

## Journal Review

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*Dhaulagiri Journal of Sociology and Anthropology* Vol. IV. Nepal: Department of Sociology/Anthropology Dhawalagiri Multiple Campus, Baglung. (PP 270), Price: NRs: 300

Dhaulagiri Journal of Sociology and Anthropology has been annually published since 2005. Since its first publication, it has opened a space for researchers living outside the Kathmandu Valley to publish their empirical and academic endeavors. Like the previous volumes, volume IV has incorporated contemporary sociological and anthropological issues in general. It contains 16 articles including a review article. Broadly, these articles can be grouped under five cross-cutting thematic sections, viz Culture, Civilization and Ethnicity; Medical Anthropology and Sociology; Change and Development; Gender Relations and Climate Change. This volume has succeeded to include the articles of both renowned and beginners of social scientists from Nepal and elsewhere. Of the total articles nearly one third are contributed by foreign scholars. Besides that from Nepal, this volume has incorporated three articles from India, one each from China and Myanmar.

### A. Culture, Civilization and Ethnicity

Gunnar Haaland, in his article entitled "Reflection on Contrasting Views on Themes in Chinese Civilization", discusses the Chinese history from cultural perspective. In the present, in Nepal and in many countries, there are public discussions on Chinese economy like: how does capitalism and communist ideology co-exist together there? What are the factors of economic growth? How does capitalist mode of production sustain communist ideology? Holland's article has analyzed these questions from the lens of culture. Many Nepalese have inadequate knowledge of Chinese culture and civilization despite of the close geographical proximity. This article fills the gap in understanding the China's past history

and present context from symbolic and interpretive anthropological perspective. Contribution made by the author is based on his experience and comprehensive study of Chinese history. Of the total civilizations (Inca, Maya, Aztec, Egypt, Mesopotamia and Indus) of the world, Chinese civilization has survived over the years due to its philosophical base. He has meticulously analyzed historical process of China in terms of philosophy, culture and political economy.

The article discusses two opposite view points: Confucian School and Legalist School. These contradictory schools have shaped and reshaped the present political and economic situation of China. Unlike Confucian school of thought, Legalist tradition emphasizes the present and discounts the past. Chinese society is ordered society (even in periods of fragmentation) that is based on Confucius moral teaching. The author states that there is a deep-rooted collective consciousness about the importance of Chinese history for understanding the present situation and for driving guidance for action in this situation (p 3). He has described various processes of modernity in China. Guanxi (personal network of social relation) is Confucian based moral obligation. One's life chances in society are to a large extent related to the scale and the power of the Guanxi relation one can mobilize. He has analyzed how Guanxi transforms as an instrument of profit seeking in the present context (P 14).

The author has also sought how incompatible infrastructure, structure and superstructure co-exist in modern China. According to him, the infrastructure of society is largely based on a capitalist mode of production that is regulated by a government dominated by the Communist Party of China, and which to a large extent draws its legitimatizing support from an ideological superstructure inspired by Confucian harmony thinking rather than Marxist class struggle thinking (P 11).

Should Chinese history be seen as a history of glory or as a history of humiliation? According to the author, they feel pride in their civilization and its important accomplishments. On the other hand, they feel inferiority in the face of the technological superiority of

the west today. Both the pride and humiliations have implications for the Chinese perception of foreigners.

Finally and importantly, author has concluded that Marxist theory, Confucian morality and material consumerism are the factors for modernization in China. Maintenance of the basic content of Chinese civilization thus required both cultivation of Confucian virtues and organization of the strong military forces. His assumption in this article is that human construction of society is not reducible to processes taking place in an assumed determining economic infrastructure. Infrastructural processes set limits to what society human can construct, but what society is constructed within these limits is shaped by processes on several independent levels from political mobilization of power to symbolic construction of legitimacy of the social institutions regulating access of valued goals (P 17).

