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*A Special Double Issue on Photography
Dedicated to Corneille Jest*

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Cover photo by Corneille Jest, Dolpo, Tarap, 1963.

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EDITORIAL

The EBHR was created during a Franco-German conference held in Arc-et-Senans in May 1990. The first issue appeared in 1991 and until 1995 the Bulletin was the responsibility of a group of scholars attached to the Südasiens-Institut of Heidelberg which published numbers 1 to 9. A French group from the CNRS then took over and published issues 10 to 16. It is now our pleasure to announce that the production of the Bulletin will be handed over to our British colleagues, starting with the next issue (n°17) for a period of three years. The editorial board will include Michael Hutt, David Gellner and Ben Campbell, while the German and French editors will continue to be involved.

This revolving editorship constitutes an effective European network and warrants the periodical renovation of the Bulletin.

After January 1st, 1999, contributors are asked to send their manuscripts either directly to the following address :

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or, as usual, to the contributing editor in their country.

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The editors wish to thank Philippe Ramirez who is responsible for the lay-out of this issue and Susan Keyes who translated the articles by G. Béguin, V. Bouillier, K. Buffetrille, P. Dollfus, M. Helffer, P. Sagant, J. Smadja, G. Toffin, B. Vasseux and revised the issue.

We also thank Charles Ramble for his help with the English editing.

INTRODUCTION

BY MARIE LECOMTE-TILOUINE

The Himalayas are an inspiration for photographers. In a sense, they made this part of the world their own, for their means of representation is not counterbalanced by other artistic approaches, local or not. Photography is so closely linked to the region we study, that the sight of mountains undoubtedly recalls for most of us a full double page colour photograph on glossy paper, in the same manner as a Japanese landscape evokes an "estampe". However, our goal here was not to study Westerners' mental representations of a place through photography, but to illustrate the role played by photographs for scholars, even if it can also contribute to the former.

We planned this special issue to answer a few specific questions relative to the place of photography in the exercise of research within the specific context of the Himalayas. We tried to find answers to three major questions : 1) What are the uses of photography in the different fields of research represented in our area ?

2) How do researchers capture their object of study ?

3) And what do they try to show when publishing photos ? From the material we received, it appears that the primary role attached to photography is historical. Photography allows comparison, especially when the same object is taken at different times and diachronic sets of pictures appear as a favoured tool for those working at the scale of landscape (M. Fort, R. Kostka & V. Kaufmann and J. Smadja in this volume). Such an exercise may reveal surprises : if the rapid urbanisation of the Kathmandu Valley is noticeable without photographic comparison, the real extent of the phenomenon is not perceivable without it. In the same way, the rapidity of geomorphological changes, erosion as well as recolonization by flora and people, can only be shown with photographs. On the other hand, the perennality of slope-fields cultivation in some areas of Nepal, presented until now as a period of transition in the terracing process, is evidenced by the set of pictures compared by J. Smadja.

Photography also serves as testimony. An example of this is the picture of the Buddha of Bungamera Tol before its new environment was built (G. Béguin). The juxtaposition of photographs of Nepalese patrimonial buildings in different states of conservation is probably the best means to raise an urgent call in support of them, now that they have lost their traditional patrons (V. Bouillier). In the same way, a photograph showing three generations together acquires its own strength, inviting comparison, such as the Gāine family presented by M. Helffer. Photographs of lost techniques like urine divination (C. Jest/F. Meyer) and the water-clock (C. Jest/O. Aubriot) are extremely precious for our understanding of the historical background which explains the present situation. And there is no need to emphasize the interest of capturing political events such

as the repression of the Khampa rebellion by the Nepalese Army (A. Manzardo). Photos of today's techniques, rituals, monuments and landscapes have a useful, potentially historical dimension besides their present role of information (G. Krauskopff, G. Toffin, K. Buffetrille). Photographs may also be used to underline symbols, such as the friendship bridge between Nepal and China (L. Boulnois), the Mao fresco of Patan (Ph. Ramirez), or the grave of the founder of a new religion (H. Kreutzmann). Lastly, it can be used to palliate the limitation of scientific writings to express a feeling and show the people who made the stay possible (M. Lecomte-Tilouine).

Though dealt with only briefly in this volume, the internal use and representation of photography is of particular interest. It is examined in depth by P. Onta within the context of the Kathmandu Valley who shows how a photograph is carefully composed and intended to display an ideal representation of the self. In this sense, it reveals the society's ideology. It is thus that the Ranas, who had a special rule of succession among brothers and not from father to son, appear as a very extended family in their pictures along with their servants. Another expression of power is shown in 1950s photographs where Newars liked to be "immortalised" sitting on a bulldozer or in front of a car... In the same manner the holistic nature of Darling society was best revealed to the ethnographer as photographer when called in by a Chetri family to shoot their portrait. Indeed all the Kami and Sannyasi neighbours joined them for the picture without asking their consent and the initial family portrait ended up as the picture of a compact crowd of 60 persons... The tragic death of a photographer and the fate of his production illustrates in a very striking way the negative and magic connotations of photography for the Tibetan nomads of the 1940s (Liotard-Guibaut/Dollfus). In a society where people have few images of themselves, because the mirrors are small, dirty, often broken and even sometimes nonexistent in the house, portraits endow a crucial dimension. In the hills of Nepal, the verandas are real portrait galleries, where the soldiers with their uniforms and decorations stand with, women in saris, seated on Western-styled chairs, their faces turned to the ground, a disguised child on the lap. Inside the frame of these studio photos, new ones are inserted, which sometimes cover completely the poor grand-parents. They show the young ones in Hindi movie star postures, wearing sunglasses, caps and scarves, standing among flowers. Despite the changes of the staging, the young ones like their grand-parents never smile or show their teeth, even if it is quite difficult for most of them to stop themselves from doing so. This is the only strict rule when shot, and it may be not only aesthetic. Indeed, the identification of the person with his photographic portrait is deep and allows for example the village Brahmins to place the frontal *tikā* mark on the King and Queen of Nepal through their photograph or a Kami shaman to sacrifice a chicken to his Master via the

same vector. Identification may be even deeper, as when the Ladakhis destroy the photographs of a child after his or her death or when one is told in Nepal that when someone dies, his eyelids close in his photographs. But the question is more complex than these examples show because it seems that a photograph cannot for instance be employed as a substitute for the person in the context of witchcraft in the same way as hair or nails. But on the other hand, the Ladakhi medium (*lha-mo*) may keep the picture of someone to protect him in his absence.

The spectrum through which photography may be analysed is thus extremely wide and we hope that this issue will encourage new reflections in all the directions outlined here.

A LETTER TO THE EDITORS, BY NIELS GUTSCHOW

You asked me to write about photographs : What do my photographs tell me and what do I want to capture with photographs as an architectural historian?

Well, I have chosen three photographs to illustrate my associations. First, let me tell you, I use my cameras as a rough tool which I treat like a typewriter or a hammer. They are always dusty, have to be thrown away after they have fallen into a river or hit on a rock. I prefer automatic exposure, because I want to use a minimum of time viewing an object or a scene through a tiny window. It is as if focusing the instrument takes attention and time away from really looking at things, especially when it comes to ritual events which tend to become so complex to the extent that I rather wish to



have six eyes. The camera reduces the view in a way that I feel helpless : I lose contact with my surroundings to such an extent that I hate the situation, if needing to “work” with a camera. That agony is overcome because at the same time I know that I need to carry home some kind of “evidence”. The more time I have at ease “looking” at things, the more useful the “evidence” is once it turns into a fine print which Stanislaw Klimek produces for me in his darkroom in Wrocław.

Events :

The “evidence” transmutes into a lasting document once it enters the file. In order to remember that the document captures nothing more than a second in a sequence of events, I carefully keep files of contact prints which are individually identified according to place and time. If possible, I also identify the persons seen on the photograph or the name of the owner of a building. I want to make clear, that everything is unique.

I am enclosing the example of Bhairava’s chariot in Inacva, an eastern quarter of Bhaktapur, after its axle broke. The chariot carries Bhairava, the “master” (*nayah*) of Bhaktapur : in this case pulling of the chariot had started on 9 April 1988 at 5.42 p.m. The upper town’s people had been strong enough to pull it uptown after only a short struggle between the two parties pulling in either directions, but just before the chariot rea-

ched Damreya Square, the centre of the upper town, it collapsed after a 90-minute journey along the main road and tilted against a house. An auspicious accident, as the chariot is required to reach its destination, Yahsi-khyah, only after three days on New Year’s eve. Three days time to repair the chariot and three days to have Bhairava in Inacva — a unique chance to worship him there, regardless of the position of the chariot. The photograph documents the underlying dynamics better than words. Some way or another the chariot collapses every

year, but blocking the entire road and transforming it into a temporary shrine was a unique event in 1988. It demonstrated the temporary nature of Bhairavas blessing of "place" in the best possible way.

Change :

Every few years I set out with my "tool" for a limited time to cover a certain road of the Kathmandu Valley, documenting what I see left and right. I keep certain themes in mind but I am trying to be open for surprise. My favourite theme is "change" regarding the built environment. Although an architect by training, used defining architecture as good or bad, I turn into an anthropologist and make visual notes. Beyond good or bad everything I see is fascinating. I took my first round on 4 March 1990 from 9.29 to 10.32 a.m. with my Hero Honda moped because by the end of the 80s urban development and change in landscape had be-

the new structure seemed to me to be a demonstration of hope. The skeleton is complete, plastic sheets that had sealed the shuttering flutter in the wind and became a decorative part of the structure as if it would never be removed. The stairs seem to be forgotten or just postponed for the second stage of construction.

When I set out for a second round on 14 November 1996, from 2.38 to 3.42 p.m. I went by a Toyota Land cruiser which for that purpose turned out to be less appropriate. But traffic had become fierce over the past six years and I had stopped touring by my beloved Hero-Honda. The tour this time took me past Thimi and Kathmandu as far as Svyambhunath. I took the earlier photographs along, searching for earlier positions to repeat photographs at certain places documenting an impressive change. "My" old house near Thimi had been pulled down, the "new" structure housed a shop behind prestigious steel shutters. Only two "pillars of



come very powerful : the most radical change since I visited the Valley first in 1962. Along every motorable road reinforced concrete frames came up as symbols of affluence. Something had obviously changed drastically.

Let me show you an example : when I passed the road near Thimi I saw one of these concrete frames beside a house which was probably built in the early 70s. The house was made of traditional bricks (*māpa*) laid in mud mortar, large roof tiles and overhanging eaves were mediating between change and tradition, but new proportions for the windows already indicated the general move from darkness to light. The first stage of

hope" were extended to indicate a future third storey. A gas station had been placed where the old house stood and next to it a fancy residence of four storeys, with a variety of sloped concrete roofs, roof terraces and balconies had sprung up. The mixture of forms and decorative motifs, document the owner's dream to get along between tradition and modernity. Hundreds of these villas have come up over the past year to park resources. In the 18th and 19th centuries affluent people built temples as individual spending had limits. The newly built villas demonstrate affluence.

The two pictures provide evidence for change. Within six years three new buildings were erected that

tell a story about many aspects of life. See, for example, the tractor in 1990, a symbol of change, that entered Bhaktapur only in 1976. Equally impressive the Tata pickup in 1996. I could write a long essay about these two photographs. In fact, I tend to write long captions, because a photograph does not speak for itself. In most cases there is an obvious message, but a second layer produces a host of sublime messages, very often

Place and Time :

To note exactly the time of the day for every photograph seems to be overdoing it. But the basic frame of a photograph represented by place and time is considered by me as the essentials to locate my eyes in both dimensions. It has almost become an obsession. Let me also tell you, that being on a documentary tour requires a lot of energy. The act of documentation is an almost



readable only by the photographer who knows the background of the place, the persons, the time of photographing. With the photographer many of these hidden layers get lost. Deciphering photographs becomes like stumbling in the dark. Your hand can identify only known objects. But there is a yet another layer : I consider a photograph "strong" when something strikes me directly. It is not a detail, not the composition. It is probably the eye of the photographer which reaches me. I recently enjoyed that experience when I saw Joseph Rock's photographs of Naxi rituals in an exhibition in Zurich. Rock had a direct eye. When I look at his photographs I do not search for details but I feel I see "everything" at once.

I admit that I look at the results of my 1990 journey along the road to Kathmandu twice a year. In the beginning I saw "documents" of change. Now it seems to me I had witnessed an explosion. Maybe because I know that 35 days after the journey in 1990 Nepal was freed from an oppressive rule. I want to say that a photograph is a witness of "age" : new layers of meaning are added in a never ending process.

breathtaking experience, which I "endure" for two hours at the most. Then comes a rest for weeks. I get nervous the day before and I channel all my energy into my eye nerves. I look at objects I had seen hundred of times but focusing for the purpose of documentation is different. In such a case I am not a detached observer but an actor. I am not searching for the "right" position or angle, but I press the button right away, knowing in a way exactly where I am. That means I have "placed" myself. Strange enough, I can produce such photographs only in Nepal, where I have a strong feeling of "place" and "time". In Germany I can't do that. When I had to document architecture in East Germany I asked Stanislaw Klimek to do that for me. I was standing beside him, we discussed what to photograph, we searched for places and angles together but he laboured through with his more sophisticated tools to produce "professional" photographs.

I talk about my experience in the form of a letter. Because I don't have a general message. There are no guidelines. Instead I am talking to you about a personal experience.

CORNEILLE JEST

ETHNOLOGIST AND PHOTOGRAPHER

Corneille Jest was born in Strasbourg, France, on February 12, 1930. After preliminary scientific studies, he decided to specialize in ethnology.

He spent many years at the Musée de l'Homme in Paris. A disciple of André Leroi-Gourhan, he followed his method. Under his supervision, he studied at the Centre de la Formation à la Recherche Ethnologique (CFRE), where fieldwork, methodology, technology and material life were stressed. It should be noted that this training used to end with a week of fieldwork in France. Corneille Jest chose to work in the Aveyron on traditional handicraft techniques which were very alive at that time. This formed the subject of his thèse de troisième cycle "Le Haut Levezou. Techniques et économie d'une communauté rurale", 1960, Paris, La Sorbonne. He entered the CNRS in 1956 where he has spent all his career.

His first mission to the Himalayas took place in Sikkim (Kalimpong District) during the summer of 1953. Afterwards he published a photo article in *Sciences et*

first stay, followed by that from later fieldwork, formed the basis of his dissertation for the Doctorat d'Etat "Tarap, 'la vallée aux chevaux excellents', communauté tibétaine du nord-ouest du Népal" in 1972 at the Université René Descartes, Paris and published in 1975 by the CNRS editions with the title : *Dolpo. Communautés de langue tibétaine du Népal*. Depicting every aspect of the economic, social, and religious life in the area, this major work was the first monograph on a Tibetan community in Nepal.

In 1965 Corneille Jest, along with other colleagues, associated themselves under the directorship of Professor Jacques Millot, then director of the Musée de l'Homme, to create a "Recherche coopérative sur programme" called RCP 65, "Etude des régions népalaises". In 1970, he created a new RCP with botanists and geologists called "Ecologie et géologie de l'Himalaya central". During winter 1970-71, he travelled around the Manaslu along with Jean-François Dobremez; an account of which may be found in *Manaslu. Hommes et milieux des vallées du Népal central*. He organised and participated actively in numerous pluridisciplinary programmes with geologists, agronomists, geographers and ethnologists in Langtang, Salme village and the districts of Gulmi and Argha-Khanci.



Ethnologist and lamas, Kegar, Dolpo, 1965 (author unknown).

Nature and a paper on Lepcha religious beliefs in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* in 1960. The same year, Corneille went to Nepal and trekked with David Snellgrove up to Dolpo, north of Dhaulagiri. He spent about one year there, mostly in Tarap, the centre of the region, working with Pasang Sherpa, David Snellgrove's research assistant. The data collected during his

During the last two decades, Corneille Jest has been involved in the conservation of Himalayan cultural heritage from Ladakh up to Bhutan, working notably under the auspices of UNESCO and the Getty Foundation.

Corneille Jest has travelled a great deal throughout

Nepal and the Himalaya, and he is certainly one of the Westerners who knows this region the best. His publications attest to the extraordinary diversity of his interests : technology, architecture, rituals, oral traditions... His writings are clear and precise. Many are pioneers in their field, such as his ethnography of a Tibetan community, and works on the Thakali, the Chepang and the Kushwar. During these many years, Corneille Jest was accompanied along the paths of Nepal by Sarkiman Majhi, from Parsel village in Kabhre Palangcok.

During all his fieldwork, Corneille collected a great number of objects, as well as geological and botanical samples, deposited respectively at the Musée de l'Homme, the Museum d'Histoire Naturelle (Paris) and the Laboratoire de Biologie Végétale (Université de Grenoble). He made several films in Dolpo, Kathmandu, and among the Thakali, made numerous recordings and edited the vinyl disc "Tibet-Népal".

Photography in the work of Corneille Jest

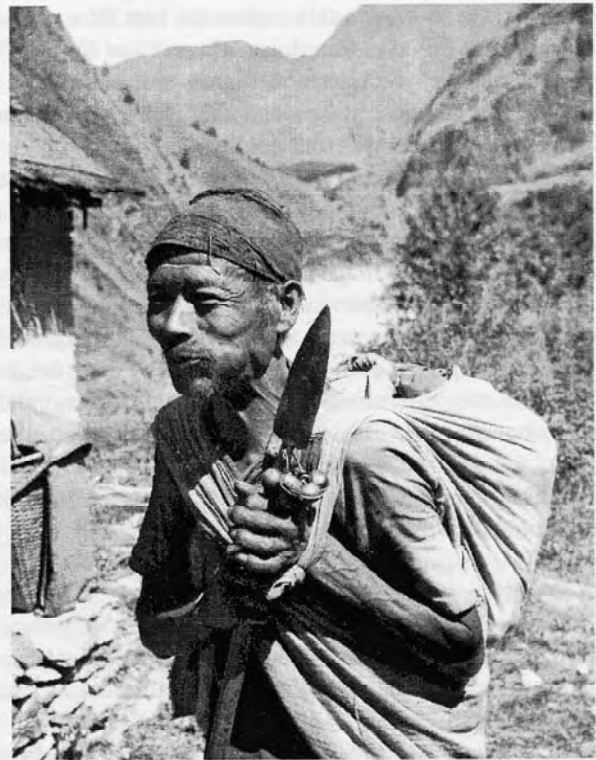
Photography plays an essential role in his objective and sensitive approach to reality. In his first articles on Dolpo, he chose this means which was unusual at that time, when theoretical anthropology was very fashionable, to introduce the reader in a direct face-to-face with a Tibetan community of Nepal. In the same way, he devoted much space to photography in his dissertation on Dolpo. Later on he developed a more direct and internal approach to this population in his picture-book on Tarap, where along with his beautiful pictures, he let his informant, Kagar Rinpoche, speak. Turning his back on the post-fieldwork embellishment of the text, interpretations done back home and theorization, Corneille aimed at minimising the filter of the anthropologist. He made himself a witness of the Himalayan peoples. However, in comparison to a professional photographer, his manner of capturing a culture on film reveals his deep knowledge of it. Without artifice, but with a profound sense of beauty, his compositions are perfect in their classicism. We have tried here to pay homage to his art with these short contributions by some of the numerous colleagues he has worked with.

*P. Dollfus, J.-D. Lajoux,
M. Lecomte-Tilouine, G. Toffin*



Women of Langtang, Wangel village, 1965. (C. Jest)

The postman.
He holds a spiked lance with bells, the
insignia of his function. Kali Gandaki
Valley, north of Tatopani, 1960. (C.Jest)



A Kanphata Yogi in the Modi Khola
valley, 1960. (C. Jest)





Brahmans pounding rice. Trisuli Valley. (C. Jest)



This photograph is a homage from Jean-Dominique Lajoux, CNRS, who worked for many years in collaboration with Corneille Jest, both in France (Aveyron) and in the Himalayas. It shows the villagers of Bouloc watching themselves in a film projected in the local school during winter 1960-61. The film was made by J.-D. Lajoux and C. Jest in summer 1959. It depicts village life and local techniques. This photograph from J. -D. Lajoux is the result of an experiment using an infrared flash.

CORNEILLE JEST'S WORKS

INCLUDING PHOTOS

BY PIERRETTE MASSONNET

I - Books and articles

1954, "Visages Lepchas", *Sciences et Nature*, Nov.-Dec., n° 6, pp. 12-24. (10 BW photographs)

1961, "A technical note on the Tibetan method of block-carving", *Man*, n° 102, pp. 83-85. (3 BW photographs)

1962, "Les missions du musée : Mission au Népal", *Objets et Mondes*, vol. 2, n° 2, pp. 107-129. (40 BW and 1 colour cover photographs)

1963, "Les missions du musée : Népal 1963", *Objets et Mondes*, vol. 4, n° 3, pp. 209-233. (38 BW photographs)

1964, "Les Thakali : Note préliminaire concernant une ethnique du Nord-Ouest", *L'Ethnographie*, n° 58-59, pp. 26-49. (4 BW photographs)

1966, "La fête du Janaipurnimâ à Pâtan", *Objets et Mondes*, vol. 6, n° 2, pp. 143-152. (11 BW photographs)
- "Les Chepang, ethnique népalaise de langue tibéto-birmane", *Objets et Mondes*, vol. 6, n° 2, pp. 183-184. (12 BW photographs)

1969, "Chez les Thâkâli : cérémonie consacrée aux ancêtres du clan", *Objets et Mondes*, vol. 9, n° 1, pp. 59-68. (11 BW photographs)

1971, "Onze mois au service du roi, un mois au service de dieu : Traditions et croyances religieuses des habitants de la vallée de Tichurong" (Nord-Ouest du Népal), *L'Ethnographie*, n° 65, pp. 66-86. (4 BW photographs)

1972, "Lumière sur l'Himalaya central", *Atlas*, n° 69, pp. 12-13. (3 colour photographs)

1974, "Fête du pa-la à Chim, Kali Gandaki", *Objets et Mondes : L'homme et la haute montagne : l'Himalaya*, vol. 14, n° 4, pp. 303-306. (17 BW photographs)
- "La Haute Seti, pays du dieu Langa", *Objets et Mondes : L'homme et la haute montagne : l'Himalaya*, vol. 14, n° 4, pp. 247-258. (7 BW photographs)
- "Les sources thermales", *Objets et Mondes : L'homme et la haute montagne : l'Himalaya*, vol. 14, n° 4, pp. 213-218. (2 BW photographs)
- *Tarap : Une vallée dans l'Himalaya*, Paris, Seuil. (50 BW, 29 colour and front cover photographs)

1975, *Dolpo : Communautés de langue tibétaine au*

Népal, Paris, Ed. du CNRS, Cahiers Népalais. (77 BW, 4 colour and front cover photographs)
- "Images du Ladakh, une région de culture tibétaine face au développement", *Objets et Mondes*, vol. 15, n° 1, pp. 93-98. (15 BW photographs)

1976, "Encounters with intercessors in Nepal, in J.T. Hitchcock & R.L. Jones (Eds.), *Spirit possession in the Nepal Himalayas*, Warminster, Aris & Phillips Ltd, pp. 294-308. (1 BW photograph)

- "L'élevage du yak dans l'Himalaya du Népal", *Ethnozootecnie : Le yak, son rôle dans la vie matérielle et culturelle des éleveurs d'Asie Centrale*, n° 15, pp. 78-90. (4 BW photographs)

- *Manaslu : Hommes et dieux du Népal central*, Paris, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, Cahiers Népalais. (18 BW and 5 colour photographs)

1977, "Nepal cultural heritage : Master plan for the conservation of the cultural heritage in the Kathmandu valley", Paris, United Nations Development Programme / UNESCO. (35 BW photographs)

- "The Kuswar of Chaithali (Central Nepal)", *Contributions to Nepalese Studies*, vol. 4, n° 2, pp. 1-45. (6 BW photographs)

1978, "Himalaya", *Le Courrier du CNRS*, n° 29, pp. 33-45. (6 BW photographs)

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II - Films

1965 - "Tarap, la vallée aux chevaux excellents"

1970 - "Ma Gcig - La mère : Peinture d'une tang-ka"
"Seto Matsyendranath"

1973 - "La fête du milieu de l'été"

1976 - "Spre-lo : L'année du singe"

1988 - "Convoquer les dieux"

**SARKI MAN'S RECOLLECTIONS OF
CORNEILLE JEST
AS RECOUNTED TO BERNADETTE VASSEUX**

Through Professor Dor Bahadur Bista, Sarki Man Majhi, of the village of Timal in Kabhre District, met Corneille Jest in 1960; Sarki Man was then 17 years old and worked for a Swiss cheese-making project in Lainchaur, Kathmandu, Langtang and in Jiri. Since 1964 he has regularly accompanied Jest on his missions to Nepal, and together they have traversed the country, from Bhajang in the far west to Ilam in the east, and Dolpo and Mustang in the north, as far as the Terai along the Indian frontier.

He remembers a long mission of 40 days in 1973 between Dolpo and Mustang, when food ran out on the 35th day; they found no place for supplies until they reached the town of Jarkhot, and they had lived for five days on tsampa, water and tea without sugar.

The following year, during a mission with Corneille Jest, Jean-François Dobremez and five of his students they were caught in an avalanche in Dolpo. Sarki Man first led Dobremez and then Jest who were tied to him with a rope. With the help of their piolets, they were able to climb up to the path and to retrace their steps with the rest of the group.

Sarki Man recalls the year 1969 and a mission somewhere between Dharan and Taplejung in eastern Nepal where they had gone to meet some Tibetans. Jest at this time smoked a lot and constantly had a pipe in his mouth. They had a difficult time stocking up and could not find cigarettes anywhere. It was then that Jest decided to stop smoking!

Sarki Man fondly remembers missions to Helambu, Khumbu to Jomson, where they helped with the restoration of temples and monasteries and the inhabitants of the villages expressed their joy and satisfaction.

In 1980 Jest invited Sarki Man to France. He stayed two months, July and August, and visited Paris, Bouloc and the country house of the Jest family, the Pyrénées and Alsace. In Paris he felt like a prisoner because he did not know the city, had no reference points and could neither express himself nor be understood. However, he adored the country and is still impressed by the farms he visited.

Today, Sarki Man is 55 and has five children from 12- to 20-years-old. The second, Harka, accompanies CNRS missions and will probably carry on in his father's footsteps.



Sarki Man's family, Thimal (C. Jest).

From left to right : the son of his eldest son, his youngest son holding his own child, his brother's two sons, Sarki Man, his two grand-daughters, two of his daughters.

TRADITIONAL DINNER SET OF THE NEWAR

SUSHILA MANANDHAR

I dedicate this photograph to Professor Corneille Jest to thank him for his generosity and hospitality. In fact, he is the first French person who invited me to his home for dinner and introduced me to his family. It was a great opportunity for me to get into a French kitchen, to observe the decoration of the dinner table, the rules of politeness and of course, to taste French cuisine (for which I must recognise the prominent role of Madame Jest, however).

To its right three bronze bowls are arranged. One is first served lentil soup, *kye*, in the bigger bowl ; stew (*dāyekālā*), in the second one, and alcoholic beverages, *ailā*, in the smallest one.

Generally, a bronze decanter, *anti*, is included in the dinner set, as shown in the picture. In front of the dishes, a kerosene lamp and to its left a pot for drinking are placed.



Although quite different, we the Newar, are also acquainted with specific table manners, which I shall briefly describe in return. Traditionally, the Newars take their meal seated on a straw mat, *suku*, laid on the floor. In front of the mat, there is a large bronze plate on which the cooked rice is served.

Until today, the Newar have used bronze and copper pots for cooking and eating. But nowadays, steel, glass and ceramic are fashionable as well as Western plates, forks, knives and glasses.

ACROBATICS AND STILTS IN OLD KATHMANDU CITY

GÉRARD TOFFIN

Corneille did not know of the existence of stilts in the Kathmandu Valley until some time ago when I showed him the document reproduced below. I took the photo in September 1993, just before the Dasain festivals, in a backyard in the neighbourhood of Tyauda, in the upper part of old Kathmandu city. I was attending religious ceremonies and *māh tahnegu* acrobatics marking the end of the *dhimay* drum and *dhunyā* pole-handling apprenticeship period for the youth of the Jyāpu (Maharjan) peasant caste from the nearby neighbourhood of Kwāh Bāhā. The short audiovisual document on the festival of Seto Matsyendranāth filmed by Corneille in the streets of Kathmandu in the late 1960s is evidence that these two elements are organically linked.

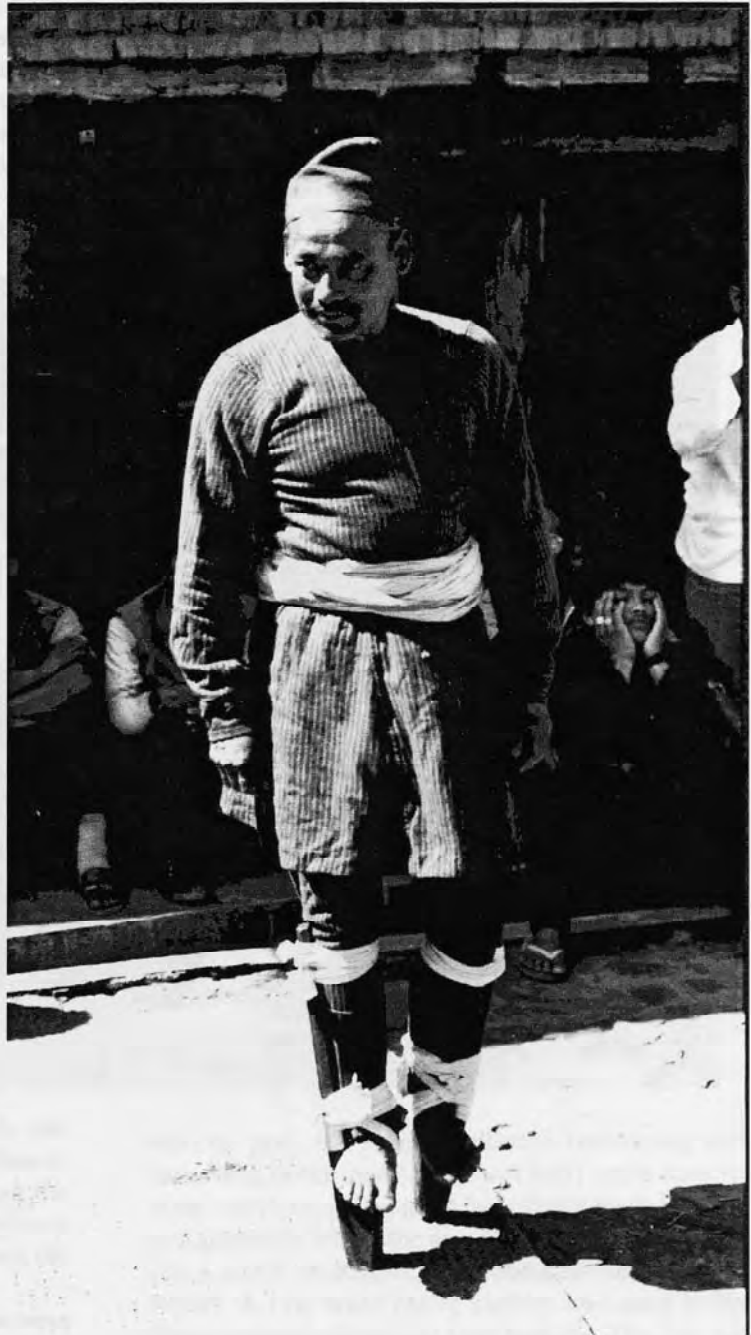
As one can see, the foot support, a simple slot, is carved in the wood and the pole is attached to the ankles and the legs by bands of white fabric. These mini-stilts, in Newari, *sim tuti*, lit. "wooden feet", are only used on this occasion. During my various investigations among the Newar, I had never seen them, neither at the close of recreational activities, nor during ritual ceremonies. As a matter of fact, in the Jyāpu neighbourhood of Kwāh Bāhā, they are only taken out of *ākhāhchen* music houses once every twelve years, during the apprenticeship of the *dhimay* drum. To my knowledge, in the other neighbourhoods, *twāh*, the Jyāpu of Kathmandu do not use them (anymore?). In the case of Kwāh Bāhā, the demonstration of *māh tahnegu* is repeated the following day in front of the group's house of music and the altar of Nāśahdyah, then in front of the *dyahchen* temple of Luti Ajima. A last *māh tahnegu* takes place at the end of Dasain, during the full moon in the month of Ashvin in Kāthasimbhu and Svāmsaphū Ganedyah.

The *dhunyā* poles that the most dexterous men of the neighbourhood handle mounted on their stilts are decorated with different colours according to the area. They must be careful not to fall while brandishing them in the air. Like the *dhimay* drums, the poles contribute to the feeling of solidarity among the Jyāpu of the same *twāh* and to identify territorial unity. There are five principal movements, each associated with a Panca Buddha. They are so spectacular and pleasant to see that it is said that Lumbini Bhagwān himself stops meditating in order to contem-

plate them.

The duodecennial apprenticeship consists of a series of acrobatic exercises (there are twelve principal ones) executed to the sound of cylindrical *dhimay* drums. The Jyāpu peasants maintain that Hanumān, the monkey-god, is on the top of the *dhunyā* pole and Nāśahdyah, the god of music, at its base. The two gods are moreover always associated during these apprenticeships and rituals.

The Jyāpu peasants whom I questioned attribute no particular religious significance to these wooden stilts. Was it initially a simple game, a ludic activity? Should



one look for symbolism? Difficult to decide. However it may be, the stilts are not exceptional in South Asia. J.P. Mills observed them among the Ao Naga in Assam

(1926 : 155) and Verrier Elwin, among the Muria of Bastar (1959 : 418-420). Katia Buffetrille recently drew my attention to them north of the Himalayan range, in Amdo, a village in Sog-ru Reb-gong District. The stilts observed during a festival devoted to local divinities were taller than those of the Newar. We still know little about acrobatic exercises in the Himalaya and the role which accessories, such as stilts, occupy. Nevertheless, acrobatics play an important part in India, and even more so in China. It is a field of investigation which is still new and challenging to explore.

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MEMORIES OF THE GAÏNE

MIREILLE HELFFER

More than thirty years have passed ... in 1966 one did not arrive directly in Kathmandu ... there was no French embassy there and it was necessary to stop in New Delhi and engage in a few formalities before securing a seat on the plane which would land in a field in Gaucar. Then it was only necessary to await the arrival of the luggage, which in my case could take more than ten days! Directed by Professor Millot, the French research group, RCP Népal, was making its first investigations, but already a certain Corneille Jest had revealed his qualities as a leader and expert, which seemed normal given his long experience in Dolpo. French ethnologists interested in the Himalayan world were still few : since 1961 Macdonald had regularly visited the Gāine, Gabo-

autumn - and the choice of the Pokhara region, discussed with my colleagues, seemed logical. It had been envisaged that Kesab Bista who already was accustomed to working with the Gāine would accompany me, but he was bedridden with hepatitis! It was thus a young Nepalese student, Drona Prasad Rajaure, one of Gaborieau's pupils in French, who agreed to become my assistant and in this way discovered the joys of fieldwork.

Installation in the village of Batulecaur was accomplished rapidly, and after a month of acclimatisation to the Gāine, to their demands and to the material for recording (*tapricot* according to local pronunciation of the word 'tape-recorder'), a prospective itinerary was defined with Gaborieau's assistance, as his knowledge of Muslim villages in the area proved to be valuable.

Where then were they living—these despised Gāine who were only capable of begging ? How would they greet my presence and my approach to them? Some, satisfied with the opportunity to earn money without having to move about, recorded willingly and proved



rieau was the first to teach French in Kathmandu and had already defined his project concerning Muslims in Nepal; Sagant, who had just begun to work on the Limbu, and I - the only woman - whose competence was limited to ethnomusicology, stood out against the horizon.

It was my first real fieldwork; my four children were grown up; and because of my work already carried out on the acoustic material collected by Macdonald, it had become possible to suggest an investigation on the settlement of singer-beggars, the Gāine, in central Nepal. The season was favourable - around the beginning of

bent on gain, the money collected facilitating their carousing in the *batti* [the local pub] more than the usual search for grain; some had already taken the route to Kathmandu where the poet Dharma Raj Thāpa, himself a native of Batulecaur, introduced them to Radio Nepal. A few were really shabby and sang badly. Others showed distrust, or even hostility. This was particularly the case of those in the photo above.

Better provided for than their counterparts in Batulecaur or Hyāngja, they had some land and would not agree to be recorded, but after being shaved and

dressed, they were pleased to pose for a family photo reuniting three generations. Their differences in head-gear are obvious and seem a tell-tale sign of status attempting to take form with the new term *gandharva* used to designate the Gāine :

- the father, wearing a turban and carrying the *saran-gi* fiddle, a sign of his caste;
- the older son, in the usual *topi*;
- the younger son, in a felt hat, like those worn in town.

Significantly, the three men are wearing locally-made shoes, while the younger son wears shoes made by the Bata Company; the little boys also have shoes, but the woman and the little girls are barefoot, which was still very common at the time.

For me this photograph marks the beginning of a difficult journey which would lead me in an unforeseen manner to the Tharu of Dang, close to the heart of my assistant.

The evaluation of my efforts was positive, and in the years to come up to the dissolution in 1970 of RCP Népal 65, "Etude des régions népalaises", which was replaced by RCP 253, "Ecologie and géologie de l'Himalaya central", I fulfilled the function of staff ethnomusicologist, responsible for cataloguing recordings made by the researchers.

SALUT L'ARTISTE !
ON MUSICAL TEACHING
FRANCK BERNEDE

Despite changes in modern society, music still occupies a central place in the life of Newar peasants (*Jyāpu*). Reserved for the men in the community, its highly ritualised apprenticeship is a fundamental component of the social and religious organisation of this group. In this very conservative culture, where the modalities of the acquisition of knowledge are veiled to the uninitiated, access to musical apprenticeship was *a priori* out of reach. Willing however to understand its theoretical bases through participating observation, I tried to find a musician who would agree to teach me how to play the *dhimay* drum, which endows an emblematic dimension among the *Jyāpu*.

The photograph I selected was taken in Patan in July 1995. It shows Dev Narayan Maharjan, one of the music masters of Kathmandu city, playing my cello. The photo was taken at the end of a *dhimay* drum recording session. It illustrates the beginning of my musical training among the Newar and I am happy to offer it in homage to Corneille Jest, whose creative energy is at the origin of numerous researchers' calling in Himalayan studies.

To grasp how my pupil-teacher relationship was established, I must first recall that although the various Nepalese musical traditions are easily identified by all the Nepalese, they do not generate a deep aesthetic feeling from one community to another. This situation which I frequently witnessed, seems to have its roots in a profound identity feeling, whose artistic expressions (principally music and dance) constitute fundamental markers. When I remember the aborted tentatives of exchange with classical Indian musicians, the curiosity that Dev Narayan showed for my cello from our first meeting, surprised me. In fact, his interest is probably an indicator of the specific status attached to the musical instruments in Newar tradition. Indeed, for the *Jyāpu*, any musical instrument — whatever its origin- is perceived as a manifestation of Nāśahdyah, the god of music and dance.

To my great surprise, Dev Narayan actually owned two violins in a very bad state, which were presented to me covered with red and black powder. As he asked me, I did worked on them a bit, correctly placing the strings which were rolled upside down as on the Indian Sarangi, and straightening the bridge. Then I returned them to Dev Narayan who began to play. Due to his posture he developed an inimitable style, close to some European village violinists. Then he presented the violin to me and I reciprocated and played with the violin standing between my knees as with a cello! Dev Narayan started an animated discussion on the flexibility of the wrist, which led us to practical exercises. I then found myself in a position where I had to teach him elements of the Western violin technique which were useless for the repertoire he planned to play on his instrument. He asked me to explain the position of the fingers on the archet. Our role were momentary

reversed. But this apparently useless conversation acquired a new dimension when I begin to learn *dhimay* with him, in particular the way drumstick is used in the different wards of Kathmandu. This anecdotic event appeared more generally as central to our relationship, which was not master-disciple but reciprocal, between two musicians of different traditions. Dev Narayan invited me to accompany him the next day to the temple of Nāśahdyah where he performed a ritual aimed at asking the god's consent for my training in *dhimay* drum. He sacrificed an egg on the altar and told me that the god accepted my request. Then my apprenticeship started, under his attentive and patient direction, but that is another story...



THE BUDDHA OF BANGEMURA TOL GILLES BEGUIN



In Bangemura tol, in the western part of Kathmandu, a grey sandstone stele, slightly bluish, representing the Cakyamuni Buddha, stands at the entrance of a shop. It appears in all its aesthetic integrity in this photograph from the 1970s. Since then, set on a cement pedestal covered with fragments of bathroom tiles, it has lost all its magic. In other places of the Newar country, inconsistent heritage conservation policy regarding the maintenance of great statuary *in situ* has given rise to numerous thefts and vandalism that are much more serious.

The work, which may date from the mid-sixth century, is one of the oldest representations of Buddha in the valley. Its style is strongly influenced by the standard type spread by the workshops of Sārnāth in northern India from the end of the fourth century and which attained perfection approximately 50 years later.

The Blessed One, standing, distributes favours with the right hand (*varada mudra*), the other, closed, holds up the fold of a garment from above. A thin incised line marks the waist of the garment underneath. He leans on his slightly bent left leg. At his feet two donors of indistinct gender pay homage to him.

As on numerous stelae from the Sārnāth workshops, the figures clearly stand out from the background, unornamented, but encircled by a double, delicate row of flames and pearls. The wide surface thus formed was perhaps originally painted.

The face echoes Gupta canons : half-closed eyes, intangible smile, strongly marked cranial excrescence (*usnisa*), a hairstyle of juxtaposed tiny curls, etc.

Until the end of the sixth century, Licchavi statuary retained a slightly provincial aspect. The thick-set body and the face with flattened features are characteristics found in other works. In the seventh century an abrupt change created the masterpieces we know.

MAO AS A MUSE

PHILIPPE RAMIREZ

Krantima himd [On the path to revolution]

Boys : The multitude of gods has left the *rodighar*¹,
listen!
Night has gone, morning has come
Look, it's beginning to get light, the red sun is up, listen
carefully
Sitting silently, we lose time
Let's take the path of revolution
together

Girls : The black cloud is disappearing
Put the *jhyaure* drum² away
[Refrain] Look, it's beginning to get
light

Boys : In the towns and in the country,
the people have risen up
Finally the proletariat has united
[Refrain] Look, it's beginning to get
light.....

Girls : Now, it's the people's turn
An earthquake will carry away the big
landowners
[Refrain] Look, it's beginning to get
light.....

Boys : The revolution accomplished,
freedom will reign victorious
Everyone will enjoy the rights that they
will win
[Refrain] Look, it's beginning to get
light.....

Girls : Two days to laugh
And to throw out the big landowners
[Refrain] Look, it's beginning to get light.....

From Nar Bahadur B.C., *Ragatko amsu*,
2050 V. S., Myagdi, B. C. Parivar.



An anonymous fresco in Chyasal (Patan, Nepal) dating from the 1991 elections. The slogan reads "Let's stamp out the sun sign" (i.e. the electoral symbol of the United Marxist-Leninist Party).

Notes :

- 1 Youth hall.
- 2 Drum used in youth band which plays and begs during the *tihar* festival.

