20-1

2001 Double issue

EBHR

EUROPEAN BULLETIN
OF HIMALAYAN RESEARCH

EBHR

SOAS • LONDON   CNRS • PARIS   SAI • HEIDELBERG

EBHR 20-1 • 2001 DOUBLE ISSUE

ARTICLES

Contributors

Ben Campbell is a temporary lecturer in social anthropology at the University of Manchester. His publications include 'Conversing with Nature: Ecological symbolism in central Nepal' (*Worldviews* 2: 1, 1998) and 'Animals Behaving Badly: Indigenous perceptions of wildlife protection in Nepal' in *Natural Enemies: People-wildlife conflict in anthropological perspective*, edited by J. Knight (2000). He is currently working on an ethnography of environmental protection in a Tamang-speaking community, entitled *Living Between Juniper and Palm*.

Roderick Chalmers is a research student in the Department of the Languages and Cultures of South Asia at SOAS, currently working on a PhD thesis on the emergence of a public sphere among Nepalis in India, under the supervision of Michael Hutt.

Martin Gaenszle is affiliated with the South Asia Institute at Heidelberg and teaches ethnology at Heidelberg University. He has conducted extensive fieldwork on social processes, ethnic identity, religion, and oral traditions in eastern Nepal since 1984 and is presently working on the Nepali community in Benares, India. His latest books include *Himalayan Space: Cultural horizons and practices*, co-edited with Balthasar Bickel (Zurich, 1999), and *Origins and Migrations: Kinship, mythology and ethnic identity among the Mewahang Rai of east Nepal* (Kathmandu, 2000).

Terence Hay-Edie is a Research Associate at the Mongolian and Inner Asia Studies Unit at the University of Cambridge. He completed his doctorate in 2000 on the activities of the World Heritage Convention in Nepal, conducting fieldwork in Lumbini, the birthplace of the Buddha, and on the monuments of the Kathmandu Valley and the proposed nomination of Shey Phoksumdo National Park.

Hiroshi Ishii is Professor in the Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa (ILCAA), Tokyo University of Foreign Studies. His principal field research has been in the Kathmandu Valley, the lower hill areas and the Tarai in Nepal, and has dealt mainly with rural social structure and change. His interests extend to Tibet and North India also. His publications include 'Agricultural Labour Recruitment among the Newars and Other Groups in the Sub-Himalayan Areas' (in *Anthropology of Tibet and the Himalaya*, ed. by C. Ramble and M. Brauen, pp.124-37, Zurich: Ethnological Museum of the University of Zurich, 1993), 'Caste and Kinship in a Newar Village' (in *Contested Hierarchies*, ed. by D. Gellner and D. Quigley, pp.109-57, Oxford: Claren-

don Press, 1995), *Nepal: A Himalayan Kingdom in Transition* (334pp, Tokyo: United Nations University Press, 1996 [with P. P. Karan and others]), and 'Bon, Buddhist and Hindu Life Cycle Rituals: A comparison' (in *New Horizons in Bon Studies* (Bon Studies 2), ed. by S. G. Karmay and Y. Nagano. [Senri Ethnological Reports 15], pp.359-82, Osaka: National Museum of Ethnology, 2000).

Antje Linkenbach is a social anthropologist and sociologist, currently working as Research Fellow at the Centre for Modern Oriental Studies, Berlin. She has published in the fields of social theory, ecology, and development, and social movements, with a regional focus on South Asia, particularly the Himalayas. Books include *'Opake Gestalten des Denkens': Juergen Habermas und die Rationalitaet fremder Lebensformen* (Munich, 1986) and *Appropriating the Himalayan Forests: Ecology and resistance in Garhwal (North India)* (forthcoming).

Kul B. Luintel is a Professor of Economics in the Department of Economics and Finance, Brunel University. He has published extensively in the areas of development policies, finance and growth, exchange rates, and fiscal convergence. One of his research focuses has been South and East Asia. His papers have appeared in *Economic Journal, Review of Economics and Statistics, Journal of Development Economics, Journal of Money, Credit and Banking, Applied Econometrics, Economics, Letters, Journal of Economic Behavior and Organizations, Manchester School* etc. He is currently working on stages of development and finance-growth relationship, R&D, and fiscal sustainability.

Ernestine McHugh is Associate Professor of Anthropology and Religion at the University of Rochester. Her publications include *Love and Honor in the Himalayas* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001) and various articles centred on self, person, and religious practice. She has conducted fieldwork in Nepal since 1973, and her most recent research is on globalization, identity, and the creation of meaning.

Alan Macfarlane is Professor of Anthropological Science at the University of Cambridge and a Fellow of King's College. His books include *The Savage Wars of Peace* (1998), *The Riddle of the Modern World* (2000), and *The Making of the Modern World* (2002). He has made sixteen visits to Nepal, spending about two and a half years in all in that country.

Judith Pettigrew received a PhD in Social Anthropology from the University of Cambridge in 1995 and is currently a Senior Lecturer at the University of Central Lancashire where she teaches medical anthropology. She has conducted research in Nepal since 1990 and is presently working on an ethnography of health and healing in the 'People's War'.

David Seddon is Professor of Sociology and Politics in the School of Development Studies at the University of East Anglia. He has undertaken research on Nepal since 1974 and his publications include *Peasants and Workers in Nepal* (1979), *The Struggle for Basic Needs in Nepal* (1979), and *Nepal in Crisis* (1980) (all co-authored with Piers Blaikie and John Cameron and recently republished by Adroit Publishers, New Delhi), and *Nepal: A State of Poverty* (1983). Recently he has written *Pokhara: The biography of a town* (with Jagannath Adhikari), published by Mandala Books, Kathmandu, and

The New Lahures: Foreign labour migration and the remittance economy of Nepal (with Jagannath Adhikari and Ganesh Gurung), published by IDS Publishing, Kathmandu. He is currently editing a book on the People's War in Nepal and writing a book on *Lahures: 1750 to 1950* (on the early history of labour migration).

Claus Peter Zoller is a member of the Fakultät für Orientalistik und Altertumswissenschaft, University of Heidelberg and he teaches at the South Asia Institute in Heidelberg. His publications include *Die Sprache der Rang Pas von Garhwal* (Wiesbaden, 1983), 'Bericht über grammatische Archaismen im Bangani' in *Münchener Studien zur Sprachwissenschaft* (1989), 'On Himalayan Ball Games, Headhunting, and related matters' in *Flags of Fame: Studies in South Asian folk culture*, edited by H. Brückner *et al.* (1993), 'The Grammar of Poetics: On some linguistic techniques in an oral epic from the Garhwal Himalayas' in *Languages of Tribal and Indigenous Peoples of India*, edited by Anvita Abbi (1996), 'Heroic Ballads and the Biography of a Woman: On coping with conflicts in the western Garhwal Himalaya' in *Perspectives on History and Change in the Karakorum, Hindukush, and Himalaya*, edited by Irmtraud Stellrecht and Mathias Winiger (1997), 'An Indian Myth about the Creation of Death and Life' in *Ways of Dying. Death and its meanings in South Asia*, edited by E. Schömbucher and C.P. Zoller (1999), and 'In Search of Excellence in the Himalayas' in *Studien zur Indologie und Iranistik*, Band 22 (1999).

8

Life-Journeys:
Rai ritual healers' narratives on their calling

Martin Gaenszle

When I tried to elicit life-histories (*jīvanī* or *jīvan kathā* in Nepali) among the Mewahang Rai of East Nepal, most respondents did not understand what I wanted. Conversations typically led to a factual account of kinship relationships, and often ended up in a nostalgic listing of prices during times when a buffalo could be bought for two rupees. Such difficulties have also been described by other anthropologists (e.g. Rosaldo 1976, Frank 1979, Hoskins 1998: 2) and they point to the fact that different concepts of personhood or individuality and different concepts of genre have to be taken into consideration. Hoskins, for example, reports a tradition in which identities and biographies are formed around objects (she calls them 'biographical objects'), thus producing a more indirect way of telling stories of personal experience. Clearly, the idea of one's life as a well-organized story of becoming is a cultural construct. It is useful at this point to distinguish between the more comprehensive 'life histories' on the one hand and ordinary 'life stories' on the other. The latter are much more widespread and have been characterized as stories which (a) make an evaluative point about the speaker, and (b) have extended reportability (Linde 1993: 21ff). Such stories may be quite short and can be part of larger discourse units, i.e. conversations, reports, etc. However, as Linde points out, like any story they imply features of coherence, and the principles of such coherence are culturally variable. In the life stories about professional choice discussed by Linde it is mainly temporal continuity which underlies the tellings. I will argue that movement through space is an important principle of coherence in the personal narratives considered here.

Though the telling of individual life-histories is not a common practice among the Kiranti of east Nepal, among their shamans and tribal priests there is a typical way of narrating 'how I became a ritual healer', and so these narratives may be considered to make up a distinct genre. These stories tell of a process of becoming which usually begins in childhood and extends up to the state of initiated ritual expertise

(e.g. Sagant 1976 on the Limbu; for a typical *jhā̃krī* story from another context see Macdonald 1987). While they are individual and often very personal stories, they display a number of common traits on the level of both style and content. There is no specific term for such narratives in the Mewahang language but, following Bauman's definition of a genre as an "orienting framework for production and interpretation of discourse" (Bauman 1992: 53), one can recognize pragmatic conditions which allow one to speak of an indigenous genre.

In this paper I will consider some of the stories I recorded among the Mewahang Rai in the Arun Valley, east Nepal, between 1987 and 1991. This group, which is termed a 'subtribe' in the literature, belongs to the larger ethnic unit called Rai who are speakers of a Tibeto-Burman language belonging to the Kiranti family.[1] Although the stories were all recounted to me as an ethnographer, a fact which has influenced the form of presentation in some ways (e.g. the insertion of explanatory remarks), my impression is that this situation has had only a limited effect on the overall content of the narratives. A closer look at these accounts shows that, despite all the variations, there are certain recurrent features which indicate that these narratives are subject to some degree of cultural standardization, especially because of the claims to authority which are connected with their telling.

The Rai have a very rich and complex oral tradition, called *muddum*, which is the embodiment of an ancestral way of life, and so it is of crucial importance that the oral texts of ritual experts are transmitted in an authentic manner (see Gaenszle 1998 and forthcoming). Because a competence in ritual speech is only inherited by some descendants of former experts, and not by all, the signs of a calling have to be publicly displayed and acknowledged. It is for this reason that to tell how one received one's calling is of more than personal relevance. Claims to ritual competence can be contested, and so it is important to convince others of the authenticity of the initiatory experience.

I will try to show that the ritual healers' narratives on their calling are both highly contextual (i.e. personal accounts of what really happened) as well as textual (i.e. possessing distinct formal and stereotypical features). The narration of journeys is of particular importance: journeys through the jungle, journeys up the mountains, journeys up and down the valley. A crucial part of the stories is the telling of dreams, and these dreams are invariably about journeys: searching journeys, journeys to the ancestral divinity, journeys to the sky and underworld. Interestingly, the dream journeys relate directly to the ritual journeys the shaman undertakes for the

---

[1] For details on the ethnographic context and conventions of transcription, see Gaenszle (2000). Terms from Mewahang Rai ritual language are marked by M*.

benefit of his clients.[2] I will argue, therefore, that the journey is a central metaphor for the stories of becoming and transformation, both in personal narrative as well as in ritual contexts.

However, although the stories tell of a process of individuation and stress the healer's personal qualities, it is important to note that this process is guided by external forces. Thus, agency in this kind of life story is minimized, because most of the actions that are recounted are beyond the control of the teller. This raises questions about the role of individualism and individual autonomy, which has been a heavily debated issue in South Asian anthropology.[3]

1. Journeys through the landscape

The first example is the story of Jokhmare, who was aged 46 at the time of recording (in 1991). He is both a shaman (*makpa* in Mewahang and *dhāmi* in Nepali) and a tribal priest (*ngo:pa*) for the *waya nāgi* ritual (offering to an ancestral snake deity), and he has a good number of clients.[4] However, there are some in the village who doubt his inherited competence (*sakhau*), because Jokhmare's father's brother is also a well-known ritual expert, and, according to local concepts, only one can be legitimate. However, Jokhmare himself claims that his *sakhau* derives from his mother's brother, and this is also a topic in the following story:

> So I became a shaman in the following manner: Back then I did not know anything and lived an ordinary life. Then I dreamt that I flew.
>
> After lying down to sleep, someone sprinkled me with water. I fell asleep and began to fly. A voice said to me: "Over there you have a stone, this is your deity, go and fetch it!" And the voice continued: "Become a shaman!"
>
> Then I took some ginger[5] in my hand and began to fly up to the source of the Sankhuwa River. After arriving there I continued to fly to China. There I arrived at a river, and I sat down. I fell unconscious (*nùngwa ma:kheda*).

---

[2] On the notion of ritual journeys in the Himalayas, see Allen (1974), and the contributions by Höfer, Oppitz, Pettigrew and Gaenszle in Bickel and Gaenszle (1999).

[3] See, e.g. Dumont (1980), Östör *et al.* (1982), Beteille (1986), Mines (1988, 1994). This discussion, it should be stressed, focused mainly on the Hindu person.

[4] The duality of ritual roles is common among Tibeto-Burman speaking groups in Nepal, and it is now common usage to call one a 'shaman' and the other a 'tribal priest'. However, both roles have shamanic features (such as initiatory crisis, the practice of ritual journeys, possession, and drumming).

[5] Ginger is a necessary tool to go on ritual journeys.

I flew back to the house, and I remembered that I had to get up the next morning.

"Don't get up! First finish dreaming this dream!" This an old man said to me. And so I continued sleeping. Then again he spoke to me: "If you wake up, don't speak to anybody. Go then, and fetch your deity, this stone!" ...

I went to look for the stone, and in fact at dawn I eventually found it. I went straight to it and grabbed it, and in that moment I started to become very hungry. I went home, I was very calm, and then a great anger came over me. "I have to worship this. If you take a deity into your house, you have to pay reverence to it."

Jokhmare's account begins with this episode about his first encounter with the divine power. Typically, it is an external voice which gives straightforward commands and advice, and these lead the initiate to travel in search of his deity. The first journey leads up to the head of the Sankhuwa river, a common destination in the ancestral *nāgi* cult, but also all the way over the Himalayan mountain range into China. In ritual journeys which form a part of shamanic séances, the destination is often 'Lhasa', and it is possible that this is alluded to here. Finally, the stone is found in the nearer vicinity, but the location is not specified.

Jokhmare continues his story by telling of how he gave the stone away to his maternal uncle. Obviously he was not ready yet. But then he started to lose his mind again. He lived through a time of repeated crises. He speaks about the hardships of making a living as a cowherd, with little to eat. Again he has a vision in his dreams—he sees a bunch of feathers. Again he later finds them in reality, and again he gives what he has found away to his maternal uncle, rather than keeping it himself. The situation becomes worse: Jokhmare does not sleep regularly, has no appetite, roams around, and gets into fits of anger. His relatives consult oracles and come to the conclusion that through his maternal uncle he has inherited the power to shamanize. It is only after his wedding that he eventually accepts his fate:

Then in the year VS 2022 or 2023 [1965/66] I lost my mind again. It was the month of Asar, and we were planting millet. I was busy carrying the seedlings. Already before that I had temporarily lost my mind, but this time the true shamanic nature came out for the first time. I went up to the high meadows (*lekh*). You probably don't remember. The mother of my father was still alive. I arrived up there at Jimbore's cowshed (*goṭh*), and he was in the process of milking the cows. I said to him: "Grandfather, give me some milk! Over there is a deity, I have to fetch it."

He mixed water into the milk and cooked it, but I had to go empty-handed.

I remained up there for three days [wandering around]. Eventually Jimbore went down to his house, the one up there, and said to my people: "Go up there and get your son!"

So they sent someone up, and eventually I came down again. As I recognized my house, I starting running down the hill. My [paternal] grandmother said: "Where have you been? You smell of forest, of leaves, where have you been all the time?" And she comforted me. While I was wandering around, not even my *ṭopi* had fallen down. Nor were my clothes torn. I had not lost anything.

Some time passed, and after I had married, a voice said to me: "Make yourself a drum (*ḍhyāṅro*)!" And so I made a drum and began to hold séances. Only then did I become human again. My body became light and agile, and I began to have an appetite again. Before, I had stopped eating rice, and only leaves tasted good to me. So then I held séances. The village elders (*pasung*) taught me one or two words, but actually I did not need any elders. I learned it by myself. In my dreams (the deity) instructed me: "Say this, say that!" So I dreamt.

In the daytime I held a *dewa puja*, then at night I held a shamanic séance. My first client household (*singkhong*) was that of Suntale. Some days later they had also heard about it over there in Tamku. "He has lost his mind and, after chasing away the spirits, become a shaman." So the word spread.

After that we began to have some grains in the house, it grew well (*saha*). If I think about it, we did not have anything to eat before that. Our rice plate was only that big, made from wood. Then I began to hold shamanic séances and to worship *nāgi*, my relatives have already forgotten about that. This is what I experienced, that's all.

This is an almost classic description of the shamanic initiatory crisis. Jokhmare roams around up in the mountains, in a confused state of mind, eating nothing but leaves and smelling of forest. This is the typical assimilation to a forest being, a way of becoming part of the "wilderness" (cf. Hamayon 1990: 439ff). Interestingly, the story does not say much about the subjective experience during these three days of wandering about. It mainly tells of his interactions with other people. This may be due to the fact that the initiate does not remember this phase, as is often the case, and that what really happened is then reconstructed from others' accounts.

The story then recounts the return from the forest, the return to normality, and the beginning of the shamanic career. Typically, the narrator stresses that he did not

need any teachers. It is the deity itself which acts as instructor. This underlines the power and authority which has now been achieved. A powerful shaman does not need a guru, his only teachers are the deities (*guru deutā*). Thus, the narrative covers the crucial period of the shaman's life: this is how he became someone special and unique. Everything after that is derivative of this period.

2. A dream journey to the sky

Sitane is a priest (*ngo:pa*) for the *Saraṅdew*[6] ritual who inherited his competence (*sakhau*) from his father. When he was in his early twenties his father, Phulmare, who was an assistant in this ritual (called *bhāgimi*) in the beginning, took him along to the jungle and taught him how to pluck the 'flowers' (actually certain green leaves) for *Saraṅdew*. This is a very important task, because the success of the ritual hinges on the purity of the flowers, and therefore the assistant is often considered to be as knowledgeable as the priest himself, or sometimes even more knowledgeable. Later on he started dreaming about flying to the sky, which indicated his proclivity for priesthood:

> I first started plucking flowers in the year VS 2015 [1958]. I had just married your aunt [father's sister].[7] My father had already been plucking flowers for a long time, but then he sent me. Was it on the field of Panere or at some cowsheds? In any case, one morning my father came at the first cock-crow and said: "Ey eldest son (*jeṭhā*)!" "What's happening?" "Come on, go and pluck flowers!"

> What kind of flowers he meant I did not know at that time.

> "Well, the flowers for Sarangdew you have to pluck." I didn't understand what my father was saying. "Come with me, I will show you," he said.

> Interlocutor: Was that in a dream or while you were awake, uncle?

> That was while I was awake. Back then I did not have dreams yet. Then we started off, and I carried a bag which he had given me. We went down to Bakluwa, and in fact there was a flower meadow.

> "Come on!" he said and kept on going ahead. "Go and wash yourself!" he said. I washed myself, my head and my feet. Then he said: "Go ahead, over there are flowers."

---

[6] *Saraṅdew* is an ancestral deity which is associated with the drying rack above the domestic hearth. It is also called *Sargadew* (N. 'deity of heaven'), which is also an epithet of the mythic ancestor Paruhang.

[7] Here the narrator was addressing my assistant.

He showed me what the flowers look like, how they are named, and where they are found. "There is a *seyengbung*, pluck it! And these are all *simmabung*, take two for yourself and four for the water containers (*kalas*), one each." So he explained.

I counted, first I plucked those for myself and then those for the water container. I remember how I was astonished. [I thought]: So this is how it is!

This section gives a straightforward account of the teaching situation. Even though Sitane had not yet received initiatory dreams, he is instructed by his father to pluck the flowers for the Sarangdew ritual. Again, the story is about a journey, not a very long or far-reaching one, but a journey through the local forest, usually down to the riverside.

Eventually, Sitane started to have dreams. This is described in the following account, which is a narrative about not one dream but recurrent dreams, which all anticipate the action in the ritual:

I dreamt about plucking flowers. I dreamt that I flew, and I didn't see any kin down on earth: parents, brothers, wife, all had become enemies. I leave the ground and fly around. But you have to come down and take a rest after some time. So I flew to this ridge over there and sat down.

Then I thought to myself: "Well, these are my parents, my younger brothers, my uncles and nephews; I have to go down."

"He's coming down there!" my brothers, my uncles, my parents shouted.

But as I was alone I began to fly towards Korongda, passed the Kulung ridge, made a few circles and flew higher. My parents, all had become enemies. "But these are my parents, my brothers," I thought, "I have to come down." And they got closer, shouting: "He's coming down there!"

Being alone then, I flew from this sharp rock; I circled around three times. The enemies had formed a circle around me. Like ants (?) all had become enemies. But as I circled around I could deceive them. So nothing happened. I thought my parents were about to reach me, since they shouted: "He is coming circling down there!"

As I saw that my parents had become enemies, I realized that I could no longer stay at this place. I climbed up the sharp rock and flew off. But in my dream I had only two bundles of flowers on my head, and in my hands I held the water vessel and mugwort leaves.[8] Nevertheless I flew away like this. [...]

Then you get to another place up there. There is this *ghorapu* (M* 'horse guard'), and this *sapkùmi tayami* (M* 'dog'), as they are called. So now there are these guards (N. *pāle*) on the path (watching over) whoever passes through there. The duck and the pigeon—I realized that they really do exist. I went on and came to a whole crowd of pigeons; it was like a bazaar. The offering of grains is a great offering; you have to scatter it [for them to eat].

Then one goes on to the Village of Ducks (*hasaten*), as it is called. There you take the seeds of the fern (M* *lolobung*), but first you say only its ritual name (*do:psù nùng*). While showing the offering, you take out the seeds and give them, and then you have to pass through quickly while the duck is swallowing them up. Otherwise these guards will not let you pass. So one has to go on by giving gifts of flowers.

As we[9] go on, following the way to the shops (N. *dokān*), we come to a horse which is tied at the bottom of a banyan tree. It's huge! There you have to offer the rice grains. "O Horse, don't kick, don't use the whip. I am going to the shops to buy *saya*, to buy *rùrù* for the *sakchami chekhama*." [10]

[Then Sitane arrives at the place of the watchmen (N./M. *pa:lepu*) and the doorkeepers (N./M. *dhokapu*) who sit with their rifles. Again he presents his offerings of flowers and recites the ritual words in order to get through.]

Then we arrived at the shops. There you have to use another language. The flowers we have carried along with us are only an offering of the ritual names. Up there the deity has his own [flowers], his own altars (N. *thān*) and water vessels (*garuwa*)— it's all on a shelf (N. *almārī*) on the wall. On the shelf are the flowers and they keep shaking. When you get there you ask yourself whether this is possible. When you see these flowers, the ones you have brought yourself seem like nothing. But those you present as an offering.

"Just as I have collected the flowers, so I give them to you, O Shopkeeper Lord, Astrologer Lord, Brahman Lord, Newar Lord, Merchant Lord! (M*

---

[8] These are in fact the paraphernalia used in rituals during the journey.

[9] Interestingly, here the first person plural inclusive is used: it is not only an individual experience, but one which can be had by anybody.

[10] The terms *saya* and *rùrù* refer to the vital head-soul; *sakchami chekhama* is the ritual name of a proto-clan, a unit called *same*.

pasala-hang-o, dokana-hang-o, jaisi-hang-o, bahuna-hang-o, newara-hang-o, baniya-hango). To buy the head-souls, to buy the life-souls I present you the offering of such-and-such *same.*"[11]

Saying this, I showed the offerings up there [...]

[In this way the priest presents one offering after the other: offerings of rice, banana leaves, the hind leg of a deer, etc. After the offering has been accepted, he enters the palace in order to do the crucial divination (*bongbo*). He enquires in a similar fashion whether the clients possess head-soul and which deities are causing trouble, naming one possible afflicting agent after the other. When the responsible superhuman agent is named, again the trembling comes. After the divination, Sitane recounts the return journey as experienced in his dream.]

Once again this account is characterized by a close interrelationship between the dream experience and the ritual procedure: the incipient priest dreams the whole ritual journey just as it is experienced in the actual ritual performance. He passes through exactly the same stages and acts as in the ritual: travelling to the deity, passing numerous obstacles, presenting offerings, and speaking the proper ritual words. Sitane's dream discourse begins as a personal account, but it increasingly becomes a description of the standard features of the priest's journey, seen from his own perspective. It may be because he is addressing an ethnographer that the narrator seems to move away from a dream narrative, and towards a normative account of the ritual. However, Sitane finishes his story by saying that this is what he dreamt. It should be emphasized again that here reference is made for the most part not only to one particular dream but to dreams which appear again and again, even after the priest has begun to perform the ritual regularly. So what is being recounted is not only a singular experience, but a recurrent one, and the dream vision is not only a personal one but one that any priest of *Saraṅdew* would have in a similar manner.

Typically, a fundamental experience of the novice is the experience of flying. In the dream, even the plucking of 'flowers' in the jungle is done while he is flying. At first, it is a stunning experience which confuses him, as he realizes that his family members are attempting to follow him. In this he sees proof of their animosity, and he turns away toward the divine, thus separating himself from his kin. This might be interpreted in psychological terms as a metaphor for the process of individuation: compared to his ordinary relatives (most of whom have no *sakhau*) he is

---

[11] In ritual contexts, persons are only referred to by the ritual name of their *same*-group, i.e. their proto-clan.

something special, and he now becomes aware of his particular disposition and his inherent powers.

The dream journey requires passage to take place through numerous gates, and in fact this is equally part of the ritual. The priest has to have a proper knowledge of how to act and what to say. He hears the incantation in the dream, i.e., the deity 'puts it in his mouth'. The ritual words have the effect of passwords: only if he utters the right formulae do the guards let him through. In this manner he proceeds upwards, passing one level after another, and approaches the deity, just as he does in the ritual itself.

Once the priest has arrived at *Saraṅdew*'s residence he communicates with the deity. He not only presents the gifts but also asks whether the offerings are accepted, whether the head-souls of the household will in fact be strong, and which superhuman being causes any disturbance. The answer to these questions is given through a mild but unmistakable trembling, which is possible because of the *ngo:pa*'s *sakhau*. In other words, the deity temporarily 'possesses' the priest, and by thus replying to his questions the two engage in a dialogue. Again, this applies to the dream as well as to the ritual.

3. Conclusion: Life-journeys and the question of agency

Most of what could be observed in the two examples given above was also found in the dream narratives of other ritual experts which cannot be included here. These accounts generally relate memories of the first dream experiences that indicated and confirmed the healer's calling, and frequently these memories are embedded in an autobiographical context, containing details about the person's age, the situation in the family at that particular time, and so on. But once they have started to relate the dreams the narrators tend to give rather standardized accounts, often in the first person plural, of journeys to the other world and encounters with the deity. This indicates that the dreams are not seen as private and singular events, as products of the individual mind, but are instead conceived of as being sent by the ancestors,[12] as an activation of the inherent *sakhau*, and therefore they are a recurrent phenomenon. This is how priests dream.

Though the two examples are quite different in style and content, there are several obvious similarities:

(1) *The journey.* The novice is always on the move, travelling in order to meet his deity. In our examples the initiates undertake journeys through the forest, up the river to its source, even to a foreign country (China), and to the upper world of the

---

[12] On similar religious meanings of dreams in a different ethnographic context see Jedrew and Shaw 1992.

sky. While many journeys are undertaken only in dreams, some have been experienced in real practice: Jokhmare did in fact roam around in the forest or on the high pastures in a trance-like state of consciousness, and Sitane regularly goes on a tour to search for flowers. Travelling is an essential mode of being for the ritual specialists, who leave familiar ground behind to venture into the transcendent, divine sphere. In order to do this they have to know the proper path, and it is this that is 'shown' to them in the dreams. Only such a capacity to go on journeys, which has been acquired in visions and through proper knowledge of place-names, enables the ritual practitioner to get in touch and communicate with the divinity.

(2) *Dreaming and ritual.* Apparently there is an intrinsic relationship between the dream consciousness and the waking consciousness. We have seen that the dream journey clearly relates to the ritual procedure: one could say that the dream encounter with the deity provides the pattern for ritual action. What has been seen in the dream has to be enacted in practical reality. For instance, a *bhägimi* dreams of 'flowers' waiting to be plucked at particular locations. But the ritual texts influence the dream experience likewise. Thus, for the priest the reality of dreaming and the reality of waking are not essentially different but rather two aspects of the same reality. Each aspect reconfirms the other. And it is this superior kind of knowledge which is the basis of priestly authority.

(3) *The tools.* Ritual objects used in the performance play an important part in all narratives: the stone as manifestation of the deity, the drum, the 'flowers'. They are often 'shown' to the novice with a more or less explicit invitation to take them and use them for sacrifice. The tool creates a particular bond between the priest and his deity. As it has been given, or shown, by the divinity it thus provides the capability, but also the obligation, to make offerings in future times. The tools are crucial for the undertaking of ritual journeys: without them the officiant would be vulnerable and helpless.

(4) *Knowledge.* Of equally crucial importance is the knowledge of the ritual language, the ritual names and formulae. The ritual specialist is able to proceed on his path only if he knows the proper words, and unless the offerings are named in the proper way they cannot be accepted by the deity. This knowledge is transmitted by the deity, who either tells the novice what is to be said or puts the ritual words directly into his mouth. In any case, the novice hears the sound of the ritual incantation in his dream and, even if some expressions still have to be learned, the basic competence in ritual speech provided by ancestral forces (inherited through *sakhau* and given by *secimang*) has already been received. Thus, the initiation which is experienced in the dream results from the peculiar relationship between the novice and the deity. It is the divine force itself, the *secimang* or *guru deutā*, who transmits

the knowledge and, though a human *guru* may also be involved, he is seen as play-
ing only a minor role.

Returning to the issue of life history, one may raise the question: Why is the jour-
ney such an important and distinctive feature of the story about becoming a ritual
specialist? What is it about the novice's movements which makes them so crucial
for ritual expertise and competence? Obviously, the journey is a powerful experi-
ence. The reason for travelling is the encounter with the deity which is located at
places outside the inhabited village area. In order to meet the divinity, one has to
leave familiar ground and venture into the 'wilderness' of unknown territories. The
narration of such an experience possesses a high degree of coherence: it is struc-
tured as a succession of places. But at the same time the textual coherence of this
kind of narrative has a moulding effect on experience: the story is not simply the
expression or representation of an event but it contributes to the structuring of the
experience in the first place (cf. Mattingly 1998). In this perspective the dream
journeys, the physical journeys, the ritual texts, and the initiation narratives are all
closely interrelated: they all deal with a transformation of experience in terms of a
text of spatial movement. For the initiate, I would argue, the special significance of
the journey lies in its 'decentring' or 'off-centring' effect:[13] he or she cuts off the
ordinary links to relatives and neighbours and moves to a different space—typi-
cally, he flies, which ordinary people cannot do. In this way a different perspective
on the known world is achieved: rather than looking out from inside, now one can
look in from outside.

One is tempted to interpret this as a form of individualism: the ritual healer is
expected to be a person who has acquired special attributes, a strong and unique
character, and a personal style, after going through a crisis during which he turns
away from his immediate kin and encounters beings of a different reality. The
social role of the healer, who mediates between the ordinary world and the world of
ancestors, provides a space which is somewhat removed from everyday life. This,
we have seen, can be taken literally: the healer moves through a larger space, he is
acquainted with a mythic landscape with which ordinary people are only vaguely
acquainted. Thus, in spite of numerous differences, one could draw some similari-
ties with the South Asian ascetic whom Dumont has described as an 'individual-
outside-the world' (Dumont 1980). This is not the place to take up such a complex
controversy, but it should be stressed that individualism in these contexts must be

---

[13] The term 'decentring' is sometimes used synonymously with 'decontextualization', i.e.
the processes which turn discourse into text (cf. Bauman and Briggs 1990: 72 [fn. 2]).
However, I prefer to use this term for a particular psychological effect which texts can have
on experience.

seen as a culturally circumscribed ideology of personhood, which has to be clearly distinguished from psychological phenomena such as individuality or individual autonomy (a distinction which is often blurred, e.g. Mines 1988, 1994). In the case of Mewahang healers, it is evident that becoming a unique ritual expert is not seen as a matter of individual choice. Quite to the contrary, no matter what psychological reasons may be involved, it is generally regarded as being due entirely to external forces. Agency in these autobiographical stories is largely located outside the narrator. The novice generally takes no responsibility for his action, but only follows the will and instructions of deities. In this way, it is precisely the claim to non-agency (or patiency) which legitimizes the claim to individual power and ritual authority.

References

Allen, N. J. 1974. 'The Ritual Journey: A pattern underlying certain Nepalese rituals.' In *Contributions to the Anthropology of Nepal,* edited by Christoph von Fürer-Haimendorf, pp. 6-22. Warminster: Aris and Phillips.

Bauman, R. and C. L. Briggs 1990. 'Poetics and Performance as Critical Perspectives on Language and Social Life' *Annual Review of Anthropology* 19:59-88.

Bauman, R. 1992. 'Genre'. In *Folklore, Cultural Performances, and Popular Entertainment: A communications-centred handbook*, edited by Richard Bauman, pp. 53-9. New York: Oxford University Press.

Beteille, A. 1986. 'Individualism and Equality' *Current Anthropology* 27: 121-34.

Bickel, B. and M. Gaenszle (eds) 1999. *Himalayan Space: Cultural horizons and practices.* Zürich: Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich.

Dumont, L. 1980. *Homo Hierarchicus: The caste system and its implications.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Frank, G. 1979. 'Finding the Common Denominator: A phenomenological critique of the life history method' *Ethos* 7: 68-94.

Frank, G. 1995. 'Anthropology and Individual Lives: The story of the life history and the history of the life story' *American Anthropologist* 97: 145-8.

Gaenszle, M. 1991. *Verwandtschaft und Mythologie bei den Mewahang Rai in Ostnepal: eine ethnographische Studie zum Problem der 'ethnischen Identität.'* Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag Wiesbaden.

Gaenszle, M. 1998. 'Ancestral Voices: Oral ritual texts and their social contexts among the Mewahang Rai in East Nepal'. Heidelberg University (unpublished habilitation thesis).

Gaenszle, M. 2000. *Origins and Migrations: Kinship, mythology and ethnic identity among the Mewahang Rai of East Nepal*. Kathmandu: Mandala Book Point and The Mountain Institute.

Gaenszle, M. *forthcoming*. 'Emerging voices: the transmission of oral ritual texts in East Nepal.' In *Sruti: The transmission of oral tradition*, edited by Molly Kaushal *et al*. New Delhi: Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts.

Hamayon, R. 1990. *La chasse à l'âme: esquisse d'une théorie du chamanisme sibérien*. Nanterre: Société d'ethnologie.

Hoskins, J. 1998. *Biographical Objects: How things tell the stories of people's lives*. New York, London: Routledge.

Jedrew, M.C. and R. Shaw (eds) 1992. *Dreaming, Religion and Society in Africa*. Leiden: E.J. Brill.

Linde, C. 1993. *Life Stories: The creation of coherence*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Macdonald, A.W. 1976. 'Preliminary report on some *jhākri* of the Muglan'. In *Spirit Possession in the Nepal Himalayas*, edited by J. Hitchcock and R. Jones, pp. 309-41. Warminster: Aris and Phillips.

Mattingly, C. 1998. *Healing Dramas and Clinical Plots: The narrative structure of experience*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Mines, M. 1988. 'Conceptualizing the Person: Hierarchical society and individual autonomy in India' *American Anthropologist* 90: 568-79.

Mines, M. 1994. *Public Faces, Private Voices: Community and individuality in South India*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Östör, A., L. Fruzzetti, and S. Barnett (eds) 1982. *Concepts of Person: Kinship, caste, and marriage in India*. Cambridge, M.A.: Harvard University Press.

Rosaldo, Renato. 1976. 'The story of Tukpaw: They listen as he orates'. In *The Biographical Process: Studies in the history and psychology of religion*, edited by F. Reynolds and D. Capps, pp. 121-51. La Hague: Mouton.

Sagant, Philippe. 1976. 'Becoming a Limbu Priest: Ethnographic notes'. In *Spirit Possession in the Nepal Himalayas*, edited by John Hitchcock and Rex Jones, pp. 56-99. Warminster: Aris and Phillips.

The Construction of Personhood:
Two life stories from Garhwal

Antje Linkenbach

Introduction

This article presents two personal histories from the Garhwal Himalayas (Uttaranchal Pradesh). The protagonists originate from villages located in two different districts of Garhwal, and the stories mirror the different social and political contexts in which each person is situated and within which each life has developed. The stories vary according to the circumstances and genre in which they are presented. The first is a personal narrative told to the anthropologist, and the second is a song about Gaura Devi, the famous Chipko fighter, written and occasionally performed by a local poet.[1]

Biographical research has always been a strong element of those academic disciplines which focus on events and processes, on the contingent and the individual (e.g. history and psychology). But in sociology and social anthropology, disciplines which often are said to concentrate on collectives and structures, biographical research has gained importance too, and this is for several reasons:

• By highlighting the *lifeworld* of individuals, their practices and experiences, biographical research illuminates the *relationship between structure and agency* in a particular society. Listening to personal narratives is one way of exploring how individuals understand society and how they act in society, i.e. how they cope with norms and constraints, with limits and possibilities.

• Biographical research helps us to get an individual's perspective on society—"to observe a particular society through the lens of individual lives" (Mirza and Strobel 1989: 1)—but it also brings into focus the "social structure of individuality" (Bude 1987: 109). The personal history of an individual reflects not only the relation of the person to himself, but also mirrors the experience of a particular time and social-

---

ity and, in most cases, tries to compose the individual life as one which is socially recommendable.

• With its accent on individuals and their personal histories, biographical research aims to transcend the objectivistic view of a society by looking at it from within. But this is the case only to a certain extent. One has to take into consideration the fact that a narrator's self-presentation of his/her life is always a response to the demands of an Other.

Certain distinctions proposed by Vincent Crapanzano help us to structure the field of biographical research in social anthropology. Crapanzano distinguishes the "personal historical text produced by the anthropologist's informant for the anthropologist" from the 'life history' or 'case history' produced by the anthropologist for his audience on the basis of the informant's narrative (1977: 4). Thus, a life history or a case history are representations of a representation, a secondary interpretation. But what is the difference between a life history and a case history? They are two forms the anthropologist gives to the subject in his writing: the 'case history', like a biography, presents the subject from the perspective of an outsider and bears the impress of the narrator (Freud's case histories are good examples); the 'life history' presents the individual from his or her own perspective and so comes closer to an autobiography (a well-known example is Majorie Shostak's *Nisa*). However, it differs from an autobiography in that it is "an immediate response to a demand posed by an Other and carries within it the expectations of that Other" (Crapanzano 1977: 4). Mirza and Strobel have stressed the impact of the anthropologist on the construction of the personal text much more clearly than Crapanzano:

> Unlike autobiographies, the initiation for which generally comes from the subject herself, a life history comes about as the collaboration between two individuals, often an insider speaking about herself and her society and an outsider asking questions from her own frame of reference. As such, a life history from the start embodies more than one person's agenda, purpose and interest. (Mirza and Stroebel 1989: 1)

My first example, the story of Sundar Singh Rawat, is just such a 'collaborative' life history. Sundar Singh's personal text is the outcome of a *dialogue*, it developed in the course of our *interaction*, and it is me, the anthropologist, who represents it. My second example is different. It concerns a local biography, constructed and presented by the narrator in the form of a poem. The poem has been composed *before* the anthropologist came to the village, it was only sung for me to illustrate the life of Gaura Devi, the famous Chipko fighter.[2] The poem is not based on a personal text

---

[2] The Chipko *āndolan* was a protest movement of people of Garhwal and Kumaon against the commercial felling of forests. The first campaigns started in 1973 in Chamoli District.

communicated by Gaura Devi herself, but on the author's acquaintance with her as well as on their shared experience of the Chipko struggle. The author, Dhan Singh Rana, has organized his representation according to his own personal intentions: with the life story of Gaura Devi he wants to communicate a message—not primarily to the anthropologist, but to the village people of his region and, maybe, to the nation and to the world. I take the story of Gaura Devi as it is—as a poem, which, like any piece of literature, invites comment and interpretation.

Before I present these two life histories, a few remarks are necessary on the geographical and socio-historical context in which they are situated. The new state of Uttaranchal Pradesh was formed in November 2000 out of the Himalayan part of Uttar Pradesh. It consists of the regions of Garhwal and Kumaon which are distinguished by their geographical and historical particularities. Whereas many parts of Kumaon are mediterranean in character and the landscape gives a clear view of the high Himalayan peaks, most of Garhwal is dominated by rugged mountain ranges, steep slopes and deep valleys. From the glaciers rise the holy rivers of Ganga and Yamuna. The remaining forests consist of oak, fir and spruce in the higher altitudes, and of pine in the lower ranges. Terraced fields may extend up to about 3000 metres and crops vary according to irrigation facilities and altitude (rice, millets, wheat, pulses, potatoes, apples). Garhwal and Kumaon were kingdoms under separate dynasties until the end of the 18th century, when the Gorkhali rulers from Nepal invaded and subjugated both regions. In 1815 the British defeated Gorkha and incorporated Kumaon, the eastern part of Garhwal, and the area around Dehra Dun into the colonial empire. The parts west of the Alakananda (today the districts of Uttarkashi and Tehri) were restored to the successor of the previous ruler of Garhwal. A new capital was built and the princely state was named Tehri Garhwal. The state merged with the Indian Union in 1949 and was integrated into Uttar Pradesh.

My first example, the life story of Sundar Singh Rawat, takes us to a village in Rawain, a region which constituted a separate administrative unit (*parganā*) in the former princely state of Tehri Garhwal and now forms the western part of Uttarkashi district. The village is divided into two parts: one is inhabited by Brahmins, the other by Rajputs and Harijans.[3] All members of these three groups are landowners and concentrate on agriculture and animal husbandry. With a few exceptions they till their land themselves. No Shudra castes live in the region and members

---

[3] The term 'harijan' ('children of God'), popularized by Gandhi to enhance the status of the so-called 'untouchables', is the most common self-description used by those belonging to the lowest strata in this area.

of Vaishya castes came as traders and businessmen in larger numbers only after
the infrastructural development of the region, when they settled down in the cities
and small townships. The story of Gaura Devi, my second example, is connected
with Lata and Raini, two neighbouring villages inhabited by Tolchha Bhotiyas to
the east of Joshimath in Chamoli District. The village economy is based on animal
husbandry and rainfed cultivation on terraced slopes. Formerly, the villagers used
to earn a good deal of their livelihood by collecting and selling medicinal and
aromatic plants (*jaṛī buṭī*) and joining mountaineering expeditions to Nanda Devi as
cooks and guides. With the establishment of Nanda Devi National Park in 1982, and
Nanda Devi Biosphere Reserve in 1988, trekking was banned and people's access to
the forest totally restricted. Sources of additional income were no longer available
and the Bhotiyas' living conditions started to deteriorate. In particular, the village
of Raini became well known nationally and internationally during the peak of the
Chipko *āndolan*, because the villagers and their supporters organised successful
protest campaigns against the auctioning and felling of the local forest.

Sundar Singh Rawat: a life history

Sundar Singh was born in 1921 in a village located in the upper Yamuna valley. I
met him for the first time in 1993 when I had settled down in a neighbouring village
to study people's perceptions of the forest and local concepts of development. At
that time Sundar Singh was 72 years old. Together with his wife, he cultivated the
family's land, worked in the apple orchards, and cared for his animals. In the course
of my research he turned out to be one of my best informants, as he had a vast
knowledge of local history, religious practices and concepts, local ways of life, and
local traditions. He could remember bygone times and events in detail and loved to
talk about them with great enthusiasm. Sundar Singh still enjoyed a high status in
the village. He functioned as the *wazīr* ('minister') of one of the main local deities,
and during the time of the Raja of Tehri Garhwal the village's *mālguzār* (village
head and collector of the king's taxes) was selected from his family: his father had
been the last one, but villagers still used the title as a form of respectful address for
Sundar Singh. Sundar Singh had married three times.[4] He had separated from one
wife after a few years of marriage, one wife had died several years before, and the
third was still alive. Sundar Singh had four sons and three daughters, all of them
educated and married. The sons had succeeded in gaining employment as a driver,
a shopkeeper, and in military service. One daughter worked as a primary school
teacher.

---

[4] Polyandry and polygyny were common forms of marriage in Rawain and were still
practised occasionally.

When I asked Sundar Singh to tell me about his life he agreed without much hesitation, but he seemed puzzled by the demand. "I have told you so much about the village, the region, the people, the gods—why are you interested in a single life?" he asked. I tried to explain that by listening to his personal life I could not only learn more about him, about his experiences, attitudes, and beliefs, but I would also have the chance to learn about the everyday life of the village people in former times and today: how they spent their youth, when and how they married, their plans and hopes, what made them happy or sad, what were important, memorable events, in what sense the life in the region underwent changes, and so on. It was this second argument which seemed to convince Sundar Singh. To see his life as an example of the way of life of villagers in the Yamuna Valley, as a valuable source of everyday history (*Alltagsgeschichte*), or "to observe a particular society through the lens of individual lives" (Mirza and Strobel 1989: 1): this was an idea he could easily understand. A few days later we met in my room and for several hours continuously he told his story with great feeling. His language and style of delivery were simple and his vocabulary very limited, and he liked to repeat himself to give a certain argument a particular weight. Never the less, he gave a lively portrayal not only of himself but of events and people in Rawain since the first decades of the 20th century.

How did Sundar Singh construct his personal story? Most obviously, he did not present his story as a chronological sequence of events, drawing a line from his birth to the present day and focusing exclusively on his individual development. Instead, he picked up and communicated *episodes* which seem either to have shaped his life and experience or which he regarded as suitable for the depiction of particular times, or to illustrate social and economic changes in the region. To adopt an expression of the German sociologist Joachim Matthes, who conducted biographial research in Southeast Asia, Sundar Singh narrated *stories from his life* (*Geschichten aus dem Leben*) and did not tell a life history (*Lebensgeschichte*) (Matthes 1984: 286-7). Matthes, like Crapanzano before him, emphasizes that the life history is a distinctly Western genre. Like the autobiography and the biography, it shapes a particular pre-selected range of data *retrospectively* into a meaningful *totality*. To assume the universal validity of the Western paradigm would be an example of ethnocentrism.

Although Sundar Singh's narrative does not produce a meaningful totality, every single episode he talked about had a particular meaning for his personal development and/or the development of the local society of which he felt himself to be a part. Thus, many of the episodes narrated by Sundar Singh seemed to be significant not only as stories of a particular time of his life, but, in retrospect, as episodes

which had had an effect on the present and could even have consequences for the future. Some examples follow, which demonstrate how Sundar Singh organized his personal text.

Episodes from Sundar Singh's personal life

In his personal story, Sundar Singh gave lengthy details of his lineage and family. He talked about his three marriages, about his children, and about their education and careers. He also mentioned that ten children had died in their early years, and reflected on the medical situation and the status of women in those days. But it was most fascinating to see how he evoked a particular image of himself as a particular and unique person, picking out isolated episodes of his life.

Childhood and the question of education – an early turning point

Sundar Singh presented his early childhood as a time of freedom from worries and responsibilities, symbolically illustrating it by praising the abundance of food:

> In those days we had enough cattle. In the jungle there were good pastures... We had plenty of ghee [clarified butter] and milk. Our uncle used to stay with the cattle. We had three or four water buffaloes and eight, nine, sometimes twelve cows, they all gave milk. There was ghee and milk in abundance. We consumed milk and ghee from our own cattle. We ate according to our own desire. Neither grandmother nor mother nor the uncle gave us food. It was not like that. From our own hands we ate, according to our own desire. We ate as much as the heart demanded. Then we grew and became older...[5]

These happy days ended when the children grew older and were expected either to go to school or to help with the family work. Sundar Singh explained that in former times it was unusual for children to be sent to school. He was one of the few boys who got a chance to study, because his parents were well off and belonged to the leading families in the village. One basic school was within reach of the village, but without roads the way was long and arduous. Because of these difficulties Sundar Singh did not start attending classes until he was ten or eleven years old. At the age of fourteen he passed the examinations and the question of his future arose.

> I said to my father that I wanted to continue my studies. Affectionately, my father answered: "Son, if you are interested to study you can do it, but what about your food?" There was no junior school in Rawain and to continue one's studies one had to go to Uttarkashi... Pitaji [Father] said: "What to do

---
[5] I have translated this and the following quotations from local Pahari.

for your food?" Pitaji was *mālguzār* in those days. "Son, what can I do? If you say that I should provide the rations I will bring them." No cars were available in those days, also no mules. There was no road in the beginning. Then I made up my mind that it would be not right for my father to provide food for me, to expect him to bring the rations all the way from the village to Uttarkashi just so that I could study. And later I would go away to search employment. The whole idea did not please me. I said to myself: "No! Leave it, don't go to Uttarkashi for studies!" So I did not go and from that very day I used to climb with the cattle to the grazing grounds. I worked in the house, I did agricultural work. At fourteen I finished the basic school, and at fourteen I started to graze the buffaloes...

Although villagers' options were limited in the days of the Tehri kingdom, Sundar Singh got the opportunity to visit the basic school and, because he was a bright pupil, he had a real chance to continue his studies. According to his narrative it was his own decision to give up the idea of further studies because he did not want to cause his father and his family trouble. He deliberately chose the life of a farmer, which also meant staying in the village and taking over responsibility for the family. Sundar Singh's decision, taken at the young age of fourteen, shaped his life and future: it was an early but important turning point in his life. It was the first episode in our long session he talked about, and apparently there was a special reason for this. It seems that he wanted to explain why he had turned out into the person he was: a villager and farmer with responsibilities and farsightedness. Although he was deeply rooted in his region, upholding tradition and the local way of life, he was also a man who was able to transcend the boundaries of the village intellectually, a person who knew about the possibilities he had not grasped, but was neither unhappy nor discontented.

A man of personal courage

Basically, Sundar Singh tried to portray himself as a person who is upright and honest (*"maiṃ svayaṃ bilkul sacchā ādmī huṃ"*), who does not accept injustice or unfair behaviour, and who stands up for his principles. A story from the day of his final examinations in the basic school was intended to give evidence of his personal courage:

It was the day of our examination. The first paper we had to write was on mathematics. When I saw the first question I was stunned. I said to myself: "Why did they ask us this question? It is a question for a high school student!" ... When the SDM [Senior District Magistrate] passed by I took my paper and stood up. I said: "Sahib, I have a problem." The SDM answered:

"What is the matter?" You must know, I was always a good student, espe-
cially in maths. I said: "The first question of this paper can only be solved
by a high school student. I will close my pen and go home. Why do you
bring us into trouble with this question?" The SDM said: "Give me the
paper." I gave him my paper. The SDM looked at the paper and then said:
"Children, you should all skip that question."

Sundar Singh mentioned proudly that he was lauded by all students and also the
teachers for his courage: "*Shabash*, son, very good." They shook hands with me,
they slapped my back, "*shabash*, son, *shabash*!"

Personal worldview and opinions

When I asked Sundar Singh to tell about moments and events which made him
extremely happy or sad he took the opportunity to elaborate on what I would call
his personal 'philosophy', which seems to have guided his life, especially in later
years:

> The moments and occasions which I remember, they are all equal for me.
> They are equal because I had no serious quarrel with anybody and nobody
> did anything really evil to me. There is a time for happiness and a time
> for sadness. I felt as much happiness as sadness. Once I found a book on
> philosophical discourse. There it was written: "For a man happiness and
> grief should be equal. If he experiences something which is profitable for
> him he will have a good time; if he experiences something bad then he will
> have a sad time. All days are given to us by God. In good and bad days
> one should be happy." ... In this book it was also written that there are four
> places which are best for a man: the banks of a river, the stable of the cattle,
> the fruit orchard, and the natural forest. These are the four best places for
> ascetic practices (*tapasyā*). God has told us that the orchard and the stable
> are good for *tapasyā*. I have both: the stable and the orchard.

Sundar Singh confessed that some people considered him mad because he did not
like to come to the bazaar and most of the days lived near the orchards in his *chānī*
(a small hut or a stable with an attached room located in the fields or orchards). "I
am not against the bazaar", he asserted, "Everybody must choose the place he wants
to live. But for myself the bazaar is not the right place":

> In the bazaar one meets one person, a second, a third person, one meets
> boozers, hunters, all sorts of people. Here I don't have such problems. In
> my orchard I find peace. Here only God cares for me. Therefore I am
> always happy.

Sundar Singh depicted himself as a person who clings to the religious traditions and finds his spiritual fulfilment. He evoked the image of a simple villager who possesses little formal knowledge but is blessed with 'wisdom'. Sundar Singh always attempted to achieve a congruence between his philosophy and his way of living. In the middle of his life, when he was selected as the *wazīr* of the deity, he became a strong devotee of the god and took to a very simple life. He never consumed meat or alcoholic drinks, he never ate meals in restaurants, he only wore traditional clothes, he truly preferred to live and work in the orchards, and he always seemed a well-balanced person. In this respect Sundar Singh reminded me of M.K. Gandhi who once stated: "My life is my message."

Episodes concerning local society

Experiences of regional marginalization—a lesson for today

In several episodes Sundar Singh referred to the hardships of village life in the time of the Tehri Raja. One issue was the infrastructural marginalization of the region. Sundar Singh explained that during his early childhood no shops existed in the upper Yamuna valley (the first one opened around 1930), the villagers had to buy necessary goods like salt, sugar, spices, and clothes from Chakrata (Jaunsar). There were no roads and the villagers were forced to walk on foot; on their way back they had to carry their purchases. Much later, a small road for mules was constructed and a few goods could be brought on horseback. In the early fifties villagers from the Yamuna Valley went to Lucknow, the capital of Uttar Pradesh and seat of the U.P. Government, to apply for the construction of a road.

> Our father, Rawaltaji, Daulatram of Kotiyal, and Premlal Shah of Balari, they went three times to Lucknow. In these days Govind Ballabh Pant [from Kumaon] was the Chief Minister of U.P. They went to ask for the construction of a road. But the Baniyas of Chakrata opposed our application. They suppressed our demands. They argued: "If the road is constructed our development will come to an end." The Baniyas were rich people. They have brought our demands to an end.

Sundar Singh added that a road was built from Dharasu (in the Bagirathi valley) to Barkot (in the Yamuna valley) only after 1960. In his opinion, this was done by mistake: "the road was supposed to be built from Dharasu to Bhatwari, but somebody had mentioned the wrong name in the papers." Sundar Singh is convinced that if it had not been for that mistake nobody would have even thought of constructing a road to the upper Yamuna valley.

The experience of marginalization and the fruitlessness of demands for local devel-

opment in earlier days seemed to have prompted Sundar Singh to take up the issue of political autonomy for Uttarakhand which flared up in 1994 and mobilized large parts of the hill population. He expressed the hopes and visions of many Paharis when he affirmed that in an autonomous hill state the demands of the population could not be ignored any longer. He seemed convinced that all the ministers would be Paharis, that they would understand the problems and needs of the villagers, and that they would jointly work for regional development:

> If we achieve our autonomous state of Uttarakhand, then we will get all sorts of facilities. With the present people in power we won't get development. We never had a person from here who could express our demands and interests. From here [Garhwal] no influential Minister came who would have been able to support us, to push our demands through... So, if our Uttarakhand state is created, we wish that our children will find employment, that we will get facilities like factories, so that our children will get their *rozī roṭī,* their daily food...

Depicting the past and the present: aspects of development, aspects of change

In various contexts, Sundar Singh referred to the social and economic changes he had experienced during his lifetime. I encouraged him to compare the local way of life during the time of the Raja of Tehri Garhwal with the present situation. Although a slight tendency to appreciate the olden times prevailed, especially as far as morality was concerned, Sundar Singh tried to avoid looking back with uncritical nostalgia. He endeavoured to give a well-balanced judgement by acknowledging the weaknesses as well as the strengths of each period. I will illustrate his way of arguing with reference to three topics.

Population growth

Sundar Singh repeatedly mentioned that in his childhood the people had sufficient to eat. There were no droughts, the harvests were good, and the number of people was limited:

> The population was small in those days. People were so few, you see my father had only two sons. The whole family counted four members. Then after marriage we became six. And later the children were born, my brother had five children. I had four children. In those days there was no question of sterilization. See, from one father so many people derived. Now see the grandchildren, how many grandsons and granddaughters were born. If each of our sons gets only two children you will count eighteen grandchildren.

I asked Sundar Singh to tell me about his explanation for the low population figures in earlier times and he started to elaborate on this issue at length. He mentioned the tradition of polyandry as the first reason. This, he said, was successively abandoned with increasing mobility and the widening of marriage networks. People suffered heavily from syphilis. Men as well as women were infected and many children died in the womb or shortly after they were born. The other disease which caused many deaths was malaria. Today the government has succeeded in its efforts to prevent both diseases and the untimely death of children and adults. The population increased steadily, but, so said Sundar Singh, the agricultural land was limited. The times when food was abundant were over and people had to search for additional sources of income to secure their livelihood.

A cash economy

Although the villagers had plenty to eat in the olden days, money (cash) was in short supply and people often had no choice other than to sell jewellery when they needed medical help, or when they wanted to give their children some education. The opportunities to earn money were extremely limited:

> People could get money by selling one of their sheep or goats, they could do some labour work... The cutting of railway sleepers started later. In those days we were children, I was 19 years old. In those days we saw a person in Kanseru, his name was Hukam Singh, he was a forest contractor. He took a contract for the preparation of sleepers. And from then on people started to earn money... A good part of the money in Rawain came from the work of sleeper cutting.

With the introduction of cash crops, Sundar Singh continued, the economic situation in Rawain improved and now each family had at least some money at its disposal. Sundar Singh recalled in detail the process of horticultural development in his as well as the neighbouring villages. He listed when, where, and by which family each cash crop had been propagated first. The main cash crops were potatoes (since 1935), apples (since 1950) and peas (since the mid-1980s).

Morality and sociality

According to Sundar Singh, population growth and the cash economy had had negative effects on the local communities:

> In my opinion the times of the Raja were better. In those days there was a law and nobody could manipulate it. The only important thing was that in those days we did not enjoy any development... Now we get sufficient development, in those days there was nothing... The law of the Maharaja

was good and in those days the people loved each other, the people were good as well. But now the population has increased, how can so many people love each other, how can they keep good relationships? ...Formerly the people lived close together, they used to come to each other's house— now people have started to give invitations. That was not the case in those days. Now everybody eats and drinks from his own money... That was not so formerly, in all places were guests, the people loved each other... But today, how to provide food and drink for so many people, now the population has increased?

In those days there was a lot of honesty (trustworthiness) amongst the people. And today we have a lot of development, people have become aware [of their possibilities]. At present we have much development, but in the olden times there was honesty (*imāndārī*) and truth (*sacchāī*). Now we don't have truth.

Two aspects of this passage are important. First, as far as morality and obedience were concerned, Sundar Singh praised the times of the Raja. These qualities had been lost in the course of the development process. Economic and social development strengthened individuality and selfishness. In the endeavour to earn money and wealth (and to improve their own status), people tried to outdo each other. They cheated, they bribed, they 'manipulated' the law. Sundar Singh's statement can also be read as a complaint about the decline of traditional social hierarchies. Development had facilitated the upward mobility of lower castes and less reputable families, and the former leading groups and families (like his own) tended to lose their status. Second, the population growth of recent decades had added to the decline of traditional values: it undermined the particular form of village sociality, the closeness of people, their brotherhood. It favoured selfishness and the decrease of honesty.

Conclusion

The comparison between the past and the present seems to be central to Sundar Singh's narrative, not only because I, the anthropologist, encouraged him to elaborate on this topic, but also because it was very much his own concern. For Sundar Singh, the past and the present were each characterized by a basically positive but exclusive feature: development marked the present, truth and honesty the past. Nevertheless, Sundar Singh conveyed that in each period there were two sides to the coin. Under the rule of the Raja, people were honest but there was no development: the villagers in Rawain suffered from a lack of education, money, and infrastructure, they felt marginalized and oppressed. In modern times the villagers

enjoyed the fruits of development and the widening of life chances, but they had lost their honesty and sociality. The tension between development and truth remains an unsolved problem, an ambivalence in society. But, personally, Sundar Singh seemed to have found a way out of the dilemma. As an individual he tried to be honest, unselfish, and true by leading a simple life, spending money on good causes (education, financing rituals) and encouraging his co-villagers to do the same.

With the help of several examples I have tried to show that Sundar Singh narrated his life by presenting singular episodes which he thought would illuminate his personality and individuality as well as the particular context in which his life developed (the geographical place, the family, the society). Sundar Singh narrated personal (hi)stories, not a life history. These histories are like pieces of a puzzle. The anthropologist can try to organize the pieces in an endeavour to approach the totality of life and context, but the totality can never be fully grasped. The life history always remains fragmentary.

Gaura Devi: a biography

Gaura Devi, a Bhotiya woman, was born in 1924 in Lata, to the east of Joshimath. At the age of twelve she married into Raini, a neighbouring village. When a forest contractor arrived with his crew to fell the forest at Raini in 1974, Gaura Devi, then a widow of 50, led the village women to the forest to protect the trees. The campaign was successful and the news of the rescue of the Raini forest gave further boost to the Chipko struggle. But for Gaura Devi herself the success was ambivalent. As the national and international popularity of the Chipko movement and its most well-known leaders C.P. Bhatt and S. Bahuguna increased, Gaura Devi became popular as well. Chandi Prasad Bhatt, in particular, presented Gaura Devi to the public at occasions such as conferences, public meetings, and celebrations of awards,[6] because she was useful to strengthen the image of the movement. As a village woman she represented in an ideal way the central features of the Chipko āndolan as they were popularized in the media: an ecological stance, the self-confidence of women as the true protectors of nature, and the spontaneity and power of the local population. G.S. Rawat, the communist Block Pramukh of the region who was

---

[6] According to the villagers of Raini, a number of awards were offered to Gaura Devi and the women from Raini, the most famous being a national award and the Swedish 'Right Livelihood Award'. The latter was handed out to Sunderlal Bahuguna, while the national award was presented by Rajiv Gandhi to Chandi Prasad Bhatt in Delhi. The village people complained that in all cases the award money went into the hands of the 'leaders', and that neither Gaura Devi nor the village women ever saw a single coin. Referring to Gaura Devi they added: 'Sirf nām uṭhāyā, paise khāyā' ('only the name was raised, the money was swallowed').

himself deeply involved in the Raini struggle (though this was not highlighted in the media), perceived selfish motives behind the public display of Gaura Devi. In an interview I conducted with him in 1994, he affirmed that Chandi Prasad Bhatt was instrumental in turning Gaura Devi into a popular figure through his writings and through public display. Nevertheless, Rawat was convinced that this was not done to underline the achievements of Gaura Devi and other village people, but to increase the popularity of the movement, and especially to popularize the name of Bhatt and his mobilization work which, Bhatt claimed, laid the basis for the villagers' success. Whereas Rawat and village people from Raini confirmed that Gaura Devi had accompanied Bhatt on many occasions, they denied that she had been together with Sunderlal Bahuguna. The latter was suspected of having shown a 'false (*nakkalī*) Gaura' to the public, i.e. to have passed off a woman from the Tehri region as Gaura Devi on one (or even more) occasion.

