

RESEARCH NOTE

DESCRIBING GORKHA: "FASKIRAP SAHEB'S" MISSION TO GORKHA, 1783¹

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The East India Company's accession to the Diwani in 1765 brought the Company's territorial frontiers to the foothills of the Himalayas. Since then, Company officials repeatedly attempted to seek passage to Nepal and beyond. While the missions of William Kirkpatrick and Francis Buchanan Hamilton are well known, little is known about some of the earlier missions². This brief paper deals with one such mission led by a Company official by the name of George Foxcroft in 1783. Till recently little was known about the fate of this mission.³ However, research conducted at a number of archival holdings at Delhi, Patna, Calcutta and Kathmandu has enabled me to piece together the narrative of "Faskirap Saheb's"⁴ mission to Gorkha.

Prior to Foxcroft's mission, we do hear of the visits by Company agents such as James Logan, Will Mirtle (?), Francis Peacock and James Christie. James Logan seems to have entered Gorkha's newly acquired territories in the Eastern Tarai in 1769 to open a channel of communication with Prithvinarayan Shah who had just annexed the Nepal valley to the possessions of Gorkha.⁵ Similarly, Will Mirtle (?) in 1769 and Francis Peacock in 1770 attempted to explore the Morung-Tista region apparently in a effort to find a way to Tibet. The only information that seems to emerge about these "missions" is that Francis Peacock obtained the sole right of cutting furs (firs?) in his country.⁶

Additional information comes from elsewhere. Fr. Giuseppe Maria the Priest in charge of the Catholic church at Bettiah (Sarkar Champaran, Subah Bihar)⁷ in the latter half of the eighteenth century who, in passing, notes that prior to Foxcroft's visit, Dr. Logan, Mr. Graeme, Monseieur Monvert and a Dutchman by the name of Mr. Raidermaiher (?), had on different occasions made largely unsuccessful attempts to visit Nepal.⁸ Thus far, I have been able to unearth little information about George Foxcroft's life

prior to his visit to Nepal. He probably worked for the East India Company as an attorney in the late 1770's.⁹

Even though the Calendar of Persian Correspondence mentions that Foxcroft went to Nepal carrying a letter of the governor-general and presents, it is unclear if this mission was an official one. George Foxcroft had earlier offered his services to the Company government as an envoy to Gorkha and Company authorities at Calcutta did not meet with this request. From the tenor of Foxcroft's correspondence with the governor-general in Council, it would appear that while government had sanctioned this visit, it was unclear what official capacity Foxcroft was undertaking this visit to "Nepal"¹⁰ Foxcroft on his part wished to gather data to write a Natural and Political History of "Nepaul". Again, from the tenor of Foxcroft's correspondence, it would appear that Calcutta had not given him any official sanction for this, leaving it to Foxcroft to find something to do that Government could later justify and support in the nature of a Public Commission.¹¹ Keeping these details in mind, it seems that the proposed project of writing a natural and political history of the country was Foxcroft's own personal ambition and therefore was to be undertaken under his own personal initiative.

Foxcroft, thus set out, sometime in April/May 1783, with the express intention to compile what ostensibly would be a Natural and Political History of the country. He arrived at the "Tyranny" or Tariani, the strip of malarial forests that ran along the length of the foothills and bordered Sarkar Gorakhpur and Champaran.¹² From there he proceeded inwards into Rautahat. He provides perhaps one of the earliest English descriptions of Rautahat (including Pachrauta). He noted in a letter to Warren Hastings that this zilla was 15 cos in length and 4 cos in breadth. It was bounded in the east by the Bagmati and in the East by the "Tere" (?) river in the west. Foxcroft refers to Rautahat and Pachrauta as Parganas, which was historically speaking, incorrect. Under the Makwani rulers this area had yielded about seven thousand rupees, which under Gorkhali rule it yielded around twenty five thousand rupees. In 1783, Sardar Naar (Narbir?) Singh¹³ was the commander of the Gorkhali troops stationed there.¹⁴ Continuing his progress he seems to have reached Hetauda. And then he ran into problems.

