Globalization, Negotiating Technology, and Indigeneity in Nepal

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Abstract: This paper explores how indigenous peoples negotiate with their state and mainstream narratives by glocalizing (localizing + globalizing) indigenous political and cultural identities through virtual spaces offered by digital technologies or information and communication technologies (ICTs). The first section makes an announcement of its concern about how globalization and indigeneity at some points can involve themselves in an act of mutual-making, a process of glocalization (localization + globalization). The second section offers a theoretical paradigm of globalization as networks of techno-culture and indigenous identity politics. The third section focuses on the Nepali indigeneity in light of mutual influence between it and global indigenous issues as well as ICTs. As indigenous peoples cannot stop the irresistible influence of global networks and flows (e.g., socio-cultural and economic), they can rather locate their political and cultural issues and identities in the very loci of globalization, mainly in the networks of techno-culture and international indigenous politics, to propitiously elevate their emancipatory movements against local hegemonies and dominations. The Nepali indigenous community organizations' intermediary efforts have been rendered successful by the use of ICTs and the strategic deployments of international indigenous forums like the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII).

Keywords: globalization, glocalization, negotiating technologies, indigeneity, online cultural identity, network of identity politics, indigenization

Introduction

The transcultural perspective opens a possibility for globalization not as homogenization but, rather, as further differentiation of cultures and their "dissemination" into transcultural individuals, liberating themselves

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from their dependence from their native cultures. The global society can be viewed as the space of diversity of free individuals rather than that of fixed groups and cultures. It is an alternative to the clash of civilizations and a hope for lasting peace. (Epstein, p. 328)

Epstein's (2009) critique of globalization unravels a paradoxical and problematic nature of cultural differences that work as essential components of the process of cultural globalization, putting it forward as a kind of heterogenizing process prone to disseminate diverse cultures across the world. The notion of globalization as a heterogenizing process, however, comes on the way leading to a manifest contradiction with emancipatory political and cultural movements of global indigenes, particularly when it is advocated for as a global process to support them in "liberating themselves from their dependence from their native cultures" (Epstein, 2009, p. 328). This is paradoxical and problematic because it corners the indigenous peoples into a state of inability to assert their local cultural and political identities. It is very difficult for them to preserve and protect their native (social, political, cultural, and genealogical) identities from unwanted impacts of global forces like neoliberal free market forces, policies, and products of multinational corporations in the mobile and ever-changing transculture in the current global society and in the clash between the global and the local that immediately evoke a series of questions concerning with problems associated with the global indigenes, such as: how can indigenous peoples locate their distinctive cultural and political identities in the loci of globalization? How do indigenous peoples adjust themselves to the global society? How can the local indigenous interests be recognizably reconciled with global interests? As a preliminary answer to these questions, it is argued that the global networks of ICTs and identity politics have constructive and supportive impacts on indigenous peoples and their movements for addressing their cultural and political issues.

The main goal of this article is to critically trace out the possible ways the indigenous communities of Nepal can adopt for re/-establishing their political identity at both national and transnational levels and their cultural identity in the online world. An apparent fact about the current globalized world is that indigenous cultures and identity-politics cannot avoid or escape from many desirable and undesirable impacts of ever-expanding global (neoliberal) economy, transnational networks of indigenous movements and digital or the Internet-based Web 2.0 networks. Mainly in terms of developing countries where indigenous communities have been struggling against discriminatory and hegemonic power practices for centuries, this study argues that indigenous interests can be embedded in the very inescapable or unavoidable global networks by appropriating global policies and technologies to local uses and interests as a new way of rescuing the native interests and cultures from the danger of being erased/under a threat posed by the global economic and technological expansions as well as hegemony prevalent at local and national levels. The ever-expanding global interests such as transnational power relations and neoliberal market forces embedded in the transnational technology-flows in general (Appadurai, 2008; Belton, 2010) and new media networks, in particular, have not only dominated indigenous peoples, but also have emerged as power factors supportive to their movements against the hegemonic relations that exist between marginalized and/or disadvantaged indigenous communities, ruling class and their state.

This paper seeks to examine how the indigenous communities of Nepal can use glocal networks of technologies and identity politics against the national or local socio-cultural and political hegemony and discriminatory practices and structures,

and how globalized politics and emerging techno-culture impact indigeneity in Nepal. Paradoxically, the indigenes have to situate themselves in the loci of globalization to assert their cultural and political identities. Nepali indigeneity is bound to articulate its cultural and political issues firmly chiming with international indigenous movements, trends of indigenous identity politics, and networks of ICTs. At this point of purposive juncture, an important point that requires to be made clear is that it is however NOT imperative for local indigenous communities to approve or follow forces and policies of the neoliberal global economy or globalization as a whole of undesirable homogenizing global forces. This study primarily focuses on global networks of techno-culture and indigenous identity politics and their constructive and supportive impacts on indigenous identity politics in Nepal.

The society of Nepal is characterized by social, cultural, and political differences between Hindus and indigenous peoples who are non-Hindus, or between the dominant Selves and the dominated Others (Gellner, 2003, pp. 75, 93; Pfaff-Czarnecka, 2003, p. 138). Gurung (2007) and Hangen (2007) mention that ever since the inception of modern Nepal in the latter half of the eighteenth century, Nepal remained a Hindu state until the Peoples' Revolution-1990. The Hindu religion was declared as the state religion and Hindu ideology as the state ideology. The ideological, political, and cultural hegemony of Hindus over the native indigenous peoples of Nepal excluded non-Hindu indigenous peoples from state mechanisms of power and policy-making levels and hence treated these indigenes as a second category of citizens in their own country. Gurung (2007) further argues that the Hindu rulers of Nepal created five caste-hierarchies to "accommodate the tribal natives [indigenous ethnic peoples] between the pure and impure castes" (p. 13). The main law of the state [2] that had been solely guided by Hinduism until the People's Revolution-1990 deprived the native indigenous peoples of equal rights as citizens. From the perspective of the discourse of hierarchical self-and-other, Hindus became the dominant Selves and Nepali indigenous peoples the dominated Others (Gellner, 2003, p. 77). As a result, Nepali indigenous peoples have been deprived of having access to the policy-making mechanisms, and their cultures have been excluded from the protection and cultural policies of the state (Bhattachan, 2005; Gurung (2007). Only the cultural and religious systems or rites and rituals of Hindus were given priority in the mainstream media. Even after the nation embarked on the republican set up in 2006, the mainstream media has failed to be democratic and inclusive in addressing the issues of indigenous ethnic peoples. The focus of a critical inquiry into the historical, cultural, and political practices of exploitation and exclusion in Nepal has radically shifted in the aftermath of the Peoples' Revolution in 1990 (Pfaff-Czarnecka. 2003, p. 138), the development of the Internet in its present form in the 1980s and the early 1990s, and the recognition of international indigenous people's issues in the United Nations (UN) by revising and renaming the International Labour

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[2] The main law of Nepal is called the "Muluki Ain," meaning "Law of the State" or "Law of the Land", introduced in 1854 as elaborated by Gurung (2007) and Hangen (2007). The "Muluki Ain" based on Hinduism authenticated the five caste-hierarchies: the *tagadharis* (wearers of the Holy Cord, a symbol of High caste) includes Brahmans, Chhetris, Thakuris, and Newar Brahmans; the *namasinya matawalis* (non-enslavable alcohol drinkers) includes the indigenous ethnic peoples; the Impure but Touchables includes the Dalits like Kasain, Dhobi, Kusule, Kulu, Musalman, etc.; and the Untouchables includes Kami, Damai, Sarki, Gaine, Badi, Pode, Chyame, etc. The Hindu dominated state imposed the discriminatory caste system upon the native tribes or indigenous peoples and others dwelling in Nepal. The system worked effectively until the People's Revolution-1990.

Organization (ILO) Convention 107 as Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention in 1989 (ILO-169).

