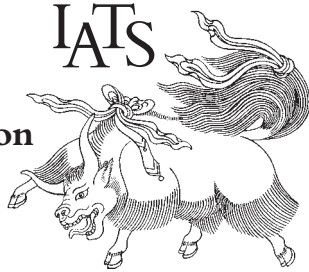# The Tenth Seminar
The International Association
for Tibetan Studies

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 represensions 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 data-base. 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 photo-graphs, 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 ethno-graphic 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 preserve 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, southern 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, transcription, 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 instrumental; 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