

BOOK REVIEWS

Biswo Kallyan Parajuli(ed). *Sociology and Anthropology in Nepal*, Department of Sociology & Anthropology, Prithwi Naryan Campus, 2008, 169pp, Rs 250(pb)

This scholarly presented proceeding of national workshop in the form of book entitled “Sociology and Anthropology in Nepal” presents the articles in worthwhile effort to any person who is interested to know about Sociology and Anthropology in Nepal. The articles are multidimensional that reflect the real image of the condition of both Sociology and Anthropology in Nepal. The proceeding includes the articles which deal common and individual issues on both disciplines. Different scholars presented comprehensive and important articles in the proceeding so that the learners come to know about the real condition of these two disciplines in Nepal. Different articles reflect the condition of these disciplines in Nepal in past, present and future as well.

There are varieties of reasons which command a serious look at the papers presented in the proceeding. The most compelling being the freshness it offers through its innovative exploration of important articles that are informative for social and cultural issues of Nepal as a whole. Ten articles are the highlights of the proceeding and it is assuring that they are close to data revealed by the latest report. The book starts with the overall summary of the events of the workshop with formal report about inauguration session and different technical sessions and ends with the list of participants, resource persons and guests on the workshop. However, the book lays emphasis on applying condition of Sociology and Anthropology.

A very scholarly written paper by Prof. Chaitanya Mishra entitled “Sociology and Anthropology at Tribhuvan University” points out the existing situation of teaching Sociology and Anthropology. He presents 14 suggestions for the improvement of teaching, learning and researching Sociology/ Anthropology in Tribhuvan University. Nepal is considered as the fertile land of sociological and anthropological research. Dr. Dilli Ram Dahal in his article “Research in Anthropology/Sociology in Nepal: Yesterday and Today” presents the researches which have been conducted by national

and foreign scholars in various issues from different perspectives. He has also showed the changing trend of sociological and anthropological research in Nepal. Dr. Dahal concludes that a research in the field of Anthropology is a challenging task.

Dr. Ram Bahadur Chhetri in his article “Anthropological Theories and Ethnography in Nepal” focuses on two theoretical orientations in anthropology that purpose different ways to understand the diversity in human societies and culture. He focuses on “Cultural ecology” and “Culture and Symbolism” as the major theories of Anthropology. He further emphasizes that development in media, communications and information technology have tremendous implications for anthropology and its theory, methods and practices.

Dr. Laya Prasad Uprety in his article “ Anthropology in Nepal: Past, Present and Future” points out that there is a need to split the department for further specialization and for the efficient academic management. He stresses over the possibility of MPhil program in both discipline with the design of the curriculum. He further suggests that there is a need to revise the current curriculum with additional courses for specialization. He also stresses over the enrollment of maximum number of students as the barrier for the production of good and skillful manpower.

Dr. Krishna Bahadur Bhattachan in his piece of writing “A Brief Note on Past, Present and future of Nepal” highlights the contribution of various scholars for the development of Sociology in Nepal. The contribution of first Nepalese sociologist Prof. Dr. G.S. Nepali and Prof. Dr. Dor Bahadur Bista is much important for the happening of present situation of these two disciplines. Other sociologists and anthropologists have also contributed a lot for the development of these disciplines and for the development of the country as servers in various government organizations and non government organizations. Mr. Bhattachan also suggests for the separation of Department of Sociology.

Dr. Tulsi Ram Pandey focuses on the field of Sociology through his article “The field of Sociological Study: Theories, Metatheories and The Status of Their Use in the Case of Studies in Nepal”. He emphasizes that sociology

is scientific discipline because sociological research is based on empirical data. The social relation can be understood from different theoretical perspectives. Particular society can be studied from different theories and perspectives. Peter Moran in his article emphasizes over the essentiality of fieldwork for anthropological research. He stresses over three characteristics that are essential for good fieldworker. For him, a good fieldworker should be qualified, experienced, and could able to observe any social event carefully which may or may not wait for the fieldworkers. People of particular community or society respond a particular incident in a certain way within a specific time and situation. He further stressed over the importance of sympathetic observation of the event and the skill of writing that is required for researcher.

