

of people and naks: the management and meaning of high altitude herding among contemporary solu sherpas

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High altitude herding remains an integral part of contemporary Solu Sherpa life. In spite of romanticists who would imply that herding is disappearing from their way of life and of critics who argue that Solu Sherpas are not 'real' herding-farming Sherpas, Solu Sherpas are not abandoning pastoralism to become exclusively agricultural by any means. With initial capital investment and proper personnel within the family, high altitude herding is an eminently profitable and viable enterprise in Solu. Moreover, it is an activity with great cultural and social significance in a symbolic universe where the prosperity and health of the herds becomes a way to speak about that of humans.

This paper will first examine the economic and management aspects of high altitude herding in Solu. In particular, the daily labor and personnel requirements and the diversity, value and distribution, as well as seasonal variations and movements, will be discussed with reference to the types of pastoralism currently widely practiced. But herding is more than purely economic activity to Sherpas. It is tied throughout to the life of the village and its inhabitants, not only through the sale of its products but also by important ritual activities. This paper will, therefore, also present several examples of the ritual and symbolic value of the herds.

The nature of the Solu environment, in which great altitude changes occurring over short distances juxtapose climatically very different eco-zones, opens four herding possibilities to Solu Sherpas.

The first, and least important, is the keeping of water buffalo at altitudes below that of the village. When this first option is exercised, it appears to be primarily as a means of supplementing household dairy products, not for the profit from their sale. In this way it is most like the second possibility, which is almost universally relied upon. This is the keeping of some cattle especially cows, bulls, shaksum and shaksa (female and male or crosses, several steps away from yaks in the direction of traditional cows and bulls) in the vicinity of the village itself. These animals are sent out to graze daily but are stabled at the homestead each night. They provide dairy products for

household use and, perhaps more importantly, fertilizer for village fields.

Villagers who do not own cattle themselves undoubtedly consume far fewer dairy products, purchased from those who have a surplus. No one, however, can do without manure for their fields, so they must negotiate to obtain it. The most common practice is for the cattle-less household to offer the straw from their wheat crop in exchange for having someone else's cattle stabled on their land for periods from a few days to several weeks or even months, depending upon their bargaining ability and the quantity of straw they have. Houses in the village with cattle have difficulty providing adequate fodder for them through the winter months and so may have to stable them at one or more houses in order to accumulate sufficient reserves.

In addition to the fodder, these cattle are driven out each day to graze. Among the three types of land ownership found in Solu Sherpa communities--1) private (deeded and saleable) ownership of agricultural lands and homestead; 2) co-operative ownership of forest and pasture lands in the immediate vicinity of the village (deeded and shares saleable, but land parcel not divisible); 3) collective usufruct rights on high altitude pasturage in the name of the traditional village headman-- it is upon lands of the second sort that the village-stabled cattle are put to graze. These co-operatively owned lands may be purchased by any groups of individual heads of households, each of whom has contributed equally toward the purchase price. The size and composition of the group can vary from a few, generally the more wealthy, to many, and in one case to nearly sixty households drawn from three neighboring villages, buying as much land as possible².

Neither of these two forms of lower altitude herding are in any way ritually significant. In this way they are very different from and perhaps ideologically negligible by comparison to the two forms of high altitude herding.

Solu Sherpas recognize two distinct types of high altitude pastoralism: dzum3goThe⁴ and nak⁵goThe. Both can be highly profitable enterprises and partake of the same ritual significance. But since there are important differences in their output and management, I will first discuss them separately before dealing with their joint symbolic universe.