THE KING, THE DRONGO AND GOMA

MARIE LECOMTE-TILOUINE

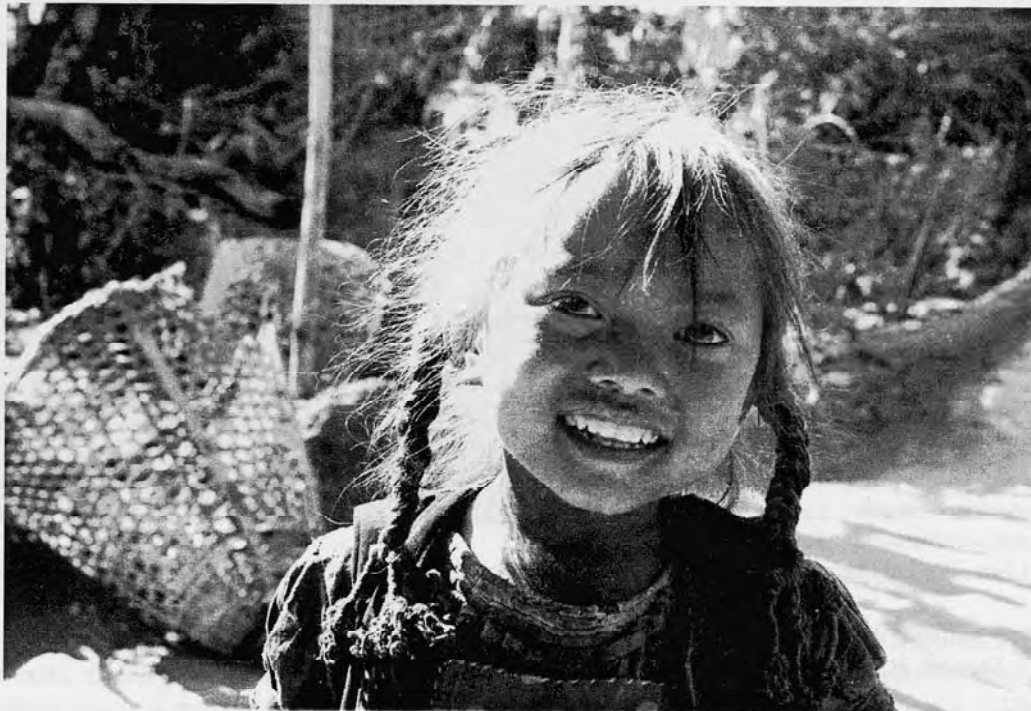
The first time I went to Philippe Sagant's course on Nepalese civilisation at Langues Orientales, he brought Tarap and brandished it in front of us, saying, "You may want to look at picture-books on Nepal. If so, I suggest you choose a book like this, because such anthropologists love the people they photograph". This rather unexpected definition of the anthropologist impressed me and suits, I think rather well, Corneille Jest. Furthermore, in my case, it was a confirmation of what I confusedly felt when, still younger, I chose to study Nepal, after reading *Communautés de langues tibétaines du Népal*. It is always difficult to later determine the reasons for such immature decisions, but it is certain that Corneille's photographs had something to do with it. The magic of his pictures probably stems partly from the people and places he captured on film, their mixture of extreme poverty and splendour. But the photographer plays his role in this magic : if beautiful, his pictures are not aesthetic but narrative. They are real "invitations au voyage".

This first impulsion in the orientation of my work was followed by constant help from Corneille who see-

paid particularly close attention to children, their games and their stories. In my view, children are the best informants, because like anthropologists, they have to understand what is going on around them. This is why I have chosen to here dedicate a portrait of Goma, who sat on my lap during a good part of my stay in Darling, along with a story that made her laugh and which was intended to go to France. It was recounted by Radha Devi Lalsing (Darling, Gulmi District).

"The Drongo bird

Once upon a time there was a Drongo bird who went to the garden of the king. As he went, he found there an iron piece of a sickle. So he went to the king's palace, in the courtyard, and said 'my rice is bigger than the king's!' The king felt angry : 'Oh oh, his iron rice is bigger than mine, let's kill him', and so saying decided to kill him and eat his meat. Thus went the soldiers who killed the bird. Having killed him and brought him back, what did he say when he was cut (in pieces), even cut, what did he say? 'The king is one, I am numerous'. And the king said, 'Cook it quickly, I'll eat him'. So he was prepared to be cooked. The spices once ground, he was covered with turmeric to be fried. But while he was covered with turmeric, what did he say? 'The king is brownish, I am golden'. The king said, 'It won't be fine until I have eaten him' and ate the bird. After he was



med to have attained a kind of anthropological Boddhhood, leading him to offer, especially to beginners, methodological advice, critical readings, translations from German and even precious fieldwork data. I myself particularly abused such generosity and must say that all my writings benefited from Corneille's information, reading, and criticism.

Long before becoming a grand-father, Corneille Jest

eaten, he still spoke from the belly, 'The king is outside, I am inside'. And the king said to his soldiers, 'I am going to shit, you will stay around my ass holding your kukhuri knives'. The king sat to shit. The Drongo bird went out and flew away while the soldiers cut the ass of the king. Then he went on a tree and said, 'the king's ass is cut, and what did you cut of myself?!'

A golden necklace to the listeners, a flower necklace to the teller, may this tale go to France!"

Cibe cārā

Euṭā cibe cārā rahecha re. Tyo cibe cārā rājāko phūlbārīmā gaecha. Jāndākherī rājāko phūlbārīmā, hāsiyāko ṭukrā bhetāecha. Bhetāundākherī rājāko darbārmā gaecha, aganmā gaecha : “rājāko dhanbhanda mero dhan ṭhūlo” bhanecha ra. Rājālāi rīs uṭhyo. “Au, au nī, mero dhan bhanda yasko dhan phalāmko ṭukrā ṭhūlo bhayo, yeslai mārō, yeslāi mārera yasko māsu khānchu” bhanecha re. Ab sipāhīharu gaera yeslāi mārechan. Mārera lāera, kātdākherī ke bhanyo re, kāṭepani ke bhanyo re : “Rājā euṭā, ma mastai”, bhanecha. “Yeslai chito pākāidiyo, ma khānchu” bhanyo rājāle. Ab pākāuna lāgyo. Masālā pīsera hālera, besār hālera buṭna lāgyo. Besār hāldākherī ke bhanyo re : “rājā phurso ma pahēlo” bhanera. “Yeslāi nakhāe hunna, chitei khānu pārme ho” rājāle bhanyo. Khāecha re. Khāndākherī petbhitra pani bolyo re “rājā bāhira ma bhitra” bhanyo re. Rājā bāhira ma bhitra bhandākherī sipāhīharulāi bhanyo re : “ma ta basnu hagna, timiharu kukhurī samātera mero cākko varīparī basnuparcha”, āphu hagna basyo. Cibe cārājhaī niskiera bāgyo, rājāko cāk kāṭdiyo sipāhīharule. Ab u yesto buṭṭāmā gāera ke bhanyo tyasle : “rājāko cāk kāṭyo mero ke chatyo”, bhana bhanthiyo re.

Sunnelāi sunko mālā, bhannelāi phūlko mālā, yo sastar Phransmā jālā”

THE TIMEKEEPER

OLIVIA AUBRIOT

In Aslewacaur, a village in the middle mountains of central Nepal, irrigation is precisely managed: individual water rights are defined, the water is distributed to each irrigator according to a very specific time schedule and each canal user has to participate in the maintenance work according to his water right. Maintenance work is indeed important as landslides often occur on the six-kilometre-long canal located on a hillside. It is collective work, supervised by the canal chief (*kuloko mukhiyā*), who is also responsible for the attendance register. Dhanapati Pande was the canal chief of Aslewacaur from 1964 to 1994.

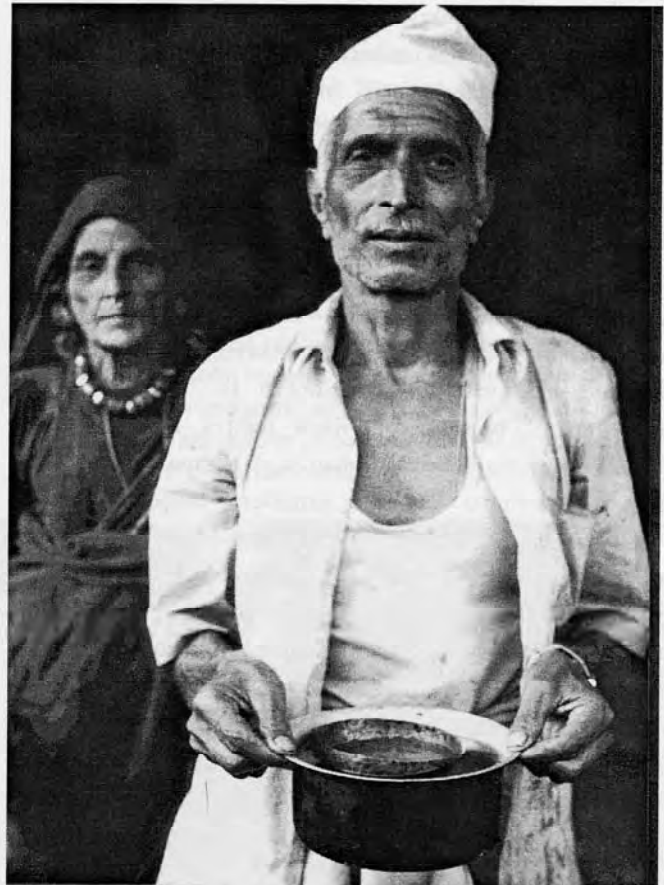
Dhanapati Pande was also timekeeper. In the photograph, we can see him carrying a waterclock (*pāniko ghari*), used to count the irrigation time granted to each canal user. The water-clock consists of a bowl with a small hole in its bottom, placed in another bucket full of water. The water slowly enters the small bowl which sinks when it is full, thus defining one *ghari*, the traditional time unit in India and Nepal. The operation lasts 24 minutes and must be repeated. Thus, a timekeeper is required to measure time continuously.

In Aslewacaur, time keepers¹ are designated for a duration of twelve hours every three days. They know the water right of each farmer. They inform irrigators when their turn arrives and verify that they use water during the time allotted to each of them. Then, they have to follow water distribution and to carry the water-clock along the canal. They must use clean water in order to avoid impurities to modify the measurement of time. They take cover from the rain and the sun in houses or in small shelters built along the borders of rice fields for this purpose. They must also be vigilant, because irrigators may try to cheat them! For example, they may disturb the timekeeper and put butter in the small hole of the water-clock, or during the cool nights of autumn, they may bring a blanket and take advantage of the guardian's drowsiness to irrigate their own fields longer!

The water-clock is not in use nowadays in the irrigation system of Aslewacaur, the wristwatch has been used since the 1960s. Dhanapati, who was one of the timekeepers, has kept a water-clock and uses it now to establish his home deities. The photograph of Dhanapati showing the container in its function as water-clock can hence be seen as a relic of the irrigation system of Aslewacaur.

This photograph was taken in the end of the afternoon, after visiting the canal with Dhanapati Pande who, at Corneille Jest's request, provided the local names of various places along the canal. This example is a good illustration of one of Corneille Jest's characteristics; he is indeed a field anthropologist. Moreover, he likes teaching students about investigative work and

field methodology (who has not heard about the notebook with a square pattern every 0.5 centimetres in order to draw to scale?). And, he is not reluctant to visit the field site of the student in order to "test" him or her, but above all, to show them field work in practice: how to obtain information, how to take notes and how to plan for the final illustrations; photography is important to each of these functions.



Dhanapati Pande, with his wife behind him, carrying a water-clock (*paniko ghari*). (C. Jest, November 1992)

Note :

1 In two neighbouring irrigation networks that have borrowed the distribution system of Aslewacaur, each farmer is in charge of the water-clock for the duration of the irrigation of his fields.

THE HAT AND THE HUNT

GISELE KRAUSKOPFF

During the rainy season when the Tharu work hard in their rice fields, one can see the tillers standing on the harrow, ploughing or weeding the fields, large round bamboo hats on their heads. This hat is in fact an umbrella, not only used at working times, but for instance, during night rituals, when rain pours down on the participants. The *chatri* is made of bamboo and *sal* (*Shorea robusta*) leaves by men, during the dry, hot months preceding the rains. There is a small hole in the ground floor of the long house's entrance hall which is

four to five meters long and no more than half a meter wide, on wooden poles in the recently cut rice fields. Squatting on the ground, he can scare the quails by the musical move of the bundle of straw. Running more than flying, the birds are then easily trapped under the net which is folded down by pulling a string. This game (for the quail as well as the hunters) is highly prized by the Tharu - an unusual hunt on dry fields, like that of rats and mice, a hunt with a net, a hunt which doesn't make the blood flow. The Tharu, as clearers of the Terai forest, savannah and swamps, have been wrongly described as big game hunters. But trapping birds and other small game on fields (or the wild boars along the edge of the forest) is much more significant of their lifestyle in the Terai which combines rice cultivation, fishing (collecting small fish and shells in rice fields is



used to shape the hat's top. Bamboo strips are tied together in a star pattern, then the interior and exterior discs are tightly woven with additional strips and the leaves are introduced before the two discs are firmly tied. These hats are quite large, at least one meter, and never as small as those commonly seen in China or Southeast Asia. For the Tharu farmers of the Dang Valley, the bamboo hat along with the wooden sandals are the primary male attributes of the rainy season, worn to fight the mud and the deluge.

I have been puzzled by the reappearance of this umbrella-hat in the dry winter season, in December, when the agricultural work is over. Then, in the morning mist which blurs the landscape, lonely figures bent over the ground, handling and shaking a bundle of straw, are hidden under their large headgear. December is the time of the very pleasant quail hunting; the game invades the dry fields. The hunter fixes a net (*batyar*),

common) and trapping game on fallow lands.

This peculiar quail hunt is also reminiscent of the aristocratic practice of quail fights which were so common in the Nawabi culture of Lucknow, a cultural pole in the past closer to Dang than to Kathmandu. The French adventurer, Claude Martin, who lived in Lucknow at the end of the eighteenth century and ran the military establishment of the Nawabs, was as fond of animal fighting as his master, Asaf Ud Daula. In Martin's baroque palace, one can still see a drawing showing such a fight. Still today in Dang, it is rarely for themselves that the Tharu catch quails, but rather to sell to rich landlords for food consumption or fight training. It is also probably as game suppliers to the aristocracy that the Tharu carry on this rewarding hunt. Old people remember the time when the king of Salyan used to come to the valley for big game hunting and when villagers had to provide, free of charge, all the necessities

for the *sawari*, the suite; fine quails had to be served.

But why do the Tharu wear this umbrella-hat when hunting, when they don't use it for any other purpose at this time of year and the only climatic problem is the morning mist? Whatever the answer may be, it appears to me as one more sign of an ancient link between rice cultivation and fishing and trapping, characteristic of a forest-clearer population from the marshlands. These economic activities set up fallow lands as a mediate and central environmental category. Wet rice cultivation and collecting practices therefore appear linked under the same technical and symbolic system. Today this umbrella-hat, which is quite different in shape from the Indo-Chinese one, does not seem very common in South Asia. In southern Nepal, it is used by the Tharu of the Dang and Chitwan valleys and the Tharu emigrants in the western Nepalese and the Indian Terai. The same kind of large bamboo hat is also worn in eastern India, especially in Bengal and the Assam lowlands, perhaps delineating a north-eastern Indian area of distribution, linked to a way of life which reveals, through the importance of fallow lands, a specific relation to nature.

SOUVENIRS FROM THE FIELD

ANDREW MANZARDO

I had just made my first trip into the deep stacks of the University of Wisconsin Memorial Library. I had just begun my research into the Thakalis and had found a copy of *L'Ethnographie* with an article on the Thakalis by a certain Corneille Jest.

I had heard about the Thakalis from some friends and they seemed to be just what I was looking for. I was absolutely stunned that this Jest had gotten there first (an emotion felt by many working in Nepal, no doubt). I took the journal back to my small office and began to (painfully) translate the French.

I had gotten about halfway through when a shadow passed over the pages. I turned around and there was a smiling face looking down at the pages. "You like that stuff?" he said. I had to confess I had just started, but I told him of my surprise finding someone had already worked with Thakalis (I later found there were others as well). He asked me if I knew where to find John Hitchcock.

As I was Hitchcock's teaching assistant at the time, I offered to take this still unidentified stranger there. I knocked on Hitchcock's office door and Hitchcock opened it and shouted, "Corneille! Corneille!" I asked, "Are you that Corneille?" For Jest it was all a good joke; for me it was the beginning of a long and happy relationship.

In those days, Americans were not very well trained in field methods. Anthropology was the stuff of books. You read about fieldwork, looked at pictures of fieldworkers, but seldom if ever had any real training in it. It was like learning to swim by being tossed in the pool. Corneille became my swimming instructor from that day. If I now can "swim laps" in the field (metaphorically), it is because of this teacher; a practical fieldworker tacked neatly on to the end of a bookish graduate career.

Jest and I share a love for the anthropology of the film and the film of anthropology and it was he who taught me how important photography can be to the field record. I have submitted two photographs that represent key points in my own first field experience, to show how important that record can be. Corneille later often called on me to translate the works of his students for English journals; that improved my ability to translate French, at least from the earlier days of trying to read *L'Ethnographie*. Salut, Corneille!

During the summer of 1974, the Nepalese government grew impatient with the activities of the so-called Kampa guerillas inhabiting Mustang District north of Jomosom. The Americans, always accused of having supported this group of anti-Chinese warriors, were now in the process of seeking detente with Mao's government of the People's Republic of China. It is

assumed that as part of President Nixon's initiative, one quid pro quo, was for the American intelligence groups to end their material support of the Kampas.

The Kampas were left without means to continue their activities, even to survive, as a result of the withdrawal of this outside support, and they were accused by some of having to prey on some local Nepalese villages, as well as on Chinese targets in Tibet, to enable them to continue to survive in the region.

While it is not yet possible to firmly state what caused the Nepalese to act at this particular moment, one can surmise that there was strong Chinese pressure on the Nepalese government, as well as pressure from the Thakalis and other wealthy inhabitants of the region, to act to bring this group under control.

I encountered the group of soldiers in this photograph in Birethanti, on the Modi Khola, in those days one full day's walk north of Pokhara. I was walking to Marpha in Mustang at that time, to begin fieldwork among the Thakali and related groups in the Thak Khola region of Nepal's southern Mustang District. When the photo was taken, I assumed that this group of soldiers was part of a contingent meant to relieve the normal garrison living in that area over the monsoon period: a normal rotation. As I continued to walk, however, I began encountering heavier weapons, broken down for transport on the narrow mountain trails and larger and larger numbers of troops.

By the time I reached Gorepani, it was evident to even one as innocent as I, that this was no ordinary troop movement. Officers on the way led me to believe that if I stayed ahead of the soldiers, I would be allowed passage to Jomosom and would be allowed to remain there. As it was monsoon, there seemed to be no other Westerners on what is now a very well used trekking trail.

An injury in Tatopani however, slowed me down and the army passed me and I was effectively shut out of the area.

Afterwards, the Kampas were forced out of Mustang. One group surrendered, while the other began a long trek toward Darchula, in the far west of Nepal. Elements of the Nepalese army reached the area by helicopter ahead of the Kampa army, and through a fortuitous set of events were able to kill the group's leader. The rest of the group entered India, where they were allowed to remain across the Sarda River from Nepal.

The photograph turned out to be the record of a most significant moment for me as a researcher. The immediate closure of Thak Khola by the military forces remained in force more than two years, until October 1976, when the area was once again opened to tourism. Repeated efforts to gain entrance were refused by the government. For that reason, the bulk of my research had to be shifted from work in the traditional homeland of the Thakalis, to research on Thakalis living in newer settlement areas in Kaski, Myagdi, Baglung, Parbat and other Nepalese districts and a shift to a focus on network development and impression management. I also

aimed to remain in Nepal as long as I could in the hopes of being able to return to Thak Khola once it reopened. To support myself, I began to work in international development programs, where my career has remained ever since.

The picture is a record of how researchers, even with the best of plans, often are sometimes moved by larger forces into unanticipated new directions.

The road between Kathmandu and Pokhara was opened around 1973. This photo catches a moment where Pokhara seems to be drawing a last quiet breath before metamorphosing itself into the noisy transportation and government hub it is today.

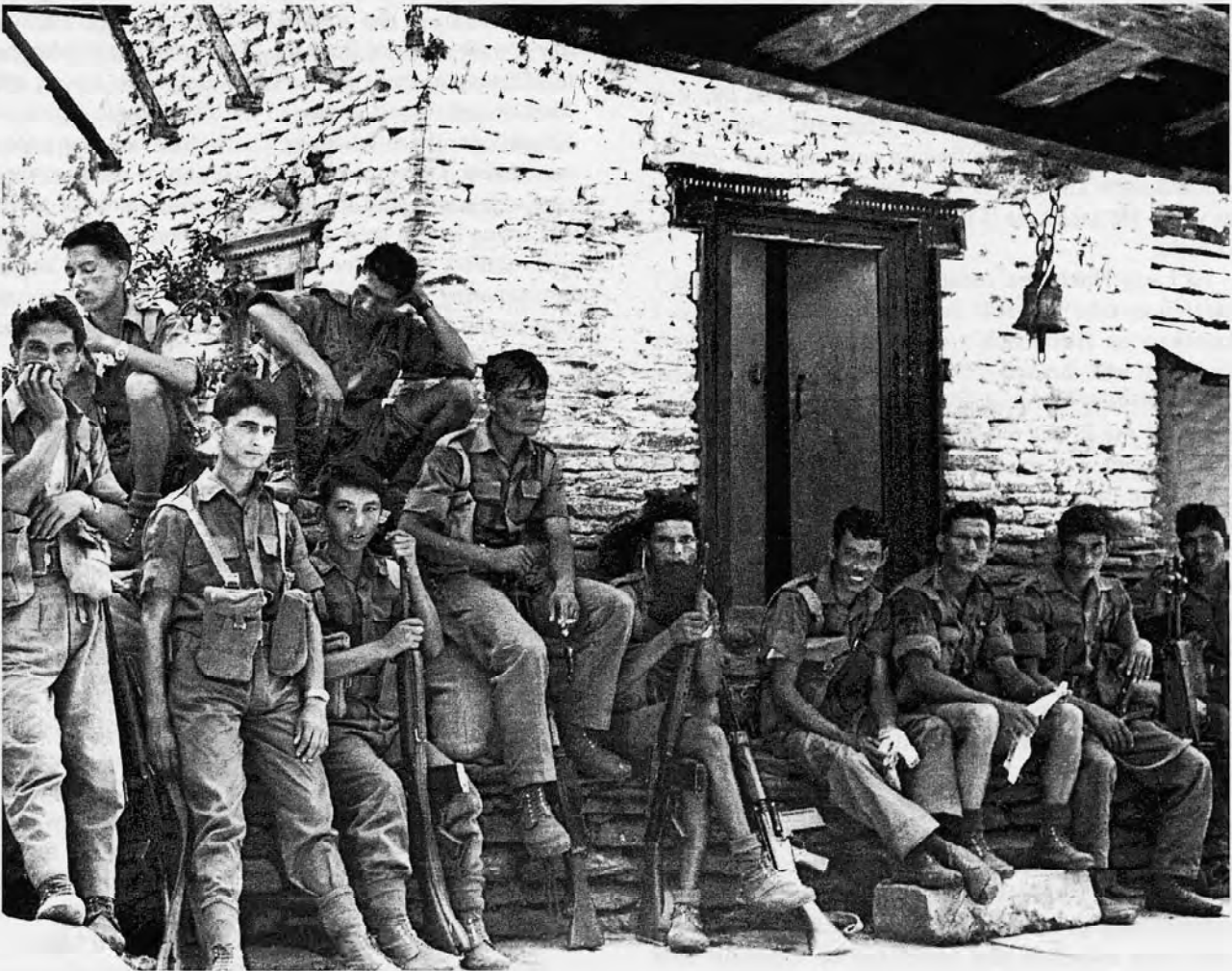
Pokhara started as a quiet, largely Newar market

Indian border at Sonauli. This was followed by the completion of the Mahendra Rajmarg in 1973, which signalled the beginning of the major commercial growth of Pokhara.

This accelerating growth attracted other significant groups to the town. These were :

- the Gurungs, a hill tribe group attracted to Pokhara through the economic activities of ex-Gurkha soldiers of which the Gurungs were a significant part in this area, centered around the British Pension Paying Post in Dip and training and educational facilities in the area such as Lumlei Farm and the Pokhara campus of Tribhuvan University;

- the Thakalis, a group once centered in the Kali Gandaki Valley and now making significant inroads



Nepalese Soldiers in Birethanti, July 1974

town. The Newars, traditional merchants from Patan, remained a significant part of the central portion of the town. The Newars traded with other local hill groups and depended on foot traffic on a major trail from Kathmandu. Traffic to the Terai was handled by air, using old Dakotas between Pokhara and Bhairawa. Later, a motor road was built connecting Pokhara with the

into the economies of the western Middle Hills of Nepal and now getting ready to use the new road to link itself up with activities in Kathmandu and the western Terai;

- the Marwaris, a group of traditional merchants and money lenders (Nep. *baniya*, lit. storekeeper) or *sahu* (lit. money lender) who came up from India and are

generally found in the cloth trade, but are also involved in other forms of investment.

This picture was taken soon after the dam at Pardi, the drainage point of Phewa Lake, broke and the town was left without electricity. Pokhara appears to get a reprieve from its growth in this picture and seems to have returned to the sleepy little hamlet it once was before its true growth began. The forces of change are apparent within the picture, as vehicles first shown as becoming part of Pokhara's normal life.

Shown is a Russian automobile used as a taxi cab broken down half a block from Mahendra Pool, now one of Pokhara's major crossroads. Russian cars at that time were sold to help pay for Russian aid to Nepal and were a real automotive bargain at the time. The license plate shows that the car comes from Lumbini Anchal,

in the western Terai, and is probably from Bhairawa which means it arrived in Pokhara via the older Sonauli road. Simple repairs were often taken care of by quite young boys.

Once this particular monsoon season was finished, the major growth of Pokhara really began. Bamboo walled stores were replaced with cement buildings and buses and trucks began to arrive. Pokhara also became a major tourist town catering to Westerners and to Indian pilgrims and honeymooners. What is striking about this picture is the total absence of any other traffic on the street, a day of quiet which was soon to end this far more innocent time.



Pokhara monsoon scene, 1974.

HORSE TRADING IN TIBET, NEPAL AND INDIA (1956-1959)

PHILIPPE SAGANT

We well know that Corneille Jest first worked in Dolpo, in western Nepal. He has nevertheless done fieldwork at many other sites. He is well acquainted with far eastern Nepal—Walung, Tokpe, Thudam.

His is also interested in quite diverse subjects, such as the pony trade, which I shall discuss here. From 1956-1959 the ancient horse market took place from the fair in Talung, a two-day walk from Lhasa in Tibet, and as far as the Indian fairs, passing through east Nepal from place to place as far as Calcutta. The fair at Talung, "the valley of horses", lasted one month in July-August. The horse dealers came from Lhasa, Shigatse and Sakya, as well as from Himalayan villages such as Walung or Tokpe Gola in eastern Nepal near the Tibetan border. This commerce ended slightly before the Dalai Lama's exile in 1959.

The prominent merchants from Walungchung and Tokpe Gola used to leave with a servant for Talung—

among them, the *goba* of Walung and some of his near relations, as well as others from Tokpe Gola. From Walung or Tokpe Gola in eastern Nepal, it took 15 to 20 days on horseback to reach Talung in Tibet.

At the fair a good three- or four-year-old stallion could bring in 200 to 250 Nepalese rupees. At that time, the important merchants from Walung and Tokpe bought 15 to 35 horses; others would buy 60. In addition, they also bought yellow coral, rugs and blankets.

The great merchants from Walung and Tokpe hired the services of Tibetan grooms: they brought horses back from Talung across the Nepalese border. Four men were needed for 60 horses; the grooms were given one rupee per day with the meal. These grooms then returned to Tibet.

In Walung the horses stayed up to the beginning of the month of December. Some villagers who had fodder kept the animals near their houses. For the most part, the horses grazed on pastures one-day's walk from the village. For 60 horses, four farm helpers were required: they guarded the horses and took care of the fodder. They were given a little maize each day, the equivalent of one *mānā*. The horses were free to graze on the pastures. Nuruk, our Tibetan informant, lived at that time in Walung.



Dolpo, Tarap, 1963 (C. Jest)

From the month of January, the horses were led down as far as Dharan. Often it was necessary to be well-acquainted with the routes, the pasture lands. In Dho-ban, Ilam, Chainpur, along the Tamur River, Newars and Yakthumbas would buy two horses, five horses. They also bought Tibetan rugs and blankets as far as Dharan.

Finally, there were large fairs near the Indian border (Neckmard, Dharmagang, Krishnagang) which took place either in February or in March. Once in India, in Jogbani, the horses were loaded into train carriages with merchandise and most often purchased to pull rickshaws in Calcutta and in other Indian cities.

The price of horses varied according to the distances traversed by the horses from Talung to Calcutta.

NEPALESE TRADERS IN LHASA

LUCETTE BOULNOIS

For a long time Dr Jest has been interested in the history of Newar merchants trading in Tibet, as can be seen, for instance, in his paper "The Newar Merchant Community in Tibet: An Interface of Newar and Tibetan Cultures. A Century of Transhimalayan Trade and Recent Developments", published in 1993 in Paris (CNRS Editions) in *Nepal. Past and Present : Proceedings of the Franco-German Conference, Arc-et-Senans, June 1990* (Ed. G. Toffin). The same text has been partly re-published in French, in *Garuda* (Paris), n° 50, 1998. It primarily deals with the Newar traders who had settled in Kyirong and Kuti; many of them left Tibet and returned home in 1960-61. Some of them later on resettled their trade in Tibet in the 1980s.

An article by Long Xijiang, "Investigating the History of Nepalese Traders in Lhasa", was published in 1993 in *Zhongguo Zang xue* (Chinese Journal of Tibetology), edited by the Chinese Center of Tibetology, n° 3, pp. 41-51. Although the Chinese author of this article never acknowledges these Nepalese as being Newar, using only the word meaning "Nepalese" (i.e., Nepalese citizens), there is little doubt that all of them, or nearly all of them, are Newar.

Besides briefly summarizing the history of these Nepalese merchants in Lhasa, whose vicissitudes were already known from the beginning to the 1930s, this article also provides other more recent and less well-known information on two periods, viz. World War II, which seems to have been a golden age for Nepalese traders in Lhasa (as all

Chinese seaports and coastlines were sealed off by the Japanese who also controlled the Burma road, Nepalese traders greatly profited from the substantial increase in trade between India and China through Tibet). In the second period, the troubled years from 1959 through 1961, many Nepalese traders had to leave Tibet because of the Tibetan insurrection and its suppression by the Chinese.

Information and data published in Long's article were primarily extracted from a survey initiated in 1961 by the Survey Group of the Lhasa Working Committee; chief sources were the Archives Department in Lhasa, and the memories and testimonies of some Nepalese traders. The survey includes a more detailed inquiry on the trade and business between 1945 and 1961 of four Nepalese firms considered to

be the most important and representative of the Nepalese community in Lhasa.

According to Long Xijiang, many of the data in his article were published for the first time.

Here are some of these data:

Although before 1959 there were one hundred or so Nepalese businesses in Lhasa, in 1961, only 74 were left with a total of 259 people.

It should be noted that statistics distinguish two categories of Nepalese traders (both categories are registered as "fore-ign"): the pure Nepalese and the "Ka-sa-er", i.e., the Khaccara, the offspring of mixed Nepalese-Tibetan marriages (most often a Nepalese father and Tibetan mother).

Among the 74 businesses in 1961:

34 firms were owned by pure Nepalese, with a total of 90 people, employing 11 Chinese (most probably local Tibetans) and

40 were Khaccara, with a total number of 169 people, employing 5 Chinese.

44 businesses (26 pure Nepalese and 18 Khaccara) sell all kinds of merchandise.

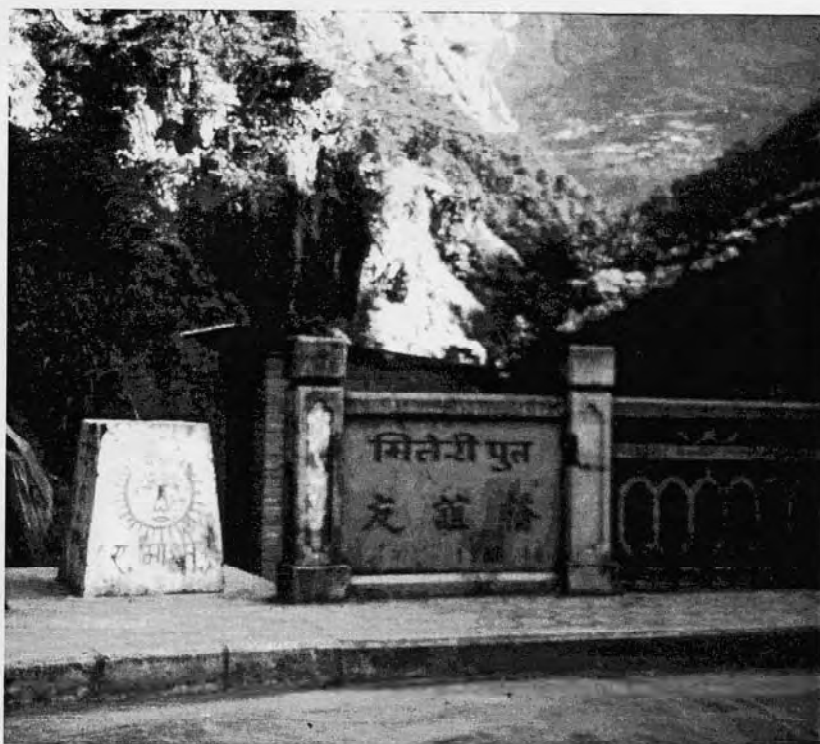
18 (7 pure Nepalese and 11 Khaccara) sell miscellaneous household goods.

5 (Khaccara) sell food and drinks.

1 (pure Nepalese) sells herbs.

6 (Khaccara) sell farm animals, gold and silver.

61 have their shops in town.



Spanning the Bhote Kosi River in a deep valley in Kodari, the Friendship Bridge marks the border between Nepal and Tibet. The "Arniko Highway", the motor route connecting Kathmandu and Lhasa since 1967, crosses the bridge; it carries most of the trade between the two countries.

9 go from place to place.
4 are street vendors.

59 are retailers.
13 had both wholesale and retail trade.
2 were wholesale dealers only.

Division of the assets of the 74 firms in 1961:

Total amount of assets: 2,675,000 yuan
(2,449,000, or 92 %, for pure Nepalese, and
226,000, or 8 %, for Khaccara)

out of which:

Fixed assets: 278,000 yuan
(191,000, or 68 %, for pure Nepalese, and
86,000, or 32 %, for Khaccara)

Floating capital: 2,397,000 yuan
(2,257,000, or 94 %, for pure Nepalese, and
139,000, or 6 %, for Khaccara).

Thirty-two of the 74 businesses (27 pure Nepalese and only 5 Khaccara) each had a capital amounting to more than 10,000 yuan; errors excepted, it seems that the four most important Nepalese traders in Lhasa had among themselves a capital amounting to 1,445,000 yuan, i.e., as much as, and even a little more than the 70 other firms altogether.

Turn-over data:

For Nepalese traders in Lhasa as a whole, the difference between 1960 and 1961 is significant:

In 1960, the global turn-over amounted to 2,744,000 yuan (2,573,000, or 93 %, for pure Nepalese and 171,000, or 7 %, for the Khaccara).

In 1961, the global turn-over amounted to 531,000 yuan (464,000, or 87 %, for pure Nepalese and 67,000, or 13 % for Khaccara).

The survey of commercial activities from 1945 to 1961 of the four firms selected as the most important and representative takes into account: the nature of the business, trading practices, the amount, origin and structure of their capital, their assets and profits; it sheds light on the business connections of the Nepalese traders between Nepal, Tibet, Calcutta and Kalimpong and on the multiple aspects (agricultural, industrial and commercial) of their fortunes in Tibet and outside of Tibet. As may be expected, the goods most often exchanged were wool, gold, musk, herbs, yak tails, hides and skins, silver coined or in ingots, cloth, sugar, chillies, tobacco, tea, rice, leather shoes, wrist-watches and fountain-pens, etc.

This article by Long Xijian, of which only a few lines have been translated here, may complement and possibly show discrepancies with Corneille Jest's own research on the subject. It also provides official statistical data and shows how the Chinese view these foreign traders in Tibet. Considering the situation in 1993 ("Opening and reform" policy, the development of border trade along all Chinese borders), it may not be acci-

dental that a 1961 survey on Nepalese traders in Lhasa was published just at that time in an academic Chinese journal.

THE WORLD IN A BOWL OF URINE

FERNAND MEYER

Corneille Jest was the first researcher I met, when as a young physician posted in Nepal and completely outside the field of Tibetology, I began to be interested in Tibetan medicine. It is in great part due to his support and encouragement, as well as those of David Snellgrove and Gene Smith, that I persevered in a domain of research which was to take up more and more of my time, drawing me inexorably away from medical practice. Over the years, Corneille became first a friend whose constant dedication was never lacking, and later a colleague under whose direction I had the privilege of starting my professional career as a researcher.

At about the time of our first meeting, Corneille had published his book *Tarap, une vallée dans l'Himalaya*, Paris, Seuil, 1974, and I remember the keen interest and the intense aesthetic emotion that were roused in me by the numerous photographs it contained. It seems to me now that the complete reorientation of my career, then free of any academic knowledge as far as Tibetology was concerned, probably had its source in my contemplation of those images which "spoke" so eloquently. The reasons which guided my choice of the photo by Corneille and with which I would like to pay him homage as an ethnologist and photographer are multiple: personal, documentary and aesthetic.

First, this picture was among a series of photographs Corneille very generously put at my disposal for inclusion in my PhD¹. He had himself already published it, along with a caption reading "Diagnostic d'une maladie par une divination avec l'urine du malade", in his master work *Dolpo. Communautés de langue tibétaine du Népal* in connection with a short passage dealing with the medical activities of the local priests. As far as I know, it was then the first picture to document this technique of diagnosis-divination which has now practically died out among Tibetan doctors. Even if they still practice uroscopy, although much less frequently than pulse examination, for strictly medical diagnosis, they seem to have abandoned almost completely the complex techniques of urine divination for which its surface must be divided in a number of sectors. I was never able to observe it myself spontaneously practised, and the few publications devoted to Tibetan urinalysis do not usually deal with this aspect². Yet, an important part of the vast chapter dealing with urinalysis in the *rGyud-bzhi*, the fundamental treatise on Tibetan medicine, concerns different divination techniques.

Corneille's photo has thus a great documentary value. It was taken during a medical consultation by Meme Tenzing of Kagar, as in another photograph taken at the same location, he checks the pulse on the left wrist of a village woman³. The related text does not provide clues about the circumstances of this consultation, but one can assume that the urine examination concerns the

same female patient. I found this picture all the more interesting since it shows a very rustic type of Tibetan medical practice, apparent as much in its setting - on the ground in front of a village house, as in the garb of its figures, the long hair of the therapist, coiled up in a turban, indicating that he is a tantric priest (*sngags-pa*), who in addition to his medical functions, probably minor among his activities, is a socially prominent farmer who provides mainly religious and ritual services. We witness here the situation which was the most common in traditional Tibet, far from the idealised image of Tibetan medicine usually shown today to the Western public.

The tantric priest-doctor is in the centre of the photo. In front of him, directly on the ground, a cup of white porcelain contains urine with small bubbles appearing to float on the surface. He has just placed two pairs of small sticks across each other on the bowl so as to form a grid. He probably has simply taken those sticks from the heap of twigs beside him as he still holds a bunch in his left hand. The doctor is using a cup in accordance with the requisites formulated in the *rGyud-bzhi*: white porcelain with no decoration on it so as not to blur the examination. Ideally, the urine should have accumulated in the bladder during the second half of the night, and should be examined immediately after it has been passed at daybreak.

Strictly speaking, medical urinalysis does not require any other device and should, theoretically, follow three stages. First, when the urine is still warm, the colour, vapour, odour, and bubbles are examined. Then, when the odour has dispersed, the suspension and the layer which forms at the surface are observed. Finally, when the urine's aspect changes, the timing and manner of its transformation, as well as its final characteristics are analysed.

But here, the aim is not to diagnose a nosological entity according to medical classification, but to identify the evil spirit causing the patient's suffering. In order to achieve this, the urine bowl is likened to the "tortoise of the world" (*srid-pa'i rus-sbal*), lying on its back if the patient is a male or lying on its belly if the patient is a female; its head is always pointing south. This layout pertains to the complex divination tradition ascribed by the Tibetans to China. Male patients are supposed to urinate in the bowl from its eastern side, whereas females should do so from its western side. As we can see in the picture, the surface of the urine is divided into nine sectors (*re'u-mig*) by two pairs of crossed sticks; their criss-cross pattern is said to evoke the grid marking the upper and lower shells of tortoises. Around the central sector, the other eight sectors are oriented towards the cardinal points and their intermediary directions. On the right side of the tortoise and starting from its head, the three sectors are, successively, those of the gods, the humans and the evil spirits (*gdon-sa*). The three sectors of the middle arc, following the same direction, those of the paternal ancestors, of the patient himself and of the offspring. Finally, the three sectors

on the left side of the tortoise are those of the cemetery (*dur-sa*), of the house, and of the fields.

The divination consists in localising, with respect to the examination grid, the figures : points, circles, cracks, etc. formed in the urine by the bubbles, the surface layer, the suspension etc.. For example, if such a figure appears in the sector of the gods, the pathological disorder is said to be caused by a protective deity (*lha-srung*) associated with the paternal ancestors or the patient himself. In such a case, the cure must consist of confession and propitiation.

The *rGyud-bzhi* and other Tibetan medical texts also discuss other divination techniques based on urine; some entail quite sophisticated calculations making use of a larger number of sectors dividing the surface of the

urine, and taking into account the directions of space as well as elements of astrology and geomancy⁴.

Finally, an analysis of the aesthetic qualities of this photograph, whose lines and masses immediately suggest, at first sight, the equilibrium of a classical painting; this impression is even reinforced by the chiaroscuro effect as well as the attitude of the main figure, the priest-doctor, at once dynamic and restrained. A perfect isosceles triangle is in the centre and takes up half of the surface of the photo. Its base is made up of the entire length of the picture's lower edge and its summit crowns the head of the priest-doctor. The left side of this triangle is marked by the right arm and leg of the physician, underscored by light, and by the legs of a bystander in the lower left corner of the picture. The



C. Jest

right side of the central triangle, more obscured by darkness, is suggested by the fold of cloth thrown over the left shoulder of the therapist, and the lower edge of the robe of a seated figure, probably the sick woman. The head of the physician, at the summit of the triangle, is bent forwards, thus bringing his face into the shadow projected by his bulky head-dress. His glance falls vertically on the bowl filled with urine, along the exact bisecting line of the central triangle. This composition draws one's glance down to the bowl, the focal point of dazzling brightness on which, one confusedly feels, the glances of the bystanders also converge although they are out of the frame. The attitude of the doctor eloquently expresses the concentrated tension with which he scrutinises the bowl: the forward movement of his head and his right side with the hand floating in the void, seems to be restrained by his left arm and leg bent towards him.

I know of no other picture which succeeds in capturing with such eloquence the moment at which the Tibetan physician, having become a seer, suspends the rational discriminative analysis of the standard medical diagnosis in favour of an intuitive perception. His consciousness is sunk into the iridescent space of the urine bowl which becomes the mirror of the world.

Notes :

1 Paris, Seuil 1974.

2 *Gso-ba rig-pa. Le système médical tibétain*, Paris, Editions du CNRS, 1987, p. 160.

3 With the exception of Y. Parfionovitch, F. Meyer & G. Dorje, *Tibetan Medical Paintings*, London, Serindia 1992, pp. 143-148.

4 C. Jest 1975, *op. cit.* p. 324.

5 For a summary presentation of those techniques and the traditional iconography illustrating them, see Y. Parfionovitch & al. *op. cit.*

THE ROUTE TO HELL

KATIA BUFFETRILLE

I don't know if the fact that having read *La turquoise de vie. Un pèlerinage tibétain*, but also about the Tarap and Dolpo pilgrimages, was at the origin of my decision to write my dissertation on "Montagnes, lacs et grottes : lieux de pèlerinage dans le monde tibétain". Once the subject was chosen, I went to see Corneille Jest to discuss my project. I remember the first conversation we had in a Paris café and his enthusiasm that someone would pursue research on this subject. Many other meetings followed in Paris, but most often in Kathmandu. Throughout my years of research, I often referred to his material and the Tarap maxim which says, "pilgrimage is the religious offering of laics"; it could serve as the conclusion of my work.

"Pass without hindrance between the closed walls of the rock 'Digpa karnag' (*sdig pa dkar nag*); 'Rock of white sins and of black sins' is a means of being purified," Karma, C. Jest's informant, used to say. These "narrow passes" (*phrang lam*) are also called *dmyal lam*, "route to hell". They are found throughout the Tibetan world, around sacred mountains, for example at A myes rMa chen, or at Kailash, as well as in the caves of Halase-Maratika in Nepal. Purification, the liberation of all faults is one of the reasons generally given by pilgrims to explain their desire to pass this test but each knows (or says) that the narrow passages are linked to the bar do (the intermediary period between death and rebirth).

