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REVIEW ARTICLE

Recent Anthropological Research on
Garhwal and Kumaon

Monika Krengel and Antje Linkenbach

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It would be no surprise if anthropologists working in the Indian part of the Himalayas would be caught glancing across the eastern border comparing jealously the flourishing anthropological research on Nepal with the somehow

meagre efforts in their own region. Leaving aside any comments upon the quality of the scholarly approaches in both regions, it is quite obvious that there exist considerable formal differences between the research on Nepal and that on the Indian Himalayas. Simply by flicking through the issues of the *European Bulletin of Himalayan Research* one easily can get the impression that Nepal is an area well-covered by diversified anthropological research (including e.g. linguistics, oral traditions, development studies) undertaken by Nepali and international scholars and which can claim to be at the summit of current theoretical debates as well. Nepal research has a strong institutional base nationally and internationally, interdisciplinary collaboration is encouraged, as is cooperation and intellectual exchange between researchers. To sum up, anthropological research on Nepal has established an international and interdisciplinary discourse, which has developed a dynamic of its own.

Without any doubt, research on the Nepal Himalayas owes much of its strength to the fact that Nepal is a (sovereign) state, the greatest part of which is located in the Himalayan mountains. Attracted by splendid landscapes and the world's highest mountain ranges - habitat of diverse ethnic groups -, Nepal assembles anthropologists from different parts of the world. All this does not apply to the Indian Himalayas, and especially not to Kumaon and Garhwal: in comparison to the plains of India, the mountain regions of the country are viewed as marginal - geographically and culturally. Amazingly, on the one hand, the *Holy Himalaya* is romantically and excessively praised as the abode of gods, as a place of pilgrimage and retreat; it is regarded as an arena for some of the most important cultural and religious dramas of Indian history (preserved in the *Mahābhārata*), as a storehouse of India's cultural heritage. On the other hand, the social sciences (anthropology, sociology), busy with deciphering the constitutive principles of "the" culture and society of India, have scarcely referred to the Himalayan hills. Characterized not only as geographically remote, the culture of this region was also perceived as backward and lacking the classical traits of the so-called Hindu tradition.

The present article focusses on works that have been published recently, some being relevant in the context of current theoretical debates as well. But additionally, in order to touch somehow on the history of research of the region, it seems appropriate to mention also a few earlier publications.¹

Systematic research focussing on the hill culture of the Indian Himalayas proceeded in conventional channels for a long time and did (does) not succeed in developing its own discourse. It began in the early sixties - the milestone being **Gerald D. Berreman's** monograph *Hindus of the Himalayas*², which concentrates on Garhwal and which became a "classic" in Central Himalayan research. Berreman lays down the aims of his study in three points:

"(1) To provide an ethnographic community study in an important and previously unreported culture area of India; (2) to analyze the functioning and interrelationship of kin, caste, and community ties in a Hindu society known to be differently organized in some significant respects than those of the adjacent and well-known plains; and (3) to study the effects of recent

governmental programs and other outside contacts on a relatively isolated and conservative Indian community" (1993:2).

Referring to the prevalent anthropological discourses of the time, Berreman's research is located in the tradition of village studies, studies of social stratification (primarily caste and kinship), and studies of social dynamics and change. He wanted to nurture these (up to then) regionally limited discourses by adding a new regional focus, which probably could provide new insights.³

In the same years in which Berreman worked on his village study, **R.D. Sanwal** was preparing his Ph.D. thesis on caste and social stratification in Kumaon (1976)⁴. In this, Sanwal combines historical and anthropological perspectives:

"The study presented here is of somewhat wider scope than the conventional anthropological field study; it does not present a detailed description of a village or any particular local community. Nor is it a historical study in the conventional sense of the term. What the study seeks to do is to identify a set of basic social categories, and examine their mutual relations and the ways in which these relations (and the categories themselves) have been changing over time" (1976:10).

Sanwal, who for the first time gave a systematic, historically based account of caste structure and caste interaction in the hills, did not receive great publicity (as did Berreman), but for scholars working on the Kumaoni society and culture his book became basic reading matter.⁵

In his book Sanwal tries to show that, in Kumaon, caste cannot be viewed merely in terms of ritual criteria, but has to be seen as a system which is characterized "by the convergence of wealth, political power and high rank" (1976:vi). In the first chapter Sanwal traces the roots of the social structure of Kumaoni society - a structure which was still extant when the British conquered Kumaon - back to the early times of Chand Dynasty (from the 11th century up to the time of the Gorkha invasion in 1790); in the next chapter he analyses the economic positions (landownership, occupation, economic exchange) of the basic status groups. Sanwal postulates that by the sixteenth century when Chand power was firmly established in Kumaon, the status structure also received its final shape. It was characterized by a threefold hierarchy of politico-economically defined status groups: the Asal- or Thul-Jats (immigrants from the plains, holders of superior tenures, monopoly of bureaucracy), the *Khasī* ("indigenous" people, under-tenants, actual tillers of the land) and the Dom (ethnically different "indigenous" people⁶, menial tasks, devoid of landrights). But by considering ritual rank (*varṇa*), one uncovers that it cuts across this secular hierarchy:

"(i) the Asal - or Thul-jat, including the Asal- or Bhal-Baman caste (consisting of the Chauthani and the Pachbiri sub-castes) and the Thakur-Rajput or Kshetri caste; (ii) the Khasi including the Pitali-, Hali- or Khasi-Baman and the Khasi-Jimdar (divided into *naee* and *purana*) castes; and (iii) the Dom" (1976:27-28).

As Sanwal points out, due to this hierarchical structure in which secular rank does not coincide with ritual rank it happens (a) that "Thul-jat as a whole rank higher than Khasi as a whole; consequently Thul-jat Rajput rank higher than Khasi Brahmin" (1976:2), and (b) that the Brahmins (the Chauthani) who are monopolizing political and administrative functions⁷ are enjoying higher status than those (the Pachbiri) who hold priestly functions as *purohit* and *pujārī*.

After a painstaking analysis of political, military and economic functions of different groups and sub-groups of the Kumaoni social structure and analyzing marriage relations and social mobility, Sanwal dedicates the final part of his book to the political changes the Gorkha invasion and British rule have brought to Kumaon.

Sanwal's theory of stratification has been criticized recently by **Charles W. Brown** and **Maheshwar P. Joshi** (1990). In their opinion, Sanwal's theoretical approach contains some serious mistakes, the most important being that the caste structure is treated as an expression of the principle of immigration, and that a too strict organization is postulated for Kumaoni society, whereas according to their own "more fluid model", caste should be seen as a result of the transformation of both, immigrants and indigenous groups (1990:249). Furthermore, Chand rulers have been wrongly attributed to be the main architects of Kumaoni caste structure; even if they were "most decisive", the structure itself has been "solidified" both by the Gorkha and the British rule (1990:246). The authors state:

"In fact there does not exist any work other than that of Sanwal which has been carried out in a very systematic and scientific manner. However, the weakness of Sanwal lies in his over-reliance on the works of early British and Indian writers (...) who had *invented* history for the Kumaonis. By the time Sanwal carried out his field work, the local people had become so much history conscious that they gave a coloured version of their community. Thus, certain things were accepted as historical facts" (1990:257).

A synthesis of Berreman's and Sanwal's approach was undertaken by **Allen C. Fanger** in his Ph.D. thesis (1980)⁸:

"The primary integrating theme of this dissertation is that an understanding of synchronic ethnographic data can be enhanced when seen in the context of a diachronic and historical perspective. It was apparent during my fieldwork in the Himalayan village of Bargaon that village society and culture had been undergoing rapid change. As I researched the historical roots of this sociocultural change, I found that the more I investigated the past the more I understood the present" (1980:1).

The dissertation is divided into two sections. The first section presents a diachronic analysis of Kumaoni society "with special attention focused on the patterns and directions of change in Kumaoni social stratification" (1980:1), the second gives a synchronic analysis of the village of Bargaon⁹. In the first part Fanger relies heavily on the work of R.D. Sanwal, which he indicates only in a

footnote (1980:67). In the second part, he follows the lines of Berreman's study. We will restrict our comments to the latter part.

Fanger claims to present the first village study on an "important ethnographic zone", "a region of the Himalayan foothills known as Kumaon" (1980:4). He aims to investigate the village as "a meaningful structure in itself" and as "a structural unit of a broader social system" (1980:15). Fanger tries to analyze the organizational structure of village society under the aspect of dynamics and change: he concentrates on caste structure, caste interaction (food exchange, economic exchange)¹⁰ and the process of "Sanskritization". When dealing with the village economy, Fanger takes into account labour processes, property relations and the development of cash economy and employment migration. The structure and change of family and family relations are correlated with the changing economic conditions. In contrast to other analyses that predict a connection between employment migration and the decline of the joint family, Fanger postulates that employment migration "seems to be contributing to its strength" (1980:446).

We have mentioned that Berreman, Sanwal - and we can add Fanger as well - with their regional studies implicitly contributed, or explicitly wanted to contribute, to a more general theoretical debate on kin, caste and social stratification. In his foreword to Sanwal's book M.N. Srinivas pointed out that "the time is indeed ripe" to concentrate first on the empirical reality instead of "proceeding from some intuitively-grasped principle" (Sanwal 1976:vi). This argument, even by being an empiristic one, contains an element of truth.

Recently, **John Leavitt** (1992) took on the task of criticizing holistic approaches in the sociology of India (Dumont, Marriott), referring to Kumaoni data on ritual, pantheon, and regional history, "all areas that call for more complex analyses than holism offers" (1992:5)¹¹. Leavitt criticizes that the premise "India is one", labelled as "cultural holism", leads to the interpretation of local data only as exemplifications of holistic patterns, "radically underestimating the reality and importance of regional and historical specificity in South Asia" (1992:4).

For Leavitt, holistic models are particularly powerful in locating ways in which widely shared South Asian conceptions differ from Western ones (1992:11). But they are not suited for analyses that try to interpret traditions and customs in their own rights and along region-specific meanings, they may even lead to an ignorance of traditions that do not fit into the general pattern.¹² Leavitt suggests "to seek structure on the level of local materials, structure that is not necessarily a reflex of that found somewhere (everywhere) else (...)" (1992:40). Neither can the Kumaoni materials be reduced to the label "residual", nor to that of a variation of the "great tradition". The two examples that should support Leavitt's argument are "the patterning of time" and the "patterning of divinity" (1992:21-28).

Still within the tradition of village studies and written in the monographic style are the works of **Monika Krengel** (1989) and **Joanne Moller** (1993), both on Almora District, Kumaon.¹³ In contrast to their "predecessors" the authors claim to place emphasis on understanding the social life of village people by means of emic categories. Additionally, both are taking strongly into

consideration the perspective of women, focussing on research on women's daily routine and interactions.

Krengel's research is located in the traditions of British social anthropology (Meyer-Fortes, Nadel) and French structuralism (Dumont, Lévi-Strauss). As indicated by its title, the book is intended as a presentation of the social structure of a Kumaoni village, centered around the institutions of household and family, caste, kinship, and marriage. Individuals (especially women) are seen in their different roles and changing identities in the course of life, attention being paid also to the description of rites de passage. The exchange of gifts, women and services are for Krengel of utmost importance for an understanding of Kumaoni social life. Exchange is seen as a symbolic message and language substitute, governing practically and ideologically the production and reproduction of life and social system. In the first pages of her book Moller states that

"Kumaoni villagers conceptually organise their social world on segmentary principles, locally expressed by the opposition between the inside (*bhiter*) and the outside (*bhyār*). The conceptual opposition of 'inside' and 'outside' is replicated at various levels of society. The segmentary logic means that the inside/outside dichotomy is flexible ... Who 'outsiders' are (and hence who 'insiders' are) varies from context to context and depends on the level of identification" (1993:11).

With the inside/outside-dichotomy Moller claims to have identified "the" meaningful local concept governing social praxis and cultural interpretation. The study as a whole aims to examine this conceptual opposition with regard to inter-household and intra-household, affinal and intercaste relations, and relations with the people of the plains. It differentiates between men's and women's perceptions and between the perceptions of outmarried women (village daughters/sisters) and unmarried women (village wives). Differentiating between "inside" and "outside", the work of Moller deals with a set of ideological oppositions, which for her seem to be constitutive of social interaction, like moral superiority - inferiority, order - disorder, trust - mistrust etc. Arranging the material within the above mentioned conceptual framework, Moller gives a precise account of high caste village life.¹⁴ Her results widely overlap with those presented by Krengel.

The works of Berreman, Sanwal, Fanger, Krengel and Moller have something in common: they all deal with **village** life, **village** structure and **village** dynamics under a historical and/or contemporary perspective. Moving now from totality to particularity, different **aspects** of hill culture come into focus.

Several publications take on the task of presenting and discussing the *jāgar* - a specific way of communication with gods and spirits through medium possession, especially prevalent in Kumaon. In his article on *jāgar* ceremonies Allen C. Fanger (1990) differentiates between existing forms of *jāgar* (house or inside/village or outside *jāgar*, *jāgar* held in times of crisis or as a thanksgiving ceremony¹⁵); he further describes the functions and roles of the essential participants and gives a description of one *jāgar* performance, also

citing the recitations (but only in a translated version). A more analytical way of dealing with *jāgar* can be found in the article by Beatrix Pfeleiderer and Lothar Lutze (1979). After first describing the *jāgar* as a performance the authors give "the anthropologist's interpretation" (starting from an ethno-psychoanalytical approach), which centrally reflects on the therapeutical and re-integrative value of the *jāgar*.¹⁶ Short presentations of *jāgar* ceremonies are also part of the monographies of M. Krengel and J. Moller, an even earlier interpretation has been given by M. Gaborieau (1975).

Whereas, regionally, the research on *jāgar* ceremonies is largely limited to Kumaon¹⁷, there is another field of anthropological study that deals with an aspect of cultural life and covers Kumaon as well as neighbouring Garhwal: the study of **marriage systems and marriage prestations**.

In 1987 an anthology was edited by M. K. Raha on *Polyandry in India* containing several articles on polyandry in the Himalayas (including Himachal Pradesh, the Tibetan border region, etc.). In his contribution (first published as early as 1962), G.D. Berreman tries to compare the polyandrous region of Jaunsar Bawar with the non-polyandrous neighbouring region of Garhwal¹⁸. Peoples of both regions live under "virtually identical physical conditions and their populations and cultures are very similar" (1987a:157). After examining the forms of "monandry" and "polyandry" (including a discussion of current explanations of polyandry), he comes to the conclusion that "a most important feature" has been overlooked by previous commentators: Within the joint family system, prevalent in this area, sexual and interpersonal connotations of the two systems are very similar. Polyandry and monandry are, according to Berreman, relatively minor variations on a central theme, namely: "that a wife brings common benefits to a group of brothers who have acquired her by common payment and who share other rights and property in common" (1987a:169). In one case the reproductive capacity of the wife is shared, in the other it is not.

In a subsequent effort (1975, also reprinted in Raha's anthology), Berreman demands to take into account the "domestic cycle" (or "developmental cycle") when talking about Pahari polyandry. He shows that in so-called polyandrous systems the "domestic unit" may change in the course of time and according to circumstances and choice (1987b:195). So families occur which successively "take the form commonly described as monogamy, fraternal polyandry, polygyny, and fraternal polygynandry or group marriage, with the number of wives and husbands varying" (1987b:195). To illustrate his theses Berreman constructs an idealtypical family passing different forms in the course of time, starting by a fraternal polyandrous family, passing the other states and ending up as a typical monogamous household.

In research on polyandry, the status of women in polyandrous societies is being taken up as a new topic, for example by G.S. Bhatt and S.D. Jain (1987). The authors examine the status of the women in Jaunsar Bawar according to their different roles as village daughter (*dhyantī*, living in the father's house) and wife (*ryantī*, living in the husband's house). G.S. Bhatt has also presented a more systematic field-based study of women's status in the polyandrous regions of Rawain and Jaunpur (1991). He concentrates on this region because in comparison to Jaunsar Bawar marriage habits there are "hitherto unexplored" (1991:1). Several short periods of fieldwork (one to three

weeks) were done in five villages with different social and physical settings (difference according to caste structure, population size, altitude, economic prosperity, distance to roads, etc.).

The study of marriage prestations seems to be of special interest in Garhwal and Kumaon because of the ongoing transformation process from bridewealth (brideprice) to dowry among Rajput clans. Allen C. Fanger analyzes this process in a Kumaoni village. He argues that "diverted bridewealth" (e.g., jewellery given from the groom's side to the bride; cash, which is used by the parents of the bride for the bride's jewellery, dowry and for the wedding feast) characterizes the transitional phase. In his opinion, the transformation from bridewealth to dowry in the Pahari region can be explained by "Sanskritization", migration and the declining economic importance of women¹⁹, and by the growing prosperity which allows people to afford ceremonies and customs "befitting a Rajput's position in society" (1992:54).

The last two authors we want to discuss - William Sax and Jean-Claude Galey - are concentrating on fields which are most crucial for the understanding of Indian culture and society: religion and politics. Both authors try to locate their approaches in current theoretical debates.

The publications of William Sax are dealing with ritual praxis (1990, 1991 a+b, 1994), trying to decipher the implicit meanings of different ritual practices for the cultural and social life in which they are embedded. For Sax, anthropology is an interpretative science "in search of local logics, particular processes, and fluid systems of meaning"; the "others" are seen by him as human beings with "creative capacity to construct alternative universes of meaning" (1991a:5). And, as meaning is related to context, the worldviews of people have to be taken under closer scrutiny, not as static cultural determinants but as a dynamic set of ideas and practices.

