

Modern History of Nepal: A Reading List

By Pratyoush Onta

This reading list is a slightly revised one of the version I used for a history course on modern Nepal at Trinity College, Hartford, Connecticut, US in spring 2007.

Course Description

This course will introduce the span of Nepali history from the mid-18th century to the present to students whose working language is English (namely, they can not read texts in the written languages of Nepal). We will discuss the territorial consolidation of the Nepali state along the Himalayas that paralleled the rise of the colonial state in South Asia. The focus will be both on the political history of Nepal and on the important social and cultural issues that have dominated the Nepali imagination. The struggles for democracy that erupted in the 1920s will take us to the present, as will the crucial subjects of development, the post-1990 experiments with multi-party democracy and the Maoist movement.

Books Used

- Ahearn, Laura M. 2001. *Invitations to Love: Literacy, Love Letters and Social Change in Nepal*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Lawoti, Mahendra. 2005. *Towards a Democratic Nepal: Inclusive Political Institutions for a Multicultural Society*. New Delhi: Sage
- Liechty, Mark. 2003. *Suitably Modern: Making Middle-class Culture in a New Consumer Society*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Thapa, Deepak with Bandita Sijapati. 2004. *A Kingdom under Siege: Nepal's Maoist Insurgency, 1996 to 2003*. London: Zed
- Whelpton, John. 2005. *A History of Nepal*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Assigned/Recommended Book Extracts and Articles

- Adhikari, Jagannath. 2003. Living on a Tightrope: Adaptive Strategies of Grassroots Development Workers in a Maoist-Conflict Area. *Studies in Nepali History and Society* 8(2): 369-383.
- Adhikari, Jagannath and Hans-George Bohle. 1998. Rural Livelihoods at Risk: Determinants of the Abilities of Nepali Hill Farmers to Cope with Food Deficiency. *Studies in Nepali History and Society* 3(1): 35-86.
- Baral, L.S. 1975. King Mahendra's Coup of December 1960: Its Implications in Nepal. *Asia Quarterly* 3: 207-238.
- Bhatta, Saurav D. 2004. Disparities in School Performance in the SLC Exams: An Exploratory Analysis. *Studies in Nepali History and Society* 9(2): 293-343.
- Bhattarai, Binod, Jogendra Ghimire and Mohan Mainali. 2005. Extracts from their *Excesses Unlimited: A Study on Impunity in Nepal*. Lalitpur: Himal Books.
- Brown, T. Louise. 1996. Extracts from her *The Challenge to Democracy in Nepal: A Political History*. London: Routledge.

