Yūba:

Making Modern Youth, Making New Nepal

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A youth participating in a Tamang New Year (*Lhosar*) celebratory march.

Thesis Declaration

This work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text. I give consent to this copy of my thesis, when deposited in the University Library, being made available for loan and photocopying, subject to the provisions of the Copyright Act 1968.

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Natalie Greenland

Dedication

Dedicated to the memory of my grandmother Helen M. Eglinton who blazed the trail.

Acknowledgements

Transliteration

Nepali is written in Devanagari script and the transliteration of Nepali words and phrases in this thesis is done in romanised form and is derived from Turner's *A Comparative and Etymological Dictionary of the Nepali Language*, 1931. This dictionary was accessed via an online database (last updated in 2006) that is supported by the U.S. Department of Education at: http://dsal.uchicago.edu/dictionaries/turner/.

Audio

Throughout this thesis there are links to audio tracks that can be found on the accompanying CD.[1] Throughout the text there are prompts to listen to particular tracks on the CD. The inclusion of this audio is intended as an opportunity to experience the places and media productions to which I refer throughout the thesis.   The audio included in this thesis is predominantly the work of radio producers in Nepal, with the exception of a piece of audio produced by me and a video recording of a street drama production captured by Sam Handley.   Some of the productions are included in their entirety, while some have been edited to shorter lengths. Below is a track listing:

Track 1
Introduction to Banaspati (recorded and produced by the author)   p.66

Track 2
SSMK episode no.355 (produced by the SSMK team, appears in its entirety)   p.94

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Track 7
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[1] Audio files are in .mp3 format, video file is provided in both .wmv and m4v formats.

Abstract

In this thesis I ask what constitutes a Nepali youth, and question what role they play in contemporary Nepal. Based on fieldwork conducted in Nepal from March 2008 to March 2009 and July to September 2010, my research contributes to an emerging body of work that problematises the youth construct in Nepal. Bucholtz (2002) has highlighted the increasingly salient roles that young people are playing in their societies and has called for an anthropology of youth as a pressing task. Faced with social, cultural, political and economic change, young Nepalis are playing more important social roles than ever before. I argue that one of these fundamental roles is nation building, the ideal product of which is popularly termed 'new Nepal'.

I look at youth and their role as nation builders through a communication for development initiative that centres on two radio programs produced in Kathmandu. The content of these radio programs is re-packaged into local radio programs that are produced in regional radio stations, and community-level activities that are conducted by radio listeners clubs. I use Bolter and Grusin's (1999) concept of remediation to conceptualise this process and the changes to the youth archetype represented in the original radio programs. Following Novak's (2010) application of this concept, I argue that the process of remediation is a means for those involved to construct and practice a youth subjectivity. The youth I describe in this thesis are defined by an awareness of development that is displayed in activities that are oriented toward building a new Nepal.

I conclude that the young people who play a role in making a new Nepal actively situate themselves within landscapes of power created by development through their engagement in the process of remediation. Development is a powerful element in the Nepali imagination that has tangible benefits for those who can demonstrate command over its rhetoric and align themselves with its visions and young people demonstrate this in their nation building activities. I argue that young people creatively engage in the process of remediation described in this thesis to position themselves within terrains of power created by development to ultimately define their own destinies and articulate their visions for a locally modern Nepal.

List of Acronyms

AC4SC	Assessing Communication for Social Change
BCC	Behaviour Change Communication
C4D	Communication for Development
CA	Constituent Assembly
CFSC	Communication for Social Change
DDC	District Development Committee
DTR	Development Through Radio
EA	Equal Access
EAN	Equal Access Nepal
EE	Entertainment-Education
GWP	General Welfare Prathistan
INGO	International Non-Government Organisation
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NN	*Naya Nepal* (New Nepal)
SSMK	*Sāthi Saṅga man kā Kura* (Chatting with my Best Friend)
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV and AIDS
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VDC	Village Development Committee
WHO	World Health Organisation

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Figure 1: Map of Nepal[2]

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[2] Accessed Online at http://ncthakur.itgo.com/map04.htm

Figure 2: Map of the Kathmandu Valley[3]

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[3] Accessed online at <http://www.digitalhimalaya.com>

Figure 3: Map of Makwanpur District[4]

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[4] Accessed online at <www.digitalhimalaya.com>

Chapter One Nepali Youth and Communication for Development

Introduction

This thesis addresses the problem of youth in Nepal. What it means to be a youth was illustrated to me one afternoon on a bus in regional Nepal. Some friends and I had travelled to Manahari, one of the political divisions within Makwanpur district, to have lunch at the house of another friend. A few hours later, after lunch, we decided to make our way back to Hetauda, the municipality of Makwanpur. On the main highway we hailed a local bus, which skidded to a halt to pick us up. Like all local buses it was dented, had bald tyres and seats that may have, at one time, been comfortable, but were now just lumpy and broken. Despite this, I was delighted to find that the bus was only half-full, which meant that I could stretch my legs across two seats instead of having to wedge my knees uncomfortably under my chin. Manahari is nearly thirty kilometres from Hetauda and with frequent stopping for embarking and disembarking passengers the journey can take an hour. Basking in my good fortune I stretched my legs, enjoying the relative comfort, and looked around at my fellow passengers. My eyes rested on the young boy who was working his way up the aisle, passenger to passenger, collecting bus fares. He had a fistful of rupee notes to which he added fares and extracted change. He looked quite young and I recalled an article that I had read in The Kathmandu Post[5] about child labour on public transport. I asked my friend Ananta[6] how old he thought this boy was. "Mm, twelve to fourteen" he replied, to which my research assistant, Saru, agreed, "yes twelve to fourteen" she nodded. "But he is not youth!" Ananta exclaimed, obviously reflecting on the discussion we'd just had about how one defines youth in Nepal. Pursuing the opportunity for further clarification of what is an ambiguous and elastic category in Nepal I asked "and why not"? "Because he's still in learning stage, he's not yet capable" Ananta replied. "So what is he then" I asked "perhaps a teenager or a child"? Ananta considered this and said "Mm, teenage. Maybe after twenty [years of age] he'll have learnt enough to be capable to *do something*" (informal chat, Makwanpur, 28th August, 2010, emphasis

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[5] The Kathmandu Post is a Kathmandu-produced, English language daily newspaper that is published by Kantipur publications—the same organisation that produces the biggest selling Nepali language daily newspaper called *Kantipur*.
[6] Some of the names used in this thesis are pseudonyms.

added)[7]. Ananta then extracted a newspaper from his backpack and buried his head in its pages for the duration of the trip, while I madly scribbled in my notebook.

This 'doing something' to which Ananta refers is integral to the construction of the social category of youth in Nepal as those people I worked with experienced it. Doing something refers to the capacity of young people to be able to "do something for the country [this] is one issue based on which we can say whether they're youth or not" (Nisha, group discussion, Makwanpur, 28th August, 2010). Doing something for the country relates to the integral role that young people are perceived to play in the contemporary nation building project. The nation building project is a result of decades of conflict that have led to a fledgling democracy and accompanying aspirations for social change that are contained in the ubiquitous term 'new Nepal'. The people who are seen to contribute to the creation of a new Nepal are described as youth, and conversely youth are understood to be youth in their capacity as nation builders. In light of this, youth require a number of attributes to function as nation builders.

Ananta based his classification of the young boy who was collecting bus fare from passengers as not youth on this boy's apparent lack of a number of attributes. The boy was engaged in employment for his survival. Working for one's own benefit, however necessary that may be, has to be balanced with nation building work. This nation building work often comprises community development and awareness-raising activities around issues such as sanitation and gender equality that are broadly seen as necessary for local and National development.[8]

It is the responsibility of youth, I was told on numerous occasions, to 'do something' other than enrich their own and their families lives. In the context of the bus, the young boy was engaged in wage labour and was clearly not, at that point, doing anything other than working for his wage. However Ananta's classification does not account for what the boy might do in his spare time. Perhaps he is involved in nation building work when he is not collecting fares on the bus? Young boys who work as fare collectors on public transport however, do this as a full-time job, often aspiring to become drivers.

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[7] This conversation took place in English. The English word 'youth' was used often by my informants when referring to people that they considered youth, even if the majority of the conversation was in Nepali. When referring to youth in Nepali my informants would sometimes use the Nepali term 'yūba'. The terms 'youth' and 'yūba' were used interchangeably and no different meaning was implied in the use of either the English or Nepali term. However, the use of English terms is significant in Nepal and is used to position oneself as more developed and privileged. This is discussed at greater length in Chapter Three.
[8] These concerns are bound-up with development and modernisation discourses in Nepal and will be discussed throughout this thesis.

This means that they have stopped going to school. Herein is another attribute of the youth category as described and understood by the people I worked with—youths are educated. To be a youth one must be aware of the social problems that need to be remedied to be able to work towards creating a new Nepal, which necessitates a consciousness (Fujikura 2001)[9] developed through school education and participation in development interventions. Age, as Ananta notes, is also a factor because it takes time and education to develop the knowledge to be able to contribute to the development of a new Nepal.

The attributes of the youth[10] that I describe in this thesis are implicit to the content and aims of a development communication initiative that Ananta and Nisha were a part of. This is a multi-sited initiative that centres on two radio programs produced by one of the four largest communication for development (C4D) content production houses in Kathmandu: Equal Access Nepal (EAN).[11] These radio programs are the corner-stones of broader projects that support and encourage the production of local programs in regional parts of Nepal, and also support listeners' clubs throughout Nepal to discuss the radio programs and conduct activities. EAN supports local radio programs and listeners' clubs with the purposes of increasing access to the information in the original radio programs and encouraging discussion in local communities to stimulate action for behaviour change (Equal Access 2010; 2011a; Saathi Sanga Man ka Kura 2010). This project design is resonant of contemporary approaches to development information and communication technologies (ICTs) that stress the importance of participation of community stakeholders and the importance of making initiatives locally relevant and culturally acceptable (Figueroa et al. 2002; Gray-Felder and Deane 1999; Gumucio-Dagron and Tufte 2006; Parks et al. 2005).

In this thesis I argue that EAN's development communication projects contribute to the production and practice of an emerging youth public, the members of which subscribe to the youth identity described above. A youth archetype is presented in the radio programs that are the basis of EAN's projects and is re-packaged into local radio program productions and listeners club activities. However, during this process groups

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[9] Fujikura outlines the emergence of discourses of consciousness linked to development in Nepal and the ways in which this discourse is appropriated in people's everyday speech to position themselves and others so that they speak in terms of having, or not having, 'consciousness' or 'awareness'.

[10] The nation building youth I have described is not the only youth identity in Nepal, but is potentially one of many youth identities that are appropriated and practiced by different people in different contexts (cf Liechty 2003).

[11] The other major communication for development production houses are Communication Corner, Antenna Foundation and Nepal Forum for Environmental Journalists (NEFEJ).

of people with diverse motivations and experiences re-package content that leads to unique and unexpected outcomes.   Through a focus on these productions and activities I demonstrate that the re-packaging process is used by those involved to position themselves within emerging landscapes of power created by discourses of development, modernisation and democracy to ultimately determine their own futures. EAN's development projects are a means for those involved to craft a culturally specific alternative modernity (Chatterjee 1997; Eisenstadt 2000; Gaonkar 1999; Knauft 2002a; 2002b) through an emerging youth public.

This thesis is situated within anthropologies of Nepal and contributes to debates about development, youth and media. I provide ethnographic evidence of how contemporary approaches to development play out at local levels of implementation, highlighting challenges and successes. Building on EAN's projects, I demonstrate in this thesis that the re-packaging of content, referred to using the concept of remediation,[12] is a means for identity construction and a way to position oneself *vis-à-vis* development discourse. Youth is a category that has emerged in Nepal owing to socio-economic change (Liechty 2009). These changes are contributing to a shifting of power from the old heads of households to young people who are economically empowered and more knowledgeable about participating in a globalising world that increasingly affects people's everyday lives. Young people, as Bucholtz (2002) has noted, are playing an increasingly significant role in societies throughout the world.   A number of anthropologists working in Nepal have referred to youth in their work (see for example Ahearn 2004; Skinner and Holland 2009), but few have problematised the youth construct.   Among those who have are Liechty (1994; 1995; 1996a; 1996b; 1997; 1998a; 1998b; 2001; 2002; 2003; 2005; 2006; 2009), who talks about the link between youth, the middle-class and media, and Snelliger (2009) and Zharkevich (2009) who talk about youth in terms of political activism and Maoism respectively.   This thesis contributes to what is a growing field of youth anthropology in Nepal by drawing on development and media as key influences on, and expressions of, the construction of youth.

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[12] The term 'remediation' refers to the representation of one media in another and has been applied to media studies by Bolter and Grusin (1999). Remediation will be defined later in this chapter.

Bikās: An evolving discourse and practice

In the 1960s, when the Panchayat system[13] was installed in Nepal, development as an ideal of social and economic progress began in earnest (Whelpton 2005). The state's pursuit of development led to the expansion of communication systems and road networks, improvements to education and literacy and decreases in infant mortality rates (Whelpton 2005:137–9). Development activities were initially led by the state or international non-government organisations (INGOs), however development as a local industry boomed in the 1980s and 1990s as a result of increases in aid to Nepal and the proliferation of local non-government organisations (NGOs) (Bhattarai 2009; Heaton-Shrestha 2004; 2006). Development became, 'The rallying cry for national unity, patriotism, and citizenship' (Pigg 2002:66) and has become a powerful concept in Nepal that profoundly affects the way that Nepalis understand and construct their identities that is evident in language use, consumption practices and expressed beliefs (Ahearn 2004; Liechty 2003; Pigg 1996).

Early development interventions were modernisation projects that presumed that the fundamental problem of underdevelopment was a lack of knowledge and that the transmission of knowledge from the West to the third world would provide the resources necessary for third-world countries to 'catch up' to Western countries (Gumucio-Dagron and Tufte 2006; Ojo 2004; Peterson 2003; Pieterse 2001; Sparks 2007). Such development interventions were premised on the dominant paradigm that theorised development as occurring in a linear and hierarchical way from a sender to a receiver, the latter of whom would make positive changes in their lives based on the information that they received (Lerner 1958; Rogers 1983; Schramm 1964). It was perceived that the most effective way to deliver this information was via media—a supposed magic bullet information delivery system that could be used to deliver information to the passive masses (Lerner 1958; Rogers 1983; Schramm 1964). Development interventions based on the dominant paradigm attracted criticism related to the linear and vertical approach to information dissemination and reception and the failure to account for local knowledge and belief systems that can confound messages and people's ability to unproblemmatically act on them (Figueroa et al. 2002; Freire 1972; Sparks 2007; UNAIDS 1999). A lack of engagement with local beneficiaries has also been highlighted as a criticism of the dominant paradigm:

> Too many projects failed because of vertical planning and implementation and too much funding was channelled to developing nations that never reached the intended

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[13] A partyless system of local councils.

> "beneficiaries" until donors and planners started realising that they were doing something wrong. If they had only involved the beneficiaries from the beginning.

(Dagron 2001:8)

Bista (1991), a well-known Nepali scholar, has argued in a similar vein that when development projects are carried out without local input, members of the community do not identify with the project and it is less likely to succeed (Gumucio-Dagron and Tufte 2006; Khadka 2000).

Criticisms of development ideology and practice have contributed to the change in development communication interventions over time to acknowledge the importance of participation, the impact of local social worlds and the power disparity between the beneficiaries and benefactors of development (Sparks 2007; UNAIDS 1999).[14] What Sparks (2007) has referred to as the 'participatory paradigm' has superseded the dominant paradigm in contemporary development discourse and practice, although it must be noted that the dominant paradigm is still evident in many development interventions (Gumucio-Dagron and Tufte 2006; Servaes 2008b; Sparks 2007). Participatory approaches are premised on the idea that development needs must 'largely emanat[e] from, the traditional "receivers"' of development (Servaes 2008b:21). Participatory approaches emerged as a means to 'enable those individuals and groups previously excluded by more top-down planning processes...to be included in decisions that affect their lives' (Kothari 2001:139). In the 1980s Chambers (1984) advocated for listening to what he termed the rural poor, who have traditionally been disenfranchised from activities that affect them.   Chambers argued that for rural people who are 'disregarded, despised and demoralised by urban, commercial and professional values, interests and power' to be able to participate in and control decisions that affect their lives, 'outsider professionals...[need to] step down off their pedestals, and sit down, listen and learn' (1984:101).[15] The communication for social change (CFSC) model builds on the participatory turn in development theory and practice and stresses that effective and sustainable development must be participatory, inclusive and foster horizontal communication (Figueroa et al. 2002; Gray-Felder and Deane 1999; Gumucio-Dagron and Tufte 2006).

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[14] I do not recount the genealogy of development communication here, such accounts exist elsewhere (see for example Gumucio-Dagron and Tufte 2006; Servaes 1999; Servaes 2008a; Sparks 2007).
[15] Participatory development initiatives have been critiqued for imposing ideas and knowledge paradigms from external organisations on participants (Bradley 2006; Cooke and Kothari 2001; Mosse 2005; White 1996).

The theoretical foundation of the CFSC model is based on the work of the South American educator, Paulo Freire (Figueroa et al. 2002). Freire (1972) proposed the establishment of dialogue within a community as a way to empower those that he called the oppressed—people subject to the will of more powerful people or forces—by enabling them to have a collective voice that would act to liberate them. Freire (ibid.) stressed that effective dialogue is contingent on the values of faith, humility and trust in the speakers, values which once realised will act to foster cooperation, unity and engage people in their cultural context to empower them to change their situations. Thus the CFSC framework (see Appendix 1) advocates for community ownership of an issue or problem through the creation and continued support of community dialogue, and as a result of this, collective action by the community to resolve their common problem. The basis of the CFSC approach is the creation of community dialogue and when the process of dialogue that is fundamental to the CFSC model is successful there is a resolution of an issue or problem that is affecting a community. It is assumed that through the process of resolving the problem the community builds the individual and collective efficacy of its members to aid in their problem-solving abilities in the future, to become 'self-renewing societies' (Parks et al. 2005:5). Initiatives based on the CFSC model are theoretically effective because they encourage communities to exercise ownership over their problems and to develop sustainable and renewable problem-solving skills that can be applied to future problems.

The CFSC model highlights that the process of achieving positive social change is complex and involves collective communication and negotiation to reach a mutually agreed upon course of action. A divided community thus reduces the capacity for effective community dialogue and consequently collective action, existing cultural, political and social structures are significant factors that can potentially perpetuate the exclusion of certain groups of people, and, according to the CFSC model, eventuate in less successful outcomes.

EAN's projects aim to encourage community discussion and ownership over communication processes. While EAN does not explicitly premise their initiatives on the CFSC model, it is nevertheless a model that they aspire to (Lennie et al. 2008) and is reflected in their project activities. In this thesis I argue that unique outcomes result as people engage in EAN's projects and take ownership over the communicative processes that the projects enable. The ownership of communicative processes is a key component of the CFSC model. However the lack of control over messages creates a tension with the behaviour change communication (BCC) model, that

premises effective communication on the ability to tightly control messages (Parks et al. 2005).

EAN's initiatives are designed on the BCC model. BCC is a model that uses research and consultation with target groups to inform the provision of 'relevant information and motivation through well-defined [communication] strategies' (McKee et al. 2004:72). BCC is based on psychological models of behaviour change including Azjen and Fishbein's (1980) theory of reasoned action. This theory posits that 'human beings are usually quite rational and make systematic use of the information available to them' and that 'people consider the implications of their actions before they decide to engage or not engage in a given behaviour' (Ajzen and Fishbein 1980:5). Bandura's (1986; 1997) theory of self-efficacy is also a theoretical basis of BCC. This theory states that 'perceived self-efficacy is defined as people's judgements of their capabilities to organise and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances' (Bandura 1986:391). The theory of reasoned action and self-efficacy are implicit in models that define behaviour change as a process that proceeds through a number of stages. This has been defined by Rogers (1983) as the innovation-decision process that proposes that change occurs as people progress from knowledge of a new innovation to adoption or rejection of the innovation on the basis of trial and experimentation. EAN delivers their BCC radio content via an entertainment-education (EE) strategy. EE refers to the incorporation of educational messages into entertainment programs (Singhal and Rogers 2003:289; Singhal and Rogers 2004:5). EE has been widely used in diverse contexts and in a number of successful initiatives including Soul City in South Africa (Tufte 2008). Like the foundation of BCC, EE is based on individual change promoted through persuasion and is linked to EE's foundation in social marketing.

Development practice often leads to complex and unique outcomes because it is fraught with difficulties and has been criticised both on the basis of the ideologies that drive it, and on its implementation (Escobar 1995a; Esteva 1992; Ferguson 1994). Escobar has argued that 'development constructs the contemporary Third World, silently, without our noticing it. By means of this discourse, individuals, governments and communities are seen as underdeveloped and treated as such' (1995b:213). Development discourse and practice originates in the West and it has been argued that development is a process through which people's 'destinies are shaped according to an essentially Western way of conceiving and perceiving the world' (Tucker 1999:1). The dominant paradigm is an example of a Western paradigm that has shaped the

provision of aid to the developing world.   Similarly, BCC models (although socio-culturally specific) impose Western paradigms onto non-western contexts. These are Eurocentric models (Amin 1989; Pieterse 2001) that derive their power from their ability to define what it means to be modern and developed, which are notions that the non-west has to accept 'or be defined out of existence' (Sardar 1999:44).   Development discourse affects the ways in which people, who are the objects of development, conceptualise themselves and reproduces power asymmetries 'in which local worlds may be razed then recontained in a network of concepts that issue from a Eurocentric view of modernity' (Klenk 2004:60). Poverty, persistence of inequality, deficiencies in education, lack of adequate infrastructure, political corruption and persistence of traditional structures are aspects that are contrasted with developed nations and contribute to a Nepali National imagination of underdevelopment (Pigg 1992; Pigg 1996).

The interaction between development discourse and local contexts, however often results in unique outcomes. It is through expanding frames of reference impacted on by media and transnational flows of people and things (Eriksen 2003; Giddens 1990; Inda and Rosaldo 2008) that Nepalis can imagine themselves in comparison to others and aspire to futures and lifestyles different to those ascribed to them. These changes, brought about by globalisation, civil conflict, infrastructural reform and development discourse and practice have led to the formation of a local Nepali modernity (Chatterjee 1997; Knauft 2002a; 2002b; Schein 1999). The phrase new Nepal that is used prolifically by government, media and citizens of Nepal themselves, broadly describes aspirations for a future that is different from the past. However, ideas about what constitutes a new Nepal are wide-ranging and linked to a fragmented political landscape in which this vision means different things for different groups of people. A new Nepal has become virtually meaningless as a pan-Nepali idea. In its multifarious and splintered meanings however, a new Nepal still describes diverse and significant aspirations that are largely achievable through the nation building efforts of youth.

Broadcasting in Nepal: The boom of the FM band

Nepal has a vibrant and unique radio broadcasting landscape that is characterised by hundreds of local radio stations. Broadcasting, and the growth of broadcasting in Nepal, has occurred in the context of conflict, realisations of new freedoms, censorship, violence and intimidation by the state and rebel groups.   The establishment of the first independent FM (frequency modulation) radio station, Radio

Sagarmatha, did not occur until 1997. Before this (from 1950 until 1995) Radio Nepal—the state broadcaster—was the only broadcaster in Nepal. Before 1950 the only radio broadcasts that were available in Nepal came from Indian radio stations and large international broadcasters such as Voice of America and the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), although this did not matter for most Nepalis given that Rana rulers preferred to keep their subjects disenfranchised and ignorant, which included restricting access to radio (Parajulee 2007). When Radio Nepal was established in 1951 some 'community listening centres were established 'in order to take the Panchayat system and its policies to every ear' (ibid.:59). Radio sets however remained largely unaffordable and were an item of status. Parajulee (2007) notes that for one informant he spoke with:

> It was common practice in his neighbourhood to take photographs with a radio hanging from the shoulder of one's body. It was a matter of great delight to do so. Even a stranger in a rural community would get more attention if he had a radio. People would offer the visitor large snacks just because they would get a chance to see and listen to the radio.

(ibid.:58)

The first FM radio station, called FM Kathmandu (a state-owned station), began broadcasting in the Kathmandu Valley in 1995 (Onta 2006b). A collective of environmental journalists were, at the same time, seeking a broadcasting license to establish an independent FM radio station in Kathmandu to be called Radio Sagarmatha. Their request for a license was delayed and rebuffed and the journalists began broadcasting illegally:

> Not long ago, there was no building, no antenna, just a few enthusiastic journalists struggling for the right to communicate, playing hide-and-seek with the police. Upendra Aryal was the technical director when *Radio Sagarmatha* finally went on the air: "I thought it was a big fantasy to transform an outfit with a single mono Sony EV500 compact cassette recorder into a sophisticated FM station, the public radio station of Nepal. It was very difficult to even get a building for the proposed station. People were reluctant to allow the radio to transmit from their house, as it still had no license to run. Finally the station was in my house, and I was ready to rent out the land and the building for the next fifteen years. Even though we had successfully tested the signal from there, we had no license and officials from the Ministry of Communications were tracing us at that time. I had the transmitter hidden in my residence and at night kept it as if it were my pillow."

(Gumucio-Dagron 2001:175)

In May of 1997 they were finally successful in their bid for a broadcasting license, Raghu Mainali, one of the founders of Radio Sagarmatha, writing that, 'The Joint Secretary said to me as he handed over the license: "You have won the war." I said: Lately, you have obeyed the law' (Mainali 2007). The persistence of those people

involved in the formation of Radio Sagarmatha paved the way for the establishment of many other independent FM stations, of which 368 now exist, 296 of these being fully operational (Equal Access Nepal 2010).

The establishment of the Digital Broadcasting Initiative (DBI) also faced significant setbacks owing to censorship. The DBI was a joint initiative of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and Equal Access that was designed to provide information about HIV/AIDS, sanitation and girls' empowerment to remote areas of Nepal (with no access to FM radio transmissions) via digital satellite technology. The DBI was initially conceptualised as a participatory narrowcast digital initiative that provided satellite radios to listeners' groups in remote areas of Nepal so that they could listen to and provide feedback on radio programming designed as part of the initiative (Westberg 2006).[16] The DBI took place during a time of censorship, which resulted in the difficulty of getting the necessary hardware for the DBI into Nepal, as Upendra Aryal who was involved in this project from its inception explains:

> "[The] government didn't like satellite technology to come to Kathmandu because they had not allowed satellite for any media institutions. But we had, you know, 400 sets of satellite radio receivers. I went to the customs department and they said you don't have import license, then you can't take these radios. It was 2002! Then they were really raising their eyebrow you know, [asking] what is satellite? 400 sets of satellite radios? For what?...So it took a quite long time to get clearance...Then...I got a letter from Raxaul [Indian city on the border with Nepal] customs...they had brought antenna overland. The radio receivers came by air so it came into Kathmandu and then the problem was fighting with the airport customs. But the antenna was at Raxaul! So the radio was not working without antenna there. There was a very interesting aerogram one day I got...So in this said it's been a long time your antennas and cables are being stored in our Raxaul customs, so if you just can't collect that then we are going to make an auction here...all the boxes were torn and then those antenna and cables were put in fertiliser sacks. The fertiliser sack was very strong enough to accommodate say 20 metres of cable, say with about half kilograms of antenna in each...so they had four to five cables and antenna in each. So, oh, when I saw those sacks they were about to make an auction, obviously...So we had to get clearance from the minister of communications, that way we became one year late, more than one year late in implementing digital broadcast initiative."

(Upendra Aryal, personal interview, Kathmandu, 29th December, 2008)

Onta (2006b) has outlined several factors that he says are responsible for the growth of broadcast media in Nepal. Following the promogulation of the 1990 constitution of Nepal an act relating to national broadcasting (National Broadcasting Act, 2049[1993])

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[16] Westberg (2006), a student who conducted her Masters research on the DBI project, notes that this project was expanded when it was, 'Found that each program would cost 25 dollars per estimated listener to produce, if only digital narrowcast as planned. "What would be the benefit of it? There would have to be many more receivers to have an impact!" (from the director of *Communications Corner*, February 2004)'. Thus the radio programming was also broadcast through a number of FM radio stations and Radio Nepal.

was passed that 'made it possible for the entry of the private and NGO sectors in both radio and TV' (Onta 2006b:18) but required a focus on themes relating to development (Nepal Law Commission 1993). This legal concession enabled the participation of private and NGO institutions in broadcasting, of which there was increasing involvement (Onta 2006b) due to the growth of NGOs in a favourable policy environment post-1990 (Heaton-Shrestha 2004). Onta (2006b) goes on to say that the growth of the advertising market and the number of consumers coupled with the widespread use of Nepali language as a result of the Panchayat system's language policy have also contributed to the broadcasting boom (ibid:19–20). The availability of FM technology in Nepal was an important aspect in the radio media boom because FM is a relatively cheap and portable technology. An outcome of the proliferation of this technology has been the establishment of the many FM stations that characterise the contemporary broadcasting landscape of Nepal, a proliferation that has recently led to signal interference (Wilmore and Upreti 2010). Currently FM signals cover lowland areas of Nepal quite well, but they do not cover the whole country comprehensively, mountainous landscapes proving challenging for broadcasting. The current FM signal coverage (see Appendix 2) has only become available in Nepal relatively recently and is due to the establishment of independent broadcasters and their capacity to contribute to the FM signal footprint in different areas.

Radio is an important development tool because it is one of the cheapest and most accessible forms of mass media (Fisher 2004; Skuse 2004). Onta (2006b) contends that radio is also a democratic medium because it is cheap and can be localised. This makes radio a significant tool in Nepal given that according to the Human Development Report of 2005, nearly forty percent of the Nepali population were surviving on one dollar per day at the end of 2003 (United Nations Development Programme 2005:228), and also given that in 2001 just under half of the population were illiterate (United nations Development Programme 2002). The affordability and accessibility of radio is a key feature of EAN's use of this medium as an integral part of their initiatives.

Radio can arguably be defined as a 'hot' medium. McLuhan's (1967) thesis on hot and 'cool' mediums proposes that the difference between these types of mediums is related to the amount of participation required by the audience to engage with the medium. According to his thesis, hot mediums require low audience participation because they are high definition—a 'state of being well filled with data' (McLuhan 1967:31)—which requires less effort on the behalf of the audience. The hot quality of radio enables audience members to engage with it while they do other things (see for example

Tacchi 2002). Hot mediums are also sequential, linear and logical and emphasise one sense over others. Radio's emphasis on the sense of hearing means that voice is an important means of communication and the use of voice is also what makes radio an intimate medium. Voice is viewed as 'a sign of emotional directness, authenticity, and immediacy' (Kunreuther 2006:324). Using an intimate medium through which one person can communicate with another through voice is a key feature of radio in which sensitive topics are discussed. Tacchi (2002) has said that in her research many people spoke of radio as a friend because of the intimacy, immediacy and directness of the medium. Listeners of EAN's radio programs are referred to by hosts as 'friends' to foster an intimate relationship in which the listener will trust their 'friend' on the radio and accept their advice. The formation of this friendship (based on the intimacy of radio), as well as its accessibility, are understood by EAN as fundamental to effecting behaviour change.

Inform. Educate. Inspire.[17]: Equal Access

Equal Access International (EAI) is the parent organisation of the later formed Equal Access Nepal. EAI began working in Nepal in early 2000 as the implementers of the DBI, which, it has been mentioned, was funded by the UNDP. EAI is predominantly, although not exclusively, funded by UN and US organisations. Many aid agencies sponsor aid abroad for domestic imperatives. For example, on the USAID website it is stated that their goal is to further '...America's foreign policy interests in expanding democracy and free markets' (USAID, 2013). It is unlikely to be coincidental that EAI was funded to undertake the DBI and that EAN is also funded by international organisations in the context of a Maoist conflict in Nepal. However, it must also be noted that EAI is supported and funded by a range of international organisations (Equal Access, 2011e), rather than just one organisation and thus is not necessarily tied to the political ideology of any one donor organisation.

In the year 2000 Nepal was yet to experience its broadcasting boom and there were still relatively few FM stations established throughout Nepal, six of these being in Kathmandu and three others[18] located in regional areas of Nepal. Onta (2006b) notes that these broadcasts were only largely available to urban listeners. The DBI project responded to the lack of broadcasting available in rural parts of Nepal by providing

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[17] 'Inform. Educate. Inspire.' is Equal Access' motto.
[18] These were Radio Lumbini, a co-operatively owned community FM station near to Butwal; Radio Madanpokhara, a community FM station owned by the village development committee; and the commercial Manakamana FM established in Hetauda, the municipal headquarters of Makwanpur district (Onta 2006).

satellite radio sets to listeners clubs organised and administered by locally-based NGO partners to listen to the radio program *Kura Khasra Mita* (Let's Talk Straight). This program dealt with issues including HIV and AIDS, girl trafficking and sanitation (Westberg 2006) and was implemented to "empower girls and women in poor societies utilising radio programs...for behaviour change communication" (Upendra, personal interview, Kathmandu, 29th December, 2008).

In 2004 EAN had a major turning point when they won a tender from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to begin producing *Sāthi Saṅga man kā Kura* (Chatting With My Best Friend[19]—SSMK), a HIV/AIDS prevention radio program aimed at Nepali youth. SSMK was initially produced by UNICEF, but they were looking to make the program autonomous and sustainable and thus tendered a contract to produce the program with EAN's bid being successful. EAN was eventually able to secure funding from EA International[20] to set-up in-house production facilities and move the program, and the people who produced it, into the EAN office. EAN has since grown both in production outputs and staff numbers and broadcasts their programs[21] through the many FM radio stations in Nepal, reaching an estimated twelve million regular listeners (Equal Access 2011a).

The producers have called SSMK the first national radio program in Nepal that openly discusses personal issues affecting young Nepalis, referring to the occasionally controversial content (cf Pigg 2002) of this program which has included discussions on masturbation and pre-marital sex. One of the SSMK program producers described the problems that they encountered broadcasting this content when they began in 2001:

> "[We has] lots of problems on broadcasting when we started. That time we used to say that we break the silence, we break the taboos and break the silence for the sex-related things, love and everything...On that time many of the listeners' parents, teachers used to send us the letter saying that you guys are starting to promoting the love relations, teaching our sons and daughters for love so you have to close this program. Like this broadcasting was so hard at that time."

(Basant, personal interview, Kathmandu, 4th March, 2009)

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[19] 'Chatting With My Best Friend' is the English translation that is used by Equal Access Nepal.
[20] EA International, located in San Francisco, is the headquarters of other EA offices which are located in Nepal, Cambodia, Afghanistan, India, Chad, Niger, Pakistan, Yemen and Laos.
[21] EAN previously used satellite to distribute their programs until the financial collapse of the satellite provider. Radio programs are now predominantly distributed via an internet website.

SSMK is a lively radio program hosted by young people, the main objective of which is to equip young listeners with the ten life skills[22] developed by UNICEF to help them deal with issues such as love and study problems, rejection and ill-health, which will be discussed in Chapter Three. Life skills are inherent to the problem solving that SSMK engages in through chat, drama, vox-pops, letters, reports and interviews—different formats that combine to create the magazine style format of the SSMK radio program.

In 2005 EAN began producing the *Sundar Shanta Bishal* (Beautiful Peaceful Land) radio program, which also faced broadcasting difficulties, but in this case these difficulties arose from the political conflict in Nepal at the time:

> "At that time [in 2005 it] was more geared at talking about the root causes of the conflict and how we can address those root causes like land disputes or caste, ethnicity, gender and all these things. But discussing them in a very safe manner. Because at that time we were in the midst of a conflict so you couldn't talk, you couldn't be very vocal. You couldn't talk about the Maoists who were one side of the conflict, you just couldn't. For fear of people's lives. Because all the people who were associated with the program, like the community reporters and everybody else, their safety was linked with the radio program and its content. If we talked about an issue that might infuriate the state or the Maoists, then even our local reporters would be at risk. So that time it was very difficult, it was very different from what it is now. Now we can speak openly."

(Naresh, personal interview, Kathmandu, 2nd March, 2009)

After the cessation of the civil war in 2006 *Sundar Shanta Bishal* became known as *Naya Nepal* (New Nepal—NN) to reflect the changes in Nepal and the hope for peace.[23] NN was primarily designed as a current affairs radio program utilising a magazine format similar to SSMK, but focussed on peace and reconciliation, the democratic process and the political transition that was at that time underway in Nepal. The NN radio program provided important information on the voting process in the lead up to the constituent assembly (CA) elections of 2008. These elections were a key turning point in Nepal's democratic process: the elections were the first step in drafting what was to be a truly representative constitution, but which has yet, in 2012, to be completed. The stagnation of the political process, in which many Nepalis had placed hope as being the key to a new Nepal, has caused a great deal of frustration and has often been satirised in the Nepali media (see Figure 4).

The SSMK and NN radio programs are the main productions around which broader projects incorporating local content production and listeners clubs are organised.

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[22] These life skills that they base their programming on are; problem solving, critical thinking, effective communication, decision-making, creative thinking, interpersonal relationship, self awareness building, empathy, and coping with stress and emotions.
[23] EAN Project report to USAID January - March 2008.

These projects incorporate the support and encouragement of local versions of the NN radio program and spin-off productions of the SSMK radio program in radio stations throughout Nepal. Local versions of the NN radio program have topics that are often defined by the NN production team in Kathmandu, have prescribed formats for presentation and processes for recording audio content. This is because the local versions of NN are directly linked with the Kathmandu-produced version and these guidelines ensure consistency. The spin-off productions of SSMK, while encouraged through a national training initiative run by the SSMK team, are not linked with the Kathmandu-produced program and the SSMK team in Kathmandu has no control over content or quality. These local and spin-off programs are encouraged to increase the capacities of local producers to make quality radio programs dealing with issues, such as youth relationship problems and small arms proliferation, that resonate with the issues dealt with in the Kathmandu-produced SSMK and NN radio programs while also reflecting local experiences. The local and spin-off productions are seen by EAN as a means of localising issues by encouraging productions that are locally relevant and accessible.

Onta (2006b) says that the ability to localise radio contributes to its democratic nature because it is produced by the people for the people. However, Onta notes that:

> Almost all of nationally influential print and electronic media is produced in Kathmandu...State-owned Radio Nepal, with headquarters in Kathmandu, is the only radio medium that broadcasts to most of Nepal in Short Wave and Medium Wave.

(ibid:21–2)

The growing significance of localisation in Nepal has been played out in the debate over centrally-produced versus locally-produced radio content. This debate calls into questions the relevance of Kathmandu-produced programming that is broadcast throughout Nepal (Pringle and Subba 2007). The local program component of the SSMK and NN projects responds to this debate by training and encouraging local producers to make and present content that is relevant to their location and context.

Listener clubs are also major components of the SSMK and NN projects and are located throughout Nepal. These clubs are most often comprised of young village or community members, often friends, who are expected by EAN to regularly listen to SSMK and NN and discuss and reinforce the messages in these programs through the conduct of social and awareness-raising activities to catalyse behaviour change in their communities (Equal Access 2011d; Quilt and Shrestha 2008; Saathi Sanga Man ka

Kura 2010). These clubs and their activities are also a means through which SSMK and NN program content can be remediated (Bolter and Grusin 1999). By localising and re-packaging messages, such as health and peace messages, into different mediums like discussion and performances, it is hoped that behaviour and social change will be made locally sensible and accepted.

The association of listeners groups with radio programs has a long history, beginning with Canada's Farm Radio Forum in 1941, which became a model that was adopted by a number of radio for development initiatives in India in the 1950s and 1960s (Coleman et al. 1968; Kivlin et al. 1968; Mathur and Neurath 1959). In Nepal the practice of listening to radio in a group can be traced to the distribution of radio sets to community listening centres where people could listen to state broadcasts during the Panchayat era spanning from 1961 to 1990 (Parajulee 2007:56). Listener clubs are also well used in contemporary development initiatives and are fundamental components of radio for development initiatives (Fisher 2004; Jensen et al. 2009; Manyozo 2005; Moyo 1991; Sood et al. 2004).   Listeners clubs provide a platform from which discussion, deliberation, debate and collective action to address social issues can occur (Luintel 1994; Singhal et al. 2004; Sood 1999). These aspects of listeners clubs have been described by Jensen (2009), Singhal et al. (2004) and Sood et al. (1999) as enabling members to effect social change in their communities. Papa et al. (2000) describe how the combination of a development radio program with listening groups in an Indian village resulted in the launching of a number of campaigns involving planting trees and educating others about environmental pollution.   The attributes of discussion and collective action that occur in listener clubs reflect the CFSC model of social change, which places people in charge of their communicative processes (Figueroa et al. 2002; Gray-Felder and Deane 1999; Gumucio-Dagron and Tufte 2006; Parks et al. 2005).

Remediation

The use of the term remediation as a concept in media has been defined by Bolter and Grusin in their 1999 book *Remediation: Understanding New Media.* In the 1960s McLuhan (1967:15–16) stated that 'the content of any medium is always another medium'. Bolter and Grusin (1999) build on this idea and use the term remediation to refer to 'the representation of one medium in another' (ibid.:45). For example, Jane Austen novels have been represented in film, and paintings are represented on internet websites. Each of these representations borrow the original medium and its content and represent it in a new, different or sometimes the same medium. Bolter

and Grusin argue that remediation is a key feature of new media and that despite the adjective 'new', these media are in fact reliant on, and derive their significance from the older media that they remediate. It is only in the context of existing media, they say, that new media can be understood. Bolter and Grusin note that 'any act of mediation is dependent on another, indeed many other, acts of mediation and is therefore remediation' (ibid.:56). They argue that all mediation is remediation and that 'at this extended historical moment, all current media function as remediators' (ibid.:55) because what they mediate is mediated content. Based on this, I argue that local radio programs and listener club activities that reproduce SSMK and NN content are in fact remediations.

A number of studies have used the concept of remediation to conceptualise the creation of new media forms. For example, the representation of places of worship on web pages (Mallapragada 2010) and internet streamed radio (Freire 2007). Other scholars have used this concept in a slightly different way to focus on the implications that remediation has for those people involved in the process and others who consume mediated content or are affected in the process (Gershon 2008; Lo 2002; Novak 2010; Silvio 2007; Strassler 2009; Wilmore 2006). Novak's (2010) consideration of remediation focuses on the process through which content is appropriated in order to be remediated and the impact that this has on the people involved. Investigating the representation of a Bollywood song and dance scene in American alternative media, Novak argues that remediation is constitutive of the formation of cosmopolitan subjectivities. The concept of remediation, he says, 'Helps us to refocus on the conditions for new subjects created through these practices of appropriation' (Novak 2010:41). In this thesis I demonstrate that remediation encouraged by local radio program productions and listener clubs helps to shape the subjectivities of those people involved (local producers, listeners club members) into youth. This is because a social consciousness is an attribute of youth that is developed and demonstrable through the act of remediation.

Remediation as a means of 'repurposing media for new contexts of use' (Novak 2010:41) is the purpose of the composite components (local version and spin-off radio programs and listeners clubs) that make-up the SSMK and NN projects. The support of local program productions and activities of listeners clubs is encouraged as a way to extend the reach of SSMK and NN content and make it relevant in different contexts. The outcomes of this process cannot be controlled however, and in this thesis I demonstrate that remediation leads to unique outcomes. I argue that this happens

because the people remediating SSMK and NN content draw from their own contextual experiences of living in places that are different from Kathmandu, which is where SSMK and NN are produced. The unique outcomes that result from remediation are evident in the changed content of remediations. Additionally, unique outcomes occur because the people who are involved in the process of remediation do not have the same motivations as EAN. Reasons for engaging in EAN's initiative instead revolve around personal desires and needs and perceived necessity stemming from local realities. Remediation offers an opportunity to demonstrate a youth subjectivity that is used to orient oneself with within landscapes of power and opportunity created by development.

However, remediation is risky for EAN because they essentially lose control of the messages contained in radio content. EAN's radio programs are based explicitly on the BCC model and the success of these programs is premised on the tight control of messages. Remediation, which allows local producers and listener club members to take control over messages, shifts the control of content out of the hands of EAN producers. The inherent tension between BCC and remediation raises the important questions of what happens to EAN's messages when they are remediated. I deal with this question in the following chapters and also address how the process of remediation was used to craft youth subjectivities.

Yūba[24]

In Nepal young people make up a large proportion of the population—about a third of the population are aged between ten and twenty-four years (Government of Nepal 2007). However these age limits do not provide an accurate picture of those who are described and accepted as youth in Nepal, who are often aged up to forty and beyond (see Figure 5). A participant recounted:

> "A long discussion [we had] about whether Girija Prasad [Koirala][25] is a youth in a program organised a couple of months ago. However, we had the general agreement that there must be a specific age group. To us, the age group sixteen to forty-five years can be youth."

> (Prithibi, personal interview, Banaspati, 1st October, 2008)

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[24] The English translation of yūba is 'youth'. As explained in the introduction to this thesis, yūba was the term that was used by my participants when they were referring to youth in the Nepali language. As such, youth and yūba are used interchangeably in this thesis.

[25] Late iconic political figure (1925–2010). Served as president of the Nepali Congress and former Prime Minister of Nepal (1991 to 1994, 1998 to 1999, 2000 to 2001, and from 2006 to 2008).

In 2008 Girija Prasad Koirala was in his eighties and it was staggering to learn that a consideration of whether or not he was a youth had been entertained. The age range of sixteen to forty-five also exceeded my expectations of what constitutes youth, especially coming from a Western country in which the classification of youth is much narrower although also changing. Snellinger (2009) explains how she was similarly surprised when presented with these large and elastic age ranges in Nepal, and asked:

> How does Chandra get introduced at political rallies as a youth, student activist, when he is a 45 year-old ex-student activist who is now a Nepali congress member? The first time I heard this introduction I dismissed it as a mistake. The second time I heard it, I asked the student sitting next to me...The third event I attended where Chandra was introduced as a student leader, I needed to know what he thought about this misnomer.