In a new national and international political milieu after 1990, Nepali indigenous peoples have begun to use virtual spaces offered by the Internet along with the establishments of various indigenous community organizations in Nepal. For instance, the organizational website (http://www.nefin.org.np/en/) of Nepal Federation of Indigenous Nationalities (NEFIN), which is the only umbrella organization of fifty-six indigenous community organizations, stands out as a new virtual space to discernably consolidate and localize the global issues about the rights of indigenous peoples over land and environment, the rights of equal access to media and politics, and proportional representation of native and disadvantaged peoples in different levels of state mechanisms and policy-making that have been now recognized, as global problems, by the international indigenous forums like the Permanent Forum for Indigenous Issues (PFII). At the same time, the massive content-flows and trans-organizational sharing of common issues through the NEFIN's official website across the websites of its member organizations are quite adequate to mark NEFIN as a new network substantiated by new ICTs tending to globalize the discriminatory socio-cultural and political policies imposed by the state upon the Nepali indigenes. The glocalizing process as such has been expedited— made faster, easier, and more successful—by the use of ICTs. The indigenous peoples in Nepal still have only nominal access to the channels associated with the mainstream media and the policy-making levels of state-mechanisms. Ignored by the biased mainstream media and disadvantaged by discriminatory power mechanisms of the state, the indigenes have long been deprived of having key positions in bureaucratic sectors and security departments of Nepal (Bhattachan, 2005; Yadav, 2007). The systematic deprivation and disadvantages have compelled them to strategically and tactically seek for aligning themselves with global forces and locating their cultural and political problems in global networks of techno-culture and indigenous identity politics to build up alternative power networks for raising their voice unitedly and glocally.

Globalization as Glocalization: Networks of Techno-culture and Indigenous Politics

Globalization is a pervasive and worldwide political, economic, cultural, and technological network that extends beyond geographical proximity around the globe. So "globalization is 'a process (or set of processes) that embodies a transformation in the spatial organization of social relations and transactions, generating transcontinental or interregional flows and networks of activity, interaction, and power'" (Belton, 2010, pp.194-195). The transnational flows and networks of activity, interactions, and powers as such have made the entire world into a single global society. As this paper attempts to study the cultural and political identities of Nepali indigenous peoples represented by the proposed communities, it focuses on two important dimensions of globalization: techno-cultural and political networks.

Techno-cultural networks have ensued from the revolution in ICTs. Emphasizing on the network of technologies as the most powerful or effective of all networks, Castells (2005) contends:

> … the network society is global; it is based on global networks. So, it is
> pervasive throughout the planet, its logic transforms extends to every

country in the planet, as it is diffused by the power embedded in global networks of capital, goods, services, labour, communication, information, science, and technology. (pp. 4-5)

From the perspective of a revolution in ICTs, globalization refers to the worldwide distribution of scientific achievements and technological processes and products. Appadurai (2008) terms such flows as "technoscape": "the global configuration, also ever fluid, of technology, and of the fact that technology, both high and low, both mechanical and informational, now moves at high speeds across various kinds of previously impervious boundaries" (p. 218). The technological flows pervade through the entire traditional, local, or "previously impervious boundaries" of indigenous cultures, systems, knowledge, practices, concepts, and politics. The technological processes and products move to the indigenous localities.

More specifically, the global networks of ICTs are based on the flows of digital media that have been handily opted for as the most appropriate media by indigenous peoples to promote and disseminate their issues and voices globally. Young and Bhawuk (2008) argue that "[g]lobalization is essentially a technologically driven process of change toward increased informational and communicative interconnectedness and functional interdependence among people across societies and nations" (p. 301). The networks of digital technological processes have formed a kind of virtual layer that virtually covers the entire world. The immediacy and urgency of the global networks can be realized in the instant flows and connections of information. Concentrating on such global characteristics of technology-flows, Barker (2008) precisely argues that the "digital universe is overflowing with information" (p. 348). The development of the Internet and the soaring popularity and usefulness of the World Wide Web, since the last decade of the twentieth century, have transformed the world into digitized bytes which are interconnected and at the same time separate bundles of coded information as well.

The World Wide Web is a virtual space where global networks, relations, and activities engage people in the functional structure of human-machine-human interactions and/or human-machine interactions. Barker (2008) terms the virtual space as cyberspace, "a spatial metaphor for the 'nowhere' place in which the electronic activities of computers, cable systems and other digital communications technologies occur" (p. 348). It is a symbolic space, an online space where people perform various personal to family and community activities both individually and jointly. So a question may arise, such as: what is the significance of online communities and activities in terms of real identities and real world problems?

Because of easy accessibility and scalability of cyberspace, it has grown as a widely admired forum frequently opted for organizing campaigns, planning projects, launching movements, and having interactive discussions that can be rendered into real implementations in the offline world. Belton (2010) acknowledges cyberspace as "a space wherein myths and stereotypes can be challenged, human-rights violations reported, consensual knowledge shared, and claims asserted. It is also a space wherein interdependent local, regional, and global online communities can be built, later to metamorphose into offline communities" (p. 200). All the digitized community and individual activities are the online versions of real events that occur in a particular location. Cyberspace and digital devices like smartphones and digital cameras as easily accessible media and the digitized events and activities as represented content are equally important factors working as complementary components in the global dissemination of any real world or offline

events and activities. Indigenous peoples have been now accustomed to using digital devices frequently and disseminating indigenous contents massively across the world on cyberspace for global support and wider advocacy.

The inclusive, democratic, and interactive zones on cyberspace are the Web 2.0 applications such as Wikipedia, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, and blogs. The networked online communities and alliances of unknown people, who remain scattered in different and distant places, are based on both the local and the global issues of common interests. Highlighting the manipulative impacts of online activities upon real world activities, Wojcieszak precisely argues that "social media are organizing online activism that moves offline" (as cited in Harlow, 2011, p. 226). Social media has offered faster channels to inform people, newer ways to motivate them, and more effective ways to involve larger numbers of people in protests and campaigns.

A view pertinent to the focus of this study is that globalization is a transnational network of indigenous movements and identity politics shared by similar communities and indigenes scattered across the world. Prone to incorporate in the inventory of major indigenous political issues substantially and transnationally raised are the indigenous peoples' right to local lands and the environment, the right of autonomy, and the rights of equal access to health, food, and economic and educational facilities. These issues have been considered as subject-matters widely worth discussing topics in the UN debates and summits mainly from the late 1980s and onwards. Merlan (2009) calls such political trends in the UN "recognition politics" (p. 304), and also argues that there has been a close association between "the emergence of recognition politics" (p. 304) and a liberal modern democratic political system that diversely affects relations among the dominant communities, dominated indigenous communities, and their state.

Another view on globalization relevant to this study is that indigenous politics has been internationalized or globalized under the concept of global governance as well, which Meyer (2012) defines as "global political management" (p. 328); global political governance refers to international attempts to address problems of transnational concerns that are either within a definite locality or outside a particular authority. Meyer points out that the important rights of indigenous peoples, which are common concerns associated with global governance, are "those protections that help them to secure their unique cultures, resources, and habitats" (p. 329). As a network of indigenous identity politics and techno-culture, globalization involves a dynamic and constructive interaction or mutual influence between the local and global governance.

As a process of reconciliation or mutual constitution between the local and the global as such, Roberstson (2006) defines glocalization as "a global outlook adapted to local conditions" (p. 477). Barker (2008) expresses a similar opinion that "the global and the local are mutually constituting" (p. 162**).** What is global and what is local are inherent in the notion of glocalization, as its complementary concepts, in that the global refers to the developed western countries, global dissemination of their products, transnational (currently neoliberal) economic policies, and digital technologies, whereas that the local refers to local indigenous cultures and the politics of developing countries. Glocalization, understood as networks based on the mutual-making influence between the local and the global, involves two processes: flows from above and flows from below. Technological products and processes mostly flow from above, from the developed countries to indigenous localities of developing countries (Appadurai, 2008). A logical argument intended to present

here is that, as indigenous peoples cannot stop the flows, they instead appropriate those flows by deploying them to diffuse their indigenous contents like traditional knowledge, cultural heritage, and native lifestyles.

