We are happy to illustrate the contributions of this issue with a compact disc. Recordings provided by the authors are presented along with rare archival recordings (Bake, 1956, Pignède, 1958, Jest, 1965). The choice of tracks included on the CD is above all scientific, and explains the unequal technical quality of the whole set.

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A HOMAGE TO NĀSAH DYO,
THE NEWAR GOD OF MUSIC

Ram Krishna Duwal & Madhab L. Maharjan

Nāsaḥ dyo is the tutelary deity of the Newar musicians, actors and dancers of the Kathmandu valley and other areas of Nepal. Nāsaḥ dyo is the deity who bestows on a person or on a group of musicians the qualities required for excelling in the field of music and for the successful staging of musical programmes, dances and dramas. There are many such divinities in and around the Kathmandu Valley. In addition to the Valley, Nāsaḥ dyo are also found in old cities such as Tansen in the west, Dolakha and Bhojpur in the east, where the Newar have migrated. But quite surprisingly, there are no Nāsaḥ dyo in Newar towns such as Narayan Ghat and Hetauda, located south-west of Kathmandu.

Many scholars refer to Nāsaḥ dyo as Nṛṭeśvar or Naṭarāj, the dancing Śiva. But it seems to us that this god can be distinguished from the Nāsaḥ dyo of the Newar, who is abstract like music and has the particularity of dwelling in a triangular-shaped niche in the wall of its shrines. This divinity is found both in deo ḍhē, houses where the gods reside, and in private houses and inns. The slit representations of Nāsaḥ dyo are called bālā ṭvah when located in a shrine, and mibhū when found in a private house or inn, although they have the same appearance in both cases. The slits and niches of Nāsaḥ dyo are covered during rituals by a piece of cloth called dhakī. The following illustration is a richly decorated example of such cloth, taken from Smarika, 2051 V.S.
Because of these specific characteristics, Nāsah dyo appears as a local god, but nevertheless people do worship him ultimately as one of the manifestations of Śiva as Nṛteśvar. Nāsah dyo is established with rituals to train groups of students in the arts of drama, dance and music, at a specific place called ākhā che.

In Newari, nāsah means charm or grace. It is essential for every person to possess nāsah. A person possessing nāsah is referred to as nāsahānī ṭiunh manā while someone without it is regarded as nāsah madunh manā, meaning "disgraceful" or "one with no knack at all". A popular saying among the Newar of the Kathmandu Valley is nāsah madaśā kabilēs hū, "If you don't have nāsah, go to the abode of Nāsah Deo at Kabilēs". Kabilēs is the most sacred and powerful centre of all the Nāsah Deo of the Kathmandu Valley. The great Newar musicians used to visit this temple; Krishna Bhai, a master of rhythmic drums, visited Kabilēs five times. Recently, Ram Krishna, one of the writers of this article, who is a poet and singer, also had an opportunity to visit Kabilēs for the second time. Upon reaching the temple, he composed the following poem in Newari, based on the Bhagat traditional rāg, expressing his devotion to Nāsah Deo.
As a last homage to the god of music, the text of one song is published here, *Nāsah dyo mye*. This type of song is traditionally sung with dāpēṅḥ orchestral ensemble on different rāga and tāla. This text was found in a thyāsaphu during our fieldwork at Bālíkumāri dāpēṅ khalah, Dīgukhel, Panga. It was composed during the reign of King Narendra Malla (1529-1560), and to our knowledge, it is the oldest Newari song or hymn devoted to Nāsah Deo.
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