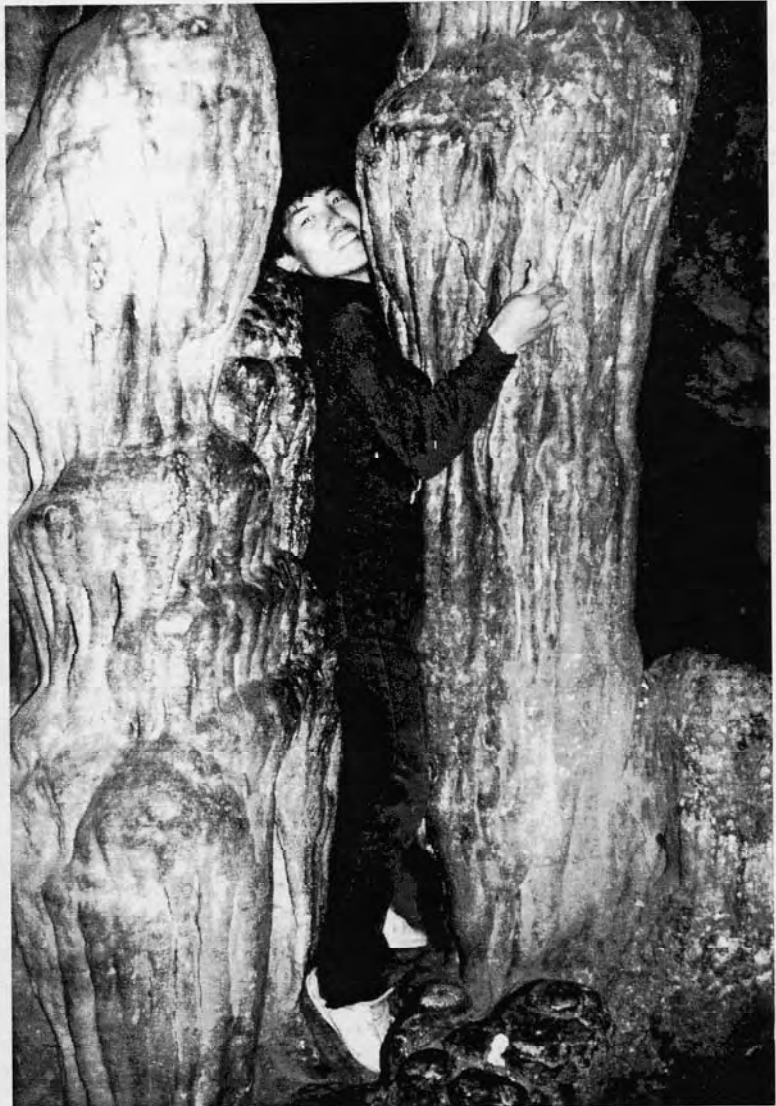
In slipping into the narrow passage, the pilgrims not only seek to erase their sins, but to carry out a rite which will keep Yama, the god of death, from learning of their sins during this life. It is a kind of rehearsal in the world of the living, of tests that man will face after his death and which will help him at this difficult time when he meets Yama. He will see the god born at the same time as himself count his beneficent deeds with white pebbles, and the demon born at the same time as himself count his maleficent deeds with black pebbles. Thus, Yama will look into the karma mirror in which every deed (good or bad) is reflected. The deceased will have no means of escape, no means of evasion, no excuse will be possible, and we understand the fear which grips "the *bar-do* being", as well as the living before the narrow passage.

When one enters the narrow passage, one does not know what will happen, if the weight of one's sins is

such that one will remain trapped. The fright that the devout feels is equal to the stakes. The notion of the ordeal is present, and with it, that of the supernatural sanction associated with purification. The devout anticipates the moment of his meeting with the god of death ; he sees him.

A Sherpa lama encountered at Solu, with whom I spoke of the Halase-Maratika caves, told me of his experience :

"Once I saw a woman who could not leave the "route to hell". She wept and begged Padmasambhava, promising to make offerings to him if he would help her leave. Thanks to her promise, she was able to leave. I myself was so afraid that I did not try".



THE EPIC OF A PHOTOGRAPH

PASCALE DOLLFUS

A full page in the French daily *France-Soir* on November 9, 1940 announced the death of Louis Liotard with the words, "Tombé au champ de l'aventure" [lit. : fallen in the field of adventure]. Liotard was a young explorer who had been killed by the bullets of Tibetan bandits, two months earlier. He was killed on a 4950 m high pass, located at 32°21 north and 100°24 east, in the country of the Go-log (*mgo log*), the famous "rebels" living in north-eastern Tibet at the bend of the Yellow River.

The yaks and horses from his expedition also disappeared and with them, their loads –not only the camping equipment, but also the boxes containing the ethnographic collections, notes and numerous photographs taken during the 580 kilometre trip from Tatsienlou (now called Kangting) to the highlands of the Amdo.

André Guibaut, his fellow-traveller, miraculously escaped uninjured. The carefully organised ambush was not a simple robbery, but it involved "supernatural mat-

ters". According to Guibaut, anthropological measurements and photography which had been met with distrust, indeed hostility, since they had been in Go-log country were linked to the attack. They had upset the locals and helped give credence to the rumour that the two scientists were "practising witchcraft". Moreover, the fact that, a few weeks later an important part of the stolen material, particularly the films and photographs, was found undamaged, seems to back him up. Fearing some magic power, none of the attackers had dared to touch them.

Handed over to Father Yang, a Chinese missionary stationed in Tao, then at the Consul of France in Chengdu, the stolen documents, after many adventures which are too lengthy to recount here, reached the Musée de l'Homme in Paris. This photograph showing an old, blind bard with his face lit up and a youth with a wily look was among these documents. Taken the day preceding the attack, its splotchy surface is evidence of the damage done to the negative.

Thus, somewhat ironically, the fear inspired by photography worked in the end in its favour and saved the photos from being destroyed.



Go-log nomads listen to a bard recite the epic of Gesar. Mission Guibaut-Liotard 1940 © Musée de l'Homme.

"Tous deux assis dans l'herbe, le torse nu, un gaou [reliquaire] de cuir sur la poitrine, se passaient un chapeau bizarre, sorte de tiare de feutre avec des oreilles, surmonté de plumes de paon. Celui qui détenait le chapeau le mettait sur sa tête, l'enlevait, le tendait à bout de bras dans des attitudes hiératiques, tout en psalmodiant avec volubilité une sorte de récit interminable que les indigènes écoutaient bouche bée, sans doute quelque chanson de geste, dont le sujet était pris dans l'épopée du héros tibétain Kesar." André Guibaut, 1947, *Ngolo-Setas*, Paris, J. Susse, p. 115.

THE ORIGIN OF OUR BELIEF : HOW THE ISMAILIYA CAME TO GHOJAL IN HUNZA

HERMANN KREUTZMANN

A spiritual authority (*pir*) from Badakhshan by the name of Shah Ardabil visited Hunza in the Karakoram mountains three times. During his first visit he pressured the local ruler, Mir Silum Khan¹, to accept the Ismaili faith as the true belief. At this time the people of Hunza were adherents of the Twelver Shia sect of Islam (*Bara Imami, Ithna'ashariyya*). Silum Khan refused to comply and the *pir* returned to Badakhshan unsuccessfully. He was escorted by two porters (*virbar*) from Ghojal. They carried his luggage across the Irshad Uwin Pass. During this journey with the holy man, these two porters from the villages of Gulmit and Ghulkin adopted the Ismaili faith. When they returned to Hunza, the *mir* found out about their conversion and punished them severely.

After some years Shah Ardabil returned to Hunza. During his stay he succeeded in convincing Mir Silum Khan to adopt and spread the Ismaili faith. The *mir* of Hunza accepted the proposition under one condition. In his hour of death Shah Ardabil would have to be present and to support him in his parting from the world.

Some time later Mir Silum Khan and a group of followers took off for a pilgrimage to Panja Sho, a popular shrine (*ziarat*) in the Chupursan valley. Here the ruler forced the people to erect a defensive structure (*topkhana*). Later on they continued their journey up the valley and reached Reshit. Near the famous shrine of Babaghundi Ziarat, Mir Silum Khan asked the people to build a house for himself. His followers became unhappy with their situation as he made them work very hard. Their absence from home had already lasted three months.

One night one of the men had a dream. In this dream a saint told him about a method to refrain from forced labour (*afsar, kar-i-begar, rajaaki*) or to get rid of the *mir*. He should perform his devotions in the following manner: His right-hand palm would point upwards in



The grave (*mazar*) of Mir Silum Khan in Gulmit is an architectural remnant and place of honour for the story of Ismailism related in the narrative.

prayer, while the palm of the left hand would do the opposite. If he would comply with this rule during his offerings they would be freed from the corvée. The dream came true the next day. When work was about to commence in the morning, the men received news that the *mir* felt ill and had ordered them to return home. They reached the village of Gircha in Upper Ghojal without any difficulty, but later on the *mir's* state deteriorated and he had to be supported and carried. When the party reached Gulmit, Mir Silum Khan realized that his reign would be terminated soon. Mir Silum Khan ordered his sons to come from Baltit Fort to announce his decision about the succession to the Hunza throne. He interviewed three sons about their future plans. The eldest son, Shah Sultan, was interested in increasing the agricultural lands of Hunza. The *mir* entitled him with his property in Altit. The second son, Jamal Khan, supported peace with the rivals in the east and south, Nager and Gilgit, while he wanted to increase attacks on Wakhan. His father favoured the third son, Shah Ghazanfar, who recommended cordial relations with Wakhan and Sarikol in the Pamirs while attacking Gilgit and Nager. He suggested that the economic situation of Hunza should be improved by plundering trade caravans. This programme convinced Mir Silum Khan and he appointed Shah Ghazanfar² as his successor. After completing this final task as a ruler he awaited the arrival of his spiritual aide.

Shah Ardabil reached Hunza riding on a white horse with a blue cover and a decorated bridle. The people of Pasu were the first to see him pass by before reaching Gulmit. There he met with Mir Silum Khan and declared that he had fulfilled his promise to be there in time. Now the *mir* was asked by Shah Ardabil to comply with his promise. Mir Silum Khan announced that from now on the Ismaili faith would be the state religion of Hunza. After that he envisaged his hour of parting and passed away in Gulmit at the foreseen hour in the year 1825.

Before departing Shah Ardabil appointed a religious man in Gulmit by the name of Mulla Singan. This follower (*murid*) would recite the holy text brought by Shah Ardabil for a period of forty days. Afterwards his family should be the keeper of this holy book. When the grandson of Mulla Singan, Gohor Hayat, became village headman (*arbab*) his "milk brother" (*zarz*), Sarbuland Ali Shah, from the ruling dynasty of Wakhan took it away. Since that time the holy book has disappeared and has never been seen again.

This story was narrated to me in Gulmit in April 1990 by Panjshambi, son of Pir Ali, and translated by his neighbour, Ghulam-ud-din.

Notes :

1. Mir Silum Khan III ruled in Hunza from app. 1790 to 1825. His grave is located in Gulmit (see attached photograph).
2. Shah Ghazanfar ruled Hunza from 1825 to 1865 when he was murdered by his son Ghazan Khan.

"A JOURNEY TOWARDS PALPA"¹, 1922-1932 / 1997

JOELLE SMADJA

"There are few Englishmen who, spending their service in India, have any conception of what a visit to Nepal is like. When once the Terai has been crossed, when once the lower foothills are entered on, one is in an entirely new world." (Bruce in Northey & Morris 1928)

In December 1922, after having left the Terai and crossed the Curiya, Major William Brook Northey reached Masyam ridge², south of Tansen (Palpa District). He later wrote:

"From here, a magnificent view is obtained of the Palpa country, the home of many of the Magars, a tribe which forms so important a part of the Gurkhas enlisted in our Gurkha regiments. The hand camera I had with me was unfortunately quite insufficient to reproduce satisfactorily the panorama that was unfolded before me, a scene made more interesting by the fact that no European, certainly of modern tie, had ever witnessed it before." (Bruce & Northey 1925)

Recounting this trip in another book in 1928, he emphasized that:

"... no European had ever set foot in the Palpa country, save perhaps an occasional Jesuit missionary in the dim past..." (Northey & Morris 1928).

It is true that at the beginning of the twentieth century, Nepal was still closed to Westerners. It remained closed from the beginning of the nineteenth century until 1951, the year of the abolition of the Rana regime and the installation of a parliamentary monarchy. Everything known about the country came from the accounts of a few explorers and triangulation surveys patiently made under difficult conditions from stations set up in Sikkim, Kumaon and on the Ganges plain in northern India³. These data were cross-checked with those recorded by a few Indian pandits trained by Montgomerie (1868); disguised as pilgrims or traders, they were able to traverse the country. The data were further cross-checked with observations made by the British residents intermittently posted in Kathmandu since the beginning of the nineteenth century and permanently after the British-Nepalese peace treaty of Segauli in 1816. The latter could not leave the capital except with special authorisation and were restricted to a few well-defined routes. The roads were deliberately not maintained, "the idea being that the worse the road, the more difficult it would be for attacking troops to enter the country" (White 1920). A sketchy map of this country thus took form from one survey to another. Although there were descriptions of the Kathmandu Valley, the route linking the capital to the Indian and Tibetan border and the east⁴ and south border, in contrast, nearly nothing was known of the rest of the country. Until 1951 Nepal remained an "unknown kingdom".

Hence, when Majors Northey and Morris, then "Recruiting Officers for the Gurkha Regiments in Nepal", received authorisation from Prime Ministers Chandra, Bhim and Juddha Shamsheer, to go to Masyam (in December 1922 and 1932 for Northey; in 1931 then in December 1932 for Morris), they discovered completely unknown areas, which along with some trips to the east of the country, permitted them to write the first general works on Nepal⁵.

At the time the British were interested in knowing more about the country, as well as about the configuration of the High Range and the appearance of the Nepal/Tibet border for strategic purposes. As Morris could not see these snow-covered summits in 1931, he asked to return to Palpa in 1932 (Morris 1963). As a matter of fact, at this date, even though the Survey of India maps were being published (its first campaign was in 1921-1924), the exact location and altitude of all the great summits was not known. Discussions on the location of Machapuchare or Dhaulagiri, for example, were heated at that time. Major Morris participated in such discussions, thanks to the photographs taken from Masyam ridge (cf. Mason 1934 and 1935).

The photos presented here come from the sojourns of these two recruiting officers and particularly the trip in 1932; they were taken just before their departure at the end of a rainy visit⁶.

These photos were principally used after their publication in discussions on the nomenclature of Himalayan summits, but today they interest us because of the landscapes presented in the foreground. Indeed, data on the history of land use in Nepal, either textual or iconographic, are very rare. As far as we know, these photos are the only ones, and the oldest, which testify to methods of land use in this region and are therefore very precious documents, for at least two reasons:

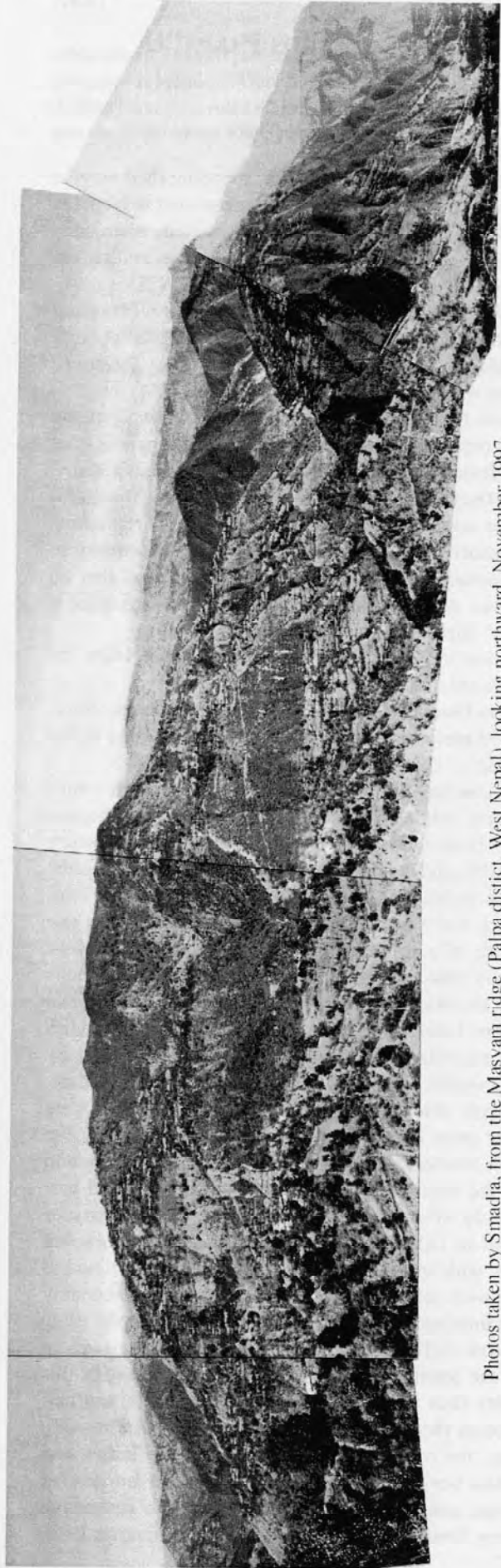
1. In general, they allow us to evaluate the evolution of forests, gullying, land use and to bring concrete elements to discussion on environmental degradation. Discussion too often biased, as its reference is at best the 1950s after the opening up of the borders—this has become in fact "ground zero" (the starting point) for observations—and at worst, data from the expert's short stay, who after a single monsoon, becomes alarmed by the damage resulting from the diluvial rains. Other work (Ives & Messerli 1989) has shown to what point comparing photos taken at intervals of several years can call into question *a priori* and erroneous ideas.

2. These photographs interest us all the more because they concern a region close to other research areas in the districts of Gulmi and Argha Kanci where a number of questions have been raised relative to sloping fields and trees in the fields (Smadja 1993, 1995). These photos thus permit us to support some hypotheses which, up to the present only grew out of investigations of the oldest people in the villages.

This is why after research in the London archives, we chose these photos from the iconography department of

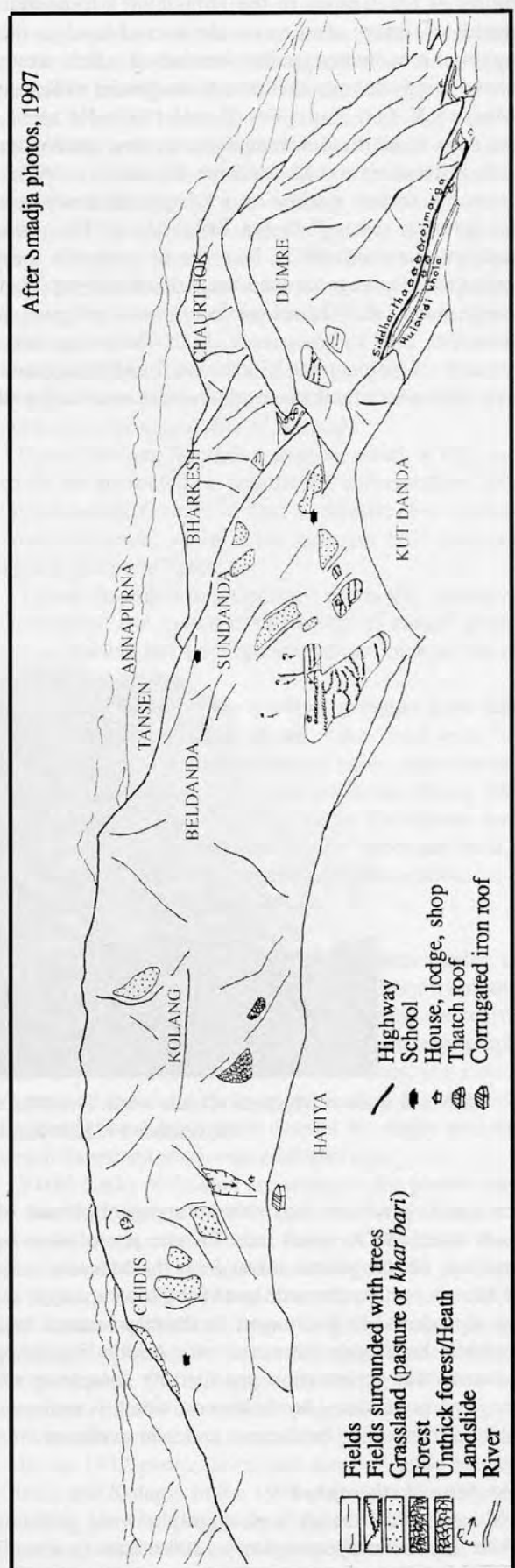
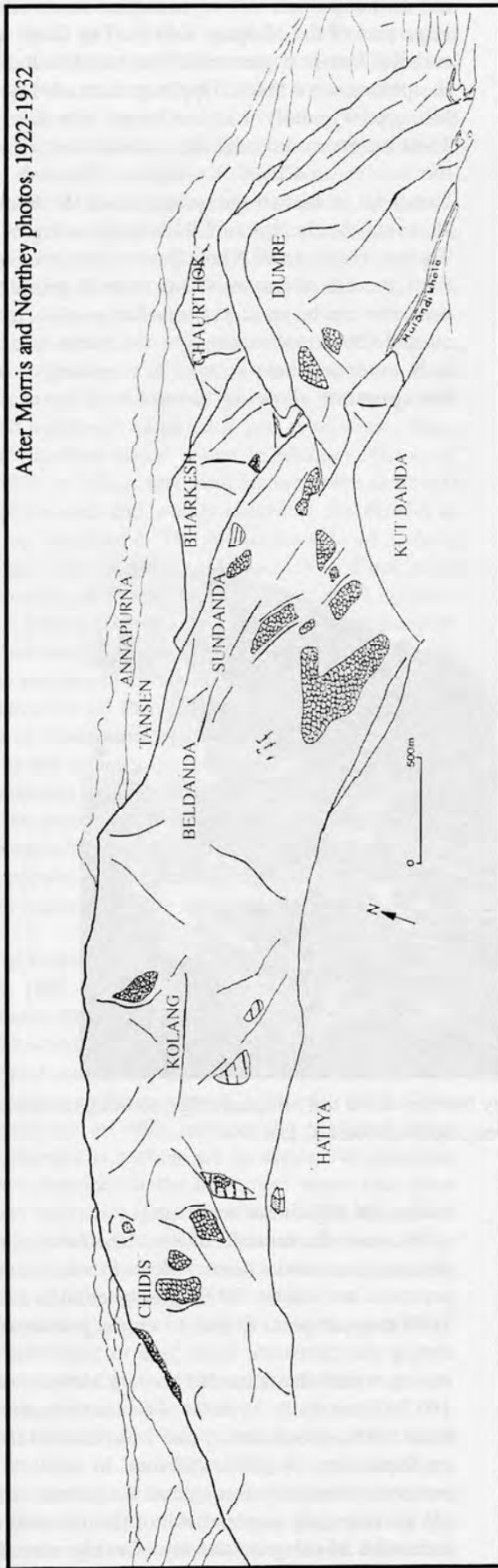


Photos taken by Morris, from the Masyam ridge (Palpa district, West Nepal), looking northward, November 1932. © Royal Geographical Society, London



Photos taken by Smadja, from the Masyam ridge (Palpa district, West Nepal), looking northward, November 1997.

Main differences in the landscape between 1922-32 and 1997 in some villages southward of Tansen (West Nepal)
 (Save borage which concern the whole cultivated area)



the Royal Geographical Society and have decided within the framework of the programme "History and Future of Landscapes in the Himalaya"⁷, to conduct pluridisciplinary studies on the use of land in this region. An economy student conducted a first survey related to private trees on farms in the hamlet of Kolang (Masyam V. D.C.)⁸ in 1996 (Bruslé 1997). He spent a few days in the field accompanied by two anthropologists, P. Ramirez and M. Lecomte-Tilouine. In 1997 an agronomy student worked on a "diagnostic analysis of the agrarian system" in the Koldanda V. D.C. near Masyam (Bernard 1997). In order to complete these studies with surveys on land use, soil, toponymy, geomorphology, etc., Monique Fort and I returned in December 1997 to Masyam V. D.C.. Following in the footsteps of Northey and Morris, we found the approximate sites where their photographs were taken and took

from the route leading from Hatiya to Tansen. The mountain sides shown in the photos are primarily exposed to the south. The foregrounds of the two regroup a large part of the Masyam V.D.C.. The fields of Hatiya and Kut Danda appear at first on benches above which the photos were taken. Opposite them, the flanks of a hill approximately 4 km in length rise from 800 to 1500 meters in altitude, and include from west to east the hamlets of Chidis, Kolang and Beldanda. The hill comes to an end to the east, outside the boundary of Masyam, at the spur of Sundanda in the V.D.C. of Thelga. The Hulandi Khola flows at its foot. East of the river, the hill of Dumre village with its distinctly rounded crest can be seen. The wooded summits of Bharke-sh and Chaurthok emerge to the north-east. We can only compare these images in the foreground as the backgrounds showing the town of Tansen, among



1. North-west of Masyam, Chidis ward. Photo taken by Northey from the Masyam ridge, looking northward. November 1922. © Royal Geographical Society, London.

new ones. We were thus able to compare photos 65 years later, and 75 years later for one photo taken by Northey. All the photos taken from the Masyam ridge by Morris and Northey and used for the comparison are not reproduced in this paper. In those presented here contrasts have been increased with Adobe Photoshop software. The information provided by comparing the images was validated by fieldwork, which is indispensable to interpreting landscapes and their evolution.

The Area Photographed

Morris' and Northey's photographs were probably taken from a small promontory 1300 meters in altitude above the Masyam bazaar, Hatiya, and some of them,

others, are difficult to make out.

We are in the foothills of the Mahabharat, a subtropical monsoon environment. Mean average annual temperatures are around 20°C. Precipitation is on average 1600 mm per year. Eighty to ninety percent of it falls during the monsoon, from June to September, season during which the rains can be very violent, more than 100 millimetres in 24 hours. For example, on September 7, 1959, 409.2 mm of rain was recorded in Tansen; on September 29, 1981, 288 mm. In addition, there is recurrent seismicity throughout the country and strongly altered rocky material. All of this contributes to the formation of the great density of easily moveable alterites.

This area of Tansen is chiefly inhabited by Magar. It was a preferred area for recruiting Gurkha soldiers during the nineteenth century. The small town of Tansen was itself an important garrison and commercial centre on the much used trade route between India and the north of the country. Until 1968 it was accessible by the footpath used by Morris and Northey who passed through Hatiya bazaar in Masyam. Since then, travellers take the road crossing the valley floor.

Settlement in this region was nevertheless apparently late. During the reign of Mukunda Sen in Palpa in the sixteenth century, the hamlet of Kolang was only a garden producing flowers for royal ceremonies. In 1804 according to the report of a Nepalese informant in service to the British army, the route leading from Masyam to Tansen "ran through forests of saul trees, and there were no villages on the way, but many huts and small patches of cultivation, and everywhere abundance of excellent water" (Scott in *Military History of Nepal*, 1824, p. 34). A few lines further in the same text "the mountainous and woody nature of the district of Palpa" are mentioned. The mountain side of Kolang only began to be cleared on a large scale and colonised in the middle of the nineteenth century⁹ (Lecomte-Tilouine, Brusl , Smadja). In 1997 the total population of Masyam was 5392 and population density was 193 residents per square kilometre. Density is approximately the same for all Palpa District and for the adjacent districts of Gulmi and Argha Kanci; it is among the highest in the country. In the wards of Kolang (including Beldanda) and Chidis, which can be seen in these photos, the population is respectively 854 and 633. The few demographic surveys undertaken at Kolang suggest that the population has multiplied about four times between the beginning of the century and today.

Photos of Yesterday and Today

When in 1961, or 29 years after his last visit, Morris again passed through Masyam, this time moving about freely, he wrote, "This was the very place in which I had camped some thirty years or so before, and it seemed in no way to have changed." (Morris, 1963). Thirty-six years later in 1997, comparison of photos shows that the changes as a whole are moderate. Nevertheless, some new features in the landscape show that there have been important transformations in the lifestyle of the populations in this region. Permanence and change discernible in the photos are in all cases most instructive. Above all, they prompt us not to rely on interpretations often too rapidly made and to be more cautious.

Permanence and Change of Mountain Sides

• An unchanged overall structure

Between 1922-32 and 1997, no change appeared in the overall structure of landscapes. Today, as at the beginning of the century, there is a mosaic of cultivated land on the crests of rather convex slopes and more or less dense woods or forests on steeper slopes. Mountain sides are patterned with sloping, rocky land reserved

for pasture or *khar bari* (meadows of Gramineae used for thatch roofing or for animal fodder).

Hence, at the beginning of century, the forest was already residual and not very dense. Since then, small parts of the forest have disappeared to leave space today for unirrigated fields as in the lower part of Beldanda¹⁰ (more recently colonised than the hamlets around it), or for pasture lands, as in Chidis and under the spur of Sundanda. However, there has been no massive deforestation but rather a "nibbling" on the fringe. Cultivated fields at the beginning of the century have also been abandoned: in Sundanda sloping fields cultivated in 1922 have returned to heathland; below Kolang the forest has recolonised the fields which were cultivated in 1932. The forests on the hills of Barkesh and Chaurthok, of which the upper parts are sacred woods, do not seem to have evolved except the lower third of the mountain side of Barkesh.

East of Kolang forest degradation, which at first sight could be attributed to significant deforestation, after investigation reveals in fact a catastrophic climatic event, a tornado, which in the spring of 1983 destroyed a great number of trees.

Today, forests are completely protected, regenerate themselves, and except in the advent of natural phenomena, should not undergo important changes in the years to come.

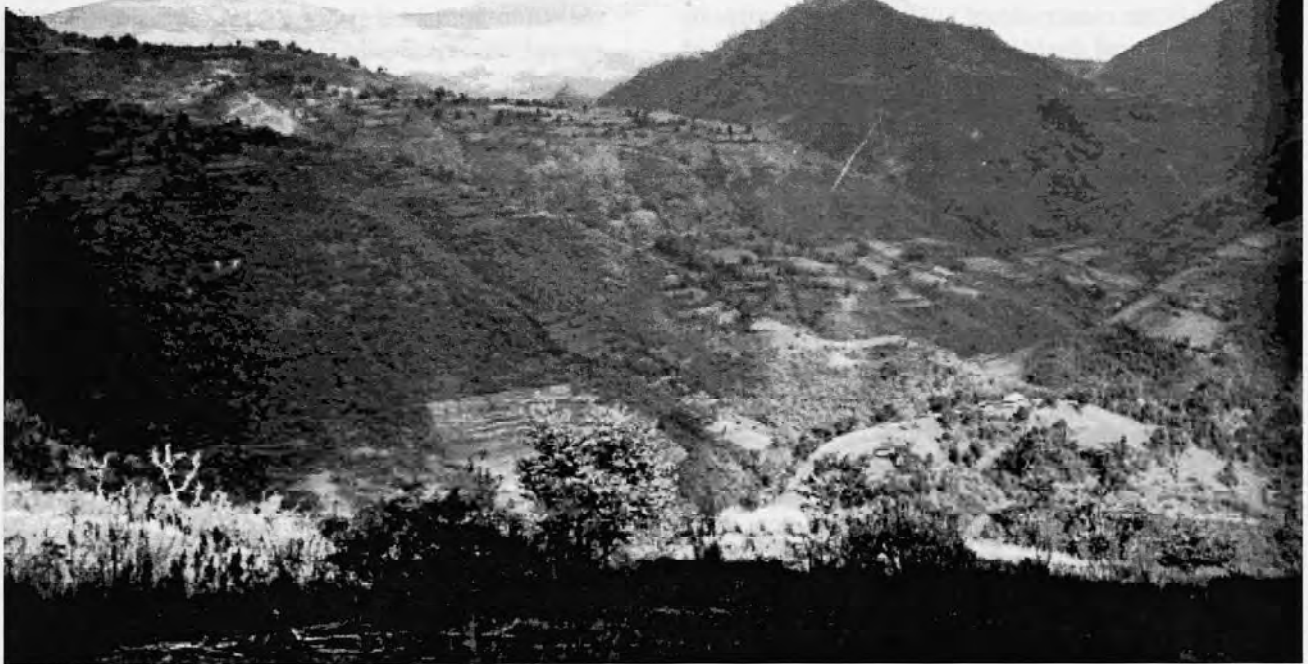
Neither *khar bari* nor grazing grounds have been converted into cultivated fields. Like "bald spots" on mountain sides, these communal lands, nevertheless, play an important role in farm economy. Since 1987 throughout Masyam V.D.C., fodder Gramineae have been tested on the *khar bari*; their seeds are sold in Kumalthar (a centre of agricultural innovation) or in other villages.

• Eroded land under control

Over the centuries, the massive hills characterising the landscapes of this region have been sculpted by significant gullyng and landslides; today, they are scarred over and colonised by vegetation, but the topography still clearly attests to these events. Thus, the hollow shape and the deep thalweg separating Kolang from Beldanda must have been caused by major gullyng which happened about two centuries ago.

Vivid marks of erosion are scarce in the photos taken at the beginning of the century. Some gullyng can nevertheless be noted in the forest of Beldanda. Since then new damage has appeared and the 1997 photograph shows a field taken back from the forest after 1932; it is covered with debris from this gully erosion. In cultivating land below an unquestionably fragile although forested area, the villagers risk losing their harvest. However, for the moment, damage resulting from erosion has been minor.

In the 1922 photo, an eroded area is visible between Chidis and Kolang. In the 1997 photo this area is covered with *khar bari* and a small forest in the lower part. Two important areas of gullyng appeared after 1932. One is located south-west of Kolang, at the site called



2. East of Masyam, Beldanda and Sundanda wards. Photo taken by Morris from the Masyam ridge, looking northward. November 1932. © Royal Geographical Society, London.

Swami dhara. In 1932 a few groves of trees covered this area although some fields had already been set out. Recent photos show that the bosquets have been preserved, but a landslide has carried away both trees and fields. The villagers date it as 1972. The other gullying in the northern part of Chidis, at Raskuti pokhara recuts an old erosion scar in the area which had not been cultivated; it dates from 1962.

The phenomenon of erosion, like massive gullying, is an integral part of these landscapes, but they seem widely inherent in the physical conditions of the Himalayan environment. The norm is 4 to 5 micro-seisms per week, several seisms of a magnitude above 5 per century, and particularly devastating monsoons at least once each decade. During the years separating the different photos, from 1932 to 1997, this region, like the rest of the country, experienced seisms measuring above 5 on the Richter scale in 1934, 1954, 1966... as well as particularly violent monsoons in 1959, 1961, 1970, 1975, 1981, 1991, 1993 and 1995. Taking into account population density and environmental constraints, the apparent stability of mountain sides rather than their degradation is surprising.

The area is fragile and the populations are aware of this. The complex mosaic of the landscapes, which as a whole have been preserved even if there have been some changes, corroborate this fact. Any extension of cultivated land can only occur to the detriment of an already precarious equilibrium, which seems controlled

up to the present. As a matter of fact, the villagers questioned do not think that there are any erosion problems at Masyam.

Whatever the case for many years, evolution has not concerned so much deforestation and taking over new land as intensification and diversification. This is what we can see if we move in and take a closer look at the landscape.

Permanence and Change in the Cultivated Sector

• The permanence of sloping fields

In the 1997 photos as in those of 1932 or 1922, unirrigated fields are sloping and form vast plots of land. They are in contrast with the finely ribboned, terraced land which we imagine in traditional images of rural Nepal. This landscape of sloping fields is typical of the districts of Palpa, Gulmi (for the south), Argha Khanci, Pyuthan and Salyan. The old photos corroborate the hypothesis that such land was cultivated from the beginning without the construction of terraces (Smadja, 1993 and 1995).

A comparison of the photos reminds us to be wary of over-hasty judgements. In 1997 isolated, sloping fields in the middle of forests, such as those located on the mountain side of Dumre, are not as may be thought at first sight, parcels recently reclaimed from the forest, i.e., slash and burn fields. The same fields were already present at the beginning of the century.

More generally, when they are mentioned in literatu-

re, sloping fields are considered as marginal, or an intermediary step of four or five years between clearing the land and definitive transformation into terraces. These photos show that after 60 years, the sloping fields still have the same shape.

- Establishing a real bocage

These sloping fields—which correspond to those called “rideaux” [curtains] in France—were delimited at the beginning of the century by a few trees, bushes and grasses forming a small talus; at the time, they already roughly outlined a bocage landscape. Trees in the fields perhaps already conveyed the scarcity of wood in an area where forests had been intensely exploited during the last century. Today the bocage is typical of this region. Indeed, if landscape structure has changed very little during 60 years with regard to mountain sides, an important modification *has* occurred in cultivated areas: the forest has slightly receded but there are many more trees around the fields to the point of hiding in places the houses and the crops. Thus, many areas seem more wooded today than at the beginning of the century, except paddy fields which remain treeless¹¹.

These observations relative to a few mountain sides can be confirmed on a national scale where since the 1980s, trees have become increasingly numerous in cultivated sectors. Their fodder, timber and firewood production replaces that which in the past came from trees in the forests. Morris’ and Northey’s photos show that this process had already begun in the region of Tansen in the 1920s. Today, in Kolang, there are on average 425 private trees per farm (the average surface area of a farm is 1.21 ha), and some farmers have more than 800 (Bruslé 1997). The trees, carefully selected according to their use and their pruning calendar, show great diversity. In addition to trees furnishing timber and firewood, more than 50 species of fodder trees have been counted per farm.

The detailed examination of different photos shows that nowadays some parcels are separated by a new row of trees in order to break the slope, while for others, the talus with trees has been done away with in order to enlarge the cultivated surface. But overall, the changes are moderate and the general shape of the fields has been maintained.

In the cultivated area, terraced paddy fields and sloping fields surrounded by trees thus make up another mosaic which overlaps on the more general mosaic of mountain sides referred to above.

- Crop diversity

A new mosaic, on the scale of the plots themselves, appears in the 1997 photos, as the crops are so varied. At the beginning of the century, rice, wheat, finger millet, maize and buckwheat were grown; today, on the same field and at the same time, up to eight different crops can be seen: mustard (*tori*), Indian rape (*sarsiung*), buckwheat (*mitho phapar*), ginger (*aduwa*), tumeric (*beshtar*), tubers (*pindalu*), beans (*simi*), and coriander (*dhaniya*). In December 1997 they formed a remarkable coloured patchwork which could not but

strike observers. Morris and Northey, who travelled in the region in the same season, make no mention of it in their brief written descriptions, nor is it discernible in their photos either. This is because there was less crop variety at the beginning of the century as confirmed by farmer surveys.

Indicators, agents of change

The establishment of the bocage and crop diversity are phenomena which originated or developed in connection with major upheavals in society; the road and the school which appear in the 1997 landscape are two important indicators.

- Siddhartha Rajmarga

In the 1997 photos, a road on the valley floor, the Siddhartha Rajmarga, can be seen; since 1968 it has linked Butwal and Pokhara. Its construction has had major consequences. Before this date, merchandise was carried on the backs of men or mules over the long distances between Butwal and Baglung, and it was an important economic activity in the region. At the beginning of the century, according to Bernard (1997), it mobilised 75 % of the active population for nearly 15 days each month and up to 25 days during the monsoon months. This activity was thus in competition with agriculture and animal husbandry¹². The establishment of a bus service on the new route has led to the disappearance of portage. To a great extent the inhabitants of the region then returned to their land to try to increase the revenues from their farms; the result was agricultural intensification and diversification. Because of the road, the surplus could be sold in the market at Butwal. Spice-dealing, especially ginger and tumeric, has developed. Winter wheat has been cultivated more systematically. The fallow period has become shorter. Since then, more manure, and hence animals to produce it, and fodder to feed the animals have become necessary. These changes have gone hand in hand with the suppression of common land which existed in some areas. Trees (especially fodder trees) growing along the borders of the fields have been able to regenerate more easily. The network of hedges has become denser and fodder crops on the *khar bari* have multiplied. This tendency has become still more accentuated since 1992 with the establishment of milk collection which could scarcely be envisaged without road transport. Milk is stored in a refrigeration centre in Biurtung along the road, then transported by lorry to Butwal. This innovation has led to an increase in the number of animals (buffaloes and cows) on farms and to the planting of more and more fodder trees to feed them.

Population movements continue but have taken other forms. Migrations are not so much seasonal as annual with a view to securing employment, often unskilled, in India or in other countries, especially those in the Persian Gulf. The statistics of Masyam V.D.C. indicate that in 60% of families, at least one person migrates temporarily to look for work in a foreign country. The few permanent migrations mentioned are those of weal-

thy peasants attracted to a lifestyle they judge more comfortable in the city or in a bazaar, where they run a hotel, a restaurant, or a boutique. They then sell their land and homes.

• Schools

In the 1997 photos, another symbol and agent of change appears in the landscape—the school. One of them can be clearly distinguished on the spur of Beldanda. The spread of schooling since the 1960s has had important repercussions on people's thinking. With regard to agriculture, a young work force responsible, among other things, for watching and feeding the herds, has been removed from agricultural tasks. Keeping animals in sheds and the increase of fodder trees near the farms partially resolves this problem as before and after school the children still cut the fodder necessary for the animals, but they stay close to their homes. Nevertheless, education presents the problem of keeping youth on farms which require a large work force to secure the equilibrium of these fragile environments. To maintain the stability of these environments, depopulation is undoubtedly more to be feared than strong demographic pressure.

Changes in Habitat

The comparison of photos does not show the many houses constructed after 1932 as they are hidden by the bocage hedges. However, new structures appear on the lower part of the mountain sides which used to be malarial and thus completely uninhabited. Villagers cultivated land there during the day and went back up to their homes at night. A WHO malaria eradication programme began in 1952 after the opening up of the borders and permitted the settlement of the valley floors.

The construction of the road also played a role in and expanded this process. In 1932 there was no dwelling along the Hulandi khola. By 1997 several population centres had developed at the foot of the hills, one of which is the Dumre bazaar where 50 % of the population is originally from Masyam. This phenomenon of migrating populations along the fringes of major routes corresponds to a general movement throughout the country.

It should be noted that in 1932, roofing was primarily thatch, although in Morris' photo, one of the houses in Kut Danda already has a sheet metal roof. Because of its cost (purchase and carriage) and the necessary cash flow, corrugated iron was confined to the villages of the Terai closer to the Indian border at the beginning of the century. It is much more common today, but a great number of thatch roofs still remain in this region.

Changes without Environmental Degradation

A comparison of the photos taken by Morris and Northey with those taken in 1997 proves that there have been no major upheavals in the landscape south of Tansen since the beginning of the century. However, the landscape has become more complex: the mosaic has become more marked, subdivided into a multitude of

sub-units on each farm. Some speak of "sustainable" development or of a "sustainable" means of farming land; these methods have probably been found by villagers in this region through diversity, expressed at different scales of analysis: the mountain side, the plot of land, the hedge.

The area was already widely cultivated at the beginning of the century. Sloping fields—up to now considered as ephemeral or marginal have turned out to be perennial and represent the norm in this region. The beginning of bocage in the 1930s already undoubtedly met the population's needs. It only became denser to cope with protection of forests or the limitation of the work force which resulted from, among other factors, the schooling of children. The school and the road, in facilitating the diffusion of new ideas, have been among the driving forces for change. Since a few years ago, village committees have taken responsibility for these changes; the management of natural resources is increasingly being thought out and controlled. Thus, current changes, despite demographic growth, do not themselves cause environmental damage. In contrast, they seem to contribute to greater stability of the mountain sides, because of the strict protection of forests and a denser network of hedges.

Comparing photos is hence very instructive and should be encouraged in other areas of Nepal. They only take us back to the first decades of the century, but at least they have the value of pushing back the limits of the 1950s, a misleading reference point which up to now has prevailed in analyses of landscape evolution.

How fortunate we are that the sky cleared a few minutes before the departure of Northey and Morris in December 1932...

Acknowledgements

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Notes :

1 "A Journey towards Palpa" is the title given by Northey to Chapter XIV of *The Gurkhas: Their manners, customs and country*, written by Northey and Morris in 1928.

2 Masyam is also the spelling of Massiang in the quoted texts.

3 With regard to such surveys, Tanner (1891) wrote : "The difficulties of this class of survey are pretty equally divided between those inherent to the operation and to unfavourable atmospheric conditions. Cloud, mist, dust-haze, and smoke-haze obscure the distant ranges for, perhaps, nine days out of ten throughout the year, and the observer has to exercise the utmost patience when waiting for the few clear periods during which he can distinguish those remote features which it is his duty to lay down by accurate observation with his instruments."

4 Data on eastern Nepal was collected beginning with the Everest expeditions of 1921-24.

5 "Owing to the fact that Nepal is closed to European travellers, it has not been possible for us to give a detailed descrip-

tion of the interior of the country. His Highness did, however, as a special favour, very kindly permit us to visit certain portions of the country on the eastern and western borders, and from these journeys we were enabled to gain a good general idea of what the rest of the country is like. (Northey & Morris 1928). "Some years after my first visit to Kathmandu I was asked by the Government of India to write a handbook about Gurkhas. By this time I had got to know the Maharaja well and I wrote and told him that I could not do this job properly without seeing for myself what the interior of the country was like. To my surprise he replied that he had given orders for me to be allowed to go to Massiang. This is a high ridge beyond the Terai, and although it is no more than twenty or thirty miles inside Nepal it affords a glimpse of a large part of the western part of the country. By coincidence I ended my journey in 1961 along this very track and it will therefore be more appropriately described later in this book. But at the time no other European had been allowed to see even this little of the interior." (Morris 1963).

