

Harka Gurung's Contribution in Nepal Geographical Society and Its Publications

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Background

Nepal Geographical Society (NGS) established in 1961, is the oldest organization of Nepalese Geographers. It is devoted to promote geographic research, education and disseminate contemporary geographic ideas to the society through research, discussion, lecture, conferences, exhibitions and publication of books and journals. In the ad-hoc executive committee of seven members formed in 1962 under the Presidentship of Mr. Ram Krishna Shrestha, Harka Gurung served as member after his return from UK. Gurung was elected as secretary in the executive committee of NGS formed for the term of two years (1966-1968). In the succeeding executive committees of 1968-1970 and 1970-1972, Gurung served as secretary. As president, Harka Gurung served the society from 1986-1990. He was a life member of the society. Now, NGS is 39 years old and 17th executive committee of nine members is at work. Gurung lead the society only one term as president and two terms as secretary. However, Dr. Gurung's role, guidance, aspiration and articles published in different theme and type during different responsibility of job and status in governmental and non-governmental organizations have been appreciable in the society from its birth.

The Himalayan Review

Nepal Geographical Society began the publication of its journal "*The Himalayan Review*" from 1968, when Harka Gurung was the secretary. Since then the society is regularly publishing its journal *The Himalayan Review*. From the initial issue, Gurung served as member of the editorial board, continuously up to the volume V. Afterwards, he was advising editor of vol. VI of 1973/74, and again editor of the vol. XX-XXIII (1989-92). Being an annual publication of NGS the executive committee of the society appoints the editorial board/committee. However, there is no consistency in the post and number of persons in the board. Occasionally the editorial board includes name/s of executive, advising, corresponding and special editors. The numbers of persons in the board ranges from three to nine members.

The Himalayan Review publishes original scholarly articles focused on topics of interest of geographers in general and Nepalese issue in particular. Articles by broad field of

geography, the maximum (9.4 %) are in agriculture, geomorphology, urban followed by geographic methods (7.7 %), tourism (6.8%), climatology (6.0 %), and 5.1 per cent each in environment, geography general, population and settlement. The minimum (1.7 %) are in remote sensing/GIS, social, political, nutrition (Subedi and Poudel, 2002). While writing a perspective of *The Himalayan Review* in 1980 Dr. Gurung categorically pointed out that “there are no articles on other important economic themes such as pastoralism, internal trade, tourism, medical geography or human ecology and geology, glaciology and plant geography (Gurung, 1980:48). By spatial focus of research work the maximum (39.3 %) are in Nepal in general followed by hill (34.2 %), other countries (9.4 %), mountain (7.7 %), geography general (6.5) and Tarai (3.4 %) respectively (Subedi and Poudel, 2002:3). Of the total (159) articles published up to 2005 the maximum (82.4 %) are research and 17.6 per cent review articles. In this journal only 11.5 per cent research articles are contributed by foreign writers whereas, all the review articles are the contribution of native writers (Table 1).

Out of 25 issues, contribution of the foreign writers is embodied only in 13 issues. By number of the articles the II-III volume is the leading and vol. XXXIII is the smallest. Span of pages in the journal ranges in between 28 (in 1985) to largest 132 (in 1996). Volume 33 is devoted to content of index (1968-2002) therefore; it contains only one article that appraises characteristics of the journal. Though, the number and size varies from volume I to VII the journal has continuously given space for the advertisement. Onward vol. VII advertisement appears occasionally. Because of low price in comparison to the printing cost and insufficient financial source, inclusion of advertisement had been compulsion for NGS to continue the journal. The journal priced Rs. 10 for the initial volume but the price of II-III volume was reduced half (Rs. 10 to 5). This price continued for ten years (1978). In 1979 price increased by four times (Rs 5 to 20). After 5 years, in 1983, it was revised to double increase (Rs. 20 – 40). Nearly one and half decade (1983-1997) this price remained unchanged. The journal priced Rs. 100 for the vol. XXIX (1998). The latest price of the journal is Rs. 125.

