

An Ethnohistorical Study of Bandipur

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Introduction

The Newar trade industry in central Nepal is changing with new geographical and political conditions. This paper concerning a Newar bazaar community proceeds from a consideration of the history of the development of a trade network and cultural center to a description of the general economy and life-styles resulting from this development. It concludes with a description of the decline of the center due to a change in trade patterns, and current adaptations aimed at revitalization of the community.

Bandipur Bazaar is located in the district of Tanahū in the southeastern corner of Gandaki Zone. It is situated south of the Prithvi Rāj marg Highway midway between Kathmandu and Pokhara, near the point where the Marsyangdi River takes a sharp turn eastward on its way to join the Trisuli River at Mugling. Along the highway at this bend in the river is the bus stop bazaar town, Dumre. At the entrance of town a footroad track takes off from the road up a sloping ridge on wide stone staircases to the top. The top of the ridge slopes gently south and then forms a saddle. The track widens and gradually enters onto a long slate-paved bazaar with brick town houses on either side. This is the main bazaar of Bandipur.

I. HISTORY OF THE BANDIPUR AREA, PRE-1800

It is useful to reconstruct and visualize how and when the Bandipur area was first settled, who were the first inhabitants, and what were their long-lasting contributions to this community during its first stages of development. A number of valuable sources of information are available for piecing together the early history of the Bandipur area prior to its identification as a significant cultural and trading center. These include the local legends and spoken history passed on from one generation to the next; the physical artifacts connected with these spoken legends (e.g., shrines, architecture, and festivals); and several accounts written by early Western travellers, which often correspond directly to the local legends. These sources, when examined together, seem to support each other in providing a fairly consistent account of the political, religious, and economic situation of the area during early periods of its history.

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Legends

During my stay in Bandipur, I found the single most popular topic of conversation of my informants was discussion of what Bandipur was like in the past. There was no end to the countless reminiscent stories and heroic tales which the people were able to recount to me. I observed that these legends, in conjunction with related physical evidence, suggested a rich historical base from which the culture of this area today has, in part, evolved. The two-part legend which follows is one of the most informative. It seems to incorporate not only an explanation for the origin of a particular Devta (Hindu God), but also a broad, all-encompassing explanation for local traditions -- and perhaps even an insight into how the people themselves view their existence in the greater scheme of things.

THE LEGEND OF MUKUNDA SEN RĀJA OF PALPA, OWNER OF THE SACRED SWORD

Part A

Many years ago, Mukunda Sen, Rāja of Pālpa, gained control over all the surrounding areas [including Bandipur, which at that time was inhabited by Magars and some Kāmis], and became ruler over many types of people. He had unified many under one throne, yet his accomplishments were not satisfactory. He felt something lacking, and longed for spiritual strength. He decided to go away from his palace and stayed in a shelter on the Mutschuk Dānda (hill) above Bandipur. One night, having shed his finery, he disguised his identity, dressed simply, and wandered out from this place to a small Brahman settlement not far away called Jhapri Phānt. Here an old woman (Brahman) took him in. She offered him rice and a place to spend the night. The meal included some 84 varieties of curry, milk, yoghurt, and pickle. But when Makunda Sen received them, he mixed all the curries together and ate everything combined. The old woman sadly looked on and commented, "You are just like Makunda Sen Rāja. Just as you have taken all these unique foods, each with its own character and flavour, and have combined them all so that no taste is different from the other and all the unique flavours are lost, so Makunda Sen has taken people of many lifestyles and combined them under one throne to lose their unique identities. Makunda Sen and you should learn to enjoy each thing separately as it is."

Makunda Sen was so moved by these words that he decided to give up his kingdom for good and become a religious devotee (sādhu). He left his material wealth behind and went to Devghat, where he built a temple, and later died. It is said that he went into a stone² which had been brought up from the Narayani in a fish net just before he died.

Among the material possessions left behind with the woman in Jhapri Phānt was a sword. This old woman had locked away in a room in case the owner returned for it. After many years, the home began experiencing bad omens. Animals died, brothers fought, and the harvest was poor. Finally a Jhānkri (Shaman) was summoned to determine the causes of the ill fortune. The Jhānkri asked if there were any objects in the house which were foreign. The old woman, suddenly remembering the sword, unlocked the door where the sword was kept. In the corner the sword was standing on end, trembling and shaking of its own accord. The Jhānkri knew the sword was a Devta -- no doubt dangerous -- and ordered it to be removed at once. It was later placed on a hill in Bandipur in a specially constructed temple. This powerful Devta is called Khadga Devi. Once a year, from the first day (Ghatasthapana) to the tenth day (Tika) of the festival of Dasain, a series of special worships takes place. On the seventh day (Phulpati) a sheep must be sacrificed between the two sons of the old woman, and a tug-of-war contest determines who keeps the mutton for the feast.

Part B

The Tanahū Rāja (Descendant of Makunda Sen)

The Rāja of Tanahū was extremely brave and cunning. He held his dominion longer than most contemporaries. He was particularly successful in defeating Prithvi Narayan Shah of Gorkha, in battles held on the tops of the cliffs in Bandipur. However, one time they agreed to have a battle along the banks of the river Marsyangdi at which no swords could be used. Prithvi Narayan Shah carefully hid his swords under the sand. The Tanahū Rāja, however, came unarmed, as was the agreed plan. For some time the battle raged on, with the Tanahū armies nearly crushing the Gorkha troops. Suddenly just as the Gorkhalis were about to lose, Prithvi ordered his men to dig up the swords and surround the Tanahū Rāja and his army. The Tanahū Rāja, in his anger toward the deceitful Prithvi Narayan Shah, vowed never again to look on the face of Prithvi Narayan. He went away to Devghat and faced away from Tanahū and Gorkha, and died.³

Physical Correlates of Legendary History

Physical correlates of details in these legends still exist in Bandipur today. In deciphering the legends bit by bit, and in applying them to what physical evidence exists in Bandipur, one can see that the legends appear to be quite accurate in their establishment of the historical setting during their respective times.

There is evidence indicating that Magars had settled in the Bandipur area long before the Newars. Most of the surrounding hills are occupied by Magars or Gurungs, and have approximately the same altitude, soil, and vegetation types as Bandipur. Thus, it is reasonable that Bandipur would be as likely a place to live as the neighbouring hills. The land itself in and around Bandipur shows signs of long occupancy. Terracing is well settled and appears on almost every piece of available land. Much of this land is now overgrown. About forty years ago, there were at least five Magar settlements on the hillsides surrounding Bandipur. Today, only two settlements are still occupied. The other three settlements have disappeared almost entirely. One abandoned site was at a later time converted into a brick factory (Figures 1 and 2).

Above Bandipur on the top of a small mountain, in the middle of an uninhabited forest, there is a small shrine containing twelve swords, numerous bells and tridents, and a brass Nepali flag (Pataka) with an inscription:⁴

"In the year 1919 (1862 A.D.) Chaitra 8,
Friday, to Siddha Makunda Sen, in this
place of love, I offer one Pataka."

Sayen Dhoj (Bhandari)
Chhetri

Near the shrine are several overhanging rock shelters, said to be the hideout of Makunda Sen after leaving his palace (Figure 2 and Figure 3). This shrine, worshipped mostly by Magars, is called Makunda Swari.

In Bandipur, the temple of Khadga Devi is still present, having been rebuilt; and still contains the Sacred Sword, believed to be a representation of Durga (fierce Hindu goddess). The sword is worshipped once a year during the festival of Dasain. The Pujari (priest) for this Puja (worship), a Magar, is one of only two people who may touch the sword. A Brahman priest officiates at the ceremonies with the Magar Pujari, but does not touch the sword (Figure 4b). After chicken and goat sacrifices are completed, the Magar brings the sword out of the temple (Figure 5). People say the sword is easily angered. Once outside the temple, the Magar Pujari gives the sword to a Kāmi Khadge (metal-worker-caste sword-bearer) who becomes the sword bearer for the long procession down through the bazaar. The Kāmi Khadge takes the Devta first to its Maiti⁵ (Figure 6 - also shown behind temple in Figure 4c) so that people of his caste and others may worship without causing pollution in the temple. The traditional sheep sacrifice occurs at the joining of two side streets into the main bazaar (noted on Figure 1 map). The Brahman family said to have descended from the woman who originally had Makunda Den's sword has now split; one son's

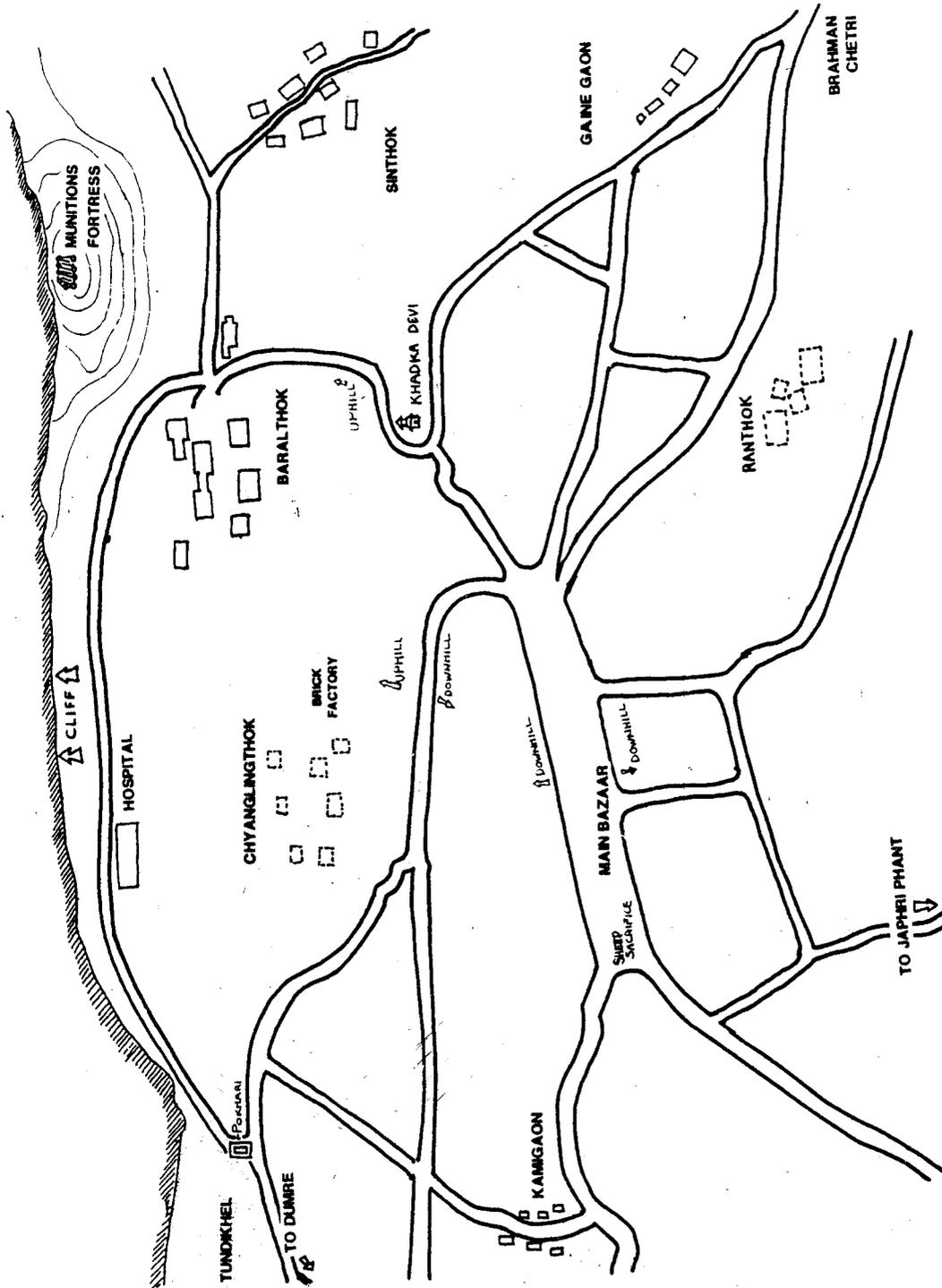


Fig. 1. Locations of original Magar settlements in relation to bazaar today.
Baralthok and Sinthok are the only active settlements remaining today.
(Map prepared by author)

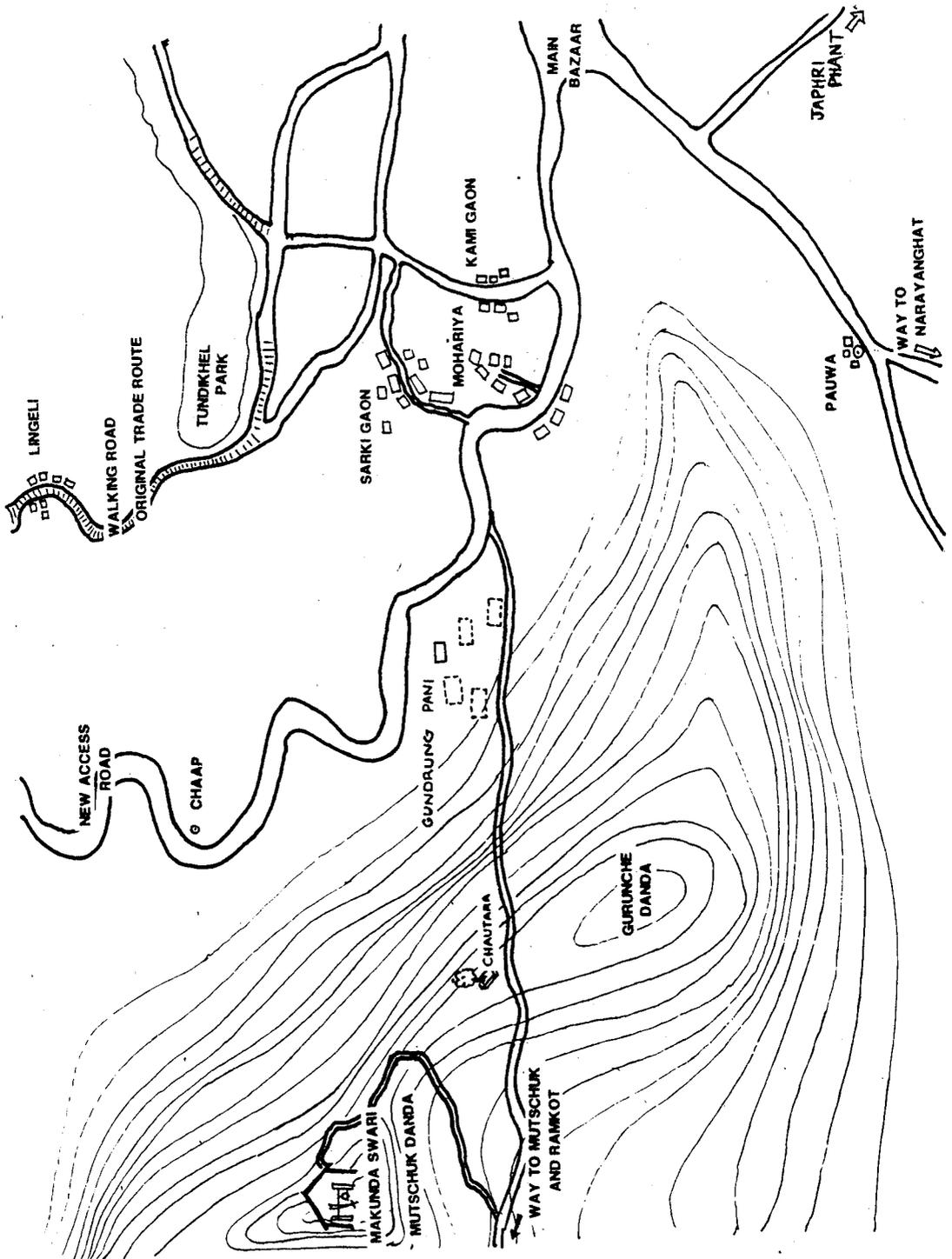


Fig. 2. Extension of Figure 1, this shows three other settlements one of which is almost abandoned. Both maps show the historic locations (Map prepared by author)

and Jindok are the only active settlements remaining today.
(Map prepared by author)

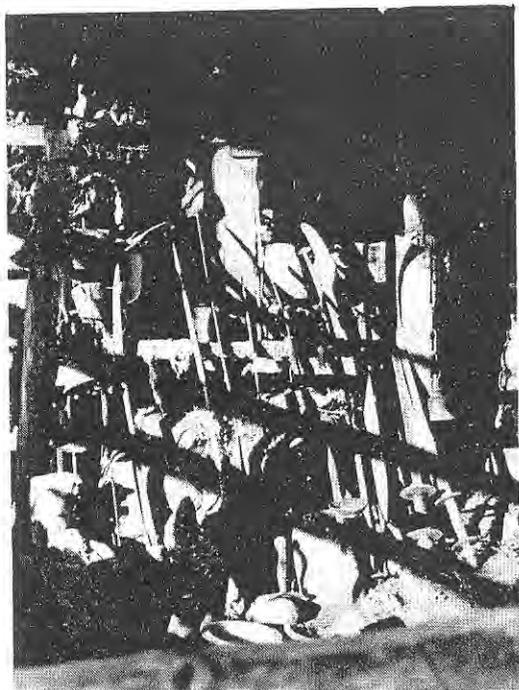
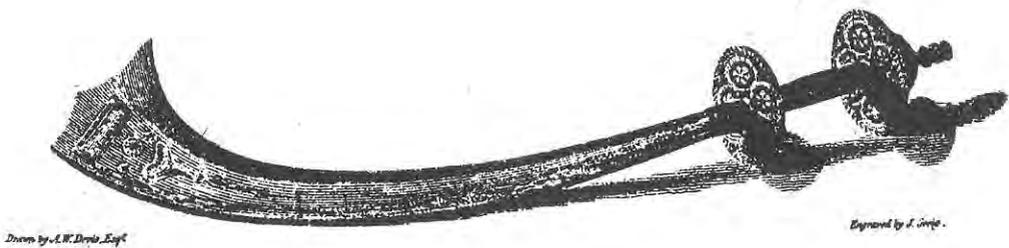


Fig. 3a. Swords in the shrined of Makunda Swari.
(All photographs by author)



Fig. 3b. Marker above shrine.



