and its principles are based on the internal principles if the cosmos, they called their religion as Sanaata Dharma. (See "SSJB Rana, 1978")

22. "Omkar" refers to those adhering to the 'Omkar', which refers to the Vaidic, Jains, Buddhist and Sikh; but Buddhist (Majority) have strong contention with this concept.

23. The DKKA (Dhanuk, Koiri, Kewat, Amat), an organization of nationalities from the Tarai, was established in 1998. They claim that they meet all economic, historical, and social measures as existing Tarain members of the NEFIN but because they practice the Hindu religion they are excluded from NEFIN membership. The Gopal Sewa Samiti, a community organization of Yadav/Ahir
raised a question: "we were the first kings of Nepal, the 'Gopal Varshi', which is entirely recognized fact, but it is ridiculous not to include us in indigenous communities. The Kirati Kings came very late in the Kathmandu valley; however, they are pure indigenous, 'Khati Adhibasi', why aren't we?" Another, executive member of the Gopal Sewa Samiti pointed out that the Newar Kings also ruled in a later period. There seems to be a contradiction in the selection of Indigenous/Nationalities to Danuwar, actually they have their Danuwar Kuti, at Ramanda Chouk, Janakpur where they worship Hindu gods (as claimed by their priest), they also have Goza, and some wear the sacred thread, like involved in Ksheer Saumaj at Satlabhi District but recognized as Nationalities that contradicts the existing definition of 'indigenous/nationalities'.

24. Significant events happened during the King's visit to Janakpur in the Yvaha Panchami. Mithila Natya Kala Parisad is one of the oldest renowned clubs in Janakpur. It is basically focused on Maithili arts, literature, and dances. The president of the Parisad illustrated the cultural misunderstanding/gap between the hill people and the people of the Tarai. They had prepared 'Ahimp-Arinon' (commonly used both) to welcome the king on the road spending about four hours but an army officer came and ordered them to erase it. Initially they tried to convince him explaining the importance of Aripan but the officer told him to either erase it or be arrested. In fact, the Aripan is prepared through Trantic Vidi to welcome a god during great occasions in the Mithila region, so they prepared it supposing the king to be a god but the army officer did not understand its significance. The members of Parisad were naturally very disappointed with the soldier's refusal.

25. In this research, we have surveyed all national constitutional political parties and some local parties except the Maoist. Nepali Congress, Communist Party of Nepal, United Marxist and Leninist, Nepali Congress Democratic, Janamorcha, Rastriya Prajatana Party, Nepal Majdoor Kisan Party, Ekata Kendra Nepal, Nepal Sadbhawan Party, Nepal Sadhawana Party Anandidevi etc. The "time when involved in the activities of the organization" pertains to the definition of activist which we have used in our project and in this paper. It may not reflect the length of time in which individuals have been informally active.

27. As a first in the political history of Nepal, the Nepali Congress Democratic party introduced reservation practices at their 11th national party convention in 2005. The party allocated two reserved seats in its central committee for indigenous ethnic people, women, and Tarai people, including one seat to Dalits, and backward region (Karnali).

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The study of diseases is really the study of man and his environment. The interplay and integration of two ecological universes—the internal environment of man himself and the external environment—determine the health status of an individual, a community or a nation, which surround him. World Health Organization (WHO) defines health as a state of complete physical, mental and social well being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. It is evident from the definition that there is rather an extension of elements of health as social well being than a limited general concepts of health as against sickness. In the modern concept, disease is due to a disturbance in the delicate balance between man and his environment. Three ecological factors (agent, host and environment) are responsible for disease. The disease agent of disease is usually identified with the help of laboratory. The host is available for study; but the environment from which the patient comes is largely unknown. Yet frequently, the key to the nature, occurrence, prevention and control of diseases lies in the environment. Without such knowledge, this key may not be available to the physician who desires to cure disease, prevent or control it (Park 1994). Hence, the study of diseases is really the study of man and his environment.

Many of the health problems have been perceived to be the direct fall-out of the environment. The high incidence of heart disease and cancer, for instance, has been increasing linked to diet, lifestyle, exposure to toxic wastes, etc., all of which, can be controlled by changes in a given environment (Voluntary Health Association of India 1992).

Disease can not arise without the convergence at a certain point in time and space of two orders of factors: factors that take the form of an environmental stimulus...and second, factors that condition the response of the tissues. These stimuli, these challenges to adjustments, are not the same in every environment. They vary with...location (Husain 1994)

Population explosion, deteriorating environmental conditions and resource constraints to tackle the key environmental health problems have affected human health and the health of the ecosystem. Planners and policy makers in Nepal are more concerned today than ever in the past about the deteriorating environmental health issues. The ability to link health and environmental data, and thereby to understand relationships between the levels of exposure and health outcome, is clearly vital in attempts to control...
exposures and protect health. This capability is particularly important for countries like Nepal where the issues of environmental pollution have traditionally taken a second place to demands for economic development (UNEPIWHO 1996). However, the present study attempts to present the environment health hazard pathway and the linkage between environment and health in Nepal with special reference to environmental pollution. Simultaneously, some recommendations are suggested to keep positive link between environment and health in Nepal.

The Environment Health Hazard Pathway
Environmental health hazards take many forms. They range from traditional hazards such as human faeces, in densely populated areas, to the wide mix of air pollutants emitted by road vehicles. The hazard pathway is described in Figure 1. In most cases, the starting point is some form of human activity and rarely, a natural process, which release pollutants into the environment (UNEPIWHO 1996)

Emission Sources and Processes: The process of release of pollutants is known as emission. The emission of pollutants due to the human activities are highly varied with time and space. The major sources of emission include mining and quarrying, energy production, manufacturing, transport, agriculture, domestic activities and waste management but other sources such as tourism, forestry and commercial services may also be important. There involve a wide range of emission processes. For example, energy combustion in vehicles, manufacturing industry, electricity generation and home heating is one of the most important emission processes, especially to the air.

Dispersion Processes: Pollutants may be dispersed through air, water, soil, living organisms and/or human products (i.e. food) in the environment. The pathways of dispersion vary greatly. It depends mainly upon both the emission source and the pollutant concerned. Rates and patterns of dispersion also depend upon the environmental conditions to a large extent. For example, pollution dispersion in the air is affected by weather conditions (especially wind speed, wind direction and atmospheric stability) by the emission height and by the local and regional topography. Pollution dispersion in the soil is influenced by soil conditions, such as its texture, structure, and degree of compaction and drainage characteristics. Dispersal by living organisms or human products depends upon the patterns of movement, contact and exchange. The intensity of these different processes varies substantially over both time and space and often very short periods and distances. As a result, many pollutants show extremely complex patterns, especially in complex environments such as cities and towns where there are a large number of emission sources and major variations in environmental conditions.