Dzum gothes are more numerous in Solu than nak gothes. Dzum produce the most dairy products, which are in high demand and easily marketed in Solu. Any surplus not sold in the villages of the herd owners themselves can be sold any Saturday at the weekly market just south of Phaplu and Salleri (formerly in Dorpu and still often referred to by that name), where each week hundreds of people come from up to a day's walk to buy, trade and sell. Among the products of the dzum gothe which are the most marketable and the range of prices they brought in 1975-76 are:

48-65 Rs./ <u>dharni</u>	butter (<u>maar</u>)
10 Rs./ <u>dharni</u>	<u>serkam</u> (a kind of cottage cheese)
3-5 Rs./ <u>mana</u>	<u>chhurbi</u> (dried <u>serkam</u>)

In addition they produce and can/will/but usually do not sell:

40 Rs/ (biscuit) tin	curds (<u>sho</u>)
1½-2 Rs./bottle	milk (<u>woma</u> or 'oma)
ca. 1 Rs./bottle	whey/buttermilk (<u>taar</u>)
1 Rs./handful	butter-skim (<u>rhim</u> --forms on boiled milk)
30 Rs./ <u>dharni</u>	<u>shoshim</u> (putty-like semi-dehydrated milk coating which will form on the inside of the wooden milking bucket if not cleaned after each milking)
not sold--special gift	<u>shomaar</u> (cooked down <u>shoshim</u>)

To make all these products at least one, and usually two adults, plus, ideally, an additional child to herd, must constantly stay in the dzum gothe. In addition someone has to carry the dairy goods down from and foodstuffs and salt back up to the gothe frequently. A common arrangement is for a wife and her smallest children, who profit from the enhanced diet, as well as an older child, who helps with milking and herding, to stay in the gothe while the husband travels back and forth, managing the agricultural work at the homestead in between. Initially, the farm work may be done by hired hands or the husband's aging parents, but as the couple's children grow up they can contribute to and even totally take over the work in either the farm or gothe. In this way, it is not surprising to find two mature (married or unmarried) daughters of an older couple managing a dzum gothe alone, while their brothers assume the bulk of the agricultural work on what will

soon be divided as their own lands. A Sherpa gothe is never owned or managed by more than one nuclear family, although in times of labor shortage as while all the couple's children are very young or if the wife must return to the village for wedding or funeral, a near relative may come to stay and work.

The rhythm of daily life in the dzum gothe is dictated by dairy work. In the morning all the dzum must be milked, then the milk boiled and combined with a little bit of yesterday's whey to culture today's milk into tomorrow's curds, while the cows are driven out to pasture. Then butter must be churned from the previous day's curds. For this, Sherpas use a butter churn consisting of a large cylindrical wooden bucket and a plunger, similar to the butter churn familiar in the west, but unlike the paddle variety used by most groups in Nepal. By noon, the butter is out and they are ready to boil down the whey to make the serkam cheese. When it has clotted it will be strained and placed in a draining basket and the previous day's drained serkam will be broken or cut into small chunks and put in a rack over the fire to dry, to make chhurbi. By the time all this is done, the cows will be wandering in for their evening milking. They are fed salt and sometimes a little flour in the liquid left behind from the boiling off of the serkam clotted cheese. They are milked, and that milk, too, must be boiled and added to the morning's. It is an inflexible schedule, but one which can be fulfilled at a leisurely pace which, especially in conjunction with the abundance of dairy products to supplement the otherwise drab and protein-short diet of potatoes and boiled flour, makes life in the dzum gothe very desirable and pleasant⁶.

The size of the dzum herd is limited by the number of milking cows and their output that one herding outpost, its personnel and equipment can handle. Fifteen milking dzum appear to be the approximate optimum; less than ten is not sufficiently profitable; but more than twenty is too hard to manage. In addition, a single shaksa bull⁷ will be kept, but the calves are of no value, not allowed to nurse and die. Daily output from the minimal 10 dzum gothe during good, but not quite peak, milk producing months will commonly be about one dharni of butter and 4-5 manas of chhurbi (or $1\frac{1}{2}$ dharnis of serkam) plus milk, buttermilk, curds and other products for consumption by the gothe dwellers, or varying amounts of the other products depending upon demands. Slightly larger dzum gothes (12-17 milking

animals) gross a cash income of approximately 100 rupees a day and the very largest gothes could conceivably bring in up to some 150 rupees a day. Even considering the cost in capital investment (a single dzum in 1975-76 could cost 1800 Rs. when young and up to 2500 as a mature animal), and in personnel, it can be easily seen that the contemporary Solu dzum gothe is highly profitable.

