

Peace durability and sustainability in Nepal

Shrishti Rana

A thesis submitted for the degree of PhD
at the
University of St Andrews



2024

Full metadata for this item is available in
St Andrews Research Repository

at:

<https://research-repository.st-andrews.ac.uk/>

Identifier to use to cite or link to this thesis:

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17630/sta/1167>

This item is protected by original copyright

Peace Durability and Sustainability in Nepal

Shrishti Rana



University of
St Andrews

This thesis is submitted in partial fulfilment for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)
at the University of St Andrews

August 2024

Declaration

Candidate's declaration

I, Shrishti Rana, do hereby certify that this thesis, submitted for the degree of PhD, which is approximately 80,000 words in length, has been written by me, and that it is the record of work carried out by me, or principally by myself in collaboration with others as acknowledged, and that it has not been submitted in any previous application for any degree. I confirm that any appendices included in my thesis contain only material permitted by the 'Assessment of Postgraduate Research Students' policy.

I was admitted as a research student at the University of St Andrews in September 2020.

I received funding from an organization or institution and have acknowledged the funder(s) in the full text of my thesis.

28. 08. 2024

Date

Signature of candidate

Supervisor's declaration

I hereby certify that the candidate has fulfilled the conditions of the Resolution and Regulations appropriate for the degree of PhD in the University of St Andrews and that the candidate is qualified to submit this thesis in application for that degree. I confirm that any appendices included in the thesis contain only material permitted by the 'Assessment of Postgraduate Research Students' policy.

26.8.2024

Date

Signature of supervisor

Permission for publication

In submitting this thesis to the University of St Andrews we understand that we are giving permission for it to be made available for use in accordance with the regulations of the University Library for the time being in force, subject to any copyright vested in the work not being affected thereby. We also understand, unless exempt by an award of an embargo as requested below, that the title and the abstract will be published, and that a copy of the work may be made and supplied to any bona fide library or research worker, that this thesis will be electronically accessible for personal or research use and that the library has the right to migrate this thesis into new electronic forms as required to ensure continued access to the thesis.

I, Shrishti Rana, confirm that my thesis does not contain any third-party material that requires copyright clearance.

The following is an agreed request by candidate and supervisor regarding the publication of this thesis:

Printed copy

No embargo on print copy.

Electronic copy

No embargo on electronic copy.

28. 08. 2024

Date

Signature of candidate

26.8.2024

Date

Signature of supervisor

Underpinning Research Data or Digital Outputs

Candidate's declaration

I, Shrishti Rana, understand that by declaring that I have original research data or digital outputs, I should make every effort in meeting the University's and research funders' requirements on the deposit and sharing of research data or research digital outputs.

28.08.24

Date

Signature of candidate

Permission for publication of underpinning research data or digital outputs

We understand that for any original research data or digital outputs which are deposited, we are giving permission for them to be made available for use in accordance with the requirements of the University and research funders, for the time being in force.

We also understand that the title and the description will be published, and that the underpinning research data or digital outputs will be electronically accessible for use in accordance with the license specified at the point of deposit, unless exempt by award of an embargo as requested below.

The following is an agreed request by candidate and supervisor regarding the publication of underpinning research data or digital outputs:

No embargo on underpinning research data or digital outputs.

28. August. 2024

Date

Signature of candidate

Date

26.8.2024

Signature of supervisor

Table of Contents

Declaration.....	2
Table of Contents.....	5
List of Figures and Tables.....	10
Selected Acronyms.....	11
A Map of Nepal.....	14
Abstract.....	15
Introduction.....	17
Thesis Outline.....	22
Chapter One: Conceptual Background and Methodological Framework.....	24
Section I: Conceptual Background.....	24
<i>Context</i>	24
<i>Peacebuilding</i>	25
<i>Local Turn</i>	28
Section II: Methodological Framework.....	33
<i>Positionality</i>	33
<i>Professional Experience</i>	34
<i>Perspectives on Peace from Personal Contemplation</i>	35
<i>Qualitative Interpretivist Research</i>	36
<i>Philosophical Assumptions</i>	37
<i>A Case Study Strategy</i>	41
<i>A Single Case Study Versus Comparative Case Studies</i>	42
Selection Criteria.....	43
Key Approaches (Auto-ethnography and Narrative).....	44
<i>The Narrative Approach</i>	44
<i>The Auto-Ethnographic Approach</i>	45
Field Research.....	46
<i>Preliminary Phase</i>	46
<i>The First Phase</i>	46
<i>Final Phase</i>	47
<i>Ethical Considerations</i>	51
Conclusion.....	53
Chapter Two: A Literature Survey.....	54
Sustainable Peace and Durable Peace.....	54
<i>Sustainable Peace</i>	54
Durable Peace.....	59

<i>Dominant Literatures on Durable Peace</i>	61
Liberal Peacebuilding and Critical Peacebuilding	67
<i>Liberal Peacebuilding</i>	67
Critique	71
<i>Critical Peacebuilding</i>	72
<i>Peacebuilding of Emerging Actors</i>	80
Conclusion	86
Chapter Three: Theoretical/Conceptual Frameworks	87
Sustainable Peace Framework.....	87
Peacebuilding Paradigms	93
<i>Liberal/Critical/Local Peacebuilding Theories</i>	94
Hybrid Peace Perspectives	96
<i>Critical Emancipatory Hybrid Peace</i>	98
Conceptualizing Hybrid Peacebuilding in Nepal	100
<i>Liberal Peacebuilding</i>	101
Peacebuilding of Emerging Actors	104
Local Peacebuilding	108
Key Propositions	114
Chapter Four: Historical Background.....	117
Section I: Political Overview (1768–2005)	117
<i>A Political History (1748–1996)</i>	117
<i>Early Years of the Modern State Formation (1748–1848)</i>	117
<i>The Rana Regime (1848–1950)</i>	119
<i>The First Experiment with Democracy (1950s)</i>	120
<i>The Panchayat Regime (1962–1989)</i>	121
<i>Restoration of Multiparty Democracy in 1990</i>	122
Historical Background of the Maoist Armed Insurgency (1990–1996)	123
<i>Formation of the Unity Centre</i>	123
<i>Participation and Boycott of the Parliamentary Elections</i>	124
<i>Preparation of the People’s War</i>	125
Understanding the Root Causes of the Maoist Insurgency	127
<i>Economic Poverty and Inequality</i>	127
<i>Diversity and Social Inequality</i>	129
<i>Discrimination, Exclusion and Marginalization (DEM)</i>	129
Madheshis	130
Tharus	132
Adivasi Janjati	132

Dalits	133
Religious Minorities	134
Women	134
The People's War (1996)	135
<i>Initial offensive in 1996</i>	135
<i>Escalation of the War</i>	137
<i>The Royal Massacre</i>	138
<i>A Turning Point</i>	140
Section II: External Engagement in Nepal's Armed Conflict (1996–2005)	141
Overview of Nepal's Foreign Policy	141
<i>A Policy of Isolation</i>	142
<i>A Buffer Between India and China</i>	143
<i>A Policy of Diversification</i>	145
<i>Post-1990: Political Change</i>	149
International Response to the Maoists' People's War	151
Pre-9/11	151
<i>India</i>	151
<i>China</i>	152
<i>The West</i>	153
Post-9/11	154
Chapter Five: Understanding the Durability of Nepal's Peace Process	156
From War to Peace: The Story of Peacemaking in Nepal	156
<i>A Secret and a Surprise</i>	156
<i>A Beginning</i>	159
<i>Revolution in the Air</i>	161
<i>Agitations and Agreements</i>	164
<i>A Dream Comes True</i>	168
<i>A Turning Point</i>	169
<i>An Ending for a New Beginning</i>	172
<i>The Final Compromise</i>	175
<i>Towards Peace</i>	177
Perspectives on Durability	177
Analysis from the Political Perspective	181
<i>Structural Political Transformations</i>	181
<i>Secularism</i>	182
<i>Republic</i>	183
<i>Social Inclusion</i>	185

<i>Federalism</i>	186
The New Constitution	190
<i>Contributions to the Durability</i>	190
<i>Locally Driven Peacemaking</i>	191
<i>Public Participation and Support</i>	192
<i>A Bottom-Up Approach</i>	193
<i>Decision-Making by Nepalese Actors</i>	194
Final Analysis	196
Conclusion	198
Chapter Six: Understanding the Sustainability of Nepal's Durable Peace Process	199
Limitations of Nepal's Durable Peace Process	199
Exploring the Sustainability of Nepal's Peace Process	201
<i>Access to Basic Needs</i>	201
The Story of Sebal Mahara	202
The Story of Sunaina Devi	207
<i>Justice</i>	212
<i>The Story of Maina Sunar</i>	212
The Story of Devi Khadka	217
Equality	222
<i>Increasing Inequality</i>	222
<i>Economic Inequality</i>	223
<i>Regional Inequality</i>	224
<i>Land Inequality and Landlessness</i>	225
<i>Social Equality</i>	227
Analyzing the Drivers of Inequality in Nepal	229
Other Forms of Violence	230
The Story of Rihana	231
Conclusion	232
Chapter Seven: The Role of External Actors	234
Global and Regional Politics	235
External Engagement in Nepal's Peace Process	237
<i>The Post-Royal Takeover Phase</i>	238
<i>The Post-Republican Phase (after 2008)</i>	242
<i>The Post-Constitution Phase (after 2015)</i>	246
Assistance to Nepal's Peace Process	250
Liberal Peacebuilding	250
<i>The United Nations Mission in Nepal</i>	250

<i>Background</i>	250
<i>The Preparatory Phase</i>	253
<i>Formal Involvement of the UNMIN</i>	254
<i>Western Donors</i>	258
<i>Assessment of Liberal Peacebuilding</i>	262
Peacebuilding of Emerging Actors	267
Conclusion	272
Chapter Eight: Conclusion	274
Hybrid Peacebuilding	274
<i>Dynamics of Hybrid Peacebuilding</i>	275
Key Findings	278
Theoretical and Policy Contributions.....	282
<i>Contribution to Literature</i>	282
<i>Locally Driven Hybrid Peacebuilding</i>	286
Call for a New Framework of Sustainable Hybrid Peacebuilding	288
Lessons from Nepal	291
Final Reflections.....	293
Annex 1: List of Interviews.....	295
Bibliography	297

List of Figures and Tables

Figures

Figure 1: Locally Driven Framework of Nepal's Peace Process

Figure 2: Hybrid Peacebuilding Framework in Nepal

Figure 3: Locally Driven Hybrid Peacebuilding

Figure 4: Sustainable Hybrid Peacebuilding

Tables

Table 1: Representation in Legislature Based on Major Population Groups

Table 2: Poverty Profile of Nepal in 2022–23

Table 3: Province-wise Poverty, 2022–23

Table 4: Change in Household Income by Demographic Group

Table 5: Poverty and Land Ownership

Table 6: Household Income by Caste Group

Selected Acronyms

BRICS –Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa

CA – Constituent Assembly

CAS – Conflict Affected Societies

CBS – Central Bureau of Statistics

CEDAW–Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women

CPN-UML – Communist Party of Nepal—Unified Marxist Leninist

CPN-Maoist – Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist)

DFID – Department for International Development

EU – European Union

ECN – Election Commission of Nepal

FPTP – First-Past-the-Post

HDI – Human Development Index

HDONCMAPR – Historical Documents of Nepalese Communist Movement and People’s Revolution

ICAI, UK – Independent Commission for Aid Impact, UK

IDA – Interdisciplinary Analysts (IDA)

International IDEA – The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance

IFI – International Financial Institutions

IMF – International Monetary Fund

INGO – International Non-Governmental Organization

IO – International Organizations

MEA, GoI – Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India

MOF, Nepal – Ministry of Finance, Nepal

MOFA, Nepal – Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Nepal

MoU – Memorandum of Understanding

MPRF –Madheshi People’s Rights Forum

NC – Nepali Congress

NEFIN – Nepal Federation of Indigenous Nationalities

NFA – Nepal Foreign Affairs

NGO – Non-Governmental Organization

NLSS – Nepal Living Standard Survey

NPADS – Nepal Peace and Development Strategy

NPTF – Nepal Peace Trust Fund

NSP – Nepal Sadbhawana Party

PARM – Peace and Reconstruction Ministry

PRC – People’s Republic of China

OECD-DAC – The organization for Economic Co-operation and Development-
Development Assistance Committee

OHCHR – Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

PR – Proportional Representation

RAW – Research Analysis Wing

RNA – Royal Nepal Army

R2P – Responsibility to Protect

SATP – South Asian Terrorism Portal

SAARC – South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation

SASEC – South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation

SPA – Seven Party Alliance

TCON – The Constitution of Nepal

TICON – The Interim Constitution of Nepal

TIGONA – The Interim Government of Nepal, Act

THT – *The Himalayan Times*

TKP – *The Kathmandu Post*

TOI – *The Times of India*

TMDP – Tarai Madhesh Democratic Party

UCPN (Maoist) – Unified Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist)

UN – United Nations

UNPM – United National People’s Movement

UNMIN –The United Nations Mission in Nepal

UNPFN – The United Nations Peace Fund for Nepal

UPFN – United People’s Front Nepal

USAID – United States Agency for International Development

US DoS – United States Department of State

A Map of Nepal



Source: Develleschauern et al., 2014

Abstract

As armed conflicts continue to disrupt “peace” in human societies, it has become crucial to explore frameworks and strategies aimed at addressing the roots of ongoing violence and to explore sustainable peace. This thesis broadly aims to engage with this investigation by offering theoretical contributions to the peacebuilding discourse and practice.

Employing primarily critical perspectives both as the main theoretical underpinning and also as a methodological approach, this research examines the peace process in Nepal to generate insights on sustainable peace within the peacebuilding discourse. The small Himalayan republic, squeezed between the two most populous countries in the world, presents a puzzling case to peace scholars. It is perplexing how overt large-scale political violence has completely stopped in Nepal as part of its peace process after a decade of complex armed conflict from 1996 to 2006. Interestingly, this is despite the persistence of fundamental problems such as poverty and inequality—factors which were used to justify the armed war earlier. In a global context marked by difficulties in ending violence once started, as evinced by a number of cases such as Iraq, Afghanistan, and Sudan (despite significant international investment), the case of Nepal is exceptional because over the years the main Maoist armed groups have continued to adhere to the commitment to ending violence.

This unusual accomplishment, in one of the startlingly diverse countries in South Asia, has raised a few important questions: Does negative peace (ending of overt violence) create the space to move towards positive peace (ending of structural/cultural violence)? Or, has Nepal’s durable negative peace become a framework to perpetuate the interests of elites at global, regional, and national levels?

Is durable peace, as in the case of Nepal, also sustainable peace? What if durability of a peace process has come at the cost of legitimizing or perpetuating injustice towards the most disadvantaged sections of the population? This research engages with these questions, tracing Nepal's journey from one of the oldest Hindu kingdoms in the world to one of the youngest secular republics. The main goal of this research is to provide insights on sustainable peace by engaging with Nepal's passage from war towards peace.

Overall, this research argues that there is a need to break the cycle of war and peace by replacing it with sustainable peace and that it is a possible pursuit.

Introduction

While the notion of sustainable peace is implicit in the scholarship and debates on peacebuilding (Cogan & Sakai, 2022, p.4; Galtung, 1976, pp.283–290; Lederach, 1997, p.x) the existing peacebuilding literature, apart from a few notable exceptions, does not fully and thoroughly engage with the frameworks of sustainable peace. O. Richmond (2022, p.124) engages with sustainable peace by offering a framework of “emancipatory peace.” He calls for a redefined understanding of politics and international relations, arguing that the new emancipatory agenda reflects the buildup of complex historical, distributive, identity, gender, and environmental concerns that are important to be reflected in any system that re-establishes security, peace, and political order after war (p.141). C. De Coning’s proposal for sustaining peace applies complexity theory to peacebuilding and argues that for a peace process to become self-sustainable, resilient social institutions need to emerge from the conflict affected societies, informed by the local culture, history, and socio-economic contexts (2016, pp.166–167). R. Mac Ginty (2021, pp.1–24) has proposed a framework of everyday peace, emphasizing how ordinary people can contribute to sustainable peace.

Apart from few such works, the large majority of the existing literature on peacebuilding has not paid explicit attention to the framework of sustainable peace (eds. Campbell et al., 2011; eds. Carey & Sen, 2020, pp.1–29; Doyle & Sambanis, 2006, pp.1–63; ed. Mac Ginty, 2013; eds. Newman et al., 2009, pp. 3–54; eds. Pugh et al., 2008; Randazoo, 2017, pp.1–20; ed. Richmond, 2010; eds. Richmond & Visoka, 2021). This research aims to fill this gap by engaging explicitly with sustainable peace within the broader peacebuilding discourse. I argue that the existing scholarship on sustainable peace, even within peace studies and critical peace thinking, has a Western bias (Nandy, 2006, p.19; Yalvac, 2017, p.18). This is despite peace studies

commonly claiming to draw on concepts of peace from various cultures (Rogers & Ramsbotham, 1999, p.741) and critical thinking drawing on postcolonial thoughts (Mundy, 2020, pp.193–205; Shapcott, 2010, pp.327–345; Spanner, 2022, pp.41–42). The frameworks of emancipatory peace, everyday peace or sustaining peace as mentioned above rely exclusively on the external conditions that block us from having a holistic understanding of sustainable peace (Tanabe, 2019, pp.1–4). These concepts pay little attention to the roots of violence within human minds.

In this thesis I therefore critique the existing understanding of sustainable peace within the peacebuilding discourse, which fails to adequately acknowledge the roots of violence (e.g., greed, anger, jealousy) within human minds (*Dhammananda*, n.d.; *Dhammapada*, 1985, pp.23–25). As argued by A. Curle (cited in Wadlow, 2014, pp.3–4), unless the roots of violence grounded within human minds are addressed, they will continue to emerge in different forms. Based on the above perspectives, I argue that there is a need to further decolonize the scholarship on peacebuilding by infusing insights from non-Western scholarships, such as from Jain and Buddhist philosophical texts that are considered to be one of the earliest and most significant thoughts on sustainable peace (Balbir, 2013, p.2; 2011, p.12; *BBC News*, 2009; Choudhary, 2018, pp. 1–4; Der-lan Yeh, 2006, pp.1–2; Howard, 2023; Jnawali, 2007, pp.28–29; Pitchford, 2023; Swann, 2021; Tanabe, 2016; p.1; *The Quest*, 2020; Dalai Lama, 2021). This is necessary to deepen and broaden the understanding of sustainable peace in the existing peacebuilding discourses.

Premised on peace studies (Rogers, 2010, p.76; Scholten, 2020, pp.27–64), critical thinking (Booth 1991, p.313–326; Cox, 1981, p.128; Richmond, 2022, p.124–147), and informed by decolonial/postcolonial perspectives (Nandy, 2006, p.19; Quinjana, 2007, pp.168–171), I critically examine the existing understanding of

sustainable peace in the dominant liberal and critical peacebuilding thinking. I also critically examine the Buddhist perspectives on sustainable peace. I argue that while the concept of sustainable peace in the existing peacebuilding scholarship fail to pay adequate attention to the roots of violence within human minds, the Buddhist insights, in its turn, fail to adequately emphasize the need to address unjust and unequal socio-political and economic structures (Fronsdal, 2005, p.37). Problematizing the gaps in both, this research combines the perspectives from both schools of thought to offer a new lens on the topic. This framework encapsulates both ending of the roots of violence in socio-economic/political structures as well as addressing the roots of violence within human minds.

Using this broader framework of sustainable peace, I have generated insights on sustainable peacemaking within the peacebuilding discourse by investigating the case of Nepal. After ten years of armed war initiated by an ultra-leftist group in 1996, the peace initiatives began in this Himalayan nation in November 2005. Nepal's peace process is about to complete 20 years, without any relapse into large-scale violence. Nepal has in the intervening years transformed from a traditional unitary Hindu kingdom to a modern federal secular republic. The Global Peace Index report in 2024 highlights that deaths from internal conflict have fallen to zero, and both arms import and armed forces rate have shown improvements (p.19). In 2024, Nepal's overall global peace ranking is 80th, which is the second highest in South Asia (p.79).

In this context, this research has conceptualized Nepal's case as locally driven hybrid peacebuilding and investigated its durability and sustainability from the deeper perspectives of sustainable peace as mentioned above. Methodologically, I have employed a qualitative case study strategy informed by critical, postmodern, feminist, and decolonial/postcolonial perspectives, as they complement each other. I have also

used an auto-ethnography approach, given my positionality of personally knowing the key actors of the peace process over a long period of time and also by being involved in earlier research on Nepal's peace process. It enables expression of unique and richer insights on the topic (Bleiker & Brigg, 2010a, p.780; Ellis & Adams, 2014, pp.254–260; Pretorious, 2023a, para 5). I have also used a narrative approach because the story format facilitates better engagement with Nepal's complex social context marked by inequalities along gender, caste, class, region, religion, and linguistic lines (Ewick & Silbey, 1995, p.199; Isik, 2015, p.106).

The primary and secondary questions interrogated in this research are:

- What explains the durability of Nepal's peace process? What is the sustainability of Nepal's durable peace?
- What has been the role of external actors on the durability/sustainability of Nepal's peace process?

The key findings from the empirical analysis of Nepal's case have been as follows: Firstly, durable peace and sustainable peace are not interchangeable concepts. While most literature, including the existing critical scholarship on peacebuilding, employ the terms durable peace and sustainable peace interchangeably, Nepal's case challenges this perception and practice. This study shows that while durable negative peace could offer the space to move towards positive sustainable peace, it could, at the same time, undermine sustainable peace by perpetuating the dominance of the elites and by legitimizing injustice against marginalized groups. This finding from the case study implies that negative and positive peace must be pursued simultaneously during peacemaking because they have non-linear, complex, and interdependent relationships. Emphasizing on negative

peace and postponing positive peace could lead to “unjust” durable peace, as in the case of Nepal.

Secondly, positive sustainable peace is achievable in a conflict-affected society if there is an alignment for it among multiple peacemaking actors. Nepal’s case shows that negative peace was achieved and has been durable because there was convergence regarding negative peace among multiple peacebuilding actors at the global, regional, and national/local levels. However, there was no convergence on positive peace among the multiple peacemaking actors at different levels. In turn, positive peace prioritized by the Nepalese actors was only partially achieved. This leads us to infer that if there had been convergence on positive peace among multiple peacemaking actors at all levels then it could have been achieved.

Finally, the existing peacebuilding frameworks are evidently inadequate in ensuring sustainable peace. Nepal’s case shows that local peacebuilding is a newly emerging concept and is not yet mature enough to offer a comprehensive template for sustainable peace. Peacebuilding of emerging actors—such as that offered by India and China—do not adequately focus on sustainable peace as the actors are more concerned with their own strategic interests. The liberal peacebuilding framework, while is advanced enough to offer a more comprehensive template for sustainable peace in theory, is constrained by the global political order that prioritizes negative peace and stability over sustainable peace in practice. Liberal peacebuilding is also constrained by its own inherent limitations, such as externally driven top-down technocratic approaches. As such, contemporary peacemaking is likely to produce negative peace as in the case of Nepal, rather than positive sustainable peace.

Premised on these findings, this research offers the following three interrelated arguments. Firstly, there is an urgent need to explore new peacemaking frameworks

for sustainable peace because the existing frameworks are likely to produce negative peace and thus are inadequate to ensure sustainable positive peace. Secondly, while locally driven hybrid peacebuilding offers more potential to ensure sustainable peace than externally driven hybrid peacebuilding, the given framework does not guarantee sustainable peace. A convergence for securing positive peace among multiple peacemaking actors at different levels prioritizing the needs of the local people in the conflict affected societies is necessary to promote sustainable peace. Finally, sustainable peace entails addressing the roots of violence in socio-political and economic structures as well as within human minds. A focus on political and economic reforms as prioritized in the dominant liberal/neo-liberal model of peacemaking is inadequate in ensuring sustainable peace.

Thesis Outline

This thesis is divided into two parts. The first part, comprising three chapters, provides the conceptual and methodological frameworks for this research. With five chapters, the second part provides empirical analysis of the case study of Nepal.

The first introductory chapter provides an overall background of this research by outlining the context of armed conflict and peacebuilding debates focusing on the local turn, which anchors this research. It also presents the methodological framework and strategies. The second chapter analyzes the literature on sustainable/durable peace and liberal/critical/emerging peacebuilding to formulate the key theoretical/conceptual framework of this research. Building on these analytical insights, the third chapter proposes a locally driven hybrid peacebuilding within a broader framework of sustainable peace as the main framework guiding this research.

The empirical part starts with Chapter four. This chapter lays out a political overview of Nepal, focusing on the context that led to the armed conflict in 1996. It

also covers the external engagement during the armed conflict, grounding it in Nepal's general foreign policy. Overall, this chapter provides the contextual insights necessary for investigating the research questions. Chapters five and six engage with the main research questions investigating the durability and sustainability of Nepal's peace process. Chapter seven engages with the secondary research question relating to the role and contributions of external actors in Nepal's peace process. Chapter eight is a concluding chapter providing the final reflections on this thesis by summarizing the main analysis. It also outlines theoretical/policy contributions as well as future research agendas.

Chapter One: Conceptual Background and Methodological Framework

This chapter is divided into two main sections. The first, on conceptual background, outlines the context and peacebuilding discourse focusing on local turn, which broadly grounds this research. The second section presents the methodological strategies and approaches employed in the research.

Section I: Conceptual Background

Context

In the post-Cold War period, the trend of conflict resolution through negotiated settlements has been increasingly marked by some notable successes and some conspicuous failures (Hampson, 1996, p.8, Ramsbotham et al., 2016, p.200). Inferring from existing literature, South Africa, Northern Ireland, Namibia, El Salvador, Mozambique are largely considered as successful examples whereas Rwanda, Angola, Cyprus, Iraq, Afghanistan, Yemen, Sudan, South Sudan, Libya are cited as failed ones (Bell & Wise, 2022, p.564; Bellamy 2010, p.195; Call, 2007, p.29; Corr, 1995, p.144; Doyle & Sambanis, 2006, pp.257–281; 2000, p. 779; Hartzell, 1999; Paris, 2000; Richtarik, 2023; eds. Stedman, Rothchild & Cousens, 2002, p.1).

Drawing on a narrow peacebuilding measure (a minimum or negative peace focused on the absence of violence), M. Doyle and N. Sambanis (2000, p.784) argue that peacebuilding failed in 57.26 per cent (71 cases) of internal wars since 1944 and succeeded in 42.74 per cent (53) cases. A number of scholars point out that negotiated settlements break down into renewed violence more often than conflicts that end in a military victory by either the government or the rebels (De Rouen & Sobek, 2004, p. 303; Fortna, 2004, p.287; Hartzell & Hoddie, 2003; Hensel, 1994; Licklider, 1995;

Maoz, 1984; Toft 2010; 2007, p.13; Wagner, 1993; Walter, 1997). A. Suhrke and I. Samset (2007, pp.195–196) add that the notion of 50 per cent risk of renewed violence within the first five post-war years has been widely accepted and agreed with.

Unfortunately, the impact of failure of the negotiated settlements could be a matter of life and death for millions of people, as demonstrated by cases such as Angola, Rwanda, and Liberia (Stedman, 2001, p.4). One estimate shows that the total number of deaths directly attributable to civil wars since World War II was 16.2 million (Hartzell & Hoodie, 2007, p.3). A high rate of failures of negotiated settlements in civil wars followed by recurrence of violence in countries with grave humanitarian implications have compelled scholars to explore frameworks to end armed conflicts and to build sustainable peace. This has resulted into peacebuilding discourse in peace and conflict studies, as elaborated below.

Peacebuilding

Peacebuilding provides the key conceptual background for this research. A shift from interstate to intrastate conflicts and increased UN peace operations to prevent recurrence of violence in the post-Cold War period has led to a study of peacebuilding (Paris, 2004, pp.2–4; Scholten, 2020, pp.36–37). With a fairly large body of academic work and practical experience, peacebuilding is no longer treated as a young area of study/practice but quite a dominant stream of discourse in the study of peace and conflict (Mac Ginty, 2013, p.387; Steinberg, 2013, p.36). The very notion of peacebuilding suggests that peace is a positive phenomenon: something that can be built (Scholten, 2020, pp.36–37). Therefore, peacebuilding has emerged as a concern for positive peace—which entails adopting a holistic approach to peace beyond merely stopping violence—and engages with the range of social and economic factors that underpin conflict (Mac Ginty, 2013, p.387).

The notion of peacebuilding originated in the work of J. Galtung a few decades ago (Edgar, 2019, p.717–729; Hancock, 2016, p.1; UN, 2010). In his pioneering work called *Three Approaches to Peace: Peacekeeping, Peacemaking, and Peacebuilding*, Galtung (1976, pp.283) coined the term “peacebuilding” by critiquing both peacekeeping and peacemaking mechanisms as inherently inadequate. Galtung proposed peacebuilding as an associative approach that would not just confront direct violence but also the structural/cultural causes of violence; he also called for facilitating local capacity for peacebuilding.

Moreover, J.P. Lederach’s work is also considered to have made one of the most important theoretical contributions to the peacebuilding debate (Hancock, 2016, p.1; Richmond, 2005, p.103). Being particularly sensitive to the consent of local actors, Lederach (1997, p.x) defined peacebuilding “as a comprehensive concept that encompasses, generates, and sustains the full array of processes, approaches, and stages needed to transform conflict toward more sustainable, peaceful relationships.” In line with his thought, the goal of peacebuilding is to transform conflicts progressively and support the creation of an enabling environment that can support a sustainable peace (Cogan & Sakai, 2022, p.4).

One of the key criticisms of peacebuilding literature is that much of the literature from the policy sphere relies on the problem-solving paradigm, focusing on immediate policy issues without much of an awareness of wider structural issues that often underpin conflict (Mac Ginty, 2013, p.389). Richmond and G. Visoka (2021, p.7) explain that peacebuilding was initially theorized in the peace research literature as grassroots, bottom-up processes in which a local consensus led to a positive peace. As the concept evolved, it converged with the agendas of contemporary liberal

peacebuilding projects, which again were partially subsumed within a liberal state building enterprise.

As the limitations of liberal peacebuilding became evident with cases such as Iraq and Afghanistan, critical approaches have been emerging as a dominant perspective in the peacebuilding discourse (Brown et al., 2010, pp.99–115; De Coning, 2016, pp.166–167; Herring, 2008, pp.47–48; Mundy, 2020, pp.191–238; Pugh, 2008 et al., pp.1–8; Rasmussen, 2010, pp.175–176; Richmond, 2010, pp.1–13). Richmond and Visoka (2021, p.5) further point out that critical approaches to peace and conflict studies have emerged in response to fallacies about international interventions aimed at peacebuilding in conflict affected societies. It is an alternative perspective that focuses on the agency of the subaltern, the agency of women, and the broader questions of how local voices come to impact and resist control by external forces.

Acknowledging the centrality of the latter, M. Pugh (2013, pp.11–12) categorizes the existing peacebuilding scholarship into two broad camps: problem solving and critical perspectives. He explains that while practitioners and policy makers are concerned with problem-solving—with the question of how to make peacebuilding work more effectively, academics are divided between thinking about both system effectiveness and the foundations on which the system is based. Critical perspectives question the assumptions behind the practice of peacebuilding and the framework of ideas and implementations of a paradigm, going beyond the limits of analysis established by hegemonic orthodoxies. However, such clear-cut binary distinctions offered by Pugh are considered too simplistic to capture the complexities of the debate (Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2013, p.765; Scholten, 2020, pp.38).

Pugh (2013, pp.14–16) himself points out two different examples of problem-solving modes in peacebuilding debates by comparing two documents of the UN—the

Secretary General's Report on Peacebuilding and the UNDP Crisis Prevention and Recovery Report. The critical camp is equally diverse (Tadjbaksh & Richmond, 2011, pp.224–229) as it comprises of a diverse body of literature that includes critiquing the problem-solving approaches from non-linear complexity perspectives (Chandler, 2014, p.83; De Coning et al., 2015, p.3) as well as from critical, postmodern, feminist, and decolonial/postcolonial perspectives (Brown et al., 2010, pp.99–115; Jabri, 2010, pp.54–55; Liden, 2009, pp. 621–622; Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2013, p.764; Richmond, 2022, p.5; Tanabe, 2017a, pp.453–454, Väyrynen, 2010, p.137–153). It has to be noted that these perspectives are not mutually exclusive and have influenced each other.

Critical perspectives are also not without their own critiques (MacLeod & O'Reilly, 2019, pp.127–145; Nadarajah & Rampton, 2015, pp.50–51; Sabaratnam, 2013, pp.259–260). For example, J. Heathershaw (2013, p.275) points out that critical perspectives have done little to develop explanatory theory or influence policy. Richmond and Mac Ginty (2015, p.175) have described such critiques as “secondary critique” and have further critiqued these secondary critiques. For example, they argue that the greatest failings which the secondary critique does not dwell on is that the debate on liberal peace has been restricted to academics and policymakers within the Global North. In response to these debates, critical approaches to peacebuilding have been marked by a number of other debates such as local turn, hybrid turn, and everyday turn. This research is situated in the local turn debates, as elaborated below.

Local Turn

The emphasis on “local” was found in works of peace scholars such as Galtung, Curle, and Lederach, much before the recent focus on “local turn” (Leonardsson & Rudd, 2015, p.826; Paffenholz, 2015, p.857; 2014, p.11). T. Paffenholz (2015, p.857)

explains that the local turn began in the early 1990s with the works of Lederach and has been revitalized in recent years with critical peacebuilding research. These two local turns in peacebuilding represent fundamental shift away from liberal peacebuilding, with its externally driven peacemaking and state building agendas and advocate a central role for local people as agents for peace. While the first local turn built on frameworks of conflict resolution theory from Azar, Freire, Curie, Fisher and Kelman, and Galtung promoted sustainable reconciliation within societies, the recent local turn builds on post-structuralist and postcolonial theoretical frameworks from Foucault, Bhaba and Scot and analyzes power and resistance aiming at more radical changes (p.857).

H. Leonardsson and G. Rudd (2015, pp.826–829) further explain that the new generation of local turn has two dimensions: first, emphasis on local ownership and local capacity building as means of effective peacebuilding, and second, emancipation, which emphasizes “voices from below” (p.825). Effective peacebuilding looks beyond national government, identifying the conflict mitigating potential of sub-national bodies. This is part of the UN’s emphasis on local governance, local capacities and ownership. Emancipatory approaches to peacebuilding are rooted in the notion that the local agency’s role is crucial, and it criticizes the way the local has been interpreted in peacebuilding so far. This approach recognizes that local communities are aware of the real causes of conflict and the ways to settle it. In practice these two are not separate categories; they are mutually symbiotic.

Mac Ginty (2015, p.845) further explains that when the failure of the liberal peace model became evident, the international community was compelled to reassess its peace approaches. This reassessment resulted in a new local turn in peacebuilding, which recognized that local partners could provide access, legitimacy, value for

money, cultural sensitivity, linguistic skills, and a swifter exit for international actors. He further adds that the local turn in peacebuilding was in keeping with advances in peace theory that realized the limitations of institution-centric conflict resolution and instead, were persuaded by the promise of a more people-centric conflict transformation (p.846). As such, local turn has emerged as an important critical agenda (Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2013, pp.763–783). Critical scholars such as Mac Ginty and Richmond (2013, p.763) argue that local turn is *terra nullius* for liberal peace epistemology, which represents a “dangerous and wild place” where Western rationality, with its narratives of universality and modernization, is challenged in different ways.

From the above discussions, it can be inferred that literature on the recent local turn is diverse, ranging from liberal to critical camps (eds. Öjendal et al., 2018; Cogen & Sakai, 2022, p.10; Lee, 2020, pp.25–38; Leonardsson and Rudd, 2015, pp.826–839; Mac Ginty, 2008, pp.139–163; Mac Ginty and Richmond, 2013, pp.763–783; Paffenholz, 2015, p.857; 2014, pp.11–27; Randazoo, 2016, p.2). J. Wolff (2022, p.3) points out that despite diversity in the local turn scholarship, it has converged around one fundamental point—a reassessment of the basic assumptions and norms guiding peacebuilding is necessary. This entails both scholars and practitioners to turn to “the local” and to pay attention to local actors and to the dynamics of their interactions, including the locally prevalent concepts of peace, democracy, human rights, and justice.

T. Donais (2012, pp.6–78) further explains that the liberal understanding of local is more in the sense of “buy in.” In this framework, “local ownership” is seen as emerging out of a commitment by domestic actors to take ownership over a predetermined liberal vision of peace. This means “local ownership” could mean

another tool generated by external factors such as the UN to promote local acceptance and legitimacy of an externally driven or influenced process. For example, in Bosnia, the external actors promoted the idea of local ownership but acted to the contrary by making decisions on crucial legislations such as the state flag and a new currency.

In contrast, critical non-linear perspectives define local as a more bottom-up, informal, society-level everyday peace (De Coning, 2016, pp.166–181; Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2013, pp.768–783). This critical view of local rejects linearity, universality, and objectivity implicit in the modernist liberal peace and disputes the dichotomies and hierarchies between international and local in search for a more plural understanding of peace (Richmond, 2017). Richmond (2023b, p.6) further explains that the original understanding of local was metaphorical, encompassing “global, civil, and post-colonial peace constituencies, councils and networks.” Mac Ginty (2015, p.840) emphasizes the need to separate local from territorial and explains it more in terms of activity, networks, and relationships.

The above discussion shows that the concept of local has also been coopted and distorted by problem solvers. Hence, debate about the local tends to drift into discussions about the state and international intervention and how state building and international assistance can support local communities to achieve security and well-being (Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2013, p.765). As such, local dovetails with narrative constructed to justify liberal peace (p.771). The local is assumed to be a near empty space, willingly subservient to Northern model and interests (p.765). Such understanding masks wide-ranging variance of local (Mac Ginty, 2021, p.21), leading to misunderstanding of the concept.

It is also important to review a few literatures on the critique of local. Paffenholz (2015, p.857) provides critical assessment of local turn, arguing that it is hampered by

a “binary and essentialist” understanding of the local and the international, which are presented as the only sites of power and resistance. Similarly, E. Randazzo (2019, p.30) points out the risk of the narratives about local being used to “save” liberal peacebuilding, whether intentional or not. C. Hughes, J. Öjendal and I. Schierenbeck (2015, pp.820–821) also critique these local perspectives for the convergence of view of the local as potentially progressive without acknowledging its internal contestations, and for ignoring the political nature of local that hides the questions of who controls power and wealth distribution. While R. Belloni (2012, p.23) warns about the local approach reinforcing the existing social hierarchy, N. Džuverović (2021, p.21) talks about “not romanticizing the local,” contemplating if liberal peacebuilding should be saved.

Furthermore, L. Wiuff Moe (2018, p. 298) cautions against embracing local as it could lead to bottom-up local coercion as in the case of Somali territories. Likewise, S. Kappler and L. Hebert (2019, p.1) point out that the local shift has failed to translate into fully convincing research transcending old binaries of international and local. M. M. Van. Leeuwan, J. Nindorera, N. Kambale Nzweve, J. L and C. Corbijn (2020, pp.1–20) draw on the empirical examples of Burundi and eastern DR Congo to argue that a concern with local in peacebuilding has provided opportunities to interveners to paper over important contributions of local stakeholders to structural peace and state-formation, which ignores the diversity of debate on issues such as justice among local stakeholders.

While these critiques provide reasons for further examination of the conceptualization of local, they do not provide any basis to reject the current emphasis on local. Moreover, Paffenholz’s critique on local is based on superficial understanding because not all interpretations of local subscribe to binary and essentialist

understanding. Similarly, the first critique by Hughes, Öjendal and Schierenbeck misses the point that despite challenges, local actors cannot be excluded and that they have a better idea about what causes conflicts and what legitimate peace looks like for locals. Similarly, the whole point of the focus on local was to reveal the power dynamics. However, though distortions by the problem-solving policy literature overlooked this dimension, critical framing of local is mindful about it.

In conclusion, this research rejects the problem-solving understanding of local and subscribes to critical understanding of local as found in the scholarship of Mac Ginty and Richmond (2013, pp.768–783) and aims to contribute to the latter. This research also argues that while the critiques of local turn by scholars such as Hughes, Öjendal and Schierenbeck (2015, pp.820–821), Paffenholz (2015, p.857), and Randazoo (2019, p.30) have necessitated more critical examination of the local framework, they do not provide any basis to reject the emphasis on local in the current peacebuilding discourse and practice.

Section II: Methodological Framework

In outlining the methodological framework, this section begins with a positionality, and proceeds to review the key strategies, approaches, and methods of data collection. It also presents philosophical assumptions about what constitute knowledge claims because they not only guide the data collection methods but also shape the overall ontological and epistemological foundation of this research.

Positionality

J.W Creswell and C.N Poth (2018, p.50) point out that the conceptualization of research process begins with researchers articulating what they bring into the inquiry—such as their personal history, their perspectives, and ethical and political issues. It is helpful to have this emphasized and positioned first. J. Gilgun (2014, p.

256) also emphasizes that it is not a good approach for researchers to write in distanced, third-person voices as if they were not part of the research. L. Richardson (1994, p.929) explains that knowing the self and knowing about the subject are intertwined. In line with the above reflections, this research draws from mainly two perspectives on my positionality, as explained below:

Professional Experience

Since 2006, I have worked in a number of West-based international organizations (both US and Europe-based), which were engaged in supporting Nepal's peace process mainly through the projects of strengthening political parties. This has given me insiders' perspectives into the Western engagement in Nepal's peace process. Moreover, I was involved in writing a book on the post-conflict Constituent Assembly (CA) elections conducted in April 2008, co-written with Nepal's Chief Election Commissioner from 2009–2011. This book, published in 2013, focused on the political processes that led to the successful execution of the first CA elections. This experience gave me an opportunity to learn the inside stories of Nepal's peace process from the key political leaders, including the top two signatories of the peace process. As one of the signatories died in 2010, I have access to unique information collected during earlier research, which is not available now.

Moreover, during the constitution-making phase from 2012 onwards, my key role was to facilitate dialogue among Nepal's major political parties to mitigate their differences on the contentious issues of the new Constitution. Through this experience, I have the first-hand knowledge of the challenges of Nepal's peace process in relation to fostering an agreement on the new Constitution among ideologically diverse political parties and multiple competing identity groups. Overall, the insights gained from my professional experiences have guided my analysis of the

empirical research. I am aware that this positionality can be both an advantage and a disadvantage. There are risks of bias due to the existing relationships with the participants. In order to mitigate this problem, I have relied on multiple sources of data collection and backed up my analysis with documentary evidence. I also did not hesitate to ask critical questions despite my personal relationship with the participants.

Perspectives on Peace from Personal Contemplation

The insights on peace that have guided this research have emerged not only from my academic engagement but also from my personal contemplation. Therefore, I have shared them as follows:

A sense of a lack of mental peace that I experienced during my early 20s led me on a personal journey to explore peace. I aspired to secure a sense of mental or inner peace regardless of external conditions. I experimented with different strategies such as psychological counselling, healing, and multiple spiritual approaches. After exploring inner peace for over 15 years, I discovered that spiritual practices such as meditation are useful tools to attain it. I experienced transformations within myself as I used them. I became sensitive to violence against animals and became vegetarian. I had also observed that the inclination towards violence was relatively lower among spiritually inclined people in Nepal, such as the Buddhist monks. Overall, my spiritual journey made me contemplative and curious about the power latent in the human mind to overcome the triggers to violence—such as greed, anger, jealousy—through spiritual practices like meditation.

I also reflected on peace by contemplating why Scandinavian countries such as Denmark, a country I have long been associated professionally with, are not completely free of violence. This is despite their effective social welfare system that ensures the basic needs of all their citizens. They also have a culture of equality and

a sense of social justice to a large extent. This observation led me to question if the fulfillment of material needs was adequate for ensuring sustainable peace.

My overall reflection has been that human beings have material, emotional, and spiritual needs. Only through the fulfillment of them all, sustainable peace is possible. Western societies such as Denmark are good at ensuring material needs. Eastern societies such as Nepal have a rich heritage of spirituality. I argue that knowledge from both societies should be combined to create a holistic framework for sustainable peace. Unfortunately, I have experienced hesitation towards engaging with spiritual knowledge among Western academia. There is a misconception among many that spirituality is contradictory to science. A number of books such as by India's top nuclear scientist and former President A. P. J Abdul Kalam (2015) and by the French philosopher M. Ricard and the neurophysiologist W. Singer (2017) imply that spirituality is not contradictory to science. Therefore, there is a need to be open about knowledge that may be derived from spirituality. These broader reflections from my personal journey have influenced my thinking on sustainable peace in this research. However, I have refrained from incorporating such personal reflections without corroboration from other evidence.

Qualitative Interpretivist Research

Qualitative research is a type of research strategy that aims to generate deep insights concerning particular topics through a considered engagement with places and social actors such as people, communities, organizations, or institutions (Clark et al., 2021, p.191). R. E. Stake (1995, pp.43–46) claims that the primary characteristic of qualitative research is the centrality of interpretation. Other defining characteristics are its being holistic, empirical, interpretive and empathic. Given that qualitative paradigm is varied and includes behavioural tradition centrally concerned with casual

inferences (Goertz and Mahoney, 2012, p.4), it is important to clarify that this research is based on epistemological and ontological assumptions of the interpretive and constructionist traditions.

A. K. Harrison (2014, p.229) explains that the interpretivist position comes from an acknowledgement of the constructed nature of all social reality, recognizing no single all-encompassing grand Truth but multiple small “t” truths that are the products of human subjectivities. Drawing on the interpretive tradition, this research contends that the researcher and the research subjects are mutually constituted through intersubjective understanding (Lamont, 2015, p.17). As such, the proposed research relies on the interpretations of realities by the human participants and the interface of those interpretations with my own positionality as a researcher, as pointed out by N. Walliman (2006, p.21).

Philosophical Assumptions

It is important to further clarify the specific philosophical underpinnings within the broader interpretative framework that guides the latter. These are postmodernism, critical theory, postcolonial/decolonial studies, and feminist theories. While all of them can be brought under the broad banner of anti-positivist approaches marked by a rejection of the objective nature of social reality, they have their own distinct perspectives that are relevant to this research.

Critical theory is both understood as a key postmodern paradigm as well as an alternative to the postmodernist and constructivist lenses (Spencer et al., 2014, p.90). R. Shapcott (2010, pp.327–345) points out that critical theories do not attempt to substitute insights from other theories but incorporate them in a more wholesome approach. This means that several theories such as feminism, postcolonial/decolonial studies are accommodated within critical theory. Nevertheless, it is important to note

their subtle differences. For example, many postcolonial/decolonial scholars are skeptical of emancipation (Shapcott, 2010, p. 238) even though they have not offered alternative to it so far. I have combined all four perspectives because they complement each other for the given inquiry.

Postmodernism is considered as a family of theories in which the basic concept is that knowledge claims must be set within the conditions of the world today and in the multiple perspectives of class, race, gender, and other group affiliations (Clark et al., 2021, p.27). C. Grbich (2012, pp.112–116) points out that postmodernism includes reflexive subjectivity (the constantly reflective and self-critical processes undergone by the researchers at all stages of the research process) and self-reflexivity (heightened awareness of the self in the process of knowledge creation). The postmodern approach is more holistic and has encouraged me to reject metanarratives in favour of descriptive documentation of specific processes or “mini narratives” (p.110). I have been also able to recognize that there are multiple meanings for an event and especially, multiple perspectives on a person’s life (McHugh, 2014, p.143). Moreover, this approach has inspired me to prioritize the interests of the marginalized and subaltern groups rather than the elite, by revealing that knowledge is not value neutral; it serves the interests of some groups more than others.

While postmodernism offers useful insights as explained above, it is not committed to transformation. Thus, I have turned to critical theory to fill this gap. Critical perspectives guide my research both as the main theoretical underpinning and also as a methodological approach. I subscribe to a critical approach of standing apart from the prevailing order and asking how that order came about (Cox, 1981, p.129). L. Spanner (2022, pp.41–42) explains that critical approaches are characterized by a

plurality and diversity of theoretical approaches and normative commitment such as feminism, postcolonialism, indigenous, and queer scholarship but they are united in seeing their research as a form of political action and resistance. M. J. Thompson (2017, p.1) adds that critical theory is a distinctive form of theory marked by its capacity to grasp the totality of social/individual as well as social processes that constitute them.

While above explanations are insightful, it needs to be noted that application of critical theory is challenging because critical theories are varied and evolving, with room for disagreements (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2005, p.303). K. K. Bhavnani, P. Chua and D. Collins (2014, p.172) suggest four filters through which research can be considered as critical. They include interrogating the history of systemic domination of the subalterns, challenging the system of domination often present in social research, undoing inequalities, and fostering a sense of accountability as a researcher. In adherence to these principles, this research is committed to both a sense of responsibility and accountability towards the disempowered groups. In this research, the application of critical theory also emphasizes the ways by which the values of the researcher and those studied impact the social world (Goodman & Fisher, 1995).

One of the key attacks against critical perspective has been its Euro-centric Western bias despite remaining critical of Western imperialism and domination (Yalvaç, 2017, p.18). In order to overcome this limitation, this research also draws on postcolonial/decolonial perspectives. P. Lottholz, (2017, p.105) points out that decolonial perspectives along with post or anti-colonial theorists have confronted the social sciences with a radical critique by denouncing the coloniality of power and knowledge and thus unmasking the Eurocentrism and Occidentalism inherent in widely used and generally accepted scientific paradigms and practices. Richmond (2021, p.8) points out that knowledge production about conflict-affected societies is

dominated by Western epistemologies, which influence how we know peace and what policy solutions are offered to resolve conflicts and build peace.

I have particularly relied on tools such as “coloniality” and “decoloniality” from decolonial perspectives explained below, to be alert about the hidden forms of Western hegemony (e.g., norms and values in the name of universality and objectivity) in peacebuilding in conflict-affected countries of the Global South like Nepal, and simultaneously to challenge and transform them. I also find the decolonial approach useful to engage with insights from non-Western societies like Nepal, which is based on values and norms different from Western societies. The decolonial perspectives include a host of diverse positions that share a view of coloniality as a fundamental problem and decoloniality as a necessary task that remains unfinished (Maldonado-Torres, 2011, pp.1–2).

Coloniality is understood as a lens that enables us to examine the ways in which colonialism (despite its formal end) continues to shape modern political, economic, culture, social and knowledge systems (Duvisac, 2022, p.3). Decoloniality calls for “decolonial delinking” because there is no way out of coloniality of power within Western categories of thought (Mignolo, 2011, p.45). M. Sabaratnam’s (2011a, p.794) decolonizing strategies that acknowledge a contested understanding of Eurocentrism is also useful to this research. It also offers a framework to prioritize the perspectives of Nepalese people focusing on the subaltern rather than the perspectives of external or elite peacebuilders in the given research.

Finally, I have also relied on feminist perspectives because they offer distinctly useful approaches to engage with oppression based on gender and other identities. R. Spencer, J. M. Pryce, and J. Walsh (2014, p.92) point out that feminist theories are not distinguished so much by their substantive topic such as women’s issues but rather

by their orientation and guiding philosophy on epistemology and methodology. I have mainly used the feminist approach because of the intersectionality framework (Marshall and Rossman, 2016, p.58), which is the most useful analytical tool to engage with multiple forms of oppression faced by marginalized groups based on class, caste, ethnicity, religion, region, and language in Nepal. K. Crenshaw explains intersectionality, 30 years after she first coined it, as a lens for seeing the way in which various forms of inequality often operate together and exacerbate each other (Steinmetz, 2020, para 1).

In summary, the overall framework of this research is shaped by the philosophical underpinnings explained above. In terms of research design, I have used a case study strategy as explained below. I have incorporated narrative and auto ethnographic/ethnographic approaches within the case study because they are complementary to the underlying epistemological and ontological assumptions of this research.

A Case Study Strategy

Among multiple strategies for qualitative research, I have chosen a case-study approach mainly because it is useful to explore a specific issue in-depth such as sustainable peace which is the main concern of this research. J. Gerring (2011, para 20) defines the case study approach research as “intensive study of a single unit or a small number of units (the cases)” that enables understanding of a larger set of similar cases. H. Coombs (2022, p.1) explains the goal of case study research as generating new theories or insights. D. Porta and M. J Keating (2008, p. 226) further point out that the case study is not a data category, but a theoretical category, and data can be collected by using both quantitative and qualitative methods. R. K. Yin (2014, p.33) points out that the objectives of case study research are descriptive, exploratory,

explanatory. This research has both explanatory and exploratory aims. I am interested both in understanding why hybrid peacebuilding in Nepal led to durable peace instead of sustainable peace, and in exploring a framework for sustainable hybrid peacebuilding.

A Single Case Study Versus Comparative Case Studies

I focused on a single case-study approach, which is most used to conduct a detailed exploration of specific phenomena that this research is concerned with (Gerring, 2008, pp.645–675). One of the key debates on the limitations of the case study relates to “generalization.” Gerring (2009, p.93) points out the methodological status of the case study is suspected because a single example of a broader phenomenon could lead to “subjective conclusions, non-replicability and causal determinism.”

Stake (2009, p.20), however, challenges such thinking by arguing that case studies are often the preferred method of research because they may be epistemologically in harmony with the reader’s experience and thus to that person a natural basis for generalization. Y. S. Lincoln and E. G. Guba (2009, pp. 27–29) add that case studies offer “working hypotheses” whose transferability is determined by the similarities between source and target cases. The ideas of “natural generalization” and transferability imply that the burden of proof is on the user than on the original researcher because readers of case study must themselves determine whether the findings are applicable to other cases than those which the researcher studied (Gomm et al., 2009, p.100). These reflections imply that though generalization from the case study is not feasible in the traditional sense, it is still possible to generate knowledge that can have general applicability through case studies.

Given the objective of this research is to explore sustainable hybrid peacebuilding, in-depth study of a single case study was more suitable than the comparative case study approach. Moreover, given my positionality in Nepal, which has equipped me with in-depth contextual and historical knowledge specific to the country, a single case study approach was effective. A. Bryman (2012, p.73) also points out that comparative studies have the potential problem of insensitivity to specific national and cultural contexts. Such risks are minimized by selecting the single case study approach for Nepal's peace process.

Selection Criteria

Gerring (2008, pp.647–648) presents nine frameworks—typical, diverse, extreme, deviant, influential, crucial, pathway, most similar and most different cases—for the case selection procedures. Yin (2014, p. 97) opines that the single-case design is justifiable under certain conditions: where the case represents (a) a critical test of existing theory, (b) a rare or unique circumstance, or (c) a representative or typical case, or where the case serves a (d) revelatory or (e) longitudinal purpose.

Drawing on the above frameworks, Nepal's peace process can be considered a "typical" study, because it reflects the increasing post-Cold War trend of ending armed conflict through negotiated settlement (Toft, 2006, p.13) and the involvement of the United Nations in intra-state conflict (Doyle & Sambanis, 2006, p.2; Newman et al., 2009, p.7). More importantly, it is a case of hybrid peacebuilding, a typical form of contemporary peacebuilding that is emerging in post-conflict locations around the world from Timor Leste to Afghanistan (Richmond, 2011, p.i). Interestingly, Nepal's case study is also exceptional (Suhrke, 2009, para 1; Martin, 2012, p.201). The analysis of Nepal's peace process provides insights to conceptualize locally driven hybrid peacebuilding and an opportunity to engage with dealing of complex and unique

social diversity. More importantly, Nepal's case is also "crucial" because it confirms to hybrid peacebuilding theory.

Key Approaches (Auto-ethnography and Narrative)

Within the broader case study strategy, I have incorporated relatively new approaches such as narrative and auto-ethnography because they are compatible with overall philosophical underpinnings of this research, as explained below.

The Narrative Approach

A. P. Bochner and N. A. Riggs (2014, p.198) explain that in the 1990s, narrative inquiry became a rallying point for those who advocated that human sciences needed to be more human. N. E. Isik (2015, p.106) adds that the "narrative turn" has emerged as anti-structuralist and anti-positivist agenda in social science since the 1980s as tools by which we reflect on ourselves as the makers of culture. J. R. Wolgemuth and V. Agosto (2019, p.1) also point out that narrative research is a qualitative research methodology analyzing stories in order to understand people, cultures and societies.

T. Moen (2006, p.57) says that the narrative approach is both the phenomenon and the method. He believes that the task for the analysis for narrative stories is to find a way to avoid the pitfalls of individualistic and societal reductionism. A. W. Frank (2002, p.113) suggests "return to stories" by pointing out that "things come to matter and continue to matter insofar as they instigate stories that affirm those things in relation to how lives are lived." P. Ewick and S. S. Silbey (1995, p.199) add that the narrative approach has two interrelated virtues: to reveal truth and to unsettle power.

I have used the narrative approach despite its pitfalls such as its unsuitability for all inquiries (Bell, 2002, pp.209–210) because it is a better approach to capture social realities of highly complex societies in Nepal with diversity along caste, ethnicity, religion, gender, language, and regional lines. The narrative approach is also useful

to engage with the complexities associated with ensuring justice for the conflict victims who were mostly from oppressed social groups. Similarly, it is useful to explain gender-based violence, which has yet to receive adequate attention on contemporary peacebuilding approaches.

The Auto-Ethnographic Approach

Based on my positionality, I have adopted an auto-ethnographic approach to this research. C. Ellis and T. E. Adams (2014, pp.254–260) point out that autoethnography refers to research, writing, stories, and methods that connect the autobiographical and personal to the cultural, social, and political. R. Bleiker and M. Brigg (2010a, p.780) define auto-ethnography as that which “...directly engages the self as a methodological resource.” L. Pretorius (2023a, para 5) points out the reasons why auto-ethnography allows researchers to use personal experiences as data sources and empowers researchers to embrace emotionality and uncertainty and to highlight topics that are hidden or considered as taboo.

My decision to use the auto-ethnography approach, despite its methodological challenges such as insufficiently objective (Grbich, 2013, p.126), is guided by its potential to bring out unique insights of the researcher, unlike in other approaches. Ellis and Adams (2014, p.258) present seven principles for autoethnographic research, such as the use of personal experience, taking advantage of and valuing insider knowledge, breaking silence, (re)claiming voice among others. These principles make auto-ethnography relevant to my research. It also helps with addressing the accusation of the colonialist and invasive ethnographic practices such as going into and studying a culture without caring about their implications on the studied group (Ellis & Adams, 2014, p.258). In this approach, the researcher is part of

the research and hence is expected to be more responsible towards representing others.

Field Research

Preliminary Phase

I adhered to an iterative approach to field research rather than a linear step-based processes. This meant that as I started conducting research, I was open to continuously revising my research framework. For example, after the preliminary research, I revised my primary research question from investigating the locally driven approach of Nepal's peace process to examining the durability of Nepal's peace process. The study of literature on the contemporary conflict resolution—as part of my preliminary research—revealed that most contemporary peacebuilding enterprises such as Columbia, El Salvador, Mozambique failed to ensure complete cessation of violence despite them being considered as successful cases (Human Rights Watch Report, 2020a; 2020b; 2020c). These revelations led to a new reflection: Nepal's case study was puzzling because the political violence ceased completely in the country after 2021, despite relatively less international support. This suggested the question of durability had more policy implications. Accordingly, I revised my key research questions to focus on durability.

The First Phase

In the initial stage of field research started in February 2023, data collection process was guided by the theoretical framework (TF) from the preliminary research. Yin (2014, pp.77–79) points out that a good researcher should make the effort to develop this TF irrespective of the aims of the study. I started the initial data collection through document-based research and interviews. I adopted an iterative approach to the data collection/analysis, meaning that there is a repetitive interplay between the

collection and analysis of data (Bryman, 2012, p.566). Hence, during the data collection process itself, I wrote down the reflections/impressions in a separate notebook. This data collection approach led me to identify the findings that challenged my preliminary research framework.

To elaborate further, the primary question of focusing on durability showed that it did not have only positive implications for sustainable peace. The initial data showed that the durability of Nepal's peace process has come at the cost of undermining its sustainability by legitimizing injustices against a few marginalized groups. As such, durability cannot be understood as sustainability and both needed to be investigated separately in Nepal's case. This initial finding prompted me to revise my overall research framework, including theoretical frameworks, mainly to reject the use of durability and sustainability as interchangeable concepts.

Final Phase

Based on these revisions, I conducted the final phase of field research. I used multiple data collection methods to facilitate "triangulation," meaning the combination of methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon (Jick, 1979, p.602). Stake (2005, p.454) defines triangulation as a process of using multiple perceptions to clarify meaning and verifying repeatability of an interpretation. Therefore, I have also incorporated perspectives from different identity groups during data collection.

I began with the document-based research. A broad scope of this research concerning both the durability and the sustainability of Nepal's peace process including the role of external actors led me to engage with a diverse set of data sources, including political/legal documents, Constitutions, UN's documents, government publications, official letters, official press statements as well as the memoirs of politicians and diplomats. Online media sources were helpful in verifying

the information collected. In order to ensure the quality of documents, I followed the four criteria of authenticity (is the evidence of a genuine origin?), credibility (is evidence free from error and distortion?), representativeness (is the evidence typical of its kind, and if not, is the extent of its untypicality known?), and meaning (is the evidence clear and comprehensible?) (Clark et al., 2021, p.263).

The document-based research disclosed two important gaps. First, I could not find satisfactory data on the living conditions of Nepal's population based on caste, ethnicity, and religious categories despite them being important aspects of the social order. Second, existing data were not adequate to explain a number of political processes such as why the earlier peace negotiations in 2001 and 2003 failed whereas the one in 2005 succeeded. Moreover, there was hardly any documents engaging specifically with the question of the durability of Nepal's peace process. In order to fill these gaps, I relied on other sources of data as explained below.

In order to fill the gaps of the limitations of the document-based methods such as difficulty in determining the veracity of sources or difficulties in capturing social interactions among others (Lamont, 2015, p.82), I relied on interviews. BC. Rathbun (2008, p.690) emphasizes how interviews are the best tool for "...establishing how subjective factors influence political decision-making, the motivations of those involved, and the role of agency in the events of interest." The interviews were of two categories. The first included in-depth interviews with two participants (male and female) from the most oppressed community in Nepal to co-create their life stories to reflect on the sustainability of Nepal's peace process. In-depth interviews were also included with the key decision makers of Nepal's peace process. This was done to understand the key facts relating to the peace process, mainly to fill gaps from the

document-based research. A few interviews with the peace negotiators were taken over several sessions.

The second category of interviews involved understanding multiple perspectives on the durability of Nepal's peace process. The interviewees in this category were not only limited to the political parties but also included political analysts, academics, journalists, artists, and ordinary people including from the marginalized groups. I ensured that these interviews represented different ethnic/caste/gender/regional identity groups. I was alert about bias during interviews with the political party leaders as they could be promoting their own political interests. In order to address this, I covered multiple perspectives. I complemented document-based research and interviews with participant observations.

Participant observation is a technique of research where the incorporation of the researcher into the group they want to study is a fundamental element. Researchers take part in the same situation in order to understand the contradictions, the stakes, and the social expectations that people being studied experience. The idea is that the best way to understand what people do, mean, think, or believe in is to be as close as possible to them (Balsiger & Lambelet, 2014, p.144).

This approach allowed me to understand the perspectives of research participants such as political leaders better, even though some feminist scholars criticize this method as a "surveillance" (Finch, 1984, as cited in Traianou, 2014, p.68). In order to systematize this process, I recorded these observations as field notes and stored them in a separate file so that they are not mixed with other sources of data.

Finally, I relied on auto-ethnographic observations. Data in this approach can come from a variety of sources such as personal memory, self-observational data,

self-reflective data, and other sources including audio, visual or written documents relating to the events being recorded (Grbich, 2012, p.123). As a data collection method, this approach gave distinct advantages than aforementioned methods because it allowed space for emotions and personal reflections, which has added richness to the inquiry. Given my positionality, the auto-ethnographic approach allowed me to present distinct perspectives on liberal peacebuilding compared to any Western or other scholar who did not belong to Nepal.

Data collection process as explained above was followed by data analysis process, which was challenging because there was no template to analyze data from multiple and diverse sources as employed in this research. J. Saldana (2014, p.604) points out that data analysis is one of the most challenging processes in qualitative research because it is “a back-stage, behind-the-scenes, in-your-head enterprise.” Yin (2014, p.217) suggests a general analytic strategy such as pattern matching and explanation building. Creswell and Poth (2018, pp.254) explain data analysis is not according to a fixed template, but it is tailor-made, “choreographed” as per the needs of the research. These insights guided my data analysis process.

As the first step, I organized data in an orderly way for easy access and analysis (Cress & Poth, 2018; Saldana, 2014, p.583). They were separately recorded in digital files and printed out. After reading them multiple times, I identified emerging themes and drew inferences from them. Moreover, the main principles that I adhered to during data analysis are as follows: First, to base the conclusions on participants experiences, not just mine. Second, not to take anything for granted or rely on hunches without evidence. Third, to examine evidence carefully and make reasonable inferences. Finally, to logically yet imaginatively think about what is going on and how it all comes together (Saldana, 2014, p.588).

Ethical Considerations

A. Traianou (2014, p.62) points out that a qualitative enquiry raises distinctive ethical issues because it involves flexible research designs entailing collecting relatively unstructured data in naturalist settings. C. Lamont (2015) points out that ethics is the most important component in every step of the process, not just when engaging with human subjects. As suggested, I have followed ethical principles in all the stages of my research, and not only during field research.

Bryman (2012, p.135) points out four main areas of ethical principles such as physical harm or harm to the participants' self-esteem, a lack of informed consent, an invasion of privacy and whether deception is involved. M. B. Miles, AM. Huberman and J. Saldana (2014, pp.66) add that any responsible qualitative researcher would ponder ethical questions such as: am I exploiting people with my research? What do I do if observe harmful actions during the field work? Who owns the data and who owns the report?

Given this research engaged with human subjects, I obtained the required approval to conduct interviews from the School of International Relations, Ethics Committee, University of St. Andrews and also followed their guidelines on ethical conduct. I reflected on the ethical considerations throughout the research process and adhered to ethical conduct of minimizing harm, respecting people's autonomy, preserving their privacy, preventing deception, obtaining informed consent from the research participants, respecting and protecting vulnerable populations, guarding access to data, as well as maintain data accuracy (Christians, 2005, p.145; Traianou, 2014, pp.62–64).

While interviewing marginalized communities such as from the Dalit community previously considered as an "untouchable" caste, I was extra sensitive. As advised by

Moen (2006, p.62), I made extra efforts to ensure they felt a sense of equality and not feel pressurized in any way. Similarly, I adopted a non-judgmental attitude and tried to reach a joint intersubjective understanding in order to avoid the dilemma of interpreting the events differently. Particularly, women from the marginalized communities did not have the experience of participating in interviews and hesitated to open up. I handled these interviews with utmost sensitivity reiterating that they could opt out if they did not feel comfortable.

One of the ethical dilemmas I faced about the auto-ethnographic approach was related to recording observations of the people in the familiar circle (e.g., politicians who are also friends) without their explicit approval. It also involved writing reflections about the marginalized social groups (e.g., Dalits) without giving them the opportunity to respond to such reflections. In order to address these dilemmas, I adopted the approach of “responsible auto-ethnographer” who acknowledges such ethical considerations and justifies the approach (Ellis & Adams, 2014, p.267). For example, I used information gained during personal interactions only after receiving verbal consent. When obtaining such consent was not feasible, I maintained confidentiality of the individual’s identity and personal details. I have been also transparent about the limitations of this data collection/analysis process. For example, auto-ethnographic observations are not used to generalize experiences even though they may provide some tentative comparative insights (Ellis & Adams, 2014, p.269).

Another ethical dilemma was related to the use of narrative approach. In this approach, what a story means to an analyst may be different from what a story means to the storyteller, especially if a researcher is interested to “take away” from a story (Greenspan, 1998, as cited in Bocher & Riggs, 2014, p.205). In order to address this dilemma, I adopted the approach of not treating stories as “data” that privileges the

standpoint of the analyst but encountering stories experientially, thus privileging the perspective of the storyteller. N. K. Denzin and Y. S. Lincoln (1997, p.249) opposes the approach to turn a “story told” into a “story analyzed” because in the latter case the essence of the story is sacrificed “at the altar of methodological rigour.”

Another ethical dilemma is related to the issue of exploitation. Feminist and postcolonial researchers condemn obtaining information for researcher’s own personal gains (in this case PhD degree) (Ellis and Adams, 2014, p.259). Feminist researchers also advocate relationships with the participants to be as equal and non-exploitative as possible (Grbich, 2012, p.69). However, given my positionality as an educated scholar from a university in the West, I have inevitably more control over research analysis. In order to address this, I was fully transparent with the research participants not only relating to the objectives/expectations of my work but also my personal background so that they could opt out if they felt exploited in any way.

Conclusion

The first section of this chapter demonstrated that the peacebuilding discourse has evolved over the years. As a result of the limitations of the dominant liberal peacebuilding, critical perspectives have offered new debates in the field—such as local turn—which provides a conceptual background to this research. The second section described the methodological framework—a qualitative case study strategy— informed by critical, decolonial, postmodern and feminist perspectives to investigate the empirical case of Nepal. Overall, this chapter has provided a conceptual and methodological background to this research.

Chapter Two: A Literature Survey

This chapter maps out the key literature on sustainable/durable peace and liberal/critical peacebuilding that provides analytical insights for the given research, followed by a summary of relevant literature on peacebuilding of emerging actors.

Sustainable Peace and Durable Peace

Sustainable Peace

A literature survey on sustainable peace—the primary area of my research—suggests limited scholarship on this specific topic within peace studies (Cortright, 2008; pp.1–18; eds. Kulnazarova & Popvski, 2019, pp. 3–85; Richmond, 2023a, pp.1–123). Theoretical engagement with sustainable peace has been part of the general debate on peace or durable peace, and while it can be traced back to ancient religious texts such as the *Vedas* or the *Avesta*, the seminal work of I. Kant, *Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch* (1795), is considered as foundational work on the topic (Cortright, 2008, p.2; Kulnarzarova, 2019, p.5).

Kant’s perpetual peace theory posits that sustainable peace is possible and presents six articles for establishing it. This theory also envisions a league of peace that would permanently end all wars (Kant, 1795, pp.1-5). Notable contributions to sustainable peace also came from M. K. Gandhi, who inspired later works of Western scholars like Galtung, despite not having created any specific literature on the topic. Gandhi rejected the rigid dichotomy between the ends and means postulating the twin doctrines of truth and nonviolence (Iyer, n.d.; Guha, 2013; Galtung & Fischer, 2013, p.57)

In order to fulfil his vision of peace, he came up with a strategy called “*satyagraha*,” which was used both as a conflict resolution approach as well as a

vehicle for civic protest (Jahanbegloo, 2019, p.73). Gandhi's vision of peace has been also rooted in pacifism and opportunities for all (Gandhi, 1993, para, 1). The theory of structural or indirect violence by Galtung (1969) is also an important scholarship on sustainable peace, offering new perspectives. Galtung presented a "violence triangle," comprising direct violence, structural violence, and cultural violence. While direct violence may include overt violence such as killing, structural violence comprises of indirect violence such as exploitation (Galtung & Fischer, 2013, pp.35-37). Galtung (1990, p.291) defines cultural violence as any aspect of a culture that can be used to legitimize violence in its direct or structural form. Galtung applied sociological lens to the behaviour of the states to analyze their internal structure and relations with each other and to illustrate structural violence through the dependence of the Global South on the Global North. Such ideas lead to the assumption that an enduring peace is impossible until direct and indirect violence is eliminated in international relations (Kulnarzarova, 2019, p.11).

Another significant contribution to the discourse on sustainable peace is *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies* by Lederach (1997, pp.150–152). In this book, exploring a conceptual framework for sustainable peace, he presents an optimistic picture, arguing the "house of peace" (p.152) can be built despite challenges. He articulated a comprehensive, integrative, and strategic approach to transforming conflict and building peace. This approach is built on a conceptual framework comprising of an interrelated set of "perspectives and activities identified as structure, process, reconciliation, resources and coordination" (p.150).

In addition to these broader theoretical engagements, the existing literature on sustainable peace also includes its interpretations from multidimensional perspectives. Defining sustainable peace from human rights perspective, A. Athie and

Y. Mahmoud (2017, pp.1–3) draw on three empirical examples—Mauritius, Senegal and Tunisia—to argue that peace can be sustained by upholding and safeguarding human rights. Defining sustainable peace in terms of the shift to just peace and the ecological turn, J. Camilleri critiques the existing peace framework as deficient, for failing to consider the ecological predicament (2020, p.27).

Likewise, scholars have also articulated sustainable peace from psychological perspectives. M. Deutsch and P. T. Coleman (2016, pp.139–140) argue for the psychological components of sustainable peace exploring what psychological theory and research can contribute to the promotion of a harmonious, sustainable peace, prevention of war, and peaceful coexistence of nations. C. Bollaert (2019, pp.48–50) critiques the Western concept of sustainable peace for its focus on structural and developmental aspects of peacebuilding while neglecting the relational ones. He points out the relational pillars tend to emphasize the interpersonal aspects of building a lasting peace including rebuilding positive relationships, creating a culture of trust, and the need to develop one’s spiritual resources.

A. Debbare (2018, pp.1–2) explains that as a process, sustained peace is informed by four practical considerations: it should be local and grow from the bottom-up; external actors should not merely identify and address the factors that drive and sustain conflict, but also analyze what still works—the residual capacities for peace that people draw on in times of conflict—external interveners should ensure that their support, even if it is well-intentioned, does not exacerbate the very conditions that brought about conflict; and as intimated by the dual resolutions, international support has a better chance of creating the conditions of sustained peace if it simultaneously addresses the humanitarian, developmental, human rights, and security needs of aggrieved communities.

L. Reyhler (2016, pp.5–8) affirms that the essential requirements or preconditions for creating sustainable peace can be clustered into five peacebuilding blocks: 1) an effective system of communication, consultation and negotiation; 2) peace enhancing structures; 3) an integrative political-psychological climate; 4) a critical mass of peacebuilding leadership; and 5) a supportive international environment. Similarly, H. H. Saunders (1999, p.31) points out that until relationships are changed, deep-rooted human conflicts are not likely to be resolved.

The above analysis shows that the existing literature on sustainable peace is vast, diverse, and differing along the lines of Western and Eastern thoughts. While the Western traditions have emphasized on addressing the roots of violence and fighting against injustice (even using force if necessary), the Eastern traditions rely on addressing the roots of violence through tranquility of mind even at the cost of tolerating injustice (Ishida, 2015, p.133; Kulnarzarova, 2019 p.11). Here, I am using 'West' and 'East' for analytical purposes, acknowledging they are not binary or homogenous categories and that they have influenced and co-constituted each other (Owen et al., 2017, p.279).

A crucial gap in the existing scholarship on sustainable peace is its Western bias. As part of increasing decolonial/postcolonial influences in Western academia, there has been a proliferation of literature that focuses on non-Western perspectives on peace. D. Hakorimana and G. Busingye's (2022, pp.15–62) work on peace from the African perspectives based on *ubuntu* [togetherness] is one example. However, the dominant scholarship does not engage adequately with relevant literature from Eastern philosophies such as Jainism and Buddhism, which deeply explore sustainable peace.

I plan to contribute to remedying this gap by drawing insights from scholarships based on Buddhist philosophy to formulate a broader perspective of sustainable peace for this research. My observation, based on informally engaging with various religious philosophies, has been that while other religious philosophies such as Hinduism, Christianity, and Islam (particularly Sufi) also engage with peace, the emphasis on peace in Jain and Buddhist philosophies is distinctly more pronounced (Balbir, 2013 p.2; 2011, p.12; *BBC News*, 2009; Choudhary, 2018, pp.1–4; Der-lan Yeh, 2006, pp.1–2; Jnawali, 2007, pp.28–29; Howard, 2023; Pitchford, 2023; Swann, 2021; Tanabe, 2016; p.1; *The Quest*, 2020; Dalai Lama, 2021).

Based on my personal inclination, I have drawn on Buddhist scholarship even though Jainism is one of the earliest philosophies engaging with peace as its core issue (Balbir, 2013 p.2; *The Quest*, 2020). The Buddhist scripture, such as *Pali Tripitaka*, is fundamental to understanding Buddhist insights on peace. One of the *Pali Tripitaka* texts, *Abhidhamma*, presents an analysis of absolute nature of physical world and absolute nature of mental world or the mind (Buddhist Discussion Centre, 2015). *Dhammapada*—one of the most widely read Buddhist scriptures—reveals that the focus of Buddhist teachings is on human mind. A key insight in *Dhammapada* is: “All experience is preceded by mind, led by mind, and made by mind.” Evidently, it focuses on mastering the mind as the ultimate victory and way to happiness (Fronsdal, 2005, p.37).

There are some works within peace studies based on Buddhist thoughts, such as Curle’s (1990) *Tools for Transformation*. Curle specifies three “poisons” that increase proclivity for violence: ignorance, yearning and jealousy (cited in Wadlow, 2014, pp.3–4). Galtung’s work has been also inspired by the Buddhist insight on “sanctity of life” (Galtung, 2012, para 7). J. Tanabe’s (2022, pp.131–161; 2017a,

pp.447–459; 2017b, pp.17-30; 2016, pp. 1–14) articles on holistic peace from Buddhism and postliberal perspectives and on Buddhist inner peace also direct toward the power of human mind in achieving sustainable peace. The analysis of existing literature reveals that the Buddhist idea of peace has been premised on non-violence and the necessity of dealing with the root causes of violence inside human minds to ensure sustainable peace in the physical world. This is not based on dichotomous understanding but on interlinkage. This research is an extension of scholarships that have been inspired by such Buddhist insights. What I add differently is a perspective on sustainable peace based on empirical insights from the case study of Nepal. I also add reflections from my own positionality of contemplating on sustainable peace from both practical observations as well as through spiritual exercises such as meditation.

To sum up, I will address the existing gap in understanding sustainable peace by infusing insights from Buddhist scholarship and consequently aim to deepen and broaden its understanding. My approach is not to idealize these Buddhist scholarships but to critically examine them. Therefore, I will critique both Western and Eastern approaches to sustainable peace and draw relevant insights from both to offer a deeper and broader framework for sustainable peace.

Durable Peace

This section outlines the existing literature on durable peace, as the key research question engages with durability of Nepal's peace process. The existing scholarship on durable peace is problem-solving oriented. Despite my disagreement with this approach, I have analyzed its key literature because of its influence on policymaking in many conflict-affected areas such as Nepal, hence providing analytical insights to understanding the main research question. Moreover, it enables us to understand useful concepts such as “spoilers,” which have also been employed in

critical literature. While a comprehensive systematic theory on durable peace is absent from the current literature, scholars have presented several frameworks that enrich understanding, as elaborated below:

The notion of “durable peace” (durability) has been defined in diverse ways in existing literature. F.O. Hampson (1996, p.207) defines durability in terms of whether violence ended and the extent to which the parties fulfilled the agreed specific commitments and obligations in the settlement. C. Hartzell (1999, p.12) defines it in terms of stability, which is assessed by eruption of civil war within at least five years. She explains that the rationale of using a five-year period to measure stability is that during this time the countries are set to hold their first set of post-settlement elections. Countries that pass through these elections peacefully are considered to be crossing a milestone in achieving stability. C. Hartzell, M. Hoddie, and D. Rothchild (2001, p.187) further explain that after a few years of peace, political implications of memories of the civil war are significantly weakened. Though there are rare instances in which civil wars resumed after five years of peace such as in Chad, Colombia, Lebanon, and Sudan, in general it is unusual.