"The concept of world view needs to be expanded so as to incorporate action and practice (...) A world view is only realized in its pragmatic public applications, wherein it is transformed, being shaped by the history and practices of the people that hold it, even as it, in turn, shapes that history and those practices" (1991a:11).

Without referring to the notion, a concept of "agency" is implicit in Sax' writings. Accordingly, his major work *Mountain Goddess* (1991a)²⁰ "is an attempt to synthesize some important local categories of place and person, and to examine the ways in which these categories shape and are in turn shaped by social practice." (1991a:9) For his analyses he draws upon material collected during his fieldwork in Chamoli District of Garhwal (1984-86, 1987; participant observation of Nanda Devi pilgrimages), the emphasis being laid upon orally transmitted genres like legends, stories and - most prominently - songs. Giving a key to shared sentiments in a cultural context the songs also reveal differences in perspective and interpretation breaking down the presumed totality of this context. Sax tries to show the interrelation between places and people in the social as well as in the political context, he also tries to show how traditions are the object of reinterpretation through the agents.

Mountain Goddess (1991a, also Sax 1990)²¹ is dealing with the pilgrimages of Nanda Devi, a goddess widely worshipped in the eastern part of Garhwal and parts of Kumaon: the *Choṭī Jāt*, which meanders for three weeks in the mountainous Badhan region of Chamoli District; and the *Rāj Jāt*, a three weeks 164 km barefoot journey in Chamoli District from Nauti, near Chandpur Fort, to Roopkund. During the *yātras* Nanda Devi is seated in a palanquin moving from her parent's home in the "lowlands" to her husband's place on the mountains (Mount Kailash).

Sax points out that Nanda Devi's story parallels the life stories of Pahari women who, living in a virilocal society, are expected to shift from their native place (*mait*) to their husbands' place (*sasurāl*) after marriage. Together with the shifting of place - i.e. the shifting to a new social context with a new set of relations, rights and obligations - the bride is expected to undergo a personal transformation. The pilgrimage of Nanda Devi is seen by Sax as a ritual dramatization of a social practice - the geographical change of place and the psychological drama of changing one's context of identification -, leading to an immense individual (and collective) tension which has to be overcome.

The songs of Nanda Devi which "capture the emotions and ambivalence associated with marriage" (1991a:71) also mirror different views on the mutual influence of persons and places: the perspectives of women and of men. Men²² say that the bride is totally transformed by moving to a new place, her relations to the people and gods of her *mait* are terminated by marriage and a new set of relations takes their place (1990:495). By contrast, women argue that the old relations never cease and the bond to their natal home will remain strong throughout their lives. Sax points out that the ethnography of Garhwal is a proof that "marriage does not replace one set of relations with another but rather adds a new set of relations to a pre-existing one. (...) a woman never ceases (...) to be the *dhiyanī* of her *mait*." (1991a:126)

Sax shows that relations between persons and places are effective on the political level too. The historical relation of the goddess Nanda Devi (*Rājarājeśvarī*) to the ruling Panwar dynasty of Garhwal served to legitimate their claim for sovereignty and royal power. The royal pilgrimage "traditionally reified and strengthened the unity of king, land, and people in Uttarakhand by physically circumambulating them" (1991a:198). But the kingdom of which the royal pilgrimage is a collective representation, has vanished, and the lack of unifying power reveals its consequences. In the *Rāj Jāt* of 1987 a far-reaching dispute between two factions of priests arose. Related with different places (Chandpur Fort/"Lowland"/*mait* vs. Homkund/"Highland"/*sasurāl*), they traditionally worship the goddess successively, each group in its own place. In the royal pilgrimage of 1987, each group of Brahmins claimed exclusive religious authority, and the conflict escalated to the refusal of *pūjā* by the "Highlanders". Territorial and religious fragmentation and conflict have been experienced by the pilgrims, the different factions and by the anthropologist as a severe challenge of the royal pilgrimage of 1987, which affected tradition and traditional customs deeply (and which, for Sax, proves the fragility of Victor Turner's *communitas* model).

The dynamics of ritual praxis and changing traditions in contemporary pilgrimages, especially the *Rāj Jāt* of 1987, are shown by Sax to be effective on

other levels, the most important of which are: (1) The abandoning of animal sacrifice and the ongoing dispute on the necessity of blood sacrifice for the self-containment and the security of society; (2) The participation of females, Harijans, and one stranger in the last part of the *yātra*, which was formerly forbidden to them; (3) the participation of the media in the pilgrimage and their influence on discourses and ritual practices.

Though Sax presents a most stimulating work, he does not fully utilise the potential of the perspectivistic concept would have offered. In his approach to Nānda Devi pilgrimages, Sax relies strongly on oral tradition and interpretations of Brahmins, being personally acquainted with Brahmin groups. He does not take into consideration systematically the views of the Rajput and Harijan groups, whose interpretations and cultural expressions may differ in certain respects.

In another field of research, the *Pāṇḍavalīlā* as a form of ritual theatre, Sax concentrates on performances in Rajput villages (1991b). *Pāṇḍavalīlā* in its many forms is a dramatic translation of local versions of the *Mahābhārata* performed by villagers. The *Mahābhārata* is strongly linked with the Rajputs and the *mise en scène* of the epos has to be interpreted as a stabilization of Rajput identity. As a collective effort, it further serves to promote the unification of the village; as a form of worship (*pūjā*), it generates prosperity and general well-being. Sax classifies *Pāṇḍavalīlā*, in the course of which possession constitutes a central dramatic and ritual element, as a form of folk theatre, locating the difference to classical theatre in the overcoming of the "distinction between actors and the characters they play" (1991b:293).²³

The publications of Jean-Claude Galey (1990, 1984, 1980) are mainly concerned with the relation between ritual and politics in India on a theoretical as well as an empirical level. The writings clearly reveal that Galey is to be located in the anthropological tradition of Louis Dumont, working explicitly in Dumont's discursive framework. But, in his historic-anthropological reconstruction of the former kingdom of Tehri Garhwal, he follows a more empirical approach. In *Reconsidering Kingship in India* Galey starts from one of the most problematic aspects of Dumont's theory on India. Dumont, on the one hand, conceptualizes king and kingship basically as a secular function, which stands in a relation "of mutual but asymmetrical interdependence" with the priestly function of the Brahmin (1990:145). But, on the other hand, he attests that the king has kept a "magico-religious character" (1990:146). With regard to Dumont, Galey complains that "we are left with separate levels with no clue to understanding how they are related and combine to order a common set of meaning." (1990:146). Thus, the main question for him is:

"whether kingship in India was primarily political with ritual or ideological justifications, or a ritual imperative with political consequence [sic]" (1990:181).

Galey tries to exemplify that kingship as found in Tehri Garhwal has to be conceptualized as a "ritual organisation which, along with priesthood and the gods, orders the world in a continuous series of transformations" (1990:184, emphasis added). Structure and history of the former Tehri State bear evidence that kingship as ritual organization is characterized by the concurrence of

religious **and** territorially based political networks, which originate in local kinship relations, clan dynamics and related power structures. Dominant clans, unified through kinship and ritual ties (clan *devtā*), exercise power over their local clientele, but "along a strict secular thread." They can extend their "mastery" by incorporating the clan *devtā* into the local pantheon or by replacing the ruling deity of a locality (1990:162).

"What matters most here is the ritual status now given to a head of the House. Ceremonial prerogatives over locality transform political mastery into religious potency. Power therefore becomes authority through ritual. We should then distinguish them and separate the power of chiefdoms from the authority of lordships" (1990:162).

Galey proceeds in claiming a **royal function** for the lords. The investiture of the **king** requires a special set of rituals which "demonstrate the exceptional character of the office and separate its representative from the rest of society" (1990:167). Royalty in Tehri was ritually defined as a unique combination of three complementary elements:

(1) The ceremony at the moment of investiture, when the king comes to sit on the throne (*gaḍḍī*): It takes the form of a ritual marriage and is seen as a repetition of the original union between his ancestor and the local princess²⁴ as well as a union with the feminine counterpart as a source of ritual energy (*piṭha*).

(2) The ritual association with the *Devī* who is the family deity (as *Rājarājeśvarī*) and the territorial goddess (as *Bhagvatī*). The cult of the *Devī* serves "to keep the manifold levels of royal authority alive, to restore its permeating energies within a kingdom ritually defined as an active field (*kṣetra*) and animated by female energies (*śakti*): an arena of potency submitted to growth and decay." (1990:168)

(3) The relationship between the king and the *avatār*²⁵, which related to the principle of renunciation. The kingdom is established as "a *realm of order* and the *access to deliverance*" (*tīrtha*) (1990:170).

Without saying so, Galey has revised Dumont in three aspects: by putting into the foreground the ritual dimension of kingship; by integrating territoriality as a basic category in his model; and by conceptualizing kingship as a key concept for the understanding of social organization. The last aspect is of crucial interest. By connecting the royal function and royalty with the basic elements of sociality - kinship, marriage, patronage -, Galey locates the idea of kingship in the heart of society. Kingship is the constitutive principle, the seed from which society in its social, political and ritual aspects unfolds.

In an earlier work, *Le créancier, le roi, la mort* (1980), Galey presents debt ("la dette") as a key concept for the understanding of the social and political organization which is mainly characterized by relations of dependence:

"la dette, et plus largement la relation de débiteur à créancier, est un paradigme central pour qui voudrait saisir le fondement des relations de dépendance" (1980:145).

He develops this concept in the course of his study on bonded labour in western Garhwal, in which he first gives a statistical account of indebtedness in the area under research. He then analyzes debt as structural basis of economic inequality and dependency, explaining the different forms of service. But indebtedness is not seen as an isolated phenomenon, rather it gets support from the caste-based structure of society. "Mise au plan de valeurs, la hiérarchie sociale répond à une hiérarchie des dettes" (1980:162).

Galey constructs a far-reaching analogy: "Dette" as a paradigm serves to explain economic inequality as well as political subordination and religious dependency. It is reflected in the relations between castes (*système des vaincus*, 1980:114), in the different forms of prostitution (*prostitution pour dette*, *prostitution de temple*) and adoption, in the relations between the sovereign and his subjects, between men and gods, between the *rāja* and the gods.

Galey's analysis of sociality with the help of a central paradigm is based on categories related to the field of economics. Ten years later his endeavour for an all-embracing interpretation persists, but the language has shifted. Galey's categorical edifice now derives from the field of politics and is closer to the categorical framework of Dumont.

The picture of Galey's work would not be complete without mentioning one of the most important consequences inherent in his approach of conceptualizing kingship. The conceptual dissociation of king and royal function leads to the conclusion that despite the disappearance of the king from the political scene, kingship is still present on many levels of society. Kingship as an "operating agency" (1990:130) has remained almost unaffected:

"Present in the minds of those who have witnessed its last decades of rule, alive in all the oral traditions, it continues to have a direct influence on the daily lives of the local population and still governs many of the customary institutions ruling over land control, patronage networks, life rituals and calendar ceremonies" (1990:129).

Galey (1990) finds empirical evidence for his hypotheses in the working of clan mechanisms and the ritual calendar (ceremonial cycles around the year). In an earlier article "Souveraineté et justice dans le Haut-Gange" (1984), which deals with forms of jurisdiction and its representatives in Tehri Garhwal (justice du palais, justice au niveau local), he analyzes in depth the juridical functions of the *wazīr* and the *sayānā* acting on the local level and which seem to prove the continuous existence of the royal function after termination of the rule of the Tehri *rāja*. In contrast to *sayānā*-ship, which represents a secular form of jurisdiction, *wazīr*-ship is connected with a temple and the authority of the *wazīr* derives from the gods: "la justice du *wazīr* est d'abord celle de la sanction divine" (1984:374). Galey attributes to the *wazīr* (who mostly has a political and territorial power base as *sayānā* or *thokdār*) a royal function because of his ritual position:

"En somme, la fonction royale assumée par le *Wazīr* dispose ici d'un pouvoir religieux, qui lui permet d'effacer le crime ... il faut aussi souligner que la justice du *Wazīr* se réclame du *dharma* (...) (1984:385).

Galey's work contributes to the expanding field of historical anthropology, which in the Indian context has its main focus upon "little kingdoms" and centers on the confrontation of perspectives deriving from Louis Dumont and Arthur Hocart, respectively, re-evaluating the interrelations between kings, religion and caste "system". In Galey's case, structural analysis prevails against historical analysis of processes and interactions. He tends to adopt the ethnographic present while discussing specific institutions and uses a generalistic mode, abstracting from the particularities of context. *Wazīr*-ship (like *sayānā*-ship), e.g., is presented as a typological model (Galey 1984) without indicating how this relates to the different circumstances Galey must have encountered in the different localities he seems to have visited.²⁶ It is striking that the author for the most part dispenses with the presentation of ethnographic details, places and contexts. In addition, nowhere are the dates of his fieldwork given with any precision (at least not in the publications consulted).

* * *

Instead of a resumé, we simply raise a question: What has been achieved in anthropological studies on Garhwal and Kumaon, and what is yet to be done? Our answer deals with four main aspects.

- (1) The publications concentrating on Garhwal and Kumaon deal largely with the topics, most prevalent in the anthropology of India: caste, kinship and marriage, religion (ritual) and politics. Research from an anthropological point of view, which would deal systematically with the most challenging regional problems - processes of modernization and integration into larger society, denial of political autonomy, environmental degradation, and local strategies of (re)action - is lacking.
- (2) Besides having region-specific value, some works are contributing to current theoretical debates as well (not necessarily restricted to the Indian context). Further theoretical efforts would help to bring the region more into the forefront, to gain attention and relevance in wider circles.
- (3) The literature reveals a tendency, a "trend", to take into serious account the perspectives, interpretive schemes and life-worlds of women. But still preference is given to the high caste perspective in most of the works, largely ignoring those of the low-ranking groups.
- (4) Researchers working in the Pahari region hail from different countries, use different languages, and relate to different theoretical backgrounds - there seems little willingness to get involved in a common discourse, even when there exist points of contact, as between Sax and Galey.²⁷ Exchange, cooperation and discourse among scholars within the region and beyond must be developed.

Notes:

1 This review article does not claim to be all-embracing. It does not present every anthropological piece which has been written on the region. We selected (available!) works which in our opinion are of crucial importance and also can illustrate in some way the region's "history of research". The discussion of ecological issues of the Himalaya regions of Garhwal and Kumaon, which is concentrated in related disciplines, though including anthropological questions, has been presented in Linkenbach (1992).

2 Berreman's book was first published in 1962. It is based on fieldwork carried out 1957-58 in Garhwal, in a village near Dehra Dun, and on his dissertation, submitted at Cornell University in 1959.

3 Parallel to his monograph Berreman wrote a piece in which he reflects on his personal experience in the field (1962). But according to the conventions of the time, Berreman isolated his reflections on fieldwork from his publication; they were included as a *Prologue* only in the edition of 1972.

4 The thesis *Changes in Caste in Rural Kumaon* was submitted in 1966 to the London School of Economics. The book *Social Stratification in Rural Kumaon* was published in 1976 (posthumous).

5 Besides the works of R.D. Sanwal and G.D. Berreman, the famous Gazetteer of E.T. Atkinson (1882, 1884, 1886) serves as a base for all research on Kumaon and Garhwal. Especially for Kumaon, the publication of G.W. Traill from 1928 (reprinted in 1992) needs to be mentioned.

6 To trace the origins of Doms in history seems to be a highly speculative task, as reliable historical sources are not available. All too easily the Aryan - non Aryan (Dravidian) - dichotomy gets reproduced.

7 But from the Chauthanis also came the holder of the important function of *dharmādhikārī*, the final authority in dharmic matters. "It was this official who interpreted caste law, and declared and legitimized the upward movement of a group in the caste hierarchy (...). The *dharmādhikārī*'s position had to be respected even by the rulers of Kumaon." (Sanwal 1976:viii) For the *dharmādhikārī* in Garhwal under the Tehri Garhwal *rāja* and after see Galey 1984.

8 The empirical data for the thesis were collected by Allen Fanger in the course of his fieldwork in 1966-67. The dissertation was submitted to Syracuse University in 1980; it is unpublished. Later publications of Fanger (1987, 1990, 1991, 1992) are based on this fieldwork as well as on data collected during two later visits (1981-82, 1986/87).

9 Bargaon is the pseudonym for Pakhura, situated not far from Almora. In later publications (e.g. 1992, s. footnote 10) Fanger uses the real name of the village, because villagers themselves had encouraged him to do so.

10 An overview of caste structure and economic exchange in Pakhura and the nearby region is presented by Allen Fanger (1992).

11 John Leavitt (1985) has written a doctoral thesis on Kumaon. It is unpublished and not accessible to us.

12 Leavitt points out the limits of holism:

"(...) a tendency to privilege the widespread over the local; to privilege the classical over the vernacular; to privilege those aspects of life that fit classical models over those that do not; and a tendency to replace specific analysis with exemplifications of a preordained scheme" (1992: 12). Seeing Leavitt's strong criticism of holistic approaches, it is quite amazing that he pleads for the use of holistic categories when comparing for example India and the West. First, if regional traditions do not fit into the "general pattern" - is it justified to recognize this pattern as "general"? If Brahmanical "sanskritic Hinduism", which describes the single cultural pattern underlying the holistic model, has itself to be seen as a result of historical change (1992:29) - is it justified to take this hegemonial and limited pattern as generally valid, transcending time and space? Second: Cultural holism does necessarily reduce the multidimensionality of cultural interpretations by *constructing* a single one. Why then oppose and compare "constructs"?