Exposure Processes: Pollutants enter the human body in a number of ways – by inhalation, ingestion or dose, dermal absorption. The amount of any given pollutant that is absorbed is often termed the dose, and may be dependent on the duration and intensity of the exposure. Target organ dose refers specifically to the amount that reaches the human organ where the relevant effects can occur. The first effects may be sub-clinical changes, which in turn may be followed by disease and in some cases even death.

Measuring exposures accurately and precisely is of great importance when seeking to establish exact associations with health outcomes. Almost all these measurements, however, are extremely costly and time consuming, and consequently cannot easily be applied to a large number of individuals as part of a population study. Therefore, more commonly, exposure is assessed indirectly, for example on the basis of measured pollution levels for a whole area. The measured levels are then used to give an exposure score to all individuals living or working within the area. Such an approach clearly ignores local or individual variations in exposures and results in misclassification of exposure level.
**Environment and Health Problems in Nepal**

**General:** Most of the health problems in Nepal are rooted in the environment. Communicable diseases are very much predominant in the country and a large number of them, are caused by microbes in water, food and air. Gastrointestinal disorders, respiratory tract infections, infections of eye, ear and nose, etc., are common in Nepal. Health statistics indicate that more than half of the total numbers of patients suffer from gastrointestinal diseases in Nepal. Worms are endemic in children and adults. Diarrhea and dysentery have been the main cause of deaths in children. Typhoid and cholera are almost endemic in urban areas in Nepal. About 80 percent of the communicable diseases are caused by polluted drinking water in Nepal (Nepal 1997). Infant mortality rate is still utmost high (102/1000 live birth). Diarrhea diseases still top the list in the country. Water available to an average Nepali is inadequate in quantity and poor in quality. Rivers and ponds are the major sources of water for all domestic purposes in most of the rural areas. Only few people use tube-well water. Pipe water is available to only about 66 percent of the urban area and 34 percent people of the rural area. The state of sanitation, all over the country, is not satisfactory. The country has three broad distinct physiographic regions viz. Terai Region (17 percent), Hilly Region (68 percent) and Himalaya Region (15 percent).

The ecological destruction that has taken place in the Himalayas over the last half century has led to an unprecedented level of poverty and a serious decline in the health status of its inhabitants. Soil erosion, deforestation, landslides etc. have been threatening the people in the hills who are hardly able to survive on the local base. These hardships have impacted upon their health. Many of the poor are engaged in subsistence farming. A typical poor hill farming family is compelled to borrow loan from landlords or moneylenders to meet catastrophic circumstances. In such a family there is continuing malnutrition and illness. For women particularly, the excessive labour required in cultivating food crops and collecting biomass, fodder and fuel has weakened their health considerably in addition to the high incidence of worm infestation from contaminated water. For this reason, the people in this area are highly susceptible to Tuberculosis. Women suffer from anemia and other gynaecological diseases like leucorrhoea, primarily because they lack the time to maintain their personal hygiene and to take rest adequately during their menstrual cycle and pregnancy.

Floods have become a hazard primarily in Terai Region. The pressures on the resource base in the Hills with consequent deforestation and soil erosion prevent water from being leached into the soil. There is increasing run-off and hence an increased amount of water that flows into the plains. The water with large amount of silts raises the river beds and reservoirs, which ultimately creates flood hazards in Terai. The tropical and subtropical types of climate and depleted resource base have also contributed to different

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**Fig.1: The environmental health hazard pathway: conceptual framework at the individual level**

- **Traditional Hazards**
  - Human activities
  - Natural Phenomena

- **Modern Hazards**
  - Development activities

**Environmental Concentration**
- Air
- Water
- Food
- Soil

**Exposure**
- **External Exposure**
  - Absorbed Dose
  - Target Organ Dose

**Health Effects**
- **Subclinical Effects**
  - Morbidity
  - Mortality

diseases in Terai Region. Malnutrition manifested in gastro-enteritis leads to higher mortality among children. Along with increased humidity come the vectors born diseases such as malaria. Increasing infrastructures development programs, forest depletion, use of marginal land, etc., have created an adverse environment and thus changed the relationship between people and land. It has threatened the means of survival especially of subsistence households, which in turn has resulted the high prevalence of different diseases.

Specific Environmental Health Problem
Water Pollution: Water is never 'pure' in chemical sense. It contains impurities of various kinds—both dissolved (e.g. hydrogen sulfide, carbon dioxide, ammonia, salts of calcium, magnesium, etc.) and suspended impurities (e.g. clay, silt, sand, mud, etc.) and microscopic plants and animals (Park 1994). Water is polluted by various anthropogenic activities and natural events. But more serious kind of water pollution is that, caused by human activity—urbanization and industrialization, which is the ultimate result of rapid population growth. Increased water pollution is one of the major public health issues in Nepal. Diseases caused by contaminated water are the most common diseases in Nepal (HMG/DoHS, 1998). Factors contributing to deterioration in water quality are given in Fig. 2.

Fig. 2: Factors contributing to deterioration in water quality

Table 1: Bacteriological water quality from different sources in the Kathmandu Valley

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faecal coliform/100 ml</th>
<th>Dug well</th>
<th>Shallow well</th>
<th>Deep well</th>
<th>Spring well</th>
<th>Stone spout</th>
<th>Pond</th>
<th>Pipe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-100</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101-1000</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;1000</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Health statistics indicate that more than half of the total numbers of patients suffer from gastro-intestinal diseases in Nepal. Worms are endemic in children and adults. Diarrhea and dysentery are the main cause of the infant mortality. Typhoid and cholera are almost endemic in urban areas in Nepal. The paucity of safe water supplies and adequate sanitation facilities have no
doubt worsened the situation for which rapid population growth of Nepal is highly responsible. About 80 percent of the communicable diseases are caused by polluted drinking water. Although 66 percent people of the urban area and 34 percent people of the rural area have been facilitated by drinking water in Nepal available water is not hygienic.

Sporadic studies on water quality indicate the degradation of both river and drinking water supply. Such a deterioration exists in urban and riverside settlement areas. Drinking water in most of the rural parts is also biologically contaminated (HMO/MoPE 1998).

Air Pollution: 'Air pollution' in general terms describes the admixture of potentially harmful substances in the air we breathe. Air becomes impure by respiration of men and animals, combustion of coal, gas, oil etc., decomposition of organic matter and trade traffic and manufacturing processes which give off dust, fumes, vapours and gases. Air pollution is one of the major environmental problems of Nepal particularly in the urban areas. The typical pollutants are sulphur oxides (SO\textsubscript{2}), nitrogen oxides (NO\textsubscript{x}), carbon monoxide (CO), photochemical oxidants and suspended particular matters.

Atmospheric sulfur oxides result largely from the burning of oil and other fossil fuels. The pollution of the air by these substances is mostly caused by use of petroleum. In Nepalese context, main sources of air pollution may be regarded as deforestation and bio-mass burning, followed by the utilization of fossil fuel.