Social, cultural, and political movements that are launched at local levels in developing countries play essential roles in the process of forming transnational political networks. Belton (2010) calls such a vector of social and political movements the "globalization from below"[3]:

> … indigenous peoples' appropriation of global ideas, tools, and institutions as part of the 'globalization from below' movement. This movement consists of those marginalized people who come together over various issues related to human rights, the environment, and poverty to pressure home governments and corporations into changing stances. (p. 196).

The flows of content from below or the globalization of the local can be rendered successful by effectively articulating indigenous political and cultural issues, interests, and values in global networks of technologies. This notion of globalization based on a unidirectional vector of social, cultural and political issues may sound relevant in terms of initial phases of transnational movements. However, from a developmental view on transnational indigenous movements, it sounds like a notion now growing irrelevant because global networks of indigenous politics have already been established across the world. Instead, there exists a dialogic relationship between the global and the local indigeneity[4]--a two-way directional vector of relations. As a result of the long endeavors of indigenous peoples and organizations, the international indigenous forums were formed, and they still need the constant efforts of indigenous peoples from around the world. At the same time, the international indigenous networks or forums like the UN desks for indigenous issues help indigenous peoples and their communities solve problems at local and national levels**.** These concepts provide a theoretical framework for conducting an interpretive content analysis of the Nepali indigeneity embodied in the digitized assets on the Limbu, the Tamang, and the Magar organizational websites as well as on that of NEFIN. This study also employs the method of network analysis—networks of techno-culture—taking the websites themselves as objects of interpretive analysis.

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[3] One of the concepts associated with globalization is that there exist economic, socio-cultural, technological, and power hierarchies among the developed or industrialized countries and the developing Third World countries; so there are two types of globalization: globalization from above and globalization from below. For instance, Dahal (2010) argues that the "[g]lobalization from above brings about hegemonic elites, and economic and cultural hegemony. Multinational corporations creating bourgeois elites who bring cars, music, and a different way of life into developing countries fall under the category of globalization from above" (p. 53). Contrarily, the category of globalization from below includes mainly the political movements, indigenous movements, and social movements; for instance, Dahal further writes that "[t]he emergence of women's rights in developing nations and organizations like grassroots Africa Watch, Amnesty International, and Peoples Against Torture are examples of globalization from below" (p. 53). From this perspective, all the indigenous movements and politics about identities and human rights of equity and equality at all local, regional, and global levels belong to the category of globalization from below.

[4] The argumentative and theoretical stand in this paper is that, in terms of establishing indigenous cultural and political identities, globalization involves a two-way process; logically there exists a dialogic relation between the hierarchical nations and the relation is made possible by ICTs and digital products and processes.

Indigeneity in Nepal: Appropriating the Global and Negotiating Technologies

Nepal is a multiethnic, multilingual, multireligious, and multicultural nation[5], where one hundred and twenty-six castes/ethnic communities have been living for centuries, the ten major religions[6] have been followed by them, and one hundred and twenty-three languages have been spoken as their mother tongues. So far, fifty-nine of these ethnic communities that have long been marginalized by their state and its discriminatory policies have established their community organizations to be organizationally and officially recognized by the government of Nepal as native indigenous nationalities[7]. Despite the fact that, if viewed from a general perspective on globalization, it is rapidly and undesirably affecting the global indigeneity, the global networks of techno-culture and indigenous movements—two of its important aspects—can be witnessed as playing a vital role in promoting and advocating for the ethnic indigenes' endeavors to liberate themselves from the local hegemonies and undue dominations of the ruling castes[8]. Along with global networks of identity politics, global networks of techno-culture—e.g., the networks based on ICTs or digital technologies such as the Internet, smartphones, personal computers, and digital cameras—have proved beneficently helpful in negotiating with the state against their marginalized and/or disadvantaged conditions. The impacts of transnational indigenous movements and the revolution in ICTs upon the political and cultural aspects of Limbu, Tamang, and Magar communities seem to have resulted incrementally and remarkably propitious as reflected by the official websites of their community organizations as well as that of NEFIN. Used as a negotiating space, the organizational websites indicate that the Internet-based networks and virtual spaces constructively and progressively empower indigenous peoples with an elevated negotiation-ability to deal with their disadvantaged conditions and accessibly offers a scalable online space where political and socio-cultural discourses are abundantly generated to fast expose the Nepali indigeneity to the global society. With an anticipatory liberation from the local hegemonies, dominations, and discriminations against them, the constructive and supportive aspects of techno-culture as such have continuously tempted the Nepali indigenes to grow more accustomed to using the international indigenous policies and ICTs to strategically glocalize their issues, and also use cyberspace as a virtual space through which indigenous cultural performances are instantly and globally disseminated.

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[5] Defined by the Nepal Law Commission (2007).

[6] National Planning Commission Secretariat (2012) reports that the ten religious communities are Hindus, Buddhists, Muslims (the followers of Islam), Kirants (the followers of Kirant Religion), Christians, the followers of Prakriti, the followers of Bon, Jains, Bahais, and Sikhs

[7] The fifty-nine castes registered in the record of National Foundation for Indigenous Nationalities, a government department, dwelling in the different geographical ranges: in the Mountain Region (Himalaya): 17—Barah Gaunle, Bhote, Byansi, Chhairontan, Dolpo, Larke, Lhomi (Shingsawa), Lhopa, Marphali Thakali, Mugali, Siyar, Sherpa, Tangbe, Thakali, Thudam, Topkegola, and Walung; in the Hilly Region: 24—Baramu, Bhujel, Chepang, Chhantyal, Dura, Fri, Gurung, Hayu, Hyolmo, Jirel, Kusunda, Lepcha, Limbu, Magar, Newar, Pahari, Rai, Sunuwar, Surel, Tamang, Thami, Kumal, Yakkha, and Tin Gaunle Thakali; in the Inner Tarai: 7—Bankaria, Bote, Danuwar, Darai, Majhi, Raji, and Raute; and, in the Tarai: 11—Dhanuk (Rajbanshi), Dhimal, Gangai, Jhangad, Kisan, Kushbadia, Meche, Rajbanshi (Koch), Satar (Santhal), Tajpuri, and Tharu.

[8] The ruling castes historically, culturally, bureaucratically and politically include the Brahmins, the Chhetris, and the Thakuris (Bhattachan, 2005; Gurung, 2007; Yadav, 2007).

Intermediary Efforts of Indigenous Organizations: Glocalizing Indigenous Identity through ICTs

The indigenous community organizations in Nepal play in the foremost an intermediary role among the ethnic communities, their local organizations, and international indigenous organizations. For instance, Limbus' community organization "Kirat Yakthung Chumlung" (KYC) established in 1989, Tamangs' "Nepal Tamang Ghedung" (NTG) in 1988, Magars' "Nepal Magar Association" (NMA) in 1982[9], and NEFIN in 1991 play a vital role in coordinating the indigenous ethnic communities in Nepal, and peoples within their communities as well as other indigenous peoples across the world. NEFIN was established "with the goal of securing indigenous peoples' rights, including documenting, preserving and promoting cultures, languages, religions, customs, and traditions of the Indigenous Nationalities of Nepal and to assist them in developing and obtaining equal rights" (Asian Indigenous Peoples CCMIN). These are non-profit and non-partisan organizations formed in order to raise their community issues, establish solidarity with other ethnic indigenes, and promote, propagate, and preserve their overall identities. Though they are non-political organizations in principle, they designate a forum for the related communities to expose their political rights collectively and make their peoples aware of contemporary common problems, challenges, changes, and other serious issues like equal access to state mechanisms (bureaucracy, army, and police), media, and policy-making levels of their state. As a member of NEFIN, each of the indigenous community organizations also plays an intermediary role between NEFIN and the peoples of their disparate communities. Therefore, all of the indigenous community organizations are distinct types of forums in themselves, but equally devoted to collaborative engagements of the disparate indigenous peoples in establishing local and transnational networks and relations conditioned by their common interests and issues. The similar issues, goals, and interests as reflected by the organizational websites bring them into a state of solidarity; some of the objectives of each indigenous organization are as follows:

Organizations and sources	Language, Script, and culture	Political issues/networks, and awareness of rights and legal system	Local environment, resources, and land
Objectives From "Introduction" to KYC	*To undertake various activities for the uplift of	*To conduct research on subjects related to Limbus and promote awareness among them.	*To conduct effective programs to curb the

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[9] Following Hangen who describes the emergence of these community organizations in the 1980s and the 1990s as a form or stage of the Nepali indigenous movement, the organizations have frequently been referred to as the Nepali indigenous movement in this paper, too. The indigenous movement was initiated long before in different ways. For instance, during the 104 years Ranarchy, many Limbus who could read and write in the Srijanga script, invented by King Srijanga in the ninth century and then revived and propagated by scholar Srijanga Thebe in the eighteenth century, are said to have escaped from the eastern part of Nepal to Sikkim—one of the states of India at present—with important documents and initiated informal programs of awareness individually. Next, the great Guru of Limbus Falgunada Lingden brought socio-cultural changes adopting Hindu rites and rituals of birth, life, and death—Limbu content in Hindu forms of rites and rituals.