Contributions by Harka Gurung

Besides, executive committee and editorial board Dr. Gurung presented himself as an outstanding and dynamic contributor of both research and review article in the journal of NGS. This journal publishes both research and review articles. A total of 159 articles have been published representing 131 research and 28 review articles up to volume 35-36. Out of 131 research articles only 11 are written in joint authorship. In total Dr. Gurung contributed ten research articles and six review articles in *The Himalayan Review*. Of the total of his research articles nine are of single and only one of joint authorship. Out of his ten articles six are related to physical geography, two populations and one each on tourism and general aspects (Table 2).

Table 1. Nature of Articles Published in The Himalayan Review

Volume	Research Articles			Review Articles			Total
	Total	Foreign Writers	Native Writers	Total	Foreign Writers	Native Writers	
I	6	1	5	5	-	5	11
II-III	12	-	12	3	1	2	15
IV	8	1	7	1	-	1	9
V	4	-	4	-	-	-	4
VI	6	1	5	-	-	-	6
VII	4	1	3	1	-	1	5
VIII	4	1	3	1	-	1	5
IX	4	2	2	2	-	2	6
X	4	1	3	2	-	2	6
XI	4	-	4	1	-	1	5
XII	5	1	4	2	-	2	7
XIII	4	2	2	1	-	1	5
XIV	4	-	4	2	-	2	6
XV	4	1	3	1	-	1	5
XVI	3	-	3	-	-	-	3
XVII-XIX	3	-	3	-	-	-	3
XX-XXIII	6	1	5	-	-	-	6
XXIV-XXVIII	10	-	10	-	-	-	10
XXIX	10	-	10	-	-	-	10
XXX	7	1	6	1	-	1	8
XXXI	5	-	5	1	-	1	6
XXXII	4	-	4	2	-	2	6
XXXIII	1	-	1	-	-	-	1
XXXIV	4	1	3	2	-	2	6
XXXV-XXXVI	5	-	5	-	-	-	5
Total	131	15	116	28	1	27	159

The first article of Gurung in *The Himalayan Review* is entitled as Geographic Foundation of Nepal. This is the opening article of this journal. Dividing the discussion into five different sub-topics (natural division, climate, vegetation, cultural process, population and settlement and circulation pattern) Gurung has concisely introduced geographical facts of Nepal, in a descriptive way, without using tables, maps and diagrams. In this article discussion of physical and socio-cultural aspects follows separate sub-headings, but drainage and transportation system are discussed in the single heading circulation pattern. To disseminate geographic knowledge about the kingdom, it is regarded as pioneering article by Nepalese geographers.

Table 2. Contributions of Harka Gurung in “*The Himalayan Review*”

S.N	Title of the Articles	Volume	Year	Page Covered
Research Articles				
1.	Geographic foundation of Nepal	I	1968	1-10
2.	Geomorphology of Pokhara Valley	II-III	1969-70	29-57
3.	Pokhara Valley	II-III	1969-70	16-27
4.	Landscape Pattern of Nepal	IV	1971	1-10
5.	Distribution and Mobility of Graduates in Nepal	V	1972	36-60
6.	The Himalayan review: A Perspective	XII	1980	44-52
7.	Population Change in Nepal (1971-1981)	XIII	1981	1-18
8.	Landscape Processes in Chure Range, Central Nepal	XVII-XIX	1986-88	1-39 (Jt. Author)
9.	Developing Lumbini as Pilgrimage Centre of Peace	XXIX	1998	97-111
10.	Pattern of Elevation range in Nepal	XXXIV	2003	11-16
Review Articles				
11.	Karan, P.P. & Jenkins, W. M. 1960. <i>Nepal: A Physical and Cultural Geography</i> . USA: University of Kentucky, Lexington.	I	1968	78-80
12.	Hagen, T. 1961. <i>Nepal: The Kingdom in the Himalayas</i> . France: Kummerly and Frey, Berne.	I	1968	80-82
13.	Snellgrove, D.L. 1961. <i>Himalayan Pilgrimage: A Study of Tibetan Religion</i> . Oxford: Bruno Cassirer.	I	1968	82-83
14.	Bista, D.B. 1967. <i>Peoples of Nepal</i> . Kathmandu: HMG, Department of Publicity	I	1968	83-85
15.	HMG/DOP. 1966. <i>Nepal in Maps</i> . Kathmandu: His Majesty's Government of Nepal (HMG), Department of Publicity.	I	1968	85-86
16.	Siurikawa, Y. 1971. <i>Himalayas</i> . New York: Harry, N. Abrams Inc.	VII	1975	43-44
Gurung's Book Reviewed				
17.	Gurung, H. 1969. <i>Annapurna to Dhaulagiri: A Decade of Mountaineering in Nepal Himalaya (1950-1960)</i> Kathmandu: HMG, Ministry of Information, reviewed by J.O.M.R.	II-III	1969-70	40-42
18.	Gurung, H. 1980. <i>Vignettes of Nepal</i> . Kathmandu: Sajha Prakashan, reviewed by Chakramahr Bajracharya.	XII	1980	87-90