13 Monika Krengel conducted fieldwork in a village near Almora for 18 months in 1983 and 1984/85. The publication "Sozialstrukturen im Kumaon" is identical with her doctoral thesis submitted to the University of Heidelberg in 1988. Joanne Moller carried out fieldwork between 1989 and 1991 in a village near Ranikhet, Almora District. Her dissertation was submitted to the London School of Economics and Political Science in 1993; the thesis is unpublished.

14 By the way, Moller mentions that her thesis "is primarily an account of high caste Kumaoni villager's ideas" (1993: 12). But most of the time she is writing in a generalizing manner.

15 Pfeleiderer and Lutze (1979) differentiate between "*jāgar* of unhappiness" (*dukh kā jāgar*) and "*jāgar* of happiness" (*sukh kā jāgar*); the latter is performed when the former has proved successful.

16 The article of John Leavitt, "Oracular Therapy in the Kumaon Hills: A Question of Rationality", was not available and could not be included in this review.

17 In Garhwal the village *jāgar* exists, but systematic research has not been undertaken. J.C. Galey mentions the *jāgar* in Tehri *riyāsat* (s. Galey 1984).

18 Berreman mentions in a footnote that also for Rawain and Jaunpur, immediately adjacent to Jaunsar Bawar (Rawain today belonging to District Uttarkashi, Jaunpur to District Dehra Dun), polyandrous marriages have been reported. See also Bhatt (1991).

19 This argument does not seem correct, especially for areas with high male migration, where the role of women in the household increases.

20 The book was also included in the review article by Berg (1993).

21 Again an article on Nanda Devi songs and the inherent perspectivism has been published most recently in Sax 1994.

22 Sax points out that the men's discourses are not uniform in that one has to differentiate between men as husbands and men as brothers (the latter linked with the bride's natal place).

23 For an indological contribution to Pāṇḍavalīlā see Zoller (1994).

24 It is said that Kanak Pal, the legendary founder of the Panwar dynasty of Garhwal, who came on pilgrimage to Badrinath from the Dhar region of west central India, married the daughter of the king of Chandpur (according to Rawat 1989).

25 *Narasimha-Badrināth*, the incarnation of *Viṣṇu*, is the divinity of the kingdom (*rāṣṭra devtā*) and the king's personal divinity (*iṣṭ devtā*). In the palace the king is treated as the divinity (*Bolanda* [speaking] *Badrināth*), in the temple he is the main worshipper of the god (*pradhān sevak*).

26 Three temple-localities, Hanol, Lakhamandal and Purola, are mentioned in a footnote in Galey 1984. Of these only Hanol is described in more detail in Galey 1986 and 1980. In his article of 1986 Galey presents three temple-localities, Hanol, Joshimath and Badrinath. In these places the hierarchical totality, the mutual interdependence of pure - impure found in social (caste) relations is paralleled in the relation between men and gods and between the gods themselves.

27 A first attempt to bring together research from different disciplines on different Himalayan regions has been made by Fanger, Joshi and Brown in editing *Himalaya: Past and Present*. But as far as we know, this effort did not lead to a continuous exchange between researchers.

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TOPICAL REPORT

Nepalese Political Parties: Developments since the 1991 Elections

John Whelpton

Based on a computer file updated regularly since 1990, this survey does not claim to be analytical but simply records some of the main developments in intra- and inter-party politics up to the recent (November 1994) general election.¹ Information has been drawn principally from the *Nepal Press Digest*, also from "Saptahik Bimarsha", *Spotlight* and other publications and from interviews conducted in Kathmandu. Only brief mention has been made of the pre-1991 history of each party, including its role in the Movement for the Restoration of Democracy, and fuller details will be found in Whelpton 1993 and in POLSAN 1992: 9-53; the latter also provides details of party organisation and attitudes of activists and parliamentarians. Popular perceptions of the parties and their support among different sections of the population are discussed using opinion survey data in Borre *et al.* 1994 and in IIDS 1993, while the issue of malpractice in the 1992 local elections is examined in DREFDEN 1992. Useful analysis of trends since the 1991 general election will be provided by the forthcoming CNAS publication of the proceedings of a June 1994 seminar on "State, Leadership and Politics in Nepal".

A. PARTIES REPRESENTED IN PARLIAMENT NOW AND/OR IN 1991-94

The underlined parties have held seats in the House of Representatives (Pratinidhi Sabha) under their own name. Percentages are of the 7,291,084 total votes cast in 1991 and 7,625,348 in the 1994 election;² in 1991 the turnout was 65.15% and the number of valid votes 6,969,061, and the 1994 figures were 62% and 7,384,277. Parties receiving less than 3% of the popular vote are not officially recognised as national parties and are not automatically entitled to exclusive use of the election symbol they were originally allotted. Where a party's number of seats changed between the two general elections, the new figure has been shown in brackets after the original one. Twelve minor groups contested the 1991 election without winning any seat, securing only 1.18% of valid votes between them, and 19 similar groups obtained 4.03% in 1994. Independent candidates attracted 4.17% of the vote in 1991, and three were elected, all of whom subsequently joined Congress. In 1994 the independents' share was 6.18% and seven of them gained seats.

NEPALI CONGRESS PARTY

(1991: 110 (114)³ seats - 37.75%; 1994: 83 seats - 33.38%)

Founded in India as the Nepali National Congress in 1947, Congress is the oldest party and, although now out of power, still the one with the largest share of the popular vote. It retains some prestige from its central role in the overthrow of the Rana regime, its victory in the 1959 election and its struggle

against the panchayat regime. The party's president, Krishna Prasad Bhattarai, became prime minister in the 1990-91 interim government, which had three other Congress members: Yogprasad Upadhyaya (Home and Communications), Marshal Julum Shakya (Supply, Construction and Transport) and Mahendra Narayan Nidhi (Water Resources and Local Development). This domination of the pre-election government meant that Congress took the major blame for failure to meet the high expectations of April 1990. Although obtaining a clear majority of the 205 seats in May 1991, its prestige was dented by its losing to the **Nepal Communist Party (Unified Marxist-Leninist, abbreviated to UML)** in 4 of the 5 Kathmandu constituencies, including Bhattarai's own defeat by the UML's General Secretary. Marshal Julum Shakya was defeated in Patan-2, and Mahendra Narayan Nidhi (a veteran of the 1959-60 parliament) was the only Congress member of the interim administration to win a seat. Other defeated candidates included the wife and son of Ganesh Man Singh.

Bhattarai resigned the premiership shortly after the results were announced and the party General Secretary, Girija Prasad Koirala, became leader of the parliamentary board and prime minister. The brother of former prime ministers B.P. and M.P. Koirala, Girija Prasad had successfully contested the Tarai seats of Sunsari-1 and Morang-1. After the election he resigned from the Sunsari seat and also from the post of General Secretary. The new, all-Nepali Congress cabinet was as follows (asterisks denote those who had also been members of the 1959-60 parliament):

Girija Prasad KOIRALA	Prime Minister, Defence, Foreign, Finance, Health, Palace Affairs
Basudev RISAL	Water Resources, Communications
*Bal Bahadur RAI	Housing and Physical Planning
*Jagan Nath ACHARYA	Land Reform
*Sheikh IDRIS	Labour, Co-operatives, Social Welfare
Ram Hari JOSHI	Education and Culture, Tourism
Shailaja ACHARYA	Forest, Soil Conservation, Agriculture
Sher Bahadur DEUPA	Home Affairs
Ram Chandra PAUDYAL	Local Development
Dhundi Raj SHASTRI	Industry
Maheshwar Prasad SINGH	General Administration
Chiranjibi WAGLE	Supply
Tara Nath BHAT	Law, Justice, Parliamentary Affairs
Khum Bahadur KHADKA	Works and Transport
Gopal Man SHRESTHA	Commerce

Ram Baran Yadav (Dhanusha-5) and Mahesh Acharya (Congress nominee in the Upper House) were appointed for Health and Finance respectively in July.

A strong anti-communist, Koirala took a firm line against a civil service agitation over pay just after his government came into office, and a number of employees linked to the UML, which had sympathised with the agitation, lost their jobs. Koirala had long been at odds with the more-emollient Bhattarai, and disputes over patronage continued after the election. 'Supreme leader' Ganesh Man Singh, the eldest member of the troika to which B.P. had bequeathed the

party leadership, initially held the ring between them, but in the autumn he accused Koirala of appointing too many Brahmans to high positions and of disregarding the wishes of the party organisation.

At the end of 1991, Koirala dropped six of his original ministers and brought in 13 new ones. Those dismissed, who included Sheikh Idris, veteran of the 1959 parliament, and the party's Assistant General Secretary, Basudev Risal. Both Ganesh Man Singh and Krishna Prasad Bhattarai expressed unhappiness over the reshuffle and the prime minister's failure to consult with them beforehand; a major reason for the dismissals was in fact that Koirala believed these ministers had been taking instructions from Ganesh Man Singh. Ill-feeling was heightened because the ministers were not informed of their dismissal before it was publicly announced. The new Council of Ministers consisted of:

Prime Minister	Girija Prasad KOIRALA	Palace Affairs, Defence, Foreign Affairs
Ministers	Bal Bahadur RAI	Housing and Physical Planning
	Jagan Nath ACHARYA	Land Reform and Management
	Ram Hari JOSHI	Tourism
	Shailaja ACHARYA	Agriculture
	Sher Bahadur DEUPA	Home Affairs
	Ram Chandra PAUDYAL	Local Development
	Maheshwar Prasad SINGH	General Administration, Law & Justice, Parliamentary Affairs
	Khum Bahadur KHADKA	Works and Transport
	Govind Raj JOSHI	Education, Culture, Social Welfare
Ministers of State	Dr. Ram Baran Yadav	Health
	Mahesh Acharya	Finance
	Aishwarya Lal Pradhananga	Commerce and Supply
	Ramkrishna Tamrakar	Industry and Labour
	Bir Mani Dhakal	Forest and Environment
	Bijaya Kumar Gachhedar	Communications
	Laxman Prasad Ghimire	Water resources
Assistant Ministers	Siddha Raj Ojha	Land Reform and Management
	Dinabandhu Aryal	General Administration, Law and Justice, Parliamentary Affairs
	Shiva Raj Joshi	Works and Transport
	Surendra Prasad Chaudhari	Commerce and Supply
	Hasta Bahadur Malla	Education, Culture, Social Welfare

Dilendra Prasad Badu	Housing and Physical Planning
Diwakar Man Sherchan	Industry and Labour

At the Nepali Congress convention (mahadhivesan) held at Jhapa in February 1992, Krishna Prasad Bhattarai was unanimously elected president. Ganesh Man, Singh, who had intensified his criticism of the government's record, announced he would withdraw from the leadership of the party but was persuaded to stay on in return for a promise that Bhattarai would resolve his complaints against the government within three months. The convention ended without taking a final decision on proposals by Koirala and his supporters which would have reduced the power of the troika, in particular providing for the election of half the members of the party's Central Committee, a body whose members were all nominated by the party president under the existing constitution. In April 1992, in response to growing violence between the workers of different political parties, Bhattarai made a controversial call for the Congress-affiliated Nepali Students Union to form a 'Peace Army' (Shanti Sena) to help maintain order. The growing Leftist agitation and in particular the violent demonstration and police firing in Kathmandu on 6 April caused Ganesh Man Singh to tone down his criticism of the government, but, when the grace period expired in May, he reiterated his threat to resign if not satisfied after the results of the local elections at the end of the month. In these elections Congress candidates were elected as mayors in 22 of the 36 municipalities and as deputy mayor in 21, whilst gaining 331 (=55.8%) of the seats on the municipal committees and just over 50% of the seats on Village Development Committees. Successes included the victory of Ganesh Man Singh's adopted son Prem Lal Singh in the contest for mayor of Kathmandu. Control of a majority of VDCs subsequently enabled Congress to gain 65% of the seats on the indirectly-elected District Development Committees. There was certainly some misuse of the administration to support Congress candidates, but this was not the decisive factor that some opposition parties claimed. Despite continuing discontent over economic difficulties, the bulk of the electorate appear to have felt that Congress administrations at local level would be in the best position to obtain development finance from the centre. Electors probably also placed the main blame for the recent violence on the various communist groups, particularly in the Kathmandu Valley.

In July the Agriculture Minister, the prime minister's niece Shailaja Acharya, was forced to resign when, without consulting her cabinet colleagues, she admitted to the House of Representatives that there was widespread corruption in her own and other ministries and invited the House to set up a commission of enquiry. Her portfolio was taken over by Local Development Minister Ram Chandra Paudyal.

Tensions within the party continued, including an outburst against the prime minister by Kuber Sharma, a close associate of Bhattarai, and more moderate criticism emanated from general secretary Mahendra Narayan Nidhi, who had been appointed by Bhattarai and was seen as his ally. Bhattarai himself was nevertheless able to act as conciliator and in December 1992 finally set up a 27-member Central Committee:

Mahendra Narayan Nidhi (General Secretary)	Bharat Shumsher
Basudev Risal (Joint General Secretary)	Dhundi Raj Shastri
Khanup Rude Rambabu (Treasurer)	Bhu Bikram Newang
Girija Prasad Koirala (P.M.)	Bal Bahadur K.C.
Mrs. Mangala Devi Singh	Taranath Ranabhat
Sushil Koirala	Mrs. Nona Koirala
Ms. Shailaja Koirala	Bhim Prasad Shrestha
Kuber Sharma	Mani Kumar Lama
Bal Bahadur Rai	Durgadutta Joshi
Sheikh Idris	Siddha Raj Ojha
Nilamber Panthi	Sher Bahadur Deupa
Ram Chandra Poudel	Chiranjibi Wagle
Surya Bhakta Adhikari	Atma Ram Ojha
Ganesh Man Singh (honorary member)	

There was some criticism of the committee's composition, in particular the inclusion of Kuber Sharma and Bharat Shumsher, strong opponents of the prime minister; also, Ranabhat, Shastri, Wagle, Idris and Risal were among the ministers who had been sacked by Girija a year earlier. The Land Reform minister Jagannath Acharya (veteran of the 1959 parliament) and the Transport Minister Khum Bahadur Khadka were reportedly among those resigning in protest from various sub-committees. There was also controversy over whether Bhattarai was entitled to use his powers under the party's 1960 constitution to appoint the committee on his own while amendments provisionally adopted at the Jhapa conference were awaiting ratification by the (still to be elected) General Council (mahasamiti) of the party.

In the same month, the Supreme Court ruled that the government must submit for parliamentary ratification its agreement with India which legitimised India's earlier construction of a dam on Nepalese territory at Tanakpur. While rejecting the government's case that the agreement was merely an 'understanding' which did not require parliamentary ratification the court did not decide whether it was a 'serious' matter requiring approval by two thirds of a joint session of Pratinidhi Sabha and Raj Sabha under clause 126 of the constitution (as most opposition parties had been maintaining), or whether a simple majority in the lower house would suffice. Although Ganesh Man Singh had said several times during autumn that the premier must resign if the government lost the case (and Koirala had countered with the threat to call mid-term elections) the Congress Central Committee opted instead for consultations with other parties. These took place against the background of a vigorous campaign both inside and outside parliament by the UML and three other communist groups (the **United People's Front**, the **Nepal Workers and Peasants Party** and **Masal**), who declared their willingness to discuss the problem with the Congress organisation, but called for Koirala's resignation and boycotted functions which he attended. After inter-party negotiations proved inconclusive, the government appeared ready to table the agreement in the house and to ratify by a simple majority, but was blocked by opposition from Ganesh Man Singh and the Speaker, Daman Nath Dhungana (a Congress M.P.). In April 1993 agreement was finally reached for the treaty to be introduced into parliament during the current session, which

was then about to end, but not to be formally debated until the next. An inter-party committee was to decide in the meantime on its treatment. However, there appeared to be no agreement on whether the committee would have to reach a consensus or whether the Congress majority on it could impose its own solution if necessary.

Internal controversy continued in February 1993, when the party's General Council agreed that the issue of the party's constitution should be referred to a special committee (which would report later to the Central Committee and the next General Council session) rather than be settled by the General Council itself as the Jhapa Convention required. In April, Jagannath Acharya, who had been accused of allowing improper transfers of land to his relatives, resigned as Minister of Land Reform, charging that he had not been allowed to implement real changes, and was replaced by his Assistant Minister, Siddha Raj Ojha. Two days earlier, Ganesh Man Singh had publicly called for a complete recasting or even replacement of the government.

There were violent clashes in late June and early July between the security forces and activists of the UML and six other Leftist Parties in the wake of the controversial deaths of UML leaders Madan Bhandari and Jeevraj Ashrit at Dasdhunga. Heavy flooding in southern Nepal caused a winding down of the movement. Negotiations that had already begun between Congress (represented by Chief Whip Tarini Dutta Chataut, Taranath Ranabhat and Arjun Narsingh K.C.) and the UML led to the signing of an agreement on 17 August. This included a renewed investigation of the Dasdhunga incident, continued discussions on Tanakpur, and the establishment of working parties to examine dismissals of Leftist teachers and civil servants. Leftist leaders maintained that there had also been a secret understanding that the prime minister would soon resign, although they refused to go into specific details until UPF co-ordinator Baburam Bhattarai alleged on 16 September that on 16 August K.P. Bhattarai had promised to remove Girija within one month. Congress leaders did not state categorically whether any such undertaking had been given, but "Punarjagaran", a newspaper normally reflecting the views of Ganesh Man Singh, insisted that it had. In public statements, Ganesh Man Singh himself continued his criticism of the government but insisted that it could not be removed under opposition pressure. After the signing of the agreement, UML leaders canvassed the possibility of removing the constitutional requirement for the prime minister to be a member of the Pratinidhi Sabha, presumably to allow K.P. Bhattarai to succeed Koirala without fighting a by-election. In September, two Congress M.P.s were also reported to have offered to make way for Bhattarai by resigning their seats.

