

REVIEW ARTICLE

A Dictionary of Contemporary Newari: Newari—English, compiled by Ulrike Kölver and Iswarananda Shresthacharya with the assistance of Daya Ratna Sakya and Nirmal Man Tuladhar [Nepalica 8 (series editors, Bernhard Kölver and Siegfried Lienhard)] Bonn: Vereinigung für Geschichtswissenschaft Hochasiens—Wissenschaftsverlag GmbH, 1994, xx, pp. 341.

E. Austin Hale

Kölver-Shresthacharya (henceforth KS) is a major new resource for English speakers who wish to study Newari. It joins a very small set of previous works: Hans Jørgensen (1941) for classical Newari; Gutschow, Kölver and Shresthacharya (1987) for architectural terms, and Manandhar and Vergatti (1986 henceforth MV) in addition to a number of shorter works. For those already versed in Newari there are also Pannaprasād Joshi (1995) and Satya Mohan Joshi (1986), the latter of which lists forms I fail to find anywhere else.

For the English speakers who wish to come to some understanding of present-day Newari either in spoken or written form, the appearance of Kölver and Shresthacharya's *A Dictionary of Contemporary Newari, Newari - English*, is a most welcome event in the history of Newari lexicography. It is a large and beautiful volume, well bound on good paper, exquisitely edited and printed. Its form of entry is exemplary, making use of both Devanagari key words and their roman transliterations sorted in a admirably consistent implementation of Devanagari order. The English glosses are concise and helpful. This volume was clearly a labour of love. Anything that I shall say by way of criticism or complaint should be taken as minor in comparison with my overriding gratitude to the compilers for this magnificent volume.

Shortly after I agreed to write this review, Professor T. R. Kansakar published his review of this volume. As a mother-tongue speaker of Newari, a competent linguist and experienced translator, Professor Kansakar is in a better position than I to judge how well the dictionary handles Newari semantics and usage. The one advantage I may have in reviewing

such a volume is that I have a greater need for such a dictionary than he does. For the past year I have made daily use of this volume, and it is my experience in using this dictionary that forms the basis for this review.

For the English speaker there is one other general dictionary of the contemporary language currently in print that must be mentioned: Manandhar and Vergati, 1986. The appearance of that work was also a major watershed for Newari lexicography, and my gratitude for that volume has not diminished in the decade that I have had the use of it. For convenience I shall refer to Manandhar and Vergati as (MV) and to the volume under review as (KS). Both dictionaries are substantial. Counting both main entries and subentries (MV) has nearly 14,000 lexical items and (KS) has over 18,000.

Since about 1968 I have been wishing for a dictionary that would serve as a reader's companion for Newari. For a few years I had the privilege of working with Thakurlal Manandhar, Ishwarananda Shresthacarya, Nirmal Man Tuladhar and others in the attempt to collect basic vocabulary used in published works that were judged to be good Newari. The collaboration with Ishwarananda and Nirmal Man resulted in the appearance of the volume entitled *Jyapu Vocabulary*, which was essentially a glossary on a series of oral accounts taken on tape from speakers of Nagām. The collaboration with Thakurlal resulted in a single-spaced typescript which filled four six by nine inch loose-leaf binders. Included were vocabulary items I had encountered in reading and in my efforts to come to an understanding of the phonology, morphology and grammar of the language. I shared this collection with various interested scholars and upon my departure from Nepal in 1976 I left a copy with Thakurlal to polish and publish, since I assumed that I would not be returning. It was Professor A. W. MacDonald who arranged (I think in 1976) to have Dr. Anne Vergati edit the collection I had left with Thakurlal and prepare it for publication. From that point my only contribution to the volume was the user's guide that appeared as one item of front matter. My original loose-leaf collection served me well as reader's companion from 1976 to 1986, when (MV) first appeared in print. Even though the nemesis of South Asian printing left us with numerous typographic infelicities on every page, I rarely was forced back to my original typescript. The redundancies built into the form of entry were sufficient to make it possible for me to make use of the dictionary without great frustration. I am deeply grateful to Thakurlal and Dr. Vergati for carrying this publication through to completion.

