

Trajectories of democracy and restructuring of the state

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On 10 April, 2008 Nepal held wholly unprecedented and epochal nationwide elections—the most peaceful in its history¹—for a 601-member constituent assembly (CA). Two hundred and forty representatives were elected in “winner-takes-all” or “first-past-the-post” constituencies, 26 were to be nominated later by the Council of Ministers, and 335 were elected by proportional representation with the whole country as a single constituency. Under strict rules about representativeness, parties were obliged to ensure, both on their submitted lists, and in their selection of successful candidates, that there would be 50 percent women within each of the following categories: 13 percent Dalits, 31.2 percent Madhesis, 37.8 percent Janajatis, 30 percent “others,” and 4 percent from nine backward districts.²

The previous 60 years of Nepal’s history, starting with the overthrow of the Rana autocracy in 1951, were marked by zigzags and contention—numerous strikes, demonstrations, revolts, and uprisings, followed by periods of peace based on compromises between different forces. Until 2006 the palace had always been an important, usually decisive, factor in the equation. In April 2006, for the first time, no compromise was made with the monarchy, and in the year and a half that followed, step by step its every symbolic presence was removed from events and edifices connected to the state.

The monarch, held a prisoner by the Rana Prime Ministers before 1951, had been an asset in the 1950–51 armed struggle against the century-old Rana oligarchy. Consequently, the post-revolution period gave birth to a hybrid system of sovereign monarchy and democratic structures. Even after 1960, when parties were banned, King Mahendra could plausibly represent the monarchy as a defender of democracy thanks to his father’s role in the 1950–51 revolution. Public faith in royal leadership and an active king finally ran out in the late 1980s. The 1990 mass movement against the Panchayat system was called jointly by the Nepali Congress (NC), a liberal democratic party, and several communist parties. The rise of an educated middle class and rapid urbanization were the forces behind the success of the 1990 mass movement. The people’s representatives in the elected bodies of the 1990s were, therefore, predominantly middle class, unlike the rural-based land-owning classes who dominated in the 1950s and 1960s. The April 2006 popular uprising against monarchical rule was a shared effort, backed both by the parliamentary political parties and by the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) (CPN-M). It was the Maoists who had given most succor to ethnic and regional movements.

The changes on which Nepal is about to embark are radical and comprehensive. The key areas of departure from its past are: from monarchy to republic, from Hindu state to secular state, from unitary government to federalism, and from the monopoly of political power by high-caste Hindus from the hills (the Bahuns and Chhetris, who together make up 31 percent of the population) to inclusive democracy with guaranteed representation for all segments of Nepali society (hill people and Madhesis; high castes, Janajatis, and Dalits; men and women).

This chapter is organized in two parts. The first provides a historical survey of the development of democracy in Nepal with a very brief account of the internal and external situations during and after each of the major political developments between 1950 and 2006. The second deals with the three major agendas—peacebuilding, republicanism, and inclusive democracy—that Nepal faces today.

The dawn of democracy: The 1950s

Nepal entered the world community with democratic aspirations in the early 1950s. For other South Asian countries, as for most of the third world, the advent of democracy was intertwined with the achievement of independence. Nepal, by contrast, was never colonized, despite its dependent relationship with the British Raj in India. Thus, democracy was intimately connected to liberation from the native despotic rule of the Ranas. Inspiration came from the general Asian resurgence of the 1940s and, in particular, from the Indian independence movement in which several early NC leaders participated. However, the structural conditions of Nepal's internal environment of the time could not be said to be highly conducive to democracy.

Nepal under the Rana oligarchy (1846–1950) was what South Asians call highly feudal in its social order, with a subsistence agricultural economy, a society governed by an

orthodox Hindu social and legal code (the caste division of labor and differential punishments by caste had the force of law), and a political system founded on *hukum* or peremptory command. Confounding those who believe that modernization must precede democracy, Nepal had a democratic revolution when its literacy rate was less than 5 percent; having only a few kilometers of motorable road in the capital; lacking any mass media except for one government-run newspaper, the *Gorkhapatra*; and in the absence of any of the features of a capitalist economy, with the exception of one bank in Kathmandu and two factories in the eastern Tarai. Contrariwise, the ease with which the king was able to outmanoeuvre democratic politicians during the 1950s may be said to have had its roots in these very conditions of economic and social backwardness. The Ranas had themselves fully understood the connection between modernization and political opposition, and had therefore sedulously attempted to keep their population isolated from foreign influences. The Ranas' policy of isolation had a loophole, however—allowing the movement of people across the open border with India for education, pilgrimage, political exile, and recruitment into the British Army. A small group of educated middle-class Nepalis living in India and ex-Gurkha soldiers were the catalysts in the formation of political parties opposed to the rule of the Ranas.

The NC, supported by other parties, launched a three-month armed revolution in November 1950 that succeeded in winning control of much of the eastern hills, as well as the towns of Birganj and Tansen in the west. But the insurrection did not culminate in military victory, as some Congress activists had hoped. Rather: “[T]he decisive battles of the revolution were fought in New Delhi between the Indian government and the Rana government, at the diplomatic level.”³ This indicates how powerful external factors behind the dawn of democracy in Nepal were. Despite their isolationist policies, the Ranas had failed to check the global trend towards national independence and democracy. Independent

India backed the democracy struggle in Nepal in several ways: providing asylum to dissidents, including King Tribhuvan; allowing space for the organization of anti-Rana activities; transmitting the ideology of democracy; and exerting diplomatic pressure on the Ranas to compromise with the King and the NC. India's predominant role was acknowledged by all contending political forces in the country, and it was India's solution that was accepted, although the Ranas initially resisted it: the return of King Tribhuvan to the throne in place of his grandson Gyanendra who had been crowned in his absence, a coalition government of the Ranas and the NC, and a new constitution to be framed by an elected constituent assembly.⁴

The restoration of the Shah monarchy and advent of democracy were the twin goals of the 1950–51 armed revolution and so the Interim Government of Nepal Act 1951 provided for a polity based on the principle of the King in Council of Ministers; this was later modified to the model of King in Parliament by the Constitution of the Kingdom of Nepal 1959. Alongside these constitutional arrangements, the basic principles of democracy were also adopted, i.e., the rule of law, a multiparty competitive system, periodic elections, fundamental rights, an independent judiciary, a modern bureaucracy, and so on. But, against the spirit of the 1951 and 1959 constitutions, which posited the monarchy and democracy as complementary to each other, actual politics in the post-Rana period moved in the direction of a zero-sum game between traditional forces led by the king, on the one side, and modern forces led by political parties, on the other.⁵ The 1950s were, in effect, a prolonged interim period with ten governments in eight years (including direct rule by the king). King Mahendra, who ascended the throne following his father's demise in 1955, gradually consolidated the bases of royal rule. The often-postponed elections were finally held in February 1959. The NC won two thirds of the seats on 37 percent of the vote. Their popular leader B. P. Koirala became

prime minister, but he was unable to check King Mahendra's ambition. Mahendra dismantled democracy by means of a bloodless coup in December 1960.