The Khora.

Published by William Walker, Edinburgh, Scotch Academy of Printing.

Fig. 3c. Engraving of 'The Khora' identical to swords at far right in Fig. 3a above.
(from Kirkpatrick 1811: facing page 118)

Figure 3. Makunda Swari shrine.

descendants live in Jhapri Phānt, while the other son's descendants live in Rāmkot. This place where the sacrifice occurs is almost half way between the two villages, and marks the crossroads.

At the southern tip of the Tanahũ District, the boundary is determined by the confluence of two major rivers of the region. The Seti Gandaki and the Kali Gandaki converge and become the Narayani River, at which point there is a sacred Hindu pilgrimage called Devghāt (Figure 7a). On the Tanahũ side of the rivers are numerous shrines and temples, including the Makunda Sen Chakravarti (from Skt. Chakravartin = "wheel turning" universal king) Mandir (temple) which contains a large, black-oval-shaped rock approximately 3 feet long and 1½ feet high (Figure 7b). The people claim this rock is the very one entered by Makunda Sen, and that it has been growing ever since that time.

The legend of Tanahũ Rāja is also supported by the existence of the ruins of his munitions fortress above the cliff overlooking the Marsyangdi Valley (Figure 1 & 8). These physical correlates serve to support the legend of Makunda Sen and illustrate the importance that legend still holds in the lives of the Bandipur people today.

Written Correlates of Legendary History

There is also some written evidence supporting the validity of the legends of Makunda Sen and Tanahũ Rāja. Two explorers, Francis (Buchanan), Hamilton (1819) and Colonel Kirkpatrick (1811), have written extensively about this time period as they viewed it first hand. Two other accounts written by Christian missionaries add much to a description of the setting at this time.⁶

According to Hamilton's observations about the turn of the eighteenth century, the populations of both Pālpa and Tanahũ were predominantly Magar and Brahman.

When the colony from Chitaur first took possession of Palpa, it belonged to a Magar Chief, and the people were of that tribe. Brahmans, ... are now the most numerous class; next to these are the Khas, and the Magars.

The mountains of Tanahung were inhabited by the same races as Palpa, and nearly the same proportions.

(Hamilton 1819: 178, 183).

Fig. 4. Khadga Devi.



Fig. 4a. Magar Pujari, (left) performs Puja.

Fig. 4b. Pujari prepares goat sacrifice.
Brahman stands at left with shirt.



Fig. 4c. General view of Khadga Devi temple,
and chicken sacrifice during Dasain.

Khadga Devi.

(left) performs

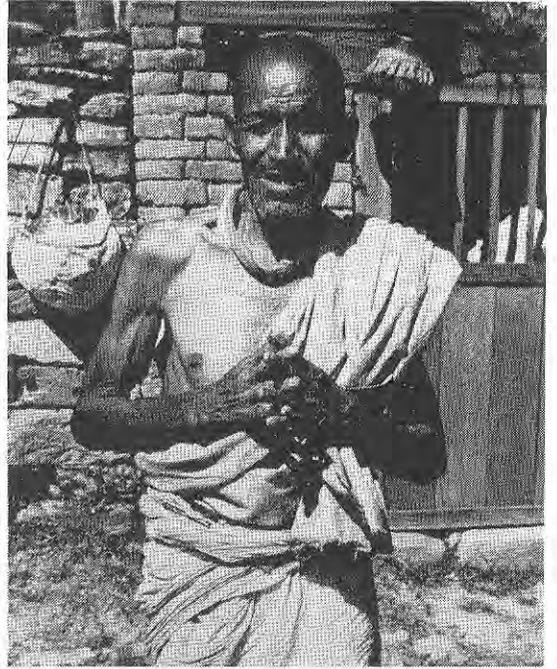


Fig. 5a. Magar Pujari brings sword from temple.

Fig. 5b. Kāmi sword bearer. (Khadge)

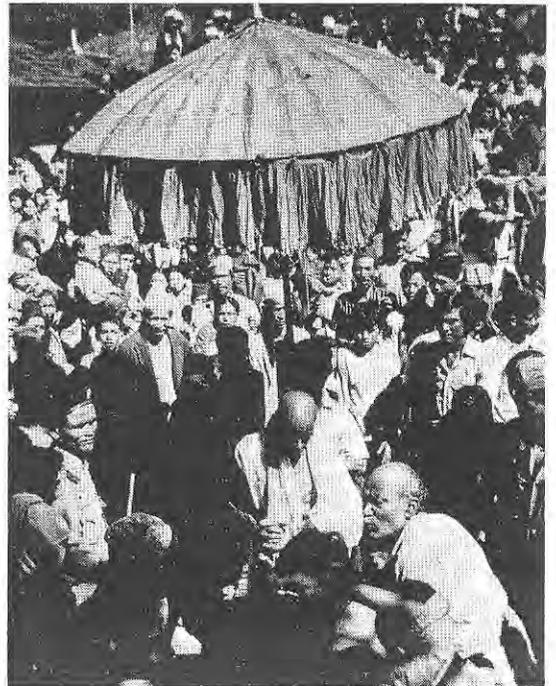
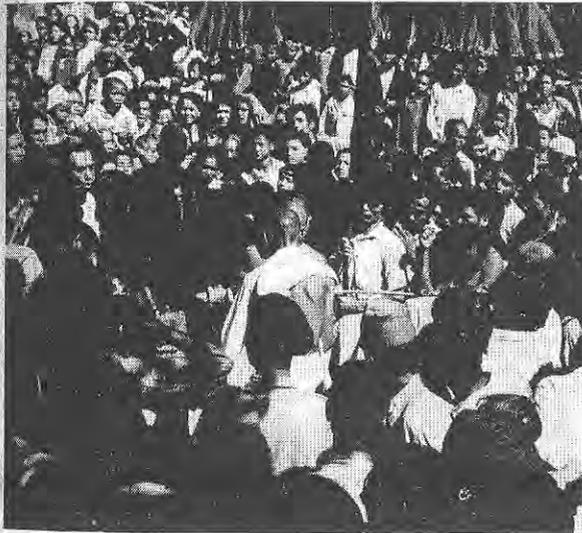


Fig. 5c. Pujari gives sword to Kāmi.

Fig. 5d. Kāmi carries sword in procession thru bazaar.

Khadga Devi temple,
during Dasain.

Fig. 5. Khadga Devi Devta Procession.

Fig. 6. Maiti for Khadga Devi.

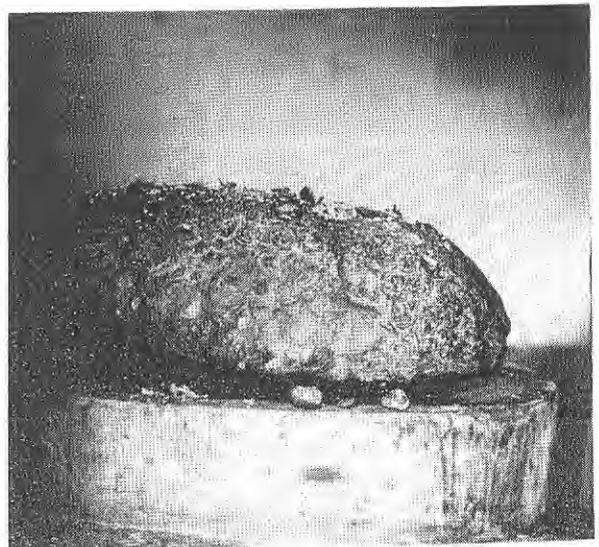


Fig. 7. Devghāt.



Fig. 7a. Ferry at Devghāt crossing the Seti Gandaki to the temple.

Fig. 7b. Makunda Sen Cakravarti mandir, containing the sacred rock.



The Chitaur family, however, seems to have been of Thakuri status (relatively high class). The Pālpa Rāja and the Tanahū Rāja both are descendants of the Chitaur family, with the class name "Sen" (Turner 1931).

... Rudra (Sen) was probably the first of the family, as his descendants alleged, who assumed the title of the Palpa Raja. It is agreed by all that the Makanda Sen, the son of Rudra, possessed very extensive dominions, and might probably have founded a kingdom equal to that which the Gorkhalese now enjoy, but he had the imbecility to divide his estates among his four sons. ... According to what I heard in Puraniya, Manik, the eldest son obtained Palpa, Bhringgu received Tanahung, ...

(Hamilton 1819: 131)

Hamilton continues with a detailed description of "Makanda Sen" and his descendants (p. 170-71), which I have presented in the form of a chart showing the patrilineal descent (Figure 9). Note that the above quote mentions Makanda Sen (Makunda Sen) and the division of his kingdom four ways, while the Legend of Makunda Sen (p. 3 above) states that Makunda Sen gave up his kingdom and went to Devghat as a religious devotee. Thus, what the legend sees as a religious renunciation, in the best tradition of the Hindu Dharmarāja, the British colonial author sees as "imbecility." The following mention of Makunda Sen by B.D. Sanwal also conforms to this part of the legend.

Makunda Sena escapes in garb of Sanyasi.

(Sanwal 1965: 35)

Hamilton's account (p. 185) mentions Makunda Sen's death at Devghāt.

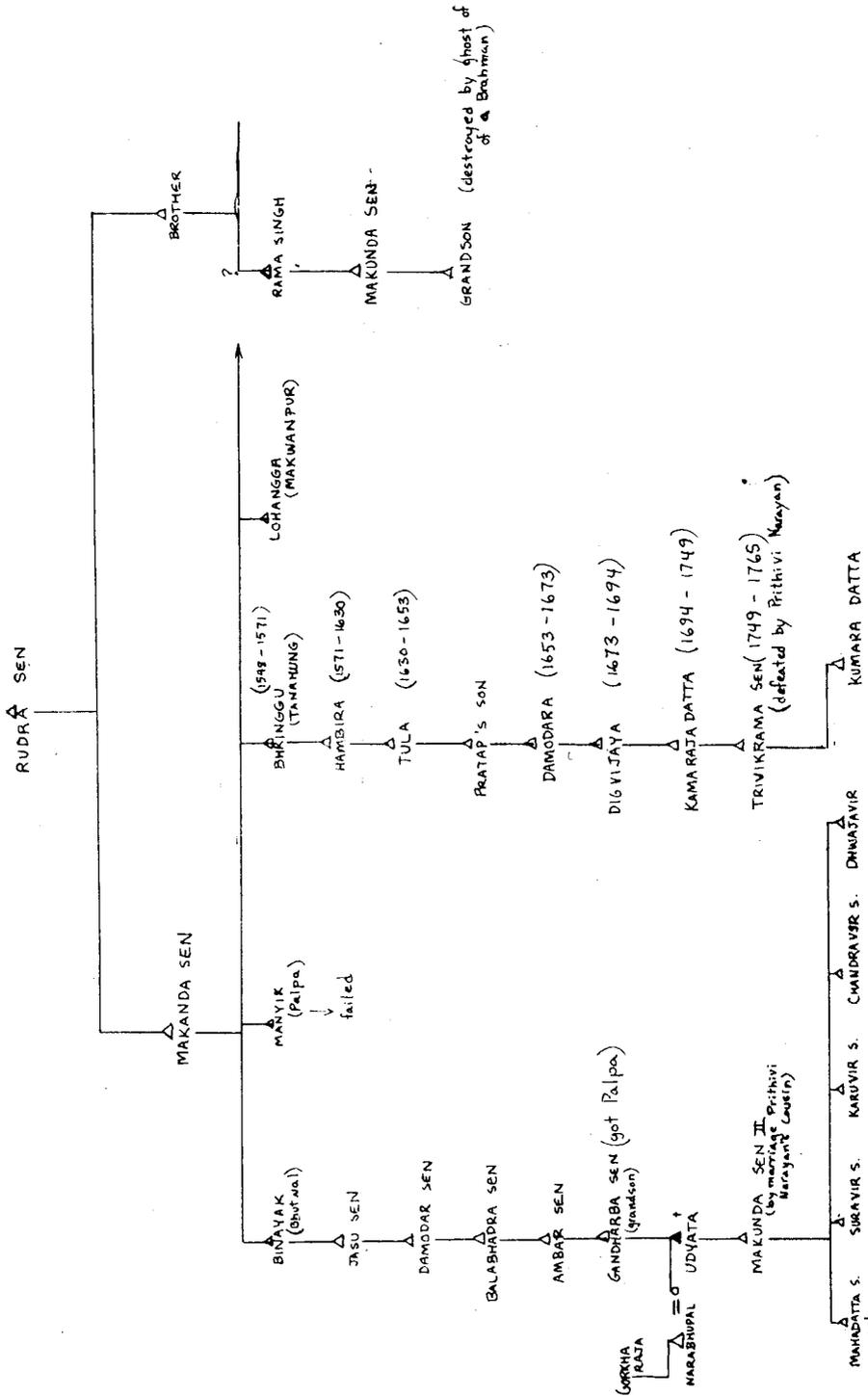
Rising (place name) seems to have belonged to his ancestor Makunda Sen the 1st, who founded at the Dewghat, in that territory, a celebrated temple, where he died.

This corresponds quite closely with Makunda Sen's founding of Makunda Sen Chakravarti Mandir in the legend, and is further evidence that he was, perhaps, indeed a religious devotee. Although these accounts written over 150 years ago must also have relied to a large extent on oral tradition, they nevertheless correspond quite closely to the spoken legend of Makunda Sen as found in Bandipur today.



Fig. 8. View from fortress of Tanah Rāja.

Fig. 8. View from fortress of Tanahū Rāja.



CHITAU FAMILY

Fig. 9. Chart showing Chitaur family patrilineal descent. (compiled by author from data in Hamilton 1819; and D.R. Regmi. 1961)

The legend of the Tanahũ Rāja is also well supported by written accounts, both Nepali and Western. Hamilton states that:

No chief resisted with such gallantry and effect the rising power of Prithvi Narayan of Gorkha as the Raja of Tanahung, by whom the forces of that perfidious prince were defeated in a most decisive battle; nor was any attempt afterwards made to extend the dominions of Gorkha to the west until the Raja of Palpa was gained. ...