Through the year the dzum gothe must move in pursuit of good grazing. Only over the 3 or 4 coldest months of the year do they stay in or near the village, but never lower than approximately 9300 feet. Over the late spring, summer and early fall, the gothe ranges gradually up the mountains to ca. 13,000-13,700 feet, then back down, stopping in as many as six different places for at least two weeks but never longer than 1 month in each place. Each gothe has a fixed route on which it returns each year to the same sites and sends its animals out to graze on the same pastures, on set areas of land over which the village from which it comes has rights. Each village, in addition to the village agricultural lands, and the nearby forest and pasture lands, will own high pasture lands. These high grazing lands are held under the third type of land-holding pattern mentioned above--in the name of the traditional village headman, or mur min. He is responsible for collecting and paying the taxes on those lands. Although any co-villager may station cattle there without question or charge, the mur min also has the right to dispense permission to graze there to Gurung sheepherders--and no one may interfere with his decisions. This can cause problems beyond the usual rivalry between sheep-and cattle-herders, especially, for instance, if the mur min does not himself keep cattle and is therefore rather more likely to be receptive to many Gurungs' requisitions, gifts and cash payments, thereby potentially straining the pasturage capacity of the area.

On this same type of high pasture, although generally slightly higher than the dzum, are the nak gothes. Like the dzum gothe, the nak too must shift to find good pasture, although they may not have to move as frequently. In fact, the nak gothe can function with only two pastures--a higher summer one for the six warmer months and a lower one for the colder half of the year. The nak gothe, then, may be a more substantial stone and wood structure; and moving between sites has more the character of a caravan since

the naks and yaks can also carry loads while dzum cannot.

The primary difference, however, between the dzum and nak gothe is that while the dzum produce only dairy products for sale, the nak gothe also sells calves and blankets. This diversification has important ramifications for sources of income, seasonal variations, labor needs, and herd size.

By crossing the nak with a dzolang, imported to the gothe for stud only, the herder gets dzum (female) and dzopkyok (male) calves. Both can be sold: the dzum to other herders for between 1800 and 2500 Rs. as mentioned above; the dzopkyok are used only as beasts of burden in Solu (although they could be used to plow and were/are in Tibet) so do not command such high prices, but even when very young bring in at least 500 Rs. each.

In addition, once a year, just before the nak are driven up to the higher pastures, the nak and yak are shorn. Since nak and yak are rather more skittish and unused to people than the other crosses, this is an exciting operation, which those who aren't accustomed to the ways of nak-yak find intimidating. The spinning and weaving of the wool into blankets may be done in the household owning the animals or it may be contracted out for a monthly fee. One 8 ft. by 5 ft. blanket, woven in eight strips, can be woven from the wool of four or five yak/nak. The finished blankets are extremely warm and durable and are in constant demand, fetching prices from 500 Rs. a coarser one woven of the outer hair to 700 Rs. for one of the finer undercoat. The more enterprising are said to get 1000 Rs. for one in India and even more astronomical figures are reported from the occasional western buyer.

These two activities overlay and significantly restructure the dairy production and labor requirements of the nak gothe. The fact that the wool is made into blankets and the calves are raised for sale introduces a seasonal pattern of peaks and slumps that is not present in the dzum gothe. For the first three months of their lives, the calves are allowed to nurse at will. After this they are gradually weaned. Although throughout much of the year this means that a single person (even an adolescent) can manage the nak gothe alone, at the time of weaning additional personnel is necessary, both to help in the now important dairy work and with

the young calves. Although nak butter (nai maar) is considered of the greatest ritual purity--and therefore sought especially by the higher lamas in the area--nak dairy production is always less than dzum. It takes fifteen nak to equal the output of ten dzum, and the peak of their production comes about a month later.

The range of dairy products is the same as in the dzum gothe, and at the time after the calves have been weaned, so is the daily routine and need for more labor, with two variations. The nak/yak do not have to be herded during the day as they stay together coming and going without the need for even the minimal supervision required for dzum. But the newly weaned calves must be fed on carefully cut grasses--a full-time job until they are sold. Similarly, the shearing is another peak time when additional workers must be called upon in the gothe.

