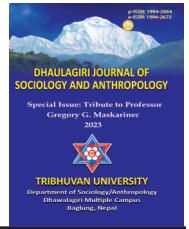


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Dhaulagiri Journal of Sociology and Anthropology



Professor Gregory: From Shamans of Jajarkot to Dr. Govinda KC's Hunger Strike Research

- Madhusudan Subedi

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Abstract

Loss of a loved one is deeply emotional. This obituary paper is about Professor Gregory G. Maskarinec (May 16, 1951-June 16, 2022), a true friend, an academic intellectual and an honest researcher of medical anthropology. Working with him and sharing ideas with open mind was a great opportunity for me and many scholars in Nepal. Based on collaborative work, interaction and the interview with Professor Gregory, in his remembrance, I have highlighted his academic background and work experiences, friendship and collaborative work, my privilege and opportunities to write about him for his professorship and some of the dreams that could not happen due to his sudden demise. My deepest sympathies are with his family.

Keywords: Gregory Maskarinec, health governance, medical anthropology, shamanistic traditions

Introduction

June 18, 2022 as soon as I woke up in the morning, I saw a new email. I saw the name of the person who sent the email, I got a little scared, and I thought it might be some bad news. I read the email. It was written:

Good morning, I wanted to let you know that Gregory died shortly after midnight on June 16. During the last 2 months on home hospice, he was glad and appreciative that he was able to be at home and look into our garden, but he had a lot of pain and suffering and did not eat anything during the last 52 days. It was very hard to see this process of slow decline. He looked asleep when he finally stopped breathing. I am very sad but I am happy to have our daughters and grandchildren in my life and we know

that we will continue our life with good memories of Gregory. I tried to find the email addresses for all his Nepal-related friends, but there must be more than I included here. So please forward this message to others.

Thanks so much.
Gertraud

Gertraud Maskarinec, Professor and Associate Director of Cancer Research Education and Training, University of Hawai'i Cancer Center, and the wife of Professor Gregory G. Maskarinec, wrote this email. I was heartbroken and distraught over the death of my dear friend Prof. Gregory G. Maskarinec. What to do, what not to do, I was confused. After 7 Am, I phoned my friend Dr. Man Bahadur Khattri, the Editor-in-Chief of Dhaulagiri Journal of Sociology



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and Anthropology. Professor Gregory was a member of the International Advisory Board of the journal since 2016 and he was a cultural anthropologist in the Departments of Native Hawaiian Health and Family Medicine and Community Health at the John A. Burns School of Medicine, University of Hawaii. He was the Director of Global Health and Internal Medicine.

We both were sad, and remembered our meetings, interactions, email exchanges with Professor Gregory, who trusted our work at Dhaulagiri Journal and understood all conditions, and donated US\$ 5000 for the sustainability of the Dhaulagiri Journal of Sociology and Anthropology, at the end of his life. The journal family is always grateful for his invaluable contribution.

Methods and Materials

Professor Gregory had visited more than 70 districts of Nepal. He suffered from cancer and had several operations done. He was also infected by COVID-19 in August 2020. He died on June 16, 2022.

This obituary paper focuses on some of the memories shared by Professor Gregory while working with him in different contexts, meetings and interaction, email exchanges, and the interview with him (Subedi and Khattri, 2022). I have highlighted some important events, qualities, contributions and connections of Professor Gregory.

Family and Professional Life

Professor Gregory was born on 16th May 1951 in the USA. Prof. Gertraud and Prof. Gregory have two daughters, Malika and Maya, both college professors, at the University of Bern (Switzerland) and University of Southern California (USC), respectively, in the departments of Germanistik and History, while his sons-in-law teach English and Classics. Each daughter has one son and one daughter.

Professor Gregory was invited several times to work at Europe's most prominent research institution, France's Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS, Paris), in both the "Milieux, Societes et Cultures en Himalaya" division and in the "Laboratoire de langues et civilisations à tradition orale," opportunities that have kept him in contact with many prominent Himalayan experts and with contemporary currents in anthropological theory and research.

