# ASPECTS OF NEPALESE TRADITIONS

EDITED BY

BERNHARD KÖLVER

FRANZ STEINER VERLAG STUTTGART
1992

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HELD UNDER THE AUSPICES OF
TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY
RESEARCH DIVISION
AND THE
GERMAN RESEARCH COUNCIL
MARCH 1990

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# GERMAN RESEARCH ON NEPAL: RESULTS AND PROBLEMS

A Seminar jointly organized by
TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY RESEARCH DIVISION
and the
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and sponsored by the
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# Introduction

## On Obstacles and Deficiencies to Research in Nepal

Bernhard Kölver

### Background and Occasion of the Conference

In 1980, the German Research Council decided to establish the Nepal Research Programme as one of its Priority Programmes. Its work was to deal with various fields of the Humanities; the plans accepted aimed at multiplicity rather than concentration, for in view of the extraordinary natural diversity and cultural wealth characteristic of Nepal it was thought appropriate to offer a chance of work to representatives of as many fields of study as was feasible. What emerged was a varied and checquered programme, ranging from geography to art and architecture, ethnological projects standing side by side with linguistics, history and philology being represented; research was based upon materials in Sanskrit, Nepali, Newari, and Tibetan. The unifying bond was the quantity of first-rate sources still little utilized, and the rapid pace of modernization which is changing the face of Nepal and in so doing inevitably does not leave traditional patterns of behaviour unaffected: everywhere, it changes and threatens traditional knowledge, no matter whether it is medicinal plants or philosophy and ritual.

To mark the end of a ten-year period, the Research Division of Tribhuvan University and the German Research Council thought it useful to acquaint a wider audience with some of its questions and results. The present Conference, and this volume, are an attempt to do so. Due to various limitations and constraints, it is only a selection of projects which is represented here.

The methods of presentation have been left to the discretion of individual researchers. Some have concentrated upon specimens of their results, others chose to outline problems which arose during their work. — We have invited Nepalese colleagues to comment upon each paper; again, some have confined themselves to the problems at hand while others took the opportunity to discuss more

general issues, sometimes touching upon the relations between Nepalese and foreign scholars, its problems and its deficiencies.

If not a painless, this yet was a very useful point to have been raised. For it is both the differences in aims and methods and the great gap in the endowment of research which as it were divides researchers into two groups, Nepalese and foreign, even when working on the same topic.

It was, thus, two different aims which we pursued during our meetings. First, there was the scientific angle. There, findings have amply justified the initial assessment. Even after decades of collection and research, there are fields where the scholarly potential of Nepal has been hardly tapped: new sources of the greatest importance are being constantly brought to light[1], and the publication of the materials collected during our limited period will take years till it is completed. The present volume contains specimens of such studies.

In the second place, we decided to tackle some of the larger issues which keep recurring in the actual course of work. In status, endowment, and the social functions of research, there are wide differences between Nepal on the one hand and Western nations on the other, and the effects of this gap tend to hinder the collaboration between Nepalese and foreign scholars which is an urgent necessity. The root of the problem is very easy to state. Research is one of the socially accepted ways to spend the surplus created by the Gross National Product: but what to do when there is no surplus to spend.

In a sense, this predicament was the second and less formalized topic of our conference, and I shall try to summarize some views and reflections[2].

In bulk, this is an insignificant part of the present volume; because of their potential practical relevance, and since they raise what to some will be touchy subjects, we nonetheless thought it fit to submit them to a larger public.

[1] See the catalogues of archival materials at present being edited by Dr. Shaphalya Amatya and published by the NATIONAL HISTORY GUIDE COMMITTEE in its Source Manual Series.

[2] These have been going on for some time, and many Nepalese scholars and/or administrators have on various occasions explained the problems of research in Nepal: Shrikrishna Acharya, Dr. S. Amatya, Dr. D.R. Bajracharya, Dr. B.M. Dahal, B.D. Dangol, Dr. C.P. Gorkhali, S.B. Gurung, Dr. K.P. Malla, Dr. H. D. Mishra, Dr. M.R. Pant, Dr. R.M. Pradhan, B.P. Shreshtha, Dr. (Mrs.) S. Subba Dahal, R.J. Thapa, B. Upadhyaya, Dr. T.R. Upreti. What is being outlined in the following pages is theirs as much as mine.

SCIENTIFIC COLLABORATION: ITS SCOPE AND PROBLEMS

To begin with facts. The sheer quantity of Nepalese materials awaiting collection, preservation, and analysis is overwhelming, much higher than anyone can have known. Houses and temples are to be restored, manuscripts to be preserved; a host of languages awaits description, etc. etc. The detailed studies we have — still rather few — are all of them variations upon a single theme: much of it is of an inestimable value for understanding the traditions of the whole of South Asia; the Himalayas have preserved a great deal that India, less fortunate than her neighbour in her history, has lost. Then, there are the many different ethnic groups now being integrated into the national mainstream and in this inevitable process losing parts of their own traditions. When speaking about species of plants threatened by extinction, botanists point to the irretrievable loss of genetic information: in a not dissimilar way, the many different peoples of Nepal have evolved a multitude of ways to cope with problems much nearer home, concerning the life of Man. We are not so successful in solving ours that we could afford to consign their strategies to oblivion without a glance. All this is to be recorded, and everybody who considers the pace of change will realize a great deal of such description is a task which will fall to the present generation, unless things are to be irretrievably lost.

This raises the obvious problem of how to cope with it. It is a very genuine predicament. The task of finding solutions no doubt will — and ought to — fall to the Nepalese in the first instance. But there are the economic constraints which will prevent Nepal from granting the Humanities the funds which her cultural heritage justifies and indeed demands. Collaboration, then, between Nepalese and foreign scholars, and the pooling of resources seems to be one of the avenues to be explored. Yet it is rare.

Why? Not to mince words, it is questions of endowment which play a conspicuous part, with the host of obstacles that follow in their wake. We have spoken of the insufficient support for research, with the Humanities for unanswerable reasons close to the end of the scale. This means limitations that make themselves constantly felt: there are the deficiencies in libraries and technical equipment; means for research projects are scant, which again implies research plays a less than adequate rôle in teaching; sufficient opportunities for specialization are lacking, as well as opportunities for contacts with the current of international research. All these factors taken together mean it is anything but easy for a Nepalese researcher to keep abreast with international developments in his field.

The Humanities face the additional problem of aims and methods. In their mainstream, those traditional to South Asia — if the generalization is permitted — were largely oriented to the mastery of a fixed canon of knowledge, of tested and proven relevance, often tying in with questions of the *philosophia perennis*, and hence of undoubted validity. The Western ones are much more limited in scope, trying to isolate minute but manageable fractions, and then going through longish phases of collection and analysis of materials, with questions of relevance tending to be indefinitely postponed or even getting lost from sight. And the results of either approach are not always considered valid by the advocates of the other.

At best, this makes for an uneasy equilibrium: it brings about a division which easily leads to a lack of communication at times rising to the level of genuine friction. And this is when the differences in opportunities and endowment begin to be a distinctly irritating factor.

This is a veritable gulf, and it seems to be widening rather than decreasing. It is in this context that one sometimes hears expressions like *scientific neo-colonialism*: by working on a subject that stems from outside his own culture, a researcher will be 'exploiting' resources not for him to use: Kālidāsa was Indian, so Indian territory he is, not to be entered without permission. If concepts like freedom of knowledge, or the international community of scholars, are to be more than mere words, this is an evil notion (besides being not really practicable). Yet, there is an element of truth in it: if we claim equality of opportunities in access, we should be willing to contribute towards an equality of opportunities in other spheres, too.

Such are the latent problems smouldering under the surface. We might as well turn round and face them, and point out a few of the more obvious shortcomings which, given good will and a bit of imagination, it should not be impossible to overcome.

At the beginning, one ought to say the inequality is not so one-sided, the scales are not so unevenly balanced as one would perhaps suppose. To be sure, as for financial and material endowment, they are heavily weighed in favour of the foreigners. As against this, the Nepalese have what counts very heavily in any research even so much as only touching upon a topic from the Humanities: their familiarity with the country, its inhabitants, the accepted patterns of behaviour, the issues relevant to society. All these are preconditions one would naively assume to be indispensable to any research in the Humanities worth the name,

and in these fields the foreign researcher comes with a heavy deficit which even years of work can at best compensate in part.

This is a state of things which, quite apart from finances, would heavily argue for both sides to collaborate in work. Yet in spite of mutual interest and good will, this is not often achieved, and it would seem institutional incompatibilities, plus a lack of explicitness in stating deficiencies, expectations, and needs are parts of the problem. It was thought useful to try and clarify them, as a first step towards finding a remedy to the present less than satisfactory state.

### Infrastructure of research in Nepal: problems of information and documentation

To begin with preconditions for a fruitful collaboration. Nepal only has inadequate access to the results of international research, even on Nepalese topics.

This has a number of reasons. Tribhuvan University Library and the libraries of the various institutions are making every effort to extend their collections and keep them up to date. But prices of foreign publications are often prohibitive; so are those of learned journals, which therefore are only available in a strictly limited selection. Languages, if other than English, are an additional barrier.

No doubt the various foreign programmes to assist in the acquisition of books are a help. At the same time, they are but a partial solution to the problem: much relevant discussion is published in learned journals, or in the form of so-called 'grey literature', of pre-prints or drafts; bibliographies often are slow, insufficient, and positively forbidding in cost.

For these reasons, Tribhuvan University Library and the Research Division very earnestly ask scholars to send offprints and, if possible, copies of monographs or at least bibliographical information about them (such as publishers' announcements). In this request, they are guided not only by the understandable desire to have their relevant records as complete as possible, but also by the necessity to take care of the needs of Nepalese scholars who, in the planning stage of a study, ought to know what work has been done or is under process: the libraries and the Research Division are the only institutions able to protect them against unwitting duplications.

To this end, the establishment of a satisfactory *Data Base on Nepalese Studies* is an urgent task for the University (and, eventually, Departmental) Libraries, the Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies, and the Research Division. A documentation network with an adequate system of catchwords would be a very useful tool.

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The equipment nowadays available will easily permit a sensible division of the work where the libraries take charge of published materials while the Research Division contributes information about projects currently being undertaken. With present-day budgets, however, purchase of the necessary hardware is still out of the question.

Even so, the Research Division would greatly appreciate all kinds of relevant information about plans and projects and publications. Once the Data Base is established it contracts to reply in kind by drawing attention to related projects which are being contemplated or under process.

The *question of languages* will be difficult to solve, and the Nepalese authorities are very far from pretending to any right whatever to interfere with an author's choice of language. They can only plead their case. A young scholar working on a subject concerning Nepal will have more important tools to acquire than a third or fourth foreign language. English summaries would be ever so helpful, and are perhaps not too difficult to provide.

The next problem is a thorny one. The Nepalese authorities ask for copies of the *materials collected* during research to be deposited with Nepalese public and/or scholarly institutions.

This of course raises the entire host of questions of priorities, rights to publish etc. Obviously a researcher will himself wish to utilize the materials he has collected. This is a very legitimate desire. But it has to be balanced against a proven fact: in many projects it is nothing but a fraction of collected materials which actually sees the light of day, and sources buried and inaccessible often would be welcome to younger researchers with straitened means. Collections often are costly and wasteful to repeat — and while duplications may be tolerable within more affluent societies, they cannot be justified under the present conditions in Nepal.

A solution would lie in the procedure archives and libraries use when assigning their materials for scholarly treatment: They will grant an individual the exclusive rights to publish *for a limited period of time*. In doing so, they give the researcher the protection he needs when investing what after all is a part of his lifespan in a particular project; at the same time, they also fulfil their obligation to the public at large by making sure materials are not being unduly withheld. Probably, it will not be useful to think of a hard-and-fast rule for the time

allotted: in fairness it will have to be somehow proportionate to the efforts invested, and to the complexity of the task.

## Methods of Research

From material we now pass to what these days is brutally called 'human resources', i.e. the issue of finding manpower with an adequate training in research methods and techniques. As far as some fields of the Humanities are concerned, it is not quite easy because of certain fundamental differences in approach.

Centuries of public care and public money have allowed Western scholarship a considerable degree of specialization, with highly elaborate methodologies, and a correspondingly sophisticated infrastructure of equipment. Accordingly, the means and techniques for collecting, describing and analyzing sources are highly developed, and in contradistinction to many other societies, we used to have the patience, and were granted the leisure, to postpone the search for meanings until the source materials had been collected to a reasonable degree, and were reasonably well understood. As against this, the indigenous traditions of South Asia have by and large followed a different course, applying much intellectual effort to the recognition of identities and fundamental principles which underlie the host of different phenomena: *sarvatrotsṛja bhedajñānam*[3], as the Sanskrit saying has it, 'abandon the search for — or rather: knowledge of — distinctions everywhere'. It is the analytic ways which have come to dominate the field and constitute the mainstream of international research.

Not every country will wish to join it in all fields: the number of German specialists in South-East Asian affairs, e.g., is quite small, and in a similar way Nepal will decide upon her priorities. But research in her own national traditions will surely be among them, and it is here that the gap will have to be bridged.

Identifying relevant areas will be the first step. To revert to the example used before: The traditional archival materials which Nepal possesses in such an amazing profusion are of the highest importance for the study of South Asia as a whole. Yet they are not really matched by staff sufficiently numerous, and sufficiently well trained and equipped, to deal with them in an adequate fashion.

Training, then, and equipment will be necessary. And it is at this point that one encounters the incompatibility of administrative systems. To take my own

[3] From the MOHAMUDGARA (quoted in Böhtlingk: Indische Sprüche[2], No. 2670).

country as an example: there are agencies for the furtherance of research; other institutions have been assigned the task of providing assistance in education and training, usefully subdivided into University and Vocational Levels; corresponding assistance in technical equipment is handled by a third set of bodies, etc. etc.: both you and we had to undergo the painful process of learning all this when trying to find the funds for a building to house the microfilms collected under the *Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project*, and it took more than a decade for the matter to be settled. — Our organizations of Economic Cooperation are very sensibly permitted to combine the various aspects and tie them into a coherent package: but by and large, they are enjoined to take the notion of development in a somewhat limited sense, with a marked emphasis on basic needs — and the needs of studies aimed at furthering the national identity of a country are not really counted among them.

In other words, our organizational framework, admirably suited to the furtherance of research under the conditions of our country, is none too well adapted to the difficulties we are discussing.

Solutions probably had best be found on higher levels. It would be for the Nepalese government to point out that and why they find present structures inadequate; that while results of research are appreciated as such, it would be considered even more helpful if scholarly projects were to be flanked by training, so as to ensure Nepal herself takes an appropriate share in research on her own culture, and that such proposals are also counted among *basic needs*, as defined from the Nepalese point of view. More than 1,00,000 manuscripts have been found on Nepalese soil and have been filmed during the last twenty years. On the international level, they are giving a considerable impetus to many branches of, not only Nepalese, but South Asian and Tibetan studies. Nepalese scholars are taking no very conspicuous part in this process. This is no healthy state of affairs.

Pending a solution to this problem, we are therefore not condemned to inactivity, and your universities, and the Research Division of Tribhuvan University, have taken a number of useful steps to further collaboration and bring about a better understanding of each other's goals and methods. Seminars or workshops on specialized topics have sometimes been held in connection with research permits: they could be made mandatory for projects which exceed a certain duration. — Where the departments concerned find a particular approach promising, they

could think of inviting someone for a series of lectures and/or workshops: as far as Germany goes, for short-term assignments (of up to three months) there is a fair chance to obtain the necessary grant from the *German Academic Exchange Council (DAAD)*, and other countries are bound to have similar programmes. — The co-researchers the Research Division used to assign to foreign projects again are a very excellent notion: ideally, they will provide training-on-the-job. One sees there is no dearth of sensible ideas and attempts. The next step would be to ensure their regular implementation, and to establish a smooth routine[4]. -

THE SUBJECTS OF RESEARCH AND THE PROBLEM OF ITS BENEFITS

The last point to be examined again is an outcome of the problem of limited resources. It is the question, often raised, of how the country will be benefitted by a particular project. Anyone who considers the economic demands of the present hour, and the scarcity of funds to meet them will realize its pertinence.

Yet it is a short-term question, and foreign to research as such. Projects from the Humanities will often find it difficult to give justifications that will convince an economist: historical studies have no immediate 'benefit', they cannot point to tangible and quantifiable returns as the introduction of chemical fertilizers can: their advocates will often resort to variations of the *Man does not live by bread alone* theme which leave a bitter taste in the mouth when there are people who lack their daily bread: against them, the historian with his interest in this monument or that manuscript does not, prima facie, have a very convincing case. Still, this is a short-sighted account. In terms of input and returns, the *International Fund for Agricultural Development* tells us, support of high-mountain agriculture is not a sensible investment — but Willibald HAFFNER in his contribution to the present volume has a very impressive case when pointing out the factors omitted in comments of this kind: acting upon such recommendations means abandoning a kind of life which is an essential factor in the cultural landscape of Nepal, a kind of life, moreover, with vital ecological functions in a high-mountain environment. And the calculation of investment and returns evades a crucial point,

[4] This is a matter definitely open to improvement. Some time ago, foreign researchers had to apply to Nepalese Embassies abroad for what was called a Research Visa. Obtaining it was an arduous process which took a length of time entirely unpredictable, but to be counted in months. A Tourist Visa, on the other hand, was granted within hours. It does not take much imagination to predict the course most people took. It meant, of course, the University and the Research Division losing contact with another project.

viz., which kind of future to offer the peasant now by implication being advised to abandon his homestead.

The question, then, is pertinent — but so is the answer, if on a different scale. A sensible solution again does not seem to consist of an either — or, but rather of a combination of both angles. Let Government and the academic community draw up a list of priority areas: whatever falls within their scope should be given the necessary permits etc. without delay. Let not therefore be excluded whatever lies outside: a topic which seems marginal today may well be considered highly relevant tomorrow. If, however, the number of marginal projects is strictly limited, a competition will develop between different contenders for a permit. It will not be difficult to agree on a list of criteria for assent or refusal: the kind and degree of affiliation with Nepalese scholars and institutions might count among them, as might the potential usefulness to the country, as assessed by Nepalese bodies. All this will imply an extended phase of preparation, which will help both parties to arrive at a better understanding of the issues involved, and of the mutual points of view.

* * * *

With its components of thoughtlessness, reticence, lack of imagination, missed opportunities, it is not an attractive panorama that is being unfolded before the reader, and for a while I was in doubt whether to burden him and myself with drawing this sketch. It would have been ever so much more agreeable (and convenient) to speak about what turns work in Nepal into a pleasure: the friendliness, the lively curiosity, the enthusiasm, the readiness to help that one constantly meets, within the academic community and beyond.

Every one of us probably treasures recollections like the good-humoured amusement of the hill man visibly struck by the absurdity of an elderly foreigner coming thousands of miles to ask what words he has for *one* and *hoe* and *see*. It is because of this spirit of place, and because of the mutual esteem and trust that has developed over the years, that we thought problems ought to be brought out into the open. We hope and trust our work in Nepal will continue. On the occasion of a farewell it may be appropriate to stick to convention and keep to words of thanks; when in the middle of work, it is useful at certain intervals to look back and face the less agreeable issues.

I cannot close on this sombre note, though: for some of us, it is a long and formative phase of our lives that has been spent in your midst, and we would be misusing this occasion if we were not to offer our thanks.

In the first place, they go to our Nepalese colleagues who have helped us in innumerable ways: the inequality of opportunities we have mentioned was a matter of abstract concern rather than a hindrance to actual communication. Every one of us from the German side has found counterparts who have turned into companions and friends.

Our thanks go to the Nepalese administrators of Higher Studies: to the former Secretary of the Ministry for Education and Culture, R. J. Thapa, who for twenty years has been a constant and benevolent guide to most of the large-scale German projects touching upon culture and research; to the Vice Chancellors and Rectors of your Universities, some of whom have continuously advised us, made us aware of problems and chances: they have done a great deal to maintain the liberality which research needs to flourish: we very well know this is anything but a matter of course nowadays. They go to the successive Chiefs of the Research Division of Tribhuvan University, Dr. Shankar Man Pradhan, Mr Santa Bahadur Gurung, and Dr. Ratna Man Pradhan, and their respective staff: they had to bear the burden of day-to-day business; to them fell the unrewarding task of straightening out things which were in danger of going wrong.

On the German side, we tender our grateful thanks to the GERMAN RESEARCH COUNCIL. Their support went very far beyond providing funds. Many of our suggestions were not easy to fit into the guidelines an institution as large as theirs cannot do without. We always found an open ear; we could rely upon their help even in the jungle of normal administrative practice so tedious, so singularly devoid of any saving grace. Best of all, and rarest in a non-specialist context: we found genuine interest in our work and understanding for its complications when they arose.

And now to those who 'stood between' both sides. Our most heartfelt thanks go to the staff of our small *Nepal Research Programme* Office in Kathmandu, to Bishnu Prasad Shreshtha, Sushil Prasad Shreshtha, Mahendra Shreshtha, and Nakul Thapa Magar. They experienced the differences in habits and tacit assumptions at first hand; they had to interpret Nepalese ways to us and did so

with patience, with tact and grace; if we managed without major mishaps, and found many doors open in Nepal, we owe it to their care.

* * * *

Many people and many institutions have contributed towards making this conference a success. The funds we owe to the German *Ministry for Economic Cooperation (BMZ),* through the good offices of the German Research Council and the *Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ)*: we are most grateful to them for allowing us to stage this extended exercise in reflection and exchange of views. The then Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Hon'ble Shailendra Kumar Upadhyaya, the Hon'ble L.N. Chand (MP), and the German Ambassador, Dr. Martin Schneller, have honoured us by their presence during much of the conference and have encouraged us to discuss the broader issues which have been summarized on the preceding pages.

We gratefully acknowledge the active interest of the then Rectors of both universities, Dr. Dayananda Bajracharya and Professor Bidyanath Upadhyaya. The Chief of the Research Division, Dr. Ratna Man Pradhan, and his staff shared the burden of organization with Bishnu Prasad and Sushil Prasad Shreshtha.

My warmest thanks go to my colleagues, Nepalese and German, who have enlivened discussions by their comments and suggestions. Many kind and complimentary words were spoken during these days which it was the editor's painful duty to eliminate: we from the German side shall nonetheless fondly remember them.

In various ways, Georg Berkemer, Erika Büntjen, Willibald Haffner, Mahes Raj Pant, and Perdita Pohle have given a great deal of care and thought to the production of this volume: it is their efforts which, together with a generous grant from the BMZ, has enabled us to keep its price at a tolerable level.

# Inauguration Speech of Dr Jochen Briegleb (GRC) at the Opening of the Final Colloquium of the Nepal Research Programme on 12 March, 1990 in Kathmandu

Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen!

On behalf of the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft — the German Research Council — I would like to welcome you to this conference which is to report on certain aspects of more than ten years of German research in Nepal, with Nepal and for Nepal.

At the same time I bring you the greetings and best wishes of the president of the German Research Council who regrets that — because of other urgent obligations — he cannot participate in this conference. So in his place I would like to inform you how much the German Research Council appreciates the fact that German scholars have found so much understanding, helpful support and cooperation for their scientific work here in Nepal.

1

But first, I think it might be useful to introduce to you in a few words the German Research Council. In fact it is an institution rather unique in structure and organization — since on the one hand it is a national, but non-governmental organization and on the other hand the money that it spends comes from public funds and is given by the government.

How does that work? Actually, the German Research Council — founded in 1920 and re-established in 1950 — is not a governmental institution; on the contrary: it is a registered society organized according to private law. The members of this society are the universities, the academies and other scientific institutes and institutions in the Federal Republic of Germany. The German Research Council's statutes are those of a self-governed body that acts as an independent agency to fund research programmes and projects of all disciplines of sciences and the humanities on the basis of recommendations of independent

peer reviewer panels — thus distributing the money it receives from the government according to criteria of scholarly relevance only.

To reach these very aims, the reviewers — who have to evaluate thousands of applications that reach the German Research Council every year — are not appointed but elected in free and secret elections every four years. All researchers in the Federal Republic of Germany are then requested to give their vote to elect the best and most critical scholars in their own field as reviewers for the German Research Council. They serve on an honorary basis only, without payment. Thus all scholars of all disciplines are involved in the decisions as to how the resources of the German Research Council should be allocated.

So after this brief sketch of the German Research Council's aims and organization you may well understand that it was with pride that we once heard the German Research Council called a unique example of a basic-democratic system of scientific self-organization and self-administration.

2

When about twelve years ago there arose the idea of establishing a special priority programme for research on Nepal, things went the same way: from the basis of scholarly interest to the top of final decision-making in the governing bodies of the German Research Council. A group of scholars who had been working in Nepal before and who already had some experience with regard to the possibilities of cooperation, set up a programme and drew up an official application to the German Research Council. This was then evaluated by the reviewers with a positive result and finally approved by the German Research Council authorities.

To sum up, there were two main reasons that led to the establishment of the Nepal Research Programme of the German Research Council:

First there was the unique cultural complexity still to be found in Nepal with its many different cultures, based on two of the great religions of mankind — Hinduism and Buddhism — and its many and varied ethnic groups with their own languages, cultures and customs — all this in a multiple way worthy of closer study and worth being explained and preserved as part of the cultural heritage of mankind.

The second essential reason for establishing the Nepal Research Programme was the liberal research policy pursued by the government of Nepal. According to our understanding, politics should not interfere with science and scholarship

— and in our country, any *bona-fide* scholar is welcome to do research, without regard to his nationality, race or creed. In the policy of the government of Nepal we found a kindred understanding of the functions of research — and thus the essential pre-conditions for a successful cooperation of German and Nepalese scholars were provided. And indeed, at the end of a decade of the Nepal Research Programme, the German Research Council feels its former decision has been amply justified by a wide range of positive experience in this regard.

3

In the course of the Nepal Research Programme another very important aspect emerged. The Nepalese authorities began to encourage and to support actively the cooperation between Nepalese and German scholars. Quite evidently, the Nepalese authorities wanted to take the opportunity to make the fields and methods of research pursued by their colleagues from abroad known to the Nepalese specialists — and this is best done by what might be called highly specialized on-the-job training.

Concerning this point a special problem has to be dealt with. By its own statutes the German Research Council is strictly limited to the funding of research projects which directly and immediately extend the frontiers of knowledge. Training and advanced teaching in all their aspects do not belong to its tasks since other organizations in the Federal Republic of Germany receive public funds for that purpose. So in this regard our hands are bound — and in the Karmakāṇḍa programme, for example, we have gone to the limits of what we are allowed to do.

Nevertheless the German Research Council is convinced it is most desirable that Nepalese scholars take an adequate and increasing part in preserving, studying and explaining the cultural wealth of their own country. And if it is necessary to learn special methods and techniques for that, there are other organizations in the Federal Republic of Germany which might be able to help achieve that purpose, and the German Research Council will of course be ready to advise these organizations when they are approached with reasonable requests by the Nepalese authorities.

4

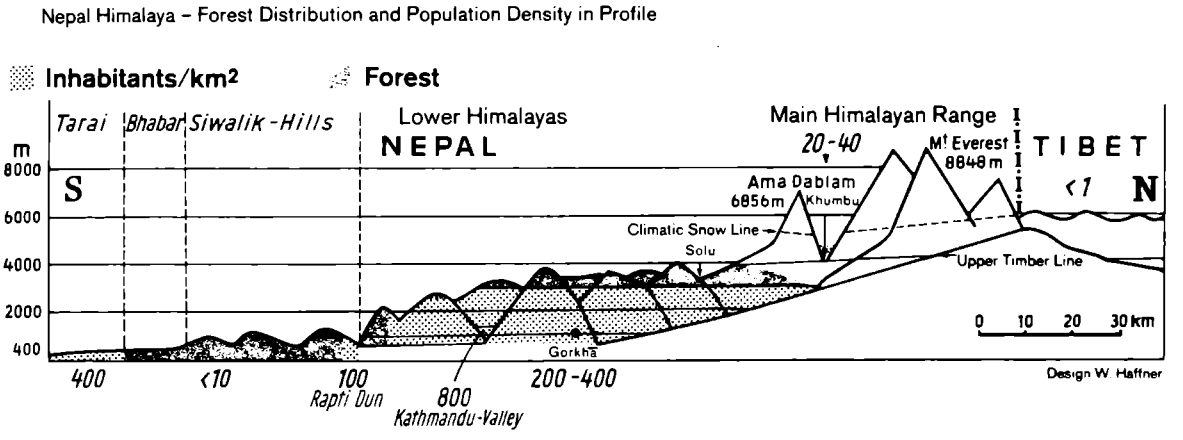
The Nepal Research Programme is now slowly drawing to an end. In the last ten years, 38 projects have been funded by the German Research Council which spent more than seven and a half million German Marks for that purpose. But I am sure that the end of this very special priority programme does not mark the end of German scholars working in Nepal as well! There are so many learned people in the Federal Republic of Germany with a scientific interest in Nepal and a genuine personal affection for this country that there can be no doubt about further successful cooperation in the interest of both sides. So with this positive perspective I would like to conclude by renewing my thanks on behalf of the German Research Council to all those in Nepal who made the Nepal Research Programme possible and who thus enabled German scholars to learn so much about Nepal, its history, religions and cultural complexity. And as we all know: to learn is the best thing that can happen, even to a scholar.