The translocal admiration for Gaura Devi did not have a local correspondence. While she was highly respected during the Chipko struggle, many people, especially those from neighbouring villages, became suspicious when she started to travel and receive awards. With her growing popularity, Gaura Devi seemed to have stirred up feelings of rivalry and envy because she was supposed to have received amounts of money which (according to her critics) she then spent only for her own profit or for that of Raini and her co-villagers. But the people from Raini affirmed that Gaura Devi took nothing, pointing to the poor situation of her family and the condition of the village. They described her as an absolutely upright woman (*sīdhī aurat*) who personally and as president of the women's council (*mahilā mangal dal*) cared about the welfare of the village and felt responsible for the forest as the basis of their livelihood. When she travelled with Bhatt she did not suspect him of taking any advantage of her company, she only wanted to support and to strengthen the forest issue.

The life of Gaura Devi has been taken up in the following poem by Dhansingh Rana from Lata village:

'Gaura Devi' (my translation from the local Pahari)

Today, Gaura, the people remember you,

Today again our environment is exposed to destruction.

You are benevolent, you come to our minds.

I will narrate about your life, just a few things:

In 1924, in the month of Sāwan

You were born in Lata village.

Since your childhood you have been in trouble.

Your mother was already dead, then the *mausī* [7] came.

Your *mausī* was there, but you felt like an orphan.

At twelve, still a child, you got married,

but only for a short while could you enjoy your husband's company.

You bore one child, then your husband died.

Oh Gaura, your life was nothing but big trouble.

Since your early days you have experienced so much grief.

Together with the other children you could have learned something,

but you were poor and barred from education.

Always you have been poor, but never without honour and wisdom.

You cared for all the villages during both happiness and grief,

you never cared for yourself, only for others.

The village people paid you a lot of respect.

In 1970 there was a women's meeting and you were elected as president unanimously.

Nobody voted against you.

In the whole world people are busy cutting down the jungle,

and in the hills the contractor system is a heavy burden.

---

[7] *mausī* : mother's sister, maternal aunt.

In 1973, in the month of October,

Bhalla-Bhai came to the Raini jungle.

Big tents arrived and trucks with provisions.

Hundreds of workers came and with them

the saws and the *kulhāṛī*s.[8]

The innocent trees—the people of the whole area started to worry about them.

In those times Govind Singh was our Block leader.

When he heard the news from Gaura, he hurried to Raini.

It came to his mind to print a pamphlet.

The songs and slogans sung by the people spread quickly.

Employees of the Forest Department and workers, they had already moved into the forest,

they laid ready their saws and *kulhāṛī*s.

It was Gaura, who called upon the people: "Save the forest!",

who inspired the women to come to the forest.

With their bare hands the women went to the jungle

and gave the *janglāt*s[9] and *chirānī*s[9] to understand

that they had sworn to allow them nothing.

Gaura realized the unity and the confidence of the women

and like the voice of the forest she spoke up:

"Do not break our affinity to the forest, rooted since generations.

Sisters, let yourselves be cut with the trees, but do not abandon and leave.

Cling to the trees, hug them, but don't let them be cut.

These, the properties of the hills—don't let them steal them.

Women, you who are the beloveds of the forest, hug the trees!"

The *chirānī*s got discouraged and they turned back.

The people of the region assembled,

---

[8] *kulhāṛī*: axe.

[9] *janglāt*: forest worker; *chirānī*: the person who cuts the railway sleepers.

the villages one after the other took the responsibility as *chaukidār*s,[10]
day by day people demonstrated at the edge of the forest.
All assembled and thought carefully,
they decided: The Block Pramukh should be our adviser.
From Gopeshwar they brought Bhatt, as a reporter.
Bhattji took photographs, and he wrote in the newspapers.
In the whole country the news from our forest spread.
As long as the jungle remains, Gaura, your memory too will remain.
*Lākh*s of money have been offered to you, but you refused it.
Looking at the bribes your face turned red in anger.
*Māldār*s[11] and *janglāt*s disappeared from our region.
Women! With your bare hands you fulfilled a great mission.
Many nations have offered awards to you, Gaura.
You were called to Delhi and your name was made eminent,
when Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi presented you with an award.
The people around you broke your trust
and had no scruples about usurping your award.
Your service has been unselfish and you were pure of heart.
They have taken your award, without any regret,
without caring for you and for your respect.
In your whole life you never talked badly of others,
your selfless actions resulted in your remaining poor.
In 1991, when you were ill, nobody looked after you.
Without any money you had no chance to get healed.
Mother of the greenery, Gaura, you went to heaven.
Death called upon you and you went empty-handed.
Today your children are living poor.
You are like Bhagwati, Gaura, you have done great work.
As long as the earth exists your name will remain.

---

[10] *chaukidār*: watchman.
[11] *māldār*: wealthy person.

> In the name of the environment people exploit the world.
>
> Still today in your hills the forests are cut.
>
> Take birth again, Gaura, and fly into rage,
>
> no matter where, but take birth again and fly into rage.
>
> In this world of injustice, show your miracle again.

Dhansingh Rana's poetical reconstruction of Gaura Devi's life follows a guiding pattern: he presents it as the life of a martyr and a saint and shapes the events in her life into a coherent biographical picture.

The introductory and concluding lines of the poem function as parentheses. They take up the issue of the worldwide exploitation and destruction of the environment and so explain and justify the remembrance of Gaura Devi: she was the outstanding person who fought against the exploiters of nature, unselfishly and non-violently. Rana evokes a divine image of Gaura Devi, when he urges her to take birth again and to help human beings in their struggle against injustice once more. His words sound like an invocation of a deity who is able to incarnate herself as a living being, in order to fulfil a mission to save the world from the evils which threaten it.

The main body of the poem narrates central episodes in Gaura's life. These episodes are organized as a sequence of suffering. The suffering takes two different forms. On the one hand Gaura has to meet her fate: her mother died, she felt like an orphan, she married while still a child, her husband died, she was poor and could not get an education. On the other hand, she had to suffer from the evil-mindedness of human beings. She was exploited and cheated by those in whom she had full confidence: the Chipko leaders whom she supported, and the village people whom she helped to save the jungle, the basis of their livelihood. Nobody cared for her at the end when she was ill and helpless, she was forgotten by all of them and had to die lonely and poor. Scattered through the poem there are statements about Gaura Devi's personal character: she is distinguished by honesty, wisdom, unselfishness, she is characterized as somebody who always cared for others, never for herself. These positive statements are closely knitted together with descriptions of her suffering so as to throw light on the injustice of her fate and the way people dealt with her.

An important issue in the poem is the narration of the Chipko struggle to save the Raini forest. This was when Gaura Devi's charisma became public: she led the women to the jungle, she spoke up "like the voice of the forest" and urged them to oppose the contractors and to fight to rescue the forest as a part of the habitat of the community, as the property of the hills and the hill people. The time of the

struggle is presented as the zenith of her life. As a widely and deeply respected woman, she was born to achieve the high goal of saving the forest. In this very moment her existence gained its ultimate significance, it was "that magic time" in her life.[12] Gaura Devi could take up the role of a 'fighter' on the forefront because she was a widow. She was not bound by the restrictions linked with the traditional role of a woman, who is usually controlled and limited in her actions by the men of the family. The respect she was given as president of the women's council, and the admiration of the public after the successful Raini struggle, could compensate for her lack of recognition as a woman fulfilling her 'natural' role as a wife and the mother of many children.

Dhansingh Rana's poem about Gaura Devi does not illustrate the life of an ordinary Pahari woman. It presents the biography of an exceptional woman; a woman who could become exceptional because of the socio-economic circumstances she experienced—the commercial exploitation of local resources in Garhwal—and the particular situation she had to face when her own forest was threatened and had to be defended against the contractors. By leading the struggle and achieving success, Gaura's life became meaningful in a private and in a public dimension. But by being misused, her suffering, which seems to have been her karma, continued. She returned into poverty and fell into oblivion. The circle was closed. Dhansingh constructed Gaura's life from fragments, but the life, in contrast to that of Sundar Singh, does not remain fragmented. It is meant to impress the reader and listener as a meaningful totality, communicating a message: the call to respect nature and humans alike.

Conclusion

The narrators of these two life histories refer to periods or events which caused considerable structural (political and economic) changes, as well as changes in the consciousness of individuals and communities. Their narratives focus on those aspects of their lives which were of personal significance, but they also permit insights into a particular socio-historical constellation.

Sundar Singh gives a vivid picture of living conditions in the princely state of Tehri Garhwal which corresponds in many respects with academic findings (see Rawat 1989, Saklani 1987). In the 1930s and 1940s 92 percent of the population of Garhwal

---

[12] Kannabiran and Lalitha (1989) have shown how women remember the Telengana struggle (1946-51) as an outstanding time in their life. During the struggle they attended meetings, they were taught to read and write, they discussed political questions. They suddenly felt propelled into a situation "when everything entered the realm of possibility" (1989: 185).

still had to rely on agriculture for their livelihood. Trade on a limited scale between the interior hill regions and the Himalayan foothills and plains was necessary for the villagers to get sugar, salt, and clothing. Forest work and military service were the only ways to earn an additional monetary income. Communications, education, and health care were extremely poor in Tehri Garhwal. In 1940, two motorable roads linked pilgrimage places along the river Ganga (Haridwar, Rishikesh, Deoprayag) with the towns in the core region of the state (Kirti Nagar, Narendra Nagar, Tehri). Only ten post offices and two telegraph offices served an inhabited area of about 4,000 square miles and a population of over 500,000 people (Annual Progress Report 1943-44). In 1944, Tehri Garhwal had 270 elementary schools, six middle schools, and one intermediate college. In 1943 there were 23 medical institutions: these comprised four hospitals and three dispensaries, located in towns, and 16 ayurvedic centres, located in the countryside. Historians mention small pox and leprosy as the main diseases, and in this respect they contradict Sundar Singh.

Efforts to 'develop' the hill regions of Garhwal and Kumaon (which became part of Uttar Pradesh after independence) started in the mid-1960s and were stimulated primarily by national interests. After the Indo-Chinese conflict in 1962, the government felt the urge to make the region 'accessible' for military, administrative and commercial purposes, and especially to facilitate the exploitation of the natural resources (forests, electric power) for the industrial benefit of the whole country. Additionally, the economic development of 'backward areas' was part of the general planning process, and this included activities in welfare and education, agricultural diversification, and increase of productivity (for example the propagation of cash crops and the use of fertilizers and pesticides).

Developmental efforts went along with an increasing confrontation of the hill population with 'modernity': that is, with discourses, practices, structures of power, and ways of life which were different from those with which the hill people were familiar. This encounter promoted a learning process which enabled the people not only to evaluate the forms and presentations of modernity but also to look at their own society in a reflexive, distanced, and critical way. The Pahari way of life lost its self-evident character and people started to compare different worlds critically, and to decide and vote consciously for (or against) a particular way of life.[13]

For Sundar Singh, 'development' had changed the moral and normative constitution of hill society. Selfishness had largely replaced honesty, truth and brotherhood—values which he felt had long served to distinguish the hills from the plains. Sundar Singh's view is not an isolated one. In the context of my research on the

---

[13] For a discussion of the concept of modernity and the encounter of hill people with modernity, see Linkenbach (2000b).

Uttarakhand autonomy movement which inflamed the hills in 1994 and 1995, I conducted a number of interviews in different parts of Garhwal and Kumaon. Most of my respondents complained that brotherhood and honesty were continuously declining in the hills and expressed fears about the ongoing erosion of solidarity and community life, which were still seen as strong markers of Pahari identity.[14]

While Sundar Singh comments on a long-term process of development in the hills, the song narrating Gaura Devi's life refers to a particular historical event: the Chipko struggle in Raini. Gaura Devi's life is constructed so that her activities during the protest campaigns appear as its climax. But, although the Chipko campaign in Raini seems to have been very much her struggle, it becomes clear that the Chipko movement against the commercial felling of forests and the erosion of local rights of forest use is a major concern for hill dwellers in certain other parts of Garhwal and Kumaon too. Dhan Singh's song has equally to be interpreted as a comment on the process of awakening among sections of the hill people and their increasing willingness to fight for their rights and for their future. As a highly influential and resolute person, Gaura Devi took the lead in a particularly crucial campaign, but the Chipko movement was a sequence of campaigns in different parts of Garhwal and Kumaon, and it involved a number of people in towns and in the countryside.

Today, the landscape of thought and action in Garhwal is characterized by a number of partly conflicting local discourses on forest, ecology, and development, as well as by numerous local initiatives, projects, and strategies to translate ideas into action. The Chipko *āndolan* was formative for most of these local discourses and practices and has gained the status of a 'key event'. Against the background of today's experiences, the Chipko *āndolan* is interpreted retrospectively in various personal and collective accounts as a turning point which altered state policies and collective strategies as well as individual life histories (see Linkenbach 2000b). For those who participated in or supported the movement, the Chipko *āndolan* represents a part of their personal biography: they memorize and represent it as a crucial period in their lifetime.

Dhan Singh's narrative on Gaura Devi is only one account, albeit an extremely elaborate one, of the Chipko times. It mirrors the importance of the period and highlights one of its most influential fighters. Gaura Devi is represented as the person who first and foremost symbolizes the Chipko struggle in her locality. But due to her international publicity she is also amongst the central figures symbolizing the struggle in India and abroad.

---

[14] I have discussed aspects of identity construction, as well as people's visions for the design and functioning of a separate hill state, in Linkenbach (forthcoming).

For a long time, biographical research on India had to struggle with what I want to call the 'Dumontian legacy'. Louis Dumont has distinguished two meanings of the term 'individual': the empirical individual, i.e. the self-conscious physical entity, and the individual as cultural value, i.e. the social concept of a unique and indivisible unity. The latter is what Marcel Mauss called 'person' (La Fontaine 1985: 124). Dumont argues that whereas (egalitarian) Western society is based on freedom and the free will of the individual (or person), (hierarchical) Indian society is based on holistic identities and collective interests. Therefore, any approach to Indian society that focuses on the individual is misconceived (Mines 1994: 5). But from the very beginning this view provoked disagreement. Mines asks whether it is acceptable that the idea of the individual can only have one socially valued manifestation: that of Western individualism? What if Indians recognize individuality, but do not value individualism? (Mines 1994: 5-6) And I would add: Can individualism or personhood only be proved by bringing one's ego into focus? I have presented two personal histories which clearly illustrate the personal strength of the protagonists. But when Sundar Singh presents himself as a particular person, or when Gaura Devi is represented as a Chipko fighter, their actions and decisions seem not to be based on ego-centred motifs. The Western ideal (prominent in Western biographical research) of planning or directing one's life according to an ideal of self-realization does not hold for them. Mines (1994: 179ff) has tried to show that the most valued expressions of individuality or personhood in Tamil Nadu are responsibility, eminence, and generosity. My observations from the Himalayas may support this view. Sundar Singh's and Gaura Devi's personal histories illustrate that it was a sense of responsibility towards society (family, village) and nature in particular which guided their personal decisions and actions, and which set up the unique personalities (individualities) of the protagonists, rather than their concern for their isolated lives and careers.

References

Bude, Heinz, 1987. *Deutsche Karrieren: Lebenskonstruktionen sozialer Aufsteiger aus der Flakhelfer-Generation*. Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp.

Crapanzano, Vincent, 1977. 'The Life History in Anthropological Field Work' *Anthropology and Humanism Quarterly* 2: 3-7.

Kannabiran, Vasantha and K. Lalitha 1989. 'That Magic Time: Women in the Telangana people's struggle' in *Recasting Women: Essays in colonial history*, edited by Kumkum Sangari and Sudesh Vaid, pp. 180-203. New Delhi: Kali for Women.

La Fontaine, J.S. 1985. 'Person and Individual: Some anthropological reflections' in *The Category of the Person: Anthropology, philosophy, history*, edited by Michael Carrithers, Steven Collins and Steven Lukes, pp. 123-40. Cambridge etc.: Cambridge University Press.

Linkenbach, Antje 2000a. 'Anthropology of Modernity: Projects and Contexts' *Thesis Eleven* 61: 41-63.

Linkenbach, Antje 2000b. 'Appropriating the Himalayan Forest: Ecology and Resistance in Garhwal (North India)'. Habilitation thesis, University of Heidelberg (to be published).

Linkenbach, Antje forthcoming. 'Shaking the State by Making a (New) State: Social movements and the quest for autonomy in the central Himalayas (India)' *Sociologus* (2002.1)

Matthes, Joachim 1984. 'Über die Arbeit mit lebensgeschichtlichen Erzählungen in einer nicht-westlichen Kultur'. In *Biographie und soziale Wirklichkeit*, edited by Martin Kohli and G. Robert, pp. 284-95. Stuttgart: Metzler.

Mines, Mattison 1994. *Public Faces, Private Voices: Community and individuality in South India*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Mirza, Sarah and Margaret Strobel (eds) 1989. *Three Swaheli Women: Life histories from Mombasa, Kenya*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.

Rawat, Ajay S. 1989. *History of Garhwal 1358-1947: An erstwhile kingdom in the Himalayas*. New Delhi: New Publishing Company.

Saklani, Atul 1987. *The History of a Himalayan Princely State: Change, conflicts, and awakening: An interpretative history of princely state of Tehri Garhwal, U. P., AD 1815-1949*. Delhi: Durga Publications.

Protecting the Treasures of the Earth:
Nominating Dolpo as a World Heritage Site

Terence Hay-Edie

If there are no people in the pristine nature,
who will admire its beauty?

Laxmi Prasad Devkota, Nepali poet [1]

In a review of Nicoletti's *La Foresta Ancestrale* published in *EBHR* 19, Hildegard Diemberger has posed an interesting question. How far does the rapidly expanding discourse of heritage conservation in the Himalayan region affect existing mythical narratives surrounding natural resources and landscapes? In the case of the Kulunge Rai, she wonders, how far does the changing symbolism of a (timeless) mythical forest relate to contemporary environmental issues such as deforestation and the incremental extension of national parks in Nepal (Diemberger 2000: 143)? What, in other words, is the symbolic and mythical impact of the designation of such protected areas?[2]

Toni Huber (forthcoming) provides one such an example from the *Shar-khog* region of southern Amdo in Tibet. Huber has examined the impact of four decades of modern Chinese state policies on the mythic and ritually defined territory of Shar Dung-ri, a mountain once considered to be a protective territorial deity and *gnas-ri* by Bonpo and Buddhist Tibetans alike.[3] During the 1980s and 90s, he recounts, an explicit attempt was made by the authorities responsible for tourism promotion

in the area to introduce a new symbolic narrative of a 'temple fair', purported to have occurred on the annual day of Tibetan pilgrimage in mid-summer, as well as in a commemorative pillar claiming that the Communists' Long March had passed through the locality. The result, he shows, has in this case been the 'reinvention' of Tibetan ritual territory by Chinese interests, and the displacement of the Tibetan pilgrimage site to other more remote areas in the province.

The present article addresses another selective description of a Tibetan cultural space as an internationally recognized protected area in Nepal. Ethnographic fieldwork was carried out between May-September 1998 on the proposed nomination of Shey Phoksumdo National Park (SPNP) as a UNESCO World Heritage site. The account retraces some of the logic of world heritage as it appeared on the ground 'looking for the facts' for the nomination of a cultural landscape in the Himalayas. Considerable scope existed for the local actors from Dolpo to present their culture strategically, which was not the case during the hegemonic state appropriation of Shar Dung-ri discussed by Huber. To some degree, the convergence of interests between the specialized agency of the United Nations, and the concerns of the Bonpo minority in SPNP, anxious to deploy and extend their own (universal) mythical narratives, found their way round elite institutional channels populated mainly by Hindu bureaucrats.

In the discussion which follows I introduce the concept of 'World Heritage', present a summary of the history of Bon religion, and introduce the major arguments concerning Himalayan sacred landscapes, before going on to present an account of the World Heritage nomination process for Shey Phoksumdo National Park.

The World Heritage concept

Officially, the nomination of potential natural and cultural sites for international World Heritage status rests on formal bureaucratized channels established by national governments. In its formative years the idea for a universal list of 'wonders of the world' was chiefly inspired by western aesthetic notions of grandiose monuments and buildings, and the promotion of the Euro-American idea of the national park. The vice-chair of the WH committee, Bing Lucas, reports that the concept was first proposed by the conservationist Russell Train, chair of the US Presidential Council on Environmental Quality. In 1965 the White House thus recommended that "there be established a trust for the World Heritage that would be responsible to the world community for the stimulation of international cooperative efforts."[4]

---

[4]   In 1971, perhaps surprisingly, it was the then US President Richard Nixon who stated in a speech that "Yellowstone is the first national park to have been created in the modern world, and the national park concept has represented a major contribution to world culture…

Since the formal creation of the World Heritage Convention in 1972 with six cultural and four natural selection criteria (see Box 1), the first step in the nomination process has been the drawing up of 'tentative lists' by national experts, followed by technical assistance and support from the international secretariat. To satisfy the WH Bureau and WH Committee, exigent demands are thus made for site descriptions as well as for the well-documented commitment of a government to protect a site in perpetuity. Nomination dossiers require that clear and undisputed boundaries must delineate a space which includes only the 'authentic', based on a persuasive argument for the 'outstanding uniqueness' of a site as an example of a particular historical, aesthetic, or scientific genre. Authenticity is then further allied to the twin concept of the 'integrity' of monuments and parks designated through national legislation.

In recent years, UNESCO has also been making a deliberate attempt to counterbalance the Euro-American bias inherent in the early period of the convention, and extend the range of sites on the list to encompass new definitions of living rural heritage. This elaboration has included the recognition of intangible cultural values as the 'associative perceptions' of landscape, recognized in a codified linkage between the natural and cultural criteria in the operational guidelines of the Convention (von Droste, Plachter, and Rossler 1996).[5] The first such associative cultural landscape nomination, Mount Tongariro in New Zealand/Aoeteroa, thus set out to recognize the interconnection between Maori ancestor-memory and the protection of the sacred peak, opening up a range of new possibilities for sacred mountains and sites elsewhere (ICOMOS-Australia 1995). The category has now also been extended to a number of case studies in Europe and Central Asia (see Dömpke and Succow 1998).

The proposed nomination described here addresses the search for a new world heritage cultural landscape in the Himalayas, and the present-day expansion of pan-Tibetan Buddhism, including Bon, throughout Nepal and the wider Himalayan region. As already amply discussed in EBHR 19 by Anne de Sales and Marie Lecomte-Tilouine, one result of the post-1990 democratic movement in Nepal has been that many of the hill peoples or so-called indigenous nationalities (*janajati*) such as Magars, Tamangs, Gurungs, and Rais, have begun to articulate their political voice long suppressed during the Panchayat period. In some cases, these groups

---

It would be fitting by 1972 for the nations of the world to agree to the principle that there are certain areas of such unique worldwide value that they should be treated as part of the heritage of all mankind and accorded special recognition" (quoted in Lucas 1997).

5   Suggested possibilities in this medium include the interpretation of 'vernacular forms of artistic expression', such as Cézanne's landscape paintings, or other representations as evidence for the authenticity of cultural landscapes and sacred sites.

have also rejected previous moves to Sankritize themselves and have begun to affirm their links to a spiritual homeland on the Tibetan plateau, or further still to a common mythical origin in Mongolia.

Recognising that the world's cultural and natural heritage transcends national boundaries and must be preserved for future generations, the Member States of UNESCO in 1972, unanimously adopted a Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, known in short as the World Heritage Convention. The structure of the WH Convention is such that sites and properties can be nominated according to one or more of the ten criteria, four natural and six cultural. Concerning the inclusion of natural properties, the criteria require that nominated sites should:

(i) be outstanding examples representing major stages of earth's history; or

(ii) be outstanding examples representing significant on-going ecological and biological processes; or

(iii) contain superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty; or

(iv) contain the most important and significant natural habitats for in situ conservation of biological diversity.

Criteria for the inclusion of cultural properties require that each nominated property should:

(i) represent a masterpiece of human creative genius; or

(ii) exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning, or landscape design; or

(iii) bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared; or

(iv) be an outstanding example of a type of building or architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates significant stage(s) in human history; or

(v) be an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement or land-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change; or

(vi) be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance (the Committee considers that this criterion should justify inclusion in the List only in exceptional circumstances or in conjunction with other criteria, cultural or natural).

1. UNESCO Heritage Site selection criteria.

Bon and Tibetan sacred landscapes

The Bon faith, the so-called 'indigenous religion of Tibet', appears to be derived largely from Central Asian Buddhism. While Bonpos accept the historical figure of Shakyamuni Buddha as 'one Buddha among many', they look to Tonpa Shenrab Miwoche as an earlier Buddha, who they believe appeared some 18,000 years ago in the mythical country of *Olmo Lung-ring,* located in the Iranian-speaking region of western Central Asia. Tonpa Shenrab is thought to have brought the higher teachings of Bon to the land of Zhang-Zhung, which centres on the sacred mountain of Mt Kailash in western Tibet (Kvaerne 1995).

Giuseppe Tucci (1970) argues that Bon was already widespread on the Tibetan plateau before the kings Songtsen Gampo and Tisong Detsan persecuted its practitioners and converted them to Buddhism during the 8th century. During these times of repression, many of the sacred texts of the Bonpos in the Zhang-Zhung language were thus said to have been concealed in the landscape as hidden treasures (*gter-ma*). They were rediscovered during a Bon revival in the 10th century, and translated into Tibetan over several centuries by eminent scholars and translators.[6] The idea of landscape as a hiding place for treasure can thus be attributed to this period of persecution by an ascendant Buddhist orthodoxy which, in the process, also incorporated a considerable number of Bon influences into its own cultural templates.

However, over the centuries, many Bonpos have migrated away from central Tibet to the hinterland provinces of Amdo, Kham, and northern Nepal. There they practise their religion relatively undisturbed by the unreformed Nyingmapa who, unlike other Buddhist sects, share with the Bonpos a ninefold division of their Ways or modes of religious observance. During the twentieth century, Bonpo were nonetheless caught up in the exodus of Tibetans to India and further afield following the annexation of the Tibetan plateau by the Chinese in the 1950s. Like many other Tibetan Buddhist schools forty years on, Bon is now expanding the scale of its global appeal and outreach. In 1978 the Dalai Lama visited the newly created Bon monastery in Dolanji in northern India and formally recognized Bon as a branch of Buddhism alongside the four main sects of the Mahayana/Tantrayana Buddhist tradition.

---

[6] These texts were first organized into 'The Four Portals and the Treasury' and subsequently reclassified into 'The Nine ways of Bon'. Passages dealing with rituals classified in this way were later translated into English by the Tibetologist David Snellgrove in the 1960s based on a manuscript of the *gzi-brjid* found at Samling monastery in Upper Dolpo (Snellgrove 1992).

Marc Dujardin (forthcoming) has argued that diasporic Tibetans, actively building monasteries outside their historical territories in countries such as Switzerland, Germany, France, the UK, and the USA, are now founding or 'taming' different places around the globe. In diagrammatic form, he depicts an international inter-connection of sites envisioned as anchor points or thresholds away from Lhasa, the cultural and spiritual centre of Tibet, and set into an associative grid or culture matrix of Buddhism. As a part of this globalizing trend, Bonpos also find them-selves promoting the view that they are in some way unique in the world, while at the same time emphasising a shared political plight with other diasporic Tibetans, linked to a further compassionate mission towards humankind as a whole.[7]

The taming of the mind through monastic discipline, and the taming of the land, are pervasive motifs for nearly all Tibetan-speaking populations in relation to landscape (Stein 1962). The great historical figures of Buddhism, such as Padmasambhava, Milarepa and Drukpa Kunle, ritually subjugated the local demons and spirits of the land, often those of Bon and other animist groups, by imposing the orthodox order of the Buddhist faith. In this manner, P.S. Ramakrishnan (1996) has reported that the whole of Sikkim is considered a sacred treasury by the local Buddhist population of Lepchas and Tibetans. However, analysing the same landscape beneath Mount Khangchen-dzonga, Brigitte Steinmann (1998) argues that the pilgrimage places themselves delimit the sanctity of the Chogyal's 'mandala-state system' of land revenues, against which the indigenous Lepchas, as nomadic hunters with scattered settlements in forest clearings, had historically revolted.

Dujardin therefore broadens his argument to present a succession of levels in land-scape perception, extending to an indigenous anthropomorphic map of a demoness who once terrorized Tibet and was then 'nailed to the earth' by ritual consecration across the length of the entire Himalayan range.[8] He portrays three imaginary grids

---

[7]   For example, the Ligmincha Institute, recently founded in Virginia, USA, under the guidance of Geshe Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, ambitiously claims that "The Institute will seek to discover new ways in which the teachings and practices of the ancient Bon shamanic tradition can contribute to healing both the individual human being and the natural environment of planet earth... the Institute hopes to preserve and further develop the indigenous culture of Tibet among Tibetans themselves living in exile from their homeland, as well as to communicate the ancient tradition of Bon to interested people in the West. We at the Institute believe that the ancient Bon tradition of Tibet, which otherwise is in much danger of being lost to humanity, can make a significant contribution towards solving the problems of the world at the end of the twentieth century" (Ligmincha Institute promotional material, www.ligmincha.org).

[8]   The giant demoness was said to be spread over the Himalayas and inhibiting the spread

demarcating a 'royal zone' (*ru-gnon*) in central Tibet; the tamed border of Tibet (*yang-dul*); and a third one to encompass areas beyond the Tibetan border. Thus the two Bhutanese temples of Kyichu and Jampai Lhakhang detain the left foot and left knee of the demoness respectively, helping "all inhabitants of Bhutan to feel spatially and ritually protected and anchored in a larger spatio-cultural whole" (Dujardin forthcoming: 7).

Far to the eastern edge of the Buddhist sphere of influence, Caroline Humphrey (1998) also addresses issues connecting a wide geographical scale in Inner Mongolia with locally grounded spatial idioms which have remained relatively constant despite recent political upheavals in China. Humphrey recounts a myth recorded in 1874 by the Russian geographer Prezhavalski on why the mountain range of Mona Uul was considered to mark the boundary between Chinese and Mongolian cultures at the line of the Yellow River.[9] With a progressive shift in the political relations of monasteries in Inner Mongolia, which came under the administration of Hohhot and Beijing, the former extensive scale in mythic thinking 'shrank away' from distant Lhasa, with the land-guardian deity Mona Khan (once reputed to send firewood to Tibet) being substituted by secular forest guards. Humphrey thus contrasts a Chinese 'military-strategist' view of topography with the Mongol herders' emphasis on the reproduction of living resources and the sacralization of particular mountain peaks, springs, and trees.

In recent times, however, vernacular landscape paintings in the Kathmandu valley and the Solu-Khumbu region of Nepal, display an *increase* in the scale of their iconography by 'flying over' the natural barrier of the Himalayas. The mountain range, previously portrayed in Buddhist *thangkas* as a threshold or boundary depicted as a white jagged line, has been surpassed to include universal landmarks in Tibet such as Mount Kailash, the Potala palace, and other prominent monasteries. As Alex McKay observes in a discussion of Tibetan pilgrimage as a prominent indicator of local and national identity, sacred sites and trading fairs in the region must therefore be situated in "hierarchies ultimately encompassing the entire Tibetan cultural sacred map of the world—in a network which stretched as far as

---

of Buddhism by the movements of her arms and legs. In response, the Buddhist king Songsten Gampo had to build 108 temples across the territory, twelve of which were placed at geographical locations designed to correspond with the joints of the demoness, with the Jokhang in Lhasa corresponding to her heart.

9   In the myth, a Mongol reincarnate lama living in Beijing was unjustly arrested by the emperor, resulting in a magical flight by the lama to the Altai mountains in far western Outer Mongolia in order to take a mountain range and drop it into the Yellow river to exterminate the Chinese population.

the sacred places of the Buddha in India, to Omei Shan in Szechuan and to Urga in Mongolia" (1998: 8).[10]

Michael Aris (1990) makes a similar point when he notes an "uninterrupted sequence of linkages" in the Buddhist theory of interdependent origination and the "wide network of lateral contacts" in the Himalayas connecting Ladakh in the west with Bhutan in the east. This includes the widespread cult of 'hidden lands' south of the barren plateau which offered refuge at times of political and religious uncertainty in central Tibet. Katia Buffetrille, another specialist on Tibetan perceptions of landscape, argues in connection with the pilgrimage to the lake Halas-Maratika in Eastern Nepal that "there is a firm intention on the part of the Buddhist authorities in exile to map out a new sacred geography based on sites outside Tibet, known through the texts… Tibetans do not try to create new sacred places but only to revive the ones collective memory knows" (1998: 30).

Many of the myths of Padmasambhava's passage to Tibet, in the course of which he conquered local divinities and demons, have been adapted in this way by converted Buddhist populations to fit the topography of the landscape in newly settled areas. Nick Allen (1997), for instance, compares the widespread mythical tradition of flood and drainage across the entire Himalayas, describing the origin of the cultivated world through the symbolic act of drainage making the 'cosmos suitable for human habitation'.[11] The conversion was not, however, an unchallenged or one-way process. Huber (1990, 1994) shows how the dominant discourse of subjugation of divinities by famous lamas and yogis was also contested by differing conversion myths espoused by rival Sakyapa and Kagyu Buddhist schools at the time of the relocation in Tibet of the cult of Tantric *pīṭha* sites adopted from India.

Charles Ramble (1997) has argued that although the pattern of the Tibetan mandala has been applied widely across the Himalayas, the creation of Bon or Tibetan sacred mountains cannot be reduced to the squeezing of topography into abstract landscape referents. Landscape perception should rather be seen as the interweaving of cultural templates, such as the form of the mandala or of holy caves, with memory events enmeshed in prominent natural formations in tangible material form. Ramble thus warns that mandala models of nature can be "too grand to

---

[10] McKay also alludes to the 'somewhat idealistic' political manifestation of the 'Tibet: Zone of Peace' proposal. Interestingly, this rhetorical strategy was shared by Nepali politicians who deployed a discourse of 'Nepal, birthplace of the Buddha, the light of Asia' as a part of their campaign to have Nepal declared a 'Zone of Peace' during the 1970s and 1980s.

[11] This tradition is notable in the myth of the 'Turquoise, the Demoness and Padmasambhava' at Ringmo in Dolpo.

account for small topographical details" without an elaborate grid-referencing.[12] Instead, the mechanisms for the allocation of precise places generally occur according to three associated techniques of: (a) buried treasure and treasure-discoverers as an affirmation of doctrine; (b) imprints on rocks by luminaries of the Bon tradition as 'steadfast tokens' of the faith; and (c) resemblances necessary to achieve the subjugation of nature (i.e. as swords, drums, anthropomorphic shapes, or animals).

Numerous local mountain peaks throughout the Himalayas, and further afield in Mongolia, may in this way be revered more fervently than the distant points of Mount Kailash (*Ti-se*) or Lhasa as central to a regional sense of cultural memory. They may even be considered to be alternative earthly manifestations of the heavenly Mount (Su)Meru or the *axis mundi*. In such a manner, András Höfer considers that, while Buddhist myths have travelled across the Himalayas and have been grafted onto new natural sites by converted populations, they have also hybridized with more territorial landscape perceptions, such as those of Bon. He comments that "subjugation turns out to be Buddhist rededication of historically older motifs such as the fixation of the earth, or the domestication of the superhuman masters of the natural environment by a cultural hero to the benefit of man" (Höfer 1998: 78).

Buffetrille (1998) presents an overview of what she terms a process of 'Buddhicization', whereby mountains traditionally considered locally to be territorial gods (*yul lha*), and characterized by a high degree of anthropomorphism of animist representations, are turned into Buddhist mountain holy places (*gnas ri*). While lay worship of Bonpo *yul lha* is generally carried out by conducting rituals on the actual slope of the mountain, Buddhist *gnas ri* feature the installation or superimposition of the mandala of a Buddhist deity, around which pilgrims perform a circumambulation. Buffetrille demonstrates that, although Buddhist pilgrimage texts try to incorporate territorial gods as protectors of the doctrine, certain mountains do exist where Bon *yul lha* continue to reside, despite Buddhists' claims that the area is a *gnas ri* representing the form of a *stupa*: "out of a mountain of local symbolical import, Buddhism makes a mountain of universal symbolical scope' (Buffetrille 1998: 23). Through this process, a mundane deity is transformed into a transcendental one, and a logic based on exchange and equivalence between pilgrim and deity is overlaid with a Buddhist attitude of veneration.

---

[12] The argument is equally valid for Humphrey's descriptions of distant mythical narratives in Inner Mongolia which are connected to Lhasa.

Dolpo: a brief history

For most of its history, the inaccessibility of the high valleys of Dolpo have provided a natural refuge for the Bon religion on the periphery of the Tibetan heartland. After the establishment of the royal dynasty by A me dpal, the area was brought under the influence of the king of the walled city of Lo Manthang immediately to the east, known today as Mustang. Between the 15th and 18th centuries, Mustang acted as a kind of 'cultural motherland', and the king collected tax from, yet did not directly administer, the people of Dolpo. From the 11th century, the area was thus considered as a hidden valley (s*bas-yul*) where hermits visiting the area from as far away as Amdo and Kham in eastern Tibet could meditate (Schiklgruber 1995).

Both Dolpo and Upper Mustang, because of their historical position, have long attracted pilgrims and travellers. Numerous architectural similarities exist between the two areas yet, compared to Mustang, which has for centuries been a major trade route linking Nepal and Tibet, Dolpo has a higher mean altitude, lower population density, and is more remote of access. While Lo Manthang drew its power mainly from its authority of the monarchy, Dolpo lacked the same political centralization. Instead, it comprised a loose affiliation of village units called *tshos* with hereditary leaders, and has always been venerated as a spiritual retreat area of exceptional natural beauty. A major pilgrimage to the sacred crystal mountain near Shey *gompa* (also established in the 11th century) continues to attract both Bon and Buddhist pilgrims from across Tibet every twelve years during the full moon of the month of Shrawan, which normally falls in August.

Economically, Dolpo relied on yak caravans which transported grain to Tibet during the summer months and returned with salt to barter in the middle hills of Nepal. In winter, the salt was then exchanged in lower Dolpo for millet and barley with Thakalis who would carry the salt by sheep, goats, or horses down to the southern hills to trade it for rice and maize (Gurung 1979). In the mid-19th century, the political connection with Lo was interrupted following the unification of Nepal and political linkage with Kathmandu. Between 1951 and 1974 the area was opened for research, but was again closed until 1989 owing to tensions with refugee Khampa guerrillas hiding in the remote mountainous terrain.

In line with other accounts of the Tibetan approach to landscape outlined above, David Snellgrove (1967) describes how lamas are locally regarded not only as the supreme ideal of Buddhist philosophers, but also as popular sage-magicians who can produce rain when it would not otherwise have fallen, and have the capacity to overpower local gods. Corneille Jest (1975) gives us a detailed account of life in the

valley of Do Tarap, focusing just briefly on Bon which has long coexisted with the majority Nyingma Buddhist sect in the area. More recently, Guntram Hazod (1995) describes how the great Bon communal worship of the land gods (*yul lha gsol*) is still held in the village of Ringmo in Phoksumdo every second and eight month, and is designed to coincide with the dates when cattle are driven to and from the mountain pastures, as well as marking the time of sowing and harvest. Marietta Kind (1999) has also provided an exhaustive summary of research in Dolpo, and explores in detail the Bonpo ritual of Mendrub performed in Ringmo (also known as Tsho) dedicated to the benefit of all living beings and the empowerment of medicine.

Shey Phoksumdo National Park

The natural heritage value and biodiversity of Dolpo were first brought to international attention by the conservation biologist George Schaller (1977) who traveled to Dolpo to study the behaviour of the Himalayan *tahr*, blue sheep (*bharal*), and the elusive snow leopard, and was instrumental in the creation of Shey Phoksumdo National Park (SPNP).[13] His travel companion, the writer Peter Matthiesen, also played a significant role in popularizing the spiritual benefits of so-called wild areas to a wider public in *The Snow Leopard* (1979). Further, since its creation in 1981 with an area of 3555 sq. km (the largest national park in Nepal),[14] SPNP has been linked to an extensive string of protected areas stretching along the Himalayan range (Bajimaya 1998). Dolpo is one of the least populated regions of Nepal, with a human population of some 2,500 inhabitants within the park at the time of the 1991 census.

In June 1998, this anthropologist visited SPNP with a group of ethnobiologists and conservationists working for an international programme entitled 'People and Plants' coordinated in Nepal by the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF).[15] The team was engaged in the mobilization of traditional Tibetan doctors (*amchi*s) for a workshop which was to be held in the village of Do Tarap, and which was designed

---

[13] In fact, Dobremez (1976) was the first to publish a comprehensive overview of the ecology and biogeography of Nepal resulting from eight in-depth expeditions accompanied by researchers such as N.P. Manandar, Corneille Jest, and T.B. Shrestha between the spring of 1969 and autumn of 1975.

[14]   SPNP was formally gazetted on August 6 1984 and is covered under (a) the National Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act 2029 (1973) which provides a legal basis for the preservation of the flora and fauna by the Royal Nepal Army; and (b) the Himalayan National Parks Regulation of 2036 (1979) which provides free entry, public right of way and limited use of park resources for the local community as long as it does not have a detrimental effect on the natural environment.

[15]   P&P website: www.rbgkew.org.uk/peopleplants

to channel local knowledge of medicinal plants into a primary healthcare project. Long-term monitoring was also being carried out by the programme in the high-altitude summer pastures above the village of Pungmo in lower Dolpo to estimate sustainable harvesting quotas for medicinal plants. Three fieldworkers focused on issues of grazing rights, women's traditional ecological knowledge, and customary rules regarding the intensity and timing of access for livestock to the pastures (Shrestha *et al.* 1998).[16]

Alongside ecological values, the team was also researching a grazing area on the Gungthang plateau associated with a sacred spring and three peaks which merged together into a pyramidal mound resembling an altar called Lama Chumig. As captured by Ramble's analysis of 'steadfast tokens of the faith', informants described how in this place the fecundity of the grass for yaks and other living resources was associated with the legends of luminaries who had left hand and fingerprints in the rocks. In this way, the interrelationship between ecology, memory, and identity was the focus of the team's research which entailed drawing participatory landscape maps of the sacred places.

As I entered the park to join the WWF personnel, I met a Bonpo Geshe, Lama Yesang, who was involved in an indigenous school project.[17] Until late one evening, amongst the noisy children boarding at the school, we discussed the history of Dolpo, the period he spent in India studying Bon texts, as well as a visit he had made to the United States on behalf of a biodiversity project. When I mentioned the suggestion to have the area nominated as a WH site he reacted eagerly, saying he had heard of the proposal a month earlier during an environmental awareness training session, but wanted to know more. I explained the interest in protecting endangered species such as snow leopard and musk deer, and the growing number of cases in cultural heritage preservation in the form of the UNESCO cultural landscape concept.

The idea of linking nature and culture conservation seemed obvious to him as he enthusiastically described the pilgrimage and grazing areas, ancient treasures and

---

[16]   The team estimates that there are at least 26 *amchi*s, but probably more, in the wider district of Dolpo: roughly one *amchi* per 1000 people making use of some 205 species of plants for medicinal purposes and another 279 species for other ethnobotanically important uses. Shrestha *et al.* (1998) are also of the opinion that the grazing of yaks and *chauri* (yak-cattle crosses) in the high pastures has been instrumental in maintaining the floristic and medicinal plant diversity in those meadows.

[17]   Tapriza Cultural School was founded by local people from the villages of Ringmo and Pungmo, in coordination with Marietta Kind who opened 'Tapriza Verein' in Switzerland to provide additional support for the project (www.tapriza.org).

marks left on the rocks by revered ancestors and saints. According to Lama Yesang, the *gompa* in Ringmo (on the shore of Phoksumdo lake) had been founded some 600 years ago as a Nyingma Buddhist site, which was later converted to Bon by Lama Treton Tsewang Tsultrim in order to protect the sanctity of the turquoise lake by banning hunting near the water's edge.[18] Quite taken by our discussion, Lama Yesang encouraged me to put forward the case for Bon culture as part of the WH nomination amongst the Hindu elites in the capital.

During the visit I also met Catherine Inman, a representative from the 'Partnership for Biodiversity' programme engaged in strengthening environmental education in the park. She had stayed in the area as a Peace Corps volunteer and had herself launched a small not-for-profit organization which aimed to foster and support the collective spirit of community heritage maintenance in the area, and attract donor funding from abroad. As part of her efforts a month earlier, a group of US park wardens had carried out workshops on trail maintenance, visitor management, and ornithology in SPNP, as well as first introducing the idea that the area might be considered as a WH site.

A 'local panel' presentation

On my return to Kathmandu, I contacted UNESCO in Paris.[19] During a visit to the UNESCO head office in April 1998 I had met Aswan, the person responsible for natural site nominations in Asia, and he had informed me of the likely possibility of the WH centre holding a meeting in Nepal. He asked me what I thought of Shey Phoksumdo as a possible nomination. I replied that as far as I was aware, Lo Manthang had been suggested as a possible WH nomination but the local people had been opposed to the idea, yet the two areas were culturally quite similar, and could perhaps be considered together to form part of a cluster nomination.

A month later, I was approached by the Nepal National Commission for UNESCO to provide a background paper at the 'Sub-regional meeting on conserving Himalayan World Heritage' to be held in Kathmandu in August-September 1998. Two days before the meeting, some of the various actors involved congregated at the WWF office in Kathmandu to set about organizing a local people's panel. Assembled were Aswan from the WH centre in Paris; Lama Yesang; Suman, a young Hindu community leader living at the edge of the park; Chombi from the WWF

---

[18] The location of the *gompa*, a natural cul-de-sac, had formerly been used to drive animals to a point where they could no longer escape and were killed (see Kind 1996).

[19] Unfortunately, WWF staff had to cancel the workshop with local *amchi*s two days before it was due to begin, owing to escalating Maoist activity and violence south of the national park, and sent a helicopter to evacuate a group of seven of us from the village of Ringmo.

field office; the SPNP park warden; Raju from WWF Kathmandu; Shrestha, an eminent Nepali botanist; Robinson, the foreign donor representative; and Krishnan from the Kathmandu donor agency office (all pseudonyms, as noted above).

After introductions, the meeting got underway when Aswan used the whiteboard to put forward, as he put it, "just a way to go about your presentation" by drawing a diagram showing 'Shey' at the top with four arrows emanating down indicating a sequential order of: 'introduction'; 'natural heritage: Shrestha'; 'cultural heritage: Lama/others'; and 'conditions of integrity: management planning/local people's participation / education & awareness / logistical aspects'. As this was going on, Lama Yesang and Raju were busy discussing the biggest and oldest *chorten*s in Dolpo, whilst Shrestha re-read a copy of Matthiesen's *The Snow Leopard.*

Lama Yesang then began to describe to the others how the Bon figure of Tonpa Shenrap had in fact been taken over by Buddhists and that Zhang-Zhung was really the ancient 'Bon language'. At this point, Raju produced a photocopy of the nomination criteria, stimulating Aswan to interject that it might be helpful to separate cultural heritage into 'tangible' components such as 'monuments, architecture, and art history', and 'intangible' components such as 'cultural/religious history, ritual patterns and manuscripts'. Aswan suggested that, because Bonpos circumambulate *chorten*s in the opposite direction to Buddhists this could be used to draw out the peaceful 'mixing of religions', and that Dolpo could be considered 'a refuge for this religion to survive'. He then explained that the "history of the WH convention is with the tangible side, monuments and buildings, immovable objects …it's not so good with the intangible, the moment you have a moveable object, like a book, you have a problem."

Asked to comment by Aswan, I added that *chorten*s should be seen as part of the landscape in terms of the local materials and technical skills of the community, as well as in their specific positioning at the entry and exit points of villages. Attention then re-focused on Lama Yesang, and concern arose regarding the length of his performance during the meeting, with Krishnan asking: "How long does Lama have to speak? Precision will be necessary for the fifteen minutes during the panel, then the audience will think 'great!'" Aswan responded that, as far the ecological values of the park were concerned, there was a seemingly clear case for natural criteria (iii) and (iv), but Lama Yesang needed to 'distil his vast body of knowledge, to match three cultural criteria' which he suggested could be drawn from criteria (iii) living cultural tradition; (v) outstanding example of land use; and (vi) interchange of values (see Box 1).

Understanding the critical role of documentary evidence in the nomination process,

Shrestha added that he had collected various historical accounts of Dolpo by the Japanese monk Ekai Kawaguchi; Harka Gurung; George Schaller and Peter Matthiesen; as well as by David Snellgrove who having "travelled all along the Himalayas" had commented that the lake at Phoksumdo was "one of the most glorious places on earth". In order to prepare visual aids and overheads, Robinson then projected a series of slides taken by the environmental awareness team, observing "I guess what we're looking for is the best", including some 'people shots' featuring Lama Yesang in ceremonial dress and other villagers from Pungmo and Ringmo. On seeing one particular image of a grey-stone winter village, Aswan commented that it seemed to really "blend into the landscape" and thought that it might be used for the presentation, leading Shrestha to agree that the flat roofs of the buildings demonstrated a clear "indicator of no rainfall", and the particular practice of using birch bark as roof-lining.

Like Shrestha, I had myself been collecting documents and reading many of the books to which he had referred. One publication not mentioned was a book entitled *Reflections of the Mountain* (reviewed in *EBHR* 14 by András Höfer) which I displayed as a detailed ethnographic commentary on territorial *yul lha*. One of the chapters included maps of Dolpo and the village of Ringmo, which Lama Yesang and Suman began to examine. As we started to discuss further the sacred geography of the area, most of the other participants decided to go, leaving me with the two 'local witnesses' of Dolpo culture to help prepare their presentation.[20] Now in the different context of Kathmandu rather than the mountains, I asked Lama Yesang why he thought world heritage might be a good thing. He replied, now rehearsing his lines, that they lived in a 'remote area' (as classified for Nepali administrative purposes) and 'facilities' were difficult to come by, adding:

> We love our culture and the environment… so if world heritage comes it will be good for our development. Our culture will not go extinct. Through world heritage we can send a message about our problems to the whole world… we are equally endangered as musk deer and snow leopard, so come and protect us.[21]

[20]   It is important to note that while the above-mentioned individuals both came from the region of Dolpo, the area is, needless to say, very heterogeneous and the selective recruitment of a few 'spokespersons' is not representative of the preponderance of Nyingma as compared to Bon faithful in the wider area, which also includes Tarap and Upper Dolpo.
[21]   Bruno Latour, in his discussion of 'dieux faitiches', also mentions the work of Patricia de Aquino amongst black-Portuguese *mestizo* communities in Rio de Janeiro who strategically invoke the language of ecology ('Um Orisa em via de extinçao') to refer to the disappearance of their gods and traditions (1996: 21).

World Heritage sub-regional meeting

As is common before any meeting gets underway in Nepal, a country noted for its 'seminar culture' (Bista 1994), the formal opening session of the event commenced with a series of obligatory remarks by government ministers and a retinue of civil servants, who filed in and out of the spacious conference room of one of the showpiece hotels in Kathmandu. The Minister of Soils and Forest Conservation (MOSFC) began with the ubiquitous roll call made at innumerable other such occasions: "I look forward to considerable support from UNESCO and other donor agencies… we would like to extend our full co-operation", before describing the enchanting scenery and wonders of the Himalayan kingdom during 'Visit Nepal Year 1998'.

The director of the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation (DNPWC) then explained that His Majesty's Government of Nepal was trying to 'fill the gaps' in the representativity of 'keystone eco-regions'. This was seconded by Aswan who elaborated that the seminar was a "first attempt to get an idea of the natural and cultural heritage of the Himalayas", while adding in a more direct tone that, as a South Asian himself: "You don't need a guy like me coming from Paris telling you about your natural and cultural diversity, you live here." Aswan warned, however, that the aim of the Convention was not to have twenty sites nominated each year, with forty percent of natural nominations being rejected on average, and that encouraging more mixed natural-cultural sites was "not going to be easy". The purpose was, in fact, increasingly to *limit* applications to ensure that only the best get in the 'global honours list'.

Mr. Fujitsuka, the director of the new UNESCO office in Kathmandu, established just a month earlier, then took the floor, and explained somewhat tautologically for those unfamiliar with his organization that "UNESCO in Kathmandu is small, but part of a big networking activity called UNESCO". Adopting a business-like attitude, he insisted that there be "strict respect for the standard and guidelines of the 1972 Convention, so that the sites are preserved in perpetuity… it is not voluntary, it is an obligation." Mechanisms exist, he stated, to involve local people in the long run monitoring of WH sites, and therefore 'education' must be an indispensable factor in their success.

The next item on the agenda was billed as a presentation by ICIMOD, which, as a Himalayas-wide office based in Kathmandu, would address regional issues in conservation and development. The head of the Mountain Natural Resources division then explored some of the features of the north and south faces of Himalayan heritage, mentioning his own research on 'temple-plants' found in the yards of Thera-

vada Buddhist temples across Yunnan. Having done this, he then handed over to me as a researcher working on cultural landscapes to deliver my pre-prepared paper on behalf of ICIMOD. I had decided to make a plea based on the possibility of undisclosed or 'silent' files for respecting the cultural tradition of Tibetan hidden valleys:

> …Karna Sakya, director of Visit-Nepal Year activities in 1998, argues that in the unique case of Dolpo as a protected area, both international experts as well as His Majesty's Government of Nepal should draw lessons from the previous opening up of other 'hidden valleys' such as that of Manang which have seen their charm and unique heritage diminished by the intrusion of mass tourism. A more culturally sensitive strategy, Sakya feels, would be to maintain 'an invisible force of curiosity' around Dolpo. Indeed, what is secret is very often associated with the idea of the sacred (hidden valleys of the Tibetan tradition can only be revealed to enlightened Lamas) and a World Heritage responsibility may be, perhaps paradoxically, to ensure concealment and hide an area from the effects of mass tourism that has also taken place in Ladakh. However can Dolpo, as Sakya hopes, really 'be preserved as a blank spot on the world map of tourism'? In May 1989 the government opened the southern part of SPNP for trekking to spread the load from Sagarmatha, Langtang and ACAP. Whilst considering this question Sakya feels that:

> In the jargon of planning, tourism is a calculative card-game. In this game it is essential that the player uses his trump card carefully. Dolpo is the future trump card. Hence the principle that concealed beauty has a greater psychological impact than tactlessly exposed nudity, [should] be followed... For the longevity of mountain tourism, Nepal must preserve her wilderness and virgin peaks. They will always remain the national, sacred, and inviolate heritage (1991: xii).

> Other critics such as Harka Gurung feel, on the other hand, that the so-called sanctity of peaks such as Macchapuchre has been artificially invented and that most of Nepal's mountains should be declared open for climbing if the attached price-tag is appropriately set.[22] The Kathmandu and Lumbini World Heritage sites have undoubtedly gained more interest from their international status, and the flood of trekkers and mountaineers climbing Everest testifies to Sagarmatha's universal appeal. Yet the com-

---

[22] Remarks made during a presentation on 'Pilgrimage Tourism' for Visit Nepal Year 1998, August 1998.

plexities of absorbing large numbers of visitors to the latter has also shown that outside interest can be at odds with local cultural privacy—Sherpas heavily involved in trekking have little time to themselves as a community. (…) Existing mechanisms have still not been able to deal adequately with

DOLPA NEPAL WORLD HERITAGE

RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL HERITAGE IN SHEY-PHOKSUNDO: UNIQUE VALUES IN DOLPA, NEPAL

Lama, Geshe (Ph.D.) Bonpo Monk
Founder and Head Cultural/Tibetan Teacher, Tapriza School
Pugmo Village, Sumdua, Phoksundo, Dolpa
translation by   , Dunai, Dolpa, editing   Phoksundo, Dolpa)
Shey-Phoksundo National Park is equally unique for its cultural heritage as it is for its environmental heritage and conservation. Every year hundreds of people visit this Park for pilgrimages in different holy places situated within and near the Park. Shey-Phoksundo provides many interesting opportunities for the tourists and researchers.
  There are hundreds of community and private monasteries and religious structures in the Park area, many of them with enormous historical importance. Many traditions which were lost elsewhere still survive only here.
  The community itself is another special case of this National Park. Shay-Phoksundo is the only place where we can find strongly organized people practising the Bönpo religion.
  The remoteness and hardship of this place helped us to remain unaffected by other cultures and religions. Bönpo religion, which was founded 18,000 years ago, was at its peak of progress during the Zhang Zung empire in what is now Western Tibet. We have written evidence of its beginnings, in our old manuscripts. Some are with gold or silver script, or earliest even written on animal hides and leaves. With the negative effects of time, this religion started declining in the world. (i.e. forced ● conversions in A.D. 7-800 by Lhasa Kings, and recently Tibetan politics since 1959.) Bön forms the entire cultural base for Tibetan Buddhism, and is very closely related to that. Bönpo religion, the source for Tibetan Buddhism and the tradition of 18,000 years, is only culturally intact in Dolpa, Nepal (without political disturbance.) Daily village lifestyle cannot be separated from Bön, is in refuge Monasteries (In other places, Bön only.)
  This religion has a central, deep respect for nature and universal creation of the natural world.

2. Written presentation of Lama Yesang.

the issue of cultural integrity of remote mountain areas too rapidly trans-
formed by tourism. Under World Heritage inscription, might the obliga-
tion for Dolpo be to ensure that the national park is NOT included in broad
publicity and showcasing to the rest of the world? …It would be ironic to
imagine that by trying to protect the harmony of Dolpo, the WH nomina-
tion could in fact contribute to its demise?…

One response to my paper, "on the integrity of cultural nominations" as Aswan
put it, came from the director of IUCN-Nepal. He pursued a number of the issues,
asking: "Who decides the level of secrecy, the local people? …are these values
which must be managed like the card game? We need to balance the need for curios-
ity with Nepal's economic development." However, the allusion to a secret-sacred
relationship failed to strike the same chord as the metaphor of being 'in the very
exclusive company' of other great monuments in the WH network such as the Taj
Mahal, Borobudur, and Angkor Wat. Bajimaya's (1998) country paper listed the
international assistance received in the past from the WH Bureau for the restoration
of *gompa*s, conservation education, and micro-hydel projects in the Everest region.

The appointed envoy from the International Council on Monuments and Sites,[23]
Aziz Niazi, then made a case for an enquiry into the archaeological evidence avail-
able for 'ancient cultural landscapes', arguing that artefacts such as stone tools in
Kashmir are rendered meaningless without a social, religious, and cultural context.
He also mentioned an objection held by the WH Bureau against lodge-owners
remaining within the Royal Chitwan WH site in Nepal, which led to the deferral
of its nomination for six years. "Those [world heritage] laws have to be enforced,"
he warned. "This is something we are preserving for posterity, perhaps we have to
encourage His Majesty's Government to move people out, this is my humble sug-
gestion." Somewhat inopportuned by Niazi's hard-liner approach, Aswan tempered
these remarks by adding: "Now we are opening a Pandora's box about what hap-
pens outside the park… animals, for instance, don't respect these boundaries."

On the second day Aswan began by noting that sites are derived from different
criteria, and therefore very diverse: "It's not a thing you can standardize, it's very
often site-specific." Only through case studies, he remarked pragmatically, "can
you understand how the convention works, UNESCO and IUCN can't monitor sit-
ting in Paris with monitoring reports, there must be broader-based interest from
local people and international groups." The Galapagos, he went on, was the first
natural nomination to the Convention according to all four (natural) criteria as a

---

23   ICOMOS is the independent organization, also based in Paris, responsible for the the
evaluation of cultural heritage proposals submitted to the WH Convention.

'living museum and showcase of evolution'. Upon Aswan's request, the head of the DNPWC then presented a case study of an irrigation project led by another government ministry which he had personally blocked owing to the likely negative downstream effects on the ecology of Royal Chitwan National Park. Until then, the director argued, Nepal had been seen as a 'leader in conservation issues', but the project would have entailed a 'loss of image' and 'international prestige' for the country in the eyes of donors.[24]

In the afternoon, there came the turn of the local people's panel to put forward, with the assistance of NGO staff, their case for the enlisting of SPNP. Robinson from the international donor agency introduced the speakers by saying: "We have two residents of Dolpo, here to talk about their home. We have Lama Yesang, a highly respected cultural leader, a Lama from the Bon religion; and Suman, a very prominent community leader." Suman spoke first and briefly and emphasized his local credentials with the following humble words: "I have just a few words to say. As the local person of Dolpo, we need to make some confessions ourselves. So, as the environment and cultural value of Dolpo is nonmaterial, we will also try to educate our people in such a manner that they will love and respect their heritage and try to keep balance with the modern development without disturbing value."

Lama Yesang then read out his statement in a slow hill Nepali, drawing some sniggers from those members of the Kathmandu elite who were present, with a simultaneous translation into English by Raju from WWF. Bonpos, he began by saying, are part of a 'rare religion' but can be found in Mustang, India, Tibet as well as Taiwan and the USA, and a national Bonpo organization of Nepal had also been recently formed in Kathmandu. Making sure not to alienate Bon from Buddhist sympathy, he observed that the 'mandala of Lord Buddha is the symbol of the universe'. The history of *gompa*s in Dolpo, he explained, was linked to anti-poaching activities and a conservation ethic, and many local pilgrimage places, replete with treasures (*gter*), such as Jagdulla and Gunasa, were still considered "as holy as other places in the Himalayas such as Manasarovar and Mt. Kailash".[25] In conclusion, he stated: "We request that Shey Phoksumdo National Park be declared as a WH site, so that the world community will have support for this area" (see Box 2).

To fulfill his part in the panel, Shrestha then eruditely presented a series of overheads of historical quotations and extracts from Western sources, beginning with

---

[24] The 'victory' was also heralded by UNESCO as an exemplar of the effectiveness of the WH Convention.

[25] Struggling to grasp a translation from Tibetan to Nepali, and then English, of the nuance of the word *ter*, Raju described the land of Dolpo as full of a great number of 'wells'.

the romantic travel account of Matthiesen ("the land of Dolpo, all but unknown to Westerners even today was said to be the last enclave of pure Tibetan culture left on earth"), and the herds of *bharal* described by Schaller as 'mountain monarchs' were to be seen as the 'missing link between a goat and a sheep'. Another totemic species for conservation, the snow leopard, he went on in anthropomorphic terms, was a "shy, elusive, solitary and secretive cat", and signified an essence of the Himalayas, such that National Geographic magazine had run an article in June 1986 claiming:

> An aura of mystery surrounds the snow leopard, one of the rarest of the world's large cats… without *Panthera uncina* the high mountains of Asia would be like African plains without lions, reduced in vitality and appeal.

The panel was followed by a film, screened during the tea break, by Austrian Tibetologist Christian Schicklgruber of his travels in Dolpo. This showed, amongst other images, the Tibetan practice of 'air burial', and the story of two children taken from Samling *gompa* to the Bon monastery in Kathmandu. Laxman from the Department of Archaeology (DOA) who, earlier in the day, had been describing his frustrations monitoring the Kathmandu Valley WH site for UNESCO, interjected sardonically: "If you mention cremation practices under WH criteria, it will also have to be preserved." Evidently struggling with the protection of cultural monuments of Kathmandu enlisted by UNESCO in the 1970s, he appeared ambivalent as to whether the commitments of WH were possibly more work and aggravation than any of the environmentalists present actually seemed to realize.