Note: Jt. means joint author.

Geomorphology of Pokhara Valley and Pokhara Valley are the second and third article of Harka Gurung published in *The Himalayan Review*. Among these the succeeding article is supplement to 21st IGU, Nepal Tour, participated by 46 geographers from 12 countries. Nepal Tour was organized by NGS as post-congress field study meeting of the International Geographical Congress held in Delhi (1st-8th, December, 1968). It was the first geographical congress in Asia, which was attended by about 1300 geographers from 71 countries of the world (Vajracharya, 1969:70). The paper Geomorphology of Pokhara Valley was derived from Gurung's doctoral dissertation on "Pokhara Valley: A Field Study in Regional Geography" submitted to University of Edinburgh in 1965 (Gurung, 1968-70:29). This article discusses geographical landscape of Pokhara Valley in perspective of highland and Pokhara Plain. While discussing the landscape of Pokhara Valley Gurung writes "the region south of Annapurna Himal presents one of the sharpest contrasts in landscape. Dissected rugged hills are typical in the mountainous terrain and the individuality of 48 mile² plain is accentuated by three-quarters of highland relief. Nature of immediate highlands, their morphometric analysis and the process of plain formation is discussed with theoretical base. In this article Gurung clearly disagrees the basis of lacustrine formation idea of Hagen and extra regional alluvial or glacio-fluvial deposition concept of Glennie and Ziegler and presents strong theoretical basis for the formation of Pokhara plain. He considers climatic changes and gravel deposits as a legacy of a peri-glacial past. These discussions are supported with three maps and three photographs. Gurung's academic in-depth and theoretical strength in analyzing geomorphological processes is clearly reflected in this article.

The article entitled "Pokhara Valley" is the third contribution of Gurung's in *The Himalayan Review*. In this article discussion follows systematic approach of analysis – location, structure, geomorphology, hydrology, climate, vegetation, soils, in physical aspects and population, health and education, cultural, settlement, circulation, agriculture, livestock, industry and land-use in human aspects followed by conclusion and recent development. Relating physical and socio-cultural aspects Gurung writes "though humid and malarial conditions conspired to make the lowest elevation (*bensi*) less favourable for permanent occupation, the subsequent movement of population to the '*bensi*' level was forced by the decrease of man/land ratio in the hills with increased population, and the trend has been accelerated recently by the extensive programme of malaria eradication. Technological innovations and central function of Pokhara Town has further enhanced the importance of the plain for hospitality. The completion of 128 kilometer Sunauli-Pokhara (Siddhartha) highway, and 200 kilometer Pokhara-Kathmandu (Prithwi) Highway, initiates far reaching transformations in the economy of the region" (Gurung, 1969-70:22-23).