From here onwards he was refused permission to proceed by the Gorkhali commander of that area, one Sardar Naar Sing (Narbir) Singh. Two reasons seemed to have been cited for this. First, the Gorkhali commander claimed that the Catholic priests at Bettiah had complained about him (Foxcroft) to the Gorkha raja, claiming that he was going to Nepal to set up a factory. Secondly, there seemed to have be the issue about the contested status of tappa Rautahat, where the Company had taken an ambivalent

stance, supporting the claims of one Mirza Abdulla Beg over that of Gorkha, to the rights to possess it. Foxcroft denied all this saying that he was only there to promote friendly communications and trade between the Company and "Nepal", in addition to writing a Natural and Political History of that country. Nevertheless, he was denied permission to proceed further. Frustrated, Foxcroft had to retreat to Patna, sometime in May 1783. And with this, the Foxcroft mission came to an end.

But our narrative continues. Foxcroft's mission unfolded within a wide historical context marked by the maneuverings of a number of historical agents. These need to be laid out, if we are to ever understand, however so partially, the complex forces that Foxcroft's efforts to write a 'Natural and Political History of the country', had to mediate.

The first set of agents involved were the catholic priests of Bettiah. What had the priests of Bettiah got to do with all this? Since their expulsion from the Nepal valley by Prithvinarayan Shah, the catholic Capuchin fathers had moved their operations down into Bettiah accompanied by a small (largely Newar) catholic community.¹⁵ Their leader was one Father giuseppe Maria who secured some land for this community and against many odds strove to preserve and nurture it. The catholic fathers, though out of Nepal, seemed to have retained some connections with Nepal. In particular they, or at least some among them, seemed to have found an ally in Bahadur Shah who after 1778 had been living in exile in Bihar, moving between Bettiah and Patna. In fact, sometime in 1777, one Father Michaelangelo seems to have visited Nepal for few days.¹⁶ On several occasions, this Father Michaelangelo seems to have acted as physician to Bahadur Shah, especially during the latter's exile in Bettiah.¹⁷ A constant correspondence between the Capuchin priest, Bahadur Shah, the Gorkhali Raja Pratap Singh Shah and one Bahunani seems to have taken place between 1777 and 1783.¹⁸ Foxcroft, it would appear was informed about this constant correspondence by Dinanath Upadhyaya, the Gorkhali *vakil* (pleader) stationed at Calcutta, but who during this time was also visiting Patna.¹⁹ The *vakil* seems to have suggested to Foxcroft in the course of conversations that the failure of his mission was due to the machinations of the priests and their close links with Bahadur Shah. Foxcroft faithfully reported all this to Calcutta, and an order was issued to W.A. Brook, the Revenue Chief at Patna to arrest the priests and bring them to Patna. This was done and in the process a letter was found in the hands of the same Father Michaelangelo addressed to "Brahminanee Sah" giving details about the British rivalry with the French, and the possibility of the expulsion of the English from Bengal and Bihar.²⁰ A prolonged investigation ensued. The priests were interrogated. Father Joseph argued passionately that he be

allowed to go to Calcutta and clear the name of his congregation. Affirming the disinterest of his congregation in any political affairs, the Capuchin priest insisted that since their expulsion from Nepal, they had settled in Bettiah and all that concerned them was the survival and growth of their little community. He also characterized Dinanath Upadhyaya, and his allies, one Bhim Khawas and the *vakil* of the raja of Benaras (name unknown) as "imposters".²¹ Ultimately, the priests were released and allowed to return to Bettiah.²²

Developments on another front generated obstacles for Foxcroft's progress. In 1762, Prithvinarayan Shah outsted the Sen rulers of Makwanpur. But the status of the tarai areas belonging to the Makwanpur raj remained unclear. Following Captain Kinloch's abortive foray into Gorkha (1767), these areas (probably the present day districts of Bara and Parsa) were taken over by the Company for a few years and then subsequently restored to Gorkha. But the case of Tappa Rautahat and its dependency of Pachrauta still remained ambiguous. So also was the case of the three tappas of Jamauli, Ramgir, and Chigwan (in sarkar Champaran) that were dependent of Fort Someshwar, but had now constituted the Ramnagar Raj.²³ Tappa Rautahat, at this time, was being claimed by one Mirza Abdulla Beg a former birtadar of the Makwanpur kings. By 1783, it appeared that the East India Company would back the Beg claims with armed force. The Gorkhali court had initiated moves to assert its claims, and since 1771 Dinanath Upadhyaya had been deputed to various places to represent Gorkha's interests in the Tarai areas to Company officials.²⁴ These moves rode the ebb and flow of politics in the Durbar at Kathmandu where various factions jockeyed for prominence in these negotiations. The territorial claims of Gorkha were inextricably intertwined with symbolic questions of honor and status and the material allurements of additional territories for the groups involved.²⁵ Foxcroft noted that Rautahat had assumed great significance for the "Nepaulians" and their loss of it might have been a great blow to Gorkha's territorial rights by way of conquest.²⁶ But by 1783 the Gorkhali claims to possess Rautahat and Pachrauta continued to elude them. In fact, in February 1783, the Company seems to have confirmed the Beg's right over Rautahat, much to the chagrin of officials at Kathmandu.