(ibid.:39)

Defining youth in Nepal was clarified for me during a chat I had with Kumar—the station manager of a radio station in Makwanpur district—and Jiwan—an EAN worker. Perched on the edge of a couch and balancing hot tea and a notebook I asked how youth is defined in Nepal. Kumar responded that "even we struggle to define what a youth is. It might be someone up to sixty!" (Informal chat, Hetauda, 5th August, 2008). If age parameters are not the primary determinant then what is? "You stop being a youth when you stop being creative and contributing or when you feel that you are no longer a youth" (ibid.) Kumar told me, before continuing:

> "Youths should be active and motivated. There are young people who just study to get a good job and get married and enrich their own and their families lives, but youths have a responsibility to do something socially conscious for their communities."

(ibid.).

I asked why this should be the responsibility of young people, to which Jiwan responded, "The youths are the creative mind masters, they are those people most capable of contributing to positive social change" (ibid.). This view of youth resonates with the descriptions offered by many of my other research participants and stresses certain attributes as the primary determinants of youth: "Youth are talented...they...are sources of power. They can do anything if they get encouragement, opportunities and the chance" (Aashish, group interview, Hetauda, 27th August, 2008); "People who are empowered are called youth" (Nisha, personal interview, Hetauda, 13th September, 2008). Youths are increasingly involved in both community-level and broader social movements, pushing for change at the local and national levels, becoming 'active participants in and drivers of social change processes' (Jensen et al. 2009:142).

In a book produced to coincide with the 1985 International Year of Youth it is written that young people are generally aged between fifteen and twenty-nine (Majupuria and Majupuria 1985). Young Nepalis are described in this book as 'pillars of the nation', and as people who are, 'full of hope, confidence and enthusiasm...potentials [which] are to be exploited for the development of the nation' (ibid.:3). In this book the then Queen—Aishwarya—is quoted as saying:

> If the potential energy of the youth is harnessed constructively in the cause of the society, many of the problems with which the country is beleaguered could be dealt with effectively, bringing in a new hope of light and dynamism for the nation by engendering greater faith in the future.

(Quoted in Majupuria and Majupuria 1985:viii)

The definitions of youth offered by my research participants reflect those evident in the work of Majupuria and Majupuria (ibid.) and the words of Queen Aishwarya. The close alignment of the definition of youth offered by my research participants and that in the Majupuria book that was produced more than 20 years earlier is no coincidence. This book was produced during a period of intense national development in Nepal and as part of an international focus on youth promoted by the United Nations (UN)—an organisation that promotes and facilitates social and economic development in less developed nations. The perception of young Nepalis as creative, capable and socially-oriented that is presented by Majupuria and Majupuria (1985) is tied to national development discourse in Nepal that charges young people with significant social roles and is evident in the contemporary definitions of Nepali youth offered by my participants. The similarity of the separate definitions of youth illustrates State interests in interpellating young people into the national development project through the category of youth. However, the ages of youth have expanded beyond that described in Majupuria and Majupuria (1985) to encompass people who are aged in their forties.

Liechty states that the emergence of the category of youth as an in-between stage of life emerges 'only in those times and places where a degree of socio-economic complexity requires a delaying of adulthood' (2009:35). Nepal is undergoing rapid social, political and economic change as a result of democratic political change sparked by civil conflict, monetisation of the economy, development discourse and increasing access to education (Ahearn 2004; Liechty 2003; Whelpton 2005). These changes contribute to changing social conditions and expectations that play a role in the delay of life cycle events that characterise adulthood. However, the youth identity

is still appropriated and practiced by people who are married and employed and have families, which are adult responsibilities (Bennett 1983; Majupuria and Majupuria 1985). I argue that this is related to the perceived social roles of young people in national development. Mastery over development discourse is a means of positioning oneself to access opportunities in the development industry (Pigg 1992; Pigg 1996; Skinner and Holland 2009), which is a highly sought-after type of employment (Liechty 2003). Youth—a stage of life during which one plays a key role in national development—is a means of social positioning and of access to opportunities offered by development. The youth identity described in this thesis, which has been demonstrated as a state-generated category above, is a means of producing subjects and directing their energies into development channels with the promise of accessing power and resources that are linked to development.

Durham has proposed that youth be thought of 'as a social "shifter"' (2000:116). A shifter is:

> A special kind of...indexical term, a term that works not through absolute referentiality to a fixed context, but one that relates the speaker to a relational, or indexical, context ("here" or "us" are such terms)...Shifters work metalinguistically, drawing attention to specific relations within a structure of relations.

> (2000:116)

Using the concept of the 'shifter', youth is a way in which people 'situate themselves in a social landscape of power, rights, expectations, and relationships' (Durham 2000:116). This is a relevant concept to apply to the category of youth in Nepal as I argue that this is a means of positioning oneself to access power and opportunities that are linked to development.

Development began as a modernisation project aimed at enabling developing nations to 'catch-up' to developed nations through the provision of knowledge and technologies (Lerner 1958; Rogers 1983; Schramm 1964). However, the articulation of local historical factors with global forces and processes and has resulted in the formation of many modernities, rather than straightforward mimicry of Western nations (Appadurai 1996; Chatterjee 1997; Knauft 2002a). Even though it has been noted that the term modernity emanates from western historical experience it is something that is experienced, and produced variously in many places:

> There is...no justification for regarding the modernities of the world as pale reflections of a Euro-American original, or of looking at them for enactments of a recipe we have lived

through (or past) already. Modernity is now everywhere...but it is not only everywhere, it is also in a series of somewheres.

(Appadurai and Breckenridge 1995:2)

It is this understanding of modernity as having multiple incarnations coming about from the integration of global influences with local socio-cultural contexts and practices that has led to the theorising of modernity as multiple, vernacular, local and alternative (Chatterjee 1997; Knauft 2002a). Local modernities exist in the contestation between traditional and modern ideas and practices (cf Bordonaro 2006; Bordonaro 2009). Liechty highlights that the social change that is occurring in Kathmandu's social structure is a balance between tradition and modernity:

In Kathmandu the fabric of an earlier pattern of sociality still exists, some strands maintaining remarkable strength. Yet other strands slowly disintegrate, leaving the structures of 'modernity' to increasingly bear the weight of social transactions.

(1995:168)

The socially constructed category of youth is one of the places where this modernity can be seen, and is indeed one of the groups that socio-cultural, political and economic change has a large impact on. This is because youth is a time when people negotiate their identities (Gillespie 1995) and in the context of Nepal the past provides few relevant role models as resources for identity construction that young people can use to negotiate their futures (Liechty 1995). The shifting of traditional identities and roles resulting from this change in Nepal has created new spaces for modern Nepali youth identities and practices. My research participants distinguished between traditional and modern beliefs and practices, which was written on the juxtaposition between the old and young generations and was commonly referred to as the 'generation gap'. Nisha, one of my research participants, told me that traditional practices often stood in the way of social change:

"The major problem is that they [the old generation] do not want any kind of change. In my childhood I heard people saying that *unless the old generation dies it is impossible to bring about change in the community.*"

(Nisha, personal interview, Hetauda, 20th September, 2008, emphasis added)

The generation gap has also been noted in other contexts in which there is a cleavage between young and old generations that is intensified by the circulation of development discourse (Bordonaro 2009; Comaroff and Comaroff 1999).

Youth as it is experienced in Nepal and described by Nepalis is created by the impact that the lived experience of development has on the formation of a local modernity and

the balance of this with tradition to create an indigenised (Appadurai 1990) Nepali modernity (Liechty 2003). The contested space between tradition and modernity that Nepali youths traversed and played a perpetual role in defining and re-defining was highlighted time and again, often in relation to social change and the negative impact that people perceived tradition as having on this (cf Bordonaro 2006; Bordonaro 2009), but also in reverse:

> Boy 1: People get a grip! What were people thinking about making out in the Garden of Dreams!! There's something called Decency and Moral Values!!!!
>
> Boy 2: i knw...ppl [sic] getting modernised...bt [sic] we better look at our reflections in the mirror too...dnt knw [sic] what pops up.

(Facebook, June, 2010)

These comments illustrate the tension between tradition and modernity, a tension that creates a compromise between these two polarities, resulting in a locally produced modernity (cf Liechty 2003).

The consumption and production of media (including social media like facebook) by young Nepalis is a means of defining and creating a Nepali modernity. Liechty (2006) investigated the practices of body building and wearing make-up and fashionable clothes among young people in Kathmandu.   These practices were linked to globalisation and mass media that expanded the frames of reference within which his young research participants understood themselves and constructed their identities as gendered middle-class youths (ibid.). Liechty (2002) describes the desire of one of his young male informants to similarly engage in an expanding world that was described as a frustration experienced through the consumption of foreign media that made his young informant 'painfully aware of the limitations of his life as a Nepali, a life that he constantly compared to lives lived in distant power centers' (ibid:39). Liechty goes on to say that this frustration occurs in response to the circulation of media, goods and people that,

> Acts like a lens which situates the local in an implicitly devalued and diminished "out here" place, while at the same time seeming to provide a window onto modern places that are distant in both time and space.

(ibid.:41)

New and traditional forms of media are used by young Nepalis to define the socially-conscious youth identity and practices. A number of youth organisations have developed facebook groups that are means for sharing information and developing

links for collaboration. The members of these groups can comment and chat with one another, and in so doing produce media that represents their identity and youth identities more broadly. Gillespie (1995:2) has argued that the media consumption and production practices among her young Punjabi research participants were a means of identity construction 'shaped by but at the same time reshaping the images and meanings circulated in the media and in the market'. The SSMK and NN radio programs and associated projects are shaped by broader social change within Nepal that acts on the creation, constitution and practices of youth, but at the same time these programs and projects shape the youth construct by the continuous and complex interplay between listeners and producers in expanding frames of reference.

Conclusion: Summary of Chapters

This thesis investigates the remediation of a youth subject characterised by the attribute of a social conscience for nation building through the SSMK and NN projects that form part of EAN's communication for development initiative. Each component of this initiative is addressed in a separate chapter in this thesis to mirror the trajectory of the SSMK and NN projects. The fieldwork followed this trajectory. This multi-sited initiative and ethnographic research is discussed in the following chapter. In Chapter Two I explain the rationale for adopting a multi-sited methodological approach, the challenges of this, and the methods I employed. In Chapter Two I also describe the people and the contexts of each of the three places in which I worked: Kathmandu, Hetauda and Banaspati. These are respectively the capital of Nepal, the municipal headquarters of Makwanpur district and a village in a neighbouring administrative area in Makwanpur. The purpose of this is to introduce the informants who populate this thesis and describe the places in which SSMK and NN content is remediated. The people in each of these places produced remediations with differing motivations and outcomes. The following chapter also addresses reflexivity as the way I was perceived in the field, my institutional affiliations and the friends I made all had an impact on my fieldwork, at times in illuminating ways, and are thus important to consider.

Chapter Three focuses on the production of the SSMK and NN radio programs in Kathmandu. This chapter argues that the experiences of SSMK and NN program producers, as young, modern and cosmopolitan urbanites shapes the capacities, choices and abilities of the characters that are constructed as part of these program productions. This chapter also argues that the SSMK and NN radio programs are constructed on Eurocentric notions of personhood and models of behaviour change

that are premised on western psychological understandings of human behaviour. I illustrate these points by drawing on radio scripts and conclude that the SSMK and NN radio programs aim to create a modern and democratic subject that is based on notions of development and the experience of a cosmopolitan Nepali modernity. The consequences of this on subsequent remediations are discussed in Chapters Four and Six.

Local radio program remediations of SSMK and NN are the focus of Chapter Four. I demonstrate that these local remediations represent youth subjects that reaffirm traditional tropes of behaviour and contribute to the ethnic identity movement in Nepal. I argue that these local remediations do not simply act to relay SSMK and NN content. Rather, these productions illustrate that making a new Nepal is a complex and uneven process. These productions also demonstrate the tensions between letting go of the control of messages in order to encourage people to take control over communicative processes. The messages are different from the original productions, which was a concern expressed by EAN staff, however the relinquishing of control enabled people to define their own identities and aspirations of a new Nepal, specifically in relation to ethnic identity and rights.

Chapter Five describes two remediations produced by an SSMK listeners club in Banaspati village, Makwanpur district. The remediations described in this chapter include a street drama about HIV/AIDS and a rubbish cleaning activity. These activities focussed on issues that were addressed in SSMK radio programs, but were entirely formulated by listeners' club members and presented content that was out of the control of the SSMK. These remediations were instead based on issues that are locally relevant and demonstrate a balance between traditional and modern practices. In Chapter Five I illustrate that the remediations of the listeners club are at times met with resistance that reveal much deeper tensions that can stand in the way of the effective delivery of messages. I argue that the remediations produced by the listeners club occur as part of an emerging youth public. This is a space in which the listeners' club members publicly create, construct, negotiate and contest their identities and imagine and articulate visions for a new Nepal.

EAN imagines that listeners clubs are a special sort of audience that engage in the SSMK and NN initiatives within a certain framework. This framework reinforces that listeners clubs do activities based on issues discussed in SSMK and NN radio programs to make this information relevant and accessible in local areas. In Chapter

Six I argue that the remediations produced by the listeners club in Banaspati village are instead used as a means for demonstrating youth subjectivities of the club members rather than as activities that are explicitly aimed at remediating SSMK content. I conceptualise the listeners' club members as agents who engage in a relationship with EAN for their own motivations rather than those of EAN.

I conclude that the youths who play a role in making a new Nepal situate themselves within landscapes of power that are created by development through their engagement in the process of remediation. Demonstrating command over development rhetoric has tangible benefits and youths demonstrate this in their nation building activities. I argue that youths creatively engage in the process of remediation described in this thesis to align themselves to development to ultimately define their own destinies and articulate their visions for a new Nepal.

Figure 4: Cartoon satirising the Maoist party's claims of their desire for political consensus

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Kathmandu Post, 14th August, 2010

Figure 5: Cartoon satirising the construction of youth in Nepal

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Kathmandu Post, 15th August, 2010

Chapter Two **Radio Routes**

In a recording studio in Kathmandu Sangita and Kaustuv, two popular hosts of the youth radio program *Sāthi Saṅga man kā Kura* (SSMK) that is broadcast nationally across Nepal, pull on their headphones and arrange their notes in anticipation of recording the 355th episode. In Makwanpur district Nisha, a community reporter employed by EAN, the same organisation that produces SSMK, holds a microphone to the mouth of an informant preparing to 'collect' their voice. This voice that Nisha will record will be sent to Kathmandu to be used as a vox-pop[26] within the *Naya Nepal* (NN) radio program that focuses on peace and reconciliation and is produced alongside SSMK by Equal Access Nepal (EAN). In a radio station in Hetauda, the municipality of Makwanpur district, Purnima is finalising her radio program *Chhar Nepal*—a Tamang local language version of NN—while Aashish and Mina wait outside the studio door, notes in hand, ready to record Young Generation—a locally-produced spin-off version of SSMK. In a village in Makwanpur district the young members of an SSMK listeners club have finished cleaning the main road that bi-sects their village of rubbish. At the bottom of this village, where it meets a large government-owned garden, they turn for home to wash up before the weekly broadcast of SSMK.

The activities of Sangita, Kaustuv, Nisha, Purnima, Aashish, Mina and the listeners club members are not happening simultaneously but are interrelated components of two of EAN's communication for development initiatives that incorporate the production of the radio programs SSMK and NN in Kathmandu and support community reporters, local content creation and listeners clubs throughout Nepal. EANs multi-faceted and multi-sited projects are designed so that the content (e.g. raising awareness about the political process, importance of education etcetera) of the SSMK and NN radio programs can be shared, localised, reinforced and acted on (Equal Access 2011a). I conceptualise this as remediation. This approach is understood by EAN to 'extend the reach and impact of health, education and other development programs' (ibid.), which is fundamental to achieving social change because 'development is uneven and incomplete unless the population has access to information vital for their well-being' (ibid.). This is a gap that EAN seeks to bridge by 'empower[ing] listeners with critically needed information' through the creation and dissemination of their radio program

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[26] A vox-pop is a short piece of audio recording generally taken from the public expressing their opinion on a certain issue, which is then inserted into a radio program (McLeish 1994).

content (ibid.). However, the dissemination of this information was shaped by people and local contexts in ways that were not accounted for in EAN's official discourse. As discussed in Chapter One of this thesis, I argue that the remediation of the SSMK and NN radio content was done by people with diverse motivations and resulted in unique outcomes.

The distribution of the SSMK and NN radio programs through local radio stations, local productions and listeners clubs is fundamental to EAN's methodology and consequently formed a central organising principle on which I based my investigation of how people created, shared and used radio content. As the content moved from production in Kathmandu and was remediated (Bolter and Grusin 1999) by local radio stations and listeners clubs I moved with it, following the routes forged by the radio-centred projects of EAN. This chapter describes these places: Kathmandu, where SSMK and NN were produced and Makwanpur district where local productions were made and a listeners club was based (see Figure 1). It was in these sites that the research for this thesis was chiefly conducted over a twelve month period between March 2008 and March 2009.[27]

Although I worked in multiple places, or 'sites' (Marcus 1995; 1998), it is important to note, as Hannerz has in relation to multi-sited ethnography, that:

> These fields are...linked to each other in some kind of cohesive structure. One could just as well say that each study concerns one field, which consists of a network of localities—'several fields in one,' in other words.

(2003b:21)

By looking at EAN's multi-sited projects I defined for myself 'an object of study that [could not] be accounted for ethnographically by remaining focussed on a single site of intensive investigation' (Marcus 1995:96) as classic ethnographers like Evans-Pritchard would have it (Hannerz 2003a:201–202). These routes forged by EANs projects also created a means through which ideas could be discussed, practiced, appropriated and contested and by moving between these sites I was able to see how this happened.

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[27] Before commencing fieldwork I travelled to Nepal for a two-week scoping trip in October of 2007 with the support of the Assessing Communication for Social Change Project that is supported by an ARC Linkage Grant (Project ID: LP0775252), to which this thesis is connected. In July, August and September, 2010 I again travelled to Nepal to conduct a seven-week follow-up research trip with the support of a Research Abroad Scholarship from the University of Adelaide.

A multi-sited approach was essential to look at the radio-centred initiatives of EAN that incorporated support and encouragement of dissemination of information through local remediations of the SSMK and NN radio program content because 'from a local viewpoint, one can only get an incomplete picture of some types of activities' (Hannerz 2003b:20). With this in mind, this chapter expands on the rationale for the multi-sited approach before describing each of the sites in which the research took place, the methods through which research was undertaken, and the methodological and personal challenges I faced. I deal with reflexivity throughout this chapter in the descriptions of the research fieldsites.

Methodology

The fieldwork for this thesis traversed the routes forged by EANs multi-sited initiatives from Kathmandu through Makwanpur district's municipality Hetauda and into Banaspati village, located in one of the organisational divisions of the same district with the aim of documenting remediations of the SSMK and NN radio programs. This approach is best characterised by what Marcus has called 'following the thing' (1995:106–108), as I essentially followed the SSMK and NN radio programs from production to broadcast and reception.

The 'follow the thing' approach usually has as its central concern a material object such as Coca-Cola (Foster 2008), which is the point of departure for this research since the SSMK and NN radio programs themselves cannot be drunk or held. While one might be able to hold a radio set, wear a t-shirt and write in a notebook with a pen that are all emblazoned with the SSMK logo, the radio programs are largely intangible as they spend a great deal of their lives as radio waves and sound. As a means of temporarily fixing radio sound for analysis Tacchi has suggested that it be thought of as textured, which 'allows the possibility of considering how it operates, and how people operate within it' (2002:242). Much like a material culture approach, it is the interactions with the 'thing' that is of interest and thinking of sound as textured is a means of focussing on what is essentially fluid and unfixable (ibid.).

As SSMK and NN radio programs are broadcast, listened to and remediated they foster a range of relationships, interactions and practices. It is useful to think of the SSMK and NN radio programs as having biographies, which is an approach that 'can make salient what might otherwise remain obscure' (Kopytoff 1986:67). A biography of things approach—although adapted here because I am not referring to commodities for which Kopytoff conceptualised this approach—allows me to ask questions about who

makes the programs, who listens and what they do with these programs. Focussing on the biography, or 'social life' (Appadurai 1986), of these radio programs revealed negotiations of youth, development and modernisation discourse that was shown in the process of remediation and will be discussed throughout this thesis.

The focus on place, or multiple places, was an essential methodological approach to this research firstly because people live in places and 'one is always somewhere' (Hannerz 2003b). There is also a salient difference between Kathmandu, regional centres and rural places in Nepal that influences the ways that people conceptualise themselves and others and also has a real impact on people's lives because it affects infrastructure, employment and education opportunities. Nisha, a community reporter, offered one of the clearest expressions of this division between Kathmandu and Makwanpur, a regional district, late one morning as we walked through small rice paddies and patches of overgrown trees to reach the home of her *mitini*[28] in Padampokhari. Nisha, talking about rural development as she often did, said that village development in Nepal had stagnated because the government in Kathmandu focussed only on itself rather than on the needs of the nation. The centrally-focussed governance of Nepal has led to what was commonly referred to as 'Kathmandu-centrism', the centralisation of the capital in contrast to the peripheralisation of regional areas to the national imagination, which Kunreuther contends is reinforced through Kathmandu-produced radio (2006:328). Pigg (1992) has argued that the village has been constructed as a 'social category' through the appropriation of development discourse that characterises the village as traditional and underdeveloped, in contrast with urban areas such as Kathmandu that are characterised as modern and progressive. This contributes to the division, or binary opposition, between urban and rural places to the detriment of the latter. This is what Nisha was referring to, interestingly in terms of a lack of development that ultimately reasserts the familiar tropes implicit to development discourse (Pigg 1992).

A brief introduction to the nation of Nepal

Nepal is a landlocked sovereign Republic[29] in South Asia that is sandwiched between the Republic of India and The People's Republic of China. Nepal spans approximately 1000 kilometres from West to East, and 500 kilometres from North to South. Despite

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[28] The term *mitini* refers to a friendship between two girls of the same age that is formalised by ritual, which thereafter becomes a form of fictive kinship, implicit to which are responsibilities and norms of behaviour that exist between consanguine kin (see Messerschmidt 1982).
[29] Known as the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal.

these relatively short distances, it takes an inordinate amount of time to travel anywhere in Nepal. This is due in part to the poor condition of many of the roads and the equally poor condition of the majority of public vehicles. It is also largely due to the geography. In the 500 kilometres from South to North, you can travel from the sea-level plains that border Bihar, India, through a number of hilly ranges and into the Himalayas where *Sagarmatha*,[30] the tallest peak on Earth is located.

Nepal is organised into five development regions that span a portion of mountains, hills, and plains. These regions are comprised of fourteen zones that are further divided into seventy-five districts, each of which contains a district headquarters run by a District Development Committee (DDC) and a Municipality office. These districts are further divided into a plethora of areas that are organised by Village Development Committees (VDCs), the management of which is linked to the DDC. Each VDC is further divided into wards that might be thought of as suburbs. For example, one of the places I worked was in the central development region, in the Narayani zone, in Makwanpur District, in Padampokhari VDC, Ward Number One. The Federal government maintains jurisdiction over these many areas via the DDCs, which in turn control their local level committees.

Nepal is a fledging Federal Democratic Republic that was declared in 2008 following the King's relinquishment of Sovereign power in 2006 in response to the People's Movement (discussed further below). Nepal has a President as Head of State, a post that is currently occupied by Ram Baran Yadav of the Nepali Congress political party.[31] The Prime Minister, Dr. Baburam Bhattarai of the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist), is the head of government and exercises executive power in concert with his cabinet. There is a unicameral Parliament called the Constituent Assembly (CA) that exercises legislative power and was, until the first half of 2012, undertaking the task of drafting a new constitution.[32] The CA consists of 601 members that have been variously directly elected, elected through proportional representation, or have been nominated by the cabinet because they represent ethnic and indigenous communities.

Nepal has nearly thirty million inhabitants who comprise the diverse ethnic and religious Nepali citizenry. According to the 2001 census ninety-two identifiable

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[30] *Sagarmatha* is the Nepali name of Mount Everest.
[31] Nepal is currently a multi-party democracy and the groups that hold the majority of seats in parliament are from the Nepali Congress party, the communist Maoist party and the communist Marxist-Leninist party.
[32] The Constituent Assembly was disbanded in the first half of 2012 after the failed to meet an extended deadline for the drafting of the constitution.

languages are spoken. The diversity of Nepal is based on its location and the migration and settlement of people over time (Whelpton 2005). Nepal is largely comprised of people of Indo-Aryan and Tibeto-Burmese descent, although there are a number of indigenous groups, for example the Newars of Kathmandu Valley and the Tharu of Western Nepal (Bista 1967). Despite this, Nepal is predominantly a Hindu, Nepali-speaking and caste-ordered society owing to past rulers, beginning with Prithivi Narayan Shah, whose conquest of the Kathmandu Valley in the eighteenth century marked the beginning of the modern State of Nepal (Gellner 1995; Gellner 1997; Burghart 1984). Burghart (1984) has noted that the formation of the nation of Nepal is linked to a number of redefinitions that have occurred over time, including the establishment of borders, language and unique culture.[33] The Ranas, who ruled from 1846–1951, codified the caste system in the *Muluki Ain* (State Law) of 1854, which incorporated and ordered the diverse peoples within Nepal in terms of a hierarchical structure with high caste Hindus (Brahmins and Chhetris) at the top and ethnic and indigenous groups, including Tamangs, at middle and low levels (Campbell 1997; Hofer 1979; Holmberg 2005).

The caste system divides people into hereditary groups that are exclusive and exhaustive and orders these groups in a hierarchical system (Dumont 1970; Ishii 2007; Parry 2007). Dumont[34] has argued that the caste system as a whole 'is founded on the necessary and hierarchical coexistence of the two opposites' (1970:43). These two opposites are the pure and the impure (ibid.) that must be kept apart (Searle-Chatterjee and Sharma 1994) and is a point that Bista elaborates on, saying that 'caste essentially involves the ascription of qualities of graduated social pollution, with the most polluted becoming pariahs' (1991:36). Quigley has highlighted that sociological theories of caste focus on the 'ladder-like vertical order' of the system and stress social stratification (Quigley 1994). The anthropological conceptualisation of caste has faced some significant problems in relation to arguments over whether caste is an ancient and indigenous system, or whether it is a product of colonialism[35] (Dirks 2001; Parry

[33] The Nation of Nepal is being continually redefined, most recently in terms of what it means to be a democracy, which is a contested concept that holds various meanings (Snelliger, 2009).
[34] Dumont's construction of the foundation of caste is built on the assumption of a fundamental difference between the Western ideology of equality and the South Asian practice of caste, implicit to the terms 'homo hierarchicus' and 'homo aequalis' that he uses. It has been argued that this construction of the caste system is a totalising view that justifies the domination of caste-ordered societies through colonialism and neo-colonialism by taking an orientalist point of view (Gellner 1995; Parish 1997).
[35] However Parry (2007) notes that caste being understood as a product of colonialism does not satisfactorily explain the presence of the caste system in Nepal, which was never colonised.

2007; Quigley 1993; Quigley 1994). However it is not within the scope of this thesis to comprehensively consider the scholarly debates over the caste system.

Relative positions of power were codified in the *Muluki Ain*, which legislated appropriate interactions between the castes (under which the ethnic and indigenous groups were now incorporated) that was organised on principles of purity such that high caste groups could not accept water or food from low caste groups, among other stipulations, and the breaking of this law incurred penalties (Hofer, 1979). This was a state-sponsored system that:

> Reflects Hindu theory, politics and the administrative needs of a state that during a expansionary phase had conquered quite diverse groups; the state's caste system throws together tribes, castes, and ex-nations, groups of different religions and with fundamentally different social organisations in a kind of Alice-in-Wonderland way for political and administrative convenience. The result is an odd juxtaposing of different kinds of societies. Buddhist and Hindu groups are brought together and have their identities reconstituted; groups aligned culturally with Tibet are thrown together with those oriented toward India; and communities with no internal history or experience of centralised power find themselves placed in the national caste hierarchy.

(Parish 1997:4–5)

Gellner (1997) notes that it was in the first half of the twentieth century, under the rule of the Ranas, that Nepal as a nation state began to be defined with a national identity based on the Nepali language, which had previously been Ghorkali and the original kingdom of the Shah rulers. As a result of a popular political movement led by the Nepali Congress, the Ranas fell in the fifties and the Shah Kings lineage was reinstated. After a short period of parliamentary democracy, a Panchayat system was established that progressed Nepali nationalism through the one nation, one language policy (Whelpton 2005). Nepal was not officially recognised as a multicultural country until the promogulation of the 1990 constitution (Tamang 2001).

The perpetuation of a singular national identity occurred to the detriment of other groups of people and the Nepali nation that was defined as a Hindu kingdom has been contested in recent times. This has been a feature around which movements for the recognition of ethnic (*janājāti*) and indigenous (*adhibasi*) rights have been organised (Fisher 2001; Gellner 2003; Gellner et al. 1997; Gellner and Hachhethu 2008; Hangen 2010). Caste still has a significant impact on social relations, but more recently this is manifested in the pan-ethnic *janājāti* movement that has become a key feature of the political landscape. It must be noted however, that the *janājāti* movement has been closely tied to the Maoist movement, the latter of which has drawn on the discontents of the former (Lecomte-Tilouine, 2004). In my research, the link between proponents

of the *janājāti* movement and the Maoists was evidenced by a Maoist member of the CA from Padampokhari who was a Tamang woman. She spoke candidly and passionately about her role in the People's War and saw her political position as a means of achieving equality for Tamang people.

Emerging cultural identities also offer new ways in which people can imagine themselves and interact and relate to one another and are being recognised in media such as the radio programs EAN produces. These changes have been largely fuelled by the People's Movement of 1990 and have gathered force during the tumultuous years since. The current politics of ethnicity in Nepal (Hangen 2007; 2010) has been growing as these groups demand representation in the new, but as yet, uncompleted constitution. This has often led to violence most prominently in the plains (Tarai) region of Nepal.[36]

The People's Movement precipitated many of these changes underway in Nepal. The conflict was preceded by a popular movement headed by the Nepali Congress that began agitating for multiparty democracy in 1990. In 1996 the People's War began, led by the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist). Driven by widespread poverty, political corruption, lack of equality and civic engagement the conflict endured for a decade, claiming thousands of lives, displacing many people with many more people still missing (Hutt 2004; Whelpton 2005). This conflict has served to bring issues of dispossessed and minority groups to the fore and has fuelled the *janājāti* movement. During the People's War the Maoists were most active in village areas, adopting guerrilla-style tactics and recruiting those people who were dispossessed and disenfranchised, the poor, women and ethnic groups of people.[37] These movements have contributed to the social, political and economic changes taking place in Nepal and represent a collective effort to overthrow a system of governance in favour of a different future that is variously imagined as a 'new Nepal' among diverse groups of people.

The infamous massacre of the royal family occurred during the continuation of fatal clashes between the Maoists and the state and is an event that Manjushree Thapa, in

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[36] Numerous articles have appeared in the Nepali media about ethnic and indigenous rights movements and related violence.

[37] The link between the *janājāti* and Maoists movements has been noted; however the village I worked in was not badly affected during the conflict, despite the fact that it is predominantly inhabited by Tamang people. The contemporary role that the Maoists play is largely a political one that is played out in the capital and local level politics.

her once-banned book *Forget Kathmandu*, recounts as being met with silence from the media:

> None of the Nepali newspapers came that morning [after the massacre]. The private FM stations—of which there were seven in Kathmandu—did not broadcast any morning news, and eventually they all halted transmission. The satellite TV entertainment channels had all been blocked—apparently in mourning, though it felt like in censorship.
>
> (2005:12)

The massacre of the royal family that occurred in June of 2001 was followed by the ascension of King Gyanendra, who declared a state of emergency and the resumption of absolute monarchical power in November of the same year after a ceasefire between the government and the Maoist agitators was broken (Whelpton 2005). This was a period that the country director of EAN described as the worst period for broadcasting "because you really couldn't talk about quite a lot of things" (Naresh, personal interview, Kathmandu, 2nd March, 2009) owing to the censorship (Lakier 2009). A number of directives were issued by the government detailing that any reporting against the King, the Kingdom of Nepal or the Royal army and reporting in favour of the Maoists, was disallowed (Bhattarai 2004b; Hutt 2006). Bhattarai (2004a) notes that by the time censorship ended five months later 180 journalists had been arrested, a number were still in custody and one, Krishna Sen, had died in custody. A period of censorship again ensued in 2005, when King Gynanendra declared a state of emergency and assumed absolute control of the country and the media was again silenced for a period. Hutt (2006) notes that during these periods of censorship public Nepali discourse, that occurred in Nepali language, eventually overcame censorship. This ultimately led to democratic elections and the downfall of the Monarchy.

Kathmandu: The centre

Kathmandu was my first research site. This was my entry point to Nepal, it was where I struggled through bureaucracy to obtain a research visa and, most importantly, it was where the EAN office was located and where the SSMK and NN radio programs are produced. Given that my research aimed to look at the remediation of these radio programs it was important for me to meet the team of producers, have an understanding of the content and learn how these programs are produced and with what objectives. I decided to get started immediately so the day after I flew into Kathmandu I went to the EAN office.

Although the house that I shared with Swiss and British housemates in Kathmandu was in gradual decay, as most things are in Nepal, it was a veritable palace. It was a three-storied, many-roomed house that was surrounded by sprawling and lush gardens, all of which were protected within the confines of a compound wall. It even had a name: Sushil Villa. Sushil Villa was located in an area called Chakupat in Patan (Lalitpur), one of the three former Kingdoms in the Kathmandu Valley (see Figure 2). Chakupat is home to the World Food Programs' Nepal office, the Association of the Community Radio Broadcasters in Nepal and a university campus. These organisations—an International aid office, a national broadcasting association and a university campus—set the tone of the area, which is occupied predominantly by middle-class Nepalis. Chakupat is also home to a number of cosmopolitan shops that suit the tastes of middle-class and young Nepalis[38] and the foreigners who live in or nearby Chakupat. There is, for example, a Japanese bakery that bakes strawberry cream sponge cakes on demand and a pizza shop called the 'New York Pizzeria' that delivers, although you do have to give the directions to your house in Nepali.

The areas surrounding Chakupat, that I walked through to get to the EAN office that morning, are more cosmopolitan than Chakupat. Surrounding Patan Dhoka (Patan's Door)—a large ornamental and free-standing archway marks the entry to the old city of Patan—are cafes that sell pasta and martinis and a book store that stocks at least fifty percent English language books. Another area nearby—Sanepa—is home to numerous foreign embassies, English language private schools and hotels and retailers that cater specifically to foreign tastes and budgets. Bordering Sanepa is Jhamsikhel. This is where the EAN office is located, in between other development agencies, bakeries, cafes and a gym that runs aerobics classes in the mornings.

Before going to the EAN office for the first time I had stayed inside the compound of Sushil Villa—I was admittedly a little afraid to venture out into Kathmandu alone. Stoller (1989) has described his experiences of diving into the sensuous world of Niger after venturing out of his government-funded, air conditioned villa. Stepping outside of the gates of Sushil Villa was a similar experience for me. It was a different world from Sushil Villa's quiet garden and I experienced this world by the way it felt, smelt and sounded. Kathmandu is often described as an assault on the senses. Horns ring out

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[38] See Liechty (1995; 1998a; 2003; 2006) for a discussion on middle-class and youth consumption patterns.

incessantly from passing vehicles and the smell of *daal*[39] and exhaust fumes mingles with the sickly-sweet smell of rot and decay created by piles of rubbish and the humidity that eats at everything. In amongst this business, street dogs scrounge in rubbish piles composed of crisp packets and chocolate bar wrappers for morsels of food, children dressed in smart private school shirts and ties chase one another in the streets and taxi drivers call out "ma'am, where going"?! These smells, sights and sounds formed the sensuous world of Kathmandu that enveloped me as I made my way to the EAN office that morning and that, over time, became familiar and comforting to me.

The EAN office is a busy place. Almost every morning as I climbed the stairs someone would often rush past me in the other direction calling out as they rapidly descended the stairs "good morning Natalie, how are you?" "Oh, where are you going," I would call out, which was met with a distant response about an interview or a production deadline. The EAN office itself is actually housed in two buildings within a compound, the smaller building to the back of the compound houses EAN's one and only recording studio. The larger of the two buildings, an impressive looking four-storey, mint green building replete with white columns, houses the majority of EAN's staff. Most mornings as I made my way up through the belly of this mint-green building, I would pop my head into offices to say good morning.

The SSMK office, the largest office on the second floor, is home to between six and seven people involved in the production of the program. This office usually did not fill up until after nine as many of its inhabitants were at college completing bachelor of masters degrees in the morning. As I popped my head in to say good morning I would be met with a series of "good morning Natalie, how are you"? before enquiring after each of them and asking what they had planned for the day. The SSMK office has large spaces for discussion between producers and walls are covered with posters of events that have been organised by SSMK and photos of the producers themselves as a team in trendy clothes jumping about and leaning on one another (see Figure 6). The photos are a clear reflection of the producers themselves who wear jeans and Converse sneakers and are at ease teasing one another in a mix of Nepali and English languages. These producers are young, cosmopolitan, fashion-conscious, college educated, employed in an NGO and proficient in English (discussed further in Chapter Three). These are attributes that Liechty (2003) has defined as belonging to youth,

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[39] *Daal* is a staple in the Nepali diet. It is a lentil soup that is cooked with onions and spices and eaten with rice and curried vegetables.

which he defines as a new social category emerging through the social change being experienced in Nepal.

The NN radio program is more of a current affairs program and does not have a trendy, youthful image associated with it, which translates in their office space that has little decoration and is often much quieter and less conducive to group discussions. When I would pop my head in to say good morning it was to producers who were often hard at work in front of their computers with headphones on. If there was any chatter it was usually quiet and less playful than that occurring in the SSMK office. These producers were however, no less educated or cosmopolitan than the SSMK producers and most attended college and spoke English well. Although I was originally given a desk and chair in the office of the monitoring and evaluation team I negotiated space in the NN, then SSMK office so that I would have the best chance of learning about program production.

It was during this early period of fieldwork that I felt the awkwardness of being a fieldworker. I felt like an outsider and asked what I'm sure were common-sense and frustrating questions of people who were incredibly busy. I also learnt that in order to go along to meetings and recordings I had to make a nuisance of myself by continually reminding people that I was interested in what they were doing and not to forget about me. I also struggled to access radio scripts, because these were in Nepali and closely guarded. Allen has written about the production of soap opera scripts and the importance of soap operas appearing as though they are a parallel reality:

> In order to "work" on us most effectively the soap opera must appear to be autochthonous—an unauthored, autonomous, self-generating realm existing alongside the world of the viewer. Its driving mechanisms must appear to be internal and not imposed upon it by the exertion of forces beyond or behind it; it must be "another world."

(1985:56)

The guarding of the SSMK radio scripts especially, operated on this principle and the producers expressed their concern that information may reach their listeners that would shatter the image of the program being an impromptu meeting of friends (discussed further in Chapter Three). Sharing the scripts with me when I would be working closely with listeners may have seemed risky to the image that SSMK sought to portray. There also seemed to be a concern that I would not be cautious enough with the scripts and that they would fall into the hands of others, potentially undermining what was often referred to as SSMK's unique and successful formula.

During the initial four months I spent in Kathmandu, and on return trips to the capital from Hetauda during 2008–2009 and again on a follow-up fieldtrip to Nepal in 2010, I engaged SSMK and NN producers, program managers and the country director in informal chats, at least one semi-structured interview per person and one focus group discussion, the latter two of which were recorded and transcribed. I also spent a great deal of time as a 'participating observer' (Bernard 1994), watching the production and recording of both SSMK and NN radio programs and becoming involved in a range of meetings relating to content of these programs as well as general business of EAN. I accessed EAN documentation including donor project reports, project initiation and structure documentation, recordings, letters and, after reassurances on my behalf that I would safeguard them, radio scripts. This all contributed to the knowledge I gained about EAN and the SSMK and NN programs and projects and is a method of data collection that Gusterson has called 'polymorphous engagement' (1997:116). I also took language classes during this time, which helped me to make sense of *Devanāgarī* script,[40] sentence construction and built my vocabulary. However, given that almost all of the people working in the EAN office spoke excellent English, I rarely practiced and did not develop my conversational Nepali until I moved to Hetauda.

Hetauda: On the periphery

One of the biggest concerns during my time in Kathmandu and the EAN office was where I would locate myself to observe local content creation and the use and sharing of SSMK and NN content. Obviously I had to go to a place where the activities I wanted to observe were occurring and accessible, as Hannerz reminds us 'ethnography is an art of the possible' (2003a:213). One of the motivating factors for choosing Hetauda and Makwanpur District was the long and well-known history that Hetauda has had with radio; it was one of the three sites where independent FM radio broadcasting began outside of the Kathmandu Valley in 2000 from Manakamana FM, which has since closed (Onta 2001:76). Since that time however, a number of radio stations have established themselves in Hetauda making this a media-rich town.

Hetauda is the municipal headquarters of Makwanpur district that lies to the South of the Kathmandu Valley and borders the Tarai districts of Bara and Parsa (see Figure 3). Early travel accounts describe Hetauda (referred to as 'Hetaura') as being relatively deserted during the summer months but becoming more populated during the winter

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[40]*Devanāgarī* is the script in which Nepali is written and is a phonetic alphabet derived from Sanskrit (Hutt and Subedi 2003).

due to the prevalence of malaria (Landon 1976:175–8) and as being located on a small plain, with a building for travellers that was predominantly surrounded by jungle (Hamilton 1971:198). Hetauda is now densely populated, a 2002 survey by the Central Bureau of Statistics calculating the population to be almost 68,500 people. Hetauda forms the meeting point between the Mahendra Highway that traverses the entire length of the country from East to West, and the Tribhuvan Rajpath linking India and Kathmandu through Birgunj on the Indian border. This means that a number of trucks and buses pass through Hetauda on their travels making this place a busy thoroughfare of diesel smoke-belching trucks and buses with high-pitched and incessantly sounding horns, a fact for which it is well known, a friend in Kathmandu once calling me 'lorry girl'. These trucks and buses rumble through much of the main street and combine with the motorbikes, tempos and rickshaws to create a great cacophony of noise and movement against which Hetauda's inhabitants and visitors go about their business (see Figure 7).

Before packing my Lonely Planet guidebook for my move to Hetauda I flicked to the page containing a few sentences about my new home in which it was recommended that you only stop there to change buses (Lonely Planet 2006:304). Having travelled to Hetauda for a short trip a month earlier I had to agree. On that trip I had found Hetauda busy, dusty and the lack of anonymity confronting—as I was the only obvious foreigner I was stared at, talked about and approached by strangers wherever I went. Upon moving permanently to Hetauda I found it no less difficult and developed deeply ambivalent feelings toward the town. I discovered that reflecting on uncomfortable and confronting experiences enabled me to distance myself emotionally from these experiences and provided me some solace. Reflecting on these experiences also revealed a great deal about the socio-political context of Hetauda. One particular field diary entry reveals how my white skin, English language and education were viewed and used in Hetauda:

> Saturday morning. I was on my way to the replica of the famous Manakamana Temple that sits atop one of the hills in Hetauda. En route to the Temple, in Hetauda's usually bustling marketplace, I noticed that a marquee of sorts had been erected and stopped to have a closer look at what was going on. It was at this point that I was seized by one of the female organisers and deposited into one of four plastic chairs that sat in front of the banner announcing that this event was a blood donation drive. Nearby were a number of people who were at that time donating, the other people sitting with me, I noticed, were those who had just donated and were having a post-donation snack. Thinking that I had been seized for the purposes of donating my blood I started to explain to my abductor that I was terribly sorry, but I wasn't able to donate blood. She responded in an irritated tone that I was to sit and watch, before directing a cameraman to photograph me. Confused by the situation and momentarily stunned by the flash of

the camera I was unceremoniously pushed out of the chair and to the edge of the event, left only with my discomfort at the entire experience.

(Field diary entry, 2nd August, 2008)

It was after the discomfort of this moment passed that I was able to reflect on and realise that the reason for my discomfort was that I had been used as a symbol to give this blood donation drive legitimacy. Being a white English-speaker marked me as a sort of representation of development and lent the aspects of legitimacy and authority that are inherent to this position, to the blood donation drive. I remember thinking bitterly to myself that I could have been anyone, as long as I was white-skinned, they did not care about who I thought I was but had foisted an identity on me, one that I was forced to accept.

This resonates with what Narayan has written about the multiple identities that we not only have, but are forced to accept as researchers and which she details through her own experience as a researcher both, and at once, an Indian but also a foreigner:

> I would argue that *every* anthropologist exhibits what Rosaldo has termed a "multiplex subjectivity" with many cross-cutting identifications (1989:168–195). Which facet of our subjectivity we choose or are forced to accept as a defining identity can change, depending on the context and the prevailing vectors of power.

(1993:676)

Being positioned by others in the field as foreign and of the developed world, and the aspects of privilege that went along with this, became apparent in those instances where I was used as a symbol. Reflecting on the blood donation drive allowed me to grapple with the identity that I was positioned by and revealed the role that development plays in the Nepali imagination.