	Limbus, and their language, including Srijanga script, Literature, religion, and culture.	* To make the Limbus, as well as other ethnic groups of Limbuwan, aware of the constitution of Nepal, *Their constitutional rights and the prevalent laws of Nepal. *To undertake activities for the achievement of Limbuwan autonomy under the federal system to ensure the country's national integrity and sovereignty as well as sustainable development by promoting communal harmony among different ethnic groups and communities. * To work for human rights, indigenous rights and women's rights and children's rights.	destruction of the environments and ecosystem.
Objectives from "About Nepal Tamang Ghedung: Introduction"	*To preserve, promote the language, scripts, arts, literature, history, religion and culture, and socio-eco-political and civil rights of the Tamang Peoples in Nepal.	* To promote the human rights, women, children and indigenous peoples' rights on the basis of Universal Declaration of Human rights, Bills of rights and emerging rights in the international arena. *To make Tamangs aware of the constitutional and legal system and the customary rights and promote the democratic rights, culture and values in Nepal. *To contribute in the national and international standard setting processes for the establishment of the rights of indigenous and tribal peoples and	

		marginalized communities who are historical victims of racial, ethnic or national, linguistic, religious and regional discrimination. *To develop and promote friendly relations and partnership with other ethnic communities to strengthen the national unity and all-round development of the country and to network with the national and international organizations of similar objectives.	
Objectives from "Ke Ho Magar Sangh? Introduction" to NMA	• Develop Magar languages and make effort for state recognition of the same. • Help create broader national culture and unity through reciprocal cooperation with other Indigenous Peoples Organizations. • Establish close ties with national and international organizations to implement the study, research and development of the Magar culture and their languages.	•To conduct research on subjects related to Magars and promote awareness among them. •To undertake activities for the achievement of Magarat autonomy under the federal system to ensure the country's national integrity and sovereignty as well as sustainable development by promoting communal harmony among different ethnic groups and communities. • To work for human rights, indigenous rights and women rights	*Make efforts for establishing rights of Magar community on indigenous natural resources
From "NEFIN's Objectives"	*Preservation and promotion of language, literature, script, religion, culture and education of Indigenous Nationalities and	• Develop unity among Indigenous Nationalities and fraternity among them. • Develop leadership and assist capacity building for Indigenous Nationalities by	

	assist to acquire their rights.	coordinating with their organizations. • Lobby for special affirmative action for the development of the Indigenous Nationalities who are severely marginalized and are on the verge of extinction. • Voice for solidarity against discriminations based on race, origin, ethnicity, language, religion and gender and promote international fraternity. * Lobby with the government for the compliance and implementation of ILO Convention No. 169, Universal Declaration of Indigenous Peoples Rights including United Nation Declaration of Human Rights and other instruments.	

The interpretive analysis of the aforementioned content categories drawn from the websites shows that all of the three community organizations—KYC, NTG, and NMA—are connected and united by common obstacles in their struggle for establishing cultural, linguistic, and political identities of their communities. Such local and national identity issues push the indigenes and their organizations towards the same extreme at which the indigenous communities of Nepal stand in a dialogic relation with their state or governments. The organizations actively form local networks which are further connected with international networks through collaborative and common efforts in uplifting human rights, children's rights, and the rights of indigenous peoples over local lands and the environment in different parts of the world. The NEFIN's intermediary role between the local and international or global indigenous organizations such as the Asian Indigenous Peoples' Pact (AIPP) and PFII is considered as an illustrative of how an effective international network is formed for transnational solidarity and unity. NEFIN plays a wider role by coordinating and facilitating the local, regional, and international indigenous organizations. NEFIN itself is a forum of glocalization, circulating both the local and the transnational indigenous contents and making the indigenous organizations' existence glocally assertive.

NEFIN simultaneously plays a triple role in the process of forming glocal networks. It plays a significant role in building up networks at local and national levels

by working as an umbrella organization of the indigenous ethnic communities in Nepal, regional networks by working as a member organization of continental organizations of indigenes like AIPP, and finally global networks by connecting the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) with the local indigenous community organizations of Nepal. NEFIN is an embodiment of collective efforts and power of the Nepali indigenous peoples as it is a network of its fifty-six organizations[10]. it is also a channel for global networks of indigenous peoples around the world. It is a common forum for indigenous peoples in Nepal to struggle for their rights, represent their voices, and raise their issues nationally, regionally, and globally. For instance, as reflected by its official website, it channels the indigenous problems and issues to AIPP and the UN indigenous desks, and simultaneously supports the Nepali indigenous peoples by attempting to localize the promises made in the UNPFII and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). Emancipation of indigenous peoples from any kind of discrimination, freedom for their social, cultural, and economic developments, the rights of equal access to opportunities and decision-making levels, self-determination, and autonomy or self-governance are some of the major achievements guaranteed by the UNDRIP. The indigenous community organizations coordinated by NEFIN have localized the UNDRIP promises as such.

NEFIN is a channel through which Nepali indigenous peoples and the international indigenous forums involve themselves in a mutual-making process or a process of glocalization. Local organizational activities and events are recognized and supported by the global community and become real and authentic as soon as they are connected to cyberspace, e.g., their authentic organizational websites. Cyberspace has been a useful tool and medium to globalize the collective efforts and mutual supports in the networks of indigenous organizations; without the support of the online networks, the organizations would be limited to their geopolitical particularities in a traditional way of such organizations' existence, beyond the reach of the world population and any impacts of "recognition politics" (Merlan, 2009, p. 304); by entering the cyber-world, Nepali indigenous peoples have been able to make their political identity globally recognizable.

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[10] The fifty-six indigenous community organizations which are the member organizations of NEFIN, as mentioned in "Jatiya Sangh Nepal Adivasi Janajati Mahasangh," are as follows:

