

Heroic Destinies and Petty Claims: Women and the Transformation of Shamanic Practices in the Hills of Nepal

Anne de Sales

(CNRS)

This paper addresses an ethnographic enigma: the sudden refusal by newly consecrated female shamans among the Kham-Magar, an ethnic minority of west Nepal, to perform the founding ritual chants of their shamanic tradition. Whether they will succeed in their attempt to transform the shamanic institution or whether, on the contrary, the institution will let them down remains to be seen. However, investigating their motivations involves focusing on the existential dimension of the shamanic calling as much as the specific cultural features and sociological context. By “existential” I mean simply the vision that these women have of themselves, partly in contrast with their perception of their male shaman counterparts, and the inner debates that their calling entails, given their living conditions. These conditions were greatly affected by ten years of a revolutionary insurrection that led to the fall of the Hindu monarchy and the proclamation of a Republic in 2008. Their biographies will also be set in the perspective of certain shamanic narratives to show how women’s capacity for creation and innovation is closely associated with the transgression of the dominant (and masculine) order.

This study is based on my recent encounters with eight female shamans in a village that I have been visiting for 30 years: four of them are already grandmothers while the other four are mothers of young children. One characteristic of shamans, and I would suggest that this is true of all faith healers, oracles or other inspired religious specialists, is that they have their life story at hand for anyone who asks about how they became who or what they are. They may be more or less loquacious, but once they have complied with the conventions and humbly expressed their ignorance about the origin of their calling, they can tell their story in one breath: their narratives form an important part of their legitimation for being a shaman; these are stories of the revelation through which they discovered who they

really were since their birth without knowing it. Although these biographies share widespread stereotypes, such as their initial illness seen as a sign of their election by their ancestors more personal feelings and concerns find their way through the narrative.

This paper aims first to show the fluctuating character of spirit possession in a community under stress since the turn of the millennium and the necessity, therefore, to study it in time. The second section briefly recalls the structurally central position of the shamans, or *jhankri*,¹ in the ritual life of the Kham-Magar. The third and fourth sections are based on the accounts of several female shamans who describe their predicament. We will try to understand what is at stake for them in their commitment to their calling.

1. *The fluctuating character of spirit possession in a community under stress*

Until the beginning of the twenty-first century, in the absence of roads, the Kham-Magar² area appeared as a remote ethnic enclave. The Kham-Magar inhabit about 30 villages grouped together in the higher valleys of the two districts of Rolpa and Rukum, located in the middle hills of West Nepal. The communities are ethnically homogeneous, with the exception of Hindu service castes such as blacksmiths and tailor-musicians who live on the outskirts of the villages. The Kham-Magar, who used to practise subsistence agriculture supplemented by transhumant pastoralism, are now dependent on the remittances of the increasing number of their family members working abroad. Partly because of their remote location and also for historical reasons that I have tried to analyse in other works,³ the Kham-Magar country provided the rebels with their main refuge during the ten years of the Maoist insurrection (1996-2006). As a consequence, the community suffered from both sides: villagers were caught between the government forces on the hunt for rebels or activists hidden in their community, and the Maoist fighters who punished "traitors"

¹ The Nepali term *jhakri* will be written *jhankri* in the text. The Kham-Magar also use the term *rama*, from the name of the mythic first shaman, Ramā Puran Can.

² "Kham-Magar" is an ethnonym coined by the linguist David Watters who doubted that their Tibeto-Burman language, Kham, was connected to the language spoken by the Magar, *magarkura*. However, the Kham-speakers are registered in the Nepali population survey of 2001 as Magar, hence the difficulty of knowing their exact number. Whatever the real origin(s) of the Kham-Magar, they do not share the same history as the Magar, the most populous minority in Nepal. The Magar are known for their close relationships to the conquering Hindu dynasty and also for forming an important contingent of the British Gurkha regiments.

³ De Sales 2013.

who might have denounced them. Village life was paralysed and the Maoists placed a ban on shamanic ceremonies, and all blood sacrifices. These activities were supposed to epitomise the backward nature of the local religion, contrary to the ideal of the “New Nepal” that the revolutionary movement was striving for.

