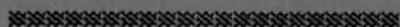


EUROPEAN BULLETIN  
OF  
HIMALAYAN RESEARCH

Number 2, 1991



Südasien-Institut  
Heidelberg

## EUROPEAN BULLETIN OF HIMALAYAN RESEARCH

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## EDITORIAL

The first issue of our Bulletin was sent to European scholars with the request that the enclosed questionnaire be returned in order to receive free of charge the second number. The present issue is being sent out to 133 scholars, representing 17 different countries. Additional copies have been distributed to research institutes in Nepal and India in the hope of establishing collaborative links with the Himalayan countries themselves. In the meantime we have begun to enlist the support of contributing editors (see below) to provide us with news and ideas from colleagues in their respective countries. In short, we are well on our way to having a viable bulletin, serving as a network for European scholars active in research on the land and peoples of the Himalayas.

You will find the present issue somewhat broader in scope than the first. We are grateful to Graham Clarke, Franz-Karl Ehrhard, Corneille Jest, Alan Macfarlane, Michael Torsten Much, Ulrike Muller-Boker, Philippe Ramirez, Anne de Sales and others for having helped in its preparation. Also we wish to thank Jonathan Benthall of the Royal Anthropological Institute for permission to publish a version of Alan Macfarlane's report that originally appeared in *Anthropology Today*. Although our editorial policy is to publish only original articles, we intend that our section on archives become a regular feature that will eventually, when indexed, provide subscribers with useful information about where materials on the Himalayas are stored. With this aim in mind, it seemed justifiable to publish a version of Alan Macfarlane's report on the Cambridge archive that most of our reader-

ship will not have seen.

As for the future, the rubrics that we have established in this issue should become standing features in the Bulletin: each issue will contain a commissioned review article and an interview, plus shorter papers of topical interest (sent to us unsolicited by subscribers). There will also be reports on archives, current research and conferences; book reviews; and announcements. Our third issue has already taken shape along these lines and will contain, among other things, a review article on recent publications on oral tradition and the first of a major two part report by Lucette Boulnois on the various Himalayan archives in Paris. Our fourth number will contain additionally a special index on current research and researchers in Europe, based on the returned questionnaires.

We present this brief look into the future as the Bulletin enters a critical stage in which we must appeal not only for your interest but also your support. The 'seed money' from the South Asia Institute lapses with this, our second, number. We aim to meet the costs of the next two issues out of subscription fees, but contingency funds from the Institute will cover any shortfall. In short, production of the next two issues is guaranteed, but only those persons who return the enclosed subscription form will receive them. From Number 5, to be published in Spring 1993, we must be entirely self-supporting.

As mentioned in our first issue, the Bulletin will survive only if its existence is the collective intellectual and financial responsibility of all European scholars engaged in Himalayan research. We

are grateful for the interest already shown in the Bulletin and urge you to continue to send us your articles, reports, news and suggestions. Finally we reiterate that from our next issue the Bulletin will be sent only to *bona fide* paid-up subscribers. For further information about subscriptions see the leaflet enclosed with this issue.

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## REVIEW ARTICLE

### Martyrs for Democracy : A Review of Recent Kathmandu Publications

Richard Burghart and Martin Gaenzle

*Āitihāsik Krāntikārī: Jan Āndolan.* Rameśa Guptā, Kathmandu: Dipak Kumar Rauniyar, 2047 V.S. 53 pp., illus. Rs. 5.

*Dawn of Democracy: People's Power in Nepal/Prajātantrako Uday: Nepālmā Jan Ubhār.* FOPHUR (Eds.). Kathmandu: FOPHUR (Forum for the Protection of Human Rights), 1990. Preface from Ganesh Man Singh and Sahana Pradhan. 128 pp., illus., n.p.l.

*Jan-Āndolan ra Śahīdharu.* Nārāyan Praśād Śivākoṭī. Kathmandu: Bhisma Kadariya, 2047 V.S. 162 pp., illus. Rs. 65.

*Nepal: Struggle for Democracy.* Thomas Bonk (Ed.). Bangkok: the author, 1991. 112 pp., illus., n.p.l.

*Rāṣṭriya Janāndolan: Vivaraṇ ra Viśleṣan.* Dipakrāj Pant, Cetamān Budhāpā and Yuvrāj Luimtel (Eds.). Kathmandu: Dipakraj Pant, 2047 V.S. 77 pp. Rs. 15.

Untitled video of police action at Indra Chowk on 7th Phalgun 2046.  
Recorder unknown.

The books, booklets and video-tape under review belong to a genre that might best be called witness literature: witness in the sense that they have been written or recorded by those who wit-

nessed the events in Spring, 1990 leading to the restoration of multi-party democracy in Nepal. No doubt, scholarly books and political memoirs will be written in years to come that will recount these events in greater detail, and with the passage of time the volumes under review will take on an ephemeral character, as they appear caught up in the very events they portray. Yet scholarly books and memoirs cannot substitute for these slim volumes and the fading copy of a copy of a video-tape, for witness literature works its effect upon the reader differently. Its purpose is to tell and show what has been heard and seen, to make witnesses of us all lest one forget. Here remembering serves not only to order the past, but also to immortalize the 'martyrs for democracy' and to protect what they have achieved by sacrifice.

The theme of witness pervades the political language of the popular movement, as recorded in the Nepalese texts under review; in particular, the *topoi* of seeing and hearing in which conventional political rhetoric is woven seamlessly into astute political practice. Those active in the popular movement continually accused the Panchas of having closed their eyes to the suffering of ordinary citizens. Justice in this sense requires vision, the vision of political leaders to establish a just order of society. Here the thirty years of *pañcāyat* democracy are referred to as a period of darkness, from out of whose shadow the people have only now just emerged



(hence the lantern procession in broad daylight by Congress activists in Biratnagar). Vision is also knowledge. To see is to know; and the opposite of knowledge is confusion, the confusion of the blindman. Gupta's rendering of house arrest, for example, is *najar band*. Just before the start of the movement the government 'shut the eyes' of the Congress leaders so that they would not know what was happening. Meanwhile the people also suffered temporary blindness as the Panchas threw dust in their eyes in order to confuse them about political realities. Vision also entails testimony, as in the organization of vigils by the medical staff at Bir Hospital. In these forms and consequences of vision figure also the ones that a European would recognize, such as the sending of human rights 'observers' to Nepal as the popular movement gained strength, provoking its repression by the state. The name of the American-based human rights organization 'Asia Watch' is in this sense appropriate.

Voice is the other theme, as in the complaint of K P Bhattarai, President of the Congress Party and Prime Minister of the Interim-Government, that under the *pañcāyat* system the people's mouths had been shut or in opposition spokesmen going on procession in Kathmandu and Biratnagar with gagged mouths. Voice here does not mean simply talking, as the following doggerel heard in private homes in Nepal during the 1980s makes clear: "Pasupatinath listens but does not speak; the King speaks but does not listen". Voice, like vision, expresses publicly the truth of experience. It reveals the inner to the outer. And, like the definition of sound in physics, it must be heard to exist. The literature under review also gives voice to these experiences, which we -- as

readers -- help bring into existence. Indeed, the ambiguous relation between spokesman and listener is demonstrated by the documents under review. The authors range from actors in the drama (Gupta, Sivakoti) to listeners who -- as the political events spread throughout all of society -- found themselves caught up in events and transformed by them into actors (Pant, Budthapa and Luimtel) to foreign observers of human rights violations, including a Frankfurt doctoral student (Bonk) who for several days in early April, 1990 lived in the "free state of Patan" and produced a photographic chronicle so that persons outside Nepal might also observe.

The people's movement (*jan āndolan*) dates from 1960 when King Mahendra forbid the activities of political parties, abolished parliament and took the steps that led to the establishment of *pañcāyat* democracy in 1962. From that moment on both the king and the underground parties spoke in the name of the people. Their vision of public life, however, was different.

Perhaps the memory of the success of armed struggle in the overthrow of the Ranas in the winter of 1949-1950 led party leaders to attempt to overthrow the state by acts of terrorism and violence, but by the mid-1970s the strategy had changed. Opposition leaders returned from exile to create and extend local organizations that did not officially exist. Increasing numbers of citizens led a double life: outwardly observing the laws and constraints of *pañcāyat* democracy, inwardly opposing the constitution or treating the Panchas with cynicism. As strategies periodically changed and political hopes were raised, the people's movement renewed its purpose and committed itself to further

campaigns to restore multi-party democracy. Late winter, 1990, therefore, was not so much the start of the movement, as its culmination.

The renewal of purpose began in 1989, as Congress leaders toured the country, sounding out local opinion on the sustainability of political action. Nepal's political weakness and economic vulnerability, demonstrated during the protracted trade dispute with India, coupled with increasing cynicism about the quality of leadership in *pañcāyat* democracy, encouraged the Nepali Congress Party to see the winter of 1989-1990 as a propitious moment for renewal. Meanwhile most of the leftist parties agreed to unite in a single Front and to combine forces with Congress in their common goal to shift the powers of state from the palace to parliament. Plans for the movement were announced at a meeting of the Congress Party (18.-20.1.1990), held at the private residence of Ganesa Man Sinha in Kathmandu, to which not only party workers but also the leader of a delegation of Indian MPs, Chandra Shekhar, attended. The conference was recorded on video, and copies dispatched throughout the country. The making of common purpose by all opposition parties encouraged them to think that in 1990 the movement would achieve its aim.

Prime Minister Marich Man Singh Shrestha immediately denounced the irresponsibility of Congress leaders promoting democracy 'for private motives' and the treachery of their soliciting support from the Indian government. For the Panchas the movement for the restoration of multi-party democracy was nothing other than an attack on Nepalese sovereignty, the monarchy and the nation (*rāṣṭravirodhī, rāṣṭraghātī*). The people were accordingly called

upon "to counter the evil activities aimed at disrupting the unparalleled relations between the Crown and the people of Nepal and attacking the party-less democratic *pañcāyat* system, which has fulfilled the needs of the nation and has already been endorsed by the people (Gorkhapatra 29.01.90). On the 15th Magh 2046 (28.1.1990) popular rallies were held throughout the Kingdom in support of the *pañcāyat* system. Gupta refers to this as political theatre and notes that the approximately 25,000 persons who demonstrated in support of the *pañcāyat* system on the 15th Magh were villagers from outside Kathmandu who had been offered by the Government a free trip to Kathmandu for the day.

The renewal of the movement for the restoration of multi-party democracy began with the theme of contested histories. The auspicious day chosen for the start of action was the 7th Phalgun (18.2.90), the day on which the Panchas celebrated King Tribhuvan's birth and his bestowal of democracy after the overthrow of the Ranas. On the 7th the Panchas gathered behind the state carriage, in which was propped a picture of Tribhuvan shaded by his royal parasol, and made their way in procession to the parade ground (Tundikhel) where they aimed to hold a general assembly praising the combined work of the monarchy and the *pañcāyat* system. For the underground parties the promise of Tribhuvan had been broken. He had been entrusted to usher in parliamentary democracy during the period of interim government in the 1950s, but his son Mahendra had violated that trust by banning political parties. The aim of the opposition parties was to celebrate this day as originally intended: the procession of political parties, with

unfurled banners converging on the parade ground, followed by an open discussion of political opinion at Khulā Mañc, the "open forum" originally built for that purpose. With the two processions converging at the same place, the two different orderings of the past came into conflict. Only the procession that succeeded in reaching its destination could claim to be the heirs of democracy.

The police set about suppressing the movement by removing its vision and voice: by placing the Congress leaders under house arrest and the United Left Front under detention, arresting countless political workers and confiscating certain opposition newspapers. Gupta lists the banned papers. Meanwhile the Government went ahead with its own public ritual. As in the past, all officials were called upon -- at the risk of their jobs -- to participate in the procession of Panchas. At the same time riot police, clad in protective jackets and armed with staffs and shields, tried to prevent the *mise en scène* of the opposition programme. Both government and opposition aimed to hold mass meetings at Tundikhel, and in the event neither did. The opposition groups, unfurled their forbidden political banners -- the four stars of the Nepali Congress and the hammer and sickle of the ULF -- marched in the direction of the Parade Ground, but were rounded up on the way and carted off to prison by the police. The ULF leader Man Mohan Adhikari managed to reach the parade ground from New Road, but his forum was encircled by the police and also carted off. Nonetheless popular resistance was such that the Panchas were also prevented from going in procession from the Stadium to the parade ground. The FOPHUR chronicle has a photograph of palanquin-bearers, carrying a picture

of Tribhuvan, being forced off the road by stone-throwing demonstrators.

The contest of histories on the first day in Kathmandu was a stand-off, yet the effect of the spectacle was to reveal the powerlessness of the state. This comes through especially in the *samij-dat* video of events at Indra Chowk, of which the Heidelberg copy, is but a faint, colour de-natured impression. In the sequences when the deteriorating tape no longer draws attention to itself by its scratchy flashes of light, a picture emerges of riot police and demonstrators playing cat-and-mouse at Indra Chowk with -- in the background -- the laughter of people watching the display of state futility from their rooftops. The policemen disappear down one alley way in pursuit of demonstrators only to return exhausted to the intersection and to charge haplessly off in another direction. The Bagmati Zonal Commissioner makes an appearance to supervise operations, but he is also rapidly transformed from a symbol of authority to one of futility. Violence ceased to be a means of state control.

For the second day of the movement a general strike (*band*) was planned. A general strike does not mean laying down tools so much as the cessation of public life. No one reports for work. Shops close. Public transport is not used, and the streets remain empty. The resolve of the opposition had been sharpened not only by the intractability of the King, as revealed in his message to the nation on Democracy Day, but also by news of the first deaths in clashes with police in Chitwan. The resolve of the government had also stiffened as they forced shopkeepers in Bhaktapur to open their shops. The altercations with police led to firings in which five townsmen lost their lives. On the fol-

lowing day in the village of Jadukuha (Dhanusa District) at least five more persons died, joining the victims in Bhaktapur and Chitwan in martyrdom. In Sivakoti's book the chronology of the movement is constantly broken by accounts of the lives of the martyrs (*śahīd*). Here he writes about one of them (p. 33).

#### Martyr Janki Devi Yadav

"In the history of Nepal the oldest person to become a martyr in the course of the people's movement was the 61 year old Janki Devi Yadav. Born in 1929 (1929 A.D.), the aged woman was killed by a bullet in broad daylight on the 9th Phalgun 2046 at Jadukuha near Janakpur. In the people's movement that began on the 7th Phalgun six women lost their priceless lives. Ten year old Rekha Khadka was the youngest, and amongst the hundreds of martyrs the oldest was Martyr Janki Devi Yadav.

Resident of Ward Nr. 9 in Jadukuha, Dhanusa District, Janki Devi was the wife of Sri Narayan Yadav. Her father was Suvai Yadav. Her mother's name is Ramsakhi Devi Yadav. Being an ordinary farmer by occupation, Janki Devi was compelled to spend her time providing for the daily needs of her family from the income of 15 *kaṭhā* of land. A bullet lodged in the left side of her stomach, and at that place she attained martyrdom. The police returned later to capture her corpse.

So one old woman in the people's movement for the restoration of democracy sacrificed her soul for the country's golden future. Her renunciation and sacrifice is a lasting lesson for all we Nepalese. We will always honour Janki Devi as an immortal martyr."

