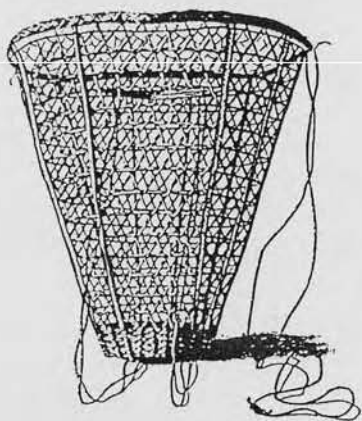


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CONTENTS

GRAHAM CLARKE : AN APPRECIATION by Ben Campbell	1
INNOVATIONS IN TRADITIONAL CRAFTS: NAGER AND HUNZA IN THE 20TH CENTURY : Jurgen Wasim Frembgen	3
WORK AND NUTRITION IN HIGH ASIA : Hiltrud Herbers	18
THE RESTORATION OF BALIT FORT : Stefano Bianca	31
SEASONAL MIGRATION IN WESTERN NEPAL : Satya Shrestha	35
ON FRANCIS BUCHANAN HAMILTON'S ACCOUNT OF THE KINGDOM OF NEPAL : Marie Lecomte-Tilouine	46
BOOK REVIEWS	
A.-M. Blondeau & E. Steinkellner, eds., <i>Reflections of the Mountain</i> , by András Höfer	76
András Höfer, <i>Tamang Ritual Texts II</i> , by Marie Lecomte-Tilouine	82
Ulrike Müller-Böker, <i>Die Tharu in Chitawan</i> , by Ben Campbell	88
Isabelle Sacareau, <i>Porteurs de l'Himalaya</i> , by Monique Fort	92
<i>Recent Research on Ladakh 4 - 5, and 6</i> , by Isabelle Riaboff	94
PROJECT	
<i>Credit Systems and Urban Development in Nepal</i> , by Michael Mühlich	97
CONFERENCE REPORTS	
<i>Ladakh Studies, 8th Colloquium</i> , Moesgaard, June 1997 by Pascale Dollfus	99
<i>The Lhasa Valley</i> , Meudon, November 1997, by Heather Stoddard	101
DISSERTATION ABSTRACTS	103
NEWS	115
HIMALAYAN ELECTRONIC DIARY	117

by Ben Campbell, with additional information by David Gellner

The community of scholars of the Himalayan region lost one of its sharpest minds in February 1998. Graham Clarke was an important figure of the second generation of anthropologists doing research in Nepal. After a first degree in experimental psychology at the University of Sussex, he went to Oxford to study anthropology. His proto-deconstructionist work on 'Who are the Dards?' (*Kailash* Vol. V (4) : 323-56) presaged the themes taken up later in his doctoral thesis. His first fieldwork in Nepal, in the remote valleys of Mugu, had to be abandoned after severe illness necessitated calling out a helicopter from Kathmandu. He then switched to Helambu and the result was *The Temple and Kinship among a Buddhist People of the Himalayas*' (Oxford D. Phil., 1980), which analysed the social dynamics behind ethnic labels in the upper Helambu valley. This work remains one of the best-kept secrets of Himalayan ethnography. For those persistent enough to locate a copy (who are understandably usually anthropologists of the same region, e.g. Desjarlais, 1992, *Body and emotion*, Univ. of Pennsylvania Press), it has become highly influential as a source of historical and ethnographic data, and in providing a tightly argued and many-stranded analysis of the role of religious institutions in social change. *The Temple and Kinship*' deploys the insights of Leach, Needham, and Bourdieu to explore the contradictory processes of status and power centring on the mobility afforded by Tibetan forms of household, community organisation and ritual practice to the illiterate Tamang cultivators of the area. Temple land grants had been made by the Newar kings of the Kathmandu Valley in the eighteenth century, and Clarke interpreted the use of the ethnonyms 'Lama' and 'Tamang' as contextually dependent means of distinguishing the oscillating fortunes of whole village communities, and socio-religious climbers within them, in terms of proximity to positions of power over the temple lands. The intimate local linkages of wealth, power and ritual status created a Buddhism which Clarke observed to be notably antithetic to the figure of the world-renouncing monk. He described as 'religious capitalism' the circulation of goods between households via the temple adding value in the form of merit (see, i.e., 'Hierarchy, Status and Social History in Nepal' in R.H. Barnes, D. de Coppet, and R.J. Parkin eds. 1985, *Contexts and levels*:

anthropological essays on hierarchy, Oxford : JASO). In the ordering of temple rank, however, principles of status hierarchy were at work which contradicted the hierarchies of Dravidian kinship and affinity characteristic of Tamang communities. For Tamangs to enter temple membership, they would have to repudiate original lineage principles, though successive generations could later build into temple-focused lineages. Clarke saw a dropping of classificatory kinship among Lama households in favour of kindred-based alliances, requiring an analysis of tactics rather than rules, though the break from hierarchies of affinity could never be complete, and in these inconsistencies social change could be understood. What makes Clarke's ethnography particularly convincing is his clear appreciation of the variant instances of these social processes across the Helambu region. Few anthropologists manage to achieve such expansive regional familiarity, but it is precisely this understanding of gradated transformation that is the key to Himalayan society. He sought, moreover, to understand the historical background to this by co-operating with the late Thakur Lal Manandhar on the translation of the copperplate grants by the Newar kings. A collection of Clarke's articles on the history and society of Helambu is currently in press with Bibliotheca Himalayica. Later periods of fieldwork, supported by an ESRC Fellowship held through IDS, Sussex, brought Clarke back to Helambu to observe local political and developmental discourse during elections and at other times, and resulted in his paper, 'Development (Vikas) in Nepal: Mana from Heaven' (paper given at the ASA Decennial conference in Oxford: was this ever published?). His interest in household, property and economic change was further extended in his research in Tibet ('Aspects of the Social Organisation of Tibetan Pastoral Communities', 1992, in *Tibetan studies: proceedings of the 5th seminar of the international association of Tibetan studies*, Narita). He also travelled widely elsewhere in Nepal, as well as in the rest of South Asia and in Tibet, carrying out consultancies for the ODA, SATA, and a range of other agencies. Clarke's unique grasp of Himalayan society as deserving of overall comparative treatment can be seen in his provocative article, 'Blood and Territory as Idioms of National Identity in Himalayan States' (*Kailash* Vol. XVII (3-4): 89-132, 1995). This was clearly the outline for a bigger work, which few others could ever entertain the ambition of completing.

*INNOVATIONS IN TRADITIONAL CRAFTS :
NAGER AND HUNZA IN THE 20TH CENTURY.*

Jurgen Wasim Frembgen

In the early 20th century anthropologists were especially aware that traditional arts, technology and corresponding skills were being lost at an alarming rate. In response to a dominant colonial environment, many traditional artefacts were no longer being made. Nevertheless, later studies on cultural change chiefly concentrated on social and economic aspects often neglecting the material side of life. Conservative anthropologists still dealt with material reality as a given part of traditional culture, leaving the impression of a culture unchanged in time.

But "tradition" is never something static or unyielding; it is dynamic and flexible and has its own potential for change. Cultures are constantly changing and as a result of culture contact we can observe many processes of innovation which can be studied by an ethnographer among living peoples. Besides contemporary native art, folk recycling and its innovative impetus have been widely acclaimed in publications and exhibitions. In this paper, however, I want to concentrate on something less spectacular and eye-catching than recycling, namely a local historical process of cultural borrowing in the realm of traditional crafts. Borrowing is generally the major force in cultural change and highlights a number of implicit questions: what are the pros and cons of an innovation, which norms and values are behind it, and why do people cease using one object and instead begin using another?¹

In the high mountain area of Nager and Hunza, two former kingdoms situated in the heart of the Karakorum (Northern Pakistan), the construction of the Karakorum Highway (KKH), completed between 1972 and 1978, has brought significant alterations to living conditions. This historic event has led to innovations in the type of cultural borrowings along the axis of the KKH with the town of Gilgit as its dominating central place of horizontal diffusion. In the past, endogenous processes of change were usually slow, although enriched by exogenous influences. Now, with the whole of Northern Pakistan open to the Punjab and the rest of "down-country", cultural change is radical and rapid. Whereas innovations as

¹ Foster 1962: 25; Mohrmann 1993: 172.

triggers of social and economic change have been studied in depth in numerous studies of the Pak-German Research Project "Culture Area Karakorum" (CAK) since 1990, the question remains as to how the Nagerkuts and Hunzukuts are responding to the conditions of change as far as their traditional crafts are concerned².

Sherman duus chamage gas nimi.
"When matches appeared, flint and steel lost their value"
(Hunza proverb)³

Material Modernity in Nager and Hunza - A General Survey

As most of the villages are either situated close to the KKH or have jeepable link roads to the main highway, industrially produced consumer goods are nowadays easily traded via Gilgit. The local population's response to the radical opening of their hitherto remote high mountain valleys is adaptive: many modern prestigious items are imported, things which are perceived as new, fashionable, or practical. Here, prestige, the desire for economic gain, and utilitarianism are the main motivations which produce the diffusion of innovative elements⁴. Therefore, the impact on local everyday culture is considerable; traditional patterns of consumption are changing quickly. In this context, the *nouveaux riches* (members of the nobility and lower-class people who have become entrepreneurs) as well as the out-valley migrants, are especially innovative.

A general survey shows that functional objects such as agricultural tools are readily adopted. It becomes immediately apparent that many imported tools (made in Punjab or even in Europe) are superior to the simpler, locally made tools. As crafts generally belong to the body of practical, common-sense knowledge, especially in this context, decisions follow "instrumental thinking". Of course the objection can be raised that these modern tools allow one to work faster, even if more superficially. Skills and specific techniques are frequently lost in this way⁵. It should be

² Here I would like to express my sincere thanks to the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft for funding my research project on "Traditional Crafts in Change (Nager/Gilgit)" (1992). The manuscript is based on a paper presented at the 14th European Conference on Modern South Asian Studies (August 21-24, 1996, University of Copenhagen) within the panel "Crafty Debates: Historical and Contemporary Issues relating to 'Art' and 'Craft' in South Asia".

³ Tiffou 1993: 70 (No. 1168 B).

⁴ Foster 1962: 29.

⁵ Koch 1993: 13.

added that agrarian innovations nowadays also include an increasing mechanisation with regard to ploughing and wheat threshing.

In the domestic domain many ordinary household items belonging to traditional material culture are being discarded⁶: metal and stone pots for cooking, formerly made by local blacksmiths and specialised stone cutters, are being replaced by steel, iron, and aluminium vessels (including pressure cookers made in Wazirabad/Punjab). Instead of wooden pots and plates for serving food, people prefer Nirosta steel, plastic, and glass. Until recently, milk and water were drunk from wooden bowls and calabashes, now the drinking vessels are of glass, steel, tin or plastic; for the same purpose people use jugs made of aluminium and plastic in the form of a *lota* (widespread in Indo-Pakistan), as well as tin vessels for canned food, *ghi*, etc. Wooden spoons and receptacles made of wood and basketry, used for storing various items and food, are being replaced by objects of aluminium, steel, and plastic.

For keeping clothes, jewellery and other valuables, metal boxes have been used for about 20 years; they are usually closed with metal locks imported from Sialkot (Punjab) or China. Wooden boxes and wardrobes, directly fitted to a wall and pillar in the traditional type of house, are increasingly being replaced by modern storage facilities.

Depending on the respective financial possibilities, not only the exterior architecture of the house, with cement walls, new doors, glass windows, and verandas, but also the rooms are furnished in a "modern" style (fig. 1). Sometimes there are chairs (even chrome folding chairs), sofas, low tables, imported carpets, foam rubber mattresses and bed sheets. Besides a mirror and family photographs, popular colour prints and posters, showing natural scenery from Pakistan, Europe, Japan and the USA, as well as film actresses, are affixed to the walls.

Often sheets of plastic and wax are spread on the floor instead of the traditional embroidered "tablecloths" in the typical oriental way. Part of the inventory of a typical living room also includes insect repellents, petroleum lamps, torches, radios, cassette-recorders, and different kinds of kitsch crockery, mostly from China. In some households there are sewing and even knitting machines paving the way for changes in the art of embroidery.

⁶ Frembgen 1985 b: 284.

Watches, folding knives, plastic bags, combs, cosmetics, etc., are personal belongings which are, like all the other items mentioned above, forwarded from larger industrial towns in the Punjab to the bazaar of Gilgit - the economic and political centre of the Northern Areas and the focal point of change. From Gilgit they reach the small village shops⁷. The local dress, *qamiz-shalwar* (shirt and trousers), common throughout Pakistan, was introduced to Nager and Hunza during the first decades of the 20th century; at that time some men started tailoring as a new profession and copied these garments which were later sold in the Gilgit *bazaar*⁸. Anoraks, parkas, and sleeping bags are mostly from equipment left over from mountaineering and trekking expeditions. Imported European shirts, trousers, pullovers, socks, etc. come from down-country *landa bazaars* (specialising in second-hand clothing) and are sold in Gilgit. Shoes, boots, and sandals are either made of leather or often of cheap plastic, sometimes having the forms of traditional leather shoes common down-country and imitated through ornamentation. Since some decades, local leather boots, wooden and grass sandals have nearly disappeared.

Objects of luxury often spread easily⁹. In Nager, Hunza and other mountain valleys of the Karakorum, prestigious luxury goods had already been introduced from Kashmir and eastern Turkestan as unique pieces especially during colonial times (19th/20th c.)¹⁰. Thus, it is known who brought the first empty whisky bottle and gramophone from India and presented it to the king of Hunza¹¹.

From the beginning, loan-words for these items were derived from subcontinental English and penetrated the local Burushaski language through Urdu; in this context, the number of English loan-words is a suitable barometer for the change in local material culture¹². Some examples from the semantic field of imported goods (more than 50 loan-words) are: glass bottle (*botal*), glass (*gilas*), lamp (*jermani*, *lemp*), matchsticks (*maches*), man's coat (*koot*), waistcoat (*waskat*), jacket (*jaket*), sandals (*silipar*), etc.

⁷ Frembgen 1985 b.

⁸ Frembgen 1996.

⁹ Thumwald 1932: 560.

¹⁰ Frembgen 1985 a: 211-212.

¹¹ Schomberg 1935: 122-123; Müller-Stellrecht 1979: 271.

¹² Frembgen 1997.

Modern innovations, which took place in the first half of the 20th century in the fields of the economy and material culture, are reflected in the trade relations of that time¹³. Since then, new consumer items were continuously brought to Nager and Hunza and were predominantly used by the royal families and by selected members of the upper class. Members of the ruling dynasties, noblemen, and official traders were the first agents promoting change. To illustrate the local trade it is sufficient to give one example: chinaware was a prestigious commodity imported by Hunzukuts from Eastern Turkestan and traded to the neighbouring Nagerkuts. The value of a teacup (*chai-shisha*, *kap*) was one lump of butter or one silver rupee (introduced in 1935)¹⁴.

It should be mentioned that "all craftsmen only practise their crafts as subsidiary occupations in their spare time. Always they are first of all peasants, supporting their families by the cultivation of their fields" (Lorimer in Müller-Stellrecht 1979: 90). This statement by the late D.L.R. Lorimer (1876-1962), who spent 1934/35 working as a linguist in Hunza, holds true today. In the following part, I shall focus on innovations in the different fields of traditional crafts in Nager and Hunza.

Silversmithing

The silver and goldsmiths (*Zargar*) of Nager belong to the Kashmiriting, a clan originally from Kashmir. They chiefly worked for the royal family and other nobility, but also made bridal jewellery for the common people. Today, they have almost given up their craft. Only in the villages of Uyum Nager-Khay, Uyum Nager-Dalum Chamaling and Sumaiyar-Jatorkhan is there one silversmith still working on a part-time basis. As these master craftsmen do not train apprentices any more, the craft is dying out. Nostalgically sticking to their tradition, they still use the old tools inherited from their forefathers.

In neighbouring Hunza the last two practising silversmiths were more innovative and had already imported new tools from Gilgit. A third one, an old man from Altit, has almost given up his craft. None of them has an apprentice. From the 13 different types of traditional silver jewellery, only a few items are still ordered for a bridal set. Since the 19th century

¹³ Frembgen 1985 a. It should be mentioned that the role of traders, for example of Gujars, itinerant craftsmen, Pathans, etc., as "transmitters" of innovations has not yet been studied in detail.

¹⁴ Frembgen 1985 a: 205-206.

some of these pieces had been decorated with imported glass beads instead of the locally found precious and semi-precious stones traditionally used for that purpose. In addition, special gold embroidered shoes (*zare kabshamuts*) for the bride were imported at that time from Kashmir and Peshawar, while today they are bought in Gilgit.

Nowadays the Nagerkuts and Hunzukuts as a rule buy jewellery from the Kashmiri and Hazara silversmiths in Gilgit. It is of inferior quality and in no way comparable to the pieces produced even 40 or 50 years ago. The community of silversmiths in Gilgit consisted until 1947 only of Kashmiri and two Hindus. After partition, two *Zargars* from Baffa (Hazara District) and one from Taxila migrated to Gilgit. Many Kashmiri jewellers took advantage of the new economic possibilities after the completion of the KKH and became traders, contractors, etc. Several craftsmen from Baffa and Balakot (Hazara District) responded to the demand for silversmiths in the expanding town. In the time of Ayub Khan, these Hazarawal (ethnic Awan) got special credits through the "House Building Finance Corporation".

With regard to the use of new imported tools, it is important to note that the leather bellows (*phushun*), are still used in Nager but no longer in Hunza and Gilgit. Today the Gilgiti and Hunza craftsmen work with electric or hand wheeled blowers (*banta*), such as those made by the "Diamond-Company" (Karachi). In addition, silversmiths use the following imported tools and materials: small saws, sandpaper (*chaghishum chapis*), blowpipes (*gabi*), Bunsen burners (*barnal*) for soldering, solder (*tanka*) and clay crucibles (*gutali*).

The immigrant Gilgiti silversmiths introduced new types and variations of jewellery. Some examples may be mentioned: the standardised form of the necklace (*har*) with a central brooch has been common since the 1930s and 1940s and was actually borrowed from Kashmir (fig. 2). Heart shaped brooches have been very much in favour since the early 1980s; as a pattern these *panwala-har* (necklaces with brooches in the shape of a betel leaf) were taken from "design-books" (see below; figs. 3-4). Many new forms were also introduced for rings.

Single pieces and certain types of jewellery clearly document the recent modern changes: sometimes even "non-traditional" materials can be incorporated. In Gilgit, for example, I found a silver brooch (*bazuband*) with a curious new medallion in the centre: instead of a precious stone or a

glass stone it contained a plastic relief in the shape of a basket with fruits (fig. 5). Apart from this "transformative" response to plastic culture, other craftsmen are more imitative. For about 20 years, new earrings have been made with a small attached star. These pieces are stylistic adaptations reflecting the awareness of Pakistani down-country culture. Furthermore, for customers of Ismaili faith, jewellery elements are made which imitate the crown of the Agha Khan.

The people of Nager and Hunza know a proverb: *thoskushi besan uyoon uyam* - "everything new is pleasant"¹⁵ which also holds true for jewellery. Besides variations of traditional forms of jewellery, the use of imported "design-books" from Karachi and Rawalpindi is of incisive importance and leads to the production of very new and fashionable types of jewellery characteristic of urban Pakistani culture (fig. 3). In addition, recently, more and more gold jewellery has been sold in Gilgit's jewellery shops.

Blacksmithing

The general remarks on change in the craft of silver and goldsmiths also hold true for the blacksmiths (*Bericho*) of Nager and Hunza. As a lot of ironmongery has been imported to Gilgit since the completion of the KKH, orders for local blacksmiths have been considerably reduced. Many underprivileged craftsmen migrated to Gilgit and Karachi to look for new sources of income. In autumn 1992, for example, only two craftsmen were still working in Uyum Nager. Before the opening of the KKH, at least 20 of them had their workshops in this main village of Nager.

In colonial times, the Nager blacksmiths started to use imported tools like "Nicholson" made in the USA, and since the end of the 1970s iron ferrules (*sukanja*) instead of locally made files (*murmu*). In several cases the leather bellows were replaced in the middle of the 1980s by the Gilgit-made metal wheels pushed by a handle. Wire has been imported since the end of the 19th century¹⁶.

For about two decades, the blacksmiths have produced simple stoves (*bukhari*, fig. 6), wheelbarrows, water receptacles, buckets, cookers (fig. 7), and still earlier, folding knives. Broken aluminium vessels have been recycled and remodelled into ladles, etc. (since the British). As raw

¹⁵ Tiffou 1993: 77 (No. 1188 B).

¹⁶ Cf. Müller-Stellrecht 1979: 272.

materials for recycling are more readily available, it remains to be seen if this sector of refabrication will expand or not.

Woodcarving and Carpentry

With the import of cheap industrially produced bowls, cups, etc., the demand for turned wooden vessels came immediately to a stop at the end of the 1960s/beginning of the 1970s. Today the *tarkhan* (carpenter), who has the highest status among craftsmen, builds houses, makes agricultural tools, chests, and containers for storing grain, as well as more recently recently turned legs for tables and beds, coat hooks, etc. In Aliabad (Hunza) carpenters even started in 1994 to produce rectangular tubes with attached metal handles for churning butter as a modification of the traditional round ones (*tsaghu*) which are increasingly being replaced (fig. 8).

Wooden spoons, albeit almost eliminated in the domestic domain, are still carved especially in the Nager village of Chalt (in the so-called Shenber area of the lower Hunza Valley). Spoons of two different kinds are presently made and sold primarily to souvenir shops in Gilgit (where spoons sold in 1992 for 20 rupees and forks for 10 rupees each) and in Hunza (fig. 9/right and left). Many of the craftsmen belong to the royal family as the carving of spoons has long been considered as a true artistic skill (*hunar*). Thus, Raja Sultan Alif Khan himself invented a new form besides the traditional spoons for eating and scooping: the spoon whose scoop is perforated is used for frying *pakora*, a pastry introduced to the Gilgiti by Punjabi people. Unlike the use of the *pakora* spoon, which remained an individual habit, the *kafgir* spoon, with a broad flat scoop to serve rice, became socially accepted. It has been known since the 1930s and 1940s and was introduced together with this new food. Generally *kafgirs* are made of steel, but sometimes also of wood (fig. 9, right). Wooden carved forks are exclusively produced for sale to tourists (fig. 10).

Since 1986/87 traders from Gilgit and Hunza (Karimabad, Aliabad) have come to Chalt to buy spoons and forks (cost: 10 rupees each). To carry out a wholesale order, the most famous carver, Haji Ahsan Ali from Chalt-Paen, bought a special "Black & Decker" electric saw as well as a "Bosch" grinder in 1990 in Karachi; with these he can finish about 20-30 spoons per day. Spoons carved for tourists are generally a bit shorter than the traditional ones used in local households. Furthermore, the form of the handle's end has been modified.

Innovations can be observed in a peripheral field of woodcarving as well, namely in the making of polo sticks. Thus, the Nagerkuts have used at least six different forms of sticks during the 20th century¹⁷. Each form was introduced by a famous player and differs in length and weight of the bat. Besides these local forms of polo sticks (*mishaski pinch*), the *angrezi pinch* has been in use since the British; today it is imported from the Punjab.

In the field of wood carving and carpentry, several new tools and related techniques have been introduced during the 20th century, for example drilling machines, grinding machines, balances, and planes (figs. 10-11). Nowadays, craftsmen also buy files and knives from Gilgit *bazaar*. Some innovators are still known by name: a genuine invention is attributed to Wazir Asadullah Beg (d. 1886) from Hunza; after much effort he prepared a mixture of the outer skin of walnuts and a special black earth to colour the wooden parts¹⁸. In the time of Mir Sikandar Khan (1905-1940), the carpenter Mozahir from the Nager village of Chalt-Bala went to Kashmir and returned with a spirit-level made by "John Rabone & Sons. Birmingham" (fig. 11) as well as with a "Ding-Dong" handsaw, screw clamp, and a plane made in England. In a double-edged way the introduction of the large handsaw has made wood cutting much easier; in densely wooded regions, like Indus-Kohistan and Nuristan, it has helped to increase lumbering and has led to ruthless, excessive felling. That carpenters worked differently in the past can be concluded from D.L.R. Lorimer's remark that "... with chisel and adze they did better work than these craftsmen of today with their fine tools" (Lorimer in Müller-Stellrecht 1979: 92).

With regard to house construction, it should be noted that new hybrid forms are appearing: for example, within the central square room - the basic unit of the Nager and Hunza house - the spatial arrangement of the rear of the house with traditional architectural elements (platforms for sitting and sleeping, pillars, wardrobes) is preserved, whereas the area near the entrance may be furnished with a modern sofa, chairs, and a table for the reception of guests, thus reflecting the new prestigious lifestyle (fig. 1).

¹⁷ Frembgen 1988.

¹⁸ Müller-Stellrecht 1979: 92.

Textile Art

In addition to the traditional techniques of sewing clothes and embroidering women's caps, sleeves, collars, etc., knitting and crocheting were borrowed from the British. In colonial times British officers presented the first metal knitting needles and crochet hooks as well as textile samples to the local royal women.

A special innovation goes back to Raja Sultan Ismail from the Nager village of Rahbat near Chalt who was the only one to carve flexible needles out of ibex horn since the 1960s. As this kind of carving is delicate and time-consuming, and moreover, the raw material difficult to obtain, these needles are only found among the royal family of Nager.

As far as embroidery is concerned, samplers provide the best survey on changes in cross-stitch motifs¹⁹. New motifs, like the rider, gun, tiger, dog, and duck, are inspired by pattern-books and brochures brought from down-country. Women predominantly use them on modern even-weave fabric made into cushions, wall hangings, napkins, etc. Modern cotton or silk thread are industrially dyed and therefore brightly coloured and lustrous. Since about the 1970s, variegation has been increasingly considered old-fashioned by men and is associated with women²⁰. Therefore, men either prefer one colour or do without any embroidery at all on their coats and waistcoats.

Women's caps are still traditionally embroidered. They consist of two parts, namely the plate and the brim; in former times the brim was stiffened with pieces of bark, but today it is filled with pasteboard (packing material from corn flakes, Vasa shoes, etc.). The use of thick, imported cotton as embroidery thread has led to a considerable decline in the quality of this textile art. In neighbouring Hunza, caps are made in greater quantities for sale to tourists. Caps of inferior quality have a density of 16 (or even only 8) threads per square centimetre on the plate and 20 on the brim, whereas excellent pieces from the first half of the 20th century have 81 to 100 on the brim. Until about 1946 Nager women used local silk for embroidery which was produced in the village of Ghulmet²¹. As young women have stopped wearing these traditional caps, whose style was

¹⁹ My monograph on embroidery in the Karakorum has a special chapter on modern developments in textile art. For more detailed studies and illustrations, the reader is kindly referred to that forthcoming book.