1.Kisan Samudaya Club, 2. Nepal Kumal Sudhar Samiti, 3. Nepal Ganagai Kalyan Parishad, 4. Tamu Hyul Chhaunjadhi (Gurung Rashtriya Parishad), 5. Nepal Chepang (Praja) Sangh, 6. Nepal Chhantyal Sangh, 7. Jirel Sangh Nepal, 8. Nepal Jhangada (Urawam)Kodrem Sudhura, 9. Tajpuriya Samaj Kalyan Parishad, 10. Nepal Tamang Ghedung, 11. Tanwe Samaj Sewa Sangh, 12. Tokpegola Samaj Sewa Samiti, 13. Thakali Sewa Samaj, 14. Thami Sewa Samaj, 15. Tharu Kalyankari Sabha, 16. Danuwar Jagaran Samiti, 17. Nepal Darai Utthan Samaj, 18. Dura Sewa Samaj, 19. Dhimal Jati Bikas Kendra, 20. Newa Deya Dabu , 21. Nepal Pahari Bikas Sangh, 22. Nepal Baram Sangh, 23. Nepal Bote Samaj Sewa, 24. Bhujel Samaj Sewa Samiti, 25. Nepal Bhote Janajati Sewa Samiti, 26. Nepal Magar Association, 27. Nepal Majhi Utthan Sangh, 28. Mugal Janajati Samaj Kalyan Kendra, 29. Meche Samaj Siwiyari Aphat, 30. Kirat Yakkha Chhumma, 31. Kirat Yakthung Chumlung, 32. Kirat Rai Yayokkha, 33. Rajbangsi Samaj Bikas Samiti, 34. Raji Shalma Samaj, 35. Rong Sejum Thee (Lapcha), 36. Larke Samaj Kalyan Kendra, 37. Walung Sewa Samaj, 38. Lhomi (Shingsa) Kalyan Kendra 39. Nepal Sherpa Sangh, 40. Byansi Shauka Samaj, 41. Nepal Santhal Adivasi Utthan Sangh, 42. Siyar Samaj Kalyan Kendra, 43. Sunuwar Sewa Samaj, 44. Bayu Gukhata Kolu Pandakmi (Hayu), 45. Nepal Hyolmu Kasmaj Sewa Sangh, 46. Marphali Thakali Samaj Sewa Sadan, 47. Teen Gaunle Thakali Sewa Samiti, 48. Nepal Dolpo Janajati Bikas Kendra, 49. Thudam Sewa Samaj, 50. Surel Jati Utthan Samaj, 51. Nepal Dhanuk Samaj, 52. Kuchbadiya Utthan Sangh, 53. Barahgaunle Samaj Sewa Samiti, 54. Lochhodhun Lhopa Sangh, 55. Nepal Raute Bikas Sangh, and 56. Nepal Kusunda Bikas Samaj.

The Impact of the Internet upon Negotiation Ability of Ethnic Indigenes in Nepal

The impacts of digital technologies or ICTs can be seen not only upon the mutual relations between the local organizations (e.g., KYC, NTG, and NMA) and the global indigenous organizations (e.g., AIPP and PFII), but also upon the ways they function and implement their plans to achieve their goals. Updated by the use of the Internet and digital devices like smartphones and digital cameras, the indigenous ethnic community-organizations can work faster and more effectively than ever before; they can easily circulate messages and maintain their networks with other organizations, while also achieving remote and native heritages along with their issues expressed on the online space defined by their authentic websites, so as to gain wider recognition. Highlighting the impacts of ICTs upon the development of organizational ability, Edwards (2004) argues that "[t]he internet can improve the capacity of organizations to maintain networks and to coordinate actions. Moreover, if organizations are online, they can advance their points of view directly to a wide public, bypassing the traditional media" (pp. 166-167). Internal communications within the Nepali indigenous communities and external communications with other indigenous organizations and peoples have been made faster and easier than ever before. The organizational websites of all KYC (www.chumlung.org.np), NTG (www.tamangghedung.org.np), and NEFIN (www.nefin.org.np) dynamically reflect the remarkable fact that the ethnic indigenes in Nepal have used the Internet for multiple purposes: for instance, they update news about indigenous peoples' cultural and political events and celebratory occasions; they use the organizational websites to educate and make their community aware of injustice; and they use them as an authentic space to officially disseminate administrative decisions, press releases/statements, achievements, or any upcoming events. Edward (2010) argues that the "internet is a powerful tool to build an organization, to collect money, to assemble information and to recruit and mobilize people" (p. 166). The Internet has enabled the native community-organizations to communicate their issues and perform glocally through online networks. The websites of KYC, NTG, and NMA are mobilization-oriented, information-oriented, and community-oriented websites.

The organization websites further inform that the revolution in ICTs such as the DOT.COM revolution has abundantly offered the divided and dominated Nepali indigenous peoples a mediating alternative channel through which they are united to raise their common voice. Systematically and inhumanely suppressed by the biased and discriminatory socio-cultural, legal, political, and administrative structures and systems that had been controlled and guided by Hindu ideology (Bhattachan, 2005; Gurung, 2007; Yadav, 2007) and deprived of political opportunity to speak and raise their voice for equal rights of citizens and be united against systematic injustice, they had been compelled to remain as the marginalized and disadvantaged Others for centuries, from the time of modern Nepal's inception until the early 1990s[11], the time of Web 2.0 phenomenon and a new political environment in Nepal.[12] Despite the fact

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[11] The indigenous peoples of Nepal have been disadvantaged by discriminatory state and its power-mechanisms long influenced by Hindu ideology until today. But in this writing, the political changes in 1990 changed the absolute Monarchy to a constitutional monarchy and a new cultural and political environment was created. This article considers that time as a turning historical point.

[12] When King Prithvi Narayan Shah annexed the then small states into Gorkha State in the latter half of the eighteenth century, modern Nepal is supposed to have begun. Since then, modern Nepal ruled by Hindu Monarchs remained a Hindu State. So by principle, Hindus ruled the nation in a way to meet their cultural, linguistic, and religious needs;

that the voiceless indigenes of Nepal have been empowered to a great extent, the political efforts and movements in a changing domestic and international political environment have not been successful to completely eradicate those discriminatory practices even after the political change in 1990, requiring to continue the networked efforts of indigenous peoples and their political movements. How the discriminatory structures and mechanisms of the state systematically marginalize, oppress, and displace the indigenous peoples is exposed by the following facts[13] extracted from the topic "Facts, Figures, and Information on Indigenous People" on the NEFIN's website:

- 65% of indigenous people's ancestral land is occupied by national parks and conservations, forcing the majority of indigenous people to migrate elsewhere.
- There are public holidays in the name of dog, cow, and crow but there are no public holidays for many indigenous festivals.
- Many Indigenous people eating beef are jailed for 10 years[14] due to the alleged killing of cows and ox because a cow is the national animal of Nepal. However, Bahun and Chhetri restaurant owners freely sell beef steak and no legal action is taken against them.
- Police and army celebrate Hindu festivals such as Dashain, Tihar, Basanta Panchami spending millions of rupees from national revenue.
- Buddhist indigenous soldiers are forced to worship Hindu religion in police and army barracks.
- Spending over 200 million rupees to preserve the dead Sanskrit language. While there is no sufficient budget to print indigenous language textbooks and hire teachers to teach indigenous languages.

These exponential facts and figures apparently and firmly support the argument that the people from the ruling caste in Nepal have long exerted their hegemony over the dominated indigenous ethnic Others because the former have traditionally, culturally, and structurally been given a privileged power by the Hindu state-principle. But in the wake of changes in both the local and international political scenario, after the late 1980s and the early 1990s—an important time marked by "a radical departure from previous practice" (Gellner, 2003, p. 89), the Nepali

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the administrative structure of the state excluded the indigenous peoples. Influenced by Hinduism, the Muluki Ain declared by Janga Bahadur Rana was/is discriminatory. Furthermore, King Mahendra Bir Bikram Shah imposed the totalitarian political system Panchayat in 1960, and also imposed monolingual and monocultural policies upon the indigenous peoples. He imposed homogenizing cultural, linguistic, educational, and political policies which are also reflected in slogans of the Panchayat period: *Hamro Raja Hamro Desh* (Our King our nation)/*Pran bhanda pyaro chha* (King and/or nation are/is lovelier than our soul/life)/*Eutai Bhasa Eutai Bhesh* (One language one culture/costume). Hence, the Nepali indigenous peoples were politically, culturally, and linguistically suppressed until the kingdom of Nepal was declared a secular state after the Peoples' Revolution-1990.

[13] Preserving the same content of the source "Facts, Figures, and Information on Indigenous People," some grammatical or linguistic changes, in the extracted points, have been made.