The meeting concluded with a series of synoptic statements regarding possibilities for new nominations in various countries in the region and trans-boundary collaboration. Aswan summed up the scope for more inventorying and field surveys to evaluate the cultural heritage of Dolpo, whilst stressing the necessity for regional comparisons to establish the uniqueness and possibility of future cultural cluster nominations, emphasizing: "You can't just describe a site."[26]

Reactions to the meeting

Despite the momentary foregrounding of many of the social actors at the meeting, the responsibility for the WH nomination of Dolpo reverted ultimately to the governmental bureaucracy. Eight months later, having returned from the field, I

---

[26] On behalf of ICOMOS, Niazi also spelled out the need to have 'proper documentation on religion, ceremonies and rituals', but felt that the 'authentic manuscripts', old paintings and sculptures described by Lama Yesang sounded most appropriate.

received an e-mail from a foreign volunteer who had been assigned to the National Parks department in Kathmandu to facilitate the nomination process. He expressed doubts over the practical difficulties of translating many of the esoteric concepts present in the nomination concept into any meaningful form of indicators for monitoring cultural heritage 'on the ground'. Directly involved in helping prepare the nomination dossier himself, he observed that most of the relevant administrators had their time taken up by logistical planning, and had little interest in a discussion of the cultural nomination criteria. He thus wondered whether many developing countries with the greatest potential for putting forward associative cultural landscapes were "not institutionally quite ready, even in a legislatively progressive place like Nepal" to tackle what he termed "interdisciplinary management":

> Since the nomination is being prepared by the MOFSC and is being managed by the DNPWC, the cultural aspects will be overlooked, if not presently in the nomination, then most surely during management, if and when the site becomes inscribed. None of the meetings we have had to date have included any cultural specialists, and when I asked whether it would be necessary to bring someone on board for cultural consultation, they seemed to balk. (…) In fact, in a meeting it was almost explicitly expressed that they would rather it be listed as a natural, rather than cultural site, since that is their arena of expertise.

In contrast with the high level of interest in the nomination shown by Lama Yesang and other local protagonists, elite bureaucrats within the administrative machinery viewed the process of WH listing as rather routine, without any enthusiasm for highlighting this particular culture. One reason for this seemed to be because the 'culture' under scrutiny was that of a minority group with whom the predominantly Bahun civil servants had almost nothing in common. It had become obvious towards the end of the WH meeting that Hindu participants hoped, in fact, to advance the case for enlisting the Janaki temple, the legendary birthplace of Sita from the Ramayana epic, located in Janakpur in the southern Tarai of Nepal.[27] In an open discussion, Raju had drawn attention to the existence of a Hindu pilgrimage shrine found outside the southern extremity of the park.

The performance of the local people's panel therefore had a multiple audience. As we saw, the UNESCO representative himself facilitated an act of self-description, and was therefore complicit in framing the nomination proposal by soliciting

---

[27]   Three participants put forward the case for Janakpur, adding that the ponds near the temple are 'rich from a biodiversity point of view', and that there was a 'daily flight from Kathmandu'.

certain facts. UNESCO, by this token, had itself initiated steps to search for new nominations in the region which fitted with its mixed set of cultural and natural criteria. Amongst the group of congregated actors, the act of persuasion to convince the Nepali authorities was, to a large degree, a collaboration between the cultural/political minority concerns of Bonpos in Dolpo (enlisted by a range of other NGOs and donor groups) and the interests of the international Convention, equally intent on promoting the WH nomination in a remote area. Suman and Lama Yesang thus attempted to appeal to the narrative of world heritage in its own terms, akin to a form of 'strategic essentialism'. In this way, both local protagonists, caught in the donor-driven development situation so prominent in Nepal, strategically deployed descriptions of their local culture so as to attract outside interest and funds.

Protecting the 'treasures of the earth'

In a related situation in Nepal, the story of Sagarmatha National Park (SNP) created to protect the Everest region has been commonly acclaimed as a successful example of culturally based environmental conservation practice (Basnet 1992). In particular, forest protection in the national park is often attributed to a rotational system of forest watchers (*shingi-nawa*) from within the local Sherpa community, who in groups of four are said to regularly survey the illegal cutting of forests. However, some anthropologists, such as Vincanne Adams (1996), have critiqued this widespread image by exploring the Sherpas' ability to astutely recast themselves in the context of mountaineering and development, by portraying an 'authentic Sherpa image' tailored to Western expectations. Sherpas in SNP have thus over the years been very successful in attracting funds for *bikās* activities such as schools and the renovation of *gompa*s from private sponsors and NGOs.

Huber and Pedersen (1997) also scrutinize recent Tibetan claims to an innate and systematic traditional ecological wisdom, which is phrased in the scientific language of ecology and environmental protection, and advanced by "inventing their ancestors in their own image". These green Tibetans, including the Dalai Lama himself, employ such keywords as 'sustainable development' and 'nature conservation', evident in the oft-repeated significance of the fact that four of Asia's major river systems originate on the Tibetan plateau.[28] The authors contrast a modern form of

---

[28] Martin (1997), for example, presents the proceedings of a conference held in New Delhi entitled 'Ecological Responsibility: A dialogue with Buddhism' featuring a poem and statement on universal responsibility by the Dalai Lama. Similarly, WWF organized a 'World Religions and Ecology' book series on each of the major world faiths. Pedersen (1995) critiques this 'religious environmentalist paradigm' as a signifier of identity in the modern world, and lists references to the Hindu caste system as an 'ecological space' and God's different 'functions' for all living things to be found in Islam.

quantified knowledge about the environment, with a locally grounded observation of the weather as found in historical Tibet. Crucially, for Huber and Pedersen, the characteristically 'Tibetan' apprehension of the environment in both Buddhism and Bon is evident in the pre-modern system of (shamanic) hail-protectors involving territorial closure, and has always been concerned with "the impersonal moral law of karma which binds beings in unsatisfactory cyclic existence" (1997: 584-5).

In much the same way, at the meeting described above, numerous philosophical incompatibilities inevitably persisted in the alliance of diverse actors around the concept of world heritage, especially concerning the indefinite protection and permanence of material heritage. Buddhist perceptions of impermanence have in the past also disrupted UNESCO projects for the renovation of temples in Bhutan which came to be negatively perceived as illusory 'beautification'.[29] To return to Dujardin's spatial schema mentioned above, while architectural elements in the Bhutanese landscape sometimes act as stone markers to help form new cultural allegiances across different geographical scales, other fundamental questions regarding deeply held Buddhist attitudes towards material cultural property must be addressed:

> The Buddhist doctrine of the impermanent character and condition of all modes of existence has never associated buildings with eternity. Like other aspects of material culture, architecture does not escape from this same wheel of existence (*samsara*)— the cycle of life, death, and rebirth; architecture, too, is subjected to a continuous process of construction, demolition and re-erection. (Dujardin 1998: 1) [30]

So, how universal is the desire to list and categorize 'heritage sites'? Michael Herzfeld, who has analysed the government protection of a historic town in Greece, notes that "scale is not particularly relevant to the centrality of symbolic classifica-

---

[29]   In one instance, a temple façade was 'saved' from partial reconstruction by UNESCO by negotiating the extension of the monastic kitchens at the rear further into the mountain. Intriguingly, the Bhutanese have interpreted the notion of world heritage to potentially include their whole country, stating emphatically: "Bhutan is one of the wonders of the world." Paradoxically, however, although the small nation has one of the most explicit set of policies to conserve natural and cultural heritage with some 26.23 percent of the country's total land area as designated protected areas, it has not yet ratified the WH convention.

[30]   According to Humphrey, Mongol and Chinese attitudes towards material culture in Inner Mongolia share, despite other manifest differences, a 're-generative' rather than a 'preservative' outlook: "buildings, including temples, are not constructed in ways that are conscious of time... buildings are erected and torn down with speed, often being constructed from the bricks and wood of previous ones" (1998: 2).

tion, except perhaps in that vastness of scale may obscure the symbolic aspects of social experience" (1992: 68). The key issue for the heritage endeavour, he argues, is to identify the power differentials in the motives and interests of those "who do the reifying", not the mere fact of singling out a heritage object itself. This point is echoed by Tibetologists such as Ramble (1995) in their analysis of Buddhist mandala models of nature which, despite an obvious hegemonic tendency to classify, must also be flexible enough to incorporate idiosyncratic experience at the level of individual lives as well as wider cultural memory.

According to Marilyn Strathern, the main conundrum facing the study of culture in the late twentieth century has therefore been one of *excess* at the heart of the cultural critique, leading logic to be forever trying to 'catch up' with the facts. As she points out, "culture exceeds itself (nature vanishes) and, outcultivated, culture is manifest as style" (1992: 5-6). Amongst the plethora of culturally derived descriptions of nature, the UNESCO WH Convention portrays itself as the "only international convention that protects both nature and culture together". During the WH nomination of Dolpo outlined here, the Convention thus required social actors from Dolpo to literalize descriptions of themselves as heritage objects. In the process, symbolic literalization did not only bring a particular (Bonpo minority) culture to national attention, but simultaneously cast new light on nature according to the, inevitably, culturalist logic of the global convention.

Conclusion

In conclusion, does the above instance provide any insights into Diemberger's question regarding the impact of national parks on pre-existing mythical narratives in the Himalayas? What emerges from the re-presentation of Dolpo as a potential WH cultural landscape? In the institutional process of configuring diverse Tibetan perceptions of landscape according to the fixed criteria for world heritage, was there a marked resistance from the local protagonists? This did not appear to be the case. The long history of the compromise between orthodox Buddhist doctrine and popular forms of Bon described above may suggest an unstable interface. Following the lead of the Bonpo globalization of morality for a Western audience (especially by the Ligmincha Institute), the ambitious scale of the universal vision of UNESCO in fact provided ample opportunity for new myth-making exercises in world heritage ordered space.

In the light of a Tibetan-derived worldview, elements of vernacular landscape perception were thus re-fashioned into new narrative assemblages. During the meeting in Kathmandu, any site included on the WH list was deemed to be 'in very exclusive company', a turn of phrase used to particular rhetorical effect by the UNESCO

representative.[31] In a systematization analogous to Buddhist orthodoxy, the WH convention can in this way be seen to 'bind by oath' through the commitment to maintain a site in perpetuity. Comparable to the phenomenological conversion of a *gnas* into a transcendental Buddhist *stupa* template, a WH site is bequeathed with a halo or unique aura.[32] Parallel to the process of Buddhicization, the codification of world heritage discourse transforms a site through an auratic museum effect. "Once the mountain has become completely Buddhicized, the pilgrim acts as if he were in a temple", Buffetrille remarks (1998: 24).

Nevertheless, as Huber (1998) has alerted us with reference to the Chinese-derived narrative around the Tibetan pilgrimage site of Shar Dung-ri, political and economic power interests will never be far away in such acts of symbolic appropriation. Similarly, McKay's historical examination of the perspectives on Mount Kailash held by Hindu pilgrims, who perceived themselves to be in a 'wilderness' outside the state of India, reminds us that this was a view heavily influenced by British colonial officers' image of a desirable sacred site deployed to help spread revenue to frontier districts. McKay thus points out that a close connection persists between religious topography and taxable areas, such that "the expansion and growth of a pilgrimage place beyond the merely local… depends upon it being drawn into a dominant model of sacred landscape imposed by a universal religion, a model which doubles as a landscape of control—a sphere of authority, ordered, taxed, and made subject" (1998: 15).

The outlook of the WH convention reflects a scale of global universality which seeks to recognize sites of paramount significance for all of humanity: a supreme act of reification and all-encompassing authority. A key mediator and cultural translator in the process, such as Lama Yesang, used the opportunity strategically to essentialize Bon culture and the hidden valleys of Dolpo as being "as endangered as the snow leopard". In so doing, he may also have been increasing his own moral and karmic merit, publicly predicting that "two hundred and fifty years from

---

[31] Raju from the WWF later commented during a presentation at the Ministry of Tourism that "The Sagarmatha National Park is one of the world heritage sites, in the Khumbu region so much known all over the world. For the mountaineers, for the trekkers, wildlife people, for almost everyone who loves Nepal. Khumbu is the name which originated from the peak of *Khumbi-yul-lha*… the peak names are after the gods. Gauri Shanker are also other names for Parvati and Shiva. Some people like to call Gauri Shanker as 'Olympus of the East'."

[32] Social anthropologists have often observed that aesthetics are crucial to classificatory practices and gild such exercises with feelings of satisfaction, such that "bureaucratic logic is pleasurable when it accomplishes successful classifications" (Handelman 1998: xlix).

now a lama will be born who will recover the books and texts and build seven mon-
asteries in the area." In the case of the Dolpo nomination, universal world heritage
status may perhaps be viewed as one further mechanism for Tibetan populations to
form allegiances with powerful allies in the taming of the land and the reaffirma-
tion of their protection of the treasures of the earth.

Acronyms

ACAP	Annapurna Conservation Area Programme
DNPWC	Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation
DOA	Department of Archaeology
HMG	His Majesty's Government of Nepal
ICIMOD	International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development
ICOMOS	International Council on Monuments and Sites
IUCN	World Conservation Union
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
MOSFC	Ministry of Soils and Forest Conservation
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
SNP	Sagarmatha National Park
SPNP	Shey Phoksumdo National Park
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature

References

Adams, Vincanne 1996. *Tigers of the Snow and Other Virtual Sherpas: An ethnography of Himalayan encounters*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

Allen, N.J. 1997. 'And the Lake Drained Away'. In *Mandala and Landscape: Emerging perceptions in Buddhist studies no. 6*, edited by A.W. Macdonald, pp. 435-51. New Delhi: D.K. Printworld Ltd.

Aris, Michael 1990. 'Man and Nature in the Buddhist Himalayas'. In *Himalayan Environment and Culture*, edited by N.K. Rustomji and Charles Ramble, pp. 85-101. New Delhi: Indian Institute of Advanced Study in association with Indus Publishing Company.

Bajimaya, S. 1998. 'Country paper—Nepal: Status of World Heritage sites in Nepal (natural category)' presented at the sub-regional meeting on 'Conserving Himalayan Heritage' September 1998. Unpublished paper, Lalitpur.

Basnet, K. 1992. 'Sagarmatha (Mt. Everest) National Park: Conservation for sustainable development' *Contributions to Nepalese Studies* 19: 121-7.

Bista, Dor Bahadur 1994. *Fatalism and Development: Nepal's struggle for modernization*. Calcutta: Orient Longman.

Buffetrille, Katia 1998. 'Reflections on Pilgrimages to Sacred Mountains, Lakes and Caves'. In *Pilgrimage in Tibet*, edited by A. McKay, pp.18-34. Richmond: Curzon Press.

Diemberger, Hildegard 2000. Review of M. Nicoletti *La Foresta Ancestrale*. *European Bulletin of Himalayan Research* 19: 141-3.

Dobremez, J. F. 1976. *Le Népal: écologie et biogéographie*. Paris: Editions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS).

Dömpke, S. and M. Succow, (eds) 1998. *Cultural Landscapes and Nature Conservation in Northern Eurasia*. Berlin: Nature Conservation Bureau & AID Environment.

Dujardin, Marc forthcoming. 'Demolition and re-erection in contemporary Rukubji-Bhutan: Building as a sign of cyclical renewal and spatial mediation'. Unpublished paper, Heidelberg.

Gurung, Harka 1979. *Vignettes of Nepal*. Kathmandu: Sajha Prakashan.

Handelman, Don 1998. *Models and Mirrors: Towards an anthropology of public events.* Oxford: Berghahn.

Hazod, G. 1996. 'The *yul lha gsol* of *mTsho yul*: On the relation between the mountain and the lake in the context of the 'land god ritual' of Phoksumdo (Northwestern Nepal)'. In *Reflections of the Mountain: Essays on the history and social meaning of the mountain cult in Tibet and the Himalaya*, edited by A.M. Blondeau and E. Steinkellner, pp. 91-111. Vienna: Verlag der Osterreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.

Herzfeld, M. 1992. *The Social Production of Indifference: Exploring the symbolic roots of western bureaucracy.* New York: Berg.

Höfer, András 1998. Review of Blondeau and Steinkellner (eds) *Reflections of the Mountain. European Bulletin of Himalayan Research* 14: 76-81.

Huber, Toni 1990. 'Where exactly are *Caritra*, *Devokota* and *Himavat*?: A sacred geography controversy and the development of Tantric Buddhist pilgrimage sites in Tibet' *Kailash* 16 (3-4): 121-64.

Huber, Toni 1994. 'Putting the *gnas* back into *gnas-skor*: Rethinking Tibetan Buddhist pilgrimage practice' *Tibet Journal* 19 (2): 23-60.

Huber, Toni forthcoming. 'The *sKor-Lam* and the Long March: Chinese modernity and the loss of Tibetan ritual territory in A-mdo Shar-khog'. Unpublished paper presented in Vienna, December 1998.

Huber, Toni and P. Pedersen. 1997. 'Meteorological Knowledge and Environmental Ideas in Traditional and Modern Societies: The case of Tibet' *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 3 (3): 577-97.

Humphrey, Caroline 1998. 'Preliminary Report on the Archaeological-Anthropological Project on Sacred Sites and Spatiality in Inner Mongolia, 1998' presented to the McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research. Unpublished paper, Cambridge.

ICOMOS-Australia 1995. 'The Asia-Pacific Regional Workshop on Associative Cultural Landscapes: A report by Australia ICOMOS to the World Heritage Committee'. Unpublished paper, Sydney.

Jest, Corneille 1975. *Dolpo: communautés de la langue Tibetaine du Népal.* Paris: Editions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique.

Kind, Marietta 1996. 'Bon Religion Today in Dolpo'. Research report handed to Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies (CNAS), August 1996. Unpublished paper, Kathmandu.

Kind, Marietta 1999. 'Mendrub: A Bonpo ritual for the benefit of all living beings and for the empowerment of medicine performed in Tsho, Dolpo 1996'. MA Thesis, Zurich.

Kvaerne, Per 1995. *The Bon Religion of Tibet*. London: Serindia Publications.

Latour, Bruno 1996. *Petite réflexion sur le culte moderne des dieux faitiches*. Le Plessis-Robinson: Collection les empêcheurs de penser en rond, Synthélabo.

Lucas, B. 1992. *Protected Landscapes: A guide for policy-makers and planners*. London: The World Conservation Union (IUCN) Chapman & Hall.

Lucas, B. 1997. '25 years of the World Heritage Convention'. Paper presented at workshop on 'Protected Areas in the 21st century: From islands to networks' in November 1997. Unpublished paper, Albany (Australia).

Martin, J. (ed). 1997. *Ecological Responsibility: A dialogue with Buddhism*. New Delhi: Tibet House.

Matthiesen, Peter 1979. *The Snow Leopard*. London: Harvill Press.

Pedersen, P. 1995. 'Nature, Religion and Cultural Identity: The religious environmentalist paradigm'. In *Asian Perceptions of Nature: A critical approach*, edited by O. Bruun and A. Kalland, pp. 258-76. Richmond: Curzon Press.

Ramakrishnan, P.S. 1996. 'Conserving the Sacred: From species to landscapes' *Nature and Resources* 32 (1): 11-19.

Ramble, Charles 1995. 'Gaining Ground: Representations of territory in Bon and Tibetan popular tradition' *Tibet Journal* 20: 83-124.

Ramble, Charles 1997. 'The Creation of the Bon Mountain of Kongpo'. In *Mandala and Landscape: Emerging perceptions in Buddhist studies no. 6*, edited by A.W. Macdonald pp. 133-232. New Delhi: D.K. Printworld.

Sakya, Karna 1991. *Dolpo the Hidden Paradise: A journey to the endangered sanctuary of the Himalayan Kingdom of Nepal*. New Delhi: Nirala Publications.

Schaller, G. 1977. *Mountain Monarchs: Wild sheep and goats of the Himalaya*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Schicklgruber, C. 1996. 'Mountain High, Valley Deep: The *yul lha* of Dolpo'. In *Reflections of the Mountain: Essays on the history and social meaning of the mountain cult in Tibet and the Himalaya*, edited by A.M. Blondeau and E. Steinkellner, pp. 115-62. Vienna: Verlag der Osterreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.

Shrestha, K.K., S.K Ghimere, T.N. Gurung, and Y. C. Lama, 1998. 'Conservation of plant resources, community development and training in applied ethnobotany at SPNP and its buffer zone, Dolpo.' WWF-Nepal, unpublished paper, Kathmandu.

Snellgrove, David (ed. and trans.) 1967 [1992]. *Four Lamas of Dolpo: Tibetan biographies.* Kathmandu: Himalayan Book Sellers.

Stein, R. A. 1962 [1972]. *Tibetan Civilization*. California: Stanford University Press.

Steinmann, Brigitte 1998. 'The Opening of the sBas Yul 'Bras mo'i gshongs according to the Chronicle of the Rulers of Sikkim: Pilgrimage as a metaphorical model of the submission of foreign populations'. In *Pilgrimage in Tibet*, edited by Alex McKay, pp. 117-42. Richmond: Curzon Press.

Strathern, Marilyn 1992. *After Nature: English kinship in the late twentieth century.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Tucci, Giuseppe 1970. *The Religions of Tibet*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

von Droste, B., H.R. Plachter and M. Rossler, (eds) 1996. *Cultural Landscapes of Universal Value: Components of a global strategy.* Jena: Gustav Fischer Verlag, in co-operation with UNESCO, Paris.

On the Relationship between Folk and Classical Traditions in South Asia[1]

Claus Peter Zoller

1 Preliminary remarks

The relationship between folk and classical traditions in South Asia has been discussed over the last decades in a number of publications (see e.g. Blackburn and Ramanujan 1986, Blackburn *et al.* 1989, Hiltebeitel 1999, Richman 1994, Sarkar 1972), and has come to be regarded as a topic that, at present, requires no new, intensive discussion. This, however, is no longer the case. Leavitt's response (Leavitt 2000) to my review article (Zoller 1995) showed that there indeed exist widely differing opinions on this issue in our academic community. But since it was not the intention of my review article to initiate a general discussion on this topic, I must begin the present article with a short summary explaining the background of its genesis.

My review article attempted a concise and critical appreciation of contributions to the study of central Himalayan forms of verbal art. Among other things, it concentrated on questions pertaining to the classification of oral genres, on the relationship between folk and classical traditions, and on the relation between forms of verbal art and social systems. Leavitt felt that he had been unjustly treated in my review article. He wrote a very extensive reply, in which he also made himself the advocate of the other authors discussed by me. Instead of attempting a constructive and differentiated discussion of competing hypotheses and models, Leavitt came forth with a monorhymed response, namely that my review did not merely contain contestable opinions and arguments, but that the review as a whole was amiss, and consequently every critical remark of mine was erroneous.

Of the three topics on which I concentrated in my review article (1995), it is probably the question of the relationship between folk and classical traditions which attracts the most general interest. The cultures of the Himalayas are especially suited to a

discussion of this question. They are still the home of many indigenous traditions, and at the same time they are influenced to various degrees mainly by the great traditions of South Asian Hinduism and Tibetan Buddhism. Although I will not bring into question the scholarly distinction between folk and classical traditions, I have the impression that this *synchronic* distinction is still frequently equated with or influenced by the *historical* distinction made by Indologists between an earlier 'stern' Brahmanism of an elite and the later 'jungly' Hinduism of the common people. This pattern of historical decline has been extended by the same people on the basis of a distinction between an earlier Epic or classical age (the age of Sanskrit *Mahābhārata* and *Rāmāyaṇa*) and the subsequent Middle Ages, which are marked by moral decline and the emergence of the vernacular languages (Inden 1992: 109-22). I will show in this article that for Leavitt too the relationship between classical and folk traditions is characterized by this very feature of 'decline'.

I will also show that the relationship between classical and folk traditions cannot simply be described in terms of 'borrowing', as suggested by Leavitt and Ramanujan. The metaphor of 'borrowing' is misleading, because no textual material is taken away from one tradition and transplanted into another. I will argue, instead, that the interconnection between different *poetic codes*[2] within and between classical and folk traditions is governed by mechanisms which I will call 'reference', 'global copying' and 'selective copying'.[3]

---

[2] Here I am dealing mainly with oral and written *texts* of verbal art which are integral parts of more comprehensive *traditions*. Traditions are (realizations of) conglomerates of different types of codes (e.g. linguistic and social codes). Texts of verbal art are specific realizations of underlying poetic codes. A poetic code is a kind of subdivision of a linguistic code. It contains mutation rules that lay down how a non-poetic linguistic structure is transformed into a poetic structure. These rules frequently differ from one tradition to another. Additionally, each poetic code contains 'instructions' on how to combine the mutation rules (which change non-poetic into poetic structures) with normal linguistic realization rules in order to produce specific 'poetic patterns' (called 'genres' in literary studies), e.g. a ritual recital or a narrative. The poetic codes of the folk and classical traditions of South Asia contain partially different and partially similar mutation rules and 'instructions' on how to realize the underlying codes. Copying might take place from one 'poetic pattern' into an identical or a different 'poetic pattern', within either identical or different traditions. I will argue here that modifications of oral texts of verbal art typically occur when they are either copied several times (a common term for this is 'diffusion') or when they are copied from one type of 'poetic pattern' into a different type of 'poetic pattern' (i.e. when they change from one genre into another). The difference between folk and classical traditions is of no immediate relevance for these mechanisms of modification.

[3] I have taken the notion of *global* and/or selective *copying* from Johanson (1992: 12ff.)

The main part of the present article discusses the question of the relationship between folk and classical traditions with reference to *Mahābhārata* traditions in the central Himalayas. Leavitt tries to defend a *direct* relationship of one-sided dependence between the classical Sanskrit *Mahābhārata* and the regional *Mahābhārata*s of the central Himalayas, and he claims that the regional traditions developed directly out of a Sanskrit *Mahābhārata* tradition. My position, on the other hand, is to advocate an *indirect* relationship between the two traditions. Although I do not deny outside influences on the central Himalayan *Mahābhārata* traditions, in this article I will stress the autonomous dimensions. I will argue that some elements of the central Himalayan *Mahābhārata* traditions might have developed directly out of a Proto-*Mahābhārata*, and that it is not possible to claim direct derivation from Sanskrit sources.

An important additional dimension to the topic of this article is the 'horizontal' relationship between oral folk tradition, e.g. the relationship between different forms of folk *Mahābhārata*s, or between regional epics. I will therefore begin with a brief discussion of the regional Kumaoni epic *Māluśāhī* and its connections with other regional epics of northern South Asia. This will also offer an introduction to some historical aspects of folk *Mahābhārata*s dealt with in the third section. Moreover, it will show some pertinent aspects of the discussion that started with my review.

2 Māluśāhī

I briefly discussed Meissner's edition and translation of this regional epic from Kumaon in my review (1995: 1-2). The epic recounts the love story between a trader's daughter Rājulā and the Katyūrī king Māluśāhī. Among other points, my critique related (and still relates) to Meissner's classicist treatment of the epic and his search for origins.

Admittedly, Meissner's search for origins was not precisely professional. In Meissner's defense, however, Leavitt confused two different issues (p. 61). The first: what is the *original Māluśāhī*? And the second: what is the *origin* of the *Māluśāhī*? Meissner believes that the version of his bard is 'nearest to the original' (1985: xx), and tries to find in the epic traces of what he believes to be typical features of Sanskrit poetry (ibid.: 241). He concludes that one of the sources of the epic is to be found in Nāth traditions (ibid.: xvii). Regarding oral versions of an epic or ballad being 'nearest to an original', I share the opinion put forward in a standard Hindi

---

who uses the German terms *Globalkopieren* und *Teilstrukturkopieren* in connection with language contacts. I use the word 'borrowing' in this article only in quotation marks in order to indicate its inadequacy with regard to intertextual processes.

literature dictionary which unambiguously declares that "it is not possible to state which is the original text of any ballad (*lok-gāthā*).[4] All its versions are of equal importance"(Varma *et al.* 1985: 222).[5] While searching for the origin of the epic, Meissner considers local backgrounds (which are there, of course) and casually mentions 'love-stories from Rajasthan', but then concludes: "It appears that the legends surrounding king Gopicand are one of the sources of the *Māluśāhī* song" (1985: xvii). The last statement is incorrect. I intend to show why, because this also has something to do with the historical background of regional *Mahābhārata*s.

None of Meissner's five arguments (1985: xvii-xix) is well-founded. The whole epic contains not a single legend connected with the Nāths (though Guru Gorakhnāth plays a minor role in some versions in neighbouring Garhwal), and the name of king Gopicand is mentioned only *once* in the whole story (p. 205: "You all shall be immortal. . . like king Gopicand of Bengal"). Pointing out the place-name *jalanara*, correctly identified by Meissner with the town and district Jālandhara, can hardly suffice as an argument in favour of his hypothesis.[6] The facts that Māluśāhī's father, like the father of Gopīcand, plays practically no role in the story, and that the common Pahari word *māyeṛī*, 'mother', is used instead of the normal Kumaoni *ijā* in the name of Gopicand's mother, also fails to lend any weight to Meissner's speculations.

Thus, there is no convincing argument in favour of Meissner's hypothesis, and I wonder why he did not pursue the obvious: namely, the parallels with the romances[7] from Rajasthan and many other places in North India and Pakistan. These include *Ḍholā-Mārū* (Rajasthan), *Hīr-Rāñjhā* (Panjab), *Mirzā-Sāhibān* (Panjab), *Sassī-Punnū* (Sindh/Balochistan), etc. Older romances include *Padmāvat* and *Mṛgāvatī* in classical Hindi. Like *Māluśāhī*, these all describe a love affair between a hero and a heroine, the many obstacles they have to overcome, and their final happy union or tragic separation. A common motif found in many of these stories, and again shared with *Māluśāhī*, is that of the hero temporarily becoming a yogi. A

---

[4] A term also used in connection with the *Māluśāhī*.

[5] This and the following quotes from sources in Hindi have been translated by me.

[6] Jālandhara has always been a famous religious place. In Buddhist times many monasteries were located there; later on it is mentioned in some Tantras as a *śākta pīṭha*, and still later it was famous for its associations with the Nāth sect and with various Muslim saints.

[7] In his critique of my review, Leavitt devotes much space to the questions of whether *Māluśāhī* is (a) a ballad, a love song, or an epic, (b) whether or not it is a *jāgar* (i.e. a 'vigil-performance' involving possession), and (c) whether it is of a secular nature or not. The discussion of these three points, especially (b) and (c), has much to do with the 'horizontal' connections between this epic and other regional epics.

case in point is *Hīr-Rānjhā*, where the hero Rānjhā for a while becomes the pupil of Guru Gorakhnāth when the parents of his beloved Hīr want to marry her to another man (see Temple n.d.: 545ff). Other examples are the Panjabi folk romance *Mirzā-Sāhibān*, in which the hero Mirza becomes an anchorite for some time (see Quddus 1992: 199ff), and Kutuban's Hindi reworking of *Mṛgāvatī*, an old folk romance, in which the hero turns into a yogi in order to find his beloved. But the most famous of all is the classical Hindi romance *Padmāvat*, written in the 16th century by the Sufi poet Malik Muhammad Jayasi. In this story King Ratansen turns into a yogi in order to search for his beloved Padmāvat, who lives in Siṃhal dvīp.[8]

Thus we see that *Māluśāhī* shares the following pattern with many other folk romances. In order to search for and win his beloved, who lives in a far-away 'otherworldly' Elysium, the hero has to become an anchorite, i.e. a 'liminal' figure. This pattern very closely resembles countless fairy tales of northern South Asia, Afghanistan, Iran, etc. While searching for his beloved fairy, at a certain place the hero orders all his companions to stay back and wait for his return, as he is now going to enter a kind of 'other world' where the fairy lives (Zoller, in press). The main difference between these fairy tales and the romances is that the fairy tales lack a spatio-temporal linking with reality, whereas the romances are traditionally understood to have occurred in the historical past. The latter are, in a sense, 'historical' stories with an ahistorical plot. Both genres share the feature of two-dimensionality, of a 'this world' and an 'other world'. If the hero is able to act successfully, then the plot consists of a movement from 'this world' to the 'other world' and back into 'this world'. In the case of the fairy tales (where the hero is always successful) the movement takes place in a sphere not connected with reality, but in the case of the romances the movement takes place in the tangible reality of northern South Asia (as in *Māluśāhī*, *Ḍholā-Mārū*, *Padmāvat* and *Mṛgāvatī*). However, if the movement remains incomplete, then hero and heroine must remain in the 'other world', i.e. they are doomed to die (as in *Hīr-Rānjhā*, *Mirzā-Sāhibān*, *Sassī-Punnū*).[9]

---

[8] *Siṃhal dvīp*, i.e. the island of Sri Lanka, is an elusive and faraway place. It also appears in other folk stories, frequently as the abode of the heroine, e.g. in the romance of *Ḍholā-Mārū*. This Siṃhal dvīp seems to have a function (as a kind of otherworldly Elysium) similar to that of Jālandhar in *Māluśāhī*. Other examples of faraway Elysiums in Himalayan oral texts are those connected with Kashmir, e.g. *Kulu-Kaśmīr* in western Garhwal, *Kaśmīr* in northern Pakistan, *Kāśī-Kasmerā* in western Nepal (Maskarinec 1998: 407), and those connected with Sri Lanka, e.g., *Siṅgal-dvīp* in western Garhwal.

[9] Here the 'other world' is typically symbolized by the hero assuming the role of an anchorite or a herdsman, the heroine living in an aloof Elysium, the lovers meeting in the jungle, etc.

Various yogi and Sufi orders 'appropriated' a number of the above-mentioned romances and other popular stories during the medieval period (Vaudeville 1996: 295), and these were moulded to some extent in accordance with the religious doctrines and world views of yogis and Sufis.[10] In the third section of this article I will show that during the medieval period yogic groups not only played an important role in the spread of folk romances, but also in the spread of folk *Mahābhārata*s.

It is possible to describe a *jāgar*, too, as a three-part movement, although in the opposite direction—from the 'other world' into 'this world' and back into the 'other world'. Here, however, the movement is not contained in the plot of the story, but is a movement of the 'story itself'. The divine actors incarnate temporarily in the human mediums who play or relate their story, and then again return into the 'other world'. In the first case the movement belongs to the structure of a plot, and in the second case it belongs to the actors enacting the plot. This is because romances are primarily epical, first of all requiring a bard who *tells about* the actors, whereas *jāgar*s are primarily dramatic, first of all requiring mediums and a bard who *speaks with* the divine actors incarnated in the mediums. And, whereas a romance relates a 'human' story that took place in the 'historical' past, a *jāgar* re-enacts a 'divine' story that took place in *illo tempore.*

The ambivalent character of *Māluśāhī* in comparison with 'real' *jāgar*s can be attributed to the fact that it is a combination or fusion of a 'human' epic and a 'divine' drama. That is why the Kumaonis say that the hero Māluśāhī was originally a human being but is now a deity, and that is why he does not incarnate in mediums but only speaks through the bards. This specific background of the *Māluśāhī*, so different from that of other *jāgar* stories, is the main reason why a *Māluśāhī -jāgar* is felt to be not quite the same as a 'real' *jāgar.*

Mixed genres like the *Māluśāhī* are not uncommon in the central Himalayas. The Garhwali *Mahābhārata* from the Tons valley, called *Paṇḍuaṇ,* is another case in point.[11] It is performed annually, but does not involve the possession of mediums. The bards of the *Paṇḍuaṇ* say that it 'sleeps' most of the time in the 'other world';

An incomplete movement seems to be an indispensable prerequisite for the heroine to be deified. This appears to have happened in the case of Sassī and Hīr. Sassī had a temple (which is now dilapidated) near the village of Shah Muhammad Wali, to the west of the town of Talagang in the Panjab state of Pakistan, and the tomb of Hīr in Jhang (also in the Panjab state of Pakistan) is traditionally a place of pilgrimage for lovers.

[10] In the case of *Hīr-Rānjhā* there exist several Muslim versions *and* a Hindu version! (Usborne 1966: 18; Sekhon and Duggal 1992: 14).

[11] I have written a thesis on this epic. The epic takes up eight hours on the tape-recorder. The thesis, including text, translation and analysis, will be published in the near future.

only during the performance does it 'wake up' and 'speak itself' through the mouths of the bards. After the performance it returns into the 'other world'. But in contrast to the *Māluśāhī*, which is a story of the 'historical' past, the *Paṇḍuaṇ*, like a *jāgar*, is a story which took place *in illo tempore*.

This short discussion of the *Māluśāhī* shows how important it is for an appropriate evaluation of oral folk traditions to see them in the context of other South Asian folk traditions. In the case of Himalayan oral epics, in particular, it is not sufficient merely to compare them with other Himalayan oral epics. Rather, one has to see them in the wider context of at least northern South Asia. This fact still has to be generally acknowledged because, when scholars in the twentieth century (and earlier) tried to connect specific folk traditions with other traditions, they frequently tended to exaggerate relationships with the classical traditions (see the critique by Blackburn and Ramanujan 1986: 2ff). Overemphasis of the 'vertical dimension' at the cost of the 'horizontal dimension' is also characteristic of Leavitt's position. Although he pays lip service to a polycentric approach, in actual fact he merely reproduces the outdated position of a classicist's centrism in his treatment of the Kumaoni *Mahābhārata*.

3 Mahābhārata

The points I have discussed above are also relevant in connection with the controversy regarding *Mahābhārata* traditions. Consider the following points:

When stories are transmitted only in one or more regional languages, then it is generally not advisable to search for original versions. Historical precursors (if such exist) and parallel forms are of equal value. Such stories are, in a sense, without origin, because no positive statement can be made in this regard.[12]

When stories are transmitted in one or more regional languages and in one or more sub-regional languages, and/or in a pan-South Asian language, then the question of original versions and copied forms arises. But here I should like to ask whether a search for original versions is *always* justified in such cases or not. Ramanujan and Leavitt think so, but I cannot agree. It is not justified in all those cases in which the assumed processes of copying are located beyond a horizon of scientific proof. A clear case of copying is Rilke's poem 'Die Gazelle' in Ghazal style (the title of the poem in itself is an allusion to this), whereas the Garhwali *Mahābhārata*, called *Paṇḍuaṇ,* and the Sanskrit *Mahābhārata* represent a clear case in which two ver-

---

[12] Those stories in which, or in connection with which, it is said that they actually belong to another region and/or language constitute an exception. One example is the story of *Sassī-Punnū* in Panjabi, although *Sassī-Punnū* actually belongs to Sindh/Balochistan.

sions of a story are too far apart from one another to allow us to say anything about original and copied forms.[13]

3.1 Leavitt's 'complex model'

Let me begin with a few statements by Leavitt which show his basic assumptions regarding the relationship between folk and classical *Mahābhārata* traditions:

(1) Leavitt (2000: 66) makes the interesting distinction between purely regional forms of Kumaoni narratives with no parallels either in other regional traditions or in the Sanskritic tradition on the one hand, and traditions subsumed under the term *bhārat* or *mahābhārat* ("stories of Ram, Krishna... the Pāṇḍavas...") on the other.[14] According to his understanding, all of the latter are connected with "classical Hindu myth" and "orthodox tellings by Brahman priests.' On the same page he repeats this, saying that they "are *derived* [my italics] from classical Sanskritic myth and epic. Since Pāṇḍava stories are *mahābhārat* among others, this conclusion holds for them as well."[15]

This means that Leavitt connects an important argument in favour of the derivation of the Kumaoni Pāṇḍava stories from the Sanskrit *Mahābhārata* with the issue of the *definition* of the genre of *bhārat*: For him, *bhārat* is a kind of container for (derivations of) classical Hindu myths, and since the Pāṇḍava stories are an element of this container, they also derive from the classical Sanskrit *Mahābhārata*. I have just expressed my doubts about the correctness of his definition of *bhārat*, as it conflicts with all the other generally accepted definitions of the term. In all

---

[13] Here and below, 'Sanskrit *Mahābhārata*' refers to the Poona Critical Edition.

[14] Leavitt claims that *bhārat* "names an indigenous genre that only includes material related to classical Hindu myth—material that has also long been available to rural Kumaonis in orthodox tellings by Brahman priests" (2000: 66). I, however, reject a definition of genre as something defined by its contents. The term 'genre' means a literary or artistic type or style. The Garhwali meaning of the word *bhārat* as a literary term is 'epic' (i.e. any kind of long story consisting partly of (more or less) sung and partly of (more or less) spoken passages). The Hindi meaning is *lambī kathā*, 'a long story', and the Rajasthani meaning is *lambā caurā vivaraṇ,* 'an extensive account'. Interestingly, Leavitt's definition of the meaning in Kumaoni contrasts with all the other definitions quoted here.

[15] Leavitt is not happy with my criticism of his graphical distinction between regional *mahābhārat* and Sanskrit *Mahābhārata*. But then he must also distinguish between *premākhyān* and *Premākhyāna* (regional and classical romances), between *Hīr-Rānjhā* in the classical written version of Waris Shah and *hīr-rānjhā* performed by petty local bards, between a Sanskrit-speaking Brahmin from Benares and an illiterate brahmin from Garhwal, and between the Hindi of internationally renowned authors and the hindi spoken in the provinces, etc.

regions where this word is used, except in Leavitt's Kumaon, *any* kind of long story is called *bhārat*. Leavitt apparently confuses here 'genre' and 'subject-matter'.

(2) Later (2000: 67) he states that "the folk and the classical renditions in question have main characters who go through most of the same things and who have names that are different only as would be predicted by the differing pronunciations of borrowed Sanskrit words in the languages in question." And "an *Ur*-text is exactly what there seems to have been."

Apparently Leavitt assumes that this is sufficient to prove that the regional *Mahābhārata*s of the central Himalayas must derive from the Sanskrit *Mahābhārata*. But is it not equally possible that the names of the characters were adapted by and by, and not necessarily through the influence of Brahmans, but by some other people who somewhere had picked up the 'correct' names? This is not a hypothetical question; I shall quote below several names of actors found in a regional *Mahābhārata* which are not borrowed Sanskrit words. And why does the fact that there indeed exist similar episodes in the regional *Mahābhārata*s and the Sanskrit *Mahābhārata* necessarily mean that the former borrowed them from the latter? Where is the proof?

(3) Leavitt points out correctly (2000: 66) that "Kumaon has been on pilgrimage routes for millennia and... certain strata of Kumaoni society have been bearers of Sanskritic influence at least since the early Middle Ages...", and concludes (ibid.) that "unlike other genres of Kumaoni oral tradition, Kumaoni *mahābhārat* are derived from classical Sanskritic myth and epic." It is a fact that classical Puranic myths are recited in Kumaon, but to my knowledge (after interrogating Kumaonis who are very familiar with the customs and traditions of their home country) no recitations of the Sanskrit *Mahābhārata* take place in Kumaon. Moreover, Leavitt himself has pointed out (1991: 452) that the folk *Mahābhārata* traditions are stronger in Garhwal than in Kumaon. Still, it is well known that the Brahmanic and Sanskritic influence is weaker in Garhwal than in Kumaon. Apart from that, in Garhwal there are no recitations of the Sanskrit *Mahābhārata,* whereas there are, as I will show below, Garhwali Brahmans who transmit *local* versions of the *Mahābhārata*.

I do not claim, of course, that the central Himalayas were immune to influences from Sanskrit and folk *Mahābhārata* traditions from outside. Such influences must have existed. However, Leavitt's claim that the *Mahābhārata* traditions of the central Himalayas can be *directly* derived from the Sanskrit source is untenable.

(4) Leavitt's central axiom regarding oral *Mahābhārata* traditions in the central

Himalayas is as follows: Input: classical Sanskrit *Mahābhārata* → Output: regional Himalayan *mahābhārat*. He refines this by postulating that some of the versions he was considering "had diverged further from this source than others had" (p. 68). The model he proposes here could be termed the 'set-of-china model'. A properly-baked set of china is sent into a distant country; there it falls to the ground and bursts into pieces. The locals are either content with the shards or try to cement some of them together. This attempt, of course, cannot recreate the original set. So new consignments of the same set of china continue to arrive, though they are only doomed to suffer the same fate.

Curiously, this model fails to take into account precisely that complexity which is stipulated by Leavitt. Moreover, I cannot understand why, of all possible areas, the 'set of china' was sent to Garhwal, Kumaon and other rather peripheral areas only, and not to the many other centres of Brahmanical erudition and Puranic Hinduism. After all, on pp. 68 and 69 he himself claims that he is against unidirectional models of 'borrowing'. If this is the case, then I wonder just where he can identify traces of Garhwali or Kumaoni folk *Mahābhārata*s in the Sanskrit *Mahābhārata*.

3.2 Folk Mahābhāratas and regional traditions

Nor is Leavitt happy with the observation I made regarding Sax's works to the effect that "many aspects of life in Garhwal have been influenced by the local *Mahābhārata*" (1995: 5). His counter-argument is that one can use "ritual and text as sources for inferring a people's cosmology and cultural categories" (p. 73). I would not deny that such 'culture discovery procedures'[16] are a very important tool which produce significant results. However, I do not believe that oral texts are in any sense maps of the brains of the people who transmit them. There can never be, so to speak, complete identity between texts of verbal art and the people who perform and transmit them (see Zoller 1999: 206ff). How deep these gaps can occasionally be has been demonstrated by Leavitt himself in his treatment of the Hiḍimbā story (see below). What he proposes is a complete dependence of people's thinking and acting on their oral or written traditions. However, there are countless examples of how different people of the same community interpret, and deal with, texts differently and even in ways that contradict each other.

3.3 Ramanujan's question 'What happens when...?'

Before I present my own position and arguments in greater detail, I have a few more things to say on the connection between Leavitt's assumed derivation of

---

[16] I use this expression in allusion to the notion of the 'grammar discovery procedures' of American structural linguistics.

folk *Mahābhārata*s from the Sanskrit source and Ramanujan's four types of concomitant transformations ('fragmentization', 'domestication', 'localization', and 'contemporization'). Leavitt quotes Ramanujan, who raised the question, "What happens when classical myths are borrowed and retold by folk performers?" (1991: 453), and he gives an unambiguous answer: "He [Ramanujan] offers four ways in which such myths are transformed, all of which fit Kumaoni *Mahābhārata*." But now Leavitt (2000: 71) suddenly claims that these four ways are only 'common' transformations and not necessary ones. Thus the question is: how common are 'borrowings' without these kinds of transformations, in comparison with the 'common' cases? And if these processes from the classical to the folk level are so common, then Leavitt, as a competent scholar, should have observed them. But has he? And where does he locate the 'starting point' for the 'borrowing' of the central Himalayan *Mahābhārata*s when, as a matter of fact, there is no tradition of recitations of the Sanskrit *Mahābhārata* in the central Himalayas?

Ramanujan's classicist's centrism with regard to the great epics, which is shared by Leavitt, is clearly revealed in the headline of the section dealing with these four transformations: 'Classical Myths in Folk Versions' (Ramanujan 1986: 64). He points out that there are folk *Rāmāyaṇa*s and *Mahābhārata*s in Kannada "which appear mostly in bits and pieces" (ibid.). Thus, it seems to be evident for him that they are the sad remains of classical epics after they had been 'borrowed and retold by folk performers'. There is also little doubt that Ramanujan regards the transformations as generally valid. Note, for example, the formulations "First of all the gods and heroes are *domesticated*" (ibid.) and "Second, the folk renditions *localize* the pan-Indian epics and myths" (1986: 67). There exist, however, serious doubts that these four transformations are crucial features of the relationship between classical and folk traditions. I should prefer to formulate them with examples from central Himalayan folk *Mahābhārata*s.

Fragmentization. In the case of the Kumaoni folk *Mahābhārata* this assumption makes sense only if there has been a direct 'borrowing' from the Sanskrit *Mahābhārata*, for which we have no evidence at all. The model of fragmentization implies that the 'glue' connecting the classical stories gets lost on its way down to the folk level. However, how does this model coincide with the fact that beside the 'complete' text of the Sanskrit *Mahābhārata* (and the 'complete' text of Valmiki's *Rāmāyaṇa*) there also exist Sanskrit versions of fragments of the epic(s)? Moreover, during recitations of these Sanskrit texts it is usually only parts that are related. On the other hand, one finds on the folk level not only fragmentized *Mahābhārata* versions (e.g. in Kumaon, Rajasthan and Karnataka), but also 'complete' versions (e.g. in Himachal Pradesh, Garhwal, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, and Bundelkhand). Thus,

when there exist very similar textual situations on both the folk and the classical levels, then how can it be shown that a 'borrowing' from the classical to the folk level is usually accompanied by fragmentization? I will argue below that there are indications that the Kumaoni folk *Mahābhārata* fragmented not on its way from the classical level down to the folk level, but in a movement from one folk tradition to another.

Domestication. Leavitt cites "the incident of Bhīma's urinating on the demons" (2000: 71) as a good example. Why is Bhīma domesticated when he pees on the heads of demons. Is ostentatious peeing not an act of free and bold self-assertion rather than of good domesticity?[17] The word 'domesticated' means 'adapted to or content with home life and activities; tamed'. But Bhīma is neither tamed (according to Garhwali traditions, his feet are in the underworld and his head touches the sky!) nor did the Pāṇḍavas spend much time at home. According to the *Paṇḍuaṇ*, they spent most of their life in exile in wild and dangerous places.

Localization. Again Leavitt's arguments are trivial: "Ramanujan never claimed that all oral vernacular renditions of classical stories were re-set in local geography, only that it was a common feature of such renditions" (p. 72). Leavitt should have prefaced every sentence with: it may be so, but it also may not be so. The Garhwali folk *Mahābhārata* from the Tons valley contains place names from the very west of South Asia to Gaya in the east and Kailash in the north (besides local and fictitious place names). This covers a bigger geographical area than is described in many classical texts.

Contemporization. Leavitt mentions that the Kumaoni Pāṇḍavas use guns, and that "contemporization does not mean that a story is supposed to have happened this morning or last week, but that the world in which it takes place is like the world of today" (ibid.). My first question: when the classical Sanskrit *Mahābhārata* was compiled, was it contemporized? My second question: when a classical myth is enacted in a *jāgar* performance, is it then contemporized? 'Contemporization' means 'making something belong to the same time'. But Leavitt must first show me that Kumaoni person who does not believe that the war between the Pāṇḍavas and Kauravas took place a very long time ago. An explicit non-contemporization is also expressed in many other (folk) stories, where it is very frequently stated that the plots took place during the *satyayuga* (Sontheimer 1981: 98). And, in addition, which weapons appear in which stories has little to do with contemporization, but rather with questions of heroic ethics, prototypical examples of chivalry, etc.

---

[17] Traces of public peeing symbolizing sovereign power in the tradition of the Nāth yogis are found in Gold (1999).

Apparently, three of the four features imply a narrowing of horizons, and one a dissolution of coherence. 'Fragmentization' means disintegration, and the three other features all suggest a diminution of the world. 'Domestication' prompts a change from a 'language of distance' to a 'language of immediacy', and 'localization' and 'contemporization' suggest a contraction of the wide cosmos down to a provincial horizon. This would not be a serious problem if Ramanujan and Leavitt had said that these four features characterize *processes* of 'borrowing' between a *poetic code A* and a *poetic code B*. Unfortunately, however, both claim that the four features are intrinsic to folk traditions, whereas values which are the opposite of the four features are intrinsic to classical traditions.

The result of confusing 'processes of copying' with 'essential features of particular traditions' is that notions like 'domestication' and 'localization' take on a derogatory undertone. To say that traditions are 'regionalized' can easily be understood to mean that they are 'parochialized', and to say that traditions are 'domesticated' means that they are perceived as folksy. Moreover, the examples of 'domestication' provided by Ramanujan and Leavitt make it obvious that they confused what they believed to be a feature distinguishing classical from folk traditions with an actual difference in *language modes*. The difference both have in mind is in fact a difference between 'language of distance' and 'language of immediacy' (see Habermalz 1998: 290). Ramanujan and Leavitt's examples of 'domestication' are all examples of 'language of immediacy', while Ramanujan's examples from the classical tradition (1986: 67) all have to do with 'language of distance'. But the difference expressed by these two notions has nothing to do with the distinction between classical and folk traditions. There are many examples in classical Sanskrit theatre and literature of 'saucy' dialogues which Ramanujan (1986: 60) believes to be typical of folk literature (see Siegel 1989 for Sanskrit works with unrefined contents), and there are as many examples in folk traditions of awe-inspiring verbal compositions.

Thus I do not claim that the four features cannot be observed in processes of 'borrowing', but I maintain that they do not characterize the essence of a tradition. Instead, they can be discovered in *any* kind or *any* direction of 'borrowing' and retelling. If this were not so, the only possible conclusion would be that classical stories are *substantially* different from folk stories. But this is not the case. Therefore I wonder what the epistemological value of Ramanujan's question "What happens when...?" really is.

Fragmentization has also taken place through the 'borrowing' of sections of the Sanskrit *Mahābhārata* into various classical Puranas. Localization of old stories

is found in the classical *Bhāgavata-purāṇa*, which centers around Dwarka and nearby places (in fact, a much better term would be 're-localization', because this is what is actually happening). Prudish domestication can be found in classical Puranic retellings of sexually explicit folk stories, and contemporization in classical *Mahābhārata* and Puranic retellings of Vedic stories, etc.

3.4 Sanskrit Mahābhārata and 'extravagant local developments'

A crucial point in examining whether Leavitt's model or my position tallies better with the facts is the background to a Kumaoni *Mahābhārata* story recorded by Leavitt from Kamal Ram (Leavitt 1987). Leavitt believes that this story derives from the Sanskrit *Mahābhārata* story of the demoness Hiḍimbā. Since the Kumaoni story is not very similar to the Sanskrit story, Leavitt argues that, in the course of the 'borrowing' process from the classical to the folk level, it underwent "extravagant local developments" (1987: 11 and 2000: 72). But did this really happen? Leavitt suggests: "As for the extravagance of the developments I present, the reader will have to look at my papers and judge" (2000: 72). So let us do that. The gist of the Sanskrit *Mahābhārata* story from the *Hiḍimbā-vadha-parvan* is this: in a forest the Pāṇḍavas encounter the demoness Hiḍimbā and her brother Hiḍimba. The latter wants to devour them, but Bhīma kills Hiḍimba and, with Hiḍimbā, he sires a son named Ghaṭotkaca.

In the Kumaoni version of Kamal Ram, the Pāṇḍavas, Draupadī, and Kuntī (but not Bhīma) have been abducted by a demon, who wants to sacrifice them to the goddess Kālikā. On his way to rescue his family, Bhīma encounters two demonesses named Herṃā and Kherṃā, who are the younger sisters of the demon, and who address Bhīma as their brother-in-law. Later on Bhīma kills the demon and his companions and liberates his (real) family.

Leavitt believes that this is a local version of the episode mentioned above from the Sanskrit *Mahābhārata* because of the name of the demoness Herṃā and because of her brother having abducted the Pāṇḍavas. But the Kumaoni version mentions neither a marriage between the demoness and Bhīma, nor a common son. And whereas the demon of the Sanskrit *Mahābhārata* wants to devour the Pāṇḍavas, in Kumaon he wants to sacrifice them. Thus, the argument equating the Kumaoni story with the Hiḍimbā story from the Sanskrit *Mahābhārata* rests on the assumed preservation of two features: similarity in name and similarity in affinal relationship. Leavitt also believes that all the supposed deviations in the Kumaoni version are a result of all the local changes and adaptations the story has undergone since it was released from its original context, and that these deviations are the effect of the principle I have called the 'china set'.

In the Garhwali *Paṇḍuaṇ* recorded by me, the above Kumaoni story appears as two stories, which are not thematically connected. I intend to show that the Kumaoni version is not the result of extravagant developments from the classical down to the folk level, but the outcome of a collapse of originally two separate folk stories into one story (a phenomenon not noted by Ramanujan). In the first Garhwali story, Bhīma and Arjuna temporarily die in the ocean. The god Nārāyaṇa arranges a marriage between them and two girls named Uṛka and Lagendri. They are the nieces of Vāsukī Nāga of the underworld. In other words, they are themselves *nāga kanyā*s, 'serpent maidens', and have nothing to do with Hiḍimbā. One of the girls revives the two floating corpses by bringing *amṛt* from their uncle Vāsukī Naga. The two girls have intercourse with the two brothers: Bhīma begets a son named Bagrīkh, and Arjuna a son named Nāgārjuna (see also Sax 1995: 141ff). In the second story a giant named Kanbir, disguised as a Brahman, abducts the Pāṇḍavas (except Bhīma) in order to offer them as a sacrifice to the goddess Candikā (almost as in the Kumaoni story). When Bhīma sets out to liberate his family, he comes across a giantess named Himra Sitia. He sires with her a son named Guṛku and liberates his family in a way similar to that in the Kumaoni story. In Garhwal, however, the giant Kanbir is the *father* of Hirma Sitia. When he is killed, Bhīma asks Guṛku to marry his own mother Hirma Sitia.

The first Garhwali story connects two similar plots, one with a background in the Sanskrit *Mahābhārata*, and a second with a supra-regional background in folk traditions. The first plot is the classical story of Arjuna and Citrāṅgadā begetting their son Babhruvāhana (the well-known story of the son killing his own father is in fact related in another section of the *Paṇḍuaṇ*). A fairly close parallel to the Garhwali version is found in the Rajasthani *Mahābhārata* story 'The story of Arjuna's visit to the underworld' (Smith, n.d.), in which the son of Arjuna and a serpent maiden is called Nāgiyā. The second plot is the folk *Mahābhārata* story of Bhīma's begetting a son named Babrīk with a serpent maiden. According to Hiltebeitel (1999: 437) this story is "largely oral and entirely nonclassical". It has a close parallel in the Bundelkhand folk *Mahābhārata* (ibid.: 418, 421).

The name given to Bhīma's son (Babrīk/Bagrīkh) in the folk tradition is apparently connected with the name of Arjuna's son Babhruvāhana in the classical tradition (Hiltebeitel 1999: 417, Harnot 1991: 251). On the other hand, the plot of Bhīma and Babrīk is paralleled on the folk level by plots involving Arjuna and his son Aravān, who was sired with the serpent maiden Ulūpī. More details on these tricky textual problems are found in chapter 12 of Hiltebeitel (1999).

The second Garhwali story displays a certain similarity with the Sanskrit Hiḍimbā

story, but nothing of this is recognizable in the Kumaoni story. The very close rela-
tionship between Himra Sitia (Hiḍimbā) and Guṟku (Ghaṭotkaca, called Ghaṟūko
in Rajasthan) is not mentioned in the Sanskrit *Mahābhārata*. However, it is well-
known in other parts of the Indian Himalayas. Jettmar-Thakur (n.d.) points out that
in the Kullu and Saraj valleys the mother (called Himra, not Heṛmā) and son always
appear together (in Kullu their *mūrti*s are frequently together; in the Saraj valley
there is a cave with two stones representing mother and son), and Harnot says (1991:
139) that in the Kullu valley Ghaṭotkaca used to provide his mother with a human
being for consumption every day.[18] A close parallel to the second Garhwali story
with basically the same plot is again found in Rajasthan, in the *āṃvalī bhārat*, 'the
myrobalan story' (Smith n.d.). Here the demon's name is Kicaka! He too wants to
sacrifice the Pāṇḍavas to the Goddess. When Bhīma tries to rescue them, he meets
the demon's *sister* (who has no name) on the way and sires Ghaṟūko (Ghaṭotkaca)
with her.

A particular feature of the Garhwali *Mahābhārata*s is the occurrence of pairs of
actors (dyads). The actors of such dyads either have their own separate names or
one name is the echo of the other (for very similar formations in Nepal see Höfer
1994 and Maskarinec 1998 in the indexes). Frequently the first is the echo of the
second. There are, for example, two giantesses named Urma and Kurma. They
guard the world pillar, which rests on the back of the kneeling giant Kurum. Thus,
Urma is an echo formation of Kurma (which derives from Kurum). The same holds
true for the Kumaoni Heṛmā and Kheṛmā, with the first name being an echo forma-
tion of the second—and not 'a *predictable* [my italics] transformation of Hiḍimbā'
(Leavitt 1988: 7). Indeed, the pronunciation of Heṛmā-Kheṛmā resembles that of
Urma-Kurma, and the function of the two resembles that of the serpent maidens
Uṟka-Lagendri. In my thesis on the Garhwali folk *Mahābhārata* called *Paṇḍuaṇ*
(Zoller 1996) I showed that several such dyads are multi-forms of one underlying
dyad (e.g. Uṟka-Lagendri are related to Vāsukī Nāga in exactly the same way as
Urma-Kurma are related to Kurum).

This little exercise can teach us a lot. If there has been a copying of the Hiḍimbā
story, then it certainly has not come into the Kumaoni folk *Mahābhārata* from the
classical Sanskrit *Mahābhārata*, but from a Himachali or Garhwali folk *Mahāb-
hārata*. At the end of this process of fusion of what were originally two separate

---

[18] This latter story is not mentioned in the Sanskrit *Mahābhārata*, but, interestingly, it
has a close parallel in the classical Sanskrit drama *Madhyamavyāyoga*, which is ascribed
to Bhāsa. The drama states that Ghaṭotkaca has to catch a Brahman as breakfast for his
mother. The parallel in the Sanskrit drama is an indication of the antiquity of this folk
Mahābhārata motif (see Brückner 1996).

folk *Mahābhārata* stories, there is nothing left over in Kumaon which could be connected with the Sanskrit story. Besides, this example also suggests that, at least in the case of the Indian Himalayan *Mahābhārata*s, the process of fragmentization of an originally coherent epic was not from classical to folk, but from folk (perhaps Garhwal or Himachal Pradesh) to folk (Kumaon and other places in the Indian Himalayas). Further research is necessary to investigate possible correlations between the fragmentization of long narratives which consist of series of stories, and the fusion of originally separate stories.[19]

3.5 Classical and folk Mahābhāratas

3.5.1 Origins

In our present stage of knowledge, it is not possible to say anything for certain about the origin of the Garhwali *Mahābhārata* traditions. I use here the plural 'traditions' because there is no homogeneous picture, and it appears that there are either older and newer layers or superimpositions of originally separate traditions. Thus, I agree that "To put it bluntly, the relationship between Indian oral epics and the Sanskrit epics is indirect" (Hiltebeitel 1999: 12) and that

> This question of the precedence of the Sanskrit epics is, however, bedeviling. There is danger of implying a master narrative: one that is all the more problematic and even 'politically dangerous' because it seems to 'privilege' two Sanskrit texts. Let us repeat that regional oral epics develop in the medieval period in regions where it is probably never the Sanskrit epics themselves, but folk versions of the epics, that supply—to borrow a metaphor from Ramanujan—their regional pools of classical epic signifiers. (Hiltebeitel 1999: 43)[20]

Hiltebeitel speaks here of various martial epics which were created probably between the 12th and 14th centuries and were influenced in the process of their creation by folk or 'underground' *Mahābhārata*s.[21] This was also the period when "Nāths, Bairagis, Jogis, and Satpanth Isma'ilis... minted underground

[19] One would also expect the existence of the opposites of fragmentization and fusion, which one might term 'concatenation' and 'division' respectively.

[20] In taking up Ramanujan's idea of 'regional pools of classical epic signifiers', which is a generalization of his concept of 'fragmentization', Hiltebeitel again runs the risk of accepting a kind of master narrative, this time the 'fragmented master narrative'. There is a striking similarity between Ramanujan's imagery with regard to an assumed pan-Indian stock of epical elements and Max Mueller's concept of a "common fund. . . a large Manasa lake of philosophical thought and language" (1973: xiv).

[21] On the notion of the 'underground *Mahābhārata*', see Hiltebeitel (1999: 299ff).

*Mahābhārata*s with interregional and interreligious currency" (ibid.: 414). But, of course, folk *Mahābhārata*s also existed prior to the 'appropriating' activities of these religious orders. Thus, one can presume four interactive processes for the central Himalayas:

(1) If we assume that the major plots of a Proto-*Mahābhārata* are located in the *doāb* of Ganges and Jumna, and if we accept that this must also be more or less the region where the genesis of the oral *Mahābhārata* traditions took place, then one could imagine (but not more than that), that *parts* of the Garhwali *Mahābhārata*s are more or less direct descendants of those original traditions.[22]

(2) One or more folk *Mahābhārata*s were imported into the central Himalayas somewhere from northern India some time in the medieval period by invading/immigrating groups of Rajputs and/or 'proselytizing' yogis.