Dr. B.K. Parajuli, Sharad Kumar Paudel and Amrit Kumar Bhandari through their article “Expansion of Sociology and Anthropology as an Academic Discipline in Pokhara” highlight the trends in the development of the sociology and anthropology academically. They have pointed out that Sociology and Anthropology are being popular academically in Pokhara. They further stress over the activities which have been conducted by the department after it was established. However, the curriculum is not sufficient. Prakash Upadhyay and Surya Bhakta Sigdel through their writing “Sociology/Anthropology Curriculum in Tribhuvan University” conclude that there is lack of original texts, materials, articles and papers. They have argued that the curriculum should recommend text based notes, materials, seminar, papers etc. to produce skill and efficient manpower.

Man Bahadur Khattri has pointed out certain problems for teaching Sociology and Anthropology in various levels through his article “Teaching Current Issues: Past, Present and Future of Anthropology in Nepal”. He focuses over nine points that help to solve the problems related with teaching Sociology and Anthropology. However, he emphasizes on the network of collaboration between institutions, teachers, departments etc.

Sukra Raj Adhikari in his paper “Scriptural Interpretation of Hindu Rituals” emphasizes over 15 life rituals among Hindus from gender perspectives. Mr. Adhikari also points out the gender discrimination while practicing these

rituals. Some rituals are preferred for the males only. Some practices are still the same since from their evolution and some are changing. In general the positive fact of this article is the presentation of views based on the notion of orientalism.

The book is important to anyone who wants to know about the situation of Sociology and Anthropology in Nepal. It is more useful and helpful for MA students. It provides suggestions to improve and spread these disciplines everywhere. One learns the ways to conduct good sociological and anthropological research. The future of Sociology/Anthropology seems bright than other disciplines academically as well as in other sectors. It is realized that there is the need of sociologists and anthropologists in various sectors because of their knowledge about the society and culture in depth. Government and Non government organizations are looking sociologists and anthropologists for the success of their program. The book as such will certainly help in enhancing the academic horizon of Sociologists and Anthropologists. Summing up the logical arrangement of different articles and comparatively low price of high quality the book has made a unique contribution to the enhancement of Sociology and Anthropology in Nepal.

Sarad Kumar Poudel



Rafael J. Engel and Russell K. Schutt : *The Practice of Research in Social Work* Sage Publication, Thousand Oaks, California USA (2005)
Price NRs 3508 (Soft Cover) PP 554, XXI

The book entitled the *Practice of Research in Social Work* is new of its own kind. It offers new things altogether in a very pragmatic way with thirteen chapters in a sequence. The basic objective of this book is to introduce the reader's to the study of research work and to the contributions research to make to our understanding of what is effective social work practices.

The first unit of this book deals with science related to the reasoning about social world, social scientific approach, social work, qualitative and

quantitative methods, social research and practice etc. The main objectives of this unit is to introduce social work research methods by describing what social scientists have learned about the social world as well as how they learned it. The theme of research and social work ties the chapters together. The important sections of chapter one viz, reasoning about the social world, scientific approach, methods seems up to date and field oriented. The most positive point of this unit is social work research in practice which deals with research problems in more practical way. Especially the problems related to society have been dealt in a very practical way.

The second unit entitled process and problems of social work research is related to social work research questions viz, identifying social work research questions, refining social work research questions, evaluating social work research questions. This chapter makes an attempt to build the foundation for our study of social work research by reviewing the types of problems that an average researcher study, the role of theory, the major steps in the research process and other sources of information that may be useful in social work research. This chapter highlights the philosophies guiding social work research along with scientific guidelines for social work research.

