NATURE, CULTURE AND THE ADAPTATION OF THE YAKKHAS

AN ECOLOGICAL-ANTHROPOLOGICAL CASE STUDY

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY/ANTHROPOLOGY FOR THE PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF MASTER DEGREE OF ARTS IN ANTHROPOLOGY

SUBMITTED BY

ARJUN RAI

CENTRAL DEPARTMENT OF
SOCIOLOGY/ANTHROPOLOGY
TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY
KIRTIPUR, KATHMANDU
FEBRUARY, 2011

TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

CENTRAL DEPERTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY/ ANTHROPOLOGY

KIRTIPUR, KATHMANDU

NEPAL

LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

This is to certify that Mr. Arjun Rai has prepared this dissertation entitled "NATURE, CULTURE AND THE ADAPTATION OF THE YAKKHAS" under my guidance and supervision. He has studied Tamafok village of Sankhuwashava district. I forward this dissertation for final approval and acceptance.

Date: February, 2011

Laya Prasad Uprety, Ph. D Reader in

Anthropology

DEPARTMENT OF
SOCIOLOGY/ANTHROPOLOGY
TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY
KIRTIPUR

NATURE, CULTURE AND THE ADAPTATION OF THE YAKKHAS: AN ECOLOGICAL-ANTHROPOLOGICAL CASE STUDY

ACCEPTANCE

	Approved by
Chairman:	
Supervisor:	
External: -	
	Dissertation Committee

Date: December 13, 2010

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First of all, I would like to thank very much to all of them who helped and supported me with their knowledge and encouragement to complete my research work.

I wish here to express my sincere gratitude to my respected teacher and supervisor Dr. Laya Parsad Uprety for his valuable contribution. Without his careful, sensitive and helpful supervision from the initial stage of writing the dissertation, my study would not have come out in the present shape. I would also like to thank Dr. Om Prasad Gurung the Head of the Department, and members of the dissertation committee and external examiner Dr. Ram Bahadur Chhetri for their constructive comments and suggestions, and all my other respected teachers of Central Department of Sociology / Anthropology for their continuous support.

I would like to thank all the Yakkhas of the Tamafok for their co-operation in their homes and village. I would specially like to thank Mr. Magman Linkha Yakkha, Miss Kamala Linkha Yakkha, and Mr. Mohan Kumar Khamyong Yakkha for their excellent research assistance. I am also most grateful to Mrs. Bim Maya Linkha, Mr. Dik BAhadur Linkha and Mr. Lachhman Linkha for their warm hospitality. I am also thankful to Mr. Dammar Linkha and Mr. Man Kumar Linkha for their help. I would like to thank my friend Miss. Chandrawati Gurung who helped me a lot by editing my dissertation.

Finally, I would like to thank my family for the arrangement of financial support. And my thanks go to my close friends for their help and suggestions to write this dissertation.

Arjun Rai (Yakkha)

February, 2011

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page No.
ACKNOWLEDGMENT	i
LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION	ii
ACCEPTANCE	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iv
LIST OF TABLES	viii
LIST OF FIGURES	ix
PHOTOGRAPHS	X
CHAPTER - 1: INTRODUCTION	1-6
1.1 Statement of the Problem	1
1.2 Objectives of the Study	4
1.3 Conceptual Framework	5
1.4 Importance of the Study	6
1.5 Organization of the Study	6
CHAPTER - 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	7-20
2.1 Theoretical Review	7
2.2 Studies in Nepal	13
CHAPTER - 3: RESEARCH METHODS	21-24
3.1 Rationale of the Site Selection	21
3.2 Nature and Sources of Data	21
3.3 Sampling Procedure	21
3.4 Techniques of Data Collection	22
3.4.1 Structured Questionnaire	22
3.4.2 Participant Observation	22