6 "Unfortunately, it was quite early in the morning - a few minutes after dawn to be exact - when a clear view was finally obtained, and even then only for a very few minutes. Hence, although the snows themselves stood out clearly in the early morning sun, the hills in the foreground and middle distance were in deep shadow, thereby making it impossible to obtain a photograph in which both the snows and the rest of the landscape could be clearly seen." (Northey 1937).

7 This programme, which I coordinate, is part of the activities of UPR 299 of the CNRS. About 20 researchers from different disciplines participate. In studying the relationship of Himalayan societies (Nepal and Ladakh) to their natural environment—the way land is used and resources are managed over time—this programme aims at better understanding the landscapes observed today, their transformations and their eventual environmental problems in this area of the world.

8 V.D.C. : Village Development Committee.

9 The most complete family genealogy of the Aslami Magar, the majority group of Kolang, took into account eight generations (of about 20 years each) installed in Kolang (Lecomte-Tilouine).

10 If one takes into consideration that theoretically no new land has been cleared since the establishment of the cadastre in 1975, these fields were thus created between 1933 and 1975. The slight extension of cleared land between the dates of the different photos shows that the establishment of the cadastre in 1975 was not solely responsible for the limitation of the phenomenon.

11 Their roots cannot tolerate irrigation water and the shadows from their foliage would be particularly troublesome for growing rice. For further information on the spatial distribution of trees in the fields, cf. Gilmour 1988; Carter 1992; Smadja 1995.

12 Was the resulting lack of a work force to cultivate the land the origin for developing sloping rather than terraced fields? This is possible but cannot be proved with current research.

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THE USE OF DIACHRONIC SETS OF PHOTOGRAPHS IN GEOMORPHOLOGY

MONIQUE FORT

I remember when I met Corneille at Jomosom, in May 1974, and when the police officer told us, "You have a new French president". Corneille and I were both at the end of a long trip during which we were cut off from the outside world. Corneille was with Dobremez, just back from Dolpo; they were very tired and nearly starving. I had been working alone with my stones and sediments for several weeks in the Kali Gandaki area. I needed desperately to talk to someone. I was relieved and very pleased to meet them. The trip back to Pokhara was a highlight of my journey in Nepal. I learned a lot from them about the environment and the people of that country. I was particularly impressed by Corneille speaking Tibetan, either in the Tukuche gompa with monks, or along the trail when he gave a Khampa rider hell for nearly pushing me out into the roaring gorge of the Kali Gandaki. Although I have walked down the Kali Gandaki many times since, I still have very vivid memories of what I saw and discovered at that time with Corneille.

More than twenty years later, many things have

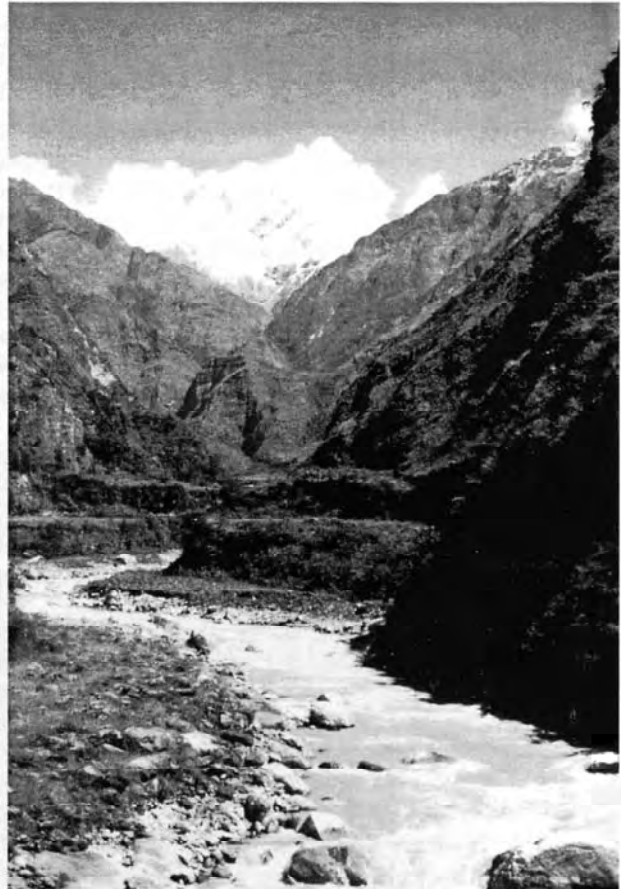
changed in this area. Jomosom has become an important administrative and touristic place, at the crossing of several trekking trails. Lodges have popped up like mushrooms; the local economy has been boosted by the influx of Westerners; landuse patterns have diversified (more fruit trees and irrigated fields). Despite the tremendous development of aerial transport to Jomosom, the Kali Gandaki Valley is still a busy trekking road linking the arid Himalaya to the wet, hot, subtropical areas of the Pokhara Valley. Its importance has even been recently reinforced by the opening of the Baglung-Pokhara road, easily reached from Tatopani downstream, thus avoiding the long climb up to the Ghorepani pass.

However, other, more subtle changes have occurred along this ancient trekking road. These changes, related to superficial geomorphology (i.e., landforms), are usually not perceptible at human scale because they involve processes which occur over a much longer time scale than human life. Yet, in the central Himalaya of Nepal, the natural, erosional forces are so active that their impact can be assessed by comparing the same landscape observed at different times. Selected photographs taken from the same site provide a good record to estimate the nature and the magnitude of the change.

The first set of photographs illustrates the Kali Gandaki Valley looking upstream from the suspended bridge of Tatopani. The left one (1A) dates from May 1974 (with Corneille), and the right (1B) is



1A. The Kali Gandaki Valley in 1974 (view from the bridge of Tatopani)



1B. The Kali Gandaki Valley in 1994 (view from the bridge of Tatopani)

from April 1994. The gorges there are very deep, with a difference in elevation of about 6000 m between the bottom of the valley (1100 m) and the Nilgiri Peak, partly visible in the background (6839 m). The landscape is marked by very steep, rocky walls, contrasting with a few alluvial, cobbly terraces built up by the Kali Gandaki only a few thousand years ago. The river flows in a narrow channel, and the zones without vegetation correspond to the level of high flow reached each year during the monsoon season. Villages and crops are located upon the terraces, the only flat and "safe" areas supposedly out of reach of floods (see 2A).

The comparison between the photographs 1A and 1B (i.e., an interval of 20 years) shows a major change — a debris cone — that has accumulated on the lower part of the left bank of the valley, thus diverting the course of the Kali Gandaki towards its right bank. The terraces of the left bank have been nearly buried under the debris. This event, which occurred during the 1993 monsoon, provided more material for the Kali Gandaki River to carry further downstream. However, the coarser bedload had been deposited shortly and not far from the debris slide, as can be seen in the foreground of photo 1B.

Other consequences of this type of event can be observed in the next set of photos. Photo 2A (taken in April 1994) illustrates the effects of the diversion of the main river caused by such debris accumulation. This photo represents the Kali Gandaki River (looking upstream) between the villages of Tatopani and Dana. The right bank of the river (on the left) has been severely eroded, thus displaying the coarse, bouldery and cobbly material that has built up the terrace landform. This erosion means that a significant part of the terrace (a few thousands cubic metres), and of the fields upon it, have disappeared into the river, being replaced by a new, major river bed where high flood channels are still visible. Since the event, the river has more or less re-occupied its former bed as shown in the upper right corner of the photo.

Photo 2B represents the same type of feature (an eroded bank of an alluvial terrace) several years after the occurrence of the event which had created it. The villa-

ge of Tatopani, located upon the right bank terrace of the Kali Gandaki (photo taken in April 1994, looking upstream) was severely damaged during summer 1987, when the Kali Gandaki suffered from exceptional flooding caused by heavy and incessant rains between July 29 and August 1 (*Rising Nepal*, 6 August 1987). The swollen river triggered several landslides, which in turn diverted the river, causing the lateral erosion of the bank opposite the landslide (estimated eroded volume of the terrace of about 10, 000 cubic metres), and thus causing a large loss in Tatopani bazaar: the Dhopa bridge to Beni was damaged, eight houses together with the small hydro-electricity office were washed away, seventy people died. Compared to photo 2A, photo 2B shows how fast the recovery after such an event can be. After only seven years, Gramineae and small trees have grown along the scarp, making the boulders and cobbles hardly visible in some areas. The former flood plain of the Kali Gandaki is now temporarily re-occupied by people (a *goth* on the flat, sandy accumulation is visible in the central foreground). For those not familiar with this Himalayan environment, confusion might easily arise between these landforms and those at least several thousand years old. Yet, the absence of soil development provides good evidence for the recentness of the event.

Landforms on Himalayan slopes are thus constantly changing, either very imperceptibly as creep (a slow downslope movement of grain in soil or disintegrated rock) or more rapidly like landslides, which can be very destructive. Although there are frequently premonitory signs indicating that landslides might occur on a slope (for instance arcuated cracks, bending of tree trunks, scarplets), landslides fail most of the time instantaneously, and as such, represent a major threat to populations and settlements. A simple example was observed in September 1982 on the lower, left slope of the Modi Khola Valley, along the trail joining Birethanti and Chandrakhot: a debris slide/landslide had occurred one month before, following intense rainfalls during the monsoon season (photo 3A). The 10 m-high scar of the slide started just below the house (note the farmer stan-



2A. Erosional effects caused by the diversion of the Kali-Gandaki River (1994, April).



2B. An eroded bank of the Kali-Gandaki River, observed 7 years after the event which created it (1994, April).

ding in front of the house): the 3-to-4 upper meters were cut into the regolith (ferruginous soil and weathered bedrock) whereas the lower part of the scar displayed rocky outcrops of green schists. The displaced mass, a mixture of schist fragments and of vegetal



3A. A small, yet common debris slide, affecting both the regolith and the bedrock, west of Chandrakot, Sept. 1982

debris, can be seen in the foreground. A new trail (right lower corner) has been established to avoid the unstable part of the slope.

Six months later (March 1983, photo 3B), the house was abandoned, and the trail had to be moved again (swinging along the edge between the slide and the forest), because the landslide area had grown. When weathered, in fact, these schists become argillaceous, with a great ability to absorb water and thus to become viscous and even to liquefy as mud. As a result, the failure expands in size until a new slope equilibrium is found.

The occurrence of such failure was quite predictable indeed, because the entire slope is underlain by these green (chloritic) schists of the Lesser Himalaya (Pecher 1977), a bedrock among those most prone to mass wasting. Outcrops of chloritic schists are quite recognisable in landscape by the density of landslides like this one, either active or not. When I first climbed up this trail with Corneille in 1974, the slope was entirely cultivated and/or covered with trees, with apparently no evidence of active mass wasting process going on. Yet, the characteristic, undulated morphology, well delineated by the patterns of present terraced fields, was already clearly revealing the existence of "old" (undated) scars of ancient landslides that had since been stabilised.

The slope of Sikha represents one of the best example of this permanent instability that typically affects the slopes of the southern Himalaya. Located on the left bank of the Ghar Khola, a tributary of the Kali Gandaki, this 2000 m-high slope was until recently the major road linking Tatopani to Ghorepani and Pokhara. I have climbed it many times during the last twenty years, and thus I was able each time to observe the

change in superficial dynamics that was going on. In 1974 for instance, an active landslide had developed between the villages of Ghara and Sikha (Fort 1974). In 1982, that specific landslide was nearly stabilised and was mostly recolonized by bamboos. That very year



3B. Same site as on 3A, 7 months later, March 1983. The house has been abandoned.

however, a new slide had appeared further up the slope between the villages of Sikha and Phalate. During the monsoon season (September 1982, photo 4A, looking westwards), the process was very active, the trail was destroyed, several *bārī* fields were carried away, and a group of houses was directly threatened. The soil was entirely soaked. The crown of the slide displayed outcrops of chloritic schists which in the central part of the slide were nearly liquefied and flowing as mudflows onto the slope. The extent of this failure reached about 250 m across and 700 m in length, thus representing about 1.5 million cubic metres of material removed. Downslope, the slide gave way to a steep torrent directly flowing into the Ghar Khola.

Eleven years later (April 1994, photo 4B), the slide was still a real threat, but some parts were in the process of being stabilised. Although its width (300 m) was larger than in 1982, and some small scale landforms quite different, there were obvious signs of decreasing geomorphic activity such as the smoothing of crown scarp and scarplets, and the recolonisation by vegetation. More specifically, alders (*Alnus nepalensis*, *Nep. utis*) have grown in the axis of the slide on an elongated mudflow (centre of photo 4B), thus taking advantage of the available moisture together with helping in slowing the downslope movement of the mud. These trees, six- to nine-years-old, indicate that the stabilisation started quite rapidly after the "crisis" of 1982.

Yet, in 1994 I also observed a reactivation of the Ghara landslide, twenty years after my first observation. As a whole in fact, this slope is constantly moving and will continue to do so as long as the Himalayan range is young and active.



4 A. The landslide of Phalate, east of Sikha (Myagdi District), September 1982.



4 B. The landslide of Phalate, 12 years later (April 1994), has extended and is in the process of stabilization.

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ORTHOPHOTO TIME SERIES FOR ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES IN THE KATHMANDU VALLEY

ROBERT KOSTKA AND VIKTOR KAUFMANN

Introduction

The Kathmandu Valley is increasingly confronted with environmental problems that are mainly due to traffic, noise, air and water pollution, waste disposal, population increase, etc. This deplorable situation already proved to be a topic of general concern 25 years ago, when a concept for the physical development of the Kathmandu Valley was developed (Pruscha 1975). Studies on urbanization and population distribution as well as investigations on transportation and infrastructure were recommended, but were realized only to a very limited extent.

Precise basic information is the most important basis for studying the changes that have taken place in the course of the past 25 years. An extensive information system could help to find a solution to the problems the Kathmandu Valley is facing and could pave the way to future sustainable development. Numerous publications indicate that such investigations are of paramount importance not only for the physical environment but also for the Hindu cities of Kathmandu, Patan and Bhaktapur (Gutschow 1982), or the vanishing cultural heritage of the area (Schick 1989).

The goal of the project idea "orthophoto time series"

In order to preserve the environment of the Kathmandu Valley, which is home to hundreds of thousands of people, decisive measures concerning soil, waste, exhaust fumes, noise, water supply, and sewage will have to be taken in the very near future. These decisions must be based on a reliable information system that provides exact environmental data. Orthophotos, which provide a geometrically correct representation of the aerial photo content on the basis of a precise terrain model, are very suitable for that purpose. An information system designed to support sustainable development in the Kathmandu Valley must contain data on the past and present situation of the region and must also take future tendencies into account.

The most comprehensive information for this purpose is contained in two series of aerial images of the Kathmandu Valley taken in 1971 and 1992. Both photo series were taken in panchromatic mode. It is very difficult, sometimes even impossible, to compare their information content due to different flight lines and image scales. This basic photo material must therefore be transformed to geometrically correct orthophotos at the same scale and in the same reference system to render them suitable for comparative studies.

The basic sources for orthophoto preparation

The aerial photos dating from 1971 were taken by the well-known Austrian mountain cartographer Erwin Schneider within the framework of the Association for Comparative Alpine Research in Munich. The specifications of these photos are:

Aerial images of the whole Kathmandu Valley, December 13, 1971

Image format: 24 x 24 cm²

Camera, focal length: WILD RC 10,

c=152,37 mm

Image scale: approx. 1:20 000

For the location of the images see flight line index 1971 (figure 1).

These images were originally used to prepare maps of the Kathmandu Valley at scales of 1:10000 and 1:50000 (Assoc. for Comp. Alp. Res. 1977). The 1:10000 map series consists of 16 sheets, each sheet covering an area of 56 km². The contour interval is 10m.

In 1992 the Topographical Survey Branch HMG, Kathmandu, also took aerial images of the whole Kathmandu Valley. The following specifications are presently available:

Image format: 24 x 24 cm²

Camera, focal length: ?

c = 153,19 mm

Image scale: approx. 1:50000

For the location of the images see flight line index 1992 (figure 2).

The two existing series of aerial images, together with collateral information, e.g. geodetic coordinates and map sheets at scales of 1:10000 and 1:5 000, provide an excellent basis for the preparation of the orthophoto time series mentioned above. The terrain information for generating the digital elevation model (DEM) is given by contour lines at intervals of 10 m.

Pilot study in the Bhaktapur test area

For the city of Bhaktapur and its surroundings two digital orthophotos were prepared in order to study the environmental changes (settlements, buildings, road network etc.), which have taken place in this region since 1971. A scale of 1:10000 was chosen, which could be subject to changes in the digital format. The medieval Hindu city of Bhaktapur was selected as the test site, being a place which has not been greatly affected by westernization until the beginning of the seventies (Gutschow, Kölver 1975). At that time agriculture was the main source of income in Bhaktapur. As could be observed in the aerial photos this situation in the surroundings of the ancient city has changed.

The location of the orthophotos is given with reference to aerial images 2538 (1971) and 35-21 (1992). The control points and the terrain information (DEM) were derived from the 1:10 000 Kathmandu Valley map. The aerial images were scanned with a resolution of 25 µm, which was followed by digital orthophoto preparation using the GAMSAD software package. The ground

pixel size in the two orthophotos is 1 m². The subsequent cartographic work was done with CorelDraw 6. The pilot study resulted in two orthophotos dated 1971 and 1992 (see attachments) in digital format (CD) and as paper prints.

Experience in the preparation of digital orthophotos in mountainous areas and the knowledge of the potential of optical-photographic image data were a prerequisite for the investigations (Kaufmann et al. 1994). The image maps, referred to the reference system of the 1:10000 Kathmandu Valley map, show the information content of the panchromatic photos and cover an area of 3.5 by 1.5 km². The quality of the orthophotos is slightly reduced due to the fact that the photos were taken in different seasons and at different original scales. But nevertheless they can serve as important geometrically correct basic information for many tasks.

Potential and use of the cartographic representations

The black-and-white orthophoto maps at 1:10000 scale are not a final cartographic product, because they do not contain names, contour lines or other details. But they can serve as a useful and important tool for a wide range of environmental studies. They represent an intermediate link between very large-scale photographs from terrestrial points or helicopters (Kostka 1992) and spaceborne remote sensing data (Haack et al. 1997) used for the mapping of urban areas. They are a useful basis for thematic maps focusing on settlements, traffic lines or agricultural areas in connection with topography and landownership (for the example of the village of Thimi see Müller-Böker 1987). They also can be used for erosion studies, such as the one performed for the Bagmati river in the south of the Kathmandu Valley (Buchroithner, Kostka 1991). However, they are still best suitable for planning processes aiming at sustainable success. The ancient cities of the Kathmandu Valley are growing and the villages are increasingly turning into urban-like settlements. Compared with the situation in the seventies (Haffner 1981/82) interests of people have changed, the basis of traditional life in agricultural surroundings is moving towards industry, business and tourism, thus creating a lot of problems in its wake.

Water supply should be mentioned as an example. Each year the Bagmati river is nearly dry for many months, and its water is dirty and foul. The water reserves of the valley are increasingly being used for industrial purposes and are therefore getting scarce. The groundwater is polluted and poses a serious health risk to Kathmandu residents and visitors (AGSO 1997). Future environmental activities must therefore include water reserves in ponds or the implementation of groundwater protection and control strategies.

Orthophotos of the past and present situation are of essential importance for solving these problems in a regional context.

Concluding remarks

In accordance with the project goals the orthophoto time series should be made available to a wide range of institutions interested in carrying out environmentally and socially significant investigations in the Kathmandu Valley. Therefore the production of these orthophoto maps for the whole Kathmandu Valley is strongly recommended. University institutes or research institutions should also get the opportunity to base their investigations on existing orthophotos for the good of the population of the Kathmandu Valley. Moreover, new aerial photos should be taken in order to continue the research efforts in this field. The terrain model required for orthophoto production can also serve as a basis for these future images, thus paving the way to a wide variety of modern forms of representation, such as animation or transposition, and providing detailed information urgently needed for purposes of environmental monitoring.

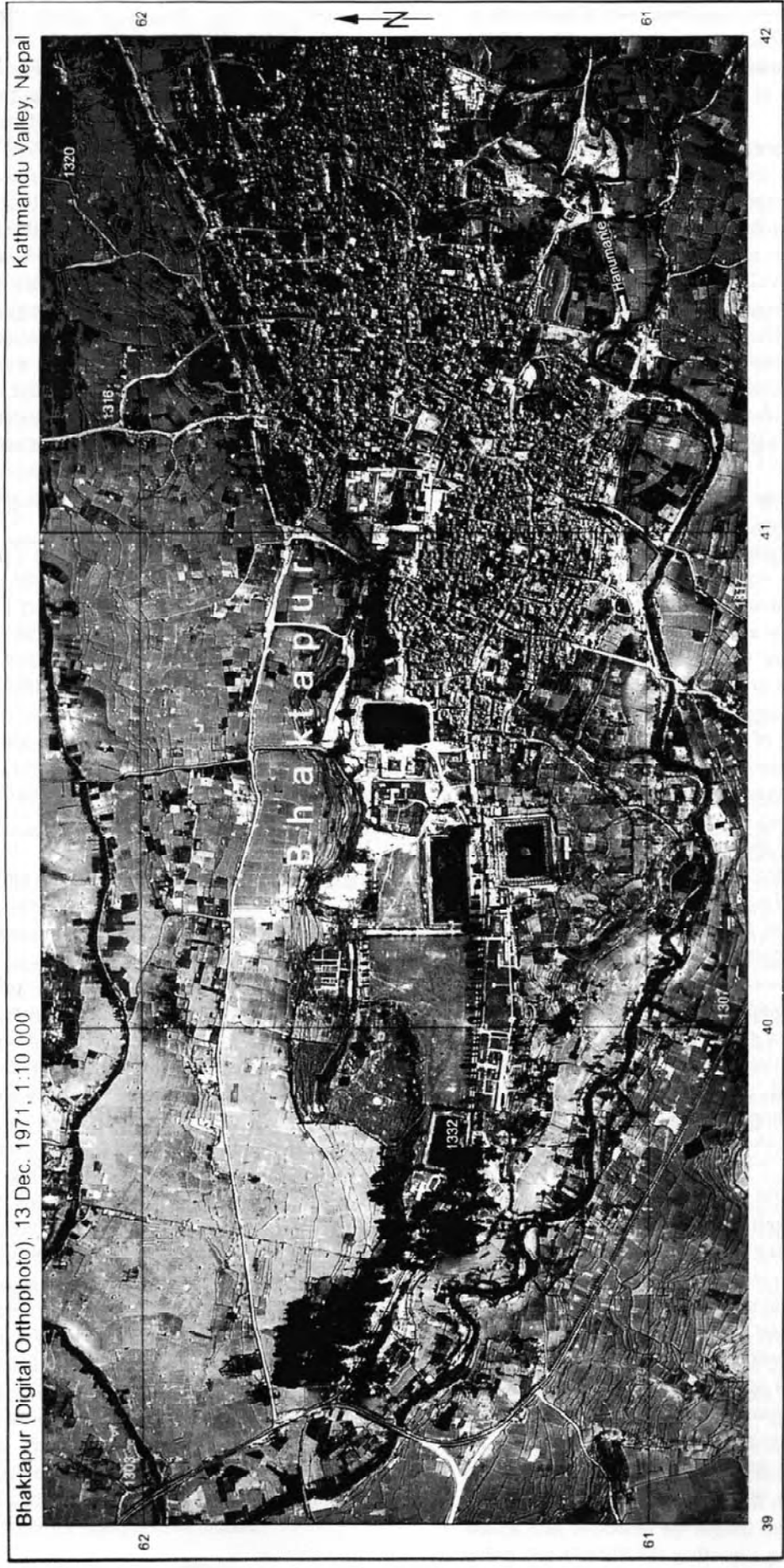


Figure 1: Flight line index 1971 and overview of 1:10 000 map sheets
 (© Cartoconsult Austria 1996 V. Kaufmann, R. Koiska).



Figure 2: Flight line index 1992 and overview of 1:10 000 map sheets
(© Cartoconsult Austria 1996 V. Kaufmann, R. Kotska).

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PHOTOGRAPHIC CONSUMPTION IN KATHMANDU, C. 1863-1960

PRATYOUSH ONTA

Introduction

Over the past two decades, a few hundred photographs taken in Nepal prior to 1960 have been published. These have been included in several books and collections. One can, for instance, think of *Nepal Rediscovered: The Rana Court 1846-1951* edited by Padma Prakash Shrestha (1986) containing 90 photos from the Rana era selected from the archives of the UK-based Nepal Kingdom Foundation. Similarly, in the 2-volumes narrative *Shree Teen Haruko Tatthya Britanta* Purushottam SJB Rana (1990) has published about 300 photos of the Ranas. In *Nepal Under the Ranas* written by Adrian Sever (1993), we can find more than 270 photos selected from the private collection of Jharendra SJB Rana. In *Portraits and Photographs from Nepal* Prakash A. Raj (1994) has published over 50 photos taken before 1960. We can also think of more recent publications such as *Images of a Century: The Changing Townscapes of the Kathmandu Valley* edited by Andreas Proksch (1995) and *Changing Faces of Nepal*, containing the photos taken by the father and son duo of Dirga Man Chitrakar and Ganesh Man Chitrakar (Heide 1997). Similarly travelogues and other books written by non-Nepalis who visited Nepal during the 19th and early part of the 20th centuries usually contain a few photographs. In addition, many of the more recent monographs on modern Nepali history contain some photographs from the pre-1960 period. Unknown number of unpublished photographs from this period are also to be found in many personal collections.

Substantive analytical histories of pre-1960 photography in Nepal have not yet been written. The first four books mentioned above treat the photographs they print as evidence that is simply 'there', sometimes to augment their respective narratives, but say very little in the form of a social history of the first century of photography in Nepal. *Images of a Century* was described by one reviewer as "a visual feast" to everybody interested in Kathmandu, "an extremely useful record of the historical layers of the city" (Shah 1996) but it is also not a work that examines the photos it exhibits. In contrast *Changing Faces of Nepal* comes with a substantial essay on the work of the early Nepali photographers and their patrons, written by Susanne von der Heide. This latter work, J. P. Losty's article (1992) on the work of Clarence C. Taylor, the first person to take photographs in Nepal, and this writer's earlier essay (Onta 1994) contribute toward a social history of the first century of photography in Nepal. Yet many questions go unanswered or are still waiting for more detailed answers. These include: who had social access to photography as a consumption item and how did that access change over the century long period under

consideration here? Toward what ends was photography put to use in the second half of the 19th and the first half of the 20th centuries in Nepal? What kinds of cultural capital did photographs embody during those two half-century periods? And of what use are these photographs to social historians today?

At this preliminary stage of research, it might not be possible to answer all the above questions adequately for all of Nepal. Nor will it be possible to provide an analytically descriptive account of the entire corpus, published and unpublished, of photographs from the pre-1960 period. For such a project to be realized, not only will we have to look at all the available photographs, but also at the related voluminous non-photographic sources that will throw light on the contexts surrounding their creation. For obvious reasons, this kind of project is well beyond the intellectual and financial means of an individual researcher. Therefore, the objective of this essay, which is a shortened and revised version of a six-part article I wrote for *The Kathmandu Post* four years ago (Onta 1994) - one that does not seem very accessible to readers in Europe as it is not mentioned by Susanne von der Heide (1997) - is to highlight and analyse some of the more interesting aspects of the history of photography in Kathmandu until about 1960. My aim will not be to provide an exhaustive history but rather a suggestive one. In particular, this is a history of photographic consumption in Kathmandu. What I offer is a very incomplete reading of a small portion of the photo archive of this period and I expect my interpretations to be superseded by more nuanced readings that others will hopefully provide fol-



1. Kaviraj Dirgananda Raj Vaidya and Chandra Badan Vaidya with their daughter and first son. Also seen is family attendant. c. 1916. Photographer unknown. From the collection of T. N. Vaidya.

lowing a more systematic research on this topic.

I begin with a short section that discusses the first photographers in Kathmandu. The following sections highlight both the varieties of and meanings in photographic consumption up to the end of the 1950s. The main thread of the argument that I make can be stated as thus: photographic consumption until about 1910 was an exclusive prerogative of the ruling Ranas. After the setting up of local studios in Kathmandu around that time, the exclusivity of this consumption practice was broken and Kathmandu's proto-middle class began to seek photographic portraits of itself. Once cameras became portable and affordable to members of this class in the 1920s, photography gradually became a normalizing practice of self-representation of this middle class.

The First Photographers in Kathmandu

The three scholarly writings that focus on the early history of photography referred to earlier allow us to reach a few conclusions:

1. While we have evidence that portraits of Jung Bahadur were made while he visited Europe in mid-1850 (c.g., P. SJB Rana 1998), there are good reasons to believe that he was not photographed there. Given the way in which his activities in Europe were covered by the press, it is highly inconceivable that a photo session, had it taken place, would not have been reported (Onta 1994). Had Jung Bahadur encountered this technology, we can guess that he would have brought back cameras with him to Nepal, thus precipitating an earlier encounter with the medium inside Nepal.

2. While photo collectors in Nepal have occasionally claimed that they have photos taken inside Nepal in the 1850s, no has been able to prove this beyond doubt. On the other hand, historical research done thus far allows us to conclude that, in all probability, Kathmandu did not see any photographic activity in the 1850s. In response to a request from Calcutta for photographs of the 'principal hill tribes' of Nepal, George Ramsay, the then British Resident in Nepal, wrote on 3 July 1861: "There are no amateurs in the art of Photography here, and the inducements to professionals to visit Khatmandoo (sic) are so very small, that none have ever come up here" (Losty 1992 : 318). Except for an occasional absence, Ramsay had been in Kathmandu since 1852 (he held this post until 1867). Given that the few foreigners who came into Kathmandu during the 1850s would have been either the guests of the Rana premier or the resident, Ramsay was in a good position to know and remember if any of them had been photo-

graphy-enthusiasts. No other archival or secondary source has succeeded in raising a credible doubt about Ramsay's statement regarding the absence of photographic activity in Nepal in the 1850s.

3. Based on indubitable photographic and textual evidence thus far examined, Losty has identified Clarence Comyn Taylor (1830-79) as the first person to take photographs in Nepal in 1863. Taylor arrived in Kathmandu on 19 March 1863 as an assistant to Resident Ramsay. On 10 September 1863, Ramsay wrote to Calcutta stating Taylor was ready to take the photographs requested in 1861. A year later, on 24 Septem-



2. Two Newar women. Late 1930s. Photographer unknown.
From the collection of P. Onta.

ber 1864, Ramsay reported that four identical sets each consisting of twenty photographs of the tribes of Nepal prepared by Captain Taylor had been mailed to Calcutta (Losty 1992). These 20 photographs by Taylor were not the first ones taken by Taylor inside Nepal and are not included in the Taylor album recently acquired by the

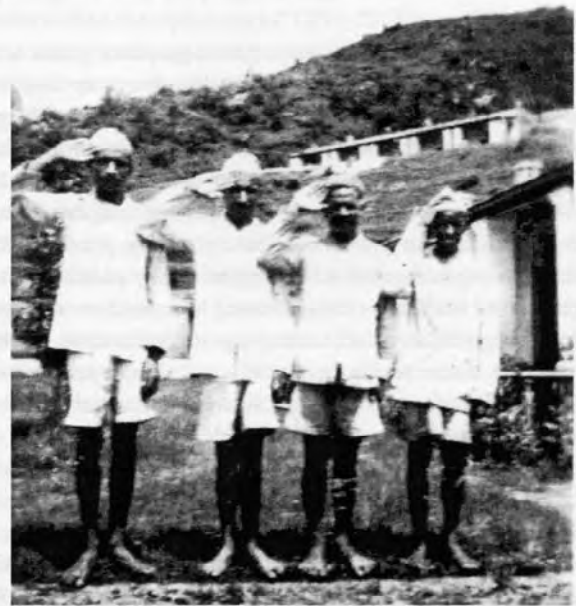
British Library. This album consists of 18 photographs, 14 of which show different views of the Kathmandu Valley. The remaining four are single or group portraits of ruling elites. The four portrait photographs include a single portrait of Jung Bahadur wearing a full formal dress, he with his sons Jagat Jung and Jit Jung sitting on a chaise longue, Jung Bahadur with his wife Hiranyagarbha Kumari, daughters and attendant 'slave girls' (so the caption reads), and King Surendra with Resident Ramsay and other Nepali high ranking officials. At least a few of these 18 photographs had already been taken by September 1863. The evidence for this comes from Ramsay's 10 September 1863 letter mentioned above where he states that several of the Ranas including Jung Bahadur had asked for copies of Taylor's photographs. Thus we can be sure that within six months of his arrival in Kathmandu, Taylor had already taken some photographs of the Kathmandu scenery and done some portraits of Jung Bahadur and his court, and had made Jung Bahadur and others interested in the medium.

4. After the photographs taken in 1863-65 by C. C. Taylor, the next dated photographs come from Jung Bahadur's visit in November-December 1871 to the great fair at Hajipur (on the Ganges opposite Patna) where he met Lord Mayo, the viceroy of India. One photograph from this occasion, showing some members of the entourage of both Jung and Lord Mayo, has been published in *Life of Jung Bahadur* written by his son Pudma Jung Bahadur Rana (1909). The 1871 photos, according to Losty (1992), were taken by Messers Bourne and Shepherd, who were also the official photographers when the Prince of Wales came to the Nepal Tarai in early 1876 for a sixteen-day hunting trip. These photographers, it seems, also made it to Kathmandu in 1875.

5. The compiler of *Changing Faces of Nepal* which was prepared as a catalogue for an exhibition at UNESCO in Paris (December 1997) of selective photos taken by the father and son duo of Dirga Man Chitrakar (1877-1951) and Ganesh Man Chitrakar (1906-1985) of Kathmandu, Susanne von der Heide (1997), provides substantial information on pioneering Nepali photographers and wealthy Rana individuals who patronized them. In an essay (spiced with relevant photos) entitled "Pioneers of Early Photography in Nepal: Photographers, Artists and Patrons," she identifies Dambar Shamsheer (1858-1922), younger brother of Rana PM Bir Shamsheer (r. 1885-1901), as the first Nepali photographer. He had set up a photo studio in his durbar with money provided by his father Dhir Shamsheer. It seems that he had learnt the art in the mid-1870s from Bourne and Shepherd. Later Dambar Shamsheer's son Samar Shamsheer (1883-1958) became a first-rate photographer.

Heide names Purna Man Chitrakar (c. 1863-1939) as an important early photographer who was patronized by Dambar Shamsheer and Gehendra Shamsheer, son of Bir Shamsheer (cf. Adhikari 2048 B.S.). Purna Man is said

to have learnt photography from the former around 1880 and was sent to Calcutta in the early 1880s for further training. Even as he continued to paint, Purna Man also received instructions from a Bengali photographer Neel Madhaba Deen who was invited to Kathmandu in 1888. Dirga Man Chitrakar came under the tutelage of Purna Man in the early 1890s when he was in his early teens. Later he was patronized by Chandra Shamsheer (r. 1901-1929) who gave him a job in the art department in Singha Durbar and took him in his entourage to Europe in 1908. Whether Dirga Man took any pictures while he was there has not been ascertained but it is known for sure that many cameras were brought back to Nepal at the end of that trip. It is with them that Dirga Man began to photograph. He set up an enlarge-



3. A group of menial workers at the Tokha sanatorium. 2004 B.S. (c. 1947). Photographer: Chandra Nanda Raj Vaidya. From the C.N.R. Vaidya album.

ment studio in his house in Bhimsensthan around then as well and later taught photography to his son Ganesh Man.

According to Heide (1997), Purna Man taught photography to many Chitrakars: his brother Badra Man, Badra Man's brothers-in-law Ratna Bahadur and Hira Bahadur; Krishna Bahadur, Tej Bahadur and possibly Harka Lal Chitrakar and his son Prithvi Lal. Other pioneering Chitrakar photographers mentioned by Heide include Chaite Chitrakar and his son Purna; Prithvi Man Chitrakar, the brothers Laxmi Bahadur and Tulsi Bahadur (grandsons of the famous artist Bhaju Man who Jung Bahadur had taken to Europe in 1850) and the latter's sons Buddhi Bahadur and Krishna Bahadur. Other early photographers included Chakra Bahadur Kayestha and his three sons: Tej, Darsan and Sahilu; Madan and Sri Man Kayestha; Ghyan Bahadur Karma-charya and his brother Shanta Bahadur, latter's son Samar; Narayan Prasad Joshi, Pashupati Lal Shrestha,

Bharat Shrestha and Tirath Raj Manandhar, Govind Vaidya, Bishnu Dhoj Joshi and his son Hiranya Dhoj.

According to Heide (1997) Chitrakars who had access to Rana courts had to redefine their traditional role as painters and artists. When photography entered the scene in late 19th century, some took it up even as they continued to paint. The new technology also gave birth to the hybrid product of 'retouched' photos (photos that had been reworked with the painter's brush) which were quite popular with the Rana elites. Photography began to coexist with water color painting and the art of engraving and powerful Ranas competed with each other to patronize the more skillful painters and/or photographers.

Varieties and Politics of Photographic Consumption, 1880-1910

In the 1880s several foreign photographers made it to Kathmandu : A certain Henry Ballantine was visiting Kathmandu when the Rana premier Ranaudip Singh was killed by the Shamsher brothers on November 22, 1885. In his *On India's Frontier or Nepal, the Gurkhas' Mysterious Land* (1896), Ballantine describes how he filled up his leisure hours taking photographs after having borrowed a few negative dry plates from a certain Mr Hoffman of the firm of Messrs. Johnson and Hoffman of Calcutta. According to Ballantine, Hoffman had come to Kathmandu with a European artist assistant "to photograph the carvings and other curiosities that were being collected under the supervision of the Residency surgeon for the Indian and Colonial Exhibition to be held in London as well as to take what pictures he could of the Nepalese officers and their court"(1896 : 109). Hoffman reportedly was "well patronized" by the Ranas. On Ballantine's own admission, we know that the photographs of the Ranas included in his book were taken by Hoffman. Of the 34 photographs given in Ballantine's book, eleven are portraits of the ruling elites, sixteen show various scenery from the Valley, and the rest seven are shots of 'common' folks. Photography during this decade was also used for scientific research. The evidence for this first comes from Cecil Bendall's *A Journey of Literary and Archaeological Research in Nepal and Northern India during the winter of 1884-5* (1886). Bendall mentions photographing several inscriptions and reproduces photographs of them and of several temples from the valley. Other visitors included Neel Madhaba Deen in 1888 and Bert Harris (a worker for Johnson and Hoffman) in 1896-97.

Photography was also used to record big-game hunting. In April 1901, during the short tenure of Dev Shumsher as Rana premier, Lord Curzon, the Viceroy of India, visited the Nepal Tarai on a hunting trip. Although Jung Bahadur and his successors seem to have gone for shikar in the Tarai on an annual basis, it was only when British guests were invited for big-game hunting that their official photographers could document this activity by the Ranas. This state of affairs

seems to have continued until the mid-1910s when Nepali photographers became capable of recording shikar activities. But until then, big hunting expeditions such as those made by the Prince of Wales in 1876 and Lord Curzon in 1901 provided their Rana hosts an opportunity to engage in their own type of "action" photography. The 1876 hunt was officially photographed by Messers. Bourne and Shepherd and more photographs than the few that have been published of that occasion probably exist in some British archive. With respect to Lord Curzon's 1901 hunt, an entire album of photographs taken by the Calcutta firm of Herzog & Higgins, entitled *H. E. the Viceroy's Shooting Tour Nepal, Terai April 1901*, can be found in the Kaiser Library in Kathmandu. The remarkable photographs from this album include those showing elephants lined-up in preparation for the hunt, tiger skins testifying to its success and big birds scavenging through the carrion (Onta 1994).

While there seems to have been plenty of photographic activity in Dambar Shamsher's durbar before 1910, access to the medium as an item of consumption was not very easily available to other Ranas. For them, photographic activity, especially before the turn of the century, mainly took place only when photographers from India came to Nepal either on their own (with permission from the Ranas of course) or were officially invited for that purpose. Based on the published corpus of photographs from this period, we can say that only the elite Ranas, their immediate families, high ranking officials and their attendants became subjects of photographic portraits during the times when guest photographers were in Kathmandu. The photographs included in Sever (1993) and Shrestha (1986) are ample testimony to this fact.

Except for those photographs taken during hunting expeditions in the Tarai, most photographs of the Ranas are portraits done indoors. The Rana men appear almost exclusively in military-like uniforms and the women are seen in the long saris that were then prevalent or hoop-skirtish clothes. Most have a serious look to their face and seem to stare directly at the camera or slightly away from it. The 'ch-e-e-se' sensibility that marks today's portraiture is completely missing from almost all of the photographs of the Ranas from this period. When royal attendants are included in group portraits they too look serious. The most exceptional photograph on this count is a portrait of eight royal servants published as plate 10 in Shrestha (1986). Dated as belonging to about 1890, we can see a smile in almost all of the faces, as if being photographed was a pleasurable break from their routine burden. In her well-known book, *On Photography*, critic Susan Sontag notes that photography became a rite of family life just when the larger family aggregates started undergoing radical surgery towards the nuclear family in the industrializing countries of Europe and America. As this was happening, "photography came along to memorialize, to restate symbolically, the imperiled continuity and vanishing

extendedness of family life" (1977 : 9). In contrast, it would seem that for the Ranas, the family portraits were testimony to the continuance of their large family aggregates as well as forceful statements of the vitality of the extendedness of their family life. Moreover, the large numbers of children and wives seen in Rana family portraits seem to suggest that photography provided an unprecedented representational medium to assert the virility of Rana male family-heads. Sontag further writes that memorializing the achievements of individual family members is the earliest popular use of photography (1977 : 8). The photographs published by Shrestha (1986) and Sever (1993) of Bir Shamsher's inauguration of premiership in 1885 seems to suggest that a genre of inauguration-photography recording the prime minister's success was begun, one that all the subsequent Rana premiers adhered to. Hunting and marriages were to provide further occasions to document individual achievements. Photographing one's huge durbars (for instance the Seto Durbar of Bir Shamsher) must also be seen as a way to record and represent one's accomplishment on a monumental scale.

From what has been said above, it should be clear that only a small group of Ranas and their allied high ranking officials had control over access to photography as a technology up to the end of the first decade of this century. Even as they might have been photographed by official photographers or travellers like Ballantine, photography remained beyond the reach of the common non-Rana folk in Kathmandu and elsewhere. They would simply allow themselves to be photographed or crowd around curiously, as reported by Ballantine (1896 : 129), as he took a photograph of Kal Bhairab in Kathmandu. And herein lies my main argument regarding its use in Nepal during this period. For the Ranas photographs embodied a special form of cultural capital that only they had intermittent access to in Nepal and therefore their consumption of this media was part of a distinct ruling class sub-culture that they were busily producing. Other consumption items of this sub-culture included foreign objects, dress, insignia and European styled durbars. The modality of this Rana practice necessarily involved, what the American anthropologist Mark Liechty (1997) has called a strategy of "selective exclusion". While consuming foreignness, the Ranas wanted to control the power that was associated with it and avoid its dangers. As Liechty has put it in his paper devoted to Nepal's contact with foreigners and foreign goods prior to 1951, the power of Ranas' trafficking of the image of foreignness depended on their ability to strictly control how it was defined, and who had access to it. The Ranas had to monopolize both the representation of foreignness inside Nepal, and the social access to it. Photography fit rather nicely in this scheme. While the control over photographic technology in the form of photographers imported from India or limited access to Rana photo studios was an obvious case of the monopolization of access, the

medium could also be effectively used to represent their consumption of other items of foreignness. Apart from the photographs that were sent to their British friends, these photographs of the Ranas adorned their homes where they were mainly seen by other members of their fraternity. While reasserting internal Rana differentiation, these photographs acted to reinforce a collectively shared Rana sub-culture.

The exclusive use of photography in the recreation of this sub-culture seems to have been so complete that the Ranas did not show any interest in producing a volume similar to *The People of India* (eight volumes published between 1868-75) wherein Indian tribes and castes were ethnographically described along with their photos. One reason this volume was commissioned for India was undoubtedly the insecurity felt by its British rulers after the uprisings of 1857-58. Hence they executed a deeper study of Indian society using all means that were then available to them. But there were no similar exigencies pressing the Rana rulers of Nepal. Having increasingly consolidated the agrarian bureaucracy - the state apparatus that ensured that the revenue extracted from the peasants in different parts of the country reached them in Kathmandu - during these years, the Ranas did not feel internally challenged to expend any of their energy on gathering this kind of knowledge about their subject population. Photographing common folks was then left to the whims of itinerant photographers who happened to be in Nepal for other reasons.

Loss of Rana Monopoly and the Rise of the Middle-Class : 1910-1940

For the period after 1910, many portraits of Chandra Shumsher and his family have already been published. As mentioned earlier Dirga Man Chitrakar began to take photographs with cameras brought back to Nepal at the end of Chandra Shumsher's 1908 trip to England. Once photography by local photographers became more easily available, the logic of internal differentiation within the Rana sub-culture propelled its more influential members to consume photography at a greatly increased volume-level. It was now not enough to be photographed once in a while by a photographer who came from India. I would suppose that life-cycle rituals and other ceremonials of these families were photographed extensively, although very few of them have been published thus far. These Ranas also included their family photographs in Vijaya Dasami, Christmas, and New Year's Greeting cards they sent to their relatives and foreign friends.

