

**EUROPEAN BULLETIN  
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## EDITORIAL

The present issue is being distributed free to all those persons who filled out and returned the questionnaire that was enclosed in the inaugural issue of Autumn 1991. Nr. 3, however, is the last issue to be distributed on these terms. Enclosed you will find information on how to subscribe to issues 4 and 5 of the Bulletin.

Our aim in publishing the *European Bulletin of Himalayan Research* has been to bring together European scholars and to provide a forum in which we might discuss current research in a dialogue with scholars from the Himalayan region itself. To facilitate this dialogue the South Asia Institute has taken out a block subscription of twenty copies to be distributed through its Kathmandu office to institutes in Nepal. What we need now is the financial support of the community of European scholars. If you have found this and the previous issues of the Bulletin at all helpful and informative in fulfilling these aims, please support us further by promptly returning the subscription form enclosed with this issue.

In preparing the present issue, we are very much indebted to Lucette Boulnois, who retires this year as Librarian at the Centre d'Etudes himalayennes at Meudon, and to her fellow librarians from institutes in and around Paris for having compiled a guide to the resources on Himalayan studies in Paris. Wolf Kahlen sent us his travel report on the works of Thang-stong rGyal-po with the request that readers help with suggestions for tracking down archive material. The article on oral ritual texts from Martin Gaenszle reviews recent textual approaches to the study of ritual

discourse in the Himalayas, to which András Hofer has added six proposals for an ethnography of the performed word. To Prayag Raj Sharma, Gérard Toffin, Ludmilla Tutting and K. Warikoo we are indebted for conference and exhibition news from Kathmandu and New Delhi.

This Bulletin can survive only with regular contributions and suggestions from its readers. In this respect promises of articles have been more forthcoming than research reports and suggestions for book reviews; and we ask you to bear this in mind. Our fourth issue has already taken shape with the publication of, among other things, a review article on ecological movements in the Himalayas, a report on missionary archives in Italy, the continuation of the report on the libraries of Paris, plus the list of current research activities of our readership, based on the questionnaire. We still need, however, news, announcements and research reports. Please keep us informed. The deadline for submissions is 30th October.

## Editors:

Richard Burghart  
Martin Gaenszle  
András Hofer

## Contributing Editors:

- Austria: Dr. Michael Torsten Much,  
Institut für Tibetologie und Bud-  
dhismuskunde, Universität Wien,  
Maria-Theresien-Str. 3/11, A-  
1090 Wien.
- France: Dr. Anne de Sales, 23, rue Mon-  
torgueil, F-75001 Paris.
- Great Britain: Dr. Michael Hutt, Depart-  
ment of Indology, School of Oriental  
& African Studies, Thornhaugh  
Street, London WC1.
- Poland: Dr. Krzysztof Debnicki, Instytut  
Orientalistyczny Uniwersytetu  
Warszawskiego, Krakowskie  
Przedmiescie 26/28, Warszawa.
- Switzerland: Dr. Joanna Pfaff-  
Czarnecka, Ethnologisches Seminar  
der Universität Zürich, Freien  
steinstr. 35, CH-8032 Zürich.

## REVIEW ARTICLE

The Text Within -  
Studies of Oral Ritual Texts in Nepal in the Last Decade  
Martin Gaenszle

HOLMBERG, David H. 1989. *Order in Nepal*. Unpub. Ph.D. dissertation, University of Cambridge.

*Paradox. Myth, Ritual, and Exchange among Nepal's Tamang*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press. 265 pp., illus., 296 pp., \$ 29.95

MASKARINEC, Gregory G. 1990. *The Rulings of the Night: An Ethnographic Exegesis of Shamanic Oral Texts from Western Nepal*. Unpub. Ph.D. dissertation, University of Hawaii.

MUMFORD, Stan Royal 1989. *Himalayan Dialogue. Tibetan Lamas and Gurung Shamans in Nepal*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 286 pp., illus., n.p.1.

OPPITZ, Michael 1981. *Schamanen im Blinden Land: Ein Bilderbuch aus dem Himalaya*. Frankfurt: Syndikat, 285 pp., illus., n.p.1.

SALES, Anne de 1991. *Je suis né de vos jeux de tambours. La religion chamannique des Magar du nord*. Nanterre: Société d'Ethnologie, 339 pp., illus., n.p.1.

STEINMANN, Brigitte 1987. *Les Tamang du Népal. Usages et religion, religion de l'usage*. Paris: Editions Recherche sur les Civilisations, A.D.P.F., 310 pp., illus., 159 FF.

STRICKLAND, Simon S., 1982. *Belief, Practices, and Legends: A Study in the Narrative Poetry of the Gurungs of*

As a mode of cultural transmission, writing has obvious advantages over oral tradition, and thus the written text tends to be regarded as self-evidently superior to words reproduced from memory. Nevertheless, there have always been grounds to argue the opposite. The Egyptian king in one of Plato's dialogues (Phaidros) rejected the newly invented script as a mode of transmitting knowledge, arguing that it would only weaken man's capacity to memorize. Similarly in contemporary Nepal, shamans value the ability to chant their texts from memory. According to Gurung myth, variants of which are also found among the Kiranti in eastern Nepal, the forefathers did have written texts, but eventually an ancestral shaman ate them; therefore, they recite the text from within and do not rely on written versions like the lamas (Mumford 1989: 53).

Whereas it is well-known that Nepal has a rich tradition of written documents which have been under academic scrutiny since the last century, the remarkably rich oral traditions, not yet recorded in writing, have only fairly recently attracted academic attention. Scientific fieldwork started in the fifties and sixties with a few pioneering studies, primarily in the

field of ethnomusicology. For example, Macdonald and Helffer (1984/1968) contain several references to the materials collected during this period. In the seventies a considerable amount of work on tribal religion, particularly on shamanism appeared, but with few exceptions (Hofer and Shrestha 1973, Hitchcock 1976, Allen 1978, 1979, Sagant 1976) the focus was on institutions and practices rather than on texts.

In the last decade there has been a noticeable shift in the focus of ethnological research: the functionalist approach with its interest in social behaviour, institutions and norms has given way to a more interpretive approach which takes the ideas expressed by people and enshrined in their language as the major focus of investigation. In this review article I shall consider the ways in which Nepalese oral ritual texts have been used, presented and analysed in recent anthropological literature. First I shall take up some books which have included ritual texts to a limited degree, mainly as documentation, illustration and evidence for ethnographic studies with a more general outlook. Then I shall concentrate on works which study oral texts in their own right, as a specific field of investigation. Since Hofer's landmark contribution in 1981 on Tamang ritual texts, this approach has gained increasing importance. However, this new field is yet little explored and there are numerous ways to treat the texts as texts. Therefore my aim is to discuss the different forms the study of oral ritual texts has taken in recent research, and the methodological problems they raise.

#### Instances of texts

When a shaman or tribal priest sings a recital, it is a complex social event in which cultural values and ideas

find expression on many different levels: the singing is accompanied by a performance of symbolic acts, these acts involve various participants with specific social roles (e.g. priest, client, assistant); these roles may be defined through kinship, and/or they may be characterized by distinctions in ritual status and authority, which again may involve the transfer of valuables. Thus a ritual text can only be understood within its multi-layered ethnographic context which requires sound knowledge of the social, cultural and historical background.

Considering the "thickness" of the performative symbolism, a visual description of these events has obvious advantages. Michael Oppitz (1989) has made a strong point for visual anthropology and presented an excellent example of such an approach with his film on Magar shamanism ("Shamans in the Blind Country", 1980). Such a documentary shows the intrinsic interplay of action and speech, the visual and the auditory, in a way which would be impossible in writing. To make up for the disadvantages of the medium of film (its transient nature hinders academic use) Oppitz has also published a book with the film text and photographs (Oppitz 1981), thus finding a compromise between film and writing. As the film and the book contain various passages from ritual texts, Oppitz has for the first time documented the poetry of the Magar shamans in its context of action, thus reminding us that we first have to watch and listen before we start to interpret. In a number of later publications Oppitz has given thorough analyses of the narrative content -- generally abstracted from its ritual form -- of the Magar myths (see particularly Oppitz 1991).

Despite the drawbacks of 'verbal' anthropology, writing allows for a different kind of accuracy. Because ritual practices are so closely linked with indigenous concepts and meaning, a deeper understanding presupposes a more analytical approach to language and its uses. In her study on eastern Tamang Brigitte Steinmann (1987), in the French tradition of Himalayan ethnography, combines detailed description of ordinary social practices, from the most material to the most ideal, with philological scrutiny. In the second half of her book she focusses on the magico-religious domain of ritual action and roles, and eventually achieves an interesting reconstruction of the disappearing world of the bard-like ritual specialist, the *tamba*, who through his orally transmitted texts maintains a pre-Buddhist core of Tamang identity. The last chapter contains a corpus of ritual texts in translation, thus allowing the *tamba* to speak for himself. Unfortunately these chants stand somewhat disconnected from the study which contains few cross-references to this corpus.

Such detailed inventories of local traditions are invaluable and of crucial importance for comparative studies. Alternatively, one can emphasize the more fundamental aspects of a culture and structure one's findings accordingly. David Holmberg in his study of the western Tamang (1989) focuses primarily on general principles and patterns, like exchange, reciprocity, contradiction, mediation, etc. by which the whole of the social order, of which religion is but one part, is characterized. To discern the underlying structures, he abstracts the "total religious field" or system, which he regards as made up of three ritual domains: that of the

Buddhist lamas based on written texts, that of the *lambus* based on sacrifice, and that of the shamans (*bombos*) based on visionary experiences. Holmberg shows how these ritual specialists view their different tasks, how these views often contradict each other, but how, at the same time, they are (at least partly) complementary and form a division of labour. It becomes evident that the three domains also imply different attitudes towards texts (which, rather than a strict division, could also be seen as a continuum): the *lama* uses printed texts, the *lambu* relies on oral texts, which he recites more or less mechanically, the *bombo* speaks "from the stomach". But, except for presenting a few exemplary passages, Holmberg does not venture into a study of texts, and thus the interrelationship of the three forms of discourse remains to be examined.

An entirely synchronic approach, however, is not tenable in the study of Himalayan religions and toward the end of his book Holmberg is more and more led to historical reconstructions of the ritual system. What is only indicated here has been taken up with strong theoretical armour by Stan Royal Mumford (1989): the essentially disharmonious process of historical layering. Rather than viewing the ritual system in Gyasumdo as a balanced whole of complementary functions, Mumford describes the situation as a result of an ongoing dialogue between the Gurung ritual specialists and the Tibetan *lamas*, based on competing claims and interpretations, leading to modifications, concessions and assimilations which never fully erase the trace of the past. In reconstructing this process, Mumford makes fruitful use of the theories of Michail Bakhtin, the

Russian literary critic who has had a growing impact on recent theoretical debate in anthropology. This reorientation marks a shift towards a study of discourse, rather than institutions, and thus Mumford distinguishes different "voices", as manifested in the different genres of texts: the shamanic world is essentially dialogical, governed by a reciprocal relationship with various superhuman beings, whereas the world of the *lamas* tends to be monological, characterized by a full control of afflicting agents through the detached recitation of the written text. By describing how these voices continue to interact and engage in arguments and counterarguments, Mumford gives a vivid account of cultural processes which tend to be "frozen" in structuralist ethnographies. This novel attempt to write a "double ethnography" (studying two groups instead of one), has, however, its difficulties. Mumford is bound to be criticized by tibetologists for not being exhaustive enough. And indeed (speaking from the anthropological side), his description of Gurung traditions is somewhat sketchy and piecemeal, mainly -- it seems -- relying on commentaries and summaries of texts rather than on the texts themselves (though he could have relied on ethnographic material such as Strickland's). Nevertheless, further studies of such "dialogues" (including that brought about by the ethnographer) are needed in Himalayan anthropology, as is the dialogue between anthropologists and tibetologists.

The books discussed so far all indicate the importance of oral ritual texts as meaningful expressions of cultural values, and as a medium for the perpetuation of traditional ideas. However, they do not intend to make these texts

the object of their analysis. Though texts, or mostly short passages of the texts or summaries, are presented, they are either uncommented documents or isolated samples of ritual language, serving to illustrate the ethnographic description or to support a certain argument as evidence. As the context out of which the passages are taken is not always made clear, the value of the evidence cannot easily be checked.

#### Texts as texts, and their relation to ritual

In his study of Tamang ritual texts, Hofer (1981) suggested an approach to oral texts which imitates the philologist's approach to written texts. The reasons he cites mainly stem from a skepticism towards "structural" studies which ignore individual variations in interpretation and construe a Whole of commonly shared beliefs. Thus, rather than attempting to construct "totalizing" models of religious ideas, Hofer turns to the source: he presents, after short introductions into the settings, whole ritual texts which he translates and annotates with linguistic commentaries. In this way the reader is in a position to sense the openness of semantic fields, and rather than being offered a pre-fabricated interpretation which explains everything, he is forced to interpret for himself.

Oral ritual texts have a peculiar status: though they exist only in the form of speech they also have qualities of written texts. To use distinctions suggested by Ricoeur (1971) writing fixes or inscribes speech events, and it dissolves it from the subjective intention of the speaker as well as the contingencies of a particular situation. The same applies - to a limited degree - to oral ritual texts: they are transmitted

from generation to generation as essentially the same texts (though variation does exist), there is no single author (rather a multitude of unknown ones), and through the repetitive nature of the ritual speech event it loses its contingent character. These qualities justify treating oral ritual texts with the same respect and a similar methodology as written texts. In both cases "the text's career escapes the finite horizon lived by the author" (Ricoeur 1971: 534).

Few scholars of the anthropology of Nepal have ventured in the direction indicated here, and the two major studies that have been carried out so far (that of Simon Strickland and Gregory Maskarinec) are unpublished. Therefore it seems worthwhile to introduce these works and to discuss them, even though it is unusual to do so in a review article.

Simon Strickland has studied the Gurung of central Nepal. In his doctoral dissertation entitled *Belief, Practices, and Legends: a Study in the Narrative Poetry of the Gurungs of Nepal* (1982a) Strickland analyses in detail some *pé* recitations and the ritual language which is used. As the corpus of *pé* is extensive, Strickland focuses on some general issues which relate to the linguistic - or poetic - characteristics and cultural content of ritual texts in Gurung society. In a case study comparing three versions of one particular text (the *pé* of Sirkulami) the author demonstrates the remarkably high stability of the narrative chants: about 85% of the lines of one textual version recur in identical or similar form in the version of another performer (this analysis has been separately published; see Strickland 1983). Having thus established the relatively fixed nature of the texts, which indicates a high degree of trans-

generational identity (but leaving little room for creativity), Strickland goes on to explore the social meaning of the texts, showing that the *pé* in their archaic language express certain conceptual patterns which seem to belong to a cultural substratum of a "civilisation de l'Himalaya" (a term borrowed from A.W. Macdonald). The legends, it is argued in detail, make specific links between, for example, creative dismemberment and the patrilineal transmission of knowledge, between the duality of the monsoon cycle and the system of symmetrical alliance, between journeys in the vertical line and the curing of illness caused by soul-theft, etc. Rather than treating the myths as direct expressions or representations of a particular social reality, Strickland focuses more on their comparative dimension, showing how particular concepts are related to similar ones among other Tibeto-Burman groups (e.g., he demonstrates striking similarities even with Rai myths).

A particularly fascinating side of Strickland's study is the analysis of ritual language (see also Strickland 1987). This form of speech, which is quite distinct from ordinary language, is characterized by the recurrence of various forms of parallelisms: mainly paired terms (binomials), paired phrases within metrical lines, and paired phrases between metrical lines. It is shown how the formal possibilities of ritual language account for the semantic richness and aesthetic quality of the chants -- something which is almost impossible to convey in a translation. For example, the pairing of *tō* (village territory, village deity) and *shyo* (stream) evokes an image of the village, which can only be understood if

one knows the complex semantic fields of these opposed terms. The combination of terms is more than simply the addition of two concepts: it requires the creative construction of a more global meaning. Here, the advantage of textual studies becomes evident: only such a micro-analysis of the ritual chants reveals their immanent poetic potential. In a recent article Höfer has further explored this kind of approach (see Höfer, forthcoming)

How do oral texts relate to ritual practices? It is mainly in the fourth chapter that Strickland partially discusses concrete rituals and relates them to the texts. Here he is primarily concerned with the recurring images of the ritual journeys and the presentations involved, which he compares, developing a typology that can be applied to other ethnographic contexts as well. Distinguishing between reciprocated and unreciprocated journeys, for instance, he points to analogies in the system of matrimonial prestations. The problem of the interrelationship between the chants and ritual action is taken up more explicitly in the final chapter (see also Strickland 1982b). Applying the speech act theory developed by Austin and Searle, Strickland takes up Ahern's distinction between weak and strong illocutionary acts: narrative *pé* belonging to the former, chants that directly accompany magic, acts fall into the latter category. This allows a kind of classification of the numerous *pé* along this continuum, but, as the author notes, "One can imagine how each type -- the narrative and the practical -- might become the other over time and across cultural boundaries" (Strickland 1982b: 56). This turn towards a pragmatic perspective clarifies, it seems to me, certain issues which

the author raised in the beginning of the study in respect of belief. Strickland elaborates at some length the point that belief is a heterogeneous and sometimes obscure phenomenon, as not everybody believes the same things. But if one regards the ritual chants not so much as propositions about the world (which can be true or false), but as modes of action which are not representative but formative of reality, then the question of belief appears less problematic. As Strickland himself observes, it is a difference whether someone discusses his belief -- for example in the existence of a 'soul' -- in abstract, or when involved in ritual action. The remark of a young informant: "When we worship... we believe (but not at other times)" poignantly expresses the power of ritual performances (Strickland 1982a: 18). They construct a reality that is either self-evident or else rejected as a whole.

Thus the recitation and enactment of *pé* narratives "opens up" -- to use the phrasing of Ricoeur -- "a world" (which for him, however, is a characteristic of written texts, see Ricoeur 1971: 535f.). Discussing the complex concept of *péda-luda* (related to Tib. *dpe* and translatable as 'example word principle word'), Strickland points out that the narrative chants to which this expression refers provide 'precedents' or 'examples' of action from the mythic past, though he emphasizes that they may not be seen as morally injunctive (at least if taken literally). Like the *muddum* or *mundhum* of the Rai and Limbu (with which the concept has much in common, cf. Gaenzle 1991: 246), the oral tradition of the *pé* keeps the memory of ancestral deeds alive and by thus ritually linking the present with the past, a particular way of life, *Lebenswelt*, is continuously re-created.

That ritual narratives are not simply obscure, half-understood, inconsequential stories with little more than aesthetic value is strongly argued by Gregory Maskarinec in his study of *Jhākris* (mostly *Kāmī*) in Jājarkot. In his dissertation entitled *The Rulings of the Night: An Ethnographic Exegesis of Shamanistic Oral Texts From Western Nepal* (1990a) Maskarinec demonstrates that shamanic recitals as well as mantras, far from being incomprehensible, are "artfully constructed" (1990a: 218), profoundly meaningful and well-preserved oral texts. Drawing upon various philosophical and theoretical approaches, especially ordinary language philosophy, ethnomethodology and pragmatism, he proposes to study these texts not as expressing or representing some hidden reality (be it "subjective" or "objective"), but as constituting a meaningful world within the texts themselves, thus constructing what he calls a "discursive space" (Maskarinec 1990a: 5, 29).

Therefore, rather than proposing totalizing models of the shamanic universe, Maskarinec lets the texts speak for themselves, so that the interpretation may "emerge from the description", without claiming to be exhaustive. For example, when discussing the difference between *jhākris* (shamans) and *dhāmis* (mediums) or the etiology of afflictions, the author cites relevant passages of texts in which the shaman himself deals with these issues. (The original Nepali texts are all given in Devanāgarī script in the appendix.) Thus, the reader, instead of being offered the "objective" meaning of certain problematic terms, gets acquainted with their use as part of the shamanic "language games". To give an example: according to the texts, the 84

*vāi* resulted from the witches who danced different dances when they became subdued, and the illnesses which they inflict are related to these dances. Though the etiology, as defined in the texts, may be at odds with 'popular knowledge', the latter is disregarded as 'superstition' by the shaman, thus "upholding the text's version as accurate" (Maskarinec 1990a: 98).

In line with his pragmatic approach Maskarinec puts much emphasis on the interrelationship of shamanic speech and shamanic action. The texts are related in various ways to the rituals: they may be descriptions of the ideal performance (ch. VI), or they may be outright "stage directions" (ch. VII); though, as the author stresses, text and action are not always linked synchronically, rather they follow "parallel but separate courses" (Maskarinec 1990a: 122). As a case study, one particular ritual sequence is examined: the summoning of the *siyo* spirit, which culminates in the spirit's arrival as announced by a chicken's fluttering. In this example, similar forms of which are also discussed by Strickland and documented by Oppitz, the problem of ritual dramas is particularly evident: though the performance is patterned by the text, the text may also be modified according to the course of events. This "reflexivity" -- in the sense of Garfinkel's ethnomethodology -- (Maskarinec 1990a: 128), which is characteristic of spoken rather than written discourse, accounts for a limited degree of spontaneity and makes possible a creative use of the tradition.