²⁰ Frembgen Ms.

²¹ Frembgen 1989.

borrowed from the Pamir region, embroidery is slowly but steadily dying out.

Techniques and motifs of traditional embroidery partly survive on modern tea cosies, embroidered devotional pictures, "tablecloths", etc. Since 1994 an NGO based in central Hunza, called "Karakorum Handicraft Development Programme", has been promoting the production of souvenirs decorated with traditional embroidery designs (fig. 12).

Finally, a very specialised handicraft must be mentioned: the famous old tailor Nisar Ali from the Nager village Budalas, widely known in the valley as *Darzi Nisaro*, is the only one making riding-breeches (*birdis*) for polo players. In his youth he accompanied Mir Sikandar Khan to Kashmir, received some training there, and later began the manufacture of breeches in his native village. As there is a great demand for this special clothing among the polo players of Nager and Hunza, the innovation proved to be very successful.

Weaving

In each village some farmers work as part-time weavers. On horizontal looms they produce long strips of sheep wool (for caps, waistcoats, coats, etc.) and on vertical ones, Kelims made of goat-hair. With the change in dress, already mentioned above, the demand for the traditional woollen fabric called *philam* has enormously decreased as modern westernised clothes are considerably cheaper and in addition socially more recognised. Since the completion of the KKH, only a very limited amount of *philam* is now sold in the Gilgit bazaar. Until now, the looms as well as the form and patterns of the fabrics have remained unchanged. Nevertheless, in Hunza, Kelims of white artificial silk have been woven since the middle of the 1980s; the raw material is imported from Karachi. Meanwhile, it is possible to find carpets in the Gilgit hotels of a rather heterogeneous provenance: the goat-hair comes from Chilas, the threads were twisted in Hunza, and the piece was woven in Yasin by a local weaver under the guidance of an old master craftsman from Hunza. By the middle of the 1970s, Nagerkuts from the village of Pheker settled in Gilgit and specialised in the trade of woollen caps for men (today there are 11 shops on Pul Road). The fabric is made by weavers from Pheker whose women sew the caps at home; when finished, they are marketed in Gilgit.

Basketry

Household items made of willow twigs (baskets, bowls, and other vessels in different shapes) are still produced exclusively for the needs of the villagers themselves. Therefore, they remain virtually unchanged in form and technique.

However, in this field of traditional crafts too, cultural borrowing is on the increase; thus, in the Shenber area, the *chura* type of basket for collecting hay is increasingly being replaced by jute and plastic bags. Instead of the traditional woven plates for drying apricots, simple wooden planks can be seen. Ali Madad, a craftsman from Huseinabad (Hunza) who does wickerwork on a part-time basis, introduced a new form of a flat basket standing on a ring and decorated with a chiaroscuro pattern obtained by peeled and unpeeled willow twigs. In the middle of the 1980s he borrowed this type of basket used for keeping bread and fruits from similar shaped baskets brought by Pakhtun traders to Gilgit (fig. 13).

Leather Crafts

The preparation of hides and the leather-work was always of limited importance in the Karakorum. Today, in Nager there are, for example, only two families producing leather goods (bridles, saddles, sieves, bags, whips) and repairing shoes on a part-time basis.

Modern change has generally led to a great decline of this craft. Therefore, members of the socially despised occupational group of the *Shauting* increasingly work as tenants. Since the 1960s, their traditional products have been replaced by cheap linen bags for corn, metal sieves, plastic shoes etc.; nowadays, locally made leather bags are only used in remote villages.

Children's Toys

In Nager and Hunza, as everywhere in Pakistan, boys play with hoops bent from metal wire which are driven with a stick. Tin cans (imported ghee containers, etc.) are recycled and made into small cars, tractors (fig. 14)²², and other toys either by the boy himself or by his father. These toys are proof of the widespread fascination for vehicles, and are virtually icons of the modern world²³.

²² The tractor belongs to the collection of the State Museum of Anthropology in Munich (Inv.-No. 89-311 934, Coll. J. Frembgen 1989, L 20 cm).

²³ Seriff 1996: 19.

Material objects clearly reflect the dynamics of culture change. With regard to technological improvements, Nagerkuts and Hunzukuts pursue economic utilitarianism. Corresponding cultural borrowing can be found in different fields of traditional crafts, sometimes to a considerable degree. In the Karakorum as elsewhere, members of the nobility, as well as underprivileged craftsmen from the bottom rungs of society are more eager to adopt new material products; key communicators and taste-makers come from these groups of culture-brokers. However, innovations are not restricted to crafts, where the elimination of objects belonging to traditional material culture is already in full swing. The diffusion is taking place on a larger scale; Nager and Hunza are on the accepting and receiving ends of a process of contact with Pakistan's modern mass-consumer culture spreading an Indo-Pakistani "standard culture". In this context, Punjabi, Pakhtun, etc., represent the "donors". The transfer of artefacts and ideas from the southern lowland to the northern highland here implies interaction between a dominating socio-cultural system and a local culture, situated in a peripheral high mountain region which was until recently rather isolated from the subcontinent. Suzanne Seriff's notion, that "...mass-mediated images, technologies, and commercial products collide and intersect with local materials, communities, and customs on a daily basis" (1996: 20), can also be applied to the present case study. A discussion of the conflicting values, the desire for monetary gains, the problems of migration and employment, etc., is beyond the scope of this paper and can only be mentioned briefly. However, concerning the new material culture, we can argue that it is still being worked out and that we may expect a kind of hybridism as a response to change and novelty. Richard Thurnwald made the general remark that "...material objects never remain as they are, since they meet another environment, another society, other men with other aims and traditions. Consequently their function changes" (1932:560). Thurnwald probably had the colonial situation in Africa or in the Pacific in mind, where differences between confronting cultures were tremendous. In comparison, the "cultural tension" between Nager and Hunza, on the one hand and down-country on the other, is not as high according to my observations. Apart from the binding force of Islam, they share many common values, even if the forces of conservatism seem to be stronger in Nager.

Nevertheless, generally speaking traditional material culture is being lost quickly, traditional crafts and corresponding skills are on the decline, so their documentation is therefore an urgent task.

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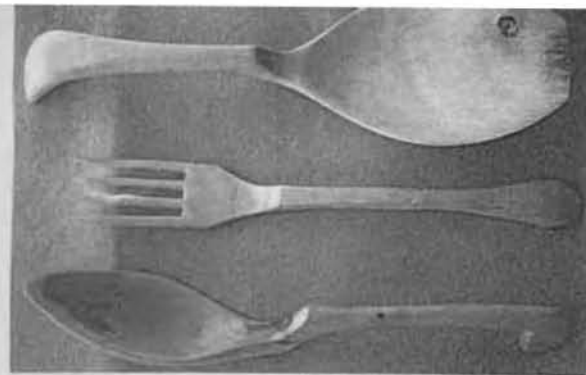
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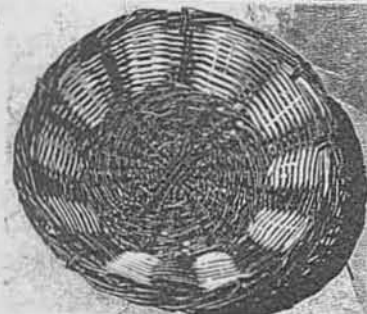


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Illustrations

n°1 Modern furnished reception room of a royal family in the Nager village of Ghulmeth (J. Frembgen, Oct. 1992).

n°2 Silver necklace with a central brooch in a jewellery shop in Gilgit, made by Zargar Hajji Khan Shirin (J. Frembgen, July 1991).

n°3 Necklace of the *panwala* type depicted in "Hanif Jewellery Design Book" (J. Frembgen, April 1992).

n°4 Panwala necklace made by Zargar Tariq Javed (Gilgit) after the design of ill. no. 3 (J. Frembgen, April 1992).

n°5 Silver brooch with medallion in the possession of a Hunza family residing in Gilgit, originally made by a silversmith from Gupis (upper Gilgit Valley) (J. Frembgen, July 1991).

n°6 Workshop of Ustad Ibrahim in Rahbat (Nager) showing stoves and various tools (J. Frembgen, Oct. 1992).

n°7 Workshop in Karimabad (Hunza) where metal is recycled and turned into cookers, buckets, pots, etc. (J. Frembgen, Oct. 1992).

n°8 Tubes for churning butter made by carpenters in Aliabad (Hunza) (J. Frembgen, April 1994).

n°9 Wooden spoons and a fork made in a Nager village of Chalt and sold in Gilgit tourist shops (J. Frembgen, July 1991).

n°10 Imported iron plane made in England, and above copied wooden plane made by the carpenter Qurban Ali in Hakalshal (Hopar/Nager) (J. Frembgen, July 1991).

n°11 Imported and locally made tools used by the carpenter Nisar Ali in Chalt-Bala (Nager): spirit-level made by "John Rabone & Sons. Makers, Birmingham", file made in China, plane made in USA, tools for wood turning made by local blacksmiths, and adjustable pliers made in England (J. Frembgen, Oct. 1992).

n°12 Embroidered souvenirs sold in a tourist shop in Karimabad/Hunza (J. Frembgen, Nov. 1996).

n°13 Basket made by Ali Madad from Hunza (J. Frembgen, April 1992).

n°14 Tractor with trailer made by the 13-year-old Amanullah from Altit/Hunza (S. Autrum Mulzer/State Museum of Anthropology, Munich).

WORK AND NUTRITION IN HIGH ASIA

*Theoretical Framework, Methods and Main Results of a Comprehensive Study on the Production-Reproduction-System in Northern Pakistan*¹

Hiltrud Herbers

Research on nutrition has a long tradition in geography. At present, problems concerning food and nutritional security in developing countries are particularly topical.² Yet, such research with reference to high mountain cultures in the so-called Third World is lacking. This deficiency provided the impetus to undertake such a study in Northern Pakistan. However, during field work it soon became obvious that the economic and social activities of the local people are not exclusively dedicated to securing food and nutrition. Rather, their endeavours are part of a wider concept of reproduction.

Work and nutrition as basic links between production and reproduction

In this paper reproduction is defined as the maintenance and restoration of human life and the human capacity to work. The term can further be divided into generative and regenerative reproduction. The first term refers to human propagation (sexuality, birth etc.), upbringing, education and socialization of children; the latter to nutrition, clothing, habitat, health and the psycho-social care of all age groups. Hence, generative reproduction relates primarily to human development before the individual enters working life, whereas regenerative reproduction refers to the daily care and maintenance of people during their whole life span (Edholm, Harris & Young 1977; Elwert 1985; Kitschelt 1987; Harris 1989). The main institution which is responsible for reproduction is the domestic unit. However, this unit is a part of a larger social network and always interacts with other institutions (e.g. public school, development agencies) which also contribute to the reproduction of individuals as well as of the society as a whole (Evers & Schiel 1981; Elwert 1983; Räder 1993).

Reproduction is closely connected with production, a fact already emphasised by K. Marx and F. Engels (Engels 1892; Marx & Engels 1932; Beetz 1989). In capitalist societies, this relationship has to be established

¹ For the full presentation of the findings, see Herbers 1998.

² See Bohle 1993; Bohle et al. 1991, 1993; Chambers 1983; Maxwell 1990; Sen 1981; Watts & Bohle 1993; Wisner 1993.

over labour and commodity markets. In non- (or less-) capitalist societies, by contrast, the linkage is much stronger. Economic returns which are not necessary for subsequent productive steps (e.g. seeds) are consumed and thereby utilised for reproduction.

On the household level this process exhibits the following pattern: People either produce raw plant and animal materials themselves or they buy these products from the market with money earned in different income sectors. After being processed, foods and other goods are consumed by household members primarily in order to meet nutritional needs. If the supplies suffice, the physical maintenance of the individuals concerned is secured. Consequently, the working population will be able to continue their productive and reproductive activities, thus keeping up the perennial cycle of production and reproduction.

It is evident that work and nutrition are the main links between production and reproduction; the yields of one are the requisite of the other. Deficits or disturbances anywhere in this process inevitably have negative consequences for subsequent steps. For instance, long-term inadequate nutrition impedes reproduction. In this case, the working ability of the people affected might be reduced, which hinders them in their efforts to perform productive and reproductive tasks.

In developing countries, production and reproduction occur under specific conditions. The majority of people utilise a variety of income sources in an effort to provide the household with food and goods. Subsistence agriculture and the reciprocal exchange of goods between relatives and neighbours play a major, but not necessarily predominant role. In many parts of developing countries, as in Northern Pakistan, most peasants possess land holdings too small to be self-sufficient. Thus, they have to earn an additional income by wage employment or marketing local commodities. However, low wages and low prices for local products result in a situation in which the cost of reproduction cannot be met through these sources alone. Thus, a large number of households are *combined subsistence-labourer-families* (Evers & Schiel 1981: 322), i.e. they can neither sustain themselves exclusively from their land, nor can they subsist without it. Hence, the costs of reproduction have to be met in part by subsistence production and reproductive services performed by non paid household members, particularly of the female sex. The rearing of children and housework are typical tasks which women perform without any pay.

Nevertheless, their contribution to production and reproduction is usually undervalued, because work is generally evaluated in terms of money instead of the work load and time spent in its execution. Despite their multisectoral engagement, many peasants' households cannot meet the basic needs of their members and thus live on a very low reproductive level (Elwert & Wong 1981; Elwert 1983, 1985; Evers 1987).

Methods and measures to estimate workload and nutritional status

Research on the production-reproduction-system has mainly been dealing with questions concerning production, mostly ignoring the area of reproduction. Work and nutrition in particular — the crucial links between these two spheres — are rarely included in analyses. Thus, a research project was initiated to focus on these two aspects in order to partially fill this gap. The high mountain valley of Yasin in the most northern section of Pakistan was selected as study site because subsistence production and wage labour — and hence production and reproduction — are still interdependent here. Work and nutrition were examined under these conditions on a microlevel, i.e. on the level of households and individuals. Due to the fact that this study was carried out by a female geographer (and nutritionist), it also gives insight into the women's sphere in an Islamic society — a sphere generally inaccessible to men, be it natives or researchers.

The data was collected during some 20 months (September 1991 - December 1992 and August 1993 - December 1993) of field work. Due to the lack of a public transport system, investigations were concentrated on the villages of Sandi and Barkulti, both located in the centre of the valley. To gather basic information on the socio-cultural, historical and political background of the area, open interviews with local representatives were conducted. Questionnaires were filled out with reference to 41 households so that the degree of self-sufficiency and the dependency on the markets could be estimated; a food balance sheet was also drawn up from this data. Moreover, 146 time-allocation-studies were carried out to highlight the organisation and division of work within and between households. For this purpose, the interview-partners had to describe all activities performed on the previous day. This data allowed for a calculation of the workload of each individual expressed in both working hours as well as the energy expended for work and other activities. For a nutritional survey, the weight and height of 175 children under six years old and their (100) mothers were

measured. Apart from the anthropometric inquiries, the survey also included questions concerning nutritional habits and health status. In addition, the same anthropometric data was taken from 104 men of the same age-group as the mothers, such that a comparison of female and male nutritional well-being could be made. With respect to several villagers detailed reports were made which listed, for each individual, all their activities as well as the kinds and quantities of foods consumed during a twenty-four hour span. These reports were used to evaluate the individual balance between the expenditure and the intake of energy and nutrients. However, this method is not only quite time-consuming, but also requires the full confidence of the person being examined. For this reason, only ten detailed reports were made from interviews with exemplary individuals. All interviews held in Yasin — regardless of their final purpose — were introduced with general questions on household composition, land size, the number of livestock and fruit trees, etc. Data of this kind were gathered from 98 households in Sandi and from 60 households in Barkulti.

Quantitative methods were supplemented by participant observation. Living in a host family and speaking the local language, Burushaski, greatly facilitated a deeper understanding of the local way of life in general and work and nutrition in particular. Reports from the colonial period found in the *India Office Library and Records* in London, recent but unpublished manuscripts from government institutions and developing agencies such as the *Aga Khan Programme* as well as common literature completed the data basis.

Environmental and historical conditions of production and reproduction in Yasin

At an altitude of 2,160-2,750 m, the Yasin valley is located in the transition zone linking the Hindu Kush and the Karakorum. Its location has two consequences for the economic activities of the people. Firstly, agriculture has to be performed in a harsh climate and environment at the upper limit of the ecumene. Secondly, a distance of more than 100 km — a one-day trip by jeep — has to be covered if one wants to reach the town of Gilgit and the Karakorum Highway, both important for trade and commerce. Thus, Yasin finds itself in a comparatively isolated location, and this will most likely not change even in the distant future. Nevertheless, living conditions have improved during the last 100 years. The beginning of British rule meant the dissolution of the autonomous but arbitrary princely

states and, hence, the end of wars and slavery. The first schools, dispensaries and shops opened in the valley. After the independence of Pakistan in 1947, a successive integration of the Northern Areas, including Yasin, into the national administration occurred. Since then, the development of roads and the spread of markets in the area has resulted in a better and continuous access to food supplies for the growing population of Yasin; the number of inhabitants increased from 6,310 to 27,500 between 1901 and 1991.

Due to the constraining conditions mentioned above, a multi-resource economy has evolved in Yasin. The mixed mountain agriculture comprised of crop cultivation on irrigated fields, horticulture, gardening and animal husbandry is one main pillar of production. The other major source providing the households with food and goods is monetary income from non-agricultural jobs. In addition, there are a number of secondary occupations such as gathering wild plants or exchanging resources between households which also help to earn a living. This highly diversified economy is the prerequisite for the regenerative reproduction of the people.

Work organisation and workload

Aside from the many productive activities, a large number of reproductive tasks have to be tended to by the peasants' households. The organisation of work shows significant daily and seasonal variations. Activities associated with cultivation and gardening have a distinct seasonal rhythm, whereas housework and child care follow the same daily pattern throughout the year. Livestock rearing, on the other hand, takes an intermediate position: Animals have to be tended and fed every day, but the fact that the high pastures can only be utilised temporarily during the summer means that herding activities differ according to the season. While housework and child care remain tasks for the female household members, both men and women are involved in cultivation and animal husbandry. Yet, even here their tasks are differentiated along gender lines. Only a few activities such as harvesting are performed jointly. As a result of the recent increase of male off-farm employment, women are performing more and more tasks formerly done only by men (e.g. irrigation).

Labour division by sex is probably the most obvious criterion of work allocation; yet, age and status are other important factors. Among female household members, it is always the oldest woman who possesses the highest authority. In keeping with her rank, she controls all food

resources, performs the least exhausting tasks and allocates the remaining work to the younger labourers of her household. The youngest daughter-in-law is usually in charge of food preparation and housekeeping; the others assist their mother-in-law in the garden or with the livestock. Because unmarried daughters nowadays are frequently enrolled in school, they only help at home during seasonal labour peaks, especially during the harvest of apricots and grain. Similar patterns of labour division prevail for male household members who — in contrast to women — cooperate for many tasks with neighbouring households (e.g. transport and spread of manure or mechanical threshing). However, there are in reality many exceptions to this "general rule" of labour management in extended families as it is presented here.

Differences also exist between permanent settlements and summer villages. In the latter, only two adult household members, usually a man and his wife, are responsible for all duties. Apart from cultivating barley, men cut firewood for the winter and frequently return to the homestead in the permanent village to pick up supplies for the summer household. In addition to animal rearing, their wives perform all of the housework, look after the children, process milk and — if there is time left — cut hay and collect wild food plants.

The time-allocation-studies show that women work an average of 9 h 35 min every day, whereas the daily average for men was 7 h - that is women in Yasin work longer than men. The often heard argument that men work harder could not be verified in this valley. Although the men's total energy expenditure of 2,901 kcal is higher than that of women (2,714 kcal), their work induced energy expenses of 1,521 kcal is considerably lower than the 1,618 kcal for women. Moreover, it must be emphasised that these results do not include the burden of child care, which young women have to shoulder. It was impossible to record such activities; they were either performed simultaneously with other duties, or they were neglected during the interviews because local people do not consider them to be real work.

At first, the two figures — the working time and the energy expenditures of men and women — do not appear to be extraordinarily high. In many countries, people work much longer and harder than in Yasin. Yet, further analyses of the data show remarkable deviations in workload according to age, household composition, farm size and other parameters (see Fig. 1). Young women, particularly if they are daughters-

in-law, women of large households, men who simultaneously pursue full-time jobs and work on the farm, farmers who are younger than 30 years or manage the farm alone, and especially women and men in the summer villages have a workload which exceeds the average by far.

Fig. 1: Workload according to age, household composition and season

	Working time (h-min)	Work induced energy expenditure: (kcal)
Women		
• average	9-35	1,618
• <40 years old	10-55	1,718
• of households with >3 female adults	10-05	1,683
• during summer season (May - July)	11-14	1,935
• during winter season (Nov. - Jan.)	7-13	1,203
• in summer villages	12-18	2,129
Men¹		
• average	7-00	1,521
• <30 years old	7-43	2,178
• during summer season (May - July)	9-27	1,388
• during winter season (Nov. - Jan.)	4-28	872
• in summer villages	10-53	2,652
• with additional off-farm employment	8-46	1696

¹ If not mentioned otherwise farmers without an additional non-agricultural employment.

Source: Author's data 1992/93

Furthermore, significant seasonal variations in the workload have to be taken into account. The working time of both sexes is highest during the irrigation period (May - July) and during the harvest (August - October).

Likewise, the heaviest physiological workload for women falls within these two periods, whereas men work particularly hard throughout the months of field preparation (February - April) and during the harvest. Due to the reduced workload and better food from replenished stores, the winter months (November - January) represent a time of recreation and restoration for men and women — with the noticeable restriction that housework and child care remain daily chores that the women alone must tend to (see fig. 1).

Food consumption, nutritional status and working capacity

A major outcome of work devoted to subsistence production and off-farm employment is the supply of different kinds of food. These are a prerequisite for regenerative reproduction. The manifold economic activities of the peasants result in a great variety of foodstuffs. Yet, insufficient yields, seasonal variability and limited food diversity on local markets constrain the actual nutritional basis. For these reasons, a rather monotone daily diet consisting of large amounts of wheat bread and salted tea prevails in Yasin. Indigenous dietary conceptions, such as the classification of all food items into "hot" (*garum*) and "cold" (*sext*) according to their effects on the organism, or the Islamic grouping of permitted (*halal*) and forbidden (*haram*) food, do not further limit the nutritional spectrum. By contrast, negative consequences arise from the intrahousehold food allocation, which gives preference to men and disadvantage to women. This is surprising in light of the fact that the women have exclusive control over all household food stocks.

In order to compare the people's work-related energy expenses with the real energy supply, a food balance sheet was drawn up for Yasin. It showed that only 88% of their energy needs are being met. While men and women combined expend an average of 2,808 kcal per day, their intake amounts to a mere 2,462 kcal. To make sure that the energy requirements of all household members are adequately met, the energy intake on a food balance sheet should be at least as high as 110%. Although this figure is not met in Yasin, the people evidently do not have the sensation that they are continuously hungry — presumably due to their voluminous diet, which is rich in fibres and fills the stomach without meeting the actual nutritional requirements.

Precise information on the balance of macro- and micro-nutrients with selected villagers was obtained by reports which minutely detailed all

activities and the total food consumption of these individuals. These records showed that a monotonous and poor diet does not necessarily result in a deficiency of all nutrients, whereas even a balanced diet might not prevent such a deficiency due to inadequate absorption or to an excessive loss of nutrients during infections or disease related illnesses. Poor hygiene, low sanitary standards, and especially contaminated drinking water are the main causes of ill-health. Apart from energy related malnutrition, the most common nutritional problems which result either from an unbalanced diet or from health disorders stem from iron deficiencies (especially with women), from iodine deficiencies (as in most high mountain areas), and probably from calcium or other vitamin deficiencies.

The long-term nutritional and health conditions were evaluated by various anthropometric indicators, i.e. height-for-age, weight-for-height and weight-for-age with children and the body mass index ($BMI = \text{weight} / \text{height}^2$) with adults. In children, there was a high prevalence of stunting (low height-for-age), which contrasted with the relatively low incidence of wasting (low weight-for-height) (see Fig. 2). Hence, chronic protein-energy-malnutrition is the main problem in Yasin. Yet the malnutrition is rather mild and the anthropometric status is generally better in the case study area than in the lowlands of Pakistan. However, the situation of both groups is unacceptable because inadequate nutrition and poor health can impair the children's immune system as well as their mental and physical development. If these deficits are not alleviated during childhood, stunted children often become stunted adults. In fact, many adults in Yasin are comparatively small and have a low body mass index. Women are far more affected than men (see fig. 2), but in both sexes mild cases of chronic malnutrition are widespread. As with Yasin's children, the anthropometric status of adults, especially of men, is better than in other parts of Pakistan. Therefore, with reference to nutritional and health conditions, this high mountain region is not as backward as often claimed.

Fig. 2: Malnutrition in Yasin

Affected groups	Proportion of all measurements (%)
- Children with chronic malnutrition (low height-for-age)	53,2
- Children with acute malnutrition (low weight-for-age)	2,2
- Women with low BMI (<18,5)	22,6
- Men with low BMI (<18,5)	8,8

Source: Author's data 1992/93

Insufficient anthropometry poses a public health problem in Yasin because about one quarter of the women and almost 9% of the men suffer from chronic malnutrition or health deficiencies. It is likely that these adults work with reduced working capacity and that their immune system is weakened. Women with a low anthropometry often face additional difficulties during pregnancy and delivery (higher occurrence of abortions, stillbirths, infants with low birthweight, etc.). These impediments can become particularly serious during seasons of heavy workload, especially if these coincide with diminishing food stocks, such as in the spring. Further weight losses are often observed during these months. Therefore, a portion of the population of Yasin always has an insufficient caloric intake, while another portion lives on a diet which is at the lower margin of that which one could call sufficient, and periodically falls below this limit. Because the real extent of the problem is not clearly visible and local people seem to perform their productive and reproductive duties well, outsiders often conclude that they are healthy and faring well. This, however, is a misconception. Although there are neither dramatic clinical symptoms of malnutrition nor breakdowns of the local production system, there is a hidden hunger which permanently affects the people's working capacity and quality of life. This is a major obstacle for further development not only in Yasin, but in practically all developing countries.