Before the publication of (KS), the first dictionary I consulted when reading Newari was (MV). Many of the words that are used in Newari text

do not manage to get included in a Newari dictionary. NIA vocabulary is thought to be adequately dealt with by dictionaries for the donor languages. I suspect that any scholar who holds this opinion knows some NIA language well enough to have little occasion to test that opinion against Newari text. In my experience, glosses that are apparently correct for the donor language do not always fit once the lexical item is a loan word in Newari. Although my language consultants kept telling me that the words I had trouble finding were Sanskrit, the Sanskrit dictionaries I had access to brought me very little help and even Nepali dictionaries often failed to help (I was working with things judged to be ordinary Newari, not with learned treatises, or news items.) After some years of frustration I discovered Meenakshi, which then replaced Turner as the first place to look when (MV) failed me. The Oxford Hindi-English and the Allied Chambers Hindi English and Bhargava's Hindi-English seem to be equivalent to Meenakshi for my purposes.

When (KS) first appeared I was hoping that it would replace (MV) for my purposes. A reading of the introduction, however, warned me that the compilation was not intended as a convenience for readers like me, but that it sought primarily to reflect the spoken Newari of Kathmandu and vicinity with major emphasis upon lexemes preserved in the traditional domains of Newari culture. It did not attempt to cover any well-defined written corpus of materials. Loans from Nepali and other NIA donor languages are included (1) where they are the only way of referring to items of everyday use (i.e. where there is no indigenous Newari term referring to the same item), (2) where they are the primary terms for common elementary notions of religious and social life, and (3) where they have undergone phonological or morphological change in the process of being assimilated to Newari.

Neologisms have been included to the extent that they could be captured. Expressive vocabulary have been included as variants where possible. Since the goal of this dictionary is to include that part of the vocabulary of Newars that reflects everyday spoken language, traditional domains of Newar culture and phonologically and morphologically assimilated loans, rather than every lexical item that a reader might wish to look up in the process of reading what Newars write in their language, one is not entitled to judge this dictionary in the way one would naturally judge a general dictionary of a major language. As I see it, a general dictionary should be accountable to the published literature in the language, and helping the reader come to terms with this literature should be a central concern. Here the accountability is primarily to the spoken vocabulary of the Jyāpus, the traditional craftsmen and the keepers of the corporate Newar cultural

heritage, an accountability that few outside reviewers are in a position to evaluate.

After a year of reading and consulting this dictionary on a daily basis, however, I can say that it does perhaps better on the materials I was reading than I had any right to expect. For what I would think of as core Newar vocabulary I detected very few missing items. (I would, for example have thought that वां छुवये 'to throw away' should have been included, but then I don't find it in (MV) either.) As far as its function as a reader's companion is concerned, (KS) is firmly established as the first place I look for help. (MV) is still useful, however, where written Newari transgresses the boundaries that (KS) has set for itself. Where this fails I next try Meenakshi or its equivalent, and if all else fails I go to Turner or equivalent for help. This reflects my experience of the relative helpfulness of these various sources, given the kinds of things I have been reading.

Spelling

The spelling, both in Devanagari and its romanization reflects its pronunciation by Newars rather than traditional spellings or those of donor languages. Where a lexeme has been remodelled morphologically in the process of borrowing, priority has been given to the Newar forms rather than to those of the source language. No attempt has been made to speculate on the etymology of loans.

The Devanagri spelling system is different from that employed in what I have been reading. The fact that (KS) consistently represents the phonology is a great help to me, since I am well acquainted with the phonology and thus I can go from the written form of an item in text to its pronunciation, and then back to the representations in (KS) without difficulty. I expect that some readers will have more difficulty in this than I have.

Pronunciation

No systematic articulatory account of the phonology is given and no direct representation of pronunciation is given in IPA or any equivalent phonological transcription. The primary representation of the lexical item is given in Devanagri and the Roman transliteration is based upon it. This makes the dictionary look superficially like one that deals primarily with the written language. There is good discussion of spelling conventions. What is missing is an account of pronunciation that is accessible to someone without the assumed background. Of course, for those who will be using the volume along with other sources and with a native speaker of Newari, this gap may hardly be noticed.

(KS) state that ". . . in transcriptions . . . we have strictly adhered to the principle of transliteration according to the conventions commonly in use for Sanskrit and New Indo-Aryan." (1994:x) I would have found an explicit statement of these conventions helpful.

A dictionary that focuses explicitly upon the spoken form of the language, yet offers help with pronunciation only in terms of the Devanagari and its roman transliteration may prove frustrating to some students of the language. In addition to a traditional tabular representation of Devanagari order (which is lacking both in (KS) and in (MV)) a table of common phonological equivalencies would have been some help even if a phonological transcription of each lexical item were not feasible. It would have been helpful for some users to be told, for example, that the symbol "v" in transliteration represents a voiced bilabial semivowel [w] and not a voiced labio-dental fricative [v], and that "ay" in transliteration represents a mid open unrounded vowel [ɛ:] and not a diphthong. I personally do not find this lack a serious problem because I have struggled long enough with Newari phonology to have multiple mappings of sound to symbol and symbol to sound in my head that enable me eventually to track down most any entry I may be looking for. I have also committed enough representational sins in the transcription of Newari to prevent me from sitting in judgement upon anyone else's transcription, so long as it is internally consistent, which the transcription of (KS) most certainly is.