How about non-Rana consumption? Some of the very first photographs taken in Nepal in 1863-64 by C.C. Taylor were of individually unidentified members of different tribes and castes. A remarkable photograph from about 1890 of a group of royal servants has been discussed above. Among the published corpus of photographs, we can find several photographs depicting crowds of people on various Kathmandu streets. On other occasions, photographs of labourers carrying elite

officials during the latter's trips to various parts of the country or cars into the Valley have also been published. These photographs are important documents of our history. But it can be nobody's argument that the common (namely non-Ranas) people seen in these photographs were sovereign consumers of the medium. That they have been inscribed in photographic record not by their own demand but because of the command of their masters or because they caught the fancy of travelling photographers is quite obvious. In this essay, I am unable to analyze these photographs. What I would like to do here instead is to look at some of the non-Rana photographs – taken undoubtedly at the demand of the subjects of these photographs – from the first half of this century.

Local photo studios had come into existence in Kathmandu by 1910. Several photos that can be dated to the decade that ended in 1920 suggest that within a few years of the establishment of the local studios, middle-class Kathmandu folks had acquired knowledge of the medium and used it upon their demand. These photographs were all taken in studios which is not surprising given the difficulty of moving the rather cumbersome camera equipment of that era. In the personal collection of an acquaintance, I have seen a photograph taken about 1915 of a common couple in their mid-twenties that undoubtedly exhibits, at least in its dress, Rana influence. The man, sitting on his wife's right, looks at the camera, exuding confidence and a prior familiarity with the technology. The woman, on the other hand, looks away from the camera and seems distinctly uncomfortable being positioned in that manner. This photograph and the three that I discuss below could constitute part of the evidence for an analysis of gender relationships of middle-class families in Kathmandu in the early part of this century.

The first photograph (from 1915) shows Kedarmani Acharya Dixit (whose contributions to the genre of Nepali travel-writing is significant) and his wife Bidyadevi Dixit (who was one of the early women writers) about two weeks after they had married. It is published in Kedarmani's autobiography, *Aphnai Kura* (2034 V.S.). Since Kedarmani's grandfather, Kashinath Acharya Dixit, and father, Rammani Acharya Dixit, were in service of the Shamsher Ranas, it is likely that his family had access to photography earlier than most other middle-class families of Kathmandu. In fact a photograph from about 1911 when Kedarmani was only seven is included in his book. However his book and the separate memoirs written by Kashinath (2031 V.S.) and Rammani (2029 V.S.) do not say anything explicit regarding the family's consumption of photography. What is of interest here is that at the time of their marriage, Kedar was eleven and Bidyadevi ten. Their age at marriage was not at all unusual even for urban middle-class educated Brahman families. Quite the contrary, available evidence would suggest that it was the norm. For women, it was customary to get married before the onset of puberty. In 1915 child marriage had not been

recognized as morally repugnant by the powerful guardians of culture and was widely prevalent, irrespective of caste or class. In that cultural world, marriage did not necessarily mean the end of childhood and the onset of adult life, although I would imagine that it entailed a growth of responsibilities, especially for child-brides.

One consequence of child marriage used to be the possibility of the wife becoming taller than her husband as they both grew up. Such a possibility is evidenced in a photograph dated about 1916 (see photo no. 1), now in the collection of T. N. Vaidya. This shows a Newar couple in their twenties from Kathmandu's inner city with their two children and an attendant (about 1916). The man shown therein, Kaviraj Dirgananda Raj Vaidya, and his wife, Chandra Badan Vaidya (my mother's paternal grandparents) had married in their early adolescence. In the photograph, he is seen to be a slightly shorter than his wife. We can only guess what social commentaries this disparity in their heights might have invited from members of Kathmandu's society where the man in any couple was expected to be taller than his spouse. This photograph is also noteworthy for other reasons. The man is located to the right of the woman, as in the two photographs discussed above. This tradition, still largely in vogue today, seems to have already set in by the time these photographs were taken and could have possibly been imported as a sensibility of 'couple portraiture' from India and beyond. In this photograph the attendant is located in the same row (but seated) as the family members whereas similar people in Rana group portraits are usually seen standing at the back of the group. Also interesting is the sari clad by Chandra Badan. Its length obviously exceeds that of those worn by Rana and Brahman/Chhetri women as seen in other contemporary photographs.

The length of the saris worn by Newar women is even more evident in another photograph taken in late 1930s (see photo no. 2). The saris of these two middle-age Newar women easily exceeded 50 feet each. Its weight was not insignificant either. According to old Newar women, it was apparently routine to cut these long saris into two pieces for purposes of washing and stitch them together once they had dried in the sun. Given the gendered distribution of labour, it is difficult to imagine how Newar women of this era, clad in these heavy and long saris, carried out household chores. It might not be outrageous to speculate that because of the difficulty entailed in walking while wearing such heavy saris, notions of distance within Kathmandu were also differentially understood by men and women (this is not to deny the other reasons at work).

Dress and habits of the body are historically inscribed makers of class and photographs provide excellent evidence of this inscription. A juxtaposition of these photographs showing members of Kathmandu's middle-class with those of the elite Ranas brings out this point clearly. However, these photographs are also evidence of how photography was no longer in the exclusive consumption domain of the Ranas, thus signalling the

beginning of the failure of what has been described as their policy of selective exclusion with respect to foreign goods and technology. Through the consumption of photography upon its own demand, Kathmandu's incipient middle-class began to assert its own social position during the high days of Rana rule. Photographic evidence of this assertion exists in a scattered manner at the moment and very few of these photographs have been published thus far. In addition, the first reference to photography (that I am aware of) in a work of Nepali language literature comes from around this time. In a short play entitled *Bishnumaya* set in Kathmandu which was written some time between 1917 and 1923, writer Pahalmansing Swar (2033 V.S. : 56) deploys a photograph in a plot wherein a husband discovers a (fake) letter written by his wife to her putative lover with the latter's photograph. It is significant that the first deployment of photography in Nepali literature does not happen within a plot involving the Ranas.

Starting sometime in the early 1920s, a few of Kathmandu's middle class men started capturing a variety of moments, views and people (and that too in different parts of the country) with their newly acquired portable cameras. Photos from the 1920s that are testimony to this fact have been published, for instance, in Heide (1997) and Bajracharya (1998 : 4). During this decade, people who owned photostudios in Kathmandu and certain Rana personalities such as Samar Shamsher and his son, Balkrishna Sama are also known to have owned and operated such cameras (see Sama 2029 V.S.). However, the use of portable cameras by common middle-class men (yes, they were almost always men) increased considerably in the 1930s and the 1940s. The following section will explore some of the images captured by them and suggest that photography came to increasingly occupy an important place in the manufacturing of middle class's sensibility toward self and others.

Asserting Middle-Class Sensibility : 1940-60

Most of the photographs that I have seen from the two decades between 1940 and 1960 remain unpublished and in the private collection of my relatives. While my comments below are informed by my viewing of these photographs, they are particularly based on a close reading of an immaculate photoalbum that belonged to my maternal grandfather, Kaviraj Chandra Nanda Raj Vaidya (d. 1981 at age 57), a Newar man from Kathmandu's inner-city. Each one of over 770 photographs in the album has a caption and most have a date. Except for a few photographs, all were taken during the decade of the 1940s and the 1950s. Over eighty percent of the photographs were taken by the album-owner himself whose use of a particular camera (later stolen while travelling in India) for that purpose is still remembered fondly by my mother.

So what are the subjects inscribed in these photographs? Many photographs in the album taken during the 1940s show members of the family, especially chil-

dren in various mundane poses. Family gatherings, *puja*, and various *bhoj* have also been recorded. Some photographs show life-cycle events such as *bratabandha* in progress. If one takes lessons from the history of the use of photography in the Euro-American world, this obsession does not come as a surprise. There, as Susan Sontag (1977 : 8) writes "memorializing the achievements of individuals considered as members of families" was one of the earliest popular uses of photography. As soon as photography became comfortably portable and could therefore be taken out of the professional studio, the middle-class Kathmandu family used it to construct an image-chronicle of itself, one what would record its connectedness not only for oneself but also for other members of the society. As Sontag adds, "It hardly matters what activities are photographed so long as photographs get taken and are cherished" (1977 : 8).

Another theme seen in the photographs from this decade is the study of the city. These include photographs of monuments of power such as the Dharahara, the Ghantaghar, statues of Rana premiers, and the facade of New Road after it had been restored following the 1934 earthquake, the ravages of which were recorded by Balkrishna Sama, among others (for Sama's photos that record this devastation, see B. Rana 1992 V.S.). They also include photographs of religious sites such as Pashupatinath and Swayambhu. Also included are photographs of city streets as some *jatra* or the *sawari* of an important Rana personality wound its way through them. The middle-class recording of the public space through photography did not stop at the city-limits. The inner-city Newars' discovery of the rural countryside in or near Kathmandu is equally apparent in these photographs. Many photographs show family members visiting places like Balaju, Dakshinkali, Dhulikhel, Sundarrijal, Dhunbeshi, Kulekhani, and Tokha. Since C.N.R. Vaidya spent a few months in Tokha sanatorium (while undergoing treatment for T. B.) in the mid-1940s, quite a few photographs of the rural landscape around Tokha can be found in the album. A shot captures a cockfight in progress. Two other photographs show different groups of menial workers of the sanatorium in their uniforms, posing for a salute (see photo no. 3). Yet two other photographs capture a young woman each, obviously posed as requested by the photographer.

The rural landscape and the people therein have been photographed in part in the spirit of discovery associated with personal travel in space. However, another aspect of this encounter is probably more worthy of attention. The photographs of the rural women and those of the menial workers testify to this middle-class man's ability to direct these people, members of a lower class to be sure, for a posed session of photography. This encounter whereby a city-man asserts his power to photographically inscribe members of a lower class is important in the manufacturing of the middle-class's sensibility of its "middle-ness." As if to provide more evidence of this, we find photographs of beggars

(with one captioned “an old beggar”) taken inside the city after Vaidya had returned home from Tokha. Caught between the elite Ranas and the majority of the masses, the middle-class discovered the latter as a curious subject of photography.

The photographs from the 1950s show a slightly different orientation. More family and architectural photographs were definitely taken. But the emphasis, both representing and reinforcing the new found freedom in the immediately post-Rana Nepal, shifts toward a search for images of “modernity.” Hence we come across photographs of a family member sitting on a bulldozer during an outing to the country-side in 1953. In another photograph, the jeep the family had rented for its trip is positioned next to the dozer, apparently at work in building a new road. Another photograph of a friend of the album-owner taken in London in the late 1950s showing the former in front of a television set further emphasizes my point : machines were the measure par excellence of this middle-class’s early brush with modernity.

Barred from participating openly in public institutions and functions during the Rana days, the middle class photographically recorded its participation in them in the 1950s with a vengeance. School functions, office space and ceremonies, elections, visits by foreign dignitaries and national celebrations (such as King Mahendra’s coronation, and annual “democracy” day celebrations) are photographed quite extensively. High school students are seen picnicking and performing stage dramas during the second half of the 1950s (see photo no. 4). We could argue that the sensibility of photographically recording every private and public ceremonial in which some family member or friend was involved was itself a characteristic of the modernity which was inculcated during these decades.² It is my argument that photography gave the urban middle-class a new way to come to terms with itself and others in Nepali society. Kathmandu’s middle-class learnt a new code of seeing which while ostensibly directed toward the outside – the city streets, the rural landscape, the lower class, school, office and public occasions – was as much directed inward. While making others the subjects of photography, the middle-class was asserting its own image of itself increasingly in the Nepali society at large.

With the passage of time, all historical sources are increasingly divorced from the context in which they were originally created (cf. Newhall 1988). Therefore they become open to multiple readings. In interpreting the photographs in the above manner, I have perhaps taken advantage of this openness. The plausibility of the readings offered here based on the viewing of an admittedly small number of photographs from this period can only be gauged after more detailed studies of photographic and other sources of this era are done. Nevertheless it must be accepted that the photographs that form the basis of this analysis help us to write, however partially, a history of, among other things,

class & consumption, social relationships and the constitution of urban public spaces. I have here suggested some ways of “reading” these common photographs as part of the project of reconstructing a social world that has changed significantly. A more complete analysis would include an account (based also on non-photographic sources) of how technologies like photography were differentially available to and consumed by the members of what was essentially a heterogeneous middle-class (in terms of intra-class wealth variation, caste, gender, educational achievements) in the early part of the century. It hardly needs to be added that social historians will benefit from a more systematic study of this corpus of largely unpublished photographs for obvious reasons.

Conclusion

In this essay then, I have briefly reviewed the state of our knowledge regarding the early history of photography in Kathmandu and indicated the ways in which photography was used there in its early years by the Ranas as part of their strategy of selective exclusion. I have also discussed how photography came to occupy an increasingly important place in the lives of middle-class inhabitants of Kathmandu over this century and hinted at ways in which historians interested in reconstructing the social worlds of this class might benefit from a close reading of the existing photographic archives.

Monograph-length treatment of the history of photography in Nepal is a must. Therein one could include a more indepth study – one that also looks at the technical and economic aspects of the trade – of the now almost century-long history of Nepali photostudios. Photographs could also be extensively studied by historians for a more complete reconstruction of class, caste and gender relationships of an earlier era of our society. Those interested in the use of photography in the post 1960 years might want to look at how the medium was used by politicians of the Panchayat system and their opponents in their respective print media forums. An anthropological study of these years that focuses on the consumption patterns of photography by different classes of Nepalis might illuminate the trends and dynamics of change in Nepali society in ways that have not been discussed before. Through a sustained study of the corpus of published and unpublished photographs, one could also do an analysis of the linked topics of the culture of national politics and the politics of culture in Nepal. For instance, for the period after 1990, it might be interesting to figure out how photography has been implicated in the politics of nationalism and ethnicity as they have been played out in the public media³.

Finally, I want to emphasize that this essay constitutes only the most preliminary look at how photographs have been consumed in Kathmandu. As stated earlier, it is based on a viewing of a relatively small number of photographs taken before 1960. Much of what I have said in this essay – the proposed periodiza-



4. Mainya Baba Vaidya in the role of "Maya" in the play Apriya Ghatana. 2015 V.S. (1958).
Photographer: Unknown. From the C.N.R. Vaidya album.

tions, thematic explorations and the general framework – must be criticized, augmented and eventually supplanted by other analyses if we want to see a healthy growth of a broad-based social history of Nepali society. The alternative would be to prolong our intellectual incarceration inside the narrow walls of the political history paradigm which has had until now a near monopolistic reign in the domain of history-writing of and in Nepal.

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Notes :

- 1 A 1927 photo taken by Dirga Man Chitrakar showing a wedding (published in Heide 1997 : 81) is proof that Kathmandu's middle-class had begun to make photography a part of the marriage ritual within years of its gaining access to the medium.
- 2 Today this sensibility has reached a stage where the still record offered by photography is found to be inadequate. Instead a record in motion in the form of video footage is preferred.
- 3 As far as I know, no systematic photoarchive exists in any of the government-owned archives and libraries in Nepal. Private collections of photographs remain very scattered and uncatalogued. Therefore archivists and social historians must also work toward the establishment of a proper photoarchive if they would like to preserve historical photographs for future viewing and analysis.

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SOME NOTES ON THE INTRODUCTION OF PHOTOGRAPHY IN NEPAL

KRISHNA RIMAL

Bourne & Sheperd British Photography Company was established at Park Street, Calcutta in the 1850s. Some people from this company (maybe Bourne & Sheperd themselves) visited Nepal during Jung Bahadur Rana's time in the 1860s. They photographed Jung Bahadur and his family, and went to different hills and mountains along with numerous porters to take photos. All the equipment required for negative processing was taken to the field since the negative plates had to be processed right after taking the photo. It is said that over 200 photos were taken from the altitude of 15000 feet. They used to visit Nepal from time to time. They were invited for wedding and hunting photography. They also visited Kathmandu to record the damage caused by the 1935 earthquake. This photography company still exists in Bombay.

Dambar Samsher Rana is considered to be the first photographer among the Nepalese, but it is not known yet where and from whom he learned photography. He was succeeded by his son Shamar Samsher, who learned from his father. Shamar was very well-known in Nepal, and used to work for the palaces. He had many people to help him. Negative glass plate was coated with silver nitrate in the dark room. He had some Citrakar employees who did oil painting on the image of the negative reflected on the canvas through enlarger-projection. Sometimes water painting also was done. Numerous paintings were made by this technique.

The normal size of negative at that time was the post card although occasionally 10/12 inches was used. As the negatives were big enough, contact prints were very commonly made on the ready made bromide-paper. As mentioned above, silver nitrate coating was done by themselves on the glass plate for negatives.

The younger brother of Shamar Samsher, Bal Krishna Samsher, was also a very good photographer as well as a poet, writer, dramatist, painter...

The employees of Shamar Samsher learned photography with him. Among them, one may cite : Bharat Pradhan from Asan, Narayan Prasad Joshi and his father, Dirgha Man Chitrakar, and Purna Man Chitrakar.

As photography equipment was very heavy, 2-3 persons were required to carry it from one place to another. Some times the assistants borrowed the equipment from the Rana photographer -especially the camera, lens and tripod- to photograph their family and friends, because they could not afford the camera. The camera was lent to them just for the day.

Bharat Pradhan, Asan

Bharat Pradhan is one of the oldest photographers, other than the Ranas. He learned photography with Dambar Samsher about 100 years ago. Later he ope-

ned a studio, named "Bharat studio". Before that he used to borrow a camera from Dambar Samsher to capture his friends, relatives and customers, and immediately after had to return it.

The rest of the work, such as the processing, was done at his home. By taking photos of his customers, he earned some money.

At that time contact print was done because the glass-plate negative itself was big enough. The negative was exposed to sun light to make a print. For enlargement sun light was also used. But Bharat Pradhan did not have even a watch to control the time of exposure, so he used to look at the clock-tower visible from his house or to count his breathings. Silver nitrate coating on the glass plate was done at night in the dark-room. Before silver-nitrate coating, silver chloride and gold chloride were also used for coating on the glass plate, according to the grand-son of Bharat Pradhan.

The assistants of Dambar Samsher were not allowed to keep the camera at their home overnight. At any cost they had to return it before it got dark. Some had dark-rooms at home, others developed in the Rana's dark room after getting permission.

Fire crackers were used if one had to take photo at night since there was no flash and not even electricity. To balance the light and shade outdoors, a sheet of white cloth was used while exposing the negative.

Photographic activity was not enough to support a family and the first photographers had to earn money elsewhere. Bharat Pradhan, for instance, had a timber business and possessed some land from which he got rice.

The photographic equipment at the time of Bharat Pradhan, according to his grand son, came from the following places :

- the camera-lens was German and body was British, later Nepalese body as well.
- paper (Bromide paper)- Selo English Bromide paper, Ilford English Bromide paper, Kodak American Bromide paper, Agfa German Bromide paper.
- chemicals - mostly English.
- enlarger lens and condenser - German and English
- trays and tools - English
- enlarger's body and camera's body - Sometimes made by local carpenters.

Like at that time, ready-made photography chemicals were not available to buy in the market. They had to weight the chemicals and mix them to make chemicals ready for photo-processing.

Chakra Bahadur Kayasta

Chakra Bahadur Kayasta is one of pioneer photographers among the public photographers. It is not yet known from whom he learned photography. Some of his grand sons said that probably he learned photography first from Dambar Samsher's palace. He was a photographer for the royal palace during the time of Prithvi Bir Bikram Shah Deva, the father of Tribhuwan.

Chakra Bahadur was sent to Calcutta to learn photography.

The descendants of Chakra Bahadur have been involved in photography and now it is the 3rd and 4th generation. His sons and nephews learned the art with him, as well as Narayan Prasad Joshi. The latter fell in love with a widow of Kayasta's family although he already had two wives at home and could not fulfil his project because of them.

It is said that Kayasta's photographers were very skilled at making wooden enlargers and camera boxes in which the lens was fitted in one side. At the back of the box two big holes were made. This camera was fitted with a wooden tripod. The whole camera was covered with a thick black cloth. The lens was capped all the time. To take the photo the cap of the lens is taken out for some seconds according to brightness of outdoor light. The bromide paper which has been put inside the camera box is exposed. After this, through the side holes at the back of the camera, hands are inserted for developing and fixing (processing) the exposed bromide paper negative inside the camera box. After negative processing positive processing starts. After 30 minutes or so the positive is ready to be taken out in the light. The photo made by this technique is very cheap since it is a paper negative.

These photographers went to villages with their camera since this cheap technique was affordable for the people. But some did not like having their photo taken, believing that it shortened the life.

Chitrakars painters and photographers :

Chitrakars were first employed by the Rana photographer for painting. The image exposed on a glass plate negative was projected onto canvas or bromide paper through enlarger. The painter oil painted or water coloured on the projected image - on the canvas or bromide paper. The projected images were very big, sometimes life size. It was not difficult for them to paint. The paintings of the Ranas were thus made by the Chitrakars.

Progressively the Chitrakars learned photography. Among them, one may cite : Dirgha Man Chitrakar, Ambar Man Chitrakar, Rat Bahadur Chitrakar, Purna Man Chitrakar, Chaitya Man Chitrakar, Yam Bahadur Chitrakar.

Among the above Chitrakars Dirgha Man and Purna Man were very renowned painters. They learned photography from Rana photographers. Dirgha Man worked as photographer and painter for Chandra Samsher and went with him to England as his photographer. Dirgha Man's father, Bhaju Man Chitrakar, went with Jung Bahadur to England as his painter, and sketched and painted different views of London (information : Kiran Chitrakar, Dirgha's grand son).

Purna Man used to work for Chhetri Shamsher. Dirgha Man and Purna Man started commercial photography along with modern oil painting, while continuing traditional paintings as well.

Dhan Chitrakar was renowned for his art of colouring black and white photos. Retouching was done to remove the scratches from the negative and positive and to lighten the faces of the people, who did not like dark appearances.

Narayan Prasad Joshi

Raj Man Joshi was an employee in the palace of Dambar Samsher Rana. He was not employed for photography work, but was very much interested in it and sometimes helped the Ranas. He thus acquired some knowledge of the technique and took his son, Narayan Prasad to the palace so that he could learn it. Narayan pleased the Ranas because he was young, smart and handsome. He used to come to the palace everyday and learnt photography progressively by helping the photographers. At the same time, he learned the Tablas there. The father and son invested some money to import photographic goods from England : chemicals, bromide paper, silver nitrate coated glass plate negatives.

Narayan opened the "Snap Shot" studio in his house at Nar Devi Tol in 2003 V.S. There he used mostly Rolleiflex cameras and ready-made film was now available in the market.

Udas and Sakya photographers

Udas and Sakya photographers took photos both in Nepal and in Tibet. According to the information so far collected three Udas and one Sakya photographers were doing photography first in Tibet and then in Nepal: Purna Tamrakar, Tej Man Tamrakar (Yatkha Bahal), Singh Tuladhar (Khicapokhari) and Budhi Bir Sakya (Makhan Yalli). It is said that commercial photography in Tibet was first introduced by Udas photographers. They left Tibet and came back to Nepal during the Chinese occupation.

THE SANNYASI MONASTERIES OF PATAN : A BRIEF SURVEY VÉRONIQUE BOULLIER

Not long ago seven monasteries (*math*) in the town of Patan were still a proof of the ancient installation of the Hindu Dasnāmi Sannyāsi renunciators. Today, some of them do not even have any walls standing, sometimes only a *śivaliṅga* remains, hidden in the rubble or lost on a waste ground. But in other monasteries, in contrast, tradition has remained alive and sometimes even the buildings have kept their original beauty. Nevertheless, the first study that Krishna Rimal and I conducted in 1992 and which I continued in 1995, shows how extremely fragile these institutions can be : land conflicts, inheritance problems, "modernism", all seem to lead to their decline.

Let's begin with a quick presentation of the sites, arbitrarily starting with those which are better preserved. I will then compare information and attempt a synthetic approach.

Chayabahal

This monastery is located in the north-western part of Patan, in the Pimbaha area, not far from Patan Dhoka. It is the only monastery which took its denomination¹ from Buddhist monasteries (*bahāl*). We see in the official document registering its foundation that it was called first Pithyabahal, before its current name, Chayabahal (or sometimes Chabahal). The buildings, still very beautiful and in a relatively good condition, are arranged according to a classic *cok* plan with four main buildings around a central square courtyard². The western side, where descendants of the founder still live, is decorated with windows carved in an attractive style. The southern side, partially opening onto a veranda, includes two small shrines, one dedicated to the *kuldevatā* Varāha and the other to the goddess Bhagavati and reserved for the Dasai celebrations. The northern side is rented as a dwelling as well as the eastern part, which is lower and less ornate. In the centre of the courtyard, a small temple with a bulbous roof, covered with coloured faience like those fashionable at the beginning of this century, is dedicated to Bisesvar Mahadev. The temple, closed except during the time of the *pūjā*, contains a stone *śivaliṅga* covered in gilded bronze. One should note that the door of this central shrine opens onto the south, an inauspicious and dangerous direction. A cement moulding around the temple is used as a support for the oil lamps and for a portico from which two bells, engraved with the names of their donors, are suspended.

On the northern wall of the temple, two stone stelae list the recent donations made to the *math*. It is written on one of them, after the invocation to Sri Bisesvar Mahadev, "In 1964 V.S. our ancestor Hiralal Bharati and his wife Mohan Maya Devi gave a garland of

lamps. In 1972 V.S. their eldest son Nandalal Bharati restored the garland [the lamps were first placed on wooden beams which collapsed]. In 2002 V.S. Bhavlal had stone pillars constructed [which support the lamps] and had the steps restored and constructed". Another *śilāpatra* relates Hiralal's gift of two *ropāni* of land in order to provide mustard oil necessary for the lamps which must be lighted nine times during the year.

Chayabahal is the only *math* in Patan for which I found ancient documents in the Archives. One (Archives K 146/27) is dated 868 Nepal Samvat (1747 AD) and registers a land gift by Raya Bharati Gosain "with his own hands" to the benefit of Bisesvar Mahadev for the financing of the daily *pūjā* (*nitya pūjā*), the distribution of food (*sadāvarta*) and money, the celebration of Śivaratri. The remuneration of the Brahman officiant is also indicated (40 *pāthī* of rice per year), as well as the maintenance of the *cok* and of the person who distributes food. This document has recently been copied and certified by Isvari Prasad Bharati (Archives K 136/45)

Calkhu math

Not far from Chayabahal, but in a much more recent and less harmonious architectural style, Calkhu or Kwalakhu *math*, comprises two main buildings in an L-shape around a courtyard where the shrines are located: a small temple with a *śivaliṅga* dedicated to Sri Banesvar Mahadev, the footprints of Vishnu, and statues, particularly those of the donor Muktinath Puri.

In Muktinath's time the two branches of the family separated and consequently occupied the two main buildings, cutting all relations to the point of no longer celebrating Dasai together. The principal building, that of the *math* authorities, has a room reserved for Dasai worship on the ground floor, as well as a statue of the goddess Bhagavati. On the other hand, there is no shrine to the *kuldevatā* who is honoured in the temple of Vajra Varahi in Chapagaon.

According to the current *mahant*, succession to the head of the *math* happened as follows: Sundar Puri, the founder in 926 N.S. (1805) was succeeded by his disciple Sundarman, who was succeeded by his disciple Pahalman. In fact, a document from 1893 V.S. (1836 A.D.) kept in Archives (K17.4.A) tells us that Pahalman succeeded Ganapati Puri. But Ganapati was dismissed both by his peers who lodged a complaint against him, and by the government for corruption. To Pahalman succeeded his disciple Basudev. He was the first to marry and he transmitted the *math* to his younger son Muktinath, by passing his older son Narayan (although allowing him to live in another part of the *math*). Muktinath's son was Dilli Nath who became the *mahant* of Kwatando *math* in Bhatgaon and chose Acchut Puri, his grandson by his daughter, to succeed him in Patan. It turned out that the latter was a croupier in a casino.

As in all other monasteries in Patan, the head of the

Sannyāsī monastery does not officiate. Daily worship is performed in the morning and in the evening by a paid Brahman *pujārī* who in the past was more often a Newar Brahman Rajopadhyaya, and is frequently now a Nepalese Brahman Upadhyaya. Another Brahman comes to officiate for the goddess's Dasai worship and for the *kuldevatā*'s worship. Sometimes the Sannyāsī family members take part in the ritual by playing large *nagarā* drums (kept upstairs in the residence). The officiating priest brings them a *prasād*, the leftovers of the sanctified offering and puts a *ṭikā* mark on them. Here the Sannyāsīs are the Jajman, the patrons of the cult.

Balukha math

This *math* is perhaps the most harmonious of all the Sannyāsī monasteries in Patan. It was built according to a *cok* layout, with the exception of the fourth side, which was never built or perhaps collapsed— one says that the *math* may have been damaged during the earthquake of 1933; it opens now onto a kitchen garden. This *math* has the distinctive feature of having its main shrine located on a large square outside its precinct ; it is a two-storeyed pagoda consecrated to Trilingesvar Mahadev. In the cella, three small stone *līnga* are highly valued as they are linked with the myth of Sati Devi : Trilingesvar is thus a triple *piṭh*, the site where during the dismemberment of the goddess's body, three of her ribs fell. The monastery has the responsibility of the worship in this temple and in that purpose hired, to succeed to a Rajopadhyaya, an Upadhyaya Bahun priest, who has been the same for fifteen years. In addition to the cult in Trilingesvar temple, the officiant performs rites inside the *math*



Balukha math,
precarious harmony, distant dialogue

courtyard at a Śiva's altar, at a basil (Tulasi) dedicated to Vishnu, and at a shrine to the *kuldevatā* whose name the *mahant* did not want to reveal.

Only one side of the *math* is still occupied by the family of the *mahant*, the other two parts are rented, one of them to a rug manufacturer. According to the *mahant*, the *guṭhi* land attached to the *math* is almost non-existent - 2 or 3 *ropani*, the size of the kitchen garden - and he lives off the rental of the three lorries he owns. But rumour in the neighbourhood attributed the obvious desire of the *mahant* to get rid of Krishna and of me with maximum courtesy and minimum informations possible to ancient disputes over *guṭhi* land. The *math* is said to have been endowed with a *rajguṭhi*, untransferable royal foundation lands - in accordance with the status of *piṭh* of the Trilingesvar temple -, lands which later on during a cadastral survey were said to have been registered as *duniya* or *niji guṭhi*, private *guṭhi*. I saw many examples of this kind of situation, especially in Bhaktapur, and certainly with many advantages for the head of the *math* who thus escaped control. Monastery land theoretically allotted for its functioning becomes the *mahant*'s own property and that of his lineage³.

Tuilakomath

Not far from the royal palace, near a Bhimsen temple, a modern, unattractive building with a bakery on the ground floor, reveals its ancient purpose in its small interior courtyard entirely devoted to the cult. In the center an altar to Śiva with a *śivalīnga* covered with *caturmukh* top, is surrounded by oil lamps, bells, statues of the donors and stone or bronze carvings. This profusion of deities in such a small space expresses the importance given to the *pūjā*. Furthermore, the monastery officiant must also honour the neighbouring temples of Bhimsen, Ganes and especially Dattatreya, a small two-storeyed pagoda next to the *math* entrance.

This *math* is dedicated, like the others, to Mahadev and is called Vinod Visesvar Mahadev *math*. The present arrangement of the buildings has completely upset the initial plan in order to suit the needs of the residents who are modern businessmen. Meanwhile, worship is still dutifully performed by the Rajopadhyaya *pujārī* who officiates daily in the courtyard and at the Dattatreya temple and is given an allowance of seven *muri* of unhusked rice per year. The *guṭhi* attached to the monastery amounts to 55 *ropani* of land in the Valley ; since the beginning it has remained a *niji guṭhi*, despite some vicissitudes. The present *mahant* recounts that in the past a Malla king took possession the *math* lands and kept them for two years but after the death of some of his relatives, he thought it wise to return the lands. Much later, Juddha Samser convened all the *mahant* of the Sannyāsī monasteries having *niji guṭhi* (eleven *mahant*) to the Singha Durbar to convince them to convert their land into state-owned or *raikar* land. However, Cita Narayan Puri, the then *mahant*, refused

and Tuilako kept its status of *niji guṭhi* until 2016 V.S. when a decree suppressed the title of *mahant* for owners of private *guṭhi*. The land is said to have then been transformed into *raikar*.

Puri math in Tumbahal

Very close to Tuilako, on the north-eastern side of Darbar Square, behind a modern building housing the Chamber of Commerce, one could notice (in 1992) a pile of ruins. This is all that remains of the ancient Puri *math*, which from the ground it covers and from what is left of the woodcarvings, must have been quite imposing. A small dwelling, on one side of the ancient *math* houses a family of Kusle musicians linked to the *math* as they are responsible for playing *tyamkho* drum morning and evening for the Mahadev *pūjā*. In the midst of piles of bricks, there still is a *śivalinga* and each day the Rajopadhaya *pujārī* comes and stands before the ruins to invoke the god by randomly sprinkling water, grains of rice and flowers. As the Kusle, he is paid with the produce from the *guṭhi* land - about 100 *ropani* towards Godavari. This *guṭhi* still exists as a private one, *niji*, and is under the responsibility of the present *mahant* who lives in Baneshvar. A conflict over its succession explains the state of decay of the *math* as well as the desire of the Kusle, who took part in the conflict, to involve us in the legal problems regarding the *math* - an emblematic situation showing both the quarrels over succession which led to the ruin of many monasteries⁴ and the exacerbation of these quarrels within a modern context of land speculation.

In a few words and according to the Kusle, the senile *mahant* gave a power of attorney to his third wife's son rather than to his legitimate son. The former then tried to sell the land occupied by the *math* to the Chamber of Commerce and promised a compensation to the Kusle. Then he retracted and sent them an eviction notice. In anger, they sued him and asked Krishna Rimal and me to intervene to save the *math* (a little too late, the bricks and the wood had already been sold for 50,000 rupees), the dharma and their situation.

This trial is apparently only the latest in a long series. About this Puri *math*, I have only heard of its legal affairs; they were considered important enough as a founding event to have led to their inscription on a stone stele still present near the Mahadev *liṅga* in the collapsed area. This inscription, copied by the Kusle, dates from 1977 V.S. (1920); it gives the genealogy of the Puri founders, reveals the past rivalries between sons and disciples and shows that misappropriations have been part of the *math* history.

Here is the text : "This *duniyā guṭhi* was established by Jvarbar Puri [...]. His youngest brother was Sindhu Puri who had two disciples, the older one being Pratap Puri. His disciple was Bahadur Puri, whose son was Chetnath Puri. All three generations [Pratap, Bahadur and Chetnath] pawned the *guṭhi* land and the *math* to the moneylenders saying, after having removed the *śilā-*

patra and Mahadev, that it was their *birtā*."

But the other spiritual descendants intervened, "The youngest disciple of Sindhu Puri whose name was Sankar Puri, his disciple named Samser Puri, the son of Samser Puri called Phatte Baijanath Puri and finally this one's son, Setu Puri, lodged a complaint against the pledge of the *guṭhi* land with the office of Chandra Samser Rana. They won the lawsuit. Six thousand six hundred rupees were paid to the moneylenders by the government [...] so that the dharma would not be lost. It was mentioned that the families of Chandranath Puri and Gannath Puri [the sons of Chetnath] who almost destroy the dharma were no longer allowed to manage the *math*. Therefore, after having recovered all the property belonging to the *math* which had previously disappeared, the court entitled these families to a part of the *math* revenue. After that, the *śilāpatra* and Mahadev were returned, and the *pūjā* and the festivals celebrated. The son of Baijanath Puri, Setu Puri manages the *guṭhi*. He repaired the *math*."

Setu Puri's inheritance passed to his brother Kedar Puri in 2039 V.S., which was confirmed by a deed of the Guthi Samsthan recognising "land measuring 7 *ānā* 2 *paisa* as *niji duniyā guṭhi*" (i.e., the local size of the *math*).

Soto math

Nearly adjacent to the above mentioned *math*, Soto *math* is no more than a waste plot of land, a square enclosure at the very beginning of the street leading to Kumbesvar. It was demolished about twenty years ago and there remains only a small *śivalinga* among wild grass. Recently the family of a Brahman priest settled there and since then has been performing the *pūjā*, getting from the *mahant* the low income of four *muri* of rice per year. That is how I learned that there is still a *mahant*, a Puri, somewhere in Kathmandu.

Bholkhel Ganes math in the suburbs of Patan

Here too, nothing remains; the *math* is completely demolished and a modern residence has just been built on its land. Nevertheless, along the kitchen garden, two *śivaliṅga* are still there in a precarious condition.

This former *math* was a branch of the Chayabahal, founded by one of the sons of the third successor of the Chayabahal founder, Jaya Kishore Bharati. It has still a *mahant*, Shiva Prasad Bharati, living near Chabahil and a *niji guṭhi* of 15 to 20 *ropani*. The only activity of this *math* is, during the month of *bhadau* (*naumi*, the ninth day), a celebration presided over by the *mahant* with a *pūjā* to Mahadev, Ganes and Balkumari and a feast given "to the Jogis" (*jogilāi khuvāune*): this is an obligation we often find mentioned on steles or in agreements, which obliges the monasteries to feed their visitors regularly and to honour them with feasts in some specific circumstances. Nowadays, the part of the Jogis during the feast is probably held by some children in the neighbourhood.



Puri *math* of Tumbahal, what remains of the rear section

Using the data collected in the various *math*, I will present now a more general approach of what has been the Sannyāsi monastery in the context of Patan.

Foundation

The foundation dates given by the descendants go back in most cases to the middle of the eighteenth century: before 1747 for Chayabahal, 1741 for Tuilako, 1759 for Trilingesvar and 1805 for Calkhu (perhaps earlier). Was it to these foundations that Baburam Acharya⁵ alluded when he wrote, “Sanyasis of the Puri sect were welcomed and granted land by King Vishnu Malla of Lalitpur” (who ruled from 1728 to 1745)?

In relation to my data, this mention of land endowments by the king is doubtful as accounts of the foundations tell something different. For example, it is said that the Chayabahal *math* was founded by Jaya Kishor Bharati on a land he owned, and that this was registered later by his successor. Jaya Kishor built three sides of the *cok* and the central temple; about the last side the story is as follows: “The fourth side isn’t his. He went to see the king three or four times to ask for land. The king refused to receive him. ‘Who is this king?’, he said, ‘If that is how it is, I’m leaving’. He organised a *bhaṇḍārā* and as there was no ghec, he transformed water into ghee. Then he went away. The king heard of the prodigy and gave him the land and the materials necessary for constructing the fourth wing (but it is the least beautiful)”.

An edict written in 868 N. S. (1747) and kept in the “National Archives”, registers the gift made by Sri Raya Bharati Gosain, the successor of Jaya Kishore

Bharati, of nearly hundred *ropani* of land, a gift made “from his own hands” in order to allow the distribution of food and the daily *pūjā* to Bisesvar Mahadev with *pancamrit*, incense, lamps, *naivedya*, rice flakes. This required 180 *pāthī* of rice and 20 mohor rupees. The *pujārī* is Sita Ram Bhatta and he must be paid 40 *pāthī* of rice per year. The person who distributes the alms must also be remunerated. He who does not respect the clauses of the gift is as guilty as if he had killed a cow, a Brahman, a child, or his guru. A copy of this document exists, countersigned but undated by Isvari Prasad Bharati, the current *mahant*’s father. This confirms that it was indeed a private foundation.

The central temple of Tuilako *math* was also founded privately in 862 VS by Vinod Puri and his wife Parvati Gosain; their son Thiraj Puri established the *math* the following year.

Where do the funds of the Sannyāsi come from, why were they already in Patan? I do not have sufficient data to put forth anything but suppositions: we do know the importance of Sannyāsi commercial enterprises at this time and their installation of storehouses in the Valley for their trade with Tibet⁶. It is also known that the Naga Sannyāsi were recruited as mercenaries by the Malla and Gorkha armies. The importance of the extant buildings and their location for most of them in the very heart of the town confirm their central position in the economic mechanism of the city. Nevertheless the fact that most of the *guṭhi* were *niji* (*duniyā*), i.e., from private foundation and not like in Bhaktapur *rajguṭhi* from royal gifts, reveals a different settling manner, more individual and less institutional than in Bhaktapur.

Another hypothesis is that the *math* is a funeral foundation, a memorial to the founder. This is actually the case for Tuilako where Parvati Gosain and his son founded the *math* after the death of their husband and father and in his memory. This is why the *math* is also called Vinod Visesvar *math*, why the *guthi* which was established is called *śrāddha guthi* (as an offering for the benefit of a deceased ancestor) and why the main festival of the *math* is called Aswin Krsna Triadasi *śrāddha* (*śrāddha* of the thirteenth day of the dark fortnight of the month of *asoj*). Is it the same tradition which explains that in the destroyed Bharati *math* of Bolkhel Ganes, there only remains the celebration that the neighbours call "making the *śrāddha guthi*", i.e. in this case essentially offering a banquet to the Jogis (as at the end of funeral rites) ?

This link between mourning and founding is also stressed in another way although I do not have any proof: some people says that the *math* were founded and endowed by the wealthy families of Patan following a death (in homage to their dead or to avoid more deaths?).

Some Rajopadhyaya - those who do not officiate - say that these *math* are anyway linked to death, to the inauspicious, that outside people must not go inside their shrines and that "true Brahmins" do not want to officiate there.

The Sannyāsi lineages

Among the seven *math*, the Chayabahal and the Bolkhel Ganes *math* are from the Bharati order of Dasnāmī and are of the same lineage; Calkhu, Tuilako, Tumbahal and Soto belong to the Puri order and Balukha to the Giri. These three orders are the most represented in Nepal among the ten orders of the Dasnāmī, the predominance of the Puris over the Giris being particular to Patan. The absence of the Bans (or Vanas) should also be noted as this order is frequently mentioned (along with the Puris and the Giris) among the great merchants of the Valley in the eighteenth century. As for the Bharatis, generally less well represented in the Valley, they say that they come from Varaha Ksetra, a sacred confluence not far from Dharan. Their *kuldevatā*, Varāha, takes its origin from this place, where its statue got its power. Indeed one of the first monasteries of Varaha Ksetra was founded by Ramnath Bharati on land donated by King Lohanga Sen of Makwanpur⁷.

Some founders were unmarried and the succession became hereditary only after several generations of inheritance from master to disciple. In other cases, the founding of the monastery was carried out by Sannyāsi householders. Marriages occurred then with Sannyāsi spouses from different *math* in the Valley. Among the Patan *math*, the only alliances which I could trace were between the two Puri *math* of Tuilako and Calkhu.

Two lines of succession, one with the original succession from master to disciple (Chayabahal) and the other from father to son (Tuilako) serve as examples of har-



Soto *math*, a *śivaliṅga* returned to nature

mony in succession. In Chayabahal; the founder Jaya Kishore Bharati has as disciple Raya Kishore, whose disciple Samser Bharati married, has three sons : X in Bisankhu, Botta Bharati (Bolkhel Ganes) and Hiralal Bharati. Botta Bharati had Shanta Lal who had Shiva Prasad. Hiralal Bharati had a son named Lakshme Prasad, who gave birth to two sons : Giriya Prasad and Ishvari Prasad. Bisesvar Prasad is the son of Ishvari Prasad.

Bisesvar Prasad is the titular *mahant*, but does not live in the *math* where the descendants of Hiralal Bharati's second marriage stay; I suspect that this marriage with Mohan Maya Devi (a Newar?) was a misalliance, anyway they had two sons Nanda Lal and Bhava Lal. Nanda Lal had three sons, the eldest is deceased but the other two live in the *math* with their children.

In the Tuilako *math* succession has since the beginning been from father to son. After the death of Vinod Puri, his son Thiraj Puri established the *math* in 1742. Sidda Puri succeeded him, then Ganes Puri, Basti Puri, Cita Narayan Puri and Arka Narayan Puri, himself succeeded by his youngest son Arka Prasad Puri (married to a sister of the former *mahant* of Calkhu, Dillinath Puri). His son Ram Prasad Puri currently runs the *math* (in place of the eldest line born of Arka Narayan who live in the United States).

The permanence of these two institutions has a lot to do with a harmonious mode of succession where conflicts resulting from self-interest have been kept under control. And we can be sure that these conflicts have existed; the division at Chayabahal between an older lineage which assumes the title of *mahant* but does not live in the *math* and a younger resident lineage responsible for all the activities is grounds for potential conflict. It is telling that the inscription engraved on the temple wall recapitulates the donations of the junior branch descending from the second wife.