The interrelationship of speech and action is especially close in the case of shamanic *mantras* (here called *mantar*). This little studied and often neglected genre of shamanic speech is

well elucidated in Maskarinec's chapter on "the world as sound" (he has written an article on the subject under the same title, Maskarinec 1990b). Here he convincingly demonstrates that though *mantars* are usually muttered in undertones, they have openings, narrate, etc. What makes them effective, moreover, is their perlocutionary force. Though Maskarinec does not elaborate the point, it is clear that he regards the *mantars* not only as particularly "strong" illocutionary speech acts, but as utterances that bring about the intended effect (the spirits are not only requested to be present, they are actually compelled into attendance).

In studying the features of ritual speech, Maskarinec juggles with pieces of oral texts which he uses as movable blocks, not unlike - it seems - the shamans themselves. But the passages are often aligned according to the author's arguments i.e.: not as in the performance of a particular rite. This kind of "cut up" technique, though methodologically legitimate, is sometimes confusing: it is not always clear whether the presented text is complete or something has been left out (sometimes longer passages are given in the appendix). What Maskarinec attempts is a portrait of a shaman through his knowledge of texts, which, as they can be used in various contexts, may be decontextualized. The problem, however, is: how are the texts interrelated? Is there a specific order underlying the multiple use of the texts? And, if there is something like a shamanic universe, how does it relate to the society as a whole? It is mainly in the two chapters towards the end of the study which deal with the initiation and death ceremonies of the shaman, that these questions are touched upon. Here

the analysis brings out more general concepts like the three-layered cosmos, or the intermediary social role of the shaman.

In her recently published book on Magar shamanism, *Je suis né de vos jeux de tambours*, to which the jājarkoṭi tradition is surprisingly similar, Anne de Sales has chosen a different approach: the first part ("rituel et société") serves to situate the shamanic tradition within the total cultural setting and deals with the relationships with "nature" and its associated spirits and deities, the sub-clan migrations and the kinship system of generalized exchange, and the annual cycle of village and household rites. In the major (second) part, entitled "gestes et paroles", rather than attempting an exhaustive account of shamanic textual knowledge, she takes the description of one particular healing session as a starting point and then focuses mainly on the narrative chants which she analyses in their totality. The chants are summarized by the author, but publication of the original texts with translations is planned in a separate volume (*Etudes mongoles et sibériennes, numéro spécial*, forthcoming).

Thus the book stands somewhere in between a pure textual study and a more conventional ethnographic account of institutions. But as the "littérature rituelle" -- as she calls it -- clearly is in the centre of the book and is treated as such in novel ways, I will concentrate on it here.

As the title of the second part suggests, a major concern is the interrelationship of ritual acts and ritual chants. A close correspondence is evident in the chants relating to the shamanic accessories ("chants d'accessoires") to which I shall return shortly.

In the case of the narrative chants, however, the relationship is more complex. The chants may be outright prescriptions (or what Maskarinec calls "stage directions"), as in the actualisation of the mythical pact with the witches through offerings in the séance. Or they may be what the author calls "sous-titrage" ("subtitling") whereby a ritual activity (e.g. the bringing up of the patient's soul from the underworld by the shaman) is synchronized with the narrative (the bringing up of Biselme from the underworld by her brother-in-law). Nevertheless, this kind of more or less direct correspondence seems to concern only a relatively small portion of the narrative chants, and it is emphasized that the symbolic acts may be easily understood by lay persons with only a rudimentary knowledge of the stories. Therefore the ritual dramatization and the corpus of myths are treated separately in the analysis.

But the interpretation of the narratives in their totality reveals a correspondence between act and speech at another, "deeper" level. In what may be described as a modified structural approach, it is first demonstrated that the myths contain a series of binary oppositions, often homologous, such as male/female, elder/younger, dry/wet, man/spirit, etc. But in addition to being regarded as constituting a mythic universe, the narratives are shown to have a dynamic dimension: they effect, what the author calls "structural movements". When, for example, the pact of Gorho -- ancestor of man -- and his younger brother Separan -- ancestor of the spirit world -- is renewed by their descendants one generation later, this is not simply a redundancy. Rather, it may be seen as evoking a passage from one level to another, from a primeval

founding act to a more recent and more differentiated ancestral past of which the present ritual activity is only a repetitive continuation. This kind of reduplication in time, which recurs in all the myths and likewise in ritual action (putting them in a relation of isomorphism) helps to explain the peculiar link between the chants and their enactment, which the author calls "anchorage".

This concept of "anchorage" is central to the last chapter in which the chants with predominantly non-narrative content are examined as "chants d'anchorage". Though also in the interpretation of myths de Sales often makes use of certain concepts developed by literary criticism, her kind of "poetological" approach which treats the chants as literary texts becomes most evident -- and most fruitful -- in this part of the book. Examining chants which variously deal with ritual accessories, the opening of the séance and the ritual journeys, the author focuses on the particularly strong "singularisation" (or what also could be called contextualization) of shamanic speech. As the analysis of the ritual phrasings shows, various rhetorical or poetical devices are employed (e.g. use of performatives, switches in the use of personal pronouns and time, serializing of metonymic expressions, listing of proper names etc.) which reduce the generalizing function of language and closely link the chanted words with the ritual situation and activity. Through this unique and often unconventional use of language, the shaman creates a ritual universe, or "espace rituelle", which is at the root of the more complex ordinary reality, and of which he alone is the master.

Thus, in a kind of hermeneutical circle, de Sales proceeds from a holistic,

structural interpretation of myth to a detailed analysis of the smallest linguistic entities and back again to an encompassing model of the shamanic universe. This universe appears as a world in itself, intimately linked with the social organisation of the Magar. Still one often wonders: how closed has this world been to the outside? Have the influences from the south, as evidenced in the high percentage of Nepali words in the ritual language, really had only an "ornamental" effect (de Sales 1991: 27)? There is no doubt about the essentially "bodhic" features of this tradition, but considering the often very similar stories reported by Maskarinec from Kāmī or other "Dum" shamans further west (cf. the association of the first shaman with "Tik(h)u Kāmī", conflict and competition with the king) one is led to assume that also in this region some kind of Himalayan dialogue -- not necessarily a symmetrical one -- may have taken place, which still remains to be reconstructed through comparative studies.

### Conclusion

Looking at these various approaches to the study of oral ritual texts, the following observations can be made.

All the authors agree that the texts are an important key to the understanding of the indigenous cosmologies. While most monographs tend to treat the texts as expressions of religious institutions and therefore mainly deal with the latter, the studies focusing on the texts as such rather reverse the emphasis: the texts are seen as the major vehicle of the religious tradition and, as such, are constitutive of social reality. Especially Maskarinec (1990a: 17ff.) argues strongly for such a "lingu-

istic turn". Interestingly, his concept of discursive space, which is constructed through the texts, has much in common with de Sales' "espace rituelle" or "univers rituel" (1991: 276, 300, 306f.) which is likewise a result of the performance of oral literature.

If there is a differing assessment about the role of the texts in the present, there seems to be a general agreement that they can be regarded as a valuable source for historical reconstruction, being treated rather like "archaeological monuments" (Maskarinec 1990a: 216). Especially the study of ritual languages reveals "archaisms" which reflect conceptual structures that may no longer be relevant. As Strickland demonstrates, there is a large and yet little explored field for comparative studies, and this -- it may be added -- will have to entail interdisciplinary collaboration.

The textual studies all devote much attention to the interrelationship of text and action. It is generally agreed that though there is a close link (homologies, "stage directions", performative speech acts), the two levels are also analytically distinct. The logic of ritual speech (especially of narrative) and that of symbolic action are different. Despite their correspondence, they are largely independent codes. But, as de Sales in particular emphasizes, it is precisely the link, the "anchoring" relation, between the chants projecting a past and the acts in the present, which makes the shamanic session effective.

It is significant that all the textual studies at some stage refer to speech act theory which was first developed in philosophical writing but has also had a considerable impact in anthropology. Obviously ritual speech has not only a referential function, representing a

somehow pre-existent reality. It quite often is formative, creating facts, defining social institutions, interacting with an invisible addressee which the shaman attempts to control. This kind of indexicality is clearly a characteristic of spoken discourse. Ricoeur (1971: 535) calls it "ostensive reference", but as our examples show, the illocutionary or perlocutionary speech acts (like the mantra) have nevertheless the quality of texts.

Finally it becomes apparent that an approach which takes the texts as "artfully constructed" phenomena (Maskarinec) also leads to the application of concepts borrowed from literary criticism. The texts are seen as making use of rhetorical figures (metaphors, metonymies, synecdoches etc.) and poetic techniques (e.g. alliteration, reduplication and parallelism). It is no coincidence that inspiration is drawn from Russian Formalism (de Sales, Strickland) and the writings of Bakhtin (Mumford, de Sales). Oral texts are literary products without an author (cf. Foucault's well-known remarks on authorship).

To sum up, let me stress again why it is not only academically rewarding but also highly necessary to pursue textual studies along the lines sketched above. Diverse as the approaches may be at first sight, they all seem to point in a similar direction (sometimes only differing terminologies are used to describe the same issue). So, rather than favouring one methodology over the other, I would suggest to treat them as complementary. Oral texts, I tried to show, are valuable documents which deserve to be studied in their own right, and there is no reason why this should not be done in different ways. As the number of those who still carry the texts

"within" is fast diminishing, the task to record these fading traditions in the field is urgent. But just as necessary is an adequate publication of the texts. Publication policies in different national contexts, are not always favourable to such editions, so one must ask how far market constraints should be allowed to affect academic studies. Moreover, there is also an ethical question: do we not owe it to the people, whose culture we describe, that we treat their traditions with respect and keep their texts as complete as possible, rather than make them fit our arguments?

Numerous questions remain open. What is the best way of presenting the texts (interlineary translation versus separate and "free" translation)? How should "inspirational" texts with a low degree of stability be dealt with? Is it better to rely on dictated versions than on chanted ones, and how do they compare? And how can a regional perspective be developed which looks beyond the boundary of one group? I do not think it is necessary to find a definite answer to these questions, as the methodologies may be fitted to each particular case. The questions only indicate that the topos is beginning to be explored and that much remains to be done, though it is already getting late.

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- Note: Quotations from doctoral dissertations appear with author's permission.

## Six Proposals for an "Ethnography of the Performed Word": Afterthoughts on Reading Martin Gaenzsle's Review Article on the Study of Oral Ritual Texts

András Hofer

The recent studies reviewed by Gaenzsle (1992, in this volume) remind us of how little we know of the rich tradition of oral ritual texts (and oral tradition in general) in the Central Himalayas. In addition, our general approach is deficient in that we tend to neglect the orality such texts "live by", and treat what is spoken and performed as if it were something that had been written to be read. That the "science of the spoken word" as called for by Dennis Tedlock (1983) is still in its infancy, and that even "linguists begin their work by disposing of the voice, committing to writing only those aspects of oral performance that are most comfortably noted by alphabetic writing" (Tedlock 1980: 828), has evidently much to do with our own Western tradition: with the distinctions we make between "content" and "form", "message" and "aesthetics", "libretto" and "musical delivery", "script" and "performance", "word" and "sound", "doctrine" and "poetics"...

In response to Gaenzsle, who concludes his stimulating paper by asking how we anthropologists should collect and present ritual texts, the following proposals (1) may be made:

1. The hypertrophy that the "text" as a notion has undergone in poststructuralist theory (for which the kind of texts we deal with are just "antiquarian set pieces", "quotes" from a native past (2) or from an endless murmuring of "es spricht") should not prevent us from valuing ritual recitations as texts in their own right, as works of orature.

What we need at first is the documentation of complete texts, rather than fragments of texts inserted in our own meta-text as particularly striking pieces of evidence.

2. Unless impossible for technical reasons, texts should be recorded *in situ*, i.e., in the in-performance situation. As experience shows, their reproduction *in vitro* is likely to confuse or even embarrass the informant asked to dictate, phrase by phrase and "in prose", a text which he has memorized, and is used to perform, in a chanted form only. Indoor, studio-recording of a chanted version by the ethnographer might be objected on grounds that it would be inauspicious to recite such and such a text outside the ritual framework and/or without a tradition-sanctioned occasion. In any case, artificial reproduction - whether dictated or chanted - necessarily results in an artificial product because it is only through the manifold and often subtle interaction between the reciter and his audience that an oral text becomes what it is *sui generis*: something *performed*, staged, represented, acted out and thus also interpreted, of course. This interaction may be said to be intrinsic not least because it has a bearing on both morphology and meaning. (3) The dynamics of phraseology and diction in the "composition-in-performance"; the indexical links between words and gestures (ritual acts); the persuasive reinforcement or even reinterpretation words may receive by their actual articulation (prosody, musical modulation or

accompaniment); the performer's parabolic comments which often interpret his own interpretation; etc. are all functionally dependent on the (tacit or open) reaction by the audience at a given place and time, and can provide, vice versa, a powerful tool of influencing the audience accordingly.

3. Consequently, the recitation of oral texts should be recorded as an essentially theatrical event in a multi-medial performance. One should pay attention to those processes through which the essentially digital code of the verbal language becomes complemented or even supplanted by the analogical code of acoustic and visual gestures of the "spatial language" in the delivery. (4) Visual (video or film) documentation in the field should not be restricted to the ritual acts themselves, but also seize on the individual behaviour of the performer and the participants, since any detail may turn out to be relevant for the understanding of a text's nature, intentionality and meaning. The same is true of the acoustic performance as a whole, which we automatically record on tape but unfortunately tend to ignore in our graphical notation. What we write down in neat lines and clear-cut sentences on the white pages of the notebook often "rescues" little more than a fossil. In this way, we reduce the text to a product of the second articulation, as it were, and treat it as a mere string of words, rather than as what it really is: an orchestral partition of speech and sounds. (5) Doing justice to the musicality of the text means more than just documenting melody, rhythm, tempi and the like in the reciter's performance and/or in the instrumental "accompaniment". It also requires a close scrutiny (a) of those

(mantric and other) utterances which are sound acts and speech acts at the same time, and (b) of the individual performer's prosodic presentation. The latter includes the stresses and stops, the pitches and falls in the dynamics of vocal articulation, interjections, whistles, groans - and a number of other chiefly paralinguistic or metalinguistic means that illustratively "onomatopoeize", solemnize or ridicule, highlight or play down, explain what would otherwise remain open to interpretation, and comment on the text's or the performer's own terms of communication.

Evidently, a faithful documentation of a text-performance in its multi-mediality may also provide important empirical clues to the "perlocutionary return" of a text, especially of those texts the recitation of which is designed to have an immediate effect upon reality, such as a psycho-somatic effect in a healing ritual. One may note in passing that this "perlocutionary return" is one of the least explored and most speculatively analyzed issues in anthropological textual pragmatics. We seem to know much more about how a text is structured and intends to effect than about how these structures are likely to structure or re-structure the listener's perception of his self.

4. Anthropologists tend to concentrate on the "official" aspects of ritual and symbolism, and rely mostly on what ritual specialists and other informants recruited from the elite expound as part of "shared belief" or at least "authoritative interpretation". Yet the claim to treat a ritual text as an event, rather than as an isolated monument, implies that the ethnographer should also keep a close eye on the *unstaged*, that is, on what happens (or seems to happen) incidentally, "informally" or peripher-

ally within or around the arena of a given ritual. (6) (a) Among the non-events that merit to be noticed are no doubt the blunders committed by the performer(s). They are to be noted in our publications, along with the emendments the informants contribute later. Mispronunciations; omissions and faulty substitutions; word monsters resulting from unusual republication or elision, narrative sequences that appear confused, redundant or mutilated; and any other kind of arbitrary permutation must be taken seriously - all the more as they might not always be unanimously recognized by our informants as plain "mistakes". First, one never knows at once whether such "mistakes" were intended - say, as a kind of ludic fabrication - by the reciter, or resulted from his "nodding", or yet again from his actual failure to conform to conditions as set by meter, rhythm or melody. Second, intended or not, they may fulfill the function of a rhetorical device (such as tmesis, aposiopesis, aprosdoketon, hapology, etc.) that works "by surprise" and is likely to create a new focus, dismantle an imagery, amplify or dissect an idea. For the audience, certain "mistakes" pose the question whether or to what extent "religious truth" and "poetic exuberance" can coexist, and question the "validity" not only of an individual performance, but also - temporarily at least - of the performer's religious tradition as a whole. Third, whether discomforting for the audience or not, such "mistakes" may be revelatory not only as "Freudian slips", but also as "generic overrides" (7) that lay bare a part of the "genetic programme" underlying the text as a whole; this is the case when blunders turn out to represent anomalies from the conceptual or paradigmatic viewpoint only, while struc-

turally they conform to the organizing principles of the general formulaic setup or the genre-specific imagery. - (b) Furthermore, it is expedient to pay full attention to what happens outside the liturgy and arena of the ritual proper: the conversations (in the breaks or after the ritual) that openly or obliquely evaluate a performance in interpreting an oracle or commenting on the artistic achievement of the individual performer, etc., as well as the spontaneous events (merriment, disputes, outbreak of violence) among both the participants and non-participants. Certain events, especially when they tend to recur regularly, may throw some light not only on the laity's general attitude towards texts and rituals, but also on the interactive processes that are at work in what one may call the self-produced psycholinguistics of a given ritual. The complex Western Tamang death-feasts (characterized, among other things, by the fact that the laymen do not understand what the lamas recite in Tibetan) might provide an example of how important afferent impacts from the periphery may be in the "mourning process". The spontaneous nightly gatherings of young people of either sex indulging in "frivolous" songs and all sorts of fun in the vicinity of (neither too close to, nor too far from) the open-air site of the mortuary ceremonies are much frowned at by the elders and notables as a practice that morally perverts the youth and debases the ritual. On the other hand, there is ample evidence to conclude that such peripheral events, however dysteleological they may appear, do exert a positively "palliative" or even "cathartic" influence on the mourners' feelings at the centre. (8)

5. Only a consistent spelling can warrant the accessibility of one's material to others. "Broad transcriptions" neglecting important linguistic features impede the comparative work yet to be done and should therefore be avoided. If the text is in a language which is written, such as Nepali, etc., it should be given in correct transliteration. (9) For texts in a non-written language, the transcription should be a phonological or basically phonological one. - The transcript of the text should respect the essential properties of its original oral delivery. Although an arrangement in stanzas or cola is certainly more comfortable for the eye and in many cases even justifiable by syntax or meter, it can ignore the autonomy with which the prosody actually intervenes, disjoins a syntactic unit (enjambement) or "compresses" several such units into one, etc. Above all, such regularized typographical patterns are likely to make one forget that oral delivery consists of an alternation of utterances and silences (hiatus, pause), in which the latter might be as important as the former. Needless to add, our publications should also include samples of the musical delivery in the conventional notation.

6. The presentation of our material in publication often proves problematic because we translate from little-known, unwritten languages and interpret texts that are not in plain prose and abound in archaisms and/or metaplasms and other patterns alien to the colloquial language. No rules can of course be given for *how* one should translate a text, but it is perhaps worth reflecting on *what* a translation should render. The present writer has always preferred a rather technical translation that tries to render both phraseology and diction of

Western Tamang ritual texts and to respect their specific structural or poetic qualities which are in a sense part of the meaning, namely means of evoking associations, providing cross-references between contexts and imposing formal "solutions" on what is conceptually irresolvable, etc. This procedure necessitates some compromise with the stylistic taste of the target language, but has, on the other hand, the advantage of facilitating the orientation for the reader who is not familiar with the source language. Different texts may require different approaches with regard to formulation and style, but the translation should principally render what the text means, here and now, to the informants themselves, while the etymological meaning and the ethnographer's own exegesis are to be dealt with in the comments only. As far as practically possible, (10) one should not confound these three levels of interpretation arbitrarily and, say, fill a gap in the informants' interpretation by a meaning won by way of etymology in the translation itself.

To conclude, these proposals are not meant to suggest that the anthropologist be also linguist, philologist, folklorist, literary theorist, musicologist, psychologist and cameraman in one, but that he should learn from these specialists and even collaborate with them, occasionally at least. In any case, he is advised to give more consideration to the ritual texts being multi-medial events that take place in the interactional triangle between performer, direct beneficiary and general audience. Only if we know more about the very "functioning" of the texts performed, will we be able to know more about their *raison d'être*: about what oral tradition *is*. More than twenty years after the

inception of the "ethnography of speaking", it is now perhaps time to develop an "ethnography of reciting".

We must not be blinded by the mythologem of the "lost writing/lost book" so widespread among the peoples whose texts we record, and take it as an acknowledgement of a basic communicative "insufficiency" inherent in all what is oral. (11) Rather, we have to explore what these traditions themselves cite in support of their orality. We should listen to the Western Tamang shaman who, according to his texts, wants to heal by "music and dance" also, and try to understand why an important god in Maharashtra categorically refuses to be "fettered" by writing in a book and prefers, instead, to be celebrated in nightlong songs by illiterate herdsmen (Sontheimer 1976: 198).

#### Notes:

(1) For reason of space I refrain from discussing the theoretical issues implied in the proposals.

(2) Griminger 1991: 402.

(3) As Maskarinec (1990: 220) remarks with reference to the "rulings" of the *jhākri*: "(...) I have come to realize that a thorough explanation of context is even more critical than are extensive glosses if these texts are to be understood and interpreted (...)."

(4) Antonin Artaud called "spatial language" those specific articulatory and gestural means in theatre, through which the verbal becomes concretized, the signified (otherwise likely to be supplanted by the purely verbal medium) gains in autonomy and is more readily grasped (Todorov 1971: 213ff.).

(5) Holmberg (1989: 142ff.) is right in calling "shamanic soundings" the Tamang *jhākri*'s rituals. - Maskarinec (1990: 160) brief description of how the

*jhākri* articulates a mantra is a rather rare example in the literature under consideration here.