In this chapter the authors have very clearly stressed the importance of considering scientific standards in social research. The positive part of this chapter is that the authors have used several studies of domestic violence to illustrate the research process and its importance. This chapter is full of discussion questions. Another positive aspect of this chapter is the format of developing a research proposal. However, there exists lacuna (vacuum) in the presentation of the research proposal format. The research proposal format seems very concise expressed in few steps owing to which many of the learner students may find it difficult to comprehend the style of developing a research proposal.

Conceptualization and measurement is the title of chapter three. This chapter discusses different concepts, conceptualization in practice variables etc. This chapter highlights the levels of measurement, measurement error in a

very pragmatic way. The positive aspect of this unit is the introduction of the concept of validity with the three aspects of validity and the specific techniques used to maximize the validity of measures, generalizations and causal assertions. Another positive aspect is about the measurement of depression, sampling of homeless people, causes of violence etc. This makes it feasible to understand research in a very practical and easy way. Sample planning, sampling methods, types, sampling error are the features of the chapter four. The most positive part is related to choosing an instrument for research, evaluating and practice. However the practice exercise is very complex and needs revision.

Chapter five entitled causation and research design is complex with discussion of homothetic causal explanation. Experimental design, errors in causal reasoning are presented, however in a very systematic way. This chapter clarifies that researcher should be able to evaluate the validity of studies findings. It also makes us aware that as a researcher we should be able to plan an approach that will lead to valid findings. The positive portion of this unit is an effective introduction of the three dimensions of validity viz, measurement validity, generalizability and causal validity in a very systematic and organized way.

The sixth chapter deals with group experimental designs with special focus on true experiments, common group designs etc. In fact this section seems vary vital. It introduces the four most important methods of data collection, likewise group designs, including experimental designs/studies, quasi-experimental studies and non experimental studies are the subjects of this chapter. These designs have been used for practice evaluation and policy evaluation. In spite of obvious strengths, however, true experiments are used in frequently to study many of the research problems that interest social work researchers. The positive aspect is that there are many components and factors to consider in choosing a group design but regardless of the design used, it is vital to understand the limits of the conclusion that can be made both in terms of the internal validity of the design and the generalizability of the findings.

The seventh chapter entitled single subject design is associated with the foundations of single subject design, targets of intervention, generalizability. This chapter also introduces ethical issues in single subject design. It is to be noted that single subject designs are useful for doing research, evaluating practice and monitoring client progress. Single subject designs may be useful for change and how change occurs with particular clients.

Survey research is the theme of eighth chapter. This chapter starts with survey research in social work, constructing questions, designing questions, organizing surveys etc. The most vital part of this chapter is Catherine Ross Survey model which produce a unique comprehensive data set on work. This enables readers to know much more about how social structure influence health, social stratification that might be done to mitigate the negative health consequences of ageing and low income side of how well social theories of health need to be improved.

Qualitative methods; observing, participating, listening from chapter nine are related mainly with the fundamentals of qualitative methods. Qualitative research allows the careful investigator to obtain in depth research and more intimate view of the social world than more structured methods. The most positive part of this chapter is that it enables us to understand why so many qualitative studies have become classics in the Sociological literature. The emphasis is qualitative research which helps to stimulate and inform other research approaches too.

Evaluating research from chapter ten raises the hope for evaluation research with an argument that society could benefit from the development of programmes that work well, accomplish their goals and serve people who genuinely need them, however there are many obstacles because social programmes in the people who use them are complex. Likewise, evaluation research designs can easily miss important outcomes or aspects of the programme success. There exist no doubt that evaluation research can provide social scientists who rare opportunities to study complex social processes with real consequences and to contribute to the public good.

Quantitative data analysis introducing statistics, displaying univariate distributions measures of variations are the subtopics of chapter eleven. It

begins with an overview of the statistics that are needed to analyze most social work research data. This is not a substitute for an entire course in statistics but it provides reader a good idea of how to use statistics in reporting the results of studies that we conduct and end interpretation the results of research reported by others. This chapter focuses on the different techniques used to analyze findings from particular statistics and it also facilitates the process of analyzing secondary data. It also demonstrates how a researcher can describe social phenomenon, identity relationships among them, explore the reasons, for, these relationships and test hypothesis.