3.4.3 Key Informant Interview	22
3.4.4 Group Discussion	23
3.4.5 Case Study	23
3.5 Data Analysis	24
3.6 Limitations of the Study	24
CHAPTER - 4: THE SETTINGS	25-27
4.1 Location	25
4.2 Topography	25
4.3 Climate	26
4.4 Natural Resources	26
4.5 Development Condition	27
CHAPTER - 5: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CULTURAL SYST	EM AND
NATURAL ENVIRONMENT OF YAKKHA COMMUNITY	28-61
5.1 Demographic Features	28
5.1.1 Population	28
5.1.2 Age Structure and Sex Composition	28
5.1.3 Household Size and Structure	30
5.1.4 Educational Status	31
5.2 Socio-Cultural Features	32
5.2.1 Consumption Pattern	34
5.2.2 The Settlement Pattern	36
5.2.3 Dressing pattern	38
5.3 Rites de Passage of the Yakkha	39

5.3.1 Mechchha Chyang	39
5.3.2 Birth	40
5.3.3 Nwaran	40
5.3.4 Marriage	41
5.3.5 Death Ceremony	48
5.4 Religious Background	52
5.4.1 Household Worship	53
5.4.2 Collective Worship	55
5.5 Agriculture	58
5.6 Animal Husbandry	60
CHAPTER - 6: CHANGE AND ADAPTATION	62-89
6.1 Cultural Adaptation	62
6.1.1 Settlement	62
6.1.2 Religion and Ritual Practices	63
6.1.3 Entertainment of Yakkha	65
6.2 Technology	67
6.3 Inter - ethnic Relationship	67
6.4 Economic Adaptation	70
6.4 Economic Adaptation 6.4.1 Agriculture	70 70

6.4.2 Animal Husbandry	77
6.4.3 The Subsidiary Economy	79
6.4.3.1 Wage Labor and Bamboo Craft Making	79
6.4.3.2 Small Trade / Business	80
6.4.3.3 Government Service	81
6.4.4 Economic Institution	82
6.5 Forest Resources and Adaptation	82
6.6 Foreign Employment: An Alternative for Adaptation	85
6.7 Alaichi Farming: New Strategy of Adaptation	88
6.8 Tea Plantation: New Economic Possibilities	89
CHAPTER - 7: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION	90-98
7.1 Summary	91
7.2 Conclusion	94
REFERENCES	
ANNEXES	
Annex 1. Case Studies	
Annex 2. Questionnaire for Household Survey	
Annex 3. Check Lists for Key Informants	
Annex 4. Check List for Case Study	

LIST OF TABLES

Table: 1: Age Structure and Sex Composition of the Sampled Household	29
Table: 2: Number and Percentage Distributions of Family Size of the House Hold	30
Table: 3: Educational Status of the Sampled Household Population	31
Table: 4: Seasonal Crop Calendar of Major Crops	63
Table: 5: Land Holding Pattern among Sampled Household	74
Table: 6: Status of Food Sufficient of Sampled Household	75
Table: 7: Land Holding by Different Sub- clans of Yakkha	76
Table: 8: Types and Numbers of Livestock Raised by Sampled Household	78
Table: 9: Some Forest Plant Species Used by the Yakkha People in the Study Area	84

LIST OF FIGURES

Fig: 1: Setting of Tamafok VDC	-
Fig: 2: Conceptual Frame Work of the Study	5
Fig: 3: Enter Ethnic Relationship	69

PHOTOGRAPHS

List of Photog	raphs	After Page
Photograph 1:	Typical Yakkha house	37
Photograph 2:	House, terrace and full of maize crop	37
Photograph 3:	Yakkha boy with traditional dress	38
Photograph 4:	Yakkha girl with Traditional dress	38
Photograph 5:	Preparation for the Lagan ceremony	45
Photograph 6:	The Lagan ceremony, dropping the chicken's blood on banana's le	eaf 45
Photograph 7:	Sansari Puja ko Than, worship of the nature	47
Photograph 8:	Sacrificing the goat to the Sansari	47
Photograph 9:	Performing Kai Lak (Chyabrung Dance)	66
Photograph 10:	Cardamom farming	89
Photograph 11:	Tea farming on a trial	89