Man Bahadur Khatri, in his article entitled "Rites of Passage: Flow of Gifts" focuses on relation between gift giving and Sanskar rite of transition. Rites and gifts giving are traditional domain of anthropological study (See Marcel Mauss, Malinowski). He talks about each transition of life cycle (Birth, Pasni, Putputai, Chhewar, Marriage, Chaurasi and Death) among the Argali Magar and others and links them with gift. According to the author, "gift giving, receiving and returning all are matter of morality, honor and prestige. Rituals and women are medium of exchange of gifts. Gift giving is not only limited to the living human beings but also to their ancestors. Relation with ancestors is maintained through rituals. Gifts are exchanged among the relatives. The author has used popular sayings, people voices and narratives in the text. Importance of gift in various stages of rituals is clearly discussed. He also tries to link between gift exchange and kinship rank. He has described various transitional rites and exchanges of gifts practiced by Argali Magars. He has also linked how each rite is related to gift with suitable examples. Roles and obligations of different members in rites ceremonies are nicely presented. He has described various types of gifts, their importance in Argali Magar. Gift of food, according to author is the best one. Giving food as a gift is placed in higher rank among the Argali Magar (p 115).

Rites of passage of Argali Magars are close to Hindu culture though the author says that they do not regard themselves as Hindus. The author has left some issues unanswered like why they have adopted these general principles of stages of life in ritual context like Hindu (p 122). There is more discussion on marriage than other rituals. After all, this article has given some insights about the way to study rituals in Nepalese context.

Gunnar Haaland's next article entitled "Cultural Landscape & Migration" discusses on Nepali Diaspora in Myanmar. Applying symbolic model, he talks about ethno-scape (Landscape). Landscape, according to author, is a product of human mind which human develops in their interaction with their environment.

The author interprets how landscape is constructed among Nepalese migrants to South-East Asia. According to him, ethno-scapes do not exist by themselves from primordial past; they require ongoing expression and confirmation. Past events and features of the natural environment in a remembered homeland may be sources for spinning of compelling webs of significance extolling the values of belonging to a group that shares the past and nature. Spinning takes the form of myths, songs, stories and other conventional forms of symbolic representation.

Migration in itself is not a sufficient condition for the creation of the Diaspora consciousness; rather it has to be expressed in objectified symbolic forms and should be subjectively internalized.

Prakash Prasad Sapkota in his article entitled, "The Ritual of *Jhakro* in Magars Community" discusses human plant relation, ritual and symbolic role of *Jhakro*. *Jhakro* is a plant species. Use of *Jhakro* in death ritual, *Kulpuja* ceremony, according to local believe, *Jhakro* purify of polluted situation of life and it also links dead body's soul to their ancestor's. Not only *Jhakro* is a wild plant species but it is also link between living human being and their ancestor. Author also talks about the medicinal use of *Jhakro* without necessary elaboration. Article covers new area but lacks micro level analysis or thick description. There is hardly any information about how Magars protect this plant species.

Pradeep Acharya in his article entitled, "Ethnicity and Prejudice: A Historical Shift" discusses ethnicity and prejudice in wider global context. The author has overviewed the historical shift on the notion and paradigms of the concept of ethnicity and prejudice in theoretical orientations and practices around the world and in particular context of Nepal. This article is based on the secondary information. Author has critically analyzed global and local processes of ethnicity incorporating the idea of Barth, Duckitt, Fisher. The author has divided theoretical orientations to prejudice in Nepal into three major epochs. According to the author, first epoch involves the Gorkhali and Rana regimes for the most part and the immediate period of the advent of democracy in Nepal. During that period plural and hierarchical thesis was dominant in Nepalese society. The second epoch involves the Panchayat period with a homogeneous and non-hierarchical perspective which was antithesis of the former one. Thirdly, the period after the restoration of democracy is somehow of both previous ideas (P 93). He concludes that ethnicity is basically a process of categorization of people into different types in terms of various makers. This process of categorization and consequent categories out there creates social boundaries among people which are manifested in particular behavioral pattern in everyday life (P. 95). Finally, author has successfully traced out the ethnicity and prejudice in Nepal that is very fruitful to understand ethnic movement in Nepal.