I arrived in Hetauda in the July heat in 2008 via a jeep service that regularly operates between Kathmandu, Hetauda and Birgunj. After arriving and dropping my bags in my small, dilapidated hotel room, I made my way to the hotel reception which was staffed by Saru, who later left her poorly-paying job in the hotel to become my research assistant. Saru went almost everywhere with me, translating radio programs as they were being recorded in scribbled note form, acting as my translator in interviews and providing an introduction to the management at a local FM station, a part-time job that she retained. When Saru got married her capacity to work as my research assistant diminished as the responsibilities of her new social role as wife and daughter-in-law took over. Consequently fieldwork hours became restricted and occasionally interrupted.

When I met Saru in the hotel reception on my arrival I handed her a crumpled piece of paper on which a friend in Kathmandu had scribbled the number of a lady her uncle knew and had recommended I stay with. Saru called her for me and half an hour later Saraswati-*didi*[41] as I came to call her, arrived in reception to pick me up. Saraswati-*didi* lived alone, which was unusual, because her husband had gone missing ten years previously.   While many people thought that he had died in a boat accident that occurred around the time of his disappearance in India, Saraswati-*didi* waited for him. She would often reminisce; showing me saris that he had bought her and talking about his habits and the big parties they had thrown, all in Nepali language. Apart from a few words Saraswati-*didi* did not speak or understand English, which was excellent immersion for me and helped me to develop my language skills far more effectively than the language classes in Kathmandu had done. I became Saraswati-*didi's* 'paying guest,' meaning that I was still considered a guest but that I footed the financial burden of my residence in her home. Apart from a few tensions that stemmed from cultural differences we developed an excellent relationship and after my second trip back to Hetauda in mid-2010 Saraswati-*didi* insisted that next time I visited I would come into her home not as a guest, but as a family member.

Saraswati-*didi's* home was a five minute walk to the main street of Hetauda, or *bajār* (market) as it is called, which is bordered by trees that one of the political leaders a number of years ago is said to have seen in Germany and, thinking them beautiful, had them planted in Hetauda. Small shops are crowded on either side of the market and in the smaller streets that branch off it selling internet time, phone cards, shampoo, old and discoloured Mars bars, newspapers and small glasses of steaming tea.   The streets of Hetauda are marked by trendy youths who frequent cafes that sell burgers, *dosa* and cream cakes and have a penchant for playing English and Hindi pop music at full volume from their mobile phones. Hetauda can be described as vernacularly cosmopolitan (Werbner 2006; Werbner et al. 2008).   This is a term that Werbner describes as an oxymoron (2006) that is 'used to refer to alternative, particularly non-Western, forms of cosmopolitanism' (2011:108).   The vernacular cosmopolitanism displayed by young people in Hetauda contrasted with that displayed by young people in Kathmandu. This difference was most obvious to me in the lack of competence and openness in dealing with foreign people and cultures, displayed by young people in

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[41] *Didi* means elder sister and I attached it as a suffix to Saraswati's name to show my respect for her as an elder to me.

Hetauda, in comparison with young people in Kathmandu who displayed behaviour more closely aligned with classic definitions of cosmopolitanism (Hannerz 1990).

The lack of competence displayed by people in Hetauda was evidenced in the open-mouthed stares that my presence in public places provoked, which was at times accompanied by comments such as *moṭo* (fat) or *seto/quiero* (white/light-eyed), highlighting just how different I was. Comments from men such as "hey baby" or "pretty" were common and were often accompanied by a deliberately obvious up and down stare. These comments were interesting in a way as they were clearly plucked from Bollywood and English language films and were being tested out. However not all comments were so harmless and at times seemed to be plucked from pornography, or 'blue films' as they are called (Liechty 2001), and were whispered in low tones or shouted at me; "hey, can I fuck you!" often from a pack of young boys. These sorts of comments are linked to the cultural perception of predominantly foreign women depicted in pornographic films. Nepali understandings of the behaviour portrayed in pornography is linked to what Liechty has called the discourse of freedom resulting from multi-party democracy, development and modernisation in Nepal (1996b; 2001). The construction of women as a result of pornography that occurs within emerging discourses in Nepal is manifested in the harassment of girls by boys. Harassment by boys is not only a problem for foreign women and Nepali women also encounter harassment as they struggle to re-define their femininity within changing contexts (Liechty 2001). These situations made me feel unsafe and threatened and I avoided walking anywhere alone, especially after dark.

When Sam, my partner, arrived in Nepal at the end of October in 2008 until the completion of the fieldwork in March 2009 and began accompanying me, these situations became less frequent and I felt less threatened. We rented our own apartment in Hetauda and called ourselves husband and wife. The presence of my 'husband' caused people to become more comfortable with me; my single female status meant that nobody was responsible for the maintenance of my honour[42] and in conjunction with perceptions of foreign women as 'easy' fuelled by the proliferation of pornography and the discourse of freedom, I was a threatening figure. I was constantly questioned about my capacity to look after myself alone in Nepal by people

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[42] Honour, or *ijjat*, is a property of all Nepalis including women and refers to the reputation of oneself and one's family. Honour must be guarded, usually by fathers, brothers and husbands, and can be lost if women are seen to be engaging in behaviour that may risk the maintenance of that honour, such as being alone in the company of strange men. This is a complex concept that has been discussed in anthropological work (see Cameron 1998; Skinner et al. 1998).

who were visibly concerned. But with the conspicuous presence of my 'husband' these questions ceased and people began to feel more comfortable in my presence because, as I later realised, my honour and the honour of others was more secure with my husband present.

As well as being my home, I also undertook fieldwork in Hetauda, spending a great deal of time at Hetauda FM, a local radio station. Hetauda FM was a broadcast (meaning they broadcast SSMK and NN) and production (meaning they produce local content) partner of EAN. It was here that I engaged in participant observation, sitting in the recording studio as producers recorded a spin-off version of SSMK and Chhar Nepal, the local language version of NN in Tamang language. I spent a great deal of time with the group of program producers who made these radio programs. I got to know the program manager of Hetauda FM, Ripesh and his family well. When I visited their home Ripesh's mother would always insist that I take tea or something to eat and would often talk to me about what, in her opinion, constituted 'proper' Nepali language, customs and norms. Aashish and Mina were both presenters of the spin-off version of SSMK, Young Generation, produced at Hetauda FM, a program in which a number of other producers became involved including Sunita, a singer who was always clad in the trendiest *kurtā-saruwal* designs, Sugeeta, a quiet girl who was the object of Ripesh's affections and Purnima, who also produced the local version of NN called Chhar Nepal. I engaged all of these producers in at least two in-depth interviews with the assistance of Saru, who translated and later transcribed the recordings. I also had numerous informal chats with these producers over tea and snacks or while they were preparing their radio programs in the radio station.

After a major conflict between the producers and the management of the station Ripesh, Sunita, Aashish, Mina, Sugeeta and Purnima quit and formed their own FM station with the financial backing of a former producer at Hetauda FM who had gone on to establish a prosperous media hardware distribution company. I was advised not to attend Hetauda FM for a few weeks, after which I went to meet the new *Chhar Nepal* program producer.[43] However I was never as warmly welcomed as I had been before the conflict, perhaps owing to the friendships I had formed with those producers who had left. Resources also became much more limited at Hetauda FM, the workloads of producers increased and I was denied interviews because they simply did not have

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[43] Young Generation was no longer being produced.

time. Consequently, after the conflict at Hetauda FM, my research there slowly drew to a close.

In Hetauda I also met and interviewed EAN's community reporters, the SSMK regional office staff and a myriad of other people involved in governance, media and local NGOs. I was invited to attend meetings, trainings and 'programs' (*karikrumharu*)— various activities in which people would orate, hold discussions or do activities, all of which were oriented toward locally identified social problems and issues. I visited a number of other radio stations in both Hetauda and Makwanpur district more broadly. Most of these had no relationship to EAN, but nevertheless broadcast the SSMK and NN radio programs because they were popular. At the commercial radio station in Hetauda—Radio Thaha Sanchar—I interviewed the program manager about the sorts of programs they broadcast. Around the corner from Radio Thaha Sanchar was National FM, the oldest radio station in Hetauda that ran on outdated technology and closed shortly after I arrived in Hetauda. Before it closed however, I interviewed the station manager about the history of the station and the radio programs they produced. On a field trip to other radio stations in Makwanpur district I briefly visited Pratidhwani FM, a commercial radio station located in the Mahabharata Ranges and Radio Palung, located nearby. At Radio Palung I interviewed the young producer of a spin-off SSMK radio program as well as the program manager, who I later interviewed a second time when he visited Hetauda. On a return trip in 2010 I interviewed the program manager of Radio Makwanpur, a new community radio station that had been established by the producers who had left Hetauda FM after the 2008 conflict. Saru acted as a translator in all except two interviews, all of which were recorded and later transcribed. As Hetauda was close to Banaspati, my third fieldsite, most of the research occurred simultaneously.

Banaspati: A village for flood victims

After I moved to Hetauda I began to visit SSMK and NN listeners' clubs in Makwanpur district with introductions and assistance from an EAN outreach worker who lived in Hetauda, my research assistant Saru, community reporter Nisha and the SSMK regional office manager Ananta. After a number of meetings and discussions with numerous listeners clubs throughout Makwanpur district I settled on Banaspati village in Padampokhari as a site to work with listeners' club members (see Figure 3). Banaspati, besides being home to both an SSMK and a NN listeners' club, was also relatively close to Hetauda, which meant that trips there would be easier and therefore

more frequent. For practical reasons I did not relocate to live in Banaspati, pitching my tent, as Malinowski would have it in his 'proper conditions for fieldwork' (1966:6). I did however spend the better part of four months in Banaspati 'deeply hanging out' (Clifford 1997:55–58) with the listeners' club members. Here I spent almost all of my time with the SSMK listeners club, discovering that the NN listeners club was defunct. I met the families of the club members and their associated children's and mothers club members.

Padampokhari is the larger organisational unit known as a village development committee (VDC) that incorporates Banaspati village.[44] In 2050 v.s.[45] (1993) a flood devastated areas of Makwanpur district, killing many people and leaving many more homeless and destitute. Banaspati (meaning 'vegetation') village, which was previously an area of uninhabited jungle in Padampokhari VDC, was established for the victims of this flood. Most of the people living in Banaspati at the time of fieldwork, and all of the people I worked with, were victims of this flood. At the time of Banaspati's establishment government officials geographically segregated the village by caste,[46] which I was told by residents was done to prevent conflict and to put people at ease. When I asked directly about inter-caste relationships I was told there were no issues, but from time to time people would comment about being teased for their traditional practices and once a colleague commented that the tension in Banaspati village was perhaps due to the inversion of power inherent to the caste hierarchy. In Banaspati there is a larger population of Tamang people relative to the population of Brahmins and Chhetris (of the 1592 people[47] who live in Banaspati 1043 are Tamang) and my colleague was commenting that this put Tamang people in a relatively powerful position and distorted the power that the Brahmin and Chhetri inhabitants felt belonged to them.

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[44] Padampokhari is one of forty-three VDCs and one municipality of Makwanpur district. Within Padampokhari VDC there are nine wards. Banaspati is within the first ward of Padampokhari VDC, which also incorporates other households that are not within this spatially segregated and geographically-defined village that is Banaspati. Banaspati village however comprises the major area and population of this first ward.

[45] Nepal's official calendar is not based on the Gregorian model, but on the Vikram Sambat (v.s.), which is 56.7 years ahead of the former. The Nepali calendar is based on twelve even months with the New Year beginning on Baisakh first, which corresponds to mid-April by the Gregorian calendar. While many people can cite either date with relative ease the Nepali date is by far the more common one that is used.

[46] Although in Banaspati there were a number of groups of people who self identify as ethnic, the caste system encompasses ethnic and indigenous groups within its hierarchical structure and labels them as *Jat* (caste).

[47] Data collected by local resident and teacher Prithibi Man Waiba for the local primary school.

Tamang people are of Tibeto-Burmese descent and live predominantly in the central and foothills areas of Nepal (Bista 1967). Tamang people have their own language, Tamang, and their own rituals and practices that vary from Hindu practices (Holmberg 2005). Although not Hindu, Tamang people have been subsumed into the Hindu hierarchy and, as I was often told by Tamang people, have as a result been historically treated poorly and afforded less opportunity. Hangen notes that 'ethnic labels lack historical depth...The appearance of a people as a coherent ethnic group reflects a group's particular historical relationship with the state more than its cultural distinctiveness' (2010:27). Thus some of the diverse *bhoṭe*[48] groups of people who collectively became known as Tamangs 'became known as a singular ethnic group because the state used these people as a source of forced labour due to their location near the Kathmandu Valley' (ibid.).

Holmberg et al. says that Tamang people were 'subordinated in the structures of the State, [they were] people who in the ideology of the Hindu state were not quite untouchable but nevertheless enslavable and despicable' (1999:5). The labelling of some groups of *bhoṭe* people as Tamang signalled their inclusion within the predominant Hindu hierarchy in Nepal owing to their economic significance as forced labour. Their ambiguous status however meant that 'they were abhorrent because they were separate, but their separateness gave them the power of inclusion as a clean caste' (Holmberg 2005:30). Those formally labelled as Tamang by royal decree in the 1930s thus occupied a position in the Hindu caste hierarchy as 'enslavable alcohol drinkers' for whom the *Muluki Ain* outlined appropriate behaviour, interaction with other caste groups and punishment for not observing these rules (Hofer 1979). It has been argued that Tamang is an administrative creation, leading Sonntag (1995) to suggest that Tamang may be a pan-identity.

When I visited Banaspati for the first time I was immediately struck by the uniformity of the homes. There are 400 households divided into seventeen evenly spaced rows of houses on each side of the main dirt road that bisects the village starting from a large concrete structure (*chowk*) at the top part of the village. Although some rows have more houses there are generally eight houses to a row, four either side facing each

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[48] *Bhoṭe* was used as a term within the state law (*Muluki Ain*), and also within Nepali vernacular, to refer to groups of people of Tibetan descent. In the *Muluki Ain* the term *bhoṭe* refers to a number of groups of people of Tibetan descent who were classified as enslavable. Hofer (1979) notes that '*Bhoṭya*' was 'a sort of reservoir for degraded persons of various ethnic origin' (ibid.: 125) and is a term that is used contemptuously even now as 'a synonym for 'savage', 'dirty fellow', 'serf', 'beef-eater' and the like' (ibid.).

other, each of which is a maisonette. I had travelled to other villages during my fieldwork and Banaspati's structures and organisation was rather unique, which was due to the fact that it was a purpose-built village funded and built by the government of Nepal with the assistance of international aid from Taiwan. The resultant houses all have the same structure—three rooms ranging in size from large to small built in a rectangular shape.

The houses have an outdoor toilet and a small amount of land that residents generally use for farming. While the houses in Banaspati have electricity they do not have running water. Residents access their water from shared taps located in every row of houses in the village. The *chowk* was a place where children played and people gathered to sit and chat. At one side of the *chowk* sits a temple, which is next to the entrance of the local primary school. On another side is a small collection of shops selling packets of biscuits and juice, next to which the rows of houses begin. These rows of houses extend all the way to the bottom of the village where there is a government-owned garden and a recently established health centre.

To reach Banaspati I either had to walk, or as I often did, ride my 100cc Hero Honda Splendor that I named Sriste,[49] through the river that separates Banaspati from Hetauda. On a return trip in 2010 during the end of the monsoon season it rained so heavily that the river rose and flowed so quickly that it became unsafe to cross, which resulted in the cancellation of a number of interviews. During the dry season however the water slows and the river is easy to cross, and even pleasant on a hot day. The walk from the river to Banaspati is a short uphill before you reach the *chowk* and the main street (see Figure 8). On my way to the village some of the children would often see me and come to greet me and together we would make our way to either the SSMK club president's house or the SSMK clubhouse, which was where I spent most of my time and which are both in a top, left row of the village, the designated Tamang area.

Banaspati smelt, felt and sounded different from Kathmandu and Hetauda. Vehicles rarely passed through Banaspati, the village was instead marked by foot traffic and public spaces where people gathered, washed their dishes and themselves and chatted or stared after children as they chased bike tyres with sticks. People sat in small, make-shift stores that sold crisps, warm cartons of juice and shampoo sachets,

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[49] In Banaspati the presence of Sriste in the main street indicated that I was there and the members of the Janahit and associated child club would often come to find me and say hello, telling me that they knew I was there because they had seen 'Sriste Greenland' in the street.

or on stools and house porches 'time-passing', as it was called. There were no English signs or speakers there, no sealed roads and everywhere I went I trailed a cohort of children that stared up at me with snotty noses or fought with each other to have a turn of holding my hand. The older and more daring children tried out English phrases they had learnt in school and asked me "how do you like Nepal"? This Pied-Piper effect made participant observation particularly difficult because I often became the centre of attention. As people got used to me this difficulty abated and I was able to sit with people, chat and observe their activities.

In Banaspati village I spent most of my time in the clubhouse of the local SSMK listeners' club. This was a versatile space that became very serious, orderly and quiet during a program, but was predominantly marked by chatter, singing and dancing (listen to Track 1). A field diary entry of an evening I spent in the clubhouse describes how the space was used:

> During the day the streets of Banaspati are usually full of people chatting, collecting water and going about their business. But the night is dark and quiet and not a little eerie for the full moon and empty streets. The Janahit clubhouse is like a beacon in this stillness, as we draw nearer the light and chatter grows closer and louder and is in complete opposition to the streets. Abandoning our footwear on the porch, Saru and I enter the clubhouse and are greeted by the sight of a dozen primary school aged children, girls and boys, who are seated on the concrete floor with their school text books sprawled out in front of them. A few children look up at me with pencils in hand before going back to their work or conversations with friends. This is the time when they ask their peers and Janahit club members questions about their homework.
>
> The Janahit members are sitting in an adjoining room chatting amongst themselves and fielding questions from the younger children. Prithibi, who has a wide grin and easy laugh, is nearest the door and is the most often approached because he is a teacher at the local school. Dudumaya has taken a seat next to Bidhya and Sukumaya—her two best friends—and the three of them are chatting quietly together. Kumari, who is also a teacher, is sitting nearby Saraswati, who has a scarf wrapped around her head and notebook in her lap. Saraswati looks on as Prenam waves at me to get my attention to ask me about a documentary she saw on Australia. As we chat the younger children start to filter into this room to listen and ask their own questions—the pull to ask me about Australia is overtaking their need to do homework. The sound of drum playing fills the room and I turn to see one of the Janahit members tapping out a rhythm on a typical Tamang hand held drum made of animal hide and wood. Singing shortly ensues and I'm cajoled into treating everybody to the great comical act of my poor dancing. The fun is short-lived however, as the Janahit members must now practice the drama that they will perform in Hetauda tomorrow. Their rehearsal is briefly interrupted by the evening's scheduled power cut with little fuss before the gas lamp is located, lit and the drama continues.

(Field diary entry, 11th December, 2008)

The relationships between members of the listeners' club were close; they supported one another in their endeavours and during difficulties and problems. Many relationships were based on mentorship and this structured the club house, how and

for what it was used and the way that I came to understand it—as somewhere members could have fun, learn, speak and be heard. The closeness between the listeners' club members was marked in a tactile way by members of the same sex; the girls of the club often leaned on one another and rested arms on one another's knees. It is common in Nepal to see boys holding hands with other boys and similarly girls holding hands or linking arms with other girls. Such behaviour arrests the attention of many visitors from Western countries and questions and assurances about the practice populate internet travel forums. It is less common to witness inter-gender touching however; such occurrences were much more common in the capital Kathmandu and evident in the interactions between the SSMK producers that contrasted with the listeners' club members. The physical separation between the sexes in Nepal is linked to beliefs and practices of impurity and honour (see Cameron 1998). These are practices that my research participants might refer to as 'traditional', meaning that they are outdated, in need of change and ultimately antithetical to development (discussed in Chapter Five). The display by SSMK producers of greater comfort with the opposite sex indicates a shift away from traditional beliefs and practices. The fact that the SSMK listeners' club members were not as comfortable with the opposite sex indicates an important difference that speaks to the existence of social distance between them and the SSMK producers which will be discussed at greater length in Chapter Three.

The NN listeners' group, *Merika Kishori Samuha* (Beautiful Flower Girls Group, hereafter referred to as Merika) had almost completely collapsed at the time of fieldwork, bar money saving and lending activities. The collapse of this club was attributed by members to the lack of support and coordination between the members, many of them moving outside of the village for study or marriage, as well as the failure of a chicken farming venture supported by the local NGO General Welfare Prathistan (GWP):

> "In the beginning, GWP gave 1000 rupees to the club to conduct activities like poultry farming. We started keeping the poultry, making a specific routine amongst ourselves to look after it. We had to work hard for there was always a threat that the chickens would be diseased. Gradually, there was a loss. We became hopeless. Even the friends did not have good relations for this reason because the loss created a kind of conflict and misunderstanding amongst them. A kind of misunderstanding about the expenses cropped up. There was a real quarrel."

> (Prenam, personal interview, Banaspati, 2nd October, 2008)

As Merika was no longer active I consequently spent the great majority of my time with the SSMK listeners group that was called the *Janahit Yūba Samuha* (Youth Group for Peoples Welfare, hereafter referred to as Janahit), but given the cross-over of

membership some of the members of Janahit were also members of Merika and vice versa. There were a number of members of Janahit who were rarely involved in meetings, social gatherings and activities. These members were engaged in full-time work in Banaspati and other places and could no longer spare the time to engage in club activities. Consequently I spent most of my time with the members who were engaged in club activities and made-up the board.

Janahit is one of over 1000 listeners clubs associated with the SSMK radio program. According to SSMK presenters, producers and publications, these clubs were formed in response to feedback from listeners that the content of the radio program (pre-marital sex, masturbation etc. see Appendix 3) raised objections from their parents and grandparents. The program presenters consequently advocated for the formation of listeners clubs as a means for young people to listen to and discuss the radio program amongst their peers 'and use the information and skills imparted by the program for their personal development' (Quilt and Shrestha 2008:49). SSMK has stressed that the initial formation of the listeners clubs was spontaneous and only later became a formal network organised and maintained by an outreach team employed by EAN. This formal network enabled SSMK 'to draw on this strong resource of active youth, training and mobilising the young people for different causes' (Quilt and Shrestha 2008:54).

The Janahit club is comprised of a board of members and chairperson, secretary and treasurer roles. Janahit is headed by Dudumaya, a slight girl of nineteen who, despite her size and age, is an authoritative voice within the club. Dudumaya has long, glossy black hair that she never cut or wore in a fashionable way as some of the other girls did and often wore an expression of intense concentration. She is the strongest driving force of the club, encouraging many others to join, listen to the radio and become involved in club activities. Dudumaya is a middle child of a Tamang family displaced from a remote area of Makwanpur by the 2050 (1993) flood. Dudumaya's family own two houses in Banaspati, one of which is the current clubhouse. The economic condition of her family however had not always been secure and Dudumaya had to quit school for two years due to poverty, an experience that has driven her to strongly support education. While she pursued her own education—she was completing a bachelor's degree during 2008-2009—she also worked as a volunteer in other socially focussed activities and groups and part-time in radio as well as for EAN as a community-based researcher. Dudumaya is a strong supporter of Tamang culture and rights and is a member of a number of organisations and societies. A friend once

alluded to her political activeness and suggested that she would be the first female VDC secretary. I formed an excellent relationship with Dudumaya and she became my most important, open and reliable informant.

I also worked with a number of other club members including Prithibi, the secretary of the club and also a teacher at a nearby primary school. He was the oldest member of the club at twenty four. Prenam is Prithibi's younger sister and sacrificed her education for that of her brother when their family could only afford to continue sending one child to school. Prenam returned to school three years later with fervour and successfully attracted a number of scholarships. Sukumaya, the treasurer of the club, lives with her mother, sister-in-law and cousins, her father and brother work abroad. Sukumaya worked full-time in the government-owned garden in Banaspati and was heavily involved in the activities of the club. She would often walk around the garden with her mobile phone in her pocket and her radio headset either plugged into her ears or hanging about her neck. This was such a common feature of Sukumaya that Kanchan once referred to her as an 'insect of radio' (see Figure 9).

Kanchan is the former secretary of the club but gave up the post when he moved to Kathmandu to study. He returned to Banaspati in late 2008 however and re-joined the club as a board member. Kanchan is the brother of Bidhya, who is also a general board member. Bidhya, Sukumaya and Dudumaya are very close friends, Bidhya once telling me that she just cannot keep anything from either Sukumaya or Dudumaya. Saraswati is the only non-Tamang member of the club and during the fieldwork period she conflicted with the club because her parents took issue with her hanging out with Tamang people all of the time. Consequently Saraswati often shirked club responsibilities and told me things about the club that the other members monitored and later contested.[50] The conflict between Saraswati and the other club members is part of a larger power struggle in Banaspati in which development offers a means for the subordinated Tamangs to become socially mobile. However, the opportunity for social mobility challenges the historically dominant position of high caste Brahmins and engenders social tensions that are played out in day-to-day interactions. Suman was one of the youngest board members of the club and was recruited because he had his citizenship certificate[51] and could thus become an official

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[50] In one instance Saraswati told me that the Janahit club did not cooperate with other clubs and organisations in Banaspati. Dudumaya's younger sister joined the interview to listen in and Dudumaya later approached me to contest Saraswati's claim.

[51] Citizenship certificates are not granted at birth, but must be sought after one reaches the age of sixteen. The 1964 Citizenship Act restricted the granting of citizenship by descent from

board member of the club. Suman rarely attended the club or any activities. Finally, Deepak was involved in the club as a board member until he got a driving job in another district. This occurred soon after I arrived in the field, consequently he had little to do with the research.

The Janahit club members had also established a children's club, the members of which ranged in age from five to fourteen years. The children's club members often joined in the activities of the Janahit club and were consequently closely linked to the former, members of either club being inseparable from each other. The Janahit club members requested that I interview a few of the older child club members, which I did, engaging five children in one thirty minute informal interview each. These interviews were attended by Dudumaya, Bidhya and the other members of the children's club and were recorded, translated and transcribed by Saru.

Besides interviewing the child club members I also conducted at least two semi-structured interviews of an hour's length with each club member and double that with the club's chairperson. These interviews focussed on consumption of the SSMK and NN radio programs and other media, as well as the interviewee's involvement in the club and club activities and also aimed to learn more about the lived experience of the club members (Spradley 1979). Saru acted as a translator in each of these interviews, which were recorded and later transcribed.   Apart from these interviews I had innumerable chats with Janahit members in the clubhouse, in the gardens, on house porches and on the road as well as observing and participating in the activities they organised such as rubbish cleaning and street dramas.

I used the participatory method of community mapping, in which one person or a group of people would draw their community on a large sheet of paper (see Figure 10). Amsden and Wynsberghe say that 'the final...maps, offer a rich and layered description of the mapmakers' perspective of the local environment' (2005:362).   Given that Banaspati is a geographically segregated village based on caste I thought that community mapping would be a useful technique as it allows the participant to draw their village, providing a picture or map as they themselves see their village (ibid.). While the drawings were by and large quite similar, what changed was what the participant chose to draw first and most carefully, which was often the immediate area

Nepali men and privileged those who subscribed to the state-sponsored drive for a Nepali national identity (discussed in Chapters One and Four). The amended Citizenship Act of 2006 (Nepal Law Commission 2063 [2006]) provided for citizenship by birth, but continues to exclude people who are illiterate and lacking the required documentation (see White 2009).

surrounding their homes. Asking in which places they spent their time and where the homes of their friends were was also interesting, as these appeared to stick to caste lines, graphically represented as a predominance to spend more time on one side of the village rather than the other.

I used a basic form of communicative ecology (Tacchi et al. 2003) to learn more about the sorts of media that my informants accessed. Communicative ecology has been used in the context of communication for development to conceptualise the impact of new information communication technologies (ICTs). The communicative ecology is a way to conceptualise all of the communication and information systems that people access and use, how use is constrained and how these systems are inter-related (Butler 2007). Rather than separating communication and information systems, the communicative ecology recognises that these systems are 'part of much more complicated ecologies' (Tacchi et al. 2003:15). While the basic communicative ecologies I mapped revealed rather less access of information and lower proficiency in using new media forms in Banaspati compared with those participants based in Hetauda, they served as a starting point to think about information and communication access and use.

To try and gather some 'thicker' description (Geertz 1973) about the media use of my informants and the role that this played in their lives, I requested that they keep a media journal for a week about what media they accessed, when, how, and what they thought about it. This proved to be a little difficult however because it was a time-intensive task, consequently I managed to get only five people to do this at varying levels of depth. Dudumaya wrote the most detailed media diary entries, which provided insight in to how she used media in her daily life and what she thought about what she heard:

> Today is Saturday and a holiday in college so I woke up late. I brought water at 6am. I worshipped and drank tea then tuned to Hetauda FM, music was playing. In the morning at 7.30am I tuned to Radio Palung to listen to Naya Nepal, but the power cut off and I felt bored. I couldn't listen to different radio programs, the messages given by these programs because of the electricity. Nepal is the second richest country in the world for water, but in Nepal there is always a lack of electricity, for this we can feel embarrassed in front of others. Again at 7.45 electricity came on, a sweet song was playing. In the song the singer sang about new Nepal. The song drew out the picture which was similar with the context of Nepal. Truly, if all Nepalese people imagined new Nepal like this from their area and forced related people and organisations for new Nepal we Nepalese can get new Nepal like our imagination. After that in Dhankutta, Korlikharka VDC's Dhikure Dada's field report about peace park was encouraging. To establish peace in society we can do every and anything, this peace park was an example of this.

(Dudumaya, media diary entry, 27th December, 2008)

Dudumaya's media diary not only provided an insight into how she used radio media in her daily life, but also the things it made her think about. Another of her media diary entries reinforced the importance of Tamang language in making her feel included in an imagined Tamang community, which is a key point that is discussed further in Chapter Four.

Conclusion

This chapter has described the structure of EAN's communication for development initiative that incorporates radio program production in Kathmandu and supports and encourages what I have conceptualised as remediation (Bolter and Grusin 1999) of these by local radio station producers and listeners' club members. A multi-sited methodology (Falzon 2009; Hannerz 2003a; 2003b; Kurotani 2004; Marcus 1995) was essential to look at the remediation of NN and SSMK content in Hetauda and Banaspati. Viewing these radio programs as having biographies (Kopytoff 1986) allowed me to view the cases of remediation as interactions that modified and shaped the original content into something slightly different. This was due in part to the different contexts that shaped the remediation of these programs.

The multi-sited approach to ethnographic fieldwork has been critiqued for lacking adequate depth because multi-sited methodology opposes classical anthropological methodology of long-term residence among one group of people within a defined geographical area. However Hannerz makes the point that this 'argument may sometimes be a bit beside the point: multi-site studies have foci which should not be compared to holistic local community studies' (2009:278). This is precisely the point— as the SSMK and NN radio programs traversed EAN's dissemination routes I charted their social lives and reincarnations (Appadurai 1986; Kopytoff 1986). This could not be done from one vantage point as this would only have revealed a partial picture (Hannerz 2003b). A multi-sited approach was essential to discovering the process and outcomes of the remediation of the SSMK and NN radio programs by local radio program producers and listeners' club members in Makwanpur district.

This chapter has described Kathmandu, Hetauda and Banaspati as different from one another and characterised by people with different experiences. I have argued in Chapter One that remediation, as well as affecting the radio program content, also shapes the subjectivities of those people involved in EAN's projects into youth. This occurred through interactions with the radio programs as part of the process of

remediation in each of the sites where I undertook multi-sited research.   In the chapters that follow I elaborate on the parts of the overall picture, beginning with the production of the SSMK and NN radio programs in Kathmandu.

Figure 6: Photos of the SSMK Team on the Wall of the SSMK Office

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held by the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 7: Hetauda's main road busy with trucks

Figure 8: Main road of Banaspati village

Figure 9: Sukumaya wearing her mobile phone headset around her neck.

NOTE:
This figure/table/image has been removed
to comply with copyright regulations.
It is included in the print copy of the thesis
held by the University of Adelaide Library.

Figure 10: Community Mapping
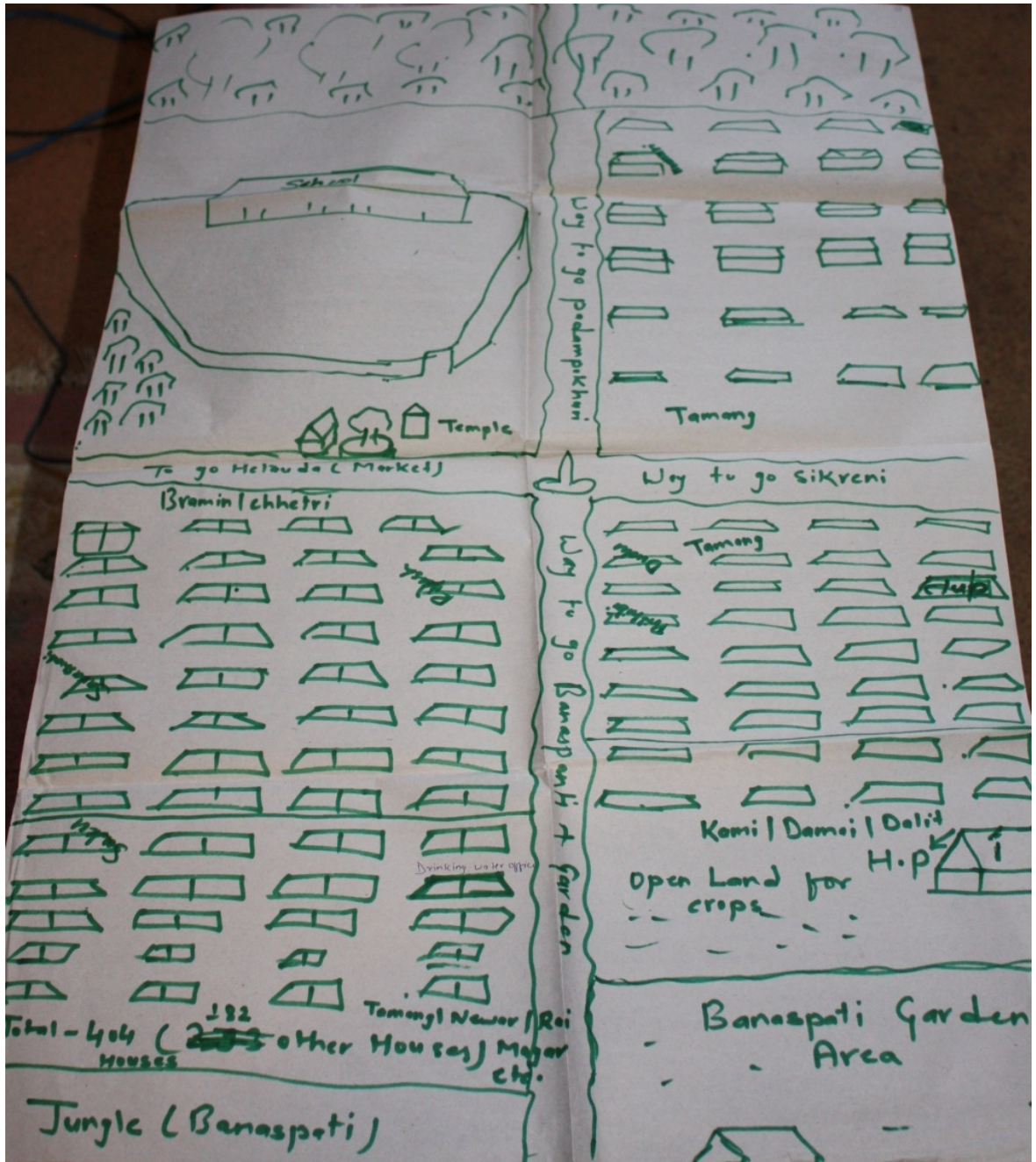
Chapter Three   Representing a Youth Archetype in Kathmandu

In this chapter I illustrate that the *Sāthi Saṅga man kā Kura* (SSMK) and *Naya Nepal* (NN) radio programs construct an archetypal youth subject that is marked by the key attribute of action. This archetype is represented in the SSMK and NN radio programs:

> "If you're to succeed and make your life better, you must wisely look for the opportunities. If we look at the present trend, most of our friends are found sitting idle thinking that the doors of possibility are closed and nothing can be achieved...If we think [about]...which actions lead us to success and improve our skills accordingly, we can easily grab opportunity."

(SSMK episode 259)

If you are to succeed in changing your life, you yourself must act to change it. So says an SSMK host in the excerpt of an episode above. Similarly, if you are to change the society in which you live, as an NN host suggests, "Youth like you and I should do something to maintain peace and security in our society" (NN episode 350). The key theme espoused by the hosts in these episode excerpts is action, it is 'doing something' as Nisha suggested in the introduction to this thesis. The things that youths do, their actions that are referred to here, are socially conscious activities such as cleaning rubbish from the streets or raising awareness about the transmission of HIV, but also relate to personal achievements, such as education.

In this chapter I focus on the production of the SSMK and NN radio programs and the representation of a youth archetype in these radio programs. I discuss how the role models used in the SSMK radio program are guided in their actions by a specific set of skills developed by United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) called 'life skills'. It is written in a booklet produced by Equal Access Nepal (EAN) about the SSMK radio program that life skills 'enable us to translate our knowledge, attitude and values into actual abilities in our everyday lives' (Quilt and Shrestha 2008:66). I also discuss how the role models used in the NN radio program demonstrate a concern with nation building, whether through the role models' own self-transformation and development of 'awareness' (Fujikura 2001), or through activities aimed at local community development. Together, these radio programs perpetuate a category of youth and an idea of a 'new Nepal' that has emerged as part of the social, political and economic change sparked by the People's Movement, monetisation of the economy,

development discourse and increasing access to education (Ahearn 2004; Liechty 2003; Whelpton 2005).

I argue that the central aim of the SSMK and NN radio programs is to encourage the imitation of the youth archetype role models by listeners. These role models can be conceptualised as 'opinion leaders' (Rogers 1983). In the *Diffusion of Innovations* Rogers (1983) defines opinion leaders as those people within a social system who are able to informally influence the attitudes and behaviours of others in the same social system. Rogers theorised that opinion leaders are able to contribute to the diffusion of new ideas within a society because they are respected social insiders and similar to the types of people among whom change is sought (1983).[52] Bandura's (1977) social learning theory similarly posits that people learn from and imitate role models. Rogers (1983) argued that this was similar to opinion leaders who can be used to effect behaviour change. The diffusion of innovations and social learning are key theories on which behaviour change communication (BCC) initiatives are developed and understood to bring about change and components of these theories can be seen in EAN's projects that include the SSMK and NN radio programs.

I consider the expectation of imitation of the youth archetype represented in the SSMK and NN radio programs to be problematic because BCC and life skills are based on Eurocentric models that aim to change the subjectivities of listeners to make them more rational individuals capable of independent and consequential action. Eurocentrism has been defined as a European-centred worldview that positions ideal European standards and practices as globally superior. Eurocentrism posits that imitation of ideal standards and practices are a means of advancement and are seen as benchmarks against which the practices of others are evaluated and judged as inferior or lacking (Amin 1989; Mehmet 1999). Behaviour change theories have largely been developed by Western scholars and are based on Western psycho-social knowledge paradigms. Such theories are 'intrinsically Eurocentric' (Sardar 1999:47) because of their origins and their core goal of changing third world peoples into an 'ideal of the cultivated European' through development interventions (Escobar 1995:43). Although this has been a historical goal tied to modernisation, the aim of changing the subjectivities of the beneficiaries of development remains in contemporary theory and practice. Changing subjectivities is a fundamental aim of life skills. Life skills promote the individual as the locus of change through developing

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[52] Rogers defined this as *homophilous.*

rational thought and the capacity for independent action. Life skills act on people's inner selves and are based on development ideology that supposes that the problem of development is really a lack of essential inner qualities (cf Fujikura 2001; Karp 2002). Behaviour change theories and life skills are problematic when they are imported into alternative contexts where the assumptions on which they are based do not resonate with socio-cultural norms and practices (UNAIDS 1999).

The youth archetype is also mediated by cosmopolitan radio program producers who draw on their own lived experience of being predominantly middle-class, cosmopolitan and Kathmandu-dwellers who are socially distant from their predominantly regionally and rurally-located listeners. The distance between radio program producers and listeners derives from the real distance between the capital Kathmandu and regional and rural areas of Nepal that have given rise to greater social distance discussed in Chapter Two. To demonstrate that SSMK and NN are based on Eurocentric models of development that are mediated by cosmopolitan producers, I consider the impact that donors and producers have on the SSMK and NN radio programs. I argue that donors, by dictating what themes are to be addressed in these radio programs, perpetuate development discourse that positions Nepal and Nepalis as underdeveloped and prescribe avenues through which to achieve development. The SSMK and NN radio programs, I argue, ultimately represent a youth archetype that is based on a confluence of donor impact, mediation by producers and Eurocentric development models. This youth archetype is most often represented as engaged in the nation building project that is colloquially referred to as 'new Nepal'.

Donors and Producers: Shaping SSMK and NN radio programs

International development organisations UNICEF and The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) have been the largest funders of EAN's radio program production and associated outreach projects (discussed in the following chapters). The funding of these projects is done on the basis of supporting what have been identified in global development discourse as significant issues or problems (such as HIV/AIDS, women's empowerment, nutrition). UNICEF, a major funder of the SSMK radio program, has a condition attached to their funding that for every eight episodes of SSMK, HIV/AIDS, girl's education, peace and reconciliation and sexual reproductive health and rights must be addressed. Essentially this means that the themes of half of all SSMK programs have been determined by the donor. These themes reflect UNICEF's priority working areas that focus on education, gender

equality, HIV/AIDS, child protection and child survival and development (UNICEF 2011).[53] Similarly, the NN radio program, which was funded by USAID, was required as part of their project funding to focus on peace building in the wake of the civil conflict with the aim of creating a safer and more secure region.

Themes such as gender equality and peace and reconciliation are reflective of development discourse that is based on internationally sanctioned conventions and targets. Skuse says that:

> While it hard to argue against the realisation of human rights for poor people...the dominant logic...is that the developing world should be 'made-over' in the image, structure and values of the developed world, reflective of fully democratic and effective governance, public services that alleviate social deprivation, the provision of security and realisation of a range of personal freedoms, including freedom of expression, information and self-determination.

(2012:4)

The themes of the SSMK and NN radio programs, which are to a large extent prescribed by the donors, perpetuate international development discourse that intimates that these are problematic areas in which Nepal, and Nepali citizens, need to improve. Highlighting certain areas that need improvement through communication for development (C4D) initiatives such as the SSMK and NN radio programs, positions Nepalis as disadvantaged and backward relative to the global north. The circulation of such ideas through C4D initiatives is a significant way in which such discourses can get traction and become aspirational concepts (Skuse 2012). This is because C4D initiatives are based on local frames of relevance and morality and 'when policies and positions of states and non-state actors have moral authority, or are seen as legitimate in the eyes of others, their soft power is increased' (Gilboa, 2008:60–61 quoted in Skuse 2012:6). Skuse has described such C4D initiatives as 'soft power public diplomacy' that play an important role in supporting development and democratisation through the ways in which such initiatives can creatively and subtly combine development discourse with culturally appropriate radio drama.

The impact that development discourse might have on shaping subjectivities through 'soft power' is mediated by producers. During the time of the conflict between the Maoists and the State, the producers discussed the extreme caution they had to exercise to remain apolitical and not get into trouble with either the Maoists or the State. The intimidation tactics employed by both sides have been documented

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[53] Responding to emergencies is also a priority working area for UNICEF.

elsewhere (Hutt 2006), however, the NN and SSMK program producers were extremely cautious in their approach and did not probe specific or sensitive cases, but spoke about issues at a more abstract level.

The SSMK and NN radio programs, which are designed for and aimed at all Nepalis, are produced in the capital Kathmandu by people living in Kathmandu. There is a significant divide between Kathmandu and rural areas of Nepal. This is experienced by people living in regional and rural areas in terms of less opportunity for employment and education and relegation to the peripheries of development and modernisation. This divide is addressed to some extent by the inclusion of audio content from the 'field',[54] listeners' letters and the support and encouragement of local and spin-off versions of NN and SSMK respectively (discussed in Chapter Four). However, the production quality of these local and spin-off programs is not as high as the SSMK and NN productions, which remain better known and listened to. The SSMK and NN producers, as translators and mediators of development through the SSMK and NN radio programs, are key people that deserve due consideration.

The SSMK and NN radio programs construct role models (Bandura 1977; Rogers 1983) that both buy into and contribute to the construction of the youth identity employed by NGOs (such as EAN) and civil society groups and organisations (for example, the Association of Youth Organisations Nepal). These role models exemplify a youth that is characterised by a proficiency in life skills and capacities for choice, independence and rationality and a concern with their responsibility as nation builders. The producers, who present themselves as youth role models, tackle issues (such as education and justice) in ways that exemplify and define youth concerns and practice. The role models represented in the radio programs depend to a large extent on the producers' own experiences of being young in Kathmandu.

The original hosts of the SSMK radio program who began when SSMK was initiated in 2001 were replaced by new, younger hosts in March of 2009. This change was enacted to keep the SSMK program responsive and in tune with a young audience, as a member of the production team explains:

> "It's been already eight years that we are running the SSMK. When we were about twenty or twenty-one years old, when we were teen actually at the time. And now we are already grown up with the SSMK...So now we are thinking that it's right time to hand over to the teenagers...when we were in the teenage, that time, we think like the

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[54] Audio content collected from the 'field' refers to recordings that are taken in regional and rural areas throughout Nepal.

teenage and the teenagers used to relate with us...But nowadays it's been a little bit matured...again there is a need of teenagers...Now...what are the teenagers thinking and way of thinking...we might again have to go and research. But these teenagers doesn't need to research because they are the teenagers, they can directly say."