(3) There was a constant import of oral and perhaps also of written collections of folk *Mahābhārata* stories of the type *Rānī Draupadī kī kahānī* and similar popular texts. It seems quite possible that it was chiefly the itinerant bards who were responsible for importing these texts.

(4) There was a constant process of transforming *local* non-*Mahābhārata* stories into *regional* folk *Mahābhārata* stories. They were either integrated into the regional folk *Mahābhārata*s or continued to be transmitted as independent tales.

3.5.2 Layers and manifold traditions

It would be wrong to assume that interactions among these four processes led to one uniform tradition. This is very clearly seen in case of the Devāḷs, the bards of the Tons valley, who are the transmitters of the *Paṇḍuaṇ*. Between the *Paṇḍuaṇ* and the Sanskrit *Mahābhārata* there exists no direct relationship of one-sided depend-

---

[22] All the evidence seems to indicate that the Proto-*Mahābhārata* was an epic transmitted orally in a form of Old Indo-Aryan. On one level it continued to be transmitted orally, first in Middle Indo-Aryan and later in various New Indo-Aryan languages (it is, of course, a well-known fact that it was also translated into many non-Indo-Aryan languages). It was written down in classical Sanskrit at a time when various forms of Middle Indo-Aryan were spoken in northern South Asia. This fact gives reason to assume that oral *Mahābhārata*s in Middle Indo-Aryan dialects existed during those times (roughly between 400 BCE and 400 CE). As pointed out below, we do indeed have proof of the existence of a *Mahābhārata* in Middle Indo-Aryan. But it is also important to take note of the fact that it was not only the oral folk versions of the *Mahābhārata* that underwent linguistic changes in the course of time, but also the classical Sanskrit *Mahābhārata*. It has been pointed out (Masica 1991: 59ff) that the written Sanskrit *Mahābhārata* reflects the grammars of languages spoken at later stages.

ence. At the same time, the same bards also perform other *Mahābhārata* stories and songs which often deviate from and contradict the plots of the *Paṇḍuaṇ*, and which are closer to the plots of the Sanskrit *Mahābhārata*.[23]

It would also be wrong to assume that the manifold folk *Mahābhārata* traditions of the central Himalayas could be neatly explained as the result of the above-mentioned four interactive processes. I have dealt with these problems extensively elsewhere (Zoller 1996), but here are two examples demonstrating some aspects of the problems involved:

(1) Hiltebeitel (1999: 414ff) has pursued the question of the relationship between old folk *Mahābhārata*s prior to the 12th century and the 'minted underground *Mahābhārata*s' emerging after the 12th century. The *Paṇḍuaṇ* certainly does display some influences of yogic traditions, but its mythological universe also contains many elements which fail to tally with Rajput ideology, with preoccupations with "land and the goddess" (ibid.: 415), or with other elements regarded by Hiltebeitel as central to the Indian folk *Mahābhārata* traditions. In fact, I have shown (Zoller 1997) that the ideology of the Rajputs of Western Garhwal is only indirectly connected with those cultic traditions of which the *Paṇḍuaṇ* is an integral part. Thus the survival of pre-medieval elements in the *Paṇḍuaṇ* is quite strongly indicated.

(2) A case in point in the copying of fragments of a regional into a local tradition is the shamanic recital of 'Kadum and Padum' in Western Nepal (Maskarinec 1995: 40, 1998: 292-304).[24] The recital describes how "The elder sister performs austerities for twelve years to obtain the blessing of sons, while the younger sister lives luxuriously, instead... When the time comes for the elder sister to collect her blessing, however, the younger sister deceives God and receives it instead" (Maskarinec 1995: 40). Maskarinec sees some parallels between this recital and the story of Vinatā and Kadrū familiar from the Sanskrit *Mahābhārata*, from various Puranic and many other sources. But *exactly* the same motif is found in the first part of the *Paṇḍuaṇ*. The structure of the western Nepal shamanic text is quite different from a *narrative*, but it contains additional elements which have exact parallels in the *Paṇḍuaṇ*.[25] In fact, it is a distant echo of a central Himalayan folk *Mahābhārata*

---

[23] Various published Garhwali *Mahābhārata* texts also belong to this newer level (see, for example, Catak 1958 and Nautiyal 1981).

[24] I shall not deal here with non-*Mahābhārata* tales that change into *Mahābhārata* tales and continue as independent tales, but see Zoller (1996).

[24] For the moment it has to remain unclear whether the plot was copied from a central Himalayan folk *Mahābhārata* into the Nepalese recital of 'Padum and Kadum' or whether it originally belonged to some other unknown source with a 'Vinatā and Kadrū' subject. But it certainly was not copied from 'Kadum and Padum' into the *Paṇḍuaṇ*.

story which is found in the *Paṇḍuaṇ*. In this, the *sisters* Kuntī and Gāndhārī[26] each desire a son; after 12 years of worship Kuntī is granted a boon by the Lord of the World which is, however, wrested from her by her younger sister, Gāndhārī. When Kuntī receives a second boon, she wants her future children to become immortal. She achieves this by preparing a meal for the Seven Rishis without using normal tools, e.g. winnowing rice without a winnowing fan (this is done by employing birds, but one bird keeps back a grain, thus creating some additional problems).[27] The same motifs appear more or less clearly in the same sequence in the recital 'Kadum and Padum' (Maskarinec 1998: 292ff).

The relationship between the *Paṇḍuaṇ* (as a representative of regional central Himalayan folk *Mahābhārata*s) and the local recital 'Kadum and Padum' could be described at least partially with reference to the features employed by Ramanujan and Leavitt. Thus, this example too shows that the four features in fact characterize copying mechanisms between different poetic codes (e.g. 'long narrative' → 'ritual healing text') and not 'borrowing' of texts from the classical to the folk level.

3.5.3 Reference and copying, classical and folk traditions

We have seen that the relationship between folk and classical traditions cannot be adequately described merely as 'borrowing'. I therefore want to suggest the use of the terms: 'reference', 'global copying' and 'selective copying'. Each term has both 'vertical' and 'horizontal' dimensions.

Reference. A 'vertical' reference exists where a particular folk tradition makes the (fictitious) claim of descent from a widely regarded classical authority (e.g. the Vedas, Puranas) or a superhuman being. 'Vertical' reference is typically linked with the need to establish authority, legitimacy or antiquity. In such cases it is frequently claimed that a particular oral folk tradition derives from a sacred book. One example would be the Tamang shamanic tradition (Höfer 1994: 32). This kind of 'vertical' reference is not found in the case of the *Paṇḍuaṇ*, although the existence of the Sanskrit *Mahābhārata* is generally known in the area. The *Paṇḍuaṇ* contains a passage in which the Pāṇḍavas capture a big iron rod from a giant, on which 'all knowledge', including the *Mahābhārata* and the *Rāmāyaṇa*, is engraved. Thus, by claiming that the *Paṇḍuaṇ* realizes an 'otherworldly book', the epic employs a paradoxical self-reference in order to create authority. 'Vertical' references are

---

[26] In the Sanskrit *Mahābhārata* their husbands are brothers.

[27] A somewhat similar story is found in some Sanskrit *Mahābhārata* versions which have not been taken into the Critical Edition: within no time Kuntī has to prepare a meal for a sage. He is satisfied and gives her a boon to procreate children with different gods (Mani 1984: 442).

also found within folk traditions. The four divine Mahāsu brothers from western Garhwal are regarded as the successors of the Pāṇḍavas; therefore the *Paṇḍuaṇ* is regarded as a sacred text. A 'horizontal' reference exists where folk traditions allude to other folk traditions, and classical traditions to other classical traditions. There is, for example, a passage in the *Paṇḍuaṇ* in which Bhīma claims that he has already killed the giant Kumbhakarṇa in Sri Lanka. This is a 'horizontal' reference to the *Rāmāyaṇa*. Another example of 'horizontal' reference is found in the romance of *Hīr-Rānjhā*, where the hero and the heroine are compared with famous lovers from other romances (Temple n.d.: 573ff).

Selective copying. Here one can differentiate between *material* and *immaterial* types of selective copying (Johanson 1992: 179ff). A case of material selective copying is found in those performances of the bards from western Garhwal where they employ aspirated mediae not used in normal language (e.g. *bh*, *dh*, *gh*) instead of unaspirated mediae, in order to create an elevated Hindi-like style. This might even lead to an artificial form like *Ghaṇeś* as a designation of the famous god. A case of immaterial selective copying is found where the same bards change western Garhwali syntactic patterns into patterns typical of Hindi. Other very common forms of selective copying are the copying of the subject matter of an 'original' story without copying the language of that story, e.g. copying Valmiki's *Rāmāyaṇa* into a popular chapbook version, and the copying of a general action pattern, e.g. a typical fairy tale plot, into other genres. Many examples of selective copying are the result of diffusion, in which the individual steps of copying from one tradition into another can no longer be traced. Some of the north Indian folk *Mahābhārata*s which perhaps influenced the *Paṇḍuaṇ* might themselves have copied motifs from the classical Sanskrit *Mahābhārata*. Cases of selective copying frequently display transformations in the Lévi-Straussian sense. The direction of copying is not always clear. There is a myth describing Mahāsu's advent in western Garhwal in which the deity kills a giant named Kirmir. This parallels an episode in the *Paṇḍuaṇ* in which Bhīma kills a giant called Bag. Both these episodes again have a parallel in the Sanskrit *Mahābhārata* ('Book of the Forest', 3.12), where Bhīma kills two giants called Baka and Kirmira, and also in the Sanskrit drama *Madhmayavyāyoga*. It thus appears that this story was always very popular on both classical and folk levels. Phenomena such as fragmentizations, concatenations, fusions, rearrangements, reversals, etc. of plots or motifs are either the outcome of repeated copying in a case of diffusion, or of a copying from one type of 'poetic pattern' ('genre') into another. Selective copying is frequently motivated by a need to adapt the copied elements to local conditions and 'needs', e.g. to pre-existing repertoires, to cognitive orientations (as manifested in the organization of kinship,

polity, ownership, ideology of the human self, aesthetic ideals, etc.), or to the demands of an audience and the circumstances of patronage.

Global copying. Examples include passages in Prakrit language in Sanskrit dramas, *tatsama*s (loan words used in a modern South Asian language in the same form as in Sanskrit), and the Sanskrit names of actors in folk *Mahābhārata*s. Another example of global copying can be observed during the so-called Daknātsaṇ festival in western Garhwal in spring. On the fifth and final day of the festival, the women of a village collect on the village ground and start to copy the dialects, gestures etc. of the people of the surrounding areas. The effect is highly amusing.

The above discussion of forms of reference and copying between different traditions and 'poetic patterns' shows that Ramanujan's 'borrowing of classical myths into folk traditions' is, at the most, a very special case of a much broader complex of interrelated phenomena. His attempt, however, was perhaps guided by the intuition that the occurrence of copying is in many cases motivated by factors like 'authority' and 'prestige'. The pursuance of authority and prestige in folk traditions of verbal art does not, however, automatically lead to a copying of Sanskritic traditions. In very many cases a vague and at times even unfounded reference to a prestigious tradition apparently serves the purpose. Leavitt's crude image that "South Asia did have the equivalent of Roman Empires and of Christianity carrying common influence across a vast region" (p. 69) is thus not apposite; the *Paṇḍuaṇ* is still a living tradition in the central Himalayas, but the *Iliad* is not sung any more in the mountain valleys of Greece.

3.6 The Paṇḍuaṇ and other Mahābhāratas

The textual history of the *Paṇḍuaṇ* and other oral *Mahābhārata*s of the central Himalayas is apparently quite intricate. There is no indication of a relationship of direct transmission between the central Himalayan *Mahābhārata*s and the Sanskrit *Mahābhārata*, and there is nothing to indicate that the pandits of the central Himalayas played a pivotal role in the importation of supra-regional or Sanskrit *Mahābhārata*s.[28] Instead of just looking down on the Kumaoni *mahābhārat* and up to the Sanskrit *Mahābhārata*, Leavitt would have done better to look into folk *Mahābhārata* traditions in Rajasthan, Gujarat, Bundelkhand, Tamil Nadu, etc., for it is on the level of the folk *Mahābhārata*s of India that most connections, parallels,

---

[28] Among the very few Brahman villages in western Garhwal are some in which the Brahmans also occasionally perform *Mahābhārata* narratives. These (sung) narratives, however, are part and parcel of the regional tradition. Thus, Chandola's 'Folk to Classic to Folk' model for Garhwal (Chandola 1977), which is a variant of Leavitt's model, is just as incorrect as Leavitt's.

and similarities are found. Let me present just a few examples of archaic traits and parallels:

(1) One knows of "the existence of an independent version of the *Mahābhārata* story in the Apabhramsa dialect of Sindh (and possibly also of North-Western or Western Panjab), prior to 1000 A.D." (Chatteyji [sic] 1965: 163).[29] The first remarkable feature of this version is that the names occurring in it are partly *tatsama*s (loan words used in the same form as in Sanskrit), partly *ardhatatsama*s (loan words from Sanskrit borrowed at an early stage of Indo-Aryan), and partly *tadbhava*s (words which have evolved organically from early Indo-Aryan forms). And this is perhaps a reflection of its content. Besides a number of episodes which appear to be quite close to the Sanskrit *Mahābhārata*, there are also other episodes which do not occur in the latter: "The divergences and new episodes show the existence of *saga* materials outside of the Sanskrit *Mahābhārata*, and this points to a different recension or independent version of the epic which was current in Sindh and Western Panjab as well" (Chatteyji [sic] 1965: 159). Chatterji quotes several *tadbhava* names: *Ajjuṇa* (for Arjuna), *Dujjohṇa* (for Duryodhana), **Dovaddi* (for Draupadi), *Juhiṭṭhila* (for Yudhiṣṭhira), **Hatthinā* (for Hastinapura),[30] etc. (ibid.: 160-3). These very names prove the existence of a very old and at least partially independent regional *Mahābhārata* tradition, because their Middle Indo-Aryan forms reflect sound changes which were already completed when the Sanskrit *Mahābhārata* was compiled.

(2) Chatterji points out that one section of this fairly independent *Mahābhārata* version deals with the early history of Sindh, in which two tribes, the Jaṭṭa and the Meda, are said to be ruled by the Kauravas. The name of the Meda survives in the modern name of the Meo of Rajasthan (Chatteyji [sic] 1965: 157). The present-day Meos, who are now Muslims, do indeed have a folk *Mahābhārata* tradition. We are eagerly awaiting the publication of a recorded version by Shail Mayaram, as it may show how this modern version is connected with the old Apabhramśa version. However, there do exist parallels between the Apabhramśa version and the modern Rajasthani *Mahābhārata*. Just one example:[31] the Apabhramśa version contains a story in which Gāndhāri piles up her hundred slain sons, and climbs up onto the heap of corpses in order to reach the food on top of it (ibid.: 159). Virtually the same

---

[29] The version was translated from Arabic into Persian in 1026. The translation from Sindhi Apabhramśa into Arabic was produced before that date, but the exact year is unknown. The original Persian version is no longer extant, but a quote or summary appeared in a later Persian work. This quote or summary was published and translated into French in 1844, and then translated into English in 1941 (Chatteyji [sic] 1965: 156).

[30] In the Garhwali *Paṇḍuaṇ* it is called *athna*!

[31] A comprehensive comparison will appear in my publication of the Garhwali *Paṇḍuaṇ*.

story is related in the Rajasthani *Mahābhārata* 'myrobalan story', which did not appear until 1000 years later (Smith n.d.).

The above example of the Jaṭṭa and Meda shows that groups of people connected with folk *Mahābhārata* traditions sometimes preferred to associate themselves with the Kauravas rather than the Pāṇḍavas. This contradicts the political outlook of the Sanskrit *Mahābhārata* and suggests the existence of old folk *Mahābhārata*s with a different outlook. Compare also the genealogy (*vaṃśāvalī*) of the kings of the Himalayan state of Kangra, which mentions a king named Suśarma-candra who sided with the Kauravas (Hutchinson and Vogel 1982: 104), and note the old Kaurava cult in the upper valley of the Tons river in Garhwal (Sax 1999, 2000).

There are dozens of parallel plots in the various Indian folk *Mahābhārata*s which have no direct parallels in the Sanskrit *Mahābhārata*, and at least some of the north Indian folk *Mahābhārata*s share a religious ideology which is not found in the Sanskrit *Mahābhārata*. These parallels and the common ideology may perhaps not suffice to establish the former existence of a pan-Indian underground *Mahābhārata*, but they do strongly indicate the existence of very old regional folk *Mahābhārata*s with a common stock of '*saga* materials outside of the Sanskrit *Mahābhārata*'.

Conclusion

Leavitt's model of interactions between the Sanskrit *Mahābhārata* and the folk *Mahābhārata*s of the central Himalayas assumes a direct relationship of one-sided dependence between the two traditions. However, I have presented evidence which shows that this model is inadequate. It is based on a smattering of facts from the intricate history of oral traditions, and it tries to perpetuate an outdated 'classicist centrism'. I have shown, instead, that the folk *Mahābhārata*s of the central Himalayas are directly related only with other folk traditions, and that there exists no direct transmission from the Sanskrit *Mahābhārata* to the long-established folk *Mahābhārata*s of the central Himalayas. The relationship between classical and folk traditions is not essentially different from that between the different folk traditions or between the different classical traditions. They are all governed by the same mechanisms of reference and copying, which are frequently motivated by a search for prestige and authority. But this motivation does not inevitably lead to Sanskritization. After all, a Himalayan shaman aspires to become a good shaman, not a good pandit. These two great traditions, the folk and the classical, are like meandering rivers. Time and again they come very close, but this does not hinder them in the continuation of their own courses.

References

Blackburn, Stuart H. and A. K. Ramanujan 1986. *Another Harmony: New essays on the folklore of India.* Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Blackburn, Stuart H., Peter J. Claus, Joyce B. Flueckiger, and Susan S. Wadley (eds) 1989. *Oral Epics in India.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Brückner, Heidrun 1996. 'Der dem "Bhāsa" zugeschriebene Einakter *Madhyamavyāyoga* - deutsche Übersetzung unter Berücksichtigung von zwei neu aufgefundenen Manuskripten'. In *Nānāvidhaikatā: Festschrift für Hermann Berger*, edited by Dieter B. Kapp, pp. 8-22. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz.

Buddruss, Georg 1988. Review of Meissner, *Māluśāhī and Rājulā. ZDMG* 138: 164-6.

Catak, Govind 1958. *Gaṛhvālī Lokgāthāeṃ.* Dehra Dun: Pratibhā Prakāśan.

Chandola, Anoop 1977. *Folk Drumming in the Himalayas: A linguistic approach to music.* New York: AMP.

Chatteyji [sic], Suniti Kumar 1965. 'An early Arabic version of the Mahabharata story' *Indian Linguistics*, reprint edition of volumes 1-15, Volume III, comprising volumes 9-15 (1944-1956).

Gold, Daniel 1999. 'The Yogī who Pissed from the Mountain'. In *Studies in Early Modern Indo-Aryan Languages, Literature and Culture*, edited by Alan Entwistle and Carol Salomon with Heidi Pauwels and Michael C. Shapiro. Delhi: Manohar.

Habermalz, Sabine 1998. '"Signs on a white field": A look at orality and literacy in James Joyce's Ulysses' *Oral Tradition*, 13 (2): 285-305.

Harnot, S. R. 1991. *Himācal ke mandir aur unse juṛī lok-kathāeṃ.* Shimla: Minarvā Book House.

Hiltebeitel, Alf 1999. *Rethinking India's Oral and Classical Epics: Draupadī among Rajputs, Muslims, and Dalits.* Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.

Höfer, András 1994. *A Recitation of the Tamang Shaman in Nepal.* Bonn: VGH Wissenschaftsverlag.

Hutchinson, J. and J. Ph. Vogel 1982 [1933]. *History of the Panjab Hill States. Volume I. Chandigarh.* Department of Languages and Culture, Himachal Pradesh.

Inden, Ronald 1992 [1990]. *Imagining India*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Jettmar-Thakur, Gabriele n.d. 'Hirimbā Devī'. Unpublished paper.

Johanson, Lars 1992. *Strukturelle Faktoren in Türkischen Sprachkontakten*. Sitzungsberichte der wissenschaftlichen Gesellschaft an der Johann Wolfgang Goethe-Universität Frankfurt am Main, Band XXIX, Nr. 5. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag.

Leavitt, John 1987. 'A *Mahābhārata* Story from the Kumaon Hills' *Himalayan Research Bulletin* 7 (2): 2-12.

Leavitt, John 1991. 'Himalayan Variations on an Epic Theme.' In *Essays on the Mahābhārata*, edited by Arvind Sharma, pp. 444-74. Leiden: E.J. Brill.

Leavitt, John 2000. 'On the Complexity of Oral Tradition: A reply to Claus Peter Zoller's review essay 'Oral Epic Poetry in the Central Himalayas'' *European Bulletin of Himalayan Research* 18: 58-77.

Mani, Vettam 1984 [1975]. *Purāṇic Encyclopedia: A comprehensive dictionary with special reference to the Epic and Purāṇic literature.* Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.

Masica, Collin P. 1991. *The Indo-Aryan Languages.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Maskarinec, Gregory G. 1995. *The Rulings of the Night: An ethnography of Nepalese shaman oral texts.* Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

Maskarinec, Gregory G. 1998. *Nepalese Shaman Oral Texts.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Max Mueller, Friedrich 1973 [1899]. *The Six Systems of Indian Philosophy.* New Delhi: Associated Publishing.

Meissner, Konrad 1985. *Māluśāhī and Rājulā: A ballad from Kumaon (India) as sung by Gopī Dās* (Neuindische Studien 10). Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz.

Mṛgāvatī. Kutaban-kṛt sūfī prem-kāvya 1968. Edited by Mataprasad Gupta. Agra: Prāmāṇik Prakāśan.

Nautiyal, Shivanand 1981. *Gaṛhvāl ke loknṛtyagīt.* Prayag: Hindī Sāhitya Sammelan.

Padmāvat. Malik Muhammad Jāyasī kṛt mahākāvya (*mūl aur saṃjīvanī vyākhyā*). 1980 (2037 Vikrama). Commentary by Shrivasudevasharan Agraval. Jhansi: Sāhitya-sadan.

Quddus, Syed Abdul 1992. *Punjab: The land of beauty, love, and mystics.* Karachi: Royal Book Company.

Ramanujan, A.K. 1986. 'Two Realms of Kannada Folklore'. In Blackburn and Ramanuja, eds.

Richman, Paula 1994. *Many Rāmāyaṇas: The diversity of a narrative tradition in South Asia*. Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Sakriya, Badriprasad and Bhupatiram Sakriya 1982. *Rājasthānī-hindī śabd-koṣ.* Jaipur: Paṃcśīl Prakāśan.

Sarkar, Benoy Kumar 1972 [1917]. *The Folk-Element in Hindu Culture: A contribution to socio-religious studies in Hindu folk institutions.* Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal.

Sax, William S. 1995. 'Who's Who in the Pāṇḍava Līlā?' In *The Gods at Play*: *Līlā in South Asia*, edited by William S. Sax. New York: Oxford University Press.

Sax, William S. 1999. 'Worshiping Epic Villains: A Kaurava cult in the central Himalayas'. In *Epic Traditions in the Contemporary World: The poetics of community*, edited by Margaret H. Beissinger *et al.*, pp. 169-86. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Sax, William S. 2000. 'In Karna's Realm: An ontology of action' *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 28 (3): 295-324.

Sekhon, Sant Singh and Kartar Singh Duggal 1992. *A History of Punjabi Literature.* New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi.

Shukla, Ramcandra 1983/4 (2040 VS). *Hindī sāhitya kā itihās* (Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Granthamālā 53). Kashi: Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā.

Siegel, Lee 1989 (1987). *Laughing Matters: Comic tradition in India*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.

Smith, John D. n.d. 'The Rajasthani folk-*Mahābhārata*'. Unpublished paper.

Sontheimer, Günther D. 1981. 'King Vikram and Kamaḷū Śinde, the shepherd *bhakti* episodes from an oral epic of the Dhangars of Maharashtra' *South Asian Digest of Regional Writing*, Vol. 6 (1977): *Bhakti in South Asian regional literatures*, edited by Günther D. Sontheimer, pp. 97-128. Heidelberg: South Asia Institute.

Suvorova, Anna 2000. *Masnavi: A study of Urdu romance.* Karachi: Oxford University Press.

Temple, R. C., n. d. *The Legends of the Panjab.* Vols. I - III. Reprint by the Institute of Folk Heritage Islamabad. Lahore: Allied Press.

Usborne, Charles Frederick 1966. *The Adventures of Hir & Ranjha: A translation into English prose by Charles Frederick Usborne from the Punjabi poem of Waris Shah*. Karachi: Lion Art Press.

Varma, Direndra and Vrajeshvar Varma, Dharmvir Bharati, Ramsvarup Caturvedi, and Raghuvansh 1985. *Hindī sāhitya koṣ: bhāg 1, pāribhāṣik śabdāvalī*. Varanasi: Gyanmandal Ltd.

Varma, Ramcandra 1986. *Hindī sāhitya kī pūrvapīṭhikā: pravṛttiyoṃ tathā paramparāoṃ kā paricayātmak adhyayan*. Delhi: Kalā-mandir.

Varma, Ramcandra 1987 [1933]. *Saṃkṣipta hindī śabdasāgar*. Kashi: Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā.

Vaudeville, Charlotte 1996. *Myths, Saints and Legends in Medieval India*. Compiled and with an introduction by Vasudha Dalmia. Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Zoller, Claus Peter 1995. 'Oral Epic Poetry in the Central Himalayas (Garhwal and Kumaon)' *European Bulletin of Himalayan Research* 9: 1-7.

Zoller, Claus Peter 1996 (unpublished). *Die Paṇḍuaṇ: ein mündliches Mahābhārata-Epos aus dem Garhwal Himalaya*.

Zoller, Claus Peter 1996. 'Eine Mahābhārata-Erzählung aus Jaunsar im indischen Himalaya'. In *Nānāvidhaikatā: Festschrift für Hermann Berger*, edited by Dieter B. Kapp, pp. 318-42. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz.

Zoller, Claus Peter 1997. 'Heroic Ballads and the Biography of a Woman: On coping with conflicts in the Western Garhwal Himalaya.' In *Perspectives of History and Change in the Karakorum, Hindukush, and Himalaya*, edited by Irmtraud Stellrecht and Matthias Winiger, pp. 473-97. Pakistan-German Research Project Culture Area Karakorum, Scientific Studies, vol. 3. Köln: Rüdiger Köppe Verlag.

Zoller, Claus Peter 1999. 'An Indian Myth of the Creation of Death and Life'. In *Ways of Dying. Death and its meanings in South Asia*, edited by Elisabeth Schömbucher and Claus Peter Zoller, pp. 205-32. Delhi: Manohar.

Zoller, Claus Peter (in press). *Tales from Indus-Kohistan*. Islamabad: Alhamra.

Sliding Down Hill: Some reflections
on thirty years of change in a Himalayan village

Alan Macfarlane

I first came to Nepal in December 1968 with my wife Gill and stayed for fifteen months. We spent a year working in the Gurung village of Thak, about five hours' walk north of Pokhara. I returned with my second wife, Sarah Harrison, in 1986 and we have visited Nepal and Thak for periods of between three weeks and three months in almost every year since. The first fieldwork led to a PhD in anthropology which was subsequently published as *Resources and Population: A Study of the Gurungs of Central Nepal* (Cambridge University Press, 1976). The planned republication of this book by Ratna Pustak Bhandar of Kathmandu makes it appropriate to reflect on some of the changes which have occurred in one village in the more than thirty years since I first visited it. This brief account, based on arguably the most intensive longitudinal study of a single Himalayan community ever made, can only sketch in a few of the changes. We hope to publish a more detailed ethnography, possibly based not only on the extensive genealogical and survey accounts but also making use of the many films and photographs which we have taken, at a later point.

In one sense, at least on the surface, there has been little change in the village since my first fieldwork. The basic agricultural and craft techniques described in *Resources and Population* are still used. The amount of labour input for various tasks is roughly the same and the village lands shown in the maps to the book have not changed greatly. The main village and the nearby hamlets are not greatly changed in their physical form, though a number of houses have tin roofs and there is now a diesel mill and two television sets (powered by car batteries) in the village. The track up the valley is somewhat improved and it is possible to get a car to the bottom of the steep climb up to the village, saving a three-hour walk. The water pipe is larger and a number of houses have taken small pipes off it. Yet there is still no electricity, no telephone, no motorable road, and no health post. The children no longer have to climb down to a school forty minutes below the village, as there

is a village school with five classes in it. There is a government office and a large water tank with watchman's house (unoccupied). The two 'shops' have a much wider range of goods, including beer and coke, than in 1968 when they basically only had tea.

The major prediction of *Resources* was that with a population growth rate of over one per cent per year, and a doubling time of thirty years or so, there would be ecological disaster in this and other villages like it. The already over-stretched forest and land resources would collapse and the Malthusian checks of famine and disease, if not war, would probably return.

One part of this prediction has been fulfilled. The population of the hundred sample households in the original survey has indeed at least doubled in that period and so there are now over two hundred households stemming from the original hundred. Yet when one visits Thak itself, the village is, if anything, slightly smaller in the number of occupied houses than it was in 1969. The paradox is explained by something which it was not possible to predict in 1969: namely that there would be very extensive and permanent out-migration.

The pattern described in *Resources* was of temporary labour migration, with many men leaving for army service in the British and Indian armies. These soldiers returned with their pay and pensions and the profits from army service were invested in the village. From the middle of the 1970s, as army recruitment dried up and towns such as Kathmandu and Pokhara grew, the pattern changed. Waves of young men started to go to wherever work was available. They went first to India and later to East and South-east Asia, the Middle East, and a few to Europe and America. When they and the remaining army service men retired they no longer came back to the village but settled in the town, in particular in nearby Pokhara.

So there is now not only the core village in the hills, but a 'dispersed' village of equal size, particularly concentrated on the road that leads from Thak into Pokhara. Currently, young people from the village are in Hong Kong, Malaysia, India, the Arab states, Europe, and elsewhere. If they are lucky enough to make any money, they will invest their savings in buying land and building houses in towns and cities, not in the village.

The beneficial effect of this out-migration has been to prevent ecological collapse. If anything, the forest above Thak is in better condition than it was in 1969. The tree cover is growing back closer to the village. This is the result of a slight decline in the need for firewood and also because of another large change, which I shall describe: the dramatic decrease in the number of larger animals. So, although there

has been erosion and loss of some land through landslides, the catastrophe which I predicted in relation to the forest has not occurred.

The negative effect on the wealth and development prospects of the village is, however, equally great. These steep and rocky hills cannot sustain people at a reasonable level of affluence from settled agriculture. In the earlier study I showed that over a third of the total income in the village came from army pay and pensions and civilian work abroad, and this constituted almost all the cash that was available to villagers. This has declined to a thin trickle from the few labourers abroad who save a little and send it home. Furthermore, those with most initiative and experience of new ways, who used to return, no longer do so. Only the young children, the old and the poor are left in the village. Consequently there is little leadership and little experience of the wider world, and few political contacts available to the village.

The results can be seen in the material culture. The clothes are often ragged, the number of brass pots and cauldrons is much reduced, the gold ornaments of the women that were so apparent in 1969 have almost all been sold off. One receives the strong impression that people are actually poorer now than they were then, despite the massive growth of wealth in parts of Asia, Europe, and America.

Thus the village is not facing imminent famine or disease, but it may well be facing malnutrition. One of the major changes in the thirty years has been in diet. Although new foodstuffs are more easily available for those with cash, for example iodine salt, oil, and sugar, the basic foodstuff, rice, is becoming too expensive for many villagers. Currently only two of the hundred households in my original sample area are self-sufficient in rice, a considerable drop from the situation thirty years ago. Most have to eat millet and maize for much of the year. In 1969, most of the medium families had enough meat and milk to consume one or both at least twice a week. Now even the wealthier families only eat meat once or twice a month and milk is a luxury for everyone.

Since the mid-1990s we have noticed for the first time that a number of the villagers, and particularly the women, were abnormally thin: their bodies appeared to be wasting away, with no reserves of fat. The amazing way in which villagers metabolize food so that a huge expenditure of energy is possible on the basis of a very small calorific input has long puzzled biological anthropologists. But the limits seem to have been reached and the people may be starting to starve.

The shortage of meat and milk is one aspect of the most dramatic change in the village: the decline in domestic animals. The number of livestock in the sample

area of Thak has more than halved in the period between 1969 and 1999. The traction power available for the fields through the use of oxen has declined, and the milk, oil, meat, and manure provided by stalled and herded buffaloes and cows has declined. The Gurungs were still pastoralists to a certain extent in 1969, as they had been for thousands of years. By 2000 those remaining in the villages were settled arable farmers living on a meagre carbohydrate diet.

The growing poverty is also the result of a third major change, the decline in land productivity. Land, which produced, say, 100 kg. of rice or maize in a good year will now produce on average only a little over half that amount. The decline in the amount of manure, far from compensated for by fertilizer (which most people cannot afford), is but one reason for this. Thirty years of constant use and the leaching effect of monsoon rains have lowered productivity hugely. Meanwhile, cheap grains from the Terai and India have skewed the costs of grain in the village.

The total result of both local and national changes can be seen in the rapidly falling value of land in the village over the thirty years. While land prices have rocketed in Pokhara, they have hardly risen in the village. Again, the decrease in income is shown in the decline in returns on labour. The wage for ploughing in the fields in 1969 was 10 rupees for a day's work. The cost of a chicken was 8 rupees. Now the wages are about 50 rupees and the cost of a chicken is 400 rupees or more. In 1969, forty days of work would earn enough to buy a buffalo. Now one would have to work for more than two hundred days to do the same.

Only one villager has enough rice to sell some, so all of the clothing, education, medicine, and extra food have to be paid for from the trickle of gifts and foreign earnings. There is a serious shortfall. One result of this is massive indebtedness. I was unable to make a systematic study of indebtedness during my first fieldwork, but subsequently we have been able to make extensive enquiries. The results are staggering.

Almost every family is heavily indebted, often for very large sums of more than a thousand pounds sterling equivalent (over a *lākh* in Nepalese money). Much of the borrowing is for special occasions, weddings, funerals, and illness, but the main reason is to pay 'agents' to facilitate work abroad. To go to South Korea or Hong Kong or Japan (in all of which most work illegally, so without the simplest of safeguards) families often borrow up to ten thousand pounds sterling (10 *lākh*s), on which they pay interest of up to seventy percent per year. For the Gulf States the sums are roughly seventy to eighty thousand rupees. Frequently the money is lost through theft or police corruption in the country where the migrants are working. In conclusion, then, while the ecological situation is stable, the economic position

of the village has declined greatly and real poverty is emerging.

The social and cultural situation has also changed. When I first visited Thak it was a rich cultural community. There were young people's associations (the *rodi*), much co-operative labour, singing and dancing in the evening, communal picnics, and so on. Almost all of this has gone. So too has most of the ancient shamanic tradition of the local 'poju' priest, who can now be seen at work only on special occasions in the village, such as the memorial service or *pae*. In what is relatively a twinkling of an eye, after several thousand years of maintaining a cultural tradition, the old ways have largely been wiped out. Ironically, it is more resolutely maintained in the towns, where numerous Gurungs associations are flourishing which emphasize the older ways, particularly in the impressive Gurung Centre (Tamu Pye Lhu Sang) in Pokhara which is building a museum and ritual centre.

Thus the village has very few of the 'benefits' of civilization—some plastic, inoculation campaigns, a diesel mill—but carries many of the costs: alienation, individualization, dependency, and corruption. These are features of town life as well. Yet these undermining effects are mitigated by a number of features of Gurung society, one of which is worth stressing. This is the way in which the Gurungs, mainly in the towns, but also villages, are energetically building up a non-political 'civil society'. This gives them some control over their lives and will increasingly strengthen them in relation to factional politics and the power of the State. The Gurungs have for long been noted for their co-operative labour organizations and other ways of working together. In Pokhara the Gurungs of Thak, for example, have set up a 'Thak support committee': there are also lineage-based social groups which meet and have picnics or celebrate other occasions and provide mutual support, there are local groups of women (as in the village) who raise money for good works, and there are at least two main, over-arching, Gurung societies.

All this activity, which crosscuts lineage and locality, although building on that as well, gives purpose and strength to their lives. They support each other in their migrations as they have always done, and the demoralizing atomization caused by moving into the towns is mitigated.

There are thus grounds for both optimism and pessimism. At the end of *Resources* I was extremely pessimistic, predicting mass hardship and little 'development' of any kind. Now the situation is more complex. There are many successful Gurungs in the towns and a number of the young are well educated and idealistic. It is in the villages such as Thak that amidst the tremendous beauty and social warmth one finds increasingly impoverished people. Many of the inhabitants are now elderly or children, and the proportion of poorer Blacksmiths and Tailors has increased; all

of them are struggling to make a living from almost impossible mountain slopes. Their backbreaking labour is day by day leading them into greater debt and food shortage. Whether electricity, which is now about five years away in the most optimistic estimate, motorable roads, telephones, and bio-industries will alter this trend it is impossible to say. I would like to be optimistic, but the situation in the village leads me to be as pessimistic as I was in 1969, but for different reasons.

Some responses to Alan Macfarlane's 'Sliding Down Hill'

Locating Population and Resources
Ben Campbell

Alan Macfarlane's book *Resources and Population* was published in 1976, the same year that I travelled overland to Nepal and spent two monsoon weeks in a small house by the then tranquil lakeside in Pokhara, marvelling at my first close-up experience of the muddy and musical interaction between people and paddy fields. By the end of the year I was attending Macfarlane's lectures at Cambridge. In the library I found the agricultural detail of his book awe-inspiring, and its conclusion deeply disturbing. His historian's training offered an interpretation of the ecological consequences of demographic growth in Thak village that spoke of no forest by the year 2000.

On reading 'Sliding Down Hill' I find Macfarlane's account of why the projected ecological collapse did not occur surprisingly silent on a number of issues, which would probably take a whole other book to respond to. First and foremost, *Resources and Population* had an enormous impact on the community of Himalayan scholars and policy-makers. It became one of the key sacred texts of development project intervention for the next fifteen years or so, before Ives and Messerli published their *Himalayan Dilemma* (Routledge 1989). Its alarming narrative contributed to a landslide of aid funds for family planning and environmental protection. Yet in 'Sliding Down Hill' we learn that the village of Thak still has no health post, and no electricity, nor has the basic agricultural technology improved over the last thirty years. The forest has improved as a result of the village's emiseration through out-migration. What conclusions ought to be drawn from the fact that the primary empirical case that was to inspire so much development activity in the hills remains

in a state of under-investment, and is peripheralized in relation to the growth in urban conglomerations? Has the idea of rural development failed completely? Have the activities of research centres like Lumle promoting improved crops and breeds had no diffusionary impact? Have the villagers themselves checked their rate of forest consumption in the light of all the messages given out by agricultural extension services and organizations such as the Annapurna Conservation Area Project and community forestry programmes? Macfarlane's locally focused story of why one village has ended up not eating its forest but moving half its progeny elsewhere has side-stepped the importance this village took on as an iconic case in the regional narrative of human-ecological destiny.

In *Resources and Population* the scenario of 'no forest by the new millennium' depended on a simulation that had no input from the human capacity to take cognizance of change in environmental surroundings, and to alter practices of resource use so as to avoid disaster. The book posited the Gurungs as a people entrapped in external ecological conditions of decline that their natural child-bearing rate could only exacerbate. The revised village history now posits urban growth as a new ascendant externality to which, again, the Gurungs can only respond as an overpowering fact of life. Both these scenarios are anthropologically unsatisfying if we are to take seriously ideas of human agency and deliberative interaction with rural and urban environments. The teleology in both narratives overshadows the presence of people who do far more than simply follow in the wake of larger forces.

Twenty-five years on from the publication of *Resources and Population,* the fate of Nepal's rural communities is still precarious, but the institutional and political contexts in which they exist have changed dramatically, as have scholars' and villagers' standpoints for understanding them. 'Sliding Down Hill' offers a version of agency from the Gurungs' standpoint in its mention of a vibrant culture of civil society organizing support committees and raising money for 'good works', but there seems to be a lack of fit between this component of reflexive engagement with change, and the general undertow of the income-seeking migratory imperative. It is important that empirical studies continue to be generated about the ongoing negotiation of flows between forests, fields, and fireplaces, and these increasingly need to be set in terms of the multi-sited realities of people's communities of extension, whether in Pokhara or further afield. The community of *Resources and Population* was attributed a bounded coherence for the conclusion to be credible. The people would continue to increase in number, in place. That this spatial coherence dissipated is not unconnected to problems with theories of community being deployed by many development and conservation agencies, which attempt to substantialize people's livelihoods, activities, and relationships in bureaucratized

forms of committee memberships, territorialized identities, and static user groups, contrary to the principles of movement, exchange, and interdependence which a consideration of the historical perspective on any Himalayan community reveals. The actual fate of the villagers of Thak chronicled in 'Sliding Down Hill' should indeed provide ample food for thought for understandings of and interventions in Nepal's rural communities.

Micro Truth—But what about the macro?
Kul B. Luintel

This account of three decades' developments in Thak does not make for pleasant reading. Frankly speaking, the scenario is a move from bad to worse. The author details that people have become thinner and more unhealthy, the livestock population has been depleted, farm productivity has plummeted, the real earnings of village workers have considerably shrunk, etc., and that this has culminated in the staggering indebtedness of village households. People have lived on capital consumption, whatever little they had. All this has led to out-migration by the young and energetic in desperation. Another casualty is the age-old cultural tradition of the Gurungs, which has become almost extinct in Thak. The author appears to concede that his prediction of 'Malthusian checks' has not happened due to out-migration, as the population pressure did not turn out to be as bad as predicted.

I am an economist rather than an anthropologist. Therefore, my comments have to be viewed in this light. I am not a fan of the concept of 'Malthusian checks', because it ridicules the whole endeavour of innovation and development. I would argue that the large part of the Third World that suffers from underdevelopment does not do so because Malthus predicted it that way; instead these economies lack a genuine development effort. Therefore, I have no qualms whatsoever over this predictive failure. However, this piece of work has both its strengths and weaknesses.

Its strength lies in the fact that it carries a striking message to all concerned that Nepalese planners, policy-makers and politicians have failed measurably. When planning was introduced in Nepal it came with slogans such as 'Back to the Village Campaign' and 'the Nepalese should achieve in 20 years what others (the world) have done in 100 years'. All of these turned out to be nothing more than gimmicks, and this monograph is the proof—hence it is a valuable piece of work. Sadly, some of the mentors of these gimmicks still hold high and influential positions in Nepal. I would argue that the multi-party democracy of Nepal, in which the Nepalese, including those of Thak did place their faith, has now become a captive of sloganeering and gimmicks. I come from a village in the eastern Tarai in Nepal

which I visit once every two years or so. I assert that the sad picture of Thak is representative of all the villages of Nepal, whether they are Hill or Tarai. It is ironic that this trend has become worse over the last decade, and more so in recent years due to political turmoil. In short, this paper truly describes the plight of Nepalese poor village dwellers.

The paper may however be criticized on the ground that it is a simple tale of the situation that Thak is facing. It does not analyse the root causes of underdevelopment and deprivation. Thak village is a micro-entity, which cannot escape from the overall macro situation of the country. It would be interesting to know what the author makes of the macro-mismanagement of Nepal and how this impinges at village level. Second, given his intimate knowledge of Thak village, the author could perhaps suggest what sort of local-level provisions could help ameliorate this downward trend.

Sliding, Shifting, and Re-drawing Boundaries
Ernestine McHugh

Two decades ago I walked down from Tebas, the Gurung village in which I was living, to Pokhara, a trip of two days. There were some Gurung households in town at that time, but not a great many. I was tired after the long walk, and I stopped at the top of the bazaar to speak with someone I knew. A middle-aged Gurung man, he stood in the street in front of his house and told me he and his family had recently moved. "Soon," he said, "only poor people and old people will be left in the villages." I thought his remark was preposterous. As Macfarlane's article shows, time has proved him largely right.

In the mid-1970s I read Macfarlane's *Resources and Population: A study of the Gurungs of central Nepal.* The problems of overpopulation and limited land resources he reported for Thak seemed only slightly more pressing than those in Tebas, a relatively land-rich and prosperous village. As he has documented with precision and care, these are not now the central problems of village life. In the area in which I lived, tourism thrives on the Annapurna trail, which used to run below the village without troubling it much. Tourists would tramp across the path that traversed the rice land, attracting little notice except when they strayed, confused, into the village. Now the trail is integral to the economy of Tebas. The families who owned the rice land have built lodges on it and the area there is, as one villager put it, "just like a little bazaar". Fields above the village, once prized as fine potato land, lay fallow and choked with weeds when I visited in 1999. I lived with the large family of the *jimwal mukhiya*. Now, except for one lodge-owning son, all the family has moved to Pokhara, and that son, I heard in my last telephone conversa-

tion with family members, is now building a house near theirs in the town.

The shift that seems most profound to me, though, has more to do with value than population. It is reflected in the statement "there is no one in the villages anymore", one that I heard repeatedly in the Pokhara bazaar. Clearly this is not so. There are people in the villages but they are older and poorer, and are seen as at some remove from a good and proper life (a view once applied by villagers to those living in the bazaar). They are not the people who count. This is worrying when heard from the mouths of the town-dwellers whose relative wealth now sets them apart, but it is painful when it is reflected in remarks made by villagers themselves. "Only people without enough money, like us, have remained in the village," the head-man's daughter-in-law said apologetically when I arrived from Pokhara. In point of fact, she and her husband ran a lodge on the rice fields and inhabited that 'small bazaar', not the village proper. The family house there was sold recently. Of all the shared activities, cooperative work groups, and agricultural rituals that expressed the moral core of Gurung life as I knew it in the 1970s and early 80s, only the rituals of death remain and they are, I was told, now often performed in a truncated form.

Though outwardly the village had not changed enormously, many of the features that Macfarlane has described for Thak were also present in Tebas: houses pad-locked shut, fields untended, and conversations indicating that village life has diminished in value. There were also large numbers of men working abroad in civilian employment. The formerly teasing "Take me to America" was said in ear-nest now, and the headman's daughter-in-law seemed to capture a situation that extended well beyond her own life when she said, "My son won't do agricultural work and he couldn't complete his schooling, so he just sits around and asks for money. Will you take him to America?" I last heard that he had been matched with work in the Middle East through a broker and is living there while his wife and children stay in the family lodge.

Many young men seem caught between the visions of the good life (captured in films and embodied in wealthy leisured tourists) and the realities of scarce oppor-tunities gained only through education, connections, great effort, and luck. Girls have also been attracted by romantic scenarios and entered 'love marriages', some of which emerged through friendship and others as a result of sexual liaisons. These marriages, unlike the formal cross-cousin marriage system, do not link lineages in a systematic way. The new situation might be appreciated for allowing young women to express their own choices, but several of those I knew who had married in this way found themselves bound with their infants to men who offered little promise as husbands and would have been hard-pressed to acquire a bride

without seduction. The West has become a reference point, a standard of value, but the goods it displays are out of reach for most villagers, and seeking its glamour can sap family resources and undermine community values that might provide alternative models of worth.

Like Macfarlane, I found greater hope and optimism in Pokhara and a kind of multidimensional solidarity there. There was the effervescence of a community under construction, taking shape in reference to at least some shared ideals. Some of these were expressed in the Gurung associations Macfarlane describes, some in ties of neighbourhood reformulated in the bazaar, some in religious activities. In the households I stayed in family members visited often, as did people from the village when they came to town. Daily life seemed sometimes tedious for those without jobs to go to—women and retired soldiers. People occasionally remarked on their boredom during visits and card games, but day-to-day living was enlivened by marriages and funerals, pilgrimage trips, investment schemes, and the movement of people home from abroad or on their way out for army service, study, or labouring jobs.

The outflow of people maintained the inflow of cash on which the maintenance of status depended. Much more than in the village of Tebas, Pokhara required cash to keep one's social footing. Women spoke of concerns about gossip in the bazaar if their saris or shoes were not in fashion, and marriages were arranged on different terms than they once had been. I was told by women in Pokhara that cross-cousin marriage might still operate in the villages, but that it no longer mattered in the town, where one looked for 'a good family', that is, one with wealth. Wealth and social standing had been important factors in marriage as long as I had been working with Gurungs (since 1973), but these considerations had been played out within at least a symbolic framework of cross-cousin marriage, which could work in tension with economic concerns. The moral demands of cross-cousin marriage could also knit together branches of families which were drifting apart because of differences in their economic fortunes: I heard more than one story in the village about marriages that were forced by the claims of a cross-cousin though the bride or groom's family might have preferred to make a wealthier match elsewhere. In Pokhara, it seemed, that moral balance to material interest was gone.

Macfarlane describes the fundamental ethos of Gurung society, one that revolves around mutual aid, as intact in Pokhara, and I would agree. Though members of the family with whom I lived have fared differently in terms of wealth and status and have weathered some strains, they come together enthusiastically for ritual celebrations and rely on one another for help. Even so, there are shopping trips in

town and pilgrimages to distant places which only the richer members of the family can afford, and it seems possible that in subsequent generations the wealthier and poorer branches of the family will drift apart. This is not simply a matter of self-interest shaping a relationship but has to do with the erosion of a common ground of experience. When I first went to Tebas, people would sometimes remark off-hand-edly, "You have lots of money, but rich or poor makes no difference here because there is nothing to buy." Obviously, this is no longer true, even in the village. At that time, too, wealth made a difference, but it was less visible and less signifi-cant. People's lives now differ greatly on the basis on their wealth. Some of what is bought is experience: education in English-medium schools, trips abroad. The army travel that provides much cash is itself a basis for a shared bond among many women, who talk about having been in Hong Kong or the UK together, experiences their poorer sisters cannot share. Those who remain in the villages share little day-to-day experience with town-dwellers. While they now remain important relatives in the minds of their families, in a generation or so ties may attenuate as those in Pokhara who have consolidated their status their through urban marriages focus on their more proximate kin.

As Macfarlane has shown in his comparison of his vision for the future in Thak with the reality that has unfolded there, the future is hard to predict. Boundaries are blurring as global media and widespread travel make distant places immediate. (I watched Prince Edward marry Sophie on a large-screen TV in Pokhara, in the sitting room at the house of my adopted sister from Tebas. Her own daughter was away in London.) Boundaries also crystallize as lack of cash makes participation in common social realms impossible for some. (Another sister regretted that she could not attend the feast for the rotating credit association because she no longer had enough money to invest.) Even for those in the village, the frame of refer-ence within which people judge their own value is global. Gurungs have for gen-erations been involved in international politics and the global economy, but now these impinge more profoundly on daily life and are implicated more deeply in their worldview.

Clearly, the material aspects of Gurung life examined so carefully in Macfarlane's article and the moral dimensions explored here are tightly linked. The question of whether existence in the villages can be made more secure and satisfying remains open, although, as Macfarlane shows, prospects for that seem poor. One place, though not typical, suggests a more cheering set of possibilities. During my last trip to Nepal in 1999, I visited a village I call Torr. It is a popular tourist centre and the Annapurna Conservation Area Project figures prominently there. The people I stayed with, whom I have known as long as I have worked in Nepal, were

prospering as owners of a large tourist lodge. They extolled the virtues of village living and said the noise and materialism of the town held no attraction for them. It was slow season, and relatives drifted in and out of the courtyard. The father and daughter went down the hill to participate in a cooperative tree-planting group. I was told of improvements to the school and the high quality of the village health post. They said the air was better, the food fresher, and life generally more fulfilling in Torr than in Pokhara. Given the tourist trade, many in Torr are at least as wealthy as those who have moved to Pokhara, and no one I spoke to apologized for remaining in the village or described it as a lesser place than the town. The man in whose house I stayed told me, "Everyone is leaving other villages, but people in Torr like to stay here. You can earn a living and the atmosphere is good." This is not the rhetoric of sufficiency expressed in Tebas thirty years ago, when 'our country' meant the village and its surroundings, and the rest of the world seemed to have limited relevance. It reflects a sense of comparison within a field of options. The situation in Torr also depends on unusual circumstances—a village operating as a hub of international tourism. The frame of reference available there is vast: foreigners inundate the place, dignitaries visit, village children study in boarding schools in Kathmandu and beyond. Yet local solidarity and dignity remain. It is not a place that conceives of itself as receding into a condition of invisibility where 'no one' lives. Walking out of Torr, I chatted with a man from the village whose eldest boy had recently returned from the Middle East. The sun came out from behind clouds and the Annapurnas showed themselves. "Can you see them from America?" he asked.

The Contradictions of Rural Transformation in Nepal
David Seddon

It is excellent to have this essentially grim picture of Thak as the starting point for a debate about the changing situation of the rural areas and of rural livelihoods in Nepal. The western hills, in general, stand out in the national statistics as relatively privileged by most indicators of development and wellbeing. A study of rural change in western Nepal carried out by the ODG[1] in the mid-1990s indicated that the most pessimistic forecasts of the mid-1970s regarding the pauperization of the mass of the peasantry in the region had not been realized and that a significant 'middle peasantry' had managed to survive through a variety of livelihood strate-

[1] Overseas Development Group at the University of East Anglia. This was a 'follow-up' on a major study undertaken in the mid-1970s in West Central Nepal, as the Western Region was then known, which gave rise to various publications, including *Peasants and Workers in Nepal*, *The Struggle for Basic Needs in Nepal*, and *Nepal in Crisis*, all of which either have been or are currently being re-published by Adroit Publishers of New Delhi.

gies, including labour migration to other areas of Nepal and abroad (see Bagchi *et al.* 1998; Cameron, J. *et al.* 1998). Kaski District, by all accounts, stands out, even among the relatively privileged districts of the western hills, as relatively advantaged. This is not to say that there are not also indications of growing inequality, spatial and social, within the region, the district, and the village, and one would anticipate a picture of growing inequality from any contemporary village study. Certainly one might have expected the inhabitants of villages in Kaski District within half a day's walk of Pokhara (like Thak) to have been affected by the contradictions of rural transformation to a greater extent than those further away from this rapidly growing urban centre. But the situation in Thak, as Macfarlane presents it, appears almost entirely negative.

It would be good to know to what extent Macfarlane intends his 'Thak' to be representative of a wider reality. Is this supposed to be a picture of any Gurung-majority village within half a day's walk of Pokhara, or of any village in the vicinity of the town? Is it supposed to inform us about the decline of hill villages throughout Kaski District, or even throughout the western hill region? Perhaps it has no such wider claims, but usually anthropologists hope that 'their' village or tribe or whatever has more to say about general processes and trends than about a single group or place. It is likely that Macfarlane intends Thak to suggest certain more general processes. In which case, extreme caution is required, both as regards the situation in Thak itself and, even more so, as regards the extent to which Thak illustrates more general processes and tendencies.

We have only recently begun to recognize the crucial importance of non-farm income, labour migration, and remittances both as integral features of rural economy and society in Nepal and as mechanisms for the integration (incorporation and peripheralization) of rural Nepal within the national and international (global) political economy (see Acharya 2000; Seddon, Adhikari and Gurung 1998, 2000; and Seddon and Subedi 2000, for recent studies of labour markets, non-farm income, and remittances in rural Nepal). We have hardly begun to recognize the importance of urbanization in Nepal in the last two to three decades (not only in the sense of urban growth but in the sense also of the creation of the countryside as a hinterland), and continue to focus on Nepal as a 'purely' rural and agrarian economy and society. More locally, the importance for the western region of Nepal as a whole of the growth and development of towns both large (Pokhara) and small has not been considered in any detail until very recently (see Adhikari and Seddon 2001 forthcoming). To understand Thak's apparent decline, we cannot see it simply as a place but must look to set the social and economic transformation experienced by 'the people of Thak' in a wider perspective of rural transformation and regional

'development'.

Certainly, the progressive subordination of small local communities to the dynamics of the wider economy and society is familiar to all students of rural change, whether in developed or developing countries. So too is the progressive 'decline' of the hill village, whether in the Alps or the Himalayas. Both have a great deal to do with the flow and movement of people as well as of capital and commodities. In Thak, the major change, which Macfarlane suggests "was not possible to predict in 1969"—although this has been a standard feature of change in 'developing' rural areas (Lenin discusses it in his study of the development of capitalism in Russia)—has been the growth of the rural exodus and "extensive and permanent out-migration".

Temporary labour migration was always a reality in the hills of Nepal, particularly where recruitment into the British army was a long standing historical tradition: it started 200 hundred years ago and Pignède signalled its importance in the villages of the Modi Valley to the west of Thak and two days' walk from Pokhara in the late 1950s. Pignède even talked (in language similar to that of Macfarlane's on Thak) about its effects on the village of Mohoriya, and that was nearly half a century ago. But it is certainly the case that during the late 1970s and through the 1980s the progressive integration of hill villages in Nepal into the wider national and international political economy was achieved by the export of labour, *par excellence.* In areas near to Pokhara we know that many hill villages became deeply involved in a process which combined integration (incorporation) with peripheralization, as those who were able to do so began to invest in the town (rather than the village), and move to the town (rather than stay in the village).

In other villages, that process was certainly by no means always negative, as Adhikari's excellent study of agrarian change in the Lahchok-Riban village cluster not far from Pokhara (or Thak) demonstrates (Adhikari 1996). Furthermore, as Adhikari's study suggests, permanent migration from the rural areas to the town usually has complex effects at both 'ends'. Incorporation and peripheralization take many forms and the precise implications cannot be assumed to be either positive or negative *a priori*—they require detailed investigation, in large part because they will be different for different groups (defined by location, age, gender, class, ethnic group, or caste). Also, village communities of different types will be changed in different ways—and the heterogeneity of village communities in Nepal is well documented and recognized.

It is hard to debate the accuracy of Macfarlane's observations as far as Thak itself is concerned for, as he himself remarks, his brief account is based on "arguably the

most intensive longitudinal study of a single Himalayan community ever made". But the task is made harder by the general absence of detailed data: we are given impressions, examples, illustrations. When we are given more precise information, such as the relationship between daily wages and the cost of livestock, conclusions are drawn which may not be warranted. What, for example, would be the effect of measuring wage trends against the cost of imported cheap grain? We are told that the villagers, particularly the women "were abnormally thin"—but against what is this measured? Macfarlane himself reports that "we have noticed [this] for the first time", and concludes, dramatically, that "the people may be starting to starve". This is possible, but the account remains impressionistic. Perhaps we shall have to wait for the more detailed ethnography, but that is a little unsatisfying.

The number of occupied houses is smaller today than in 1969, largely, it seems, because of substantial emigration. But we are told that "there is now not only the core village in the hills, but a 'dispersed' village of equal size, particularly concentrated on the road that leads from Thak into Pokhara." There is also a significant community of 'Gurungs of Thak' in Pokhara. In fact we know (from other reports by Macfarlane) that by 1987 there were already 46 households (that is, about 275 people, presumably mainly Gurungs) in Pokhara from Thak alone, most having retired on a pension. In this regard there are some basic questions to which it would be satisfying to have answers. In particular, given that the focus is almost exclusively on 'the village', it would be helpful to know not only *how many* and *who precisely* now live and work in the 'core' village, but also the same for the 'dispersed' village (of equal size) concentrated on the road that leads from Thak into Pokhara, and for 'the people of Thak' in Pokhara itself, let alone how many and who precisely work elsewhere in Nepal or abroad and send remittances back. 'The people of Thak' clearly now inhabit a space larger than that of 'the village': this needs more careful conceptualization, documentation, and analysis.

In the village itself (we are told virtually nothing of the 'dispersed' village along the road to Pokhara and little enough about 'the Gurungs of Thak' in Pokhara) we learn only that, in general, "only the young children, the old and the poor are left in the village" and that "many of the inhabitants are now elderly or children" (who looks after the children, who are sufficiently numerous as to fill "a village school with five classes in it"?). But "the proportion of poorer Blacksmiths and Tailors has increased", so presumably the departures are mainly of Gurungs? At the same time, we are told that a number of houses have tin roofs, and that there is a diesel mill and two television sets in the village. These are presumably indicators of some degree of wealth, but whose? The ethnic and caste pattern of inequality in 'the village' has evidently changed, but again, what we have on this is only impressionistic.

One problem here, of course, is that the focus is, as it was in Macfarlane's original study, 'the village' and mainly (although awkwardly not always) the Gurungs, rather than 'the people of Thak'. Of course, in a dynamic, changing, and spatially as well as socially extended 'community', a focus on the least dynamic 'part' will produce a grim and negative picture. The emphasis here is on 'those left behind', which is perhaps a valid, but is undoubtedly a partial vision. It would help to have a wider perspective on change which encompassed also the 'dispersed' village and those in the town. We do learn that "there are many successful Gurungs in the towns and a number of the young are well educated and idealistic", and also that "in Pokhara the Gurungs of Thak... have set up a 'Thak support committee': there are also line-age-based social groups which meet and have picnics or celebrate other occasions and provide mutual support, there are local groups of women (as in the village) who raise money for good works, and there are at least two main, over-arching, Gurung societies." This all sounds very positive. And in fact Macfarlane acknowledges as much when he suggests that the negative ("undermining") effects of modernization "are mitigated by a number of features of Gurung society…(including)… the way in which the Gurungs, mainly in the towns, but also villages, are energetically build-ing up a non-political 'civil society'." Even if one might argue with the notion that this is 'non-political' in the context of *janajati* movements, the 'dynamism' and growth of new forms of identity and social organization, going well beyond the vil-lage, must surely be seen as a positive development?

But presumably the argument is that (a) those in the town (and perhaps even in the 'dispersed' village along the Thak-Pokhara trail) fail to re-distribute their afflu-ence to those remaining in the 'core' village, and that (b) that those who work abroad do not bring their earnings back into the village: "currently, young people from the village [sic] are in Hong Kong, Malaysia, India, the Arab states, Europe, and elsewhere. If they are lucky enough to make any money, they will invest their savings in buying land and building houses in towns and cities, not in the village." But the burden of debt that Macfarlane emphasizes as an indication of poverty in the village could also be seen as a substantial investment in the future, being made precisely in order to gain the benefits of employment abroad and the opportunity to leave the village. It depends rather on who is involved and on the success rate of those seeking foreign jobs in gaining employment which will generate remittances and savings.

It may well be that there is real poverty in the core village of Thak, particularly among those *dalit* households (which have become relatively more numerous) for whom the opportunities of foreign employment are more uncertain. But, even so, it would be good to know more about the effects on these groups of the current

pattern of land ownership, farming activities, and employment within the village, and the extent to which those who are no longer in the village maintain and control resources in the village. In other villages in the western hills, the absence of young men abroad has had the effect of creating local labour shortages, which in turn have increased the wages paid to agricultural and casual local labour—which is something that may not have happened in Thak.

The rich cultural life of the village, Macfarlane tells us, has declined: "in what is relatively a twinkling of an eye, after several thousand years of maintaining a cultural tradition, the old ways have largely been wiped out." This, alas, has happened not only in Thak, but across rural Nepal, and indeed across the developing and developed world. Read, for example, John Berger's tribute to the disappearing culture of the French peasantry in *Pig Earth* and other works. But in the western hills of Nepal and, as Macfarlane also points out, in the towns, "numerous Gurung associations are flourishing which emphasise the older ways, particularly in the impressive Gurung Centre (Tamu Pye Lhu Sangh) in Pokhara, which is building a museum and ritual centre." This also is part of a more general trend across the world, of preserving, re-creating, and re-vitalizing old cultural patterns in new forms and new ways. Not the same, of course, but nevertheless perhaps worth celebrating. Perhaps, some time in the near future, the *dalit*s (who keep slipping out of sight in Macfarlane's account, as they tend to do in most such studies[2]) will find a voice and the kinds of association and collective social forms that will benefit them, the people who truly have benefited least so far from the process of rural transformation.