Restoring democracy, 1960–2002

The movement for the restoration of democracy (MRD)—although its roots go right back to 1960 when King Mahendra introduced absolute monarchy under the banner of the partyless Panchayat democracy—reached its climax with the 1990 mass movement (called “Jan Andolan I”). King Mahendra introduced a new constitution in 1962, which for the first time explicitly designated Nepal as a Hindu kingdom. On the one hand, Nepal joined the ranks of many “guided democracies” such as Pakistan, Egypt, Indonesia, and so on. On the other hand, in the early days, Mahendra and his ideological supporters imagined that they could “unleash the energies of the country for development,” as they often put it, by mobilizing youth and imitating some of the methods of Chairman Mao. However, sending Master's students to the villages as a compulsory part of their education turned out to be a way to radicalize the villagers, and the regime quickly put a stop to it.

Opposition to the authoritarian Panchayat regime began with small-scale armed resistance by the NC in the early 1960s and the early 1970s (including raids across the border and the hijacking of a plane). Initially the regime concentrated on its main opponent, the NC, and did not attempt to repress communist activity so severely; subsequently many communists also spent long periods in jail. In 1972–73 there was a short-lived communist revolt (a series of targeted assassinations of landlords) in Jhapa, east Nepal, inspired by the Naxalite uprising just over the border in India six years earlier. The Panchayat regime was able to suppress these struggles effectively for three main reasons. First, India gave priority to its security interests, in maintaining its supremacy over the southern flanks of the Himalayas,

especially during and after its humiliation in the India–China war of 1962. This correlated with the primacy of strategic interest over ideological interest on the part of the super-powers during the Cold War, although it fit less well with the high moral tone adopted by India in arguing for nonalignment on the world stage. (Nepal’s strategy in response to this was to attempt to cultivate ties also with China, and later, under King Birendra, to attempt to win agreement from neighbors to declare Nepal a zone of peace. However, India never agreed to this.) Second, as a consequence of the adverse external situation, anti-establishment forces, in particular the NC, were reduced to seeking strategies for survival. Thus in 1968 Subarna Shansher, the leader of the NC in exile offered “loyal cooperation [with the king].” B.P. Koirala was then released from jail and went into exile in India. Similarly, in 1977, the NC adopted a policy of “national reconciliation”: in 1975, after Mrs Gandhi declared her emergency, staying in exile in India became problematic for B.P. Koirala and his lieutenant, Ganeshman Singh; both of them were arrested on their return to Nepal in 1976. Third, despite some internal tensions and conflicts, the elite in Kathmandu was essentially united around the king in his determination to rule and to suppress violent opposition, a unity and determination which contrasted strongly with the attitude of the center when it was faced by armed rebellion again in the late 1990s. This determination gradually dissipated in the 1980s.

King Mahendra’s son Birendra, whose rule began in 1972, was certainly a softer and more compromising character than either his father or his brother Gyanendra. In 1980, following violent student protests sparked by the hanging of Zulfikar Bhutto in Pakistan, but clearly aimed at authoritarian government nearer home, the king conceded a referendum on the future of the Panchayat system. The Panchayat side, making full use of the advantages of government incumbency and also, according to its opponents, thanks to considerable corruption in the form of selling forests

and buying votes, won by 55 percent to 45 percent. Despite losing the referendum, the parties had been allowed the freedom to organize during the campaign, a freedom that was hard to reverse after it was over. The Panchayat system itself moved in a more democratic direction with direct elections to the national legislature, explicit responsibility of the cabinet to the legislature, and limited political freedom. Thus, both the internal and external situations developed in the direction of greater democratization in the 1980s. Increasingly, the legitimacy of the partyless system became eroded; its incumbents were mired in repeated corruption scandals, including some which were widely believed to reach right up into the royal palaces.

Although democracy suffered a setback in 1960, it was a key part of the legitimacy sought by King Mahendra that he aimed to be a democratic, modernizing, and reforming king—for all that he simultaneously sought to portray himself as an authentic Hindu monarch and to enlist the support of pro-Hindu groups in India. Thus, the process of modernization, begun in 1951, was continued under the partyless Panchayat system. A new civil code in 1963 established equality before the law regardless of caste, creed, and sex, and the implementation of the Land Reform Act 1964, with its provisions for ceilings on landholdings, the protection of tenancy rights, and the regulation of land rents, over time fundamentally undermined hierarchical dependencies on upper-caste landholding families in most areas of the country. This was complemented by rapid progress in infrastructure developments, i.e., education, health, road transportation, communications, and so on, which in turn produced a critical mass of educated middle-class and urbanized Nepalis. By the end of the decade of 1980s the literacy rate in Nepal had reached around 39 percent; the road network was 7,330 kilometers long; the number of cities was 35; and communication media, including television, had proliferated. Progress was evident in infrastructure and education, but jobs and income generation

opportunities were much harder to come by. This led to the problem of educated unemployment, combined with price rises, as well as, for many, perceived ethnic inequalities. The result was a frustrated middle class, which, especially in the 1980s, began to seek redress through various civil society forms. “Nepali civil society originated and revived as a part of [the] democratic movement”⁶ and it was the backbone of “extra systemic opposition” during the Panchayat period.⁷ The 1990 mass movement was largely a middle-class urban movement; it combined student radicalism, support from professional groups, such as doctors, and an unacknowledged ethnic element, since the revolts were based in the old Newar cities of the Kathmandu Valley and mobilized both men and women of the Newar peasant caste. The young people of this caste are suspended between a peasant (and pro-communist) elder generation and past, on the one side, and incipient middle-class identity, on the other side, since they are urban dwellers who have, for the most part, prospered from the development of the capital.⁸

The 1990 mass movement in Nepal formed one small part of the global “third wave” of democracy. The fall of dictators in Eastern Europe, Asia, Africa, and Latin America boosted the morale of democratic forces of Nepal. The international environment—the global relaxation in east–west tensions, as well as the détente in Sino–Indian relations—reduced the room for maneuver of the authoritarian Panchayat system. Moreover, relations between Nepal and India in the late 1980s were strained for several reasons: in particular, India took umbrage at Nepal’s import of arms from China, which it held to be in violation of the 1950 Friendship Treaty. The semi-blockade imposed by the Indian government in 1989 when Nepal tried to renegotiate the Trade and Transit Treaty was in part retaliation for this; the economic hardships experienced in Nepal’s cities added to dissatisfaction with the regime that boiled over in 1990. However, in contrast to its decisive and directing role in 1950–51,

the Indian government adopted a “non-interference” attitude in 1990. Nonetheless, Chandra Shekhar—at that time a leading figure in the National Front government of India, who became prime minister the following year—provided very significant moral support by visiting Nepal in January 1990 and publicly speaking out in favor of the overthrow of tyrannical rule by democratic forces. A similar role was played by US Senator Stephen Solarz in mobilizing support from American and other western human rights activists and non-governmental organizations.