Moreover, there seemed little possibility that the Company would accede to Gorkhali claims over the three dependent tappas of Fort Someshwar as well.²⁷ The early months of 1783 produced much anxiety at the court, and a suspicion of English intentions. It would seem that the assurances of success that Dinanath had promised after his celebrated meeting with Warren Hasting's wife at Patna in 1781, when the first assurances of the

Company's sympathetic recognition of Gorkha's claims over Rautahat were made, had come to nothing. In fact, earlier in January 1782, Bahadur Shah was asked to use his offices to instruct his representative *Bhabnanni* to pursue these matters, especially since Dinanath's efforts to achieve them had largely failed.²⁸ Foxcroft unsuspectingly walked into this situation in April 1783 on his way to write a Natural and Political History of the country.

Letters written from the court to Bahadur Shah at Bettiah seem to tie into the unfolding scenario I have highlighted above. In mid March (Chaitra 4) 1783, Bahadur Shah was asked to pronounce his views on the claims and counter claims being made by Dinanath Upadhyaya and *Bhannani*. On what the nature of these claims and counter claims were, we are not aware of. All we know is that both were representing contrary views on some subject of importance to the court.²⁹ Anyway, Bahadur Shah declined to get involved. But we can tentatively guess what this might have involved. From the context outlined in the previous paragraphs, the crucial issues that both were representing at that time were Gorkha's interests in three areas- the right of Gorkha over Pachrauta-Rautahat, the claims over the Someshwar Tarai and the return of the Makwani Prince living in asylum in the Company's territories.³⁰ In this connection, we can assume that there were at least two groups involved in representing Gorkha's Tarai claims, with Dinanath representing the court (or at least some sections of it) and Bahunnani representing Bahadur Shah. The Catholic priests by being close to Bahadur would have automatically incurred the hostility of Dinanath Upadhyaya's camp.³¹ Hence, the Upadhyaya's efforts at "leaking" information to Foxcroft about the negative role played by the priests in stalling his mission. Father Giuseppe's characterization of Dinanath Upadhyaya and others as "imposters" seems to register well this picture of mutual distrust.

Anyway, the next letter in this unfolding scenario is a letter from Run Bahadur Shah to Bahadur Shah. The former notes that while Foxcroft sought to come to Nepal, such a trip was rather unnecessary. No Englishman had ever come to Nepal prior to this, and if they ever needed anything, it was accordingly sent to them. In short, every polite attempt was to be made to dissuade Foxcroft to push forward into Nepal. The hostile reaction at the court, and the negative implications that it might have had for Bahunnani seem to have gone into the construction of this decision.³² In case Foxcroft persisted in his attempts, then Bahadur Shah was asked to advice the court on what the appropriate response should be. But as we know, Foxcroft did not persist in his attempts for long and retired to Patna. In November 1783, Warren Hastings in a minute decided the case of

Rautahat and Pachrauta in the favor of Gorkha, setting the issue, temporarily at least.³³

Contextualizing an event is crucial to understanding its production. The circumstances surrounding Foxcroft's mission, as exposed above, constrained Foxcroft's actions in more ways than he probably ever recognized. We are now able to, at least partially, understand what transpired to produce the event we now refer to as the Foxcroft mission.³⁴ George Foxcroft, in attempting to explore and write about Gorkha/Nepal was only drawing on the semantic materials of his time. Hoping to gain favor in Company service, and exhibiting that same urge to name, describe, and classify that motivated many Europeans as they traveled around the globe, Foxcroft worked towards carving a discursive space for himself. And yet, he was constrained, to make history under circumstances not entirely of his choosing. Living in the present, but thinking through the past, actors like George Foxcroft, Dinanath Upadhyaya and Father Michaelangelo strove to definitively plot what were largely uncertain futures. Foxcroft's actions brought him into contact with other historical actors who in trying to employ their own historical trajectories, thwarted his attempts to achieve what he had set out to do. These were issues of power, and they would constrain some, while enabling others. In fact, George Foxcroft's mission was not just a "mission". It has provided a template for the study of human actions located at the intersection of various forces and sedimented with issues of culture, power, space, history and arguably even statemaking. Whatever would be left of the mission in May 1783 would be a product of the mutually transformatory relations of these categories. And this is what processes of statemaking are all about. Processes of statemaking on the AngloGorkha frontier in the late eighteenth century were intimately connected with the demarcation of statal spaces, the generation of new forms of knowledge, all enacted through the situated actions of historical actors like George Foxcroft, Dinanath Upadhyaya and Fr. Michaelangelo and the various forces that coalesced around them. Together, they would produce the wrinkles that inevitably mark the uneven terrains of statemaking.³⁵