Evidently, the combination and concentration of outdoor air pollutants varies from city to city, according to the quantity and composition of fossil fuel used. But they also depend on other environmental factors such as geographical and meteorological characteristics of the area concerned (UNEP/WHO, 1996). The air quality monitoring result in the Kathmandu valley is given in Table 2.

Table 2: Air Quality Monitoring Result in Kathmandu Microgram per cubic meter (PM\textsubscript{10})

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of collection</th>
<th>Putalisadak</th>
<th>T.U.</th>
<th>Thamel</th>
<th>Bhaktapur</th>
<th>Markhipura</th>
<th>Patan Hospital</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Jan, 1999</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 Aug, 2002</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 Aug, 2004</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>N.A.</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Indoor air pollution in same the situation is considered to be more serious than outdoor air pollution. This is due to the tendency of entrapment of pollutants indoors, resulting to higher concentration. In addition, most people spend a much larger proportion of their time indoor often in close proximity to indoor emission sources. Indoor air pollution is an especially serious problem in Nepal (UNEP/WHO 1996).

Information on indoor air quality is very limited. A recent study (NHRC/NESS 2001) indicates PM\textsubscript{10} concentration for cooking place is utmost high where biomass (wood) is burnt and low at the places where kerosene and LPG are used as fuel respectively (NHRC/WHO 2002).

Various studies suggest that the high prevalence of chronic bronchitis is primarily due to the exposure to domestic smoke while using biomass as fuel in cooking. The information provided by CBS in 2001 shows that about 80 percent of total households still use biomass as fuel. The rural population depends mainly on firewood to meet their energy demand. The use of other traditional sources of energy like animal dung and agricultural residue are also in practice.

Air pollution affects human health. Some pollutants are actually toxic, fluorides, hydrogen sulfide and arsenic. Most commonly, the results are irritation of throat and lungs, coughing, lesion of the respiratory tract, and in severe cases, death from respiratory failure. In regard to heavy metal, certain forms of mercury and lead attack the central nervous system, affecting the lungs and heart.

Noise Pollution: Noise is often defined as unwanted sound; but this definition is subjective because of the facts that sound for one man may be noise for another man. Perhaps a better definition of noise is: "wrong sound, in the wrong place, at the wrong time". As the population has been increasing rapidly, the intensity of noise pollution is also growing faster and faster in Nepal especially in the urban and industrial areas where the population agglomerates highly. The sources of noise are many and various. These are automobiles, factories, industries, aircraft, and the domestic noises from the radio, transistors - all adding to the quantum of noise in daily life in Nepal. There exists positive relationship between population growth and the acceleration of noise sources, i.e. urban centres, industries, radio, films, automobiles etc. The noise pollution greater than 60 dBA is considered as hazard for man and when it reaches more than 80 dBA noise levels, he becomes deaf. Acceptable noise levels (dBA) is presented in Table 3.
The information given in Table 5 reveals the fact that the degree of industrial noise pollution in Nepal is highly excessive than the acceptable noise level.

The natural environment is suffering from pollution in almost all important areas related to air, water, noise, etc. Outdoor air pollution is caused primarily by vehicular pollution and poor road conditions while biomass burning has contributed to severe indoor pollution. Improper discharge of industrial and domestic wastewater has contributed to surface and ground water pollution. The growth in traffic, establishment of certain industries in particular localities and modern ways of urban life styles have contributed to noise pollution particularly in urban areas.

### Table 3: Acceptable Noise Levels (dBA)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas</th>
<th>Noise Level equivalent (N leq)</th>
<th>Noise level as % of samples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>Bedroom</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Living room</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td>Office</td>
<td>35 - 45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conference</td>
<td>40 - 45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Restaurants</td>
<td>40 - 60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial</td>
<td>Workshop</td>
<td>40 - 50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Laboratory</td>
<td>40 - 50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational</td>
<td>Classroom</td>
<td>30 - 40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Library</td>
<td>35 - 40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospitals</td>
<td>Wards</td>
<td>25 - 35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


If we compare the situation of noise pollution in Nepal with the suggested acceptable noise levels (dBA), we find worse condition. Noise level in decibels (dB) in different areas of Kathmandu is given in Table 4.

### Table 4: Noise level in decibels (dB) in different areas of Kathmandu

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas</th>
<th>Noise Level equivalent (N leq)</th>
<th>Noise level as % of samples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High traffic</td>
<td>78.97</td>
<td>80.97 75.34 69.04 97.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low traffic</td>
<td>75.21</td>
<td>78.00 71.96 64.42 94.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public places</td>
<td>69.67</td>
<td>72.00 67.04 62.36 86.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential and commercial places</td>
<td>74.52</td>
<td>77.02 70.44 63.38 92.27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Note: Subscript values indicate sample size.

### Table 5: Industrial Noise Level in Nepal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industrial Area</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Noise (dBA)</th>
<th>Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Balaju Aluminium Industry</td>
<td>Spinning</td>
<td>90-98</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plastic Industries</td>
<td>Molding</td>
<td>97</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balaju Yantra Shala Industry</td>
<td>Gutting</td>
<td>104</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birganj Sugar Mill Birganj</td>
<td>Turbine</td>
<td>105</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hulas Steel Industry Pvt. Ltd., Bara</td>
<td>Galvanizing</td>
<td>94</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


### Food and soil contamination:

Environmental pollution can also be transmitted through food and via soil. The soil may be chemically contaminated with a wide range of pollutants, including pesticides and heavy metals such as lead and cadmium. Agricultural activities, industry, landfill, and emission from road transport are all main sources of soil pollution. Direct contamination of foodstuffs may also occur as a result of the deposition of pollutants from the atmosphere, through the use of contaminated irrigation water, by application of pesticides and other substances to growing crops or livestock, and through contamination during processing and distribution (UNEP/WHO 1996).

Nepal is one of the few countries where food adulteration is posing a serious threat to public life. It is creating havoc in the society, as the large numbers of people are becoming its victims. Many people, particularly from the lower and middle income earning groups, fall victim of different diseases, though no statistical account is available to substantiate the fact.

Nepalese society is gradually becoming modernized with people's dependence growing on foodstuffs prepared on street corners, restaurants and small hotels. The foodstuffs in such places are prepared in most unhygienic environment close to public toilets and garbage containers. Such scenes are seen in most part of the country particularly at the bus-parks. Quite often, the utensils used for serving foodstuffs or liquor are not properly washed or washed with dirty water. Besides, most of the foodstuffs are badly exposed to dust, dirt, flies and the fumes of the vehicular traffic.

The foodstuffs are also contaminated with harmful chemicals, colour, food additives and preservatives, which are detrimental to the health of the consumers.