At the outset of the 1990 mass movement, unity between two different ideological streams—the NC, on the one side, and several splinter communist parties, on the other—was remarkable. Unlike in 1950–51, when the Communist party was relatively insignificant, the leftist forces had developed in size and strength during the Panchayat period and so they were able to play a prominent and active role in 1990, which was duly acknowledged in post-movement political arrangements. A coalition government led by the NC, comprising representatives of both the Left and the king, brought forward a new constitution, namely, the Constitution of the Kingdom of Nepal 1990, which adopted a Westminster model of parliamentary democracy and constitutional monarchy. This new constitution, although vesting sovereignty in the people, kept the king as head of state and of the armed forces, and gave him the power, in the fateful article 127, to take power in an emergency “in order to remove difficulties.” Contentiously also, the constitution continued to designate Nepal as “a Hindu Kingdom,” even though it also dubbed it “multiethnic” and “multilingual” (the adjectives “multireligious” and “secular” were conspicuously absent). Finally, the fact that the constitution, although vesting sovereignty in the people, had been granted by the king, gave legitimacy to the Maoists’ demand for a constituent assembly. Had the king and those in the palace been convinced of the need to help make constitutional monarchy work, none of these problems would have been insuperable.

In a context where many in the palace sought a return to the monarchical preeminence of the Panchayat era, they turned out to be fatal flaws in the constitutional design.

Three successive parliamentary elections were held in 1991, 1994, and 1999, and two nationwide elections for local government institutions in 1992 and 1997. The NC and the Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist), usually known by the initials UML, emerged as the two major parties. The former formed a majority government after the 1991 and 1999 general elections (on the latter occasion thanks to a split in the UML). After the 1994 mid-term elections, the UML was the largest party in a hung parliament and formed a minority government. This was soon brought down, however, by a vote of no confidence, and the pattern of unstable, indecisive, coalition governments that characterized the mid-1990s and gave the political parties such a bad name, was set (see Tables 9.1 and 9.2).

Although the second experiment with party democracy lasted longer than in 1959, it was likewise full of stress and strains.⁹ The political parties began with a huge fund of goodwill, which they rapidly squandered. Adopting neoliberal solutions to Nepal's deep-seated economic and ecological problems (selling off nationalized industries, inviting

foreign business in to run major infrastructure projects) neither generated employment nor inspired confidence in transparency and good governance. The disparities between the remote rural areas and the cities were exacerbated. The country only remained afloat economically because of the growing remittances sent from abroad (India, the Gulf countries, Southeast Asia, South Korea) by poor Nepalis working in construction and security; this was ironic since the elite was at the same time exporting capital, either to invest abroad directly or in the form of school and college fees for their offspring in India, the USA, and other Western countries.

The problem of underdevelopment and uneven development was further exacerbated by disparities along caste/ethnic and regional lines. Ethnic difference had been downplayed in the Panchayat era of nation building. People of Indian origin living in the southern strip, the Tarai, were in a particularly sensitive position. The border with India is completely open: Nepalis may cross and work in India without papers and vice versa. In many border areas, Nepalis own fields in India and vice versa. Nepali citizens marry, shop, go to college, and carry out business in India—and vice versa. In other words, it is a border that, in many of the modern understandings of the term, is

Table 9.1 Political party positions in the first, second, and third parliamentary elections in Nepal

Parties	Number of seats elected			% of popular vote		
	1991	1994	1999	1991	1994	1999
Nepali Congress (NC)	110	83	112	37.75	33.38	36.14
Unified Marxist-Leninist (NCP-UML)	69	88	70	27.98	30.85	30.74
Rashtriya Prajatantra Party (RPP)	4	20	11	11.94	17.93	13.46
Nepal Sadbhawana Party (NSP)	6	3	5	4.10	3.49	3.13
National People's Front	—	—	5	—	—	1.36
Nepal Worker and Peasant Party (NWPP)	2	4	1	1.25	0.98	0.54
United People's Front (UPF)	9	0	1	4.35	1.32	0.83
Communist Party of Nepal (Democratic)	2	0	0	2.43	0.38	0.06
Independents	3	7	0	4.17	6.18	2.83
Other small parties	0	0	0	6.04	5.49	10.92
Total	205	205	205	100.00	100.00	100.00

Source: Election Commission, *House of Representative Members, 2048 (1991): Final Results*; *House of Representative Members, 2051 (1994): Election Results*; *House of Representative Members, 2056 (1999): Election Results*

Table 9.2 Governments of Nepal, 1990–2005

	<i>PM</i>	<i>Parties</i>	<i>Length</i>	<i>Dates</i>
1	KP Bhattarai	Congress + ULF interim	13 months	19/04/90–25/05/91
First general election (1991) Congress 110 seats (37.8% votes), UML 69 (28%)				
2	GP Koirala	Congress majority	42 months	26/05/91–28/11/94
Second general election (1994) Congress 83 seats (33.4%), UML 88 (30.9%)				
3	MM Adhikari	UML minority	9 months	29/11/94–10/09/95
4	SB Deuba	Congress–NDP–NSP coalition	18 months	11/09/95–11/03/97
5	LB Chand	RPP–UML coalition	7 months	12/03/97–05/10/97
6	SB Thapa	RPP–Congress–NSP coalition	6 months	06/10/97–25/03/98
7	GP Koirala	Congress minority	5 months	26/03/98–25/08/98
8	GP Koirala	Congress–ML coalition	4 months	26/08/98–22/12/98
9	GP Koirala	Congress–UML–NSP coalition	5 months	23/12/98–26/05/99
Third general election (1999) Congress 112 seats (36.1%), UML 70 (30.7%)				
10	KP Bhattarai	Congress	9 months	27/05/99–09/03/00
11	GP Koirala	Congress	16 months	10/03/00–22/07/01
12	SB Deuba	Congress, later Congress (D)	14 months	23/07/01–04/10/02
13	LB Chand	Non-party	8 months	11/10/02–31/05/03
14	SB Thapa	Non-party (in practice RPP)	11 months	04/06/03–07/05/04
15	SB Deuba	Cong (D) + NSP(Mandal) + UML + RPP	8 months	01/06/04–01/02/05

not a border. The fact that Madhesis, as Nepalis of Indian ethnicity and language are called, are indistinguishable culturally from Indians means that their loyalty to Nepal is always suspected by hill people (Pahades or Parbatiyas). Madhesis know and resent this. For many years they have felt that they have been treated like a colony of the hills, despite the fact that the Tarai is now home to 50 percent of Nepal's population, most of its industry, and the great bulk of its agriculturally productive land, and despite the fact that the educational level and capabilities of many Madhesis is high.