Chapter twelve introduces the variety of approaches to qualitative data analysis; which makes it different to provide a constituent set of criteria for interpretation their quality. Reviewing the chapter is a fitting summary for our understanding of the qualitative analysis process. However, the criteria for judging quantitative content analysis of the text are the same standards of validity applied to data collected with other quantitative methods. Reporting Research' of chapter thirteen focuses on the contents of research reports on the process of developing them. It gives especial attention to how to formulate research proposals and how to critique or to evaluate reports of research that we encounter for good critical skills that are essential when evaluating research reports. Much research lacks one or more of the three legs of validity, measurement validity, causal validity or generalizability and contributes more confusion than understanding about the social world.

Reviewing the entire book, in synopsis, we can say that the book "The practice of Research in social work" is an excellent book covering in all the dimensions of research works, plasticizing research in social work. This book is totally appropriate for students of graduate and post graduate levels. The whole book has been designed in a very efficient way with pictures to make students comprehend the topics in a proper way. However from Nepalese perspective, the book is expensive and may be out of the reach of many of the students.

Surya Bhakta Sigdel



Hemant R. Ojha, Netra P. Timsina, Ram B. Chhetri, Krishna P. Paudel (ed.). *Knowledge System and Natural Resources, Management, Policy and Institutions in Nepal*, Cambridge University Press India Pvt. Ltd., 2008, p.p. 173, ISBN: 978-81-7596-563-8, Price not quoted.

This scholarly written book is a compilation of six case studies on forest, agriculture and water resource governance, this book has clearly analyzed the status of knowledge system interface among various groups of people and identified the challenges of participatory and deliberative governance of the natural resources. The book has tried to explain the importance of indigenous knowledge and skills in effective management of natural resources. Although Nepal is rich in natural resources, it has not been able to make appropriate use of these resources for its development. In such a situation, this book casts light on how these natural resources can be utilized making appropriate policies and implementing effective management skills. So, this book may prove to be helpful for the development of the country like Nepal. The book may be helpful to the students and experts of this field.

There are eight chapters in the book. The first chapter “Knowledge System and Deliberative Interface in natural Resource Governance: An Overview” by Hemant R. Ojha, Netra P. Timsina, Ram B. Chhetri, Krishna P. Paudel describes the ways in which natural resources management is influenced by mutual interactions of knowledge systems among the diverse group of people viz. politicians, civil societies, techno-bureaucratic agencies and development agencies.

The second chapter “Agricultural Technology Development in Nepal: Critical Assessment from Knowledge System perspective” by Netra P. Timsina and Hemant R. Ojha firstly gives an overview of NARC (Nepal Agricultural Research Council). Perspectives of scientists and farmers are clearly presented along with the problems faced by both of them in implementing new agricultural technologies. Similarly, effective strategies for the solution of such problems have been suggested.

The third chapter “Contested Knowledge and Reconciliation in Nepal’s Community Forestry: A Case of Forest Inventory Policy” by Krishna P

Paudel and Hemant R Ojha analyses how the knowledge system of local forest users and of forest officials contradict and how a way can be found for maintaining a deliberative interface. It seems as if this chapter attempts to create a interactive balance between local forest users and the government forest officials. Chapter four “From Grassroots to Policy Deliberation: The Case of Community Forest “User’s Federation in Nepal” by Netra P. Timsina and Hemant R. Ojha casts light on FECOFUN’S (Federation of Community Forestry Users, Nepal) establishment, its contribution to deliberative forest governance and the problems faced by it.