(6) One of the more or less reliable test methods to distinguish the unstaged from the staged is to follow the old-established rule requiring from the ethnographer that he identify all persons present (whether active or passive participant, performer or helper, beneficiary [patient, client], sponsor, kinsman or onlooker, etc.) at the site of a ritual in order to determine their role and their relationship to each other.

(7) I adopt the term from Foley (1990: 373-374, 377, 386-387). He sees the "generic override" at work in a faulty choice between alternatives that are equivalent in terms of story pattern, but not in terms of actual narrative content; such errors are the result of story-pattern congruence and the Serbo-Croatian bard's traditional impulse towards analogy.

(8) And since such spontaneous gatherings occur regularly, one is even led to ask if they are not to be considered an intergral, albeit "profane", part of the death-feast.

(9) Perhaps with the exception of Tibetan dialects, the spelling of terms not attested in the dictionaries, in the literary or urban colloquial language can in most instances be easily established either on the basis of etymology or with the help of literate local informants.

(10) This distinction cannot be applied radically, of course, since the exegesis by the informants is already an exegesis for the ethnographer, and the very work of translating (the choice of adequate terms, style, punctuation, layout, etc.) is already an interpretation by the ethnographer.

(11) To me, the myth (also referred to by Gaenzle) acknowledges the superiority of writing not as a mode of communication but as a mode of cultural transmission by way of "fixing" and preserving only. And since in Indian and Tibetan cultures, the transmission itself cannot be authentic, nor even achieved at all, without the intervention of a guru of divine inspiration, the myth can ignore the danger that lies in the semantic autonomy a text is likely to assume once it is written (as contended by the neo-hermeneutic school). Moreover, these cultures treat the book as a repository of sacred words which become effective when the written is converted into oral performance by *reciting* - often in a group and/or before a public.

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## ARCHIVES

### Himalayan Archives in Paris

Lucette Boulnois

This brief survey of the resources of the libraries of Paris on Himalayan studies was carried out in 1991-1992 by several specialist librarians whose names are given at the end of each section of this report. Although one of them, Lucette Boulnois, acted as liaison -- interviewing other librarians, collecting their papers and translating some of them into English -- it is a collaborative work.

As to the collections described herein, the reader is invited to take into account the following circumstances: in spite of the fidelity and spirit of heritage preservation which are characteristic of librarians, collections are, like mountains, subject to the erosion of Time. Without mentioning fires and wars (which did not affect too much Paris libraries) and - still more destructive - moving from one building to another, one may observe, here and there, a surreptitious 'evasion' of some books, as centuries pass. May the God of Reading forgive those scholars who (out of mere absent-mindedness, of course) forgot to bring back a borrowed book. And worse cases occurred - let them sleep. This inquiry could not include the checking one by one of all the volumes on the shelves and files, and, especially as some collections are very old, some books may be missing.

Several libraries in the oriental field have moved, some suffer from lack of room or lack of staff; librarians had to adapt themselves to computerization, which took a lot of time before allowing

(or so we were told) to gain time actually. This may explain some of the difficulties for readers. But as a whole, the present inquiry gives, it is hoped, a rather clear view of the present available resources. Such an inquiry should be repeated every twenty or thirty years to take changes into account.

It would be fair to pay homage to all the librarians, past and present, whose patient work, century after century, permits now every interested citizen of any country the privilege of reading, free of charge in our public libraries, this impressively rich heritage of knowledge, be it a 1743 Newari manuscript, a Tibetan gold manuscript, or the 1981 population census of Nepal: this right to read, this free access to knowledge, for which we had to fight in the past, is one of the fundamental rights in a civilised country, and one of the pillars of freedom.

#### CENTRE D'ETUDES HIMALAYENNES

The Centre d'Etudes himalayennes is a department of the Research Team UPR 299 "Milieux, société et culture en Himalaya" of the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique. It stands in the quarters of the team in Meudon, twelve minutes from Paris by train. It is a library and bibliographical centre, open to all four days a week, with books in free access. The catalogue is not computerized. Parts of the bibliographical data are inserted in different national banks

of data, computerized or not computerized.

The Centre was founded in 1965-66 as Centre d'Etudes Népalaises, and then extended its activities to the entire Himalayan area and changed its name accordingly. Its geographical field includes Nepal, the Himalayan districts of India, Bhutan and Tibet and (this is more recent) the mountainous districts of Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Its first task in the sixties was to compile the *Bibliographie du Népal*, several volumes of which were published from 1969 on by Editions du C.N.R.S., Paris. Around 1969 it started working as a library open to all.

Printed comprehensive bibliographies are no longer published. The Centre issues a typed yearly accessions list of books, articles, symposia papers etc. in Western languages, which is distributed free to interested research workers and institutions. Each list includes between 800 and 1200 new titles. Since 1978 one hundred copies of each annual accessions list have been issued and distributed.

Almost all books and periodicals may be borrowed through inter-library loan in France and Western European countries.

This library, being a rather recent one, keeps very few old publications; nor does it keep manuscripts. The collection includes chiefly materials in the field of the social sciences, with a few hundred titles in natural history. It is especially rich on Nepal (about two-thirds of the collection) and shows, for all areas, a strong interest in social anthropology, geography, ecology, economy, history, art and religion.

Thirty-five or forty titles of periodicals are regularly received (twelve from Nepal). Only periodicals focussing

on the Himalayan area are bought by subscription, but thousands of articles from scores of periodicals all over the world have been provided as offprints, photocopies, etc.

The Centre also keeps a collection of maps.

#### General description of the collections

Books, unpublished dissertations, unpublished monographs: 3,200, including: about 1,900 in English, 710 in Nepali, 290 in French, 50 in Newari, 40 in Chinese and more than 200 in other European and Oriental languages: (German, Italian, Japanese, Tibetan, etc.).

Articles (within received periodicals, or as offprints and photocopies), pamphlets, short unpublished reports, detailed chapters of multi-authored books, symposia papers: about 10,800.

Maps: 580 sheets.

Total: between 14,000 and 15,000 different titles on the authors cards.

The global distribution by language is: English, 78%; French, 15%; other: 7%.

Due to twenty-five years of field work in Nepal by different members of the team UPR 299 and its previous avatars, many books have been bought directly in Nepal; works in western languages come from France, United Kingdom, USA, Nepal, India, Germany and other countries. An extensive net of academic and personal connections is responsible for the stock of offprints and unpublished academic material.

#### Description by country: Nepal

About 11,200 titles (books and all other types of materials included) of which in European languages:

Bibliographies, more than 100 titles;

guides, general descriptions and travel, about 300; geography (including physical geography, human geography, ecology), 1,100; history, about 2,200; economy since 1950, 2,600 (including 1,200 on agriculture only); education, research, media, museums, intellectual life, 320; physical anthropology, health, demography, 500; social organisation, social anthropology (including tribal languages), 1,700; religion, 800; art and archaeology, 500; Nepali language and literature, linguistics, manuscripts, inscriptions, 400.

In Nepali there are the following holdings: art, 20; social anthropology, ethnic groups, folk tales, proverbs, folk songs, 80; geography, economy, demography, land reform, 60; history, 130; religion, festivals, rituals, 60; poetry, 54; fiction, novels, drama, 157; dictionaries, manuals, grammars, 60; essays and other kinds of literature, 35; a few titles on archeology, inscriptions, other subjects.

In Newari there are about 50 titles, chiefly on Newari language and literature, poetry, essays; and a few titles on religion.

In Japanese (50) and Chinese (4) there are titles on natural history, social anthropology, mountaineering.

Special features of this collection include the entire series of *Cahiers Népalais* and *Etudes Himalayennes* with the 10 *Cartes Ecologiques du Népal*, published by CNRS (40 titles); almost all significant works of the last 30 years by French research workers, and many unpublished dissertations in French; a few old French works: first edition of Sylvain Lévi's *Le Népal*, 1905-1908 (and also the 2nd ed.) and others.

In English there are few old books (Landon's *Nepal*) but many Indian reprints of the old British authors: Bibli-

otheca Himalayica series and others; most important works by British, American, Indian authors of the last 30 years; many American Ph.D. dissertations, especially in social anthropology; and many unpublished dissertations from several countries; 65 cyclostyled reports issued by CEDA, Kathmandu. There are many books by German authors, plus the Khumbu Himal series.

Other volumes include the *Nepal Population Census 1981*, published in English (10 vols.); the *Population Census 1971*, on pre-publication typed sheets, in English; the census of 1961 in Nepali (*Rāṣṭriya jana-ganana 2018 ko pariṇām*) with figures in Nepali, in 10 vols.; in Nepali, the 1961 agricultural census in 52 vols. (*Nepāl adhirājyako rāṣṭriya kṛṣi ganana, 2018, pramukh baliko utpadan dar*).

There is also the *Muluki Ain of 1854* (1965 ed.) and of 1983; the 1962 Constitution of Nepal; the 1990 Constitution; about 60 dictionaries of various languages: Nepali, Newari, Tibetan, Sanskrit, Chinese, Gurung, Lepcha etc.; and many works by the Summer Institute of Linguistics.

In Nepali there are 20 titles of books by Laxmi Prasad Devkota, works by Bhanubhakta, a Ramayana in Nepali prose (transl. Sundarananda); Balkrsna Sama, Lain Siha Bangdel, Parijat, Nepali translations from Sanskrit religious works;

The collection of *The Rising Nepal* and *The Motherland* since 1972 is 95% complete; as are the collections of: *Ancient Nepal*, *Contributions to Nepalese studies*, *Journal of the Nepal Research Centre*, *Kailash*, *Regmi Research Series*; and in Nepali, of *Pūrṇimā*.

### Himalayan districts of India, Bhutan, Afghanistan, Pakistan

Chiefly in the field of geography, history, social anthropology: Uttar Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh, 565 titles; Kashmir (chiefly Ladakh), 452; North-Eastern Himalayas including Sikkim, 358; Himalayas in general, 263; Bhutan, 300; Afghanistan, 74; Pakistan, 264.

The special features of this collection include: 40 volumes of the *Census of India of 1961, 1971 and 1981* (various Himalayan districts); reprints of old provincial Gazetteers; many recent books on deforestation, environment, ecology. The periodicals include: *Kuensel* (Thimphu); *Journal of Central Asia* (Islamabad).

Additionally there are 1130 titles in the field of Geology, Botany, Zoology, all Himalayan regions included.

### Tibet

In the Tibetan language are a few books (60) on history, folklore and oral tradition in Tibet, a reprint of *Dzam-gling rgyas-brshad*; and in western languages about 1,560 titles, including: bibliographies, 23; general descriptions and travels, 78; geography, ecology, economy, 190; history before 1950, 240; history since 1950, 106; life and works of Dalai-Lamas (chiefly the XIVth), 56; religions and religious arts, 506; social anthropology, 79; Tibetans in exile, 33; tibetology, 53; Tibetan medicine, 39; Tibetan languages, dictionaries, grammars, studies on literature, etc., 112; folk tales, Gesar epic, 25; physical anthropology, 12; numismatics, 10.

Among the special features of these Tibetan holdings are some precious works on thangkass: Tucci's *Tibetan Painted Scrolls*, first edition 1949, now rare; hors commerce copy of *Quarante*

*et un Thangkas de la Collection de Sa Sainteté le Dalai-Lama*, 1980, and hors commerce copy of *Les Seize Netens Thang-kas, Collection de la Maison du Tibet à New Delhi*, 1984, both published by Editions Sciaky; many works of the Himalayan department in Musée Guimet, Paris; L. Petech's works, including the 7 vol. of *I Missionari Italiani nel Tibet et nel Nepal*, 1952-56, now rare; the 2 volumes *Geological and Ecological Studies of Qinghai-Xizang plateau* (Proceedings of the Symposium on Qinghai-Xizang (Tibet) plateau in Beijing, 1981, totalizing 260 communications (more than 3,000 pp.) by hundreds of contributors on the geology, geography, ecology and related subjects of Tibet and Qinghai; and the 1991 Indian reprint of Sven Hedin's *Southern Tibet (1906-1908) explorations*, first published in Stockholm in 1917, in 12 volumes.

In Chinese there are 35 books, mostly on natural history: dictionaries of herbs, several volumes of the series *Zhumulangma fendiqu kexue kaoca paogao 1966-68* (reports of scientific research in the region of Mount Everest) and of the reports of the integrated scientific research of the Qinghai Xizang plateau in the 1980s.

Periodicals: complete collection of *The Tibet Journal*; some issues of *Xizang yanjiu* (Chengtu), *Tibet Studies* (Lhasa).

### The Map Collection:

#### Nepal

In general series: Indian Survey 1 inch / 4 miles series: a black and white reproduction of all Nepal sheets, from 1953 British War Office edition; U S Army Map Service 1:250 000 Series U 502 (some originals, some black and white reproductions, mostly editions

issued circa 1963); sheets covering: the whole of Nepal, parts of Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, a few sheets covering the North Eastern Himalayas.

Maps of Nepal only or parts of Nepal: 264 sheets (of which only 7 printed before 1957); including: the *10 Cartes Ecologiques du Népal* by J.-F. Dobremez and his collaborators (mostly 1:250 000); Landsat maps; *Planimetric map of satellite images*, 1:250 000 in 19 sheets, by Nepal National Remote Sensing Center; all the maps issued by Research Scheme Nepal Himalaya and distributed with the *Khumbu Himal* series; several series in Nepali; many city maps; land utilization maps, trekking maps, geological, geomorphical, agricultural, administrative maps, etc.

### Tibet

Maps of Tibet or parts of Tibet: 150 sheets (only 4 before 1950), many of which are in Chinese including maps in the Remote Sensing maps series, in colour (published in continental China): 10 sheets, 1:500.000 Qing Zang gaoyuan weixing xiangpian yingxiang tu, 1980; 1:500.000 series in 77 sheets for Xizang and 48 sheets for Qinghai published by the Chinese Academy of Sciences (Ludi weixing jia caise yingxiang tu) (Map of images in false colours by Land Satellite, 1982); the series of maps of Lhasa drawn by Zasad J. Taring, published in Tokyo in 1984; the Kessler's Tibet showing all the religious and administrative centres before the communist regime, published in Rikon Institute in Switzerland in 1980, with the great monasteries, and place names given directly from Tibetan and not in the Chinese phonetic system; plus a few maps issued before 1950 or reprints of pre-1950 maps.

### Other countries

A few maps of Kashmir, Sikkim, Bhutan, India (series), inner Asia etc.

Inquiries: L. Boulnois, Librarian-in-charge.

Address: Centre d'Etudes himalayennes, UPR 299, C.N.R.S., 1 place A.-Briand 92195 Meudon, France.

### BIBLIOTHEQUE DES LANGUES ORIENTALES

The Library of the Institut National des Langues Orientales (more commonly known by its old name, Ecole nationale des langues orientales) is situated in the same block as the historic building of the original Ecole (the classrooms of which are now in other parts of Paris). The bicentenary celebration of 'Langues 'O' is only four years away.

This library is very rich in old books and periodicals, dating back to the seventeenth century. Generally speaking, it is one of the best libraries in Europe for Oriental studies.

Neither Tibet nor Nepal were a chief preoccupation of the Library in previous times, Tibetan not being taught until 1962 and Nepali until 1966; nevertheless, many important books of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries are to be found there, as well as important periodicals.

The catalogue is being computerized; the computerization will include, little by little, back collections.

### The Tibet Collection

The importance of the collection in western languages cannot be put in figures but the student will find books by most important authors: Bacot, Desgodins, Pelliot, Sven Hedin, Minyaev, Pallas and others, plus many modern

names in the field. He will find also lots of historical works on all parts of Asia, translations into Western languages of Persian and Arab geographers and historians of old, important periodicals, (often from their very first issue), many books on Buddhism and all oriental religions, etc. It is also useful to know that the Russian collection of the Library is one of the best in France, containing important books and periodicals in various fields of orientalism, including tibetology.

Following the development of Tibetan studies in the western world and the creation of the teaching of Tibetan in "Langues 'O", a strong incentive was given to increasing the collection of books on Tibet and Tibetan civilization, especially religion, in the 1970s. From the 1980s publications in social anthropology and history have been more extensively bought.

Among the special features of the holdings are such volumes as a 1762 copy of A.A. Giorgi's *Alphabetum Tibetanicum*; three copies of G.C. Amaduzzi's *Alphabetum Tangutanum sive tibeticum*, 1773; J. Reuilly's *Description du Tibet, d'après la relation des Lamas tangoutes, établis par les Mongols* (a French fragmentary translation published in Paris in 1808 of the book in German by P.S. Pallas); one of the first editions of Bogle's report, under the title *Voyages au Tibet, faits en 1625 et 1626, par le père Andrada, et en 1774, 1784 et 1785 par Bogle, Turner et Pourunguir, traduits par J.P. Parraud et J.B. Billecoq*, published in Paris, in IV (i.e. 1796); of course, the classic travel reports (Jean Baptiste Tavernier, François Bernier, Melchisedech Thévenot and others); and among more recent titles: the splendid *Secret Visions of the Fifth Dalai Lama* from the gold manu-

script in the Fournier collection, edited by Samten Karmay (1988); G. Tucci's *Tibetan Painted Scrolls* (1949) and L. Petech's *I Missionari Italiani nel Tibet e nel Nepal* (1952-1956).

Periodicals in Western languages include the *Tibetan Review* (since 1979) and *Tibetan Studies* (since 1990-91).

In Tibetan there are no manuscripts. The Library started entering books in Tibetan only from 1970. It now holds about 400 books; most are Indian reprints, published in Dharamsala, Kalimpong, Darjeeling and Delhi, of Tibetan religious works; reprints in the Sata-pitaka series are systematically collected; Uralo-Altai series are also bought regularly. The collection is chiefly on Lamaism and Bon.

Periodicals in Tibetan: *ces-bya*, (from 1979).

Among the special features in Tibetan language collection are the *Biographical Dictionary of Tibet and Tibetan Buddhism* in 14 vols. by Khetsun Sangpo, Dharamsala (from 1973); many language manuals and dictionaries; *A Tibetan Encyclopaedia of Buddhist Scholasticism* by 'Ba'-pa-ba rgyal-mchan, Dehra Dun, 1970; rare bka'-brgyud-pa hagiographies, Tashijong, 1972/73; rare Karmapa texts, Bir, 1974; the *Nyingmapa Tantras: rñin-ma rgyud-'bum* (1974) in 36 vols.; complete works by Tshen Khapa published in 1987 in Beijing; works by Blo Bzan chos kyi rgyal mchan; by Padma Dkarpo (24 vol.); the *Deb Ter dkar po* by Gedun Chopel; and many titles of the Opuscula Tibetana series from Rikon Institut.

It must also be mentioned that the Library holds a Chinese collection, hence Chinese sources on Tibet are also found there.

### The Nepal Collection

No special interest was devoted to Nepal before 1965. Accessions developed in the sixties, but have not since then kept pace. No manuscripts are kept.

No figures can be given as to the pre-1960 collection of books in western languages. A few old books are available but some are not under the category "Nepali" or "Nepal", but under the categories "India, regions" or "India, languages, Gurkhali", which reflects our nineteenth century vision of Nepal. Among the foreign titles are: A.W. Cornelius' *English to Gurkhali Dictionary*, 1914; Hamilton 1819; Hodgson 1857 (*Essays on the languages...*), and Landon 1928. Until recently the Nepali language was not taught at the Ecole, and France had little knowledge of and interest in Nepal. The notable exceptions are, of course, Sylvain Lévi's *Le Népal* (1905-1908), and Isabelle Massieu's *Népal et pays himalayens* (1914). Between 1928 and 1960: Bruce, 1922; Gnoli, 1956; Haenisch 1959 (*Dokumente aus dem Jahre 1788 zur Vorgeschichte des Gorkha-Krieges...*).

The situation changed in 1965. Recent books were bought in western languages and in Nepali. The collection is not very large (the cards of the whole post-1960 collection, all languages included, do not fill one single drawer), but it is not uninteresting, including recent important titles.

Periodicals: *Contributions to Nepalese Studies* since vol.6; *Journal of the Nepal Research Centre*, from N°1, *Himalayan Journal*, since 1978; *Kailash* from N°1.

In Nepali there are about 420 volumes of which 25% were published before 1960, and 5 or 6 only before

1940. Pre-1960 books were published in Varanasi or Darjeeling; post-1960 books, mostly in Nepal.

The Nepalese literature is represented by a large collection of fiction, novels, short stories, poetry, drama (174 titles, of which 128 after 1960) and about 10 since 1960; then next in importance comes history with 20 titles; in other fields -- law and constitution, economy, social anthropology, geography, arts -- a few titles each.

Special features in the collection include two *Ramayanas* in Nepali: one is *Bhanubhaktako Ramayana* edited by Surya Vikram Gyawali, Darjeeling, 1954; the other is *Ramayana* translated by Tulasi Prasad Dhungyal, 1959; also translations into Nepali of Sanskrit classical works and also of Voltaire's *Candide*! Many titles by Laxmi Devkota, Balkrsna Sama.

Periodicals: *Kavitā*, from N°1, 1964.

Among the other languages spoken in Nepal let us mention, although it was not properly a Nepal affair, *The Gospel of John* in Lepcha, Calcutta, 1872; *The Book of Genesis and part of Exodus* in Lepcha, Calcutta, 1874; Mainwaring's *Grammar of the Rong Language*, 1876 and his *Dictionary of the Lepcha Language*, 1898; Schott's *Über die Sprache des Volkes Rong*, 1882.