On the other hand, the shift in emphasis from exclusively dairy work to include the sale of calves and blankets means that a larger herd is both possible and desirable. Herds of fifty or sixty producing up to fifty calves⁸ and 12-15 blankets each year are feasible though rare. Fewer than twenty naks, which is to say about sixteen calves and 4-5 blankets annually, is apparently sufficiently unprofitable that owners of such dwindled herds will forgo one year's income from the sale of calves in favor of allowing their yak to breed the naks and thus increase herd size.

In spite of these differences, the two types of high altitude pastoralism are alike in that both partake of the same ritual schedule. The rituals associated with the gothes may be roughly divided into three classes: 1) those which are performed daily, 2) those performed at the time of herd movements, and 3) those which are performed only once a year. All invoke local divinities for the protection of the herd and household.

The first, daily, ritual activity is simple. It consists merely of offering incense in the morning fire before cooking and a recitation, one variant of which is given in translation here:

Offering of the tardza⁹

From each and every place, the villages of far pilgrimages and near pilgrimages, this tardza

is offered to the spirits of the high cliffs of our birthplace and to the spirits of the waters of our birthplace. To people dwelling on the earth do not send suffering. Do not pollute our waters below. Do not disrupt our purity of mind, nor the cleanness of our lungs. So be it for each and all. This pure tardza is offered to the heavens and the firmament and the void. And so this pure tardza is raised toward the heavens. Thus it is. So be it. King of gods.

This simple prayer is based upon and also recited in the slightly larger ritual performed each time the gothe is moved, at which time an actual tardza is erected. Butter, milk (preferably from a red or white animal) and incense are again offered at a site near the gothe. Since the gothes return to the same sites year after year, the tardza accumulate, making the otherwise inconsequential pile of stones easily noticeable. These offerings are made to the regional divinities or country gods (yul lha). Of particular importance are a number of goddesses resident in prominent peaks within the triangular area bounded by Kathmandu (Nagarkot--visible from the highest ridges in Solu, especially at night when the lights stand out), Mt. Everest in Khumbu, and Salwa (a distinctively pointed peak to the east and slightly south). Among these goddesses are the well-known "long-life sisters" (Sherpa Tsering chhe-nga, Tibetan Tshe-ring mched-nga). Even though to Solu Sherpas, ultimately, the yul lha of Numbur mountain and the goddess of Womi Tso are agreed to be the most important, the relative emphasis between the other country gods and goddesses (and even their names and number) varies. It may vary from gothe to gothe depending upon the area it moves in, but not from location to location for any one gothe in its annual movements. Thus the gothes on the slopes below the peak called (on the Thyssen map) Konyaklema (13,989 ft) direct their worship primarily to the female divinity who resides there and whom they call Kwonye lyemu, saying that she is the most important to them. But the gothes on the slopes of the Womi Tso Himal claim ascendancy for the yul lha of Numbur and the goddess of the lake, Jomo Tungnug Karmu, directly and devote their attentions primarily there.

The most well-developed of the rituals which more or less marks the herds' departure for the highest pastures in the late spring and early summer is the kang sung. Although some of the dzum or nak herds may

depart before the actual ritual, after it none may return to the village until fall. By not applying to the cattle which are permanently kept in the village, however, this ban relegates those herds to symbolic insignificance. But the kang sung is far more than a public posting of a rule about crop-destroying animals in the village. The herds, their owners' families, household goods and lineage segment are symbolically classed together as the divinities' protection is invoked for all simultaneously. At the center of this cluster is the nak, which provides the symbolic focus for ritual signification and activity.