Landscape pattern of Nepal is the next article of Gurung published in the journal of Nepal Geographical Society. This study introduces landscape pattern of Nepal in seven sub-units, untitled, and numbered only in Roman numerals. Discussion in the article began with landscape pattern of Churia Range followed by *Pahar Zone*, Trans Himalayan (*Bhot*)

Valleys and Main Himalaya. In latter part of the article, analysing landscape pattern on the basis of drainage system Gurung presents his academic argument based on plate tectonic theory in explaining the formation of young fold mountain, Churia Range, and how its formation is linked with the great Himalaya and Siwalik. He argues that mountain landscape is not only barrier but also opportunity and writes “the mountain ranges do act as natural barriers among the various regions of the country but the rivers traversing down the mountain to the plain not only shape the landscape but also articulate circulation of man, materials and ideas. It is not without significance that the Nepalese defy the imposing mountains that divide them and sanctify the fertile rivers that unite them” (Gurung, 1971:10).

In the succeeding article Gurung has changed the theme of writings from physical (continuous from 1st to 4th) to social geography “Distribution and Mobility of Graduates in Nepal”. In absence of regular inventory and up to date list of graduates, the study assumes that ten per cent graduates failed to register in the voter list of 1971 National Panchayat election. Therefore, it estimates the number of graduates to be around 10,887 and discusses distribution by geographical region and subject. Mobility of the graduates is analysed by metropolitan hinterland, flow, employment in different offices and development institutions like education and health. Reflecting the distribution and mobility of graduates Gurung writes “over 60 per cent of graduates are reported in Kathmandu Valley. Of the total, the capital region claims that 77 per cent engineers followed by 73 per cent general science, 72 per cent commerce, 67 per cent law, 81 per cent education, 59 per cent medicals, 54 per cent liberal arts, 45 per cent agriculture, and 33 per cent veterinary graduates. Out of the total 39 Ph. D's only two are working outside the capital region”. The study is supported by nine tables and 12 maps. Table nine is extended to the span of four pages and maps exceed double page size of the journal.

In 1980 Gurung reviewed *The Himalayan Review* published during first decade (1968-1979) entitling the article as “The Himalayan Review: A Perspective”. It attempts to review the progress and content of *The Himalayan Review*, during its first decade of publication. In this critically reviewing the journal Gurung has written “the journal was appropriately titled. Its regular publication must be considered a noteworthy effort in the light of mortality and morbidity of most professional journals in Nepal”. Analysing shape and size, contributors, content by theme and area, classification by aspect, Gurung write a suggestive note. He wished *The Himalayan Review* be perfect in physical quality and balance in published research articles both in theme, coverage of different regions of the country. The section on book review should be considerably expanded. In his own words “the size and format should be kept uniform and the journal has over represented Kathmandu Valley while other larger regions have been neglected. This situation needs to be rectified by publishing more articles of other areas”. Subedi and Poudel (2002) reviewing the journal in 2002 appreciating Gurung idea write “after two decades since this article was published, it appears that the statement of Gurung still holds’. In this article Gurung initiates Nepalese geographers to

contribute in missing themes such as water resources, environmental stress, land use change, population dynamics and air transportation (Gurung, 1980).

Population change in Nepal (1971-1981) is the seventh article of Dr. Harka Gurung embodied in *The Himalayan Review*. This study considers change in district boundary as the important factor for population change in Nepal. On the basis of census data of 1971-1981, the study analyses absolute and percentile change by district and development regions. The east-west aspect is examined on the basis of three major river basins and north south by ecological regions and geographical component with the support of three maps, one figure and six tables. Analyzing population change of Nepal by geographical regions Gurung points out that “population increase was most pronounced in the eastern and western parts of Terai region followed by Inner Terai districts and some hill districts, with extensive low valleys. Population increases in most of the hill districts have moderate where as mountain region have marginal increase”. (Gurung, 1981:14).