Janki Devi's death was investigated

by human rights organizations. Apparently police were searching for a local activist who was thought to be organizing a protest to be held later that day in Jadukuha. Their search was fruitless, but they did round up a few suspects in one household. Villagers arrived, arguing for the release of the suspects. The policemen were forced to leave empty-handed; but in departing, they turned and fired indiscriminately into the courtyard. Among the dead were three women, a fourteen year old boy and a 35 year old man.

Sivakoti's brief, and all too conventional hagiography, is short on details, but stresses a major theme in the rhetoric of the movement: that the victims of police firings were martyrs who had sacrificed their souls for democracy. In fact, many of those who died seem not to have been 'political activists' at all. They were people, who like everyone in Nepal, were caught up in events but who unfortunately found themselves at the wrong place at the wrong time. (One martyr mentioned by Sivakoti is 'Ricard Henari Jon Wiliyam', an Englishman caught up in police firing on Darbar Marg). The theme of sacrifice was critical, however, for the rhetorical construction of events. The Nepalese authored texts under review stress the idea that their countrymen offered their blood in sacrifice to the motherland for which democracy was received in return. By extension, even those citizens who donated blood so that doctors might save the lives of their fellow countrymen found their blood donation (*rakta dān*) transformed into sacrifice (*bali dān*). Sacrifice, of course, is a willed act. By making the victims of state oppression into martyrs, the movement appropriated not their deaths but the gesture of their dying



which symbolized the truth of the life that they had led. Dying, however, has nothing to do with death. Death, for Janki Devi, was senseless, and it probably remains so for her relatives as well. Her dying, however, extended its power over the living.

One of the most damning moral criticisms of a Hindu monarch is that he must kill his people, rather than protect them, in order to perpetuate his rule. The state did not want the inscription of injustice on the hundreds of bodies to be brought into public light. It became necessary, therefore, for the government to appropriate the bodies. Over and again Sivakoti and Gupta refer to the macabre police practice of capturing corpses. Relatives were thereby prevented from mourning the dead and healing family bonds. Meanwhile public expressions of mourning (*śok sabhā*), organized by spokesmen for the movement, were broken up by the police. Not all corpses, however, could be captured and hidden. The book produced by FOPHUR shows them. The photographs strip away the religious rhetoric, the social status, the person. They even strip away the truth in the sense that they remove the ideals to which the martyrs had been truthful, leaving them only as men and women, and perhaps something the lesser thereby. The reader must overcome something in himself to look at the violated bodies in the Nepalese edition (*Dawn of Democracy*). For fainter souls, there is the international edition (*Nepal: Struggle for Democracy*) in which the more revolting photographs have been withdrawn.

Despite -- and because of -- the early deaths, the movement for the restoration of multi-party democracy persisted with further demonstrations. The volumes under review vary on details,

but concur in their mention of the sending of prayers for the dead on Siva Ratri (23.2.90), the organization of public mourning for the martyrs, the observance of a Black Day (*kālo divas*) on the 14th Phalgun (25.2.90), the burning of straw effigies of *pañcāyat* leaders (9.3.90) -- interspersed by general strikes (2.3.90, 14.3.90) in which, as Gupta notes, the Government sent their henchmen to the bazaars, forcing merchants to keep their shops open, and ordering taxi and tempo drivers to keep on the road, after having given them 20 liters of free petrol. Meanwhile the professions were increasingly drawn into political action. Lawyers of the Nepal Bar Association struck on the 9th Phalgun (20.2.90) because of the arrest of around fifty of their members. Medical doctors protested on the 12th Phalgun (23.2.90) with a strike of two hours against police brutality and torture; similar warning strikes were repeated. University teachers refused to work on the 15th, and one day later office-workers organized "pen-down" strikes (*kalam band*). Political assemblies and discussions were organized at the University, the protocol of one of which (on 16.3.90) is printed in the volume edited by Pant, Budthapa and Luimtel. Four days later, on the 7th Chaitra, a great assembly of around 700 intellectuals -- comprising university lecturers, lawyers, engineers, doctors, and others -- was convened at the University Campus at Kirtipur, whereupon they were soon encircled by the police. In reply to the order to stop the meeting, participants observed a minute of silence - before being carted off to jail in lorries.

Despite countless acts of solidarity, it remained until mid-March unclear whether the basis of the movement was broad enough to be successful or

whether it would be simply supported by students and the educated elite. In his speeches to the nation the king expressed clearly his intention to retain the *pañcāyat* system. Meanwhile the jails had long since filled to overflowing (with FOPHUR estimates of 5,000 in prison and 20,000 who had been in and out of temporary custody) so that government warehouses had to be brought into service as temporary prisons. Many intellectuals and nearly all political leaders had been arrested, and the campuses in Patan and Kathmandu were shut down.

The course of the movement began to change on the 16th Chaitra (29.3.90) as the opposition called for a blackout at 7 pm that evening in sign of solidarity. Small torch processions (*masāl julus*) took place along the narrow streets of the Newar bazaars -- despite the government ban on assembly. When the police arrived, the processions broke up and disappeared in different directions down the side alleys. On the 17th youths in Patan attacked the Pancayat office and the district court. In an attempt to protect public property the police fired into the crowd, killing at least two demonstrators. The following day the police made arbitrary house searches and shot again at demonstrators, some during the, by now, regular evening black-out. In response, the people of Patan put up barricades at the city gates to prevent police entry. Accordingly Patan was declared an autonomous state, outside the authority of the king. Right of assembly was proclaimed and politicians addressed the public to motivate them for further action. The FOPHUR chronicle shows a photograph of a barricade in flames at the Patan Gate. The image could have come straight out of a Newar *thangka*. On the 20th Chaitra

(2.4.90) 50,000 men, women and children of all ages massed at short notice in Patan and began to proceed to Kathmandu, with the idea of encouraging the people of Kathmandu to set up their own free state. They were stopped by police on the bridge over the Bagmati. Tension was great, and matters could have turned either way, but eventually the demonstrators returned to Patan. On the same day, though, in Kirtipur several demonstrators were shot, which led townsmen to put up barricades, preventing police movement. That evening the black-out in the valley was complete, showing the anger of the people. All that was lit up was that which the people had themselves set alight: tyres, police posts and traffic posts.

What, if anything, extended the movement's popular base at this time was the response it provoked in the police. Each side in the conflict had its own version of reality which it sought to reveal as truth. The Panchas maintained that the opposition leaders were treacherous and anti-national, deceiving the Nepalese people into rebelling against a political system with which they were content. The opposition leaders saw the kingdom as being dark with injustice perpetrated by unruly Panchas who were fattening themselves on the ill-gotten gains of their public position. The violent police response to the movement, demonstrated the truth of opposition claims. In firing on the people, the government took on the role scripted for them by the opposition thereby making the opposition version of reality appear true. Street action became political theatre. Demonstrators were beaten down in lathi charges and sprayed with tear gas. Sometimes it was enough just to show the party flag to be shot at. Meanwhile the shooting of children and

women (this in a kingdom in which women were never subject to capital punishment) confirmed the worst allegations about the political morality of the Panchas. The Panchas and police found themselves unwittingly acting in an opposition drama in which the final act became more and more inevitable.

The next general strike had been planned for Friday, the 24th Chaitra (6.4.90), and it was clear from reports coming in from around the valley that even villagers would be drawn to the centre of the kingdom to offer their protest. The days in wait were quiet: with prayers for the dead in Pasupatinath and work stoppages by state employees at the electricity works, the Royal Nepal Airlines and the telephone office. Despite the quietness, there was an impression of gathering momentum, and that the general strike on the 24th would be massive and dangerous. The king tried to defuse the crisis by announcing early on the morning of the 24th that Prime Minister Marich Man Singh had been relieved of his duties and that Lokendra Bahadur Chand had been asked to form the new government. Additionally a Constitution Reform Suggestion Commission would be set up to which the people might express their wishes. The opposition drew, however, the conclusion that the king had little interest in reform, for he had not appointed a Prime Minister who would make the work of the Commission effective. In short, nothing had changed. The determination to strike became even greater.

On this Friday, not only were all shops and offices in the valley shut down, so also were almost all traffic and commerce. The streets were controlled by demonstrators, and everywhere one saw the forbidden party flags. On the

afternoon at Tundhikhel an open forum took place with around 100,000 participants in which party leaders spoke freely in public. The police held back. At the same time, not more than five hundred yards away in the palace, Lokendra Bahadur Chand arrived to be sworn in as Prime Minister. After the forum was concluded, a call was made to go to the gates of the palace. Between the Parade Ground and the royal palace lay a five hundred yard long stretch of Darbar Marg, defended by well-armed policemen. The crowds pushed ahead and breached the first police line of defense only to be repulsed with lathi sticks and tear gas at the second line. The demonstrators in the rear, however, continued to press forward, pushing those in the front line back in the direction of the palace. When they reached the statue of King Mahendra, about 300 meters from palace, the police began firing from various positions in nearby buildings, the result of which was a massacre, in which the number of dead and wounded still remains unknown.

In the evening a complete curfew was called; the military patrolled the city; and the rumour mill started up again. The first signs of a change in fortune for Nepalese politics came on Sunday, the 26th Chaitra (8.4.90) after the king had invited Krishna Prasad Bhattarai and Girija Prasad Koirala (NC) and Sahan Pradhana and Radha Krishna Mainali (ULF) to the palace for discussions. At 11 pm a brief message from the palace, transmitted over Radio Nepal, announced that the thirty-year long ban on political parties had been lifted. The following day the curfew was lifted and jubilant crowds celebrated the restoration of multi-party democracy with victory processions, songs and dancing. Political meetings were

openly held, speeches were made, and moments of silence observed for the martyrs. Having achieved their aim, the opposition leaders called off the movement.

Gupta's booklet is a chronology of the movement, and he concludes his story at this point with the opposition leaders calling off the movement. Sivakoti's book, however, is an account of the lives of the martyrs. His story continues.

Despite the removal of the ban on political parties, it remained unclear what King Birendra was prepared to give up in the way of royal powers. He waited until his traditional New's Year's message to the nation on the 1st Baisakh 2047 (14.4.90) to speak his mind: "The events of the past few weeks are before us all. The loss of life and the destruction of property have saddened us. We pray for the eternal peace of those who have lost their lives in tragic circumstances. Politics in Nepal has now taken a new turn. We have upheld the tradition of respecting the popular will and fulfilling the aspirations of the people. The Constitution Reform Commission in the process of being set in the near future will consult elements of society pressing different political views in the course of preparing its report. We are also confident that all Nepalis will work together to safeguard the sovereignty and integrity of Nepal, which has ever remained independent since time immemorial (*Rising Nepal* 14th April 1990).

The continuation of the nine-day old Chand government proved unacceptable to both party leaders and to the people on the streets, and on 3rd Baisakh (16.4.90) the king announced Chand's resignation and the dissolution of the National Pancayat and of all *pañcāyat* institutions. Three days later an interim

government led by Krishna Prasad Bhattarai as Prime Minister was sworn in at the palace. In the new cabinet there were equal members of Congress and the ULF, plus two independents and two appointees from the King. The Government was encharged to work out a new Constitution and to hold free elections within a year.

The new Cabinet had hardly been sworn in by the King when panic spread throughout the valley. There were muggings, break-ins, arson attacks and telephone threats. Suspicion pointed to the so-called *maṇḍale*, also referred to in the Nepalese texts as the *maṇḍale kamāṇḍoharu*. The expression derives from the National Independent Student Association (*rāṣṭravādī svatantra vidyārthī mandal*), the official student organization set up by Mahendra in 1968, but which had become so notorious for hooliganism that it had already been disbanded by the time of the national referendum in 1980. The *maṇḍale*, who were active at the close of the *pañcāyat* system, had been recruited partly from sportsmen in the National Sports Council (*Gorkhapatra* 9.1.47) and had already been engaged by the Panchas to infiltrate the popular movement and to discredit it by violence. With the official legitimation of opposition parties, the Panchas -- whose fortunes had so dramatically changed -- called on their *mandale* commandos to spread chaos and terror throughout the valley so as to prove the new regime incapable of governing. Relations between the public and the police became especially tense and hostile on the 4th Baisakh 2047 (17.4.90) after a slum in Patan had been put to the torch, destroying some sixty houses. The previous weeks the police had been active arresting public-spirited democrats;



now they seemed to have disappeared from the streets in order to allow the commandos free rein.

In the absence of police support, vigilante groups armed themselves with sticks and began to protect their neighbourhoods from the *maṇḍale* creating thereby a politically and morally awkward problem for the interim government. The tensest day came on the 10th Baisakh, 2047 (23.4.90). In the early morning a group of vigilantes at Kalankishan on the Ring Road stopped a suspect lorry carrying five men, armed with weapons and explosives. They arrested the men and set their cars on fire. News of the capture of the suspected *maṇḍale* spread rapidly throughout the city. Meanwhile in Teku (in Kathmandu) local people began to suspect a group of policemen of being *maṇḍale* in disguise. The policemen were stopped, interrogated, mistreated and brutally lynched. During the day dead, or half-dead, suspected *maṇḍale* were paraded through the city on pushcarts. Others lay the entire day, dead on the streets. Still others were delivered by vigilantes to their local police station. The government had to quickly restore public order; yet it was not clear on whose side the police were. Prime Minister Bhattarai threatened to resign without clear support from the King, who in the absence of a new constitution still remained the highest government authority in the land. In the evening a curfew was declared, and the army patrolled the city. The rumour mill started up again: the army and police had conflicting loyalties, Indian troops were massed on the frontier, the water supply of Kathmandu had been poisoned, a military coup was imminent, the King and Queen were locked in bitter disagreement over Nepal's political

future. The following day several hundred policemen shouted "Blood for blood" and "We will bring back the *pañcāyat* system", as they carried the bodies of their murdered colleagues to Pasupatinath. The fear of counter-revolution was great.

The next day, the 12th Baisakh 2047 (25.4.90), brought a decisive message of support for multi-party democracy from the palace:

"His Majesty the King has been pained by the loss of life and violence perpetrated in parts of Kathmandu on Monday, 23rd April 1990. His Majesty joins all the countrymen in wishing eternal peace to the departed souls. In the political environment obtaining in the country, it should be everybody's concern to see multi-party democracy succeed. . . . The government headed by Prime Minister Krishna Prasad Bhattarai should be fully supported in preparing for early general elections. . ." (*Rising Nepal* 25th April 90).

With the unambiguous support of King Birendra, together with that of the army and the readiness of the people to come out onto the streets, the political situation in Nepal began gradually to stabilize. There was still sporadic police firing, the last of which took place on the 17th Baisakh in front of the CDO's residence in Pokhara, where a crowd had gathered protesting against the CDO harbouring suspected *maṇḍale* arsonists. Sivakoti brings his book to an end with the death of the last martyr and the names and addresses of 1307 persons wounded in the movement. The FOPHUR book also ends with the unsuccessful counter-revolution. Gradually the struggle for democracy shifted from the streets to the palace where political leaders and the King negotiated the new constitution.