On the other hand, the major use that I personally make of any Roman representation of Devanagari is to determine where the unwritten vowel in Devanagari is actually pronounced and where it is not. A strictly mechanical transliteration is of no use to me at this point since the halant is so seldom used for this purpose. The practice of (CS) in this respect is much appreciated. Thus आचार comes out "ācār" and not as the mechanical transliteration "ācāra" which would reflect the Devanagari spelling but not its pronunciation.

Alphabetical Order

The use of Devanagari spelling as a phonological representation of spoken Newari has implications for alphabetical order which are implemented in a way that this reviewer has found logical and convenient. As (KS) points out, the fact that Newari low vowels contrast for quality ([ɔ] vs [a]) as well as for length ([ɔ:] vs [ɔ]) and la: vs [a]) places two principles of traditional Devanagari order in conflict. The two low vowel symbols (अ and आ) are employed to represent the quality contrast and visarga (:) is employed to represent the length contrasts. The general rule is that short vowels precede

long ones in alphabetical order, but with length being represented by visarga, which follows the vowels and precedes the consonants, word non-final long low vowels will precede their short counterparts (as happens in MV) if the traditional order of visarga is allowed to prevail. (KS) have opted to give priority to the principle that short vowel precedes long, and to achieve this visarga was moved to the end of the alphabet. I have found this quite a user-friendly solution.

Diphthongs (ai au, āi, āu) are all represented with digraphs. I found the impact of this upon alphabetic order easy to get used to.

Sequence of Entries

Compounds or derivatives are not grouped under the first morpheme, but are entered in alphabetical sequence. I found this practice quite helpful. It reduces the number of places one is obliged to look while in the process of finding the entry one is after. The alternative practice places much greater demands upon the user in that one must know a good deal more about the morphological segmentation of the word at hand and the derivational patterns of the language just to find the appropriate entry.

Structure of Entries

In (KS) an entry may have twelve different kinds of information, of which I shall comment on six.

1. Entry in Devanagri. Verbs are entered in their infinitival form; nouns in the absolutive or unmarked form. Adjectives appear without attributive suffixes. Optional reduplication that does not affect the meaning of the item is enclosed in parentheses and is ignored for the purposes of sorting order. In practice reduplicated forms are fairly rare within the dictionary. Listing all possible reduplications in every entry is clearly not feasible since several of the reduplicative patterns are highly productive. This would be like listing all the regular causative formations as separate entries. It would add bulk but not functionality.

Since Iswarananda has published accounts of the reduplication patterns in Newari I had expected reduplication to be well covered. I was disappointed to see no mention of these accounts in the bibliography. I wondered how much of this would be made accessible to the user. Reduplication is certainly not just a literary device restricted to written Newari. To get an idea of whether or not the treatment of reduplication would make any difference to a reader or not I went through one short text, (Prem Bahadur Kansakar's

Dhōmcholecā) and found 28 instances of reduplication involving 23 different tokens. Eight were identical reduplications

Sāḥ-sāḥ 'tasty-Rdp'; *bhīm-bhīm* 'good-Rdp';...

Eight involved the addition of nasality or the lengthening of a nasal in the second member

dhā-dhām 'say-Rdp'; *kho-khom* 'weep-Rdp';...

The remaining seven involved a more highly modified second member

lākā-likā 'get-Rdp'; *khāpā-khipā* 'door-Rdp'; *jā-ji* 'rice-Rdp';

dakko-dikko 'all that there were-Rdp'; *mha-mhi* 'body-Rdp';

naye-nī 'eat-Rdp'; *chucum-chācum* 'wheat flour-Rdp'

While all three cases should be dealt with in a grammar, I would think that it could be quite helpful to a reader to be informed by the dictionary of reduplications involving modified second members. Although the patterns involved are relatively few in number, it does not seem possible for a non-mother-tongue speaker to predict which pattern a given word will take in every case. As it turned out I did not succeed in finding any of these patterns listed in the entries concerned.