- Burghart, Richard. 1984. The Formation of the Concept of Nation-State in Nepal. *Journal of Asian Studies* 44(1): 101-125.
- Chalmers, Rhoderick. 2002. Pandits and pulp fiction: popular publishing and the birth of Nepali print-capitalism in Banaras. *Studies in Nepali History and Society* 7(1): 35-97.
- Chauhan, R.S. 1971. Extracts from his *The Political Development in Nepal, 1950-1970*. New Delhi: Associated Publishing House.
- Devkota, Laxmi Prasad. 2003[c. 1945]. Is Nepal Small? Translated by Govinda Raj Bhattarai. In *Selected Nepali Essays*. Govinda Raj Bhattarai, ed., pp. 17-24. Kathmandu: Jiba Lamichhane.
- Des Chene, Mary. 1993. Soldiers, sovereignty and silences: Gorkhas as diplomatic currency. *South Asia Bulletin* 13(1-2): 67-80.
- Dixit, Kanak. 2007. Naya Nepal. *Seminar* No. 569.
- Dixit, Shanta. 2002. Education, deception, state and society. In *State of Nepal*. Kanak Mani Dixit and Shastri Ramachandaran, eds., pp. 193-211. Lalitpur: Himal Books.
- English, Richard. 1985. Himalayan State Formation and the Impact of British Rule in the Nineteenth Century. *Mountain Research and Development* 5(1): 61-78.
- Fujikura, Tatsuro. 2004. Vasectomies and Other Engagements with Modernity: A Reflection on Discourses and Practices of Family Planning in Nepal. *Journal of the Japanese Association for South Asian Studies* 16: 40-71.
- Fujikura, Tatsuro. 2007. The Bonded Agricultural Labourers' Freedom Movement in Western Nepal. In *Social Dynamics in Northern South Asia volume 2: Political and Social Transformations in North India and Nepal*. H. Ishii, D. Gellner and K. Nawa, eds., pp. 319-359. New Delhi: Manohar.
- Graner, Elvira and Ganesh Gurung. 2003. Arab ko lahure: Looking at Nepali Labour Migrants to Arabian countries. *Contributions to Nepalese Studies* 30(2): 295-325.
- Gurung, Harka. 2003. Janajati and Dalit: The Subjugated in Governance. In *Readings on Government and Development vol II*. Mukti Rijal, ed., pp. 1-13. Kathmandu: Institute of Governance and Development.
- Gurung, Harka. 2005. Affirmative Action in Nepalese Context. In *Readings on Government and Development vol IV*. Mukti Rijal, ed., pp. 1-25. Kathmandu: Institute of Governance and Development.
- Gurung, Harka. 2006. Area Development Experience in Nepal. In *Nepal: Quest for Participatory Democracy*. Lok Raj Baral, ed., pp. 200-230. New Delhi: Adroit.
- Hachhethu, Krishna. 2006. *Political Parties of Nepal*. Baha occasional paper no. 1. Lalitpur: Social Science Baha.
- Hoftun, Martin, William Raeper and John Whelpton. 1999. Extracts from their *People, Politics and Ideology: Democracy and Social Change in Nepal*. Kathmandu: Mandala Book Point.
- Holmberg, David and Kathryn March with Suryaman Tamang. 1999. Local production/local knowledge: forced labour from below. *Studies in Nepali History and Society* 4(1): 5-64.
- Hutt, Michael, ed. 2004. Extracts from *Himalayan People's War: Nepal's Maoist Rebellion*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Hutt, Michael. 2005. King Gyanendra's Coup and its Implications for Nepal's Future. *Brown Journal of World Affairs*. 12(1): 111-123.

- International Crisis Group. 2007. Nepal's Constitutional Process. Asia Report No 128, 26 February.
- Karan, P. and H. Ishii. 1997. Agriculture: Patterns and Problems. In their *Nepal A Himalayan Kingdom in Transition*, pp. 71-99. New Delhi: BookWell.
- Khanal, Krishna. 2006a. Re-structuring the Nepali State: A Proposal for Proportionate Representation System. In *Nepal: Quest for Participatory Democracy*. Lok Raj Baral, ed., pp. 231-263. New Delhi: Adroit.
- Khanal, Krishna. 2006b. The Maoist Agenda of Restructuring the State: An Appraisal. In *Nepal: Facets of Maoist Insurgency*. Lok Raj Baral, ed., pp. 164-184. New Delhi: Adroit.
- Lama, Mukta Singh. 2004. Indigenous Peoples of Nepal and Human Rights. In *Nepal Human Rights Yearbook 2004*. Krishna Gautam, ed., pp. 121-146. Kathmandu: INSEC.
- Levine, Nancy. 1987. Caste, State and Ethnic Boundaries. *Journal of Asian Studies* 46(1): 71-88.
- Liechty, Mark 1997. Selective Exclusion: Foreigners, Foreign Goods, and Foreignness in Modern Nepali History. *Studies in Nepali History and Society* 2(1): 5-68.
- Mishra, Chaitanya. 2007. Political Transition in Nepal: Toward an Analytic Framework. Ms.
- NESAC. 1998. *Nepal Human Development Report 1998*. Kathmandu: Nepal South Asia Centre (NESAC).
- Onta, Pratyoush. 1994. Dukha during the World War. *Himal* 7(6): 24-29.
- Onta, Pratyoush. 1996a. Ambivalence Denied: The Making of *Rastriya Itihas* in Panchayat Era Textbooks. *Contributions to Nepalese Studies* 23(1): 213-54.
- Onta, Pratyoush. 1996b. Creating a Brave Nepali Nation in British India: The Rhetoric of *Jati* Improvement, Rediscovery of Bhanubhakta and Writing of *Bir* History. *Studies in Nepali History and Society* 1(1): 37-76.
- Onta, Pratyoush. 1997. Activities in a 'Fossil State': Balkrishna Sama and the Improvisation of Nepali Identity. *Studies in Nepali History and Society* 2(1): 69-102.
- Onta, Pratyoush. 1998. A Suggestive History of the First Century of Photographic Consumption in Kathmandu. *Studies in Nepali History and Society* 3(1): 181-212.
- Onta, Pratyoush. 1999. The Career of Bhanubhakta as a History of Nepali National Culture, 1940-1999. *Studies in Nepali History and Society* 4(1): 65-136.
- Onta, Pratyoush. 2000. A Striving for Dignity. *Dawn*, 1 January.
- Onta, Pratyoush. 2004. The Panchayat Media. *Nation Weekly*, 6 June.
- Pandey, Kumar. 2003. The Micro-calculus of Benefits and Sacrifices of *Bikas*: Experiences from a Power Plant. *Studies in Nepali History and Society* 8(2): 349-368.
- Parajuli, Ramesh. 2007. The Politics of Public Library in Nepal. Paper presented at a conference on 'Envisioning the State in Himalayan Region' 10-11 January, Edinburgh.
- Pfaff-Czarnecka, Joanna. 1991. State and Community: Changing Relations of Production after the Unification of Nepal. In *Early State Economics*. Henri J.M. Claessen and Pieter van de Velde, eds., pp. 231-263. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers.
- Pfaff-Czarnecka, Joanna. 1997. Vestiges and Visions: Cultural Change in the Process of Nation-Building in Nepal. In *Nationalism and Ethnicity in a Hindu Kingdom: The Politics of Culture in Contemporary Nepal*. David N. Gellner, Joanna Pfaff-