Of the 2000 to 3000 items identified by the Department of Food Technology and Quality Control, nearly 20 percent are either of below standard or adulterated. Among these items, the adulteration is utmost high in items like oil and ghee where there is serious violation of food safety measures. Most of the consumer items, including vegetable oils, vegetable ghee, milk and milk products, cereal grains, spices, sweets, confectionery, tea and mineral water are contaminated, though in varying degrees (NHRC/WHO 2002).

### Conclusion

The natural environment is suffering from pollution in almost all important areas related to air, water, noise, etc. Outdoor air pollution is caused primarily by vehicular pollution and poor road conditions while biomass burning has contributed to severe indoor pollution. Improper discharge of industrial and domestic wastewater has contributed to surface and ground water pollution. The growth in traffic, establishment of certain industries in particular localities and modern ways of urban life styles have contributed to noise pollution particularly in urban areas.
Though direct correlation is not found between the environmental degradation and the major diseases in Nepal, it cannot be ignored that some of the diseases like diarrhoea, meningitis, kala-azar, viral hepatitis, parasitic infection, ulcer, respiratory infection, etc., affecting public health and killing so many people in different parts of the country are caused by environmental degradation. As a result of these problems, the public health is affected predominantly. It demands rational and effective measures from the planners and policy makers to control and minimize the situation.

References
Early attempts to identify Kakrebihar

Interestingly, the famous Italian Orientologist Prof. Giuseppe Tucci has not mentioned Kakrebihar in his book. He must have missed to visit the site during his historical survey of western Nepal. Yogi Naraharirath reported briefly about the site during the time of his exploration in 1956 A.D.). According to Yogi, the site could be linked to Asokachhalla, a ruler of Malla dynasty during 12th century A.D. (Yogi 2013 VS: 170-172). Before excavation only a handful of sculptures and limited number of carved stones were recorded on the surface of the mound.

Although the name, Kakrebihar, implies a vihara or monastery but, in fact, the site is nothing more than a sikhara styled temple that consist of several miniature sikharas in successive layers of the superstructure. We can easily discern skillfully carved images of the Buddha, Bodhisattva and other minor Buddhist deities. Many such images are now preserved in the Birrendranagar Regional Museum of the Government of Nepal. The rest of the sculptures and other artistic carvings can be seen still lying on the site. Thus, the art activity of Kakrebihar features the beautifully carved images indicating the spread of the Buddhist art belonging to the Mahayana school of Buddhism in that part of western Nepal. The interesting part of the images can be ascertained exclusively carving the life history of the Buddha. No such other sites of the region have done so.

The tradition of the depiction life scenes of the Buddha in stone art can be traced out from the inspiration of Gandhara and Mathura School at the beginning of Christian era. Bharhut art illustrated the narrative scenes related to the story of previous birth of the Buddha symbolizing Chaitya, Bodhi tree, disc, etc. during 2nd century B.C. The Gandhara school, on the other, laid the landmark history of Buddhist sculptural art, and started to make the images of the Buddha that denote different scenes based on his life activities only after 1st century A.D. (Choudhary 1956: 48).

Buddhist sculptures at Kakrebihar

Many Buddhist sculptures found around the ruins of Kakrebihar suggest that the site was a developed Mahayana centre of art in this region. Most of the carved images display the theme of dhyani Buddha, sitting independently on the pedestal whilst other sculptures narrate several themes relating the incidences of the life history of the Buddha. Interestingly, many Buddhist sculptures of historical sites represent the scenes based on the life history of the Buddha, such as birth, death, Sravasti miracle, monkey's offering of honey, taming of the mad elephant, enlightenment at Bodhgaya, the first sermon of Saranath, and Buddha's descend from Trayastrima heaven, are noteworthy from the point of view of the development of Buddhist sculptural art equally in India, Nepal and Tibet. Among these, Kakrebihar promoted some life incidences of the Buddha through the sculptural art of the region. In this sense, as in other Buddhist sites, Kakrebihar played a prominent role for inspiring on carving the beautiful and expressive images during the 12th century A.D. The followings are the newly recovered important images of the site.

Birth scene of the Buddha (Figure 1)

A single stone slab with the scene of birth story of Lord Buddha is no doubt a significant art specimen of Kakrebihar. In this relief, Mayadevi is seen standing on the pedestal together with her newly born baby prince Siddhartha in samabhanga pose. Mayadevi's head is decorated with usnisita and she has a lower garment around her waist, which is delineated in beautiful textile pattern. Although her left hand is missing, the remaining raised right hand can be identified in the abhaya pose. Beside Mayadevi, her son Siddhartha is also standing on the back of the lion clinging on to his mother. Although the head of the child is damaged, ascribed designs clearly show the beautiful figure in representation.

Both the upper corners of the stone slab have the design of half circle wheels while the lower corner depicts the design of tendrils. The representation of a lion here, no doubt, symbolizes the clan-name sakyasthita to which the Buddha belonged. Next to the lion there is a projected niche which contains the figure of an elephant. The elephant must have been a white elephant Mayadevi, as literary tradition narrates, dreamed before giving birth to Siddhartha. This relief, thus, indicates the birth-story of the Buddha. Below the pedestal, one can see the design of rolling scrolls with the bud in the centre.

Buddha in the scene of Enlightenment (Figure 2)

The seated image, depicting the scene of the Buddha's Enlightenment at Bodhgaya after a rigorous practice of dhyana, has been a widely accepted theme in Buddhism. Normally, in this scene the Buddha is seated in dhyana touching the earth (bhupapersha mudra) with his right hand showing the gesture of envoicing the earth goddess for the witness of his long awaited success. It is said that when he was sitting on penance Mara, the demon, sent his three daughters including Tanha with an army to create disturbance in his final attainment. But despite the attempt he made, the Buddha succeeded to defeat him and achieved Enlightenment. This was at this historical and critical juncture when the determined Buddha invoked the earth goddess to be the witness of his entering Buddhahood. This scene is nicely portrayed in this relief. The figure of the Buddha is carved seated in dhyana. He is flanked by two other unidentified figures in separate niches. Since the image is badly abraded so one cannot describe its artistic features in details. However, the niche is embellished with trefoil torana overarching the figure and an additional small sikhara can be seen above the head of the Buddha. The side
figures must be Mara and his assistants in the act of disturbing the Buddha. Thus, the scene very interestingly represents one of the illustrable themes on the stone.