# SUFFICIENT HARVEST-YIELDS DESPITE LOW SOIL FERTILITY – THE SPECIAL STRATEGY OF NEPALESE MOUNTAIN FARMERS

WILLIBALD HAFFNER, GIESSEN

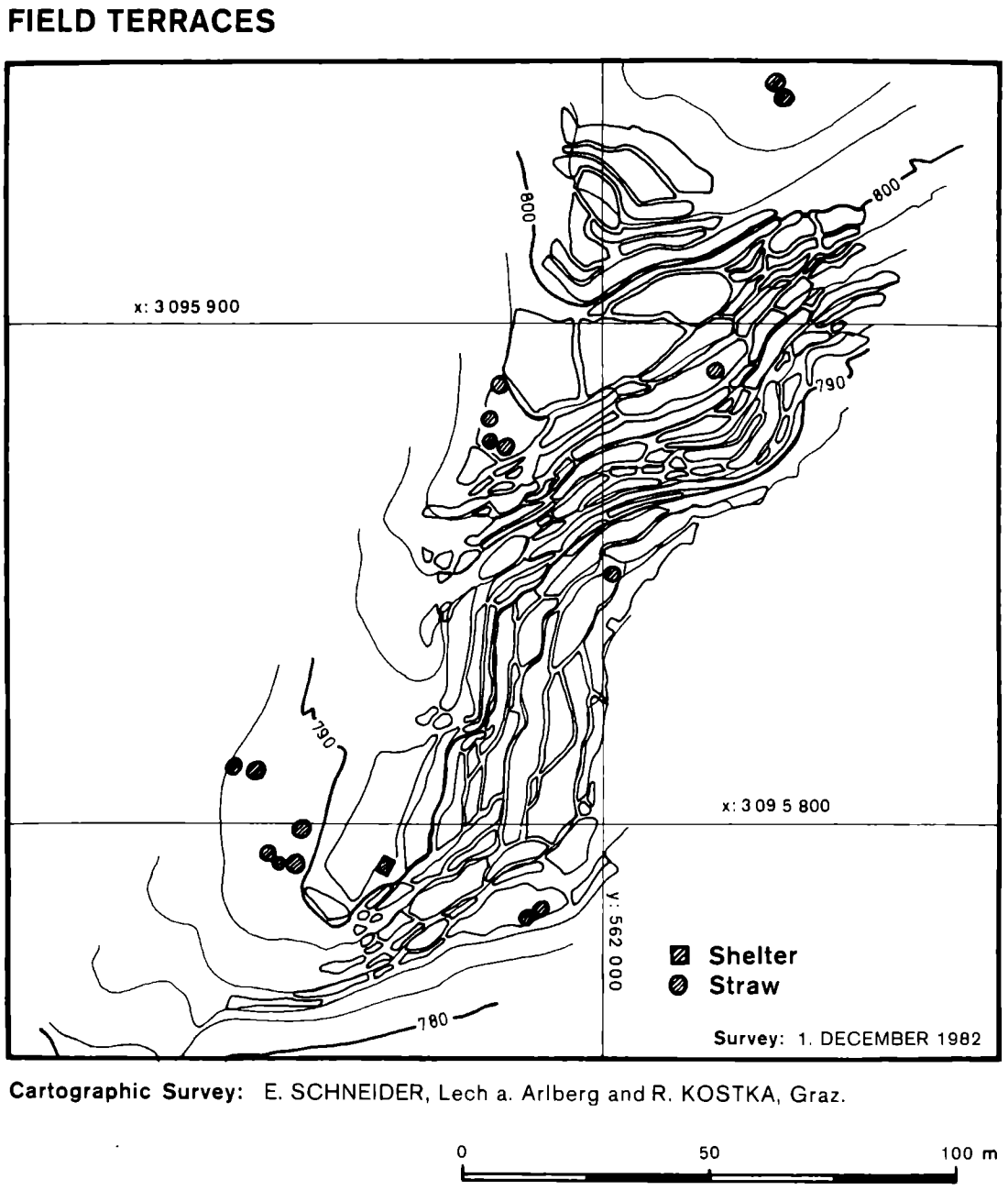
In the Nepalese Himalayas, the difference in elevation between the Gangetic Lowlands (100 m above sea-level) and the main Himalayan range with its 8000 m summits is enormous (Fig. 1). The upper limit for permanent settlements is

**Fig. 1:** The Nepal-Himalaya in profile.




4000 m, for forests 4200 m, and the climatic snow line is 5700m. All these values, it will be noted, are about twice as high as in the Alps, which is of course due to climatic conditions and the southerly position of ±27°N. The plentiful summer rains and freedom from frost up to a height of ±1500 m characterize the Nepalese Himalayas as a monsoon-tropical high-mountain area. This climatic-ecologically favourable position is reflected, among other things, in the high population density; in the Lower Himalayas it reaches 400 inhabitants per $km^2$ and — as in other developing nations — is still steadily increasing. However, in mountainous regions, such high population densities are only possible with especially labour-intensive forms of agriculture. The terraced fields of Nepal (Fig. 2), which

**Fig. 2:** A detailed sketch map of irrigated terraced fields.




stretch several hundred meters upward from the bottoms of valleys up to heights of 1500 m and give the landscape its typical character, are well known and admired throughout the world.

A slope of this kind, characterized by its intensive, terraced agriculture, is the site of the old residence and bazaar city of Gorkhā (cf. land-use map). One of the reasons why we chose the surroundings of Gorkhā for our geographical studies was because there are stone inscriptions preserved not far from the palace of the Gorkhā kings (G. Unbescheid, 1986) which testify to this region's having

been settled for at least 1500 years: to put it another way, the mountain farmers of Gorkhā have known for centuries how to live and farm on this mountain slope in an adequately successful way. This is still true today. In support, the current system of land use can be mentioned. One can gauge their success by the following figures which give the agricultural yields per hectare:

Tab. 1: Harvest Yield in Gorkhā and Jelung

**Gorkhā** (1000 m above sea level)

| | |
|---|---|
| Upland rice | 750 kg/ha |
| Wet rice | 2800-6500 kg/ha |
| Maize | 1730-3400 kg/ha |
| Finger-millet | up to 5000 kg/ha |

(Survey: MÜLLER-BÖKER, POHLE)

**Gorkhā-District**

| | |
|---|---|
| Wet rice | 2180 kg/ha |
| Maize | 1520 kg/ha |

(HMG, 1983: Agricultural Statistics of Nepal)

**Jelung** (2000 m above sea level)

| Amount of seed | Harvest yields 1 pāthi = 4.5 l |
|---|---|
| 1 pāthi barley | 7-8 pāthi |
| 1 pāthi wheat | 5 pāthi |
| 1 pāthi black potatoes | 8-10 pāthi |
| 1 pāthi white potatoes | 12-13 pāthi |
| 1 pāthi red potatoes | 17-18 pāthi |
| 1 pāthi maize | 20 pāthi |
| 1 pāthi finger-millet | 30-35 pāthi |

(Survey: POHLE)

Although the agricultural yields mentioned for Gorkhā are indeed considerably lower than in Germany or in the Punjab in India, the yields for crops which

are grown in the monsoon period (wet rice, maize, finger millet) are considerable. The same is also true for the area of Jelung (±2000 m above sea level) in eastern Nepal which is settled by Sherpa farmers. Eight to ten times the seed amount for potatoes is harvested there, for maize twenty times the seed amount. The high yields for finger millet (*Eleusine coracana*) are especially surprising. However, these can be understood as soon as one considers the high amounts of compost and natural dung which are typical in the cultivation of millet. Agricultural yields on the order of those listed in Table 1, i.e., yields which could guarantee the self-sufficiency of the population with basic provisions, are therefore unexpectedly high, especially because of the unfavourable relief and soil conditions which are typical of the Lower Himalayas.

## Rocks and Soils and their Ecological Value for Agriculture

The parent rocks which are typical of the soil formation in the region of Gorkhā and on the whole for the Lower Himalayas are relatively uniform mica-schists rich in quartz and silicat, fine phyllites and gneisses. These metamorphic rocks are the basic material of the so-called Nuwakot nappes (T. Hagen, 1959), that most important tectonic unit in the Lower Himalayas. The soil formation on acid phyllite and mica-schists as the parent rock material, both of which are rich in quartz, produces acid soils with a high percentage of sand and fine sand and low content of clay, that is, soils which are relatively easy to cultivate but have the disadvantage of a low soil fertility (Tab. 2) (W. Haffner, 1986).

On the rocky silicate outcrops in the Gorkhā region, two main types of soil can be found: lateritic red clays (ferric luvisols) and brown soils low in alkali (dystric cambisols) (cf. soil map).

The red clays are relics of earlier soil formation in a warmer climate, possibly before the rising of the Himalayan mountains. The distribution of these soils on old, ridge-like land surfaces also seems to confirm this. The uniform elevation of these denudated surfaces in the region of Gorkhā is noteworthy. In all the places where the relics of red clay have been eroded and worn away (i.e. in areas of sloping valleys interspersed with ridges), brown soils (dystric cambisols) low in alkali and, as a proto-stage, ranker, have developed under the recent conditions of a monsoonal mountain climate. Ranker of extremely varied thickness shows a relatively wide distribution (cf. soil map) on recent to subrecent rock fall or slide material. Above all, in forest land, for example in Rāniban, the humus horizon is clearly developed and well preserved. Deforestation and the resulting erosion,

Tab. 2: Selected Soil Data from Gorkhā

| | cm | pH | clay | org.C | humus | mg $P_2O_5$ | mg $K_2O$ | C:N |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | in % | | | in 100g soil | | |
| Ferric Luvisol (bāri eroded) | 0-10<br>10-30 | 3.9<br>3.9 | 39.5<br>42.8 | 0.8<br>0.5 | 1.4<br>0.9 | 5.9<br>8.1 | 1.0<br>0.8 | 11.4<br>8.3 |
| Rice Gleysol (khet) | 0-20<br>30<br>65 | 4.6<br>5.5<br>5.5 | 7.9<br>9.6<br>17.4 | 0.9<br>0.4<br>0.5 | 1.6<br>0.7<br>0.9 | 4.9<br>2.7<br>4.3 | 2.3<br>1.8<br>2.0 | 15.0<br>10.0<br>12.5 |
| Dystric Cambiosol (forest) | 0-7<br>10-20<br>100<br>>200 | 5.4<br>5.2<br>4.9<br>4.8 | 19.1<br>11.5<br>36.8<br>35.2 | 7.0<br>3.2<br>1.1<br>1.7 | 12.0<br>5.5<br>1.8<br>2.9 | 8.1<br>2.7<br>8.1<br>2.7 | 10.3<br>5.3<br>1.8<br>5.0 | 17.1<br>11.4<br>14.1<br>14.2 |
| Dystric Cambiosol (bāri) | 0-20 | 4.2 | 17.9 | 1.1 | 1.9 | 2.7 | 1.3 | 11.0 |

through centuries of terraced cultivation, but especially through the cultivation of wet rice, has changed and transformed the natural top-soil to a large extent. Therefore, it was not possible to find undisturbed, fully-developed soil profiles in the region of Gorkhā. Even forest soils are either young ranker (i.e. Rāniban, Kāliban) or disturbed top-soils. There is a long historical tradition of carefully working the soil through, which led to successful retention of soil within the scope of terraced agriculture, and which fully justifies speaking of perfect soil management. The decisive factors in present-day soil thickness, as well as in the physical and chemical characteristics of these anthropomorphic soils, are the form and intensity of agricultural usage. Although forest soils show the highest observed humus content (up to 12%), the larger uninterrupted areas of forest are in fact all located on coarse block fields of relatively recent landslide debris, which means soil formation has not yet developed to a very advanced stage. The fact that this layer of stony soil (rankers on rockfall debris) is so thin explains why these tracts of forest have been preserved and did not become part of the cultivated and terraced slopes long ago. Although severe weathering of the parent substratum occurs in this rainy, monsoon-tropical climate, many of the nutrients are washed away and the organic matter rapidly decomposes, especially when the land is being farmed (see Tab. 2). An X-ray-graph determination of

clay minerals[1] did show illite and alluminium chloride (along with kaolinite) as the main components in three profiles of the soil. The high acidity of the soil, however, causes a limited availability of plant nutrients. Finally, the low cation-exchange capacity, which would be expected with low clay and humus content of soils, is the reason for the limited fertility potential of the soil in the region under investigation (cf. Tab. 3).

Tab. 3: The Effect of the Humid Monsoon-Tropical Climate and of Acid Phyllite and Mica-Schist on Soil Formation

Humid Monsoon-Tropical Climate

+

Phyllite and Mica-Schist

↓

| | |
|---|---|
| (1) | Weathering several metres deep (favourable for the construction of terraces) |
| (2) | Low content of clay of the soil (±20%) |
| (3) | Low content of humus especially on arable land (±20%) |
| (4) | Low pH value: pH 3.8 — 4<br>Wet rice cultivation: pH 4.6 — 5.5 |
| (5) | Low cation-exchange capacity (s-value between 5.4 — 6.2) |
| (6) | Reduced availability of nutrients |

↓

Reduced ecological potential of the soils

If, in spite of this, the Lower Himalayas of Nepal give the impression of an abundant, green farming area — which is so striking a feature of the landscape

[1] For the X-ray determination of the clay minerals I would like to thank Dr. H. Tributh (Institute for the Science of Soils of the JLU), for the determination of the soil-chemical data Mr Adam Lapp (Geographical Institute of the JLU).

especially during the monsoon; if adequate yields for self-sufficiency of a slowly but steadily increasing mountain population have been guaranteed for centuries, one reason for that is that the population is very knowledgeable about using its natural environment successfully: Nepalese mountain farmers have developed and handed down special forms of agrarian technology which mitigate the unfavourable ecological factors, if not entirely, then at least to a considerable extent:

1) A stabilization of soil fertility is achieved through crop rotation and through intermittent periods of leaving the land fallow (cf. P. Pohle, 1986).

2) Attempts are made to counteract the depletion of nutrients in the soil through application of natural manure. As the fodder is to a considerable extent composed of slopping fodder, a continual transfer of organic matter from forest and fallow lands to the fields takes place via the manure. The cultivation of trees for use as fodder has a similar effect (cf. Fig. 3). Only the rice fields are not generally manured.

3) The farmers try to compensate for the low humus content of the soil (especially where no animal dung is spread) by raking the plants which have grown during the previous rainy season down from the terrace walls. The organic matter obtained in this way is then worked into the soil with a plough.

4) In addition, the annual carving-out of the terraces, i.e. the gradual diminution of the mountain side, has the effect of steadily feeding fresh mineral matter from the crumbling, decaying rock back into the soil. This process counteracts washing-out. Finally, the channelling of irrigation water also has the effect of compensating for nutrient depletion.

Only because of these measures which compensate for nutrient depletion has it been possible to keep the yields in irrigated agriculture sufficiently stable for centuries, even without regular organic fertilization.

5) Artificial irrigation is a further important means of increasing the ecological potential of naturally poor soils. The highest pH (KCl) readings were recorded in soil samples taken from areas where wet rice was grown. Although pH readings of between 4.1 and 5.5 are still definitely within the acid range, an increasing amount of nutrients vital for plant growth (nitrogen, phosphates, potassium) and important trace elements can be found in those types of soil where pH readings are distinctly higher than 4. In the case of paddy gleys, the pH values evidently increase during the flooding of the fields, which takes place in the summer months. For soil types which are naturally high in acid content, the importance of such a process cannot be overemphasized.

**Fig. 3:** Ecologically adapted land use during the agricultural year.

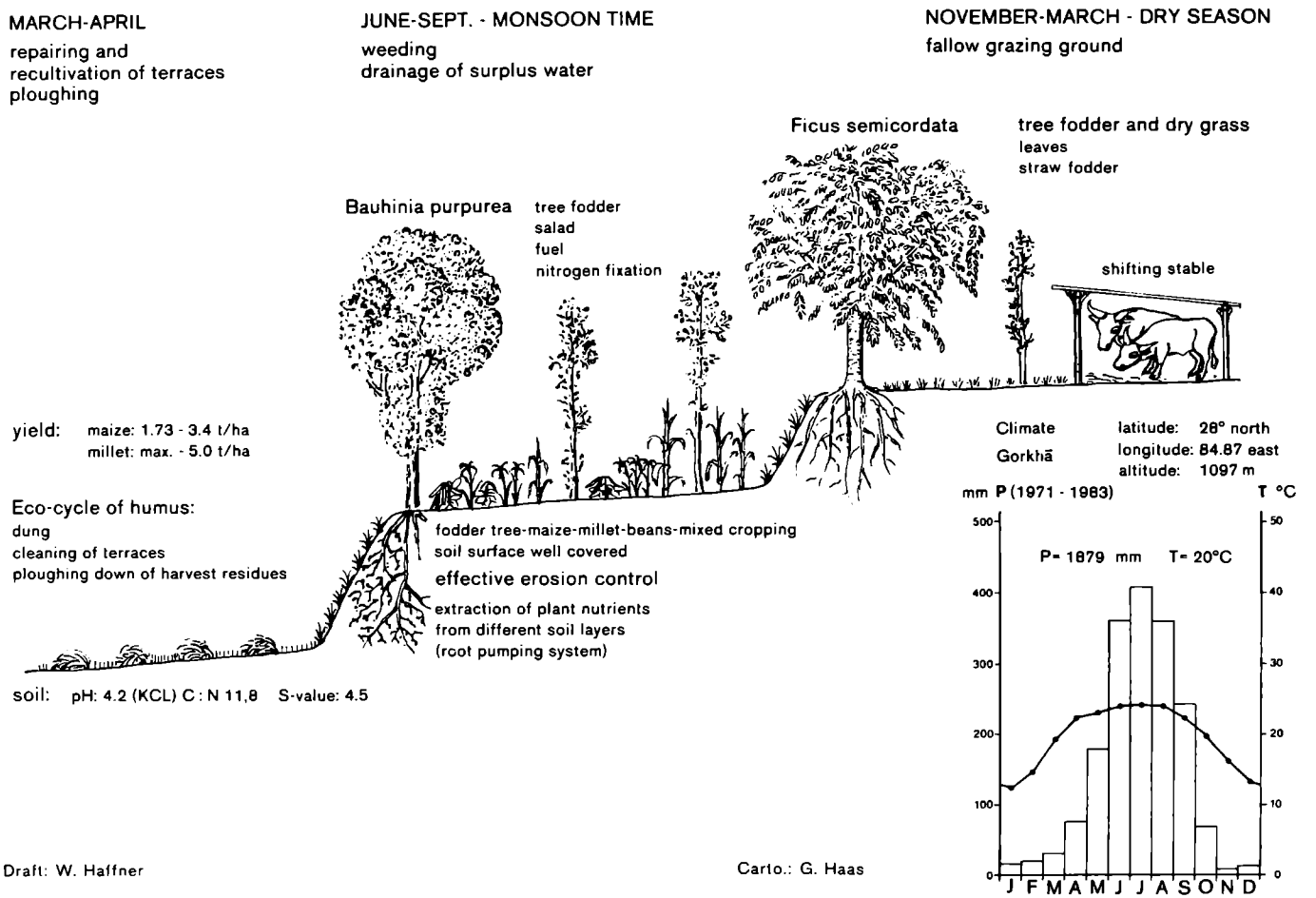


Figure 3 again shows, in the form of the seasonal cycle, the perfect type of land-use in Gorkhā. Both the leaves from fodder trees and the constant transportation of organic substance (straw, leaves, wild hay) from the forests onto the intensively used, terraced dry fields (bāri) play a key role within the framework of the regulated humus-farming which is common for this region as well as in the attentive care of the soil. Fodder trees (i.e. *Bauhinia variegata* and *B. purpurea*) provide foliage fodder; their stronger branches provide firewood; their blossoms are used for salads; in addition, the Bauhinia species, as leguminous trees, serve as collectors of nitrogen. Fodder trees with their deep-reaching root system are also important as protection against erosion. There is good reason to believe that, in a combined agriculture of deep-rooting trees and shallow-rooting annual plants (for example maize), soil horizons of different depths can be brought into the circulation of nutrients. Trees in this system are used to "pump" nutrients and water out of deeper soil layers (root-pumping system) and, via defoliation, supply the top-soil layers with organic substance which, when mineralized, serves as nutrient for annual plants.

The climatic diagram included in the outline is meant to point out the tropical-monsoonal climate during the growing season. The low soil-fertility in agro-ecological systems of the Nepalese Himalayas is apparently at least partially balanced by the especially favourable monsoonal climate. This is demonstrated by the climatic diagram included in the outline, and there are the following supplementary observations to be added: With the beginning of the moist-warm monsoonal vegetation period a "growth spurt" occurs which never fails to amaze the European. After just a few days the land becomes green; freshly sown fields are covered by vegetation in a short time. Even ligneous, stick-like "cuttings" which are often planted on the sides of paths — examples of the *Ficus* species, of the *Poinsettia* (*Euphorbia*) and others which can reach a length of one and a half metres — shoot out in next to no time and — something that is unthinkable under European climatic conditions — even the wooden posts planted by Swiss development helpers as pasture-fences begin to bud and sprout leaves.

Traditional agricultural techniques and traditional systems of cultivation and pasture-farming are undoubtedly adapted to the natural potential in the densely settled Nepalese area. One should not, however, confuse adaptability with environmental and ecological stability or, even worse, with an ecological balance between the natural potential of the environment and the demands made upon it by the people who settle and farm the land there. Slow but relentless forest and soil degradation have proved unavoidable and are by no means a modern development, even in old, cultivated landscapes. The continual transfer of organic

matter from forest and scrub areas, from roadsides and patches of wasteland to the sloping terraces used for upland farming has inevitably led to the gradual degradation of both trees and soil.

Even wet rice cultivation, which is generally regarded as being a most suitable form of ecological farming, has always been responsible for erosion damage. Heavy monsoon rain or even the smallest weak spot in the canalization of water, especially in drains, have repeatedly entailed sudden landslides in the larger terraced complexes. As a result, continual repair and perfect recultivation of the areas damaged by landslides are two of the traditional technical skills mastered by Nepalese mountain farmers.

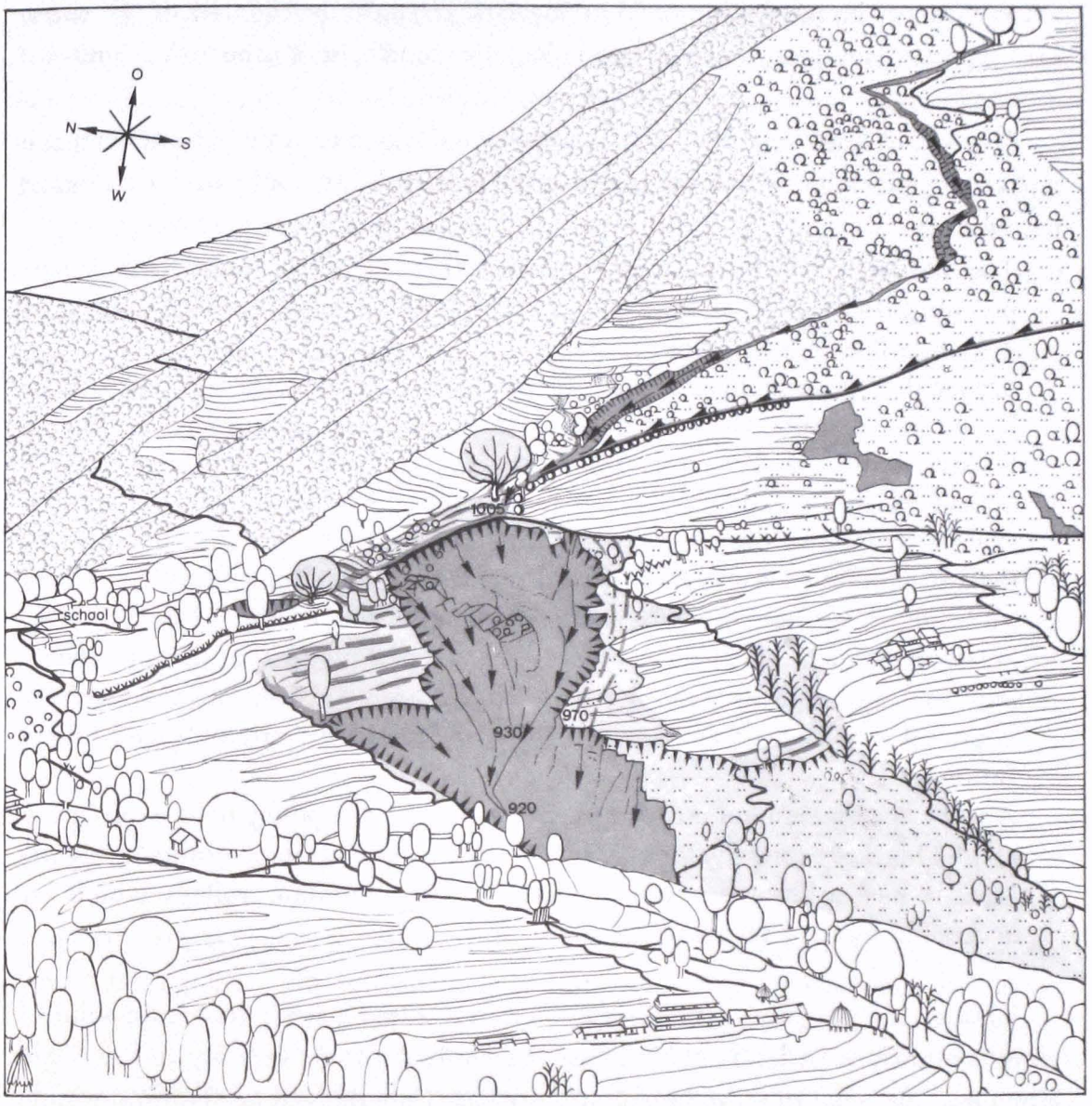
The agricultural landscape of the Lower Himalayas today is therefore characterized not only by carefully tended terrace complexes which are interspersed with fodder trees but also by degraded, overused forest areas and erosion phenomena which can assume catastrophic proportions. A good example is the upper Ludi Kholā basin not far from Gorkhā (Fig. 4).

As the sketch shows, the farmers living on the upper part of this mountain brook perfectly master the art of terracing even in steep inclines; the fields, which are interspersed with fodder trees, give the impression of an intact, ecologically stable environment. However, on the upper slope the continual overuse of the forests has led to the typical gradual degradation of forest and soil. In the last few decades the branches of the upper Ludi Kholā have widened to the point where they now resemble ravines, terraced field complexes are in danger of sliding away, and houses, even the school, are endangered by the possibility of a landslide. After torrential monsoon rains the heavy regressive river erosion in deeply weathered bedrocks and thick colluvial slope sediments (albeit a natural phenomenon) also accelerated the formation of a valley; moreover the slope was increasingly destabilized through the diversion of the excess surface water from a neighbouring village uphill into the erosion ravine of the Ludi Kholā.

As can be expected, there are serious conflicts between the population of the immediate, endangered vicinity of the erosion-ravine and the inhabitants of the village above.

To sum up: A highly developed art of changing the relief through terracing, the careful tending of the soil, an ingenious form of humus-farming: all these laborious techniques and strategies have until now enabled Nepalese mountain farmers to balance the disadvantages of the relief and the handicap of soils low in nutrients — at least to some extent. Therefore, an adequate self-sufficiency of

**Fig. 4:** Nepalese agro-cultural landscape along the upper Ludi Kholā. Typical the contrast between carefully tended terrace complexes with fodder trees, overused forest areas and erosion phenomena.




Draft: W. Haffner

Carto.: G. Haas

the mountain population was assured over the centuries. But by now there is another question to be faced: Which strategy should be followed, what should be done in the future if the present population growth-rate continues. It will lead to a doubling of the population in 25 to 30 years. Have the boundaries of the carrying capacity not long been crossed, has the land not reached the limits of growth?

One could draw up a long list of possible solutions for this basic theme; it is not only typical for Nepal but assumes general validity for poorer developing nations:

- The reduction of the population growth through birth control and family planning. In traditional agrarian societies this is a very doubtful attempt, at best, it will be a long-term success.
- Seasonal or permanent migration to the Nepalese Lowlands or abroad. Even in the last century there were colonies of Nepalese immigrants in Burma, Sikkim, and India. The Terai, the Himalayan forelands of Nepal, has become a desirable settlement area of Nepalese mountain farmers since the eradication of malaria in the sixties. Even the seasonal migration of labourers and the hiring of men as "Gorkhas" in the Nepalese or Indian Army has a long tradition. Nevertheless, the mountain population continues to grow.
- Agro-economically, an increase in productivity through the introduction of improved agricultural technologies is conceivable: that is, mineral fertilizer, improved seed, etc., as much as possible combined with irrigation and humus farming.
- Another recommended measure is the change from a policy of self-sufficiency to a market economy, for example from the cultivation of grains to vegetables. It has enjoyed a certain success in the mountain valleys which are accessible by road (cf. land-use map).

There is a final point which has to be raised. From a strict economic point of view, suggestions which could increase the productivity of farming in the Nepal Himalayas are open to a fundamental objection. Experienced agricultural economists of international organizations (cf. Report of the Special Programming Mission to Nepal of IFAD 1989) deny any benefit of agricultural investments in the mountainous regions of Nepal especially because of the very limited natural resources, the size of the farms, which are often too small (U. Müller[-Böker], 1986), the deficiency or lack of accessibility to roads and other infrastructural disadvantages. But is it really appropriate to judge concepts and suggestions for developmental planning of the mountain regions of Nepal only according to economic criteria?

In Nepal itself, completely different planning concepts are being put forward. These have their roots in the self-perception of the Nepalese as a mountain people who consider the mountainous areas the traditional political and cultural centre of their country. Thus, it is not economic profitability and feasibility which play such a central role in Nepalese development planning. Rather, the aim is to maintain the cultural identity of the Nepalese farmers and also the typical Nepalese agrarian and cultural landscapes which they have taken centuries to create and which they have so admirably adapted to the environment. Parallels to the alpine farmer's uncertainties and problems are obvious. Despite the decreasing profitability of alpine mountain farming, the traditional life-style so well adapted to the environment, should be retained as much as possible in the Alps. The development programmes for mountain farmers in Germany or Austria pursue this goal, as does the so-called "Winter Help" which reaches back into the last century in Switzerland, all of which in effect are something like "developmental aid". It therefore seems appropriate to consider similar programmes of assistance or aid for the Nepalese mountain people and their economy. Industrial countries will definitely have to sponsor and to subsidize the basically unprofitable rural economies in the Nepalese Himalayas if they want people to stay there and if they want the Nepalese specialists of high-mountain agriculture to survive economically by continuing to farm "sufficient harvest-yields in spite of low soil fertility" and other on-site disadvantages so typical of the Nepalese Himalayas.

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## COMMENT ON HAFFNER'S CONTRIBUTION

HARKA GURUNG

We are familiar with Dr Haffner's earlier studies on the ecology of parts of Nepal. The area studies by Dr Haffner and his colleagues from Giessen are well-designed to represent different geographical areas in Central Nepal. The case study of Gorkhā represents an area with a comparatively long history of human settlement. Another reason for the choice of the site was the availability of large-scale maps for the area.

The enquiry into the use of resources yields two basic conclusions. The first is the poor quality of the soil in terms of agricultural productivity. The second conclusion relates to the farming methods which are highly adapted to the local ecological system.

Other relevant observations in the paper include susceptibility of the land to landslides even in forested areas and the need for the constant repair of the fields. These points deserve some further explanation. Generally, soil erosion and landslides are attributed to a lack of vegetation cover or deforestation. Although vegetation cover does minimize the impact of rainfall on the removal of soil, the slope factor is a still more important cause of erosion. In areas of high relief such as the Nepalese hills, soil erosion as an expression of mass wasting takes place whether there is vegetation cover or not. As to the need the for the continual repairing of the fields as the basic feature of traditional farming, there could be no better expression of the dynamic nature of the landscape. Indeed such labour is the basis of survival and sustainability of the hill-farming system.

The traditional farming system has evolved through generations of trial and error. This holds good for the Gorkhā region just as for any other. However, the area has had a road connection since 1981. Assessing the impact of the road on farm technology would be a pertinent question. I am raising it in the context of the long experience of the Khairenitar Agriculture Extension Programme served by Prithvi Rajmarg in which the Federal Republic of Germany has been involved. Has the road to Gorkhā affected or facilitated innovations in farming technology, such as the use of chemical fertilizers and improved varieties of

seeds? Or is the poverty so pervasive as to preclude these outside interventions and thus perpetuate the old practices with increasing stress on local resources and the natural environment? [...]

# Two Ecological-Geographical Approaches Concerning the Topic: Man and His Environment in Nepal

Ulrike Müller-Böker

In the framework of the Nepal Research Programme, my research activities were devoted to two different ecological geographical approaches concerning the topic of *Man and his Environment*. First, the present paper will give a brief synopsis of our studies in the region of Gorkhā focussing on the question of adapted use and overuse of natural resources. Second, ethno-ecological studies undertaken in different parts of Nepal will be discussed.

## Studies on the Theme: Adapted Use and Overuse of Natural Resources in the Central Midlands of Nepal (Gorkhā)

As one aspect of our studies in Gorkhā, we have analyzed the interrelationship between population density, socio-economic structure, and resulting pressures on natural resources (Müller[-Böker], 1986a). As a first step, for each settlement[1] the number of households was tabulated according to ethnic group and caste.[2] A survey of selected households was primarily directed towards finding out the existing sources of income for the maintenance of families (Müller[-Böker], 1986a: 400). Furthermore, with the aid of land registers and cadastral maps, three wards of the region were studied in detail with regard to legal property rights (cf. Fig. 3 (enclosed), Tab. 2 and Müller[-Böker], 1986b).