The other big cleavages are between the hill high castes, the Bahuns (Brahmans) and Chhetris (Kshatriyas), and those groups that used to be called hill tribes and are now known as Janajatis, and between all these and the Dalits (former untouchables). None of these differences was acknowledged in the Panchayat period (it was considered that simply declaring formal equality before the law was enough). Following the 1991 census, which recorded and published the results, ethnic difference emerged into the public sphere and was increasingly politicized. The extent to which all the major

offices of state and society were dominated by Bahuns, Chhetris, and Newars could now be documented and demonstrated (see Tables 9.3 and 9.4). For the first time, reservations (affirmative action) became possible, politically feasible, and increasingly unavoidable.¹⁰

Frequent changes of government (see Table 9.2) meant that governments were unable to address underlying issues. Neither were they able to deal with the Maoist insurgency, which was launched in the western hills in February 1996. Instability and division at the center were in marked contrast to the force and determination with which the Panchayat regime had been defended in its heyday. Each competing power center in Kathmandu sought to use the growing insurgency to bolster its own position: the NC hoped that it would split the left and undermine its main competitor, the UML; the UML hoped that the main targets would remain NC- and RPP-aligned landlords; the palace hoped that the political parties would be undermined. The first force to benefit from increasing weakness and instability at the Center was the palace. The king seized power in two steps, first in October

Table 9.3 Population breakdown of Nepal (2001 census) (total: 23.15 million) with figures for hill minority language loss

<i>Parbatiyas</i> (“hill people”)		<i>Hill minorities</i> (<i>Janajatis</i>)		<i>Language loss</i> <i>among minorities</i>	<i>Madhesis</i> (“plains people”)	<i>Others</i>
Bahun	13%	<u>Magar</u>	7.2%	52.1% (67.9)	<u>Tharu</u>	Muslims 4.2%
Chhetri (incl. Thakuri)	18%	<u>Newar</u>	5.5%	34.5% (33.7)	Yadav	
Dalit	9%	<u>Tamang</u>	5.6%	7.1% (11.2)	(+ many small castes incl. Dalits and Janajatis)	
		<u>Rai</u>	3%	23.2% (16.4)		
		<u>Gurung</u>	2.4%	47.5% (49.5)		
		<u>Limbu</u>	1.6%	6.2% (14.5)		
Total	40%		25%		30%	5%

Notes: Dalit = former untouchables; Janajatis (underlined) are mainly those who were formerly called hill tribes (many Tharus, as noted, reject the label “Madhesi”): 59 groups were officially designated as Janajatis in February 2002, not all of which had been included in the 2001 census. Estimated figures for language loss are courtesy of John Whelpton, with the 1991 figures given in parentheses (see Whelpton 1997: 59). All figures are likely to be disputed. Those for language loss require particular care. The apparent increase in minorities speaking “their” language since 1991 may be ascribed to the increased politicization of the issue and the fact that many Magar activists, for example, campaigned for people to return their language as “Magar” regardless of what they spoke at home.

Table 9.4 Presence (percentage) of different groups in leadership positions in Nepal, 1999

	<i>Dominant groups</i>		<i>Marginalized groups</i>				<i>No. of individuals</i>
	<i>Bahun/Chhetri</i>	<i>Newar</i>	<i>Madhesi</i>	<i>Janajati</i>	<i>Dalit</i>	<i>Other</i>	
1 Court	77	13.6	7.6	1.7	0	0	235
2 Constitutional bodies	56	24	12	2.8	0	0	25
3 Cabinet	62.5	9.4	15.6	12.5	0	0	32
4 Parliament	60	7.6	17.4	13.6	1.5	0	265
5 Public administration	77.6	17.6	3.7	1.2	0	0	245
6 Party leadership	58.8	10.9	15.8	15.2	0	0	165
7 Local elected bodies	55.5	15.7	16.2	12	0	0	191
8 Commerce and industry	16.7	47.6	35.7	0	0	0	42
9 Educational arena	77.3	11.3	7.2	2.1	1	1	97
10 Cultural arena	69.1	17.9	0	4.9	0	0	123
11 Science/technology	58.1	29	9.7	3.2	0	0	62
12 Civil society leadership	75.9	14.8	7.4	1.9	0	0	54
Total	66.5	15.2	11.2	7.1	0.3	1	
Population %	31.6	5.6	30.9	22.2	8.7	1	
Difference with population %	+34.9	+9.6	-19.7	-15.1	-8.4	-1	

Note: Although Newars are officially included in the Janajati category, in practice their “advanced” position, as the inhabitants of the capital with a higher HDI than any group in the country, makes it sensible to treat them separately.

Source: Neupane, Govinda, *Nepalko Jatiya Prashna* (The Caste/Ethnicity Question in Nepal) (Kathmandu: Centre for Development Studies, 2000)

2002, when he dismissed Prime Minister Deuba and called for a technocratic government of those with a “clean image,” and subsequently with a full-blown coup d’état in February 2005, when phone and internet connections were shut down for a week and the King himself became the chair of the Council of Ministers.

Reinventing democracy after 2002

Until the royal coup of February 2005 political struggle took the form of a triangular conflict with different roles and motives for each of the key actors. The king, while sidelining the political parties, attempted to tackle the Maoist insurgency alternately by negotiation or suppression (the army is said to have promised to deal with the insurgency within six months, which it signally failed to do).¹¹ The mainstream parties, united under the banner of the Seven Party Alliance (SPA), launched a series of street protests against the King’s “regression” (*pratigaman*), while keeping their distance from the Maoists and their violent methods. The standing of Girija Prasad Koirala (the younger brother of B.P.) in the post-2006 period stemmed from his outspoken and unwavering opposition to the king from October 2002 onwards, whereas other leading politicians allowed themselves to be tempted into compromise and accepting participation in the king’s governments. Finally, the CPN (Maoist) was able to escalate its “People’s War” more intensely during the time of the royal regime, winning some important morale-boosting battles, such as over-running Beni, the district headquarters of Myagdi, in March 2004 and the hill town of Tansen in January 2006.