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*THE HISTORIC CITIES SUPPORT PROGRAMME OF THE AGA KHAN TRUST
FOR CULTURE COMPLETES THE RESTORATION OF BALTIT FORT*

Stefano Bianca

Centuries-old landmark of Islamic architecture, brought back to splendour, is returned to its community as a cultural centre and economic force. Located at the top of a natural amphitheatre in Pakistan's rugged Hunza Valley, where it dominates an age-old settlement close to the great Silk Route, Baltit Fort has been described as "the most impressively-situated medieval castle in the world" (C.P. Skrine, *Chinese Central Asia*, Methuen, 1925). Founded more than seven centuries ago as a compound of houses with a defensive tower, then expanded and improved through a series of some seventy construction phases, the Fort was for many years the residence of the Mirs of Hunza, who ruled this high valley between China and the Indian sub-continent until Hunza became part of Pakistan's Northern Areas in 1974.

By that time, Baltit Fort had been abandoned. Though it still was considered to be the defining landmark of Hunza, the walls were leaning, the roof was full of holes, and the empty rooms were covered with mud and graffiti. Such was the situation in 1985, when the heir to the former Mir of Hunza appealed to His Highness the Aga Khan, as leader of the Ismaili community, to consider ways to save Baltit Fort from further decay, and if possible to restore it to its former splendour. The work began in earnest in 1991 through the newly created Historic Cities Support Programme (HCSP) of the Aga Khan Trust for Culture.

These efforts finally came to fruition on Sunday, September 29, 1996, when the Historic Cities Support Programme (HCSP) inaugurated the fully restored Baltit Fort, which is now being used as a museum and cultural centre serving both residents and visitors. Simultaneously, a public foundation called the Baltit Heritage Trust took ownership of the Fort, which it will maintain and operate as a focal point of the economic, social, and cultural development of the rapidly urbanising village of Karimabad. To ensure that the architectural restoration of Baltit Fort will be matched by a self-sustained rehabilitation process in the historic village, the Aga Khan Trust for Culture has been instrumental in founding two additional local organisations: a non governmental Town Management Society, and its

technical services agency, the Karimabad Planning Support Service, both of which receive technical assistance from the HCSP.

"The dual task of applying international conservation standards to a structure as complex as Baltit Fort and of injecting compatible new uses into the restored architectural shell was a highly sensitive one," says Stefano Bianca, Programme Director of the Historic Cities Support Programme. "As the prime historic landmark of Hunza, the Fort is a major tourist attraction and a potential source of income for the local community. It can therefore be expected that the restoration project itself will act as a dynamic factor of change. The Historic Cities Support Programme has set out to assist the community in assessing the available development choices, with a view toward preserving and managing cultural and environmental values, while at the same time benefiting from the economic opportunities."

"Though we take great pride in the work accomplished so far," he continues, "we do not claim to have provided all the answers for the future development of Karimabad. Neither do we intend for the Karimabad planning project to freeze the area's physical conditions. Our principal aim was to provide an effective frame of reference for further deliberations and consistent action in years to come."

History of Baltit Fort and its Restoration

Baltit village is a very old settlement, where the original dwellings were single- or double-story houses with attached animal pens. One or two of these compounds, with a defensive tower attached, were constructed on a glacier moraine pinnacle and so became the core of a grand, continually evolving Fort. The Fort's owners were in an excellent position not only to control the valley's water supply but also to raid the trading routes between Persia and China, some 200 miles to the north. These lucrative activities allowed the owners to expand and improve the Fort many times, adding various towers and then a second story. The remodelling continued into the early 20th century, when the Mir of Hunza transformed the entire top floor into a palace, with some features drawn from British colonial buildings of the Punjab.

Although Baltit Fort was in a precarious condition when it was examined in 1979 by Richard Hughes and Didier Lefort, who were later to become consultants to the Trust, the building still dominated contemporary

life in the valley and still exerted a distinctive character. The massive structure remained delicately poised atop the soil cliff; details of its wood construction revealed how the Fort had been conceived to resist earthquakes. Moreover, the archaeological value of the site and structure was considerable, yielding strong evidence of a continuous evolution and very few signs of modern alterations. The structure was a masterpiece of craftsmanship, thoroughly adapted to climate and functions. The team considered it important to preserve Baltit Fort, not only as a legacy for posterity but also for the lessons it might provide about environmentally suitable building technology.

The Aga Khan Trust for Culture began supporting planning efforts for the restoration in 1985; but it could not sponsor active work on the structure until the former Mir of Hunza generously donated the Fort to the Baltit Heritage Trust (BHT), an entity established by the Government of Pakistan for the purpose of owning and operating the property. This donation to a public entity was accomplished in 1989. In 1991, the Aga Khan Trust for Culture began to fund conservation of Baltit Fort. It has committed over \$1.5 million to the restoration effort and associated activities, joined by the Getty Grant Programme and by NORAD, the Norwegian bilateral aid program.

Since this was to be the first conservation project undertaken in the Northern Areas of Pakistan, the Trust placed special importance upon introducing international conservation standards and conceiving the project as a teaching process. A number of young architects and engineers from the Northern Areas were provided with training through courses held at York University in England and at UNESCO's International Center for Conservation in Rome during the less-active winter months. The Aga Khan Housing Board, with its proven building expertise in these areas, took on the responsibility for construction management, hiring all site workers from the local community.

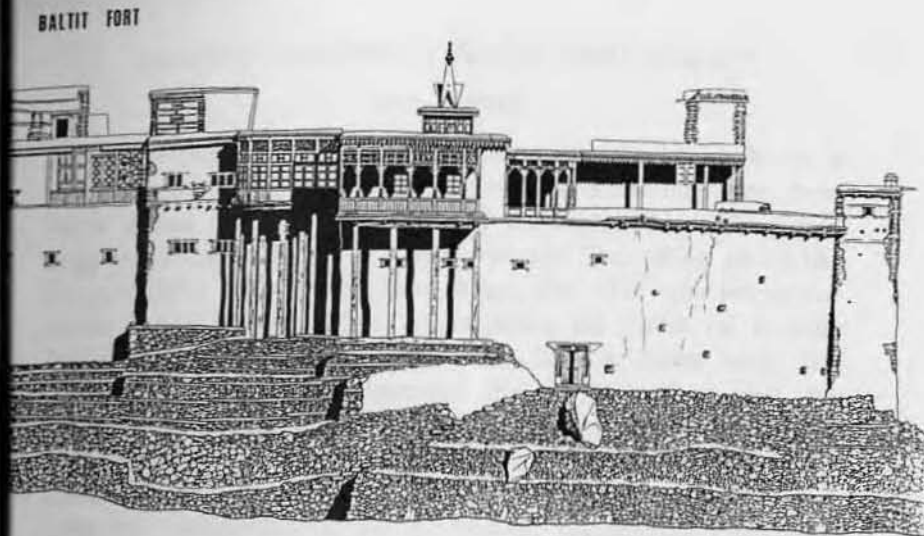
Whenever possible, original construction techniques and materials were used for repairs. The site team restored the physical shell to a satisfactory state of stability, strengthening the floors, roofs, and load-bearing walls. Minor functional adjustments were needed to adapt the building to its new use as a museum and cultural centre; these included the addition of basic electrical and plumbing services, a small pantry, toilets, and an emergency exit. In some instances, advanced technology was

introduced, such as tie-ropes and geo-mesh soil stabilisation to remedy serious structural problems. These interventions have been clearly indicated and differentiated from the preserved or restored elements.

The main rooms of the new cultural centre have been accommodated on the first floor of the Fort, around a small courtyard. A traditional living room with a covered roof opening serves for audio-visual presentations; on the other side of the courtyard are a library and study centre, with their floors suspended above the excavated archaeological areas of the Fort. The traditional rooms on the lower floor, with their attractive carved timber columns and beams, have been kept as they were and highlighted with integrated light fixtures. The more palatial rooms on the second floor provide spaces to exhibit what is left of the private collections of the Mir, including antique carpets, furniture, ceremonial robes, and weapons.

The ongoing evolution of Karimabad from a secluded rural settlement into a contemporary town may well be accelerated by the inauguration of the cultural centre and museum in Baltit Fort. In the absence of conventional municipal institutions, the Historic Cities Support Programme has therefore established the Karimabad Planning Support Service (KPSS), with architect and social organiser Essa Khan as its full-time manager.

Through its professional staff, and with the assistance of Masood Khan, an American planner of Pakistani origin, KPSS is providing development guidance at the grass-roots level. It is helping the local community to manage the problems of infrastructure, traffic, and environmental pollution; to promote the renovation of historic stone houses in the village, while introducing modern sanitary facilities and basic services; to design guidelines and aid in the development of houses, shops, hotels, and townscape improvements; and to build new, environmentally sensitive cluster housing. It is the hope of HCSP and the Aga Khan Trust for Culture that this aspect of the project will set an example for development in other rural areas in the north of Pakistan. For implementing these activities, KPSS relies on the social network of the village organisations that have been established over the past fifteen years through the Aga Khan Rural Support Programme. Some of the concepts used by KPSS have been developed in close co-operation with a research project carried out at MIT.



Satya Shrestha

Population movement within Nepal and across the border is not a very recent phenomenon. Historically, population migration from Nepal started during the unification of the small principalities into a large nation-state, Nepal, by Prithvi Narayan Shah, King of Gorkha (Regmi 1971). Major out-migration began after 1816 with recruitment in the Indian and the British armies during the British raj in India due to the post-war period (Regmi 1971; Elahi & Sultan 1985). The later out-migrants were attracted by tea plantations and the construction works in Assam, Darjeeling, Garhwal and Kumaon (English 1985) and the reclamation of land for rice-fields in Assam (Shrestha 1985). The massive migration within the country took place with the introduction of the government resettlement programme (Bishop 1993: 59) after the eradication of malaria from the Terai in the 1950s. The government resettlement programme in the Terai belt more or less slowed down permanent emigration to India. In *Landlessness and Migration in Nepal* (1990), Shrestha discusses the phenomenon of Nepalese migration within the country in its historical, political and social contexts. He emphasises internal migration as a solution to the economic and ecological problems of the Nepalese hills.

However, the temporary or seasonal migration beyond national boundaries continues to supplement family incomes in the Nepalese hills, as English writes, "Hill-men continue to supplement family incomes by taking work for years at a time as road builders and timber cutters in Sikkim, Bhutan, and in India's Western Himalayan districts" (English 1985: 76). In Jumla District, seasonal migration plays a very important role in the economic life of villagers. It is one of the means of acquiring the daily necessities to sustain village life. This paper will explain seasonal migration from a single Hindu village, Botā, one of the three villages of Mālikā Botā V.D.C. (Village Development Committees), situated north of Jumla District. It does not provide any migration statistics, rather it explains social relations and the complex organisational structure of migration. The

¹ This research is generously financed by the programme "Histoire et devenir des paysages en Himalaya", CNRS, UPR 299, Meudon.

research was conducted between September 1996 and March 1997 in Botā. The author herself accompanied the trading groups from the village to Nepalgunj, the exit point to India. It took seven days.

Geographic and Economic Context

Jumla District is the headquarters of the remote Karnali Zone in mid-western Nepal. It is a six/seven-day-walk from Surkhet (the nearest town) in southern Bheri Zone and three-quarters of an hour by plane from Nepalgunj in southern Rapati Zone.

Botā is situated at the head of the Sinjā River Valley, north of Jumla District, at an altitude of 2800m to 3000m. It is a two-day-walk from the district headquarters over a river trail and one day over the high mountain pass. The village is entirely inhabited by Hindus known as Matwāli Chetri (the Chetri who drink alcohol) and four *Kāmi* households. It is composed of 145 households and divided into several neighbourhoods or hamlets, locally called *bādo*. Each *bādo* comprises one or several long houses called *pāgri*; a *pāgri* is a group of houses called *dwāng*, constructed one after another sharing a common roof and terrace resembling a simple long house. The ground floor of a *pāgri* is called *goth* (cowshed). Each *pāgri* is usually inhabited by the same lineage and extended lineage.

The economy of the village is primarily based on agriculture on irrigated land, locally called *bhuwā*, and they own little irrigated land (*khet*). The villagers of Botā (Botāl) also raise livestock, especially sheep and goats. Since the creation of the Rārā National Park along the village border, the livestock have drastically decreased. To supplement income caused by this loss, the villagers increasingly depend on seasonal migration to sustain their lives in the village.

Despite the importance of seasonal migration in the village economy, this practice is mostly popular among the Sinjāl (the inhabitants from the Sinjā Valley where Botā is located are referred to by the term 'Sinjāl) and the Bhotya of Mugu District in Karnali Zone. The latter group lives in an area unsuitable for agriculture and concentrate more on trading. Although the Sinjāl live in a relatively good agricultural area, their trading is more diversified. The Sinjāl are known for their trading skills among the people of Jumla, their

southern neighbours and even in India. According to Bishop (1970: 21), the Sinjāl have inherited this trading tradition from the Malla period when Hāt Sinjā (one of the villages of Sinjā Valley) was the summer capital of the Malla kingdom, between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries. The word *hāt* refers to a "market".

The Botāl differentiate two types of migration; the first is labour migrants to Nainital. They stay away from the village for a long period: from seven/eight months to three/four years. The other migration is to *deśa*, which means, according to Turner's Nepali dictionary, "country, territory or region", but for the Botāl, migration refers to the plains of the Terai and India, where they go for trading rather than labour. Those migrants are called *haṭhauro*² and are away from the village for only three or four months from October/November to February/March. The trading trip is carried out every year at the same time and only men participate; a few low-caste women, especially the *Damāi* (tailors), accompany their men on this trip. This paper will deal only with trading migrants.

Preparation

In Botā as well as in the Sinjā Valley as a whole, seasonal migration coincides with agricultural work. By the end of October and November, the agricultural work for the year is over and the new cycle does not begin until February or March. Between this period the men are free while the women are occupied throughout the year. Winters are very cold in this region and men state that they do not like winters. Instead of staying home in the cold, doing nothing, they would rather earn some money during their leisure time to supplement their daily necessities and to also save some grain at home. Moreover, shovelling snow off the roofs is considered women's work, thus the men explain, "we would rather go to India than to throw women's snow" (*āimāiko hiū phālno bhandā deśa jānu jāti*).

² The word *haṭhauro* must have been derived from *haṭh* which means "fair" or "bazaar" in Kāśmiri. In Nepali the word is written *hāt* (Turner 1990, first ed. 1931: 635) and the market takes place periodically in a given territory. The only migrants who go to the Terai or India for three or four months are called *haṭhauro* and they go almost every year. Thus, the migrants returning from *hāt* are called *haṭhauro*.

The villagers meticulously plan their migration weeks in advance. Everyone prepares enough rations—flour, rice and beans—for the journey to Surkhet (the nearest large town from the village). The migrants form a group of seven or eight members³ of diverse ages and not necessarily from the same lineage or extended lineage. Age plays a very important role in the organisation of the group due to the division of work. Hence, each group chooses a *nāike* (group leader) who will be in charge of all members during the trip. His decisions will be final and respected by all members. Most of the time, the eldest of the group is chosen as leader, because he is considered to be more experienced on trading trips to India in comparison to younger members. The group's success depends on his experience.

When everything is ready, the *dhāmi* (oracle) of the village god, Māhādeu, is consulted for the auspicious day and time of departure. If a group wants to leave immediately, they go without consulting the god; usually this only happens with groups of younger members. On the return trip, each individual brings at least one bell for the village god to thank him for his protection during their sojourn in India. If trading was good, he also brings *ghumco* (red and white cloth, usually measuring one square meter).

Departure

In the morning, everyone in the migrant families is busy preparing *arni* (different delicacies for daybreak), which should last as far as Surkhet. If someone is leaving for the first time on migration, he is called *pante*⁴ and his family has to prepare some other titbits which will be distributed among the members of the group after crossing the Hāudi *lek* (the highest pass on the way to Surkhet). While crossing this pass as a new participant, he will be carried on the back of a member of the group to circumambulate the divinity of the pass. Afterwards, he must offer the titbit or yoghurt to other

³ Sometimes the group may have ten or eleven members but it is very rare. The villagers do not like to form a big group because Indian villagers are very reluctant to give shelter to a large group and it is very difficult to organise them.

⁴ There is no mention of "pante" in the Turner dictionary but the word "panthan" in Sanskrit means "way".

members to celebrate the event. Usually young boys start participating in trading trips at the age of twelve or thirteen.

At the time of leaving home, the person who is leaving receives a *tikā* (mark of husked rice put on the forehead) from his mother outside the house on the *otālo* (terrace). Then she pours one *mānā* of husked rice in his *āncā/patukā* (a cloth tied around the hips). This rice is called *āncā māno*. The migrant keeps it with him throughout the day and in the evening he cooks it to avoid dropping it on the floor. If this happens, it is a bad omen. *Āncō māno* may be given by anyone but it is usually given by the members of one's own lineage to bring good luck. He may also receive walnuts, said to bring good luck. On his return trip, he should bring gifts to all those from whom he received *āncō māno* and walnuts.

After this ritual, the migrant directly goes to the edge of the village to wait for other members of the group. When everyone has arrived, each one hangs *dhajā* (strips of white and red cloth) and bows before the *dhutelo* (prickly shrub) which marks the boundary of the village, before leaving it behind. Just outside the village, some members of the trading trip sacrifice chickens to the shrines of *bhān* (servant of Māhādeu, the village god), and others offer red beans and *dhajā* asking for protection during their sojourn in India.

Usually all the migrants leaving on the same day travel together from the village; it looks like one group (there were five different groups with thirty members leaving together that day when I was there, but it looked like one group). Wherever they stop for a short time or to spend a night, they divide into small groups and the members of each group stay together; they do not mingle with other groups although they spend the night very close to one another.

First Day

The first day is very important for the migrants. They do not walk far; after three or four hours, they stop for the night. They say, "It is very difficult to be away from home for a long time, we want to be closer to our home at least for one night". Although they spend the night near their village, they cannot go back to their houses. Beginning the next morning, they walk all day, from early dawn to dusk.

Whenever the migrants stop to spend the first night, they split into small groups and the members of each group stay together to eat the *chakkauro* - all the members must bring around ten *tātyā* (flat cakes) for this occasion and they put them all on one plate. Then, the *nāike* (group leader) redistributes them among the members of his group, called *chakkauro khāne* ("to eat the *chakkauro*"). After having shared the *chakkauro*, all the group members are considered as one family until their return to the village; a member of one group cannot move into another group. Before *chakkauro* members can still change groups although it is not well regarded.

The group generally stops at wayside tea shops and close to the water so that they can cook their meal and spend the night. They do not carry tents like the Bhotya, shopkeepers provide shelter and some utensils if necessary but they must be cleaned before being returned to the owner. The group is responsible for its own water and wood. On the return trip the shopkeepers charge one rupee per person for shelter.

Organisation of the Group

Although part of the division of work can be observed on the way, it is revealed very clearly from the first night. When the group stops for the night, it divides into two sub-groups: elders and younger members: cooking and cleaning are assured by the younger members and the elders are in charge of security. Among the younger members, the youngest works more than the others. He brings water for cooking and cleaning and washes all the utensils after meals. He also has to ensure water supply on the journey. Whenever the group takes a break, *chāḍyā*, which lasts about half an hour, the youngest of the group has to provide drinking water for all the members. Even if the water is very close, nobody will walk to the water to drink it. Breaks are always decided by the group leader; normally a group rests after every one and one-half or two hours of walking. If someone becomes tired before, he can stop for a few minutes, *teknu*, but he will not be provided with drinking water. When meals are prepared, each member provides his share of food to be cooked collectively.

While the younger members are occupied with cooking and cleaning, the elders watch their belongings. At night they sleep

according to hierarchy. Among the elders, the youngest sleeps at the entrance, the eldest sleeps at the other extremity of the room and the middle ones sleep in the middle with the younger members. The latter are placed in the middle to protect them from thieves and bad omens. In some places, as in the lower hills, the Terai or in India, the migrants prefer to watch their belongings throughout the night; in this case, the elders assume the responsibility and let the younger members sleep.

At the end of the trading trip, the youngest receives some money (20 to 50 Indian rupees) from each member of the group as compensation for his work. There is a proverb which says "not to be the eldest at home and not to be the youngest on the trading trip" (*gharko jetho nahunu, piṭhāko kāncho nahunu*) which underscores how difficult it is to be the eldest at home because he has to look after everything and how it is difficult to be the youngest on the trading trip because he has to do most of the work.

The First Steps to India

On their arrival in Surkhet, the migrants get rid of their *ḍoko*⁵ which was used to carry food for the journey. They put it in a secure place so that they can find it on their way back. It should be noted that more than the uselessness of the basket, it designates someone as a Nepalese hill man, a stigmatisation the migrants try to avoid. Thereafter, they go to Nepalgunj by bus where they stay one or two days to borrow money. If the money can be arranged on the same day, they leave the next day for India. Indeed, most of these villagers start for India with little money and they supplement it in Nepalgunj from *baniyā* (merchants). Four merchants have long-standing business relationships with the Jumli and lend money to the Sinjāl without charging any interest. On the way back from India the Sinjāl reimburse the borrowed money and buy all the necessary cloth from the same Muslims before returning home. They have been frequenting the same merchant families for generations.

After borrowing money, they immediately leave for Gorakhpur (the largest Indian town near the border) by train. Some migrants may stay in Gorakhpur, in this case I witnessed only a small group

⁵ Bamboo basket which is carried on the back and shoulders and secured by a strap on the forehead.

of three members with more money than the others who remained in town. The others buy clothes and asafoetida with their borrowed money and set out for Indian villages selling door-to-door. They also continue to sell their "imaginative herbs" although the export of geological products and herbs from Nepal is prohibited (for details, Shrestha 1993: 103-104).

In Indian villages they seek shelter at rich men's houses, for two reasons: the first is that the shelter is free, and the second and most important, is that it provides protection. If they have any problem with the local police or if they are robbed during their stay in the village, they can always seek their host's assistance. The Jumli are very well regarded by Indian villagers. They do not know exactly where Jumla is, but they situate it somewhere in the northern mountains called *jwōlā pāhād* (blazing mountain)⁶. They think the people from the "blazing mountain" are honest and cannot cheat them. Taking advantage of their good reputation, within two or three months, the Jumli earn from 1,000 to 4,000 Indian rupees.

The Return

After two or three months the Jumli return from India. On their way home they stop in Nepalgunj to pay their debts to the shopkeepers who lent them money and to buy their necessities from them. It is not an accident to stop in Nepalgunj to buy household supplies coming from India. First it is loyalty to their money-lenders, and secondly it avoids harassment by Nepalese customs officials. It is sometimes said that the Nepalese customs officers levy duties on the cloth worn by them if it appears new. Even if it is cheaper in India, the Jumli would rather purchase their necessities in Nepalgunj to avoid customs.

To make some money from their returnee Jumli clients, a few *Damāi* (tailors) travel down to Nepalgunj with their sewing machines so that they can make clothing for them. It became a custom for those Jumli to make new outfits in Nepalgunj before heading home and they prefer to go to Jumli tailors than to a local tailor.

⁶ The name *jwōlā pāhād* is from the shrine Sire Thān where a small flame comes out of the ground and burns twenty-four hours. It is situated in Dailekh District. Once a year, in February-March, on the day of Śivratri, people from Dailekh District and its surrounding areas make a pilgrimage to this shrine.

Whatever their income is, the Jumli spend some time in Nepalgunj shopping. Their purchases consist of fabric for all the family, shoes, socks, bangles, necklaces of glass beads, sweaters, blankets, cigarettes, matches, spices, oil, sugar, molasses, utensils, soap, iron ingots and some sweets for the children. After purchasing the essentials, if money remains, they buy gold and silver for the women; usually they do not return with money.

In the village families become increasingly anxious if the trading groups do not come back within the normal time frame. The children may even go one or two villages further down to wait for the *hathauro*. When they get back, they receive *tikā* from their mothers before they enter their homes. Then all the children and young women of their own lineage come to see what they have brought back from the trading trip, receiving molasses as a gift from the returnee. From the next day, they go to visit their close relatives in the village and take some molasses for the women and cigarettes for the men.

This paper differs from the seasonal and temporary migrations explained by Gaborieau (1978), Toffin (1978), Muller (1990) and Bishop (1993). It elucidates the complex organisation of the trading cycle from Botā, Sinjā Valley. In Botā and Sinjā Valley, migration is a group phenomenon and only men participate. It coincides with the agricultural cycle. Every year the Botāl go to India at the same period in October/November after the agricultural work and they come back in February/March to begin the cycle. They stop in Nepalgunj on the way to India to borrow money and on the way back to reimburse the money and to buy necessities. It is one of the ways to sustain their lives in the village.

What is remarkable in Sinjāl migration is its codification and ritualization. The trip is not accidental but rather a fixed peregrination. It is totally integrated in village life, showing that it is a traditional practice.

In recent years, more and more villagers go to India to compensate income caused by the loss of livestock due to the Rārā National Park. Despite their regular contact with the urban world, their socio-religious life in the village is scarcely different than their grandparents', as Gaborieau states for Samjur village in Central

Nepal, "la vie qu'ils trouvent au village, la cinquantaine passée, n'est guère différente de celle qu'ils avaient connue dans leur jeunesse".