The results impressively document the relation between socio-economic structure on the one hand, and overuse of natural resources on the other. Besides the excessively rapid population growth in Gorkhā, social hierarchies and dependence relationships, imbalances in land possession and ownership of land and, last but not least, unsuitable administrative measures are intensifying the problems of overuse. A few examples to elucidate these relationships:

[1] With reference to the topographical map "Gorkhā — Sirdi Kholā, 1 : 10.000" cf. Fig. 1 (enclosed).

[2] Cf. Fig. 2 (enclosed), Tab. 1.

| Tab. 1: Ethnic Groups and Castes in Gorkhā | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Ethnic Group* | *Caste* | *Number of households* | |
| | | | in % |
| *Newar* | Śreṣṭha | 243 | 27.7 |
| | Śākya | 5 | 0.6 |
| | Kasāi | 7 | 0.8 |
| *"Parbatiyā"* | Bāhun | 99 | 11.3 |
| | Chetri | 203 | 23.1 |
| | Jogi | 31 | 3.5 |
| | Sārki | 104 | 11.9 |
| | Damāi | 43 | 4.9 |
| | Kāmi | 23 | 2.6 |
| | Gāine | 9 | 1.0 |
| *Magar* | | 108 | 12.3 |
| *Guruṅg* | | 3 | 0.3 |
| (100 % = 878 households, in 1983) | | | |

According to the estimates of the local authorities the average size of land property in the region of Gorkhā is said to be about 20 ropani (ca. 1 ha). However, at least 25 ropani (ca. 1.25 ha) are necessary to support an average family. The properties of the households investigated ranged from 3 to 96 ropani. The land is not evenly distributed, as there is no shortage of land in particular amongst tradesmen (Śreṣṭhas) and amongst a few Bāhun families, whereas the members of the "occupational" castes not only have little, but also poor quality land. About 80% of the households do not have enough land to be able to supply their members with basic foodstuffs all year round. The scarcity of land forces small farmers to practise an extremely intensive form of land use. They manage to achieve astoundingly high yields on poor soils using crop rotation systems

Tab. 2: Land-Ownership and Possession of Lands in Gorkhā

| | |
|---|---|
| average size of lands owned | 1.00 ha[1,2] |
| family-support level | 1.25 ha[1] |
| minimum found | 0.15 ha[2] |
| maximum found | 4.80 ha[2] |

Sources: [1]District Panchayat Gorkhā, 1983
[2]Survey of 23 households in 1983

title to land

raikar:
- farmed by owners
- farmed by unprotected tenants (rent: 50% of each crop)
- farmed by owners and day-labourers

guṭhi:
- farmed by proctected tenants (rent: 50% of the main crop or service for the guṭhi)
- farmed by unprotected subtenants (rent: 50% of each crop to the protected tenant)
- farmed by protected tenants and day-labourers

which produce two to three harvests per year.[3] However, the fertility of the soils is decreasing because the periods when fields are allowed to lie fallow are too short. The application of mineral fertilizer can only improve this situation to a certain extent, owing to the poor exchange capacity of the soil; the available amount of dung and organic matter is not sufficient. Furthermore — and this is

[3] Yields in Gorkhā:
rice: 3 muri/rop. (2.793 kg/ha) to 7 muri/rop. (6.517kg/ha)
average yield: 4,17 muri/rop. (3.882 kg/ha)
maize: 1,5 muri/rop. (1.734 kg/ha) to 3 muri/rop. (3.469 kg/ha)
average yield: 2,5 muri/rop. (2.891 kg/ha)
(own survey in Gorkhā, 1983)

average yields in the whole Gorkhā District (1975/76-1979/80):
rice: 2.128 kg/ha
maize: 1.517 kg/ha
(HMG, 1983: Agricultural Statistics of Nepal. Kathmandu: 92)

chiefly practised by the "occupational" castes — fields are opened on ecologically unfavourable terrain — this is hardly profitable economically and unjustifiable ecologically. On the other hand, there are quite a number of families where certain members have a steady job. Their farms face a great shortage in manpower, and it is not always profitable to have labourers helping. Thus, some farmers prefer more extensive land-use in a region where there is an acute land shortage.

According to the land register — completed in 1984 — all owners of *raikar* land farm their fields themselves. No tenants are mentioned. However, in actual fact between 20 and 30 % of the fields are not cultivated by the owners themselves but by labourers. Although they work the land quite independently, they do not enjoy the rights of a tenant. Thus, the landowner can still claim half and even more of the total harvest, whereas according to the law, a registered tenant needs only yield half of his *main* harvest. This evasion of the tenancy laws not only keeps the labourers themselves in an extremely precarious economic situation; it also has a negative effect upon agricultural productivity. Labourers have neither sufficient capital nor enough security to invest in farms. It is not worthwhile for the landowner to invest either time or energy in measures to increase farming intensity as his income does not entirely depend upon agriculture. Thus, it could be observed that well-irrigated fields were only cultivated once a year for one rice crop — which means high quality land is not used very extensively.

Another clear result of the studies of land ownership is the fact that the greatest damage from erosion and the largest number of phenomena related to overuse occur on common land. The solution of the problem of over-grazing along with that of firewood is thus especially important for conservation programmes.

## Ethno-ecological Studies in Nepal: Knowledge and Evaluation of the Natural Environment in Traditional Societies in Nepal

As a consequence of various experiences and observations during our work in Nepal, we decided to take up the topic of the knowledge and the evaluation of natural environment in traditional societies — a field hitherto much neglected by geographers and environmental experts.

To some people, this question may seem a bit out of step with the times, given the current environmental problems and the supply shortages in the so-called "developing countries". Solutions are expected rather to come from technical

innovations, from "progress" and from developing experts than from the traditional know-how of a poorly or meagrely educated population. In more recent discussions of development strategies, however, the call has been going out for a greater participation in ecologically orientated programmes on the part of the populations concerned, and the idea promoted "that traditional knowledge and resource management practices of rural communities can be an effective basis for conservation and development" (IUCN, 1985:10). The increasing number of studies on the field of indigenous knowledge pertaining to Nepal[4] reflects the attitude that the *documentation of traditional ecological know-how* seems to be an essential task of modern applied research, not in order to preserve tradition but in order to learn from it, and on this basis to evolve new concepts for an adapted, ecologically sound use of the natural environment.

As a first step in environmental planning, it is imperative to know the local, often *ethno-specific evaluation of the environment.* This is because *differences and problems of understanding* between scientists or experts and the local population crop up repeatedly when it comes to interpreting ecological issues.

*Differences* exist concerning the *variously motivated claims* on the natural environment.

Eg. the local population for example looks on forest areas as an economic resource important for their survival, whereas zoologists see them as biotopes for endangered wildlife, and ecologists regard them as the main factor to prevent increasing erosion.

*Criteria of evaluation* are often different in nature, as are classification schemes of the natural world.

E.g. local soil classifications and evaluations can sometimes be harmonized with scientific ones. In other instances, there will be remarkable discrepancies — as is the case with *rāto māṭo* — the *latosol*, which is very highly regarded by the local population, but seen with the eyes of a soil scientist is very poor soil.

Or another brief — very simple — example: If we pose the question in Central Europe which slope is climatically the more favourable in terms of exposition, we would certainly receive the answer: the slope facing the sun. As a visitor

[4] Cf. Johnson et al., 1982; Schroeder, 1985; Bjønness, 1986; Gurung, 1989; Messerschmidt, 1990; Stone, 1990; Zurick, 1990. The considerable number of ethno-botanical studies published pertaining to Nepal is summarized in Manandhar (1989).

from the cooler latitudes who appreciates sunlight, one applies this concept of exposition all too easily to warmer regions. When asking the same question, e.g., in the lower hill regions of Nepal, one may be astonished to hear the opposite answer: the slope facing away from the sun, as our forefathers have always said.

All too often *problems of understanding* exist for the simple reason that the population concerned and the experts have no common vocabulary relating to the environment with which they can communicate with one another — and I don't only mean that foreign researchers have language barriers to cross!

Problems of understanding begin with the very names of projects. In Gorkhā, for example, there was an American Nepalese Resource Conservation and Utilization Project, RCUP in short. In the language of the people RCUP became *arci rupie* (*arci* = shine, *rupie* = Nep. currency). This was by no means meant as a joke: The abbreviation, quite incomprehensible in itself, was given a new, though inaccurate, sense.

*Differences* also exist, however, among the various ethnic groups of Nepal, which exploit and evaluate their natural environment in quite distinct — *ethno-specific* — ways (cp. Gurung, 1989: 356ff; Müller-Böker, 1987: 279ff).

Especially Bāhun and Chetris are real experts in growing fodder trees on their *bāri* land, while Newars like to keep their *bāri* bare of trees.

Or another example from Citawan: The Tharus say themselves, in distinction to the recent settlers, that they are a "people of the forest"; the forest represents a familiar environment to them; they know how to exploit its biological wealth. At the same time the area is highly venerated and somehow feared as the place where the gods and spirits live.[5] For Pahāṛiyās, the forest is an important resource for cattle fodder, firewood and timber, but not part of their culture, as it is for the Tharus.

Such differences in the interpretation of ecological relations must be identified, and their socio-economic and cultural roots explained. As a basis for an environmental planning which does not bypass the needs of the people and is accepted by them, the local, often ethno-specific ways of using and evaluating nature, as well as the local terminology, must be known. This is particularly important in the case of Nepal, as hundreds of millions of dollars are pumped in here by international development agencies for projects and programmes related

[5] The Pahāṛiyā frequently like to poke fun at the Tharus for their faintheartedness, and it is a matter of fact that Pahāṛiyā women sometimes go out into the forest, even alone, to cut firewood and fodder. Tharunis will never do so.

to ecology. Problems in understanding and discrepancies of interpretation can therefore lead both to a wastage of development capital and to massive failures and conflicts.

A line of research that sets these goals for itself can be programmatically placed within the context of the "man — environment" concepts that have again become topical in recent years.[6] There is a line of research within ethnology which aims in the same direction, viz., ethno-ecology. "... the prefix 'ethno-'" Vayda & Rappaport (1968: 489) explain, "is to be understood here as referring to a people's own view or knowledge of some subject matter ...". Ethno-ecology, therefore, attempts to penetrate the cognitive (natural) environments of traditional societies, i.e. "environments as understood by those who act within them" (Vayda & Rappaport, 1968: 491). While conceding that it is not always easy to convert the ethno-ecological approach into a controlled series of methodically satisfactory steps, everybody would probably agree that even a fragmentary documentation of environmental knowledge is useful at the present stage. In the spirit of applied research, the topics of our investigations are therefore oriented to the currently relevant question of the overuse of natural resources.

The following overview outlines the topical and regional themes emphasized:

1. Kathmandu Valley:
   * The use of the various soils and sediments
2. Gorkhā and Citawan:
   * The local classification and evaluation of soil, of particular "ecotopes", of climate and exposition;
   * the existing relations between the natural resources and material culture;

[6] In 1982 Ives & Messerli expressly formulated the goals of the UNO' Highland-Lowland Interaction System Project, which is programmatically tied into the Man and Biosphere Programme. They included "work with the local people so as both to learn from their understanding of catastrophic and chronic processes and to collaborate with them to devise more effective ways to alleviate the impacts of such processes". In this connection, Bjønness (1986) investigated "Mountain hazard perception and risk-avoiding strategies among the Sherpas of Khumbu Himal, Nepal"; S.M. Gurung (1989) investigated the "human perception of mountain hazards in the Kakani-Kathmandu area".

* the influences culture and religion exert upon the way a population perceives its natural environment
* the extent to which questions of ecological relevance are understood by traditional societies, their reactions to ecological problems (human response), and their ideas of how nature should be protected.

3. In Citawan, moreover, I carried out studies on the tremendous conflict between environmental protection and local economic interests concerning the Royal Citawan National Park. One important aspect of my work was a detailed documentation of the local population's traditional claims and rights to use the land.
4. In the region of the Carnawāti Kholā, I recently analysed the human response to, and perception of, natural hazards. A serious landslide occurred there in 1985.

With few qualifications the results of the studies show the detailed knowledge and thorough appreciations the local population has of its natural environment. Let me cite a few examples:

The inhabitants of the Kathmandu Valley not only distinguish a large number of soils and sediments but also know how to make diverse use of them in house construction, handicrafts (pottery, brass founding), as combustible material (*koilā*) and as fertilizer (*kālimāṭi*) (Müller-Böker, in press). An overview is given in Tab. 3.

The farmers of Gorkhā, too, know soil types very accurately, as was revealed by a comparative listing of the local classification of soils, as contrasted with scientific analysis (cf. Tab. 4). In the area studied, no less than 15 different types of soil are distinguished on the basis of their water storage capacity, their depth and susceptibility to erosion (grading and evaluation are based on fertility: Müller-Böker, 1991a). In Citawan we are dealing with predominantly alluvial soils, and so the Tharu farmers have a different system of classification. The main distinction is made between soils brought by rivers (*phakahan maṭi* = alluvial soil) and others which are not (*satjugi maṭi*).

In Citawan, as farmers of the same soil, the Tharus are far less successful than the Pahāṛiyās.[7] On the other hand, they do know a large number of useful

[7] The production per acre is lower, mainly because they do less weeding, less protecting of the fields from wild animals and have a very extensive way of keeping cattle.

Tab. 3: Utilized Soils and Sediments in the Kathmandu Valley

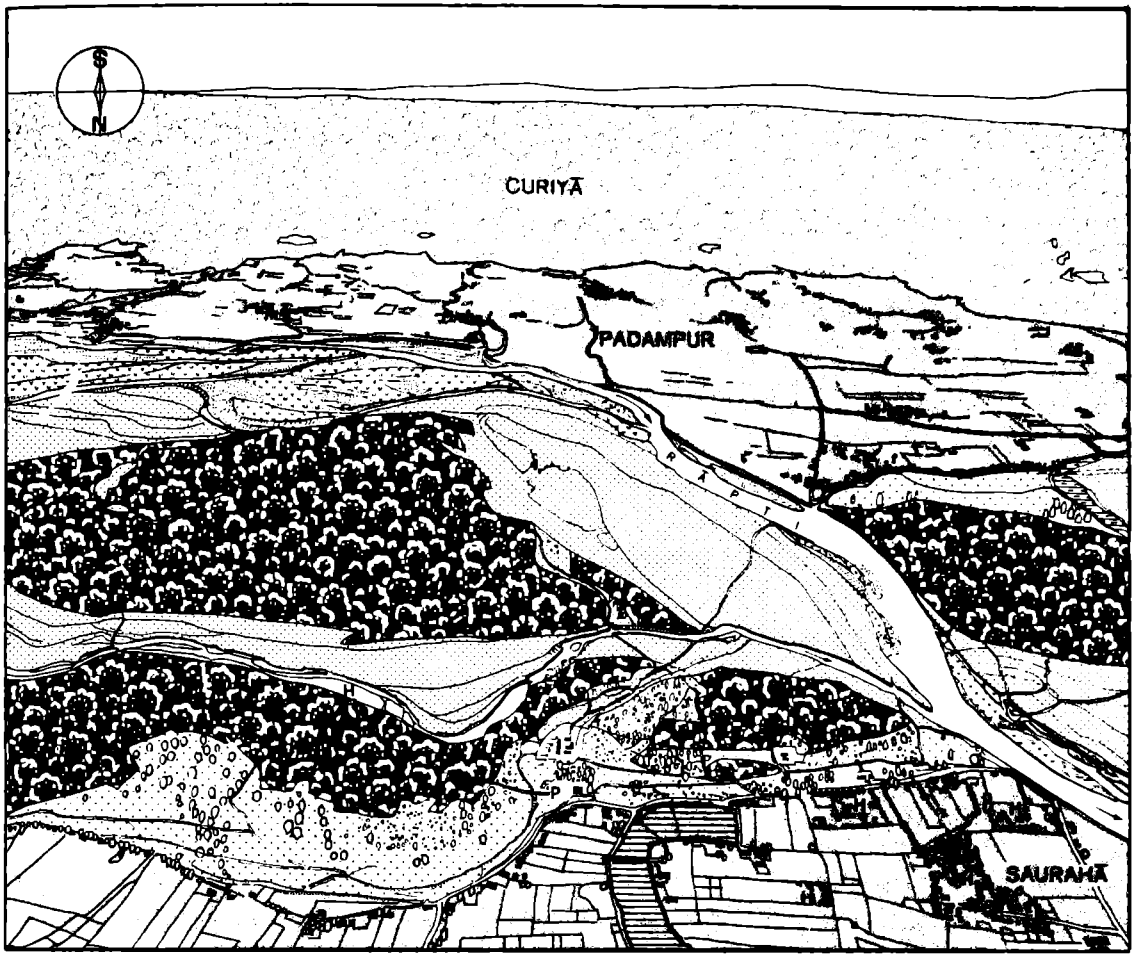
| *Nepālī* | *Newārī* | *Scientific Characterisation* | *used for ...* |
|---|---|---|---|
| rāto māṭo | siyucā | relict ferric luvisol, contains Fe, haematite and goethite | painting house walls and floors |
| pahēlo māṭo | mhāsucā | weathered material, contains Fe, haematite and goethite | painting house walls, washing |
| ākāsrāg māṭo | niucā | reduced lacustrine sediment | washing hair, painting house walls |
| seto/ kamero māṭo | tākicā | weathered pegmatite, contains Fe | painting, writing chalk, washing |
| seto/ kamero māṭo | tākicā | lacustrine sediment, contains kaolinite (C tot.: 0.2 %) | painting, washing |
| kālimāṭi | hākucā | lacustrine, organic sediment (C tot.: 1.8 %) | pottery, soil conditioning, forming caityas |
| | gīcā | lacustrine sediment (C tot.: 0.5 %) | pottery, soil conditioning |
| | maīsicā | lacustrine sediment | lost-wax casting, 1st claycoat |
| pahēlo māṭo | mhāsucā | lacustrine sediment | lost-wax casting, 2nd claycoat |
| | gathicā | lacustrine sediment | lost-wax casting, 3rd claycoat |
| māṭo | cā | paddy gley | brick and tile manufacturing |
| māṭi koilā | | lignitic, organic sediment | firing |

Tab. 4: The Local Soil Terminology in Gorkhā in Comparison to the Scientific Classification

| *local terms* | *scientific classification* |
|---|---|
| kālo māṭo | dystric cambisol |
| gegraṅg kālo māṭo | ranker, stony |
| balauṭe kālo māṭo | dystric cambisol, sandy |
| phusro kālo māṭo | dystric cambisol, fine sandy/silty |
| cimṭe kālo māṭo | dystric cambisol, clayish silty |
| rāto māṭo | ferric luvisol |
| ariṇāle māṭo | ferric luvisol, high humus content |
| phusro māṭo | rice gley, fine sandy |
| cimṭe māṭo | rice gley, clayish silty, impermeable |
| kamero māṭo | recultivated recent fluvial sediment, light |
| phusro kamero māṭo | rice gley, fine sandy/silty, light |
| cimṭe kamero māṭo | rice gley, clayish silty, impermeable, light |
| seto māṭo | white sediment in gullies |
| kālimāṭi | fossil organic sediment |

## Fig.4:

The »Ecotope« Classification of the Citawan Tharus




Draft: U. MÜLLER-BÖKER

Cartogr.: G. Haas

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Sal forest (Shorea robusta) | kaṭhaban, jinawahan | | Pasture | jamar |
| | Riverine forest (Dalbergia sisso, Bombax ceiba et al .) | sissohan, simarhani | | Steep river-bank | bhiḍ |
| | Grassland (Saccharum-Phragmites-Themeda sp.) | jhaksihani, bagar | | Stream, river | |
| | Swamp (Arundo donax, Cyperus sp., Saccharum sp.) | dhab | | Road, path | |
| | Sandbank with Saccharum spontaneum | bagar | | Hedge and trees | |
| | Sandbank without vegetation | khola (-river) | | Buildings | |
| | Moist fields | gaheri | P | Park administration | |
| | Rainfed and irrigated fields | sarhad and dhanhar kheti | H | Hotel | |

wild plants from the forest and grasslands. All in all we were able to collect 62 edible plants, 36 plants used for house construction and other purposes of material culture, and 63 medicinal plants (Müller-Böker, 1991b). Furthermore, the Tharus very clearly distinguish between the various ecotopes of the Rāpti Valley (cf. Fig. 4).

- A sal forest is called either *kaṭhaban* or *jinawahan. Kaṭhaban* = wood forest, i. e. a forest in which good timber is found. In using *jinawa* = *Shorea robusta*, they have taken the dominant tree species to designate the area.
- A riverine forest is correspondingly referred to as *sissohan (sissowa* = *Dalbergia sissoo)* or *simarhani (simar* = *Bombax ceiba)*, according to which species of trees dominates.
- The savannas of tall grass are designated according to the dominant type of grass, generally *jhaksihani (jhaksi* = *Saccharum spontaneum)*. For the ecotope of periodically flooded or potentially floodable areas the term *bagar* is common.
- Swampy areas are called *dhab*; for wet areas near ground-level water the term *gaheri* is used.

As in a vegetational classification, their classification for the most part resorts to the dominant plant type as the distinguishing criterion. In other cases, the areas are differentiated according to the criteria of proximity to ground water, flooding, accessibility etc.

The inhabitants of the Carnawāti region on the one hand made an exact analysis of the factors causing the serious landslide which occured there in 1985. On the other hand they interpreted this natural hazard as an act of the goddess Kālī — "she became angry because of the improper behaviour of some people".

Knowledge about nature — and this seems to be common in every ethnic group I dealt with — is usually connected with the exploitation of natural resources. The idea of conservation is mainly directed to the land one owns or motivated by religiously toned concepts.[8] The evaluation and perception of the natural environment, however, is heavily influenced by cultural and religous ideas not directly comprehensible to an outsider. Why are certain trees regarded as holy by certain people which means they are not cut down? Why do Tharus highly revere forests as the domain of gods and spirits, while Pahāṛiyās do not?

[8] The responsibility for the conservation of common land is increasingly delegated to government: its protective measures (restrictions of utilization) are very often met with little understanding.

Even if our answers can be only speculative it is no doubt worthwhile to ask such questions and find out local conceptions because they influence the behaviour of the people towards nature. On the basis of the results of an ethnoecological approach combined with the methods of natural science, we may eventually evolve new concepts for an adapted, ecologically sound use of the natural environment.

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## COMMENT ON MÜLLER-BÖKER'S CONTRIBUTION

Bal Kumar K.C.

The author has analyzed the interrelationship between population density, socio-economic structure and pressure on natural resources resulting from human impact.

The author establishes a connection between socio-economic structure and overuse of natural resources. The overuse of natural resources is attributed to the excessively rapid growth of population. The magnitude of the relationship between population growth and overuse of natural resources is not assessed. The author derives a series of conclusions by introducing new variables. As such overuse of natural resources is the result of or the cause of social hierarchies, dependence relations, imbalance in land acquisition and ownership, and unsuitable and ineffective administrative policy measures, it is difficult to assess the inclusion of these variables and the magnitude of their relationship. The author deserves congratulations, however, for arousing curiosity.

The second theme of the paper is on "Ethnoecological Studies in Nepal". The author aims at including an environmental analysis from the perspective of the natural sciences. Environmental perception and human behaviour are sub-branches in behavioural geography and human ecology. The author has listed the topics and areas of her studies regarding ethno-specific knowledge of the environment and differing perception of the natural environment. She has focused on the use of various soils and sediments in the Kathmandu Valley, whereas in Gorkhā and Chitwan she has concentrated her studies on the classification and evaluation of 'ecotopes', soil types, climate and exposition, relations between the natural resources and material culture, the culturally and religiously toned concepts of natural environments in a given population, and the understanding of the question of ecological relevance by traditional societies, together with their reactions to problems and ideas about solving them with respect to protecting the environment.

In Chitwan, the author delved into the problem of the conflict between environmental protection and local economic interests while assembling a collec-

tion of plants to document the local use of the land. In Carnawati Khola, the author has analyzed human response to natural hazards.

She concluded that the local population is well aware of the need for environmental protection and possesses the knowledge of how to use environmental resources. Gaining insight into the knowledge of the local people concerning the use and protection of their environment is the sole motto of these studies. But it is not so clear how the author assimilated and synthesized adapted use and overuse of natural resources on the one hand, and ethno-ecological studies in various areas on the other. The question of the differences and similarities of knowledge and perception of the local people according to geographical areas, or of what separates a scholar or a geographer from the local people in terms of possessing knowledge about environmental planning: These are problems that need further research. Even if the local population has adequate knowledge of the environment and ways of protecting it, why are we constantly talking about overuse and pressure? What should be done at the policy level to reduce ecological degradation and sustain or change the present level of population density and socio-economic structure? Are there any solutions from social and environmental engineering points of view rather than only from social and natural science perspectives?

# STUDIES OF MAN AND THE ENVIRONMENT IN THE NEPAL-HIMALAYA
## EXAMPLES FROM GORKHĀ AND MANĀṄG AREA

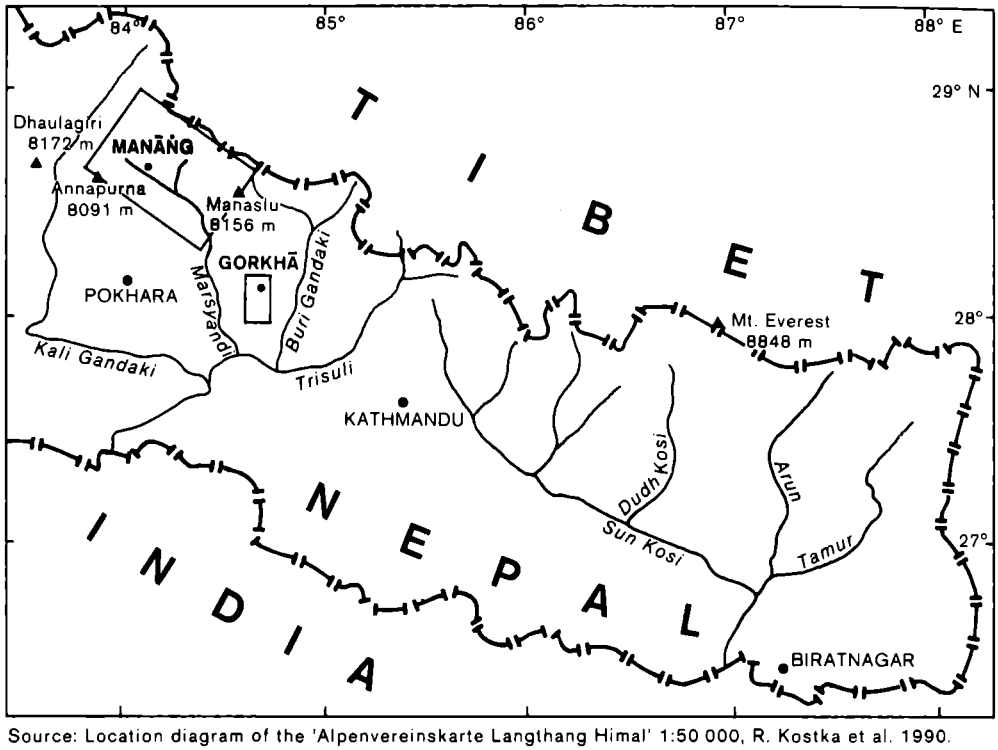
PERDITA POHLE

The investigations into human-environmental relations in the Nepal-Himalaya were carried out during the last ten years of research, partly within the ecological-geographical project of the DFG Nepal Research Programme (cf. Haffner, in the present volume). In particular, the studies were centered on:

1. Land Use and Geo-Ecological Damage in Gorkhā
2. Environmental Adaptation and Recent Changes in Manāṅg (cf. Fig. 1).

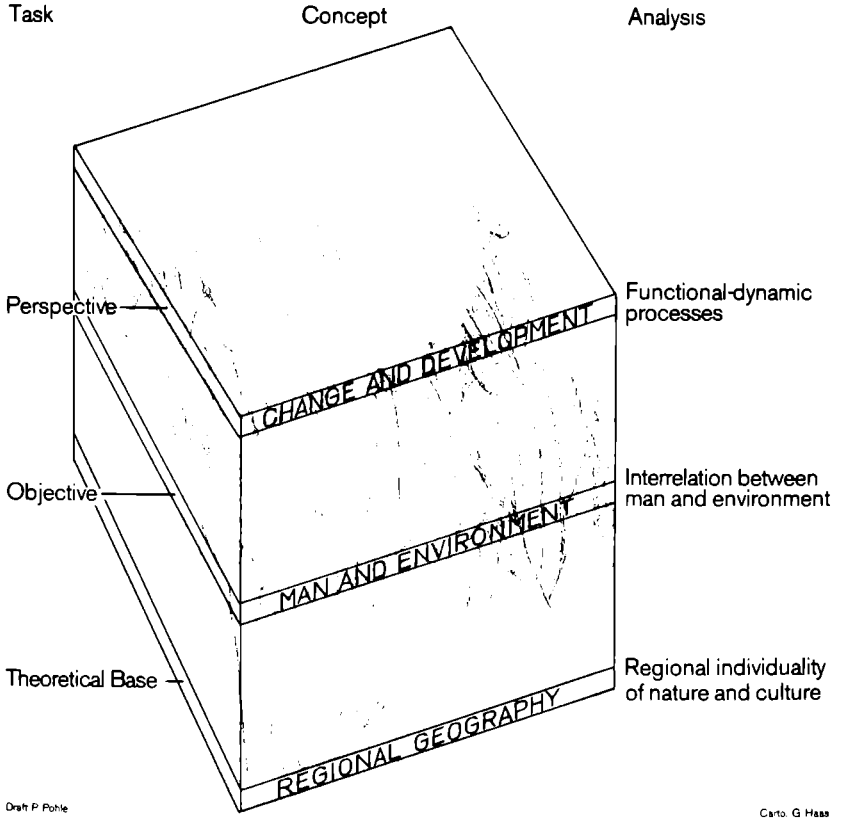
Although both studies differ both in their main emphasis as well as in their research area, from the methodological point of view they do have much in common. To begin with, in a first step in both studies the characteristic natural and cultural features of the regions were described. In a second step, the interrelationship between man and environment were studied more closely, and in a third step, changes in the areas were shown, their causes analysed and the possibilities for development discussed. The basic theoretical conception of the two projects thereby represents a combination of three different concepts established within the field of geography (cf. Fig. 2). Forming the theoretical basis of the investigations is the concept of "Regional Geography." In this field the natural and cultural data of a region are investigated and their characteristic features, or individual traits, profiled. The second concept is the notion of "Man and Environment", which highlights both the influence of man on his environment as well as the influence of environmental conditions on human nature. These interrelations between man and environment form the objective of the specific studies. Finally, it should be emphasized that investigations into human-environmental relations are not of a static nature but are dynamic processes which necessitate a functional-dynamic viewpoint. In this respect the concept of "Change and Development" might form a perspective of the study. To my mind,

**Fig.1: The geographical location of the areas under study.**




Source: Location diagram of the 'Alpenvereinskarte Langthang Himal' 1:50 000, R. Kostka et al. 1990.

**Fig. 2: A combined theoretical concept for mountain research and development.**



geographical investigations which pay respect to all three of the concepts might not only be useful for the understanding of interrelations between man and nature in a complex and highly diversified geographical region, but might also be useful for a regional planning which is adapted to the ecological environment, the economic demands and the cultural diversity of the local population.