### **B. Medical Anthropology and Sociology**

Madhusudan Subedi in his article entitled, "Uterine Prolapse, Mobile Camp Approach and Body Politics in Nepal" discusses on socio-cultural perceptions and practices of uterine prolapse (UP). In the beginning of the article, author has shown the situation of UP in Nepal as well as in the world context. Data presented in the article are based on fieldwork in Jumla, Bajura and Achham districts during the time of health camps. Collected data from mobile health camps and additional data were generated from interaction with women suffering from UP. Rich information (demographic) and some illustrations of social practices of Uterus Prolapse are nicely presented in the text. Author has clearly described social stigma related to UP. In Nepalese society, open

discussion on some diseases and reproductive health do not occur within family and society. Author says that "Uterine prolapse is a complex condition that is often kept in secret because of the shame of the condition affecting a sensitive part of the women's body" (p 37). Such practice is also found among the women working in health related services. In this regard author has presented a case of FCHV from Achham district where a FCHV did not give permission to examine her uterus to doctor during the health camp (P 37). Author indicates that diseases i.e. UP are not only bio-medical issues but also embedded with socio-cultural practices. He has also mentioned that intervention through mobile health camps have opened up the women to discuss reproductive health related problems in public places. Author has properly discussed processes of health camp and diagnostic mechanism from anthropological perspective. However, author has discussed more on technical aspects of UP, and less on cultural and structural issues of UP. Lack of socio-cultural and economic background of the respondents to whom author interacted during his field visit is seen. Linkages between UP and socio-economic variable (caste, ethnicity and class) are not analyzed in the article. Finally, by and large, author has succeeded to demonstrate how bio-medical issues are related to socio-cultural process.

Raj Kumar Subedi in his article entitled, "Prevalence of Insomnia and factors Associated with it among the elderly people of Sagangdanda VDC in Panchthar District", discusses the issues of insomnia among the elderly people. Article based on 142 sample of elderly people. He has presented social, cultural and economic characteristics (age, sex, family type, caste/ethnicity religion, marital status and occupation) of the respondents. However, there is no discussion on how social variables are associated with insomnia. He has adequately presented linkage of elderly people eating habits who suffered from insomnia (P 140). His finding suggests that insomnia was significantly higher among the elderly who have the habit of eating too close to bedtime than those who didn't have.

Amanpreet Singh in his article entitled, "AIDS Awareness and Educating Adolescents about Contraception Techniques: A Sociological Study of Parents and Teachers" discusses knowledge

and awareness on AIDS. Data presented in the article are based on empirical work of author conducted in Sangrur district of Punjab, India. The main objective of the article is to assess the knowledge of AIDS among parents and teachers, and to explore the level of agreement among parents and teachers on the issue of educating adolescents about contraception techniques. He shows that mothers have less knowledge compared to their fathers regarding AIDS. Author states that teachers have more comprehensive knowledge on AIDS compared to parents. His finding demonstrates that majority of the parents disagreed to give education about contraception using techniques to adolescents. He gave detail socio-economic description of parents and teachers (age, sex, education, income, marital status). However, relation between socio-economic variables and level of AIDS awareness and contraception use techniques are not seen in the article. His finding shows that parents and teachers were reluctant to provide contraception information to their adolescent children but does not explain why.

### C. Change and Development

Laya P. Upreti, in his article entitled, "Problems of Participation and Issues of Sustainability in the Public Irrigation System in the Context of Management Transfer: Some Sociological Observation from Eastern Tarai; Nepal" discusses on the problem that occurred while transferring the agency managed irrigation into the community. Author has stressed that there is a problem of institutional development, participation and sustainability in agency managed irrigation system. Author has incorporated experiences of irrigation management transformation from Turkey, Mexico, and Philippine agency managed irrigation. He found low level of performance of Water Users' Association (WUA) in agency managed irrigation canal due to imposed participation, inadequate institutional strengthening support, flaw of the organizational structure. Author has given more importance of people participation for the irrigation management; however, author's conclusion is not unproblematically authentic. Earlier studies (Cooke and Kothari, 2001, and Mosse, 2001, 2005) show many development projects including irrigation canal has failed even adapting participatory approach. Author always talked about

farmers or landholder but little discuss on peasants of the command area. Finally, author has successfully demonstrated the shortcomings of agency managed irrigation from sociological perspective.