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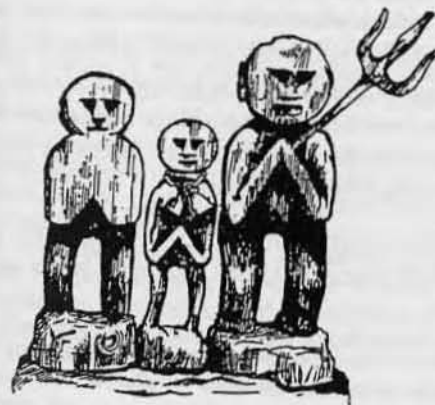
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ON FRANCIS BUCHANAN HAMILTON'S ACCOUNT
OF THE KINGDOM OF NEPAL¹

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Francis Buchanan Hamilton's² *An Account of the Kingdom of Nepal* is one of the most complete historical works on the country. Being the only reference for many of the ancient Himalayan kingdoms, it is widely quoted, and many old articles on Nepal are mere summaries of this book³. The conditions of elaboration of this pioneering and influential study thus shed some light on the way Nepal is apprehended by Westerners and even by Nepalese scholars. A first draft of the work can be found in a manuscript entitled *Some Observations on Nepal* that Hamilton wrote after his trip there in 1802-1803. It was later completed and corrected during his two stays near the Nepalese frontier in 1810 and 1814 and after the reading of Kirkpatrick's account (published in 1811). To my knowledge, the manuscript of *Some Observations* has never been utilised by other scholars than Hamilton himself. It is dated 1802 on its cover, but while this may refer to the beginning of its composition, it is certainly not the date of its termination, as Hamilton's trip ended in 1803. Hamilton refers to this manuscript in *An Account* in the following manner: "In the year 1802, when in this vicinity, I heard an imperfect account concerning this dynasty, and have mentioned them in the observations on Nepal, which I then composed"⁴. Hence, we learn that *Some Observations* was written at the time of the trip or shortly thereafter. Another clue shows that it is not a travelogue but a text written afterwards: Hamilton describes the village of Muccul Puccul (or Maka Paka) between Ettonda (Hethauda) and Bimphedi (Bhimphedi) in a narration which seems to follow his journey, but we learn in *An Account* that he went through this village only on his return, and it may thus be concluded that he included all the places he had visited on a reconstituted single journey for easier reading.

It is quite obvious that *An Account of the kingdom of Nepal* was written in reaction to Kirkpatrick's book, the latter being amply cited by

¹ I wish to thank Steve Brown for his careful reading of the first draft, and especially Mahes Raj Pant for his numerous corrections and suggestions regarding the contents.

² In 1818, Francis Buchanan adopted his mother's name, Hamilton, for inheritance purposes.

³ For example, L. Dubeux (1848).

⁴ *An Account of the Kingdom of Nepal*, p. 45.

Hamilton, and much criticised. On his side, Kirkpatrick makes clear reference to Hamilton in his preface and states that he wanted to publish both his data and those collected by the Knox mission together in the same work, but it seems that Hamilton was reluctant to share his information⁵.

There were at least two copies of *Some Observations on Nepal*, as fragments of the same text are now kept in the India Office Library⁶.

Some Observations, as well as Hamilton's other unpublished materials, render the conditions in which *An account of the Kingdom of Nepal* was elaborated more explicit and provide new data on Nepal, two components that I shall examine here.

Hamilton's correspondence to Roxburgh (quoted by S. Brown 1997) leaves no doubt that he very much disliked his mission to Nepal: "(...) the people are such cursed liars that no dependence can be put on what they say" (11 April 1802, Chitlong), "(...) We arrived here yesterday and are in sight of Catmandu in a large bare ugly valley(...)" (15 April 1802, Tancote) "I (...) wish for nothing more than to be out of it again as soon as possible" (25 April 1802, Catmandu).

⁵ One should remember that Knox was under the orders of Kirkpatrick during his first mission to Nepal. He later became the first British resident in Nepal. Kirkpatrick writes in his preface, p. xiii, that ten years after he made an account of his mission for the Government, some friends incited him to publish a book and that he then gave his manuscript to a gentleman to be embellished.

"From this time, the fate of the Work rested with the gentleman alluded to; and perhaps its appearance would not have been much longer delayed, if it had not been suggested that, as a second mission to Nepaul had taken place, since the former one in 1793, and under circumstances far more favourable to the prosecution of useful enquiry, it was probable that much new, as well as more correct information, relative to that country, would soon reach England, which, if it did not wholly supersede the necessity of the intended publication, might be advantageously engrafted upon the latter. But the expectation thus excited was not yet fulfilled, when the death of the proposed Editor once more arrested the progress of the Work, which, on that occasion, passed into the hands of the present Publisher, exactly in its original shape.

In the mean while, the latter having incurred considerable expense in preparing entirely to relinquish the publication, or to postpone it to an indefinite period; especially as the additional information, in the expectation of which so much delay had already occurred, did not any longer appear likely to be obtained." (my emphasis)

⁶ They seem to have been written by Hamilton himself as they have the same script, and furthermore the script of these manuscripts is also the same as the one used in the letter Hamilton sent in 1814 at the time of the British war with Nepal.

The entirety of *Some Observations* reflects Hamilton's feelings of exasperation, perhaps also of disappointment for this unknown and mysterious country which did not in fact reveal much to his eyes, as might be understood from his letter to Roxburgh, dated 2 March 1802: "(...) very serious objections have been made by the Nepal government to the number of Europeans (...) and (...) the strongest objections would be made to the coming of any person who had no evident employment but that of spying the nakedness of the land."⁷ It must be recalled that the British thought during the eighteenth century that Nepal was an Eldorado, full of gold mines (K.C. Chaudhuri, 1960: 4).

A first general remark is that the text of *Some Observations* has been toned down by Hamilton in *An Account*. He suppressed many of his excesses, both negative or positive, and most of the details relating to himself or his trip, creating a more impersonal text.

Though still numerous, many of the contemptuous remarks of *Some Observations* were not published in *An Account*. Thus this passage (p. 34) "Even now the common poor bullocks of the country, in one day, carry four maunds of rice from Bichiapcor to Ettonda" appears in *An Account* (p. 197), as: "Even now, cattle convey along it on their backs the usual burthen of grain."

On p. 39, he writes about the Makvanpur fort in the following terms: "(...) probably, like the other forts of the Nepalese, a place of no strength", a nasty remark which does not appear in the book. Again, on pp. 47-48 of *Some Observations*, a very scornful and humiliating passage follows a remark published on p. 202 of *An Account*, according to which the Nepalese would not construct a road for fear of their neighbours:

"Jealousy of strangers is the predominant principle in the Nepal government, and they have succeeded in keeping up that ignorance of which the Genevan Philosopher was so great an admirer. This however completely counteracts their jealous care of excluding foreigners: and exposes them to be subdued by every well informed nation, that may choose to make the attempt."

The Nepalese attitude is clearly unbearable for Hamilton who seems to lose his sangfroid here.

An amusing example of the watering down of the text can be found on p. 115 of *Some Observations*, where one reads: "Captain Knox killed

⁷ My emphasis.

two female buffalos [sic], that had been fattened entirely on grass, and they made very good beef", whereas in *An Account* they only make "tolerable beef"⁸.

The only thing in Nepal which Hamilton seemed to have enjoyed, and which is also hidden from the reader of *An Account*, is its flora, (p. 51): "Until the 14th of April we remained at Chitlong, in a situation highly gratifying to me as a botanist (...) "⁹.

It should be noted that Hamilton employs the first person plural in this last remark as throughout *Some Observations*, whereas *An Account* is composed in the first person singular and omits all references to Knox, who Hamilton was in fact accompanying during his mission. This is symptomatic in my opinion of Hamilton's radical change of status between 1802 and 1818, which can perhaps be explained by his role during the British war with Nepal in 1814. Indeed, Hamilton was solicited to deliver information on this occasion.

Hamilton as a spy

In a letter dated 21st July 1814, addressed to S. Adam, Secretary to Government, H. Fagan, from the Secret Department, writes about Hamilton:

"(...) that gentleman would be anxious to contribute to the public Service all the benefit to be derived to it from his extensive Statistical Knowledge and experience, directs me to request you will suggest to the Right Hon'ble the Governor General the propriety of conveying to Doctor Buchanan the expression of His Excellency's wish that he would communicate to you any information he may have acquired in his Journey to Nepal or in his recent tour along the Northern Frontier which might in his judgement be of use in a military point of view, and with reference to a future invasion of the Nepal Dominions."

Accordingly, Adam sent a letter to Buchanan on the 28th July in the name of the Governor General. On 19th August 1814, Francis Buchanan hastened to reply to Adam's letter received on 15th August, from Garipoor. He states therein that he was sending three maps of Nepal and then describes the easiest route to Kathmandu according to Samar Bahadur, uncle of the Rajah of Palpa, as being the one along the channel of the

⁸ Whether "good" or "tolerable", killing female buffaloes was forbidden by Nepalese law.

⁹ On the impeded career of Hamilton as Botanist, see Brown (1997).

Bagmati. He also advises taking the easy and strategic fort of Makwanpur to distract the enemy's attention, whereas the real goal would be the road to Chisapani. He then describes the road he had taken in 1802 in the very same words used in *Some Observations* ¹⁰.

There follows a long passage on politics in which Hamilton suggests using the Newar against the Gorkhali :

"The Newars who form the most numerous class of inhabitants in Nipaul proper, are, I believe, the most disaffected subjects of Gorkha, partly from the remembrance of cruelty, and partly from religious differences; and would, I am convinced, be willing to afford supplies, so soon as their fears of punishment were removed; but this might not be easy to accomplish; and although the resources of such a fine valley could not be removed without a most barbarous severity, there is little room to suppose that the present ruler of the Country would hesitate a moment about the execution, provided he has knowledge to value the importance of the measure."

Hamilton recommends taking information from the refugees, and restoring the native Chiefs to their former position, a project which had been planned on several occasions before that time to restore the commerce of the Company via the Kathmandu valley (Chaudhuri 1960) :

"The whole Dominions of Gorkha, except the petty principality of that name, are known to have lately been under the independent Government of numerous petty Chiefs, to whom the people under their authority appear to have been strongly attached. Many of these chiefs, or their immediate children, are now living in the Company's territory, fed with daily hope of assistance, the known character of the person, who manages the affairs of Gorkha, having long rendered it almost certain, that no accommodation would take place (...) they are in a state of want, that renders them highly dissatisfied (...). It is evident, that, if any advantage is to be taken of these persons' claims, no delay should be admitted, as whatever force they may have is daily diminishing."¹¹

Finally, he advises against attacking Kathmandu, and suggests sending a detachment with the four Rajas of Makwanpur, Tanahun, Palpa and Garwhal and restoring afterwards the legitimate heir of the Gorkha

family with the ancient family possessions, satisfying Bhimsen's ambition with Nepal proper, and confirming the rule of Brahm' Sahi in the country of Almora. Hamilton ends by suggesting that the British might take the whole of the Nepalese Terai, but not more, lest the Chinese interfere.

Clearly, it is not a mere letter of information that Hamilton sent, but a real strategic programme, which, it seems, was appreciated by the Governor General, as expressed in a letter dated September 9 from Adam, and which formed the basis of the policy adopted.

In fact, Hamilton had acted as a spy for the Company much before the war with Nepal, and it is even clearer from *Some Observations* than in *An Account* that our surgeon and botanist was also a spy collecting strategic information during his mission. Unpublished mentions are numerous. Thus, on p. 34. about the road from Bichiakor to Ettonda:

"For about seven miles the channel of the river serves for a road, which is enclosed by low but very steep hills and precipices, that are covered with thick woods, and form a strong barrier to the dominions of Nepal."¹²

Again on p. 37, about Ettonda:

"It is a small village containing a dozen shops, where travellers may procure grain and other refreshments, and where traders can get a small supply of porters : for goods from the Terriany are generally carried so far on bullocks, but these can proceed no farther. For the accommodation of travellers the Rajas have built a brick house, which surrounds a square court and is very capable of lodging safely a considerable quantity of goods. Was the true interest of the country understood by the Nepal government, it would make the road so far at least passable with loaded carts, which would greatly facilitate commerce; and, as hereafter will be seen, there would remain between Ettonda and Catmandu a frontier of abundant strength".

On p. 31, on the forest before Bichiakor :

"In this forest there is little or, no underwood, and the trees stand at considerable distances from each other, so that against a regular army it does not add much strength to the frontier of Nepal".

¹² When there is an underlined part in a quoted passage, it means that this part does not appear in *An Account of the Kingdom of Nepal*. When nothing is underlined, the entire passage is missing in *An Account*.

¹⁰ This probably indicates that he had not yet started drafting *An Account* at that time.

¹¹ All these letters are kept at the India Office Library, in the Home Miscellaneous Series H 644 and are published in the *Military History of Nepal. Papers respecting the Nepaul war*, pp. 2, 6, 37-46.

And lastly on p. 137, Hamilton describes another itinerary, through Pharping, which he took on his way back, with precision:

"For horses this road is certainly easier, than that by which we entered, and it is the only route by which elephants can go into the country; but it is more fatiguing for men, and is a much stronger barrier to Nepal than even Chundunghery. Some reports state, that a road practicable for carts either exists, or might be easily made on the banks of the Baagmutty all the way from Catmandu to the low country, and that the river during its whole course flows with so gentle a stream, that in the rainy season canoes might descend. How far it may be practicable to make such a road, I do not know: but I learned from a faithful servant, that followed me to the low country, and who had several times travelled the road from Catmandu to Hateoul, that on this route he had been forced to leave the banks of the river by precipices, and some of the stages had consisted entirely of bad roads passing over mountains."

Clearly then, the first draft of what was to become *An account of the Kingdom of Nepal* is less filtered than the final result and provides us an interesting insight into the conditions of elaboration of the book. More than this general context, *Some Observations* also describes the progress of the trip in detail.

Progress of the trip

This precise account of Hamilton's journey and sojourn in Nepal gives a more vivid idea of the mission¹³. Apart from the difficulties on the road, these extracts show that the members of the mission did not remain together all the time.

"Captain Knox having been appointed Resident at the Court of Catmandu, I was directed to accompany him, and accordingly in the beginning of the year 1802, I went to Patna, where he then was encamped. On the 12th of January we commenced our journey, and proceeded by slow marches to Gorasan, a village near the boundary. There we continued encamped from the 30th of January till the 19th of February, when we advanced a few miles within the frontier of the Nepal dominions, and came to a village which is named Chucheroa, and is placed near the ruins of an ancient city, that was called Gor Semeran. On the 14th of March we advanced about four miles to a small village

named Baguanpur, on the 17th we returned to Cucheroa, and on the 18th we again encamped at Gorasan, where we remained seven days. [p. 1]

On the 25th of March we proceeded towards the West, and having passed through a poor ill cultivated country, in the Bettia Zemindary, and near the frontier of Nepal, on the 28th we arrived at Jukiary, the last village in the Companys [sic] territory on the great road to Catmandu.[p.29]

On the 29th of March, at no great distance from Jukiary, we again entered the territory of Nepal, and went about fourteen miles to Gor Pursera. The country near our route is level and clear: but little of it is cultivated. An old fort, and many plantations of Mango trees show, that formerly it has been in a better state. [p. 30]

Gor Pursera is a small village with a large tank. Near it is a brick house, which was build by Singy Pritap', the present Rajas grand father, who in the cold season sometimes resided in the Terriany, on the improvement of which he bestowed considerable attention.

On the 30th of March we advanced about fourteen miles to Bichiacor. [p. 31] On the 31st of March we proceeded about sixteen miles to Hettaura or Ettonda. [p. 34]

On the way we met with some religious mendicants, who, as we passed, very charitably called out, Ah! my children you will all die of thirst, there is no water to be had for eight miles. This having been bawled out in a dismal tone by ten or twelve men reputed holy, alarmed our people, and made them fancy themselves quite exhausted with thirst, before we had advanced three miles from where they had received a copious supply of water. Accordingly on approaching a spring near the Currura, some of them flew from the road, and threw themselves down to drink with as much avidity, as if they had passed an Arabian desert. [p. 36]

On the 4th of April Captain Knox proceeded, but I did not follow until the 7th, and during my stay at Ettonda I made the following observations on that place. [p. 37]

On the seventh of April I went about eighteen miles to Bimphedi. [p. 40] The eighth of April I remained at Bimphedi (...). [p. 44]

On the ninth of April I joined Captain Knox, who had encamped about a mile above a town called Chitlong. [p. 45]

In the afternoon I proceeded about six miles, and having at first followed the principal stream of the Panouny, and then one of its

¹³ A good description of the Knox mission can be found in K.C. Chaudhuri (1960 : 119-141).

branches, I came to Captain Knoxes [sic] encampment, after having had a good view of Lahary Nepal. [p. 49].

Until the 14th of April we remained at Chitlong (...), when we advanced about four miles to Tancot in the greater valley of Nepal. [p. 51]

On the 16th of April we went to the bottom of a celebrated hill dedicated to Suembu, and continued encamped there till the twenty sixth of July, when we moved into houses, which the Regent built for our accommodation, and which were placed in a garden near a temple called Narainhutti. On the Eighteenth of March 1803 we took leave of the Court, and proceeded on our return to the Companys dominions. During this time we made frequent visits to different parts of the valley, and I shall now detail, what I observed, and what I was able to collect from the observation of the Bramin, by whom I was accompanied. [p. 52]

On the 18th of March the Resident and his suit took leave of the court, and we set out on [p.136] our return by the way of Pherphing.(...) On the 27th of April we entered the Company's territory, and in the following day I took leave of Captain Knox." [p. 137]

The context of Hamilton's journey thus clarified, we shall now turn to the data contained in *Some Observations* and which do not figure in *An Account of the Kingdom of Nepal*. In the following pages, I shall quote most of them, apart from geological observations, which are not very useful today, and agricultural data that will be quoted in a future publication.

Whether one should rummage through the deliberately unpublished accounts of others is of course a debatable point. It is certain that Hamilton made a choice when he selected extracts of his *Observations* to incorporate them in his *Account*. And one may presume that he did not make use of what he considered too personal, too imprecise or incorrect and what was diplomatically inopportune. However, given the lack of information on Nepal at that time, it seems to be a valuable source that should at least be investigated, given that the political incorrectness has been erased by time. Nevertheless, one should be careful when using this type of source and it should be underlined that Hamilton's writings as a whole have too often been quoted as a primary source and taken for granted. To give just one example, the fact that he wrote on pp. 52

and 240 of *An account of the kingdom of Nepal* that the Gorkhali kings were in fact Magar is too often cited as historical proof for this assertion. Nevertheless, Hamilton naturally remains a primary source with regard to what he observed, such as the names by which people designated their country at that time:

"The inhabitants of Nepal call their own country Hinduany, as having never been subject to foreigners; while the Company's territory, from the name of its former Lords, they call Mogulany. [p. 1] Nepal is also named Maddesh or the Central-country, for which appellation I heard no reason assigned." [p. 2]

Description of the Terai

One of the most interesting parts of *Some Observations* is the description of the Terai dominions of Nepal before their reduction caused by the British war in 1816.

"Although the Terriany forms a part of that immense plain, which separates the large mountainous tract, called Bindachul, from the still more extensive alpine region called Hemachul or Hemalichul; yet it is not so level as Bengal, but in some places rises into very gentle swells. Although the soil is free from those saline impregnations, that render sterile a great part of the Companys territory, through which we passed on our route from Patna, yet in general it is light and poor. It is however exceedingly deep; and, like the whole of the immense plain, of which it forms a part, consists entirely of alluvial earth, in which, at the greatest depths to which men have penetrated, no stone is to be found.[p. 11]

To judge from the numerous tanks and canals, it is probable, when GorSemeran [sic] flourished, that the whole of the Terriany was well peopled and cultivated: [p. 14] but, from all accounts, after the Nawars [sic] retired, it became in a great measure desolate. The Rajas of Macuanpur were always too weak to venture upon clearing a country, which they could only defend, by concealing themselves among hills and forests. According to the account of the present inhabitants, almost the whole country, about twenty years ago, was waste. In the government of Singy Pritap considerable encouragement was given to settlers from the Companys provinces. In times of scarcity advances were made to poor wretches, who at home could not procure a subsistence; and all thieves, debtors, and vagabonds were received with open arms. By these means a considerable population has been collected : but the country is still capable

of very great improvement, even on the wretched system of agriculture that now exists. [p. 15]

The Terriany, like the other parts of the dominions of Gorca, the valley of Nepal excepted, is divided into districts called Subaias, each of which is governed by a Suba, who in general holds his office for three years. In the cold season the Suba of the district, through which we passed, resides at Cucheroa; but, when the unhealthy season commences, he retires to Macuanpur. These Subas possess a jurisdiction in all matters civil and military, but their power does not extend to the inflicting of capital punishment, which can only be carried into execution by orders from the Raja. The Suba appoints his own deputy, who is called Phousdar; and, besides his authority as judge magistrate and commander of the troops, he is invested with the power of collecting the royal revenues, and particularly the rent of the crown lands. [p. 16]

The crown lands are not extensive, being only such as are reserved to defray the personal expense of the Raja. All the officers of government, all the military down to the private soldier, and even many of the domestics in the palace are paid by Chacran or Service lands, which they hold, so long as they perform the services, but of which they may be deprived at the pleasure of the Raja. There is however a considerable extent of land, which has been entirely alienated from the crown. The larger part of this has been granted either to various places of worship for the support of religious ceremonies, or to men who are reputed to be the servants of God: but a considerable portion also has been given to different branches of the royal family, and to some of the principal chiefs of Gorca, who accompanied the conquests of Prithi Narain.

In the Terriany the Crown lands are more extensive than any where else, and are divided into small districts called Jappas, each of which is placed under the management of a Chaudry assisted by a Mauzumdar or Accomptant. In order to encourage these officers to be diligent in reclaiming [p. 17] waste lands, they are allowed two anas for every Biga in their district, that is cultivated. Of this sum the Chowdry²⁴ gets ten sixteenths, and the Mauzumdar has the remainder. The Suba, whenever he pleases, has the power of removing them.

Under the Chowdries are a set of officers called Macuddum or Mahatau, each of whom manages one or more villages: and who for every hundred Begas, that he has in cultivation, gets ten Bigas of Chacran land.

Massun Row, the Maccuddum of Cucheroa, had under his care three other villages. He was a man of considerable influence, being a very notorious and barbarous robber. On this account he was greatly feared by all his neighbours, who called him Sirdar, a title of much higher rank than that even of Suba, and to which he had no manner of legal right. If we could credit the natives, his followers amounted to a thousand men able to bear arms. These at convenient times he sends into the Companys territory to steal cattle, or to commit similar depredations. When they cannot be employed in this way, which is esteemed honourable, they assist the old men and women to cultivate their fields. [p. 18]

Omne avum ferro teritur, versaque juvenum
Jerga fatigamus hasta : - semperque recentis
Conportare juvat prodas, et vivere raptis.

Such practices, it is said, are only allowed in the Terriany; and in fact, near the capital, we found the police tolerably good. The office of Macuddam [sic] is not hereditary, and is held at the pleasure of the Suba.

The farmers or cultivators of crown lands ought to give the Raja one half of the produce. But in general they give nothing voluntarily, and the Mocuddams [sic] exact from them as large a proportion of the produce, in kind, as they can, and for this purpose commonly employ flogging: and the same means are again employed by the Chowdries to make the Macuddams disgorge. Every private person, and all those who have Chacran lands make the best bargain that they can: but leases are never given, and money rent can seldom be procured." [p. 19]

This fascinating account of the state of the Terai draws a picture of a wild zone where a great kingdom once flourished, that of Gor Semeran, which had fallen into complete negligence by the end of the eighteenth century and whose cultivation was very much encouraged by the Gorkhali government of 1800. This out-lawed territory was mastered by powerful rogues helped by real armies. They belonged to the central administration but behaved as independent lords. In Hamilton's picture of the Terai, insalubrious forests are expanding, against which the powerful kings oppose clearance by all means: financial interest for newly cleared fields and permission to all kinds of thieves to settle in the kingdom. On the

other hand, the weak kings (such as that of Makvanpur as described below), as well as the tribal groups "oppressed by their conquerors", find refuge in the middle of these woods, and prevent their clearance.

"(...) at about ten miles from Etonda there is a place called Muccul Puccul, where some grounds are cultivated by a class of people called Cat' Bhotas. In their persons and manners these strongly resemble the rude tribes, that inhabit the country between Ava and Chittagong; and seem to have retired into these woods as a protection against the Hindu invaders of their country. Their huts are raised on posts, which in countries, that from the nature of their soil are apt to produce fevers, seems to be a practice very conducive to health." [p. 42]

Crossing the Terai at that time was perilous and the entrance into the Nepalese dominions did not seem to be marked by any duty, the customs being located further up on the road, in the hills, as indicated by this passage :

"At Bichiacor merchants proceeding to Catmandu pay a small duty. It is two annas[sic] on every bullock-load, with fourteen anas[sic] for every musketeer, and twelve anas for every other armed man, that forms a part of the escort: for without a Guard merchants cannot venture any valuable property." [p.34]

By proceeding from the Terai to the Kathmandu valley, Hamilton noted *en route* precise botanical information, absent in the *Account* :

"On the 30th of March we advanced about fourteen miles to Bichiacor. The Terriany extends about three miles North from Gor Pursera. After having passed this space, we entered a stately forest consisting mostly of a tree called Sucua, the timber of which is by the Europeans of Bengal called Saal. The trees, that are most commonly intermixed with the Sucua are the Shaguda and Cumbia, that I have described in my papers relatives to Mysoor". [p. 31]

"At Bimphedi the vegetable productions put on a strong resemblance to those of Europe. Peaches, Pears, Pines, Oaks, Willows, and Alders are thickly scattered through the woods, while Rasp berries grow on every bank. The *Pinus longifolia* it must be observed delights in a southern exposure. None grow between Churiagat and Doca Phedi: but the steep precipice there facing the south, and the southern face of the mountains

above Bimphedi are covered with trees of this kind. In Nepal proper I afterwards found the same to be the case.(...) The inhabitants would not sell their poultry, and were with difficulty persuaded to part with a kid." [p. 44]

History of the Terai

In the only passage of *An Account* which mentions *Some observations*, Hamilton refers to the history of Gor Semeran (modern Simraongarh), and notes that he sent a Brahman there in 1810 to correct and complete his data. We may suspect that this revision was provoked by the reading of Kirkpatrick's account; indeed, in spite of the fact that it did not appear until 1811, it seems to me that Hamilton may have read Kirkpatrick's manuscript¹⁴, for his first version of the history of Tirhut contained an error that presumably only another account may have shown him. Indeed, in *Some Observations*, Hamilton wrote that Hurry Sing Deo, the last king of Simraongarh, was the founder of the dynasty, whereas Kirkpatrick's genealogy is correct on this point:

"The next grand event, that is remembered, is the foundation of Gor Semeran, which according to one tradition happened in the year of our Lord 1361, and according to another twenty years later. It was founded by Hurry Sing Deo, who is said to have been a Jemedar¹⁵ Bramin, a cast of which I could procure no account. He is said to have come from the West, and to have subjected to his authority the whole country, that is bounded to the North by the mountains of Nepal proper; on the East by the Cousuky river, and on the South by the Ganges. Traditions differ concerning the western frontier, some making it to have been the Gunduky, while others extend to the river Deva the Kingdom of Hurry Sing. When this Prince come to these parts, they are said to have been mostly overgrown with forests, among which were concealed small villages governed by petty Rajas. The walls of Gor Semeran may still be traced, and are said by the natives to form a square, of which each side extends

¹⁴ Of which, at least two copies exist, kept respectively in the British Library and in the India Office Library.