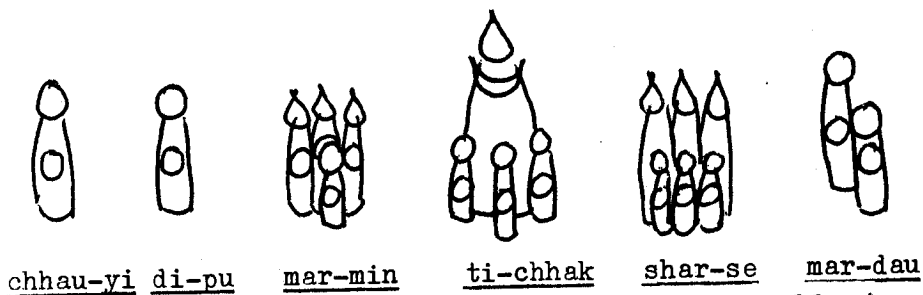
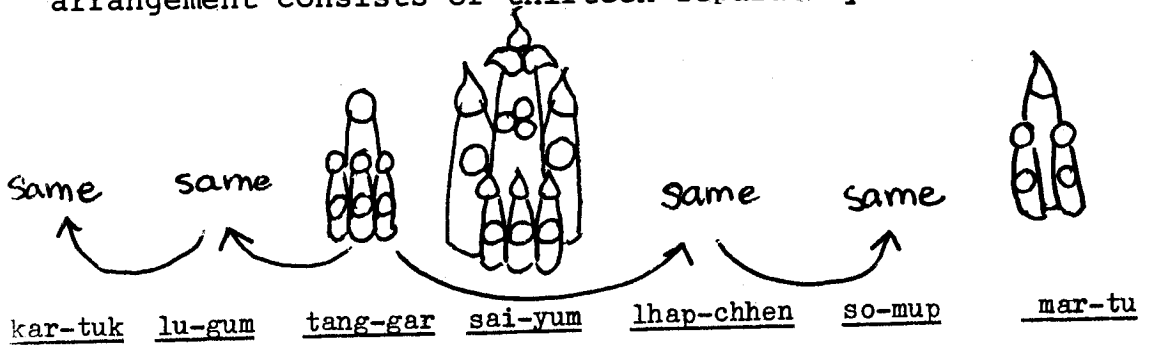
Kang sung may be performed at the village homestead or in the gothe. Not every household will perform kang sung, but a household need not concurrently own high altitudes herds in order to. In the village studies, however, every performing household in 1975-76 had at one time or another, if not then, owned a nak gothe.

Although not done IN every house, in any given village kang sung will ultimately be done FOR every household. Heads of households not performing kang sung will be invited to partake of the blessing of a kang sung done in the house of a close kinsman. Thus, in the village primarily studied, where there were three main lineages, at least one household from each lineage did kang sung. Lineage A, which consists of three aging brothers and their eight⁰ adult sons, only three of whom had built their own separate residences, attended the kang sung in the house of the youngest of the original brothers. Four of the five (the fifth does not live in Solu) brothers of Lineage C, none of whom had sons living separately, were represented at the kang sung done in the house of the eldest brother. It is in Lineage C, however, that the role of this ritual in marking lineage fragmentation becomes most clear. Just as at one time, when the founders of all three Lineages A, B, and C were living brothers, only one kang sung was necessary for the households of all three brothers. After they died, their sons began to perform kang sung independently--in their separate houses with their sons. At present, the original brothers who were the sons of founder B are dead, so Lineage B is in the process of fragmenting further and establishing a number of new sublineages independent of one another. They are also beginning to perform separate kang sung for each of the new sublineages. In this way, then, X number of brothers performing kang sung separately are in effect signifying their separation

into X number of sublineages, although they will of course, continue to recognize their shared ancestry.

When kang sung is performed in the village it can become very involved, having in its most elaborated form three main aspects: the ritual performed inside the house, that done outside and the feasting of the guests.

Inside the house a multi-level altar will be set up of the offerings. This can be more or less extensive depending upon the household desires and means, but the overall format is fixed. The central or uppermost torma arrangement consists of thirteen separately named tormas:



An auxiliary set consists of general offerings of water, flowers, incense, a butter lamp, na¹⁰, and chhang¹¹, clustered around another large torma like the sai-yum of the central/upper offerings, but here called chhau-yi. Finally there are the most general or public offerings of a large plate of potatoes and a large simple torma--together they are merely called chhau, 'offering.'

The presiding lama is a village, not a monastic lama. In front of him are placed offerings of na, arak¹³, incense, flowers and a butterlamp. First, he recites and makes an offering of small pieces of the chhau to exorcise the rhendi, 'ghosts', which is thrown violently out the window. The rest of the chhau is distributed among all present and children are given some of the smaller tormas as special treats.