Admitting the complexities of defining such a concept theoretically, M.D. Toft (2010, p.27) defines durable peace as enduring peace. She uses two criteria for durable peace: 1) a cessation of violence and 2) unwillingness to pursue economic, political, and social objectives through violence. By this understanding, enduring peace would be a peace that lasts at least ten or ideally, twenty years. Premised on the above perspectives, durable peace has been defined in terms of timeframe, the peace process that lasts over 10 years for this research.

Dominant Literatures on Durable Peace

Hampson's book, *Nurturing Peace: Why Peace Settlements Succeed or Fail?* is one of the pioneering comprehensive works on durable peace. He presents four variables as the explanation of durability: 1) sustained third-party engagement not only during the negotiation phase but throughout the implementation process; 2) the changing dynamics of regional and/or systemic power relationships; 3) the role of ripeness; 4) terms of settlement itself. Hampson insists that the success of the peace process depends more on implementing than signing a peace agreement (Hampson, 1996 p.4; Stedman, 2002, p.5). Hampson's work has been critiqued for failing to provide clarity on international nurturing, such as how much international resources would produce success (Stedman, 2002, pp.5–6).

B. Walter (2002, p.19) tried to explore these answers in her work *Committing to Peace* (Stedman, 2002, p.5). She has put forward a thesis of commitment problem among conflicting parties once the peace agreement is signed, which she identified as a main barrier to durable peace. She proposes that two specific factors—third party guaranteeing to provide security to combatants as they demobilize, and power-sharing guarantees in the first postwar government—determine whether conflicting parties will sign and implement settlements and consequently enforce durability. In line with Walter's framework, several other scholars have proposed additional frameworks on durable peace, including institutional power sharing approach by Hartzell and Hoddie (2007). Moreover, the findings from many other scholars like V. P. Fortna (2004), Doyle and Sambanis (2000) comply with the role of third-party commitment on durability of peace.

Walter has however been critiqued by scholars like M. Peceny and W. Stanley (2003, p. 150) who argue that successful termination in El Salvador and Guatemala

occurred without the security guarantees stipulated by Walter. In the same vein, S.J. Stedman (2002, p. 11) also points out that international actors succeeded in implementation in South Africa without security guarantees. B. Mukherjee (2006a, pp.483–484) concludes that domestic institutions are more critical to sustaining peace overall than third-party enforcement, which is useful mostly in the short term. C. T. Call (2012, p.208) highlights cases where nonrecurrent peace consolidation have occurred without the sustained presence of international peacekeepers, such as in El Salvador, Guatemala, Nepal. M. Barnett, S. Fang, and C. Zurcher (2014, p.608) argue that the international peacebuilding operations reproduce essential elements of status-quo than propelling post-conflict states towards a liberal democracy. Evidently, the role of the third party is one of the key debates in the existing literature on durable peace.

To address the gaps in Hampson's and Walter's work, Stedman and D. Rothchild identified the organizational barriers to successful implementation of the peace negotiations and hence to the durable settlement. These are—vague and expedient peace agreements, the lack of coordination between mediators and implementers of agreements, the lack of coordination among implementing agencies, the incomplete fulfilment of mandated tasks, the short time horizon and limited commitment of implementers, and the presence of spoilers—leaders or factions who use violence to undermine implementation (Stedman, 2002, pp.8–9). One of the most commonly used concepts from the above analytical framework is “spoilers.”

Stedman's (1997, pp.7–20) earlier work tried to add to the differentiation among cases of civil war termination by presenting a typology of spoilers based on their position in the peace process, number of spoilers, their intent, and whether the locus of spoiling behaviour lies with the leader or followers of the party. The motivation and intent of the spoiler is considered crucial. As per this perspective, limited and greedy

spoilers can be addressed through inducements or socialization, while total spoilers can be only managed with a coercive strategy.

The spoiler thesis has been criticized mainly because its immutable understanding is problematic. M. J. Zahar (2010, p.265) points out that there are no fixed spoiler types; actors' propensity to use violence depends on their conditions influencing their capacity and their opportunity structure. Call (2012, p.213) claims that his findings underscore the focus on spoilers and the need to manage them because "inclusionary political behaviour" affects the chances of consolidating peace.

The institutional approach to power-sharing is another notable dimension in the examination of durability of a negotiated settlement (Hartzell, 1999; Hartzell & Hoddie, 2007; 2003). Hartzell and Hoddie (2003, p.318) have emphasized that settlements that include an array of institutions designed to address core issues for adversaries emerging from civil war—the question of who will control the levers of state power—are the ones most likely to produce an enduring peace. They found that in 38 negotiated settlements, peace endured longer when more types of power-sharing were adopted. There are disagreements regarding the effectiveness of the institutional approaches' (that is associated with the concept of consociational democracy by Arend Lijphart, 1977) contribution to durable peace. Other recent studies such as those by A. K. Jarstad and D. Nilsson (2008, pp. 206) show that power-sharing enables sustained peace.

Power-sharing approaches are considered to promote cooperative behaviour among contending groups. Consociational democracies aim to manage and contain ethnic tensions, armed uprisings, and intercommunal violence through inclusive representation, helping to build peace in plural societies (Licklider, 1995, p.684). Scholars like L. Wantchekon (2000, p.339), S. Werner and A. Yuen (2005), K. R.

Derouen and D. Sobek (2004), G. Uzony and R. Hanania (2017, p.678), and S. H. Ogutcu Fu (2021) subscribe to this thinking. They also point out that military and territorial power-sharing have more significance in terms of durability. H. M. Binningsbo (2006, p.1) found that two forms of power sharing—territorial and proportional representation—led to longer periods of peace in 118 post-conflict countries.

Call's (2012, pp.186–206) work on power-sharing is most insightful for understanding nonrecurrence of Nepal's violent conflict. He argues that not just power-sharing arrangements of political, military, and other forms but also the power-sharing systems that meet the expectations of former rebels is necessary. Among the pool of core cases examined on recurrence or non-recurrence, 85 per cent of instances of inclusionary behaviour are associated with sustained peace. Citing the case of Nepal, Call explains that even though power-sharing agreements have not been fully implemented, the promise of it has deterred recurrence. It must be noted that his work was published in 2012 when Nepal's peace process was still fragile. Evidently, power-sharing, incorporated in many peace agreements including in Nepal, is one of the most dominant approaches in the existing peacebuilding literature (Miklian, 2009, p.8; Call, 2012). J. Miklian (2008, p.3) points out that power-sharing elements were implemented during the early phases of Nepal's peace process around the elections, even though he is skeptical about its effect on reforms.

Not all scholars, however, are convinced about the efficacy of power-sharing on durable peace. They draw on empirical insights from countries such as Sierra Leone, Angola, Rwanda, Zimbabwe, Kenya, Lebanon, Burundi and Cyprus where power-sharing failed (Binningsbo & Dupuy, 2009, p.87; Call, 2012, p.188; Cheeseman & Tendi, 2010, pp. 203–204; Licklider, 1995; Spears, 2002, p.123; 1999, p.570; Tull &

Mehler, 2005, p.375). I. S. Spears (1999, p.1) claims that in Africa, power-sharing is difficult to reach and implement. Similarly, D. M. Tull and A. Mehler (2005, p.375) add that the power-sharing model has triggered violence in Africa. One of the critiques that is relevant to Nepal is that this model ignores the most marginalized and the minority groups.

In addition to these substantive works on durable peace, many other scholars have also engaged with the concept. Toft (2010, p.39) points out that the learning curve for negotiated settlements has shown that the “quality of peace” following a war is the deciding factor in the duration of peace. Her key argument is that security sector reform (SSR) offers the potential for both enduring and constructive peace. Aligning with the institutional approach, Mukherjee (2006b, p.428) points out that democracy and the proportional representation (PR) election system significantly reduces the likelihood of failure of peace in post-conflict societies.

Concurring with Mukherjee, M. Joshi (2013, pp.743–744) conceptualized an indicator of durable peace called a Transition Towards Democracy (TTD), defining it as a process that incorporates many attributes from partial democracies, but not necessarily a full-fledged democratization after a civil war, as such a transition is extremely difficult in the wake of a civil war. He further adds that the TTD has survived in countries like Mozambique, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and South Africa whereas post-civil war states such as Zimbabwe, Liberia, Angola, and Democratic Republic of Congo have returned to authoritarianism or renewed conflict. Joshi (2013, p.763) also cites the example of Nepal, claiming that democratic institutions have aided Nepal in effectively avoiding a relapse into authoritarianism.

Using a different perspective, Fortna (2004, pp.276–283) argues that as *ceteris paribus* when the international community deploys peacekeepers the risk of another

round of fighting drops by 70 per cent. Multidimensional peacekeeping cuts the risk of another war by more than half and enforcement missions by less than half. Doyle and Sambanis (2000) have reached similar conclusions, asserting that there is compelling evidence that multidimensional peacekeeping including economic reconstruction significantly improves the chances of peacebuilding (measured two years after the end of the war).

The overall analysis shows that the literature on durable peace is large and diverse and that in the existing literature, durable peace is mainly defined in terms of linear problem-solving. A key gap I found in the literature is that there has been sparse engagement on the topic from critical perspectives. The concept is defined in terms of state-centric framing despite findings from an increasing number of critical scholarships based on empirical investigations that such approaches are inadequate to build peace (Chandler, 2014; Mac Ginty, 2011, Richmond, 2011). The concept also relies on strategies such as power-sharing, international interventions, and other technocratic approaches that have also been found ineffective in most empirical investigations (Call 2012; Heathershaw, 2008; Spears, 1999). Therefore, I plan to address this gap by problematizing the problem-solving framework of durable peace that has narrowed and limited its conceptual potential.

I also argue that despite its limitations, the concept has an analytical value and is more potent than negative peace, which is confined to only ending physical violence. The concept is particularly useful to capture the empirical dynamics of countries such as Nepal, which is more than negative peace and far from positive peace but still a durable peace. I further argue that the concept can also be theoretically useful in critical literature if it is framed as a stepping step towards sustainable peace.

Liberal Peacebuilding and Critical Peacebuilding

While the frameworks of sustainable peace/durable peace provide a broad theoretical anchor to this research, the peacebuilding paradigms specifically useful for the case study analysis are liberal and critical peacebuilding. Therefore, I have elaborated them as follows.

Liberal Peacebuilding

Despite near consensus on the limitations of liberal peacebuilding, it is still the dominant form of internationally supported peace interventions that are promoted by leading states, international organizations and IFIs (Mac Ginty, 2010, p.393; Philpott & Powers, 2010, p.4; Richmond, 2014; 2009; 2005, p.102). In policy, it remains highly influential due to its immense material and symbolic power (Jackson, 2017; Mac Ginty & Firchow, 2016, p.3; Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2013, p.775; 2015; Richmond, 2005; 2011). The crisis of liberal peace has not led to a paradigm shift away from liberal peace (Heathershaw, 2013, p.275–276). Therefore, theoretically, it is not feasible to engage in a peacebuilding case analysis as focused by this research without engaging with the liberal peace framework because of its pervasive dominance. Hence, the following section attempts to clarify liberal peacebuilding by engaging with relevant literature.

The concept of liberal peace is seen as a spectrum comprising the ideology of peacemaking, the socio-cultural norms of peacemaking, the structural factors that enable and constrain it, its principal actors and clients and its manifestations. As the term seeks to capture the totality of internationally sponsored peace support interventions, its usage varies contextually, and its ideological coherence is questioned (eds. Campbell et al., 2011, p.3; Mac Ginty, 2010, p.393). Heathershaw (2008, p.1) points out that liberal peace is not a single discourse but “a tri-partite

international discursive environment.” As such, literature on liberal peace also varies from the UN official documents to critical works that reject the fundamental epistemological and ontological foundations of liberal peace (Richmond, 2021, p.5). My research aims to contribute to the latter.

Mac Ginty (2010, p.393) points out that liberal peace offers a comparative lens enabling the examination of multiple peacemaking interventions in the contemporary era. He adds that even though there is no typical liberal peace intervention, it is distinguished by a few commonalities. Generally, the same actors (states, IOs and IFIs) deploy the same strategies associated with state building and reinforcing civil society and use the same timelines and liberal principles (Mac Ginty, 2011, p.3). L. A. Berg (2020, p.77) adds that liberal concepts provide a strong basis for understanding contemporary peacebuilding practice for assessing its successes and failures and for improving its outcomes.

Many scholars point out that liberal peacebuilding became possible in many conflict-affected areas in the immediate post-Cold War period (Campbell, et al., 2011; Richmond, 2005, p. 102). M. Duffield (2001, p.9-12) explains that the conclusion of the Cold War, marked by a sense of liberal triumph, resulted in the spread of liberal models—including democracy and peace—particularly in the Western, aid-dependent countries of the Global South. He points out that as a response to the limited success of development initiatives, liberal peace emerged from a consensus that “...conflict in the South is best approached through a number of connected, ameliorative, harmonizing and especially transformational measures” (p.11).

E. Neuman, R. Paris and Richmond (2009, p.7) argue that these interventions reflected a post-Westphalian approach to conflict management and international security that emphasized a multifaceted approach involving a wide range of social,

economic, and institutional needs. Due to the wide scope of activities and the emphasis on building upon institutions based on market economics and democracy, contemporary peacebuilding is described as liberal peacebuilding. J. Wallis (2018, p.83) explains that at its core, liberal peacebuilding assumed that liberalism was inherently attractive and offered the most likely path to peace and prosperity.

Most literature agree that the former UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali's 1992-policy document *An Agenda for Peace* laid the foundation for liberal peacebuilding initiatives led by the UN (Cogan & Sakai, 2022, p.3; Edgar, 2019, p.721; Philpott & Powers, 2010, pp.5–6; Sabaratnam, 2011b, p.14). This document envisioned five interconnected roles for the UN in peacebuilding, ranging from preventive diplomacy to post-conflict reconstruction. It reiterates how the Security Council must fulfil its primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security and calls upon the General Assembly to support this role (UN, 1992, p.8). Richmond (2005, p.105) points out that this agenda revived Hammerskjold's notion of preventive diplomacy, and brought together peacemaking, peacekeeping, peacebuilding as well as peace-enforcement operations to enable the UN to contribute to constructing the liberal peace. M. Lund (2003, pp.5–6) adds liberal interventionism as a shift from alleviating "human suffering" to "post-conflict peacebuilding."

The impetus for UN's expanded role was also encouraged in 1996 by Ghali's *Agenda for Democratization* (Edgar, 2019, p.722; UN, 1996). Given that the liberal peace approach retained the primacy of the state as the peace building actor, UN's mandates soon expanded from merely securing ceasefires to multidimensional peace operations including promoting democracy by reconstruction of states and institutions (Philpott & Powers, 2010, pp.5–7). Richmond (2005, p.105) points out that it has been possible to link peacebuilding interventions with the construction of liberal peace

through the UN framework. Berg (2020, p.77) adds that the expanded UN role assumes that donor countries and international organizations have widely adopted the notion that building effective and legitimate state institutions is crucial for sustaining peace after war and that outside actors can contribute to building effective states.

Most of these peace operations have been implemented in domestic contexts with goals such as security, development, humanitarian assistance plus governance and rule of law. Main examples of the UN operations in the post-Cold War context are Angola, Burundi, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Chad, Central African Republic, Cote d'Ivoire, Congo, Croatia, Eastern Slavonia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Kosovo, Liberia, Mozambique, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Timor-Leste (eds. Newman et al., 2009, p.7). Between 1989 and 1999, the UN had deployed 33 peace operations, more than double the 15 missions it deployed during the previous four decades (Blanton, 2017, p.278).

With liberal internationalism sweeping the peacebuilding discourse and praxis, other themes such as trauma, illness, and healing based on therapeutic approaches informed a parallel and more dovish academic and practical discourse as reflected in Ghali's (1995) *The Supplement*. This approach led to themes such as reconciliation and rehabilitation and increased role of transitional justice and human rights mechanisms (Sabaratnam, 2011b, pp.19–20). In 2000, the UN produced the Brahimi Report based on the assessment of the shortcomings of the existing system and attempted to conceptualize and legitimate the expanding international mandate in intra-state conflicts, and to establish some strategic directions. In this report, the interdependence of ensuring post-conflict security and achieving broader peacebuilding was made explicit and official (Edgar, 2019; Lund, 2003, p.6; UN, 2000).

By the mid-2000s, the discourse around liberal peace became increasingly intertwined with discussions on state building, even though the two are distinct concepts. This shift was particularly triggered by 9/11 and subsequent interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan. The field of conflict management became crowded with rapidly proliferating literature on the question of state building, state failure, and its implications on interveners even though interpretations varied (Sabaratnam, 2011b, pp.22–23). This has provoked critiques from all quarters to the extent that critical understanding of liberal peace is abundant in the existing scholarship.

Critique

As the limitations of liberal peace became evident particularly after failed peacebuilding missions in countries such as Rwanda, Bosnia, Iraq and Afghanistan, several literature critiquing it proliferated (Berg 2020, p.77; Leonardsson & Rudd, 2015; Mac Ginty, 2015, p.845; Steinberg, 2013, pp.36–38). S. Campbell, D. Chandler and M. Sabaratnam (2011, p.1) add that sustained debate has emerged in both academic and policy circles around the value and validity of the liberal peace approach due to failures of international efforts to create liberal governments through peace operations of the 1990s. This section maps the key debate on critiques of liberal peace, which ranges from calls for its reforms to interrogation of its fundamental premise.

S. Tadjbaksh and Richmond (2011, pp.224–229) have broken down the critique of liberal peace into five key types namely the communitarian critiques, social constructivist critiques, critical international theory, post-modern critiques, and post-colonialism. Richmond and Mac Ginty (2015, p.172) explain that the liberal peace critique has developed from being a summary of well-documented failings of international peace interventions and policy prescriptions about how to make it more

effective, into a more philosophical unpacking of ideological bases for interventions and power in international relations. Opinions differ about whether this is a result of the values and assumptions that underpin it or of its performance on the ground (eds. Newman et al., 2009, pp. 13).

Wallis (2018, p.84) argues that despite the claims of being rooted in liberalism, peacebuilding practices have been characterized by neoliberal principles guided by an emphasis on individual autonomy removed from basic principles of justice. Neoliberal peacebuilding has not built sustainable peace in most places where it was attempted. Newman, Paris and Richmond (2009, pp.12–13) also critique liberal peace and its neo-liberal economic dimensions for displacing the traditional liberal ideas about welfare, which are not necessarily suitable for conflicted societies.

Overall, debate on the critique of liberal peace is categorized between “critical perspectives” that want to fundamentally transform it and “problem solvers” who advocate for its reforms (eds. Campbell et al., 2011, p.1; Scholten, 2020, p.38). Thus, while some analysts recommend reforms such as ensuring institutionalization before liberalization or fostering local ownership, others question the fundamental assumption of suitability of liberal political and economic values in different contexts of the Global South (Paris, 2004; eds. Newman, et al., 2009, pp.12–13). Given the proposed research is situated in the critical perspectives, they have been elaborated further below.

Critical Peacebuilding

Critical peacebuilding in this research refers to multiple critical approaches to peacebuilding that have emerged in response to the limitations/fallacies of problem-solving approaches. Given this research draws on critical approaches to peacebuilding

and aims to contribute to the debates on sustainable hybrid peacebuilding I have elaborated them below.

Richmond and Mac Ginty (2014, p.173) trace the critical thinking on peacebuilding in the writings of scholars such as Kenneth and Elise Boulding (2015, p.475) and Schmid (1968) who questioned the international structures and warned against the powerful co-opting peace research, much before the Cold War. Visoka (2021, p.646) adds that while the early critique of liberal peace was concerned with conceptual and philosophical problems, the more recent works of critical peace scholars focus on having real world impact and offering a vision of emancipatory peace. In the post-Cold War period, the regular reversion to violence and the poor quality of peace promoted critical interrogation of liberal peace (Mac Ginty, 2010, p.352; Richmond 2011; Wolff, 2022, p.3). As such, critique of liberal peacebuilding is a dominant theme in contemporary critical peacebuilding scholarships. I have discussed a few such critiques that have informed this research.

The most common critiques of liberal peacebuilding from critical perspectives are its externally driven peace process, imposition of political and economic systems based on Western liberal values, technocratic approaches and emphasis on state building as a common template for sustaining peace (Bellamy, 2010, p.194; Brown, et al., 2010, p.99; Heathershaw, 2008; Mac Ginty, 2010, p. 352; Mac Ginty & Firchow, 2016, p.3; Pugh et al., 2008, p. 274; Richmond, 2009, pp.326–327; Vayrynen, 2010, p. 137; Viktorova Milne, 2010, p.74). Richmond and Mac Ginty (2015, p.178) claim that the focus of the critique of liberal peace has been on highlighting contradictions built in the dominant form of peacemaking. Given consent and legitimacy are rarely present in international interventions, liberal peace is an unequal peace benefitting the West/North.

A few scholars such as Chandler (2014, p.12) and De Coning (2014; 2016) have also emphasized non-linearity and complex system theory to critique linear assumptions of cause and effect of liberal peace. De Coning (2016, p.176) rejects claims of moral superiority of pre-determined templates implicit in liberal peace. He also points out that the linear problem-solving approaches have focused merely on tools and do not engage with deep structural tensions and inherent contradictions in peacebuilding (De Coning, 2014, p.117). From a decolonial perspective, A. I. R. Iglesias (2019, p.217) points out that liberal peace reproduces coloniality of power/knowledge/being embedded in the modernity project through exclusion of other disadvantaged by race, class and gender.

Similarly, V. Jabri (2010, pp.54–55) critiques the liberal peace project as constitutive of a “matrix of war” that seeks the governmentalization of the post-colonial state in the image of liberalism. This primarily dispossess target societies of self-determination and agency unless they comply with liberalism. Pugh (2013, p.11) draws on “foundational critique” to argue that the “sub-paradigm of peacebuilding” depends on the “overarching paradigm of neoliberalism.” He points out that transformation of liberal peacebuilding is unlikely to suffice without addressing its connections to the instability of capitalism. Heathershaw (2008, p. 597) argues liberal peace reproduces technical solutions that fail to address the core issues of conflict in a given place.

Mac Ginty (2011, p.41) has summarized the key criticisms of the liberal peacebuilding as follows: 1) Ethnocentric: it is directed from the Global North and attempts to reproduce peace and governance as per the framework of the Global North 2) Elitist: power is held by political and economic elites at the international and national level 3) Security-centric: it emphasizes order and security over emancipation and diversity 4) Superficial: it responds to the manifestations of conflict rather than

structural causes. He presents additional critiques of liberal peace such as its short-term framework, neo-liberal orientation, technocratic focus, and rigidity, explaining that liberal peace is insufficiently flexible to account for local cultural preferences. He also points to an irony that liberal peacebuilding relies on illiberal means to promote peace (Mac Ginty, 2015, p.845; 2013, p. 389; 2011, p.20; 2010, p.394).

Critical approaches to peacebuilding have resulted into a number of alternative concepts such as post-liberal peace, everyday peace, resilience, sustaining peace. To explain those concepts briefly, Richmond (2011, pp.1–188; 2009, pp.330–332) has defined post-liberal peace in terms of liberal-local hybrid without essentializing local-liberal binaries. He illustrates that the tensions among the various strands of liberal peace including emancipatory peace have led to an emergence of contextual peace building agencies that “renegotiate both the local context and the liberal peace framework, leading to local-liberal hybrid of peace” or “a post-liberal peace.” In line with the post-liberal thought, Richmond (2022, p.141) proposes a new emancipatory peace framework from a critical perspective, which aims at dismantling of existing power structures through peace settlements favouring global/planetary justice, unlike liberal or neo-liberal peace, which requires the maintenance of core elite structures.

Mac Ginty (2021, p.8) has conceptualized everyday peace as a series of actions and modes of thinking that people use to navigate through daily life in deeply divided conflict societies. It relies on the emotional intelligence of the people to understand social situations and make decisions. Everyday peace acknowledges peacemaking agencies at societal level rejecting the limited focus on formal and institutional processes in the mainstream peacebuilding practices.

Chandler (2014, pp.12-13) has conceptualized resilience as the discursive field through which the emerging problems of governing complexity are negotiated. He has

put forward “post-classical” or “post-liberal” understanding of resilience that draws on complexity and non-linearity. In this framing, the subject/object divide is overcome through understanding resilience “as an interactive process of relational adaptation.” Both subject and object are immersed in and are products of complex adaptive processes (p. 14).

De Coning (2016, pp.174-175) has conceptualized sustaining peace as essentially a local process. He defines sustainable peace as all actions undertaken by the international community and local actors that work towards consolidating and maintaining peace in a given social system. Sustainable peace is a peace that has proven robust and resilient enough to withstand serious challenges. He further explains “peacebuilding” is less about a facilitated integrated strategic framework for the next three years, although that is needed as well, and it is more about a vision for a peaceful and better future that is alive in the hearts of the ordinary people, so that they take everyday decisions that will lead to that vision becoming a reality” (2014, p. 120).

One of the alternative concepts that is the most relevant to this research is hybrid peace. It is primarily used to describe the outcome of the international interveners and conflict societies as well as an array of peacebuilding endeavours (Hameiri and Jones, 2018, p.99). V. Boege, M. A. Brown, K. P. Clements, and A. Nolan’s work (2008, pp.6–8; 2009) on hybrid political orders and Richmond’s work on the post-liberal hybrid (2011, pp.1–50) are considered as notable work towards conceptualizing hybrid peacebuilding in peace and conflict studies (Mac Ginty, 2010, p.397; Mac Ginty & Richmond,2015, pp.1–4). Hybrid peace draws on the concept of hybridity in conflict resolution implying a combination of elements from different, seemingly incompatible and inharmonious worldviews. Hybridity seeks to capture

intertwined relationship between the global and the local, the formal and the informal and the liberal and illiberal that characterizes the actual practice of contemporary peacebuilding as opposed the focus on the narrow state-centric process (Kent et al., 2018, p.2; Brown, 2018, p.24).

The existing literatures on hybrid peace is diverse, spanning from the narrow security-centric policy documents such as that of the OECD, World Bank and the UN to the emancipatory hybrid peace that this research subscribes to (Björkdahl & Höglund, 2013, p.289–299; Boege, 2018, pp. 115–128; Brown & Gusmao, 2009, pp.61–69; Brown, 2018, p. 24; Hunt, 2018, pp.51–65; Kent et al., 2018, pp.1–17; Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2015, pp.1–9; Millar, 2014, p.501–514). For example, in the *World Development Report 2011: Conflict, Security, and Development*, the World Bank acknowledged that in parts of the Global South where state institutions are weak and much of the population lives according to local socio-political beliefs and practices, it might be necessary for international actors to move away from unilinear processes of institutional transfer from the Global North and instead adopt flexible “best fit” approaches that draw upon “combinations of state, private sector, faith based, traditional, and community structures for service delivery” (p.17).

However, critical emancipatory hybrid peace is skeptical of the possibility of instrumentalizing hybridity and present the concept as an escape from governmentality and determinism along with fixed and hegemonic categories in peace/conflict studies (Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2015, p.13). Hybrid peace from this perspective unsettles the statist, Eurocentric, and linear logic of liberal peacebuilding (Kent et al., 2018, p.2). They provide a useful conceptual tool to describe a status of flux and nonlinear movement of change in conflict-affected environments (Deinla, 2018, p.219).

A few works critiquing the emancipatory hybrid perspectives articulated by scholars such as Richmond and Mac Ginty have also emerged in hybrid debate. G. Millar (2014, p.506) highlights that the hybrid framework does not provide clarity about what exactly is being hybridized, why, and to what effect. He has put forward disaggregated hybridity theory with four levels of hybridity—institutional, practical, ritual, conceptual—each of which is open to different degrees of purposeful design and administration and to different intensities and modes of local resistance. Heathershaw (2013, p.277) claims that Mac Ginty cannot escape the bifurcation between ideal types of local, indigenous, and international liberal. The attachment of the liberal to international, and the indigenous to local is both reductive and misleading. A few other scholars such as Randazzo (2016, p.1358), Sabaratnam (2013, pp.259–260) and Millar (2014, p.504) decry the prescriptive orientation of emancipatory thinking in hybrid peace.

In response, Richmond and Mac Ginty (2014, p.175) have pointed out that secondary critiques that assess the imposing dichotomy between the “international” and the “local” misunderstand hybridity, which has been used as a tool to interrogate categories and combat dichotomy with local being used as a scale. They have also clarified that critical progressive hybrid thinking does not offer a set of prescriptions as they negate the principle of envisaging peace from bottom-up dynamics. They add that the manufactured hybrid peacebuilding could lead to “sham process of democratization and liberalization” (Richmond & Mac Ginty, 2015, p.15). However, critics are not fully convinced of their justification (Wolff, 2022, p.5).

Randazzo, for instance, responds to their claim by arguing that the “denial of normativity” of the notion of emancipation implies that the selectivity of what counts as an emancipatory expression of local is effectively obscured rather than acknowledged

(Wolff, 2022, pp.5). S, Nadarajah and D. Rampton (2015, pp.50–51) continue to assert that hybrid peace reproduces Eurocentrism, dualisms, and hierarchies inherent to liberal peace and neglects the import of economic and social structures by identifying the local barriers to peace at ideational level.

The overall analysis of critical peacebuilding literature shows that it is a diverse body of scholarship spanning from those concerning deeper structural issues (e.g., West-centric capitalism or global inequalities) to those focusing on therapeutic responses such as resilience and healing (Chandler, 2014; Mac Ginty, 2013, p.389; Pugh, 2013, p.22). While critical literature on peacebuilding is rich and extensive, a crucial gap is the inadequate engagement of the existing literature with the notion of sustainable peace. There are a few works that encapsulate the reflections on sustainable peace such as Richmond's (2022, pp.124–147) formulation on emancipatory peace, De Coning's (2016, pp.166–181) articulation of sustaining peace framework, Paffenholz's (2021, pp.367–385) proposal on perpetual peace, and Mac Ginty's (2021, pp.1–24) framework of everyday peace. However, they disregard the aspect of peace within human beings or inner/mental peace that is considered as crucial for sustainable peace in non-Western perspectives such as in Buddhist scholarship. Therefore, I plan to address this gap by adding the inner peace dimension as an important part of thinking about sustainable peace, drawing on Buddhist scholarship.

Another key gap in the existing critical peacebuilding scholarship is that they have not paid adequate attention to the locally driven framework of hybrid peacebuilding innovated in the conflict affected societies based on their contextual needs. While there is ample literature on critical hybrid peacebuilding, including the empirical analysis of case studies (Björkdahl & Höglund, 2013, p.293; Brown, 2018, p.

24; Brown & Gusmao, 2009, pp.61–69; Hunt, 2018, pp.51–65; Kent et al, 2018, pp.1–18; Mac Ginty, 2011, Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2015, pp.1–9; Mac Ginty & Sanghera, 2012, pp.3–8; Millar, 2014, p.501–514; Richmond, 2011, pp.1–30; eds. Wallis et al, 2018), most scholarship is still focused on the critique of liberal peacebuilding rather than the local peacebuilding frameworks. I plan to address this gap by focusing on the local peacebuilding framework within the broader hybrid peacebuilding. In particular, I offer a conceptualization of locally driven hybrid peacebuilding from the perspectives of the conflict affected people in Nepal who have the lived experience of going through the armed conflict and the peace process. I also argue that a locally driven hybrid approach offers greater potential to advance sustainable peace rather than externally driven hybrid or liberal peacebuilding.

Peacebuilding of Emerging Actors

For this research, the conceptualization of the engagement of India and China in Nepal's peace process is situated in the broader literature of emerging/rising powers. The concept of rising powers is ambiguous and contested, implied as "countries that have successfully sought to exercise a strategic influence in their regions and multilateral fora" (De Coning & Call, 2017, pp. 245). By this definition many countries such as India, South Africa, Indonesia, Turkey is considered as rising powers. Given that this research concerns only India and China, it is analytically useful to narrow down the concept to the leading BRICS members viz. Brazil Russia India China and South Africa. BRICS are also considered as the most significant among emerging donors in peacebuilding and there has been shifts in peacebuilding debate owing to the increasing involvement of emerging actors such as BRICS (De Coning & Call, 2017, pp.253–256; Tellidis & Richmond, 2014, p.569). Therefore, I will specifically

draw on existing literature on engagement of BRICS countries to formulate analytical insights on the engagement of India and China in Nepal's peace process.

B. De Carvalho and De Coning (2013, p.2) point out that "emerging powers" is a new vocabulary with little consensus on its meaning. While emerging powers such as BRICS are recognized by their core character of "emerging markets," they have also become a symbol of US hegemonic order. De Coning and Call (2017, pp.249–250) point out that the term "rising powers" is better than "emerging" or "middle powers" because the former is problematized by countries like India, which was a key power historically, while the latter is problematized by countries such as Indonesia, which rejects a military based world order.

Therefore, instead of referring to China and India as emerging powers as is used in some literature, I have referred to them as "emerging actors in peacebuilding." This may be still problematic because they claim to engage in development work since the 1950s (Mwase & Yang, p.4; 2012; Singh, 2017, pp.70–80). Nevertheless, this framework is still useful to understand their engagement in the peacebuilding arena, which has become noteworthy only more recently.

The literature on emerging actors in peacebuilding such as BRICS, despite its underdeveloped status so far, has been growing, particularly because of their increasing influence in the global order (both as soft and hard). Moreover, BRICS and a few other regional powers have emerged as "new donors" that advance their own political and technical approaches to peacebuilding (De Coning and Call, 2017, pp.3–5; Tellidis & Richmond, 2014, pp.563–584). Nepal's case also shows India's role (not liberal peacebuilding) was the most dominant among external intervention in its peacebuilding (Adhikari, 2017, pp.27–31; Jha, 2012, p.333; 2014; Muni, 2012, p.313;).

Richmond and I. Tellidis (2013, p.1) point out that BRICS can represent both “status-quo” and “critical actors.” On one hand, they all engage with the liberal peace paradigm and its often-neoliberal agenda that allows them to safeguard sovereignty and non-intervention and pursue their own political and economic interests. On the other hand, their involvement has challenged the character of Western liberal peace through the promotion of their own development agendas. Tellidis and Richmond (2014, p.564) further point out that the first option raises coordination and efficiency issues for the international community and the second offers more significant ethical, ideological, and material challenges.

N. Mwase and Y. Yang (2012) explain that the BRICS development engagement differ from traditional Western donors in three ways. First, they provide financial assistance based on mutual benefits in the spirit of South-South cooperation, with the exception of Russia who aligns with traditional donor on emphasizing the role of aid in poverty reduction. Second, BRICS—particularly China—view “conditionality” as interfering with recipient’s’ sovereignty while traditional donors view the former as an instrument to ensure effective use of aid. Third, different emphasis is placed on how to ensure debt sustainability, with some BRICS giving greater weight to micro-sustainability unlike traditional donors resorting to long-term macro-sustainability.

In general, the engagement of BRICS in peacebuilding through the frameworks of development assistance is distinguished from traditional Western donors on the basis of national ownership, South-South cooperation, less conditionality, long-term perspective, less hierarchy, sensitive towards anything hinting Northern hegemony such as R2P but aware of capacity deficit in a few areas, rejection of OECD-DAC led approaches and comfortable with investing in global public goods (De Coning and Call, 2017; Mathur, 2014; Richmond & Tellidis, 2013; Singh 2017; Sinha 2017).

All major five BRICS donors, however, converge on a few aspects of liberal peace: a stable state with monopoly on the use of violence and varying degrees of capitalism. They also agree on the significance of the state being the main partner for aid and peacebuilding (Richmond & Tellidis, 2013, pp.2–7). As such, there is debate about if they represent a better alternative to the Western model or if they perpetuate status-quo. A. Mathur (2014, p.5) points out emerging powers can offer alternative models of conflict management and development by rejecting Western donor-recipient model and offering their recent transition experiences that could be more easily replicated and adapted to local contexts of other developing countries. Richmond and Tellidis (2013, pp.2–7) are more skeptical because of their status-quo orientation. They point out that unless emerging actors engage on a more significant scale and resolve differences with traditional donors on issues such as R2P, their alternative approaches remain fragmented and indeterminate. They also argue that BRICS being an economic—not normative grouping—does not offer a coherent picture on peacebuilding.

The existing literature on BRICS also points out the subtle differences in BRICS members' interests, approaches, motives, power, influence, and adherence to or rejection of established standards (such as OCED-DAC principles). For example, India, Brazil, and South Africa—known as IBSA group—support democracy, the rule of law, human rights, and civil society. South African approaches are based on anti-imperialism and a sense of moral obligation to support other African countries with emphasis on aspects such as good governance, dialogue and reconciliation, infra-structural development. Moreover, from 2005 to 2010, when countries such as India and Russia shifted from bilateral to multilateral, China shifted in the opposite direction (Nyuykonge & Zondi, 2017; Richmond & Tellidis, 2013, pp.1-3).

Given that this research is only concerned with India and China, I have focused on their engagement in the following way. India's peacebuilding engagement is part of its development framework since the 1950s. Based on its colonial experiences, it wanted to support other developing countries coming out of colonial experiences focusing on economic sustainability and technological sharing. Its foreign policy premised on Nehruvian idealism recognized its international responsibility despite modest resources. It also draws on the South-South cooperation framework that emphasizes mutual benefits and growth, equality, projects in infrastructure and productive sectors. Its main approaches have been demand-driven support without conditionality, partnership-based framework instead of a donor/recipient one, focus on economic and technical assistance, respect of sovereignty of partners, broad-scope, and long-term perspective (De Coning & Call, 2017, p.265; Singh, 2017, p.70–87; Sinha, 2017, p.129).

Tellidis and Richmond (2014, pp.572–575; 2013, pp.2–8) opine that India focuses on old-fashioned concepts of peacekeeping and security (where sovereignty is not at risk) as well as electoral support and priority to its own internal development. It does not support democratization based on conditionality and concentrates on technical assistance matters. Indian initiatives have also engaged with everyday issues such as exporting water pumps and irrigation systems that are overlooked by Western donor policies. China, on the other hand, prioritizes infrastructure while remaining respectful of sovereignty and away from controversial political issues. China has low appetite for social issues such as promoting human rights or liberal forms of governance because it is an area where they themselves are underperforming and scrutinized. China is both a status-quo and critical actor. China's prioritization of development over externally imposed democracy and governance makes it a

potentially critical actor. However, China does not attempt to transform the established norms and rules.

L. A. Alexandra and M. Lanteigne (2017, p.194) explain China's view on the intervention on war-to-peace transition shifted from negative to positive after its entry into the UN in 1971. China's interest particularly grew after 1990s, as it sought to enhance its international profile to match its rising power status through peacekeeping engagement. Since then, China's preference has been peacebuilding via UN than unilateral or great power-led peacebuilding initiatives. China's engagement in Myanmar shows that it is geared towards control over its border areas, discouraging enhanced Western engagement (via support to education, infra-structure, anti-poverty etc.), increasing its soft power to compete with the West on trade and diplomacy, and promoting its economic interests. What makes China's approaches distinct is that it is widely acknowledged to be a rising power and potential challenger to US policies in Asia.

M. Adhikari (2020, p.ii) has proposed a conceptual framework called "Emergent Power Regional Conflict Management" (EPRCM) to encapsulate peacebuilding approaches of China and India through investigating case studies of Nepal and Myanmar. She argues that India and China's peacebuilding framework is distinct and cannot be encapsulated within liberal peacebuilding. The key approaches of the EPRCM are: "stability, development, unevenly applied state centricity, rejection of universality of liberal peace, prioritization of regional actors in conflict resolution," and an underlying pragmatism that shuns fixed templates in conflict resolution (p.6). She further argues that they have "negotiated coexistence" with "liberal peacebuilders" rather than converging or replacing them (Adhikari, 2022, pp.1-2). The EPRCM is a useful guide to conceptualize the engagement of India and China in Nepal's peace

process as “peacebuilding of emerging actors” for the given research. The concept of “negotiated coexistence” also provides useful contributions to analysis of hybrid peacebuilding in Nepal.

Conclusion

This chapter shows that “sustainable peace” related more intensively to addressing the roots of violence is distinct from “durable peace,” which has a narrower scope, focusing on preventing recurrence of violence. It also demonstrates that alternative peacebuilding frameworks such as hybrid peacebuilding emerged as a better analytical tool to capture the complexities of conflict-affected societies. These insights are useful to formulate a theoretical framework for this research as elaborated in the next chapter.

Chapter Three: Theoretical/Conceptual Frameworks

This chapter outlines the theoretical/conceptual frameworks for the proposed research. The first section offers a framework of sustainable peace, a foundational component in this research. The next looks at peacebuilding paradigms that ground the key conceptual framework of this research. The final section conceptualizes hybrid peacebuilding in Nepal, offering a few propositions for empirical analysis.

Sustainable Peace Framework

The framework on sustainable peace that broadly informs this research is grounded in the literature analyzed in Chapter two. I problematize both existing Western and Eastern thinking on sustainable peace because of their respective limitations. Western thinking is inadequate because they do not sufficiently pay attention to the roots of violence in human minds as explained in Chapter two. As pointed out by Tanabe (2016, p. 3), although the external conditions or causes cannot be ignored, looking at them alone blocks us from deepening the understanding of our problems. Premised on the four noble truths, he further argues that examining our own mind and its dynamics enables us to grab the inner cause of the problems and to explore what state of mind we should achieve for peace.

What is problematic in the Western approaches to sustainable peace as implicit in concepts such as emancipatory peace (Richmond, 2022, pp.124–141; Visoka, 2021, pp.641–660) is that they tend to prioritize “rationalism” even when it has promoted violence and to shun “spiritual approaches” even though these have been found to promote justice, peace, compassion, and toleration. Eastern thinking is also not without gaps. While Eastern philosophy such as those manifested in Buddhist

scholarships provide deeper and systematic insights on eliminating the roots of violence in human minds (Rana, 2005, p.115), they create tension with the humanistic value of striving for social justice because maintaining social harmony sometimes requires targeted violence (Howard, 2023, p.1). These scholarships fail to engage with contemporary social realities of unjust political structures and unequal economic institutions. It is believed that once human minds are free from defilements such as greed, anger or jealousy and once they embrace “love and compassion,” a just and equal society may be achieved (*Dhammananda*, n.d.).

To offer an alternative perspective on sustainable peace addressing the gaps mentioned above, I have combined three theoretical perspectives—peace studies, critical perspectives, and decolonial thinking. I have relied on peace studies because it is informed by the normative commitment towards sustainable peace and is concerned with addressing the root causes of direct violence and exploration of ways to overcome structural inequalities (Rogers, 2010, p.76; Rogers & Ramsbotham, 1999). I have relied on the conceptions of negative and positive peace within the scholarship of peace studies.

Galtung (2023, para 3) views peace as a relation between two or more parties that could be negative disharmonious, indifferent, or positive harmonious. In real world, relations may be a mix of all three. The framework of positive peace has been defined as one “in which all forms of violence including the structural are addressed.” Similarly, negative peace is defined as “...the absence of direct violence” (Galtung, 1996, pp.31–32). The forms of violence have been also recognized as the causal flow between cultural violence to structural violence leading to direct violence. A negative understanding of peace draws on an “inherency” view that violence is intrinsic to human nature and is endemic in society, history, and among states. A positive

understanding of peace imply that conflict and war are learned behaviours that can be prevented or mitigated. A positive peace is also defined as long-term stability, sustainability, and social justice (Richmond, 2023a, pp.8–10).

Drawing on Curle's theory of peace, which includes both negative and positive peace (Woodhouse, 2010, p.1), this research contends that both positive and negative peace must be pursued simultaneously to ensure sustainable peace because they have interdependent, complex and non-linear relationships. It rejects their dichotomous categorization. Curle's theory draws on eclectic mix of academic, theological, and philosophical sources that postulates true peace depends on liberating human potential. Curle argued "violence lies not so much in action as in a state of mind" and pointed out the need to develop one's spiritual resources without which violence will continue to reinvent and transform itself no matter what efforts are used to root it out (Curle, 1972, pp.1–7; Quakers n.d., Woodhouse, 2010, p.1)

In addition to peace studies, I draw on critical peace perspectives to formulate the key insights on "sustainable peace" because of the limitations of the former. Peace studies have been critiqued for abandoning its radical orientation and being comfortable with non-critical orthodox paradigms. Many peace related projects have been limited to narrow problem-solving oriented focus that fail to engage with deeper systematic issues and power structures (Mac Ginty, 2011, pp.23–25). Critical perspectives enable to remedy this gap as they dissect conventional understandings by asserting, investigating, and arguing below-the-surface processes and interests explain the outcomes such as peace. An engagement with power is also central in critical approaches (Carey & Sen, 2020, p.23). I have employed critical approaches to critically examine not only Western scholarships on "sustainable peace" but also non-Western scholarships such as the Buddhist philosophy.

I subscribe to a critical approach as explained in Chapter one (Cox, 1981, p.129). I have been also inspired by its emancipatory thinking (Booth, 1991, pp.313–326). The emerging emancipatory peace framework prioritizes emancipation and the pursuit of multiple forms of justice, including global, for all actors. It is also concerned with peace experience at the local and everyday level (Thiessen, 2011, p.15). Richmond and Mac Ginty (2015, p.184) have clarified that emancipatory peace is not a prescriptive model; it is “open to alternatives, and anti-hegemonic, bottom-up, freed from the constraints of statehood and imposed norms, and balancing needs with rights, rather than a homage to a hierarchical order.”

Moreover, I have also drawn on decolonial perspectives (Mignolo, 2011, pp.44–63; Maldonado-Torres, 2011, pp.1–2) as explained in Chapter one because they offer useful insights when it comes to engaging with non-Western perspectives on “sustainable peace.” This is mainly because both peace studies and critical peace perspectives, despite their commitment to rise above Western ethnocentric bias, have failed to pay sufficient attention to the perspectives on sustainable peace from the non-Western world. As Nandy (2006, p.19) points out, critical scholars are caught within Western enlightenment vision that makes it “in-house criticism.”

The framework of coloniality of knowledge within decolonial perspectives is specifically useful in my effort at deepening understanding of sustainable peace. A. Quijano (2007, pp.168–171) argues that even though political colonialism has been eliminated, the relationship between the European culture (apart from progressive thinkers) and others continues to be that of the colonial domination. As such, non-European knowledge and experiences were rendered an inferior position in the mainstream academic thinking. Moreover, from this perspective, the relation between European culture and other cultures was established as a relation between “subject”

and “object.” This perception blocked interchange of knowledge and of modes of producing knowledge between cultures. This above analysis enables us to understand why non-Western perspectives on “sustainable peace,” such as Jain or Buddhist philosophies, have been marginalized despite their longer traditions and comprehensive approach to understanding peace (Balbir, 2013 p.2; 2011, p.12; Choudhary, 2018, pp. 1-4; Howard 2023, pp.1-2; Janwali, 2007, pp.28–29; Tanabe, 2016, pp.1-10; *The Quest*, 2020).

Using a decolonial approach, I have drawn on non-Western scholarships, such as Buddhist philosophy, to formulate a thesis on “inner peace” that can be simply understood as “peace within human minds.” This inner peace is not based on a dualistic thinking between inner and external worlds or mind and body but more on interdependent and interpenetrating nature of conceptual thoughts framing different views. It is also based on “reflective self-awareness,” which recognizes that all ways of thinking and knowing are constructed, contextual and contingent (Tanabe, 2022, p.138; 2017, pp.18–26; 2016, pp.5-10).

Inferring from *Dhammapada* (1985, pp.23–26)—one of the most widely read Buddhist scriptures—inner peace is a calm state of mind. This state of mind is achieved through ending defilements such as greed, anger and jealousy within human minds through spiritual practices. A person with inner peace is unlikely to resort to physical or any other form of violence. Therefore, I argue for combining the inner peace framework with the ending of structural/cultural violence to ensure sustainable peace. Inner peace alone cannot ensure sustainable peace without ending structural/cultural violence in socio-economic and political spheres (Tanabe, 2016, p.3).

In summary, the proposed perspective on sustainable peace in this research connects both Eastern and Western thoughts to offer a framework that encapsulates elimination of all the roots of violence i.e., political/socio-economic injustices, as well as elimination of defilements within human minds such as hatred and anger. This is premised on an understanding that justice and equality in the socio-economic/political structures is not possible without kindness, compassion, and empathy within human minds.

While the above perspectives are useful for the normative concern of this research mainly to conceptualize sustainable hybrid peacebuilding, Galtung's perspectives on sustainable peace particularly in reference to Nepal's case will mainly guide my empirical analysis. Even though they are not elaborate, they provide a simple yet effective analytical tool best suited for my empirical inquiry. Galtung (2012, para 3) pointed out that the Nepalese have been especially good at "negative" forms of non-violence such as civil disobedience or non-cooperation, but they struggle when it comes to positive non-violence like nation building and constructive action towards peace.¹ Galtung (2012, para 9) also argued, "if you want peace, abolish hunger." He further suggested that the source of violence is inequality. One must identify the most "miserable" communities in terms of life expectancy, income, health, morality etc. and lift them up and do the same for the second "miserable" community and so on (Galtung, 2013, para 9).

In line with the above perspectives, I will explore sustainability of Nepal's peace process mainly by examining its four parameters: 1) if the most "miserable" communities in Nepal have access to basic needs or not; 2) if an economic inequality

¹Even though his remarks were in the context of dissolution of the first CA in 2008, they continue to aptly describe the current situation of hybrid negative peace in Nepal.

overlapping social inequality has been addressed or not; 3) if a sense of injustice has been eliminated or not; and 4) if violence has re-emerged in other forms or not.

Peacebuilding Paradigms

There have been attempts to implement sustainable peace in practice through mainly the framework of “peacebuilding” by Western liberal states in the post-Cold War context (as elaborated in Chapter one). Given that this research explores sustainable peace through investigating a peace process in Nepal, the peacebuilding framework provides an overarching theoretical ground for my research. In this section, I have engaged with relevant paradigms of peacebuilding that guide the proposed research. Since 2015, UN has deepened the meaning of peacebuilding and defined it as a holistic vision of sustainable peace that encompasses not only efforts to prevent relapse into conflict, but also to prevent emergence of conflict in the first place (UN, 2021, p.1). This vision of sustaining peace has been incorporated in the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (UN, 2015, pp.1–35).

Theoretical approaches to peacebuilding are diverse (Barnett, 2006, pp.89–90; Call, 2012, p.225; Liden, 2009, p.616) as also demonstrated in Chapter one and two. H. F. Carey and O. Sen (2020, pp.1–28) have proposed seven major paradigms of peacebuilding namely realism, liberalism, constructivism, cosmopolitanism, critical theories, local approaches, and policy analysis. This formulation is most useful for this research because it includes liberalism, critical theories, and local approaches that have been employed in the given research. Therefore, I have briefly discussed them below. It is important to note that all the seven paradigms have common themes such as hegemony, dependency, power, interests, agency, hybridity, etc. Ideologically, they vary on the issues—state versus society, neoliberal versus progressive, pragmatic versus utopian among others.

Liberal/Critical/Local Peacebuilding Theories

Given the centrality of liberalism in contemporary peacebuilding discourse and practice, its impact is found in all contemporary peacebuilding cases including Nepal. The liberal peacebuilding theory is rooted in two main propositions: 1) democracies are less likely to go to war, which has been also applied in the context of internal conflicts even though its focus is on interstate war; 2) cooperation among states and international organizations contributes to peace. The association between democracy and peace has played a significant role in peacebuilding (Berg, 2020, p.79). Liberal peace has been also understood in terms of a triangle—economic interdependence, international organizations, and democratic peace—that challenges the rational actor model of realism (Howe, 2020, p.112). Liberalism views cooperation as risky but possible under certain conditions. Adopting Lockean social contract theory, peace is seen as the consequence of a state protecting life, liberty, and property (Carey & Sen, 2020, p.16).

Critical theory engages with the existing peace theories to expose their inadequacies as explained in Chapters one and two. Critical perspectives are valuable to this research because they provide useful frameworks to critically engage with ideologies such as liberal peacebuilding, hybrid peacebuilding, and local peacebuilding. Unlike traditional approaches towards peacebuilding that draw on mainstream IR debates, critical approaches “decentre” the state in their analysis and focus on the role of subaltern identities, social movements, and revolutionary political change for durable peace. Regarding peacebuilding, critical approaches have had little interest in contributing to a “bourgeoisie” state. Yet there are three ways in which critical approaches to peace and conflict are critical. The first is “critiques” of power—whether they are exercised through states or social groups or even nonhuman agency.

The second one is a shared commitment to problematizing relationship between power and knowledge. The third is critical research ethically engaging with pressing issues of critical importance, such as resistance. They have a normative orientation because of their interests in understanding inequality, violence and oppression and so serve those who resist such forces (Mundy, 2020, pp.193–205).

Furthermore, theory on the locally grounded peacebuilding, which is still in its infancy, is also relevant to the proposed research since the focus of this research is on “local.” Scholars such as Autesserre (2014, p.70) argue that solutions rooted in domestic realities are more likely to be sustainable than externally imposed ones. This is mainly because local people can continue such initiatives even when foreign peacebuilders have left. Familiarity of the context is also of crucial importance. While local thinking has been incorporated within both realism and liberalism, it is more consistent with critical approaches that emphasize on a greater focus on indigenous institutions (Hoven, 2020, pp.268–269).

These theoretical perspectives above have led to different peacebuilding approaches such as liberal and hybrid peacebuilding. The literature survey in the last chapter showed that the liberal peacebuilding framework is inadequate in capturing the interactions among a range of Nepal’s peacebuilding actors along a spectrum of local and international scales (Richmond, 2015, p.50). This framework is particularly insufficient to understand Nepal’s locally driven peace process. As pointed out by Mac Ginty (2010 p.395), there is a risk of overestimating the power and coherence of liberal peace. Local actors can have considerable agency resulting in hybridized peace. Therefore, I have used the hybrid peace framework, elaborated below, as the main conceptual tool for this research.

Hybrid Peace Perspectives

The emergence of hybridity is part of the local turn in peacebuilding as elaborated in Chapter one. Hybridity emerges from local resistance and frictions between “inside” and “outside” normative frameworks (Björkdahl & Höglund, 2013, as cited in Useugi, Deekeling, Ingtedt, 2021, p.25). Prominent scholars in the peacebuilding field point out that the core value of the hybrid peace framework is its analytical strength. Mac Ginty and Richmond (2015 p.5) point out that hybridity describes contextual situations and the dynamic nature of peace and conflict in a fluid and dynamic way by transcending the rigid and binary categories. Hunt (2018, p. 51) claims it is a useful lens with which scholars can better comprehend the empirics of socio-political order and the forms of peace produced through international interventions in conflict-affected states.

The usefulness of hybridity as an analytical device has been summarized as follows: first, it focuses on the interfaces and interchanges between actors; this interchange can take many forms and often operate in non-obvious ways. Second, the concept of hybridity encourages us to recognize the fluidity within groups. Third, it moves us away from elite level analyses and encourages us to take non-elites seriously. The concept of hybridity encourages us to look beyond state and institution-centric analyses and instead see a fuller cohort of actors including local actors and those not on the national stage. Fourth, it keeps us focused on the dynamic nature of peacebuilding and development context. Rather than conceiving of a neat transmission chain, whereby ideas and practices are passed down from international to national elites, it is more accurate to conceive of a series of linkages transmitting ideas and practices in all directions (Mac Ginty & Sanghera, 2012, p.5).

The hybridity concept is also useful in thinking about sustainable peace in the current era. It offers a mix of grand theory, mid-level theory and ethnographic approaches through which emancipatory forms of peace connected to networks of legitimacy across scales may be simultaneously imagined and researched (Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2015, p.2). In this research project, even though hybridity is mainly used for an explanatory purpose, it is also guided by a normative concern. Forsyth (2018, p.2) argues that unless the explanatory dimension and normative concern are interwoven together, they are ineffective for policymaking.

As elaborated in Chapter two, hybrid peacebuilding is marked by two contradictory trends. One view is emancipatory as hybridity is seen as part of a shift towards more generous and realistic categories of institutions that can transcend Weberian notions of the state and liberal institutionalism. This perspective encourages bottom-up views and recognizes the messy reality of politics in conflict-affected societies. The other view is less progressive, where hybridity is co-opted and instrumentalized by some international organizations and peace-intervention states. It is more in sync with curtailed liberal interventionism and neo-liberal thinking of shifting responsibility and lowering intervention costs (Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2015, pp.1–7).

It is also important to note that there are risks of hybridity because it can be both negative and positive. While a negative hybrid peace represents outsourcing of power and norms from the international to the state/society, a positive hybrid form would represent contextually rooted process through which broader political and social injustice is addressed across local and international scales. In negative hybridity, non-emancipatory peace is created in space where “oppressive social, political or military structures and elite interests are preserved” (Richmond, 2012, p.4) A positive hybrid form of peace is emancipatory and socially just and implies that significant legitimacy

and agency emerge from the local scale. In order to mitigate negative hybridity, a concept of “peace formation” (Richmond, 2012, p.3) has been offered as complex but visible expression of critical agency aimed at ending cycles of state formation and inter-related inequalities (Richmond, 2016, pp.70–73; 2015, pp.51–52; Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2015, p.12).

The conceptual framework for this research is based on critical emancipatory framings of hybrid peace that is concerned with positive hybrid peace, by moving beyond the limited conception of negative hybrid peace. Critical emancipatory hybrid framing also encapsulates insights from postcolonial/decolonial and postmodern/postliberal perspectives that I subscribe. Therefore, I have summarized the key tenets of critical emancipatory hybrid peace thinking that has guided the main theoretical/conceptual framework of this research as follows.

Critical Emancipatory Hybrid Peace

Critical emancipatory hybrid thinking acknowledges the role of history, including colonialism, in determining the various institutional and non-institutional relationships in post-colonial societies. As such, this strand of hybridity provides a lens to take profound difference as fundamental in the dynamic of political order in all postcolonial states; this difference is not simply related to competing interests or opposing ethnic or religious identities, but to fundamentally diverse ways of knowing and being in the world. Hybridity not only looks at the complex dynamics of power but also at profoundly different understandings of what constitutes power, its source, and the checks upon it (Brown, 2018, p.24; Kent, et al., 2018, p.2).

Using post-colonial/decolonial perspectives, Mac Ginty and Richmond (2013, p.765) claim that while the liberal peace may view the local as subservient to Western models—local institutions being seen as weak or dysfunctional, corrupt and neo-

patrimonial—the local can also characterize international intervention as dysfunctional, contextually insensitive, ethnocentric, interest-based, illegitimate, unaccountable and anti-democratic. Similarly, the hybrid perspectives focus on “relationality,” which is more suitable for capturing the multifaceted, dynamic, and fluid interactions among the plural forms of engagement (Richmond, 2018, p.viii). The hybrid peace thinking acknowledges the mutually constitutive outcomes of processes of interactions between diverse norms, institutions, actors, and discourses. They show how peace agencies, both local and international, are instrumental in building hybrid and legitimate forms of peace (Richmond, 2012, p.6).

Critical emancipatory hybrid thinking also acknowledges the presence of multiple actors, not just “local” and “international.” Hybridity is understood both as a process and a condition of interaction between actors and practices. It is not the grafting together of two discrete entities but a more complex and fluid process of interchange. This means the hybrid peace framework also helps us to consider the role of the BRICS and other alternative sources of assistance and interventions, considering the fact that to a certain extent, they are complicit with the perpetuation of many aspects of liberal peace (Mac Ginty, 2011; Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2015, p. 13).

Additionally, while the emancipatory strand sees local as potential agents for emancipatory peace, it does not romanticize them. It acknowledges that local culture is not immune to asymmetric relations that serve the interests of some at the cost of others. It recognizes that local can also be partisan, discriminatory, exclusive, and violent (Mac & Ginty Richmond 2013, p. 770; Tanabe, 2017a, p.453). Richmond (2013, p.280) points out where local peace formation is governmentalized, as in Nepal or

South Sudan, it clearly runs the risk of reflecting dominant interests, but it also offers—in a fine balance—some possibility of their mitigation.

More importantly, strands of critical thinking subscribing to postmodern and postliberal thinking call for deconstructing binary thinking of either liberal peace or local peace to resist attachment to any point of view and to accommodate for multiple perspectives in examining/addressing the problems faced. It recognizes that both internal and external commitments are indispensable: international actors and local actors cannot build peace without each other's support. Therefore, this framework envisages a mutually learning and transformative process to look beyond narrow and restricted conceptions of peacebuilding and to create a broader framework of peace (Richmond, 2011; Tanabe, 2017a, pp.453–454). One of the notable contributions of this framework is also that it acknowledges the unequal global economic structures as the cause of the conflict and calls for addressing such structural inequalities as part of the long-term peace process (Richmond, 2016).

Conceptualizing Hybrid Peacebuilding in Nepal

Using the above perspectives, I have conceptualized Nepal's peace process as a locally driven hybrid peacebuilding. I have used this framework to broadly analyze Nepal's peace process by focusing on the perspectives of Nepalese people from the conflict affected societies. Relevant literature analysis shows that Nepal's peace process is an outcome of interactions among multiple actors at multiple levels (Adhikari, 2017, pp.27–31; eds. Adhikari et al., 2016; Baechler, 2010, pp. 1–10; eds. Einsiedel et al., 2012, 361–381; Einsiedel and Salih, 2017, pp. 1–17; Gautam, 2015, pp.1-83; Martin 2010, pp. vii–xii; Muni, 2024, pp. 57–91; Pokharel & Rana, 2013, pp 7–183; Suhrke, 2009, 1–44; Uprety & Sapkota, 2017, pp. 35–45; Uprety 2010, pp.302–385). S. von Einsiedel and C. Salih (2017, p. 6) point out that Nepal's peace

process and the wider transition were largely domestically driven but supported by various international efforts. T. Whitefield (2012, pp.155–174) has referred to Nepal's peace process as "Masala peacemaking," referring to an interaction among a variety of national and international actors, which formed a unique peacemaking mix.

Adhikari (2023, p.340) argues that multiple forms of international engagement in Nepal have allowed the elites to not only co-opt international support but adopt a "hedging" strategy to exploit differences between different international agencies, securing maximum benefits for themselves. Such resistance has fostered illiberal institutions where elites renege on critical pledges of the peace process such as inclusion and security sector reform to protect their interests. I. Campbell, T. Wheeler, L. Attree, L. D. Butler, and B. Mariani (2012, p.5) have also pointed out that because of internal and regional dynamics, peace in Nepal cannot be considered as secure and safe.

This research aims to understand the interactions among different external and local agencies and their impact on Nepal's peace process through liberal/emerging/local frameworks within a broader hybrid peace framework. This analysis is grounded in the literature discussed earlier. The categorization into three distinct approaches is only for analytical purpose; this research acknowledges that in the real context of the conflict society, their existence is hybrid and more intertwined with each other.

Liberal Peacebuilding

Inferring from the existing publications, the liberal peacebuilding dimension of Nepal's peace process can be understood as engagement from the UN Agencies (UNMIN, UNDP, UNOHCR, UNOCHA), Western states/non-state actors (e.g., US, UK, Switzerland, Denmark, Norway, EU, INGOs), and IFIs (e.g., the World Bank), which

converged on a loose consensus on the liberal framework such as an emphasis on democracy, rule of law, human rights and free-market among others to promote peace (Einsiedel & Salih, 2017, p.6; Gautam, 2015, pp.219–269; Martin, 2010, pp.173–186; Pokharel & Rana, 2013, 69–76; MFA, Denmark, 2014, pp.8–53; Suhrke, 2011, 37–55; 2009 pp.14 –44; UN, 2011; UNFPN, 2016; Uprety & Sapkota, 2017, pp.33–46; Westendorf, 2018, pp.228–252; Whitfield, 2012, pp.158–173). Liberal peace also influenced Nepal's peace process by expressing itself through international structures, regimes, and soft power. As Mac Ginty (2011, pp.39–41) points out, such forms are deeply embedded in international political culture. This means liberal peacebuilding in Nepal's peace process included not only liberal actors and institutions but also liberal frameworks and norms.

The main engagement of liberal peace building in Nepal's peace process was through the direct involvement of the UN from 2007 to 2011 (Landgren, 2012, pp. ix–24; Martin, 2010, pp.1–54). Similarly, Western state/non-state institutions such as EU provided financial and technical support to the process from 2007 onwards (NPTF, 2015b, p. ix; Teerink, 2017, p.134). The literature analysis of their engagement during the peace process shows that all liberal peacebuilders (except the US during the initial negotiation) prioritized ending the ongoing armed violence through a negotiated settlement. Since this objective aligned with the aspirations of Nepalese actors, it was successfully secured.

Apart from these, liberal peacebuilders encouraged normative agendas such as human rights, rule of law, transparency and accountability and emphasized on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR), security sector reform (SSR), transitional justice (Adhikari, 2020, pp.39–40; Einsiedel & Salih, 2017, p.6; Lal, 2006; UN, 2011, pp.37–40; Pokharel & Rana, 2013, pp.77–83; Uprety & Sapkota, 2017, pp.

33–46). These were not the key priorities of the Nepalese elites making decisions. A senior columnist wrote that Nepal needs 3Rs of economic revival—rehabilitation, reconstruction and reinvigoration of physical infrastructure, not DDR or SSR (Lal, 2006, para 11). Hence, normative agendas of liberal peacebuilding were not implemented fully during the peace process.

The liberal engagement in Nepal's peace process has come under criticism. Robins (2016, pp.66–67) argues that the transformative ambitions of the CPA have been compromised in favour of “a process constrained by an ideological and globalized understanding” of liberal peace which in effect has been instrumentalized by Nepalese elites to their own advantage. The power structures remain unchanged. He further points out that Nepal has experienced an elite-led transition, based on an idealized liberal polity that has no resemblance to the social and political structures in Nepal, which structurally embed exclusion and inequality, the drivers of historic and ongoing conflict.

Robins' key point is Nepal is a liberal peace whose implementation has emphasized the institutions of liberal democracy, with priority on elections, institutions and mechanics of democracy, rather than a commitment to social justice (p.67). This has been imposed by the national and global powers to serve their interests and neglect the social, economic, and political needs of those most affected by conflict and histories of marginalization (pp.67–68). While his analysis points out useful insights to understand the elements of liberal peacebuilding in Nepal's peace process, he ignores the engagement of peacebuilding of emerging actors and local actors, as explained below.

Peacebuilding of Emerging Actors

The existing literature shows the relevant emerging peacebuilding actors in Nepal's peace process are its immediate neighbours—India and China (Adhikari, 2023, pp.338–360; Adhikari, 2017, pp.27–31, Campbell et al., 2012, 1–25; Jaiswal, 2014, pp.1–8; Jha, 2012, pp.332–358; Muni, 2024, pp.57–91; 2012, pp.313–331; Nayak, 2014, pp.43–102; Pokharel & Rana, 2013, Rae, 2021, pp.23–80; Saran, 2017, pp.149–174; Uprety & Sapkota, 2017, pp.33–50). Premised on the literature analysis in Chapter two, I have conceptualized their engagement in Nepal's peace process as “peacebuilding of emerging actors.” I have used this framework for the following reasons. The literature analysis of Nepal's peace process shows that the engagement of India and China, despite a few convergences with liberal peacebuilding, is more characterized by its divergences with the latter.

The difference starts with the underlying ideologies. To elaborate, India and China's peacebuilding paradigm, despite not being coherent, is distinguished by their non-adherence to Western paradigms such as the liberal framework. In Nepal's case, they engaged in peacebuilding through their security and foreign policy frameworks. Both India and China have an interest in reforming the international diplomatic architecture, which they consider to be Western led. China is also increasingly engaged in the South Asian regional structure SAARC, where India has been the main voice while India has an observer status in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, which China dominates. These multilateral frameworks provided a framework for strengthening understanding and mutual trust including in respect to Nepal (Campbell et al., 2012, p.14).

One of the key tenets of their foreign policies is adherence to the *panchsheel* principles, also known as the five principles of co-existence (Nehru, 1961a, pp.99–

101). It was first formally enunciated in the trade agreement between the Tibet region of China and India in 1954 and later evolved as the basis for conduct among international relations globally (Malhotra, 2019, para 11). The panchsheel is codified as the basis for interstate relations within the community of decolonized states of Asia, Africa, and Latin America (Saran, 2017, p.261). The key tenet of panchsheel is non-interference of any kind—political, economic, or ideological—on other countries and respect to sovereignty (Nehru, 1961a, p.100). This differs from liberal peace thinking. Liberal peace subscribes to interventionists processes to support civil society, the marginalized, the rule of law among others, in an assumption that dysfunctional societies cannot fix themselves. The liberal peace framework also problematizes sovereignty and endorses infringement on sovereignty in cases of humanitarian crisis or gross human rights violations. Given the framework of emerging actors is premised on their foreign policies, they engage in peacebuilding within the parameters of the state, unlike liberal peacebuilding characterized also by involvement of non-state and multilateral actors like the UN.

The main feature of Chinese diplomacy is peace, development, and cooperation. Chinese foreign policy seeks to inculcate a stable and peaceful outside environment conducive to building a prosperous society. Currently Chinese leaders claim that its foreign policy objective is to adopt an international strategy of “peaceful development in developing a harmonious world.” (Medeiros, 2009, p.2). From a Chinese perspective, the presumption is that economic development leads to peace. Hence, China’s engagement through support to infrastructure and economic development was expected to have a positive impact on Nepal’s peacebuilding. This perspective differs from liberal thinking, which locates the roots of conflict on a variety of sources such as identity, inequality, governance etc. (Campbell et al., 2012, p.16).

China's position was also that the support it gives to developing countries was not conditional on political or economic reforms, improvements in governance or human rights—a position that differed from Western donors (p.10).

Similarly, India's foreign policy emphasized on “a peaceful and tranquil periphery” and “economic cooperation as the framework of integrated security in South Asia” (Saran, 2005, para 14). Three elements are highlighted in India's approach to peacebuilding. First, India's own experience of overcoming the challenges of transforming a colonial legacy into a modern dynamic nation. Second, India focuses on an inclusive and comprehensive approach that seeks to provide humanitarian and emergency assistance, resume economic activity, and create political and administrative institutions to improve governance while also including all stake holders, particularly the weak and underprivileged, based on its experience of panchayati raj.² Third, India puts greater emphasis on multilateral development initiatives with its IBSA partners (Brazil and South Africa) as well as South-South cooperation on development and security instead of traditional multilateral mechanisms such as OECD (Sidhu, 2011).

India has also formulated a “first responder” policy to support smaller less capable states in times of crisis such as natural disaster, expatriate evacuation operations, post-conflict relief and rehabilitation (MEA, India, n.d.b). India emphasizes on “non-prescriptive development assistance” and is opposed to export of ideologies and change of regimes (Malhotra, 2019, pp.12–45). All the above aspects show India's framework of peacebuilding is different than liberal peacebuilding.

²A three-tier structure of the Indian administration for rural development is known as Panchayati Raj in India, denoting local self-government in villages (Government of India-Ministry of Panchayat Raj, n.d.)

The existing literature also shows that the objectives of peacebuilding of China and India were also different from liberal peacebuilders. Their objectives in Nepal were to advance their strategic priorities particularly regarding their state-centric security concerns and regional stability. They both emphasized sovereignty and independence of other countries (Saran, 2005, para 14; Campbell et al., 2012). Both shared a common objective, i.e., a degree of stability in the bordering region with a government that is sensitive to their respective countries' security interests (Vaughn, 2006). Their version of stability is narrow, closer to negative peace, than the broader version of "stability" encompassed by the UK's Building Stability Overseas Strategy (Campbell, 2012, p.77).

Their objectives are also different from liberal peacebuilders such as the UN, which emphasized addressing the root causes of violence. Even though India claimed to welcome more democracy in the neighbourhood, it objected to its imposition. India was ready to engage with whichever government is exercising authority in any country in their neighbourhood (Saran, 2005, para 14). Therefore, even on the issue of democracy, there was little convergence between liberal and emerging actors. Both emerging actors were skeptical about liberal peacebuilding approaches, including the capacity of the UN to engage in the complex issues of social inclusion in Nepal (Muni, 2012, pp.313–317; Nayak, 2014, pp.15–36). Thus, they aligned on constraining the engagement of the UN in Nepal's peace process.

The existing literature also shows that the approaches of India and China, to peacebuilding support, different from liberal peacebuilders, were similar to each other (despite a few divergences). They did not have any specific funds for peacebuilding like the UN (Nayak, 2014, pp.43–102). Similarly, normative agendas such as human rights or transitional justice as emphasized by liberal peacebuilders were also not the

priority of either India or China. An Indian diplomatic was quoted as referring to transitional justice as “European non-sense,” which has been reduced to a political tool to punish opponents (Adhikari, 2020, p.116).

The above analysis shows that the peacebuilding framework mainly the underlying ideologies of emerging actors was different from liberal peacebuilding despite a few convergences. Despite some divergences between India and China, they were united by their non-adherence to the liberal peace framework. The objectives and the approaches of India and China also share more similarities with each other and differ with liberal peacebuilding. However, they have not substituted liberal peacebuilding. The peacebuilding framework of emerging actors like India and China co-exist with liberal peacebuilding, both cooperating and competing, as necessary. Therefore, the engagement of India and China in Nepal’s peacebuilding has to be understood as an alternative framework that cooperates, competes and co-exist with the liberal peace framework.

Local Peacebuilding

Nepal’s case has been widely described as a “locally led” or “home-grown” peace process (Martin, 2012, p. 201; Suhrke, 2009, pp. 8–11; Whitfield, 2012, p.155). Whitfield (2010, p.1) points out Nepal’s peace process was “a national achievement” without international mediation. Suhrke (2009, p. 10) explains that the “nationally owned” peace process was a function of national conditions and capacities, including well-established political parties, active civil society, vibrant media, and a distinct sense of nationalism due to its geopolitical situation. Moreover, Nepal’s little strategic importance to outside powers, apart from India and China, and acceptance of all parties of India’s preeminent position also made it easy to assert national ownership than it would have to countries that are caught in international competition. Unlike

other post-war transitions elsewhere which are brought under the preview of expanding UN peacebuilding regime, often in ways that undermined national ownership, this did not happen in Nepal due to India's constraining role.

It is first important to conceptualize local before conceptualizing local peacebuilding in Nepal. The literature analysis shows that "local" is a contested concept (Dinnen and Allen, 2018, p. 138; Ljungvist & Jarstad, 2021, p.2209). Hameiri and Jones (2018, p.105) claim that local has been used to mean everything not "international," with scholars lumping entire "target societies" together to focus on the interactions between "international" and "local." Elsewhere "local" denotes something more subnational as in dichotomous presentations of "non-state indigenous societal structures" and "externally introduced state structures." Here local means traditional, indigenous, and customary, denoting social relations at an individual or communal level rather than at the national level (Wallis, 2018, p.84).

Mac Ginty and Richmond (2013, p.770) have tried to conceptualize local more coherently without resorting to binaries and fixities. They explain that the key descriptor of local is that it is differentiated from national and international although the boundaries are blurred that all agency is networked in an increasingly complex manner. Local is the product of constant social negotiations between localized and non-localized ideas, norms, and practices. It can be transnational, transversal, and comprised of geographically dispersed networks. Furthermore, they have defined local agencies from two perspectives.

The first is that of practice: small scale mobilization for peace in practical terms, in the context of everyday life and of the state but sometimes necessarily hidden from and often expressive of informal critical and tactical capacity rather than public agency. The second is local agency from a philosophical and theoretical perspective: in terms

of social and historical struggles that give rise to legitimate institutions in each context through larger scale mobilization according to a complex local-international mix of identities, values, and norms of cultural, political, and economic practices. Understanding the theoretical and philosophical underpinnings of practices provides us with an understanding that the local is essential for any viable and sustainable forms of peace.

The above discussions point out that it is necessary to adopt a critical approach towards local to avoid its romanticization. Therefore, this research subscribes to the critical framing of the local which advocates that the grassroots local agencies or indigenous people is the subject that should primarily be prioritized than the interests of the ruling elites and the international actors who impose and govern the peacebuilding policy and project (Brown & Gusmao, 2009, p.61). This project also subscribes to the understanding of local as “activity, networks, and relationships” (Mac Ginty, 2015, p.840) and that it must be contextually defined.

However, the literature analysis on Nepal’s peace process shows that such theoretical perspectives are not easily applicable in the practical context because multiple peacebuilding agencies at different levels are often intermixed with each other. One key complexity I faced is regarding political parties—including the Maoist party—the key actor in Nepal’s peace process. Political parties are neither state actors nor indigenous institutions. Particularly in the case of the Maoist party, they represented the subaltern and marginalized/excluded voices during the armed conflict. If the political leadership is considered, they are “elites.” However, if most cadres are considered, they are the subalterns representing the periphery of the periphery (Rana, 2011, pp.40–54; Yami, 2021, pp.121–131). They can be defined as the local given

their locally rooted bottom-up resistance against the liberal democratic model. However, this understanding is problematic because of their reliance on violence.

Similarly, the political parties in Seven Party Alliance (SPA) can be considered as local because they come with a long legacy of fighting for multiparty democracy and social justice. More importantly, they have the most expansive grassroots base across the country. A clear categorization between the political elites and the grassroots is not analytically useful because of their dynamic interactions with each other on the ground. At the same time, when they formed the government, these political parties became closer to elite state actors. Given these complexities, I innovated a context-based understanding of local that is analytically useful to the empirical case study of Nepal even it though may not fully align with the mainstream understanding of local in the critical scholarship.

In Nepal's case, I have employed "local actors" to denote the Nepalese actors such as the political parties—the SPA and the Maoists who were the key decision-makers during the peace process—because they had launched a series of movements for the restoration of multiparty democracy and social justice against the King's autocratic regime during the signing of the first peace understanding in 2005. It has to be noted that at a later stage when democracy was restored, they formed the government and their interconnection with the state became closer. Yet I have referred to them as local actors mainly because of their role in the initial stage and also because the majority of members in political parties are not the elites but the progressive agencies who fought for socio-political and economic reforms in Nepal. Similarly, I have used local actors also to denote diverse identity groups as well as marginalized/excluded groups such as Madheshis and Janjatis who impacted the outcomes of the peace process through their movements for rights, representation,

and identity. In Nepal's case, the security forces, bureaucracy, traditional elites such as the royal family and business community are considered as non-local actors in this research.