In November it was finally agreed that Bhattarai, who had previously claimed he was resisting pressure from both Ganesh Man Singh and Koirala to take over the premiership, would be the Congress candidate in the February 1994 by-election caused by Madan Bhandari's death in May. "Deshantar" and the government-owned "Gorkhapatra", papers sympathetic to the prime minister, both attacked Bhattarai's decision. Koirala himself made some brief criticisms of Bhattarai's tactics, including in particular his playing of the anti-Indian card, and then shortly before polling day issued a long statement explaining that he had initially advised Bhattarai not to stand and that, although he would have liked to

support his candidacy, he could not do so as Bhattarai's campaign was attacking rather than defending the government's record. This brought both Bhattarai and Ganesh Man Singh into line, but Congress still lost in Kathmandu-1 (by 41, 490 votes to the UML's 43, 319), though winning the former UML-held seat of Jhapa (16, 194 to 13, 337). Bhattarai's supporters staged rowdy demonstrations in Kathmandu, with the district committee head, Prakash Man Singh, one of the main leaders, accusing the prime minister of sabotaging the by-election campaign. However, Bhattarai himself called for calm and later issued written instructions for all Congress M.P.s to support the government against a no-confidence motion moved by the UML, which was therefore easily defeated (113 votes to 81). In the meantime, the Central Committee had decided that all party office holders would continue in post until the next general conference.

A group of 36 dissident M.P.s, led by ex-ministers Taranath Ranabhat and Chiranjibi Wagle, indicated that they would accept Koirala as leader for the present, but would still press for his resignation in due course. They continued to show their displeasure with the government, and their absence from the chamber for a vote on a government bill in March left the opposition in a temporary majority.

Tension remained high within the party, as both Mahendra Narayan Nidhi and (ever more stridently) Ganesh Man Singh called for Koirala to go and Bhattarai, entrusted by a Central Committee decision in April with sole authority to resolve the intra-party dispute, played for time. The prime minister's health also became an issue, as he had collapsed during the special session to debate the no-confidence motion in February and did so again in April; medical tests in the U.S., however, revealed that he was suffering only from exhaustion and irregular eating habits. Another problem for the government were the raid on two houses in Baneshwor by armed Indian police in search of a fugitive. Despite the suspension of the Kathmandu Valley Police Chief for agreeing to the operation, and of the Indian policemen involved, there was intense public protest.

There was some relief at the end of June when Bhattarai finally decided that no action would be taken against those who had 'sabotaged' his by-election campaign, but the prime minister also came under renewed pressure over a report from the Public Accounts Committee suggesting he had acted improperly over the appointment of a new company with Indian connections as the European General Service Agent for Royal Nepal Air Corporation. The government was also embarrassed by Amnesty International's endorsement of charges of unjustified killings by the security forces during the Leftist agitation the previous summer.

On 10 July 1994, despite an earlier undertaking from Bhattarai that he would ensure they would turn up, the 36 Congress dissidents absented themselves from the house during a vote on the government's programme as outlined in the king's speech, thus causing a government defeat. Later the same day, Koirala went to the palace and presented the king with a letter in which he submitted his resignation and also requested that parliament be dissolved and mid-term polls be held in November. The king accepted the resignation at once but then began consultations with other politicians including the UML leader Man Mohan Adhikari and Krishna Prasad Bhattarai. Bhattarai, who had asked Koirala not to

seek a dissolution, is believed to have wanted the king to invite Mahendra Narayan Nidhi, the party's General Secretary, to form a new Congress administration. However Koirala had secured a signed statement by 74 Congress M.P.s accepting him still as their leader, and, as no one else could claim majority support in the House, the king agreed on the following day to a dissolution and appointed Koirala acting prime minister until the elections.

Koirala's action and the king's decision were regarded as unconstitutional both by the Communist opposition and by Congress dissidents. Concern over Koirala's commitment to fair elections was also increased by the dismissal of the production team of a popular radio current affairs programme ("Ghatna ra Bichar") which had been seen as critical of him. After the UML and its allies had launched a campaign of strikes and protest meetings, Mahendra Narayan Nidhi called upon the king to dismiss the prime minister and then made a joint appeal with the leaders of the six-party Leftist alliance for the reconvening of parliament. Bhattarai, who had probably authorised these moves in advance, and UML president Man Mohan Adhikari, then signed a joint statement explicitly endorsing them.⁴ Hari Prasad Nepal, a dissident Congress M.P., was among those petitioning the Supreme Court to declare the dissolution of the House invalid. Meanwhile, Koirala had responded by summoning to Kathmandu the delegates to the party Conference and General Council, amongst whom he was believed to have majority support. His popularity amongst Congress activists is partly the result of his long spell as General Secretary, which involved him in travelling throughout Nepal, while Bhattarai and Ganesh Man Singh normally remained in Kathmandu.

When the Central Committee (nominated by Bhattarai and with an anti-Koirala majority) met on 27 July it accepted a compromise proposal from Shailaja Acharya under which neither Bhattarai, Koirala nor Nidhi would stand in the forthcoming elections. This formula had apparently been floated some days earlier by the 36 dissident M.P.s in informal talks with Koirala's group, and Bhattarai himself may have instigated it. Although Koirala himself now publicly endorsed the scheme, three of his closest allies on the Central Committee (Sushil Koirala, Bhubikram Nemwang and Surya Bhakta Adhikari) entered a 'note of dissent' to the decision. Many of his supporters waiting outside party headquarters were also unhappy. These activists were received in regional contingents at the prime minister's residence the next day and at a 'gathering' on the 29 July⁵, where they called for both Bhattarai and Girija to stand in the elections and for the reconstitution of the Central Committee. There was obvious hostility: not just against the publicly-declared dissidents but also to Shailaja Acharya and ministers Sher Bahadur Deupa and Ram Chandra Paudel, who had avoided taking a definite stance and who, as the most prominent members among the party's 'second generation', had most to gain from the old guard stepping aside.

Koirala's position continued to strengthen. In mid-August Bhattarai removed nine members from the Central Committee, including three fierce opponents of the prime minister - Bharat Shumsher, Kuber Sharma and Bal Bahadur K.C. - and added three Koirala supporters: Khum Bahadur Khadka, Bhim Bahadur Tamang and Mahanta Thakur. On 12 September, by a vote of 7 to 4 among the presiding judges, the Supreme Court rejected a petition challenging the legality

of the dissolution. A Central Committee meeting on 13-14 September decided that Koirala, Bhattarai and Nidhi could decide for themselves whether to stand in the election. On 16 September, Ganesh Man Singh resigned his membership of the Congress Party and on 24 September he called for the defeat of pro-Koirala candidates in the election and condemned K.P. Bhattarai as 'the biggest traitor and political criminal in the history of Nepal'.

As had been widely anticipated, Koirala did indeed opt to contest the election personally, being nominated for constituencies in both Morang and Sunsari, as he had been in 1991. Bhattarai and Nidhi did not contest, but Nidhi's place as candidate for Dhanusha-4 (including Janakpur town) was taken by his son, Bimalendra. The 204 Congress nominees, of whom around two-thirds were reckoned to be Koirala supporters, included 91 of their 114 ex-M.P.s. Only one minister (Dinbandhu Aryal) was not allotted a ticket. Official Congress nominees faced opposition in many constituencies from disaffected activists, who either stood as independents or in one of the various Congress splinter groups which had formed immediately before the election. Many were persuaded to withdraw before polling day, but 50 or more remained in the field. Congress expelled persistent rebels, including long-term Koirala-opponent Durga Subedi who was standing against the P.M. in Morang, and Umesh Giri, a party activist who had been accused of using intimidation in past election campaigns and who was now standing for the Nepali Congress (Bisheshwor).

Nepali and foreign observers reported that, although the elections were generally 'fair and peaceful', there were numerous irregularities, mostly committed by the Congress side. Though there were few unambiguous cases of rebel candidates letting the opposition in by splitting the Congress vote, in Manang and Mahottari-4 Congress dissidents defeated the official candidates and elsewhere the fact of Congress division clearly eroded popular support, affecting the result in around 30 seats. In the east, the seats gained and lost by the party were roughly equal but net losses to the UML in the west left them with five seats less than their main rivals. The party lost the only two seats it had held in the Kathmandu Valley (including that of the former speaker, Daman Nath Dhungana) and also all nine constituencies in the districts of Syangja, Palpa and Gulmi south-west of Pokhara. Other prominent casualties included the prime minister's close aide Sushil Koirala (Banke-1) and two of his bitterest critics, Taranath Ranabhat (Kaski-1) and Kuber Sharma (Saptari-4).

Following the election defeat, Girija Koirala resigned as prime minister and called for the party to go into opposition and allow the UML to form the government. This line was backed less publicly by Nidhi and Bhattarai, but Sher Bahadur Deupa, Ram Chandra Paudel and Shailaja Acharya, the main contenders to take the place of the old guard, wanted to try for a coalition government. There are conflicting reports of the intensive inter-party negotiations, but Paudel appears to have tried to get the UML to enter a Congress-led coalition, the UML appears to have wanted a coalition with itself as the senior partner, and Bhattarai, backed by Ganesh Man Singh's supporters, appears to have offered to let the UML hold power alone for one year. After a Central Committee meeting on 23/24 November showed that party workers were strongly in favour of remaining in government, the emphasis switched to discussions with the NDP, with whom Sher Bahadur Deupa, son-in-law of the NDP's Pratibha Rana, had

already been in contact. Despite rumours of western and Indian pressure for an agreement, these negotiations were unsuccessful. However, Deupa's later unanimous selection as leader of the parliamentary **Congress** party might suggest further attempts at co-operation with the **NDP**.

THE LEFT

(1991: total of 82 (81) seats - 36.49%; 1994: 92 seats - 31.83%⁶)

The **Nepal Communist Party**, founded in India in 1949 by Pushpa Lal Shrestha, has, since Mahendra's 1960 coup, splintered into well over a dozen different factions. Seven of the groups agreed in January 1990 to collaborate in a **United Left Front**, which then worked with **Congress** in the democracy movement and shared power with it in the interim government. Leftist groups which obtained seats in the 1991 election were:

NEPAL COMMUNIST PARTY (UNIFIED MARXIST-LENINIST)

(1991: 69 (68)⁷ seats - 27.98%; 1994: 88 seats - 30.85%)

Now providing a minority government, the party was from 1991 to 1994 the main opposition to **Congress**. The party was formed in January 1991 by the merger of the two most significant groups in the **ULF**:

(a) **Nepal Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist)** ('the Mah Lehs': abbreviated to **NCP (ML)**). Usually the most important leftist group of the later panchayat years, it was represented in the interim government by Jhalanath Khanal (Agriculture, Land Reform and Forestry and Conservation), who won Ilam-1 in the election. Originating as the 'Jhapali' group in the early 70s, it later abandoned 'Naxalite' terrorism and then in 1989 formally abandoned Maoism and accepted the idea of collaboration with **Congress** for the restoration of the parliamentary system. Its most influential figure was Mohan Bhandari, General Secretary after the amalgamation and victory over Bhattarai in Kathmandu-1.

(b) **Nepal Communist Party (Marxist) (NCP(M))**. Cultivating close relations with its Indian namesake, still in power in West Bengal, this was led by veteran Communists Man Mohan Adhikari, now president of the unified party, and Sahana Pradhan, who defeated Ganesh Man Singh's son in Kathmandu-4 in 1991. Pradhan, the widow of Pushpa Lal Shrestha, was chairman of the **United Left Front** and was Industry minister in the interim government.

Despite their involvement in the Nepalese communist movement since its inception, Man Mohan Adhikari and Sahana Pradhan remained less influential within the **UML** than the leaders from the pre-1991 Mah-Lehs, who had a more extensive network of activists. Although the two ex-**NCP(M)** leaders appeared firmly committed to the unified party, others remained unhappy with the dominance in the party of the 'hard-line' faction of the old **NCP(ML)** under Madan Bhandari, Jhalanath Khanal and Madhav Nepal. In September 1991 some former members of the **NCP(M)** broke away to set up the **Communist Party of Nepal (15 September 1949)** (later reverting to the pre-1991 **Communist Party of Nepal (Marxist)** label). The defectors alleged that the conditions of the 1991 merger had not been kept and that Pushpa Lal's concept of 'naulo janbad' ('new people's democracy') was being abandoned in favour of

'bahudaliya janbad' - people's democracy based on a multi-party system. The latter formulation was in fact formally adopted at a **UML** Central Committee meeting in October, in the absence abroad of Man Mohan Adhikari and Sahana Pradhan, and against the opposition of C.P. Mainali's faction of the former **NCP (ML)**. In fact, the change of phraseology did not indicate a great change in substance, since the line both before and after October 1991 appeared to be acceptance of political pluralism but with restrictions on the right of 'reactionary parties' to organise.

Immediately after the general election, the party was involved in confrontation with the government over the civil servants' agitation, but gave the impression of following rather than leading the campaign. Whilst intensifying its political opposition to **Congress** in 1992, the **UML** appeared eager to preserve its standing as a constitutional party. Following the police killing of extreme-leftist demonstrators in Kathmandu on 6 April 1992, the party called for the resignation of the Home Minister, but refused to join more radical Leftist groups in demanding the resignation of the whole government or in calling a general strike for May 3. It attracted further criticism from these groups at the end of April by signing an agreement with **Congress**, providing for a commission of enquiry into the April 6 incident, and the setting up of joint committees to ensure the peaceful holding of local elections at the end of May. During the night of May 2 the **UML's** Radha Krishna Mainali's house in Patan was one of the targets of radical demonstrators. Negotiations between the **UML** and the other leftist parties for a comprehensive seat sharing agreement in the elections were unsuccessful, though, as in the general election, adjustments were made in some localities. The results were disappointing for the **UML**, which gained the post of mayor in only 6 of the 36 municipalities (Bhadrapur, Damak, Hetauda, Bidur, Birendranagar and Dharan); that of deputy mayor in only 5; 119 (=20%) of the seats on municipal committees; and around 26% of the seats on Village Development Committees. In an interview with "Saptahik Bimarsha" in September, Man Mohan Adhikari stated that the party preferred for the time being to remain in opposition and admitted that distrust of communism internationally would cause difficulties if they came to power.

Following the December 1992 Supreme Court ruling on the Tanakpur issue (see above) the **UML**, which had denounced the agreement from the start as a sell-out to India and argued that it was a treaty requiring a two-thirds parliamentary majority, launched a renewed campaign with the **United People's Front (UPF)**, the **Nepal Workers and Peasants Party** (abbrev. **NWPP**) and the **Nepal Communist Party (Masal)** for Koirala's resignation. The party withdrew from the campaign in April 1993, after agreement with **Congress** for a special inter-party committee to examine the issue. In the meantime (January - February 1993) the Party's National Convention approved Bhandari's 'bahudaliya janbad' line by 541 votes to 101. These latter votes were cast in support of Chandra Prakash Mainali's 'parimarjit janbad' ('refined people's democracy'), which was reportedly favoured by Jhalanath Khanal and Man Mohan Adhikari.

In May 1993 Madan Bhandari and party organiser Jeevraj Ashrit died when the jeep they were traveling in swerved off the road into the Narayani River at Dasdhunga. Bhandari's successor as General Secretary was his ideological ally,

Madhav Kumar Nepal, generally regarded as a party bureaucrat rather than a charismatic leader. C.P. Mainali, who had resigned from the Central Committee alleging violation of the National Convention's instructions, now withdrew his resignation. In June a government enquiry concluded that the jeep crash was an accident, and the UML, insisting there had been an assassination plot, called strikes in the Kathmandu valley and country-wide in late June and early July, demanding a fresh enquiry and Koirala's resignation. The agitation, during which 24 people were killed in police firing was supported by six other Leftist groups: the UPF, the NWPP, Masal, **Nepal Communist Party (Amatya)**, **Nepal Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist-Maoist)** and **Nepal Communist League**. On 16 August the UML concluded a written agreement with Congress covering most of their demands and claimed also to have reached a secret understanding that the prime minister would soon resign. The UPF and three other groups rejected this as inadequate and continued the protest campaign for some time on their own. By early November Madhav Nepal was complaining of a failure to implement the agreement and threatening to bring about 'the final struggle' if Koirala did not resign.

During the agitation C.P. Mainali and Jhalanath Khanal took a more moderate line than the party leadership, arguing that an elected prime minister could only be removed by constitutional processes.

In September, a Central Committee Meeting took disciplinary action against members of the 'minority', who had defied party orders by supporting the candidacy of Jagat Bogati for the National Assembly. C.P. Mainali was deprived of his post as deputy leader of the parliamentary party. Mainali and Jhalanath afterwards issued defiant statements. In an interview, Adhikari, who was widely believed to be actually in sympathy with the dissidents, criticised them for going against party policy.