(Basant, personal interview, Kathmandu, 4th March, 2009)

SSMK producers contend that the experience of being a 'teenager', as described by the production team member is something that can only be fully understood by other teenagers. Only teenagers can relate with other teenagers and understand the issues of this group to successfully create a radio program based on that experience. This indicates that this group can only be fully experienced from within, and only for a certain amount of time, before one becomes unable to relate.   Importantly it also indicates that producers premise their understandings on their own lived experience and translate that into the radio programs. Inherent to the idea that producers must draw from their own lived experience of being a teenager in order that they can better relate to their audience is an assumption that being a teenager is a homogeneous experience.   However, as discussed in Chapter Two, Kathmandu is different from Makwanpur and the SSMK producers are also different from their regionally and rurally located audiences.   This is shown in the English language proficiency, education, dress and cosmopolitan attitudes of the SSMK producers in comparison with their audiences.

Liechty (2003) says that education is a commodity, a marker of middle classness that is shown through English language proficiency. The SSMK production team were all proficient in English; they were so fluent in fact that all of the interviews I conducted with them were in English. It was not only for my benefit that the producers spoke in English; I would often find them in their office and in meetings discussing issues in half English and half Nepali, code switching that they referred to as *Nepāngreji*.[55] Code switching has been defined as 'a discourse phenomenon in which speakers rely on the juxtaposition of grammatically distinct subsystems to generate conversational inferences' (Gumperz, 1982:97 quoted in Liechty, 2003:xiv).   Conversational code switching such as, "Hello hello *sāthi*" (friends) (SSMK episode 372) was common and 'indicates how Nepali speakers signal new epistemological codes that are simultaneously acknowledged as foreign (because they are in English) and local (because they are incorporated into Nepali utterance)' (Liechty 2003:xiv).   Acharya notes that such code switching 'is used to indicate younger generations' modern

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[55] *Nepāngreji* is a compound Nepali phrase that combines *Nepā* for the Nepali language and *Angreji,* which is the Nepali term for the English language.

identities' (2010:59) because an individual's subscription to a social identity is constructed in part through language use (Fuller 2007).

Proficiency in English is a marker of education and status, and by code-switching the SSMK and NN producers were making statements about their educational attainment (Kunreuther 2010). Liechty says that:

> As a rule of thumb, the higher the tuition fees, the better the quality of English instruction. For more and more people in Kathmandu, English proficiency is...the key to a better future, [and] an index of social capital...Education, and especially English proficiency, has been commoditized such that for the most part, consumers get what they can pay for.

> (2003:213)

The young SSMK producers were all well educated and one producer remarked that:

> "I think I'm one of the privileged person living in Nepal because I've always got to live in the capital city, get the best of the education that's available here. So I feel privileged in a way and also thankful. Life has not been so hard for me as compared to other people that I know in Nepal generally."

> (Sabita, personal interview, Kathmandu, 4th August, 2010)

All of the SSMK producers were either engaged in, or had just completed some sort of study, all having at least a Bachelors degree, while some of them were Masters students or planning to apply for a Masters degree. One of the producers wanted to go abroad to complete his Doctorate, while a number of the other producers spoke about their and their families' desire for them to go abroad to study. Their families were predominantly from the Kathmandu Valley, also well-educated, more likely to be Newari or high caste Hindus and middle-class. One young producer told me outright "I belong from a middle-class family" (Arjun, interview, Kathmandu, 10th August, 2010). Arjun had attended an Indian school[56] in Kathmandu and had been taught in English and Hindi languages rather than Nepali:

> "It really taught me so many things you know, in-discriminatory approach, different culture mingling together, the sense of acceptance because if you study in a different school where there are only Nepali children you tend to become a bit hostile towards cultures. But we had British students, Pakistani students coming, people from Malaysia, Indonesia, India. So it was more like mixture of different culture. And you could really relate to them, think from their perspective. So it always provided me a

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[56] In Kathmandu there are a number of schools that have been established for the children of expatriate communities (e.g. Indian, American, British). These schools provide teaching environments and curriculums that are similar to those provided in the home countries of the expatriate students. Education that is provided in these schools is of a high quality and comes at a significant cost, which attracts a number of students from various expatriate communities as well as middle and upper-class Nepalis.

very open approach towards things...Boosted a sense of acceptance towards [different] culture."

(Arjun, personal interview, Kathmandu, 10th August, 2010)

Arjun's attitude toward his schooling and his contention that it made him tolerant and accepting of other cultures, which he compared with a Nepali education that made students "hostile...[which] really means it's just about Nepal, just taught about Nepal, just taught about the people, the culture" (ibid.) rather than diverse cultures, is indicative of a cosmopolitan attitude. By describing his proficiency in managing and appreciating other cultures Arjun evidences what Hannerz has described as cosmopolitanism, which is a perspective that entails:

> Relationships to a plurality of cultures understood as distinctive entities...But furthermore, cosmopolitanism in a stricter sense includes a stance toward diversity itself, toward the coexistence of cultures in the individual experience. A more genuine cosmopolitanism is first of all an orientation, a willingness to engage with the Other. It is an intellectual and aesthetic stance of openness toward divergent cultural experiences, a search for contrasts rather than uniformity...At the same time, however, cosmopolitanism can be a matter of competence...there is the aspect of a state of readiness, a personal ability to make one's way into other cultures, through listening, looking, intuiting and reflecting.

(1990:239)

The economic resources that are available to middle-class Nepalis enable them to develop a cosmopolitan perspective through education and to display their middle-class identity through the consumption of material commodities, which is an important class marker (Liechty 2003). In practice, this translates as a trendiness of appearance, which was evidenced by the SSMK producers in the ways that they carefully cut and styled their hair, applied lip gloss, chose fashionable clothes and arranged their bodies for photographs (see Figure 11). Their employment in a development organisation is also an important marker of their middle-classness. This is because these positions require a high level of education. EAN itself also requires that the people they employ be proficient in English, which means that those people who were not fortunate enough to get an expensive-enough education miss out. English language is 'one of the most powerful means of inclusion into or exclusion from further education, employment, or social positions' (Pennycook 1994:14). Requirements that privilege the employment of a certain sort of person in SSMK production roles are evident in EAN's job specifications:

> Intermediate (+2) degree in any discipline; eager to learn & develop skills in radio production including script writing, presentation, editing & packaging; prior experience in radio production an asset.

> Good understanding of issues related to young people and the problems that they face and an excellent knowledge of life skills and their application to problem solving.
>
> Have a sound understanding of, and commitment towards good development practice including participatory approaches, building of ownership and ability to consistently work as a team member.
>
> Be fluent in English and Nepali with good writing and communication skills.

<div align="center">(Employment specifications, SSMK program associate, February 2011)[57]</div>

EAN seeks to employ people who are, given the attributes outlined as necessary to perform the role, likely to be middle-class youths. These youths are required to have a good understanding of young people's issues, again indicating that one's own experience and knowledge is necessary to perform a role within program production.

Life Skills: Capacities and Attributes of the Modern Youth

The producers play a key role in imparting life skills to their audience, which are the fundamental skills underpinning the modern self that is represented as a youth archetype. Life skills comprise key aspects of an internationally accepted model of life education (i.e. outside of traditional classroom learning) that refers to 'the abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life' (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime 2006:2). Life skills are comprised of:

> A group of psychosocial competencies and interpersonal skills that help people make informed decisions, solve problems, think critically and creatively, communicate effectively, build healthy relationships, empathise with others, and cope with and manage their lives in a healthy and productive manner. Life skills may be directed toward personal actions or actions toward others, as well as toward actions to change the surrounding environment to make it conducive to health.

<div align="right">(World Health Organization 2003:3)</div>

The life skills used by the SSMK team are self awareness, effective communication, empathy, critical thinking, creative thinking, positive thinking, coping with emotions, problem solving, decision making and managing stress.

The focus on imparting skills as well as providing information is based on the assumption that 'knowledge alone does not automatically lead to positive actions...that is when life skills come in to translate knowledge into actual abilities' (UNICEF 2002). Life skills are used as resources for effecting behaviour change and problem-solving in every episode of the SSMK radio program. A common issue addressed in the SSMK

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[57] This advertisement appeared in English.

radio program is love—how do you manage your romantic feelings toward someone? Rani, an SSMK producer, explained how the production team structures the solution to such a problem based on life skills. If a girl likes a boy, she explained, this girl would be encouraged through discussion in the radio program to think critically about her feelings—is it really love she is feeling? If she is sure of her feelings her next step would be to analyse the boy's behaviour toward her to determine if he feels the same way. Based on these critical judgements the girl must make a decision about whether or not she will communicate her feelings to the boy. This progression to a solution is based on analysis, self-awareness and critical thinking, all of which are life skills that are intended as skills, or capacities, to be used by listeners to effect changes in their behaviour.

Bela, a senior SSMK producer, explained that the on-air interactions between the SSMK hosts are used to highlight how life skills can be successfully employed in relationships. Using her on air flirtatious relationship with another SSMK host Bela explained that:

> "It's [an] easier way to bring up issues when we talk about boy/girl relationship or handling interpersonal relationship or importance of effective communication or being honest. Think of any youth issues in this kind of scenario, it is always easy to bring in, and then, you know, with that chemistry [between Bela and Basant] that we have launched there is more fun because you flirt with the person and you are not talking only serious thing so indirectly when you just listen to the program it will be like a girl flirting with a boy right. And then hiddenly there will be a message. Like how Basant deals with me when I approach him, you know, handling interpersonal relationship but also not giving up, even if he doesn't like what I am proposing to him, or whenever I want him to go out with me to the movies or for a night out or whatever how he says no but still maintaining the relationship—we still are good friends. Then we give out message like, you know, it's not important that if you are a friend you have to do whatever your friend says if you think something you don't like or it is not right then you can always say no. But the skill, the life skill is to say it in such a way that you maintain that relationship if that person is important for you."

(Bela, personal interview, Kathmandu, 3rd March, 2009)

While relationships between SSMK hosts model the application of life skills there is never a definitive answer to a problem. The consistent outcome of SSMK programs is providing information and teaching skills, not telling people what they must do: "SSMK does not say that 'you must do this,' rather it says 'here are your options'" (Rani, informal chat, Hetauda, 25th September, 2008).

By discussing options for action the SSMK radio program presents alternative narratives (Galavotti et al. 2001) of being young. If, for example, a young person is faced with an impending arranged marriage that they do not want they 'learn ways to

convince parents that the decision concerns their wellbeing, and learn to resolve differences or conflict with their parents' (UNICEF 2002) rather than submitting to their wishes without protest. Life skills provide the means through which young people can script alternative narratives and SSMK's approach of providing options rather than answers is a way to encourage them to write these scripts themselves. By placing the responsibility for thinking, choosing and acting with the person who is experiencing the problem the SSMK program aims to cultivate a modern subject capable of rewriting their life scripts by working toward an imagined future (Galavotti et al. 2001).

Life skills place the individual as the site of behaviour change and as such are 'part of a wide-scale international discourse that has saturated the development world, in which behavioural change must come from inside oneself rather than from any political of social transformation' (cf Karp 2002; Kunreuther 2010:343).   Personal life, Kunreuther notes, is viewed as the key site for transformation and the actor driving that change is the individual who helps themself[58] and imagines themself 'as a self with an enormous potential' (Fujikura, 2001:303 quoted in Kunreuther 2010:344). Viewing the self as the site for transformation was a common view among my research participants, who saw social change as starting "from an individual to the community and then to the society" (Pramod, personal interview, Kathmandu, 3rd August, 2010), and had an understanding that "If people change personally this change will bring social change" (Dudumaya, personal interview, Banaspati, 30th August, 2010). The idea that change occurs at the individual level is consistent with modernisation theory in which it is conceptualised that development is linked to an individual's inner-qualities (Lerner 1958). Lerner states that:

> Only insofar as individual persons can change their places in the world, their position in society, their own self-image, does social change occur. Social change in this sense is the sum of mobilities acquired by individual persons.

(Lerner, 1963:331 quoted in Sparks 2007:24)

Radio, Spitulnik (2002) notes, is an important means of circulating ideas about what it means to be modern, a modern notion of self being associated with self-fashioning and individuality. This modern self is a reflexive self (Giddens 1991), which is displayed in the use of life skills to promote a critical appraisal of thoughts, relationships and actions. Giddens says that lifestyle i.e. ''how shall I live?', has to be answered in day to day decisions about how to behave' (1991:14), for which life skills can act as a resource. The extent to which this idea is embraced is demonstrated by the comments

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[58] Kunreuther notes that the self-help discourse is part of the development project in Nepal.

above that state a belief in the idea that transformation must occur with the individual first. The change in individuals is the change to a youth that is active in the creation of a new Nepal and the capacity for action is enshrined in life skills, which are designed with the aim of providing skills that can be used to guide everyday actions that ultimately display the modern self. Becoming a modern, self-fashioned individual, by using life skills as a resource to change oneself, is a step to effecting social change that is a triumph of Western-funded C4D initiatives to effect soft power public diplomacy (Skuse 2012). The formation of neoliberal subjects who are capable of participating in the changing economy of Nepal (Kunreuther 2010) is a politically-loaded endeavour undertaken in the context of a Maoist conflict, the underlying ideologies of which challenge Western market economy principles and practices.

Nation Building: Responsibilities of the Modern Youth

Youth, who are endowed with the capacity for independent critical thought and reasoned action through life skills, shoulder the responsibility for nation building. This nation building project is enshrined in the ubiquitous term new Nepal, which is used to refer to an imagined Nepal that is characterised by features and values of development and democracy. However, a new Nepal does not have a universal meaning and there is little or no agreement in Nepal on what a new Nepal should be or look like. Both the SSMK and NN radio programs focus on changing individual behaviour, the self being seen as the site of transformation such that, "unless I change, the community will not change" (Nisha, personal interview, Hetauda, 20th September, 2008). Thus, by undertaking to transform the individual, both radio programs aim to create subjects with changed values and practices who may in turn influence their communities, leading to large scale behaviour change.

New Nepal has become an oft-quoted term that has risen out of the democratic change that began in Nepal after the cessation of the People's War and refers to an equitable and developed Nepal in which:

> "There should be social change. Development in transport, good utilisation of natural resources, people should think about good education for their children, give good food, if children get good education all things are possible, if we make plans giving more priority to education one day everyone will be educated, no one will be unemployed, should give practical education then they can develop their place themselves, then the concept should be progressive for new Nepal. Without education nothing will be possible for new Nepal. [Development] plays an important role...development is change, just building of infrastructure is not change. All changes are not good, if an accident occurs and my nose is broken there is some change in my face this change is not development, because every change cannot be development. Change should be for human welfare."

(Kashi, personal interview, Hetauda, 17th August, 2010)

The term new Nepal has been appropriated by many people and the phrase 'nation building' adorns the front of Nepal Telecommunications mobile recharge cards, and has been used by political parties and civil society organisations as a call to action. This is a multifarious concept that has, and is, being used by many different people for many different purposes, but young people have grown steadily more disillusioned with broken promises and the lack of change:

> "We had a dream, after the revolution has been a success and after the King had been sent out and there comes a Republic in our country then there will be a lot of developments and we are going to have an underground railway in Kathmandu, and a railway from East to West part of Nepal, a lot of transportation, a lot of development and the good quality education, a lot of facilities, lot of hospitals, lot of doctors, per capita income is going to be increased, lot of industries are there. So those dreams were with us, the collective dream of an average Nepali that has been named 'new Nepal.' And now the dream has vanished and new Nepal is not there. Young political leaders are still fighting for the chairs for the power rather than making the constitution, rather than doing the development."

(Sagar, personal interview, Kathmandu, 5th August, 2010)

This concept of new Nepal, viewed as a delusional concept that has been stripped back to being understood as a long process of social change because "things don't change quickly" (Sabita, personal interview, Kathmandu, 4th August, 2010), has implicit in it a role for youth. This was in fact a question that the SSMK producers posed on their facebook fan page, asking, 'Are young people also responsible for the state of the country'? (Saathi Sanga man ka Kura 2009). A number of the 'fans' of this page responded: 'In my view yes...they are responsible for there [sic] state/country. If they play there [sic] role for there [sic] responsibility country mey [sic] [be] good' (ibid.). Another respondent highlighted what she believed was the responsibility of youth in nation building, but which was held back by personal goals:

> I think, we youngster also responsible for this. nobody [sic] has time to think about the country. we [sic] are just running towards our personal goal, someone wants to study, someone wants to get good job and bla bla...but if the country is going this way like this, neither we can sleep well nor we can live peaceful life.

(ibid.)

This response to SSMK's question posed on facebook defines appropriate youth practice as incorporating a responsibility for nation building that is of greater importance than individual pursuits. The perceived necessity for young people to play an increasingly important role in the development of the nation and their inability to do so was described by an SSMK producer:

> "The enthusiasm that the young people displayed during the April uprising, the enthusiasm that the young people displayed during the constitution assembly election, the enthusiasm that they displayed during so many political chapters in our history is not being displayed today. For the fourth time we are not being able to decide who is going to be the Prime Minister. The date of the constitution writing has already been delayed. And what I thought was that when it would be delayed people would come up, people would pressurise the government to be responsible. But no one came...I was so touched by the solidarity that every youth showed during the April uprising because that is something, that spark in their eyes, the dream that they visualised was so powerful you could feel it...but still look at it today, the frustration is still there, the unemployment is still there, people going abroad that's even grown bigger. So the problems are still there. But still like the demon who never woke up...it's more like a myth, the demon just sleeps and sleeps and sleeps and when he wakes up the things have worsened."

(Arjun, personal interview, Kathmandu, 10th August, 2010)

This role for youth, the mythological sleeping demon, is modelled in the SSMK and NN radio programs as youth archetypes that are focussed on nation building, a necessary focus if they are to become the 'pillars of the nation' (Facebook, 23rd September, 2010).

Modelling the Modern Youth

Both SSMK and NN are designed as entertainment-education (EE) radio programs. EE 'is a communication strategy [designed] to bring about behavioural and social change' (Singhal and Rogers 2004:5) that occurs through:

> The process of purposely designing and implementing a media message to both entertain and educate, in order to increase audience members' knowledge about an issue, create favourable attitudes, shift social norms, and change the overt behaviour of individuals and communities.

(Singhal and Rogers 2003:289)

EE has been used globally in a number of radio soap operas (see for example Papa et al. 2000; Singhal et al. 2006; Singhal et al. 2004; Skuse 2007; Sood 1999) including in the SSMK and NN radio programs in Nepal. Educational messages encompass a wide array of topics from HIV/AIDS to environmental conservation and desired behaviour changes are displayed by role models that 'can demonstrate ways to think about a problem and cope with set-backs, as well as ways to achieve a goal' (Galavotti et al. 2001:1603). The use of role models is premised on Bandura's social learning theory, which posits that people imitate and adopt behaviours by observing role models. The social learning theory posits that the representation of role models and their successes play a key role in increasing self-efficacy amongst audience members,

which is the belief that they can attempt and succeed at implementing similar changes in their own lives (Bandura 1977; 1997; Galavotti et al. 2001).

The use of role models is an important component of both the SSMK and NN radio programs, which use 'good models, bad models, and those who transition from bad to good' (Waisbord 2001:13) to encourage self-efficacy for behaviour change. The understanding of how such behaviour change occurs is based on a number of health and psychological approaches to behaviour change (Ajzen and Fishbein 1980; Bandura 1997; Becker 1974; DiClemente et al. 1991; Prochaska et al. 1992). The behaviour change communication (BCC) model assumes that the communication of a message does not result in immediate effects. Rather, that people must progress through a number of steps (knowledge, approval, intention, practice, advocacy) before sustainable behaviour change is achieved (De Fossard 2005). Radio program hosts and drama characters in the SSMK and NN radio programs are used to model stages of and progression through these steps of behaviour change to encourage mimicry of desired behaviours.

The SSMK radio program positions the program hosts as peer role models who refer to themselves and listeners as friends. The program is often opened with a statement such as "Namaste friends, welcome to the program",[59] or "Namaste friends! It's me Sangita, your friend. You're most welcome in this episode of *Sāthi Saṅga man kā Kura*. So how are you, all? Must be fine aren't you?"[60] These role models are characters that are carefully maintained by the hosts:

> "If I once say I hate red colour, I only wear blue. So throughout the program I always have to remember that I hate red, I love blue. And because, if I say that thing today and I contradict myself in some other episode you won't be able to have that consistency and people will be confused. For them to be able to relate to you as a real person, you know, you have to remember those small details and be consistent and reinforce that because...every small details, every single dialogues, you know, it reinforces the image."

> (Bela, personal interview, Kathmandu, 3rd March, 2009)

The role model characters are carefully maintained so that they are consistent and believable, as an example given by one of the hosts illustrates:

> "What happened was, that was the chat between me and Sarita...we made a little dramatic scenario between Sarita and me that I'm being late because I'm going to somewhere else not coming to program and Sarita called me on my mobile and she said, 'Where are you?' And I said that I'm on the way, that I'm going to leave my elder

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[59] Episode 355.
[60] Episode 259.

> sister on one place and I will come to program. Then she said on program that see Basant is so irresponsible he did this this this. And immediately after that program aired, two, three letters come and 'no, Basant won't do like that! You make false saying that Basant did this and this'."

<div align="right">(Basant, personal interview, Kathmandu, 4th March, 2009)</div>

The program hosts focus on maintaining the consistency and what was referred to as the 'image' of these characters because they believe this is fundamental to the belief and trust that listeners have in the hosts and what they say, which was explained to me by an SSMK producer:

> "Let's think you are my listener...for you to want me as your advisor you will have to have that trust on me right. And here people...we are giving out behavioural change messages and we are often focussing on certain things that people think are right and we are saying it's not right, like going out for drinks, taking cigarettes. We are saying, while we be their friend and not judge them we say it's not really really right. So for them to be able to take positively, those messages, it should come from a person whom they think they know very very well and whom they can trust very very well. They have to believe that if this suggestion is coming from this person, even they don't believe it that very second, it should be something that will be in their mind for some time, something that they will think about you know."

<div align="right">(Bela, personal interview, Kathmandu, 3rd March, 2009)</div>

It has been stated earlier that there is an assumption that the experience of being a teenager is a uniform experience. This assumption formed the grounds on which new, younger producers were hired in order to keep the SSMK radio program informed of and responsive to the needs and concerns of teenagers. Bela's comment above highlights that while there is an assumption of common experience, there is also a separation between the hosts of the SSMK radio program and the listeners that is articulated in the distance created between the hosts as advisors and the listeners who are advised.

Referring to audience members as friends and establishing a consistent image are the grounds on which parasocial relationships with these characters can be formed. Parasocial relationships have been defined as a relationship that forms between an audience member and media personality 'that is perceived as analogous to the interpersonal relationships of people in a primary face-to-face group' (Papa et al. 2000:34). Papa et al. (2000) contend that parasocial relationships are important in considering behaviour change because if audience members can relate to a character then they are more likely to believe that they are able to enact the behaviours of that character and demonstrate self-efficacy (Bandura 1997). The link between parasocial relationships with media characters and self-efficacy has been shown in the research

of Papa et al. (2000) on the radio program *Tinka Tinka Sukh* (Happiness Lies in Small Pleasures) in a northern Indian village. One of the respondents of this research commented that, 'I learned [from the radio serial] that young girls should study...I was inspired by Champa [radio serial character]. If she could realize her potential, why can't I?' (ibid.:42). The listeners I worked with did not explicitly relate to a specific character as Papa et al. (2000) found in their research. However, Dudumaya, the chairperson of a listeners' club, commented that the SSMK radio program had presented cases of people that she and others were able to relate to, which encouraged them to take actions in their own lives. The programs contributed to their sense of self-efficacy.

The hosts of the SSMK radio program use contrasting role models to display desired behaviour change. Kalyan, for example, is a funny character who always needs to learn a lesson that is taught throughout the program through the other hosts, drama and letters. This is in contrast with Basant's character, who demonstrates the desirable way of behaving. These role models enable the program to explore the options of the problems they deal with, during which they convince the naughty character of the 'right' behaviour and this naughty character can progress from knowledge to acceptance and practice of a desired behaviour. This is a model that is also used in the drama, which follows a character's problem that peaks in a conflict and culminates in a resolution. Throughout this process the character models a linear progression to acceptance of a desired behaviour that is based on an understanding of behaviour change as a progression through stages of change such as those outlined by Rogers (1983), Prochaska (1992), DiClemente (1991) and others. The progression through stages of change demonstrated by SSMK role models and fictional characters in the radio drama are linear and reliant on didactic messages of what is clearly a good behaviour in relation to what is a clearly bad behaviour. Change seems simplistic, even naturalised. If one decides to choose the right behaviour everything will be fine. However, the capacity to recognise and enact that 'right' behaviour is assumed and relies on the development of a changed subjectivity, which one may develop through the application of life skills.

In the following condensed SSMK drama script (listen to Track 2), youth and education are addressed through the story of a boy who has to negotiate between having fun and studying. Throughout the progression of the story this boy interacts with contrasting characters and progresses through a number of behaviour change steps:

Scene-1: Exam center[61]

Regan, Abhishek and Akriti are happy that the SLC exam is over and now they don't have to study all the time. Akriti wants to celebrate and tells them that they should party. Regan puts forward the idea of a day disco, but both his friends do not want to join him. Then he says that they can party the whole day and go to the disco in the night, Akriti opposes the idea saying that her mother won't allow her the late night. Regan tells them that now they have already finished SLC, they have grown up and it is not necessary for them to do what their parents tell them every time. Akriti convinces them to go for lunch for now.

Scene-2: In the restaurant

Akriti and Abhishek are surprised to see that Regan has changed his tee-shirt and styled his hair in the restaurant bathroom. Regan had brought an extra tee from home and he regrets not getting his baggy pants too. When Abhishek orders for water, Regan wants to drink beer and tells others to drink the same. Both his friends do not want to go with his idea of drinking and even requests him not to make such habit. Regan is happy that his parents are going to buy a bike for him and tells his friends to blackmail their parents to do the same.

Scene-3: In the road

Regan is walking on the road listening to the Walkman, when Prabesh comes and stops him. He wants a treat[62] from Regan because he has just finished the exam. When Regan says that he will give it after the results, Prabesh says he can't wait for three months for one treat and tells him to sit on his bike and they go to meet other friends for the treat.

Scene-4: At Regan's place.

Regan calls Akriti and invites her for lunch, but she says she is busy volunteering in an old age home. When he says to meet in the evening, she says she has computer class. After he puts down the phone, he is angry that his friends have no time for him and thinks of going to meet Prabesh, who takes him everywhere.

At the same time, Abhishek goes to meet him, and tells him to join the bridging course so that it will help him while giving the entrance for college. Regan tells him that he does not want to do that and when they are about to leave, Regan's mom asks her son, why has he changed all of a sudden. She complains about his hair style, torn jeans, late comings and not doing anything and asks Abhishek if he is also doing the same. Abhishek tells her that he has joined a bridging course and is also taking tuition classes. Regan asks for 500 Rupees from his mother but she denies him and tells him to become like Abhishek. Regan gets angry and goes out banging the door.

His mom gets tense and talks to Abhishek about it. She tells him to convince Regan to walk the good path, as she is afraid that he is walking on the wrong path. Abhishek says that he would talk to him right now and leaves.

Scene-5: In the restaurant

Prabesh and his friend Suresh, tells Regan that today is their treat and when Regan ask the occasion, they say that because Prabesh flunked his exam fifth time and Suresh was rejected for the job, because of his personality and lack of experience.

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[61] This is a summarised script of an SSMK radio drama translated and condensed by Shirisha Amatya—the AC4SC Nepal-based project officer.

[62] A 'treat' refers to Regan buying Prabesh buying drinks and snacks.

They tell Regan that when they have cleared the SLC six years back, they were like a free bull, they didn't think of the future and now nobody believes in them, not even their family. He tells Regan, that as he is also following in their footsteps, he wants to treat him. Regan tells them that he has to attend the party with his mom and leaves the place.

Scene-6: At Regan's place.

Regan is watching TV, when his mom enters the room and turns it off. She tells him to start the designing course; Regan gets irritated and goes to his room. Inside the room, he thinks hard, he is thinking why everyone is scolding him. He remembers what Suresh and Prabesh had told him and gets tense thinking if his future is going to be like theirs. He realizes that what his mother and Abhishek is telling them is true and promises to himself, that he is going to work hard on his future from the next day.

(SSMK episode 355)

Liechty (2003) has discussed negative portrayals of youth in Kathmandu, where 'teenager' denotes an anti-social, vulgar, violent young male, which here is represented in the Suresh and Prabesh characters. Regan's friends Suresh and Prabesh contrast with his mother and other friends Akriti and Abhishek. The first two friends talk about the negative aspects of what they have done and the latter two encourage Regan to study and walk the right path. The characters are at various stages of behaviour change: Suresh and Prabesh are at the knowledge stage, they know they've made wrong decisions but the drama suggests it is too late for them to go back (Rogers 1983). Akriti and especially Abhishek, are at the final stage of behaviour change, that of adoption of a desired behaviour (ibid.).

What this drama shows is Regan moving through the steps of behaviour change, he becomes aware through his friends of potential paths to follow, but only decides to walk the 'right' path of being a good middle-class Nepali youth (studying and respecting his mother) after Suresh and Prabesh tell him of their troubles, after which he is persuaded that changing his behaviour is suitable for him (Rogers 1983). The drama ends with Regan's intention to start studying the next day, illustrating to the listener that he has made a decision to adopt what is framed as the right behaviour. The steps through which Regan progresses reflect the innovation-decision process outlined by Rogers (1983) and stages of change theories outlined by other scholars (DiClemente et al. 1991; Prochaska et al. 1992).

The drama described centres on the creation of a transformative subject, implicit to which are life skills such as decision making, which gives the character Regan the capacity to choose to study and effect change in his life (Quilt and Shrestha 2008).

The hosts re-affirm Regan's choice at the completion of the drama, Basant saying, "Thank god Regan's eyes were opened in time" (SSMK episode 355).

The NN radio program (listen to Track 3) constructs characters that are positioned as having a responsibility for nation building. Nation building is not just one activity, but a range of activities and attitudes that contribute to the overall effort for positive change in people's lives. The need for young people to remain in Nepal to contribute to the nation building project rather than emigrate is often discussed as important to nation building in Nepal and a responsibility of young people.   This is a point that was addressed in the following condensed NN radio program:[63]

> Upendra: "The people are more in the state of depression than being positive. But our country is undergoing the process of huge change, so it is quite understandable that there could be instability in the process of development. After every night there is a day, we should hope for a better tomorrow. We should always think positive. Today I have invited a popular personality in the studio, who always encourages people to think positive. His name is Karna Shakya."
>
> Karna Shakya: "What I want to say to today's youth is that, if you want to survive in this modern society being a modern man, then you need to learn to compromise with the modern problems. No country is without problems, what today's youth and other people should understand is that running away to another country is not a solution."
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> Drama: Older Brother Lahure's Tea Shop[64] (summary):
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> The scene opens with Batuli and Lahure in conversation. Both are feeling bored that Manju, a friend who shared news from all over the world, has gone somewhere since morning. Lahure think she has gone to meet two youths who had come to the village regarding the election, which is not going to happen. Both are sad about the deeds of the politicians who keep fighting amongst themselves. Lahure tells Batuli not to talk about politics today and both go back to their respective work.
>
> In the next scene, a new couple, Kumar and Devi, arrive in Lahure's tea shop and tell them that they have come to eat and meet Lahure. Kumar feels a little uneasy with the respect that Laure and his wife bestow on them and tells them that everybody is equal in today's society and [this equality] starts from the language. So they don't need to use high level language while addressing them.
>
> Kumar is a writer who writes stories in the paper, Devi is a retired teacher, and at present working for a citizen's society. Batuli asks them if the election is going to happen. She says they have lots of hope from the election in building a new Nepal by writing a new constitution.

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[63] At the time that this NN episode was aired, Nepal was in the lead up to their first democratic elections that would decide who would run the country as well as heralding the writing of the new constitution. There was contest between a number of parties wanting to further their causes and this contest resulted in strikes and protests, each trying to further their aims and recruit more voters, leading people to become fed up with the process.

[64] In Nepali this drama is titled: *Lahure Dāi ko Chiyā Pasal.* The character Lahure is referred to as *Dāi*—older brother—which implies a respected position. The tea shop—*chiyā pasal*—is an important place that is understood as being typically Nepali and is a place where people meet and exchange news.

> Kumar says that after visiting different places outside the capital, people believe that all the political decisions are done from Kathmandu, which is not the case. Our country has given lots of importance to politics, here people eat, sleep and drink politics.
>
> Then he talks about the youths of the village, how after going abroad to work, they haven't forgotten their village and helped in building schools and so on...Even if they don't get anything at least they bring creative ideas and good mannerism with them when they come back. Because of the money that they have sent, more than 25000 people have risen above the poverty level. They have also done lots of work for the village.

(NN episode 149)

In this episode the issue of young people going abroad in response to frustration at the stagnant political process in Nepal is raised. Karma Shakya says that running away overseas is not a solution and suggests that it is the responsibility of young people to remain in Nepal. The serial drama *Lahure Dāi ko Chiyā*[65] *Pasal* (Brother Lahure's Tea Shop)[66] then seeks to re-engage young people in contributing to nation building through the Kumar and Devi characters, who talk about young people who go abroad but still support their villages.

More directed action has been encouraged in other episodes of NN:

> Rabindra: "Oh....the people are in such a condition. I thought it was growing sense of insecurity only on my locality but it's the same situation in Birgunj."
>
> Bina: "Yes indeed. These days we keep on hearing that there is no security at all and the security units are also doing nothing about it. They don't seem to care at all."
>
> Rabindra: "If that is that case then I think Bina youth, like you and I, should do something to maintain peace and security in our society."
>
> Bina: "What a noble thought you have Rabindra! Yes, now we have to do it from youth like us. What are the activities that are going on in our village and society that have created an insecure environment. We have to find out and we have to do different efforts to bring them under control, for instance by establishing a club we can run this campaign."

(NN episode 350)

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[65] Turner Transliterates tea as *ciyā*, however EAN transliterates tea as *chiyā*, which is the transliteration that I use here.

[66] De Fossard (2005) says that serial dramas enable audience members to develop emotional connections with the characters and become invested in their lives, which enables this to be a medium that can educate '...because it is closely aligned with the customs and norms of its audience and uses narrative forms with which they are familiar (Galavotti et al. 2001:1602). This was true of *Lahure Dāi ko Chiyā Pasal*, people were able to relate to it, its success evident in people's knowledge of the serial drama over the NN radio program of which it is a part: when on a field trip, Nisha, a community reporter, asked a young girl if she listened to NN. The girl shyly shook her head. But when Nisha asked her about *Lahure Dāi ko Chiyā Pasal* recognition flared in the girls face and she said that she liked it very much. This response was by no means uncommon and was well-known among the NN producers.

This chat aimed to encourage young people to become active in contributing to a better security situation in Nepal. This episode responded to the insecure situation that has arisen out of the political instability and increasingly violent ethnic politics in Nepal. In this context the NN program has been focussing on justice and security reform, targeting youth to advocate for positive changes. The NN and the SSMK radio programs target the youth of Nepal as those people capable of building a more secure and positive future by making small changes in their own communities. Young people are represented in these radio programs as being agents of change. In development theory, agents of change are used in interventions to stimulate social change (Figueroa et al. 2002; Rogers 1983). The SSMK and NN radio programs that form the core of broader interventions use young people, and especially listeners' club members (discussed further in Chapters Five and Six), as agents of change. This was indeed the way that many young people saw themselves and reinforced this through comments such as 'by listening to SSMK programme, I realized an energetic youth within myself who need [sic] to do many duties to change his society' (Sathi Sanga man ka Kura 2009). This response resonates with what many of my research participants said about the role they believed they had to play in building a new Nepal. This is not only reinforced by radio program hosts as in the excerpt of an NN episode above, but is also modelled in dramas like the SSMK drama in which Regan realised that he needed to change, and in the NN drama in which socially-minded youth are lauded.

Letters: Learning about Youth Practice

Letters are a component of the NN radio program, but form an especially important part of the SSMK radio program. Letters are sent by audience members and are used as a means of feedback and interaction by both the SSMK and NN radio programs. Letters are a key means of using real-life scenarios and modelling solutions based on life skills to encourage the letter-writers to adopt behaviours of critical thinking and rationality. Letters are also a means of encouraging the audience to become change agents because their social activities are recognised on air and supported through the provision of registration and booklets. Acknowledgement is an important aspect of creating an interactive and participatory relationship between the radio program hosts and the listeners:

> Friend Toya or Sushma,
>
> On the 6th, when we listened to your program together, we came to know that our club had been registered. We are now waiting for the certificate and the books/magazines.

On that episode, you read out the name of our club, but you did not read out the names of the club members, due to which we are very sad. In case the members' names were not distinct, I am writing their names once again—we would be grateful if you will read out these names on air.

(UNICEF 2002)

The letter goes on to list the names of the club members with the final assertion that "we will be very happy if you read this out on air," indicating that recognition within the radio program by the hosts is of great significance to these letter writers. Liechty has talked about the link between fans and stars through the formers' contributions to Nepali film magazines. Liechty says that 'one of the most important things that these interactive pages and features do is to coalesce widely dispersed individuals into groups that share certain interests and dreams' (2003:193). He goes on to say that this magazine provides a forum for interaction that 'not only link stars and fans but actually produce them' (ibid.). The incorporation of letters within the SSMK and NN radio programs unite those people who tune into these programs as youth, for which there are a set of life skills for managing what are identified as youth problems and responsibilities for nation building. The SSMK program particularly constructs potential courses of action for letter-writers. In doing this, the incorporation of letters within the programs does more than link the audience with the presenters; it also produces them as modern youth (Liechty 2003:194).

In addition to feedback and interaction the SSMK radio program also uses letters as a tool to model youth practice based on the application of life skills. During every episode of SSMK a letter, or a part of a letter, will be read out:

Respected presenter sister Binita and brother Binayak,

Namaskar from a distant place through this letter! I have a boyfriend and both of us like each other very much. It has been 5 years since we first met. We still write letters to one another. The problem is that my family doesn't want to let me marry him and I am afraid to get married without their consent. Brother Binayak! What should I do to get rid of this problem?

Your sister, who is waiting for your response.

(Quilt and Shrestha 2008:24)

In responding to this letter Binayak encourages the girl to analyse her feelings and think about why she is afraid to get married without her parents' consent and explains:

Relying on parents' choice is a demonstration of respect, but we think that letting parents decide for you or giving up your own will is also a demonstration of complete dependency on others. It's like, in a way, you are running away from taking responsibilities for your own actions and choices and allowing your parents to run your

> life, which is not right. We have to learn to be responsible for what is best for ourselves, for our own self-development. When we leave it to our parents to decide, they will decide for you out of love and what they think is best for you. But what they think is best for you may not always be right.

(Quilt and Shrestha 2008:24)

This discussion, which highlights many of the assumptions on which SSMK is based, clearly promotes a person who questions their parents' knowledge and authority and by doing so asserts their independence and takes responsibility for their actions. However, the capacity of the letter-writer to question her parents' decision by asserting her independence through her exercise of choice is complicated by her social and cultural obligations. For the letter-writer, the decision about who she will marry is not hers alone, but that of her and her future husband's family. Bennett (1983) has noted that marriages that are arranged by the families of the couple are important to fulfilling Hindu belief and lifecycle rituals. Thus, collective decision-making is fundamental to spiritual belief, cultural maintenance and social practice. The UNAIDS communication framework refers to these aspects as 'domains' of context that are significant factors in people's decision-making activities (1999). Indeed, I heard of and witnessed a number of occasions in which a young person's own choice of partner was not approved of by the families of the couple—usually on the basis of caste and other indicators of status and class including educational attainment—and the marriage did not proceed. However, there were also occasions when, despite familial objections, a marriage did proceed. Ahearn (2004) has highlighted that the practice of marriage is changing in Nepal as a result of local appropriations of development and the meaning attributed to talking about love as being linked to a modern subject.

This indicates a change to historical power relations between children and their parents and is linked to the social, political and economic changes underway in Nepal. Binayak presents life skills as the basis on which this girl can become capable of disrupting the power status quo between herself and her parents and become responsible for her own future:

> First thing you can do is effectively communicate with your parents...you might say, I've already communicated with my parents and they don't listen to me...but you've to understand that, just communicating and effectively communicating is totally different. Effective communication is built on empathy—the ability to sense the need and feeling in another person...communication with empathy is a must to get yourself out of this problem...your role is to understand their [her parents] feelings first and then make them understand why this the right guy for you. After you give them very thoughtful logic about marrying him then they will definitely listen to you. You can also use some creative ideas to convince them...persuading someone (close to your parents, but who understands and supports you) to talk to them on this.

(Quilt and Shrestha 2008:25)

The life skills of effective communication, empathy and creative thinking are explained in this discussion as tools to help this girl solve her problem. To achieve a desirable resolution this girl needs to voice her concerns, through which action she displays and enacts a modern self with a changed subjectivity. The girl's changed subjectivity is based on assumptions of rationalism and agency, which are attributes that are part of life skills and as such are an imported skill set that is based on imported Eurocentric ideas of what constitutes a capable subject. The capacity for reasoned and carefully thought-out action is fostered through life skills, which act as resources for young, modern Nepalis who are increasingly being faced with more options and more complex decisions in a changing socio-cultural landscape. In responses such as these, the SSMK radio program acts a resource from which young people can learn about the practice of being young (Liechty 2003). Media is a significant resource through which people negotiate and construct their identities (Barker 1999; Gillespie 1995) and the SSMK and NN radio programs assist in that construction by responding to listeners' letters.

Conclusion

The NN and SSMK radio programs represent a youth archetype that is characterised as an agent of change capable of determining their own futures and contributing to the nation building project that is known as making a new Nepal. This youth archetype is portrayed by the hosts and the drama characters in their use of life skills to problem-solve fabricated issues and the problems they receive through listeners' letters. Kunreuther has argued that life skills, as part of the broader discourse of skills, are central to the creation of a neoliberal subjectivity that 'requires practiced skills and, quite often, state (or in this case, INGO [International Non-Government Organisation]) intervention to achieve its effects' (2010:337). It has been argued that C4D, as an intervention led by INGOs, works on the subjectivities of third world people to predispose them to democratic change and the emergence of market economies (Skuse 2012). NN and SSMK, both part of C4D initiatives implemented by EAN, fashion the program hosts as role models (Galavotti et al. 2001) for young Nepalis to learn from, look up to and imitate.

I have argued that the expectation of imitation is problematic because the youth archetype is modelled on the Eurocentric notions of BCC and life skills and is mediated by cosmopolitan producers. The behaviour change theories and life skills that are

essential components of the NN and SSMK radio programs are based on Western psycho-social knowledge paradigms and are directed toward changing the behaviour of young Nepalis to be independent and emancipated individuals. The application of Eurocentric models like BCC and life skills is problematic because they are applied in contexts that are different from those in which they have been developed (UNAIDS 1999). Imitation of role models is also problematic because of a centre-to-periphery dynamic (Pringle and Subba 2007) that means that people who live in Kathmandu often live radically different lives to those in regional and rural areas of Nepal. Producers, who are most often middle-class Nepalis living in Kathmandu, are expected to draw from their lived experience in the production of the radio programs and there is an assumption that being young is a homogenous experience throughout Nepal. Given this assumption and what I have highlighted as the problematic application of Eurocentric models, EAN's approach to remediation may be expected to yield interesting outcomes. These production outcomes are discussed in the following chapters.

Figure 11: Team Photo of SSMK Producers

NOTE:
This figure/table/image has been removed
to comply with copyright regulations.
It is included in the print copy of the thesis
held by the University of Adelaide Library.

Facebook, *Sāthi Saṅga man kā Kura* fan page

Chapter Four Remediating Youth Subjects in Hetauda

Equal Access Nepal (EAN) supports and encourages producers located in radio stations throughout Nepal, including a radio station located in Hetauda, to produce local versions of *Naya Nepal* (NN) and spin-off versions[67] of *Sāthi Saṅga man kā Kura* (SSMK). The support of local programs is based on EAN's fundamental premise that social change is effected through the provision of accessible and relevant information. Many Nepali citizens speak languages other than Nepali and live in places that are different from Kathmandu. For these people, SSMK and NN may be neither relevant nor accessible. EAN's support of local and spin-off radio programs seeks to address issues of NN and SSMK's relevance and accessibility throughout Nepal.

The support and encouragement of local radio program productions occurs in the context of an ongoing debate in Nepal over the role and efficacy of the syndication of Kathmandu-produced radio content. It is argued that locally-produced radio programs can better respond to the needs of the communities in which they are produced and that syndicated programming poses a risk to local content creation (Dixit 2008; Pringle and Subba 2007).   This risk is intensified by the proliferation of distribution technologies, such as satellite, and the appeal of broadcasting syndicated radio programs that is linked to funding, listener demand for national content and the provision of quality content that syndicated programs offer local radio stations (ibid.).

The debate over syndicated radio programming speaks to a deeper concern within Nepal that is linked to the 'centre-to-periphery power dynamic' (Pringle and Subba 2007:21). In Chapter Two I recounted comments made by a friend as we walked through Banaspati village: My friend, Nisha, said that the government of Nepal was concerned only with the governance and development of Kathmandu and not with regional areas of Nepal. The imagined distance between the centre and peripheries expressed by Nisha is compounded by Kathmandu-produced radio programs (see Kunreuther 2006); especially when locally-produced content is marginalised in favour of the Kathmandu-produced content. It is in this context that EAN's support and encouragement of local and spin-off radio programs can be seen as a means of reconciling the centre and the peripheries and rectifying the imbalance between the two.

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[67] These programs were often referred to in this way by SSMK program producers but were also called 'spin-off' productions, which is how I refer to these productions throughout this chapter.