The king’s coup of 1 February, 2005, in which the major leaders were all put under house arrest and the leaders of civil society and political activists were taken into military barracks and in some cases tortured, forced the parties closer to the CPN-M. The Maoist leaders, aware that they would not be able to

conquer the cities militarily, were also looking at the possibility of alliance with the parties. This turning point in oppositional politics was reflected in the 12-point understanding made between the SPA and the CPN-M in Delhi in November 2005. It contained three key commitments: first, the SPA endorsed the CPN-M fundamental demand for elections to a CA; second, the Maoists reciprocated with an assurance that they accepted a multiparty competitive political system, the prime concern of the SPA; third, both the SPA and the Maoists agreed to launch a peaceful mass movement against the monarchy.

The 12-point pact was agreed with the active involvement of India. As in previous democracy movements, the external factor in the April 2006 Jan Andolan II was extremely important, although unlike 1951 or 1990 it did not correspond to any global “wave.” The change of government in India in May 2004, with a Congress-led alliance replacing the BJP, limited the king’s ability to play on Hindu sentiment in India or to mobilize his kin links with Indian royal families. Sita Ram Yechuri, a leader of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), a major supporter of the ruling coalition in India, played a similar role to that of Chandra Shekhar in 1990. Disappointed by King Gyanendra’s attempt to bring in China as an observer in SAARC, and frustrated by his repeated rejection of Indian advice to compromise with the political parties, India took a tough stand against the king’s coup. The international community had been sympathetic to King Gyanendra’s post-October 2002 political project of combining the monarchy and democracy to counter the Maoist “terrorist” threat, but it unequivocally condemned the King’s seizure of power in February 2005. The principal suppliers of military aid—India, the US, and the UK—postponed their shipments. Many donors withdrew or cut their earlier commitments to development aid as well. There were attempts in the international community to persuade the leaders of the April 2006 popular movement to accept a return to the status quo ante

February 2005, i.e., retaining the monarchy as an important actor. Such moves were rejected outright. Unlike the 1950–51 revolution, but in some ways similar to 1990, it was internal forces, rather than external pressures, that determined the course and outcome of the April 2006 movement.

The April 2006 Jan Andolan II was unique and unprecedented both in terms of the degree of the people's participation and the nature of the political demands. It was the most powerful anti-establishment struggle that Nepal has witnessed. The 1950–51 revolution was fought by the NC's cadres as a guerrilla war, like the Maoist insurgency of 1996–2006, though on a much smaller scale. The 1990 MRD was a largely urban and middle-class movement, with a specifically Newar ethnic element. By contrast, the April 2006 Jan Andolan II was rural in the specific sense that many among the millions of people who participated in this 19-day popular uprising were rural dwellers who had come (or, as many claimed, had been sent by the Maoists) to the cities for this very purpose. In Kathmandu the main sites of opposition were around the ring road, i.e., close to the new poor suburbs settled by migrants from the hills; the old city cores were very quiet by comparison.

The post-April 2006 transition ushered in important political developments, namely reinstatement of the dissolved parliament along with formation of a government led by NC leader G. P. Koirala in April 2006, signing of a comprehensive peace agreement (CPA) between the government and the CPN-M in November 2006 followed by placement of the CPN-M's combatants in cantonments, promulgation of the interim constitution of Nepal in January 2007 and subsequent participation by the CPN-M in the interim parliament and government in January–April 2007, and the Madhes uprising in January 2007, which recurred in January 2008. The frequent *bandhs*, bombs, and assassinations, and the emergence of a plethora of small armed groups hiding over the border in India, established that the strategically important Tarai can

no longer be ignored or taken for granted by Kathmandu. Amendments to the interim constitution had to be made three times to take into account the demands of the Madhes activists, as well as those of the Janajatis and the Maoists, incorporating the provisions of federalism, delimitation of constituencies according to the principle of population size, and adaptation of a mixed electoral system weighted more to proportional representation (PR) than to first-past-the-post (FPTP) in the distribution of CA seats.

The CA election was held peacefully and in a relatively free and fair manner despite massive pre-election apprehension about violence and rigging. (There was certainly some intimidation in districts where the Maoists are strong, such as Rukum and Gorkha, but not enough to invalidate the result as a whole.) As expected the election produced a hung assembly but what was unexpected and surprising, even to the winners themselves, was that the CPN-M—a former insurgent group—should come out on top with a total strength of 220 out of 575 elected seats, putting its rivals—the NC and the UML—far behind. The NC, which expected to win, came second with 110. The UML, which was also confident—evidently overconfident—of winning, came third with 103 seats. The rise of regional ethnic parties was confirmed by the fact that the Madhes Janadhikar Forum (MJF)—a party created from the Madhes uprising of January 2007—won 52 seats and another Tarai party, the Tarai Madhes Loktantrik Party (TMLP), led by Mahantha Thakur who had defected from the NC, scored 20 seats.

Simply to hold the elections was itself a major achievement. The other accomplishments of the transitional period (April 2006 to April 2008) flowed from the aim of restructuring the state. The three key elements of this project are the transformation of the armed conflict, the end of monarchical rule forever, and the advancement of inclusive democracy.

The transformation of armed conflict

The restoration of democracy in April 2006—against the background of a decade-long war (1996–2006) between the Maoist guerrillas and the state security forces in which around 13,000 people lost their lives¹²—is closely associated with the peace project. After the 1950–51 revolution, conflict transformation was not a big challenge either technically or politically. The NC *Mukti Sena* (liberation army) was simply turned into the Nepal police as Nepal did not have a proper police force at that time. The NC's intentions were not in doubt because the political system introduced after the 1950–51 revolution conformed to its ideology of multiparty democracy. Today's parallel situation is not so simple, even though the People's Liberation Army (PLA) is in cantonments, its arms are locked in containers, and the United Nations Mission in Nepal (UNMIN) is monitoring the arms management process. The CPN-M disclosed only 3,428 weapons, whereas the number of its combatants living in the cantonments is 19,601. Moreover, the Nepal Army is firmly against any integration with the PLA whereas the CPN-M is unlikely to revise its proposal for the integration of the Nepal Army and the PLA. The PLA was constituted and trained according to communist principles; clearly, the restructuring of the state will require both the party and the PLA to adapt to a multiparty political system.

To the surprise of many observers, the CPN-M as a party began to adapt in this direction, even in 2003 when the insurgency was at its peak. At this stage, it was running a parallel administration in the many areas under its control.¹³ Perhaps the decision was taken in realization of the impossibility of military victory over the state army, and with a plan for collaboration with the mainstream parties in order to consolidate all anti-monarchy forces. After signing the 12-point understanding with the SPA in November 2005, the CPN-M publicly reaffirmed its faith in the multiparty

system, provided the SPA backed its demands for a CA and a republic. In conformity with its changed ideological position, the party was actively involved in every important decision taken in the post-Jan Andolan II transitional process. Despite some ambivalence and inconsistency in words and deeds, the CPN-M has basically been moving towards a new commitment to peaceful politics. The crux of the matter is that the transformation of the CPN-M may very well be a necessary condition of the survival of multiparty democracy in Nepal.