In the rituals of Nepalese political culture the martyrs of 1990 joined those at Martyrs Gate, who two generations earlier had given up their lives in the overthrow of the Ranas. Despite their deaths, the martyrs continued to play a decisive role in the negotiations concerning the new Constitution. The various proposals were never put to a popular test, neither by referendum nor by constituent assembly. It was understood, however, that the wishes of the martyrs had to be respected in the new Constitution, and it was clear in the rhetorical construction of the people's movement that sovereignty had already transferred from the king to the

people. The king was no longer the mediator between deity and people who by sacrifice preserved the well-being of his subjects. From the Nepalese texts under review, it is clear that the martyrs had sacrificed their lives to the motherland for democracy which they, not the king, gave to the people. Powers of legitimate agency had shifted within the kingdom. Sovereignty did not lie with the royal dynasty (the *pañcāyat* model) and could not lie with Parliament (the British model). Rather it lay with the people, who now have the burden of defending the martyrs' sacrifice in the future.

## ARCHIVES

### The Cambridge Experimental Videodisc Project

Alan MacFarlane

Largely inspired by the films and photographs of Prof. Christoph von Furer-Haimendorf, we at Cambridge decided in April 1985 to make an experimental videodisc about the Naga peoples of the Assam Burma Border.

The Nagas seemed a good choice for such an experiment. The precipitous terrain and forest, as well as the warlike head-hunting reputation of the peoples, deterred outsiders from entering the area until very late. The period of contact, starting effectively in the 1840s, was unusually gradual, lasting over a century until Indian Independence in 1947. The relative lateness of the contact meant that the second fifty years of documentation were within the era of easily portable cameras and the last fifty years within that of moving film. But how well was

this process documented, and what remained?

Good fortune brought to the Naga Hills a series of very gifted observers. These men and women became so involved with the Nagas that they assembled large collections of material in very difficult circumstances. The chief collections we were given access to were those of R.G. Woodthorpe, J. H. Hutton, J.P. Mills, C. von Furer-Haimendorf, Ursula Graham Bower and W.G. Archer. Between them, they collected over 5,000 artefacts, took over 7,000 black and white photographs, made a number of sound recordings and made over six hours of moving film. They also kept extensive diaries and collected pages of field-notes as well as published eight books and many articles on the Nagas. There was clearly no

shortage of material. But how was this to be formed into a usable and distributable archive?

#### Making a videodisc

A videodisc or optical disc is a silver object which looks like a gramophone record. Information is engraved on its surface which is then coated with plastic. The information is read off each separate track by a laser beam, using a standard videodisc player. This produces a virtually indestructible storage format which is not damaged by dust, normal changes of temperature, electric currents, damp, insects, etc.

A videodisc can hold a very large quantity of information. A standard disc can play moving film for 36 minutes per side in interactive mood or hold 54,000 separate pictures per side, or a combination of these. It can store at least 300 megabytes of information per side (the entire *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, with pictures takes about 200 megabytes of store).

A videodisc can hold copies of almost all kinds of recordable information: photographs, slides, moving films, X-rays, sound recordings, graphics. The discs are double-sided and once a master has been created copies can be made relatively cheaply.

This sounded an ideal medium for our pictorial materials. But how does one make a master? Here there was almost no guidance. These were early days and no videodisc of the kind we were attempting had been made in Europe. With the cooperation of the Audio Visual Aids Unit at Cambridge and the Open University Production Unit at Milton Keynes, we therefore invented the methods as we went along. How this was done can be summarized as follows.

We photographed about 1,200 Naga artefacts as colour slides and transferred these by tele-cine to the one inch master tape from which a videodisc is made. We re-photographed some 7,000 black-and-white negatives with a half-frame camera and 'Illumitrans' and transferred the strips of films onto one inch tape. We constructed and photographed some 200 maps. We extracted 150 moving sequences of film and 1,000 still frames from moving films. We re-recorded a number of sound recordings from early wax cylinders to recent missionary songs. After three years' work we had a master disc and 100 copies.

#### Dealing with texts

For a variety of reasons, including the need to update and change textual data and the far greater cost of a machine that could (as with the BBC Domesday disc) read digital data, we decided to keep the textual materials separately. We decided therefore to keep these materials on a computer.

The main categories of material were as follows. There were the equivalent of about 500 pages of manuscript fieldnotes. There were manuscript field diaries, from the earliest in 1872, through the field diaries of Christoph von Furer-Haimendorf, up to the diary of Mildred Archer in 1947; approximately 1,000 printed pages or equivalent in all. Over 100 official tour diaries by J.H. Hutton, manuscript letters, and other typed and manuscript materials were also available. All these were typed into the computer.

The other main way of getting materials in was through optical character recognition, where the published book can be directly scanned into the computer. We did this with the eight

monographs, which saves a great deal of labour, though it still leaves a good deal of cleaning up of the material to be done by hand.

This data input proceeded alongside the making of the disc. It will result finally in the production of a 40 megabyte database of materials which provide the context or the visual and sound materials. It is obvious that pictures and text reinforce and enrich each other.

#### Principles of selection

Elsewhere we have described at greater length the principles we used in selecting visual and textual materials. Very briefly, they were as follows. We reduced the six hours of moving film to 30 minutes by trying to include the material that was most intellectually and academically interesting, and, all else being equal, rejecting those sequences that were out of focus, badly composed, unsteady, from too great a distance, damaged, the colour fading, and so on.

There are likely to be over 15,000 Naga objects in European museums and private collections, of which we photographed a little over 1,200. We decided to confine ourselves to British collections. We then sought a representative selection, in terms of the types and functions of objects and their origins in different groups. We tried to use Naga criteria of significance rather than our own. We chose well documented pieces and those that fitted in with other materials on the disc.

Only a few hundred of the roughly 7,000 black-and-white photographs we discovered have been omitted. These were left out on the following grounds: they were duplicates of, or very similar to, other images; their quality was poor;

they were outside the delimited geographical area; they were outside our time span; or they fell on the side of 'private experience' as opposed to 'public experience'. We did not censor photographs because their content was embarrassing or shocking in any way, or might do damage to the reputation of individuals, the British, anthropology as a discipline, or for any other reason. As far as textual materials are concerned, we limited ourselves mainly to materials written before 1947 and in English. If the material was likely to cause personal offence or political embarrassment to living persons, or was repetitive or trivial and of only personal interest, we omitted it. In all, this meant omitting at the most half a dozen paragraphs as compared to the twenty thousand we included.

#### Retrieval Systems

From very early on, we were aware that the possibilities of the new media, a combination of computer and optical disc storage, would mean that we would have very large sets of data which it would be difficult to manage. The materials on the videodisc comprised about 10,000 'items' (maps, photographs, artefacts, films, etc.). The 40 megabytes equivalent of text represented about 20,000 paragraphs of writing. Supposing one wanted to search this, finding all the information in visual and textual materials relating to a specific person, place, date or subject, how could this be done? To search through 1,000 photographs or 1,000 pages of manuscript can be a long business. Recording materials of this diversity and scale, the disc would be unusable without an appropriate information retrieval system.

None of the database management



systems which had been developed for commercial or academic applications seemed appropriate for this project, so we developed our own. We worked in partnership with Dr Martin Porter to adapt his MUSCAT (Museum Cataloguing System) for these purposes. This system had been developed for use on mainframe and 'midi' computers and seemed ideal for our use. Among its advantages were as follows.

It combines 'free text' with structured (boolean) searching technique. The majority of current databases are based on 'boolean' retrieval (and/or/not). Though suitable for some purposes, boolean retrieval suffers from major limitations: the number of answers is usually too large or too small; users are often required or expected to compose boolean expressions; the retrieved set of answers is not ranked in any way and so it is necessary to inspect the entire list in the search for relevance. The MUSCAT system incorporates boolean retrieval, but overcomes its weakness by adding 'probabilistic' retrieval, where answers are ranked in order of their probable usefulness. Terms are weighted according to formulae derived from probability theory.

In effect, this means that it is very easy to put in a natural language query such as 'show me all the photographs of women wearing black-strap looms' or whatever. The 'best' answer will be given, then the next best, and so on, in decreasing order of probability of matching the query.

The added features of 'relevance feedback' and 'query expansion' turns this into a semi-intelligent system with considerable heuristic power. If an 'answer' is 'relevant' (the kind of thing one was looking for) then it is 'marked'.

All the marked records can then be examined by the machine. The computer provides a list of terms in order of their probable statistically significant correlation with the marked answer. Any of these terms can then be added to the query so that it becomes 'expanded', that is to say, more powerful. This is a creative alternative to a synonym list. It is also a way of using computer and human intelligence together - combining the mathematical power of the machine with the intuitive knowledge of the human.

For our data, the MUSCAT system had a number of other advantages. It is very flexible, both in terms of size and structure. The system will deal with data sets of any size. It is possible to hold as many datasets as are needed. The number of records per data sets is unlimited. The number of fields per record and of characters per field is unlimited, within a single restriction that no single record must exceed 64,000 characters (about 20 printed pages).

There is no need for pre-coding and the data structure in a record can mirror the material one is dealing with. Hence we were able to adapt it easily to deal with the varied structures of records describing artefacts, photographs, maps, sketches, films, sound, manuscripts and printed texts.

Our aim was as follows. We wanted to adapt the very general 'MUSCAT' system so that it would be useful for historians, anthropologists, museums, etc. To do this it was necessary to bring it down from a mainframe to a micro. This has been done and it works on all IBM XT/AT compatibles, running in less than 300k of free RAM. It needed a friendly icon-driven screen system, which it now has. It needed special programs to deal

with the kinds of data which anthropologists produce. And it needed simple documentation on how to use and set up a system. All this has been done and the system, re-named the 'Cambridge Database System' is now completed in a prototype version.

It has exceeded our expectations. To take just the question of speed. Using a normal IBM-PC compatible microcomputer, a search of the 20,000 records which we currently have will take from one to five seconds. A structured (boolean) query for a place name, for instance, retrieved the first 1,000 answers out of 1,775 in two seconds. A 'free text' search on three terms, occurring respectively 148, 263 and 48 times in the database, assembled the several hundred answers, in decreasing order of probability of interest to the user, in just over a second.

It is possible, using the Naga materials as a test bed, to find the information about any person, any place, any date (day/month/year), any archive, any medium (e.g. photograph) or any ethnic group, or a combination of these (combined with any subject) more or less instantaneously. For instance, if one asks to see all the photographs taken by a certain photographer in a certain month in a certain village, which concerns carved village gates, the photographs will be presented almost immediately.

Of course, the retrieval depends very heavily on the care and accuracy of the descriptions of the visual and textual items. These are based on the ethnographic and other texts and our accumulating knowledge of the materials. If the ethnographer appears to have made a mistake, this is indicated. Since it is possible to modify the descriptions within the database, this

can be an 'open' system which reflects the growing knowledge of the compilers.

#### Work still to be done

The main task remaining is how to make the methods and materials available to a more general public.

The videodisc was used in a special exhibition on the Nagas in the Andrews Gallery of the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology when the whole anthropology galleries re-opened in Spring 1990. A re-constructed Naga long-house (morung) held a videodisc and computer, so that visitors could look at films and photographs and listen to sounds as a background to the exhibition. The videodisc is also being used in teaching at all levels. For instance, it is being used to give undergraduates a simulation of how to ask questions of anthropological data in a 'practical' exercise in their first year. In the second year, it is linked to courses in 'Visual Anthropology'. At postgraduate level, it is being used to show how information retrieval works on anthropological materials.

The videoclip itself, as well as the texts and computer discs, are to be marketed. Any profits from this or other parts of the project will go back into a university fund for future research on anthropology. Likewise the Cambridge Database System software will be marketed both for use with optical discs (videodiscs and compact disc) and also as an advanced database system on micros.



## The Nepal German Manuscript Preservation Project

Franz-Karl Ehrhard

The Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project (NGMPP) is a joint venture between the Department of Archaeology, HMG Ministry of Education and Culture and the German Oriental Society. Its principal objective is to preserve the literary, historical, religious and cultural heritage of Nepal through the microfilming of manuscripts, block prints and historical documents. Any manuscript that has a bearing on this objective can be included for microfilming if its owner so desires. No language or subject area is excluded.

To date, since the project was launched in 1970, a total of more than 120,000 manuscripts with around 4,500,000 folios has been microfilmed. Two types of microfilms are prepared from a given manuscript: one negative copy and two positive copies. The negative copy and one of the positive copies remain in the National Archives in Kathmandu, and the other positive copy is sent to Berlin to be kept in the collections of the Deutsche Staatsbibliothek, the German State Library. Copies of individual texts can be ordered from the National Archives in Kathmandu only, and the National Archives has the copyright on any reproduction of the material.

The organization and ongoing business of the NGMPP is handled jointly by the National Archives, Kathmandu, and the German Oriental Society, though the responsibility of financing the project devolves upon the latter. The photographic section located in the National Archives undertakes microfilming and does the developing of all the films.

Given the large number of manu-

scripts microfilmed to date, one should keep in mind that it is not yet possible to undertake a systematic and thorough qualitative evaluation of the collection, aside from a few isolated instances. The vast majority of microfilmed manuscripts are Sanskrit texts, frequently of Indian provenience. We estimate that some 80 to 85% of the manuscripts which have been microfilmed thus far contain texts which have been microfilmed in the project before. Indeed, such duplicate texts are occasionally represented in our collection in as many as 100 separate microfilms. There is, however, a quite good scholarly reason for this practice of microfilming practically every manuscript fragment which we can locate or which is submitted to the project for filming, even if we already have many copies of the given text: because of such a procedure, it will be possible for the first time in the history of research of Hindu and Buddhist culture in South Asia to put together a statistical overview of the distribution and frequency of certain texts in a given geographically limited cultural area, such as the Kathmandu Valley or the northern parts of Nepal that are under the influence of Tibetan culture.

This wealth of manuscripts is not only distinguished by its exceptional diversity - nearly all subfields of Hindu and Buddhist Sanskrit and Tibetan literature are represented - but frequently also by the rarity and great antiquity of individual pieces. In many cases, the microfilmed manuscripts represent the oldest available source for a given text, and this holds true not just for the Buddhist Sanskrit texts which have

been preserved in their entirety only in Nepal, but also for many Vedic, Brahmanic and Hindu works which are only extant in later copies in India or Europe. Rare samples of Tibetan-language material (religious literature and documents) are also to be found in Nepal, many of which are lost now in Tibet proper.

Thanks to a revision covering the extension of the agreement between HMG and the German Oriental Society to its third five year phase, it became possible to microfilm throughout the entire kingdom except for the restricted areas. Exploratory research and microfilming expeditions were undertaken into the mountains and the Terai - to centres of Nepalese history such as Gorkha, Janakpur and Kaski. Lamaist monasteries in the far north of the kingdom became a major focus of attention after 1983. In this new context, the quality of a given manuscript was given priority in the criteria for microfilming. With the aid of a short-title list we were able to determine whether it was in fact worthwhile microfilming a particular manuscript which we found in the field. The careful and thorough preparation of such expeditions in cooperation with the National Archives came to constitute a major new and rewarding activity during the fourth and now fifth phase of the project.

### History of the NGMPP

The establishment of the NGMPP took place in 1970 through an agreement between the Department of Archaeology, HMG Ministry of Education and Culture, represented by Mr. R.J. Thapa, and the German Oriental Society, represented by Dr. Dr. h.c. W. Vogt, director-general of the NGMPP and the Nepal Research Centre (NRC).