Despite reported repeated pleas from Ganesh Man Sing for it to give Krishna Prasad Bhattarai a clear-run in the Kathmandu-1 by-election, the party nominated Madan Bhattarai's widow, Vidya Bhattarai, who won the seat in February 1994. However, the UML candidate lost Drona Acharya's former seat in Jhapa-1. Immediately after the by-elections, the party successfully petitioned the king to summon an extraordinary session of parliament, and tabled an unsuccessful no-confidence motion against the Koirala government. In March, after the start of the new parliamentary session, the party's M.P.s manhandled the deputy-speaker because he did not accept as valid a vote the opposition appeared to have won when rebel Congress M.P.s were out of the chamber. Tension between the 'majority' and 'minority' factions within the party continued and in April three members belonging to the latter were disciplined for joining a parliamentary overseas delegation against party instructions. The same month the party declined to support the UPF anti-India agitation, though Mohan Chandra Adhikari and C.P. Mainali were allegedly sympathetic to it. In June the party announced that they would recommence agitation against the government because of its non-compliance with previous year's agreement.

When abstentions by rebel Congress M.P.s brought about the government's defeat in the house on July 10, the UML tried in vain to form an alliance with the dissidents, and then unsuccessfully asked the king to invite it to form a new government on its own rather than accept Koirala's request for mid-term polls.

Supported by the **Nepal Communist Party (United)**, **United People's Front (Vaidya)**, **Unity Centre, Masal** and **Communist League**, the party then launched an agitation for Koirala's removal and the formation of an all-party government. They argued that it had been unconstitutional for the king to dissolve the Pratinidhi Sabha on Koirala's recommendation after the latter's resignation as prime minister, that Koirala should not have used his prime ministerial prerogative against the wishes of his own party organisation; and that he could not be trusted to hold free and fair elections. Initial protest actions included torchlight processions and a one-day Nepal Bandh on 20 July in which there were minor clashes between demonstrators and police, but no violence on the scale seen the previous summer. When the Congress General Secretary, Mahendra Narayan Nidhi, gave public support to the Leftist campaign, a three-day bandh planned to start on 24 July was cut back to one day and passed off peacefully. The UML vehemently denounced Nidhi and Bhattarai for reaching a compromise agreement with Koirala at the Congress Central Committee meeting on 24 July. The agitation continued but by mid-August the UML's attention was more on its election campaign while its partners (apart from the **NCP (United)**) wanted to carry on.

On 12 September the Supreme Court dismissed an application by a former UML M.P. (Ganesh Pandit) and others to squash the dissolution of the Pratinidhi Sabha. Though critical of this decision, the party was now concentrating fully on election preparations. C.P. Mainali's 'minority' faction complained that it was being allotted too few nominations, whilst veteran leader Mohan Chandra Adhikari, together with Sanu Shrestha, resigned from the party, alleging that it was no longer a revolutionary organisation.

The Party nominated candidates, including 48 of its 68 former M.P.s; for 196 seats. Party leader Man Mohan Adhikari stood in two Kathmandu constituencies and Tulsi Lal Amatya, formerly the leader of his own communist faction, stood in Congress-held Rautahat-3. Party secretary Madhav Kumar Nepal did not stand. Although, as in 1991, it proved impossible to create an electoral alliance amongst the Leftist parties, the UML withdrew in six constituencies in favour of **Masal**, the **UPF (Vaidya)** and Ramraja Prasad Singh's **Nepal Janbadi Morcha**. Outlining their policies in October, Madhav Nepal and Man Mohan Adhikari called for a review of 'unequal treaties' with India, 'regularisation' of the open border, and Nepal-India talks on work permits. Madhav Nepal later promised a lowering of the ceiling on land holdings to 25 bighas.

The party emerged from the election as the largest grouping in parliament (88 seats to Congress's 83). However it still lagged behind Congress in its share of the popular vote and lost 20 of the seats it had held previously, including one in the party's birthplace of Jhapa district. The day after the elections, the UML issued a statement accepting them as fair, but later, as its strong early lead was cut back, it accused the government of rigging in the 79 polling stations where re-balloting had been ordered by the Election Commission. In December the U.S.-based Nepali political scientist Chitra Tiwari backed allegations that the UML had been unfairly deprived of victory in 18 constituencies.

Despite a declaration by Man Mohan Adhikari that the party would under no circumstances combine with the National Democratic Party or with Sadbhavana,

Madhav Nepal and others were more flexible, and informal discussions appear to have been held with the NDP although without result. More extensive negotiations took place with Congress, covering the possibilities of a Congress or UML-led coalition or of Congress supporting a UML-led government from 'outside'. Agreement proved impossible and the UML opted to form a minority government as the largest single party in parliament.

On 29 November, Man Mohan Adhikari was sworn in as prime minister, but, unlike his Congress predecessor, Adhikari did not take control of the Foreign and Defence portfolios, these going to Madhav Kumar Nepal. As party general secretary, Madhav was generally regarded as the key figure in the new administration, especially as Adhikari himself had said at a parliamentary group meeting a week earlier that, in contrast to what had happened with Congress, an UML government 'could do nothing beyond the limits set by the policy of the party.' The full ministerial line-up was:

Ministers:

Man Mohan Adhikari	Prime Minister, Palace Affairs
Madhav Kumar Nepal	Deputy Prime Minister, Defence and Foreign Affairs
K.P. Sharma Oli	Home Affairs
Chandra Prakash Mainali	Local Development and Supply
Bharat Mohan Adhikari	Finance
Radha Krishna Mainali	Agriculture and Land Reforms
Mod Nath Prashrit	Education, Culture and Social Welfare
Pradip Nepal	Information and Communications
Padma Ratna Tuladhar	Labour and Health

Ministers of State:

Ashok Kumar Rai	Works and Transport
Salim Miya Ansari	Forests and Soil Conservation
Prem Singh Dhimi	Housing and Physical Planning
Subas Chandra Nembang	Law and Justice, Parliamentary Affairs and General Administration
Bhim Bahadur Rawal	Commerce, Tourism and Civil Administration
Hari Prasad Pande	Industry and Water Resources

NEPAL COMMUNIST PARTY (UNITED)

(1991: 2 seats, 2.43%; 1994: no seats, 0.38%)

Formed at the end of July 1991 by a merger between the **Nepal Communist Party (Democratic) (NCP(D))** and two parties which had failed to win parliamentary seats, the **Nepal Communist Party (Amatya)** and the **Nepal Communist Party (Varma)**. The NCP(D) was a pro-Soviet grouping, more accommodating towards India than the larger Communist groups. Until early 1991 it was known as the Nepal Communist Party (Manandhar) after its General Secretary, Vishnu Bahadur Manandhar. It was represented in the interim

government by Nilambar Acharya (Law and Justice, Labour and Social Welfare, Tourism). The party remained within the ULF after the December 1990 split, but in the run-up to the election was critical of the UML for seeking a dominant role and not agreeing to adequate electoral adjustments with other leftist parties. Both Manandhar and Acharya failed to win seats in the 1991 election. Bhim Bahadur Shrestha (a member of the former Rashtriya Panchayat) won in Chitwan-2 and Vaidyanath Mahato in Sarlahi-4. The merger was troubled from the start and in April 1992, the Varma group withdrew from the amalgamated party. In June the NCP (United) Central Committee expelled Bhim Bahadur Shrestha and 50 other workers for supporting UML candidates in local elections. Shrestha was later re-admitted but differences between him and the party remained and he was finally to resign in July 1994.⁸ Amatya's group broke away in September 1992 and later joined the UML, but the rump of the party, essentially the old Manandhar group, retained the name adopted in the time of the merger.

The party did not join other Leftists in denouncing the Tanakpur agreement with India, and was prepared to meet with prime minister Koirala while the 7-party Leftist alliance was demanding his resignation in June-August 1993. In the Kathmandu-1 by-election in February 1994, it fielded a candidate of its own but Nilambar Acharya appealed to voters to support Krishna Prasad Bhattarai. In March the party's M.P.s voted in favour of the UML no-confidence motion, despite not supporting the UML's objection to mid-term polls. Following the dissolution of the Pratinidhi Sabha in July, the party joined the UML and four other groups in a joint agitation, but in August, like the UML itself, was becoming less enthusiastic about the campaign.

The party's election programme, unveiled in October, included unemployment benefits for the educated unemployed and a review of treaties with India. The NPC (United) lost in all 36 constituencies it contested, and did not put up candidates in the two the Manandhar group had won in 1991. Only seven of the party's candidates gained more than 1,000 votes.

UNITED PEOPLE'S FRONT (NEPAL)

(1991: 9 seats, 4.83%; 1994: no seats, 1.32%)

A Maoist grouping, formed just before the January deadline for registration with the Election Commission. During the campaign, it argued that real transformation is impossible through parliamentary politics, and that it was contesting only to 'expose' the system and would not form or join a government. Baburam Bhattarai was chosen as the Front's convenor and Lilamani Pokhrel as its leader in the House of Representatives. The UPF was essentially an umbrella organisation for a number of groups which wanted both a means of taking part in conventional politics and also to retain the status of 'underground' parties. These included:

(a) **Nepal Communist Party (Unity Centre)**: by far the most important component, this was formed in 1990 by a merger between the **Nepal Communist Party (Mashal)**, the **Nepal Communist Party (Fourth Convention)**, which had been part of the United Left Front until December 1990, and Rup Lal's lesser-known **Sarvaharavadi Shramik Sangathan**. The

Mashal leader 'Prachand' (Pushpa Kumar Dahal), who had split from Mohan Bikram Singh's **Masal** group in the early '80s, became General Secretary of the combined party. The **Unity Centre** leadership also included the former **Fourth Convention** leaders Nirmal Lama and Lilamani Pokhrel. Lama, one of the drafters of Nepal's 1990 constitution, had also once been with Mohan Bikram Singh's group but broke with him in the mid-80s.

(b) A dissident faction of the **Nepal Communist Party (Masal)** (see below), which rejected party leader Mohan Bikram Singh's call for a complete boycott of the election. This appeared to be led by Shital Kumar, who referred to himself as 'Secretary of the Central Organising Committee of the NCP (Masal)'. Baburam Bhattarai had also been an ally of Shital Kumar's within **Masal** but appears to have broken with Mohan Bikram Singh and joined the UPF earlier.

(c) **The Nepal Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist-Maoist) (NCP(MLM))** was part of the UPF during the election but quit in September 1992, alleging that the **Unity Centre** was unfairly dominating the organisation. It appears to have rejoined after a split in the Front in 1994.

In February 1992, the **Unity Centre** joined Mohan Bikram Singh's **Masal**, the **NCP (MLM)** and the **Nepal Communist League** (abbrev. **NCL**) in a Joint People's Agitation Committee to organise protests against **Congress** policies. This was to culminate in the observance of April 6 (anniversary of the climax of the pro-democracy demonstrations in 1990) as 'People's Movement Day'. All four groups backed plans for a meeting that day at Kathmandu's Open Air Theatre, but the **UPF** (effectively now the **Unity Centre** on its own) also organised street demonstrations, which turned violent resulting in police opening fire and the deaths of between 7 and 14 people (figures supplied respectively by the government and the Human Rights Organisation of Nepal). The **Unity Centre** called a second general strike for May 3 which was widely observed in the Valley.

The **Unity Centre** then formed an alliance with **Masal**, the **NCP (MLM)**, the **NCP (15 September 1949)** (later renamed as **Nepal Communist Party (Marxist)**), the **NWPP** and the **NCL** to continue the agitation and contest the local elections. In the elections the **UPF** gained only one deputy mayorship, 8 (= 1.34%) of the seats on municipal committees and around 5% of the seats on Village Development Committees. In Kathmandu its candidate for mayor attracted only 3.4% of the vote, compared with 52.2% for **Congress** and 44.4% for the **UML**. This poor showing indicated that support for the May 3 day of action had been the result of frustration at continuing economic difficulties and/or of intimidation rather than reflecting widespread popular enthusiasm for the radical Left.

The **UPF** joined the Leftist alliance calling for the prime minister's resignation after the Supreme Court's Tanakpur verdict (December 1992) and remained in the campaign with **Masal** when the **UML** and **NWPP** withdrew in April. In June 1993, following the Left's rejection of the Anil commission's report on the deaths of two **UML** leaders, the **UPF** joined the 7-party alliance agitating initially for a new enquiry and then also for the prime minister's

resignation and the fulfillment of other demands. It rejected the August agreement between **UML** and **Congress** and together with the **NWPP**, **Masal**, and the **NCP (MLM)** continued street protests to force Koirala's resignation. The **UPF** decided to boycott the February 1994 by-elections in Kathmandu and Jhapa, despite some opposition from within the party. In March the Front voted for the **UML**'s no-confidence motion against the government and in April it began an agitation aimed both at the government and at alleged Indian interference in Nepal; this was supported by the **NWPP**, the **NCP (Marxist)**, **Masal** and the **NCP (MLM)** and 'independent leftist' Padma Ratna Tuladhar.

Internal tension had been building up since the beginning of 1993 as Baburam Bhattarai and the **Ex-Mashal** element attempted a purge of former members of the **4th Convention**. A full split in May 1994, leaving Baburam's section of the **UPF** and Prachand's followers in the **Unity Centre** on one side ranged against Niranjan Gobinda Vaidya's **UPF** and Nirmal Lama's **Unity Centre** on the other. The Vaidya group, which had the support of most of the **UPF M.P.s**, held a national Conference in July, confirming Vaidya himself as convenor and Nar Bahadur Karmacharya as central spokesman. The **UPF (Vaidya)** and **Unity Centre (Lama)** joined the 6-party alliance for Koirala's ousting and the formation of a multi-party government. Baburam's group remained outside the alliance: it opposed the demand for a multi-party government because this would allow the king to become actively involved in politics again, and it called instead for the reconvening of parliament. Prachand and Bhattarai called for a boycott of the November elections, but the **UPF (Vaidya)**, recognised by the Election Commission as the original organisation and therefore allowed to retain the hammer and sickle election symbol, contested 49 constituencies, including 5 of the 9 held by the **UPF** in the previous parliament. All of its candidates were defeated, six of the party's former seats going to **Congress**, two to the **UML** and one to the **NDP**.

NEPAL WORKERS AND PEASANTS PARTY (abbrev. **NWPP**)

(1991: 2 seats; 1.25%; 1994: 4 seats; 0.98%)

Led by Narayan Bijukchhe ('Comrade Rohit'), who split from Pushpa Lal Shrestha in 1975/6. Its **M.P.s** in 1991-94 were Dilli Bahadur Mahat (Jumla-1) and Rohit himself, elected from the party's principal base, Bhaktapur, where it has a firm grip on the **Jyapus** (Newar cultivator caste). One of the first Leftist groups to adopt an 'entryist' approach to the panchayat system, it first won the Bhaktapur seat in 1981. The party was a member of the United Left Front collaborating with **Congress** in 1990, although Rohit and many associates had been in prison since 1988. The party remains officially Maoist and was at one point reported to be willing to contest the 1991 general election under the **UPF** banner. However, at times it appeared to differ from the latter in its commitment to a multi-party system as a permanent requirement for democracy rather than a tactical expedient. It fought the May 1992 elections, in which it won the Bhaktapur mayoralty, as a member of an alliance with the **Unity Centre** and four other parties. After joining the four-party alliance campaigning for Koirala's resignation over Tanakpur in December 1992, it withdrew with the **UML** in April 1993. It joined the 7-party Leftist alliance in another anti-government agitation in June and was one of the four parties which rejected the

UML-Congress agreement in August and continued the protest campaign. The party voted for the **UML** no-confidence motion in March 1994 despite reservations over the **UML**'s objection to mid-term polls. In April it expressed support for the **UPF** (Baburam) agitation.

Following the dissolution of parliament in July, Rohit criticised Girija's action, but accepted that both he and the king had acted within the conventions of 'bourgeois parliamentarianism' and announced his own party's readiness to take part in elections. During the campaign, the party made clear its belief that 'socialism will not be attained through elections'. It denounced as inadequate other parties' plans to grant tenancy rights to some tillers and in its own programme called for the development of ropeways and other alternative means of transport. The party contested 27 seats, and although its total share of the popular vote fell, it doubled its representation in parliament by winning the second Bhaktapur constituency and Dailekh-2 from Congress.

NEPAL SADBHAVANA PARTY

(1991: 6 seats - 4.10%; 1994: 3 seats - 3.49%)

A regional party, representing the interests of the Tarai and its inhabitants of recent Indian origin. Known before the legalisation of political parties as the Nepal Sadbhavana ('Goodwill') Council, the party's grievances against hill domination are probably shared by many in the region, but its electoral support has been limited, perhaps as party president Gajendra Narayan Singh, a Rajput, is seen as representing principally his own, upper-caste group.

The party's demands include official status for the Hindi language, a liberal policy on citizenship for recent immigrants, 'reservations' for under-privileged communities, a separate madheshi battalion in the army, and a federal system of government. After the convening of the House of Representatives and the National Assembly they insisted on addressing the assembly in Hindi and boycotted elections to the Assembly of members representing the development regions in protest against regional boundaries which do not recognise the Tarai as a separate entity. The party also pressed its demand for a separate madheshi battalion in the army. In the 1992 local elections the party won the post of mayor in Rajbiraj, that of deputy mayor in three municipalities, 3% of the seats on Municipal Committees and about 2.3% of the seats on Village Development Committees.

In 1993, a breakaway group, the **Nepal Sadbhavana Party (Ram Janam Tiwari)**, was established. In March 1994, the party abstained in the vote on the **UML** no-confidence motion. Singh made changes to the Central Committee, replacing Hriyadesh Tripathi, who had resigned as General Secretary to take responsibility for the party's poor showing in the recent by-elections, with Shyamsundar Gupta, and appointing Gaurishankar Mohapatra to the Central Committee as an additional vice-chairman. Mirja Dal Sad Beg, an M.P. alleged to have been involved in violent crime, was appointed treasurer.