I made several trips back to the village of Lukum during that time, and in 2003 and 2006, I noticed five elderly women with very long dreadlocks—a new phenomenon in this locality. Siddha-Braha, the village god, was supposed to have “seized” these “mothers” or *mataji*, causing their hair to grow in this spectacular fashion and submitting them to strict rules of purity and occasional shaking. I asked people whether there might be a link between the duress under which the community had been put by the on-going military interventions and this sudden manifestation of the village god. I thought that in this decade of uncertainty and fear, the *mataji* who consecrated themselves to the god of the place might express the community’s need for his protection. However, my suggestion was strongly denied: I should have known that gods do not always reveal their motivation in such a functionalist fashion. In 2013, seven years after the end of the insurrection, there were no more of these “mothers”: the elder ones had died, the younger ones had lost their dreadlocks—that had fallen off, it seemed, in the same spontaneous way as they had grown in the first place. The phenomenon had simply disappeared and was hardly remembered.

In 2010, another fact caught my attention that also motivated me to write this article: four newly consecrated shamans were all young women. However, although they had gone through the traditional shamanic “birth” or *boshine*, they had not learned the chants or, rather, they refused to do so. Kham-Magar shamans learn their chants in two ways: first they are supposed to be taught in their dreams by their invisible master, their ancestor whom they reincarnate; they also have to assist their human masters during the healing séances, repeating the lines after him until they are able to sing by themselves. The main guru of the village, Jode Jhankri, lamented the stubborn refusal of his female disciples to comply with his teaching, fearing that his knowledge would die with him. Indeed, the chants are ritual charters in the sense that Malinowski gave to myths: they introduce the principles of the organisation of society in a narrative mode and keep the memory of the ritual procedures that underpin the healing séances. Above all, what makes séances meaningful is not only the content of the chants but their performance. A pragmatic analysis would show how only the actual performance of the chants might succeed in involving the specialist, the patient, the public and the

spiritual entities into an efficacious séance.⁴ Dispensing the chants would amount to a radical transformation of the shamanic practices of this community. In fact, none of these female shamans were able to perform alone at the time of my visit; they mostly participated in larger shamanic gatherings when all the shamans have to be present. This is the case for the ritual birth of a new shaman or the revitalisation of one of their colleagues, and for the yearly village festival to chase away the “witch of the white clay” (*sara zya*). In these three circumstances that represent, so to speak, the minimum duty of a shaman who wants to remain part of the institution, they participated in the chorus and repeated the lines after the main master. However, they just skipped the much more frequent healing séances.

During my last visit in 2013, I found out that within the three previous years, four more *jhankri* had been “born”— all young men. I did not have an opportunity to see them performing since they happened to be away during my stay, but I was told that they did not know the chants either.

These fast and unpredictable changes that have occurred within the ritual life of this community over the past 15 years demonstrate the necessity and virtues of returning to the field in order to understand them better. The possession of the five “mothers” or *mataji* by the village god had an epidemic but also innovative character at the beginning of the 2000s. It happened within the midst of the Maoist insurrection, a time of chaos that might have fostered the sudden appearance of the *matajis* yet certainly limited it, along with its ending, to a unique and temporary phenomenon. It was a phase that passed. Also, it would have been wrong to suggest that women were taking over the shamanic institution altogether in 2010, since a few years later the new shamans were all males again. Spirit possession needs to be studied over time. It is a volatile, ethereal phenomenon that appears as a cultural response to uncertain times and individual anxieties—it fluctuates.

However, this does not mean that it is not structured. As a matter of fact, the shamanic institution among the Kham-Magar displays such a strong structure that, in my initial works on the subject, this structure tended to obliterate the individuals who embody the institution and make it live. I will first recall briefly a few of the principles at work in Kham-Magar shamanism, before focussing specifically on the existential dimension of these female individuals that I had neglected.

⁴ Such an attempt is to be found in my monograph (de Sales 1991, chapters 11 and 12) and in a more recent article (de Sales 2016).

2. Shamans at the centre of ritual life

Unlike most other places in Nepal, Kham-Magar shamans do not share the ritual life of their community with any other religious specialists, including any priest of the two dominant religions in Nepal, Hinduism and Buddhism. According to I.M. Lewis's binary classification into central and peripheral spirit possessions, the Kham-Magar shaman clearly falls into the first category.⁵ Another character has to fulfil religious duties on a regular basis but he is not a specialist: the son-in-law is accountable for his wife to his wife-givers and subsequently has to fulfil ritual obligations on several occasions in the life-cycle ceremonies, notably weddings⁶ and funerals. Sons-in-law also have to assist the shaman in a séance that takes place in the house of their wife-givers: they start by fetching the religious specialist from his home and carry his paraphernalia to the patient's house. Then the shaman orders them to get all the necessary items (wood, water, animals etc.), which they provide in accordance with the host. They will also have to behead the sacrificial animals at the end of the séance.