Ritual obligations

As we have seen, each *math* has an appointed Brahman *pūjārī* who comes morning and evening to open the doors of the shrines and to perform the *pūjā* with the required offerings : unction of the *liṅga* and statues,

ornamentation, offerings of grains of rice, flower petals, incense and light. In addition, he must officiate during the main festivals celebrated at the monastery; for the festivals of the Goddess at Dasai and for the offerings to the *kuldevatā*, he is assisted by a "tantric" *pūjārī*, a Rajopadhyaya specialist. It should be noted that on these occasions the *maṭh* are not reluctant to make blood sacrifices.

Ritual obligations are often summed up on a kind of notebook. For instance, the list kept in the Tuilako *maṭh* specifies ritual duties in the following way:

1. Sri Vinod Viseswar, Dattatreya and Kstrapal; daily *pūjā*.

2. Each fifth day of each fortnight and each full moon; [hymns] *rudri* and *pūjā*. Pour milk and water on the head of Mahadev while reading the texts.

3. Each Tuesday *pūjā* to Ganes of the *ṭol* (Sri Val-khu Ganes) and in the *pūjā koṭha*.

4. Each Saturday, *pūjā* to Balkumari and Bhimsen [two temples outside the *maṭh*].

5. In *mangsir*, the fifth day of the light fortnight (*vivāha pancamī*), [go to] Koteswar Mahadev [3 km east]: *pūjā* and *hom* [fire offering] to the temple.

6. The same day *pūjā* to the *kuldevatā* Chinnamasta [the goddess' headless representation, with four hands, in one hand her bleeding head. She is only represented by a drawing beside Kotesvar Mahadev].

7. *Margarsira*, the seventh day of the light fortnight. Dattatreya *pūjā*. Read hymns to Vishnu, make an offering to the fire, recite *rudri* hymns, repeat the sacred names (*jap*) and make a *pūjā* to the flag on the top of the temple.

8. *Māgh saṅkrānti*: As *prasad* give the gods and eat, ghee, *caku* [cooked sugar], *tarul* [yam].

9. *Phālgun*, the fourteenth day of the dark fortnight: *Śivarātri*. Make a fire [here called *dhuni*] all night long. Offer soyabeans and roasted peas, rotis and fruits to the Mahadev temple. Make four *pūjā* during the night: evening, at midnight, 3 a.m., and at dawn. Make a light offering (*ārati*) accompanied by bells, *nagarā* kettle-drum, *ḍamaru* hourglass drum, conch and cymbals.

10. *Baisākh*. From the first day of the dark fortnight until the first day of the light fortnight: [have hymns read] *rudri* by a Brahman in the temple of Śiva.

11. In *baisākh*, on the third day of the light fortnight (*akṣa tritiya*). Give sugar water, pea and barley flour and caramelised sugar to the divinities.

12. In *jeth*, on the sixth day of the clear fortnight. Make a *pūjā* with flour and lentils to the Earth (Prithvi) in front of the temple.

13. In *jeth*, on the day of the full moon: annual *pūjā* to Narayan. Read hymns to Vishnu.

14. In *sāun*, on the fifth day of the light fortnight. Put a drawing of Naga on the lintel and make a *pūjā* to Mahadev and Dattatreya.

15. In *sāun* on the day of the full moon, Janai Purnimā or Kvanti purnimā [*kvanti* = mixture of lentils

and peas]. Thread around the wrist by Brahman.

16. In *bhadra*, on the eighth dark day or Krishna *aṣṭami*. Birth of Krishna. Go to the temple [the Krishna Mandir on Darbar Square]. Prepare *malpa* [*malpuva* ?], *swari* (flour mixed with sugar and oil), *haluwa*, and some fruits.

17. The next day, the festival of Krishna. Open the door [of the *maṭh*] and give *upanrak* (?) to the people.

18. In *bhadra*, on the tenth day of the dark fortnight. In the evening, annual *pūjā* to the temple of Bhimsen.

19. In *bhadra*, from the twelfth day of the light fortnight until the fourth day of the dark fortnight of aswin, Indra Jatra. Make a small clay elephant as well as a statue of Indra. Place them in the *pūjā koṭha*.

20. The full moon of *bhadra*. In the temple of Dattatreya, put oil in the lamps inside and outside and light them. Give those who come rice, black soy, dried fish and ginger.

21. In *aswin*, on the thirteenth day of the dark fortnight: *pūjā* to Vinod Viseswar Mahadev and Dattatreya. Give *khir* to eat [it is the date of the founding of the *maṭh*. Also named Aswin Krishna Triadasi *Śrāddha* in memory of the founding ancestor, as we have seen].

22. In *aswin*, on the twelfth day of the dark fortnight, decorate and "make beautiful" Mahadev and Dattatreya.

23. Dasai.

Honour the swords (*tarwar*).

Kālārātrī (the "black night", the eighth day): give a young goat to Bhagavati and a duck to Ganes.

In front of the temple of Bhimsen: sacrifice a young goat.

Inside the temples of Bhairav and Bhimsen, sacrifice a duck.

To Ganes of the *ṭol*: a duck.

To Bal Kumāri: a duck.

For the ninth day (*naumi*); feed the *kumāri* [the little girls chosen in this case in the family]⁸.

24. In *kārtik* on the day of the new moon: light the lamps in the temple of Mahadev.

25. For the festival of Matsyendranath, offer coconuts, the day following the chariot-pulling.

All the monasteries have their own ritual calendar depending on their geographical situation (i.e. the relative proximity to some temples) but the majority of celebrations is common to all of them : *Śivarātrī*, Dasai, the festivals of Patan, and at varying dates, the anniversary of the foundation and the *pūjā* to the *kuldevatā*.

These ceremonies occur in the private enclosure of each *maṭh* (or in nearby temples) but only the important ceremonies of the Sannyāsi life cycle bring together all the residents of the Patan *maṭh*. These ceremonies are : the funerals, usually held at Sankhamul, the funeral *ghaṭ* of Patan on the banks of the Bagmati, and the enthronement of a new *mahant*. This event must be sanctioned by all the monastery heads in the Valley ; they gather together in the *maṭh* to be transmitted, under the authority of the head of the Bhaktapur Pujari *maṭh*.

Conclusion

The unusual presence of these Dasnami Sannyāsi monasteries in the heart of Newar towns, their foundation during the time of the Malla kings by ascetics from India (even though they were probably tradesmen or soldiers), provides additional proof of the complexity of the organisation of these cities of the Kathmandu Valley. Besides Kathmandu, Bhaktapur and Patan reveal a very different configuration: Kathmandu has no Sannyāsi monastery⁹; Bhaktapur has a dozen of them, clustered around the Dattatraya temple and generally endowed with lands given by kings. The *maṭh* in Patan are more scattered, they have few ties between them and are founded and endowed on an individual basis.

The absence of royal patronage, the apparent lack of function in the system of sovereignty of Patan, probably explains the marginalization of these now little known monasteries, lost in the urban landscape in which they no longer play any role. Having become fragile, they no longer depend on anything but chance or the will of their owners; their status of *guthi* no longer suffices to protect them as these private *guthi* escape the authority of the Guthi Samsthan. Half of these *maṭh* have already disappeared; their ruins are evidence of the loss for the architectural heritage of Patan. As one of the residents of Chayabahal said, "A Programme is necessary" (meaning a Programme of Restoration). And they were not too happy with us, Krishna and me coming empty handed and saying that the *maṭh* was beautiful and that everything must be done to preserve it!

Notes :

1 *bahāl*, for the Newari *bāhāḥ* and the Sanskrit *vihāra*. See D. Gellner, 1992, for the architectural layout of these Buddhist monasteries, especially pp. 23-24 and 167-179.

2 Cf. Barré, Berger, Feveile and Toffin, 1981, p. 167 et seq.

3 His descendants feel free to sell the land, which is in principle completely excluded, whatever the nature of the *guthi*. For more on *duniyā guthi*, see M.C. Regmi, 1976, chapter IV; "The private character of *duniyā guthi* endowments makes it difficult to detect instances of dislocation of their functions" (p. 63).

4 See my articles on Kvatando *maṭh* in Bhaktapur and on Sri gau in the Dang Valley.

5 B. Acharya, 1979, p. 49.

6 Cf. D.R. Regmi, 1975, pp. 117-118, R. Markham, S. Amatya, 1991. B. Acharya adds to the note previously cited, "These Sanyasis collaborated with the Kashmiri Muslims in hampering the trade of Shakyas and Udas with Tibet." (ibid. p. 49).

7 Cf. F. Hamilton, 1971, pp. 132 et seq.

8 The celebrations of *Kālārātri* were abandoned for being "too dangerous". The actual head of the Tuilako *maṭh* himself performs the sacrifices.

9 Except for a different settlement established much later (19th century), along the Bagmati to Tripuresvar.

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FILM REVIEWS

SIMAREKHA, A HISTORICAL BORDERLINE ?

ANNE DE SALES



At the end of last winter, walls in Kathmandu were covered with posters advertising a historical film, *Simarekhā*, “The Borderline”. “You studied History but you have never seen it”, the posters claimed along with the pun, “*Simarekhā* has drawn a historical borderline”. By promising the true History, the advert denounces the falsification that, it claims, has been foisted on the Nepalese public until now. It also underplays the fact that this is a cinematographic fiction: what you will see is true, contrary to what you read or

studied at school, which was not.

Dominant culture or received ideas do not need to be justified. They easily occupy the whole field of common knowledge. Individual interpretations may depart from the main line without being questioned by the majority until there is a visible change. The reasons for this change will not be analysed here. I shall focus rather on one example of the manifestation of change, of its visibility.

Simarekhā was billed as the first Nepali historical film. Even though there might have been other

examples¹, this is the first one to attempt a revised interpretation of a historical event and to be so successful and widely acclaimed. It ran for several months and filled cinema halls to capacity. The director, Kishor Rana Magar, succeeded in dealing with a “serious” topic (to take up a classification used in video rental shops) without discouraging the audience. Films in video rental shops are divided into two main categories in order to help undecided customers for whom the third Art is still rather new: “Love Story” and “Action”. A third category, designated by the slightly depreciative sobriquet of “slow type”, comprises psychological dramas, usually of Western provenance. Two other categories have emerged recently: “Political (*rājnitik*)² and “Historical” (*aitihāsik*).

Among the various posters advertising *Simarekhā*, several show a confrontation between two rows of men, or as on the poster shown here, only two men, their respective chiefs. Dressed in mediaeval outfits, the Thakurs are in black, while the villagers facing them wear white clothing, similar to what rural Gurungs or Magars wear nowadays: a kilt with a wide

belt, a cloth crossed in front, forming a large pocket in the back, a turban wound around the head. The former ride horses, the latter are on foot drawing bows. The opposition is, so to speak, colour coded: there was no “unification” of Nepal, but a victory of the “baddies”, the black ones, the Thakurs, over the “goodies”, the white ones, the indigenous people. The face of a woman, in close up, wearing jewelry and a scarf that identify her as a Magar or a Gurung, hovers near the centre of the poster as if to reassure the prospective

viewer that the story will contain element of romance.

The inverted commas that frame the concept of “unification” subsume the present claim by indigenous populations that the history of their country needs to be revised. The film goes against stereotypes that were transmitted within the dominant culture and reveals the point of view of the populations that consider themselves not unified under the banner of a unanimously accepted king but rather defeated by violence and stratagem.

The analysis of this film needs to trace back the chain of various works that preceded it. The event that is specifically related here is the sixteenth-century conquest of the Gorkha kingdom ruled by a Magar king, by Drabya Shah, the ancestor of the “father of Nepal”, Prithvi Narayan Shah. We are dealing here with one of “the foundational historical narratives of the Nepali Nation”, to take up an expression used by Pratyoush Onta in his study of the creation of the Bir History of the country³.

The conquest of Gorkha was first told by Suryabikram Gyawali who started his series of biographies of the great men of Nepal with Drabya Shah’s biography in 1933. Since then the story has been told in different forms. Only some of them will be considered in the present article. I shall begin by looking at a chapter in a text book for elementary schools before studying a document published by the Yogi Naraharinath, that relates the same event. The two texts present two different visions of kingship. A play by Bhimnidhi Tiwari, *Silānyās*, “The Foundation Stone”, develops a certain conception of the Matwalis and of the Tagadharis, the two basic components of the Nepalese nation. This controversial work led to a novel, *Simarekhā*, by Naru Thapa Magar, and eventually to the film. This historical film itself has a history that brings to light variations in the relationships between political and religious powers.

An image: the winner of the race.

In the same way as Saint Louis is represented dispensing justice under an oak tree, or Joan of Arc is shown expelling English soldiers from France, Nepalese schoolchildren learn that Drabya Shah conquered Gorkha by being the strongest runner in a foot race. The third chapter of a school book, *Hāmro Nepālī Kitāb*, is entitled: “He who won a race became king”⁴.

We learn in this chapter that Nepal was organised in several small states among which the Lamjung kingdom stood out as the most powerful under the rule of the Thakur king Yasobramha Shah. Of his two sons only the elder, in accordance with the rule of primogeniture, would inherit his kingdom. The second son, however, happened to be particularly gifted, both strong and clever. He showed no personal ambition and was led the modest life of a cowherd, devoted to the care of his parents’ livestock, when the prediction of a yogi that he would be a great king determined the course of his life. Since Lamjung would go to the elder brother, a new kingdom was needed for the younger.

And the small neighbouring kingdoms, ruled by the Ghale, offered the most natural target.

The Ghale used to elect their king through competitions. The winner of the final race acceded to the throne for one year. The auspicious day for this election is said to have been Tika day, during the Dasai festival⁵.

Drabya Shah declared his intention of taking part in the race in Liglik, a neighbouring Ghale kingdom. The villagers, first divided about their attitude towards the stranger, ended up accepting him as a competitor. And Drabya Shah, by winning the race, won the kingdom in 1559. We are told that this was the beginning of an irresistible ascent since at the same time he subdued Gorkha, the point of departure for his illustrious descendant’s conquest of Greater Nepal.

As his elder brother, heir of Lamjung, wanted to add Gorkha to his kingdom, Drabya Shah claimed his right to rule over his own conquest. According to the legend, the mother of the two enemy brothers brought them together on the bank of the Chepe river that runs between the two countries. She poured a few drops of her milk in the water and begged her sons never to go against the milk that had nourished them by crossing the river.

The account presents the ancestor of the ruling dynasty as someone who is not motivated by personal or political ambition. He wishes only to follow the destiny that has been foretold and in this way prescribed for him by a religious figure. By trying his luck in the race, Drabya Shah shows respect for local custom. He fights on equal terms with the people whom he wants to conquer and his victory legitimates his accession to the throne. In a way the legend presents the surrender of the autochthonous populations to the good Thakur as being natural, in accordance with the planets; in a word, in the Order of Things. This neat image is part of the cultural kit, so to speak, that is acquired in the course of a few years at school, and even if grown-ups cannot remember the words of the song that tells the legend, they can reproduce the drum beats that are supposed to have accompany the race: “Dharra Dhamma Dharra Dhamma”.

No matter how cleverly the legitimization of the conquest is presented, the fact remains that the story compares two different political systems: on the one hand kingship is open to everyone but questioned every year; on the other hand kingship is hereditary, and is likely to involve either divisions among brothers in the kingdom or new conquests in order to satisfy everyone’s ambitions. This reflexion evolves from the fight between the two brothers and their mother’s mediation that concludes the account. Such an ending could be interpreted as a warning against the internal fights that the great conqueror of Nepal is supposed to have terminated. But this comparison could also be used in favour of the defeated system, raised to the status of ancestor of democracy, as is the case in the film.

It is rather surprising that the Ghale mode of election of a king was remembered in this way by the dominant

culture. It is reminiscent of similar customs brought to light by Philippe Sagant in his analysis of chiefdom in the Tibetan province of Amdo. An annual hunt used to determine the future chief of the community. If the candidate came back empty handed, it was understood not only that he was not a good enough hunter but also that the gods did not approve of him. If on the other hand he was successful, his trophy was the sign that they had invested him with the authority to lead his community for a year. In Sagant's conceptual framework the principles underlying this custom are equally at work in the institution of "great men" in Kirant societies in eastern Nepal. A man is powerful thanks to his competence but he also needs the vitality and the good luck that depend on supernatural powers. High deeds are signs of a divine election. Victory can't be achieved without the gods' agreement. The analysis of this subtle link between political and religious powers deserves a development that cannot be undertaken here⁶. However, a point that should be stressed in the perspective of what follows is that accession to power is achieved without intermediaries. Nobody consecrates the winner.

It is difficult to know whether the legend of the king who won the race is based on actual fact or even how it was born. Its epic inspiration evokes court songs in praise the new rulers who have arrived recently from India. The folklore would have perpetuated such narratives and these themselves found their way into chronicles. Further research is needed to clarify what actually happened during the first encounters between Thakurs and the local populations. One of the documents published by the Yogi Naraharinath in 1965 in his collection of treaties offers a very different interpretation of the same event, in which the role of the Brahmans is presented as a determinant factor.

The "god" of Gorkha, a creature of the Brahmans.

The discoverer of the document does not tell anything about its origin. Entitled "The entry of Drabya Shah to Gorkha" (676), the account is written in a lively style, with concrete details that suggest the work of a storyteller possibly on the basis of several chronicles.

Yasobrahma Shah, king of Lamjung, has three sons and wants to conquer Gorkha for his second son, Drabya Shah. Narayan pandit, a Brahman famous for his high intelligence, is on pilgrimage in the area. Called to the palace, he promises to bring the matter to a successful conclusion: "If I fail, I'll throw my books and my sacred thread in the fire", he says to the king. Resuming his pilgrimage to Gosainkund, he meets on the way another Brahman, Ganesh Pandey, who furnishes him with information about the coveted area.

Himself from Palpa, Ganesh Pandey has come to know the Gorkha region from the time when he accompanied his king, Mukunda Sen, on campaign against this state. The mission failed but Ganesh Pandey has stayed on. This is how we learn that the Khadkā king of Gorkha drinks alcohol and insults the Twice-born, the Tagadharis, by pressing them to do the same. The

latter feel badly treated and are ready to part. Ganesh Pandey seizes the opportunity. Accompanied by a Magar traitor, Ganga Ram Rana Busal, he fetches Drabya Shah for the preparation of the campaign. The aggressors decide that it would be safer first to attack the small Ghale kingdom of Liglikot.

The Ghale king has been ruling for the last ten or twelve years. Although his status has been subject to his victory in a annual race (according to the custom already described), nobody had been able to get the better of this particularly strong king. The Brahmans therefore judge that they will be better off ignoring local custom and attack in order, by the sword (*tarwār*), the dagger (*khukuri*) and the sabre (*khuda*). Drabya Shah and his men win the battle, with heavy losses on both sides.

Then the Thakur army attacks Gorkha. After fighting two weeks in vain, the counsellors decide to resort to strategy. One night, Drabya Shah and a few men enter the palace and kill the Magar king. Drabya Shah is consecrated on the spot, in front of a population that had transferred its loyalty to him.

The Ghale kingdom of Upallokot is the next to fall. Drabya Shah unifies the submitted territories under one banner and becomes the "god of Gorkha". He thanks his counsellors, especially Narayan pandit whom he rewards with land and everything needed to live on it: clothing, utensils, grain, horses, cows, buffaloes and slaves.

Contrary to the version of events contained in the legend, Drabya Shah does not take part in the race. The Ghale king is supposed to be invincible and only violence and deception can defeat the local population. Two new characters, absent in the previous version, appear in this one: the two Brahmans, the true architects of Drabya Shah's victory. Fine strategists, they know how to use the discord within the region on which they have set their sights and the resentment of the Twice-born against the excesses of a tribal king. Moreover they are helped by a Magar traitor, who, we suppose, informs them about the land where the battles will take place. The point here is that the Thakur enters the scene only once everything is ready and victory is almost secured. He seems passive until the two counsellors ask him to fight. When he fights, he fails, and his accession to the throne is thanks to the brahmans' intrigues. This text develops a brahmanic model of kingship, contrary to the model that is implicit in the legend. The king is no longer a man whose physical strength, vitality and skills designate him as a natural chief, somehow divine. He is now a puppet of the brahmans. They appear as the inevitable intermediaries in the king's ascent to the throne. The "god of Gorkha" is clearly presented here as the creature of the priests.

Although political and religious power are still closely linked they are nevertheless distinct and in the hands not of the king but of religious specialists. The political strategy of Narayan pandit is reinforced by a religious ceremony, Purascaran⁷, supposed to orient the planets'

configuration in favour of Thakur success. While it could be understood that is an instrument in the service of politics, it may be more accurate to see religion as the frame within which people make politics. Narayan pandit is seeking his fortune during his pilgrimage. The prospect of a good deal does not cause him to interrupt his religious journey to Gosainkund, but rather gives him an opportunity to cultivate fruitful contacts and realise his nascent plans. His return to Lamjung and his performance of the ritual of Purascaran, gives him the chance of becoming more deeply involved in the affairs of the kingdom and of officialising his enterprise. We shall later see a more radical discourse on the use of religion in politics.

The fights against Liglikot and even more so against Gorkha are described as particularly violent. According to this account, as we have seen, without the brahman's stratagems, the Thakur would not have defeated the tribals, who are both physically stronger than them and may have been more familiar with the country. How are we to understand that the king emerges from this account no better than being totally dependent on the Brahman for his victory? The various accounts of the conquest are organised around two recurrent qualities, cunning intelligence and physical strength. While the brahman masters the first one and the tribals are endowed with the second, the Thakur king excels in neither.

The first reason that comes to mind is that these accounts are written by brahman who are attempting to substantiate their model of kingship. In order to show how much their advice is needed by the king, they have to present the enemy as invincible by strength. They also have to deprive the king of the epic power with which the legend endows him and that enabled him to conquer all by his own divine strength.

The two paradigms of intelligence and strength are also very present in a third version of Drabya Shah's conquest, a play written by Tiwari and published in 1967, two years after the appearance of the yogi's account.

The Foundation Stone: a play burnt in public

The play *Silanyas* obviously takes up the same sources as the document. The author takes advantage of the personality of the dissolute Magar king who ends up turning the population against him.

In the third act of the play a public crier beats the drum and announces that from now on every household will have to give a share of home-made beer and a selected piece of meat from every pig killed at home; as if this were not enough, every bride must visit the palace before her marriage. This announcement causes lively discussion among the villagers, who start questioning the justness of the king. The following act develops stereotypes that are respectively associated with the Twice-born and the Matwali.

In front of the palace, the Magar king Mansingh is in the middle of a discussion with his secretary, Magar Ale, and with a Brahman, a Chetri, and a Ghale. In

awkward Nepali, the king questions the caste hierarchy: "Mansingh: What is this about Bahun? About Chetri, about Ale, about Ghale? (Turning to the right) If I cut your skin, you'll bleed. (Turning to the left) If I cut your skin you'll bleed. Blood is blood. Skin is skin. You'll be hurt and you, you'll be hurt. All this is nonsense.

The Brahman: Sire, we are not the authors of these rules. The religious caste order has been going on since ancient times. How do you want to replace it?"

The king turns towards the Ghale and the Ale Magar who defend the caste system by referring to it being specifically human:

"Mansingh: (...) What do you have to say? He! Ghale!

Ghale: Sire, men are men. They are not like sheep that stay mixed together. Bahuns stay with Bahuns, Chetri stay with Chetri, Ale stay with Ale, Ghale stay with Ghale. Like that, there won't be any quarelling.

Mansingh: And you Ale! What do you have to say?

Ale Magar: From father to son, for generations, the Tagadharis are separate, the Matwalis are separate. The Matwalis respect the Tagadharis.

Mansingh: What are you telling me here? I made you my secretary and you show no wisdom whatsoever! (...)"

Then the king drinks more beer and offers some to the Chetri: "You don't drink beer? Why don't you? You eat curd. We drink beer. This is the same. Fermented milk turns into curd exactly in the same way as fermented grain turns into beer (...) Eh! Ale! Everybody is the same. Beat the drum (to announce this). Who is inferior? Who is superior? Men are all equals. Brahman's and Chetris' wives, if they are unhappy with their husbands, may marry again. Why not? Beat the drum."

Towards the end of the act, the Brahman tries to reason with the king: "If we stay with you as your courtiers (*bhārdhār*), we shall give you good advice, our rules will be applied and you won't lose". But Mansingh rejects the brahman's offer. Getting even drunker, he laughs loudly in mockery of the Brahman's lack of wit and ends the act by shouting: "May only the Matwalis stay in this kingdom!" It is clear now that the Magar king is cutting himself off. He refuses that his kingdom be converted to a Hindu state as the brahman suggested and rejects the integration recommended by the Ghale and the Ale secretary.

The whole play and this scene in particular deserve an analysis that cannot be undertaken here, suffice to say that the work was on the curriculum of universities and colleges till 1995. Of the thirteen editions that were made, the last four were funded by the government that made of it a piece of the national literature. Recently the portrait of the Magar king depicted in this scene was judged by militants for the Magar cause to be an insult against their people. At the beginning of the nineties, the Nepal Magar Association (Nepal Magar Mahasangh) asked that the play be removed from school and

university curricula. Since the government kept ignoring the claim, the Association openly burnt the play in the conference hall of its 5th national meeting, in Dang in February 1995.

The Magar king is indeed excessive and provocative. He behaves like a drunkard and claims *ius primae noctis*. His poor Nepali completes the image of a rough king who rejects the help of educated brahmins expert in the art of ruling. There is, however, another side to the character invented by Tiwari. The fool-king also utters truths even though they sound sacrilegious to the Brahmins: are we not all made of flesh and blood in the same way? Is the caste hierarchy as natural as that? Why would the fermentation of grain be impure and not the fermentation of milk? These questions remain even after the king has been silenced. In the post-revolutionary context of the nineties, militancy cannot hear these possible echoes of a literary work that was also a consecrated example of the panchayat culture that they wanted to abolish. They saw in this portrait of the king a mockery of all their kin. These reactions are not exempt from a certain puritanism that inflexibly rejects the least evocation of drunken revelry, gay feasts and free love, familiar stereotypes attached to indigenous village people. The Magar king alone defends them loudly and clearly before being betrayed by his own people.

The following acts show the Brahmins working at the conversion of the population as this happened to be the only way to conquer kingdoms otherwise invincible by the armed forces: "Magars are invincible, like cocks they keep fighting even though they are blind with blood" (66). Drabya Shah is said to have become king of Liglikot by winning the race and then to have been crowned king of Majkot-Gorkha in front of a population that was secretly converted by brahmins spies.

Let us consider this "foundational narrative of the nation". As in the document published by Yogi Naraharinath, the conquest is presented here as a game in which strength and bravery lose in front of subterfuge. Although the autochthonous people are depicted as rough human beings, comparable to animals, they still show an exemplary courage, that makes them admirable, especially in the chronicle of a war. It was suggested above that a reason to enhance indigenous strength was to demonstrate that the help of the brahmins was needed in an otherwise impossible task. Another reason may be more precisely at work here. The play was rightly understood as aiming at the building of the Nepalese nation. In this process the indigenous people are the backbone of the country, and they must be part of the National Bir History, although on an inferior level. The Tagadharis are superior to them in intelligence as various institutions, distinguishing between men and between food, show. This capacity for discrimination is also at work in long-term plans that happen to be more efficient than blunt confrontation. The guardians of these rules and the finest strategists are the brahmins, while the Thakurs, well advised by them, have to be good warriors. It remains that physical

strength is distinguished from spiritual qualities and submitted to cunning intelligence. Local populations are shown to be the raw material of which the Nepalese nation is made. It is not a matter of getting rid of brute force but of civilizing it by means of Hindu rules and integrating it with a superior humanity. It is precisely this vision that the novel *Simarekhā* challenges.

Simarekhā

The author of the novel, Naru Thapa Magar and the director of the film, Kishor Rana Magar have similar backgrounds. Both are natives of a district in the mid-West, Baglung, but were partly brought up in India because, like many men in the area, their fathers were serving in the Indian army. Kishor Rana went to Bombay to enrol in the Navy, but was unable to join the service and was left jobless in the world capital of cinema. He started to work in a production office until he found himself behind a camera. When he came back to Nepal, it was with the idea of making films that would be specifically Nepalese and not simple imitations of the Hindi films that are invading the market. He wanted to tackle Nepalese concerns such as the building of his nation.

Naru Thapa has now responsibilities in the Nepalese Secret Service. He explained in an interview with the journal *Rastriya Samanantar* that he wanted to go against the pervasive notion that "only winners have History" (*itithās jitneko huncha*) and give the subjected populations a voice. The novel claims to tell the true story of Drabya Shah's conquest. When, in the third chapter, it is clear that the balance of power between the Magars and Thakurs is reversed in favour of the latter, the author takes some historical distance and writes: "The descendants of Micakhan and Kacakhan⁸ are making their history. With the blood of men borderlines are drawn then erased. If Drabya Shah did not do that, Nepal would not be". The novel does not question the conquest but aims rather to reveal how it really happened. The title of the play and of the novel are nicely contrasted in this respect. While "The Foundation Stone" evokes the founding union on which the Nepalese nation is built, "the Borderline" brings to light the violent confrontation at the origin of the nation.

Both the novel and its cinematic version develop a parallel between the village of Liglikot, where the young Ghale Magar king⁹ is assisted by an elderly tribal priest, and the Lamjung palace where the king Yasobrahma holds a council with brahmins about the succession of his kingdom. We are first in Liglikot in 1549. We are told that Nepal is made up of various small states ruled by "Mongol" lineages. Private property does not exist. Neither rich nor poor, everyone enjoys a home and lives on natural products. Women are given a prominent position, designated as "matriarchy" (*mātripradhān*). The political organisation is presented as the ancestor of democracy probably on the grounds that the custom of the yearly election of the king through a competition is open to all. The king has

a mentor, a guru, the tribal priest, who is said to school his pupil in certain secret methods of fighting.

The Liglikot king, "strong as a tiger" is the villagers' pride. But he is shown to behave as an ordinary man. The first scene catches him on his way to the place where a pig had just been killed, because he particularly likes fatty pork. But his mother stops him and reminds him of everything he has to do: cut grass, take care of the animals and so on. Villagers joke about his appetite. In this way we are introduced to the simplicity of an accessible king and to the authority of women. However the king is not quite an ordinary man. Two hunters coming back from their expedition with a dead deer give him the head and the skin of their quarry. The king is shown to enjoy a natural authority among his kinsmen. The scene is set up in a charming and peaceful village where harmony reigns under a blue sky with snow-covered peaks in the background.

Contrasted with this peasant good humor, the following scene takes place in the Lamjung palace among rigid characters in magnificent heavy robes, wearing worried expressions on their faces. The king expresses his fear of weakening his kingdom by dividing it among his sons and the queen insists on her younger son having his own kingdom. The brahman Narayan Aryal suggests the conquest of Liglikot and it is decided that Drabya Shah should be called back from the pastures in order to start the campaign. The first appearance of the prince suggests that he is the counterpart of the Ghale king. He is shown building a cowshed, dressed like an ordinary peasant, but his tall imposing stature and his strength already make him a natural chief. The Thakur king, even though he is on the wrong side as his black outfit makes clear in the film, will be spared by this revised version of the conquest.

The real villains of the piece are the brahmins. Both the novel and the film depict in detail the hidden but steady infiltration of the tribal kingdoms by the Hindu cause carried by the brahmins with the help of Magar traitors. The chief spy whom Narayan sends to Liglik, Chandreswar, gets close to the Magar priest and healer by pretending that he is wounded. He becomes the priest's servant and is in a good position to set a trap and kill his benefactor. When the dying priest, impaled on sharp stakes, calls for help, the brahman retorts: "Why are you shouting? You're brave, aren't you? You don't need help! In politics there is no sin (...) In the open, you are like my father, but in politics you're my enemy". When the old priest mentions the gods who will not forgive such betrayal, the brahman reveals his view on what he is supposed to serve: "Religion is created by men for their political purposes". The priest then invokes History, which will remember the brahman's treachery, but the triumphant assassin declares: "History is written by the winners. I make history. This is my History. My name will be great". At last, before burying his victim under a last spadeful of earth, he announces the imminent victory of Drabya Shah over

the Magar king and ends his speech with what appears to be his motto "If strength does not win, ruse will win" (*balle na jite challe jitlā*).

The extreme cynicism of the brahman's statements leave no doubt about the militant purpose of both novel and film, precisely on their anti-brahmanism. This scene, where the priest, a wise and generous man, in favour of opening his country to newcomers, falls into the trap set by the brahman is elaborately developed and emotionally charged. The brahman is evil or deception incarnate. He denies all human feelings, all morality and even the gods. Politics alone is his religion. His attitude stands at the other extreme of the spectrum we observed at the beginning of this article with the epic model of kingship in which religious and political powers were merged. We saw how the brahmanic vision of kingship drives a wedge between the two. However, the brahmins in the Yogi's document as well as in the play by Tiwari do not go as far as denying religion. Their politics remain within a religious framework. Here in the novel and in the film, political power stands by itself, aloof from any religious pretention or even ethical concern.

Once again ruse and more precisely, trickery, win over physical strength. One of the last scenes is very expressive in this respect. The villagers are celebrating the victory of their king, forgetting about their enemies. This is the moment that the Thakur army chooses to go into action. The Magar king and Drabya Shah have been fighting for some time when Narayan, who is attending the fight, asks a soldier to stab the Magar in the back and finish him off. Drabya Shah turns towards the brahman and blames him for having killed a warrior such as the Magar king:

Narayan: Two knives can't be put in the same sheath.

Drabya Shah: It's possible to make a smaller knife.

Narayan: A khukuri will never be a khadga.

Drabya Shah: I'm sad. He was brave and a good fighter."

Until the last minute the brahman is leading the game. His way of finishing off the Ghale king makes the Thakur both innocent and at the same time somehow of secondary importance. The image of the khukuri, a tool as well as a weapon, represents the Magar nation while the sabre refers to the Hindu kingship. The Thakur king pleads for an integration of the Magars into the nation even on an inferior level. But the brahman's retort, full of contempt, rejects the assimilation of the two nations, as if they were two different species. This raises a doubt about the possibility of one nation, a question very much at the centre of modern ethnic claims.

The film is in two parts: dances and love songs performed by villagers in a bucolic setting give a certain rhythm to the first part. But after the break, the second part develops a very fast succession of murderous fights represented in a hyperrealistic way: people are shown dying very slowly in the midst of general bloodshed.

This organisation suggests the massacre of a paradise, of a golden age that preceded the Hindu invasion.

The picture of the Magar village before the Thakur conquest is reminiscent of European utopias in the 18th century that reconsidered the concepts of family, sexuality, property rights, government and religion. An egalitarian society is forged, free from the constraints of the private property and gender inequality. Divorce is allowed with the help of a village council presided over by a woman who dispenses justice (an affair between secondary characters shows the harmonious functioning of this ideal society).

The guardian of this system is the tribal priest. He teaches a religion of nature and of the ancestors and shows more concern for ethical values than for liturgy. He contributes to make of this village community an enlightened society, far from the stereotypes of obscurantism usually associated with tribal populations.

The tribal priest is a new element in the novel and in the film compared to the three previous narrations: the legend, the document and the play. This character next to the Ghale king looks like the counterpart of the brahman who serves the Thakur king. It makes the comparison of the two societies more balanced: the tribal government too is bicephalic, with an executive king and a thinking brain, the priest. But the dyad formed by the young warrior instructed by his guru is not only informed by the parallel with the Hindu government, but is strikingly reminiscent of Kung Fu films that are very popular in Nepal. The master has a supernatural force that can be acquired not only through a certain physical discipline but also by respecting ethical rules and achieving wisdom. The political dimension of power here is underplayed.

The presence of the tribal priest in the film is not only new compared to the other versions of the conquest. It is new in the presentation by Magar militants of their own culture. It seems that ethnic claims have seldom referred to their traditional priests as an institution that should be defended. They do fight for the protection of their "language", of their "culture" but not for their local priests. This is somehow surprising since these priests are often the guardians of the tradition of the community, in so far as they recite origin myths and perform rituals. But they do not seem to be identified as such. The fact that the tribal priest is not isolated as an element that can be added to the list that is supposed to describe a local culture would suggest either that it is not important at all or that it resists folklorisation and cannot be easily objectified.

The film, on the contrary, gives a very prominent part to the tribal priest. This new image is impregnated with romanticism. In the ordinary life of a village, priests are not (directly) consulted on political matters. Although their ritual action may have political consequences, they keep their distance from political power. Only somebody conceiving this culture from the outside, who has experienced a modern way of conceiving the two powers as separate could think of the tribal priest

as a political councillor. Then the priest is shown next to the king in order to demonstrate, somewhat artificially, that the two powers were merged in ancient times.

The importance of nature, specifically manifest in the film, needs to be located in the context of the reconstituted utopia. The Magar peasants emerge as noble savages in a pristine world. The author of the novel speaks in this respect of the purity of the film: "In this film there is pure Nepalese art, Nepalese culture, Nepalese history". He then develops his statement with a list of symbols that express Nepal: "The film shows the Nepalese soil, the air, the rivers, the trails, the plain and the mountains, the resting places and the passes... There is in this film a Nepalese plough, a sickle and its sheath, a mat and dried spinach, nettles and maize porridge, a drum, Magar dances and a woman in love."

This reconstructed image of "true" Nepalese culture, featured in travel brochures for the benefit of tourists, is invoked here as a measure of authenticity, a sort of proof that the version of history purveyed is the true story. Landscape, tools, objects and food seen in the countryside, which are still commonplaces for the majority of Nepalese, constitute the form that is given to this new history, which stands for the truth. They are the hallmarks of a genuine culture and history. Of course, this reconstitution has the character of folklorisation for an observer or analyst who watches the process from the outside: a folklore that is, ironically, partly made up of myths borrowed from both the West (the European Utopia) and the Far East (the warrior-sage), and mirror-images of the same Hindu society that has been rejected (the tribal priest as the counterpart of the Brahman).

But this observation fails to do justice to the emotional impact that this highly successful film has had. To take the example of the student, once a schoolmaster, who helped me with the translation of some of the works cited here: he was completely scandalised by the discovery that Drabya Shah may not have taken part in a footrace and that his accession to the throne was the outcome of nothing more than an ordinary political victory. He felt cheated and showed his eagerness to know more about the populations that had been conquered. What the film shows is that history is not monolithic; that it may be called into question and subjected to a range of interpretations; in short, that work can start. *Simarekhā* may, after all be a historical borderline.

Notes :

1 "Prem Pinda" is another example of a historical film in the restricted sense that it takes place in the past, in Rana times. But it seems to have no pretention beyond the love story that forms the central plot.

2 Just before *Simarekha* was shown, one of the largest cinema hall in Kathmandu presented *Baldan*, a film about the 1990 uprising.

3 See Onta 1997.

4 The other chapters are devoted to edifying accounts of famous characters of Nepal like Prithvi Narayan Shah, the mountaineer Pasang Lhamu Sherpa, and the sculptor Arniko.

Other chapters present great men from world History, about Abraham Lincoln, Einstein and Leonardo da Vinci. There are also debates such as the advantages of salaried job over a business, which is more lucrative but always more risky.

⁵ It seems that several localities in the Gorkha area were ruled by Ghale who remain largely unknown. They probably were of Tibetan origin. The fact that the competition took place during Dasai is curious in view of the violent confrontations between the Ghale and the Hindu invaders (see Lecomte on the subject). There are Ghale settlements in the North of Gorkha that have not been researched so far.

⁶ See for instance Sagant's first article on the subject in 1981 ("La tête haute: maison, rituel et politique au Népal oriental." in *L'homme et la maison en Himalaya*, G. Toffin, L. Barré, C. Jest (eds)) and his last book, *Les neuf forces de l'homme*, Société d'ethnologie, Nanterre, 1999.

⁷ When India imposed an economical blocus on Nepal, just before the 1990 uprising, king Birendra ordered this ceremony (Mahesh Raj Pant, personal communication).

⁸ Micakhan and Khacakhan are supposed to be ancestors of the Shah dynasty, who fled from Citaur and came to Lamjung and Gorkha (see Lecomte on the subject).

⁹ According to Gurung historians, the king of Liglig was Ghale and his population Tamu (see the English translation of Pignède, pp.486-487). There might have been Magar as well but this is the first mention of Ghale Magar that I came across. The king of Gorkha, on the contrary appears to be Magar in all sources, although his name Khadka is not. The Thakur rule had already been long established in many parts of the middle hills.

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CHICKENSHIT & ASH - A VISIT TO PARADISE¹

A Film about the encounter of Two Tamang Men with "the Western World"

GABRIELE TAUSCHER

Editor and sound: Karl Prossliner

Camera, co-editor, concept: Peter Freiss

Concept, script, ethnology: Gabriele Tauscher

Synopsis

Chayarsaba is a remote Tamang village in the middle hills of Nepal. It can be reached only by a two day walk, has no electricity, no machines and no modern means of communication. It is a village in which for centuries an archaic tradition influenced by the great traditions of Buddhism and Hinduism has lived on, and where changes resulting from the impact of western civilization are very recent. To live in this village means undertaking hard physical work in order to have enough to eat and to serve the ancestors and the gods who guarantee life and protection from illness and natural disaster. The people of this Himalayan village have recently started to long to be in another world, where in their imagination money brings happiness and machines relief from work.

The shaman and the headman of Chayarsaba visit the other world in Vienna, where they encounter this other world. For them this Austrian village seems like a kind of paradise, a place where sky and earth have no ending, where everything is shining as in a mirror, where they can watch people eat in abundance, sit or stroll around and where all work is done by machines. But they are also puzzled by where the food comes from, since they see no fields.

They are intrigued by the god hanging on a cross, and confused by the perfectly reproduced statues of humans in the shop windows which wear clothes but do not breath. They are surprised by the overweight people who use machines to try to get rid of their fat. They are shattered to find that many elderly parents are abandoned and entrusted to the care of others.

Through the words of the people of Chayarsaba we get to know part of their life in the mountains of Nepal, and through the eyes of the shaman and the headman we experience our western industrialized world from a new perspective - a Tamang perspective.

Documentation Process

Michael Oppitz in the foreword of his book *Kunst der Genauigkeit*² regarding his work on the film *Schamanen im Blinden Land* noted the difficulty of bringing together a foreign world and a familiar one, or communicating experiences made by one side to the other. During my lengthy stay as anthropologist in the village Chayarsaba, where I had gone to study Tamang social structure and religious tradition³, I also had the experience of the encounter with a foreign world very different from my own. I was confronted with the limits of comprehension - for example when dealing with supernatural phenomena which for the Tamang are real and essential - and with the difficulty of expressing in words my observations or my experience of their world. I also realized that I often compared 'them' to 'us', and they, through my presence, showed a great curiosity about 'us'. So I thought that reversing the situation might provide an interesting experience for both sides which might also yield new information concerning their *Weltbild*. In practice my idea was to arrange an encounter for some Tamang with our industrialized world to let them try to understand and explain 'us'. This would be an experimental attempt to bridge two different worlds - and the film could be an adequate



means in which to attempt this.

Together with the cameraman Peter Freiss I developed a concept for a documentary film on the confrontation of the archaic world of the Tamang with the world of the industrialized west, as seen from the perspective of the Tamang.

In the film the (mainly western) audience should first be introduced to the culture and way of life of the Tamang of Chayarsaba. We did not want to create a romantic picture of a life close to nature in a beautiful natural environment, nor did we intend to explain their culture through an anthropological approach. Our aim was to show a realistic picture of the arduous life of the people of Chayarsaba, how they view and experience it and how they explain their own historical and religious background. Afterwards two Tamang were to visit Vienna and experience the life of a central European city. We wanted to show how they perceived and explained what they encountered.

From a methodological viewpoint this film comes close to using what David Macdougall described as the guidelines of "participatory cinema" and which lies beyond the mere observational in ethnographic filmmaking. "Here the filmmaker acknowledges his entry upon the world of his subjects and yet asks them to imprint directly upon the film their own culture. (...) By entering actively into the world of his subjects, he can provoke a greater flow of information about them. By giving them access to the film, he makes possible the correction, additions, and illuminations that only their response to the material can elicit. Through such an exchange a film can begin to reflect the ways in which the subjects perceive the world."⁴

We had planned a shooting time of eight weeks in Nepal and four weeks in Austria. We had to remain flexible and to collect together with the people of Chayarsaba as much material as possible to choose from for the editing. The shooting schedule was kept fairly open to allow for spontaneous reactions to unforeseen situations. The main outline was kept simple and mainly concerned a framework which would illustrate the themes dealt with in the film. A large part of the film material consisted of detailed interviews in front of the camera with people in Chayarsaba and with the two protagonists during their journey in the west. Every interview, every discussion, and all remarks were translated word by word. We tried to stay as close as possible to their way of expressing themselves. The original idea was to have subtitles in the film so as not to impose a foreign voice on people, but in the final editing we realized that the translations for the subtitles had to be short and could only be basic. Thus, in order not to lose their language we chose to use narration.