This agreement, which was initially planned for five years, stipulated that the entire holdings of the National Archives, situated on Ramshah Path in Kathmandu, would be committed to microfilm. The National Archives, of course, houses the large collection of the Durbar or Bir Library. It also looks after a number of smaller but nevertheless valuable libraries, such as that of the late Rajguru Hemraj Pandit as well as the partial collection of the former Prime Minister Chandra Shumshere Jung Bahadur Rana.

The first German representative of the NGMPP in Nepal was Prof. B. Kolver, later coordinator of the Nepal Research Programme, who led the NGMPP for a period of two years from 1970 to 1972. He, in turn, was succeeded by Prof. A. Wezler and Mr. F. Erb in 1972. The next representative was Prof. M. Witzel, who directed the activities of the project as well as the NRC for a period of some five years - up to 1977.

During the first five years virtually all of the manuscripts stored in and looked after by the National Archives were microfilmed. On the basis of these microfilms a tentative catalogue was prepared to facilitate the preparation of a more comprehensive catalogue that is now being compiled at Hamburg University with the aid of a PC (provisional title: Preliminary List of Titles of Manuscripts Microfilmed by the NGMPP).

In 1975 a new five-year agreement was signed which allowed for a broadening of the scope of the activities of the NGMPP. Aside from filming or retaking manuscripts, palm-leaf rolls and inscription rubbings from the National Archives, the NGMPP obtained permission to film all the extensive private and other public libraries of the

entire Bagmati zone as well. When Prof. Witzel stepped down in 1977, the NGMPP witnessed a rapid succession of representatives who, besides directing the project itself, also continued to look after the NRC. Thus Prof. O. von Hinuber was representative from 1977 to 1978, Prof. Wezler again in 1978, Prof. M. Hahn from 1978 to 1979, Dr. H. Brinkhaus from 1979 to 1981, Dr. A. Michaels from 1981 to 1983, Dr. H. Brinkhaus again from 1983 to 1985, Dr. C. Cuppers from 1985 to 1986, Dr. R. Grunendahl from 1986 to 1987, Dr. C. Cuppers again from 1987 to 1988, and Dr. F.K. Ehrhard from then to the present. Within the second phase of the NGMPP, microfilming began to be done outside the buildings of the National Archives to which the preservation activities of the NGMPP had been previously confined. Another microfilming unit was set up at the Ganabahal office of the NRC, and a series of mobile units were established in Banepa, Bhaktapur and Patan so as to ensure maximum accessibility to the project for private owners of manuscripts.

For the third phase of project activities, Prof. A. Wezler (Hamburg University) was appointed by the German Oriental Society as director-general of the NGMPP and NRC. This coincided with the establishment of the new NRC building in New Baneshwar in 1980. The microfilm unit shifted as well to the new house and continued to attract private manuscript owners. During the third phase expeditions of the Tibetan section of the NGMPP were started to the northern parts of Nepal.

These activities continued during the fourth phase (1986-1990), during which a total of 10 expeditions were successfully conducted. From 1986 onwards a microfilm unit was also

established at the Gūṭhisamsthān in Bhadrakālī, allowing the NGPP to microfilm the valuable Gūṭhi records.

Entering the fifth phase (1990 onwards) has meant continuing the work in the National Archives (filming of new incoming Sanskrit and Tibetan material), filming private collections and the Gūṭhi records, as well as exploring new areas in northern Nepal and conducting microfilm expeditions in those regions.

#### The Microfilmed Manuscripts

The largest proportion of Sanskrit texts comes from areas of *karmakāṇḍa*, *stotra* and *tantra*, though it is somewhat difficult at times to classify the texts as belonging to one field or another. In the remaining half of the manuscripts *vyākhyāna* and *śāstra* constitute a considerable portion. Other fields such as philosophical *darśana* texts, Veda, traditional sciences, *kavya* and *itihāsa* are relatively rare but nevertheless of great scholarly importance.

The proportion of palm-leaf manuscripts amounts to an estimated 1 to 2% of the total. In the reported national holdings, however, the proportion of palm-leaf manuscripts is substantially larger (some 7%).

Along with the manuscript collections there are also rubbings of inscriptions, palm-leaf scrolls containing contracts, and other documents which were and are being microfilmed.

In addition to manuscripts in Sanskrit, there are also preserved a considerable number in Nepali, Newari, Maithili and several of the other languages of Nepal.

Manuscripts in the Tibetan language constitute the second major focus of the microfilmed holdings of the

NGMPP. Buddhist literature in the Tibetan language is quite prevalent in the Himalayan regions of northern Nepal, and it is therefore hardly surprising that the National Archives has a fairly sizeable collection of Tibetica of its own. When these were filmed, however, no Tibetologist was on the staff of the NGMPP, and it was only much later that these were completely catalogued by Mr. F.K. Ehrhard, whose results were published in the 4th volume of the *Journal of the Nepal Research Center* (1980).

Given the steady influx of Tibetica from 1976 onward, in 1978 a Tibetologist came to figure as a permanent staff member of the NGMPP. At that time, Mr. U. Hartmann joined the NGMPP; he was succeeded by Dr. L.W.J. van der Kuijp in 1980, and from July of 1983 to July 1988 the Tibetan section was led by Dr. C. Cuppers. Dr. F.K. Ehrhard took over this task in August 1988.

During the period when activities were confined to the Bagmati Zone, most of the Tibetica filmed came from several monasteries of Svayambhūnāth and Bodnāth. In addition, however, not an inconsiderable number of manuscripts and block prints were still and are being brought by private individuals to the NGMPP. Once access was gained to collections of Tibetica lying beyond the Bagmati Zone, expeditions were undertaken to such northern areas as Langthang, Helambu, Jomosom, Jumla and Junbesi, and from 1991 onwards also to remote areas such as Serang (Gorkha District) and Muchu (Humla District). With the opening of Dolpo future expeditions in this area are planned as well.

Mention must also be made of the Tibetan collection of the National Museum (Chauni), which the project was able to have transferred in 1990 to

the National Archives for microfilming. Of special interest in this collection of around 500 individual block prints and manuscripts are, among other things, the hitherto oldest block print of the *Theg mchog mdzod* of Klong-chen rab-'byams-pa (1308-1364), a rare manuscript copy of ritual texts ascribed to the Fifth Dalai Lama (1617-82) and an unknown biography of Padmasambhava rediscovered in Yang-le shod (present-day Parphing) by the "treasure finder" sTag-sham Nus-Idan rdo-rje (17th century). For a report on these activities see Dr. F.K. Ehrhard, "New Accessions and Recent Findings in the Tibetan Collection of the National Archives", *Abhilekh*, no.9 (1990).

The legal codes kept in the National Archives were thoroughly examined and compared by Dr. Jean Fezas (France) during a study trip in 1990. The results of his research work were presented to the Nepalese public in a preliminary article: "The Nepalese Juridical System and Its Sources: A List of the *ain* Books Kept in the National Archives", *Abhilekh*, no. 8 (1990). Only a portion of these manuscripts, which comprise some 29 volumes, have been microfilmed by the project up to now.

On the manuscripts presented recently by private owners for microfilming in the Nepal Research Centre, two items may be mentioned: the collected material of the Regmi Research Series and a manuscript collection from Gūhyeśvarī (that of Padmanāth Paudel). Thus the work of the NGMPP continues to go on, and tasks still lie ahead to be done.

On the 27th of February 1991 the foundation stone for a microfilm building was laid on the premises of the National Archives. The house will provide adequate maintenance and



storage facilities for the films made under the NGMPP. With the completion of this building it is hoped that the collections of the National Archives can readily be consulted via microfilm, in surroundings offering proper research facilities to the interested public and Nepalese and foreign scholars.

#### Publications

The series entitled *Publications of the Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project* is edited by the project's director-general, Prof. A. Wezler, in cooperation with the National Archives, Kathmandu. The first volume was prepared by one of the former representatives: A Concordance of H.P. Sāstri's Catalogue of the Durbar Library and the microfilms of the Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project / Reinhold Grunendahl. A catalogue of palm-leaf and selected paper mss. belonging to the Durbar Library Nepal: vols. I und II / Hara Prasad Sāstri. -Stuttgart: Steiner Verl. Wiesbaden, 1989. (Publications of the Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project; 1) (Verzeichnis der Orientalischen Handschriften in Deutschland; Suppl.-Bd. 31)

For general information on the National Archives and document-holding institutions in Nepal see:

*National History Guide Committee (Nepal)*, ed. Dr. S. Amatya

*His Majesty's Government, Ministry of Finance, Department of Revenue (Record Section) and Office of the Comptroller General Kumari Chowk Gosara Treasury*

Source Manual Series No.1, 1988

*His Majesty's Government, Ministry of Defence; Royal Nepal Army Headquarters and His Majesty's Government, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Record*

*Section)*

Source Manual Series No.2, 1988

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*Dadeldhura, Doti, Bajura, Accham, Bajhang, Jumla, Mugu, Kalikot, Jajarkot, Surkhet, Dailekh, Salyan, Rolpa, Dang, Piuthan, Mustang, Myagdi, Baglung, Parvat, Argha Khanchi, Gulmi, Palpa, Kapilvastu, Tanahun, Lamjung, Shyangja, Nuwakot, Rasuwa, Dolakha, Udayapur, Bhojpur and Panchthar district.*

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## TOPICAL REPORTS

### The Study of Oral Traditions in Nepal

Corneille Jest

On the occasion of the CNRS-DFG conference on the History and Anthropology of Nepal, held at Arc-et-Senans in June 1990, a number of research themes were brought up and among them the collection and analysis of oral traditions received special attention. The rapid development of communication media and social changes in both rural and urban areas have contributed to a radical transformation in the transmission of unwritten lore and the call for an urgent recording of oral traditions in their widest expression. This urgency is justified by the fact that many forms of expression which have remained unrecorded for posterity are now disappearing.

Our present research effort should not be narrowly concerned within the purely academic fields of folklore, ethnology, linguistics and the like but should also serve as a tool to better understand the functioning of oral tradition in contemporary society. The collection of data should be systematic without neglecting evidence from non-traditional media such as news articles, comics and posters. To date, most of the research done on oral tradition seems to have concentrated on well-structured, easy to define, understandable stories (e.g. myths, legends, tales and proverbs). However upon reflexion, it seems to me that forms of human expression are far more diverse than those which have been classically recorded within an established academic typology.

My travels in different ethnic territories in the Himalayan region and my

interest in the study of technical and economic activities have called my attention to a form of expression seldom observed, or rather little described, by researchers in oral tradition and particularly those linked to festivities, to merry-making and all actions which accompany work. It is during the festive moments, and often upon the euphoric effect of food and drink when the tongue is loosened, that stories are told or that simple incidents become tales which afterwards will be carried far and wide.

Within each community there are individuals who have the gift of story telling. Are they still numerous? In fact, most of those whom we met are old enough to remember a period during which the movement of people was quite limited and when means of communication were still unavailable (daily press started in 1960, radio transmission in 1954 and television in 1988/ dates approximative). In the case of a story-teller his information originates from a member of the family or from other story-tellers of the community and sometimes from an itinerant traveller. Certain opportunities favoured the transmission and the creation of tales, such as rest periods during common agricultural activities or the occasion of travel linked to commerce or as porters. As an example of the above, the father of one of the story-tellers I met, well known for his "merry spirit", was called to tell stories during the husking of corn in order to liven the spirit and keep awake the womenfolk who reached the end of a day in a state of great fatigue. For his services he was



compensated with a good meal and drinks.

Specific celebrations linked to rituals, such as death ceremonies, represent another important occasion involving a great number of participants. Stories spontaneously emerge, which serve to demystify the occasion and put the principal actors at a more human scale.

By way of example I recall an occasion in which the story turned around a shaman who, in 1987, had failed to produce the result of his intervention in a Tamang village. The story is as follows: "Maili was sick in the stomach, the shaman Birbal was called in to perform a healing ritual. The shaman and his son went to look for crabs in a rice field, put a crab in a small container and the son kept it under his shirt. His father told him: "I will heal Maili, who is sick in the stomach. The moment I beat the drum I will pronounce the words 'rau-rau ru-ru'. At that moment you will discreetly release the crab".

Both father and son went to Maili's house; the shaman diagnosed the sickness as being caused by a crab, eating into the entrails and said that he would extract it.

He beat the drum in a trance, pronounced words without meaning, adding occasionally 'rau-rau ru-ru'; after a while his son recalled his father's instructions and asked him: "Is this the moment of letting loose the crab we caught this morning?" The shaman was furious and cried out: "May a tiger devour you and may the devil carry you away...".

Numerous myths, legends, tales, fables and proverbs, which form part of orally transmitted folklore, are increasingly written in special publications or school books and are thereby adapted to

a major national language. Thus these stories have been tailored and structured by the compiler and do not lend themselves to many variations. To such stories one must add an ensemble of tales of variable length which I would call 'short stories', the themes of which originate from events of daily life and in which a simple, unimportant event in the beginning, becomes, through the imagination of a facetious story-teller a humorous story which will be perpetuated through repetition and enrichment.

Among the diverse story lines the following categories could be cited. First, there are stories which deal with the marvellous, local history and geography linking with the domains of the gods and demons. Second there are stories dealing with life itself, as for example, the need to remain young among both women and men (there is a belief that when a man marries a very young woman he preserves his youth. If he marries a woman older than himself, he loses the freshness of his face and ages rapidly). Third, there are stories which concern the family and the structure of caste society: e.g. the relationship between different social strata and forbidden relation between a man and woman, such as incest and adultery. For example, there are tales about the marriage between a very old man and a pre-adolescent woman (the obvious difference between the parties appearing as an unbalanced element of society as well as an object of ridicule), the privileged role of the maternal uncle responsible for the education of his nephews and nieces, the often ambiguous relationship between the son-in-law and his mother-in-law (particularly when there is a notorious difference of age between the married partners), the

relationship between in-laws of the same generation, the hierarchy established between elder and younger siblings, the institutionalized links of friendship (*mit*) and stories which reflect the rivalry between ethnic groups or castes in which the story-teller tells the tale to his advantage.

This latter category seems to be particularly abundant. It should be recalled that rather recently lower castes and ethnic groups of Tibeto-Burman language became dominated by the Bahun Chetri castes. The latter have exploited the former, less educated groups who became dispossessed of their property. Thus, a satirical short story told by a member of an inferior caste becomes a sort of revenge. As the saying indicates: "The Bahun does harm but the story-teller delivers it back with interest".

Along the same lines the following true story recorded in the Terai tells of a Bahun who enjoyed suing Pahari migrants from the hills. Approaching death, he asked them to come to his side whereupon he told them that he was aware he had caused them wrong and suggested that they plunge a dagger in his heart after his death which would give them the feeling of having taken their revenge.

They did so, but the descendants of the Bahun initiated a new case for having defiled the dead, a posthumous deed of the Bahun from which originated the expression that "even a dead Bahun could bother a simple man from the hills".

Social stratification can also be manifested by the fear provoked by certain ethnic groups, for example the Danuwar caste living in the Terai and Mahabharat range are said to have the power of turning into leopards and

attacking women, killing them and stealing their golden jewels. To recover human form, their partners must throw three grains of rice in their direction pronouncing an appropriate spell.

The language utilized by the story-teller is always an everyday language with often trivial expressions, sometimes derived from well-known religious texts in which certain words are changed and new ones added. The linguist should thus find here a rich material for research.