**Buddha in Dharachakra Mudra (Turning of the Wheel of Dhamma) (Figure 3)**

Many Buddha images portray the important event of the first sermon the Buddha gave in Saranath. This incident of the Buddha is known as Dharachakra-pravartana or first turning of the Wheel in Buddhist literature. The beautifully carved image has broken hands. The mark made by the broken right hand on the chest no doubt indicates the gesture of dharachakra-pravartana. Normally, the depiction of hand gesture should meaningfully be raised up to chest and the forefinger and thumb of the right hand form a circle in the gesture like vishvam. According to Ghose (1998:24), the gesture of the left hand raised slightly at low level suggests the Tibetan character. The Buddha, in this popular scene, should be flanked by two deities i.e. Padmapani and Vajrapani on left and right respectively (Snellgrove 1978:251). In Kakrebihar the figure of Padmapani, on the left, has worn a wisdom cap while the figure on the right shows the character of a Brahmin ascetic with shaved head and wearing dhoti as a lower garment. The seat of the Buddha reveals square shape of which the frontal part bears the figure of two lions facing and butting each other. Below the seat, there are two tendrils similarly winding in circular motif on both sides of the lower section of the niche. The design of the chhatra above the head and arching tretoli torana is noticeable and exhibit higher art skill. The flanking pilasters are decorated in cage-motif at the top with embellishing lozenges around. Here, the carved design of the tretoli torana and pilasters suggest the meticulous decorative skill. The half-exposed bodies of the side deities are given special consideration in this relief. The robe worn by the Buddha, which eling tightly, is falling from the left shoulder and passing under the right shoulder. The swelling chest and thinner waist, no doubt, represent the notable physical character of the Buddha. Similarly, the half-closed eyes considerably supports the fact of ascetic nature of the deity.

**Buddha in the Sravasti Miracle (Figure 4)**

This particular image based on the story of the Sravasti miracle is believed to have performed by the Buddha. It is stated that the Buddha performed a miracle before King Prasenjit at a specially built pavilion in Sravasti. In many of these types of scenes, the Buddha is seen sitting on the lotus with special hand gesture for performing the miracle. This piece is considered a very well created art form in term of expression and modeling. The sculpture is carved in a decorative niche on the single stone slab. The image is flanked by two beautifully carved pilasters on both sides of the

Buddha's Life Depicted in the Sculptures of Kakrebihar 99

The figure of the Buddha is seated in padmasana pose on a double-petalled lotus. The lotus itself rests on a square base decorated with the design of lozenges. Below this, there is the symbol of two tendrilis that have full-blown tiny flowers in the centre. This design associates with the wheels probably giving the shape of a ratha. In addition, two half chakra symbol can be seen on the upper section of the niche. The carved image indicates the Buddha's serene expression. The figure of the deity shows his right hand raising up to the chest with the gesture of forming the circle with the thumb and the index finger. The gesture of the left hand is not clear as it is broken off. The Buddha in this relief is decorated with vishvam (wisdom cap) on the head while the chivara (robe) can be seen with very thinner line on the body. This is marked by the folded lines on his left arm, indicating the robe spreading down between the legs.

The figure of the Buddha exhibits an anatomical perfection. The physiognomy is visible in a round shape and the body of the image is modeled with soft and energetic movement. The half-closed eyes portray the serene attitude which is common in the sculptures of the Buddha. Similarly, the eyelids are delineated in arching lines that emerge from the root of the nose. The lips are gently closed while the chin is modeled in round shape. Thus, the sculpture very ably presents the divine perfection in this figure. On both the sides of the deity are carved small, seated figures in anjali posture. Several other figures can also be seen carved on both corners of the niche. They might be the figures of disciples who are gazing at the Buddha's miracle. Above the head of the Buddha's image has the decoration of branch of a tree and further above is overshadowed by a tretoli arched-band resting on two pilasters. The arched-band is stamped with scroll designs and groove pattern. Similarly, cylindrical pilasters show the design of circular bands in a vertical arrangement. The finial of the pilasters is embellished with small cage-motif with lozenges. This makes the niche of the figure beautiful and elegant.

**Buddha in Abhaya Mudra (Figure 5)**

Buddha images in abhaya mudra (the gesture of assurance or fearlessness) are also popular in the Kakrebihar site. In this particular scene the Buddha is depicted in seated posture on a simple square pedestal with his right hand raised up to the level of chest showing open palm and the left palm is resting on the lap. This posture of Buddha is considerably associated with the theme of religious sermon. It is also notable that Buddha's abhaya mudra can be interpreted as his assurance to the world of his ability to withstand all temptations and find out the cause and remedy of sorrow and suffering (Sitharamamma 2004: 150). The dress and other attributes of the image are similar to other images mentioned in the text. The Buddha in abhaya mudra
In this relief, the Buddha's figure is beautifully carved in a seated posture on a three-tier seat with both legs pendent. Another remarkable feature of the image is the representation of aureole around the head of the Buddha indicating a divine status. This is embellished with sun-rays around. He also wears the usual usnisha on his head and a thin robe can be seen on his body across the chest. The left arm of this image is broken off while his right hand is resting on the lap. Although the head of the image is partly damaged, the other feature can, no doubt, be ascertained a beautiful representation of the body. The half-closed eyes signify the gesture of deep meditation. The robe worn by the deity is marked in various pleated lines across the chest leaving the right shoulder bare. Here, it clearly indicates the fringe of the robe swinging out of the left elbow. The image shows a carving in the niche flanked by beautiful design of pilasters. The decoration of the remaining pilasters suggest cylindrical in shape including the cage-motif design and a trefoil arch torana above.

Buddha in Dana Mudra (Figure 6)
This figure portrays the feature of Ratnasambhava, one of the five dhyani buddhas who is normally seen facing to the southern direction. The Buddha is touching the earth with his upturned palm of the right hand while his left hand rests on the lap, represents the theme of life activity of the Buddha particularly giving dana in this relief. The Buddha is seated on a decorated seat which is embellished in the foliages designs. Although the head of the Buddha is missing the other features suggest its notable hand gesture. As with other Buddha images, the robe worn by the Buddha displays several pleats at the edge that emerges from the left shoulder and is hidden behind his lower right chest. This may slightly be considered dissimilar with the above images so far. The edge of the robe is clinging out of the left elbow of the deity, which could be the common features of images. One of the distinct characters of this image is the representation of solid and columnar limbs of the deity.

The Buddha holding honey offered by the monkeys (Figure 7)
This is a unique image and can be identified as the first sculptural example of Nepalese Buddhism so far recovered in the country. In this context, the image places a prominent role not only for Kakrebihar but also for the whole country from the point of view of the developed Buddhist sculptural art. The image, no doubt, portrays the life story of the Buddha based on honey offering to him by the monkey. The legend tells us that in course of the offering the honey to the Buddha, a group of monkeys danced in extreme ecstasy but while doing so one monkey fell down into the well and immediately died. This story is described in Dhammapada Commentary and also narrated by Xuan Zang (Huen Tsang) (Pal 1984: 48).