The themes chosen for this film were those which prevail in everyday life of all people in all cultures, such as how to get food to eat, how to deal with age and illness, what religion is based on, and what the significance of birth and death is. The two Tamang who traveled to Austria were intended to have the opportunity to

locate their new experiences in relation to their lives in Nepal.

In the film we see the people in Chayarsaba make their living as farmers using traditional agricultural techniques. Different men and women of the village talk about their personal fears and dreams, and about their own life histories. The Buddhist priest explains a ritual, a sick woman speaks about the reason for her illness and the shaman gives an account of his own history and function as a healer. One of the main characteristics of the situation of the people of Chayarsaba is the absence of many of the men. They do not possess enough fields for their subsistence and many of the men have to work as labourers in India. This means for most of the women that they have to cope alone with the bringing up of the children and with the agricultural work. The men coming back from India have brought back descriptions of an ideal 'developed' world with an easier life. The beginnings of a rupture with the traditional life can be observed, mainly among the young men and women who, for example, no longer wish to continue with the traditional marriage system of bilateral cross-cousin marriage, where the parents choose the marriage partners to maintain old marriage alliances. Young mothers wish for their own children a different future than their own and at the same time fear that their husbands will not return home from India.

Finally two Tamang visit the idealized world, in this case the city of Vienna.

In Vienna many sites were chosen beforehand for filming in accordance with the themes and to allow a wide spectrum of views of the industrialized way of life (and also due to the difficulties in obtaining the necessary film permits). But we intended to stay flexible and to adjust to the spontaneous wishes of the two Tamang visitors. However the two men from Chayarsaba in Austria never expressed any wish or preference as to what they would like to see. And they never openly expressed any criticism of us or of the intense program we had prepared. In fact they remained very passive and behaved as Tamang guests should behave: doing what they are requested to do and adjusting to the life of their host. They took the work on the film very seriously and showed great patience during hours of discussions in front of the camera when they tried to explain and to answer to our many questions.

The two protagonists selected for the travel to Austria were the two official representatives of the village: the shaman (bonpo) who also is the priest of the fertility-cults (dhami) and the headman (adakche) of the village. According to our main criterion of selection they had to be deeply rooted in their village life. The shaman (62 years old) represented the elder generation rooted in the old tradition, worried about the maintenance of the old structures and the preservation of the orally transmitted knowledge. The headman, fifteen years younger, had worked for many years in India and had great respect for western education and technical development. Even though he was well acquainted with the ancient tradi-

tions, he considered them to be “backward”.

In Austria the shaman proved to be a natural actor, who loved to perform in front of the camera. The headman sometimes felt ashamed about the behavior of his companion which was not always appropriate, such as spitting openly or squatting in the street. The shaman as a result of his free and easy behaviour was often the centre of attention; the headman could not understand the special sympathy this evoked in us and sometimes became slightly jealous.

Their statements given during their trip to Austria clearly reflected their way of thinking and often expressed confusion. The mayor endeavoured to give good explanations, the shaman more often expressed emotions and sometimes with his humour made fun of us.

Before filming, we thought we would have to be very cautious not to transform the two Tamang who travelled to Austria into something exotic and ridiculous. The practice showed that even though they were constantly being filmed they never lost their self-esteem and stayed surprisingly self-confident. The presence of the camera seemed as if it was very natural to them. The statements they made looked genuine, and at times their comments were extremely accurate. At the end of the stay in Vienna we asked them their opinion of our constant practice of questioning and interviewing them during the entire film process. Their answer was clear and simple: “It is good to ask, there are many questions. You want to know what we think about the things which you have not understood, therefore you have to ask. I too don't understand everything, I also have to ask.”

Notes :

1 The present film was financed by the Austrian Film Fund, the Austrian Television (ORF) and Abteilung Kultur Niederösterreich. The shooting took place from January to April 1997, the editing of the film was completed in April 1998. The German title of the film is: “Huehnerdreck & Asche - ein Besuch im Paradies.”

2 M. Oppitz (1989), *Kunst der Genauigkeit*. Trickster Verlag, München, p. 7.

3 The field research to write the PhD Thesis was undertaken in Chayarsaba, district Dolakha (Nepal), from 1986-87: “Meme Khor - Kreis der Ahnen. Gesellschaft und soziale Reproduktion der Tamang von Chayarsaba”, Unpublished thesis, 1992, Vienna.

4 See D. Macdougall, 1975, “Beyond Observational Cinema”, in Paul Hockings (ed.), *Principles of Visual Anthropology*, Mouton, The Hague, Paris, pp. 109 - 124.

BOOK REVIEWS

A. PROKSCH ed., 1995, *Images of a Century: The Changing Townscapes of the Kathmandu Valley, Kathmandu: GTZ (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit) GmbH and UDLE (Urban Development Through Local Efforts Project). 128pp, 98 plates, 8 maps, glossary.*

REVIEW BY DAVID N. GELLNER

This book is the published version of a photographic exhibition entitled 'Images of a City: The Old Townscape of Kathmandu and Lalitpur, 1919-1992', held in Kathmandu in 1992. There are brief introductory essays to each section, on religious places in the Valley (Franz-Karl Ehrhard), on the Dharahara ('Bhimsen's Folly') and its surroundings (Prayag Raj Sharma), on the Tundhikhel and its perimeter (Mahesh Chandra Regmi), on the 'heart' of Kathmandu (i.e. Hanuman Dhoka, Indra Chowk, New Road, Asan) (Annick Hollé), on the Bagmati (Huta Ram Baidya), on Patan (Madhan Lal Karmacharya), on Bhaktapur Durbar Square (Niels Gutschow), and on Rana palaces (Eric Theophile). There is, in addition, a fluent introductory essay by Kanak Mani Dixit which summarizes the historical social changes and their accelerating ecological impact in the Valley.

It is the photographs themselves which form the heart of the book. There are many photographs which show the devastation of the earthquake of 1934 and there are many others which document what was there before. Particularly striking are a series of before and after pictures on facing pages. For example, on pp. 32-3 we see the view to the north from Bhimsen's tower in the late 1920s. Apart from a few neo-classical palaces in the distance the dense townscape of Kathmandu is a harmonious blend of tiled roofs and brick walls with only the occasional white-plastered front. In the foreground is the large courtyard of Te Bahal with its temple of Sankata (roofed in corrugated iron) and other religious structures. The same view in the 1990s is radically altered. To one side looms the RNAC building; in every direction are concrete houses of different sizes pushing skywards at different rates and in different styles. The courtyard of Te Bahal is still there. The temple of Sankata has even been improved with beaten copper roofing. But of the houses in the courtyard only two remain in the same proportions and style as before. On pp. 36-7 one sees the same contrast, but looking south. The difference between the 1920s and the 1990s is simply stated: where before there were fields, with one or two homesteads, almost as far as the eye could see, now there is unplanned suburban sprawl. For the social historian there is much to treasure. A parade on the Tundhikhel from 1883 has captured a straggle of onlookers as well as a washerman's clothes spread out in the foreground. There is a pair of photo-

graphs from 1915 showing soldiers and porters assembling on the Tundhikhel to be sent to India in support of the Allied war effort; the clothes and the bare feet of the porters are vivid testimony to their position in the military hierarchy. In a similar vein, the photograph of a Rana family crossing the Bagmati on elephants en route to a wedding in Patan. In the crowd packing the central crossroads of Asan Tol for the Janbahadyo (Seto Matsyendra) chariot festival there appears to be a solitary Sikh in the bottom right hand corner. A picture from before the 1960s of Khasti/Baudha stupa the author(s) of the captions unfortunately continue to add the Hindu '-nath' to the Buddhist shrines of Swayambhu and Baudha- shows a Tamang ploughing in the foreground (see the too-little-known article by Peter Webster, 'To Plough or not to Plough? A Newar Dilemma: Taboo and Technology in the Kathmandu Valley, Nepal' *Pacific Viewpoint* 22:99-135, 1981). The photographs of a feast for the poor on the Tundhikhel, probably in 1910 after Chandra Shamsher's return from London, and of the crowd assembled on the Tundhikhel in 1924 to hear the announcement of the end of slavery are equally remarkable.

On many occasions it would have been good if more information had been supplied to the reader. Who took the photograph of the Akash Bhairab temple in the 1930s and what were all the people waiting for? Why is the Annapurna temple in Asan enveloped in a 'ceremonial net of puffed rice'? Is the 'annual festival' of Yatkha Bahal the displaying of gods during Gunla? Who is the (presumably) Rana gentleman in three-piece suit and trilby posing in front of the Bungadyo/Matsyendra chariot in the 1940s? What was the occasion for local people to assemble on top of the Lagankhel stupa in Lalitpur/Patan? What are the 'procession' and 'festive occasion' in Hanuman Dhoka shown on pp.63-4 if not Indra Jatra? In one case there is a demonstrable error: the statue of Yognarendra Malla in front of the Lalitpur palace is incorrectly, though in line with popular belief, described as being Siddhi Narasingh Malla, Yognarendra's grandfather.

Compared to Kathmandu, Lalitpur (Patan) and Bhaktapur receive relatively little attention. Is this just because fewer photographs of them survive? It would be good to be told.

Such cavils aside, this is a wonderful collection of photographs and all involved are to be congratulated on publishing it.

S. von der HEIDE ed., *Changing Faces of Nepal. The Glory of Asia's Past*, Kathmandu, Ratna Pustak Bhandar (for the UNESCO Division of Cultural Heritage and Himal Asia), 1997.

REVIEW BY GÉRARD TOFFIN

This book is the catalogue of an exhibition held at UNESCO (Paris), 1997-1998, of photos concerning old Kathmandu Valley. Some sixty photographs, mostly 16 x 20 cm, are reproduced. They were taken by the Citrakars of Bhimsen Sthan (Kathmandu) from the beginning of the twentieth century onward. The oldest ones date from 1909, the most recent (the royal wedding procession of the then Crown Prince Birendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev) from 1970. As explained in the valuable introduction written by Susanne von der Heide, the members of this family of the southern part of the capital belong to the Newar caste of painters and may be considered as the pioneers of early photography in Nepal. They were employed from early times by the Rana rulers and other powerful families. One of them, Dirga Man (1877-1951), even had the chance to travel to Europe in 1908 with Chandra Shamsheer and to buy some English and German cameras. Such an association with rulers was not exceptional. Another Citrakar of Kathmandu, Bhaju Man, formed part of the entourage during Jang Bahadur's trip to England and France in 1850. He was the first Newar artist to travel to the West. These Citrakar artists were often painters as well. Most of them set up private studios in the capital.

Broadly speaking, the photos can be divided into four categories. 1) Monuments: the pictures of important Rana palaces (Lal Durbar, Seta Durbar, Singha Durbar), from inside and outside, are already well known to specialists and often displayed in Kathmandu for tourists and travellers. Views of religious monuments: Taleju temple of Kathmandu (1911), Bhaktapur (1915) and Lalitpur (1920) Durbar square, Bhimsen temple in Kathmandu (1928), Nasal Chowk inside of Hanuman Dhoka Palace (1916), Bodnath stupa (1913), etc., are also numerous. A large number of them were taken immediately before the devastating earthquake of 1934. They are therefore of great interest. 2) Portraits of Ranas, Shahs, and other officials. These photos, often already published in various books, recall the pictures of Rana families taken by the British photographers residing in India such as Bourne and Sheperd of Calcutta. There are most fascinating. One never tires of looking at these self-assured faces, martial moustaches, contemptuous attitudes and extravagant clothes. 3) Official and State ceremonies: These photographs are of exceptional interest, for example the photo on page 82 shows the visit of King Mahendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev to Bhimsen temple in Kathmandu with representatives of the Malla family in 1962, and page 84 shows the then Crown Prince Birendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev at his *bratabandha* ceremony in April 1963. Most of

them are to my knowledge published here for the first time. 4) Citrakars of Kathmandu and Newar life: the collection is smaller but of great value, i.e., pp. 80-81, pictures of the Citrakar family of Bhimsen Sthan with festive dress and gorgeous ornaments. Page 43, the photography of the *samyak* in Yaktha Bahal, Kathmandu, taken around 1920, is remarkable. I have never seen it before. Unfortunately, the Buddha statues are not visible. Besides their artistic quality and charm, these pictures are precious records of living history. They are unique anthropological documents for the study of Nepalese traditional or neo-classical architecture, Rana rule and the past life of the Kathmandu Valley. It is hoped that other private archives of glass plates will be disclosed in the future and more official photographs from Narayanhiti or Hanuman Dhoka royal palaces will be published.

PHOTO ARCHIVES

REFLECTED PICTURES

VISUAL ANTHROPOLOGY OF NEPAL AT THE VOELKERKUNDEMUSEUM IN ZUERICH MAJAN GARLINSKI

Sometimes it is indispensable to look back for the future. I would like to give a short overview on the processes in the fields of Visual Anthropology at the Voelkerkundemuseum of Zürich University, particularly since 1991, when Michael Oppitz became director of the museum, as his extensive experience and keen sense for pictorial documents paved the way for Visual Anthropology at an institutional level. Although I will concentrate on the period of the nineties, the previous years should also be covered if we are to understand the paradigmatic changes. Geographically I will focus on the Himalayas, with particular attention to Nepal.

Between 1972 and 1990 aspects of the Himalayan cultures were presented in six different exhibitions at the Voelkerkundemuseum. The most important of these was the great 1984 exhibition *Nepal - Leben und Ueberleben* (Nepal - Life and Survival)¹. It was, like most of the other five, realized by Martin Brauen. The above mentioned exhibition was completed by a remarkable Nepali film program which gave, as a representative sample, a close idea of what has been produced since 1964. The schedule included five Nepali feature films and fifteen ethnographic documentaries². While the Nepali features, which were formally influenced by the Indian Hindi-movie tradition, gave an inside view of such conflict loaded socio-historical subjects like caste rules in a changing world, many of the documentaries concerned rituals or ecology. Seen from a formal point of view, they range from commentary guided, impressive, short audio-visual documents like *Himalayan Shaman of Northern Nepal* (1966) by John & Patricia Hitchcock to the densely interwoven, 224-minute long film *Shamans of the Blind Country* (1980) by Michael Oppitz. With the single exception of B. B. Shresta's four films - *Funeral and Festival*, *Wedding Rituals of Nepal*, *Religious People of Nepal* and *Festivals of Nepal* (1983) - all were realized by Westerners like Corneille Jest, Pitt Koch or Michael Allen.

To include an "indigenous" documentary in the program was already something unusual but to present five Nepali feature films was, paradoxically, an extraordinary event. Not only because the films were shown for the ever first time in Europe but because until then indigenous feature films had seldom been regarded as social-cultural documents which might also be read ethnographically. Of course one needs a deeper knowledge and

subtlety to derive an ethnographic gain out of "indigenous" features than one would need for documentaries made with Western eyes for an occidental public. Generally and by definition, the latter category are more closely related to the 'real' world. This observation may be briefly exemplified by two films, which were screened in Zuerich. Both deal with the subject of the living goddess Kumari. One is Michael Allen's documentary, entitled *The Living Goddess* (1980), and the other is Prem Basnet's feature film *Kumari* (1977). Michael Allen described, more or less chronologically, the ongoing Newari ceremony by following the ritual performance up to the point where the young girl, representing the goddess Kumari, was "enthroned". Prem Basnet's feature, on the other hand, dealt with the life of the young lady Shova after she had to resign as a Kumari. According to the myth she will bring disaster upon her lover, as everyone who falls in love with her will have to die before his time. *Kumari* can be read as a psychological love-story speaking less of the glorified side of a Kumari and more of the fears and the loneliness of the real person behind the ritual mask. By presenting the rather unknown side of the Kumari cult, which could hardly be shown in a documentary, he scrutinized this tradition from an inside perspective. Ambros Eichenberger, a renowned Swiss critic, acclaimed Prem Basnet's film as the best of the whole program, which was in all very well attended. *Kumari* was also warmly welcomed by Nepali critics and intellectuals but it was not a commercial success in its country. This was probably due to the particular filmic language the author tried to develop by combining narrative Newari ways of storytelling with Western film traditions without neglecting completely audience taste for Hindi movies. *Kumari* is also a very good example against the popular opinion that all filmic languages are international. Fortunately not all of them are. If one tries to keep good relations with the own culture than it seems obvious to look for original formal answers for the subjects one is treating in film. Therefore also the feature is relevant as an ethnographic document.

Only once an entire presentation was exclusively dedicated to the studies of historical, ethnographic photographs. In 1982 Martin Brauen presented at the exhibition *Fremden Bilder* (Images of Strangers) an excerpt of the great British exhibition *Observers of Man* where the public could see photographs from the Royal Anthropological Institute in London.³ Nevertheless the Voelkerkundemuseum holds an impressive collection of its own. Following Dario Donati (1997), it came together mostly in the time from the end of the last century, till around 1940. Especially during the period of director Hans Wehrli (1917-1941) it grew considerably. But in the following decades the photographic collections did, due to lack of personal and finance, remain fairly in a state of disorder.

Concerning the moving pictures the situation was quite similar: various 16mm films and video tapes were included in the collections of the different cura-

tors. On the other hand, students did in the early eighties initiate a publicly accessible video collection, based on recordings of television productions. Concerning the Himalayas many of them dealt with Tibet and/or Buddhism, like Norman Dyhrenfurth's *Tibetische Totenfeier* (Tibetan Funeral Rites) (1982) which was shot in Nepal's Khumbu region, or *Tibet - The Bamboo Curtain Falls* (1981) by Norman Carr, who compiled a documentary by using a lot of archival material to tell the recent story of Tibet. The archival work, which demands continuity and concentration, came to a temporary halt around 1989 with something like two hundred titles.

Generally, one can conclude that Visual Anthropology at the Voelkerkundemuseum was a marginal affair till the late eighties, a question of individual interests but with no real long-term idea and without any substantial direction, at least on the institutional level.

This may seem surprising if one takes into consideration the fact that the Zürich University was, at least at that time, one of the rare institutions worldwide which had at its disposal its own professional video department, called TV University.

Periodically theoretical and practical courses in ethnographic film were offered. In the meantime a new students' group, interested in those questions, emerged. We discussed concepts, organized film screenings, launched small video productions and invited visiting lecturers. One of the highlights was a guest seminar with Michael Oppitz at the Voelkerkundemuseum in 1990. His presentation made us aware that Visual Anthropology comprises more than ethnographic film, video, photography or audio-visual communication. It includes *all* forms of pictorial representations of cultures which ethnographers were and are studying. The second highlight was, in the same year, the international seminar *Anthropology of Tibet and the Himalayas* which was hosted by the Voelkerkundemuseum and organized by Martin Brauen. It was again complemented with a film program.

A very stimulating film was *Dor - Low is Better* (1988), made by Robert Boonzajer-Flaes, a Dutch ethnomusicologist and film-maker. His film is not only noteworthy because he completely renounces any spoken off-commentary by confining himself to inter- and subtitles, but mainly because of his intriguing approach of bringing similar instruments of different cultures together. To find out how the *dung chen*, which is a giant horn played by the Buddhist monks in Tibet and Ladakh, works, he took two giant horns along to Ladakh. While he tried to play the *dung chen*, the Buddhist monks attempted the two European horns. By using the instruments as a kind of provocation, he and the monks were directly guided to raise important questions which led them to a deeper mutual understanding. In a later film, *Bewogen Koper* (Brass Unbound) (1993), his comparative approach became even more refined. This extraordinary documentary, which begins in the Kathmandu Valley by describing the musical tradition of

brass bands, compares in a very cinematographic and playful way the synchronic and diachronic use of brass instruments in four different countries. *Brass Unbound* can be read as a rare example of *ethnological* documentary and as such marks one end of the spectrum in which edited ethno-films can be located. The other pole is taken by ethnographic documentaries which aim foremost to serve as source material of a second degree. I will try to exemplify this through *Deva and Cinta* (1990), which had its international première on the occasion of the abovementioned seminar. The film was the result of a very close collaboration between the ethnographer Martin Gaenzle, Albin Bieri and myself. The basic idea was to record different shamanic rituals and ancestral cults among the Mewahang and Kulunge Rai of the Sankhuwa Valley in Eastern Nepal. It should have been done in such a detailed way that the ethnographer could carefully analyze the rituals at home in Kathmandu. On the other hand, we had in mind to edit at least one of the rituals for public screenings without neglecting the ethnographer's needs for source material. The double ritual of Deva and Cinta began in the early afternoon and lasted until the next morning. Out of these eighteen hours of ritual performance we recorded ten hours and reduced them to approximately one hundred minutes by fully respecting the sequential chronology of the rituals. If the idea had been only to record the rituals exclusively for conservation and research purposes, then one of the most appropriate ways would have been to use infinite sequences with long and medium shots only; with an inevitably tedious result. But if one has a final, edited version in mind, it is possible to take advantage of the full range of possible shot compositions. The two approaches are obviously incompatible, since one involves the inclusion of material that the other excludes. However, neglecting formal aspects does not necessarily result in a more adequate representation of the perceived reality. If the conflict between form and content is understood as a challenge, than it can provoke creative solutions where the form supports the demands of a holistic ethnographic research in a subtle way.

Apart from the above mentioned exceptions, public screenings were held very rarely at the Voelkerkundemuseum in the period 1972 to 1990. People preferred to rely on evening lectures or slide talks.

The third but not least important highlight was an institutional one: in 1980 the Faculty of Zuerich University accepted Heinz Nigg's thesis on community media, which reflected the possibilities of video as an ethnographic research tool so clearly that ever since then students could submit their seminar 'papers' in the form of a video production. And in the late eighties, with the recommendations of the professors Lorenz G. Loeffler and Karl H. Henking⁴, the Faculty did accept for the first time in Zuerich that a degree could be obtained on the strength of a video production, if accompanied by a written text. *Review of Makai* (1991), a semi-documentary video production on inter-caste relationship in a

Brahmin village in the Gorkha district of Nepal, was the ever first audio-visual licentiate work in anthropology to be accepted in 1992 at Zuerich University.

The time was ready to bring together all the various individual efforts on different levels.

In 1991, one year after his inspiring guest seminar, Michael Oppitz became director of the Voelkerkundemuseum. It was obvious that he, who said, "Over the centuries the visual and the verbal or textual anthropology were without any discussions accepted as equal partners in establishing a descriptive ethnography,"⁵ would improve with his own ideas the progress of Visual Anthropology in Zuerich. And he did it on different levels: he transferred his Magar collection to Zuerich. The collection consists, besides his published written work and the feature long documentary *Shamans of the Blind Country*, of thirty-four hours uncut married prints⁶, which were made in connection with the above-mentioned outstanding ethnographic documentary, seventy-five hours of audio recordings of ritual chants, about five thousand stills and twenty handwritten journals. Moreover he brought along to Zuerich a remarkable collection of historical photographs on shamanism from other regions of the world. His keen interest in Visual Anthropology, especially concerning the interplay between form and content, was also reflected in his seminars. The first one was kept on archival film. Besides his own research, which respects pictorial and written sources as equal partners, he realized exhibitions like *Eine Schamanenruestung aus dem Himalaya* (A Shaman's Gear from the Himalayas) (1997)⁷, or the extraordinary one on the Naxi, entitled *Naxi - Dinge, Mythen, Piktogramme* (Naxi - Pieces, Myths and Pictographs) (1997), which will be referred to later on separately. He also invited guest-exhibitors to present their research in different fields of Visual Anthropology.

But the most important changes were on the institutional level. Michael Oppitz engaged two assistants, Dario Donati and myself, each on a fifty percent basis, to cultivate above all the fields of Visual Anthropology. He encouraged and enabled us to continue research, to teach and to realize audio-visual productions as well as presentations in the form of exhibitions and film programs. Moreover he made it possible to create a comprehensive *Archives for Visual Anthropology* at the Voelkerkundemuseum, which was to be organized in such a way that one could find a picture as easily as one might find a book. This archive was also to be opened to the public.

To find out how archives of the future might look, the Voelkerkundemuseum bought a complete version of the *Cambridge Experimental Videodisc Project on the Nagas of Assam*, which was published after five years' work in 1989 and was one of the first multimedia products ever made. Essentially it is a mobile archive, which combines varying materials (like photos, films, sound recordings, diary notes and photographed artifacts) from different museums and private collections on the culture of the Naga population by means of a

laserdisc and of a particular computer software program. Although recent years have seen the development of computer systems which are more efficient, the Naga experiment remains a feat of pioneering. It demonstrates in an exemplary way not only how one can compare varying ethnographic photos with each other, but also how one can confront them with published and unpublished written source materials. We see here a comprehensive possibility; to relate verbal and visual sources as equal partners in such a way that they complete and increase each other in the transfer of knowledge.

The decision to establish an *Archives for Visual Anthropology* has been based on a twin conviction: one, that social-cultural anthropology will be increasingly confronted with pictorial documents; second, that on the tide of this tendency one has to develop ideas to use these pictorial documents scientifically, to collect them as historical as well as ethnographic sources and to use them to the full. Therefore an archive of this kind should be understood in the sense of an enlarged library and as a place of secondary ethnographic field work. The *Archives for Visual Anthropology* has been built up in two sections which are complementary: one consists of *still images*, like photographs, lithographs, engravings, drawings and paintings; the other one consists of *moving images*, like films, video tapes and multimedia products.

Dario Donati, who has worked since 1993 on questions concerning stills, devoted himself right from the beginning to the Voelkerkundemuseum's rich collection of historical photographs. This was an enormous work, not only because of the sheer number - thirty thousand pictures - but mainly because he had to identify many of them; their registration was rudimentary and there were often no captions. The problem itself is not bound to a particular time; it can arise with historical, present and also future collections, because the reason of this problem lies, maybe, in its banality: taking pictures can be a pleasure; to select, describe and to file them properly is an exercise only few people like to do. Therefore many people keep their photographs without any detailed captions. In the best case, the author himself can recall location, people or circumstances and make the pictures vivid. But once he disappears, there will be a sudden hush, leaving future researchers with the questionable pleasure of identifying pictures which could have been relatively easily described by the photographer.

After intensive research Donati made a rough inventory of the thirty thousand historical pictures, and once he had found a logic in the existing collection, he subdivided the corpus into four hundred and fifty groups. The whole collection of historical photos is now accessible to the public and can be recalled on computer by different, combined criteria. Finally, Dario Donati and his students presented an excerpt of this collection under the title of *ans licht geholt* (brought back to light) in 1997.

Although none of the Nepal pictures was displayed on that occasion, there are about one hundred historical photos on Nepal with some ethnographic content: on the one hand glass negatives made by the Swiss photographer Martin Huerlimann during his expedition to Asia in 1926/27; on the other hand postcards, probably made at the beginning of this century, which were signed by B. Singh.

But the photo collection on Nepal has grown remarkably in the last two decades, thanks especially to the already quite well filed five thousand Magar pictures Michael Oppitz brought along with him to Zuerich. He faced the archival problem with lucidity and developed, in collaboration with Dario Donati and the museum's photographers Peter Nebel and Erich Frei, a special archival system. The system is based on a form the curators of the Musée de l'Homme in Paris used for their collection. The idea of the latter was to glue the paper print together with the captions, the registration numbers etc. on a pasteboard. Unfortunately these conservators were not aware of the archival problem that this ensemble would deteriorate over time as it was not stored on non-acid archival material. Oppitz's idea was to remake a new paper print which combined on one and the same paper the original picture and on the right side the description together with the technical data, like author, location, number of trip, film and picture etc. as shown below.

Out of the total number of five thousand Magar positives, three thousand, all dealing directly with different aspects of shamanism, have been treated in the above mentioned manner. Each twice: one for present researchers and one for future students. In this perspective a CD-ROM version of the Magar pictures is planned. This would not be a task, because all texts are already stored in a separate textfile on computer. Reading the description, one remarks immediately the quality of the text which adds information we cannot derive directly from the picture and which at the same time refers lexically to the pictorial content. The latter is very important if one thinks about the functioning of digital retrieval systems. Therefore it is indispensable to describe or index each picture as exactly and openly as possible so that the text refers to the invisible and the visible aspects of it without duplicating the picture's content verbally. The way the Magar pictures are archived and classified can be taken as a model.

If the remaining two thousand pictures are treated as thoroughly as those mentioned above, then one would need only a small step to present them in a digitalized form. In this way the material would be accessible for research from various perspectives, if it were presented in combination with a software that would allow an iconographic identification of the picture's content and published on CD-ROM as well as fed into the Internet.

15.11.1978 3/6:35
Taka NW Nepal Foto: M. Oppitz

Nächtliche Séance wider den kindermordenden Geist *ra* mit Man Bahadur, Beth Bahadur, Jaibir und Bhimsen.



Taka NW Nepal (15.11.1978; 3/6:35)

Man Bahadur hat seine Trommel in eine horizontale Position gebracht und auf ihr ein paar Stoffkügelchen, *ri*, deponiert, die aus dem Besitz der Patientin stammen. Diese Kügelchen werden durch sanftes Anschlagen der Trommel in Vibration gebracht und auf der Membrane fortbewegt. Dies ist eine Divinationsmethode: je nachdem, wo die Stoffkügelchen von dem Rahmen der Trommel fallen, dementsprechend sind die Zukunftsaussichten für die Patientin.

Original Text in German: Nächtliche Séance wider den kindermordenden Geist *ra* mit Man Bahadur, Beth Bahadur, Jaibir und Bhimsen. Man Bahadur hat seine Trommel in eine horizontale Position gebracht und auf ihr ein paar Stoffkügelchen, *ri*, deponiert, die aus dem Besitz der Patientin stammen. Die Kügelchen werden durch sanftes Anschlagen der Trommel in Vibration gebracht und auf der Membrane fortbewegt. Dies ist eine Divinationsmethode: je nachdem, wo die Stoffkügelchen von dem Rahmen der Trommel fallen, dementsprechend sind die Zukunftsaussichten für die Patientin.

Translation : Nocturnal séance performed against the spirit *ra* who preys on children; with Man Bahadur, Beth Bahadur, Jaibir and Bhimsen. Man Bahadur has set his drum horizontally. He has placed on it some pellets, *ri*, from clothing belonging to the patient. The pellets will be moved on the drumskin by the vibration of gentle drumbeats. This is a method of divination: the future prospects of the patient depend on where the clothing pellets fall from the edge of the drum.

It would open efficient access to a revealing source of material. If one were to work in a similar way also on the other parts (diaries, sound recordings and film) - something that would involve a huge amount of work and require substantial financial support - then one could, together with the already published corpora, consider the possibility of an *Ethnographic Encyclopedia on the Magar*. Such a precise, densely interwoven, multimedia presentation of the sources would not only reflect various dimensions of Magar cultural life, but would be an extraordinary treasure for research by future generations of social scientists, especially when the Magar will have replaced the naked flame with the electric light.

The project outlined above may seem to be old-fashioned, especially at a time when only the very latest things count, where money is scarce and where cultural projects are financed only when the sponsor derives a social benefit from it. On the other hand, one should learn from mistakes made in the past: actual collections should be developed in as detailed a way as necessary and be made as clear as possible, in order to be more accessible and usable than at present. The envisaged project of a digitalized, ethnographic *Magar Encyclopaedia* aims in this direction. At the same time one should not forget, that an archive is finally only a means and not an end in itself: on the way to new insights it corresponds to a bridge between the sources and their users. The modern technique allows the latter to consult various archives in a short time without having to travel. There is, however, the danger that the sensuality of the photography as well as of the quest falls by the wayside.

While the complete *Magar Encyclopedia* project unfortunately has to wait for a more propitious moment, the *Collection of Moving Images* which has been built up since 1993 was opened already in 1995 with the screening of Robert Gardner's poeto-filmic reflection *Forest of Bliss* (1986) on life and death in Benares. So far this collection consists of a corpus of one thousand five hundred titles⁸ in the sphere of ethnographic documentary film, stored in the form of films and, in particular, video tapes; the latter in the common video format of S-VHS, which has been quite a reasonable solution with respect to financial possibilities and the quality of the recording. But in the coming years all these tapes will be transferred step by step onto a digital video format. Compared with film, which is still the most appropriate archiving material, video is more practicable for teaching and research purposes. But for public screenings one has to respect the gauge: we continue to project films as films and to present videos on TV monitors or, should the need arise, on beamer.

Incorporated into the collection were also married prints and uncited video tapes, which have been placed at the museum's disposal by individual film- and videmakers. In spite of the energy and time that it requires to put such material into the archives and to file it for further research, sequences that are uncut or

discarded for the published version offer an important treasure of audio-visual information which were ignored for a long time. The value of this material in comparison with the final version lies in the fact that the uncut takes are longer and are less tainted with the interpretations of the author. This means that they are closer to the represented reality. The *Archives for Visual Anthropology* tries to take advantage of material which would otherwise be thrown away as a visual source for research.⁹

For analyzing this visual source materials as well as the edited films it is very helpful to have written documents at hand, in published and unpublished form. Field notes, articles or books which document for example the process of the film production, the ideas and the conflicts, hold precious information we cannot derive directly from the films themselves. We are therefore trying to collect various written documents to complete the *Archives for Visual Anthropology* with a well equipped library.

It is not surprising that the core of the *Collection of Moving Images* has been built by the film *Shamans of the Blind Country*; not only because we hold it in different versions and formats, which are completed by its married prints, but also because the film of Michael Oppitz is well documented by written texts such as the pamphlet *Materials on the Making of an Ethnographic Film* (1982).

The film and video titles which have been included in the collection were selected according to different criteria. On the one hand the selection tries to reflect ethnographic film works in a diachronic and synchronic sense; on the other hand it tries to reflect the actual thematic and geographic fields of activity at the Voelkerkundemuseum.

Concerning the content, the selection resulted in the following foci: religion and ritual (especially shamanism); history of the ethnographic film and - mirrored in it - the history of ethnology; portraits of individual ethnic groups; contributions to the understanding of film as a craft and where the medium itself is the subject. The limits are set deliberately broad concerning the question of which film products can be ascribed at all to the realm of Visual Anthropology. Besides ethnographic films in the true sense of the word, the rubric also includes documentaries in general as well as television documentations, docudramas, experimental and essay films; and, last but not least, films with some ethnographic content, realized by indigenous filmmakers which give an inside view of their culture.

In the way the *Collection of Moving Images* strives for extension of the strict limits of an ethnographic film, it tries to quest and to overcome the conventional dichotomy between document and fiction with the idea of enlarging the concept of an ethnographic source.

Regarding geographic orientation there has been a focus on Asia and especially on the Indian subcontinent, including the Himalayas.

Since February 1993, when we started to build up the

new *Collection of Moving Images*, till the end of the year 1997, the Archives for Visual Anthropology grew constantly. Out of the 1500 titles, one fifth were bought and the rest recorded directly from different TV stations.¹⁰ Altogether 150 titles deal with the Himalayas. While the majority of the purchased items are ethnographic documentaries and many of them on the subject of shamanism, the recorded ones are TV documentations for a broader public. In 1995 I gave a seminar, entitled *Nepal in Film and Video*, where we analyzed the ways in which the Himalayas are presented to a European audience. Some of the conclusions seem quite noteworthy: compared with other regions of the world, the Himalayas are predominantly present in geo-cultural TV programs. Concerning Tibet most of the films are on Buddhism and/or the country's uncomfortable political situation. As if the films on Tibet's issues could not live without the authority of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama, he appears in almost every TV documentation which is included in the collection. What the Dalai Lama is for Tibet, the Himalayan mountains are for Nepal. It is the exotic that attracts us today: TV documentaries have joined the coffee-table books. This is not astonishing if one looks more closely at the conditions of production. Most of the TV teams spend less than one month in the Himalayas. Before the biases they have brought with them can be confronted with the perceived reality that might lead to new conclusions and to a different perception, they already have left the place. The technically clean, beautiful pictures are often sterile and cannot tell the story they should in an intelligent montage. While the visuals are often flat, the commentative sound is overloaded: by the pleasing music and by a too-present voice-over. Both still have to glue the story together as if there were neither any direct cinema, nor any ethnographic films where the subjects themselves had the voice to speak for themselves. In the fifties, where light, sound synchronic cameras did not yet exist, many film-makers knew how to combine the quality of pictures, music and commentary to a stimulating ensemble.

Most of the outstanding ethnographic films and documentaries we have recorded for the *Collection of Moving Images* have been broadcast by ARTE. In recent years, television companies have become increasingly important for the production of films in the fields of ethnography, where they are often looking for a collaboration with ethnographers. If the latter are not misused to fulfill an alibi function then the results can sometimes be quite convincing. A good example is the BBC / National Geographic co-production *The Dragon Bride* (1993), which was directed by Joanna Head. She was assisted by the ethnographer Carroll Dunhan. This ethnographic documentary is a witty film about the polyandrous marriage system of Humla's Nyinba community in northwest Nepal. There, no bride is more desired than a woman born in the year of the dragon, which in this case means that a fifteen year old girl is going to marry five brothers. The film worked with

parallel montage, subtitled the spoken word, used hardly any off-commentary and renounced any kind of interviews. An other ethnographic documentary of a similar style is *Mustang: The Hidden Kingdom* (1994), realized by Tony Miller in collaboration with the ethnographer Charles Ramble. The film tells, in the form of a travelogue, the story of the Tibetan Lama Kamtruel who has been dispatched by His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama to Mustang, where he should strengthen the Buddhist beliefs of the inhabitants. To accompany the protagonist from Dharmasala up to the capital Lo Mantang in Mustang and back to India allowed the filmcrew not only to document his various meetings with local people but to include, in a kind of cross-cutting montage, archival and recent audio-visual documents on the history of Tibet. Would it make a big difference if we were to know that the basic idea of sending the Lama Kamtruel to Mustang did not come originally from His Holiness the Dalai Lama but from the author of the film? The answer is not straightforward. On the one hand it would make a difference; by holding back an important piece of information the film lets us go on believing that similar incidents and meetings would have taken place without the presence of the film crew. Although this may be fairly right, we might have been told - for example in one spoken sentence at the beginning - that they themselves initiated the expedition to Mustang. On the other hand the question may be regarded as irrelevant because we can, in general, assume that every presented coherence is, ultimately, a constructed one. In this sense the Discovery co-production *Mustang: the Hidden Kingdom* fits very well in a long tradition of ethnographic film-making which goes back to *Nanook of the North* (1922) by Robert F. Flaherty, which is often quoted as one of the first ethnographic documentaries ever made. *Nanook of the North* was not only initiated by Robert F. Flaherty, but it was more or less a complete reconstruction, because at the actual time of shooting the Netsilik no longer lived in the traditional way which the film director wanted to present. Once they agreed on his project, the natives collaborated with Robert Flaherty to develop episodes that demonstrated their traditional life. Today it is a unique document. Therefore the question is, how and for what reason is one to (re-)construct a filmic reality which corresponds in a sincere and adequate way with perceived reality?

In 1994 Martin Brauen realized the exhibition *Irgendwo in Bhutan – Wo Frauen das Sagen haben* (Somewhere in Bhutan – Where Women Have the Final Say). Together with the Swiss television SF DRS the Voelkerkundemuseum followed this production with a film based on the same theme: *Das Tal der Frauen: Erlebnisse einer Schweizer Bäuerin in Bhutan* (The Valley of the Women: Experiences of a Swiss Woman Farmer in Bhutan) (1994). This conventional TV documentary is based on the Swiss woman farmer Tina Joos who leads us as a protagonist from Switzerland to Bhutan, where we share in her participatory observations of

Bhutanese farming women; once in visible form and secondly on the audio track, as many excerpts of her written diary are included in the off-commentary. While she explores the women's way of rural life and work, she develops a close friendship with Dorje Dölma. Subsequently the latter will, at the end of the

film, come to Switzerland to return Tina Joos' visit. With the changed filmic perspective, the commentary in this part is based on Dorje Dölma's diary. Unlike in *Mustang – The Hidden Kingdom*, it is clear from the outset that these farming women in *The Valley of the Women* would have never met without Martin Brauen's



Tollo Sera NW Nepal (18.5.198; 5/a5:32), M. Oppitz

Original Text in German:

Doppelininitiation zweier Männer in Tollo Sera: am Lebensbaum, *da suwa*.

Die beiden Initianden, jeder auf seinem Lebensbaum, während der aktuellen Reinkarnation. Die Schamanen sind alle verschwunden; sie zechen und speisen in den Initiandenhäusern, während die Neophyten still ihre Geburt, *bohsine*, vollziehen. Ausser einigen Kindern und Verwandten, die noch auf dem Festplatz verbleiben, sind auch die Zuschauer abgezogen. Doppelininitiationen wie diese sind selten. In Taka kommen sie fast gar nicht vor, in Sera dagegen häufiger.

Translation :

Double initiation of two men in Tollo Sera: on the tree of life, *da suwa*.

The two initiates, each on his own tree of life, in the course of their actual reincarnation. All the shamans have disappeared; they drink and feast in the houses of the initiates, while the neophytes silently undergo their birth, *bohsine*. Apart from a few children and relatives who remain at the site of the ceremony, the crowd has also dispersed. Double initiations like this one are rare. In Taka they happen once in a blue moon, whereas in Sera they are more frequent.

idea of making a film. To visualize processes and concepts of thinking has been one of the core aims of Martin Brauen's ethnological work. Not only by exposing objects and by screening films, as he has continued to do in recent years, for example with his program *Filme aus Tibet - Raritäten aus den Archiven* (Films from Tibet - Rarities of the Archives) (1995), which was co-organised by the Tibet Institute of Rikon (CH) and the Voelkerkundemuseum, or the exposition *Mandala - Der Heilige Kreis im tantrischen Buddhismus* (Mandala - The Holy Circle in Tantric Buddhism) (1992) but also by his attempts to translate words into pictures. The result is remarkable: *Kalachakra Mandala* (1998), a computer based 3D-animation. This seven-minute computer-film on a virtual journey through the Kalachakra Cosmos and its Mandala Palace on the Top of Mount Meru opens new fields of Visual Anthropology.

While there is a long tradition of including photographs in exhibitions, incorporating audio-visual products like film, video or CD-ROM is a recent phenomenon. Unlike still pictures, which can be treated as objects, moving images in an exhibition provoke a contradiction of movements; in a normal exhibition, the objects are fixed and the visitors are moving, while in a traditional film screening, the film is moving and the audience is sitting. To tally these antagonistic movements is hardly possible, unless one reduces the duration of the audio-visual production approximately to the time the average visitor of a museum will spend in front of an object. Another possibility is to screen the audio-visual supplements in a separate room, as sometimes happens at the Voelkerkundemuseum. Otherwise, there is likely to be a negative effect on the whole exhibition because the visitors will be too attracted by the TV or computer screens where they will spend their time instead of visiting the 'real' exhibition, which cannot be taken home - unlike the mobile video tape or the CD-ROM.

I would therefore try, as far as possible, to resist the temptation to include any audio-visual productions directly in ethnographic exhibitions, unless the medium is not itself the subject of the presentation, as it is for example in the case of video-sculptures. Visual Anthropology and exhibitions are anyway in a very close relation. How closely they are interrelated was demonstrated in an exemplary fashion by Michael Oppitz in his latest creation, the exhibition *Naxi - Dinge, Mythen, Piktogramme* (Naxi - Pieces, Myths and Pictographs). It has been dedicated to the extraordinary *dtô-mbâ* culture of the Naxi, an ethnic group living on the fringes of the Himalayas in the Chinese provinces of Yunnan and Sichuan. Over the centuries the Naxi, who have been at the point of intersection between Tibet in the west and China in the east, have amalgamated their local culture with these neighbouring civilisations. This is especially reflected in their religious tradition, which is known as the *dtô-mbâ*-religion. The *dtô-mbâ* priests are, by tradition, the only ones who can read the peculiar Naxi pic-

tographic system. These pictographs function as codes of the religious oral tradition and as symbols of real objects. One has to know the myths to open this wealth of experience. The challenge of the exhibition *Naxi - Dinge, Mythen, Piktogramme* was to present the pictographs, myths and pieces as interrelated elements of the Naxi ritual world in such a coherent and clear form that the hidden concept became understandable for a Western public. This stringent exhibition with its simple elegance renounced from all spoken words and music.

The Naxi exhibition was completed by two video documentations. One was a re-editing of short archival films made by the great American Naxi researcher Joseph F. Rock in the late twenties; the other one, *Der Vogel auf dem Berge* (The Bird on the Mountain) (1997), documented the development of the exhibition itself by focussing mainly on the work of the Naxi specialist Mu Chen, who was assisted by Zhao Xiuyun.

In autumn 1998 a third production, *Naxi Pieces, Myths and Pictographs: an Exhibition Trailer*, was finished. Its function is a double one: as a trial to illustrate the concept and content of the exhibition, it should animate other museums to take it over. Secondly, together with published texts, it should be a reminder of this animating presentation of the Naxi shamanic tradition, where new ways of composing objects, pictures and words were demonstrated in an exemplary fashion.