Notes

1. I use the term Gorkha to signify the expansionist state founded by Prithvinarayan Shah following the conquest of the Nepal valley.
2. See Kirkpatrick, William. 1811. *An Account of the Kingdom of Nepal (being the substance of observations made on a mission to that country in 1793)*. London: William Miller; Buchanan-Hamilton, Francis. 1819. *An Account of the Kingdom of Nepal and of the Territories Annexed to this Dominion by the House of Gurkha*. Edinburgh: Archibald Constable and Co.

3. See for example, Amatya, Saphalya. 1969 [2025 B.S.]. "British Diplomacy and its various mission in Nepal", in *Pracina Nepal*, 6:1-5. He like many others notes that little is known about this Mission. See also, Regmi, D.R. 1961 [1975]. *Modern Nepal.: Rise and Growth in the eighteenth century*. Calcutta: Firma K.L. Mukhopadhyaya, p 407. Dineshraj Pant is probably the only one who has looked closely at the correspondence concerning the Foxcroft Mission. But even he concludes that what actually became of the mission is something that awaits further research. See Pant, Dineshraj. 1973 [2030]. "Aprakashit bara wota aitihāsik patra", *Purnima* 21, 6(1):49-70. The *Calendra of Persian Correspondence* (hereafter CPC) does mention Foxcroft by name of having gone to Nepal carrying with him the Governor-General's Letter and presents. See *CPC*, IV:857 & VI:911.
4. Foxcroft's name as it appears in official Gorkhali discourse.
5. Regmi, 1975, *op cit*, pp. 399-401; *CPC* II: 1686.
6. Regmi, 1975, *ibid.*, as above, p400.
7. The location of these places should not be difficult to find on any modern map. However, I have retained their Mughal administrative denominations such as Subah, Sarkar, Parganas and Tappas. The Mughal Empire was divided into a number of Subah which were in turn divided and subdivided into Sarkars, Parganas and Tappas, though not always, in descending order.
8. Fr. Giuseppe Maria to Warren Hastings, June 21, 1783, in *Proceedings of the governor-general in Council at Bengal, Revenue Department (hereafter, PGGCB)*, July 18, 1783 No. 15, pp. 1678-1682, West Bengal State Archives (hereafter, WBSA).
9. Foxcroft's name is a recurring feature in the Board of Revenue Proceedings for the year 1776. See *Proceedings of the Board of Revenue (hereafter, BOR)*, 1776, Bihar State Archives, Patna.
10. While there is evidence to suggest that Hastings had drafted a letter for Foxcroft to carry stating that Foxcroft's mission was to promote trade between the two states, there is no mention of this letter in Foxcroft's correspondence with Calcutta.
11. George Foxcroft to Warren Hastings, *PGGCB*, 3 June, 1783, No. 1 & 2 WBSA.
12. The term Tariani is generally a reference to the plains, and its usage does not seem to have been confined to the forested low lands that separated Gorkha from the Company's territories in the plains. The inhabitants of Pargana Salimabad, for example, in Sarkar Bhagalpur (subah Bihar) described their pargana to be divided into two topographical zones, the "Terianee" (plains with high yielding lands) and "Muggah" (low lands, prone to constant flooding and therefore possessing low agricultural yields). See *BOR*, Proceedings 17 April 1793, WBSA.
13. Regmi cites one Narbir Singh as being the Subba of Rautahat. Regmi, D.R. 1975, *op cit*, pp. 257.
14. Foxcroft to Warren Hastings, May 13, 1783, *PGGCB*, June 3, 1783, No. 1. WBSA. One cos is roughly equivalent to 2 modern miles. The "Tere" river

