

Foreword

—Dr. Saphalya Amatya

I am happy to be back once again as the editor of the mouthpiece of the Department of Archaeology, "Ancient Nepal". The majority of the articles published in this issue are concerned with the archaeological activities and findings in the western Himalayan region of Mustang. The first article "Sandul Monastery: A Temple at the Crossroads of Jumla, Dolpa and Mustang" is written by Dr. Franz-Karl Ehrhard. In this article the author has not only enlightened us on the history of Sandul Monastery but also revealed many unknown facts about a spiritual Guru O-rgyan bstan-'dzin. According to the author Sandul Monastery was renovated from time to time. It was renovated for example in 1690 by the king of Jumla, Vikramasahi. Inside the monastery a statue of the King Vikramasahi is kept to keep his memory alive.

The second article in this issue is on "Houses and Households in Southern Mustang", written by John Harrison and Charles Ramble. In this article the authors describe a house of an Angyal Gurung community of Mustang. They have also tried to

convey the idea that for a Gurung a house means being, as one prayer says, ".....full of people;full of grain;and full of cattle".

The next article titled "Watermills in Mustang: Notes on Architecture, Function and Management" is also from John Harrison and Charles Ramble. In this interesting article the authors tell us how water power is used in the Mustang area and how watermills are managed. It is fascinating to note that there are water-powered prayer-wheels in Mustang.

The next article is "Ritual Deposits at Garab-Dzong, Dist. Mustang", by Angela von den Driesch, Henriette Manhart, Petra Maurer and Ernst Pohl. This is a preliminary summary report of the findings of their archaeological excavation carried out in 1996.

Angela Simons, Werner Schön and Sukra Sagar Shrestha's article on "Archaeological Research in Mustang: Report on the Field Work of the Years 1994 and 1995 Done by the Cologne University Team", has revealed a fact that a homogeneous

population once lived in the Mustang area around 1000-500 B.C. They were the first settlers of Mustang. It was they who built the cave systems there, or to be more precise, funerary caves. The archaeologists have divided the prehistory of Mustang into two main phases — the "Chokhopani Phase" (about 1000-500 B.C.) and the "Mebrak Phase" (about 400 B.C. to 500 A.D.). In fact in the Mustang area there are still hundreds of unexplored caves likely to contain much new evidence of the part we have played in the rise of civilization.

Last but not least is an article by Giovanni Verardi on "Excavation at Gotihawa: A Note on the Results Obtained during the First Excavation Campaign in Winter 1994 - 95". The Gotihawa excavation has shown that a stupa was built near the pillar in the 3rd century B.C. This stupa was then enlarged and extended in the Saka and the Kushan periods (1st

century B.C. and 2nd/3rd century A.D.). The author in his concluding remarks says "thanks to the presence of a dated charcoal in our site, we think, however, that the caution demonstrated by Herbert Haertel (1991) in evaluating the chronology of the archaeological sites in the District of Lumbini and Kapilavastu and in the adjacent Indian ones is too great, and that the archaeological sequence in this part of the Terai goes certainly back to a period preceding the earlier possible date to which the life of the Buddha can be attributed". In this issue all the drawings and photographs published are of very good quality and they help us to understand the authors viewpoints clearly.

Finally, I would like to thank and congratulate all the authors for their valuable contribution to this issue of our journal.