He has conducted research on traditional medicine, medical education, and contemporary medical systems in Nepal, Bangladesh, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Palau, American Samoa, the Federated States of Micronesia (Yap, Chuuk, Pohnpei and Kosrae), and the Republic of the Marshall Islands as well as in Hawai'i and the continental United States (Arkansas).

Professor Gregory had been significantly involved in developing and implementing numerous medical education efforts for physicians, nurses, and allied health professionals throughout the US Associated Pacific Island States (Commonwealth of the Marianas Islands, Guam, The Federated States of Micronesia, The Republic of the Marshall Islands, The Republic of Palau, and American Samoa), efforts supported by Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the US Health and Human Services Division and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), and had heavily been involved in promoting problem-based learning (PBL) as an appropriate and cost-effective method for continuing medical training, disaster preparedness, and multidisciplinary tuberculosis control.

The author of several books and many articles, his work on Nepal has been honored, on the recommendation of the Nepal Royal Academy, with the "Birendra Pragyalankar" from the late King of Nepal, Birendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev. This award is the highest honor given by Nepal to non-native scholars in recognition of outstanding research in Nepalese studies. He was also the only foreigner to have received a Vidhyadhari (Honorary degree of Sanskrit Scholarship) from the late Nepalese scholar and religious leader, Yogi Naraharinath, in recognition of his unique contribution to the understanding of Nepalese language and culture. Professor Gregory had received Senior Fulbright Awards two times (2010 and 2015), and had taught as a visiting professor at Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu (Nepal); Asian University for Women, Chittagong (Bangladesh); the University of Paris X (Nanterre); and the University of Zürich (Switzerland). In 2016 he was given the "National Honor - 2016 Award" from the Nepal literary organization "Nepal Sahitya dot com," honoring his lifetime commitment to Nepali language and literature.

As a research director in the Department of Family Medicine and Community Health of the John A. Burns School of Medicine, University of Hawai'i, each year he used to advise six senior residents who must complete their required research projects, and

they were very successful in incorporating social science methodology into projects that examine patient attitudes, beliefs, and practices, patient education, case studies, and quality improvement projects. Additional research on which he had assisted includes a translational diabetes project in the Marshall Islands, women's health issues in American Samoa, attitudes and beliefs regarding tuberculosis in the Federated States of Micronesia, outer island dispensary evaluation in Yap and Chuuk, public health innovations and evaluations in Palau, and clinical education needs assessments in seven jurisdictions.

Study of Dhamis-Jhankris of Nepal

In 1977, Gregory came to Nepal and was posted in Jajarkot as a Peace Corps Volunteer. He had done BA in Mathematics. At that time, in rural Nepal like Jajarkot, getting a mathematics teacher was difficult. He started to teach mathematics in a high school. It was the most remote posting offered that year and had never had a Peace Corps volunteer posted there before.

While living in Jajarkot, he realized that people's consciousness is shaped by culture and multiple realities could be considered and rational and social existences can be constructed in different ways. He observed day-to-day life and living of people, agriculture, food habits, and health seeking behavior of the people and livelihood strategies. He was fascinated by the searching, understanding and cure for bodily affliction in Jajarkot that was completely different than that of the USA. He returned back to the USA, joined MA in Anthropology, and came back to Jajarkot for thesis work. His thesis in MA was "Jajarkoti Jhakri Oral Texts: Shamanic Recitals from Western Nepal (1986) from University of Hawai'i." He joined PhD in anthropology immediately after his graduation and came to Jajarkot. He defended PhD thesis entitled, "The Rulings of the Night: An Ethnographic Exegesis of Shamanic Oral Texts from Western Nepal" in 1990 (Maskarinec, 1995). Altogether, he lived in Jajarkot for more than six years.

Professor Gregory used to consider himself a cultural anthropologist. Most of his academic contributions are focused on the culture of various medical traditions. His writings are important contributions to the anthropology of language, ritual, and social reality.

Friendship and Collaborative Work

I had heard about Professor Gregory from my senior colleagues at the Central Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Tribhuvan University. In 1997, I read his book, 'The Rulings of the Night: An Ethnography of Nepalese Shaman Oral Texts. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press (1995)'. Considering its anthropological and social values, the book was reprinted from Kathmandu, Nepal (1999) and it was translated into Nepali language and published in 2013. It is a unique contribution to anthropology and the oral tradition of the shamans of Nepal.

