POLITICS OF PLACEMAKING AND POSITIONS OF THE MUSAHARS AT JAMDAHA-GOLBAZAR

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Abstract

A certain unity of place and people have been long assumed in the anthropological concept of culture. The association between a particular geographical territory and a cultural group has been studied by classical anthropologists. The taken-for-granted logic was that the Madhesi live in Madhes, 'the Nuer live in Nuerland', 'the Andamanese' are the indigenous peoples of the 'Andaman Islands, and the Musahar live in Musahari. The places are named behind the name of the first settler. The clearest illustrations of these kinds of thinking are the classic 'ethnographic map' that purported to display the spatial distribution of peoples, tribes, and cultures. Place itself becomes a neutral grid on which cultural differences, political identity, historical memories, and societal organizations are inscribed. This assumed isomorphism of place and culture results in some significant problems. The place is not natural, rather it is cultural construction of peoples and it has no singular narratives. This article represents a modest attempt to deal with the issues of interrelation between people and place, displacement and crisis of place-based identity at Golbazar-Jamdaha in Siraha. The Musahar, the first settler of the Jamdaha, are not only marginalized from socioeconomic positions but also displaced from the placemaking process. The history of the Musahar and their places have been refigured in favor of the dominant community. The fundamental question is on the anthropological practices of captivating the association of a culturally singular group and its territorial location as natural. For me, places with cartography are always imagined in the context of political-economic privileges that have a logic of their own.

Keywords: culture, political identity, placemaking, settler, historical memory.

Introduction

I[3] zwas appointed to conduct ethnographic profile research for the Social Inclusion Atlas and Ethnographic Profile (SIA-EP) project carried out by the Central Department of Sociology and Anthropology in 2012. The survey team of the project identified that Jamdaha was one of the field sites for ethnographic profile research based on the density of the Musahar population. Though I have been doing research among the Musahar community around Lahan-Bastipur, Jamdaha was a new site for me. I decided to do fieldwork because this research would be part of my Ph.D. research. When I was at Golbazar in September 2012, I came to know that there were two Jamdaha geographically discontinuous territories within a Jamdaha VDC. Ward no 1 and 2 of the Jamdaha VDC were at the road ahead of East-West Highway eastern part of Golbazar and the rest of the other 7 wards were lap of Chure, across Asanpur and Lalpur VDCs in between the two geographical part of the Jamdaha VDC. I found a district map with the distribution of VDCs in Siraha. The map can tell me how to find the place I have not seen but

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have often imagined. But the reality was as Geoff King (1996) cautioned readers about cultural cartographies. He argues that when you get there, following the map faithfully, the place is not the place of your choice and imagination (King, 1996:14). Similarly, when I asked *Gurusaran Sada*[4] about *Jamdaha Musahar*, he asked me, "which *Jamdaha* are you talking about?" He told me that there were two *Jamdahas a*nd there were *Musahars* in both sites. He asked me," What do you want place or people?" As an anthropologist, it was a very difficult question because I read that place was attached to a certain community. For me, the place was not the main entity of the study. So, I replied that I was interested to study Musahar people. He said, "There are Musahar at *Nipane* settlement that is also in *Jamdaha* VDC. *Nipane* is Southern side of the highway, no need to walk long, very close to the *Golbazar*". He asked me, "If you are interested to go *Jamdaha Musaharniya*, it is almost an hour's walk from the Golbazar. There is a public bus service one trip in the morning and one trip in the evening". Again, he added that there was new Musaharniya at Dhanghadi, the photocopy of Jamdaha Musaharniya. After formation of Musahrniya settlement at Dhanghadi, Jamdaha Musaharniya was orally known as *Purano Musaharniya*. Then I was interested to go *Purano Musaharniya* or *Jamdaha Musaharniya*.