- Czarnecka, and John Whelpton, eds., pp. 419-470. Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers.
- Pigg, Stacy. 1992. Inventing Social Categories through Place: Social Representations and Development in Nepal. *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 34(3): 491-513.
- Regmi, Mahesh. C. 1971. Chapters 3- 7 of his *A Study in Nepali Economic History 1768-1846*. New Delhi: Manjusri Publishing House.
- Regmi, Mahesh C. 1978. *Thatched Huts and Stucco Palaces: Peasants and Landlords in 19th-century Nepal* (esp. chs. 3-10). New Delhi: Vikas.
- Seddon, David with J Adhikari and G Gurung. 2002. Foreign Labor Migration and the Remittance Economy of Nepal. *Critical Asian Studies* 34(1): 19-40.
- Shah, Saubhagya. 2002. From evil state to civil society. In *State of Nepal*. Kanak Mani Dixit and Shastri Ramachandaran, eds., pp. 137-159. Lalitpur: Himal Books.
- Shaha, Rishikesh. 1978. The Structure and Dynamics of Panchayat Politics. In his *Nepali Politics: Retrospect and Prospect*, pp, 64-97. Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Sharma, Prayag Raj. 1977. Caste, Social Mobility and Sanskritization: A Study of Nepal's Old Legal Code. *Kailash* 5(4): 277-299.
- Sharma, Sudhindra. 2002a. The Hindu state and the state of Hinduism. In *State of Nepal*. Kanak Mani Dixit and Shastri Ramachandaran, eds., pp. 22-38. Lalitpur: Himal Books.
- Sharma, Sudhindra. 2002b. Half a Century of Foreign Aid. Introductory chapter to Eugene B. Mihaly's *Foreign Aid and Politics in Nepal: A Case Study*. 2nd ed., pp. xix-ix. Lalitpur: Himal Books.
- Shrestha, Celayne Heaton. 2002. NGOs as *thekedar* or *sevak*? Identity Crisis in Nepal's Non-governmental Sector. *European Bulletin of Himalayan Research* 22: 1-31.
- Stiller, Ludwig F. 1976. *The Silent Cry: The People of Nepal 1816-1839*. Kathmandu: Sahayogi Prakashan.
- Stiller, Ludwig F. S. J. 1989. Modern Nepal. In *Nepal Perspectives on Continuity and Change*. Kamal P Malla, ed., pp. 101-120. Kirtipur: Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies.
- Tamang, Mukta Singh. 2006. Culture, Caste and Ethnicity in the Maoist Movement. *Studies in Nepali History and Society* 11(2): 271-301.
- Tamang, Seira. 2000. Legalizing State Patriarchy in Nepal. *Studies in Nepali History and Society* 5(1): 127-156.
- Tamang, Seira. 2002. Civilizing Civil Society: Donors and Democratic Space. *Studies in Nepali History and Society* 7(2): 309-353.
- Thapa, Manjushree. 2005. The Coup that did not happen. In her *Forget Kathmandu: An Elegy for Democracy*, pp. 7-47. New Delhi: Penguin.
- Upadhyaya, Sanjay. 2002. A dozen years of democracy: the games that parties play. In *State of Nepal*. Kanak Mani Dixit and Shastri Ramachandaran, eds., pp. 39-61. Kathmandu: Himal Books.
- Uprety, Prem R. 1992. *Political Awakening in Nepal: The Search for a New Identity*. New Delhi: Commonwealth.
- Yamanaka, Keiko. 2000. Nepalese Labour Migration to Japan: From Global Warriors to Global Workers. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 23(1): 62-93.
- Yamanaka, Keiko. 2005. Changing Family Structures of Nepalese Transmigrants in Japan: Split House-holds and Dual Wage-Earners. *Global Networks* 5(4): 337-358.