(Hamilton 1819: 182)

This is in direct agreement with the legend which stresses the firm holdings of Tanahũ Rāja. Hamilton also mentions that:

The Marchangdi continued to be the boundary (of Gorkha) to the west, as it had been in the time of his ancestors.

(p. 171)

Although there is no mention in these accounts of battles being fought in Bandipur, there are several conflicting accounts of the Tanahũ Rāja's "Last Stand." Hamilton states:

How the overthrow of Tanahung took place I have not learned; but the Raja made his escape to Ramnagar, and retains only what he held of the company.

(p. 182)

Colonel Kirkpatrick states that the son of Prithvi Narayan was responsible for the seizure of Tanahũ.

Singh Pertaub (Prithvi's heir) reigned little more than three years, dying in the year 1776; he had added, however somewhat to the conquests of his father, having among other places of less consequence, seized on the districts of Tannhoi (Tanahũ), Soomaisee, Jogimarra ... the Raja of Tannhoi, Hurry Koomar Dutt (Hari Kumar Datta), is still in possession of part of his patrimonial inheritance ...

(Kirkpatrick 1811: 272)

However, the account which most strikingly supports the legend is offered by D.R. Regmi. I have chosen to present his account in its entirety, so that it may be compared with the legend itself:

In 1756, he (Prithvi Narayan) deceptively imprisoned the Raja of Tanhou, Trivikram Sen, who had come to meet him at Jyamir Ghat. The circumstances described by the chronicler are as follows. Prithvinarayan felt that although the rulers of Bhatgaon and Tanhou were supposed to be his friends, he could not completely rely on them; rather he feared that in moments of crisis they might harbour a design to harass him. Therefore, he contrived to kidnap them and place them near his camp under surveillance. He had no design to absorb the two states into Gorkha, but if he could hold the persons of the two rulers, he would certainly influence the policy of the administration in Tanhou and Bhatgaon. To this end some trusted men were sent to both the capitols. These men were to say that Prithvinarayan was too eager to meet Ranjeetamallā and Trivikram for a very urgent task. One Pandit Gaurisvara who happened to be a common friend of both Tanhou and Gorkha ruling houses was deputed by the conspirators to talk to Trivikram. The latter did know nothing of the scheme to arrest Trivikram. Gaurisvara was a priest of the Tanhou family, and therefore, his advice was accepted. It was suggested that the conference would meet at Jyamir Ghat where the participants would go unarmed. But the Gorkhalis had kept hidden their arms underneath the sand to use the same as the occasion required. So while the Tanhou ruler came in all good faith, they surprised him and attacked his person. His retinue watched helplessly as the Gorkhalis unearthed their weapons, sprang on him with a show of force and made him prisoner. Thus Prithvinarayan was freed from the worries of a surprise attack from that quarter. Therefore he proceeded to grab more lands in the Valley of Nepal, and nearly succeeded to annex in no time at least half the area there and in adjoining hills in the west of it. Trivikram Sen was later released, but he died a broken hearted man.

(D.R. Regmi 1961: 57-8)

Other Historical Factors: Pre-1800

I have thus far dealt mainly with the political aspect of the history of this area - through the point of view of both the people of this area and their legends, and the outsiders who have contributed much to the written knowledge of this topic. Other historical factors such as life-styles, subsistence patterns, and sources of income and trade are less emphasized in the spontaneous spoken history of Bandipur, but are nevertheless important to an understanding of cultural development of the people and the area. I was able to obtain some information on these factors through observation and extensive discussions with the elderly people of Bandipur.

The inhabitants living in and around Bandipur were of different caste origins, i.e. Magar, Brahman, Chhetri, Kāmi, and perhaps some Sarki, and each group was positioned in different settlement clusters (Figure 1 and 2). The homes of these settlements today reflect the gradual change from the original architectural styles and techniques to the present-day Newar architecture. Unaltered older homes of the area are constructed from sticks, poles and small rocks, plastered together with clay, dung, and straw. A thick thatched roof protects the home from heavy rains. These homes (if two levels high) usually have notched tree trunk ladders. Woodwork on the windows and doors usually incorporates a pagoda framing, with lattice work in the center (Figure 10). Animals are kept next to the house and under the veranda. The veranda provides a cool, shady location where crafts and other household chores are done during the hot sunny days. For Magars, these crafts consisted mostly of weaving. Cloth weaving with the throw-shuttle loom was used by many to make cloth for the bulk of their clothing. Most common is the white shawl-size piece worn by the women around the head, and by the men around the waist (Figure 11a and b). Bamboo is also skillfully woven by these people into sturdy baskets (dokos), floor mats, and winnowing trays (nanglos) (Figure 12). Mastery of basketry and construction of nanglos proved sufficiently superior so as to provide an additional means of income for those who sold their products in other small villages nearby.

The main source of subsistence for the people of the eighteenth century and earlier must have been their almost total dependence on their own agriculture and animal husbandry. The Bandipur people say that:

Before the Magars settled in Bandipur, there were many tall trees and lots of wild animals. But while walking through the area some people noticed khorsani plants (red hot peppers) growing in the wild. They thought this must be a

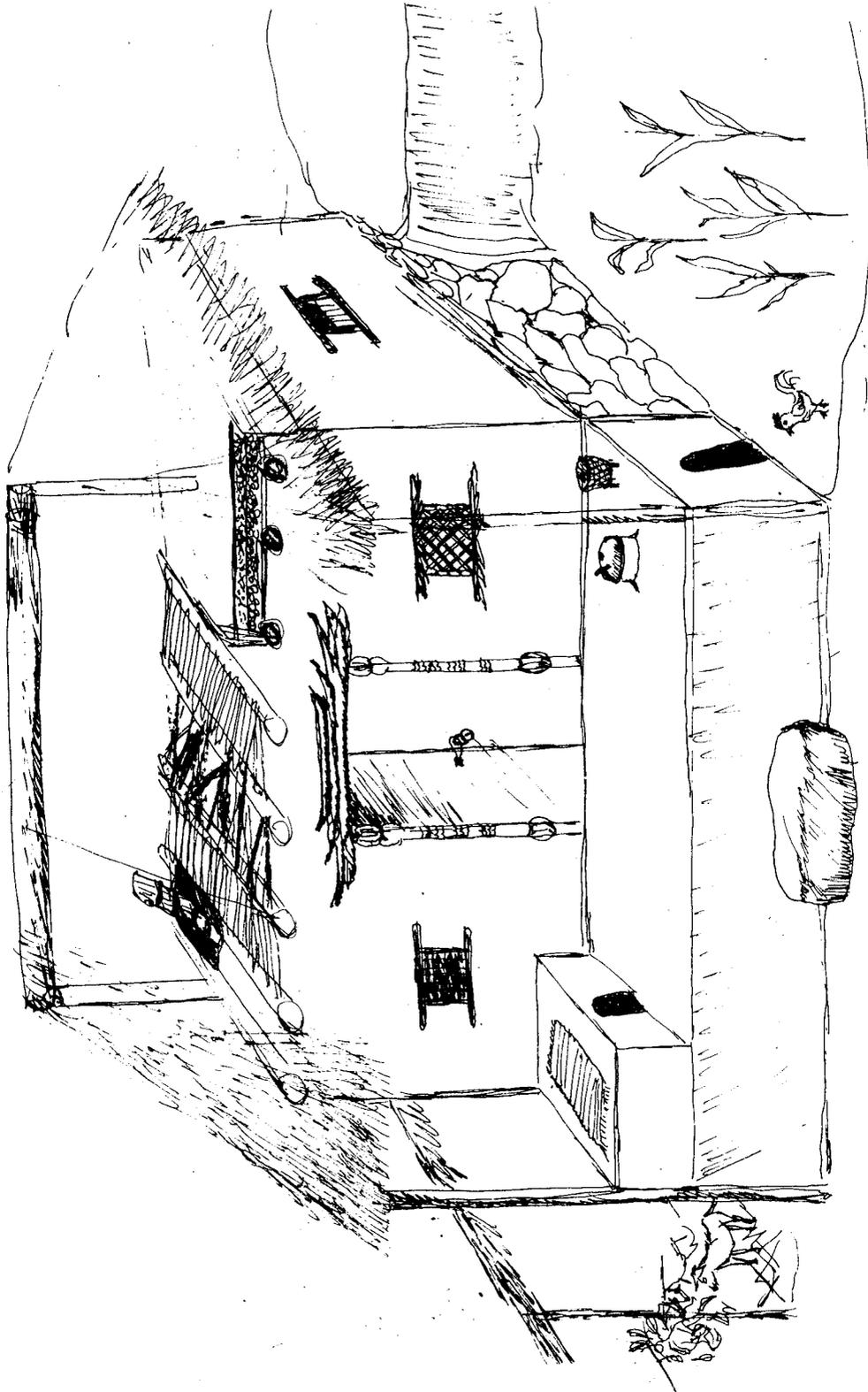


Fig. 10: Illustration of a Magar home, showing construction process, with clay, wood, thatching, and stones. (by author)



Fig. 11a. Hand woven cloth worn by women as a head covering.

Fig. 11b. White hand woven fabric worn around the waist by men.



Fig. 11. Traditional historical clothing worn by Magar and Gurung people near Bandipur.

Fig. 12. Basket and mat weaving.

The Dhoka

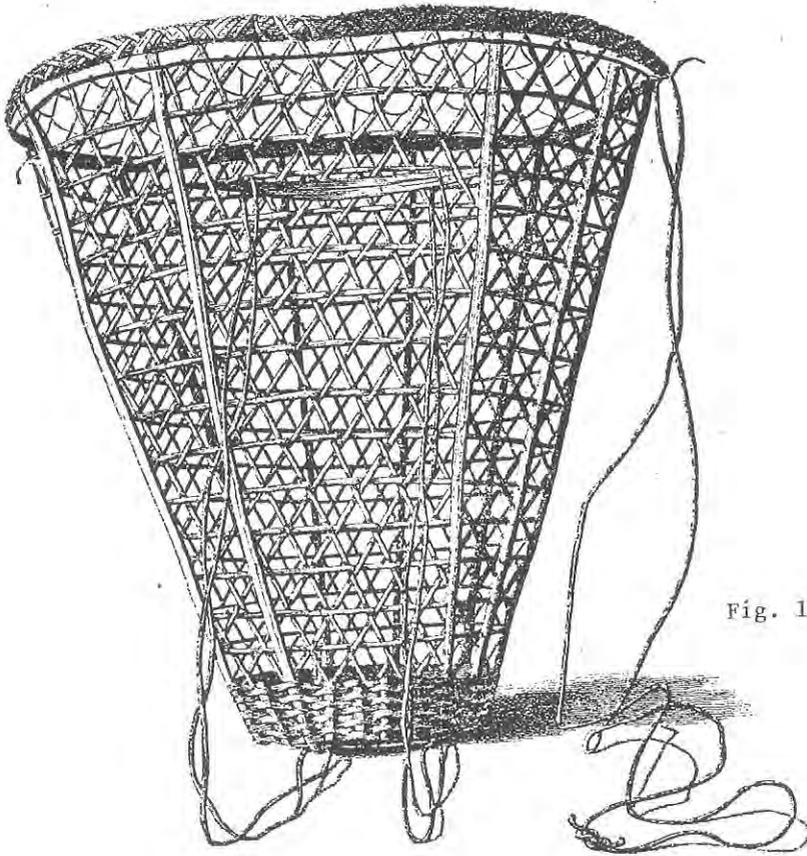


Fig. 12a. Engraving of the Dhoka from Kirkpatrick - 1811



Fig. 12b.

Example of basket weaving in Bandipur, (thumse-large basket, and dalu-small basket).



Fig. 12c.

Woman weaves a straw mat (gundri) in Bandipur.

good place for growing domestic plants,
so they settled there.

The land as mentioned before, shows evidence of long usage. There is no doubt that corn, millet, rice, mustard, and sesame can grow well in this area when properly irrigated. The rice always is planted in low lying areas, while corn and millet are planted in the higher fields, along with sesame and mustard. Wooden plows and bulls were used for tilling the fields. Locally crafted metal scythes were used for harvesting. Threshing rice was done by bullocks, and processing of foodgrains was done by hand, with winnowing trays. The foodgrain is often stored unhulled and unground, until it is ready for use; that is, aged a desirable length of time. Rice was milled on a foot-operated Dhiki lever system which, when raised with the foot and let drop, breaks the seed coat off the grains of rice.

The climate is quite mild, with plenty of rainfall which provides at least two crops per year. Although vegetable farming was in some areas difficult due to lack of irrigation, tropical fruit trees grow in profusion and some forest tubers, berries, and nuts could also have supplemented the main diet (If the Brahman woman of the Makunda Sen legend could make 84 kinds of curries, she must have had access to good produce). The altitude and constant cool breezes from the north keep the Bandipur area mosquito-free, even during the monsoon, and hence malaria-free.

There is very little evidence of extensive reliance on trade at this early date, probably due to the relative self-sufficiency of the inhabitants. This is not to say, however, that trade was nonexistent. Peddlers were probably quite common. Potters (Kumals) brought bisque ware for cooking. Lathe-turned wooden containers for storage of milk products and oils could also have been brought from other areas to the north. A small description of trade as far back as 1756 is given by Padre Tranquillo, a Christian missionary, who visited Tanahũ at this time. He mentions the presence of "... some musalmans in Tanhoun", which according to D.R. Regmi (1961: 32-4) are said to be "Bangle Traders" from "North Bihar." It is also known that the northern border people, Manangbas, and Bhotiyas, depended partly on trade for a living due to their lack of resources and shorter growing seasons.

The salt trade through Khot Khola at this early time was a petty affair ... tales of weighing the salt and grain with gravel, of wetting it for greater volume, and of outright looting of stock piles are commonly recounted by the descendants of those early barterers.

At first, the trade was pursued locally by the Ghale Gurung clansmen of Tilje village and vicinity and to some extent by lowland Nepalese from Lamjung, with Tibetans from across the frontier.

(Messerschmidt and Gurung 1973:215)

They could easily have been supplying the Bandipur area with salt in exchange for rice at equal amounts. There seems to be little evidence, legendary or otherwise, of trade conducted by Magars.

The above legends, physical evidence, and written accounts concerning the 1700's have been presented in order to provide some historical background for understanding the major change which was to take place at the end of that century. In the following section of this paper, a discussion of this major change and how it affected the patterns of life in Bandipur is presented.

II. BANDIPUR GROWTH - INFLUX OF NEWARS AND TRADE

Around the beginning of the 19th century, there began an influx of a new population in the area of Bandipur. From Bhaktapur, in the Kathmandu Valley, a number of Newar families of reported merchant status began moving into the community. Although the exact years during which the preliminary migration occurred are not yet known, according to two written male kinship records which were made available to me in Bandipur, the first persons to move from Bhaktapur lived at least seven generations ago. This would place the start of migration in the period 1775-1800. This new influx marked the beginning of a major change in subsistence patterns, and absorption of new cultural patterns and traditions into the community, which brought a transformation of a rural hill village into a thriving cosmopolitan trade center.

The Newars had a well established reputation for trading as an independent means of livelihood. Elsewhere, as early as the beginning of the 17th century, Newars had established commercial relations between Tibet and Kathmandu by setting up a Newar colony in Lhasa, Tibet. This eventually began the Newari monopolization of north-south trade with Tibet. At the same time, Newari traders were encouraged by King Ram Shah (1605-1633) to open up trade in Gorkha, just north of Bandipur. But due to the "scarcity of marketable produce", this Gorkha trade did not succeed until 1754. (M.C. Regmi 1971: 20, 24, Gyawali 2019 B.S.: 195, Stiller 1968:48).