[14] Even though the nation has been declared a secular nation, any act of killing cows and oxen or eating beef is considered illegal because the discriminatory Muluki Ain is still in effect. In Hindu religion, a cow is worshiped as Laxmi, the mother Goddess of richness, prosperity, and money. The cow has been declared the national animal because all the legal systems and documents in the past were guided by Hinduism under the Hindu monarchs—a cow is worshiped as the mother goddess by Hindus and hence a national animal declared by the state guided by Hinduism. Though some acts and articles in the Muluki Ain have been amended at different times, they are rarely in favor of indigenous people.

indigenous organizations began to be established, representing the authentic and collective voice of the marginalized indigenous peoples. The advent of the Internet, in its present form, in the 1990s began to offer the suppressed indigenous peoples an alternative medium to communicate their issues to the world and appeal the international community for lobbying in their support and against the discriminatory political power-structures. In this sense, the Internet is a negotiating technology for the Nepali indigenous peoples who have grown much more capable than ever before in their political efforts and movements for negotiating with the state against their disadvantaged conditions and hegemonic relations with male elites of the ruling castes.

Online Space and/or Virtual Networks: A Negotiating Space and an Accessible Medium

ICTs such as the Internet and smartphones play a catalytic role (Franklin, 2004, p. 49) in the political process of exclusion and inclusion by rendering the dialogic relations among the Nepali indigenous peoples, their governments or state, and the international indigenous forums like AIPP and PFII more dynamic, urgent, and immediate. After 1990, the Nepali indigenous organizations such as KYC and NTG have been able to substantially establish themselves as the authentic and recognized forums for the previously divided and marginalized native/ethnic peoples, consolidating and communicating their issues to the glocal (local + global) communities through the virtual networks of Web 2.0 applications. The organizational websites have been used as a consensual, authentic, and effective online space to present the indigenes themselves in unity with their genuine issues and thereby speak in an authentic and united voice. Integrated by the glocal networks among local communities and international indigenous organizations held up by the online space, the authentically united voice is indispensably transformed into an expressed form of a political voice that gradually engages the ethnic indigenes in dialogic and dynamic interactions with their governments. For instance, KYC, NTG, and NMA have long struggled to achieve various rights such as the priority of rights over the local resources, equal or proportional representations in government service sectors, and all other human rights. Their struggle seems to be increasingly winning international supports because of the political issues associated with global governance that refer to "those protections that help them to secure their unique cultures, resources, and habitats" (Meyer, 2012, p. 329).

One of the key concerns central to the policies of the international indigenous organizations such as the UN and its wings like PFII is to address common global indigenous problems, and all the signatory nations of the UN wings like the UNDRIP[15] are bound to follow the policies (Indigenous Foundations, 2009). Therefore, the networks and common voice of local, regional and international indigenous organizations can always put Nepali governments under a kind of political pressure for addressing local indigenous issues as per commitments made in the international forums. This obligatory nature of policy-implementations indicates that the idea of emancipation is inherent in the idea of globalization that advocates for the local indigenous communities to stand united against the national and local

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[15] Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and the United States initially refused to sign the UNDRIP because they share the same colonial history, and the governments have argued that the autonomy promised by the UNDRIP has been problematic and might affect the sovereignty of the nations (Indigenous Foundations, 2009, para. 9).

discriminations, exploitations, and hegemonies. Consequently, the ethnic indigenes of Nepal have begun to achieve some of their goals as mentioned in the section "Major Achievements of Indigenous People" on the NEFIN website:

- Social inclusion became the agenda of all political parties
- 36% IPs [indigenous peoples] representation in CA [constituent assembly]
- MLD [Ministry of Local Development] formed Adivasi Janajati [indigenous nationality] District Coordination Committees in all 75 districts
- MLD issued directives to DDCs [District Development Committees] and VDCs [Village Development Committees] to spend at least 20% (later 35%) of the grants they received on Janajati, Dalit, children, people with disabilities and women
- DCCs and IPOs at the village level have begun to receive grants from DDCs and VDCs.
- Terai Janajatis received citizenship certificates and have become capable of claiming lands and other state goods, services and opportunities
- Funding support from international agencies to more than one dozen IPOs
- Increased number of organizational forums and fronts formed by Janajatis.

These culturally and politically meaningful forms of communication expressed on the authenticated online space imply that the indigenous peoples of Nepal have made certain achievements that can be considered as the perceptible results of a series of dialogic interactions and relations with their state over a long period of time. In this article, the terms "dialogic interactions and relations" have been used to mean collective dialogic conversations or political engagements with their state such as protests and movements—online and/or offline—against governments and discriminatory state policies. The dialogic interactions as such remain abstract unless they are rendered into commonly intelligible forms of practical implementations and meaningful communication as elucidated by the aforementioned points. The indigenous peoples and their organizations are the foremost beneficiaries of the dialogic engagements and therefore always require to communicate their issues as much as they can on the online space with maximum uses of their organizational websites and links that also prove the Internet as an easily available medium for the unravelling of progressive consequences of their political engagements and interactions. As the marginalized indigenous peoples of Nepal do not have considerable access to state services and the mainstream media, they depend significantly on digital technologies, cyberspace, and Web 2.0 applications. The organizational websites of KYC, NTG, and NMA constitute a category of alternative media and a political and cultural forum for Limbus, Tamangs, and Magars for dialogic engagements building up a networked alliance with other local indigenous peoples as well as with international indigenous organizations and communities; the websites have been used as a negotiating space where the indigenous peoples propose their social, cultural, and political issues for negotiation, respond to others, discuss their achievements, and express the issues of their common disagreements.

The organizational websites have been used not only as an alternative medium and an easily available online forum, but also as an immediate channel to inform and mobilize indigenous peoples about any urgent upcoming events such as interaction programs, political and cultural programs, festivals, and protests that are not given any importance or space in the Nepali mainstream media. For instance,

the political issue of federalism characterized by ethnic identities[16] is rarely given priority in the Nepali mainstream media. Contrarily, a top priority is given to the issue on the websites of KYC, NTG, NMA, and NEFIN as well as on social media networks among indigenous peoples. The indigenous peoples cannot be stopped from having access to the open websites of the community organizations and social networking sites that are the online channels connecting all the disadvantaged indigenous peoples. These peoples are then informed through press statements, announcements, and appeals to participate in the common programs organized by indigenous organizations. For instance, L. S. Limbu, secretary of the central committee of KYC, virtually publishes an invitation letter "Nimantrana", inviting people to participate in the 25th anniversary of KYC (Limbu, 2009a) and a press statement "Press Bigyapti" on the KYC website, pleading publicly on behalf of KYC and Limbus with the Regmi government [17] not to deduce the numbers of proportional representatives from indigenous communities in the upcoming second election for the constituent assembly (Limbu, 2009b). Similarly, "Tamsalingka lagi Mukkhya dalka karyalayama Ghedungle Dharna Dine" and "Akhandit Tamsalingko lagi tin mukkhya dallai Tamang Ghedung ko Gyapan Patra"—the news about a demonstration and a memorandum published on the NTG's website and circulated on social media—show that Tamang indigenous peoples demonstrated in front of major political parties' offices tendering a memorandum about a proposed sketch of the impending Tamangsaling State in the upcoming Statute, participated in other demonstrations with other indigenous organizations demanding the guarantee of identity-based federalism before the dissolution of the Interim Constituent Assembly-2007 in Nepal, and actively engaged Tamang indigenous peoples in awareness programs conducted in the Tamang populated areas across the country. Likewise, the news-archive on the NEFIN's website shows that cyberspace, mainly the organizational website, was used to make an announcement and appeal for participation in the celebration of the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples, organized in front of the south gate of the Sigh Durbar [18], and in the demonstrations of the former Kamlaries[19] against violence—violence against the pro-Kamlaries.

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[16] In political debates of Nepal after the Peoples' Revolution-2006, the phrase "federalism with ethnic identities" or "federalism characterized by ethnic identities" has become a controversial but unavoidable phrase. Nepali indigenous organizations and the majority of indigenous peoples as well as some political parties such as, to mention few of them, the Federal Socialist Party, the Social Democratic Party, the Madhesi Peoples' Rights Forum, and the Federal Limbuwan State Council, have taken a political stand that, in the upcoming re-structuring of the nation into a federal model, ethnic identities (histories, languages, cultures, abilities, and natural resources) must be the criteria of sketching the federal states—" a statute with federalism, federalism with ethnic identities." On the contrary, the majority of Hindu elites who have long held sway over the state mechanisms and some political parties like the Nepali Congress (NC) and the Communist Party of Nepal—United Marxist-Leninist (CPN-UML) have stood against the "federalism with ethnic identities." These people and parties directly or indirectly control the Nepali mainstream media as well.