I first met Professor Gregory at the University of Bergen, Norway, in 2000. At that time, I was doing a Master of Philosophy course in Social Anthropology under the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD) Fellowship Program. Professor Bhim Subedi from the Central Department of Geography of Tribhuvan University (TU) was at the same university for three months as a Senior Research Fellowship. Both Gregory and Bhim had done PhD from the University of Hawai'i. Professor Bhim introduced me with Professor Gregory and his family. From 2000 onwards, we became close friends because we both had a common interest in the social and cultural aspects of health, illness and suffering, and health governance.

Professor Gregory was very much concerned about Nepal's health system and he used to highlight that Nepal's health care system is threatened by the privatization of medical services, and the government's inconsistent, inadequate, and superficial responses to the problems associated with the recent uncontrolled expansion of medical education in Nepal.

In 2010-11, Prof. Gregory was granted Fulbright Senior Scholar Award at the Central Department of Sociology and Anthropology, TU. I developed a course, 'Culture, Society and Health', for the master-level students of sociology and anthropology at TU. He contributed to revising and finalizing the curriculum and also helped to collect reading for preparing the compendium. Prof. Gregory took some classes at the Central Department of Sociology and Anthropology, TU, and his way of teaching and interacting was highly admired by the students. He also highlighted the practical research on topics particularly concerning medical ethics and

medicine as a cultural system. His logical reasoning was appreciated by the students as well as faculty members. Some students constantly were in touch with him and had been benefitting academically, especially in the field of medical anthropology and shamanistic tradition of Nepal.

In 2010-11, Prof. Gregory also attended sessions and delivered invited lectures in Kathmandu at Martin Chautari, Social Science Baha, Central Department of Sociology and Anthropology-TU, and at the Patan Academy of Health Sciences (PAHS). I also joined with him and shared my views in some of these occasions. Many social scientists, especially anthropologists, are familiar with his writings and reasoning. Prof. Gregory writings are wide ranging – Bio Ethics and Social Science, Anthropology and Culture of Medicine, Health and Human Rights, Politicization of Medical Education and Practice, and Languages of Political Discourse.

When he came to Nepal for the second time as a Fulbright scholar in 2015, I suggested that he study a slightly different but important subject. I requested him to study medical education governance in Nepal. He immediately accepted my request and asked for help for further information. We conducted a research of a non-violent movement of Govinda KC, a Professor of orthopedics and philanthropic activist who relentlessly pursued reforms in the health sector regardless of the danger to his life. Our intensive research started with the ethical permission of Nepal Health Research Council. Former Vice-Chancellor of Tribhuvan University Kedar Bhakta Mathema and Hira Bahadur Maharjan, Dr. Arjun Karki, Dr. Bhagwan Koirala, Dr. Saroj Dhital, Dr. Shankar Rai, medical students, and other stakeholders related to the theme of research were consulted, interacted and interviewed. The results obtained from this research were presented at programs organized by Martin Chautari and the Annual Conference of Central Department of Sociology in November 2016. An article was published in an international journal and published an article in Social Medicine (<https://www.socialmedicine.info/index.php/socialmedicine/article/view/1145/2173>).

Professor Gregory was a very true friend of mine. We shared our thoughts and ideas several times. An earthquake struck near Kathmandu in central Nepal on 25 April 2015. About 9,000 people were killed, many thousands were injured and more than 600,000 structures in Kathmandu and other nearby towns were either damaged or destroyed. Gregory was

THE J. WILLIAM FULBRIGHT FOREIGN SCHOLARSHIP BOARD



February 27, 2015

Dr. Gregory Maskarinec
 2304 Lipioma Way
 Honolulu, Hawaii 96822-1955
 United States

Dear Dr. Maskarinec,

On behalf of the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board (FFSB), I am pleased to congratulate you on your selection for a Fulbright award to Nepal. The FFSB is the presidentially appointed 12-member Board responsible for supervising the Fulbright Program worldwide and approving selection of all Fulbright recipients. Your grant is made possible through funds appropriated annually by the U.S. Congress and, in many cases, by contributions from partner countries and the private sector.