In line with the above perspectives, I have conceptualized Nepal's peace process as locally driven peacebuilding because of the following reasons: First, Nepal's peace process aimed at ending of the Maoist armed war was not between the state and the rebel but primarily driven by the coalition of democratic parties known as the Seven Party Alliance and the Maoist party. While the elite political leaders were the key decision-makers, several examples show those decisions were also influenced by voices from below (Pokharel & Rana, 2013, p.109). For example, the Nepali Congress party accepted political agendas such as republic, federalism, proportional representation due to the pressure from the ground even though they were not part of its policy. Second, a substantial number of ordinary Nepalese people have shaped Nepal's peace process. For example, at least one to five million ordinary people participated in the People's Movement in 2006—a key milestone of the peace process (Sijapati, 2009, p.5). Additionally, many discriminated/marginalized/excluded groups influenced the outcome of Nepal's peace process, including the peace agreements, through their movements for social justice (eds. Adhikari, et. al., 2016; eds. Thapa & Ramsbotham, 2017). Moreover, local groups such as "Mother's groups" have informally contributed to building peace at the community level that strengthened the formal peace process (Pokharel, 2015). More importantly, Nepal's political leaders engaged with external peacebuilding support based on the needs identified by the Nepalese decision-makers (Pokharel & Rana, 2013, pp.90–99).

The literature analysis of local peacebuilding shows that Nepal's political leaders prioritized political transformations, such as ending the armed conflict,

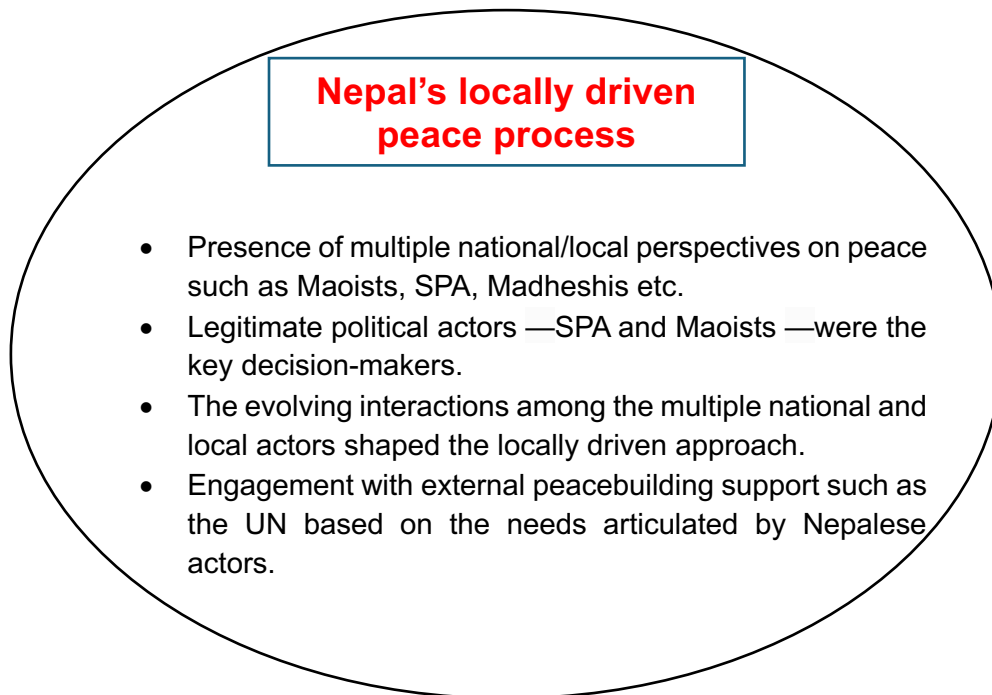
constituent assembly elections, proportional representation, ending autocratic monarchy, and restoring multiparty democracy (UN, 2005). Issues as prioritized by ordinary people such as day-to-day governance and service delivery such as price rises, unemployment, health care facilities, corruption, poor infrastructure, lack of irrigation, degrading law and order (Karki & Edrisinha, 2014, p.18) were not adequately emphasized.

Wennmann (2009, p.5) points out that Nepal's peace process has been a puzzle: while socio-economic inequalities were the major catalyst for the outbreak of the armed war and the central agenda of the rebels, they hardly factored in the peace process. Instead, the peace processes emphasized political and military issues such as the abolition of monarchy, CA, the management of arms and armies. He further explained that general principles on economic recovery were included in the CPA. However, their detailed treatment was delegated to take place within the new political system, as part of "normal politics." This policy of postponement was consistent with the notion of a "step-by-step peace process" and Maoist ideology that considered systemic political change as a means to achieve socio-economic transformation. The absence of a parallel track on economic issues in the peace process threatened the political and military achievements of Nepal's post-conflict transition. Even though Wennmann's work was published in 2009, his analysis is still apt. A lack of attention to the economic issues highly prioritized by ordinary people has been the key limitation of the locally driven approach.

Overall, local peacebuilding in Nepal included the following dimensions: 1) presence of multiple perspectives on peace, 2) key decisions of the peace process were taken by the legitimate Nepalese actors such as political leaders, 3) constantly evolving interactions among the multiple actors across local and international scales

shaped the peacebuilding outcomes, 4) engagement with external actors based on demands/needs of Nepal (eds. Adhikari et al., 2016; Einsiedel & Salih, 2017, pp.1–10; eds. Einsiedel 2012 et al.; Gautam, 2015, pp.1-83; Pokharel & Rana, 2013; eds. Thapa & Ramsbotham, 2017; Whitfield, 2012, pp.155–170). See Figure 1 below:

Figure 1. Locally Driven Framework of Nepal's Peace Process.

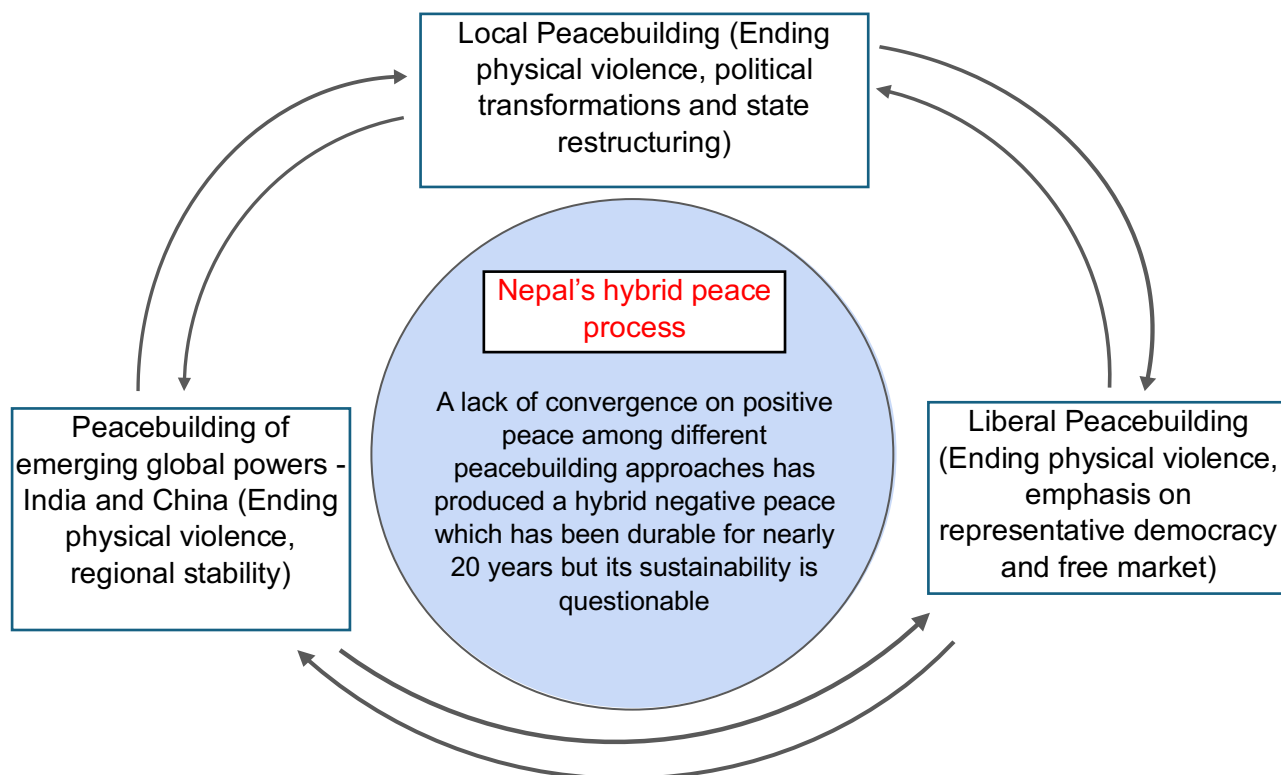


Key Propositions

Inferring from the above discussions, the key propositions are as follows:

Nepal is case of largely locally driven hybrid peacebuilding in which three key peacebuilding approaches—local, liberal and emerging—interacted with each other to produce a hybrid negative peace. This is mainly because while all the three approaches converged on negative peace, or ending physical violence through a negotiated settlement, they failed to converge on securing positive peace that is concerned with addressing the structural violence. As a result, Nepal's peace process has been durable, but its sustainability is questionable. See figure 2 below.

Figure 2. Hybrid Peacebuilding Framework in Nepal



The key limitation of locally driven approach of Nepal's peace process was that it prioritized the political transformations but undermined the urgency of economic transformations as aspired by the people. The key limitation of liberal peacebuilding promoted by the UN and Western donors was that it emphasized on its own normative agendas such as human rights, transitional justice, rule of law rather than adequately contributing to the necessary economic transformations as prioritized by the Nepalese people. It also failed to address the increasing economic inequality that overlapped with social inequalities. The limitation of emerging peacebuilding actors such as India and China were also that they prioritized their own strategic interests such as regional stability rather than adequately promoting a sense of justice and equality in Nepal. Their contributions to economic transformations as prioritized by the Nepalese people were also insignificant. The cumulative impact has been a negative peace marked by

weak everyday peace for ordinary people. This implies that even if Nepal's peace has been durable, its sustainability is far from secure.

The key limitation of locally driven hybrid peacebuilding in Nepal has been also that it ignored the dimension of inner or mental peace. This means the roots of violence within human minds have not been eliminated. As a result, it is likely that even if political violence has ended for now, violence could re-emerge in other different forms such as domestic violence or crimes or even another form of political violence.

Chapter Four: Historical Background

This chapter provides a historical background for the case study of this research. It is divided into two main sections, the first providing a political overview focusing on the context that led to the Maoists' People's War, and the second outlines the engagement of external powers in Nepal's armed conflict grounded in the country's overall foreign policy. Both sections provide the necessary contextual insights to engage with the research questions that follow this chapter.

Section I: Political Overview (1768–2005)

A Political History (1748–1996)

This section reveals that the root of the Maoist armed conflict can be traced back to the process of state formation of Nepal in the mid-eighteenth century, which was primarily accomplished through military conquests. Distinct identity groups, who were subjugated into submission to the new kingdom, felt oppressed and alienated. Moreover, a feudal economic system and the institutionalization of the caste system further aggravated a sense of oppression among a large section of Nepal's population.

Early Years of the Modern State Formation (1748–1848)

Nepal emerged as a state in its present form in the mid-eighteenth century, when several small warring principalities covering much of the Himalayan foothills and an adjoining strip of the North Indian plains were consolidated into a united kingdom. The conquest of the powerful Kathmandu valley in 1748–49 is considered to be the time when Nepal was founded. Prithivinarayan Shah, the king of a small hill kingdom of Gorkha, around 139 km west of Kathmandu, led this consolidation process through a combination of smart diplomacy and military conquest (Regmi, 1961). This state

consolidation process institutionalized his dynastic rule as the absolute ruler of the new kingdom.

L. Stiller (1993, p.17) claims that even though Prithivinarayan Shah's initial intentions were mercenary (to enrich his impoverished Gorkha Kingdom), at some point, he realized the importance of uniting the hills of Nepal. King Prithivinarayan also understood that building a nation was more than expanding the state boundaries. He envisioned his new kingdom as a "garden of many flowers." He governed successfully by accommodating diverse people, and the administrative system provided a basis for union, not uniformity (Stiller, 1993, p.22). D. R Regmi (1961, p.257) also claims that King Prithivinarayan dealt with conquered people fairly and humanely; he respected their manners and customs.

Nevertheless, this state consolidation process is highly contested today. A few historians claim Prithivinarayan Shah saved the hills of Nepal from the violence of eighteenth-century India and thereby from possible colonial advances from the British East India Company. They refer to him as the founding father of modern Nepali state (Regmi, 1961; Stiller, 1993, pp.19–23). This aligns with the narrative of the ruling class that benefitted from the state consolidation process. Others such as Madheshis—population groups dominant in the southern part of Nepal along Indian borders—are portrayed as victims of internal colonization by Madheshi intellectuals and activists (Hachhethu, 2023, p.45).

Prithivinarayan Shah—a Hindu king—also envisaged his new kingdom as "pure Hindustan," contrasting with Mughlana (India), the land polluted by the rule of the Mughals and their British successors. The king's responsibility was to sustain the Hindu moral order for his subjects throughout his realm even though King Prithivinarayan was tolerant of all religions (*Dibya Upadesh*, n.d; Whelpton, 2005,

p.56). This became another source of grievances for most Adivasi Janjatis (indigenous nationalities) who were not Hindus. They claimed that the imposition of the Hindu religion to ethnically, linguistically, and culturally diverse population of the newly acquired territories marginalized their cultures and identity (Jha, 2019, pp.2–3; Tamang, 2017, p.100). They also claimed that prior to the state consolidation process, the concept of caste and class were nonexistent in their societies as they were organized on a kinship basis through traditional rules and customary practices. They further complained that the promotion of a common Nepali (Khasa) language by the new state undermined their native languages (Gurung, 2022, p.2).

The Rana Regime (1848–1950)

In the mid-nineteenth century, the Shah kings were reduced to a ceremonial role when a royal courtier named Jang Bahadur Rana usurped their power. In 1856, Jang Bahadur received the title of Maharaja by the royal edict and gained power over the King himself. This royal edict also provided a legal basis for the establishment of a hereditary prime-ministership for the Rana family, which conferred Jang Bahadur and his successors absolute authority on all affairs of state including foreign relations (Pokharel & Rana, 2013, pp.1–2).

In 1854, Jang Bahadur promulgated the *Mulki Ain*—Nepal’s first legal code—which introduced homogeneous legislation as well as a uniform system of administration. The laws contained in the code were for most part applications of traditional Hindu law, with clauses added to accommodate ethnic practices that had by prolonged use acquired the force of law (Stiller, 1993, p.86). The *Ain* was considered a major step towards Hinduization of Nepal as it formally institutionalized a complex Hindu caste system, subsuming all ethnic—and mostly non-Hindu—groups. It brought diverse caste/ethnic groups into five main caste groups based on

categories of purity and impurity and established the superior status of the Khas-Arya³ (Hachhethu, 2023, p.53; Khatiwada et al., 2021, p.4). Janjati intellectual K. Hachhethu (2023, p. 53) points out that by bringing different ethnic groups into the fold of a Hindu-based hierarchical caste system, the *Ain* converted social diversity into inequality.

The Rana regime, for the bulk of the population, did not represent a radical break with the past but was rather institutionalization of one family's dominance at the expense of the Shahs and other leading families within the traditional elite. They strengthened the central control that was already under way before their takeover (Whelpton, 2005, p. 50). In 1909, the Ranas began to specify the country they ruled as "Nepal;" before that "Nepal" referred to only the Kathmandu valley and what we know as Nepal today consisted of various "countries" that were all subjects to the Gorkha Kingdom. As part of constructing a new national identity, the dominant language of the region, known as Gorkhali, was renamed "Nepali" in about 1933 (Gellner, 2016, p.5).

The First Experiment with Democracy (1950s)

In the early twentieth century, India's independence struggle inspired educated Nepalese youths to organize a movement against the Rana regime. In the latter part of the 1940s, this anti-Rana movement was supported by the then Shah King, Tribhuvan. In 1950, an armed uprising orchestrated by a newly formed democratic party known as the Nepali Congress (NC), with decisive backing from newly independent India, led to a power sharing arrangement between the King, the ruling Rana family, and emerging democratic forces, or the Nepali Congress. The system of

³People from hill Hindu castes including Brahmin, Chettri, Thakuri, and Dasnami (Hachhethu, 2023, p.38). They are collectively known as Parbatiya (Pradhan, 2002, p.1).

hereditary prime ministership of the Rana family and their control of all state affairs ended (Pokharel & Rana, 2013, p.2).

In 1951, an interim government act was promulgated, which stipulated elections to the parliament by the interim government (TIGONA, 1951, p.19). In 1959, the first parliamentary elections were held. The NC party got a two-third majority, and its leader BP Koirala became the country's first democratically elected prime minister. Unfortunately, this democratic experiment ended quickly when in 1960, the reigning King Mahendra assumed executive power with the backing of the army. All pro-democratic leaders including emerging communist activists were either imprisoned or exiled (Pokharel & Rana, 2013, p.2).

The Panchayat Regime (1962–1989)

In 1962, King Mahendra promulgated a new Constitution that established a panchayat system of governance. Even though this was projected as grassroots democracy, in practice all powers—executive, legislative and judicial—were vested on the King (TCON, 1962, pp.6–7). King Mahendra's regime can be considered as another notable phase of the state consolidation process. He modernized the country and diversified foreign relations (elaborated in the next section).

In the new 1962 Constitution, "Nepal" was identified as a Hindu state; this provision was not present in the Constitutions of 1951 and 1959 (TCON, 1962, p.1; TIGONA, 1951, p.1). In 1963, King Mahendra eliminated untouchability in the civil code upholding the universal principles of equality, but they did not translate fully into practice because of the self-contradiction of the value system that the state promoted (Hachhethu, 2023, p.54). In an effort to homogenize Nepal's diverse population, he introduced the slogan of "*one king, one dress, one language, one nation.*" Janjati intellectuals claim this new policy constrained the practice and promotion of their

languages, cultural traditions, and religion (Gurung, 2022, p.3). The Madheshis also claim King Mahendra's concept of "monolithic" national identity as "an imperialistic tool to force hill elites' culture" on different communities (Gupta, 2021, para 10).

Overall, Hachhethu (2023, pp.54–55) has broadly categorized the nation building process into two phases—co-option of local elites in the pre-modern period and assimilation of masses into the culture of the dominant Khas-Arya group through modernization particularly after the 1960s. This policy of assimilation was marked by promotion of one language (Nepali), one religion (Hinduism), and one culture (*parbatiya*). Along with the monarchy, they were considered as the pillars of Nepali nationalism. He also points out that in the past, while assimilation was largely driven by the state, there was a tendency of voluntary assimilation on the part of other ethnic groups. Prior to the recent emergence of identity politics, "Sanskritization"—the process through which low Hindu tribal caste alter their culture in emulation of high castes—was preferred because it was considered as upward mobility.

Restoration of Multiparty Democracy in 1990

In early 1990, NC and a coalition of seven moderate left parties, known as the United Left Front, organized a people's movement demanding restoration of multiparty democracy. This movement became successful also due to the backing of India and global climate in favour of democracy. The 30 years of autocratic panchayat rule thus ended (Brown, 1996, p.1, Hutt, 1991, p.1020). The new Constitution, promulgated in 1990, rendered King Birendra—who succeeded King Mahendra in 1972—as a constitutional monarch under a parliamentary system (TCON, 1990, p.3).

In 1991, parliamentary elections were held, in which the NC got a simple majority. Due to internal differences within the NC party, the government collapsed, resulting in a mid-term poll in 1994. One of the moderate left parties that called itself

the Communist Party of Nepal-Unified Marxist Leninist (CPN-UML) became the largest party and formed a minority government (ECN, 2008). This government fell within nine months and a period of unstable government ensued (Brown, 1996, p.223). It is in this political context that the Maoists launched an armed rebellion in 1996. A detailed analysis of the Maoists' armed conflict has been given in the section below.

Historical Background of the Maoist Armed Insurgency (1990–1996)

This section provides an overview of the political developments after the restoration of multiparty democracy in 1990 that led to the Maoist armed insurgency in 1996. It explains how the Maoist party was formed and why they started an armed rebellion.

Formation of the Unity Centre

The emergence of the Maoist insurgency can be traced to the formation of the Communist Party of Nepal (CPN)-Unity Centre in 1991. In 1990, the radical communist parties—which hitherto operated underground because the existing Constitution prohibited political parties (TCON, 1962, p.3)—had supported the NC-led people's movement for the restoration of multiparty democracy. They had a joint front called the United National People's Movement (UNPM) headed by Baburam Bhattarai (Thapa & Sijapati, 2004, pp.36–38).

After the success of the democratic movement, when the NC and other moderate left parties agreed for the new Constitution drafted by a constitution recommendation committee with the representatives of the political parties and the King, Bhattarai declared the agreement was a betrayal of the people's movement. The radical UNPM vowed to continue its struggle for a constituent assembly (Yami, 2021, p.42). In this political context, the leader of one of the radical communist parties called CPN-Mashal—Pushpa Kamal Dahal—coordinated to bring small radical communist

parties together under an umbrella organization called the CPN-Unity Centre (Thapa & Sijapati, 2004, pp.40–45), which was later renamed as the Maoist party.

Participation and Boycott of the Parliamentary Elections

In order to contest the parliamentary elections in 1991, the CPN-Unity Centre set up a political front called the United People's Front Nepal (UPFN) led by Bhattarai. Their main intentions to participate in the elections were “to expose the futilities of a ritualistic parliamentary system and to prepare the ground for a new democratic revolution.” They did not want to submit to the standards of liberal democracy and constitutional monarchy (Pokharel & Rana, 2013, p.39; Yami, 2021, pp.42–44).

The radical UPFN got nine seats out of the 205-member parliament seats and became the third largest political party in the parliament (ECN, 2008; Thapa, 2002). They had more ethnic representation than other parties (Whelpton, 2005, p.203). However, the UPFN was not serious about engaging in parliamentary politics. Their strategy was to use the parliament to expose its inadequacy. Inspired by Peru's people's war, in 1991, the party held a national conference that decided a policy of achieving “new people's democracy” through a “People's War” (Whelpton, 2005, p.204; Yami, 2021, p.58).

After the 1991 parliamentary elections, the NC-led government pursued neo-liberal economic policies favoured by the aid donors despite its socialist orientation. Around 16 public enterprises were privatized, and bureaucracy was downsized without any support to those who lost their employment. This had created discontent among the factory workers and civil servants. In addition, a treaty with India on the construction of dam on Nepalese territory at Tanakpur was seen as unfavourable towards Nepal (Bhattarai & Jain, 1993, para 1; Whelpton, 2005, p.189; Yami, 2021, p.53).

Moreover, the rising prices of commodities and the continuing political instability created disenchantment among the people for the newly introduced parliamentary system of governance. There was a growing perception that the political system was failing to deliver. Among the educated class, there was a disillusionment over the accompanying corruption, which had expanded from a small circle of royals to wider circle of political parties (Whelpton, 2005, p.201). This situation led to a realization among most leaders in the radical Unity Centre that “the time was ripe for a revolution.” In November 1994, the Unity Centre decided to boycott the mid-term parliamentary elections (Yami, 2021, pp.54–56).

Preparation of the People's War

In February 1995, the party held its third extended meeting where a decision to launch a people's war was formally taken. At that meeting, the party's name was officially changed to the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist). The term Maoist was incorporated to indicate a revolutionary line. In Nepali context, Maoism was defined by the insurgent military strategy and continuous revolution (Subedi, 2017, p.37; Thapa & Sijapati, 2004). They formulated a politico-military policy, outlining the strategy and tactics of the Maoist People's War. It was clearly spelt out that the main form of organization would be the army, and the main form of struggle would be the “People's War” to complete the “new democratic revolution” (Yami, 2021, p.55).

One of the immediate triggers of the armed rebellion was the suppression of the Maoist movement by the state. As part of the preparations for the People's War, the political front of the Maoist party known as the UPFN had organized political campaigns in their strongholds in the mid-western region. In 1995, a police operation called a Kilo Sierra was launched to crack down on the ultra-leftists in their strongholds which saw indiscriminate and brutal action triggering local resentment against the

government (Adhikari, 2014, p.29; Thapa & Sijapati, 2004; Whelpton, 2005, p.204; Yami, 2021, p.56). In 1996, the death of a police officer resulted in the arrest of about a hundred villagers. Among them, 70 per cent were women. The culmination of these incidents prompted the party to immediately launch the People's War in February 1996 (Yami, 2021, pp.55–56).

A few days before formally launching the war, the Maoists submitted a 40-point demand to the government. Their demands were categorized into three themes: nationalism, democracy, and improving livelihoods. One of their key demands was an election to the Constituent Assembly to draft the new Constitution of Nepal (SATP, 1996, para 11). A senior Maoist leader explained that at that time their key objective was to grab power. Their main grievance was that the central administration in Kathmandu collected taxes from them in the rural areas but did not fulfill their expectations regarding development. Hence, they wanted to seize power to take charge of their own development. They were inspired by Mao's saying that political power grows out of the barrel of gun (Interview, Kathmandu, 24 December 2023).

Another top Maoist leader further explained that they were convinced that the liberal democracy introduced in 1990 did not address the "class" issues. Hence, they wanted "people's democracy." The Maoists had also analyzed that in the context of Nepal, a "capitalist democratic revolution" or "bourgeois democracy" was necessary to move towards communism. Their strategy was to first set up the "capitalist democracy" by ending the feudal structures and then collaborate with the "necessary productive forces" to move towards socialism. They were inspired by different revolutions across the world, particularly the French Revolution. The Maoists considered their revolution as "the last revolution" of the Enlightenment movement (Interview, Kathmandu, 3 April 2023).

Understanding the Root Causes of the Maoist Insurgency

The existing literature shows that two main underlying factors contributed to the Maoist insurgency: 1) economic poverty, which meant a large section of people were deprived of their basic needs 2) increasing economic inequality post-1990, which also overlapped with the existing social, gender and regional inequality (Bhattarai, 1998, para.1; Campbell et al., 2012, p.3; Thapa & Sijapati, 2004 pp.55–74). In explaining the political rationale of the Maoists' war, its deputy leader Bhattarai (1998, pp. 1–2) has emphasized on poverty, inequality, and a lack of overall development. He explained that a crucial need to address these were the impetus behind their People's War. He cited the key reasons for Nepal's poor economic situation as oppression by British colonialism in the early years and after the 1950s oppression by various imperialist powers, mainly India.

Economic Poverty and Inequality

Since 1950s, Nepal has been considered as one of the least developed countries with chronic poverty. In 1998, the Maoist deputy leader had stated the following data to justify their armed movement: Around 71 per cent of the population fall below absolute poverty; 46.5 per cent of national income is in the hands of 10 per cent of the richest people; 60 per cent of the population is illiterate, 90 per cent live in rural areas; 81 per cent of the labour force is engaged in backward agricultural occupation, 10 per cent are fully unemployed, 60 per cent are under-employed. Similarly, the growth rate of food grain production declined in the last 30 years and foreign debt constituted more than 60 per cent of GDP with increasing intensity (Bhattarai, 1998, para 1).

The available data shows that economic inequality was increasing in Nepal at the time of launching the insurgency. Gini Coefficient (GC) based on income shows

that it increased from 0.30 in 1985 to 0.43 in 1995–96 (Dhungel, 2022, p.53). Regional inequality also increased after liberalization in the early 1990s. The HDI for urban areas (0.616) was far higher than for rural areas (0.446) where 80 per cent of the population lived. Similarly, human poverty in rural areas (41.4) was twice as high as in urban areas (23.9) (UNDP, 2001, pp.131–134). In 2000, 82 per cent of the budget went to the central-level programmes. Within the budget line for district development, only two-thirds were spent on a specific targeted programme. In turn, in some districts of the mid and far west, everyone was poor for generations (Thapa & Sijapati, 2004, p.62). The economic inequality in Nepal also overlapped with the existing social inequality, as elaborated in the next section.

One of the key drivers of economic inequality, which also aggravated social inequality in Nepal, is considered as the neo-liberal economic model and the economic conditionalities of external institutions and aid agencies (Brown, 1996, p.178). The neo-liberal policies imposed by the structural adjustment programmes of the IMF and the World Bank in the 1980s saw investment and regulation replaced by a market-oriented economic policy regime. After the multiparty restoration in 1990, liberalization accelerated, which led to cuts in public spending and increased privatization in Nepal. It unsettled the economy that had been controlled by the government and cushioned by the subsidies (Thapa & Sijapati, 2004, pp.58–63). Public services like health and education were also privatized and commercialized at a rapid pace. In the liberalization process, the agriculture sector was neglected (with only 3.1% growth) and abrupt subsidy withdrawal caused landlessness and homelessness among poor farmers (Oxfam & Hami, 2019, p.9).

Diversity and Social Inequality

It is important to understand Nepal's unique and complex diversity and social inequalities to understand the Maoist People's War. Nepal began generating data on caste social groups within Hindu caste system and ethnicity—social groups with their own mother tongue, native area, and religious tradition—only in 1991 (Gurung, 2003, p.1). Hachhethu (2023, p.38) has categorized the approximately 30 million population of Nepal into four categories.

- Region: Pahadis, i.e., people of hills origin (68%) and Madheshis, i.e., people of Tarai origin (32%). [Pahadi people comprise caste-structured Parbatiya or Khas-Arya as well as hill Janjatis (Pradhan, 2002, p.3)].
- Caste/ethnicity: a) Hindu caste both hill and Tarai (59%) vs. non-Hindus (by origin) or Janjatis of both hill and Tarai (37%) b) Among the Hindu castes, non-Dalits (46%) and Dalits (13% including 8% hill Dalits and 5 % Tarai Dalits)
- Language: Those speaking Nepali as their mother tongue (49.5%) vs. those of minority linguistic groups such as Maithili, Bhojpuri, Awadhi, Magar, Tharu, Tamang, Newari etc. (50.5%)
- Religion: Hindus (81%) vs. minority religious groups—Buddhists (9%), Muslims (4%), Kirats (3%), and Christians (1%).

Discrimination, Exclusion and Marginalization (DEM)

Nepal's 1990 Constitution established a more inclusive state as it described Nepal as "multi-ethnic, multilingual and democratic" and declared all citizens as equal, irrespective of religion, race, gender, caste, tribe, or ideology. Yet it retained a few contradictions in trying to preserve traditions such as Hinduism as a state religion, centralized system of administration, Nepali as the official language (even though other languages were recognized as national languages), continuing unequal

citizenship provisions for women (Bennett, 2006, p.xix). Communal groups were only granted minor non-fundamental concessions and demands of the Tarai groups were ignored (Hutt, 1991, p.1039). Liberal democracy both in 1951 and 1990 had refused to recognize, let alone respect, ethnicity as the basis of political constituencies (Hachhethu, 2023, p.253).

In turn, the hill Hindu Khas-Arya males were accused of concentrating the political, economic, social, and cultural powers (Lawoti, 2005, pp.91–94; Thapa & Sijapati, 2004). Table 1 provides a breakdown of the parliamentary representation. The political parties failed to adequately integrate the issues of DEM into their action plan, and aid agencies also ignored this issue (Bennett, 2006, p.7). Overall, democracy disguised the continued influence of Nepal’s traditional elites and re-legitimized unequal social and economic system through the ballot box (Brown, 1996, p.220). The section below outlines key identity groups and their grievances in Nepal, which is important for understanding both the Maoist insurgency and Nepal’s peace process.

Table 1. Representation in Legislature Based on Major Population Groups

Caste/ethnic groups	Population (%)	National Panchayat (total 112 seats)	House of Representatives (Total 205 seats)		
			1991	1994	1999
		1986			
Khas Aryas	31.2	58	55	62	61
Hill Janjatis	27.3	29	24	19	19
Madheshis	27.5	13	21	19	20
Dalits	12.9	0	0.5	0	0

Source: Hachhethu, 2023, p.44

Madheshis

One of the key social cleavages in Nepal is between the Pahadis (hill origin) and the Madheshi people (Tarai/plains origin). The latter is diverse caste and linguistic

groups who share similar culture and dialect with each other and those across the border of UP and Bihar in India. The Madhesh is used to refer to Nepal's territory in the plains covering 17 per cent of land that is a distinct ecological zone. Given the distinctness of Madhesh and its inhabitants, Madheshi leaders and intellectuals have claimed that Nepal is a country of two nationalities: Madheshis and Pahadis (NEMAF, 2013 as cited in Hachhethu, 2023, p.45).

The Madheshis have felt exploited, marginalized, and discriminated against by the hill-centric Nepali state (Jha, 2014, pp.186–189). They trace the roots of their discrimination to the mid-eighteenth century during the state consolidation of Nepal when a hill king annexed a Maithili kingdom. The hill king dismantled their Tiruhat army and did not include them in his Gorkha army. The king also encouraged settlements of his supporters and relatives from the hill community in Tarai diluting its existing demographic composition with hill people (Mishra, 2008, p.41).

Their sense of alienation grew particularly after King Mahendra constructed a new narrative about nationalism, privileging the culture (e.g., language, costume) of the ruling hill caste groups. Madheshi people who spoke different languages and had lifestyles different from the ruling elite felt as "second class citizens" (Jha, 2014, p.186). The Madheshis also complain of discrimination on securing citizenships (Lal, 2001). A Madheshi analyst C. K. Lal (2002) also argued that for the Kathmandu elite, the flat piece of land has been an area to be exploited; its resources are useful, but its people are a liability.

The key demands of the Madheshis in general were regional autonomy, access to citizenship rights, and the recognition of their language/culture. After the 1990s change, several civil society groups emerged to champion Madheshi issues. One of the civil society groups had transformed itself into a political party called Nepal

Sadbhawana Party (NSP). The party, however, secured less than five per cent votes in all three parliamentary elections in the 1990s (ECN, 2008). Therefore, Madheshis' grievances did not get national attention.

Tharus

Another group—indigenous to western Tarai—who identified themselves as Tharus, as distinct from Madheshis, also claimed to be exploited by the ruling elite. Tharus claimed the jungles and lands inhabited by them were confiscated by the hill king during the state consolidation process and were distributed to his supporters and relatives. Particularly after the eradication of malaria in the 1950s, there was an influx of hill people in the Tharu dominated region. Many Tharus ended up working as bonded labourers to rich hill migrants (BASE, n.d.). Although their political representation (8.3 %) in 1991 elections was slightly higher than their population (Vollan, 2015, p.47), they were one of the groups with a low HDI (UNDP, 2001).

Adivasi Janjati

The Adivasi Janjatis also have strong grievances with the Nepali state. The Janjatis were able to organize themselves in an autonomous umbrella association known as the Nepal Federation of Indigenous Nationalities (NEFIN) in 1991. As per NEFIN, the shared attributes of Janjatis are: 1) non-Hindu, animist believers; 2) possessing distinct territory and language; 3) deprived of tribal resources; 4) devoid of any policy-making role; and 5) internally egalitarian as opposed to adhering to a caste system. In general, NEFIN equates being indigenous as being an ethnic minority (Hachhethu, 2023, p.48).

The Janjatis are of Tibeto-Mongolian origin, which distinguish them racially from “the high Hindu castes,” also known as Parbatiyas. (Geiser, 2005, p.29). Before the unification of Nepal, the Janjatis had their own independent ethno-political territories.

Over time, indigenous people became political minorities in their own homeland and their marginalization began. The Janjatis were also recruited in the Gorkha regiment in the British and Indian army and acquired a new identity as a “martial race” (Hachhethu, 2023, pp.48–49).

While mobilization of Janjatis was done by civil society groups or NGOs, a party named Rastriya Janamukti Party was formed in 1990s to raise their issues. Their main demand was a full federal system and a multi-ethnic proportional system (RJP, 2024). However, the party’s strength remained weak with less than 2 per cent of overall votes in all the elections in 1990s (ECN, 2008). The Janjati movement centred mainly on issues of governance and political representation such as constitutional reforms to declare Nepal as a secular state, all Janjati languages recognized for use in state affairs alongside Nepali, and affirmative action (Bennett, 2006, p.xxii). Between 1990 and 2006, the Janjati movement also demanded recognition, reparation, justice for inequality and discrimination based on caste/ethnicity while calling for more proportionate representation (Tamang, 2017, p.100). The Maoist stronghold in the mid-hill region was home to various Janjatis. The Maoists recruited extensively from these groups for both the party work and their army (Ramsbotham & Thapa, 2017e, p.7).

Dalits

The Dalits, considered as untouchables, are at the bottom of the Hindu caste hierarchy. In Nepal, Dalits are broadly categorized into hill Dalits and Tarai Dalits. The hill Dalits are considered as better off than Tarai Dalits. For example, the literacy rate among hill Dalit women (14.7%) was three times the literacy rate of Dalit (4%) women in the Tarai (Pradhan & Shrestha, 2005, p.12). During the time of conflict in 1996, the

HDI for Dalits was at 0.239, almost half of Brahmins at 0.439 (UNDP, 2001, p.15). Almost half of Dalits fell below the poverty line (Bennett, 2006, p.20).

During Nepal's democratic transition in the 1990s, even though the government introduced a few Dalit empowerment programmes, they were not adequate for eliminating the deeply entrenched discriminations against Dalits. Donors were also critiqued for sporadic funding, emphasis on political/social rights without attention to livelihood issues, and excessive reliance on upper caste staff in the design and implementation of their interventions (Bennett, 2006, p.59). As a result, the Dalits continued to be the most deprived in terms of access to health, education, and economic wealth. They formed a major support base for the Maoists (Yami, 2021, p.203).

Religious Minorities

As the state identity of being a Hindu Kingdom was retained by the 1990 Constitution, Hindu norms and values continued to guide the laws, policies, and everyday practices of the state. In turn, non-Hindu religious minorities such as Muslims felt like "second class citizens" (Lawoti, 2005, p.20). Muslims had not won any seat in the FPTP elections before 1999, hence they were also victims of exclusion (Vollan, 2015, p.16). Muslims had the lowest HDI (0.422) in Nepal, even lesser than the Madheshi Dalits (NPC, 2014, p.17).

Women

A sense of gender-based discrimination felt by women cut across all other forms of identities including regional and religious. Despite the 1990 change, women continued to be discriminated in social, political, and economic spheres; the presence of woman in different decision-making positions such as parliament, administration,

judiciary, and executive remained low (Lawoti, 2005, p.19). In the parliament in the 1990s, women's representation was less than ten per cent (Vollan, 2015, p.20).

Women also continued to be discriminated on citizenship issues in the 1990 Constitution, which made them feel like second-class citizens. Women were disadvantaged in comparison to men in terms of ownership of land, livestock, and real estate; only less than one per cent of households reported female ownership of all three assets. Women continued to be confined to primarily unpaid family labour; nearly 60 per cent women fell in this category as against 21 per cent men. There were also wage disparities due to lower education levels (Bennett, 2006, p.25).

Overall, the complexities of Nepal's diversity include the fact that no ethnic group in Nepal is numerically preponderant enough to act as an adhesive to hold the country together (Pradhan, 2002, p.3). More importantly, a majority of the people, except a small section of the elite hill male Khas-Arya, claim to be victims of discrimination and marginalization. Women in the elite Khas-Arya faced more social discriminations than the Janjatis, who have a relatively egalitarian structure. This implies that over 90 per cent of people felt a sense of exclusion and discrimination in Nepal even after the restoration of multiparty democracy. It is in this socio-political context combined with the economic context of epidemic poverty and inequality that the Maoist People's War had unraveled, shattering Nepal's image as a mystical Shangri-la.

The People's War (1996)

Initial offensive in 1996

The Maoist People's War was formally launched on 13 February 1996 with a series of armed attacks in various parts of Nepal. Utilizing the experience of the Chinese Revolution, the Maoists divided their war into three phases: strategic defense,

strategic stalemate and strategic offence. In the initial phase, the Maoists were based in the western part of Nepal. These areas were not of crucial economic importance and had a weak penetration of the Nepali state. (Whelpton, 2005, p.205). The core Maoists at that time—full-time workers—were around 1000. As part of launching the war, the Young Communist League (YCL) was formed. This Maoist youth league played the main military role in forming other forces (Interview with senior Maoist leader, Kathmandu, 24 December 2023; Yami, 2021, p.181).

Within a year, in 1997, the Maoist party produced a political document on “nationality” issues, asserting the right to self-governance. At that time, they were inspired by Lenin’s work “The Rights of Nations to Self-determination” (Interview with senior Maoist leader, Kathmandu, 24 December 2023). Accordingly, the Maoist party endorsed the formation of nine autonomous provinces based on regional and national/ethnic identity (Khanal, 2017, p. 75). Redefining identity as an element of class struggle was the key to the expansion of the Maoist cause (Subedi, 2017, p. 38). The Maoist leaders also claim that the hallmark of the People’s War was that it was able to identify that class oppression intersected with oppressions based on gender, caste, ethnicity/nationality, language, and region in the context of Nepal. The party gave legitimacy to struggle against ethnic/nationality oppression by treating these additional issues not only as an instrument of revolution but also a vital part of revolutionary state functioning, which few other communist or rebel groups had done in the region (Interview with the top Maoist leader, Kathmandu, 3 April 2023; Jha, 2014, p.48; Subedi, 2017, p.38; Yami, 2021, p.145).

For the first time in Nepal, a political party promoted and incorporated in its ranks the humblest people on a large scale—common villagers, women, Dalits, young, illiterate—who till then had been only instrumentalized as vote banks. Nepalese

society based on patriarchy, gerontocracy, caste hierarchy, and monarchy were shaken to its very roots (Lecomte-Tilouine, 2013, pp.6–7). Incorporation of identity issues became the distinctiveness of the Maoist political and ideological intervention to solve Nepal's ethnic and regional problems. Other issues raised by the Maoists such as redistribution of land to landless, wage reforms, republicanism were like other communist parties (Subedi, 2017, p.38). Whelpton (2005, pp.206–207) points out that the Maoists had the best of both worlds. They tapped into frustration with the status quo but also relied on the old tradition of submission to authority through violence. Lecomte-Tilouine (2013, p. 1) points out that although the Maoists did not seize power using weapons, the movement took the form of revolution in the sense that it was a well-thought-out ideological project, the action and implementation of which were developed in a methodological way.

Escalation of the War

Over the first two years of the Maoist insurgency there were intermittent declarations by both the government and the rebels about their willingness to negotiate but no talks were organized. This was because the Maoist policy only prioritized armed action at that time. As a result, violence intensified. In 1998, the government launched another large-scale police operation against the Maoists insurgents in the mid-western hills. Although this succeeded in inflicting heavy casualties on the Maoists, the government came under criticism for the deaths of innocent civilians (Thapa & Sijapati, 2004, p.391). By 1999, when the new general elections were held, three-quarters of Nepal's seventy-five districts were infiltrated by the Maoists, with twenty-one being strongly affected. The senior police started admitting that they were unable to cope and began abandoning smaller police stations in the Maoist strongholds (Whelpton, 2005, p.209).

In February 2001, the Maoists held the second national conference in Punjab, India. This meeting was considered as a “great leap” because it established that the ideological/political line prevailed in the party. This meant that the Maoists’ armed actions were subservient to the party’s political line. They also decided that alongside an armed revolution, simultaneous attempts for peace negotiations were to be carried out. One of the strategies adopted by the party was to cultivate more contacts with leaders of the parliamentary parties for peace negotiations (HDNCMAR, 2013, pp.461–503; Yami, 2021, pp.85–86). This was an important development as regards the subsequent peace process. This meeting represented a policy shift inside the Maoist party, which gave them an ideological framework to engage in the peace negotiations.

The Royal Massacre

In June 2001, King Birendra’s entire family were killed during a shoot-out in the palace. As per the official report, Crown Prince Dipendra killed his father and other royals and then mortally wounded himself. A few days later, King Birendra’s brother succeeded to the throne. He did not have the political experience of his brother and had low public support (Pokharel & Rana, 2013, p.22). A top Maoist leader shared that they saw this as the best opportunity to intensify their war and advance their agenda of a republic (Interview, Kathmandu, 3 April 2023).

In July 2001, the Maoists agreed to the peace talks with the government for the first time, following informal communication between both sides. They were not serious about the peace talks at that time. It was only a “tactical” move to strengthen their internal organization. Therefore, even though they participated in the peace negotiations publicly, they prepared to set up the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) (*Nepalnews*, 2006; Interview with the top Maoist leader, Kathmandu, 3 April 2023;

CNA Insider, 2024). Given the Maoists were not serious about the peace negotiations, the talks failed.

In November 2001, the Maoists broke the ceasefire with attacks both on the police and the army; the army had been attacked for the first time. In response, the government declared a nationwide emergency and the army was fully deployed against the rebellion (Kramer, 2002, p.208; Whelpton, 2005, p.218). The top Maoist leader explained that they had deliberately attacked the army to advance their war to the next stage (Interview, Kathmandu, 3 April 2023). Meanwhile, in 2002, the parliament elected in 1999 was dissolved by NC's Prime Minister Deuba before its term completed due to internal party rifts (Kramer, 2002, p.214; Pokharel & Rana, 2013, p.26). This led to NC's split with the splinter faction known as Nepali Congress-Democratic led by Deuba. The King took advantage of political fluidity to play a more active role. This was a violation of the 1990 Constitution. In October 2002, the King sacked Prime Minister Deuba citing his inability to hold the elections. He appointed a new prime minister from the pro-monarchy party (*CNN*, 2002).

In January 2003, the Maoists had another round of failed peace talks with the royal-backed government. According to the key negotiator of that peace process, the Maoists were contacted by the facilitators of the royal-backed government with a power-sharing deal. While most Maoist leaders were open to this offer, a few top Maoist leaders were skeptical about the King's sincerity. Nevertheless, the Maoists were ready to give the King the benefit of the doubt. These talks were "semi-tactical" talks, but they failed when the King installed a new hardliner prime minister after the second round of the peace negotiations. This implied the King was not sincere on the power-sharing deal with the Maoists. On 27 August 2003, the Maoist broke the ceasefire unilaterally (Interview, Kathmandu, 3 April 2023; *Nepalnews*, 2006).

Meanwhile, the Nepali Congress party launched demonstrations for the restoration of the parliament. The NC coordinated with other parliamentary parties including the UML to form a five-party alliance in May 2003 to launch a campaign demanding the restoration of the dissolved 1999 parliament and formation of a multiparty government (Pokharel & Rana, 2021, pp.25–26, Whelpton, 2005, p.222).

A Turning Point

In early 2004, a few senior Maoist leaders were arrested in India. This incident created a serious rift between two top Maoist leaders, Chairperson Dahal and Vice-Chairperson Bhattarai. Dahal suspected Bhattarai, with his close links to India, was responsible for the arrests of other senior leaders (Yami, 2021, p.110). In a central committee meeting held in August 2004 in Rolpa district, Bhattarai, who was a strong advocate for republic, was sidelined. Chairperson Dahal advocated Indian expansionism as “the main contradiction” in Nepal. A “trench war” was declared; the cadres began to dig trenches in preparation of military offence against India (Yami, 2021, p.110). A senior Maoist leader explained that Dahal was trying to negotiate with the King to reach a power-sharing arrangement. Bhattarai was against that policy, thereby a disciplinary action was taken against him (Interview, Kathmandu, 24 December 2023).

Unexpectedly, on 1 February 2005, the King conducted a royal coup assuming executive control of the government, with the backing of Nepal Army. A state of emergency was immediately declared, suspending freedom of speech and assembly, and right to information. Political leaders were either imprisoned or put under house arrest. In his address to the nation, he lambasted the Maoists as a terrorist group and denounced them for killings and the destruction in the country (Pokharel & Rana, 2013, p.14). Any understanding with the King became impossible for Chairperson Dahal.

Soon after the royal takeover, in April 2005, the Maoists planned an attack in Khara in Rukum district supervised by the party chairperson himself. It is claimed that Chairperson Dahal wanted to score a point against King Gyanendra for deceiving him and also against Bhattarai (Yami, 2021, p.168). However, the Khara battle proved to be a disaster for the party leadership as the battle was lost and 152 Maoist fighters were killed (*Al Jazeera*, 2005; Cowan, 2021, pp.93–99). After this defeat, Dahal patched up with Bhattarai and accepted his political line to engage with parliamentary parties against the King (Yami, 2021, p.168). This was the context in which Nepal's peace process was conceived.

Section II: External Engagement in Nepal's Armed Conflict (1996–2005)

This section outlines the engagement of external forces in Nepal's armed conflict. The engagement of external forces during the armed conflict was shaped by Nepal's foreign policy and relations. Therefore, this section starts with a foreign policy overview. It is followed by an analysis of the external engagement from the War's inception in 1996 till the royal takeover in February 2005.

Overview of Nepal's Foreign Policy

This section outlines Nepal's foreign policy starting from its emergence as a modern state. The overview shows that historically, Nepal struggled to survive as a state because it was squeezed in between two huge ancient empires viz. India and China and hence followed a policy of isolation to protect itself from the external threats. When it opened to the world in 1950s amid the decolonization movement across the world, it expanded its relations with the West to assert its independence. The overall analysis of Nepal's foreign policy shows that three power blocs—India, China, and

West—have been dominant in Nepal and hence their engagements were most notable during the armed conflict and the peace process as elaborated below.

A Policy of Isolation

In the period from the emergence of Nepal as a modern state in the mid-eighteenth century till the end of the Rana regime in early 1950, Nepal followed a policy of isolation. Given Nepal's vulnerable positions between the two ancient empires—India and China—bordering the country, the key tenet of Nepal's foreign policy has been its survival as a country (Rose, 1971, p.xiii). The newly emerged kingdom took a defensive stance against both China and the British empire to prevent potential external threats (*Dibya Upadesh* n.d.; Whelpton, 2005, p.37). This policy, supported by its predominantly mountainous terrain, worked because Nepal was not directly colonized even when most other countries in Asia were under the colonial grip (Khanal, 2019, p. 97).

Incursions into northern India by Nepal led to the Anglo-Nepalese War in 1814–1816, which saw the British East India Company (EIC) lose several battles against the Gorkha army before finally securing victory in a hard-fought war (Cartwright, 2022, *The British Army*, n.d.a). The Treaty of Saugauli was signed in 1816 between Nepal and the EIC to end the war, in which Nepal had to give up one-third of its territories and to surrender the entire Tarai region (Stiller, 1993, p.56). Nepal remained independent but it had to accept a permanent resident British representative in Kathmandu (Chaturvedy & Malone, 2012, p.291; Katel, 2022, para 6; Whelpton, 2005, p.42). Impressed by the courage of Nepalese soldiers, the British decided to enlist them into the force under the name of the British Gurkha Brigade (Stiller, 1993, p.57).

After 1846, the new Rana regime strengthened relations with the EIC, as it was an emerging power in the region (Khanal, 2019, p.98). In 1857, during the Indian

mutiny, they sent the Gorkha troops to fight on the side of the British (The British Army, n.d.a). Nepal became a “natural ally” of the British. In turn, Britain preferred sustaining traditional power structures rather than supplanting their own direct administration (Whelpton, 2005, p.61). Thus, Nepal’s foreign policy, thereafter, was geared towards cultivating a good relationship with the British Raj, recognizing them as a pre-eminent power in the region till its departure from the subcontinent (Nayak, 2014, p.20). In 1923, Nepal established its first diplomatic relationship with the UK by signing a new Treaty of Friendship (MOFA, Nepal, n.d.). It was the first formal recognition of sovereignty and independence by the UK, thereby attracting the application of international legal principles in the conduct of relations between the two. The insecurity among the Nepalese regarding a possible British invasion to consolidate its grip in South Asia also ended (Subedi, 2023, para 3).

A Buffer Between India and China

Nepal established its diplomatic relations with India after its independence in June 1947. Nepal’s relation with the newly independent India was special because several pro-democratic Nepalese leaders had participated in its independence movement (Dahal, 2022). It must be also mentioned that people-to-people relations rooted in the age-old connection of history, culture, religion preceded this state-to-state relation (MOFA, Nepal, n.d.). Nepal currently shares an open border of over 1850 km with five Indian states and is also dependent on the latter for its access to the sea (MEA, India, 2013).

During independence of India, in November 1947, a tripartite agreement among the UK, India and Nepal (TPA) was also signed, in which Nepal agreed the employment of “Gurkha” troops in both the UK and Indian armies. The British retained four regiments while the remaining six went to India, which became the Gorkha

regiment in the Indian Army recruited from hill districts of Nepal (TPA, n.d.; UK Parliament, 1991, para 8). In 1948, the Indian prime minister requested Nepal for troops to maintain internal security of India in the context of emerging violence in many parts of India such as Kashmir (Kumar, 2022, p.21). This shows that the Gorkha battalion plays a crucial role in India's security.

In 1949–50, when the newly established People's Republic of China (PRC), started its invasion in Tibet, Nepal became alert of its own vulnerability (Nayak, 2014, p.20; Johny, 2024). It prompted Nepal to sign the "Treaty of Peace and Friendship" with India in July 1950. According to the treaty, the parties mutually agreed to respect "the complete sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of each other" (TPF, 1950, para 1). The treaty also granted nationals of both countries reciprocal rights regarding residence, property, and trade (TPF, 1950, para 7). While India considers this treaty as the "bedrock" of "special relations" between two countries, Nepal has been demanding of its revision⁴ (MEA, India, 2014; Nayak, 2014, p.20). The treaty is considered to have granted Nepal preferential economic arrangements in return for achieving its security objectives (Dabhade & Pant, 2010, p.163).

As China established its control over large parts of Tibetan territories (MOFA, Nepal, n.d.; Sharma, 2022) in 1951, it came to be Nepal's immediate neighbour with borders of 1,414 kilometers across the Himalayan range. One of the implications of this development has been that the role of buffer played by Tibet between India and China passed on to Nepal. This development also led to a significant reduction in trade with Tibet (Mulmi, 2022a, pp.21–24). Likewise, Nepal became a shelter for Tibetan refugees (currently estimated to be around 20,000–25,000) who refused to accept

⁴In January 2016, an Eminent Person's Group (EPG) was formed to review the agreements and treaties between India and Nepal including the 1950 Treaty (SASEC, 2018).

Chinese occupation (Dabhade & Pant, 2010, pp.159–160). Nepal also became a key transit point for Tibetan asylum seekers on their way to Dharmasala in India and beyond (Campbell et al., 2012, p.3).

Therefore, from 1950 onwards, Nepal's status has been primarily a landlocked buffer state between two large Asian states, which has enhanced its strategic importance. For India, the Himalayas provide a principal barrier between China and the resource rich Ganges plains (Nehru, 1961a, p.436). For China, Nepal is bordered with its most sensitive region of Tibet. However, Nepal's geo-political position has constrained its foreign policy and trade options. Nepal had to rely asymmetrically on India for its trade because it is hard for the former to gain access to Chinese seaports via mountainous Tibetan territories (Bhattarai, 2005.p.12). In order to navigate between strategic interests of these two Asian giants and to ensure its own survival, Nepal pursued a policy of neutrality that stipulates maintaining an equidistance from both its neighbours.

A Policy of Diversification

With the beginning of the decolonization process, Nepal ended its policy of isolation and opened to the world. In February 1947, Nepal had established its second diplomatic relations with the US. The US also became the first country to extend development assistance to Nepal in 1951 (MOFA-Nepal, n.d.). This came at a time when Cold War hostility between two superpowers was at its peak. The key objectives of the US aid were to prevent the Chinese communists from penetrating into Nepal and through Nepal into the Indian subcontinent; to contain communism in general including the penetration from USSR; to influence Nepal to adopt a liberal “pro-Western” and US friendly foreign and economic policy; and to support Nepal's independence i.e., to protect it against any possible attacks (Khadka, 2000, p.81).

Nepal was strategically important to the US as an entry point to engage on Tibet. It was also a strategic location to both monitor China and India (Nayak, 2014, p.85).

The increasing presence of the US in Nepal also prompted China to increase its engagement with the latter. In August 1955, China established a diplomatic relation with Nepal. King Mahendra's accession to the throne also made this conducive. Unlike his father who followed a policy of alignment with India, the new King accelerated diversification of Nepal's foreign affairs, moving away from the policy of "special relations" with India and establishing an equidistance with its neighbours (Chaturvedy & Malone, 2012, p.292). In line with this policy, in March 1960, the democratically elected Prime Minister BP Koirala signed a similar Treaty of Peace and Friendship with China based on the principles of panchseel. It included mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty and non-interference in internal matters, among others. The same year, China set up a residential embassy in Nepal, which was reciprocated by Nepal in 1961 (Embassy of PRC, Nepal 2021), even though earlier India wanted Nepal to conduct its relations with China through its embassy in New Delhi (Dabhade & Pant, 2010, p.163).

After the royal takeover in December 1960, the King took more concrete steps to expand the scope of international relations. He cultivated close relations with China promoting its economic and military aid including connectivity between two countries (Jaiswal, 2014, p.2). This was despite India being upset about the construction of Kathmandu-Lhasa highway without consulting (Dabhade & Pant, 2010, p.164). China was interested in three interrelated objectives in Nepal during the Cold War: 1) strategic: to safeguard its vital interests, 2) political: to compete with India and to reduce Western and USSR's influence, 3) economic: to strengthen ties between Tibet and China (Khadka, 1999, p.62). In general, China followed a pro-establishment policy

adhering to the principle of non-interference in internal affairs to build good relations with Nepal (Jaiswal, 2014, p. 2).

The King also sought diversification of the sources of aid (actively sought aid from other countries including USSR) as well as military supplies (secured military supplies from the US and the UK) (Rose & Dial, 1969, p.96). While its short-term objective was to discourage India from supporting the pro-democratic forces, its strategic objective was to assert Nepal's independence by counter-balancing dependence on India (Nayak, 2014, p. 21). During the King's regime, any threat to the monarchy was considered as a threat to Nepal's sovereignty. During the early 1960s, Nepal's foreign policy, with an underlying framework of panchsheel, adhered to the UN principles as well as to non-alignment.

A new twist in Nepal's foreign policy came in 1962 with China-India War when Nepal's policy of equidistance from India and China came under strain. India needed access to Nepal's territories for the war, which Nepal provided (Dabhade & Pant, 2010, p.166). The King, despite his earlier proximity, was also apprehensive about Chinese intentions and hence supported India (Muni, 2024, p.30). As the war broke out, India sought assistance from the US (Mage, 2007, p. 1834). This led to the establishing of the US-sponsored anti-Chinese guerilla camps known as "CIA Khampa" in Nepal's two districts bordering Tibet. Given the US was Nepal's top development partner, it enjoyed considerable influence in the Himalayan Kingdom. The Khampa camps were removed only in 1974 after the US-China relations improved under President Nixon (Mage, 2007, p.103; Whelpton, 2005, p.103). One of its implications was also a decrease in the aid to Nepal as the US also expanded its engagement in other regions. As the US aid plummeted, European countries entered Nepal in 1970s with an offer of development aid that was conditional. Their strategic interest was to push for market

oriented neo-liberal policies that would promote their economy and shape their long-term interest. They were also interested in “empowering” Tibetan refugees (Nayak, 2014, p.135).

A few developments in early 1970s under Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, such as the creation of Bangladesh in 1971 (Mishra, 2021) and annexation of Sikkim (Sethi, 2015), created concerns once again for Nepal’s own independence (Whelpton, 2005, p.102). In response to Nepal’s growing insecurity, King Birendra, during his coronation in 1975, asked the international community to endorse Nepal’s proposal to be declared as a Zone of Peace (ZoP) (Duquesne, 2022). While the King’s proposal was driven by a desire to preserve Nepal’s “sovereign integrity” (Muni,1984, p.780), India perceived it as an attempt to neutralize its influence by undermining 1950’s treaty and hence did not endorse it (Nayak, 2014, p.22). Even though the ZoP was not implemented due to India’s opposition, it remained the major thrust of Nepal’s foreign policy till the regime change in 1990. This policy underscored two key themes: Nepal’s desire to maintain neutrality in all regional conflicts and ensuring domestic stability and economic development. The ZoP was conceptualized as a detailed version of panchsheel (Muni, 1984, p.781).

The constraints on Nepal’s foreign policy became evident in 1988 when Nepal started a bilateral military cooperation with China and procured military hardware such as anti-aircraft guns from China in 1989 (Chhetry, 2021, p.4; Mage 2007, 1835). This provoked a fierce response from India, who imposed an economic blockade on Nepal from 1989 to 1990 and closed most of these transit points on the border with devastating consequences for daily lives of the Nepalese people (Campbell et al., 2012, p.66; Mishra 2004, p.633). The trade and transit deadlock of Nepal by India made obvious the extent India can go to preserve its position in Nepal. This blockade

was lifted in July 1990 only after the success of the pro-democracy movement supported by India when the new government accepted the accommodation of India's security concerns, particularly with respect to Chinese arms imports by Nepal (Chaturvedy & Malone, 2012, p.295; Dabhade & Pant, 2010, p. 66).

Post-1990: Political Change

The restoration of multiparty democracy also coincided with the ending of the Cold War. In this period, there were no developments within India and China that aggravated Nepal's insecurity. For the most part, China accepted Nepal as being within India's sphere of influence (Dabhade & Pant, 2004). Thus, Nepal's earlier insecurity regarding survival lessened. As regards neighbours, the elected governments continued a policy of equidistance. China's explicit concern was that Nepal should not be a springboard for anti-Chinese forces like Khampas. Nepal's government respected China's sensitivity. China continued its policy of non-interference in Nepal's internal affairs as desired by Nepalese political leaders (Bhattarai, 2005, p.11). China also supported Kathmandu's position during most disputes between India and Nepal in trying to project itself as a benevolent power as against the "supercilious" attitude of India towards smaller neighbours (Dabhade & Pant, 2010, p. 162). As such, the relation with China was cordial without any major tensions.

In contrast, the relationship with India was complicated. There were tensions between India's ambitions to play a leading and hegemonic role in South Asia and Nepal's inherently strong desire to be independent in all aspects of the country's life. India was accused of meddling in domestic politics. Nepalese resented dependence on India, which was worsened by India's "patronizing attitude" (Chaturvedy & Malone, 2012, p.296). A new integrated treaty relating to sharing of Nepal's water resources

was seen as “exploitative” (Whelpton, 2005, p.190). A few leftist parties called for a revision of the 1950 treaty, accusing India of using it to constrain Nepal’s independent foreign policy even though none of the provisions implied so (Subedi, 1994, p.274). In this setting, one of the three main themes of the Maoists’ 40-point demand was “nationality.” For example, they demanded the Mahakali Treaty signed in 1996 to be repealed because it allowed Indian “imperialist” monopoly over Nepal’s water resources (SATP, 1996, para 3).

Overall, the key goal of Nepal’s foreign policy has been to protect its independence and sovereignty by balancing three external power blocs—India, China, and the West. Given Nepal’s unique geo-political reality as a landlocked buffer between two Asian powers, Nepal’s equations with these three competing power blocs are distinct than most other countries in South Asia. Nepal is intertwined with India to the extent that the latter’s security is interdependent with the former like no two other countries in Asia. While Nepal cherishes its historical and cultural relations with India, it resists any attempts at domination from its southern neighbour. This means Nepal’s relations with India is marked with both close connections as well as frequent tensions. Nepal’s relation with China till the start of the peace process was cordial because both sides respected each other’s sensitivities. Nepal’s relationship with the West is also relatively friendly. Unlike other colonized countries in the Global South, Nepal does not harbour resentment against the West. Its relations are more guided by the need to counter-balance its giant neighbours than the colonial past. These distinct dynamics of Nepal’s foreign policy are important for this research because they have shaped the external engagement in both Maoists’ insurgency and later in its peace process.

International Response to the Maoists' People's War

This section outlines the role of external actors during armed conflict because it helps to understand their role in the peace process, the secondary question of this research. I have categorized their engagement into two phases: pre-9/11 and post-9/11. This is because pre-9/11, external powers had not paid significant attention to Nepal's armed conflict. After 9/11, which also coincided with the attack on Nepal's army in November 2001, external powers increased their engagement in Nepal.

Pre-9/11

I have analyzed the engagement of external powers before 9/11 by covering the response of three power blocs in Nepal: India, China, and the West as elaborated below. In the initial phase of the Maoist war, all powers supported Nepal government's military action against the Maoists (Vaughn, 2006, pp.16–17).

India

In the 40-point demand, the Maoists referred to India—the most important external actor—as “imperialist” and “colonial” (SATP, 1996, para 9). Given that the Maoist movement was limited to the remote parts of Nepal, it was not a significant concern for India before 1999. A number of developments around 1999 and early 2000 such as—hijacking of an Indian airline, escalation of the armed conflict across the country, formation of the South Asian regional network of the Maoists in 2001 called CCOMPOSA (and the declaration of a red corridor from Kathmandu to Kerala), and shifting of their base to India—all combined to make India concerned about the ongoing armed conflict in Nepal and its resolution (Bhattarai, 2005; Chaturvedy & Malone, 2012, p.302; Dabhade & Pant, 2010; Mishra, 2004, p.643; Nayak, 2014; Singh, 2021; Whelpton 2005). In August 2001, the Indian External Affairs Minister

visiting Nepal labelled the Maoists as “terrorists” and provided substantial military aid to fight against them (Bhattacharjee, 2024; Mage, 2007, p.1836).

The Maoists have been accused by other political parties of being hypocritical in their dealing with India. The UML’s leader Bhattarai (2005, p.38) claimed that the Maoists remained silent on India’s unilateral decision to construct dams in the border regions, which were criticized by all parties in Nepal. Nepalese politicians and public also suspected that since the Maoists openly operated from India, they had a tacit support from the latter. The Maoist leaders rejected any direct support to them from India (Interview with the former Maoist youth leader, Kathmandu, 17 Feb 2023). However, it has to be noted that the Maoist deputy leader Bhattarai studied in India and had access to Indian leaders and policy makers. His preferred approach was to get support from India to their cause (Muni, 2024, pp.60–61).

In 2003, Bhattarai reached out to Indian policymakers to seek their support. India demanded for a written commitment from the Maoists to ensure that their actions would not jeopardize India’s core interests particularly referring to the 1950 Treaty and the Gorkha Recruitment Treaty. The Maoists complied and provided the letter even though they argued that those demands were not initiated by the Maoists, but were longstanding demands raised also by other political parties (Muni, 2024, p.61). This explains India’s tolerance towards the Maoists operating from their country. However, they did stop military support to Nepal’s government against the Maoists.

China

Unlike an antagonistic stance against India, the Maoists were not hostile towards China because it was where “their Mao was born” (Interview, with senior Maoist leader, 8 April 2024). However, China did not reciprocate the Maoists’ goodwill. They arrested a few armed Maoists who had gone to Tibet for shelter, clearly signaling

to the latter not to expect any leniency (Bhattarai, 2005, p.7; Interview with senior Maoist leader, 8 April 2024). China's antagonism towards the Nepalese Maoists' armed war was mainly due to their concerns over its implications in Tibet. China also assumed that the Maoists were supported by India, given their base there (Sharma, 2024, p.70). China's policy was also to provide significant economic aid as well as to offer "political and moral support" to fight against the Maoist insurgency (Vaughn, 2006, p.16).

During King Gyanendra's visit to China in 2002, the state media quoted President Jiang Zemin as saying China supported efforts of the Nepal government "in cracking down on armed anti-government force" (Dawn, 2002). Its foreign ministry spokesperson also clarified that they did not support any rebels in Nepal and that "anti-government" forces within Nepal were misusing the name of Mao (Pan, 2002). In 2002, the Chinese ambassador to Nepal also referred the Maoists as "terrorists" (Mage, 2007, p.1836). China's key concerns during the armed conflict was its spill-over effect in one of its most sensitive regions, Tibet. China had put conditionality to its aid requiring 30 per cent of total aid to be spent in northern region to prevent Maoist insurgency from spilling over (Bhattarai, 2005, p.43).

The West

The Maoists were critical towards the West in their original demands. They had called for stopping the invasion of "colonial and imperial elements in the name of NGOs and INGO" (SATP, 1996, para 10). The Maoists threatened the US with "another Vietnam" if the US expanded its aid to Nepal (Vaughn, 2006, p.15). Overall, Western states, particularly the US, were concerned about Nepal being a "failed state," which could destabilize the region, spur new tensions between India and China, and become a new terrorist haven in South Asia. Strengthening Nepal to prevent a Maoist takeover

was key to US regional and bilateral goals. They were also concerned about “human rights crisis.” (US DoS, 2005; Vaughn, 2006, pp.17–20).

Post-9/11

The launching of the “War on Terror” also coincided with the attacks on the army by the Maoists. Nepal’s army had historical and close relations with both the UK and the US. Therefore, both expanded their military cooperation for Nepal and stationed their advisors in Nepal. India had also joined hands with the global war on terror closely coordinating with the US and UK on the overall strategy of fighting terrorism in South Asia (Muni, 2012, pp. 319–320). In early 2002, US Secretary of State Colin Powell visited Nepal along with Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs Christina Rocca, who was closely coordinating the US intervention in Nepal (Mage, 2007, p.2007). They committed to support the constitutional monarchy and democracy that were perceived to be under attacks from the Maoists (*BBC News*, 2002). Shortly afterwards, the US provided \$ 20 million aid for security forces and the mobile teams of the US army were sent to support Nepal’s army on military tactics (Mage, 2007, p.1836).

The US is also accused of opposing and derailing peace talks in both 2001 and 2003 comparing the Maoists to Khmer Rouge (Mage, 2007, p.1836). In October 2003, the US State Department designated CPN-(Maoist) as a terrorist organization by an executive order, numbered 13224 (US DoS, n.d.a). European countries such as the UK, Belgium, and France also provided arms to Nepal’s government during the armed conflict (Amnesty International, 2005; Norton-Taylor, 2005).

However, a few differences between the US and European approaches need to be noted. While Europeans emphasized on addressing the root causes of conflict and democratic peace, recognizing the nexus between development and peace, the

US advocated for increasing military offensive that would bring the Maoists to the negotiating table (Bhattarai 2005, p.43; Campbell et al., 2012, p.65). In 2003, the UK was the first country to appoint Sir Jeffry James as its special representative to support the ongoing peace process (*Times of India*, 2003). A high-level EU team visited Nepal in December 2004 urging the Maoists to come to dialogue without any conditions (EU, 2004).

Europeans also took a strong position against government human rights abuses through regular public statements and supporting the national human rights commission. On the contrary, the US was “uncritically supportive” of the government. The US opposed a consensus resolution by the EU in 2004 at the UN HR Commission meeting, which condemned both government and Maoist human rights record (Human Rights Watch, 2004, p.81). Similarly, when the US encouraged “village defence volunteers” based on Latin American death squad models after the failure of peace truce in 2003, Europeans publicly proclaimed that such plans have been responsible for grave human rights violations elsewhere (Mage, 2007, p.1837). The role of international actors after 2005 has been elaborated in Chapter seven.

Chapter Five: Understanding the Durability of Nepal's Peace Process

This chapter engages with the key research question: *what explains the durability of Nepal's peace process sustained for nearly 20 years?* Here, durable peace is defined as the peace process that lasts for over ten years without any relapse of violence (Toft, 2010, p.27). Despite limitations, this definition is useful to engage with the empirical reality of Nepal, which is more than negative peace but not positive peace yet.

In order to understand durable peace in Nepal, I have traced the evolutionary history of Nepal's peace process. I preferred the story format to effectively bring out the socio-political complexities of the process. This section also provides important insights for all the empirical analysis of this research. Then from the interviews, I have presented summarized analysis of multiple perspectives on the durability. Finally, drawing on the insights from the evolution, interviews, auto-ethnographic observations, I have presented my final analysis.

From War to Peace: The Story of Peacemaking in Nepal

A Secret and a Surprise

From what I remember from early 2005, when Nepal's peace process was conceived, most Nepalese people did not expect it. Peace negotiations in both 2001 and 2003 failed. After the royal coup in February 2005, there was a triangular contestation for power between the King, parliamentary parties, and the Maoists, which seemed endless without any resolution at sight. The King had the support of the army, traditional elites, and also external powers such as the US and China. He wanted to consolidate more powers for the institution of monarchy, which had been the centre

of power in this Himalayan kingdom since its emergence as a modern state. The Maoists had the strength of their military structures, as well as the support from alienated rural people. A notable section of Dalits, Janjatis and women also backed them up. They had gained strength all over the country except in a few urban areas like the capital Kathmandu (Mage, 2007, p.1838; Pokharel & Rana, 2013; Vaughn, 2006, pp. 12–15; Yami, 2021, pp.152–159)

The parliamentary political parties—which did not have any separate military base—were caught in between by the King and the Maoists. They wanted the Maoists to end violence to restore peace and they wanted the King to give up his authoritarian rule to restore multiparty democracy. The parliamentary parties drew their strength from the support of the majority of people in Nepal, who favoured peace and democracy, and also from the establishment in Nepal—police, bureaucracy, court, and the media. India, US, and other Western liberal states also supported parliamentary parties because of their interests in promoting multiparty democracy in Nepal (Interview with a senior leader from Madheshi Party, Kathmandu, 11 August 2023).

Before the royal takeover, the King and the parliamentary parties known as the constitutional forces were on the same side, against the Maoists. The parliamentary parties stood for the 1990 Constitution, encapsulating the constitutional monarchy and parliamentary democracy. They were against the Maoists' demand for an election to the Constituent Assembly to draft the new Constitution because it was expected to implement the latter's demands for a republic. Ironically, the King himself had jeopardized the 1990 Constitution that protected his role by his ambitious power grab. (Pokharel & Rana, 2013, pp. 23–34).

The royal takeover, in early 2005, pushed parliamentary parties to revise their position. They had to rethink their strategy to restore and safeguard democracy. The

president of Nepali Congress, G. P Koirala, in his early 80s, was most eager to restore multiparty democracy. A number of his family members had sacrificed their personal lives in the struggle for multiparty democracy. His elder brother, B. P. Koirala, the first elected prime minister of Nepal, had died in 1980s without succeeding in restoring multiparty democracy after nearly two decades of struggle. G. P. Koirala did not want the same to happen to him. So, he was determined to restore multiparty democracy before he died. He called it “the last battle of my life” (Koirala, 2007, p. xiv; Pokharel & Rana, 2013, pp. 29–46).

From his long experience in the fight for Nepal’s democracy, Koirala knew that the only way to safeguard Nepal’s democracy was to bring the Royal Nepal Army (RNA) under a full civilian control. The institution of monarchy had used the RNA again and again to jeopardize democracy in Nepal. This new mission meant Koirala had to explore a new strategy. It was rather challenging to restructure the army because of its historically close links with the institution of monarchy, as they were the oldest and the strongest political institutions in Nepal (Pokharel & Rana, 2013, p. 50).

While the SPA leaders reflected on the new options, the Maoists were quick to grab the opportunity. They reached out to the SPA leaders with an offer to collaborate on ending the King’s authoritarian rule. The Maoists believed it was not possible to win the armed war completely, given the geo-political constraints post-9/11, also marked by increasing proximity between the US and India. After the 9/11 attacks, external support to the national army had substantially increased, making the Maoists militarily weak (Interview with the top Maoist leader, Kathmandu, 3 August 2023; Muni, 2024).

Besides, the Maoists strategy was to engage in the peace negotiations when the balance of power was in their favour. In a triangular contestation for power, they calculated that the balance of power would be in their favour once the parliamentary

parties joined hands with them. Their political demands would be thus fulfilled. So, after the royal coup, the Maoists offered partnership to the SPA to restore multiparty democracy and peace (Interview with top Maoist leader, Kathmandu, 3 April 2023). In early 2005, the SPA leader Koirala accepted the rebel's offer. After being released from house-arrest, he went to Delhi to meet the Maoists leaders to discuss about the framework of the possible collaboration. He had come up with a political framework of national reconciliation based on *consensus, collaboration and unity* taking inspiration from the national reconciliation espoused by his brother B. P. Koirala in the 1970s to promote understanding between the King and the democratic political parties during the autocratic panchayat regime (Pokharel & Rana, 2013, p.50; Rana, 2023, p.116).

In October 2005, the Maoists also held a central committee meeting in Rolpa to pass a new political line of “democratic republic,” reversing the party's earlier line on fighting against the “Indian expansionism.” This democratic republic was envisaged as neither “a bourgeois parliamentary republic” nor a traditional communist people's republic. It was expected to play a transitional state, which solved class, gender, national/ethnic and regional oppression through total restructuring of the state. It envisaged an interim government, an interim Constitution, and a new Constitution through an elected constituent assembly (Political and Organizational Proposal, 2005, pp.80–82). As a state of emergency was imposed in the country by the King, all the initiatives for peace were kept secret. This is why the peace deal came as a surprise to the Nepalese people.

A Beginning

In preparation for the first peace deal, the Maoists and the SPA leaders went to New Delhi. It was considered not safe to do the agreement in Nepal in the prevailing situation of “emergency.” Also, their interests for the peace deal aligned with India

because the latter wanted restoration of multiparty democracy and ending of the Maoists war. Both the SPA and the Maoists gauged that having India as a guarantor would ensure its acceptability of the peace process as well as contribute towards international legitimacy (Interview with a peace negotiator, Kathmandu, 3 April 2023 and 7 Nov. 2023).

In November 2005, after a series of informal conversations, the Maoists came up with a few drafts of the peace understanding, which was finalized with inputs from the SPA. The SPA preferred to call it an “understanding” instead of an “agreement” and sign it separately because the Maoists had not formally given up their protracted armed war (Interview with a top peace negotiator, Kathmandu, 3 April 2023). This understanding became popularly known as the 12-point Understanding. The core of this 12-point understanding was that the Maoists would give up their protracted armed insurrection to accept a multiparty democratic competition and civil liberties. In return, the SPA would accept their demand for the CA elections to write a new Constitution.

The new Constitution was envisaged to institute republic and “forward looking restructuring of the Nepali state” to solve the class, ethnic, gender, regional issues in all political, economic, social, cultural spheres. The other key provisions were restoration of parliament through a democratic people’s movement, forming an all-party government, and conducting the CA elections to establish “full democracy” and “permanent peace.” The parties agreed that the Nepal Army and the Maoist army shall be under the supervision of the UN or any other “reliable” international actor, to conduct fair elections (PARM, 2012, pp.7–8; UN, 2005). The 12-point Peace Understanding is a key document because it represented the core political concerns of the key signatories. Thus, it provided the key framework of Nepal’s peace process.

Revolution in the Air

I remember the spring of 2006. There was revolution in the air. One of the oldest countries of South Asia, known for its relative isolation and traditionalism, was poised for revolutionary reforms—not through violence but through peaceful means. In March–April 2006, a country-wide people’s movement to restore multiparty democracy was launched jointly by the SPA and the Maoists. This was the first and most important stage of the 12-point understanding. Thousands of ordinary Nepalese from various parts of Nepal had joined the demonstration—including farmers, labourers, workers, teachers, students, doctors, lawyers, drivers and even homemakers. This was despite the presence of a large posse of security personnel, who had been ordered to quell the movement with tear gas, rubber bullets and even live rounds (Pokharel & Rana, 2013, p.55; *CNA Insider*, 2024).

On 21 April 2006, in response to the massive public demonstration, the King addressed the nation declaring that he wished to return the executive powers to the people. The international community, including India, welcomed it. The SPA did not accept this concession, claiming they would not settle for anything less than the restoration of the parliament. On 24 April 2006, the King had to make another address to the nation accepting the SPA’s demand on the restoration of the parliament. The SPA then withdrew its ongoing agitation (Pokharel & Rana, 2013, p.58). The Spring Revolution was successful. Power was finally back with the people.