After a couple of weeks, I was in the teashop at *Golbazar. Rakesh Raut* (Madhesi Raut) has been selling tea and food at *Golbazar* since 2007 AD. He asked me, "Where are you from?" "Where do you live here?" I replied, Musaharniya. He nodded and said, "Are you Tamang?" I said, "no, am I figured Tamag?". He said that Tamangs of this area were similar to hill Brahmin and Chhetris. I replied that I was not Tamang and came from Tribhuvan University to study the Musahar community. He hasn't been Musaharniya so far. He surprisingly told," There are many Musaharis (Musahar settlements) around the Golbazaar. Why did you go to the Tamang village to study the Musahars?" I said that there are sufficient Musahars at Jamdaha Musaharniya. He thought that Musaharniya was an exclusive Tamang settlement. *Musaharniya* as *Tamang* village was very popular at *Golbazar* because *Musahrniya Tamangs* owned private schools, buses, a monastery, private organizations, businesses, and politically vocal at Golbazar public sphere. I was interested to explore the interrelations between the place and the people at *Jamdaha Musahrniya*. After a couple of weeks, I heard contested claims and the history of settlement at *Jamdaha Musaharniya*. When I asked Lachhana Sada[5] about the politics of placemaking, his community has no idea about the cartographical politics of village *Panchayat* in 1972 and the *VDC* in 1991. None of the Musahars have an idea about the non-continuous territory of the *Jamdaha VDC*. The formation of two discontinuous *Jamdaha* and two discontinuous *Musaharniya* was not a much talked about issue among the dominant communities at *Jamdaha* because most of them took it as taken for a granted phenomenon.

Jamdaha Musahaniya is a cultural border even though the political border of the nation-state is about 10 Km away in the south and the geographical border of hill-Tarai is Chure hill on the Northern side of the settlement. Homi K Bhabha (1994) argues that a border is not that at which something stops but the border is that from which something begins its presencing (Bhabha, 1994:4). He denied that borders were binary like black and white rather borders were plural cultural settings. In this sense, Bhabha termed border as 'third space' (Bhabha 1990) like the liminal space of Victor Turner in ritual performance (Turner, 1986). Jamdaha Musahrniya, a water-slop at the lap of Chure hill, is multicultural land because both Musahars and Tamangs claimed as the first settlers at the micro-level. Madhesi communities claimed that all plain land from Gangetic plain to Chure hill is in the

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4   Gurusaran Sada is one of the active Musahar youth from Golbazar. He is also founder of Sabari Sankalpa
     Samaja (a Musahar cultural organization) at Golbazar.
5   An old Musahar who was Marar (traditional village authority of the Musahar caste) as well as a socially
     active person.

Madhesi cultural landscape. It is the cultural border of both because two larger cultural groups (hill communities and Madhesi communities) engaged not only everyday communication and cultural issues but also politics of place naming and making. The place was a marginal cultural territory that did not attract the attention of the state. Veena Das (2004) argued that peoples of margins were considered insufficiently socialized into the law and order of the state. Therefore, the state attempts to manage the populations of the margins through both force and pedagogy of conversation intended to transform subjects of the state (Das, 2004:9). The Musahars, as a highly marginalized Madhesi Dalit community (CBS, 2011) not only excluded from the list of Madhesi indigenous communities but also lost their attachment with the place. Dominant narrative depicted as if all Musahars were mobile communities to legitimize their displaced, ahistorical, and landless status. The Musahars who have been living in the same place for a century were also treated as ahistorical. Their history of the place was not considered unauthentic only because they did not have *Lal-Purja* (land ownership certificate) given by the state authority. For me, it was an interesting issue in terms of academic as well political attachment of place, the plurality of placemaking, and politics of cartography. The first part of the paper deals with the contested history of *Jamdaha Musahrniya*. The second part explores political and cultural issues of the reproduction of *Jamdaha and Musaharniya* at different places. The last part analyzes interrelations between place, people, and political mapping of the place.

Research Questions and Objectives

The fundamental question of the paper is how cultural politics naturalized place people's relationships. Specific questions of the paper are: What are historical trajectories between place and people? Why and how do people make a place-based identity? What are the cultural politics of cartography and placemaking?

The general objective of the article is to document the relation of a political-economic dimension of placemaking and cartography. The main objectives of the article are: To explore historical trajectories of the Musahars and placemaking; to explain cultural politics of cartography, and to examine values of place-based identity for the Musahars.