Inquiries: Christina Cramerotti (Tibet Collection); Sultana Mohammad (Nepal Collection)

Address: Bibliothèque des Langues Orientales, Institut National des Langues Orientales, rue de Lille, 4, Paris.

## THE MUSEE GUIMET LIBRARY

The Musée was founded about a century ago by Emile Guimet as a museum of religions; after 1918 it became, as it is now, a museum for the art and archaeology of Asia. The Library holds a good collection of nineteenth and twentieth century volumes, and even some older ones as Guimet also bought private collections. Although the Library is specifically devoted to the arts and religions of East Asia, in the last thirty years both the Museum and Library have witnessed a dramatic increase in the Nepalese and Tibetan holdings, not only through the purchase of works of art and books but also because of important gifts and legacies by Sir Humphrey Clark in 1966, Alexandra David-Néel after her death in 1969, and recently, in 1988, by Rolf Stein who parted with some of his own books in Tibetan. The books from the David-Néel legacy are also in Tibetan; and the Clark legacy is partly in Tibetan and partly in western languages. The Museum also received in 1955, from the Bibliothèque de l'Institut, the Hodgson collection of Tibetan and Nepalese paintings and drawings with a few Nepalese and Tibetan manuscripts relating to them.

### The Tibetan collection

Before receiving these gifts, the library was already rich with interesting or curious works, such as a complete edition of the *sNar-thang bsTan-'gyur* and Reverend Theo Sorensen's Christian catechism in Tibetan, printed in Dajian-lu (Gangding) by the China inland mission.

Beside the Clark, David-Néel and Stein collections, which are described below, about 140 titles are available; they also include more recent books such as a Delhi reprint of the *Sde-dge*

*Kangyur*, many titles on religion, history of religion, history of monasteries, biographies of lamas, reprinted out of Tibet; among others, the Sata pitaka series. Curiously enough, the Library also holds ten years, between 1938 and 1961, of a periodical in Tibetan (founded in 1929) published in Kalimpong: *Yulchog sosoi sargyur melong* (The Tibetan newspaper).

### The Sir Humphrey Clark legacy

Beside about 500 volumes in western languages, this legacy includes about 15 titles in Tibetan: splendid manuscripts and xylographs, among them, ten sheets from a *bsTan'gyur* manuscript in gold letters on black paper (see G. Béguin: "Miniatures et Rouleaux Enlumines du Népal et du Tibet", Genève, Crémille, 1990, pp.108-109).

### The Alexandra David-Néel legacy

The famous explorer-writer-philosopher specialist of Tibetan religions bequeathed her books in Tibetan to the Musée Guimet library, a place where she spent so many pleasant hours in her youth, as her writings testify. As to her books in Western languages, most of the about 400 titles were bequeathed to the Musée de l'Homme Library in Paris. As may be guessed, these volumes are chiefly on the religion and philosophy of Tibet, rituals, prayers, meditation texts, biographies of lamas, history of Buddhism, history of Tibet, hymns and songs, yoga, cosmography and divination. The collection also comprises numerous grammars, language manuals, vocabularies and dictionaries. It includes, in all, about 700 titles (25 of which deal with Bon and the others on Buddhism). Most have no date nor publisher's name; many are probably

reprints of fundamental old works. Taking into account the biography of Mme David-Néel, it may be assumed that they came in her possession between 1925 and 1945.

### Professor Rolf Stein's private collection of Tibetan books

164 books in Tibetan were offered to the Library in 1988, the catalogue for which is being prepared (a preliminary list is already available; see also the article by F. Macouin, Chief Librarian of Musée Guimet Library in *Arts Asiatiques*, 43, 1988, pp. 143-144). Most of the works - on Buddhism, history, music, divination, biographies, dictionaries, epics and drama, are xylographs, old or new. The list also includes a few manuscripts and recent editions.

This is only a small part of what was Professor Stein's own library: the Centre d'Etudes des Religions tibétaines in Paris has bought most of his books in western languages (2500), in Chinese, Japanese and modern books in Tibetan (3000) and received also many offprints. About 80 Chinese books, many old and rare, chiefly on Sino-Tibetan border regions, have been received at Centre d'Etudes tibétaines, Collège de France, Paris.

### The Hodgson collection

The Hodgson collection, removed to Musée Guimet in 1955, was previously at the Bibliothèque de l'Institut, Paris. It is a collection of Tibetan and Nepalese paintings and drawings (27 scrolls of paintings and 6 bundles of drawings), not of books, excepting some Nepalese and Tibetan manuscripts in explanations of them, and a few notes by B.H. Hodgson. These works of art, collected by B.H. Hodgson between 1825 and 1857 in Nepal or in Darjeeling, had been

offered to the Institut de France in 1858. As these are not books, we shall not linger over them. Further information can be found in A. Foucher "Catalogue des peintures népalaises et tibétaines de la collection B.-H. Hodgson à la Bibliothèque de l'Institut de France", *Mémoires...à l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, 1ère Sér., tome XI, 1ère partie 1897, pp. 5-34*. An initial study of this collection, made by Barthélemy Saint-Hilaire, was published in *Journal des Savants*, 1863, pp. 96 and 175.

### Works on the Art and Archaeology of the Himalayas in western languages

800 or 900 cards fill a drawer, mostly of books but also some articles. Most important authors and works in the field of art and archaeology of the area are available; of course, a very complete collection of works by curators of the Musée itself: Marie-Thérèse de Mallmann, Odette Monod, Gilles Béguin; many exhibition catalogues and auction sales catalogues from Sotheby and others.

Among old books: a copy of *Alphabetum Tangutanum sive Tibetanum*, Roma, 1773; Franz Anton von Schiefner's *Bharatae responsa tibetice cum versione latina*, Sankt Petersburg, 1875.

The Library is very rich in periodicals in Western languages in the field of the art and archaeology of Asia, many of which from the very first issue.

Inter-library loan is possible. The computerization of the catalogues is in progress.

Inquiries: Francis Macouin (Chief Librarian)

Address: Musée Guimet, 6 place d'Iéna,  
75116 Paris.

### CENTRE D'ETUDES SUR LES RELIGIONS TIBETAINES

The Centre d'Etudes sur les Religions Tibétaines, currently directed by Anne-Marie Blondeau, is a department of the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes, Section of Religious Science, Studies direction: Tibetan religions. It originates from the Department of East Asia of the Centre Documentaire d'Histoire des Religions which was founded in 1952 by the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes and the Musée Guimet for the comparative study of religion. It is associated with the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique through URA 1229 Languages and Cultures of the Tibetan Area and with the Centre d'Etudes Tibétaines at the Collège de France.

Housed within the Maison de l'Asie, the Library is part of an extensive ongoing reorganization in which some of the Paris libraries specialized in Far Eastern studies will be brought together in that building: this will enhance the availability of the collections of the Centre, which at present is open only three days a week (Wednesday to Friday).

#### The documentation centre

As its first vocation was within the Centre Documentaire d'Histoire des Religions, C.E.R.T. remains a documentation centre with filed and classified collections of photographic material (the chief part of the collections) and sound and audiovisual material, relating to the religious life -- giving to this word a very large meaning - of

Tibet and areas of Tibetan civilisation (Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan). The Centre also keeps a library.

C.E.R.T. is open to all, but its collections are of interest chiefly to research workers and students. Loans are allowed only for books recently published. As to photographic material, it may be used only in the reading room, as the Centre follows the law of copyright and guarantees it to the authors and owners of the photographs it keeps.

The Collections include: black and white photographs, 5,000 (including some pre-1950 materials, such as the photographs by H. Richardson, A. Migot etc.), slides, 8,000; maps, posters and bills, 80; films, audio and videocassettes, 60; documentation sets of newspaper clippings, 30.

#### The Library

The Library possesses three important collections: that of the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes, the Stein collection and the Bacot collection:

##### 1. Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes collection:

200 titles (books); 150 offprints; 61 titles of periodicals (5 of which now current); 150 titles of photocopies of articles or books.

The whole of this material more or less relates to the subjects iconography, rituals, masked dances, etc.

##### 2. The Stein collection

In 1991 C.E.R.T. bought Professor R.A. Stein's private orientalist collection of books (excepting the books which entered Musée Guimet and the Chinese books which were acquired by the Centre d'Etudes Tibétaines in Collège de France). Cataloguing is in progress, but it already appears that it includes: 2,500

books in Western languages; about 3,000 books in Chinese, Japanese and Tibetan (modern editions); and a very considerable number of offprints.

The volumes deal with all areas of Far East, chiefly in the fields of comparative religion and folk religion.

##### 3. The Bacot collection

Housed in the C.E.R.T. but belonging to the Société Asiatique, to whom Jacques Bacot had bequeathed it. The Bacot collection includes books in Western languages and Tibetan original books (manuscripts and xylographs).

In western languages there are 550 titles, including all works of J. Bacot and M. Lalou (books, offprints, reviews). Most of the books by these two authors deal with travels, explorations, and language studies (dictionaries, grammars, dialectology).

Maps: ten or so, including the original maps from which J. Bacot's printed maps were drawn.

Periodicals: about 30 titles, but just a few issues of each. A rare collection of *Yul-phyogs so-so'i gsar-gyur me-long*, Tarchin, Kalimpong (years 1930-1939 and 1954-1961, but with missing numbers).

Tibetan manuscripts and xylographs: comprising 135 titles. Chief fields: primarily religious literature (biographies, theatre, Milarepa, Mani bka'-bum, bKa'-thang...) and some ritual series. J. Bacot's article "Titres et colophons d'ouvrages non canoniques tibétains" in *Bulletin de l'Ecole Française d'Extrême-Orient*, 44, 2, 1954, pp. 375-337 is a good survey of this collection.

N.B.: all types of, written, sound, audiovisual, photographic and printed material etc. are not computerized, but catalogued on traditional files.

Inquiries: Anne-Marie Blondeau  
(Director)

Address: Centre d'Etudes sur les Religions Tibétaines, Maison de l'Asie, 22 avenue du Président Wilson, Paris 75116

### CENTRE D'ETUDES TIBETAINES IN COLLEGE DE FRANCE

The Centre d'Etudes Tibétaines is a department of the Instituts d'Extrême-Orient of the Collège de France. It mainly operates as a library and bibliographical centre and is open three days a week, Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday from 10.00 a.m. to 2.00 p.m. The Centre was founded in 1971 and is associated with the Centre d'Etudes sur les Religions tibétaines (22 avenue du Président Wilson, Paris); it was located there up to 1990 when all the Far East Institutes moved to the new address of the Collège de France.

Most of the bibliographical data and references of books are not computerized and no inter-library loan has been planned, even in France, but the Library is ordinarily open to researchers and students.

#### General description of the collection

Books are mostly recent ones; xylographs and manuscripts are not kept, except as photocopies and reprints.

Books, dissertations and monographs: about 400 titles mostly in English and other European languages, dealing with history, philosophy, religion, ethnology, travels and tibetology in the strict sense of the word.

Periodicals: 26 periodicals are currently purchased including a complete collection of *Tibetan Review* as well as *Bulletin of Tibetology*, *Kailash*, *Tibet Journal*, *Himalayan Research Bulletin*, *Buddhist Text Information in Tibetan and Zla-gsar Bod-mi rang-dbang*, *Shes-bya*, *Bod-ljong zhib-jug*, etc.

Tibetan books: nearly 1,000 different titles; a list of the actual number of texts would run in the thousands but unfortunately only a few of the *Collected works* and *Series* have been filed up to now: this includes collections like the *bka'-ma* and collected writings of individuals, as well as compilations of rituals and other items belonging to particular schools. Collections which are not yet detailed are under special entries such as the name of the author, title of the book or collection, title in English, etc.

Chinese books: 82 titles including old and rare books mostly dealing with the Sino-Tibetan Marches. The largest part of this collection was acquired from Professor R.A. Stein.

Dictionaries and catalogues: 30 titles totaling 60 volumes including Tibetan dictionaries, bilingual and trilingual dictionaries, biographical and thematic dictionaries, catalogues from different institutions and bibliographical works.

None of these titles may be lent.

Inquiries: Jean-Luc Achard

Address: Centre d'Études Tibétaines,  
Instituts d'Extrême-Orient, 52 rue  
du Cardinal Lemoine, Paris.

#### LIBRARY OF THE ECOLE FRANCAISE D'EXTREME-ORIENT

The Ecole Française d'Extrême-

Orient (EFEO) was founded in 1898 as Mission archéologique d'Indochine; in 1901 it became Ecole Française d'Extrême Orient; in 1902 it moved to Hanoi, where it remained for more than 60 years; in 1968 it was repatriated to Paris, 22 avenue du Président Wilson, with the collections which were kept formerly in its Hanoi precincts.

The library is temporarily closed because of building works; the collections will probably not be available for at least six months.

The library acquires new publications in all its usual fields, including Tibetan studies, in Tibetan and in western languages. The collections in Tibetan include the Migot collection and other works, old and new.

#### The Migot Collection

This has been described in: "Catalogue du fonds tibétain de la Bibliothèque de l'Ecole Française d'Extrême-Orient. Fonds Migot", by Nagwang Dakpa, Paris, EFEO, 1987 (107 pages of data in Tibetan, reproduced from handwritten cards, in Roman transcriptions). Dr. André Migot, a French traveller and physician, journeyed in Khams in 1947-1948, and visited many Tibetan monasteries. There came into his possession nearly 700 books, chiefly xylographs (many of which he ordered from the famous Sde-dge prints). The collection, after his death, was purchased by EFEO circa 1970.

It includes chiefly religious works, most of them xylographs, of various religious traditions of Buddhism (Rñin-ma-pa, Sa-skya-pa, Dge-lugs-pa, Bka'-rgyud-pa) and Bon, philosophical Buddhist texts, religious history, rituals (*cho-ga*) and prayer books, history of Buddhism in India, medical classical works (*Rgyud-bzi*) and commentary

(*vaidurya Sñon-po*); more than 180 canonical works belonging to the Bka'-gyur and Bstan-gyur collection (most in Sde-dge edition). The collection includes also less known books: a rare work on omens and astrology (*brje-tho-gyan-t'i-za-ma-tog*), and a complete collection of the *Gnam-chos*, revelations from the Rñin-ma-pa tradition, rare out of Tibet.

#### Other books in Tibetan

Apart from the Migot holdings, books in Tibetan include post-1950 publications, mostly printed in India. The most important ones are works of gsun-'bum or bka'-'bum types, i.e. sets of works by the Great Teachers. The EFEO library holds about ten sets, belonging to the Rñin-ma-pa, Bka'-rgyud, Sa-skya and Dge-lugs branches of Tibetan Buddhism, and to Bon.

Let us mention some of them: Rje-bcun Tāranātha (1575-1634): set, 17 volumes; Mkhyen-brce-dbañ-po (1820-1892): set of 13 vols.; Kon-sprul (1813-1899): gdams-nag-mjod set: 13 vols.; rgya-chen-bka'-mjod: set, 20 vols.; Sa-skya-bka'-'bum: set, 15 vols. including works by Sa-skya-pa great teachers such as Kun-dga'-sñin-po (1092-1158), Bsod-nams-rce-mo (1142-1182) and Grags-pa rgyal-mchan (1147-1216). Gnam-chos-thugs-kyi-gter-kha-sñan-brgyud-zab-mo'i-skor: set, 11 vols.; Vairocana rgud-'bum: set, 8 vols.; Rje-bcun-chos-kyi-rgyal-mchan, dbu-ma'i-yig-cha: set, 2 vols.; Sde-dge Tibetan Tripitaka Bstan-gyur, Tokyo, 1977; set, 7 vols., etc.

Out of Migot collection and the Satapitaka series (the EFEO Library is one of the rare libraries holding the whole Satapitaka series production: 340 vols., not all in the Tibetan field), the Library keeps more than 140 vols. in

Tibetan, which makes, in all, for the EFEO, 1340 vols. in Tibetan, including the 167 vols. of the Bka'-gyur and Bstan-gyur edited by D.T. Suzuki, Kyoto-Tokyo 1957.

An extreme diversity of fields is encountered: religious history, philosophy, medicine, astrology, divination, poetry, all kinds of liturgical works.

#### Books in western languages and dictionaries

Around 235 volumes about Tibet are presently held in various western languages. The oldest one seems to be an Italian edition of Antonio di Andrada: *Relazione del Novo Scopimento del Gran Cataio, overo Regno di Tibet ...* Roma, 1627. This rare book is an exception: the library is not so old, and in fact very few 18th and even 19th century books are available (they are chiefly dictionaries) and books of the beginning of this century are not many.

The library is rather rich in two kinds of works: dictionaries and catalogues of manuscripts and xylographs. Scholars will find there the most rare and precious dictionary edited by A. Schiefner and published in Saint Petersburg in 1859: *Buddhistische Triglotte, Sanskrit-Tibetisch-Mongolisches Wortverzeichnis* with introduction and summary in German (the Sanskrit text appears as transliterated into Tibetan script); the *Dictionnaire tibétain-sanskrit par Tse-Ring-Ouang-Gyal* (Che Rin Dbañ Rgyal) edited by J. Bacot and published in Paris in 1930 (it includes 15,000 words); and a slightly different edition of the same, with handwritten annotations (possibly by Bacot); in both, the Sanskrit words appear in Tibetan script; it is a dictionary of Sanskrit words used in manuscripts. Also: the *Detailed Dictionary of Sanskrit Equival-*

ents for Various Tibetan Terms by the 14th Rje Mkhan-chen of Bhutan, Bstan-'dzin-rnam-rgyal, reproduced from a rare MSS from Bkra-sis chos-zdzong, printed in Bhutan in 1976; the 1910 *Sanskrit-Tibetan-English vocabulary, being an edition and translation of the Mahavyutpatti* by Alexander Csoma de Körös, printed in Calcutta (Sanskrit in Roman script, Tibetan in Tibetan script); dictionaries by Lama Dawasamdub Kazi (1919), T.G. Dhongthog (1973), Lokesh Chandra (*Tibetan-Sanskrit dictionary*, 12 vols., 1959), H.R. Jäschke (1881), Sarat Chandra Das (1960 reprint), Charles Bell (1905) and Mgr Giraudeau and F. Goré's *Dictionnaire Français-Tibétain* (1956).

One will find catalogues of many Tibetan collections kept in various libraries in the world: in India Office Library (Louis de la Vallée Poussin), in University of Washington (Gene Smith), in Toyo Bunko (Zuiko Yamaguchi), in Library of Congress, in Otani University Library in Kyoto, and even the catalogue, in Russian, by B.D. Dandaron, of the Tibetan manuscripts and xylographs in the Buriat Research Institute, published in Moscow in 1960. We cannot mention all titles in this short paper, French catalogues being included of course.

The 18th century is illustrated by a Spanish edition (translated from Tuscan) of a book on the Christian mission in Tibet: *Representacion...por el R. Procurador General de religiosos menores capuchinos...sobre el estado actual de la mission del Thibet*, Madrid, 1744; and by a copy, in a rather poor condition but complete, of the famous *Alphabetum Tibetanum*, 1762.

C.H. Desgodins' *Le Tibet d'après la Correspondance des Missionnaires* (1885) and A. Launay's *Histoire de la*

*Mission du Tibet* (1903) are available; as well as Tucci and Ghersi's *Cronaca della Mission Scientifica Tucci nel Tibet Occidentale* (1933) and Swami Pranavananda's *Exploration of Tibet* (1939). Most titles, though, came after 1950: scores of titles by R. Stein and G. Tucci (including a copy of the *Tibetan Painted Scrolls*) and a somewhat rare 1959 title: *Tibetan version of Kesar Saga - chapter V - Struggle against the King-Satham* (Corpus scriptorum mongolorum Instituti linguae et litterarum comitetti scientiarum et educationis Altae reipublicae populi Mongoli. Tomus VIII-Fasciculus 5). Also available are classical works by Bacot, David-Néel, Hedin, Hummel, Lalou, Pelliot, Rock, Rockhill, etc.

#### Nepal in EFEO library

The Library holds a very limited stock of about 40 works (in western languages) on the history, civilisation and Buddhism of Nepal.

Inquiries: Sophie Robert (Librarian); Nagwang Dakpa

Address: 22, Avenue du Président Wilson, Paris.

#### THE BIBLIOTHEQUE DE L'INSTITUT

The Bibliothèque de l'Institut, situated in the precincts of the Institut de France, 23 Quai de Conti, is an encyclopaedic library, founded in 1797, very rich in manuscripts of all sorts. It often receives interesting donations.

#### The Schilling von Canstadt Tibetan Collection

Baron Schilling von Canstadt, State Councillor at the Russian court, travelled, accompanied by Father

Hyacinth Bitchurin, throughout the Mongol-Chinese border regions in 1830, and collected many Tibetan and Mongol manuscripts and xylographs. In 1835 he offered the Bibliothèque de l'Institut 79 volumes in Mongol. The 79 Tibetan volumes represent 48 titles.

The whole Tibeto-Mongol collection is kept under shelf numbers 3501 to 3614 (Tibetan works: 3501-3579). N°3614 is a handwritten catalogue including: a list on 11 pages, in Tibetan and Mongol, handwritten, maybe by Baron Schilling in Kiakhta; with a separate sheet giving the translation into French (maybe by Bacot?); a 24 page handwritten catalogue in French by E.A. Clerc de Landresse, Librarian, and a list on 13 sheets, by J. Bacot, in French and Tibetan script, of the Tibetan collection, which appears to be the original draft of his article in *Journal Asiatique* (see below).

