

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF HIMALAYAN MUSIC

by Mireille Helffer

The following bibliography comprises works in European languages on the Indian Himalayas, Nepal and Bhutan. Nepali and Newari publications are included in the bibliography compiled by Ram Sharan Darnal. Tibet is not included since several bibliographies have been published elsewhere (cf. Helffer, "An Overview of Western Work on Ritual Music of Tibetan Buddhism (1960-1990)", in M.P. Baumann, A. Simon, U. Wegner (Eds.), *European Studies in Ethnomusicology: Historical Developments and Recent Trends*, Selected papers presented at the VIIth European Seminar in Ethnomusicology, Berlin, Oct. 1-6, pp. 87-101, Wilhelmshaven: Florian Noetzel Verlag).

Books, contributions appearing in journals or collective works and leaflets accompanying records were taken into account in the publications of songs, musical instruments and organology (cf. collections in the Musée de l'Homme and the files established by Agnès Eberhard-Heinmann in 1971), musicians, music and musical language, the performing arts (Theater, Dance).

For a brief presentation of the tape recordings kept in the department of ethnomusicology in the Musée de l'Homme, please see EBHR No.5, 1993, pp. 24-25.

We shall consider publications from the 1960s on, when portable tape recorders became common-place. This was also the time when researchers supervised by Prof. G. Millot and Dr. C. Jest started their work in Nepal. We shall mention a few older published recordings that are of some historical importance, such as B. Pignède's recordings among the Gurung.

Nepal

Fieldwork in Nepal remained for a long time confined to the Kathmandu Valley, as A.A. Baker's and A.W. Macdonald's studies show. Relationships with the Gaine musicians were not easy given their low status.

A) Works by anthropologists and linguists mention musical performances in the life of the people that they describe, but they rarely publish recordings or offer musical analysis.

For instance the very thorough studies by M. Oppitz or A. de Sales on the Kham-Magar accord considerable importance to the drum *rē* used by the shamans. The fabrication of this drum is described in great detail, and songs related to this instrument are presented. However, the recordings remain in these researchers' personal archives.

With regards to the Tamang, the situation is approximately the same; since A.W. Macdonald's pioneer publication, A. Höfer and B. Steinmann have introduced many *hvāi* texts to their readers and here too, the omnipresent drum is carefully studied, but no recordings are available.

Recently G. Krauskopff presented the rich repertory of the Tharu songs of Dang, but it is significant that her contribution appears in a collective work devoted to oral traditions in the Indian world and music is not even mentioned.

It is important to cite the numerous songs, especially wedding songs, collected in the Humla region by N. Levine (unpublished to my knowledge) and by David Friedlander (MA thesis submitted to INALCO in 1991). As for numerous songs collected by C. Ramble in the Mustang area, they still need to be edited and analysed.

Regarding the French researchers whom I know better, many recordings remain unexamined in various collections. For example no one has pursued the preliminary surveys, accompanied by recordings and rich photographic documentation, collected by C. Jest in Dolpo or among the Thakali.

It should be acknowledged that many ethnic groups are almost totally unknown as far as their music is concerned because there is no qualified ethnomusicologist in a position to study them. Only a comparison with recordings collected in the past would allow researchers to bring out specific features before it is too late: radio or television programmes, as well as the growing popularity of professional folklore groups tend to bring a general uniformity to these performing arts.

The question of the *jhānkri* and their use of the *dhyāṅgro* drum are often presented, but it is an exception when it is the object of an ethnomusicological study (cf. Gianattasio).

B) Works by ethnomusicologists or musicians such as Bernède, Ellingson, Gianattasio, Grandin, Helffer, Moisala, Tingey, Wegner, Weisetaunet, or Wiehler-Schneider, concern mainly four domains:

1. Musicians castes and their repertoires.

Following A.A. Bake's (cf. Tingey, 1989) and A.W. Macdonald's works on the singer-musicians *gāine* in the 1960s, this caste attracted the attention of researchers. The numerous recordings of that time (cf. archives in the Musée de l'Homme: recordings by Macdonald, Gaborieau, Jest and Helffer) can be compared today with modern *Gāine* music, recorded by J. Galodé and H. Weisetaunet.

C. Tingey provides us with some excellent work on the musicians-tailors *Damāi* and their instruments within the traditional context of the village, as well as at contemporary weddings in Kathmandu.

The practice of the *dholi* and of the *hurkiya* in western Nepal, on which M. Gaborieau and myself worked in 1969, has been part of F. Bernède's research programme since 1994. A compact disc on the subject should be published in 1997 in the CNRS-Musée de l'Homme collection.

2. Newar music.

Newar music has been studied from various angles: organology (Wiehler-Schneider), publication of songs (S. Lienhard) and drumming analysis (G.M. Wegner). I. Grandin examined the musical tastes of the young Newar population; G. Toffin analysed the way drums are used in the *gyapu* initiation in Kathmandu, while F. Bernède is working on the rhythmic structures of drum repertoire. In addition, the music god, *Nasah Diyo*, has not been forgotten (Ellingson, Wegner).

3. Gurung music

See the work of Pirkko Moisala.

Ladakh

The numerous publications by Francke at the beginning of this century were followed by a long period of silence. Then recordings were published following the Crossley-Holland mission in 1961, and the Helffer mission in 1976. Texts of songs are published locally. Anthropologists, researchers and travellers have published records with little documentation. Since 1986 Mark Trewin has been working on the *mon* repertoire (cymbals and oboe), and in particular, on the *lha rnga* or "the drum of the gods".

Bhutan

Very little documentation is available. Bhutanese music has obvious links with Tibetan music. John Levy published several records with a few comments. Although he was neither an ethnologist nor an ethnomusicologist his publications provide the best available source of Bhutanese repertoire.

A few cassettes as well as texts of songs are published locally, but there is no analysis either of the context nor of the musical language.

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