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In the Kakrebihar relief the Buddha is seated in dhyana on a seat made of double-petalled flower. The right hand of the figure is however broken off. The mark on the abdomen level suggests abhaya posture. The remaining right hand is resting on the lap. Although the head of the image is partly damaged, the other feature can, no doubt, be ascertained a beautiful representation of the body. The half-closed eyes signify the gesture of deep meditation. The robe worn by the deity is marked in various pleated lines across the chest leaving the right shoulder bare. Here, it clearly indicates the fringe of the robe swinging out of the left elbow. The image shows a carving in the niche flanked by beautiful design of pilasters. The decoration of the remaining pilasters suggest cylindrical in shape including the cage-motif design and a trefoil arch torana above.

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NARRATIVE SCENES IN A SINGLE STONE-SLAB (FIGURE 8)
It is interesting to note yet another illustrative scene based on Buddha's life history in a single stone slab. There are three different narrative scenes representing the distinct postures of the Buddha seated in the separate niches, while additional two niches that are carved in alternate row contain the standing figures of the demon-like creature. These figures might have been associated with the story of Mara and his daughters that are giving a trouble to the Buddha during his dhyana.

Almost three scenes of the life of Buddha can be identified in this single slab. The first scene, from the right, displays dhyana, the second exhibits the first sermon while the third reveals the miracle performed by the Buddha in Sarnavati. The rest of the figures, depicted in two alternate niches, can be identified with Mara and his assistant, represent in their unique posture.

Finally, the historic site of Kakrebihar offers the marvelous collection of monumental art comparable in the whole region, which confirms the fact that the region has a higher advancement of the Buddhist Mahayana tradition that might have been under the inspiration of western part of India.
particularly of Gujarat during the medieval period. The Mahayana knowledge in practice might have been blended with Hindu ideology and popularized it as a social harmony of the region. The site, therefore, unfolds the history of Buddhism in the framework of higher degree of art skill developed in the region. In conclusion, it can be asserted that Kakrebihar now faces a serious conservation problem despite its historic and artistic/archaeological significance. The Government of Nepal has carried out preliminary excavation and the conservation to salvage the shrine and the remains. But proper care of the whole site and further conservation and research are warranted in order to save the legacy of art asset of the region as a whole.

References


Buddha's Life Depicted in the Sculptures of Kakrebihar

Figure 3: Buddha in Dharma Chakra Mudra

Figure 4: Buddha in the Sravasti Miracle

Figure 5: Buddha in Abhaya Mudra

Figure 6: Buddha in Dana Mudra
Figure 7: The Buddha holding honey offered by the monkeys

Figure 8: Narrative Scenes in a single stone-slab

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शिविर के आयोजकों को अभिनेता अभीनव प्रकाश सिंह ने दो पहलों दिनों के दौरान वास्तविकता को सुनाया।

प्रकाश सिंह:

लेखन हमें राज्य बंपको धारण करने की तैयारी को सुनाया।

1. धन्यवाद उपवरीतियों का जो कार्यवाहक समय में यहाँ पहुँचा।
2. वहाँ लगभग अनुमान लगाया कि वा जो देखा जा सकता है।
3. वह यहाँ पहुँचा क्योंकि उन्होंने वास्तविकता को सुनाया।

अभिनेता अभीनव प्रकाश सिंह ने दो पहलों दिनों के दौरान वास्तविकता को सुनाया।

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3. वह यहाँ पहुँचा क्योंकि उन्होंने वास्तविकता को सुनाया।
1. Subba Siddhiman, Subho Surendranath, Suhedar Ilamdar, Kaji, Bhimsen, Bhupendra Baidya Chakrapani, Artist Bhajuman, four cooks (Life of Jung Bubadur, 1850).

2. Bhupendra Baidya Chakrapani, Artist Bhajuman, four cooks (Life of Jung Bubadur, 1850).
विच १: राया भृतामात्री वज्राको पाणीमा बनाएको मुख्यभूमिका दर्शावण्डको गरिर्छ।

विच २: दर्शावण्डकी साहित्यको आर्थिक, कब्रिज्ञानको भौतिकीको र राजकीयको संध्यामा अभिन्न भौतिकी तथा चतुर्भुज रक्षकार विश्वसनीय छन्।

विच ३: चतुर्भुज पर्वतारायण
पिन्न ५: भोक्तरका स्थान भरि अधि कार्यालय डबा मग नेवा भेला परेछो, उद्धरका महाझोिव परटी केसर कम्हा, प्रस्तरको चलिउँदा नागणको मूलि, साती जलावी

पिन्न ६: भार्यालय जलि भार्यालय स्थान नेवा जलावा भेला परेछो, उद्धरका महाझोिव परटी केसर कम्हा, प्रस्तरको चलिउँदा नागणको मूलि, साती जलावी
सर्वदेश दण्डपाणिको घर र वैफ आरामका कलाकृति

चित्र 9: आकिर, ताजा गल्प निर्माण/संश्लेषण चाहिए शाब्दिक 8, भवनहरू अर्थात राजकीय तथा समाजसेविक संस्थान पनि सामुन्य नै 8। खिममण बौद्ध (असाध्य शक्तिपूर्ण) का बैनुका शीर्ष नारायणको मूर्ति सामुन्य तथा थाको 'छब्बेरा' पनि पूजा-प्रणार

चित्र 10: आकिरपुस्तक पुराणसङ्ग्रह ग्राहक वैफ आरामका (वाक्यान्तरिक शरीर आलम) महिना जस्तै आलम (नारायणीय) द्याउने जस्त छ। पढी पनि परिसर्याँ क्षेत्रमा बाल बाल्यको आफ्नो नेक्सीको बैनुका शीर्ष नारायणको अधिवेशन आलमका कुमारहरूका छन।

चित्र 11: निमित्त रामको परिसरमा वर्णित हरूलाई वैद्यको आराम
राममहेश्वर गणेश रुप र वैश्वनाथ कलाकृति 115

पिच १५: वैश्वनाथ प्राचीन काण्डकारणिकी यो कलामक बीजाको तीर्थाको बीचमा दुःखमहेश्वर र बाहार बाहार गणेश र कुमार छन्।

