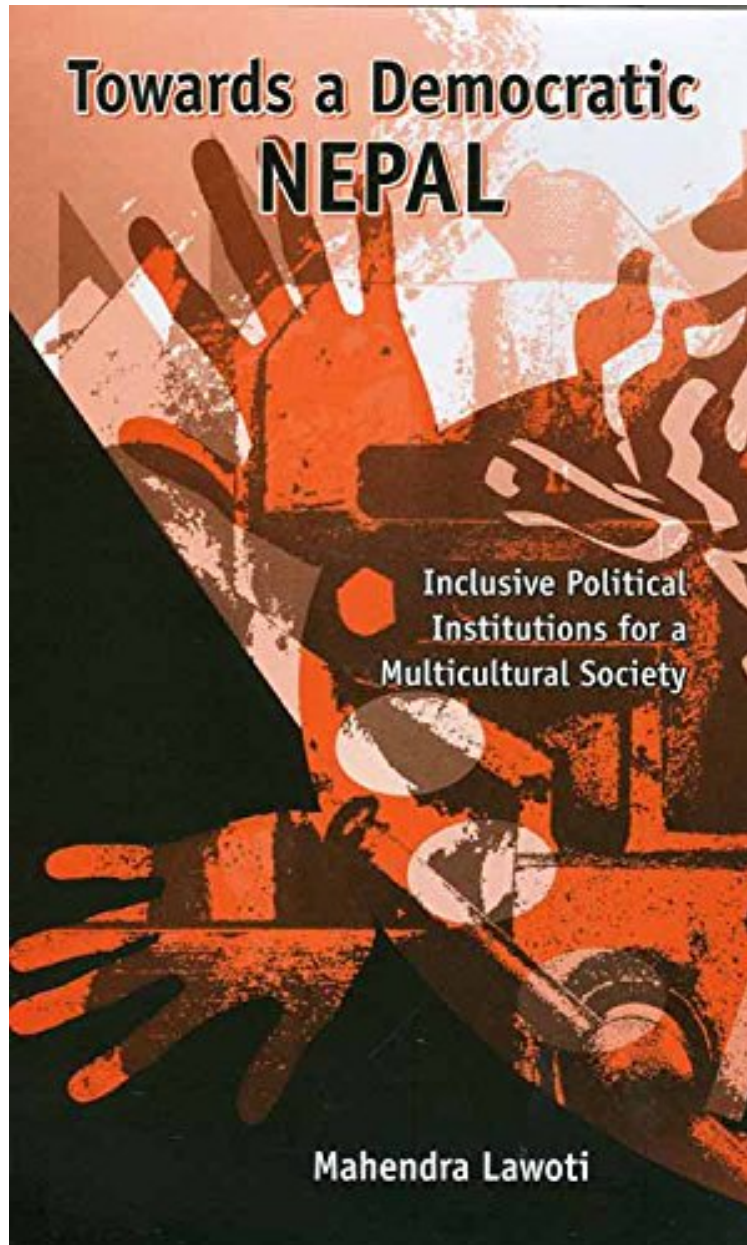


Towards A Democratic Nepal: Inclusive Political Institutions for a Multicultural Society

Mahendra Lawoti

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This book analyses the problem of the increasing political exclusion of ethnic, caste and gender groups in democratic Nepal and discusses its consequences for democracy and the stability of the country. While outlining alternative democratic institutions and proposing specific institutions that can include the diverse socio-cultural groups in Nepal, this book:-analyses the Maoist insurgency, arguing that political exclusion was a major cause for its genesis and growth; - examines the causes for the lack of democratic consolidation in Nepal;- provides the first comprehensive critique of the 1990 Constitution, identifying it as an important factor leading to the political exclusion of ethnic groups;- suggests the setting up of a new Constituent Assembly to address the social and political crisis in Nepal;- makes important recommendations to shape an inclusive and democratic Nepal which include federalism; a powerful House of Nationalities; a proportional electoral system; affirmative action policies and reservations; declaration of a secular state; a centralized judicial review; and the protection of minority rights in the Constitution.Overall, the author argues that unless Nepal's ruling elite becomes sensitive to the needs of marginalized and excluded groups, the country could witness an escalation in violence.Highlighting a wide range of issues crucial to strengthening democracy in Nepal, this book is of interest to students and academics studying Nepal and South Asia.

Coming out at a time when the South Asian region is hearkening to the birth pangs of a democratic Nepal, this eye-opening study by Mahendra Lawoti...could be considered to be of a path-breaking nature. Its significance transcends the political and social landscape of Nepal and envelopes South Asia and other regions of the world....On reading Towards a Democratic Nepal one is compelled to recognize the degree to which the 'democratization and nation-building exercise' in most troubled regions of the Third World could be characterized as fundamentally flawed and even misconceived....Thus the appearance of Towards a Democratic Nepal could not have been timelier.--The Island

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About the AuthorMahendra Lawoti, Ph.D., is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Political Science at Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo. He is the author of Towards a Democratic Nepal: Inclusive Political Institutions for a Multicultural Society (Sage Publications, 2005, third reprint 2006, Nepali translation 2007), Samabesi Sambidhan Sabha ra Rajyako Punarsamrachan (Inclusive Constituent Assembly and Restructuring of the State) (NISP, 2007), Looking Back, Looking Forward: Centralization, Multiple Conflicts and Democratic State Building in Nepal (Forthcoming, Washington: East West Center) and many articles and book chapters. He is currently revising his dissertation into a book to be titled Exclusion in New Democracies: Nepal in a Comparative Perspective. Professor Lawoti is the President of the Association for Nepal and Himalayan Studies and Non- Resident Associate Fellow of the New York-headquartered Asia Society. His teaching and research interests cover international development, democratization and political institutions, constitutionalism, ethnic politics, social movements and insurgencies, and South Asian politics.