The road ahead was not rosy. Once the King was defeated, differences grew between the SPA and the Maoists on how to move forward. While the SPA wanted the revived parliament as a route to the CA elections, the Maoists did not. They demanded an interim government to move forward to the CA elections. Eventually, the SPA leader Koirala convinced the Maoists, arguing that going for the CA elections to draft

a new Constitution through the existing 1990 Constitution would give a “historical continuity.” Finally convinced, the Maoists announced a three-month ceasefire. Koirala became the prime minister. At the first meeting of the reinstated parliament, Koirala registered a proposal to hold the CA elections, which was unanimously approved (Pokharel & Rana, 2013, p.58).

On 28 May 2006, the parliamentary proclamations, hailed as “Nepal’s Magna Carta,” was passed. This proclamation specified the parliament as a sovereign body with all the executive powers vested in the cabinet. This was a major step to curtail the powers and privileges of the King and to bring Nepal’s army under civilian control. The private property and income of the royal family was also taxed (PARM, 2012, pp.12–14). New reforms were declared: His Majesty’s Government became the Nepal government, and the Royal Nepal Army became the Nepal Army. The Nepal Army would be inclusive and reflect a national character. The national anthem of Nepal was also changed; it was now less a eulogy to the King and more a celebration of Nepal’s diversity. Nepal was declared as a secular state. Women were guaranteed one-third seats in the parliament. A multi-language policy was also adopted (Hachhethu, 2023, p.254; PARM, 2012, pp.12–14).

Through this proclamation, several political demands of the Maoist party encapsulated in their original 40-point were fulfilled. Koirala’s interest of bringing the army under civilian control also materialized. The country was geared towards the CA elections—one of the key foundations of Nepal’s peace process. This was challenging because it was expected to eliminate one of the oldest institutions of monarchy in Nepal which traditionally enjoyed the support of the Nepal’s army. In preparation for the CA elections, several peace agreements were signed. On 16 June 2006, an eight-point agreement was signed between the SPA and the Maoist party to facilitate the

process of finalizing the interim Constitution and the parliament so that the Maoists could join the governance and the legislative process. The underground Maoist chairperson Dahal and vice-chairperson Bhattarai appeared in public during this agreement (PARM, 2012, pp.20–21; Interview with senior Maoist leader, Kathmandu, 9 July 2023).

On 8 November 2006, another top-level agreement was signed between the SPA and the Maoists. This was a broad agreement covering many areas such as army/arms management through the support of the UN, interim Constitution, interim parliament, interim government, elections reforms, affirmative action, judiciary, constitutional bodies, local bodies, and citizenship issues (PARM, 2012, p.31–37). All these peace agreements eventually culminated into the signing of a Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) on 21 November 2006. The CPA is one of the most crucial peace agreements because the Maoists formally declared an end of their armed struggle. Nepal's peace process also got formal international recognition (PARM, 2012, pp.38–48). Immediately after signing of the CPA, in January 2007, the UN formally established its mission in Nepal to support with the monitoring of arms/armies of both Maoists and the Nepal Army to ensure free and fair CA elections (Martin, 2010, pp.1–9).

On 15 January 2007, an interim Constitution was promulgated premised on the CPA and other relevant peace agreements rendering the 1990 Constitution void. This is considered as one of the most progressive Constitutions of Nepal's history. On the same day, the parliament revived during the People's Movement was dissolved and interim legislature-parliament came into effect. Around 83 representatives of the Maoist party entered the legislature-parliament (TICON, 2007, pp. i–109). This was a moment of euphoria for a country ravaged with war for almost a decade.

Agitations and Agreements

Disadvantaged identity groups such as Madheshis and Janjatis saw the political transitional process that committed to the forward-looking restructuring of the state as an opportunity to solve their enduring grievances. As soon as the interim Constitution was promulgated, in January 2007, the Madheshis started a violent uprising. They were upset with the ambiguity of the interim Constitution on federalism, which mentioned eliminating the existing centralized and unitary structure without explicitly specifying it (TICON-Nepal, 2007, p.61). Federalism was one of their long-standing demands to ensure their full autonomy on governance in the Tarai, where they demographically dominated. So, when this demand was not fulfilled, a Madheshi civil society group called the Madheshi People's Right Forum (MPRF) started agitating with burning copies of the interim Constitution (Karn, 2017, p.70; Yadav, 2008, p.78).

Initially, the SPA-led government hesitated to address the demand for federalism by Madheshis because it was not the demand of the rest of the hill communities except a few Janjati groups. The Maoists also saw the Madheshi uprising as a ploy by India to weaken their support base in its border areas (Interview with a senior Maoist leader, Kathmandu, 4 February 2024). The government had failed to grasp the genuine discontent simmering in the Tarai among Madheshis (Jha, 2014, p.182). The suppression of the movement through brutal police actions further infuriated them. Soon, the Tarai began burning. The movement was joined by a cross-section of ordinary Madheshi people. The agitation erupted into violent clashes everywhere, with activists attacking shops, government offices, police posts, and political party offices, burning vehicles and blocking the national highway, which was the main supply route to Kathmandu (Pokharel & Rana, 2013, p.88).

The agitators replaced the words “Nepal government” with “Madhesh government” on official sign boards, vandalized the statues of national figures of hill origin, including former monarchs and prime ministers. In areas where the people of hill origin sought to organize counter-protests, inter-community tensions grew and led to clashes. In many areas, the Maoists and the Madheshi protestors clashed. The Madheshis felt betrayed by the Maoists for not pushing the federalism agenda strongly enough. The protest and violence went on for several weeks leaving around 24 dead and 800 wounded (Jha, 2014, pp.200–205; Yadav, 2008, pp.78–102).

At last, the Nepal government relented. On 7 February 2007, Prime Minister Koirala expressed the government’s firm commitment to meet the legitimate demands of the Madhesh movement (his earlier address had failed to satisfy the agitators). On 14 March 2007, the interim Constitution was amended to incorporate federalism—the key demand of the Madheshi agitators (TICON, 2007, pp. 61–62). A few months later the Janjatis also started their agitations demanding a full proportional election system and restructuring of the country based on ethnicity, geography and language. They were also unhappy with the interim Constitution, which failed to accommodate their full demands (Gurung, 2022, pp.4–6). During the same time, the Madheshi parties also formed a Madheshi front to agitate till their demand of full autonomy in Tarai was met. A number of armed groups also emerged in the Tarai. A few of them were also the splinter factions of the Maoist party. These ongoing agitations created new security challenges for the planned CA elections (Gautam, 2008a, pp.1–36; Pokharel & Rana, 2013, pp.121–126). These movements introduced a new layer to Nepal’s peace process. It was no longer about the power negotiations between the Maoists and the SPA but also among various identity groups who claimed to be disadvantaged in the Khas-Arya dominated Nepali state.

After a few months of relentless agitations by various ethnic/identity groups, the government signed agreements with both Madheshis and Janjatis. The 20-point agreement with Janjatis committed to restructuring the state based on ethnicity, language and geographic regions. A 22-point agreement with the Madheshi Forum (MPRF had transformed itself as a political party) committed to autonomous provinces while keeping the national integrity intact during the state restructuring process (PARM, 2012, pp.102–104). A section of the Janjatis and the Madheshis remained dissatisfied. In September 2007, the situation in Tarai again became tense. In Kapilvastu district, the death of a local Muslim sparked violent clashes leading to the death of around 14 people and several thousand displaced (UN, 2007).

The interesting part was the complexity of these contests. Nepal is a country of minorities. Several ethnic, caste, and religious groups speaking over 100 languages have been assimilated with each other. There is no single dominant group or a region where only one group dominates. Among three broad groups—the Khas-Arya, the Madheshis, and the Janjatis—who competed with each other for power, there were cross-connections on different issues. The Madheshis and the Khas-Arya communities shared a common Hindu religion against the Janjatis, who felt oppressed by Hindu norms and practices of the state. The Khas-Arya and the Janjatis shared a common hill origin against the Madheshis, who were of the Tarai origin. The complications were aggravated by the fact that these three groups were not homogenous. Within the Madheshis, there were elites such as the high-caste Madheshi Brahmins who had one of the highest HDI in the country with their adequate representation in the parliament (NPC, 2014, pp.17–18; Vollan, 2015, p.17). On the other side of the continuum were the Madheshi Dalits who were most oppressed by

the high-castes within their own community and were among excluded groups in terms of their representation in the parliament (Vollan, 2015, pp.14–17).

Within Janjatis, there were elites such as the Newars, who had the highest HDI and were well-represented in different positions of power and influence. Then, there were other Janjatis whose HDI was even lower than Dalits (NPC, 2014, pp.17–18). The Khas-Aryas were also not all elites. Khas-Aryas from the remote mountainous region in the western part (the lowest HDI region) were one of the most deprived communities in the country. The daily hardship they had to endure owing to the constraints of remote location were also distinctly disadvantageous (Bennett, 2006, p.109; NPC, 2014, pp.17–18; Pradhan, 2002, pp.1–20). Understandably, it was not easy for the Nepalese leaders to come up with solutions to satisfy all groups. Often, fulfilling the demand of one group came at the cost of disadvantaging the other group in a resource-strapped country.

The most severe complication of all was caused by Nepal's geo-political dynamics. Leaders such as Koirala were apprehensive about India exploiting Madheshis dominant along its borders to advance their own strategic interests in Nepal. Western liberal countries were also perceived to be triggering ethnic discontent in the hills to promote their own geo-political interests in Nepal (Pokharel & Rana, 2013, pp.122–123). A country that has been perpetually insecure about its survival from external threats was at a loss about how to deal with these internal threats. It marked the key challenge of Nepal's peace process.

Ultimately, Nepal's political leaders, somehow, were able to convince the agitating ethnic groups to participate in the CA elections. Their lighter demands—such as increasing a few more seats in the PR election race, recognition of their cultural identity, increasing their representation in the state organs—were met. On deeper

structural reforms relating to power-sharing such as full regional autonomy in Tarai or ethnic-based governance, Nepal's political leaders, predominantly from the Khas-Arya group, adopted a different approach. Their approach was to agree to the deeper structural reforms demanded by the Madheshis and the Janjatis on paper without taking full responsibility of their implementation in practice. This approach, despite flawed, worked to ensure the much-awaited CA elections (Pokharel & Rana, 2013, pp. 140–145).

A Dream Comes True

On 10 April 2008, the CA elections were finally held. Since they were postponed twice earlier, there was a pervading uncertainty around its occurrence. The demand for the CA elections to draft a new Constitution was raised first by the communist parties in the early 1950s. At that time, their demand was not met because of the opposition from the royal palace. In 1996, the Maoist party revived a demand for CA elections in their 40-point demands. Maoist leaders like Bhattarai, who claimed to be inspired by the Western enlightenment thinking, felt a new Constitution through a fully sovereign body would be legitimate and sustainable (Interview with a top Maoist leader, Kathmandu, 3 April 2023; Pokharel & Rana, pp.157–160). So, the CA elections were the Maoists' dream come true (*CNA Insider*, 2024).

Over ten million cast their votes in spite of a fragile security situation. The people of Nepal showed an overwhelming support to the Maoists. In the FPTP race, the Maoists got 120 seats grabbing nearly 50 per cent of seats with 30 per cent of popular votes. The erstwhile largest party in parliament, Nepali Congress, got a distant second position with only 37 seats with around 21 per cent of popular votes. Overall, the Maoists became the largest party in the parliament with nearly double the seats than the first runner-up (ECN, 2008; Pokharel & Rana, 2013, pp. 174–177). The CA

had brought a “sea change” in balance of power in favour of the new Maoist party and other pro-identity parties (Hachhethu, 2017, p.59).

While old political parties accused the Maoists of using the threat of violence to prevail in the elections, they accepted the results without any furor. Nepal got the most socially inclusive parliament in its history. The first meeting of the CA on 28 May 2008, as per the peace agreement, abolished the 240-year-old institution of monarchy and declared Nepal as a republic. What was striking about this process was that it was peaceful. The institution of monarchy, whose identity was embedded with the identity of modern state of Nepal till that point, was gone with a single announcement in the newly elected CA (Pokharel & Rana, 2013, pp.7–9).

A Turning Point

The CA elections became a turning point in Nepal’s peace process because after that there was a deliberate attempt to weaken the Maoists by an implicit alliance among the elites such as the SPA (status quo bloc), pro-status quo forces (bureaucracy, court, police/army, business community), and external powers such as India and the US. Weakening of the Maoists also meant the undermining of the progressive agendas for political and economic transformations championed by them as the later developments would prove. When the election results came, there was a sense of disappointment among the SPA members. They, along with the key external powers, were not prepared for this outcome. It was commonly predicted that the Maoist party would come as the third largest party (Muni, 2024, pp.75–76). Given the Maoists’ army and arms were not settled yet, there was a sense of distrust towards them. The US was concerned about the state takeover by the Maoists. Hence, the SPA, the pro-status-quo domestic forces and the external powers (India and the US) aligned together against the Maoists.

It took almost four months for the Maoist leaders to form the new government due to the different hurdles created by the latter bloc (Interview with a Maoist leader, Kathmandu, 23 August 2022). A few reforms initiated by the Maoist prime minister, such as sacking of the Indian priest in the main temple of Nepal, was also blocked (Chalise, 2009). After some time, in May 2009, the Maoist prime minister had to resign over a controversy regarding the appointment of the new army chief. India's interventions behind the scenes were considered crucial in leading the Maoists to quit the government (Jha, 2014, pp.102–104). The fall of the Maoist government caused a deadlock in the peace process.

The Maoists did not agree to settle their army and arms without first getting back to power, which they claimed as legitimate, as the largest party in the elected parliament. The SPA and the external powers favoured the settlement of the Maoists army and arms before allowing them to get back to power (Jha, 2014, p.173). After nearly three years of deadlock, on 2 November 2011, a seven-point agreement was signed to facilitate the army/arms settlement process among four key parties (PARM, 2012, pp.92–94). This agreement was possible because India had changed its strategy to keep the Maoists out of power and supported the Maoist deputy leader Bhattarai as the new prime minister in August 2011 (Jha, 2014, p.173).

While progress on the peace process raised hopes for the finalization of the new Constitution, this was not to be. Ideologically divergent parties in Nepal's CA differed with each other on several issues such as the forms of governance, election system, and judiciary. The most contentious issue was federalism. Due to intense differences among political parties on this issue, the CA could not finalize the new Constitution within the deadline given by the Supreme Court. When the last-minute efforts failed, the Maoist Prime Minister Bhattarai announced a date for the new CA in

November that year (OCHA, 2012). The 2008 CA was de facto dissolved. Ironically, the CA was dissolved during the premiership of the person who was its most ardent advocate. It felt tragic.

After the dissolution of the CA, Nepal's peace process faced serious risks of falling apart. In June 2012, the hardline faction of the Maoist party led by Baidya split to form a new Communist Party of Nepal-(Maoist). They were unhappy with Chairperson Dahal's handling of the Maoists army integration. They claimed that the political line of democratic republic was a mistake and kept the option of armed revolt open (*BBC News*, 2012; Karn, 2017, p.70). Moreover, Bhattarai's decision to go to the polls was termed unconstitutional as the interim Constitution did not allow for two elections. The constitutional vacuum ensued because the interim Constitution had not envisaged the dissolution of the CA without finalizing the new Constitution. It was not possible to amend the interim Constitution without an elected body. The political parties were in no mood to compromise. They blamed each other for the crisis.

Only after a year of stalemate, on 13 March 2013, the four key political parties signed an 11-point agreement to resolve the constitutional and political crisis. Invoking the principle of necessity, the parties agreed to hold new CA elections under the chairmanship of the existing chief justice (*11-Point Agreement*, 2013). In November 2013, the second CA elections were held peacefully as agreed with fewer irregularities than ever before in Nepal. The atmosphere of fear and intimidation that was perceptible in 2008 was significantly lesser in 2013 (Gellner, 2014, p.243).

The second CA was considered a defeat for the Maoists, who went from being the biggest single party to a distant third party. Their popular votes almost halved i.e., 15.2 per cent. The identity based Madheshi parties also suffered losses. The MPRF popular votes dropped from around 6.3 per cent to 2.2 per cent (Gellner, 2014, p.253).

The victors were the two older established parties, the NC and the UML. At that time, it was not clear if it was a beginning of “counter-peace”⁵ or if it was simply the exasperation of Nepalese voters against the Maoists, who had failed to deal with their crucial livelihood issues.

An Ending for a New Beginning

A new Constitution was expected to complete the peace process. With the successful holding of the second CA elections, hopes for the new Constitution revived in the new republic. In March 2014, the newly elected CA members decided to adopt all agreements for the new Constitution forged in the first CA. They also decided to form a committee to resolve disputed issues in the earlier assembly (Legislature-Parliament Secretariat, 2017). While both sides offered flexibility on other issues, federalism remained a sticking point. The largest parties, the NC and the UML, preferred fewer provinces, prioritizing economic and geographic considerations. The Maoists and the Madheshi-based parties favoured the proposal from the first CA (Khanal, 2017, pp.75–77). Both were unwilling to budge.

Unexpectedly, on 25 April 2015, a massive earthquake of magnitude 7.8 on the Richter scale hit Nepal, which was followed by a series of aftershocks. It brought unprecedented suffering and loss to the ordinary people (Rana, 2015, para 1). The politically fragmented and economically weak state of Nepal was overwhelmed with managing the consequences of the disaster and hence the Constitution writing process was put on hold. Nepal’s prime minister, however, came under an intense pressure by both people and international community to finalize the Constitution and to focus on relief and rebuilding efforts as billions of foreign aids was promised (Adkin,

⁵Counter peace can be understood as blockages to peace by the traditional power alignments (Richmond, 2012, p.1).

2015; Khalid, 2015; Sharma, 2015). This context galvanized Nepal's key political parties to finalize the new Constitution (Haviland, 2015).

On 8 June 2015, the four main parties—the NC, the UML, the UCPN-Maoist, the MPRF-Democratic—signed a 16-point agreement that paved the way to promulgating the new Constitution. The agreement made provisions for eight provinces based on both economic viability and identity (Bhattarai, 2015). It was seen as a compromise between the proposals of the NC/UML and the Maoist party (Shakya, 2015, para 2). Two key components of the federal states—names and delineation—would be settled later by the provincial assemblies. The signatories of the agreement also indicated a “super fast-track approach” (Shakya, 2015, para 14) to promulgate the new Constitution by mid-July 2015 (Bhattarai, 2015).

Most Madheshi-based parties in the CA objected to the 16-point deal and registered a note of dissent. One of their main criticisms was that the proposed federal design did not address their demands for an autonomous Madheshi federal province. The dissatisfied Madheshi parties also boycotted the CA meetings in protest. The agreement was also criticized by Tharus and other excluded groups who saw the new agreement as the political elites exploiting the disaster to push through status-quo and conservative agendas. In all the provinces except Madhesh, the elite Khas-Arya caste group enjoyed a political advantage. The constitution-making was considered a missed historic opportunity to unite a fragmented Nepal (Khalid, 2015; Shakya, 2015, para 1).

The three main parties had their own considerations to finalize the new Constitution. The leaders stressed urgency, insisting that once passed, it could be improved through the amendments (Interview with the political leader, Kathmandu, 13 July 2023). A leader from the NC claimed that many achievements were already made

in terms of inclusion agendas. If they had pushed further then it would have led to social polarization (Rijal, 2019, p.69). The Maoist attitude was “something was better than nothing” (Shakya, 2015, para 8). After the election of the pro-Hindu BJP government in India in 2014, the Maoists understood that if the Constitution was not quickly finalized then their prior achievements, such as secularism, could be reversed. Hence, even though the UCPN-Maoist party expressed reservations about many issues such as the parliamentary system, citizenship issue and federal demarcation, the party endorsed the draft Constitution (IDEA, 2015, p.23).

As the CA decided to finalize the new Constitution, the protests by Madheshis and Tharus were characterized by a high level of violence (Jha, 2015). On 24 August 2015, the Tikapur village in Tharu-populated Kailali saw one of the worst incidences of violence, killing eight people including a senior police officer and mostly security personnels but also an eighteen-month-old boy (Chaudhary & Budhair, 2015). The police saw it as a premeditated attack and responded with severe brutalities (Rimal, 2021). An indefinite shutdown in Tarai continued for five weeks. The Nepal Army was mobilized for the first time since the Maoist People’s War to deal with the civic unrest (ICG, 2015, para 3).

On 18 September 2015, the CA Chair authenticated the Constitution, which was to be promulgated on 20 September 2023. On the same day, Indian Foreign Minister Jaishankar came to Kathmandu, as the special envoy of the Indian Prime Minister, to persuade Nepal’s political leaders to delay the new Constitution. A top Nepalese leader shared that India’s main interest was to push Nepal to retain its Hindu identity in the new Constitution (Personal communication, Kathmandu, 16 July 2024). This was not India’s public position. India requested to secure “widest possible agreements” on the new Constitution by bringing the agitating groups to the

constitutional process (*The Kathmandu Post*, 2015). This last-minute request from India was ignored. Nepalese leaders declared that this intervention was too late (*The Kathmandu Post*, 2015).

On 20 September 2015, the much-awaited new Constitution was promulgated. It was considered as “paradoxical” because it was adopted by 85 per cent, far beyond the threshold required for its legitimacy. Yet many Madheshis and Janjatis felt that the new charter was restrictive on questions of identity and inclusion (Hachhethu, 2017, p.63). Overall, the new Constitution was a document of compromise among ideologically diverse political parties that also represented competing identity groups in Nepal.

India felt “snubbed” and did not welcome the Constitution promulgation claiming that it only “noted” the declaration of the new Constitution. China was the first to welcome Nepal’s Constitution. Other international community members like the UN, the US, the EU also congratulated Nepal on its new Constitution. While the UN’s statement expressed concerns over violence in some parts of Nepal, others welcomed it as a culmination of the peace agreement (Kumar, 2015). With the new Constitution, the peace process that began in 2005 was considered near complete. This end was seen as a new beginning for a young republic transitioning from war to peace.

The Final Compromise

The Madheshis and the Tharus continued their agitations even after the Constitution promulgation. Their agitations were largely supported by the local people. On 2 October 2015, thousands of people came together to form “the world’s longest human chain” along the 1,555 km highway from the east to the west of Nepal, covering the Tarai region (Yadav, 2015, para 2). The use of police against the protestors and even the army’s mobilization worsened the situation. All Tarai districts turned into war-

like zones (Jha, 2015). As the protests intensified, the agitators occupied the border areas blocking the supplies of essential goods to generate pressure on Kathmandu. Soon there was a shortage of essential goods including fuel and even medicines, which affected the daily lives of ordinary people. The suffering caused by the blockade united the hill communities, including Janjatis, against India. Nepal's government called it an undeclared Indian blockade (Jha, 2016; *The Times of India*, 2015).

In February 2016, the blockade caused by the protests finally ended after 135 days. The Madheshi parties had decided to end the blockade due to several reasons including India's pressure owing to the upcoming visit of the Nepalese prime minister in India. The initiative taken by Nepal's army chief to convince his counterpart in India to stop the blockade as it was escalating anti-Indian sentiments in Nepal had also worked (Interview with a Madheshi leader, Kathmandu, 11 August 2023).

Even though the blockade was lifted, the protests by the Madheshi leaders continued. They refused to participate in the local elections scheduled in 2017 under the new Constitution. In 2017, the Madheshi leaders eventually decided to compromise and participate in the elections ending their long protests. This was mainly due to persuasions by India and also the US to participate in the electoral process (Interview with a Madheshi leader, Kathmandu, 11 August 2023). During the blockade from India, Nepal had turned to China for support. So, India's geo-political imperative was to improve its relations with Nepal's government to end the latter's growing proximity with China. This meant India stopped its support to the Madheshi agitations and instead nudged them to compromise (Interview with a Madheshi leader, Kathmandu, 11 August 2023). This compromise most likely came out of compulsion rather than by choice for the Madheshi leaders because Nepal's government had not

addressed their core demands. Currently, all Madheshi parties have joined the political mainstream even though their grievances linger on.

Towards Peace

In 2018, the mainstream Maoist party merged with the UML party to form the Nepal Communist Party, completing its full co-option as a non-revolutionary mainstream party. In March 2021, the government reached a three-point agreement with one of the remaining armed splinter Maoist parties after the latter committed to giving up violent ways in return for releasing their cadres. This group had waged an armed war boycotting the elections in 2014 (Karn, 2017, p.70). As of 28 August 2024, there are no major political groups that use physical violence in Nepal. Large-scale political violence has fully ended. Since the start of the peace process, the government reached an agreement with 57 groups and around 338 weapons were submitted to the government (PARM, 2012, pp.1–152). An overwhelming majority of Nepalese people (95.1%) do not live in fear of being assaulted (IDA, 2018, p.35). The Global Peace Index report in 2024 (p.19) highlights that deaths from internal conflict have fallen to zero, and both weapons import, and armed forces rate have shown improvements. In 2024, Nepal's overall global peace ranking is 80th, which is the second highest in South Asia (p.79). With the ending of overt violence, the space for promoting peace has opened up.

Perspectives on Durability

In order to complement the insights from the evolution of Nepal's peace process explained above, I relied mainly on the conversations with decision-makers of Nepal's peace process—leaders from the political parties—to understand the durability of its peace process. I also interviewed political analysts, journalists, academics, and ordinary people to bring broader perspectives on the topic. These conversations, both

in-person in Kathmandu and via email, have provided multiple perspectives on the durability. The section below presents their summarized analysis.

In an interview in Kathmandu, the former Maoist deputy leader Bhattarai shared that the reason why Nepal's peace process got successful was because many of their political agendas—republicanism, secularism, proportional representation, social inclusion, and new Constitution through an elected assembly—were achieved. He asserted that these achievements gave the justification to the Maoists to remain committed to the peace process (20 March 2023). Bhattarai's views aligned with another interview in Kathmandu (16 May 2024) with a former journalist and a political analyst. Analyzing the post-war developments, he pointed to the fulfillment to some extent of the political reforms related to inclusion, equality, and power distribution away from the centre as the core factor that contributed to the durability of Nepal's peace process. He claimed the leaders could show these achievements to their rank-and-file as resulting from war.

The NC leader M. Rijal, closely involved in the peace process, explained the durability through three inter-related political factors in an email interview (27 May 2024). First, the peace process had a clear objective to elect a CA, as the sovereign representative of the people, to write a new Constitution that would institutionalize peace and democracy in the country. Second, it clearly acknowledged in the 12-point understanding, that there were differences between the two sides regarding the path to the CA election. Third, it had clearly outlined in the 12-point understanding a political process to resolve those differences. His explanation implies that there were clear goals and strategies in Nepal's peace process including the space for disagreements and the approaches to reconcile them.

A senior Madheshi leader from the Madheshi-based party shared a completely different perspective drawing on the cultural factors in an interview in Kathmandu (11 August 2024). He explained that the Madheshi people's fatalistic attitude has made them accept the status quo even though their grievances have not been addressed. His main argument is that the Madheshis ended their violent agitations despite their grievances because the Madheshis tend to blame their problems on "fate" rather than on the political system. His analysis can be understood with the reference to the concept of "fatalism"—a tendency of Nepalese people to rely on fate rather than on their action—put forward by Nepalese anthropologist Dor Bahadur Bista (1991). This argument shows that durability of Nepal's peace process has resulted not only from the positive factors but also from nonpositive factors like tolerating injustice.

A senior woman leader from the UML party also drew on culture but provided a different perspective in an interview in Kathmandu (13 August 2023). Referring to the Newari⁶ culture, she claimed that the regular festivals and co-operative organizations such as *guthi* (engaged in preserving cultural heritage) bring the people of different communities together, promoting harmony and co-existence. Her main argument is that Nepal's peace process worked because of Nepal's culture that promotes peace. Another senior male UML leader echoed similar views even though he emphasized on the geo-political factors as the primary reason for the durability (Interview, Kathmandu, 25 July 2024).

A senior Madheshi columnist in a local newspaper also explained the durability from a geopolitical perspective. In an email interview (27 Oct 2023), he pointed out: "There is little appetite for internal disturbances in Nepal among the major geopolitical players with any stake in South Asia." His argument implies that India, China and other

⁶Newar is a community of diverse ethnic groups native to the Kathmandu valley.

global powers such as the US did not want any large-scale violence in Nepal and preferred stability. He was highly critical of Nepal's durable peace as elaborated in the next chapter.

Similarly, another factor emphasized by a few interviewees was the "home-grown approach." In an email interview (19 May 2024), a former bureaucrat and a political analyst pointed out Nepal's home-grown model of the peace process as a key factor contributing to its durability. He explained that the home-grown approach meant that the peace process was not directed from outside despite the involvement of the external actors. This also meant that Nepal did not have to face the complexities of international mediation and take any burden to address international concerns.

During the interviews, other political factors such as flexibility for compromises, decision-making process through consensus, step-based process to political transformations rather than abrupt changes, confidence building measures, power-sharing modality were also cited as factors contributing to the durability (Email Interview with NC leader and former CEC on 27 May 2023 and 19 May 2024 respectively). Most of the ordinary people interviewed in Kathmandu emphasized on the cultural and religious factors that led to peace in Nepal (14 October 2023; 27 November 2023; 20 December 2023). This was strongly contested by a Maoist youth leader and a Madheshi analyst who argued that, with high poverty and deep social inequalities, Nepal did not have a culture of peace. Moreover, while a political analyst pointed out the migration of youths for employment and education outside Nepal being the major factor leading to the end of violence (Email interview, 27 Oct 2023), others disagreed (Interviews with political analyst and party leader, Kathmandu, 11 July 2024 and 25 July 2024 respectively).

Overall, the findings from the interviews can be summed up as follows: The durability of Nepal's peace process can be understood from multiple perspectives such as social, economic, and political. While socio-cultural factors were repeatedly emphasized during the conversations, this research—limited in scope—focused on the political factors. The three political factors contributing to the durability of Nepal's peace process that were most emphasized were: 1) political transformations 2) geo-political interests of external powers towards ending violence 3) the home-grown approach of Nepal's peace process.

Analysis from the Political Perspective

Combining insights from the evolutionary history of Nepal's peace process and the multiple perspectives on the durability as explained above as well as my own auto-ethnographic reflections, the analysis of the political factors that contributed to the durability is presented in this section. My main argument is that a combination of three political factors—the fulfillment of the key structural political transformations as prioritized by the main Maoist rebel group, geo-political interests towards stability and state-centric security, and locally driven peacemaking that fostered legitimacy and ownership towards the peace process—led to the durability of Nepal's peace process. While geo-political factors have been explained in Chapter seven, I have analyzed the other two political factors to support my arguments in the section below.

Structural Political Transformations

Nepal introduced a number of structural political transformations as explained in the evolution section. These transformations contributed to the durability because they fulfilled the key demands raised by the Maoist rebel group. They also addressed the grievances of other disadvantaged ethnic, caste and gender groups, such as women, Madheshis, Janjatis, Dalits. Even though all the demands of the latter were

not fully met, significant progress was made towards fulfilling them, compared to the situation prior to the peace process. In the section below, I have analyzed on a few fundamental transformations that occurred during Nepal's peace process and their contributions to the durability of Nepal's peace process.

Secularism

The 1990 Constitution had defined Nepal as a "Hindu" kingdom while recognizing the multiethnic and multilingual character of the state (TCON, 1990, p.4). This was despite the existence of other religions in Nepal such as Buddhists, Kiranti and Christians (Gurung, 2003, p.20). As adherents of the communist ideology, the Maoists subscribed to the conviction that the state should endorse no religion (Personal Communication with top Maoist leader, 7 November 2023). Moreover, one of the key demands of the Janjati movement was a secular state as explained earlier (Tamang, 2017, p.101). As the Janjatis formed a key support base for the Maoists, secular agenda was prioritized by the latter and incorporated in their 40-point demand (SAPT, 1996). During the peace process, the secular agenda was implemented quickly by declaring Nepal as a secular state through the parliamentary proclamation in May 2006 (PARM, 2012, pp.12–14) which was later incorporated in the interim Constitution in January 2007 (TICON, 2007, p.2). The Maoists prioritized this agenda despite a lack of widespread public support to this change, since the majority of people in Nepal are Hindus.

During the new constitution-making process, Nepalese leaders came under the pressure from the pro-Hindu BJP-led government in India to retain Hindu identity (Muni, 2024, p.80). In effect, secularism was diluted. An explanation was added to define "secular" as the protection of religion and culture being practiced since ancient times and religious and cultural freedom (TCON, 2015, p.3), which was not the case

in the interim Constitution (TICON, 2007, p.2). Regardless of this setback, the principles of secularism have been protected in the new Constitution. The state of Nepal does not have any religion, unlike in the past.

Republic

An abolition of the institution of monarchy to institute a republican system was the most prioritized demand of the Maoist party after the royal coup in February 2005. This was because “democratic republic” was their key political framework to engage in the peace process. The agenda of republic was raised by other communist parties in Nepal as well (Subedi, 2017, pp.37–40). Yet it was the Maoists who ensured its implementation by using this agenda as the main bargaining chip to come to the peace process and accept multiparty democratic competition.

Prior to the 2005 peace negotiations, the Maoists agenda for a republic was the bone of contention with the Nepali Congress party—one of the oldest and largest parliamentary parties. As a non-communist party, the NC adhered to the political line of constitutional monarchy and parliamentary democracy. After the royal takeover in 2005, which proved that the institution of monarchy was a threat to multiparty democracy, the NC was forced to change its position. In this context, the NC President Koirala had implicitly agreed for a republic during preliminary negotiations with the Maoists. This became a meeting point between the ultra-left Maoist party and the SPA led by the liberal NC party (Interview with the top peace negotiator, Kathmandu, 3 April 2023).

Yet Koirala was not fully convinced about instituting a republic even after he informally committed to the Maoist party. During the 12-point understanding, the NC disputed incorporation of republic in the initial draft, requesting to replace it with “full democracy.” One of the drafters of the peace agreement from the Maoist side

explained to me that even though they did not want to replace “republic” and had written a note of dissent, they were flexible about accommodating the NC’s political position at that time. In any case, the Maoists understanding of “full democracy” was “republic” (Kathmandu, 3 April 2023). Koirala’s indecisiveness on “republic” became one of the sore points during the peace process. In the early phase of the peace process, in June 2006, Koirala had floated the proposal of a ceremonial King, which made the Maoists suspicious about his intention to implement their demand for a republic (*Zeenews*, 2006). To counter this, the Maoists formed a leftist alliance with the UML, which was the largest communist party in the SPA, on the issue of republic (Pokharel & Rana, 2013, pp.106–110).

In the context of the postponement of the CA elections, in May 2007, the Maoist party registered a public interest proposal in the parliament, with the immediate declaration of a republic as its first demand. Around 10,000 Maoists had surrounded the parliament to create pressure (*Business Recorder*, 2007, para, 1). While Koirala’s approach was to implement republic in a graduated manner, the Maoists were concerned that the delay could allow the King to jeopardize the CA elections. This delay in implementing republic was one of the reasons why the Maoists boycotted the CA elections planned for November 2007.

In order to assure the Maoists, a 23-point agreement was signed in December 2007, which declared “Nepal shall be a federal democratic republic,” to be implemented by the first meeting of the CA (PARM, 2012, pp.75–77). Koirala had to accept the Maoists demand for a republic to ensure that they came to the CA process. During a conversation as part of my earlier research in 2009 in Kathmandu, Koirala had shared with me that he accepted the republic not out of choice but out of compromise for peace. Regardless of his initial reservations on republic, his step-

based approach towards republic ensured its peaceful implementation. If the republic was not implemented or if it was implemented abruptly without the necessary political preparations, it was likely that Nepal's peace process would have fallen apart. It has to be noted that with the implementation of a republic, the Maoists' key political objective of the peace process was fulfilled.

Social Inclusion

One of the key demands of the Maoist party was social inclusion. This demand was not only related to their ideological affinity towards social justice but also based on the demands of disadvantaged caste/ethnic/gender/religious/linguistic groups in Nepal. The 1990 Constitution, based on a liberal democratic framework, had failed to deal with social diversity in Nepal (Hachhethu 2023, p.71; Lawoti, 2005, p.41; TCON, 1990). This meant the parliament as well as other state structures were dominated exclusively by the elite social groups. In order to end this, one of the Maoists' demands was representation based on the proportion of population.

In order to fulfill the above, Nepal's election system was changed to a mixed election system from a majoritarian FPTP system. The mixed election system comprised of both FPTP (240 seats) and PR (335 seats) systems. In the PR system, quotas were reserved for different groups in proportion to their population. For example, women comprising of 50 per cent of population got nearly 50 per cent of seats. This ensured a socially inclusive parliament. In the new Constitution, the ratio of PR seats (110 seats) has been reduced as against FPTP (165 seats) (Pokharel & Rana, 2013, p.138; TCON, 2015). Still, the guarantee of the representation of diverse groups in the parliament is far higher than prior to the peace process when such guarantee was nearly absent (TICON, 2007, p.20; TCON, 2015, p.46; Vollan, 2015).

New affirmative actions were also introduced to promote social inclusion in Nepal as part of the peace process. In the new Constitution, women have 40 per cent of reservation at the local governing bodies and 33 per cent at the national and provincial parliaments. The rights of Dalits have been specifically outlined in the Constitution, including the provision of free education to Dalit students from primary to higher levels, as provisioned in the law (TCON, 2015, pp.23–24). Nepal also ratified the International Labour Convention 169 on indigenous peoples as demanded by the Janjatis (Thapa, 2017d, pp.16–17).

In line with the principle of social inclusion advanced by the peace process, several policies have been introduced with far-reaching implications in promoting inclusion of diverse groups in Nepal's state agencies. For example, the Civil Service Act was amended to reserve 45 per cent of jobs to excluded groups such as women, Dalits and Madheshis (Thapa, 2019, p.62). The political parties have also implemented the reservations for excluded groups at all organizational levels. A drive to promote gender equality and social diversity in both government and non-government sectors has also been implemented. Separate commissions for different marginalized groups, such as the Muslim Commission, have been set up (Subedi, 2017, pp.37–40; Thapa, 2019, p.65). As a result of these policies, Nepal's parliament and state agencies are now far more socially inclusive than in the past. During the post-conflict transition period, Nepal had a female president, a male Madheshi president, a female Janjati speaker in the parliament. This implies that Nepal's diverse groups have reasons to hope for further reforms in the future.

Federalism

Federalism has been the most challenging issue in Nepal's peace process. The origin of the demands of federalism in Nepal is attributed to a Madheshi party that

demanded an autonomous Tarai region in 1950s. Following the consolidation of the Nepali state by the central administration after 1953, the party dropped the demand. After the 1990s, both the Madheshi and the Janjati parties came up with demands for federalism along ethnic lines. They were mostly marginal parties. During that time, the issue of federalism had not yet caught public imagination (Khanal, 2017, p.75; Thapa, 2017a, p.83). The issue gained prominence when in 2004, the Maoist party declared the formation of the “autonomous people’s government,” based on the historical origins of major social groups. The Maoists had followed the Chinese model of autonomous regions and did not refer to it as a federal set up (Khanal, 2017, p.75; Thapa, 2017a, p.83–85). After the Madheshi uprising in 2007, Nepal’s major political parties were forced to incorporate federalism as an inseparable part of the peace process. However, this issue was so controversial that it consumed most of the energy of Nepal’s political leaders during the peace process, overshadowing other issues of restructuring of the state.

In the first CA, while the Maoists and identity-based Madheshi and Janjati parties were in favour of ethnicity-based federalism, both the NC and the UML were against it. Their concern was more about economic viability. At the core of their dispute was the difference in understanding of the Nepali state. Pro-identity groups such as the Maoists described Nepal as a state formed by coming together of different nationalities (or nations) who deserved their historical autonomy and rights. The other side such as the UML party understood Nepal as a single nation formed by coming together of diverse caste, religion, ethnic, linguistic, and gender groups with the shared historical experience of being part of the Nepali state (Interview with senior UML leader, Kathmandu, 25 July 2024).

As a compromise between two fundamentally different positions, in the first CA, the basis of federalism was agreed as “identity” (ethnic/communal, linguistic, cultural plus contiguous geography and territorial alignment of the ethnic population and historical continuity) and “capacity” (economic inter-relationship and capacity, status of infrastructural development, availability of natural resources and administrative convenience) (Khanal 2017, p.76; SRC, 2011). Still, the parties were strongly divided over the provinces’ names and boundaries. The 14-province model proposed by the Maoists was criticized as propagating ethnic federalism and was rejected by older political parties (Khanal, 2017, p.76). The counter-movements organized by the Khas-Arya group to “de-ethnicize” the federalism created further tensions (Hachhethu, 2023, pp.128–162). This was the key reason why the first CA had failed to finalize the new Constitution.

One of the main reasons why federalism became the most contested during the peace process was because of the conflicting demands among multiple social groups. The Madheshis initially demanded an autonomous Madhesh province covering the entire Tarai region that would ensure their majority. The Tharus and other hill communities in Tarai were against it. The Tharus wanted a separate autonomous province for themselves in the western part of Tarai where they dominated. The Khas-Arya group in the far-western region of Nepal, which included the Tharu dominated districts, were against the Tharus’ demands. They demanded a unified far-west province based on geographical rather than ethnic identity. The hill communities in many parts of the country were not in favour of federalism in general. Those who did not understand the essence of federalism were apprehensive about its implications on Nepal’s territorial integrity. The main complexity was created by the mixed population

settlements in Nepal that had diluted historically prevalent population settlement (Hachhethu, 2023, p.135; Khanal, 2017, p.78).

The federalism issue was further complicated by geo-political interests of neighbours—India and China—which were apprehensive about the implications of administrative restructuring in Nepal within their border areas. China was against identity-based federalism mainly due to its implication on Tibet. India was also against too many provinces along its border. India and China are accused of instigating and supporting the dissolution of the first CA in 2012 to prevent the implementation of the Maoist's proposal on federalism to protect their geo-political interests (Interview with a senior Maoist leader, Kathmandu, 4 February 2024).

In the second CA elected in 2013, federalism remained the most disputed issue. The final decision has been to create seven provinces based on both identity and economic viability. The Madheshis and the Tharus were most disappointed. Only eight districts in the Tarai region were given the status of Province 2 (Madhesh Province), where Madheshis would have a majority, and the remaining districts in Tarai were merged with hill provinces where they were a minority (Khanal, 2017, p.78). The Tharus did not get an undivided Tharu province as they demanded to correct historical injustices against them. Therefore, federalism became the key source of grievances in the post-Constitution phase.

While federalism has failed to fully satisfy the Madheshis and Tharus, the transformation from a centralized unitary state to a decentralized federal state can be considered as a notable step forward in addressing Madheshis' grievances. This is especially so in the context where a sizeable section of hill population in Nepal are against federalism even after its implementation.

The New Constitution

The new Constitution of Nepal was the first Constitution drafted by a fully sovereign body and not handed over by the King. The new Constitution was considered a culmination of Nepalese people's repeated struggle for democracy and progressive changes since the 1950s. A top Maoist leader explained during an interview (Kathmandu, 3 April 2023) that a constitution by an elected body is itself a huge systemic transformation for Nepal. The preamble of the new Constitution recognized oppression/discriminations caused by the feudal, autocratic, centralized and unitary state system with a commitment to end them. The preamble also recognized the multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, multi-religious, multi-cultural characteristics, and geographical diversity of Nepal (TCON, pp.1–2). A number of elements of Nepal's peace process were also institutionalized through this Constitution, such as adoption of republicanism, secularism (conditional), inclusion, federalism as its basic principles (Hachhethu, 2023, p.258).

One of the key criticisms of the new Constitution has been that it undermined a few progressive changes—like secularism, proportional representation, equal citizenship rights encapsulated in the interim Constitution. Despite limitations, the new Constitution has institutionalized several progressive reforms demanded by the Maoists and other discriminated/marginalized groups.

Contributions to the Durability

The above discussions show that the core objectives of peace process as articulated by the Maoist rebels were largely fulfilled. The following analysis demonstrates how they contributed to the durability. There were a few developments during the peace process, which could have pushed the Maoist to walk out of the peace process. Yet a significant section of the Maoists did not abandon the peace

process because they did not want to lose their political achievements. For example, in 2008, two days before the CA elections, seven Maoist cadres were also killed in a violent clash with the NC leaders. A senior Maoist leader, in an interview in Kathmandu (4 February 2024), shared that after the shoot-out, the Maoist army had immediately prepared to retaliate and waited for an order from the political leadership. However, the political leadership decided not to retaliate because it would derail the peace process. The military leadership accepted the decision even though they wanted “revenge.” The Maoist chairperson had explained to the military commanders that if the peace process got derailed then their achievements, such as the CA elections, would be under threat. So, the Maoists army restrained themselves.

More importantly, in 2012, the Maoist party split into two factions; one mainstream led by Dahal, which remained committed to the peace process, and the other hardliner led by Baidya. A splinter of the hardline Baidya faction, known as the Maoist Party, led by Chand, launched another armed people’s war in 2014. However, this did not convert into large-scale violence because of its limited public support and organizational strength. If a considerable number of the Maoists had joined this faction, then large-scale violence would have re-emerged. Many chose to stay in the mainstream Maoist party because some of their important demands were already fulfilled through the peace process (Interview with a senior Maoist leader, Kathmandu, 4 February 2024).

Locally Driven Peacemaking

Nepal’s peace process has been conceptualized as locally driven peacemaking as elaborated in the theoretical framework chapter. The locally driven approach contributed to the durability by mainly fostering a sense of ownership and ensured its legitimacy among the people in the conflict-affected societies in Nepal. It also

promoted a strong political will, and strategies based on contextual needs. In the section below, I have analyzed three aspects of locally driven peacemaking to substantiate my argument on its contributions to durability.

Public Participation and Support

The key aspect of Nepal's locally driven peacemaking is the participation of the ordinary Nepalese people in the peace process—such as in the people's movement, two constituent assembly elections, and constitution writing process. To elaborate on the example of the people's movement, civil society initiatives such as the Citizen's Movement for Democracy and Peace had played a critical role in laying the groundwork for this mass uprising. They also came up with a narrative of new Nepal, which was more than just a republican state (Pandey, 2017, pp.18–19). Civil society had also contributed to mobilizing public opinion and creating a “discursive environment” unfavourable to the autocratic regime (Shah, 2008, p.11). A survey among the Nepalese people, conducted after the first three-tier elections in 2017 following the new Constitution, showed the majority (51.5%) were optimistic that the country was moving towards the right direction. The reasons behind this perception were better roads, overall progress, empowered local bodies, local elections, new Constitution, and absence of armed conflict/there is peace among others (IDA, 2018, pp.8–12).

The above discussions show that the participation of ordinary people in Nepal's peace process was noticeable. Their overall positive perception also reflects that Nepalese people have been supportive of the outcomes of the peace process. This implies that Nepal is able to avoid the risks to the peace process as had happened in Colombia when the peace agreement was rejected in a referendum in 2016 (*BBC*

News, 2016). Such problems would have undermined the durability of Nepal's peace process.

A Bottom-Up Approach

A few elements of Nepal's peace process reflected the bottom-up approach. For example, Nepal's constitution-making process had no immutable principles, as in South Africa. Although the peace agreements served as a broad reference and formed the basis for deliberations, the CA was not explicitly bound by the peace understandings. There was an effort to encourage public participation during the constitution-making process (Khanal, 2014, pp.9–11). In the first CA, the concerned committee asked all citizens to submit their suggestions by email, fax, toll-free phone, or by letter. The CA committee also made all the consultations related to the constitution-making public as per its terms of reference, which also entailed public hearings and seeking expert advice on thematic areas (CA 2008, International IDEA, 2015; Khanal, 2014; Legislature-Parliament 2013). Around 549,763 submissions based on the public opinion drive were received and around 0.5 million people participated in the public campaigns (Khanal, 2014, p.18; Legislature-Parliament 2013).

Similarly, the bottom-up approach was encouraged through the provision of local peace committees (LPCs). This committee was envisaged as an inclusive body with the representation of diverse groups (TOR, 2009). The LPCs were mandated to create local committees further at the grass-roots level as necessary. Their main task was specified as facilitating the conflict management process at the local level as per the peace agreements. They were also expected to contribute to reconciliation, healing and building mutual trust (TOR, 2009). LPCs were set up in all 75 districts. The

impact of these committees is unclear because there has been no systematic evaluation.

A few assessments give a mixed picture of their performance (Carter Centre, 2011; Sijapati, 2017, p.93; Tandukar et al., 2016, pp.20–21). A Carter Centre's (2011) report states that LPC functioning varied by district. In Surkhet district, the LPC was widely lauded for intervening and resolving conflicts. For example, the committee calmed the tension after a bus driver was killed by an irate local following a vehicle accident. In contrast, in a far west district, the LPC was accused of “no results.” In a few other districts, there were complaints that LPCs were dominated by political parties and acted as “a party committee” rather than “a peace committee.”

Despite its partial implementation, the bottom-up approach encapsulated in a few elements of Nepal's peace process promoted the engagement with local level issues concerning everyday peace rather than only with the national level political issues. This meant that Nepal's peace process was not only top-driven but also had elements of local peacemaking. This also fostered a sense of participation, ownership, and legitimacy among Nepalese people contributing to the durability of Nepal's peace process.

Decision-Making by Nepalese Actors

As Nepal's peace process was initiated by Nepalese political actors rather than externally mediated, they were naturally the key decision-makers and the political will to sustain the process was high. As demonstrated above, there are several examples when the Maoists—under the force of circumstances—could have broken the cease-fire. Yet they restrained themselves. One of the most noteworthy examples is also the Guar massacre on 26 March 2007, when 26 Maoists were killed in a political clash with the Madheshi Forum party (UN OHCHR, 2007). However, the Maoist leadership

decided not to retaliate to prevent the peace process from being derailed (Interview with senior Maoist leader, Kathmandu, 8 April 2024). Other political parties had also made several compromises for peace because of their strong will to sustain the peace process (Pokharel & Rana, 2013, pp.129–132).

One of the advantages of the Nepalese actors making the key decisions during the peace process was also that they could articulate the necessary strategies based on contextual needs. For example, the Maoists and the SPA decided to deal with the Maoists army/arms only after the CA elections despite international pressure to do so before the elections (Interview with senior Maoist leader, Kathmandu, 8 April 2024). This is due to the specific political context of Nepal in which the national army was traditionally loyal to the institution of monarchy. The SPA leaders calculated that the existence of the Maoist army/arms would deter the King from spoiling the CA elections process. Their strategy worked (Interview with NC leader, Kathmandu, 13 July 2024).

Another advantage of Nepalese actors making decisions was that the informal cultural factors got more prominence than the formal technical processes. For example, in Nepal, there is a deferential culture towards elders. Koirala used his advanced age to convince the Maoists on many peace-process related issues. Koirala often also used his health issues to support the peace process. Whenever the political leaders got into heated discussions, Koirala would put on his oxygen mask citing his health reasons and retire to his room to diffuse the tensions. Koirala's "omnipresent oxygen mask" saved the peace process from falling apart many times (Pokharel & Rana, 2013, p.110). Likewise, the most difficult issues of the peace process were mainly resolved through informal ways drawing on the personal relationships rather than on the technical processes emphasized by external peacebuilders (Interview with NC leader, Kathmandu, 13 July 2024).

Final Analysis

While this research focused only on the political factors given the limitation of its scope, my overall reflections are that the political factors have to be understood in the broader context of historical and socio-cultural context. A historical analysis shows that overt violence at the community level has been relatively less than in the neighbouring India where communal violence has been recurring (PPRC, n.d.). An American historian on Nepal, Stiller (1993, p.1), has wrote, “few have attained the peace the Nepalese enjoy.” A British historian on Nepal J. Whelpton has categorized four types of political violence in Nepal since its unification such as conflicts within the political elite, ethnic and regional resistance to the Gorkhali state, agrarian revolts, and ideological crusades. His analysis implies that even though the political violence was not uncommon in Nepal, they had not reached the intensity of an armed conflict except for the Maoists rebellion. In general, overt violence in Nepal’s modern history has been sporadic, short-lived and not spread to the community level (Whelpton, 2013, pp.27–67).

This means Nepal was peaceful in the narrow sense of absence of overt violence prior to the Maoists’ rebellion. This is a puzzle because Nepal possessed all the ingredients that could trigger violence. For example, Nepal was economically one of the least developed countries in the world with chronic poverty along with social, political, and economic inequalities such as feudalism, casteism, and other forms of structural violence (Bhattarai, 1998). This observation implies that there were deeper socio-cultural and historical factors in Nepal that contributed to the absence of overt violence at society level. Such factors could be no history of direct colonization or Nepal’s rich spiritual heritage based on the intermingling between Hinduism and Buddhism of the Himalayan civilization. Even though it is not the scope of this research

to investigate such socio-cultural factors, it shows that the ending of violence in Nepal through the peace process has to be understood within the broader framework of historical and social-cultural factors.

The above argument mainly comes from further reflections on the analysis of the political factors explained above. It shows that even though the political transformations have been notable, they have been incomplete, and they have failed to satisfy all the social groups. The economic transformations to improve livelihoods were also not adequately prioritized during the peace process. Yet the political violence has fully ended in Nepal. This implies that there must be possibly other socio-cultural and historical factors, either positive (e.g., tradition of non-violent co-existence) or non-positive (e.g., fatalistic attitude), that have contributed to the ending of violence in Nepal. Therefore, a combination of three political factors identified above have to be situated in the broader historical and socio-cultural setting of Nepal.

Finally, it has to be further pointed out that the combination of all the three political factors was necessary to ensure durability. They would not have resulted in durability independently. To elaborate, if the structural political transformations were externally led (for e.g., by the UN or India) rather than locally driven, then it would not have fostered a sense of genuine ownership and legitimacy or may have even triggered resistance and thereby possibly undermined the durability. Similarly, if Nepal's peace process was locally driven without the structural political transformations—such as republic and the new Constitution through an elected assembly as prioritized by the main rebel group—then the locally driven approach alone would not have been sufficient to ensure the durability. If so, when the splinter Maoist group led by Chand started another people's war in 2014, a significant section would have sided with him resulting into a relapse of large-scale violence. Likewise, if

external powers, such as India, chose to support the Madheshi armed groups rather than pushing them to the peace talks (Interview with Madheshi political analyst, Kathmandu, 11 August 2023) then again, violence would not have ended completely.

Conclusion

The examination of the durability of Nepal's peace process shows that a combination of all three political factors—the structural political transformations as prioritized by the rebel group, geo-political interests towards ending violence and regional stability, and locally driven peacemaking—within the specific historical and socio-culture setting of Nepal mainly contributed to the durability of its peace process. One of the unexpected findings of this research is that the durability of Nepal's peace process has not only resulted from positive factors such the political transformations but also non-positive factors such as a fatalistic inclination towards tolerating injustice and geo-political pressure with the interests of regional stability rather than justice for the disadvantaged groups. This finding confirms to the analysis of literature in Chapter two that durable peace cannot be understood as sustainable peace. This conclusion necessitates a critical examination of durability from the perspective of sustainability, as elaborated in the next chapter.

Chapter Six: Understanding the Sustainability of Nepal's Durable Peace Process

Using the insights from Chapter five, this chapter engages with the second part of the key research question relating to the sustainability of Nepal's durable peace process. While this research has employed a limited definition of durable peace as explained in the last chapter, sustainable peace is defined as a broader and deeper concept relating to eliminating all the roots of violence (Curle as cited in Wadlow, 2014, pp.3-4; Galtung, 1996, pp.31-32; Lederach, 1997, pp.150-152). This chapter starts with engaging with the limitations of Nepal's durable peace process. Then, it explores sustainability of Nepal's durable peace process by examining if a few minimum parameters of sustainable peace such as access to the basic needs for the most "miserable communities" as pointed out by Galtung (2013, para 9) have been met or not. It further examines other parameters of sustainable peace such as justice, equality, and the ending of all forms of overt violence.

Limitations of Nepal's Durable Peace Process

While Nepal's peace process has received international praise for ending violence and moving from war to peace (Martin, 2010, p.vii; UN, 2023),⁷ during this research, I found out its key limitations. In an email interview (10 November 2023), a Madheshi political analyst wrote:

Nepal's peace has been "unjust peace" hence its durability will continue to "deny" equitable rights to Dalits, Magars, Tharus and other section of the poorest of the poor who were duped into fighting a war that their generals bartered away for crumbs.

⁷ UN Secretary-General António Guterres' remarks to the Nepalese Parliament on 31 October 2023

The peace process has turned out to be a document of surrender to ensure dividends of peace for the elite of both sides. A peace process that is brought about under duress of one party is postponement of contested issues, not their just closure.

Similarly, a Janjati scholar points out that all laws/by laws/policies/programmes introduced by the government are to mask the problems of discrimination and inequality; they are part of remedies not an end-all cure. For example, secularism has been ambiguous by defining it as protection of traditional religion. The same is the case with language. While the provinces have been conferred power to determine one or more than one language spoken by a majority of people within the province as its official language(s), the Nepali language was given the status of the “official language of Nepal”. This means Nepali language still got privileged status than other languages. The caste system, which is one of the root sources of social inequality in Nepal, persists in everyday practices even though it was abolished by law in 1963 (Gurung, 2022, p.2).

It has to be noted that the Maoist party eliminated the caste system in their party organization during the insurgency times. A senior Maoist leader in an interview in Kathmandu (9 July 2023) explained that they used to have “tech name” dropping the surname based on “caste”. For example, Maoist Chairperson Pushpa Kamal Dahal was known as Prachanda. However, after the peace process, they reverted to using their surname, signifying their caste. This implies that the Maoists did not prioritize ending the caste system during the peace process even though it was the root of social inequality in Nepal. A political science scholar Baral (2021, p.xiv) also adds that despite structural changes and occasional political upheavals, the traditional political values and elite structure have remained unchanged. A well-known analyst N. Manandhar (2019, para 1) wrote: “Based on Nepal’s happiness index, Nepal is a

happy country because we do not have violence, but we are also sad country because we fall behind in positive peace.”

Similarly, P. S. Rana and I. Shahi (9 March 2021) also question if there is peace in Nepal. They point out that the roots of conflict—the dominance of the male Khas-Arya community, the Nepali language, and Kathmandu—have not been addressed/tackled. From the perspectives of women, who continue to suffer different forms of gender-based violence, the narrative of “peacefulness” makes no sense. The same with Dalits who continue to suffer from caste-based structural discriminations. The victims of conflict who continue to fight for justice also challenge the narrative of peaceful transition.

The above reflections demonstrate inadequacies of Nepal’s durable peace. While it has ended physical violence and introduced notable political reforms, the structural transformations necessary for sustainable peace have been partial. This context raises a question: is Nepal’s durable peace another framework to perpetuate the interests of elites at global, regional, and national levels rather than a preceding step towards sustainable peace? In the section below, I have explored this question by examining a few minimum parameters of sustainable peace.

Exploring the Sustainability of Nepal’s Peace Process

Access to Basic Needs

I have examined the sustainability of Nepal’s peace process by investigating if the most “miserable communities” have access to the basic needs. I selected the most “miserable communities” as the bottom 40 per cent based on the average annual household expenditure per capita by caste/ethnicity identified by National Planning Commission of Nepal (2022, p.49).

This research has relied on narrative personal stories based on in-depth interviews with one Chamar caste male (average annual consumption of approx. USD 304) and one Dom caste female (average annual consumption of USD 255) as per the National Planning Commission's report (2022, p.102) conducted on 31 May 2024 and 11 June 2024 respectively. Both are Madheshi Dalits, the most deprived community in terms of social, economic, and political power. They are discriminated against based on caste, ethnicity, and class. In the case of Madheshi Dalit women, they are considered as "oppressed of the oppressed" because they also go through gender oppression in addition to other forms of oppression (Yami, 2021, p.152).

The Story of Sebal Mahara

Sebal is from a Chamar community in Mahottari district in Tarai. He was born in 1964. Like most Chamars in those days, his father used to work as a labourer in a rich zamindar's (landlord) land. For one day of labour, he would get some small amount of (2 ½ kgs) rice grains. With that small amount, he had to support a family of three sons, one daughter and a wife. Sebal says:

I remember only eating rice and sometimes *chapatis* [local bread] two times a day.

We did not have money to eat other nutritious food like fruits. We ate little so that we could sell the remaining grains to secure cash for other expenses such as education for me and my brother.

Given Sebal was from the "untouchable" community, in school, "the upper caste" people, both students and teachers, would talk to him in condescending and rude ways. They did not let him sit in the first bench, coercing him and other Dalit boys to sit at the back. This was not a new experience for Sebal. He had seen the upper caste

zamindar boss talking in the same condescending way to his father. When they would go to get water in the community water tap (this was the only option available), Chamars and other Dalits' turn came only in the end, after all other members of community filled their jars. He shared an incident of waiting for his turn to get water when a guest had come home. He could not get water on time because others got preference to him.

As his father was uneducated, the zamindar chief would also cheat him on the loan, hiking the principal amount to exploit his labour. The zamindar chief also discouraged his father from sending Sebal and his brothers to school, offering work to them such as tending his cattle. The zamindars did not want the Chamars to be educated so that they could continue to exploit them.

When Sebal was around 12 years, his father had paralysis. Given their poor economic condition, Sebal, his middle brother, and the sister had to drop out of school. Sebal went to Punjab, India, as a labourer to earn money to support his family. Only his younger brother could finish his junior high school through the money sent by Sebal.

In Punjab, there was no caste discrimination, and the working conditions were also not exploitative. Still work was tough, and he was away from his family. The money was enough to support the survival of his family back home. That made it possible for him to marry at 19 years old and later to get his sister married at 19 years. After working for 10 years in Punjab, his friend suggested he go to Kathmandu. He came to Kathmandu and started working as a shoemaker. The monthly income was around NRS 600 (around 4.5 USD at the present rate), which was enough to eat but not enough to ensure good education and health for his family. In 1990, Sebal and others from the Chamar community participated in the public demonstrations for the

multiparty democratic movement in Kathmandu. They hoped that democracy would give them the right to speak and dignity to live. Despite suffering severe police brutalities, he and his Chamar friends were undeterred in their struggle for democracy. After multiparty democracy was restored, a few positive changes took place, but they were not adequate to improve their livelihood. Sebal shares:

We could speak freely about our rights and needs. Several NGOs supported by the UN and other international donors launched a few projects such as inter-assimilation programmes between Chamars and non-Dalits. However, there was no programme to improve our livelihood and to support our education from the government or international organizations, which was what we most needed. Also, we continued to be the victims of violence from other communities. One of my friends, a shoemaker, was attacked with *Khukuri* [Nepali knife], when he asked for money from the customer he served. We raised this issue with the home minister who consoled us but failed to find the culprit.

The most beneficial part about democracy was that they could organize themselves in a Dalit network across the country to demand their rights and dignity. They launched a movement demanding they should not be forced to do caste-based demeaning tasks such as removing the carcasses of dead cattle which Chamars were traditionally forced to do. Their movement was successful when the government decided that the Chamars should not be forced to do that job. Sebal says, “We had many other demands. The government agreed on paper but failed to implement them. Untouchability persisted despite the government claims of eliminating it.”

As the Maoists started their movement, they were good with the Chamars in the beginning. They came at night to induct the Chamars to their party organization. If

an upper caste did not behave well with the Chamars then the Maoists defended the latter threatening the upper caste people. Nonetheless, as the Maoists got powerful, the elite zamindars also cultivated good relations with them. The Maoists engaged with such zamindars to collect funds. The Maoists no longer antagonized the elite zamindars by defending the Chamars. Sebal says:

Even though the Chamars and lower caste people were the main martyrs in the Maoists movement, we could not reach to the high leadership positions which were all captured by the upper caste people.

Sebal also participated in the second People's Movement in April 2006. He was a district commander of the Madheshi-based party, which meant he had to mobilize people from the districts too. He says:

We thought that the King's rule for so many years did not bring any positive change in our life. We hoped that a republic and the new Constitution would bring the much-needed change.

After the success of this People's Movement, a few positive changes were experienced. For example, the government introduced a poverty alleviation programme through which they were entitled to a loan of NRS 30,000 (approx. USD 225 at the present rate) to start up their business. This amount would be topped up depending on the performance of the project. Likewise, untouchability has been also significantly reduced even though not fully eliminated. Sebal narrated an incident of an inter-caste marriage between an upper caste girl and a Chamar boy.

This young couple had run away from the home and registered their marriage in court. The bride's family managed to imprison both groom's father and brother falsely charging them of abducting the girl. The Chamar boy reached out to our Dalit network. Our lawyer helped him file a case in court which was later decided in his favour. This incident shows that even if the situation is better, untouchability has not been fully eliminated.

These days, Chamars have better access to education and have better living standards. It is not because of the government's efforts but because of the remittance. Unfortunately, it has come at the cost of working in difficult conditions in the Gulf countries. They have to work in high temperatures as labourers, far away from their families to merely survive. The working conditions are often exploitative without any labour protection. Sebal explains:

Nepal's government has not introduced any targeted programmes to improve our difficult lives. Chamars are far behind in education but there is no policy to address this gap. It would take at least two generations after me to catch up with the people of other castes. The most needed programme is employment-based opportunities. Unfortunately, the political parties formulate programmes that only benefit their political cadres. They do not care about the oppressed communities like Chamars, Doms, Paswan except during the elections for votes. The government has now stopped the poverty alleviation programme also. Madheshi leaders also focus on power-sharing in Kathmandu than fighting for the most marginalized section of their community like us.

Sebal thinks the new Constitution has many good provisions but there are a few shortcomings also. He elaborates:

The main problem is that even the good provisions are not implemented fully. The Constitution has made reservations for at least one Dalit woman member at the ward level. This position does not have any influence. These women have to do what the ward chair says. There should have been reservations of Dalit women at higher positions such as mayor/deputy mayor. In most of the reserved seats, the political parties choose those Dalit candidates who would toe their line rather than voice Dalits' concerns. This is also the reason that despite an increase in our overall representation, Dalits' issues continue to be sidelined. While the proportional representation based on the population is good, the problem is also that it increased representation of all based on their population rather than that of the marginalized communities who needed it the most. The reservations specific to Dalits are necessary to improve our situation.

Sebal is still a shoemaker in Kathmandu when many of his upper caste co-workers from the 2006 democratic movement have become ministers and MPs. He claims:

There is a sense of distress among Dalits, Adivasi Janjati, Madheshis. Our agitations would erupt eventually. It might take a few months or years. But I am sure they will erupt. I do not feel a sense of peace. Peace will only come if the government behaves well. This is not the case now.

The Story of Sunaina Devi

Sunaina Devi was born in a poor family in India around 45 years ago (she does not know her exact birth year). The family could not afford her education, so she studied only till grade two. She got married to a Nepalese man from Dalit community in Mahottari district at the age of 15 years. She had four children, consecutively for

four years. She had to wear *ghoonghat* (headscarf that cover both the head and the face) at her home. She explains:

Women in the Madheshi community, and not just Dalit, during those days, were expected to wear in ghoonghat and were not allowed to go outside the house except to our maternal homes. We would be busy with the household chores the whole day. We were not allowed to talk to any men except our respective husbands. My husband used to beat me up often but that was considered as normal in Tarai those days.

Sunaina's husband also did not have any education because he was a poor Dalit. Her husband's family was economically poor and did not have enough to eat. Her family in India used to support them with some food because she was the only daughter in a family of three sons. As a Dalit, her family was considered as untouchables therefore had to be careful when interacting with "the upper caste."

After being married for a few years, her husband decided to go to Kathmandu in search of work. He was engaged in a small business. He also took his four children including Sunaina to Kathmandu. In Kathmandu, their income was better than in the village. They could send their children to the government school. At times, she had to face discrimination as a Madheshi. She explained:

I was dark complexioned so sometimes the strangers in Kathmandu used to pass comments like "*Black Madhisini*." Not everyone was discriminatory, though. My landlord was good, and they treated us like their own family.

In 2019, her husband passed away. She had to take care of four children on her own. She was not educated so getting a job was out of the question. She opened a small tea shop. Soon, people in her village started gossiping. She shared:

Villagers started asking me why are you staying in Kathmandu alone when your husband is not there? Widows are socially ostracized in Nepal. We are considered ominous and bad luck.

Sunaina wanted to stay in Kathmandu for the education of her children. She could not afford it. So, she returned to the village. She could survive and educate her children due to her maternal family's support. She also did handicraft work which also got her some money. She shares:

Widows get NRS 2000 [approx. USD 14] per month from the government. I did not know about this provision till late. When I went to make a claim, the officials did not give money for the four years which was due to me. The government employees took my money because I was weak without any male support. Now, I collect money every three months.

She got her older daughter married at the age of 21 years. She had just passed grade ten. In the village, it is a normal practice to get daughters married off as early as possible so that they do not go around with anyone. She shares:

My younger daughter wanted to study nursing. She asked me to take some loans for her education. But I could not afford it. I got her married off at the age of 23 years. It was easy to get her married because she was pretty, not dark

like me. She made many TikTok videos so many marriage proposals came to her.

Both my daughters are married to Dalits because inter-caste marriages are still not practiced except in the rare cases when couples are in love.

These days, the situation is better. Caste discrimination has reduced significantly even though it still exists. Especially if one is poor then they are discriminated against.

We have both private and public schools in our village. Most in my village have enough to eat and can afford to send their children to school. However, health care is still a challenge. When people get seriously ill, they must take loans.

These days women wear ghoonghat only till 3-4 months after marriage. However, there is still dowry related violence in our village. There was a case of dowry murder recently in my village. The culprit was imprisoned for a few months but got out with bribing. He is even married now. For men it is not a problem at all.

I tried to find if there are any job opportunities or any other support for vulnerable Dalit women like me. The official from my ward says there is nothing for now. I contested election in the ward level in the Dalit quota but lost because I was not educated. I want to study. I went to find out if they have the adult learning courses which used to be run by the government earlier. But they have stopped that as well. I do not know any NGOs who support Dalit women like me.

Earlier, the Maoists had pursued me to be their member. They were human beings, so I liked them even though I did not like their violence.

Fortunately, the situation in India has improved because of Modi's government. My family in India gets lots of food subsidies like wheat and rice. They send them to me. That is how I am surviving because these days I cannot work much because I do not have good health.

The stories of Sebal and Sunaina are representative of Nepal's population at the bottom of social, political, and economic hierarchy who continue to struggle for their basic needs such as food, healthcare, and education. Their stories have to be understood in the context of broader poverty in Nepal. The first Nepal living standard survey (NLSS, 2023, pp.12–13), after the promulgation of the new Constitution, points out that 20.27 per cent of total population or around six million people are living under the poverty line. This is based on the criteria of annual per capita consumption expenditure of less than NRS 72,908 (approx. USD 551 or less than 2 dollars a day). Multidimension poverty is 17.4 per cent of population (NPC, 2022, p.25).

Moreover, Nepal also has a high level of food insecurity and malnutrition, approximately 36 per cent of children under five years are stunted, while 27 per cent are underweight and 10 per cent suffer from acute malnutrition (Oxfam & Hami, 2019, p.7). The above data analysis shows that in terms of absolute numbers, the number of people under poverty line is around the same (around 6 million) as during the insurgency years. Earlier, the overall population was less, and the percentage of poor was more. Currently, the poverty rate has decreased but the overall population has increased. This can also be used to infer that the poverty rate has not improved if absolute numbers are considered. Table 2 below shows the poverty situation in Nepal.

Table 2: Poverty Profile of Nepal in 2022–23

Region	Poverty Incidence			Gini Index	Distribution	
	Headcount rate	Poverty gap (per cent)	Poverty gap squared (per cent)		of the poor	of the population
Nepal	20.27	4.52	1.48	0.300		
Urban	18.34	4.03	1.29	0.303	62.86	69.48
Rural	24.66	5.64	1.91	0.287	37.14	30.52

Source: NLSS, 2023, p.13

Justice

The former Maoist leader Bhattarai (2024) wrote in a recent article that out of the three main dimensions of Nepal’s peace process—the new Constitution, army/arms integration, and transitional justice—the latter one is incomplete. This was also pointed out during an interview with the UML leader in Kathmandu (25 July 2024). While the slow implementation of transitional justice in general has been highly criticized, I have focused on “extreme injustice” to argue that without addressing them, Nepal’s peace process is not sustainable. For this research, I have defined “impunity against rape” and “impunity against killing of children” as “extreme injustice” because both are “crime against humanity” as per the UN (2019, pp.12–13). Below are the two stories of extreme injustice. I avoided doing direct interviews on these stories due to the traumas involved. I have relied on secondary sources given in the footnote.

The Story of Maina Sunar⁸

Maina, a Dalit girl, was fourteen years old, studying in the ninth grade at Bhagwati Secondary School in Kharellthok village in Kavre district, around one hour drive from Kathmandu. In February 2004, as she was heading to her school, she and her brother were dragged away by the Nepal army. Eyewitnesses said the soldiers

⁸ Based on newspaper stories: *Dahal*, 2023; *Nepali Times*, 2022; *Shrestha*, 2016; *Republica*, 2019; *Nepali Times*, 2006

thrashed Maina all the way to the barracks. The army had come looking for their mother Devi, who had spoken against the recent killing of her niece Reena Rasiali by the army. Accused of being a Maoist supporter, Reena was shot dead in her own backyard. While other villagers suggested that the family cremate Reena's body silently, Devi wanted a proper police investigation. She sought help from a reputed advocate and exposed the incident to the local media.

Two days later, the army came looking for Devi. She was not at home, so the officers took Maina and her brother instead. The army officers told Maina's father to send Devi to the Panchkhal barracks when she returned. Once interrogation was done then Maina and her brother would be sent back.

The next day, Devi went to the army's Panchkhal base, asking for her daughter. No one gave her any answer. Then, the district chief of Kavrepalanchok told her: "The army has raped and killed your daughter. Don't go looking for her anymore, save your son. Go home." After this, Devi started looking for her disappeared daughter.

Maina was not found for months. Under pressure from the human rights groups, the Army set up a court of inquiry to investigate the incident in March 2005. As per the inquiry,⁹ Maina's interrogation had taken place in the presence of seven officials—Colonel B. Khatri, Captain. N. Basnet, Captain. S. .P Adhikari, Captain. A. Pun, Sergeant K.B Khatri and two soldiers, D. B. Basnet and S. Thapa—from the army.

Captain Adhikari and Captain Pun were ordered to get a large container of water by Col. Khatri. Then, the task of torturing Maina began. The army men in attendance shoved her repeatedly into the water. She was drenched and she choked frequently due to being held under water. After they failed to make her speak by repeatedly holding her under water, Khatri instructed them to give her electric shocks.

⁹ *Nepali Times*, 2006; Advocacy Forum (2010, pp.9–23)

Thapa pulled a live wire out from a geyser line. He electrocuted the soles of Maina's feet and her hands, which were still wet. Her wrists started to bleed. Thapa slowly stepped back in fear and stopped electrocuting her. By then, Maina was broken. She admitted she was involved in Maoist activities for a couple of months. Then, Adhikari and Pun were ordered to give her more electric shocks by Col. Khatri.

After one-and-half hours of torture, Maina did not have anything substantial to say. She was then taken to a nearby temple, and it was agreed that the interrogation would continue after the officers ate their meal. Maina was blindfolded, her hands tied behind her back and there was a sentry guarding her. Thapa and Khatri were still there. At around 11, Col. Khatri was informed that Maina was vomiting and foaming at the mouth and in a serious condition. By the time a medical team came over to check on her, she was already dead.

Then, Col. Khatri ordered Pun to bury the body to cover up the incident. Pun ordered to dig a spot northeast of officers' mess. Then, Pun fired two shots from the same weapon. Only one hit Maina's body in the back. After shooting her, Pun photographed her and buried her with the help of those present. Meanwhile, Captain Basnet reported the incident to the police. Col. Khatri asked the police to make up a story about the body. The false story that was circulated was: when Maina was arrested, she tried to break the security cordon and jumped out of the vehicle. She was shot by the security forces while doing so and died.

A report by a local human rights group called the Advocacy Forum (2010, pp.2–3) stated that the Army Court found three military officers—Colonel Khatri, Pun, and Adhikari—guilty only of using wrong interrogation techniques and of not following proper proceedings in the disposal of the dead body. The Court implicated Basnet but decided not to recommend him for prosecution without any justification. No one was

convicted for the disappearance, torture and killing of Maina Sunuwar by the army Court Martial. The death by prolonged torture was described as “accidental,” and put down to “carelessness,” and a failure to follow procedures. Maina was blamed for her “physical weakness” in not being able to withstand the simulated drowning and electrocution acknowledged by the Court Martial. The three accused were finally convicted of procedural offences, sentenced to six months’ imprisonment, temporary suspension of promotions and a paltry sum as compensation to Maina’s family. The guilty officers did not have to serve the prison term because the court held that they had spent their time in confinement during the proceedings of the Court Martial.

Maina’s mother Devi felt the punishment was not commensurate with the crime, so she decided to file a case in the civil court. She registered a complaint with the police, but the investigation went nowhere. During this time, in March 2007, with the pressure from international human rights activists, Maina’s body was exhumed from Panchkhal barracks (Shrestha, 2016). When the body was found, Devi said she expected to find her daughter but instead found a skeleton. If Maina had indeed taken up arms, then Devi would not be questioning the army’s actions. But Maina was just a child.

In May 2007, the Supreme Court ordered that the army headquarters produce the original file concerning the Court Martial within a week. After much pressure and a ruling by the Supreme Court in September 2007 clearly stating that the case should be dealt with in a civilian court, a murder case was filed in the Kavre district court in January 2008. The court issued summons for the arrest of the four accused. However, none of them were arrested. The case was put on hold as the defendants did not show up (Shrestha, 2016).

After nearly 12 years, in 2016, the Kavre District Court issued an order to re-open the case and go ahead with hearing even though the defendants were not present. In April 2017, it found three army officers—Colonel Khatri, Captain Pun, and Captain Adhikari—guilty of murdering Maina. The court, however, acquitted Basnet stating insufficient evidence. Immediately contesting the Court’s decision, the Army filed a writ petition at the Supreme Court demanding the life-sentence of the three accused be annulled. The Army challenged the legitimacy of civilian courts to hear this case after it had conducted its own Court Martial (Dahal, 2023). The writ petition is still pending at the Supreme Court and perpetrators have not been punished yet (*Republica*, 2019).

In 2019, army officials approached Maina’s mother Devi with offers like setting up an endowment fund in Maina’s name in a school where she studied to install her statue. But Maina’s mother declined saying she wants nothing less than justice for her murdered daughter.

In February 2022, Maina’s mother wrote a letter to the Prime Minister. Her letter said:

My daughter would have been 33 this year. I had many dreams for her, as I am sure you do too about your son. Everything was robbed from me and my family. Although I will not be able bring my daughter back, and nothing could repair that loss, I want to see those responsible brought to justice. This will give a sense of security and hope, not only to me and my family, but also to hundreds of victims who suffered losses during the armed conflict. I have promised my daughter that unless I bring those perpetrators to justice, I will not rest. The remains of my daughter are still in the Teaching Hospital, and I am not able to perform her last rituals pending the implementation of court’s decision (NT, 2022; *Republica*, 2019).

The Story of Devi Khadka

Devi Khadka was born in Dolakha district, which is situated in the high mountains at an altitude of around 3842 meters. She was passionate about learning despite societal norms that limited girls' education in her village. While her brothers attended school, Devi, like many other girls, did not get that opportunity. People believed that if daughters were educated then they would elope away. She quenched her thirst for education by reading her younger brother's books. Her brother used to share everything he learnt in school. She also supported her younger brother with his homework. That is how she learnt to read and write.

