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Bibliography of Academic Writings and Reflections on Social Science Research in Nepal

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Introduction

Academic reflections on social science research in Nepal began for real in the early 1970s. The first major seminar on this topic was organized by the Institute of Nepal and Asian Studies (INAS) of Tribhuvan University (TU) in Kathmandu in October 1973. Full-length articles examining the status of geography, sociology, anthropology, history, political science, economics and public administration were presented by various scholars on that occasion. Several individuals commented on each of those papers and the entire proceedings of the seminar were published the following year (Sharma 1974a). This major event was followed by a seminar on linguistics organized by INAS in November 1974 (its proceedings were published as INAS 1976; see also Malla 1976). During the second half of the 1970s, TU constituted 25 working groups of experts on different subjects/disciplines and 23 of the reports prepared by them were published in a special issue of the *Tribhuvan University Journal* (vol 10, no 1, July 1978) under the theme 'Research in Tribhuvan University: Problems and Prospects'. For our present purposes, it must be noted that expert group reports were published for several social science disciplines including economics, political science, history, sociology/anthropology and geography.

During the 1980s and the 1990s, both large events focused on the social sciences in general and smaller ones focused on specific disciplines were held. An example of the former is the 'National Seminar/Workshop on the Development of Infrastructure and Programmes in Humanities and Social Sciences' organized by TU's Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences (IOHSS) in Kathmandu in December 1983. Papers on history, Nepalese history, culture and archaeology, anthropology, political science, geography, linguistics, economics, psychology, home science, and statistics were presented and commented upon on that occasion. Recommendations were also made and the entire proceedings were published a few months later (see Lohani 1984a). Another example of the same kind was the national conference on 'Social Sciences in Nepal: Some Thoughts and Search for Direction' organized by TU's Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies (CNAS) in Kathmandu in September 1995. Papers on sociology/anthropology, history, political science, economics, geography, psychology, linguistics, and demography were presented in the conference (see Khattry 1997 for its proceedings).

An example of a specific discipline focused seminar held during the 1990s is the 'International Seminar on the State of Nepali Historiography: Problems and Prospects,' organized by TU's Central Department of History (CDH) in Kathmandu in October 1993. Papers were presented on the historiography of ancient and medieval Nepal by Tulsi Ram Vaidya (1995), and on modern Nepal (up to 1950) by Krishna Kant Adhikari (1995). Prem Raman Uprety (1995) presented a paper on selected trends and problems in

post-1950 Nepali historiography.¹ These papers were later published as part of the seminar proceedings in Manandhar et al. (1995).

In September 1992 two major back-to-back conferences were held in Kathmandu where anthropological and sociological research papers were presented. The first was organized by the Sociological and Anthropological Society of Nepal (SASON) under the title ‘Structure and transition: society, poverty and politics in Nepal’. The second conference was held under the title ‘The Anthropology of Nepal: peoples, problems and processes’ and was organized jointly by CNAS and the Department of Anthropology of the University of Sydney.² In some of the presentations made in these two conferences (e.g., Devkota 1992) and on their sidelines, reflections on the state of these disciplines, their thematic orientations and tensions inherent in them were discussed and reported (e.g., Onta 1992).

After the year 2000, various efforts have been made to review the state of social sciences in Nepal or the state of specific disciplines. A major article on the state of social sciences in Nepal was published by Hachhethu (2002a) in the journal *Contributions to Nepalese Studies* based on research executed during fall 2001. His research was done as part of a regional level study on ‘Social Science Research Capacity in South Asia’ sponsored by the New York-based Social Science Research Council (SSRC).³ Country-specific studies arising from this regional level study were published in the journal *Economic and Political Weekly*, where a slightly different version of the article by Hachhethu (2002b) also appeared.

During 2002-2003, several academics looked at the state of specific disciplines under a project executed by the Kathmandu-based Institute for Social and Environmental Transition-Nepal (ISET-Nepal). Articles arising from this project have examined the discipline of history (Onta 2003), political science (Hachhethu 2004), sociology (Mishra 2005) and geography (Adhikari 2010). Specific discipline focused meetings have continued to take place. For example, Nepali historians met in Pokhara in April 2003 at a conference organized by the History Association of Nepal (HISAN) in which two of the papers presented examined regional history writing (Kshetry 2003) and the (low) enrolment of students in the discipline of history (Thapa and Budhathoki 2003). In January 2004, Nepali geographers met in Pokhara under the auspices of the Nepal Geographical Society (NGS) to reflect on the state of their discipline and hear research presentations of their colleagues (see Subedi and Poudel 2005 and Subedi, Poudel and Poudel 2006 for its proceedings). Nepali sociologists and anthropologists gathered in December 2007 – also in Pokhara – to reflect upon the state of their disciplines in a national workshop organized by the Department of Sociology/Anthropology (DOSA) of Prithwi Narayan Campus (PNC; its proceedings can be found in Parajuli 2008).