Research Methodology

Methodologically, anthropologists generally rely on ethnography, entailing not just interviewing, mapping, and other conventional qualitative research methods, but also, participant observation-long term residence in the research community during which the ethnographer observes people in their daily life activities in their own time and space. We have divided the responsibility of the paper. The first author (Madhu) has carried out extensive fieldwork, observations of different contexts, and collection of data in different years from 2013 to 2018. The first author used 'I' to refer to himself alone when he interacted with the Musahars, and Tamangs interlocutors in the field. He lived in the Musahar community at Jamdaha during his PhD fieldwork in 2013 and 2014. He collected trajectories of the different settlers and their politics of placemaking. Everyday interactions of different communities, administrative and everyday politics of place and people have been observed. Besides observation and interaction, the first author employed key informants' interviews, cartographical studies, and informal talking as tools of data collection. School teachers, politicians, and old people of the Musahar, Tamang, Magar, and Madhesi castes people were informants in the field. Educated youths and traditional leaderships of the Musahar community were key informants. The author has interacted with the Musahar, Tamang, and other Madhesi castes at Jamdaha in 2013 and on subsequent visits. As a part of the first author's PhD research (Giri,2018), qualitative ethnographic context or anthropological methodological lens has been used.

The second author (Ganga) has organized and analyzed the information by connecting interdisciplinary literature. She has read the draft article as an objective reader and revised based

data. The final revised version was prepared by both the authors. This research is based on the historical ethnographic method (Shah 2004: 12) in which the local historical process informed the Musahar's response to a total of their educational activities.

Findings and Analysis

The major findings with analysis and argument of the Musahars and Tamangs are categorized into different sub-topic of the article. This provides evidence of placemaking, cartographic politics, and contested history of different communities at Jamdaha-Golbazar.

Contested History of Jamdaha Musaharniya

Studies of tribal and village societies customarily included descriptions of the natural landscape, material conditions of everyday life, and quite often contained an analysis of these in support of other theoretical arguments. However, anthropologists have begun to shift their perspective to foregrounding spatial dimensions of culture rather than treating them as background, so that the notion that all behavior is located in and constructed of space has taken on new meaning (Low & Lawrence-Zuniga, 2003). The people of each caste/ethnic group typically hold to an origin myth that tells of their descent from noble or divine ancestors in a specific territory, or some of each kind. These narratives not only reflect the common self-image, but they also serve to justify the effort to regain one's noble and rightful heritage at Jamdaha. This is also people's way of placemaking. These mythic stories are culturally produced history and awareness of the past among marginalized communities (Vansina, 1965). The Musahars cherished different myths of their origin and the name of "Musahars" but they shared a common myth of descent Dina-Bhadri. Lachhana Sada (58 years old Musahar) heard that human beings came out of the earth like other soil creatures. Soil is everything from the beginning of life to death for them. He added, "We live in soil, worship soil, eat soil, and use soil for treatment. Therefore, the soil is God, food, shelter, medicine". He gave the example of the origin of Sita (daughter of the King Janak of Mithila) who was found on the soil in *Janakpurdham*. Similarly, Dina-Bhadri was born at Jogiya Jhajhar but they visited this territory for their exercise and hunting. Lachhana's argument was materialized by Sabari Sankalpa Samaj, a cultural organization of the Musahar. The Samaj has been continued soil celebration day by offering and worshiping soil as a symbolic attachment with land, ancestral ownership, home, life, and death each year since 2010 AD. The greatest irony is that they do not have the right to soil/ land where they live and work.

Moreover, Lachhana extended Musahars attachment with land, wildlife, and their transcendental power. He told that man was the wish of god because they believed that Musahar can be transformed into a tiger and again man through mantra. He argued, "Our ancestors were king of both jungle and human society through the mantra. When they lost mantras or forgotten that powerful cultural stuff, they became powerless and turned into the dark tunnel of Haruwa-Charuwa labor". He told me a mythic story of the tiger god as the mask of Musahar's ancestor. He heard this story from his grandfather. The story of the tiger is:

> A small settlement of the Musahars had been living in the middle of the dense forest named Musaharniya. They had made some land for corn production. They collected most of the food materials from the jungle. One day a new man and his wife came into the settlement. They pretended that their cattle were lost in the jungle. The Musahars gave them shelter and food. The next day they went to the jungle and came with cattle. They made a small hut at the end of our settlement. The other people also came near the newcomer. They were gradually displaced both from migration and the encroachment of newcomers. When the Musahars were almost displaced, last Musahar went to Dhami to know the cause of displacement. Dhami told him a Mantra (enchant) to transform himself into a tiger. Then a Musahar turned into a tiger and destroyed the cattle of the newcomers. Then all newcomers returned

by leaving the land. The tiger ancestor turned into humans again and called relatives for the settlement. The Musahars were the first settlers of the Jamdaha Musaharniya.

