



# CHAUTARI QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

## No. 8 | January–March 2025

### REGULAR SEMINARS

Martin Chautari continued its regular discussion series on Sundays and Tuesdays during the months January to March 2025. Altogether 24 discussions were held in these series. MC has been collaborating with various institutions/groups to organize Tuesday discussions on specific themes. The

Karnali Discourse series is organized jointly with Karnali Discourse Society. Similarly, the Democracy Dialogue series is organized in collaboration with Democracy Resource Center Nepal (DRCN), and the Urja Policy Dialogue is held jointly with the Urja Khabar team. Three discussions in each of these thematic series were held during this quarter.



*Barsha Manandhar and Narayani Chaudhari speaking at the Sunday Research Seminar on March 23, 2025*



*Nasala Chitrakar speaking at the Sunday Research Seminar on March 2, 2025*

As in previous years, Chautari celebrated March as women's month. In the eight seminars and discussions held during the month of March, 13 women researchers and practitioners were the main speakers. In addition, a day-long workshop of women researchers was also organized on March 30 (as mentioned in the section below). All these discussions/workshop were also well attended by women participants from various walks of life.

## PUBLICATIONS

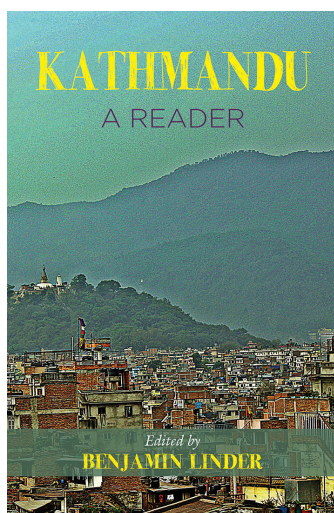
### *KATHMANDU: A READER*

Edited by Benjamin Linder

An anthology of academic writings documenting the many changes that Kathmandu has experienced in the past three decades has just been published by Chautari. The anthology was edited by Benjamin Linder who has also written a long introduction.

Kathmandu comprises an intricate collection of spaces, histories, conflicts, and imaginaries. Long a site of contestation, aspiration, and external projection, the city encompasses a bundle of seeming contradictions: ancient and modern, traditional and cosmopolitan, ever-changing and yet consistently itself. In the twenty-first century, research about contemporary Kathmandu—and the Kathmandu Valley more broadly—has proliferated, owing to transformations in the city itself as well as to shifts within the social sciences. The upshot has been a diverse and nuanced literature exploring the intertwined politics, cultures, and geographies of the present city and its surrounds. Collected here for the first time, the articles in this volume offer an exemplary snapshot of current research about a rapidly changing metropolis done by researchers of various nationalities. Presenting both classic texts and more recent work by young scholars, this book maps the contours of a still-emerging body of work, exploring everything from housing markets to heritage, memory to migration, infrastructure to identity, and much more. The diversity of themes is meant not only to give a broad overview, but also to supply readers with embarkation points for further research. Thus, as both a handy reference and an introductory anthology, *Kathmandu: A Reader* sustains a crucial, ongoing conversation about the city's past, present, and future.

**Benjamin Linder** is an anthropologist and cultural geographer with interests in urban place-making, transnational mobilities, and cultural transformation in



Nepal. Linder has researched the recent transformations in Thamel, the part of Kathmandu that is very popular with both international tourists and local residents. He currently serves as the Coordinator for Public and Engaged Scholarship at the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS), Leiden University, the Netherlands. He is also an associate editor of *Studies in Nepali History and Society*.

Further details about the book are available at:

<https://martinchautari.org.np/mc-publications/kathmandu-a-reader>

### *STUDIES IN NEPALI HISTORY AND SOCIETY*



Volume 29, No. 2 December 2024 issue of the journal *Studies in Nepali History and Society* was published in early March 2025. This publication is editorially curated at Martin Chautari and is published by Mandala Book Point. This issue contains two full-length articles written by historians, the first of which focuses on production in the Gorkhali Polity and the second focuses on violence and mobility

across the Indo-Nepal border during the early decades of the 19th century. Another article examines the challenges of digital agro-advisory services for smallholder farmers. Two other articles are related to the Nepal Tarai. There is a note about the Nepal scrapbook of the Indian historian Bhagwanlal Indrajit who visited Kathmandu for research in 1873. Further details about the table of contents of this issue and the full-texts of the eight book reviews it contains can be found at: <https://www.martinchautari.org.np/mc-publications/sinhas-volume-29-number-2>

### *A RESEARCH REPORT ON THE EXISTING LAWS AND STATE BEHAVIOR TOWARDS NEPALI CSOs*

A research report on the existing legal framework and state behavior towards Nepali civil society organizations (CSOs) was published in February 2025. It was written in Nepali by MC researcher Devraj Humagain. It analyzes the existing legal provisions implemented by the three tiers of



## सामाजिक संघ-संस्था सम्बन्धी नेपाली राज्यका कानून र व्यवहार

अनुसन्धान प्रतिवेदन

देवराज हुमागाई



governments in Nepal with respect to CSOs. The report has four chapters. In the first chapter, an overview of the constitutional provisions and existing laws related to CSOs is provided. The second chapter focuses on the legal provisions and their implementation with respect to the registration and renewal of CSOs. The third chapter discusses existing legal provisions and the challenges faced by CSOs regarding their

organizational operation and management. The fourth chapter looks at how ongoing efforts to formulate new laws have become futile due to the unwillingness of the state to ensure peoples' fundamental rights as provided by the 2015 Constitution.