पिच १६: वैश्वनाथको, आगमानयको यस एकेको अद्वीतीयताको तीर्थाको उमामहेश्वरः यो भगवानो व्याप्तिपूर्ण दुःखमा नैराजस्वसत्व -अस्तिनु र गणेश र वैश्वनाथको आय्युंती कुमाराको दुःखमा द्वीपस्थिती भवानी र कुमार देखाइएको र भवानी चार्दिनभाग भवानी र कुमार देखाइएको र भवानी चार्दिनभाग भवानी र कुमार देखाइएको र भवानी चार्दिनभाग भवानी र कुमार देखाइएको र भवानी चार्दिनभाग भवानी र कुमार देखाइएको र भवानी चार्दिनभाग भवानी र कुमार देखाइएको र भवानी चार्दिनभाग भवानी र कुमार देखाइएको र भवानी चार्दिनभाग भवानी र कुमार देखाइएको र भवानी चार्दिनभाग भवानी र कुमार देखाइएको र भवानी चार्दिनभाग भवानी र कुमार देखाइएको र भवानी चार्दिनभाग भवानी र कुमार देखाइएको र भवानी चार्दिनभाग भवानी र कुमार देखाइएको र भवानी चार्दिनभाग भवानी र कुमार देखाइएको र भवानी चार्दिनभाग भवानी र कुमार देखाइएको र भवानी चार्दिनभाग भवानी र कुमार देखाइएको र भवानी चार्दिनभाग भवानी र कुमार देखाइएको र भवानी चार्दिनभाग भवानी र कुमार देखाइएको र भवानी चार्दिनभाग भवानी र कुमार देखाइएको र भवानी चार्दिनभाग भवानी र कुमार देखाइएको र भवानी चार्दिनभाग भवानी र कुमार देखाइएको र भवानी चार्दिनभाग भवानी र कुमार देखाइएको र भवानी चार्दिनभाग भवानी र कुमार देखाइएको र भवानी चार्दिनभाग भवानी र कुमार देखाइएको र भवानी चार्दिनभाग भवानी र कुमार देखाइएको र भवानी चार्दिनभाग भवानी र कुमार देखाइएको र भवानी चार्दिनभाग भवानी र कुमार देखाइएको र भवानी चार्दिनभाग भवानी र कुमार देखाइएको र भवानी चार्दिनभाग भवानी र कुमार देखाइएको र भवानी चार्दिनभाग भवानी र कुमार देखाइएको र भवानी चार्दिनभाग भवानी र कुमार देखाइएको र भवानी चार्दिनभाग भवानी र कुमार देखाइएको र भवानी चार्दिनभाग भवानी र कुमार देखाइएको र भवानी चार्दिनभाग भवानी र कुमार देखाइएको र भवानी चार्दिनभाग भवानी र कुमार देखाइएको र भवानी चार्दिनभाग भवानी र कुमार देखाइएको र भवानी चार्दिनभाग भवानी र कुमार देखाइएको र भवानी चार्दिनभाग भवानी र कुमार देखाइएको र भवानी चार्दिनभाग भवानी र कुमार देखाइएको र भवानी चार्दिनभाग भवानी र कुमार देखाइएको र भवानी चार्दिनभाग भवानी र कुमार देखाइएको र भवानी चार्दिनभाग भवानी र कुमार देखाइएको र भवानी चार्दिनभाग भवानी र कुमार देखाइएको र भवानी चार्दिनभाग भवानी र कुमार देखाइएको र भवानी चार्दिनभाग भवानी र कुमार देखाइएको र भवानी चार्दिनभाग भवानी र कुमार देखाइएको र भवानी चार्दिनभाग भवानी र कुमार देखाइएको र भवानी चार्दिनभाग भवानी र कुमार देखाइएको र भवानी चार्दिनभाग भवानी र कुमार देखाइएको र भवानी चार्दिनभाग भवानी र कुमार देखाइएको र भवानी चार्दिनभाग भवानी र कुमार देखाइएको र भवानी चार्दिनभाग भवानी र कुमार देखाइएको र भवानी चार्दिनभाग भवानी र कुमार देखाइएको र भवानी चार्दिनभाग भवानी र कुमार देखाइएको र भवानी चार्दिनभाग भवानी र कुमार देखाइएको र भवानी चार्दिनभाग भवानी र कुमार देखाइएको र भवानी चार्दिनभाग भवानी र कुमार देखाइएको र भवानी चार्दिनभाग भवानी र कुमार देखाइएको ।

पिच १७: नेव. 1075 (बि.स. 2018) मा पुण्डिर वैश्वनाथ आमारी जीवाधारीको तैयारीको आर्यका जुनदेवलाई बहादुरी लिङ्को दुर्गा-महादेवको वाको सो तीर्थाको पानी उमामहेश्वर, गणेश र कुमार छ।
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हिंदू संबंधित ईंद्रज्ञांकन कस्तोन्नत मध्यमरोपण यथावत प्रकार युक्तावर्तमान कल्पना न न्यूनतम प्रयोग भरेष्ठ । वाक्यांशहरूले प्रयोग गरी वर्तमान चार तत्त्वहरू छन् –

(१) विषय
(२) विश्लेषण
(३) विषयवश
(४) विषयवश

विद्याधिकार धिमारी अवधिकार कस्तो ईंद्रज्ञांकन कस्तो मध्यमरोपण यथावत प्रकार युक्तावर्तमान विणण अन्तर्गत या पद्धति प्रकारे तथा विषय युक्त धिमारी अवधिकार कस्तो मध्यमरोपण यथावत प्रकार युक्तावर्तमान या पद्धति प्रकारे तथा विषय युक्त धिमारी अवधिकार कस्तो मध्यमरोपण यथावत प्रकार युक्तावर्तमान या पद्धति प्रकारे तथा विषय युक्त धिमारी अवधिकार कस्तो मध्यमरोपण यथावत प्रकार युक्तावर्तमान या पद्धति प्रकारे तथा विषय युक्त धिमारी अवधिकार कस्तो मध्यमरोपण यथावत प्रकार

(५) विषयवश

नेपाली संस्कृतिमा कल्सो गहराय । एक बारभन्दा १२३
Cordial folia

Coronation ceremony
giraffe en buitensporige voedselontbrekendheid. Door deze dieren te bevrijden van de strijd om het overleven in hun natuurlijke habitat, kunnen ze beter samenwerken en hun voedselbronnen beter exploiteren. Dit kan leiden tot een vermindering van de stress en een verbetering van hun gezondheid. 

Deze ondertitels betekenen dat het zich om een moeilijke situatie handelt, waarbij dieren hun behoeften bij elkaar moeten houden om te overleven. Het is belangrijk om deze situaties te begrijpen om efficiënte en humane oplossingen te ontwikkelen voor de behoeften van dieren in het wild. 


पाटनको एउटा घरको प्रवेश काण्ठोका दायाबायाँ अक्षित अभ्यासलक्षण फिता गर्नुहुन

पाटनको हिरण्यकर्ण शाक्षाको भिजी प्रवेशार्मा अक्षित अभ्यासलक्षण पूर्ण कला

पाटनको धर्मको प्रवेश धार्मिक दायित्वको अक्षित अभ्यासलक्षण फिता गर्नुहुन

पाटनको धर्माको प्रवेश धार्मिक दायित्वको अक्षित अभ्यासलक्षण फिता गर्नुहुन

नेपाली संस्कृतिमा कलशको महत्व: एक पर्याय 145
Bharat Ganga: Kantochara, Hindupur, Shukrawar, Vedic Manavchar, Ganga, Nadiwatt, Jal Swayum (Sajjna Annapurna Pahada, 2063 Asosan 14 Gahi)
BOOK REVIEW


Buddhism in Nepal has traditionally been of two forms: First, Tibetan Buddhism, mainly of the Nyingma tradition, found among the ethnically Tibetan peoples along the northern border plus the Tamangs and secondly, the Buddhism of the Newar people of the Kathmandu Valley. This is also Mahayana and Tantric Buddhism but with direct links to the ancient Indian tradition. In fact, it has been called, the “only surviving community of Indian Buddhism”.