Binod Pokharel in his article entitled, "Changing Relations between High Castes and Tamang in Melamchi Valley" discusses processes of change in education, agriculture, local and foreign wage labor, money lending and girl trafficking. Data presented in the article are based on author's PhD fieldwork carried out in 2006/07. Author says that there was more dependency of Tamangs over high caste people on money lending, crop borrowing and wage labor in the past. With development intervention in the Melamchi Valley, Tamangs got some opportunities outside the high caste groups. According to him, relation between Tamangs and high caste have defined or redefined over the decades due to historical process of change, various development interventions in the Melamchi Valley. Author views that market creates different opportunities and constraints for differently positioned social groups, as well as shaping the parameters of labor markets and commodity circulation. According to author, various processes of socio-economic and political changes led to local people to seek their position and identity in the changing context. This article shows some trends of social transformation in rural village of Nepal. However, there is lacking on comprehensive micro level information of study area.

Balaram Acharya in his article entitled, "Urban Poverty: A Sociological Study of Shankhamul Squatter" discusses issues embedded to urban squatters. He presents the social structure, social relation among squatters and outsiders, availability of services, etc of squatter. According to him, squatters are make it rural origin people coming to Kathmandu for survival. For him, urban squatter is the result of poverty. However, author has not said anything about how politicians protect squatters for their vote bank. Author attempted to understand social, economic and political background of the squatters (P 182), however, there is a lack of analysis of economic and political issues embedded with squatter. Dimensions of poverty are hardly analyzed. Issues of squatter have got public and government attention in recent years

in Kathmandu. In Nepalese case, squatter is more political problems than poverty related issues.

Umesh Prasad Acharya in his article entitled, "Livelihood Strategy of Bote Community: A Case Study of Bote Community of Patihani VDC of Chitwan" discusses changes occurred in livelihood pattern among the Bote people. Article does not tell anything about the earlier livelihood strategies of Bote people. Article is also silent on how Bote community has seen transformation in terms of livelihood over the years. Some field data are presented in the article but it lacks enough analysis. In some places cited literatures are not found in reference section.

#### **D. Gender Relation**

Rajendran and R. P. Raya in their article entitled, "Wives, Husbands and Sharing of Household Works in Indian Village" discuss changing gender roles in Indian Villages. Study was conducted among 450 respondents in 26 villages in India (Tamil Nadu). This article has shown the relation between sharing of household work and socio-economic variables (family size, age, education). Major finding is that men in age group of 41 to 50 years significantly share household works. Landholding size and level of education are positively co-related to sharing of household works. This article concludes that age of women and family size does not influence the husbands in sharing their household work. But there is a relationship between the age of the husbands and sharing of household work, men in the age of 41 to 50 years significantly share household works. Article concludes that the educational level of the husbands strongly influences the sharing of household works.

Amita Pradhan and Neera Shrestha in their article entitled, "Working Hour and its Impact on Backache from Gender Perspective" show the relation between work burden and backache among women and men. 32 households with 64 respondents having 15- 49 age groups were examined. Their finding suggests that longer working hour is associated with backache. It also shows that women get engaged in longer working hour than men. Article

concludes that the working hour per day for female and prevalence of backache among them is significantly higher than that of male.

#### **E. Climate Change**

Jailab K. Rai in his article entitled, "Global and Local Discourses on Climate Change: A Perspective from the Concept of Embeddedness" discusses on the overview of contexts and concerns of international communities for combating global climate change and its discursive influence in national policy discourse. Author has reviewed and analyzed international and national documents related to the efforts and actions against climate change issues. He has also conducted a brief field visit in Mustang district along with constituent assembly members to understand the effect of climate change in local level. Author has nicely presented various protocols made by international convention in the field of climate change (PP-150-151). He presents how people perceive climate change in the study area. Author has argued that the human body's senses are the important avenues to know the local weather manifestation in the form of rain, hail, snow, wind and temperature (P 166). Anthropology of climate change is new area of inquiry. It requires anthropological approach and methods to understand climate change in local level. However, issues presented in this article seem more journalistic and stereotyped in nature rather than anthropologically based. Author sparsely focuses on types of socio-cultural behavior which are produced or reproduced among the people due to climatic change in Mustang district. However, what author has discussed in article will be useful for anthropology of climate change in general.

Finally, the Dahulagiri journal is successful to present various discourses of sociology and anthropology in Nepal including south Asia and China. However, lack of uniformity on citation, and typological errors are seen in many places. In spite of its limitation, it has provided forum for the scholars for publishing their scientific paper living in the countryside of Nepal. Finally, I would like to thank Department of Sociology/Anthropology, Dhawalagiri Multiple Campus for giving continuity of its publication with their financial and other limitations.