¹⁵ In the fragments of *Some Observations* there is a note at this word : "A Brahman, not following the profession of the priesthood, but holding land and attending to temporal concerns." It thus seems that this fragment is posterior to the complete manuscript. Moreover, Jemedar is spelled there as "Zemindar", which tends to show that there has been some improvement by Hamilton in this second text. According to Mahes Raj Pant, Hamilton mixed the dynasty of Karṇāta up with that of Oinwārā who followed them after the fall of Harasiṃhadeva, and who were degraded Brahmins.

three cosses or six miles. The inhabitants of this city were of a tribe called Nawar [sic], who are supposed by the people of the Terriany to have accompanied Hurry Sing Deo from the west. [p. 3]

(...) It must however be observed, [p. 4] that, without comparing both Musulman History and Hindu tradition, we are constantly liable to fall into great mistakes. The Musulmans are apt to bestow the name of rebellion on all the wars, which the most powerful Hindu Monarchs have carried on against the Faithful, while on the contrary the Hindus look on the most petty Zemidars as legal sovereigns, and the actions of the list established Musulman governments are often represented as the temporary incursions of a band of robbers.

According to tradition Hurry Sing Deo reigned thirty years, and was entirely independent of the Musulmans. He was succeeded by his son Shivai Sing. A brother of this prince, having had a dispute with his sovereign, fled to Delhi; and having procured an army from the Musulman King, he advanced towards Gor Semeran with an intention of dethroning his brother. Before he had reached the Gunduky, Shivai Sing having heard of the approach of an army of men that eat beef, was seized with a panic, and after having reigned twenty two years resigned his kingdom to Cun Calli¹⁶ the tutelar Deity of his capital city. He then [p. 5] dedicated his life to God, and having assumed the character of a religious mendicant, he passed his days in wandering about the places which are esteemed holy.

It is said, that about this time the unnatural brother of Shivai Sing died; and that the Musulman army, after a fruitless attempt on Gor Semeran, were obliged to retreat, owing as the Hindus suppose, to the powerful influence of the tutelar Deity. The Musulmans however seem to have seized on all the country near the Ganges, which continued subject to them, until the establishment of the Companys authority.

About the same time the Nawars [sic] deserted Gor Semeran, for what reason I have not been able to learn. They took with them the image of Cun Calli, and retired with an intention of going to Nepal, which in fact was probably the country, from whence they originally came. (...) [p. 6] (...) They afterwards settled in the valley of Nepal, where at present they are the most numerous class of inhabitants: but, ever since they left Gor Semeran, it would appear, that they have been subject to Rajput princes.

A considerable time after the retreat of the Newars [sic] the Musulmans seized on the middle parts of the territories of Hurry Sing Deo, and extended their conquest to the present boundary of the Gorca dominions. These new acquisitions were granted to two Hindu Zemindars, through whose influence probably the inhabitants had been induced to submit to a foreign yoke.

The Eastern part of this newly acquired country, which we call Tiruhut or Tyroot, was given by the Musulmans to Mahis Tacur, a Coruri Bramin, who governed it as a Zemindar under their authority. He was succeeded by his son Purus Suttum, he by his son Mahinat, and he by his son Narput. Ragu Sing son of the last mentioned Chief obtained from the king the title of Raja, and was succeeded by his [p. 7] son. Narindar Sing, who left his Zemindary to a brother named Pritap Sing, and he was succeeded by his half brother Madu Sing, who is the present Zemindar. The carelessness or imbecility of these chiefs, and the art and treachery of some of their servants, have reduced this family to a comparative poverty, and forced them to alienate a large proportion of their estates.

Bettia, or the western part of the dominions of Gor Semeran that fell under the Musulman yoke, was given to a Sallaria Bramin named Guzz Sing. He had six sons, and was succeeded by Dilliph the eldest. This chief divided his country between his two sons Drup and Shivanat. The latter was soon after put to death by his elder brother, who thus reunited the whole Zemindary. He was succeeded by his daughters [sic] son Jugul Kissur, whose son Birkissur is the present Raja of Bettia. After the company obtained the government of the country, five pergunnas or districts were taken from Jugul Kissur, and given to the son of Shivanat, who now enjoys that part of the family estate. Drup Sing seems to have been a savage, who with the policy commonly adopted by [p. 8] Hindu Rajas, allowed the frontiers of his country to be over-run with forests, and who considered it as a capital offence to clear any part of them for cultivation. He thus however procured safety from the musulman authority, who were contended to receive an annual tribute in wax and charcoal, which he valued at twelve thousand Rupees. His successors, having been more enlightened, began to clear their country, and when the permanent settlement was made, it was valued at three lacs of rupees. Ever since the Raja has been laudably employed in improving his estate, and this such success, that he is said to have at present a neat income of one lac of rupees, after paying the revenue and deducting all expences of collection. There is still however much room for improvement; nor can it be

¹⁶ Obviously Cun Calli is one of Taleju's local names. Kāli is a common epithet of Taleju and Cun may be an incorrect spelling of *khun*, a Hindi word designating "blood" which is often used in central Nepal as well.

expected, that less than twenty years, even of his prudent management will be able to give the country a number of inhabitants adequate to its full cultivation.(...) [p. 9]

(...) After the retreat of the Nawars the northern parts of the dominions, that had belonged to Hurry Sing Deo, seem to have fallen into great confusion; and to have been almost entirely overgrown by forests. At length Manic Sing, a Rajput, established his authority at Mucuanpur, and seems to have possessed all the country bounded on the North by Nepal proper, on the East by the Cousuky, on the South by the territory now belonging by the Company, and on the West by the Gunduky.

Manic Sing was succeeded by his son, Hemcurn Sing, who was also called Hindupad. He was succeeded by Dirgobund Sing, who gave his sister in marriage to Prithi Narain the Raja of Gorca, by whom he was sometime afterwards deprived of his dominions. Bupbur Sing, the son of this unfortunate prince, fled from the conqueror into Bettia, and died there a few years ago, leaving [p. 10] behind him a son, who as yet is a child. A portion of Hurry Sing Deos [sic] kingdom, which was situated to the East of the Cousuky, was formed into a principality called Morung, which also fell a prey to Prithi Narain of Gorca : but of its history, I have been able to procure no account. It forms a part of the Terriyani subject to Nepal, and is governed by two Subas, who reside at Visiapur, which is the Bissypour of our maps." [p. 11]

Hamilton's account of the history of Tirhut, inaccurate as it may be, is nevertheless important in two respects: it is a local account told by people of Gorsamaran¹⁷, as well as being quite an old one, dating from before the diffusion of the Nepalese chronicles. It has been accepted since Petech (1962, 1984) that Hurry Sing Deo did not come as a conqueror to the Kathmandu Valley and did not found a new dynasty there as a late inscription and the Wright chronicle state¹⁸. For L. Petech (1962), Hurry Sing came as a refugee and his role should not be emphasised, as no Nepalese inscription of that time mentions him. The Nepalese would have

¹⁷ L. Petech (1984 : 211) is mistaken when he alleges that Hamilton's account of Mithila is a Nepalese tradition unknown in Mithila, as it is clearly indicated that the account was told, both times, in this Southern part of Nepal which was once the capital of Mithila.

¹⁸ According to Mahes Raj Pant (personal communication) this theory was first elaborated by the Saṃśodhana-maṇḍala and later incorporated in their *Itihāsa-Saṃśodhanako Pramāṇa-Prameya*, published in 2019 V. S. (1962).

created this origin of the Malla dynasty lately for prestige. Not being a historian, one may nevertheless have a doubt about the soundness of this hypothesis when Hamilton tells us precisely that the Newars do not refer to this origin¹⁹, but that the story is told by people of Simraongarh itself. One would have to suppose that the myth was born in Nepal between the 14th and the 17th centuries when we have evidence of its existence, was then conveyed to the plains and remembered orally there, whereas it was forgotten in the Kathmandu valley by the beginning of the 19th century. Hamilton's materials are precious as they show how the account of the history of Tirhut could be told by the people, in 1802 and then in 1810. This historical account has been quoted in length although it does not differ much in its last part from *An Account* because it states more clearly here Simraongarh as a late Newar's place of origin, for they are said to be from Nepal, to have fled to Simraongarh and then to have returned to their original country.

Population

In *Some Observations* Hamilton discusses the origin of the Newar at length, and raises the contradiction between their alleged origin in Mithila, their physical appearance, their caste system and their language.

"From the vocabularies of the two languages it will be evident, that the Nawars have a considerable affinity with the Cat'Bhoteas; and their features have a strong tendency towards the Chinese countenance, although this is not so strongly marked as among the natives of Thibet.

In contradistinction to Kirkpatrick, Hamilton states later²⁰ that their physical features are not clear. In *Some Observations* Hamilton had already remarked that together with their "Chinese countenance" the Newar

"(...) have the custom of Cast in all its strength: and in the next place the most common tradition, in the Terriyani, is, that they came originally from Gorsemeran. This however in Nepal is not generally credited, and it is there alleged, that they are descended from certain servants of Shiva,

¹⁹ "It must, however, be confessed, that the Newar themselves totally deny this origin, and allege, that the only foundation for it is the resemblance between the names Newar and Aniwār.", *An Account*: p. 50.

²⁰ *An Account*...p. 50.

who attended that deity on an expedition, which he made into the country, where they were left behind to inhabit the land, and long continued to be governed by princes of their own nation. It must be observed, that, when the Gorca family conquered Nepal, the Nawars were subject to Rajputs, and were defended chiefly by soldiers of that cast. Perhaps then it may with some probability be conjectured, that the Nawars were originally Bhoteas, who were converted to the doctrines they profess by a small colony from Hindustan, and who by this incorporation suffered a partial change in their language and customs. That afterwards they were either wholly, or in part expelled by a colony of Rajputs, and retired to Gorsemeran, where they continued, till they were pressed upon by the Musulmans. Preferring the government of Hindus to the Mohammedan yoke, they may have again returned to Nepal, and submitted to its Rajput chiefs. It is not unlikely that, during their residence [p. 76] at Gor Semeran under the authority of Bramins, they may have adopted the doctrine of cast, which even the Musulman conquerors of India have not been altogether able to resist. Some of them also, in order to gain the favour of their sovereign, may have deserted the doctrine of Boudha, and worshipped Maha Deva as the chief Deity." [p. 77]

Along with the Newar, unpublished extracts concerning the "Cat' Bhotea"s and the "Parbutties" can be found in *Some Observations* :

"The first class of inhabitants, that I shall notice, are those, who by the present governing people are called Cat'Bhoteas; but who assume to themselves the name of Sayn, by which appellation they are also distinguished among [p. 71] the Nawars [sic], and the same appellation is bestowed on their country." [p. 72]

Who exactly are the Sayn or Cat' Bhoteas ? In *An Account* (pp. 55-56), it is said that all the inhabitants of Tibet and Bhutan are called Bhotiya : "Some of these people, who inhabit near Kathmandu, call themselves Sayn; and the same name is given by the Newars to the whole nation". *Some observations* adds :

"The same may be said of the Cat' or wild Bhoteas or Sayn. In this name we may perhaps trace the Sinoe of the Ancients, who are placed near mount Emodus. The language of the Sayn is nearly allied to that of Lassa, and they are a thick, short, muscular people with Chinese countenances. The religion of the Cat'Bhoteas is the same with that of the

Boudhists of Thibet, and they follow the Lamas as their spiritual guides".
[p. 72]

It seems that the people similar to Tibetans, who follow their religion and employ Lamas, and who leave near Kathmandu may be the Tamang, but their alleged polyandry which follows tends to prove that either the Tamang once practised this custom, or that Hamilton mixed them up with other Tibetan groups, and that may be the reason why he did not publish this.

"The women of the Cat'Bhoteas have at the same time several husbands; and when one happens to be in his wifes [sic] company, he places at the door his shoes, or a fruit called Bel, which prevents the others from intruding." [p. 74]

Furthermore, in an extract quoted above, we have seen that Hamilton encountered a village of Cat'Bhoteas²¹ on his way to Kathmandu, between Etonda and Bhimpheedi, which is now inhabited by Tamang. He compared them with the Burmese groups he encountered in Ava and stated that their huts are raised on posts (p. 42), a fact that links them more to the Kirat, from what we know today. But in *An Account* (p. 53) he wrote that "(...) no Murmi is permitted to enter the valley where Kathmandu stands, and by way of ridicule, they are called Siyena Bhotiya, or Bhotiya who eat carrion (...)". Murmi being an ancient ethnonym for the Tamang and the word *siyena* being probably related to *sayn*²², it seems likely that the expression Cat' Bhoteas may refer more specifically to the Tamang. Whether this name referred only to the Tamang or was a generic name

21 It may be that this appellation was referring to the "Bhoteas" who work the wood (*kāth* in Nepali), as do the Tamang around the Kathmandu valley. Hamilton may have misunderstood this word and thought it was the wood as forest, hence his translation of "wild Bhoteas".

22 In his interesting discussion on the word *Se*, it seems to me that Ch. Ramble (1997) has forgotten to take into account the possible Nepali and Sanskrit origins of the word. Indeed, if the word "Siyena" quoted here may be only a Nepalese mocking interpretation of the word "Sayn", the *Gorkhā vaṃśavāli* mentions the Sekhant people as living near Gorkha, and the modern usage in Gulmi District is to call *šeṣi* (or *šaiṣi*) and *šeṣinī* the people living north of them in the mountains, whatever their caste or ethnic group, and *šeṣ* their country (except the Tibetans which are called Bhote and their country Bhotān). The names *sekhant* and *šeṣi* are obviously derived from the word *šeṣ*, which means "the end, the remainder of something" in Sanskrit and Nepali, and, more specifically in the Nepali of central Nepal, "the top of something", like the head or the summit. Thus the phoneme "Se" is also found in Nepali names designating various people living in the mountains.

designating any Tibeto-Burman group, their state at the beginning of the 19th century seems to have been miserable:

"All the Cat' Bhoteas are very poor, and have either been reduced to slavery, or in order to avoid that odious condition have been forced, to retire into forests or other places of difficult access. From this circumstance, joined to their weakness, which must have prevented them from being intruders, I am inclined to believe, that they are the original inhabitants of the country". [p. 74]

While commenting on the "Bhoteas", Hamilton delineates a basic distinction drawn by the Hindus²³ between Christianity and Islam on the one hand, which are strictly forbidden and whose followers are kept apart, and any form of animism or Buddhism, on the other hand, whose followers are *de facto* incorporated into society²⁴.

"Although the Bhoteas eat all kind of animals and do not even abstain from beef, still they are considered as Hindus by their neighbours the Parbutties and Nawars: nor are these liable to be punished on account of an intercourse with the Bhoteas, as they would be for a too intimate connection with Christians or Musulmans." [p. 74]

His treatment of the Parbutties (called Parbatiya or Mountain Hindus in *An Account*) is rather different, being obviously more passionate than objective. In *Some Observations*, Hamilton accused them of being "false" in addition to the amazing series of insults he professes against them in the two texts. He adds that they are:

"debilitated by an excessive indulgence in low pleasures; their morning are spent in sleep, and the day is occupied in the performance of religious ceremonies; so that no time is left for business, nor for informing their minds concerning anything useful."

In the same passage on p. 22 of *An Account*, they are only "exhausted" instead of "debilitated", and the underlined passages are

²³ On this subject, see Gaborieau (1994).

²⁴ Interestingly, Christians and Muslims appear under the same category in a letter from Parasuram Thapa quoted by K. Chaudhuri (1960: 114): "Misser Gujraj would have given up the country of the Hindoos to Mussalmans (...) [i.e. the British]" and thus commented by Chaudhuri: "The reference to the Mussalmans here must have been made in a generic sense, meaning persons who took beef."

suppressed.²⁵ Despite Hamilton's evident antipathy, the description of the Parbutties is very rich in *Some Observations* :

"In Nepal proper the Parbutties are not so near so numerous as the Nawars: but in the remote parts of the Kingdom, they form the sole population, except in the Terriany, and some districts inhabited by Bhoteas." [p. 103]

"In other respects [than the killing of one's wife's lover] the Parbutties resemble entirely the Hindus of Northern parts of India: and delight in swaggering about fully armed, and in boasting of their warlike, and predatory adventures. They are however a diminutive race of men, but very active and hardy." [p. 92]

"The widows of all the Parbutties, except those of the two lowest casts, ought to burn themselves with the dead bodies of their husbands: but many of them refuse to submit to this barbarous custom, and I never heard, that force was used. From all that I have hitherto learned, I am inclined to think, that this custom is more prevalent in Bengal than any where else. The women of the two higher casts of Parbutties are shut up from view, wherever extreme poverty does not interfere to prevent the husband from showing this mark of his jealousy. I shall now give an account of the different casts of the Parbutties beginning with those of higher rank and gradually descending to the lowest. The Parbutty Bramins seem to be exceedingly ignorant, and, so far as I could learn, did not even know, whether they belonged to the Paush Draveda or to the Paush Gauda division of the sacred tribe²⁶. They are almost all of the sect called Shiva and Suty because they follow the worship of the destructive spirits as explained in certain books called Agum." [p. 98]

"The Parbutties Bramins (...) abstain from venison, because, according to the legend, their Deities in a visit to this country assumed the form of a deer²⁷. The widows of these Bramins, in place of burning themselves on the funeral piles of their husbands, prefer in general to live as concubines with some person of their own rank.(...) The Jujubedy Bramins also keep concubines of the Rajput cast, and with these beget a race of people called Coss, who are considered as a higher kind of Rajputs. The (...) Cummia and Purubi (...) act as Gurus and Purohitts for the low casts (...).The

²⁵ On the other hand, in the next sentence of *Some Observations* which is "Except the Brahmins, all are addicted to drunkenness", Hamilton rectified "Except a few of the Brahmins" in *An Account*.

²⁶ Paush Draveda and Paush Gauda = Pañcadrāviḍa and Pañcagaūḍa.

²⁷ A reference to Paśupatiṅāth ?

children they have by Bramins widows are also called Jousy, and those they have by Rajput concubines are Coss, the lowest of whom is by birth higher than the sovereign of the country." [p. 99]

"The ignorance of the Parbutty Bramins, and their neglect of the rules of their sacred order in eating unclean things, seem early to have disgusted the Gorca Rajas, who have long employed two families of Canogia Bramins to act as hereditary Gurus and Purohitts for all the branches of their house. When the power of Prithi Narain had extended to Nepal, he invited from Tiruhut a hundred families of pure Bramins, and settled on them lands of considerable value. The Bramins and Pundarums, who officiate as priests in most of the temples in Nepal, are from Draveda, or the country near Madras, for which I heard no rational cause assigned." [p.100]

Turning to the Rajput, *Some Observations* has the following to say:

"Saha it must be observed is the family name, and is applied even to the illegitimate branches of the house of Gorca. This name is also that of the Rajas, who for some generations have governed Goruhal or Srinuggur, and this family is the only one of these Rajput chiefs, that has not been expelled from the country, or reduced from sovereign authority." [p. 94]²⁸

"The country subject to these Rajput chiefs continued long subdivided into a number of petty principalities, of which Nepal proper contained the three most powerful, namely Liliet Patun on the South, Catmandu on the West and North, and Baatgong on the East. Prithi Narain the great grand father of the present Raja, being a man of sound judgement, and great enterprise, took advantage of this divided state; and sometimes by force, but oftener by fraud and perfidy, he subjected most of the country to an authority, which he maintained by the terror of his cruelty. He was however liberal to his followers; and his memory, and prudential maxims are held in the highest reverence by the people of Gorca, whom he [p. 94] so far elevated above their neighbours, and who to do them justice, possess a loyalty and love for their sovereign, that somewhat brightens their character.

Although Prithi Narain detested Europeans, and left as a sacred maxim of state, an injunction never to admit any of them into his dominions, he was sensible of the advantages of our military discipline; and confirmed his throne by a tolerably well regulated Militia, which he armed, clothed, and

²⁸ This first paragraph has been crossed out in the manuscript, but the status of the crossed out passages is not clear as many of them have been published in full in *An Account*.

disciplined somewhat in imitation of English Seapoys, and this rendered them infinitely superiour to any troops, in the neighbourhood."²⁹ [p. 95]

"The succession to the Gudy, or Throne, was always considered as confined to the male line of the Royal family by legitimate wives : but all persons descended from concubines are untitled to be called Saha, and to hold certain high offices, which are confined to the royal blood. However on the resignation of the late raja, who had no legitimate son, he placed on the throne a child, which had been born to him by a Brahminy woman. This child on account of his mother's birth [p. 96] is no doubt of higher rank than any other person of the family: but the people were much disgusted by the Rajas having had the audacity to defile a woman of the sacred order, so that the sons title is not a little invalidated by his birth having originated in what is considered as a shocking crime. The leading chiefs of Gorca however eagerly support his claims, as during his minority they have a favorable opportunity of plundering the country." [p. 97]

"The same Bramin says that the ancestor of the most respectable branch of the royal family, to which Bum Saha, the late Chouter, belongs, was the offspring of a concubine: but the branch continues of pure unmixed Rajput blood of which among a people so dissolute very few families can boast." [p. 98]

"These [the Rajputs] call themselves Cshitries, and the Prince being of this cast, their claim to that rank is not openly disputed: but they receive only the Opadesha of Sudur. Not only the Raja, and most of the principal families are of this cast; but to it also belong by far the greater number of the Telingas, or Soldiers. Few of them however are of pure descent, most of them having become Coss by a mixture with Brahmins. The Rajputs in their turn have not been idle in confusing the distinction [p. 100] of cast, and with women of lower birth, both Parbutties and Newars [sic] have begotten a numerous progeny. These are called Cussia and adopt the cast of their mothers with some additional rank on account of their paternal origin. Many of the royal family are of this kind." [p. 101]

²⁹ It seems that Prithvi Narayan went further by employing, for instance, a French engineer to cast canons. This man, called Dilbensee by the Nepalese, was met in 1795 by Maulvi Abdul Qadir who wrote that he was paid an enormous salary of 500 rupees per month. He had a son, Francis Neville, by a Newarni, in 1777, who fled to India after his father was killed when he tried to escape, and gave information to the British in 1814. Dilbensee was assisted by another Frenchman called Vincent.

The description of the caste system of the Parbutties notes (p. 102), of the Nai barbers that: "(...) a Rajput without disgrace may keep a concubine of this cast."

On the same page, Hamilton had inserted in the hierarchy of castes three groups between the "Cami" and the "Damai" which do not appear in *An Account*: "the Dholi or Drummers, the Gain or Singers and the Bahat, another set of people who sing and dance". Their relatively high position compared to modern usage is surprising, but the fact that Hamilton erased them from the book perhaps shows that he was not so sure about them.

This very interesting description of the high caste "Parbutties" of that time links them with the warrior tribes of India, such as the Rajput, when it is said that they walk around fully armed and that they shut up their women from view. The Brahmins are divided into three classes: the first one is religious as Jujubedy is a deformation of Yajurvedī, and the latter two, geographical, Kamiya and Purubi probably being the current distinction between the Purbiyā and Kumāi Brahmins. In fact the Rājopādhyāya, Jhā, Purbiyā and Kumāi are all Yayuverdin except a some of the Kumāi, who are Tripāthī. One point on which Hamilton is probably wrong is the higher status he attributes to the groups born from intercaste unions.

Administration and justice

This is the last topic on which valuable observations are not reported in *An Account*, such as this passage about the status of the administrators:

"The third rank of Great Ministers are the Sirdars. Royal favour, may raise the lowest person to this dignity without irritating the people: but the late Maha Rany seemed in a great measure to have been driven from her authority by the disgust, that was excited by her raising a favourite Sirdar to the office of Treasurer." [p. 108]

which in *An Account* became :

"The Serdars are chosen from whatever families the chief thinks proper; but in public opinion, the giving the office to low men, especially if these are entrusted with much power, is exceedingly offensive". [*An Account...*, pp.108-109]

The published version thus erases the incriminating remark, which is quite important if one remember that the office of Treasurer was the same as that of Kaji, Minister, according to both Hamilton and Kirkpatrick. And finally, *Some Observations* provides a rich description of the social context in which justice was administered and applied in 1802 :

"Justice is administered by certain Bramins called Bicheris, who have very little rank, except that derived from their cast; and whose salaries are not adequate to make the office respectable. Two or three of them sit daily in the market place to determine civil causes, and a similar number have the charge of the police, and of punishment of crimes. They decide finally no causes, but such as are of very little importance. In every matter of consequence the Bicheris draw up a report, which is referred to the decision of the Durbar. The present weakness of the government has produced some relaxation in the police: but formerly it was in so far good, that thefts and robberies were very rare. Even now they are not so [p. 108] common as in most parts of India. The crimes were punished with an excessive severity, and no offender was ever pardoned. The hands and feet of the culprit were cut off, he was then flayed alive, and allowed to expire in this state of agony. Deliberate assassination under certain circumstances of provocation is not considered as a public crime. (...) The fines levied for different offences form a considerable addition to the Royal income, and often amount to a total confiscation of the property and person of the offender. Frequent occasion is on this account taken to hearken to invidious complaints against wealthy men, who are thus often squeezed: and of course every person is careful to affect an appearance of poverty." [p. 109]

Here again, Hamilton as an observer provides valuable remarks that would not be found in historical documents, such as the false appearance of poverty affected by the people to avoid confiscation³⁰, and which, even now that this practice no longer exists, still persists to a certain degree in the hills.