The party accepted the dissolution of parliament in July 1994 as constitutional and appeared enthusiastic about the forthcoming elections, although voicing some scepticism over how fair they would be. The party manifesto called for the reservation of 50% of government posts for the madheshis and 30% for the hill

'tribals'; they had campaigned on a similar pledge in 1991 but had not then actually included it in their manifesto.

In the election, Sadbhavana contested 86 constituencies. Although winning Saptari-3 from **Congress**, they lost four of their original six seats and were thus reduced to three seats. One of the lost constituencies, Kapilavastu-4, was actually retained by the former Sadbhavana M.P., Mirja Dal Sad Beg, who had deserted to the **NDP**. Triyogi Narayan Chaudhuri, vice-president and former Sadbhavana M.P. for Nawalparasi-4, had joined **Congress** in September, and unsuccessfully ran for his new party against Hriyadesh Tripathi in Nawalparasi-3. However, **Congress** did capture Chaudhuri's old constituency.

NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY (RASHTRIYA PRAJATANTRA PARTI) (abbrev. **NDP**)

(1991: 4 seats, 11.94%; 1994: 20 seats, 17.93%)

Two former prime ministers of the panchayat era each formed a party to contest the 1991 election, largely incorporating other ex-activists from the old régime. The two were amalgamated in February 1992 as the **United National Democratic Party** under Lok Bahadur Chand as leader and Surya Bahadur Thapa as president. Many other ex-panchas joined **Congress** (to which many of them had belonged before 1961) and defections have continued. The two separate parties were:

(a) **National Democratic Party (Chand)**

(1991: 3 seats, 6.56%)

Led by Lok Bahadur Chand, who served the last of several terms as prime minister in April 1990 before the installation of the interim government. Chand lost in both constituencies he contested in the election. His group's most prominent figure thus became Pashupati Shumshere J.B. Rana, who won the Sindupalchok-3 seat, part of the area he had represented in the old Rashtriya Panchayat, despite the disruption of his campaign by opponents. After the election the party sought to tone down its image as anti-Indian and also to distance itself from the palace.

(b) **National Democratic Party (Thapa)** (1991: 1 seat, 5.38%).

Led by Surya Bahadur Thapa, who alternated in the panchayat years between the roles of royal henchman and dissident. Widely seen as corrupt, though also with genuine liberal leanings, he was defeated by more than two to one by his **UML** opponent in his Dhankhuta-1 constituency.

In the 1992 local elections the **NDP** won the post of mayor in Lahan and Kapilavastu; that of deputy mayor in two municipalities; 9.27% of the seats on municipal committees and around 10% of seats on Village Development Committees. In February 1994, the party's candidates in the Kathmandu-1 and Jhapa-1 by-elections, Jog Mehar Shrestha and Gopal Chandra Singh Rajvamshi, came third with 7,533 and 8,251 votes respectively. Jog Mehar accused Surya Bahadur Thapa of sabotaging his campaign. The party abstained in the 7 March vote on the **UML** no-confidence motion.

Having itself earlier called for fresh elections, the party welcomed the dissolution of the House of Representatives in July 1994. Although accepting that the constitution had been complied with, it agreed with the Leftist demand for a multi-party government to ensure free elections. The party contested 202 constituencies, with most of its leading figures nominated for more than one. It won 20, becoming the third party in terms of seats, as it already was in terms of share of the popular vote in 1991. The party's main strength remained in the central region, where it now holds ten seats, but gains in the west included party leader Lok Bahadur Chand winning both seats in his native district of Baitadi. Surya Bahadur Thapa lost in Sarlahi-2 but won on his home ground of Dhankuta-2. Nine seats were won from **Congress**, four from the **UML**, two from **Sadbhavana** and one from the **NCP(United)**. The one loss was in Darchula, where the **UML** took the new single constituency formed by the amalgamation of NDP-held Darchula-2 and Congress-held Darchula-1.

Following the elections, there were some discussions between the NDP and the **UML** (though the party denied that the communists formally invited them to join a coalition) and protracted discussions with **Congress**. The party's preferred option was a national government with each party holding ministries in proportion to its parliamentary strength, but this was unacceptable to the **UML**. It was believed that Chand, whose group included 13 of the new M.P.s, favoured working with the communists, and that Thapa favoured an alignment with **Congress**. India and western governments were also said to be urging a **Congress-NDP** coalition but in the end the NDP rejected Congress approaches, apparently because it believed **Congress** itself was too disunited for any agreement to stick.

B. LEFTIST GROUPS NEVER REPRESENTED IN PARLIAMENT

Nepal Communist Party (Masal). A hard-line Maoist grouping under Mohan Bikram Singh, who became well-known nationally during the 1980 referendum campaign. The party was once the home of many now in the **UPF**, and it has been alleged that splits may have resulted less from ideological differences than because of Singh's personality. His party has co-operated with other Leftist groups in most of the agitations since 1991, but, despite membership of the six-member alliance formed in May 1992, it put up its own candidate for the post of mayor of Kathmandu. In the local elections in its Pyuthan home base Masal won 228 of the 539 seats. Following the dissolution of parliament, it backed the agitation for Koirala's removal and the formation of a multi-party government. It supported a number of nominally independent candidates in the 1994 election, including Pari Thapa who was elected in Baglung-3.

Nepal Communist Party (Varma) A small, formerly pro-Soviet grouping, led by Krishna Raj Varma and part of the United Left Front during the Democracy Movement. Varma unsuccessfully contested the Saptari-5 seat in the 1991 general election. The group decided in July 1991 to merge with the **Nepal Communist Party (Democratic)** and the **Amatya** group to form the **Nepal Communist Party (United)** but withdrew from the new party in April 1992.

Nepal Communist Party (Marxist). Led by Prabhu Narayan Chaudhuri and made up of former workers of the pre-1991 party of this name who left the **UML** soon after the 1991 election. In December 1993 Keshar Mani Pokhrel, the politburo member responsible for foreign affairs, joined **Congress**. The **NCP(M)** put up candidates in 1994, but all except four of them received less than 1,000 votes and the party's share of total votes cast was only 0.39%.

Nepal Communist League. Led by General-Secretary Shambhu Ram Shrestha. In 1992 joined the **Unity Centre** and other groups in anti-government agitation and in the local election campaign. It also took part in the 7-party agitation of June-August 1993. After the **Congress-UML** accord, the party criticised both the **UML** and the 4-party 'rejectionist' alliance, but said there was no point in restarting the protest movement. The League joined the 6-party Leftist alliance to demand the prime minister's resignation after the dissolution of parliament in July 1994.

Nepal Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist-Maoist). Led by Nanda Kumar Prasai. Was a member of the **UPF** from before the general election until September 1992. Took part in the 1993 7-party agitation over the Dasdhunga incident, and in the 4-party alliance which rejected the ensuing **Congress-UML** accord. It apparently rejoined the **UPF** after the May 1994 split as Nanda Kumar Prasai became vice-chairman of the Central Committee of the **UPF (Vaidya)** in July.

Nepal People's Front (Nepal Janbadi Manch). Set up in 1980 by Ram Raja Prasad Singh, who as a Congress supporter had used the graduate constituency under the original panchayat constitution to challenge the ban on political parties, and was imprisoned. He rejected B.P. Koirala's switch to 'national reconciliation' in 1976 and, in self-exile in India from 1981, advocated the violent overthrow of the panchayat regime and the establishment of a republic. He claimed responsibility for bomb explosions in Nepal in summer 1984, though it has been alleged he was not actually involved but was paid to take the blame by a palace-connected faction who were the real perpetrators. Singh's colleague, Prem Krishna Pathak, led the party within Nepal during the 1991 elections. Singh, who had been condemned to death in absentia but was amnestied in 1991, returned to Nepal in summer 1994. The party contested the general elections in November 1994, putting up 41 candidates, almost all of whom lost their deposits, including Singh himself in Dhanusha-4 (his home constituency). The party received 0.43% of total votes cast.

C. MISCELLANEOUS GROUPS

Rashtriya Janata Parishad, formed in February 1992, with M.P. Koirala (half-brother of Girija Prasad and B.P. Koirala and himself prime minister in 1951-52 and 1953-54) as president and Kirtinidhi Bista (another panchayat-era premier) as vice-president. The general secretary is Shribhadra Sharma, a former Congress M.P. who joined the panchayat system in the 1980s. In summer 1994, the party agreed to join an alliance with the **Janta Dal**

(Social-Democratic), Nepal Praja Parishad, Samyukta Prajatantra Party, Janta Party,¹⁰ and Jana Rajya Parishad. In the 1994 election, in which a son of M.P. Koirala was elected as a UML M.P., the party put up 28 candidates but obtained only 0.12% of votes cast.

Janta Dal (Social-Democratic). Set up by ex-Communist Keshar Jung Raimajhi, it contested 15 seats in the 1991 election and obtained 0.08% of the national vote. In the 1994 election, Raimajhi himself was his party's only candidate and attracted just 404 votes in Nawalparasi-2.

Nepal Praja Parishad. Nepal's oldest political party, formed to oppose the Ranas in the 1940s and re-established by one of its original leaders, the late Tanka Prasad Acharya, after the restoration of multi-party democracy in 1990. Among the leaders of the party after Acharya's death was Bishwa Bandu Thapa. The party put up 7 candidates in the 1994 election, all of whom received under a thousand votes.

Prajatantrik Lok Dal. Launched in December 1992 by Devendra Raj Pande, a former Finance Secretary who had served as an independent in the 1990 interim government, with himself as chairman and Tanka Karki, once a NCP (ML) youth leader, as general secretary. The new party condemned Congress for continuing Panchayat-era policies in the name of economic liberalism and for its lack of intra-party democracy, and accused the communists of failing to come to terms with the collapse of the world communist movement. Of the 10 candidates standing for it in the 1994 election, only Devendra Raj Pande himself received over a thousand votes (1,116 in Palpa-2).

Rashtriya Janamukti Party. Led by Gore Bahadur Khapangi, this is an ethnically-based party, campaigning on behalf of the 'hill tribals', but since, as is also the case with Sadbhavana, its name and constitution do not make its ethnic appeal explicit, it was accepted for registration by the Election Commission. In 1991 the party contested 50 seats and obtained 0.47% of the popular vote. In 1994, 85 candidates obtained a total of 1.05%.

APPENDIX: LIST OF PARTIES MENTIONED

(Parties underlined were represented under their own names in parliament. Italicised names are the author's own translations and may not be the official English title of the organisation concerned. Asterisks denote parties no longer functioning as independent groups, and square brackets enclose an earlier title of the party listed immediately above.)

Name in Nepali	Name in English*	Abbreviation
<u>Nepali Kangres</u>	<u>Nepali Congress</u>	
<u>Nepal Kamyunist Parti</u> (<u>Ekatriit Marksbad-Leninbadi</u>)	<u>Nepal Communist Party</u> (<u>Unified Marxist-Leninist</u>)	<u>UML</u>
*Nepal Kamyunist Parti (Marksbadi-Leninbadi)	Nepal Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist)	NCP(MLM)

<u>Nepal Kamyunist Parti</u> (<u>Samyukta</u>)	<u>Nepal Communist Party</u> (<u>United</u>)	
*Nepal Kamyunist Parti (Prajatantrik)	Nepal Communist Party (Democratic)	NCP(D)
[Nepal Kamyunist Parti (Verma)]	Nepal Communist Party (Verma)]	
*Nepal Kamyunist Parti (Amatya)	Nepal Communist Party (Amatya)	
<u>Samyukta Jana Morcha</u> (<u>Nepal</u>)	<u>United People's Front</u> (<u>Nepal</u>)	<u>UPF</u>
Nepal Kamyunist Parti (Ekta Kendra)	Nepal Communist Party (Unity Centre)	
*Nepal Kamyunist Parti (Mashal)	Nepal Communist Party (Mashal)	
*Sarvaharavadi Shramik Sangathan	<i>Proletarian Workers Organisation</i>	
*Nepal Kamyunist Parti (Chaturtho Mahadhiveshan)	Nepal Communist Party (Fourth Convention)	
Nepal Kamyunist Parti (Marksbadi-Leninbadi-Maobadi)	Nepal Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist-Maoist)	NCP (MLM)
Nepal Kamyunist Parti (Masal)	Nepal Communist Party (Masal)	
<u>Nepal Majdur Kisan</u> <u>Parti</u>	<u>Nepal Workers and Peasants</u> <u>Party</u>	<u>NWPP</u>
<u>Nepal Sadbhavana Parti</u>	<u>Nepal Goodwill Party</u>	
(<u>Samyukta</u>) <u>Rashtriya</u> <u>Prajatantra Parti</u>	(<u>United</u>) <u>National</u> <u>Democratic Party</u>	<u>NDP</u>
Nepal Kamyunist Lig	Nepal Communist League	
Nepal Kamyunist Parti (Marksbadi)	Nepal Communist Party (Marxist)	NCP(M)
[Nepal Kamyunist Parti (15 Saptamber 1949)]	Nepal Communist Party (15 September 1949)]	
*Nepal Kamyunist Parti (Chataum Mahadhiveshan)	Nepal Communist Party (Sixth Convention)	
Nepal Janabadi Morcha	<i>Nepal People's Front</i> ¹¹	
Rashtriya Janata Parishad	<i>National People's Council</i>	
Nepal Praja Parishad	<i>Nepal People's Council</i>	
Prajatantrik Lok Dal	<i>Democratic People's Party</i>	

Janta Dal (Samajik-Prajatantrik)	People's Party (Social Democratic)
Samyukta Prajatantra Parti	United Democratic Party
Rashtriya Janta Dal (Nepal)	National People's Party (Nepal)
Rashtriya Janta Dal (H)	National People's Party (H)
Nepali Janata Parti	Nepali People's Party
Rashtriya Janarajya Parishad	National People's Rule Council

Notes:

1 I am grateful to Krishna Hachhethu of CNAS for comments. Chaitanya Upadhyaya also kindly read through an earlier draft of the paper. Neither, of course, is responsible for errors remaining in the final version. I am also indebted to Abhi Subedi for collecting material on the 1994 election.

2 Figures for the 1994 election are normally taken from CRPS/DAS 1994.

3 Effective strength was actually 113 as the speaker, Daman Nath Dhungana, could only vote in case of a tie.

4 The statement was signed on 25 July but held back for release until 27 July. It was rendered meaningless by the Congress reconciliation on that day, but released to the press by the UML.

5 Despite earlier speculation, there was no attempt to hold a formal session of the General Council. The Congress constitution (clause 12.B) provides that the party's central office (viz. Bhattarai as president) 'may summon' the council on application from one third of the delegates, but the Koirala side presumably preferred not to provoke a fight by putting in such a request.

6 Including parties which failed to gain seats, the total vote for the Leftist parties was 36.79% in 1991 and 33.92% in 1994. The latter figure excludes votes for independent candidates backed by Masal. Had the Left been able to negotiate comprehensive seat-sharing arrangements they would probably have won an additional 14 seats in 1991 and 8 more in 1994.

7 This total includes Padma Ratna Tuladhar, who used the UML election symbol but still describes himself as an 'independent leftist'.

8 Shrestha, who was absent from parliament when the crucial vote was taken on 10 July, afterwards expressed sympathy for Girija and was widely expected to join the Nepali Congress.

9 As the theoretically palatal sibilant in *masāl* and dental one in *masāl* are now identical in most people's pronunciation, they have to be distinguished as *moṭo* (fat) and *pāṭlo* (thin) when words are spelled out. Hence Prachand's former group is often referred to in conversation as *moṭo masāl* and Mohan Bikram's as *pāṭlo masāl*.

10 Presumably to be identified either with the Rashtriya Janata Party (Nepal) of Jayaprakash, or its splinter group Harka Bahadur Buda's Rashtriya Janata Party (H). These put up 9 and 28 candidates respectively at the general election and each received 0.06% of the national vote. The Nepali Janta Party of Kamal Prasad Ghimire registered with the election commission in 1991 but did not put up candidates. This was also the case with the Samyukta Prajatantra Party of former-Foreign Minister K.B. Shahi and Manik Raj Bajracharya's Rashtriya Jana Rajya Parishad.

11 This was the title under which Ramraja Prasad Singh's party fought the 1994 election. It was earlier normally known simply as 'Janbadi Morcha'. A party with that shorter name was also registered for the 1994 election and it is not clear if there is any connection between the two organisations.

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INTERVIEW

Ethnicity and National Integration in Nepal A Conversation with Parshuram Tamang

Karl-Heinz Krämer

Parshuram Tamang, lecturer for economics at the Sarasvati Multiple Campus of Tribhuvan-University, Kathmandu, is Secretary-General of the Nepal Tamang Ghedung, a socio-cultural Tamang-Organization, which was founded as early as 1956, as well as Chairman of the International Network of Engaged Buddhists, Nepal Chapter. Last year he functioned as Secretary of the National Committee for the International Year for the World's Indigenous Peoples, Nepal. In July 1990 he was one of the founders of the Nepal Janajati Mahasangh, a kind of umbrella organization of the 'Tibeto-Mongolic peoples' organizations of Nepal. This organization had been preceded by Sarvajati Adhikar Manch (Forum for the Rights of all Nationalities), which was founded in 1986 and Visidh Dharma, Bhasha, Jati tatha Janajati Samgharsha Samiti (Various Religions, Languages and Nationalities Action Committee), which had been active during the movement for democracy of 1990, then presided by Parshuram Tamang. He is the author of several articles relevant to the history and ethnicity of the Tamang, as well as to questions concerning status and rights of the Tibeto-Mongolic peoples in general. The question of the national integration of these ethnic groups and the related increase of politicization of the ethnic organizations in Nepal were the topics of our conversation on 10th April 1994 in Kathmandu.