His sense of place boggled my mind to think over the politico-legal and natural-cultural relation of placemaking. Most of the Musahars at Jamdaha Musahaniya were politico-legally landless but owned the landscape by traditional attachment. His story sounds like a phoenix, the Musahar came out of the ashes of the mythic tiger-Musahar. Like Philippe Descola's (2013) and Hindu-Buddhist philosophical argument of a chain of being (Weber, 1958), the connection between souls and intersubjective communication was possible between the Musahars and the tiger. The differences in physical dispositions did not constitute an obstacle to communication and were partly wiped out by the interpersonal relations that were established between terms that can be substituted for one another since they were positioned at the same level of the ontological scale (Descola, 2013). Tiger was still considered as their ancestral god. Different levels of inter-subjective transformations, from animal to human and vice versa provide a 'thick description' (Geertz, 2073) of the Musahars' powerful placemaking. This tiger imagery of the ancestors indicates physical strength which was also translated into Dina Bhadri's mythic story. When a Musahar was spirited by Baghaiya (tiger) deity, then the Musahar behaved like a tiger, destroyed enemies' property and cattle. The story sounds mere imaginary but reveals a mythical and historical landscape of their settlement and the resonance of their relationship with other people and the place. He still believed that the Musahar never extinct from the place because their ancestor will come up disguised form (either tiger or Dina Bhadri) from the Jungle. The land around the Musaharniya was spirited by their ancestors. Despite landlessness and marginalized socio-political status, the Musahars continued their presence at Jamdaha Musaharniya. Their physical presence was not sufficient to make their narrative heard. The *Lal-Purja* or politico-legal record became more real than natural-cultural narratives of attachment of the place. Since they were made politico-legal exclusion from the territory, their narratives of placemaking sounded artificial.
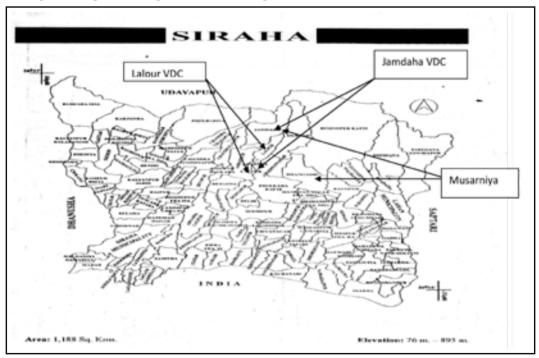
Lachhana Sada showed me the territory where their great grandfather used to collect water for their family and landlord's cattle. We moved around Jamdaha-Musaharniya, cornfield, buckwheat farm, traditional water collection centers, Chure hill, seasonal ponds, and cultural territory where Dina Bhadri's marked hand and footprints. He felt happy and honored to show me all the historical places of the community in the hope of writing and telling to the rest of the communities. His excitement of showing and telling could be read in terms of the emotional attachment of the Musahar and Musahrniya.

Kishan Sada from the Musaharniya settlement argued that the Musahars have attachment with the place because their great grandfathers made arable (agriculture) land first time. The etymological meaning of the Musaharniya came from Musahars' settlement. He did not know the historical date of their arrival at the settlement but he argued that his grandfather told a story of the landscape by linking their ancestor god Dina Bhadri. There was a resting place, exercise sport, and hunting area of the Dina-Bhadri around the Chure. Foot and handprints of the Dina Bhadri on the big stone were seen by most of the villagers. The Musahars believed that the prints on the stone were foot print of Dina-Bhadri. According to the Musahars, initially, Tamangs came and started close to their settlement. They were powerful and sufficient kinship networks at the hill.

