

Rethinking Dor Bahadur Bista's, "Fatalism or Development?"

A New Perspective on the Development of Nepal

by Geoffrey Clarfield (December 2016)



1) Introduction

In the scramble to assist Nepal in its desire to reach the standard of living of an average OECD nation, the OECD provides more than 50% of Nepal's development funding. Clearly then Nepal is a different kind of society than those of the fully industrialized world. But what is its exact nature? Until 1950 Nepal was a classic agrarian state. Since 1950 it has become an industrializing agrarian state, with many of the classic features of this kind

of social formation that characterizes societies as culturally distinct but structurally similar as Mexico, Guatemala, Turkey or Morocco.

Macrosociologists would argue that contemporary Nepal as an industrializing society combines elements of traditional agrarian societies with elements of modern industrial practise. Despite the adoption and promotion by urbanized elites of modern education, evidence based medicine, bureaucracy and professional standards in science, medicine, engineering and banking, the characteristic attitudes and practices of the pre-industrial agrarian world persist, and get in the way of a more rapid move to modernity, especially in the faction ridden world of Nepali politics and the guild-like cartels of the private sector, that dominate this country's private sector.

For those interested in the development of Nepal this provides a different perspective from which to contemplate the late Dor Bahadur Bista's classic anthropological and controversial tome on underdevelopment, [here](#).

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