[17] The government led by the incumbent prime minister Mr. Khil Raj Regmi.

[18] The Singh Durbar, literally Lion Palace, is located in the compounded area at the center of Kathmandu. Most of the government departments or offices, ministries are located inside it. The phrase Singh Durbar refers to not only the Lion Palace, but also the entire area as the administrative center of the nation—a trope for power center of the nation.

[19] Tharus are one of the native indigenous communities living in the western Terai belt of Nepal. These native people have been replaced from their lands by other communities migrated from hilly regions. Because of their poor economic condition, their young daughters are compelled to work as housemaids, until they reach the age of marriage, in the elite families of other castes. Such girls are called Kamlaries, who have long been victims of domestic and gender violence. In the half of June, 2013, the former Kamlaries came to the street demanding for security and a guarantee of human rights of mainly the pro-Kamlaries.

These evidences quite substantially establish the argument that cyberspace or the Internet as a negotiating space and an accessible medium has facilitated the alternative ways to disseminate news online, as well as appeal, inform, and mobilize people.

Online Discourse as a Global Exposure of Nepali Indigeneity

The organizational websites of the indigenous communities have been used not only as a medium to inform and mobilize peoples, but also as a virtual space where online discourses are generated in favor of indigenous peoples and against rival elements such as the biased Nepali mainstream media and discriminatory state policies. Arguing for the importance of online political discourses, Soriano (2012) succinctly writes: "The online communicative environment is expected to revolutionize political discourse as it extends to cover underrepresented groups and ideas" (p. 33).

The online discourse on the website of NEFIN is found to concentrate on topics of local governance, proportional representation in the Constituent Assembly and various government mechanisms, and the implementation of the ILO-169 by the Nepali government. Similarly, the organizational websites of KYC, NTG, and NMA raise the political issues such as federalism based on identity-issues, propose names of potential provincial states like the Limbuwan State and the Magarat State, and make demands for equal access to opportunities as well as for a guarantee of indigenous rights in accordance with the proclamations made by the UN wings like ILO-169 and PFII. The political issues in their digitized forms generate discourses in support of the Nepali indigenous peoples. As these online environments and discourses get exposed to the global public for wider offline support, they have successfully created a political ambience for putting an offline pressure upon the Nepali government and the major political parties. In this sense, the innovative digital technologies and Internet-based platforms that massively flow from the powerful and developed countries towards indigenous localities (Appadurai, 2008) have offered the indigenous peoples in Nepal a strategic opportunity to articulate their marginalized conditions and discriminations against them in the very flows and networks of globalizing technologies, politics, and ideas.

The focus on the excessive dependence on online activities as such may evoke some questions: do the indigenous peoples have access to information and communication technologies? Has the consequence of the global flows of digital technologies been in favor of the Nepali indigenous peoples? The impacts of digital technologies have been witnessed not only upon the organizational functions but also upon the stratified traditional social, cultural, and political structuration that broadly characterizes the Nepali society. In the new social hierarchy characterized by the socio-economic or material factors of a digital divide that refers to the hierarchy between digital "haves" and "have nots" (Barker, p. 347; Vie, p. 10), global indigenous peoples often belong to the category of Others or "have nots." As the majority of economically marginalized or disadvantaged "have nots"[20] or indigenous peoples dwell in remote areas, whereas the flows of technologies can be seen mostly in urban areas, Appaduria's (2008) concept of the global flows of technology also rarely

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[20] Economic factors, gender discriminations, the ability to use technological products and processes, and age differences play a determinant role in creating the digital divide. For Barker, a digital hierarchy of "haves" and "have nots" is the result of gender and economic factors; for Vie, both material access and ability to use technological products and processes productively are responsible factors. For Appadurai, an odd distribution of technology in rural and urban areas is responsible for creating a digital divide.

embraces them. In the newly emerging hierarchy of the digital divide, Nepali indigenous peoples, however, belong to the group of digital "haves", and they have experience of the global fluidity of digital technologies because a larger number of Nepali indigenous peoples, compared to non-indigenous ones, go to work in foreign countries as manpower. This fact has also been highlighted by the NEFIN's comment that the "[m]ajority of Nepalese migrated abroad are indigenous youths."[21] They come back home with digital devices for themselves and their family members as well as for certain relatives who can then use the devices to disseminate issues of identity-politics and discriminations against them. They are emerging as new digital literates quite adequately capable to enter cyberspace, use Web 2.0 applications, participate actively in activities on social networking sites, and connect the online world with the real world, using easily available common digital devices like mobile phones/smartphones and cameras. In this sense, in the context of Nepal, the concept of digital "haves" include here the marginalized and disadvantaged indigenes of Nepal.

The previously marginalized indigenous communities of Nepal are now emerging as a dominant class within the digital hierarchy as opposed to the traditional class hierarchy predicated on Hindu ideology (also see Edingo, 2013). Pondering over such a change in the hegemonic relations between the Hindu male elites and the indigenous peoples, Lecomte-Tiloune and Dollfus (2003) argue that "Nepalese society [...] seems recently to have witnessed a counter process to that which was imposed on local [tribal] communities" (p. 6). The inventory of the major factors conducive to the Nepali indigenous peoples' negotiations with their state for equality and equity includes the technology-facilitated issues such as the global flows of new digital technologies, global political awareness, transnational dissemination of political information, worldwide impacts of international indigenous forums and tactical uses of ICTs in a way appropriate to their local particularities and necessities. Precisely, ICTs offer a space in which global discourses about the indigenous issues are generated and exposed to the global public.

Strategic Deployments of Global Policies and ICTs

The tactical and strategic uses of digital technologies and indigenous forums are a twofold issue: the interpretive analyses of the content on the organizational websites indicate that Nepali indigenous peoples use cyberspace as a counter-forum where they can deny or oppose any stigmas and correct misrepresentations and disqualifiers imposed upon them. At the same time, it is also used as a space where they present their localized concepts and processes[22] about global criteria of differentiating and

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[21] This is one of the facts about Nepali indigenous peoples listed by NEFIN under the title "Facts, Figures, and Information on Indigenous People" on its website.

[22] The international indigenous forums like the UNPFII prescribe general criteria for advocating and implementing the indigenous rights—for example, self-governance or local governance, a priority of rights over the local environment and resource and right of socio-cultural and political identities. As these general criteria are rendered to meet the local needs, their adoptions and implementations are locality specific; for instance, the Newars of the Kathmandu Valley understand the recognition and preservation of native cultures as guaranteed by the UNDRIP to mean the recognition and preservation of their Guthi system, a social or clan organization that maintains the social order of Newar society. So for them, the Guthi is a localized concept of what the article 3 of the UNDRIP promises: "Indigenous peoples have the right to self-determination. By virtue of that right, they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development."

defining indigenous peoples and their rights. In Belton's (2010) words, "[t]he Internet and other forms of ICT offer indigenous peoples spaces from which they correct misrepresentations rapidly, raise awareness about human rights issues, engage in interpersonal communication, and tell their stories" (p. 198). This notion applies to Nepali indigenous peoples as well. For example, the international concept or definition of indigenous peoples is indigenized or localized to include the native Nepali tribes, and hence the process of indigenization or localization of the global is a tactical and strategic process of negotiation. One of the broader definitions given to indigenous peoples is the definition associated with the UN "Study of the Problem of Discrimination against Indigenous Populations":

> Indigenous communities, peoples and nations are those which, having a historical continuity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies that developed on their territories, consider themselves distinct from other sectors of the societies now prevailing on those territories, or parts of them. They form at present non-dominant sectors of society and are determined to preserve, develop and transmit to future generations their ancestral territories, and their ethnic identity, as the basis of their continued existence as peoples, in accordance with their own cultural patterns, social institutions and legal system. (The Concept of The Indigenous Peoples, 2004, p. 2)

One of the basic criteria of recognizing indigenous peoples is that they are the first settlers in a place, the settlers prior to colonial expansions. The notion of colonial presence does not incorporate the indigenous ethnic peoples of Nepal so comfortably because they have never been under any direct colonial rule, though its indirect effects cannot be ignored. They define themselves as the first settlers of their historical and ancestral territories, where they had already lived for centuries even prior to the expansion of modern Nepal or the formation of modern Nepal in the latter half of the eighteenth century. As elaborated on the website of NEFIN under the topic "Definition of Indigenous", the localized definition of the Nepali indigenous peoples comprehensively covers all of their historical, cultural, political, and linguistic aspects as essential components integral to the local definition of indigenes:

- First settlers prior to the formation of Gorkha and Nepal state.