This book recounts the story of a modern development in Nepal: the growth of a Theravada Movement in Twentieth century Nepal. This movement traces its origins back to the 1930s but has grown considerably since the overthrow of the Rana government in 1951. As Nepal has developed, education has spread and the people of Nepal have tried to find their place in the contemporary world, this movement has gained momentum and legitimacy. It is an unusual book in that it was written by two different people with different backgrounds: David Gellner, long recognised as an expert on the traditional Buddhism of the Newar community of the Valley and Sarah Levine, an Associate in Sanskrit and Indian Studies at Harvard University, whose main interest has been female asceticism. It has been truly a collaborative effort, not just some chapters written by one and others by the other. The authors say in the introduction that they feel the book is better for this collaboration. They are right.

Chapter One traces the origins of what has been called “Modernist Buddhism” which originated in Sri Lanka through the work of Dharmapala who in turn had been influenced by a lecture given in Colombo in 1880 by Colonel Olcott. Yet, there was a difference in their approaches: Olcott’s thrust was anti-Christian whereas Dharmapala’s thrust was anti-Hindu. It was an attempt to clearly mark Buddhism off as distinct from Hinduism. This was not the view of ancient India where Buddhism was always seen as a spiritual path that had its origins in the culture of India and which was one of many spiritual paths that grew up within the fold of the cultural phenomenon which was “Hinduism”. This was not the view of the people of the Newar community of the Valley who never made such a clear distinction but considered themselves as sharers of a common culture based on the Newari language and the round of festivals, Hindu and Buddhist, in which all took part. There were among them followers of the way of Shiva (saiva
eventual exile from Nepal. The chapter then recounts the difficulties that both the monks and nuns encountered as they tried to live as monks and nuns in a Buddhist society that was not used to such people during the strict Rana regime resulting in their found refuge. These changes gained momentum in the days of the Panchayat regime which made good use of modern means of communication to spread a strictly Brahminical and Sanskrit Hinduism as the norm. This was not the tradition of the majority of the people of Nepal who were content to identify themselves as “Hindu” is a broad sense as along as this term accepted their cultural traditions as of equal value. This has resulted in a growing awakening among the multi-cultural and multi-ethnic peoples of the country giving rise to the janajati movements which have been a characteristic of the past fifteen years and many of which clearly state “We are not Hindus”. This study fits into that context.

This first chapter also recounts the origin and development of female renouncers in the Buddhist traditions of South and South East Asia, a movement which had a profound effect on the development of the Theravada movement in Nepal. One cannot understand this movement without a study of the role played by women. They have been paramount and their stories are recounted in this study.

Chapter Two traces the origins of the movement in Nepal and gives an excellent account of the context, i.e. traditional Newar Society and the role of Buddhism in that society and its attempts to preserve its traditions under the strict Hindu regime of the Ranas. The tale begins with the story of Jagat Man Vaidya, a Sakya from Chikah Bahi in Lalitpur who was the first to embrace the new Buddhism, taking the name of Dharmadiya Dharmacharya in 1923. The next trailblazer was Mahapragya who was ordained by a truly charismatic Burmese monk called Chandramani who resided at Kushinagara in India. By 1931 three Newar women had found their way to Kushinagara and requested ordination. Chandramani was unable to ordain them as the Theravada tradition held that the order of nuns had become extinct. He did, however, give them the ten precepts and called them angrikas, or “homeless ones”. This was the origin of the so-called nuns. The chapter then recounts the difficulties that both the monks and nuns encountered as they tried to live as monks and nuns in a Buddhist society that was not used to such people during the strict Rana regime resulting in their eventual exile from Nepal.

Chapters Three through Eight are based on the detailed ethnographic material collected by LeVine over several years of research and detail the growth and development of this movement after the overthrow of the Ranas. This is where the book really comes alive with the stories of the men and women who have sponsored this movement and have faced numerous trials and difficulties. It is also the story of how this movement has fit into the traditional Newar Society and how it has appealed to the increasingly educated population of the Valley, providing them with the means to carry on their traditions in a way that makes sense to them in a modern context. The following chapters trace the creation of a tradition (Chapter Three), the development of the Nuns’ Order under the charismatic Dhummawati (Chapter Four), the changes among the Buddhist laity (Chapter Five), the question of educating the monks (Chapter Six), the status of the nuns and the controversy over Bhikshuni Ordination (Chapter Seven), and finally the changes brought about by increased interest in Buddhist Meditation and Social Activism (Chapter Eight).

Chapter Nine expands the scope of the book beyond the Newar community to look at other Buddhist Revival Movements among the so-called Tibetan Mahayana community and compares this to what has happened in the Newar community. This chapter ends with a note on the future of traditional Newar Buddhism. The authors note a comment by Todd Lewis in 2000 that the Newars could follow the example of the exiled Tibetans who have succeeded in making their local tradition a global tradition. This suggestion meets with a difficulty that I have often pointed out to those who want to revive the Mahayana-Vajrayana tradition of the Valley. This tradition cannot be revived without scholars of the Mahayana-Vajrayana tradition and men and women who actually and seriously practice the tantric yoga. Though Buddhism among the ordinary Tibetans may have been mostly ritual Buddhism of which the ordinary people understood little, there were always eminent scholars and true practitioners among the monks. If one wanted to learn he or she could find someone who could teach with authority. This is generally lacking in the Newar community today. The authors point out another difficulty. Lewis does not mention the place of women in the tradition. In the tradition women cannot be ritual specialists or teachers. From the modern female perspective this is a great hurdle. When one places this fact within the context of a larger problem, i.e. that all non-Vajracaryas are excluded from the highest teachings and from tantric initiation, one wonders what the future holds when more and more educated Vajracaryas take to other occupations and the community is left with the least educated to carry on the tradition and there are no openings for those of other groups who show an aptitude and interest in carrying on the tradition.

The final chapter is a conclusion which looks toward the future looking at the status of the monks, the nuns and the lay people and the difficulties that
they all face. This is an excellent chapter which does not lend itself to facile summaries. It should be studied and pondered, not just in the context of Newar Buddhism but in the larger context of what is happening to all religious and cultural communities in Nepal. In conclusion the book is an excellent investment for anyone who wants to understand what is going on in Nepal today and what the future might hold not only for the Newar community but for all the peoples of Nepal.

The book concludes with two appendices: one, short biographical notes on the prominent personalities in the Theravada Movement and the second a complete list of the Theravada Viharas in Nepal. There is also a glossary of technical terms.

- John K. Locke

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