When significant Newar migration eventually took place around 1800, Bandipur rapidly developed as an important center. Hamilton shows Bandipur on his map drawn about that time (Figure 13), and

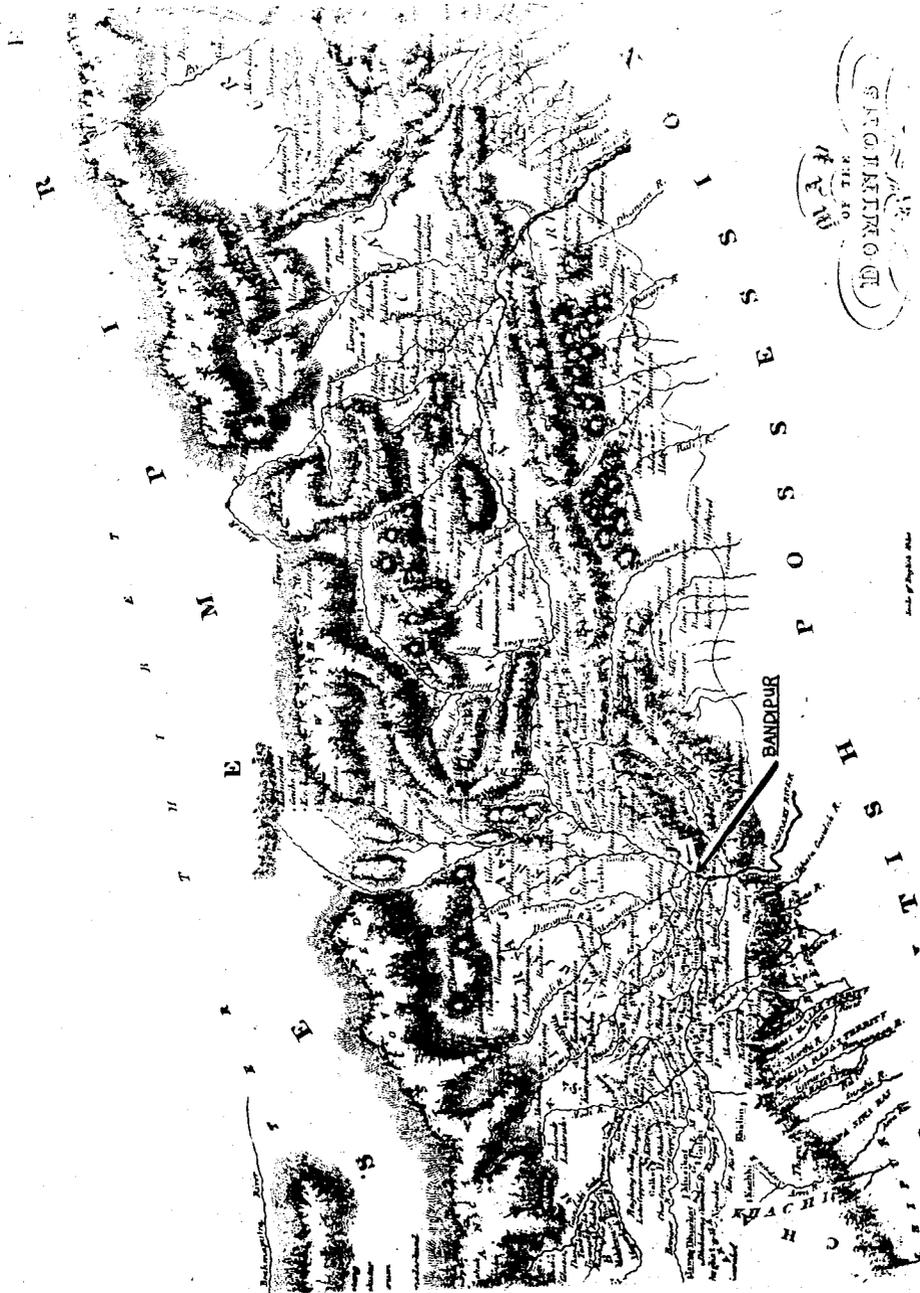


Figure 13. Portion of 'Map of The Dominions of Gorkha' (from Hamilton, Op.Cit) showing Bandipur.

states, "In the western wing of Tanahung were the capital and Bandi,⁷ two places of some consequence" (Hamilton 1819: 184).

Although Hamilton (p. 185-190, 197-98) considered the major north-to-south trade routes of this time as being from Rerighat via Butwal to Devghat and Kathmandu to Hetaura, he also describes a trade route existing along the Marsyangdi River (Bhot Khola). This represents the north-south trade route with which Bandipur was, and is, directly connected to Tibet on the north and India on the south.

The Chief of Lamjung ... was not only followed in war by his kinsman the Chief of Kaski, but by the Raja of Tanahung. Lamjung after the loss of Gorkha, was a cold country bordering on the snowy peaks of Emodus, and inhabited by Bhotiyas, with some Brahmans, Khasiyas in the warmer vallies. It contained no mine of any importance, nor any town of note except the capital; and the chief advantage, after the loss of Gorkha, that the Raja enjoyed, was the commerce with Bhotan or Tibet which was carried on through a passage in Emodus called Siklik. Many goods were conveyed by this route to Lamjung, and from thence, by Dewghat, and Bakra, into the low country; but this trade has been interdicted by the present Government of Nepal, which is very jealous of the Raja of Tanahung, to whom Bakra still is secured by the Company's protection.

(Hamilton 1819: 243)

This trade route, which existed up until the 1960's, is shown in Figure 14. As mentioned in the above quote, it was temporarily closed in the early 1800's. This was done mainly to prevent invasions from the south by foreign troops, and to channel trade traffic into a limited number of routes for easier collections of the newly-imposed customs (Hamilton p. 180). The government order to close the Bandipur track in June 1804 reads:

In case of any person has constructed unauthorized tracks in your area, discover and locate such tracks and install dikes and plant thorny bushes there in such a manner that no person can pass through them. In case any person tries to pass (through such tracks) forcibly, capture him if possible, or else fell him with poisoned arrows.

(M.C. Regmi 1971: 164-65)

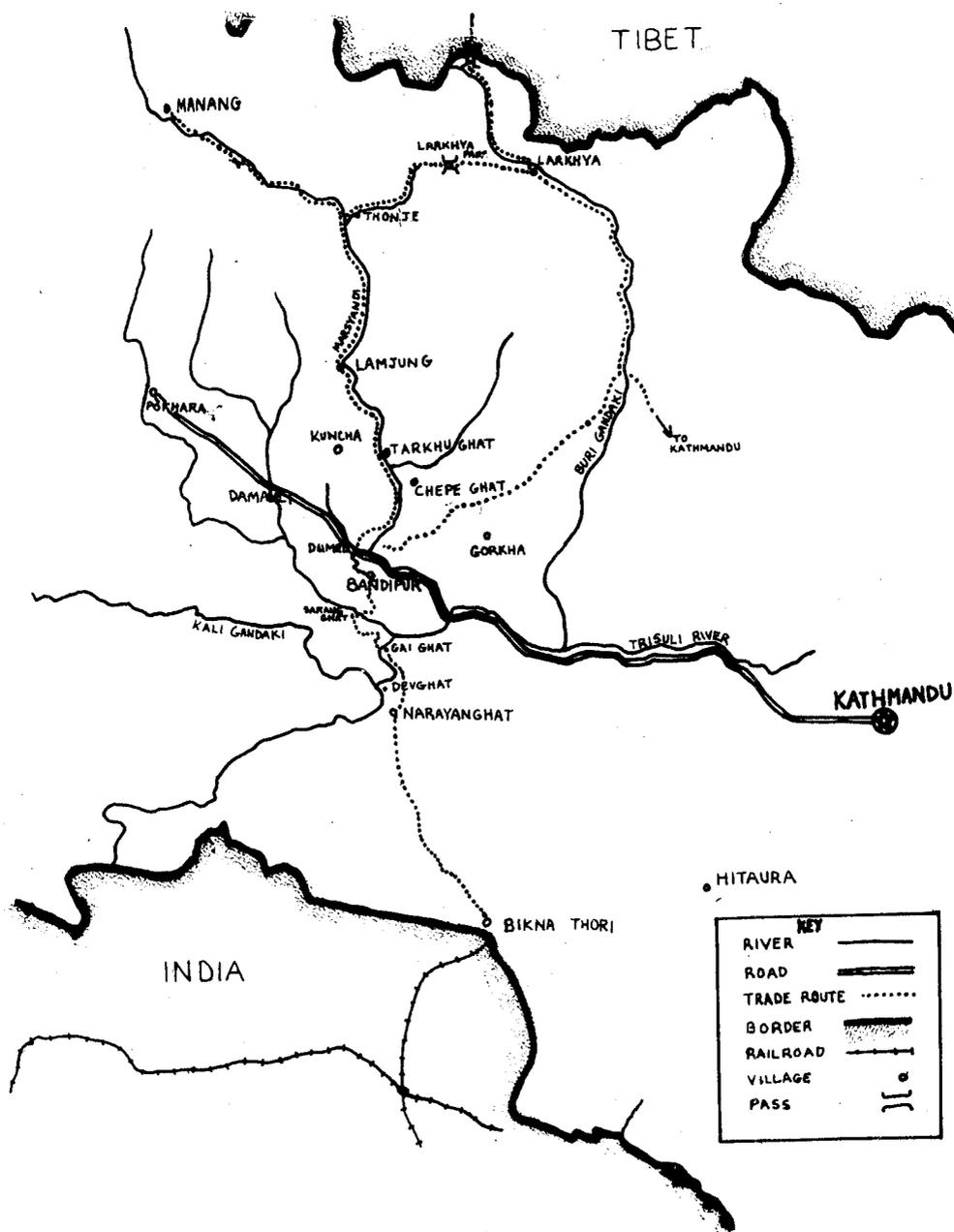


Fig. 14. North-south trade route via Bandipur.
(Map prepared by author).



Fig. 14a. Marsyandi River Valley north of Bandipur near Tarkhughāt.

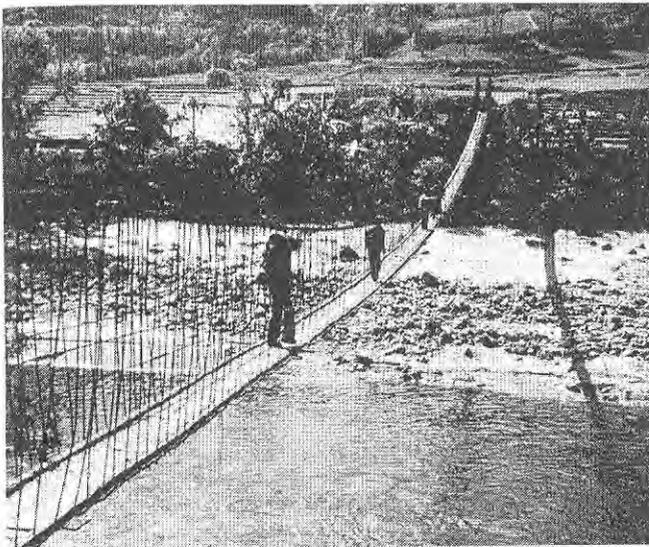


Fig. 14b. Suspension Bridge over the Seti Gandaki at Sarang Ghāt.

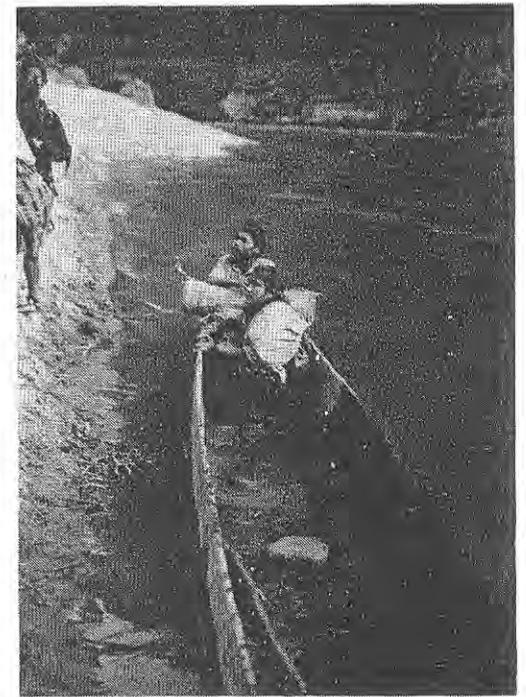


Fig. 14d.
Dugout canoe leaves from Gai-ghāt for Narayanghāt.

Fig. 14c. Ferry at Gai-ghāt.

Another cause of main track closings is mentioned by Stiller (1968: 51-2) in his discussion of the sanyāsi rebellion. Requested by the British, Prithvi Narayan Shah actually agreed to close off some main routes into Nepal which were used as escape routes for the fleeing sanyāsis.

If such an order for closure of a track was needed, there obviously must have been a track which was worth closing. Indeed, the route through Bandipur (a walking road) shows evidence of long usage. Stone staircases are set in on much of the road and have become polished by the long wear.

The early trade probably began as Tibetan salt in exchange for Nepali rice. Eventually other products were also traded. From Tibet came medicinal plants, various herbs (e.g. jimbu), nirmasi or musk, paper, silver, gold dust, wool products, horses, and goats. These were traded for buffaloes, European articles, corals, cottons, tobacco, spices, pepper, wrought copper, iron and brass, glassware, mustard oil, and kerosene (Hamilton 1819: 212-13). Nepal also exported paper, copper, ivory, and timber (floated through Devghat) (Hamilton, p. 181) to India in exchange for cottons, velvet, British wools, silks, firearms, iron, spices, salt, pepper, and leather (Hodgson 1874: 105-20). In addition to the trade conducted between these countries, Bandipur was strongly involved in internal trade with areas directly north and south of Bandipur. With profits obtained from their trade, the Newars were able to purchase land holdings, especially fertile land to the north along the Marsyangdi and south of the present Gorkha airstrip (Phalungtar). Land to the south of Bandipur was also purchased.

Among the several reasons for migration of Bhaktapur Newars to Bandipur was the fact that Bandipur had a highly desirable climate and was naturally devoid of malaria. But the strongest attraction to the Bandipur area seems to have been the prospect of the development of a major North-South trade center, relying mostly on trade and trade profits as a means of subsistence, with agriculture as a secondary enterprise.

Although this influx of trade probably had little immediate effect on the agrarian communities in Bandipur and the surrounding area, over the past two hundred years it has greatly influenced the traditional patterns of subsistence in these communities. In some cases, it has caused these communities to adopt alternate sources of income, as we shall see. The survival and success of any trade or business center is largely dependent upon its involvement with surrounding communities. This interdependence, coupled with Newari resourcefulness and investment capital brought about the shift in Bandipur from a rural hill village to a thriving trade center.