Establishment of a republic

Jan Andolan II was the final showdown in a half-century-long confrontation between democracy and monarchy. King Gyanendra ascended the throne against the background of the royal massacre of 1 June, 2001 in which King Birendra along with all his immediate family members and five other royals were killed. The then Crown Prince Dipendra was the culprit according to the official version. However, because King Gyanendra was absent and both his wife and his son Paras, who were present, survived, the vast majority of Nepali people became convinced that it was a conspiracy. The personal unpopularity of both Gyanendra and Paras fueled republican sentiment and massively undermined people's faith in the institution of monarchy. The rise of ethnic activism, accompanied by demands for a secular state, also had a negative impact on the traditional legitimacy of the Nepali monarchy. Since the unification of Nepal in 1768, the Shah dynasty had made concerted efforts to blend inherent rights with divine authority, promoting Hinduism as a symbol of the Nepali nation. Now the whole package of Hinduism and monarchy—far from being a bulwark of democracy as Gyanendra's father Mahendra had claimed—was seen as inimical to it.

Gyanendra's own political ambitions were also to blame for the rise of republicanism.

The February 2005 royal coup—the logical culmination of the series of royal takeovers begun in October 2002—was primarily justified by the failure of the party regime to counter the Maoist insurgency. But people's initial hopes that there was to be a rapid improvement in the situation were quickly dashed by the lack of any plan—economic, political, or military. Instead, the CPN-M's violent "People's War" rapidly intensified and spread all over the country. By systematically opposing and undermining the political parties, King Gyanendra pushed them into the arms of the Maoists. The single biggest reason for the success of republicanism in Nepal has been the shortsightedness of the monarch. Unlike his father's assertion of authoritarian rule in 1960, Gyanendra's attempt cannot be said to have corresponded to any worldwide movement or tendency; Gyanendra himself lacked either the toughness or the military experience that would have enabled him to follow such unhappy regional examples as Pakistan or Burma, and it was the army generals who went to him in April 2006 and told him the game was up.

Jan Andolan II was, in fact, a republican movement in spirit, even though the 12-point pact explicitly claimed only to be aiming at "the end of the absolute monarchical system." The post-Andolan period saw the rapid removal of monarchical relevance. The May 2006 Declaration—considered the Nepali Magna Carta—made by the reinstated House of Representatives, formally cut off the monarchy's two arms—the Hindu religion and the army's loyalty—by declaring Nepal a secular state and deleting the title "royal" from the military and all other state organizations. The change in the popular mood was so radical that support for a republican system of government increased from 15 percent in 2004 to 59 percent in 2007.¹⁴ Consequently, the interim Prime Minister G. P. Koirala was forced to withdraw his proposal to save the monarchy by installing a "baby king" through the voluntary abdication of both king and crown prince in favor of Gyanendra's grandson Hridayendra.

The CPN-M's relentless campaigns for a republic eventually forced the government, in November 2007, to insert a provision into the interim constitution declaring Nepal a federal republic. The original provision that the fate of monarchy would be decided by a simple majority of the CA members in its first meeting was retained and it was understood, certainly by the Maoists, that this meant simply that the CA would put the already taken decision into operation. As parties contesting on a republican platform swept the CA election and the CPN-M, long the leading champion of republicanism, went on to head the post-CA election government, it was clear that the days of the Shah dynasty, which had ruled Nepal for nearly 240 years, were numbered.

Inclusive democracy

The government of post-2006 Nepal will be radically different from anything that has gone before. The 1990 constitution, though it permitted reservations and designated the state as "multiethnic" and "multilingual," neither built measures of positive discrimination into the structure of the state nor gave any consideration to the introduction of proportional representation. This very weak support for restructuring was, it became apparent, not going to be sufficient to satisfy the demands of ethnic and regional activists as they became increasingly better organized and mobilized throughout the 1990s. Post-Jan Andolan II politics include much more radical measures. The declaration of Nepal as a secular state, the adoption of bilingualism, a new provision of 45 percent reservations in the bureaucracy for excluded groups, a provision ensuring 33 percent representation for women in all state machinery, including elected bodies and political parties, distribution of 335 PR seats in the CA as per the size of the population of different social segments, and political and constitutional commitments to federalism are some of the concrete decisions in favor of

inclusive democracy made during the transitional period.

The restoration of multiparty democracy in 1990 coincided with an ethnic revival. As one of us has written: “If the period 1960 to 1990 was one of *nation*-building, the [period] since then has been a time of *ethnicity*-building.”¹⁵ The principles of popular sovereignty, equality, freedom, cultural rights, and the right to organize provided a platform for ethnic activism. The disadvantaged of Nepal fall into three large blocs: the Janajatis, Madhesis, and Dalits and each of these groups has its own organizations aiming to speak on behalf of the bloc as a whole. Of all the political forces seeking to cash in on post-1990 ethnic mobilization, the CPN-M seems to have been the most successful. It is certainly thanks to the Maoists that the maximum ethnic demands—for autonomy and federalism—have been adopted into the political agenda. The CPN-M’s concerted effort to blend ethnic rights and class war was evident both in its opening of ethnic “front organizations” and in its division of the country into nine ethnic and region-based “regional governments,” eight of which were declared in the first half of 2004 at mass meetings and heavily publicized afterwards.

The experience of the transitional period, 2006–08, suggests that street demonstrations, *bandhs*, and other forms of political protest will not stop just because the CA has been elected. Dalits, women, Janajatis, Madhesis, and other regional groups are all likely to protest if their demands are not met, and some expectations are bound to be disappointed. The NC and UML may themselves turn to the politics of the street now that they find themselves in opposition. The Madhesi movement of January–February 2007 was the strongest, most violent, and most effective set of street protests Nepal has seen—and the lesson has surely not been lost on others. During the 21 most intense days of the Madhesi movement, 27 people lost their lives, more than the 21 people who died in April 2006. A further 27 Maoists were massacred in Gaur, the capital of Rautahat, right on the Indian border, when

a Madhes and a Maoist meeting were called at the same place on the same day. It was the sheer ferocity and persistence of the Madhes uprising that convinced the interim government that there was no alternative but to accede to demands for federalism, the redistribution of electoral constituencies on the basis of the size of population, and ethnic representation for the CA members elected under the PR system.