Among specific studies necessary in this field, the following were undertaken:

### Land Use and Geo-Ecological Damage in Gorkhā

The investigations in Gorkhā were mainly centered around Gorkhā Bazār, the area given by the topographical map "Gorkhā — Sirdi Kholā 1:5000" by R. Kostka and E. Schneider (cf. maps enclosed). Within this area and its surroundings, it was particularly striking that areas of intensive and at the same time ecologically adapted land use may be found immediately adjoining others which are extremely overused and degraded. To find out the reasons for these different modes of land use and to come to conclusions on how degraded surfaces may be used more profitably and at the same time adapted to the ecology, the following investigations were carried out (cf. Haffner, 1986; Müller[-Böker], 1986; Pohle, 1986):

- analysis of physical-geographical parameters (eg. climate, soil, vegetation),
- mapping of land use, geomorphic damage, soils, ethnic groups and land ownership (cf. maps enclosed),
- interviews on the socio-economic structure of the population and analysis of the land register.

The specific aim of the studies carried out under the present topic was the analysis of traditional land use systems in correlation to ethnic groups and their specific environment. The particular objectives of this study were:

1. a description of the natural and human resource base,
2. an analysis of the actual land use practices in terms of adapted use or overuse of the natural resources, and
3. a discussion of strategies for the development of traditional land use systems under the conditions of a rapid population growth with a resulting increased pressure on natural resources.

Although a brief summary cannot give all the results and conclusions, we proceed to list the more important findings.

*Traditional farming systems are well adapted to the ecology*

Only recently has attention been drawn to the intricate methods and techniques local farmers have developed in cultivating their land. Earlier, numerous reports on deforestation, erosion and geo-ecological damage had been published in which farmers all too often had been blamed for land degradation and had even been labelled as destroyers of their natural environment. But in fact, there should be no doubt that the traditional farming systems, based on the experience of centuries, are suited to the environment and optimally adapted to the natural resources and their potential. Numerous examples can be drawn from the observations in Gorkhā, such as the careful construction of field terraces, the regular crop rotations, the natural fertilization with dung and organic matter, just to name a few. Even the fact that the population carrying-capacity of the Gorkhā area reaches an amount of about 2000 pers./km$^2$ in Gorkhā Bazār and almost 900 pers./km$^2$ in the surroundings speaks for itself (cf. Tab. 1).

Tab.1: Population Density in Gorkhā (Census 1981)

| Name of the area | total population | area (km$^2$) | population density (inhabitants / km$^2$) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Gorakhakāli Pañcāyat (Ward 1 and 4)[1] | 2195 | 1.125 | 1951 |
| Rānīśvārā Pañcāyat (Ward 3 and 7)[1] | 1514 | 1.690 | 896 |
| Gorkhā District[2] | 231,294 | 3610 | 64 |

[1] Central Bureau of Statistics, Individual Check List, Kathmandu
[2] H.M.G., 1987: Statistical Year Book of Nepal, 1987, Kathmandu

To sum up the results of the investigations into land use systems, the present situation of cultivation in Gorkhā may be described as follows. Approximately two-thirds of the total mapped area are now under agricultural cultivation (cf. Gorkhā — Sirdi Kholā Land Use Map, enclosed). Wet-rice is the staple crop on levelled and bunded irrigated terraces *(khet)*. The most commonly practiced

rotation system on *khet* land is the cultivation of wet-rice during the monsoon, followed by the cultivation of wheat or potatoes as winter crops, or the cultivation of maize in spring followed by wet-rice during the monsoon (cf. Fig. 3). Due to the introduction of an improved variety of wet-rice with a shorter vegetation period, nowadays even three crops per year are possible. Yet, the high labour input and the increasing demand for fertilizer along with the lack of monetary resources cause that these fields are few in number.

On dry, mostly sloping terraces *(bāri)*, maize, millet, and dry-rice are cultivated as well as numerous subsidiary crops (cf. Fig. 3). In many cases the intensity of cultivation on *bāri* land might be considered higher than that on *khet* land. Applying the methods of mixed and relay cropping[1], the farmers commonly harvest two or three main crops per year. Additionally, fodder trees are planted along the terrace bunds, providing animal fodder and at the same time stabilizing the fields. The cultivation of *bāri* land may be regarded as exemplary for ecologically adapted land use.

Despite the ecologically well adapted methods of cultivation there are definite signs of over-exploitation, especially on "common land" such as forests and pastures.

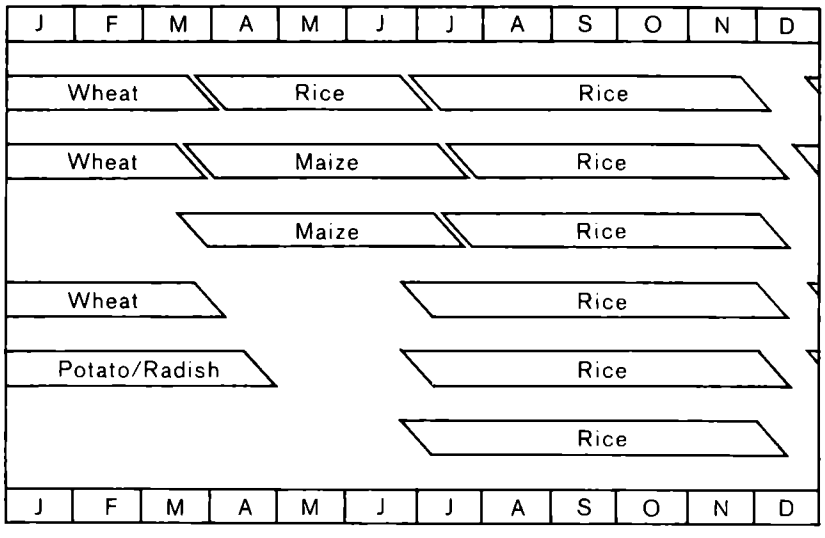
*Over-exploitation of "common land" (forests, pastures) as a result of high population pressure on limited natural resources*

When Gorkhā is compared to other parts of the Nepalese midlands, a considerable number of common characteristics may be emphasized. An increasing population and correspondingly a higher demand for food, fodder, fuel and timber lead to the clearing of the natural forests and the extension of arable land, even in ecologically unfavourable terrain. Due to the natural conditions of the area such as the monsoonal climate, heavily weathered metamorphic rocks, steep slopes etc., the deforested land in Gorkhā is highly susceptible to erosive

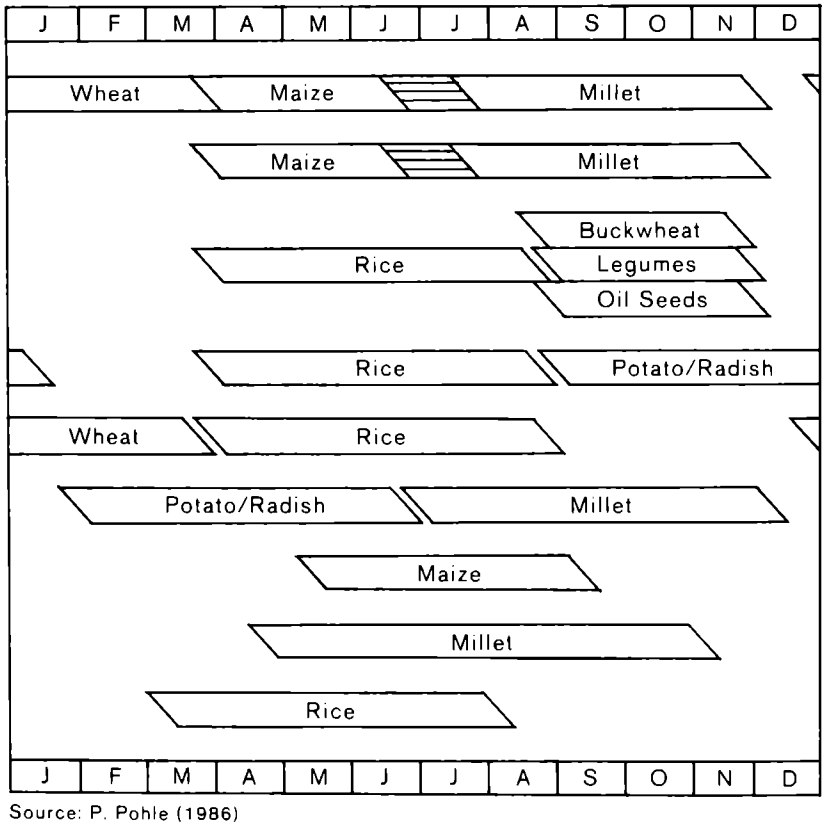
[1] According to Beets (1984:3) mixed and relay cropping are forms of multiple cropping, "defined as growing more than one crop on the same piece of land during one calendar year". "Mixed cropping is defined as growing more than one crop on the same piece of land at the same time". "Relay cropping is defined as planting crops between plants or rows of an already established crop during the growing period of the first planted crop(s)".

## Fig.3: Cropping calendar on *khet-* and *bāri-* fields in Gorkhā

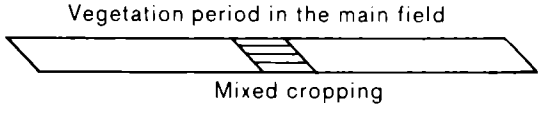
**Cropping calendar on irrigated *khet* land in Gorkhā**




**Cropping calendar on rain-fed *bāri* terraces in Gorkhā**




Source: P. Pohle (1986)



processes if it is not intensively cultivated[2] or sustainably used from the ecological point of view (e.g. in the case of pastures).

With the exception of the protected forests of Rāniban and Kāliban, the original woodlands in Gorkhā have either had to make room for arable land or were degraded to scrubland through overuse (cf. Gorkhā — Sirdi Kholā Land Use Map). The grasslands, occurring only in a few places, are subject to overuse as well, resulting in a low productivity on the one hand and a rising susceptibility to erosion on the other.

The discrepancy between areas showing ecologically adapted land use (e.g. intensive dry-field systems) and surfaces extremely degraded as a result of overuse and lack of care (woodlands, pastures) is most striking (cf. Haffner, in the present volume). Whereas farmers are very well capable of applying intensive and ecologically adapted methods of land use to their own lands, communally owned land is extremely overused.

*Khet fields: High susceptibility to erosion due to extensification*

Comparing the susceptibility of *khet* and *bāri* land to erosion, the irrigated fields show extensive damage. Other than with woodland and grazing land, in this case it is not the population pressure which leads to overuse and ensuingly to the intensification of erosive processes, but rather the extensification of land use resulting from socio-economic causes. Maintenance of the terraces, supervision of the irrigation channels, and multiple cropping are often neglected as land owners pursue more profitable extra jobs. Since the development of Gorkhā Bazār to an administrative centre and the extension of the road network from Khaireni Bazār to Gorkhā Bazār, the economic situation has fundamentally changed. Income no longer derives solely from agriculture, but, depending upon ethnic group and caste, from service jobs, restaurants, hotels, trade, and business. Simultaneously, there is a tendency for agricultural production to shift from a purely self-consumption economy towards a market economy. With increasing distance from the Bazār, however, this recent trend wanes, and agriculture takes on its traditional role of simply providing subsistence for the farmers.

Although in the long run the shift of labourers into different income sectors is unavoidable, even desirable, in Gorkhā the consequences of this shift are

[2] This is usually the case on *khet* land if there is a labour shortage and on *bāri* land if the ecological terrain conditions are extremely unfavourable.

already obvious. In particular, there are irrigated fields, traditionally classified as highly valuable, which have not been used to their potential for some time. Instead of two to three possible harvests, often only one is obtained. Most often, the owners do not work the fields themselves but rather give them over to tenants or day-labourers (cf. Müller-Böker, in the present volume), and as a result the productivity of the leased land is clearly below its optimum level. Smaller damage due to erosion can be observed especially in irrigated terraces which are located at a greater distance to the settlements. Since irrigated terraces require the highest degree of care and attention, damage occurring to them by uncontrolled irrigation or lack of care may seriously affect the entire plot and serve as focal point for further erosive processes. Another serious consequence of labour deficiency in agriculture is the increased workload for women. They are not only responsible for the household, obtaining firewood and keeping track of the animals, but must also work more in the fields. Since they have to obey certain restrictions such as the prohibition of ploughing and in certain cases also working with the *kodāli,* cultivation is usually reduced if male workers are not available.

*Perspectives of land use development in Gorkhā*

Concerning the question of the agrarian carrying-capacity of the area, asking whether the limit to reception has been reached or already been passed, or whether there are still possibilities to increase the agricultural productivity, the answer may be put as follows. At present, the agricultural productivity is not being exploited to its fullest, particularly with respect to the woodlands and grazing lands where there are definite possibilities to increase production. Obeying the concepts of "Social Forestry" or "Agro-Forestry"[3], the following

[3] Tiwari (1983:189) has defined "Social Forestry" in the Indian context as "the science and art of growing trees and/or other vegetation on all land available for the purpose, mainly outside traditional forest areas, with intimate involvement of the people and more or less integrated with other operations, resulting in balanced and complimentary land use with a view to provide a wide range of goods and services to the individuals as well as the society." "Agro-forestry" has been defined according to King & Chandler (1978) and Bene et al (1977) as a sustainable land management system which increases the yield of the land, combines the

proposals may contribute to improve the exploitation of natural resources (cf. Haffner, in the present volume):

- the introduction of rotational grazing systems,
- more productive stockbreeding and stables for livestock,
- growing of fodder plants during fallow periods (e.g. leguminous plants),
- replanting of eroded surfaces and degraded scrubland with plant varieties of high yield and fodder value,
- transferring the responsibility for woodlands and grazing land from state to community level,
- reduction of energy use, e.g. through the overall introduction of low-energy stoves.

Since an increase of the agricultural potential by means of extending arable lands in Gorkhā is no longer possible nor desirable (cf. Fig. 4), the aim should be to intensify cultivation on the land already in use by means of ecologically and economically adapted methods. The possibilities, however, are limited. Intensifications which seem profitable from the economic point of view easily turn out to be disadvantageous to the ecological conditions. For this reason the following proposals have to be made subject to careful analysis regarding both the ecological and the economic local conditions e.g.:

- optimal application of fertilizer,
- exploitation of the high genetic potential of the local varieties.

Theoretically a new concept of land ownership in which there is an easier access to land, especially for the underprivileged groups and castes, might also lead to a better use of land — a device which is not easily put into practice. More realistic instead it seems at present, to undertake the following efforts:

- the improvement of irrigation and drainage systems,
- the intensification of measures taken against erosion,
- the development of cultivation methods which reduce labour input.

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crops (including tree crops) and forest plants and/or animals simultaneously or sequentially on the same unit of land and applies management practices that are compatible with the cultural practices of the local population" (cited in Tiwari, 1983:289).

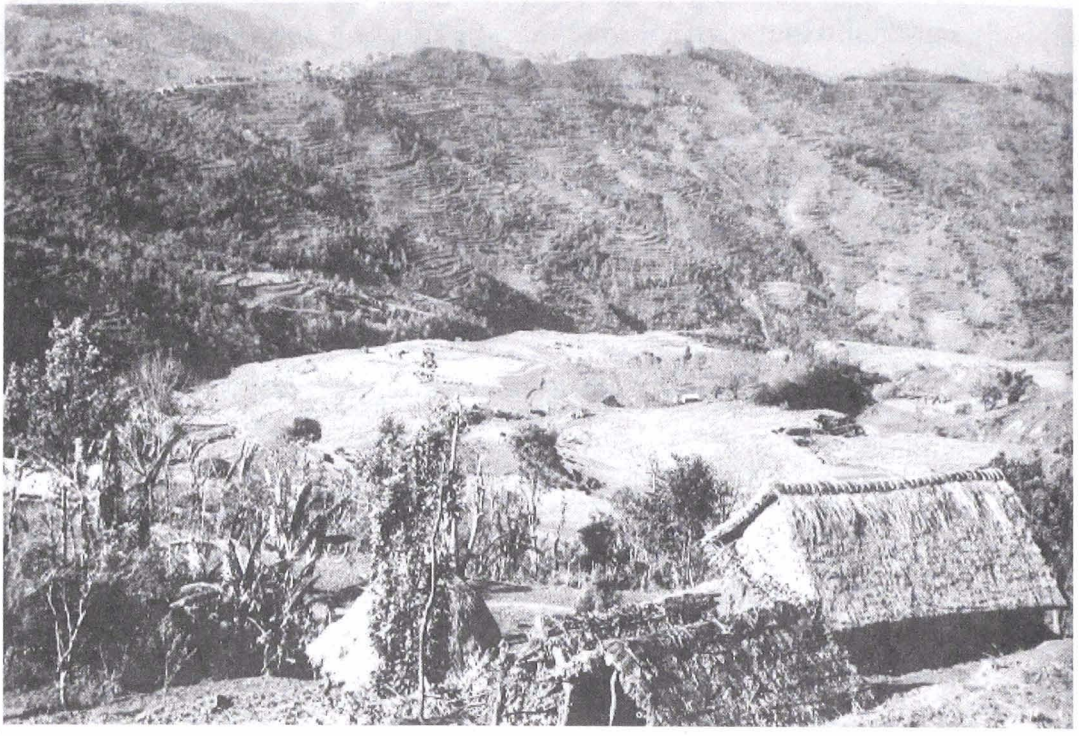


**Fig. 4:** Woodlands in Gorkhā had largely to make room for arable land. On relatively favourable terrain the slopes of Gorkhā Bazār are intensively cultivated: rainfed *bāri* terraces with fodder trees on the north facing slopes, irrigated *khet* terraces in southern exposition (March 1990).

**Fig. 5:** Two boys preparing vegetable fields in Gorkhā. The shortage in farm hands poses a big strain on the agricultural household (December 1983).

Special attention has to be given to the last proposal since the migration of labourers out of the agricultural sector into non-farm employment is surely unavoidable and, in fact, may even be desirable. On the other hand, however, such a migration causes numerous problems for the agricultural household left behind. In this respect one should also keep in mind the statement of one of the Gorkhā farmers who complained about the shortage of farm hands within his own household by saying: "There are many mouths to feed but less hands to work"(cf. Fig. 5).

However, whichever of the improvements suggested may be considered feasible has to be decided upon with regard to the local conditions and above all by the local people themselves.

## MANĀṄG: ENVIRONMENTAL ADAPTATION AND RECENT CHANGES

The high-altitude areas of Nepal are environments with extreme living conditions. Apart from the special high-altitude climate which poses a strain on the human organism, many natural hindrances such as steep relief, shallow and poorly developed soils, frost, short vegetation period etc. limit the economic potential. In spite of this, high-altitude populations have gained their livelihood there over long periods of time while adapting to the severe environmental conditions in different ways and with different methods and strategies.

By taking a closer look at the possibilities of adjustment one may distinguish three different modes of adaptation. The first one is the category of *high-altitude adaptation*, which includes physiological acclimatization and biological adaptation, reactions of the human organism in order to compensate for the high-altitude stress and at the same time to make living possible under severe conditions. Despite the biological mechanisms of adaptation, moreover, the inhabitants of the high mountains have developed numerous strategies and techniques of *cultural adaptation* which enable them to use the high mountains as an area of living, of settlement and as an economic region. Finally, even within the social structures one may recognize modes of socio-cultural organizations which to a certain extent are adapted to the external living conditions (*socio-cultural adaptations*).

The research carried out in Manāṅg District was thus primarily centered on these different modes of environmental adaptation, a comprehensive label which implies the study of a veritable host of factors. There are the physical problems effected by high altitudes (cf. Pohle, 1992) as well as the cultural and socio-cultural components which comprise the forms of housing and settlements (cf.

Pohle, 1988), the patterns of population, family and household structures; there are the economic strategies evolved in response to ecological conditions and historical-political developments (cf. Pohle, 1986). However, due to economical reasons based on historical and political events, profound changes have taken place in Manāṅg during the last two decades. Stimulated by a strong interest in international trading ventures, many families have left the high-mountain valley of Manāṅg to establish themselves in the cities of Nepal, predominantly in Kāṭhmāṇḍu and Pokharā. In doing so they have, within a very short period of time, transformed their way of life once adapted to the high-mountain environment to one adapted to an urban setting today. The discussion of the consequences of these migration patterns for the community itself as well as for the high-altitude and urban environment was thus the second focal point of the studies.

To summarize, the main questions relevant to the research carried out in Manāṅg District can be put as follows:

1. How has the Manāṅg population adapted to the natural environment, and how are the forms of adaptation manifested in the cultural landscape?
2. Which are the processes of change that they are governed by, and how do these changes affect the community as well as their environment?

Now let us look further at the research results which are centered within the limited scope of the present paper on the economy and its recent developments.

*Economic strategies adapted to ecological conditions and historical-political developments*

Because the agricultural potential in the high mountains is extremely low, due to the many unfavourable ecological factors, the inhabitants of the high mountains have developed methods and strategies which enable them to make a living even under severe ecological conditions. To compensate for the limited economic capacity of a single location, for example, they have developed multiple settlement and economic sytems in which they use various altitudinal belts with different economic preconditions according to the seasons. Thus the Manāṅgis, similar to other high-altitude populations, have traditionally practised a combined economic system comprising agriculture, animal husbandry, and trade (cf. Fig. 6). In spring, they cultivated their fields close to the main settlements with buckwheat, barley, wheat and potatoes in irrigational agriculture (cf. Fig. 7), after

**Fig. 6:** The seasonal and altitudinal stratification of the economic system in Manāṅg.

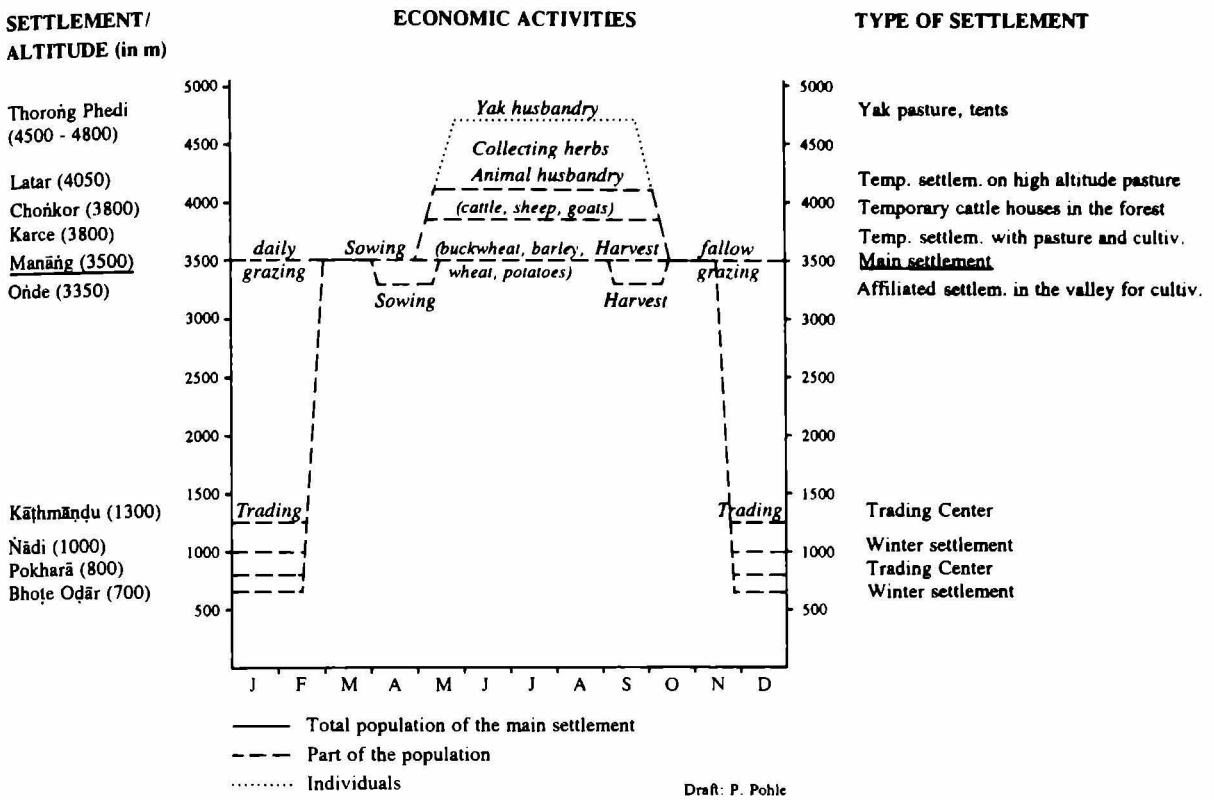



**Fig. 7:** The high-altitude settlement of Manāṅg (3500 m) with the Annapurṇa range in the background and the fields layed out for cultivation on the valley floor of the Marsyāṅdi Kholā as well as on the southern exposed slopes (November 1983).

which they brought their herds (cattle, yaks, goats, sheep) to the high-mountain pastures for summer, only to drive them back down after the harvest in fall to let them graze on the harvested fields in the valley. In the beginning of winter, the men — sometimes taking their families along — moved to the lower regions of southern Nepal, where they stayed in winter lodgings and from where they conducted their trading ventures.

If one asks the Manāṅgis how the different economic pursuits have changed in the course of time, one learns that they apparently developed from mainly herdsmen to farmers and finally to traders. For the greater length of time they were employed in all three branches of the economy at the same time, though each of them assumed varying degrees of importance during the different periods.

Having emigrated from West-Tibet, from a region called Tö-Ngari, several centuries ago (cf. Pohle, 1992), they most probably initially adhered to their traditional stockbreeding. But in the course of time agriculture became more important and the agricultural land was largely extended. With this, stockbreeding suffered a retrogressive development, which has endured to this day. The decisive change in the manner of livelihood, however, presumably occurred towards the end of the 18th century, when special trading privileges were awarded (cf. Gurung, 1980; Cooke, 1988), which in the succeeding years were renewed and even extended. Interestingly enough, the trade was from its very beginning oriented towards the south, since trade with Tibet was not directly possible due to the poor travel conditions to the north. In the beginning of their trade activities their trading goods came completely from their own region. For example, they traded in numerous animal products (such as musk, hides, yak tails, and butter), as well as in herbs (e.g. *gurki* = *Picrorhiza scrophulariiflora*, *poṅkar* = *Aconitum violaceum*, *aṅla* = *Dactylorhiza hatagirea*, *poṅmar* = *Aconitum sp.*, *yertsa-gumbu* = *Cordyceps sinensis*), which they gathered during the summer months in the high-mountain pastures and which they sold during winter in the south of Nepal but also later in India. During that time, their trading trips were still seasonal: in autumn after the harvest the men would set off for the south and return in spring to Manāṅg to till the fields.

Presumably there are many reasons why trade activities have been able to develop more and more in the last two centuries. The reasons the Manāṅgis like to point out are the bad living and economic conditions of their environment. In reality, however, it seems that during the past each succeeding government had a political interest in the areas in the north, with governmental support being

accorded for the most part for security reasons (cf. Spengen 1987; Schrader 1988). In spite of that the Manāṅgis were clever enough to maintain their privileges once gained, not without using deft political tactics for maintaining them, which can be seen in the fact that before the revolution in April 1990 they had even two members in the Rāṣṭriya Pañcāyat — quite exceptional for high-mountain populations of Nepal —, who represented their interests at the highest political level.

Whereas in the beginning of their trading journeys the Manāṅgis only had permission for free trade and exemption from custom duties within Nepal, these concessions were later extended over the Indian border. In India, during the colonial period, they were able to obtain Indian passports and after that they could expand their trading relations over the whole of South-East Asia. With the extension of their trading trips across all of South-East Asia, the assortment of products they traded in also increased. They no longer depended on the products of their own area but rather traded in precious and semi-precious stones from Burma, electric appliances and watches from Hong Kong, clothing from Bangkok, precious metals and much more. Although, when they began trading, the men would go on trading journeys during the winter seasons and return for cultivation in spring, in the course of time, as more and more emphasis was put on international business, an absence of several years was no longer an exception. However, even then Manāṅg was still the main place of residence.

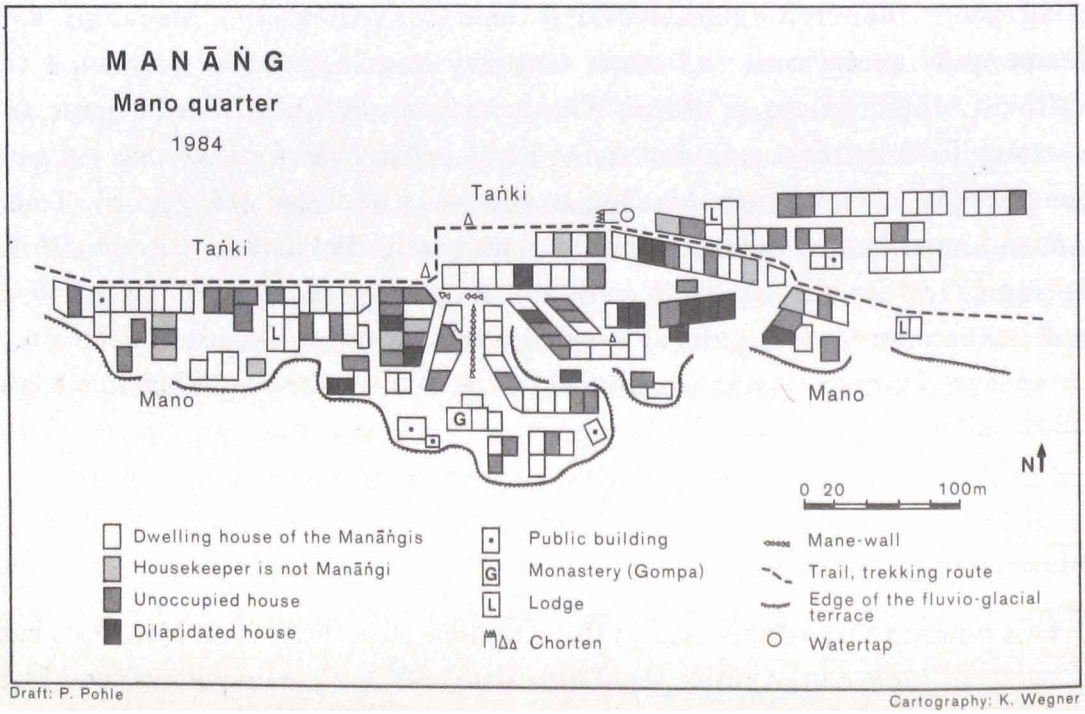
For about fifteen to twenty years now another dramatic change has been taking place. Through their extensive trade connexions the Manāṅgis have become quite prosperous; one could even say that they today are among the wealthiest ethnic groups of Nepal. The increasing revenues from business and the search for a better standard of living and a better basis for trade has led most young people to move from Manāṅg to the cities of Nepal (cf. Fig. 8). Today more and more land is being bought in Kāṭhmāṇḍu, Pokharā and Bodhnāth by Manāṅgis, new houses are being built and shops opened. Even hotels are managed by them and a few years ago, besides the Māṭepāni Gompa in Pokharā, a second new monastery was established close to Svayambhunāth in the Kāṭhmāṇḍu valley.