Newar Architecture and Crafts and Effects of Newar Immigration on Local Crafts

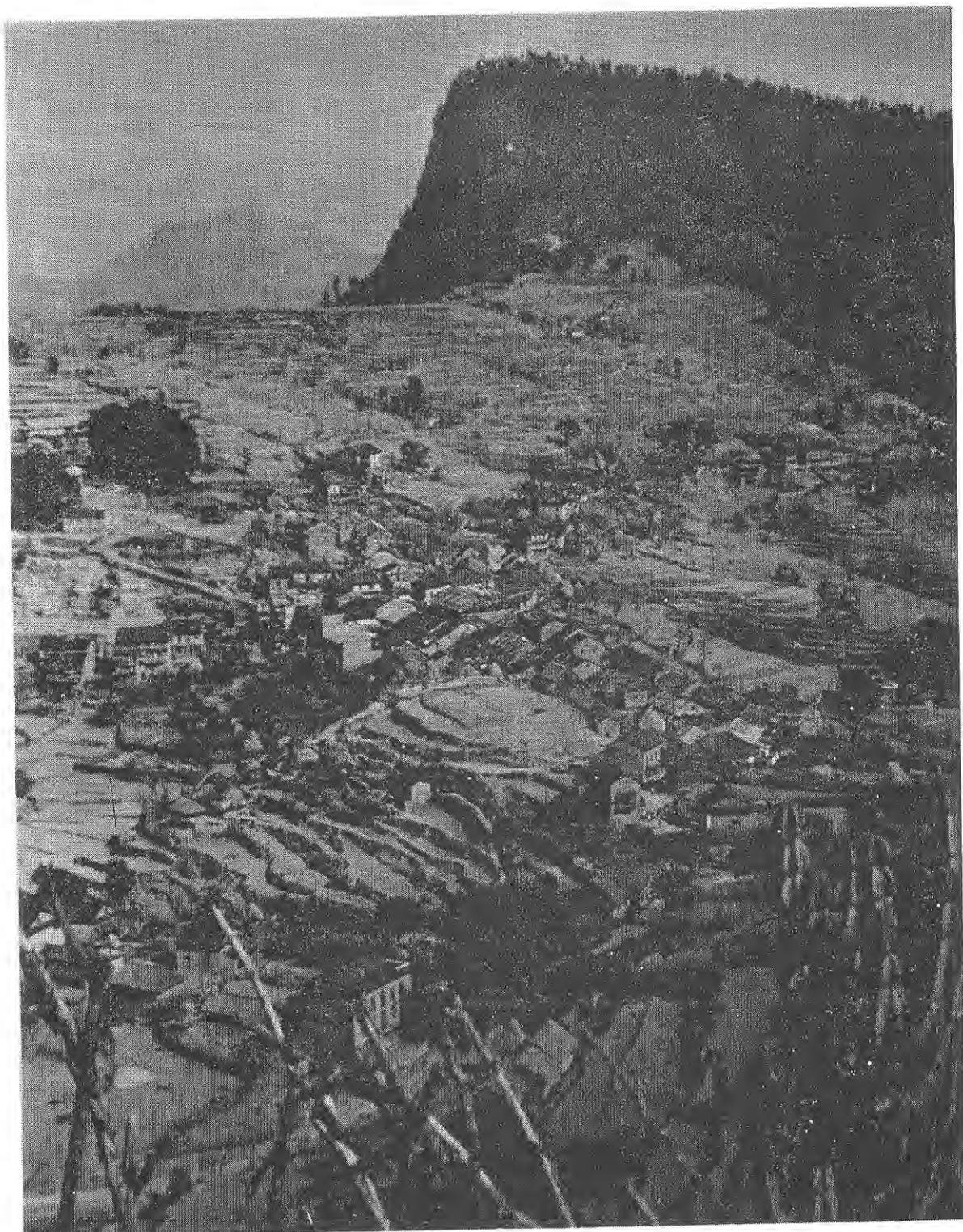
The Newars have long been famous for their proficiency in many activities. In addition to being skilled merchants and effective administrators, they are known as the "true artisans of Nepal" (Bista 1967: 169) because of their craftsmanship in the Kathmandu Valley.

Their reputation had reached Tibet and China also, and Christian missionaries have reported the existence of large colonies of Newar craftsmen and artisans in Lhasa.

(M.C. Regmi 1971:23)

It seems only natural that the most obvious evidence of Newar influence in Bandipur would be captured in their architecture and hand crafted articles. The Newars, unlike the Magars, settled and built their homes along a narrow, level saddle, wide enough only for the width of the bazaar with houses on either side (Figures 15 and 16). As can be seen in Figure 17, they introduced a style of architecture which contrasted sharply with that of the Magars. The Newars used brick which they manufactured in Bandipur from local clay as their main building material, and also produced clay tiles for roofing material. Stones were worked and chiseled to make close-fitting blocks for the foundations of homes. The wooden beams and supports in the home were worked into square shaped notched posts or boards, and many were decorated with an array of detailed relief carving. The most elaborate carving appears on the windows and window grilles, doors, eaves, trim, and eave struts. Relief carving was used for many shutters and window arches. Very few, if any, nails were used. Beams were held together by a mortise and tenon technique (Figures 18 and 19).

When compared with Bhaktapur architecture, Bandipur architecture is almost identical in many respects. The homes are quite sturdy and weatherproof. Walls are thick, indoor walls are painted, many homes have carved cabinets and room-to-room doors. The "stairs" in a Newar home are constructed with boards, and usually have hand railings. A standard Newar home in Bandipur is usually three to four stories high with an open courtyard in the middle. Balconies may be built out over the courtyard, as well as in front over the street. Drain spouts collect roof water, which is channelled and pours from the four corners of the roof into a large holding tank in the center of the courtyard (Figure 20). Later in Bandipur's development, much of the brick work was covered with cement work (Figure 21), and roof tiles were replaced by tin and slate. A photograph and short description of Bandipur before these renovations were introduced appears in P. Landon's Nepal, Vol.2 (1928:21).



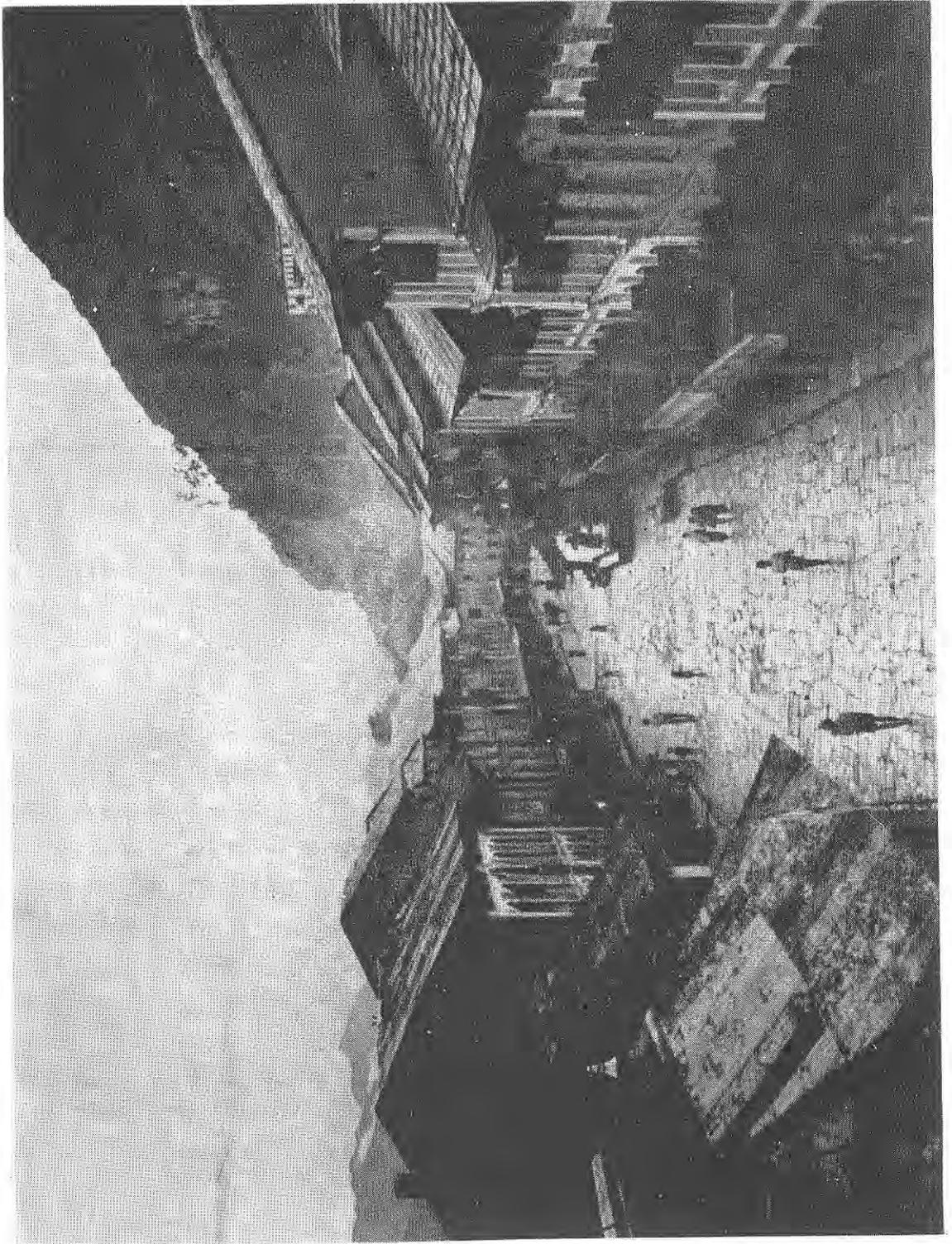


Fig. 16. Full view of Bandipur Bazaar (main bazaar) showing Newar homes and temples.

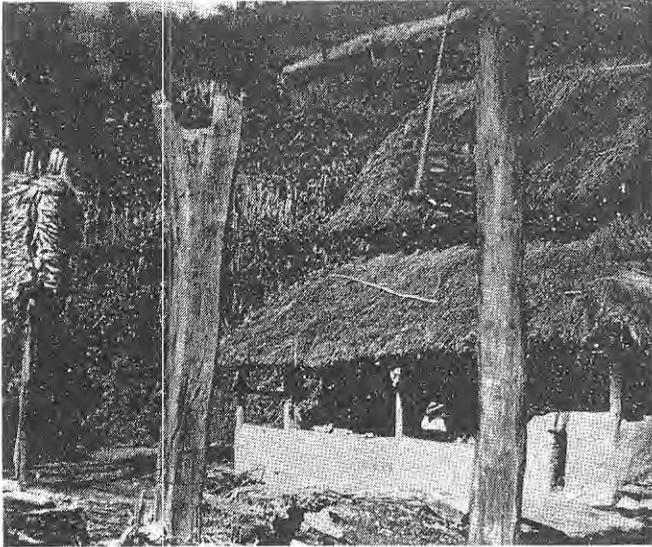


Fig. 17a. Magar home near Bandipur.

Fig. 17b. Newar architecture in Bandipur Bazaar (main bazaar) looking East.

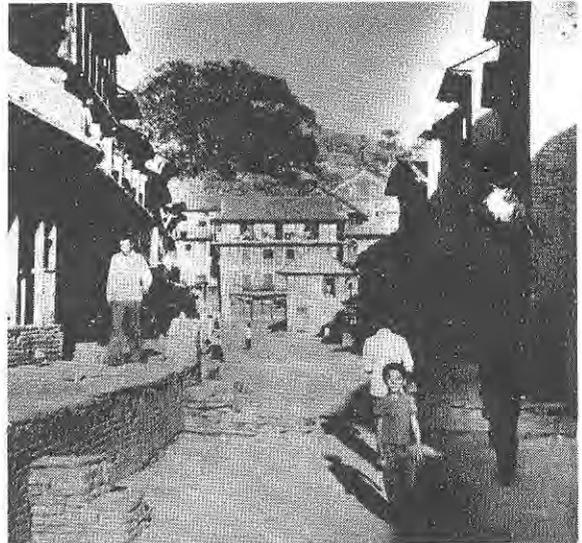


Fig. 17c. Newar architecture in Bandipur Bazaar (main bazaar) looking west.

Fig. 17. Comparison of Magar and Newar architecture.

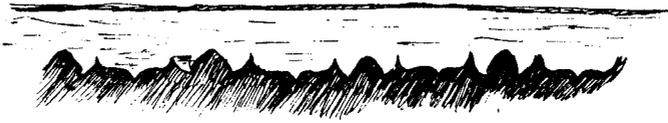


Fig. 18a. Eave decorations.

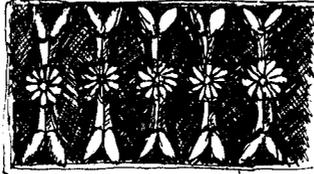


Fig. 18b, and 18c. Window grilles.

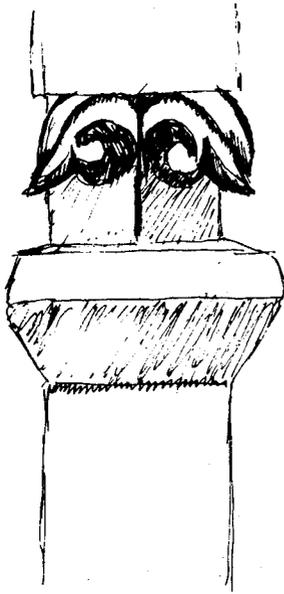
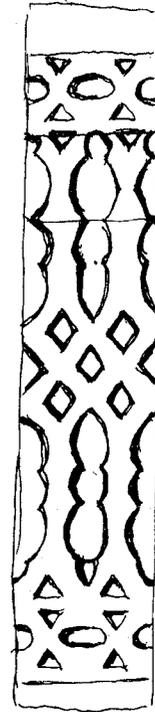


Fig. 18d. Post carving.

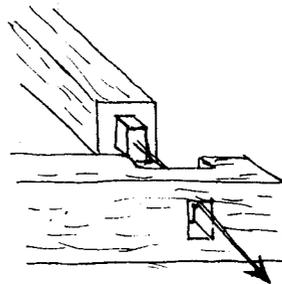


Fig. 18e. Mortise and Tenon technique of construction.

Fig. 18. Newar woodwork and carving in Bandipur.
(Drawings by Helen, Robert and Linda Iltis).



Fig. 19.

Enlarged drawing of relief carving on wooden window in abandoned home of Bandipur.

The identifying characteristic of a Newar bazaar home is the store front (Figure 22). This consists of the ground floor front room which faces on the bazaar. The front wall is made of grooved posts and sliding slats which can be removed in order to adjust the opening to full or half length during the day, or completely replaced and locked during the night. This creates a true market atmosphere, as goods, especially cloth, could be seen by people walking in the bazaar. The open store front also marks the occupation of each household.

The temples and shrines built by the Newars in Bandipur are also similar to the ones in Bhaktapur. There are three two-tier pagoda temples in Bandipur, the largest of which is located in the main bazaar (Figure 23). These temples are foci of high craftsmanship. The temple door arches are done in detailed brass work with three-dimensional figures and flags. Carved woodwork lines and trims the windows and doors, while highlighting the temple struts as well (Figure 24). Inside the temple are numerous detailed stone deities, and one of silver. A famous marble statue, once the main deity at this temple, was stolen several years ago. Deities were also made by the lost wax technique in Bandipur (Figure 25). The artisans who made them were the only Buddhist inhabitants of Bandipur in recent memory. Sunwars (gold and silver smiths), well known for their fine quality work, also left their mark on Bandipur's temples. Large quantities of jewelry were made by these metal-smiths, who still reside in Bandipur today. Copper and brass metal workers provided marketable products of superior quality, which sold well in the hills and accounted for most of the water jugs in the area.

The crafts mentioned so far were produced almost exclusively by men. Weaving was usually done by women. Although the method used by the Newars for weaving cloth was similar to the method used by Magar women, Newari weaving was usually done indoors. Weaving was one of the crafts which was extensively exploited for production of export goods. A small factory, established by the Newars near the park (tundikhel), provided employment for many young women and a supplemental source of income for their families. This weaving was done by both Newars and Magars on "throw shuttle" looms at first, and later on "fly shuttle" looms (Figure 26) (Shrestha 1967:141).

Although basket and mat weaving was done by Magars prior to the arrival of Newars into Bandipur, the new market situation brought about an increase in production and sales. Since Bandipur was at a mid-way point on the trade route people were always needing replacement dokos (baskets) for transporting goods.

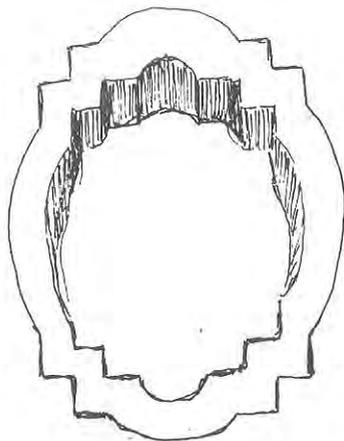


Fig. 20.

Drawing of courtyard water holding tank as seen from balcony (Dimensions - 5ft.x 8ft.x3ft. deep).



Fig. 21a. Photo showing cement work overlay on brick.

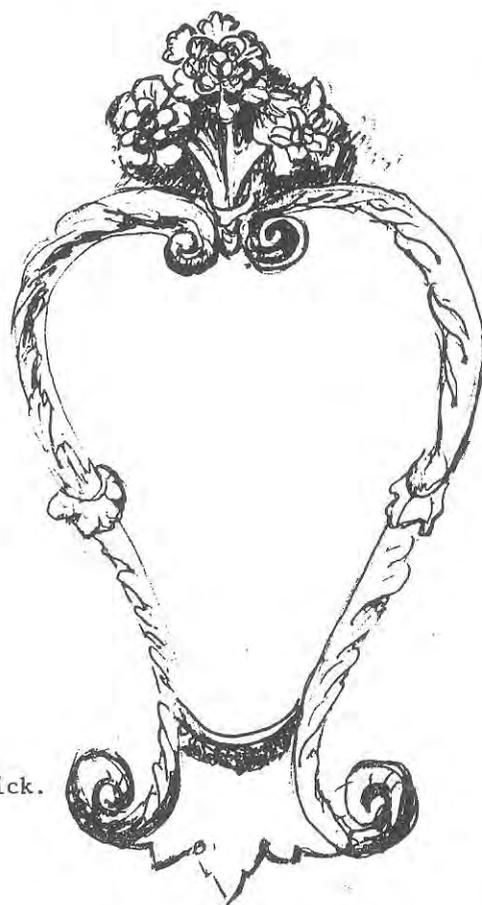


Fig. 21b. Drawings of cement work decoration of house front.