Your selection for a Fulbright award is an achievement for which you can be justly proud. However, your award is contingent upon the completion of several more steps before you become a Fulbright grantee. These include, but are not limited to the following:

- Obtaining official research clearance from the host country (where applicable)
- Satisfactory medical clearance
- Required visas

The terms and conditions of your award and other pertinent information will be forwarded to you by the Fulbright Commission or the Council for International Exchange of Scholars (CIES) following completion of all required paperwork. After you receive your grant documents, you must sign and return them as instructed. If you have any questions, please contact your program representative at CIES.

The Fulbright Program aims to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries, and it is the flagship international educational exchange program sponsored by the U.S. government. As a Fulbright grantee, you will join the ranks of distinguished participants in the program. Fulbright alumni have become heads of state, judges, ambassadors, cabinet ministers, CEOs, and university presidents, as well as leading journalists, artists, scientists, and teachers. They have been awarded 53 Nobel Prizes. Since its beginnings in 1946, more than 360,000 Fulbrighters have participated in the Program.

Senator Fulbright's goal of developing international understanding depends on a commitment from Fulbright grantees to establish open communication and long-term cooperative relationships. As a Fulbrighter and a representative of the United States, you will have the opportunity to work collaboratively with international partners in educational, political, cultural, economic, and scientific fields. We also hope you will become involved in your local community while on your Fulbright exchange. In so doing, you will demonstrate the qualities of service, excellence, and leadership that have been the hallmarks of this program for more than 65 years.

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the United States Department of State, which oversees the operations of this Program throughout the world, joins the Board in congratulating you. We hope that your Fulbright experience will be highly rewarding professionally and personally, and that you will share the knowledge you gain as a Fulbrighter with many others throughout your life.

Sincerely,



Betty Castor
 Chair

A Presidential Appointed Board Responsible to the Congress and the Public authorized under the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961
 WASHINGTON, D.C. 20547


concerned about the situation of his friend in Nepal and had written an email about the situation. I wrote an email to him that our family was safe and keeping well aftermath of the devastating earthquake. He wrote an email:

Dear Madhu, What a relief to hear that you are alive and safe, I have been thinking about you, and others, and the whole situation, day by day, and am very relieved to get your note. Stay safe!

Warmly,
 Gregory

I Felt Honored While Writing a Letter of Evaluation

In 2014, I received a letter from the Department of Family Medicine and Community Health, John A. Burns School of Medicine, University of Hawaii. I was requested to write an objective opinion about the scholarly contributions of Dr. Gregory Maskarinec for promotion to Professor. I did my best on the promotion criteria of the university. Criteria were – teaching, research, scholarship, and service. After a couple of months, I received another letter from the same university saying that he was promoted to professor that made me happy.

 **UNIVERSITY of HAWAII**
MĀNOA

John A. Burns School of Medicine
Department of Family Medicine and Community Health

September 11, 2014

Madhusudan Subedi
Professor
Patan Academy of Health Sciences
Community Health Sciences
P.O. Box# 26500, Lagankhel, Lalitpur, Nepal
madhusubedi@nahs.edu.np

Dear Mr. Subedi:

The Department of Family Medicine and Community Health at the John A. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM) – University of Hawaii at Manoa is considering Dr. Maskarinec for promotion to Professor. For this purpose, the University of Hawaii at Manoa requires that we seek external evaluations of each applicant's work. The purpose of this request is to obtain an objective opinion about the scholarly contributions which the applicant has made.

Your name was suggested by either the applicant or the department as a potential external reviewer. Per UH Manoa procedures, applicants are not allowed to directly contact potential external reviewers, therefore I am contacting you to see if you would assist us by providing an assessment of the significance of Dr. Maskarinec's scholarly and professional standing in a community of peers as well as your opinion as to whether his accomplishments warrant promotion at our institution at this time.