Once the story-teller is identified it is convenient to obtain from him his life history which will help to better understand his environment and life style as well as his sources of inspiration.

The attention of his listeners is important as every detail is worth noting; his vocabulary may be adapted to his audience according to the circumstances. Systematic recording is evidently the best means of preserving this information (let us recall here that certain languages lack a written expression).

An aspect which remains unexplored is that of oral tradition among women particularly on occasions when women gather together, such as at marriages where through laughter and jokes women see through the claims and pretensions of men in a male-dominated society. Here is a line of research which would perhaps only be suitable for female ethnologists and linguists.

The suggestions made here might appear as "platitudes"; however, it seems to me that they are important enough when wishing to understand the psychological framework of specific populations and their interdependence and interactions. It is also important, before it is too late, to collect in as much detail as possible the different dimen-

sions of the tales including situation, expressional language nuances, changes in wording and the portions which provide either humour, mockery or social

comment. They are of great value in portraying personal identity in multi-ethnic Nepalese society.

### Wild Animals and Poor people: Conflicts between Conservation and Human Needs in Citawan (Nepal)

Ulrike Muller-Boker

#### From the "Fever Hell" to the "Melting pot" of Nepal

Citawan, the largest of the broad valleys within the Śiwālik Range was only sparsely populated until the middle of this century. Difficult of access, the region was infested with malaria (Haffner, 1979:51ff.). During the period of Nepal's political isolation (1816-1950) the interests of the government were consciously geared to preserving this protective zone of forests, grasslands and swamps, all the more so for constituting one of the best territories for hunting big game. It seems that the autochthonous inhabitants of Citawan, the majority of whom are Tharus, lived relatively undisturbed, in this peripheral region despite the presence of the state and disposed of sufficient arable land and forest.

With the eradication of malaria - Citawan having been largely free of malaria since 1964 - and the turnabout in Nepal's political orientation to the outside world, the situation changed drastically. A large and still continuing flow of immigrants from the mountains (Pahārijyas) entered Citawan, promoted by planned resettlement programmes (Kansakar, 1979; Conway & Shrestha, 1985), causing the population to increase thirteenfold since 1920. Where in 1953 only 19 people shared one sq.km, there are today about 120. Since the late 1970s the main thoroughfare

from Kathmandu to India goes through the Nārāyaṇi and Rāpti valleys. This in turn brought many bazar-settlements into being, the most important of which is Nārāyaṅhāt.

In sum, Citawan has developed in less than a half century from a sparsely populated periphery to an attractive multi-ethnic center.

#### Citawan as Wildlife Heritage

During the Rāṇā period (1846 - 1950) Citawan was declared a "private hunting reserve" of the Maharajas due to its richness in big game, being the arena of elaborate hunts, to which the royalties of the world were invited (Kinloch, 1885; Oldfield, 1880/1974: 210ff.).

For example - for the visit of King George V of Great Britain in 1911 600 elephants were employed, and 39 tigers, 18 rhinos, four bears and several leopards were shot within eleven days. All records were broken by a hunt in 1938/39, in which the Viceroy of India took part. The bag included 120 tigers, 38 rhinos, 27 leopards and 15 bears (K.K. Gurung, 1983:2f.).

After the downfall of the Rāṇā regime hunting and poaching increased dramatically. Dealing in particular in rhino horn became a lucrative business (Stracey, 1957: 766). Poachers came from India and from the hills, but also new settlers were responsible for the decimation of the *Rhinoceros unicornis*

population from c. 1,000 (1953) to c. 100 (1966) (Gee, 1959; Spillet, 1967). The ever-expanding settlement area - H. Gurung (1986) estimated that between 1961 and 1977 49% of Citawan's forests were transformed into fields - led at the same time to a constant reduction in wildlife habitats.

An initial attempt was made in 1964/65 to bring back the rhinoceros from the brink of extinction. A "Rhino Sanctuary" was established; 22,000 squatters and 4,000 long-resident farmers were removed from the territory and the area south of the Rāpti and between Nārāyaṇi and Lothar Kholā was "cleared" from settlers with the exception of a few old Tharu villages (Spillet, 1967: 567).

An effective ecotope conservation management succeeded only in the beginning of the 70s. IUCN and the World Wildlife Fund launched a tiger project. Efforts to save the tiger, sitting at the apex of the food chain and needing considerable territory to survive - so the idea goes - necessarily required preservation of a large habitat (Mishra, 1990:14). In 1973 an area of 544 sq.km was declared a national park and put under strict protection. In 1977 the territory was extended to cover 932 sq.km. The Parsa Wildlife Reserve, comprising 499 sq.km was annexed by the Citawan National Park in 1988. In recognition of its richness in flora and fauna, of which some are considered endangered species, the UNESCO declared the park a World Heritage Natural Site (Jefferies & Mishra 1991:26).

These conservation measures led to a stabilization of the *Rhinoceros unicornis* population at the level of 350 animals: the annual net increase of five animals allowed meanwhile the re-

moval of rhinos to other national parks. The differentiated structure of ecotopes in the park supports, besides the rhinos, a wide spectrum of mammals (e.g. the endangered gaur and the Gangetic dolphin), reptiles (gharial crocodile and marsh mugger), amphibians, birds, fishes and insects. Thirty-five to forty tigers (*Panthera tigris tigris*) were counted in the last year. Edds (1986) recorded 113 fish species in the waters of the park, and 486 bird species were registered in Citawan up until 1988 (Jefferies & Mishra, 1991:174ff.). Without any doubt, the Royal Citawan National Park is today one of the most important national parks in all of Asia and a great attraction for tourists.

The situation, seen from "the other side of the fence" and protected by 1,000 armed soldiers, stands in stark contrast, however, with this ecologically positive picture.

#### Traditional Exploitation in Conflict with Ecological Concerns

The protected forests and grasslands of Citawan, together with rivers and streams, are not only a potential reserve of arable land, but also of pasturage for large herds of cattle. Additionally this area provided hunting, fishing and gathering grounds; plus firewood and the raw materials necessary for the construction of houses and domestic tools.

The Tharus who traditionally settled this area, practised a short fallow shifting cultivation (2-4 years rice cultivation; 3 -12 years fallow). After the allocation of landtitles by the government, shifting cultivation was prohibited and the Tharus had to change to permanent farming thus necessitating regular manuring. The forest had been the most important pasturage for the



Tharu. With the establishment of the National Park and the prohibition of grazing in the forest, the number of cattle declined drastically, in some villages by 80%. The animals starved to death. The farmer now face a lack of dung and of working animals. Because of problems in collecting firewood - it has to be stolen - more and more dung is used as fuel. The increase in the population of wildlife has caused the Tharu to suffer loss of harvest and of livestock for which there is no compensation. The regular collection of edible and medicinal plants, of materials for making houses and household items, has become nearly impossible (Müller-Böker, 1991a).

It is the Tharus in particular who have been greatly affected by the loss of access to land extensively used in the past. In the face of their immediate problems of survival, one can understand why they close their ears to arguments supporting the preservation of a biotope and the protection of endangered wildlife. For the Tharus the forest is not only an important economic resource, it is also their form of economy, their way of life and cultural identity (Müller-Böker, 1991b:112). For them it is hard to accept the ideas of Western ecologists who see the forest and savannas as a living space for wild animals only, one in which the Tharus no longer have a place.

The ecologically sensible decision to protect and conserve vast areas of Citawan contradicts the infrastructural development and the opening of the region to people from the outside. The Tharus are the victims of a twofold dispossession. Only a conservation management which involves the needs of the local population, providing them with effective support, can counter the growing impoverishment and criminal-

ization of the autochthonous inhabitants and prevent illegal encroachment on the protected areas.

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## INTERVIEW

### Reorientation at the Royal Nepal Academy: An interview with Vice-Chancellor Prof. Isvar Baral Martin Gaenzle

He refused to go to Princeton in the late fifties, because this would have committed him to the School of International Studies (SIS) in New Delhi, which had arranged for the scholarship, for a further five years - and he intended to go back to Nepal. The political changes in 1960, however, put an end to this plan, so he went to London to get his Ph.D. from SOAS and eventually stayed in Delhi, where he taught south Asian politics and the history of modern Nepal at the SIS (Jawaharlal Nehru University) for what came to be 34 years. For a long time he had been in the bad books of the

Panchayat system because of his democratic credentials, but last summer, after the restoration of multi-party democracy, when Prof. Isvar Baral came - as usual - to his home country for vacation, he was made Vice-Chancellor of the Royal Nepal Academy. (The post of Chancellor has remained vacant since the restructuring of the Academy).

When he wrote his doctoral thesis on *The Life and Writings of Prithvi Narayan Shah* in London under the supervision of the late T.W. Clark, he used the archives of the India Office Library and became - as he recounted - "the first



person in the world who has seen all the volumes of the Hodgson papers from cover to cover - and the first Nepali of course." Besides being a distinguished scholar in the fields of history and political science, Isvar Baral is well-known as an authority on Nepali literature (for example as editor of "Jhyālbāta", "Himālcufī", "Sayapati", "Mohan Koirā-lakā Kavītā", etc.) - and as a writer. He is also a linguist, well versed in the Sanskrit language and literature, and speaks fluently Hindi, Maithili, Bengali and Bhojpuri.

Asked for the reasons for taking up his present post, Prof. Baral replied that it was his long-standing interest in history on the one hand, and literature on the other, that made the job attractive to him. He went on to explain that the Royal Academy is meant primarily for the development of five branches of knowledge: language, literature, culture (which includes history), art (painting, music and drama), and philosophy.

But later on he pointed out that at first he had had reservations: "I was not very enthusiastic in accepting this job, primarily because I have left a few things incomplete, writings: I have a plan of publishing about 15 books, 7 are in the last stage of completion. My plan was to retire early from Jawaharlal Nehru University and devote the rest of life to full time writing. Now I don't get the time. So this is a great loss to me, that is why I was not very enthusiastic. But secondly there was the challenge - the challenge to strengthen the foundations of democracy in the country through the activities of the Royal Academy."

This challenge was the central theme of our talk. When I asked him about the major changes in the set-up of the Academy, Prof. Baral first explained some administrative problems he faced:

"The first thing I had to do here was - how do we say? - spring cleaning." This implied stock-taking of previous commitments and liabilities. For example, bills for the printing of books had to be paid, which no longer reflected the policy of the Academy. The case of the employees had to be taken up, as there had been "anomalies" in their appointment, stagnation in their salaries and academic grading, etc. And thirdly, the financial situation had to be reviewed: as the government no longer provided a developmental fund of two million and the increment of salaries took up one million. The Academy faced a decrease of three million rupees in its budget.

We then turned to the question of restructuring the academic activities. What kind of shift had taken place in the orientation of the Academy's projects?

"We made certain innovations. First we included studies regarding different languages in the country, not only Nepali. Previously, only Nepali was being encouraged, only studies and books in Nepali were being published. And all the activities were related to the Nepali language. We modified that, and our activities now are related to other languages also."

Prof. Baral then went on to explain the newly started projects on four languages (other than Nepali): Limbu, Maithili, Bhojpuri and Newari (for details see below). Later on, he continued, other languages, such as Magar, Tamang, and Gurung, will be included in the programme.

A similar shift of emphasis has taken place in other activities, like the performance of dramas.

"Every year a drama festival was held here in which only Nepali dramas were staged for a week or so. So this time dramas in other languages also will be

staged. We included two languages this year, other than Nepali - Newari and Maithili. Next year we will include two other languages. So in this way all the languages will be given a chance as best as possible."

For this drama festival, which was scheduled for 26th September, already more than 150 scripts of non-professional drama groups, literary organisations etc. have been submitted. The best presentations will be awarded prizes.

Another change concerns the "research fellowships" awarded by the Academy. Previously, these fellowships were mostly given for creative writing, to essayists, poets, novelists. But now, true to their name, they will be strictly given for scientific and methodologically sound research only.

This does not mean, however, that creative writing will no longer be promoted. The Vice-Chancellor emphasized that the Academy will continue to support the publication of creative writing, ... "but they must be of a standard. Thus, if somebody wants to publish an anthology of poems, for example, it has to be seen what particular contribution these poems are going to make to the development of Nepali poetry."

Apart from such shifts in the emphasis new projects will also be introduced. In the beginning of February 1992 a Festival of the People (lokotsava) is going to be held, which is meant for the presentation of folk songs, "songs of the tribal people of different languages, not modern songs, only such songs which are part and parcel of the cultural life of the people." The plan is to group these presentations according to different genres, such as heroic ballads (like those of the Gaine), songs pertinent to women (like those sung on Tij), or relating to certain religious festivals, or

agricultural seasons etc. Asked whether these songs will also be recorded and published later, Prof. Baral affirmed that this is intended. Summing up he continued: "So we are trying our best at new things which previously had not been taken up. As you asked earlier, certainly I thought there would be very exciting things for me, to make innovations and to depart from the norm, the normal activities, and to contribute something to the cultural environment of the country. So I thought an opportunity had been given to me."

The "opening up" of the Royal Academy's activities to a wider field of interests also creates a bigger ground for possible collaboration with foreign scholars and institutions. When we came to that point towards the end of our talk Prof. Baral stressed the necessity to keep each other informed and initiate "mutual cooperation and an exchange of ideas."

(Interview held on 19th August, 1991)

## Current and Projected Language Projects of the Royal Nepal Academy

### Limbu

1. Study on Limbu Language, Literature and Culture: The major objective of this project is to collect materials on Limbu oral tradition and publish them in *devanāgarī* script with Nepali transliteration. Several books are in preparation: 1) short introduction to the Limbu language and literature (this is already completed and is to be published in 1992; 2) collection of folk songs and tales; 3) collection of proverbs and idioms (fieldwork for this will start in 1991-1992; 4) studies on the *mundhum* (one ritual text, sung by a *phe-*

*dangma* for the benefit of a pregnant mother and her expected child, has been recorded and edited by Vairagi Kahila and is presently in press).

#### 2. Limbu-Nepali-English Dictionary:

This is a reedition of the dictionary which was originally compiled by I.S. Chemjong and published by the Academy (1961/62). The new edition will be revised and enlarged.

Chief editor: Vairagi Kahila

Committee: Dr. Subhadra Subba, Dr. Navel Kisor Rai, Bikram Ingwaba

#### Newari

History of Newari Literature (in Nepali). This will be the first comprehensive history of Newari writing covering the various periods and genres in the light of changing political contexts. The volume of approximately 700-800 pages is planned to be published in about three years.

Chief editor: Krishna Chandra Singh Pradhan

Committee: Narmadesvar Prasad Pradhan, Dr. Janak Man Vaidya, Kashinath Tamot, Madhav Lal Karmacharya.

#### Nepali

Dictionary of Literary Terms (in Nepali) The compilation of this dictionary is - among other things - intended to facilitate the understanding of and communication with the western tradition of literary history and criticism.

Chief editor: Krishna Chandra Singh Pradhan

#### Maithili

1. Maithili-Nepali Dictionary. The plan is to first publish a concise dictionary with about 35,000 entries. Later this will be enlarged up to 60,000 words or more. Three collectors will be deputed to three different areas in Nepal: one in Mahottari and Sarlahi, the second in Janakpur, the third will be in Siraha and Saptari (up to Rajbiraj). Thus, not only

standard Maithili, but also variant dialects (like those close to the border with Bhojpuri speakers) will be included, as long as different words are in usage. (If the difference is only in spelling, the standard spelling will be given).