Fig. 21. Examples of cement work on Newar homes of Bandipur, added later in the 1900's.

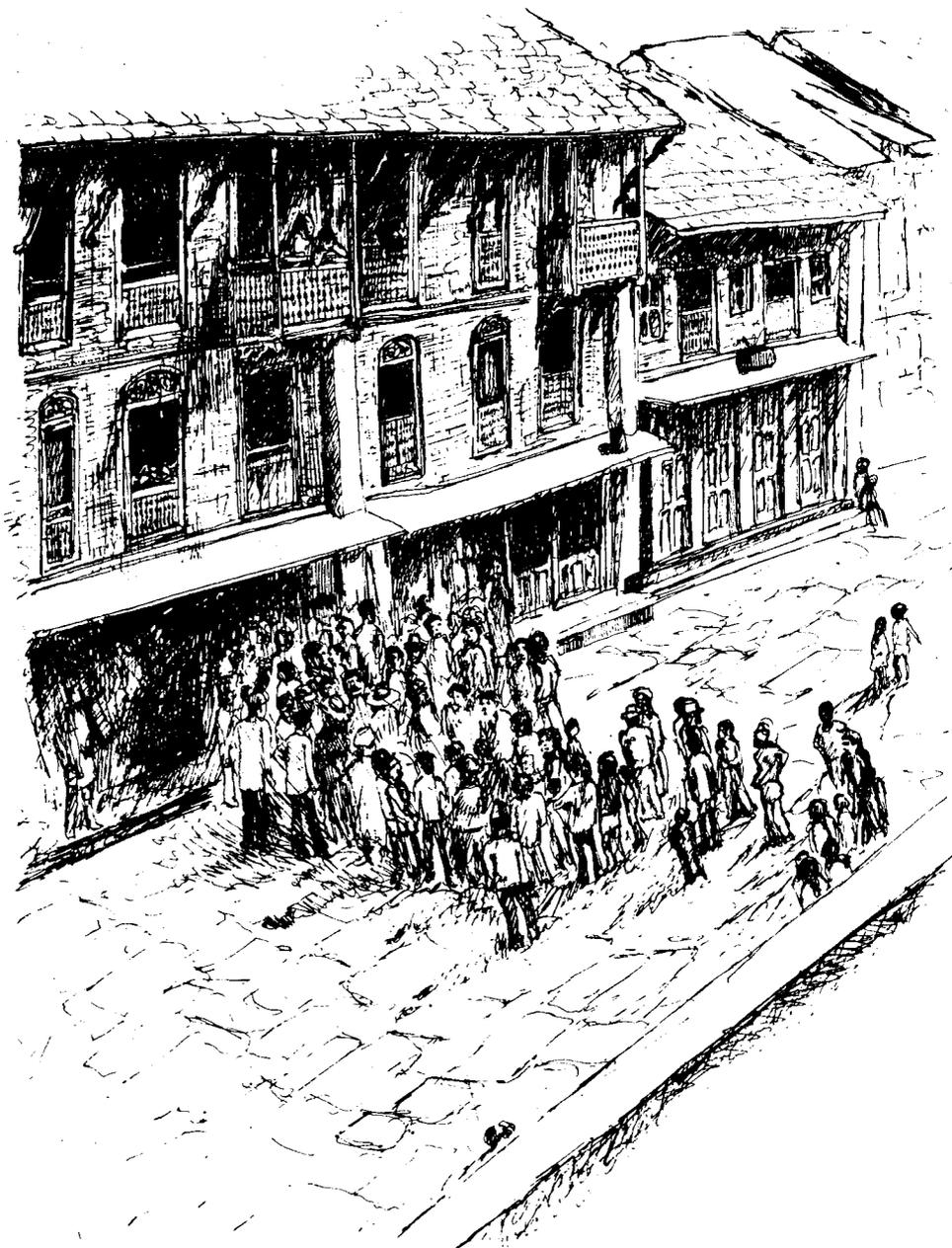


Fig. 22. Drawing of bazaar architecture in Bandipur, with carved windows, and store fronts.

- 5ft.x

oration
the 1900's.



Fig. 23. Vinu Vashini temple in the main bazaar of Bandipur-most elaborate of three similar pagoda temples in Bandipur.

Fig. 24. Close-up photos of temple woodwork.



Fig. 24a. Corner posts.

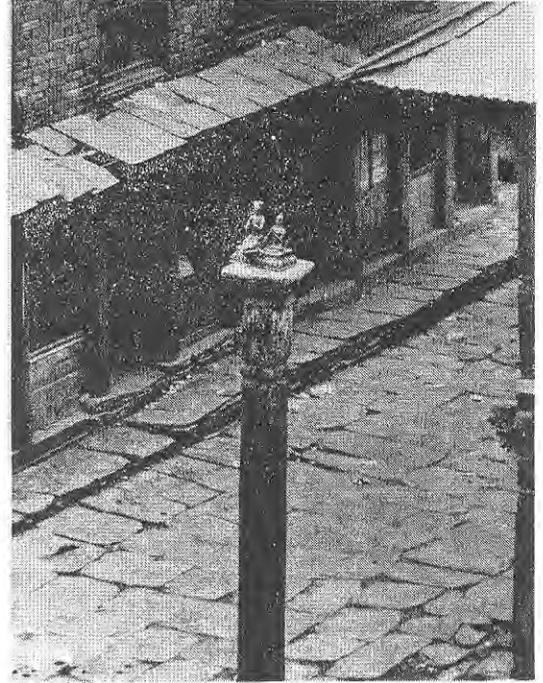


Fig. 25. Brass figures facing temple-made by lost wax technique.

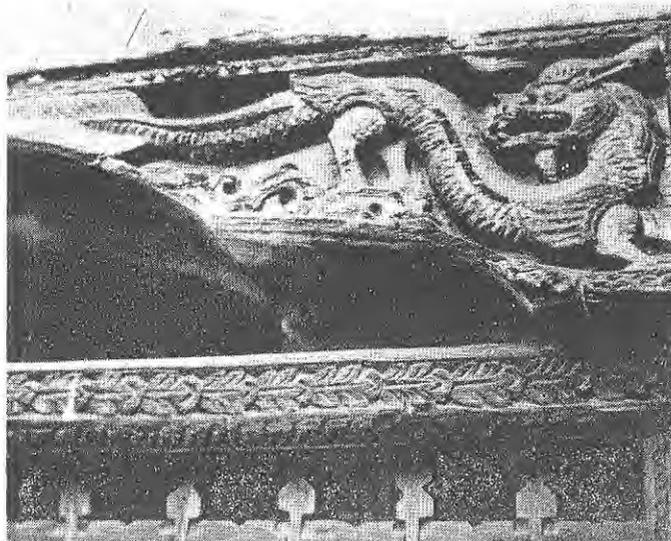


Fig. 24b. Window trim.

In the same manner, other traditional craftsmen such as kāmis (metal workers), sarkis (leather workers), damais (tailors) and gaine (musicians) found in Bandipur an increased market for their goods and services. Both Newar and Magar craftsmanship provided necessary elements of culture through which the community as a whole was able to expand and increase its options.

New Supplementary Income Options

As already stressed above, the new presence of a bazaar provided a convenient and attractive place to sell and trade privately produced goods. It also provided an increased demand for hired labour in connection with farming and transport. Although some Newar families today are skilled agriculturalists in the Kathmandu Valley, those who came to Bandipur were predominantly merchant families. These families invested in agricultural lands around Bandipur in Japri Phānt and Marsyangdi River Valley. Although many Newars farmed these lands themselves, others often hired Magars, Sarkis or Chhetris to do their farming. The increased trade necessitated hiring of reliable people for transportation of goods to the south (Bikna Thori, head of British rail service) and north (Tonje, Manang, Larkhe, via Tarkughat). Since the track of the trade route from the Tibetan border to the Indian border was quite rugged, pack animals were used with discretion (Messerschmidt and Gurung 1973:200). Although mule trains were not unknown in Bandipur, most of the transportation seems to have been done by porters. These new supplementary forms of income for the residents of communities surrounding Bandipur began a shift from agrarian subsistence patterns to a joint dependence on both agriculture and trade. The expansion of trade in this area provided cash profits which were then invested either privately in more landholdings, or communally toward improvement of local facilities: e.g. road maintenance, lengthening of stone stairways, etc.

For the first portion of the Rāna rule (1846-1951), Bandipur was a zonal headquarters for the Zone West No. 3. This naturally increased the flow of traffic through Bandipur Bazaar, further enlarging opportunities for trade and commerce, and creating a convenient site for formal business transactions. More job opportunities arose, and more people who were attracted to the variety of opportunities migrated to the bustling bazaar in the hope of improving their economic situations. The zonal headquarters was eventually moved to Pokhara, while Bandipur remained a district headquarters.

Festivals and the Economy

In Bandipur, as in Bhaktapur, the Newars never short-cut their festivals. There is a common saying in Bandipur:



Fig. 26. Newar woman weaves on fly-shuttle loom in Bandipur home.

Chhetri bigreko moja le
Newar bigreko bhoja le

The Chhetri is ruined by a lust for things.
The Newar is ruined by a lust for feasting.

Aside from possibly implying an economic relationship between these two groups, this saying expresses a self-recognition of the zeal with which Newars feel they celebrate their festivals. In fact, all the inhabitants of Bandipur Bazaar and the surrounding area celebrate their festivals with great zeal. Since such a variety of ethnic groups are represented in the Bandipur area, there are also a great variety of festivals.

Public festivals fall into two broad categories, mela and jātra. Melas are held throughout the hill and Tarai regions of Nepal, and might best be described as "fairs." They are usually held in connection with a specific ritual occasion or religious holiday such as Śiva rātri; and frequently occur in the vicinity of a famous pilgrimage site, but rarely in village or town. Besides observing the specific ritual connected with the mela, people of communities ranging from two to five days in distance bring food and goods to sell and trade. During the mela, which may last for several days, they camp out and conduct business from leaf-walled shelters. There is always a variety of entertainment -- dramas, gambling, singing and dancing, wining and dining, and, for the young people, courting. Newar business families from Bandipur still send business representatives to set up temporary shops for selling goods at melas in the surrounding area.

Jātras are also held throughout Nepal, but unlike mela, they are more localized, relating to a specific ritual of one community, and held within that community. The jātras held in Bandipur are primarily of Newar origin. Since large ritual processions involving music, dance, and drama skits are the focus of attention, people begin planning for jātras several weeks in advance of the actual date. Accompanied by cymbals, drums, flute, śahnai (double-reed aerophone), and narsinga (S-curved copper trumpet), the participants in the procession dance and act out, to the music, a storyline of a story associated with the ritual being observed. The procession moves through the bazaar to all the branches, stopping at every ṭol (quarter or division of the bazaar) and cok (square) (Figure 1). In Bandipur, some of these processions last far into the night, or all night.

These jātras are always well attended by many people from the surrounding area. Magar and Gurung family groups, or groups of young friends, come together to Bandipur Bazaar to observe the ritual processions. Like a mela, these jātras also provide a



Fig. 27. Traditional Newar festival procession on Gai Jātra (in Bhaktapur).



Fig. 28. Bandipur Damai dances in Jātra procession (in Baudipur).

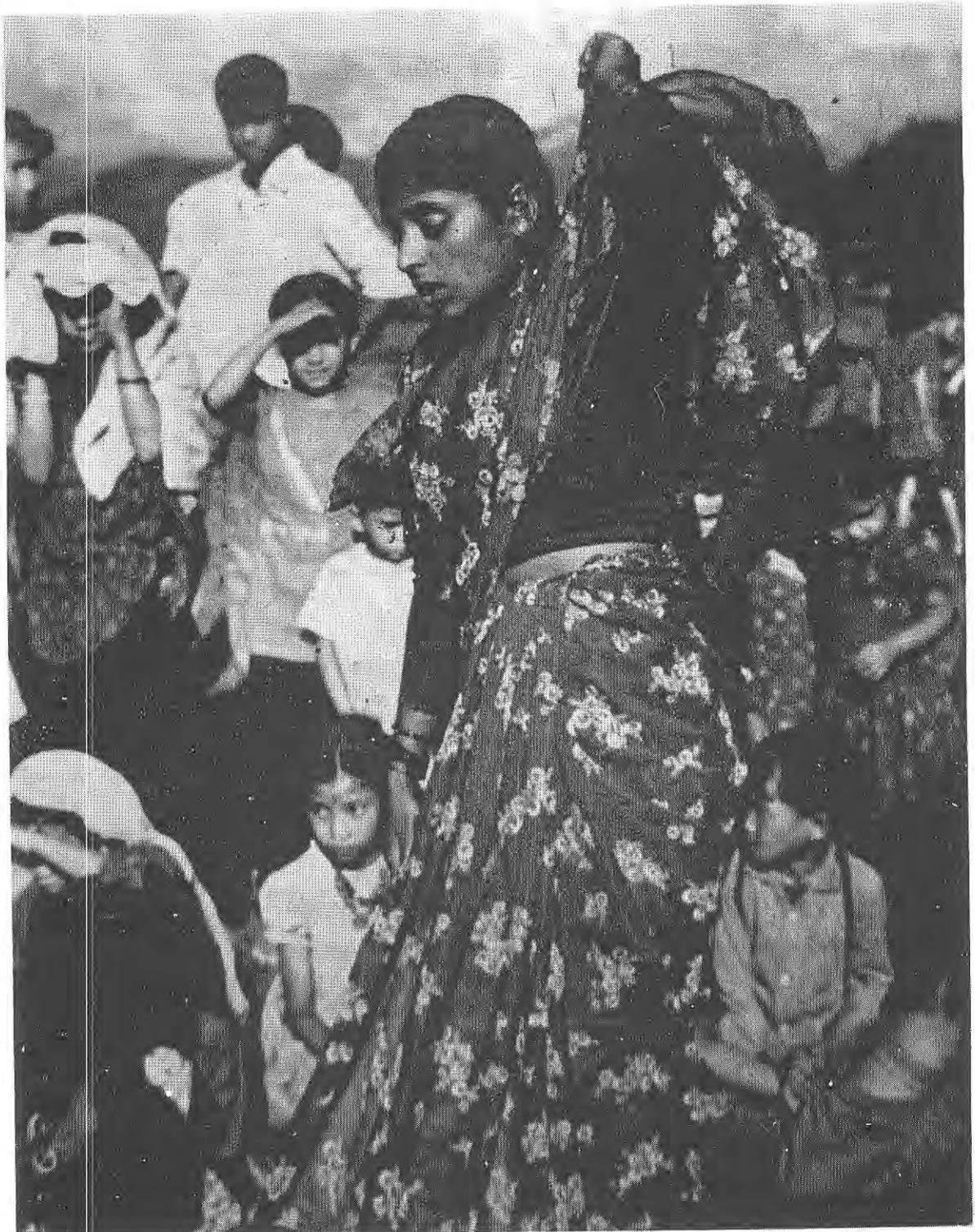


Fig. 29. Brahman girl dances in her finery at the festival of the Tij mela in Bandipur.

variety of other types of entertainment, such as gambling and winning and dining. The Magars and Gurungs form groups of singers (men) and dancers (women), and establish themselves in the various tols, under the covered verandas along the bazaar. The young Newar men also stroll through the bazaar to enjoy the Magar and Gurung performances. Many admire and even try to learn the various songs and dances. The Newar business families always open their stores during the jātra and keep them open all night. Those who normally sell only cloth or supplies usually have food and drink available as well. The stores are always thronging with people on these occasions, and the best selling items are cigarettes, tea, and liquor.