The fifth chapter “From Isolation to Interaction: Increasing Knowledge Interface in Chhattis Mauja Irrigation system in Nepal” by Laya Prasad Uprety describes the technical, organizational and institutional arrangements for irrigation system in “Chhattis Mauja”. According to this article, the people are using the knowledge that has been handed down by their ancestors and using their own wisdom for the smooth management of their local resources by becoming the “makers and managers” of resources.

According to the sixth chapter “Action Research Experience on Democratizing Knowledge in Community Forestry in Nepal” by Mani R. Banjade, Harisharan Luitel and Hari R. Neupane, for the better management of forest, issues of inequity, inequality, democratization of knowledge and power within stakeholders need to be addressed. Critical empowerment services to the members of poor and disadvantaged groups should be provided. Various ways for this have also been suggested in this chapter. The seventh chapter “Culturally Embedded Knowledge in Irrigation: People’s Ways of Thriving in a Himalayan Village” by Ram B. Chhetri clearly explains how the local community in “Lo Manthang” has managed to exist well in a harsh environment by using its indigenous and traditional knowledge for a suitable irrigation management.

The eighth chapter “Deliberative Knowledge Interface: Lessons and Policy Implementation” by Hemant R. Ojha, Krishna P. Paudel, Netra P Timsina and Ram B. Chhetri, analyses the six case studies presented in this book together at a place. The authors come with conclusion that the difference between “Indigenous” and “Scientific” knowledge may not exist as sharply

distinct as is usually believed. Traditional methods can be easier and more appropriate in some cases rather than the technical ones.

To sum up, this book has extracted conclusions based on practical experiences not on mere theoretical contemplation, which has made it more reliable. So far as the dark aspect of this book is concerned, the authors have used complex words even to describe general phenomena which may not be understood by all range of readers. In a nutshell, the book is highly beneficial to all including planners, policy makers and those who are interested or themselves involved in projects or organizations that aim for the proper utilization of the natural resources within the country. The skill with which these authors have integrated natural resources management skills in a practical way, the analytical scheme based on empiricism and Sociological and Anthropological elements embedded have made the book a unique contribution in the arena of natural resources management of Nepal.

Pushpa Raj Adhikari



Kailash Nath Pyakuryal, PhD, Bishnu Raj Upreti, PhD Sager Nath Sharma, PhD. (ed). *Nepal: Transition to Transformation*, Published by NCCR North South, June 2008. Page 234, ISBN: 978-9937-2-0602-0, Price not quoted.

The Human and Natural Resources Studies Center in collaboration with SWBS National Center of Competence has seriously stressed on certain issues prevailing in the Nepalese society. Their instant interests have given birth to “Nepal: Transition to Transformation” which can be a milestone for the new transition which Nepal is going to witness very soon after the formation of constituent assembly. The book includes nine chapters and one indexing. The book has addressed on various issues such as economic transition to transformation as well as the cultural, historical changes that Nepal has recently faced.

Mr.Suresh Raj Sharma has given his view on the changes that have taken place in Nepal after a long period of economic resin. Major political changes

in Nepal had given a positive move towards a liberal society as well as high economic prospect after the end of feudal dominated society. Prof. Kailash Nath Pyakuryal has introduced the first chapter describing political changes that occur for last few decades. Describing about the political changes in Nepal, Prof. Pyakuryal has given his view on inclusion and exclusion that is really needed to be addressed in the New Nepal. He has also raised some issues concerned with transformation and national integration Prof. Pyakuryal has also mentioned some negative impacts that could be prevailed in the society when the autonomous government gets into power and rules the country.

Dr. Upreti in the second chapter focuses on the April movement of 2006 in which people participated for mainly two purposes to end the autocratic rule of the king and to settle down the armed conflict by bringing the CPN-Maoist into democratic system. The non-violent movement headed by Gandhi (India), King (USA) looks for the moral defeat of the existing force. Dr. Upreti deals with people's movement of April 2006, which couldn't be taken only as a movement to changing political system. It was the people's consciousness, which was ignored earlier. This delivered the suffocation of people from the autocratic rule and armed conflict within the short period of time i.e. 6 months. In chapter three, Dr. Sharma mentions that Official Development Assistance (ODA) is the form of foreign aid usually from foreign government or international institution to a government or non governmental organization in a recipient country, especially for the further development. This paper attempts to establish a relationship between ODA and FDI (Foreign Direct Investment) and policies in the developing countries and then propose a few strategies for their development.