The books, Tibetan style, are of various sizes, and may be dated from 17th to 19th century. They constitute, according to Bacot, "a collection for a Buddhist scholar": 54 of the 79 volumes are canonical works (many are parts of the Kangyur); 18 other religious works are to be found: rituals, prayers, exorcisms, hymns, benedictions, religious dogmas. The collection includes also medical works, books on astrology and astronomy, alphabets and vocabularies (in all, 5 non-religious books). Some of the Kangyur volumes are manuscripts in silver letters on black or gold letters on black paper; it may be interesting to note that the collection includes copies of: the Tibeto-Mongol dictionary *Min gi rgya mthso* (Ocean of words) of 11 sheets; an iconography of the Tibetan pantheon (300 figures, with captions); a silver on black manuscript of the *100,000 Precious Words* (ma ni bka'

'bum) supposedly Sron btsan sgam po's words; the *White Gem* (Vaidurya dkar po), a work on mathematics, astronomy and history written at the end of 17th century by Sde srid sam' rgyas rgya mtsho, Regent of Tibet (634 sheets, with illustrations).

Further information on the collection can be found in *Catalogue général des manuscrits des bibliothèques de France, Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Institut, Ancien et nouveau fonds*, by M. Bouteron and J. Tremblot; Paris, Plon, 1928, pp.501-503; and in an article by Jacques Bacot in *Journal Asiatique*, Oct.-Dec. 1924, pp.321-348: "La collection tibétaine Schilling von Canstadt à la Bibliothèque de l'Institut."

In addition to the Schilling von Canstadt collection, the Bibliothèque de l'Institut keeps some parts of canonical Tibetan manuscripts which come from the Dépôt des cartes de la Marine; they are under shelf number 2817 in: "Papiers de Jean-François Boissonade, membre de l'Institut, 1774-1857".

#### The Hodgson Collection

The Hodgson collection of Nepalese and Tibetan paintings, drawings, and a few manuscripts related to them, brought by B.-H. Hodgson and offered to the Institut in 1858, is no longer in this library. It was removed to the Musée Guimet in 1855 (see Musée Guimet).

A few letters by B.-H. Hodgson are still kept in Bibliothèque de l'Institut (see *Catalogue général des manuscrits des bibliothèques publiques de France*, op.cit., p.470).

#### Books in western languages on Nepal, Tibet and the Himalayas

Out of its famous Tibetan collection, the Bibliothèque de l'Institut holds interesting titles on Nepal, Tibet and the

Himalayas, chiefly published in the 19th century and the first 25 years of the 20th century: a few dozen titles on Nepal, about 70 on Himalayan areas, more than 100 on Tibet, including titles on the natural history of these areas.

#### Nepal and the Himalayas

B.H. Hodgson appears several times in the files, which is not surprising; he appears even in French translations, so little known that they seem to have been missed by the "Bibliographie du Népal" published by CNRS in 1969: "Notes ethnographiques et géographiques sur la partie orientale du Népal" in *Nouvelles Annales des Voyages*, 1850, and "Origine des tribus militaires du Népal", same periodical, 1838.

Among the oldest titles are: Kirkpatrick 1811, Temple 1887, Le Bon 1886 and 1887, Wallich's flora 1824, Hamilton's flora 1825, Hooker 1854, 2 original editions of Hamilton 1819, Samuel Turner in French, 1800.

Later on came: Isabelle Massieu, 1914; other works on fauna and flora; the Filippo de Filippi expedition 1923; and very few titles afterwards.

In the files are listed 3 maps of the Himalayas (Ritter, 1832 and others).

#### Tibet

On Tibet the library holds precious old works: one copy of *Alphabetum Thibetanum*, 1762; one copy of *Alphabetum tangutanum sive tibetanum*, 1773; the 1770 Du Hald's *Description ... de l'Empire de la Chine ...* (with interesting chapters on the 18th century map of Tibet by d'Anville); Reuilly's translation into French of Pierre-Simon Pallas: *Description du Thibet ...* 1808; *Description du Thibet, d'après son état actuel avec une carte...*, Paris 1829; *Description du Thibet ...* translated by Klapproth

from a translation from Chinese into Russian by Bitchurin, Paris, 1831; under its German title, the Tibetan text: *Das Ehrwürdige Mahājāna sūtra mit Namen "das unermessliche Lebensalter und die unermessliche Erkenntnis"* (lithographischer Abdruck, besorgt durch den verstorbenen Baron Schilling von Canstadt), hrsg. von der Kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften, St Petersburg, 1845; two editions of Père Huc, 1853 and 1878; Sven Hedin's works published in 1899, 1904, 1912 and his *Southern Tibet*, 1917, which had become rare until the 1991 Delhi reprint; a 1823 pamphlet by Baron de Mortemart: *Observations sur les chèvres tibétaines du troupeau d'Alfort*, Launay's works on the Tibet catholic mission, 1903; short works by Henri d'Orléans, 1850-1855; Bonvalot, 1891; Mission Pelliot and Bacot, 1921; a little -known text: *Relation du voyage au Thibet de Baza Monkodjoueff. Texte Calmouk publié par A. Pozdnievime*, St Peterburgh, 1897, which seems to have been missed by Kuloy and Imaeda's "Bibliography of Tibetan Studies".

Old dictionaries and grammars of the Tibetan language are concentrated here: dictionaries by A. Csoma de Körös, 1834; Jaschke, 1831; Sarat Chandra Das, 1902; the 1899 *Dictionnaire tibétain-latin-français* published in Hong Kong by Les Missions Etrangères; grammars by Csoma de Koros 1834, Schmidt 1839, Foucaux 1858, S.C. Das 1915, C. Bell 1919, Bacot 1928, Bacot 1946-48, Lalou 1950; and the *Istočnik mudrecov; tibetsko-mongol'skij terminologičeskij slovar' buddizma*, Ulan Ude, 1968.

Rich in all fields for the 19th century, the library offers interesting old travel series and periodicals, like *Nouvelles Annales des Voyages*, and others.

Chief Librarian: Françoise Dumas  
Inquiries: Annie Chassagne  
Address: Institut de France, 23 Quai de Conti, Paris.

#### THE MUSEE DE L'HOMME LIBRARY

Founded under this name in 1937, the library originates from the Library of the Musée d'Ethnographie du Trocadéro (founded in 1878), ancestor to the Musée de l'Homme building, Palais de Chaillot, Place du Trocadéro.

The special vocation of the library is "the study of Man in time and space". And it actually is a first-rate library in the fields of social anthropology, material culture, physical anthropology, and prehistory. Although better known for its world famous collections on the Americas, it is also rich in collections on all other continents (but not on France which is the field of another specialist museum). Its periodical holdings from all over the world are also very considerable.

Interesting maps on Tibet and inner Asia are kept but not filed and are not generally available.

Computerization of the catalogue has recently started: the library is a participant in OCLC and sends its data to the national PAN-CATALOGUE.

#### The Alexandra David-Néel Collection

Mme Alexandra David-Néel bequeathed 400 volumes in western languages of her own collection, to the Musée de l'Homme library (her books in Tibetan were bequeathed to Musée Guimet and some books were left in her house in Digne in the South of France, now Foundation Alexandra David-Néel). These 400 volumes entered the Museum Library in 1970. They constitute a good collection for the scholarly

study of Buddhism, Hinduism, Chinese philosophy and religion, with English translations of classical Chinese, Hindu and Tibetan texts. Most books are in English and were published in the first half of this century.

Inquiries: Jacqueline Dubois (Chief Librarian); Bernadette Poux  
Address: Musée de l'Homme, Palais de Chaillot, Place du Trocadéro, Paris.

*The second part of Lucette Boulnois' "Himalyan Archives in Paris" will be continued in our next issue.*

## TOPICAL REPORTS

### Thang-stong rGyal-po - A Leonardo of Tibet

Wolf Kahlen

In 1985 I served as consultant to the Royal Government of Bhutan for Art and Architecture. Travelling freely within the country and making drawings, I started to trace the life and works of Thang-stong rGyal-po, the genius Mahasiddha, whose name is known within the Tibetan Himalayas, but who remains virtually unknown among western scholars, except for his accomplishments as builder of iron bridges. R.A. Stein was the only scholar who carried out research on Thang-stong rGyal-po and came to understand his importance. Janet Gyatso and Cyrus Rembert Stearns, in 1979 and 1980 respectively, published papers dealing either with the spiritual traditions or the life story of Thang-stong rGyal-po. Stearns, whom I met in early 1986, has since collaborated with me in my research and shares responsibility for the results I present here. In this report I emphasize the diverse artistic achievements of Thang-stong rGyal-po as seen by myself, also an artist.

Thang-stong rGyal-po was a Mahāsiddha of renaissance character, who in the course of his lifelong travels also engaged in teaching, building, constructing, performing, painting, composing, healing, etc. He lived 124 years, from 1361-1485. His methods of perceiving, acting and reflecting within the world were strategically open-minded, interdisciplinary, intermediary, social and 'crazy' (*grub-thob smyon-pa*) because he was in the first instance a sensuous and pragmatic person, an actual bridge builder as well

as a symbolic one, bridging gaps in Tibetan society, such as the one between the 'classes'. He practiced as a blacksmith, thus adhering to a 'lower' class, and at the same time acted as a philosopher, teacher and reincarnated emanation (*thugs-sprul*) of *Guru Padmasambhava*. By trespassing from one 'profession' upon another, he could show up common prejudices about differences between sentient beings.

We consider Thang-stong rGyal-po, as Janet Gyatso does, as *the* example of a Mahāsiddha as artist. In addition to his unrivaled contribution to Tibetan architecture (*zlum-brtsegs lHa-khang at sPa-gro, Bhutan*); he was also a poet, bridge and ferry builder, composer, sculptor, painter, engineer, physician, blacksmith, philosopher, the founder and promoter of the *A-iche-iHamo* drama theatre and the originator of the seemingly lost ritual of Breaking the Stone (*pho-bar rdo-gcog*). Many of his activities may be compared with those of his contemporary Leonardo da Vinci. In this report we exclude his life-story, his aspect as a *gTer-ton*, his reincarnations, his spiritual traditions, his tantric and medicinal practices, his *mahāsiddha*-powers and legendary aspects and concentrate on four of his activities that we investigated in the Himalayas: bridge building, architecture, frescos and ritual enactments -- the results of which were displayed at the First International Thang-stong rGyal-po Expedition organized by me in 1988 with the support of the Technische Universität Berlin.

The expedition took place from August till October 1988. The members came from different national backgrounds: the Polish expert on Buddhism and iconography Marek Kalmus, the Polish anthropologist and second cameraman, Waldemar Czechowski, the Tibetan Padma Wangyal, the American Tibetologist Cyrus Rembert Stearns and myself as artist, film maker, initiator and leader of the expedition.

The route of the expedition, as far as the results given here are concerned, was as follows. Starting in India at Dharamsala we travelled around Spiti to Tabo, Kye, Lhalun, Kibber and the Pin-valley (names in international transcription), then to Kathmandu and Bodhath in Nepal, then into Tibet to 'Bri-khung, bSam-yas, rTse-thang, Zwa-lu, rGyal-rtse, gZhis-ka-tse, sNye-thang, Bras-spungs, Lha-rtse, rNam-ring, Ri-bo-che and Ding-ri. In this brief report comments are offered on only five of the works of Thang-stong rGyal-po that we encountered: 1. the iron chain suspension bridge at Yu-na; 2. the iron chain suspension bridge at Ri-bo-che; 3. the *mchod-rten* of *gCung-* resp. *Pal Ri-bo-che* as an example of architecture; 4. the frescoes of Ri-bo-che as an example of painting; and 5. the ritual *pho-bar rdo-gcog* as an example of the link between performance and theater.

We would not have discovered what we did, without the preliminary work of Stearns, his thesis on Thang-stong rGyal-po's life (1980) and his translation of the biography *Lo-chen 'Gyur-med bde-chen* (1609) under the title (1989)

**The iron chain suspension bridge at Yu-na**

The spelling Yu-na follows local pronunciation. The bridge is located in

the upper sKyid-chu - valley north of LHa-sa south of 'Bri-khung til. The historic iron chains span about 30 meters, but contemporary steel cables stabilize the bridge today. The neighbouring former monastery of Yu-na was completely destroyed during the Cultural Revolution. Relics, such as carved wooden pillars, beams and stone reliefs, are embedded today in the foundations on both sides of the stream. Round boulders with central holes for the suspension of the chains with an iron bolt at either side seem to be original or are indistinguishable from traditional designs. On two of the iron links we found incisions.

The roughness of the inscriptions are probably more a sign of the difficult process of producing them during the red glowing phase of the hammering rather than a sign of age. Technically the inscription could only have been accomplished by use of a long chisel, which gave enough distance to protect the hands from the heat. The pointing of the chisel and the configuration of the syllables must have been difficult. Therefore the characters are simple and read: *rin-chen lCzags-zam*, Treasurable or Valuable Iron Bridge. The often used term *rin-chen* denotes that the bridge must be made by, in honor of, or related to an important person, and/or must be situated at a holy place, etc.

The other incision we found supports this, saying: *khyi-chu*, dog-water, thus giving a date, which could be the year 1442 within the Tibetan 60-year calendar cycle, if we consider the life time of Thang-stong rGyal-po relevant. Within his life the first dog-water-year would be the time, when he was only about twenty years old, the next one is the assumed date and the last one some time after his death. Both inscrip-

tions give us reason to trust in the date 1442, since Thang-stong rGyal-po did not start bridge-building until he was 69 years old. Not surprisingly his biography mentions his activity in this area of the upper sKyid-chu right during that time.

#### The iron chain suspension bridge Ri-bo-che

Ri-bo-che monastery, called gCung-or Pal Ri-bo-che, not to be mixed up with Ri-bo-che in do-Khams, was, in addition to Chu-bo-ri, Thang-stong rGyal-po's main seat. Here several thousands of monks lived and Thang-stong rGyal-po's followers stayed until its destruction. The site at the 90 degree bend of the gTsang-po river, south of rNam-ring in U-Tsang, is dominated (and this is the only architectural structure which survived the ideological 'purification' in tact) by a gorgeous seven-storey-high *bKra-shis sgo-mang*-type *mchod-rten* or *sku-bum* with a processional path *skor-lam* at the base, completing the *maṇḍala* structure, and an iron-chain-bridge nearby.

The bridge is a childhood dream of a bridge. It bridges the river *gTsang-po*, here in the upper part not wider than 100 meters, in two steps, a longer and shorter suspending part, as usual with Thang-stong rGyal-po's bridges, starting on a pile of river stones, originally found there or piled up, as Thang-stong rGyal-po did at *rTse-thang* and other places, mentioned in his biography. Yakhide and leatherstrings, which are fastened to the links of the chain at either side, hang down and loop under wooden planks and logs, which function as foot paths. The chains serve as handrails as well, though they reach the height of one's hips. According to the

biography the bridge was built in 1436; and as we anticipated, it looks its 550 years. The foundations of the bridge at the river side are crowned by *maṇḍala* *chu-skor*, and enormous trunks of old willow trees are used within the stone masonry work. The iron links themselves are the expected and known type that I have examined in Bhutan. They are one foot long, oblong shaped, more like squeezed ellipses, covered by a bronze-like smooth brownish to reddish patina, with a particular diagonal soldering seam of arsenic-containing iron. Therefore the seams, usually the weakest part, are of additional strength and free of any rust; as the chains are entirely free of iron-mould, probably as a result of the rather unclean composition of the blacksmithed iron.

The perfect condition of the bridge, which is an object of private daily worship and religious service by the inhabitants of the village finds its explanation, no doubt, in one of the prophecies known in the region: Buddhism will flourish in Tibet as long as this holy bridge stays. Thus the bridge has been defended and taken care of down through the centuries.

The documentation we took are the first photographs, films and videotapes ever. There is no other visual record of the bridge, apart from a sketch made by Peter Aufschnaiter more than forty years ago, passing by the village on his escape, not daring to enter it. The bridge can be seen at the very left of his drawing next to the *stupa* of Ri-bo-che.

#### The *mchod-rten* of Ri-bo-che

The *mchod-rten* is definitely of Thang-stong rGyal-po's hand, the construction process is described in detail in the biography. It is a seven storey high hierarchical structure, if we

count the structurally visual elements from the outside. Seen from the interior, we may add another storey inside the double-storeyed *bum-pa* and a three-dimensional *maṇḍala* like the three *sku-bum* of rGyal-rtse, rGyang (this one Thang-stong rGyal-po is said to have helped building), and Jo-nang. The building was erected between 1449 and 1456 with the active support of the *rNam-ring* ruler who provided labourers and materials. There was also severe resistance by the workers, several assassination attempts, thefts and some collapses of walls. Wonderful stories concerning building techniques, spiritual teachings connected with the labour, and legends of the wild and crazy life of the Mahāsiddha are told. After the *mchod-rten*'s completion even the Emperor of China sent loads of presents to its consecration.

In this context it should not be neglected to mention the most important and most innovational architecture of Thang-stong rGyal-po in Bhutan, the *Zlum-brtsegs lHa-khang* in the sPa-gro-valley, showing some of the same inside features as the *Ri-bo-che sku-bum*. To the best of my knowledge, the construction of a *mchod-rten* as a temple did not occur before the time of Thang-stong rGyal-po.

#### The frescoes of Ri-bo-che

Within the very small and narrow chapels of the two storeys above the basement, used for processional circumambulation, we observed and documented frescoes, luckily preserved in their lower parts. The rubble that fell from the massive wood, mud and slate rooves, when they had been destroyed by the Red Guards, protected the murals from decay. The frescoes are of great interest and, we believe, of Thang-stong

rGyal-po's own hand, or commissioned by him. They were probably at least, in part, iconographically initiated and supervised by him. All the paintings of the second storey, for example, are *maṇḍala*-compositions, a rarity in Tibet, and a significant attribute of centres for higher level-tantric practices.

The style of the paintings varies between floral design in earthy colors and free-flowing, heavily dark outlined figures of the same colour in material and character. Some of them have a transparent coating and the colours look different in brightness because of the slight gloss. We did not have enough time to examine them in the three days of our visit, which were filled with documentation work. They have to be urgently researched before they vanish under new frescoes, for 'restoration' work has already started. I may say here, that we believe from our experience as artists and researchers that the frescoes may date from as early as the 15th century. The artist's or artists' 'hand' is very personal, even quite daring within the given framework of the iconographic regulations. It is a way of unpretentious, direct depiction of the necessary features of the figures, which proves the strong personality(ies) of the artist(s), characteristics which can be attributed to Thang-stong rGyal-po himself. Incomparable to other 'schools', we may only say, there is a certain relationship to *Ngor-Evam*, as far as the *maṇḍala*-character is concerned.

#### The ritual *Pho-bar rdo-gcog*

We found the Thang-stong rGyal-po attributed ritual 'breaking of the stone' (*pho-bar rdo-gcog*) in the lonely and politically forbidden Indian border-valley Pin of Spiti in Himachal Pradesh. This ritual, which was

believed lost forever after having been first observed by tibetologists over fifty years ago, was recorded in full with 16 mm film, video, photography and audio equipment. We agree with Stein that this *bon*-related ritual is a link between the story-telling and lecturing activities of the wandering *ma-ñi-pa*, which I observed in Bhutan, and the Tibetan performances of *A-lche-lha-mo*. With actors of Ri-bo-che, Thang-stong rGyal-po founded a school of such fame, that according to witnesses they usually enacted the first drama among the various troupes of the *Nor-bu gling-kha-yoghurt*-festivals.

The abbreviated historical background of the three hour-long ritual can be given as follows. By request of *Tsong-kha-pa*, so the story goes, Thang-stong rGyal-po is asked to come to lHa-sa to help cure a severe epidemic. He arrives, miraculously flying on a white eagle, and finds the cause of the disaster to be either the demon *dBang-rgyal*, or *Hala rTa-brgyad* or *Drang-srong chen-po gzha-bDud* (*Rahula* with the sea-snake *chu-srin*) inside a stone at the threshold of the *Jo-khang* door. He initiates and then performs the ceremony on the market-place. The stages of the ritual are: asking the demon to leave the stone, then making an offering to him, then blaming him and urging him to go, and finally demonstrating one's superior supernatural powers to the evil force by balancing his body on the tips of swords. Thang-stong rGyal-po is not able to have the demon react at all. So he announces he will break the boulder and force the demon to appear in open light. The threats have no effect so Thang-stong rGyal-po must do what he threatens. The rock, which requires two men to lift, is placed on the chest of third actor, lying in trance on his back

on the floor. If the stone breaks by the first stroke of another riverstone, the omen is *dharmakāya*; by the second, *nirmāṇakāya*, etc.

The tone of the ritual is somewhat interrupted in the introductory scenes by a historical 'lecture' that begins humorously and ends with a deadly fight. The lecture sheds light on the unexplained relation between the 'King of the North' *byang mi-rgod rGyal-po* and the *dharmarāja Chos-rGyal Nor-bzang*, a story which could stem from the legend of Thang-stong rGyal-po building a *mchod-rten* at the northern border to prevent Mongolian infiltration. Surprisingly we found a *Nor-bzang* theme depicted in the nearby Tabo monastery on the *tsug lHa-Khang*-wall. But this, and its possible relation to the ritual, still has to be examined closely.