The report argues that the state should have formulated new legal framework regarding CSOs by taking into full consideration the democratic values and principles embraced by Nepal's constitutions promulgated in 1990 and thereafter. However, the central state did not change its controlling mindset inherited from the autocratic Panchayat System (1960–1990). The report concludes that the provincial and local governments are also replicating the same undemocratic laws and practices of federal government regarding the CSOs. The report states that this state of affairs is not acceptable in the federal democratic Nepal as envisaged in the 2015 Constitution of the country. The report is available online at: <https://martinchautari.org.np/mc-publications/laws-and-practices-of-the-nepali-state-regarding-civil-society-organizations>

## CAPACITY BUILDING INITIATIVES

### WORKSHOP OF WOMEN RESEARCHERS, 2025

As in the previous years, Chautari organized a one-day workshop of women researchers at its premises on March 30, 2025. The objectives of the workshop were: 1) to encourage women scholars in the humanities and social sciences in Nepal, and 2) to promote women's voices in the public sphere.

Following the public call for papers, nine papers were received by the last week of February. The workshop organizing committee selected seven papers for presentation but two of the authors withdrew their participation at the last minute.

The five papers were presented in three sessions, each of which was chaired by a designated woman researcher who also commented on the papers presented. After each



*Prinisha Baidya and Sarita Bista presenting their research papers in a session moderated by Medha Sharma during the Workshop of Women Researchers – 2025 held on March 30, 2025*

presentation, there was also open discussion where the workshop participants asked relevant questions or made critical comments.

The papers presented in the workshop covered a variety of topics, namely, menstrual hygiene management among deaf adolescents (by Nika Shakya and her colleagues), gender-based health practices among Dalit aging population (by Sarita Bista), and an ethnography of young Nepali women engaged in leisure travel and tourism (by Bidhyalaxmi Maharjan). Similarly, the two final papers were on glass ceiling perception of women workforce in Nepali financial institutions (by Indira Shrestha) and a historical study of a part of the old city of Bhaktapur (by Srijana Prajapati). The workshop schedule is available at: <https://martinchautari.org.np/public/events/workshop-of-women-researchers-2025>

Altogether, there were 51 participants in the workshop, 43 of them were women. Most of the participants were university students.

### ENERGY POLICY DIALOGUE SERIES

“Energy Policy Dialogue,” a monthly discussion series jointly organized by Urja Khabar and MC has completed a year. The first discussion of the series was held in April 2024. The objective of this series is to enhance the quality of debates about appropriate policies in Nepal's energy sector. The organizers signed an agreement on March 24, 2025 to continue the discussion series for another year.

Three discussions were held in this series between January and March 2025. Dr. Narayan Prasad Chaulagain, former executive director of Alternative Energy Promotion Center, talked about the disregard for energy efficiency in Nepal on January 28.

On February 25, Chairperson of Green Energy Entrepreneurs Nepal, Surya Prasad Adhikari shared his observations on the sustainability challenges of small



## नेपालमा ऊर्जा रूपान्तरणको मार्ग

दिगो वितरणका अवसर, चुनौती र सम्भावना



रेशा पिया

पूर्वाधार सल्लाहकार, बेलायती दुतावास  
काठमाडौं, नेपाल

मिति, समय र स्थान

चैत १२, २०८१ (March 25, 2025), मंगलबार

दिउँसो ३:००-८:३० बजे

मार्टिन चौतारी सभाकक्ष | थापाथली, काठमाडौं



fb.com/UrjaKhabarOfficial  
fb.com/martinchautari.f  
youtube.com/MChautari

hydropower projects. Similarly, on March 25, Resha Piya (above), Infrastructure Advisor at the British Embassy in Kathmandu, spoke on the opportunities, challenges and possibilities for robust distribution of energy in Nepal. Each event was well attended by participants interested and involved in the energy sector.

### SELECTED TESTIMONIES ABOUT THE IMPACT OF MC'S WORK

#### AN INVALUABLE PLATFORM FOR INTELLECTUAL EXCHANGE



Kamal Raj Sigdel  
Chautari Fellow 2006 and 2009

I will never forget the Martin Chautari fellowship awarded to me in 2006 for my research proposal titled “Male Gaze and Ideological Formations in Nepalese Television.” This grant propelled me to delve deeper into the gender dimensions of the Nepali media and the advertising industry. Consequently, it inspired an extensive study, leading to the authorship and publication of a series of academic articles within the realms of media and representations.