We cannot really tell, from this brief account, whether for 'the people of Thak' (wherever they may be) their situation is better or worse, or just different now, after thirty years of change. Perhaps a more detailed ethnography with a wider and more inclusive vision of social, economic, and political change in this part of Nepal will help us to draw some more robust conclusions. In the meantime, we should thank Alan Macfarlane for sharing his impressions and perhaps starting a wider debate on the processes and patterns of rural (and urban) change in contemporary Nepal.

---

[2] For an exception see Mary Cameron's study (1998) of Bajhang in far west Nepal.

References

Acharya, Meena 2000. *Labour Market Development and Poverty, with focus on opportunities for women in Nepal.* Kathmandu: Tanka Prasad Acharya Memorial Foundation in cooperation with Friedrich Ebert Stiftung.

Adhikari, Jagannath 1996. *The Beginnings of Agrarian Change.* Kathmandu: TM Publications.

Adhikari, Jagannath and David Seddon 2001. *Pokhara: Growth and development.* Kathmandu: Mandala Books (forthcoming).

Bagchi, D.K., Piers M. Blaikie, John Cameron, M. Chattopadhyay, N. Gyawali, and David Seddon 1998. 'Conceptual and Methodological Challenges in the Study of Livelihood Trajectories: Case studies in eastern India and western Nepal' *Journal of International Development* 10: 453-68.

Berger, J. 1979. *Pig Earth.* London: Writers' and Readers' Publishing Cooperative.

Blaikie, Piers M., John Cameron, and David Seddon 2000. *Nepal in Crisis* (2nd edition with additional chapter). New Delhi: Adroit Publishers.

Blaikie, Piers M., John Cameron, and David Seddon 2000. *The Struggle for Basic Needs* (2nd edition with introduction). New Delhi: Adroit Publishers.

Cameron, John, Piers M. Blaikie, N. Gyawali, and David Seddon 1998. 'Patterns of change in Western Nepal: Rural households of the 1970s and 1980s compared' *Himalayan Research Bulletin* 18 (2): 15-27.

Cameron, Mary 1998. *On the Edge of the Auspicious: Gender and caste in Nepal.* Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

Islam, R., A.R. Khan, and E. Lee, 1981. *Employment and Development in Nepal.* Geneva: ILO.

Macfarlane, Alan 1976. *Resources and Population: A study of the Gurungs of Nepal.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (Second ed. forthcoming, Kathmandu: Ratna Pustak Bhandar.)

Macfarlane, Alan and I.B. Gurung 1990. *Gurungs of Nepal: A guide to the Gurungs.* Kathmandu.

Pignède, Bernard 1958. *Les Gurungs: Une population himalayenne du Nepal.* Paris: Mouton.

Pignède, Bernard 1993. *The Gurungs: A Himalayan population of Nepal* (edited by Sarah Harrison and Alan Macfarlane). Kathmandu: Ratna Pustak Bhandar.

Seddon, David, Jagannath Adhikari, and Ganesh Gurung 2000. *Foreign Labour Migration and the Remittance Economy of Nepal* (Report to DfID Nepal, September 2000). Overseas Development Group, Norwich.

Seddon, David, Jagannath Adhikari, and Ganesh Gurung 1998. 'Foreign Labour Migration and the Remittance Economy of Nepal' *Himalayan Research Bulletin* 18 (2): 3-10.

Seddon, David and B.P. Subedi 2000. *Labour Markets and the Poor in Nepal* (Report to DfID, September 2000). Overseas Development Group, Norwich.

Seddon, David, Piers M. Blaikie, and John Cameron 1979. *Peasants and Workers in Nepal.* Warminster: Aris and Phillips.

Observations during the State-of-Emergency: Kathmandu, December 2001

Judith Pettigrew

Accustomed to sharing my flights to Kathmandu with large numbers of people dressed in trekking gear, I sat in Vienna Airport and wondered when my fellow passengers would arrive. It took me a while to realize that the trekkers had all stayed away, with the exception of two young couples. The plane that held over 250 people had a mere 40 on board. Approximately half were Nepalis: some returning from overseas trips, and others visiting. The remainder of the passengers were an assortment of foreigners: business people, development workers, foreign residents, the four trekkers, and me. Within minutes of boarding the plane the only two other passengers seated near me at the rear of the plane began a conversation about 'the Maoist situation'. "Bad, bad," I overheard the Kathmandu politician comment, to which the development worker asked, "What do you think will happen?" As the conversation continued it became harder to hear the whispers and I lost the thread of the discussion, but not before I heard the development worker comment, "We have had to close projects, staff have been threatened by the Maoists and offices ransacked." The politician added, "Perhaps things will be sorted out now that the army are involved, we don't know what will happen, nobody knows."

On arrival in Kathmandu the following morning I left the airport terminal to find that the parking area was totally deserted and the person designated to collect me nowhere in sight. I phoned and was told,"We can't get beyond the main gate, we tried but they have closed it for security reasons, can you walk down to meet us or get a taxi yourself?" Within moments of getting into the taxi the driver started talking, "Things are not good here, we don't know what will happen, there are very few tourists. We were 46% down last month (the peak season month of November) and they say it's going to get worse." He tried hard to get me to stay at his newly opened hotel. "It's new, we have all the facilities but no one is coming. I don't know what to do," he commented. I apologised profusely, explaining that I had a reservation elsewhere.

At first glance the hotel I stayed in looked much as before but it took only a few minutes to realize the extent of the changes. There were ten guests instead of the usual 100 plus and they insisted that they were doing well in comparison to other places. This was backed up by a friend who got the name of the hotel I was staying in mixed up and ended up looking for me in another similar sized place which had only two guests. In the lobby the pictures of King Birendra and Queen Aiswarya occupied their usual places with butter lamps burning in front of them - there were no pictures of the new king and queen. Before I went out for the first time I inquired about being on the street after dark. "It is quite alright to walk around up until about 9 p.m. as things in Kathmandu are quiet. There have only been two incidents—the bombs at the Coca Cola factory and the one at the carpet factory," stated the young man on the front desk. Others took a different view. A friend phoned from Pokhara and told me to stay in the hotel after dark. "How are things there?" I asked. "Dangerous," he replied, and continued:

> The Maoists are underground now and so they are not worrying people as much as before but there are new dangers: lots of people have been arrested and no one knows where they are. The other night the police raided one of the Campus hostels and arrested a group of students. They haven't been seen since and nobody knows their whereabouts.

Amnesty International states that according to official sources more than 5000 people have been arrested since 26 November on suspicion of being members or sympathizers of the CPN (Maoist). It is suspected that many people are held in army camps without access to their relatives, lawyers, or a doctor and very few of those arrested have been brought to court (Amnesty International 2002b).

Due to limited time I was unable to visit Pokhara or the villages where I have done most of my fieldwork and so I asked my friend how things were in the surrounding villages. He answered:

> Quiet in most places but not so good in others. The Maoists have left their training camp above *** village but now the villagers have a new worry. They are really frightened to go into the jungle as the army helicopters are coming over looking for the Maoists and the villagers fear that they will be mistaken for Maoists and shot at by the helicopters.

The human rights organisation INSEC (Sector Service Centre) (2001a) has reported the death and injury of villagers in Rolpa district by helicopter gunfire.

While the tourist haunts of Kathmandu are not particularly busy in early/mid December, what I witnessed was something totally different—there were hardly

any tourists at all. On the first morning I walked the full length of almost two streets before seeing another foreigner. My impression was that most of the tourists were low-budget travellers. The people who seemed to be missing were the better-off middle-aged and older ones who spend more money. The owner of a bookshop I frequent commented on the decline in tourism by saying, "We didn't know what we had, until we lost it." Shops were closing earlier than usual and people were anxious to get home as soon as possible. Weddings began earlier in the day so that people could be home by evening.

I met two expatriate colleagues who were very upset about the treatment of a Nepali friend at the hands of the police. They explained:

> 'Ram' is a young single man in his twenties from a rural background who works in the tourist industry. His family lives in the village and other than a few friends he is alone in Kathmandu. He is not interested in politics and has never been politically active. One evening shortly after the emergency had been declared he was walking home from work. As he crossed the bridge into Kopundol en route to his home in Patan, the police at a check-point stopped him. They asked him where he was going and he replied that he was returning home after work. They then asked him where he was from and when he replied that he was from *** district [one of the districts most affected by the 'People's War']. They commented that "everyone from there is a Maoist" and insisted that he come with them to the police station. He was kept in the station overnight and was badly beaten. The next day at the insistence of his friends he went to the hospital where he was treated for severe bruising and a fractured arm. He never held a strong political opinion before but now he is very, very angry with the government. This event has politicized him and has made him into a prime candidate for joining the Maoists.

The following day, I became friendly with two taxi drivers, 'Kumar' and 'Raju', who thereafter came to my hotel each morning to check on the prospect of getting employment that day. On a couple of occasions I changed my plans at the last minute and told one or other of them to come back at a later time if they were not busy. Each time the reply was the same: "There is no chance that I will be busy, I'll be back." As we drove along Kantipath behind a truckload of heavily armed soldiers 'Kumar' worried about how to pay his children's school fees:

> How will I educate my two sons? Before being a taxi driver was a good job but now it is terrible. There are so few tourists. Tourism began slowing down after the hijacking of the Indian Airlines plane followed by the

Maoist problem but it didn't really get bad until this year. This has been a terrible year: there was the palace massacre, the 11th of September, the war in Afghanistan, the Maoists, and now the emergency. Hardly anyone is coming. They are frightened. Can you blame them? I'm frightened. Who knows what will happen next?

Sitting in traffic jams--made worse by the road repairs being undertaken for the forthcoming SAARC summit--'Raju' told me how much he misses "the old king". I commented that there were very few photos of the new king around. "You won't see many of them. They are only up in official offices. He is not popular." The next day walking through Lazimpat I got my first glimpse of the king and queen returning from a function held by the Raj Parishad in their honour. The following day I saw the king driving in a large black Mercedes down the road from Maharajganj.

That evening I spoke to a friend from Pokhara. He was very upset, as Maoists have killed a friend of his who was active in the Congress Party:

> How could they do that? What did they know about him? All they knew was that he was in the Congress Party and they killed him because of that. They didn't care that he was a good man, a good father, a good son, and a good friend. They came for him in the night, took him out of his house and killed him with a khukuri. What sort of people would do that? I used to think that the Maoists had the right idea but now I think that they are just a bunch of vicious killers. At first I wasn't sure about the emergency but now I support it. The government has to sort out this problem but when they get things under control they will have to provide some proper benefits to the people as the lack of these is why we are in such a mess.

I met health professionals who were concerned about the Ministry of Health directive that states that health workers cannot treat people involved in terrorist activities without informing the local administration or security organisations. If they do, action will be taken against them, as for example on December 15, when Dr Jitendra Mahaseth was arrested and held until January 5 2002 on the grounds that he had treated Maoists. Some medics I spoke to felt that the policy meant that they are not permitted to treat anyone affected by the war. One doctor told me that he thought that he was probably working illegally when he treated people with war related health problems. He had taken to writing prescriptions on small slips of paper rather than on headed notepaper. I commented, "But this directive is against the Hippocratic oath." He replied, "Yes, of course it is, but that is what has happened." I was told that the Physicians for Social Responsibility, Nepal (PSRN) had drafted a response to the directive the previous week that was subsequently sent to Prime

Minister Deuba and also to national and international medical organizations. No Nepali newspaper, however, dared publish it.

Although Nepali human rights activists and a supreme court judge have noted that requiring health professionals to seek permission to treat the injured is not constitutional, the only medical organization to comment (aside from PSRN) has been the American Medical Association (2001) which sent a letter to the Prime Minister Deuba in which they pointed out that " ... a physician must always give the required care impartially and without consideration of sex, race, nationality, religion, political affiliation or any other similar criterion." Furthermore, they added that the fulfilment of medical duties should in no circumstance be considered an offence.

On a sunny Saturday morning I visited a friend in a suburb of Kathmandu. As we chatted over tea we were totally unaware that a matter of streets away American Embassy Security employee Ramesh Manandhar was dying—assassinated in the early afternoon outside the Lincoln School. Manandhar, aged 28, had just finished the inspection of the security arrangements at the school when he was shot dead by two unidentified men who, according to eyewitnesses, claimed that they were Maoists and warned people not to follow them (Informal Sector Service Sector 2001b).

On my last day in Kathmandu I met an NGO staff member who told me that she had received a phone call during the first week of the emergency from people she had become friendly with during a fieldtrip to Jajarkot:

> They phoned me to tell me that they remember me. They wanted to say goodbye as they felt that they are going to die. They are not political, they are just local people, but with the Maoists shooting on one side and the army on the other they said that they don't know how they are going to survive. I have not heard from them since then. It is very difficult to get news from the most affected areas at present. We are very worried about what is going on in those places. People get caught in the middle between the Maoists and the security forces. If someone is injured or in need of medical treatment it is hard for him or her to get help now, as they cannot easily travel. In many places night buses are not running and even if they are people can't travel or they are too frightened to travel or to ask for help. Somebody did manage to come yesterday: he had been tortured the previous day.

Amnesty International has appealed to both the Government and the Maoists, raising a number of concerns around extra-judicial killings and other human rights violations. Amnesty fears that among those killed by the state are scores of civilians and Maoists who were deliberately killed as an alternative to being taken prisoner.

Amnesty has also strongly condemned human rights violations by the Maoists who have been responsible for torture, widespread intimidation, and execution-style killings. Many of those killed were supporters or members of the Nepali Congress Party, although members of other political parties have also been killed. Recently there has been a series of killings of teachers by Maoists (Amnesty International 2002a).

The airport on the day of my departure was as quiet as it was when I arrived. There were slightly more passengers leaving than arriving but it was, after all, just before Christmas. The security arrangements in the departure lounge had been increased, and the last thing I did on Nepali soil was to be frisked at the foot of the stairs to the plane.

After the plane climbed out of the Kathmandu valley, I watched as we traversed the familiar mountain ranges and as I did so, I reflected on the words of a non-governmental worker I had met the previous day:

> This is not going to be a short war. Some people think that it will be over soon but I do not think so. I have been in the worst-affected areas and I have met many Maoists. Lots of them have very deeply held beliefs. They come from the most impoverished and underdeveloped parts of the country, they have no facilities, nothing, the people in those districts are forgotten people. They have little to lose and so they turn to fighting.

> One day I spoke to some child soldiers and told them that they should be in school and not fighting a war. One boy who was aged about 12 looked at me and said, "How can you say that older sister? Do you not understand what is happening in our country? This is the time for us to fight; this is the time for us to die for our country." Some of those who feel most strongly about the cause joined the Maoists after the state killed members of their family. One day I met a woman who became a Maoist as the police killed her husband. This woman and people like her will never give up; they will fight to the end.

> When I visited those areas I discovered that life is cheap and that people on both sides kill easily. Because of this I know that many Nepalis will die before this war is over and many more will live in terror.

As the mountains and valleys of Nepal faded from sight and as we started the long flight back to Europe the images of my visit and the words of the people I had spoken to in Kathmandu flooded into my thoughts. As I considered the diversity of perspectives, I remembered what my fellow passenger had said as we arrived in

Nepal just a week ago:

" ... we don't know what will happen, nobody knows."

Acknowledgements

References

American Medical Association 2001. 'Letter to Prime Minister, Sher Bahadur Deuba'. December 14.

Amnesty International 2002a. 'Amnesty International condemns horrific killings of teachers by Maoists'. Public Statement. 18 January.

Amnesty International 2002b. 'Urgent Appeal'. 6 February.

Informal Sector Service Centre 2001a. 'One month of emergency. Annex 3. Some exemplary reports of human rights violation by state'. pp. 44. http://www.insec-nepal.com

Informal Sector Service Centre 2001b. 'One month of emergency. Chronology'. pp. 26. http://www.insec-nepal.com

The Tenth Seminar
The International Association
for Tibetan Studies
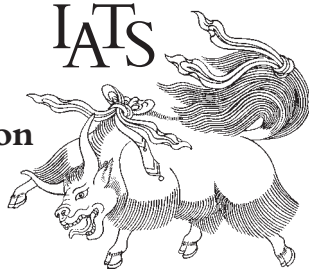
I am very happy to announce the details of the Tenth Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies. This will be held at St Hugh's College, Oxford, from Saturday 6th to Friday 12th September 2003. The conference fee, set at £150, includes the conference itself and a daily buffet lunch. Accommodation at the College is available.

The IATS, presently the largest gathering of Tibetologists in the world, was formally created in Oxford in 1979 when Michael Aris convened a group of some seventy scholars at St John's College. It is just one measure of the development of Tibetan Studies that the Seminar has outgrown St John's, and will be moving to St. Hugh's, just ten minutes' walk from the city centre, in order to cater for 250 people – nearly four times the original number.

For further information, please contact the organisers at:

The Aris Trust Centre,
Wolfson College
Oxford, OX2 6UD
or visit our web-site at:
www.wolfson.ox.ac.uk/iats (which includes a down-loadable application form).

Best wishes,

Charles Ramble

Convenor – Tenth IATS, Lecturer in Tibetan and Himalayan Studies, University of Oxford

Announcements

17th European Conference on Modern South Asian Studies
(Heidelberg, September 9-14, 2002)

Panel 8: 'Representing Local Histories in the Himalayas'
convened by Martin Gaenszle and Gisèle Krauskopff

Much of the historical discourse on the Himalayan region is concerned with larger social units, dealing with issues such as the formation of states, colonial rule, and, above all, nation-building. In order to complement such large-scale perspectives, and sometimes as criticisms of a biased, idealizing form of official (e.g. 'dynastic') history-writing, there has been an increasing interest in local histories, among scholars as well as among the peoples concerned. In view of the great ethnic and regional diversity in the Himalayan region, this is no surprise. Defying the homogenizing attempts of national history-writing, many 'ethnic' or regional groups (e.g. Gurungs in Nepal, Lepchas in Sikkim/India etc.), have taken recourse to the traditional representions of their own histories, often rewriting previous accounts and finding new modes of making history. Anthropologists have studied the historical formation of ethnic identities, but such ethnohistories reach their limits as soon as the ethnic groups under study are found to be in regular interaction with other groups and agents. Thus, especially in a multi-ethnic setting, the focus of historical memory tends to be a politically, culturally and territorially constituted locality.

The panel will try to assess the situation by looking at how local histories are constructed and represented. It may include local histories written by scholars, as well as histories produced by local peoples, either in writing or other forms (ritual performance, drama, song, dance, etc.). Contributors might address the following issues:

—the ways localities are constructed as meaningful settings of historical events;

—the role of kingship as a focus of local identities;

—the relationship between local and national perspectives;

—the changing use of ethnic, religious, or territorial affiliations;

—the symbolic styles and generic conventions in the forms of representation;

—the use of modern media (sound-recording, video, radio, TV etc.);

—the interests (academic, political etc.) behind representations of local histories;

—the role of the researcher in an arena of conflicting claims.

We invite scholars who have worked on these issues (anthropologists, historians, political scientists etc.) to present their findings and reflect on the conditions of history making.

Gisèle Krauskopff
Laboratoire d'ethnologie et de sociologie comparative
(CNRS, Université de Paris X) MAE
21 Allée de l'Université
92023 Nanterre CEDEX
krauskop@mae.u-paris10.fr

Martin Gaenszle
South Asia Institute
INF 330
D-69120 Heidelberg
martin.gaenszle@urz.uni-heidelberg.de

Digital Himalaya: An Ethnographic Archive in the Digital Age

Sara Shneiderman, Mark Turin, and the Digital Himalaya Project Team
(University of Cambridge)

Objectives

Digital Himalaya is a pilot project to develop digital collection, archiving, and distribution strategies for multimedia anthropological information from the Himalayan region. Based at the University of Cambridge, the project began in December 2000. In the initial phase, we are digitizing a set of existing ethnographic archives comprised of photographs, films, sound recordings, fieldnotes, and texts collected by anthropologists and travellers in Tibet, Nepal, Bhutan, and the Indian Himalayas (including Sikkim) from the beginning of the 20th century to the present.

The project has three long-term objectives:

  a) to preserve in a digital medium valuable ethnographic materials that are degenerating in their current forms;

  b) to make these resources available in a searchable digital format to scholars and to the Himalayan communities from which the materials were collected;

  c) to develop a template for collaborative digital cataloguing that will allow users to contribute documentation to existing collections and eventually to link their own collections to the system, creating a dynamic tool for comparative research.

Collections

There are five collections involved in the first phase of the project. These have been chosen for their historical value and their coverage of diverse geographical areas and ethnic peoples of the Himalayan region (which we have defined broadly as the region stretching from Ladakh and Kashmir in the west to Arunachal Pradesh and Assam in the east; and from the Tibetan plateau in the north to the foothills in

the south). The collections make use of a wide range of original recording media, including nitrate photographic film, 35mm monochrome and colour film; 8mm, Super8, and 16mm moving film; U-Matic, VHS, Hi-8, and 1-inch videotape; and a number of digital formats including DVMini and DVCam digital video, and TIFF and JPEG still images.

The five initial collections are:

a)   the *Williamson Photographic Archive*: 1,700 photographs taken between 1930-1935 by the British Political Officer Sir Frederick Williamson in Tibet, Sikkim and Bhutan. Williamson's collection is now held in the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology at the University of Cambridge and includes a number of rare historic images.

b)   the *Fürer-Haimendorf Film Collection:* over 100 hours of 16mm film from various parts of the central and eastern Himalayas filmed between 1936-1980 by Christoph von Fürer-Haimendorf, Professor of Anthropology at SOAS. The films are supplemented by Haimendorf's detailed field diaries.

c)   the *Naga Videodisc*: Part of Haimendorf's film archive overlaps with a large ethnographic collection relating to the Naga peoples of north-eastern India and parts of Burma, principally collected by five different anthropologists and travellers. These materials were compiled as an analogue videodisc in the 1980s, and included some 10,000 photographs, a large number of film and sound clips, and original fieldwork diaries and notes in an associated database. This system is now technologically obsolete, and we hope to re-release it in a digital format.

d)   the *Thak Archive*: materials from a study of the Gurung village of Thak in central Nepal, including over 100 hours of film, more than 3,000 photographs, and continuous censuses and fieldnotes covering the period 1968 to the present, collected by Alan Macfarlane and Sarah Harrison.

e)   the *Thangmi Archive*: comprised of digital video, photographs and ethnographic data from the Thangmi communities of Dolakha and Sindhupalchok districts in north-east Nepal, collected by Mark Turin and Sara Shneiderman between 1996 and the present.

Of these five collections, three are finite, historical resources, while the latter two are ongoing collections that continue to grow. Depending on the success of this initial phase, the project may expand to include other high-quality archives.

Technologies and Methodologies

There are three aspects to the project, each of which requires a different set of technologies. Digitization is the first step: scanning photographic prints, negatives, and slides, creating digital master copies of film and video through telecine projection and other analogue-to-digital conversion processes, and storing these masters in high resolution digital formats. The second step is data management and interface design, to which we will return shortly. The third step concerns questions of storage and distribution: should all of the materials be available over the Internet? Should we opt to use DVD? How will different users respond to each format? Furthermore, we must think ahead to ensure that the digital format in which we archive films and photographs can be easily migrated to new platforms as technology develops, so as to avoid the problems of obsolescence that have plagued previous ethnographic archiving projects such as the Naga Videodisc.

Broadband Internet (high speed Internet over which video can be streamed in real time) offers ways of making an archive available to a geographically diverse audience. The individuals who appear in the images (or their descendants), as well as scholars around the world, could view the materials at any time if the archive were located at a digital address rather than a physical one. But in large parts of the West, and certainly in the Himalayan region, the bandwidth necessary to transfer large digital files is currently unavailable. Even if the appropriate hardware and software were soon put in place, many of those who might like to view images of their own communities are not literate in English or familiar with the basic computing concepts needed to search an online database. Although Digital Himalaya is investigating the use of Unicode fonts for Devanagari and Tibetan, it remains difficult to construct a multilingual search engine.

One option which bypasses some of the pitfalls inherent in the Internet would be a DVD-based archive. A DVD can store many times more information than a CD-ROM: approximately two hours of film at cinema quality or up to fifteen hours of film if compressed at a lower resolution. As a physical object, a DVD is a self-contained portable resource which requires neither high speed Internet access nor a computer. With the advent of small battery-operated DVD-Video players, it is now possible to play DVDs in areas with no infrastructure or electricity supply. Instead of complicated keyboard and mouse controls, DVD players are controlled with simple TV-style buttons. A DVD-based archive could provide better access to non-literate and less advanced users by offering limited interactivity, but more high-quality playable content which makes use of voiceovers in local languages instead of text. Local groups might attend demonstrations where they could watch

film footage and listen to voiceovers on a simple battery-operated DVD player. However, as a physical object (unlike the Internet), the widespread distribution of a single DVD is limited. In addition, the pace of technological development suggests that DVD in its current form has a limited life-span, making it impossible to rely upon as a long-term archival medium.

Recently, new convergent strategies which integrate the best of both Internet and DVD have emerged. With the advent of low-cost consumer DVD burners and authoring software, searchable databases could be available online along with low resolution film clips and photos, which users could then select to order a custom DVD that would come complete with relevant voice-overs. The film clips on the DVD would have embedded URLs, which when viewed on a computer would become active, enabling the user to link back to the relevant database information available online. An online annotation feature would allow members of the communities from which the material originated and/or scholars to add new or corrected information about individuals, rituals, or historical events, which could then be incorporated into the database documentation for that item. In areas where Internet access is unavailable, DVD-only versions of the archive could be compiled and installed, and comments sent by mail.

Technology is now developing and changing at an unprecedented rate, and choosing the design which will afford the widest range of people the most efficient and inexpensive access to these resources over time is not a simple proposition. We must consider the needs and priorities of each target audience, and create a flexible and adaptable system with multiple layers and entry points. If more than a few token members of the Himalayan communities from which the material originated are to have access to this visual documentation of their history, the multiple obstacles of illiteracy, unwritten languages, and poor technical infrastructure must be overcome. At the same time, in order for researchers to find the archive useful as a comparative resource, effective search and retrieval techniques, detailed documentation, and high resolution images must be incorporated. The challenge here is not so much in bridging the gap between Asia and Europe, but rather that between educated, English-speaking computer users in urban centres like Kathmandu or London, and their rural counterparts, who often do not have the education or facilities to make use of new technologies. Bridging this divide has been a central problem for ethnographic studies published in other media; books published only in English often remain inaccessible to the non-English speaking community which they describe. Digital technologies such as broadband Internet, with its high data transfer rates, and DVD, with its large storage capacity, now provide unprecedented capabilities for transporting and displaying large amounts of visual ethnographic

material. If we can begin to dismantle the existing 'digital divide', there is some hope that the use of new technologies may help surmount the communication barriers which often frustrate the ethnographic endeavour.

Consent and Confidentiality

Whether online or on DVD, issues of confidentiality and consent remain central to the construction of the archive. Although copyright clearance has been received for most of the materials in the initial collections, the privacy and security of the individuals appearing in the photographs and films are a more serious concern. The potential problems are acute due to the immediacy and lack of anonymity inherent in visual representation, and the fact that many of the images originated in generations past when mass distribution of visual information was inconceivable. Although anthropologists may have been certain at the time that the people they filmed or photographed consented to these activities, the advent of the digital age threatens the basis of that 'informed consent'. When Fürer-Haimendorf first travelled to Nepal in the 1950s, the country had just opened to the outside world. How could his informants have consented to having their images broadcast over the Internet fifty years later? How could they have anticipated that the words they uttered (gossip about their neighbours? political criticism of the monarchy?) might be available to millions of faceless viewers around the world? Although many of the individuals who appear in Haimendorf's films may now have passed away, what happens when their descendants view the digital archive and come across images of their grandparents taking part in some politically compromising activity or making statements which are still embarrassing to the family today?

Even at present, how can those we work with make an informed decision regarding the use of their image in a digital archive? Many of them are on the other side of the 'digital divide', with little experience of the new technologies that make a project like Digital Himalaya possible, and people remain wary of their images being used to adverse purpose. And they are right to be concerned: how can any of us know how these images will be manipulated over the next hundred—or thousand—years? Old film doesn't die, it just gets clipped into ever smaller pieces, further removed from its original context, and used for ever-more egregious purposes (an example being the images of bare-breasted Masai women placed on the web as part of an ethnographic archive that were later spotted on a pornography site).

Future Directions

All of these considerations will shape the way Digital Himalaya develops over the coming years. Salvaging ethnographic films and photographs by assuring that they are properly digitized, catalogued, and kept in context is a priority. Another central

objective is making them available to a broader audience, from scholars around the world to members of Himalayan communities who have no access to the libraries where these materials were previously stored. Involving those whose images are archived in the documentation process is a further avenue for exploration. If we can accomplish all of these objectives, we will be on the way to creating an appropriate ethnographic archive for the digital age. We need to build an open, non-linear archival structure that offers a range of access points and different paths through the archival materials. Each step requires a careful analysis of the central questions raised here, a process which we hope will make Digital Himalaya a dynamic ethnographic archive that accurately remembers the past yet remains a culturally responsive resource for the future.

Contact

Digital Himalaya is a pilot project under development and we welcome ideas and comments. Please visit our website at <www.digitalhimalaya.com> for further information and regular updates as the project progresses. Comments may be sent to info@digitalhimalaya.com

Commission on Folk Law and Legal Pluralism
XIIIth International Congress

'Legal Pluralism and Unofficial Law in Social, Economic and Political Development'

(7-10 April 2002, Chiang Mai, Thailand).

The Congress will be precededby an International Course on 'Resource Rights, Ethnicity and Governance in the Context of Legal Pluralism'

(1-5 April 2002, Chiang Mai, Thailand).

The Congress and the Course will be hosted by the Regional Centre for Social Science and Sustainable Development (RCSD), Chiang Mai University.

Objectives of the Congress

The Congress will address a number of related themes in which legal pluralism and local unofficial law affect social, economic, and political development. While the conference symposia are comparative in nature and ask for papers from all over the world, we expect that a major focus will be on problems in South and Southeast Asia. In the historical development and contemporary situation in this region, the legal landscape has undergone rapid change. Local populations, non-governmental and governmental agencies alike are faced with immense challenges posed by the plurality of laws and institutions. Beside local forms of traditional and neo-traditional law and the diverse regulations of governments at different levels of administration, religious laws (Islamic and Hindu law in particular) also play an important role in the organization and legitimation of governance, of social and economic relationships, and the administration of justice. In the context of globalization, international and transnational legal rules and conventions as well as international actors, governmental and non-governmental organisations increasingly add to the earlier forms of legal complexity, not only influencing law making at national level but also having impacts on small-scale local communities.

Objectives of the course

In addition to the Congress, a five-day course on 'Resource Rights, Ethnicity and Governance in the Context of Legal Pluralism' will be organized for young

academics and practitioners. The course will provide a combination of practical and theoretical insights into some of the central questions concerning the development and safeguarding of local populations' rights. The purpose of the course is to familiarize the participants with current international debates and insights in legal pluralism and to offer them a comparative perspective that allows them to rethink their own research and practical work. At the centre of the discussion will be issues of human rights, recognition of local populations' folk laws, and governance in the context of globalizing economic, political, and legal developments. Special attention will be given to rights to natural resources and sustainable development. Course participation is limited to 30 persons.

For further information, registration, or to join the commission, contact:

Melaine G. Wiber, Secretariat
Commission on Folk Law and Legal Pluralism
University of New Brunswick
PO 4400, Fredericton, N.B.
Canada E3B 5A3
Email: wiber@unb.ca

For conference and course registration contact the local organizing committee:

Dr Rajendra Pradhan (Chair),
GPO Box 10447
Kathmandu,
Nepal
Fax: 977 1 261076
Emails: lpluralism@wlink.com.np, rpradhan@mail.com.np
Reduced fees for Commission Members!
Some funding possible.
Check our website: http://www.unb.ca/cflp/

Conference Report: The International Folklore Congress
(Kathmandu, 5-7 May 2001)

Organized by the Nepal Folklore Society

Report by Marianna Kropf

'Folklore for Identity and Understanding' was the slogan painted on the cloth panel marking the first International Folklore Congress organized by the Nepal Folklore Society (NFS) in Kathmandu. NFS is a non-profit organisation founded in 1995 by a group of Nepali scholars, motivated by the conviction that the rich heritage of cultural expressions in Nepal must be given increased attention. The fact that many such traditions are losing ground in societies and environments which are undergoing often virulent change has lent weight to such aims. Cultural traditions do play a key role in (re)defining ethnic and ideological boundaries, a fact that asks for sensitivity in dealing with them. Several programmes organized by NFS so far, and a growing network of affiliated specialists from Nepal and abroad, provided ths scope for a first international event.

The preparatory committee, under the experienced guidance of Prof. Tulasi Diwasa (President, NFS) and Prof. Dr. C.M. Bandhu (General Secretary, NFS), set up a three-day programme, with eight sessions each including six to nine papers. The sessions were tentatively structured into: 1) Identity, Ethnicity and Folklore; 2) Folklore, Tourism and Development Issues; 3) Folklore, Literature and Performing Arts; 4) Folklore, Folk Life and Folk Practices; 5) Folklore, Gender and Power; 6) Folklore and Folk Literature; 7) Nepali Folklore (conducted in Nepali); 8) Indo-Nepal Folklore Studies. As indicated by the choice of such broad topics, the Congress sometimes resembled a brainstorming event which explored the widest possible definition of 'folklore' and related aspects. Over sixty papers were presented, among them one third by scholars from abroad, but the time-frame prevented deeper exploration of any specific subject.

It was no surprise to discover that a range of views existed about what the topic of the Congress really was. One may have found mutual consent on cultural traditions locally defined and unique to a specific community. One may further concede some kind of historicity and ongoing transmission within that given community. But then? Whereas some of the contributions built on a dichotomy of *folk* versus *urban* (Prof. Abhi Subedi), others took as their starting point a distinction between *written* (non-folk) versus *oral* (folk) traditions. 'Folklore' was rejected for its most

ambivalent history and derogatory tinge within Western contexts. As applied to a South Asian context, Tulsi Prasad Bhattarai proposed a twofold division of *Vedic lore* and *Folk lore*, the former referring to a tradition "that descended down according to the classical laws", the latter having survived in customs and behaviour. He further elaborated on *lok* as the Nepali equivalent for *folk,* depicting not only the world made up of the experiences of daily life but three *lokas* encompassing the whole of the universe.

Lee Haring addressed the question of *translation* as an integral part of any communication system. Folklorists looking at a specific aspect of local or folk culture from outside have always to translate (select/adapt/revise), or perhaps one should say trans-create, their materials for their particular audience. Haring further voted for a reversal in focus by taking the *lore* (performance, text, song) first and then the respective *folk*, the specific group of which it is a part. Cultural expressions may unite or even reconcile different beliefs as much as they continuously negotiate and re-model elements of an existing tradition.

Jawaharlal Handoo (India) came up with a request to consider male bias and discourses of power as expressed through cultural/folkloristic production. Guy Poitevin (Pune) stressed, again referring to a recent Indian context, that popular oral traditions are becoming "controversial assets to the extent that they are turned into strategic idioms of discourses and practices prompted by aims of cultural hegemony and political control." He offered a very substantiated approach to matters relating to a constructed dualism between *tradition* and *modernity,* on display in recent political discourse.

Pulikonda Subbachary (Hyderabad) elaborated the topic of geographical, social, ritual, or media displacement and its impacts on a given cultural tradition, adopting a classificatory approach which aimed to deal with questions related to increasingly multi-ethnic and multicultural communities. Bert van den Hoek's paper on serpent sacrifices in Nepal offered an example of a ritual performance which is adapting itself to changing circumstances by defining new standards for a ritual which displays contemporary, locally rooted aspects in combination with traces pointing towards Vedic origins.

Several papers concentrated on oral texts (folktales, songs, lullabies, poetry, proverbs, rhymes), their contents, composite features and narrative techniques. The most valuable research papers were presented by Yogesh Raj Misra (Nepal) on a manuscript which provided proof of shadow-dancing as a part of Newar tradition, and by Kishore Gurung (Nepal) on Ghantu, a unique narrative music performance among Gurung communities, which includes elements of trance and uses a language which has not yet been traced back to its linguistic origins.

The potential for cultural traditions to develop into means for economic ends—a

'hot' topic especially in the Nepal context, with its focus on tourism and related industries— was discussed during the second session. These contributions focused on marketing potential rather than on the 'products' themselves, therefore neglecting a serious reflection on the possible impacts and problems for the respective communities as they shifted from self-restrained to profit-oriented cultural production. However, the interactions, social frames and hierarchies involved in any traditional performance were addressed in other papers.

The third day developed dynamics of its own, with some very enthusiastic speeches and follow-up discussions on present deficiencies (methodological, systematic, organizational) and strategies for future collaboration and co-ordination across borders and institutions. The final session was given special weight by the involvement of Naveen Prakash Jung Shah, Vice-Chancellor of Tribhuvan University, and Satya Mohan Joshi, renowned expert and one of the scholars who initiated the study of local traditions in Nepal.

The concluding valedictory session resulted in a list of resolutions to enhance continuity and international collaboration in the field of folklore studies:

1) A letter of perspectives is to be issued by NFS with regard to organizational and collaboration matters as discussed during the final session.

2) SAARC will be informed on the outcome of the Congress in order to explore a possible association/collaboration towards an international centre focusing on South Asian Folklore Studies.

3) The initiation of a Folklore Studies Department at Tribhuvan University in Nepal will be followed up.

A selection of the papers presented will be published in due course. A newsletter circulating among specialists working on topics related to folklore studies within South Asia is also planned. Similar congresses and seminars organised on a regular basis were considered essential to intensify research, to discuss materials and possible comparative potentials as well as methodological and theoretical issues.

The Congress was well worth all the efforts undertaken by the organizers as well as contributors. And not least it was the host of sponsors who allowed it to take shape. One wishes such an initiative, as it was successfully undertaken by the NFS, to develop dynamics towards an intensified and co-ordinated research within the wide field of South Asian cultural traditions.

For further details on the congress or NFS and its activities contact:

Tulasi Diwasa: <tdiwasa@info.com.np>

C.M. Bandhu: <cmbandhu@ccsl.com.np>

Sound recordings from the Himalayas and the Hindu Kush at the *Phonogrammarchiv* of the Austrian Academy of Sciences in Vienna

Established in 1899, the *Phonogrammarchiv* was originally commissioned to pre-serve recordings on wax cylinders (most of which perished later during the Second World War) by transferring them to metal disks. It was only later that the institution developed into a technically well-equipped archive to include both linguistic and musical materials. Apart from several, by now historic, phonograms recorded prior to the First World War in Greenland, New Guinea, Brazil, southern Africa, south-ern Arabia, etc., the world outside Europe remained under-represented up until the 1950s. Since then, collections relating to the Third World, above all to the African continent, have seen a rapid increase. Recordings from the Himalayan and Hindu Kush areas, relatively small in number (roughly 2000), show a geographically uneven distribution, and the quality of their documentation (description, transcrip-tion, translation) varies. In the following, only the more important collections are briefly listed.

I. Indo-Tibetan borderland, Tibet, Nepal

(1)   Narratives in Tibetan; Tibetan Buddhist ritual music, both vocal and instru-mental; Tibetan folk songs; a recital of the Gesar epic; songs of the Nepalese Gaine bards; folk songs in Nepali, Newari, Sherpa and Tamang; Newar ritual music; a recital of his poems by the Nepalese poet Bal Krishna Sama; songs of the Lepcha; Lepcha narratives; a Catholic mass in Lepcha and Nepali, and a Protestant service in Tibetan; etc. Recorded by the Austrian Tibetologist and anthropologist R. de Nebesky-Wojkowitz in Kalimpong and Kathmandu in 1950-1953 and 1958-1959.

(2)   Word lists, phrase samples and narratives in the Kusunda and Raji languages, all neatly documented; shamanic rituals among the southern Magar and the Damai tailor-musicians; Tihar and wedding songs of the Raji and Raute. Recorded by the anthropologist J.G. Reinhard in Nepal in 1969-1971.

(3)   Tibetan Buddhist vocal and instrumental music within the framework of the *lCag mkhar* ritual. Recorded by the Tibetologist Ch. Luczanits in Spiti in 1991.

(4) Tibetan traditional theatre; folk songs (dancing songs); the Tibetan New Year Festival; ritual dialogues, etc. with detailed documentation. Recorded by the Tibetologists H. Diemberger, G. Hazod and P. Wangdu in Tibet (Tsang, Kharta, Gungthang) in 1993 and 1994.

(5) Tibetan songs recorded by the Tibetologist G. Hazod in Tibet (Yarlung, Kyirong) in 1995.

(6) Tibetan Buddhist vocal and instrumental music recorded by the art historian D. Klimburg-Salter in Spiti in 1996.

(7) Narratives, interviews, ritual recitations, love songs and ritual dancing songs of the Western Tamang in Dhading and Nuwakot districts recorded by the anthropologist A. Höfer in Nepal between 1968 and 1983. (As its documentation and digital preservation have not yet been completed, the collection is not accessible to the public at present.)

II. Afghanistan, northern Pakistan

(1) Numerous samples of vocal and instrumental music of various ethnic and language groups, such as Farsi, Hazara, Tadzhik, Taimani, Pashtu, Turkmenian and Usbekian. Recorded by the art historian M. Klimburg in 1958-1959 and the anthropologist A. Janata in Afghanistan in 1969.

(2) Poem recitals, vocal and instrumental music of various ethnic and language groups, such as Farsi, Pashtu, Usbekian, Baluji, Hazara and Kalash. Recorded by the composer and music teacher H.M. Pressl in 1967-1969, 1970 and 1973 in Afghanistan and Pakistan. The documentation of this rich collection of well over 600 recordings is exemplary.

(3) Instrumental music, ritual and dancing songs of the Pashtu, Kalash and Kati recorded by the engineer K. Wutt in Afghanistan and Pakistan in 1974.

For further information contact:

Phonogrammarchiv
Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften
Liebiggasse 5
A-1010 Wien/Austria
e-mail: <pha@oeaw.ac.at>

Appeal to Nepal scholars

Over the past decade or so higher education has made rapid strides in Nepal. Scores of colleges offering courses in engineering, medicine and business management have been established. This quantitative advance, however, has not been reflected in the non-technical field. Not a single institute dedicated to the social sciences has come up. Yet the number of scholars working in this area is going up and they feel handicapped by the lack of research facilities that would help them in their work. There are hardly any libraries worth the name in Nepal and the ones that do exist do not have adequate research materials.

To remedy this situation a group of individuals have come together to set up a social science library in Kathmandu. As a first step, the Social Science Baha (*baha* from the Newar term for the *viharas* that were the centres of monastic learning in Kathmandu Valley) has been formed not just to establish the library but also to focus on the larger goal of facilitating the study of the social sciences. For now, the day-to-day administration of the library will be handled by Himal Association, a non-profit group involved in information dissemination in Nepal for the past fourteen years (through such media as *Himal* magazine, Himal Books, film festivals, and children's book bank).

The Baha's library will initially be based in Patan Dhoka until it can be moved to a dedicated space, and is being run through voluntary donations from well-wishers in Nepal. The plan is to open the library to the public by April 2002. The library's collection will focus on the following subject areas: economics, political science, history, sociology, anthropology, development studies, gender studies, natural resource management, and environmental sciences, and the major categories of the publications will be: 1. social science classics and theoretical works; 2. contemporary social science works; 3. Nepal-related works, including unpublished PhD dissertations; 4. journals and periodicals; and 5. monographs and academic papers.

This is an appeal by the Social Science Baha to the scholar community which has worked or has interest in Nepal and the Himalaya to provide this incipient library with copies of their books, academic papers, monographs, and dissertations. We are also seeking gift subscriptions to foreign journals, financial aid and even donations of personal collections of books. We need all the help we can get.

For more information on the library and/or how to contribute to it, please contact:

Deepak Thapa   email: <books@himalassociation.org>
Himal Association   Phone: +977-1-542544/548142
PO Box 166, Lalitpur, Nepal   Fax: +977-1-541196

Obituary:

BERT VAN DEN HOEK

In Memoriam Bert van den Hoek
(1951-2001)

by

Bal Gopal Shrestha and Han F. Vermeulen
University of Leiden

Bert (Albertus Wilhelmus) van den Hoek was a brilliant anthropologist and Indologist from the Netherlands, who had been working on India and Nepal for more than thirty years when he died on December 1st 2001, on his way to a conference in India, aged 50. He left behind numerous scholarly works, three films, and the memory of a gentle, warm, and dedicated man.

Bert was born on September 2 1951 in Apeldoorn as the first son of his parents. He attended high school at Utrecht, completing the Stedelijk Gymnasium in 1969. In the same year he attended courses in cultural anthropology and philosophy at the University of Amsterdam. Then he switched to Leiden, where he studied cultural anthropology at the University of Leiden for his BA and MA degrees from 1970 to 1976. He travelled to India for the first time in the summer of 1970, together with Jan Brouwer. During this period, Bert followed courses in linguistics and the anthropology of Indonesia with Professor P.E. de Josselin de Jong and in the anthropology and sociology of South Asia with Professor J.C. Heesterman, which included studies of Tamil, Sanskrit, and philosophy. Together with Sjoerd Zanen, he carried out fieldwork for his MA thesis in Lebanon (1974). They travelled extensively through the Middle East, Turkey, Syria, Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India (1973-74) and Bert first visited Nepal in 1975. In 1977 he was a postgraduate student of Professor Louis Dumont at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Centre d'Études de l'Inde et de l'Asie du Sud, in Paris. During this period he worked out the research he had undertaken in the spring of 1977 with Zanen in Madurai, south India. 'The Goddess of the Northern Gate: Cellattamman as the "Divine Warrior" of Madurai' (1979) was one of his earliest papers based on his research in South Asia. For a short period (January-March 1978), he worked in southern Sudan in a mission for the Foreign Ministry of the Netherlands with Zanen and Philip Leek Deng, which resulted in several publications on Dinka religion and culture (1978, 1985, 1987).

From 1 September 1978 until January 1ˢᵗ 1981 he was a PhD student at the University of Leiden under the supervision of P.E. de Josselin de Jong and J.C. Heesterman carrying out research on 'The Religious, Social and Political Significance of the Goddess Kālī (Devī Durgā) in Hindu-Buddhist Society'. For this purpose, he conducted fieldwork in Kathmandu, Nepal, together with Sjoerd Zanen in 1979; between 1979 and 1982 he was assisted by Bal Gopal Shrestha and Tirtha Narayan Mali.

Having returned to Leiden in May 1982, he participated regularly in seminars of the CASA (Cognitive Anthropology and Structural Anthropology) research group at Leiden and of the ERASME research group at Paris. From April to July 1985 he was assigned by LIDESCO to prepare the working document for the International Symposium on the Cultural Dimension of Development, sponsored by UNESCO. In addition, he published several articles on the same subject (1985, 1986, 1988), arguing for the importance of including anthropological ideas in the development process.

In 1988 he went back to the University of Leiden to expand his language skills and enrolled in the study of Sanskrit and cultural history of South Asia at the Department of Languages and Cultures of South and Central Asia, where he obtained a BA degree in 1989. During this period, together with Bal Gopal Shrestha, he carried out research on the 'Sacrifice of Serpents and the Festival of Indrāyaṇī in Northern Kathmandu' and on 'Fire Sacrifice in Nepal: the Agnimaṭha in Patan'. For this purpose he was in Nepal during two periods of three months of fieldwork in 1988 and 1989. His knowledge of Sanskrit and Vedic literature is very evident in the published papers from this research.

From 1989 to 1992 he served as the head of the Documentation Centre of South Asia at the University of Leiden. During this period he managed to add a wealth of literature on South Asian to the library of the Kern Institute at Leiden. He was also editor of the *South Asia Newsletter*, published by the Universities of Amsterdam and Leiden for the period 1989-92. He organized the Dutch Asia Conference (KOTA) with Dr Jos D.M. Platenkamp at Leiden in 1989, and at Amsterdam in 1990. He was also a member of the organizing committee of the 11th Conference on Modern South Asian Studies, held in Amsterdam in 1990.

Resigning his post as head of the Documentation Centre of South Asia in 1992, he took up a position as research assistant (AiO) to write a PhD thesis on 'The Ritual Structure of Kathmandu, Nepal'. For this purpose he was in Kathmandu to carry out fieldwork with Bal Gopal Shrestha from June 15 1992 to July 14 1994. During this period, he took lessons in Nepālbhāṣā (Newari) with Subarna Man Tuladhar. In November 1992 Dr Dirk J. Nijland of Leiden University joined them to shoot an ethnographic video-film on their earlier research, 'Sacrifice of Serpents'. During this period, Bert participated in a number of conferences and wrote several research papers such as 'The Death of the Divine Dancers: The Conclusion of Bhadrakālī' (1992), 'Guardians of the Royal Goddess: Daitya and Kumār as the Protectors of Taleju Bhavānī of Kathmandu' (1992), 'Kathmandu as a Sacrificial Arena' (1993), and 'Caste and Gender in the Perfect Buddhist Gift: The Samyak Mahādān in Kathmandu, Nepal' (1994). His genius is to be seen in all these writings, which provide penetrating insights into Newar cultural and ritual life.

In July 1994 Bert was back in Leiden to write up his PhD thesis at the Centre of Non-Western Studies (CNWS) under the supervision of Professor Heesterman. He was one of the most talented students of Heesterman and took his comments and criticisms seriously. Accordingly, he tried to revise all chapters in accordance with his guru's suggestions, and, more often than not, he was a perfectionist. He finished a draft version of the text, but was compelled to leave his office at the CNWS in December 1996, before being able to finalize it. This situation was aggravated by personal problems, including financial constraints, which never stopped haunting him.

Nevertheless, he remained active academically and in 1997 completed the editing of the documentary film 'Sacrifice of Serpents', together with Dirk Nijland and Bal Gopal Shrestha. The film deals with the annual Newar festival of Indrāyaṇī in the northern part of Kathmandu city and was first screened at the opening of the festival of South Asian documentaries 'Film South Asia 1997' in Kathmandu, October 26-28 1997. It was selected for the seventh Bilan du Film Ethnographique in Paris,

March 23-28 1998, the Ethnographic Film Festival 'Beeld voor Beeld 1998' in Amsterdam, June 4-7 1998, and the Film Festival of the Society for Visual Anthropology during the Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association (AAA) in Philadelphia, December 2-4 1998. On the latter occasion the AAA honoured the film with an 'Award of Commendation' for making

> a thorough documentation of a multi-day festival which is slow paced with spare narration and 'time to see'. A depth of Vedic scholarship and many years of fieldwork by the anthropologist are combined with Nepalese team assistants who were community members to make an informed film record of the event.

Earlier in 1998, in the wake of the annual meeting of Asian Scholars in Washington, Bert and Bal Gopal had been invited to show the film at Cornell, Princeton, and Harvard Universities, as well as in Washington at a meeting of the Newar community in the USA. The audience in Nepal and in all other countries where the film was shown appreciated it for presenting an inside view of the rituals performed during the Indrāyaṇī festival.

Many scholars in Nepal greatly appreciated Bert for his scholarly talents. Professor Tirtha Prasad Mishra, Director of the Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies (CNAS) at Tribhuvan University in Kathmandu, to which Bert was affiliated until his death, stated a few weeks before he died that Bert was one of the most talented foreign scholars working on Nepal. Professor Kamal Prakash Malla, a prominent Nepalese scholar from Tribhuvan University, had the following to say on Bert's sudden departure:

> His death is, indeed, a great loss to the world of Indian Studies in general and Nepal Studies in particular. His work and keen insight into the culture of the Kathmandu Valley, particularly its festivals and ritual structure, have always been deep and penetrating, often ending in brilliant conclusions, synthesizing Indology with anthropological perspectives. Personally, it is a great loss to me and my colleagues in the academic community in Nepal, committed to the cause of the promotion of Newar studies.

Although Bert's chief interest in Nepal was the study of rituals and religious festivals he was also interested in Nepalese politics, ethnicity, and the situation of human rights. He published several articles on Nepalese politics, language issues, and social problems in *Nepal Nieuws*, a bulletin published in the Netherlands by a group of activists, of which he was one of the editors in the 1990s.

In addition to his academic interest in Nepal, Bert was active in social work and in

heritage conservation. His idea was that scholars working on Nepal should not only work in their own interests but must also reciprocate by supporting Nepalese traditions and cultures. His involvement in fund raising for the restoration of temples and monuments in Nepal was proof of this. For this reason Bert will be remembered especially in Sankhu, a small town near Kathmandu, where the renovation of a number of religious monuments was begun with his active support.

He was a member of several organizations in the Netherlands working in Nepal and India, such as Vereniging Nepal Samaj Nederland (NSN), Vereniging Nederland Nepal (VNN), International Council for Friends of Nepal (ICFON), and Vereniging Nederland India. He was active in establishing a relationship based on equality between Nepal and the Netherlands. He was of the view that Nepal has rich traditions of culture, arts, and architecture, which fully deserve the attention of countries like the Netherlands. For this purpose he wished to establish a cultural agreement between the Netherlands and Nepal at the governmental level. In 1992–94, when he was in Nepal, he met Ishor Baral, then Vice-Chancellor of the Royal Nepal Academy, and drafted a memorandum for the agreement that was not followed up for financial reasons. Bert not only wanted Nepal to be studied by foreign scholars, but also wanted Nepalese scholars to be given the chance to study the cultural traditions of Western societies. This led to the appointment of Bal Gopal Shrestha as a PhD student at the CNWS, University of Leiden, in September 1996. That same year, Bert drafted a Memorandum of Understanding for co-operation between the University of Leiden and Tribhuvan University. The director of the Research School CNWS, Professor D.H.A. Kolff, played a key role in getting this memorandum signed in January 1997. Bert continued to work on restoration projects in Sankhu, and in July 2000 established a foundation for cultural and scientific exchange between Nepal and the Netherlands (Stichting Culturele en Wetenschappelijke Samenwerking Nepal-Nederland). Its immediate aim was to build a Nepalese-style pagoda temple to Ganesh in Leiden; its long-term aims were to spread Nepalese art and culture in the Netherlands and to contribute to the preservation of the cultural heritage and infrastructure of the Kathmandu Valley.

Intending to finalize his dissertation and add to his research data, he went to Nepal in August 2000, only to return to the Netherlands for a month towards the end of May in 2001. He again returned to Nepal on July 13 2001 to continue his research on rituals in Kathmandu. He was very concerned about the political developments in Nepal, including the 'palace massacres' of June 1st 2001 and the government struggle against the Maoist movement. Ironically, his departure for India, to participate in an international seminar in Pune, coincided with the declaration of the state of emergency in Nepal on November 26. In Pune he was expected to present a paper titled 'Lingua

Franca in Nepal: The Pre-Nationalist, the Nationalist, and the Ethnic Discourse' in an international seminar on November 28 2001. Unfortunately, he never reached the conference venue. On his way to Pune he was hit by a motortrailer in Mumbai (Bombay) on the early morning of November 27. He was admitted to the King Edward Memorial Hospital where he died without regaining consciousness on December 1st, the full-moon day (*Sakimilā punhi*).

This was the tragic end of a brilliant man. He has left behind three films and a corpus of published and unpublished papers, including his incomplete PhD dissertation, which he retitled *Caturmāsa: Celebrations of Death in Kathmandu.*

Bert took a lively interest in the cultural traditions of the Newar of Kathmandu Valley. Newars combine Hindu and Buddhist beliefs and practices, which fascinated him. Shortly before the fatal accident, Bert stopped in Lumbini, the birthplace of Buddha in southern Nepal, for a few days. There he was initiated by His Holiness 17th Gyalwa Karmapa on November 22, one week before he died. During Bert's cremation at Rijswijk, the Netherlands, on December 14 2001, Kalsang Norbu Gurung, a Tibetan-Nepali monk studying in Leiden, was invited to carry out a recitation of Buddhist texts and to pray for the eternal peace of Bert's departed soul. On the same occasion Bal Gopal Shrestha and his family performed a *pūjā* or farewell worship to pay respect to Bert van den Hoek and his long association with Newar rituals and traditions, which he admired so much and which he knew much better than most Newars today.

Bert van den Hoek made his contributions to South Asian studies by combining his thorough fieldwork-based anthropological research with his profound knowledge of Sanskrit and Vedic literature. This sometimes confused contemporaries as to whether they should consider him an anthropologist or an Indologist. In real life, actually, he was both.

With his departure, a great light has gone out.

Publications of A.W. van den Hoek

1974   A.W. van den Hoek & Sj. Zanen, *De bron des gouds: De sociaal-culturele ontsluiting van een Libanees bergdorp (Nahr-ed-Dahab)* [The Fountain of Gold: Socio-cultural incorporation of a Lebanese mountain village]. Report on a field study, 137 pp. ill.

1975   'Theater en spel als antropologische modellen [Theatre and Play as Anthropological Models]'. Manuscript, 13 pp.

1976a   'Tamilnadu als deel van het Indische studieveld [Tamilnadu as Part of the Indian Field of Study]. Scriptie voor het bijvak Zuid-Azië' (short thesis, University of Leiden).

1976b   'Huwelijks-alliantie op Sumatra, bezien in het licht van het Pandji-thema [Marriage Alliance on Sumatra, from the Viewpoint of the Panji Theme]. Scriptie voor het bijvak Zuid-Oost-Azië' (short thesis, University of Leiden).

1976c   Sjoerd Zanen en Bert van den Hoek, *Netwerk en structuur. Theoretische studie van sociale verandering in een Libanees bergdorp* [Network and Structure: Theoretical study of social change in a Lebanese mountain village]. Leiden: Instituut voor Culturele Antropologie en Sociologie der Niet-Westerse Volken (ICA-Publicaties 14). 47 pp. ill.

1976d   'Een kanttekening bij de methode van het structuralisme [A Note on the Method of Structuralism]' *Antro* 6 (5): 7-12.

1978   Bert van den Hoek, Sjoerd Zanen & Philip Leek Deng, *Social-anthropological Aspects of the Jonglei Development Projects in South Sudan (field-work report)*. Leiden: Instituut voor Culturele Antropologie en Sociologie der Niet-Westerse Volken. May 1978. 107 pp., maps, ill. Reissued with a new introduction 1985c.

1979   'The Goddess of the Northern Gate: Cellattamman as the "Divine Warrior" of Madurai'. In *Asie du Sud: Traditions et changements*, edited by Marc Gaborieau and Alice Thorner, pp. 119-29. Paris: CNRS. Paper presented at the Xth International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences, Post-Plenary Session on Religion and Society, Madras, December 19-21 1978.

1985a   *The Cultural Dimension of Development.* State-of-the-Art document presented at the UNESCO Symposium on the Cultural Dimension of Development at the Peace Palace, The Hague, September 1985.

1985b   'De culturele dimensie van ontwikkeling: een sleutelbegrip in UNESCO's toekomstbeeld [The Cultural Dimension of Development: A key concept in UNESCO's policy]' *IMWOO-Bulletin* 13 (3): 12-14.

1985c   Bert van den Hoek, Sjoerd Zanen & Philip Leek Deng, *Social-anthropological Aspects of the Jonglei Development Projects in South Sudan*. Leiden: Instituut voor Culturele Antropologie en Sociologie der Niet-Westerse Volken (ICA-Publicaties 67). Reprinted from 1978 with a new introduction.

1986   'The Cultural Dimension of the Jonglei Development Projects'. In *The*

Cultural Dimension of Development, edited by G.C. Uhlenbeck, pp. 77-87. The Hague: Netherlands National Commission for UNESCO.

1987   Sjoerd M. Zanen and A.W. van den Hoek, 'Dinka Dualism and the Nilotic Hierarchy of Values'. In *The Leiden Tradition in Structural Anthropology: Essays in Honour of P.E. de Josselin de Jong,* edited by Rob de Ridder and Jan A.J. Karremans, pp. 170-96. Leiden: E.J. Brill.

1988   *Cultural Diversity and the Ideology of Development. UNESCO's role in the international debate on the cultural dimension of development.* Leiden: Faculty of Social Sciences, Leiden Institute of Development Studies and Consultancy Services (LIDESCO R-88/10). ix + 68 pp.

1989   'Purity and Progress: Hindu ritual and Western planning'. Paper presented at the IXth KOTA conference, held in Leiden, June 29-30 1989. Published in a Dutch version 1990.

1990a   'Hindu ritueel en Westerse planning. Een Nepalees offerfestival in vergelijkend perspectief [Hindu Ritual and Western Planning: A Nepalese sacrificial festival in comparative perspective]' *Antropologische Verkenningen* 9 (3): 16-31.

1990b   'Does Divinity Protect the King? Ritual and politics in Nepal' *Contributions to Nepalese Studies* (CNAS, Tribhuvan University) 17 (2): 147-55. Paper presented at the Xth KOTA conference, on 'Ritueel & Politiek in Azië', held at CASA, Amsterdam, June 14-15 1990. French translation 1993b.

1990c   'CNAS and CEDA: Two Centres of Asian Studies in Nepal' *South Asia Newsletter* No. 5: 22-4.

1990d   'Report on the 11th Conference on Modern South Asian Studies' *CNWS Newsletter* No. 3: 10-11.

1990e   'De afkondiging van de Nepalese grondwet 1990 [The Proclamation of the Constitution of Nepal in 1990]' *Nepal Nieuws* No. 3: 2-7.

1990f   'Eindelijk een nieuwe grondwet [A New Constitution At Last]' *Nepal Nieuws* No. 4: 2-8.

1991a   'Report on the VIIIth World Sanskrit Conference' *South Asia Newsletter* No. 7: 41-2.

1991b   'Nepalese verkiezingen brengen politieke duidelijkheid [Elections in Nepal Provide Political Clarity]' *Nepal Nieuws* No. 2: 2-9.

1991c   'Hongerstaking sterft een zachte dood [Hunger Strike Dies a Solemn Death]' *Nepal Nieuws* No. 3: 2-5.

1991d   'Een kijkje in het parlement [A Look in Parliament]' *Nepal Nieuws* No. 3: 6-7.

1991e   'De rituele structuur van de stad Kathmandu, Nepal [The Ritual Structure of Kathmandu City]'. Research proposal submitted to the Centre of Non-Western Studies, University of Leiden. Dated Kathmandu, 1 October.

1991f   'Vikāsa va saṃskṛti rakṣya nitāṃ nāpaṃ juimā [Development and the Protection of Culture must be carried out simultaneously]'. Interview by Bal Gopal Shrestha, conducted in English and translated into Nepālbhāṣā (Newari), published in *Ināp*, a Nepālbhāṣā Weekly, 9 (44), November 20, pp. 3 and 7.

1991g   'Life and Death at Svanti - The Turn of the Ritual Year in Nepal'. Unpublished paper presented at CASA-ERASME seminar "The Cycle of Life and Death", held in Paris, December 9. 7 pp. Planned as chapter 7 of the dissertation.

1992a   (with Bal Gopal Shrestha) 'The Sacrifice of Serpents: Exchange and non-Exchange in the *sarpabali* of Indrāyaṇī, Kathmandu' *Bulletin de l'Ecole française d'Extrême Orient* (BEFEO, n.s.) 79 (1): 57-75. Paper presented at the 11th European Conference on Modern South Asian Studies, Amsterdam, July 1990 and at the VIIIth World Sanskrit Conference, Vienna, August 27-September 2 1990.

1992b   A.W. van den Hoek, D.H.A. Kolff and M.S. Oort (eds) *Ritual, State and History in South Asia. Essays in Honour of J.C. Heesterman.* Leiden/New York/Köln: E.J. Brill 1992. (Memoirs of the Kern Institute 5.) xi + 843 pp. ill.

1992c   'Fire Sacrifice in Nepal'. In 1992b, pp. 532-55 + 7 ill. Paper presented at the VIIIth World Sanskrit Conference, Vienna, August 27-September 2 1990.