The 8th article of Gurung’s published in the journal is “Landscape Change in Churia Range: Central Nepal” in joint authorship. It is the lengthiest article of *The Himalayan Review* published from 1968-2005. Out of the total eighty pages of volume XVII-XXIX this article covers 48.8 percent of the journal. It has analysed geomorphic processes, prevalent land forms and land-use of four sample localities covering an area of 387 mile². Under physical aspects geology, climate, vegetation, drainage network, drainage basin morphometry, erosion processes, and depositional forms are discussed. Similarly, settlement, resource use and perception and land use are discussed under human aspects. Four figures, seven maps, five photographs and ten tables have supported the analysis of the study. On the basis of the study the writers suggest that in the mountainous country Nepal there is need for a more in-depth study based on at least one year investigation with sufficient financial support and necessary scientific equipments.

After a decade Gurung’s again has contributed an article in “*The Himalayan Review*” focusing on pilgrimage tourism and concerned development planning. This article is entitled as “Developing Lumbini as Pilgrimage Centre of Peace”. It is a revised version of the keynote addressed given at World Buddhist Summit, held at Lumbini during 30th Nov. 2nd Dec. 1998. In the preceding section the article deals with the setting, historical and archeological overview of Lumbini, and in the succeeding section review of development efforts, donor contribution and aspects towards fulfillment have been discussed. Gurung attempts to draw attention to the importance of Lumbini and writes” over two millennia age, the plain around Lumbini harbored a rich civilization. There should be many more sites lying underground beyond our ken. Monuments and materials have become victims of political turbulence and natural ravages. The ideas and philosophy profounded by Buddha, son of that soil is now central to belief of a major portion of the mankind. However, developing Lumbini as a place of pilgrimage and peace is indeed a challenge. The fulfillment of this

novel endeavor should consider some practical measures like review, necessary modification, judicious phasing of development activities and follow-up of the archaeological work. But commitment, co-operation and mobilization are the pre-conditions” (Gurung, 1998:110). Four tables and a map included in the article have notably supported to draw the attention of the readers.

Pattern of elevation range in Nepal in the last article of Harka Gurung published in *The Himalayan Review*. In this research article pattern of elevation levels are described in two perspectives longitudinal (north-south) and latitudinal (east-west) and two hierarchies’ regional level and district level. The study analyses elevation ranges of all 75 districts of Nepal, dividing elevation into seven different ranges at an interval of 500 meter with minimum and maximum level below 500m and over 6,000m. Four tables in the text and two tables as annex and one map have made the article more analytical and interesting.

Review Articles

There exists co-incidence that the research article and review article contributed by Dr. Harka Gurung in *The Himalayan Review* follows almost the same type of sequence by nature of subject. He contributed half a dozen review articles, of which five are embodied in the first volume of the journal. Most of the books he reviewed are related to physical aspects of geography of Nepal written by the foreign writers (Table 2).

‘Nepal: A Physical and Cultural Geography’ written by Karan and Jenkins is the first book reviewed by Gurung. He might have given this priority to review this book because it was the first comprehensive geography of Nepal based on reconnaissance and land-use aerial survey of the country. Critically reviewing the book Gurung has pointed out that the book contains numerous statements that are either over-generalizations or factual errors or ill founded mainly in the analysis of northern boundary and climate of the country. He writes land form characteristics have not been fully dealt with. Folding maps are wrongly grided. It does not represent administrative units and fails to describe cultural matrix, ethnographic and linguistic zone reliably. This book provides a good chapter on population. These expressions of Gurung’s amply reflect his commanding knowledge on different geographical aspects of Nepal. Though the review includes several weakness of the writers but in the succeeding section of the article Gurung appreciates the book as “If there are inadequacies in the book, these are obvious in a pioneer work on a complex area. The high standard of cartography and a bibliography over 235 items are the main assets of the book” (Gurung, 1968:80).

The second review is on the book ‘Nepal’ which was written by Toni Hagen, on the basis of extensive travel as geologist that presents the best introduction to Nepal. Gurung comments Hagen on physical aspects like orogenesis, climate and vegetational characteristics.