Even though she did not have any formal education, she read a book called *Women, Bondage, and Liberation*. Being in the communist movement, her brothers also got involved in the 1990 multiparty democratic movement. Hence, she learnt about the oppression by rich people from them; she was also engaged in political activities against the autocratic regime. After the restoration of multiparty democracy, she felt the progress she expected on women's liberation did not come. She felt that "revolt" was the only means for women's liberation.

In 1996, her elder brother became involved in an underground Maoists' movement after which she could not even meet him. Then, she only had her younger brother at her home whom she loved enormously. Both felt that other communists' movements were degenerated thereby they both joined the Maoists' movement thinking that it would bring the necessary change.

In 1997, seventeen-year-old Devi was shopping for Diwali festival when she got arrested. The following excerpts adapted from the *Guardian* (Pattisson, 2024) explain the situation in police custody.

“Where is your brother?” The police shouted as they began to lay into Devi.

“We know you are going to meet him. Tell us where he is!” One of the officers kicked her hard in the stomach and she crumpled to the ground.

“For a few seconds, I blacked out,” says Devi. “I thought it was the end for me.” She lay in the dust, blood seeping from her nose.

The police, determined to drag information about her brother’s whereabouts out of Devi, hauled her off to jail, hung her upside down and continued the assault with bamboo canes.

It lasted for hours.

“I was vomiting blood. There were bruises all over my legs. I hoped they would just kill me quickly,” she says. Devi survived, but a week later she was transferred to the police station in Dhulikhel, a town near Kathmandu.

One night, still bruised and bloodied, she was taken to a hut outside the police compound. Inside was a group of male officers, drinking beer. They demanded she sign a document denouncing her brother, but she refused. “I told them I’m not going to sign anything. It’s better to kill me,” she says.

“If we’re going to kill you, let’s have some fun first,” they told her, before she was repeatedly raped.

Devi was eventually released with the help of human rights activists. The Maoist leaders publicized her as a rape “victim.” Tagged with this shameful taboo, Devi battled depression, anxiety, and social ostracism, joined the rebel frontlines, and rose through the ranks in the Maoist party to become a platoon leader.

Being raped hurt her self-esteem so much that Devi often contemplated ending her life. After her ordeal, the only thoughts that came to her mind was how to carry a gun and kill as many people as possible. Recognizing her fragile mental state, human

rights activists helped her with treatment in Kathmandu. She did not want to go back to her home. After the treatment for five months, she was mentally stable. However, she was emotionally fragile. She kept questioning herself, “why was I raped?” She channeled her pain into activism, becoming more involved in the Maoist movement.

After the Maoist came to the peace process, she became a parliamentarian. She was disappointed that the Constituent Assembly was not serious enough for the change. No action was taken against the preparators of rape or sexual violence during the war. While other victims such as internally displaced or injured received some relief package, the state did not even recognize victims of rape and sexual violence (Ghimire, 2024). The Maoist party kept quiet even when it led the government. Given “rape” was not registered in the government’s account, victims did not get any reparations. As the only public face of survivors, Devi took up the courage to speak about it. Her daughter did not know about her traumatic experience. Yet, Devi agreed to do a documentary to share her story.

She also travelled around Nepal, listening to stories of wartime rape survivors, and creating a unified voice for justice. Many women were raped countless times in the army barracks. Many got pregnant and were further victimized by social ostracization. Most of them are living with mental distress and other health-related complexities. Rape victims also had children whom they were not able to support. In one investigation, out of 127 victims, an overwhelming 70 per cent had one or multiple reproductive health complications. Most of these victims are from the marginalized communities (Ghimire, 2024).

Devi became the coordinator of the National Association of Conflict Rape Victims to seek justice for all victims. She also built a network across the country to address their mental and physical health needs. This was expected to contribute to

the identification of men and women who were victims of rape during the conflict so that they were rehabilitated and compensated. Her campaign was not easy. She and other victims felt more traumatized when speaking about their sufferings (Ghimire, 2024).

Devi's relentless advocacy has yielded a few progresses in the campaign to seek justice for conflict-era rape victims. Through her collaboration with the parliamentary committee, the Supreme Court decided to create a commission on this issue. Now, rape/sexual violence victims can file their cases. The state has recognized them as victims. However, given the delay in the transitional justice bill, which was ratified only recently, they are yet to be implemented.

As a result, none of the perpetrators of rape or sexual violence has been punished yet. The victims' association is demanding at least a guarantee of relief and reparation with the registration of the complaints at the transitional justice commission. Although a committee was formed which recommended immediate counselling, treatment, and interim relief to the victims, this has not been implemented yet (Ghimire, 2024).

Maina and Devi's cases can be considered as emblematic of "failure to address injustice" in Nepal's peace process. Women have been victims of violence not only during the war time but also before that. As one of the Maoist leaders puts it, women have been subjected to discriminations from "womb to tomb" (Yami, 2021, p.138). During the war, violence against women shot up because the rape and murder of women was one of the instruments of war used by the state army to defeat the Maoists (p.138).

Maina and Devi's stories have to be also understood from overall transitional justice process in Nepal. In May 2014, the Enforced Disappearances Inquiry and Truth

and Reconciliation Commission Act was promulgated by the parliament. As per the act, Truth, and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and the Commission on the Investigation of Enforced Disappeared Persons (CIEDP) were established to investigate abuses during the civil war (PARM, 2015, pp.1–20). In February 2015, the Supreme Court struck down the amnesty provisions for crimes such as torture, including rape and other sexual violence and ill-treatment and enforced disappearance in the Act (Library of Congress, 2015, para 1 & 2). However, the government petitioned to overturn the ruling. This petition was rejected by the Court in April 2020 (Human Rights Watch, 2020d, para 1).

The TRC has identified 314 cases as related to rape or sexual violence. There are a few cases of rape also from the Maoists (Ghimire, 2024). The TRC received 63,718 complaints of war-era crimes and atrocities. In seven years after its formation, the Commission conducted preliminary investigations of 4000 complaints and completed detailed investigation of merely 29 cases (Ghimire, 2021). Similarly, CIEDP received 3288 complaints of abuse committed during the 1996–2006 conflict out of which a list of 2513 was verified for further investigation. Since July 2022, these two Commissions have been without an office-bearer (CIEDP, n.d.).

Finally, the parliament has ratified the Act on 15 August 2024 (Bhusal, 2024) which was being delayed because of politicizing of the issue and using it as a bargaining tool in power-sharing (Email interview, Kathmandu, 13 June 2024). A Maoist leader blamed a few West-based international organizations for creating hurdles in implementing transitional justice (Personal Communication, Kathmandu, 16 July 2024). It is still not clear if the implementation of the Act would ensure justice to the victims such as Maina and Devi.

Equality

As pointed out by Wennmann (2009, p.17), widespread poverty and socio-economic inequalities have been a feature of Nepal's economy. Despite them being the key drivers of the armed conflict, the CPA failed to address the concentration of political and economic power in the hands of small elite at the cost of many marginalized groups.

The CPA called for ending all forms of discriminations based on class, caste, region, language, religion, gender, and all forms of caste-based untouchability (PARM, 2012, p.38–48). This was the key essence of Nepal's peace process and hence they have been institutionalized in the new Constitution. The Constitution commits to build an egalitarian society based on proportional inclusive and participatory principles in order to ensure economic equality, prosperity, and social justice by eliminating all forms of discrimination. It also encourages positive discrimination towards marginalized and excluded groups in education, health, employment, and social security (TCON, 2015, p.22). In line with the new Constitution, the government has introduced new laws promoting social inclusion and affirmative action.

Yet the marginalized groups claim that the reforms have not met their expectations to correct historical injustice (Gurung, 2022, p.2; Email interview, 10 November 2023). In the section below, I have analyzed inequality in Nepal because as argued by Galtung (2012, para 5) it is a good indicator of if peace is sustainable or not. I have categorized them as: 1) economic inequality, 2) regional inequality, 3) land inequality, and 4) social inequality.

Increasing Inequality

Nepal ranks fairly low in Oxfam and Development Finance International (DFI)'s Commitment to Reducing inequality Index (CRI), which ranks countries on their

policies to tackle inequality. In 2018, Nepal ranked the 138th out of 157 countries (Oxfam & Hami, 2019, p.9). As per the World Inequality lab, Nepal ranked in the 116th (Ventura, 2022). The remittance-based economy has helped in the reduction of poverty ratio by 5.3 per cent but deepened the poverty gap by 7.37 per cent and severity by 9.25 per cent. It has contributed to rising income inequality when compared to non-remittance receiving group (Salike, Wang & Regis, 2022, p.1). Sharma (2009, p.3) points out that the rural areas have lagged and the poor, less educated and landless had to contend with low opportunities.

Economic Inequality

Nepal ranks 81st out of 152 countries in economic inequality (DFI & Oxfam, 2017, p.19). The Gini index, which measures inequality per capita consumption, has not shown a notable change from when the insurgency started (32.2) and now (30.0) (NLSS, 2023, p.19). However, income Gini Coefficient (GC) shows an increasing trend. It steadily increased to 0.49 in 2010–11, one of the highest in the world, which is nearing an explosive state of 0.5. The income Gini Coefficient reached 0.58 in 2019 showing an alarmingly increasing trend (Pradhan, 2024; Oxfam & Hami, 2019, p.7).

The GC for wealth inequality in 2010/11 was 0.74 (per capita) which is even higher than income GC reflecting an extreme wealth concentration in Nepal. The richest 10 per cent of Nepal's population have more than the 26 times the wealth of the poorest 40 per cent. The Palma ratio which compares the income share of the top 10 per cent and the bottom 40 per cent shows a similar trend. The income of the richest 10 per cent is more than three times that of the poorest 40 per cent (Oxfam & Hami, 2019, pp.7–8). The poorest 40 per cent saw their income decline over a 15-year period, from 15.3 per cent in 1995/96 to 11.9 per cent in 2010/11, while the income shares of the top 10 per cent rose (Oxfam & Hami, 2019, p.17). Income and wealth

inequality also have overlapped with the region, caste, and gender hierarchy as explained in the section below (NPC, 2022, pp. 22–25).

Regional Inequality

NLSS (2023, pp. 19) shows a high disparity among rural and urban populations and the newly created provinces. For example, the incidence of poverty is higher in rural areas (24.66 %) than in urban areas (18.34 %); it was 21.55 per cent and 43.27 per cent respectively during 1995–96, which means the gap has improved. Four provinces out of seven provinces have a poverty rate higher than the national average of 20.27 per cent as shown by Table 3 (NLSS, 2023, p.19). Similarly, life expectancy in the remote far-Western regions such as Dolpa district is 61.2 years whereas in the districts in the capital Kathmandu such as Bhaktapur is 70.48 years. Likewise, the per capita income in remote districts such as Bajhang is USD 487 whereas it is USD 2764 in the capital Kathmandu (CBS, 2019). The overall data suggests that the regional inequality is high, and the improvements have been limited to addressing regional inequality. Table 3 below shows the public perception on the change in household income by demographic group (IDA, 2018, p.111).

Table 3: Province-wise Poverty, 2022–23

Province	Poverty Incidence			Distribution	
	Headcount rate	Poverty gap (x100)	Poverty gap squared (x100)	of the poor	of the population
Koshi	17.19	3.84	1.25	13.80	16.26
Madhesh	22.53	4.62	1.36	25.08	22.56
Bagmati	12.59	2.64	0.89	12.68	20.42
Gandaki	11.88	2.33	0.71	4.88	8.34
Lumbini	24.35	5.80	1.99	22.76	18.96
Karnali	26.69	6.25	2.16	6.74	5.12
Sudurpaschim	34.16	8.41	2.87	14.02	8.32

Source: NLSS, 2023, p. 14

Table 4: Change in Household Income by Demographic Group

		Increased %	Decreased %	Stayed the same %	Don't Know %
Ecological Region	Mountain	18.0	11.8	69.4	0.9
	Hill	21.4	11.6	66.2	0.7
	Terai	28.1	10.5	59.6	1.8
Residence	Rural Area	25.6	10.4	62.6	1.5
	Urban Area	20.3	13.9	65.1	0.6

Source: IDA, 2018, p.111

Land Inequality and Landlessness

The land reforms were included in the CPA and incorporated in the new Constitution which contains interconnected state obligations pertaining to access land to the marginalized. For example, recognizing ill effects of long-standing caste-based discrimination and socio-economic exclusion of Dalits, the Constitution obligates the state to provide land to landless Dalits. The state is also obligated to identify the freed bonded labourers, tillers, landless, and squatters and to rehabilitate them (Amnesty International, CSRC, Juri Nepal, 2019, p.7).

The Constitution has also provisioned for “scientific land reforms” by ending dual ownership of land for the benefit of farmers. It calls for increasing productivity through land plotting and by discouraging absentee land ownership. It also stipulates protecting and promoting rights and interests of peasants and utilizing land use policy for increasing production and productivity of agriculture and for commercialization, industrialization, diversification, and modernization of agriculture (TCON, 2015, p.33).

Following the promulgation of the new Constitution in 2015, the government amended the Lands Act 1964 in 2018 to provide land to landless Dalits. It introduced another amendment aimed at providing ownership of land for landless squatters and unmanaged dwellers. They are considered as the important steps towards addressing the landlessness among the Dalit and other communities who have been marginalized. However, they are critiqued for a lack of comprehensive approach to

address the issues related to exploitative land relations and lack of access to land for those who are dependent on land for livelihood (Amnesty International, CSRC, Juri Nepal, 2019, p.5). The implementation of reforms measures is considered weak.

Overall, agricultural land ownership is associated with lower poverty rates. See Table 5 below (NLSS, 2023, p.17). Land inequality is the oldest and most fundamental inequality in Nepal. More than 66 per cent of the population depend on land for their livelihood in Nepal, yet land is concentrated with a rich minority. The wealthiest 7 per cent of households own around 31 per cent of agricultural land. More than half of farmers own less than 0.5 hectares of land and 29 per cent– do not own any land at all. Only 3 per cent own land of more than 3 hectares. Women work long hours on agricultural land, yet 81 per cent are landless. Minorities are less likely to own land, with landlessness as high as 44 per cent among Dalits in the Tarai region (Oxfam & Hami, 2019, pp.22–24). Land inequality is also unfavourable towards women, ethnic minorities, and low caste Dalits (Kumar, 2019).

Table 5: Poverty and Land Ownership

Land ownership Status	Incidence			Distribution	
	Headcount rate	Poverty gap	Squared Poverty gap	of the poor	of the population
Nepal					
No Land	20.15	4.63	1.49	34.34	34.56
<0.2 ha.	23.32	5.22	1.76	22.62	19.66
0.2-1 ha.	20.36	4.27	1.37	35.16	34.98
1-2 ha.	16.14	4.25	1.51	6.18	7.76
2+ ha	11.38	2.20	0.65	1.70	3.04
Rural					
No Land	33.41	8.82	3.28	22.54	16.62
<0.2 ha.	27.13	6.56	2.23	22.34	20.30
0.2-1 ha.	23.48	4.97	1.61	46.30	48.62
1-2 ha.	16.88	3.23	0.95	7.36	10.74
2+ ha	9.91	2.11	0.53	1.50	3.70
Urban					
No Land	17.86	3.91	1.19	41.32	42.42

<0.2 ha.	21.57	4.60	1.54	22.78	19.38
0.2-1 ha.	18.07	3.76	1.19	28.56	29.00
1-2 ha.	15.61	4.99	1.92	5.48	6.44
2+ ha	12.25	2.25	0.71	1.84	2.76

Source: NLSS, 2023, p. 17

Social Equality

Although Nepal is a secular country, the caste system, patriarchy, and exclusionism continue to influence social interactions, formal and informal networks, and behavioural norms (USAID, 2020, p.9). Gender inequality cuts across all other forms of inequality in Nepal. Despite the increase in the political representation of women, they continue to face discriminations. Nepal scored a 0.659 for gender parity in the gender gap index in 2023 ranking 116 out of 146 countries; it performed best in the political empowerment with a ranking of 54. In terms of economic participation and opportunity, the country ranks 136. It ranks 127 in education attainment. In health and survival aspect, Nepal ranks 82 (World Economic Forum, 2023). These data show that despite notable strides on the political representation, women are discriminated in Nepal.

More importantly, women continue to suffer discriminations on the citizenship rights. For example, foreign women married to Nepalese men can become naturalized citizens immediately, but it is not vice-versa. There are also difficulties in transferring citizenship to children for women married to foreign citizens (Gurung, 2019, para 14; Rana, 2020, para 4). I was involved in the campaign for the equal citizenship rights for women in the new Constitution. During our campaign, political leaders cited “geo-political compulsions” (possible huge migration from India) and “historical reasons” (the provision originated to help Indian women who married Nepalese men to get quick citizenship). This justification has not satisfied a significant section of population who criticize this unequal treatment (Desouza, 2015).

From my own observations, preference for male child is pervasive in Nepal even in urban centres. A friend of mine, who is a gynecologist has shared with me several stories of female feticide even in urban areas. A British Medical Journal analysis claimed that 1 in 50 women were missing from the birth record in Nepal (Shetty, 2021, para 1). A gender analysis report states that women continue to suffer harmful practices under the veil of tradition and religion (USAID, 2020, p.31).

The CEDAW report (2018, p.6) points out such harmful practices as: *chhaupadi* (isolating menstruating females), child marriage, dowry, son preference, polygamy, discrimination against widows, accusations of witchcraft against women, discriminations against Dalit and indigenous women, *jhuma* (offering young girls to Buddhist monasteries to perform religious functions), *deuki* (offering girls to deities to fulfill religious obligations) and *dhan-khaane* (parents receiving money for the solemnization of the marriage of their children). The government has introduced several legislations to address these issues. However, their implementation has been poor (Karki, 2014, pg. 16; Puri, 2020; Yadav, 2024).

Similarly, social inequality such as discriminations based on caste and religion have not been fully eradicated in Nepal. For example, in Janakpur, Tarai, caste and religious discrimination persists even though they have been reduced compared to the past. Many Hindu “high caste” people do not eat the food cooked/touched by Muslims or Dalits. Inter-marriages between Dalits and non-Dalits are still discouraged at the community level even though the government has introduced policies (e.g., cash package) to encourage them (Interview, Kathmandu, 31 May 2024). One study found that 71 per cent of Dalit women faced public abuse for inter-caste marriages (Nagarik, 2024, para 1).

A survey claims 19.9 per cent of people feel that not having their mother tongue as Nepali puts them at a disadvantage at work and socially. However, only 3–5.1 per cent Nepalese report their ethnic/caste identity is a disadvantage across the situations such as work, in the government offices, health facilities among others. Similarly, 86 per cent believe that the status of women has improved in the last five years. A majority of 61.9 per cent Nepalese report that relationship between social groups including inter-ethnic groups is improving because of factors such as acceptability of inter-caste marriages (IDA, 2018, pp.40–58). The table below shows changes in household income by demographic group.

Table 6: Household Income by Caste Group

		Increased %	Decreased %	Stayed the same %	Don't Know %
Caste	Hill Caste	23.0	11.1	65.5	0.4
	Hill Adivasi/Janjati	23.1	11.5	64.0	1.4
	Hill Dalit	24.3	13.3	61.3	1.2
	Madheshi Caste (Socio Economic Level-1)	22.8	14.0	63.2	0.0
	Madheshi Caste (Socio Economic Level 2)	30.9	9.2	57.9	2.0
	Madheshi (Adivasi/Janjati)	28.2	11.5	59.4	0.9
	Madheshi Dalit	24.8	9.2	62.7	3.3
	Other Cultural Groups	20.8	20.8	58.3	0.0

Source, IDA, 2023, p. 111

Analyzing the Drivers of Inequality in Nepal

One of the key drivers of inequality in Nepal is considered as the neo-liberal economic model and the economic conditionalities of external institutions and investors. Technology and foreign direct investment have driven more liberalization. Nepal is one of the most highly liberalized countries in South Asia when judged in

terms of tariff structure, deregulation, and openness of economy (Oxfam & Hami, 2019, pp.8–9). This has led to a reduction in government interventions, including the absence of any welfare programmes for the most vulnerable groups explained above. Unfettered privatization, including that of health and education sectors pushed by the World Bank and IMF have also contributed to intense inequality. Health spending fell from 7.8 per cent of total spending in 2011/12 to just 4.79 per cent in 2023/24 and education spending dropped from 18.3 per cent to 11.25 per cent during the same period. This has adversely affected the poor who depend on public services. Around 60 per cent of rural households require over 30 minutes to reach the nearest public health facility (Pradhan, 2024, para 6).

Overall, it can be concluded that while there have been a few efforts at addressing socio-political, economic, gender and regional inequality, its results are not satisfactory. This is mainly because of three reasons. 1) Firstly, the implementation of the commitment towards equality enshrined in the new Constitution has been weak as their accompanying laws and policies are still to be formulated. 2) Interventions to reduce income economic inequality have been weak. Nepal as an aid-dependent country has constraints to move beyond the neo-liberal prescriptions of international financial institutions which invariably result into economic inequality as explained above, and 3) Efforts to reduce social inequality have also been inadequate with a focus mostly on legal reforms on eliminating caste discriminations; there have been no efforts at eliminating the caste system altogether.

Other Forms of Violence

One of the assumptions of sustainable peace for this research is that until the roots of violence are eradicated in the minds of people, violence could re-emerge in different forms as pointed out by Curle (as cited in Wadlow, 2014, pp.3–4) and other

literature based on Buddhism (*Dhammapada*, 1985, pp.33–43). Therefore, I have briefly investigated if other forms of violence have increased or not. Given the methodological challenges to investigate the promotion of inner peace, I have not made any conclusive claims. This section merely demonstrates that even though political violence has ended in Nepal, a few other forms of violence are increasing.

Gender-based violence (GBV) is pervasive and increasing (Karki, 2014, p.1; NPC, 2022, p.29; WOREC, 2021). As part of my professional work, I was involved in a campaign on ending violence against women in Nepal since 2014. There was no reliable comprehensive data from the government on gender-based violence. Therefore, we kept a record of all gender-based violence reported in the media from January 2018 to December 2019; we recorded around 705 cases including rapes, domestic violence, witchcraft among others. Other reports show similar high trends. The findings of a survey done by the National Planning Commission (2022, p.29) suggests that women experiencing violence are more in rural areas in terms of place of residence, Tarai among the ecological zones, and Madhesh province among the seven provinces. One report showed that 78.82 per cent of GBV was related to domestic violence (*Republica*, 2023a). I have presented an example of gender-based violence below that I was professionally involved with to show the intensity of the problem.

The Story of Rihana

Rihana Sheikh—a 19-year-old Muslim girl—was set on fire by her husband because they wanted her to get a motorcycle, a wristwatch, and a water buffalo as dowry. She was seven months pregnant when her husband tied her hands and put kerosene on her. The worst part was she was left to die in a room after she was burnt. It was only later when neighbours heard her cries that she was rescued (Gajmer,

2019). Earlier, she would be tortured with her husband burning her with cigarette butts (Shakya, 2014).

Rihana's case is representative of dowry-related violence prevalent in Tarai. While there is no systematic data on dowry-related violence from the government, there is a recognition that it is a prevalent problem. A human rights organization reported 12 victims of dowry violence in 2012, which increased to 26 in 2013. Women are physically beaten and mentally tortured on the dowry demands. Worst of all, they are even killed by their in-laws when demands are not met. There were ten cases of deaths in 2012 and 2013 (Karki, 2014, pp.26). Dowry violence is only among several domestic violence against women which has been increasing in the post-conflict order in Nepal.

Conclusion

The above analysis shows that Nepal's durable peace suffers from a few limitations, implying that its sustainability is questionable. The above analysis shows that the structural political transformations have been inadequate to satisfy different identity groups such as Madheshis and Janjatis. Moreover, even extreme injustice cases have not been addressed, let alone other transitional justice issues. Similarly, the most prioritized issue by Nepalese people—economic transformations to improve livelihood—were not adequately prioritized during Nepal's peace process. The bottom 40 per cent are still deprived of basic needs. Increasing economic inequality overlapping the social and regional inequalities have also been ignored. Likewise, social transformations have also been not deep enough; there were no efforts to end the discriminatory caste system. Therefore, the overall outcome of Nepal's peace process has been that the elites including the new elites from the Maoist party continue to dominate the structures of power. In other words, the fundamental problems of the

country—poverty, inequality, and injustice—remain the same even though there have been a few reforms to prevent a relapse of overt violence.

The above conclusion demonstrates that “durable peace” and “sustainable peace” are not interchangeable concepts. Nepal’s durable peace, despite its success in preventing relapse of overt large-scale political violence, is marked by injustice, inequality, a failure to ensure basic needs to the people at the bottom, and an emergence of other forms of violence. Nepal’s case shows that by legitimizing inequality and injustice, Nepal’s durable peace has undermined sustainable peace. Overall, Nepal’s case study exposes the inadequacies of the current hybrid peacebuilding approaches that result into durable peace rather than sustainable peace.

Chapter Seven: The Role of External Actors

This chapter explores the secondary question of this research: *What has been the role of external actors on the durability/sustainability of Nepal's peace process?* Scholars and experts have analyzed the external engagement in Nepal's peace process mainly through focusing on the key actors such as India, China, West (US, UK, EU) and the UN (Adhikari, 2017, pp.27–31; Campbell et al., 2012, p.21; Einsiedel & Salih, 2017, pp.6–10; Jha, 2012, p.332–359; Mage, 2007, pp.1834–1839; Martin, 2012, pp. 201–220; Muni, 2024, pp.57–91; 2012, pp.313–330; Uprety & Sapkota, 2017, pp.35–45; Suhrke, 2011, pp. 37–55; 2009, pp. 14–44; Whitfield, 2010, pp.1–20). Adopting a different approach, I have engaged with the question of external engagement by using the frameworks of liberal/emerging peacebuilding within a broader hybrid peacebuilding framework as elaborated in Chapter three.

This chapter starts with describing the evolving geo-political dynamics during the peace process because the latter occurred in the context of “the return of geopolitics” implying that geo-political rivalries had become central to world politics even though the US and EU preferred to move past geopolitical questions of territory and military power and focus instead on the ones of world order and global governance (Mead, 2014a, p. 69). I have situated my overall analysis on the engagement of external actors on the broader geo-political dynamics. Given that this research does not subscribe to clear-cut binary distinctions between domestic and external interventions, the analysis below focuses more on dynamic and circular interactions among the key actors of Nepal's peace process rather than their individual contributions.

Global and Regional Politics

It is important to understand Nepal's peace process through broader developments outside the country both at global and regional levels. A significant development at the global level with considerable implications for Nepal's armed conflict and the peace process was the 9/11 attacks and the consequent global "War on terror" (U.S., DoS, n.d.b). In the context of the War on Terror, Western states, mainly the US, increased their military support to Nepal's government to fight against the Maoists, which weakened the latter militarily (Interview with a top Maoist leader, Kathmandu, 7 November 2023; Mage 2007, p.1837; Muni 2012, pp.319–320). In 2005, the King tried to take further advantage of the global situation by projecting the Maoists as "terrorists" and his power grab as a fight against "terrorism" (Pokharel & Rana, 2013, p.14). In such a global context, the Maoists understood that if they escalated their armed actions further then it would invite external interventions like in Afghanistan (Gupta, 2022). This global situation prompted them to go for a negotiated settlement.

The regional context also favoured the ending of the armed war in Nepal. In the first decade of the twenty-first century, China, and India both geared up to be the global powers, and did not want any instability in their region. They were concerned about the increasing military engagement of the US and the UK in Nepal after 2001. China was mainly concerned about the implications of Nepal's armed conflict in its Tibet region (Bhattarai, 2005, p.22; Jaiswal, 2014, p.1; Saran, 2017, p.171) and wanted to promote stability in the bordering region (Vaughn, 2006, p.4). India had multiple security concerns—such as the links between the Maoists in India and Nepal, the use of Nepal's territory by the Pakistani-ISI, spillover of the conflict with potential destabilization in India's volatile northeastern states among others (Muni 2012, pp.320–324; Nayak, 2014, p.62; Vaughn, 2006, p.3). Overall, the security concerns of

the regional powers over Nepal's armed conflict had translated into support towards the negotiated settlement initiated by the Nepalese actors.

While analyzing the global and regional contexts, it is important to take note of the evolving relationships among these external powers because of their direct implications on Nepal's peace process. During the initial phase, in 2005, there was relatively good relationships between the US, China, and India. During the April 2005 visit of Premier Wen Jiabao to India, the two sides had established a Strategic and Cooperative Partnership for Peace and Prosperity (MEA, India, 2005c). In July 2005, the US and India had announced the Civil Nuclear Cooperation Initiative, which laid the foundation to their strategic partnership (MEA, India, 2005b., US DoS, n.d.c), signifying a good relationship between the two. China was also India's largest trading partner in 2008 (Campbell et al., 2012, p.14). The relations between China and the US were also considered as "stable;" the global war on terror had made China a strategic partner rather than a potential adversary to the American observers (Roy, 2005, pp. 1–2). This meant that the external powers cooperated with each other. The outcome was that they aligned on the core priorities of Nepal's peace process as articulated by its political leaders—ending of the armed conflict, bringing the Maoists into a democratic fold, the CA elections to draft a new Constitution, and the implementation of a republic.

This situation gradually changed after 2008 when Xi Jinping got elected as the vice president of China, which was seen as his stepping stone to presidency. Following Xi Jinping taking office in 2012, there were clear shifts in China's foreign policy towards Nepal. Xi articulated the "Chinese dream" of national rejuvenation, abandoning Deng's policy of hiding the capacities while binding their time. This policy caused changes in China's foreign policy behaviour (Baviera, 2016, p.59) with proactive nationalism

(Lawrence Kuhn, 2013, para, 19). This shift caused tensions in its relationship with both the US and India. The frictions in the Indo-Pacific between the US and China provides a good example of these new tensions (US, DoS, n.d.d). Particularly after China's support to Russia's attack on Ukraine, the trust between the two dipped even further. The relationship between India and China also deteriorated. The border standoff in 2017 in Doklam, and the Galwan clash in 2020 that led to the death of 20 Indian soldiers are conspicuous examples (Chengappa & Krishnan, 2017; Haidar et al. 2020). While China was wary of India due to its strategic relationship with the US, India was concerned about the growing nexus between China and Pakistan (Chhetry, 2021, p.6). This geo-political situation meant that major external powers competed among each other on the issues of Nepal's peace process rather than cooperating, as in the initial phase before 2008. In effect, in the latter phase, there was no alignment among the external powers on Nepalese actors' priorities relating to the peace process. The external engagement in Nepal's peace process was situated in this evolving broader geo-politics as further elaborated below.

External Engagement in Nepal's Peace Process

The external support to Nepal's peace process was mainly guided by their broader engagement in the country. Therefore, I have explained these engagements by categorizing them into three phases: 1) the post-royal takeover phase in 2005 after which major external powers shifted their support towards the peace initiatives by the Maoists and parliamentary parties; 2) the post-CA elections phase in 2008, after which a few major external powers aligned to weaken the Maoist party, which also resulted into undermining of the progressive agendas championed by the party; and 3) the post-Constitution phase in 2015 marked by an unprecedented engagement of China in Nepal and other powers' efforts at its containment, which further undermined the

progressive agendas because of the power struggle among the major external powers for their influence in Nepal rather than the concern for peace.

The Post-Royal Takeover Phase

The royal takeover in 2005 brought changes in the external engagement in Nepal's armed conflict. The external actors, who supported the military action till then, revised their policy to support the peace initiatives taken by the Maoists and parliamentary parties. In the aftermath of the royal takeover, major external powers such as India, the UK, and the US criticized the King's autocratic action and decided to stop arms supplies (Mage, 2007, p.1838; Saran, 2017, p.156; Vaughn, 2006, p.4). There was a growing realization among India, the US, and the UK that the King's military approach was "unwinnable," which contributed to a strategic convergence among them on Nepal to explore conflict resolution through means other than military. The UK and the US gave India the lead in Nepal to restore democracy and human rights. The US approach was to "wait and see" (Muni, 2012, p.325) but it was generally supportive of Indian and British approaches (Jha, 2012, p.355). In line with this policy, Western donors were openly critical of the King's autocratic regime and threatened to cut off aid (Suhrke, 2009, p.10).

As regards to India, following the royal takeover, it was compelled to change its policy of supporting the twin pillars of constitutional monarchy and multiparty democracy in Nepal (Jha, 2012, p. 334; Muni, 2024, p.58). The royal takeover in 2005 had come at a time when ending of the Maoist war had become a security imperative for India, as explained earlier. In addition to security considerations, India's foreign policy of "a peaceful and tranquil periphery" and "economic cooperation as the framework of integrated security in South Asia" also guided its approach towards Nepal during that time (Saran, 2005, para 15). Meanwhile, the change of government

from BJP-led to Congress-led coalition in 2004 in India also triggered policy shifts in its relation to Nepal. The new government depended on the support of the left parliamentarians who pushed the Indian government to change its attitude from a position of “unbridled hostility” towards the Maoists towards a willingness to accommodate their participation in talks from 2006 onward (Chaturvedy & Malone, 2012, p.298; Mage, 2004, p.1837).

Apart from these broader considerations, one of the key factors that pushed India to support the peace initiative was its deteriorating relations with the King (Saran, 2017, p.157). The King had failed to act on India’s suggestion to restore multiparty democracy even though he privately assured to do that (Muni, 2024, p.69). He also purchased arms from China, which was “the last straw on the camel’s back” that changed India’s approach to the King (Muni, 2012, p.323). This happened in the context when the King’s domestic support was eroded substantially. The combination of these factors led India to explore new options to end the Maoists’ armed conflict.

In this setting, when the Maoists and Seven Party Alliance (SPA) approached India to support them in overthrowing the autocratic monarchy in 2005, India saw it as an opportunity to both take revenge on the King for ignoring its requests and to find a peaceful solution to the ongoing armed conflict. A senior Maoist leader explained that given they were branded as “terrorists” by Nepal’s government, initially India was careful while engaging with the Maoists and had given the responsibility to its intelligence unit, the RAW. Its chief had made inquiries about the key Maoist leaders through his local networks and got convinced that the latter could be relied upon. The RAW then met with the top Maoist leaders (Confidential interview, 7 November 2023). The RAW Chief later claimed that they had hoped that the Maoist mainstreaming in

Nepal would also have a demonstrative effect for the Maoists in India (Tharakan, 2008, para 6).

The context above led India to promote the first 12-point understanding between the Maoists and SPA in 2005. India's exact role during this process is not clear (Suhrke, 2009, p.7). While a few Indian leaders and scholars argue that they brought the Maoists to the peace process (Muni, 2024, pp. 57–90; 2012, p.313), this claim is rejected by the Maoists who argue that they joined the peace process as part of their party's policy decision to engage in the peace process (Interview with top Maoist leader in Kathmandu, 3 April 2023).

The findings of this research shows that India's role was more of an international "guarantor" than a "facilitator."¹⁰ Given India's geo-political sensitivities, Nepalese leaders understood that it was not possible to succeed in the peace process without engaging with India (Interview with the peace negotiator in Kathmandu, 3 April 2023). At the same time, both the SPA and the Maoists did not trust India's intentions fully and kept the key content of the process in their control.¹¹ Nevertheless, India's financial contributions to promote an alliance among democratic parties as well as to the People's Movement in 2006, which implies its broader role, need to be also noted (Pokharel & Rana, 2013, p. 55; Jha, 2012, p.336). More importantly, India also played a crucial role in rallying the support of the broader international community to the peace process in the initial phase (Muni, 2012, p. 323; Einsiedel & Salih, 2017, p. 10). The former Indian Ambassador involved in Nepal's peace process S. Saran (Saran, 2017,

¹⁰Based on the document analysis as well as interviews. My claim also comes from having visited the venue of the 12-point understanding during my earlier research. Even though the understanding was signed in New Delhi, it had taken place in an ordinary rented flat of one of the Maoist sympathizers who was a migrant labourer (Pokharel & Rana, 2013, p. 44.48). If India was the facilitator, then it would have organized the venue.

¹¹Based on the interviews with the SPA leader Koirala and Maoist Chairperson Dahal in 2009 for the earlier book (Pokharel & Rana, 2013, pp.49–51)

p.157) and Whitfield (2012, p.166) have also claimed that India was “the guarantor” of Nepal’s peace understanding.

China was not directly involved in the first 12-point understanding, but India and China had been talking with each other on Nepal (Jha, 2012, p.353). China had supported a hardline approach towards the Maoists in order to stabilize Nepal (Campbell et al., 2012, p.12). China did not condemn the royal takeover like other Western countries and India, describing it as an internal matter. China had continued to supply arms to the royal government after the takeover (*BBC News*, 2005; Mage 2007, p.1838). However, as the King’s domestic and international support eroded following the takeover, China aligned itself with the new developments towards Nepal’s peace process. China’s policy towards Nepal at that time was guided by its larger strategic game in South Asia. In a press conference in January 2006, its foreign ministry spokesperson said China hoped Nepal could “stabilize as soon as possible” and all parties could narrow down their differences through dialogue and commit themselves to national development and prosperity (Embassy of PRC, 2006).

Unlike China, the US openly denounced the 12-point understanding, pointing out that the Maoists had not formally renounced violence (US Embassy, Nepal, 2005). Even though the US had halted arms supply,¹² its key approach was to encourage the rapprochement between the King and the parliamentary parties to weaken the Maoists. In May 2005, Christina Rocca visited Nepal emphasizing on reconciliation between the King and the parliamentary parties. She also stated that a Maoist takeover would have profoundly negative effects in Nepal and region and called upon the Maoists to renounce violence and engage in the political process (*THT*, 2005).

¹²Even though the US halted arms supply not to antagonize India and EU, it requested Israel for support, which sent “huge cache” to the army in August 2005 (Mage, 2007, p.1838).

Despite initial reservations, the US slowly came around to support India's approach towards a peaceful settlement in Nepal (Jha, 2012, p.355). This was also because of improving ties between the US and India, as explained above.

The international community (particularly India and the West) showed their explicit support to the peace process for the first time during the People's Movement in April 2006—one of the key milestones of the 12-point understanding. Many Western donors had cut foreign aid on its eve to pressurize the King to respect human rights and democratic freedom. They had extended both moral and financial support for the movement, which was successful finally leading to a CPA (Pokharel & Rana, 2013, p.55). It was in this context that the external actors had extended their direct support to Nepal's peace process.

The Post-Republican Phase (after 2008)

One of the shifts on the external engagement came in 2008 after a republic was declared and the Maoists emerged as the largest party in the CA. India, which did not trust the Maoists fully yet, was not prepared for the Maoists' victory (Jha, 2012, p.338; Muni, 2012, p.328; Muni, 2024, p.54). One of India's objectives of the peace process was to strengthen the middle ground of Nepal's politics, preventing the centre from turning too far to the left (Jha, 2012, p.343). A few sections of the Indian security forces were suspicious about the Maoists' long-term intentions (Muni, 2012, p.328).

Therefore, India's policy towards the Maoists was to "engage, coerce, co-opt and try to divide the leadership without making any concessions while working toward frustrating, weakening and isolating the cadres" that it had used with some success towards its own militant groups in Kashmir and the northeast (Jha, 2012, p.344). India's policy aligned with the US policy of preventing a Maoists takeover of the state (Vaughn, 2006, p.17). One of its implications was India prevented the Maoists from

leading the government after the army chief episode till certain conditions were met, despite them being the largest party (Jha, 2014, p.164–168). As the Maoist party was undermined, progressive agendas raised by them were also weakened.

The policies of China also changed after 2008 (Chhetry, 2021, pp.4–9). It was triggered by the extended anti-China protests by the Tibetan refugees in Kathmandu preceding the Beijing Olympics. These protests convinced China that any understanding with India about minimizing US presence had broken down (Dixit, 2010, p.127). Tibetan refugees and the Western countries in Nepal were also accused of supplying arms to the protestors in Tibet (Pradhan, 2022, para 10). When the Maoists emerged as the largest party, China saw it as an opportunity to cultivate a new ally in Nepal. Given other political parties such as the NC was perceived as pro-India, the Maoists, known for its anti-India and anti-US rhetoric, were more amicable to Beijing (Jaiswal, 2014, p.2). The Maoists also pursued better relations with Beijing to develop leverage vis-à-vis Delhi, crossing a major “Indian red line” (Chaturvedy & Malone, 2012, p.300). During this time, China also strengthened its relationship with other political parties. India’s over interference in Nepal’s domestic affairs after 2006 in return for its support to the latter’s peace process and the restoration of democracy had irritated Nepalese leaders and they were willing to engage with China to counterbalance India (Sharma, 2024, p.26).

In turn, China increased an overall engagement in Nepal scaling up both economic/military aid and diplomatic interactions (Campbell et al., 2012, p.1, Chhetry, 2021, p.3). In January 2012, when China’s PM Wen Jiabao visited Nepal, he pledged USD119 million aid, which included economic and technical assistance to Nepal police (Lei Ravelo, 2012). In 2014, China overtook India as the largest foreign investor in Nepal (Krishnan, 2014). China’s enhanced role in Nepal was guided by its regular

objectives relating to the security of Tibet. A new dimension was investing in strategically important infrastructure projects—like airports and important highways—to increase its influence. China was also interested to have Nepal as its new strategic partner (Nayak, 2014, pp.81–91). China also engaged in Nepal through its soft power such as through setting up the China Study Centres as well as a Confucius Institute in one of Nepal’s universities (Campbell et al., 2012, pp.8–9).

The increased Chinese engagement was also a result of China’s periphery diplomacy endorsed in 2013, after Xi Jinping took office, which stipulated that China was no longer content to be passive recipient of the strategic currents in Asia, and that it would take more initiative to actively shape its regional context (Boon & Wang, 2019, pp.6–7). China was also in favour of completing peace and the new constitution-making process in Nepal to ensure regional stability. China prioritized stability above ideology and hence did not show inclination to promote any ideological agenda in Nepal and was ready to do business with whoever was in power (Campbell et al., 2012, p.12).

India was concerned about China’s increasing influence in what has been historically regarded as its sphere of influence (Campbell et al., 2012, p.13). Hence, India also enhanced its engagement in Nepal to compete with China’s growing influence in the region. After the election of BJP in 2014, the new prime minister N. Modi put forward a “Neighbourhood First” policy. This policy, inter-alia, aimed at enhancing physical, digital, and people-to-people connectivity across the region as well as augmenting trade and commerce (MEA, India, n.d.a). Modi became the first prime minister from India to visit Nepal after a gap of 17 years (NDTV, 2014). Modi’s special attention to Nepal under this policy was also evidenced by his frequent visits to the country. The new BJP government’s key priorities were: 1) accommodation of

the Madheshi demands, and 2) restoration of “the Hindu character of state” (Muni, 2024, p.77). Till then India’s approach was considered as short-term and tactical unlike the strategic long-term approach of China (Campbell et al., 2012, p.20).

The former Indian ambassador to Nepal R. Rae has explained that they wanted accommodation of Madheshi issues so that there was stability in the Tarai region. Given the sizeable numbers of the Madheshi people, if their aspirations were not met then the Tarai plains it would be vulnerable to growing external presence that would be “inimical” to India’s interests and security. They were also concerned about “Pakistan-sponsored terrorist activities,” mosques and madrasas increasing in the border areas, and a growing presence of Western NGOs involved in proselytization in both the hills and the Tarai (Rae, 2021, pp.96–97).

Similarly, the BJP government was inclined towards restoration of the “Hindu identity” of the Nepali state. During the constitution-making process, the BJP government invited Nepalese leaders to share its preference. Nepalese leaders only partially implemented these issues in the new Constitution. Moreover, Nepal’s government had refused PM Modi’s request to address in Janakpur (Tarai) during his second visit in 2014, citing security reasons. All the above factors led to a clash of egos leading to India’s stiff attitude towards Nepal. They culminated into the form of undeclared economic blockade after the promulgation of the new Constitution (Muni, 2024, pp. 80–81).

China’s growing role in Nepal did not just shift the balance of power vis-à-vis India, but it also affected the role and influence of Western powers including to influence the peace process. China’s increased support meant that Nepal became less dependent on Western aid. It was considered to have resulted into decreasing leverage of Western aid to persuade the Nepal government to address some of the

more difficult aspects of the conflict such as security sector reform, transitional justice, human rights abuses, which needed to be addressed for sustainable peace (Campbell et al., 2012, p.20). However, China and the West aligned with each other on the shared concern of finalizing the new Constitution to complete the peace process.

The above analysis clearly shows that in the post-CA phase in 2008, external powers became more concerned about their own strategic interests. As part of safeguarding their interests, India deemed it important to weaken the Maoist party as the latter was also perceived as intimate with China. Undermining of the Maoists contributed to weakening of the progressive agendas championed by the party. This became a turning point, after which the momentum of progressive changes ushered in by the People's Movement was halted in Nepal.

The Post-Constitution Phase (after 2015)

As explained in Chapter five, India did not support the promulgation of the new Constitution in 2015 because Nepal's government defied its request to delay the new charter. There was a perception among the hill communities in Nepal that India instigated the Madheshi protestors along its border areas to blockade the flow of goods to the hills because the Madheshi protestors by themselves would not have been able to do so if India had stopped them (Interview with a senior political leader, Kathmandu, 25 July 2024). Therefore, the blockade of goods in the border areas by the Madheshi agitators was seen as an undeclared economic blockade from India by a majority of Nepalese people.

During this economic blockade (Pokharel, 2015) from India, Nepal turned to China and the two developed an unprecedented proximity. In 2016, Nepal and China agreed on a number of deals aimed at reducing Nepal's long economic dependence on India in areas of free trade, transit transport, connectivity, and economic

cooperation (Ramachandran, 2016; *TKP*, 2016c). In April 2017, Nepal and China held their first-ever joint military exercise known as “Sagarmatha¹³ Friendship–2017,” to be followed by the second version in 2018 (Ghimire, 2018; *THT*, 2017). In May 2017, Nepal also signed a MoU under the BRI (Belt and Road Initiatives) framework for further bilateral cooperation in line with its aspiration to be a “land-linked” instead of “land-locked” (*Xinhuanet*, 2017a; 2017b, para, 1). In terms of development disbursement, China allocated USD 453.763 million from 2014 to 2021, which was more than the amount from India even though the latter remained the higher trading partner (Johny, 2024, p. 9). In 2019, when President Xi Jinping visited Nepal, he provided USD 500 million economic aid and signed 18 agreements in areas of connectivity, security, border management, trade, tourism, and education (*Al Jazeera*, 2019).

One of the implications of an increased Chinese engagement in Nepal was its involvement in the domestic affairs marking a departure to its earlier non-interference policy. In 2017, China facilitated the unification of the two major communist parties (Bhatta, 2023b, p.90; Gokhale, 2022, para 2). Similarly, there were also delays ratifying the US-supported USD 500 million Millennium Challenge Cooperation (MCC) grant by the parliament signed in 2017 on Nepal’s request; this was perceived as due to China’s pressure, which saw the MCC as a ploy to counter its BRI project (Kumar, 2021, para, 13; Jha 2022). China also considered Western INGOs in Nepal as a threat (Sharma, 2021, p 96), which led Nepal government to tighten its grip against Western INGOs. In 2019, when China condemned the US economic sanctions on Venezuela, the ruling Communist party in Nepal issued a similar statement, making it the first instance of Nepal taking a stance against the US on the matters of Latin America

¹³A Nepali name for the Mount Everest

(Jacquard, 2020, para 4). In 2023, China's ambassador openly critiqued India's policy towards Nepal, describing it as "less than ideal" in the first instance of a Chinese envoy making such comments (Chaudhury, 2023).

China's growing influence in Nepal with direct implications on the US aid cooperation prompted the latter to increase its diplomatic engagements (Kugelman, 2023, para 4). In 2022, a US diplomat warned that Nepal's failure to ratify the MCC grant would be seen as "Chinese interference" and threatened to "review" US-Nepal ties if Nepal did not ratify the MCC. This came after China openly discouraged Nepal to ratify the MCC, encouraging Nepalese leaders to think twice before accepting a Pandora's box (Mulmi, 2022b). The US' explicit warning pushed the Nepal government to ratify the MCC. Given fierce opposition from the ruling coalition's members, "an interpretative declaration" that specified Nepal shall not be a part of any strategic, military or security alliance including the Indo-Pacific strategy was added (Shrestha, 2023).¹⁴ Washington was considered to have made inroads in the country through MCC despite China's high investment (Gokhale, 2022). In response, China "noted" the passage of MCC and its "interpretive declaration," showing its displeasure subtly (NFA, 2022).

The US government also increased its overall engagements in Nepal because it realized that India was not a reliable partner in countering China particularly in its dealings with Nepal (Phuyal, 2023). Soon after the MCC was ratified, the US provided additional aid of USD 659 million to support Nepal's priority sectors such as education, health, economic development and strengthening the democratic institutions (Giri & Shrestha, 2022; MOFA, Nepal, 2022). There have been also the high-level US

¹⁴This is an example of how foreign aid, irrespective of its intentions, could be a source of conflict in the recipient country.

delegation visits to Nepal (Poudel, 2023b). In 2019, the US also accepted Nepal's request to join the State Partnership Program (SPP), which its government claimed was not part of any military alliance (US Embassy, Kathmandu, 2022). Despite US's assurance, Nepal government decided not to join the SPP in June 2022 as it was perceived as a military pact (Balachandran, 2022; Giri & Pradhan, 2022).

In the context of competition from China and the West, India has been also trying to protect its space and constrain the role of others in Nepal. India has been particularly insecure about China's aggressive investment in energy infrastructure and its increasing presence throughout the Indian Ocean have triggered its fears of strategic encirclement by states allied to China (Dixit, 2010, p.125). India saw Nepal's growing proximity with China to as a threat to their interest. The Indian Ambassador Rae has admitted that India "jettisoned" the Madheshi cause in the hope that Nepal would step back from its embrace of China (Rae, 2021, p.97).

It is also important to note that in the latter phase of Nepal's peace process, India's policy has been also to deter any violent movements in Nepal particularly from the Madheshis in the border areas. A few evidence can be presented to support this claim. In 2019, India pushed a radical secessionist Madheshi group led by CK Raut to join the political mainstream (Ghimire, 2019, para 2; Interview with political analyst in Kathmandu, 25 May 2023). Similarly, India coerced Madheshi armed groups to reach agreements with the Nepal's government by handing information about their whereabouts to the latter and even handing over individuals to Nepal's security forces (Interview with political analyst in Kathmandu, 25 May 2023; Jha, 2014, pp. 240–248). This policy contrasts with its policy towards the Maoists who were allowed to operate freely in India. India's policy to constrain overt violence in Nepal has been supported by China, who does not want any violent disturbance in its neighbourhood either

(Interview political analyst in Kathmandu, 25 May 2023). Both India and China are concerned about a possibility of increasing Western presence if a violent conflict relapses or breaks out.

Assistance to Nepal's Peace Process

The external support to Nepal's peace process operated within the constraints of broader geo-politics and overall engagement with Nepal, as explained above. This research has analyzed this external support through the conceptual frameworks of liberal peacebuilding and peacebuilding of emerging actors within a broader hybrid peacebuilding framework as formulated in Chapter three.

Liberal Peacebuilding

The key element of liberal peacebuilding in Nepal's peace process was the direct engagement of the UNMIN. In addition, other Western donors also supported it. Although they were not a homogenous group, they were recognized by a loose consensus on the liberal framework to promote peace. Their role has been analyzed as follows:

The United Nations Mission in Nepal

The UNMIN formally started its engagement in Nepal's peace process in January 2007 as stipulated by the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA). The mission closed down in January 2011. The involvement of the UNMIN has been elaborated below.

Background

The UNMIN's engagement in Nepal needs to be understood from Nepal's broader engagement with the UN. Since 1958, Nepal has been contributing to the UN peacekeeping forces and is among the top countries to do so. As a small country

sandwiched between two giants, Nepal recognizes the importance of engaging with multilateral entities like the UN (Poudel, 2023a). More importantly, there is a sense in Nepal that the UN is better than any other bilateral engagements (Lal, 2006b). Hence, the UN's engagement in Nepal's peace process was requested by Nepalese actors themselves.

As the armed conflict intensified in early 2000, the UN offered its “good offices” for dialogue in 2002. A top peace negotiator shared that when the UN showed interests to facilitate Nepal's peace process in early 2000, they realized that the UN was better than the big powers (Interview in Kathmandu, 3 April 2023; *CNA Insider*, 2024). As the Maoists responded positively, in 2003, the UN General Secretary sent his senior political representative, Samuel Tamrat, to Nepal to explore if the UN could assist with the ongoing peace process. While he met with political leaders and other relevant actors, he talked to the Maoists through the help of an interlocutor—Padma Ratna Tuladhar—who was a respected human rights activist. According to Tuladhar, India was not happy about the possible UN involvement at that stage. The Indian Ambassador told him that they were ready to provide any kinds of support that Nepal needed, and there was no need for the UN to intervene. China was less concerned about the UN's involvement at that stage, which he assumed was because of its veto power (Pokharel & Rana, 2013, p.78; *CNA Insider*, 2024).

India's reluctance towards the UNMIN has been interpreted differently (Jha, 2012, p.351; Muni, 2012 pp.325–326; Nayak, 2014, p.29). Suhrke (2009, p.24) explains that India's perspective of the UN was at best “unruly” and “unpredictable,” and at worse, “an instrument of India's adversaries.” Moreover, India could not trust anyone for protecting India's interests. A senior Indian official was quoted: “Regardless of the irritants, no one understands each other better than India and Nepal. Everyone

else would come and meddle ...and if anything went wrong, they could dash off with their first-class tickets” (Whitfield, 2012, p.160).

After Tamrat’s visit, a series of dialogues with the UN officials and Nepal’s political actors continued. In April 2005, the office of the OHCHR headed by Ian Martin was set up to assist the authorities in promoting/protecting human rights (UN, 2005). Martin (2010, p.viii) was in dialogue with the Maoists as part of the agreement to engage all relevant actors for ensuring international human rights and law. In this context, one of provisions of the 12-point stipulated that the Nepal Army and the Maoist army shall be under the supervision of the UN or any other “reliable” international actor to conduct fair elections (PARM, 2012, p. 7–8; UN, 2005). The Maoists calculated that the UN would be the best option to assist with arms management because there was no reliable national mechanism to do so (Interview with the top peace negotiator, 3 April 2023).

The Maoists’ thinking aligned with the SPA leader. Whitfield (2012, p.170) claims that the SPA leader Koirala put it “starkly” to India that either a UN role was to be accepted, or it must assume the responsibility of arms management in Nepal by itself. Unwilling to take on this role, Indian officials “grudgingly” accepted UN’s role (Brubaker & Upadhyay, 2021, p.22). A journalist has also explained that Koirala’s preference for the UN came from the assumptions that the international community would check “any excesses” by the Maoists (Jha, 2014, p.142). As a compromise, India agreed to a narrow civilian role of the UN with an initial mandate of 12 months (UN, 2007).

In June 2006, an eight-point agreement was stipulated to formally invite the UN to support the management of arms and armies of “both sides” and monitoring them during the elections (PARM, 2012, pp. 20–21). It is important to note that during the

initial phase, the Nepal army was considered as a potential spoiler to Nepal's democratization and peace process, given its earlier role in supporting the King's takeover (Pokharel & Rana, 2013, p.111). Therefore, the agreement stipulated monitoring not just the Maoist army but both. For the Maoist leadership, the provision of the supervision of both the armies was important also to assure their rank and file that they had not surrendered (Interview with senior Maoist leader in Kathmandu, 8 April 2024; *CNA Insider*, 2024).

In August 2006, the Nepalese government and the Maoists finally reached an agreement on the UN's role and wrote separate but identical letters requesting the UN to assist in the peace process (leaving the storage for weapons to be discussed later), especially in relation to monitoring: human rights through OHCHR; the Code of Conduct during the ceasefire, arms, and armed personnel of both the sides and observation of the Constituent Assembly elections. These requests involved the deployment of qualified UN personnel to monitor and verify both the confinements of Maoist combatants and weapons within designated cantonment areas (Pokharel & Rana, 2013, p.79; UN Press, 2006).

The Preparatory Phase

In response to the invitation, the UN appointed Ian Martin as the Personal Representative of the UN Secretary General in late August 2006 (UN, 2006b). Martin was assisted by a small team of political, military, electoral and ceasefire monitoring advisors. This team engaged with important political actors to forge an agreement on the specifics on the UN's mission's role in the peace process particularly in relation to the monitoring of the Maoists arms and combatants (Martin, 2010, p.viii). Another peace agreement on 8 November 2006 further elaborated the role of the UN, which was incorporated in the CPA (PARM, 2012, pp.31–37).

The CPA stipulated seven cantonments and 21 sub-cantonments for the verification and monitoring of the Maoist cadres. It also specified the provisions for the UN monitoring of the storage of the Maoist weapons in the cantonments by the concerned party (PARM, 2012, pp.31–37). In line with the CPA, the UN also facilitated signing of an Agreement on Monitoring of the Management of Arms and Armies (AMMAA) on 8 December 2006. This agreement stipulated a UN mission and the joint monitoring coordination committee to assist the parties in implementing the previous agreements (Pokharel & Rana, 2013, p.80).

A senior leader divulged that Martin informally engaged with political parties to guide the drafting of the CPA. The UN's perceived legitimacy and Martin's personal rapport with political leaders made his intervention successful (Interview with senior Maoist leader, 8 April 2024). A few distinct patterns stood out in the CPA. The CPA's title was different from other locally driven agreements in Nepal such as 12-point or 6-point peace agreements. New elements, which are observed in other UN-led peace processes, such as "conflict management," "socio-economic transformations," "democratization of army" was incorporated in the CPA. Similarly, institutional mechanisms such as the peace and reconstruction commission, truth and reconciliation commission, state restructuring commission and local committees were incorporated. With the involvement of the UN, the liberal peace approaches interacted with the locally driven peace approaches in Nepal. The positive outcome of this was the incorporation of socio-economic issues, which were ignored in the earlier agreements.

Formal Involvement of the UNMIN

The UNMIN was not established as an integrated mission or with a mandate for peacebuilding, yet it sought to adopt an integrated approach to its responsibilities

and engaged with other actors in the UN system (Whitfield, 2012, p.4). It immediately engaged in the verification of the Maoist army to filter out those recruited after 2006 and minors. In March 2007, the UNMIN reported over 31,000 Maoist army personnel who were placed in 28 cantonment sites supervised by unarmed UN monitors. This created a controversy because the Maoist army personnel were expected to be around a maximum of 8000 to 10,000. The UNMIN was criticized for not being able to distinguish between the genuine Maoist fighters and fake ones (*THT*, 2009b; Nayak, 2014, p.51). In a video tape of the Maoist Chairperson in January 2008, he said that they had inflated the numbers for the UN verification to project their armed strength (*Nepalnews*, 2008). While the UNMIN defended its position (*THT*, 2009b), a senior Maoist leader confirmed that their army was around 5000–6000, and the remaining were from their youth militia group (Confidential interview with senior Maoist leader, 11 June 2023).

Similarly, the number of weapons deposited for the UNMIN monitoring was 2855 (UN, 2007), far less than the verified armed cadres—which was again controversial. A senior Maoist leader shared that SPA leader Koirala himself had instructed them not to handover all the weapons. Koirala was worried that the King could be a disrupter using the Nepal army, so he wanted the Maoists' arms as a shield. The Maoist leader also admitted that they had exaggerated about their weapons during the peace negotiations to project their strength (Confidential interview with senior Maoist leader, 11 June 2023),

The UN also set up an election support unit in the Election Commission of Nepal (ECN) as per the request from the latter. They had decided to invite the UN for technical support to ensure that the Maoists accepted the election' results. The ECN was disappointed with UN's role because of gaps in expectations. A serious friction

occurred also because international experts who came to Nepal with prior experience from Iraq and Afghanistan expected to run the entire elections. When they saw the fully functioning Commission, they did not know what their role should be (Pokharel & Rana, 2013, pp.73–99).

The UNMIN also made a determined effort to reach out to marginalized groups as an effort to communicate with the Nepali society through its public information strategy (Whitfield, 2010, p.4). When the Madheshi agitations broke out in January 2007, the UNMIN showed immediate concerns and engaged with them. While the Madheshi leaders appreciated this role initially, others opposed this. Nepalese leaders claimed that by raising the expectations of specific ethnic groups in a country known for its ethnic diversity, the UNMIN was triggering unavoidable conflict. India was also concerned that the UNMIN would mess it up (Suhrike, 2009, p.7). The Madheshis themselves were soon disappointed with the UNMIN. They complained that the UNMIN staff would come in their big cars and ask questions like journalists but do nothing except draft reports to the headquarters (Jha, 2012, p.350). In September 2007, there was a controversy when two officials from the two UN agencies went to India to meet with leaders from an armed group in Tarai, which was a splinter faction of the Maoist party. The Indian Embassy officially objected to this visit (OCHA, 2007).

During the election campaign, the UNMIN received the most opposition. The leaders of older political parties criticized the UNMIN's failure to stop the Maoists from using violence during the election campaign. In its defense, the UNMIN claimed that they did not have any enforcement power to stop the Maoists. The UNMIN criticized the Maoists' violent activities through press statements, but such actions were hardly adequate as deterrents. The ECN Chief has admitted that the election field was

marked by unequal players, one with an army and others without (Pokharel & Rana, 2013, p.151).

As its mandate neared expiry in January 2008, the UNMIN sought a more active role in the peace process including the expansion of mandate to use its good offices in Tarai (OCHA, 2007). However, the Nepal government rejected it. By this time, a large section of the Nepalese society (mainly older parties) and India had begun to feel that the UNMIN had failed to “tame” the Maoists, and its neutrality suited the latter, who continued to use violence and coercion (Brubaker & Upadhyay, 2021, p.20). China was concerned over UN’s active role in a country neighbouring Tibet (Suhrke, 2009, p.7). The Maoists were also not happy with the UNMIN’s role at that stage and accused it of meddling in internal affairs of Nepal (OCHA, 2007). After the CA elections, even though its term was extended a few times, the status of the mission was downgraded and downsized (Suhrke, 2009, p.30).

In January 2011, the government decided not to extend the UNMIN’s mandate any further even though arms management was not settled. An agreement between the government and the Maoist leader stipulated that a local special committee would take responsibility of the combatants and weapons in the Maoist cantonments (PARM, 2012, p.90). The UNMIN’s departure was guided by mainly geo-political reasons as both India and China were against its extended presence in Nepal (Nayak, 2014, p.179). Moreover, the Nepal army was not happy with the UN’s role in monitoring army/arms of both parties as encapsulated in the CPA. The exit of the UN mission was the army’s primary objective (Sharma, 2017, p.42).

Overall, the performance of the UNMIN has received mixed reviews. Its role as a “security guarantor,” which enabled the Maoists to trust them to handover their army and arms to the UN-monitored cantonments has been appreciated (MFA, Denmark,

2013; Suhrke, 2009, p.7). However, the UNMIN was criticized for not systematically analyzing the root causes of conflict and providing a comprehensive peacebuilding strategy (Campbell et al., 2012, p.77). The UNMIN was also accused of not adequately raising the issue of dismantling the Maoists' military wing (Dixit, 2010, para, 8). One evaluation points out the mismatch between expectations regarding the UNMIN. The elites were considered as being hostile towards the UNMIN because they championed the cause of the marginalized (Brubaker & Upadhyay, 2021, p.21). A political leader counters this by arguing that they were concerned about the UNMIN's foray into engaging with the deep-rooted exclusion problems of Nepal because it did not have an adequate capacity to engage with such sensitive issues in a highly diverse social context (Interview, Kathmandu, 13 July 2023).

Western Donors

In addition to the UNMIN, other Western donors also supported Nepal's peace process through other mechanisms. Nepal, being the "darling of donors," had around 50 bilateral and multilateral donor agencies and more than 100 INGOs, which regularly provided aid at the time of the peace process. In 2006, aid accounted for 60 per cent of the national development budget and approximately 90 per cent of overall development expenditure making Nepal an aid-dependent country (International Alert, 2006 p.2; *Nepali Times*, 2014, para 3). While no combined records of the financial support to peace process is available, one report estimates it to be around USD 300–400 million (MFA, Denmark; 2013, p.9). Their contributions have to be understood from the broader development cooperation in Nepal, as explained below.

When the conflict escalated in early 2000, a wide range of institutions and individual conflict resolution experts, funded or deployed by donor agencies, expressed interest to facilitate a peace process in Nepal. A few organizations that

strove to promote dialogue between the Maoists and the government in early 2000s were: the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (CHD), Carter Center, Crisis Management Initiative, Community of Sant'Egidio, Fredrich Ebert Stiftung, International Alert, International IDEA. In addition, there were workshops organized by Denmark, Finland, Germany, Sweden, Switzerland, the UK, and the US with attempts to draw experiences from Northern Ireland, South Africa, India, among others. However, their support was “entrepreneurial” and not based on the invitation from Nepal. They had also not coordinated with India due to the assumption that it would not welcome their involvement (Whitfield, 2012, pp.159–160).

Once the CPA was signed in November 2006, it became conducive for Western state and non-state actors to get involved in peacebuilding. They contributed funds mainly through two joint funding mechanisms: the Nepal Peace Trust Fund (NPTF) and the United Nations Peace Fund for Nepal (UNFPN) (Frieden, 2012, pp.108–109). Moreover, international financial institutions such as the World Bank also contributed to Nepal's peacebuilding through its Emergency Peace Support project such as the payment of allowances to the Maoists in the cantonments and through its development programmes (OCHA, 2009). In addition, several INGOs supported by the donor agencies also adapted their project to contribute to the ongoing peace process. The analysis in this section below is based on my experience of working both in a donor agency and a few Western INGOs for nearly two decades.

The NPTF, set up by the government in 2007, was the key mechanism for harmonizing donors' support with local needs. One of its mandates was to act as a funding mechanism for assistance to the peace process for the government and donors. The NPTF's key role was to support the implementation of the CPA and other subsequent peace agreements. This was to be achieved through a series of activities

broadly categorized into four clusters: 1) cantonment management and rehabilitation of combatants; 2) conflict affected persons and communities; 3) security and transitional justice; and 4) CA and peacebuilding initiatives at local and national levels. The key donors for the NPTF have been UK, Switzerland, Denmark, Norway, Finland, US, EU, Germany (NPTF, n.d.; NPTF, 2015b, p.4–21). Between its inception and January 2014, the Nepal government provided NPR 11.3 billion and its eight donors contributed NPR 9.3 billion, a total of USD 208.6 million (OCHA, 2015). Its project activities ranged from addressing immediate needs—such as providing blankets to the Maoists in cantonments before the winter—to broader issues relating to consolidation of the peace process (MFA, Denmark, 2013, p.13; Wilson, 2013, p.8). The NPTF also supported Nepal Transition to Peace (NTTP)—a mechanism for non-formal dialogue processes—set up in 2005 to promote the peace negotiations. This platform facilitated informal dialogues between the SPA and the Maoists at various levels with the involvement of civil society leaders. This mechanism also facilitated regular informal dialogues of all major national and region-based political actors (Uprety & Sapkota, 2017, p.26; *CNA Insider*, 2024).

In addition to NPTF, the UN Peace Funds for Nepal (UNPFN) was also set up in March 2007 as complementary to the former, to mobilize UN agency support to the implementation of the peace process on tasks that cannot be funded or implemented through existing mechanisms. The UNPFN has received funds from the UN Peacebuilding Fund (the largest contributor) and the governments of Canada, Denmark, Norway, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom. During its lifetime, the UNPFN has received a total of USD 27,247,325 including the interests from different bilateral donors, out of which USD 25,799,790 was transferred to 18 projects

implemented by 11 UN partner agencies (MFA Denmark, 2013, p.10; UNDP, 2016, pp.7–11).

The UNPFN's priorities evolved from short-term peacebuilding priorities to an enhanced focus on the peace and development nexus. The UNPFN also formulated a strategic UN approach to support peacebuilding in Nepal. The key areas of its projects were 1) cantonments/reintegration (e.g., improving living conditions in cantonments and verifying/registering the Maoists army personnel); 2) elections, governance and mediation (e.g., technical/logistic advice on elections/constitutional issues and well as directly support the peace process); 3) recovery/quick impact project (e.g., projects to address the absence of peace dividend for vulnerable communities); 4) rights and reconciliation (e.g., supporting transitional justice commission or mapping serious human rights violations implemented by various UN agencies) (UNDP, 2016, pp.11–18).

In 2010, the Nepal Peace and Development Strategy (NPADS) was formulated by international actors in coordination with the UN. In alignment with the CPA, the strategy focused on the peacebuilding dimension of international development cooperation, emphasizing tackling “the root causes” of the conflict through long-term development processes and interventions. The strategy highlighted the intersections between “peace” and “development” so that development partners include peacebuilding priorities in their strategic plans and set aside the necessary resources when necessary. The short-term priorities of the strategy were: support to conflict-affected and the new constitution, creation of jobs, clearing of the remaining minefields etc. The long-term strategy focused on social inclusion, land reform, good governance, inequality, and inclusive growth, state restructuring and employment acceleration (UN, 2011, p.xi-xiii).

Assessment of Liberal Peacebuilding

In general, the engagement of Western state and non-state actors was motivated by calculus of different interests: security, economic, development and geo-strategic (Campbell et al., 2012, p.83). They were guided by a mix of their foreign policy principles, their bi-lateral relationship with Nepal, their development cooperation, and their representation in the UN/EU. For example, UK's peacebuilding support to Nepal was based on a long UK-Nepal relationship described earlier. The UK has been also one of the top development partners of Nepal (MOF, Nepal, 2022, pp.44–45). Globally, the UK is also one of the countries with the largest contribution to peacebuilding and conflict prevention (ICAI UK, 2022, p.1). In 2016, the UK was the largest investor in that portfolio even though its share has declined in recent years (Mercy Corp, 2023).

The strong involvement of Switzerland, Norway, and Denmark have to be also understood from their foreign policy strategies of promoting peace. These countries also have a strong development cooperation with Nepal. Switzerland and Denmark's development cooperation started since 1959 and 1973 respectively. Even though Norway started only in 1996, it has become one of the top donors after the peace process (MOF, Nepal, 2022, p.11). These countries were also preferred partners in Nepal because they were perceived as not having any hidden political "agenda" and they promoted peace—not triggered war—globally (Interview with senior political leader, Kathmandu, 8 April 2024).

It needs to be noted that the engagement of Western countries on peacebuilding has been controversial, which undermined their support. For example, the UK's support to the NEFIN (an association of ethnic groups) as explained in Chapter four was perceived as fueling ethnic divisions. Older parties such as the NC

and the UML, which were against ethnic-based federalism, were particularly critical of the DFID's support to the NEFIN (Interview with the political leader, 13 July 2023). The DFID funding later stopped due to Nepal government's opposition (Ghale, 2017, p. 124). The relationship with the UK also suffered a dent when a Nepal army officer was detained in East Sussex in 2013 on charges of human rights violation during the conflict. Nepal government immediately objected and asked for his release (*BBC News*, 2013). An article by the British ambassador Andrew Sparkes created another tension because it was perceived as promoting Christianity (Giri, 2014; Sparkes, 2014).

This latter incident has to be understood from a broader context of a growing sense in Nepal that Western organizations were promoting Christianity by converting Hindus. A report in 2013 confirmed that Nepal had become one of the fastest growing Christian populations in the world at a 10.93 per cent annual growth rate despite proselytizing being punishable by law (Subedi, 2015). In 2017, the *Guardian* covered a story of increasing Christianity in Nepal in which a local Hindu priest was quoted claiming that foreign organizations exploited the people's material needs to promote conversion (Pattisson, 2017). Apart from the UK, other European countries were also charged with spreading Christianity (Interview with the political leader, 13 July 2023). These claims, even though officially unsubstantiated, created skepticism about external assistance to peacebuilding in Nepal.

The role of US in the peace process needs a separate analysis because it was peculiar. As the US government did not remove the Maoists from its list of terrorist organizations even after they signed the CPA in 2006, the US was inhibited about providing any support to peacebuilding that would directly go to the Maoists. Based on my experience of being an employee in a US-based organization during that time, it

was apparent that the US was in an awkward position. For example, when we conducted our project activities such as trainings, we were not allowed to invite the Maoists even though they were in the government. The US removed the Maoists from its terrorist list only in 2012 (US DoS, n.d.a), six years after the CPA was signed. Only after this, it became possible for the US to support Nepal's peace process, including funding the NPTF.

International evaluations of the projects led by Western donors also offer a mixed picture. There was misuse and corruption of funds on a few projects such as support to the "internationally displaced" and the "disappeared" (Wilson, 2013, p.8). On the other hand, the projects by donors contributed to addressing class, ethnic, linguistic, gender, cultural, religious discrimination through social mobilization and empowerment of the people in their project areas despite a few gaps. One of the key gaps is that no progress was made in the economic aspects of the CPA even though these issues formed an important part of the original demand by the Maoists and repeatedly been identified as critical factors on the conflict analysis. The field work showed that outside Kathmandu, economic issues were repeatedly identified as critical issues that had not been adequately addressed (MFA, Denmark, 2013, p.42; Wennmann, 2009, p.5).

From my own reflections as a practitioner, one of the key limitations of Western assistance was that they were top-down and based on the interests of the donors. With few exceptions (such as engagement through NPTF), local ownership was promoted only as an instrument to get consent on the projects decided by the donors according to their priorities. Flexibility to incorporate local demands was limited. There was also an imposition of Western norms during the peace process. For example, Western donors pushed their Nepalese counterparts to speed up the process and

imposed deadlines even when the Nepalese leaders needed more time to sort out complex political issues (Interview with senior political leader, Kathmandu, 4 Feb 2024).

More importantly, Western liberal actors failed to convince the political leaders even from ideologically progressive parties like the NC, the UML, or the Maoist of the importance of addressing human rights violations, transitional justice, and security sector reform. Western support was perceived as being driven by their vested interests to promote pro-Western policies. The perception of Western donors aggravating ethnic tensions on the pretext of promoting “inclusion” led to Nepal government adopting a policy of discouraging aid for “soft” sectors like human rights or democracy and promoting for “hard” sectors such as hydropower, infrastructure, irrigation (*Nepali Times*, 2014, para 6). Their role was also seen contradictory. While organizations such as the UN emphasized on tackling the roots of conflicts, IFIs such as the World Bank put a condition on Nepal to follow neo-liberal policies that constrained the much-needed social welfare programmes (Interview with the political leader, 13 July 2023).

A number of structural constraints—such as most aid being recycled to the donor country in tied-aid contracts, consultants or overheads, elite capture of aid, a lack of long-term commitment, focus on “good reports” than the actual changes on the ground—all combined to create a negative perception of aid in Nepal and thereby weakened their overall impact on the peace process (Campbell et al. 2012, p.15–17; Interviews, Kathmandu, 2024; Lederach 2017, p. v-viii; *Nepali Times*, 2014, para, 2; Pandey, 2012, pp.81–98). One of the key criticisms of the Western engagement in Nepal’s peace process has been a lack of adequate support on trade and investment fronts despite the request from Nepal’s leaders, who preferred to encourage investments and trade in contrast to aid from rich Western countries. They had set up

a new investment board in Nepal in 2011 and hosted the first investment summit in 2017 (IBN, n.d.). However, Western countries have not made any noteworthy progress on trade and investment in Nepal. Only Ireland (7.9 %), the US (3.2 %), and the Netherlands (2.4 %) are on the top 10 investors' list in Nepal from the rich Western world (NRB, 2023, p.10).

Appreciation of donors in a few areas by the Nepalese must also be noted because of its positive impact on the peace process. A former senior journalist of the one of the widely read local newspapers shared in an interview in Kathmandu that the role of the UN and Western donors was crucial in ensuring that the progressive agendas such as secularism and social inclusion were implemented as part of the peace process. He argued that without them, India and China would not have supported such progressive agendas. Therefore, their role was noteworthy in terms of advancing progressive agendas during Nepal's peace process (11 July 2024). A senior Maoist leader shared that the international experts such as Lederach contributed to forging common agreements on several complex issues. The leader would meet all the stakeholders and identify possible areas of agreements and then present them to political leaders. This technical support was useful to narrow down differences (Interview with senior leader, Kathmandu, 4 Feb. 2024). The role of human rights "watchdogs" assumed by the internationals has been appreciated by civil society (Pandey, 2012, p.93). There is also a recognition that donors have contributed positively towards promoting gender equality by prioritizing the agenda (Interview with political analyst, 29 November 2023).

The overall analysis points out that the liberal peacebuilding was constrained by the power dynamics at national, regional, and global levels that emphasized on stability, which was secured through "negative peace" rather than prioritizing

sustainable peace, which entailed promotion of “positive peace.” Nepal’s political leaders resisted implementing normative liberal agendas by several strategies such as hedging because they were perceived to be motivated by Western strategic interests than by the interests of Nepalese people. In turn, the priorities of liberal peacebuilding such as human rights, the rule of law, justice to the victims, and deeper social inclusion remained limited to the paper without their implementation despite substantial investment from the West. It can be concluded that the impact of liberal peacebuilding in Nepal’s peace process was limited because they were constrained both by Nepal’s political actors who wanted to drive the peace process themselves and by India and China who were suspicious of Western liberal actors. More importantly, their impact was limited also because of their own structural constraints as explained above.

Peacebuilding of Emerging Actors

India and China did not have a coherent peacebuilding framework. Their framework can be recognized by the non-acceptance of liberal peacebuilding even though they co-existed with the latter. Both India and China had refused to be part of a donor coordination group supporting peacebuilding in Nepal, distancing themselves from the Western donors (Campbell et al., 2012, p.22; Suhrke, 2009, pp.8–11). They prioritized their strategic objectives such as ending the ongoing armed violence to ensure stability in the region and containing the increasing Western influence in Nepal to protect their strategic space. Their objectives often clashed with the objectives of peacebuilding entailing structural transformations in socio-political and economic spheres.

The assistance on peacebuilding from India and China was part of their broader engagement with Nepal, which take a variety of forms: economic investment, trade,

aid, infrastructural development, military assistance, disaster relief support, diplomatic as well as cultural/education/religious initiatives (Campbell et al., 2012, p.5; MEA, India, 2020b). They did not have separate peacebuilding support funds like the UN. The support was largely part of their broader development cooperation. In 1966, Indian Aid Mission was renamed as Indian Cooperation Mission to reflect the spirit of cooperation rather than aid. Its cooperation focused on the synthesis of large infrastructure projects and people-centered grassroots development initiatives focusing on areas such as health, education, drinking water (Embassy of India, 2008, pp.3–11). China's aid has been focused on infrastructure building, industrialization process, human resources development, health, education among others (MOF, Nepal, 2022, pp.11–13).

While India's annual aid went up from USD 4.75 million in 2005/2006 to USD 92 million in 2010/11 (the key phase of the implementation of the peace process), China's grew from USD 0.14 million to USD 35.48 million in the same period. A sector-wise analysis shows that both countries focused more on infrastructure sector rather than social sectors (Nayak, 2014, p.93). They also provided ad hoc support to a few peacebuilding activities. For example, in 2012, China provided a one-time grant of USD 20 million for the rehabilitation of the former Maoist army (Nayak, 2012, para 1). Likewise, India provided 764 vehicles for the 2013 CA elections (MEA, India, 2013).