In chapter four, Renu Rajbhandari in her article on "Transformative Politic and Women in Nepal" mentions that after the mass movement of 2005/2006, Nepal has faced about the transitional politics after seizing power from the king. In her article she mentioned that many people including women lost their life during people's movement. As a result, Nepal get back its sovereignty. The alliance of 7 parties and Maoist formed interim government. However the condition of women was worst. In this article she focuses on the necessity of inclusion of women in all of the process of transition. She argues that women have ability and capacity to become the

partner of development. Violation of women rights on the basis of cast, sex, religions is the critical issues for the development process. Women participations have to face lots of challenges relating to transformation in Nepal.

In their article on ‘Conflict- Induced Displacement: an Emerging Phenomenon of Internal Migration in Nepal,’ Ghimera and Upreti in chapter five mention that Displacement and status, trend and dilemma faced by internally displaced people due to the political conflict has uprooted them from their home and they are facing traumatic experiences of phenomenal migration, which is a changing reality of rational acts of an individual well known to the generation. That means people are determined in a quest to broaden their horizontal prospective for their positive changes with regards to their social norms and values in a developed insight to have a stable and promoted life

In chapter six Mr. Jagat Basnet has widely described about the traditional land distribution system in Nepal, which is playing a vital role in the economic and social system in Nepal. The land reform and its importance have been noticed in Nepal for along time. And promise has been made it and is still being done by political parties to bring the landless people in to the mainstream. A lot of problems are unaddressed. In the past an organizational set up had developed. A kind of integration has been developed in between the landlords and landless people. The land lord people are forcing the land less people to work as Kamaiya, Laguwa and Huruwa Charuwa etc. Many stakeholders are directly involved in land reform system on which the derived people, civil society, organization, political parties and government play the tangible role for reconstructing the whole system. Mr Basnet has also listed some suggestions that should be taken in to the consideration if a country really wants to move peacefully towards land reform. Finally, the paper highlights some general option for land reform in Nepal.

Purna B. Nepali describes about the issues of Dalits in terms of their access to land resource and their livelihood insecurity in chapter seven. In Nepal, land is the most influencing factor for the socio-economic status of people. In this chapter he focused Dalit are treated as haliya, charuwas, gothalas

etc. The Dalit works as the skilled labor like the Kami, Damai etc. The inborn profession is used as their livelihood for six month a year and the profession as farm labor for the next half of the year. The discrimination either in the social, political or economical field among the dalits become the bridging ground for the revolution. From the revolution they raise the voice against the discrimination and about their fundamental rights. Though the constitution of Nepal has given the fundamental rights to all the citizens, it is not practice yet. The vertical structure of the society has been one of the most important factors for the backwardness of the Dalits. It is now tending to be changed due to some facilities like education and reservation too which will help in the upliftment of the life standard of the citizens.

In chapter eight Prof. Pyakuryal has described the concept of pluralism, diversity and national integration. Pluralism means in general a condition in which numerous distinct ethnic, racial, religious or cultural groups exist in a society. Diversity implies a societal condition comprising divers' ethnic, racial and religious groups with their distinctive heritage, values, language and life-style and Integration refers to the progressive process of identifying commonalities with respect to common goods but maintaining and promoting the distinct ethnic identity of each group through social integration with in the framework of current international political boundaries. Prof. Pyakuryal in his article describes the concept of ethnicity and inter-ethnic group relation and theories on inter group relations, such as assimilation, amalgamation on basis of cast, ethnicity, religion, language and ecological regions make Nepal a fertile ground for social conflict. Prof. Pyakuryal says that attaining national integration is respecting and recognizing pluralism and diversity and empowering various group of people on equal footings. This needs a thorough reform in the existing legislation.