Moreover, the fellowship provided an invaluable platform for intellectual exchange through the renowned Tuesday Discussion Series that the Chautari organizes. This forum not only facilitated my own learning but also enabled fellow

research enthusiasts to share and explore new knowledge and ideas within the dynamic fields of media and representation. Given its significant contribution in promoting a culture of highly civilized debates in Kathmandu, I wish the Chautari model could be replicated in all municipalities across Nepal.

#### CHAUTARI SERVES AS A NEXUS FOR ACADEMICS, PRACTITIONERS AND YOUNG STUDENTS



Sujen Man Maharjan  
Transcultural Psychosocial  
Organization (TPO) Nepal

I am pleased to express my admiration for Martin Chautari. I remember my initial encounter with Martin Chautari dating back to 2008 when Dr. Brandon Kohrt, a colleague of mine, and I collaborated on a paper focusing on Nepali ethnopsychology of child development and violence.

Our efforts resulted in the publication of that paper in *Studies in Nepali History and Society* (SINHAS) in 2009, a Nepali journal renowned for its credibility and adherence to high-quality standards.

The pleasure of contributing to a respected journal like SINHAS has since led me to become a regular participant in Martin Chautari's discussion series—a commendable platform for knowledge-sharing and thought-provoking inquiries. We jointly organized a seminar on Nepali Psychology over a decade ago in 2012, an experience that underscores the valuable role Martin Chautari plays in promoting social sciences research, including psychological and mental health research, in Nepal.

Martin Chautari serves as a nexus for academics, practitioners and young students, offering a vital space for knowledge acquisition across a spectrum of research topics. Its activities not only contribute to fostering a robust academic environment but also serve as an inspiration for young students to engage in vigorous discussions surrounding various research themes, enriching their understanding of Nepali society and its contemporary challenges.

I find Martin Chautari's ability to curate compelling topics and speakers for its regular discussion series truly commendable. The organization's commitment to providing a platform for discussions related to psychology and mental health is particularly noteworthy. Personally, I have had the privilege of sharing my work at Martin Chautari on multiple occasions, delving into topics such as creating a bibliography of psychological research in Nepal, the historical development of psychology in Nepal, and exploring the integration of passive sensing data in psychological interventions.

Martin Chautari's enduring commitment to advancing knowledge and facilitating meaningful discussions in the realm of social sciences stands as a testament to its invaluable contribution to the Nepali academia at large.

### ***MC'S PUBLICATIONS CONTAIN CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES ON NEPALI SOCIETY***



*Praju Pant  
Journalist*

I started following the activities of Martin Chautari about six years ago. I started reading the journals edited there – *Samaj Adhyayan* (including some of the issues of its predecessor *Media Adhyayan*) and *Studies in Nepali History and Society* – and some of its other publications. Since I am

interested in education, I have found the books published by Chautari dealing with Nepal's education to be especially useful to me. I have read almost all of the books published by Chautari on school education and own copies of them. I have been helped by the critical perspectives on Nepali society (and history) contained in the publications of Chautari.

Since I am a journalist by profession, it is normal for me to be interested in writings that are a result of deep research. The publications of Chautari—journals, research briefs and books—are interesting food for thought for those of us interested in research. I am also a fan of the way in which the Chautari library and its archive is organized to facilitate easy access by users. I have found many historical books that are not easily available elsewhere in the Chautari Library.

### ***MC HAS BEEN A GREAT ALLY IN MY ACADEMIC PURSUIT***

I learned about Martin Chautari (MC) after I moved to Kathmandu and enrolled in the Master's of Arts Program in Mass Communication and Journalism in 2005. The MC library was rich with communication and journalism-related books and reference materials. The library, MC publications, and the weekly discussions organized at the MC premises largely abetted my academic pursuit. The



*Indra Dhoj Kshetri  
Media Researcher, Chautari Fellow 2009*

media archive available at the MC library was very rich. I used this archive extensively while doing content analysis of Nepali media both as an MC media research fellow and for my coursework for the Regional Master's Program in Journalism, Media, and Communication at the University of Dhaka.

I also presented my research works at several MC Media Research Conferences and was able to publish a couple of my research works and book reviews in MC publications, particularly *Media Adhyayan*, *Samaj Adhyayan* and *Studies in Nepali History and Society*. MC has become a great ally in my academic pursuit and I am deeply thankful for the help I received. I am glad that the institution continues to support hundreds of young and aspiring researchers every year.

## **ANNOUNCEMENT**

### ***CALL FOR PAPERS/PANELS: CHAUTARI ANNUAL CONFERENCE – 2025***

Martin Chautari has announced a call for abstracts of research papers/panels for its “Chautari Annual Conference, 2025.” This in-person conference will be held in Kathmandu on November 26–28, 2025. The abstracts can be in English or Nepali and should be between 400 and 500 words in length. The important deadlines of the call are:

**Abstract submission deadline:** June 22, 2025

**Announcement of accepted abstracts:** July 27, 2025

**Deadline for the submission of full papers (length 4000-5000 words):** October 30, 2025

**Announcement of accepted papers:** November 7, 2025

**Conference dates:** November 26-28, 2025

The full text of the announcement can be found here:

<https://martinchautari.org.np/events/chautari-annual-conference-2025>



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