1992d   (with Bal Gopal Shrestha) 'Guardians of the Royal Goddess: Daitya and Kumār as the Protectors of Taleju Bhavānī of Kathmandu' *Contributions to Nepalese Studies* (CNAS, Tribhuvan University) 19 (2): 191-222.

1992e   'Locale verkiezingen locaal beschouwd [Local Elections Considered Locally]' *Nepal Nieuws* No. 3: 4-10.

1992f   'Nepali, Sanskrit en de etnische talen [Nepali, Sanskrit, and Ethnic Languages]' *Nepal Nieuws* No. 3: 11-18.

1992g   'The Sanskrit Language: An outsider's view' *Independent Weekly*, 2 (28) p. 2.

1993a   'Kathmandu as a Sacrificial Arena' In *Urban Symbolism*, edited by Peter J.M. Nas, pp. 360-77. Leiden/New York/Köln: E.J. Brill.

1993b   'Les Divinités protègent-elles le roi? Rituel et politique au Nepal' *L'Ethnographie* 89 (1): 19-28. Translation from the English (1990b) by Xavier Blaisel. [N.B. The title has been rendered incorrectly, distorting the argument significantly, according to the author.]

1994   'The Death of the Divine Dancers: The conclusion of the Bhadrakālī pyākhaṃ in Kathmandu' In *The Anthropology of Nepal: Peoples, Problems and Processes*, edited by Michael Allen, pp. 374-404. Kathmandu: Mandala Bookpoint. Paper presented at the conference jointly sponsored by the Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies, Tribhuvan University and the Department of Anthropology, University of Sydney, held in Kathmandu, September 7-14 1992.

1995a   (with Bal Gopal Shrestha) 'Education in the Mother Tongue. The Case of Nepālbhāṣā (Newari)' *Contributions to Nepalese Studies* 22 (1): 73-86. Paper presented during the 14th Annual Conference of the Linguistic Society of Nepal, Tribhuvan University at Kirtipur, Kathmandu, November 26-27 1993.

1995b   Presentation of fragments of the Agnimatha film, during the conference 'Film and Ritual' organized by the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique at Nanterre University, Paris, October 26-28. Showing video material about the Darśapūrṇamāsa ritual in the Agnimatha in Patan, which takes place every fortnight to guarantee the continuation of the cycle of the moon.

1996a   'Caste and Gender in the Perfect Buddhist Gift: The Samyak Mahādān in Kathmandu, Nepal' *Contributions to Nepalese Studies* (CNAS, Tribhuvan University) 23 (1): 195-211. Paper presented during the 13th European Conference on Modern South Asian Studies, held in Toulouse, August 31–September 3. Reprinted in 1999.

1996b   'The Festival of Indra in Kathmandu: An archaic survival or an 18th century construction?' Unpublished paper presented at the 14th European Conference on Modern South Asian Studies, held in Copenhagen, Denmark, August 21-24. 7 pp.

1996c   'Newar Culture and Gorkha Power: The royal rituals of Kathmandu'. Unpublished paper presented at the International Conference on "Asian Minority Cultures in Transition: Diversity, Identities and Encounters."

held at Münster, December12-15, organised by J.D.M. Platenkamp.

1997a   (Film, with Dirk J. Nijland and Bal Gopal Shrestha) *Sacrifice of Serpents: The Festival of Indrāyaṇī, Kathmandu, Nepal 1992/94.* An Ethnographic Videofilm. Leiden: Institute of Cultural and Social Studies (108 min., English version, Pal SVHS/Betacam SP).

1997b   'Simplification and Mystification: The Cultural Context of the Development of Nepal Bhasa'. Paper presented during the 18th Annual Meeting of the Linguistic Society of Nepal, Tribhuvan University at Kirtipur, Kathmandu, November 26-27, 7 pp. Published in the Annual Journal of the Linguistic Society of Nepal (1998).

1997c   'Ethnicity and Pre-ethnicity in Nepal: The case of Indrayatra in Kathmandu'. Unpublished paper presented at a special meeting of the Nepal Bhasa Academy in Hotel Vajra, Kathmandu, December 23. (Broad press coverage in the vernacular press, including a first-page headline in the national newspaper *Gorkhapatra*.)

1998a   (with Erik de Maaker, Dirk Nijland and Bal Gopal Shrestha) 'Film South Asia 1997'. *IIAS Newsletter* No. 16, p. 16.

1998b   'Sacrifice of Serpents: the festival of Indrāyaṇī'. Presentation of documentary film with a lecture at Cornell University, Ithaca, March 30; Department of Anthropology of Princeton University, NJ, 7 April; Department of Anthropology and Department of Sanskrit of Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, April 16-17; Ethnographic Filmfestival 'Beeld voor Beeld 1998' in Amsterdam, June 4-7; International Convention of Asian Scholars (ICAS-I), panel 'Film South Asia', Noordwijkerhout, the Netherlands, June 25-28; Film festival of the Society for Visual Anthropology, Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Philadelphia, December 2-4.

1999a   'Caste and Gender in the Perfect Buddhist Gift: The Samyak Mahādān in Kathmandu, Nepal'. In *The Feminine Sacred in South Asia*, edited by Harald Tambs-Lyche, pp. 46-62. Delhi: Manohar. Originally published as 1996a.

1999b   'De IHI-ceremonie [The Ihi Ceremony]'. *Samachar*, ICFON Newsletter 8(4), June, p. 2.

2000   'Gathammugah: de uitdrijving van de geesten in Kathmandu [Gathāmugaḥ: Expulsion of the ghosts in Kathmandu]'. *Samachar*, ICFON Newsletter 9 (3), May, pp. 1-3. Also on the International Council for

Friends of Nepal, The Netherlands, homepage.

2001a 'Serpent Sacrifice in Nepal: Vedic lore, tantric lore or folklore?' Unpublished paper presented at the International Conference on Folklore in Kathmandu, organized by the National Nepal Folklore Society, May 2001. Typescript, 27 pp.

2001b 'Sadness and Suspicion: A tribute to the late King Birendra' (Amsterdam 10 June 2001). Typescript, 3 pp., sent to Kanak Mani Dixit, editor of *Himal South-Asia.*

2001c 'Kathmandu as a Sacrificial Arena: A Study of ritual competition and cooperation in Kathmandu City'. Research proposal submitted to the Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies, Tribhuvan University at Kirtipur, for the period July 15 2001-July 15 2002.

2001d 'Alcoholism and Recovery'. Kathmandu, Chetrapati, 3 pp.

2001e 'Lingua Franca in Nepal: The Pre-Nationalist, the Nationalist, and the Ethnic Discourse'. Abstract of a paper prepared for the international seminar on 'Language, Modes of Interpretation and the Concepts of Tradition and Modernity', in Pune, India, November 27-29, 2 pp.

In preparation

n.d.a (with Dirk J. Nijland and Bal Gopal Shrestha) 'Sacrifice of Serpents: Ethnographic Images and Anthropological Interpretation'. Forthcoming in *Evaluating Visual Ethnography: Research, Analysis, Representation, and Culture. In Honour of Dr. Dirk J Nijland*, edited by M. Postma, Proceedings of the International Conference held in Leiden, September 21-24 1999. Typescript, 27 pp. Dated November 2000.

n.d.b *Caturmāsa: Celebrations of death. Festivals of the Fall in Kathmandu City* (PhD thesis, University of Leiden, incomplete). *Kathmandu as a Sacrifical Arena* (Monograph, volume II).

n.d.c (Film, with Dirk J. Nijland and Bal Gopal Shrestha) *Agnimaṭha, the Fire Temple in Patan.*

n.d.d (Film, with Dirk J. Nijland and Rajendra Shrestha) *Pacali Bhairava, the Festival of Liquor and Death.*

Japanese Studies on the Himalayas and Nepal (Social Sciences and Humanities, 1900-2000)

Hiroshi Ishii

Contents

1. Introduction

2. Works before 1990

3. Works after 1990

 3.1. Nepal

 3.2. Bhutan

 3.3. Other Himalayan Areas

 3.4. General Works on the Himalayas and Nepal

4. Conclusion

1. Introduction

The Japanese have shown considerable interest, both academic and non-academic, in Nepal and the Himalayan region. For example, a bibliography on Nepal edited by the Japan Nepal Society (Nihon Nepaaru Kyoukai 1984) contains more than 4000 titles. Their interest continues up to the present day. Authors in Japan tend to write in Japanese, especially in the fields of the humanities and social sciences, though some write or provide summaries in Western languages (usually English).

This is an attempt to introduce Japanese works on Nepal and Himalayan areas related to the above fields—mainly those published in the 1990s, though I will deal briefly with the period before 1950 and with the 1950s and 60s. (For Japanese studies on Nepal from before 1990 see Ishii 1991.)

2. Works before 1990

2.1. Works before 1950

Japanese interest in Asian countries other than Korea and China grew stronger from the end of the 19th century, especially after the Sino-Japanese war (1894-5) and the Russo-Japanese war (1904-5). Tibet, with its Buddhism, its geo-political situation, and its very inaccessibility, attracted religious, political, or other adventurers, who competed with each other to attain their goals. Some, including Buddhist monks such as Kawaguchi, Aoki, and Tada, spent a considerable length of time in the Himalayas or surrounding areas before they surreptitiously entered Tibet. They left many valuable descriptions of the Himalayan region, although they were not trained as fieldworkers. The best known are Kawaguchi's travelogues (1909, 1966). (I will not deal with Tibet in this article except when it is related to the present topic.) There are few academic studies of the region from before the 1950s. Ishida's historical work on Aniko (1941) using Chinese materials is exceptional for its reliability.

2.2. Works from the 1950s and 1960s

After the Second World War Nepal opened its doors, and the Japanese were among those who early on tried to take advantage of the new possibilities. Research expeditions were sometimes combined with mountaineering, and aspiring individuals made efforts to explore new fields. Notable examples are: Kawakita and Nakao's field trip encircling the Manaslu and Annapurna ranges in 1953, which clarified the correlation between altitude, ecology, and culture (Kawakita 1957, Nakao 1957); Nakao's travels in Bhutan in 1957 which gave rise to his idea of a specific culture area extending from eastern Nepal to southern Japan (Nakao 1959); and a scientific expedition to northwest Nepal in 1958 led by Kawakita which mainly studied a Tibetan village in Dolpo but also included the Thakalis within its scope. Members of the latter expeditions later returned to conduct fieldwork: Iijima's study of the Hinduization of the Thakalis (Iijima 1963, 1982) and Takayama's book on Kawaguchi's life and works (Takayama 1999) are noteworthy.

In 1963 Kawakita began working in the Sikha Valley in central Nepal which resulted not only in his monograph on a Magar village (1974) but also led to his active and long-term participation in and writing on local development and nature conservation (Kawakita ed. 1995). Kawakita's works were recently published in a set of 14 volumes. Another important work from this period is Suzuki's historical study (1962) of relations between Ch'ing China, Tibet, and British India, which emphasizes the Gurkha dynasty's role. In the 1970s and 1980s it became much easier for Japanese to visit Nepal, and this led to an increase in the number of schol-

ars carrying out fieldwork or other kinds of study there (see Ishii 1991). However, few dealt with other Himalayan countries.

3. Works after 1990

Research groups and individuals have been engaged in various fields, as I detail below.[1] The period of stay of research groups tends to be comparatively short, though some repeat their visit. Individual studies are diverse in terms of both topic and research period. It is encouraging that studies on Bhutan have been conducted to some extent, and that there are a number of young scholars actively carrying out research. Needless to say, there are scholars continuing their studies from the preceding period.

3.1. Nepal

In the Himalayan region, Japanese have made more studies in Nepal than in other areas, and more in anthropology than in other disciplines. Many other fields are also covered though the arts are not well studied in this period.

3.1.1. Anthropological (and some related) studies

Reflecting the recent socio-political movement and changes as well as academic trends, there have been studies of topics such as ethnicity, development, social change, environment, and urban life as well as ethnographical and comparative studies. In this period, gender seems to have attracted the attention of scholars other than anthropologists.

Ethnographies and studies of ethnicity

There are substantial ethnographies (some for PhD dissertations) based on long-term observation and collection of data. Religion, ritual, and ethnicity, as well as ordinary life, comprise their focus, which the authors try to analyse with a theoretical orientation. (In what follows I will give author-year citations only where it would otherwise be unclear which item I am referring to.)

Yasuno studies the Masta cult in west Nepal on the basis of detailed fieldwork

carried out mainly in a Brahman village in the Jumla area. She interprets the cult as a form of popular Hinduism and analyses the way in which people resort to the power of gods in order to resolve disputes and escape from misfortune. She makes a point of describing the people's belief in the gods' power to maintain moral order which lies behind their practice. She analyses disputes over women and land, people's ways of explaining misfortune, myths and rituals of Masta and other deities, and notions of *pāp* (sin) and *doṣ* (moral violation), and shows that it is with regard to *doṣ* that people come into disputes and try to settle them, and that Masta deities function as agents of *doṣ*.

Nawa conducted his fieldwork in far western Nepal among the people who are often called 'Byansi' but whose ethnonym is 'Rang' in their mother tongue. His PhD dissertation (1998b) is an ethnography of the Rang, focusing mainly on their social categories (including ethnic categories) and rituals. First he shows the multilayered nature of the Rangs' rituals and social categories by analysing relations between the observed social and ritual processes and the more or less fixed explanations of them given by Rangs. He then describes changes and transformations of these rituals as a dialectic process between a series of attempts for change (or in some cases accidental omissions or additions) often analysed as 'Hinduization' or 'modernization' on the one hand, and the persistent half-conscious ritual practices carried on by the villagers on the other (see also Nawa 2000).

Sato carried out her first anthropological fieldwork among the Yolmo people of Helambu, both in Yolmo and Kathmandu, from mid-1994 to early 1997. Her research has focused on the ways in which their social identities were constructed in the context of Nepal after the restoration of democracy. She looks at day-to-day activities, language and concepts, kinship, rituals, conflicts, and the Yolmos' own 'ethnic activities', and she explains that the ethnic category 'Yolmo' has been ambiguous and has varied depending upon context, but that it has tended to be taken as a more solid category in recent years under the influence of active movements to organize and integrate Yolmos in the capital.

Uesugi studies Gurkha soldiers, taking the perspective that they are one example among various collaborators under colonial regimes, but that they possess their own uniqueness, part of which is the fact that they are not the people of a colonized country. Her main concern is the ways in which such uniqueness has influenced the British Army's management policy. She approaches the question through an analysis of its policy on religion. The Gurkhas are a multi-ethnic group, including Hindus, Buddhists, and followers of other religions. But the Gurkha Brigade has adopted a policy of encouraging Hinduism, which is an outcome of the political

judgement of the British. Uesugi asserts that international strategies and domestic politics inevitably influence the management policy. Her analysis of the Dasain festival of the Gurkhas in the British army demonstrates that it is organized to unite various ethnic cultures, while fully utilizing the regimental rank system.

Studies of socio-cultural change and comparative studies
Nearly half a century has passed since Japanese scholars began fieldwork in the Himalayan region. Some have accumulated considerable experience in their research fields and have produced works which reflect this.

Kano has been studying Sherpa society and livelihoods since the 1970s, and his work has included a detailed analysis of the Rolwaling Sherpas and studies in Khumbu, Solu, Kathmandu, etc. In his most recent book, he presents a consolidated picture of the Sherpas, based on his research and mountaineering experiences in the Himalayan giant peaks. It covers their immigration history, the basic structure of agro-pastoralism, the importance of trade, the emergence of the mountaineering 'Sherpas', the development of tourism, Sherpa society in Kathmandu, and a consideration of Sherpa identity and change. With regard to this last point, he points out, along with a warning that ethnic identity is flexible, that the Sherpas have adapted positively and successfully to recent changes by responding strategically to the development of tourism and modernization. These have given rise to socio-economic fragmentation, but this has been redressed by efforts to recover unity. His understanding of mountaineering (which is indispensable for an analysis of the Sherpas) adds greatly to the originality of his work.

Kawakita and others published an anthology on settlements in Nepal. The ethnic/ caste groups and/or areas dealt with are: (from the east) Chamlin Rais, Tamangs of the upper Trisuli, Newars and Parbate Hindus (compared), Magars in the Sikha Valley, the upper Kali Gandaki area, and Tibetans in south-western Dolpo. Among the points discussed are the correlations (a) between altitude and living patterns and (b) between social cohesion and settlement types.

Ishii has been working on village societies among the Newars, Parbate Hindus, and Maithils. With regard to the Newars, he analyses one of the 'intermediate' settlements in the Kathmandu Valley, pointing out its difference from 'fringe' settlements and cities, and emphasizing the importance of the former for an understanding of Newar society. He also carries out comparative studies of the above three societies. Comparing patterns of agricultural labour recruitment, he shows that the Newars had depended until recently on intra-caste reciprocal exchanges, the Parbate Hindus depend on inter-ethnic/caste relations, and the Maithils on the caste hierarchy. His study of rituals in the three societies reveals a wide range of differ-

ences as well as similarities. Among the shared phenomena are: the dwindling of the interdependence between castes and the foregrounding of the social aspects of rituals concomitant with the weakening of conscious notions about their meaning.

Environment

N. Yamamoto and Inamura edited a book on the life of Sherpas and environment in Jumbesi village in eastern Nepal (2000). Together with researchers from disciplines such as geology, botany, meteorology, anthropology, agriculture, and animal husbandry they carried out fieldwork in the village and the surrounding area from 1994 to 1996, dealing with the relationship between human life and nature (especially plant and domestic animals) and changes in nature and society. Some notable points discussed are as follows. Sherpas there practise what the authors call the Solu-type transhumance system which (unlike the Khumbu-type) is not organically combined with agriculture. They dry and utilize plants for fodder which are usually classified as weeds. Their system of classifying domestic animals accords well with genetic relations. They have long coexisted with nomadic Gurung shepherds whose sheep graze on and manure their land, but recently there have been difficulties because of increasing government control of forests. There have been changes in many aspects of Sherpa life such as food, work, education, movement, and settlement patterns. Yuki, Inamura, and Furukawa write three chapters in the above book which deal with society, people, and change. They describe the importance that Jumbesi Valley society places on clans: a village is usually occupied by a dominant clan in Solu, and this contrasts sharply with Khumbu. Exposure to the cash economy, especially through the trekking business and the inflow of other ethnic groups, is a notable feature of change.

K. Watanabe, under the guidance of N. Yamamoto, studied the environmental utilization of sheep transhumance in Okhaldhunga district in east Nepal, and clarified the Gurung shepherds' seasonal migrations, their animal husbandry, and their social strategies for the use of pasture. The seasonal migration of Gurung shepherds is more extensive than that of Sherpa herders of yak/hybrid cow (*zom* or *zopkyo*), and there is a social practice by which Gurung shepherds use the Sherpas' pasture in return for providing manure (sheep dung) for the Sherpas' fields along their migration routes (Watanabe 1998).

Various aspects of change have been studied among the Khumbu Sherpas. Kawai (1992) has looked at the impact of trekking/tourism, Imai at occupational and environmental change, and Furukawa at environmental problems.

Studies of urban life / in urban areas

A number of scholars have studied urban areas and life. They are mainly concerned with rapid changes or problems that urban people have been facing. Some analyse more general cultural topics as exemplified by urban residents.

Y. Yamamoto has been studying Pokhara town since the 1980s. One of his studies is a survey of the social and economic condition of all its households. His computer-processed results show that the urban middle class there has not been formed to a satisfactory degree, which, he points out, hinders the growth of a proper ethos for economic competition. At the same time, he carried out participant observation in Pokhara and discovered changes in people's behaviour towards others, and in food habits, smoking and drinking, etc., resulting also in greater consumption. He has been studying *sukumbāsī*s (landless people) in recent years. Plotting and surveying all the *sukumbāsī* settlements in Pokhara, he points out that there has been a marked increase in the number of such settlements since the 1990 democratic movement, although they first began to appear in the late 1970s, that low castes and Gurungs are the largest groups among the settlers, and that there are marked differences in the way different settlements develop, depending upon their history and the kind of leadership that emerges in them.

M. Yamamoto has studied urban and suburban areas of Kathmandu after economic liberalization. A new residential area just outside the ring road, she points out, is inhabited by different castes and ethnic groups and is characterized by weaker social relations, stronger ties with foreign countries, and the existence of a homeless population. Her study of supermarkets reveals a clear change in the consumption patterns of city dwellers.

S. Kobayashi, among other topics, has been studying urban problems in Kathmandu, such as water shortage and garbage increase. He relates the difficulties in garbage disposal to administrative, cultural, and social factors, including the traditional division of labour by caste (Kobayashi, S. 1994).

M. Tanaka, conducting a study of waste collection in Kathmandu, finds it encouraging that new organizations have been emerging to cope with it. She discusses three contrasting cases in which people have been tackling the problem: a club of young people in the old city, a CBO (community-based organization) in the suburbs, and an NGO in an old suburban area. As a background remark, she points out that the traditional system in which urban households depended upon the services of sweeper castes has changed as the latter became employed by the municipal government and lost interest in working for individual households.

Mikame investigates customs concerning impurity (especially that regarding the notion of biṭulo) in Nepalese Brahman families in Kathmandu. He maintains that the customs reflect social structure and that, consequently, the more people are wedded to such customs the more the social structure is reinforced for the persons involved. He also studies the relationship between language and social structure with reference to Nepalese pronouns and kinship terms, and shows that principles of hierarchy by age and male dominance prevail in their use.

Yamagami studies notions of impurity/pollution among Bahuns (Nepalese Brahmans) in the Kathmandu Valley. She selects five words as important and divides them into three groups, namely (i) *aśuddha* and *biṭulo*, (ii) *juṭho*, and (iii) *phohor* and *mailo*. She connects the first set of concepts to the impurity of substances which come out of bodily orifices, to anything or anyone connected to such impure substances, and to impurity caused by the infractions of taboos. The second, *juṭho*, is the impurity caused by the adhesion of saliva and the impurity of death and mourning. The third category is said to be the impurity of materials related to the body and of excreta from the body surface or of matter from the body.

Development
Publications on development have been issued most extensively by JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency) and to some extent by other organizations, which I will not deal with here.[2] Aside from these, there are some who discuss development from an academic perspective. Several authors are themselves involved in the development activities of NGOs.

Fujikura's research concerns relations between development discourses and processes of cultural change. Specifically, it explores how the ideas and practices associated with 'development' and 'progress' contribute to the ongoing construction of subjectivity and social projects in rural Nepal. He examines closely the discourse of 'community development', tracing its conceptual permutations during the interwar period in America and implementation in Nepal after 1950, finding the paradoxical effects that populist development discourse apparently had in facilitating the bureaucratization of the state and the governmentalization of social life. He concludes that a peculiar blindness towards history, culture, and political processes characteristic of the community development discourses of the 1950s still typifies much of the development discourse in Nepal today (Fujikura 1996). From 1996

---

[2] JICA's activity in Nepal covers a wide range and its publications (which sometimes exceed thirty volumes a year) deal with many topics, including education, mass communication, and general studies on development which aim to give an overview of its activities in Nepal (e.g. JICA 1993). I list only a few publications per author because of limitations of space.

to 1999 Fujikura conducted ethnographic fieldwork in Salyan district villages and Kathmandu development circles, exploring local articulations of the discourses and practices of modernity in formal and non-formal education, family planning, agriculture, electoral politics, and so on.

Kamata, an NGO-worker, tries to theorize his experience in Nepal and Ladakh from the perspective of development anthropology. His main theme is how to materialize "development by the people based on traditional culture". He considers it by examining critically the process and the complex socio-cultural, political, and natural factors which affect it.

Minami, dealing with modernization and development in Nepal from an historical perspective, discusses how anthropologists can make a sharp distinction between Euro-centric/modern ideas and material 'affluence' in order to seek an alternative way for development which is independent of modern European values (1997). Further, he argues that the advancement of the development process in Nepal has given rise to a new self-image of the Nepalese as an inferior nation, and to a new criterion by which others are not classified through recourse to the caste hierarchy but according to the degree to which they have absorbed development or modernization (1999). He has also studied collective fishing in Nawal-Parasi district using poisonous plants grown in the fallow bush by shifting cultivation; he has also written on the typology of water jugs (see below 3.1.3).

Recently a Nagoya University team, commissioned by JICA, carried out an evaluation of its activity in Nepal in the areas of agriculture, forestry, and fishery, paying special attention to poverty alleviation and gender problems. In brief, they made the following recommendations: 1. technology transfer should reach grassroots farmers directly, 2. agricultural projects should be planned to change communities, 3. it should influence other areas so as to initiate a virtuous circle, 4. education for farmers should include biology, science, and mathematics related to agriculture (Nagoya Univ. 2000). A research group of the Department of Agriculture, Hokkaido University, conducted fieldwork in Janakpur in the Tarai (where JICA had carried out one of its agricultural cooperation activities) and in Sankhu in the Kathmandu Valley in collaboration with Nepalese scholars with a focus on issues of technology transfer (especially in the field of irrigation) (Osanami *et al.* 2001).

3.1.2. Geographical and other studies

Comparative geographical studies

Tsukihara and Furukawa, comparing the composition of domestic animals in Khumbu, north-eastern Nepal, and Dingri in Tibet, maintain that in contrast to the 'dry Tibet' area to which Dingri belongs, there is no dichotomy between agricul-

tural villages and pastoral high plateau in the 'wet Tibet' area to which Khumbu belongs, and that it is characteristic of the latter that agriculture is closely combined with pastoralism.

Tsukihara (1992) considers the migration of Tibetans across the Himalayas, comparing Bhutan and Solu-Khumbu in Nepal. Pointing out the ecological similarity between the two areas, he asserts that the 'Tibetans' who migrated to the southern flanks of the eastern Himalayas first settled below the coniferous forest area (2900-3500m), and subsequently above it. The core areas of Bhutan and Solu in Nepal are examples of the former pattern, and preserve more traditional social systems than the latter. Thus, Tsukihara asserts that Khumbu, especially Namche, is not typical of other Sherpa societies.

Agriculture and local economy
M. Kobayashi conducted field studies in Gorkha district in Nepal. Combining these with an analysis of population statistics, he shows that inhabitants of the rural hill region have moved from an agriculture- and village-based economy to one based on service industries dependant on urban areas. Mountainous geography, underdeveloped transportation networks, and other social and economic infrastructures limit the life strategies of rural people. As a result, the analysis shows, the gap between rural and urban areas has been growing, as has that between upper and lower classes.

S. Kobayashi (1993) shows that common field systems are found extensively in midland villages in Nepal (1500-2400m in altitude), where cropping is possible in both summer and winter. He also studied the diffusion of winter rice-cropping in the Kathmandu Valley as initiated by the peasants of Tokha in 1977, who showed how it could be done by procuring the seedlings from low elevations outside the Valley (S. Kobayashi 1992).

Fukuda (an ethno-botanist) and E. Yamamoto have written about Nepalese (and southern Chinese) rural life, paying attention to food habits, to ethnic differences, to (low) agricultural productivity, and to people's strong religious orientations (especially where rice cultivation is concerned).

Shinoda has studied the history and organization of an irrigation association in Rupandehi district. He points out that, despite the fact that the canals there had originally been constructed and utilized by the Tharus, they have been put in an unfavourable position vis-à-vis the immigrant population from the hills, which was supported by government policy. He also analyses changes in the water distribution system which accompanied a shift in the focus of agricultural problems (i.e.

from labour recruitment to water sharing) in the late 1970s.

Mizuno studies the agricultural credit system in relation to the economic development of Nepal, and establishes the importance of indigenous and autonomous savings/credit associations (called *dhikuri*, *dhikur*, etc.) in contrast to the insufficient and inefficient operation of public finance. Dealing with *dhikuris* in various places, paying particular attention to internal mechanisms and the actual amounts of money involved, he points out that the *dhikuri* institution has spread far beyond its origin in Thakali society and that it has grown to take various forms such as those found in Kathmandu in which the financial, rather than the social, function is prominent.

Urban tourism
Morimoto has studied the process of tourism development in Damside, a tourist area of Pokhara, focusing on the activities of entrepreneurs. Since the 1970s a hotel industry in Damside has been developed by local entrepreneurs. Starting at the end of the 1980s outside investors established high-quality hotels to attract more affluent tourists. As a result, hotels in Pokhara are divided into two sectors: those characterized by large capital and those with small capital. During this process some local hotelkeepers left the hotel industry. Morimoto has also been studying Thamel, a tourist and commercial area in Kathmandu.

Eco-tourism
A research group of the Hokkaido University headed by T. Watanabe, a geo-ecologist, sent expeditions to the Kanchanjunga area from 1997 to 1999 in collaboration with Tribhuvan University and some NGOs. Taking the promotion of eco-tourism in the area as their ultimate aim, they have carried out basic research on the natural and social environment, geological issues, and eco-tourism. One of the team, Sadakane, studied the socio-economic conditions of the Gunsa valley. Grouping the people, whom she calls Khambachenda (or -pa), with other Tibetan border populations, she points out that their ethnic boundaries are fluid and that they consist of descendants of immigrants from various places. Their economy is said to combine agriculture (potato and barley), animal husbandry, and trade in which butter and animals (yaks and their hybrids) are sold and Chinese industrial and other commodities are purchased. She also pays attention to the religious (Tibetan Buddhist) characteristics of the area. N. Ikeda and T. Watanabe consider the factors which decide the altitude at which yaks and their hybrids are grazed in the Gunsa valley. They find that there is a high concentration of herds in a narrow altitudinal belt in summer, and relate it to the availability of pasture and hence to the specific air temperature. In other seasons the herds tend to scatter more, which they find difficult

to explain in the same way. As regards eco-tourism, T. Watanabe and Ikeda found the proportion of pack animals (yaks and male hybrids) to be still low (18.8-21.8%), which, they think, indicates that pastoralism there is not yet disturbed by tourism. But they anticipate that changes might occur as in the Sagarmatha National Park, where the increase in the number of pack animals has caused soil erosion and a decrease in vegetation cover along the trails, as well as an increase in the number of people becoming porters (and hence being unavailable for pastoralism).

Deforestation

Iwata has found evidence of deforestation in the Himalayan region by examining the charcoal left by forest fires and humic materials in the soil. He considers the remains in central Nepal to be from the 14th-15th centuries and relates them to population growth and cultural change in the Kathmandu Valley and the active cultural exchanges between Nepal and India. He attributes the evidence of deforestation in Khumbu, eastern Nepal, to the Sherpa immigration from Tibet in the mid-16th century. He has also found evidence of intensive outbreaks of fire between the late 8th and 12th centuries in south-eastern Tibet, corresponding with the territorial and ethnic expansion of Tibet, and evidence of forest fires over the millennia. He interprets this as demonstrating that hunting and grazing started several thousand years ago.

3.1.3. Small-scale industry, economy, and material culture

The Japan-Nepal Society sent several members to Nepal to investigate small industries and enterprises at the beginning of the 1990s. They dealt with industries relating to forest products (paper making, the silk industry, etc.), the iron industry, construction, distribution and commerce, tourism, metalwork, and commerce in east Nepal, local industries in the inner Terai, and industries in Kathmandu. In the 'General Discussion' section of their research report, Nishizawa argues that many aspects of Nepalese small industries cannot be explained by modern economic theories: other approaches are needed to grasp people's life as a whole and to understand the Nepalese situation. An example is given by F. Kobayashi, who points out the difference between Japanese and Newar merchants' manner of dealing with customers in her chapter on commerce.

A research group headed by Niitsu (who was also a member of the above team) carried out fieldwork on the techniques and cultures of Blacksmiths (Nakarmis and Kamis) in the latter half of the 1990s, mainly in Kathmandu, Lalitpur, Pokhara, and villages in west-central Nepal (see AKK). One of the group, Asaoka, who studied recent technological changes among blacksmiths, especially in Pokhara and surrounding rural areas, points out that urban Kamis who have access to electricity or

gas, and hence use welding techniques, can use second-hand spring steel as their material, whereas rural Kamis, who can only resort to forging when they need to join iron and steel, have to use second-hand railway steel although it is more expensive than the spring steel. He also points out that many urban Nakarmis (Newar Blacksmiths by caste) have built up small firms dealing with car repairing, the steel industry, etc. in which they sometimes hire Kamis (Parbate Hindu Blacksmiths by caste) from rural areas. Koido describes in detail the image-casting techniques of the Shakyas in Lalitpur. A detailed description of the Blacksmiths' culture in Nepal is provided by Tamura, Katsuki, and Shiozaki. They study a village in Palpa district, a street in Pokhara, Tansen, and Lalitpur (Patan), and give an illustrated and highly informative account of the material culture of these areas, especially concerning tools, products, and work places. Minami, drawing on his fieldwork in Dhading district, suggests a typology of different shapes of water jugs (*gāgrī*) and their methods of manufacture, and points out that the techniques and economy of the Parbate Hindu smiths there has been changing under the influence of Newar coppersmiths (Tamrakar) (Minami 1998).

3.1.4. Political movements and law

Thanks to technological developments, it has become increasingly easy to gain access to newspapers and magazines published abroad and to know about political movements and changes. On the other hand, it remains the case that only a few Japanese deal with political and judicial aspects of the Himalayan countries. However, some unusual and painstaking studies have been carried out.

M. Yamamoto (1993) tries to grasp the political consciousness of Nepalese people in the 1980s by analysing short satirical plays by two comedians who have become popular among the new urban middle class from which they have emerged. The main targets of their criticism are politicians, bureaucrats, and Indians. The fact that they have not treated the king as an object of satire, she maintains, is the reason for their success in comparison with their Newari-speaking predecessors.

Inoue analyses the Nepali political system after the 1990 democratic movement, focusing on points of contrast between the old and new constitutions and the results of the 1991 national election. She lists the following points as possible threats to multi-party democracy: the existence of powerful economic monopolies, the indebtedness of politicians to outside forces, heavy dependence on foreign aid, and corruption. She also analyses the new local administrative system and the result of the local elections held in 1992. Pointing out the emergence of political multi-polarization, she thinks it is necessary for there to be constructive supervision over local administration.

Ogura, a journalist, wrote a factual document of Nepal's democratic movement. Stimulated by her ten-day encounter with the movement in 1990, she returned to Nepal in 1993 for a two-year stay and interviewed 1050 people, taking in ordinary citizens (including the families of those who died in the movement), party activists, and Panchayat politicians. She tried to reconstruct the movement by describing how individuals acted during the period from February 6 to April 9 1990. The Kathmandu Valley and Janakpur are the places she chose for description, although she carried out interviews in other places also. Describing incidents of arrest, demonstration, injury, and death as well as leaders' negotiation with the government and people's reactions to it, she successfully conveys the heated atmosphere of the movement. An abridged English translation of her work has been published recently.

Tanigawa traces the change of constitutions and political structure of modern Nepal from a comparative viewpoint. According to him, the constitution of 1990 is democratic in that it approves of the people's sovereignty, but not fully so because it also includes provisions bestowing certain powers upon the king. He also refers to its judicially ambiguous status and internal contradictions, which he ascribes to the political process of the democracy movement ending in compromise. The most noteworthy contradiction, he points out, lies in the clauses which refer to political parties: the constitution does not allow the establishment of parties based on religion, community, caste, tribe, or region, while at the same time negating the non-party system and single-party dictatorship.

3.1.5. Education

Though education is an urgent issue in Nepal, not many serious studies of it have been published in Japan. In this sense, the research work made by the Yamashitas' group is noteworthy.

Isono has studied education in Nepal, looking at statistical data, the government's education plan, and the activities of two NGOs. Pointing out various problems, including the low female literacy rate, she thinks it is necessary for conditions to prevail under which NGOs and CBOs can carry out their work on their own initiative, especially in the field of informal education.

Y. Yamashita, T. Yamashita, and several other scholars have conducted field research on education in Nepal, visiting schools, university campuses, training centres, hostels, and offices in five development regions. Their primary concern was the enhancement of the self-reliance and life standards of Nepalese women, which (they think) cannot be accomplished without improving education for girls and increasing the number of female teachers. With this in mind, they carried out

research mainly in remote places, interviewing teachers, officials, and others, using questionnaires, making observations, and also analysing statistical data. Among their findings are: a large rural-urban difference in the proportion of female teachers (higher in urban areas), an overall low quality and reputation of teachers, and the difficult position of female teachers due to social, religious, and familial factors. Their suggestions include the introduction of a teacher's license and systematic training for teachers, and especially the establishment of schools to educate girls for the teaching profession (with feeder hostels in remote places).

Murakami identifies educational problems at Phortse primary school in Khumbu, eastern Nepal. Nagaoka considers the roles of INGO and foreign aid on the basis of her short observations of two cases of non-formal education in Kathmandu and Lalitpur.

3.1.6. Studies on classics, religion, and rituals

There are well-qualified scholars of Indology in Japan, most of whom deal with Buddhist texts. Some among them have become more aware of the importance of the manuscripts kept in Nepal, though the number of competent scholars remains small. There are also a few scholars who study religion and rituals by combining textual study and fieldwork. In this period, the Kathmandu Valley has been their main arena of study.

Fujita scrutinized two Buddhist manuscripts in Kathmandu and found that they were made in recent years by copying a published version. They both contain the shorter *Sukhāvatīvyūha* written in "new Newar" (i.e. Pracalit) script; one is on paper and kept in the Asha Archives, and the other on palm leaves, kept privately but catalogued by the Nepal German Manuscript Preservation Project. Comparing these with Max Müller's and P.L. Vaidya's published versions, he concludes that both manuscripts were written utilizing Vaidya's version, and hence after 1964. He points out that there is a custom of making manuscripts for religious use among the Newars, and that they may not have been made for the purpose of making fake ones, but he points out regretfully that the palm-leaf version contains a colophon dating it to the 10th century which, he presumes, was added later.

The Centre for East Asian Cultural Studies for UNESCO under the Toyo Bunko (Oriental Library) at Tokyo published some materials preserved at the National Archive in Kathmandu under the editorship of Tachikawa. One volume is by M. Mori and Y. Mori: this contains (in colour photos) a set of 125 water-colour paintings of the Devīmāhātmya story which was produced in 1863 in Pokhara. They give introductory remarks on the present state of the paintings, their background, the correlation between the paintings and the Devīmāhātmya, drawing methods, and

the principal features and iconographic characteristics of the deities. They also give a comparative table of the plates and five versions of the Devīmāhātmya as well as descriptions of all the paintings.

Another volume is by Matsuda in which he presents pictures of all the existing palm leaf folios of two Sanskrit manuscripts of the *Daśabhūmikāsūtra*, a representative Mahayana Buddhist classic. Matsuda points out that the older of the two ('Manuscript A') was the one found by Bendall who was most excited by his discovery but was never able to publish it. Manuscript B is Matsuda's new finding. He states that Manuscript A, written in Nepalese Gupta script, may date from the 7th century; that contrary to what is often thought it does not contain the verse portion (as is also the case with Manuscript B); and that the content of the prose portion is basically the same as in modern manuscripts, though there are some differences.

Tachikawa edited a book on Buddhism in Tibet and Nepal as the third volume in a series titled *Reception and Change of Buddhism*. All contributors are acquainted with Sanskrit and/or Tibetan, and many of them practise fieldwork too. As an introduction to the second part of the volume, which deals with Nepal (the Kathmandu Valley), Tachikawa presents a view that Newar culture with Buddhism should be located as part of a 'Tibeto-Burman Culture Area'. Shima gives an account of the role of temples, monasteries, and *guthī*s in Newar Buddhism, and looks especially at the structure of the *guru maṇḍala pūjā*. Hattori describes and analyses the *bali pūjā* in the Gatha Muga ritual and includes an analysis of its mantras. Sakuma deals with the 108 Avalokiteśvaras in Jana Bahā in Kathmandu, giving descriptions of fourteen of the images with reference to Sādhanāmālā. M. Mori has studied the images of the Daśa Krodha in India, Tibet, and Nepal. First, he analyses related Tantras and puts forward four different sets of Daśa Krodha, according to which Tibetan and Nepalese images are classified. In Kathmandu he investigates the Daśa Krodha images in Chusyā Bahā and Jana Bahā, and concludes that the images have lost their individuality except for instruments they hold; but for that very reason they have been accepted into the Buddhist pantheon.

K. Tanaka and Yoshizaki jointly published a book entitled *Nepalese Buddhism* (1998), the first general introduction to the topic in book form written by scholars acquainted with Sanskrit and Newari. The book deals mainly with Newar Buddhism and is divided into the following sections: 1. History and Noted Places, 2. Manuscripts and Texts, 3. Art and Iconography, and 4. Rituals and Feasts. Seven appendices cover other forms of Nepalese Buddhism and other matters: 1. Tibetan Buddhism in Nepal, 2. Theravada Buddhism in Nepal, 3. Transcription of Sanskrit and Newari terms, 4. How to decipher Newari colophon of manuscripts, 5. Chrono-

logical table, 6. Bibliography, and 7. Maps.

In addition Tanaka has made a study of Buddhist (particularly Tantric) Sanskrit manuscripts of Nepal and has discovered several important Sanskrit manuscripts in the microfilms of the Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project. These incomplete or fragmental manuscripts had not been properly identified, or had been wrongly registered by NGMPP. He is now planning to publish romanized editions of several of them. The manuscripts in question are

a commentary on *Samantabhadra-nāma-sādhana* by Buddhajñānapāda;

Guhyasamājamaṇḍalopāyika-viṃśatividhi by Nāgabuddhi/Nāgabodhi;

Samājasādhanavyāvasthāna by Nāgabuddhi/Nāgabodhi;

Dakiṇīvajrapañjarapañjikā-tattvaviṣadā by Mahāmati.

About 90% of the second and two thirds of the fourth manuscript were recovered. There are only several folios of the third remaining.

Yoshizaki emphasizes the ritual idea for the *kalaśa pūjā* based on the cosmology of the Saṃvara-Mandala, which propounds that *kalaśa* (pot) is the vessel for inviting deities. He asserts that *kalaśa* takes various forms such as the Kathmandu Valley itself, cities, *bahā*s (Buddhist monasteries), houses with eyes on the doors, caityas, and pinnacles, and so on, as well as the bodies of Buddhist priest, Kumari, traditional *pyākhã* (dance-play) dancers, and *dyaḥ māju* (literally 'god mother' or women who can be possessed; Yoshizaki reports the term as *dyaḥ māju* rather than *dyaḥ maiju* or *dyaḥmā*).

Terada has been studying Indra Jātrā in Kathmandu. Paying special attention to Indra's pole, she describes the festival from the ritual of cutting the pine tree for the pole to the finishing ritual and compares it with other festivals that also include the erection of pole(s). She maintains that it is the festival of the state of Nepal to show the power of the ancient Aryan god combined with indigenous deity of fertility as well as to attain the spiritual power of the former dynasty. She sees a profound connection to the ritual erection of similar sacred poles in South-east Asia and Japan.

Kaneda analyses Hindu festivals and feasts in Nepal from the viewpoint of the anthropology of sport and fitness, and she maintains that some rituals contain elements which enable the participants to keep healthy. She also deals with gambling with dice, kite-flying, and swinging in Nepal and traces their connections to religion.

3.1.7. Architecture

A group of architects from the Nippon Institute of Technology carried out studies on royal buildings and Buddhist monasteries in the Kathmandu Valley from 1978. They then embarked on the project of restoring the I Bahā-Bahi monastery in Lalitpur (Patan) in 1990, which was completed in 1995. They published a book on the restoration project and its results that also contains chapters dealing with the classification, description, and history of Buddhist monasteries in Nepal. The book is highly professional and contains many pictures and diagrams as well as a chapter on architectural measurement (K. Watanabe 1998).

Kurotsu, one of the members of the above group, wrote a dissertation on the Choks (*cok*s) of the royal buildings. Considering Mul Chok and Sundara Chok as main components of the royal building, he gives a detailed description and analysis of the Choks in the Kathmandu, Lalitpur, and Bhaktapur palaces from the aspects of function, structure, planning idea, and the relation between religious images and special design. He maintains that their quadrangle structure reached its perfection in the mid-17th century but underwent changes during the period of Shah rule.

3.1.8. Linguistic studies

Kiryu has been analysing the usage of Newari verbs mainly using materials he collected from Lalitpur Newari speakers. The verbs *cwane*, *taye*, and an auxiliary *dhune* have been discussed in detail. He has published examples of the usage of about 350 Newari verbs with grammatical notations, translations, and explanations. This is accompanied with a brief introduction to Newari grammar.

Matsuse studies the structure of adverbial clauses in Newari and claims that the clauses show a gradient behaviour concerning the acceptability of tense elements. They range from a strictly phrase-based level, in which the tense element cannot be inserted, to a full-fledged level. She also studies the motion event and its lexicalization system in Newari and maintains that deictic verbs such as *wane* (go) and *waye* (come) that constitute most of motion expressions have also developed various subsidiary meanings.

Toba has been continuing his research in linguistics and related fields among the Khaling Rais of East Nepal. He also describes Khaling myths to show their worldview. Recently he published a wordlist of the Dhimal language in Roman script, which contains two thousand words with English equivalents.

Honda conducted linguistic fieldwork in the upper Kaligandaki studying some dialects of Seke and Thakali languages, especially Tangbe in lower Baragaun.

Nishi reviews recent worldwide trends in the study of 'the Himalayan languages',

or the Tibeto-Burman languages in the Himalayan region, paying special attention to important advances after 1992; he points out that more studies are necessary in typology and socio-linguistics. He refers to studies before 1991 only briefly as he has written many entries in the Sanseido Encyclopaedia of Linguistics using his own and previous works; they include those on individual Himalayan languages and those on this language category dealing with distribution, genetic classification, and linguistic features, as well as with researchers and their work.

3.1.9. History

Sahegi has written about some of the controversial points in the ancient history of Nepal such as Narendradeva's coronation year, the date of Aṃśuvarma's death, the antiquity of the Cābahil inscription, the extent of Licchavi Nepal territory, origin of the Nepal Licchavis, re-interpretation of 'Kirata', and similar topics. His strict analysis and knowledge of classical Chinese make his work dependable though it is beyond his scope to examine the texts of the original inscriptions. His translation of Dhanavajra Vajracharya's book on Licchavi inscriptions, to which he has attached his original articles mentioned above, has made Licchavi history accessible for Japanese readers. He has also been writing a synoptic history of Nepal.

Sekiguchi studies modern Nepalese history, especially the relation with (British) India. She examines major political issues in early modern history, from the Gorkha conquest to the Rana regime, taking into consideration international relations in the area and British India's Himalayan policy. She also deals with Nepalis in India (especially in Darjeeling, West Bengal, and Sikkim) analysing their political development and social dynamics.

3.1.10. Other studies

S. Kobayashi (1996) has recently studied the adaptation to malaria. Reviewing the records of Western visitors to Kathmandu since the 18th century, he points out two kinds of adaptation to malaria in Nepal, namely cultural and biological (genetic). The former is realized by seasonal or diurnal migration to lowland from the altitude higher than 1200m. The latter is found among lowlanders who have abnormal haemoglobin, thalassemia, and glucose-6-phosphate dehydrogenase (G6PD) deficiency, which accompany anaemia (Kobayashi 1996). With medical researchers, he studied Tamangs and Danuwars as examples of the two types and found that the prevalence of alpha-thalassemia is low among the former (5%), and quite high (63%) among the latter, though they live in adjacent areas (Sakai *et al.* 2000).

Ito has been studying Nepal from various aspects. Beginning with a concern for the status of women, she compares the various constitutions and family laws of 1854,

1964, and 1975, and she studies the legal precedents for the proposed bill outlawing female discrimination. She has also conducted fieldwork on dowry practices in the plains. Ito's second study concerns Biratnagar, where she studies Marwaris' industrial and business activities and their competition with Brahman landowners in the context of an expanding market economy and globalization. She also studies Mustang and the Thakalis, tracing their integration into wider Nepalese society and the world.

3.2. Bhutan

3.2.1. Studies by Kyoto-based research groups

In 1988 Kyoto University fieldworkers from various disciplines--including medicine, agriculture, primatology, geography, sociology, and cultural anthropology--formed 'The Association for the Study of Himalaya' (as it is called in English) and set out for expeditions in which they combined academic research and mountaineering. Supported by AACK (Academic Alpine Club of Kyoto) and cooperating (for the first five years) with a Chiba University team, they sent research expeditions from 1988 to 1995 to the following areas: Karakorum, Hunza (in Pakistan), Pamir, Tibet, Yunnan (in China), Nepal, Bhutan, Mongolia, Guam, Myanmar, and India. In 1990 they began publishing a journal-like series called 'Himalayan Study Monographs' written in Japanese (some articles have English summaries). Many articles are in the field of medicine, including a few which pay attention to such aspects as psychology, the notion of health, and the perception of smells. There are works on other fields, some of which I will deal with in this article.

Tsukihara examined the vertical structure of the subsistence economy in Bhutan and found that it differs from Nepal as analysed by Kawakita in that its vertical ecological spectrum does not correlate with ethnic differences because of the dominance of the Tibetan population. He finds the seasonal migration of the people (mostly farmers accompanying cattle) of the 'Central Valleys' to be the most characteristic feature of the Bhutanese situation. He also points out that the degree of specialization in commerce is low and that cultural differences are found on the east-west axis.

Kurita analyses Bhutan's ethnic linguistic and religious composition, costumes, food, and domestic animals, and he suggests that Bhutanese culture derives principally from Tibet but it is unique in that it has integrated east Himalayan elements. He also analyses the relationship between development and nature conservation in Bhutan and asserts that it has not faced the problem of rural poverty, unlike many developing countries, and that it has been successful in keeping the problems accompanying foreign aid to a minimum. He ascribes Bhutan's skilful utiliza-

tion of foreign aid to the lessons drawn from Nepalese experiences, to its policy of decentralization, and to its socio-cultural background.

Yonemoto considers Bhutan to be an 'experimental nation' trying to make itself sustainable by resorting to abstinence in the face of modernization. Adopting a similar perspective, Kawai analyses the local administration systems and development problems in Bhutan (1994), as well as its centre-periphery relationships (1995), and maintains that Bhutanese people have taken the preservation of natural environment to be their common target and have made this aim part of their political culture.

From 1997 to 1999, a research group from Kyoto University carried out field studies on education in Bhutan; the results were published in No.7 (2000) of the Himalayan Study Monographs in several articles under the general title of 'Kyoto University Educational Research on Bhutan 1997-99'. Tsujimoto, the research-group leader, outlines their aim of studying the role of education in Bhutan at a time of rapid modernization and in view of Bhutan's position as 'an experimental nation'. Sugimoto traces the history, the present condition, and future direction of education from the primary to college levels and discusses young people's concepts of tradition and modernity on the basis of observation and a questionnaire survey in three college-level institutions. His conclusion is that the government's policy to preserve traditional culture and religion has penetrated deep into students' minds: they evince a high regard for modern technology but are more cautious towards Western culture. Maehira, aiming to throw light on non-formal education, presents the transcripts of interviews with the head of a youth centre, people in Bumthang, and two Bhutanese refugee activists in Nepal. Yoshida writes on the recent policies and organizations of non-formal education and empowerment of women and calls for the need for the grassroots democracy to realize them. Yasui reports research on customs associated with, and views on, childbirth, based on interviews and observations in hospitals and other places and points out the relevance of the notion of pollution and evil spirits for understanding birth and illness. Tsukihara traces the history of linguistic and educational policies among the 'Cultural Tibetans' and points out that Bhutan is unique in that it has been coping with modern changes towards secularization successfully. Nomura presents an overview of the linguistic situation as well as of the present state of journalism and linguistic policy in Bhutan.

3.2.2. Studies by scholars outside Kyoto

M. Yamashita compares the land tax systems of Bhutan and Meiji Japan and points out that they are similar in that they both chose land tax as the basis of their tax systems and set down the household as the unit on which tax was levied. As one

of the differences, he points out that Bhutan has retained the land tax as the core of taxation whereas various other forms of taxation have evolved in Japan.

Imaeda, who worked as an adviser to Bhutan's National Library for ten years from 1981, gives a general picture of Bhutan covering environment, ethnic groups, language, history, state mechanism, society, ethnic problems, Buddhism, Buddhist art, life, and Bhutanese characteristics. In the last chapter of his book he expresses his sympathy with the Bhutanese policy of preserving her culture and traditions by reducing the pace of modernization. Imaeda also wrote a book with Nagahashi on the Tshecu festival celebrated in the name of Padmasambhava on the tenth day of every month in Bhutan (Nagahashi and Imaeda 1994).

Itonaga, who had analysed traditional Bhutanese love songs in the 1980s, traces the Bhutan-Japan relationship, with particular attention to Bhutan's foreign relations, especially with Britain. He is also a co-author of a research paper on traditional architecture in Bhutan written by a group from the Japanese Agency for Cultural Affairs (Miyazawa *et al.* 1994). This research was carried out in order to explore the possibilities of technical cooperation in renovating Bhutanese historical architecture.

Sasano, studying Bhutanese monuments, considers the historical development of Bhutanese architecture. He puts forward a hypothesis that the architectural style employed in the *dzong* (architectural complexes with religious and administrative functions) evolved when two other traditional styles namely *lhakang* (Buddhist temple) and *gompa* (Buddhist monastery) were amalgamated. He emphasizes the need for an appropriate programme for the preservation of historical monuments in Bhutan.

K. Yamamoto has written a finely illustrated book on textiles of Bhutan dealing mainly with women's costume *kira*, secondarily with the men's go, and then with other kinds of costume. She classifies textiles according to the ways they are woven, lists the names of the parts of the *kira*, and describes the types of threads, the ways of dyeing, kinds of weaving machines, the warping, design, and weaving techniques. She extends her perspective also to the textiles of the Lepchas, to Tibet, and to some areas in north-eastern India such as Nagaland, Manipur, and Arunachal Pradesh. Her previous book (1991) provides basic information on Bhutan including a guide to books and articles on Bhutan written in Japanese.

Kidokoro studies the costumes of Bhutan focusing on the male costume, go. Comparing its structure and manner of sewing with those of the Japanese kimono, she points out that despite apparent similarities there are basic differences between

them. She also deals briefly with women's costume (*kira*), belts, and ornaments.

Warashina gives an account of local institutions and administration in Bhutan.

3.3. Other Himalayan areas

Yoshizumi studied the Gujars in the Indian Himalayas, collecting information on the livelihood of several families in Uttarkashi in Uttar Pradesh and in Kulu in Himachal Pradesh. He concludes that Gujars who had been water buffalo pastoralists have been changing under the pressures of government policies and other modern factors towards becoming sedentary farmers, either directly or after practising transhumance. He also deals with the struggles of pastoralists in the western Himalayas against restrictive forest policies under the British rule, which, he maintains, were not based on scientific principles and destroyed organic linkages and diversity in the area.

Tsukihara (1993) surveyed the Hunza and Gojal areas in Karakorum, northern Pakistan, and gives a concise account of ethnic, religious, and agricultural distributions, recent changes brought about by the opening of the Karakorum Highway, and the activities of the (Ismaili) Aga Khan Rural Support Programme. He studied Gulmit village in Gojal inhabited by Wakhis with a focus on agriculture and its change. He characterizes the landscape of the area as the 'mountain oasis' where small-scale irrigation is indispensable. Besides the irrigated village land, there is a pasture land on top of the hill where there is more precipitation. This kind of bipolar structure, he points out, is characteristic of the dry or semi-dry mountain areas in south-east Tibet, central Tibet, and Ladakh.

Tsujimoto, in the same research group, surveyed school education in Hunza villages, northern Pakistan, and found the level of education there to be surprisingly high due to the activities and financial support of the Aga Khan Foundation. He also points out that school education there inevitably assumes the characteristic of learning other culture(s) because people have to use Urdu in schools, which is different from their mother tongue.

Nejima studied the changes among the Ismaili community in Karakorum, northern Pakistan. Focusing on development activities, as well as dealing with historical background on the basis of colonial documents, he points out that the Ismailis there who were thought to be closed in on themselves have been changing toward an open community as part of the recent trend for development; they have been prominent in such activities as school education, public health, rural development, and the reconstruction of historical monuments. He emphasizes that it was leading Ismaili Imams, rather than traditional local religious leaders (Pirs), who motivated such

changes and argues that this movement is related to the creation of a new Ismaili identity.

Takahashi, studying the Kinnauri language in Kinnaur district, Himachal Pradesh, India, presents a list of basic vocabulary (200 words) of three dialects and the paradigms of several verbs. His next paper presents a phonological analysis and morphosyntactic phenomena of the Pangi dialect of Kinnauri. Some of the notable points are: the existence of an object affix in verb inflection, split ergative, and inalienability in the possessive construction.

3.4. General works on the Himalayas and Nepal

3.4.1. Ethnomusicology

Fujii has been carrying out ethnomusicological fieldwork in many places of the world including the Himalayan areas. His book *Musicians of the Himalayas* (1991) deals with Tibetan, Nepalese, Bhutanese, and Ladakhi music and musicians. He points out that Tibetan music, which is highly religious, generally consists of a single melody sung in unison with accompanying instruments. He divides music in Nepal into: urban-Indic music; music of the Gaines and Damais; music of the Tibeto-Burman groups of the hill region; religious music; and other music. Urban-Indic music is said to be spreading swiftly even among the Tibeto-Burman groups. Some Tibeto-Burman groups have the custom of collective singing and dancing by young men and women whose songs are characterized by a repeated monotonous melody. Among the 'others', he points out that Newar music is mixed but considerably Indianized and that Tharu music is characterized by melodies with a small number of notes. In the main, Bhutanese music is similar to Tibetan but the Sharchop people in the east have a pentatonic scale that is also found among the Tamangs in Nepal, the Pes in South China, and in Ryukyu in Japan. Ladakhi music is mainly Tibetan but Islamic and Christian music can be found also. Fujii led a research party to Bhutan in the late 1980s and published papers, together with other authors, dealing with culture, rituals (especially of house building), performing arts (including the analysis of body movements), and beliefs concerning the story of Gesar (Fujii 1990).

3.4.2. Reviews

Tsukihara (1999) reviews the Himalayan studies of the world from the 'human geo-ecological' perspective and emphasizes the importance of comparison, ecological studies, and socio-political studies concerning development.

3.4.3. Dictionary

Saigusa has published a Nepali-Japanese Dictionary that contains more than 20,000 entries in 1,010 pages. Entries are followed by transliterations with diacritical marks and in some cases include synonyms, antonyms, and examples written in Devanagari accompanied by Japanese translations.

3.4.4. Bibliographical works

Yakushi published a revised and enlarged bibliography of the Himalayan areas. It contains books in European languages and in Japanese (with English translations of the titles and other information), translated books into Japanese, and books on mountaineering and expeditions in Russian. The total number of titles amounts to 9,398. It includes four indices.

4. Conclusion

Nowadays Japanese scholars of the Himalayan areas and Nepal take an interest in these areas for their own sakes unlike those pioneer scholars whose primary interest was in Tibet. A wide variety of topics have been studied but at the same time there has also been a convergence on certain key areas. Studies on ethnicity, environment, and development are typical examples. No doubt this reflects worldwide trends in academic and practical interest.

In general, Japanese scholars are conscious of academic trends abroad (mainly through works in English). Natural scientists tend to write in English but it is different in the case of humanities and social sciences, as can be seen by the examples I have cited. True, there are some scholars who are more inclined to gear their analyses directly to an overseas audience. Anthropologists studying ethnicity and development, some of the geographers, linguists, and those who study religion and classics are examples. They sometimes write in English (as indicated in the bibliography), but often in publications with limited circulation. It is normal even for them and more so for other scholars to write in Japanese as this is the language of academic debate for them. (Unlike South Asian countries, it is rare for Japanese scholars to carry out academic discussions in English.) Foreign-derived concepts and theories tend to be discussed in Japanese using translated or untranslated specialist terms. Thus Japanese scholars tend to stand in an indirect or one-sided relation to foreign scholars. Japanese scholarship (in the fields we are dealing with) is in a way semi-secluded because scholars are not much exposed to direct criticism from abroad. Hence there arises the danger of complacency, though there may at the same time be scope for original perspectives to be worked out.

The accumulation of knowledge in Buddhology and Indology in Japan gives a

special character to Japanese works in these genres that deal with the Himala-
yas. Strongly stimulated by Western scholarship, but also reflecting a traditional
Japanese concern for Mahayana Buddhism backed up by knowledge of classical
Chinese, Sanskrit, and/or Tibetan, the methods of Japanese Buddhologists and Ind-
ologists are usually rigorous and solid. Some have restricted themselves to purely
textual studies, but others have combined them with fieldwork. The most striking
characteristic is that many of the proper names, especially names of deities and
Buddhist sutras, have their established translations in Kanji (Chinese characters)
and these (rather than the Sanskrit or local equivalents) are used rather extensively
by scholars. Failure to follow this convention may be criticized as unprofessional
in their own circle. However it should be pointed out that such usage always carries
with it a risk that the terms used are understood with Japanese connotations that
may be misleading in some cases. We should also add that there is a certain degree
of religious sympathy for Buddhism in their works. There is nothing blameworthy
in this phenomenon in itself but it has certainly created an imbalance in the selec-
tion of objects of study. Thus there are far fewer Japanese scholars dealing with
Hinduism.

As an example of the semi-secluded character of Japanese scholarship on the
Himalayas we may take the Kyoto groups' works on Bhutan. They have developed
new perspectives especially around Yonemoto's brief paper viewing Bhutan as an
'experimental nation'. Some have tried to make use of this concept in their research
on particular aspects of Bhutanese society. This approach of making a hypothesis
into a theory is quite appropriate. But the way they handle the matter is not rigorous
enough as they tend to pay attention to positive aspects only and draw rather opti-
mistic pictures of Bhutan's development (some of the studies are not deep enough
either). Alternative interpretations might have been made if they had taken other
elements into consideration. For example, they have not dealt with the problem of
the Bhutanese refugees in a satisfactory way. If they had considered it as an impor-
tant part of the 'experimental nation', the rosy picture they have presented might
have been modified considerably.

This said, we have to acknowledge the efforts of the Kyoto groups in widening
the scope of Japanese scholarship to include Bhutan and other Himalayan areas.
Noteworthy among them is Tsukihara's contribution. As he states, he has been
stimulated by Kawakita's way of grasping the phenomena. His broad compara-
tive perspective combining his own research results with others' works leads one
to hope that he will construct a comprehensive theory of the Himalayan area as a
whole, a theory which would be different but complementary to Kawakita's theory
of vertical structure. Furthermore, the comparison between Nepal and Bhutan

Tsukihara has been making is stimulating and will become more interesting if developed further. This is a further reason for studies of Bhutan to be continued and strengthened.

It is noted here that works attempting to achieve a synthesis have appeared in this period. Kano's book on the Sherpas and Tanaka and Yoshizaki's book on Newar Buddhism are examples. As for other studies, it would be very fruitful if other serious efforts could be made in the field of historical studies using Chinese documents in addition to Nepalese and Western sources. Not much has been done in this sphere though Japanese scholars are in an advantageous position as far as the handling of materials is concerned.

If we look at the organizational aspect, we notice that there is virtually no established school or systematic university-level education concerning the Himalayas and Nepal in Japan; there are only sporadic lectures on these areas as part of courses in anthropology, geography, linguistics, etc. As a result, most of the scholars are self-educated as far as Himalayan studies are concerned. This seems to lead to a divergence of interests, rather than convergence, and hence to the juxtaposition of diverse themes, approaches, and methods. Academic research groups are sometimes organized to attract funds from government or other institutions but as those sources are competitive, and the organization of the groups is temporary, the scope for the stable continuation of study is limited. Thus 'sustainable development' is an issue for the promotion of scholarship also.

Bibliography

Works without '(in English)' at the end are written in Japanese. Where authors and/or publishers have supplied English translations of titles, I have included them as given, and the English glosses are included inside quotation marks (for articles) or in italics (for book and journal titles). Where such translations are not supplied by the authors, I have supplied glosses which are placed, respectively, outside the quotation marks or in roman.