K-HK: Could you please tell me something about the history and organization of the Nepal Tamang Ghedung? What is the purpose of your organization?

PT: The Nepal Tamang Ghedung is a social Tamang Organization. It is not like an NGO. It is not an organization of only a few people but of the whole Tamang people. Its purpose is to develop a people's movement. The Nepal Tamang Ghedung works for the preservation, support and development of the common

language, religion, culture and identity. This is the main concern of the Nepal Tamang Ghedung. As you can see, these concerns are all within the scope of human rights. We are engaged in everything concerning the development of the Tamang people. Our organization was founded in 1956. When all political parties were forbidden at the end of 1960, the Nepal Tamang Ghedung was affected as well. Although this prohibition was effective until 1990, our organisation continued operating underground in different ways. Outwardly, we again became particularly active in 1979 when the King announced that a referendum was to be held about the abolition or maintenance of the Panchayat system. It was then that we held our first national conference. From 1979 to 1988 we continued working in different ways. Until 1988 a number of different Tamang organizations existed. In 1988 we tried to unite these different organisations under one roof. For this reason a common organization committee was formed. After the peoples' movement of 1990 we held our second national conference. Later on, a third conference was held. Within our organization we founded a National Education Committee, consisting of 45 members of different districts. Today our organization is represented in 62 out of 75 Nepalese districts. So you could call it a country-wide spreading. The Nepal Tamang Ghedung used to be restricted to a certain elitist class in the Kathmandu Valley, which was engaged in political issues. Today we have become a genuine people's organization which is supported by all social classes of the Tamang people.

K-HK: How many members does your organization approximately have today?

PT: That is difficult to say. The organization and registration of the members are subject to the particular local district committee. The central registration of this data has not yet been established but is intended to be in the near future. Through our organization we also try to motivate other ethnic groups to organize themselves in a similar manner. As a result, in the meantime a number of similar organizations have been founded by different ethnic groups. Today 19 of these organizations are integrated into the Nepal Janajati Mahasangh. Our organization is among the founding members of the Nepal Janajati Mahasangh. At that time (1990) the Janajati Mahasangh only consisted of 7 or 8 member organizations.

K-HK: What is the programmatic demand of the Nepal Tamang Ghedung?

PT: The Nepal Tamang Ghedung works for the improvement of the Tamang people's situation. We talk about all the problems concerning the Tamang people, like language, religion, culture, identity and the right of development. Unfortunately, the new Nepali Constitution declared Nepal to be a Hindu state. Therefore, we demand a transformation into a secular state. This means if Nepal is by definition a Hindu state, it is only a state for Hindus. But Nepal is a multinational state. Therefore, we demand equal rights for all religious groups of the country. This is also a question of our identity. If Nepal is a Hindu state one has to ask what the status of the non-Hindus is. Another problem concerns our language. We are fighting for its acknowledgement. Although the new constitution has pronounced the formal acknowledgement of the ethnic languages as one of the basic rights, this does not mean an acknowledgement of equal rights. We demand of the state to treat all languages equally. The government provides money for the development of Nepali which was declared the national language. No effort is made whatsoever towards a development of the country's

other languages. Consequently, we demand instruction of our children in their mother tongue. Moreover, we demand that our languages also should be used in the media. The constitution guarantees the right of information to all the citizens of Nepal. But in Nepal all the news and information, laws and decrees are only spread in one single language, Nepali. Even according to the latest census at least fifty percent of the population speak Nepali rather insufficiently, or not at all. Now, if all information in Nepal is spread in Nepali only, this means that half of the Nepalese population are deprived of their basic right of information. Consequently, we demand a translation of all information, news, proclamations, decrees etc. into the other languages of the country also. A different question is the right of development. The Tamang people can look back on a long history of their own. But it is also a history of oppression. Accordingly, we demand an upgrading of our history. Even the ruling class of our country should analyse our history from a new point of view and acknowledge the actual state of our position. The numerous ethnic groups of Nepal - especially the non-Hindu ones - were subject to a very strong oppression and discrimination in the course of history. You know the history of this country. It was written by members of Nepal's ruling class. They are very strongly prejudiced in their presentation and interpretation of the Nepalese history. What you read in Nepalese history books is not our history but the history of the ruling class only. It was written according to their own values, their way of thinking and their ideology. With their idea of a super caste they tried to point out their superiority. Our social history has not been written yet. We demand that this be brought up now. I would like to mention an example of our history. In our history books we still read that Jaya Stithi Malla undertook great reforms by introducing the caste system to Nepalese Society. Out of that we can not make out any positive social reform. Nevertheless, we are forced to read it like this in our history books. Another example: The Licchavi period is celebrated by the Nepalese historians as being the Golden Age of Nepalese history. How can we regard this period to be the Golden Age of Nepal, knowing that it was then that the system of slavery was introduced to Nepal? Therefore, we urgently demand a reevaluation of Nepal's history where all of Nepal's ethnic groups hold an appropriate place and a revision of the development programme which must also take Nepal's ethnic groups into consideration.

K-HK: The members of the various ethnic groups should, of course, be involved in such a reevaluation and revision of Nepalese history. Has anything been undertaken in this respect so far? For example, has the attempt yet been made to write a history of the Tamang people or to present the Nepalese history from the Tamang people's point of view?

PT: We are still working on it. We are trying to motivate suitable Tamang to write about this problem. I believe that there are quite a number of Tamang who are able to write their history much better than it is presented in Nepalese history books, simply because they have an understanding of themselves. The members of the country's ruling class do not understand the history and the problems of the Tamang people. For centuries now our people have not had the right to decide for themselves. How is it possible to form a consciousness of development in a situation like that? You know that there have been two political systems in Nepal. In Panchayat times the National Panchayat was located at the

top and the local and district panchayats underneath it. The People's Movement of 1990 brought about a parliamentary system. Nowadays, the Parliament is at the top and the district and village committees are underneath. What is the difference between these two systems? At the upper level some changes have, without doubt, taken place because today we have a Parliament which consists of two chambers. It used to be only one, today there are two; this is a change. But what kind of changes occurred on the lower level? There we find no changes whatsoever apart from the new name. How are we to expect any kind of progress with the structure remaining unchanged? There are the same laws, the same structure, the same people as before. No decisions are being made at the lower level.

KH-K: What do you imagine the necessary political changes to be like?

PT: The ethnic groups demand a restructuring of the political system. On the one hand, there is the House of Commons which is a house of representatives. The delegates are from the different electoral divisions and represent the various political ideologies of the country. On the other hand, there is the House of Lords which now is merely a doubling of the House of Commons. Accordingly, we demand the conversion of the House of Lords. In Nepal there are numerous groups of inhabitants. Some of them are big in number, others are very small. Even the small populations ought to be given an opportunity to participate in the process of decision-making. How else can it be possible for them to communicate their opinions and requests? How else can they say: "This is our Parliament, this is our country, these are things done for us."? We, the ethnic organizations, therefore demand to change the House of Lords into a House of Nationalities where all groups, the small as well as the big ones, are to be represented. It is only when all populations of the country are able to participate in such a way that they will feel the sovereignty of the country to be in the hands of all the people and believe that they are a part of this sovereign people. But with things being as they are nothing has changed. The state has remained the same, the Nepali language is the national language and all of the communication media are in the hands of the very same population group. The whole of the administration is likewise dominated by the same group of high-caste Hindus. The same is true for law, military and police. Our organization works in different ways. Firstly, we try to organize our people and to sharpen their consciousness. Secondly, we put pressure on the government to make them consider our requests adequately. Thirdly, we try to make a contribution to the development of our society by cultivating and promoting our language and by spreading information in our language. Moreover, we conduct training and seminars and the like to strengthen and develop the basic structures of our society.

K-HK: What about a participation within the political parties? Today, politicians are substantially responsible for the decision process. It seems to me that the participation of the ethnic groups is very small. If I take your share in the controlling groups of the political parties into account, it seems obvious that they are still mainly dominated by Bahun, Chetri and high-caste Newar. How are the chances of the ethnic groups and their requests to be estimated in this situation?

PT: Well, our organization is not a political but a social organization, although we also pick up and respond to political questions and problems. That means, we differ from political parties both in what we are and how we work. We present

political problems from a social point of view. Today, the people and their leaders are all politically divided. If we join the political level, we, too, will have the same kinds of difficulties. Therefore, we will continue to work on the social level. To this end, we organize certain symposia from time to time, to which we also invite parliamentarians. Politicians always look at all problems from a political point of view and in so doing are usually guided by their particular ideology. We, on the other hand, are trying to present our opinions from a purely social point of view and thereby to influence their political thinking. This organizational work is supported by an occasional distribution of leaflets and posters or by articles in newspapers. On a few occasions, we were thus able to make politicians support our requests. So, you could say that we are trying to educate and inform parliamentarians, politicians and parties in this way. Through them we are putting pressure on the government as well.

K-HK: If you are trying to change something, you naturally need the support of the political parties. Are there certain parties you or the other member organizations of the Nepal Janajati Mahasangh are on better terms with than others?

PT: In this respect, all organizations are independent. They are all social organizations which are not related to any of the political parties at all. But it is natural, that some individual persons are members of our ethnic organizations and, at the same time, commit themselves to a political party. For example, some members of our Nepal Tamang Ghedung are members of the Nepali Congress, in the NCP (UML), the Janvadi Morcha, the Rashtriya Prajatantrik Party or in some other political parties. Party affiliations are, therefore, very diverse. But this has nothing to do with the orientation and the commitment of our organization. We feel unified through our common problems. There are problems common to all Tamang, to all indigenous peoples, to all ethnic groups of Nepal. This is our common bond. You know from history that the Tamang people was very much oppressed under the Rana regime. The Tamang didn't have access to the government or administrative system and were not allowed to leave the country. The Tamang were held as cheap labourers. Under the Rana system, education of any kind was a monopoly of the country's ruling class. Participation in the decision process did not exist. Today's situation is a direct result of that system. Today our people are backward not through any fault of theirs, but because they were oppressed and discriminated against. Therefore, a compensation programme has to be introduced. The Tamang's situation today does not result from a mistake of the people but from a mistake of the country's government. It was the state's mistake that made them backward. Therefore, the state has to compensate the Tamang.

K-HK: Today, there are quite a number of people who do acknowledge the disadvantaged position of the ethnic groups, and who try to picture it as being primarily an economic problem. The cultural, social, political and historical causes are thereby either minimized or even completely denied. What is your opinion on this issue?

PT: The economic disadvantage of the ethnic groups may well be a consequence of the general discrimination against these peoples, but not its cause. If we lived in a communal system like the *kipat*-system, the situation would be completely different. *Kipat* means that the land belongs to the community not to the whole

community but to a certain clan. This was a system in which we were able to unfold and develop our own cultural and social values. For example, in our society man and woman are equal. These, our own value systems, still continue to exist. Now, what is the reason for our being backward compared to the country's ruling class? The reason is that they have destroyed our traditional system. First they destroyed our social and economical system. Then, finally, they destroyed our cultural values. They confiscated the land of our people and made themselves landlord, *jamindār*, *tālukdār*. That the people are economically poor today is a consequence of this policy. But the cause is the confiscation of our land, the *kīpaṭ*-land. The cause is political oppression. Take a look at the Muluki Ain, the country's civil code. They have incorporated our society into their four-level social system. In their system, they made us *Śūdras*. This meant that members of our people did not have any rights or prospects. They were only allowed to do what the ruling class ordered them to do.

K-HK: I see. This is the consequence of the introduction of the Hindu state. Today, too, the constitution calls Nepal a Hindu state. How great is your confidence in the constitution, the laws, the judicial system? How about the chances of the legal equality of all citizens which is guaranteed in the constitution?

PT: The constitution itself is already discriminatory when it talks about the legal equality of all citizens on the one hand, but declares Nepal to be a Hindu state on the other. I think it will hardly be necessary to illustrate this any further. The contradiction in the constitution speaks for itself.

K-HK: How about the acceptance of your organization or corresponding ethnic organizations by the respectively represented ethnic group? Is your work being accepted? How great is the striving for participation?

PT: I have already mentioned that we held a national convention. 750 people from different districts participated in this event. They all mentioned the support of our organization by the Tamang people. There is a great confidence in our work. This also becomes clear when we occasionally hold meetings and seminars. We are always trying to secure the people's opinions. I would consider it dangerous if we did not. In the meantime, 62 district-committees of our organization also contribute. They enable us to reach basically every village and every house and to talk to every Tamang individually. For example, 6 or 7 days ago there was a meeting of our national education committee with the participation of 29 members from 29 districts. At this meeting, they talked about our work in different villages. It became clear that our organization keeps expanding further and further. This is only possible if it meets with wide support among the Tamang people. The charter of our organization, our requests and aims meet with unanimous approval because they are identical with the hopes and wishes of the Tamang people.

K-HK: Are the problems with the diversity of languages for the Tamang similar to those of, for example, the Rai, who speak quite a number of totally autonomous languages? Western researches often stress that the Tamang are a very differentiated people, which becomes particularly apparent through the distinct linguistic variants which are sometimes not mere dialects but virtually autonomous languages. How are you trying to solve this problem? Are efforts being made in the direction of standardizing the Tamang language?

PT: Our problems are somewhat different from the Rai's. The Rai do indeed have a number of different languages; in their case it is not a matter of different dialects. Efforts towards a single standardized language would for them be senseless as they should rather strive for the development of all of their languages. In our case though, there is only one language, even though there might be a number of different dialects. This common language we have to develop and cultivate. But in doing so, we are trying not to favour a certain dialect above the others. All members of the Tamang people should be able to call this language their own. Therefore, we are eager to let the dialects of all social groups merge into that one language.

K-HK: The Tamang language is not originally a literary language. Which kind of writing do you use today for the development and standardization of your language?

PT: The educated Tamang are using the Devanagari writing, which is also used for Nepali. But we have come to the conclusion that we should use the writing which is used for the Tibetan language if we really want to develop our own language. It is only in this writing, that the Tamang sounds can be reproduced correctly. The main reason for this is that the roots of our language lie in the Tibetan language. This also fits with our religious tradition. Accordingly, today we are trying to revive our old tradition and culture.

K-HK: How about women's participation in your organization? In the whole of the Nepali society women's participation is very low. Does your organization try to address women in any particular way?

PT: Women's participation is indeed very low. This is a matter of forming a consciousness. Beneath our executive committee we have a number of sub-committees. Through these committees with their special programmes we are trying to aim at the Tamang women and to sharpen their consciousness.

K-HK: Many Tamang use the word Lama as their surname, others, like yourself, call themselves Tamang. What is the difference between these two variations?

PT: In the past, it was very common for the Tamang to use the name 'Lama' (*lāmā*) as their surname. This happened through a certain pressure from outside. In Nepali society the word 'Tamang' was looked upon as being very abusive. I would like to mention a national event in this context. Under King Tribhuvan and Prime Minister Bhim Shamsher, a new name was given to the Tamang (*tāmāṅg*) in 1932. By then, the Nepalese King officially granted the Tamang the right to call themselves 'Tamang'. From then on, all members of the Tamang people were to be registered under the surname 'Tamang'. This proclamation was a consequence of the Tamang demands. Until then, Tamang were registered under a number of names, including the names of numerous other ethnic groups, which made a classification of the Tamang much more difficult. It was with the proclamation of 1932 that the traditional name of the Tamang was officially acknowledged. Various researchers have written about the Tamang. I would like to refer to Hamilton here. When the current Nepalese state was created, that means when the Gorkha leaders conquered the remaining parts of today's Nepal, a time of oppression began for the Tamang. They were directly assigned to state administration. But the Tamang differed from the country's ruling class in having a different religion, a different language, a different social system,

different values and a different culture. The Tamang resisted the social fusion. They remained true to their culture and their social values. In order to escape this discriminatory existence, some Tamang proceeded to call themselves 'Lama'. 'Lama' was, of course, a clerical expression, but other people also assumed this name because priests were particularly respected persons. One group of Tamang who had a good relationship to the Ranas, such as the brothers of the wife of the prime minister Bhim Shamsher, were revalued. But the greater part of the Tamang were still discriminated against. They were not allowed into the parliamentary service, or to leave the country. In order to escape from this restriction, many Tamang took on names of other ethnic groups, for example the Gurung.

K-HK: There exists a certain controversy about the term *janajāti* which is used by the ethnic organizations of Nepal. A few days ago I talked to Gopal Gurung of the Mongol National Organization. He strongly criticizes the use of this term. What is your opinion about this?

PT: It is well known that Gopal Gurung criticizes the usage of the term *janajāti* and our organization as well. He obviously misunderstands the original meaning of the word *janajāti* on the one hand. On the other hand, he denies his own pursuit of confessional politics. Apart from that, it is sometimes not that easy to decide on the right translation of certain Nepali terms into English. Sometimes a certain word is used to express a broader range of meanings. We prefer the English term 'nationalities' for a translation of *janajāti*. Others prefer to say 'ethnic groups' or *ādivāsī*, the latter being deprecatory in its use. I do not believe that the terminology should be considered that important; the crucial point being the substance of our statement.

K-HK: Thank you very much.