After a short informal interlude in which there is much joking, laughing and drinking of chhang and arak, the lama resumes and culminates his work with a special butter blessing (karkye shop) to the members of the household holding the kang sung. He will take the grain offerings before him home in payment for his services.

The ritual outside apparently may be done before, after, or during a break in the inside work. It consists of setting up (ideally five) tardza--the evergreen tree poles with the branches of the crown not removed described earlier--and making offerings to it of cloth, butter and corn. As the offerings are made, the lama recites 'put the butter on the head', 'put the butter on the tail', 'on the feet', etc., and the household head mimics his instructions as best as possible on the imaginary head, tail, and feet of a tree-trunk. In the gothes, or in very large rituals (see below on Mani-rimdu) these can be done on a real animal. Also, in the village, older informants said they could recall that in their 'grandfather's time' a white goat was used, and then sacrificed. To contemporary Sherpas the idea of killing is so reprehensible that some of the younger people could not believe that this could ever have been true, but they were informed quite firmly by the older ones that, indeed, it was so.¹³ Similarly, the cloth offerings--of two sorts: gak, a dark appliqued piece which is kept and added to from year to year, and Dau-tok (also called, through association, tardza), five strips of white cloth which are renewed each year--are tied and draped in different places on the tree-pole-goat-nak.

Finally kang sung involves the feasting of all guests present. This is an integral part of this event as well as of the entire Sherpa complex of hosting and hospitality described in detail by Ortner (Paul, 1970).

The last rituals to be discussed in this paper which draw upon the herd-human equation in invoking local divine forces somewhat outside of, appended to, or on the fringes of, rational Nyinmapa Buddhist theology for protection and prosperity are the Womi Tso festival and the nak consecration in Mani-rimdu. Both are big annual public events, attracting not only Sherpas but anyone who wishes to attend, bringing with them their own interpretations of the event.

The variety of participants is most obvious at Womi Tso, where people come from up to a week's walk away, from almost every ethnic group in the region, and

in great numbers. Brahmin-Chetris, who call the festival Dudh Kund Jatra or Mela, come for the bathing and renewing of their sacred threads for which the full moon (of Sawan or Bhadau, generally falling in the western months of August or September) is named, Janai purnima. In this year (1976) because it fell in Sawan, the time of another all-Tamang festival nearer to Phaplu, no Tamangs came to Womi Tso. There were, however, hundreds of Rais and Limbus who came with shamans from their villages. Their primary ritual activity was centered at the lake shore, where they made a series of offerings including small leaf boats set afloat with little burning wicks in them, and at five points around a cliff on the western shore of the lake. The Sherpas laughed at the efforts of the scantily-clad bathing Hindus shivering violently from the cold. Coming warmly dressed from gothe and village, the Sherpas were content to splash a little water on face, hands and feet. They enjoyed the preceding night's all-night, drinking, dancing and singing with the Rais and Limbus and watched (and even consulted) their shamans with interest. But the focus of their religious action was the circumambulation of the lake itself three times. They voiced great concern that the lake was so dried up: it was clearly shrunken to about one-third its normal size, a disturbing phenomenon to Sherpas who look to this lake especially, its fullness and purity, as a visible symbol of their own prosperity and health. Their action and concern were part of their belief system, just as were those of the other groups present. For Sherpas, the festival at Womi Tso, which occurs when the gothes are about to redescend from the highest pastures, when calves are about to be sold and dairy production is at or just beyond its peak, is devoted to the highest of the local country gods. It marks the moment after which they need no longer be worshipped in the gothes themselves each day. The prosperity and health of herds and families is reflected in the lake; the most important of the country gods in Numbur mountain, overseeing all the other gods and goddesses and visible repository of their protective force, looms above.

Mani-rimdu is the largest more exclusively Sherpa festival in Solu.¹⁴ Although people of other ethnic groups are free to attend, when they do so, it is as spectator in an essentially Sherpa event. Either they come to watch the costumed monastic dancing without understanding them or they subscribe to the significance given them in Sherpa belief.