Chief editor: Prof. Dr. Harideva Mishra  
Committee: Prof. Ramawatar Yadav, Dr. A.N. Chaudhari, Dr. Bal Krishna Jha  
2. Nepali-Maithili Dictionary. This dictionary is designed for Nepali speakers who want to learn the Maithili language. It will be based on dictionaries which are already published and therefore will not involve field-work. Later it will be supplemented by a grammar in Nepali.  
Chief editor: Prof. Dr. Isvar Baral  
Committee: Dr. Yogendra Yadav, Ram B. Kapadi, Dr. Rajendra Vimal

3. Representative Collection of Maithili Writings. An anthology will be prepared in two volumes, one focusing on prose, the other on poetry. The collection is intended to represent the whole history of Maithili literature from earliest times up to the present and will include various literary genres (also short-stories, essays, literary criticism, narrative poetry etc.) Use will also be made of manuscripts kept by the National Archives. The text will be presented with an introduction about the authors (as far as possible). A glossary of obsolete terms is to be attached.

Chief editors: Dr. Dhireswar Jha (Prose), Parameswar Prasad Singh (Poetry)

#### Bhojpuri

Grammar of Bhojpuri. For this project a committee has been formed with Prof. Isvar Baral as president and Dhanush Chandra Gautam, Jagdish Sharma, Uma Shankar Dvivedi and Dr. Dhruva Chandra Gautam as members.

## RESEARCH REPORTS

### Group Projects

#### Gulmi & Argha-Khanci Inter-disciplinary Programme

Since late 1985 the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique and the Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique have been conducting inter-disciplinary research in two districts of mid-western Nepal: Gulmi and Argha-Khanci. The programme was undertaken under a general Cultural Cooperation Agreement between the Nepalese and French governments. Further, the CNRS team was affiliated to the Royal Nepal Academy. The research was supposed to help in the preparation of an EEC development project scheduled in the same area. The decision to choose these two particular districts was taken by HMG.

For the CNRS and INRA, this project was their second inter-disciplinary endeavour in Nepal, following a joint programme conducted in 1981-83 in Salme village, Nuwakot District. However, Gulmi and Argha-Khanci was the first undertaking at a regional level. The Salme and Gulmi programmes were both conducted under the GRECO-Himalaya, an inter-disciplinary structure involving numerous French researchers working on the Himalayas.

Till now, some 30 persons have contributed to the Gulmi-Argha-Khanci programme, for various lengths of time. Six major fields of study were covered: geography, ecology, agronomy, rural economy, history and social anthropology. Moreover, specialists in remote sensing helped in the collection of data, and the Topographical Survey Department (HMG) issued a "Baseline survey",

a set of maps displaying the basic geographical features of the districts.

Twelve junior researchers spent between 6 and 18 months in field surveys and provided the bulk of information on the area. In addition, they used these materials for their doctoral degrees in Ecology (L. Redaud, C. Michaud), Social Anthropology (M. Lecomte-Tilouine, P. Ramirez) and Agronomy, Water-management and Agro-economy (J. Assié, O. Aubriot, J.P. Fontenelle, C. Knepler, P. de Verdieres, J. Andrieu, N. Sibelet, F. Segala). Furthermore seven post-doctoral and senior scholars undertook studies in particular fields: J. Smadja (human geography), G. Krausskopf (study of the Kumhal potter-fishermen), C. Panter-Brick (labour relations), Y. Houdard and J. Bonnemaire (agriculture), J.P. Deffontaines (land use) and G. Toffin (Dasain). C. Jest extensively toured the districts and monitored the work of junior researchers. R.R. Subedi of T.U. History Dept. collected available manuscripts and historical data.

Gulmi and Argha-Khanci (600 000 inhbs., 2500 km<sup>2</sup>) are situated in the heavy populated middle hills (800-2000 m) to the west of the Kali Gandaki, inhabited mainly by Nepali-speaking Hindus: Bahun, Chetri, Thakuri, Kami, Sarki, Damai, Gaine. Tibeto-Burmese groups, Magar and Gurung, represent less than 15% of the total population, and they generally use Nepali as their mother tongue. Before 1804, the area was divided into six Thakuri principalities, founded in the early 16th century and more or less under the suzerainty of neighbouring Palpa.



Documents dating from the pre-unification period are very few, but the emphasis put on diachronic studies was particularly fruitful concerning changes which occurred in the last 150 years in certain domains: the Hinduization of the Magar, ritual geography, distribution of power, internal migration and the evolution of land-use.

Joint field-work and analysis conducted by small teams of two researchers proved to be quite productive. However, the synthesis on a higher level, involving numerous disciplines and people, did not reach original expectations. The reason lay not only in the difficult harmonization of various methodologies but also in very simple problems: for example to make people meet regularly when they belong to different institutions, live in different areas and keep commuting between Europe and Asia.

Another disappointment for some of us is that our work was of little use to the EEC development project. This project started later than initially planned, so that development experts and researchers were not in the field at the same time. On the other hand, it must be confessed that, when they are not part of a codified agreement, exchanges between the two parties generally seem not to take place.

A number of memoirs on Gulmi and Argha-Khanci are already either in print or available in the library of the "Centre d'Etudes Himalayennes" (Meudon). An edited volume presenting the results of different researches is expected to be published before the end of 1992.

Philippe Ramirez

#### Nepal-Italian Joint Project on High-Altitude Research in the Himalayas

The Royal Nepal Academy of Science and Technology (RONAST) and the EV-K2-CNR Committee have agreed on a joint project on high altitude research in Himalayas that is to begin in 1991. The research programme is under the patronage of the Italian Ministry of University, Scientific and Technological Research, the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Commission of the European Communities. Topics to be investigated include:

**Biological Sciences:** physiology 1: Cardiovascular and gas exchange readjustments to exercise at high altitude; physiology 2: - Study on the effect of strength training at high altitude. - Muscle strength at fatigability in chronic hypoxia. Physiology 3: - Human muscle adaptations at high altitude. An electromyographic and soundmyographic study. - Heart rate variability during muscular exercise at high altitude. Physiology 4: Functional and metabolic studies at high altitude. **Respiratory Physiology:** Measurement of respiratory work at high altitude. Physiology: Respiratory function tests and bronchial hyperreactivity in asthmatic subjects at high altitude. **Zoology:** Reproductive behaviour of the Himalayan thar (Hemitragus jemlahicus).

**Environment Sciences:** Atmospheric Deposition and Circulation of Pollutants. Environmental assessment of long range pollution in high elevation and remote areas. Atmospheric Pollution. Evaluation of atmospheric pollutants in remote areas.

**Human Sciences:** Ethnography and Human Geography. Human geography and ethnology. Material and spiritual culture of Kanchanjunga (Kanchend-

zonga).

**Earth Sciences:** Geodynamics. Geodynamic evolution of the highest peaks of the Himalayan chain. Geophysics. A broad band seismic station in the Himalayas. Sedimentary Geology. Sedimentary geology in Manang Area Crystalline Geology. Geology and Petrology of the Crystalline rocks of the Himalayan belt. For further information: K2-CNR Representative Office: P.O.Box 5109, Kathmandu, Nepal

#### Development Strategies for the Remote Areas of Nepal

The objective of this project is to delineate appropriate short-term and medium-term strategies for development of the areas classified as "remote" in Nepal, based on the thorough investigation of some representative localities. Field research is being conducted in five districts (Taplejung, Dolakha, Dolpa, Jumla, Darchula) and focusses on the traditional economy and resource utilization as well the impact and problems of development programmes, the role of the state, and the specific implications of "remoteness".

The research group consists of five senior researchers (one anthropologist, one sociologist, one geographer, one economist and one cultural historian) and 16 research assistants. For each district one team has been formed headed by a senior researcher. The project started in August 1990 and is scheduled to be completed by July 1992. It is financed by the IDRC (Integrated Development Research Center), Canada. Coordinator: Dilli Ram Dahal

#### Individual Projects

**Project:** The dynamics of interethnic relations: the Dom of Hunza (Northern Areas of Pakistan)

**Researcher:** Anna Schmid, South Asia Institute, Heidelberg University

**Sponsored by:** Gottlieb Daimler- und Karl Benz-Stiftung and South Asia Institute

When the Dom immigrated from northern India some 300 years ago they were given land by the local ruler in the central part of Hunza, where they form now approximately 2% of the population. In return they had to perform services as musicians and blacksmiths. As musicians, the Dom were situated at the core of the local culture; as blacksmiths, they were set apart from the rest of society and relegated to the lowest social stratum. Due to their ambiguous social status and their ubiquitous presence at musical performances, they are frequently mentioned in the literature on the Northern Areas of Pakistan - scientific and others. Yet so far they have not been investigated in any detail.

Fieldwork was conducted from March to October 1988 and from April to July 1990. It concentrated only on the Dom village of Mominabad, and a few dispersed households in other villages of Hunza. In addition, comparative data were collected in their village in Nagar, the adjoining district and in the urban center of the Northern Areas, Gilgit.

The aim of the research is to clarify the interethnic relationship between the Dom minority and the

wider society, i.e. the significance of ethnic identity in social interaction and the structural characteristics (economical conditions, power relations etc.) of this interaction. To elucidate this topic three problems are being examined.

First, the domains (religious, political, economical etc.) in which the Dom act as specialists are being analysed with regard to the roles they play, the positions they take up, their possibilities to manipulate and enlarge the scope of their acting, and the space for interaction created by themselves. Moreover, the domains from which they are excluded (e.g. by rules of endogamy) as well as the implications of the various restrictions on their interaction are being taken into account.

Second, the ways by which the Dom are qualified to articulate central societal and cultural values of the wider society are being investigated: namely by their musical apprenticeship, their intimate knowledge of the wider society's requests, the skill to control this knowledge, etc; and secondly their low status and social exclusion.

Third, the ideas and concepts by which the Dom are categorized and perceived and by which the Dom perceive themselves are being analysed. This implies the study of the

local mythology and the numerous stories about the Dom.

Since Hunza underwent a dramatic change after the removal of the local ruler in 1974 the study has to account for both, the diachronic and synchronic perspective. It will be argued that the analysis of the interethnic relationship shows a specific pattern of integration and segregation which varies in historically and situationally different contexts.

The data will be presented as a Ph.D. thesis.

Project: Sociolinguistic Survey of the Jirel Community

Principal Investigator: Nirmal Man Tuladhar, CNAS, Tribhuvan University

Sponsored by: UNESCO

Since a motorable road reaches up to Jiri (Dolakha district), the Jirel community - in and around Jiri - is increasingly subject to social change. The aim of the project is to study the impact of this on the Jirel language. This will be done by collecting data on bilingualism, the domains and patterns of language use, attitudes towards the native language and towards the other languages spoken in the community.

The project is scheduled to be completed within one year.

## BOOK REVIEWS

**DOR BAHADUR BISTA**

*Fatalism and Development: Nepal's Struggle for Modernization.*

Calcutta: Orient Longman, 1991. 187 pp.  
Rs. 150

D.B. Bista's long-awaited book presents a picture of the social organisation and values that govern Nepalese society with a view to assessing the country's chances of development. This synthetic treatment of the subject has the agreeable quality of avoiding digression while adopting a personal point of view; the relative partiality of the author's position is a necessary feature of a work that confines within the space of 187 pages the entire history of a country and the analysis of its institutions. The author addresses his compatriots (the book is dedicated to the people of Nepal) in a manner that is simultaneously critical and optimistic. The critical aspect is levelled at the caste society imported from Hindu India, and at its basically fatalistic system of values, whereas Bista's optimism arises from the country's inherent capacity for work and endurance, qualities that are demonstrated by the indigenous ethnic groups, the Matwali. The central argument is clearly stated and provides the thematic framework of the book.

The diachronic perspective that extends from the earliest times up to the present day highlights the importance of two pastoral groups, the Kirat and the Khas, in the prehistoric area. They represent the original substratum of Nepal, which had very little connection with the Gangetic plain. In the ancient historical period, with the first waves of Hindu immigration, the caste system appeared beside Vaishnavism, prac-

tised by an elite, whereas two other religious currents, Shaivism and Buddhism, remained independent of this system. The organisation of society into castes was adopted during the Middle Ages in the Magar and Khas kingdoms in the West, and by the Mallas in the Kathmandu Valley. But the adoption of this system was far from homogeneous in the country. For a long time the Gandaki region showed little interest in Brahmanism; moreover, it was only in recent times that the latter penetrated the eastern part of the country, where it encountered a flourishing local religion. Not to mention the northern Himalaya, in which the Bahuns themselves showed little interest.

In retracing the history of the Nepalese caste system, the author is at pains to emphasise a point that has perhaps been too frequently overlooked. It would be misleading to imagine a country passively allowing itself to be invaded by immigrants from the plains and their ideology. It is likely rather that there was some mutual backscratching between the Nepalese rulers and the Bahun immigrants. The latter, Bista proposes, created castes of clients by inviting the wealthier Khas, Magars and Newars to be initiated into Chetri status. The new initiates who took the title of Thakuri subsequently got the Bahuns to manufacture genealogies that linked them to the Rajputs of India and legitimated their ambitions to rule.

These manipulations led to a complete historical confusion, for the Khas, who moreover spoke an Indo-Aryan language, were attributed the same origin as the immigrants. But for D.B. Bista



"It is hard to believe that Nepalis, with their reputation for an independent spirit and martial qualities, could not produce their own leaders but had to wait for fugitive nobles to arrive from India and paid homage to them as soon as they set foot in the hills. There is evidence suggesting that such Indian pedigrees for the Thakuri-Chhetri are the artifacts of their own sycophants (p. 37)."

This line of reasoning does not spare the Shah dynasty, who "have been given a Rajput ancestry by a few historians, yet all their clan deities and family tutelary deities are worshipped and cared for exclusively by Magars - by Brahmanic standards a polluted low-caste ethnic group" (p. 38)

The next step in the process, according to this scenario, was that the system of values which originally belonged to an immigrant minority, ended up by ruling Nepalese society. The analysis of this dominant "hierarchical sub-culture" in the succeeding chapters shows a ruthless clarity on the part of an anthropologist observing his own culture.

The key concept of this analysis is fatalism: the order of the world and society is divinely ordained, and the course of events is irreversible. This doctrine has several distinct consequences for the behaviour of individuals, particularly with regard to work. According to a stratified conception of activities physical labour and material preoccupations are the province of the low castes, while the higher castes who are the exclusive beneficiaries of learning and religious speculations essentially despise all effort. This is why salaried work, preferably in administration, represents the ideal career for a Bahun: "In such jobs one is not expected

to actually work" (p. 80). It is also why students do not expect the educational system to provide them with training for future work, but rather with the means of acquiring a status - a status which will eventually allow them not to work. Moreover, a sense of responsibility, individual competence and the success that might derive from this, as well as a spirit of competition - in short, all the values of modern Western society - are discouraged by fatalism.