Abbreviations:

AKK: Ajia no Kinzoku-Shokunin-Bunka to Kindaika [Modernization and the Culture of Metalworkers in Asia] (Ajia Bunka Kenkyuu Bessatsu 8 [Asian Cultural Studies: Special Issue 8]), Tokyo: International Christian Univ.

HG: Himaraya Gakushi [Himalayan Study Monographs]

Asaoka, Koji 1998. 'Nepaaru ni okeru Tekkiseisan to sono Gijutsu no Hen'you' [Changes of iron production and its techniques in Nepal] *AKK*: 1-17.

Doi, Tokihisa *et al.* 1998. 'Nepaaru ni okeru Nougyou Kaihatsu to Kaihatsu Enjo: Nougyou Gijutsu Iten no Shiten kara [Agricultural development and development assistance in Nepal: Agricultural technology transfer aspects]' *Monbushou Kagaku Kenkyuuhi Hojokin Kokusai Gakujutsu Kenkyuu Seika Houkokusho [A report of international scientific research by the grant-in-aid from the Japanese ministry of Education].*

Fujii, Tomoaki and Tamura, Hitoshi 1991. *Himaraya no Gakushi-tachi* [Musicians of the Himalayas]. Tokyo: Ongakunotomosha.

Fujii, Tomoaki *et al.* 1990. 'Buutan no Girei to Geinou' [Rituals and performing arts in Bhutan] *Minzoku Geijutsu* [Ethnic Arts] 6: 7-86 (including papers by seven authors).

Fujikura, Tatsuro 1996. 'Technologies of Improvement, Locations of Culture: American discourses of democracy and "community development" in Nepal' *Studies in Nepali History and Society* 1 (2): 271-311. (in English)

Fujita, Kotatsu 1994. 'Nepaaru no Bukkyou Shahon no Ichi Mondai: <Amida-Kyou> no Sansukuritto-Bon wo Megutte [A problem of the Buddhist manuscript in Nepal]' *Indogaku Bukkyougaku [Hokkaido Journal of Indological and Buddhist Studies]* 9: 1-27.

Fukuda, Ichiro and Yamamoto, Eiji 1993. *Komeshoku no Minzokushi* [Ethnography of Rice Eating]. Tokyo: Chuuoukouronsha.

Furukawa, Akira 1992. 'Enjo Chousa Purojekuto to Juumin no Kankyou Mondai [A result of aid projects and environmental problem in Namche Bazar]' *HG* 3: 73-82.

Honda, Isao (forthcoming) 'A Sketch of Tangbe' *Themes in Himalayan Languages and Linguistics* (proceeding of the 5th Himalayan languages symposium), Kathmandu: Royal Nepal Academy. (in English)

Iijima, Shigeru 1963. 'Hinduization of a Himalayan Tribe in Nepal' *Kroeber Anthropological Papers* 29: 43-52. (in English)

Iijima, Shigeru 1982. 'The Thakalis: Traditional and modern'. In *Anthropological and Linguistic Studies of the Gandaki Area in Nepal (Monumenta Serindica 10)*, edited by D.B. Bista *et al.*, pp. 21-39. Tokyo: ILCAA. (in English)

Ikeda, Naho and Watanabe, Teiji 1999. 'Higashi Nepaaru, Gunsa Dani ni okeru Yaku oyobi Yaku-Ushi-Zasshu no Houboku Koudou wo Ketteisuru Youin [Factors deciding the altitude of grazing yaks and their hybrids in the Gunsa Valley, Kanchanjunga area, eastern Nepal]'. In T. Watanabe (ed), pp. 23-32.

Imaeda, Yoshiro 1994. *Buutan: Henbou suru Himaraya no Bukkyou Oukoku* [Bhutan: A changing Himalayan Buddhist kingdom]. Tokyo: Daito Shuppansha.

Imai, Ichiro 1993. '"Sekai no Isan" Chiiki no Shizen to Hito [Natural environment and people's way of living in the "world heritage areas"]' *HG* 4: 94-102.

Inoue, Kyoko 1992. 'Nepaaru no Shin Seiji Taisei' [The new political system in Nepal] *Kaigai Jijou* [Journal of World Affairs] 40 (11): 28-44.

Inoue, Kyoko 1992. 'Nepaaru ni okeru Chihou Jichi Seido no Keisei' [Formation of local administrative system in Nepal] *Ajia Torendo* [Asian Trends] 61: 74-84. Tokyo: Ajia Keizai Kenkyuujo [Institute of Developing Economies].

Inoue, Kyoko 1993. 'Nepaaru ni okeru Chihou Seido [Local administration in Nepal]' *Ajia Shokoku no Chihou Seido II* [Local Administration in Asian Countries], pp. 129-71. Tokyo: Chihou Jichi Kyoukai [Institute of Local Government].

Ishida, Mikinosuke 1941. 'Gendai no Kougeika Nepaaru no Ouzoku Aniko no Den ni tsuite [On the biography of A-ni-ke (sic), a celebrated artist of the Yuan age]' *Mouko Gakuho [The Moko Gakuho: Journal Devoted to the Study of the Mongols and Mongolia]* 2: 244-60.

Ishii, Hiroshi 1991. 'Nepal Studies in Japan' *Journal of the Japanese Association for South Asian Studies* 3: 109-35. (in English)

Ishii, Hiroshi 1991. 'Nougyou ni okeru Roudouryoku Choutatsu to Kaasuto Shisutemu [Agricultural labour recruitment and the caste system]' *Minzokugaku Kenkyuu [The Japanese Journal of Ethnology]* 56 (2): 131-58.

Ishii, Hiroshi 1993. 'Seasons, Rituals and Society: The culture and society of Mithila, the Parbate Hindus and the Newars as seen through a comparison of their annual rites'. In *Vedic Altar to Village Shrine (Senri Ethnological Studies 36)*, edited by Y. Nagano and Y. Ikari, pp. 35-84. Osaka: National Museum of Ethnology. (in English)

Ishii, Hiroshi 1995. 'Caste and Kinship in a Newar Village'. In *Contested Hierarchies*, edited by D.N. Gellner and D. Quigley, pp. 109-57. Oxford: Clarendon Press. (in English)

Isono, Yoshiko 1997. 'Nepaaru no Kiso Kyouiku no Genjou to Kyouryoku Purojekuto' [The present condition of basic education and cooperation projects in Nepal] *Kokusai Kyouiku Kenkyuu Kiyou* [International Education Studies] 3: 25-59. Tokyo: Tohwa Daigaku Kokusai Kyouiku Kenkyuujo [Tohwa Univ. International Education Research Institute].

Ito, Yuki 1997. 'Nepaaru no Bijinesu Waarudo' [The business world in Nepal]. In *Nepaaru* [Nepal], edited by H. Ishii, pp. 128-34. Tokyo: Kawade-Shobo-Shinsha.

Ito, Yuki 2000. 'Juumin no Ishiki Chousa' [Research on local awareness]. In Y. Yamashita (ed.) pp. 92-114.

Itonaga, Masayuki 1988. 'Buutan no Soumonka' [Love songs in Bhutan] *Bunka Sesshoku no Shosou II* [Aspects of Cultural Contact II] (Gakushuuin Daigaku Touyou Bunka Kenkyuujo Chousa Kenkyuu Houkoku [Research Report of the Institute of Oriental Studies]), Gakushuin Univ., 21: 51-187.

Itonaga, Masayuki 1993. 'Buutan to Nippon' [Bhutan and Japan] *Chiri* [Geography] 38 (10): 28-37.

Iwata, Shuji and S. Miyamoto 1996. 'Himaraya ni okeru Kankyou Riyou no Rekishi-teki Hensen [History of deforestation in the Himalayas]' *Tropics* 5 (3/4): 243-62.

Iwata, Shuji, S. Miyamoto, and Y. Kariya 1996. 'Deforestation in eastern and central Nepal' *Geographical Reports of Tokyo Metropolitan Univ.* 31: 119-30. (in English)

JICA (Kokusai Kyouryoku Jigyoudan [Japan International Cooperation Agency]) 1993. *Nepaaru: Kunibetsu Enjo Kenkyuukai Houkokusho* [Nepal: A report of the country study committee], JICA.

Kamata, Yoji 1999. 'The Potential to Revitalize the Tibetan Medical Tradition in changing Himalayan communities'. MA thesis, Univ. of Sussex, Brighton. (in English)

Kamata, Yoji 2000. 'Indigenous Knowledge, Cultural Empowerment and Alternatives', *Contributions to Nepalese Studies*, Tribhuvan Univ., 27 (1): 51-69. (in English)

Kaneda, Eiko 1996. 'Hinduu-kyou no Sairei Gyouji ni Senzaisuru Kenkou Houryaku ni tsuite: Nepaaru Saijireki no Bunseki kara [Strategies for keeping health observed in the Hindu feasts: based on the Nepalese calendar]' *Nagasaki Daigaku Kyouyoubu Kiyou [Bulletin of the Faculty of Liberal Arts, Nagasaki Univ., Humanities and Natural Sciences]* 37 (1): 145-76.

Kaneda, Eiko 1997. 'Nepaaru no Yuugi ni okeru Shuukyou-teki Haikei [Religious background of the games in Nepal]' *Kyuushuu Taiiku Supoutsu Gaku Kenkyuu [Kyushu Studies on Physical Education and Sports]* 11 (1): pp. 51-8.

Kano, Katsuhiko 1995. 'Katomanzu no Sherupa Shakai [Sherpas of Kathmandu]', *Ronshuu, Koudoukagaku-ka Hen [Studies and Essays, Behavioral Sciences and Philosophy]* (Kanazawa Daigaku Bungaku-bu [Faculty of Letters, Kanazawa Univ.]) 15: 65-86.

Kano, Katsuhiko 1998. '20 Seiki Kouhan ni okeru Roruwarin Sherupa no Keizai Shakai Henka' [Socio-economic change of Rolwaling Sherpas in the latter half of the 20th century], *Ritoru Waarudo Kenkyuu Houkoku* [Little World Studies] (Yagai Minzoku Hakubutsukan Ritoru Waarudo [The Little World Museum of Man]) 14: 1-45.

Kano, Katsuhiko 2001. *Sherupa: Himaraya Kouchi Minzoku no 20-seiki* [Sherpas: The Himalayan highlanders in the twentieth century]. Tokyo: Meikeido.

Kawaguchi, Ekai 1909. *Three Years in Tibet.* Madras: The Theosophist Office. (in English)

Kawaguchi, Ekai 1966. *Dainikai Chibetto Ryokouki* [My second trip to Tibet]. Tokyo: Kinnohoshi-Sha.

Kawai, Akinobu 1992. 'Sherupa Sonraku Keizai no Hen'you [Change in the Sherpa society]' *HG* 3: 52-61.

Kawai, Akinobu 1994. 'Buutan no Chihou-Seido to Kaihatsu no Kadai [Development strategy and local self-government system of Bhutan]' *HG* 5: 149-58.

Kawai, Akinobu 1995. 'Buutan no Chuuou-Chihou Kankei [A note on decentralization of Bhutan]' *HG* 6: 85-92.

Kawakita, Jiro 1957. 'Ethno-geographical Observations on the Nepal Himalaya'. In *Peoples of Nepal Himalaya* (Scientific Result of the Japanese Expeditions to Nepal Himalaya 1952-1953, Vol.III), edited by H. Kihara, pp. 1-362. Kyoto: Fauna and Flora Research Society, Kyoto Univ. (in English)

Kawakita, Jiro 1974. *The hill Magars and their Neighbours.* Tokyo: Tokai Univ. Press. (in English)

Kawakita, Jiro (ed.) 1995. *Himaraya ni Kakeru Yume–Ekorojii to Sankaku ni Motozuita Sanson Kasseika* [Dreams of the Himalayas: The mobilization of mountain villages through ecology and participation]. Tokyo: Bunshindo.

Kawakita, Jiro *et al.* 1992. *Nepaaru no Shuuraku* [Settlements in Nepal]. Tokyo: Kokon-Shoin.

Kidokoro, Ayako 1997. 'Buutan no Minzoku Ishou [Bhutan's ethnic costumes]' *Yamawaki Gakuen Tanki Daigaku Kiyou [Bulletin of the Yamawaki Junior College]* 35: 63-78.

Kiryu, Kazuyuki 1999. 'A Contrastive Study of Aspectual Auxiliary verbs in Newari and Japanese, with Special Reference to *cwane* and *taye*' *Nepalese Linguistics* 16: 41-53. (in English)

Kiryu, Kazuyuki 2000. 'A Note on Perfect Aspect in Newari' *Bulletin of Mimasaka Women's College* 45: 45-50. (in English)

Kiryu, Kazuyuki 2000. 'A Collection of Examples and Usages of Basic Newar Verbs' *A Report of the Contrastive Study of Basic Predicates between Japanese and Newari with a Grant-in-Aid for Exploratory Research*, The Ministry of Education, Science, Sports, and Culture. (in English)

Kobayashi, Fumiko 1991. 'Shougyou' [Commerce], *Nepaaru ni okeru Chuushoukigyou to Kanai-Sangyou no Jittai chousa* [Small enterprises and domestic industries in Nepal], pp. 65-81, Nihon Nepaaru Kyoukai (The Japan Nepal Society).

Kobayashi, Masao 1991. 'Nepaaru Kyuuryoubu Nouson ni okeru Seikatsu Kiban no Hendou [Change of rural livelihood in the hills of Nepal]' *Chiikigaku Kenkyuu [Regional Views]* 4: 87-106, Komazawa Daigaku Ouyou Chiri Kenkyuujo [Institute for Applied Geography], Komazawa Univ.

Kobayashi, Masao 1992. 'Life Strategies of Rural Village Inhabitants in Nepal' *The Bulletin of Faculty of Sociology* 36 (1): 45-58. Toyo Univ. (in English)

Kobayashi, Masao 1996. 'Regional Patterns of Population in Nepal' *The Bulletin of Faculty of Sociology* 33 (3): 63-82. Toyo Univ. (in English)

Kobayashi, Shigeru 1992. 'Katomanzu Bonchi no Ine no Nikisaku [The double cropping of rice in the Kathmandu Valley]' *Noukou no Gijutsu [Techniques in Agriculture]* 15: 91-109.

Kobayashi, Shigeru 1993. 'Common Fields in the Nepal Himalaya', *Les Dossiers de la Revue de Géographie Alpine (Grenoble)* 11: 153-9. (in English)

Kobayashi, Shigeru 1994. 'Katomanzu no Toshi Mondai [Urban problems in Kathmandu, Nepal]' *Rekishigaku Chirigaku Nenpou [Annals of Historical and Geographical Studies]* (Kyuushuu Univ.) 18: 19-149.

Kobayashi, Shigeru 1996. 'Nepaaru ni okeru Mararia ni taisuru Bunkateki Seibutsugakuteki Tekiou [Cultural and biological adaptations to malaria in Nepal]' *Hikaku Shakai Bunka [Bulletin of the Graduate School of Social and Cultural Studies]* (Kyuushuu Univ.) 2: 59-73.

Koido, Mitsuru 1998. 'Nepaaru ni okeru Butsuzou Chuuzou' [Image-casting in Nepal] *AKK*: 89-108.

Kurita, Yasuyuki 1992. 'Buutan no Bunka-teki Aidentiti ni tsuite [On cultural identity of Bhutan]' *HG*: 3 123-8.

Kurotsu, Takayuki 1991. *A Study on Quadrangle Architectures of the old Royal Buildings in Nepal* (Report of Researches, Nippon Institute of Technology, Special Issue 91-02). Saitama: Nippon Institute of Technology. (in English)

Maehira, Yasushi 2000. 'Buutanjin no Seikatsushi no Ichi-Danmen [Production of life by Bhutanese people]' *HG* 7: 33-46.

Matsuda, Kazunobu 1996. *Two Sanskrit Manuscripts of the* Daśabhūmikasūtra *Preserved at the National Archives, Kathmandu (Bibliotheca Codicum Asiaticorum 10)*, pp. 108. Tokyo: The Centre for East Asian Cultural Studies for Unesco, The Toyo Bunko. (in English)

Matsuse, Ikuko. 1996. 'Newaaru-go no Hukushi-setsu Kouzou: Ku kara Setsu eno Katamuki'[The structure of adverbial clauses in Newari: the gradation from the phrase to the clause] *Gengo Kenkyuu no Ryouiki: Kobayashi Tamotsu Hakushi Koki Kinen Ronbun-shuu* [The Sphere of Linguistic Investigations: A Festschrift for Dr. Tamotsu Koizumi], pp. 417-28. Tokyo: Daigaku-Shorin.

Matsuse, Ikuko. 1997. 'Motion Verbs and Subjectivity in Newari' *Bunkagaku Nenpou [The Annual Reports of Humanities and Social Sciences]* 16: 17-30. Hyogo: Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Kobe Univ. (in English)

Matsuse, Ikuko. 1998. 'Motion Event and its Typology in some Asian SOV languages' *Bunkagaku Nenpou [The Annual Reports of Humanities and Social Sciences]* 17: 23-55. Hyogo: Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Kobe Univ. (in English)

Matsuse, Ikuko. 2000. 'The Basic Use and their Extentions of the Motion Verbs "*wane/waye*" in Newari' *Proceedings of the 24th Annual Meeting*, pp. 175-85. Kansai Linguistic Society. (in English)

Mikame, Kiyotomo 1991. 'Nepaaru no Braaman no Katei ni okeru Kegare to Shakai Kouzou [Impurity and social structure in Brahman families of Nepal]' *Minzokugaku Kenkyuu [The Japanese Journal of Ethnology]* 55 (4): 383-405.

Mikame, Kiyotomo 1991. 'Kotoba to Shakai Kouzou [Language and social structure]' *Iwaki-Meisei Daigaku Jinbun Gakubu Kenkyuu Kiyou Kaigaku 10-shuunen Kinen Tokubetsu-gou [Bulletin of the Department of Humanities of the Iwaki-Meisei Univ. (Tenth Anniversary Volume)]*, pp. 1-35.

Minami, Makito 1993. 'Gyodoku-Ryou no Shakai Seitai: Nepaaru no Kyuuryou Chitai ni okeru Magaru no Jirei kara [Socio-ecology of poison fishing: A case study of the Magars in the middle hills of Nepal]' *Kokuritsu Minzokugaku Hakubutsukan Kenkyuu Houkoku [Bulletin of the National Museum of Ethnology]* 18 (3): 375-407.

Minami, Makito 1997. 'Kaihatsu Ichigenron to Bunka Soutai Shugi: Nepaaru no Kindaika wo megutte [Development-monism and cultural relativism: the historical background to modernization in Nepal]' *Minzokugaku Kenkyuu [The Japanese Journal of Ethnology]* 62 (2): 227-43.

Minami, Makito 1998. 'Nepaaru ni okeru Shokugyou Kaasuto no Bunpu to Doukaji-gyou no Tenkai' [The spread of the service caste population and the development of coppersmithing in Nepal] *AKK*: 43-70.

Minami, Makito 1999. '"Kaihatsu" kara Umareru Bunka' [The culture produced by 'development']. In *Bunka no Seisan* [The production of culture], edited by K. Tamura, pp. 188-203. Tokyo: Domesu-Shuppan.

Miyazawa, S., T. Ezura, and M. Itonaga 1994. 'Buutan no Dentou-teki Kenzoubutsu no Chousa [Investigation report on the traditional monuments in Bhutan (October, 1993)]' *Kenchikui [Journal of Conservation Architecture]* 2 (1): 10-36. Tokyo: Bunkazai Kenzoubutsu Hozon Gijutsu Kyoukai [Architectural Conservation Society of Japan].

Mizuno, Masami 1990. 'Nepaaru Nougyou Kaihatsu Ginkou [Agricultural development bank in Nepal]', *Ajia Keizai [Monthly Journal of Institute of Developing Economies]* 31 (6-7): 122-42.

Mizuno, Masami 1994. 'Nepaaru no Kin'yuu-Kou "Dhikuri" [Dhikuri: rotating savings and credit associations in Nepal]' *Ajia Keizai [Monthly Journal of Institute of Developing Economies]* 35 (6): 2-30.

Mori, Masahide and Mori, Yoshiko 1995. *Devīmāhātmya Paintings Preserved at the National Archives, Kathmandu (Bibliotheca Codicum Asiaticorum 9)*, tr. R.W. Giebel. Tokyo: The Centre for East Asian Cultural Studies for Unesco, The Toyo Bunko. (in English)

Morimoto, Izumi 1998. 'Nepaaru Pokara ni okeru Tsuurisuto Eria no Keisei to Minzoku "Kigyouka" no Katsudou [Activities of ethnic entrepreneurs in the formation of a regional tourist area in Pokhara, Nepal]', *Chiri-Gaku Hyouron [Geographical Review of Japan]* 71A-4: 272-93.

Morimoto, Izumi 2000. 'Kokusai Tsuurizumu wo Meguru Nepaaru Chiikizou' [International tourism and the image of Nepal]. PhD dissertation, Ochanomizu Univ., Tokyo.

Murakami, Makiko 1993. 'Kunbu-Porutse Mura no Shougakkou Kenbun [Observations on primary school in Phortse]' *HG* 4: 103-10.

Nagahashi, Kazuo and Imaeda, Yoshiro 1994. *Buutan no Tsechu Sai* [The Tshecu festival in Bhutan]. Hirakawa Publications.

Nagaoka, Chizuko 2000. 'Nepaaru no Kyouiku Kaihatsu ni tsuiteno Ichi Kousatsu [What has kept education in Nepal undeveloped?]' *HG* 7: 127-42.

Nagoya Univ. (Graduate School of International Development) 2000. *Nepaaru Oukoku no Nourin- Suisan-gyou ni okeru JICA Gijutsu Kyouryoku Hyouka* [The evaluation of the technical cooperation of JICA in agriculture, forestry and fishery in the kingdom of Nepal]. Nougaku Kokusai Kyouiku Kyouryoku Kenkyuu Sentaa [Research Center for International Agricultural Education Cooperation].

Nakao, Sasuke 1957. 'Transmittance of Cultivated Plants Through the Sino-Himalayan Route'. In *Peoples of Nepal Himalaya* (*Scientific Result of the Japanese Expeditions to Nepal Himalaya 1952-1953, Vol.III)*, edited by H. Kihara, pp. 397-420. Kyoto: Fauna and Flora Research Society, Kyoto Univ. (in English)

Nakao, Sasuke 1959. *Hikyou Buutan* [Secret Bhutan]. Tokyo: Mainichi-Shinbunsha.

Nawa, Katsuo 1998a. 'Ethnic Categories and International Border: The case of Byans, far-western Nepal', *Journal of the Indian Anthropological Society* 33 (1): 65-75. (in English)

Nawa, Katsuo 1998b. 'Mouhitotsu no <Kindai> no Huchi: Nepaaru, Byansu oyobi Shuuhen Chiiki ni okeru Girei to Shakai Hanchuu ni kansuru Minzokushi-teki Kenkyuu [Another constellation of 'modernity': An ethnographic study of rituals and social categories in Byans, Nepal, and adjacent regions]'. PhD dissertation, Univ. of Tokyo.

Nawa, Katsuo 2000. 'Ethnic Categories and their Usages in Byans, far western Nepal' *EBHR* 18: 36-57. (in English)

Nejima, Susumu 1998. 'Isumaaiiru-ha no Hen'you to Pakisutan ni okeru Shimin-Shakai no Soushutsu' [Change among the Ismailis and the creation of civil society in Pakistan]. In *Chuutou-Isuraamu Shokoku no Kokka Taisei to Minshuka* [States and Democratization in the Middle Eastern Islamic Countries], edited by Y. Kosugi. Tokyo: Nihon Kokusai Mondai Kenkyusho [Japanese Research Centre for International Affairs].

Nejima, Susumu 1998. 'Diversity of Lineages in Ghizer, Northern Areas, Pakistan'. In *Karakorum-Hindukush-Himalaya: Dynamics of Change - Pt. II*, edited by I. Stellrecht. Ruediger Koeppe Verlag. (in English)

Nihon Nepaaru Kyoukai [The Japan Nepal Society] 1984. *Nepaaru Kenkyuu Gaido [Bibliography of Nepal].* Tokyo: Nichigai Associates.

Nihon Nepaaru Kyoukai [The Japan Nepal Society] 1991. *Nepaaru ni okeru Chuushoukigyou to Kanai Sangyou no Jittai Chousa* [Small enterprises and domestic industries in Nepal]. Tokyo: Nihon Nepaaru Kyoukai [The Japan Nepal Society].

Nishi, Yoshio 1992. 'Himaraya Gokei [Himalayish languages]', 'Himaraya Shogo [Himalayan languages]'. In *Gengogaku Daijiten [The Sanseido Encyclopedia of Linguistics]* edited by T. Kamei, R. Kono, E. Chino, 3: 495-505, 505-52. Tokyo: Sanseido.

Nishi, Yoshio 2000. 'Himaraya-Chiiki no Chibetto-Biruma-kei Gengo Kenkyuu no Doukou: Kaisou to Genjou [Trends in studies of Tibet-Burman languages in the Himalayan region: Past and present]' *Kokuritsu Minzokugaku Hakubutsukan Kenkyuu Houkoku [Bulletin of the National Museum of Ethnology]* 25 (2): 203-233.

Nishizawa, Ken'ichiro 1991. 'Souron' [General discussion], *Nepaaru ni okeru Chuushoukigyou to Kanai-Sangyou no Jittai Chousa* [Small enterprises and domestic industries in Nepal] Nihon Nepaaru Kyoukai [The Japan Nepal Society], pp. 3-21.

Ogura, Kiyoko 1999. *Oukoku wo Yurugashita 60 nichi* [Sixty days that shook the kingdom]. Tokyo: Aki-Shobo.

Ogura, Kiyoko 2001. *Kathmandu Spring: The People's Movement of 1990* [tr. of Ogura 1999]. Lalitpur: Himal Books. (in English)

Osanami, Humio, *et al.* 2001. 'Minami Ajia Kangai Kouritsu no Hikaku Kenkyuu' [A comparative analysis of irrigation efficiencies in South Asia] *Kagaku Kenkyuuhi Hojokin Kiban Kenkyuu Kenkyuu Seika Houkokusho* [A Report of International Scientific Research by the Grant-in-Aid from the Japanese Ministry of Education and JSPS].

Sadakane, Ayako 1998. 'Gunsa-Dani no Minzoku to Shakai wo Tazunete [Ethnic groups and society in the Gunsa Valley]' in Watanabe (ed), pp. 31-44.

Sahegi, Kazuhiko 1999. *Kodai Nepaaru Shiryou* [Historical materials of ancient Nepal]. Tokyo: Akashi-Shoten (Sahegi's translation of Dhanavajra Vajracarya's *Licchavikalka Abhilekha* plus Sahegi's own articles on Nepali history).

Saigusa, Reiko 1997. *Nepaaru-go Jiten* [Dictionary of Nepali]. Tokyo: Daigaku-Shorin.

Sakai, Y., S. Kobayashi, H. Shibata, H. Furuumi, T. Endo, S. Fucharoen, S. Hamano, G.P. Acharya, T. Kawasaki, and Y. Fukumaki 2000. 'Molecular analysis of alpha-thalassemia in Nepal: Correlation with malaria endemicity' *Journal of Human Genetics.* (in English)

Sasano, Shiro 1994. 'The Dzong and the Historical Architecture of Bhutan', *Annual Report of the Japan Center for Historical Research on Fortifications*, pp. 47-105. (in English)

Sato, Seika 1997. '"Rama" Saikou: Hokutou Nepaaru, Heranbu no Fiirudowaaku kara [Rethinking the word "Lama": A view from Helambu, northeast Nepal]' *Ajia Afurika Gengo Bunka Kenkyuu [Journal of Asian and African Studies]* 54: 127-49. Tokyo: ILCAA.

Sato, Seika 1998. 'Minzoku no Hutatsu no Kao: Hokutou Nepaaru no "Yorumo" wo meguru Giron to Jissen no Tasousei [Facets of ethnic representation: Discourse and practice concerning the ethnic category "Yolmo" from Helambu, northeast Nepal]' *Minzokugaku Kenkyuu [The Japanese Journal of Ethnology]* 63 (1): 73-95.

Sekiguchi, Mari 1994. 'Nepaaru-kei Indo-jin to Shakai Undou [Nepalis in India: Their social and political movements]' *Ajia Torendo* [Asian Trends] 1994-II, 66: 86-98. Tokyo: Ajia Keizai Kenkyuujo [Institute of Developing Economies].

Sekiguchi, Mari 1996. 'Nepaaru Kin-Gendaishi to Sono Kenkyu Doukou [Studies on modern Nepalese history, survey and analysis]' *Kokusai Kankei Kiyou [Journal of International Relations]* 5 (2): 99-118. Tokyo: Asia Univ.

Shinoda, Takashi 1994. 'Nepaaru Tarai no Kaihatsu to Suiri Kumiai' [Development activities and irrigation associations in the Nepal Tarai] *Toyo Kenkyuu* [Oriental Studies] 111: 25-51.

Sugimoto, Hitoshi 2000. 'Buutan Oukoko ni okeru Koukyouiku to Seinen no Ishiki [The schooling system in Bhutan and students]' *HG* 7: 11-31.

Suzuki, Chusei 1962. *Chibetto wo meguru Chuu-In Kankei Shi: 18-seiki Nakagoro kara 19-seiki Nakagoro made [China, Tibet and India: Their early international relations].* Tokyo: Hitotsubashi-Shobo.

Tachikawa, Musashi (ed.) 1991. *Bukkyou no Juyou to Hen'you 3: Chibetto Nepaaru Hen* [The reception and development of Buddhism 3: Tibet-Nepal volume]. Tokyo: Kousei Shuppansha.

Takahashi, Yoshiharu 1999. 'Kinauru-go no Kijutsu-teki Kenkyuu' [A descriptive study of Kinauri]. In *Chibetto Bunkaiki ni okeru Pon-Kyou Bunka no Kenkyuu: Monbushou Kagaku Kenkyuuhi Hojokin Kokusai Gakujutu Kenkyuu Kenkyuu Seika Houkokusho* [Studies of Bon Culture in the Tibetan Culture Area, A Report of International Scientific Research by the Grant-in-Aid from the Japanese Ministry of Education], pp.199-213. Osaka: National Museum of Ethnology. (in Japanese with a word list in English)

Takahashi, Yoshiharu 2001. 'A Descriptive Study of Kinnauri (Pangi dialect)' *New Research on Zhangzhung and related Himalayan Languages*, (Bon Studies 3, Senri Ethnological Reports 19) edited by Y. Nagano and R.J. LaPolla, pp. 97-119. Osaka: National Museum of Ethnology. (in English)

Takayama, Ryuzo 1999. *Kawaguchi Ekai: Hito to Tabi to Gyouseki [Kawaguchi Ekai: The man, his travels, his achievements]*. Tokyo: Taimeido.

Tamura, Zenjiro, S. Katsuki, and Y. Shiozaki 1998. 'Nepaaru ni okeru Kinzoku Shokunin Bunka Chousa Nouto' [A note on the culture of metal workers in Nepal] *AKK* : 151-233.

Tanaka, Kimiaki and K. Yoshizaki 1998. *Nepaaru Bukkyou* [Buddhism in Nepal]. Tokyo: Shunjusha.

Tanaka, Masako 2001. 'Dare ga Dare no Gomi wo Atsumerunoka?: Katomanzu-shi ni okeru Seikatsu Youshiki no Hen'you to Gomi Kaishuu no Tayouka [Who manages, who collects whose waste?: A comparative study on waste collection programmes in Kathmandu]' In *Minami Ajia no Toshi Kankyou Manejimento [Urban Environment Management in South Asia]* edited by M. Hosaka and T. Shinoda (Monbushou Kagaku Kenkyuuhi, Tokutei Ryouiki Kenkyuu 'Minami Ajia no Kouzouhendou to Nettowaaku' [Education Ministry Grant-in-aid for Research on 'Institutions, Networks and Forces of Change in Contemporary South Asia'] Discussion Paper 18), pp. 17-59.

Tanigawa, Masayuki 1997. 'Nepaaru Gendai Seiji to Kunshusei' [Politics and kingship in modern Nepal], *Aji-Ken Waarudo Torendo* [World Trend] 27: 30-3. Tokyo: Ajia Keizai Kenkyuujo [Institute of Developing Economies].

Tanigawa, Masayuki 2000. 'Nepaaru no Kindaika to Kokka-kan no Hensen' [The modernization of Nepal and changing images of the state]. In *Kaihatsu to Minami Ajia Shakai no Hen'you* [Structural change in the societies of South Asia], edited by N. Kondo, pp. 1-16. Tokyo: Ajia Keizai Kenkyuujo [Institute of Developing Economies].

Terada, Shizuko 1990. 'Nepaaru no Hashira Matsuri to Ouken: Indora Jaatora' [The festival of the pole and kingship in Nepal: Indra Jatra] *Dolmen* 4: 151-74. Tokyo: Gensousha.

Toba, Sueyoshi 1998. 'World View in the Creation Story and Other Myths of the Khaling' *Journal of Nepalese Studies* 2 (1): 11-16, Kathmandu: Royal Nepal Academy. (in English)

Toba, Sueyoshi (with the help of Nagendra Dhimal) 1999. *Dhimal-English English-Dhimal Glossary.* Kathmandu: Nepal National Languages Preservation Institute. (in English)

Tsujimoto, Masashi 1994. 'Hunza no Kyouiku Jijou to Kodomo-tachi [Children and their education in Hunza]' *HG* 5: 39-51.

Tsujimoto, Masashi 2000. '"Jikken Kokka" Buutan Kyouiku-Chousa-Kenkyuu no Kadai to Gaiyou [Perspective of educational research on Bhutan, "An experimental nation"]' *HG* 7: 1-9.

Tsukihara, Toshihiro 1992a. 'Chibetto-jin no Rekishiteki Idou ni kansuru Jakkan no Kousatsu [Historical process of the migration of Tibetans to Solu-Khumbu and Bhutan]' *HG* 3: 62-72.

Tsukihara, Toshihiro 1992b. 'Buutan Himaraya ni okeru Seigyou Youshiki no Suichoku Kouzou [Vertically organized structure of subsistence economies in Bhutan]' *HG* 3: 133-76.

Tsukihara, Toshihiro 1993. 'Hunza ni okeru Bokuchiku Keitai [Notes on the cultural geography of the Hunza and Gojal areas]' *HG* 4: 35-46.

Tsukihara, Toshihiro 1999. 'Himaraya Chiiki Kenkyuu no Doukou to Kadai: Sono Ningen Chi-Seitai no Haaku to Chiiki-Ron no Kouchiku ni Mukete [Major trends and research themes in Himalayan area studies: human geo-ecology and the Himalayas as a region]' *Jinbun Chiri [Human Geography]* 51 (6): 41-61.

Tsukihara, Toshihiro 2000. 'Karuchuraru Tibetan no Gengo-Bunka to Kyouiku [Linguistic culture and education of the cultural Tibetans]' *HG* 7: 79-92.

Tsukihara, Toshihiro and Akira Furukawa 1991. 'Kunbu, Thinri Ryouchiiki no Seigyou Kuukan Hensei [Spacial organization of subsistence economy in highland Nepal and Tibet]' *HG* 2: 169-209.

Uesugi, Taeko 2000. 'Eikoku Rikugun Guruka-Hei no Dasain [Dashain of the Gurkhas in the British army]' *Ajia Afurika Gengo Bunka Kenkyuu [Journal of Asian and African Studies]* (ILCAA) 60: 113-58.

Uesugi, Taeko (forthcoming). 'Eikoku-Rikugun Guruka-Ryodan no Shuukyouseisaku: Genchijin-Heishi to Futatsu no Kokka' [The British army's policy on the Gurkha's religion: Native soldiers and two nations]. In *Shokuminchi-Shugi to Jinruigaku* [Colonialism and Anthropology], edited by K. Yamaji and M. Tanaka. Nishinomiya: Kwanseigakuin University Press.

Warashina, Hiroto 1993. 'Buutan no Chihou Seido' [Local administration in Bhutan] *Ajia Shokoku no Chihou Seido II* [Local Administration in Asian Countries], pp. 129-71. Tokyo: Chihou Jichi Kyoukai [Institute of Local Government].

Watanabe, Katsuhiko 1998. *The Buddhist Monasteries of Nepal*. Saitama: Nippon Institute of Technology. (in English)

Watanabe, Kazuyuki 1998. 'Kachiku to Tomoni Kurasu [Living with the flock]'. In *Sumai wo Tsumugu (Architectural Anthropology 1)*, edited by K. Sato, pp. 125-42. Kyoto: Gakugei-Shuppansha.

Watanabe, Teiji (ed.) 1998. *1997-nen Kanchanjunga Chousa Houkokusho [Kanchanjunga 1997 Report]*. Sapporo: Hokudai Himaraya no Mura to Shizen wo Mamoru Kai [Think Himalayan Environments-Japan]. (partly in English)

Watanabe, Teiji (ed.) 1999. *1998-nen Kanchanjunga Chousa Houkokusho [Kanchanjunga 1998 Report]*. Sapporo: Hokudai Himaraya no Mura to Shizen wo Mamoru Kai [Think Himalayan Environments-Japan]. (partly in English)

Watanabe, Teiji and Ikeda, Naho 1999. 'Higashi Nepaaru , Kanchanjunga-Chiiki ni okeru Tsuurizumu no Hattatsu ni tomonau Yaku no Houboku to Sangaku Kankyou eno Eikyou ni kansuru Kousatsu. [Expected tourism growth in the Kanchanjunga area, eastern Nepal Himalaya, and its possible impacts to yak herders and mountain environments]'. In T. Watanabe (ed.), pp. 35-43.

Yakushi, Yoshimi 1994. *Himaraya Bunken Mokuroku [Catalog of Himalayan literature]*. Tokyo: Hakusuisha.

Yamagami, Aki 2001. 'Kegare ni matsuwaru Kan'nen to Sono Shosou: Nepaaru
    Bahun no Shisen' [Concepts of impurity and related aspects: The views of
    Nepalese Bahuns] *Seikei Jinbun Kenkyuu* 9: 11-115.

Yamamoto, Keiko 1991. *Hajimete Shiru Buutan [Index of Bhutan].* Tokyo: Akashi-
    Shoten.

Yamamoto, Keiko 1995. *Buutan no Sen to Shoku [(Work note) Textiles of Bhutan].*
    Tokyo: Senshoku to Seikatsu Sha.

Yamamoto, Mayumi 1993. *Nepaaru-jin no Kurashi to Seiji: "Huusi Shougeki" no
    Sekai kara* [The life and politics of the Nepalese: From the world of satirical
    plays]. Tokyo: Chuuoukouronsha.

Yamamoto, Mayumi 1996. 'Minshuka-go Kyuuzou shita Katomanzu no
    Suupaa Maaketto' [Supermarkets in Kathmandu: Their increase after
    democratization] *Aji-Ken Waarudo Torendo* [World Trends] 16: 43-6.
    Tokyo: Ajia Keizai Kenkyuujo [Institute of Developing Economies].

Yamamoto, Mayumi (forthcoming) 'Katomanzu Shutoken no Bouchou' [Suburban
    expansion in Kathmandu]. In *Nepaaru Shakai no Doutai* [Change in
    Contemporary Nepal], edited by H. Ishii.

Yamamoto, Norio and Inamura, Tetsuya (eds) 2000. *Himaraya no Kankyou
    Shi: Sangaku Chiiki no Shizen to Sherupa no Sekai* [Environment in the
    Himalayas: Nature and the world of Sherpas]. Tokyo: Yasaka-Shobou.

Yamamoto, Yuji 1989, 1990, 1992, 1994. *Nepaaru Toshi Kaasuto Shakai no
    Konpyuuta Teiryou Kaiseki ni yoru Tsuu-Kaasuto Hikaku Kenkyuu [A
    comparative study of castes in an urban caste society in Nepal through
    quantitative analyses on computer]* 1, 2, 3, 4, Nagasaki Daigaku Kyouiku
    Gakubu Huzoku Kyouiku Jissen Kenkyuu Shidou Sentaa [Educational
    Practices Research and Guidance Center, Nagasaki: Dept. of Education,
    Nagasaki Univ.].

Yamamoto, Yuji 1998. 'Chuusan Kaisou no "Kyousou Etosu" no Miseijuku to
    Hinkonsou no Kakudai: Nepaaru no Kankou Toshi Pokara wa, Naze
    Mazushiku Naru noka' [Unsatisfactory growth of the competition ethos
    among the middle class and the expansion of poverty: Why is the tourist city
    of Pokhara becoming poorer?]. In *'Hinkon no Bunka' Saikou* [Rethinking
    'Culture of Poverty'], edited by N. Eguchi, pp. 9-53. Tokyo: Yuuhikaku.

Yamamoto, Yuji 2001. 'Nepaaru no Minshuka to Toshi Sukunbashi Shuuraku no "Komyunitasu" teki Tokuchou [Nepal's democratization and its effect on the "communitas" of sukunbasi dwellers in Pokhara]' *Ritsumeikan Daigaku Jinbun Kagaku Kenkyuujo Kiyou [Memoirs of Institute of Humanities, Human and Social Sciences, Ritsumeikan Univ.]* 76: 199-246.

Yamashita, Manabu 1996. 'Minami Ajia no Ousei Kokka no Tochi Zeihou to Waga Kuni Chiso Kaisei no Zei-Shakaigaku teki Kenkyuu' [A sociological study of the land tax system in a kingdom in South Asia and comparison with the land tax reform in Meiji Japan] *Nihon Hougaku* [Nihon Jurisprudence] 62 (3): 171-95.

Yamashita, Manabu 1997. 'Minami Ajia no Ousei-Kokka: Buutan Oukoku no Tochi Hourei no Shoukai' [A kingdom in South Asia: An introduction to land legislation in the kingdom of Bhutan]' *Ajia to Nippon* [Asia and Japan] 280: 32-48.

Yamashita, Yasuko (ed.) 2000. *Nepaaru ni okeru Josei no Kyouiku to Josei Kyouin no Genjou [Research report on female education and female teachers in Nepal]*, Japan-Nepal Female Education Association.

Yasui, Manami 2000. 'Buutan no Shussan Shuuzoku [Customs of childbirth in Bhutan]' *HG* 7: 61-78.

Yasuno, Hayami 2000. *Nishi Nepaaru no Hyoui Karuto: Popyuraa Hinduuizumu ni okeru Hukou to Hunsou* [Possession cults in west Nepal: Misfortune and conflict in popular Hinduism]. Tokyo: Keiso-Shobo.

Yonemoto, Shohei 1992. 'Kagaku-Gijutsu-Bunmei no Shikaku to Houhouron wo Motomete [Towards the perspective and methodology to elucidate modern technology-oriented societies]' *HG* 3: 218-23.

Yoshida, Masazumi 2000. 'Buutan ni okeru Nonfoumaru Kyouiku to Enpawaamento [Non-formal education and empowerment in Bhutan]' *HG* 7: 47-60.

Yoshizaki, Kazumi 1996. 'Newaaru Bukkyou Girei ni okeru Hotoke no "Jutai" to "Tanjou"' [Impregnation and the birth of divinity in the rituals of Newar Buddhism]. In *Mandara Uchuu-Ron* [The Cosmology of the Mandala], edited by M. Tachikawa, pp. 304-46. Kyoto: Houzoukan.

Yoshizaki, Kazumi 1997. 'Sanvara Mandara ni okeru Upachandouha/Himaaraya toshite no Katomanzu Bonchi' [Kathmandu Valley as the Upachandoha/Himalaya in the Samvara Mandala] *Bukkyo-Gaku* [Journal of Buddhist Studies] 39: 1-21.

Yoshizumi, Tomofumi 1991, 1992. 'Indo Himaraya no Suigyuu Yuubokumin
        Gujaaru Zoku (1), (2) [The Gujars, buffalo pastoralists in the Indo-
        Himalayas (1), (2)]' *Ikkyou-Ronsou [The Itotsubashi Review]* 106 (2): 77-
        102, 107 (2): 45-51.

Yoshizumi, Tomofumi 2001. 'Shinrin Hozen ka Houbokuken ka: Shokuminchi-ki
        no Nishi Himaraya no Bokuchikuken wo megutte [Forest conservation or
        grazing rights: Pastoralism in the western Himalayas under British rule]'. In
        Minami Ajia no Kachiku to Kankyou [Domestic animals and environment
        in south Asia], edited by T. Shinoda and T. Nakazato (Monbushou Kagaku
        Kenkyuuhi, Tokutei Ryouiki Kenkyuu 'Minami Ajia no Kouzouhendou
        to Nettowaaku' [Education Ministry Grant-in-aid for Research on
        'Institutions, Networks and Forces of Change in Contemporary South Asia']
        Report No.8), pp. 1-30.

Translating a Life: B.P. Koirala's Atmabrittanta [1]

Rhoderick Chalmers

Introduction

Bishweshwar Prasad ('BP') Koirala was the figurehead of Nepali democratic politics for over three decades, from the birth of the Nepali Congress party in newly independent India to his death in 1982. For long stretches of this period he was imprisoned or exiled. And out of power: his brief stint as home minister in the first post-Rana government ended in disaster, while his promising Prime Ministership was cut short before it had run two years by the palace coup of December 1960.

Yet his political influence prevailed and, along with King Mahendra, his was one of the decisive voices in a formative period of Nepali political development. Much of the earlier part of his political career is well described in *Atmabrittanta*, a remarkable work that has recently been translated into English. Consideration of the production of *Atmabrittanta*, memoirs recorded onto tape in BP's dying days, now transcribed and translated, forms the latter part of this article.

More than a mere political memoir, however, what *Atmabrittanta* forcefully reminds us is that BP was a multidimensional personality. A striking and, to many, magnetic character himself, considerations of psychology and creativity, and of the individual, informed his eclectic socialist political outlook. Such considerations also lay at the heart of his literary work.

For BP is remembered almost as two separate personalities: the political leader and the writer. These aspects of his life's work are, by implication, conveniently divisible into discrete units. For the political scientist or historian interested in, say, intra-Congress intrigues or the struggle against the Panchayat system, the flights of BP's imagination in a novel such as *Sumnimā* must seem abstract, far removed

---

[1] B.P. Koirala, *Atmabrittanta*, translated by Kanak Mani Dixit. Lalitpur: Himal Books, 2001.

from the day to day cut and thrust of the political chess game.[2] For the literary critic, perhaps concentrating on BP's innovative and intense psychological short stories, his political life and Congress associations are unwelcome distractions.[3]

So we have been left with two distinct BPs. And, on the face of it, *Atmabrittanta* does little to revise this, focusing as it does largely on BP's political career. Indeed, direct reference to creative writing is limited to mention of the excitement of having his first short story published (p. 18)—in Hindi, in Premchand's journal Hansa—and of a productive period in Darjeeling where he wrote 15 to 20 stories after Suryabikram Gyawali persuaded him to switch from Hindi to Nepali (p. 24). Although accounts of his imprisonment make clear that writing, keeping a diary or journal, was essential for BP, here he does not choose to remind us of his fiction writing in the same period.[4]

Yet it is the contention of this brief article that if one is to understand BP as an individual, leader or writer one must start by integrating the various aspects of his life and appreciating that they may be more closely intertwined than is often assumed. And for such an understanding *Atmabrittanta* provides an excellent starting point, in particular for a non Nepali-reading audience.

---

[2] For example, one of BP's biographers does include a brief allusion to BP's literature:

In his democratic thought a current of deep humanism is flowing *which could be seen in his literary writings* and political speeches. The real problems for him were the problems of individual and social life… Koirala's whole philosophy of life revolved around the individual. He attached great importance to the growth and all-sided development of individual in society (Mishra 1985: 12, emphasis added).

Yet the reference to literary writings is not elaborated by Mishra, and indeed not a single literary work of BP's finds its way into his bibliography, much as his political publications are covered.

[3] We should remember that BP himself stated that "I am one person in politics and in literature I am quite another, it seems to me that inside me there are two beings doing two different things" (quoted in Acharya 2053: 173; ironically Acharya is both a literary scholar and senior Congress politician). I do not believe we have to take this statement at face value. Hutt (forthcoming) demonstrates, for example, that the composition and themes of *Sumnimā*, composed while BP was imprisoned in Sundarijal, relate both to BP's immediate political environment and to fundamental questions about human nature that shape his political philosophy as much as his artistic sensibilities.

[4] BP's *Jail Journal* was published shortly before the original Nepali edition of *Atmabrittanta*, and has now been translated into Hindi.

Reading Atmabrittanta

Above I described BP's socialism as 'eclectic', but perhaps 'idiosyncratic' would be a better choice of adjective. Here *Atmabrittanta* provides the major clues we need to piece together BP's determinedly individualistic approach to political ideology. First and foremost, we can feel the influence of his fiercely non-conformist and outspoken father. Krishna Prasad Koirala was an early member of the Indian Congress and an exile from Nepal following a clash with Chandra Shamsher. It is of more than passing interest to observe how BP's love-hate relationship with Mahendra, characterized apart from political differences by insurmountable pride and stubbornness, echoes his father's long-running stand-off with Chandra.

Then there comes the influence of Marx, followed by Gandhi, Nehru and, closest personally and politically, socialist leaders such as Jayprakash Narayan. Yet this heritage did not restrict him: he was quite happy to be impressed by Maoist mobilization of labour with minimal capital in China as opposed to Nehru's Soviet-inspired fascination for impressive technology and infrastructure.

Throughout *Atmabrittanta*, however, one factor remains clear and constant: it is the individual, not ideology, that captures BP's attention and imagination. Much as there is genuine passion in his fundamental political beliefs, it is when he speaks of people that *Atmabrittanta* comes alive and the words on the page become compelling. BP was never a satirist—he had too much sympathy for his subjects to make that reduction—but speaking extempore onto tape his brief character sketches of colleagues and acquaintants are revealingly direct and gently humorous. Take his depiction of the young Ganesh Man Singh (p. 34):

> He had escaped from jail and by the time he arrived in Benaras he was already a romantic figure… [he] dressed in blue trousers and a blue cardigan, and always had bits of paper and newspapers stuffed in his pockets. With unruly hair, he used to rush around on a bicycle. You could barely catch a glimpse of him before he was gone.

Or his amusing but affectionate memories of imprisonment alongside Manmohan Adhikari following the Biratnagar strike (p. 45):

> We had arranged to take turns making the tea and when it was Manmohan's turn he invariably spoilt it. Sometimes he would cut himself in the kitchen and be holding his bloody finger as he brought in the tray. He was someone who could neither make good tea nor take good care of himself. He was completely unreliable about anything he had to do. But he was very personable company.

This is a good example of BP's style: frank, entertaining and candid but also characterized by almost always having something good to say even of political rivals. (In fact, as a child he had been greatly impressed by Manmohan's father, who "liked to look for hidden meanings in news reports and to interpret them" (p. 7).) Indeed, the lack of bitterness in his recollections of his foes is amazing. He certainly makes clear that he was frequently under attack by many factions, but to understand the harshness of the criticism he faced one must look to other sources.[5] In *Atmabrittanta* he gives fair mention to the achievements of other individuals and parties: he goes out of his way, for example, to make it clear that the Nepali communist party did not develop after Congress but rather alongside it (p. 39).

This marked lack of score-settling, the hallmark of too many political memoirs, sets *Atmabrittanta* apart. Indeed, BP is often at his most touching when speaking of his one true rival for power, King Mahendra. We have no outpouring of bitterness for the years of imprisonment or the long cold war in exile: instead we find poignant recollections of time spent as the royal family's personal guest, sympathetic glimpses into what he saw of Mahendra's inner feelings, and warm memories of the friendship between their two wives.

For, just as BP's literary imagination and most powerful descriptive skills tended towards the intimate, so were many of the great political battles of Nepal played out almost as family tragedies. Despite the appearance of a cast of thousands on occasion, *Atmabrittanta* shows us political history as the interaction of personal histories. The chronic Congress schism between BP and his elder brother Matrika Prasad was a genuine family affair; BP grew up in Banaras with the family of Manmohan Adhikari, communist leader for five decades; both Nehru and King Tribhuvan, ultimate arbiters of the secretive 1951 Delhi agreement, were at different stages intimate with BP, their personal characteristics as familiar to him as their public political faces.

One recurrent feature of *Atmabrittanta* is BP's open-minded approach to individuals and deeply human eagerness to engage with and understand people and their varied experiences. This attitude perhaps comes across most clearly in his comments on women, sexuality and morality, again inspired by his father's progressive outlook (p. 54):

> My uncles were old-fashioned, but Father used to maintain a modern

---

[5] For example, see Tanka Prasad Acharya's lengthy correspondence to Jaya Prakash Narayan, in which he rails against BP, and also his direct letter to BP: "You appear to me to be a great materialist who does not have the slightest regard for truth and seeks to fulfil his selfish interests by any means" (reproduced as appendices in James F. Fisher's *Living Martyrs*).

attitude about everything, be it religion, relationships, rituals or tradition. I too have always held a modern worldview, which is the result of the various events that overtook my family. This outlook is also due to the women of our family, who would be called immoral from the traditional point of view, but whom I was able to view first-hand. My third, aunt, my second aunt who eloped, and Sahili Didi and her secret sojourn— these women forced my standard of judgement about who is immoral and who is not to be entirely different.

Here too we find pointers to the inspiration for some of BP's later literary work. Questions of natural sexuality and its repression through social or spiritual laws forms a recurrent theme, evident in BP's *Jail Journal* and discussed at length in *Sumnimā*. His aunt who eloped to find happiness must have made him think about the right for women to seek fulfilment in marriage, a need that drives the desperately dissatisfied heroine of his celebrated short story *Karnelko ghoḍā* ('The Colonel's Horse'). Lastly, there is 'Sahili Didi', who had fearlessly confronted bandits with a sword and mysteriously run away from her husband. The combination of danger, love and seduction that she represented to BP is surely a model for one of the most memorable characters in his later short stories: the wild but irresistible maid of *Śvet Bhairavī*. In this way BP's childhood recollections help us equally to understand the politician and the writer.

Translating *Atmabrittanta*

It is worth now considering the conditions under which *Atmabrittanta* was produced. It is the result of direct recordings onto tape in numerous separate sessions with little chance for planning and no opportunity for the author to edit afterwards—nor even to complete the memoirs, for the narrative breaks off tantalisingly in mid-flow just as BP is about to describe the RNAC hijacking that the Nepali Congress decided to resort to.

The recording took place during the final weeks and days of BP's struggle with lung cancer. His body was not only wracked by the disease but also occasionally overwhelmed by the side effects of harsh chemotherapy. The only people present at the daily taping sessions were Ganesh Raj Sharma (a lawyer who defended BP from the 1960s onward) and his niece Shailaja Acharya. We can assume that others who were close to BP personally and politically may have been piqued to be excluded from these closed door meetings, but the lack of distraction was surely essential to the project.[6]

------

[6] Sharma is particularly emphatic in the foreword to the second Nepali edition (following queries by readers of the first edition) that no one else was ever present at any recording session (Koirala 2055). It might have been helpful had the English version made clear that its translation of the original Nepali foreword by Sharma is in fact an abridgement.

In any case, BP's physical state, the lack of time, and the audio medium unfamiliar to a writer make for unpromising circumstances for literary endeavour. Yet the final text is a triumph, albeit sui generis, and one that has transcended the translation(s). The distance from BP's thoughts to the printed English page is considerable: they pass through the recording, the transcribing by Sharma, the editing into consistent Nepali (retaining some of the original Hindi conversations but removing BP's frequent lapses into English), and the translation from Nepali into English.[7] This was a process which was fraught with pitfalls for accuracy, and enough transpositions to dampen the directness of the telling. But this has not happened to *Atmabrittanta*: BP's voice rings clear and true, some of the bedside intimacy of the first narration remains, and the tale is absorbing and compelling.

BP always consciously strove for a degree of emotional openness that he himself compares to Gandhi's 'experiments with truth', a subtitle BP felt would also be appropriate for his own autobiography (a comparison the hubris of which his detractors would not be slow to point out). In *Atmabrittanta* he traces the roots of this outlook to his childhood (p. 7):

> All these were very emotional events that were taking place in the world and around me, and perhaps this is one reason I also developed a sentimental personality. And I do believe that it is good to be emotional, because then you are transparent. People given to too much realism are not that clean.[8]

It is reasonable to speculate that BP's awareness of his imminent death could only enhance his natural candour. The effect of this refreshing frankness is to draw the reader in as fellow confidant. In general the English translation captures the force and vitality of the original and maintains a consistent, credible voice.

There are however, some details to quibble about—first and foremost spellings. Oddities range from idiosyncratic versions of place names (Benaras, Chabel) to

---

[7] BP makes explicit mention of his mixed linguistic heritage twice in *Atmabrittanta*: "But even with such a large community [of Nepalis in Banaras], I still faced difficulty with the Nepali language. This difficulty has always stayed with me. The reason is that while we spoke Nepali in the house, outside it was Hindi and in school it was English. I never quite got rid of my confusion stemming from those days" (p. 8). This is echoed a few pages later where he also related the confusion caused by his friends' use of Avadhi and Bhojpuri at home (p. 20).

[8] Here the translation perhaps does not serve us well: 'transparent' and 'clean' are both translating the same Nepali original, *saphā*, which here may also carry a connotation of 'healthy'.

aesthetically unpleasing deviations from basic Nepali transcription (madhisay, bajey) to the plain erroneous, such as the bizarre 'Breach Kandy' whose 'k' implies an overhasty and unthinking transliteration from Devanagari. Given the sheer number of Nepali terms and proper names it would have made sense to stick to a simple but consistent pattern of transliteration.

Indeed, the use of Nepali words, scattered liberally through the translation, perhaps raises further questions. For a largely bilingual readership this will pose no problems, but there seems to be some editorial confusion as to the readers' likely level of understanding. So while terms such as *thuldaju* and *saili* are explained in parentheses at their first appearance, others (such as *pirka* or *thekis*) are left to be guessed at from context. Some readers may miss entirely the significant derogatory connotations of the shouted order to a Bahun addressed only as bajey (p. 186). The local terminology, judiciously deployed, certainly provides flavour and cultural location. But is there any significant stylistic purpose to be served by saying *shikar* instead of 'hunting', or 'bubu nurse' instead of 'wet nurse'? Sometimes the tension between leaving original vocabulary and choosing an unsatisfactory English substitute is more acute, visible through the translation. For example, allowing the Nepali *Jindabad! Jindabad!* (p. 187) is surely wiser than opting for a blander 'viva' or 'long live'. Yet a few sentences later the opposition cry of 'Murderer! Murderer! B.P. Koirala!' loses in English the essential rhythm and rhyme of the original *hatyārā ! hatyārā! BP Koirālā*! (which cannot help but subconsciously suggest itself to Nepali-speakers).

Of course, difficult decisions such as this dog every translation, but readers in English should be aware that they do occasionally lose something. For example, the translator understandably throws in the towel when confronted with the cruel children's rhyme that BP and classmates used to shout at a lame teacher. The English simply mentions 'a derogatory ditty' but that BP can remember the actual words (*laṃgaḍ dhin, ṭakekā tīn, māro jutā sāḍhe tīn*) is both interesting and entertaining. Also, one feels that the occasionally stilted English of dialogues is probably not a fair reflection of BP's spoken words. In a conversation with the departing British Ambassador, would he really have said: "There is nothing riding by a name. As Shakespeare has said, you may give the rose any name, its aroma remains the same" (p. 274)? Or is this ungainly rewording again just the result of rapid translation from the Nepali?

More serious than these minor points (which, given the overall quality of the translation it seems almost churlish to dwell on) is the lack of an index, glossary and

any explanatory notes on the characters who appear and disappear (often without second names) alarmingly frequently. Just as every fellow reader I have spoken to is gripped by the book, so are they baffled by some of the less obvious references. A brief discussion of the fascinating narrative will inevitably turn to a conspiratorial "But who is 'Surya Babu'?" or similar question. And indeed, I think it is true that despite his central role in Congress and constant appearances in the text, Surya Prasad Upadhaya's full name is never revealed. Equally, statements such as "Tarini had already left his editorship, and Kishori Raman Rana used to work at the paper" (p.211) become frustrating when it is clear that 'the paper' is an important part of a story but is never specified.

Those who want an index of names will for the time being have to stick to the Nepali edition (which includes both full names and nicknames). Hopefully, this much and more in the way of explanatory aids will be provided in future English editions. In the meantime, however, whatever occasional confusions a reader unfamiliar with the context may have to cope with, *Atmabrittanta* is as involving and exciting as any political memoir. BP covers a grand sweep of events that explain the formative period of Nepal's modern political history, yet he never loses his human touch or his writer's eye for detail and skill at conveying it. Overall the translation deserves praise: it is flowing and vigorous, engaging and entertaining. It allows the reader to feel that BP is speaking to them directly, personally. This is the lasting impression of reading *Atmabrittanta* and the great achievement of BP, his transcriber, and his translator.

References

Acharya, Narahari 2053 V.S. [1996-7]. 'Biśveśvarprasād Koirālāko Sumnimā Upanyāsle Prastūt Gareko Jīvan-Darśan'. In *Biśveśvarprasād Koirālā Samālocanā ra Bicārmā* edited by Jivanchandra Koirala. Kathmandu: B.P Anusandhān tathā Sevā Kendra. pp.167-75.

Fisher, James 1998. *Living Martyrs: Individuals and revolution in Nepal*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Hutt, Michael (forthcoming). 'Reading Sumnima'.

Koirala, B.P. 2054 V.S. (1998; Hindi translation 1999). *Jail Journal*. Lalitpur: Jagadamba Press.

Koirala, B.P. 2055 V.S. (1999, 2nd edition) *Ātmabrittānta*. Lalitpur: Jagadamba Press.

Mishra, Shashi P. 1985. *B.P. Koirala: A case study in Third World democratic leadership*. Bhubaneswar/Varanasi: Konark Publishing House.

BOOK REVIEWS

Pilgrimage in Tibet edited by Alex McKay. London: Curzon Press, 1998. 228 pp.

Reviewed by Maria Phylactou

Readers of this journal will be familiar with recent writing on Tibet and the Himalayan region concerning the subjects of space, place, and landscape. One strand of this writing relates to specifically western images of Tibet as a sacred space. The popular and enduring image of Tibet as Shangri-la, a distorting representation in which Tibet is apparently detached from its geographical and historical referents and transformed by the Western imagination into a placeless utopia is one that many writers have now meticulously documented, analysed, and tried, more or less successfully, to deconstruct. Peter Bishop's (1989) study of Western travel writing is especially well known; others have focused on representations of Tibet in history, accounts of Buddhism, and in Western popular culture.

Another strand of writing examines Tibetan ideas about space and ideas that Tibetans hold about particular places, and types of places, at particular times, drawing also on textual sources. Individual studies provide insights into highly situated understandings of place, which also function as a much needed critique of the distorting representations alluded to above. With this substantial body of firmly grounded ethnography and textual source material, generalization and theorization about Tibetan notions of space may proceed rather more cautiously.

The main focus of this literature is on sites of religious importance: 'sacred landscapes'. There is still relatively little documentation of how Tibetan communities live in, and interact with, their immediate environments. The middle ground between 'households' and 'sacred mountains' remains to be covered, while religion does not figure in recent discussions of development. Beyond Tibetan studies, the literature on Buddhist ideas of nature and the environment has also grown. Drawn from textual sources and oriented towards philosophical themes, it seems even further removed from lived experience.