Tamangs gradually dominated the socio-economic and political spheres of the Musaharniya. Then, Musaharniya became the settlement of the Tamang. Many of the Musahars became Haruwa-Charuwa[6] in Tamang's households at Musarniya. Every Musahars above 30 years have a separate story of

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6 A kind of unfree and bonded labor for their Tamang and Magar landlords.

unfree labor and extreme forms of domination. The Musahars lost not only authority of the land but also the authority of the first settler because the Tamangs modified the history of settlement for their favor. Kishan added, "If you ask peoples at Golbazar about Musaharniya, they will tell you the history and pride of the Tamangs". This was not only the end of the story of Musaharniya. He argued that many Musahars from Jamdaha Musaharniya also hegemonized that they thought Musaharniya was Tamangs' place and the Musahars were newcomers like other Madhesi castes (Yadav, Mahato, Teli Sudhi, Dushadha, Kewat, and Mallaha). Moreover, Tamangs attached not only their identity but also their pride and sentiment with the Musaharniya. Those who migrated from Jamdaha Musaharniya made new Musaharniay at Dhangadhi VDC. Biren Lama from Musaharniay argued that Musaharniya became Musaharniya because of Tamang community. Tamangs from Musaharniya were engineers, doctors, international players, and politicians. If there were no Tamangs, nobody would hear the name of Musaharniya. He added that Tamangs of the Musaharniya loved the place so much that they named the new place by Musaharniya. The new Musahrniya was formed mostly by Tamangs, Magars, and Rai, and the settlement was Musahar exclusive. Kishan Sada agreed that the Tamangs loved Musaharniya so much that they made new for the memory of the old one. But, what place and contributions of the Musahars in course of the making of the Musaharniya were not only deleted but also stolen by the Tamang. He added that Tamangs shared the history of settlement with many visitors and their narratives became valid. The Musahars neither got a single opportunity to share their stories of the place nor were their stories heard. It can be argued that the historical identity of the place and placemaking was not free from political-economic dominations.

According to Kishan Sada, the Musahars were the first settler by clear trees and bushes. They named the place Musaharniya because its name was from Maithili tones like Laddhaniya and Brahmajiya. It is believed that the meaning of the word Musaharniya derived from Musahar because even today, Musahars' settlements are separate, distinct, and named Musahari in everyday life in Madhes.

Tamangs' Story of Jamdaha-Musahrniya

Kahila Lama, 75 years old Tamang of the Musaharniya, said, " three brothers of great grandfathers migrated from *Kavre* and one of them went to *Diktel*, one settled in *Sindhuli* and my great grandfather came here. As grandfather said, it was a jungle and people could not live because of wildlife's troubles. He stayed in another nearest village for 4-5 years and came to *Musaharniya* for permanent settlement. When great grandfather's family with relatives came here, Musaharniya was not the Musaharniya, it was mere Jungle". Lama argued that his grandfather was the first settler. There was no name of the place. He also got surprised why the village was called Musaharniya. He opined that the Musahars were used to make the land arable and they started to live here permanently and then it might be called Musaharniya. He showed me religious *Stupas* and small monasteries made by great grandfathers around the village.

Even though the name of the village is Musaharniya, the majority of people are Tamangs. The Musahars is the second largest (51 households) community in old Musaharniya. Tamangs argued that Musahars did not have land and a permanent settlement place. Their argument was when the Musahars did not have a permanent settlement; they did not have attachment with the place. Kahila Lama said that most of the Musahars in the Musaharniya were newcomers through the kinship network of the earlier. Being Haruwa and Charuwa of the Tamangs, the Musahars did not defend the cultural belongingness of the place. Besides Musahars, and Tamangs, there are few Teli, Sudhi, Yadav and Kami. Musahniya is a relatively homogenous and isolated settlement of the Musahar. This village comprised wards no 7, 8, and 9 of Jamdaha VDC.

Kishan Sada heard that migrated Tamangs made another Musahaniya but he did not know why did they name the settlement Musaharniya. He argued that Musaharniya without Musahars sounded awkward. Kahila lama heard that the migrated Tamangs were interested to make replicas of the old Musaharniya where any visitor could observe Tamang culture. Besides Musaharniya, Jamdaha was dominated by Chhetri until 1980. Then they left the place silently. They were rulers in the village Panchayat. They designed the cartography of the village panchayat in terms of the Hill-Madhesi population and landlords' Kamat. After their disappearance, Thapamagar and Tamang were dominant in Jamdaha