During his consecration, the shaman himself, starting with the first mythic shaman, Ramma Puran Can, occupies a position of son-in-law towards the spirits, who are supposed to give him a spiritual wife. The complex *boshine* ceremony may be read as both the rebirth of the shamanic ancestor in the neophyte and the neophyte's marriage with the daughter of the spiritual entities associated with wilderness. It is important to remember that the consecration of a new shaman involves many parties: his ritual fathers, the master shamans who were "born" earlier than him; his own family and close relatives in the patrilineal line, who bear the cost of an expensive ceremony involving many guests; the lineage of his wife-takers through the presence of the son(s)-in-law; and finally, the lineage of his wife-givers who have their role to play at the crucial moment of the ritual climbing of the tree of life.⁷ The ceremony can be more or less developed depending

⁵ Cf. Lewis 2003 (1971). For reasons of space it will not be possible here to elaborate on the relevance or shortcomings of the various attempts to classify the different types of spirit possession. However, on the basis of Himalayan ethnography, Rex Jones improved on Lewis's binary classification with a diagram of four categories differentiated according to the dimensions of time and space: peripheral, oracular, reincarnate and tutelary possessions. The Kham-Magar shaman would belong to the category of "tutelary possession", where time is designated but not space (Jones 1976: 1-11).

⁶ Among the Magar, lineages cannot exchange women directly: ego from lineage (A) cannot take a wife from lineage (B), to which he gave a sister or a daughter. This means that the son-in-law (B) ritually helps his wife-giver (A) to marry into a third lineage (C).

⁷ De Sales 1991: 115-134.

on the wealth of the hosting family but it is a public demonstration of a commitment to a career, which is backed up by the lineage structure of the society and its marriage system. This is illustrated again during the summer exorcism mentioned above, when the shamans are supposed to chase away the witch of the white clay and bring grain from the underworld: a lineage that is unable to send its own shaman to the village festival would have to borrow one from another lineage or pay a fine. It is clear that the shaman occupies a central role in the community and that, above all, his or her career is a collective affair, strictly controlled, as much as it is an individual one. However, with the women's resistance to complying with the tradition, the personal or individual dimension of the equation comes to the fore.

3. *The female shaman's predicament*

The shamanic career is open to women on an equal footing with men. This has always been the case, even when, 30 years ago, shamans counted far fewer women than men. The costume is the same, including the characteristic black velvet pair of trousers of the Kham-Magar shamans. The ritual climbing of the life tree that represents the crucial union between the neophyte and his spiritual wife is also performed in the same way. There is no restriction concerning menstruation. I even saw one female shaman who, as she was putting on her shamanic gear at the beginning of a séance, spotted bloodstains at the top of her pair of trousers—the hidden part of the clothing is not made of the expensive black velvet but of ordinary white cotton. She was not embarrassed one bit and rather than being discreet about it, openly complained that she had had no time to wash her clothes. Her behaviour did not seem to shock people around her partly because, in contrast with high-caste Hindus, there is no particularly strong ritual aversion to menstrual blood among the Kham-Magar. Also, being a shaman, she did not have to bother with female shyness concerning menstrual blood. Indeed, shamans must show confidence and enjoy provoking people with transgressive behaviour.

Parents and relatives are equally involved in a women's career knowing, that once she is married, it is the lineage of her husband that becomes the relevant unit in shamanic ceremonies. This is not connected with the fact that her ancestors may come from her own original lineage (*maiti*).

How are we to understand the fact that women incarnate Ramma Puran Can, the first shaman, who himself had two wives? For the main master of the village, who initiated most of the shamans over

the last ten years, a female shaman can be as powerful as a man as long as she learns the ritual chants. Sex is not relevant here. Supporting this conviction, one female shaman, Janne Jhankri, “the knowledgeable female shaman”, further developed this theme:

I was born a “woman” (*nāmarda*) from my (biological) parents, and then in the middle of my life I was (ritually) born a male (*marda*) because the divinity chose me. And then we have feathers on the head, an arm guard on the wrist, a drumstick in the hand, an iron chain around the neck... What do you think we are? We are *marda*. And after our death we will go as *marda* to Indra Lok.