Pilgrimage in Tibet is a welcome addition to the growing body of literature on place. It adds to our knowledge about particular places and pilgrimage sites in Tibet, and our understanding of the pilgrimage process among Tibetan people. The ten papers of this collection were presented at a conference on pilgrimage held in Leiden in 1996, and organized by Alex McKay. Alexander Macdonald has contributed a foreword. Individual papers highlight different aspects. Pilgrimage events may cut across all manner of geographical, cultural, religious, and political boundaries: we encounter Indian and Western pilgrims in Tibet, and Tibetan pilgrims in

India. There are professional pilgrims, pilgrim-traders, and tourist pilgrims; tourism may overlap or indeed compete with pilgrimage. Pilgrimage, as much recent anthropological writing has shown, is simply not a homogeneous category, nor is it uniformly experienced or described. The focus has moved away from the ritual process.

In this collection a historical approach is at least partially privileged, foregrounding some of the changes that have occurred over time at particular sites, and to particular pilgrimage events. It sheds light on processes connected with the establishment, systematization, growth and, occasionally, decline, of particular sites; their possible development into arenas of contestation; the possible cessation and subsequent revival of pilgrimage events—changes that relate as much to an economic and political canvas, the worldly setting of which pilgrimage is a part, as to religious phenomena alone.

Drawing on a wide range of textual and ethnographic material relating to well-known pilgrimage sites in Nepal and Tibet, Katia Buffetrille discusses the process whereby a cult linked to a territorial god or local deity (*yul lha*) is incorporated over time into a more encompassing Buddhist ritual matrix. The landscape is perceptually reconfigured according to more universal Buddhist (mandalic) models, and may become the focus of large-scale pilgrimage (*gnas skor*). Parallels are drawn with the process of Sanskritization. Buffetrille notes that cults associated with sacred mountains (*gnas ri*) are often composite in character: neither wholly Buddhist, nor non-Buddhist. Brigitte Steinmann's paper illustrates an analogous process of 'Buddhicization' as it occurred in Sikkim. She draws on a history written by the Maharaja of Sikkim in the early 20th century, and focuses on the creation of sacred sites by a religious elite and the submission of local powers.

McKay's introduction and the paper by van Spengen, a geographer, provide useful insights into some of the distinctive aspects of Tibetan pilgrimage sites. Van Spengen highlights the 'geographicity' of the Tibetan pilgrim world, its 'written-in-the-earth quality', noting that sacredness derives from landscape and monuments alike, each often imaged in terms of the other. He discusses the economic aspects and contexts of pilgrimage, urban pilgrimage centres, and the trade that occurred there. Trade forms the subject of John Clarke's paper on the Hindu Gosains who, during the 18th and 19th centuries, made annual visits to Tibetan pilgrimage sites, bringing precious stones and returning with musk, yaktails, and gold.

Tibetan pilgrimage accounts provide an important narrative frame concerning people as well as places: pilgrimages often feature in individual biographies. Per Kvaerne and Hanna Havnevik both write about individuals for whom pilgrimage

became a way of life during certain periods. Hanna Havnevik draws on the biography of Jetsun Lochen Rinpoche, a female religious practitioner with links to the Rime movement, who travelled widely in the Himalayan region and Tibet between the 1860s and early 1900s, and became highly respected. Havnevik suggests that the pilgrimage process itself contributed to an accumulation of sanctity within her, though her biography also testifies to the hardship and prejudice she sometimes faced, as did so many female practitioners. The (1957) biography of Khyung-sprul 'Jigs-med nam-mkha'i rdo-rje, discussed by Per Kvaerne, relates how this Tibetan Bonpo pilgrim travelled around India and the Himalayan region on several occasions between the l920s and 1940s, visiting Bon and Buddhist sites alike. He produced several publications, founded a monastery in western Tibet, and suppressed local practices of animal sacrifice in the worship of mountain gods.

The collection contains three different views of Mount Kailash in western Tibet. Andrea Loseries-Leick examines references to Kailash/Meru in various early sources and reviews its significance in the Hindu, Jain, Bon and Buddhist traditions, showing how its sacredness is portrayed in each. Alex McKay examines the development of Kailash as a site of Hindu pilgrimage. Drawing on Indian classical sources, he argues that, while renunciates may have frequented the area from early times, there is little evidence of ordinary Hindu pilgrims until much later. Modern British sources indicate a significant increase in the number of Indian pilgrims to Kailash in the early 20th century. Winand Callewaert's personal narrative of his 1996 pilgrimage to Kailash oscillates between the highs and lows of an exacting journey, the physical hardships and moments of spiritual insight.

The final article is an engaging account by Peng Wenbin of the revival of a Bonpo pilgrimage to the sacred mountain of rDza-dkar in Sichuan during the 1980s among a local Tibetan community. For several years the pilgrimage flourished, only to decline with the increase of tourism to the area, which a guide book describes as 'a holy land of Nature to which thousands upon thousands of tourists pay homage'.

The juxtaposition of pilgrimage and tourism returns us, by another route, to some of the different conceptualizations of sacred place mentioned at the outset. It reminds us that sacredness can be constituted in a multiplicity of ways which may at times converge, whilst the contemporary idiom of pilgrimage brings into relation quite different constructions of place in a changing ecology of the sacred. Future studies may begin to shed more light on these different aspects, on whether and how they interact and influence each other, and on the shifting and multiple significance of pilgrimage as it is understood and practised in the present. While *Pilgrimage in Tibet* focuses mainly on the historical dimension of this diversity, it is essential

reading for anyone interested in understanding the phenomenon as it is developing now.

Ladakh: Culture, history, and development between Himalaya and Karakoram edited by Martijn van Beek, Kristoffer Brix Bertelsen and Poul Pedersen. (Recent Research on Ladakh 8). Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 1999. 414pp. ill.

Reviewed by Maria Phylactou

The first colloquium for Ladakh studies was held in Konstanz in 1981 and its proceedings were published as *Recent Research on Ladakh*. The International Association for Ladakh Studies was set up at the third conference in Herrnhut in 1987, largely at the initiative of Henry Osmaston who has guided the Association through its first ten years and to whom this volume is dedicated. The volume includes an account of his remarkable career as forester, farmer, geography lecturer and mountaineer. In 1993 and 1999 IALS meetings were held in Ladakh. Ten of the contributors to this volume are from the region and attended the colloquium in Moesgard in 1997.

The editors remark that the collection "reflects both the depth and breadth of recent research on Ladakh". One is certainly struck by the sheer number of papers (27 in all) and the variety of topics. The collection does not include editors Martijn van Beek and Kristoffer Brix Bertelsen's own work on practices of representation in Ladakh, an important recent contribution to Ladakh studies. A brief introduction might have helped guide the non-specialist through the recent history of the field, identifying particular interests, trends, and broader regional and theoretical contexts.

The regional scope of Ladakh studies has been significantly broadened with the addition of studies of some of the nomadic communities of Changthang, and of the region's Muslim communities, especially in the district of Kargil in the west. One of the papers relates to the Northern Areas of Pakistan.

Monisha Ahmad describes the annual salt trek to Tso Kar lake in Rupshu, east Ladakh. Salt extraction began here after the cessation of the traditional salt trade with west Tibet in the 1960s, and continues today despite the availability of subsidized sea salt. In the l970s and 1980s the rights of the Rupshu nomads to salt extraction and grazing at the lake were contested by nomads from Kharnak. The

nomadic community of Kharnak is discussed by Pascale Dollfus. The territory of Kharnak is protected by a number of named local deities associated with particular mountain peaks and worshipped at small shrines, which Dollfus contrasts with central Ladakh where local deities are not associated with particular peaks, which are neither 'mountain deities', nor places of pilgrimage.

The village of Yangthang in a northern side valley of the Indus in Sham, western Ladakh, is discussed by Reinhard Herdick. Established in the mid-l9th century by the founder of the nearby monastery of Rizong, and on its land, the settlement maintains strong links with the monastery. The paper contains a wealth of detail on its households, agriculture, and relations with the monastery. Still further west lies Hanu, a village at the crossroads of 'Leh, Kargil, and Baltistan', vividly described in a short piece by Sonam Phuntsog. According to the myths, it was originally settled by people from Gilgit; later it came to be annexed by the kings of Ladakh; in the 18th century the villagers converted to Buddhism. The ritual life of the village preserves something of this distinctive and rich identity.

Until now there have been few studies of religion or ritual among Ladakh's Muslim communities, but this volume contains two accounts of Muharram: one in Leh, and one in Kargil district. David Pinault describes the procession held by Leh's Shia community on the occasion of Ashura, the tenth day of Muharram, which commemorates the death of Husain, grandson of the Prophet, on the plain of Karbala. Buddhists are present as onlookers, and are invited to the matam serai for a 'funeral feast' on the fourteenth day. The procession also includes a group of Sunnis who do not, however, participate in the gestures of lamentation. Prior to the l950s, the Shia community did not commemorate Muharram publicly, whilst Sunnis only began to participate in any number after 1989. Nicky Grist presents an account of Muharram as she observed it in the Suru valley south of Kargil in 1994. Here two local Shia factions form separate processions which converge at certain points. In the 1960s and '70s one of the factions was associated with millenarian beliefs.

Martin Sokefeld writes about the Northern Areas of Pakistan and traces the emergence in Gilgit, in the late 1980s, against a background of continuing demands for political reform, of a discourse emphasizing a common historical and cultural identity across the region, despite its ethnic and linguistic heterogeneity.

Several contributions deal with historical material. John Bray and Chris Butters examine the role played by the Bhutanese Drukpa Kagyu lama Jamgon Ngawang Gyaltshen, who was sent as head lama to the palace at Leh and stayed in Ladakh for several years, in consolidating relations between Ladakh and Bhutan in the 18th century. Nawang Tsering Shakspo discusses the teachers of the Ladakhi kings, and

in particular the role of the seventeenth-century Drukpa lama, Stagtsang Raspa, and his later incarnations; whilst a paper by Peter Marczell concerns the teachers of Alexander Csoma de Koros, the nineteenth-century pioneer of Tibetan studies, at Dzongkhul monastery in Zanskar.

Two of the papers on Ladakhi history help to place the discussions concerning recent economic development in wider context. Janet Rizvi tells the story of the valuable trade in shawl wool that passed through Ladakh. The trade had ceased completely by the 1960s, though pashmina is still produced in Ladakh, its value soaring in recent years. Abdul Ghani Sheikh's account of the Ladakhi economy over the last two centuries highlights the economic hardships of the Dogra period: forced labour and debt were especially heavy burdens. Nowadays, he writes, Ladakhis are comparatively well off, but he notes, as do the papers on development, the move away from agriculture and an increasing reliance on subsidized food imports.

Mohammed Deen Darokhan provides a wide-ranging discussion of the significance of traditional agriculture in Ladakh and considers how it can be made more economically viable and ecologically sustainable, whilst Sonam Dawa provides extensive quantitative material which documents the remarkable scale of demographic and economic change over the last 40 years.

In development terms, the district of Kargil has in the past been overshadowed by Leh. Mohammed Jaffar Akhoon considers its potential for tourism. Mohammed Raza Abassi looks at the role of the Youth Voluntary Forum Kargil, established in 1990, in guiding the younger generation, especially by providing educational opportunities and facilities for poorer members of the community. Kaneez Fatima discusses the development of women's education and employment opportunities in Kargil, where women were less likely to receive an education in the past, and female literacy is low. Numbers have increased, but the drop-out rate remains high.

Several papers highlight women's central role in Ladakhi agriculture, and their increasing workloads and responsibility as more men are employed outside the villages. With fewer women in paid employment, women's work and contributions to the household tend to be undervalued. Katherine Hay notes some curtailment in female mobility, more widespread notions of female purity, and greater polarization in gender relations. Regarding women's centrality in the household, she suggests that a traditional 'site of power' may be turning into a 'site of marginalization'. Spalzes Angmo discusses activities taken up by the Women's Welfare Society, founded in 1994. Growing vegetables for sale has provided a significant livelihood, and village women stress the importance of continuing to teach children traditional farming methods, besides school education. David Sonam Dawa points out that

education in Ladakh needs to address the very specific needs of the society, especially of its isolated village communities. He highlights the demanding nature of the present curriculum, and the multiple languages that Ladakhi students are routinely required to learn.

Language features in two further papers. Bettina Zeisler notes the absence of Ladakhi as a medium of instruction in medium and higher education and is critical of what she sees as the 'passive assimilation' and use of foreign loanwords in Ladakhi. She expresses concern for the future of the language and advocates a means of writing the 'ordinary' (i.e. spoken) language that retains a recognizable form of (classical) Tibetan orthography. Anandamayee Ghosh suggests that the form of Ladakhi used in the Gesar epic may be a distinct literary language akin to literary Tibetan.

Finally, John Clarke looks at the development, during recent decades, of Ladakhi metal stoves. Neil Howard discusses the dating of ancient Ladakhi painted pottery. Mick Khoo and Tsering Norbu Martse present a highly readable account of Tibetan Buddhist cosmology and Ladakhi beliefs about solar and lunar eclipses; Khoo describes his own experience of a partial solar eclipse in Ladakh in 1995. Kim Gutschow describes the events at the centre of the *smyung gnas* fast at Karsha in Zanskar, concluding that ideals of renunciation undermine norms of hospitality only, finally, to reaffirm them through the elaborate exchanges of foods that follow the fast.

This is an important collection covering a broad range of subjects that will be of value to anyone interested in Ladakh, and Himalayan studies more generally, though its very breadth leads me to wonder whether the proceedings of future colloquia might not benefit from being thematically arranged and more fully introduced and discussed.

Tibetan Mountain Deities: Their cults and representations edited by Anne-Marie Blondeau. Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1998. 214 pp., maps, photographs.

Reviewed by Martin Gaenszle

In recent years the religious significance of mountains in the Himalayas has been the object of growing scholarly interest, and this has resulted in a number of fascinating and valuable descriptions and discussions. The present volume is one of the latest contributions to this field. It is the outcome of a panel at the International

Association for Tibetan Studies conference held in Graz in 1995, but it can also be seen as a sequel to the volume *Reflections of the Mountain: Essays on the social meaning of the mountain cult in Tibet and the Himalayas,* edited by Anne-Marie Blondeau and Ernst Steinkellner, 1996 (reviewed by András Höfer in EBHR 14, 1998). Many of the contributors to the latter volume are also represented in this one, providing further aspects of their studies (in the same or other regions), thus adding to the richness of description and strengthening the argument. Unsurprisingly, many of the earlier volume's themes reappear, but there are also new ones which deserve special attention.

To begin with, I will take a look at the central issue, which is the 'red thread' running through all the studies: namely the question of the specific characteristics of Tibetan mountain deities. Like its predecessor, this volume presents a broad spectrum of variations on a theme. The first section contains five papers dealing with Tibetan cultures proper, in the sense that these are traditions little affected by non-Tibetan ones. Two of the papers give vivid accounts of rituals in which the mountain as such is at the centre of religious activity. Katja Buffetrille provides us with a stimulating study of a pilgrimage to a mountain which can erase the defilements of incest. Here the *yul lha* (territorial divinity) acts as a divine judge, and it seems that because moral transgression has offended this divinity, it also has the power to pardon the offence. Schicklgruber's paper deals with a martial horse-race in Dolpo at the foot of a revered mountain. In this case the *yul lha* appears as a political force which traditionally 'selects' the leaders of the village community. In both cases, the mountain divinity emerges as an ancestral power which regulates the moral as well as natural order on its territory. In the other three papers in this section, the situation is historically more complex: the mountain deity appears as the protector of the Buddhist doctrine and is iconographically represented in anthropomorphic form. Diemberger and Hazod deal with two fierce protective divinities in southern Tibet, both depicted as 'horsemen in red', whose history can be traced back with the help of texts and oral traditions. Similarly, Pommaret discusses the 'lord of treasure' of a hidden valley (*sbas yul*) in Bhutan. In these three cases the authors try to reconstruct the development from a pre-Buddhist deity (associated with ancestors and the land) to a Buddhist divinity who has been pacified and integrated into the pantheon as a protector (*chos skyong*). It is interesting that, even though the influence of the Buddhist doctrine is quite dominant, the possession of a medium by the deity still occurs in all three contexts. This might be seen as a kind of 'return of the suppressed' and indicates a tension to which I shall return below.

The six papers of the second section deal with cases from the margins of the Tibetan linguistic and cultural zone. To some extent this was also the case in the previous

volume, but here the scope is further extended, both regionally (with papers on Lahul and Amdo) and culturally (with a paper on a Kiranti group). Stutchbury provides another interesting case of a mountain which is worshipped as the protector of a whole region, Lahul. Here we also find the recurring pattern of a medium's possession by the deity and its request for blood sacrifice. What is unique in this case is that here blood sacrifice is locally seen as Hindu influence rather than as an archaism. This shows how important it is to consider the larger political context in order to understand local interpretations, a point also stressed by Steinmann in her study of constructions of national identity in Sikkim. Likewise, Tautscher examines the changing meanings and appropriations of Kalingchok and Sailung, two mountains in eastern Nepal, in the context of Hindu-Buddhist rivalry. Her study shows how two mountains may be locally conceptualized in terms of a complementary opposition: male vs. female, pure offerings vs. blood sacrifice, death rituals vs. life-giving rituals, etc. However, as Tautscher makes clear, these meanings are not part of a timeless structure, but are the result of long-standing historical struggles. That mountain deities are often heavily contested is not surprising if one considers their territorial and political significance. Ramble's study of territorial divinities in southern Mustang nicely demonstrates that the process of Tibetanization which began more than five hundred years ago is still incomplete, if ritual recitations for the local territory of the village are taken into account. The pagan priest in one village intermittently uses a language which is otherwise long forgotten. Ramble concludes that "the notion of place appears to be marked by a relatively high degree of cultural conservatism" (p. 139). One might perhaps go further: could the code-switching not also be seen as a form of resistance?

With the latter paper we have already moved somewhat away from the 'classical' complex of mountain deities (the term is not used by Ramble in this context). What is of central importance here is the village territory, and Ramble rightly stresses the notion of place. This is also the focus of Forbes' paper on the Yamphu Rai. Although this Kiranti group is only distantly related to Tibetan ones, the inclusion of this paper in the present volume is a welcome enrichment of the comparative perspective. Among the Rai too, the village territory, closely associated with a spring, is a place linked to the memory of first ancestors, and its cult is an expression of legitimate land ownership and political power (the notion of *tsawa* has been described in more detail in Forbes 1995). Though mountains are not at the centre of this religious tradition, it is the whole surrounding landscape which is the focus and imaginary stage of ritual activity. Shamans and priests go on ritual journeys through local valleys, they commemorate ancestral movements and migrations, and thereby renew the forces of fertility and prosperity. In particular, the notion of an external soul invites further comparison with Tibetan concepts, such as the *sku bla*

discussed by Pommaret.

It becomes clear that one has to be careful not to essentialize the concept of mountain deities (a point which is also stressed in Blondeau's introduction), since many of these phenomena share only a kind of family resemblance. It seems that in the local terminologies the concept of 'mountain' is not always prominent. In the last two cases mentioned above we have seen that it is mainly the territory which is revered. The two papers in the third section lead us away from the Himalayas to Mongolia and beyond. Birtalan's preliminary research report on Mongolian stone cairns (which is rather overly concerned with typologizing) focuses on the material shrine and form of worship. There are obvious similarities with the shrines of the Tibetan cases, but this is not further discussed. The last (very short) paper by Uray-Köhalmi takes the most general perspective by looking at the marriage of mountains in various traditions. Here the author gets somewhat carried away by a search for Eliade-style archetypes, and what is discussed under the heading of 'mountain deities' is a rather wide category, including the Tungus master of beasts.

The papers in this volume provide an immensely rich documentation, including in-depth analyses of the varied forms of mountain worship in the Tibetan cultural sphere. But there is another theme which recurs in almost all the papers and appears to be of equal importance to the theme of mountain deities: this is the theme of cultural assimilation and subjugation. In practically all the cases presented here, the question sooner or later arises as to how an oral pre-Buddhist, non-Buddhist or pagan cult (Ramble gives good reasons for favouring the latter term) was eventually confronted with a scriptural tradition (mainly Buddhism, but also Hinduism) and as a consequence was in some way transformed, and often appropriated. The process of Buddhicization is so central to these studies that the volume can also be read as a detailed documentation of this phenomenon with reference to the issue of sacred space. It demonstrates, for example, how the relationship to the landscape undergoes fundamental changes, how place (as Ramble, for example, demonstrates) is substituted by a more abstract realm (cf. also Bickel & Gaenszle for a related discussion), and that the project of nation-building is an important force in the reformulation of such religious concepts (Steinmann). The recurrent theme of mediumship is particularly striking: here the question arises as to why ferocious, blood-thirsty territorial spirits are the ones to come into the body of a medium. Pommaret suggests that it is a way to neutralize them, but one could go further and see it as a 'taming' of the god, as was argued by Samuel (1993: 196, quoted by Forbes), which, of course, is a well-known topos. These are issues of more general relevance, and one wonders why the authors have not linked their discussions more often to debates in Himalayan as well as South Asian anthropology (e.g. those

dealing with Hinduization, Sanskritization, universalization vs. parochialization, inclusivism, dialogue etc.).

As in the preceding volume, the strength here lies in the 'thick description' and the combination of philological (Tibetological) and anthropological expertise. One should note that not all contributions are equally accessible to the non-expert reader: for instance, one paper is in Tibetan. Anne-Marie Blondeau's introduction gives a good overview of the contributions, but there is no attempt to situate the papers within a larger theoretical framework, as was done by Gingrich in the previous volume. This would have been helpful, because the papers contain a number of issues which are of wider interest in anthropological theory, such as the tension between the local and the regional/national, or the problematic concepts of syncretism and hybridity. But, considering the richness of the material and the great variety of papers it was perhaps wise to leave such generalizations to the reader and future discussions. The book is illustrated by various photographs of good quality. The one on the cover epitomizes the complex issue: it shows a radiator grill of a car along with prayer flags offered to a territorial god.

References

Bickel, Balthasar & Martin Gaenszle (eds) 1999. *Himalayan Space: Cultural horizons and practices.* Zürich: Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich.

Forbes, Ann Armbrecht 1995. 'The Boundary Keepers: The poetry and politics of land in northeastern Nepal'. (Unpublished PhD thesis, Harvard University).

Samuel, Geoffrey 1993. *Civilized Shamans: Buddhism in Tibetan societies.* Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press.

Himalaya: Past and Present, Vol. IV 1993-94 edited by Maheshwar P. Joshi, Allen C. Fanger, Charles W. Brown. Almora: Shree Almora Book Depot, 2000. 243 pp.

Review by Daniela Berti

As in the earlier volumes in this series, the reason for gathering the contributions presented in this fourth volume is not thematic, but geographic. Seven of the ten contributions are dedicated to Uttarkhand/ Uttaranchal and are based on fieldwork as well as on archival research. Two contributions are on Nepal and one on Himachal Pradesh.

The first two papers deal with kinship in Kumaon, focusing on temporal and spa-

tial transformations respectively. Monika Krengel analyses the social and symbolic values transmitted by gifts exchanged among kin at the time of marriage. The introduction of new modern items in marriage transactions has provoked a diversification among providers of dowry. The affinal relatives of the bride's house provide mostly what the author calls the 'basic dowry'. This part of the dowry continues to maintain tradition: the prescribed gifts are the same as before and consist mainly of cloths and metal utensils. Along with these items of the basic dowry, close agnatic relatives and brothers of the bride's mother also provide an 'extended dowry' which is associated with modernity, as the relatives pool their resources in an effort to provide various items from the consumerist world: a television or a fridge, for example. This part of the dowry is not fixed but is "a matter of negotiation between the two marriage parties and means to demonstrate status and prestige" (p. 8). The author states that for the basic dowry the emphasis is more on who gives, and less on who gives what, because the items received are prescribed and do not depend on good or bad relationships between givers and receivers (as can be the case for the 'extended dowry'). If we compare this with the similar practices that can be observed in the nearby Kullu valley (Himachal Pradesh), this would perhaps call for some nuance, as it would be difficult to affirm in the latter case that in the 'basic dowry' the 'who gives what' is not important. Although the link between the 'who' and the 'what' reflects a presumed relationship, and not a spontaneous and individualized feeling, correspondences between gift and giver can be prescribed in a very detailed way. For example, the cloth which has to be given to the bride will be different in quality, size and number of decorative drawings, depending on the feeling the giver is supposed to share with the bride: full of love and without conflict for the patrilateral kin of the bride's mother, more ambiguous and mixed with jealousy for the paternal kin, and so on. As in Kumaon, these objects have to be registered at the moment of the marriage celebration by one of the bride's trusted family members. But it is said that the purpose of this practice is not only to facilitate reciprocity, but also to identify the provenance of the objects in case of a witchcraft attack, which may often be blamed on spells cast on dowry items.

Joanne Moller's contribution is also concerned with kinship, this time in relation to spatial and contextual variations. Rejecting a clear-cut profile of the Kumaoni kinship system, she shows how Kumaoni kinship includes apparently contradictory features, which have been usually referred to as distinguishing traits of north and south Indian systems. Through a minute analysis of kinship terminology, taking into account the role of indigenous concepts in structuring relations, she demonstrates how symmetry and asymmetry, isogamies or hypergamy can coexist and be called upon by villagers, according to different contexts and perspectives, depend-

ing on the social units that are taken into consideration. Even the distinction made between consanguinity and non-consanguinity appears to depend on different levels of discourse, i.e. whether it is at the level of individuals or of lineages.

Gérard Toffin's article on the Rajopadhyaya Brahmins of the Kathmandu Valley is a good demonstration of how the political history of a region can influence the transformation of a local caste hierarchy. It also shows the plurality of points of view adopted by different groups of Brahmins regarding their respective place in the caste hierarchy. The Rajopadhyaya Brahmins had once played an important role inside the Newar royal palace, but were downgraded to a very low position by the legal code in the 19th century, after the Gorkhalis took control of the region. Being more Newarized than other Brahmin castes, they were indeed more subject to the Gorkhalis' general suspicion of the indigenous population. It is interesting, therefore, that attribution of indigeneity to their identity is nowadays firmly denied by the Rajopadhyaya themselves, who refuse to be considered as Newars and claim superiority by posing as outsiders.

William Sax's study of Tehri Garhwal begins with a critique of the theory, quite common in North Indian kinship studies, according to which a viri-patrilocal marriage leads to a woman becoming completely a member of her husband's kin group. This theory conforms to the Garhwali conception, according to which the bride, moving to a new place, is subjected to a physical transformation, following the local idea that "persons and the place they reside have a great deal of influence upon each other" (p. 80). But Sax reminds us that recent studies of Indian society have criticized this view as a male, high-caste perspective, and then shows that women's discourses are less radical and have a more 'gradualistic' perspective. Some ritual contexts indicate also "the continuing and substantial relationship of a married woman to her natal place" (p. 95). A woman's constant movement between places leads thus to a constant change in her nature, so that she does not become only a member of her husband's kin group.

Emma Mawdsley describes the important role women played in the recent creation of the new hill state of Uttarkhand. She suggests that, along with the many other problems with which the separatist movement was associated (migration, environmental degradation, economic deprivation, liquor consumption) the crucial reason for women to be involved in the movement was the protest against the reservation order for the Other Backward Classes passed in Uttar Pradesh in 1993, in a region inhabited mostly by high-caste people.

Marie Lecomte-Tilouine's article is a regional study of the geographical recurrence of a god's name which, in a multitude of different orthographies, is everywhere

identified with Varaha, the boar *avatāra* of Vishnu. By comparing the god's classical myths with those of his local homophones, and by illustrating the extreme variation found in myths, cults and iconography, the author suggests that the various local forms of the god are not necessarily derived from the classical one. Local gods, sometimes of tribal origin, seem rather to have been assimilated to and identified with the classical type through the sheer proximity of their names. The multiplicity of etymologies associated with the name of a deity like Varaha is seen by the author as constituting an 'area of meaning' which includes the options of various possible paradigms in the definition of a particular local deity. The author notices that, alongside this standardization of local deities according to a Sanskrit and Paninian model, the opposite phenomenon can also be found: namely, the 'localization' of a Sanskrit deity. Confronted with this stimulating interpretation, one would like to know whether these two trends can be linked to specific sociological contexts, leading people to emphasize either the classical or the local origin of a deity, and in which way these two opposite tendencies can influence, and be influenced by, human or village relations.

B. Chinn's contribution analyses some of the problems which arose in Kumaon during the period of British administration, as a consequence of the kind of relationship the British established with the Kumaoni people. She shows how this relationship differed completely from that which existed between the people and the previous rulers, which was based on interdependence and reciprocity between client and patron.

M.P. Joshi and C.W. Brown look at mediaeval north Indian history through a micro-level study based on the records of a district of Kumaon. They aim to show the existence of a system of social, economic, and political organization, which differs from that described by historians of the Delhi Sultanate and the Mughal empire.

The short contribution of Tobdan, a Buddhist scholar, aims to establish the existence of Buddhism in Lahul before the advent of Tibetan Buddhism. He identifies some place names in ancient Tibetan texts as referring to Lahul, or to some places in Lahul. This would also be the location of an ancient monastery for which we have some twelfth century records written by Tibetan lamas. Besides, according to the author, even if Indian Buddhism has been smoothly transformed to Tibetan Lama-ism, the contemporary local temples of Lahul show that Indian Buddhist structures remained intact in Lahul, unlike in other parts of India.

The last contribution is written by an Uttaranchal lawyer, Dutt Gairola. The author makes some suppositions about the origins of the castes and sub-castes of Garhwal, presenting an internal perspective on the matter. Expressions such as 'the true spirit

of *Hinduism*', 'true Kshatrias', and 'true Brahmans', as well as the many adjectives which indicate a personal judgement, show a certain lack of distance from the subject of study.

The volume offers rich material for our understanding of the Himalayan region, not only in terms of its traditional structures but also of the transformations taking place nowadays. Some of the contributions are excellent and present a more general interest as anthropological studies of kinship and religion.

Sharing Water: Irrigation and water management in the Hindu Kush-Karakorum-Himalaya edited by Hermann Kreutzmann. Oxford and Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2000. 277 pp. ISBN 0 19 579159 2

Reviewed by Linden Vincent

This is the first internationally published book to present case studies of aspects of irrigation and irrigated agriculture across the Himalayan mountain range. Its core aim is to show different aspects of water management in a complex and challenging environment—and thus the value of trans-disciplinarity—rather than make comparative analysis of water management technologies, institutions, or processes of change across the region. Another short book also published in 2000 on water management in this region, provides such a synthesis (Banskota and Chalise 2000). The book also aims to promote reflection on science and development, and to better link studies of traditional water management with teaching in the social and agricultural sciences, and with development projects.

The book succeeds in making some important contributions to these aims, and shows the complexity and subtlety of adaptations that are rarely reflected in mainstream irrigation science. The book provides papers on most countries across this mountain range except Afghanistan, China, Myanmar and Bangladesh with: one paper on Central Asia; five papers covering areas of northern Pakistan; three papers covering areas of Northern India (Himachal Pradesh and Ladakh); three papers on Nepal (Dolpo, Mustang, and central Nepal) and one paper on water law in Bhutan. In this respect, the detail and breadth of the study is greatest with respect to northern Pakistan, and decreases eastwards. Of the thirteen case studies, three are by national authors from the region, with no local contributors from Nepal and Bhutan. Except for water harvesting in Ladakh, the case studies all focus on river diversion surface irrigation systems and their environments. These are the main source technologies of the region, but not the only ones (Banskota and Chalise 2000; Pande 1995; Vincent 1995; Yoder 1994).

Of the papers, three have a historical focus in archaeology (Fourniau on irrigation in Central Asia), or law (Vohra for Ladakh, and Jest for Bhutan). Seven papers present more disciplinary studies of physical and social geography and the local ethnography of water management. There are observations on land use and land stability in Dolpo and Mustang in Nepal by Fort, Jest and Polge de Combret, while Aubriot and Sabatier also document the use of a water clock in Nepal for irrigation scheduling (and astrology). Schmid gives a political case study from northern Pakistan of minority claims to water rights, and the papers by Israr-ud-Din, Stober and Kreutzmann deal with social organization and irrigation practices across Hunza, Gilgit and Chitral in northern Pakistan. Two papers discuss approaches to development assistance: the Aga Khan Foundation in northern Pakistan (Wali Khan and Ali Hunzai) and the USAID-assisted Hill Areas Programme of Himachal Pradesh (Manzardo).

The strengths of the book lie in its well-presented text with relevant photographs and a wealth of local detail: this is valuable locally, and also for broader regional studies. The papers show the different dimensions that come into water management, as well as the long history and strong importance of irrigation in the region. The book highlights the carefully crafted nature of these local water management systems, and rightly urges participatory development processes that might avoid their destruction through insensitive intervention.

The framework for the book has water management evolving through three dimensions and their inter-relationships. These are: **natural factors** and their relation to an environmental framework and processes of technological adaptation; **social factors** and their impact on culture, economy and equity; and **institutional factors** and their importance for sustainable growth and implementation of development projects. The key inter-relationships examined are agricultural activities; resource use and resource endangerment; and fields of conflict (seen as scarcity and competition for water, resource costs, and changing flow regimes through dams or other causes).

This is, as the editor describes it, a 'systemic framework', although this and the other theoretical backgrounds of the case studies are not clearly explained. These I shall review here, because they are important in the debate about future water research in this region. This is not a narrow systems modelling framework approach, but is instead a 'complex systems' approach, in which elements and levels are mediated by complex social and ecological relationships. Such a framework accommodates many other theories and concepts, which can be used to explore local conditions. The threefold division of factors described by the editor, and used in his regional

Karakoram chapter, has parallels with a long-standing threefold 'man-mind-land' analytical framework in natural resource management studies. The remaining case studies draw on other theoretical traditions which sit well within this approach, and indeed are found more broadly now in studies of 'rural resource systems', a concept evolving from older 'farming systems' research.

The first set of papers draws on a range of geographical, geomorphological, anthropological, and farming system ideas which enable one to interpret an environment, its landscape, and its resources, and the transformative and organizational effects of a technology such as irrigation. The concepts used include river regimes, hazards, specificities, and the 'structures of historical space' to explore the adaptive capacities of groups and societies to expand where they can evolve technology, but to remain contained and vulnerable where they cannot. The papers written from these perspectives include those by Fourniau, Israr-ud-Din, Stober and Fort.

Another group of papers originates in French conceptual traditions on interactions between water and agriculture, and a comparison of typologies of water environments with agricultural environments. This tradition is not easily translated, but it includes distinctions between hydraulic agriculture dependent on hydraulic control structures, i.e. large-scale irrigation, and 'hydroagriculture' which is agriculture that uses water supplied in different 'natural' ways. It also distinguishes between 'dryland' areas where water is limited (through seasonal rainfall or aridity), and wetlands. This school emphasizes the structure of social organization in agriculture and water supply, especially indigenous local technologies and the institutions which help them to mesh together. It also looks at the field as a social space, with much attention to techniques of water land and crop management. The papers by Labbal on Ladakh, Aubriot and Sabatier on Nepal, and Jest and Polge de Combret on Dolpo, Nepal, demonstrate these approaches.

A third group of papers, including those by Wali Khan and Ali Hunzai and Manzardo, adopt an interventionist approach and discuss how to work (better) at the local level, by filling gaps in the approaches of irrigation agencies, and really supporting local needs. Their theoretical underpinnings come from farming systems, and they develop anthropological traditions that have criticized insensitive technical intervention and driven debates about participation among development-oriented researchers. The fourth and final group of papers relates to law and politics. These stand out because, while they can fit under the complex systems framework, they face dilemmas about how to address socially constituted actions that go beyond adaptation to the environment or a technical innovation in irrigation.

Vohra's study of Ladakh and Jest's paper on Bhutan both choose to document the local laws and customs that are likely to be affected by interventions and population and economic change. However, they do not raise any questions of ethnic politics and local governance that have also affected irrigation operations over the last decade. Only Schmid's paper on caste politics in water access stands out as really celebrating the politics which surrounds irrigation: how people use intervention projects and are not just victims of them. This a paper that should be widely read by development practitioners.

The disappointment of this book lies in the development linkages presented, and those left unexplored, especially for those working in irrigation and development in this region. This stems not so much from any criticism of its findings, but from what is left unsaid about farmer-managed irrigation and water supply systems in the region. Irrigation researchers will be frustrated by a lack of reference to other local work, and the small number of local authors involved. The case studies are largely from research conducted in the late 1980s, although some are more recent. They thus relate to the development concerns of the time which were about endogenous adaptations and appropriate intervention for greater food and environmental security without increased conflict. Other more contemporary local development struggles—for greater empowerment and livelihood viability, system sustainability, equity in water rights, greater gender equality—are invisible. The actions of the state and workers in state agencies, and the politics of everyday water management, are barely discussed. Past history often gets more attention than recent transformations in government, or the difficult politics of democratization, insurgency and ethnic identity. This leaves a feeling of idealization of the past and local adaptations, without a framework for dealing with contemporary struggles. But a recognition of new dynamics is as essential to future development in water management as an appreciation of history and ecological adaptation.

This tension comes from the framework, which views irrigation as an adaptation for agriculture, from particular disciplinary or systemic perspectives, and less as a technology operating in a very complex environment. While some structures and field layouts are described, technical design principles and social action around water management infrastructures are rarely discussed. There are other conceptual approaches that allow one to look outwards from an irrigation system with recognizable adaptations to a montane context, and examine how the dynamics of operating the system bring all kinds of agrarian, political and technical issues into play. Contemporary concepts used in water management and development, such as hydraulic property rights, socio-technical analysis, legal pluralism and collective action, are not mentioned in this book, although they have contributed greatly to

local understanding of irrigation management in the region (Chand 1994; Dani and Siddiqui 1989; Lam 1998; Pant 2000; Parajuli 1999; Poudel 2000; Pradhan *et al* 2000; van Steenbergen 1997).

This is a valuable book for the historical and ethnographic detail it contains, which inspires both interest in the region and respect for its communities. However, the book is valuable also for questioning how academic researchers can work more inclusively with local development-oriented researchers and social dynamics. Future publications can build critically on this study, to think further how to reconcile different approaches to research for development. The issue for teaching and research is not only about trans-disciplinary awareness, but also about which issues are studied. We still need more documentation of water management in mountain areas—as a dynamic operational process within a complex ecology subject to many social forces—as well as artifacts and institutions adapted to mountain ecology and culture.

References

Banskota, M. and S. R. Chalise 2000. *Waters of Life: Perspectives of water harvesting in the Hindu-Kush*. Kathmandu: International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD).

Chand, R. 1994. 'Role of Water Rights in Farm-managed Hill Irrigation Systems' (Himachal Pradesh) *Economic and Political Weekly* March 26: A26-A30

Dani, A.A. and N. Siddiqui 1989. 'Institutional innovations in irrigation management in northern Pakistan', in *Public Intervention in Farmer-Management Irrigation Systems*, edited by the International Irrigation Management Institute. Sri Lanka: IIMI.

Lam, W.F. 1998. *Governing Irrigation Systems in Nepal: Institutions, infrastructure and collective action*. San Francisco: ICS Press.

Pande, U.C. 1995. *Design by Experience: Hill irrigation in the Indian Himalayas*. New Delhi: Joginder Sain and Bros.

Pant, D. 2000. 'Intervention Processes and Irrigation Institutions: Sustainability of farmer-managed irrigation systems in Nepal', PhD thesis, Wageningen University, The Netherlands.

Parajuli, U. 1999. 'Agro-ecology and Irrigation Technology: Comparative research on farmer-managed irrigation systems in the mid-hills of Nepal', PhD thesis, Wageningen University, The Netherlands.

Poudel, R. 2000. 'Farmers' Laws and Irrigation: Water rights and dispute management in the hills of Nepal', PhD thesis, Wageningen University, The Netherlands.

Pradhan, R., F. von Benda-Beckmann, and K. von Benda-Beckmann 2000. *Water, Land and Law: Changing rights to land and water in Nepal*. Legal Research and Development forum (Freedeal) Kathmandu, and Erasmus University and Wageningen University, The Netherlands.

Steenbergen F. van, 1997. *Institutional Change in Local Water Management: Cases from Balochistan*. Royal Dutch Geographical Society, Faculty of Geographical Sciences, Utrecht University.

Vincent, L. 1995. *Hill Irrigation: Water and development in mountain agriculture*. London: Intermediate Technology Publications.

Yoder, R. (ed.) 1994. *Designing Irrigation Structures for Mountain Environments: A handbook of experience*. Sri Lanka: International Irrigation management Institute.

dBa'bzhed. The Royal Narrative Concerning the Bringing of the Buddha's Doctrine to Tibet: Translation and facsimile edition of the Tibetan text by Pasang Wangdu and Hildegard Diemberger. Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2000. (Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-historische Klasse, Denkschriften, Band 291) 121pp., 32pl.

Reviewed by Rudolf Kaschewsky

The cooperation between the Tibetan Academy of Social Sciences and the Austrian Academy of Sciences has produced a new publication of the highest value: the undisputed earliest version of one of the most authentic chronicles of Tibetan history (in Dan Martin's chronologically arranged *Tibetan Histories* the 'Sba-bzhed' is the No.1). This work presents details on the introduction of Buddhism into Tibet, the erection of the famous temple of bSam-yas, and the "historically still shadowy Chos-Bon contest" (as P.K. Sørensen in his preface, p. x, rightly calls it), and, finally, the debate between the Indian and Chinese interpretations of Buddhism (AD 792-794).

In fact, we have known of the existence of a chronicle bearing this (or a similar) title since A.I. Vostrikov's *Tibetskaja istoriceskaja literatura* (1937 and 1958; this

meritorious book is lacking in the bibliography) and R.A. Stein's first edition of the text (1961), and it was already quite clear that this work constitutes a unique source of high authenticity. However, there were obviously "numerous additions, modifications and updatings" (Introduction, p. 2) in the versions then known.

The most interesting question is concerned with differences between the text edited and translated in this book and previously available versions. The answer is clear: this dBa'bzhed "predates the extant sBa bzhed versions, or at least represents an early and different elaboration" (as stated on the back cover of the book). In the chapter 'The Problem of Dating' the authors are cautious enough not to indicate an exact date, but they present various proofs of the relative antiquity of the work.

The Tibetan text is presented in a quite legible facsimile edition and the translation is highly accurate. In fact, each strange or uncommon word has been carefully discussed, and remaining ambiguities and uncertainties have frankly been admitted. Therefore, and especially in view of the 'ancient terminology' (discussed on pp. 11ff.), an index of words—or at least of those expressions whose meanings the translators have elaborated with utmost accuracy—would have been highly appreciated.

Also, the names occurring in the text have been explained in a very reliable way, with many elucidating quotations from other historical texts, above all from the ancient Chronicle of Dunhuang. There are very helpful indices of personal names, geographical names and Tibetan texts. Among the names, some are missing, e.g. Khri'phang gsum (fol. 29b, translation p. 101), dBa' Rad na (who is dealt with not only on fol. 20a, but also fol. 17b/p. 72), Zhang bTsan bzher (fol. 28b/p. 100; fol. 30a/p.102), Shakya pra bha (fol. 17b/p.69), and Sru Yang dag (fol. 19b /p. 79).

The bibliography contains Tibetan, Chinese and Western 'sources'. (One wonders, of course, why the purely secondary Western treatises are also named 'sources'.) Of the Tibetan (mainly historical) texts, with very few exceptions only modern 'editions' (published in the People's Republic of China between 1978 and 1995) are mentioned, in spite of the fact that in most cases facsimile editions of the original texts are available.

To sum up, the book under review is beyond doubt a milestone in the investigation of ancient Tibetan historiography.

Civilisation at the Foot of Mount Sham-po. The Royal House of lHa Bug-pa-can and the History of g.Ya'-bzang. Historical texts from the Monastery of g.Ya'-bzang in Yar-stod (Central Tibet). Annotated Translation, Transliteration and Facsimile Edition by Tsering Gyalbo, Guntram Hazod and Per K. Sørensen. Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2000. (Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-historische Klasse, Denkschriften, Band 290). 340 pp.

Reviewed by Rudolf Kaschewsky

While we are comparatively well informed on the history of the early kings of Tibet up to the destruction of the monarchy in the mid-ninth century, there is a considerable gap in our knowledge of the subsequent period. Therefore any work on the later periods is greatly appreciated. The book under review presents a detailed study of the history of southern central Tibet from the 12th/13th centuries onward, based on three local historical texts: a 'Genealogy of the Royal House' (10 fols.), a 'Dharma History' (of g.Ya'-bzang) (52 fols.) and a 'Short Biography of the Founder of g.Ya'-bzang' (5 fols.). Thus, the focus is on g.Ya'-bzang, one of the thirteen 'myriarchies' (*khri skor bcu gsum*) of the Yüan period, situated south-east of Lhasa. Nowadays, this is called Ne-gdong rdzong or Naidongxian; the main city is Tsetang which is also the capital of the whole Lho-ka or Shannan district.

The introduction of his book throws light not only on the rather intricate rise and downfall of the relevant dynastic families, but also on, among other topics, the original meaning of the name 'Yar-lung' (and its different spellings), which is considered to be the home of the Tibetan kings, on the specific ideological basis of the g.Ya'-bzang bKa'-brgyud-pa order, etc.

The main body of the book is a precise translation of the above-mentioned source-texts and a careful transliteration, the latter being especially helpful on account of the fact that the facsimiles of the manuscripts, presented on the (unnumbered) pages 289-317, are in places hardly legible.

There are seven appendices which cover topics closely related with the g.Ya'-bzang area, among them a survey of the Yum-brtan lineage and the 'genealogical manipulations' connected with the (step)son of king Glang-dar-ma, and one containing supplementary data and a summary concerning the land of g.Ya'-bzang-pa (both by G. Hazod).

Seven tables provide, among other topics, lists of the Dvags-po bKa'-brgyud line, the 'Religious Lords of g.Ya'-bzang' and a chronological table. The latter is, in fact, not as undisputed as it looks at first sight: the years are those calculated according to the three texts, which—as the authors state elsewhere (e.g. the year 569 as the year of the birth of king Srong-btsan sgam-po, p. 36, note 91)—are in no way historically reliable. A short notice indicating this fact at the beginning of the chronological table would have been helpful.

As there are many Buddhist terms in the texts, the authors have often attempted to give the Sanskrit forms. Here some minor inaccuracies are to be noted: *iṣṭadevatā* (p. 34 and Sanskrit Index) should be *iṣṭadevatā*; *uṣṇiṣa* (p. 45 and Ind.) should be *uṣṇīṣa*; *caitvāri saṃgraha-vastūni* (p. 100, Index: p. 101) should be *catvāri saṃgraha-vastūni*. However, this is generally rendered by *bsdu ba'i dṅos po bzhi*, but perhaps the original wording *bslu ci thub* could have been retained: "(He could even protect those who secretly made inappropriate actions) by pretending as much as he could", i.e. because of his loving mercy he acted as if these evildoers were good fellows. *jvālamukhī* (p. 46 and Ind.) should be *jvālāmukhī, daka* (p. 65 and Ind.) should be *ḍāka* (however, Tib. *dpa' bo* usually renders *vīra*, not *ḍāka*); Dharmaprānin (p. 67, Index: Dhramaprānin) should be Dharmaprāṇin; Mahāsaṃmata (p. 58 and Ind.) should be Mahāsaṃmata; Lokaprajñāpti (pp. 25, 44 and Ind.) should be Lokaprajñapti; Vajraśekara (p. 44 and Ind.) should be Vajraśekhara; Vimalakirti° (p. 44 and Ind.) should be Vimalakīrti°; Śātānīka (p. 58 [Index: p. 59]) should be Śatānīka; *sarvanīvarana°* (p. 44 and Ind.) should be *sarvanivaraṇa°;* Saddharmapuṇḍarika (p. 49 and Ind.) should be Saddharmapuṇḍārīka (correctly on p. 104 [not: 103, as the Index says]); Hanūmān (p. 53 and Ind., also in the Tibetan Index p. 330a) should be Hanumān. The labial nasal before a labial is sometimes spelled *ṃ* (e. g. *saṃpanna*, *saṃbhoga*), sometimes *m* (e. g. °*viṣkambhin*); it should be uniform (preferably *m*).

The surprising wealth of names (personal names, place names, text titles) contained in the texts and the annotations is made accessible through very informative indices. In the Tibetan index of personal names, in a few cases only the folio numbers, but not the relevant text (I, II or III of the three sources) are indicated, e. g. s.v. bKa'-brgyud-pa or sKal-ldan ye-shes seng-ge (in both cases the text is no. II); s.v. Phag-mo gru-pa instead of '41a' read 'II 41 a'; s.v. Rāhula for 'I b' read 'I 5 b'.

Mention should be made of the two carefully drawn maps of the g.Ya'-bzang area and the beautiful photographs (38 plates) of both the local area and relevant objects of art. Here a vivid picture is given of where the events described in this study had taken place.

To sum up, the book reviewed here is a scientific work of the highest standard and it is to be strongly recommended to Tibetologists, specialists of Central Asian history and, in a broader sense, to scholars of 'historical geography' in general because of its highly exemplary methodology.

Popular Buddhist Texts from Nepal: Narratives and rituals of Newar Buddhism by Todd T. Lewis. Albany: SUNY, 2000. 236 pp, 25 figures, bibliography, index. ISBN 079144612-3

Reviewed by Will Douglas

This book is a valuable contribution to the burgeoning field of Newar Buddhist studies. With his long experience working in the Urāy community of Asan in Kathmandu, Lewis is able to document the interaction between mercantile sponsors and Vajrācārya specialists, mediated through the public deployment of Buddhist sacred texts. This volume contains both the local Newari versions of Sanskrit Vajrayāna texts, translated by two learned Urāys together with Lewis, and discussions which set these texts into their ethnographic and historical contexts. In format, the book has five chapters each considering a specific text, together with an introduction and conclusions.

As with many other recent studies, Lewis is intent upon correcting a perceived tendency in past Buddhist studies to listen to, or rather read, the work of the religious elite without also paying proper attention either to their lay sponsors or to the "local literati" (xiv) as Lewis calls them. He is also keen to ground his discussion historically, relating the Vajrayāna Buddhism of the Newars to its Indian antecedents. To this end, he presents a wide range of textual types, from the widely known popular narrative of Śrī Sārthavāha to a Mahākāla *vrata*. Typically the use of the text is described from the perspective of the lay particpants in the recitation and accompanying rituals, although we get occasional hints of the manipulation of the tradition by the officiating Vajrācāryas; thus, in accounting for the particular Tārā text he prints, Lewis writes, "These volumes arise both from a patron's need to have new ritual manuals for the family's own *vrata* observances and from [Badri Ratna] Bajrācārya's own effort to revive the performance of Newar Buddhism." (p. 95)

This book is poorly edited and far too ambitious for its brief format. The editing cannot be laid at Lewis's door, although the numerous errors in transcription bring down the tone of the book as a whole. As to ambition: in setting out to achieve his

programme Lewis too often overlooks important aspects of the history of Newar Buddhism and the doctrinal context in which it locates itself, and in so doing injures his theoretical argument. While I am broadly in sympathy with his aims, I would suggest that a simple division between philological and ritual studies, or between elite and lay representation, is bound to founder especially when confronted with the Newar Buddhist data. So, where Lewis writes "Buddhism in practice was far more complicated by calculations of wealth and kinship than scholars have imagined and … the tradition 'on the ground' was much less tidy and more diverse than indicated by the documents generated by the monastic elite and stored in their libraries" (88), we have only to remember that the libraries in question, at least for the history of Sanskrit Buddhism, are precisely the libraries of the Vajrācāryas of the Kathmandu Valley, to see the problem. The Badri Ratnas of the past just as now were not static curators but redactors of their tradition, and hence a criticism of Western modes of scholarship which overlooks the dynamism of the indigenous elites falls into the same objectifying trap as the model it criticizes. The situation is only rendered more complex when we take into account the self-awareness of the Newar Buddhist tradition which arises in response to Western interrogation beginning with the early 19th century encounter of the Vajrācārya Amṛtānanda and Brian Hodgson.

The history of the Newar Buddhist textual tradition suggests that it was not, as philological scholars (or those who object to them) have often assumed or wished it were, a passive and archival tradition without significant innovation which derived its vitality entirely from ritual praxis. Thus, arguing from the Newar tradition back to the Indian (or even to the medieval Newar) is a hazardous activity. To take some specific examples: Lewis repeats Brough's peculiar assertion that the *Svayaṃbhūpurāṇa* derives from a Khotanese original (p. 36); while Lewis himself has furthered the study of Tibetan-Newar relations considerably (e.g. Lewis 1996), he has not noticed that the only Tibetan translation of the *Svayaṃbhūpurāṇa* comes from the pen of Situ Panchen Chos kyi Byung gNas (18th century), thus undermining Brough's assertion that the Tibetans transmitted this text to Nepal. The earliest Nepalese versions date at least from the 15th century and are probably far older. The *Svayaṃbhūpurāṇa* is clearly an indigenous text with its origins beyond our present historical grasp. Again, Lewis proposes (pp. 53-4, following Lienhard) a linear sequence in which the Indian *Kāraṇḍavyūha* is followed by a Nepalese Sanskrit version, and then by a Newari language version; a review of the published manuscripts, let alone the hundreds circulating in the Kathmandu Valley, would show that the Newars themselves continued to develop the 'Indian' Sanskrit version after composing their own Sanskrit verse redaction (the *Guṇakāraṇḍavyūha*) in the 15th century, itself subject to modification in the late 19th century and again at the hands of 20th century Indian editors. Multiple Newari language translations and folk song

versions of the text have continued to develop into the 20th century, and as Michael Hutt (1997: 9) has recently argued, the same story forms the basis of Devkota's *Munā Madan*. Thus the 'local' redaction of the story of Siṃhalasārthabāhu is not, as he proposes, the final stage in the localization of a narrative, but part of a complex process in which Nepalese writers and reciters have produced both elite and popular versions from at least the 15th century up to the present day. The complexity of the narrative can further be demonstrated by the diverging traditions of manuscript illustration for the Sanskrit texts, which in at least one case were done in a strongly Tibetan style.

Finally I must object to Lewis's anachronistic use of the term 'Hindu' when drawing historical conclusions about Pāla and pre-Pāla India (118). Especially in the modern political context, this is a very dangerous word. The Nepalese Sanskrit texts themselves never speak of 'Hindu', but Śaiva, Saurya and so forth; thus, a 'dialectic' in the sense Lewis proposes cannot be found. The specific dynamics between traditions such as Śaiva and Bauddha were antagonistic or competitive at times, but (as is clear from the history of Śrīnivās Malla and Karuṇāmaya) the specific relations between Vaiṣṇava and Bauddha were at times collaborative and mutually reinforcing. It may also be helpful here to distinguish between those deities who are common to most Sanskritic Indian religions—Gaṇeśa, for example, claimed in the Purāṇas by the Śaivas but clearly not of sectarian origins—and those such as Śiva who have their own sects. Different sorts of historical explanation are required to account for the development of contested deities such as Mahākāla and those who are comfortably ubiquitous such as Gaṇeśa and Haritī. *Vrata*s, too, appear to be a common feature of Indic religion and the simple existence of *vrata*s within Newar Buddhism is no more surprising than their use of Sanskrit. We know that the Buddhist *aṣṭamīvrata* goes back at least to the 6th century on the basis of the dated Chinese translations of its root text, the *Amoghapāśasūtra*.

This book is a valuable collection of useful sources together with careful ethnographic analysis. Lewis reveals a powerful critique of textualist Buddhology implicit in his sources, but the work falters when he tries to supplement this with historical arguments that are not well founded.

References

Hutt, Michael 1997. *Devkota's Munā Madan: Translation and analysis.* Kathmandu: Sajha Co-operative.

Lewis, Todd T. 1996. 'A Chronology of Newar-Tibetan Relations in the Kathmandu Valley'. In *Change and Continuity in the Nepalese Culture of the Kathmandu Valley*, edited by S. Lienhard, pp. 149-66. Turin: CESMEO.

The Tibetan Assimilation of Buddhism: Conversion, contestation and memory by Matthew Kapstein. Oxford University Press, 2000. 316 pp. ISBN 0-19-513122-3.

Reviewed by Martin Boord.

In this thought-provoking and penetrating study, Kapstein explores the shifting dynamics of the gradual absorption by Tibetans of alien cultural elements so as to create a new Tibetan self-identity, often referred to by learned Tibetans as 'authentic Indian Buddhism' despite the way in which the original material was often creatively adapted for use in the new homeland. Examining a range of eighth-century religious and historical sources, he charts the enormous reform of Tibet's ancient system catalyzed during that period by the influx of Buddhism, and also shows how that ancient system remains still visible today beneath the deliberately adopted veil of a mainstream Buddhist identity.

In developing his narrative, the author examines a variety of original Tibetan sources including historical chronicles, imperial edicts, philosophical treatises, and writings on practical meditation and yoga. Far from simplistic in his approach, Kapstein discusses the influences on early medieval Tibet of Chinese historiography, Greek medicine, Nepalese sculpture, Sogdian textiles, Nestorian Christianity, and Manichaeism, as well as the several schools of Buddhism that had been developing away from India and which were now encountered by Tibetans in all directions around their homeland.

His careful reading of the *Testament of sBa*, an early chronicle of Tibetan history, reveals the manner in which details were wilfully altered in favour of a consciously created new identity and the genesis of Tibetan Buddhist historiography. For example, the *Testament of sBa* seems very much in favour of the Chinese influence upon the developing Tibetan culture, valuing their positive contribution to the Dharma in a manner which later historians do not.

Kapstein also explores the possibility of biblical sources for some of the tales told as 'ancient Tibetan history' so that the *Testament of sBa* stands revealed as an interpretation of history and not as an historical record. Indeed, it has been called 'a specialised kind of religious meditation on parts of the story' and marks the beginning of the Tibetans' attempt to define themselves as operating within the Buddha's prophetic intention so that the destiny of Tibet and the destiny of the Buddha's teachings are inextricably intertwined. Tibetan historians since these early days have systematically developed a vision of their world as having been ordered and controlled by the agency of buddhas and bodhisattvas.

Speaking to lamas today, they all agree that their religion is pure Indian Buddhism, while outsiders have called it 'lamaism' and refer to it as a debased and corrupt anomaly.

The old Tibetan royal annals served as instruments of bureaucratic practice and the art of government. Their development coincided with and reflected the organization of the empire during the period of expansion beginning in the mid-seventh century. With the fall of the empire during the ninth century, Tibetans were faced not only with a practical political and economic crisis, but with a crisis of understanding as well. The sophisticated cosmology and soteriology of Buddhism provided one possible way of making sense of the Tibetan world as a domain of meaningful agency and possible excellence, which began during and continued after its period of imperial greatness. The stunning achievement of Tibetan Buddhist historians was to create a compelling and enduring articulation of this vision, and it is to the author of the *Testament of sBa* that we owe what was perhaps its first full, and for Tibetans still vital, formulation.

Monastic clerical Buddhism, with its trained scholars and scribes, its language sciences and methods of translation, its libraries and catalogues, its systematization of reasoning and debate, provided medieval Tibet with an ideal model of organized knowledge at a time when the management of knowledge must have been felt as an ever more urgent concern. If we wish to make sense of the preferability of Buddhism to some in medieval Tibet, we need to understand how they thought it rationalized, more adequately than its competitors, the frailties of our concrete existence in the world. The adoption of the cosmology of *karma* and *saṃsāra* did not preclude, and in some respects no doubt encouraged, the performance of what we might hold to be magical ritual, but also it did appear to make intelligible why it was that among such rituals there were sometimes those that worked and at other times those that failed, and did so in a lawlike manner. Furthermore, the cosmology of *karma* and *saṃsāra* comported well with an imperial interest in legislation; that is to say, law and order may be reinforced by assenting to cosmic justice and order. The Buddhist canon, therefore, came to be regarded as an imperial treasure and the incorporation of this into the monarch's realm increased the royal charisma by signifying the king's possession of the well-ordered empire of enlightened reason.

The opening section of the *Testament of sBa* relates the events surrounding the birth and childhood of Khri Srong-lde'u-btsan, culminating in his personal adoption of Buddhism. This king placed great emphasis on funerary rites and the truth of the Buddhist teachings concerning *karma* and *saṃsāra*, whilst Kapstein's study of the development of such mortuary rites and their particular theories concerning the

after-death state clearly demonstrate the ongoing process of accomodation in which the alien and the indigenous came by stages to suffuse one another, especially due to the link binding Buddhism to language and literature. Kapstein also shows the well-known nine-vehicle analysis of religious practice to be a native innovation, the Buddhist schema deriving from the Bon.

The middle section of the *Testament* concerns itself with the invitation to Tibet of Śāntarakṣita and Padmasambhava, the foundation of Samye monastery (built as a representation of the cosmos containing a maṇḍala of Vairocana as its pure aspect), and the inception of a Tibetan Buddhist *saṃgha*.

In its final section, the *Testament* speaks of the schism between Hwa-shang Moheyan and his Chinese supporters of Chan, and Kamalaśīla and his Indian supporters of the gradual path. A royal resolution of the conflict determined in favour of the Indian faction and their view of the world as a well-ordered domain of rebirth governed by the lawlike operation of karma. The Chinese notion of sudden enlightenment was dismissed as dangerously disruptive of this natural order of moral causation.

From the 11th century onwards, the Tibetan vision of the old order became increasingly defined by the ongoing elaboration of two great cycles of myths of imperial Tibet: an Avalokiteśvara cycle focusing primarily on the reign of Srong-btsan sgam-po, and a Padmasambhava cycle focusing on the reign of Khri Srong-lde'u-btsan in which 'the precious guru' comes to dominate even the figure of the king. The role of the Chinese in the conversion of Tibet accentuated in the *Testament of sBa* is now mostly effaced, and the Chinese monks who had come to stay in Tibet later became ridiculed as buffoons in monastic dances.

Another interesting case study is the lately unacknowledged contribution made to Tibetan learning by the Buddhism of Korea during the Tang period (618-907) which is investigated fully by Kapstein in his section on 'Sources of Contestation'.

Despite all that has been said about wilful tampering with tradition, of course, it would make little sense to think of the transmission of Buddhist enlightenment as a process whereby identical learning could be reproduced invariantly in each generation, like a series of objects stamped out on a factory conveyor. Indeed, instead of rigid replication, such transmission must of necessity be a dynamic process involving a continuous recreation of tradition through both selective reappropriation of the past and innovation. Kapstein therefore shifts his focus from history to religion and offers an analysis of the very nature of 'scholasticism' in Tibet. Here the subject of study is the myriad number of opinions on topics that are, in

the final analysis, unknowable, for the truly significant foundation that is sought (the enlightenment of the buddhas) can only be realized intuitively, free from all worldy propositions about it. Tibetan masters call upon their disciples to question any and all doctrines, adhering to none until that final realization is gained and, to this end, Kapstein compares and contrasts the pedagogical styles of various lamas revered in the old and new schools of Tibetan Buddhism and considers the value of the 'revealed treasure' teachings by means of which the ancient tradition especially periodically revitalizes and renews itself.

This is a book of great value, to be read slowly more than once.

Information for authors

Proposals for articles should in the first instance be sent to the lead editor, Michael Hutt. All articles submitted are subject to a process of peer review.

Please use author-year citations in parentheses within the text, footnotes where necessary, and include a full bibliography. This is often called the 'Harvard' format.

In the body of your text:

It has been conclusively demonstrated (Sakya 1987) in spite of objections (Miller 1988: 132-9) that the ostrich is rare in Nepal.

In the bibliography:

Sakya, G.D. 1987. *Nepalese Ostriches: A trivial myth.* Kathmandu: Mani Pustak Bhandar.

Miller, M.L. 1988. 'A comprehensive rebuttal of G. Sakya' *Kailash* 6 (2): 121-83.

We welcome information on upcoming conferences and publications. For advertising rates please contact the editors.

For more detailed information on format, spelling, fonts, etc., please consult the web page <*http://dakini.orient.ox.ac.uk/ebhr*>.

Address for proposals, submissions, etc.

EBHR
SOAS • LONDON   CNRS • PARIS   SAI • HEIDELBERG
ISSN 0943 8254

EBHR 20-1

2001