could be the Tiyar river, which falls in the present day district of Bara. If this is so, then Rutahat was probably broader than what it is today. Regarding the use of the terms Parganas and Tappas, Foxcroft obviously got the information from some local source. Evidence seems to suggest that no consensus might exist between the inhabitants of one pargana or tappa as to the actual extent, nature, history, and nomenclature of these fiscal divisions. Anyway, Rautahat was a Tappa subdivided into seven Tarafs. Rautahat was one of the two tappas of an older Pargana referred to simply as Simraon in English records and Gadh Simraon in Gorkhali records. Reference to this older pargana can be found in the *Ain-I-Akbari*, a statistical document on the internal resources of the Mughal Empire prepared by one of Akbar's courtiers. The other tappa that made up Gadh Simraon was called Nannor and during this period, it formed part of the little kingdom of Bettiah in Sarkar Champaran. This confusion among Company officials regarding the nomenclature of the old Mughal fiscal divisions can be seen throughout the records of this period.

15. For details on these matters, see Vaninni, Fulgentius. 1977. *Christian Settlements in Nepal in Eighteenth Century*. Delhi. I Am also grateful to Jose Kalapura S.J. for discussions on the Bettiah Church, and to Mr. Amanseus Josephat and Mr. Cherubim John who took time out to show me around Bettiah in May 1998. Further historical details on the Bettiah church can be found in some volumes of the *Hosten Collection*, Vidya Jyoti Archives, New Delhi.
16. See Letter of Pratap singh Shah to Bahadur shah, Baisakh2, 1834 B.S. (1777), cited in Pant, Dineshraj. 1974. "B.S. 1832 dekhi 1858 sammako Nepalko itihasma naya prakash parne kehi patraharu", *Purnima* 17(5)1:35-37.
17. After Raja Pratap singh Shah's death, Bahadur Shah along with Queen Rajendra Laxmi acted as Regents to the infant king, Ran Bahadur Shah. The political vicissitudes of Bahadur Shah's career, from the years of his Regency beginning in 1778 to his alleged death in 1797, are too numerous to be detailed here and fall beyond the scope of this paper.
18. Bahunnani is also variously referred to as Brahmnnani and Babhnani in Nepali records. East India Company records refer to him as Brahminanee. It was probably the name by which one Laxmi Raman Upadhyaya was known. See Bajracharya Bhadra Ratna. 1992. *Bahadur Shah: The Regent of Nepal*. New Delhi: Anmol Publications, p27. for details of this correspondence see Pant, Dineshraj. 1973(2030), op cit; Pant, Dineshraj. 1983 (2040). "Shri Panch Pratap Shah lai Padre Michaelangelo le lekheka char wota aprakashit patra"; Padre Michaelangelo le Bahun nani lai lekheko aprakashit patra" in *Purnima* 55, 14(3):34-44. See also Pant, Dineshraj. 1972(2029). B.S. 1832 dekhi B.S. 1858 sammako Nepalko itihasma naya prakash parne kehi patraharu", *Purnima* 17(4)1:27-51.
19. Since 1779, the *vakil* was processing gorkha's claims over certain portions of the Makwanpur Tarai, which had become illegible due to contestations