Even though India projected a relatively visible role in Nepal's peace process, it largely respected Nepal's local sensitivities and encouraged local ownership. Initially, India's key priority was the elections. India saw it as a major step towards mainstreaming the Maoists. India pushed for an early election also because it wanted the UNMIN's early exit. An Indian diplomat said to the Chief Commissioner: "It's best to send the white elephant back as soon as possible." This was despite both ECN and

UN advocating for adequate time for technical preparations due to sensitivity of the post-conflict elections (Pokharel & Rana, 2013, pp.101–103).

Unlike India, China's initial approach was not to show any active involvement till its interests were directly at stake (Interview with a senior political leader, Kathmandu, 4 Feb 2024), in continuance of its principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of Nepal (Embassy of PRC in Nepal, 2007). China's engagement was based on a number of core principles that reflected its own development experience and history of engagement with other states. A central principle that guided China's engagement was that of respecting sovereignty. Another key principle was that of mutual benefit. China is open about advancing its economic self-interest at the same time as contributing to the development of other countries. Additionally, China's engagement was guided by a variety of context-specific interests and motives such as stability to ensure the support of Nepal government for ending Tibetan dissidents and support to its "One China policy" and economic interests to facilitate the entry of Chinese firms into new markets in South Asia via Nepal (Campbell et al., 2012, pp.9–10).

Around the CA elections, both India and China supported the key agendas of Nepal's political leaders, such as the constituent assembly elections, republic, secularism, social inclusion, and proportional representation. Even though India and China favoured "reforming" rather than "abolishing" monarchy, they eventually accepted the popular will for a republic (Pandey, 2012, p.94; Saran, 2017, p.162). From these perspectives, both India and China aligned with the aspirations of Nepalese people and empowered the progressive forces in the country in the initial phase of the peace process.

Both India and China's policies changed after 2008 due to their geo-political considerations as explained earlier. India sided with the older parties in 2008–2009 to block the decisions made by the newly elected Maoist government by using its several leverages. For example, in May 2009, the Maoist Prime Minister Dahal sacked the army chief over differences on the recruitment process started by the army in violation of the peace agreement (*THT*, 2009a). India immediately intervened behind the scenes to make sure that the decision was not carried out (Jha, 2014, p.104). As a result, the Maoist prime minister had to resign in 2009 (*The Guardian*, 4 May 2009). India's key priority at this stage was to settle arms/army management process to disarm the Maoists (Jha, 2014, p.102).

China was concerned that an ethnic-based federal structure proposed in the CA by the largest Maoists party could lead to disintegrative tendencies in the country with implications in Tibet. It was so concerned about this issue that Chinese officials expressed "disapproval of the idea of federalizing Nepal" several times in bilateral exchanges, departing from its non-interference policy (Adhikari, 2017, p.5). A senior political leader claimed that to prevent the proposed identity-based federalism, China aligned with older political parties such as the NC and the UML to dissolve the first CA in 2012. It was concerned that such demands could emerge in Tibet as well (Interview, Kathmandu, 4 February 2024).

In terms of trade and investment, while India and China's engagement was more than Western countries, they have been criticized for the unfavourable trade deficit towards Nepal. India accounts for about two-third of merchandise trade and one third of foreign direct investment (Embassy of India, 2022). China's share of trade increased from 11 per cent in 2009 to 19.4 per cent in 2011 (Jaiswal, 2014, p.6). In the recent years, export from both countries have increased in Nepal whereas imports

from Nepal to them have decreased (*Republica*, 2024b). While India and China respectively are among the top countries to provide employment opportunities (Jaiswal, 2014, p.7), there is a sense in Nepal that these two rising economies have not adequately helped their landlocked lesser developed neighbour, which desperately needed economic growth to sustain its peace.

The engagement of China and India has also received criticism. They are perceived as not as committed to progressive values as the Western donors (Interview in Kathmandu, 11 July 2024; Campbell et al., 2012, p.24). Their political role was also more criticized than Western donors. India has been criticized for “alleged attempts to obstruct and undermine the key aspects of CPA including the constitution, army integration process and promoting “Hindutva.” (Johny, 2024, p.9). During the Constitution promulgation phase, India could neither satisfy Nepal’s older parties, which denounced its blunt interference, nor could it satisfy the new Madheshi parties, which blamed India for not doing enough for them despite its moral responsibility (Interview with a Madheshi leader, Kathmandu, 11 August 2023). China was accused of pursuing a coercive diplomacy and micromanaging on a few issues (Interview with the political leader, 13 July 2023). There is also a perception that their support was not genuinely unconditional as projected. For example, China’s aid has been conditional on the acceptance of the “One China” policy by Nepal.

The above analysis can be summarized as follows: India and China adopted similar approaches to peacebuilding in Nepal by mainly using development cooperation to extend their support. They both prioritized their own global and regional geo-strategic goals and foreign policy objectives. They converged on the common objectives of ensuring stability in the region. They also aligned on constraining the role

and agendas of Western donors to contain the latter's increasing influence in their neighbourhood.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that overall, the external actors contributed to the durability of Nepal's peace process by encouraging the following aspects of Nepal's peace process. They supported the negotiated settlement and disarmament and demobilization of the Maoist army, aligned largely with the political reforms prioritized by Nepalese actors during the initial phase, contributed to addressing of the issues of discriminations and exclusion to some extent; and deterred excesses (e.g., use of violence by both sides). All these factors have contributed to the survival of Nepal's peace process for nearly 20 years. More importantly, the alignment between India and China to deter any armed movement by the dissatisfied groups has also contributed to durability of Nepal's peace process. At present, there are no armed groups funded or supported by external actors in Nepal as happens in other countries where the peace process has broken down.

The contribution of external actors on the sustainability of peace in Nepal is weak because of the following reasons: The external actors prioritized their strategic interests rather than addressing the roots of violence. For example, they did not adequately support the issue of social inclusion and discrimination. In a conflict for power between the elites who dominated the state structures and marginalized/discriminated group who were powerless, they chose the former due to their strategic interests. They were also not able to ensure justice to the victims such as Devi and Maina as discussed in chapter six.

The external actors also did not provide any significant support to improve Nepal's economic conditions as desired by Nepalese people. This meant the priorities

of ordinary Nepalese people for everyday peace, such as job creation, better public services, better infrastructure were not adequately prioritized either by Western liberal donors or by China and India. Their support has failed to ensure access to the basic needs of the most miserable communities such as Sebal as demonstrated in chapter six. Moreover, the imposition of neo-liberal policies by IFIs has led to increasing economic inequality rather than its reduction, which again has undermined sustainable peace.

Chapter Eight: Conclusion

This chapter draws the conclusions of this research, based on the analysis discussed in the preceding empirical chapters. It starts with analyzing the key dynamics of hybrid peacebuilding and the implications of those dynamics on the outcomes of Nepal's peace process. This provides a broader framework of locally driven hybrid peacebuilding, within which, the primary research questions—*What explains the durability of Nepal's peace process? What is the sustainability of Nepal's durable peace?*—and the secondary research question—*What has been the role of external actors on the durability/sustainability of Nepal's peace process?*—are analyzed and novelty of the research is summarized. The section that follows covers the broader implications of this research and the potential policy contributions. Avenues for future research are outlined next. The last section presents the overall final reflections on this research.

Hybrid Peacebuilding

A key conclusion that stands out from the overall empirical analysis is that Nepal is a case of locally driven hybrid peacebuilding. This means Nepal's peace process is an outcome of interactions among multiple actors mainly Nepalese actors at the national/local levels, India and China at the regional level, and the UN and Western liberal state and non-state actors at the global level. I have provided the key findings of this research within this broader framework of locally driven hybrid peacebuilding. Few existing literature on Nepal has analyzed the case within the framework of hybrid peacebuilding (eds. Adhikari et al., 2016, pp.1–5; Adhikari, 2014, p.239–247; Bell, 2019, pp.11–17; eds. Einsiedel et al., 2012, pp.1–33; Einsiedel & Salih, 2017, pp.1–10; Gautam, 2015, pp.1–83; Jha, 2014; Pokharel and Rana, 2013, pp.1–5; eds.

Srestha & Uprety, 2008, pp.1–39; eds. Thapa & Ramsbotham, 2017e, pp. 5–10; Thapa, 2019, pp.61–66; Uprety, 2010).

This locally driven hybrid peacebuilding has its own specific dynamics in terms of their interactions among multiple forms of peacebuilding mentioned above that have been broadly conceptualized as local peacebuilding, peacebuilding of emerging countries, and liberal peacebuilding respectively by this research. It has to be emphasized that these three broad peacebuilding categories are not homogenous and their interactions among each other are not linear but dynamic. This categorization is only for analytical purposes with an acknowledgement that each category contains agencies for both peace and war. As such, these dynamics have manifested both in supporting the peace process but also in undermining it as elaborated below:

Dynamics of Hybrid Peacebuilding

The locally driven hybrid peacebuilding meant the agendas of Nepalese actors largely prevailed over the emerging peacebuilding actors such as India and China, and liberal peacebuilding actors such as the UN and Western donors such as EU, the US, the UK among others. As explained in Chapters five and seven, the former constrained the role of the Western liberal actors by designing a framework of the peace process based on the priorities of Nepal's key political actors, such as forming a republic, instead of prioritizing normative liberal agendas such as human rights, transitional justice, and security sector reform. Nepalese actors also constrained the role of liberal actors such as the UN and Western donors by pursuing the Nepali ways of peacemaking, ignoring the latter's technical suggestions on many issues (Pokharel & Rana, 2013, p.119). Similarly, the Nepalese actors constrained the role of emerging peacebuilders like India by discouraging their direct or formal role, unlike in the Sri Lankan peace process in 1987 in which India had played an explicit role (Premdas &

Samarasinghe, p.676). Nepalese political leaders also decided to invite the UN despite India's reservations, as explained elaborately in Chapter seven.

However, Nepalese actors did not prevail fully in all issues despite the locally driven approach. The process was co-constitutive among multiple peacebuilding actors and approaches. On a few important issues, Nepalese decision-makers were constrained mainly by one of the emerging peacebuilders i.e., India. For example, India constrained the operation of the Nepalese leaders by blocking the decisions of the Maoist-led government relating to the sacking of the Nepal army chief in 2009 and later by preventing the Maoist party from forming the government between mid-2009 and mid-2011 (despite it being the largest party), as explained in Chapter five. India not only constrained the role of Nepalese actors but also that of the liberal actors. Both India and China ensured a narrow mandate of the UN and contributed to the termination of the UN OHCHR in December 2011, mandated to promote human rights in Nepal (OHCHR, 2011).

Similarly, Nepalese actors were also constrained by the overall liberal framework that dominates the global order. For example, even though Nepal's new Constitution stipulates moving "towards socialism-oriented economy" (TCON, 2015), the country has adhered to the neo-liberal economic framework in practice because of the constraints posed by the liberal global order dominated by the West. Likewise, Nepal was constrained by several international agreements and membership of global bodies that are dominated by liberal norms, values, and actors.

These dynamics have a few other notable aspects as well. Despite material and normative power of liberal peacebuilding actors and institutions, their engagement was weak in Nepal because they were constrained by both Nepalese actors and also by India and China. Interestingly, while India and China constrained the role of the UN

in Nepal as explained above, they were also the reason why the UN got the space to engage in Nepal. One of the key reasons why the Nepalese actors preferred the presence of the UN was to counter-balance India's dominating role. A senior political analyst pointed out during an interview in Kathmandu (11 July 2024) that if the UN was not involved and if India had played a more direct role, then Nepal's peace process would have failed, given a pervasive sense of resistance against any kinds of domination from India. This shows, despite limitations, the UN's role was crucial to Nepal's peace process.

Moreover, during the promulgation of the new Constitution, Nepalese leaders defied India's request to delay it despite its dependence on the latter owing to the landlocked condition. This would not have been possible for Nepal without the support from Western donors. For example, if the UN and other Western countries such as the US and the UK did not support the Constitution-promulgation process then its promulgation would not have gained international legitimacy (Interview with senior political analyst, Kathmandu, 11 July 2024). These discussions show that the interactions within hybrid peacebuilding are highly complex and that it challenges some of the existing assumptions in the study of peacebuilding. Despite normative and material power of Western donors, they could not dominate Nepal's peace process and were constrained by other actors. This challenges the claims of the hegemonic role of liberal peacebuilding in contemporary peacebuilding, as claimed by critical peacebuilding scholars such as Mac Ginty and Richmond (2013, p.775).

The analysis of Nepal's case shows that when the external actors supported the progressive agendas, they prevailed and when they supported the status-quo agendas, the latter prevailed. This means that the responsibility of undermining the progressive agendas lies not only with domestic elites but also with the external actors.

In the first phase of Nepal's peace process till the declaration of a republic in May 2008, many progressive agendas representing the aspirations of the marginalized groups as mainstreamed by the Maoist party prevailed. They were backed by both India and China as well as Western donors. After 2012, when the first CA was dissolved by an alignment between domestic status-quo forces and external powers, the Maoist party got weakened. Weakening of the former rebels also led to the weakening of the progressive agendas, which reflected the demands of the marginalized groups as championed by the Maoist party. In the latter phase, the power of the elites to undermine the demands of disadvantaged groups came from the support of external powers.

Overall, the above analysis shows hybrid peacebuilding as complex patterns of unpredictable cross-interactions among different external actors such as the alignments among India-China-West (on ending overt violence), India-China (on countering Western influences in Nepal), India-West (on promoting a democratic framework), and also China-West (on the new Constitution-promulgation) to ensure stability. This analysis shows that while the Nepalese peacemaking actors, India and China, as well as the Western donors converged on ending physical violence i.e., negative peace, they did not converge on positive peace. This is the core reason why despite the durability of Nepal's peace process for nearly 20 years, its sustainability is questionable.

Key Findings

I have provided the key findings of this research within the broader framework of locally driven hybrid peacebuilding, as explained above. The examination of the primary research question on the durability of Nepal's peace process, as examined in Chapter five, shows that it can be understood from multiple perspectives such as

economic, political, and socio-cultural. The political perspectives, within the scope of this research, show that the durability of peace process has resulted from both positive factors (e.g., fulfillment of the demands for the political transformations by the rebel group) as well as the factors that cannot be considered as positive (e.g., geo-political interests for stability than prioritizing justice towards the disadvantaged). In summary, a combination of three main factors—the structural political transformations as prioritized by the rebel group, geo-political interests towards ending violence and regional stability, and primarily locally driven peacemaking that fostered a sense of ownership and legitimacy among the people—within the specific historical and socio-culture setting of Nepal mainly contributed to the durability of its peace process.

This conclusion shows that Stedman's (2002, pp.8–9) emphasis on the implementation of the peace agreements, Call's (2012, pp.186–206) emphasis on the inclusionary political behaviour that meet the power-sharing expectations of the rebels as well as Joshi's (2013, p.763) and Mukherjee's (2006b, pp.483–484) emphasis on the inclusionary democratic institutions such as the PR election system have contributed to the durability of Nepal's peace process. However, as regards to other approaches emphasized in durable peace literatures such as the international mediation/facilitation including peacekeeping missions (Doyle and Sambanis, 2000; Fortna, 2004, pp. 276–283; Hampson 1996; Hartzell, Hoddie & Rothchild, 2001; Stedman, 2002; Walter, 2002) and power-sharing (Hartzell, 1999; Hartzell & Hoddie 2003; Miklian, 2009, p.8), this research raises doubts about their contribution to the durability. If the core demands of the Maoists were not fulfilled, then the approaches such as power-sharing and international support would not have been adequate to ensure durable peace.

Furthermore, a deeper analysis of Nepal's case from the perspectives of sustainable peace, as reviewed in Chapter six shows Nepal's durable peace also suffers from a number of limitations as explained below. The structural political transformations, such as the abolition of the feudal monarchical system, introduction of a secular polity, ending of the unitary administrative system, have been inadequate to ensure social justice to a number of disadvantaged groups such as Dalits, Tharus, and Muslims. In turn, the elites, including the new elites from the Maoist party, have dominated the socio-economic and political power structures. The fundamental problems of poverty and inequality are the same. This implies that the sustainability of Nepal's durable peace is questionable.

Furthermore, the conclusion from the secondary research question as covered by Chapter seven is as follows: The external actors contributed to the durability of Nepal's peace process by their support to the negotiated settlement as well as aligning largely with the political reforms prioritized by Nepalese actors during the initial phase. More importantly, the alignment between India and China to deter any use of violence by the dissatisfied groups in the post-Constitution phase has also contributed to the ending of overt violence in Nepal thereby to the durability of its peace process. However, the contribution of external actors on the sustainability of peace in Nepal is weak because of the following reasons: The external actors prioritized their strategic interests rather than sustainable peace in Nepal that entail addressing the underlying causes of violence such as fulfilling grievances of disadvantaged groups. This meant that the external actors did not adequately support the issue of social inclusion and discrimination. In a conflict for power between the elites who dominated the state structures and the marginalized group who did not have such powers, they chose the former due to their strategic interests. The external actors also did not provide any

significant support to improve Nepal's economic conditions (such as job creation or better infrastructure) that were prioritized by Nepalese people. This undermined everyday peace. Therefore, their contribution to sustainability has been insignificant.

Overall, it can be concluded that Nepal's peace process has both positive and nonpositive dimensions. The positive dimension is that the ending of physical violence has created new spaces to move towards positive peace. The nonpositive dimension is that durable peace has legitimized the prevailing injustice and inequality that led to the armed conflict in the first place. In addition to the key findings discussed above, the analysis of Nepal's hybrid peacebuilding has offered additional insights which are useful to the study of peacemaking. They have been summarized below.

Nepal's case shows that its political leaders were willing to introduce affirmative action towards disadvantaged and marginalized but reluctant to share power. It means they were ready to put a band-aid to the wound rather than going through surgery to heal that wound. Unfortunately, this is the approach practiced and promoted by the regional and global powers. The liberal peacebuilding was implemented within the constraints of these political orders in Nepal. It explains why even relatively successful peace processes like Nepal is not characterized by positive peace. This is the core problem of current peacemaking.

The other important insight from the case study is that Nepal's peacemaking is an outcome of the interactions among inter-related political, economic, and socio-cultural factors. Nepal's case shows that even when political and economic restructuring have been inadequate, it has been able to prevent overt violence, implying a possibility of the primacy of socio-cultural factors in promoting peace. Nepal's case study raises an important question of if the engagement with socio-cultural structures that fulfill the emotional needs of the people should be prioritized

along with the political and economic justice and equality in peacemaking. This necessitates deeper engagement with socio-cultural frameworks in the study of peacemaking than offered by liberal/neo-liberal peacebuilding paradigms.

Finally, Nepal's case shows that there is a need to emphasize addressing gender-based violence as part of peacebuilding approaches. The case study analysis demonstrates that gender-based violence increased in the post-conflict order. As violence was normalized during the armed conflict, women became easy targets. As explained in Chapter six, while many sophisticated approaches were promoted to end explicit political violence in Nepal by both national and external powers, adequate attention was not paid to deal with gender-based violence, which were often hidden. A relatively more advanced peacebuilding framework such as liberal peacebuilding also does not have any special emphasis on the post-conflict gender-based violence. This shows how contemporary peacebuilding study and praxis continue to marginalize the issues that affect women and that they need to be changed.

Theoretical and Policy Contributions

This section outlines the key theoretical contributions of this research focused on the analysis of the case study of Nepal. It starts with an overall analysis of contribution to literature within which the two key theoretical contributions—the conceptualization of locally driven hybrid peacebuilding and generation of some insights on sustainable hybrid peacebuilding—are presented. The key policy contribution is the lessons from Nepal's peace process that could be also practically applicable to other conflict-affected countries. They have been elaborated below.

Contribution to Literature

This research mainly contributes to the existing scholarship on critical peacebuilding by inviting debates on sustainable peace and by providing insights on

locally driven hybrid peacebuilding. While sustainable peace is implicit in peacebuilding thinking (Cogan & Sakai, 2022, p.4; Galtung, 1976, pp.283–290; Lederach, 1997, p.x), the existing peacebuilding literature, apart from a few notable exceptions (De Coning, 2016, pp.166–167; Mac Ginty, 2021, pp.1–24; Paffenholz, pp.367–385; Richmond, 2022, p.124–141), does not adequately engage with what the notion of sustainable peace entails. This implies that the frameworks of sustainable peace—a key element of peacebuilding—has not been adequately debated about in the existing peacebuilding scholarship (eds. Campbell et al., 2011; eds. Carey & Sen, 2021, pp.1–29; Doyle & Sambanis, 2006, pp.1–63; eds. Mac Ginty, 2013; eds. Newman et al., 2009, pp.3–54; eds. Pugh et al., 2008; Randazoo, 2017, pp.1–20; eds. Richmond, 2010; eds. Richmond & Visoka, 2021). A few critical literatures that engage with sustainable peace through concepts of emancipatory peace (Richmond, 2022, p.124–141; Visoka, 2021, pp.641–660) or through everyday peace (Mac Ginty, 2021, pp.1–24) or sustaining peace (De Coning, 2016, pp.166–167) are limited to the framework of Western Enlightenment and do not engage with spiritual knowledge even when they have longer and richer tradition of exploring sustainable peace.

I have filled the aforementioned gaps by explicitly engaging with the notion of sustainable peace drawing on three distinct theoretical approaches—peace studies, critical perspectives, and decolonial thoughts—which fill each other’s gaps. By employing decolonial perspectives, I have been able to engage with scholarships that are beyond the confines of Western Enlightenment. As such, this research has engaged in infusing insights from Buddhist scholarship to the understanding of sustainable peace within critical peacebuilding scholarship. Therefore, while this research is an extension of the works of critical peacebuilding scholars such as

Richmond and Mac Ginty, it challenges their insights on sustainable peace and hence on sustainable peacemaking because they are limited within Western Enlightenment.

Overall, this research also offers a framework of sustainable peace that can be used to analyze an empirical peacebuilding case. This framework is premised on new approaches. For example, it distinguishes between “durable” and “sustainable peace,” which have been used as interchangeable concepts in the existing peacebuilding literature such as by Rasmussen (2010, p.175). This framework also adopts non-Western Buddhist perspectives that emphasizes on ending the roots of violence within human minds. This dimension of sustainable peace that goes beyond ending the roots of violence in socio-economic and political structures have also not been engaged adequately in the existing peacebuilding literature except by scholars such as Tanabe (2022, pp.131–161; 2019, pp.1–18; 2016, pp.1–10). Additionally, this framework also engages with practical indicators such as ensuring basic needs of the most disadvantaged communities in the conflict affected societies to investigate sustainable peace. Thus, the central contribution of this research is to invite debates on sustainable peace in the peacebuilding field.

Moreover, this research also adds to the existing literatures on the case study of Nepal. While there are ample literatures on Nepal’s peace process (Adhikari, 2020; eds. Adhikari et al., 2016, pp.1–5; Adhikari, 2014, p.239–247; Bell, 2019, pp.11–17; eds. Einsiedel et al., 2012, pp.361–381; Einsiedel & Salih, 2017, pp.1–10; Gautam, 2015, pp.1–83; Hachhethu, 2023, pp.218–260; Hutt, 2020a, 2020b; 2006; ICG, 2011;2015; International IDEA, 2015; 2016; Jha, 2014; Martin, 2010; Muni, 2024, pp.57–91; Pokharel and Rana, 2013, pp.6–183; eds. Srestha & Uprety, 2008, pp.1–39; Sharma, 2013, pp.1-69; eds. Thapa & Ramsbotham, 2017e, pp.5–10; Thapa, 2019, pp.61–66; Uprety, 2010, pp.325–397, Wennmann, 2009, pp.5–19), there are

few literatures that analyzes Nepal's case from sustainability/durability perspectives. Simangan (2023, pp.536–549) has drawn on the concept of everyday peace to illustrate how the link between peace and sustainability plays out at the local level with a case study of a village in Nepal. Lundqvist (2014, p.7) has investigated the post-conflict state in Nepal from the perspective of “no war, no peace.” This research adds to such works. It offers new insights by engaging in a comprehensive analysis of Nepal's peace process through durability and sustainability perspectives particularly by distinguishing between the two concepts.

Furthermore, the given research contributes to the existing literature on Nepal's peace process by offering its analysis from a new approach of locally driven hybrid peacebuilding framework. Robins (2016, pp.66–84) has analyzed Nepal's case study from liberal peace perspectives. Adhikari (2020 pp.264–292) has referred to Nepal's case as hybrid peacebuilding. However, their works have not paid attention to locally driven peacebuilding framework innovated in Nepal based on the contextual needs. Uprety (2010, pp.91–112) has articulated the local approaches to conflict management in Nepal as have Dahal and Bhatta (2008, pp.14–23). This research agrees to Dahal's argument on peace from bottom-up to ensure not only ownership and legitimacy but also to yield benefit to all the groups in the society and not just the elites (2021, para 1).

Similarly, the given research also contributes to the existing literatures on the external engagement in Nepal's peace process through new sustainability/durability perspectives within a broader framework of locally driven hybrid peacebuilding. While there are a number of informative and critical literatures on the analysis of the external engagement, particularly the liberal peace in Nepal's peace process (Adhikari, 2023, pp.338–360; 2020 pp.264–292; Adhikari, 2017, pp.27–31; Jha, 2012, pp.332–358;

Martin, 2010; Miklian, Lidén, & Kolås, 2011, pp. 285–308; Muni, 2024, pp.57–91; Robins, 2017, pp.66–84; Suhrke, 2011, pp.37–55; 2009, pp.14–44; Uprety & Sapkota, 2017, pp.35–45; Whitfield, 2012, pp.155–174), they have not paid attention to the interactions between external interventions and local agencies and their impact on the outcome of the peace process from the sustainability/durability perspectives within the broader locally driven hybrid framework. This research has filled that gap.

Locally Driven Hybrid Peacebuilding

A key theoretical contribution of this research is the conceptualization of locally driven hybrid peacebuilding drawing on the case study of Nepal. Despite rich literature on hybrid peacebuilding from critical perspectives (Brown & Gusmao, 2009, pp.61–69; Björkdahl & Höglund, 2013, p.293; Brown, 2018, p. 24; Kent et al., 2018, pp.1–17; Mac Ginty, 2011, Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2015, pp.1–9; Millar, 2014, pp. 501–514; Wallis, et al., 2018, p.3; Tanabe, 2017a, p.455), attention has not been paid to local peacebuilding frameworks innovated in the conflict-affected societies like Nepal. While scholars such as De Coning (2016, pp.166–167, Mac Ginty 2011; 2010, pp.391–412;) and Richmond (2013, pp.271–87, 2011, pp.17–19) have captured the importance of local agencies in peacebuilding (Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2015, pp.219–239), the understanding of what actually constitutes locally driven hybrid peace building in the actual practice of peacebuilding is limited (eds. Kent et al., 2018; Mac Ginty, 2011, Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2015, pp.1–9). This research aims to fill this gap by articulating a locally driven hybrid peacebuilding framework through empirical insights from Nepal.

Nepal's case shows that the contemporary peacebuilding practices are marked by growing assertiveness of actors at both national and local levels in the conflict affected societies (CAS). In Nepal, the political leaders do not position themselves as “recipient” of peacebuilding support but rather project themselves as the key actors

leading/shaping the peacemaking order. They have also developed their own perspectives and practical approaches to peacebuilding based on contextual needs despite the globalized context blurring the lines between domestic and external. These approaches are both constrained and supported by other forms of external interventions such as liberal peacebuilding, which led to hybrid peacebuilding on the ground. I have conceptualized the peace process guided by such contextually rooted needs as locally driven peacebuilding. It is important to acknowledge that given diversity in armed conflicts, the model of locally driven hybrid peacebuilding is likely to be diverse based on contextual needs. What I have presented below is one of the possible templates based on Nepal's case study.

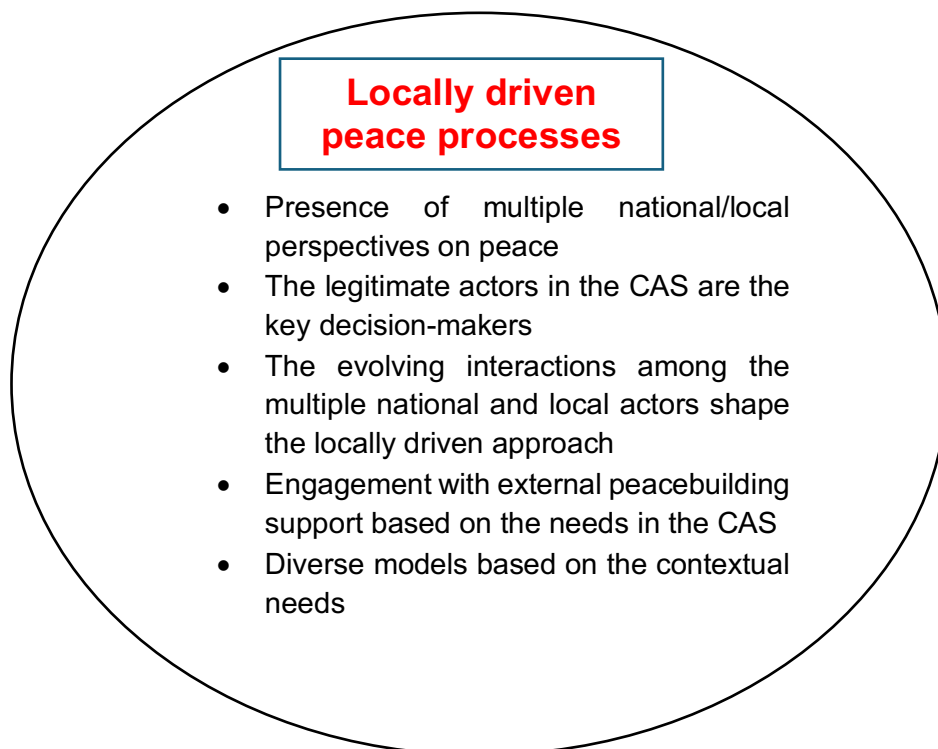
A locally driven hybrid peacebuilding framework includes: First, the presence of multiple local perspectives on peace, which compete and co-exist with each other. For example, the main perspectives guiding Nepal's peace process was that of the Maoists and the SPA as explained in Chapters four and five. Initially, the Maoist framework for the peace process was "a democratic republic." They later revised their framework to "a secular federal democratic republic" to incorporate the demands of the disadvantaged groups such as the Madheshis and the Janjatis. The SPA envisioned a "full democracy" in which the Nepal Army was under civilian control and not under the King. Under this framework, the SPA claimed it was their responsibility as democratic parties to bring the undemocratic forces into constitutional fold (Koirala, 2007, p.102).

Another dimension of locally driven hybrid peacebuilding is that the legitimate actors in CAS are the key decision-makers and also the key implementers of the peace process. Yet another dimension of a locally driven approach is the notable impact of marginalized groups and also ordinary people in the outcome of the peace process.

Nepal's case shows that the initial phase of Nepal's peace process was shaped by the movements for restoration of democracy by ordinary people and agitations by different identity groups as explained in Chapter five.

The final dimension of locally driven hybrid peacebuilding as the engagement with external peacebuilding support is based on the needs identified in CAS. Nepal's political leaders decided to engage with the UN on the settlement of the Maoist army and arms. This implies that a locally driven process does not mean a negation of external support. In such an approach, the external support is based on the needs in the CAS. (See Figure 3 below).

Figure 3. Locally Driven Hybrid Peacebuilding



Call for a New Framework of Sustainable Hybrid Peacebuilding

Another theoretical contribution of this research is to provide the insights on sustainable hybrid peacebuilding based on the reflections from Nepal's case study. The case study shows that most contemporary hybrid peace processes (even locally

driven ones) are likely to produce hybrid negative peace due to a lack of convergence on “positive peace” among different peacebuilding approaches. This conclusion challenges the claim of “emancipatory potential” of hybrid peace (Richmond, 2011, pp. 17–19). This conclusion also means that “sustainability” of most contemporary peace processes is questionable even though they may lead to “negative peace” or even “durable peace” as in the case of Nepal. Therefore, there is an urgent need to explore new theoretical frameworks for sustainable hybrid peacebuilding that can guide practices in conflict affected societies.

I have presented a few insights on such new frameworks of sustainable peacebuilding, drawing on the insights of postliberal and postmodern hybrid peace as well as on the empirical analysis of the case study. The former emphasizes joint conflict analysis to create a common view of the main challenges toward peacebuilding (Tanabe, 2017a, p.455). Overall, the proposed notion of sustainable hybrid peacebuilding combines the insights from sustainable peace elaborated in Chapter three and locally driven hybrid peace elaborated above.

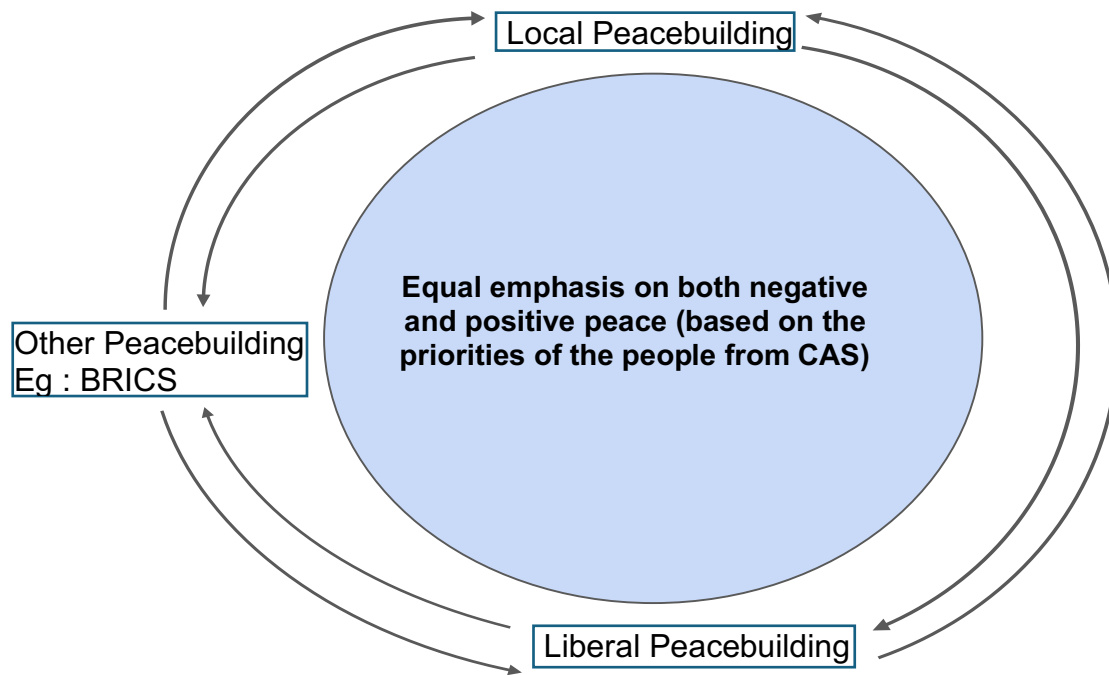
Based on the above perspectives, the proposed thinking on sustainable hybrid peace emphasizes co-constructing commonly agreed tailor-made peacebuilding frameworks through dialogues/interactions among multiple peacebuilding actors. These dialogues/interactions are geared towards forming a broad understanding/commitment (including the necessary strategies) on both negative and positive peace, which should be pursued simultaneously. Additionally, positive peace within this framework aims to address injustices and inequalities in political, economic, and social spheres both globally and locally to ensure peace desired by the people in the conflict affected societies.

Moreover, within this proposed framework, it is important for the Western liberal states championing liberal peace,¹⁵ who also represent the globally resourceful and powerful elite, to acknowledge the implicit injustice and inequality in the existing international economic system based on West-centered capitalism (Quijana, 2000, p. 533) and to work towards reforming them. Rogers (2007, p.79) argues that a combination of unequal global distribution of wealth and economic power and environmental constraints are the key drivers of contemporary armed conflicts. Nepal's case shows that conflict affected societies in the Global South have limited influence on these issues. Hence, Western liberal states who are also global leaders owing to their material and normative strength, need to take the responsibility of addressing them.

One of the key challenges in co-constructing a broadly accepted peacebuilding framework based on the above perspectives is likely to be the contradictions between liberal peace approaches promoted by the Western states or non-state actors and other approaches adopted by non-Western states or societies. Such issues can be addressed by adopting a locally driven people centric approach that prioritizes the perspectives/needs/aspirations of the marginalized and subaltern people in the conflict-affected societies rather than prioritizing the perspectives of the Western liberal actors or rising global powers or elites within the conflict affected societies. Therefore, in sustainable hybrid peacebuilding, everyday peace—mainly concerns of the most deprived—is prioritized by both domestic and external actors. See figure 4 below.

Figure 4. Sustainable Hybrid Peacebuilding

¹⁵They are not a homogenous category, but they have a loose consensus on the liberal framework as explained earlier.



Lessons from Nepal

A few lessons from the case study of Nepal, which are practically applicable to other countries going through peacebuilding, can be considered as the key policy contributions of this research. One of the key lessons from Nepal's peacebuilding is that for peace to be secure, a few minimum parameters of sustainable peace must be fulfilled at the very least. For example, the basic needs of the most miserable communities in terms of HDI have to be fulfilled. Furthermore, any increasing economic inequality must be addressed as well.

Similarly, Nepal's case shows that locally driven approach in hybrid peacebuilding is a precondition but not a sufficient condition for sustainable peace. The locally driven approach ensures participation, ownership and legitimacy of the process in the conflict affected societies. However, the sustainability of the peace process is determined mainly by the fulfilment of the core objectives as articulated by the parties involved in armed conflict. If the key objectives are fulfilled, then a peace process is likely to become sustainable. On the other hand, when the key

transformative objectives of the peace process are compromised, and the status quo perpetuated, then they are likely to undermine the sustainability of the peace process.

Finally, Nepal's case shows that the implementation of structural political reforms as demanded by one of the conflict parties is not adequate to ensure sustainable peace. To ensure sustainable peace, the economic dimension that relates to improving the livelihood of the people needs to be simultaneously prioritized. Unfortunately, this was not adequately prioritized in Nepal. The empirical research covered in Chapters four and five shows that Nepalese people wanted improvements in their livelihood, health, education and other public services, infrastructural developments, and irrigation among others. Nepal's political leaders and decision makers did not prioritize such everyday concerns of the people. Neither did the external peacebuilding actors do so, who also prioritized their own interests. As a result, a large majority of people do not feel a sense of peace as demonstrated by this research. It is also evidenced by an unprecedented level of migration of youths outside the country, a characteristic that has marked the post-transition phase. Around 17,000 youths between 25 and 35 years are estimated to migrate abroad for work every day (Mishra, 2023).

Finally, a few approaches that are considered to have worked well in Nepal are as follows: Firstly, a phased implementation of difficult agendas. During an interview in Kathmandu (11 July 2024), one of the analysts pointed out that given challenging political agendas such as implementing a republic was completed in a phased manner rather than abruptly, it did not create any violent backlash. Similarly, another analyst pointed out that as the key political actors were willing to make compromises for peace, this contributed positively to the peace process (Interview, Kathmandu, 13 July 2023).

Nepal's case also shows that the political will is a crucial factor for the success of the peace process.

Final Reflections

The overall analysis of Nepal's peace process reveals an interesting story of war and peace. A small group of highly educated idealistic youths from the rural mountains of a Himalayan kingdom had started an armed revolt in 1996 with a dream to dismantle the oppressive international and state structures that denied access to the basic needs as well as social justice to a large section of Nepal's population. The main ideologue of this war claimed to be inspired by the French revolution. They called their movement "a last battle of Enlightenment" even though they called themselves the Maoists too. Soon, this armed movement by a small number of youths limited to remote areas spread like wildfire across the country. The regional and global security implications of the increasingly expanding violent Maoists' movement in the country between two rising global powers forced the external powers to engage in Nepal's internal armed conflict. The initial response of Nepal's government, the regional and rising powers such as India and China and the global powers, the US, was to defeat the Maoists militarily. In contrast, local civil society groups in Nepal, the UN and a few other Western organizations simultaneously explored a peaceful settlement. Given the widespread public support for the Maoists, even if the support was out of coercion for some, the military approach failed. It was in this setting that the multiple external and domestic actors came together for a peace settlement in Nepal.

Therefore, Nepal's peacemaking has to be understood as an outcome of dynamic interactions and linkages among multiple local, regional, and global agencies. At all levels, there have been agencies of both war and peace. Nepal's peace process has been durable so far because the agencies for peace prevailed over war in all three

levels. However, one of the key limitations of this durable peace is that it has legitimized injustices against a few marginalized groups in Nepal undermining overall sustainable peace. The coming years will confirm if Nepal's durable peace is a preceding step towards sustainable peace or if it is yet another framework to perpetuate the dominance of the elites. It is too early to predict any outcome for now because currently there are trends in both directions.

This point leads to my final reflection. So far, the cycle of war and peace has been accepted as a normal pattern in human societies from time immemorial. This cycle needs to be replaced with a focus on sustainable peace. This is possible only if the roots of violence within socio-political and economic structures as well as within human minds are eliminated, as demonstrated by this research.

Annex 1: List of Interviews

Political Parties

1. Former prime minister and former deputy leader of the Maoist party. He was also one of the key negotiators of the peace process, Kathmandu, 3 April 2023; 7 November 2023; Email interview: 20 March 2024
2. Former speaker of the parliament and the vice-chairperson of the Maoist party. He was also one of the key negotiators of the peace process, Kathmandu, 11 June 2023; 8 April 2024
3. Former Constituent Assembly member and the politburo member of the Maoist party. He was in the interim Constitution-drafting committee and also one of the members of negotiating team in the peace process, Kathmandu, 9 July 2023; 24 December 2023; 4 February, 2024; 20 March 2024; Email interview: 13 June 2024.
4. Former minister and the senior leader from the Nepali Congress party. He was also one of the members of negotiating team in the peace process, Kathmandu, 3 July 2023. Email interview: 27 May 2024.
5. Former deputy prime minister and the senior leader from the CPN-UML party, Kathmandu, 25 July 2024.
6. Former minister and the senior woman leader from the CPN-UML party, Kathmandu, 13 August 2023.
7. Former deputy prime minister and the senior Madheshi leader. He was a leading figure in the Madheshi Movement, Kathmandu, 16 August 2023.
8. Former minister and the senior Madheshi leader. He was also one of the active members of the Seven Party Alliance, Kathmandu, 11 August 2023; 7 March 2024.
9. Former youth leader from the Maoist party, Kathmandu, 17 Feb 2023.

Other Interviews

10. In-depth interview with a representative (economically poor) from the Chamar, Madheshi Dalit community, Kathmandu, 31 May 2024.
11. In-depth interview with a representative (economically poor) from the Dom, Madheshi Dalit community, Kathmandu, 11 June 2024.
12. Interview with a representative (economically poor) from the Madheshi community, Kathmandu, 26 November 2023.

13. Interview with a representative (economically poor) from the hill Dalit community, Kathmandu, 10 October 2023.
14. Interview with a representative from the hill Janjati community (economically poor), Kathmandu, 11 October 2023.
15. Interview with a representative from hill Janjati community (economically poor), Kathmandu, 15 October 2023.
16. Interview with a senior citizen (ordinary citizen), Kathmandu, 14 October 2023.
17. Interview with a youth member (ordinary citizen), Kathmandu, 27 November 2023.
18. Interview with a female member (ordinary citizen), Kathmandu, 20 December 2023.
19. Interview with an academic (professor of history/culture), Kathmandu, 25 December 2023.
20. Interview with a senior Madheshi analyst, Kathmandu, 25 May 2023; 17 July 2024.
21. Email interviews: 27 October 2023; 10 November 2023; 21 May 2024.
22. Interview with the former bureaucrat, Kathmandu, 18 May 2023; Email interview: 19 May 2023.
23. Interview with a senior political analyst and former journalist, Kathmandu, 29 November 2023; Email interview: 16 May 2024.
24. Interview with a senior political analyst and former journalist, Kathmandu, 11 July 2025.

Bibliography

Aarthik News (2020). Income Inequality in Nepal, *Aarthik News*, 22 August. <https://english.aarthiknews.com/income-inequality-in-nepal/>

Access to Insight (ed.) (2005). Abhidhamma Pitaka: The basket of Abhidhamma, <https://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/abhi/index.html>

Ace Project (2013). 11-point Agreement Signed by Four Major Political Forces, Ace Project, <https://aceproject.org/electoral-advice/archive/questions/replies/207090914/285703754/tr-eng-four-party-agreement-full-text-p-13-mar.pdf>

Acharya, K.K. (2015). Community Governance and Peacebuilding in Nepal, *Rural Society*, vol. 24, no. 1, pp.65–84, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10371656.2014.1001477>

Acharya, M., & Chapagain, B. (2021). National Opinion Poll 2021, Lalitpur: Sharecast Initiative Nepal

Adhikari, A. (2014). *The Bullet and the Ballot Box: The story of Nepal's Maoist Revolution*, London: Verso

Adhikari, A. (2017). International Support for Peace and Transition in Nepal, in Ramsbotham, A., & Thapa, D. (eds), *Two Steps Forward, One Step Back: Nepal's peace process, Accord: An international review of peace initiatives*, no. 26, London: Conciliation Resources, pp.27–31

Adhikari, D. (2014). Will Modi's Win Impact India-Nepal relations? *Al Jazeera*, 21 May, <https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2014/5/21/will-modis-win-impact-india-nepal-relations>

Adhikari, G. (2019). The Spectre of a New Maoist Conflict in Nepal, *Al Jazeera*, 21 April, <https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2019/4/21/the-spectre-of-a-new-maoist-conflict-in-nepal/>

Adhikari, M. (2020). Emergent Powers in the Field of Peacebuilding: Modalities, interactions and impact of Indian and Chinese engagement in the peace processes of Nepal and Myanmar, PhD Dissertation, University of Edinburgh

Adhikari, M. (2022). Negotiated Coexistence: Indian and Chinese engagement in the global governance of peacebuilding, *International Studies Review*, vol. 24, no. 1, pp. 1–25. <https://doi.org/10.1093/isr/viac012>

Adhikari, M. (2023). Non-Western Engagement in Peace Processes and the Rise of 'Hedging' by Elites in Conflict-affected States, *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, vol. 37, no. 3, pp.338–360, doi: 10.1080/09557571.2023.2271996

Adhikari, P., Ghimire, S., & Valik, V. (2016). *Nepali Transition to Peace: A decade of the comprehensive peace accord (2006–2016)*, Lalitpur: Jagadamba Press

Adkin, R. (2014). Nepal Tries Again to Write a Constitution, *The Diplomat*, 12 March, <https://thediplomat.com/2014/03/nepal-tries-again-to-write-a-constitution/>

Adkin, R. (2015). Nepal Adopts Constitution Born of Bloodshed, Compromise, *yahoo!news*, 20 September, <https://ca.news.yahoo.com/nepal-adopts-constitution-born-bloodshed-compromise-140501580.html>

Advocacy Forum, Nepal (2010). Maina Sunuwar: Separating Fact from Fiction, Kathmandu: Advocacy Forum Nepal, <https://advocacyforum.org/downloads/pdf/publications/maina-english.pdf>

Agence Europe (2004). EU Urges Maoist Rebels to Enter Dialogue with Government, <https://agenceurope.eu/en/bulletin/article/8854/3>

Al Jazeera (2005). Maoists Killed in Nepal Encounter, *Al Jazeera*, 14 April, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2005/4/14/maoists-killed-in-nepal-encounter>

Al Jazeera (2019). China, Nepal Sign Trade, Infrastructure and Security Deals, *Al Jazeera*, 13 October, <https://www.aljazeera.com/economy/2019/10/13/china-nepal-sign-trade-infrastructure-and-security-deals>

AI Nepal, CSRC, JuRI-Nepal (2019). *Nepal: Land for Landless Peasants*. Available at: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/ASA3112212019ENGLISH.pdf> (Accessed: 18 June 2021)

Alexandra, L.A., & Lanteigne, M. (2017). New Actors and Innovative Approaches to Peacebuilding: The case of Myanmar, in Call, C.T., & De Coning, C. (eds), *Rising Powers and Peacebuilding: Breaking the mold*, Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, pp.191–241

Amnesty International (2005). Nepal: New report shows foreign arms fuelling conflict and human rights abuse, Amnesty International, 15 June, <https://www.amnesty.org.uk/press-releases/nepal-new-report-shows-foreign-arms-fuelling-conflict-and-human-rights-abuse>

Amnesty International (AI) Nepal, CSRC, JuRI-Nepal (2019). Nepal: Land for landless peasants, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/ASA3112212019ENGLISH.pdf>

Anam, S. (2018). Peacebuilding: The shift towards a hybrid peace approach, *Global Strategies*, vol. 9, no. 1, pp.37–48, doi: 10.20473/jgs.9.1.2015.37-48

Anand, J. P. (1977). Nepal's Zone of Peace Concept and China, *China Report*, vol. 13, no. 1, pp.6–10, doi: 10.1177/000944557701300102

Anupam, B. (2020). The Story of Nepal's 'Zone of Peace' Proposition to the World, *People's Review*, 21 September, <https://www.peoplesreview.com.np/2020/09/21/the-story-of-nepals-zone-of-peace-proposition-to-the-world/>

Arezina, S. (2020). U.S.-China Relations Under the Trump Administration: Changes and Challenges, *China Quarterly of International Strategic Studies*, vol. 5, no. 3, pp. 289–315, doi: 10.1142/S2377740019500210

Army Be The Best (n.d.) *Gurkha History*. Available at: <https://www.army.mod.uk/>

Askerov, A., & Barakat, C. (2021). Peace and Conflict Studies: Evolution, relevance, and approaches for change, *Global Journal of Peace Research and Praxis*, vol. 3, no. 1, pp.1–36

Athie, A., & Mahmoud, Y. (2017). Human Rights and Sustaining Peace, International Peace Institute, pp.1–7, https://www.ipinst.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/1712_Human-Rights-and-Sustaining-Peace.pdf

Autesserre, S. (2014) *Peaceland: Conflict Resolution and the Everyday Politics of International Intervention*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ayoob, M. (2002). Inequality and Theorizing in International Relations: The case for subaltern realism, *International Studies Review*, vol. 4, no. 3, pp.27–48

Backward Society Education (BASE) (n.d.). *History of BASE*, <https://nepalbase.org/history-of-base/>

Badal, A. (2013). The Potential for and Challenges of a Local Peace Committee (LPC): A study of the district level peace forum in Kavre, Nepal, Beyond Intractability, <https://www.beyondintractability.org/casestudy/badal-lpc>

Baechler, G. (2008). Emerging Archetypes: A comparison of patterns of the peace processes in Sri Lanka and Nepal, Berghof Foundation, https://www.berghof-foundation.org/fileadmin/redaktion/Publications/Handbook/Dialogue_Chapters/dialogue6_baechler_com.pdf

Baechler, G. (2010). A Mediator's Perspective: Women and the Nepali peace process, Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (HD), <https://hdcentre.org/insights/a-mediators-perspective-women-and-the-nepali-peace-process/>

Bagchi, I. (2015). Nepal Earthquake: India scores on aid diplomacy, China lags, *The Times of India*, 29 April, <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/nepal-earthquake-india-scores-on-aid-diplomacy-china-lags/articleshow/47090553.cms>

Bajpai, K. (2021). *India Versus China*, New Delhi: Juggernaut Books

Balachandran, P.K. (2022). Nepal Backs Away From US State Partnership Program, *The Diplomat*, 22 June, <https://thediplomat.com/2022/06/nepal-backs-away-from-us-state-partnership-program/>

Balbir, N. (2011). Jain Treasures of the British Library, https://www.jainology.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/Nalini-Balbir-Lecture-22_Mar_11.pdf

Balbir, N. (2013). Practice of Nonviolence and Peace: The Jain perspective, <https://www.jainology.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/JainNonViolence-NaliniBalbir-14June2013.pdf>

- Balsiger, P., & Lambelet, A. (2014). Participant Observation, in Porta, D.D. (ed.), *Methodological Practices in Social Movement Research*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp.144–172, doi: 10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198719571.003.0007
- Banka, N. (2022). Explained: How Sikkim became a part of India, *The Indian Express*, 17 May, <https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/explained-sikkim-history-culture-became-a-part-of-india-7920790/>
- Baral, L.R. (2012). *Nepal: Nation-state in the wilderness*, New Delhi: Sage Publications Pvt. Limited
- Baral, L.R. (2021). Preface, in Rose, L.E., & Fisher, M.W. (eds), *The Politics of Nepal* (1st edn.), Berkeley: University of California Press, pp.vii–xix
- Baral, T., Dhungana, T., & Budathoki, J. (2013). *Sambidhan Sabha Darpan [CA Elections 2065–2069]*, Kathmandu: Parliament-Legislature Secretariat
- Bargués-Pedreny, P., & Schmidt, J. (2018). Learning to Be Postmodern in an All Too Modern World: “Whatever action” in international climate change imaginaries, *Global Society*, vol. 33, no. 1, pp.45–65, doi: 10.1080/13600826.2018.1539952
- Barnett, M. (2006). Building a Republican Peace: Stabilizing States after War, *International Security*, vol. 30, no. 4, pp.87–112, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4137530>
- Barnett, M., Fang, S., & Zurcher, C. (2014). Compromised Peacebuilding, *International Studies Quarterly*, vol. 58, no. 3, pp.608–620, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1111/isqu.12137>
- Barnett, M.N. (1997). Bringing in the New World Order: Liberalism, legitimacy, and the United Nations, *World Politics*, vol. 49, no. 4, pp.526–551, doi: 10.1017/S0043887100008042
- Basnet, P.B. (2011). Plenum Fiasco, *Himal SouthAsian*, 29 January, <https://www.himalmag.com/plenum-fiasco/>
- Baviera, A.S.P. (2016). China’s Strategic Foreign Initiatives under Xi Jinping, *China Quarterly of International Strategic Studies*, vol. 02, no. 01, pp.57–79, <https://doi.org/10.1142/s2377740016500032>
- Baylis, J., Smith, S., & Owens, P. (2014). *The Globalisation of World Politics: An introduction to international relations* (6th edn.), Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Bazeley, P. (2002). The Evolution of a Project Involving an Integrated Analysis of Structured Qualitative and Quantitative Data: From N3 to NVivo, *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, vol. 5, no. 3, pp.229–243, doi: 10.1080/13645570210146285
- BBC News (2002). US Pledges Support to Nepal, *BBC News*, 18 January, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/1767826.stm
- BBC News (2005). Chinese 'Deliver Arms to Nepal', *BBC News*, 25 November, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/4469508.stm

- BBC News (2012). Nepal Maoists: Faction breaks away from governing party, *BBC News*, 19 June, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-18504403>
- BBC News (2013). Nepal's Colonel Kumar Lama Charged in UK with Torture, *BBC News*, 5 January, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-20914282>
- BBC News (2014). Sushil Koirala Wins Vote to be Nepal's Prime Minister, 10 February, *BBC News*, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-26116387>
- BBC News (2016). Colombia Referendum: Voters Reject Farc Peace Deal, *BBC News*, 3 October, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-37537252>
- Bell, C. (2000). *Peace Agreements and Human Rights*, Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Bell, C. (2008). *On the Law of Peace: Peace agreements and the Lex Pacificatoria*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199226832.001.0001>
- Bell, C. (2019). New Inclusion Project: Building inclusive peace settlements, in Carl, A. (ed.), *Navigating Inclusion in Peace Processes, Accord: An international review of peace initiatives*, issue 28, London: Conciliation Resources, pp.11–17
- Bell, C., & Wise, L. (2022). The Spaces of Local Agreements: Towards a new imaginary of the peace process, *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, vol. 16, no. 5, pp.563–583, doi: [10.1080/17502977.2022.2156111](https://doi.org/10.1080/17502977.2022.2156111)
- Bell, J. S. (2002). Narrative Inquiry: More than just telling stories, *TESOL Quarterly*, vol. 36, no. 2, pp.207–213, doi: <https://doi.org/10.2307/3588331>
- Bellamy, A.J. (2010). The Institutionalisation of Peacebuilding: What role for the UN Peacebuilding Commission? in Richmond, O.P. (ed.), *Palgrave Advances in Peacebuilding: Critical developments and approaches*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp.193–212
- Belloni, R. (2012). Hybrid Peace Governance: Its emergence and significance, *Global Governance: A review of multilateralism and international organizations*, vol. 18, no. 1, pp.21–38, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1163/19426720-01801004>
- Bengtsson, M. (2016). How to Plan and Perform a Qualitative Study Using Content Analysis, *Nursing Plus Open*, Elsevier, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/295303146_How_to_plan_and_perform_a_qualitative_study_using_content_analysis
- Bennett, L. (2006). *Unequal Citizens: Gender, caste and ethnic exclusion in Nepal* (1st edn.), Washington, DC: World Bank and DFID Nepal, <https://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/745031468324021366/pdf/379660v20WPOUn00Box0361508B0PUBLIC0.pdf>
- Berg, L-A. (2021). Liberal Peacebuilding: Bringing domestic politics back in, in Carey, H.F. (ed.), *Peacebuilding Paradigms: The impact of theoretical diversity on implementing sustainable peace*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 77–93

Bhatia, R., Van Deutekom, J., Lee, L., & Kulkarni, K. (2016). Chinese Investments in Nepal, *Gateway House*, 16 September, <https://www.gatewayhouse.in/chinese-investments-nepal-2/>

Bhatta, C. D. (2012). Reflections on Nepal's Peace Process, *International Policy Analysis*, <https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/iez/08936-20120228.pdf>

Bhatta, C.D. (2018). The Power of Parties, *The Kathmandu Post*, 12 October, <https://kathmandupost.com/opinion/2018/10/12/the-power-of-parties>

Bhatta, C.D. (2023a). Kathmandu and The Dragon: A perspective on the Nepal-China relations in changing world, *Outlook India*, 23 September, <https://www.outlookindia.com/international/kathmandu-and-the-dragon-a-perspective-on-the-nepal-china-relations-in-changing-world-news-320125>

Bhatta, C.D. (2023b). Reflections on Nepal-China relations, *The Kathmandu Post*, 16 September, <https://kathmandupost.com/columns/2023/09/16/reflections-on-nepal-china-relations>

Bhatta, C.D., & Menge, J. (2021). Gaida's Dance with Tiger and Dragon, Nepal office: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung

Bhattachan, K.B., & Webster, S. (2005). *Indigenous Peoples, Poverty Reduction and Conflict in Nepal*. International Labour Organization

Bhattacharjee, K. (2024). Maoist Leaders Reached out to Vajpayee Government to End Monarchy in Nepal, Says Book, *The Hindu*, 18 February, <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/how-india-helped-maoists-end-monarchy-in-nepal/article67861165.ece>

Bhattarai, B. (1998). Politico-Economic Rationale of People's War in Nepal, *The Worker*, no. 4, May, <https://www.bannedthought.net/Nepal/Worker/Worker-04/Bhattarai-RationaleOfPW-W04.htm>

Bhattarai, B., & Jain, R. (1993). Tanakpur Treaty to come up for Ratification, *Down to Earth*, 31 January, <https://www.downtoearth.org.in/news/tanakpur-treaty-to-come-up-for-ratification-30583>

Bhattarai, K.D. (2015). Way Paved for Constitution as Four Parties Reach 16-pt Deal, *The Kathmandu Post*, 09 June, <https://kathmandupost.com/miscellaneous/2015/06/09/way-paved-for-constitution-as-four-parties-reach-16-pt-deal>

Bhattarai, K.D. (2020). The Indo-Pacific Vs. the Belt and Road: Nepal's great MCC debate, *The Diplomat*, 30 January, <https://thediplomat.com/2020/01/the-indo-pacific-vs-the-belt-and-road-nepals-great-mcc-debate/>

Bhattarai, R. (2005). Geopolitics of Nepal and International Responses to Conflict Transformation, Purano Baneshwor: Friends for Peace

Bhavnani, K. K., Chua, P., & Collins, D. (2014). Critical Approaches to Qualitative Research, in Leavy, P. (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Qualitative Research*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp.165–178

Bhusal, P. (2024). Parliament Passes TRC Bill, *The Rising Nepal*, 15 August, <https://risingnepaldaily.com/news/47440>

Bigombe, B., Collier, P., & Sambanis, N. (2000). Policies for Building Post-Conflict Peace, *Journal of African Economies*, vol. 9, no. 3, pp.323–348, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1093/jae/9.3.323>

Bilgin, P. (2008). Critical Theory, in P. Williams (ed.), *Security Studies: An Introduction*, USA: Routledge, pp.89–102

Binningsbo, H.M. (2006). Power-Sharing and Post-conflict Peace Periods presented at the Power-sharing and Democratic Governance in Divided Societies workshop. Oslo (PRIO): International Peace Research Institute, https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/38262/2006_Power-Sharing%20and%20Postconflict%20Peace%20Periods.pdf

Binningsbo, H.M., & Dupuy, K. (2009). Using Power-Sharing to Win a War: The implementation of the Lomé Agreement in Sierra Leone, *Africa Spectrum*, vol. 44, no. 3, pp.87–107, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1177/000203970904400305>

Bishop, R. (2005). Freeing Ourselves from Neocolonial Domination in Research, in Denzin, N.K., & Lincoln, Y.S. (eds), *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research* (3rd edn.), London: Sage Publications Ltd, pp.109–138

Bista, D.B. (1991). *Fatalism and Development: Nepal's struggle for modernization*, India: Sangam Books Ltd

Björkdahl, A. (2013). Ideas and Norms in Swedish Peace Policy, *Swiss Political Science Review*, vol. 19, no. 3, pp.322–337, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1111/spsr.12046>

Björkdahl, A., & Höglund, K. (2013). Precarious Peacebuilding: Friction in global–local encounters, *Peacebuilding*, vol. 1, no. 3, pp.289–299, doi: [10.1080/21647259.2013.813170](https://doi.org/10.1080/21647259.2013.813170)

Blanton, Shannon L., & Kegley, C.W. (2017). *World Politics: Trend and transformation*, USA: Cengage Learning

Bleiker, R., & Brigg, M. (2010a). Autoethnographic International Relations: Exploring the self as a source of knowledge, *Review of International Studies*, vol. 36, no. 3, pp.779–798, doi: [10.1017/S0260210510000689](https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210510000689)

Bleiker, R., & Brigg, M. (2010b). Introduction to the RIS Forum on Autoethnography and International Relations, *Review of International Studies*, vol. 36, no. 3, pp.777–778, doi: [10.1017/S0260210510000677](https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210510000677)

Bochner, A.P., & Herrmann, A.F. (2020). Practicing Narrative Inquiry II: Making meanings move, in Leavy, P. (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Qualitative Research*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp.284–328

Bochner, A.P., & Riggs, N.A. (2014). Practicing Narrative Inquiry, in Leavy, P. (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Qualitative Research*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp.195–222

Boege, V. (2018). Hybridisation of Peacebuilding at the Local–International Interface: The Bougainville Case, in Wallis, J., Kent, L., Forsyth, M., Dinnen, S., & Bose, S. (eds), *Hybridity on the Ground in Peacebuilding and Development: Critical conversations*, ANU Press, pp.115–128

Boege, V., Brown, A., Kevin, C., & Nolan, A. (2008). On Hybrid Political Orders and Emerging States: State formation in the context of fragility, Berghof Foundation, <https://berghof-foundation.org/library/on-hybrid-political-orders-and-emerging-states-state-formation-in-the-context-of-fragility>

Boege, V., Brown, M.A., & Clements, K.P. (2009). Hybrid Political Orders, Not Fragile States, *Peace Review*, vol. 21, no. 1, pp.13–21, doi: 10.1080/10402650802689997

Bollaert, C. (2019). Anchoring Concepts: Sustainable peace, identity, culture and worldview, in *Reconciliation and Building a Sustainable Peace: Palgrave Studies in Compromise after Conflict*, Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 47-81.

Booth, K. (1991). Security and Emancipation, *Review of International Studies*, vol. 17, no. 4, pp.313–326, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20097269>

Booth, K. (1997). Security and Self: Reflections of a fallen realist, in Keith, K., & Willams, M.C. (eds), *Critical Security Studies: Concepts and cases*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, pp.83–119

Boulding, E. (1972). Peace Research: Dialectics and development, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, vol. 16, no. 4, pp.469–475, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1177/002200277201600402>

Boutros-Ghali, B. (1992). *An Agenda for Peace: Preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peace-keeping*, Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to the statement adopted by the Summit Meeting of the Security Council, New York: United Nations (UN), <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/145749?ln=en&v=pdf>

Box-Steffensmeier, J.M., Brady, H.E., & Collier, D. (2008). *The Oxford Handbook of Political Methodology*, Oxford: Oxford University Press

Britannica (2024). Treaty of Sagauli, *Britannica*, 26 February, , <https://www.britannica.com/event/Treaty-of-Sagauli>

British Army (n.d; a). Corps, Regiments & Units: Gurkha history, <https://www.army.mod.uk/learn-and-explore/about-the-army/corps-regiments-and-units/brigade-of-gurkhas/gurkha-history/>

British Army (n.d; b). The Tri-Partite Agreement, https://www.army.mod.uk/media/6207/20161001-tripartie_ageement.pdf

Brown, G.K. (2012). Nepal: First steps towards redressing HIs? in Langer, A., Stewart, F., Venugopal, R. (eds), *Horizontal Inequalities and Post-Conflict Development*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 275–296, doi:10.1057/9780230348622_12

Brown, M. A. (2018). The 'Hybrid Turn': Approaches and potentials, in Wallis, J., Kent, L., Forsyth, M., Dinnen, S., & Bose, S. (eds), *Hybridity on the Ground in Peacebuilding and Development: Critical conversations*, ANU Press, pp.21–36

Brown, M. A., & Gusmao, A. F. (2009). Peacebuilding and Political Hybridity in East Timor, *Peace Review: A Journal of Social Justice*, vol. 21, no. 1, pp.61–69, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10402650802690086>

Brown, M.A., Boege, V., Clements, K.P., & Nolan, A. (2010). Challenging Statebuilding as Peacebuilding: Working with hybrid political orders to build peace, in Richmond, O.P. (eds), *Palgrave Advances in Peacebuilding*, Palgrave Advances London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp.99–115

Brown, T.L. (1996). *The Challenges to Democracy in Nepal: A political history*, London, New York: Routledge

Brubaker, R., & Upadhyay, A. (2021). Breaking the Mold: Lessons from sixteen years of innovative UN political engagement in Nepal, *International Peace Institute*, <https://www.ipinst.org/2021/02/lessons-from-sixteen-years-of-innovative-un-political-engagement-in-nepal>

Bryman, A. (2012). *Social Research Methods*, New York: Oxford University Press

Buddhist Discussion Centre (2015). Buddha Dhamma Teachings, <https://bdcu.org.au/dhamma-teachings/>

Buhaug, H., Gates, S., Hegre, H., & Strand, H. (2007). Global Trends in Armed Conflict: Globale Norge - hva nå? Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, <https://cdn.cloud.prio.org/files/dc8defc3-6f82-4798-97a2-05978a7600cc/Global%20Trends%20in%20Armed%20Conflict.pdf?inline=true>

Burgess, H. (2004). Peace Processes, in Burgess, G., & Burgess, H. (eds), *Beyond Intractability*, Conflict Information Consortium, Boulder: University of Colorado, <http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/peace-processes>

Burghart, R. (1984). The Formation of the Concept of Nation-State in Nepal, *The Journal of Asian Studies*, vol. 44, no. 1, pp.101–125, doi: <https://doi.org/10.2307/2056748>

Burke, J. (2017). They Use Money to Promote Christianity: Nepal's battle for souls, *The Guardian*, 15 August, <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2017/aug/15/they-use-money-to-promote-christianity-nepal-battle-for-souls>

Business Recorder (2007). Thousands of Maoists surround Nepal parliament, *Business Recorder*, 14 May, <https://www.brecorder.com/news/3393713/thousands-of-maoists-surround-nepal-parliament-20070514564057>

Business Standard (2013). Nepal Parties Reach Four-point Agreement, *Business Standard*, 24 December, https://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ians/nepal-parties-reach-four-point-agreement-113122400574_1.html

Buzan, B. (1984). Peace, Power and Security: Contending concepts in the study of international relations, *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 21, no. 2, pp.109–125

Byju's (n.d.). *Panchayati Raj: 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act*, <https://byjus.com/free-ias-prep/panchayati-raj/>

Call, C. T. (2007). The Mugging of a Success Story: Justice and security sector reform in El Salvador, in *Constructing Justice and Security After War*, Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, pp.29–67

Call, C. T. (2012). Making Peace Stick: Inclusionary politics and twenty-seven nonrecurrent civil wars, in *Why Peace Fails: The causes and prevention of civil war recurrence*, Georgetown University Press, pp.183–210

Call, C.T. & Stanley, W. (2002). Civilian Security, *Ending Civil Wars: The implementation of peace agreements*, pp.303–326

Call, C.T., & De Coning, C. (2017). Conclusion: Are rising powers breaking the peacebuilding mold? in Call, C., & De Coning, C. (eds), *Rising Powers and Peacebuilding: Rethinking peace and conflict studies*, Palgrave Macmillan, Cham, pp.243–272

Camilleri, J. (2020). A Just and Ecologically Sustainable Peace: The policy imperative of our time, in *Towards a Just and Ecologically Sustainable Peace*, pp.17–48, doi: 10.1007/978-981-15-5021-8_2

Campbell, I., Wheeler, T., Attree, L., Butler, D. L., & Mariani, B. (2012). China and Conflict-Affected States: Between principle and pragmatism, Saferworld, <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/57a08aad40f0b649740006f2/China-and-conflict-affected-states.pdf>

Campbell, S., Chandler, D., & Sabaratnam, M. (2011). *A Liberal Peace? The problems and practices of peacebuilding*, London; New York: Zed Books

Cardenas, M. (2023). Decolonizing Perspectives in Peace Research, in Cohrs, C., Knab, N., & Sommer, G. (eds), *Handbook of Peace Psychology*, Forum Peace Psychology, pp.3–30

Carey, H.F., & Sen, O. (2020). Bridging the Conceptual and Theoretical Divides on Peace and Peacebuilding, in Carey, H.F. (ed.), *Peacebuilding Paradigms: The impact of theoretical diversity on implementing sustainable peace*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp.1–28

Carl, A. (2019). Navigating Inclusion in Peace Processes, in *Accord: An international review of peace initiatives*, issue 28, London: Conciliation Resources

Carta, C. (2019). A Rose by Any Other Name: On ways of approaching discourse analysis, *International Relations Review*, Vol. 20, no. 2, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1093/isr/viy020>

Cartwright, M. (2022). Anglo-Nepalese War, *World History Encyclopedia*, 5 December, https://www.worldhistory.org/Anglo-Nepalese_War/

Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS), Government of Nepal (2019). Nepal in Figures 2019, <https://cbs.gov.np/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Nepal-in-Figures-2019.pdf>

Central Tibetan Administration (2019). The 17-point Agreement: What China promised, what it really delivered and the future? Central Tibetan Administration, 23 May, <https://tibet.net/the-17-point-agreement-what-china-promised-what-it-really-delivered-and-the-future-2/>

Chalise, V. (2009). Priest Appointment: Transparency can soothe nerves, *The Himalayan*, 12 January, <https://thehimalayantimes.com/opinion/priest-appointment-transparency-can-soothe-nerves>

Chandler, D. (2014). Resilience: The governance of complexity, Abingdon, New York: Routledge

Chapagain, K., & Yardley, J. (2010). Girija Prasad Koirala, Former Nepal Premier, Dies at 85, *The New York Times*, 21 March, <https://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/21/world/asia/21koirala.html>

Chaturvedy, R.R., & Malone, D.M., (2012). A Yam between Two Boulders: Nepal's foreign policy caught between India and China, in Einsiedel, S.V., Malone, D.M., & Pradhan, S. (eds), *Nepal in Transition: From People's War to fragile peace*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp.287–312

Chaudhary, G., & Budhair, M. (2015). 8 Killed in Tikapur clash, *The Kathmandu Post*, 25 August, <https://kathmandupost.com/miscellaneous/2015/08/25/8-killed-in-tikapur-clash>

Chaudhury, D.R. (2023). China's Ambassador Slams India's Nepal Policy, Calls it 'Less Than Ideal', *The Economic Times*, 06 September, <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/international/world-news/envoy-slams-indias-nepal-policy-calls-it-less-than-ideal/articleshow/103405628.cms?from=mdr>

Cheeseman, N., & Tendi, B.-M. (2010). Power-Sharing in Comparative Perspective: The dynamics of “unity government” in Kenya and Zimbabwe, *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, vol. 48, no. 2, pp.203–229, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40864715>

Chene, M.D. (2007). Is Nepal in South Asia? The condition of non-postcoloniality, *Studies in Nepali History and Society*, vol. 12, no. 2, pp.207–223

Chengappa, R., & Krishnan, A. (2017). India-China Standoff: All you need to know about Doklam dispute, *India Today*, 7 July, <https://www.indiatoday.in/magazine/cover-story/story/20170717-india-china-bhutan-border-dispute-doklam-beijing-siliguri-corridor-1022690-2017-07-07>

Chhetry, A. (2021). Decoding IndoNepal Relations from the Prism of Indian Military Diplomacy, Centre for Land Warfare Studies, https://www.claws.in/static/IB-300_Decoding-Indo-Nepal-Relations-from-the-Prism-of-Indian-Military-Diplomacy.pdf

Cho, J., & Trent, A. (2014). Evaluating Qualitative Research, in Leavy, P. (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Qualitative Research*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp.677–696, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199811755.013.012>

Choudhary, C. K. (2018). Jain Philosophy: One solution for all global problems, International Conference on Jain Philosophies and Jainism, Shravanabelgola, Karnataka, India, https://www.academia.edu/36209138/Jain_Philosophy_and_Solutions_Dr_Chiranjib_Kumar

Chris Abbot, J., Rogers, P., & Sloboda, J. (2011). *Beyond Terror: The truth about the real threats to our world*, London: Edbury Publishing

Christians, C.G. (2005). Ethics and Politics in Qualitative Research, in Denzin, N.K., & Lincoln, Y.S. (eds), *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research* (3rd edn.), London: Sage Publications Ltd, pp.139–164

Clark, T., Foster, L., Bryman, A., & Sloan, L. (2021). *Bryman's Social Research Methods*, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press

CNA Insider (2024). Making Peace with Nepal's Maoist Rebels | The Peacemakers - Ep 1/3 | Full Episode, 27 September, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NCnSQHFQGps>

Cogan, M.S., & Sakai, H. (2022a). Conceptualizing Bespoke Peacebuilding, in Cogan, M.S., & Sakai, H. (eds), *Alternative Perspectives on Peacebuilding: Rethinking peace and conflict studies*, Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, pp.29–53

Cogan, M.S., & Sakai, H. (2022b). Introduction: Toward bespoke peacebuilding, in Cogan, M.S., & Sakai, H. (eds) *Alternative Perspectives on Peacebuilding: Rethinking peace and conflict studies*, Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, pp.1–25

Collier, P. (1999). *Doing Well Out of War*, The World Bank, <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/zh/504671468762020790/pdf/28137.pdf>

Collier, P., Hoeffler, A., & Söderbom, M. (2004). On the Duration of Civil War, *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 41, no. 3, pp.253–273, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343304043769>

Commission of Investigation on Enforced Disappeared Persons Nepal (n.d.). A brief Information of CIEDP, <http://ciedp.gov.np/en/introduction/#:~:text=What%20is%20CIEDP%3F,the%20conflict%20related%20disappeared%20Persons>

Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) (2013). *Historical Documents of Nepalese Communist Movement and People's Revolution*, volume I, Kathmandu, Nepal: Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist), Magarat Province Organizing committee, pp.566–580

Coombs, H. (2022). Case Study Research: Single or multiple, White paper, Southern Utah University, doi: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.7604301>

Corr, E.G. (1995). Societal Transformation for Peace in El Salvador, *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, vol. 541, no. 1, pp.144–156, doi: 10.1177/0002716295541001010

Cortright, D. (2008). *Peace: A history of movement and ideas*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Country Economy (n.d.). Nepal: Global peace index, *Country Economy*, <https://countryeconomy.com/demography/global-peace-index/nepal>

Cowan, S. (2021). Inside the People's Liberation Army: A military perspective, *The Record*, 27 December, <https://www.recordnepal.com/inside-the-peoples-liberation-army-a-military-perspective>

Cox, R. W. (1981). Social Forces, States and World Orders: Beyond international relations theory', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, vol. 10, no. 2, pp. 126–155, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1177/03058298810100020501>

Cramer, C. (2003). Does Inequality Cause Conflict? *Journal of International Development*, vol. 15, no. 4, pp.397–412, doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/jid.992>

Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing among five approaches* (4th edn.), Washington DC: Sage Publications

Creswell, J.W. (2003). *Research Design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed method approaches* (2nd edn.), Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications

CRS Report for Congress (2004). India's 2004 National Elections, https://www.everycrsreport.com/files/20040712_RL32465_2dc37ea85af7a3553e2eb741a5b4bf2c8c57c28e.pdf

Cunningham, D.E. (2006). Veto Players and Civil War Duration, *American Journal of Political Science*, vol. 50, no. 4, pp.875–892, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4122921>

Curle, A. (1971). *Making Peace*, New York: Harper and Row Publishers

Curle, A. (1972). *Another Way: Positive response to contemporary violence*, Oxford: Jon Carpenter Publishing

Curle, A. (1990). *Tools for Transformation: A personal study*, United Kingdom: Hawthorn Press

Dabhade, M., & Pant, H. V. (2004). Coping with Challenges to Sovereignty: Sino-Indian rivalry and Nepal's foreign policy, *Contemporary South Asia*, vol. 13, no. 2, pp.157–169, doi: 10.1080/0958493042000242945

Dahal, A. (2023). Comparing Maina Sunar and Resham Chaudhary Cases, *Nepali Times*, 03 June, <https://nepalitimes.com/opinion/comment/comparing-maina-sunwar-and-resham-chaudhary-cases>

Dahal, B. (2022). Remembering BP and Pushpalal, *The Rising Nepal*, 25 July, <https://risingnepaldaily.com/news/14407>

Dahal, D. R., & Bhatta, C. D. (2008). The Relevance of Local Conflict Resolution Mechanisms for Systemic Conflict Transformation in Nepal, Bergh of Foundation for Peace Support, <https://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/document?repid=rep1&type=pdf&doi=9be26d9c8b524ae0ef170b610911675818c0369e>

Dahal, D.R. (2021). Peace from Bottom Up, *Telegraphnepal*, 20 December, <https://www.telegraphnepal.com/peace-from-bottom-up/>

Darby, J., & Ginty, Roger M. (2003). *Contemporary Peacemaking: Conflict, violence and peace processes*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan

Dasgupta, S. (2016). Nepal Moves to Open Up China Route, *Voice of America*, 23 March, <https://www.voanews.com/a/angered-by-blockade-of-indian-goods-nepal-moves-to-open-up-china-route/3250884.html>

Dawn (2002). Beijing Disowns Nepalese Maoism, *Dawn*, 16 July, <https://www.dawn.com/news/48012/beijing-disowns-nepalese-maoism>

De Carvalho, B., & De Coning, C. (2013). *Rising Powers and the Future of Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding*, Noref, <https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/175234/f194e6326ee12f80c3705117b151ef78.pdf>

De Coning, C. (2011). Moving Beyond the Technical: Facing up to peacebuilding's inherent contradictions, *African Security Review*, vol. 20, no. 1, pp.116–121, doi: 10.1080/10246029.2011.561023

De Coning, C. (2013). Understanding Peacebuilding as Essentially Local, *Stability: International Journal of Security and Development*, vol. 2, no. 1, p.6, <https://doi.org/10.5334/sta.as>

De Coning, C. (2016). From Peacebuilding to Sustaining Peace: Implications of complexity for resilience and sustainability, *Resilience*, vol. 4, no. 3, pp.166–181, <https://doi.org/10.1080/21693293.2016.1153773>

De Coning, C., & Call, C.T. (2017). Introduction: Why examine rising powers' role in peacebuilding? in Call, C., & De Coning, C. (eds), *Rising Powers and Peacebuilding. Rethinking Peace and Conflict Studies*, Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, pp.1–12

De Coning, C., Aoi, C., & Thakur, R. (2007). *The Unintended Consequences of Peacekeeping*, New York: United Nations University Press

De Coning, C., Karlsrud, J., & Troost, P. (2015). Towards More People-Centric Peace Operations: From 'extension of state authority' to 'strengthening inclusive state-society relations', *Stability: International Journal of Security and Development*, vol. 4, no. 1, pp:1–13, <https://doi.org/10.5334/sta.gl>

Debbare, A. (2018). Humanitarian Action and Sustaining Peace, USA: International Peace Institute, <https://www.ipinst.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/0306-Humanitarian-Action-and-Sustaining-Peace.pdf>

Deinla, I. (2018). Security and Hybrid Justice Systems in Mindanao, Philippines, in Wallis, J., Kent, L., Forsyth, M., Dinnen, S., & Bose, S. (eds), *Hybridity on the Ground in Peacebuilding and Development: Critical conversations*, Australia: ANU Press, pp.217–234

Deitelhoff, N., & Wallbott, L. (2012). Beyond Soft Balancing: Small states and coalition-building in the ICC and climate negotiations, *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, vol. 25, no. 3, pp.345–366, doi: 10.1080/09557571.2012.710580

Della Porta, D., & Keating, M. (eds) (2008). *Approaches and Methodologies in the Social Sciences*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Denzin, N. K. (1997). *Interpretive Ethnography: Ethnographic practices for the 21st century*, Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.