Few in number as they are, the observations on Nepal by the first Western travellers must be carefully preserved and exploited. We have already underlined the precautions one should take when using

³⁰ This is confirmed for instance by G.-M. Wegner (1988 : 10), about the Newar Butchers : "In the olden days, all the Nāy families were regularly dispropriated by the king(...)"

these old documents, which are difficult to criticise by lack of comparison. Additionally in this case, the manuscript having already been used by the author for a publication, the precaution should be even greater. However, this partial first draft of *An Account* makes the conditions of elaboration of the work and the writer's presumptions more explicit, presumptions which we have inherited along with this constitutive account. For instance, and this is true for most 19th century works, these first observations were made in the Kathmandu Valley and reflect in one sense the Newar's view on the whole society. Many clues to this can be found in the manuscript, such as the low position given to the "Cummiya" and "Purubi" Hill Brahmins, who are said to perform rites for low castes. As they were ranked in the Muluki Ain (1854) at the highest position in the caste system, this may be understood as the Newar Brahmins' view on them, for it is well-known that the latter allege a superior position, believing themselves more literate and less involved in the degrading activity of agriculture. Another clue to the Newar view conveyed by Hamilton is the use of the name "Parbutties" which is not used by the people it designates themselves, but by the people living in the Kathmandu Valley and especially the Newar³¹. In *Some Observations*, the Magar (Mungurs) are classified as one class of "Parbutties". Hamilton thus underlines, in spite of himself, the true meaning of the word, but the use of "Parbutties" (or its modern spelling) to designate the Nepalese of Indian extraction still persists, even in anthropological texts. This is regrettable, given the pejorative coloration of the term. Hamilton is also a precursor in the kind of discrimination that developed against the high castes of Nepal, in

³¹ Nowhere in the new Nepali dictionary of the Academy it is written that Parbatiya designates a population or a language but "1. Related to the mountain; hilly. 2. Which stands in a hilly region; Hillman; mountaineer". In the Turner dictionary, the pejorative coloration of the term is indicated in connection with the language: "Belonging to the mountains; -s. a Hillman; the Nepāli language (esp. as spoken by uneducated villagers)." In the Muluki Ain, the expression seems to be used only to characterise "the Chetris and other cordon-bearers of the Hills" (Höfer 1979 : 135), probably in opposition to the ones of the plain who are given a lower status. For Oldfield (1880: 44) : "The term "Parbattiah" is applied only to the tribes dwelling to the west of the Valley of Nipal;". Finally, even though the adjective Parbatiyā can be found in a Malla text preceded by the very honorific prefix *śrī*, in the expression *śrīparbatiyā brāhmaṇa* (personal communication from Mahes R. Pant), its modern usage in Central Nepal is to qualify backward and poor people living in the heights.

many Western writings. We should guard against such practice³²: the so-called "arrogance" of the Gorkhali was principally a reaction to the Company's expanding authority.

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³² The following passage (G. Kopp, 1995) is a common if caricatural example of this : "Une distorsion fondamentale affecte de ce fait le Népal contemporain entre sa culture autochtone (égalitarisme, sens du travail et du devoir accompli chez les Kirat à l'est) et cette culture importée de l'Inde (hiérarchie des castes, fatalisme oisif chez les Khas à l'ouest). [...] Pour les hautes castes, politesse et courtoisie sont le fait des inférieurs. L'oisiveté est une distinction sociale et travailler revient aux gens du commun. [...] à un même niveau de formation, les hautes castes (Brahmanes et Chhetris) ne rechercheront pas d'emploi, tandis que les basses castes reprendront de toute façon les activités de leurs aînés : le système éducatif, très coûteux, tourne donc à vide, celui qui exerce une profession étant justement celui qui n'y est pas préparé!"

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Some Observations on Nepal

by
Francis Buchanan -

Anne-Marie BLONDEAU and Ernst STEINKELLNER (Eds.), *Reflections of the Mountain: Essays on the History and Social Meaning of the Mountain Cult in Tibet and the Himalaya*, Verlag Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Vienna, 1996, 262 pp., fig., plates.

Review by András Höfer

Tibet is more or less open now for Western scientists; the number of Tibetan documents accessible to them has grown to an unprecedented extent; and Tibetologists are increasingly resorting to what sociologists and anthropologists have long since been doing, namely fieldwork. As a consequence, our ideas about Tibetan civilization have been broadened considerably. *Reflections of the Mountain*, so rich in new data and insights, testifies to this development. Product of a symposium of ten Tibetologists and three anthropologists, this book is most welcome - also for those non-Tibetologists who are working on areas bordering on the cultural sphere of influence of Tibet. Most of the contributions give equal consideration to sociological and philological-historical perspectives and are excellently presented. Nearly all the papers have resulted from the authors' own fieldwork, and most of the Tibetologist contributors have also been trained in anthropology. That the non-French among the authors are laudably familiar with the literature in French also deserves emphasis.

Not surprisingly, several articles revolve around the question of whether or to what extent the present-day findings conform to the "model case" that Rolf A. Stein and Ariane Macdonald [Spanien] have reconstructed for early Tibetan society. (As may be recalled, this model included the worship of a mountain, associated with a male warrior god, and of a lake, associated with a female divinity - a couple conceived of as the mythical ancestors of the descent group of the first settlers and/or of the ruling dynasty within a territory.) The answer Karmay gives - not without a certain measure of risky generalization - is essentially positive, while other authors place emphasis on the divergencies that exist side by side with certain continuities, both often astonishing. Who would have thought that in Ladakh, the divine guardians of the local territory are not mountain gods (although elevation is generally classified as the sphere of the gods, the *lha*), that an ancient category of gods, the *phyva*, has "survived" in Bhutan, or that *rMa chen spom ra* is worshipped in far-away Nepal, too? In any case, there are certain recurrent, though not ubiquitous, elements which

indeed seem to point to continuity. These are: (a) a "wrathful" or ambivalent male mountain divinity, generally referred to as *yul lha*, believed to be the owner-protector of the local territory (a valley or a group of valleys), guarantor of the social order and the prosperity of the community of his worshippers; (b) a rather allusively or metaphorically asserted "ancestral link" between this divinity as a *pho lha* or 'father', on the one hand, and the descendants of the first settler or of the local specialist of the worship, on the other; (c) a periodic worship which includes, or in the past included, animal sacrifice, and which is usually celebrated by local lamas and a specialist acting by virtue of his charismatic "ancestral link", such as a "priest" (*lha bon*) of the territorial and clan divinities or a layman in privileged position, such as a headman and/or a descendant of the first settler; (d) the mountain divinity and a female superhuman being can stand in a kind of complementary opposition to one another, even though they are not necessarily conceived of as a couple, and the female counterpart is not necessarily associated with a lake or a river.

Several authors delve into the semantic problems posed by taxonomy. Even the old question of whether we are dealing with "divine mountains" or with "divinities residing on mountains" is raised once again. Classificatory problems stand in the foreground. For example, whether associated with a mountain or not, the divine owner-guardian of the territory is generally referred to as *yul lha*, frequently also as *gzhi bdag*, *sa bdag*, *pho lha*, *dgra lha*, *btsan* or *gnyan*, etc. at the same time. Since in the Tibetan pantheon the latter terms generally designate specific categories of beings associated with certain sites and spheres, in some instances the *yul lha*'s categorical identification remains disconcertingly vague or at least equivocal. (The same holds true of those mountain gods who are not *yul lha*, by the way.) Blondeau, in the foreword, comforts her authors with the observation that "our obsession with labelling is not shared by Tibetan societies", whose classificatory series often "co-exist or are juxtaposed without organic or logical links between them" (p. ix). Schicklgruber does not leave it at that, but contends that the multiple namings and identities have resulted mainly from the simultaneous prevalence of different vantage-points, as represented by a local/ethnic/oral (in part pre-Buddhist) and a superimposed Buddhist or Bon conceptualization, each applying its own criteria and nomenclature. He even resorts to the well-known "emic" distinction between religious-monastic tradition and lay tradition, *lha chos* versus *mi chos*. In a wider context, Diemberger aptly drives the point home

in placing emphasis on the *negotiated* and hence dynamic character of the coexistence of these more or less isolable strands or perspectives within one and the same cultic complex. Indeed, most of the contexts discussed in the book suggest that the local configurations of such perspectives have resulted from "cultural translations" that tend to remain inchoate and to include a certain amount of interference inasmuch as they require permanent readjustments of the systems of reference of the agencies involved.

With the remarkable exception of the *phyva*, whose cult was recently discovered by Pommaret in Bhutan, the mountain and territorial divinities dealt with have been integrated into the pantheon of Tibetan Buddhism. The familiar motif of their being "subjugated" by a Buddhist protagonist and bound by oath to become guardians of the Faith appears throughout the book, and is the subject of some interesting comments by the authors. As Hazod and Buffetrille point out, this "subjugation" turns out to be a Buddhist re-dedication of historically older motifs, such as the "fixation" of the earth, or the "domestication" of the superhuman masters of the natural environment by a cultural hero to the benefit of man. Furthermore, one finds the site of the mountain divinity transformed into a *gnas ri*, i.e., a holy mountain to serve as a place of Buddhist pilgrimage, or the local ancestral territory sublimated into a *sbas yul* (lit. 'hidden country'), i.e., an enclave of particular sanctity, where ideal conditions for religious life prevail. The projection of the *sbas yul* as a kind of earthly paradise to come also contributes a teleologically new conceptualization of the relationship between space and time, as is alluded to by Diemberger. For Steinmann (whose rather hasty discussion is difficult to follow at some points, though by no means lacking in intuitive sensitivity), certain rituals and myths of the Eastern Tamang, Thami, Lepcha and Sikkimese Bhotiya clearly indicate that what Buddhism did was to separate human society from its ancient tribal divinities who once had constituted an "invisible mountain kingdom" where "divine and social body" had been identical. This radical formulation - inspired, in part, by the writings of Granet, Malamoud and Stein - certainly deserves further consideration. In any case, most of the contributions seem to suggest that, in the specific field of mountain worship as well, Buddhism's role has been an encompassing, rather than a merely marginalizing or even supplanting one, as is also shown by the kind of distance-respect relationship it still maintains in some places with local practices and local ritual specialists (cf. e.g., Diemberger). On the whole, one should not overemphasize the "confessional" aspect. Change at the

level of representation and belief was not brought about by missionary activities alone; it also resulted from change at the infrastructural level, such as migration or the imposition of new systems of land tenure and political allegiance by the state administrations.

Two substantial articles focus more on the notion of territory than on that of the mountain. Diemberger shows how in Khenbalung (situated on the Tibet-Nepal border) the veneration of the mountain divinities in its political context can have "cognitive implications in shaping the concrete management of the environment, its spaces and times" (p. 219), and in particular how territory is being periodically defined - "opened", "closed", "realized" - by means of processions which can be undertaken physically or only verbally, as an enumeration of places and gods. Discussing similar kinds of definitory movements across space in Mustang, Ramble reveals a principle that underlies the perception and "utilization" of space in ritual. Of particular interest are "serial evocations" of places on the horizontal plane; following a spiralling itinerary, they either draw an imaginary political map of the territory, thus ensuring its integrity and security, or locate the terminal point, where the speaker-officiant resides, within the sacred-geographical setting of a larger area. Contrary to what one would expect after reading other authors' contributions to the volume, divinity is not necessarily a primary component of the representation of space. In some cases, a place can be a numinous entity, some sort of "intermediate stage between nature and the supernatural", without being associated with a god at all. In some other cases, the god associated with a place "called at" in the recitation lacks individuality and is only invoked as *lha*, *btsan* or *chos skyong*, that is, as an unspecified member of a category. From this, Ramble concludes that supernatural beings are not intrinsically needed for the demarcation of a territory, and that the "characteristics attributed to place gods may not be primarily qualities of the gods themselves, but of the places" (p. 152). There is much that is novel in his findings (to my knowledge not reported so far in the literature on Tibet) and that invites comparison with the verbal ritual journeys as performed among several Bodic speaking ethnic minorities in Nepal.

Nearly all contributors are concerned with the quest for structure, origins and change, but it is A. Gingrich who takes it upon himself to go to all the way in offering a hypothetical reconstruction of the development of the mountain cults. His is a courageous (albeit somewhat lengthy, at some points even top-heavy abstract) attempt at typological ordering on the basis of comparison that extends far beyond Tibet and the Himalaya.

Dichotomizations, such as "tribal"/"state", "village"/"monastery", "centre"/"periphery", "oral"/"scriptural", "élite"/"folk", "doctrine"/"heresy", and the like, are resorted to in order to venture, with eloquence, a structural explanation of historical continuities and discontinuities that account for both divergencies and similarities in the *present* forms as documented by his co-authors. Gingrich is at his best on the political context of the interrelations between centres and peripheries, and he rightly draws attention to what ones tempted to call the self-organisational component in those processes of mutual adjustments, "parochializations" and "universalizations" that have produced an array of configurations in the accommodation, by way of subordination, of mountain and territorial cults within Buddhism and/or the ideologies of the state polities in the area as a whole. Part of his argumentation comes close to Max Weber's thinking on the "innere Konsequenz" a concept or tenet may have for the development of social phenomena. One might add that precisely through their literature, Buddhism, and to a lesser degree Bon, not only transformed, but also contributed to preserving or even proliferating some of the ancient elements of a basically oral tradition; further research might reveal a similar double role played by "la tradition orale du bouddhisme", whose existence was pointed out by R. A. Stein. Drawing on Sahlins's *Tribesmen* and adducing evidence from Evans-Pritchard's study of Shilluk kingship, Gingrich concludes that for structural reasons, the conceptual foundations of the territorial cults centred around the mountain in the Himalayan regions, as well as in the "sacred kingdom" in early Tibet, must have ultimately originated in a tribal type of social organization.

Such systematic reflections *on* the mountain may indeed furnish some useful heuristic impetus for further research, provided that one avoids reifications, so likely to emerge when our technical terms tend to be treated in an essentialistic way, and when extrapolations replace the detailed knowledge of the specialist. Our reach should not exceed our grasp. What we need first of all is to fill the gaps in the empirical data by studying texts (both written and oral) and by doing more fieldwork wherever this is still possible. K. Buffetrille's monumental doctoral thesis on *Montagnes sacrées, lacs et grottes ...* (Nanterre 1996) is an exemplary demonstration of how rewarding the combination of textual and field studies can be. (Her work also contains a lucid exposé of what we know and can say at present on the history of mountain worship in Tibet.) One would like the Tibetologist in-the-field not to rely too hastily on learned lamas and their written texts as ultimate authority in matters of interpretation, but to give

equal consideration to oral texts and to the meanings the rituals in question may have to those actively involved in them: the laymen.

In view of the thematic concentration of the contributions, the book should have been supplemented with an index, and the reader wonders why the editors did not think it necessary to have the manuscripts of some of the authors revised by a native speaker of English. It is not meant to diminish the immense value of the publication if the reviewer finds that two additional articles on mountain worship in India and China, respectively, could have broadened the comparative perspective to a considerable degree, if only just by raising new questions.



Höfer, Andrés, *Tamang ritual texts II*, Ethnographic studies in the oral tradition and folk-religion of an ethnic minority, Franz Steiner Verlag, Stuttgart, 1997, 217 p.

Review by Marie Lecomte-Tilouine

Sixteen years after the first volume of the *Tamang ritual texts*, the long awaited second volume has been published. Conceived independently from the first, the book is divided into two parts. The first one presents four songs sung in the context of the national Hindu festival of Dasai, and the second one, a recitation to the deities of the village territory. As in his previous publications, the author adopts the philological method, and states that, despite its dangers - search for an original form or meaning, isolation of the text from its context of performance - it allows us to understand how oral traditions are elaborated by reference to "(...) high cultural and other regional or local oral traditions". History - both of the texts and rituals - is an important concern of the author.

One of the main qualities of this book is the careful description of the context in which each text is sung or narrated, and the permanent reciprocating motion between myth, ritual and their political and historical context, which illuminate each other. Furthermore, Höfer's method of studying a number of villages at the same time, prevents him from extrapolating from too narrow a point of view.

Thus the Dasai rituals of three Tamang villages of Dhading district are described in precise detail. Though pan-Nepalese, they endow some peculiarities to the Tamang which lead us to a better understanding of the role of their chief, as well as their integration into the Nepalese society and the Hindu state. It must be recalled that the performance of the Dasai rituals was mandatory for all the village headmen during the Rana period, whatever their religion. In the three villages studied, the celebration starts on *phulpāti*, the seventh day of the ritual for the high caste Hindus. In this matter, the Tamang do not differentiate themselves radically, as many low castes or tribal people also start their ritual on this date only. In its short form, the celebration omits what can be called the Brahmanic phase of the rite, consisting elsewhere mainly in the recitation of the *Devī Māhātmya*. During this first day, buffaloes are killed and men gather in the home of the head-man where they share alcohol. The main ritual of the day consists in the reaffirmation of the function of the four subaltern headmen by the main one. The second day sees the sacrifice of five buffaloes, one for each

headman, who afterwards keep the head of the animal in their house. On *Nawami*, people visit their relatives. Finally, the most important day, in these Tamang communities as elsewhere in Nepal, is *Dasami*. The usual *ṭikā* ceremony is unknown, except in the context of the administration, as the tenants receive the *ṭikā* mark from the tax collectors (i.e. the Mukhiya headman and the Jimmuwal) in the Bhokteni community. In Cautara, there is a surprising gathering of the women in the headman's house with alcohol and buffalo meat. The author underlines how this gathering corresponds to the men's one on the first day, but while he sees the "the allegiance of the men" in one case, he qualifies the second only as the "expression of solidarity and hospitality by the women". Compared to what we know of the Dasai rituals, this gathering of women among the Tamang is unique and may reveal that the power of the Tamang headman is also conferred on him by them. The most striking peculiarity of the Tamang celebration of Dasai is the ritual which takes place on the evening of this day, called "the death-feast for the head". The men assemble at the Mukhiya's house, around six plates of offerings: one for each headman and one for the *lama*. Then starts song I: a long invocation for the gods during which the *lambu* shaman shivers when a specific invoked god graces his benediction for each headman in turn, materialised in a white substance that the *lambu* incorporates into the butter dabs, which is applied as a *ṭikā* by the *lama* to the headmen.

The participants then eat the buffalo head, divided into one half for the five headmen and one half for the others. At this point, songs II and III, along with dances, are performed.

Höfer underlines Tamang ritual specificities: the secondary role played by the Goddess and the evening *ṭikā* ceremony, which is not, as usual elsewhere, a replica of the *ṭikā* given to the King of Nepal, but an independent benediction of the Tamang gods. He thus logically deducts from this fact: "(...) the Tamang Mukhiya emerges as an embodiment, rather than as a subordinate and local representative, of the King." I am tempted here to make a parallel with the Magar, and the sacred function of their traditional headmen, who is at the same time the descendant of the first settler, a representative of the king and the main officiant of the gods protecting the territory. The parallel can be drawn further as the southern Magar perform an invocation of the gods during the Dasai festival which share some similarities with the one described above: among the southern Magar, the ceremony is called *Sorāthī* and takes place during *Kāl rātri*, but I only witnessed it in the Gulmi district, among hinduised Magar of

Northern origin, where it is usually called *bhāilo* or *khyāli nāc*. On this occasion, all the men of the village (Magar or not), gathered on the playground, but before the Pancayat reform, it took place in the headman's courtyard. A Kami song leader intones an invocation to all the gods of the territory (the village, the neighbouring ones, the whole Nepal, in a circular symbolic peregrination) while men play drums and dance. Each in their turn becomes possessed when a specific god (that they call their *guru*) is invoked, and this *séance* opens a season of dance which ends in December. Among both the Tamang and the Magar, the power of the headman is demonstrated during *Dasai* in a very direct and local way when the gods manifest their presence in his territory and inhabitants. But while they are not apparent in Magar rituals, in the Tamang case, there are intermediaries -the *lambu* and the *lama*- between the headman and the gods. Of course, it must nevertheless be noted in this last context that the song leader is a Kami from the lineage which has adopted the Magar headman's ancestor, that the drum players and masculine dancers are the headman's wife receivers, whereas the feminine dancer is a member of his lineage. In this sense, it is the order and history of the whole community which is thus sanctified by the gods. In the same way, the Tamang dancers and singers are also from an allied clan which came to the headman's territory to take land and wives. The *lama* themselves are from this clan, as if, like in the Magar case, two main religious functions were constantly affirmed : the ancestral role of the headman linked with the gods of the territory and the ritual role of the allied clans, who make the village prosper by the progeny they assure and the rites they perform. Among the Tamang, the gathering of the women further emphasises how the prosperity of the headman is dependant on fecundity, a point fully developed in song IV.

One difference between the Tamang and Magar traditions with respect to the invocation of the gods during *Dasai* is that the Magar follow Hindu practice, because their invocation takes place during *Kāl rātri* or the night when the Goddess manifests herself on earth, whereas the Tamang celebration during the evening of the 10th day is unorthodox, for the gods are conceived as having gone on the morning of this day. Is it that the Tamang gods take their turn after the Hindu ones have gone ?

The first song is a myth of origin of the world, which bears striking similarities with the Western oral tradition of the Magar and Kami in its first part : the world is in a state where there is no night or day, no earth or sky, when nine suns and nine moons rise. The earth, rocks and trees burn and melt. Then Mahadeo and Parbati are born. The creation of two trees

and of two birds on each of them follows. Both have a golden egg from which the first *lama* and the first shaman emerge. The two of them create everything : clouds, vegetation, human beings, cattle, and so on. The creation of the headman is simultaneous with the rise of Kalu Panre, 'Damdare' Panre and the king of Gorkha; and with the rise of the headman, the ritual of *Dasai* and the sacrifice of a yak take place. Afterwards the gods of the headman's clan and those of the mountain are invoked.

The author distinguishes two parts in his analysis of this song : the first one, a journey in a historical mythical register, up to the mention of the present ritual, which is thus linked with myth; then a journey in a geographical mythical register, into the world of the gods. He examines why the buffalo's sacrifice which is performed is called 'yak' and shows how the ritual of *Dasai* in its very foundation is linked with Gorkha power.

Song II follows the same narrative patterns except that instead of the gods invocation, the text affirms the idea that sacrifice will send the buffalo to paradise, an idea which is again developed in song III.

Song IV is the story of two orphans, a brother and a sister, who are separated. The inconsolable boy goes to the mythic place of origin of the Tamang in Tibet where he attends to a yak-head-feast, then comes back up to Cautara where he participates in the *Dasai* dances, which are being accomplished by the singers. This last song shows better than song I that the Tamang probably had a festival of their own with a yak sacrifice that they transformed into the *Dasai* celebration after their integration in Nepal. An impressive evocation of the brother-sister relationship by one informant is reported by the author : in the song, the brother is called Golden Tree and the sister Flower of the Sky, because the sisters are like flowers on the patrilineal tree : they can be picked up, but if they are to conceive a fruit, they must come back to the tree. This unclear conception strongly links the fertility of a clan to the married sisters, and becomes clearer if we note that it refers implicitly to the allied clan, the flowers' pickers. Finally, the last verses of the song express in a clear cut and powerful way the ritual effectiveness of the dance : with the *mane* dance, the living being will go to paradise, disorder will be 'stamped down' the earth, and the obstacle removed into the sky.

The lonely brother of song IV is probably an image of the headman, as he attends or creates the yak-head festival. An orphan, he is a wanderer and thus a potential first settler somewhere. If he does not need a vertical line to become a headman, he needs a sister, because he needs wife-receivers and givers.

The rigorous precision with which the author describes the Dasaī songs and their context is a merit which must be particularly underlined, for it provides the reader with everything needed to *freely* interpret the ritual, at a time when the authoritarian selective view of writers -i.e. interpretation without description- is regrettably becoming more and more prevalent.

The second part of the book is devoted to a narration addressed to the protective gods of the village territory, the *syibda-nè:da*. In this part again, the author follows the same method : comparison of the facts between three villages, an attentive description of the shrines, ritual ingredients and acts, before presenting the text itself. The *syibda-nè:da* are the "lords of the place", responsible for its prosperity. They are sensible to the disorder of the society (incest, illegitimate pregnancy) to which they react by sending calamities. Their cults are performed either by the headman or the *lambu* shaman and the link between the two seems obvious, as Höfer notes that a *lambu* is called Mukhiya when performing this cult, and the Mukhiya shown in the photographs when performing the buffalo sacrifice wears a long tuff of hair, like shamans.

Höfer provides a deep understanding of this category of gods, linked, as he shows, to the mountain gods by their attachment to the rock and slopes, and suspects that their original form were indeed of mountain gods. In contradistinction to the Nepalese Sime-Bhume, the *syibda-nè:da* has no attachment with water although the couple mountain/lake was probably at their origin. But they are dichotomised in a vegetarian aspect, sometimes called Mahadeo or linked with holy Tibet, and a carnivorous one, sometimes called Devi or related with the spirit of a Gurung (an association which is not surprising as the Goddess, like spirits, is viewed as local and dangerous).

By definition however, the *syibda-nè:da* is indefinite : he is the one "whose extent, name, identity and region are unknown", and numerous gods are associated with him. For Höfer, this complexity is due to historical changes and adaptation to different environments. But more fundamentally, it is the result of a cosmo-centric movement which explains its power or incorporation.

There are clues which tends to link the *syibda-nè:da* cult to the epoch when the Gurung were installed in the Gorkha kingdom by the king, as narrated by the *Gorkha vamshavali*. Indeed, the Tamang studied by Holmberg cannot offer themselves to this god, but must give the ritual ingredients to a Gurung for that purpose. And, in the villages studied by

Höfer as well as in the area studied by Holmberg, it is said that the original *syibda-nè:da* resides in Jharkalleri and is Gurung. The author raises the question why there is no reference to the political context and no reference to the king as the supreme possessor of the earth in the *syibda-nè:da* cult ? I think he has answered this question by linking the two parts of his book, like a link between two rituals which forms a totality : Dasaī, which is a *transcendental* power conferred to the headmen (by the king or the mountain gods) on the people he rules, and the cult to the gods of the territory, which is a local, chthonian, and *immanent* power conferred on him as well, as a first settler of the place, which he masters by this very fact.

As a matter of fact, if everybody participates in the offerings to the *syibda-nè:da*, it is a secret cult, a private one, where only the headman or the one who acts in his name can participate. Like the Magar headman propitiating Bhume, the Tamang headman spends the night alone in the sanctuary of the *syibda-nè:da* in a state of purity, reaffirming that his own body is in union with the earth, that, as Paul Mus would have written : he is the earth made man. The taboo against the presence of nubile woman in this rite whereas they are especially present in the Dasaī ritual, may equally be interpreted as the wholeness of the union between the chief and the earth, which needs nobody else. If we compare the Tamang data from what we know of Bhume, they differentiate themselves both from the high caste Hindus who do not have a collective cult to Bhume except in the context of Dasaī, showing that for them the source of power is unique, and from the Magar who always see Bhume as one Magar god whose origin is in their own territory. This regional and Gurung form of the god in the Tamang society raises a question : is it the reflection of a historical or ideological unique and foreign origin of the group perpetually remembered in this allogenic earth god?