*The consequences of change*

This profound transformation in the economic structure of the Manāṅgis has, of course, influenced the entire population structure, settlement patterns and land

**Fig. 8:** Manāṅgi businessmen in their trekking shop in Kāṭhmāṇḍu (November 1991).

**Fig.9: The village plan of Mano quarter in Manāṅg.**



use in Manāṅg. In 1984 in the Mano quarter of the Manāṅg village for instance, 63 houses, from a total number of 168, were abandoned (cf. Fig. 9). Also in other villages almost one third of the houses formerly inhabited were closed, some of them were dilapidated or had even already collapsed. The present inhabitants in Manāṅg are mainly elderly people, women and children who stay during summer but mostly leave for Kāṭhmāṇḍu in winter. Several houses are also leased to recent immigrants from Mustāṅg, Nubri, and Nār. The leasing rate, however, is very low and often the only conditions imposed are to care for house and land. Of course, due to the high income from business nowadays most Manāṅgis no longer depend on agricultural revenues, and many fields are left uncultivated. On the fields which are still under cultivation, work is done predominantly by hired workers from the districts of Gorkhā, Lamjuṅg or Kaski. Also the herding of the relatively low number of animals is no longer done by the Manāṅgis themselves, but mostly by Tibetan refugees.

However, the development in Manāṅg is not only subject to rather negative influences. Part of the money earned from business also flows back to Manāṅg, where new *maṇi-walls* and *chorten* are built, *gompas* restored or furnished, new pipes are fitted for drinking water, paths repaired and even roads are built. A few years ago, a small hydroelectric power plant was also established which nowadays supplies most of the villages of Nyiśaṅg with electricity. Additionally, tourism has raised the attraction of the Manāṅg area for the Manāṅgis themselves, and at present they are completely fulfilling the tourists' expectations while not entirely ignoring the lucrative aspects of the business they bring with them.

It is very surprising in how short a time the Manāṅgis have changed their way of life, which was once adapted to the extreme conditions of the high mountains, to a life-style which is adapted to the city today. There is, however, also the danger that knowledge of the environment which has been learned and passed down over the generations, could become lost within one single generation. One must remember that the Manāṅgis are a Tibeto-Burman ethnic group which does not have its own literary history and is therefore not used to recording facts about its environment, the economic and political conditions or other changes. The extensive knowledge of herbs (cf. Pohle, 1990) or the knowledge about the principles of building houses climatically suitable, the establishment of settlements, field irrigation, rotation of pasture lands and much more can become lost within a very short period of time. The necessity of documenting this extensive knowledge was also both the reason and motivation for me to undertake studies in the Manāṅg District. An additional reason was that far too little is still known

of the high-mountain regions of Nepal, but that developmental measures are already being implemented there by the government and by development organizations. Some of them, however, seem premature or not sufficiently well considered. Why are methods of climatically suitable house-building, well known to the local people, not applied in public buildings, as, e.g., in schools? Why does one try in vain to cultivate rice at heights where there is danger of frost, when a large number of other, better suited local agricultural products are available? One could cite further examples of miscarried planning measures in this connection which, when taken together, make it very clear that a regional analysis of man-environment relations in the high mountains could be more than just documentation: it could — and ought to — serve as the basis for a better regional planning, one adapted to the needs of the high-mountain population and the ecological conditions of their environment.

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## COMMENT ON POHLE'S CONTRIBUTION

MANGAL S. MANANDHAR

The subject of Dr Pohle's investigations, the inter-relationship between man and environment, is of special importance to Nepal. In developed countries the main problem of environment is inorganic pollution, but in Nepal, it is the land degradation because of its over-use. The overwhelming majority of the people of Nepal derive their subsistence directly from the land. Hence the interaction between man and environment is more direct. The land being the source of subsistence, the problem of land degradation is inseparably linked with the sustenance of the people. In fact, the environmental problem in Gorkhā or, for that matter, in the whole of Nepal, is the socio-economic problem of the development of Nepal. Environmental problems, therefore, cannot be tackled without solving the problem of the livelihood of the people in the hills.

Dr Pohle has made the following keen observations:

1. The traditional farming system practised by the farmers is based on an experience accumulated during many centuries; it is suited to the environment and is optimally adapted to the natural potential.
2. The degraded land is basically the 'commmon land'.
3. Land degradation is caused by the increased demand for food, fuel, and fodder ensuing from the increasing population, and the extensification of land use which in Dr Pohle's account is a factor even more important than the pressure of over-population in the disastrous processes of erosion. Extensification, she says, results in the neglect of maintenance of terraces, supervision of irrigation channels, and cropping patterns. The extensification occurs whenever a land owner pursues a more profitable, non-agricultural extra-job. This observation deserves special attention.
4. A redistribution of land ownership creating an easier access to land especially for the underprivileged for optimal land use has been rejected as impractical. The option of improving the present method of cultivation and use especially of 'common land'-forest and grazing land is envisaged.

To support her contention that the traditional farming system devised by the farmers in Gorkhā is a well-balanced one, she points to the 'construction of terraces', the 'crop rotation system', and the 'application of natural fertilizers'. When asserting, in the concluding remarks of her paper, 'if the rich traditional knowledge of the local farmers could be applied, then both the demands of the people and ecology could be met', Dr Pohle is probably right. But in the face of increasing population pressure, people even when fully aware of the consequences of land degradation are forced to over-use forests and grazing land; they are forced to farm the steep marginal lands to survive today; providing for a better tomorrow by reducing the use of lands means starvation today. The problem, therefore, is how to create, on the one hand, a situation where people are not forced to do things which damage environment, and on the other hand, increase agricultural production by making it profitable enough to lead a good life without beginning an extra-job. Besides, there is not enough land for everybody who depends upon it. So, to establish a balanced relationship between man and environment, off-farm employment generation especially for the poor and the landless is an imperative need.

Regarding the man-environment relationship in Manāṅg, Dr Pohle's account is tinged with concern about the possible loss of the knowledge and practices of adaptation accumulated through centuries in the harsh high-altitude environment. But Dr Pohle, perhaps because of the limitations imposed by the length of the paper, has not described the measures and strategies developed by Manāṅgis in sufficient detail. Except for the description of the utilization of different altitudinal belts in different seasons and the trade in animal products and herbs, the paper only mentions their vast knowledge of different aspects of the habitat. I would have preferred to read more details of the measures adopted by Manāṅgis to survive in their high-altitude environment as it carries great significance for the development of the area.

Dr Pohle is very correct in stating that there has been a profound change in the economic structure of the Manāṅg area, which has had its repercussions on population structure, settlement patterns and land use. But very little has been substantiated regarding the change in the settlement pattern and land use. Similarly, the shift of population from Manāṅg to urban areas in substantial numbers leading to unoccupied and unattended houses continues unabated. It would have been of great interest to know how this shift of population has affected the ecological condition of the environment in the area, because the rapid growth of population has been blamed as the factor for the deterioration of the ecological environment of Nepal. There can be no doubt that the increase

of population and its consequences are very essential factors in the man-environment relationship in Nepal.

# GEODETIC-PHOTOGRAMMETRIC WORK IN THE COURSE OF CULTURAL STUDIES IN NEPAL

ROBERT KOSTKA

## INTRODUCTION

The cultural heritage of Nepal, including temples, stūpas, and palaces, is famous all over the world. It is essential to document these specimens of architecture because, on the one hand, they are partly in danger of dilapidation and need to be restored, and on the other hand, they are to be studied and analyzed from a historical point of view as well as in a developmental perspective. In this, we can largely refer to recordings of buildings by N. Gutschow and his Nepalese team. Geodetic and photogrammetric methods are also applied in cases like these, although they demand greater expenditure of instruments and financial means than manual surveying. They are mainly used when recording has to be done within a short period of time; results are obtained from metric images taken at the site and plotted later. Geodetic-photogrammetric methods are also applied in cases where the object is inaccessible but where we are able to determine the position and altitude by measuring angles and distances. With the help of such methods, it is also possible to plot certain objects that cannot quite be defined geometrically.

## GEODETIC-PHOTOGRAMMETRIC METHODS

These include measurements of angles and distances as well as photogrammetric images with special cameras. Angular and distance measurements are carried out with the help of a theodolite and different instruments for measuring distances in horizontal and vertical planes. They have proved to be effective in cases where simple surveying methods are impracticable, for instance with objects of irregular ground plans, great differences in heights, etc. In order to obtain exact data of the position and altitude, one first has to define every point

one wants to mark. The method of photogrammetric recording with the help of special cameras — phototheodolites — has chiefly proved advantageous where the object surveyed is inaccessible (e.g. elevated domes) or not completely definable. The geometric form of a three-dimensional object can be documented by using stereo images (provided certain pre-conditions of the analysis are given).

Tab. 1: Geodetic-photogrammetric surveys of monuments and sites in the Kathmandu Valley 1980 — 1988 executed by E. Schneider and R. Kostka

| | |
|---|---|
| 1980: | Photogrammetric survey of the Mahābauddha Temple in Pāṭan |
| 1981: | Photogrammetric documentation of the South Stūpa in Pāṭan;<br>Survey of the slide area of the southeastern slope of the Svayambhūnāth mountain;<br>Photogrammetric survey of Maṇi Keśava Nārāyaṇa Cok pallas (Metal art museum) in Pāṭan |
| 1983: | Photogrammetric survey of some cupolas of temples in Kathmandu — supplementary work to the studies of N. Gutschow |
| 1986: | Documentation of important monuments and sites in the Kathmandu Valley (vertical and oblique aerial photography from a helicopter); |
| 1988: | Geodetic-photogrammetric survey of the Svayambhūnāth Stūpa<br>Photogrammetric survey and documentation of the South Stūpa in Pāṭan (concluding work) |

## OUTLINE OF ACCOMPLISHED WORK

During the years from 1980 to 1988 the team, consisting of E. Schneider and R. Kostka, carried out research work for the various projects described in Table 1. Surveying and recording of data were partly carried out in cooperation with our Nepalese colleagues, for instance in the case of the Maṇi Keśava Nārāyaṇa Cok pallas in Pāṭan. Sometimes though, work was discontinued after recording. Within the limits of this paper, we will not be able to go into further details; I shall confine myself to the geodetic work done at Svayambhūnāth and the documentation of objects in the Kathmandu Valley from a helicopter flight.

## Geodetic work at the Stūpa in Svayambhūnāth

The task of the work at Svayambhūnāth was to define individual architectural elements with regard to their reciprocal orientation, and especially to analyze the position of the top (apex) in relation to the periphery of the cube or the intersections of axes of the different shrines (see Plate 1). A number of measuring points were chosen to form a kind of network so that the points in question could be determined by means of angular measurements (Fig. 1).

The data determined in this procedure were used to calculate the coordinates of individual points; the results have been listed and contrasted in Tab. 2.

Tab.2: Comparative listing of determined points at Svayambhūnāth Stūpa

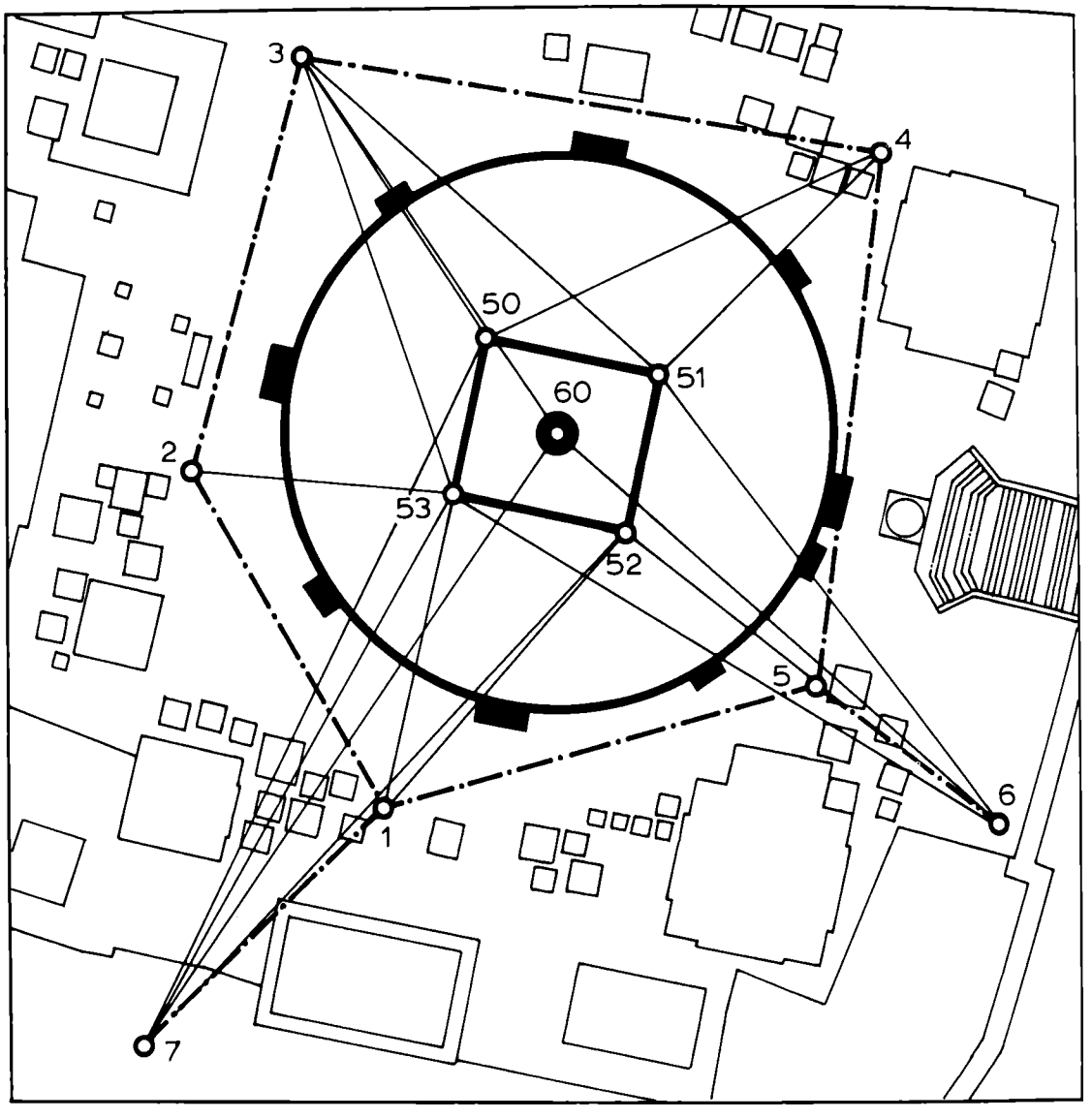
| | x | y |
|---|---|---|
| Top (apex) | 115.06 | 203.98 |
| centre of cube | 114.96 | 204.04 |
| intersection of axes of shrines (Tathāgatas) | 115.10 | 204.09 |
| intersection of axes of shrines (Tāras) | 115.22 | 203.99 |
| centre of circle | 115.07 | 203.90 |

Considering the diameter of the building, which amounts to about 23 metres, and its height of more than 30 metres, the computed data can be described as documenting the reciprocal positions of the points very precisely. Therefore it can be said that all architectural elements have been determined with great care.

## Documentary photography of monuments in the Valley of Kathmandu

In order to support and improve various studies of cultural sites a helicopter was employed to survey important monuments in the Valley of Kathmandu. Shots (colour slides) were taken by E. Schneider and R. Kostka, using Hasselblad cameras. The photographs complete and supplement the exact surveying of the buildings. The Hindu temple of Paśupatināth (see Plate 2) and the Bodhnāth Stūpa (see Plate 3) give examples of this documentation work.

**Fig.1** Position of measuring points around the Stūpa




## CONCLUSION

It is to be hoped that the work done by Erwin Schneider and myself has been instrumental in the investigation and future preservation of the cultural heritage of the Kathmandu Valley. Moreover, the photogrammetric material gained from a survey of several objects has been carefully stored and will be of considerable use in the future. Last but not least, I would like to thank my Nepalese colleagues as well as the local authorities for their support of the project.

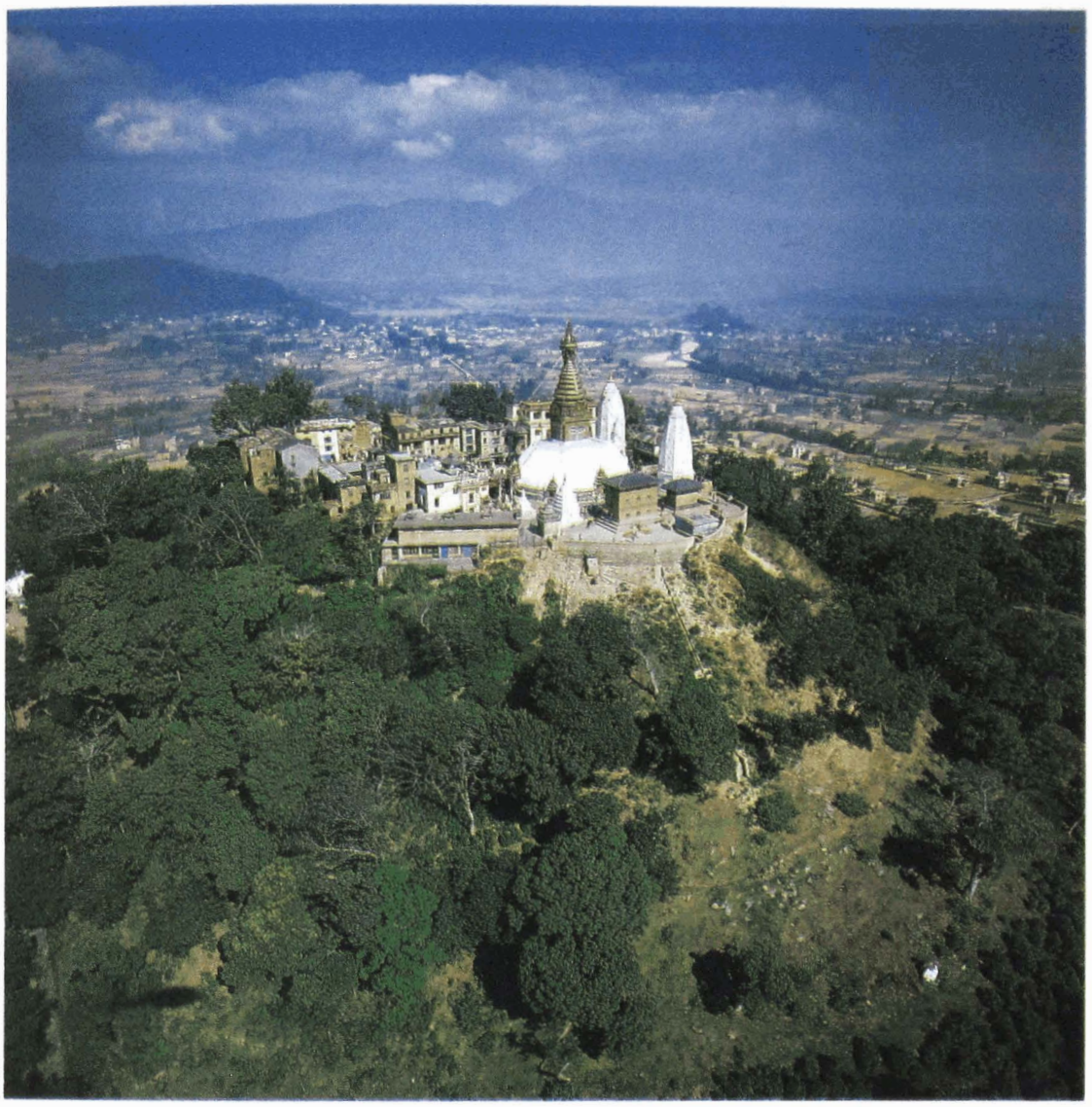


**Plate 1** *Svayambhūnāth*, the large stūpa is reputed to be the oldest in Nepal (photo E. Schneider 1986)

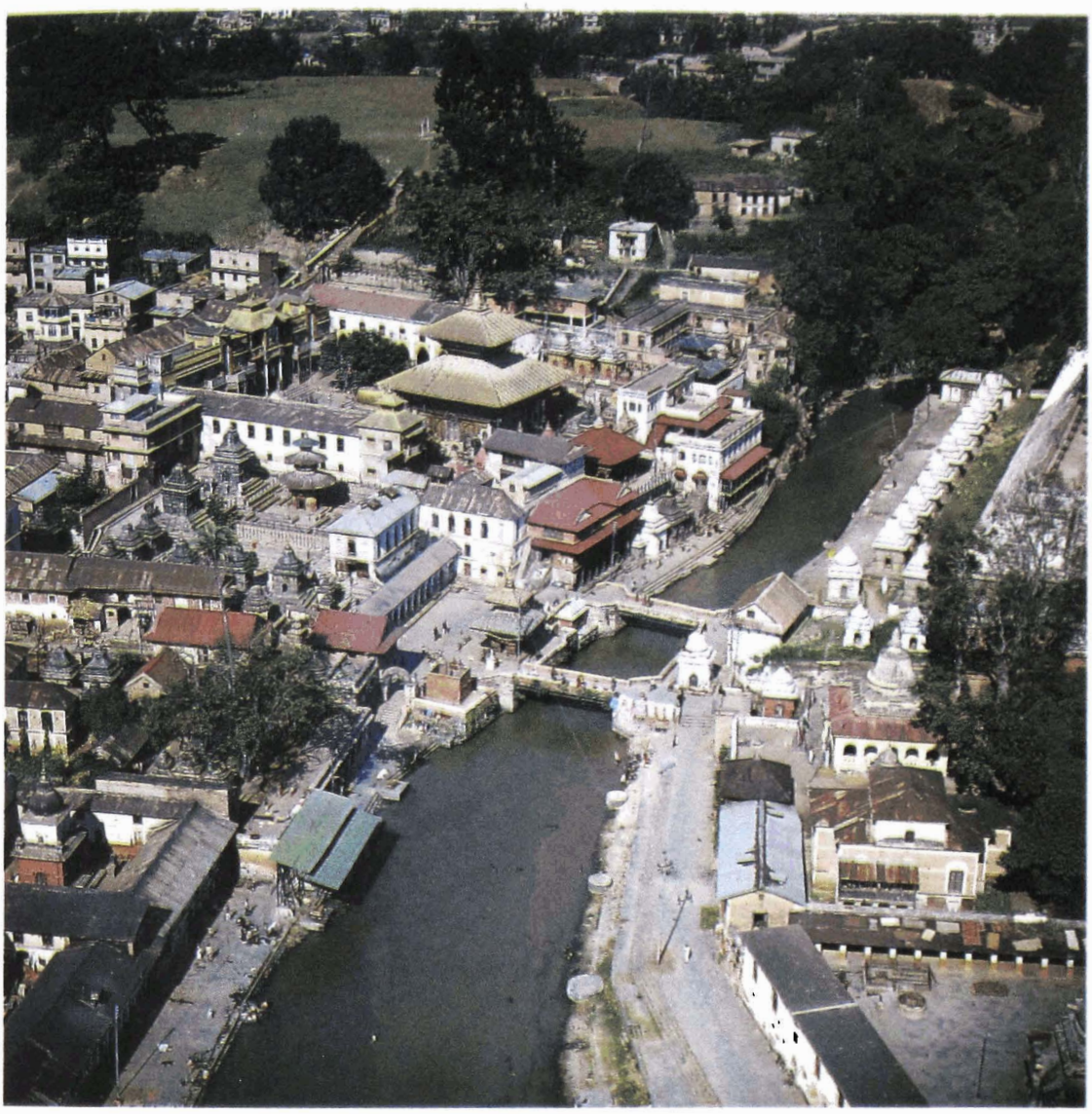


**Plate 2** *Paśupatināth* is the most famous Hindu temple in Nepal, situated at the holy river Bāgmatī (photo E. Schneider 1986)

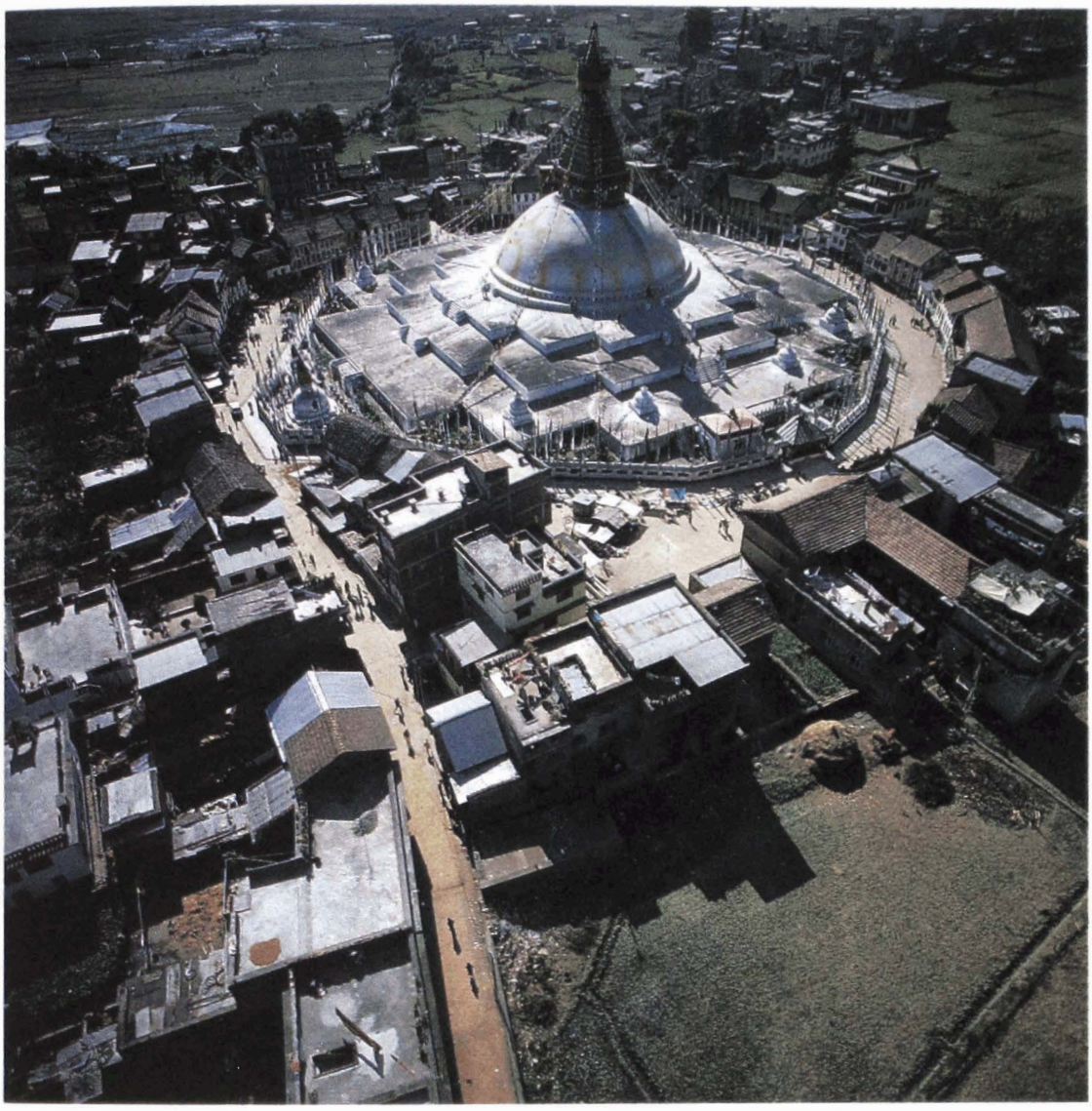


**Plate 3** *Bodhnāth*, one of the largest stūpas in the world, is the centre of Tibetan culture in Nepal (photo E. Schneider 1986)

# LARGE-SCALE MAPPING FOR GERMAN RESEARCH ACTIVITIES IN NEPAL

ROBERT KOSTKA

## INTRODUCTION

In former times, mapping activities in Nepal were carried out by the Survey of India; today, this is the task of the Topographical Branch of the Survey Department HMG in Kathmandu. Therefore, foreign research projects will not have to do overall mapping for the whole country. Rather, they will focus on preparing maps for certain districts and specific purposes.

- The main aim is to present extreme high-mountain areas (e.g. Mt. Everest) as well as certain regions in the Valley of Kathmandu.
- An important part of the research activities carried out by the "Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft" (DFG) in the course of its Nepal project has been the preparation of thematic maps on very large scales.
- In addition to this, German research activities have concentrated on the possibilities of using satellite data in solving topographical and thematic problems.

In a mountainous country like Nepal, with large regions almost inaccessible, the advantages of such a procedure will be very helpful in the future.

From the year 1955 until his death in 1987 the Austrian Erwin Schneider was intensively concerned with mapping in Nepal. The well-known "Schneider maps" are important results of his valuable work. One map, Annapurna 1: 100 000, and two others presenting Langtang Himal on a scale of 1: 50 000, are still in preparation.

From 1980 onwards I joined Erwin Schneider in his Nepal project; since his death I have continued Schneider's work (Table 1).

| Tab.1: Survey of Cartographic Activities 1980 — 1988 in Nepal (E. Schneider, R. Kostka) | |
|---|---|
| 1980: | Langtang Himal, fieldwork for map preparation 1 : 50,000;<br>continuation of Erwin Schneider's work;<br>glacier studies at Lirung glacier;<br>settlement and land-use map, Syabru 1 : 10,000 |
| 1981: | Fieldwork for preparation of Gorkhā map 1 : 3,000;<br>fieldwork Langtang-Himal continuation |
| 1982: | Langtang Himal continuation;<br>Gorkhā — Sirdi Kholā map 1 : 5,000 |
| 1983: | Comparative studies for ESA — Spacelab Metric Camera experiment, large-scale mapping in the Jiri road area |
| 1986: | Large-scale mapping in the Jiri road continuation;<br>erosion studies fieldwork — aerial photography;<br>SPOT satellite data in Trisuli valley;<br>geomorphologial studies in Bagmati valley;<br>glacier studies in Langtang Himal, Khumbu Himal, Barun valley |
| 1988: | Large-scale mapping in the Jiri road area, Panchkal valley, Langtang Himal;<br>additional fieldwork for map preparation 1 : 50,000 |

## LARGE-SCALE MAPS

Available maps often do not provide sufficient information or are not topical enough for the study of details so that special mapping has to be carried out — just as in the case under study. I would like to mention two examples: the district of Gorkhā and the area near the Jiri road. Large-scale mapping was an absolutely necessary preliminary for the environmental research activities of the German Research Council in Nepal. Questions of thematic description shall be dealt with elsewhere; in this context we will mainly concentrate on basic maps.

*The maps of the Gorkhā region*

*Gorkhā Map, Nepal; Scale 1: 3 000, Size 68 x 57 cm², dicromatic (Fig. 1)*

Geodetic, photogrammetric and cartographic field studies were carried out by Erwin Schneider and R. Kostka; the latter was also responsible for calculations and plotting. Names and transcriptions were worked out by a German-Nepalese team. The project was supported by the German Research Council; the map was printed at the Topographical Survey Branch, Department of Survey, HMG Kathmandu, in 1982.

*Study map Gorkhā-Sirdi Khola; Scale 1: 5 000, Size 82 x 37 cm², monochromatic*

Even though every piece of information and all maps available, but also additional measurements by our team, were used in the production of this basic map, it does not contain all information, but only the contents gained from existing maps and further remote-sensing measurements. Additional fieldwork, inquiries about names and specialist field studies were necessary to develop thematic maps on the basis of this material; this was done by the Geographic Institute of the University of Giessen. Definitive maps with various thematic contents have been published on a reduced scale.