Class Plan and Assigned Readings [Those within parenthesis are recommended readings]

1st class: Introduction to the course

2: Introduction to Nepal and Nepal in South Asian History
Whelpton Introduction and ch 1; English 1985

3 and 4: Nepal: the Story of 'Unification'
Whelpton ch 2; Regmi 1971; Pfaff-Czarnecka 1991; Stiller 1989

5 and 6: The Implications of 'Unification' and the Rana Regime (1846-1951)
Whelpton ch 3; Stiller 1976; Regmi 1978; Sharma 1977; Gurung 2003; Burghart 1984; Levine 1987

7 and 8: 20th Century Politics – I: Political Economy of the Second Half of Rana Rule and the Movement for Democracy (up to 1951):
Liechty 1997; Holmberg et al. 1999; Des Chene 1993; Onta 1994; 1996b; Chalmers 2002; Onta 1997, 2000; Devkota 2003; Uprety 1992

9 and 10: 20th Century Politics – II: The 1950s Experiments and the Panchayat State (1960-90)
Hoftun, Raeper and Whelpton 1999: 47-114; Whelpton ch 4; [Chauhan 1971]; Baral 1975; Shaha 1978; Onta 2004, 1996a, 1999; Parajuli 2007; Tamang 2000;

11: 20th Century Politics – III: Nepali Parliamentary Politics 1990-2002
[Hoftun, Raeper and Whelpton 1999: 115-214]; Whelpton ch 7; Upadhyaya 2002
Brown 1996: 211-222; Hachhethu 2006; Bhattarai, Ghimire and Mainali 2005: 1-56;

12 and 13: Development and Social Change I: Foreign Aid, Development Culture and Human Development
Whelpton ch 5; Brown 1996: 51-83; [Sharma 2002b; Gurung 2006a]; Pandey 2003; Pigg 1992; Fujikura 2004; Tamang 2002; [Shah 2002]; Shrestha 2002; Dixit 2002; Bhatta 2004; [extracts from NESAC 1998]; Ahearn 2001

14 and 15: Development and Social Change II: Rural Poverty and Long-Distance Labour Migration
Karan and Ishii 1997; Adhikari and Bohle 1998; Seddon et al. 2002; Graner and Gurung 2003; Yamanaka 2000, [2005]

16 and 17: Development and Social Change III: The Middle-class in Kathmandu
Whelpton ch 6; Onta 1998; Liechty 2003

18 and 19: The Crises of the 'Old' State
Pfaff-Czarnecka 1997; Lama 2004; Fujikura 2007

20 and 21: Maoist Insurgency

Thapa with Sijapati 2004; [Extracts from Hutt 2004]; Adhikari 2003

22 and 23: The Political Transition

Documentary on Royal Massacre of Nepal (available at

http://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=Royal+Massacre+Nepal&search=Search

Hutt 2005; Khanal 2006a, Dixit 2007; ICC 2007 [and previous reports available online]

24, 25 and 26: Issues for a 'New' Nepal

Lawoti 2005; Khanal 2006b; Gurung 2005