What we have achieved in the last years has laid the foundation for intensive progress in the fields of Visual Anthropology. Concerning the *Collection of Moving Images* there are still many films on the Himalayas which should be found and included, made both by foreigners as well as the Nepalis themselves. Of course, one should try to do the same with still pictures, with the idea of building up a representative collection on all ethnic groups which would reflect various aspects of traditional and modern cultural life in the Himalayas. Although the Voelkerkundemuseum in Zuerich would have the ability to achieve this goal, there is an even better place: somewhere in the Kathmandu Valley, where it would be right to appropriate an audio-visual study center. First attempts in this direction were already presented in the form of the first-ever *Film Himalaya* festival in Kathmandu in 1994. On that occasion one of the initiators, the editor Kanak Mani Dixit, said: "The films present our world to the rest of the world. It is perhaps time to evaluate those films." In the meantime, the follow-up *Film South Asia* festival was realized in 1997. Many of the participant film-makers did agree to give a (video) copy of their presented films to the festival's library. In this way a small but respectable collection could be achieved. If all professional filmmakers, photographers, ethnographers and custodians of audio-visual collections from all over the world would deposit one copy of their pictorial representations of cultures in the Himalayas, it could become the core for a real audio-visual archive in the sense of an enlarged cinemathèque. Such an archive, focused at least in one spot, cultivated in an intelligent manner with modern

communication tools and accessible to all interested people would not only guard the audio-visual heritage but would be also an important foundation for local as well as foreign future researchers.

Notes :

¹ Unlike the exhibitions, which exist only temporarily, their accompanying catalogues remain as references. Therefore they are cited in the bibliography at the end of this article.

² A short filmography is included at the end of this article. The films of the different screenings as well as those which will be mentioned in the course of this article will be listed. For further information please contact either the Voelkerkundemuseum in Zurich or the author himself at the Musée d'Ethnographie, Geneva.

³ Only few pictures from the Himalayas were included. Among them an albumin print portrait of a lady from Tashilhunpo photographed by F. Hoffmann at the end of last century.

⁴ Professor Lorenz G. Loeffler was in those years director of the Ethnological Institute, while professor Karl H. Henking was director of the Voelkerkundemuseum.

⁵ Original in German: "Ueber mehrere Jahrhunderte hin wurden die visuelle und die verbale oder textuelle Anthropologie ohne viel Diskussion als gleichwertige Partner in der Etablierung einer deskriptiven Ethnographie angesehen" (Oppitz, 1989).

⁶ A married print is the positive print of a film including both sound and image.

⁷ This exhibition was completed by a video presentation which documented the public handing over of the shaman's gear by the Gurung shaman Pachyu Yarjung Tamu to the Voelkerkundemuseum, followed by his lecture on playing ritual instruments, especially drums.

⁸ Included are fifty titles from the old U-matic collection the students built up in the eighties. As far as possible, they were transferred on S-VHS tapes. But only a few could be saved because the older magnetic tapes were already flaked off. One has to remember that a video tape last for approximately ten years. In order to keep a video archive all the titles must therefore be copied every decade.

⁹ The huge work of editing archival films as done in former times is now obsolete. Instead one should try to digitalize the rushes, make a precise index of their content and edit the material on CD-ROM or on the internet as already mentioned in the context of the *Magar Encyclopedia*.

¹⁰ To record from TV and to include the recording in a public collection is legal in Switzerland, as long as it is for study purposes and the copyright fees are paid.

Filmography:

Nota Bene:

- all titles marked with one star (*) were presented during the exhibition Nepal - leben und ueberleben in 1984.

- all titles marked with two stars (**) were presented on the occasion of the Seminar : Anthropology of Tibet and the Himalayas in 1990.

a) Documentaries:

Allen, Michael, *The Living Goddess*, Australia/Nepal, 1980, 30'. *

Bieri, Albin; Garlinski, Majan; Gaenzle, Martin, *Deva and Cinta - An Ethnographic Documentation of a Ritual Cycle Celebrated Among the Mewahang and Kulunge Rai of East Nepal*, CH/FRG/Nepal, 1990, 127'. **

Boonzajer-Flaes, Robert & Rens, Maarten *Dor, Low is Better*, NL, 1988, 47'. **

Carr, Norman, *Tibet: The Bamboo Curtain Falls*, GB, 1981, 48'.

Cavillon, Daniel & Cavillon, Michèle, *Un jour à Panaoti (A Day in Panaoti)*, F/Nepal, 1978, 25'. *

Dyhrenfurth, Norman G., *Tibetische Totenfeier (Tibetan Funeral Rites)*, FRG, 1982, 43'.

Flaherty, Robert J., *Nanook of the North*, USA, 1922/75, 65'.

Gardner, Robert, *Forest of Bliss*, USA, 1986, 88'.

Garlinski, Majan, *Eine Schamanenruestung aus dem Himalaya: Eins - Auspacken der Ruestung im Museum; Zwei - Die Trommeln und ihr Spiel (A Shaman's Gear from the Himalayas: One - Outpacking of the Gear in the Museum; Two - The Drums and their Play)*, CH, 1997, 44'.

Der Vogel auf dem Berge: Ein Beitrag zur Ausstellung - Naxi: Dinge, Mythen, Piktogramme (The Bird on the Mountain - A Contribution to the Exhibition - Naxi: Pieces, Myths and Pictographs), CH, 1997, 20'.

Garlinski, Majan & Bieri, Albin, *Review of Makai*, CH, 1991, 76'.

Garlinski, Majan & Oppitz Michael, *Naxi - Pieces, Myths and Pictographs - Exhibition Trailer*, CH, 1998, 16'.

Hitchcock, John & Hitchcock, Patricia, *Himalayan Farmer*, USA/Nepal, 1966, 16'. *

Himalayan Shaman of Northern Nepal, USA/Nepal, 1966, 15'. *

Himalayan Shaman of Southern Nepal, USA/Nepal, 1966, 14'. *

Jest, Corneille, *Dbyar Ston*, France/Nepal, 1967, 17'. *
Spre-lo, F/Nepal, 1972, 45'. *

Tarap: La vallée aux chevaux excellents (Tarap: The Valley of Excellent Horses), F/Nepal, 1967, 26'. *

Kahlen, Wolf, *Der Daemon im Stein (The Demon in the Stone)*, FRG, 1988/89, 110'. **

Koch, Pitt, *Durga Puja*, FRG/Nepal, 1980, 43'. *

Ma Lihua, Gelek, *Northern Tibet of Ten Thousand Li*, Peoples Republic of China, 80'. **

Miller, Tony, *Mustang : The Hidden Kingdom*, GB, 1944, 89'.

Nichols, Sandra, *The Fragile Mountain*, USA/Nepal, 1982, 55'. *

Oppitz, Michael, *Shamans of the Blind Country*, FRG/USA/Nepal, 1980, 223'. *

Pletscher, Marianne, *Das Tal der Frauen : Erlebnisse einer Schweizer Bäuerin in Bhutan (The Valley of the Women : Experiences of a Swiss Woman farmer in Bhutan)*, CH, 1994, 58'.

Rock, Joseph F. (1928/32/54); Garlinski, Majan (1997), *Joseph F. Rock filmt die Naxi: Ausschnitte aus dem Archivmaterial der Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin: Naxi Taenze – Expedition nach Mi-Nyag - Der Naxi Har-La-Llue Tanz* (Joseph F. Rock films the Naxi – Na-Khi Dances – Expedition to Mi-Nyag – The Na-Khi Har-La-Llue Dance), USA/CH, 1928/1954/1997, 14'.

Sadakane, Ayako, *This is the Great Himalayas*, Japan, 1989. **

Sagaster, Ursula, *Prozession am Asuratag* (Procession at Asuratag), FRG, 60'. **

Schenk, Amelie, *Orakelheiler in Ladakh* (Oracle Healers in Ladakh). FRG (no technical data). **

Schicklgruber, Christian, *Tashigang - Ein tibetisches Dorf zwischen Menschenwelt und Goetterwelt* (Tashigang - A Tibetan Village between the Human World and the World of Gods), Austria, 120'. **

Shrestha, Baikuntha Bahadur, *Festivals of Nepal*, Nepal, 1983, 28'. *

Funeral and Festival, Nepal, 1983, 18'. *

Religious People of Nepal, Nepal, 1983, 20'. *

Wedding Rituals of Nepal, Nepal, 1983, 15'. *

van der Keuken, Johan, *Bewogen Koper* (Brass Unbound), NL, 1993, 185'.

Vohra, Rohit, *The Bononah Festival of the Buddhist Dards in Ladakh*, FRG, 40'. **

Von der Heide, Susanne, *Nari Jhyowa - Das Geheimnis der Goettin* (Nari Jhyowa - The Secret of the Goddess), FRG, 1988, 70'. **

b) Feature films:

Basnet, Prem, *Kumari*, Nepal, 1977, 105'. *

Sharma, Lakshmi Nath, *Badlindo Akash* (Changing Horizons), Nepal, 1983, 165'. *

Singh, Hira, *Ama* (Mother), Nepal, 1965, 150'. *

Hijo, Aja, Bholi (Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow), Nepal, 1967, 165'. *

Thapa, Prakash, *Sindoor*, Nepal, 1981, 165'. *

Multimedia:

Macfarlane, Alan (ed.)

Cambridge Experimental Videodisc Project on the Nagas of Assam, 1989, University of Cambridge.

Bibliography:

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1992, *Das Mandala - Der Heilige Kreis im tantrischen Buddhismus* (The Mandala- Sacred Circle in Tibetan Buddhism), DuMont, Koeln.

1994, *Irgendwo in Bhutan - Wo die Frauen (fast immer) das Sagen haben* (Somewhere in Bhutan - Where Women Have (Usually) the Final Say), Waldgut, Frauenfeld.

Brauen, Martin (ed.),

1982, *Fremden-Bilder - Eine Publikation zu den Ausstellung: Fruehe ethnographische Fotografie - Fotografien vom Royal Anthropological Institute London; Die exotische Bilderflut*, Ethnologische Schriften Zuerich, ESZ 1. Voelkerkundemuseum der Universitaet Zue-

rich, Zuerich.

1984, *Nepal - leben und ueberleben*, Voelkerkundemuseum der Universitaet Zuerich, Zuerich.

Donati, Dario,

1997, "Voelkerkundemuseum der Universitaet Zuerich". in *L'objectif- subjectif - Collections de photographies ethno-historique en Suisse*, Commission des musées de la Société suisse d'ethnologie (ed.), Société Suisse d'Ethnologie, Berne, pp. 137-145.

Donati, Dario (ed.),

1997, *Ans licht geholt - Fruehe Fotografien aus dem Archiv des Voelkerkundemuseums* (brought back to light - Early Photographies from the Archives of the Voelkerkundemuseum), Voelkerkundemuseum Zuerich: Zuerich.

Eichenberger, Ambros,

1984, "Unser Entwicklungsland" - Nepal im Spiegel seiner Filme ("Our Developing Country" - Nepal in the Mirror of its Films), in *Neue Zuercher Zeitung*, p. 51, 23. Mai 1984.

Nigg, Heinz,

1980, "Community media. Video, local TV, film, and photography as tools for community communication", Dissertation, Universitaet Zuerich, Zuerich.

Oppitz, Michael

1989, *Kunst der Genauigkeit - Wort und Bild in der Ethnographie* (The Beauty of Exactitude - Word and Picture in Ethnography), Trickster Verlag, Muenchen.
1997, *Eine Schamanenruestung aus dem Himalaya* (A Shaman's Gear from the Himalayas, Voelkerkundemuseum Zuerich, Zuerich.

1997, *Naxi - Dinge, Mythen, Piktogramme* (Naxi - Pieces, Myths and Pictographs), Voelkerkundemuseum Zuerich, Zuerich.

Oppitz, Michael & Hsu, Elizabeth (eds.)

1998, *Naxi and Moso Ethnography. Kin, Rites and Pictographs*, Voelkerkundemuseum Zuerich, Zuerich.

**COLLECTION OF PHOTOGRAPHS
AT THE CENTRE D'ETUDE SUR LES
RELIGIONS TIBÉTAINES, PARIS
PRESENTED BY KATIA BUFFETRILLE AND
MARIE LECOMTE-TILOUINE**

This collection may be consulted at the Centre d'Etudes sur les Religions Tibétaines, 22, avenue du Président Wilson, 75116 Paris. Tel & fax : 01.53.70.18.66. By appointment with Katia Buffetrille.

No photocopies or reproductions are allowed without the author's consent.

The Centre would like to take this opportunity to inform that they wish to improve their collection with donations of originals or duplicates.

I. Black and white, paper

This collection has been assembled by R.A. Stein.

Nepal

- 218 photos by M. Peissel, Mustang.
- 74 photos by R. A. Stein, Kathmandu Valley.
- 6 by A. Macdonald.
- 51 by P. Dureuil, 1967, Kathmandu Valley.

Bhutan

- 24 by J.E. Bertrand, misc.
- 80 by E. Von Schulters, 1961, 67-70, Thimpu temples.
- 77 by M. Peissel, 1967, misc.
- 60 by M. Aris, 1973, misc.
- 1 by B. Olschak.
- 16 by P. Khambache, 1970, statues.
- 419 by J. Perrin, 1960, misc.

Sikkim

- 34 by R. de Nebesky-Wojkovitz, c. 1950, music, religion, mediums.
- 275 by R. A. Stein, 1956, Gangtok, sacred dances.
- 11 by J. Bacot, around 1920, Ghoom monastery, sacred dances.
- 13 by Bourguignon-Didier, frescoes.
- 95 by Prince P. de Grèce, 1952, oracle.
- 34 by J. Perrin, 1960, monastery.

Lahul

- 109 by Prince P. de Grèce, 1938, ritual.

Tibet

- 14 by R.A. Stein, eastern Tibet.
- 11 by Cl. Philastre, Nyingmapa statues.
- 18 by A. Palat, Shigatse, Lhasa, before 1950.
- 134 by Richardson, central Tibet, Lho Brag fort, New Year festival in Lhasa, c. 1940.
- 23 by A. Palat, c. 1950.(colour)
- 21 by Turpault, Tibetan objects.

- 7 by S. Karmay.
- 24 by Mele, Southern Tibet, c. 1950.
- 39 by B. Olschak, objects and manuscripts.
- 22 by S. Hummel, Tibet misc.
- 10 by R. A. Stein.
- 22 by A. Koenig, objects exhibited at the Grand Palais, Paris 1977.
- 20 by M. de Berval, Tibetan drawings.
- 40 from the Musée Guimet, Paris, 12 objects, 28 drawings.
- 40 by S. Karmay, Tibetans in exile.
- 72 by L.A. Waddel, drawings.
- 170 by A. Migot, Lolos, Kham & Amdo, Tibetan temples in China, 1940-50.
- 27 by S. Karmay, Tibetans in exile, 1978.
- 60 by R. Demandre, Kham, Manasarovar.
- 44 by N. Thierry, Gyantse, 1991.
- 30 by J. Bacot.

II. Slides (7985 in total)

This collection has been gathered by A.-M. Blondcau.

Nepal

- A. Macdonald, 190 slides, 1960-62, shamans of Nepal.
- P. Dureuil, 54 slides, 1967, Kathmandu Valley, Nepal.
- M. Peissel, 70 slides, no date (but before 1980), Mustang.
- K. Buffetrille, 20 slides, 1990, Solukhumbu.
- K. Buffetrille, 219 slides, 1992, Baudhnath.
- K. Buffetrille, 483 slides, 1996, Baudhnath.

Darjeeling

- M. Ricard, 10 slides, 1974, Darjeeling

Sikkim

- Y. Imaeda, 20 slides, 1975, Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh.

Bhutan

- J. E. Bertrand, 60 slides, 1970, Bhutan.
- M. Peissel, 100 slides, no date (but before 1980), Bhutan.
- M. Aris, 240 slides, 1975, Bhutan.
- L. Rault, 25 slides, 1976, Bhutan.
- M. Aris, 245 slides, 1977, Bhutan.
- M. Peissel, 28 slides, 1977, Bhutan
- Mrs von Schulthess, 30 slides, 1977, Bhutan.
- Y. Imaeda, 112 slides, 1978, Bhutan.
- F. Pommaret, 60 slides, 1980, Bhutan.
- F. Pommaret, 270 slides, 1982, Bhutan.
- Y. Imaeda, 81 slides, 1989, Bhutan.
- Y. Imaeda, 113 slides, 1984, Bhutan.
- Y. Imaeda, 178 slides, 1985, Bhutan.
- F. Pommaret, 50 slides, 1986, Bhutan.
- F. Pommaret, 33 slides, 1990, Bhutan.
- G. Van Strydonck, 95 slides 6/6, 1980, Bhutan.

Ladakh

- F. Pommaret, 83 slides, 1976, Ladakh.
- Sonnenschein, 30 slides, 1977, Ladakh.
- C. Valls, 20 slides, 1979, Ladakh.

Himachal Pradesh & other places in India

- Y. Imaeda, 33 slides, 1982, Himachal Pradesh.
- H. Stoddard, 45 slides, 1976, Himachal Pradesh, Dolanji.
- Y. Imaeda, 50 slides, 1979, Dolanji.
- Y. Imaeda, 33 slides, Dolanji, 1979.
- R. Canzio, 315 slides, 1984, Dolanji.
- H. Stoddard, 50 slides, 1976, Dharamsala.
- S. Karmay, 20 slides, no date, India, Tibet.
- P. Kvaerne, 55 slides, 1974, Tibetans in India.

Tibet

- P. Mansier, 33 slides, 1980, Amdo.
- Massin, 208 slides, 1981, central Tibet.
- Vallet, 15 slides, 1981, central Tibet.
- A. Vallat, 59 slides, 1981, central Tibet.
- 60 slides of Tangkas from the Musée Guimet, Paris, 1981.
- G. Truden, 45 slides, 1982, Kalacakra initiation in USA.
- P. Mansier, 99 slides, 1982, central Tibet.
- H. Stoddard, 147 slides, 1984, Amdo.
- S. Karmay, 162 slides, 1987, Tibet.
- S. Karmay, 40 slides, 1987, Tibetans in exile.
- S. Karmay, 132 slides, 1987, Amdo.
- F. Pommaret, 30 slides, 1988, central Tibet.
- K. Buffetrille, 345 slides, 1988, central Tibet and Amdo.
- S. Karmay, 200 slides, 1988, central Tibet.
- H. Stoddard, 177 slides, 1988, central Tibet.
- K. Buffetrille, 80 slides, 1989, central Tibet.
- P. Kvaerne, 80 slides, 1989, Bon-Po monasteries, Amdo.
- N. Thierry, 50 slides, 1989, Tibetan ritual objects.
- K. Buffetrille, 100 slides, 1989, central and South-Esatern Tibet.
- F. Pommaret, 50 slides, 1986, central Tibet.
- M.-B. Hannequin, 108 slides, 1986, central Tibet.
- S. Karmay, 93 slides, 1986, Tibet.
- H. Stoddard, 199 slides, 1986, Tibet.
- R. Demandre, 80 slides, 1987, Tibet.
- H. Stoddard, 99 slides, 1989, central Tibet.
- M.-F. Lorton, 250 slides, 1990, central and oriental Tibet.
- K. Buffetrille, 89 slides, 1990, central Tibet.
- K. Buffetrille, 208 slides, 1990, Kailash.
- Lortan, 137 slides, 1991, oriental Tibet.
- K. Buffetrille, 396 slides, 1990, oriental Tibet.
- F. Lagrange, 235 slides, 1993, central Tibet.
- F. Pommaret, 127 slides, 1995, oriental Tibet.
- K. Buffetrille, 132 slides, 1996, western Tibet.
- K. Buffetrille, 99 slides, 1996, Tsaparang.

PHOTOGRAPHIC ARCHIVES IN PARIS AND LONDON

BY PASCALE DOLLFUSS

I. PHOTOGRAPHIC ARCHIVES IN PARIS

Photographic Library ("Photothèque"), Musée de l'Homme.

Pl. du Trocadéro, Paris 75016.

The photographic library of the Musée de l'Homme currently includes some 2800 photographs, both black and white and slides, devoted to the Himalayas, in addition to the hundreds of photographs - not taken in account below - depicting the objects kept in the Musée de l'Homme ethnographic collections.

The photographs are classified first by country (India, Nepal, Pakistan) and then according to themes such as local inhabitants and costumes, settlements, landscapes, agriculture, herding, techniques, rituals and festivals, architecture and monuments, etc.

The old collection (before the 1930s.) includes :

- 28 photographs taken by Johnston & Hoffman c. 1880s. (cf. supra)
- 4 glass plates (1890-1904) captioned Annet (name of the author ?), Nepal.
- 2 studio-photographs taken before the 1930s. by H. Wentz in Kathmandu and captioned 'Deux jeunes femmes népalaises'.
- Dr. H.E. Kauffmann collection : approx. 370 photographs taken in the 1930s among different tribes of Naga in Assam and describing the Nagas' daily life and ceremonies.

In 1958, these collections were augmented by two donations :

- Gabrielle Bertrand collection on Assam : approx. 50 photographs depicting various tribes of the north-eastern Himalayas : Garo, Apa-Tani, Naga, etc..
- G. Pourcher collection on Nepal : 145 photographs taken in 1958 in Kathmandu Valley and Pokhara; the former including a set on the "coronation ceremonies of King Mahendra" (approx. 30 photos) and a set on goat sacrifice. (approx. 25 photos).

In the course of the years, however, the Himalayan section was expanded by photographic material collected in the 1960s, mainly in Nepal, by French anthropologists of the RCP Nepal based at the time in the Musée de l'Homme. Among them, special mention must be given to Corneille Jest and Philippe Sagant.

The Corneille Jest collection comprises more than 550 photographs taken in different parts of Nepal (Kathmandu Valley, Dolpo, Baglung, Langtang, Trisuli, etc.) among the Newar, Dolpo-pa, Tibetans, Magar, Thakali, Chepang...during 1960, 1963, 1965 and 1967 missions. C. Jest also provided photographs taken in Sikkim in the 1950s. (India drawers).

The Philippe Sagant collection consists of more than 730 photographs taken in 1966-67, mainly in eastern

Nepal among the Limbu, Rai, Chetri, Sherpa, Bhotiya and Sunuwar.

Both these collections encompass pictures of landscapes, architecture, techniques, agriculture, herding, trade, festivals, shaman practices, rites of passage, etc.

In addition to these major collections, one can find 350 photographs taken in 1965 by Jacques Millot, (director of the RCP Nepal) in the Kathmandu Valley, approx. 110 photographs (c.1966-67) by Mireille Helffer, related primarily to musicians castes, 45 photographs (1967-68) by Marc Gaborieau, 40 photographs taken in 1966 by Harka Gurung in the Upper Karnali Valley (Mugu, Tibrikot), a dozen pictures by Alexander W. Macdonald (1967), a dozen pictures taken in the Terai as well as the Upper Trisuli Valley by R. Rieffel, at the time a diplomat in Kathmandu, 15 photographs taken in the 1970s by Albert Robillard and approx. 20 anonymous pictures concerning Kathmandu urbanisation c.1965-70.

The Ella Maillart collection (120 prints) taken all over the Himalayas and Tibet must also be mentioned. Finally, in 1981-82, 100 more photographs from the Kalash of the Hindu-Kush (Pakistan) were bought by the museum from the private collection of the photographer Hervé Nègre.

In addition to this black and white photographs, the Photographic Library has some 200 slides taken in 1969 by Solange Thierry in the Kathmandu Valley, and by the photographer Henri Bancaud in the Kathmandu Valley and Humla (north-western Nepal) c. 1980.

Besides these Himalayan collections, the photographic Library of the Musée de l'Homme also holds Tibet collections, including 35 photographs by Jacques Bacot, a great scholar who undertook several Asian expeditions which led him to eastern Tibet (1907) and various parts of the Himalayas (1913-14 and 1930-31), approx. 80 photographs by André Guibaut and Louis Liotard who undertook two expeditions along the Salween River up to the Go-log country in the bend of the Yellow River in 1936-37 and 1939-40, and 24 photographs from Alexandra David-Néel, who traveled widely in Tibet between 1914 and 1938, the bulk of the A.D.N. collection is kept in the Alexandra David-Néel Foundation, Digne, France.

Musée national des Arts Asiatiques-Guimet

6 place Iéna, Paris 75116.

Photographic Librarian : Jérôme Ghesquière

e-mail : jerome.ghesquiere@culture.fr.

The Musée Guimet will re-open in 1999-2000.

The photographic archives of the Musée Guimet comprise 320 slides on Ladakh and 3600 slides on Nepal, taken chiefly in the Kathmandu Valley and primarily concerning sites, architecture and monuments. In addition, the Musée Guimet possesses a quite large collection of black and white photos donated to the museum by Jean Mansion. This collection includes pictures taken in Tibet, Ladakh, Nepal and Bhutan.

II. PHOTOGRAPHIC ARCHIVES IN LONDON

India Office Library

Oriental & India Office collections of the British Library.

St Pancras, Euston Road, London NW1.

OIOC collections are expected to move before spring '99.

e-mail : oioc-move@bl.uk

The India Office Library possesses a large collection devoted to the Himalayas. It is divided between the Reading Room and the Print and Drawings Department. For reasons of space, Tibet, Simla, Mussoorie and Darjeeling, and the "North Eastern Frontiers Provinces" of India (Assam, Arunachal P.) are excluded and only the most important collections are listed below.

IOL Reading Room

The J. Claude White Collection

The IOL stores the bulk of the J.C. White Collection on Sikkim, Bhutan and Tibet. J.C. White (1853-1918) lived for 21 years in the Himalayan region. He was promoted to the post of political officer in charge of the administration of Sikkim in 1889 and of Bhutan in 1905. His photographic albums *Sikkim* (1902) and *Tibet and Lhasa* (1908), which contain some of the most amazing images of Tibet and the Himalayas, were published by Johnston and Hoffmann. Some of them, primarily portraits and groups of people, are also kept at the Royal Geographical Society.

The Sir Charles Alfred Bell Collection

This renowned collection encompasses more than 500 prints taken before the 1920s. The collection focusing primarily on Tibet, is divided among 4 boxes MSS. EUR F.80/282; 80/283; 80/284, 80/287 and two envelopes (MSS EUR F 80/288 a & b).

C. Bell (1878-1945) was a British administrator who spent many years from 1901 to 1918 in Darjeeling, Kalimpong, and Sikkim in the eastern Himalayas. From May to September 1904, he was fortunate enough to be able to push through Bhutan to Tibet, and was then in charge of the Chumbi Valley. Finally, in November 1920 in response to repeated invitations from the Dalai Lama, he went to Lhasa for nearly one year.

In addition to the large collection devoted to central Tibet (Lhasa, Ganden, Drepung and Gyantse), they are two sets concerning Sikkim and the Chumbi valley, and several prints devoted to Nepal as well as the Mishmi people and their settlements.

The Francis Younghusband Collection

MSS. EUR F.197/651. Two large format prints: one showing Leh bazaar c.1904 and the other, a group comprising the king of Ladakh along with monks dressed

for 'cham (monastic masked dances) and young men wearing velvet hats. The picture was probably taken during the Hemis festival.

The Henry Lee Hadwen Shuttleworth Collection c.1910-1920.

MSS. EUR. D. 722. This collection includes 2 boxes (D.722/29 and D.722/30) comprising black and white photographs taken by Henry Lee Hadwen Shuttleworth (c. 1910-1920) India's western Himalayas (Kulu, Lahul, Spiti and Ladakh). Unfortunately, captions and a numbering system are lacking.

MSS.EUR.D.772/29 displays 249 miscellaneous prints, including some views of Leh (Ladakh), temple interiors and masked dances, Buddhist monuments such as chorten and rock carvings, nomadic people (from Rupshu ?), converted Christians, farmers, etc.

MSS. EUR. D. 722/30 consisted of 169 beautiful panoramic views taken in Kulu, Lahul and Spiti, including among many others a view of Kyi village in Spiti, of Kyelang in Lahul; the confluence of the Pin and Spiti rivers near Dangkar, the Bhaga valley, or the Tshomori Lake in Ladakh. Most of these photos are also kept in the Royal Geographical Society, but with captions. (*infra*)

The F. Bournes Collection 1925

Under MSS.EUR. E. 364 is kept in a box containing Sir F. Bournes' and his wife's papers, medals, diploms, water colours and an album of 120 photographs shot in 1925 during a one-month summer trek through "Indian Tibet" from Kulu to Srinagar across Lahul (Kyelang, Patseo, Baralacha pass) and Ladakh (Lingti plain, Lachalung pass, Debring, Gya, Upshi, Chuchot, Leh, Saspol, Nurla, Mulbek, Kargil and Zoji-la).

The Sir Robert N. Reid Collection 1933-1941

MSS. EUR. E. 278/86. An Album belonging to Sir Robert Niel Reid (1883-1964) and containing 488 prints concerning Bhutan and taken between 1933 and 1941.

The Symon Alec Collection

MSS. EUR E 367. Box 2. This box includes a diary along with an envelope of black and white photographs (without captions) of landscapes and monuments. A. Symon with his wife Dodo Symon undertook a journey from the Indian border to Kathmandu through the Terai in November 1947.

IOL Prints and Drawings Department

This department stores about 160 photographs - mainly anonymous - taken in Baltistan, Ladakh, Darjeeling and Nepal between the last decades of the XIXth century and the first decades of the XXth.

Baltistan and Ladakh

1870s : 4 stereoscopic views of unidentified Ladakhi villages (Basgo, Thiksey and Shergol ?), one distant

view of the Buddhist monastery at Lamayuru, and one view of the Buddhist monastery at Thiksey.

1899 : a dozen prints showing the town of Khapalu, the Shigar Valley, shepherds huts and unidentified villages in Baltistan;

a dozen prints including yak as pack-animal; pitching camp in Ladakh; the Buddhist monasteries of Basgo and Hemis; Leh bazaar, palace and Muslim cemetery; chorten and prayer-walls; nomads' black tents in Chang-thang.

c.1928 : 60 pictures including a scenic view of the Shyok Valley, Leh town, Hemis and Lamayuru monasteries, ploughing in the Indus valley, yaks and sheep as pack-animals, Khalatse bridge, Wakha valley, Zoji-la pass.

Mount Everest and "Himalayan range"

About 35 views (including telephotographs) of Mount Everest, Kanchenjunga and "others snowy peaks and wooded hillsides in the Himalayas" taken between the 1860s and 1929.

Nepal, Kathmandu Valley

About 40 photographs from the Kathmandu Valley between the 1860s and 1901 including street scenes in Kathmandu. Bathing and Cremation Ghat at Pashupati, Durbar square at Patan and Bhatgaon, the Buddhist temple of Shimbhounath [Swayambunath]. Among the oldest are an anonymous picture of a man holding a sword untitled "Ramnath subovadur guide" (1860's), some beautiful views of the "valley and city of Kathmandu" and several very interesting "scenes from the Indra Jatra festival" taken in 1863 by C.C. Taylor.

The Royal Geographical Society

1 Kensington Gore

London SW7 2AR

Picture Librarian : Joanna Scadden

e-mail : pictures@rgs.org

The Royal Geographical Society displays an extraordinary collection of pictures devoted to the Karakorum, the Himalayas, and Tibet. Each print has a number : 030180, 088770, etc. and, usually, a caption specifying place, date and name of photographer. The photographs are filed by area, such as Kashmir, Nepal-Pakistan, India, Tibet. For example, if you want to learn about Ladakh, one must look in the Kashmir, India and Tibet drawers.

Concerning Western Himalayas, The RGS possesses a large collection of images (over 200 prints) from the period 1890-1933, concerning Baltistan and Ladakh. Some of the panoramic views of Lahul-Spiti by H.L.M. Shuttleworth (*supra*. IOL) are also kept there.

Baltistan and Ladakh

1890, Capt. A.F. Mockler-Ferryman : approx. 15 photos (Basgo, Lamayuru, Khalatse, Chemre, Leh, Wazir and officials, monks, Yarkandi merchants, wildlife,

game, etc.)

1896-1899, H.P. Deasy & A. Pike : 3 distant views of Leh and 6 pictures of Hemis monastery.

1900, Lieut. A.A. Crookshank : approx. 15 photos taken in Eastern Ladakh : Gya, Tsomorari, Tsokar, Debring, wild animals and hunting scenes.

1903, Capt. C. G. Rawling : approx. 50 photos taken throughout Ladakh, in Purig, Basgo, Leh (caravanserai, shoeing ponies, etc.), Changthang (nomads, wildlife, hunting).

1904, Jane E. Duncan : approx. 10 photos taken in the Shyok Valley showing petroglyphs and rock-carvings. J.E. Duncan took part in an archaeological excavation near Khalatse with A.H. Francke.

1906, Capt. C.M. Ritchie : a dozen small and poor quality prints on Leh, northern and eastern Ladakh.

1921, Miss G. Macklin : approx. 20 photos of people and landscapes from western Ladakh (Kargil, Mulbek, Wakha).

1923-25, Capt. E.L.G. Griffith Williams : more than 50 photos taken in western, central and eastern Ladakh (Kargil, Suru Valley, Lamayuru, Nurla, Phyang, Leh, Nyoma, Tsomorari and Pangong lakes).

1925, Col. R. Meinertzhagen : approx. 10 photos depicting Mulbek Chamba, Leh, Hemis monastery, Pangong Lake, Nubra and Shyok confluence.

1927, Dr. E. Trinkler : 2 photos of landscape taken in north-eastern Ladakh (Aksai Chin, Chang chenmo valley).

1928, Lieut. Col. C.H. Stockley : 5 photos taken at Leh and Hemis monastery.

1932-33, H. de Terra : 5 landscapes of Tsomorari and Pangong lakes.

Nepal

The photographs related to Nepal are filed within 2 'Nepal Pakistan' compartments according to their size, and few envelopes. Six large, red boxes are devoted to the Olfield collection.

1854-1860, *the Oldfield Collection* .

This unique historical collection contains, besides beautiful water-colours, a large set of exceptional photographs of landscapes and architecture taken c. 1850-60 in the Kathmandu Valley. Among the former, several pictures should be noted, such as the views of Kathmandu one taken from Swayambunath, the other from "Nagarjoun mountain", a view of Nuwakot and a view of "Bhecmphety village at the foot of the Cheesepani Mountain, with a view of the Host of Cheesaghurie near its summit", dated January 1854.

Henry Ambrose Oldfield (1822-1871) was posted to Nepal in March 1850 as Residency Surgeon and remained there until his retirement in 1868.

1894 *Johnston & Hoffmann* : Several pictures including landscapes of Hetounda and Bimphedi, views of Kathmandu Valley, Newari women weaving, ...

1903. H.H. Hayden (from the Tibet Frontier Commission) : only one photograph of Mugu village and Western range from the East.

1926. Capt. J. C. Morris : approx. 100 photographs of landscapes, settlements and people taken in the Terai, central and eastern Nepal, including among others, splendid pictures of Inghla and Massiang villages, Magar women.

1924-26. Major W. Brook Northey. Numerous photographs shot in the Kathmandu Valley in 1924 and a set on Massiang village taken in 1926 during the journey in eastern Nepal with J.C. Morris.

1949-50. Tilman. Two main boxes comprising numerous small size photographs without any number or caption : Upper Kali Gandaki valley, Mustang ?; and 4 beautiful photographs taken in 1950 : "Looking up Marsyandi valley from Pisang" and "Kami river near Tange".

1978. Richard Ravensdale : a set of photographs taken during the Pokhara-Muktinath and Trisuli-Langtang trips.

In addition to these collections related to Ladakh and Nepal, the Royal Geographical Society offers a large collection, especially devoted to Sikkim, Bhutan and Tibet, and chiefly comprising photographs of Tibet, Sikkim and Bhutan

Tibet

by Chandra Das (1879-08), G.R. Littledale (1895), Capt. Rawling (1903), Capt C.H.D. Ryder (1904), Percival Landon (1904), Sven Hedin (1906-08), Brig. Gen. G. Pereira (1910 & 1921-23), Capt. Noel (1913 & 1922), W. Pierdom (1914-1915), Major E.O. Wheeler (1921), E. Teichmann (1921 Eastern Tibet), Capt. H.R.C. Meade (1922), F. Kingdom Ward (1924, 1932-33, 1935 Eastern Tibet), H. Rutledge (1926, Western Tibet), Capt. M.R. Sinclair (1931), E.W. Fletcher (1931), J.L.R. Weir (1931) of Tibet, Sir G. Taylor (1935 S.E. Tibet & Assam), F. Spencer Chapman (1937).

Sikkim

by Chandra Das (1879-08), Rev. R.A. MacLeod (1926).

Bhutan

by J.C. White (1905), Capt. H.R.C. Meade (1922). And also several sets concerning *Karakorum valleys* (Gilgit, Astor, Hunza, Baltit, etc) and *glaciers* (Biafo, Baltoro...) by Major J.R. Roberts (1895, extraordinary photographs), G.J.F. Knowles (1902), J.B. Mackintosh (1905), A.R.B. Shuttleworth (1909), T. Longstaff (1910), C.P. Skrine (1922-24), G. Dainelli (1930), etc.

National Army Museum

Royal Hospital Road, Chelsea
London SW3 4HT.
Picture Librarian : P. Boyden

Only, a few photographs and films are kept there.

Ladakh

1873. Capt. E.F. Chapman. approx. 10 photographs taken in Leh city and in Panamik village (Nubra).

anonymous, c. 1905 : approx. 10 poor quality photographs depicting landscapes, Buddhist prayer walls and chortens, and monks taken in Nyemo, Saspol, Basgo, Fatula pass, etc.

Nepal and Himalayan range

1900-1909. An album including views of the Himalayas

1922. Everest Expedition

1933 5 photos, Houston Mount Everest Flight Expedition

Worth noting : a exceptional panoramic view (140 cm x 15) showing the northern slope of the Himalayas made from various photographs taken c. 1922-24 by Mr. Milward;

- an amateur film shot in the 1930s. by Lt. Col. W. Emsden-Lambert in Kulu, Kangra, and Mahili;

- and numerous photographs depicting colonial life in the hills (Mussoorie, Simla, Darjeeling).

Royal Anthropological Institute

Photographic Library

50 Fitzroy Street. London W1P 5HS.

The Royal Anthropological Institute boasts the P.A. Johnston and T. Hoffmann studio portraits of Tibetans and Nepalese : 60 portraits of "Natives" (full face, left profile or right profile) taken c. 1880s. Each print is 6" x 4" wide.

Johnston and Hoffmann (dates unknown) were the proprietors of a photographic studio in Calcutta and publishers of the J. Claude White albums. They had also established smaller studios along the border between Tibet and Nepal, where they specialize in photographing the local inhabitants (see in this volume the article of Pratyoush Onta).

The captions of the photographs mention : "Lepchas of Sikkim, Nepalese Black-smith caste or Kami; a Tibetan lady from Tashilhumpo wearing Lhasa style of dress; Newars; a Sherpa, a Tibeto-Nepalese, a Gurung of Eastern Nepal; Limbus; a Bhotiya; a Yakha; Mangars; a Tamang; Nepalese Rajputs; a Goldsmith caste of Eastern Nepal; a Murmi of Eastern Nepal; Jimdars or Khambus of Eastern Nepal ("one of the fighting tribes"), a Sikkimese "slave" or Gharti; a Nepalese cultivator caste Western Nepal wearing European cap".

Acknowledgements :

I am grateful to Joëlle Smadja and Marie Lecomte-Tilouine for their assistance concerning the collections in London. Travel expenses in London for the three of us were financed by the programme coordinated by Joëlle Smadja : "Histoire et devenir des Paysages en Himalaya". I also wish to thank Jérôme Ghesquières for information on the photographic archives of the Musée Guimet.

DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

Kim Gutschow : *An Economy of Merit : Women and Buddhist Monasticism in Zangskar, Northwest India.* Department of Anthropology, Harvard University, 1998.

This dissertation is an ethnography of a local moral world created by the intersection of a nunnery, a monastery, and a village within the Zangskar region of Himalayan Kashmir. These three entities are related within an economy of merit constituted by institutional practices as well as the lived flow of individual experiences which emerge out of wider socio-economic, cultural, and historical processes. The thesis describes who becomes a nun, with what motivations, from what familial and social contexts, and by what kind of a ritual process.

The dissertation reverses the conventional frames of reference for most ethnographic studies of Buddhism. It privileges a view from a nunnery rather than the one from the monastery, which has dominated Buddhist studies thus far. The perspective from the nunnery reflects on the monastic life from the standpoint of those women who have renounced the world. This view may illuminate the contested nature of merit making in one Buddhist society. It appears that nuns make merit rather differently than monks do. With both male and female monastics who practice Tibetan Buddhism are expected to devote themselves to selfless compassion and asceticisms, most nuns must compromise their ritual devotions with obligations to farm, field, and family. Nuns can no more renounce their roles as dutiful daughters than they can elude the female bodies defined as inferior and impure. This contradiction between the household and monastic realms has shaped the historical development of the nuns' and monks' orders in a profoundly separate manner.

The first two chapters situate the local lifeworld of the nunnery and its inhabitants within an economy of scarcity and solidarity in this turbulent part of the Indo-Tibetan borderlands. The last of these chapters charts the history of patronage and kingship which left the monasteries so well endowed and nunneries relatively impoverished. The fourth and fifth chapters sketch the dynamics of subsistence at the nunnery and delineate who becomes a nun as well as why, drawing on theories of exchange and experience near ethnography. The sixth chapter examines the three ritual stages a nun must pass through which are theorized as : separation, liminality, and reintegration. The final chapter delineates the historical denigration of women in Buddhist doctrine and local popular culture which have established the male Sangha as the highest field of merit.

CONFERENCE REPORT

Representation of the Self and Representation of the Other in the Himalayas : Space, History, Culture Meudon, CNRS, 25-26 September 1998

BY PASCALE DOLLFUS & MARIE LECOMTE-TILOUINE

The first workshop of the European Bulletin of Himalayan Research, organised by Pascale Dollfus and Marie Lecomte-Tilouine, was held in CNRS, Meudon, France on 25-26th September 1998. The need was felt to organise a regular - annual or bi-annual- thematic workshop to gather the different scholars participating in the EBHR. Indeed such a structure was lacking in Europe despite the vitality of Himalayan studies. The next workshop will take place in SOAS, London, on the theme of Life Histories.

The first workshop gathered more than 50 scholars from different European countries. Eleven contributions were presented, analysing Himalayan identities through diverse fields : tribal claims, formation of ethnic consciousness in caste groups, ideology perceptible within folk-tales and literature, rituals and historical materials. Each communication was followed by a discussion from another specialist of the domain. A synthesis and general discussion led by Steve Brown ended the workshop. The proceedings of the workshop will be published.

Contents

Pascale Dollfus & Marie Lecomte-Tilouine

Introduction

William Douglas : Washing your Neighbour's God

Discussion Véronique Bouillier

Michael Hutt : Reading 'Sumnima'

Discussion Martin Gaenszle

Ben Campbell : Identity and Power in a Conflictual Environment (Tamang)

Discussion Andras Höfer

David Gellner: From Cultural Hierarchies to a Hierarchy of Multiculturalisms: The Case of the Newars of the Kathmandu valley, Nepal

Discussion Gérard Toffin

Joanna Pfaff : Ethnic Markers in Local and National Comparison

Discussion Marie Lecomte-Tilouine

Gil Daryn: Ethnicity without and Ethnic Group

Discussion Philippe Ramirez

Eberhard Berg : Dumji and Zhindak : Local Festival Performance and Patronage as a crucial source of Sherpa identity

Discussion Nicolas Sihlé

Karl-Heinz Krämer : The Janajati and the Nepali state: Aspects of Identity and Integration

Discussion, Anne de Sales

Joanne Moller : Insiders and Outsiders : Community and Identity in Kumaon, North India

Discussion Antje Linkenbach-Fuchs

Martijn van Beek : The Art of Representation: Domesticating Ladakhi Identity

Discussion : Pascale Dollfus

Martin Sökefeld : Selves and Others: Representing Multiplicities of Difference in Gilgit, Northern Areas of Pakistan

Discussion Marc Gaborieau

Steve Brown : Synthesis and questions

NOTES TO CONTRIBUTORS

All manuscripts should be written in English, not exceed 20 pages (5000 words) and must concern the Himalayan region (whether an article, conference report, announcement, or book review, etc.). Texts should be submitted in hard copy and if possible on disk (preferably on MacIntosh, Word). Bibliographic references must be complete (i.e., with the date and place of publication and the name of the editor), and follow this pattern :

Stein, R. A.

1981, *La civilisation tibétaine*, Paris, l'Asiathèque.

Sharma, P. R.

1981, "Nepal : Hindu-Tribal Interface", *Contributions to Nepalese Studies*, VII (1), pp. 1-14.

Tambiah, S. J.

1973, "Dowry and Bridewealth and the Property Rights of Women in South Asian", in J. Goody and S.J. Tambiah eds., *Bridewealth and Dowry*, pp. 59-169, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

The deadline for submissions to vol. 17, is June 30, 1999.

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The views expressed by individual contributors are their own and do not represent those of the editorial board.

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