

**Land Politics in Nepal: An Ethnographic Study of Makar VDC in
Nawalparasi District**

**The Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Humanities and Social Science
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Degree of Master
in Anthropology**

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2008**

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Recommendation Letter

This dissertation entitled “**Land Politics in Nepal: An Ethnographic Study of Makar VDC in Nawalparasi District**” prepared by Dilli Ram Timilsina under the supervision and guidance for the partial fulfillment of Master Degree in Anthropology. The study is original and carries useful information in the field of land. Therefore, I recommend it for the evaluation to the dissertation committee.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Researching and writing this dissertation has been much like a journey for me. And like many journeys it is one in which numerous people have helped me along the way. My greatest debt is to the people of Makar VDC whose voices and responses resound within the research. This thesis would not have been possible without their co-operation and support. I am grateful to family of Tul Bahadur Rana, Anju Acharya, Tara Bhandari, Maheswor Panthi, Krishan Prasad Poudel, Dab Bahadur Garbuja, Dharma Bdr. Magar, Ganga Chaudhari and Khem Raj Paudel for their patient help in my research. I would like to express my gratitude to *Gramin Awas Company*, Dibya Jyoti Campus and Chisapani Community Forestry of Nawalparasi district.

As my dissertation advisor Dr. Saubhagya Shah sensitively and wisely helped to navigate me through the intricacies of the field work process. I benefited a great deal from his skill and experience as an ethnographer. He provided critical feedback and encouragement during both the field work and writing of the dissertation. Similarly, I would like to express my deep appreciation to Dr. Om Prasad Gurung the head of the department for his kind acceptance in carrying out this research. I would like to acknowledge gratitude to Prof. Chaitanya Mishra, Dr. Padma Lal Devkota, Dr. Ram Bahadur Chhetri, Dr. Krishna Bahadur Bhattachan, Phadindra Poudel, Dr. Tulsi Ram Pandey, Bhanu Timilsina, Binod Pokharel, Yub Raj Luitel, Shyamu Thapa, Sambhu Kattel, Nabin Rawal, and all the respected *gurus* of the department who helped me in many ways during the research period.

Also, I owe a great deal of gratitude to Lynn Bennett for her support and

inspiration. I am equally thankful to Christa Oppriessnig (*Didi*) for her continual support through out my master's degree. I am equally thankful to my friends and colleagues in and around Tribhuvan University for their delightful company and generous help. Badri Prasad Acharya, Puskar Kafle, Sunil Regmi, Tek Bahadur K.C., Sushma Singh, Mina Pandey, Janak Bahadur Shahi, Madhu Giri, Reena Maharjan, Pol Gurung, Jyoti Khanal, Ramita Nakarmi, Subhadra Tamang, and Kalpana Baral (Subedi) Who constantly encouraged me and offered their help.

Last but not the least, I would be remiss if I did not mention my parents (Bhanu Bhakta Timilsina and Aku Maya Timilsina), brother (Bishnu), sisters (Dilmaya, Yamuna, Ganga and Guma) and other relatives who have supported me by whatever means was available to them. I offer my special thanks to Mrs. Bishnu Poudel of Creative Computer Centre, Kirtipur, Kathmandu for typing, setting and printing the thesis.

December 2008

Dilli Ram Timilsina

Abstract

The present research is an ethnographic study on land politics in Makar VDC of Nawalparasi district. The main issues included in this research are land right, land ownership, land institution, dual ownership of land, fragmentation of holdings, nature of land encroachment and landlessness among the rural households. It is needless to say that land is the socio-cultural entity where co-existence of two or more legal system as well as specific rules and regulations are attached to it. Such plural legal processes have created complexity and confusion to the government and the concerned people. The study examines issue of landlessness, squatters (*sukumbasi*), and peasants, who played major role in the land development of Makar VDC. As the land value rose along with social change, they are unable to sustain land right due to local power politics and the land resource ultimately goes in the hands of the local elites. Similarly, the communal land is used in the name local institutions like schools, campuses, temples, monasteries and so on. The institutions played a means of land transformation in the study area. When land is transformed through local innovative rules and regulation, controversial and arbitrary legal systems are created. The process provided a fertile land to the local elites to germinate power and authority in social sphere. The dichotomy between local and central and peoples' perception on different social phenomenon has created dilemma that has relatively influenced the governmental land policy as well as local land development. Different commissions have been formed and their emblematic notion of 'land to the tillers' as well as rural political volatility has generated a new power politics over land. Adequate legislative and administrative machinery have not been provided to meet the ever increasing problems which have arisen in the implementation because statutory provisions have been pyramided. The burden of tenure insecurity that is better understood as an effect of social relations and their dynamics, many more land has become merely a political discourse even in the 'so-called' democratic society.

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Abbreviations

CDO	Civil District Officer
CF	Community Forestry
CIAA	Commission for the Investigation of Abuse of Authority
CPNML	Communist Party of Nepal United Marxist and Leninist
CPNUML	Communist Party of Nepal United Marxist and Leninist
DFO	District Forest Officer
GAC	Gramin Awas Company (Rural Housing Company)
IRDP	Rapti Valley Integrated Development Project
JMM	Jana Mukti Morcha
MPs	Members of the Parliament
NC	Nepali Congress
NPC	National Planning Commission
NRC	Nepal Resettlement Committee
RPP	Rastriya Prajatantra Party (National Democratic Party)
SP	Superintended Police
SPN	Sadbhawana Party of Nepal
VDC	Village Development Committee

Illustration

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