DeRouen, K.R., & Sobek, D. (2004). The Dynamics of Civil War Duration and Outcome, *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 41, no. 3, pp.303–320, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4149746>

Desouza, N. (2015). Nepal: The struggle for equal citizenship rights for women, *openDemocracy*, 02 December, <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/5050/nepal-struggle-for-equal-citizenship-rights-for-women/>

Deutsch, M., & Coleman, P.T. (2016). The Psychological Components of a Sustainable Peace: An introduction, in Brauch, H., Oswald Spring, Ú., Grin, J., & Scheffran, J. (eds), *Handbook on Sustainability Transition and Sustainable Peace, Hexagon Series on Human and Environmental Security and Peace*, vol. 10, Cham: Springer International Publishing, pp.139–148

Development Finance International & Oxfam (2017). *The Commitment to Reducing Inequality Index*, Development Finance International and Oxfam Research Report, https://oi-files-d8-prod.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/file_attachments/rr-commitment-reduce-inequality-index-170717-en.pdf

Devkota, K. (2012). *A Perspective on the Maoist Movement in Nepal*, Kathmandu: D.R. Khanal

Devleesschauwer, B., Ale, A., Torgerson, P., Praet, N., Maertens de Noordhout, C., Pandey, B.D., Pun, S.B., Lake, R., Vercruyssen, J., Joshi, D.D., Havelaar, A.H., Duchateau, L., Dorny, P., & Speybroeck, N. (2014). The Burden of Parasitic Zoonoses in Nepal: A systematic review, *PLoS Neglected Tropical Diseases*, vol. 8, no.1, <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pntd.0002634>

DFID And Asian Development Bank (2006). *Nepal Resilience Amidst Conflict An Assessment of Poverty in Nepal, 1995–96 and 2003–04*, Report No. 34834-NP. Washington, D.C.: World Bank Group, <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/215071468122987031/Nepal-Resilience-amidst-conflict-an-assessment-of-poverty-in-Nepal-1995-96-and-2003-04>

Dhakal, A. (2024). Panel Submits Report on TRC Bill to Top Leaders, *The Kathmandu Post*, 7 August, <https://kathmandupost.com/national/2024/08/07/panel-submits-report-on-trc-bill-to-top-leaders>

Dhungel, K.R. (2022). Income Inequality in Nepal, *Law and Economy*, vol. 1, no. 3, pp.51–54, <https://www.paradigmppress.org/le/article/view/212>

Dijkema, C. (2022). Creating Space for Agonism: Making room for subalternised voices in peace research, *Conflict, Security & Development*, pp.1–20, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14678802.2022.2122697>

Dinnen, S., & Allen, M. (2018). Reflections on Hybridity as an Analytical Lens on State Formation: The case of Solomon Islands, in Wallis, J., Kent, L., Forsyth, M., Dinnen, S., & Bose, S. (eds), *Hybridity on the Ground in Peacebuilding and Development: Critical conversations*, Australia: ANU Press, pp.129–144

Dixit, K. (2010). A New Himalayan Game, *The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs*, vol. 34, no. 1, pp.125–134, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/45289495>

Dixit, K.M., & Ramachandran, S. (2002). *State of Nepal*, Kathmandu: Himal Books

Donais, T. (2013). *Peacebuilding and Local Ownership: Post-conflict consensus-building*, London, New York: Routledge

Doyle, M. W., & Sambanis, N. (2006). *Making War and Building Peace, USA*: Princeton University Press

Doyle, M.W., & Sambanis, N. (2000). International Peacebuilding: A theoretical and quantitative analysis, *American Political Science Review*, vol. 94, no. 4, pp. 779–801, doi:10.2307/2586208

Dubey, P. (2006). King Gyanendra's Government as well as Maoist Rebels Bought Weapons from China, *PIME Asianews*, 14 June, <https://www.asianews.it/news-en/King-Gyanendras-government-as-well-as-Maoist-rebels-bought-weapons-from-China-6435.html>

Duffield, M. (2001). *Global Governance and the New Wars: The merging of development and security*, London: Zed Books

Dungen, V.D.P., & Wittner, L. S. (2003). Peace History: An introduction, *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 40, no. 4, pp.363–375, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3648288>

Duquesne, I. (2022). Nepal: King Birendra's Zone of Peace Proposal (ZOP), *Telegraph Nepal*, 07 August, <https://www.telegraphnepal.com/nepal-king-birendras-zone-of-peace-proposal-zop/>

Duvisac, S. (2022). Decolonize! What does it mean? Oxfam America, <http://hdl.handle.net/10546/621456>

Dzuverovic, N. (2018). Why Local Voices Matter: Participation of local researchers in the liberal peace debate, *Peacebuilding*, vol. 6, no. 2, pp.111–126, doi: 10.1080/21647259.2018.1449186

Dzuverovic, N. (2021). To Romanticise or not to Romanticise the Local: Local agency and peacebuilding in the Balkans, *Conflict, Security & Development*, vol. 21, no. 1, pp.21–41, doi: 10.1080/14678802.2021.1888517

Edgar, A.D. (2019). International Norms and Future Peacebuilding, in Kulnazarova, A., & Popovski, V. (eds) *The Palgrave Handbook of Global Approaches to Peace*, Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, pp.717–729

Einsiedel, S.V., & Salih, C. (2017). Conflict Prevention in Nepal: Background paper for the United Nations World Bank study on conflict prevention, Conflict Prevention Series, United Nations University Centre for Policy Research, <https://collections.unu.edu/view/UNU:6430>

Einsiedel, S.V., Malone, D.M., & Pradhan, S. (2012a). Introduction, in Einsiedel, S.V., Malone, D.M., & Pradhan, S. (eds), *Nepal in Transition: From People's War to fragile peace*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp.1–33

Einsiedel, S.V., Malone, D.M., & Pradhan, S. (2012b). *Nepal in Transition: From People's War to fragile peace*, New York: Cambridge University Press

Eisenhardt, K. M. (1989). Building Theories from Case Study Research, *The Academy of Management Review*, vol. 14, no. 4, pp.532–550, <https://doi.org/10.2307/258557>

Eisenhower, D.D. (1960). Joint Statement Following Discussions with King Mahendra, *The American Presidency Project*, 28 April, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/joint-statement-following-discussions-with-king-mahendra>

Election Commission Nepal (1991). The General Election in Nepal, HMG-Nepal, http://archive.ipu.org/parline-e/reports/arc/2386_91.htm

Election Commission Nepal (2008). Facts and Figures on Elections in Nepal, <https://web.archive.org/web/20081021001831/http://www.election.gov.np/EN/prevelection.html>

Election Commission Nepal (2022). The General Election in Nepal, HMG-Nepal, <https://result.election.gov.np/>

Ellis, C., & Adams, T.E. (2014). The Purposes, Practices, and Principles of Autoethnographic Research, in Leavy, P. (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Qualitative Research*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp.254–276

Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Nepal (2021). Photo Exhibition in Celebration of the 60th Anniversary of the Signing of the *Boundary Treaty between the People's Republic of China and the Kingdom of Nepal*, http://np.chinaembassy.gov.cn/eng/Diplomacy/202110/t20211005_9560973.htm

Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the Hellenic Republic (2006). Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Kong Quan's Press Conference on January 24 2006, http://gr.china-embassy.gov.cn/eng/ztlm/lxjzzdh/200601/t20060124_3366718.htm

Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Nepal (2005). Foreign Ministry Spokesman Liu Jianchao's Press Conference on 31 March 2005, http://np.china-embassy.gov.cn/eng/fyrth/200504/t20050404_1587119.htm

Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Nepal (2007). China, Nepal Signed an Agreement on Economic and Technical Cooperation, http://np.chinaembassy.gov.cn/eng/ChinaNepal/200709/t20070905_1586063.htm

ETV Bharat (2020). Nepal links with China Affecting its Autonomy, Ability to Take Decisions: Report, *ETV Bharat*, 23 August, <https://www.etvbharat.com/english/international/asia-pacific/nepal-links-with-china-affecting-its-autonomy-ability-to-take-decisions-report/na20200823162450170>

Every CRS Report (2007). Nepal: Background and U.S. Relations, https://www.everycrsreport.com/reports/RL31599.html#_Toc229369954

Ewick, P., & Silbey, S. S. (1995). Subversive Stories and Hegemonic Tales: Toward a sociology of narrative, *Law & Society Review*, vol. 29, no. 2, pp.197–226, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3054010>

Falk, R. (1993). Hard Choices and Tragic Dilemmas: Intervention revisited, *The Free Library*, 20 December, [https://www.thefreelibrary.com/Hard choices and tragic dilemmas; intervention revisited.-a014663322](https://www.thefreelibrary.com/Hard+choices+and+tragic+dilemmas;+intervention+revisited.-a014663322)

Fearon, J. D. (2004). Why Do Some Civil Wars Last so Much Longer than Others? *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 41, no. 3, pp.275–301, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4149745>

Fine, M., & Weis, L. (2005). Compositional Studies, in *Two Parts: Critical theorizing and analysis of social (in) justice*, in Denzin, N.K., & Lincoln, Y.S. (eds), *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research* (3rd edn.), London: Sage Publications Ltd, pp.65–84

First Hand Films (2024). Devi | OFFICIAL TRAILER | A film by Subina Shrestha, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7CKndYjxix4>

Forsyth, M. (2018). Should the Concept of Hybridity Be Used Normatively as well as Descriptively? in Wallis, J., Kent, L., Forsyth, M., Dinnen, S., & Bose, S. (eds), *Hybridity on the Ground in Peacebuilding and Development: Critical conversations*, Australia: ANU Press, pp.67–82

Fortna, V. P. (2004). Does Peacekeeping Keep Peace? International intervention and the duration of peace after civil war, *International Studies Quarterly*, vol. 48, no. 2, 269–292, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3693574>

Fortna, V.P. (2003). Scraps of Paper? Agreements and the durability of peace, *International Organization*, vol. 57, no. 2, pp.337–372, doi: 10.1017/S0020818303572046

Forum For Women, Law and Development (2018). Concluding Observations on the Sixth Periodic Report of Nepal on CEDAW, <https://fwld.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Concluding-comments-English.pdf>

- Francis, D. (2009). Conflict Transformation: A global agenda, Report of the CCTS Seminar held on 10 November, 2009, <https://rc-services-assets.s3.eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/Review41.pdf>
- Frank, A. W. (2002). Why Study People's Stories? The dialogical ethics of narrative analysis, *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, vol. 1, no. 1, pp.109–117, <https://doi.org/10.1177/160940690200100102>
- Frieden, J. (2012). A Donor's Perspective on Aid and Conflict, in Einsiedel, S.V., Malone, D.M., & Pradhan, S. (eds), *Nepal in Transition: From People's War to fragile peace*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp.100–113
- Friedman, T. L. (2010). Containment-Lite, *The New York Times*, 9 November, <https://www.nytimes.com/2010/11/10/opinion/10friedman.html>
- Fronsdal, G. (2005). The Dhammapada: A new translation of the Buddhist classic with annotations, Boston: Shambhala
- Gajmer, B. (2019). Her Husband Set Her on Fire. She lived to tell her story, *The Kathmandu Post*, 01 June, <https://kathmandupost.com/visual-stories/2019/06/01/her-husband-set-her-on-fire-she-lived-to-tell-her-story>
- Galtung, J. (1969). Violence, Peace and Peace Research, in *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 6, no. 3, pp.167–191
- Galtung, J. (1976). Three Approaches to Peace: Peacekeeping, peacemaking and peacebuilding, in *Peace, War and Defense: Essays in peace research II*, Copenhagen: Christian Elders, pp.292–304
- Galtung, J. (1990). Cultural Violence, *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 27, no. 3, pp.291–305, <https://www.galtung-institut.de/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Cultural-Violence-Galtung.pdf>
- Galtung, J. (1996). *Peace by Peaceful Means: Peace and Conflict, Development and Civilization*, London: Sage Publications
- Galtung, J. (2000). Conflict Transformation by Peaceful Means (The transcend method), Participant's and trainer's manual, Transcend: A Peace and Development Network, https://www.transcend.org/pctrcluj2004/TRANSCEND_manual.pdf
- Galtung, J. (2013). *A Theory of Peace: Building Direct, Structural and Cultural Peace*, Oslo: Transcend University Press
- Galtung, J., & Fischer, D. (2013). *Johan Galtung: Pioneer of Peace Research*, New York: Springer
- Gandarilla Salgado, J.G., García-Bravo, M.H., & Benzi, D. (2021). Two Decades of Aníbal Quijano's Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism and Latin America, *Contexto Internacional*, vol. 43, no. 1, pp.199–222, <https://doi.org/10.1590/s0102-8529.2019430100009>

Gandhi, E. (n.d.). Gandhi's Vision of Peace, <https://www.mkgandhi.org/articles/elagandhi.php>

Gautam, B. (2008a). Madheshi Bidroha: Nairasyako Rajniti [Madheshi Rebellion: Politics of Despair], in Gautam, B. (ed.) *Madhes Bidroha ko Nalibeli [Inside Story of the Madhes Uprising]*, Kathmandu: Martin Chautari, pp.1–36

Gautam, B. (2008b) *Madhes Bidroha ko Nalibeli [Inside Story of the Madhes Uprising]*, Thapathali: Martin Chautari

Gautam, K.C. (2015). Lost in Transition: Rebuilding Nepal from the Maoist mayhem and mega earthquake, Kathmandu: Nepa-laya

Geiser, A. (2005). The Struggle of Excluded Groups, in *Social Exclusion and Conflict Transformation in Nepal: Women, Dalit and ethnic groups: FAST Country Risk Profile Nepal*, Swisspeace, pp.26–32, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep11080.10>

Gellner, D. (2014). The 2013 Elections in Nepal, *Asian Affairs*, vol. 45, no. 2, pp. 243–261, Doi: 10.1080/03068374.2014.909627

Gellner, D. N. (2007). Caste, Ethnicity and Inequality in Nepal, *Economic and Political Weekly*, vol. 42, no. 20, pp.1823–1828, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4419601>

Gellner, D. N. (2016). Ethnicity and Nationalism in the World's only Hindu State, in

Gellner, D. N., Pfaff-Czarnecka, J., & Whelpton, J. (eds), *Nationalism and Ethnicity in Nepal*, Thamel: Vajra Books, pp.3–31

Gellner, D.N., Pfaff-Czarnecka, J., & Whelpton, J. (2016). *Nationalism and Ethnicity in Nepal*, Thamel: Vajra Books

Gérard, T. (2013). *From Monarchy to Republic: Essays on changing Nepal*, Nepal: Vajra Books

Gerring, J. (2008). Case Selection for Case-Study Analysis: Qualitative and quantitative techniques, in Box-Steffensmeier, J.M., Brady, H.E., & Collier, D. (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Political Methodology*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp.645–684

Gerring, J. (2009). The Case Study: What it is and what it does, in Boix, C., & Stokes, S.C. (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp.90–122

Gerring, J. (2011). *The Oxford Handbook of Political Science*, in Boix, C., & Stokes, S.C. (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, <https://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199566020.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780199566020-e-4>

Ghale, S. (2017). Backlash Against Inclusion, in Ramsbotham, A., & Thapa, D. (eds), *Two Steps Forward, One Step Back: Nepal's peace process, Accord: An international review of peace initiatives*, no. 26, London: Conciliation Resources, pp.123–124

- Ghimire, B. (2018). Nepal-China Military Drill in September, *The Kathmandu Post*, 21 July, <https://kathmandupost.com/valley/2018/07/21/nepal-china-military-drill-in-sept>
- Ghimire, B. (2019). CK Raut Quits Secessionist Movement, Joins Mainstream Politics, *The Kathmandu Post*, 08 March, <https://kathmandupost.com/national/2019/03/08/ck-raut-quits-secessionist-movement-joins-mainstream-politics>
- Ghimire, B. (2023). Disputed Bill to Revise Transitional Justice Law Lands in House, *The Kathmandu Post*, 20 March, <https://kathmandupost.com/politics/2023/03/20/disputed-bill-to-revise-transitional-justice-law-lands-in-house>
- Ghimire, B. (2024). Conflict-era Rape Victims' Trauma Compounds, *The Kathmandu Post*, 19 February, <https://kathmandupost.com/national/2024/02/19/conflict-era-rape-victims-trauma-compounds>
- Ghimire, Y. (2012). The Maoist Split, *The Indian Express*, 26 June, <https://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/the-maoist-split/>
- Ghodsee, K. (2011). Research, Collaboration, and Intelligence: When governments take an interest in feminist ethnography, *Feminist Formations*, vol. 23, no. 2, pp. 164–189, <https://doi.org/10.1353/ff.2011.0016>
- Gilgun, J. F. (2014). Writing up Qualitative Research, in Leavy, P. (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Qualitative Research Methods*, New York: Oxford University Press, pp.658–676
- Gillham, B. (2000). *Case Study Research Methods*, London: Bloomsbury Academic
- Giri, A. (2014). Diplomat Summoned Over Envoy's Conversion Note, *The Kathmandu Post*, 16 December, <https://kathmandupost.com/miscellaneous/2014/12/16/diplomat-summoned-over-envoys-conversion-note>
- Giri, A. (2019). UN Letter on Transitional Justice Process Puts Government in a Bind, *The Kathmandu Post*, 19 April, <https://kathmandupost.ekantipur.com/news/2019-04-19/un-letter-on-transitional-justice-process-puts-government-in-a-bind.html>
- Giri, A., & Pradhan, T.R. (2022). Government Decides to Stay Away from SPP, *The Kathmandu Post*, 21 June, <https://kathmandupost.com/national/2022/06/21/government-decides-to-stay-away-from-spp>
- Giri, C.L. (2023). America Becomes Nepal's Largest Donor Surpassing China and India, *Nepal Khabar*, 21 September, <https://en.nepalkhabar.com/news/detail/6159/>
- Goertz, G., & Mahoney, J. (2012). *A Tale of Two Cultures: Qualitative and quantitative research in the social sciences*, UK: Princeton University Press
- Gokhale, V. (2022). China's Influence in Nepal Isn't Limitless, *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, 6 April, <https://carnegieendowment.org/posts/2022/04/chinas-influence-in-nepal-isnt-limitless?lang=en>

- Gomm, R., Hammersley, M., & Foster, P. (2000). *Case Study Method: Key issues, key texts*, London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi: Sage Publications
- Goodhand, J., Walton, O., Karn, S., & Jha, K. (2018). *Madheshi Borderland Brokers in Nepal's Post-War Transition*, London: Conciliation Resources, https://rc-services-assets.s3.eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/9_Nepal.pdf
- Goodman, R.F., & Fisher, W.R. (1995). *Rethinking Knowledge: Reflections across the disciplines*, New York: State University of New York Press
- Government of India (n.d.). Ministry of Panchayat Raj, <https://panchayat.gov.in/en/about-department/introduction/#:~:text=The%20Ministry%20of%20Panchayati%20Raj,are%20divided%20among%20two%20governments>
- Government of Nepal (1951). *Interim Government of Nepal Act, 1951*. ConstitutionNet, International IDEA, <https://constitutionnet.org/sites/default/files/1951%20Constitution%20English.pdf>
- Government of Nepal (2007). *23-point Agreement Between the Top Leaders of the Seven-Party Alliance, December 23*, https://www.satp.org/satporgrp/countries/nepal/document/papers/23-point_Agreement.htm
- Government of Nepal and United Nations Development Programme (2014). *Nepal Human Development Report 2014*, https://www.npc.gov.np/images/category/NHDR_Report_2014.pdf
- Government of Nepal, Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction (2015). *Nepal Peace Trust Fund Strategy 2014–17*, http://www.nptf.gov.np/downloadfile/Nepal%20Peace%20Trust%20Fund%20Strategy%20Stratragy%20compile_1449048269.pdf
- Government of Nepal, National Planning Commission (2022). *National Framework for Leave No One Behind*, <https://npc.gov.np/images/category/231120105645LNOB%20UPDATED%20REPORT-Sept%203%202023%20updated.pdf>
- Government of Nepal, Office of the Prime Ministers and Council of Members (n.d.). *Former Prime Ministers*, <https://www.opmcm.gov.np/en/former-pm/>
- Grbich, C. (2013). *Qualitative Data Analysis: An Introduction*, London: Sage Publication
- Guha, R. (2013). *Gandhi Before India*, India: Penguin Random House
- Guha, R. (2023). *India After Gandhi*, India: Pan Macmillan
- Gupta, B. (2021). *One Hat to Rule Them All: The dhaka topi and the subjugation of minority cultures in Nepal*, *The Record*, 10 January, <https://www.recordnepal.com/one-hat-to-rule-them-all-the-dhaka-topi-and-the-subjugation-of-minority-cultures-in-nepal>

Gupta, D. (2023). Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist Centre), *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 13 March, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Communist-Party-of-Nepal-Maoist-Centre>

Gupta, S.S. (2022). What Would Happen If The Civil War Never Ended, Prachanda, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=alY3zmhndMY>

Gurung, H. (2003). *Social Demography of Nepal*, Lalitpur: Himal Books

Gurung, O. (2022). Social Inequality and Ethnic Conflict in Nepal, *Dhaulagiri Journal of Sociology and Anthropology*, vol. 16, no. 01, pp.1–13, doi: 10.3126/dsaj.v16i01.50916

Gurung, T. D. (2019). Debate Over Nepali Women's Right to Pass on Citizenship to Children Reignites as House Committee Holds Discussions on Controversial Provisions, *The Kathmandu Post*, 07 March, <https://kathmandupost.com/national/2019/03/07/debate-over-nepali-womens-right-to-pass-on-citizenship-to-children-reignites-as-house-committee-holds-discussions-on-controversial-provisions>

Gurung, Y. B. (2014). Nepal Social Inclusion Survey 2012: Caste, Ethnic and Gender Dimensions of Socio-economic Development, Governance and Social Solidarity, Central Department of Sociology/Anthropology, Tribhuvan University, NEPAL, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/280216061_Nepal_Social_Inclusion_Survey_2012_Caste_Ethnic_and_Gender_Dimensions_of_Socio-economic_Development_Governance_and_Social_Solidarity

Hachhethu, K. (2017). Legislating Inclusion: Post-war Constitution making in Nepal, *Accord: An International Review of Peace Initiatives*, issue 26, pp.59–63

Hachhethu, K. (2023). *Nation-Building and Federalism in Nepal*, Oxford University Press

Haidar, S., Krishnan, A., & Peri, D. (2020). Indian Army Says 20 Soldiers Killed in Clash with Chinese Troops in the Galwan Area, *The Hindu*, 28 November, <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/indian-army-says-20-soldiers-killed-in-clash-with-chinese-troops-in-the-galwan-area/article61668218.ece>

Hakorimana, D., & Busingye, G. (2022). The Concept of Peace: An African perspective, in Kuwali, D. (ed), *The Palgrave Handbook of Sustainable Peace and Security in Africa*, Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-82020-6_2

Hameiri, S., & Jones, L. (2018). Against Hybridity in the Study of Peacebuilding and Statebuilding, in Wallis, J., Kent, L., Forsyth, M., Dinnen, S., & Bose, S. (eds), *Hybridity on the Ground in Peacebuilding and Development: Critical conversations*, Australia: ANU Press, pp. 99–112

Hamel, J., Dufour, S., & Fortin, D. (1993). *Case Study Methods*, Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications

Hampson, F.O. (1996). *Nurturing Peace: Why peace settlements succeed or fail*, Washington: United States Institute of Peace

Hancké, B. (2009). *Intelligent Research Design: A guide for beginning researchers in the social sciences*, Oxford University Press

Hancock, L.E. (2016). Agency and Peacebuilding: The promise of local zones of peace, *Peacebuilding*, vol. 5, no. 3, pp.255–269, <https://doi.org/10.1080/21647259.2016.1253604>

Haque, A. (2015). Madheshi Agitation Halts Supplies, Thousands Stranded on Indo-Nepal Border, *India Today*, 01 October, <https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/Madheshi-agitation-halts-supplies-thousands-stranded-on-indo-nepal-border-265909-2015-10-01>

Harbom, L., Högbladh, S., & Wallensteen, P. (2006). Armed Conflict and Peace Agreements, *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 43, no. 5, pp.617–631, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343306067613>

Harrison, A.K. (2014). Ethnography, in Leavy, P. (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Qualitative Research*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp.223–253, <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199811755.013.011>

Hartlyn, J. (1993). Civil Violence and Conflict Resolution: The case of Colombia, in *Stopping the Killing: How civil wars end*, New York: New York University Press, pp.37–62, <https://doi.org/10.18574/nyu/9780814765425.003.0006>

Hartzell, C. A. (1999). Explaining the Stability of Negotiated Settlements to Intrastate Wars, *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, vol. 43, no. 1, pp.3–22, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/174531>

Hartzell, C., & Hoddie, M. (2003). Institutionalizing Peace: Power sharing and post-civil war conflict management, *American Journal of Political Science*, vol. 47, no. 2, pp.318–332, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3186141>

Hartzell, C., Hoddie, M., & Rothchild, D. (2001). Stabilizing the Peace after Civil War: An investigation of some key variables, *International Organization*, vol. 55, no. 1, pp.183–208, <http://www.jstr.org/stable/3078601>

Hartzell, C.A., & Hoddie, M. (2007). *Crafting Peace: Power-sharing institutions and the negotiated settlement of civil wars*, United States of America: The Pennsylvania State University Press

Haug, S., Braveboy-Wagner, J., & Maihold, G. (2021). The 'Global South' in the Study of World Politics: Examining a meta category, *Third World Quarterly*, vol. 42, no. 9, pp.1923–1944, doi: 10.1080/01436597.2021.1948831

Haviland, C. (2015). Why is Nepal's New Constitution Controversial? *BBC News*, 19 September, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-34280015>

Heathershaw, J. (2008). Unpacking the Liberal Peace: The dividing and merging of peacebuilding discourses, *Millennium*, vol. 36, no. 3, pp.597–621, <https://doi.org/10.1177/03058298080360031101>

Heathershaw, J. (2013). Towards Better Theories of Peacebuilding: Beyond the liberal peace debate, *Peacebuilding*, vol. 1, no. 2, pp.275–282, doi: 10.1080/21647259.2013.783260

Hegre, H. (2004). The Duration and Termination of Civil War, *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 41, no. 3, pp.243–252, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343304043768>

Heng, Y-K. (2012). Confessions of a Small State: Singapore's evolving approach to peace operations, *Journal of International Peacekeeping*, vol. 16, no. 1–2, pp. 119–151, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/187541111X613623>

Hensel, P. R. (1994). One Thing Leads to Another: Recurrent militarized disputes in Latin America, 1816–1986, *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 31, no. 3, 281–297, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343394031003004>

Herring, E. (2008). Neoliberalism Versus Peacebuilding in Iraq, in Pugh M., Cooper, N., & Turner, M. (eds), *Whose Peace? Critical perspectives on the political economy of peacebuilding*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp.47–64

Himalkhabar (2017). मैना सुनार हत्यामा संलग्न सैनिक अधिकृतलाई जन्मकैदको फैसला [Life Imprisonment for Army Officer Involved in Maina Sunar Murder], *Himalkhabar*, 17 April, <https://www.himalkhabar.com/news/3144>

Hindustan Times (2009). UN Nepal Mission Rejects Criticism over Maoist Verification, *Hindustan Times*, 20 May, <https://www.hindustantimes.com/world/un-nepal-mission-rejects-criticism-over-maoist-verification/story-0tXYHVOMMBABUivYX7DwXJ.html>

Hirblinger, A., Hooff, S.V., Kellogg, M., & Paffenholz, T. (2019). *Supporting or Resisting Change: Elite strategies in war to peace and political transitions*, Inclusive Peace and Transition Initiative, <https://www.inclusivepeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/report-elite-strategies-en.pdf>

Hoddie, M., & Hartzell, C. (2003). Civil War Settlements and the Implementation of Military Power-Sharing Arrangements, *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 40, no. 3, pp.303–320, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3648333>

Holiday, D., & Stanley, W. (1993). Building the Peace: Preliminary lessons from El Salvador, *Journal of International Affairs*, vol. 46, no. 2, pp.415–438, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/24357142>

Holmes, D.D. (2018). The Buddhist Ideals of Good Governance, *Buddhistdoor*, 09 July, <https://www.buddhistdoor.net/features/the-buddhist-ideals-of-good-governance/>

Hoven, J. (2020). Paradigm Partners for Locally Grounded Peacebuilding, in Carey, H. F. (ed.), *Peacebuilding Paradigms: The impact of theoretical diversity on implementing sustainable peace*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp.255–270

Howard, V.R. (2023). The Nonviolence Conundrum: Political peace and personal karma in Jain and Hindu traditions, *Religions*, vol. 14, no. 2, p.178, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel14020178>

Howe, B. (2020). The Social Construction of Peacebuilding, in Carey, H.F. (ed.), *Peacebuilding Paradigms: The impact of theoretical diversity on implementing sustainable peace*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp.111–125

Hughes, C., Öjendal, J., & Schierenbeck, I. (2015). The Struggle Versus the Song: The local turn in peacebuilding: An introduction, *Third World Quarterly*, vol. 36, no. 5, pp.817–824, doi: 10.1080/01436597.2015.1029907

Human Rights Watch Report (2004). Between a Rock and a Hard Place: Civilians struggle to survive in Nepal's civil war, <https://www.hrw.org/report/2004/10/06/between-rock-and-hard-place/civilians-struggle-survive-nepals-civil-war>

Human Rights Watch (2015). Like We Are Not Nepali: Protest and police crackdown in the Terai region of Nepal, *Human Rights Watch*, 16 October, <https://www.hrw.org/report/2015/10/16/we-are-not-nepali/protest-and-police-crackdown-terai-region-nepal>

Human Rights Watch Report (2020a). Columbia Events of 2019, <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2020/country-chapters/colombia>

Human Rights Watch Report (2020b). El Salvador Events of 2019, <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2020/country-chapters/el-salvador>

Human Rights Watch Report (2020c). Mozambique Events of 2019, <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2020/country-chapters/mozambique>

Human Rights Watch Report (2020d). Nepal: Supreme Court's Decision Reaffirms the Need to Amend Transitional Justice Law, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/05/01/nepal-supreme-courts-decision-reaffirms-need-amend-transitional-justice-law>

Hunt, C.T. (2018). Hybridity Revisited: Relational approaches to peacebuilding in complex sociopolitical orders, in Wallis, J., Kent, L., Forsyth, M., Dinnen, S., & Bose, S. (eds), *Hybridity on the Ground in Peacebuilding and Development: Critical conversations*, Australia: ANU Press, pp.51–65

Hutt, M. (1991). Drafting the Nepal Constitution, 1990, *Asian Survey*, vol. 31, no. 11, pp.1020–1039, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2645305>

Hutt, M. (2006). A People's Peace, *The Guardian*, 2 May, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2006/may/02/nepal>

Hutt, M. (2020a). Before the Dust Settled: Is Nepal's 2015 settlement a seismic constitution? *Conflict, Security & Development*, vol. 20, no. 3, pp.379–400, doi: 10.1080/14678802.2020.1771848

Hutt, M. (2020b). The Changing Face of Nepal, *Current History*, vol. 119, no. 816, pp.141–145, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/48614528>

IANS (2020). Beijing Funds a Study on Gorkhas Joining Indian Army, *The Daily Guardian*, 18 August, <https://theguardian.com/beijing-funds-a-study-on-gorkhas-joining-indian-army/>

Iglesias, A.I.R. (2019). A Decolonial Critique of the Liberal Peace: Insights from peace practices of ethnic people in Colombia, *Journal of Peace and Conflict*, vol. 12, no. 2, pp.199–223, <https://doi.org/10.30827/revpaz.v12i2.9379>

Inclusive Peace and Transition Initiative (n.d.). Making Peace Processes Work, <https://www.inclusivepeace.org/theme-posts/making-peace-processes-work/>

Inclusive Peace and Transition Initiative (2019). Elite Strategies to Support or Resist Peace Processes and Political Transitions, <https://www.inclusivepeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/briefing-note-elite-strategies-en.pdf>

Independent Commission for Aid Impact, UK (2022). The UK's Approaches to Peacebuilding—ICAI, <https://icai.independent.gov.uk/html-version/the-uks-approaches-to-peacebuilding/>

Institute for Economics & Peace (2024). Global Peace Index 2024: Measuring peace in a complex world, <https://www.visionofhumanity.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/GPI-2024-web.pdf>

Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies (2013). Peace Audit Nepal: A review, in *Peace Audit Nepal*, Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies, pp.3–8, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep09410.3>

International Alert (2006). Donor Aid Strategies in Post-Peace Settlement Environments, <https://www.international-alert.org/app/uploads/2021/09/Nepal-Donor-Aid-Strategies-EN-2006.pdf>

International Crisis Group (ICG) (2011). Nepal's Peace Process: The endgame nears, <https://www.crisisgroup.org/asia/south-asia/nepal/nepal-s-peace-process-endgame-nears#:~:text=Nepal%27s%20peace%20process%20has%20moved,arrangements%20until%20the%20next%20election>

International Crisis Group (ICG) (2015). Nepal: Conflict Alert, <https://www.crisisgroup.org/asia/south-asia/nepal/nepal-conflict-alert>

International Crisis Group (ICG) (2016). Nepal's Divisive New Constitution: An existential crisis, <https://www.crisisgroup.org/asia/south-asia/nepal/nepal%E2%80%99s-divisive-new-constitution-existential-crisis>

International IDEA (2015). Nepal's Constitution Building Process: 2006–2015: Progress, challenges, and contributions of international community, <https://www.idea.int/sites/default/files/publications/nepals-constitution-building-process-2006-2015.pdf>

Investment Board Nepal (n.d.). <https://ibn.gov.np/>

Ishida, T. (1969). Beyond the Traditional Concepts of Peace in Different Cultures, *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 6, no. 2, pp.133–145, <https://doi.org/10.1177/002234336900600205>

Isik, N.E. (2015). The Role of Narrative Methods in Sociology: Stories as a powerful tool to understand individual and society, *Journal of Sociological Research*, 18, pp.103–125, 10.18490/sad.47604

Issifu, A. K., & Bukari, K. N. (2022). (Re)thinking Homegrown Peace Mechanisms for the Resolution of Conflicts in Northern Ghana, *Conflict, Security & Development*, vol. 22, no. 2, pp.221–242, Doi: 10.1080/14678802.2022.2059934

Iyer, R.N. (n.d.). Means and Ends in Politics, Mahatma Gandhi, https://www.mkgandhi.org/g_relevance/chap28.php

Jabri, V. (2010). War, Government, Politics: A critical response to the hegemony of the liberal peace, in Richmond, O.P. (ed.), *Palgrave Advances in Peacebuilding*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp.41–57, https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230282681_3

Jackson, P.T. (2016). *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations Philosophy of Science and Its Implications for the Study of World Politics*, Routledge

Jackson, R. (2017). Post-liberal Peacebuilding and the Pacifist State, *Peacebuilding*, vol. 6, no. 1, pp.1–16, Doi: 10.1080/21647259.2017.1303871

Jacquard, R. (2020). Nepal Links with China Affecting its Autonomy, Ability to Take Decisions: Report, *ETV Bharat*, 23 August, <https://www.etvbharat.com/english/international/asia-pacific/nepal-links-with-china-affecting-its-autonomy-ability-to-take-decisions-report/na20200823162450170>

Jahanbegloo, R. (2019). Gandhism and Peace, in Kulnazarova, A., & Popovski, V. (eds), *The Palgrave Handbook of Global Approaches to Peace*, Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, pp.69–85

Jahanbegloo, R. (2021). Gandhi and the Global Satyagraha, *Social Change*, vol. 51, no. 1, pp.38–50, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0049085721993162>

Jain, D.K. (2014). India's Foreign Policy, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, <https://www.mea.gov.in/indian-foreign-policy.htm>

Jaishankar, D. (2016). India's Five Foreign Policy Goals: Great strides, steep challenges, *The Wire*, 26 May, <https://thewire.in/diplomacy/indias-five-foreign-policy-goals-great-strides-steep-challenges>

Jaishankar, S. (2020). *The India Way: Strategies for an uncertain world*, India: HarperCollins

Jaiswal, P. (2014). Caught in the India-China Rivalry: Policy options for Nepal, Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies, <https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/178444/IB249-Pramod-NepalChinaIndia.pdf>

Janesick, V.J. (2014). Oral History Interviewing: Issues and possibilities, in Leavy, P. (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Qualitative Research*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp.300–314, <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199811755.013.025>

Jarstad, A. K., & Nilsson, D. (2008). From Words to Deeds: The implementation of power-sharing pacts in peace accords, *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, vol. 25, no. 3, pp.206–223, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/26275095>

Jarstad, A., Olivius, E., Akebo, M., Høglund, K., Kovacs, M.S., Soderstrom, J., Saati, A., Kostic, R., & Sahovic, D. (2015). Peace Agreements in the 1990s: What are the outcomes 20 years later? Umeå Working Papers in Peace and Conflict Studies, no 8. Sweden: Department of Political Science, <https://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:887947/FULLTEXT02>

Jayatilake, K.N. (2008). Buddhism and Peace, *Wheel Publication*, no. 41

Jeffery, R. (2017). Nepal's Comprehensive Peace Agreement: Human rights, compliance and impunity a decade on, *International Affairs*, vol. 93, no. 2, pp.343–364, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ia/iix007>

Jha, D. (2017). Comparing the 2007 and 2015 Constitutions in Nepal, in Ramsbotham, A., & Thapa, D. (eds), *Two Steps Forward, One Step Back: Nepal's peace process, Accord: An international review of peace initiatives*, no. 26, London: Conciliation Resources, pp.64–67

Jha, H. B. (2015). Nepal's New Constitution: An analysis from the Madheshi perspective, *Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defense Studies and Analyses*, 24 September, https://idsa.in/idsacomments/NepalsNewConstitution_hbjha_240915

Jha, H. B. (2019). *The Janajati of Nepal*, New Delhi: Vivekananda International Foundation

Jha, P. (2012). A Nepali Perspective on International Involvement in Nepal, in Einsiedel, S.V., Malone, D.M., & Pradhan, S. (eds), *Nepal in Transition: From People's War to fragile peace*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 332–358

Jha, P. (2014). *Battles of the New Republic: A contemporary history of Nepal*, Oxford University Press

Jha, P. (2015). Time for Modi to Nudge Nepal on Writing an Inclusive Constitution, *The Hindustan Times*, 14 July, <https://www.hindustantimes.com/analysis/time-for-modi-to-nudge-nepal-on-writing-an-inclusive-constitution/story-4bnuUXrVz5G1Jg6whrUqCL.html>

Jha, P. (2016). End of the Madheshi Blockade: What it means for Nepal, *Hindustan Times*, 06 February, <https://www.hindustantimes.com/opinion/end-of-the-Madheshi-blockade-what-it-means-for-nepal/story-JixO1gsdWLprj8Lc6G0hQL.html>

Jha, P. (2022). US Believes China Behind Delay of \$500m Grant Project in Nepal, *The Hindustan Times*, 14 February, <https://www.hindustantimes.com/world-news/us-believes-china-behind-delay-of-500m-grant-project-in-nepal-101644830409010.html>

Jick, T. D. (1979). Mixing Qualitative and Quantitative Methods: Triangulation in action, *Administrative Science Quarterly*, vol. 24, no. 4, pp.602–611, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2392366>

Jnawali, D. (2007). 'Buddhism and Global Peace: Perspectives on Cultural Geography', *The Third Pole*, Vol 5(7), pp. 28-36.

Johny, E. (2024). Foreign Policy Strategies of Nepal Between China and India: Bandwagon or hedging, *International Politics*, pp.1–19, <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41311-024-00560-1>

Jones, B.D. (2002). The Challenges of Strategic Coordination, in Stedman, S.J., Rothchild, D., & Cousens, E.M. (eds), *Ending Civil Wars: The implementation of peace agreements*, Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner, pp.89–115

Jones, S.H. (2005). Authoethnography: Making the personal political, in Denzin, N.K., & Lincoln, Y.S. (eds), *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research* (3rd edn.), London: Sage Publications Ltd, pp.763–791

Joshi, M. (2013). Inclusive Institutions and Stability of Transition Toward Democracy in Post-Civil War States, *Democratization*, vol. 20, no. 4, pp.743–770, doi: 10.1080/13510347.2012.666067

Joshi, M. (2024). Rebel Diplomacy and Negotiated Settlement in Civil Wars, *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, vol. 26, no. 3, pp.940–964, <https://doi.org/10.1177/13691481231178245>

Joshi, M., & Quinn, J. (2015). Is the Sum Greater than the Parts? The terms of civil war peace agreements and the commitment problem revisited, *Negotiation Journal*, Doi: 31. 10.1111/nej.12077

Kant, I. (1957). *Perpetual Peace*, New York: MacMillan Publishing Company

Kappler, S., & Lemay-Hébert, N. (2019). From Power-Blind Binaries to the Intersectionality of Peace: Connecting feminism and critical peace and conflict studies, *Peacebuilding*, vol. 7, no. 2, pp.160–177, doi: 10.1080/21647259.2019.1588456

Karki, B., & Edrishina, R. (2014). Participatory Constitution Making in Nepal, Issues of Process and Substance, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/migration/np/UNDP_NP-participatory-constitution-making-in-nepal.pdf

Karki, S. (2014). A Study on Dowry Related Violence in Nepal, Informal Sector Service Centre <https://www.insec.org.np/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/1409727203.pdf>

Karlsrud, J. (2018). From Liberal Peacebuilding to Stabilization and Counterterrorism, *International Peacekeeping*, vol. 26, no. 1, pp.1–21, doi: 10.1080/13533312.2018.1502040

Karn, S. (2017). Political Parties, Old and New, in Ramsbotham, A., & Thapa, D. (eds), *Two Steps Forward, One Step Back: Nepal's peace process, Accord: An international review of peace initiatives*, no. 26, London: Conciliation Resources, pp. 68–71

- Katel, S. P. (2022). Imperialism in Nepal: Past and Present, *JamhoorMedia*, 5 December, <https://www.jamhoor.org/read/imperialism-in-nepal-past-and-present>
- Kegley, C., & Raymond, Gergory, A. (2010). *The Global Future: A Brief Introduction to World Politics*, USA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning
- Kent, L. (2018). Engaging with 'The Everyday': Towards a more dynamic conception of hybrid transitional justice, in Wallis, J., Kent, L., Forsyth, M., Dinnen, S., & Bose, S. (eds), *Hybridity on the Ground in Peacebuilding and Development: Critical conversations*, Australia: ANU Press, pp.145–161
- Kernot, S. (2006). Nepal: A development challenge, *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies*, vol. 29, no. 2, pp.293–307, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00856400600849167>
- Khadka, N. (1992). Geopolitics and Development: A Nepalese perspective, *Asian Affairs*, vol. 19, no. 3, 134–157, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30172158>
- Khadka, N. (1999). Chinese Foreign Policy toward Nepal in the Cold War Period: An assessment, *China Report*, vol. 35, no. 1, pp.61–81, <https://doi.org/10.1177/000944559903500104>
- Khadka, N. (2000). U.S. Aid to Nepal in the Cold War Period: Lessons for the future, *Pacific Affairs*, vol. 73, no. 1, pp.77–95, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2672285>
- Khalid, S. (2015). Nepal Pushes to Finalise Constitution Despite Concerns, *Al Jazeera*, 31 July, <https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2015/7/31/nepal-pushes-to-finalise-constitution-despite-concerns>
- Khanal, G. (2019). Foreign Policy of Nepal: Continuity and Changes, *Journal of APF Command and Staff College*, vol. 2, no. 1, pp.97–102, doi: 10.3126/japfcsc.v2i1.26749
- Khanal, K. (2014). The Participatory Constitution Making Process in Nepal: An assessment of the CA Process (2008–2012), in Karki, B., & Edrisinha, R. (eds), *Participatory Constitution Making in Nepal Issues of Process and Substance*, Pulchowk: United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), pp.1–42
- Khanal, K. (2017). Federal discourse, in Ramsbotham, A., & Thapa, D. (eds), *Two Steps Forward, One Step Back: Nepal's peace process, Accord: An international review of peace initiatives*, no. 26, London: Conciliation Resources, pp.75–79
- Khanal, Y. N. (1996). *Nepal After Democratic Restoration*, Kathmandu: Ratna Pustak Bhandar
- Khatiwoda, R., Cubelic, S., & Michaels, A. (2021). *The Muluki Ain of 1854: Nepal's first legal code*, Heidelberg University Publishing
- Kincheloe, J. L., & McLaren, P. (2005). Rethinking Critical Theory and Qualitative Research, in Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (eds), *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research* (3rd edn.), London: Sage Publications Ltd, pp.303–342
- Koirala, G.P. (2007). *Simple Convictions: My struggle for peace and democracy*, Kathmandu: Mandala Book Point

Koirala, K.P. (2016). Nepal Makes First Amendment of its Constitution Four Months After Promulgation, *The Himalayan Times*, 23 January, <https://thehimalayantimes.com/nepal/breaking-nepal-makes-first-amendment-of-its-constitution>

Koirala, K.R., & Dahal, A. (2019). China will Help Transform Nepal from 'Landlocked' to 'Land-linked': Prez Xi', *Republica*, 13 October, <https://myrepublica.nagariknetwork.com/news/china-will-help-transform-nepal-from-landlocked-to-land-linked-prez-xi/>

Kramer, K-H. (2002). Nepal in 2002: Emergency and resurrection of royal power, Friedrich Ebart Foundation, <https://library.fes.de/libalt/journals/swetsfulltext/16528414.pdf>

Krasner, S. D. (1982). Structural Causes and Regime Consequences: Regimes as intervening variables, *International Organization*, vol. 36, no. 2, pp.185–205, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2706520>

Krishnan, A. (2014). China is Largest FDI Source for Nepal, Overtakes India, *The Hindu*, 13 May, <https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/world/china-is-largest-fdi-source-for-nepal-overtakes-india/article5618081.ece>

Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies (2019). Donor Support: Comprehensive peace agreement, Peace Accords Matrix, 11 April, <https://peaceaccords.nd.edu/provision/donor-support-comprehensive-peace-agreement>

Kugelman, M. (2023). Why the United States Is Courting Nepal, *Foreign Policy*, 02 February, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2023/02/02/nepal-united-states-china-diplomacy-nuland-visit/>

Kuhn, L.R. (2013). Xi Jinping's Chinese Dream, *The New York Times*, 04 June, <https://www.nytimes.com/2013/06/05/opinion/global/xi-jinpings-chinese-dream.html>

Kulnazarova, A. (2019). Framework for Global Approaches to Peace: An introduction, in Kulnazarova, A., & Popovski, V. (eds), *The Palgrave Handbook of Global Approaches to Peace*, Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, pp.3–24

Kulnazarova, A., & Popovski, V. (2019). *The Palgrave Handbook of Global Approaches to Peace*, United Kingdom: Palgrave Macmillan

Kumar, A. (2015). Nepal-Salient Features of the New Constitution, Indian Council of World Affairs, https://www.icwa.in/show_content.php?lang=1&level=3&ls_id=1827&lid=824

Kumar, J. (2022). Gorkha Dimension in India-Nepal Relations, Vivekananda International Foundation, <https://www.vifindia.org/sites/default/files/Gorkha-Dimension-in-India-Nepal-Relations.pdf>

Kumar, R. (2019). Nepal's Great Income Divide, *Nepali Times*, 22 February, <https://nepalitimes.com/banner/nepals-great-income-divide>

- Kumar, R. (2021). China Lobbying Against MCC, *Nepali Times*, 23 December, <https://nepalitimes.com/here-now/china-lobbying-against-mcc>
- Kuwali, D. (2022). *The Palgrave Handbook of Sustainable Peace and Security in Africa*, Cham: Palgrave Macmillan
- Laffey, M., & Nadarajah, S. (2012). The Hybridity of Liberal Peace: States, diasporas and insecurity, *Security Dialogue*, vol. 43, no. 5, pp.403–420, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0967010612457974>
- Lal, A. (2024). The Saga of C K Raut and the Madhesh's Struggle for Justice in Nepal, *Himal Southasian*, 26 June, <https://www.himalmag.com/politics/ck-raut-madhesh-janamat-aim-independent-federalism-nepal>
- Lal, C.K. (2001). In a State of Statelessness, *Nepali Times*, 10 May, <https://archive.nepalitimes.com/news.php?id=8644>
- Lal, C.K. (2002). Cultural Flows Across a Blurred Boundary, *Himal Southasian*, 01 February, <https://www.himalmag.com/essay/cultural-flows-across-a-blurred-boundary>
- Lal, C.K. (2006a). DDR, SSR, RRR and the SPA, *Nepali Times*, 01 September, <https://archive.nepalitimes.com/news.php?id=12409>
- Lal, C.K. (2006b). The Elusive Formula, *Nepali Times*, 10 August, <https://archive.nepalitimes.com/news.php?id=12252>
- Lal, C.K. (2019). The Long Decade, *Republica*, 29 April, <https://myrepublica.nagariknetwork.com/news/the-long-decade/>
- Lamont, C. (2015). *Research Methods in International Relations*, London: SAGE Publications Inc.
- Landgren, K. (2012). *Nepal's Peace Process at the United Nations*, vol. II, Lalitpur: Jagadamba Press
- Lawoti, M. (2005). *Towards a Democratic Nepal: Inclusive political institutions for a multicultural society*, Kathmandu: Mandala Book Point
- Lecomte-Tilouine, M. (ed.) (2013). Maoist Despite Themselves: Amid the People's War in a Maoist model village, northern Gulmi, in Lecomte-Tilouine, M. (ed.), *Revolution in Nepal: An Anthropological and historical approach to the People's War*, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 212–257
- Lecours, A. (2002). Paradiplomacy: Reflections on the foreign policy and international relations of regions, *International Negotiation*, vol. 7, no. 1, pp.91–114, <https://doi.org/10.1163/157180602401262456>
- Lederach, J. P. (1997). *Building Peace: Sustainable reconciliation in divided societies*, Washinton, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press
- Lederach, J. P. (2014). *The Little Book of Conflict Transformation*, USA: Skyhorse Publishing Inc.

Lederach, J. P., & Appleby, R.S. (2010). Strategic Peacebuilding: An overview, in Daniel, P., & Gerard F.P. (eds), *Strategies of Peace: Transforming conflict in a violent world*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp.19–42

Lederach, J. P., & Thapa, P. (2012). Staying True in Nepal: Understanding community mediation through action research, The Asia Foundation, <https://asiafoundation.org/resources/pdfs/OccasionalPaperNo10CommunityMediationNepal.pdf>

Lee, S.Y. (2020). Reflection on the “Local Turn” in Peacebuilding: Practitioners’ views, *Journal of Human Security Studies*, vol. 9, no. 2, pp.25–38, https://www.jstage.jst.go.jp/article/jahss/9/2/9_25/_pdf/-char/ja

Legislature Parliament Secretariat (2013). संविधानसभा दर्पण (२०६९-२०६५)[Constituent Assembly Darpan (2008–2012)]

Legislature Parliament Secretariat (2017). संविधानसभा दर्पण (२०७२-२०७०) २ - [Constituent Assembly Darpan—2 (2013–2015)] <https://hr.parliament.gov.np/en/publication/download/kz2nnrozsjpu7uw4.pdf>

Leonardsson, H., & Rudd, G. (2015). The ‘Local Turn’ in Peacebuilding: A literature review of effective and emancipatory local peacebuilding, *Third World Quarterly*, vol. 36, no. 5, pp.825–839, Doi: 10.1080/01436597.2015.1029905

Library of Congress (2015). Nepal: Supreme court strikes down amnesty provision in Truth and Reconciliation Law, <https://www.loc.gov/item/global-legal-monitor/2015-03-17/nepal-supreme-court-strikes-down-amnesty-provision-in-truth-and-reconciliation-law/>

Licklider, R. (1995). The Consequences of Negotiated Settlements in Civil Wars, 1945–1993, *The American Political Science Review*, vol. 89, no. 3, pp.681–690, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2082982>

Lidén, K. (2009). Building Peace between Global and Local Politics: The cosmopolitical ethics of liberal peacebuilding, *International Peacekeeping*, vol. 16, no. 5, pp.616–634, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13533310903303255>

Lincoln, Y.S., & Guba, E.G. (2000). The Only Generalization is There is No Generalization, in Gomm, R., Hammersley, M., & Foster, P. (eds), *Case Study Method*, London: Sage Publications, pp.27–45

Linklater, A. (2007). Critical Theory, in Griffiths, M. (ed.), *International Relations Theory for the Twenty-First Century: An introduction*, London and New York: Routledge

Ljungkvist, K. and Jarstad, A. (2021) ‘Revisiting the local turn in peacebuilding through the emerging urban approach’, *Third World Quarterly*, 42(10), pp. 2209-2226. Available at: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/01436597.2021.1929148> (Accessed: 6 March 2023)

Local Peace Council and its Procedure–2006 (2006). Peace Agreements, <https://www.peaceagreements.org/viewmasterdocument/1327>

Lottholz, P. (2017). Workshop Summary: Peace research and (de)coloniality, Vienna, December 2016, *Peace Studies Journal*, <https://afk-web.de/cms/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/lottholz-2017-workshop-report-vienna.pdf>

Lund, M. (2003). What Kind of Peace is Being Built? Taking stock of post-conflict peacebuilding and charting future directions, Discussion Paper, International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada, https://www.academia.edu/20566496/What_Kind_of_Peace_is_Being_Built_Taking_Stock_of_Post_Conflict_Peacebuilding_and_Charting_Future_Directions

Lundqvist, M. (2014). Peacebuilding in Nepal: The tentative quest for post-liberal peace, <https://lup.lub.lu.se/student-papers/record/4586167/file/4586168.pdf>

Lunn, J. (2013). Nepal's Endless Peace Process, 2006–12, <http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN04229/SN04229.pdf>

Mac Ginty, R. (2008). Indigenous Peace-Making Versus the Liberal Peace, *Cooperation and Conflict*, vol. 43, no. 2, pp.139–163, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/45084517>

Mac Ginty, R. (2010). Hybrid Peace: The interaction between top-down and bottom-up peace, *Security Dialogue*, vol. 41, no. 4, pp.391–412, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/26301105>

Mac Ginty, R. (2011a) *Hybridity and Hybridization: Beyond top-down meets bottom-up*. University of St Andrews. Available at: https://www.academia.edu/866541/Hybridity_and_Hybridisation_Beyond_top_down_meets_bottom_up

Mac Ginty, R. (2011b). *International Peacebuilding and Local Resistance: Hybrid forms of peace*, London: Palgrave Macmillan

Mac Ginty, R. (2013). *Routledge Handbook of Peacebuilding*, Abingdon: Routledge

Mac Ginty, R. (2015). Where is the Local? Critical localism and peacebuilding, *Third World Quarterly*, vol. 36, no. 5, pp.840–856, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2015.1045482>

Mac Ginty, R. (2021). *Everyday Peace: How so-called ordinary people can disrupt violent conflict*, New York: Oxford University Press

Mac Ginty, R., & Firchow, P. (2016). Top-Down and Bottom-Up Narratives of Peace and Conflict, *Politics*, vol. 36, no. 3, pp.308–323, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0263395715622967>

Mac Ginty, R., & Richmond, O. (2013). The Local Turn in Peace Building: A critical agenda for peace, *Third World Quarterly*, vol. 34, no. 5, pp.763–783, doi: 10.1080/01436597.2013.800750

Mac Ginty, R., & Richmond, O. (2015). The Fallacy of Constructing Hybrid Political Orders: A reappraisal of the hybrid turn in peacebuilding, *International Peacekeeping*, vol. 23, no. 2, pp.219–239, doi: 10.1080/13533312.2015.1099440

- Mac Ginty, R., & Sanghera, G. (2012). Hybridity in Peacebuilding and Development: An introduction, *Journal of Peacebuilding & Development*, vol. 7, no. 2, pp.3–8, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/48604375>
- Mage, J. (2007). The Nepali Revolution and International Relations, *Economic and Political Weekly*, vol. 42, no. 20, pp.1834–1839, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4419603>
- Mahat, J. J. (2018). Karnali 2.0, *The Kathmandu Post*, 28 January, <https://kathmandupost.com/opinion/2018/01/28/karnali-20>
- Maldonado-Torres, N. (2007). On the Coloniality of Being: Contributions to the development of a concept, *Cultural Studies*, vol. 21, no. 2–3, pp.240–270, doi: 10.1080/09502380601162548
- Maldonado-Torres, N. (2011). Thinking Through the Decolonial Turn: Post-continental interventions in theory, philosophy, and critique—An introduction, *Transmodernity: Journal of Peripheral Cultural Production of the Luso-Hispanic World*, vol. 1, no. 2, <https://doi.org/10.5070/t412011805>
- Malhotra, A.D. (2019). India's Foreign Policy: 2014–19: Landmarks, achievements and challenges ahead, *Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India*, 22 July, <https://www.mea.gov.in/distinguished-lectures-detail.htm?833>
- Manandhar, N. (2019). Are We a Peaceful Nation? *Republica*, 17 July, <https://myrepublica.nagariknetwork.com/news/are-we-a-peaceful-nation/>
- Manchanda, R. (2003). New Guns in an Old Battle, *Frontline*, 14 February, <https://frontline.thehindu.com/world-affairs/article30215482.ece>
- Maoz, Z. (1984). Peace by Empire? Conflict outcomes and international stability, 1816–1976, *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 21, no. 3, pp.227–241, <https://doi.org/10.1177/002234338402100303>
- Mariani, B., Adhikari, M., & Zhou, Y. (2022). The Role of Domestic Actors in China's International Conflict Management, PeaceRep: The Peace and Conflict Resolution Evidence Platform, <https://peacerep.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Mariani-Adhikari-Zhou-2023-PeaceRep-Report-The-Role-of-Domestic-Actors-in-Chinas-International-Relations-compr.pdf>
- Martin, I. (2010). Nepal's Peace Process at the United Nations, vol. I, Lalitpur: Jagadamba Press
- Martin, I. (2012). The United Nations and Support to Nepal's Peace Process: The Role of the UN Mission in Nepal, in Einsiedel, S., Malone, D., & Pradhan, S. (eds), *Nepal in Transition: From People's War to fragile peace*, New York: Cambridge University Press, pp.201–231
- Mathur, A. (2014). Role of South–South Cooperation and Emerging Powers in Peacemaking and Peacebuilding, Report No. 4, Norway: Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, <https://emergingpowerspeacebuilding.files.wordpress.com/2015/08/mathur-role-of-south-south-cooperation-and-emerging-powers.pdf>

- McHugh, M.C. (2014). Feminist Qualitative Research: Toward transformation of science and society, in Leavy, P. (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Qualitative Research*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp.137–164, <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199811755.013.014>
- McKibben, H.E., & Skoll, A. (2020). Please Help Us (or Don't): External interventions and negotiated settlements in civil conflicts, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, vol. 65, no. 2–3, pp.480–505, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022002720950417>
- McLeod, L., & O'Reilly, M. (2019). Critical Peace and Conflict Studies: Feminist interventions, *Peacebuilding*, vol. 7, no. 2, pp.127–145, doi: 10.1080/21647259.2019.1588457
- Mead, W. R. (2014a). The Return of Geopolitics: The revenge of the revisionist powers, *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 93, no. 3, pp.69–79, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24483407>
- Mead, W. R. (2014b). History Isn't Dead Yet: Asia and the return of geopolitics, *Global Asia*, https://www.globalasia.org/v9no3/cover/history-isnt-dead-yet-asia-and-the-return-of-geopolitics_walter-russell-meadb
- Medeiros, E.S. (2009). China's International Behavior: Activism, opportunism, and diversification, Santa Monica: Rand Corporation, https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monographs/2009/RAND_MG850.pdf
- Mendoza, B. (2021). Decolonial Theories in Comparison, in Shih, S-m., Tsai, -c. (eds), *Indigenous Knowledge in Taiwan and Beyond*, Sinophone and Taiwan Studies, vol 1. Singapore: Springer, pp.249–271
- Mercy Corps (2023). Time to Turn Around: The Decline of UK Peacebuilding, *Mercycorps*, 13 March, <https://www.mercycorps.org/research-resources/the-decline-of-uk-peacebuilding>
- Miall, H., Ramsbotham, O., & Woodhouse, T. (2005). Contemporary Conflict Resolution: The prevention, management and transformation of deadly conflicts (1st edn.), UK: Polity Press
- Mignolo, W. (2011). Epistemic Disobedience and the Decolonial Option: A manifesto, *TRANSMODERNITY: Journal of Peripheral Cultural Production of the Luso-Hispanic World*, vol. 1, no. 2, <http://dx.doi.org/10.5070/T412011807>
- Miklian, J. (2008). Post-Conflict Power Sharing: The case of Nepal, South Asia, Briefing Paper #2, Oslo: International Peace Research Institute, <https://www.prio.org/publications/7301>
- Miklian, J., Lidén, K., & Kolås, Å. (2011). The Perils of 'Going Local': Liberal peacebuilding agendas in Nepal, *Conflict, Security & Development*, vol. 11, no. 3, pp.285–308, Doi: 10.1080/14678802.2011.593809
- Miles, M.B., Huberman, A.M., & Saldana, J. (2014). Qualitative Data Analysis: A methods sourcebook (3rd edn.), Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications

Millar, G. (2014). *An Ethnographic Approach to Peacebuilding: Understanding local experiences in transitional states*, Abingdon: Routledge

Milliken, J. (1999). The Study of Discourse in International Relations: A critique of research and methods, *European Journal of International Relations*, vol. 5, no. 2

Milne, J. V. (2010). Method: Theory and ethnography in peace and conflict studies, in Richmond, O.P. (ed.), *Palgrave Advances in Peacebuilding*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp.74–98

Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India (n.d.a). Neighbourhood First Policy, https://fsi.mea.gov.in/Images/CPV/LS97_00.pdf

Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India (n.d.b). Responding First as a Leading Power, https://www.mea.gov.in/Portal/IndiaArticleAll/636548965437648101_Responding_First_Leading_Pow.pdf

Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India (1950). Treaty of Peace and Friendship, <https://www.mea.gov.in/bilateraldocuments.htm?dtl/6295/Treaty+of+Peace+and+Friendship>

Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India (2005a). Foreign Secretary Mr. Shyam Saran's Speech on "India and its Neighbours" at the India International Centre (IIC), <https://www.mea.gov.in/Speeches-Statements.htm?dtl/2483/Foreign+Secretary+Mr+Shyam+Sarans+speech+on+India+and+its+Neighbours+at+the+India+International+Centre+IIC>

Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India (2005b). Implementation of the India-United States Joint Statement of July 18, 2005: India's Separation Plan, https://www.mea.gov.in/Uploads/PublicationDocs/6145_bilateral-documents-May-11-2006.pdf

Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India (2005c). Joint Statement of the Republic of India and the People's Republic of China, https://www.mea.gov.in/SpeechesStatements.htm?dtl/2509/Joint_Statement_of_the_Republic_of_India_and_the_Peoples

Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India (2006). On the visit of Dr. Karan Singh, Special Envoy of the Prime Minister, to Nepal, 15 April, <https://www.mea.gov.in/mediabriefings.htm?dtl/3130/On+the+visit+of+Dr+Karan+Singh+Special+Envoy+of+the+Prime+Minister+to+Nepal>

Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India (2013). Fact Sheet: India-Nepal partnership, <https://www.mea.gov.in/mediaadvisory.htm?dtl/21920/Fact+Sheet+India+Nepal+Partnership>

Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India (2022a). India-Nepal Bilateral Brief, https://www.mea.gov.in/Portal/ForeignRelation/India-Nepal_2022.pdf

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of India (2022b). Foreign Policy of Nepal: Past, present and future, https://mofa.gov.np/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/WebVersion_First-Edition.pdf

Ministry of Finance (MOF), Government of India (2022). Development Cooperation Report 2020/21, Singhadurbar: International Economic Cooperation Coordination Division, Ministry of Finance, https://www.mof.gov.np/uploads/document/file/1661161034_1660713168_DCR%20Report%202021_7_2.pdf

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Nepal (n.d.). Nepal-India Relations, <https://mofa.gov.np/nepal-india-relations/>

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Nepal (2019). Nepal-China Relations, <https://mofa.gov.np/nepal-china-relations/>

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Nepal (2020). Nepal-US Relations, <https://mofa.gov.np/nepal-us-relations/>

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Nepal, (2022). Bilateral Relations, <https://cn.nepalembassy.gov.np/bilateral-relations/>

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark (2013). Joint Evaluation of the International Support to the Peace Process in Nepal 2006–12, https://um.dk/en/danida/results/eval/eval_reports/joint-evaluation-of-the-international-support-to-the-peace-process-in-nepal

Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction (2012) नेपालको शान्ति प्रक्रियामा हालसम्म भएका सम्झौता, सहमति, समझदारी, घोषणा र निर्णयहरूको संकलन (बाह्र वुंदे समझदारी र विस्तृत शान्ति सम्झौता समेत) Collection of agreements, understandings, declarations, and decisions made so far in Nepal's peace process). Available at: <https://www.abcnepal.tv/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/शान्ति-सम्झौता-documents-.pdf>

Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction, Government of Nepal (2015). Nepal Peace Trust Fund Strategy 2014–17, http://www.nptf.gov.np/downloadfile/Nepal%20Peace%20Trust%20Fund%20Strategy%20Stratragy%20compile_1449048269.pdf

Mishra, B. P. (2008). Madheshi Bidrohako Yetihasik Bibechna: Purbi Madhesko sandarbha [Historical Analysis of the Madheshi Revolt: Context of eastern Madhes], in Gautam, B. (ed.), *Madhes Bidroha ko Nalibeli [Inside Story of the Madhes Uprising]*, Kathmandu: Martin Chautari, pp.37–58

Mishra, N. (2021). Story of Bangladesh: Indira brought Pakistan to its knees in 13 days, *Indian National Congress*, 19 April, <https://inc.in/congress-sandesh/analysis/story-of-bangladesh-indira-brought-pakistan-to-its-knees-in-13-days>

Mishra, R. (2004). India's Role in Nepal's Maoist Insurgency, *Asian Survey*, vol. 44, no. 5, pp.627–646, <https://doi.org/10.1525/as.2004.44.5.627>

- Mishra, S. (2023). Why Nepali Youth Migrate to Foreign Lands? *Nepal News*, 12 January, <https://www.nepalnews.com/s/issues/why-nepali-youth-migrate-to-foreign-lands>
- Moe, L.W. (2018). Counter-Insurgency in the Somali Territories: The 'grey zone' between peace and pacification, *International Affairs*, vol. 94, no. 2, pp.319–341, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1093/ia/iix250>
- Moe, L.W., & Stepputat, F. (2018). Introduction: Peacebuilding in an era of pragmatism, *International Affairs*, vol. 94, no. 2, pp.293–299, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ia/iyy035>
- Moen, T. (2006). Reflections on the Narrative Research Approach, *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, vol. 5, no. 4, pp.56–69, <https://doi.org/10.1177/160940690600500405>
- Mohan, C. R. (2007). Balancing Interests and Values: India's struggle with democracy promotion, *The Washington Quarterly*, vol. 30, no. 3, pp.99–115, doi: 10.1162/wash.2007.30.3.99.
- Morris, R. C. (2010). *Can the Subaltern Speak?* Reflections on the history of an idea. New York: Columbia University Press
- Mukherjee, B. (2006a). Does Third-Party Enforcement or Domestic Institutions Promote Enduring Peace After Civil Wars? Policy lessons from an empirical test, *Foreign Policy Analysis*, vol. 2, no. 4, pp.405–430, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24907259>
- Mukherjee, B. (2006b). Why Political Power-Sharing Agreements Lead to Enduring Peaceful Resolution of Some Civil Wars, but not Others? *International Studies Quarterly*, vol. 50, no. 2, pp.479–504 <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3693619>
- Mukherjee, R., & Malone, D.M. (2011). Indian Foreign Policy and Contemporary Security Challenges, *International Affairs*, vol. 87, no. 1, pp.87–104, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2346.2011.00961.x>
- Mulmi, A.R. (2022a). *All Roads Lead North*, New York, NY: Oxford University Press
- Mulmi, A.R. (2022b). The MCC Debate, Nepali Politics and Intensifying Sino-US Rivalry in South Asia, *LSE*, 21 March, <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/southasia/2022/03/21/the-mcc-debate-nepali-politics-and-intensifying-sino-us-rivalry-in-south-asia>
- Mundy, J. (2020). Critical Approaches to Peacebuilding, in Carey, H.F. (ed.), *Peacebuilding Paradigms: The impact of theoretical diversity on implementing sustainable peace*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp.193–206
- Muni, S. D. (1984). Nepal as a Zone of Peace, *Strategic Analysis*, vol. 7, no. 10, pp. 780–792, doi: 10.1080/09700168409428645

Muni, S.D. (2012). Bringing the Maoists Down from the Hills: India's role, in Einsiedel, S.V., Malone, D.M., & Pradhan, S. (eds) *Nepal in Transition: From People's War to fragile peace*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 313–331

Muni, S.D. (2024). *Dabbling in Diplomacy: Authorised and otherwise, recollections of a non-career diplomat*, Delhi: Konark Publishers

Mwase, N., & Yang, Y. (2012). BRICs' Philosophies for Development Financing and Their Implications for LICs, IMF Working Paper, <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/wp/2012/wp1274.pdf>

Nadarajah, S., & Rampton, D. (2015). The Limits of Hybridity and the Crisis of Liberal Peace, *Review of International Studies*, vol. 41, no. 1, pp.49–72, Doi: 10.1017/S0260210514000060

Nagarik News (2017). मैना सुनार हत्याकाण्ड- 'न्यायिक पद्धतिमा हस्तक्षेप नगर [Maina Sunar Massacre Not to Interfere With the Judicial System], *Nagarik News*, Nepal Republic Media, 22 May, <https://nagariknews.nagariknetwork.com/social-affairs/122576-1495419480.html>

Nandy, A., & Jahanbegloo, R. (2006). *Talking India: Ashis Nandy in conversation with Ramin Jahanbegloo*, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780195678987.001.0001>

National Planning Commission, Government of Nepal (2014). *Nepal Human Development Report 2014: Beyond Geography Unlocking Human Potential*, https://www.npc.gov.np/images/category/NHDR_Report_2014.pdf

National Statistics Office (Central Bureau Statistics) (1996). *Nepal Living Standards Survey Report 1996*, <https://microdata.worldbank.org/index.php/catalog/2301>

National Statistics Office (Central Bureau Statistics) (2012). *Nepal Living Standards Survey Report 2010/2011*, <https://microdata.worldbank.org/index.php/catalog/1000/download/20615>

National Statistics Office (Central Bureau Statistics) (2024). *Nepal Living Standards Survey IV 2022–23*, <https://www.studocu.com/in/document/sanjay-ghodawat-university/managerial-economics/nepal-living-standards-survey-iv-2022-23/85830802>

Nayak, N.R. (2012). Chinese PM in Nepal: A short visit but a long trail? Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (MP-IDSA), 18 January, https://idsa.in/idsacomments/ChinesePMinNepalAshortvisitbutalongtrail_NiharNayak_180112

Nayak, N.R. (2014). *Strategic Himalayas: Republican Nepal and External Powers*, Pentagon Press

NDTV (2014). Narendra Modi to be First Indian Prime Minister to Visit Nepal in 17 Years, NDTV, 02 August, <https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/narendra-modi-to-be-first-indian-prime-minister-to-visit-nepal-in-17-years-602937>

Nehru, J. (1961a). Nepal, in Nehru, J. (ed.), *India's Foreign Policy*, India: The Publication Division, pp.99–101

Nehru, J. (1961b). Panchsheel and Co-existence, in Nehru, J. (ed.), *India's Foreign Policy*, India: The Publication Division, pp.99–101

Nepal Federation of Indigenous Nationalities, <https://nefin.org.np/about-us>

Nepal Foreign Affairs (2022). China Notes MCC Endorsement with 'Interpretive Declaration,' 28 February, *Nepal Foreign Affairs*, <https://nepalforeignaffairs.com/china-notes-mcc-endorsement-with-interpretive-declaration/>

Nepal Law Commission (2008). Constituent Assembly Rules, 2065 (2008), <https://www.lawcommission.gov.np/en/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/constituent-assembly-rules-2065-2008.pdf>

Nepal Law Commission (n.d.). राष्ट्रपिता बडामहाराजा श्री ५ पृथ्वीनारायण शाहको दिव्य उपदेश [Divine Counsel of the Father of the Nation, Great King His Majesty Prithvi Narayan Shah], www.lawcommission.gov.np/np/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/पृथ्वीनारायण-शाहको-दिव्य.pdf

Nepal News (2008). Mohan Vaidya Resigns as CA member, Revolution in South Asia, *Nepal News*, 25 October, <https://southasiarev.wordpress.com/2008/10/25/vaidya-resigns-as-ca-member/>

Nepal News (2009). Prachanda Speaking About Combatant Numbers and Verification at Shaktikhor Cantonment, 8 May, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6EoQYZ2oa6M> (Accessed 11 June 2022)

Nepal Police Headquarters, CID (n.d.). Annual Fact Sheet on Gender-Based Violence FY 2078/79 (July/Aug 2021 to Jun/July 2022), https://www.nepalpolice.gov.np/media/filer_public/bc/d0/bcd064f5-284a-492a-b424-def0a6800de2/fy-2078-79-annual-infographics-en.pdf

Nepal Rastra Bank and Economic Research Department (2023). Survey Report on Foreign Direct Investment in Nepal (2021/2022), <https://www.nrb.org.np/contents/uploads/2023/09/FDI-Survey-2021-22-2.pdf>

Nepal Samaj (2024). Panchasheel Principles, Nepal's conviction: Newly-appointed foreign minister, *Nepal Samaj*, 15 July, <https://nepalsamaj.com/en/panchasheel-principles-nepals-conviction-newly-appointed-foreign-minister/>

Nepali Times (2006). How Maina was killed, *Nepali Times*, 30 August, <https://archive.nepalitimes.com/news.php?id=12418>

Nepali Times (2014). Beggars and Choosers, *Nepali Times*, 15 May, <https://archive.nepalitimes.com/article/editorial/Beggars-and-choosers,1338>

Nepali Times (2022). She Would Have Been 33 This Year, *Nepali Times*, 17 February, <https://nepalitimes.com/latest/she-would-have-been-33-this-year>

Nepali Times (2023). Justice Delayed, Justice Denied, *Nepali Times*, 31 October, <https://nepalitimes.com/news/justice-delayed-justice-denied-byrx8a1c>

Nepali Times (2024). More Equal Than Others, *Nepali Times*, 29 February, <https://nepalitimes.com/editorial/more-equal-than-others>

Neufeldt, R.C., Klassen, M.L., Danboyi, J., Dyck, J., & Bako, M.Z. (2020). Gaps in Knowledge about Local Peacebuilding: A study in deficiency from Jos, Nigeria, *Third World Quarterly*, vol. 41, no. 7, pp.1103–1121, doi: 10.1080/01436597.2020.1761253

Neupane, G. (2007). Burning Madhesh, Bleeding Madheshis, *Madheshi - United We Stand*, 28 January, <https://Madheshi.wordpress.com/2007/01/28/burning-madhesh-bleeding-Madheshis/>

New Spotlight Nepal (2012). The Maoist split, *New Spotlight Nepal*, 27 June, <https://www.spotlightnepal.com/2012/06/27/the-maoist-split/>

Nilsson, D. (2008). Partial Peace: Rebel Groups Inside and Outside of Civil War Settlements, *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 45, no. 4, pp.479–495, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343308091357>

NTTP Institute Working Paper (2016). The Enduring Importance of Local Peacebuilding in Nepal: Should local peace committees be continued? https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00SS3X.pdf

Nyuykonge, C., & Zondi, S. (2017). South African Peacebuilding Approaches: Evolution and lessons, in Call, C., & De Coning, C. (eds), *Rising Powers and Peacebuilding: Rethinking peace and conflict studies*, Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, pp.107–125, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-60621-7_6

Observer Research Foundation (2013). Nepal: Terrorist arrests and cooperation with India, 06 September, *Observer Research Foundation*, <https://www.orfonline.org/research/nepal-terrorist-arrests-and-cooperation-with-india>

Ochen, E.A. (2017). Women and Liberal Peacebuilding in Post-Conflict Northern Uganda: Community social work agenda revisited?, *African Sociological Review*, vol. 21, no. 2, pp.15–35, <https://www.ajol.info/index.php/asr/article/view/167159>

Ogutcu-Fu, S. H. (2021). State Intervention, External Spoilers, and the Durability of Peace Agreements, *International Interactions*, vol. 47, no. 4, pp.633–661, doi: 10.1080/03050629.2021.1910822