EAN's country director noted that, while EAN disseminates the radio programs that they produce, "the main aim is to transfer [the] skill" (Naresh, personal interview, Kathmandu, 2nd March 2009) of radio program production through training sessions and other initiatives that target radio program producers located throughout Nepal. The training sessions and initiatives that support the production of local and spin-off versions of NN and SSMK encourage local producers to repackage NN and SSMK content in a similar style using local issues and languages. This is essentially a process of localisation in which there is an expectation of remediation of NN's and SSMK's content.

Localisation is predominantly understood as an outcome of globalisation, which refers to 'the intensification of global interconnectedness' (Inda and Rosaldo 2008:2). The 'ever-densening network of interconnections' (Tomlinson, 1999:2 quoted in Nustad 2003:122) characteristic of globalisation provides a means for commodities, culture and ideas to travel between places and be consumed and reproduced in contexts other than their production. Localisation implies an active process of appropriation, whereby a commodity, culture or idea is made meaningful in a different cultural context (Appadurai 1996; Miller 1987). The localisation that I refer to here however, occurs in a purposeful way within the national boundaries of Nepal and is referred to by EAN staff as the rendering of NN and SSMK content into local program productions that deal with local issues in local languages.

For my purposes I refer to this specific occurrence of localisation as remediation because it provides greater conceptual clarity for considering the production of local NN and spin-off SSMK versions as actions that purposefully repackage NN and SSMK radio content (Bolter and Grusin 1999). The concept of remediation allows me to look at the changes to the NN and SSMK radio program content when it is repackaged and consider how youth subjectivities are produced in the process (Novak 2010) and represented in the final product. Using the concept of remediation allows me to investigate whether the youth archetype represented in NN and SSMK and discussed in Chapter Three remains intact in the remediations or if it is changed.

Encouraging the localisation of messages through remediation does not fit with the practice of behaviour change communication (BCC) in which control over the content and messages is usually retained by the organisation implementing the initiative. This unusual practice was acknowledged by an Equal Access staff member during a meeting in which they stated that: "We don't have tight control over the message and

this runs contrary to BCC orthodoxy" (August 20th, 2009). The lack of control implicit in remediation caused some doubts about the value of this approach that was expressed by an EAN staff member in the same meeting: "We do not have any control on the remediation part—whatever they do, good or bad, is up to them" (August 20th, 2009). The divergence from usual BCC practice raises an important question about what happens to the content (that is usually 'tightly controlled' by the development organisation carrying out the initiative; e.g. EAN) when it is remediated.

In this Chapter I focus on the production of radio content in Hetauda. I look at a local version of NN and a spin-off production of SSMK that were produced by staff at Hetauda FM. The local version of NN produced at Hetauda FM is a Tamang language production called Chhar Nepal.[68] The spin-off production of SSMK is a Nepali language production called Young Generation. I demonstrate that remediation is a process through which the producers involved can represent locally-relevant subjectivities that respond and contribute to the complex and uneven process of making a 'new Nepal'.

Setting the Scene: Local FM Radio Stations in Hetauda

Hetauda is the municipality of Makwanpur district (see Figure 3) and is rich in media. Against the background of rumbling and honking buses and trucks described in Chapter Two, are businesses selling newspapers, magazines and books, and others that sell mobile telephones and internet time. People gather in front of these businesses to read newspapers, talk on their mobile phones and meet with friends. On their way to and from the newspaper and mobile phone shops, these people might pass by one of the radio stations that are nestled in amongst residential homes in Hetauda. One of these, now overgrown with weeds, used to be called Manakamana FM. Manakamana FM was one of the first three independent FM radio stations outside of the Kathmandu Valley to be granted a commercial broadcasting license in 2000. As discussed in Chapter One, Radio Sagarmatha in the Kathmandu Valley blazed a trail for independent broadcasting and Manakamana FM was one of the first radio stations outside of the Valley to take advantage of this (Kunreuther 2004; Onta 2001; Parajulee 2007; Pringle and Subba 2007). In 2006 Manakamana FM financially collapsed and was re-opened soon after as National FM before permanently collapsing in 2008 owing to outdated technology and increasing competition.

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[68] *Chhar Nepal* is Tamang for 'New Nepal', the name of the Kathmandu-produced radio program.

Broadcasting licenses were issued more freely following the movement towards democracy. This freedom was related to the recognition of press freedom in the Interim Constitution (Nepal Law Commission 2063 [2007]), which had an impact on the FM boom throughout Nepal. In Hetauda this led to the rapid and successive establishment of a number of new FM radio stations. In 2006 a radio station called Hetauda FM began broadcasting. Preceding and perhaps contributing to the collapse of National FM in 2008 was Radio Thaha Sanchar—a well-funded and popular commercial radio station. Most recently, in 2009, a new community FM radio station called Radio Makwanpur began broadcasting.[69]

Ideally community radio stations are different from commercial radio stations because they work in concert with their local communities to raise issues that are of local concern and give 'voice to the voiceless' (Banjade 2006b). This is in opposition to commercial radio stations that are largely seen as focusing on income generation, popular music, news and attracting a large audience. Those who held these views also asserted that "commercial FMs love to say that 'we are like community FM, we aren't any less than community FM'" (Sitaram, personal Interview, Hetauda, 18th February, 2009). The station manager of a community radio station called Vijaya FM in Nawalparasi reiterated this point of view:

> "Vijaya FM has the ownership of various socio-economic background peoples that are participated as a direct member...which directly shows our community behaviour and the community ownership in this radio. And the next, our program, most of the programs, are targeted to carry out the hidden affairs that prevailed in community from the many decades ago. That's why we claim we are community radio: because we are responsible to community. While talking regarding the private radio stations, they are not compelled to carry out and [be] responsible [for] such kind of programs. Some private radio stations are also copying this kind of programs and they are also trying to be little nearer with the community. I think they feel that community radio has [been] able to build the intimacy among the community due to such kind of programs and they also think we are have to make such kind of intimacy among the community. That's why I think they are trying to [make] such kind of program."

(Personal interview, Nawalparasi, 22nd November, 2008)

In practice the separation between community and commercial radio stations is not clear-cut and the blurred boundaries between them are a result of the lack of differential regulation and licensing costs (Pringle and Subba 2007). This has resulted

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[69] Outside of the Hetauda municipality in the hills of Makwanpur district there are a further three FM stations: Pratidhwani FM which began broadcasting in 2006 under a commercial license, Radio Palung, a community FM station that began broadcasting officially in 2004, and most recently Shakti FM, which also operates under a community license. Owing to the hilly landscape of Makwanpur district, the signals of Prathdwani FM and Radio Palung did not reach the lower lying areas of the district and could only be heard intermittently and with signal interference in Hetauda and Banaspati during the fieldwork.

in 'a fiercely competitive environment in which [there are] problems of signal interference and the need to increase audience sizes to capture advertising revenue' (Martin and Wilmore 2010:868). Thus Radio Palung (a community radio station), for example, sought funding from The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to establish a relay tower to increase the size of their broadcast radius. They stated that this was "to fulfill listener demands from other remote areas" (Sitaram, personal Interview, Hetauda, 18th February, 2009), but would also give them a larger listenership and consequently a larger market for revenue-raising from advertising.

Commercial radio stations, including Hetauda FM, similarly rely on revenue from a larger listenership. However they also capitalise on relationships with NGOs to feed into their revenue. Thus, Hetauda FM broadcasts the SSMK and NN radio programs (among other socially-oriented programs produced by other Kathmandu-based content production houses) and produces Young Generation and Chhar Nepal, which are all socially-oriented programs. The broadcast of the SSMK and NN radio programs and the production of the spin-off and local versions is an obligation of the partnership that exists between EAN and Hetauda FM. These production and broadcast partnerships involve funding, which increases Hetauda FMs revenue. The development of these relationships was largely fortuitous for Hetauda FM as they were the only radio station in Hetauda when EAN was establishing partnerships.

Hetauda FM is a fifteen minute walk from the Hetauda marketplace and is nestled in amongst residential housing. The radio station is housed in a two-storied building inside a large compound. On the front of the building is a faded sign that reads 'Hetauda FM, 96.6', and sitting atop the building is the stations' transmitter tower (see Figure 12). The ground floor of the building is devoted to the administration of Hetauda FM and houses the accountant, the station manager and reception. On the ground floor is also a large meeting room, which, aside from a lounge reminiscent of the 1970s, is completely bare, decorated only by peeling paint and discoloured streamers from a long ago party.

The first floor of Hetauda FM is the production space and houses the recording studio, which is set-up with computers, microphones and a mixing console. I spent much of my time at Hetauda FM in this room because this is where the Young Generation and Chhar Nepal radio programs were recorded and produced for later broadcast. Adjoining the recording studio is the on-air room that is used for the broadcast of live-to-air programs including news, phone-in and quiz programs. The on air studio is

empty apart from a table and some microphones and is controlled via a mixing console in another room. Across the hall from these production rooms are spaces in which hosts and producers research and prepare their radio programs. These are the library and newsroom. The Young Generation and Chhar Nepal producers spent most of their time in the library, which was where I perched on a regular basis to talk with them and watch them prepare their programs.

These producers included Ripesh, who was the program manager at Hetauda FM for the majority of the time that I conducted fieldwork there. Ripesh was quick to laugh and to show off the voice impressions he could do. Although when he was gossiping, which was often, he would sit close, raise his eyebrows and speak in a slow and confidential voice. Aashish was a presenter of the Young Generation program and was tall and trendy. Meena was a co-presenter of the Young Generation program, but unfortunately had to spend a great deal of time in Birgunj being treated for tuberculosis. Purnima was the presenter of the Chhar Nepal program. She had a round face and was always very cheerful. After Purnima left Hetauda FM, Chhar Nepal production was taken over by Aadarsha, a softly spoken Tamang man who, over the two months that I worked with him, went from being excited and eager about his work at the station to being stressed and overworked. There were many other people that I met who worked at the station, but those described above played the biggest roles in my research. Most of these producers had recently been studying, or had plans to study in the near future at college.

It is not at all unusual that Hetauda FM, as a commercial radio station, worked in concert with an NGO (EAN) to broadcast and produce socially-oriented programs. This is because this partnership increased their revenue. However the hectic schedules of the producers did mean that there was little or no community involvement or consultation in the production of the SSMK spin-off radio program. This was not the case for the local version of NN because EAN funded community reporters to provide community involvement for inclusion in this program in the form of field reports, interviews and vox-pops.[70] The funding for these community reporters ended around

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[70] The term 'vox pop' may be derived from the Latin *vox populi vox dei*, meaning 'the voice of the people is divine' (Boas, 1969). Although the term 'vox pop' has become equated with a specific format in media and in doing so has created its own contextual identity it is interesting, and even illuminating to consider that the history of the phrase has changed over time with the changing conception of the rights and importance of those people who were considered to comprise the group of 'the people' (Boas, 1969). With a greater contemporary focus on egalitarianism and democracy the voice of the people has gained greater importance, a factor

the same time that I completed my fieldwork and although the station manager said that he was committed to continuing to produce the local version of NN, this program inevitably came to an end. Commercial radio stations, like Hetauda FM, are not necessarily committed to community engagement and involvement; rather listeners are treated 'as objects to be captured for advertisers or to be informed' (Banjade 2006b:73). The production of the spin-off version of SSMK and the local version of NN at Hetauda FM are driven by funding and the goal of increasing listenership. The consequence of this is that there is no real commitment to continue to produce the programs at the completion of funding.

Hetauda FM broadcasts twenty four hours a day using a 500 watt transmitter on 96.6 MHz. During the severe electricity shortages experienced in 2008–2009[71] these hours were cut back due to high fuel costs needed to run the generators. Hetauda FM broadcasts a wide array of programs: Syndicated programs including both NN and SSMK, Tamang language programs, a large number of entertainment, phone-in, quiz and drama programs, and locally produced news every hour. Hetauda FM is a broadcast partner of EAN. This means that EAN pays Hetauda FM a small fee for broadcasting NN and SSMK, which up until late 2009 they accessed through the Worldspace *Aphai Mato, Aphnai Bholi* (Our Path, Our Tomorrow) satellite pathway used by EAN to distribute their programs. Early in 2010 this satellite pathway ceased functioning and now Hetauda FM accesses these programs via website download.

Local Versions of NN: Chhar Nepal

Local versions of NN were encouraged and supported by an initiative funded by USAID and the UN Democracy Fund (UNDEF) in an effort to increase the accessibility of information related to peace, reconciliation, justice, security and the democratic process because of the cultural, ethnic and linguistic diversity in Nepal (see Bista 1967). In a media release that marked the beginning of local language productions in Maithili and Bhojpuri languages[72] EAN's strategic partnerships director said:

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that can't be overlooked in contemporary development movements that place a great deal of importance on the voice and participation of the people.

[71] Nepal experiences regular scheduled power cuts, called 'load shedding' because there is not enough electricity to supply the country all of the time. In winter this is intensified because there is no rain to produce electricity, however coupled with the Koshi disaster in August of 2008 in which the bank of the Koshi River broke causing a great deal of devastation in Bihar, India and adjoining Nepali districts, load shedding was intensified to at least 16 hours per day during the '08-'09 winter (TheKathmandu Post 2008a; 2008b).

[72] Maithili and Bhojpuri are the most widely spoken languages after Nepali (Government of Nepal 2007).

> In the threshold of reintegration and reconstruction this local language initiative will certainly benefit a significant population percentage of the middle-east of Nepal who [have been] getting less access to the information opportunities in the past.

> (14th March, 2008)

In support of this initiative EAN provided technical, financial and material support in the form of content and production guidelines, training, and the provision of recording devices, community reporters and production fees. Local versions of NN are required to use the same format as the NN radio program, incorporating vox-pops, interviews, discussion and music. Local versions of NN are also linked to NN by use of the same opening music and an opening statement that the local program is assisted by EAN. However, the production of a drama segment remained the sole responsibility of the NN radio program. Producers making local versions of NN were required to conduct content advisory group meetings involving local stakeholders in discussions about program content; however local versions were often made on the same topics covered in the NN radio program. The support provided for local versions of NN and the production requirements ensured that NN could exercise a degree of control over the style and content of local productions.

Community reporters in particular play an important role in ensuring that local versions of NN are stylistically similar to NN. Community reporters are people living in regional areas of Nepal who are trained and supported by EAN to record and produce radio content generated from their communities. Community reporters can be understood as part of the 'barefoot journalism' phenomenon in which local people are trained to produce local media content for broadcast (Banjade 2006a). The importance of this approach is highlighted by Equal Access staff in an unpublished article which states that being able to express oneself in the public sphere (e.g. through broadcast media) is an unequally distributed resource (Quilt et al. 2007). In this article the authors indicate that production studios are often distant from audiences. The geographical space between Kathmandu, where large production studios are invariably located, and the people who comprise audiences is intensified by Kathmandu-centrism or what Pringle (2007) has referred to as the centre-to-periphery power dynamic. It is contended by Equal Access that community reporters help bridge the producer-audience gap and create space for the voices of marginalised people to be heard by placing the power of media production within communities and in the hands of community members (Quilt et al. 2007). Community reporters are conceptualised as a mechanism for asserting claims to citizenship in the public sphere and I will

demonstrate that they, as important elements in the local versions of NN, contribute to political claims for ethnic identity and rights.

Nisha worked as a community reporter in Hetauda and facilitated the production of the Tamang language local version of NN: Chhar Nepal. Nisha would regularly travel within Makwanpur district interviewing people and recording their opinions to be used as interviews and vox-pops within Chhar Nepal that would broadcast from Hetauda FM at seven o'clock on Wednesday evenings for thirty minutes. Chhar Nepal was produced during 2008 to 2009 by local young Tamang producers Purnima, and later Aadarsha, and Nisha. Purnima, the producer of Chhar Nepal, asserted that the aim of Chhar Nepal is to "ensure the right of people to get access to information...particularly the Tamang community who may not understand mainstream Nepali language" (personal interview, Hetauda, 17th September, 2008). Nisha, who assisted with the production of this program, reiterated this, saying that Chhar Nepal aims to:

> "[Make] the community aware...These [local] programs are more effective to readily bring about change in the community...Chhar Nepal makes the people aware, and more basically, the program aims to bring about some changes in the Tamang community...The community needs education to change...The long held traditional practices need revision and change."

> (Personal interview, Hetauda, 20th September, 2008)

The local version of NN, which later became Chhar Nepal, was initially produced in Nepali language but changed in 2008 to become a Tamang language production because "we realised that in Makwanpur the population of Tamang people is greater than any other community [and] we started localising the program by using Tamang language" (Nisha, personal interview, Hetauda, 20th September, 2008). Tamang people are one of the larger ethnic groups of Nepal, making up five percent of the Nepalese population (Eagle 1999) and more than fifty percent of the population of Makwanpur district (Government of Nepal 2007).

Broadcasting in languages other than Nepali is significant in Nepal because the latter has been the *lingua franca* since the middle of the twentieth century when the Panchayat assimilationist policy of 'one language, one style of dress, one country' was developed to consolidate a national identity (Whelpton 2005). This national identity was based on the Hindu religion and Nepali language of the reigning Shah dynasty and was reflected in the 1962 constitution that declared Nepal a Hindu state (Eagle 1999). Use of the Nepali language and the promotion of development during the Panchayat era was propagated through Radio Nepal. During this time Radio Nepal did

not broadcast in other languages and by doing so effectively marginalised people of diverse cultures in Nepal (Parajulee 2007). The Nepalisation of Nepal has marginalised those people who claim a different mother tongue, of which there are reportedly ninety-two (Government of Nepal 2007), and further excludes those who are unable to speak or understand Nepali.

Language is essential to identity construction (Bailey 2001) and radio media offers a means through which these identities can be articulated (Suryadi 2005). In 2008 every radio station in Makwanpur district was broadcasting at least Tamang language news, and often other Tamang language programs in addition to this. Local language programs allow Tamang people to negotiate, construct and express their identities as part of a new Nepal that is politically recognised as multi-ethnic. Consequently I found that the most popular Tamang language programs amongst the participants in my research were those that dealt with Tamang culture and traditions. These programs offered Tamang listeners the opportunity to imagine themselves as part of a community with not only a distinctive language, but also with distinctive practices and beliefs.

Local language media is a key way in which Tamang people can position themselves as part of an emerging new Nepal that is marked by pluralism (Garrett 2007) and is part of the democratic process underway in which the *janājāti*[73] movement (of which Tamang groups are a part) opposes the recent monocultural history of Nepal. Local language productions such as Chhar Nepal are both a response to this changing sentiment and a contribution to a diverse and democratic new Nepal. The contemporary Nepali *janājāti* movement for the recognition of rights has resulted in diverse languages appearing in media. These groups are speaking up, asserting themselves and making themselves heard in the push for recognition of their identity and rights (see Hangen 2007; 2010). Sonntag says that:

> The official debate today is...over boundaries between groups that together make up the 'culturally unique' people of Nepal...This new debate emerged during the drafting of the 1990 constitution. For the first time, speakers of Tibeto-Burman languages other than Newari were demanding constitutional recognition of their languages.

(Sonntag 1995:110)

Tamang (2001) has argued that the *janājāti* movement, which is actually comprised of a number of small organisations representing diverse ethnic groups that form a pan-

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[73] *Janājāti* means nationalities or ethnic groups and is term that is used to distinguish these groups from dominant Hindu culture.

janājāti identity, engages in the public sphere to promote alternative discourses to the dominant Nepali Hindu identity (ibid.). Media is an important component of the public sphere (Habermas et al. 1974; Onta 2001) and is a means through which the groups involved in the *janājāti* movement voice their issues, contest their rights and promote their cultural identities. The NN and Chhar Nepal radio programs promote the issues and rights of *janājāti* people as comprising the "multi-lingual and multi-cultural country [of Nepal that]...makes ours a special identity in the world" (Naya Nepal, episode 235).

In the *Lahure Dāi ko Chiyā Pasal (*Brother Lahure's Tea Shop*)* radio drama that accompanies the NN radio program it is asserted by the regular female character named Batuli that:

> The communities, like dalits, ethnic and indigenous groups, who were suppressed, exploited and discriminated against have representatives in the Constituent Assembly. So there's hope for the prosperity of all Nepalese, irrespective of their caste and creed.

(Episode 137)

In this drama Chepang people are referred to as "the most backward among the indigenous communities" (ibid.). Chepangs are marginalised indigenous people of Tibeto-Burmese descent living predominantly in the central region of Nepal, including Makwanpur district (Bista 1967; SNV Netherlands Development Organisation and Nepal Chepang Association 2008). Historically Chepang people lived a nomadic lifestyle, used resources from the jungles and had no land ownership. When migrants moved into the mid and lower hills regions of Nepal they took ownership over land which effectively excluded Chepang people from use of and claims to land. The *Muluki Ain* further marginalised Chepang people by including them in the caste hierarchy as 'enslavable alcohol drinkers' (Hofer 1979), a low position that enabled their subjugation. These factors, as well as changing laws about forest access and use and the changing economy, have contributed to the asymmetric power relations and economic impoverishment of Chepang people (SNV Netherlands Development Organisation and Nepal Chepang Association 2008).

Around the same time that the NN radio program was broadcast, a Chhar Nepal radio program was also produced about Chepang people. Purnima began this episode[74] by saying (listen to Track 4):

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[74] This episode was broadcast in a mixture of Tamang and Nepali language. Purnima's presentation was in Tamang and the report, vox pops and interview were in Nepali language.

> Purnima: "Today's program will focus on Chepang people. This is one case of indigenous ethnicity."
>
> (Bridging Music)
>
> Purnima: "According to the 2058 census the number of Chepang people in Nepal is above fifty-two thousand. But the problems they face are still the same."

This is followed by a report produced by a community reporter in Chitwan about a local Chepang village:

> Reporter: "After three hours of walking we can reach Parya Cot. It is a rural Chitwan village. There is no electricity. It takes more than an hour to go to school. In the village they produce fruits and vegetables but there is no market nearby and no good road [to reach the market] to sell the fruits and vegetables."

The community reporter continues her report, remarking how difficult it is for local fruit growers to sell their goods owing to the lack of a road. In this report she effectively establishes the difficulties and poverty faced by the Chepang people of Parya Cot. This is reinforced by an interview with a Chepang leader that follows this report:

> Chepang leader: "Chepang people have had their own land but they haven't got any legal proof of it...The government only gives their attention to running the state and making the constitution. They don't make any policy for Chepang people to develop their situation."

This is then followed by some vox pops that Nisha had recorded in Manahari a few weeks earlier:

> Vox-pop: "My name is Man Bahadur Praja. There is not enough land to produce food so we have to do labour work and sell firewood to fulfill our needs."

In this episode of Chhar Nepal the issues of Chepang people were framed as development problems that have roots in historical social and cultural marginalisation and are understood to have specifically political solutions. This was highlighted by one of the Constituent Assembly (CA) members who was interviewed for the program and explained that he was involved in the process of making: "New policies and programs to be included in the new constitution. Our main issue is making our own State...that's why we'll struggle sitting here [in parliament]...to bring attention to our issues".

This episode and other episodes like it consolidate the *janājāti* movement by highlighting the plight of indigenous and ethnic communities to realise their rights. The Chhar Nepal radio program cross-references the plight of Chepang people with that of Tamang people by reporting on the former in a local language radio program that has

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Nisha translated this radio program from Tamang into Nepali, after which my research assistant, Saru, translated it from Nepali into English for use here.

as its explicit purpose the development of Tamang people. In a media diary entry a Tamang respondent highlighted this cross-over:

> At 7.30 I tuned to Radio Thaha Sanchar. CA member Kumari Moktan's voice is playing on Sabaika Kura program. In this episode they are discussing about free education and fundamental and other necessary things for Chepang people of her own area— Kakada VDC. Chepang people's expectations after making her a winner in the election is playing as a vox pop and she said she will try her best to raise their issues in parliament and fulfill their expectations. In this area Chepang and Tamang people's health condition is so weak so I got information that they talked with two institutions that are related with health sector to establish health centres for them. We don't depend only on every area's representative in CA or parliament, we should also try to implement development work from small things. If we do this it helps to build new Nepal.

> (Dudumaya, media diary, 23rd December, 2008)

By cross-referencing the experiences of Chepang people with Tamang people Dudumaya consolidates a shared history of subjugation and a shared aspiration for a better future achievable through the realisation of rights, political representation and agency.

The *janājāti* movement draws on the past objectification and abuse of ethnic groups of people in Nepal, as Tamang asserts:

> The janajati movement rests on the shared concerns that virulent discrimination persisted historically in multicultural Nepal. The movement is based on the common experience of the ethnic and indigenous populace that despite the traditional rhetoric of 'unity in diversity' and democratic equality, discrimination is continually reproduced. They feel it intensely in almost every dimension of their lives, including economic prosperity, political participation, educational access, and cultural dignity.

> (2001:22)

Tamang activists draw on their collective history of subjugation. The only popularly elected female Tamang member of the Constituent Assembly[75] from Padampokhari VDC drew on this history, telling me that the state objectification and abuse of Tamang people as forced labour had resulted in what she called the 'backwardness' of Tamang people:

> "We feel that we aren't the cause of our backwardness but that the State made us that way. The State didn't give us any opportunities and we are backward for it—what can we do?...If we look in other fields—taxi driver, tractor driver, labour workers, thieves— all are from the Tamang community. If we talk with Kathmandu taxi drivers most of the

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[75] The Constituent Assembly (CA) was formed in 2008 on the basis of elections earlier that year. The 601 members of the Constituent Assembly were tasked with the responsibility of writing a new constitution. This proved to be a challenging task owing to division between political parties and the deadline for the drafting of the constitution was extended a number of times before the CA was disbanded early in 2012.

> drivers are from the Tamang community...Now...what should be done is that this government should focus on education, employment and participation in the higher level. If it should do otherwise the Tamang situation will never develop and we can't go ahead, that's my opinion."

(Kumari Moktan, CA Member, personal interview, Hetauda, 28th January, 2009)

The 'backwardness' of Tamang people that Kumari Moktan speaks about refers to a perception that marginalised ethnic groups within Nepal are underprivileged as a result of the Nepalisation of the State. This is a perception borne out in everyday life, in which high caste Hindus and Newaris generally have greater financial resources and access to education and employment than members of low caste and ethnic groups (Tamang 2001).

The Chhar Nepal radio program has the capacity to engage people as part of a Tamang community through the broadcast of Tamang language programming. Listeners of Tamang language programming have said that they feel proud to hear their mother tongue on radio. Through a media journal entry a young Tamang research participant expressed her feelings about being able to access Tamang language media:

> I heard our own mother language [radio] program Jyaba Mehendo. The program presenter said that this program's objective is to save the Tamang language and culture...The Tamang community is socially, economically, politically, culturally, religiously and educationally backward because of the state. We are backward so there is no access in any field so we haven't any unity. Slowly these things are changing through media and when Tamang programs are broadcast on radio who could feel unhappy? Radio programs play an important role for change. We are forgetting our culture, language and identity with modernisation. In this situation this kind of program plays an important role.

(Dudumaya, media diary, 23rd December, 2008)

As Dudumaya notes, local language media plays a key role in creating change and unity among Tamang people and also in reversing the loss of culture, language and identity through 'modernisation,' which was a concern similarly expressed by young people in Kathmandu (Chapter Three). Hangen encountered similar concerns during her work in Nepal. She recounts commenting on a calendar promoting the Mongol National Organisation (MNO) to a shopkeeper, who 'began talking about the impending loss of Tamang language, religion and culture' (2010:113). This is an outcome of media as an empowering tool when used by disempowered and vulnerable groups and as a resource for identity expression and construction (Barker 1999; Beck 1994; Gauntlett 2002; Giddens 1991; Ginsburg 1991;Lash and Friedman 1992). Hangen (2010) argues that calendars, like those promoting the MNO, are displayable artefacts

that create national communities by producing a sense of belonging. Hangen (2010) notes Anderson's argument (1983), that nations are created through representations, such as media forms, that create a sense of belonging because they can be reproduced, disseminated and ultimately bring people together. Radio similarly creates a national Tamang community by enabling Tamang people throughout Nepal to share a history and an identity. Ginsburg (1991; 2002) has noted that indigenous media is concerned with mediating across boundaries to heal disruptions in identity due to external assaults and that media can be used to regain and share collective histories. For Dudumaya, Tamang radio media that asserts a shared language and culture is a way in which she can imagine herself as part of the Tamang community that was obscured when media was only produced in Nepali language.

The Chhar Nepal program itself however, was not widely listened to amongst the people I met and interviewed. On a number of occasions people claimed not to have heard of the program, or said that they were unable to listen to it because of the regular scheduled power cuts (load shedding). The producers of Chhar Nepal maintained that it was well listened to in remote areas of Makwanpur where Tamang people were unable to understand or speak Nepali. On occasions when Nisha asked young people to respond in Tamang language they replied that they were unable to and often dissolved into giggles. As a result of this much of the program was often in Nepali language. In fact Nisha cited getting people to speak in Tamang language as one of the key challenges to producing the Chhar Nepal radio program. Chhar Nepal did reflect key issues dealt with in the NN radio program (e.g. giving space to minority ethnic groups) and may contribute to the formation and consolidation of an imagined Tamang community. This is however not straightforward and not all Tamang people will be willing and capable of becoming actively involved in the constitution and promotion of a Tamang community.

Spin-off SSMK Productions: Young Generation

The Young Generation radio program produced at Hetauda FM was supported by a capacity-building initiative run by EAN. EAN conducted a series of trainings throughout Nepal called Tanneri Awaj (Voice of Youth) in 2008. A member of the SSMK team told me that this was initiated by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), who felt that if SSMK was to share the formula for their successful program, local FM stations could produce similar programs that would deal with young people's issues in a locally specific way:

> "Centrally-produced radio programs would not be able to address specific issues of so many areas. The program would need to remain general because the whole of the country would be listening. And because Nepal is so diverse in so many ways they [UNICEF] thought that it would be a good idea if we were able to localise the program, localising regarding the content, regarding the language, because people living in different parts of Nepal spoke different languages. And if we are able to tap that they thought the program would be more...efficient. So they wanted the SSMK team to train the local FM stations, they wanted us to share with them our experiences, they wanted us to give the formula. So the popularity that we gained how we gained that, they wanted us to give our mantra to the local FM stations and they would be able to produce local versions of SSMK, or similar programs dealing with young people's issues, in a more local, more specific way."

(Kalyan, personal interview, Kathmandu, 3rd March, 2009)

These trainings had three objectives: to build the capacities of the participants to make local language programs for youth; to train the participants in 'life skills' and encourage them to promote youth priorities, concerns and issues; and to provide a point of departure for them to establish networks for support and collaboration.[76] In these trainings the participants were encouraged to establish their own local programs for youth and were given portable voice recorders to do this.

The young producers from Hetauda FM who participated in the Tanneri Awaj training were already producing a program for youth entitled Young Generation. After the training however they were able to apply some of the things they had learnt in the ongoing production of their program. After these producers left Hetauda FM they began planning their new program for youth that would be broadcast through the newly established Radio Makwanpur using many of the skills and lessons they had learnt through the Tanneri Awaj training.

It must be noted here, as it was stressed by a member of the SSMK team, that these were not local versions of SSMK, rather, they were similar, spin-off productions that had been inspired by SSMK and encouraged through the Tanneri Awaj training. This is an important distinction to make because the SSMK team could not be responsible for the content of the productions that were developed as a result of the Tanneri Awaj trainings. These programs are still important to consider here because the young producers who participated in the Tanneri Awaj trainings were trained to remediate life skills and deal with youth issues. These young producers were essentially being trained to produce a program at the direction of SSMK. Furthermore if the trainings did not take place these local productions may never have started, or at least they may not be in the form that they were.

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[76] Tanneri Awaj Training Report, 22nd–30th June, 2008

Young Generation began before the Tanneri Awaj training initiative, but was modelled on the SSMK program. Aashish, one of two producers (who were also the presenters) of Young Generation, told me that the program "started inspiring from SSMK. We were listeners of that program at that time...It's a clone of SSMK, it's a local version of SSMK I think" (personal interview, Hetauda, 27th August, 2008). When Young Generation was produced it was a forty-five minute program broadcast from Hetauda FM on Wednesday evenings after the five o'clock news. This program addressed what the producers determined to be local youth issues, which were identified by the producers as different to problems faced by young people living in urban areas:

> "In Kathmandu...they can share their problems easily and freely but in Hetauda they are facing small problems but think that these small problems are such a big problem for them and their lives...The problems that they face are especially about love problems, generation gap, career, family, studying abroad, early marriage, physical change in teenagers et cetera."

<div align="right">(Aashish, personal interview, Hetauda, 27th August, 2008)</div>

Aashish reinforces the centre-to-periphery division in his comment about the ease with which he perceives youths living in Kathmandu can talk about their problems in comparison with youths living in Hetauda. This is a difference that can be linked to the use of what Kunreuther (2010) calls 'direct speech' which is a way of speaking transparently about one's feelings and desires that implies agency and is, she argues, integral to the formation of neoliberal subjectivities. When Aashish says that Kathmandu youth can talk about their problems with greater ease he is making a distinction between them and the youth of Hetauda that is based on the difference between their subjectivities. Aashish's assumption reinforces the distance between Kathmandu and regional areas of Nepal and justifies local radio programs as appropriate to audiences comprised of people with different subjectivities.

Stylistically Young Generation was similar to SSMK. The program was composed of a lively chat section in which the presenters, Aashish and Mina, would banter with one another, which would eventually lead to a discussion of a key issue (for example unrequited or unwanted love). This issue would then be highlighted by a drama that Aashish and Mina would produce using other presenters and producers working at Hetauda FM as characters. A further chat would follow this that would return to the issue, at times using letters and often using life skills (Chapter Three), to resolve the issue. This program was interspersed with popular music and advertisements for educational institutions, local businesses, agencies that assisted people to travel abroad for study and work and station promotions. The Young Generation program

introduction also used a combination of popular music with overlaid voice samples that proclaimed "youth voices...youth discussion...our own destination...this is Young Generation" (listen to Track 5). This program introduction overlays Nepali/English code-switching with popular music and implies an exclusive space for young people, conjuring an image of young, hip Nepalis.

Young Generation styled itself as part of the youth market by code-switching, playing popular music, addressing contemporary youth issues such as love and future aspirations (cf Ahearn 2004), and the speaking styles and playful interactions between the presenters (Kunreuther 2010; Pigg 2002). These are features specific to what Kunreuther (2010) has called the 'direct voice', which is characteristic of FM radio. Kunreuther argues that the direct voice is constituted by the live feel of FM radio and the use of phatic language that emphasises the radio as a mediator of social relations. This direct voice is seen as a link to people's inner selves and evidences a presumably changed subjectivity in which people can speak openly about their feelings (ibid.). Aashish and Mina saw this as a strength of Young Generation which operated as a platform for young people living in Makwanpur to speak openly about their feelings:

> "Youth can't share their inner problems freely and without hesitation with their families. When they listen to the radio program they come to know that it's a natural process and something that every youth has faced in their life. After listening to this program they feel easy in the knowledge that all will, or have, faced similar problems."

(Aashish, personal interview, Hetauda, 27th August, 2008)

But one does not necessarily need to listen to the radio program to recognise it as part of the youth market—this is proclaimed in the title: Young Generation. This title is in English, which I found curious and consequently asked the Hetauda FM program coordinator why this was. He responded that English words that are in common use in contemporary Nepali vernacular are not always translatable to Nepali; they don't have an exact equivalent. In this case that statement is quite untrue, the Nepali equivalent is *yūba pustā* and there is in fact at least one radio program with this title that is broadcast on Image FM located in the Kathmandu Valley. What the program coordinator was referring to however, is the conceptual difference between the use of Nepali and English words. It has been discussed in Chapter Three that proficiency in English language is both a marker of social privilege, as it implies an expensive education (Liechty 2003), and is increasingly tied to the domain of youth experience and expression (Pigg 2001). Language is a means through which young people can mark their membership in this social category and thus 'borrowing of terms, and

switching between codes can all be seen as part of a continuum of linguistic practices through which identities and the boundaries of communities are experienced and marked' (Pigg 2001:507). By adopting an English title, Young Generation explicitly positions itself within the social category of youth.

Taking its lead from the SSMK program and the Tanneri Awaj trainings, Young Generation offers life skills-based solutions to issues such as love, study and tradition. One episode addressed 'ragging' (teasing) in a college setting (listen to Track 6):

> Aashish: "Before the break you listened to the drama and found out what happens in ragging."
>
> Mina: "Especially why people tease girls."
>
> Aashish: "Not only girls but boys also face the same problem."
>
> Mina: "You've also experienced that in the present day both boys and girls are facing the same problem."
>
> Aashish: "Especially in towns. This trend is increasing day by day."
>
> Mina: "The best idea is for no-one to rag anyone. Please think with empathy [a life skill] about the kinds of problems that can happen after ragging."
>
> Aashish: "Please tell me how we can use empathy in this case."
>
> Mina: "If you tease one girl think about what your sister would feel if other people tease her."
>
> Aashish: "I'll fight with them!"
>
> Mina: "In this case we should use empathy."
>
> Aashish: "I shouldn't tease their sisters."
>
> Mina: "Yes never. Please don't tease anyone, the great solution of this problem is don't tease anyone in any case. I've seen people who start a fight if somebody teases their sister."
>
> Aashish: "Friends, if we feel uneasy when people tease us it can encourage them. We should ignore it. If we ignore it, people will think that it doesn't affect you and they'll stop it."
>
> Mina: "We have one letter about it: 'me and my sister study in the same college and on the way people tease us. They only tease with chatting so we don't say anything to them. Is this our weakness?'"
>
> Aashish: "Thank you for your letter. You are a brother so obviously you will feel hurt when people tease your sister. You may want to fight like the films but this is not wise...if you shout at them it can create a fight...but it's good for you to ignore these things. Empathy will be useful in this situation. If those people who rag each other think what will happen if people tease my sister? This situation would not happen. If those people who rag each other are local people we can talk with their families or persuade them. For this friends you should use polite language."

> Mina: "You easily gave a solution to the problem."
>
> Aashish: "But it's not easy to solve quickly, but it can be solved slowly if senior people of society or college teacher talk with them, or you yourself try to chat with them while your sister isn't with you."
>
> Mina: "Yes friends, having fun isn't a bad thing but we should think about the way [we have fun] and choose the right way."
>
> Aashish: "Yes friends. You are listening to Young Generation. Laughing at someone is different to laughing with them. This is today's conclusion."

Aashish and Mina promote the life skill of empathy as a way of addressing and reducing teasing. This is played out in the drama (which preceded the above chat) when a boy and girl who are being teased turn the tables on their teaser, fabricating a story about his sister going home crying because she had been teased. This boy, experiencing empathy, then realises his wrong-doing and resolves to advocate against teasing: "I was frightened after listening to you [say that the sister had gone home], but I was wrong. I'll convince Bikram too." This boy's change of heart is premised on the protectiveness he feels for his sister. This narrative draws on the sacred position that sisters occupy in the Nepali home and the role that men have in protecting them and maintaining their reputations, especially in expanded public spaces such as colleges where there are many more opportunities for interacting with boys. Indeed Mina, one of the Young Generation hosts, notes earlier in the chat that teasing is "increasing day by day with urbanisation," drawing attention to the challenges to existing values and norms that changing social structures bring about.

This Young Generation episode draws on the idea of honour (*ijjat*). Cameron describes honour as,

> A social concept that is articulated through various social structures. For example, we find that a person's honourable behavior is related to her fathers and husband's lineage and caste. A person acting with honor enhances not only personal reputation, but also the prestige of the household and its members, the agnatic descent group, and the local reputation of the caste.

> (1998:136)

In my research people did not speak of their *ijjat*. Honour was instead spoken about in more practical terms. For example, upon returning from a trip to Banaspati Village late one evening with my research assistant, Saru, we saw her new husband walking down the road to collect her. He looked irate and she hastily jumped off my motorbike and waved me goodbye. She later told me that it was not good for her to be outside of her home after dark. This was a theme that was often reiterated to me—women should

not be outside their homes after dark. Indeed, one evening I was chatting with some friends in the marketplace in the early evening when Saraswati-*didi's* nephew called my mobile and told me to return home immediately. This is a means through which women, and their families, protect their honour. If a woman is outside after dark for no specific and acceptable reason and without the company of her family members, questions will invariably be raised about her sexual practices. Honour is vested in such behaviours and it has been argued that honour largely rests on women's behaviour:

> It would not be an exaggeration to say that the honor of the collective depends on the honor of its women. A household's absence of honourable women (or abundance of dishonourable women) prevents a collective from claiming ijat.

(Cameron 1998:137)

As I have intimated above, the honour of women largely relates to their sexuality (Bennett 1983; Cameron 1998). Women's sexuality[77] is a powerful force that can be destructive to their families and husbands if sexual discretion is not exercised by women (ibid.). Cameron explains that for women to maintain the honour of their families they 'must avoid indiscrete sexual behaviour' (1998:138). But 'indiscrete sexual behaviour' is not always within the control of women. The occurrence of teasing ('ragging') as described in the Young Generation episode above is an emerging social practice over which women have no control. Teasing is nevertheless risky for women because it often positions them as sexual objects and as an object of men's attention. It is such a detrimental practice that newspapers have reported girls attempting and committing suicide after being subjected to teasing.

The Young Generation episode described above proposes solutions to the contemporary problem of ragging that are based on familiar tropes of honour. Aashish implores raggers to think about how they would feel if their own sister became an object of ragging. This highlights the susceptibility of the ragger's own honour and how this is linked to the general practice of ragging. It is also suggested that teachers, respected people and brothers themselves address the problem directly with the ragger. It is not suggested that this is a task that a girl herself can undertake. Instead she must rely on those who play a role in maintaining her honour, especially brothers.

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[77] Bennett (1983) explains that Hindu women's sexuality is reinforced as problematic and dangerous by Hindu religious belief that manifests in ritual practices.

Liechty has highlighted that the harassment of women was experienced by his respondents as a contradiction of democracy (2001). While freedom is understood to be a key element of democracy, Liechty's female respondents in fact felt less empowered and more threatened as a result of democratic change. His respondents noted that a newfound freedom meant that boys 'think that to do anything is OK. That's why the girls have to look out for themselves' (quoted in Liechty 2001:35) and there are fewer protections for women.

The ragging described in the Young Generation episode above is an attempt to solve this contemporary problem by traditional means. By relying on the idea of honour and brothers as key players in the honour of sisters, this episode represents a struggle between tradition and modernity. Liechty (2003) has argued that, for middle-class society, *ijjat* is a moral and material economy that is based on the complex negotiations of balancing traditional morals with modern practices. However all young people, whether or not they are from middle-class families, are similarly engaged in balancing tradition and modernity in defining appropriate practice. This is a matter of degree. While the SSMK radio program producers represent youth archetypes based on experiences of living in Kathmandu and international development discourse, the Young Generation episode rests heavily on the local experience of producers and traditional structures to define youth practice.

Negotiating between traditional and modern social structures and practices to define youth practice is highlighted in another episode of Young Generation that reinforced religious values. This episode criticised the way that some young people celebrate the major religious festival of *Dasaī*[78] as entertainment rather than with deep religiosity:

> Aashish: "Friends, I'm celebrating *Dasaī*...I couldn't sleep in the night just thinking about *nawaratha*.[79] I woke up in the morning at three am [to go to the temple]!...To worship the gods lots of people come and beautiful also come. I enjoy looking at girls and worshipping."
>
> Mina: "The main problem of the young generation is that they want to get entertainment from everything and don't try to understand the importance of these things. You also don't know the importance of *nawaratha.*"
>
> Aashish: "Why are you saying only me? Tell your friends too who never used to go before to the temple but during nawaratha they go to temple to show fashion wearing their clothes like it's a runway but they don't worship God."

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[78] An annual fifteen day celebration occurring in late September to early October (*Ashwin*) in which the victory of the goddess Durga (divine goddess, wife of Shiva and mother of Ganesh) is celebrated with prayer, worship and animal sacrifices.
[79] One of the holy days during the *Dasaī* festival.

> Mina: "You people, you lie to your parents and tell them that we are going to the temple for worship but you people sit in one corner and tease girls and say that this girl is beautiful and that girl is beautiful."
>
> Aashish: "If we don't tease girls you people will feel bad and tense. When we tease you walk happily."
>
> Mina: "Really friends our intention is not to blame boys and girls...we're just trying to raise the topic of young generations view about *nawaratha* and its importance to us.*"*
>
> Aashish: "Really in *nawaratha* we young people should worship Goddess Durga...but people go to temple just to show new dresses and for enjoyment rather than with some feelings for God...Sometimes we can have fun but we shouldn't forget our culture...We the young generation should think about it, our culture is diverting. We are rich in our culture and that's why our culture has been saved, but if our culture changes then we won't have our own customs and rituals."

This episode evidences a wariness of some aspects of morally unrestrained practice and advocates for the maintenance of some traditional belief in practice. This is indicative of the moral tension inherent in modernisation and resonates with Liechty's understanding of middle-class practice in Kathmandu as traversing a fine line between tradition and modernity:

> In Kathmandu the middle class are those people struggling to rescue a socially valid "traditional" Nepali morality from its associations with the provincial vulgarity of the urban poor, while at the same time attempting to define a "suitably" modern-but-still-Nepali lifestyle of moral and material restraint distinct from what they view as corrupt elite lifestyles of foreignness and consumer excess. To be middle class is to walk this knife's edge between low and high, tradition and modernity, and to be willing to risk the social penalties of falling away from one's social others as they collectively debate and improvise a Nepali modernity.