On the main dance day, the central religious activity is the morning-long consecration of two young naks. Most of this takes place inside the gomba before the dances begin, away from the public who have not yet assembled to watch the dances in the courtyard, but are still drinking, eating and visiting outside. Inside, the naks are dedicated to the local divinities, who are praised and honored greatly, as is the country over which they preside itself, and the monastery which serves it them. Finishing the consecration of the naks overlaps with the beginning of the dances, so that once the public is seated and the initial orchestral number has ended, they are led into the courtyard and blessed before the crowd. To the intoning of the lamas, they receive butter on head, tail, feet, etc, white cloth scarves over their neck and dark cloth applique and brocade banners across their back (see above outside ritual of kang sung). Then they are made to circumambulate the altar in the middle of the courtyard and blessed being led away to circumambulate the entire gomba. In its entirety, Mani-rimdu is an important assurance to Sherpas that not all their pantheon has been rationalized into complete unapproachability by the high monastic tradition even though that tradition has managed to incorporate those country gods, earth gods, and goddesses of life and prosperity as 'Protectors of the Faith.' Mani-rimdu is living expression of continuing divine involvement in the concerns of daily Sherpa life, an important symbol of which are the naks and the high altitude herds.

FOOTNOTES

1. Based upon field research conducted with the support of the National Institute of Mental Health Doctoral Dissertation Research Fellowship in Solukhumbu district, Nepal, from October 1975-December 1976.
2. It must be noted, however, that very large sections of Solu have been held by the members of one clan segment in Phaplu whose willingness or reluctance to sell portions of their holdings has until now been the only factor limiting the purchase of new lands. This, of course, cannot go on forever. Although at present there is still what must be called--relative to the rest of Nepal--a land surplus in Solu (e.g. no villager in the primary

village of study was working all the land they owned), if population growth continues at its present rate this will and within the next generation, much sooner if many of the Sherpas residing in India or Kathmandu but who still have land rights in Solu were to suddenly return.

3. Female of a cross between a nak and a dzolang, raised for sale in the nak gothes.
4. Term specifically refers to the herder's hut (cf. Nepali goTH).
5. Female yak.
6. It is interesting to note that not only is infant mortality dramatically less in the gothes, -- presumably due largely to the far better nutrition, -- but also the men who have and often stay in high altitude gothes are rarely involved in the many fights, drunkenness and general belligerence which marks village life, even when they are in the village.
7. Indeed, dzum gothe owners pride themselves on their shaksa bulls, feeding them butter, eggs and even honey and never using them to plow. Owners take great delight in the prowess of their bulls, especially in the bulls' conquests in other herds, and even in the number of other bulls theirs has killed or injured in combat, endowing them with many anthropomorphic qualities. Thus a defeated bull is said to hide in the forest for days from 'shame' after losing a battle. And should one bull kill another, there is no particular animosity between the owners, but the surviving bull must provide free stud service for the other's cows for three years.
8. Not all will survive. Even with the care they get as many as half the calves may die.
9. A tardza is a special kind of offering: a small evergreen tree is stripped of all its branches except those of the crown. This awkward pole is planted in the ground or in a pile of stones and made offerings of white cloth, butter, milk and a special dark banner.

10. Generally translated as 'barley.' My informants, however, insisted it was not barley. Toba (SIL) translates it as 'cop.' In any case, it is the grain crop which is harvested just before the time of kang sung and eaten roasted or made into chhang--and a welcome treat from the end-of-winter diet.
11. Fermented but undistilled beverage which can be made with rice, millet, corn or na. Sherpas in Solu generally make and prefer corn, corn-and-millet, or na chhang.
12. Alcoholic beverage made by distilling chhang.
13. A point brought up again later in an argument about how similar or different Sherpas are from Tamangs, another non-Hindu ethnic group. Sherpas are somewhat ambivalent about Tamangs. On the one hand, they frequently say, usually in the presence of Tamangs, that they're equal and they do co-dine, But most Sherpas are disturbed greatly by, and regard as ultimately a sign of inferiority, the fact that Tamangs sacrifice animals in some of their rituals. Thus, to be told that their ancestors--and not those of the distant distant past--also made living sacrifices was a distressing discovery and contradiction.
14. Cf. Jerstad (1969).

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