He further appreciates the author about economic development and highly selective photographs that covers diverse aspects of the country. This indicates Gurung's in-depth knowledge in physical aspects of the country and interest using photography as a tool of geographers. He writes "the book is well-conceived and remains the best introduction to Nepal" (Gurung, 1968:80).

The next book review contributed by Harka Gurung in "*The Himalayan Review*" is *Himalayan Pilgrimage* authored by Snellgrove (1961). The book is the out come of the author's extensive travel through the trans-Himalayan region of Nepal over 17,000 feet in altitude and interest in Tibetan Buddhism. Reviewer appreciates the author for the classification and analysis of shrine, Gompas and place names. Gurung writes that Snellgrove fails in specifying particular settlement located at higher altitudes though the author cogently stresses the unity of diverse cultures in Nepal (Gurung, 1968).

Comprehensive mosaic of the diverse elements that make-up the Nepalese society reflected in the book entitled "Peoples of Nepal" written by Bista in 1967 is the next review of Harka Gurung in *The Himalayan Review* (Table 2). Dividing the country into three parts by geographic characteristics, the book discusses the various tribal, caste and local groups within a broad frame-work. Reviewer has put his very low voice on comments of the book. Gurung praising Bista writes 'the author has done a praiseworthy job of collecting to much material and introducing people and society of Nepal and succeeds in drawing a bold relief of the main features'.

Gurung has reviewed the book *Nepal in Maps*, published by Department of publicity, HMG, in 1966 (Table 2) that contains 26 maps dealing with physical, cultural and economic aspects of the country. Twenty five tables in the book show comparative progress of Nepal. Carefully reviewing the book Gurung expresses his view that the book might be taken as an authoritative reference work which it is not because most of the maps bear no scale, boundary shown in the map are not authoritative, physical map is misleading by its tone value, land-use map is over simplified, place names are misspelled, rivers alignment are not proper, rainfall, population, economic, transport maps does not tally to the data. Therefore, these obvious errors must be carefully edited to regard its authoritative reference.

A photographic book entitled *Himalayas* authored by Yoshikazu Shirakawa (Table 2) that contains 119 photographs (91 colours and weigh 5.4 kg) and four maps was reviewed by Gurung in volume VII of *The Himalayan Review*. The photographs of the book include Nepal Himalayas (54), Punjab Himalaya (18), Sikkim Himalayas (31), and Hindu Kush Range (16), taken during author's trek to the Himalayas. Gurung reviewing the book writes "apart from minor errors in place names and date the book succeeds well in conveying the magnitude and mood of the Himalayas. To the average readers the price of the book US\$ 100 is as stupendous as the mountain themselves.

Gurung's Books Reviewed

Numbers of books contributed by Dr. Harka Gurung have been published. However, only two books have been reviewed in *The Himalayan Review*. The first book *Vignettes of Nepal* (Gurung, 1980) published by *Sajha Prakashan* was reviewed by Chakramehr Bajracharya in 1980. The reviewer writes "this book has filled rarity of perceptive travel account in Nepali geographic literature". The book is extended in the span of 435 pages and twenty chapters with 11 colour and 14 black and white photo plates, bibliography, glossary and index. Regarding the book Bajracharya prefer to write "the book is not merely a travel account as travel accounts go, but a perceptive exercise in diverse geographical, social, economic and developmental manifestations of Nepal whose chapters are organized geographically from west to the east". He writes the book introduces to the readers a wide range of environmental conditions, type of vegetation, land-use, exotic scenic attraction between tropical plain and the alpine height of Nepal.