Finally Dr. Uprety deals with the title of 'Moving Ahead; from transition to transformation'. In this chapter nine, Dr Uprety briefly discusses about the important element of 'management or transition 'and components of 'transformation' of the old stage in to a new nation. Dr. Uprety describes multiple political interest opaque dealing and power-hungry action and behavior on the part of key political actor have shaped the course of the entire peace process. He also claims that Nepal's transition can be

successful only when Nepalese politician can keep aside their vested and narrow political interest and collectively work for achieving broader national interest. The Report in this collection gives important and valuable insights of current Nepal and gives the way or roadmap for its future prosperity and peace. It could be the important for policy maker as well as scholars, researchers, planners.

Sachit Parajuli



Prof. Chaitanya Mishra, *The Essays on the Sociology of Nepal* Published by FinePrint Inc., Anamnagar, Kathmandu Nepal, 2007. Page 363, ISBN: 99946-2-321-4, Price Rs. 450.

“The Essays on the Sociology of Nepal” is a collection articles written in the past 25 years by the prominent Sociologist of Nepal Prof. Chaitanya Mishra. Some of the articles are still relevant in both theoretical schema and substantive scope. Marxism is scientific epistemology for production of knowledge and Prof. Mishra has applied it to analyze Nepali society. No body can construct the ultimate reality, the truth in sociology. The reality depends upon who tells the reality and who listen at what political condition.

“Essays on the Sociology of Nepal” contains an array of analytical and perceptive essays on underdevelopment, growth of the social sciences, foreign aid, the Maoist insurgency, etc. Some of the essays in the collection are prophetic: for example, the author has correctly predicted that the Maoists would center-stage politics rather than armed struggle and that the privileged as well as the disadvantaged would come together to fight against the king. The essays comprise a wide range substantive and thematic aspect of Nepalese society. The development strategies in the past, migration and population dynamics, causes and destiny of Maoist insurgency foreign aids, NGO movement; structural adjustment program, privatization, liberalization and globalization. It thus becomes a milestone for grooming and nourishing infant Sociology and Anthropology disciplines of Nepal. It has been an amalgam of fifteen different articles plus four book reviews.

His first article “Political Transition in Nepal: Toward an Analytical Framework”, analyses the political transition made in Nepal in April 2006. In this article, he has presented an excellent analytical framework to explain the transition. He has explained five basic conjectures responsible for the political transition of 2006 AD. For him, these conjectures are Weakening/demise of the pre-capitalist and feudal forms; Expansion and intensification of capitalist form; Successive and increasingly successful democratization; Individualization, capability enhancement and empowerment, Royal coup, popular resistance and SPA-CPNM-civil society collaboration.

In the second article “Politico-Economic Framework of Population Redistribution: A Case Study of a Dang Village”, he takes the political and economic line to analyze the population redistribution in Urahari village of Dang. Here his basic focus is on the immigration of Pahadis into the village and emigration of indigenous Tharus from the village, malaria eradication, resettlement, and land reform as the key factors of the population redistribution in entire Valley.

“Development and Underdevelopment: A Preliminary Sociological Perspective” is another excellent presentation of Prof. Mishra which was first published in 1987. This article sheds light in the World famous issues of capitalism, development and underdevelopment. His explanation on the history and development of underdevelopment in Nepal are quite clear, realistic and meaningful. Mishra in his essay about Capitalism gives useful information to readers about capitalism. He brilliantly analyses Nepali capitalism through semiotics or by giving examples of signs that have value and salability. He shows a contradiction and ambivalence of Nepali capitalism. Such discourses in social studies by Nepali scholars will be productive in future. The frozen or the patterned sociological epistemology of the west undergoes reinterpretation in such writings.