- Dominated group and no representations in state organs.

- Not included in the Hindu caste system.

- Own language, culture, and religion are different from those of the rulers.

- Listed by the Nepalese Government Indigenous Act 2002.

Except for the notions of the non-Hindus and the Nepali indigenes as the first settlers in Nepal, the other defining ideas about indigeneity are often adopted from or referred to the international definition. This shows that the Nepali indigenous organizations have indigenized the global or international concept, and at the same time have globalized their native conditions and concepts as well. This kind of glocalization, mutual making involvement of the global and the local, has been easier

than ever before because of digital technologies, mainly the Internet and smartphones. The contribution of ICTs to the propagation and generation of discourses about the concepts is worldwide because people visit the websites from any part of the world, beyond their geopolitical boundaries and particularities. ICTs or digital technologies like the Internet and smartphones have become an essential element of the indigenization process.

By indigenizing the global concept of indigeneity proclaimed in the UN, Nepali indigenous peoples have strategically, politically, and tactically articulated their local (historical, social, and political) identities in a form appropriate to the context of Nepal. The adoption or appropriation of the broader transnational policies has proved a negotiating strategy and tactics for them to assertively locate their concepts in the global networks and international forums in a way appropriate to their native conditions. By localizing the indigenous ideas, rules, and voices that have been internationally approved, the Nepali ethnic indigenes and their organizations create not only an alternative stream of culture, politics, and an alternative concept of national development[23], but also participate in activities of forming global networks. So, the process of mutual influence between what is local and what is global is a process in which the endeavors of localization and globalization are accomplished concurrently; in the words of Bill Ashcroft et al. (2006), "[b]y appropriating strategies of representation, organization and social change through access to global systems, local communities and marginal interest groups can both empower themselves and influence those global systems" (p. 462).

The indigenization/localization of what is global and the globalization of what is local have become the two inextricably simultaneous processes essentially facilitated by ICTs. This is one of the accessible ways for Nepali indigenous peoples to embed their political issues in the global networks of technologies that flow around the world. The localized uses of digital technologies, the ways global policies are appropriated, and the ways indigenous peoples have been redefined are the strategic deployments of global indigenous policies and technologies.

Virtual Cultural Performance as Globalizing Spatiality of Cultural Identity

Cyberspace, as a virtual form of ICTs, is very much a part and parcel of the online cultural identity of Nepali indigenous peoples. In the preservation, promotion, and propagation of both tangible and intangible cultures as well as their performances such as Chasok Tangnam (the harvest festival) of Limbus, Chandi Dance (the harvest celebration) of Rais, and Lhosar of Tamangs, cyberspace is of paramount importance basically in two ways: cyberspace as online storage and social media as a space of cultural performances. Agreeing with Barker's (2008) argument that "cyberspace is a dominion of playful identity construction where anything is possible" (pp. 348-349), it can be argued that the organizational websites of Limbu, Tamang, and Magar communities construct not only historical and political identities, but also dynamically and repeatedly (re)construct their cultural Identities—a new way for reviving and re-asserting their cultural identities. The photo gallery on the Kirant Yakthung

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[23] One of the arguments put forward by Nepali indigenous peoples and their organizations is that, as Nepal is a multiethnic, multireligious, multilingual, and multicultural nation, only the overall development of the indigenous peoples (their cultures, *religions*, and languages) renders the nation into a real development; this is an alternative concept of national development in the context of Nepal because the emphasis on the prosperity of only the *Khasa* language called Nepali language, Hindu culture, and Hindu religion under the Hindu monarchism failed.

Chumlung's website (www.chumlung.org.np/gallery.php) offers a general view over cultural activities, typical Limbu cultural performances like ya?lang (meaning, Paddy Dance), kelang (drum dance), Ya(yeba/yema)lang/Shamans' Dance, and Chasok Tangnam, along with other activities of cultural and political awareness, programs of language-development, and other Limbu-empowerment programs. The Limbu organizational website has further established a kind of glocal network by connecting itself with other Limbu-specific organizations such as Limbuwan blog spot (www.limbuwan.blogspot.com) and Limbu Library (www.limbulibrary.com), and with Kirat Yakthung Chumlung's own sister organizations and international chapters such as Kirat Yakthung Chumlung, Hong Kong, Kirat Yakthung Chumlung, UK, and Kirat Yakthung Chumlung, USA. Therefore, these online cultural assets embody an online cultural identity of Limbus. Using digital devices like digital cameras and smartphones, the cultural performances accomplished by diasporic Limbus are uploaded into YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter. In this sense, ICTs have proved a helpful tool in promoting, preserving, and globalizing the native cultural identity of Nepali indigenous communities.

Conclusion

Taking a slightly different logical position juxtaposed with the Epstein's critique of globalization as a process or force that liberates individuals "from their dependence from their native cultures" (p. 328), it can be asserted that native cultures are not the things or burdens from which globalization is required to liberate the natives or ethnic indigenes. Instead, global networks of technologies and indigenous identity politics—two important concepts of globalization—enable marginalized indigenous peoples to preserve, promote, and propagate their cultural identity and empower them to negotiate local problems so as to consolidate their political identity as well.

Digital devices and the Internet/cyberspace as negotiating technologies constitute an alternative medium, a counter-forum, and a new space for Nepali indigenous peoples who are non-Hindus to express their voice that had been suppressed by the state guided by Hindu culture, ideology, and religion for centuries. The activities and united presence of the indigenous communities such as Limbus, Tamangs, and Magars on cyberspace via their organizational websites are exposed to the global community for much wider support than ever before. The Nepali indigenous organizations—KYC, NTG, and NMA—form a local network or unity that gets further connected with international indigenous forums like AIPP and PFII by the intermediary role of NEFIN. Such an association further situates them in a better political position to negotiate with their state for their political, cultural, and identity rights.

Next, by locating their issues in the globalized networks of ICTs and politics, indigenous ethnic peoples in Nepal have been indigenizing the international indigenous policies and concurrently globalizing their local issues and problems. Such glocalizing endeavors help them to progressively struggle against the local hegemony, domination, and discrimination at the national level. Observed as important operational forces in empowering indigenes, the two aspects of globalization—networks of techno-culture and transnational identity politics—evidently espouse the idea that the indigenous peoples' collective efforts are certain to grow more effective in struggles and protests against the practices of suppression and discrimination because, as a new constructive opportunity provided by ICTs, they

can now create an online cultural identity that represents their cultural heritages and performances. Cyberspace such as the organizational websites and social media has become a useful tool to preserve, promote, and globalize the cultural aspects of the indigenous peoples, even when they do not have access to the Nepali mainstream media.

Finally, globalization here refers to primarily global networks of techno-culture and indigenous identity politics. Empowered by the networks, the marginalized voice of Nepali indigenous peoples has now emerged as an alternative voice, able to create a new social, cultural, and political scenario at local, national, and global levels. As a result, they can effectively engage themselves in dialogic interactions and negotiations with the discriminatory, hierarchical, and hegemonic power-centers that refer to the state, the mainstream media, and major political parties in Nepal. Due to ever-soaring global concerns with the essential factors of global networks such as the Internet, cyberspace, and global solidarity for human rights, it can be asserted that indigenous peoples will gradually gain more ability to challenge mainstream narratives, claim over equal opportunities, and eventually build up a secure and inclusive future.

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