> (2003:61)

Liechty has argued that youth is essential to the middle class' production of itself. Youth is described in this thesis as working to build a new Nepal through self and social transformation. Programs like Young Generation indicate that this new Nepal must be 'suitably modern' (Liechty 2003). What is 'suitable', or acceptable, youth practice as defined by the Young Generation producers is based on religious values and traditional power relationships. Ideas about appropriate youth practice were often gendered and were reiterated time and again. Another drama portrayed a pregnant woman who became ill when her mother-in-law insisted that she fast during *Tij*.[80] The woman's husband stood-up to his mother, telling her that his wife would not fast. While this episode challenges a traditional practice that has lately been framed as potentially

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[80] *Tij* is a 'women's festival' that occurs during the month of Bhadra. During this festival women fast for the longevity of their husbands.

dangerous for women, it does this by reinforcing traditional power relationships between men and women.

The Young Generation remediation represents a youth subject whose decisions and actions occur on an alternatively modern terrain. This is a localised terrain that is a negotiation between modern and traditional imperatives in Hetauda. The youth subject represented in Young Generation is guided through the modern challenges of social change by drawing on traditional tropes of behaviour and relationships in a way that is toned-down from subject represented in the SSMK radio program. The experience of being young in Nepal is not homogenous and the perceived distance between Kathmandu and Hetauda is evident in the different youth subjects that are represented in the SSMK and Young Generation radio programs.

Conclusion

In the introduction to this chapter I recounted the comments of an Equal Access staff member who asserted that remediation runs contrary to BCC orthodoxy because there is a lack of control over the messages being relayed. In this chapter I have demonstrated that the Young Generation radio program (a spin-off of the SSMK radio program encouraged and supported by EAN) represents a youth subject that is a toned-down variation of the youth archetype portrayed in the SSMK radio program (described in Chapter Three). The Young Generation radio program represents a youth subject that often makes decisions (or has decisions made for them) and reaches conclusions that are couched in traditional power structures and relationships. The application of life skills—one of the key features of the Tanneri Awaj training that was undertaken to encourage spin-off versions of SSMK—in the Young Generation production reinforces these traditional power structures and relationships by championing brothers as gatekeepers of their sisters' honour and husbands as the guardians of their wives. Consequently the youth subject represented in the Young Generation remediation of SSMK is not an independent and emancipated subject, but one that occupies a defined role in the existing status quo. The creation of changed subjectivities inherent in the SSMK radio program (discussed in Chapter Three) is subverted in the Young Generation remediation and youth subjects are instead defined by local producers' own understandings of the socio-cultural world and the role of young people within it. SSMK producers attempted to mitigate the risk posed by remediation—highlighted by the Equal Access staff member quoted above—by insisting that Young Generation was *not* a local version of SSMK, despite the fact that

the Tanneri Awaj training centred on encouraging local radio program producers to use life skills as a means of influencing the subjectivities of young Nepalis, just like the SSMK radio program.

The Chhar Nepal radio program—a remediation of the NN radio program—regularly broadcasts episodes that address similar issues to those addressed in the NN radio program. The Chhar Nepal episode described in this chapter discussed the challenges facing Chepang people and framed these in terms of a lack of development and a need and desire on behalf of the Chepang community to progress these issues through the political realisation of rights. Local program productions, such as Chhar Nepal, are a means for increasing the circulation of and access to messages promoted in NN, including multiculturalism and the right of political representation. The NN radio program producers ensure that particular messages are addressed in local program productions with the inclusion of the views of community members by exercising a significant level of control over the local program productions. Control is effected through content and format requirements of the local programs and the provision of EAN-trained community reporters who record and edit vox-pops and interviews for the local versions of NN. However, the Chhar Nepal radio program rarely promoted the role of young people in contributing to the development of a new Nepal as the NN radio program often did. In Chapter Three I argue that the promotion of active young people in socially-oriented activities is a core message of the NN radio program. This is not a message that is remediated in the local Chhar Nepal radio program. Instead, the focus was on increasing the accessibility of the information that was covered in the NN radio program by producing it into a Tamang language program. This was a key feature of what was understood to be localisation of the NN radio program, the other key feature being the representation of local peoples' voices within the Chhar Nepal program which is widely understood to increase local engagement with media (Tacchi 2012). However I argue that localisation may have an impact beyond increasing the accessibility of and engagement with issues covered in the NN radio program that are remediated in Chhar Nepal.

In a media diary entry Dudumaya, a young Tamang woman, writes that Tamang language media plays an important role in developing and strengthening an imagined Tamang community that is based on common issues and a shared language and culture. The Chhar Nepal radio program contributes to the mediascape (Appadurai 1990) of local language productions that contributes to an imagined Tamang community. As I have discussed in this chapter, the collective Tamang identity is

asserted in terms of continued underdevelopment as a result of past abuses at the hands of the State. The realisation of these rights and access to resources underscores the Tamang movement, which is part of the broader *janājāti* movement. The *janājāti* movements' visions of what a new Nepal should look like are evident in calls for a form of Federalism that would effectively carve-up Nepal along dominant ethnic and indigenous lines that has ultimately proved to be an insurmountable barrier to political consensus in Nepal. Creating a new Nepal is an uneven process that is complicated within larger political and local contexts. NN and SSMK radio content is affected by these contexts and their core messages become distorted as they are remediated in these contexts.

Figure 122: Hetauda FM Radio Station

<u>Chapter Five</u> A Youth Public

In this chapter I argue that the Janahit listeners' club members are part of an emerging youth public. The Janahit club is one of the listeners' clubs that is associated with and supported by Equal Access Nepal (EAN) through *Sāthi Saṅga man kā Kura* (SSMK). Clubs—including listeners' clubs like Janahit—are important to the formation of civil society and subsequently for the creation of a public sphere (Eley 1994; Mchakulu 2007). EAN's communication for development initiative, which incorporates the support of listeners' clubs, contributes to a public sphere engendered by the prolific and ubiquitous media boom in Nepal in the 1990s. Onta (2001) argues that the imagined communities of media owners, producers, contributors and audience members produce and are produced as elements of a public sphere:

> FM radio is not only what goes on air. It is as much what happens off air. If the programs aired are engendering a new public sphere, then the communities that produce them and the communities, in turn, produced by them are important elements of that sphere.

(2001:78)

I argue that an element of the public sphere described by Onta is a youth public that resembles what Fraser (1990; 1995) has called a 'counterpublic'. A counterpublic is made up of people aligned by a common identity who have found themselves oppressed and dominated by power structures that pervade existing publics (ibid.). In Nepal traditional publics have excluded young Nepalis (UNICEF 2003) and the youth public is an alternative space where young people can articulate their visions for the future. The common identity of the youth public is based on the attribute of action for social change that is enshrined in the term 'new Nepal' and a major feature of this public is the appropriation of development discourse (Hauser 1999). The support and encouragement of listeners' clubs to remediate issues dealt with in the *Naya Nepal* (NN) and SSMK radio programs are a means for club members to contribute to and demonstrate their membership in the youth public.

Listeners' clubs represent a participatory form of communication that can be likened to the communication for social change (CFSC) model that EAN aims to adopt (Lennie et al. 2008). The CFSC model emphasises horizontal and participatory communication that is grounded in local realities and stresses that social change comes about through community dialogue and collective action to resolve shared problems and build

community problem-solving capacities (Figueroa et al. 2002; Gray-Felder and Deane 1999). The listeners' clubs evolved from grass-roots initiated groups of friends that formed to listen to SSMK, to become key avenues for the remediation of radio program messages within their communities through activities and informal discussion (Equal Access 2011d; UNICEF 2003; 2008). I argue that remediation is a process through which youth subjectivities are locally constituted (cf Novak 2010) and also poses challenges for the practice of CFSC.

I recount two activities performed by the Janahit listeners' club members that remediated broad issues dealt with in the SSMK radio program—a street drama and a sanitation activity—that had the stated respective aims of raising public awareness about the link between violence against women and HIV and of rubbish as an issue for health. I concentrate on the production rather than the reception of these activities for the purpose of focussing on the practice of youth subjectivities by the club members through the process of remediation. The club members were also largely unconcerned with their audiences and did not interact with them. The activities produced by the Janahit club members contribute to the generation, circulation, affirmation and contestation of cultural meaning and practice that characterise the youth public (Fraser 1995). I argue that the emerging youth public is a space in which the Janahit listeners' club members, among others, can articulate alternative visions for the future and create an 'alternative modernity' (Knauft 2002a; 2002b) that is imagined in the project of making a new Nepal.

The Public Sphere and the Youth Counterpublic

The concept of the public sphere was famously described by Habermas as:

> First of all a realm of our social life in which something approaching public opinion can be formed. Access is guaranteed to all citizens. A portion of the public sphere comes into being in every conversation in which private individuals assemble to form a public body. They then behave neither like business nor professional people transacting private affairs, nor like members of a constitutional order subject to the legal constraints of a state bureaucracy. Citizens behave as a public body when they confer in an unrestricted fashion—that is, with the guarantee of freedom of assembly and association and the freedom to express and publish their opinions—about matters of general interest.

(1974:49)

Habermas' conception of the public sphere is based on the emergence of the eighteenth century European bourgeoisie class that, owing to new forms of commodity exchange and the circulation of news, began to publicly communicate on matters

deemed of general interest (Habermas 1989).[81] The public sphere is characterised by a number of principles including equitable participation, inclusivity and rational-critical discourse on matters of common concern (ibid.). However, it has been argued that the public sphere as it was conceptualised by Habermas was in fact constituted by a number of significant exclusions (Eley 1994; Fraser 1990; Landes 1988). Critics have highlighted that the bourgeoisie public sphere privileged propertied men to the exclusion of others (Eley 1994; Fraser 1990; Landes 1988) and that it is not generalisable to other historical contexts, as Castells highlights:

> The material expression of the public sphere varies with context, history, and technology, but in its current practice, it is certainly different from the ideal type of eighteenth-century bourgeois public sphere around which Habermas (1989) formulated his theory.

(2008:79)

In Nepal the formation of a public sphere was repressed by the 'strict control the state wielded over public representation up until 1990' (Lakier 2009:220). Burghart (1996) explains that the Panchayat system was maintained by controlling the actions of political agitators in public spaces through arrest. Consequently, there was no space for public criticism of the political order and this space had to be 'actively created...through an act of willpower' (Burghart 1996:317). The act of willpower that Burghart (ibid.) refers to is a strike, but could equally be applied to the People's Movement that was a backlash against public oppression and represented aspirations for an equitable future.

The People's Movement and War, the establishment of democracy, the writing of a new constitution, the media boom, changes to the economy, the influx of development discourse and practice, and consumerism have all contributed to an expanding public sphere in Nepal (Ahearn 2004; Fisher 2008; Liechty 2003; Onta 2001). The expanding public sphere however, is marked by a multiplicity of alternative publics seeking recognition and rights, especially in relation to the drafting of the new constitution. These multiple publics are evident in the many minority, ethnic and caste groups that have formed to advocate for their rights and aspirations (cf Hangen 2007; Hangen 2010). It is amidst these multiple publics that those who comprise the youth public are expressing their own aspirations for a new Nepal.

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[81] Fraser offers a feminist critique of the framing of matters of interest for the public sphere. She says that framing of certain things as 'private' acts to keep these out of the public sphere and intensifies subordination and domination, which most often occurs along gendered, racialised and sexualised lines (1995).

The principles of inclusion and equal participation are problematic principles in Banaspati village. This is related to the different historical contexts out of which Habermas' bourgeoisie public sphere and the Nepali youth public have emerged. Listeners' clubs are fundamentally exclusive; they are for young people who have the desire, capacity and ability to identify themselves as part of a youth public. Participation rests on the important practicalities of attaining a consciousness of development (Fujikura 2001) and having free time, which occurs when one is studying, not engaged in time-intensive labour, and before marriage. These features have been identified as attributes of youth presented in Chapter One. The social stratification in Banaspati village (see Chapter Two) further contributed to the exclusivity of the Janahit listeners' club. Although a few members were Brahmin, one member was Magar and one Dalit,[82] members were predominantly Tamang. All of the significant posts within the club (chairperson, treasurer, secretary) were occupied by Tamang members and often within the clubhouse Tamang language was used, at times to keep conversations private by deliberately excluding those who could not understand the language. It is important to note however, that this exclusion was refuted by members, who claimed that people of other castes were not represented in the club because of a lack of interest and the caste politics in the village, which was always attributed to the older generation.

Counterpublics offer a way to think about people who have been excluded by the dominant public sphere and its discourse that suppresses other concerns and voices. The resulting oppression was keenly felt by young people who spoke about being overlooked in political arenas and in local situations in which elders—the classically powerful—silenced the voices of young people. The youth counterpublic is a response to such oppression. Fraser argues that owing to existing structures of power, subordinated groups have created what she terms 'subaltern counterpublics' that create greater equality overall by expanding discursive space:

> In stratified societies arrangements that promote contestation among a plurality of competing publics better promote the ideal of participatory parity than does a single, comprehensive, overarching public...Where societal inequality persists, deliberative processes in public spheres will tend to operate to the advantage of dominant groups and to the disadvantage of subordinates. These effects will be exacerbated, however, where there is only a single, comprehensive public sphere. In that case, members of subordinated groups would have no arenas for deliberation among themselves about their needs, objectives and strategies. They would have no venues in which to

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[82] Brahmins and Dalits are members of the highest caste and lowest caste respectively. Magars are an Indigenous ethnic group of people from the area now known as Nepal and are classified within the middle to lower ranks of the caste system (Hofer 1979).

undertake communicative processes that were not, as it were, under the supervision of dominant groups...Because such counterpublics emerge in response to exclusions within dominant publics, they help expand discursive space. In principle, assumptions that were previously exempt from contestation will now have to be publicly argued out. In general, then, the proliferation of subaltern counterpublics means a widening of discursive contestation. In stratified societies, this expansion represents a movement toward greater democracy.

(1995:291–92)

The articulation between counterpublics occurs in the public sphere because this is 'where cultural and ideological context or negotiation among a variety of publics takes place' (Eley 1994:310). Warner has highlighted that counterpublics maintain an awareness of their subordinate status and it is through 'friction against the dominant public forces [that]...counterpublic discourse...become[s] salient to consciousness' (2002:86).

An important feature of the youth public is the appropriation of development discourse that is essential to the youth attribute of social consciousness and activeness. Thus I argue that an important feature of the youth public is development rhetoric. Hauser has proposed a rhetorical model of a public sphere as:

A discursive space in which strangers discuss issues they perceive to be of consequence for them and their group. Its rhetorical exchanges are the bases for shared awareness of common issues, shared interests, tendencies of extent and strength of difference and agreement, and self-constitution as a public whose opinions bear on the organization of society.

(Hauser 1999:64)

Participation in the rhetorical public sphere requires competency in contextualised language (ibid.). Rhetorical public spheres are marked by activity rather than passivity; they must also be believable, tolerant of the views of others, and, although they may have a specific membership, others can also participate in the discussion (ibid.). The youth public displays many of these features, especially proficiency in development discourse and action. The Janahit listeners' club was not especially participatory; however this was not intentional and related to local politics.

Sadak Nātak[83]

In December 2008 the Janahit listeners' club members performed a street drama that aimed to raise awareness about the link between violence against women and HIV. HIV/AIDS and violence against women are regularly discussed in the SSMK radio program. One such episode portrayed a husband who beat his wife because he

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[83] Street Drama.

blamed her for having an extramarital affair. The husband believed the evidence of this affair lay in both his and his wife's HIV positive status. However, it is made clear in the drama through the wife's arguments and pleading with her husband that it is he who had the extramarital affair and when he accepts his guilt he stops beating his wife and the couple seek treatment. In the ensuing discussion between the radio program hosts they talk about the social issue of violence against women:

> Swarnima: "You know an unjust thing of our society is that whoever makes any sort of mistake it is the women who take the blame and they are being punished."
>
> Suyog: "Yes it is so, it was the husband's mistake [character in the drama] that Makhmali [wife in the drama] became HIV positive but she was held responsible for it and he started beating her."
>
> Swarnima: "Most of the women and girl children are facing similar kinds of violence...They also don't know that it's a violation of their human rights and whatever is happening to them is not right."
>
> Suyog: "Oh it's so frustrating that the people instead of seeing them [women] with respect as our mother, sisters, daughters, wives and female friends, they are being subjected to all kinds of violent acts. It's such a shameful thing!"
>
> Swarnima: "A thought has come to my mind about what role the youth of today can play in this situation?"
>
> Suyog: "So we can ask this question to our friends through SMS [Short Message Service]. So friends this week's SMS question is: 'What can we, the youth, do to keep violence against women under control?'"
>
> Swarnima: "The options are: a) We can initiate it in our family, b) Raise social awareness about this issue, and option c) We don't think we can do much about it."

(SSMK episode 442)

Swarnima implies that young Nepalis have a role to play in challenging violence against women and asks listeners to take part in an SMS poll. The response options are predominantly linked to action (a youth attribute) on the social issue of violence against women and present an opportunity for listeners to engage in the youth public engendered in part by SSMK. The Janahit club members engaged in this youth public through a street drama performance that took place on a cold and foggy morning in early December.

Early on the morning of the street drama Sam (my partner, introduced in Chapter Two) and I made our way to the Hetauda bus park where the drama was to be performed. The bus park was already full of activity when we arrived and we dodged buses at advanced stages of disrepair, alighting and disembarking passengers, fruit sellers hawking freshly-cut cucumber and young boys and men who periodically counted and

recounted discoloured rupee notes and solicited for passengers. "*Phaphula didi*"[84] rang out amongst the horns and revving engines and I spotted Balkrishna, a member of the Janahit children's club who had called out to me and we made our way to the gathered club members.

As we stood huddled and chatting with the club members it became obvious that those child club members who were playing roles in the drama were growing increasingly anxious; if they had to wait much longer they would run late for school or miss it altogether. I asked Dudumaya what we were waiting for. She replied, "the chairperson of MMS,[85] you know Radikah? She's late; she has the banner and we can't start without it". The banner formed an important part of the performance because the wording (see below) explicitly stated that the performers were linked to development organisations, a significant statement that will be explained later. More than an hour later Radikah arrived with the all-important banner and the street drama began: The younger members borrowed a tempo[86] for costume changes while the other members spread out the banner between them and started to organise onlookers into a circle. I tried to make myself useful by grabbing a corner of the banner, which read:

"Sometimes These Things Can Happen"
Street Drama

Sponsor: **Brought to you by:**
Equal Access Nepal   **Makwanpur Mahila**
                                                                                      Samuha (see Figure 13).

The drama opened with a scene of a husband and wife chatting about their plans for the day while collecting water from a public well. On the way back from the well they meet four girls who greet the husband and wife politely but nevertheless gossip about them after they part company:

> Girl: "They haven't had a child yet. The grandmother is saying that she needs a grandson...You know the other couple, the *bhoṭe*[87] brother? His wife already had a son."[88]

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[84] *Phaphula* is Tamang for *Namaste*.

[85] *Makwanpur Mahila Samuha* (Makwanpur Women's Group), a local NGO and sponsor of the street drama.

[86] A three-wheeled vehicle used as public transport.

[87] A derogatory term used to refer to people of Tibetan descent, see Hofer, 1979.

[88] The focus on having a *son* rather than a child (either daughter or son) is significant in the Nepali context because it is considered necessary to have a son to continue the family lineage into the next generation and for important funeral rites for which culture dictates only men are able to perform.

Shortly afterward these girls meet the husband's mother, who is also going to the well to fetch water. She mimes carrying a *gāgro*,[89] which captures the attention of a woman who is walking past the performance carrying her own load balanced by a hessian strap across her forehead. This woman stops to watch the street drama as the mother meets the girls and they exchange a few comments:

> Girls: (sarcastically) "I think we should celebrate the arrival of your grandson."
>
> Mother: "What are you talking about? My daughter-in-law is not even pregnant. There's plenty of time."
>
> Girls: "She should have a baby by now. It's high time you had a grandson. Look, the couple who were married 2 years ago, they have a son. But now she [the daughter-in-law] should have a baby."
>
> Mother: "There's no need to hurry."
>
> Girls: (amongst themselves) "Yeah, you know that *bhoṭe* married two years ago already has a baby...Usually you have a child after two years but four years is a long time. It's been four years!" (see Figure 14).

They part company angrily but the mother, nevertheless, mulls over what the girls have said on her walk home. The mother resolves to talk to her son and daughter-in-law about having a baby. Upon arriving home she enters into a discussion with them that ends unhappily:

> Mother: "Oh my god! He doesn't want to listen to me. He's just like his father. The whole village is saying that he's *namard*.[90] (To her daughter-in-law) Your husband just left, shouldn't you say something to him? What about you, at least you should understand...I need a grandson soon, do you understand!? This year I need a grandson, otherwise tell your husband to get a new wife and have a baby [with her] and only then can you stay here or else you can leave the house!"
>
> Daughter-in-law: "No, you can't do this to me!"
>
> Mother: "Your crying isn't going to help unless you do something about it. By all means I need a grandson from you...You are so useless, can't give me a grandson even after four years...Even the cows and goats have been giving me babies once a year. You, it's been four years and you still don't have a baby!"

In the next scenes we witness the husband being ridiculed by two village men played by two young boys dressed in *daurā-saruwal*[91] and with drawn on moustaches. They chat jovially about the party for the birth of one of their children and ridicule the husband for being childless while jumping about comically to the great mirth of the audience who roar in laughter at their antics. This leads (in the following scene) to the

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[89] A large metallic water container.
[90] This term refers to the husband not being a man because he is unable to have a baby.
[91] Traditional men's dress (see Figure 16).

husband becoming drunk and beating his wife. The mother-in-law happens upon the scene as her son falls over during his drunken assault on his wife. Suddenly angered by what she perceived to be an assault on her son, the mother-in-law launches her own attack on the daughter-in-law and slaps her and pulls her hair. This melodramatic scene that represents a classic family triangle of conflict also provokes a great deal of laughter from the audience. Family violence, whether physical or psychological, is a familiar theme for Nepali audiences who regularly watch and listen to Hindi and Nepali radio and television soap operas that represent similar violence.   The audience's laughter is a response to a familiar dramatic form that is usually intended as entertainment.

After she is beaten, the daughter-in-law is evicted from the house and subsequently trafficked to a brothel in Mumbai where she contracts HIV and is thrown out amidst exclamations of "disastrous!   disastrous!" from the brothel owner who has lost her investment.   The scene changes and we are back in the village again but there is somebody new in town: A woman working for a women's association (played by Dudumaya) who plans to conduct an awareness-raising program about the link between HIV and violence against women. Dudumaya's character meets the two men who previously ridiculed the husband. The husband has become an intravenous drug user and contracted HIV and is coaxed along to the awareness program. The HIV positive daughter-in-law has returned to the village from Mumbai and is also brought to the awareness program by some of the villagers. A representation of an educational program ensues that changes the tone from melodrama to a didactic educational program. With the village members gathered around her in a tight circle, Dudumaya's character explains that if it had not been for the violence that the daughter-in-law suffered at the hands of her family she would never have contracted HIV because she would never have been driven from her home and trafficked to a brothel:

> Narrator: "In the beginning you can see the family had a strong bond, but afterward due to the family and our superstitious society [the daughter-in-law] gets into trouble and goes through a painful situation."

Dudumaya encourages the husband and wife to reunite because they will be able to support one another through similar experiences. The street drama closes on the villagers joining hands and pumping their fists in the air while pledging to fight violence against women and HIV. Finally, Dudumaya turns to the audience to drive home the message but the crowd has largely dispersed, and in fact had begun to disperse during the educational program portrayed in the drama that effectively excluded the audience.

Dudumaya gives up addressing a rapidly emptying space and begins to pack up costumes and banners with the other club members. None of them make any attempt to talk to the few departing members of the audience. However, I see a man who watched the entirety of the drama and hasten to chat to him before he leaves the area. He is a local man who works in the hospital in Hetauda and tells me that he found the drama "good, very good" and says that it addressed an important issue. Radikah—the banner-wielding late arrival—had also spoken to a couple of people who said that they had not previously known about HIV treatment (which the drama had mentioned) and concluded that the drama was a great success because of this. By this point the crowd had completely dispersed and regular activities of people in the bus park resumed.

The club members did not engage with the audience and even physically excluded them during the portrayal of the awareness-raising activity, thereby limiting the space for dialogue about HIV and violence against women. Dialogue is a key component of the CFSC model and it is through dialogue that a social issue is recognised and means of resolution are discussed (Figueroa et al. 2002). It has been noted that the creation of space for dialogue is central to the successful participatory communication initiated by the Aarohan Street Theatre group that is based in Kathmandu and has been described as a CFSC 'case story' (Dagron 2001). A failure to encourage dialogue creates a significant stumbling block for the practice of the CFSC model through listeners' clubs. I argue that the remediation of SSMK messages about HIV and violence against women by the Janahit listeners' club members was not necessarily about creating a space for dialogue and participatory communication. Instead, the opportunity for remediation enabled the club members to position themselves as developed. The significance of this will be discussed shortly.

The street drama represents familiar socio-cultural constructions of HIV/AIDS infection that are grafted onto women's sexuality and 'proper' sexual conduct (Fujikura 2003; Pigg 2002). While the husband is portrayed as contracting HIV through illicit intravenous drug use—constructed and stigmatised as a HIV/AIDS 'risk category' in non-government organisation (NGO) discourse (Pike 1999)—his story is overshadowed by the wife's story of HIV infection that we see played out in the fictional setting of a Mumbai brothel. In her work that draws attention to the complex social terrain on which HIV/AIDS interventions take place in Nepal, Pigg (2002) highlights that HIV has largely been seen as a foreign problem. A part of this foreign problem is represented by 'Bombay returnees'—women who have been trafficked to Indian brothels and have returned to Nepal—as harbingers of HIV/AIDS (Pigg 2002:65).

'Bombay returnees' have been largely framed as victims both within public discourse and Nepali law (Poudel and Luintel 2003) and are characterised by an image 'of simple, uneducated, and poor village girls and their parents...[who] were not aware of the dangers outside their communities and tended to become victims of temptation and deception' (Fujikura 2003:29–30). The awareness-raising program in the drama draws on these real-world discourses that expose:

> Some of the longstanding cultural concerns of contemporary Nepali society and politics...Much of these debates were preoccupied with the purity of the Nepali nation, expressed in a strong desire to cast the issue of trafficking in terms of Nepali victims and immoral worlds of red light districts in India. In a politics of victimhood, the Nepali state blamed India for the problem of AIDS and trafficking while Nepali NGOs embarked on the projects of repatriation and rehabilitation as a matter of national pride.

(Fujikura 2003:29)

The appropriate place for trafficked women repatriated to Nepal is ultimately their families (Fujikura 2003). A 'moral panic' (Cohen 1972) created by trafficking and HIV/AIDS led to questioning 'whether or not women's sexuality was properly protected within the sphere of the family' (Fujikura 2003:12). It is essential then that the family—a moral institution and a cornerstone of the Nepali nation—be reaffirmed by the repatriation and protection of women who have been victimised by immoral foreign forces. This is reflected in the drama, in which the development worker successfully reconciles the daughter-in-law with her family[92] and by doing so abates the threat of her 'out of place-ness':

> The bodies of 'trafficked girls' were treated as being in a status of temporary 'out of place' and then transformed through physical and educational interventions to be returned to their 'proper' place within the society.

(Fujikura 2003:3)

The drama is structured on standard Nepali norms and values as well as development discourses of risk groups that lead to a progression from unregulated sex and practices to corrupted bodies: Both the husband and wife end up with an incurable disease. It is a natural progression for AIDS to result, as it is 'figured as a problem of those who are already outside of "the limits"' (Pigg 2002). However, the husband and wife characters were always outside of the limits as their union was a non-traditional one as they are in

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[92] The wife's husband's home, not her natal home, as the former is a married woman's 'appropriate' place. Working in Kathmandu I recall hearing a number of discussions about a married woman who remained at her natal home rather than her husband's home. The fact that it was important enough to be gossiped about indicates that it was newsworthy in itself, but people often qualified their discussions by saying how modern and understanding both of the families must be.

a love marriage. The husband is also demasculinised in the first scene of the drama in which he is collecting water with his wife—which is not typically a male role—and it is also implied that he is at fault for not being able to produce children, rather than his wife which would traditionally be the case. These are not usual in a traditional marriage in Nepal and raise the question: If this had been an arranged marriage with the husband and wife fulfilling expected gender roles would any of these problems have occurred? It is implied in the drama that this marriage was destined to be ill-fated because it transgressed so many cultural norms. In their portrayal of an atypical marriage that ends with both the husband and wife contracting an incurable disease the Janahit club members unintentionally reinforce that which they are trying to transcend—superstitious and traditional beliefs and practices—and reinforce the importance of the institution of the family as a source of moral order.

However, the street drama simultaneously challenged some existing socio-cultural beliefs and practices. The representation in the drama of domestic abuse as a risk factor for HIV is an attempt to locate a private practice within the realm of public concern. The drama similarly challenged the cultural imperative to have children soon after marriage, as a superstitious belief that sparked a chain of events, including domestic abuse, that led to HIV and the ultimate corruption of the family unit. The maintenance of some socio-cultural beliefs and practices while others are rejected represents the struggle of being and becoming alternatively modern in Nepal. This struggle is played out in the actions that occur as part of the youth public, including the street drama. Being critical of the socio-cultural status quo is a key characteristic that the SSMK radio program aimed to instil in its listeners, as a program producer explained:

> "We have a very, we have this thick blanket of culture wrapping us. So of course we really need to go past that, see through it...we really need to question ourselves...the host when they deliver a message the agreement towards the message is so diverse that people start thinking why the host said that, whether it's true or not. Therefore young people should really think about what they are following, they should be questioning themselves, they should be questioning others...try to think [about] the relevance of the thing...why it came, where it started from, why are we following it. That's why young people should become junior Sherlock Holmes [laughs]. They need to think before they leap rather than blindly following some culture for the sake of following it, being able to question [it]."

(Arjun, personal interview, Kathmandu, 10th August, 2010)

In this street drama performance the Janahit club members both practice and represent aspects of a youth identity that are integral to the SSMK radio program's image of youth.

The youth public is a means through which the Janahit club members can position themselves as modern. Being modern requires a critique of existing practices and therefore some form of reflexivity. This can be thought of in terms of Turner's notion of 'performative reflexivity':

> Performative reflexivity is a condition in which a sociocultural group, or its most perceptive members acting representatively, turn, bend or reflect back upon themselves, upon the relations, actions, symbols, meanings, codes, roles, statuses, social structures, ethical and legal rules, and other sociocultural components which make up their public "selves."

(1987:24)

Turner goes on to describe this performative reflexivity as intentional, a 'deliberate and voluntary' act (ibid.). The drama performed by the Janahit club members deliberately critiqued the socio-cultural norm of having a child soon after marriage by showing the negative consequences (violence and HIV) that, what they referred to as 'superstitious' (*andhebiswass*) beliefs can bring about. This superstition is at the root of the daughter-in-law's suffering, the son's drug abuse and the degradation of the family. I suggest that superstition is tradition that has been rendered negative. The difference between tradition and superstition is revealed in the statement in the drama: "We...showed you what happens if a girl gets married to a boy without the consent of the family", which is followed up by the assertion that the daughter-in-law's suffering is due to "our superstitious society". These two statements indicate that while some socio-cultural (*sanskriti*) beliefs and practices (such as family consent to marry) continue to be valid and upheld by the club members, others (such as childbirth soon after marriage) are disregarded as superstitious, as no longer valued or relevant and viewed as antithetical to progress.[93]

The villager characters in the drama are positioned as superstitious by their preoccupation with having children soon after marriage and are contrasted with the NGO educator who comes from outside of the village to conduct an awareness raising activity. These characters demonstrate the binary logic described by Pigg that is inherent in the way that development discourse conceptualises and constructs a 'villager':

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[93] The term 'forwards' (*agādī*) is important because it was the term used by the club members themselves when they spoke about what they viewed as positive village-level and personal development. It is in contrast to 'backwardness' (*pachādī*), which was a term used to describe aspects that they saw as being undeveloped such as the continuing marginalisation of Tamang people caused by past subjugation by the state.

> There is an obvious perspective built into the category, villager, as it is formulated in the rhetoric of development: one cannot be one to see one. The social ideology of modernization espouses a binary logic, opposing the village to *bikās* [development] and villagers to the people who can recognise that "they do not understand".

> (1992:507)

It is evident that the characters in the street drama are constructed based on this logic, which is perhaps best illustrated by the two male characters who ridicule the husband. These two characters are juxtaposed with the NGO educator who is not a villager and recognises that the villagers lack an awareness of development, that they 'do not understand'. This sets the NGO character apart by reinforcing the opposition between 'the village' and 'development':

> Dudumaya: "We have come for the first time in this village...We have come from the *Mahila Samaj* [women's organisation]...you must have heard on FM radio."

> Balkrishna: "Yeah I heard, but the radio was not working properly so I kicked it and it went into the river."

> Dudumaya: "We...have been going to villages and doing programs. So that's why we have also come to your village...Do you know about the relationship between violence against women and HIV?"

> Krishna: "What is HIV?"

> Dudumaya: "Since you have asked so listen: there is this virus called HIV and it destroys the immune system and we cannot fight the disease. The virus multiplies and finally if we suffer from two or more than two diseases then we call it AIDS."

> Balkrishna: "So how do you get AIDS then?"

> Dudumaya: "You are saying AIDS? But first the person is HIV positive and later the disease develops into AIDS. Number one, injecting drugs. Number two, through blood transfusion. Number three, if a mother is HIV positive the baby has a high chance of getting it. And number four, if we have unsafe sex we'll get HIV."

> Balkrishna: "Do you know that we have this fellow in our village, Aite, who injects drugs with syringes, smokes ganja...he must also be HIV positive."

> Dudumaya: "If we take hashish, ganja, we won't get HIV...so now don't think that he has AIDS."

> Krishna: "He is also sick."

> Balkrishna and Krishna: "Oh yes, yes!"

> Krishna: "Can't we bring him to the program?"

> Dudumaya: "Yes, we will be doing the program in the village and you get [him] and bring him to the program." (see Figure 15).

This scene plays out a conventional power dynamic that positions the knowledge and language of development as superior to local knowledge (cf Walley 2002). In her work

in Nepal, Pigg (1996) has highlighted that peoples' scepticism of shamans[94] as healers draws on the pervasive influence of development and modernisation. By expressing their scepticism, Pigg's informants were signalling that they were not, as development discourse constructs them, backward villagers. This is important because it 'advantageously distinguishes a person in Nepal from others in the same village or the same country' (Pigg 1996:193). The street drama was an activity that allowed the club members to distinguish themselves from other villagers.

Distinguishing between the knowledge of villagers and that of NGO workers is seen in the drama in the juxtaposition of the village men with the NGO worker. The meeting of these characters highlights that the NGO worker has valuable and relevant knowledge that the village men do not. The ignorance of the village men on the matter of HIV infection is confirmed when Dudumaya corrects them. This contradiction between the villagers' and NGO worker's knowledge[95] supports the binary logic thesis described by Pigg, which, as she says, is formulated through development and modernisation rhetoric and ideology (ibid.). Development and modernisation are core discourses that provide dominant ways of knowing and also act as key resources used by the Janahit club members for critiquing traditional socio-cultural practices. The NGO educator, acting as an embodiment of modern ideas based in development discourse and practices, critiques the traditional socio-cultural knowledge and practices of the villagers and it is through this critique that the club members performing the drama vicariously critique their own socio-cultural beliefs and practices. These critiques form part of a desire for an alternative future that Janahit club members are articulating through their engagement in the youth public and by positioning themselves vis-à-vis their representation of others.

In his work among the Gebusi in Papua New Guinea, Knauft (2002b) describes how the Gebusi represented themselves as modern by ridiculing traditional practices through a drama performance on Independence Day. In this performance, tradition was marked as a clumsiness in dealing with modern commodities, such as bashing a can on a rock to open it and melting a plastic bucket on a fire in an attempt to cook something in it (ibid.:122–3). Knauft describes this drama performance as a juxtaposition of tradition and modernity in which traditional practices are represented as occurring in the past, a progression from which is used by the Gebusi to mark

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[94] Shamans are traditional healers.
[95] See Long (1999) and Long and Villarreal (1994) for discussions of 'knowledge interfaces'—sites at which local and institutional knowledge often clash.

themselves as modern, or as alternatively modern (ibid.). Knauft suggests that this process of becoming alternatively modern is inherently contradictory and defines this process as 'oxymodernism':

> The "oxymodern" here is the notion that modernity proliferates and becomes acerbic through the disjunction or contradiction between globalizing forces and localizing ones. It suggests that actors live significant dimensions of their lives as a schism, an embraced contradiction, between practices and beliefs seen as historical, conventional, or more traditional, and those viewed as newly progressive...The trials of the oxymodern are a process of constructing an acute semblance of progress through the opposition between local constructions of history or tradition and those of being or becoming modern...In the process, the reinvention of tradition becomes directly related to the complementary process of becoming locally modern.
>
> (Knauft 2002b:106)

The street drama performed by the Janahit club members in the Hetauda bus park was similarly an act of presenting themselves as 'progressive' by representing an opposition between traditional and modern belief and practice. The Janahit club members expressed this contradiction by juxtaposing the traditional beliefs of the villagers with the modern knowledge of the NGO educator. The drama characters rejected certain traditional beliefs while positively framing knowledge imparted to the villagers through the character of the development worker. This juxtaposition is fundamental to becoming modern because as Knauft says, 'what is modern and what is traditional are intrinsically relational; they define each other reciprocally as figure and ground' (2002b:124).

Pigg similarly found that her research participants' scepticism of shamans, a symbol of tradition, was used to construct modernity. Pigg argues that people's credulity and joking about shamans was a means through which they positioned themselves *vis-à-vis* tradition and modernity:

> First a chuckle, and then a comment. One way or another, this comment would focus on the oddness of a person from a "developed country," a *bikasit des*, trying to know about this most "Nepali" phenomenon. "So what have you decided?" I would be asked by a laughing stranger, "Do you believe in dhamis?" Or, even funnier to them: "Have you become one yet?" Sometimes my statement elicited a story. "I don't believe in shamans myself"—always this introduction—"But one time I saw a shaman in [insert name of remote place in the mountains] who did the most amazing thing [insert elaborate description of the shaman's magic feats and/or miraculous cure]. Now how can that be explained?" Another response was, "Of course, our shamans really do work. They cure people in a 'psychological' way." In the rural area of eastern Nepal where I lived I was often told, "Well, you've come to the wrong place then. The dhamis around here stink." And then I would be instructed about a place that was more "remote," more "traditional," or more "backward," where the shamans really "know"...In Nepal, nowadays, your attitude toward shamans communicates who you are. My interlocutors said quite a lot in their few words. If you can laugh about dhamis, then you do not take them too seriously. If you can find them fascinating, then obviously you do

not see them every day. If you can explain what they do, then you cannot be fooled. If you know the difference between good and bad shamans, or know where and to whom their knowledge is valuable, then you know how to make the complicated judgments necessary to deal with these healers...The responses I got indicated, quite simply, how a person chose to position himself or herself.

(1996:160–1)

When Pigg spoke to people about shamans they often expressed scepticism, a tool used to position themselves as modern and cosmopolitan. For Knauft's respondents, humour and ridicule were tools used to mock traditional cultural practices such as sorcery inquests, spirit medium séances and corpse divinations to an audience that 'convulses in mirth' (ibid.:122). Gable similarly looked at the use of humour in a performance by youth club members in a village of Guinea-Bissau, to ridicule traditional roles:

> The skit...begins as a young wife rouses her decrepit husband to go visit a diviner...The "elder" is so crippled with age that he cannot rouse himself from his bed. He tries to prop himself up, coughs, and collapses. The "wife" tugs and pulls at the long arms of his tattered coat and ends up dragging him to the "diviner"...[who is] an equally decrepit man, wearing a yellow plastic hardhat and an equally tattered overcoat. He too takes a long time to be roused from (what I'm later told is supposed to be) a deeply drunken sleep...They enter his "diviner's hut"...Underneath the table and only partly hidden from view by a screen of cloth is the "nanjangurun," or the diviner's spirit familiar, played by another youth. The diviner goes through a typical routine. He asks questions and the youth within responds, imitating perfectly—and to howls of laughter from the young audience members—the high-pitched sounds a nanjangurun emits when in real life the diviner disappears behind the wall of the inner sanctum of his hut to converse (ostensibly) directly with the spirit in the spirit's "foreign" language...as they pass the table the nanjangurun's arm reaches out from behind the screen to grab the old man's coat. There is a comical tug of war, as the old man is being dragged under the table. His buddy the diviner returns and with his rickety cane begins to swat at the nanjangurun's arm until it releases the old man.

(2000:197)

Gable argues that the youths of this village were seeking to assert themselves through activities such as the drama described above to make village life attractive to young people. Gable argues that this was done by promoting certain elements of their culture while getting rid of other elements they saw as destructive, such as customary and traditional practices that reinforced the privileged positions of the elders. By ridiculing certain traditions the young performers were able to challenge the authority of elders.

The street drama performed by the Janahit club members also used humour to critique traditional beliefs and challenge socio-cultural hierarchy. Nepali men were parodied in this drama through dressing two children in traditional garb and drawing moustaches on their faces. These two 'men' romp around the inner circle joking with and poking fun at one another and the husband while the crowd laughs appreciatively at their

humorous rendition of the importance of having a party and treating your friends to food as a way to celebrate the birth of a son:

> Krishna: "Oh, I have heard that there is a mother who has just given birth in your home."
>
> Balkrishna: "But it's not me! It's actually my wife! Ha ha!"
>
> Krishna: "It means the same thing. You need to throw a party, invite me to your party!"
>
> Balkrishna: "Oh you're always looking to attend a party just because you want to eat all the time!" (Watch Track 7)

In this parody the club members poke fun at traditional village men and set the village men up to have the authority held by them (who represent traditional and superstitious beliefs) challenged by the authority held by a young female development worker. This humour acts to subvert the status quo, as Douglas explains: 'Take any pun or funny story: it offers alternative patterns, one apparent, one hidden: the latter, by being brought to the surface impugns the validity of the first' (1999:149-150). The humour portrayed in this drama is an important element of the reflexive cultural critique engaged in by the club members and a way through which they challenge tradition as part of the process of becoming alternatively modern (Knauft 2002b).

In parallel to the NGO educator within the drama, the club members assume roles as educators of the audience. The support of the development organisations EAN and MMS is fundamentally important because it plays a role in the 'relational identities' (Holland et al. 1998:127) that the club members have with the audience. Recall the importance of waiting for the banner that proclaimed the organisational support before it was possible to begin the drama. Holland et al. describe relational identities as behaviour that is 'indexical of claims of social relationships with others. They have to do with how one identifies one's position relative to others' (ibid.). The club members position themselves as knowledgeable sources of information (appropriating discourses of development within the drama itself as well as displaying this on their banner) in relation to an audience whom they teach. Pigg highlights this relationality in terms of the social categories inherent in development:

> The social categories of development are not simply imposed from the outside on rural people but assimilated into the ways they see themselves and their relations to other Nepalis. Not only can one hear rural people talking about their neighbours, residents of the same village, mind you, as people who do not understand, but more profoundly, rural people adopt the conceptual polarity of *bikās* and village to *orient themselves in national society.*
>
> (1992:507, emphasis added)

This last point Pigg makes, about the appropriation of this binary logic to orient oneself within national society, is evidenced by the club members through the role they assume in educating their communities on a range of different issues, whether it be the link between HIV and violence against women, the necessity of cleaning one's village or the importance of equitable education. When the secretary of the Janahit club made a statement about the other villagers not cleaning the village (as we will see later) he is positioning them as people who do not understand, or care to understand, in relation to himself who does understand the importance of cleaning the village. Similarly, in the drama the club members act out these character roles to educate an audience, thereby positioning themselves as knowledgeable and developed. The club members are 'cosmopolitan villagers...[who] claim their place on the side of *bikās*, not the village' (Pigg 1992:510) by using development discourse to position themselves as members of the youth public.

In the street drama performance the Janahit club members appropriate development discourse to position themselves as modern, developed and knowledgeable and in opposition to traditional (superstitious) beliefs and practices. In their performance the club members traverse the space between tradition and modernity and in doing so define modern youth practice. [96] The juxtaposition of characters portrayed in the drama and the club members' adoption of roles as educators are aspects of youth practice that are fundamental to the construction of a modern youth identity. Inherent in this emerging youth identity is a critical appraisal which challenges the socio-cultural status quo. Critiquing tradition (superstition) by juxtaposing it with modern, developed practices is a means for the club members to position themselves as part of the emerging youth public.

Street Cleaning: *"Bādar āphulepani āphno ghar banāudaina ra arulāi pani banāuna dĩdaina"*[97]

Sanitation is periodically addressed as a problem for development in the SSMK radio program. For example, one SSMK drama portrayed a scenario in which a girl became sick with diarrhoea because of the poor hygiene of the toilets at her school. At the end of the drama the hosts, Suyog and Kala, talked about the importance of sanitation and the role of young people in advocating for good hygiene:

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[96] See Liechty (2003) for a discussion on the negotiation between tradition and modernity as an aspect of modern, middle-class practice in Kathmandu.
[97] "The monkey doesn't make its own home or those of others."

Suyog: "Oh I have to applaud Bigyan [drama character] and his friends for the united effort Kala [other SSMK host]. Because of their effort new proper toilets will be constructed in their school...if there are other boys like Bigyan in our village who are also self-motivated then all the villages will be so clean and healthy."

Kala: "Yes Suyog, the villages and households would definitely stay clean. Also if everybody cared about the social cleanliness and personal hygiene it'll prevent us from suffering from various diseases and also there'll be less chance of death from diseases caused due to lack of proper cleanliness and hygiene."