The temptation to further discuss this incredibly rich and stimulating book is great. For example, this review has not taken into account many aspects dealt with in depth by Höfer, such as the Tibetan etymologies of the Tamang texts, the analysis of the prosody, or the musical notations of the songs because of the reviewer's limitations in these fields. This book shows us how fundamental questions can be raised only by meticulous ethnography. Every Himalayan and Tibetan specialist will find it a mine of information and a model of method.

Ulrike Müller-Böker, *Die Tharu in Chitawan: Kenntnis, Bewertung und Nutzung der natürlichen Umwelt im südlichen Nepal*, Stuttgart, Franz Steiner Verlag, 1995, 213 p., bibl., ill., tables, maps.

Review by Ben Campbell

Ulrike Müller-Böker has written a serious and passionate account of the very deep problems inflicted upon villagers through the creation of the Royal Chitawan National Park. It will doubtless make uncomfortable reading for conservationists, scientists, government officials, and tourists, whose prime interest is the protection of threatened species like the rhinoceros. The message of the book is that local participation through recognition of villagers' subsistence needs is a *sine qua non* of long term nature protection. Müller-Böker does not question the ultimate need for a national park, but presents research evidence collected over eight months of fieldwork of the devastating effect the park has had, particularly on the traditional forest-dwellers, the Tharu. Müller-Böker defines her approach to investigating the issues of knowledge, valuation and use of the environment as one of "ethno-ecology", informed by analysis of the physical environment and socio-political development. She explores the Tharu's "cognitive environment" through their classifications of plants, animals and eco-type variation, and attempts to locate this knowledge within conflicts of valuation that bring out distinctive patterns of environmental orientation. It is not only a matter of differently contextualised ecological consciousness between traditional, pre-industrial societies and Western-scientific ones in the struggle over the national park, because Müller-Böker successfully shows how different are the agro-ecological orientations of the Tharu as compared to the immigrant farmers who came in large numbers from the hills since the 1950s after malaria eradication.

Chapter 6, "The use of the natural environment by the Tharu" is a tour de force which deserves to be read by everyone concerned with agrarian change in Southern Nepal. Till 1951 the Tharu practised shifting agriculture. They kept large herds of cattle used for ploughing and transport. The establishment of the national park in 1973 decimated the village herds through the absolute exclusion to pasture (and wood and plant collection). In the three villages studied the numbers per herd fell from about thirty to about six. There is now a permanent lack of dung for agriculture which is unable to compensate for the economic loss of forest

resources. With the lack of ploughing teams, tractor use removes income from the substantial proportion of day-labourers. The Tharu seem loathe to adapt to Pahâriyâ techniques of stall-keeping livestock, saying grass-cutting is too much work, forbidden, and they don't know how to do it anyway. Müller-Böker shows how the Tharu are absolute beginners compared to the Pahâriyâ's experience of agricultural intensification. The latter are also more attuned to dry crop production while the Tharu focus almost exclusively on rice. Rather than agricultural diversification the Tharu are still based in a mentality of fishing, gathering, and extensive herding. Alongside this many Tharu lost their land title to the incomers through naiveté about land values.

The final chapter 8 "the traditional life-style and economy of the Tharu in conflict with nature protection" amounts to a reasoned plea for the voices of Chitawan's villagers to be heard by the authorities, supported by pragmatic suggestions for improving the park-people interface. The Tharu have been squeezed by contradictory state policies of opening the district to economic migrants, and excluding them from their traditional environmental resources. The conservation institutions followed policies of strict nature protection, until local outcry led to a limited period of permitted winter grass-cutting. Still, the population is compelled to fulfil their needs illegally, risking detection by the military guards, and this determines an overwhelmingly negative opinion of the park. As one villager put it "If we only go into the forest to shit we are fined".

Müller-Böker takes a deliberate investigative strategy in adopting the framework of ethno-ecology, and explicitly sets her work in a counter-direction to the general trend of agro-ecological studies which have minimised the differences between "ethnic" groups (e.g. Schroeder 1985), so I will explore the merits of this approach briefly. There are strong and weak senses of the "ethno" prefix, and for the most part Müller-Böker is undogmatic, using the concept as a methodology to see what empirical insights it can generate with an applied rather than theoretical objective (p.19). Local discourses of ethno-specificity need to be questioned as to whether they are a rhetoric of group-identity boundary maintenance, or genuinely refer to coherent and distinctive lived-worlds. My reading of Müller-Böker's work leads me to conclude that neither of these alternatives are wholly true for the situation she describes. One of the factors which leads me to doubt the comprehensive applicability of concepts such as Tharu environmental knowledge, valuation and use is the huge discrepancy in land holding among the Tharu (p.78), greater even than between the

incomers, favouring especially Mahato (jimindars). Is this not such a difference as to make commonalities of language with the bulk of Tharu propertyless day-labourers secondary to land holding in determining environmental orientations? Müller-Böker claims Tharu religious cosmology holds their identity together (p.82), but the elite's engagement of Brahmans surely indicates some discrepancy in this respect. An unanswered question of 'ethno'-relevance concerns the discussion of the composite category Awaliya, that includes the Tharu and among whom some intermarriage occurs. This category disappears from view after chapter 4 and Tharu become the sole indigenous group we hear of. We are left in the dark as to whether Bhote, Darâi, Danuwâr, etc. share the same ethno-ecological formation. As for the autochtones' locally-attuned knowledge, an encounter with a non-Awaliya Chepang woman is described who says "in comparison to us you (Tharu) know nothing"! With other incomers, their ethnic diversity of Parbatya as opposed to Tibeto-Burman becomes lost under the label Pahâriyâ. Are they all identified as "blood-suckers" (p.90)?

Beyond these reservations, the identification of ecotope classification as Tharu-specific but not soil terminology, shows where ethno-specificity works and where it doesn't. In chapter 5 the data literally brings down to earth arguments about ethno-classification. There is indeed more supporting evidence for distinctive cultural orientation : as in the spatial mobility characteristic of Pahâriyâ being unthinkable to Tharu; and Tharu not knowing how to cut fodder. However, the policy consequences of taking an ethno-specific stance in terms of negotiating access for traditional user-groups, are all too briefly raised in asking how to "filter out" these groups from the heterogeneous population (p. 192)?

Caution is required in that the greater the argument made for 'ethno-specific' factors, the more local is the focus it prescribes, and the harder it may be to make comparisons. Lessons from the Chitawan-Tharu need to be able to refer beyond, to other people-park struggles. There is unfortunately no reference to Stevens' (1993) work on Sagarmatha published two years before this one, though Langtang and Sagarmatha are mentioned en-passant as examples of better co-existence with more benefits from tourism.

This book more than deserves to be translated into English. It needs to reach a Nepali readership. Müller-Böker's account of factors of agrarian change in Chitawan is full of material that will be of interest to analysts of population-agriculture dynamics. The situation she describes stimulates reflection about the effects of culture (indigenous technical knowledge and

classificatory paradigms) in conditions of economic change when population growth and resource inaccessibility are responded to very differently, depending on culturally distinctive dispositions to agro-ecological intensification. It is a courageous and thought-provoking book that brings to light facts many would like swept under the carpet. It has also introduced me to a word that should be borrowed from the German; Naturschutzpolitik. The simplistic protection of nature against all human encroachment is an extreme position born of a particular time and culture. It is also environmentally counterproductive if you consider the anthropogenically necessary maintenance of grass-stands in Chitawan for the rhinos' nutrition. I would add, consider also the animals' perspective and their own disinterest in false dichotomies of nature and society: humans produce some of the best food available, and right on the edge of the forest too! A last point, the résumés at the end of each chapter are excellent but there is unfortunately no index.

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Isabelle Sacareau, *Porteurs de l'Himalaya. Le trekking au Népal*. Berlin, coll. Mappemonde, 271 p., maps, fig., photographs.

Review by Monique Fort

Isabelle Sacareau presents the first comprehensive study on the porters of Nepal in relation to the development of trekking activities. After a concise, yet enlightening introduction, the author begins by discussing the conditions of the development of mountain tourism in Nepal. The originality of the Himalayan environment of Nepal, with its eight ">8000m" peaks and of its mosaic of populations, is first evoked. Then, the author emphasizes that Nepal has benefited from the mythic constructions generated in the minds of Westerners around the magic words "Himalaya" and "Tibet" and on the semantic confusion raised by the word "Sherpa". Both these aspects explain why Nepal Himalaya appears for those living in a materially-oriented society as an appealing, new territory for "wild" and/or mystic adventure. The economic and political contexts of Nepal are also important for tourism development since this activity is the primary source of foreign currency and thus generates new sources of income that the government of Nepal wants to control inasmuch as tourism may indirectly play an important role in the development of peripheral areas of the country.

The second part of the book deals with the specificity of mountain tourism and with its consequence on the Nepalese involved: porters, Sherpas and the managers of trekking agencies. Mountain tourism (in contrast to religious or cultural tourism) is rather recent (the last 20 years) and has progressively spread over most of the country. As a consequence, revenue from trekking has economically benefited, to a significant extent, the villages located along the major trekking trails. The trekking boom during the last 15 years has also stimulated entrepreneurial attitudes, thus resulting in the creation of many new trekking agencies. The author analyses the social impact of this expansion, as expressed by the progressive integration of tribal populations (Rai, Limbu, Tamang, Gurung, etc., natives from the areas of trekking destinations) into the group of tourism business people, initially composed of both literate Indo-Nepalese and physically skilled Sherpas. Internal social and economic segregation/hierarchy among the different groups are also analysed in detail and illustrated with several examples—from real success stories to the marginalization and impoverishment of those who have lost their roots

in breaking definitely with the traditional agro-pastoral activities of their ethnic group. Sacareau shows how tourism has generated among the Nepalese populations involved in trekking new lifestyles, complex forms of migration (from temporary to permanent emigration from the native village), and multiple activities in the villages. More generally, tourism has stimulated the emergence of a new middle class based on economic status rather than on birth or caste conditions. Trekking development and its spatial expansion have also established a new geography of Nepal, with the supremacy of the capital city, Kathmandu, and the secondary centre, Pokhara—the starting point for treks around the Annapurna range and further north and west. The redistribution of trekking benefits is, however, unequal in the country. The regions which are the most visited receive a great portion of this income (i.e., through lodging, food, gardening activities), whereas the regions providing porters have also been progressively included in the market economy. In some cases agricultural activities are becoming outpaced by jobs provided by tourism. However, it is clear that some other parts of the country, either too remote or still considered as "unattractive", receive little or no feedback, a situation which, at term, might generate socio-political instability. Enlarging the scope of her study, the author shows how this form of mountain tourism, as analysed in Nepal, appears as a good model for other developing mountainous countries where tourism also plays a growing part in the economy (e.g., Morocco, Turkey and the South America Andean countries). Tourism provides a positive impact on the economy, on the diversification of activities (off-farm jobs) for countries still relying chiefly on agricultural products; it also provides a means to rise in the social hierarchy for individuals or some specific ethnic groups; and it favours the development of a national identity among multi-ethnic countries. However, Sacareau reminds us that the economic benefits may remain fragile, since they are very dependent upon the "moody" behaviour of tourists, upon the regional and international economic situation, and above all, on the political stability of the welcoming countries.

Clearly illustrated with well-conceived diagrams and maps, this book is a pleasure to read. It should be warmly recommended, not only to scientists but also to all lovers of Nepal and the Himalaya, to those who like trekking not only for the discovery of magnificent landscapes but also for a better understanding of the mountain people, their conditions of life and work, and the mutations affecting their society under the influence of tourism as part of the "mondialization" of our world.

Recent Research on Ladakh 4 & 5, Henry OSMASTON & Philip DENWOOD eds., London, School of Oriental and African Studies, 1995, 429 p., fig., plates.

Recent Research on Ladakh 6, Henry OSMASTON & NAWANG TSERING ed., Bristol, University of Bristol, 1997, 374 p., fig., plates.

Review by Isabelle Riaboff

Since 1981, international colloquia on Ladakh have been regularly convened in Europe, and once in India, by a group of scholars who formed the International Association for Ladakh Studies in 1987. Open to all who are interested in the study of Ladakh, Westerners as well as Indians (among whom are a number of Ladakhi), the IALS forums gather not only academics (geographers, historians, sociologists, anthropologists) but also professionals who take part in modern Ladakh's destiny.

Two recently published volumes record the proceedings of three successive colloquia, held in Bristol (1989), London (1992) and Leh (1993). It is regrettable that the editors did not classify the papers other than alphabetically by author. However, if classified by rubric an important imbalance would have been evident: social and religious customs are poorly dealt with, whereas history, social development and ecology appear to be major concerns.

Among the anthropological contributions, a few are worth recalling. John Clarke (RRL4) surveys the technical and social aspects of metalworking. Kim Gutschow (RRL6) contrasts some Ladakhi and Zanskari irrigation systems with the Tibetan management of water distribution. Smriti Srinivas (RRL6), on the basis of fieldwork carried out in the Nubra valley (Tegar and Hundar settlements), analyses the way Muslims and Buddhists behave jointly at village level. As for religious topics, we are indebted to John Crook (RRL6) and Thierry Dodin (RRL6) for accounts of the lives of two modern Buddhist masters, Tipun Padma Chogyal (born in Chemre in 1877) and Negi Lama Tenzin Gyaltsen of Kinnaur (1894-1977).

History papers are of two kinds: a number of articles are dedicated to factual history, while others shed light on the history of Ladakhi studies. In addition to studies focusing on nineteenth-century events, some authors turn to earlier times: Rohit Vohra (RRL4) and Philip Denwood (RRL5) examine Ladakh's situation before its Tibetanization; Neil Howard (RRL6) investigates the dynastic history between 1450 and 1550 AD; lastly, several

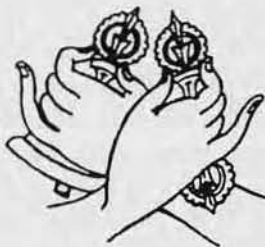
Ladakhi episodes involving Tibetan diplomacy (from the eighteenth century to the 1940s) are presented in detail by Peter Schwieger (RRL6) and John Bray (RRL5). As for Ladakhi studies, in total, seven papers deal with the predecessors that Ladakhologists celebrate, namely, William Moorcroft, Alexander Csoma de Kőrös (the London colloquium commemorated the 150th anniversary of his death) and August Hermann Francke. The critical reading of Moorcroft's writings by Nicky Grist (RRL5) is particularly interesting, as well as Peter J. Marczell's analysis (RRL5), which shows how in the 1930s, the figure of Csoma de Kőrös was used by Hungarians to serve both personal and institutional ambitions.

When reading these proceedings, one cannot but note that the modernisation of society has influenced Ladakhi life as a whole. The large military presence, the strengthened administration, the expansion of employment opportunities, road construction and increased tourism have deeply affected the economic, social and religious structures. James Crowden (RRL5; RR6), David Mallon and Roger Prodon (RRL6), Helena Norberg-Hodge (RR6), Henry Osmaston (RRL4), Harjit Singh (RRL4; RRL6), Prem Singh Jina (RRL6) all consider the impact of 'progress' on the traditional way of life. John Crook (RRL4) reports how the use of "small houses" has changed; Sonam Phuntsog (RRL6) recalls that sacrifices offered to local deities have been abandoned by the Buddhist Dards since 1991; Nawang Tsering (RRL4) and Paula Green (RRL6) describe the new educational structures established for monks and nuns. Many contributors ponder over what policy to follow, in order to support development while protecting Ladakh from ecological and cultural disruptions.

The wide range of papers dedicated to historical and developmental issues shows that most of the Ladakhologists no longer convey the atemporal image of Ladakh which prevailed for years in academic literature. Ravina Aggarwal (RRL6), who denounces this romantic cliché, adds that Ladakhology wrongfully encapsulates Ladakh under the domain of Tibet, denying the other influences that have affected Ladakhi culture. Yet, Aggarwal's paper no longer seems valid. Thus, the number of contemporary works considering Ladakh as being at the cross-roads of various cultural worlds is striking. In the proceedings under review, Rohit Vohra (RRL4), on the basis of myths, points out the possible connections that might have existed with Gilgit and Hunza prior to the eleventh century; in another paper (RRL5), he presents the relationship between Ladakh, China and the Turks of Central Asia during the seventh and eighth

centuries. Kulbushan Warikoo (RRL4) describes nineteenth-century Ladakh as a transit emporium in Indo-Central Asian trade. Mark Trewin (RRL5), ethnomusicologist, shows how a song composed *circa* 1825 has been further adapted to different musical schemes of Balti and Indian of inspiration. Lastly, Islam appears to have become a major concern within Ladakhology: Abdul Ghani Sheikh (RRL4) and Pascale Dollfus (RRL5) relate the history of Muslim settlement in Ladakh, whereas Nawang Tsering Shakspo (RRL4) and Smriti Srinivas (RRL6) provide accounts of the co-existence of Muslims and Buddhists in some villages of the Nubra valley and the Purik area.

More recently, the contributions presented at the seventh and eighth colloquia of the IALS held in Bonn (1995) and Moesgaard (1997) confirm this trend: Ladakhology today grows enriched with fruitful comparisons with Ladakh's neighbouring regions (such as Baltistan).



Project :
Credit Systems and Urban Development in Nepal

Michael Mühlich

The proposed study¹ connects two fundamental topics, of general theoretical as well as Nepal-specific value: the transformation of traditional into modern, of "old" into "new" regional centres, focused on through research on the transition of socio-ritual credit relations into secularised credit systems. This seems to be a central field of study as the historically classical situation in Nepal may allow conclusions about the transformation of traditional into modern forms of exchange. The situation in Nepal, compared to that of other still traditional societies, seems to be exceptional from a historical point of view as Nepal was until recently relatively independent from external political influences. Although Nepal's social order was based on early Indian caste hierarchy, the country developed a less rigid model. With the exception of state-controlled corporations during the historical epoch and then especially under Rana rule as well as later on, nearly no forms of co-operation existed which went beyond ritually or ethnically informed institutions. Other organisations, such as culture centres or self-help groups and NGOs, were restricted, because they might have led to political opposition. The democratic changes in the country since 1990 have allowed mutual help relations to be extended.

The study's objective is to analyse to what extent urban and regional credit systems and their mediums of exchange are a result of development from ritual forms of exchange or from the advancing market economy. Within this analysis, the aspect of regionality will receive special attention, because clues are anticipated in relation to the geographical separateness of certain regions.

With this objective, the study will also contribute to discussion on the origin of mediums of exchange as a necessity of pre-monetary exchange as well. This topic is as important in economics as in ethnology, because in addition to the monetary system in developing countries, a "shadow economy" also exists. In Nepal one finds the *dhikur* and *guthi* systems, in which money as well as other forms of credit circulate. These informal credit systems, viewed as shadow economies from an external

¹ The Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG) has provided an 18-month scholarship for the period of research in Nepal, starting in June 1997. I also wish to express my gratitude to Tribhuvan University for supporting my research proposal.

perspective, connote distrust in the monetary system in comparison with an equally possible internal view of trust that informal sectors provide for regional economies. Writing on the subject, Trenk² (1991) pointed to the implications of informal credit relations for the economy as a whole, which can only be understood through their social "embeddedness".

This study will examine how far extended trust is created through the establishment of informal credit relations in developing urban and regional environments, and which might lead to co-operation on a general social level beyond ethnic boundaries. Therefore, a central objective of the study is to establish the meaning of regionality and its character in the development of informal credit systems, as well as its connection to the general social value system, as far as relations of trust are concerned.



² Trenk, M. 1991, *Der Schatten der Verschuldung. Komplexe Kreditbeziehungen des informellen Finanzsektors*, Saarbrücken.

Conference Report by Pascale Dollfus

In June 1997, Aarhus University in Moesgaard hosted the eighth international gathering of scholars in Ladakh Studies; participants came from Denmark, France, Germany, Great Britain, India, Switzerland and the United States to consider a wide range of issues dealing mainly with history, social anthropology and development.

Convened by Kristoffer Brix Bertelsen, Poul Pedersen, Martijn van Beek and their colleagues, eleven participants came from Ladakh itself, from both Leh and Kargil districts. Their papers revealed a keen interest in sustainable development, non-conventional energy and education.

The colloquium was organised in different sessions based on common themes. The first day was dominated by papers dealing with archaeology and history. Neil Howard (London) described his own pottery finds, and in light of the author's studies of the forts of Ladakh, he discussed the dating proposed by A.H. Francke in his pioneering work on the archaeology of Ladakh. Sonam Phuntsog (Achinathang) outlined the history of political relations between the village of Hanu and the state of Ladakh. Mick Khoo (Boulder, CO) presented some remarks on the observation of solar and lunar eclipses, linked with Rahu. Then Nawang Tsering Shaksपो (Leh) spoke on the foremost teachers of the successive kings of Ladakh.

On the second day, Abdul Ghani Sheikh (Leh) presented the economic conditions during the Dogra regime. Next John Bray (London) and P. J. Marczell (Geneva) spoke on two great figures of Ladakhi Studies: The Rev. A. H. Francke and Csoma de Kőrös. An attempt to understand the perception of the inhabitants of high altitude regions was made by Harjit Singh (New Delhi) who conducted a study based on household level data in three villages of Ladakh, Spiti and Lahaul. Then various anthropological papers examined the religious concepts, livelihoods and activities of both nomads and agriculturists. Monisha Ahmed (Bombay) described the Rupshu inhabitants' yearly trek to Tso kar (one of the main salt lakes in Ladakh) and the method by which the removal of salt is organised. Pascale Dollfus (Paris) focused on the local cult to mountain deities performed by the nomads of Kharnak. Reinhard Herdick (Munich) analysed the spatial order of architectural and socio-cultural structures in the village of

Yangthang in western Ladakh. Kim Gutschow (Cambridge, MA) detailed a lay fasting rite known as *smjung gnas* which is performed in Zanskar and shed new light on Turner's theory of liminality. Finally in a session called "Community and Belonging", David Pinault (Chicago) discussed the ways in which the annual Muharram rituals celebrated in Leh township have functioned in recent years to mediate communal relations among the Shia, Sunni and Buddhist populations, while Martin Sökefeld (Hamburg) analysed "the nationalist imagination" that has emerged in the Northern Areas of Pakistan, whose inhabitants suffer from much political discrimination.

The third day was entirely devoted to development and education with a set of papers on sustainable development, non-conventional energy sources and ecological agriculture read by Sonam Dawa (Leh), P.G. Dhar Chakrabarti (Jammu), Jigmet Namgyal (Leh) and Mohd. Deen (Leh); Mohd. Raza Abbasi (Kargil) exposed the role of voluntary organisations in the development of Kargil Districts, while Mohd. Jaffar Akhoun (Kargil) spoke on the scope of tourism. In addition, special attention was devoted to education, and particularly to women's issues. David Sonam Dawa (Leh) stressed the problems of primary education in Leh District. Both Kaneez Fatima (Kargil) and Spalzes Angmo (Leh) gave lively papers on women's development and education respectively in Kargil and Leh Districts. Finally Katherine E. Hay (Copenhagen) highlighted the gender dimension of modernisation in Ladakh.

On the fourth and last day in a session called "Language and Literature" Anandamayee Ghosh (Santineketan, West Bengal) examined the continuity of *gzungs skad* (literary language) which prevails in Ladakh from the linguistic point of view in common speech and in the written language. Bettina Zeisler (Berlin) discussed loan-words in the Ladakhi language: mimicry or integration of modern concepts. We may also include under this theme the paper given on the second day by Ravina Aggarwal who, taking the example of a novel written by Abdul Ghani Sheikh, discussed the various problems arising when translating modern literature.

Most of the papers delivered during the colloquium (plus some others ...) will appear in van Beek, Martijn and Kristoffer Brix Bertelsen (Eds.) *Recent Research on Ladakh 8*. Proceedings of the Eighth Colloquium of the International Association of Ladakh Studies, Moesgaard, 5-8 June 1997.

THE LHASA VALLEY
November 27-29th, 1997, Meudon.

Conference Report by Heather Stoddard

An interdisciplinary workshop, entitled: "The Lhasa Valley: History, Conservation and Modernisation in Tibetan Architecture", was held on the premises of the UPR 299 (Milieux, sociétés et cultures en Himalaya), CNRS, Meudon. The workshop was funded by the European Science Foundation, Asia Committee, Leiden. Further grants were provided by the Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales and the URA 1229 (Langues et Cultures de l'Aire Tibétaine), CNRS, Paris. The workshop was initiated and prepared by Heather Stoddard, with the assistance of Françoise Robin. Participants came from the Tibet Autonomous Region of the People's Republic of China, USA, UK, Italy, Switzerland, Germany, Norway and France. Other colleagues were invited from China, Nepal and India.

The city of Lhasa is, with Jerusalem, Rome, Benares and Mecca, one of the holy cities of our planet. The name itself, Lha.sa, meaning "Land of the Gods" or "Sacred Place", proclaims its origin in the mid-7th c., however, archaeological finds confirm the presence of human habitation in the valley since Neolithic times, 4500 years ago. For two hundred years capital of the military empire of Great Tibet, the city became simultaneously the "Sacred Place" of Tibetan Buddhism. Lhasa was also important as a Central Asian city, in historical, cultural and economic terms, drawing pilgrims and merchants from many parts of Asia. Unique by its altitude, at 3700 m. above sea level, Lhasa was and still is one of the places on earth that captures the imagination of humankind.

Lhasa is one of fifty protected historic cities of the PRC. However, at present, the whole valley, including the old city, is undergoing rapid transformation. The very fabric of the heart of Lhasa is in danger. When the workshop was proposed two years ago, 270 sites remained out of the 650 recorded on Aufschnaiter's map in 1948. At the end of 1997, only 180 survive. This is why the workshop sought to concentrate attention on city itself, while at the same time reaching out to the broader question of Tibetan architecture on the high plateau, and beyond.

At present, the *Lhasa Historic City Atlas* is under preparation with the participation of a European-T.A.R. team, headed by Knud Larsen of Trondheim University, Norway, and it was this on-the-ground work done by us over the last four years which created the impetus for the present workshop. French tibetology has also produced a rich and interesting new corpus of materials on Lhasa in the 17th c. during the reign of the Great Fifth Dalai Lama, in *Lhasa. Lieu du Divin*, Olizane 1997, ed. F. Pommaret.

The workshop is the first to be held specifically dedicated to this subject. Its aim was interdisciplinary, including anthropologists, historians, architects, tibetologists and sinologists. It was also an experiment, venturing into the sensitive area of cultural heritage conservation, restoration and development in Tibet.