For the first time in Nepali history, the hill high castes will find their representation reduced in the national legislature to their own population size 31 to 32 percent, where previously it had been between 54 and 63 percent. For the first time in the electoral history of Nepal, the Janajatis, Dalits, and Madhesis will be represented approximately in proportion to the size of their population. Having one-third women in the CA will also be a new phenomenon. This may have a massive demonstration effect on the whole country.

Conclusion: A comparison with recent developments in Bhutan

For those looking from afar, Nepal is often bracketed with Bhutan since both are (or, in Nepal’s case, were) Himalayan kingdoms. There are some fairly radical differences, however. Nepal’s population is heading towards 30 million, half of whom live in the Tarai bordering India and sharing much with the neighboring Indian states of UP, Bihar, and West Bengal. Bhutan’s population is less than 1 million. The ruling elite of Nepal is and has always been Hindu and pro-Indian in outlook; Nepali is close to Hindi and most Nepalis can understand Hindi fairly easily. The ruling elite and dynasty of Bhutan are Tibetan Buddhists and the national language of Bhutan is a dialect of Tibetan.

Despite these highly significant differences of scale, culture, and history, there is a striking (albeit inverted) structural similarity between the problems faced by the two countries. Nepal’s key ethnic problem—although most

Nepalis only woke up to the fact in January 2007—is the presence of a sizeable minority of Nepali citizens (over 30 percent) who are ethnically Indian and who are no longer willing to accept second-class citizenship or being ruled by non-Madhesi. Bhutan’s key ethnic problem was the presence of a similarly sized minority of Nepali origin, likewise based in the fertile south, the so-called Lhotshampas (“southerners”). Bhutan has, in the short term, attempted to solve this problem by a degree of ethnic cleansing, expelling over 100,000 Lhotshampas in 1990, who ended up crossing the short span of Indian territory and being settled in UNHCR-run camps inside Nepal.

The achievements of Nepal’s Maoists are arguably unparalleled in world history. What other Maoist movement has gone from armed movement to success in national polls in 12 short years? (Ironically, had they not pushed so hard, along with ethnic activists, for the PR system, they would, after the April 2008 elections, have had 50 percent of the seats, instead of 229 out of 601.) These achievements, which produced a secular republic in Nepal, have had a powerful demonstration effect on Bhutan’s Lhotshampa population, among whom the Bhutanese Maoist Party (founded 2003) started to become quite powerful. In 2008 it issued death threats to any Bhutanese refugee who came out openly in favor of accepting the US offer to resettle 60,000 of them,¹⁶ and in some cases carried them out. By January 2009 these threats had died away as the process of resettlement got under way.

Nepal’s trajectory towards democracy has been, as we have shown, highly chequered and marked by several phases of violent opposition. Only in the latter phases has mobilization on ethnic grounds been overwhelmingly significant. In Bhutan, by contrast, developments have been far more controlled. Violence has been less open and the regime’s concern, whether in politics, tourism, or development projects, has been to avoid taking the Nepali path.

It is possible to write the history of democracy in Nepal and Bhutan in terms of a conflict between four models of democracy: guided

monarchical “democracy,” liberal party-based democracy, communist “people’s democracy,” and multiculturalism.¹⁷ Bhutan has attempted to shortcircuit further internal dissent by moving from guided democracy without elections (somewhat similar to Nepal’s early Panchayat regime) to a form of guided party elections. The first elections under this system were held in March 2008. Only two parties were allowed to run. To the surprise of many, the Bhutan Peace and Prosperity Party, led by Jigme Y. Thinley, won over two thirds of the votes and 45 out of 47 seats in the new Parliament. In short, Bhutan is attempting to combine the first two models (monarchical guided and liberal democracy), while firmly rejecting the latter two. Nepal, by contrast, has seen the definitive defeat of the first model and a rapprochement between the other three.

[We would like to thank John Whelpton for helpful comments on an earlier draft. This chapter was composed in the immediate aftermath of the April 2008 elections, with minor amendments made in March 2009.]

Notes

- 1 “Peaceful” is a relative term, and the judgment could, of course, be disputed. INSEC, one of the leading human rights organizations in Nepal, recorded that, in 2007, 37 people were killed by the state, 15 by the Maoists, and 108 by nine different Madhesi groups (inseconline.org); 75 persons died from the date of enforcement of the election code of conduct (16 January) to the CA election day (Mahendra Lawoti, “Aspiration to Change and Threat Factor” (in Nepali), *Himal Khabar Patrika*, 29 April–13 May, 2008, p. 53).
- 2 The category “other,” originally intended to protect groups not explicitly named, such as Muslims, was adopted as a reserved category for the high castes (i.e., Bahuns, Chhetris, Thakuris, and Sanyasis). In 1996 a government committee published a list of 23 castes (by surname) that would be recognized as Dalits. Fifty-nine officially recognized Janajatis (“nationalities,” what in India are called “tribes”) are listed in a