Both mela and jātra give stimulus and reinforcement to the economic and trade network centered in Bandipur, while helping to promote friendly relationships which transcend a purely economic plane of interaction. Ties between caste and ethnic groups are strengthened; the Magar and Gurung populations are attracted to the large-scale Newari performances, while Newars in their turn are attracted to local hill traditions (c.f. the Khadga Devi sword festival described above). Magar and Gurung groups extend their social and courtship horizons among the wide audience drawn to the Newari festivals, while Newari youths attend Magar and Gurung events to broaden their own social horizons.

Education and Rāna Repression

Brahman priests were probably the first official teachers hired for formal education in the Bandipur community. The Newars organized Bhajans (singing groups), which on special occasions hired local Pandits to perform ritual recitations of Sanskrit Purānas or epics, and to translate and summarize them in Nepali. At first, these Pandits were hired by Newari families to teach Sanskrit to at least one child in the family. Eventually, a school was established in Bandipur, with such Pandits as its teachers. But during the Rāna regime, from the mid-1800's to the mid-1900's, education throughout Nepal was severely repressed. In Bandipur, the story is well known of how a local official was threatened for having assisted in the founding of a publicly supported library, Padma Pustakalaya (Pradhan n.d.). It was not until the end of the Rāna regime in 1951 that further educational development projects were permitted to resume in Bandipur.

The Rānas had established a military outpost in Bandipur, and a training ground was levelled for their use where the tundi-khel (park) stands today. Because of the educational suppression and exploitation, etc., anti-Rāna sentiment was high in Bandipur among all the groups of people. Finally in January 1951, a revolt was organized in the bazaar. A group of people rallied with a Nepali flag and began jeering and marching up the hill toward

the military barracks. The military was unsure of what type of action to take. At first, blanks were shot to disperse the crowds. Later, when this failed to deter the demonstrators, they began shooting real bullets from behind the walls of the Khadga Devi courtyard into the crowds. This ended the demonstration, but not before seven people had been shot to death. "The shouts and sounds of gunfire and bullets ricocheting off the wooden windows" still rings in the ears of many who recall this day. That night, the military contingent fled from Bandipur.

After the ousting of the Rānas, educational facilities were established, including a high school and the public library. A literary journal, Mulbāto ("main road"), also began publication at this time from Bandipur. And many Bandipur residents made valuable and popular contributions to this journal.

Effects of Malaria Eradication

Malaria eradication in Chitwan (in the Tarai) began in the early 1950's, and marked the opening of this area to settlement by the hill people. The prospect of new land investment was a great attraction, and Newars of Bandipur jumped at this new opportunity to expand their monopoly of trade southward by setting up a new business community called Narayanghāt along the Narayani River. From this point, the Indian border could be reached in one day's walk.

One of the first families to leave Bandipur and migrate to Chitwan obtained a contract to grow fodder for HMG royal elephants. Several other families soon followed and purchased large amounts of land for farming. The development in Chitwan made the connection between Bandipur and Bhikna Thori, the railhead at the India - Nepal border stronger, and strengthened the southern half of the trade route by providing an additional branch center in the commercial network from which localized linkage could be made. At first, Bandipur Newar families occupied Chitwan on a half-year basis. In the summer months, people would stay in Bandipur where the climate was cooler. Later, after Dasain, when Bandipur area harvests were in, the father or an eldest son would spend six months on the farm land. Tharus (original inhabitants of the region) were frequently hired to work on the new landholdings. Families who wished to open new businesses were able to send one son to manage a new shop in Chitwan while the family remained in Bandipur to maintain the original shop there, resulting in two sources of cash income. Since these joint extended families were large, the spread of single nuclear units of a family north and south of Bandipur to branch center establishments was a convenient way to increase the family's resources. The central focus for such families during the first years of development of Chitwan seemed to have remained in Bandipur. This seems logical when an

examination of the entire trade route at this time shows Bandipur in the center, and the presence of Bandipur Newar descendants located in practically every major village situated on the track north and south (Figure 14). The overall effect of malaria eradication on Bandipur was no loss of families, and at the same time a gain in stronger linkage outward with better facilities.

The transport of goods to and from the Indian border was facilitated by the clearing of jungles and construction of dirt roads between Devghat and Bikna Thori. Once at Bikna Thori transport of goods and traders south into India could be accomplished by railroad. The increased accessibility of Indian goods made possible the purchase and installation of the mechanized rice mill and oil mill in Bandipur (Figure 32). Two mills were built to compensate for the large demands. The new mills were capable of hulling rice and grinding millet and flour, but the dhiki (foot operated hulling device) was retained in many places because it was the only means of making chiura (pounded rice). Oil mills almost completely replaced the hand-turned oil presses.

Later, a pressurized water pipeline system was laid down, which provided at least twenty taps in the Bazaar of Bandipur itself, and other tap outlets along the line in nearby settlements. This saved many women the arduous twenty-minute walk to the spring fountains at the edge of town. Some women recall the big business days with pain, as they were often forced to rise after the first cock crowed (about 3 A.M.) and go to the fountains early enough to get two jugs of water on the first trip, without standing in line, in time to make a second trip for another three-jug load, two in a basket and one in their hand. They laugh now at their daughters, who think 6 A.M. is too early to get up for fetching water. The new water facilities enabled the development of larger-scale farming; and with plentiful water available, it was possible to establish the Bandipur Hospital. The hospital contains about 20 beds and is well staffed, with facilities for performing minor operations. Two medical shops in Bandipur carry most of the medical supplies needed by the community.

The new development of Bandipur as a trade center, educational center, health center, and district headquarters made it a busy urban center, particularly during the winter months. Rice, flour, oil, kerosene, tobacco, cloth, copper and brass, and miscellaneous wares were of highest demand in the North; while wool, paper, chyangra (mountain goats), musk, gold and medicinal herbs were of highest demand in the South. The latest in personal and household items were always in demand both to the North and South. The older people of Bandipur today reflect on these trading days with pleasure. Some recall the days when travelling merchants laid their gold out on jute sacks in the sun for 20 rupees per tola.⁸



Fig. 30. Narayanghat, the new Newar business community situated along the Narayani.

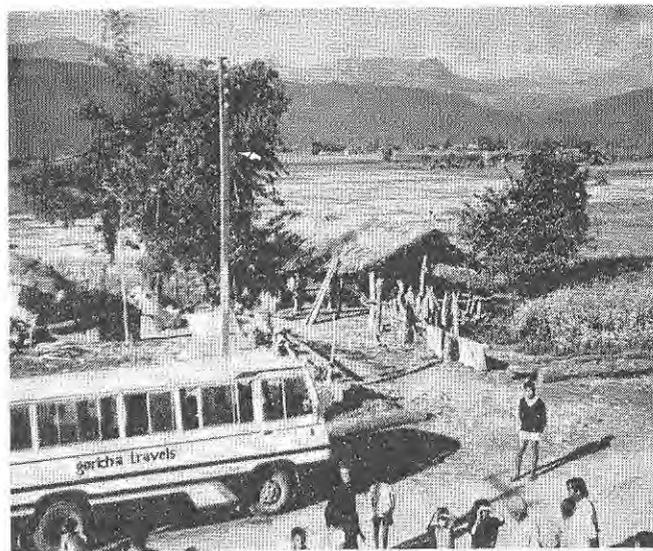


Fig. 31. Location of Bandipur Newar landholdings in Chitwan.



Fig. 32. One of the several mechanized rice mills brought to Bandipur via Narayanghat.



Fig. 33a. Woman from Manang sells herbal medicine to Bandipur shop owner.



Fig. 33b.

Man from Larkhya sells hand woven woolen floor covering.



Fig. 33c. Bandipur Newar cloth shop.

Fig. 33. Traders in Bandipur.

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A gallon of butter (Nepali ghee) was no more than 2.5 rupees (20 cents), and 15 pāthis⁹ of paddy rice sold for 1 rupee (10 cents). There was a large market for fabrics and wool; European goods obtained illicitly in India were sold to Tibetans and Bhotias from the North. A 120-yard bolt of white fabric sold for 9 rupees. This had a negative effect on the Bandipur weaving industry, but it was an important gain to the trade industry.

Trade traffic at this time was almost non-stop activity. One woman recalled how an average day during this time began at 4 A.M. with the sound of the traders' walking sticks tapping through the Bazaar. By mid-day, the Bazaar was "as full as Asan Tole" (Central Bazaar in Kathmandu). Again, at night, she fell asleep to the sound of the walking sticks and loud voices bartering. Manāngbas from the North en route to Hong Kong, Larkhe people, and others moved consistently through the Bazaar in lines during the winter months, stopping occasionally to sell goods to the shop owners (Snellgrove 1961:209) (Figure 33). The road was so full of people travelling in both directions that it was almost impossible to be alone on the road at any time.

Conclusion

The years directly following malaria eradication proved to be what most people of Bandipur considered the peak years for living in Bandipur. Prior to and during this time, geographical changes affecting the Bandipur area proved profitable and advantageous. The Bazaar was occupied by and visited by many peoples of many occupations and from many places, and from many ethnic backgrounds (Table I). Later however, Bandipur was to see other changes which would work contrary to its interests - they would mark the beginning of a downward slide in trade, cultural unity, and family unity.

Table I
People Using Bandipur Bazaar in Peak Years

Group	Place of Origin	Religion	Occupation
Newars	Bhaktapur	Hindu (some Buddhist)	Traders
Gurung	Gandaki Zone	Hindu (some Buddhist)	Military Farmers
Magar	Tanahũ	Hindu	Farmers
Kami	Tanahũ	Hindu	Metal Workers
Sarki	Tanahũ	Hindu	Butchers Shoemakers
Kumal	Gorkha	Hindu	Potters
Chhetri	Tanahũ Pokhara	Hindu	Farmers Military
Brahman	Tanahũ	Hindu	Priests Farmers
Gaine	Pokhara (Gorkha)	Hindu	Musicians
Manāngba	Manāng	Buddhist	Traders
Bhotiya	Larkhe	Buddhist	Traders Weavers Herdsman
Indian	India	Hindu	Miscellaneous
Damai	Tanahũ	Hindu	Tailors and Musicians

III. BANDIPUR DECLINES - POLITICAL CHANGES AND A NEW ROAD

Removal of the District Headquarters

After the major military coup in 1960, King Mahendra decided to reorganize the political and administrative systems of Nepal. The country was divided into 75 development districts and fourteen zones (Rose and Fisher 1970:77). Each district also had the opportunity to relocate its official district headquarters. Bandipur was now, according to the new district boundaries, located to one side of the Tanahū district, and no longer could be considered the geographical center of the district. It was concluded that the district headquarters must be moved to a new location. It was eventually decided that the lowland confluence of the Seti Gandaki and the Madi Khola (Rivers) would be an easily accessible, more centrally located position for the new headquarters.

The idea of removing the district headquarters from Bandipur infuriated the majority of its inhabitants. Many people had invested large sums in the growth and development of Bandipur. The loss of the headquarters meant a certain major drop in traffic and trade, not to mention a loss of their community health and education facilities. There were many heated discussions and long debates concerning the change. Regardless of efforts to persuade the officials otherwise, the date for the official change was set. The Zonal Commissioner, Nanda Bahadur Malla, posted official notices of the change date in Bandipur Bazaar at night. The people had by this time built up considerable hostility toward this commissioner and his plans. Some people recall with grave anger:

Had we known such notices were being posted,
Nanda Bahadur might never have left Bandipur
alive. One woman threatened him with a rifle,
after which he left Bandipur that very night.

To effect the change of the headquarters, Nanda Bahadur ordered one person from every household in the Tanahū district to be present in Bandipur to assist in moving the offices. The Bandipur people were nevertheless prepared to resist. At first, entrances to the offices were physically blocked, and no one was permitted to enter. Later, fights broke out and kindled a mass riot, in which one person was killed and many were injured. 100 or more arrests were made, and a temporary jail was established in the court yard of the Khadga Devi temple for three days. His Majesty Mahendra, the King, was notified by wireless radio, and flew directly into Bandipur by helicopter to settle the disagreement. Several hours were spent establishing a compromise.

However, the outcome was a loss to Bandipur. The district headquarters was to be moved, without further resistance. The schools, hospital, post office, police office, and wireless radio would remain in Bandipur. King Mahendra had previously visited Bandipur 10 years earlier and personally admired Bandipur's progress. He was still concerned with Bandipur's discontent, and before leaving vowed to help Bandipur in any way he could. King Mahendra died two years later.

As was dreaded by most people, the change of the headquarters brought about significant changes. Traffic slowed down considerably, as much of the traffic was directed to Damouli (the new headquarters), one day's walk west of Bandipur. Officers and their families were forced to move to the new location. Some people saw their businesses suffer, and moved all their belongings and began new lives in Damouli. Because of the heated dispute, families split, friendships were lost, and the overall sense of unity among the people dwindled. Local peddlers, having increased their dependence on trade, were also forced to take their wares to the more frequented places (Figure 34b).

The "Chinese Road", Prithvi Highway

About the same year the district headquarters was moved (in 1968), planning for construction of a new road linking Kathmandu and Pokhara was begun. The road was to be built by and paid for by the People's Republic of China. People in Bandipur naturally took an interest in this proposal, as they felt their position along the route would be of major significance. However, the plans, when drawn up, showed the route extending along the paths of the river valley 2000 feet below Bandipur, virtually by-passing the entire town.

Meetings were held in Bandipur to discuss the problems of the future road. It was obvious to many people that the road, if built on the planned route, would have devastating effects on Bandipur. Trade traffic would again be slowed and drawn away from Bandipur Bazaar to Damouli. Buses would be available to India, and most people would be forced to move to better locations for business. Several letters were sent to the Department of Roads proposing a re-routing of the road to pass through Bandipur. A representative committee was organized in Bandipur and sent to Kathmandu for further consultation concerning the road. A meeting was held with Chinese officials and surveyors, who concluded the proposal was both "uneconomical" and "unfeasible." The Committee returned to Bandipur in hopes of some way arriving at a solution to the problem. After much discourse, it was decided that enough funds could be raised to construct a motorable dirt road between Bandipur and the new highway. The construction of the Bandipur access road was begun as soon as possible. Surveying was done with the assistance

of a Peace Corps Volunteer. The road is just now (1980) in the process of being paved. At the same time, the construction of the highway was near its completion. As early as 1970, there were 85 vehicles in the Gandaki Zone (Doherty 1975:151). The highway was completed in 1973.

The construction of the Bandipur access road was not effective in keeping large numbers of families from moving out of Bandipur and down to the highway. Nor was it effective in drawing trade up to Bandipur. In a rushed attempt to save their businesses, two small settlements, Dumre and Bimalnagar, were quickly constructed to create a trading stop along the highway road. Homes were constructed from the most readily available resources (wood and slate). Thin-walled homes of temporary quality were thrown up in a hodgepodge fashion (Figure 34). Dumre, located at the intersection of the access road and the highway, is the larger bazaar of the two, and constitutes the major bus stop. By 1975, there were about four cloth shops, numerous general stores, two copper and brass smiths, and scattered tea shops, hotels and restaurants. Dumre has a variety of ethnic groups, similar to Bandipur, but non-segregated. Newars, Thakalis, Magars, Gurungs, Brahmans, Chhetris, Kumals, and Damai all reside in this community. No temples have been built along the road. Bimalnagar is the smaller of the two towns and somewhat quieter; it marks the suspension-bridge crossing of the Marsyangdi River to Changling and on to Gorkha (Figure 35). Bimalnagar (sometimes called Bimaltar) now has a bread factory. Many of the shops along the road were prospering at the time of this study.

Effects of the Social and Economic Changes

Despite completion of the access road to Bandipur, the new highway and the move of the district headquarters had taken a major toll on Bandipur as a trading center. Table II shows the number of shops abandoned in the main bazaar in recent years, as determined from extensive discussion with people still living in Bandipur today. One can see a small effect from the malaria eradication and trade expansion in the 1945-1955 period, and, by contrast, the major effect in the years when the road was constructed and the district headquarters were moved. Trade had dwindled by 1975 to three cloth shops, six general stores, and seven tea shops. Small-scale trade had replaced large-scale trade, with cloth, kerosene (for lamps), mustard oil, tobacco, and medicine being the main items sold. Trade in Bandipur is now (1980) almost totally local. Most major thru-trade from the North and South is diverted via Dumre. Many business transactions there in connection with visits to Kathmandu or Pokhara via bus or the new highway. Social institutions such as the Bhajans (music groups) have dwindled from fifteen to two; one for women, and one for men.