Topics for papers and discussion included the following:

- Myth, history and architecture: foundations of the Lhasa valley - Tibetan and Asian history: Lhasa, Holy City in Central Asia - Traditional habitat and religious architecture on the Tibetan plateau. Links and influences beyond - Technical aspects of Tibetan architecture - The future of Tibetan and Himalayan architecture - Traditional architecture: restoration, conservation and development planning - SAVE: Historic Cities of Europe Project: its application in an Asian context - Social studies: the dynamics of living historic cities - Mapping, town planning - Archives, visual documentation and development of CD ROM resources.

The declared scientific objectives of the workshop were as follows:

- Creation of an East-West forum for scientific research and exchange on Tibetan architecture and habitat - Creation of a strategy for the restoration, protection and development of traditional architecture on the Tibetan plateau - - Creation of Archives of Tibetan Architecture.

It remains to be seen to what extent the above-mentioned long-term scientific objectives will develop in the present context of rampant capitalism, construction of concrete jungles, and the modernisation of society in China and Tibet. It is to be hoped, however, that a heightened awareness of the values of traditional architecture, and the possibilities for its development in the future, will contribute to the protection of the historic city. As we heard during discussions, the Phala House was saved this year, following the initiative taken by Lhasa city residents. This is one important aspect of the evolving situation. Most of these topics were covered or touched upon by the speakers or in discussion, with the exception of the development of CD ROM resources. Several French colleagues who did not present papers acted as chairpersons for the different sessions, and took an active part in discussions. A round table was held at the end of the workshop, during which suggestions on future strategy were discussed. It was concluded that two complementary approaches should be pursued: 1. Research under present existing agreements should be continued, with small on the ground projects working with local authorities. 2. The possibility of launching a large-scale international project should be explored.

Kegan Paul, London, made an early proposal to publish proceedings of the workshop.

Michael Mühlich: *Traditionelle Opposition: Individualität und Weltbild der Sherpa*, Freiburg im Breisgau, 1994, Centaurus Verlag, Kulturen im Wandel vol. 7, Pfaffenweiler, 1996, 305 pp. (Published dissertation).

Since Nepal opened its borders to the western world in the 1950s, the Sherpa of Solu-Khumbu have continuously attracted researchers focusing on the Buddhist religion and rituals. In addition, researchers interested in their history, economy and trade have also contributed to make the Sherpa probably one of the best-known ethnic groups in South Asia and the Himalayas. However, their character and lifestyle have rarely been examined independently from their adherence to Buddhism. Within that perspective, a one-dimensional point of view has also contributed to the rather uncritical subsumption of different lines of thought encompassed in what Ortner (1989) called "the concept of high religion".

As my own research in Solu and Baudhanath, from November 1991-May 1993, has shown, opposing views exist among the Sherpa concerning Buddhist institutions, with consequences reaching into the present. I did not, however, try to point out different schools of thought but to concentrate on the endurance of diverse lifestyles expressed in religious and social institutions and their organisation. The chief opposition exists between what I call the *Lama* system, on one hand, and the indigenous *mortsa* system, on the other. The title *Lama* connotes "superior", and the "ideal" system derived from it is built on the high religious precepts of hierarchy with religious institutions, sustained by promoting asceticism, lifelong vows of celibacy, a tendency to segregate the common people and the exclusion of people from lower castes to achieve membership within religious institutions as well as within ritual organisations of the village. On the social level, mutual assistance is reduced to a minimum, while formal contracts and wage-labour relations are taking over the role of informal relations and relations of equality. However, to conclude, as Ortner (1978) did, that Sherpa Buddhism completes the atomistic tendencies of their social structure seems far-fetched.

Thus, a rather different picture of their communities emerges when one looks at the "common" Sherpa *mortsa* system. The Sherpa word *mortsa* denotes "common account" or "common interest", or more precisely, "to collect funds and other help within the community and contribute to a primary or common interest". At first glance, this does not seem very different from the Newar *guthi* system. However, their system was traditionally more restricted to outsiders than the Sherpa system.

Historically, the *mortsa* system is first mentioned at the foundation of religious institutions, for example, the *gompa* of Chialsa in the southern Sallerie Valley or the *gompa* of Trakshindo east of the Solu Valley. These Sherpa projects resulted from the common interest of local communities, whereby outsiders, such as Newar and even low-caste Sherpa (Yemba), could contribute and be integrated, thus in a sense also opposing the subordination demanded by the very religious elite. Next to these *gompa*, villagers have built small houses for the aged, hence reflecting the social dimensions of their projects. Furthermore, these monastic institutions have never been segregated from village life since they were also conceived as schools (Sh. *sheta*) and there has been no introduction of lifelong ascetic vows, like that of the *Gelung* of high religious tradition. Furthermore, the position of women in these monasteries was not related to lifelong vows.

Without looking at the village background, these institutions could be construed as an imitation of the high religious ideal by the common people. However, as I have tried to show in a detailed analysis of the social structure, these diverging institutions seem to be built on the endurance of diverse lifestyles within Sherpa society as a whole. While the social structure of communities adhering to the *Lama* system proves to be associated with a more sedentary peasant lifestyle, the social structure of the communities related to the *morstar* system still shows a stronger reference to a former nomadic-pastoral lifestyle. The difference is that relations based on mutual help and sharing common land-use of the wider locality (in the sense of the valley-community) are more highly valued than relations based on common descent and its atomistic tendencies whence connected to the private ownership of land and titles. In theoretical terms, this contrast could also be explained as the opposition of personality versus territoriality, although political, ethno-historical and ecological perspectives may also be taken into account.

The endurance of these opposing tendencies is also relevant to the Sherpa concept of the household (*mikhang*). There are many instances to which I could refer, where the Sherpa have themselves expressed the idea of an extended household based on the idea of mutual help. The inclusion of siblings' children as well as attached household workers proves that the principle of a common locality and mutual assistance is as important as the Sherpa concept of the house itself. In the traditional perspective of the Sherpa, the house is a "living being" (to borrow this term from R. Waterson's book "*Living House*" in *Southeast Asia*, 1991). Titles, such as those of the mediator in village affairs are associated more with the esteem

of a certain house than with a certain person and may in case of the absence of the holder be transmitted to other persons in the household and thereby also to women. The house is also thought to possess a soul, and when it is gone, people say that the house is empty (*khangpa tongba*), as they would say for a person who had died (*mi tongba*). In order to build a house, the local gods, the *lu sabdag*, must be appeased; and hence symbolically, relations among members of the household are as dependent on locality and mutual help as they are on kinship and descent.

Michael Kollmair: *Futterbäume in Nepal. Räumliche Verteilung und Stellenwert in kleinbäuerlichen Betrieben*, University of Giessen, Department of Geography, 1996, 205 p., maps, illus., figs.

This dissertation deals with the spatial distribution and the status of fodder trees in the land-use system of the Nepalese Middle Hills. The term "fodder trees" is defined as arborescent plants integrated into the fields of private land and pruned annually for feeding purposes. Fodder trees are found throughout Nepal, though only in the Middle Hills are they a distinct feature of the landscape and the land-use system.

Livestock husbandry, intimately coupled with the practice of arable farming, occupies a key role in the predominantly smallholding and subsistence-oriented land-use system of the Nepalese Middle Hills. Virtually all the nutrients needed to maintain soil fertility make their way onto the fields via livestock. Moreover, such animals represent the only possible means of providing draught power for farming on the steep, narrow-terraced slopes. Overall, the land-use system is characterised by an exceptionally tight-knit spatial, functional and economic integration between animal husbandry, arable crop production and the use of forested areas. In this production system, maintaining the supply of feed during the dry winter season poses a basic problem for animal husbandry. Foliage of fodder trees is able to provide a considerable amount of fodder needed during this critical period of the year. Although more than 100 different tree species in Nepal are cultivated to obtain fodder, only 20 to 30 species are frequently encountered and characterise the mix of species at local level. Common to all is a great variety of additional uses—for example as fuelwood, litter, bedding, fruits or medicinal properties.

The study's objectives were on the one hand to identify the spatial distribution, and on the other to deduce the traditional knowledge regarding fodder tree cultivation. Therefore, a conceptual approach, a combination between landscape ecology and indigenous knowledge, was needed. A broad range of different methods, from semi-structured open interviews to ethnobotanic methods as well as mapping and biomass determination, was chosen. By selecting several case studies in the Middle Hills of central and eastern Nepal at all typical altitudes inhabited by diverse ethnic groups, fodder tree cultivation could be studied on different scale levels.

Despite varying socio-economic and ecological conditions, there are certain regularity factors in fodder tree distribution at regional level. Different groups of suitable tree species can be demarcated at various altitudes, with the number of species declining clearly as the altitude increases. On account of the change in water balance and intensity of irradiation, exposure influences the cultivation limits of individual species as well as the intensity of fodder tree cultivation. In lower-lying locations, it was possible to ascertain a preference for the north-exposed slopes which are more humid during the dry season, while south-exposed slopes are preferred at higher localities because of higher irradiation values.

At household level, fodder trees are, wherever possible, planted near dwellings, not only to guarantee convenient availability but also to protect the foliage against theft. Preferred locations are terrace embankments, along paths and in home gardens. Conversely, there are practically no fodder trees to be found in the area of irrigated terraces. One of the most interesting study findings emerged from the enquiry into the relations between different ethnic groups and the intensity of fodder tree cultivation. Contrary to a common hypotheses, the ethnic group as such does not strongly affect the intensity of fodder tree cultivation, nor does traditional knowledge between different groups substantially differ. Rather, the more determining factors are the settlement location and the population density as well as access to areas of pasture and woodland. The yield of fodder from a single tree averages 35 to 40 kg/tree annually. It fluctuates greatly, however, and for very large trees it may total up to 300 kg per annum. Thirty to 50% of the biomass harvested consists of wood from the branches lopped off in the process. Converted for an average farm—with about 45 fodder trees of varying size—that amounts to a total yield of about 1,700 kg, providing some 15% of the annual feed and 10% of the fuelwood requirement.

The farmers of the Nepalese Middle Hills have traditional classifications to assess the quality of tree fodder. Two main assessment criteria can be distinguished. Fodder foliage quality is graded primarily on the basis of palatability. Furthermore, the farmers differentiate foliage feed with regard to its effects on the productivity of cattle, goats and buffaloes. Some of the tree species are considered *posilo* (nutritious), others *narāmro* (poor). More precise still—though not applicable to all tree species—are distinctions regarding milk production or even relating to the fat content of the milk. From the farmers' point of view, the time span during which it is possible to prune a tree is an important quality criterium. Species with early or late, long or short, as well as multiple pruning periods can be distinguished. For the farmers it is important to use a broad range of different tree species, which are able to meet the feed requirements during the dry season. In order to record the negative impacts of fodder tree cultivation (e.g. shading, water dropping, root competition) on the yield of arable crops, comparative studies were made on affected and unaffected sections of terraces. Results from these studies showed that the yield reduction caused by fodder trees is smaller than usually expected. Even without fodder trees—owing to poorer fertilisation and inferior seed stock—the yield from the lateral terrace areas turns out to be generally lower.

The farmers in Nepal have a quasi-fixed, reproducible nomenclature for the influence of the various tree species on soil quality. It is an observation-based empirical value derived from the root competition and the influence of leaf litter on the tree's surroundings. Trees that have a soil-enhancing, fertilising influence are considered *malilo* (manuring, fertile), whereas trees impacting negatively on the fertility of the surrounding soils are termed *rukho* (dry, infertile). The yield-reducing effects of the fodder trees on cultivated crops are, from the farmers' point of view, attributable not only to shade and root competition. Particularly during the rainy season, sizeable areas of poor or non-growth were reported to emerge beneath the trees, with the farmers ascribing these to the effect of dripping water. They use a word of their own for these areas: *tapkyāni* (literally: "place of the drops"). Since a part of the trees are already pruned and many fields lie fallow during the dry season, the farmers sometimes attribute less significance to the effect of shade.

Despite these negative impacts, fodder tree cultivation has been intensified during the past decades. A distinct increase in trees on private

land is attested by the results of the interviews conducted and by aerial photographs. Since fodder tree cultivation is a successful option to bridge the shortage of forage during the dry season, this process will probably continue. In spite of everything, the trees between the fields are only tolerated; for besides the positive contribution they make to the feed supply, they also have detrimental effects on arable crop yields.

The intensified cultivation of fodder trees clearly shows that, contrary to opposing views, innovations are able to spread quickly in traditional societies. Even people who live at subsistence level adopt innovations which prove useful under their specific ecological and socio-economic context. The inferred implication for the planning of development initiatives is that it is more meaningful to provide the indigenous population with "baskets of choices" and to entrust the task of selection to them rather than to present rigid, pre-engineered solutions.

Annick Hollé : Cité des dieux, ville des hommes : organisations spatiales, morphologies urbaines et correspondances sociales à Katmandou - Népal, Université de Paris I, UFR de Géographie, 1997, 550 p., tabl., maps, fig., photographs.

This geographical study is both an analysis and an interpretation of the spatial organisation of Kathmandu. The author emphasizes the connections between the spatial patterns of the city and its social conditions. The scope of investigation varies from the minute to the comprehensive according to necessity.

Arranged in three parts, the first is an examination of the location and development of Kathmandu: why is/was this town, located on the southern Himalayan slopes, so wealthy? The reasons are numerous. Kathmandu is first considered in an international context, a point on the map of Asia, before gradually approaching the town itself, first at the national, then the regional level. The first part concludes with a general presentation of the city through its various aspects—religious, political, military, economic, cultural, etc.

The second part, a detailed description of the urban space, penetrates into the alleys and neighbourhoods of the city. Kathmandu is divided into its fundamental elements—streets, crossroads, neighbourhoods, landmarks and borders. Each of these elements is then analysed through its

architectural, cultural and spatial perspectives, sometimes with supporting historical documentation.

The dissertation is organised by separating the urban space into two units: the "city", the historical centre of Kathmandu which dates back more than seven centuries; and the extensions or additions, which appeared during the last 40 years. Urban elements are first examined in the centre, then in the rest of the city. The last chapter links these elements to emphasize urban forms, patterns and networks in Kathmandu.

The third and last part focuses on local human data. The first chapter takes an ethnological approach. Rules governing the social organisation of the Newar, as well as other groups living in Kathmandu, are examined from a spatial perspective (population distribution, architecture, etc.). Differences between the criteria of spatial location in the city (social and religious) and its extensions (economic, i.e., affordable land with land speculation greatly restricting the possibilities) are highlighted. Atypical areas, the zone of contact between the centre and the rest of the city and the slums, are then examined. It ends with a critique of development programmes and urban planning in Kathmandu.

The next chapter scrutinizes the settlement of the city from historical records. From the myths of Kathmandu's origins to the most recent events, the history of Kathmandu unfolds along a spatial perspective. Only the people, events, political decisions which shaped the city are presented. The choice of the site from Manjusri's myth, the foundation of Kathmandu by King Gunakama Deva and the goddess Laxmi, the Licchavi dynasty, the division of the valley into three small independent kingdoms giving rise to the regional royal palaces, decrees about the caste system by Jayasthiti Malla, as well as Prithvi Narayan Shah's conquest in 1769, the rise of the prime ministers at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the civil code, the removal of the king during the reign of Ranaudip Shumsher Rana in 1881, the transfer of power during the Rana dynasty, and at last, the 1934 earthquake which destroyed much of Kathmandu are analysed with regard to their spatial repercussions. A large part of this chapter is devoted to the Rana dynasty because of its role in the development of the modern city.

The third chapter of the section concludes with a discussion of transformations in various sectors: why does the younger generation of Newar not build in the traditional style and on traditional sites? Why has the King of Nepal chosen to rule from the Narayanhiti palace rather than the Hanuman Dhoka? Why does the seven-century-old city cover only 200

hectares, while the areas constructed during the last 40 years cover nearly 5000 hectares?

Hypotheses about the meaning of the changes and structures and their evolution across the centuries are suggested by the above questions and discussed in the conclusion.

Monisha Ahmed: 'We are Warp and Weft': Nomadic Pastoralism and the Tradition of Weaving in Rupshu (Eastern Ladakh), Ph.D. in Anthropology, Linacre College, Michaelmas, 1996., 394 p., photographs, drawings, maps, diagrams.

This thesis, based on twelve months of fieldwork and archival research undertaken in Ladakh, explores the place of wool and weaving in the life of Rupshu. It attempts to trace the nexus between livestock, fibres, textiles, social and symbolic structures in Rupshu in order to understand the multitude of contexts within which wool-oriented activities exist. The craft of weaving was bestowed upon Rupshu by the gods, and thus all acts related to it have a close connection to the sublime.

Rupshu lies in the easternmost part of Ladakh in North India, in a Restricted Areas Zone, and is accessible only to Indian citizens. Hence, extensive fieldwork has not been carried out in this area. Further, though there is a little documentation on the craft of weaving in Ladakh, none exists on the nomadic tradition of weaving.

The first two chapters introduce the region of Rupshu and explore the historical context. They include a discussion of the origin and development of weaving and textiles in the area, and of the old trade routes in fibres. The next two chapters examine the connections between livestock, the source of fibres in Rupshu, and the Ladakhi pantheon. The relationship between the two is reflected in the manner in which livestock are revered and treated in Rupshu. Further, this affinity is widely expressed in Rupshu, and one such occasion is the harvesting of the fibres. The next four chapters look specifically at the craft of weaving, and local representations of the tradition. Using examples of particular pieces woven in Rupshu, I examine the gender, spatial, and hierarchical relations that they express and perpetuate. Not all the fibres harvested in Rupshu are used there, and the final chapter examines their distribution through trade. While woven articles are not traded, specific containers are woven for the transport of fibres and their characteristics are looked at here.

The concluding remarks include a discussion of the future of wool and weaving activities in Rupshu, and address the dangers posed by re-settlement schemes, and a shortage of pasture and over-grazing. These trends would eventually lead to a decrease in the number of livestock, and cause the people of Rupshu to abandon their tradition of nomadic pastoralism.

Kristoffer Brix Bertelsen: *Our communalised Future. Sustainable Development, Social Identification and Politics of Representation in Ladakh*, Aarhus University, Department of Ethnography and Social Anthropology, 1996, 319 p.

In this dissertation, a critique of the concept of sustainable development is presented in the context of a case study of social identification and politics of representation in Ladakh, North India. The initial critique of the concept revolves around the inherent assumption of availability of distribution, either in a descriptive or a normative sense, which is seen to be at hand in various elaborations of the concept. This assumption is linked to the parallel assumption of community or collective identity as the primary context of distribution. Through a detailed presentation of material relating to the political history and representation of Ladakh vis-à-vis government administration and development, it is intended to show that current conceptualisations of sustainable development more often than not take for granted the availability of "community" in one form or the other. Thus, in the case of Ladakh, the dissertation seeks to elucidate historical processes in which privileged representations of Ladakh were established in the context of resource distribution and political representation. Special attention is given to the formation of the category "Ladakhi Buddhists" as a vehicle for securing representation. This formation is seen to be informed by and recognised in various representational practices, ranging from the context of South Asian Protestant Buddhism to the context of contemporary invocations of Ladakh as a living example of sustainable development as imbedded in the cultural ethos of indigenous people. What is at issue is not whether the representations are accurate depictions of socio-cultural realities in Ladakh or not. Rather, the representations are surveyed for the images they invoke and how they are put to work in practice. It is the consequences of representations which are accorded importance in the dissertation, as well as their construction within various

frames of identification of "Ladakhiness" and the accompanying claims to truth; relevance and legitimacy in the highly politicised context of social identification in Ladakh. The dissertation is an attempt to pin-point how such identification carries consequences for the practice of sustainable development - which, in spite of the initial critique, should not be discarded but further elaborated to address issues of social justice in a more distribution-independent manner. The consequences of identification along the lines of "community" is exemplified by the case of Ladakh Ecological Development Group, a local NGO with strong commitments to the preservation of "traditional" life in Ladakh. In the case of LEDeG, it is seen that the logic of communal identification in combination with the outlook and practical activities of local influential "interpreters" of contemporary life in Ladakh combine to create an organisational weakness and inability to change practices in favour of greater involvement/participation in activities. In conclusion, the dissertation asks for a reconsideration of the dual distributive basis (descriptive/normative) of the concept of sustainable development. In this respect, an emphasis on identification in relation to rights is suggested which should be informed by history and practice in a given context, rather than the assumption of distribution as empirical fact/normative goal.

Isabelle Riaboff: *Le Roi et le Moine. Figures et principes du pouvoir et de sa légitimation au Zaskar (Himalaya occidentale)*, University of Paris X-Nanterre, 1997, 401 p., 3 vol., photogr., maps and diagrams.

This dissertation is the result of twenty-two months of fieldwork in Zaskar in the western Himalayas (Jammu and Kashmir State, north-western India). It is a study of the connections between religion and polity in a Tibetan community. The author examines the separation between the monastic authorities and the Zaskari monarchistic structures (the King of Zangla, leader of a small kingdom, maintained his prerogatives until 1950).

After a lengthy introduction to Zaskar's geography and history, the thesis successively describes the main features of Zaskari social order, the political and religious figures, the economic foundations of the exercise of power and the ritual roles played by the King and the monks which symbolically contribute to ensure their authority and power.

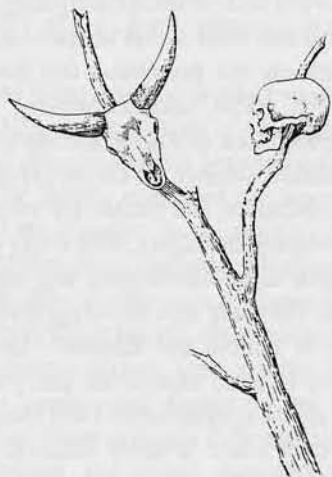
In conclusion, the author considers the association between the Tibetan king and monk in comparison with the Hindu king and Brahmin as

analysed by Louis Dumont. In both cases, the hierarchy is linked to the distinction between status and power, and the pair is in a "hierarchical reversal" form of relationship. However, great divergences appear: on one hand, the Tibetan monasteries and hierarchs' economic life is not entirely comparable to the material dependence of the Brahmins upon their clients; on the other, the Buddhist king is somehow linked with the divine sphere (indeed, the idea of a strictly secular nature of the Hindu king, asserted by Dumont, is decried by numerous Indianists).

Martijn van Beek : *Identity Fetishism and the Art of Representation . The long struggle for regional autonomy in Ladakh*, Cornell University, 1996. 410 p., map, fig., tabl.

This study seeks to understand the mutually conditioning influences of a global hegemonic discourse of rights, rooted in contradictory imaginings of the world as populated by sovereign individuals and collectivities such as peoples, nations, tribes, communities, and state practices of resource allocation and access (globally, inter-nationally, nationally) and the complicity of (social) science in these processes. The study further investigates the links between this hegemonic grammar of identification, representation and justification, and the daily practices of people who seek to make a living under rapidly changing conditions, characterized by commodification and the (perceived) loss of decision making power to centralized institutions. It is argued that most social science and political practice suffer from identity fetishism: the perception that the social is comprised of a natural order of stable, unambiguously bounded, communities/peoples/cultures. Conceptions of justice and democracy are built on the principle of representation assuming a convergence between 'identity' and 'rights'; both multiculturalism and racism are rooted in this misrecognition of the nature of being and belonging, effectively producing the very difference that is supposed to be represented, and instituting a logic of fragmentation without end. The study uses the struggle for regional autonomy in the Ladakh region of Jammu and Kashmir, India, as an illustration. In spite of the fluidity of lived experience and practices of identification in Ladakh, the most recent agitation after 1989 pitted Tibetan Buddhists and Muslims against each other. In-depth archival and field research of the conflict and its historical background carried out during prolonged visits over a ten-year period, shows that neither causes, nor form

of the agitation can be reduced to 'communal' differences. The dissertation shows that the historical transformation of the political economy of Ladakh and the production of certain normative frames of identification and justification offer important insights into the communalization of politics in the region, and suggests that such an approach would benefit understandings of 'identity' politics and 'ethnic' conflict elsewhere.



NEWS

**Colloquium "Sacred Landscape of the Tibetan Himalaya",
May 25-27, 1998, Heidelberg,
Internationales Wissenschaftsforum der Universität Heidelberg,
Hauptstrasse 249.**

**3rd Meeting of the European Cooperation Project
on Himalayan Languages
June 4-5, 1998, Heidelberg
South Asia Institute, Heidelberg**

The topics will be "Ritual language and poetry" and "Speech Act Participant marking in the verb".

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First Workshop of the Himalayan Studies Network
Meudon 1998

Representation of the Self and Representation of the Other in the
Himalayas : Space, History, Culture

Suscribers to the EBHR are invited to our first annual thematic workshop which will be held on 25th-26th September 1998 at the CNRS, 1 pl. A. Briand, 92195 Meudon, FRANCE.

Please contact Pascale Dollfus and Marie Lecomte-Tilouine, UPR 299.
e-mail : himal.res@cnrs-bellevue.fr

Friday, 25 September 1998

9:30 Welcome

9:50 Karl-Heinz Krämer : The janajati and the Nepali state : Aspects of Identity and Integration

10:30 Franck Bernède : Music and identity among the Newars

11:10 *Coffee break*

11:30 Gil Daryn: Self community and land in a Bahun village

12:10 *Lunch and visit of the Centre d'Etudes Himalayennes.*

2:00 Ben Campbell : Identity and power in a conflictual environment (Tamang)

2:40 Eberhard Berg : Dumji and Zhindak : Local Festival Performance and Patronage as a crucial source of Sherpa identity

3:10 Joanna Pfaff : Ethnic markers in local and national comparison

3:50 *Coffee break*

4:20 Joanne Moller : Insiders and Outsiders : Community and Identity in Kumaon, North India

5:00 Martin Sökefeld : Selves and Others: Representing Multiplicities of Difference in Gilgit, Northern Areas of Pakistan

5:40 *General discussion* (Steve Brown)

Saturday 26 September 1998

9:30 Martijn van Beek : The Art of Representation: Domesticating Ladakhi Identity

10:10 Ingun B. Amundsen : National identity as reflected in the Bhutanese architecture

10:50 *Coffee break*

11:10 William Douglas : The Khasia "invasions" in the Gopalaraja vamsavali

11:50 Michael Hutt: "Brahman meets Kiranti: reflections on BP Koirala's novel 'Sumnima'"

12:30 David Gellner : 'From Cultural Hierarchies to a Hierarchy of Multiculturalisms: The Case of the Newars'.

13:10 *Cocktail*

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Tambiah, S. J.

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