- government document published on 10 February, 2002; (see D. N. Gellner and M.B. Karki, "Democracy and Ethnic Organizations in Nepal", in D. N. Gellner and K. Hachhethu (eds), *Local Democracy in South Asia* (Delhi: Sage, 2008, p. 111); there is also a national confederal body bringing together one representative organization from each group, the Nepal Federation of Indigenous Nationalities (see nefin.org.np). Madhesis are the ethnically Indian Nepali citizens who inhabit principally the flat Tarai belt in the south of the country bordering India. Some groups such as Tharus, Santals, and Rajvanshis are both Janajati and Madhesi, although they often do not wish to be included in the Madhesi category. It is essential for some double-counting of the PR candidates in order for all the required percentages (which sum to 116 percent) to be fulfilled. Whether Muslims are to be included in the Madhesi category is controversial. The nine backward districts (those lowest on human development indices) are Achham, Kalikot, Jajarkot, Jumla, Dolpa, Bajhang, Bajura, Mugu, and Humla. All are either in the far west or on the northern fringe, or both.
- 3 Bhuwan Lal Joshi and Leo Rose, *Democratic Innovations in Nepal* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1966), p. 79; cf. Martin Hoftun, William Raeper, and John Whelpton, *People, Politics, and Ideology: Democracy and Social Change in Nepal* (Kathmandu: Mandala Book Point, 1999), ch. 1.
 - 4 Anirudha Gupta, *Politics in Nepal* (Bombay: Allied Publishers, 1964), pp. 46–47. The constituent assembly was never held and the election of a new one became one of the key demands of the Maoist insurgency launched in 1996.
 - 5 R. S. Chauhan, *The Political Development in Nepal 1950–70* (Delhi: Associated Publishing House, 1971).
 - 6 Krishna Hachhethu, "Civil Society and Political Participation," in Lok Raj Baral (ed.), *Nepal: Quest for Participatory Democracy* (New Delhi: Adroit Publishers, 2006), p. 128.
 - 7 Lok Raj Baral, *Oppositional Politics in Nepal* (New Delhi: Abhinav Publishing House, 1977). For Nepali politics during the Panchayat period, see also Rishikesh Shah, *Essays in the Practices of Government in Nepal* (New Delhi: Manohar Publishing House, 1982).
 - 8 Krishna Hachhethu, "Mass Movement 1990," *Contributions to Nepalese Studies*, 17, 2 (1990), p. 190. See Vincanne Adams, *Doctors for Democracy* (Cambridge: University Press, 1998) on the involvement of the doctors, and David N. Gellner, "Caste, Communalism, and Communism: Newars and the Nepalese State," in D. N. Gellner, J. Pfaff-Czarnecka, and J. Whelpton (eds), *Nationalism and Ethnicity in a Hindu Kingdom* (Amsterdam: Harwood, 1997) on the unacknowledged ethnic background to the 1990 uprisings in the cities of Lalitpur (Patan) and Bhaktapur.
 - 9 For details of Nepali politics in the post-1990 period, see Lok Raj Baral, *Nepal: Problems of Governance* (New Delhi: Konark Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1993); Lok Raj Baral, *The Regional Paradox: Essays in Nepali and South Asian Affairs* (Delhi: Adroit Publishers, 2000); Lok Raj Baral, Krishna Hachhethu, and Hari Sharma, *Leadership in Nepal* (New Delhi: Adroit Publishers, 2001); Michael Hutt (ed.), *Nepal in the Nineties* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1994); Martin Hoftun, William Raeper, and John Whelpton *People, Politics and Ideology* (Kathmandu: Mandala Book Point, 1999); POLSAN, *Political Parties and the Parliamentary Process in Nepal: A Study of the Transitional Phase* (Kathmandu: Political Science Association of Nepal, 1992); Ole Borre, Sushil Raj Pandey, and Chitra Krishna Tiwari, *Nepalese Political Behaviour* (New Delhi: Sterling, 1994); Dhruva Kumar (ed.), *State, Leadership and Politics in Nepal* (Kathmandu: Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies, 1995); Dhruva Kumar (ed.), *Domestic Conflict and Crisis of Governability in Nepal* (Kathmandu: Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies, 2000); T. Louise Brown, *The Challenge to Democracy in Nepal: A Political History* (Routledge, 1996); Krishna Hachhethu, *Party Building in Nepal: Organization, Leadership and People, A Comparative Study of the Nepali Congress and the Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist)* (Kathmandu: Mandala Book Point: 2002).
 - 10 On ethnic aspects of Nepali politics, see Frederick H. Gaige, *Regionalism and National Unity in Nepal* (New Delhi: Vikas, 1975); David N. Gellner, Joanna Pfaff-Czarnecka, and John Whelpton (eds), *Nationalism and Ethnicity in a Hindu Kingdom* (Amsterdam: Harwood, 1997); Prayag Raj Sharma, "Ethnicity and National Integration in Nepal: A Statement of the Problem," *Journal of Nepalese Studies*, 1

- (July–December 1987), pp. 23–30; “How to Tend This Garden,” *Himal* (May–June 1992), pp. 7–9; Harka Gurung, “Representing An Ethnic Mosaic,” *Himal* (May–June 1992), pp. 19–21; Marie Lecomte-Tilouine and Pascale Dollfus (eds), *Ethnic Revival and Religious Turmoil* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2003); Mahendra Lawoti, *Towards a Democratic Nepal: Inclusive Political Institutions for a Multicultural Society* (New Delhi: Sage, 2005); Susan I. Hangen, *Creating a “New Nepal”: The Ethnic Dimension* (Washington: East-West Center, 2007); G. Toffin, M. S. Tamang, P. Onta, and S. Sato, *Studies in Nepali History and Society*, Vol. 11, No. 2 (2006).
- 11 On censorship and self-censorship during the period of the king’s rule, see Michael Hutt, “Things that Should not be Said: Censorship and Self-censorship in the Nepali Press Media, 2001–2,” *Journal of Asian Studies*, 65 (2006), pp. 361–92. For information on the way in which internet blogs kept the outside world informed of what was going on inside Nepal, see James Sharrock, “Nepali Blogging and Democracy,” *Studies in Nepali History and Society*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (2007), pp. 55–94.
- 12 For details of the Maoist insurgency, see Arjun Karki and David Seddon (eds), *The People’s War in Nepal: Left Perspectives* (New Delhi: Adroit Publishers, 2003); Michael Hutt (ed.), *Himalayan People’s War: Nepal’s Maoist Rebellion* (London: Hurst, 2004); Deepak Thapa and Bandana Sijapati, *A Kingdom under Siege: Nepal’s Maoist Insurgency, 1996 to 2003* (Kathmandu: The Print House, 2003); Deepak Thapa (ed.), *Understanding the Maoist Movement of Nepal* (Kathmandu: Martin Chautari, 2003); S. D. Muni, *The Maoist Insurgency in Nepal: The Challenge and The Response* (New Delhi: Rupa, 2003); Arjun Karki and Binod Bhattarai (eds), *Whose War? Economic and Social-Cultural Impacts of Nepal’s Maoist-Government Conflict* (Kathmandu: NGO Federation of Nepal, n.d.); and Kiyoko Ogura, “Maoists, People, and the State as seen from Rolpa and Rukum,” in H. Ishii, D. Gellner, and K. Nawa (eds), *Political and Social Transformations in North India and Nepal* (New Delhi: Manohar, 2007).
- 13 See Kiyoko Ogura, “Maoists’ People’s Governments, 2001–05: The Power in Wartime,” in D. N. Gellner and K. Hachhethu (eds), *Local Democracy in South Asia* (Delhi: Sage, 2008).
- 14 Krishna Hachhethu, *State of Democracy in Nepal: A Survey Report* (Kathmandu: SDSA/Nepal and International IDEA, 2004); and Krishna Hachhethu with Sanjay Kumar and Jiwan Subedi, *Nepal in Transition: A Study on the State of Democracy* (Stockholm: International IDEA, 2008).
- 15 David N. Gellner, “Caste, Ethnicity and Inequality in Nepal,” *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 42, No. 20 (2007), p. 1,823.
- 16 On the US offer, see http://hrw.org/english/docs/2007/05/17/bhutan15936_txt.htm. For an article about the appeal of Maoism to refugee youth in the camps, see R. Evans, “The Two Faces of Empowerment in Conflict,” *Research in Comparative and International Education*, 3 (2008), pp. 50–64 (doi:10.2304/rcie.2008.3.1.50).
- 17 See David N. Gellner, “Democracy in Nepal: Four Models,” *Seminar*, 576 (2007), pp. 50–56 (available at <http://ora.ouls.ox.ac.uk>).