Fig. 34a. Dumre Bazaar - temporary housing on roadside.



Fig. 34b.

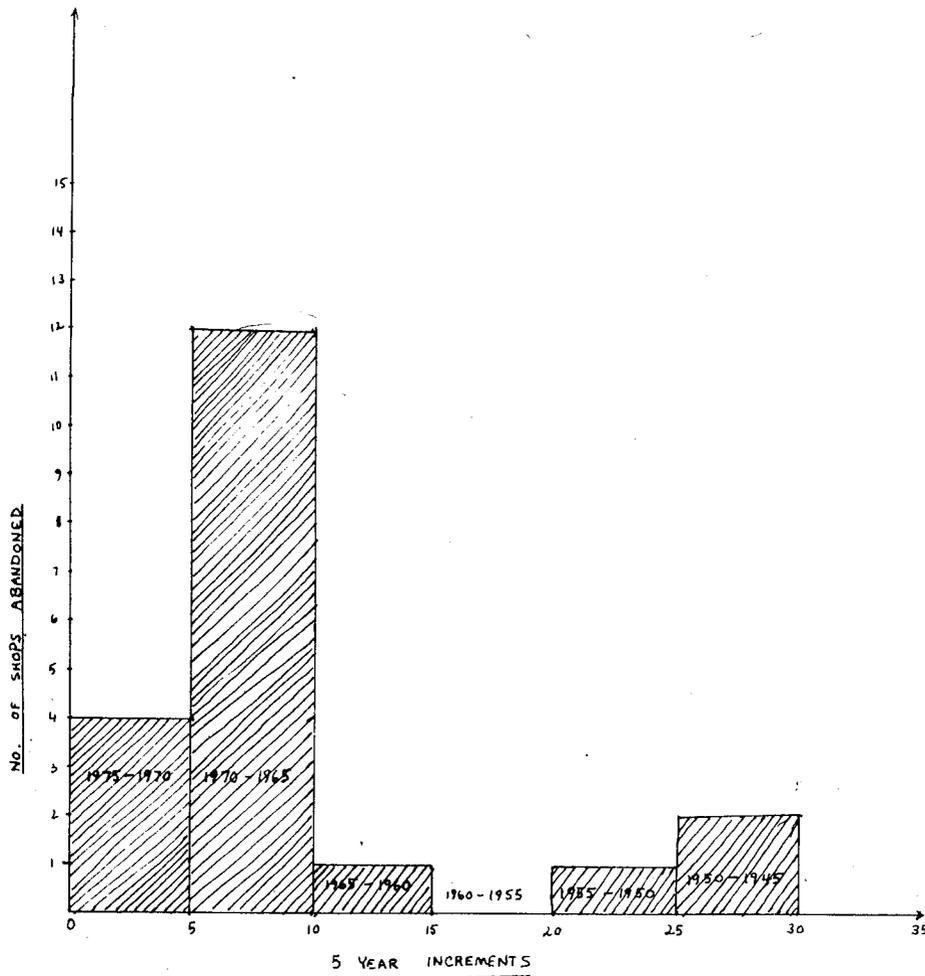
Kumal (potter) rests while selling wares in Damouli (site of new District Headquarters).



Fig. 34c.

Mathura Lal Plya (center) manages his family's 'Cold Drinks' store in Dumre.

Fig. 34. Settlement along the new highway.



The graph shows the migrations occurring in conjunction with the times of greatest geographical and political changes.

Table II. Peak years of migration from Bandipur bazaar.

Fig. 35. New transport.

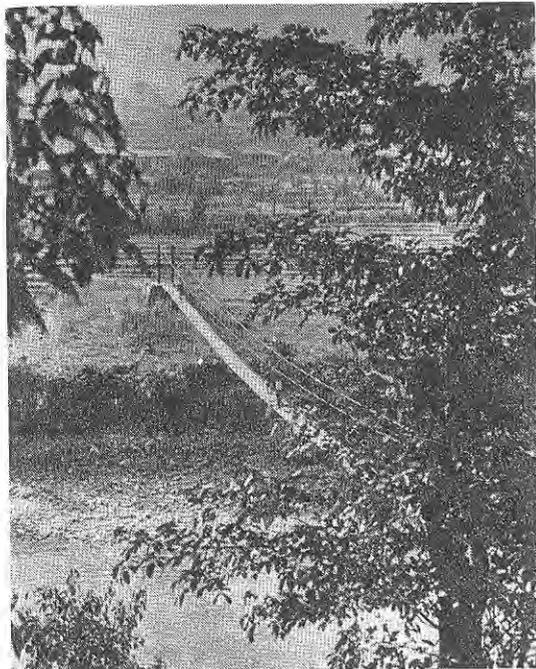


Fig. 35a. New suspension bridge in Bhimalnagar links Gorkha more directly to the new highway.

Fig. 35b. Public buses run daily between Kathmandu, and Pokhara.

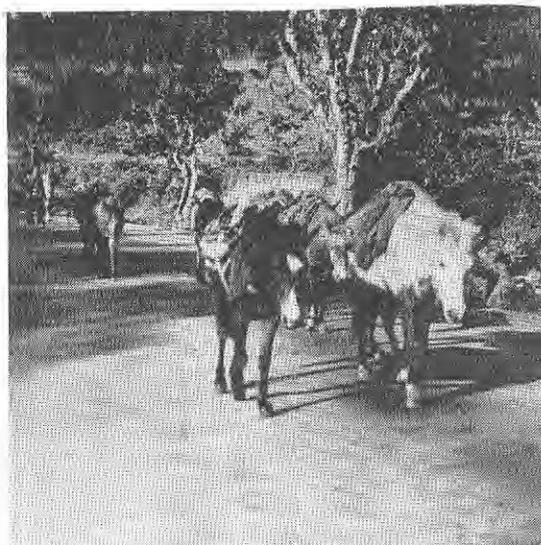


Fig. 35c. Mule trains travel along the new highway through Bhimalnagar.

The small outlying communities around Bandipur which evolved as partially agrarian and partially trade-dependent communities also have suffered from the recent changes. The demand for hired labour from the Bandipur area has gone down sharply. Some communities, which had over the past one hundred years reduced their dependence on farming and developed greater dependence on earnings as porters, have suffered greatly from their new unemployment. Having lost their touch for farming, some families have resorted to gathering wild plants for food, which, without the proper knowledge of identification, has in some cases proved fatal. Others who could make various craft goods as an alternative no longer have a convenient market.

Although the occupational and institutional aspects of life in and around Bandipur have all suffered, the traditional family and friendship ties have not been lost. The Guthi seems to still hold importance. While I was there, seven Guthis celebrated the Guthi Puja, and each celebration was well attended. Families who have parents or relatives still living in Bandipur tend to return for Dasain and various jātras. This includes many of the people in Bimalnagar, Dumre, and even Narayanghat. Even if an entire family has moved to the road, they will return to Bandipur for the colourful festivities. Those who come seem to enjoy the traditional celebrations and participate with devotion. Some families return in time for the all night festival of Khadga Devi on Phulpati (7th day of Dasain) where they set up a temporary shop to sell concessions.

There are, moreover, other remaining attractions in Bandipur. A principal attraction is the good quality high school and middle school. A total of 500 students attended the primary, middle, and high schools in 1980. The rice mills, post office, and hospital also keep a small, but steady, flow of people coming through Bandipur. Newar homes which are still occupied are usually headed by the grandparents, one son's family, and possibly his nieces and nephews. Some families have moved, leaving their children with grandparents while they operate a store on the road or in Narayanghat. Many people feel Bandipur is a good place to raise and educate children; the climate is healthier than the hot humid river valleys or the Tarai, and the schools are convenient.

IV. NEW ADAPTATIONS AND FUTURE PROSPECTS

Bandipur no longer maintains its former status as a trade network center. Newari families and others who were part of this network have in some instances completely moved from Bandipur and re-established themselves variously along the road, at the new district headquarters, north along the Marsyangdi River (e.g., Tarku-ghat, etc.), and mostly in Narayanghat. Others have moved their primary business operations to these more profitable locations,

but still maintain a footing in Bandipur with a secondary business. And many are determined not to sell their holdings. With the decline of commercial trade and administrative activities in the Bandipur area, the remaining people have tended to move closer together. Families in the outer neighbourhoods have moved into Bandipur Bazaar and have rented rooms for low rent, or have become caretakers for families who have moved away.

Today the Bazaar is peaceful, and the sound of walking sticks never fills the night air or early morning hours. However, many people are deeply concerned about the future, and are searching for new ways to stimulate and thus revitalize the community and economy of Bandipur. Community problems and issues are often discussed in Bhajans, and special delegations have been formed and sent to Kathmandu on the behalf of the whole community.

One family in Bandipur has begun export of medicinal herbs and roots which sell for a good profit in India. These are dried and sent to India in shipments from Bandipur (Figure 39). Another family is investigating possibilities of beginning a silkworm industry, and is trying to purchase the proper equipment. Some families are capitalising on their orange tree orchards, which have grown well in the area. The oranges are taken to the road and sold at a good price of 50 paisa - 1 rupee (5 to 10 cents) each. With careful planning and expansion of the cultivation, the sale of oranges could be a good prospect for the future. A goat livestock development project has also been discussed as a possibility, utilizing unplanted land for grazing. Since the time of this study, this project has been initiated.

Slate mining is just beginning to take hold in the area. There are now five slate mines operating on otherwise completely unusable land (Figure 38). Newar families own the mines, and they hire Magars, Brahmans, Chhetris, Sarkis, Kamis, and Ganes for the labour. Some are trained at extracting stone in large sheets for shaping. Others carry the pre-shaped stones down to Bimalnagar where they are bused to Kathmandu or Pokhara. Wages for this portering in 1976 were 25 paisa (2 cents) per stone. The maximum load weight at 70-80 lbs. (about 50 slabs) brought 12.5 rupees (\$ 1.00) per load. Since it takes one hour to make the trip down to Bimalnagar, some people are able to make two trips in one day, earning 25 Rs./day which (in 1976) was more than the average pay for a trekking porter elsewhere who carried a load all day. The slate business is growing (thirty new hirings in a three-month period in 1976), and offers a promising prospect for the future.

Tourism is another option which has been pushed by some, and opposed by others. The views from the park (tundikhel) are extremely beautiful (Figure 40); the walk up from the road is steep but well-built; the Bazaar is quiet and non-hectic; water is



Fig. 37. Bandipur school students in assembly.



Fig. 38a. Slate mining below Bandipur.



Fig. 38b. Gaine settlement in Bandipur.

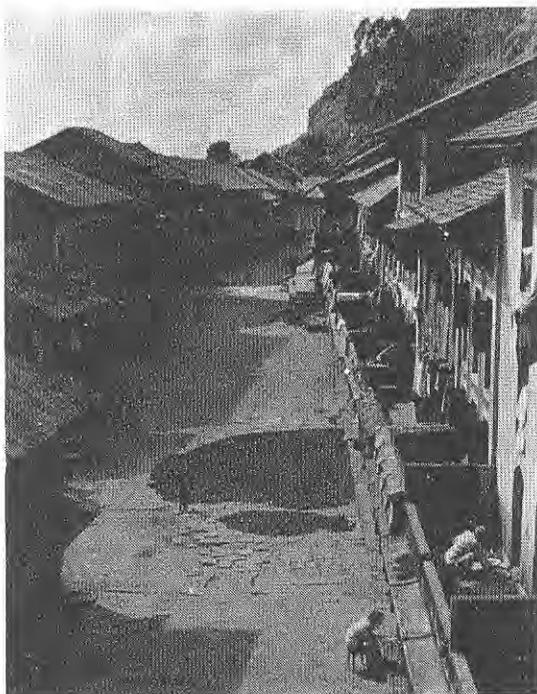
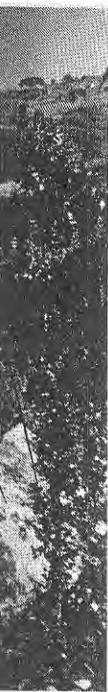


Fig. 39. Medicinal herbs dry in main bazaar.



andipur.



Fig. 40. View from Tundikhel of Bandipur.

readily available; and Bandipur makes a good overnight stop en-route between Pokhara and Kathmandu. This last year (1980) construction was begun on a new tourist hotel (Messerschmidt n.d.).

One of the best sources of revitalization in Bandipur has been the continued expansion of its educational facilities. As an educational center Bandipur has done extremely well. Boys and girls from as far as three days walking distance attended Bandipur high school and board with other friends or families, renting rooms in the vacant homes. Since Bandipur is the SLC (School Leaving Certificate) examination center, many students come for three months of study and exams during the winter. Many of the young adult inhabitants in Bandipur today are school teachers, and the operation and maintenance of the expanded school facilities has provided a new source of reliable income. There are some teachers now in Bandipur who wish to open a boarding school. Some Narayanghat families feel that Narayanghat is a bad influence on their youth, and would send their children to Bandipur if such a facility existed. A house has already been donated for this purpose. Since the time this study was conducted (1976), both a two-year nursing college and an arts and science college have been approved and started in Bandipur.¹⁰ Plans are also underway for the construction of a community soccer field.

This past year, two new shops were opened in the Bazaar, and during the new year festival puja, one of the Bandipur families donated a new temple roof and restoration expenses for the main Bazaar temple, Vindu Vāsini. And the main jātras, Phulpati, Tīj, Kṛṣṇa Astami, Bhāg jātra, Siva rātri, Gai jātra, and Lakhe are all still celebrated.

The future of Bandipur may be quite different from its past as a trade network center. Current trends indicate a shift towards its development as an educational, cultural, and tourist center. The important strategy for success in this new identity has been and will continue to be the cooperation between all the people in the community.

Notes

1. This research was part of a directed study project in the Anthropology Dept. at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. The study was guided and encouraged by Prof. John T. Hitchcock, to whom I owe many thanks. I was further encouraged and assisted by Dwarika Shrestha, who made his native home in Bandipur available to me as a place to live. Krishna Lal Pradhan, formerly of Bandipur, has aided me first through several years of language training and subsequently through extensive discussion, evaluation, and supplementary information concerning my research in Bandipur. From August 1975

thru March 1976, I lived with the people of Bandipur, who shared their lives and their hospitality with me, and made my stay the most interesting and worthwhile experience. My sincere thanks go out to all the Bandipur people who contributed their valuable time and knowledge toward making this project possible.

2. It is believed that the person who reaches the state of Siddhi and/or Nirvana is capable of entering or transforming both physically and spiritually into another form or object.
3. In a recent communication, a friend in Bandipur indicated the existence of yet additional versions of the Makunda Sen story.
4. This inscription was copied from the flag by Mathura Lal Piya, of Bandipur Bazaar, in January 1976, and later translated by Krishna Lal Pradhan, at the University of Wisconsin, in December 1976.
5. A maiti is the home of the parents of a married daughter. Throughout Nepal temples are affiliated with each other and assigned kinship relationships to each other. See also Casper J. Miller (1979:18-20).
6. Father Giuseppe, 1801; accounts of Tranquillo as a missionary to Tanahū in 1776 - cited by D.R. Regmi 1969, pp. 32-33.
7. "Bandi" here refers probably to the first appellation of Bandipur. According to local history, Bandipur was named after a respected religious Kāmi, (a caretaker of Khadga Devi temple) named Bandi Kāmi. This was later added on to form Bandipur. I am still investigating a possible relationship between Bandi and the Sanskrit word bandin meaning "bard" or "praise singer."
8. Tola is a measurement of weight equal to about $\frac{1}{2}$ of an ounce.
9. Pāthi is a measurement of volume equal to about $\frac{1}{4}$ of a bushel.
10. Private communication from Krishna Kumar Pradhan, Bandipur, (letter dated 10/80); and from Radhe Shyam Duwadi (letter dated 10/80).

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