Before the ritual takes place a travelling altar *mchod-bcams* with, in this case, two Thang-stong rGyal-po statues, is set up and *A-lche lHa-mo*-performances, the initial prayer is sung to Thang-stong rGyal-po, asking him to purify the site, space and situation.

When we showed our *bu-chen*-people from Sagnam the text Roerich had written down about 60 years ago with the help of the *lo-tsa-ba chen-po*, the *lo-chen* leader and main magician of the troupe of married lamas, they could hardly hold back their tears. This was their grandfather's and great grandfather's text, used over the generations and even now given further for the initiation of the leader's eldest son. This we take as a proof of having found the same lineage of *pho-bar rdo-gcog*-performers. Neither in Bhutan nor in Tibet could I find them or other *bu-chen*.

Our knowledge of the other diverse professional activities of Thang-stong rGyal-po and of his life story, which for reasons of space cannot be illustrated here, enable us now to give an exact picture of his works and life. A privately financed archive has been established in Berlin in order to collect and diffuse information on this Tibetan genius. We took some eighty hours of video documentation, three hours of 16 mm film and three thousand slides in the course of the expedition, but we are still looking for more photos, audio- and videotapes, films, literary sources and quotes, ritual and profane objects connected with his tantric practices, etc. An illustrated book and videofilm portrait is in preparation; and a film in eight parts has been planned. The first part, entitled 'The Demon in the Rock' and depicting the search for and discovery of the 'breaking of the stone' ritual, has already been cut.

Please help us trace additional materials by sending your information to: Thang-stong rGyal-po Archiv Berlin, Prof. Wolf Kahlen, Ehrenbergstraße 11, 1000 Berlin 33, Germany (Tel 030-831 37 08).

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## INTERVIEW

### Rishikesh Shaha on Human Rights and Democracy in Nepal

An Interview with the President of the Human Rights Organisation of Nepal (HURON)

Martin Gaenzle

Active in Nepali politics since 1949, Rishikesh Shaha is a unique figure who has had a first hand experience of the upper echelons of power, as well as of the hardships of political persecution, and who, at the same time, has pursued academic studies and drawn on these experiences in numerous scholarly publications on the political history of his country.

He witnessed the dawning of democracy in the fifties as a leading politician and became Nepal's first representative at the UN. Later, he played a significant part in drafting King Mahendra's 1962 constitution, but soon afterwards resigned, went into opposition and was jailed several times for his political views.

Many of his books deal with the Panchayat era *Three Decades and Two Kings - Eclipse of Nepal's Partyless Monarchic Rule* 1990, *Politics in Nepal (1980-1991) - Referendum, Stalemate and Triumph of People Power* (1992). But he has also published works on the general history of Nepal: *The two volume Modern Nepal. A Political History 1769-1955* (1990), and *Ancient and Medieval Nepal* (1992).

In 1988, together with a good number of other concerned intellectuals, many of whom today are prominent figures in quite different parties, (for example, Dr. Baburam Bhattarai from the leftist United People's Front

and Daman Dhungana from the Congress Party) Rishikesh Shaha founded the Human Rights Organisation of Nepal (HURON). The organization was under considerable repression from the government; his house, where also the office was located, was under constant observation. In 1989 he was arrested on the charge of seeking to subvert the established order in collusion with a foreign power, and the state prosecutor asked for the death penalty, but he was eventually released on bail.

After the restoration of democracy, Mr. Shaha has remained an independent voice. At a press conference just four days before our interview he presented a HURON report on the violence during the recent *Nepali band* (General strike) on April 6, 1992 in which the figure of deaths caused by police action was put at 14 instead of the official 7. He took the opportunity to give a statement on the general political situation in the country, appealing to the leaders to strengthen the external or formal safeguards of democracy provided for the constitution. Many of the points made in the statement were touched upon during our talk. The following is an abridged version of the one and a half hour interview which Mr. Shaha gave me on May 15, 1992 at his house in his frank and outspoken manner.

G: On April 6 the new democracy in Nepal had to go through another test: a *Nepal band* seemed to signal popular discontent; and police, again, resorted to firing, killing several persons. Which, in your opinion, is the greatest danger for democracy right now in Nepal?

S: To me the greatest danger for democracy arises from the complacency of our political leaders. They, the ruling party especially, seem to argue that because there is this global trend of democratization, the democratic process cannot be reversed. This is what they have been saying, even to the people in public speeches. My contention is without democratic freedom you cannot have anything. This is what I say to the left also. You must have an electoral system because it enforces the grand principle of accountability. There are people who want to expose that parliamentary system, the extreme left. To them I say: Look, I cannot accept that attitude. Democratic freedom may not be a sufficient condition, but it is a necessary condition of economic uplift, social uplift also. I tell the leaders: Don't be too sure that democracy might not have back-slidings and set-backs. Unless you can develop democracy into an effective instrument for removing social and political ills, it may be doomed. So the greatest danger to democracy to my mind comes from the inability of our leaders to cope with the economic and social problems which the country faces. Seventy percent of the people live below the poverty line, according to the latest World Bank development report. Unless you have some kind of security net for them, there will be trouble. There is a lot of discontent, as the second *band* (on May 3) even without the participation of the United Marxist Leninist Communist

Party of Nepal showed. The people are discontent. Why: because of rising prices, because all these kids have no jobs. And of course, this liberalization has aroused high expectations and these expectations are not being quickly fulfilled. But the leaders are not looking at these problems; instead they are saying: Oh, because there has been democracy all over the world, we have no worries for the future. I say no: if I were in your place, I would be worried. It is very difficult to make democracy work in the trying circumstances that prevail in Nepal.

G: Does also, in your opinion, the politicization of the students and the civil servants contribute to this unstable situation?

S: ... It is very dangerous. Without a functioning civil service we cannot have a reliable, effective, efficient and clean administrative machinery. ... Of course, the opposition says that the Congress Party has politicized them; they call it Congressization. I say there is Congressization, but the other side is also not playing fair. They are also trying to win over the civil servants. And that accounts for a lot of instability in the land now. ... We are receiving very disturbing reports about the law and order situation, from east, from west, from everywhere.

G: But is this politicization not part of the democratic process?

S: No, in other countries, such as Britain and India, even in the United States, the civil service officers are appointed through public competition. It is on the basis of merit that they are recruited, and on the basis of efficiency and seniority they are promoted. For that you have the Public Service Commission here also. I call that one of the formal safeguards of democracy.

These formal safeguards must be strengthened. Public Service Commission, and independent audits and accounts, you hear nothing about these things. You do hear, though, of the scandals: Oh, the government has pocketed so much money in this deal or that. In democracy you have independent audits and accounts. The Public Service Commission is not making any appointments just now; it is simply out of the picture. The Prime Minister heads an Administrative Reforms Commission, that is responsible for the removal of people and all that: but where is the Public Service Commission? ... And then the third thing is an independent judiciary. We shall have to see how independent it will be in practice. It has all the protection it needs. So these I regard as the formal or external safeguards of democracy. We must strengthen them if we are to make democracy work in this country.

G: Let me come to the Constitution. As you know, the new constitution was drafted within a rather short period, within seven months. So, as far as I remember, you had been in favour of a constituent assembly. But the Constitution has never been voted on by the people. What consequences do you see deriving from this?

S: I said to His Majesty: "Your Majesty, the best thing for You will be to follow in the footsteps of Your illustrious grandfather, King Tribhuvan, who had made an offer to hold elections for a constituent assembly. Then there will be no quarrel. Without it You will be caught up in bargaining with the various parties. And You will have a constitution trying to satisfy all the political parties without ensuring democracy for the people in general." This was my humble submission. This constitution

unduly favours the parties. The parties are not even required to show their accounts. And it gives everything to the major parties. So much so, that the Election Commission was not even prepared to allow other minor parties to run in their own name on the plea that they had not got the requisite number, that is 3%, of the votes in the country. The Supreme Court gave a verdict only yesterday, that, no, it is not wrong not to let these small parties run in their party's name. So Comrade Rohit's Workers' and Peasants' Party (WPP) will be campaigning in its own name. ... Comrade Rohit's contention was, I think, very correct. He said: I don't claim the privileges of a national party, because my party did not get 3% votes, but you cannot prevent me from running as a party or putting up candidates from my party for election. And there were other parties, I mean the new parties, parties to be born, how could they get 3% votes? The constitution can't ask the people to do the impossible. But thank God, the judges have said that the election commissioners, or the election officer, was wrong not allowing the WPP's candidate to run in the name of his party. ... Comrade Rohit had filed his case before the parliamentary by-elections to a particular constituency were held, but the verdict came after the elections were finished. What prevented these learned judges from coming out with this verdict right at that time, right at that time before the elections? They could have done that. They could have asked the election commissioner: Allow Rohit's candidate also to run in the name of his party. You see, the old mentality has not changed. They don't want to hurt the powers-that-be. This is why I always insist: Unless your mentality changes, nothing is going to happen.

Even the judges, they seem to be afraid of treading on somebody else's toes.

These things don't change over night, and it will take us some time to change our ways. I have said in the course of my report that all those people who are in favour of privatization and open market here, you see, they will not acquire a protestant bourgeois work ethic over night. They will try - I have said in my report - to corrupt the elected political leaders in the same way as they were used to corrupting the predecessors of these rulers in the government.

G: You said that the Constitution is overly party-oriented. Can you explain a bit more?

S: Overly party-oriented it is bound to be, because the parties' nominees were among the members of the Constitution Drafting Commission. There were only one or two nominees of the King and they were also ex-party leaders. So at that time when the parties had won against the King, naturally they all succumbed to their pressure.

G: Can you say in more detail what articles, or what aspects of the Constitution are the result of this party-orientation? What do you see as the major weakness of the Constitution? (As Mr. Shaha wrote an article on the Constitution in *HIMAL* Nov./Dec. 1990 only passages that add or clarify some of his points are reproduced here.)

S: Chapter XVII in the Constitution deals with political organizations. It merely provides that the constitution of the party must be democratic, the rules and the manifesto must be democratic and it must be registered. Now it does not even say, that its accounts should be audited every year and made available to the public. It should have been there. In other constitutions, parties are not even mentioned; in the American

constitution parties are not even mentioned. ... You see, it is a negative right, you can form political organizations, the government should not interfere, that's all. So they could have left it at that. ... They are not going to provide, as in your case (in Germany), or in the case of Israel, money to the parties for running elections on the basis of their record in the previous one. They are not going to do anything of that kind. So why the 3% rule?

... About the constitutional weaknesses, the King has the power to revoke the Constitution. He might revoke the Constitution only for fear that there might be another popular upsurge which might end monarchy. Theoretically speaking, he can revoke the constitution because it is he who has given it. Whoever has given the Constitution can take it away. ...

G: To come to another aspect, how do you see the state of religious freedom in the country?

S: (Reads from *HIMAL*) "Right to religion. The officially distributed (but unofficial) English translation of the Constitution reads thus: 'Every person shall have the freedom to profess and practise his own religion as coming down to him from the perennial past (sic) having due regard to traditional practices. Provided that no person shall be entitled to convert another person from one religion to another.'"

Now look: in Nepali there is no word for proselytization. What the real text says, I have given my translation. Even the translation has not properly been done. Because in Nepali for "convert another person", there are no appropriate words because we do not have the practice.

G: What is it in Nepali: *dharma parivartan garāune*?

S: My translation of the above clause is: "Provided that no person shall cause or compel another individual to change one's religion." These were the words written by me for King Mahendra's Constitution. You see, the late King wanted me to draft his Constitution.... I told him even then: "Sir, it will look very bad if you do not allow people to change their religion out of their own volition.

G: Have you had any cases of people imprisoned for changing their religion?

S: These people have been released. Some of the missionaries, I championed their cause. ... They have all been released. The pressure on them has decreased, because of the allround liberalisation. The municipal law, however, remains the same. ...There is the Muluki Ain, in the Muluki Ain they can be punished for changing their religion. And the Muluki Ain articles have not been changed. Now, it is up to the judges to rise to the occasion and say that the Muluki Ain is not consistent with the spirit of the Constitution, and declare the provisions therein *ultra vires* of the Constitution. We have to see whether the judges will have the courage to say that.

...Now about torture, let me tell you that I pleaded with my friend Mr. K.P. Bhattarai to sign that optional protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. ...Now, the effect will be, if anyone is denied his personal right in any way, after exhausting all the means for the redress of grievances in Nepal, he can go to the International Court of Justice, or to the Human Rights Commission for the redress of his personal grievances against the government. He has signed that ... during his time as prime minister.

...So torture has also been abolished, but the people are still being

tortured. ... Long before the leftist report came out, I said on the basis of the report I received from my own HURON friends that in Baglung people were being tortured.

G: In what context?

S: Some police inspector was killed there. After that the police went berserk and rounded up several people, and they were all tortured. And some of them are still in prison..... The leftists did their research only now. I came out with the statement about three weeks ago. Saying that the government was definitely wrong. I asked the government to set up a judicial inquiry commission to go into it and find out about what had happened.

The difference between now and the Panchayat regime is that the present rulers allow me to meet these prisoners. And then, the victims of torture have told me in the presence of police officers and inspectors that they have been tortured. That is the change. During Panchayat-Raj they would not allow me to go anywhere near them.

Now about death the penalty, even the Constitution says that in certain cases it is still allowed. So if you look at the Amnesty comment, it says that in Nepal the death penalty is only partially abolished. Because there is one law here. Let me be very frank with you, there is one law here, which is called *rājgaddi uttaradhikāritva ain*, or the Law Relating to Succession to the Royal Throne, which was drawn up by the King's father and revised by the present King. In that law there is a provision that if anybody makes advances to the royal ladies, or wants to do something untoward to the King, the person can be hanged. So I said: Why don't you go and tell the King that this act should be changed in the present context?

G: One question concerning the protection of ethnic minorities. How has the situation changed in that respect?

S: Neither the leftist parties nor the Congress Party have been able to find a solution. And all these ethnic minorities are discontent with both the parties. Their leaders have deserted the mainstream political parties. They have started founding their own organisation. There is *Janamukti Morcha*, Peoples's Liberation Front of Messrs. Gore Bahadur Kapangi, and M.S. Thapa. ... They have told me that the leftist won't do anything for them. They have tried to put up their own candidates. And there are Panchayat-oriented ethnic group parties. They are also fed up with the Panchayat parties, and with the communists also....

G: Do you think these ethnic parties have a good chance to win in the local elections?

S: They may fare better in local body elections but the government has not given real powers and responsibilities to local bodies. They have been given responsibilities for development without having any real power or authority as units of local self-government. I said: For god's sake, the people will never learn how to run their own affairs, if you don't give them powers, give them money also. I told them of the Constitution of Brazil, in which it is provided that 31% of the budget be spent through institutions of local self-government. Otherwise the people will never learn how to run their affairs. This is the only way in which you can build up democracy from bottom up. But now, I have absolutely no doubt that Congress and the Leftists will try to capture whatever is possible, and then they will try to run things in their own way, and with the help of the civil

servants again, as it was being done in the Panchayat time.

...You see, there should have been a chapter on local self-government in the text of the Constitution itself. It is not there. And when I raised this question, one of the members of the Constitution Drafting Commission belonging to UM-L CPN, Mr. Bharat Mohan Adhikari, said: We wanted to have a complete chapter, here in the Constitution, but Mr. K.P. Bhattarai didn't want it. So we dropped the idea at the last minute.

... And there is another trend, that of ethnicity or regionalism. The Tarai is a big region. The Sad-bhavana Party is regarded as being pro-Indian but it could be more popular in the Terai area because most of the parties have given more tickets to the hill peoples who have moved to the Tarai than to the indigenous Tarai people. So they must show some kind of vision and foresight in this respect. Otherwise the Tarai people are not going to take it for long.

Meanwhile the Tarai youth, have grown very very extreme. They say: "There is no Palk Straits between Nepal and India. No water or natural boundary between India and Nepal. If the bloody fools in the hills want to suppress us, the same way as they did in the past, there will be another Liberation Tigers' Front in the Tarai. We will see what your government in the hills will do. We border on Bihar. And look at Bihar, there are explosions every other day. So we can get all the technical knowhow.... and give you the taste of what is going to come." So this is another danger.

G: Coming to my last question, concerning your own work, what are your next projects. What do you plan to write on in the near future?

S: ... Now, if I find time, I shall start writing my autobiography because I

think I should share my experience in life with succeeding generations. Not because I have been a great success, or anything of the kind, but only because I have lived turbulently and have had a rather adventurous life. I have married in the Rana family. We have been Khans or Shahas. We belong to one of the Twenty-Four Principalities in the Gandaki basin. And, for good or bad, I came to be associated with the popular

political movements. Which here played a critical role in our country's recent history. As a gadfly, you can say. But I have had some role and I have seen the working of politics and government in Nepal from both the inside and the outside. I think my fellow-countrymen at present and in the future would profit by my experiences and learn from my mistakes and failures.

## RESEARCH PROJECTS

### Group projects:

The Senate of the German Research Council (DFG) approved in 1991 the following major research programme: Settlement Processes and State Formation in the Tibetan Himalayas.

To be investigated in a border region characterized by high altitude and aridity is the relationship between settlement processes and the emergence and decline of states. The interdisciplinary project, with its aims defined largely by the humanities, was stimulated by tibetologists and architectural historians, extended further by specialists from the fields of settlement archeology and historical settlement geography and methodologically completed by specialists from natural and engineering sciences (dendrochronology and photogrammetry/Cartography). The research hypotheses apply to the entire area of the Tibetan Himalayas, but the planned field studies shall concentrate for the time being on the pass and transit landscape of Mustang in northern Nepal. This research strategy was decided upon both for reasons of accessibility for fieldworkers and for the fact that, in contrast to Chinese administered Tibet, the Tibetan culture has been handed down unbroken and is still alive and developing in Mustang.

The first phase of the programme will last six years. The coordinators are: Prof. Dr. Dieter Schuh (Universität Bonn) and Prof. Dr. W. Haffner (Universität Gießen).

### Individual projects:

**Travelling to Buddhist Holy Centers: The Case of Sherpa Pilgrimages**

Researcher: Dr. Eberhard Berg.

Institutional address: Ethnologisches Seminar Zürich, Freiesteinstrasse 5, CH-8032 Zürich, Switzerland

According to recent empirical research as well as theoretical discussion, pilgrimage represents a distinct kind of ritual performance. The pilgrimages leave behind the structured world of everyday life for a limited period of time in order to overcome the physical hardships and psychic strains of their journey. Thus the process of pilgrimage seems to favour the emergence of conditions which may temporarily give rise to new forms of social interaction while crossing ethnic, social and religious boundaries. The main part of the investigation will consist of systematically observing these interactions with reference to three geographically varying case studies: a local pilgrimage, a regional pilgrimage and a supra-regional pilgrimage. It is assumed that the various differences between these three varieties of Sherpa Buddhist pilgrimage may give insight into the multiple forms of social interaction and organization which can emerge in the course of the pilgrimage process.

The three case stories are:

1. The study of local pilgrimages: the case of holy mountains and lakes. In their own locality the Sherpas worship various holy mountains and lakes.

These places can be the aim of local pilgrimages during summertime. It takes usually three to four days of travelling by foot. For Buddhists holy mountains here a double meaning. On the one hand there are to be considered as the home of a god to be worshipped, usually the tutelary god of the locality. On the other hand they represent a god whose locally framed power reaches as far as the mountain can be perceived from afar. Very often a holy mountain exists in combination with a holy lake being regarded as the representation of a goddess and also of her dwelling. There god and goddess are imagined to live together in eternal harmony. This type of pilgrimage performed in August happens to remain within the boundaries of their familiar geographical horizon. Other Bhotia people can be met.

2. Regional pilgrimage: the case of Halase. An important pilgrimage centre on the regional level is situated at Halase in the vicinity of Okhaldhunga. It is a cave in which according to Buddhist tradition the famous tantric saint Guru Padmasambhava who is said to have introduced Buddhism to Tibet once had spent time of retreat. The course of this regional pilgrimage leads through the territory of different ethnic groups and attracts pilgrims of diverse origin who have to manage to get along with each other. The month of pilgrimage is February.

3. Supra-regional pilgrimages: the case of Bodhnath. Bodhnath is situated about six km northeast of Kathmandu in the area in which the most formidable growth of Buddhism in whole South Asia can be found. In the Kathmandu Valley there exists an extraordinary number of important Buddhist places of

pilgrimage. However, Buddhists regard the two biggest stupas in this area, Swayambunath and Bodhnath, as the most important ones. Being constructed in the 5th and 6th Centuries A.D., a considerable mythological tradition is connected with each of them. Swayambunath situated on a hill west of Kathmandu is the older sacred complex, but Bodhnath constituting a holy centre of its own built in the characteristic shape of a mandala seems to be better suited for the intended study.

Since many centuries Bhotia people from Sikkim, Bhutan, Tibet, and the Nepalese Himalayas come to Bodhnath to stay over the fairly mild winter, to trade and to worship the deities at the important shrines and at the stupa by prayer, circumambulation, etc. Most of them use to dwell in the houses surrounding the stupa or in the numerous monasteries of the locality. From here they visit other Buddhist places in the valley.

The pilgrimage provides further possibilities for the fusing of religious and secular motives (trade and tourism). Thus the supra-regional type of pilgrimage offers important insights into the diverse aspects of change in combination with the recent growth of Buddhism in this part of the Himalayas. The winter from December to February is regarded as the pilgrimage season.