NEWS

Nepal-Human Ecology Programme

Nepal in the early 1990s is a very poor country struggling to overcome a set of interrelated crisis-promoting processes; for example, rapid population growth (official growth rate of 2.4% per year, probably closer to 3%), low level of investment in industrial production, 90% of population dependent on agriculture, indications of overexploitation and serious soil erosion in the densely populated and vulnerable hill areas (where 30% of cultivated land supports 60% of the country's rural population), political instability and little governmental capacity to pursue longterm economic policies, increasing dependence on foreign aid, and ad hoc, short-term crisis management.

Destabilizing processes caused by human resource utilization are frequently seen in total deforestation and irreversible erosion of hill slopes, lowered crop productivity (in terms of yield per unit area and of contribution to GNP) and an increasing percentage of subsistence farmers with nutrient intakes below minimum acceptable levels.

However, these doomsday scenaria are now increasingly being challenged by researchers from different disciplines. The overarching objective of the programme is to contribute to more adequate conceptualization of the interplay between processes in nature and processes in society. Such conceptualization has to tackle the problem of integrating socio-cultural and political administrative processes within an overall ecosystem approach. This obviously will require contributions from several disciplines.

The programme seeks to realize its main objective through coordination of activities within two main sub-programmes: a) Tribhuvan-Bergen Human Ecology Research and Teaching Programme and b) Resource systems, Human Ecology Programme Nepal. In addition, individual student fellowships have been awarded as part of the overall activities in Nepal.

a) Tribhuvan-Bergen Human Ecology Research and Teaching Programme

This programme which was founded by NUFU, tries to contribute to the overall objective through a joint Tribhuvan-Bergen research and training programme. The original programme proposal argued for methodological procedures characterized as "progressive contextualization", i.e. starting the investigation by focusing on significant people-environment interactions and then searching for gradually more comprehensive explanations of these interactions by placing them in progressively wider or denser contexts.

The programme started as planned in July 1993 with disciplinary inputs from anthropology and archaeology. In anthropology, the teaching component includes supervision of 9 MA (per year) and 2 Ph.D. students (for the programme period). In archaeology, the teaching component includes supervision of 8 MA students and 2 Ph.D. students (for the programme period) in archaeological field excavations of Neolithic and early Iron Age sites.

b) Resource Systems, Human Ecology Programme Nepal

This programme attempts to link up the Tribhuvan-Bergen Human Ecology Programme with related research activities by Norwegian staff and students.

Participation of students and staff members from Tribhuvan University together with staff members and students from Bergen (funded from other sources) in a Human Ecology-focused research programme is of fundamental importance for the programme's approach to competence-building. Empirically, this research programme is focused on two regions: the Kali Gandaki river system and the Dang valley in Central-Western Nepal and the Tamur and Arun river systems in Eastern Nepal.

One project on vegetation ecology has been started in the Middle Hills (by O.R. Vetaas). It will focus on the utilization of oak forest and the consequences for biodiversity, field-layer composition, and fodder value. There are few studies on vegetational changes in Nepal, although deforestation is highlighted by many other authors. This study attempts to use some of the methods applied in the Indian Himalayas adjacent to West Nepal so as to give a comparative perspective for the Nepalese Himalayas. The project is also expected to train a few MSc. students from the Botany Department, Tribhuvan University (Nepal).

Gunnar Håland, Ole Reidar Vetaas, Tore Nesheim

Workshop on "Bagmati - A Living Museum?" Kathmandu, October 21, 1994

For more than two years now, the Goethe-Institut in Kathmandu has affiliated itself with various groups and projects whose common objective is to rehabilitate Bagmati river and its surroundings. This effort has focused specifically on the area between Teku and Thapathali, on both sides of the river.

That area has to be considered of great significance, both in regard to Nepal's cultural heritage and with respect to environmental protection and balanced urban development in the future. Up to now, the area has been completely neglected, with the consequence that its cultural treasures are disintegrating, the *ghāts* are shunned by worshippers, *sattals* no longer serve pilgrims but rather homeless families, land is being illegally encroached upon, and above all, the Bagmati is turning ever more into an open sewerage.

With this in mind, the Goethe-Institute and the "Bagmati Rehabilitation Trust Fund" jointly organised this workshop. A two-fold action plan was discussed:

- (a) to develop strategies for the culturally sensitive and educationally sound promotion of tourism in the area - such "tourism" to comprise foreigners and especially the local populace; school children, university students, scholars, and even politicians;
- (b) to involve the existing museums of the Kathmandu Valley in this ongoing experience, i.e. "learning by doing", that will be professionally supervised and guided by a German expert in museology over various phases.

Since the interests of the groups involved, i.e., locals and governmental authorities, differ from each other, a sound and common basis of mutual trust and cooperation had to be reached. Concerning the question of which steps were necessary to coalesce the different interest groups, four areas of action were identified:

- (1) The four wards, being in charge of the area, as well as the M.E.I.P. (Metropolitan Environmental Improvement Project), and the mayors of Kathmandu and Patan, will be assisted to work towards a comprehensive project-proposal. The exact boundaries and the channeling of the river and methods to fight water pollution shall all be subjects of discussion.
- (2) Legal protective measures have to be initiated by creating an "Environmental-Monumental Zone".
- (3) It is indispensable to come to terms with Guthi Samsthan and its policies of neglecting its duties, underpaying its caretakers, and selling off land, etc. One way to have a better understanding of the Guthi doings in the area would be to require the Guthi head-offices to come up with a "Guthi Land Holding Map". This map then could be compared with other cadastral and private guthi maps. Possible differences should lead to a better understanding of where and why these differences arise.
- (4) The idea of the "Living Museum" was presented for the target area.

Responsibilities for immediate action taking follow these four target aspects. They have been divided between Dr. Susanne von der Heide, Mr. Christian von Hatzfeldt, and Mr. Dr. Saphalya Amatya.

Report on the Symposium

"The Wild Goddess in South Asia" Berne and Zurich, November 3-5, 1994

This international symposium, convened by Axel Michaels, Annette Wilke (Institute of Religious Studies, University of Berne) and Cornelia Vogelsanger (Ethnological Museum of Zurich University), dealt with the wild and untamed aspect of goddesses in India and Nepal. The meeting also concluded the Kālī-Exhibition at the Ethnological Museum in Zurich. Publication of the contributions is planned in the series *Studia Religiosa Helvetica* (vol. 2).

The first day was devoted to the Himalayas, with predominantly ethnological contributions on Bhairava (Elisabeth Chalier-Visuvalingam, Paris-Budapest), the Navadurgās (Niels Gutschow, Abtsteinach-Kathmandu, and Gérard Toffin, Paris), Guhyeśvarī (Axel Michaels, Berne), Hārātī (Brigitte Merz, Heidelberg-Kathmandu) as well as Draupadī and Kuntī (William Sax,

Christchurch). In the evening a public film was shown on the cult of the Living Goddess (Kumārī) in Nepal, with an introduction by Gérard Toffin.

The second day focused on art-history and philological topics. The papers dealt with Kālī (Rachel Fell-McDermott, New York, and Andrea Loseries, Graz), the role of demi-goddesses like the Dākinīs and Śākinīs (Adelheid Hermann-Pfandt, Marburg), an elaborate ritual for Dantēśvarī (Cornelia Mallebrein, Tübingen) as well as wall paintings of goddesses in Orissa (Eberhard Fischer, Zurich). The day was concluded with text-related contributions on Caṇḍikā and other goddesses in the Kathāsaritsāgara (Fabrizia Baldissera, Naples), on martial aspects of the goddess in the Tripurarahasya (Silvia Schwarz Linder, Milan) and on the taming of the goddess in Śaṃkara-legends (Annette Wilke, Berne).

On the last day - in Zurich - presentations dealt mainly with South Indian topics, such as the relationship between violence and gender of the deities and their devotees (Heidrun Brückner, Tübingen), and the meaning of the number of eyes of goddesses (Evelyne Masalmani-Meyer). This was followed by a short working report on the Kālikāpurāṇa by Sylvia Wendt.

This conference was the first concerned with the goddesses of South Asia to take place in Europe. The main focus was not on general issues, such as goddesses and women or the feminist debate on the goddess. (Interestingly, the topic is still examined mainly by female scholars, as was the case in this conference). The value of the unpublished contributions rather lay in the in-depth studies of local traditions, which in a comparative perspective evinced surprising similarities and congruities even in minor details. This was the case, for example, with respect to the function of the sword, which many goddesses carry, or the meaning of the eyes.

There was no singular comprehensive result of the conference that could be ascertained, but that was not its aim. Nevertheless, it was apparent from the discussions that the theoretical analysis of goddesses in South Asia can no longer be made with simplistic, rather static dichotomies and oppositions, paradoxes and ambivalences (pure-impure, benevolent-malevolent, *ugra-saumya*, etc.). Rather it turned out, on a closer view, that goddesses have both aspects, or move back and forth between the extremes: Kālī may become milder, others may (also under political influences) become wilder.

Axel Michaels



ANNOUNCEMENTS

**International Symposium on
Karakorum-Hindukush-Himalaya:
Dynamics of Change
September 29th - October 7th, 1995
Islamabad, Pakistan**

Invitation

The International Symposium on *Karakorum Hindukush - Himalaya: Dynamics of Change* will be held in Islamabad, Pakistan, from Sept. 29th - Oct. 2nd, 1995, followed by an excursion from Oct. 3rd - Oct. 6th (ending on the morning of Oct. 7th). The symposium will be organized by the Pak-German Project *Culture Area Karakorum* (CAK), the German Research Council (DFG), the national Institute of Folk and Traditional Heritage (Lok Virsa), Islamabad, and the UNESCO- Programme on *Man and the Biosphere* (MAB), of which the project is a part. The organising committee takes pleasure in inviting you to participate.

Objective of the Symposium

The Pak-German Project *Culture Area Karakorum* (CAK) was initiated by the German Research Council (DFG) in 1989 and designed for a period of 6 years. Its scientific programme centres on the relationship between man, culture and environment in the high mountain areas of Pakistan. Physical and Human Geography, Social Anthropology, Oriental Studies and Linguistics are integrated, both on the Pakistani and the German side. The programme's specific research focus has evolved from a situation of intensive change which started with the construction of the Karakorum Highway. These changes can be paralleled with the situation in the high mountain areas of neighbouring countries. After six years of intensive field research, the symposium should provide a forum for scientists working under CAK to present their results and discuss them under a broader perspective with colleagues working in the Karakorum, as well as in the Hindukush and the Himalayas. Their presentation of research results is most welcome.

Programme

The first four days of the symposium, from Sept. 29th - Oct. 2nd, 1995, will take place in Islamabad and will be used for formal presentations and discussions. The presentations are expected to illustrate problems of high mountain research in the Karakorum, Hindukush, and Himalaya of comparative and regional interest. A four day excursion, from Oct. 3rd - Oct. 6th, along the Karakorum Highway to Gilgit will follow. It will offer the chance to discuss changes due to road building and development. Please note: the number of scientists participating in the excursion has to be limited because of organisational problems.

Topics of the Symposium

Participants are encouraged to contribute papers dealing with:

1. Mountain Environments: Resources and Degradation
2. Hazard and Habitat
3. History of Settlement
4. Historical links between Highland and Lowland
5. Regional Cultures and their Transformation
6. Karakorum Highway and Cultural Change

Accommodation, Registration fee, Price of the Excursion

All accommodations will be arranged in hotels and guest houses and will cost an average of US \$ 70,- per night.

Abstracts

Those intending to make presentations at the symposium are requested to send a one-page abstract no later than June 30th, 1995.

Publication of Proceedings

The Organising Committee of the Symposium hopes to be able to publish the papers presented in a special volume. However, this will only be possible if a sufficient number of authors are willing to have their papers published in this way.

Registration and all Correspondence:

CAK Coordination Office, Prof. Dr. Irmtraud Stellrecht, Institute of Social Anthropology, University of Tübingen, Im Schloss, D-72070 Tübingen, Phone: 49-7071-293999 / Fax: 49-7071-294995

7th Colloquium of the International Association for Ladakh Studies

Bonn, 12-15 June 1995

Only in the last decades has Ladakh (northwest India, once known as Little Tibet) been readily accessible for study, but in that short time it has been the focus of much attention by students in many disciplines. These have been attracted by the interest in its physical situation at high altitude in the rain-shadow of the geologically active Himalaya; by the natural ecology of this rugged desert and the skillful adaptations of pastoralism and agriculture; by the sociology, history and cultural tradition, especially as a surviving example of Tibetan Buddhism; and by the problems presented by modern development and conservation.

The International Association for Ladakh Studies (IALS) was formed with an international committee of distinguished scholars concerned with a wide variety of topics. The functions of the IALS are to provide contacts between all who are interested in the study of Ladakh, and to disseminate information about proposed

and completed research and publications. To do this the IALS organises colloquia, arranges publication of the proceedings, and publishes an occasional newsletter, *Ladakh Studies*.

The colloquia of the IALS have been organised regularly since 1981 (Konstanz, Germany (1981), Pau, France (1985), Herrnhut, German Democratic Republic (1987), Bristol, U.K. (1989), London, U.K. (1992) and Leh, Ladakh, India (1993)). The proceedings of these colloquia have been published or are currently in press.

The 7th colloquium of the International Association for Ladakh Studies will be held 12-15 June 1995 at Arnold-Janssen-Haus, Sankt Augustin near Bonn, Germany (about 20 min. by public transport from Bonn). It will be organised by the Institute of Central Asian Studies (Heinz Räther and Thierry Dodin), University of Bonn, Germany. About 30 papers will be held in different sessions (ethnology, tibetology, history, geography, biology, development, etc.). One of the main subjects of this colloquium will be the relationships between Ladakh and Central Asia.

A picture exhibition as well as films and slide shows on Ladakh will complete the scientific sessions of the colloquium. Participants are also kindly invited to inform about their current research and planned projects on posters.

A conference fee of DM 50 has to be paid on arrival (approx. Pounds 20 / \$ 32 / FF 150). Travel grants can only be provided for a limited number of Asian participants.

As far as accommodation is concerned, a limited number of rooms at Arnold-Janssen-Haus itself are available at the moderate rate of DM 70/day (including breakfast, lunch and dinner). Early booking necessary! (First come - first serve).

For the participants who wish to stay at the Youth Hostel (about 1 hour to Arnold-Janssen-Haus by public transports, bed and breakfast: DM 30,50/day) reservation will be arranged by us.

Hotels must be booked by the participants themselves, a booking form will be sent on demand. (For students only: we will try to arrange free or cheap private accommodation).

Please register as soon as possible, especially if you want us to provide accommodation! Further information will be sent immediately after we receive your provisional registration. Please specify the type of accommodation you need and let us know whether you intend to read a paper or not. In this case, please specify the title or subject of your paper and include a 100-word summary.

Registration and further information: T. Dodin/H. Räther, Zentralasiatisches Seminar/Uni Bonn, Regina-Pacis-Weg 7, D-53113 Bonn, Tel: (-49)-228-737-465 / Fax: (-49)-228-737-458

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE

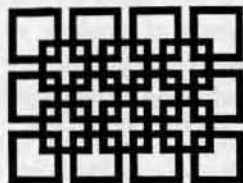
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Monika Krengel received her doctorate at Heidelberg University. She presently teaches at Heidelberg and Frankfurt Universities and continues research in Kumaon, focusing on property relation and moral codes.

John Whelpton is a free-lance writer on Nepalese affairs based in Hong Kong. His translation of and commentary on *Jang Bahādurko Belāit-Yātrā* was published by Sahayogi (1983) and his *Kings, Soldiers and Priests: Nepalese Politics and the Rise of Jang Bahadur Rana, 1830-1857* has been published in 1991 by Manohar. His bibliography, *Nepal*, was published in 1990 by Clio Press in their World Bibliographical Series.

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NOTES TO CONTRIBUTORS

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1. Topical reports on ongoing, or recently completed, research projects.
2. Information about archives with literary, historical, archaeological, ethnographic, botanical, etc. materials collected in the Himalayan region.
3. Reviews of books on the Himalayas, including books published in Nepal, India, Pakistan and China which because of poor distribution may be inadequately known in Europe.
4. Current political developments in Nepal, India, Pakistan and China and the implications of these developments for research carried out by European scholars.
5. News about recent or forthcoming conferences, and on funding opportunities for European scholars working in the Himalayas as well as for scholars from the Himalayan region itself to visit Europe.

Manuscripts should not exceed 5,000 words (ca. 20 pages) in length. All contributions will be published in English. Anything submitted in English by a non-native speaker will be copy-edited in Heidelberg or London.

Contributors are invited to submit their articles as hard copy and possibly on disk. (If your article is sent on disk, please also send hard copy.) All formats are acceptable. If your article is not on disk, please type it boldly, in a large font, and avoid hand-written additions to facilitate scanning.

Please submit your articles with notes attached at the end of your contribution, don't use footnotes at the end of the page. Non-English words should be underlined or written in italics throughout the text. The titles of books, etc. cited should be written in italics. Titles of articles should be in plain text within quotation marks, together with the title of their source (book or journal) in italics, e.g.

Bista, Dor Bahadur. 1991. *Fatalism and Development. Nepal's Struggle for Modernization*. Calcutta: Orient Longman.

Quigley, Declan. 1987. "Ethnicity Without Nationalism: The Newars of Nepal." In: *European Journal of Sociology* XXVIII, pp. 152-70.

The deadline for submissions for our ninth issue is May 30, 1995. Anything received after that date will go into the tenth issue, expected in autumn, 1995.

The views expressed by individual contributors are their own and do not represent those of the editorial board.

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