The author argues that dependence on the father is a fundamental aspect of the Nepalese character, a "national trait". A description of intra-family relations in its most concrete aspects shows that the very free upbringing of young children does not favour the development of their independence. Throughout his life an individual searches for a father-figure, with his authority and protection. In association with fatalistic preconceptions this dependence produces two institutions that Bista describes with perspicacity: *chakari*, which consists of playing oneself under the protection of someone more powerful, and to pander to him in exchange for the advantages that he is then entitled to receive; *afno manche* designates a sort of coterie, a network of social relations in which information and favours circulate. The operation of official institutions depends on these two unofficial strategies that inevitably invite corruption.

Another feature of this society of privileges, rather than rights, is its conception of time, which accords little reality to the present and sees the future as a subject of religious speculation rather than a domain to be planned - which gives some idea of the misunderstandings with which development programmes are received. Foreign aid

reinforces the father figure on which the Nepalese show themselves to be dependent, and to which they abandon all their responsibilities in the event of failure.

Bista very clearly sets out his position on this matter:

"Nepal cannot look to the cornucopia of foreign aid for solutions to all its problems and it is no use blaming it for the negative fallout of fatalistic belief.... It would be short-sighted to wish it away (150-151)."

The author briefly mentions a few studies criticising foreign aid without endorsing their position. Here the reader may be surprised to note that the acute incisiveness - tinged with humour - that Bista applies to his own society, disappears as soon as he mentions the

matter of foreign aid. Is this because he considers that a criticism of this nature would be ungracious in view of Nepal's effective economic dependence on foreign finance? Has he perhaps taken his cue from the development literature that systematically adopts a tone of dutiful self-criticism? The impression with which one is left is that in this severe but optimistic message, encouraging his compatriots to get a grip on themselves and to change their own society, the author himself adopts the role of the father-figure, admonishing his children without wasting his time on explaining to them what only grown-ups can understand, the serious business of politics.

Anne de Sales

## NEWS

### Himalayan Studies at Oxford Today

Over the last twenty years, as an increasing number of scholars of Nepal and the Himalayan region have progressed through Oxford University, many of these have been working in 'Social Anthropology and Ethnology', while others have come from Forestry and Oriental Studies. In the last decade these have been joined by Nepalese students, studying for degrees at Oxford across a full range of academic subjects from maritime law to medicine.

In the past there have been occasional seminars on Nepal at Oxford. In 1989 these included two presentations by the Swiss geologist and development specialist, Toni Hagen. At the Asian Studies Centre of St. Antony's College he talked from his unparalleled forty year's experience of Nepal; his talk for

the Refugee Studies Programme at Queen Elizabeth House covered the history of the Tibetan Refugee relief programme for which he was largely responsible in the 1960s. In 1990 Graham Clarke gave a seminar on Politics and Development in Nepal for the Contemporary South Asia Seminar Series, again at Queen Elizabeth House. This year at the Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology, David Gellner gave a Seminar on the types of approaches utilised in the study of Newar religion, a complex topic with its own long literary history. More recently, in the wake of Nepal's election a panel discussion was convened to debate the future of Nepal in the Contemporary South Asia Series (by Neville Maxwell and Graham Clarke). This seminar was exceptionally well-attended, and chaired by Tapan

Raychauduri of St. Antony's College. Andrew Hall (Foreign & Commonwealth Office) introduced the election and the Results; Graham Clarke (Queen Elizabeth House) discussed the wider social and economic context; Michael Hutt (SOAS) talked on politics and culture, and Tom Januzzi, a political scientist from the University of Texas at Austin, discussed Indian parallel and influence. H.E. Bharat Keshar Simha, the Royal Nepalese Ambassador in the UK, played a vigorous role in the debate and discussion that followed. A number of ideas were expressed. One was that populist forces within institutions and society over the next few years will be more important than the election itself in deciding the future of Nepal; another was that the religious world-view of Nepal was still reflected in a special kind of civil order. Few disputed the view that India, politically, economically and culturally, was becoming ever-more important in Nepal's affairs.

A significant development in Himalayan Studies at Oxford occurred earlier in 1991, in January, when the Himalayan Society and Environment Seminar was started. This Seminar was held by the Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology in conjunction with Queen Elizabeth House, and organised by Nick Allen, Graham Clarke (convenor) and David Gellner. The seminar originally was conceived of as an open workshop in which those concerned with Himalayan Studies in Oxford could come together and discuss work in progress, whether the subject was ecology, ethnography, history or any other subject area. However, in practice, this first series had a more well-defined focus, concentrating on the relation of local communities to the broader civil order and environment in

which they are located. At the same time most of the presentations originated from village-level studies and were backed by a history of direct, long-term participant-observation. With the exception of Melvyn Goldstein's brilliant presentation on Tibet (alongside Catriona Bass and Tsering Shakya for the Refugee Studies Programme), the seminars all concerned Nepal. This was not just in the sense that they happened to be village studies conducted in Nepal, but in that they placed the village in a broader national, cultural and ecological context.

It may be that in Nepal, more than in most other countries, anthropologists have come to practical terms with the institutions of development. A number of serious ethnographers of Nepal from the Anglo-Saxon world now have moved to positions with one development agency or another, and this practical *rapprochement* was reflected in the intellectual convergence of the seminar. The vocabulary of culture and community was combined with accounts of the state and administrative institutions, of economic changes through markets, and of changes in culture through "modernity" and development.

Charles Ramble (Woodlands Institute) gave a paper on "Cultural Considerations for Park Management in Eastern Nepal". Here he described how the different social orders and ideologies of Rai-Limbu and Tibetan as contrasted to Hindu groups resulted in different problems for Park Management. One important conclusion was that environmental education needs both to take account of, and to build on, local conceptions of what is or is not natural.

Nick Roche (Overseas Development

Administration), who was formerly attached to the Forestry Department at Oxford, Swiss Development Co-operation in Nepal, offered a paper on "Projects & Communities: a Forestry Case-Study in the mid-hills of Nepal". Much of his material, like that of the subsequent presentations of Jane Carter and Graham Clarke, came from the hinterlands of Sindhu-Palchok and Dolakha Districts to the north-east of Kathmandu. He discussed the history of land tenure and rights to the products of the forest in Nepal: secure communal and private rights to natural resources were placed squarely at the centre of any agenda for environmental conservation in the mid-hills of Nepal.

Melvyn Goldstein (Case-Western Reserve University) gave a paper on his long-term fieldwork in Tibet with the title "Traditional Nomadic Pastoralism and Ecological Conservation on the Tibet Plateau". He discussed the ecological pressure on the grassland in relation to live-stock numbers, and gave a detailed historical account of changes in the pastoral practices of the Tibetan nomads of Phala. Climate and social organisation were among the factors he considered in an elegant consideration of theories of progressive or cyclical ecological change. He questioned the widespread assumption of a current general degradation of the quality of grassland and wildlife in this area of the plateau, and concluded that traditional practices and peoples were on the side of environmental sustainability.

Andrew Russell's (Oxford) paper was entitled "Issues in the Ecology and Demography of Nepal", and concerned concepts of the environment, both in western ideology and in the far eastern hill-village of Dandagaon where he recently conducted fieldwork. His pres-

entation concerned to what degree environment, as much as any other concept, was culturally defined. His conclusion was that, at least in Dandagaon, environment as understood by local people themselves is as important, if not more so, than the Himalaya "environment" of crisis theory.

Jane Carter (Oxford) gave a paper on "Village Communities and the Private Ownership of Trees in Nepal: a Case-Study". She moved down a level from the long-term concerns of crisis theorists with environmental/population linkages to focus in detail on perceptions and practices in agriculture at the micro-level of the household farm in villages in eastern Nepal. The traditional local taxonomy of plants, fodder and food was seen as a major conceptual framework behind people's everyday ideas and behaviour in relation to nature, and in this context of culture and community she discussed measures for crop, land and tree protection.

Chris McDonough (Oxford) gave a paper on "Social Aspects of Small-Scale Water Mills in Nepal". He examined the varying types of small-scale hydro-electricity ("micro-hydro") projects in the Terai and pointed to the gap between the project documents, with their planned technical and financial specifications of inputs, budget size, and projections of performance output and broad-based benefits, and the more limited and partial effects of these projects in practice, as they were captured by local pre-existing elites, and/or fell into disuse through lack of maintenance.

Graham Clarke (Oxford) gave a paper on "Local Views of Development and Political Order in Highland Nepal", based on fieldwork carried out in the mid-seventies. He argued that develop-



ment or *bikas* often was seen as a kind of "mana from heaven", a gift as much sacred as secular and bestowed from above, which tended to reinforce the pre-existing social hierarchy. The traditional state, which often - backed by religious and military sanction - exacted an agrarian surplus, was contrasted with the nascent modern state. In this second and more populist order in Nepal, political legitimacy often comes from the distribution of materials downwards by the state for immediate consumption, with the benefits of development projects being handed out in exchange for votes in return. This process of distribution was illustrated by tracking one project from the political centre down to the village, and showing how the various levels of civil society benefitted. The political support in return was illustrated by an account of the *panchayat* and *jilla* elections in that same area in 1986 & 1987.

Harald Sklar (Norwegian Institute of International Affairs) gave a more wide-ranging talk on "Indigenous Peoples of Nepal". Here the issues of local rights versus those of the central state, and the question of just who is indigenous, came to the fore. The convoluted history of migrations in Nepal, historically complicated both by the topography and the relations to neighbouring polities, and now by a modern state structure, made the interpretation of modern international conventions for indigenous people an extremely demanding task.

John Horberry (Environmental Resources Ltd.) first studied anthropology at Cambridge before moving to ecology and development. His seminar had the title "Natural Resource Management for Sustainable Development: a Study of Feasible Policies, Institutions

and Investment Activities in Nepal with Special Emphasis on the Hills". It derived from his copious study carried out by Environmental Resources Ltd. for the World Bank, and funded by the UK Overseas Development Administration. The study consists of a major literature review with a consideration of the long-term relations between environment, population, energy needs, and migration in Nepal. The implication here in some ways was similar to that of the earlier Seminar on "Nepal after the Elections". One way or another, the linkages between Nepal and India were of fundamental significance to the future of both the country and its people. The ODA attended this presentation, the last of the current series, which was held at Queen Elizabeth House (International Development Centre).

The focus of this first Himalayan Society and Environment Seminar series at Oxford has been largely on Nepal, and it may be possible to publish the proceedings at some future date. Research at Oxford also is being conducted on Western China (at the Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology) and Tibet and the north-west Himalaya (at Queen Elizabeth House and the Pitt-Rivers Museum). The hope is that such thematic seminars and workshops on the Himalaya and mountain regions of central Asia will continue in Oxford in this and other seminar series in years to come.

Graham E. Clarke

#### Workshop on the May 1991 General Elections in Nepal

The first general election under the new constitution of Nepal was held on May 12, 1991.

The Institute for Integrated Development Studies (IDS), Kathmandu, in collaboration with a team of American scholars led by Prof. Leo E. Rose of the University of California at Berkeley conducted field visits to many districts of Nepal during the election campaign period to study the evolving multi-party political system of Nepal as reflected in the first general elections.

A workshop was organized by IIDS in Kathmandu on May 17 at which time most of the election results had just been announced.

The IDS study team and the American scholars presented their preliminary assessment of the election results and the implications for the evolving political development of Nepal. The workshop participants included other academicians, political observers and activists and representatives from other research organizations also involved in studying the 1991 Nepal General Elections.

A Final Report on the IDS study on the 1991 Nepal General Elections is being prepared and will be ready by October 1991.

Prem Jung Thapa  
Senior Research Associate  
IDS  
P.O.B. 2254  
Kathmandu, Nepal

International Symposium on  
Environmental & Hormonal  
Approaches to Ornithology  
(Garhwal Himalaya)

Birds not only enrich our lives with their aesthetic and food value but are important indicators of environmental degradation and have been instrumental in unfolding some of the funda-

mental principles of biology. An international meeting was organised in Garhwal Himalaya on 27 November - 1 December 1991. These mountains envelope in their fold environmental extremes of tropics to tundra affording a unique opportunity to study how birds adapt to diverse ecosystems - all within a range of 150 km!

The aims of the Symposium:

- to give an impetus to ornithological researches in the Indian subcontinent
- to highlight the contribution of ornithology to environmental conservation, socio-economic development and biological concepts
- to provide a platform for Indian ornithologists, specially younger enthusiasts, to interact with leading authorities in the field from different countries
- to bring together researchers, conservationists, managers and policy makers to evolve strategies for effective management of Himalayan avifauna

The symposium comprised invited lectures and contributed papers on applied (game birds, pest birds, habitat & species conservation, captive breeding) and basic aspects (ecology, physiology, special sessions on reproduction, migration, biological rhythms) with an emphasis on the environment and on adaption to the environment (hormones).

Local organiser:

Dr. Asha Chandola-Saklani, P.O.B. 45, Garhwal University, Srinagar Garhwal, U.P. 246 174 India; Fax 0135 28392 (international) 0091 135 28392, Telex 585-345 EBD IN; 585-232 PAL IN.  
Patron: Prof. S.P. Nautiyal (Vice-Chancellor).

Hon. President: Prof. J.P. Thapliyal.

### New Appointments at Tribhuvan University

After the former office bearers had tendered their resignation and these were accepted, the following new appointments were made in August of this year: Prof. Kedar Bhakta Mathema (Vice-Chancellor), Dr. Devendra Raj

Mishra (Rector), Mr. Sudarshan Risal (Registrar). The resignation of the former Chief of the Research Division, Dr. Krishna Bahadur Thapa, has been accepted in September. His functions have, for the time being, been taken over by the Chief of the Planning Division, Dr. Panna Lal Pradhan.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Symposia

#### The Himalayan Forum at SOAS 1991-1992

- October 10th - John Bray: "Ladakhi History and Indian Nationhood."  
 October 17th - Shelby Tucker: "A Journey through the Kachin Hills of northern Burma."  
 November 21st - Mark Temple: "Population Growth and the Labour Shortage in Nepali Agriculture."  
 November 28th - Graham Clarke: "Local Views of Development and the Political Order in Highland Nepal."  
 December 5th - Yoshiro Imaeda: "Bhutan Past and Present."  
 January 16th - Andrew Russell: "Sanskritisation and Identity in the East Nepal Hills."  
 January 23th: Dave Richards and Bijaya Sainju: "Nepal in the 1990s: Donor-Driven-Democracy?"  
 January 30th: Tsering W Shakya: "Tibet and China in 1950: Coercion or Diplomacy?"  
 February 6th: Sonam Chhokipology "Ritual in a Bhutanese Village: an Historical Perspective."  
 February 13th: Surya Subedi: "Monarchy and the Constitution in Nepal and Bhutan."

- February 20th: Michael Hutt: "On the Nepali Poet Mohan Koirala."  
 March 5th: Dipak Raj Pant: "Street-Level Political Action in Nepal."