Among Madhesi castes, the residing Yadav and Teli households of Jadaha-Musaharniya are not old inhabitants of this place. According to Kahila Lama, they were migrated from places - Kadharuwa, Khajanpur, and Itari belong to both Laxminiya and Pipra VDCs of Siraha district. He added that before they had settled *Jamdaha Musaharniya*, Yadavs of southern villages came with cows at every rainy season and started making their cowherd cottage (*gwali*) at Tudkiya. The reason behind rainy season cowherd migration was at their places during the time - excessive water deposit dipped grazing land, acute mosquito bites, and water-filled cowshed due to flood. Slowly they made monsoon temporary settlement and later came for permanent residence. Many of them have land and family in southern villages. Yadav claimed that plain land belonged to the Madhesi cultural zone therefore; they were legitimate settlers of the place. Plain castes including Musahars believed that hill peoples were newcomers into the plain cultural territory. On the other hand, Hill origin emigrants claimed that Yadav including the Musahars were emigrants and many of them were not citizens of the country. They argued that because of the open border, many plain castes people came and their population exceed not only in Tarai but also in the whole country.

After Madhes Movement in 2007, the Madhesi community socio-psychologically dominated the public spheres. Hill origin communities were threatened by criminal gangs of southern villages. Bir Bahadur Tamang told that a powerful bomb was blasted in his home yard and a group interred into his house to kill. He jumped behind the house from the top and ran away. He told terrible stories of

political crimes committed by Madhesi insurgent groups who threatened to leave the place. Local residence of Madhesi communities was cooperative in the sense that there was no single physical fight in the name of *Madhesi* and *Pahadi*. Bir Bahadur added that after the Madhes movement, the Madhesi community specially Teli, Yadav, and Sudhi (Sah) started to dominate political-economic public spheres. With the political support of Dharmanath Sah, the dominant leader of the Maoist party at Golbazar, they became dominant position holders like the chairperson of the school management committee, school headmaster, and chairperson of user groups. There was no exclusive political division in terms of hill origin and plain origin peoples.

Placemaking and Cartography

The idea of our territory is opposed to their territory of the local landscape where local peoples invested themselves and to which they feel they belong. In terms of Keith Basso (1996), the sense of place or attachment to place inculcates certain thoughts in the mind of people. He did not talk about a plurality of thoughts within the peoples of the same place. The place has a definition, a history, a meaning: a container both of facts and symbolism. Geoff King (1996) argues that place as a defined region exists in its being but it is also constructed, represented, and narrated. He notes that it is not simply a geographical notion of a fixed and bounded piece of territory mapped by authority (King, 1996: 25). Such fixedness has been challenged so that now human geographers and anthropologists maintain that places are fluid and contested spaces. Generally, preliterate people locate and reshape themselves in correlation to the place as much as the place contains their social history.

The declaration of "there are no aspatial social processes" (Soja 1996: 46) articulates to the notion of marginal spaces, those of "betwixt-and-between" (Turner 1974: 232) or "third spaces" (Bhabha 1990:211), portrayed as an 'interstitial passage between fixed identifications which opens the possibility of cultural hybridity (Bhabha 1994:4). The plurality of the place has aptly been depicted by Foucault's (1970) heterotopias: a place that captures the new cultural politics of difference.

A plurality of Jamdaha was engineered by Hill origin Chhetri Jamindars who dominated the place until the 1980s. Local peoples could not remember the exact date of the cartography of discontinuous Jamdaha and Lalpur but they understood the territorial cultural engineering of the designers. According to Lachhana, the name Jamdaha itself has linguistically hill taste whereas Lalpur (adjoining VDC where plain caste communities were dominant) has Madhesi taste in its name. Because of hill allies, Tamang and Magar were also dominant communities who supported the cartographical politics of the Chhetries. The map is more than merely a passive representation of the territory. Instead of accommodating geographical continuity, Jamdaha left Madhesi settlements for Lalpur VDC and accommodated hill community settlement discontinuous territory. Similarly, Lalpur was made one ward discontinuous territory. The Musahars settlements were neither counted as hill origin nor Madhesi settlement because neither they had citizenship nor they were believed permanent settlers of the place. Monopoly was made by early cartographers working with the benefits of cultural politics. According to Dambar Chemjong, one of the members of the commission of state restructuring in 2013, told that cartographic formation of the constituency was highly political activity. He said,

> King Mahendra ordered to make a cartography of the country in 2018 BS. Biswobandhu Thapa was prime minister, there was a declaration of the formation of district and village Panchayat. When Mahendra made the cartographical structuring of the country into four different tiers of Panchayat units, it was followed the principles of governmentality. His idea of governmentality was also reflected in the formation of village Panchayat.

