

**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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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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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.

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
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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

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