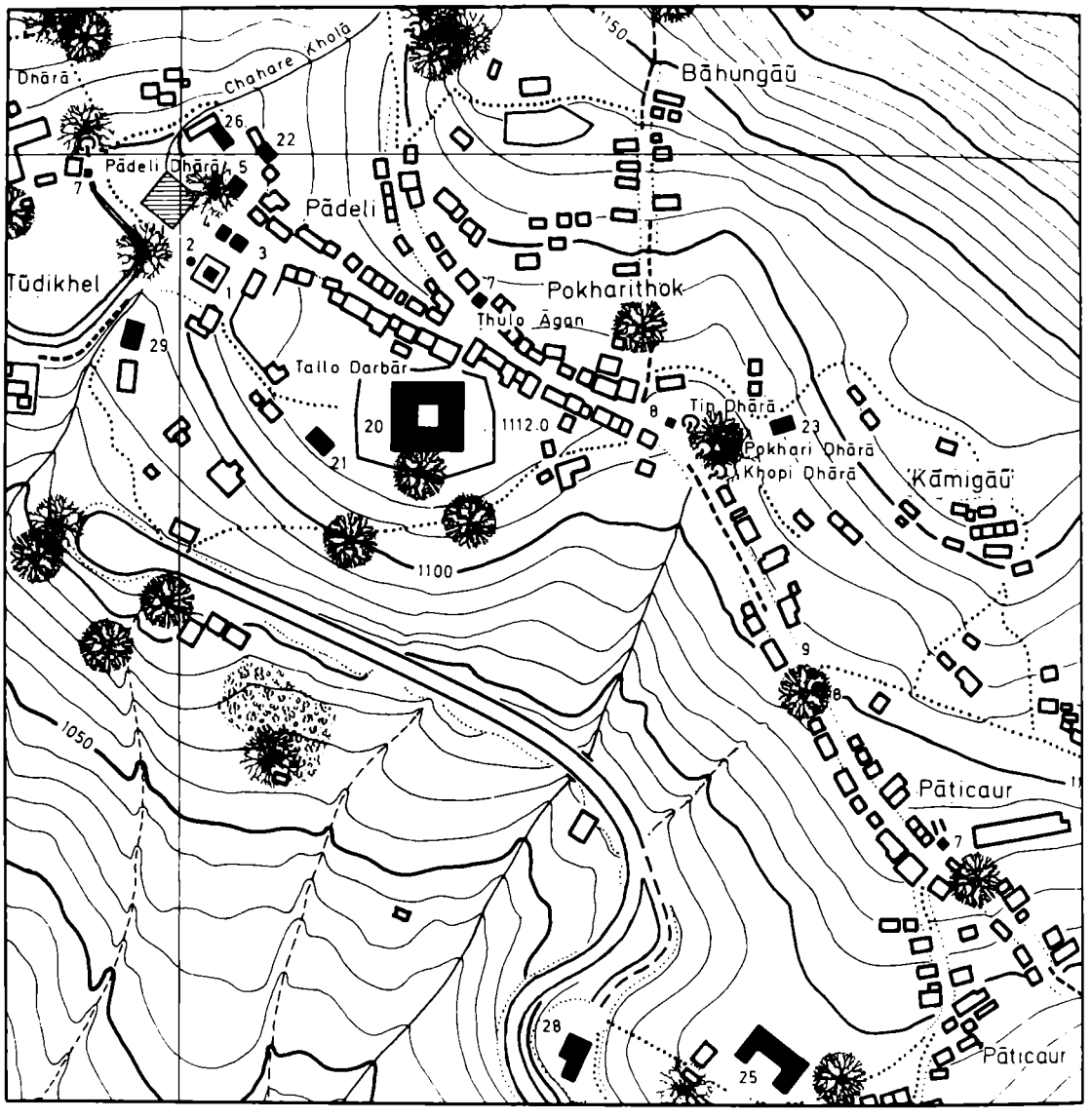
*Cartographic presentation of analysed areas along the Jiri road*

The Jiri road, leading from Lamosangu to Jiri, is a well-known project area. As far as its origin, construction, problems of environment and development are concerned, it has been dealt with in several studies that have already been published or are due to appear in the near future. The road provides easy access to a region of high economic — and scholarly — importance.

*Situation of the areas analyzed*

As there was no map that gave an exact position of the road (the data used for planning did not correspond to its actual course), we had to prepare an outline map in order to be able to define the various areas to be studied. These areas are listed in Tab. 2.

**Fig. 1:** Detail of the Gorkhā Map 1:3000, showing Gorkhā Bazār.



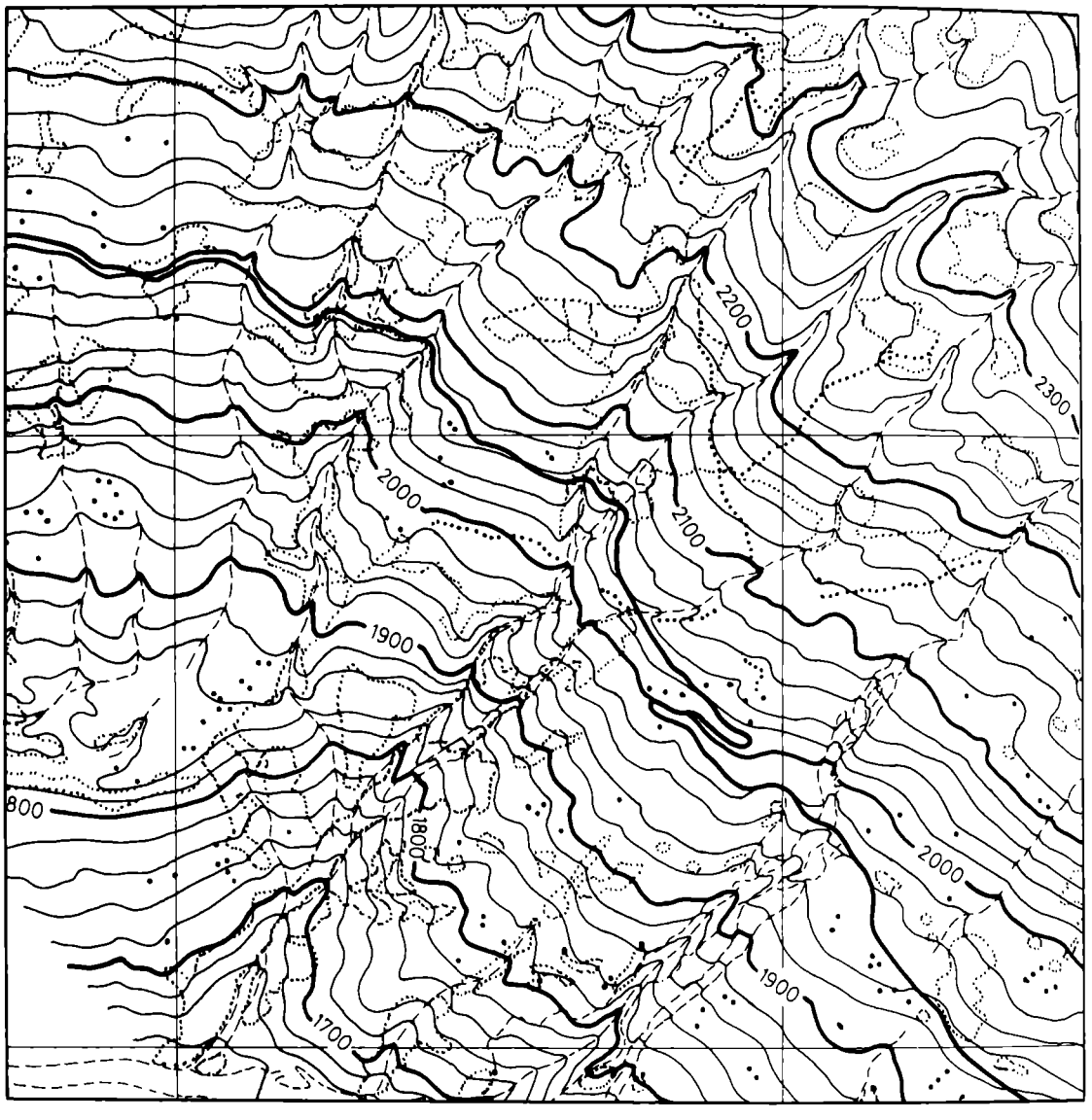
| Tab.2: Large Scale Maps in the Study Areas near Jiri Road |
|---|
| 1. Dolalghat in preparation |
| 2. Tauthali Ridge<br>Lamosangu — Jiri road area km 15 — km 35 1 : 50,000<br>Tauthali ridge area 1 : 5,000<br>size: 70 cm x 45 cm |
| 3. Charnawati Khola<br>Lamosangu — Jiri road area km 30 — km 50 1 : 50,000<br>Charnawati Khola landslide area 1 : 10,000<br>Charnawati Khola landslide 1 : 5,000<br>size: 48 cm x 38 cm |
| 4. Basin between Dolakha and Tamba Kosi Bridge<br>Lamosangu — Jiri road area km 50 — km 90 1 : 50,000<br>Basin area 1 : 10,000<br>Village area 1 : 2,500<br>size: 50 cm x 44 cm |
| 5. Jiri Village in preparation |
| 6. Yelung Valley<br>Jiri — Khimti Khola area 1 : 50,000<br>Yelung valley 1 : 10,000<br>Village area 1 : 2,500<br>size: 53 cm x 42 cm |
| 7. Those Village in preparation |

The area of study around Dolalghat is shown on Plate 1. Only one of these large scale maps will be discussed in the following section.

*Charnawati-Khola Landslide Map; Size 48 x 38 cm², monochromatic*

The basin of the Charnawati River can be described as an old landslide area with a thick layer of loose material up to the outcropping rock. An outline map 1 : 50,000 shows the course of the road from km 30 to km 50. The slope to the west of the Charnawati Khola with the road, its settlements and wooded area up to the ridge is presented at a scale of 1: 10,000 (Fig. 2). In the map sheet there is a difference in elevation of about 700 metres. The area around the landslide of

**Fig.2:** Reduction of a section of Charnawati-Khola-Map 1 : 10,000



1985 has been mapped at a scale of 1 : 5,000; in this, emphasis was laid on a representation of as many details as possible. By means of these recordings field studies can be carried out most effectively, because the map not only allows precise orientation within the country, but also provides thematic entries of outstanding accuracy.

## CONCLUSION

As far as surveying methods are concerned, it was not possible to go into details within the limits of this paper. On the whole, we tried to restrict mapping to comparatively simple procedures in order to be able to produce cost-effective research tools. As far as possible, available maps were referred to. Apart from geodetic methods, i.e. measurements of angles and distances, photogrammetric measuring techniques were employed. Moreover, we used metric images taken at terrestrial stations and also from the air. Satellite images — photographic products, but also images recorded by scanner (LANDSAT or SPOT satellites) — were tested in this project, but have not yet proved effective for large scales like these. In future, though, a combination of all these possibilities will assure optimal results. Additional fieldwork was necessary in the present case. This was carried out in connection with thematic field research and inquiries for names.

It was a most interesting experience for me to get to know the mountainous regions of Nepal in the course of this project — the beauty, but also the problems of this country. I was very much impressed by the fruitful inter-disciplinary teamwork of Indologists, Tibetologists, geographers and others; members of different universities of all German-speaking countries were assembled in joint research activities and co-operated with our friends and colleagues from Nepal. We are very grateful to the local authorities for their support, which made concerted fieldwork possible and led to satisfactory results achieved by mutual effort. It is due to these aspects that the major part of the aims of the project has already been achieved.

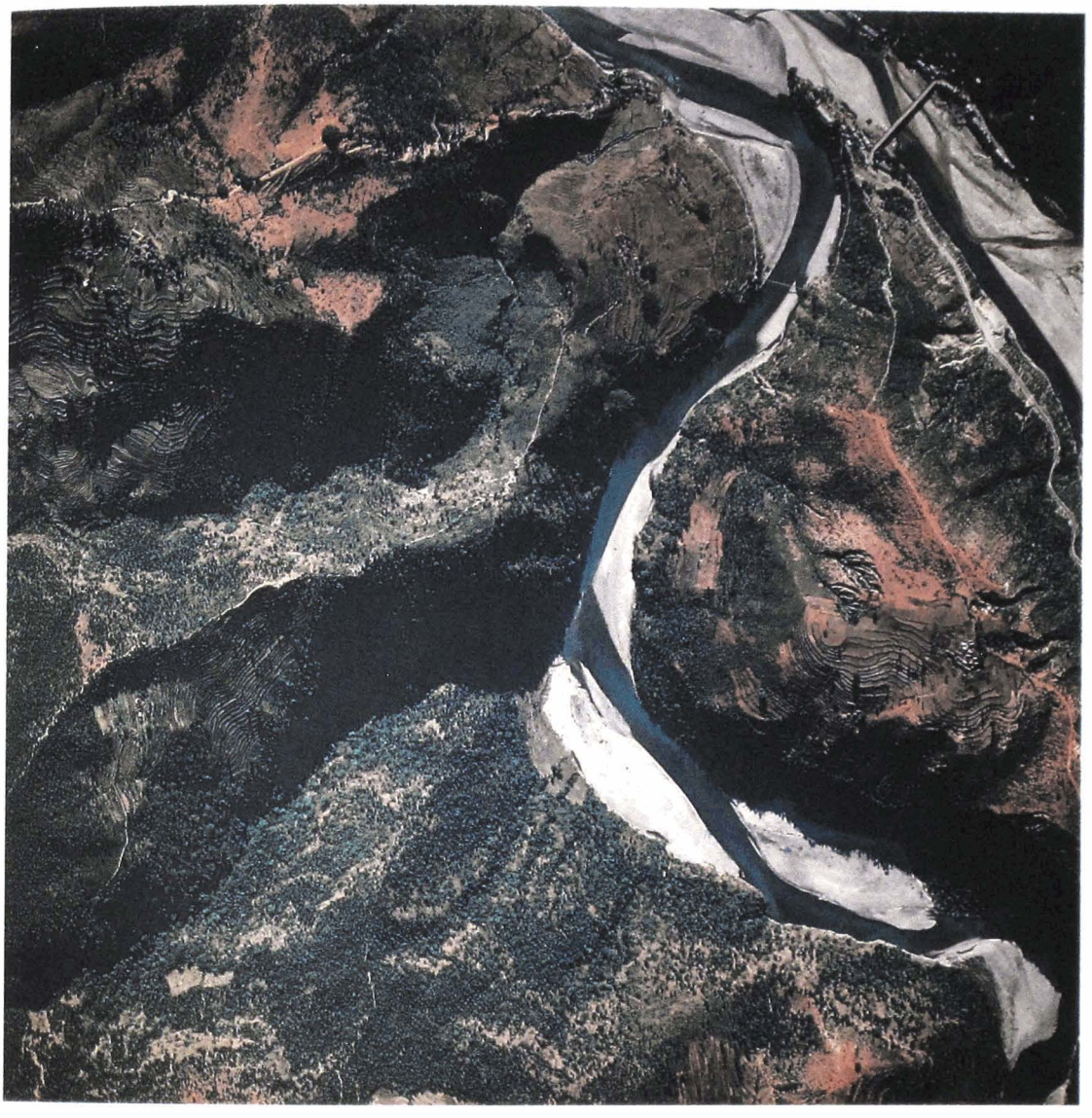


**Plate 1** Aerial photo of the study area around Dolalghat. The bridge in Dolalghat crossing the Indrāwatī river a bit north of the confluence with Sun Kośī can be recognized (photo E. Schneider 1986)

# NEPALICA ICONOGRAPHICA

ADALBERT GAIL

Over the course of ten years working within the Nepal Research Programme the following questions have seemed to me especially attractive viewed from the scenery of Indian art, which serves as a framework to elucidate the peculiarities of the Nepalese tradition extremely well.

Nepal, as a bearer of Hindu traditions, has preserved many traits which have been lost, superimposed upon or abandoned in India. This has been fostered to a large extent through its geographical position: in a relatively secluded valley and at the periphery of a cultural area, while regional diversity in India has led to more rapid change through more advantageous exchange.

In addition to this: Buddhism was wiped out in northern India, while it survived in Nepal, where its tantric form continued in an osmotic relationship with tantric Hinduism.

Finally, however, one must also stress the creative energies of the Nepalese/Newari artists, who discovered forms and variants in the iconic traditions common to both Nepal and India, which, however, were not used in India.

The following notes by no way represent a summary of my research results but are rather intended to shed some light on peculiarities of Nepalese imagery reflected by a few selected specimens.

1. The four-faced cult figure in the Cārnārāyaṇ temple in Pāṭan dating from 1565 A.D, in its essential iconographic characteristics, corresponds to a text in the *pratimālakṣaṇa* portion of the Kashmiri Viṣṇudharmottara-Purāṇa (8th cent. A.D.), whereas no such *caturvyūha* example can be found in India itself.[1]

2. The Nepalese Viśvarūpa from the Cāṅgunārāyaṇa hill, which is praised with good reason, distinguishes itself from all Indian Viśvarūpa images in respect to the overall composition — starting below with Ananta-Balarāma etc., up to the ten-headed Viṣṇu — and must therefore be taken as a unique piece of art.[2] A

[1] See A.J. Gail, *On the Symbolism of Three- and Four-Faced Viṣṇu Images: A Reconsideration of Evidence*, in: Artibus Asiae Vol. 44, Figs. 1-4.

[2] M.S. Slusser, *Nepal Mandala — A Cultural Study of the Kathmandu Valley*, Princeton 1982, Vol. 2: Plates, Pl. 371f. — P. Pal, *The Arts of Nepal, Part I: Sculpture*, Leiden/Köln 1974, Fig. 113.

**Fig. 1**: Vāsudeva-Kamalajā from Bhaktapur

**Fig. 2:** Viśvarūpa from Lohanhiti, Pāṭan

later copy of this image, much less refined, can be found in the Lohanhiti, Pāṭan (Fig. 2).

3. The transfer of the idea of a universal, primeval bisexual god, Ardhanārīśvara, from Śaiva to Vaiṣṇava art, appears to be limited to Nepal (Fig. 1).[3] Of great importance are subdivisions of this bisexual god, each with its own name, in the small Svathanārāyaṇa temple in Pāṭan.[4]

4. Nepal, with an almost iron will, preserved its own way of depicting Garuḍa from the 6th century onwards, viz. a kneeling, anthropomorphic servant to Viṣṇu. It was not until the 19th century that Garuḍa was also portrayed as a bird.[5]

5. The prolific diversity of the tantric pantheon can best be studied in the royal bath of Śrīnivāsamalla in Pāṭan. There are, for many of the images of gods represented here, no comparable Indian works of art and (*horribile dictu!*) no textual-iconographic material, so that a precise denomination of the respective figures is occasionally not easily found.[6]

6. The crowned *ekamukhaliṅga*, wearing an artificial crown, not a hair crown (*jaṭāmukuṭa*), appears to be an invention of the Nepalese of the Licchavi era. The obvious explanation is that Śiva's nature as the divine ruler of the Kathmandu valley should be emphasized, rather than his Ādiyogī nature. This image type is therefore of religious-political importance.[7]

7. No other architectural member or motif of decor has experienced a richer development than the upright and the curved bracket with the Śālabhañjikā motif.[8]

The Śālabhañjikā dominates the scene in India from the 2nd cent. A.D., until the 4th cent. A.D., i.e. as long as there are stone fences and gates which enclose brick-built stūpas and temples. As soon as the stone temple is making its appearance in north India, and at the same time, fences and gates are

[3] This fine relief from Bhaktapur was stolen some years ago.

[4] A.J. Gail, *Tempel in Nepal, Vol. I*, Graz 1984, Plates 22-25.

[5] See the Garuḍastambha in the Jagannārāyaṇa temple compound, Śaṅkhamūl: Gail, *Tempel in Nepal, Vol. 2*, Graz 1988, Pl. 50, 1.

[6] Krishna Deva, *Images of Nepal*, Calcutta 1984, pp. 40-57, Figs. p. 117-128. — Gail 1988 (see n. 5), pp. 44-48, Plates 53-55.

[7] Slusser 1982 (see n. 2), Pl. 245. The image was stolen about 4 years ago.

[8] Gail 1984 (see n. 4), p. 21 f., Plates 6 f., Plate 49. A fine specimen from Itum Bahal, Kathmandu, which has since been stolen, is depicted in: J. Schick, *Die Götter verlassen das Land*, Graz 1989, plate. 108.

**Fig. 3:** Buddha-Maitreya from Śaṅkhamūl

**Fig. 4:** Sa-Śakti-Hariharihārivāhana-Lokeśvara from Chakbalonhiti, Pāṭan (upper middle zone)

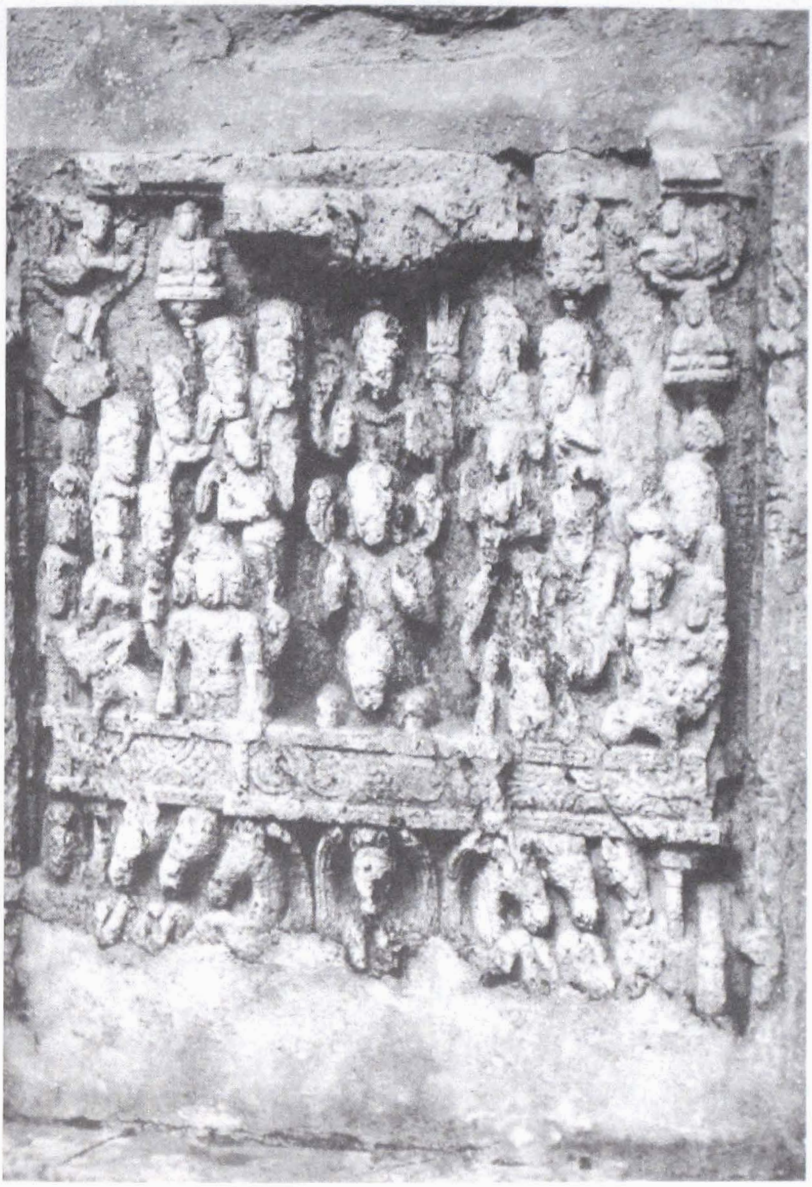


**Fig. 5:** Śiva-Sūrya image from Kontihiti, Pāṭan

**Fig. 6**: Nāga-mithuna from Macchegaon

beginning to disappear, the Śālabhañjikā is also leaving the scene. The development in Nepal heads in the exact opposite direction: pyramid-shaped temples and Buddhist monasteries, with their ornamented brackets and struts, become the homes of the Śālabhañjikās.

With that we are in the centre of the Buddhist tradition. As later (Northern) Buddhism is not represented in India, only a limited comparison with the Nepalese material can be made.

8. Stone sculptures of the historical Buddha make a rather late appearance in Nepal, viz., in the 6th cent. A.D., a period at which his outfit is already canonized.[9]

The treatment of the future Buddha Maitreya is noteworthy: he is differentiated from Śākyamuni only by means of the type of garment. While Śākyamuni wears a smooth robe (Sarnāth tradition), Maitreya wears a pleated *saṅghāṭī* (Gandhāra tradition) (Fig. 3).[10]

9. The Hari-hari-hari-vāhana Lokeśvara aspect of Avalokiteśvara which is described in the Sādhanamālā (p. 77) has so far only been preserved in Nepal.[11] The small relief attached to a wall of the Chakbalonhiti in Pāṭan shows an interesting variation of this inclusivistic type of image: Lokeśvara who is sitting in *padmāsana* above Viṣṇu, is depicted with his Śakti (Prajñā) (Fig. 4).

10. A noteworthy case of Buddhist influence on Hindu sculpture is a Śiva-Sūrya image in Pāṭan. Here, Śiva dominates[12] Sūrya (Fig.5) in a way quite similar to that of Lokeśvara sitting above Viṣṇu in the example mentioned above (9). This relief from Kontihiti, close to the Kumbheśvara temple, is, to my knowledge, iconographically unique.

11. Nepalese art went its own, original ways in the furnishing and placement of the 'Eight Mothers' (*aṣṭa-mātaraḥ*)[13] and the 'Eight Planets' (*aṣṭa-grahāḥ*)[14]

[9] Pal 1972 (see n. 2) pp. 104 ff., Fig. 166 ff.

[10] A. J. Gail, *The Newly Discovered Maitreya from Śaṅkhamūl, Kathmandu Valley*, in: Makaranda — Essays in honour of Dr James C. Harle, Delhi 1990, pp. 91-93, 14 Figs.

[11] Gail 1988 (see n. 5), p. 51, Plate 60.

[12] Śiva's lower body disappears behind Sūrya's upper body. Thanks to an observation by Lain S. Bangel, I correct my earlier view that Śiva is sitting on Sūrya's shoulders.

[13] Gail 1984 (see n. 4) p. 50 f., Plates 32, 40, 44 f.

[14] Gail, Planets and Pseudoplanets in Indian Literature and Art with Special Reference to Nepal, in: *East and West*, Vol. 30, 1980, pp. 133-146.

on temple walls. As is the case with the 'Eight Guardians of the World' (*aṣṭa-dikpālāḥ*),[15] they are considered to be regents of the directions of space.

12. In closing, a word about the representation of the snake gods (*nāga*). As in India, *nāgas* are depicted both as snakes (theriomorphic) and as human beings with snake hoods. The pictorial representation of the snake god holding a snake in his hand, as if it were a flower, is a genuine Nepalese invention (Fig. 6).

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[15] Gail 1984 (see n. 4) p. 23 ff, Plates 9 f.

## COMMENT ON GAIL'S CONTRIBUTION

LAIN SINGH BANGDEL

In his paper, the author draws attention to some peculiarities of Nepalese iconography when it is seen against the background of the Indian tradition. It is not only interesting but also surprising to see the wealth of art treasures to be found in the Valley of Kathmandu, which is relatively small and isolated in the foot hills of the Himālayas. The Valley has not only imbibed the cultural flow from the vast Gangetic plains of India since very early times, but has also developed its own characteristic style. Because of this characteristic style, whether expressed in wooden, metal or stone sculpture, one is able to differentiate between the art of Nepal and that of India.

Because of the geographical isolation, once a certain tradition, style or norm is accepted in Nepal, it continues to survive for many years, sometimes for centuries, without any drastic change. In India, due to vast open lands and diversities, traditions tend to change more rapidly.

In view of this background, we are going to discuss some of the peculiarities that are found in Nepalese sculptures.

1. Regarding the four-faced cult figure of the Cārnārāyaṇa Viṣṇu from Pāṭan dated A.D. 1565, it is located in a temple which remains closed most of the time, except early in the morning. My cursory study reveals that each figure of Viṣṇu faces one of the four directions. Unlike the Nepalese tradition, he holds the mace and the wheel in his right and left hands, respectively. This is Indian tradition: in almost all the Viṣṇu images dating back to the pre-Licchavi period, say the second or third century A.D., he holds the club or mace in his *left* hand and not in his right as in the sculpture under discussion. Likewise, he is represented holding the wheel or disc in his right hand. This is Nepalese tradition. [...]

2. As for the Caṅgunārāyaṇa Viśvarūpa Viṣṇu which can be assigned to the Seventh or Eighth Century A.D., Professor Gail has rightly noted that no such example can be cited from Indian sculpture. Not only the composition but also the iconographical traits of this image are unique. This is an example of an

innovation, of the creative urge of Nepali artists. This image may be regarded as one of the finest examples of Nepalese stone sculpture in Asia.

3. As for the Ardhanārīśvara theme, though it is of limited frequency in Nepal, it turns out to be much older than was commonly supposed. It is of course popular among the bronze makers of Nepal during the late Malla period, say from the fifteenth century onwards. It is interesting to note that a few years ago, while digging the subway at Bhotahiti, a unique sculpture of Ardhanārīśvara was discovered. On stylistic grounds it could be considered the oldest stone sculpture of Ardhanārīśvara in Nepal: it can be assigned to the fourth or fifth century A.D. [...]

4. In Nepal, the anthropomorphic Garuḍa, half man and half bird, *vāhana* of Viṣṇu, is a common figure to be seen in Viṣṇu temples. He is represented either kneeling with folded hands, or standing on the left side of Viṣṇu. This *śrīdhara* type of Viṣṇu flanked by Lakṣmī and Garuḍa is not known in India. The representation of Garuḍa as a bird may be found in much later versions in Nepalese art, as cited by the author.

5. Because of tantric influence, images of both the Hindu and the Buddhist pantheons belonging to the late Malla period are most complicated. No text is available for their proper explanation. A large number of such sculptures is found on the walls of the Royal Bath at Sundarīcok, Pāṭan, and at Hanumān ḍhokā.

6. There are countless images of Śiva depicted in various forms dating back to the second or third century A.D. The faces of these old sculptures are badly eroded or defaced. A cursory look, however, will reveal that up to the fifth century A.D. Śiva was shown wearing a *jaṭāmukuṭa* (hair crown). Only after the fifth to sixth century he was generally shown wearing a crown over his hair.

7. The Śalabhañjikā motif was a favourite theme especially during the Kuṣāṇa period, where it mostly depicted a Yakṣī. This motif disappears in northern India from the early mediaeval period, while in Nepal it has survived until today, especially as ornamental brackets or trouts of buildings or temples.

8. The author has rightly remarked that from the early fifth to sixth century, Śākyamuni Buddha is treated as wearing a smooth robe in the Sārnāth tradition, whereas Maitreya is shown in Mathurā style, wearing a folded robe or *saṃghāṭī*.

9. As mentioned already, from the middle of the Malla period, many peculiarities are seen in Nepalese sculpture which are not common in Indian images.

10. The motif of snakes, *nāgas,* has for centuries been a much favoured theme of Nepalese artists. This motif has been used in various forms, as human beings and in anthropomorphic patterns.

11. A final point about the Sūrya image of the Pāṭan Kumbheśvara Dhārā. In this image, the God is represented sitting on a chariot driven by seven horses. Aruṇa the charioteer sits in front of the Sun God who is shown holding a large lotus flower in each hand. He is surrounded by other divinities, including Brahmā on his right and Viṣṇu on his left, the details of which are badly abraded. Similarly, Śiva is represented standing behind the Sun God. Actually, Śiva is not sitting or riding on Sūrya's shoulder, as mentioned by Professor Gail. The error probably arose because the image is badly eroded and the lotusses which Sūrya holds on each side look like Śiva's knees.