Suyog: "And not caring about cleanliness is a means to invite all kinds of deadly, life threatening diseases."

Kala: "Yes Suyog. From today's story what I learnt from Bigyan is that we shouldn't just sit around when we can do something to solve a problem, we should initiate it as well. If they had just sat and talked about their problem then they would have kept on staying in a polluted environment."

Suyog: "Yes Kala and cleanliness is one of the most important things in our life and *it's necessary to raise social awareness about it.*"

(SSMK episode 421, emphasis added)

The SSMK hosts Suyog and Kala are not only raising awareness about the importance of hygiene for health reasons but also advocating for young listeners to initiate solutions and raise awareness themselves. The club members did just that when they conducted a village cleaning activity during which they cleaned rubbish from the main street of Banaspati. I consider the village cleaning activity in Banaspati to remediate the issue of sanitation that is dealt with in the SSMK radio program. However my concern is less with the fidelity of the content of the club members' cleaning activity to SSMK's original message and more with what this activity revealed about the complexities and challenges of social change encouraged through EAN's communication for development initiative at the local level and what this means for the practice of CFSC.

On a Saturday in September, after a painfully slow tempo ride and a thirty-minute walk around the concrete factory's compound, through the river and up a hill, Saru, Nisha, Ananta and I arrived in Banaspati to participate in the Janahit club's cleaning activity. We found Dudumaya in the main street clad in a long patterned kurta with her purple shawl wrapped over her shoulder and tied about her waist in a knot, lest it get in the way of the cleaning. She bid us a hasty *Namaste* before she bent over double again using a short broom to sweep rubbish consisting of faded sweet wrappers, noodles, chips and juice boxes into a small pile (see Figure 16). Nearby to her in the street were two other Janahit club members and a number of Janahit child club members who were also pushing rubbish into their own small piles along the main road. As

Deepak, a Janahit club member dressed Shah Rukh Khan-style[98] in a trendy waistcoat and shirt, struck a match and held it to a pile of rubbish, Ananta clicked his tongue in disapproval and Nisha said in an undertone that they should not be burning plastic. Making his way over to Deepak, Ananta told him that they should not burn plastic, but instead collect it and then call the district development committee (DDC) to come and collect it. Dudumaya, standing up from her sweeping, intervened and told Ananta irritably that they had in fact done this in the past but neither the DDC nor the village development committee (VDC) had turned up to take the plastic they had collected. Ananta sighed, shrugged his shoulders, selected a long stick and began prodding pieces of rubbish into small piles.

The club members worked their way down the main street, quietly going about their work, followed by small children and watched by a few of the residents of Banaspati who sat out the front of their houses and at the sides of the main road. Saru and I approached one of these spectators, a middle-aged lady wearing a red sari high around her thick waist and asked her what she thought about this program. "*Rāmro cha*" (it is good) she told me. I asked her if she ever cleaned like this, like the club members were doing. "Sometimes I clean around my house" she responded with a shrug. Further down the main street in one of the rows of houses, that I would later discover was a designated Brahmin/Chhetri part of the village (see Chapter Two for a discussion of village division in Banaspati), I noticed a group of men and boys who had arranged their chairs in a semi-circle to better observe the cleaning (see Figure 17). When I asked what they thought about this activity an older man responded that it was "*rāmro.*" Good. I then asked, if they thought that this activity was good, why they were not participating in the cleaning. A younger man, slouched lazily in his chair, responded that last time this activity had happened they had received information about it. This time they had received no information and so were unable to participate because they were busy. Obviously, I thought to myself. As the cleaning progressed down the main street I noticed Ananta chatting to a young woman seated by the side of the main street with a big, blue plastic tub atop a stool in front of her. She was a local resident whose business was selling *chātpate*, a snack made of puffed rice, chilli and potato. "What do you think of this cleaning program?", I asked her. "Oh it's good!", she said, and then continued, "The road is clean, it's no longer dirty. Our children can now play in the road without becoming dirty".

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[98] Shah Rukh Khan is a famous Bollywood actor. In one of his films—*Om Shanti Om*—he wore a waistcoat and shirt and many young boys and men subsequently adopted a similar style.

As I watched Ananta take a picture of this lady, Nisha seized my arm and gossiped conspiratorially in low tones that an old man of the village had commented that the club members were only cleaning because they were being paid to do it by some organisation. She said that some of the club members had overheard this and been angered at the assumption. Nisha then led me up the street a little way to an old man clad in traditional *daurā-saruwal* and *topi* who greeted me politely with a toothless *Namaste*. I asked him what he thought of the program, "Oh it's very good!", he said, "But it should not be done only every fifteen days but every day!" A number of the club members had gathered about and at this exclamation they shot back at him simultaneously, "How can we clean every day?!" "It's not possible to clean every day!" "You think we're being paid to do this but we're not!" The club members, irate and grumbling amongst themselves, went back to cleaning the road, one of them calling out in jest, "If you come join us we'll pay you ourselves!" The assumption that this old man had made, that a development organisation was paying the club members to clean the village, in part explains the many spectators. After all, why should the villagers clean for free when they assumed the club members were being paid to do the same job.

Reflexivity is an important methodological tool that reveals 'impressions and ideas about what is going on in the societies we are studying' (Salzman 2002:808). Thus, reflecting on this old man's comments highlighted his likely assumption that I was his imaginary donor of the cleaning activity. I was often introduced in Banaspati as an employee of EAN and despite my frequent interjections to the contrary I was perpetually located as an NGO worker. I was also obviously foreign in Banaspati and my interest in the cleaning activity—an activity that would typically fall into the realm of development organisations—could have easily been understood as the interest of one of the many foreigners who periodically go to villages to revel in their philanthropy. Development organisations have a significant presence in Padampokhari and Banaspati owing to the high level of trafficking and poverty, and fund many activities from employing local people to conduct surveys, to developing infrastructure and service provision. Indeed, one of the listeners' club members had proudly told me that he had been employed by a large international NGO to conduct a survey of the inhabitants of Banaspati. This same club member had agreed to help me conduct a limited survey of Banaspati village, but upon learning that this would be volunteer work he curiously disappeared. Taken in this context, this old man's comments are enlightening because they indicate that the work of development organisations does

not occur unproblemmatically and leads to contestation over the outcomes of this work. While some people benefit financially or in other tangible ways from programs run by development organisations, others may not benefit at all, or at least not in any immediate or obvious way. The old man's comments (among other observations) and the spectators and subversion of the cleaning activity by other villagers indicate that development organisations and their work are politicised in Banaspati and create a division between those who benefit and those who do not. Division within local communities is an important point to consider for the practice of CFSC initiatives because this is a fundamental barrier to consensus and collective action (Figueroa et al. 2002).

Interested in the division between the club members and spectators, I asked the club members later that same day why other villagers did not participate in the cleaning. Prithibi, the club secretary, responded as he pulled pieces of grass out of the ground "*Bãdar āphulepani āphno ghar banāudaina ra arulāi pani banāuna dĩdaina*" (group chat, Banaspati, 27th September, 2008), which was met by scattered giggles. This translates as 'the monkey doesn't make their own home or those of others', but this translation doesn't fully explain the meaning of this proverb in this context. Nepali proverbs use animals as proxies for people to raise issues about logic and morals and 'legitimise ideological positions' (Uprety 2008). The life of the monkey is appropriated in this proverb because they are seen as mischievous and disruptive creatures. What Prithibi meant by the use of this proverb is that the monkey (proxy for the villagers) does not seek to improve him or herself nor will they contribute to the improvement of others, and furthermore, the monkey will seek to disturb and destroy the work of others. This subversiveness and disruptiveness was also articulated by Bimala, the chairperson of the largely defunct Merika girls group, who had coordinated the cleaning activity prior to the Janahit club. Bimala explained how they (Merika members) had stopped doing the cleaning activity when the villagers had subverted the program by tricking them into taking faeces:

> "We did the first sanitation program in 2060 [2003–2004]. When we started we picked up paper and plastics in a plastic bag. We told all the villagers that we will clean every month so don't throw plastic outside, collect it in your home and we will come and collect it and throw it in a safe place. People used to say that we were behaving like the municipality and some people put children's stool in the plastic. They didn't show us good behaviour, complaining that we got a salary and that's why we came to pick up the plastic. So we quit it."

(Individual interview, Banaspati, 21st February, 2009)

On that Saturday in Banaspati, the spectators of the cleaning program did not sneak faeces into plastic containers but they accused the club members of being salaried, while watching the activity and continuing to litter, literally just as the club members had passed. It is in this mischievous sense that the villagers, just like the monkey in the proverb, not only do not clean themselves or help others, but also seek to subvert the work of others who are trying to maintain their homes (i.e. clean the village).

The Janahit club members carried this activity out in a public space to publicly display both what they considered important behaviours for others to mimic as well as their youth identity, which is marked by the performance of activities that indicate a change in consciousness (Fujikura 2001). Their engagement as part of the emerging youth public is a means through which they can display this identity, but which nevertheless provoked contestation. This contestation may be understood as a competition between competing publics. The Janahit club members represent an emerging public of motivated youths with increasing power owing to their connections to development organisations and thus greater access to opportunity, benefits and an increasingly important social role. In contrast, established publics would ensure that the old man described earlier would gain benefits of development activities. This almost silent contestation was played out through the actions of the Janahit club members as they cleaned the road in contrast with the actions of the spectators. Fraser notes that 'relations among differentially empowered publics in stratified societies are more likely to be contestatory than deliberative' (1995:292). Despite this, and even because of this, equal participation is more likely when contestation is encouraged 'among a plurality of competing publics [rather] than by a single, comprehensive public sphere' (ibid.).

In Nepal, a patriarchal society based on a caste system, the public sphere tends to be dominated by high caste men, excluding the concerns and opinions of other groups of people, including youths. In these cases, Fraser says, 'members of subordinated social groups...have repeatedly found it advantageous to constitute alternative publics...[which] permit[s] them to formulate oppositional interpretations of their identities, interests and needs' (1995:29). Members of the Janahit youth club, as part of an emerging youth public, have the capacity to articulate their own concerns, opinions and visions for their futures free from the domination of existing hierarchies.

As the late afternoon sun slanted through the trees I asked who did support the club members in their cleaning activity. Dudumaya spoke up, saying that they are

supported by their families, not by the other villagers because, according to Dudumaya, the villagers are generally uneducated and not united and thus they only think of themselves. The Janahit club members define themselves in contrast to their stated perception of the other villagers by repeatedly defining their collective attributes as unity and community mindedness and demonstrating this by cleaning Banaspati village.

There is a clear divide in Nepal between inside and outside spaces, that is evidenced in common practices such as removing your shoes before entering someone's home. This divide is also evidenced in the spaces that people take responsibility for, for example the comments of the red sari-clad lady, who said that she sometimes cleaned around *her own house* rather than the public spaces within the village. This is a point at which the club members demonstrated a divergence from the other village members by cleaning the main road of the village while other village members watched on. This difference highlights an aspect of the changing consciousness of the club members who have become conscious of rubbish as posing a problem (Figueroa et al. 2002:8), as 'matter out of place' (Douglas 2002) and have taken it upon themselves to remove it for the health of the village. This presents another issue for the practice of CFSC initiatives that is linked to the recognition of a common problem. The CFSC model conceptualises social change as occurring through community dialogue and collective action (Figueroa et al. 2002). The first step of community dialogue is the recognition of a problem (ibid.). In the village cleaning activity the club members recognise rubbish as a problem, but the other villagers may not see it in the same way owing to the division between inside and outside spaces and differing responsibilities for each of these. Development discourse conceptualises rubbish as a problem, when people may only see rubbish as problematic in certain spaces and contexts. Thus the recognition of a problem that the CFSC model conceptualises as a fundamental first step to social change is lacking in this scenario. Rubbish in public spaces is a concern with a specific development focus that the emerging youth public claims as one of their areas of interest and action. It is underscored by a development consciousness, which, I have argued, is a key discourse around which the youth public is oriented.

Fujikura has argued that changing consciousness is linked to the proliferation of development discourse in Nepal that has:

> Not only insistently labelled those identified as the 'underdeveloped' part of the
> population as somehow lacking in consciousness, but have also helped to create

> conditions in which variously positioned people speak in terms of the state of their own and others' consciousness.

(2001:271)

This consciousness, Fujikura says, is often manifested in 'very specific attitudes and conduct, such as financial frugality, use of contraceptives, use of pit latrines, growing of cash crops [et cetera]' (ibid.). A lack of engagement in such activities was conflated with a lack of consciousness, the assumption being that these people lacked the internal qualities required to solve what were identified as problems through development-intervention activities (Fujikura 2001; cf Karp 2002). Development activities occurring at the community level were thus:

> Aimed at creating in people a new sense of self, a self which could imagine oneself as a self with an enormous potential...a new sense of awareness that would, then, motivate people to learn to read and write, send their daughters to school, build toilets, and use chemical fertilizers.

(Fujikura 2001:303)

It is this awareness, inherent in development discourse described by Fujikura (2001) that the Janahit club members publicly demonstrated in their cleaning activity, differentiating themselves from the other villagers. By becoming conscious of rubbish as a problem and stepping outside of the usual domains of responsibility and cleaning the main road of the village, the club members are challenging normal practice and establishing practices for youth. The youth public, which is structured around development discourse and is linked to development organisations competes with existing publics that are structured on caste, age and gender privilege and are concerned with maintaining the status quo. Development and modernisation discourses are not exclusive to the youth public however, and are important discourses which are employed to position self and other (cf Pigg 1992; 1996). By positioning the other villagers as lacking a development consciousness through their activities as a public, the Janahit club members position the other villagers as ignorant and backward in contrast with themselves. This turned the existing social structure on its head and provoked the antagonistic responses of the other villagers.

If we view this activity 'as' a performance (Schechner 2006:38-40) this allows us to think about the cleaning activity as a public performance through which the club members challenged the existing socio-cultural structures. Turner's theory of anti-structure refers to performances that 'can generate and store a plurality of alternative

models for living' (1982:33) and can act to subvert existing structures (Carlson 1996:23). Sutton-Smith, expanding on Turner's theory of anti-structure, says:

> The normative structure represents the working equilibrium, the 'anti-structure' represents the latent system of potential alternatives from which novelty will arise when contingencies in the normative system require it. We might more correctly call this second system the protostructural system because it is the precursor of innovative normative forms. It is the source of new culture.
>
> (Quoted in Turner 1982:28)

Through the cleaning activity the club members challenged existing socio-cultural structures that in part define inside as a domain of responsibility and outside as not. By cleaning the main road of the village the club members are performing an alternative way of viewing and dealing with the chip packets, lolly wrappers and empty juice boxes that litter the public areas of Banaspati—they are suggesting an alternative to the 'normative structure' described by Sutton-Smith. This alternative is influenced by discourses of development that are manifested as changes in consciousness (Fujikura 2001) that ultimately result in altered subjectivities (Karp 2002). In Banaspati this challenge to the normative structure engendered resistance such as the verbal challenges of the old man, the spectators and the continuation of littering described earlier. This resistance to change is based in part on divisions created by development aid between those who do and those who do not benefit from development organisations, but is also based on contestation between existing and emerging publics. Local resistance and contestation highlight that the CFSC model's focus on collective recognition of a problem, dialogue and action faces significant challenges in Banaspati.

Conclusion

This chapter has described a street drama and a village cleaning activity undertaken by the Janahit club members as actions undertaken as part of an emerging youth public. Fraser (1995:287–8) has said that, 'The public sphere is a site where social meanings are generated, circulated, contested and reconstructed [which allows us] to study the discursive construction of social problems and social identities'. The young people who constitute the youth public described are active proponents of social change and can be thought of as 'change agents' (Rogers 1983) working for a new Nepal. They are becoming the sorts of young people that the SSMK and NN radio programs model (see Chapter Three). The creation of change agents through the existence of radio is noted by EAN:

> The program's relevance and appeal to youth have spawned a network of over 1,000 formally organized listener's clubs throughout the country. The clubs conduct their own activities, such as HIV/AIDS training and prevention, programs on gender discrimination & caste discrimination in collaboration with local health centers and village development committees, exemplifying how Nepali youth are positively changing their behaviors to live healthier and more productive lives.

> (Equal Access 2011b)

This quote implies that the conduct of self-organised activities on issues related to development is an important outcome of the listener club initiative. Thus these clubs, which exist because of the SSMK and NN radio programs, are achieving their goals by engaging young people as part of an active and development-focused youth public.

A key feature of the listeners' club is remediation of topics covered in the SSMK radio program through activities. Remediation is a process through which new subjectivities can be constituted (Novak 2010) and is important and consequential for the Janahit club members because it is a means for social progress and positioning themselves as 'cosmopolitan villagers' (Pigg 1996). Remediation may seem an ideal opportunity for participatory communication. However, the club members' appropriation of development discourse created a division between them and those they wished to create 'awareness' among. Development creates a divisive landscape which means that the other important features of CFSC—dialogue and collective action—will not be able to take place because they rely on consensus and mutual understanding (Figueroa et al. 2002; Gray-Felder and Deane 1999).

The activities conducted by the Janahit club members enable them to articulate their concerns and visions for their futures. These visions inform a local or alternative modernity that is represented in the subtexts of the street drama and cleaning activities. Schein has said that 'the modern is usefully thought of not only as a context in which people make their lives, nor only as a discursive regime that shapes subjectivity, but also as powerfully constituted and negotiated through performance' (1999:361). It is through the street drama and village cleaning activities, which may be thought of as performances, that the Janahit club members publicly negotiated a local Nepali modernity. Turner has talked about performance as a way to challenge and critique the status quo and says that it must be:

> Realized that cultural performances are not simple reflectors or expressions of culture or even of changing culture but may themselves be active agencies of change, representing *the eye by which culture sees itself and the drawing board on which creative actors sketch out what they believe to be more apt or interesting "designs for living."*

(1987:24, emphasis added)

The club members are representing these new 'designs for living' through their performances, actions that are part of a youth public in which they traverse tradition and modernity to create a complex and locally relevant modernity. It is through these activities that certain practices were framed as problematic and superstitious while other practices were upheld, representing a part of the complex configuration of the local modernity as constituted by the youth public.

Figure 13: Banner for the Street Drama

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Figure 14: Street drama practice in Janahit club house on 11th December, 2010. L to R Jasun, Tulkumaya, Kalpana, Bhimmaya (who play the 4 jeering girls) and Prenam (who plays the mother-in-law)

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**Figure 15: Dudumaya talking to Krishna and Balkrishna during the drama.
L to R Balkrishna, Krishna, the NGO worker's assistant and Dudumaya**

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**Figure 16: The cleaning/sanitation activity conducted by the club
members in Banaspati's main street**

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Figure 17: The group of men and boys observing the cleaning activity

Chapter Six Achieved Futures: Crafting youth subjectivities

Official Equal Access Nepal (EAN) discourse frames listeners' clubs as a special sort of audience that acts in certain ways. This was described by Kunreuther, who conducted research with the *Sāthi Saṅga man kā Kura* (SSMK) producers:

> Equal Access, distributes satellite receivers to areas that do not receive FM or Radio Nepal signals...[and] facilitate the formation of community groups to listen to radio programs together. "People gather from the village to listen to the program," Binayak explained to me. "Afterwards, they discuss the program. 'Was it beneficial to us? [they ask each other] They send this feedback to Equal Access. In this way, we are making it interactive." Some listener clubs undertake 'clean-up' or other such development projects in the name of SSMK, but the primary objective of sending collective radios is to create a space for discussion about the issues raised in the program.

(2010:344)

The primary purpose of the listeners' clubs, as they are understood by EAN, is to create space for discussion about the issues raised in the SSMK radio program. The creation of space for discussion is reflective of the communication for social change (CFSC) model that emphasises the importance of community dialogue as a means for collective recognition of a problem and mutual understanding and agreement for action (Figueroa et al. 2002; Gray-Felder and Deane 1999; Gumucio-Dagron and Tufte 2006; Waisbord 2001). A focus on collective action is integral to the process of social change defined by CFSC: '"Community dialogue" and "collective action" work together to produce social change in a community' (Figueroa et al. 2002:5). Listeners' club members act collectively when they do activities such as the clean-up projects mentioned by Kunreuther (2010) and those described in Chapter Five. This is reiterated in EAN documents which state that 'listening clubs also conduct their own activities, such as HIV/AIDS training and prevention, programs on gender discrimination and caste discrimination' (Equal Access 2011d). 'Members of these clubs', it is noted, 'are playing active roles in engaging their communities and influencing long-term decision making related to issues that matter to youth' (Saathi Sanga Man ka Kura 2010). Organisational assumptions about how listeners' clubs function as a space for discussion and collective action,[99] direct the ways in which they are used as part of EAN's communication for development initiative and influence when and how SSMK engages with club members.

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[99] Listeners clubs are commonly conceptualised as sites for dialogue and action for social change (cf Jensen et al. 2009; Martins 2003; Mchakulu 2007).

While the initial aim of forming the clubs was to facilitate listening to the SSMK radio program, many groups have gone beyond this and regularly conduct activities 'to help raise awareness around different SSMK-inspired issues' (Quilt and Shrestha 2008:49). The expansion of the original purpose of the listeners' clubs by club members has become an important component of EAN's understanding of how these groups function and informs a framework for participation as a listeners' club. This is reinforced when SSMK broadcasts letters as well as through listeners' club activites and grants funding for activities that align with SSMK content.[100] By doing this, SSMK producers and presenters ultimately define the terms of engagement for listeners' clubs, only recognising and rewarding those who participate in defined ways and remediate appropriate (i.e. SSMK or development focussed) messages.

Similarly, Morley and Brunsdon (1999), in their well-known study of the Nationwide television program, found that participants were confined within the dominant framework of the program. This was done by the use of discursive strategies during interviews in which certain questions were asked to confine and direct participation (cf Ytreberg 2004). Morley and Brunsdon state that while participation exists in the Nationwide program, this participation is inequitable and controlled by the presenters (1999:43). The ways in which listeners' clubs are encouraged to engage with SSMK similarly demonstrates participation that is controlled and directed. When the SSMK production team chooses to broadcast certain letters and fund certain activities they are defining a framework for participation as a listeners' club that is based on their assumptions of how, and on what topics, club members should engage in discussion and act for social change (cf Figueroa et al. 2002; Gray-Felder and Deane 1999; Gumucio-Dagron and Tufte 2006).

However, the Janahit club members used their relationship with SSMK to define their own futures and actions, proving, as Appadurai has said, that media is not the opium of the masses, rather that 'the consumption of the mass media throughout the world often provokes resistance, irony, selectivity, and in general, agency' (1996:7). In this chapter I argue that the Janahit listeners' club members evidence agency by purposefully engaging in a relationship with SSMK to achieve self-defined ends. The type of agency that is most valued by club members, and therefore is addressed in this chapter, is the ability to speak—to raise one's voice—which is an ability that is

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[100] Letters sent to SSMK have been described in Chapter Three. SSMK producers decide which letters are broadcast that contain information about activities that a listeners' club may have undertaken. EAN also had a small amount of funding that could be granted for the conduct of activities at their discretion.

fundamental to social mobility. I describe the club members' strategic engagement in relationships with development organisations and explain how the actions of the club members led to their personal transformations through the development of social capital (Bourdieu 1986). Initial personal transformations were described by club members to be incidental. However, upon discovering the potential for personal transformation, the club members established an associated children's club so that children living in Banaspati village could directly access the perceived benefits of club membership.

Agency

Ahearn has described agency as 'the human capacity to act' (2000b: 12) and says that in its simplest form 'agency refers to the socioculturally mediated capacity to act' (2001:112). The theory of agency emerged in response to what Ahearn describes as 'structuralism's failure to take into account the actions of individuals' (2000b:12) and is a means for conceptualising the relationship between people's actions and social structures (Ortner 2006). The theory of agency is a means for thinking about how the actions of individuals can challenge socio-cultural norms and redefine them, and conversely, how social norms limit and direct the actions of individuals.

Bourdieu's (1977) theory of habitus offers an explanation of how people internalise social structures, which in turn constrain or enable their capacities to act. The habitus refers to what Bourdieu calls a system of dispositions that are created in the context of objective structures and that, through practice, contribute to the reproduction of social structure (1977; 1990). The habitus, as 'the product of a particular class of objective regularities...tends to generate all of the "reasonable", "common-sense", behaviours (and only these) which are possible within the limits of these regularities' while also excluding 'all the behaviours that would be negatively sanctioned because they are incompatible with the objective conditions' (Bourdieu 1990:55–56). Because the habitus is bound by the social and historical conditions of its production it provides for an 'infinite yet strictly limited generative capacity' of actions (Bourdieu 1990:55). Webb et al. (2002) explain that a person's habitus is naturalised, resulting in the inevitability of the habitus even though it is socio-culturally constructed:

> In order for a particular habitus to function smoothly and effectively, individuals must normally think that the possibilities from which they choose are in fact necessities, common sense, natural or inevitable. Other possibilities are ruled out precisely because they are unthinkable.
>
> (2002:38-9)

Giddens (1984) takes what has at times been criticised as a more individualist approach (Elliott 2003), contending that the structures that people abide by are produced and reproduced through the repetitive practices of individuals, rather than structures determining people's actions. Practices can cause social transformation or can serve to reinforce inequalities as has been noted by Holland et al. (1998:5): 'Humans' capacity for...self-direction plays into both their domination by social relations of power and their possibilities for (partial) liberation from these forces'.

I understand agency to be the capacity for active and consequential action that is demonstrated in the creative and purposeful use of the listeners' club relationship by the Janahit club members. In a footnote in his work dealing with the homeless mentally ill in the United States, Desjarlais writes that he understands agency as 'being able to do otherwise', rather than simply 'doing something' (1996:897). This is a key point in describing the Janahit club members as agents, because it was their ability to act in a way that was other than that defined by SSMK that enabled them to use the listeners' club to transform themselves. These self-transformations are an integral part of a locally experienced and practiced modernity in which young people are aspiring to futures different from those of their parents. This is, as an SSMK producer described it, an achieved future rather than an ascribed one. This view of agency resonates with Sen's description of an agent 'as someone who acts and brings about change' (2000:19). Agency is a central feature of Sen's capabilities approach and understanding of development, which he argues is 'a process of expanding the real freedoms that people enjoy' (2000:3). Consequently, he argues that the 'achievement of development is thoroughly dependent on the free agency of people' (Sen, 2003 quoted in Alkine and Deneulin 2009:28) to have the opportunity to determine and live a life of their choice (Sen 1992). The agency of the club members described in this chapter demonstrates their capacity, or capability, to determine lives of their choosing.

Janahit Yūba Samuha

In 2062 v.s. (2006) young villagers of Banaspati formed the *Janahit Yūba Samuha* (Youth Group for People's Welfare) that one year later adopted the listeners' group title of *Janahit Yūba Sāthi Saṅga man kā Kura Srota Samuha* (Youth for People's Welfare Chatting with my Best Friend Listener Group). These young club members stated that they initially formed the club with the intention of creating unity, which they described as an essential element of their collective ability to act on social issues. The Janahit club members often referred to themselves as a collective and attributed their social

actions to their unity and collectivity. They sought unity through the group format because they said that it enabled them to act in a more powerful way than they were able to as individuals. Thus, while club members exercised agency as individuals, the Janahit club created a platform that enabled collective agency (Ahearn 2000a). As a club, the Janahit members sought and formed relationships with various organisations, drawing on the authority inherent in these organisations to further strengthen their ability to act.

The Janahit SSMK listeners' club had not always been this sort of club and had previously been associated with various organisations before establishing a relationship with SSMK. It was through the *Tamang Sanskriti Ghedung* (Tamang Cultural Organisation) that the group of young Banaspati villagers who are now members of the Janahit club, met and developed friendships with one another. Prithibi, the current Janahit club secretary, told me that he met Dudumaya, the club president, through this organisation and that previously "we did not know each other. Though I knew some [people] I did not have much contact with them" (personal interview, Banaspati, 9th February, 2009). Dudumaya explained that it was through this cultural organisation that "we became very close" (personal interview, Banaspati, 16th February, 2009). Bidhya, a board member of Janahit, met the other club members when they "practiced the drama for the *Lhosar* [Tamang New Year] program near my home...a group of people called us to participate in the drama" because they had heard that Bidhya and her brother Kanchan, also a board member of Janahit, could speak Tamang and it was "after that we became friends" (personal interview, Banaspati, 5th February, 2009).

Following this, the Janahit club members sought and established a relationship with the anti-trafficking organisation Maiti Nepal.[101] The focus of this organisation reflected the problems that the Janahit club members experienced and feared in their daily lives, as Dudumaya recounted: "Everybody was sending kids to the circus and we were scared and worried that we might need to join the circus and might never go to school" (personal interview, Banaspati, 16th February, 2009). It was at that time that those members who comprise the Janahit club:

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[101] The term *Maiti* refers to a married woman's natal home and *Maiti Nepal* is an organisation that describes its mandate to be the protection of 'Nepali girls and women from crimes like domestic violence, trafficking for flesh trade, child prostitution, child labour and various forms of exploitation and torture' (2012).

> "Discussed forming a group with a few friends. We thought that if we only form a group [by ourselves] then we cannot win trust from the villagers so we thought of taking help from people who *can talk well in the village* [and] we approached Maiti Nepal."
>
> (Dudumaya, personal interview, Banaspati, 10th February, 2009, emphasis added)

When Dudumaya refers to winning the trust of the villagers through seeking the assistance and support of an organisation that can 'talk well' in the village she is referring to the broad perception of non-government organisations (NGOs) in Nepal as authoritative. NGOs play a key role in the practice of development and the authority inherent in these organisations is based on the national project of becoming developed that has proliferated throughout Nepal and become a key means for orienting oneself in landscapes of power (Pigg 1992; 1996). By forming relationships with development organisations the Janahit club appropriated this authority and used it to deal with social issues in their village.

Appropriation can be described as the act of making something one's own by redefining an object in local terms to make it express oneself and one's culture (Miller 1987; Strang and Busse 2010). As a theoretical concept, appropriation has been discussed in material culture studies (see for example Miller 1987), and in media studies (see for example Gillespie 1995; Liebes and Katz 2005; Liechty 2006; Strelitz 2003) in relation to the ways in which people creatively engage with commodities and media texts resulting in locally relevant and unique uses and readings. While the appropriation of authority inherent in development institutions is neither a commodity nor a media text, the fundamental idea that creative engagement with a thing or a text results in locally relevant and unique outcomes can be applied to the actions of the Janahit club members who appropriated SSMK's authority to respond to their local needs and attempt to realise their aspirations.

Development is part of a global discourse that takes on altered meanings in local conditions and thus may be thought of as an 'ideoscape' (Appadurai 1990) that is appropriated and used differently in different contexts in meaningful ways. In Nepal, development discourse is used by governments and NGOs as a rationale for social change in light of their global positioning as one of the least developed countries. However, Pigg (1992) has highlighted that this discourse is also appropriated by those who are framed as beneficiaries. In this case, development has proliferated to become a key discourse around which social identity is oriented and is a means for accessing jobs and social distinction (ibid.). It has also been argued that the appropriation of development discourse is a means for exercising agency because it offers new means

of expression and self-determination (Ahearn 2004) and because it allows access to new modes of power (Bordonaro 2009).

The Janahit club members, by being able to incorporate themselves under the umbrella of a respected NGO—EAN through association with the radio program SSMK—publicly claim and display their membership in EAN and make the latter's authority their own. This is deliberate, as Dudumaya asserted, and evidences the agency of the club members who have positioned themselves in new terrains of power created by development to bring about personal and community transformation.

Āphno Gāū Āphai Banāu[102]

While EAN's understanding of the functions of listeners' clubs is related to discussion, personal transformation and action, the purpose of forming the Janahit club articulated by the members themselves was to create unity to work to create a 'model village'. Janahit's purpose directed their actions, which focussed on doing socially-conscious activities for the general betterment of the village. Dudumaya, the club president, reinforced that the club was a place with a serious mission, which was not something that resonated with all club members and led to a great number of them leaving over the lifetime of the club:

> "They [former club members] focused on entertainment only and were not very serious, which we do not like at all...To conduct programs in the club we have to come here in the evening or night time, and it might be tough for female club members to be sent from their home if their family come to know about such [bad] behaviour. The family members will feel bad when people say that, 'your daughter has been spoiled after joining the club.' Therefore we thought that such kind of behaviour is not acceptable in the club and when we are in the club we should alter such things to maintain the club's reputation...I think they [club members who left] did not get what they wanted from the club and that is why they left".
>
> (Dudumaya, personal interview, Banaspati, 10th February, 2009)

The Janahit club thus defined itself as a serious, respectable and socially-conscious group by choosing to act and represent themselves in certain ways to the exclusion of others. This was done to build an image of a club of responsible and positive youth. The terms positive and negative were used to describe an opposition between youth who were socially-conscious versus those who were anti-social and violent (cf Liechty 2003). The domain of these positive, socially-minded youths of the Janahit club was action within the village aimed at transforming it.

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[102] 'Developing our village ourselves,' which was also a slogan that was used by the United Marxist Leninists (UML)—a political party—in the 1990s (Whelpton 2005:193).

The Janahit club addressed certain issues that were felt by the club members to be a problem in their village. The focus on solving these perceived problems by promoting and initiating social change in the village became a fundamental objective of Janahit and the rationale for the formation and existence of the club. The Janahit club aimed to turn Banaspati into a model village through their own efforts at creating change, which they expressed through their slogan:

> "The slogan of Janahit club is our campaign as well: *Āphno gāū̃ āphai banāu* - develop our village by ourselves. In every situation we were disrespected in the past and at that time we thought of creating a model village [*namūna gāū̃*]. That was our aim, to create a model village."

<div align="right">(Dudumaya, personal interview, Banaspati, 10th February, 2009)</div>

The model village is a concept that has been used in communist regimes (see China Radio International 2006) to describe a village or provincial town that exhibits the central values of the presiding doctrines and is held as an example for others to follow. An article championing the People's Movement in Nepal refers to a:

> 'Woman model village' where women practiced special rights, exercised equal rights to parental property, where it was forbidden to beat women, where women were involved in constructing trekking trails, martyr gates [and] running peoples' court.

<div align="right">(Yami 2010)</div>

This place, a base of the Movement, is referred to as a model village because it is a place that exhibits women's rights as values of the Movement. The model village is also referred to in initiatives aimed at improving or developing something. The local primary school in Banaspati for instance was referred to by the education department of Makwanpur district as a 'model school' because both the physical condition of the school and the teaching methods were promoted as desirable and ideal for other schools to mimic. The Gorkhapatra[103] daily reported on a development initiative that aimed to turn a village in Khotang district into 'a model in sanitation' by funding households to construct toilets (Ghorkapatra quoted in NGO Forum for Urban Water and Sanitation 2008). Chambers says that the model village, when used in terms of development initiatives, is a 'nicely groomed pet project' used to showcase the success of a development initiative to donors and other stakeholders (2008:34). The notion of a model village in Nepal is a pervasive notion perpetuated through development discourse and the People's Movement. In light of these examples, the model village represents a progression toward certain ideals, these ideals often being consistent with those upheld in development discourse. The model village that Dudumaya referred to

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[103] The Gorkhapatra is the oldest Nepali language national daily newspaper in Nepal.

is a developed village, and it is this that the Janahit club members were working towards. The difference is however, that rather than having a model village defined and constructed for them, the Janahit club members defined and aimed to create their own ideal village.

The desire of Janahit club members to make Banaspati a model village (i.e. developed) is premised on both their reflexive experiences of being Nepali and categorised as 'underdeveloped' in relation to 'developed' nations (Liechty 2003; Pigg 1996), and their local experiences of being displaced Tamang people living in a village established for landless and destitute flood victims (see Chapter Two). Banaspati was perceived by the club members as 'backward' (*pachādī*) because of the social and economic problems experienced by those living there:

> "[This village is] in a backward area and other people have a bad perception of us and they blame us of being thieves and prostitutes...because of our low economic condition. They do not want to understand us and our problems."
>
> (Dudumaya, personal interview, Banaspati, 1st October, 2008)

Padampokhari, in which Banaspati is located, is notorious for the trafficking of girls into circus troupes[104] and brothels in India (Pearson 2004). The high level of trafficking in Padampokhari may be linked to the high proportion of Tamang people living in this area, and their historical victimisation as indentured servants in the royal court (Fujikura 2003).

Club members attributed problems of trafficking to the lack of education and the poor economic condition of many of the villagers. Among other issues, the club members identified the cleanliness of the village as a problem and Sukumaya, the club treasurer, explained that they wanted to change this to make Banaspati a model village:

> "Before it was very dirty here, shops by the roadside threw everything on the road and it was very dirty and we cleaned it by ourselves. We want to make this village better and make it a model village."
>
> (Personal interview, Banaspati, 16th February, 2009)

These problems led to negative external perceptions of Banaspati and a friend once told me to be careful after dark in Banaspati because I would be robbed. Poor

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[104] People are trafficked from Nepal for a number of exploitative purposes including: Prostitution, forced marriage, for purposes of war, as domestic servants, as labourers and for entertainment in circus troupes (Deane 2010). It has been reported that those who are trafficked face beatings and labour and sexual exploitation (Nair et al. 2005).

treatment developed from these negative perceptions, which was articulated by Saraswati, the only Brahmin board member of the Janahit club:

> "[Other] people dominated the people of Banaspati, saying that you are homeless, poor people. We made this club to make our village good and civilised and developed to the other village people's eyes."

<div align="right">(Personal interview, Banaspati, 7th February, 2009)</div>

What developing the village meant for the Janahit club members (expressed in their notion of creating a model village) was premised on the aspects that they saw as negative and underdeveloped in relation to broader discourses and perceptions of people outside of Banaspati. Prithibi explained that they had to 'control' these negative things but that this needed to be done from a platform of unity, a key aspect to creating the desired change:

> "This is a youth club where youth gather together and they have a feeling that they can do something and forming the club is like centralising and bring together such strength of the youth. They, being youth, have the feeling, belief and confidence that they can do something good, to make this happen. This club is like a group which helps to strengthen and channel such feelings of all the club members. It's an organisation where youth are involved with feelings of energy, enthusiasm, strength. This club is a unity of that youth...This club...acts to minimise the negative aspects of society like dealing with social taboos to make it fit in the current context. It is only possible to speak against bad works of society and control conservative thinking and modify it into modern society from a unity of youth. That's why we made the club."

<div align="right">(Personal interview, Banaspati, 9th February, 2009)</div>

In the previous section, unity was described by the club members as a key element of their ability to act, as a feature of their collective agency. The club members explained that unity was essential for turning Banaspati into a model village and Prithibi said, "I knew that an individual effort would go in vain" (personal interview, Banaspati, 1st October, 2008). Dudumaya emphasised this point, saying "alone how can I do something for the village? After the club [formed] I got help from my friends and now it is easy to [do social] work" (personal interview, Banaspati, 16th February, 2009). Sukumaya explained that unity meant that when they want to do an activity they can rely on their friends to help them. The emphasis that the Janahit listeners' club members placed on unity as an essential precondition for action is an articulation of the way that they see themselves and understand their ability to act, as part of a collective (cf Figueroa et al. 2002; Gray-Felder and Deane 1999; Gumucio-Dagron and Tufte 2006; UNAIDS 1999).

Research by Singhal et al. (2004) focussed on the radio program *Taru* in northern India that used listeners' clubs to help spread the messages of the radio program. The

authors claim that, 'When individuals organize in small groups to take charge of their lives, they shift community norms, which may make the social change more sustainable' (2004: 374). They similarly found that the precursor to this program, *Tinka Tinka Sukh*, used listener clubs that stimulated local action and social change because they created a forum through which the community members could reflect on the radio program and debate it (Sood 1999). Listeners' clubs create spaces for dialogue and collective action to foster social change in a process similar to that described in the CFSC model (Figueroa et al. 2002; Gray-Felder and Deane 1999; Gumucio-Dagron and Tufte 2006). The way the Janahit club members used the club however, was framed in terms of the local concern of creating a model village, which club members actively sought to create through their actions as part of the SSMK initiative. The Janahit club members recognised that in their work for the village they developed skills, experience and knowledge that they could use to transform their lives and create their futures.

"We didn't establish it just to get something"[105]: Incidental personal transformation

The Janahit club members purposefully engaged in relationships to appropriate authority and create unity to turn Banaspati into a model village. However, through their practices, experiences and interactions in pursuit of the model village many of the club members brought about incidental transformations in their own lives. These transformations were based on; the interplay between organisational affiliation, the development of interpersonal relationships and confidence as well as the ability to speak and be heard and to take consequential action in their own lives. The interplay of these factors enabled club members to develop social capital to bring about transformations in their lives.

Bourdieu has defined social capital as:

> The aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition—or in other words to membership in a group—which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectivity-owned capital...the network of relationships is the product of investment strategies, individual or collective, consciously or unconsciously aimed at establishing or reproducing social relationships that are directly usable in the short or long term.

(1986:248–9)

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[105] (Dudumaya, personal interview, 16th February, 2009). Dudumaya is saying that they didn't establish the Janahit club for personal gain or benefit.

This conceptualisation of social capital as a 'usable' resource has similarly been expressed by Coleman (1990:302), who contends that 'social capital is productive, making possible the achievement of certain ends that would not be attainable in its absence'. Likewise, Portes (1998:6) says that 'social capital stands for the ability of actors to secure benefits by virtue of membership in social networks or other social structures'. Social capital that developed through the platform of the Janahit club was similarly used to purposefully effect changes in Banaspati village to alter both the internal everyday realities experienced by the club members as well as what they perceived were negative external perceptions of the village. The Janahit club provided a platform for civic engagement through which this social capital could be developed in interpersonal relationships as 'social capital inheres in the structure of relations between persons and among persons' (Coleman 1990:302) and is 'a resource gained by social relationships with other human beings' (Savage and Kanazawa 2002:189). The development of social capital had implications for the mobility of club members through their membership in the club and was premised on interpersonal relationships, the ability to speak and act and organisational affiliations.

"Now I have many friends"[106]: Developing interpersonal relationships

Many of the Janahit club members had gone to school together when they were younger as most had moved to Banaspati as small children. However, when their education was interrupted, as happened with many of the members, they spent much of their time in and around their homes and lost contact with one another. Dudumaya explained that:

> "We were very close with each other during our school times and shared the same bench, played together in 2053 [1996], but later we did not even talk with each other when we met, maybe we were too shy...[At] that time we did not even know how to talk and behave with friends."
>
> (Personal interview, Banaspati, 16th February, 2009)

Prithibi explained that "even the aged people of our village were not known to each other" (personal interview, Banaspati, 1st October, 2008), a social feature of Banaspati resulting from the inhabitants having no familial connections and being geographically divided by caste and ethnicity. Those who moved to Banaspati did so under traumatic circumstances, many people having lost a number of family members in a flood that devastated remote areas of Makwanpur district. The experience of being displaced in a divided village, and because of this displacement, of being poor, landless and

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[106] (Prenam, personal interview, Banaspati, 14th October, 2008).

stigmatised, meant that many of the young people struggled to develop interpersonal relationships.

When a number of the club members reunited under the auspices of the Tamang Cultural Organisation they began to develop strong relationships with one another again. The club became a platform through which to make friends, as described by Deepak, a board member of the Janahit club: "When I came here for the first time, I knew very few people but now I have many friends" (personal interview, Banaspati, 14th October, 2008). Many spoke about the strong relationships they had formed with other members as a result of the club, saying that they had grown much closer to one another since the formation of the club. Prenam, a Janahit club board member, said that she had decided to join the club because:

> "I can extend my relations with other friends. We can also plan for different activities and share our problems with each other. There will be mutual trust between the members [who can] suggest each other if they are facing some problems."
>
> (Personal interview, Banaspati,2nd October, 2008)

The experience of being in a new place without family and close friends and the significance of the club in overcoming this is shown well in the stories of Bidhya and Kanchan. Bidhya and Kanchan, brother and sister, had lost their house, land and several family members in the 2050 v.s. (1993) flood described in Chapter Two. They were living in Aagra at the time, a remote area in Makwanpur district. After the flood their grandmother had gone to Banaspati to acquire a house, the same house that Bidhya and Kanchan, along with their young brother, had moved into three years previous to my fieldwork while the rest of their family remained in Aagra. They had gone to study, given that Banaspati is close to Hetauda where a number of colleges are located. As they were relatively new inhabitants of Banaspati they knew no-one other than each other. "I hadn't met anyone. I hadn't met Dudu...In the beginning before joining the club I just sat inside my room and studied" (Kanchan, personal interview, Banaspati, 4th February, 2009). This was an experience shared by Bidhya:

> "Before I didn't have any friends...only my brother and I stayed here; we don't talk to each other so much. I was alone and missed my family. I felt so sad and bored."
>
> (Personal interview, Banaspati, 5th February, 2009)

Things changed for Kanchan and Bidhya however, when some of the club members were rehearsing a drama for the Tamang *Lhosar* (New Year) celebration near to their home and they were invited to join in because of their ability to speak Tamang language. Since that time they have become important members of the club, which

has changed their lives in Banaspati as Bidhya explains: "Before I didn't have any friends, but after joining the club all the members have become my friends" (personal interview, Banaspati, 5th February, 2009). Kanchan explained that in addition to studying, he now does "social activities and work, discuss with friends...this is the change" (personal interview, Banaspati, 4th February, 2009).

The club brought about a palpable transformation in the lives of Bidhya and Kanchan, as it did in the lives of the other club members. The close friendships formed as a result of membership in the Janahit club persisted in personal arenas outside of the club. Club members often supported one another through personal tribulations and aspirations, Bidhya saying that the most important thing about the club is:

> "To stay with friends and share each other's feelings. I like that. We talk about the club and personal life...I can't stay without telling both of them [Dudumaya and Sukumaya] if I knew something or if something happened to me."