One convention was used, a vertical bar, which may be familiar to those more learned than I for which I was unable to find an explanation. It seems to appear between stems in entries for compounds. Associated with this was another convention for which I failed to find an explanation: a superscript circle which seems to mark a subentry as morpheme bound to the form listed as main entry.

2. *Romanized Transliteration.* This is a helpful supplement to the Devanagari main entry as a guide to pronunciation. The Devanagari forms do not use halant to indicate when the unwritten vowel is not pronounced, but fortunately the transliteration fills this gap.

3. *Variant Forms.* Variant forms are not only listed in the entry, a main entry that contains a variant form is also cross-referenced from an abbreviated entry for the variant form which is alphabetized at the appropriate point in the main listing. The incidence of variants in Newari is high, consequently this is a very important feature. In the first 61 pages I counted 1932 main entries and 344 cross-reference entries. If this sample is representative, something like 15% of all entries are cross-references. Paradoxically, the more useful this really helpful feature proves, the more

frustrated the user may be tempted to feel at being redirected from a cross-reference to a main entry.

4. Abbreviation of Word Category. The elaboration of the part of speech, noun, into the three subcategories, (inanimate) noun (n.), animate noun (n.anim.) and honorific noun (n.hon.) is a very useful one, indicating in a consistent and concise way what plural affixation, and what set of case affixes are appropriate. The transitive-intransitive distinction used in subcategorizing verbs is useful but I would like to have seen a more detailed classification such as could have been done on the basis of U. Kölver (1976). Eventually a classification of Newari verbs according to the kinds of insights David Hargreaves is giving us would be a very valuable thing to incorporate into such a dictionary.

5. Nouns: Oblique Forms and Classifiers. Nouns are cited in their nominative or unmarked forms. Newar nouns in this form generally end in open syllables. Stem-final consonants that have been lost in word-final position often reappear before case suffixes. Anyone who does interlinear glosses using underlying forms will appreciate being able to look up the lost finals. Thus under *bhvay* 'feast' one finds the oblique form, *bhvaja-*. Unfortunately for the reader who finds the form, *bhvajay*, 'at the feast' in running text, there is no cross-reference entry for *bhvaja-* to guide him to the main entry which lists the form he needs. The actual number of noun stems with lost finals in word-final position is actually not so large as to have make this kind of cross reference impractical. For learners it would be helpful, especially given the lack of introductory material on morphology and syntax included in the volume.

Newar nouns also have classifiers that are used with numerals that quantify the noun head. Animate nouns all quantify with the animate classifier, *-mha*, and thus the part of speech designation 'n.anim.' or 'n.hon.' suffices. In these classes the classifier is not given. Inanimate nouns quantify with a variety of classifiers, some of which reflect the shape of the noun head, some of which are reduplications of part of the noun head, some of which are unique and so on. Thus the noun, *chem* 'house' is quantified with a unique classifier, *-khā*, which is listed not only in the entry for *chem*, but also as an entirely separate entry. One who finds the form, *chem nikhā*, will need to know how to break the numeral classifier construction in order to look it up.

Classifiers and oblique forms appear to be more consistently given for subentries involving compounds than I would have expected given the

treatment of diagnostic forms for verbs in subentries. Still, quite a bit is expected of the user so far as his or her understanding of Newari noun morphology and syntax is involved.

6. Verbs. Verbs are cited in their infinitive forms. In order to conjugate the verb one needs to know the verb class (determined by the stem-final consonant) and subclass (determined by the vowel of the stem-final syllable). The infinitive form itself suffices as a diagnostic form for the subclass to which a verb belongs. Verbs with stem-final *n* in the infinitive belong to class 1. Verbs with stem-final *l* in the infinitive belong to class 4. Verbs with stem-final stops *p*, *t*, or *k* belong to class 5. The problem comes with verbs of classes 2 and 3, both of which have stem-final *y* in the infinitive, and both of which have stem-final alternations that do not show in the infinitive form. When glossing interlinear text using underlying forms I need this information, and I have been disappointed frequently by not finding it, especially in subentries.

The remaining six kinds of information I list for information without comment, other than that I have found each of them useful and well done:

7. Dialect, Sociolect, and Stylistic Restrictions
8. English Gloss
9. Illustrative Phrases and Sentences
10. Homonym Cross Reference
11. Compounds, Synonyms, and Antonyms
12. Subentries

Nothing that I have said in this review, however, should detract from the fact that (KS) is now the standard against which other Newari-English dictionaries must be judged. I wish it contained a larger proportion of the words I must look up when reading text, but that is my problem. The compilers have been very clear about the limits of their domain and have done an excellent job,

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