[...] Comparative studies on the art of Nepal like the present one are a very necessary contribution at the present stage. [...]

# A SURVEY OF THE ŚAṄKHAMŪLA GHĀṬS NEAR PĀṬAN

HEIMO RAU

The project concerning the Śaṅkhamūla Ghāṭs was planned and conducted by a Nepal-German team consisting of M.R. Aryal, H. Rau, R.J. Thapa, P.R. Uprety and the survey detachment including H.M. Amatya, H.R. Ranjitkar, M. Shrestha during 1986/1987. The survey of Śaṅkhamūla had already been pending for years because previous surveys of the valley had neglected it. The project therefore filled a gap in the documentation. Beyond this more technical reason, the challenging facts which favoured the investigations were mainly of a historical and socio-religious nature.

At first sight, these *ghāṭs* look like constructions of the 19th and 20th centuries used till today, and indeed earlier buildings are nowhere visible. We know, however, from the Purāṇas and other traditions that the Śaṅkhamūla Ghāṭs occupied a highly esteemed place among the ghāṭs of the whole South Asian subcontinent for centuries or even millennia: Local tradition says a single bath, one sole immersion at this place is as salutary as a thousand baths in the confluence of Gaṅgā and Yamunā at Prayāg. And we also know through the Nepal chronicles that they were constantly used as maśān ghāṭs by the princes and citizens of Pāṭan.

The *mātṛkā*, however, the site's oldest intact monuments, are the focal point of early archeological research. These places of sacrifice under the open sky belong to the timeless undatable foundations of Newar culture in the Kathmandu valley. They, too, are located on the significant spot where the Bāgmatī and Manoharā flow together, on the slope above the river valley and below the settlement of Pāṭan. Rising above one of the old *pīṭhas* today is the three-roofed pagoda of Cāmuṇḍā Mandir, roofing in the old *pīṭha* which remains clearly visible as a sunken hole. There are no inscriptions, no dates, no name of donors. Numerous restorations and associated gifts completely changed the initial construction, whatever it may have been like, in the course of the 19th and 20th centuries.

Particulary illuminating, however, and of an archeological significance one cannot value highly enough, is the second mātṛkā pīṭha, which going under the name of Sīkhbahī abuts on the north on Cāmuṇḍā pīṭha. There the sunken

places of sacrifice are preserved in their original state and are not covered over. Natural stones as cult objects, a sculpture of Umāmaheśvara and one inscription are also preserved, the inscription dating from 573 A.D., the sculpture stylistically belonging to the same time, i.e. the Licchavi period. All these documents hint at the fact that here, at the confluence of the two rivers, a temple adorned with a stone statuary stood which did justice to the religious significance the place must have had since earliest times. The inscription is a votive inscription for mātṛkā cult images to be placed at the confluence.

Once one confronts this dedication with a glance at the map (which reproduces the present-day course of the river and the buildings along the banks of the *ghāṭs*), a most important point has to be noted: In the 6th century of the Christian era votive sculptures meant for the confluence of the rivers were placed on the slope of the hill where today the remains of the Sīkhbahī Pīṭha are located. If one also takes into account the position of the old cremation grounds likewise to be found on the slope of the hill in its continuation northward, i.e. the maśān ghāṭs of the 6th century, then it becomes clearly visible that formerly the joint rivers, flowing further to the west, described an arc which touched the slope of the hill, and that the river-bed was later on shifted to the east, defining this straightening process by the lay-out of the ghāṭs. This is one of the important results of the investigations. After this early date from the Licchavi period, the archeological sources within the grounds of the Śaṅkhamūla Ghāṭs remain silent for more than a thousand years. Historical sources, however, report on events in which the *ghāṭs* play a role.

After this gap, the first archeological evidence is again given by two groups of temples from the first half of the 19th century which have been preserved at the southeastern end of the *ghāṭs*: Ripumardaneśvara Mahādeva and Jayeśvara Mahādeva. These two groups represent the pre-Rāṇā period within the aggregate of the Śaṅkhamūla Ghāṭs. The dates of their epigraphs cover the period between 1821 and 1845 A.D. The donors are all members of the Thāpā family, Kājī Rāṇādhvāja Thāpā prominent among them: he is even portrayed in front of the Jayeśvara Mandir. In view of the Rāṇās' seizure of power in 1846 A.D. by the strategem of eliminating the Thāpā family, it is remarkable that it was precisely members of the latter who donated these temples. From an architectural point of view they are, again within the aggregate of the Śaṅkhamūla Ghāṭ, the last temples to still display a projecting roof with struts of carved wood.

It looks indeed as though the Rāṇās' seizure of power in 1846 A.D. was also reflected in an immense building activity at the Śaṅkhamūla Ghāṭs. Jagat

Shamsher, the sixth brother of the usurper and all-powerful prime minister Jaṅg Bahādur, and his association of artisans did not attempt to forge a link with the local tradition, but cleared everything away and, from the bottom up, created a new religious, social and cultural centre for the citizens of Pāṭan at the edge of their city and for the entire valley beyond, between town and country. That was not only a task for master builders, it equally concerned the landscape and garden planners and the constructors of roads and bridges. It also provoked creators of plastic art to renewed efforts who had felt themselves to be at the end of a worn-out tradition. New commissions were waiting in stone, terracotta, metal and wood. Thus a comprehensive association of artisans could develop itself to its full capacity. The project which encompassed numerous temples and subsidiary buildings was dedicated to both Viṣṇu and Śiva and thereby achieved a special kind of preeminence vis-à-vis the older religious centres of the valley. So we have side by side Jagannārāyaṇa Mandir and Jagadīśvara Mahādeva Mandir. In the middle of the large piece of land on the left bank of the joined rivers, cleared of earlier structures and opened up as a new construction site, stands the Jagannārāyaṇa Mandir. The massive brick *śikhara*, about 25 m high, has a wide command of the river lowlands: This set the first conspicuous accent in the landscape and clearly marks the aims of the builder who had already started the construction campaign in 1847. The period until 1861 A.D. is covered by his inscriptions. The remarkably broad and heavy monumental *śikhara* tower is modelled after the Nārāyaṇa Hiṭi Mandir in Kathmandu which, being the centre of the annual four-temple *pradakṣiṇa* of Icaṅgu-Cāṅgunārāyaṇa-Biśaṅkhu-Śeṣanārāyaṇa, plays an extraordinary role in the sacred landscape of the valley. It is much larger than the Jagadīśvara Mahādeva Mandir in the immediate vicinity, dedicated to Śiva and unpretentious compared with many others in the common-place shape of a cube surmounted by the hemisphere of a cupola.

Instead of renovating traditional structures, Jagat Shamsher and his association of artisans with their large-scale, ambitious planning created a new socio-religious centre of imposing uniformity and dynamics, well able to enter into competition with Paśupatināth. They did not forget to link their new centre with the *darbār* square of Pāṭan and, at the same, to embed it within the landscape by means of gardens and groves of trees. In this way a unified ensemble has been created from the temple buildings and the transformation of the bank of the river accommodating both nature and human handiwork. Among their labors, they straightened out the course of the confluent rivers Bāgmatī and Manoharā by cutting off the arc that curved around to the west and by giving the newly

constructed bank a form in keeping with the course of the river and the total landscape of the valley. Their initiative was carried on by the following generations and continued into the present, till 1961 A.D. The newly constructed bank, 572.41 m long, consists of a chain of 40 round stone bastions, called *bhakāri* in Nepālī and *tuṅga* in Newārī. They were not all built one after the other in a single construction period but rather gradually, during the course of the 19th and 20th centuries up to the present. Jagat Shamsher, of course, began the work, and after him ten other donors followed his example. He himself donated the middle section of the *ghāṭs*, between *bhakāris* 7 and 15. Seven other donors joined in to the right (NW) and three to the left (SE). To the northwest, between *bhakāris* 15 and 18, there follows Rāma Ghāṭ. Between 18 and 23 Dākha Cauk Mahārāṇī Ghāṭ — the donor is one of Mahārāja Jaṅg Bahādur's wives. Between 23 and 26 Sher Bahādur Ghāṭ, dated 1912 A.D. Between 26 and 34 Juddha Ghāṭ, donated by Mahārāja Juddha Shamsher (1932-1945). Between 34 and 36 Mṛtyuñjaya Ghāṭ, dated 1948. Between 37 and 38 Jośi Ghāṭ. Between 38 and 40 Māṇa Shamsher Ghāṭ, the last one of this side. Beyond Jagat Shamsher Ghāṭ to the southeast, between *bhakāris* 6 and 7 is Sijapati Ghāṭ, between 5 and 6 Daṇḍikeśvara Ghāṭ, and between 1 and 5 Bhavalāl Bhārati Ghāṭ, also called Naya Ghāṭ, dated 1967 A.D.

This report describing the Śaṅkhamūla Ghāṭs has come up with a variety of facts, monuments and documents which produce a diversified picture. It coalesces into a unity, however, as the scene of daily customs and rituals which are held sacred within the unbroken tradition of a human community down through the centuries. To the historian's eye, these steps leading down to the river combined with the structures on its sacred banks, which still are so much a thing of the present, reveal a multitude of strata and traditions which supersede or overlay or become entwined with one another.

When setting such a marked accent at the beginning of their reign, it may well have been a new era which the Rāṇās wanted to create, not only in a political sense but encompassing the whole of Nepal's culture. Architectonically it is a bold and sovereign shaping of the landscape — the way the dynamic chain of shoreline structures, composed of like segments, is held together by the temple tower which manifests what is constant within the variation of natural phenomena. No doubt, it was intended by the rulers to create their own Ghāṭs equal or even superior to those at Prayāg, and they continued this trend down the Bāgmatī: they as it were built their own Kāśi.

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# THE NEED TO BUILD A TEMPLE
# OBSERVATIONS ON BUILDING TRADITIONS IN CHANGE IN WESTERN NEPAL

NIELS GUTSCHOW

## INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Ten years ago, the Nepal Research Programme started its ambitious projects under a wide frame-work. Participating scholars agreed that many religious, cultural and social phenomena could only be understood within a sphere of dynamism caused by a gradual yet inevitable change of local traditions called *Little* traditions. Moreover, it was widely accepted that changes were initiated through an adoption of values propagated by a *High* (or Great) tradition with its sources in the south. The first conference of the Nepal Research Programme was therefore held in February 1984 in Heidelberg under the heading '*Patterns of Cultural Change*' (Formen kulturellen Wandels).[1]

The author presented at the conference an account of the Bhīmbhakteśvara[2] temple, built in 1822 in Kathmandu, in front of Bhīmsen Thāpās Bāgh Darbār at the southeastern edge of the historic city. It was argued that the domed temple studded with Anglo-Indian decorational elements in plaster hid a traditional building type, complete with a square sanctum and a *pradakṣiṇāpatha*. Introducing building techniques and new forms from Lucknow, the flourishing capital of Avādh, Bhīmsen Thāpā was probably confirming a legitimation of power, introducing an 'imperial' architecture with fluted pilasters and akanthus leaves. Various traces of Moghul and occidental motives in a rare and ingenious blend set high standards for hundreds of similar Rāṇā- or Śāha-style buildings to be

[1] Bernhard Kölver (ed.): *Formen kulturellen Wandels und andere Beiträge zur Erforschung des Himalaya — Colloquium des Schwerpunktes Nepal / Heidelberg, 1.-4. Februar 1984.* St. Augustin: VHG Wissenschaftsverlag, 1987.

[2] Niels Gutschow: Die Kuppelbauten des 19. Jh. im Kathmandu-Tal. In: *Formen kulturellen Wandels und andere Beiträge zur Erforschung des Himalaya. Colloquium des Schwerpunktes Nepal / Heidelberg, 1.-4.Febr. 1984*, pp. 283-310.

erected in the Kathmandu Valley in the course of the 19th century. Bhīmsen Thāpā's temple was only built a few years after Queen Tripurasundarī chose a Malla type of building for her personal memorial temple, the Tripureśvara. While she did not change the building tradition, she achieved entirely new dimensions: Her temple compound, a pagoda in a large courtyard, remains to this day the largest ever built in Nepal.

Even decades before the construction of the Tripureśvara, the kings of the Śāha dynasty adopted the traditions of the Mallas, whereas their later prime ministers, the Rāṇās, chose the traditions of the south with all its divergent details. But although Bhīmsen Thāpā had already set new standards with his Bhīmbhakteśvara, King Surendra Bīr Bikram Śāha Deva built the Tallo Darbār in Gorkhā in 1832 in accordance with well-known Malla traditions, thus following the earlier examples of Kālikā Darbār in Gorkhā and Nautale Darbār in Nuvākoṭ.[3] The Tallo Darbār in Gorkhā, however, represented the last example of a palatial building in Nepal that was built according to those traditions which had developed in the Kathmandu Valley through the centuries. The building landscape was indeed to change radically and rapidly when Jaṅg Bahādur Rāṇā seized power. He and his successors determined the change: Hundreds of temples, namely those dedicated to Śiva/Mahādeva, were built along the Bāgmatī and Bishṇumatī rivers to reflect the grandeur and ritual importance of Vārāṇasī along the Gaṅgā. Alien building traditions dominated again on a large scale as if the Rāṇās were in a constant need of legitimation by expressing Śaivite orthodoxy and by choosing a building style which clearly denied indigenous traditions.

After extensive architectural surveys in Gorkhā (1980-82), Nuvākoṭ (1982/84), at Svayambhūnāth and Kathesiṃbhu (1985/87), the author turned to remote provinces of the kingdom in order to compare the findings of earlier surveys with the process in which architectural traditions overlap and eventually compete in a less prominent setting. The question was: What kind of traditions enter the high valleys of the Himalayas in an era of ever growing communication? In

[3] Niels Gutschow: Gorkhā, The Architectural Documentation of two Palaces from the 18th and 19th century (with Gernot Assum, Surendra Joshi and Saumundra Devpradhan). In: *Journal of the Nepal Research Centre*, Vol. VII, Franz Steiner Verlag Wiesbaden, 1985, p. 3-22. Niels Gutschow: Courtyard Buildings in Nepal — The Palaces, Temples and Monasteries of the Newars. In: A.L. Dallapiccola (ed.): *Vijayanagara — City and Empire. New Currents of Research*, Franz Steiner Verlag Wiesbaden, 1985, p. 363-379.

October/November 1989, the author toured the districts of Baitaḍī, Dārchulā and Bajhāṅg, which rate among the remotest of the country. There, the traditions of the Kathmandu Valley remain at a vague distance until today. The influences from neighbouring Indian provinces, namely Almora and Rampur, were more dominant.

## Traditions of Non-iconic Deities as Representations of 'Place'

In the Western Himalayas, from Jumlā through Dārchulā, there seems to predominate a twofold representation of deities or spirits. An unhewn stone is usually placed on a stone platform and exposed to unhindered daily worship. An additional representation is placed in a house called *thān* (see Fig. 3, 4 and ground plan). This is a place connected to shaman *(dhāmi)* traditions of West-Nepal. Whereas village shrines have corresponding 'houses', there are countless wayside shrines — like the example of Banaridevī near Kālkoṭ in Dārchulā (see Fig. 5, 6) — without such correspondence. In Dārchulā and Baitaḍī we are able to observe such shrines and houses all along the Chamaliyākholā and its tributaries, with a clear movement from the villages high up towards the Mahākālī river. In the neighbouring district of Bajhāṅg similar patterns of distribution of building types can be observed along the Bahuli Gad and Setikholā. The high mountains in between, the Surmasarowa Lekh, house the sacred place to which most of the shrines in the valley refer. A small pond (nep. *pokharī*) at a height of about 5000 metres attracts pilgrims from Bajhāṅg and Ḍotī in the east as well as Dārchulā and Baitaḍī in the west on the occasion of *Śrāvaṇ pūrṇimā (Janāi-pūrṇimā)*. The deity representing the sacred source of water is installed in a non-iconic form at village shrines. It is there that the deity has its seat *(pīṭha)*. In much the same way Silumahādyaḥ (or Mahādeva) represents the Nīlakaṇṭha Mahādeva of Gosaīkuṇḍa within the settlements of the Kathmandu Valley. And it is at the same occasion that Newars as well as the other communities undertake a pilgrimage to the sacred *kuṇḍa*, where Śiva took refuge after having swallowed poison on the request of Brahmā.

Whereas the Surmasarowa is visited only on the occasion of the annual pilgrimage, the village of Chiti, some 2500 m down the mountain, houses numerous shrines, in fact the most extensive variety to be seen in the whole territory.

Prominent are three different shrines, dedicated to Surmādevī[4] and Bhūmirāj (see Fig. 7, 8), the 'master of the earth', who is likewise represented in all the other 16 villages of the Chitikholā valley, all of them at a height of 1900 to 2200 metres and exclusively of a Bohora Chetri population. Bhūmirāj is represented by a large, white, smooth stone, placed on a three-tiered platform. The uppermost step of the platform has a niche for the daily offerings, mostly flowers or simply grass. Whereas the shrines of Bhūmirāj and Surmādevī have complementary 'houses', the ones dedicated to Gorakhnāth and Siddhanāth do not. In contrast to the other shrines, the shrine of Gorakhnāth is peculiar because of manifold offerings of tridents (*triśūla-*). Chiti got along with these shrines, which reflected building traditions common to the neighbouring valleys of the Himalayas, until 1978, when the villagers decided to add a pretentious, temple-like structure (Fig. 9, 10), which was not meant to house Surmādevī permanently but represents the deity during the two weeks of the *jātrā* and *melā* preceding Janāipūrṇimā. Colourful prints of Rāmacandra are hung into the otherwise empty four niches and are worshipped by those circumambulating pilgrims who do not undertake the hardship of the pilgrimage up to the sacred waters of the Surmasarowa. The new structure obviously tries to combine various building forms which are borrowed from the cultural heritage of the south. The niches are set into a rough cube measuring 234 by 218 cm under a slightly projecting pyramidal roof. The rough finial on top of the structure does not allow to identify the usual components of a *gajura*. The building, placed on a square platform, represents somehow the first step in the process of transformation of a non-iconic open shrine into a building which we might already call a temple, although a sanctum, an enclosed space, has not yet developed. To those Bohora craftsmen in Chiti who built the structure, however, it did not seem convincing enough. They placed the square platform (a form generally associated with 'earth') on another platform in the shape of a star with eight points, and this is again placed on a double-stepped circular plinth (a form generally associated with 'heaven'). Whereas a square or nearly square platform is generally used for temples of any provenance, the circle is rare (as yet there seems to be no other example of it in Nepal) and the eight-pointed star is otherwise unknown. The local builders probably understood the

[4] Adalbert Gail drew my attention to a possible etymological explanation of the name Surma. Sur- or Sur-mā could be identical with Sirimā, which occurs in an inscription at Bharhut. Siri is Middle Indian for Sanskrit Śrī, Surma being thus identical with the Sanskrit term Śrīmātā.

star as a crossing of two identical squares, with a faint reminiscence of the *śrīyantra* with its 6 points which evolve from two crossed triangles. A leading intention might have been to express the orientation of the building towards the eight directions of the cosmos. This idea is basically achieved by the square platform, but it finds a secondary and probably more obvious representation in an eight-pointed star.

The second temple-like building (Fig. 11, 12, 13) in Chiti was built in June 1989 and was consecrated for the occasion of the *bisejātrā*, the festival which starts on the new moon day *(aũsī)* and ends on Janāipūrṇimā. The small building enshrines the hearth *(culo)* of Siddhanāth, the legendary *yogin* who is said to have lived in this valley ages ago. A large, nearly spherical stone, placed on three upright rocks, represents the cooking bowl placed on the hearth which the *yogin* used to cook his food in. Until 1989 the stone was placed on a stepped plinth, very much like the stone of Bhūmirāj today. Now it is concealed in a niche, closed by a movable thick wooden plank, inscribed Siddhanāth. The niche is carved out of a cube of only 160 centimetres lateral length. This built form does not convey anything exciting or irritating. The exceptional expression of the structure, in this case, does not reveal itself in the formation of the platform — as was the case with the temple of Surmādevī, built a decade ago — but in the formation of the finial above the cube. A square step is placed on top of the cube to serve as an indented platform for an octagon which in turn serves as the platform or drum of the following massive dome, with its belly slightly projecting. As the dome is built of successive layers of rocks, the projection is of a fragile nature and will collapse after only a few years.

The basic message of the two new buildings at Chiti is very similar: Both add a circular shape and one associated with the eight directions to the basic form of the cube with niches. The new 'temples' include the three prominent designs of building, they indeed capture the widely accepted patterns of high traditions in general without reference to any example or ideal in particular. A unique, vernacular style is the result. It seems only a question of time before the introduction of a temple in its true sense, a building with a sanctum enclosing the iconic object of worship.

## Domed Temples — A Building Type Representing Southern Traditions

Crossing the Mahābhārat Lekh and moving up the main routes which follow the valleys of the large rivers, one observes an abundance of domed temples.

Although these buildings have been constructed in a simple manner, with massive domes or domes on false vaults, these temples tend to rival their larger and more refined models in the southern plains, where, beginning with the 16th century, these examples were introduced under all-pervading Muslim influence, replacing the ancient tapering tower above the womb chamber of the Hindu temple.

Proceeding along the Chamaliyākholā through the Baitaḍī district into Dārchulā, many of these domed temples can be seen, the most prominent being the Gokuleśvara (Fig. 14, 15) in Gokule, built in 1943 in a *pañcāyatana* pattern, i.e. a dome on a false vault over the central sanctum, raised on a small drum and a stepped base above the ground floor and four miniature temples with massive domes in the four corners. The small sanctum, which is only accessible from the northwestern main front, houses a *liṅga* and iconic representations of Śiva, Pārvatī, Umāmaheśvara, and Indra. A *pradakṣiṇāpatha* surrounds the sanctum, accessible from the four directions. The temple is part of an extensive ensemble with a separate small temple dedicated to Bhairavnāth and a non-iconic Betāleśvara (also called Maśāndevatā) shrine accepting blood sacrifices. Whereas the *pūjāri* of the Gokuleśvara is a Giri Brahman, that of Bhairavnāth is a Kānphaṭa Yogī.

As the Gokuleśvara is situated on the Baitaḍī side of the river, a duplicate of the temple was subsequently built on the other side of the river, which is part of the Dārchulā district. The duplicate surpasses the original in size by three centimetres, and the enclosed *liṅga* is not directed to the northeast, but to the southeast.

Not only is the Gokuleśvara copied in much the size, but it is also represented in a miniature version, placed in a niche of the compound wall which follows the main route along the river. Modelled in clay, this miniature version allows people who pass by in a hurry to pay homage to Śiva/Mahādeva. Such secondary representations seem to be quite frequent. A few miles down the river, a non-iconic representation of Latamaśanīdevī in Camatari is placed in a tiny temple-like structure which represents only a faint reflection of a multitiered building. A small weathered stone is worshipped although five minutes up the hill the deity reveals herself in a deep hole in the rocks nobody is supposed to look into.

The two Gokuleśvaras on either side of the river represent the most accurate temples of the entire valley, with the sides of the square ground plan differing only from 525 to 534 centimetres. A simpler version of this building type is found only half an hour down the river in Panjun, built in 1971 by one Janak Rāj Jośī

(Fig. 16).

The temple is — like its model in Gokule — directed towards the northwest. The sanctum, however, does not house a *liṅga*, but figural representations of Śiva (placed in the centre of a small platform) with Pārvatī and Gaṇeśa on either side. The sides of the ground floor differ considerably in length: From 420 and 425 cm in east-west direction to 448 and 453 cm in north-south direction. Nevertheless the whole structure is designed, like the prototype in Gokule, after the *pañcāyatana* model and thus claims the attributes assigned to the square. The "dome" of the building rises 175 centimetres on a step-like roof-platform and above a false vault. Likewise, the small vaults above the circumambulatory path are false, being achieved by a succession of slightly projecting stone slabs.

Following up the Chamaliyākholā, one encounters various temple-like buildings with massive domes or with false vaults, in many cases without any traces of plaster and without a finial on top of the dome.

Higher up the valley, the enshrined deity is not Śiva/Mahādeva, but Latamaśānī (like in Joshi Bagar), Bāīsdhārādevī (in Makarikghar) or Siddhanāth (near Kālkoṭ). The unpretentious temple of Bāīsdhārādevī was built in 1979, a Brahman *pūjāri* performs a *pūjā* there on the occasion of Māgh Saṃkrānti, when the people of the neighbouring villages and even pilgrims from Baitaḍī and Pāṭan come here to worship the 'goddess of the twenty-two springs' nearby and to attend a *melā*.

Three hours up the hill from Makarighar (a tiny post with only three shops) stands another building of this kind, but of quite a pretentious design and as part of an ensemble. A wall with a gate along the ridge of the slope marks an edge between the lower world of the river valley with the road following the river bed and the villages of the Bohora Chetri situated at a height of between 1900 and 2500 metres. The wall identifies the edge of the territory of those 25 villages which totally depend on livestock (and the pastures high up), hemp (which is grown only above 1700m) and potatoes. In the higher villages not even maize grows and the houses are buried under snow from December to February.

The temple dedicated to Siddhanāth (see Fig. 17) behind the afore-mentioned wall was built in 1969. The design differs considerably from the previous ones. The base storey is directed towards the southeast, placed on a stepped platform and divided into two chambers. The devotee may enter into the frontal chamber and place his offerings into a gap in the dividing wall, behind which a stone is said to represent Siddhanāth. Above the base storey rises a massive 'second storey', slightly indented above a projecting layer of slabs and divided into two

equal parts. The lower part repeats the directions of the base, the upper part is rotated by 45 degrees. Above this second storey rises a 'third storey' of half the preceding dimensions, but along the same design: The lower half, conforming with the directions of the base and the upper half, is again rotated. In the centre of this stepped structure rises an egg-shaped massive dome with a finial.

## Temples with Multi-tiered Roofs ('Pagodas') — Influence from Central Nepal

In the preceding chapters we have followed various influences from the west and south which have caused a considerable building activity and which testify to a change of values within the last two generations. We have pointed out that this influence has extended high up into the remotest valleys.

One further influence may be identified as 'Nepali', as it propagates a kind of 'national style', a building form which centuries ago developed in the valley of Kathmandu. We mean the multi-tiered temple type, which is generally known under the term 'pagoda'.

For a generation, such pagoda-style temples have been introduced all over the country to enshrine the protective deities of the military garrisons. Thus such temples were recently also built in Dadeldhurā, Baitadī Bazar and Dipāyal.

Higher up the valleys this building type does not appear in a local context. Beyond Dipāyal, however, pagoda-type temples can be found as part of a village architecture along the tributaries of the Setikholā. The designs are usually of squat proportions or rather slim in cases of small buildings. The temple at Kakanibas (see Fig. 18), some three hours up the hills from Dipāyal, represents a two-tiered example dedicated to Bhairava. A unique design is displayed in the small temple near Rigāon (see Fig. 19), dedicated to Śiva/Mahādeva in Bajhāṅg district. Above the base-storey rises an indented storey placed on the ceiling joists above the sanctum. A third storey is rotated by 45 degrees. The small roofs have been made of rough stone slabs.

## Conclusions

A shrine tradition with non-iconic deities placed on uncovered platforms pervades the high valleys of the Himalayas in different settings and extends to Baitadī and Dārchulā. As in Jumlā, these shrines are complemented by 'houses'

*(thān)* connected to shaman *(dhāmi)* tradition in the eastern districts of Nepal.[5]

For a generation, however, this building tradition has been changing rapidly. New designs like domed temples and pagodas have been introduced to enclose the local deity or even a *liṅga*. In an all-pervading process, the essentially non-iconic shrine is converted into a building with a well defined interior, which shelters the representation of the deity or even hides it (as the example of Siddhanāth in Kālkoṭ shows). The divine, therefore, becomes less accessible. It is no longer part of the spatial continuum of the landscape, but set aside into a defined space. The constructed shell around and above the enshrined deity represents a new landmark which tends to absorb values of form which are taken over from high traditions in the south. The process is accelerating: Only in the last two decades have 'temples' of the shape discussed here been constructed in the remote valleys of western Nepal.

[5] Beside Campbell (1978) and Gaboriau (1976), Günter Unbescheid worked in Jumlā in 1983 under the Nepal Research Programme and has presented a preliminary account: Günter Unbescheid: A God's Journey. The Paṛheli of the God Lāmā from Lekhpur (Sījā). In: *Kailash*, Vol. XIII, No. 1-2, Kathmandu 1987, p. 49-99.

**Fig. 1**: Location of temples and shrines under discussion between Setikholā and Mahākālīkholā in Baitaḍī (Devmandu, Panjun, Gokule), Dārchulā (Kālkoṭ, Chiti), Bajhāṅg (Jajallo, Rigāon) and Ḍotī (Kakanibas).

The tradition of houses *(thān)* in which the deities are embodied directly in the person of a shaman *(dhāmi)* is labelled as the Transhimalayan tradition, extending down to Baitaḍī, Bajhāṅg and Bājurā. — Building traditions from neighbouring Garhwal into Baitaḍī and Ḍotī, whereas from the south forms enter which are generally associated with the high traditions of the Gangetic plains. They extend along the main routes into the remotest valleys, overlapping local shrine traditions. — From central Nepal building forms like the pagoda enter into the hill regions but do not reach the high valleys beyond.

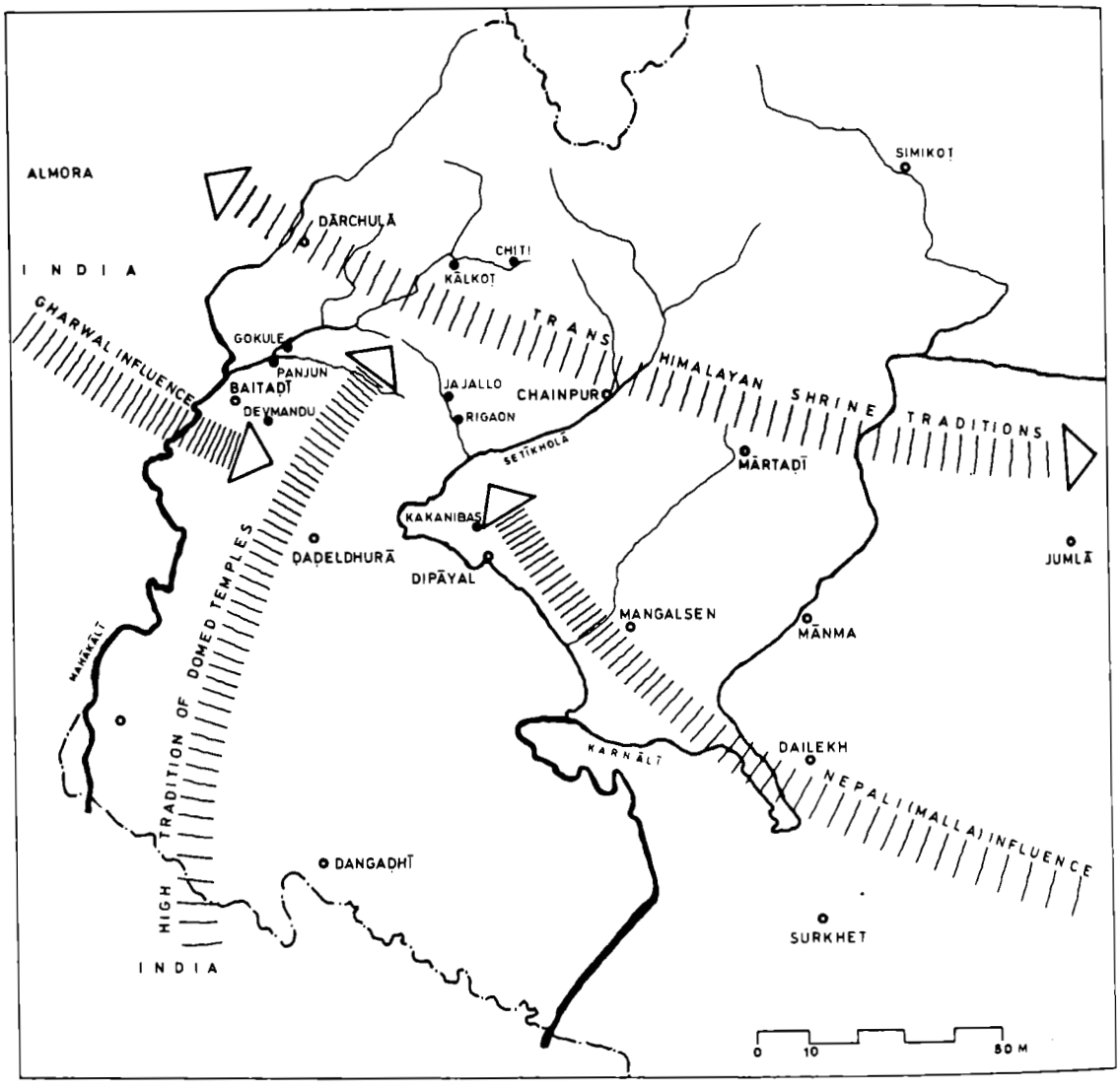


Fig. 2: Territory of the Bohora Chetri, with about 25 villages (of not more than 5 to 25 houses each) west of Surmasarowa along the Chamaliyākholā and its tributaries (Dārchulā district) and another 25 villages east of Surmasarowa along the tributaries of the Setikholā (Bajhāṅg district). All villages are located at a height of 1900 to 2100 metres, with the exception of Chiti, being located just below 3000 metres. Both these groups undertake the yearly pilgrimage to the sacred pond Surmasarowa on the occasion of Janāipūrṇimā.