#### Socio-Economic Conditions of the Terai (Madhesiya) Community in Nepal

Researcher: Dr. Hari Bansh Jha, M.A., Ph.D. (Economics)

Organization Carrying the Study: Centre for Economic and Technical Studies (CETS), Post Box 3174, Kathmandu, Nepal.

Sponsor: Friedrich-Ebert Foundation (Germany)

The above study is being conducted with the following objectives: 1. To access the problem of the *madhesiya* community in regard to the manifestation of their language, culture and identity. 2. To analyze the nature of participation of the *madhesiya* community in the different political and administrative assignments as well as in the different line ministries and corpora-

tions. 3. To review the impact on the *madhesiya* community of the migration of the people to this area from the hills. 4. To find out the income and expenditure pattern of the *madhesiya* community. 5. To suggest measures for integrating the *madhesiya* community in the national mainstream and also to improve their socio-economic status.

Work for conducting the above study began in February 1992 and will be completed in August.

## NEWS

### Human Rights Violations in the Himalayas - the Domination of Elites 6-10 December 1991, Kathmandu

As a result of democratisation in Nepal and the newly gained freedom of speech, it is now permitted to discuss potentially explosive topics in public. Between 6th and 10th of December 1991 in the Hotel Vajra (Kathmandu), about 100 human-rights activists, environmentalists, politicians, journalists and scientists from all over Nepal, as well as from Ladakh, Garwhal, Sikkim, bhutan (refugees), Tibet (refugees), Germany, England and the Netherlands met to examine critically human rights problems and the dominance of elites: the meeting was organized by NGO (Nepal Watch)/Berlin, and the Peace Movement Nepal, Lalitpur.

In an unusually free atmosphere there were discussions on human rights and human-rights violations connected with the following topics: environment, health, peace, education, language, access to information, freedom of speech, political participation, women, children, bonded labour, religion, culture, rights of ethnic minorities, land conflicts, racism, foreign aid, foreign media, tourism. From the discussion it became obvious, how much the ethnic minorities (who in some cases are not 'minorities' at all) in the Himalayas feel politically, economically and culturally oppressed. Above all religious elites and the centralist governments in Delhi, Kathmandu, Timpbu and Beijing were held responsible for transforming ethnic groups into aliens. Nepal, is the largely unknown fact, of how many

ethnic groups there are and their number in relation to the national population. Tamang spokesmen, for example, estimate that they represent 17% of the whole population, and non-Hindus altogether about 75%. In the conference they assess that as long as the Nepalese constitution proclaims Hinduism a state-religion, many people would not reveal that they actually belong to another religion: the disadvantages are too great.

Massive Human-rights violations were reported anew from Tibet and Bhutan. In both cases there was no reaction from India or Nepal. In the case of Bhutan there has been even no reaction worldwide. About 70,000 Nepalese people here had to flee Bhutan, and it is said that 300 come each day to seek help in the refugee-camps in eastern Nepal. From Tibet also about 300 people escape daily to Nepal, there often being maltreated, extorted and robbed.

The participants at the meeting agreed upon the following statement (interestingly the demands in connection with the situation in Tibet were not reported on)...

We call on the Governments concerned to ensure equality of all ethnic, social, religious and linguistic groups, and to take appropriate measures to enable members of all these groups to participate fully in society and in decision-making processes. Surveys should be conducted to determine the size and living conditions of the various ethnic groups in the region.

The constitution of any country should not promote, safeguard, or grant preferential treatment to any particular religion.

The right to a healthy environment is the most fundamental of human rights. Governments concerned should take appropriate measures to prevent the further destruction of the environment. We strongly urge Governments to set up environmental courts.

Governments should ensure education is available in the mother tongue of different ethnic groups, at least at primary level. They should make available existing resources, including teachers and materials, to enable this to take place.

Governments in the Himalayan region that do not have a language policy and planning should initiate such measures.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child should be implemented. Special measures should be taken to improve the lives of women and to prevent their continued exploitation.

Communication through the media of announcements, reports and official Government statements should be in the languages of the people.

We call for the increased awareness of, and support for, the plight of the Tibetan people in their struggle for the restoration of their human rights, including the right to self-determination.

The world community should extend support and solidarity to the ongoing movement for human rights, justice and democracy in Bhutan, and should provide relief measures and protection to the refugees in India and Nepal.

The protection and rights of all refugees in the region should be guaranteed under the international laws concerned.

Finally, it was proposed and accepted that a Himalayan Network is

established to monitor, promote and document the human rights situation in the Himalayan region. It will be called "Peace Himalaya" with its headquarters in Kathmandu.

Ludmilla Tütting

### Society and Culture in the Himalayas 9-11 December 1991, New Delhi

The entire Himalayan region stretching from the Pamirs-Hindukush-Karakoram trijunction in the northwest to Arunachal Pradesh in the northeast has attracted scholars, travellers, adventurers and mystics since ancient times. In recent times there has been a revival of interest in this region not only because of its distinct eco-cultural system, historical, socio-economic and scientific character but also due to its increasing geopolitical importance. It was in early 1989 that a group of area specialists and personalities from the Himalayan states of India, namely Sh. T.N.Kaul, former diplomat, Ven. Kushok Bakola, the spiritual personality of the Buddhists of the Himalayas, Sh.Ghulam Rasool Santosh, a leading artist from Kashmir, Prof. B.R. Grover, a historian, Prof.K.N. Pandita, scholar of Oriental studies, Prof. K. Warikoo of Jawaharlal Nehru University and a specialist in Central Asian and Himalayan studies and some other experts formed a non-profit voluntary organisation - Himalayan Research and Cultural Foundation - at New Delhi. The Foundation is engaged in systematic, in-depth and micro-studies of history, culture, art and literature, social structures, economic, geopolitical and other issues pertaining to the Himalayan and

pertaining to the Himalayan and adjoining regions in a holistic manner adopting an inter-disciplinary approach.

The Foundation organized a three day National Seminar on "Society and Culture in the Himalayas" at the Jawaharlal Nehru University Campus, New Delhi (India) from December 9 to 11, 1991. Attracting wide participation from specialists and cultural personalities from the Himalayan states of Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh hills and Jammu and Kashmir, the seminar was the first such organized initiative in India to involve experts from the grass roots with an established disciplinary specialisation connected with the Himalayan and adjoining Central Asian region. The seminar provided a forum for scholars, literati and cultural personalities from the entire Himalayan region to share their experiences and opinion with leading social and natural scientists from Jawaharlal Nehru University and other institutions. The deliberations of the seminar were organized in 5 technical sessions covering almost all aspects of the society and culture in the Himalayas in a thematic manner. More than twenty-five research papers were presented and discussed in the seminar and important recommendations were adopted at the concluding session.

In the first session which focussed on "ecological and geopolitical perspectives of the Himalayas", three keynote presentations were made. Prof. P.S.Ramakrishnan, of the School of Environmental Sciences, JNU made case studies of Kumaon, Garhwal, Sikkim Himalayas and the north-eastern hills thereby illustrating linkages between ecological, social and cultural dimensions of devel-

opment process. Dr. A.R. Yusuf, Reader in Kashmir University explained the changes in the ecology of Kashmir Himalayan lakes occurring due to adverse impact of modernisation. The geopolitical imperatives of the Himalayas were analysed in detail by Sh. T.N. Dhar, president of Lucknow based voluntary organisation SHERPA.

About ten papers were presented in the second session which dealt exclusively with the "Himalayan society and culture in a historical perspective". The participation of a learned delegate from Mongolia, Mr. Jigjidiin Byamba, Member Parliament and Dy. Chairman of Association of Mongolian Free Writers, who discussed the cultural and historical ties between peoples of The Indian Himalayas and Mongolia lent an international character to this seminar. Prof. Grover explained the methodology and approach to the study of Western Himalayan history and culture during the medieval times. Whereas Prof. K.N. Pandita's paper dealt with the contribution of Kashmir to Indian culture, Prof. P.N. Pushp analysed the importance of Kashmir as the crucible of cultural interaction. Dr. R.P. Khatana highlighted the dilemma faced by the Gujjars in Jammu and Kashmir over the past few years. Similar case studies on Sikkim Society and culture and Adi tribes of Arunachal Pradesh were made by Dr. Aparna Bhattacharya of Calcutta University and Dr. Tamo Mibang, of Arunachal University respectively. The participants were enthralled by the range and depth of case studies presented and discussed in the seminar, particularly when these were made by scholars who have spent their life times in this field.

The third session, "Himalayan frontiers in recent history", witnessed

lively discussion. Whereas John S. Lall, former Dewan of Sikkim gave his opinion on the Sino-Indian border in the western sector, Mr. A.K. Ray, former diplomat shed interesting light on the strategic aspects of the Himalayan frontiers of India. Dr. Warikoo provided a historico-political perspective of Kashmir's relationship with its frontier territories. A Tibetan scholar from Sarnath, Acharya Jampa Samten gave a biographical account of Dorjjeff, the key person involved in Anglo-Russian-Tibetan frontier diplomacy during the Curzon years. This session was marked by intense debate on various strategic and political issues involving the Himalayan frontiers of India and the participation of three former diplomats in the deliberations lent a special character to the seminar.

"Modernisation and change in the Himalayas" formed the theme of discussions in the fourth session. The problems of changing society and cultural dilemma faced by Ladakhis at present were analysed by Prof. Harjeet Singh of JNU. Similar case studies about the impact of modernisation on the society and culture of Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim and Himachal Pradesh were made by Dr. S. Dutta (Arunachal University), Dr. Anand Kumar (JNU), Dr. Yashi Choudon (Gangtok), Dr. Pamela Kanwar (Shimla) and several others. The face to face interaction between experts from the Himalayan region and well known social scientists helped them in a better understanding of the problems and issues related to Himalayan society and culture.

The Seminar participants deliberated in detail various resolutions before the same were finally adopted. The seminar called upon the central government and concerned Himalayan state

governments to initiate steps for preservation of rich and variegated cultural heritage of the Himalayan region. It urged upon the government to fulfill the cultural aspirations of the hill people and support specific result oriented programmes recommended by the Himalayan research and cultural Foundation in order to accelerate the process of social development keeping due regard for local milieu, needs and cultural quest.

The proceedings of this Seminar are expected to be published soon. For further details write to: Dr. K. Warikoo (Secretary, Himalayan Research and Cultural Foundation), Associate Professor, Central Asian and Himalayan Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi - 110067.

K. Warikoo

#### **The Anthropology of Nepal: A Franco-Nepalese Seminar, 18-20 March 1992, Kathmandu**

This seminar, convened jointly by the National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS) and the French Embassy in Kathmandu, intended to present recent scientific results, discuss methodological problems and raise several issues on the anthropology of Nepal. Three areas of research were explored.

1. Urban studies. In his paper, "Buddhism as seen through Svayambhu Purana", Kamal P. Malla showed the importance of this religious text in Newar Buddhism. He analyzed the genesis of the Svayambhu Purana in the particular context of the Kathmandu valley, and its different sources, especially Indian. Annick Hollé, Gerard

Toffin and Krishna Prasad Rimal offered a paper on "The 32 Maharjan tols of Kathmandu city". They stressed the role of the Maharjan (Jyapu) in the growth of the present capital of Nepal and explored the ritual functions of this group in the city. The three authors presented also the social and territorial organization of the Maharjan of Kathmandu - an organization without parallel in Patan and Bhaktapur - and for the first time pointed out the importance of *dhimay* drum in the social fabric of the town. Nadia Mercier gave a paper on "Socio-economic determinants of women's work in urban service sector", based on fieldwork carried out in 1988-1990. She discussed the changes introduced by women's work in the traditional family structure.

2. The anthropology of religion. Two papers dealt with Tibetan studies. Katia Buffetrille spoke on "Preliminary remarks on a Sherpa pilgrimage: the pilgrimage to the milk-lake in the district of Solu". She described this ritual practice and stressed its similarities with Tibetan tradition. However, she noted that Sherpa do not circumambulate sacred mountains but mainly lakes. Mireille Helffer, an ethnomusicologist who studied the Gaine in the sixties, gave a paper on "A recent phenomenon: the emergence of Buddhist monasteries around the stupa of Bodnath". She questioned the present revival of Tibetan Buddhism in the Kathmandu valley and recalled the ancient links between this region and Tibet. Ram Niwas Pandey spoke on "The religious beliefs of people of Western Nepal". The integration of local divinities into the Hindu pantheon was vividly discussed by participants. R.N. Pandey rightly outlined that Masta was at the same time a territorial

divinity and a lineage deity of many high caste families. Finally, Jag Man Gurung spoke on "Continuity and change in the Gurung culture of Nepal". He argued that funeral rituals were one of the stronghold of Gurung identity during the days of Hinduization.

3. Anthropology and Development. Mangal Siddhi Manandhar and Caitanya Misra presented the CNAS research programme on the remote areas and their study in West Nepal. Corneille Jest presented the Gulmi-Argha Khanci CNRS project which was launched in late 1985. Both papers questioned the relevance of basic research for development and decision-makers. To be sure, besides raising heritage consciousness in the different ethnic groups, the anthropologist can be a link between tradition and change. Prayag Raj Sharma expressed the view that road construction is not a correct indicator of development in the remote areas. On the other hand, Denis Blamont, a geographer himself, gave a paper on "Demographic growth, natural constraints and the diversification of the rural productions systems: Bajhang, Jumla, and Dhading-Rasuwa". He emphasized the recent standardization of crop systems all over the Hills of Nepal, from West to East. By and large, this trend encompasses the ethnic boundaries.

Gopal Singh Nepali and Prayag Raj Sharma played a vigorous role in the debate and all the discussions. G.S. Nepali, who spoke on "The role of anthropology in Nepal", outlined the need of theoretical training for Nepalese anthropologists. Referring to the great amount of anthropological studies published in French by CNRS scholars, P.R. Sharma urged these works be translated in English.

In closing, Dyuti and Isvar Baral (Central Dept. of Sociology, TU/Royal Nepal Academy) presented the new official policy concerning cultural pluralism. In fact, since the promulgation of the new constitution, which explicitly guarantees the right of every community to conserve and to promote its language and culture, an unprecedented situation arose. The controversial question of the interrelationship between national identity and minority cultures was posed and passionately discussed by participants.

Seven French films on the anthropology of Nepal were shown. Most of these films were made in the 1970s and can now be considered as historical documents.

The papers will be published by the French Cultural Centre, Kathmandu.

Gérard Toffin

**Journey through a Century: A Tale of the two Cities,  
7-28 May 1992, Kathmandu**

The recently held photo exhibition on 'Images of a City - The Old Townscape of Kathmandu and Patan: 1910-1992' was a memorable social event in Kathmandu. A distinguished gathering of elites from various walks of life had assembled on the occasion of its inauguration on May 7, 1992. The guest of honour invited to address this inaugural function was no less a person than the Nepali Congress Party supremo, Mr. Ganeshman Singh himself. The pictures made a vivid documentation of the towns of Kathmandu and Patan as they have changed and transformed themselves under the impact of 'development' and

'modernization' in Nepal over the past eighty years or so. It was jointly organized by the Nepal Heritage Society and the Urban Development through Local Efforts Project (UDLE) in Nepal. To have thought of such a theme was a commendable act in itself, since it was perhaps the first exhibition of its kind. The show was made possible by the energy, ingenuity and resourcefulness of a small but active band of persons consisting of Nepalese, Germans and some other nationals working in Nepal. That the exhibition was a tremendous success can be easily deduced from the keen public response it evoked in Kathmandu, both among native and foreign audience. There was a record number of visitors to the exhibition during the entire three-week duration for which it remained open in the Birendra Art Gallery at the Balmandir building in Naxal. The organizers deserve our sincere praise and appreciation, as well as our gratitude.

The objective of the exhibition, described in the printed handout, was 'to create awareness of the changes' taking place in Kathmandu and Patan in this century. Visitors to the exhibition could get enough of an idea of the extent of this change through the eyes of the camera in a most telling manner.

Unfortunately, all this change in the character and appearance of the town is not for the better. I am inclined to think that all these physical changes not only affect the architecture and style of individual house-making, but also alter the street scenes, the character of temple, public squares, monuments, open spaces, the city skyline - in short - the ambience and elan of these two towns as a whole.

The organizers disclaim any idea that their aim in putting together the

exhibition lay in 'glorifying a past'. This apologetic tone on their part has been prompted probably by the fact that the exhibition was made concentrating chiefly on the 'politically oppressive' and 'economically exploitative' Rana period of Nepal's history (1846-1950). This explanation was quite unnecessary, in my opinion, because the focus of nostalgic quality about it which it comes to acquire with due intervention of time. This is what has happened also in the case of the present Rana period exhibition. Watching the photographs of the exhibition has been a moving experience, especially to those people who grew up and spent their childhood in these towns. The now vanished face of Kathmandu looks so quiet, tranquil and placid - what one would like to have once again - in these pictures. This feeling gets far acuter, as the harried denizens of Kathmandu try to cope with their life in an over-crowded, over-polluted and traffic-choked city.

Altogether, 137 black and white photographs in frames were put on display, hanging them on the walls of the large, spacious rooms of a former Rana palace. Photos were taken from the old box camera on a tall wooden stand, using glass negatives. The subjects covered by these photographs have included i) the street scenes, ii) vernacular architecture, iii) Rana palace architecture and gardens, iv) religious and secular monuments, such as temples, stupas, river-banks (Nep. *ghāṭs*) old Durbar squares, Clock tower (*ghaṇṭāghar*) and the Dharahara, v) the shots of the town damaged by the earthquake of 1934 and those during reconstruction, vi) festivals and peasants, vii) the Bagmati river and viii) ordinary people and soldiers in their normal dress and uniforms.

Nowadays, it is more common to find the admirers of old and by-gone things among higher business classes and nouveau riche class of Kathmandu. The concern for heritage preservation is also expressed more strongly by these people. It should, however, be remembered that the pace and direction of 'development' on which they put the blame for Kathmandu's plight today, is the work of their hand to some extent. The 'development' creed earlier suited and favoured them up to a point. Hotel trade and tourism in Kathmandu has thrived by selling the idea of modern luxury and comfort concealed beneath the so-called cultural surface. It is they who are responsible for reducing a living culture into a piece of drawing-room decoration and its cheap commercialization. They would themselves live in the suburban residential areas and lament the loss of heritage in the inner cities. But an awareness in these matters from whatever direction is a desirable thing to have.

The amorphous change and rude transformation of Kathmandu, which the exhibition was well able to capture, however, gives little cause for rejoicing. There is so much thoughtlessness and lack of planning in everything going on in Kathmandu lately. The pace of construction and unplanned urban growth is simply mind-boggling. This follows no defined order and system. There are no guiding norms or rules for regulating the urban development of Kathmandu. The supply of basic civic amenities and minimum of hygiene are threatened.

In this background one cannot but admire the Rana rulers who showed a greater appreciation for the idea of a planned Kathmandu town, and gave evidence of a high urban aesthetic taste

and orderliness to it. Looking at the picture of the Juddha Road, the new Town-Hall and Nepal Bank buildings, the Bhugol Park, the uniformly designed row of houses at Indrachowk, the New Road gateway arch, the respect shown to the lay-out of Tundikhel, etc., one is struck by the presence of an unmistakable desire for planning, aesthetics and urban order, when this portion of the town was rebuilt after the earthquake of 1934. Some of the more pretentious buildings, like those of the Town-Hall and the Nepal Bank, were laid out on spacious premises with open grounds in front, fenced off by elegant wrought iron railings. Today we know how little respect Kathmandu gives to open, public spaces. More than anybody, the government and the corporations established by it are the greatest encroachers of public grounds. If we had only the sense to preserve the sanctity of this older Rana period town-planning, at least the New Road and Tundikhel area would have done us proud today. The curse of Kathmandu, therefore, is not its 'development' or 'modernization', as some people would like us to believe, but the haphazard method of doing things, which I call pseudo-modernization. If anything can redeem Kathmandu as a town, it is an even more modernized, efficient and orderly approach.

The many religious and secular structures adorning the towns of Kathmandu and Patan yesterday, individually may or may not have been in an ideal state of preservation, but they were certainly endowed with a dignity and atmosphere befitting them, because of plenty of open and unencroached open spaces surrounding them. The exhibition brings out this moral amply clearly. The tragedy of Kathmandu today is that we have neither any

energy, nor a collective will, nor the urge to be locally resourceful - so much that we do not even show cognizance of our most pressing problem - to check and put some order to our chaotic urban growth. The exhibition, I am sure, has succeeded in putting such questions into the minds of many onlookers. The success of the exhibition must be regarded to lie precisely here. Not to let its usefulness go to waste or fade into quick forgetfulness, it would be profitable, in my opinion, to bring out a catalogue of this exhibition with a short text and small-sized illustrations of the exhibited photos alongside it, so that its contribution to the public becomes more lasting and permanent.

Prayag Rai Sharma

**Oral Traditions and Literature in Nepal,  
22 May, 1992, Kathmandu**

A growing interest in studies on oral literature among Western scholars became apparent with the formation of the Oral Tradition Study Group during the Franco-German conference on the Anthropology and History of Nepal in Arc-et-Senans in 1990. To explore the field and assess the "state of the art" in Nepal itself, where in the changed political context there is a renewed awareness about the multilingual heritage and cultural diversity of the country, the South Asia Institute, Kathmandu Branch Office, organized a one-day seminar on May 22, 1992.