The use of the word *marda/nāmarda* needs a few comments. Janne Jhankri did not use the Nepali terms, *maili/purus*, the conventional terms for male/female, nor did she use the Kham terms, *kepā/mimā*. The pair of word *marda-nāmarda* conveys the opposition between manly and unmanly qualities, weakness opposed to strength.⁸ Janne Jhankri did not suggest that she literally changed sex when she became shaman, but that she acquired the qualities of a man. Since she was ritually “born” a shaman at the age of 50, it was presumably at a time when she could no longer bear children.

Two other female shamans gave a slightly different answer to the question, insisting that they enter the role the moment they don the costume. Dan Mala Jhankri said: “Look at me, I am a woman. But when we wear our pair of trousers we are like men.” Dil Puri Jhankri clarified: “When we wear the costume, we are Ramma Puran Can, but the costume is very heavy for us.” These two women, still young mothers, did not suggest a transformation of their gender or their “self” as did their elder colleague. With the costume comes the role, but the wearers are not transformed to the point of not feeling the weight of the costume. It is worth mentioning that, unlike Janne Jhankri who had the reputation of knowing the chants, neither of these younger female shamans did. Their commitment to the role was much more tenuous.

Yet another young female shaman, Layan Jhankri, understands her predicament in this way:

I was (ritually) born in the month of June and one month later had to follow my guru to the séance *thum*.⁹ I did not want to

⁸ Nep. *marda*: s. man, male; adj. stout, strong. Nep. *nāmarda*: s. eunuch; adj. Impotent, unmanly (Turner 1931)

⁹ *Thum* comes from Nep. *thumā*: “an uncastrated ram”. “Going to the *thum*” in the Kham language refers to the action of drinking the blood of the sacrificial animal

sing. I would have died if I had not become a *jhankri*. I was very ill and my husband had to take me to a big hospital. But they could not do anything for me. This is why I had to become a *jhankri*. Here, in our village, women are the head of the family and we have a lot to do. I cannot follow my guru everywhere and learn the chants. But I feel shy not being able to sing. But if I sang, villagers would call me to sit (to perform) at their house, and I cannot go. So my guru is unhappy with me. He is very strict. But what can I do? Look, all the male *jhankri* are dying one after the other. Not women. This is why there are so many female *jhankri*!

Layan cannot refuse her election by her ancestor at the risk of dying, but at the same time she cannot perform as a shaman because the long night séances would mean letting her household down. The specification that women rather than men are householders reflects the situation that most of them have to face nowadays: that their husbands have left home—previously to flee the insurrection and now to work abroad.

Layan's statement about male shamans who die young needs clarification. Out of a dozen shamans in the village there are only three whose good reputation means that they are frequently called on to perform. The main guru, Jode Jhankri, is in his mid-50s and does not have a minute for himself. He is called for one séance after another, hardly sleeps and drinks alcohol to keep up. The body of a shaman is put to the test to the point of suggesting that there is an almost sacrificial dimension in his ritual task: he is drained of his own vitality to benefit the households that call him precisely because they lack vitality. However, apart from a share of the sacrificial animal, his payment consists mainly in prestige. However, the socio-economic life of the community is changing, and the increasing importance of the cash economy contributes to make a *jhankri*'s life untenable if the traditional way of retribution of a shaman remains what it used to be. Jode Jhankri is reduced to borrowing money for his children to go to school and to pay for their uniforms and school equipment. The long séances that last up to two days and two nights do not leave him any time to plough his fields, and he has no money to pay a labourer to do it for him while he is performing as a shaman. The praise he receives in return for being the best shaman of the village does not always seem to justify his condition of great poverty. And this circumstance might well be the main cause of the fact that young men

at the end of the séance, and regaining vitality. The term is connected to Sanskrit *thūma*: "virility" (*ibid.*).

choose to work elsewhere rather than continuing their ancestors' tradition.

The refusal by the young female shamans to learn the chants and go on as before reflects their analysis of their "householder" situation and may be at the origin of a transformation of shamanic practices in this community undertaken now by more female shamans than before. However, I would like to draw attention to two features of the women's capacity for creation and innovation: the first is that, in our Kham-Magar case, this capacity is deeply inscribed in the mythical understanding of the world that the shamans develop throughout their chants. The second is that, as we shall see, it carries a price that women pay with personal torment.