As a result of the above mentioned exercises and other initiatives not discussed here, a moderate volume of academic writings reflecting upon the various state of social sciences in Nepal have appeared since the early 1970s. While discipline-specific reviews have referred to their related predecessors, no comprehensive list of such writings exists to date. Such a compilation is necessary both to have a more

¹ My report on this history seminar can be found in Pratyoush Onta. 1993. History: a bold beginning? *The Independent*, 8 December, p. 11.

² As far as I know, no proceedings of the first conference were published. 34 of the more than 50 papers presented during the second conference were published in Michael Allen, ed. 1994. *Anthropology of Nepal: Peoples, Problems and Processes*. Kathmandu: Mandala Book Point.

³ A report with the “thematic summary of the main findings and recommendations for all five countries in South Asia” was published by the SSRC as Partha Chatterjee et al. 2002. *Social Science Research Capacity in South Asia: A Report*. New York: SSRC.

general view of the status of reflections on social sciences in Nepal (and specific ones focused on particular disciplines) and to promote new research on the same topic. With these points in mind, I have prepared this bibliography of academic writings on social science research in Nepal.

With respect to social science disciplines, writings on history, political science, geography, sociology and anthropology have been covered extensively by consulting relevant bibliographies, journals, edited volumes and other reference sources. A relatively less effort has been made to locate all relevant writings on economics, psychology, demography, linguistics and a number of other disciplines which also fall within the remit of social sciences in Nepal but fall outside of my core disciplinary interests. In that sense, this bibliography is incomplete and will have to be augmented by others with different disciplinary foci. Also writings covering French (de Sales 1995, Toffin 2009), German (Haffner 2008, Hanisch 2008; cf. Kolver 1992), British (Onta 2004a, 2004b), Russian (Shrestha 1980, 200) and Japanese (Ishii 1991, 2001) research on Nepal have been included.⁴ In terms of publication outlets, items that appeared in newspapers have not been included but those published in magazines, when found, have been included.

The initial version (no 1) of this bibliography was first made public online in the website of Martin Chautari (www.martinchautari.org.np) in October 2010. Its slightly revised version (no 2) was published in the *Himalayan Journal of Sociology and Anthropology* (Onta 2010a). It has been further revised in mid-2011 and is published here as version no 3. I intend to update this bibliography periodically and post them here.

Copies of most of the books and journals from which entries have been obtained for this bibliography are available at the Martin Chautari (MC) Library, 27 Jeet Jung Marg, Thapathali, Kathmandu (Tel: 4238050) which is open to the public, Sunday through Friday. Online copies of articles published in the journals *Contributions to Nepalese Studies*, *European Bulletin of Himalayan Research*, *Himal*, *Himal Southasian*, *Nepalese Linguistics* and *Occasional Papers in Sociology and Anthropology* can be found in the online journal collection of Digital Himalaya (www.digitalhimalaya.com/collections/journals/). Online copies of specific articles published in the journal *Studies in Nepali History and Society* can be found at the website of Martin Chautari. Online copies of other items, when found, have also been noted. However, some of them might be accessible only in restricted sites. Other articles might be available at Nepal Journal Online (NepJOL) portal (www.nepjol.info/) which was officially launched in September 2007.

All efforts have been made to ensure the accuracy of the entries in this bibliography. However there might still be inadvertent errors in them. I would appreciate suggestions regarding any corrections that need to be made in the entries given here and additions of relevant items missing in this edition of the bibliography. Such suggestions should be sent to me at sinhas@mos.com.np and they will be incorporated in future revised online editions of this bibliography. I would also be grateful for any information on the online availability of other articles. Please accept my thanks in advance for such suggestions.⁵

⁴ Also see Nepal Research Centre (n.d.).

⁵ I am grateful to several individuals for providing me information that has been used in the preparation of this bibliography. In particular I would like to thank Harsha Man Maharjan (in Kathmandu) and Bhaskar Gautam (in Kyoto and London) for their assistance in locating some of the references.

Abbreviations Used

CDG = Central Department of Geography, Tribhuvan University
CDH = Central Department of History, Tribhuvan University
CDSA = Central Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Tribhuvan University
CEDA = Centre for Economic Development and Administration, Tribhuvan University
CERID = Centre for Educational Research Innovation and Development, Tribhuvan University
CNAS = Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies, Tribhuvan University
DOSA = Department of Sociology and Anthropology, PNC
IOHSS = Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences, Tribhuvan University
INAS = Institute of Nepal and Asian Studies, Tribhuvan University
NCCR = National Centre for Competence in Research North-South
NGS = Nepal Geographical Society
PNC = Prithwi Narayan Campus, Tribhuvan University
SASON = Sociological and Anthropological Society of Nepal
SSRC = Social Science Research Council
TU = Tribhuvan University

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END

Author introduction

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