#### Sixth Conference of the International Association of Tibetan Studies, Fagerness (Norway)

August 21 - 28, 1992

The conference is to be hosted by the Institute for Comparative Research in Human Culture, Drammensveien 78, N-0271 Oslo 2, Norway, (Tel. 02-554207). Workshops have been planned on the following topics (conveners mentioned in brackets): 1. "The Tibetan Canon" (Dr. Helmut Eimer, Indologisches Seminar der Universität Bonn, Regina-Pacis-Weg 7, D-5300 Bonn 1, Germany); 2. "Sacred space, geography and pilgrimage" (Prof. Lawrence Epstein, Dept. of Anthropology, DH-05, University of Washington, Seattle, WA 98195, U.S.A.); 3. Tibetology and social anthropology (Dr. Patrick Kaplanian, 4, Rue Neuve Popincourt, F-77011 Paris, France); 4. Buddhism and modernity in respect of Tibetans (Dr. M.P.S. Chandel, Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, Sarnath, Varanasi 221 007 U.P., India);

5. Old Tibetan (Dr. Helga Uebach, Kommission für Zentralasiatische Studien, Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Marstallplatz 8, D-8000 München 22, Germany); 6. Tibetan grammarians (Dr. P.C. Verhagen, Institut Kern, State University of Leiden, P.O.B. 9515, NL-2300 RA Leiden, Netherlands).

The conference will take place at Fagernes, situated in one of the most scenic regions of inland Norway, some 200 kilometers north of Oslo.

#### Second International Seminar on Tibetan Language, Siena and Arcidosso (Italy) August 30th-September 4th, 1992.

The seminar is convened jointly by Shang-Shung International Institute for Tibetan Studies, The University of Siena and I.S.M.E.O. of Rome. The aim of the seminar is to contribute to a variety of problems regarding the preservation, updating and diffusion of the Tibetan language (e.g. standardization, problems of translation and teaching). Contact address: Istituto Shang-Shung, Istituto Internazionale di Studi Tibetani, Via degli Olmi, 1, 58031 Arcidosso, GR, Italy - Tel. 0564 - 966940, 966941; FAX 0564 - 966846.

**The anthropology of Nepal: Peoples, problems and processes Kathmandu 7-14 September 1992**  
 The Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies, Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, and the Department of Anthropology, University of Sydney, plan to hold an international conference in Kathmandu on 7-14 September 1992. Whilst CNAS will act as the host for the Conference, the Department of Anthropology, University of Sydney, will assume responsibility for the initial organiza-

tion. The title of the conference has been selected to indicate that though papers on a wide range of anthropological topics will be welcome, the conference nevertheless will be distinguished by its concern for some of the contemporary problems in social living in Nepal. There will therefore be a number of either half- or full-day sessions devoted to the following topics: the anthropology of resource management; women and development; medical anthropology; and urban anthropology.

All scholars who have done anthropological research in Nepal are invited to participate. There will probably be a registration fee of US-\$ 50 for scholars employed on a full-time basis in the United States, Canada, Europe, Japan, Australia and New Zealand. Other scholars and post-graduate students will not have to pay any registration fee. The conference will be held in the Hotel Vajra, Kathmandu, and daily room rates range from US-\$ 20 to US-\$ 30. Scholars interested in attending this conference should write to: Professor Michael Allen, Department of Anthropology, University of Sydney, Sydney, NSW 2006 Australia.

#### SASON National Congress: "Structure and Transition. Society, Poverty and Politics in Nepal." (planned for July or August 1992)

The Sociological/Antropological Society of Nepal (SASON), which was founded in 1985 "with the twin objectives of promoting the disciplines of sociology and anthropology in order that they contribute towards the development of the country", has in August 1991 elected a new Executive Committee with Kailash N. Pyakurel as President and Bihari K. Shrestha as Vice-President. The National Congress



planned for next summer will be the first in several years - and the first after the political changes in Nepal. For details contact: SASON, P.O.B. 4771, Kathmandu, Nepal.

### Ladakh: History and Culture

#### A Conference to mark the 150th Anniversary of the death of Alexander Csoma de Körös

Alexander Csoma de Körös (1784-1842) travelled from Europe on foot in search of the origin of the Hungarian people. Arriving in Ladakh in 1822, he began the study of Tibetan at the instigation of an Englishman, William Moorcroft. His studies in Ladakh and Zangskar were to culminate in the publication of a dictionary, grammar and other works which laid the foundations of the scientific study of Tibetan in the West.

A two-day Conference is to be held at the School of Oriental & African Studies (SOAS), University of London on 1st and 2nd June 1992. Offers are invited of 20-minute papers to be delivered on subjects relating to the history, culture or anthropology of Ladakh, and/or the life and work of Alexander Csoma de Körös. This will be the fifth in a series of conferences on Ladakh starting at Konstanz in 1981. It is hoped to publish the proceedings.

Several distinguished foreign scholars have been invited to participate, including Dr. Bethlenfalvy, Chairman of the Csoma de Körös Society in Budapest. Various events are planned to accompany the conference, including an exhibition of relics of Csoma de Körös.

The Conference is being sponsored by SOAS and organized by a sub-committee of the International Association for Ladakh Studies, with the co-operation of the Hungarian Embassy in London.

For further information contact Mr. Philip Denwood, Far East Department, SOAS, Thornhaugh Street, Russell Square, London WC1H 0XG. Tel: 071-637 2388 Fax: 071-436 3844.

## Organisations

### The Association for the Ethnological Research of Tibet and the Countries of the Himalaya

Address: Institut für Tibetologie & Buddhismuskunde, Maria-Theresien-Strasse 3/26, A-1090 Vienna, Austria.

The association was founded in Vienna in March 1991. According to its statutes the association serves the following aims:

1. scientific field research in Tibet and the countries of the Himalaya;
2. ethnological work for the counselling of projects concerning development policy and environmentalist aims in the Himalaya;
3. establishment of a special library and data bank;
4. scientific exchange with national and international institutions; and
5. public information in Austria for a better understanding of the cultures and political situation in Tibet and the countries of the Himalaya.

The funds for the realization of these aims will be raised through membership fees, donations and subsidies, contributions, legacies and profits from the association's publications and events.

At present the main research objective is a detailed treatment of environmental problems. An analysis of "emic"

relations with the environment shall furnish the basis for a programme which is directed at using the autochthonous population's conceptions of the world so that the world might also be protected on their terms.

The results of these studies shall be put at the disposal of development-policy makers and environmentalists of diverse organisations.

The Association wishes to take up contact with institutions and persons with similar aims and interests.

### Natural History of Nepal

After initial preparation for creating a Natural History Society of Nepal (NAHSON) for about four months, it was finally established in July by a general assembly of members and registered with HMG. One hundred founder members are now preparing for an inaugural ceremony to be held at end of this year.

The objective of the Society is to study, promote and develop the natural history of Nepal by encouraging research and the exchange of information on the natural history of Nepal within and outside Nepal.

To achieve the above objectives, to popularise and promote NAHSON in Nepal and in foreign countries, the following activities will be carried out on a regular basis:

- to conduct talks seminars and workshops
- to publish a newsletter bulletin, journals and books
- to extend Natural Conservation Education in villages, towns and educational institutions
- to encourage regional and international agencies that are interested in

natural history to exchange research information, share knowledge and hold national and international seminars and conferences.

For further information, contact Dr. M. K. Giri.

President, NAHSON

Chief, Natural History Museum.

Manjushree Bazar Swyambhu, Kathmandu, Nepal.

Phone No. 271899

## Courses

### Courses in Himalayan Languages at the Campus of International Languages, Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, Nepal

Apart from catering for the needs of Nepalese interested in learning foreign languages the Campus of International Languages (CIL) offers long-term courses in Himalayan languages for foreigners. The CIL, an institution of the state run Tribhuvan University established about 30 years ago, conducts at present language courses for foreigners in Nepali, Sanskrit, and Tibetan.

The courses aim at persons with an interest in in-country language learning. Although Tibetan is regionally spoken only in corners of the country far away from Kathmandu, learners will find ample opportunities of outside classroom language contacts, be it with some of the numerous Tibetan refugees or with members of local institutions of Tibetan Buddhism. Students of Sanskrit are given the chance of familiarizing themselves with Sanskrit prosoody through the guidance of a tradi-

tional Nepali Pandit. This may be useful in a basic approach to the language or as a complementary component for advanced learners. A knowledge of Nepali for theoretical or practical purposes has been felt ever since the beginning of the interest in the Himalayan region. Especially anthropologists working on Nepal are sooner or later faced with the necessity of knowing Nepali. The courses are conducted by enthusiastic and academically qualified native teachers.

The courses in Nepali are of a maximum two-year duration, the courses in Tibetan and Sanskrit of one-year. The introduction of second year courses for Tibetan and Sanskrit is currently under consideration. Each year is divided into two semesters at the end of which examinations are held. For successful participation in each one-year term a certificate equalling twenty credit hours is issued. A regular visit of the classes, held five times per week for two hours, is necessary for formal and academic reasons.

All adult bona fide learners are eligible for admission. Permission to reside in the country at personal risk for the period of the course is granted to the successful applicants by the Nepalese immigration authorities. The present visa fee is 60 US Dollar per annum.

The next term starts on August 1st, 1992 and will end in June/July 1993. The course fee for the term 1992/93 amounts to approximately 250 US Dollar or equivalent foreign exchange. Requests should be mailed to: The Campus Chief, Campus of International Languages, Tribhuvan University, Pradarsani Marga, Kathmandu, Nepal.

Manfred Treu

## PUBLICATIONS

### Himalaya Environment and Development: Twelve Years of Research

The study on Himalayan ecology has a long project tradition in the Department of Geography at the University of Berne, Switzerland. Since 1979 numerous projects have been undertaken on various regions and themes, but always turning around the same basic questions: What are the most important natural processes within the Himalayan ecological system? What is the human impact on these processes and what are the ecological consequences for the future planning towards sustainable development, especially with regard to the use of natural resources? Many of these studies took place in collaboration with United Nations University as well as local partners in the Himalayan states.

A forthcoming volume "Himalaya Environment and Development" edited by B. Messerli, T. Hofer and S. Wymann will summarise the results of the Bernese Himalayan research and at the same time anticipate future activities.

Chapters included: Regionalization of the Himalaya, WYSS, M.; The Himalayan-Lowland interactive system: Do land-use changes in the mountains effect the plains? LAUTERBURG, A.; Deforestation-changing discharge and increasing floods: Myth or reality? HOFER, T.; Forest changes in the Indian Himalaya. KUSTER, H.-J.; Mountain hazards mapping in Nepal's Middle Mountains. Maps of land use and geomorphic damage (Reprint). KIENHOLZ, H., HAFNER, H., SCHNEIDER, G., TAMRAKAR, R.;

Mapping of mountain hazards and slope stability (Reprint). KIENHOLZ, H., SCHNEIDER, G., BICHSEL, M., GRUNDER, M., MOOL, P.; Mountain hazards mapping in the Khumbu Himal, Nepal, with prototype map, scale 1:50'000 (Reprint). ZIMMERMANN, M., BICHSEL, M., KIENHOLZ, H.; The Langmoche flash-flood, Khumbu Himal, Nepal (Reprint). VUICHARD, D., ZIMMERMANN, M.; The 1985 catastrophic drainage of a moraine-dammed lake, Khumbu Himal, Nepal: Cause and consequences (Reprint). VUICHARD, D., ZIMMERMANN, M.; Jalkini Area: An analysis of changes in land use and

geomorphological damage between 1979/80 and 1988 and a general introduction to the agricultural system of Jalkini. BOSSHART, U.; Land use changes and soil fertility status in small watershed in the Middle Hills of Nepal: Signs of pressure. WYMAN, S.; The greening of the Siwalik Himalayas. MUKERJI, A.B. (Chandigarh).

The volume will be published early 1992 and can be obtained from Arbeitsgemeinschaft GEOGRAPHICA BERNENSIA, Hallerstrasse 12, CH-3012 Bern. Price is approx. 30 Sfr.

Th. Hofer, B. Messerli & S. Wymann



## Contributors to this Issue

**Richard Burghart** is Professor of Ethnology at the Sudasien-Institut, Universität Heidelberg. He has recently completed a study of the Maithili language in the Nepalese Tarai and is currently working on the changing relationship between state and society in Nepal.

**Graham Clarke** is a social anthropologist and development consultant based at Queen Elizabeth House, University of Oxford. He was previously attached to the Institute for Development Studies, Sussex and has conducted fieldwork in the Helambu region.

**Franz-Karl Ehrhard** is a Tibetologist, currently serving as Director of the Nepal-German manuscript Preservation Project in Kathmandu. He has published on Buddhist philosophy and religion. A recent paper of his deals with the history of the stupa of Bodhnath (*Ancient Nepal*, 120/1990).

**Martin Gaenszle** is wissenschaftlicher Angestellter at the Sudasien-Institut, Universität Heidelberg and Director of the Institute's branch office in Kathmandu. His monograph on kinship and myth among the Mewahang Rai was published last year by Steiner Verlag, Wiesbaden. His current research is on Rai ritual texts and oral tradition.

**Corneille Jest** is doyen of Himalayan studies, specialising in the anthropology of the Tibetan-speaking population groups and the human ecology of the Nepal Himalaya. His monograph *Dolpo, communautés de langue tibétaine du Népal*, came out in 1975. He was Director of the Centre d'Etudes Himalayennes and the "GRECO Himalaya-Karakorum" project of the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique in Paris. At present he is affiliated with the Equipe de Recherche "Milieux, Société, Culture en

Himalaya".

**Alan Macfarlane** was recently appointed to a personal Chair in Historical Anthropology at the University Cambridge. He has published widely on the Gurwags and on medieval English history. He is author of the monograph (*Resources and Population*, 1976) and papers on the Gurung of Nepal. *A Guide to the Gurungs*, which he wrote with Indrabahadur Gurung, came out in 1990.

**Ulrike Müller-Böker** is a geographer and affiliated with the Geographisches Institut of Giessen University. She lists several publications on land utilization, erosion and related matters. Her monograph on Newar rural settlements in the Kathmandu Valley was published in 1984 in the "Giessener Geographische Schriften" (Heft 56), a series of which she is Chief Editor.

**Philippe Ramirez** recently completed his dissertation in Ethnology as part of the Gulmi and Argha-Khanci Interdisciplinary Programme.

**Anne de Sales** is anthropologist and member of the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique in France. Her monograph on Northern Magar shamanism (*Je suis né de vos jeux de tambours*) was published last year by the Société d'Ethnologie (Klincksieck).

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## Notes to Contributors

The European Bulletin of Himalayan Research welcomes for consideration manuscripts and short notices dealing with any of the following topics.

1. Topical reports on ongoing, or recently completed, research projects.
2. Information about archives with literary, historical, archaeological, ethnographic, botanical, etc. materials collected in the Himalayan region.
3. Reviews of books on the Himalayas, including books published in Nepal, India, Pakistan and China which because of poor distribution may be inadequately known in Europe.
4. Current political developments in Nepal, India, Pakistan and China and the implications of these developments for research carried out by European scholars.
5. News about recent or forthcoming conferences, and on funding opportunities for European scholars working in the Himalayas as well as for scholars from the Himalayan region itself to visit Europe.

Manuscripts should not exceed 5,000 words in length. All contributions will be published in English. Copy can be submitted in German or French with the understanding that the editors in Heidelberg will arrange for its translation. Anything submitted in English by a non-native speaker will be copy-edited in Heidelberg by a native speaker.

The deadline for submissions for our third issue is 1. May 1992. Anything received after that date will go into the fourth issue, expected in autumn, 1992.

The views expressed by individual contributors are their own and do not represent those of the Editorial Board. All correspondence to The Editors, European Bulletin of Himalayan Research, Sudasien-Institut der Universität Heidelberg, Im Neuenheimer Feld 330, 6900 Heidelberg, Federal Republic of Germany.