The objective was to convene scholars who - in one way or another - work in the field of oral tradition studies, to discuss research findings, methodological problems and practical

aspects. It turned out that such a forum of discussion was indeed felt to be necessary, as interested scholars are spread in various different departments, or are not in the university at all. Significantly the interest was not only guided by academic questions but also by a genuine concern for the preservation of a cultural heritage. Maybe it was also symptomatic that among the Nepali contributors there were several poets, but no anthropologists. As Prof. D.P. Bhandari emphasized in his inaugural address, it is quite a different thing whether an oral tradition is "lived" or whether it is made an object of study. And it was perhaps one of the special characteristics of the seminar that several of the contributors spoke about traditions of which they themselves are - to some degree - still a part.

The papers focussed on the unique, rich, and multifunctional character of the various oral genres, such as myths, tales, songs and proverbs.

Prof. Krishna Chandra Mishra (Department of Hindi) in his paper on "Oral Tradition and Literature, with special focus on the Mid-eastern Tarai area, gave a short historical sketch of the role of oral traditions in South Asian religions. He pointed to the importance of oral transmission of vedic knowledge (e.g. *śruti*) in the earlier periods, when writing was still viewed with scorn. In later times, the orthodox scholars tended to look down on oral traditions, though these have always influenced the scriptures. That many folk cults of the 'people' (*loka*) gradually find a place in the written traditions can be observed in the Tarai region to this day. But numerous forms of orally transmitted knowledge, some

of which have an important educational value, are as yet unrecorded.

Sueyoshi Toba's paper on the "World View in the Khaling Creation Myth" was a vivid exemplification of the existential importance which oral traditions have for many ethnic groups in Nepal. Mr. Toba emphasized that for the Khaling Rai, as expressed in the creation stories, the universe is animated (which can also be deduced from grammatical markers) and largely anthropomorphous. His paper presented the myths of origin in its consecutive order: from the separation of heaven and earth, through various episodes like the story of the First Women who is in need of a husband and gives birth to the various species, to the migration of the ancestors to the present settlements.

Vairagi Kahila, member of the Royal Nepal Academy and a poet who is known for his association with the "Third Dimension" literary movement in the 60s, gave a paper (in Nepali) on the Limbu *tongsing mundhum*. The full ritual recitation and enactment of these oral texts, which recount the origin of man and society, lasts for three days (the recording is 30 hours long). He stressed that though the *phedangma* ('tribal priest') is regarded as higher in the ritual hierarchy, it is the *samba* or *yeba/yema* who is in charge of reciting the *tongsing mundhum*. This was exemplified by ritual invocations and the metaphors and idioms used to chase away *Nahen*, the Spirit of Jealousy.

Also Prof. Satya Mohan Joshi (Department of Newari) gave his paper in Nepali, which was clearly conducive to his style of presentation. As he spoke on "Folk Drama in Lalitpur.

Social Humour and Satire" his contribution could not escape giving examples of the joking exchanges which are enacted during the *Kārttik nāc*. This little known drama festival, which goes back more than 300 years to the time of the Patan ruler Siddhinarasimha, is staged by lay actors and lasts for several days. The humorous dialogues, as Prof. Joshi pointed out, are full of caricature and criticism, both of society and oneself.

Tulsi Divas, also a poet, who has published a collection of folk stories from all over Nepal at the Royal Nepal Academy some twenty years ago, presented a paper on "Nepalese Folk Tales about Specific Traits of Human Character" based on the aforementioned material. He, too, stressed the humorous side of these stories as well as the social meaning which is conveyed through them. Distinguishing between tales of cleverness, of foolishness, and of greed and stinginess, he showed that these narratives all serve to uncover not only individual shortcomings but also the hollowness of social formalities and injustice of economic imbalances.

Dr. Ram Dayal Rakesh (Department of Hindi) spoke on Maithili proverbs, pointing out the social and cultural meanings which they have. He gave various examples, classifying them according to their content (like proverbs relating to other social groups), and stressed that the most important thing in using a proverb in speech is using it wittily at the right time (for example in court to defend one's case). Thus, it is not enough to collect proverbs, but it is also necessary to study the context of their application, - which methodologically is not unproblematic.

Finally, Prof. Cuda Mani Bandhu (Department of Nepali) presented a paper on the "Use of Oral Traditions in Education." He emphasized that orally transmitted songs, tales, riddles and proverbs have already had an important educational value. Since the beginning of the century folk stories and songs were included in school books in Nepal, but they were later reduced under a new education policy during the Panchayat time. As Prof. Bandhu pointed out, many editions lack a sound methodology, which often leads to a distortion rather than a preservation of these traditions. Thus he warned that the genuine nature of folklore may eventually be destroyed by "fake lore".

Though the papers could only give glimpses of the numerous oral traditions in Nepal - as there were, for example, no contributions on Tibetan groups, Tamang, Magar, Gurung etc. - the richness of this type of cultural heritage became evident. It was generally felt necessary that such a meeting should be repeated, possibly on a broader scale (involving more foreign scholars), and the suggestion was brought up to found a Folklore Society to encourage and coordinate further collections and study of oral traditions all over Nepal.

Martin Gaenzle

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

## Symposia

**Sixth Conference of the International Association of Tibetan Studies, Fagerness (Norway)**  
21 - 28 August 1992

The conference is to be hosted by the Institute for Comparative Research in Human Culture, Drammensveien 78, N-0271 Oslo 2, Norway. (Tel. 02-554207). Workshops have been planned on the following topics (conveners mentioned in brackets): 1. "The Tibetan Canon" (Dr. Helmut Eimer, Indologisches Seminar der Universität Bonn, Regina-Pacis-Weg 7, D-5300 Bonn 1, Germany); 2. "Sacred space, geography and pilgrimage" (Prof. Lawrence Epstein, Dept. of Anthropology, DH-05, University of Washington, Seattle, WA 98195, U.S.A.); 3. Tibetology and social anthropology (Dr. Patrick Kaplianian, 4, Rue Neuve Popincourt, F-77011 Paris, France); 4. Buddhism and modernity in respect of Tibetans (Dr. M.P.S. Chandel, Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, Sarnath, Varanasi 221 007 U.P., India); 5. Old Tibetan (Dr. Helga Uebach, Kommission für Zentralasiatische Studien, Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Marstallplatz 8, D-8000 München 22, Germany); 6. Tibetan grammarians (Dr. P.C. Verhagen, Institut Kern, State University of Leiden, P.O.B. 9515, NL-2300 RA Leiden, Netherlands).

The conference will take place at Fagernes, situated in one of the most scenic regions of inland Norway, some 200 kilometers north of Oslo.

**Second International Seminar on Tibetan Language, Siena and Arcidosso (Italy)**  
30 August - 4 September 1992

The seminar is convened jointly by Shang-Shung International Institute for Tibetan Studies, The University of Siena and I.S.M.E.O. of Rome. The aim of the seminar is to contribute to a variety of problems regarding the preservation, updating and diffusion of the Tibetan language (e.g. standardization, problems of translation and teaching). Contact address: Istituto Shang-Shung, Istituto Internazionale di Studi Tibetani, Via degli Olmi, 1, 58031 Arcidosso, GR, Italy - Tel. 0564 - 966940, 966941; FAX 0564 - 966846.

**SASON National Congress on Structure and Transition: Society, Poverty and Politics in Nepal, Kathmandu**  
4-6 September 1992

The Sociological/Antropological Society of Nepal (SASON), which was founded in 1985 "with the twin objectives of promoting the disciplines of sociology and anthropology in order that they contribute towards the development of the country", has in August 1991 elected a new Executive Committee with Kailash N. Pyakurel as President and Bihari K. Shrestha as Vice-President.

The National Congress planned for 4-6 September will be the first in several years - and the first after the political changes in Nepal.

The theme of the congress - *Structure and Transition: Society, Poverty and Politics in Nepal* - encompasses a number of issues conventionally explored as elements/processes of Nepali society and culture. These include, among others, cultures and cultural manifestations; household and community; ethnicity, caste, class, language, religion and gender; regional, state and interstate processes, economy and polity; resource ownership, use and management; demography, governance; decentralization; national integration; development and underdevelopment; and correlates and dynamics of poverty and poverty alleviation policies and measures. For details contact: SASON, P.O.B. 4771, Kathmandu, Nepal.

**The Anthropology of Nepal - People, Problems and Processes, Kathmandu, Kathmandu**  
7-14 September 1992

Approximately 100 scholars from Nepal, India, Japan, Europe, USA, Australia and New Zealand have so far registered for the conference, and of these about 62 plan to read papers. As in the case of the Zürich conference, such a large number of interested scholars will necessitate selective criteria in establishing a final programme. The following panels are at present planned: 1. The Anthropology of Resource Management, convened by Dr. Ram B. Chhetri (Central Department of Anthropology and Sociology, Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur, Kathmandu) and Dr. Robert F. Fisher (Faculty of Agriculture and Rural Development, University of Western Sydney, Hawkesbury, Richmond NSW 2753, Australia).

In recent years the management of natural resources, especially forest resources, has become an important theme in the anthropology of Nepal. Anthropologists have contributed to resource management through studies of indigenous knowledge of forest resources and studies of resource use. More recently there has been an increased concern with the control and management of resource use, especially through local organisations. To this effect anthropologists have become involved in policy formation and in the design and implementation of projects concerned with resource management, especially in community forestry programmes.

This session is aimed at researchers and practitioners involved in anthropological and sociological aspects of resource management in Nepal. It should be of interest to non-anthropologists, especially sociologists and geographers, as well to anthropologists.

It is envisaged that the session will include papers on local systems of forest management, grazing land livestock management as well as papers dealing with the implementation of resource management projects. So far eighteen papers have been received.

2. Women and Development, convened by Ms Indra Ban (c/o Sewa Samaj; NGO, Dilli Bazaar, P.O.Box 4749, Kathmandu, Nepal).

Ten papers have been promised for this panel. Contributors are invited to consider both the part played by women in development projects in Nepal and the various ways in which such projects impinge on the social lives of women. Issues examined will include the gender implications of rural development projects, the impact of industrialization

on the social position of urban women, women and changing health practices, the media and gender stereotypes, etc.

3. Medical Anthropology, convened by Dr. Peter Webster (Anthropological Department, Victoria, University of Wellington, Wellington, New Zealand).

Medical Anthropology has loomed large in recent research in Nepal with scholars, both local and overseas, examining such topics as indigenous systems of diagnosis and healing, the social consequences of the introduction of western medical practices, the relationship between religious belief and bodily health, etc. Contributors to this session, of whom seven have promised papers, will pay particular attention to the politics of competitive health practices in both rural and urban contexts.

4. Urbanism in Nepal, convened by Dr. Alex Kondos (Departments of Sociology, University of NSW, Kensington NSW, Australia) and Mr. Ananda Shrestha, (Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies, Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur, Kathmandu).

Urbanism is a rapidly increasing feature of Nepalese social life. In this session contributors will examine some of the key features of both its traditional and new forms. The emphasis throughout will be on a distinctively anthropological contribution to the understanding of problems of urban living, that is to say, an understanding based primarily on prolonged fieldwork in small face-to-face communities. While some papers may be essentially of a descriptive nature. It is envisaged that most of them will also deal with a range of empirical and theoretical issues centering on Nepalese urban life: communalism, urban semiotics, urban

conflicts, urban lifestyles, industrialization and poverty. So far five papers have been received

5. The State and the People, convened by Dr. Vivienne Kondos, (Department of Anthropology, The University of Sydney, Sydney, NSW 2006, Australia).

The panel will address theoretical and empirical question dealing with state-subject relations. These may cover issues like: nationalism, ethnicity, bureaucratic processes, the democratic movement and changes impelled by the revolution of 1990. So far four papers have been promised.

A registration fee of \$Aus 70 is to be paid by all established scholars from Europe, USA, Japan, Australia, New Zealand etc. Cheques should be made payable in Australian currency to "Anthropology of Nepal Conference" and should be sent without delay to Professor Michael Allen, Department of Anthropology, The University of Sydney, N S W 2006, Australia.

#### 13th Annual Conference of the Linguistic Society of Nepal 26-27 November 1992

The Linguistic Society of Nepal (LSN) elected a new executive body on April 28, 1992. A week later, the out-going president Abhi Subedi handed over the keys to his successor Nirmal M. Tuladhar. The present executive committee consists of Jai Raj Avasthi (vice president), Chandra Prakash Sharma (secretary-treasurer), Manfred Treu (joint secretary), K.B. Maharjana (joint secretary), Pramila Rai (Member), R. Laksmi Shrestha (member; Sajag Rana (member), Hriseekesh Upadhyaya (chief editor), Madhav P. Pokharel

(editor), Renu Lama (editor), Vijaya Rauniyar (editor), and Simon Gautam (editor).

In its first meeting the committee decided to hold its 13th Annual Conference on November 26-27, 1992, at Kirtipur Campus, Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu. The Society invites for papers in the following areas: Tibeto-Burman and Indo-Aryan languages; Syntax and Semantics; Phonetics and Phonology; Sociolinguistics and Psycholinguistics; historical and comparative Linguistics; orthography and lexicography; applied Linguistics; Linguistics and Literature.

Paper abstracts of about 200 words should reach the Society by October 31, 1992. The Society regrets for not being in a position to provide any funds for travel, board and lodging. It will, however, be helpful in arranging lodging. The Society welcomes your participation.

On the occasion of its 12th conference the Society published its journal *Nepalese Linguistics*, vol. 5-8, November 1991.

All correspondence should be addressed to: Chandra Prakash Sharma, Campus of International Languages, Pradarsani Marg, Kathmandu, Nepal.

#### Exhibitions

**Culture and Everyday Life in Tibet, Hannover  
23 May - 8 August 1992**

A special exhibition drawn from the Tibetan collection of the Department of Anthropology in the Niedersächsisches Landesmuseum Hannover is being held between 23 May and 8th August. This is

the first time the Department of Anthropology can present the Tibet Collection to the public. Most of the objects on display were acquired during three research expeditions: the expedition of the Schlaginweit Brothers to India and the Himalayas 1854-1857, the first Brooke-Dolan Expedition to western China and eastern Tibet 1931-32, and the journey of Ernst Schäfer to India 1964. The various groups of objects have been arranged thematically in order to provide an introduction to everyday life, monastic life and nomadic life as well to Tibetan history, the natural environment and living conditions.

The contemporary political, economic and cultural situation of Tibet is also shown; and the attempts of Tibetans, living in exile in India, to maintain their ethnic and cultural identity are documented photographically in an accompanying photo exhibition on display in the Forum Gallery, entitled: "Tibetan Culture on Foreign Ground". The exhibition is based on the travels in Spring 1990 of the photographer Manuel Bauer and the writer Hans Reutimann in India and their report on the efforts of Tibetan exiles to maintain and develop their tradition. Thirty-eight prints illustrate such topics as monastic life, the Dalai Lama, Shiwalha, Kanjur, book printing and handicrafts.

The following lectures (in German) have been arranged in collaboration with the Ethnologische Gesellschaft Hannover e.V., on Wednesdays at 7 p.m. in the lecture theatre of the Niedersächsisches Landesmuseum, Am Maschpark 5, 3000 Hannover 1, Admission is free.

- 3rd June - Tibetischer Lama Geshe Thubten Ngawang (Hamburg): "Einführung in den tibetischen Buddhismus"
- 10th June - Prof. Dr. Klaus Sagaster (Bonn): "Die Symbolik des tibetischen Tempels"
- 17th June - Dr. Veronika Ronge, Ittenbach: "Tibet heute"
- 24th June - Prof. Dr. Jaroslav Poncar (Köln): "Tibet zwischen Kham und Güge"
- 19th August - Prof. Dr. med. Klaus Jork (Frankfurt a.M.): "Tibetische Medizin"
- 26th August - Gerd-Wolfgang Essen, (Hamburg): "Padmasambhava - Leben und Wundertaten des großen tantrischen Meisters im Spiegel der tibetischen Bildkunst"
- 2nd September - Thomas Wachter, (Freising): "Umweltzerstörung in Tibet"
- 9th September - Dip.Ing. Manfred Gerner, (Fulda): "Tibetische Architektur"
- 16th September - Hans Zimmermann, (Frankfurt a.M.): "Die Besonnungsfeier der großen Thangka im Kloster Ganden"
- 23rd September - Carola Roloff, (Hamburg): "Das Leben tibetischer Nonnen"
- 7th October - Dr. Uwe Meya (Berlin): "Die Zerstörung der tibetischen Kultur"
- 14th October - Dr. Jan Andersson: "Die politische Situation Tibets"
- 28th October - Klemens Ludwig, (Tübingen): "Tibet heute: Leben im Widerstand"
- 4th November - S.E. Loden Sherap Dargyab Rinpoche: "Tibetischer Buddhismus im Westen".

## Organizations

### Aims and Objectives of ASH

ASH is a non-profit earning association devoted to studies on the Himalayas. Its aims are as fourfold:

To publish original research material for international circulation.

To assist researchers engaged in Himalayan studies by: a) exchange of information, b) supply of information and research material, c) providing field assistance: research assistants, interpreters, lodging, etc., d) short term language courses.

To undertake a planning and action research programme for cultural and socio-economic resources management of the Himalayas.

To promote international understanding in making the Himalayas a tension-free natural habitat of peace-loving world citizens.

Membership is an annual and open to both individuals and institutions. Individual membership entitles one to a 50% discount on all ASH publications in addition to a free copy of the *Himalaya: Past and Present*.

For details and inquiries write to Maheshwar P. Joshi, Sri Mallika Kunja Malla Joshi Khola, Almora, U.P. Himalayas, 263601, India, with self-addressed stamped envelope (using international postal coupons) for reply.

Original research papers are invited from Himalayan scholars for submission to the ASH journal *Himalaya: Past and Present*. Two copies with complete citations and bibliographical references should be sent to: (for the Americas) Allen C. Fanger, Anthropology, Kutztown University, Kutztown PA 19530, USA; (for Europe) Charles W. Brown, c/o WILDUNG, St. Grabroders-gatan-38,

222 22 LUND, Sweden; (for Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh) Y.B. Singh, Dept. of History, Jammu University, JAMMU, J&K, India; (for South Asia) Maheshwar P. Joshi, Sri Mallika Kunja, Malla Joshi Khola, Almora, U.P. Himalaya -263 601, India; (for Nepal) Jayaraj Pant, Dept. of Nepalese Language, Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, Nepal; and (for Japan, China and Australia) Haruko Tsuchiya, Faculty of Comparative Culture, Sophia University, 4, Yonbancho, Chiyoda - Ku, TOKYO - 102, Japan

### Contributors to this issue

**Lucette Boulnois** retires this year as Librarian at the Centre d'Etudes himalayennes at Meudon. She compiled the *Bibliographie du Nepal* (1969-1975) and published, in 1983, a book on 18th Century Coinage in Tibet. The Accessions List she released annually has been a useful bibliographical source for all scientists specializing in the Himalayas.

**Martin Gaenszle** is wissenschaftlicher Angestellter at the Südasiens-Institut, Universität Heidelberg and Director of the Institute's branch office in Kathmandu. He is currently researching ritual texts and oral tradition among the Mewahang Rai

**András Höfer** is affiliated with the South Asia Institute of Heidelberg University. His recent activities include research on Western Tamang oral tradition.

**Wolf Kahlen** is Professor of Intermedia Art in the Department of Architecture, Technische Universität Berlin and organizer of the Thang-stong rGyal-po Archive in Berlin. He was previously consultant for Art and Architecture for the Royal Bhutanese Government.

**Prayag Raj Sharma** is Professor of History at the Centre of Nepal and Asian Studies, Tribhuvan University. He has published a book on the Art and Architecture of the Karnali Basin (1972), and numerous articles.

**Gérard Toffin** is Director of the Research Programme *Milieux, Société et Culture en Himalaya* of the Centre Nationale de la Recherche Scientifique, Paris. He did field research among the Newar of the Kathmandu Valley and the Western Tamang in central Nepal. His monograph on Newar religion and society was published in 1984.

**Ludmilla Tüting** edited with K. Dixit *Bikas-Binash Development - Destruction*. She is currently in Kathmandu, where she works for the human rights organization, Nepal Watch.

**K. Warikoo** is Associate Professor, Central Asian and Himalayan Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi and co-founder of the New Delhi-based Himalayan Research and Cultural Foundation.

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### Notes to Contributors

The European Bulletin of Himalayan Research welcomes for consideration manuscripts and short notices dealing with any of the following topics.

1. Topical reports on ongoing, or recently completed, research projects.
2. Information about archives with literary, historical, archaeological, ethnographic, botanical, etc. materials collected in the Himalayan region.
3. Reviews of books on the Himalayas, including books published in Nepal, India, Pakistan and China which because of poor distribution may be inadequately known in Europe.
4. Current political developments in Nepal, India, Pakistan and China and the implications of these developments for research carried out by European scholars.
5. News about recent or forthcoming conferences, and on funding opportunities for European scholars working in the Himalayas as well as for scholars from the Himalayan region itself to visit Europe.

Manuscripts should not exceed 5,000 words in length. All contributions will be published in English. Copy can be submitted in German or French with the understanding that the editors in Heidelberg will arrange for its translation. Anything submitted in English by a non-native speaker will be copy-edited in Heidelberg by a native speaker.

The deadline for submissions for our fourth issue is 30 October 1992. Anything received after that date will go into the fifth issue, expected in spring, 1993.

The views expressed by individual contributors are their own and do not represent those of the Editorial Board. All correspondence to The Editors, European Bulletin of Himalayan Research, Südasiens-Institut der Universität Heidelberg, Im Neuenheimer Feld 330, 6900 Heidelberg, Federal Republic of Germany.