The Madhesi community of the Jamdaha argued that the cartography of VDCs was politically and culturally designed. There was a hill community near road head and the settlement was politically

connected to the Jamdaha hill community. Therefore, two wards of the roadside were merged into Jamdaha to make a homogeneous hill community village Panchayat. Their argument was similar to Dambar Chemjong's experience of restructuring constituencies in 2013.

When I saw the VDC map of Jamdaha and Lalpur, I thought that cartography itself was great politics of dominance. Both VDCs have discontinuous territorial wards. When I saw Lalpur territory behind Asanpur VDC, it was like a banana stretched up to Chandralapur VDC in between Jamdaha and Asanpur VDCs. There were two wards of Lalpur VDC in the banana shape stretch. The story of the awkward shape of Lalpur was not ended with this banana shape stretch, there were other two geographically discontinued wards in the southern block behind an isolated block of Jamdaha wards.   The geographical continuity of the hill settlement was close to Lalpur VDC. The VDC was dominated by the plain caste community. Instead of the geographical continuity, Lalpur also got discontinued territorial wards southern back of Jamdaha discontinued territory. This cartographical discontinuity was not new. In Siraha and Dhanausa, some Jamindars included their land within their predominant village.

Similar interesting cartographical politics was observed when ward number 1 and 2 of the Jamdaha VDC was located beside Mahendra Highway. There was no geographical continuity between the two wards with the rest of the wards of Jamdaha VDC. *Lalpur* and *Asanpur* VDCs were in between the southern two wards and northern wards of the Jamdaha. It was an odd composition of the VDC but the next VDC Lalpur also had a similar composition. The politics of separation of geographical continuity was balancing hill origin and plain origin peoples. There was a big Musahar settlement and the rest of the others were plain castes in ward no 1 named *Nipaniya* lies on the southern side of the highway. The Musahar settlements were included because they were an essential component of the Jamindari System. The Musahar were apolitical as well as non-citizen labor for the landlords. The discontinuous cartography of the Jamdaha and Lalpur was ended when both VDCs and other 7 VDCs were included to form Golbazar Municipality in 2071 BS. The change was not the end of the cultural politics of cartography rather articulated from previously marginalized plain caste communities.

Conclusion

This article challenged the traditional as well as the taken-for-granted notion of a place-people relationship. Classical anthropology believed that a singular community has a natural connection with the place and place was inherently related to the community. When places are made up and names are given by authority, the legitimacy of place-people natural association is fallacious. The construction of the place is not free from the political-economic power of the people. When multiple communities live together, they constructed multiple narratives of the same place. In Jamdaha Musaharniya, Tamangs constructed their history of settlement and attachment of the place. The Musahars claimed that they were inscribers of the arable land, unfortunately, they did not have legal ownership of the place. Because of the lack of legal narrative, their narratives of indignity sounded artificial and artificial narratives became more real. On the other hand, plain castes like Yadhav, Teli, Sudhi, Koiri, and others claimed that the southern plain from the Chure was connected with the ancient civilization of Madhes, therefore, the land belongs to cow herders of the plain. They claimed that Hill immigrants encroached on their cultural territory. Micro-level orientation was the last interpretation in which plain was the land of plain castes peoples. They tried to threaten both physical and psychological to the hill origin people.

There are multiple narratives and multi-sited construction of a place. A set of problems raised by the explicit mapping of cultures onto places is to account for the cultural differences within a locality. The second set of problems was raised when a place of a cultural group was occupied by

another cultural group and refigured the stories of the placemaking. The duplication of the map of Jamdaha, and Lalpur was cartographical politics. Cartographers were the most important members of a community that carves to know the exact shape of its uncertain land. Gradually, maps and cartography were taken much more naturally by the inhabitants who did not know cultural politics. Cultural mappings play a central role in establishing the territories we inhabit and experience as real, whatever their ontological status. The power to draw or redraw the map is a considerable one, involving as it does the power to define the place's history.

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