- over the right to "own" them. I will provide more details in the paragraphs that follow.
20. Translate of a letter from Father Michaelangelo to Brahminanee Sah in the *PGGCB* (Revenue Department), October 24, 1783, No. 20, pp 1685-1687. WBSA. One of the allegations made to W.A. Brooke (probably by Foxcroft) was that Father Michaelangelo had written to Bahadur Shah asking him to prevent foxcroft's visit to Nepal as he was going there to build a factory according to an agreement reached between him, Dinanath Upadhyaya and Bhim (Khawas), the Taksari (Superintendent of the Mint). I have found no such references in Michaelangelo's letter to Bahunnani. the only details in the letter, that can be construed as negative are the references that the English power might be at an end.
 21. Letter of Father Giuseppe Maria to Warren Hastings dated June 21, 1783 in *PGGCB* (Revenue Department), July 18, 1783, No. 15, pp 1678-82, WBSA.
 22. Father Michaelangelo was possibly detained for a longer period at Patna. What became of him I have been unable to uncover.
 23. The Ramnagar Raj was managed by the survivors of the Tanahu Raj who established themselves here after their expulsion by the Gorkhalis in 1782. The Ramnagar Raj fell within the dominions of the East India Company. Though the Tanahu Raj fell in 1782, parts of it such as Fort Someshwar, Upardang Garhi and Chitwan had been wrested by Gorkha, a few years earlier, in 1779.
 24. Some details of these moves can be found in *Papers Respecting the Nepaul War*, Volume 1:378-382.
 25. These groups coalesced around important figures such as Swarup Singh Karki, Bhaktawar Simha Basnayet, Bahadur Shah and Queen Rajendra Laxmi.
 26. Foxcroft to Warren Hastings, May 13, 1783, *PGGCB* (Revenue Department), June 3, 1783, No.1.
 27. Details on these issues can be found in various official reports and correspondence of the East India Company from 1781 onwards. Even after the Company officially granted Rautahat to Gorkha in October 1783, the problem did not really cease. The question of where Rautahat actually lay, its actual extent and boundaries remained to be addressd. They would reappear in the Company's reports on the investigations conducted along the Rautahat-Champaran frontier prior to the Anglo-Gorkha war of 1814-16. The failure to address these issues was not as much due to official negligence by agents of the two states, but registered certain spatial dilemmas the Company state was encountering in its attempts to order society and space in its territories in India. They form part of a larger investigation I am currently conducting on the impress of issues of spatiality on processes of statemaking on the Anglo-Gorkha frontier, which I argue formed a crucial backdrop to the Anglo-Gorkha war of 1814-1816. But for a preliminary discussion of these matters, see my paper, "Fiscal Space and Illegible Landscape on the Champaran Frontier: The Case

of the Anglo-Gorkha war of 1814-1816", presented at the *Indian History Congress*, 59th Session, Patiala, December 28-31.

28. Letter from Run Bahadur Shah to Bahadur Shah, Magh 12, 1838 (January 26 (?), 1732), Historical Letters, Kausi Tosakhana Collection, No. 91, National Archives of Nepal.
29. Letter from Run Bahadur Shah to Bahadur Shah, Chaitra 4, 2039 (March 18(?) 1983), Historical Letters, Kausi Tosakhana Collection, No. 86, National Archives of Nepal.
30. This is very expressly stated in Run Bahadur Shah's letter to Bahadur Shah in 1782. Bahadur Shah is informed that what Dinanath had been deputed for, he has failed to achieve, and hence, even if he (Bahadur Shah) is unable to achieve anything else, he could at least to assist in the attainment of the above mentioned three objectives. Subsequently, he is asked to instruct Babhnani accordingly, See Run Bahadur Shah to Bahadur Shah, January 1782, Historical letters, Kausi Tosakhana Collection, No. 91, National Archives of Nepal.
31. The building in which Bahadur Shah recuperated, and called "Padre Ki Haveli", still stands in the old quarters of Patna city. In the courtyard of this church one can still find a brass bell donated by Bahadur Shah with the Latin inscription, "Bahadur Shah, Regis Nepaul, 1787".
32. Run Bahadur Shah to Bahadur Shah, Chaitra 12, 1839 (March 26(?), 1783), Historical letters. Kausi Tosakhana Collection, No. 85. National Archives of Nepal. Intriguingly, Dilli Raman Regmi does cite this letter (p308) on the one hand and then on another page (p407) mention the Foxcroft Mission adding nothing is known about the fate of this mission. No attempt is made to draw and connections or conclusions from these two sets of data, the reason probably being that Regmi had never seen the letters in the first place, something he concedes at one point (p308, footnote 20). See Regmi, Dilli Raman, 1975, *op cit*.
33. PGGCB (Revenue Department), 11 November, 1783, No. 56. WBSA. Questions about Rautahat would be revived less than 30 years later and would play a significant role in the build up towards the Anglo-Gorkha war of 1814-1816.
34. In this sense, this paper makes no claim of having exhausted our understanding of what the Foxcroft mission was all about. The official discourses I have examined are shot through with their usual doses of hidden transcripts, some of which we might never see through. The real motives of many of the actors were masked especially when representing matters to their superiors. Ambiguity and incoherence are prominent markers in the production of social life. Some of the statements made here might be altered in the light of new evidence. But the point remains that social life is produced by conscious actors, unconsciously constrained, producing and reproducing and yet transforming their worlds.
35. Most of these issues will hopefully be treated in greater detail in a forthcoming dissertation tentatively titled, "Separating the Yam from the

Boulder: Statemaking and Space on the Margins of Empires— The Anglo-Gorkha War of 1814-1816", Department of History, University of Hawaii at Manoa.

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