Gurung's book on "Annapurna to Dhaulagiri: A Decade of Mountaineering in Nepal Himalaya (1950-1960) was reviewed by J.O.M.R. in volume II-III of *The Himalayan Review* (Table 2). Regarding the book the reviewer writes "this little book is basically a concise history of mountaineering in Nepal and is especially welcome at this time, co-inciding as it does with the publication of HMG's regulations for mountaineering in Nepal and the opening of the mountains after a lapse of three years to foreign expeditions. The book is well produced and printed, with few miss-prints and poor printing of black and white photographs. Reviewer has made correction of wrong date of expedition team leader and route in the sprit of segmentation rather than criticism. Reviewer appreciates and writes "the book is a tribute to Dr. Harka Gurung that on the one hand his book should encourage such careful consideration, and on the other that this same examination should reveal so few errors and minor in accuracies".

Gurung in Other Publications of Nepal Geographical Society

In 2002 NGS published a book entitled "Pokhara Valley: A Geographical Survey" written by Dr. Harka Gurung based on his Ph. D. thesis submitted to university of Edinburgh, Scotland in 1965. This research was undertaken as a Colombo Plan scholar of HMG under the supervision of Dr. Arthur Geddes. The book is published in the span of 97 pages the book includes 7 chapters, 16 tables, 10 photos plates (8 colour and 2 black white), 36 maps and diagrams. It is soft covered and costs NRS 300.

This book covers various physical aspects such as structure, relief, drainage, climate, bio-geography and soils. Similarly various cultural and economic aspects such as cultural area, settlement, population, growth of Pokhara town and land-use of Pokhara Valley has been systematically analysed and synthesized. Major portion of the book was published in two

articles of *The Himalayan Review* vol II-III. Half of the text of the book is already included in these articles. The photographs maps, and detail tables have made the book more interesting and proved Gurung's versatile nature and capacity of geographical inquiry, interpretation, theoretical explanation and factual presentation. Therefore, it deserves importance though the writings was prepared and submitted for academic degree before 36 year of the publication in the book form. Gurung has shown unforgettable affection to the Nepal Geographical Society providing the opportunity of publishing the book without any investment and efforts. Therefore, Prof. Malla president of NGS has written in the foreword of the book "his assurance of a certain percentage of the sales proceeds to NGS is highly appreciated".

Mountain environment and landscape change (Table 2) is the latest article of Harka Gurung published by NGS. This article is the key note address delivered by Gurung in a national gathering of Nepalese geographers organized by NGS in Pokahara during 4-5 Jan. 2004. Dividing the speech into four sub-topics- what is mountain?, terminological traverse, conceptual clarification and landscape change Gurung not only sets the theme of the conference but also exemplifies the spatio-temporal dimensions that geographers should focus upon considering Nepal's environmental and social diversity. Using repeated photographs of Taranche, Lamjung (his birth place) for 40 years span (1962-2002) he clearly demonstrate how the changing landscape in central hill of Nepal is the out come of the interplay between natural and cultural processes in which the former remains dominant even if the latter seems more apparent (Gurung, 2005:17).

To Conclude

Dr. Harka Gurung has become immortal by his academic contribution to the nation, Nepal Geographical Society, its journal and other publications. His contribution of research and review articles in diverse and multifarious fields of geographic studies clearly provides academic awareness and direction to the Nepalese geographers and their publications. However, the study and analysis of physical aspects of geography have been his main interest of thrust in the publication of NGS. Dr. Gurung's earliest (1968) and the latest (2003) research articles embodied in the publication of NGS are both focused on physical geography. Even in review articles he has given more focus on physical geography. Comparatively though little in number, his writings on socio-cultural aspects of geography also covers diverse fields. These works of Dr. Gurung's and straight forward writing and viewing mountains and natural diversity as resources are equally noteworthy for making academic awareness of both professional researchers and vocational in general and geographers in particular. Therefore, Gurung's contribution in the publication of NGS have been perennial source of inspiration to students, researchers and others who are interested in geography and social and developmental issues of Nepal.

The demise of Dr. Gurung in a Helicopter accident on 23rd September 2006 (7th Aswin, 2063) at Ghunsa (Taplejung District, Eastern Nepal) has been irrecoverable loss to the Nepal Geographical Society, Nepalese Geographers and the nation.

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