It is my hope that you will be able to provide a critical evaluation of Dr. Maskarinec's work. A detailed evaluation serves us better than a testimonial summary. To aid you, I am enclosing a copy of Dr. Maskarinec's curriculum vitae and the University of Hawaii at Manoa's promotion and/or tenure criteria (as well as any applicable department and school criteria). It would be most helpful if you addressed the following:

- Dr. Maskarinec's primary scholarly or creative contributions and their impact on the field
- How Dr. Maskarinec's accomplishments compare to those of other scholars in the field at a similar level
- The quality of the venues in which Dr. Maskarinec's work has appeared
- Dr. Maskarinec's independent productivity and creativity and/or role in co-authored publications

If you are able to comment on Dr. Maskarinec's contributions as a teacher and mentor and/or service to the profession, this would also be very helpful.

So that reviewers understand your knowledge of Dr. Maskarinec, we require you to state your (current or prior) professional affiliation or association with Dr. Maskarinec. (For example if you are at present or have been a colleague or collaborator, you must explain how you know of or have worked with the candidate and describe the frequency and/or time period of this association. Similarly, if you have

the faculty at the Patan Academy of Health Sciences (PAHS), a newly established Health Science University which had PBL pedagogy for undergraduate medical students. PBL was a new concept for the faculties at PAHS. The title of his presentation was, "Integrating Four Domains of Medical Knowledge into PBL". He highlighted the four domains (biological, clinical, behavioral, and population) of medical knowledge and the advantages of PBL based on his own and the experiences of John A. Burns School of Medicine, University of Hawaii. He emphasized that a good case of PBL should include all four domains.

The advantages of PBL mentioned were:


1. PBL encourages learners to identify their knowledge deficits and to correct deficits by means of active, self-directed learning.
2. Participants themselves determine what is most relevant to their learning.
3. PBL takes advantage of local resources and is locally sustainable.
4. PBL cases are easily modified to be more appropriate locally

In his presentation, Prof. Gregory highlighted that health is a fundamental human rights and gross inequalities in health care are politically, socially and economically unacceptable. He emphasized that social justice in medicine requires:

1. Understanding the social determinants of health,
2. Seeking the equitable distribution of health resources,
3. Correcting injustice in the institutions that support the condition for a healthy life,
4. Advocating for positive changes in the larger health care system and in society,
5. Social justice should examine critically political economic structural relations among economic system, political power, social classes and ideologies, and
6. Poverty is a key determinant of illness.

We both were involved in making a student and faculty exchange program. In the initial phase, we were planning that Nepalese medical and public health students would go to America and American students would come to Nepal and study and research for some time. While we were drawing a blueprint for cooperation, he fell ill again, and this time with cancer and he passed away at the age of 71.

Another dream was to write a book about the genesis and outcomes of the movement of Dr. Govinda KC. I am not sure whether I would be able to accomplish the task alone.

 **UNIVERSITY of HAWAII**
MĀNOA

John A. Burns School of Medicine
Department of Family Medicine and Community Health

June 15, 2015

Madhusudan Subedi
Professor
Patan Academy of Health Sciences
Community Health Sciences
P.O. Box# 26500, Lagankhel, Lalitpur, Nepal
madhusubedi@nahs.edu.np

RE: Gregory Maskarinec for Promotion to Professor-
John A. Burns School of Medicine, University of Hawaii


Dear Mr. Subedi,

On behalf of the University of Hawaii and the John A. Burns School of Medicine we would like to thank you for taking the time to assist us with evaluating Dr. Gregory Maskarinec for Promotion.

As the review process is officially complete, we would like to inform you that Dr. Maskarinec has been successfully promoted to the rank of Professor.

Again, we appreciate your comments on his professional contributions and qualifications. Your input plays a significant role in the overall review process.