> (Personal interview, Banaspati, 24th February, 2009)

These friendships, built and nurtured through the club, fostered what Putnam (1993) has referred to as trust and norms of reciprocity that are important features of social capital. As such he defines social capital as, 'features of social organisation, such as trust, norms, and networks, that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions' (1993:167). Coordinated action for social change as a result of the development of social capital has been investigated in India by Singhal et al. (2006) in relation to the entertainment-education (EE) radio soap opera, *Taru*. This occurred in a context in which the radio media messages could be discussed, reflected on, debated among members of listener groups and often led to collective action (cf Figueroa et al. 2002; Gray-Felder and Deane 1999; Gumucio-Dagron and Tufte 2006). Singhal et al. (2006) argue that the EE radio soap opera facilitated the formation of social capital. They say that social capital, 'displayed through the development of: (a) relationships based on trust, (b) norms of reciprocity; and (c) communication networks', led to social change in areas of education, health, child marriage and gender inequality (2006:15). The Janahit club and members are displaying and developing social capital in their interpersonal relationships based on trust and reciprocity in a place that was lacking a sense of collectivity (cf Putnam 2000; Singhal et al. 2006).

"I joined so that I could speak"[107]

By interacting with others outside of their homes, conducting activities and participating in various activities run by development organisations (with which the club had linkages), the Janahit club members developed what they referred to as an 'ability to speak'. Tulkumaya, the younger sister of Dudumaya and a member of an affiliated child club established by Janahit, said that before she joined the club she had mostly stayed at home and did not have close relationships with other people in the village:

> "I felt afraid [to speak], my hands and feet would tremble. If new people came into the village we used to go inside our home. We never participated in any activities, we didn't have any knowledge. If I didn't join the club I couldn't even speak to you like this. Now I don't feel afraid with people."

> (Tulkumaya, group interview, Banaspati, 20th February, 2009)

These interpersonal relationships, an incidental outcome of the desire of the Janahit club members to create a model village, formed an important basis on which the ability to speak was fostered.

The Janahit club members, like Suman and Tulkumaya, spoke often and consistently about the Janahit club enabling them to speak. While Suman and other younger Janahit members like Prenam claimed that "I joined [the club to] give me confidence so that I could speak among people and face them" (personal interview, Banaspati, 2nd October, 2008), many founding members spoke about the transformation they experienced in finding their voices incidentally through the club:

> "In the beginning we couldn't speak, even like this [in this interview]. We didn't know how to behave or speak with different people...Compared with in the beginning lots of change has happened. In the beginning I wasn't able to speak...Now we've built up our confidence power, we can face the audience people, we can speak with them freely and confidently. Compared with before I am perfect. This is the big change before and after joining the club...Now I can speak at the needed time, if some people dominate me I can speak against that. Before when people used to call us homeless people we couldn't face it. Now we can convince them that we are flood-affected people. Before joining the club I couldn't speak like this. If people say [that we're homeless] we just listen to it and don't react—we don't know how to answer these people. We felt afraid of what people would say if we tried to convince them."

> (Sukumaya, personal interview, Banaspati, 16th February 2009)

Sukumaya explains that the ability to speak is premised on the development of confidence, which is a fundamental aspect of building the personal capacity to voice one's concerns and desires and be heard. The Janahit club members created their own space, characterised by interpersonal relationships amongst peers, where they

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[107] (Suman, personal interview, Banaspati, 2nd October, 2008)

could speak and be listened to. The Janahit club further facilitated access to a space for experiences that helped club members develop their confidence, as Bimla explained: "My peers can't talk or face with other people...but I can because of my experiences, I can freely. The club gave me confidence" (personal interview, Banaspati, 21st February, 2009). The experiences that Bimla refers to are the social activities of the club (such as street drama and village cleaning activities described in Chapter Five) and the 'other people' that such activities necessitate engagement with. These people include those of high caste, village elders and officials—people who have traditionally dominated public discussion and subordinated the concerns of those such as the young Tamang Janahit club members.

There have been many changes in Nepal related to democratic change and the development of a public sphere (Burghart 1996; Lakier 2009) that have facilitated public expression (discussed in Chapter Five). One such change is the circulation of development discourse and appropriation of this to position oneself within Nepali society. The confidence that the *Janahit* club members talk about developing is in part fostered by their association with EAN and their public discussion of common development issues such as HIV/AIDS. The people they communicate with recognise that the Janahit club members are occupying a familiar space, an authoritative space, which facilitates their public expression and identity construction as youth.

'The question 'how shall I live?' has to be answered in day-to-day decisions about how to behave' (Giddens 1991:14). The SSMK radio program offers options for action that can be used to answer this question and thus are a resource for identity construction.[108] Dudumaya explained how media, and the SSMK radio program particularly, enabled her to change her behaviour to speak and be heard:

> "I realised that people are disrespected everywhere. I used to think that people are disrespecting and discriminating against us only and that this did not happen with anybody else...The bigger impact [of media] is that we know how to challenge and oppose what others have to say. I also learnt this from SSMK. Before I could not say anything and was scared thinking what to say and how to speak. A year ago SSMK broadcast one program which matched our situation and then I thought that we should oppose and challenge others views. Only then I realised that I should oppose and challenge others if [their views are] not acceptable to me."

> (Dudumaya, personal interview, Banaspati, 16th February, 2009)

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[108] Giddens says that this question of 'how shall I live?' that is answered in terms of behavioural traits and habits is a question that is characteristic of modernity in post-traditional societies. Nepal provides such a context in which there is increasingly more freedom and choice to construct one's identity (see Ahearn 2004; Liechty 2003).

Dudumaya's realisation of speaking and acting is linked to the term *awāj uṭhāune*—to raise one's voice. This is a phrase that assumes a suppressed consciousness as voice is a metaphor for consciousness and agency (Kunreuther 2010). Consequently, being able to speak was explained in terms of taking consequential action in one's own life, of agency, which enabled club members to aspire to desired and imagined futures. Prithibi articulates how this ability to speak enabled him to successfully seek employment as a teacher:

> "In our time we couldn't speak or talk with people senior to us...they never allowed us to do it...In our time also I myself felt afraid to talk with or face other people. Now we can raise our voices for our need...After being involved in the club I went to the school, where there was a vacancy and I said—I am a local person, I am capable of working here. I raised my voice like this. After being involved in the club I got a job. If I wasn't in the club I couldn't raise my voice and get a job."

> (Personal interview, Banaspati, 9th February, 2009)

Having the ability to speak, or being able to raise one's voice, enables the club members to face peers and others, to pursue future education and employment aspirations and to construct identities differently and creatively to those that have been thrust on them. 'The figure of voice...has become a new way to imagine oneself, a way to contrast one's older and newer self, in short, a way to reconfigure subjectivity' (Kunreuther, 2010:336-7). Because subjectivities are represented and reproduced through voice and who is able to speak and be listened to, the club members are creating their subjectivities through developing the confidence to speak (cf Kunreuther 2009).

The ability to speak not only becomes an important part of the club members' self narrative (Giddens 1991), but is also integral to their development and competition for social capital in fields of education and employment. The club members used their social capital to access employment and educational[109] opportunities and for the generation of 'symbolic capital' in the form of changes to status, prestige and renown (Bourdieu 1977; 1990). This in turn contributed to the expansion of the club members' networks and enabled them to achieve greater capital by demonstrating their competence in various fields (Bourdieu 1977; 1990).

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[109] Bourdieu (1986) has referred to education as a form of 'cultural capital' that can be institutionalised in the form of educational qualifications.

"People give me respect"[110]: Status, networks and employment

Saru and I have gone to visit Ananta in his family home in Manahari, thirty kilometres from Hetauda along the highway to Chitwan district. Although Ananta now rents a room in Hetauda because he works there, his home and family are in Manahari, which is where he grew up and joined a local SSMK listeners' club. While his mother is cooking our lunch of *dhāl, bhāt* and *tarkāri* (lentils, rice and curried vegetables), I ask Ananta about the organisations he is involved in. He tells us that he is a member of: *Gāu̐ Basi Sanchar Mānch*, a communication group that produces a newspaper; a Manahari-based group called *Junkeri* (Fireflies) that does street drama as well as training for journalism and social work; *Yūba Chautari,* a youth organisation that produces a newspaper and conducts social work; an SSMK listeners' club in Manahari; and a member of the SSMK youth network. He is also a Red Cross action team volunteer. Ananta tells us that at times there are many meetings and he has a lot of work and responsibilities that he cannot always manage to meet and in those instances these groups have called him and threatened to remove him from the group. "Ok, I'm coming! I'm on the road on the way!" he mimics, pumping his arms at his sides as though running and we all laugh. So if it is difficult to manage, why does he do it? "I want to do lots of social work" he says, "It's good for society, it's good for identity, people give me respect". He then does an imitation of people paying him respect—he presses his palms together high on his forehead. "Hi *Namaste*," he mimics "You want take some cold drinks, Coca-Cola, take some breakfast?" (Informal chat, Manahari, 22nd February, 2009).

Ananta's comments are enlightening because they reveal that social work within organisations or recognised groups for the development of Nepal is a field in which one can increase one's status. Pigg has pointed out that,

> Increasingly, the apparatus of *bikās* (the burgeoning of office jobs, the money brought in by foreign aid, the positions of influence in the bureaucracy) is the source of power, wealth, and upward social mobility.

(1992:511)

The change in status is based on the value placed on doing social work in Nepal, which Skinner and Holland (2009) say is an aspect of the model of an educated person represented in school texts and social and economic development discourse as 'one who serves the people [and], works toward the development of the country' (ibid.:327). They go on to say that education is an increasingly important form of symbolic capital

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[110] (Ananta, informal chat, Manahari, 22nd February, 2009).

that gives those possessing an education the power to claim superior status. Those people who engage in social work thus appropriate the symbolic capital of possessing an education and are able to situate themselves as knowledgeable and proactive within national discourses about development (Pigg 1992).

Status was an important concern for the Janahit club members that they sought to display by educating other villagers through social activities in which they presented an official image. This image incorporated their formal linkage with SSMK, official positions in the club such as secretary and treasurer, uniforms worn during different events and their desire to fund and establish their own clubhouse that would stand as a physical representation of their mandate for conducting social work. This status was also important for the Janahit club members because it helped them to establish networks that acted as resources to access greater opportunities because, as Pigg has put it, 'To be relegated to the margins of *bikās* is to be excluded from the opportunities it offers' (1992:511). The importance of forming networks can be seen in Ananta's many organisational obligations that increased his status, which then reinforced his ability to deepen his networks and eventually gain greater status, so that one day people would know him, pull up a bench for him to sit at, and buy him breakfast.

It has been highlighted in other work on clubs and groups that these structures are a means of social mobility and differentiation. Errington and Gewertz (1997) have discussed how membership in a Rotary Club in Papua New Guinea provided a means for club members to construct themselves as middle-class. Wilmore (2008) has argued that membership in a local NGO in Palpa, Nepal provided a means for members to compete for capital in the development field and promote their own interests and status, along with other group members. Similarly, Bennett (1983) has stated that members of a committee and a club that existed in the village in which she conducted her research, aimed to get benefits for the village, which further increased their prestige.

Development is politicised in Nepal and there are multiple versions toward which people work. A member of the Youth Communist League will have a different worldview from a Madeshi and compete in the field of development for different purposes and reasons and with different visions for the future. In this research I describe members of a youth category that define themselves as active and socially oriented and work toward a new Nepal that has developed infrastructure, equitable

access of resources and education, equality and no poverty that they saw as proceeding from a well-functioning Republic.

Social mobility and differentiation is related to the networks that members of clubs, committees, groups and organisations have access to. Networks are forms of social capital (Putnam et al. 1993; Singhal et al. 2006) that can be used not only to increase status but also to access benefits. Owing to networks formed as a result of being a recognised club, Janahit was funded to do a street drama about the link between HIV/AIDS and violence against women (described in Chapter Five). They also won a grant from EAN to establish a small stationery shop in Banaspati and had previously been awarded funding to conduct a social activity by the same organisation. The Janahit club also had a significant connection with an organisation working for women's and children's rights in Nepal and were able to secure a children's rights awareness program with prizes for the children's club members. These club members approached this same organisation again when one of the child club members needed medical help that required them to travel to a neighbouring district. The club reinforced these relationships by staying in contact and requesting assistance from time to time. The chairperson told me that they sought assistance and funding with organisations they had good relationships with, although given the opportunity and introduction they would establish new networks.

Having strong networks is particularly important in Nepal. The concept of *āphno mānche* is an example of this. Bista describes *āphno mānche* as:

> The term used to designate one's inner circle of associates—it means 'one's own people' and refers to those who can be approached whenever need arises. The strength or weakness of one is measured in terms of the quality and quantity of the circles of *afno manche* he is a part of. *Afno manche* is a critical Nepali institution.
>
> (1991:98)

Much time and effort is expended in taking care of one's own people, while those who are outside of this circle are considered as 'non-persons' (Bista 1991:97) and disregarded in favour of those within it (cf Wilmore 2001; 2008). Networks that are created through the cultural practice of *āphno mānche* are a means of accessing opportunities that one may not have access to otherwise, as Hatlebakk et al. (2010) have demonstrated in their research on access to employment opportunities being contingent on familial networks. Clubs play an important role in the formation of *āphno mānche* networks (Bista 1991). Wilmore (2008) explains that the cultural phenomenon of *āphno mānche* meant that a tightly-knit group of people in his research site of

Tansen, Palpa formed a parallel structure of authority and controlled the flow of development resources into the town. Similarly, Bennett (1983) found that the members of a village committee and a youth organisation were the informal leaders of their village. The cultural practice of *āphno mānche* is a way in which people can ensure that their 'own people' gain benefits, access to resources and increase their status (Bennett 1983; Bista 1991; Wilmore 2008). The means of accessing resources as part of a *āphno mānche* network is linked to social capital. Wilmore (2008) has referred to this phenomenon using Putnam's concept of bonding capital (2000) to explain that capital within the network enhanced the capacity of group members to link-up with outside organisations (bridging capital).[111] This can also be seen in Banaspati, in which the Janahit club members spoke about the importance of unity in the club as enabling them to act as a collective to achieve social and individual changes and transformations.

Dudumaya received a number of opportunities because of the networks she formed through the Janahit club. She was employed by a local NGO to run peace-building and reconciliation activities throughout Padampokhari. Later she was employed by EAN as a community researcher because she was known by EAN staff as an active and capable person and thus judged the most appropriate person for the job. Prithibi, the secretary of the Janahit club, told me that being involved in the club enabled him to access a number of employment opportunities:

> "Plan Nepal gave me an opportunity to conduct a survey for eighteen days only because I am a talented and active...club member. [From this] I gained some experience, knowledge and also got some money. In most of the programs that are organised by Plan[112] in Banaspati, Plan gave me the opportunity. When I wasn't in the club no one knew me or gave me opportunities. *Now if I give an application for a [job] vacancy I also include the club's work and my experiences of doing activities in the club.*"

> (Personal interview, Banaspati, 9th February, 2009, emphasis added)

Being involved in the Janahit club is itself capital to invest in the writing of one's job applications. Employment prospects are abysmal for young people in Nepal, even those who are educated, which makes access to development resources (such as those offered by the club) all the more essential. The Janahit club also helped its members to get jobs through recommendation letters, as Sukumaya the club treasurer told me: "I got my job here in the garden because of the club. To work here people

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[111] Wilmore (2008:170) says that bonding capital '…originates in strongly felt experiences of shared, in-group identity…', while bridging capital refers to the '…connections that are formed between the members of different groups'.
[112] Plan Nepal is an international development organisation.

need a club authorised letter or the support of the club" (personal interview, Banaspati, 16th February, 2009). To establish networks and seek employment however, one must have the ability to speak.   This ability to speak is nurtured through interpersonal relationships built on trust and reciprocity (Putnam 2000), which in turn contributes to the establishment of networks and gaining employment. The ability to speak in which is enshrined confidence and the ability to take consequential action is essential to the development of social capital among the Janahit club members.

"They can now study despite their economic condition" [113]: Educating the next generation

The Janahit club members experienced interpersonal transformations that increased their access to opportunities as a result of being involved in the club. Recognising that the club format was beneficial for personal development and future aspirations, the Janahit club members established the Janahit children's club in 2064 v.s. (2007) so that the children of Banaspati could experience these same benefits. The Janahit children's club, like the Janahit club, has a formal structure with the posts of chairperson, secretary, treasurer, board members and general members. The focus of the children's club was education and the development of knowledge. The Janahit club members had experienced disrupted and delayed educations and wanted to make education accessible for the next generation "so that they do not have to struggle and face hardship as we did" (Prithibi, personal interview, Banaspati, 9th February, 2009). The ability to gain an education was viewed as fundamentally important to being able to realise future aspirations.

During the autocratic Rana rule in Nepal from 1846 to 1951 education was exclusive to Rana families and high caste Hindus, the latter being educated in religious institutions that were not seen as threatening to the state (Bhatta 2009; Onta 2009; Skinner and Holland 2009). When the Shah monarchy was restored to power in 1951 institutions and programs were established in concert with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to educate the subjects of Nepal so that they would be able to contribute to the development of the country (Skinner and Holland 2009:295-6). Ideas about education for development were prevalent in the documents produced by the national educational planning institution: 'Education is a critical foundation of economic and social development. Universal access, especially to primary education, is among those essential preconditions for any nation's

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[113] (Sukumaya, personal interview, Banaspati, 16th February, 2009).

modernization' (quoted in Skinner and Holland 2009:300). Ideas about education for development are pervasive in Nepal and are evident in school text books (Onta 2009; Pigg 1992). It has also been noted that education is a means of appropriating symbolic capital that gives the possessor greater upward mobility as well as access to superior positions and status (Bourdieu 1984; 1986; Skinner and Holland 2009:297). It is in this context that the intense focus of the Janahit club on education can be understood:

> "I used to feel bad when I could not go to school, as all my friends went to school. I used to listen to the radio at that time and when I went to the *Ghedung* [Tamang organisation] the elder brothers involved used to tell me that I should study. Even when I was involved in programs I felt that people have done a lot with their education, I did think that without education nothing can be done even though I was not going to school...[I left school] because of domestic problems. There was a poor economic condition due to which we had to leave school many times and we know that suffering. That is why we have programs, so that the coming generation do not have to face such problems."
>
> (Dudumaya, personal interview, Banaspati, 16th February, 2009)

The programs that Dudumaya are referring to include a scholarship program that is implemented and managed by the Janahit club members and a number of other small activities that are conducted through the Janahit children's club. According to the Janahit club members these programs were initiated so that the younger generation did not have to face disrupted education due to poverty. Gaps in education were common amongst the Janahit club members, and indeed even amongst a number of older children's club members who were studying in class seven (with a scholarship distributed by the Janahit club) at sixteen years of age.[114] Prenam, a member of the Janahit club, left school in class seven because her family could not afford to send both her and her brother to school. "I said to give the money to brother because he is in nine class. I'll not take the exam" (personal interview, Banaspati, 27th August, 2010).[115] Prenam then had a two to three gap in her education during which time she participated in a number of skill development training sessions. She says that during that period:

> "We were teenagers. We didn't have anyone to convince us about the importance of education, not any trainings to teach us the value of education. People have the concept that a daughter should get married and go to another's home...daughters are compelled to work whether they become educated or not, so taking skilful training is

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[114] If one was to go through schooling uninterrupted in class seven one would be around twelve years of age.

[115] The schooling system in Nepal requires that students take exams at the end of every year to progress to the next level. The School Leaving Certificate (SLC) exam occurs at the end of class ten and once that is successfully completed students can begin studying +1 and +2 (one year each) at a college campus.

> better than education...Other people didn't convince me otherwise and my concept was also the same because I had no idea about education."
>
> (Personal interview, Banaspati, 27th August, 2010)

Prenam explained that she started to get an idea about the significance of education from the SSMK radio program, to which both she and Dudumaya listened "and we discussed it. In the SSMK program they focused on education" (Prenam, personal interview, Banaspati, 27th August, 2010). The Janahit club was subsequently formed and it was "from friends [that I] got the value of education [and] after making the club we came to know more things about education" (Prenam, personal interview, Banaspati, 27th August, 2010). Prenam went back to school and obtained enough marks in her class seven exam to receive a scholarship for classes eight through ten. For the higher levels of schooling (+1 and +2) Prenam sought alternative scholarship opportunities for her tuition costs and also works in the local school in Banaspati because "for everything we need money and we ourselves [have to] earn money to fulfil our own needs" (Prenam, personal interview, Banaspati, 27th August, 2010). Prenam's story indicates that radio, specifically the SSMK radio program, is a means of developing awareness (Fujikura 2001) that, combined with support networks and capacity building platforms (clubs), led to her return to school.

The Janahit club ran an ongoing scholarship program funded by KIKA Education Foundation based in Kathmandu, that began in 2064 v.s. (2007) for twenty of the children of Banaspati village. This scholarship program was one of the favourite activities of the club members, as I was told: "I like everything, especially the scholarship program" (Bidhya, personal interview, Banaspati, 5th February, 2009); "[My favourite activity is] the one where the club gave scholarships to the kids. They can now study despite their economic condition" (Sukumaya, personal interview, Banaspati, 16th February, 2009). Dudumaya told me that the Janahit club members chose twenty students based on their school exam marks and their families' incomes. However, KIKA could only provide funding for ten children, which the Janahit club accepted and divided amongst the twenty children they had put forward for the initial scholarship application. Three children were also supported through the Child Workers in Nepal (CWIN) organisation, which has a regional office in Hetauda. In mid-2010 the Janahit club was also working with an INGO in the hope of securing thirty more scholarships for children in Banaspati. These scholarships enabled a number of children to attend school that otherwise would not have been possible.

Tsering (see Figure 18) was one such scholarship holder. Tsering is one of eight brothers and sisters supported by a single income. When we met, he introduced himself in English: "*Namaste*. My name is Tsering...I am poor, my father is a rickshaw puller. I read in class six" (group interview, Banaspati, 20th February, 2009). In a loud and clear voice Tsering talked about the importance of a good education, something that he would have had no prospect of obtaining before getting a scholarship and joining the children's club:

> "I don't have my birth registration. My mother hasn't got her marriage registration or citizenship. 'Till five class Bimala Miss' father helped me but my economic condition is not good to continue education after five class. Because of joining the club I got a scholarship and that's why I'm able to get a education."

> (Tsering, group interview, Banaspati, 20th February, 2009)

Another scholarship holder, Aite, was orphaned when his mother died of tuberculosis a few years after his father had died of the same disease. Aite moved in with his aunt and uncle who live in Banaspati and was supported by the scholarship program run by the Janahit club to continue his education:

> "[My family] sometimes they say bad things [about the club]; 'why are you always going there?' I come to the club instead of doing housework so they scold me. They say good things too, that I got scholarship, that I'm not like before – now I talk much more. They say good things, but when I speak a lot with my uncle at that time he says, 'Oh, you speak so much!'"

> (Aite, personal interview, Banaspati, 24th February, 2009)

The Janahit club ran regular activities, including tuition classes in the mornings and informal study sessions in the evenings where the children's club members could ask questions about their homework and study with their friends (see Figure 19):

> "I have no one at home to help me with my homework if I have difficulty or confusion, so I come to the clubhouse and learn with friends. All my class friends come to the clubhouse and we are members of the club. If my friends can't solve [the homework problems] then my teacher [Prithibi] helps."

> (Kalpana, group interview, Banaspati, 20th February, 2009)

Kalpana highlights an important point when she says that there is no one in her family who is able to help her with her homework. Most of the parents of club members, and even older brothers and sisters, aunts and uncles have at most only completed elementary schooling. Most of the residents of Banaspati village, indeed all of the people I worked with, were displaced from their homes by the flood described in Chapter Two. Many of these people come from remote villages in Makwanpur where they were largely subsistence farmers and where there were (and are) relatively few

schools that are often far away. Travel time, attitudes toward schooling, lack of money, and the need for children to labour in the homes and fields are factors that affect participation in schooling (Skinner and Holland 2009:305). Many of the mothers[116] I spoke to were shy and claimed that they were not able to speak, dissolving into giggles before expressing their pleasure at their children's involvement in the club, receipt of scholarship and the importance of equitable education. Skinner and Holland (2009) found in their research that the educated person is widely lauded, especially by those who are uneducated and that education constitutes a new social distinction:

> So convincing was the emblematic value of education as both a route to upward mobility and as a shedding of the hated oppressions of the past that we found this notion to be hardly contested by those people who had been bypassed by schooling.
>
> (2009:297–8)

There is a clear distinction in Banaspati between the Janahit club members I worked with and their parents—the former receiving formal education and being outspoken and engaged in social activities, while the latter expressed shyness and had most often not received formal education and were often illiterate.

Tsering highlights the importance of the club and education for his future:

> "If I didn't learn such things in the club I will not be capable in the future...Now education is everything, everybody needs education...My family can't give me an education because my brothers and sisters also go to school. My father is [poor]—it's difficult for him to manage his children's education."
>
> (Group interview, Banaspati, 20th February, 2009)

The view that education is fundamentally important for one's future was held by most of the members of the Janahit and children's clubs. This resonates with the findings of Skinner and Holland regarding education being viewed as a pathway to upward mobility (2009). Dudumaya stressed that despite the fact that one may be capable of working, having an education is significant because it "is like proof. In every field it is easier to go ahead with education" (personal interview, Banaspati, 16th February, 2009). Education is a way in which these young people can engage with their changing and expanding world and is fundamental for the future that they imagine for themselves. The stress on building the capacities and capabilities of the child club members was extended through the children's club itself, which also acted as a platform through which the children could develop themselves as people, as Prithibi explains:

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[116] I rarely spoke to fathers or elder brothers as they were often elsewhere in Nepal or overseas working.

"I want to say something...We [now] think that being in the club does bring opportunities. For the upcoming generation we want to let them realise and know that if you work in the club it helps in personal development and people come to know you and you get opportunities as well, and I think they have already understood this...When somebody invites child club members to their program then we need to select those who can speak well as well as describe the club properly in such programs. But now most of the children are able to speak up, as [they take turns speaking]".

(Comment made during a chat with club members, Banaspati, 16th February, 2009)

The children's club provided a platform through which the members were able to develop relationships, form networks with development organisations like CWIN, KIKA and Plan Nepal and develop their confidence and speaking abilities and gain knowledge. In a way I was also a part of their personal development; when the Janahit club members insisted that I speak with a few of the children's club members in a group format this was an opportunity for these children to practice speaking with a foreigner and answer questions. It was through activities such as these that the members of the children's club claimed that they developed their confidence:

"Before [joining the club] we couldn't speak with others, give our introduction, stand in front of people - I always felt 'please never come my turn.' Now I feel happy, I can talk, speak, give my introduction, now I'm always waiting for my turn—my hands and feet don't tremble."

(Kalpana, group interview, Banaspati, 20th February, 2009)

For the children's club members the support networks and friends they have made in the club are also significant aspects of being a club member, as Aite explains: "If something happens to a club member we talk with each other, try to find out the problem and solve it" (personal interview, Banaspati, 24th February, 2009). This was reiterated by Tulkumaya, another member of the children's club who explained that being able to gather in the club enabled them to "share our own feelings and problems with each other" (group interview, Banaspati, 20th February, 2009).

The Janahit club members established the children's club based on their own intensely personal experiences of being poor and displaced and difficulty in accessing education. These personal experiences of hardship impacted on what the Janahit club members saw as important areas for development, which were informed by national and global discourses about education. Through radio programs like SSMK and talking with peers in the club format, the young members developed interpersonal relationships and social capital that helped them effect changes in their lives. The formation of the children's club by the Janahit club members evidences an acknowledgement of the role that both education and club membership plays in self-transformation.

Conclusion

The listeners' clubs are conceptualised by EAN as spaces for discussion and collective action. As such they are examples of the CFSC model that emphasises collectivity as fundamental to achieving social change (Figueroa et al. 2002; Gray-Felder and Deane 1999; Gumucio-Dagron and Tufte 2006). The CFSC model also highlights that sustainable social change is dependent on groups of people defining their own problems and finding and enacting solutions to these (Figueroa et al. 2002; Gray-Felder and Deane 1999; Gumucio-Dagron and Tufte 2006). The expectations that EAN (and SSMK as a part of EAN) have of listeners' clubs (described in the introduction to this chapter) to discuss issues raised by the SSMK radio program and act on these, informs a framework for participation as a club member. This framework is reinforced by the broadcast and acknowledgement of letters, audio recordings and activities for and by listeners' clubs that emphasise SSMK's messages. What is deemed 'appropriate' listener club practice is based on the demonstration of a social consciousness, which I have described throughout this thesis as being integral to a youth subjectivity. This was reiterated by an EAN employee who described what he saw as good clubs in opposition to clubs driven by selfish motivations:

> "Initially, during the conflict, people joined the clubs to get information. People also joined because they thought that it was a means to do some community activities and some of the others joined thinking that they would get some economic benefits...In a way, we can say that the newer clubs are economically motivated...Those clubs that were opened in the initial phase had purely social motives. They had not expected money from donors. The newer clubs that are formed, being motivated by those old ones, do not listen to the radio programs in general, but are more interested in community activities like HIV/AIDS awareness, human rights activities. I have an example from Palpa. The difference between two clubs, one established in 2062 and the other recently established, is that the earlier club would listen to SSMK and do real activities in the community like producing the same drama [as SSMK] in the community. But the situation has changed. Now the newer clubs do not do real activities in the community."

> (Jiwan, personal interview, Hetauda, 2nd October, 2008)

By outlining the way that listeners' clubs *should* be acting Jiwan is also describing what he sees as inappropriate (i.e. economically motivated) practice. Jiwan tells us that listeners' clubs that have 'purely social motives' derived from faithful listening to SSMK are those that are the 'real' and legitimate clubs as opposed to those that are economically motivated. Jiwan's comments highlight that while participation, or 'interaction' as Binayak described it (Kunreuther 2010), certainly exists through the listeners' clubs, it is, as Morley and Brunsdon (1999) similarly found, largely dictated by the (SSMK) producers.

The Janahit listeners' club members largely work within SSMK's framework. However they do this with different motivations that are fuelled by specifically local experiences. While the difference between motivations of the club members and those of the SSMK producers may be subtle it is nevertheless an important distinction to make because it reveals the agency of the club members to use the listener club structure for their own ends (Desjarlais 1996; Sen 2000; Sen 1992). The organisational relationships that the Janahit club members developed allowed them to position themselves within landscapes of power created by development and to access the opportunities that it offers for upward mobility (cf Pigg 1992; 1996). For example, Prithibi, Dudumaya and Ananta were offered employment because, they claimed, they were known as young and active people who displayed a development consciousness (Fujikura 2001). Prithibi, Dudumaya and Ananta's access to opportunities was brought about by the interplay between organisational affiliation, interpersonal relationships and the ability to speak and take consequential action in their lives that they developed in the listeners' club and that enabled them to build social capital (Bourdieu 1977; 1986; 1990) that they were able to invest in realising their aspirations.

The individual benefits that Dudumaya, Prithibi and Ananta realised because of their membership in a SSMK listeners' club indicates that club membership provides a means for social and economic mobility. These listeners' clubs are, as Prithibi once explained, a place where young people who want to "do something" and can gather and act (Prithibi, personal interview, Banaspati, 9th February, 2009). Radio listeners' clubs have been discussed in the communication for development literature as: a means to increase community social capital (Singhal et al. 2006); a means of fostering dialogue and collective action for social change (Jensen et al. 2009); and as means for getting feedback on radio program content, increasing local input, participation, reach and impact of messaging (Fisher 2004; Jacobson and Storey 2004; Manyozo 2005; Moyo 1991; Sood 1999; Sood et al. 2004). However, studies that focus on the impact of messaging obscure what club membership means to the members themselves and how they use that membership to develop and realise aspirations. Tacchi has stated that while the CFSC model recognises the value of dialogue, 'We are still fundamentally lacking an understanding of the...aspirations of people living in poverty. We need to more effectively listen to them' (2012:661–662). A focus on the meaning and use of listener club membership by the members themselves reveals a more nuanced impact of communication for development initiatives by radio programs like SSMK, that allows people to talk about and realise their own aspirations.

Figure 18: Tsering laughing with his class mates during a group interview.

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Figure 19: Child club members studying in the Janahit clubhouse in the evening.

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Chapter Seven   Conclusion: Youths making 'new Nepal'

In the introduction to this thesis, I described a scene in which a young boy was collecting fares from bus passengers. Spotting him, I asked my friend, Ananta, if this boy was a youth. Ananta's response revealed a great deal about the constitution of a youth category in Nepal: Youths are not determined by age, but by the attribute of social consciousness that is demonstrable in their actions to make a 'new Nepal'. This category of youth is, by definition, exclusionary. Not all young people are able to undertake socially conscious activities, like the young boy working on the bus who was engaged in wage labour for his survival. Being able to engage in activities for the making of a new Nepal requires free time and education, which are not equally available to all people. Thus the category of youth described in this thesis is a category of privilege. In this thesis I have examined this construction of youth in the context of a communication for development (C4D) initiative implemented by Equal Access Nepal (EAN) by exploring; the representation of a youth archetype in radio programs produced in Kathmandu (Chapter Three); the remediation of youth subjects by regional radio program producers and listeners' club members in Makwanpur District (Chapters Four and Five); and the practice of youth subjectivities by listeners' club members in Banaspati Village, Makwanpur District (Chapter Six). The youth subject that I have described is not a description of all youth in Nepal, nor do all young people necessarily subscribe to this identification (cf Ahearn 2004; Liechty 1995; 1998b; 2002; 2003; 2006; Snelliger 2009; Zharkevich 2009). The youth that I describe may be one of many facets of people's subjectivities that are demonstrable in certain contexts (Narayan 1993; Rosaldo 1989) and at certain times. My fieldwork took place in the context of a development initiative with people who played roles in that initiative. In this context, the youth that I have described was particularly evident.

The focus of this thesis is on the remediation rather than on the impact of messages that are disseminated through the *Sāthi Saṅga man kā Kura* (SSMK) and *Naya Nepal* (NN) radio programs. However, the impact of EAN's initiatives can be seen to an extent in the process of remediation as a form of self-realisation. Remediator roles create opportunities for people to change their own lives to some degree. While it may be said that EAN's initiatives are effective in achieving their aim of behaviour change, this occurs in unique ways and is driven by different motivations. This is not

detrimental to EAN's aims and EAN staff members are not ignorant of this. Indeed the strategic use of the listeners' club relationship described in Chapter Six is integral to EAN's aim of behaviour change because this is effected through the activeness of agents capable of bringing about change in their lives and advocating for broader social change within their communities (De Fossard 2005; Galavotti et al. 2001).

EAN's C4D initiative provides the context for my investigation of the construction of youth in Nepal. C4D has been defined as a social process that involves two-way information sharing aimed at achieving 'culturally and socially relevant communication dialogue' between development workers and target groups (Servaes 2008b:15). EAN thus creates opportunities for participation in their initiatives by supporting local radio program productions and listeners' clubs with the aims of increasing the relevance and accessibility of 'critically needed information' and building 'the capacity of large numbers of rural Nepalis to advocate for change at their local level' (Equal Access 2011c). By encouraging and supporting local radio program productions and listeners' clubs, EAN creates opportunities for people to take control of their communicative processes and to discuss issues and work on solutions to these. These actions resonate with the communication for social change (CFSC) model that has been described as a dialogue-based process through which 'people themselves define who they are, what they need and how to get what they need in order to improve their own lives' (Parks et al. 2005:3). However, the content of local radio programs and listeners' club activities—forms of communication over which people exercise control—is EAN's development messaging and entails a lack of control over the original messages. EAN staff members expressed concern about this lack of control, which is a tension between CFSC and behaviour change communication (BCC) models—which stress tight control over the message—that is not easily resolved.

EAN's initiatives contribute to an emerging youth public in Nepal. In Chapter Five, I argue that the youth public is an alternative public that is organised on development discourse (Fraser 1990; 1992; 1995; Hauser 1999). Fraser notes that because alternative publics, or counterpublics, 'Emerge in response to exclusions within dominant publics, they help expand discursive space' (Fraser 1995: 291–92). As discussed in Chapter Five, censorship and partyless rule in Nepal constrained public discourse (Burghart 1996; Lakier 2009). The establishment of multi-party democracy has contributed to the emergence of multiple publics (including the youth public) that add their own concerns to public discourse and expand public discussion.

Radio has an important role to play in the emergence of publics and a public sphere because it helps create imagined communities (Onta 2001). People may listen to radio programs alone, but they know that 'at that very moment, there are many others listening to the same program' and while they may never meet, they are 'an imagined community' (Onta 2006a:97) because 'in the minds of each lives the image of their communion' (Anderson 1983:6). People perceive themselves as members of an imagined community of youth, which is highlighted in a conversation recounted by an SSMK radio program producer:

> "This is something a listener told me; what's SSMK for you [I asked]? And the person said 'it's a beacon of hope for me.' Then I asked him why? Then he said 'you know like when we are in my village there's so much frustration, if you look outside there is poverty, if you look outside there is no good education, if you go outside the threshold people are complaining. But when I listen to SSMK I feel that it's not only me who is complaining, it's them [other young people] who are complaining as well and I can really relate to what you say.'"

(Arjun, personal interview, Kathmandu, 10th August, 2010)

Dudumaya, the chairperson of the Janahit listeners' club in Banaspati Village, explained that the SSMK radio program similarly made her feel part of an imagined community. She said that "I used to think that people are only disrespecting and discriminating against us and that this did not happen with anybody else" (Dudumaya, personal interview, Banaspati, 16th February, 2009). After listening to SSMK, she said "I realised that people are disrespected everywhere" and "I learnt from SSMK how to challenge and oppose what others have to say" (ibid.). Feeling part of an imagined community was the basis on which Dudumaya and the other Janahit listeners' club members acted and is an important part of creating a youth public. Actions as part of this youth public were enabled by EAN's initiative. Engagement in this initiative necessitated action in the form of local program productions or activities, which I refer to as remediations.

My use of this concept is based on Bolter and Grusin's (1999) argument that 'at this extended historical moment, all current media function as remediators' (ibid.:55) because 'any act of mediation is dependent on another, indeed many other, acts of mediation' (ibid.:56). Bolter and Grusin's understanding of remediation is focussed on new media forms and did not fit well with what I learnt during fieldwork. While local producers and listeners' club members were remediating SSMK and NN content in local radio program productions and activities, there were also a lot of other interesting things that were happening as a result of their engagement in EAN's initiative. Novak (2010) has expanded on Bolter and Grusin's concept to argue that culture and

identities are constructed during the process of remediation. While Novak talks about the remediation of foreign media his take on this concept can be equally applied to the remediation of Nepali content within Nepal.

Remediations produced by local producers and listeners' club members demonstrated the construction and practice of youth subjectivities. This was usually done by contrasting the youth subject with others that were framed as either too modern or too traditional. Liechty has termed this balance between being too traditional and too modern as being 'suitably modern' and says that it is integral to the cultural production of the middle-class in Kathmandu:

> The middle class are those people struggling to rescue a socially valid "traditional" Nepali morality from its associations with the provincial vulgarity of the urban poor, while at the same time attempting to define a "suitably" modern-but-still-Nepali lifestyle of moral and material restraint distinct from what they view as corrupt elite lifestyles of foreignness and consumer excess. To be middle-class is to walk this knife's edge between low and high, tradition and modernity.

(2003:61)

Defining the space of the youth public as suitably modern (i.e. in-between tradition and modernity) was implicit to the local radio program and listeners' club remediations (Chapters Four and Five). However, while the SSMK and NN producers were middle-class (discussed in Chapter Three) the local program producers and listeners' club members were not. If defining a suitably modern space is a feature of the middle-class as Liechty suggests, then why are those who are not middle-class defining a similar space? This is a question that Liechty addresses in a case study of a teen magazine. The owners of the teen magazine desired upper middle-class subscribers, but found that the majority of subscribers were middle to lower middle class. The subscribers were people who, Liechty says, desired to identify with modernity and its possibilities (ibid.:216–26). The local radio program producers and listeners' club members similarly aspired to the possibilities related to defining themselves within a suitably modern space. These possibilities were linked to the project of making a new Nepal in which their lives might be different and better.

I outline the actions of people to aspire to different futures in Chapter Six and argue that the Janahit listeners' club members engage in EAN's development initiative for their own purposes and to their own ends. The motivation of the listeners' club members is based on creating different and better lives for themselves. EAN's initiative offers them an opportunity to do that through the upward social mobility linked to development in Nepal:

> In rural areas, *bikās* is associated in people's minds with social mobility. There has emerged in Nepal a new kind of status that is correlated with economic advantage but is not reducible to it. Being cosmopolitan, being a relatively "developed" kind of person, is a form of cultural capital.

> (Pigg 1996:173)

Youth is marked by the attribute of social consciousness which is demonstrated through local radio program and listeners' club remediations that address social issues. These remediations not only comment on suitably modern practice for a new Nepal, but also position the radio program producers and listeners' club members as developed. They position themselves in opposition to underdeveloped villagers (Pigg 1992) in their remediations that critique some beliefs and practices as old, tired and superstitious (Chapters Four and Five). These beliefs and practices are antithetical to the aspiration and creation of a new Nepal. For example, the street drama described in Chapter Five frames the belief of having children within two years of marriage as superstitious and detrimental by crafting a series of events that occur as a result of this expectation that lead to HIV infection. This street drama allowed the listeners' club members to position themselves as developed because they could demonstrate a social consciousness based on development messaging. The process of remediation allowed the local radio program producers and listeners' club members to position themselves within landscapes of power created by development.

The stories of a number of my research participants demonstrate that practicing a youth subjectivity is a means for social differentiation and economic mobility. In Chapter Six I recounted how Dudumaya, Prithibi and Ananta gained paid employment as a result of their activities as listeners' club members. These listeners' clubs are, as Prithibi once explained, a place where young people who want to "do something" can gather and act (Prithibi, personal interview, Banaspati, 9th February, 2009). 'Doing something' is related to the role that young people are perceived to play in the Nepali nation building project and refers to activities that promote development and social change. Engagement in these activities requires a consciousness of development, which is linked to new senses of self implicit in development interventions that act on individuals (Fujikura 2001; Karp 2002). Listeners' clubs are sites that foster new senses of self because they present opportunities for remediation—a form of production that draws on development discourse and is constitutive of identity formation (cf Gillespie 1995; Liechty 2003; Novak 2010). Remediation is a means of self-realisation—a desire to lead 'a life of your own' (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002) that is an essential component of modernity:

> Modernity embraces the notion of self-realisation, the belief that a world increasingly subject to rational control creates the conditions in which people can shape their own lives through the formation and exercise of self-consciousness, creativity and agency.

> (Prout 2000:307)

This is a strong theme that is present as part of the youth subjectivity and is also evident in life skills that are promoted in the SSMK radio program. Kunreuther (2010) argues that life skills are central to the creation of neoliberal subjects that are predisposed to participation in market economies. Thus engaging people as remediators can be seen as a means of grooming future employees, perhaps not just for EAN, but for the development industry more generally. While this appears as an exercise of 'soft power public diplomacy' (Skuse 2012) that acts on people's subjectivities, it is important to note that listeners' club members especially, actively engaged in this relationship for their own purposes based on local experiences and in order to orient and position themselves within changing social terrain. Social change as a result of globalisation is inevitable, but people are not hapless victims in this process—they are agents. In the contemporary developmentalist Nepali State that promotes neoliberal subjects the capacity for agency creates possibilities for people to strive to define their own futures, while placing the responsibility for success or failure in this endeavour on the individual. However, creating one's own future—exercising agency—is confined and directed by structures of dominance that reproduce entrenched privilege, meaning that agency is never free, but limited by the social, cultural, political and economic context in which the actor is inevitably entrenched.

Appendix 1: Communication for social change model[117]

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[117] Figueroa, ME, Kincaid, LD, Rani, M & Lewis, G 2002, p.7. Communication for Social Change: An Integrated Model for Measuring the Process and Its Outcomes, Rockefeller Foundation, New York.

Appendix 2: FM Broadcast Signal Radio Coverage[118]

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[118] http://www.nepalradio.org/nepalradio/Signal-Propagation-Maps.html

Appendix 3: SSMK Letter Analysis Categories and Sub-categories[119]

1. Health

    a) Disabled people

    b) General health problems

    c) Information on HIV/AIDS

    d) Mental health problems/psychological problems

    e) People with HIV/AIDS

2. Love

    a) General love problems

    b) Handling rejection/how to forget someone you love

    c) How to propose/what if rejected

    d) How to say no when someone proposes

    e) Letters not answered

    f) Problems between lovers

    g) Whom to chose

3. Marriage

    a) Extramarital affairs

    b) Family problems

    c) Marriage decision

    d) Physical appearance

    e) Pregnancy (after marriage)

    f) Problems between husband and wife

4. Miscellaneous

    a) Habits

    b) Low economic condition

    c) Miscellaneous

    d) Superstition

5. Personal

    a) Career/study

    b) Contraceptives

    c) Dealing with peers

    d) Disabled people

    e) Drugs/substance abuse

    f) Low self esteem

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[119] These are the letter categories that the SSMK production team uses to classify and organise the letters and e-mails that they receive from listeners.

g) Physical appearance

h) Vocational training

6. Program

a) About booklets

b) About the program

c) Response to the booklets

7. Sex

a) Information on sex

b) Legal issues

c) Masturbation/nightfall

d) Menstruation

e) Pregnancy (before marriage)

f) Safe sex

g) Same sex issues

h) Sexual harassment

i) STD

j) Rape cases (this sub-category is included in table with letter count, but not in list of subcategories)

8. Social

a) Conflict issues

b) Family problems

c) Legal issues

d) Miscellaneous

e) Social problems

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