4. The ambivalence of creation

It is worth stressing that in the shamanic chants all major human creations are presented as being performed by women, starting with the first human being. We learn that the divine couple, Mahadev and Parbati, have been trying in vain to produce a human child: Mahadev failed to breathe life into the image of the first man that was forged in gold. He was also no more successful in his subsequent attempts trying metals of decreasing quality and value: first silver, then copper and at last iron. Parbati, increasingly worried about being childless, hid from her husband in order to give a human shape to a more trivial mixture of ashes, clay, and the excrement of dogs and chickens. Then, with profuse apologies for this first transgression, she presented the breathing creature to the god of the gods, who frowned but could not undo his wife's creation of life on earth.

In the same way, it is a disobedient daughter who lies at the origin of time on earth: the king of the skies endowed his daughter Somarani with a precious box that he made her promise not to open until she would have reached her husband's kingdom on Earth, which was plunged into eternal night. The impatient girl could not resist opening the box on her way and, to her horror, released nine moons and nine suns that made life on earth impossible. However, she would eventually redeem this first transgression with yet eight more transgressions, involving spitting in the foyer and smearing her snot onto the pillar of the ancestors. Each of these sacrilegious actions involved the disappearance of a star until one sun and one star were left to establish a viable alternation between day and night on earth.

The two examples under consideration show two characteristics—at least in myths—of women's capacity in and for creation. Firstly, it is a result of their transgression of the dominant order. Indeed in

both cases, the men, a husband and a father, are clearly in a position of superiority towards their respective wife and daughter who act against the established rules. The second characteristic is that women introduce life into a lifeless world through impure organic elements—animal excrements, snot and saliva—reminding us again of the human condition. Other examples would develop even further the farcical potential that women’s interventions bring into the narrative, in contrast with the epic inspiration of the chants. It is as if men had to mock what they nevertheless have to acknowledge: women’s capacity for giving life.



Fig. 1. The female shaman Jhankrini Lukum. Photo: Anne de Sales.

I suggest that the complaints of the female shamans that their domestic chores prevent them from fully pursuing their calling as religious specialists draw on the same pragmatic assessment of the situation. The trivial nature of their claims, commanded by the constraints of their daily life, stands in contrast with the heroic figure of the shaman as expressed in their chants. In one chant in particular, Ramma Purañ is described abandoning the field that he was ploughing to follow the messengers who came to invite him for a séance. As he is leaving he cries out to his wives who try to keep him at home, that he is only following his destiny “whether (his) name will be remembered or forgotten.” Fame and social status are what is at stake in a shaman’s career and is put at risk in every séance. If, for the various conjectural reasons mentioned above, women find themselves in charge of the shamanic function in a village deserted by men, then shamanic practices may have to be modified in the line of their petty claims.

However, their position as agents of social change entails personal torment. In the previous interview, the young female shaman Layan

mentioned that, although she did not want to learn them, she felt “shy about not being able to sing the chants.” The following account will develop further this feeling of embarrassment, the fear of losing one’s self-esteem. Sun Rupi is a young woman in her 30s, a mother of four children. Her husband works abroad. She knows that I have been working with shamans for a long time, so before I even have asked any question, she says:

I have four children and I want more sons! I am not a shaman anymore... Well, whether I am or not... I have to say that I quit. But I am the only one who knows, in my heart-soul. The outside world, the others do not know what I have in my heart.

This defensive introduction says it all: the young mother wants to conform to her social role and produce more children, preferably boys. At the same time she suggests that although she has stopped practising as a shaman for material reasons, she has kept her shamanic calling. This is why she insists that nobody knows what she feels in her heart. Clearly having quit her shamanic career is a cause of torment. She then proceeds to relate the story of her election by the spirit of her maternal uncle and all the signs of her shamanic destiny in her early childhood—a long story “that could take a whole night to tell.” Then again she expresses her ambivalence:

I was determined to be a shaman, hoping that in this way I would feel better. I wanted to know once and for all [what it was that made me suffer so much]. Or die. So I did the ceremony *boshine*. But now I am a mother; I do not know anything anymore. I said that my ancestors (*pitra*) left me, but actually they still play me, they still are tormenting me, *kut kut zir zir*. We put our body at risk thinking no matter, even if our ancestors leave us... But why would they leave us in the first place? They do not leave us. I worship my ancestors regularly and I am not as sick as I used to be.