Similarly in another article, “Locating the Causes of the Maoist Struggle”, he tries to locate the factors for the rise of the communist party of Nepal (CPNM) and “People’s War” (PW) led by it. In the article “New Predicaments of Humanitarian Organizations”, Prof. Mishra has given some remarkable suggestions to the “Think Tank” on Humanitarian Organizations

for the future, Denmark regarding the identification of the challenges being faced by the humanitarian and NGOs in the north. He also attempts to assess the linkage between such organizations in the north and the south. Prof. Mishra, in association with Pitambar Sharma tries to analyze the relationship between foreign aid and Nepalese social structure in the article “Foreign Aid and Social Structure: Notes on Intrastate relationships”. Their focus is on how Nepalese society, economy and production system is being more and more dependent on and affected by Foreign Aid. Similarly, they have also pointed out the important consequences of foreign aid in the society.

In his paper “Nepal : Five Years Following the Social Summit” Prof. Mishra assesses the efforts made by the Nepalese Government for the execution of commitments made at the social summit held in March 1995 in Copenhagen. In this process, he also analyses the policies, strategies and measures undertaken by the government as well as the obstacles encountered in the course of their formulation and implementation. “The New Push for Privatization” is an excellent documentation of the ways Nepal is heading in the line of privatization historically. He talks about the relations between Nepal and India in this article.

In “Basic Needs: Some Answers, Many More Questions”, he deals with various issues related to the fulfillment of basic needs of Nepalese people. Also, he has analyzed various programs held in Nepal for the fulfillment of basic needs and raised various questions in supplement of basic needs for future. The “Indo-Nepal Relations: A View from Kathmandu” analyzes various treaties, agreements, proposals, trade relations etc. between Nepal and India.

“Mountain and Development: A Brief Theoretical Note” is another significant part of the compilation. In this paper, Prof. Mishra attempts to sketch the counters of a possible design for a study of the relationship between the mountain ecosystem and development. In “The Genesis of the Gurkhas”, he attempts to explain the meanings and explanations of the Gurkhas - a name given to the Nepalese youths recruited in the Indian and British Military Services. He talks with the process of liberalization in the context of Nepal in his article “A Note on Liberalization”.

“Sociology in Nepal: Underdevelopment amidst Growth” is another excellent manuscript of Prof. Mishra compiled in this collection. This paper clearly demonstrates the way Sociology is growing its field in Nepal. Here, he sums up the institutional development of sociology, key arguments about the sociology and social anthropology, themes covered by sociological articles, emphasis of sociology etc. in Nepal. At the same time, he also presents the constraints being faced in the course of development of sociology in Nepal.

In his paper “Social Research in Nepal: of Critique and a Proposal”, he attempts to sketch certain dominant substantive epistemological biases embedded in the institution and practice of social research in Nepal and provides some suggestions and proposal to make social researches more realistic. In addition to these articles and paper, the collection has included four book reviews made by Prof. Mishra. The books he has reviewed are: Trans-Himalayan Traders by James F. Fisher, The State and Economic Surplus by Mahesh C. Regmi, The Use and Misuse of Social Science Research in Nepal by J. Gabriel Campbell, Ramesh Shrestha and Linda Stone and Nepal in Crisis by Piers Blaikie, John Cameron and David Seddon. Here he has presented excellent ideas about the way of reviewing a particular book.

In conclusion, the book “Essays on the Sociology of Nepal” has been as perfect blend of analytical and perceptive essays on development, underdevelopment, growth of social sciences, foreign aid, the political conflict and transition, social science researches etc. in the Nepalese context. Certainly, it will prove to be helpful in the better understanding of political, social, economic and developmental issues of Nepal. It will help in understanding the political, social and economic landscape of Nepal. It should prove indispensable to academics, social science students, development workers and anyone interested in the undercurrents that shape Nepali politics, Nepali society, culture etc.

Khumanath Baral (Suman)

