

## **Political transition in Nepal: Chances of Resembling Faustian Model of Development**

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### **Introduction:**

To understand Nepal and its development pace, one has to see the country from historical lenses on its sociopolitical structures. Development is not a natural process rather it is an intentional and instrumental in which mode of production and economy are shaped and moved towards a desired goal through the anvil of technological progress, dialectic and capitalist experimentations. Here the technological progress stands for highly skilled human resources and dialectic and capitalist experimentations stand for political transition and latter to the market. The labor force from Marx's view is the source of power which basically plays a crucial role in shaping socioeconomic structure. In response to several claims by political leaders of Nepal portraying themselves as development agents, and civil war was an indispensable event to change Nepal, I am going to discuss and implicate the war and political transition whether it would fit under Schumpeter's Faustian development model. In this paper, I would like to employ the Schumpeter's theory of development in relation to civil war and political transition which I look as internal forces of development. Through the paper, I will try to employ the theory and argue that these ongoing events could turnout to be a similar consequence like a mythical character Dr. Faustus<sup>i</sup> who unknowingly destroys himself to create a new world. Following Nepali civil war and present political stalemate, Maoists and other major political parties are acting almost like Dr. Faustus. Although, it is not time yet to judge such an inference however, it might implicate unless handled well. The selection of the same old faces for election candidates in most of parties in constituency assembly election through proportional and direct election, it is unlikely to happen any dramatic change in the future. I personally feel it because, ever since 1990's popular movement these same faces were at least somewhere representing either in the parliament or in the government or in the caretaker government.

Cowen and Shenton (1996) mention that Schumpeter attempted to transcend a metaphysical or evolutionary conception of development by asserting that while development was about the causes of disturbance and destruction of existing material condition of life, mere adaptation to disturbance from some exogenous or external source of change such as colonialism, famine or war...a part of

normal economic life (410). In this sense, no doubt, Nepali people always aspired a highly progress which is obviously a natural behavior. However, a question still persists over the surface, has the civil war and political transition changed Nepal in the structure of democratic institutions? Or was it only to legitimize a crooked methodology of bringing so-called change? It is true that Nepal is historically a feudalistic state where mode of production was controlled by a few numbers of political elites. If we go beyond the background of these leaders, many of them are partly related to those earlier political elites who inherited the same culture. The selection of CA election candidates from all parties either proportional nomination or direct election proves it. It really ridicules to those martyrs who sacrificed lives for the brighter future to their coming generation. The aspiration of people in 1990's movement was absolutely a want to dismantle the static mode of production and distribution or in another words, the new was a moment in the destruction of the old. It was according to Schumpeter's view a rapid and abrupt striking out along tangents from the normal circular flows of economic life.

### **Economic and Political History of Nepal:**

Before the Shah Dynasty, there is no extant history of Nepal that authenticates different dynasties that ruled over the country. Prithvi Narayan Shah (1769 -1775) a king from Gorkha, a small principality from west of Nepal started to expand the country into a larger territory. After conquering the Kathmandu valley on 25 September 1768, Nepal became a unified nation.<sup>ii</sup> The successors of Prithvi Narayan Shah and latter Rana regime kept Nepali economy into a feudalistic mode of production until 1960. All exchange sources were virtually controlled by the centrally located political elites. The state structure was constructed in a way that there was no value of labor force and higher consumption based market for large production. Neither there was an attempt to intervene new technology nor finding the market economy. The land was sources of economy however many political elites owned the most fertile lands to maintain their supremacy. Upreti (2004) mentions, in Nepal national planners, policy makers, the bureaucrats and professionals still treat technology as a 'black box' (60). It is a normal circular of economic life or static mode of production and consumption where surplus value contributed only state administration. It was only when cold war was heightened on the globe Nepal experienced a new dimension of capitalistic mode of production.

Rist argues:

*The cold war had at least two consequences. First it constituted the 'Third World' as an ideological battleground of the major powers, so that new States or national liberation movements were able to benefit from the support of influential protectors (sometimes switching from one to another). Second, it blocked the UN decision-making system... Thus the organization was thus forced to occupy itself with matters on which there was more of a consensus 'development' being one of the most important of these (1997:80).*

It was a kind of intentional development in the context of globalization in between two political polarities. Nepal during the cold war somehow was forced to change its static equilibrium economy into dynamic equilibrium. Considering the development, and Schumpeter's theory, Cowen and Shenton (1999) argue development literally meant to fundamentally unstable and disequilibrating change whose source was endogenous and whose impact was to destroy existing production and consumption practices in the process of creating new ones. Development, however, brought its own internal sources of destruction and again it is the ephor of development of the economic system but not simply 'the market' that has to be brought into play to counteract the fundamental change of development (415). Since Nepal had conventional feudalistic structure, no colonized experience and less interruption because of its geopolitical context, it experienced very slow developmental practices. In essence, those political elites every other time retained power in different socioeconomic and political institutions who know that their future can only be secured through active involvement in democratic institutions, internally feudal in characteristics. Therefore, even after in each political movements and change of power, the same elites misled the people portraying themselves dynamic agents of rapid development. On the other hand, northern development institutions approached the country with fragmented missionary projects which contributed only a tiny partial change.

### **Conclusion:**

Lately experiencing civil war, political turmoil, Madheshi movement and the nomination of same political elites with characteristics of feudal hierarchies, the election of constituency assembly will likely to bring any literal difference in the development as it has been proclaimed. As per researchers and other concerned claim that Maoist's civil war was a catalytic force for socioeconomic

development, the central power structure in all political parties seems improvised with feudalistic hierarchies. Those elites' representation through constituency assembly election might push the development further slow. In the context of rapid development in the neighboring countries, Nepal has to find an absolute viable, potential and revolutionary development approach. Provided that if the goal of development wouldn't meet as it was expected and strived through the movements, all the political parties possibly have to face the same fate as Dr. Faustus had in the gothic drama. The neighboring countries which have extremely enhanced the technology and where the value of labor is translated into global market Nepal has to follow an indigenous approach that is highly productive to its multi ethnocentric structure and compatible to its rich natural resources and geopolitical context.

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<sup>i</sup> Dr. Faustus is an imagery character in a Gothic drama in which the character ends up oneself when trying to crate a new world.

<sup>ii</sup> <http://www.thamel.com/htms/history.htm> retrived on 29 Jan 2008.