Her speech is complex and contradictory. She hesitates and expresses first the urge of a diagnosis in order to know the origin of her suffering that seems to be as much physical as mental. As in Layan’s case, it is a question of life or death. Then, once she has complied with the ancestors, she feels better to the point that she is tempted to neglect them. But they remind her with their presence; they do not leave her alone. And why would she stop worshipping them when they brought her some relief? It is a rhetorical question, but the rest of the interview develops her predicament further:

After the consecration, one has to learn many things, and learn with one's guru who takes one to many séances, singing, speaking... This is an art (*kala*) that we have to learn. But for women like me it would not make any sense to ask for more teaching from the gurus. I cannot concentrate on the chants. Instead I think, maybe the youngest (of her children) has not eaten yet... and who is going to put the hens into the basket tonight, work in the field tomorrow? I always worry about these things. So how can I learn? But it is a shame not to know (the chants). I feel shy. Sometimes I think that I should learn properly. This is my destiny after all. I made the right predictions on the tree of life (*suwa*).

Sun Rupi needs to remind herself that she could be a good shaman and that she has visionary powers: her first predictions concerning the prosperity of the village on the tree of life, the day of her consecration, happened to be accurate. Also the fact that her ancestors have not left her may be understood as the sign that her calling is still alive; she is still inspired by them. What if we replaced the notion of ancestor by one of muse for the poet or the artist, and the notion of destiny by one of superego that we, Westerners, are implicitly using when we organise our experience? There would not be much difference between Sun Rupi's words and those of any young woman at the beginning of her career, debating between the desire to answer her inner calling and stand out from the crowd on the one hand, and the impulse to conform to a social role on the other hand. Village life does not give individuals many opportunities apart from being a farmer; and for young women who have not had the opportunity to be schooled, being a shaman is also one way to explore a more imaginative path, and, last but not least, to receive respect and additional social status as a shaman. Although human experiences are historically and culturally shaped, they are never so different that they cannot be shared beyond these local specificities.

Conclusion

We have seen, first, that the Kham Magar shamans were central in the community and that the shamanic career was open to both men and women. This remarkable equality principle is contradicted in practice in the case of young female practitioners who, given their family responsibilities, cannot devote the necessary time to their career. The situation seems to have worsened over the past 20 years, that at the same time, have seen significant outmigration by young

men for both economic and political reasons. Women are left alone with responsibility for the survival of the community. We witnessed a rapid increase in the number of young female shamans, but also individual attempts to adapt their calling to their living conditions. These attempts, still marginal, seem to involve a radical simplification of shamanic rituals that are emptied of their fundamental core—the songs—and, therefore, of the necessary control by a master. If this trend continues, then the Kham Magar would be another example of a central shamanic institution yielding to peripheral possession. This process would be comparable with the increasing number of “freelance mediums” in which David Gellner saw a democratisation of the means of religious authority in his study of the Kathmandu valley.¹⁰ This is not yet the case in the village considered, especially since a recent tourist interest in large shamanic gatherings seems to have supported the “tradition”.

This article has also shown that, insofar as they are the drivers of the transformations of shamanic practices women have in fact remained in line with the role they occupy in the chants. In the foundation myth of the Kham-Magar, they are cultural heroes responsible for the creation of life on earth, yet as unsung heroes; the songs ensure that they depict their creations under the most trivial aspects of the human condition—that are nevertheless human for all that. Finally, the biographies of female shamans show their own ambivalence towards the change that they bring, almost unwillingly, into the shamanic institution. Being unable to succeed as a proper shaman hurts their self-esteem, as if this were the price to pay for change.

Bibliography

de Sales, Anne

- “The Sources of Authority for Shamanic Speech: Examples from the Kham-Magar”, *Oral Tradition Journal*, vol.30, no.1, 2016 (forthcoming).
- “The crucible of the Revolution”, in Marie Lecomte-Tilouine (ed), *History and Anthropology of the Nepal People’s War*, New Delhi, Sage, 2013, pp. 164-211.
- *Je suis né de vos jeux de tambours. La religion des Magar du nord*. Nanterre, Société d’ethnologie, 1991.

¹⁰ Gellner 1994.

Gellner, David

"Priests, Healers, Mediums and Witches: The Context of Possession in the Kathmandu Valley, Nepal", *Man*, NS, vol. 29, no. 1, 1994, pp. 27-48.

Jones, Rex L.

"Spirit possession and society in Nepal", in John T. Hitchcock & Rex L. Jones (eds.), *Spirit Possession in the Nepal Himalayas*, Warminster, Aris & Philips, 1976, pp. 1-11.

Lewis, Ioan Myrrdin

Ecstatic Religion. A Study of Shamanism and Spirit Possession, London and New York, Routledge, 2003 (1971).

Turner, Ralph Lilley, Sir

A Comparative and Etymological Dictionary of the Nepali Language, London, K. Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1931.