Ojendal, J., Schierenbeck, I., & Hughes, C. (2018). The 'Local Turn' in Peacebuilding: The liberal peace challenged, Abingdon, New York: Routledge

Olesen, V. (2005). Early Millennial Feminist Qualitative Research: Challenges and contours, in Denzin, N.K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (eds), *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research* (3rd edn.), London: Sage Publications Ltd, pp.235–278

Onlinekhabar (2023). 4 Parties Announce Samajbadi Morcha (Socialist Front), *Onlinekhabar*, 19 June, <https://english.onlinekhabar.com/parties-announce-samajbadi-morcha.html>

Open Data Nepal (2019). Life Expectancy Income and Per Capita Income in USD of Nepal by Districts, <https://opendatanepal.com/dataset/life-expectancy-income-of-nepal-by-district/resource/208787f8-07f0-4e22-a526-25f9d0e9b538>

Open Doors (2023). Nepal: Number of Christians growing, *Open Doors*, 20 July, <https://www.opendoors.org/en-US/research-reports/articles/stories/Nepal-Number-of-Christians-growing/>

Owen, C., Heathershaw, J., & Savin, I. (2017). How Postcolonial is Post-Western IR? Mimicry and Mētis in the international politics of Russia and Central Asia, *Review of International Studies*, vol. 44, no. 2, pp.279–300, <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0260210517000523>

Oxfam International and HAMI (2019). Fighting Inequality In Nepal: The road to prosperity, <https://oxfamlibrary.openrepository.com/bitstream/handle/10546/620607/bp-fighting-inequality-nepal-110119-en.pdf>

P. Richmond (eds), New Perspectives on Liberal Peacebuilding, *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, vol. 39, no. 3, pp.894–895, <https://doi.org/10.1177/03058298110390031708>

Paffenholz, T. (2013). International Peacebuilding Goes Local: Analysing Lederach's conflict transformation theory and its ambivalent encounter with 20 years of practice, *Peacebuilding*, vol. 2, no. 1, pp.11–27, doi: 10.1080/21647259.2013.783257

Paffenholz, T. (2015). Unpacking the Local Turn in Peacebuilding: A critical assessment towards an agenda for future research, *Third World Quarterly*, vol. 36, no. 5, pp.857–874, doi: 10.1080/01436597.2015.1029908

Paffenholz, T. (2021). Perpetual Peacebuilding: A new paradigm to move beyond the linearity of liberal peacebuilding, *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, vol. 15, no. 3, pp.367–385, <https://doi.org/10.1080/17502977.2021.1925423>

Paige, J.M. (1996). Land Reform and Agrarian Revolution in El Salvador: Comment on Seligson and Diskin, *Latin American Research Review*, vol. 31, no. 2, pp.127–139, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2504031>

Pan, P.P. (2002). China Backs Nepal Over Maoist Rebels, *The Washington Post*, 13 July, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/2002/07/14/china-backs-nepal-over-maoist-rebels/23df97dc-2534-4bce-ac90-518dc6b6811f/>

Panday, D. R. (2012). The Legacy of Nepal's Failed Development, in Einsiedel, S.V., Malone, D.M., & Pradhan, S. (eds), *Nepal in Transition: From People's War to fragile peace*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp.81–128

Panday, D.R. (2017). Role of the Citizen in Nepal's Transition: Interview with Devendra Raj Panday, in Ramsbotham, A., & Thapa, D. (eds), *Two Step Forward*,

One Step Back: Nepal's peace process, Accord: An international review of peace initiatives, no. 26, London: Conciliation Resources, pp.18–20

Pandey, L. (2022). US Grant to Nepal Puts Spotlight on China Rivalry, *Deutsche Welle*, 23 February, <https://www.dw.com/en/us-grant-to-nepal-puts-spotlight-on-geopolitical-rivalry-with-china/a-60889582>

Pandey, S., & Paudyal, B.R. (2015). Protecting Forests, Improving Livelihoods: Community forestry in Nepal, *Fern*, https://www.fern.org/fileadmin/uploads/fern/Documents/fern_community_forestry_nepal.pdf

Paris, R. (2000). Broadening the Study of Peace Operations, *International Studies Review*, vol. 2, no. 3, pp.27–44, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1521-9488.00214>

Paris, R. (2004). Toward More Effective Peacebuilding: Institutionalization before liberalization, in *At War's End: Building peace after civil conflict*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp.179–211

Paris, R. (2010). Saving Liberal Peacebuilding, *Review of International Studies*, vol. 36, no. 2, pp.337–365, doi: 10.1017/S0260210510000057

Pariyar, D. (2024). सङ्क्रमणकालीन न्यायका आधार कानुनी र राजनीतिक दुवै हुन् [The Foundations of Transitional Justice are Both Legal and Political], *Ratopati*, 13 February, <https://www.ratopati.com/story/411221/-gobinda-bandi->

Pariyar, M. (2023). Communists in Saffron Robes, *The Kathmandu Post*, 11 July, <https://kathmandupost.com/columns/2023/07/10/communists-in-saffron-robos>

Patomaki, H. (2001). The Challenge of Critical Theories: Peace research at the start of the new century. *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 38, no. 6, pp.723–737, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0022343301038006005>

Pattison, P. (2017). They Use Money to Promote Christianity: Nepal's battle for souls, *The Guardian*, 15 August, <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2017/aug/15/they-use-money-to-promote-christianity-nepal-battle-for-souls>

Pattison, P. (2024). Rebel Fighter, Maoist MP, Rape Survivor: The many lives of Devi Khadka, *The Guardian*, 5 August, <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/article/2024/aug/05/devi-khadka-rebel-fighter-maoist-mp-rape-survivor-sexual-violence-campaigner-nepal>

Pearce, J. V., & Dietrich, W. (2019). Many Violences, Many Peaces: Wolfgang Dietrich and Jenny Pearce in conversation, *Peacebuilding*, vol. 7, no. 3, pp.268–282, doi: 10.1080/21647259.2019.1632056

Peceny, M., & Stanley, W. (2001). Liberal Social Reconstruction and the Resolution of Civil Wars in Central America, *International Organization*, vol. 55, no. 1, pp.149–182, <https://doi.org/10.1162/002081801551441>

Philpott, D., & Powers, G. F. (2010). *Strategies of Peace: Transforming conflict in a violent world* (Studies in Strategic Peacebuilding), Oxford: Oxford University Press

Phuyal, S. (2023). US Steps Up Influence in Nepal in Competition with China, Australian Institute of International Affairs, 10 February, <https://www.internationalaffairs.org.au/australianoutlook/us-steps-up-influence-in-nepal-in-competition-with-china/>

Pogodda, S. (2020). Revolutions and the Liberal Peace: Peacebuilding as counterrevolutionary practice? *Cooperation and Conflict*, vol. 55, no. 3, pp.347–364, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0010836720921881>

Pokharel, A (2015). Making Waves in the Mountains: The women's groups fighting for a fairer future in Nepal, *Peace Insight*, 08 March, <https://www.peaceinsight.org/en/articles/making-waves-mountains-womens-groups-fighting-fairer-future-nepal/?location=nepal&theme=>

Pokharel, B., & Rana, S. (2013). *Nepal Votes for Peace*, New Delhi: Cambridge University Press

Pokharel, S. (2015). Nepal Accuses India of 'Trade Blockade' Amid Fuel Crisis, *CNN World*, 03 October, <https://edition.cnn.com/2015/09/29/asia/nepal-india-fuel-crisis/index.html>

Polat, N. (2021). *Peace in Non-Western Theory*, London: Oxford University Press, <https://open.metu.edu.tr/handle/11511/92408>

Poudel, S. S. (2023a). Why is the UN Key to Nepal's Diplomacy? *The Diplomat*, 20 September, <https://thediplomat.com/2023/09/why-is-the-un-key-to-nepals-diplomacy/>

Poudel, S.S. (2023b). US Steps Up Its Courting of Nepal', *The Diplomat*, 13 February, <https://thediplomat.com/2023/02/us-steps-up-its-courting-of-nepal/>

Poudel, T.M. (2021). Empowering Women Through Mother Groups: A case study of Hanshposha Aama Samuha, Itahari- 20, Sunsari, *Dristikon: A Multidisciplinary Journal*, vol. 11, no. 1, pp.183–194, <https://doi.org/10.3126/dristikon.v11i1.39158>

Pradhan, M. (2024). Examining the Dynamics of Wealth and Income Inequality in Nepal, *Nepal Economic Forum*, 31 January, <https://nepaleconomicforum.org/examining-the-dynamics-of-wealth-and-income-inequality-in-nepal/#:~:text=Currently%2C%20the%20income%20of%20richest,wealth%20of%20the%20poorest%2040%25>

Pradhan, P.R. (2022). Nepal: King Birendra's Zone of Peace or dynamite? *Telegraph Nepal*, 17 August, <https://www.telegraphnepal.com/nepal-king-birendras-zone-of-peace-or-dynamite/>

Pradhan, R. (2002). Ethnicity, Caste and a Pluralist Society, in Dixit, K.M., & Ramachandran, S. (eds), *State of Nepal*, Kathmandu: Himal Books, pp.1–21

Pradhan, R., & Shrestha, A. (2005). Ethnic and Caste Diversity: Implications for development, Asian Development Bank Working Paper Series No. 4., <https://www.adb.org/publications/ethnic-and-caste-diversity-implications-development>

Pradhan, T. R., & Giri, A. (2019). Government Labels Chand Party a Criminal Group, Bans its Activities, *The Kathmandu Post*, 13 March, <https://kathmandupost.com/valley/2019/03/13/government-labels-chand-party-a-criminal-group-bans-its-activities>

Preiss, D. (2016). Why Nepal Has One of The World's Fastest-Growing Christian Populations, *NPR*, 03 February, <https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2016/02/03/463965924/why-nepal-has-one-of-the-worlds-fastest-growing-christian-populations>

Premdas, R. R., & S. W. R. de A. Samarasinghe. (1988). Sri Lanka's Ethnic Conflict: The Indo-Lanka Peace Accord, *Asian Survey*, vol. 28, no. 6, 676–690, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2644660>

Pretorius, L. (2023a). Autoethnography: What is it and how do you do it? *The Scholar's Way*, 09 December, https://www.lynettepretorius.com/the_scholars_way_blog/autoethnography-what-is-it-and-how-do-you-do-it/

Pretorius, L. (2023b). Combining Research and Storytelling: Using personal experiences as research data, *Basil Cahusac de Caux*, 30 March, <https://www.basilcahusacdecaux.com/post/combining-research-and-storytelling-using-personal-experiences-as-research-data>

Prime Asianews (2008). Hundreds of Arrests Among Tibetans in Nepal, But the Chinese are Preparing Counter-Demonstrations, *Asia News*, 18 April, <https://www.asianews.it/news-en/Hundreds-of-arrests-among-Tibetans-in-Nepal,-but-the-Chinese-are-preparing-counter-demonstrations-12054.html>

Prior, L. (2014). Content Analysis, in Leavy, P. (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Qualitative Research*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp.359–379, <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199811755.013.008>

Pugh, M. (2013). The Problem-Solving and Critical Paradigms, in Mac Ginty, R. (ed.), *Routledge Handbook of Peacebuilding*, New York: Routledge, pp.12–24

Pugh, M., Cooper, N., & Turner, M. (2008). Introduction, in Pugh, M., Cooper, N., & Turner, M. (eds). *Whose Peace? Critical perspectives on the political economy of peacebuilding*: New security challenges series, London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp.1–8

Pugh, M. C. (2021). Peacebuilding's Origins and History, in Kustermans, J., Sauer, T., & Segaert, B. (eds), *A Requiem for Peacebuilding? Rethinking peace and conflict studies*, Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, pp.17–40

Puri, S. (2020). Six People Arrested in Connection with 'Honour Killing' of 17-year-old in Rautahat, *The Kathmandu Post*, 30 November,

<https://kathmandupost.com/province-no-2/2020/11/30/six-people-arrested-in-connection-with-honour-killing-of-17-year-old-in-rautahat>

Quakers in the World (n.d.). Adam Curle 1916–2006, <https://www.quakersintheworld.org/quakers-in-action/4/adam-curle>

Quijano, A. (2007). Coloniality and Modernity/Rationality, *Cultural Studies*, vol. 21, no. 2–3, pp.168–178, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09502380601164353>

Quijano, A., & Ennis, M. (2000). Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism, and Latin America, *Nepantla: Views from south*, vol. 1, no. 3, pp.533–580, <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/23906/>

Rae, R. (2021). *Kathmandu Dilemma: Resetting India-Nepal ties*, India: Penguin Random House India Private Limited

Rahmeen, M., & Bowcott, O. (2009). Nepalese Prime Minister Resigns from Cabinet, *The Guardian*, 04 May, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2009/may/04/nepal-dahal-maoist>

Rai, B. (2014). Beggars and Choosers, *Nepali Times*, 15 May, <https://archive.nepalitimes.com/article/editorial/Beggars-and-choosers,1338>

Ramachandran, S. (2016). Nepal Inks 10 Deals with China, Cutting Dependence on India, *Asia Times*, 24 March, <https://asiatimes.com/2016/03/nepal-inks-10-deals-with-china-cutting-dependence-on-india/>

Ramsbotham, A., & Thapa, D. (2017). Introduction, in Ramsbotham, A., & Thapa, D. (eds), *Two Steps Forward, One Step Back, Accord: An international review of peace initiatives*, no. 26, London: Conciliation Resources, pp.5–10

Ramsbotham, O., Woodhouse, T., & Miall, H. (2016). *Contemporary Conflict Resolution* (4th edn), Cambridge: Polity Press

Rana, J. (2020). Nepali Women are Unequal by Law, *The Kathmandu Post*, 08 March, <https://kathmandupost.com/columns/2020/03/08/nepali-women-are-unequal-by-law>

Rana, P., & Shahi, I. (2021). How Peaceful is Nepal Really? *The Record*, 09 March, <https://www.recordnepal.com/how-peaceful-is-nepal-really#:~:text=According%20to%20the%202020%20index,to%20have%20been%20dealt%20with>

Rana, R. L. S. (2006a). Bhattarai at JNU: A vignette, *The Kathmandu Post*, 29 March, <https://fr-fr.facebook.com/DrBaburamBhattarai/posts/bhattarai-at-jnu-a-vignetteby-shrishti-ranaautumn-2003-i-found-myself-at-the-sam/619214221549425/>

Rana, R. L. S. (2006b). Rolpa's Reality, *Nepali Times*, issue 312, pp.25–31, <http://archive.nepalitimes.com/news.php?id=12393#.YFXnDS0Rpao>

Rana, S. (2005). *Bodhipushpanjali*, Wyom Kushuma Buddha Dharma Sangh, Translated by N.P. Rijal

Rana, S. (2007). Beyond the Illusion of Rolpa's Tar Bar, *Inroads*, no. 20, <https://inroadsjournal.ca/issues/issue-20-winter-spring-2007>

Rana, S. (2011). A Revolt from the Margins: The Maoists' War in Nepal, Unpublished Master's Dissertation, Bradford University, Bradford

Rana, S. (2015). Nepal: Chronicle of a disaster foretold, *openDemocracy*, 6 May, <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/opensecurity/nepal-chronicle-of-disaster-foretold-0/>

Rana, S. S. J. B (2023). Kingdom Lost: Nepal's tryst with democracy 1951–2008, First impression, New Delhi: Rupa

Randazzo, E. (2016). The Paradoxes of the "Everyday": Scrutinising the local turn in peacebuilding, *Third World Quarterly*, vol. 37, no. 8, pp.1351–1370, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2015.1120154>

Randazzo, E. (2017). *Beyond Liberal Peacebuilding*, Taylor & Francis

Randazzo, E. (2019). Post-conflict Reconstruction, the Local, and the Indigenous, in Lemay-Hebert N. (ed.), *Handbook on Intervention and Statebuilding*, Edward Elgar Publishing, pp.30–40

Rasmussen, M. V. (2010). The Ideology of Peace: Peacebuilding and the war in Iraq, in Richmond, O.P. (ed.), *Palgrave Advances in Peacebuilding*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp.175–189

Rastriya Janamukti Party (RJP) (2024). <https://janamukti.org/>

Rathbun, B.C. (2008). Interviewing and Qualitative Field Methods: Pragmatism and practicalities, in J.M, Box-Steffensmeier., H, Brady., & D, Collier. (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Political Methodology*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp.685–701

Ravelo, J. L. (2012). China Surprises Nepal with \$119M, *Devex*, 16 January, <https://www.devex.com/news/china-surprises-nepal-with-119m-77229>

Rawski, F., & Sharma, M. (2012). A Comprehensive Peace? Lessons from human rights monitoring in Nepal, in Einsiedel, S.V., Malone, D.M., & Pradhan, S. (eds), *Nepal in Transition: From People's War to fragile peace*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp.175–200

Raymajhi, S. (2015). With Controversy British Ambassador Resigns British Foreign Service, *Human Rights*, 12 February, <http://www.shreedeeprayamajhi.com.np/2015/02/with-controversy-british-ambassador.html>

Regmi, D. R. (2007). *Rise and Growth in the Eighteenth Century, India*: Rupa & Company

Reiter, D. (2017). Is Democracy a Cause of Peace? *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics*, <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228637.013.287>

Relief Web, OCHA (2006). Nepal: Chronology of decade-long conflict, *Reliefweb*, 22 November, <https://reliefweb.int/report/nepal/nepal-chronology-decade-long-conflict>

Relief Web, OCHA (2007). Nepal: UN mandate under fire, *Reliefweb*, 4 December, <https://reliefweb.int/report/nepal/nepal-un-mandate-under-fire>

Relief Web, OCHA (2008). Dr Ram Baran Yadav Becomes Nepal's First President, *Relief Web*, 21 July, <https://reliefweb.int/report/nepal/dr-ram-baran-yadav-becomes-nepals-first-president>

Relief Web, OCHA (2009). World Bank Reaffirms Support to Nepal's Peace Process', *Relief Web*, 15 July, <https://reliefweb.int/report/nepal/world-bank-reaffirms-support-nepals-peace-process>

Relief Web, OCHA (2012). Timeline of Constitution Stasis, *Relief Web*, 28 June, <https://reliefweb.int/report/nepal/timeline-constitution-stasis>

Relief Web, OCHA (2015). Nepal Peace Trust Fund to Enter New Phase, *Relief Web*, 22 April, <https://reliefweb.int/report/nepal/nepal-peace-trust-fund-enter-new-phase>

Republica (2014). British Envoy in Nepal Sparks Storm of Conversion Controversy, *Republica*, Nepal Republic Media, 15 December, https://web.archive.org/web/20141215233555/http://www.myrepublica.com/portal/index.php?action=news_details&news_id=88247

Republica (2019). Maina Sunar's Mom Declines Army's Offers of Charity, *Republica*, Nepal Republic Media, 19 August, <https://myrepublica.nagariknetwork.com/news/maina-sunar-s-mom-declines-army-s-offers-of-charity/#:~:text=She%2C%20however%2C%20declined%20the%20offers,headquarters%2C%E2%80%9D%20Devi%20told%20Republica>

Republica (2022). Dr C. K Raut Elected PP leader of Janamat Party, *Republica*, Nepal Republic Media, 19 December, <https://myrepublica.nagariknetwork.com/news/dr-ck-raut-elected-parliamentary-party-leader-of-janamat-party/>

Republica (2023a). 78.82 Percent GBV Cases Related to Domestic Violence, *Republica*, Nepal Republic Media, 9 December, <https://myrepublica.nagariknetwork.com/news/78-82-percent-gbv-cases-related-to-domestic-violence/>

Republica (2023b). Nepal succeeds to curb income inequality considerably: UNDP Report', *Republica*, Nepal Republic Media, 22 December, <https://myrepublica.nagariknetwork.com/news/nepal-succeeds-to-curb-income-inequality-considerably-undp-report/#:~:text=The%20UNDP%20further%20praised%20Nepal,minimize%20the%20inequality%20among%20women>

Republica (2024a). Devi Khadka: The champion of sexual violence victims, *Republica*, Nepal Republic Media, 23 April, <https://myrepublica.nagariknetwork.com/news/devi-khadka-the-champion-of-sexual-violence-victims/>

Republica (2024b). Nepal's Trade Deficit Exceeds Rs 1.314 Trillion as Exports Continue to Slump, *Republica*, Nepal Republic Media, 22 June, <https://myrepublica.nagariknetwork.com/news/nepal-s-trade-deficit-exceeds-rs-1-314-trillion-as-exports-continues-to-slump/>

Reychler, L. (2006). Challenges of Peace Research, *International Journal of Peace Studies*, vol. 11, no. 1, pp.1–16, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41852935>

Reynolds, A. (2002). *The Architecture of Democracy: Constitutional design, conflict management and democracy*, Oxford: Oxford University Press

Ricard, M., & Wolf, S. (n.d.). On Meditation and the Unconscious: A Buddhist monk and a neuroscientist in conversation, *The MIT Press Reader*, <https://thereader.mitpress.mit.edu/meditation-and-the-unconscious-buddhism-neuroscience-conversation/#:~:text=Buddhism%20shares%20with%20science%20the,the%20form%20of%20scientific%20observation>

Ricard, M., & Wolf, S. (2018). *Beyond the Self: Conversations between Buddhism and neuroscience*, Cambridge: Mit Press

Richardson, L. (1994). Writing: A method of inquiry, in Denzin, N.K., & Lincoln, Y.S. (eds), *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, pp.516–529

Richmond, O. P. (2005). *The Transformation of Peace*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan

Richmond, O. P. (2006). The Problem of Peace: Understanding the liberal peace, *Conflict, Security & Development*, vol. 6, no. 3, pp.291–314, doi: 10.1080/14678800600933480

Richmond, O. P. (2007). Critical Research Agendas for Peace: The missing link in the study of international relations, *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political*, vol. 32, no. 2, pp.247–274, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40645212>

Richmond, O. P. (2008a). Reclaiming Peace in International Relations, *Millennium*, vol. 36, no. 3, pp.439–470, Doi: 10.1177/03058298080360030401

Richmond, O.P. (2008b). *Peace in International Relations*, New York: Routledge

Richmond, O. P. (2009a). A Post-liberal Peace: Eirenism and the everyday, *Review of International Studies*, vol. 35, pp.557–580, <https://www.prio.org/publications/4348>

Richmond, O. P. (2009b). Becoming Liberal, Unbecoming Liberalism: Liberal-local hybridity via the everyday as a response to the paradoxes of liberal peacebuilding, *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, vol. 3, no. 3, pp.324–344, <https://doi.org/10.1080/17502970903086719>

Richmond, O. P. (2010a). Resistance and the Post-liberal Peace, *Millennium*, vol. 38, no. 3, pp.665–692, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0305829810365017>

Richmond, O. P. (2010b). A Genealogy of Peace and Conflict Theory, in Richmond, O.P. (ed.), *Palgrave Advances in Peacebuilding*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp.14–38, https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230282681_2

Richmond, O. P. (2011). *A Post-Liberal Peace*, London and New York: Routledge

Richmond, O. P. (2012). The Dilemmas of a Hybrid Peace, *E-International Relations*, <https://www.e-ir.info/2012/12/23/the-dilemmas-of-a-hybrid-peace/>

Richmond, O. P. (2013). Peace Formation and Local Infrastructures for Peace. *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political*, vol. 38, no. 4, pp.271–287, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24569417>

Richmond, O. P. (2015). The Dilemmas of a Hybrid Peace: Negative or positive? *Cooperation and Conflict*, vol. 50, no. 1, pp.50–68, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0010836714537053>

Richmond, O. P. (2017). The Green and the Cool: Hybridity, relationality and ethnographic-biographical responses to intervention, *Mediterranean Politics*, vol. 23, no. 4, 479–500, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13629395.2017.1338214>

Richmond, O. P. (2018). Foreword, in Wallis, J., Kent, L., Forsyth, M., Dinnen, S., & Bose, S. (eds), *Hybridity on the Ground in Peacebuilding and Development: Critical conversations*, Australia: ANU Press, pp.vii–viii

Richmond, O.P. (2022). What is an Emancipatory Peace? *Journal of International Political Theory*, vol. 18, no. 2, pp.124–147, <https://doi.org/10.1177/17550882211036560>

Richmond, O.P. (2023a). The Use and Misuse of the ‘Local Turn, for the Millennium Symposium, Unpublished

Richmond, O. P. (2023b). *Peace: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford: Oxford University Press

Richmond, O. P., & Mac Ginty, R. (2015). Where Now for the Critique of the Liberal Peace? *Cooperation and Conflict*, vol. 50, no. 2, pp.171–189, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0010836714545691>

Richmond, O., & Mac Ginty, R. (2020). *Local Legitimacy and International Peacebuilding*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press

Richmond, O. P., Pogodda, S., & Visoka, G. (2023). The International Dynamics of Counter-Peace, *European Journal of International Relations*, vol. 30, no. 1, pp. 126–150, <https://doi.org/10.1177/13540661231168772>

Richmond, O.P., & Tellidis, I. (2013). *The BRICS and International Peacebuilding and Statebuilding*, Norway: NOREF, Norwegian Peacebuilding Resource Centre, <https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/160996/5f8c6a3d43ec8fff5692d7b596af2491.pdf>

Richmond, O. P., & Tellidis, I. (2014). Emerging Actors in International Peacebuilding and Statebuilding: Status quo or critical states? *Global Governance*, vol. 20, no. 4, pp.563–584, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24526325>

Richmond, O. P., & Visoka, G. (2021). Introduction: International, state, and local dynamics of peace in the twenty-first century, in Richmond, O.P., & Visoka, G. (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Peacebuilding, Statebuilding, and Peace Formation*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp.1–28

Richtarik, M. (2023). Introduction, in *Getting to Good Friday: Literature and the peace process in Northern Ireland*, Oxford University Press

Rijal, M. (2019). Creating space for inclusion in Nepal: Conversation with Minendra Rijal, in Carl, A. (ed.), *Accord: Navigating inclusion in peace processes*, London: Conciliation Resources, pp.67–69

Rimal, P. (2021). Understanding the Tharu Perspective on the 2015 Tikapur Incident, *The Record*, 02 September, <https://www.recordnepal.com/understanding-the-tharu-perspective-on-the-2015-tikapur-incident>

Roberts, W. (2017). The Idea of Emancipation after Postcolonial Theory, Interventions, *International Journal of Post-colonial Studies*, vol. 19, no. 6, pp.1–17, doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1369801X.2017.1347055>

Robins, S. (2016). Transition but not Transformation: How Nepal's liberal peace fails its citizens, in Adhikari, P., Ghimire, S., & Mallik, V. (eds), *Nepal Transition to Peace: A decade of the comprehensive peace accord (2006–2016)*, Lalitpur: Jagadamba Press. pp.66–82

Rogers, P. (2007). Peace Studies, in Collins, A (ed.). *Contemporary Security Studies*, Oxford: Oxford University Press. pp.69–81

Rogers, P., & Ramsbotham, O. (1999). Then and Now: Peace Research: Past and future, *Political Studies*, vol. 47, no. 4, pp.740–754, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9248.00229>

Rose, L.E. (2021). *Nepal: Strategy for Survival*, S.L. University of California Press

Rose, L. E., & Dial, R. (1969). Can a Ministate Find True Happiness in a World Dominated by Protagonist Powers? The Nepal Case, *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, vol. 386, no. 1, pp.89–101, <https://doi.org/10.1177/000271626938600109>

Rose, L.E., & Fisher, M.W. (1998). *The Politics of Nepal: Persistence and change in an Asian monarchy*, Kantipath: Mandala Book Point

Roy, D. (2005). *China and the United States 2004–2005: Testy partnership faces Taiwan challenge*, Hawaii: Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies, <https://dkiapcss.edu/wp-content/uploads/2010/PDFs/SAS/APandtheUS/RoyChina2.pdf>

- Royles, E. (2017). Sub-state Diplomacy: Understanding the international opportunity structures, *Regional & Federal Studies*, vol. 27, no. 4, pp.393–416, doi: 10.1080/13597566.2017.1324851
- Ryan, S. (2013). The Evolution of Peacebuilding, in Mac Ginty, R. (ed.), *Routledge Handbook of Peacebuilding*, New York: Routledge, pp.25–35
- Sabaratnam, M. (2011a). IR in Dialogue ... But Can We Change the Subjects? A typology of decolonising strategies for the study of world politics, *Millennium*, vol. 39, no. 3, pp.781–803, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0305829811404270>
- Sabaratnam, M. (2011b). Situated Critiques of Intervention: Mozambique and the diverse politics of response, in Campbell, S., Chandler, D., & Sabaratnam, M. (eds), *A Liberal Peace? The problems and practices of peacebuilding*, London: Zed Books Ltd, pp.245–264
- Sabaratnam, M. (2011). The Liberal Peace? An intellectual history of international conflict management, 1990–2010, in Campbell, S., Chandler D., & Sabaratnam, M. (eds), *A liberal Peace? The problems and practices of peacebuilding*, London: Zed Books, pp.13–30
- Sabaratnam, M. (2013). Avatars of Eurocentrism in the Critique of the Liberal Peace, *Security Dialogue*, vol. 44, no. 3, pp.259–278, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0967010613485870>
- Saldana, J. (2014). Coding and Analysis Strategies, in Leavy, P. (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Qualitative Research*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp.581–605, <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199811755.013.001>
- Salike, N., Wang, J., & Regis, P. (2022). Remittance and its Effect on Poverty and Inequality: A case of Nepal, *NRB Economic Review*, vol. 34, no. 2, pp.1–29, doi: 10.3126/nrber.v34i2.49430
- Sambanis, N. (2001). Do Ethnic and Nonethnic Civil Wars Have the Same Causes? A theoretical and empirical inquiry (Part 1), *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, vol. 45, no. 3, pp.259–282, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022002701045003001>
- Sapkota, S., & Singh, S. (2008). Apratyasit Nepalgunj Danga [Unexpected Nepalgunj Riots], in Gautam, B. (ed.) *Madhes Bidroha ko Nalibeli [Inside Story of the Madhes Uprising]*, Kathmandu: Martin Chautari, pp.59–73
- Saran, S. (2017). *How India Sees the World: Kautilya to the 21st Century*, New Delhi: Juggernaut
- Saunders, H.H. (1999). Changing Conflictual Relationships, in *A Public Peace Process*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp.31–46
- Scambary, J., & Wassel, T. (2018). Hybrid Peacebuilding in Hybrid Communities: A case study of East Timor, in Wallis, J., Kent, L., Forsyth, M., Dinnen, S., & Bose, S. (eds), *Hybridity on the Ground in Peacebuilding and Development: Critical conversations*, ANU Press, pp.181–200

Schmid, H. (1968). Peace Research and Politics, *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 5, no. 3, pp.217–232, <https://doi.org/10.1177/002234336800500301>

Scholten, G.V.I. (2020). Peace in Peace Studies: Beyond the 'negative/positive' divide,' in *Visions of Peace of Professional Peace Workers: Rethinking peace and conflict studies*, Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, pp.27–64

School of Arts, Interdisciplinary Analysts and The Asia Foundation (2019). A Survey of the Nepali People in 2018, <https://asiafoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/A-Survey-of-the-Nepali-People-2018-revised-8132019.pdf>

Sethi, S. (2015). Did India Have a Right to Annex Sikkim in 1975? *India Today*, 18 February, <https://www.indiatoday.in/magazine/cover-story/story/19780430-did-india-have-a-right-to-annex-sikkim-in-1975-818651-2015-02-18>

Shah, S. (2008). *Civil Society in Uncivil Places: Soft state and regime change in Nepal*, Washington: East-West Center

Shaha, R. (1990). *Modern Nepal: A political history, 1769–1955, vol II. 1885–1995*, New Delhi: Manohar Publisher

Shahi, P. (2024). जनयुद्धको तुफानी केन्द्र कर्णाली: २९ वर्षमा के पायो के गुमायो? [Karnali, The Stormy Center of the People's War: What has been gained or lost in 29 years?], *Ratopati*, 13 February, <https://www.ratopati.com/story/411319/peoples-war->

Shakya, A. (2014). My Husband and In-laws Left me to Die, *Nepali Times*, 22 May, <https://archive.nepalitimes.com/article/nation/rihana-sheikh-dhaphali-victim-of-dowry-related-violence-nepal,1366>

Shakya, P. (2015). Nepal's Constitutional Deal: Significant milestone but short of a breakthrough, *Constitution Net*, 12 June, <https://constitutionnet.org/news/nepals-constitutional-deal-significant-milestone-short-breakthrough>

Shapcott, R. (2010). Critical Theory, in Reus-Smit, C., & Snidal, D. (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of International Relations*, Great Britain: Oxford University Press, pp.327–345

Sharma, B. P. (2021). Nepal-China Security Issue in the Context of Belt and Road Program Implementation, *Open Journal of Social Sciences*, vol. 9, pp.91–107, <https://www.scirp.org/journal/paperinformation?paperid=111118>

Sharma, C. (2015). Nepal's Ruling Majority and Opposition Agree on Eight Provinces in a Federal State, *PIME Asianews*, 6 October, <https://www.asianews.it/news-en/Nepal%E2%80%99s-ruling-majority-and-opposition-agree-on-eight-provinces-in-a-federal-state-34473.html>

Sharma, M. (2022). Explained: The China-Tibet 17-Point Agreement, the Conflict's History, and India's Place in it, *Outlook*, 23 May, <https://www.outlookindia.com/national/explained-the-china-tibet-17-point-agreement-the-conflict-history-and-india-place-news-198184>

Sharma, P. (2014). *Some Aspects of Nepal's Social Demography: Census 2011 update*, Lazimpat: Himal Books

Sharma, S. (2009). *Poverty, Growth and Economic Inclusion in Nepal*, United Nations, <https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/egms/docs/2009/Ghana/Sharma.pdf>

Sharma, S. (2013). *Prayogshala [Laboratory]*, Kathmandu: Fineprints

Sharma, S. (2017). *Army and Security Forces After 2006*, in Ramsbotham, A., & Thapa, D. (eds), *Two Steps Forward, One Step Back: Nepal's peace process, Accord: An international review of peace initiatives*, no. 26, London: Conciliation Resources, pp.41-45

Sharma, S. (2024). *Himalpariko Huri [Storm beyond the Himalayas]*, Kathmandu: Kitab Publishers Pvt. Ltd

Shetty, D. (2021). 1 In 50 Females 'missing' From Nepal's Birth Records, Finds Latest Analysis, *Forbes*, 20 March, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/dishashetty/2021/03/20/1-in-50-females-missing-from-nepals-birth-records-finds-latest-analysis/>

Shrestha, P.A., & Uprety, H. (2008). *Peace Building Process in Nepal*, Nepal Foundation for Advanced Studies.

Shrestha, P. M. (2023). *Nepal's Declaration on MCC Compact Gets US Nod*, *The Kathmandu Post*, 24 October, <https://kathmandupost.com/national/2023/08/30/nepal-s-declaration-on-mcc-compact-gets-us-nod>

Shrestha, P.M., & Giri, A. (2022). *Nepal, USAID Set to Sign \$659 Million Deal for Five Years*, *The Kathmandu Post*, 9 March, <https://kathmandupost.com/national/2022/03/09/nepal-usaid-set-to-sign-659-million-deal-for-five-years>

Shrestha, S. (2016). *A Mother's Long Fight for Justice* *Nepali Times*, 17 January, <https://archive.nepalitimes.com/article/from-nepali-press/mother-fights-for-justice-Devi-Sunar,2837>

Shrestha, S. (2024). *शान्तिप्रक्रियाप्रति त्रुटिपूर्ण बुझाइ [A Flawed Understanding of the Peace Process]*, *Ratopati*, 13 February, <https://www.ratopati.com/story/411310/shyam-shrestha->

Shukla, S., & Tiwari, V. (2022). *Friction Between India and China: Examining the Indian Approach*, *ORCA*, 11 May, <https://orcasia.org/public/article/205/friction-between-india-and-china>

Sidhu, W.P. (2011). *Global Peace-building, the Indian Way*, *Mint*, 20 Feb, <https://www.livemint.com/Opinion/8pZJFHE3Ze9GAqNrbQYc7N/Global-peacebuilding-the-Indian-way.html>

Sigdel, A., & Dahal, M. (2022). *US–China Rivalry Complicates Development Aid in Nepal*, *East Asia Forum*, 22 April, <https://eastasiaforum.org/2022/04/22/us-china-rivalry-complicates-development-aid-in-nepal/>

Sijapati, B. (2009). People's Participation in Conflict Transformation: A case study of Jana Andolan II in Nepal, *Occasional Paper: Peace Building Series No.1*. Future Generations Graduate School, https://www.future.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/nepal_people_create_peace_case_study.pdf

Sijapati, B. (2017). Local Governance and Inclusive Peace in Nepal, in Ramsbotham, A., & Thapa, D. (eds), *Two Steps Forward, One Step Back, Accord: An international review of peace initiatives*, no. 26, London: Conciliation Resources, pp.91–94

Simangan, D. (2009). Peaces of the Puzzle: Mapping the trajectories of three decades of peacebuilding scholarship, in Cogan, M.S., & Sakai, H. (eds), *Alternative Perspectives on Peacebuilding*, Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, pp.55–79, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-05756-4_3

Simangan, D. (2023). Beyond Indices of Peace and Sustainability: Everyday perspectives from Nepal, *Peace Review*, vol. 35, no. 3, pp.536–549, Doi: 10.1080/10402659.2023.2243244

Singh, P.K. (2017). Peacebuilding Through Development Partnership: An Indian perspective, in Call, C., & De Coning, C. (eds), *Rising Powers and Peacebuilding: Rethinking peace and conflict studies*, Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, pp.69–91, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-60621-7_4

Singh, R. (2024). This Quote Means: With Ram Temple consecration in Ayodhya, recalling what Gandhi said about Ram Rajya, *The Indian Express*, 22 January, <https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/this-quote-means-ayodhya-ram-temple-gandhi-ram-rajya-9120495/>

Singh, S.M. (2012). Chinese Premier's Nepal Visit: Brief but landmark, *Nepal My Nepal*, 15 January, <https://nepalmynepal.wordpress.com/2016/01/15/chinese-premiers-nepal-visit-brief-but-landmark-2/>

Sinha, S. (2017). Rising Powers and Peacebuilding: India's role in Afghanistan, in Call, C., & De Coning, C. (eds), *Rising Powers and Peacebuilding: Rethinking peace and conflict studies*, Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-60621-7_7

South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation (2018). Eminent Persons' Group on Nepal-India relations Finalizes Report, 17 July, <https://www.sasec.asia/index.php?page=news&nid=910&url=epg-final-report&enews=58>

South Asia Terrorism Portal (1996). 40 Point Demand, <https://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/nepal/document/papers/40points.htm>

Spanner, L. (2022). Critical Approaches, in Huddleston, R.J., Jamieson, T., & James, P. (eds), *Handbook of Research Methods in International Relations*, United Kingdom: Edward Elgar Publishing, pp.41–57

Sparkes, A. (2014). Letter to Sabhasad-jyus, *Republica*, 10 December, https://web.archive.org/web/20141215233555/http://www.myrepublica.com/portal/index.php?action=news_details&news_id=88247

Spears, I.S. (1999). Angola's Elusive Peace, *International Journal: Canada's Journal of Global Policy Analysis*, vol. 54, no. 4, pp.562–581, <https://doi.org/10.1177/002070209905400402>

Spears, I.S. (2002). Africa: The limits of power-sharing, *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 13, no. 3, pp.123–136, <https://doi.org/10.1353/jod.2002.0057>

Spencer, R., Pryce, J.M., & Walsh, J. (2014). Philosophical Approaches to Qualitative Research, in Leavy, P. (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Qualitative Research*, Oxford University Press, pp.81–98

Spivak, G.C. (2021). How the Heritage of Postcolonial Studies Thinks Colonialism Today, *Janus Unbound: Journal of Critical Studies*, vol. 1, pp.19–29, doi: <https://doi.org/10.2021/ju.v1i1.2309>

Stake, R.E. (1995). *The Art of Case Study Research*, Sage Publications

Stake, R.E. (2005). Qualitative Case Studies, in Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (eds), *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research* (3rd edn.), London: Sage Publications Ltd, pp.443–466

Stake, R.E. (2009). *The Case Study Method in Social Inquiry*, London: SAGE Publications Ltd

Stanley, W., & Holiday, D. (2003). Broad Participation, Diffuse Responsibility: Peace implementation in Guatemala, in Stedman, S.J., Rothchild, D., & Cousens, E. (eds), *Ending Civil Wars: The implementation of peace agreements*, Boulder, USA: Lynne Rienner Publishers, pp.421–462, <https://doi.org/10.1515/9781685850395-017>

Stedman, S. J. (1997). Spoiler Problems in Peace Processes, *International Security*, vol. 22 no. 2, pp.5–53, <https://doi.org/10.1162/isec.22.2.5>

Stedman, S. J. (2001). Implementing Peace Agreements in Civil Wars: Lessons and recommendations for policymakers. *IPA Policy Paper Series on Peace Implementation. CISAC and IPA*, https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/ImplementingPeaceAgreementsinCivilWars_IPI2001.pdf

Stedman, S. J. (2003). Peace Processes and the Challenges of Violence, in Darby, J., & Mac Ginty, R. (eds), *Contemporary Peacemaking: Conflict, violence and peace processes*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp.103–112

Stedman, S. J., Roth Child, D., & Cousens, E.M. (2002). *Ending Civil Wars: The implementation of peace agreements?* Boulder: Lynne Rienner

Steinberg, G.M. (2013). The Limits of Peacebuilding Theory, in Mac Ginty, R. (ed.), *Routledge Handbook of Peacebuilding*, New York: Routledge, pp.36–53

Steinmetz, K. (2020). She Coined the Term 'Intersectionality' Over 30 Years Ago. Here's what it means to her today, *Time*, 20 February, <https://time.com/5786710/kimberle-crenshaw-intersectionality/>

Stiller, L.F. (1993). *Nepal: Growth of a nation*, Human Resources Development Research Center, 1993

Subedi S. (2005). India, Nepal and the Maoist Conflict: A Nepalese Perspective, *Liberal Democracy Nepal Bulletin*, https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/nsc_liberal_democracy/23

Subedi, J. (2017). Transformation of the Maoists: From revolutionaries to reformists? in Ramsbotham, A., & Thapa, D. (eds), *Two Steps Forward, One Step Back: Nepal's peace process, Accord: An international review of peace initiatives*, no. 26. London: Conciliation Resources, pp.37–40

Subedi, R. R. (2015). British Envoy in Nepal Sparks Storm of Conversion Controversy, *LankaWeb*, 5 July, <https://www.lankaweb.com/news/items/2015/07/05/british-envoy-in-nepal-sparks-storm-of-conversion-controversy-ritu-raj-subedi/>

Subedi, S. D. (2015). With Controversy: British ambassador, *Shreedeeprayamajhi.com.np*, 5 February, <http://www.shreedeeprayamajhi.com.np/2015/02/with-controversy-british-ambassador.html>

Subedi, S. P. (1994). India-Nepal Security Relations and the 1950 Treaty: Time for new perspectives, *Asian Survey*, vol. 34, no. 3, pp.273–284, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2644985>

Subedi, S. P. (2023). Nepal–Britain Treaty of Friendship 1923: An international legal perspective, London School of Economics and Political Science, 28 August, <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/southasia/2023/08/28/nepal-britain-treaty-of-friendship-1923-an-international-legal-perspective/>

Suffla, S., Malherbe, N., & Seedat, M. (2020). Recovering the Everyday Within and for Decolonial Peacebuilding through Politico-Affective Space, in Acar, Y.G., Moss, S.M., & Uluğ, Ö.M. (eds), *Researching Peace, Conflict, and Power in the Field*, Peace Psychology Book Series, Cham: Springer, pp.343–364

Suhrke, A. (2009). UN Support for Peacebuilding: Nepal as the exceptional case, Bergen: Chr. Michelsen Institute (CMI Working Paper WP 2009: 7), <https://www.cmi.no/publications/3468-un-support-for-peacebuilding>

Suhrke, A. (2011). Virtues of a Narrow Mission: The UN peace operation in Nepal, *Global Governance: A Review of multilateralism and international organizations*, vol. 17, no. 1, pp.37–55, <https://doi.org/10.1163/19426720-01701003>

Suhrke, A., & Samset, I. (2007). What's in a Figure? Estimating recurrence of civil war, *International Peacekeeping*, vol. 14, no. 2, pp.195–203. doi: 10.1080/13533310601150776

Suilleabhain, A.O. (2014). *Small States at the United Nations: Diverse perspectives, shared opportunities*, International Peace Institute, https://www.ipinst.org/wp-content/uploads/publications/ipi_e_pub_small_states_at_un.pdf

Tadjbakhsh, S. & Richmond, O.P. (2011). Conclusion: Typologies and modifications proposed by critical approaches, in *Rethinking the Liberal Peace: External models and local alternatives*, Milton Park: Routledge, pp.221–241

Tadjbakhsh, S. (2010). Human Security and The Legitimation of Peacebuilding, in Richmond, O.P. (ed.), *Palgrave Advances in Peacebuilding*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp.116–136, https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230282681_7

Tamang, M.S. (2017). Social Movements and Inclusive Peace in Nepal, in Ramsbotham, A., & Thapa, D. (eds), *Two Steps Forward, One Step Back, Accord: An international review of peace initiatives*, no. 26, London: Conciliation Resources, pp. 97–106

Tamang, S. (2011). Exclusionary Processes and Constitution Building in Nepal, *International Journal on Minority and Group Rights*, vol. 18, no. 3, pp.293–308, <https://doi.org/10.1163/157181111X583297>

Tanabe, J. (2016). Buddhism and Peace Theory: Exploring a Buddhist inner peace, *International Journal of Peace Studies*, vol. 21, no. 2, pp.1–14, https://www3.gmu.edu/programs/icar/ijps/vol21_2/Tanabe%20FINAL.pdf

Tanabe, J. (2017a). Beyond Liberal Peacebuilding: A Critique of liberal peacebuilding and exploring a postmodern post-liberal hybrid model of peacebuilding, *International Relations and Diplomacy*, vol. 5, no. 8, pp. 447–459, <https://doi.org/10.17265/2328-2134/2017.08.001>

Tanabe, J. (2017b). Buddhist Philosophy of the Global Mind for Sustainable Peace, *Dialogue and Universalism*, vol. 27, no. 2, pp.17–30, <https://doi.org/10.5840/du201727223>

Tanabe, J. (2022). A Holistic Peace: Buddhism and liberal peace, in Cogan, M., & Sakai, Y. (eds), *Alternative Perspectives on Peacebuilding: Theories and case studies*, Cham: Springer, pp.131–161

Tandukar, A., Upreti, B. R., Paudel, S. B., Acharya, G., & Harris, D. (2016). The Effectiveness of Local Peace Committees in Nepal: A study from Bardiya district, Working Paper 40, Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium

Taylor, R.N. (2005). British Arms Supplies Fuelling Abuses in Nepal, Says Amnesty, *The Guardian*, 15 June, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/jun/15/armstrade.foreignpolicy>

Teerrink, R. (2016). CPA Talk, in Adhikari, P., Ghimire, S., & Mallik, V. (eds), *Nepal Transition to Peace: A decade of the comprehensive peace accord (2006–2016)*, Lalitpur: Jagadamba Press, pp.134–136

Tellidis, I., & Richmond, O.P. (2014). Emerging Actors in International Peacebuilding and Statebuilding: Status quo or critical states? *Global Governance*, vol. 20, no. 4, pp.563–584, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24526325>

Tengfei, G. (2021). Disputes About the “Indo-Pacific” Regional Security Order and China’s Vision of Regional Order, *Center for Strategic & International Studies*, 3 May,

<https://interpret.csis.org/translations/disputes-about-the-indo-pacific-regional-security-order-and-chinas-vision-of-regional-order/>

Thapa, B. B., & Thapa, H. B. (2023). *Rastra-Pararastra: Ekatantradekhi ganatantrasamma* [Nation and Foreign Affairs: From autocracy to republic], Kathmandu: Fine Print

Thapa, D. (2017a). Mapping Federalism in Nepal, in Ramsbotham, A., & Thapa, D. (eds), *Two Steps Forward, One Step Back, Accord: An international review of peace initiatives*, no. 26, London: Conciliation Resources, pp. 80-87.

Thapa, D. (2017b). Post-War Armed Groups in Nepal, In Ramsbotham, A., & Thapa, D. (eds), *Two Steps Forward, One Step Back, Accord: An international review of peace initiatives*, no. 26, London: Conciliation Resources, pp.107-111.

Thapa, D. (2017c). Preparing for Another Transition? Interview with Daman Nath Dhungana, in Ramsbotham, A., & Thapa, D. (eds.), *Accord: Two steps forward, one step back*, Issue 26. London: Conciliation Resources, pp.21-23.

Thapa, D. (2017d). Stability or Social Justice? in Ramsbotham, A., & Thapa, D. (eds), *Two Steps Forward, One Step Back, Accord: An international review of peace initiatives*, no. 26, London: Conciliation Resources, pp. 13.-17.

Ramsbotham, A. and Thapa, D. (2017e) Introduction: Two steps forward, one step back, in Ramsbotham, A. and Thapa, D. (eds.), *Accord: Two steps forward, one step back*, Issue 26. London: Conciliation Resources, pp. 5-10.

Thapa, D., & Ramsbotham, A. (2017e). Conclusion More Forward than Back? Next steps for peace in Nepal, in Ramsbotham, A., & Thapa, D. (eds), *Two Steps Forward, One Step Back, Accord: An international review of peace initiatives*, no. 26, London: Conciliation Resources, pp.133-136.

Thapa, D. (2019a). Creating Space for Inclusion in Nepal: Conversation with Minendra Rijal, in Carl, A. (ed.) *Navigating Inclusion in Peace Process, Accord: An international review of peace initiatives*, issue 28, London: Conciliation Resources, pp.67–69

Thapa, D. (2019b). Negotiating a 'New Nepal': Evolving relationship between inclusion and peace, in Carl, A. (ed.), *Navigating Inclusion in Peace Processes Accord: An international review of peace initiatives*, no. 26, London: Conciliation Resources, pp.61-66.

Thapa, D., & Sijapati, B. (2003). *A Kingdom Under Siege: Nepal's Maoist insurgency, 1996 to 2003*, Zed Books.

Thapa, S. (1995). The Human Development Index: A portrait of the 75 districts in Nepal, *Asia-Pacific Population Journal*, vol. 10, no. 2, pp.1–8, <https://doi.org/10.18356/0c212f86-en>

Tharakan, H.P.K. (2008). Best of All Uncertainties, *The Indian Express*, 22 April, <http://www.indianexpress.com/news/best-of-all-uncertainties/299851/0>

The Associated Press (2012). China Pledges \$119M in Aid for Nepal, *CTV News*, 14 January, <https://www.ctvnews.ca/china-pledges-119m-in-aid-for-nepal-1.753896>

The Carter Center (n.d.). Observing Nepal's 2013 Constituent Assembly Election, https://www.cartercenter.org/resources/pdfs/news/peace_publications/election_reports/nepal-2013-final.pdf

The Carter Center (2011). Carter Center: Local Peace Committee functioning has improved, but overall effectiveness remains unclear, The Carter Center, <https://www.cartercenter.org/resources/pdfs/news/pr/nepal-localpeacecommittees-update-051011-eng.pdf>

The CNN (2002). Nepal King Sacks Government, Takes Control of Nation, *The CNN*, 4 October, <https://edition.cnn.com/2002/WORLD/asiapcf/south/10/04/nepal.govt.sacked/index.html>

The Constitution of Nepal (1962). ConstitutionNet, International IDEA, https://constitutionnet.org/sites/default/files/constitution_1962.pdf

The Constitution of Nepal (1990). ConstitutionNet, International IDEA, https://constitutionnet.org/sites/default/files/1990_constitution_english.pdf

The Constitution of Nepal (2007). World Intellectual Property Organization, <http://www.wipo.int/edocs/lexdocs/laws/en/np/np006en.pdf>

The Constitution of Nepal (2015). Office of Attorney General, Nepal, https://ag.gov.np/files/Constitution-of-Nepal_2072_Eng_www.moljpa.gov._npDate-72_11_16.pdf

The Guardian (2009). Nepalese Prime Minister Resigns from Cabinet, *The Guardian*, 04 May, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2009/may/04/nepal-dahal-maoist>

The Himalayan Times (2005). Renewed Support, *The Himalayan Times*, 12 May, <https://thehimalayantimes.com/ampArticle/10451>

The Himalayan Times (2009a). PM for House Debate on Prez Move, *The Himalayan Times*, 18 May, <https://thehimalayantimes.com/news-archives/pm-for-house-debate-on-prez-move>

The Himalayan Times (2009b). UNMIN Clarifies Definition of Combatants, *The Himalayan Times*, 20 May, <https://thehimalayantimes.com/news-archives/unmin-clarifies-definition-of-combatants>

The Himalayan Times (2015a). Agitating Madheshi Parties to Observe Sept 20 as 'Black Day', *The Himalayan Times*, 17 September, <https://thehimalayantimes.com/kathmandu/agitating-Madheshi-parties-to-observe-constitution-commencement-day-as-black-day>

The Himalayan Times (2015b). Madheshi Front to Burn New Constitution, *The Himalayan Times*, 18 September, <https://thehimalayantimes.com/nepal/Madheshi-front-to-burn-new-constitution>

The Himalayan Times (2017). Nepal-China Joint Military Drill Kicks Off', *The Himalayan Times*, 16 April, <https://thehimalayantimes.com/nepal/nepal-china-joint-military-drill-kicks-off-sagarmatha-friendship-2017>

The Hindu (2023). India, A Voice of Peace, Security, Says Jaishankar, *The Hindu*, 27 July, <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/jaishankar-in-parliament/article67128107.ece>

The Kathmandu Post (2015). CPN-Maoist, CPN(Unified) Announce Merger, *The Kathmandu Post*, 8 November, <https://kathmandupost.com/valley/2015/11/08/cpn-maoist-cpnunified-announce-merger>

The Kathmandu Post (2015). Utilise Time Before Statute Promulgation, *The Kathmandu Post*, 19 September, <https://kathmandupost.com/miscellaneous/2015/09/19/utilise-time-before-statute-promulgation>

The Kathmandu Post (2016a), 'I Saved Nepal Army From Ruin': Ex-Prez Yadav, *The Kathmandu Post*, 10 April, <https://kathmandupost.com/national/2016/04/10/i-saved-nepal-army-from-ruin-ex-prez-yadav>

The Kathmandu Post (2016b). Govt Starts Cracking Down on Chand-led Maoist Cadres, *The Kathmandu Post*, 13 June, <https://kathmandupost.com/national/2016/06/13/govt-starts-cracking-down-on-cpn-maoist-cadres>

The Kathmandu Post (2016c). Nepal, China Issue 15-Point Joint Statement, *The Kathmandu Post*, 23 March, <https://kathmandupost.com/national/2016/03/23/nepal-china-issue-15-point-joint-statement-read-full-text>

The Kathmandu Post (2019). Mothers' Groups Uplift Women and Create Social Awareness in Rural Parts of Baitadi, *The Kathmandu Post*, 27 May, <https://kathmandupost.com/sudurpaschim-province/2019/05/27/mothers-groups-uplift-women-and-create-social-awareness-in-rural-parts-of-baitadi>

The Kathmandu Post (2022). China Says it Has Noted Aid Passage and 'Interpretive Declaration,' *The Kathmandu Post*, 1 March, <https://kathmandupost.com/national/2022/03/01/china-says-it-has-noted-aid-passage-and-interpretive-declaration>

The Kathmandu Post and Transcend Media Service (2013). Interview with Johan Galtung on Nepal, *Transcend Media Service*, 4 March. Available at: <https://www.transcend.org/tms/2013/03/interview-with-johan-galtung/>

The Quest (2020). *Comparative Religion Philosophy*, Jainism 2, 11 October, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GBQtmPowH4I&list=PLxYDMSdfTAgtZZR3h5yEsm2OCOVKboGW1&index=3>

The Rising Nepal (2022). Remembering BP and Pushpalal, *The Rising Nepal*, 25 July, <https://risingnepaldaily.com/news/14407>

The Times of India (2003). UK Appoints Special Representative to Nepal, *The Times of India*, 26 February, <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/uk-appoints-special-representative-to-nepal/articleshow/38664266.cms>

The Times of India (2008). Prachanda Meets Chinese President; Breaks Tradition, *The Times of India*, 24 August, <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/china/prachanda-meets-chinese-president-breaks-tradition/articleshow/3399147.cms>

The Times of India (2009). Govt Inks Deal with Muslims in Nepal, *The Times of India*, 17 March, <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/south-asia/govt-inks-deal-with-muslims-in-nepal/articleshow/4276182.cms>

The Times of India (2015). Nepal PM Wants India to Immediately Lift Undeclared Blockade, *The Times of India*, 15 November, <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/south-asia/nepal-pm-wants-india-to-immediately-lift-undeclared-blockade/articleshow/49793532.cms>

Thiessen, C. (2011). Emancipatory Peacebuilding: Critical Responses to (Neo) Liberal Trends, in Matyok, T., Senehi, J., & Byrne, S. (eds), *Critical Issues in Peace and Conflict Studies: Implications for theory, practice, and pedagogy*, New York: Lexington Books

Thompson, M.J. (2017). Introduction: What Is Critical Theory? in Thompson, M. (ed.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Critical Theory. Political Philosophy and Public Purpose*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp.1–14

Timalsina, R. (2016). The Promise and Perils of Aid: The role of the Nepal Peace Trust Fund (NPTF) Framework in facilitating post-conflict development in Nepal, *Asian Journal of Peacebuilding*, vol. 4, pp.115–135, 10.18588/201605.00a002.

Toft, M. D. (2006). Peace Through Security: Making negotiated settlements stick, <https://www3.carleton.ca/csds/docs/Toft%20PTS.pdf>

Toft, M. D. (2009). *Securing the Peace: The durable settlement of civil wars*, Princeton: Princeton University Press

Toft, M. D. (2010). Ending Civil Wars: A case for rebel victory? *International Security*, vol. 34, no. 4, pp.7–36, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40784560>

Traianou, A. (2014). The Centrality of Ethics in Qualitative Research, in Leavy, P. (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Qualitative Research*, Oxford University Press, pp. 62–77

Tucker, K. Unraveling Coloniality in International Relations: Knowledge, relationality, and strategies for engagement, *International Political Sociology*, vol. 12, no. 3, pp.215–232, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ips/oly005>

Tull, D.M., & Mehler, A. (2005). The Hidden Costs of Power-Sharing: Reproducing insurgent violence in Africa, *African Affairs*, vol. 104, no.416, pp.375–398, <https://doi.org/10.1093/afraf/adi034>

U.S. Department of State (n.d.). South Asia, <https://2009-2017.state.gov/documents/organization/42254.pdf>

U.S. Department of State (n.d.a). Executive Order 13224, <https://www.state.gov/executive-order-13224/>

U.S. Department of State (n.d.b). The Global War on Terrorism: The first 100 days, <https://2001-2009.state.gov/s/ct/rls/wh/6947.htm>

U.S. Department of State (n.d.c). U.S.—India: Civil Nuclear Cooperation, <https://2001-2009.state.gov/p/sca/c17361.htm>

U.S. Department of State (n.d.d). China's Military Aggression in the Indo-Pacific Region, <https://2017-2021.state.gov/chinas-military-aggression-in-the-indo-pacific-region/>

U.S. Department of State (2005). FY 2006 Congressional Budget Justification for Foreign Operations, <https://2009-2017.state.gov/s/d/rm/rls/cbj/2006/index.htm>

U.S. Department of State (2012). Delisting of the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist), <https://2009-2017.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2012/09/197411.htm>

U. S. Embassy (2005). Statement by U.S. Embassy in Kathmandu: Embassy warns against Maoists-parties "alliance," https://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/nepal/document/papers/Statement_U_S_Embassy_Kathmandu.htm

U.S. Embassy in Nepal (2022). State Partnership Program Factsheet, <https://np.usembassy.gov/state-partnership-program-factsheet/>

Uesugi, Y., Deekeling, A., & Ingstedt, A. (2021) A Brief Sketch of Hybrid Peacebuilding, in Uesugi, Y., Deekeling, A., Umeyama, S., & McDonald-Colbert, L. (eds), *Operationalisation of Hybrid Peacebuilding in Asia: From theory to practice*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 21–35

U. K. Parliament (1991). Brigade of Gurkhas, <https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/1991-07-18/debates/892748c2-96a1-4513-8c38-0fb7361d98e1/BrigadeOfGurkhas>

UN General Assembly (1993). An Agenda for Peace: Resolution / adopted by the General Assembly, 8 October, A/RES/47/120B, <https://www.refworld.org/docid/4a54bbdad.html>

UN General Assembly (2006). Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the Human Rights Situation and the Activities of her Office, Including Technical Cooperation, in Nepal, <https://www.refworld.org/reference/countryrep/unga/2006/en/40380>

UN Security Council (2009). Report of the UN SG on the Request of Nepal for UN Assistance in Support of its Peace Process (S/2009/553), <https://reliefweb.int/report/nepal/report-un-sg-request-nepal-un-assistance-support-its-peace-process-s2009553>

UNCT Nepal (2011). Nepal Peace and Development Strategy 2010–2015, https://un.org.np/sites/default/files/doc_publication/202011/nepal_peace_and_development_strategy_2010-2015_english.pdf

United Nations (1992). An Agenda for Peace: Preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peace-keeping, Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to the statement adopted by the Summit Meeting of the Security Council on 31 January 1992 / Boutros Boutros-Ghali, <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/145749?ln=en&v=pdf>

United Nations (1996). An Agenda for Democratization / Boutros Boutros-Ghali, <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/230086?ln=en&v=pdf>

United Nations (2000). Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (Brahimi Report), https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/a_55_305_e_brahimi_report.pdf

United Nations (2005). Office of High Commissioner For Human Rights Sets to Monitor Situation in Nepal, <https://press.un.org/en/2005/hr4825.doc.htm>

United Nations (2006a). In Nepal, UN delegation holds talks with Communist Party leaders. Available at: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2006/07/187082-nepal-un-delegation-holds-talks-communist-party-leaders>

United Nations (2006b). Secretary-General Appoints Ian Martin of United Kingdom as his Personal Representative in Nepal for Support to Peace Process. Available at: <https://press.un.org/en/2006/sga1017.doc.htm>

United Nations (2006c). Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the Human Rights Situation and the Activities of her Office, Including Technical Cooperation, in Nepal, Available at: <https://www.refworld.org/reference/countryrep/unga/2006/en/40380>

United Nations (2007a). Nepal: UN human rights official condemns killings, urges halt to violence, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2007/09/231442>

United Nations (2007b). Security Council Establishes United Nations Political Mission in Nepal, Unanimously Adopting Resolution 1740 (2007), <https://press.un.org/en/2007/sc8942.doc.htm>

United Nations (2007c). Secretary-General Welcomes New Round of Monitoring Nepalese Combatants, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2007/06/222862>

United Nations (2010). UN Peacebuilding: An orientation, https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/sites/www.un.org.peacebuilding/files/documents/peacebuilding_orientation.pdf

United Nations (2015). Resolution Adopted by the General Assembly on 25 September 2015: *Transforming our World: The 2030 agenda for sustainable development*, <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n15/291/89/pdf/n1529189.pdf>

United Nations (2018). Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, *CEDAW_C_NPL_CO_6-EN* - PDF
<https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/1656064?ln=en&v=pdf>

United Nations (2019). Crimes Against Humanity,
<https://legal.un.org/ilc/reports/2019/english/chp4.pdf>

United Nations (2021). Guidance Note on Sustaining Peace,
https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/sites/www.un.org.peacebuilding/files/documents/guidance_on_sustainingpeace.170117.final_.pdf

United Nations (2023). Addressing Parliament, Secretary-General Praises Nepal as a Promoter of Peace, Champion of Multilateralism, Staunch Supporter of Sustainable Development, <https://press.un.org/en/2023/sgsm22015.doc.htm>

United Nations and General Assembly Security Council (2009). Report of the Secretary-General on Peacebuilding in the Immediate Aftermath of Conflict,
<https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/Haiti%20S%202009%20304.pdf>

United Nations Development Programme (2001a). Human Development Report 2001, New York: Oxford University Press,
<https://hdr.undp.org/system/files/documents/hdr2001en.pdf>

United Nations Development Programme (2001b). Poverty Reduction and Governance Nepal, <https://hdr.undp.org/content/poverty-reduction-and-governance-nepal>

United Nations Development Programme, Nepal (2021). Nepal Multidimensional Poverty Index 2021, <https://www.undp.org/nepal/publications/nepal-multidimensional-poverty-index-2021>

United Nations Nepal (2011). Nepal Peace and Development Strategy 2010–2015, <https://unmin.un.org.np/resource/nepal-peace-and-development-strategy-2010-2015>

United Nations Peace Fund for Nepal (2016). Final Report on Activities Implemented under the United Nations Peace Fund for Nepal for the Period 2007 to 2016, https://mptf.undp.org/sites/default/files/documents/25000/unpfn_final_narrative_report.pdf

United Nations Peacemaker (2005). 12-Point Understanding between the Seven Political Parties and Nepal Communist Party (Maoists), <https://peacemaker.un.org/nepal-12point>

United Nations Security Council (2007). Security Council Establishes United Nations Political Mission in Nepal, Unanimously Adopting Resolution 1740 (2007), Press Release SC/8942, <https://press.un.org/en/2007/sc8942.doc.htm>

United States Agency for International Development (2020). Nepal Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Analysis 2020, https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00Z96G.pdf

United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (2007). OHCHR-Nepal Releases Report on Gaur Investigation, Press Release, https://nepal.ohchr.org/en/resources/Documents/English/pressreleases/Year%202007/APR2007/2007_04_20_HCR_PressRelease_Gaur_E.pdf

United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (2011). UN Concerned Over Recent Govt. Decisions to Appoint, Pardon and Promote Alleged Perpetrators of Human Rights Violations, <https://nepal.ohchr.org/en/index.html>

Upreti, B.R. (2006). *Armed Conflict and Peace Process in Nepal: The Maoist insurgency, past negotiations and opportunities for conflict transformation*, New Delhi: Adroit

Upreti, B.R. (2010). *Armed Conflict and Peace Process in Nepal: The Maoist insurgency, past negotiations and opportunities for conflict transformation*, New Delhi: Adroit Publishers

Upreti, B.R., & Sapkota, B. (2017). *Observations and Reflections on the Peace and Constitution-Making Process: Case study on Nepal*, Berhof Foundation, <https://berghof-foundation.org/library/observations-and-reflections-on-the-peace-and-constitution-making-process-case-study-on-nepal>

Uprety, P. (2019). Measurement and Decomposition of Consumption Inequality in Nepal, *Journal of Business and Social Sciences Research*, vol. 4, no. 2, pp.53–69, Doi: 10.3126/jbssr.v4i2.29483

Uzonyi, G. (2022). The Formation and Success of Peace Agreements in Civil Wars, *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of International Studies* [Preprint], <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190846626.013.725>

Uzonyi, G., & Hanania, R. (2017). Government-Sponsored Mass Killing and Civil War Reoccurrence, *International Studies Quarterly*, vol. 61, no. 3, pp.677–689, <https://doi.org/10.1093/isq/sqx050>

Van Leeuwen, M., Nindorera, J., Kambale Nzweve, J-L., & Corbijn, C. (2019). The 'Local Turn' and Notions of Conflict and Peacebuilding: Reflections on local peace committees in Burundi and eastern DR Congo, *Peacebuilding*, vol. 8, no. 3, pp.279–299, doi: 10.1080/21647259.2019.1633760

Vaughn, B. (2006). *Nepal: Background and U.S. Relations*, CRS Report for Congress, <https://sgp.fas.org/crs/row/RL31599.pdf>

Väyrynen, T. (2010). Gender and Peacebuilding, in Richmond, O.P. (ed.), *Palgrave Advances in Peacebuilding*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 137–153

Ventura, L. (2022). World Inequality Ranking by Country 2022, *Global Finance*, <https://gfmag.com/data/economic-data/world-inequality-ranking/>

Visoka, G. (2021). Emancipatory Peace, in Richmond, O.P., & Visoka, G. (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Peacebuilding, Statebuilding, and Peace Formation*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp.641–660

- Vollan, K. (2015). *Elections in Nepal: Identifying the politically excluded groups*, Lazimpat: Himal Books
- Wade, C. J. (2016). *Captured Peace: Elites and peacebuilding in El Salvador*, Ohio: Ohio University Press
- Wadlow, R. (2014). *Adam Curle: Tools for transformation*, Transcend Media Service, https://negociacionytomadedecisiones.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/tms_article_41590.pdf
- Wagner, L., & Druckman, D. (2016). Drivers of Durable Peace: The role of justice in negotiating civil war termination, *Group Decision and Negotiation*, vol. 26, no. 1, pp.45–67, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10726-016-9511-9>
- Wagner, R. (1993). *The Causes of Peace, Stopping the Killing: How civil wars end*, New York, USA: New York University Press, pp.235–268
- Wallensteen, P. (2002). *Understanding Conflict Resolution: War, peace and the global system*, London: Sage Publications
- Wallensteen, P., & Sollenberg, M. (1997). Armed Conflicts, Conflict Termination and Peace Agreements, 1989–96, *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 34, no. 3, pp.339–358, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/425168>
- Wallensteen, P., & Sollenberg, M. (2001). Armed Conflict, 1989–2000, *Journal of Peace Research*, vol 8, no. 5, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343301038005008>
- Walliman, N. (2006). *Social Research Methods*, London: Sage Publication
- Wallis, J. (2012). A Liberal-Local Hybrid Peace Project in Action? The increasing engagement between the local and liberal in Timor-Leste, *Review of International Studies*, vol. 38, no. 4, pp.735–761, doi:10.1017/S0260210511000787
- Wallis, J. (2018). Is There Still a Place for Liberal Peacebuilding? in Wallis, J., Kent, L., Forsyth, M., Dinnen, S., & Bose, S. (eds), *Hybridity on the Ground in Peacebuilding and Development: Critical Conversations*, Australia: ANU Press, pp. 83–98
- Wallis, J., Kent, L., Forsyth, M., Dinnen, S., Bose, S. (eds) (2018). Introduction, in *Hybridity on the Ground in Peacebuilding and Development: Critical Conversations*, Australia: ANU Press, pp.1–17
- Walter, B.F. (1997). The Critical Barrier to Civil War Settlement, *International Organization*, vol. 51, no. 3, pp.335–364, doi: 10.1162/002081897550384
- Walter, B.F. (2002). *Committing to Peace: The Successful Settlement of Civil Wars*, New Jersey: Princeton University Press
- Walter, B. F. (2004). Does Conflict Beget Conflict? Explaining Recurring Civil War, *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 41, no. 3, pp.371–388, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4149750>

Wang, J., & Boon, H.T. (2019). Periphery Diplomacy: Moving to the center of China's foreign policy, *China's Omnidirectional Peripheral Diplomacy*, pp.3–14, https://doi.org/10.1142/9789813141797_0001

Wantchekon, L. (2000). Credible Power-Sharing Agreements: Theory with evidence from South Africa and Lebanon, *Constitutional Political Economy*, vol. 11, pp.339–352, <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1026519406394>

Wennmann, A. (2009). Economic Issues in Peace Processes: Socio-economic inequalities and peace in Nepal, CCDP Working Paper, The Graduate Institute, Geneva, <https://repository.graduateinstitute.ch/record/4046/files/CCDP-Working-Paper-2-Nepal.pdf>

Werner, S., & Yuen, A. (2005). Making and Keeping Peace, *International Organization*, vol. 59, no. 2, pp.261–292, Doi: 10.1017/S0020818305050095

Westendorf, J. K. (2018). Challenges of Local Ownership: Understanding the outcomes of the international community's 'light footprint' approach to the Nepal peace process, *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, vol. 12, no. 2, pp.228–252, Doi: 10.1080/17502977.2018.1472963

Whelpton, J. (2005). *A History of Nepal*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Whelpton, J. (2013). Political Violence in Nepal from Unification to Janandolan I: The background to 'People's War', in Lecomte-Tilouine, M. (ed.), *Revolution in Nepal: An anthropological and historical approach to the People's War*, Delhi: Oxford Academic, pp.27–74

Whelpton, J. (2016). Political Identity in Nepal: State, nation, and community, in Gellner, D.N., Pfaff-Czarnecka, J., & Whelpton, J. (eds), *Nationalism and Ethnicity in Nepal*, Thamel: Vajra Books, pp.39–78

Whitfield, T. (2010). Focused Mission: Not so limited duration, A report on a workshop held in New York on 2–3 November 2009 at the Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations, <https://www.repository.cam.ac.uk/bitstreams/848d1800-2f34-4607-8465-416add241f81/download>

Whitfield, T. (2012). Nepal's Masala Peacemaking, in Einsiedel, S.V., Malone, D.M., & Pradhan, S. (eds), *Nepal in Transition: From People's War to fragile peace*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp.155–174

William, Paul D. (2008). *Security Studies: An introduction*, USA: Routledge

Wilson, S. (2013). External Monitoring of Nepal Peace Trust Fund (NPTF) Projects: Second monitoring report, Nepal Peace Trust Fund (NPTF) and Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction (MoPR), <http://www.nptf.gov.np/uploads/files/November%202013%20Final%20Report.pdf>

Wolff, J. (2015). Beyond the Liberal Peace: Latin American inspirations for post-liberal peacebuilding, *Peacebuilding*, vol. 3, no. 3, pp.279–296, Doi: 10.1080/21647259.2015.1040606

Wolff, J. (2022). The Local Turn and the Global South in Critical Peacebuilding Studies, Peace Research Institute Frankfurt, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep40389>

Wolff, J., & Zimmermann, L. (2016). Between Banyans and Battle Scenes: Liberal norms, contestation, and the limits of critique, *Review of International Studies*, vol. 42, no. 3, pp.513–534, doi: 10.1017/S0260210515000534

Wolgemuth, J. R., & Agosto, V. (2019). Narrative Research, *The Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology*, pp.1–3, <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781405165518.wbeos1244>

Woodhouse, T. (2010). Adam Curle: Radical peacemaker and pioneer of peace studies, *Journal of Conflictology*, vol. 1, no. 1, p.5, <https://doi.org/10.7238/joc.v1i1.999>

WOREC Nepal (n.d.). Violence Against Women Campaign, 30 November, <https://www.worecnepal.org/camp/1>

World Bank (2009). World Bank Reaffirms Support to Nepal's Peace Process, *Relief Web*, 15 July, <https://reliefweb.int/report/nepal/world-bank-reaffirms-support-nepals-peace-process>

World Bank (2011). World Development Report 2011: Conflict, security, and development, <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/entities/publication/25f2300c-f9d4-54de-8a56-30566e72003a>

World Economic Forum (2023). Global Gender Gap Report 2023: Benchmarking gender gaps, 2023, <https://www.weforum.org/publications/global-gender-gap-report-2023/in-full/benchmarking-gender-gaps-2023/>

World Economics (n.d.). Economies by Inequality Levels, <https://www.worldeconomics.com/Rankings/Economies-By-Inequality.aspx>

XinhuaNet (2017a). Nepal, China Sign Bilateral Cooperation Agreement under Belt and Road Initiative, *XinhuaNet*, 12 May, http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-05/12/c_136276949.htm

XinuhNet (2017b). Nepal Gives High Importance to Relationship with China: Minister, *XinhuaNet*, 3 August, http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-08/03/c_136497528.htm

Yadav, P. (2015). 47th Day (Situation Update): Madheshis/Tharus Form the World's Longest Human Chain to Protest over Nepal's New Charter, *Madheshi Youth*, 01 October, <https://www.Madheshiyouth.com/news/madhesuprising-3/47th-day-people-across-terai-form-longest-human-chain/>

Yadav, P. (2024). Combating Domestic Violence in Nepal: A comprehensive approach, *Online Khabar*, 25 April, <https://english.onlinekhabar.com/combating-domestic-violence-in-nepal-a-comprehensive-approach.html>

Yadav, R. (2008). Madhesh Bidrohama Siraha-Saptari [Madhes Rebellion in Siraha-Saptari], in Gautam, B. (ed.), *Madhesh Bidroha ko Nalibeli* [Inside Story of the Madhesh Uprising], Thapathali: Martin Chautari, pp.75–102

Yalvaç, F. (2017). Critical Theory: International relations engagement with the Frankfurt School and Marxism, *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of International Studies*, <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190846626.013.109>

Yami, H. (2021). *Hisila: From Revolutionary to First Lady, India*: Penguin Books

Yin, R.K. (2017). *Case Study Research and Applications: Design and methods*, New York: Sage Publications

Yeh, T.D-I. (2006). 'The Way to peace: A Buddhist Perspective', *International Journal of Peace Studies*, 11 (1). Available at: https://www3.gmu.edu/programs/icar/ijps/vol11_1/11n1Yeh.pdf (Accessed: 2 December 2023)

Zahar, M. J. (2010). SRSG Mediation in Civil Wars: Revisiting the "spoiler" debate', *Global Governance: A Review of Multilateralism and International Organizations* vol. 16, no. 2, pp.265–280, <https://doi.org/10.1163/19426720-01602006>

Zartman, William I. (2003). The Timing of Peace Initiatives: Hurting stalemates and ripe moments, in Darby, J., & Mac Ginty, R. (eds), *Contemporary Peacemaking: Conflict, violence and peace processes*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp.19–27

Zee News (2002). China Denies Links with Maoists in Nepal, *Zee News*, 11 July, https://zeenews.india.com/news/south-asia/china-denies-links-with-maoists-in-nepal_48937.html

Zee News (2006). Nepal PM Koirala Favours Ceremonial Role for King, *Zee News*, 15 June, https://zeenews.india.com/news/south-asia/nepal-pm-koirala-favours-ceremonial-role-for-king_302432.html

Zhang, F. (2019). The Xi Jinping Doctrine of China's International Relations, *Asia Policy*, vol. 14, no. 3, pp.7–24, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26773952>

Zhao, S. (2023). Implications of Xi's Power Concentration for Chinese Foreign Policy, *United States Institute of Peace*, 18 December, <https://www.usip.org/publications/2023/12/implications-xis-power-concentration-chinese-foreign-policy>

Zuniga, D. (2023). How Many Worlds are There? One, but also many: Decolonial theory, comparison, 'reality,' *European Journal of Political Theory*, pp.1–24, <https://doi.org/10.1177/14748851231214252>

नेपाल सरकार र नेपाल कम्युनिष्ट पार्टी (माओवादी) बीच भएको विस्तृत शान्ति सम्झौता २०६३ (2006) [The Comprehensive peace Agreement between Nepal government and Nepal Communist Party (Maoist).] Singhadurbar: Shanti Sachiwalaya. <https://www.hdcentre.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/Comprehensive-Peace-Agreement-GovNepal-and-CPN-Nov-2006-Nepalese.pdf>

राज्य पुनर्संरचना सुझाव उच्चस्तरीय आयोगको सुझाव प्रतिवेदन - २०६८ (2011) [Recommendation Report of thFe High-Level Commission on State Restructuring].

Available at: <http://martinchautari.org.np/storage/files/rajya-punarsamrachana-sujhav-uchchastariya-aayogko-prativedan-2068.pdf>