Sincerely,



Allen L. Hixon, MD
Professor and Department Chair

95-250 Kuahalahi Avenue, Mililani, Hawaii 96789
Telephone: (808) 627-2245 Fax: (808) 627-7972
Medical Student Teaching Division: (808) 627-3215 Fax: (808) 627-3262
Residency Program: (808) 627-2220 Fax: (808) 627-2265
Web site: www2.jabsom.hawaii.edu/FamilyMedicine
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Unrealized Dreams

On 17 January 2011, Prof. Gregory gave a presentation about Problem Based Learning (PBL) to



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John A. Burns School of Medicine
Office of Global Health and International Medicine

Dean
Patan Academy of Health Sciences
School of Medicine

Exploring possibilities for a school-to-school exchange program

Dear Madam,

Our medical school in Hawai'i, the John A Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM) currently has 35 "memorandums of understanding" MOUs with other medical schools, located in Japan, Korea, Thailand, Taiwan, Philippines, and Indonesia (see our website at <http://jabsom.hawaii.edu/globalhealth/> for more information).

These MOUs allow for reciprocal student exchange. This year, for example, we will host for one month each 26 students who are in their final year of study at these various schools, and will send 18 of our final year students for one month observerships to these schools.

As the new director of Global Health and International Medicine at JABSOM, and because of my long-standing connections with Nepal going back 40 years, I am interested in exploring ways that we might have a similar relationship with your school, and therefore would like to discuss this possibility with you.

Sincerely,

Gregory G Maskarinec PhD
Director
JABSOM Office of Global Health and International Medicine
e-mail: gregorym@hawaii.edu

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Conclusion

Professor Gregory G. Maskarinec was a true friend, academic intellectual and an honest researcher. He had good relationships with high-level scholars, university teachers, literature artists, and politicians of Nepal. He participated in literature festivals in rural areas and promoted local arts and artists. He was worried about the poor health governance of Nepal and the consequences of social inequalities. During these times of sorrow, sharing fond memories can provide some solace to those who are closest friends and relatives. My deepest sympathies are with his family.

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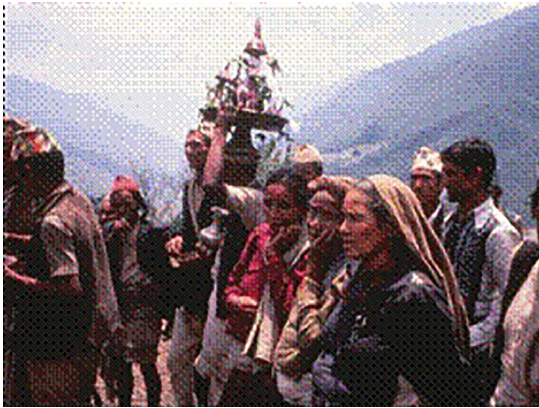
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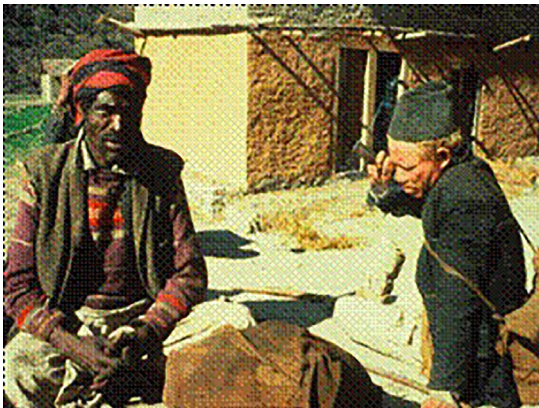
Annex I

On 17 December 2010, Professor Gregory gave a presentation at the Central Department of Sociology and Anthropology (CDSA), Tribhuvan University, as a Visiting Fulbright Scholar. The title of his presentation was 'Struggles between Rulers and Oracular Mediums in Jajarkot'. The key points of his presentations were: Social relevance of shamanistic studies; overemphasis on witches; relatives and neighbors; avenging suicides; and class struggle in west Nepal. The first photograph is farewell of Prof. Gregory from the CDSA, TU, and the second is Prof. Gregory with the author. The other photographs were used by the Prof. Gregory in his presentation.











Madhusudan Subedi (<http://orcid.org/0000-0001-6495-0601>) is a Medical Sociologist/Anthropologist and Professor of the Department of Community Health Sciences and Coordinator of the School of Public Health, Patan Academy of Health Sciences. He is also associated with the Central Department of Sociology, Tribhuvan University, Nepal.

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