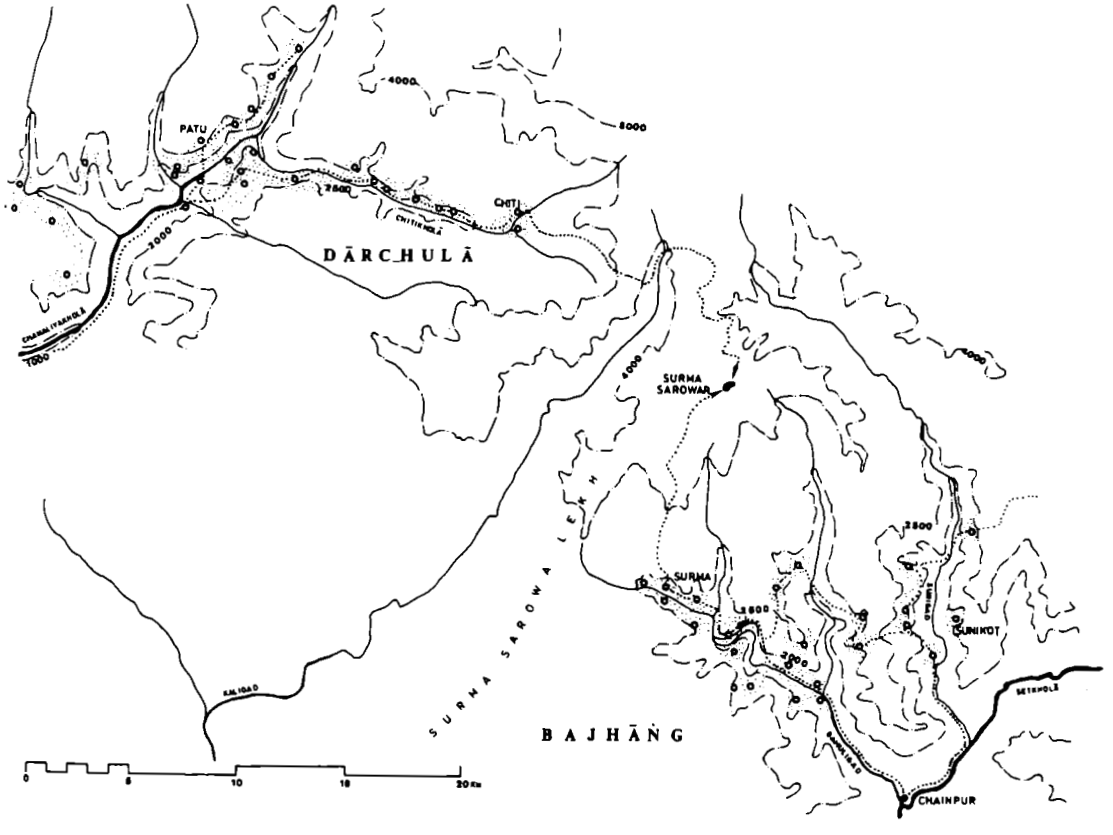


**Fig. 3**: Shrine (thān) at Jajallo in Bajhāṅg, ground plan.

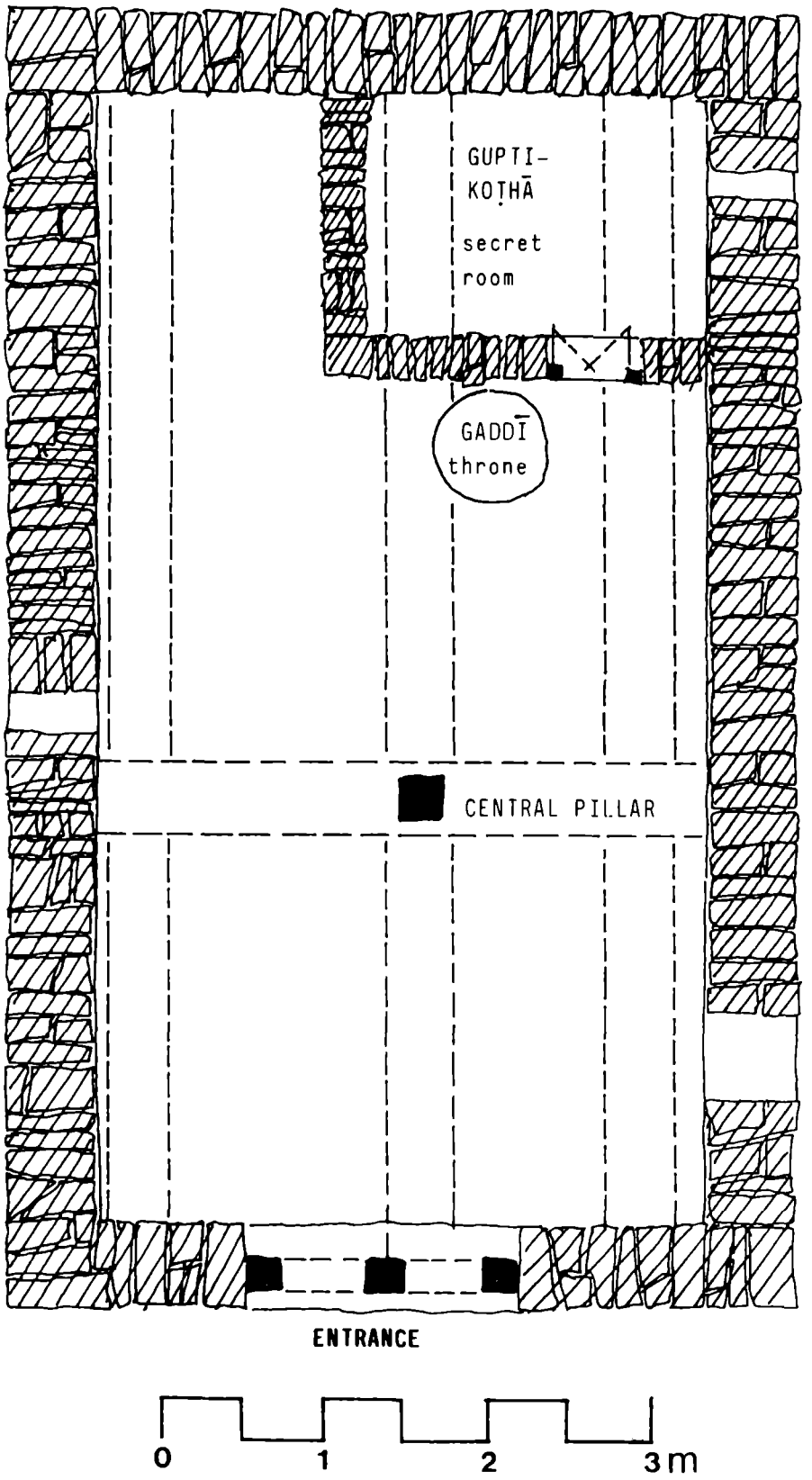


**Fig. 4**: Shrine (thān) at Jajallo in Bajhāṅg, view from the south.

**Fig. 5, 6**: Shrine of Banaridevī near Kālkoṭ in Dārchulā. A couple of sharp-edged stones represent the goddess. Offerings of grass and flowers are placed in a triangular niche below.

Fig. 7, 8: Shrine of Bhūmirāj at Chiti, ground plan, elevation and view from south.

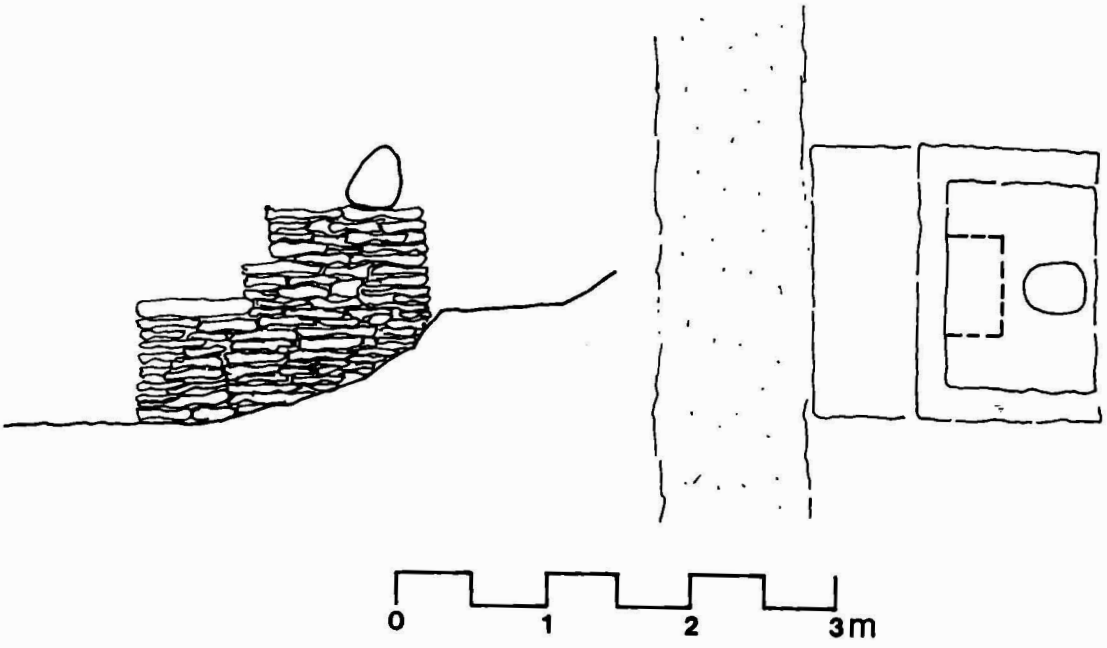



**Fig. 9, 10**: Shrine of Surmādevī at Chiti, ground plan and view from south.

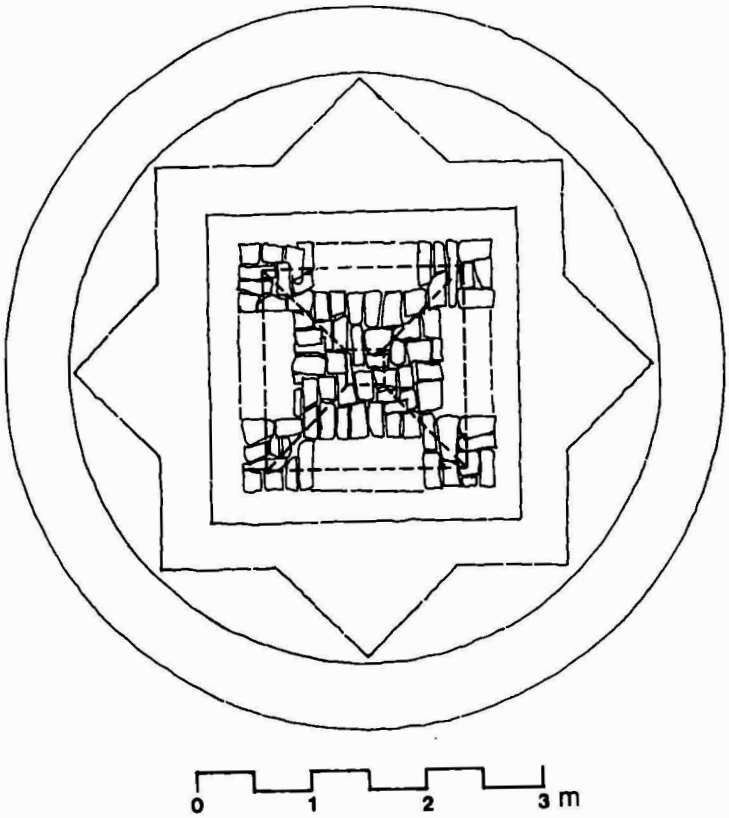
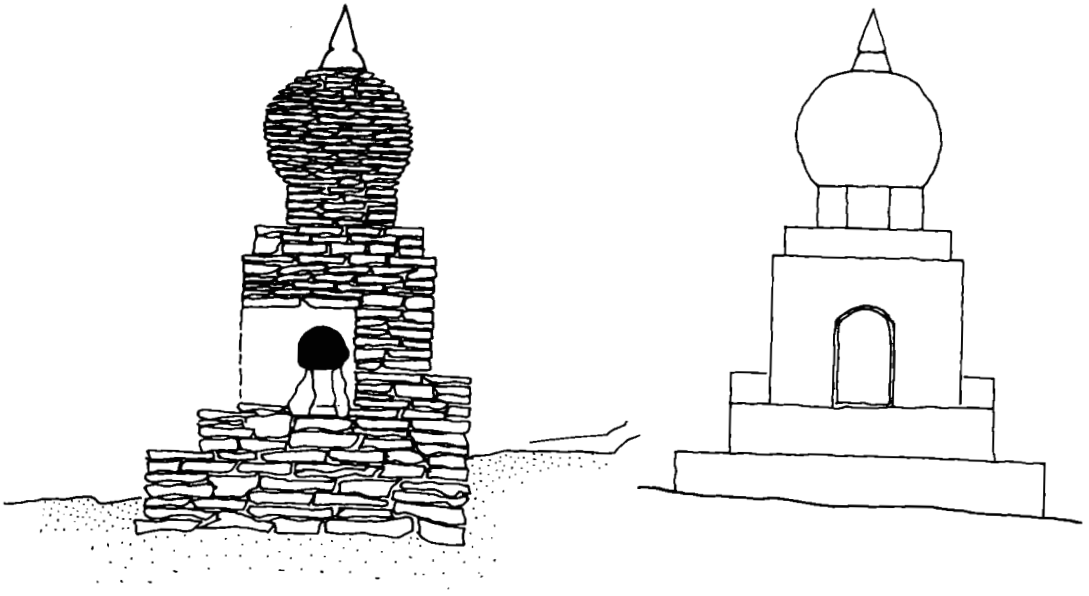
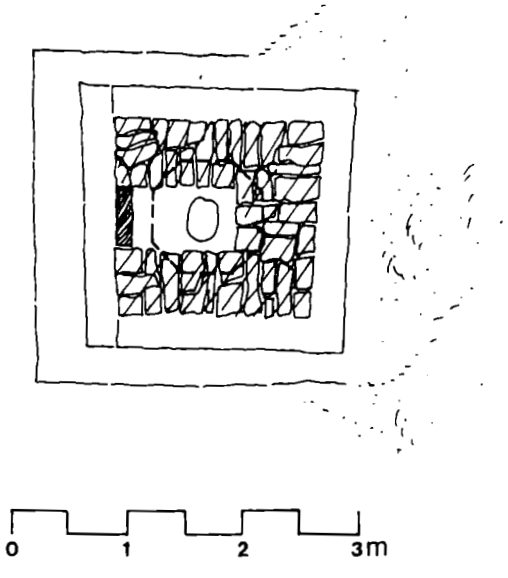


**Fig. 11, 12, 13**: Shrine of Siddhanāth at Chiti. Built in June/July 1989 (BS 2046), the small building houses the legendary hearth *(culo)* of the saint, with a stone, symbolizing his cooking bowl, on top.





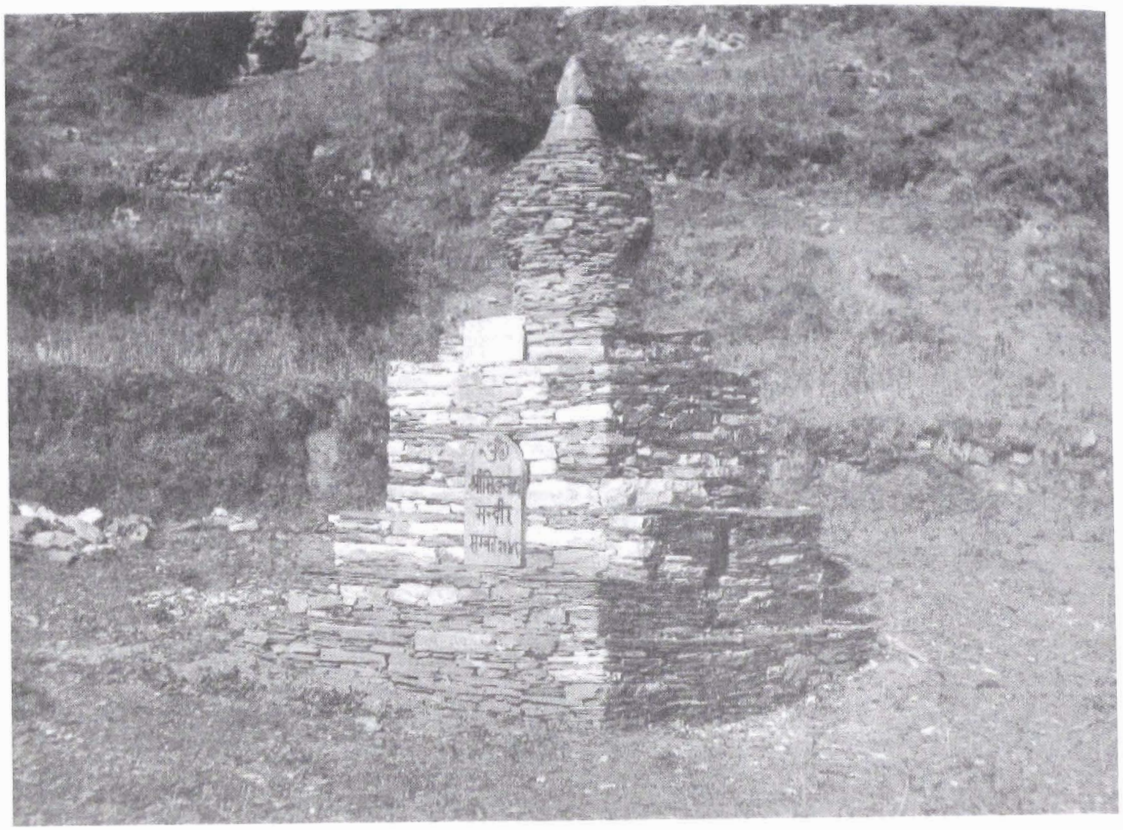


**Fig. 12:** Shrine of Siddhanāth at Chiti.

**Fig. 13:** Shrine of Siddhanāth at Chiti.

**Fig. 14**: Gokuleśvara Mandir at Gokule, ground plan.

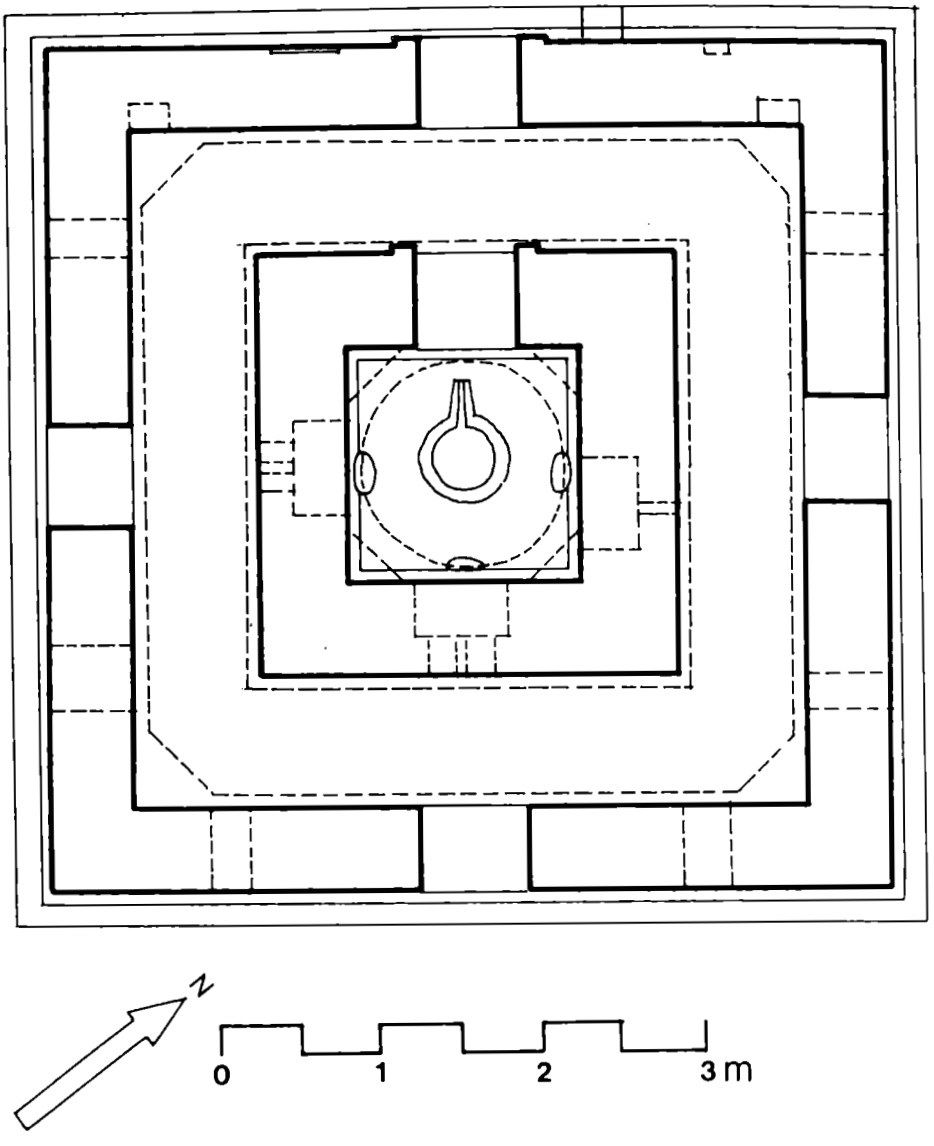


Fig. 15: Gokuleśvara Mandir at Gokule, view from south.

**Fig. 16**: Mahādeva Mandir at Panjun, ground plan and section.

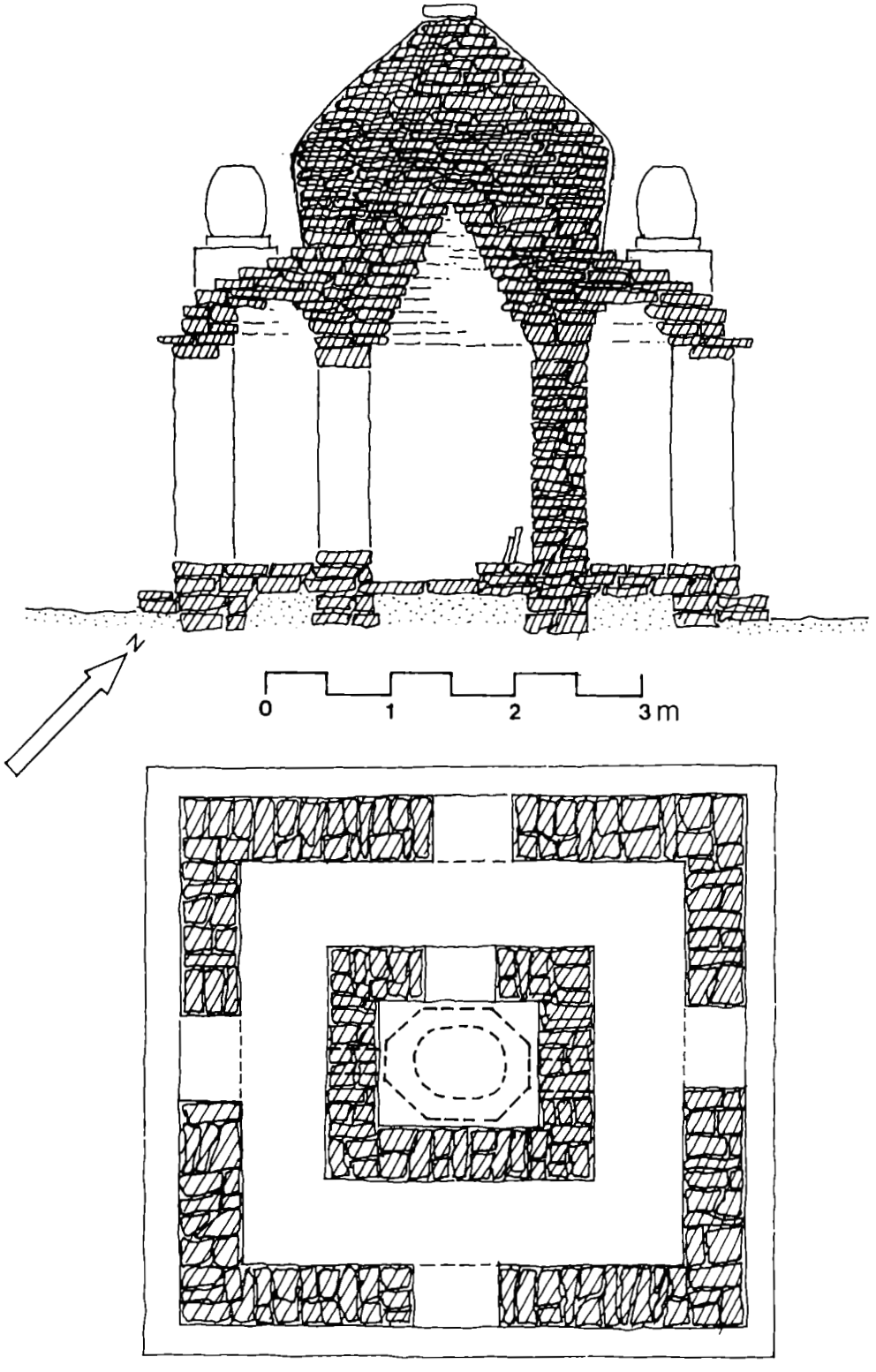
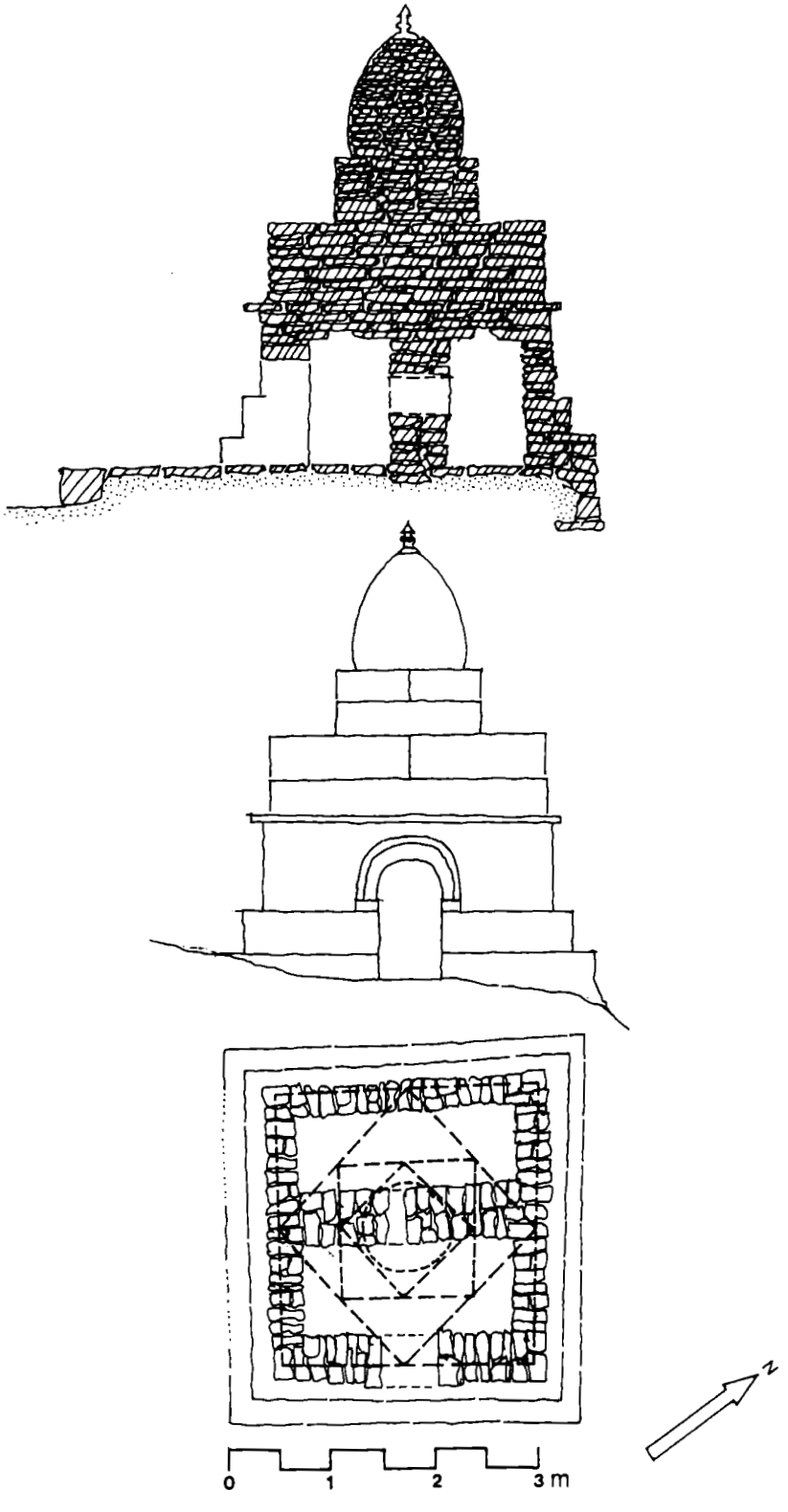


Fig. 17: Siddhanāth Mandir near Kālkoṭ, ground plan, elevation west and section.



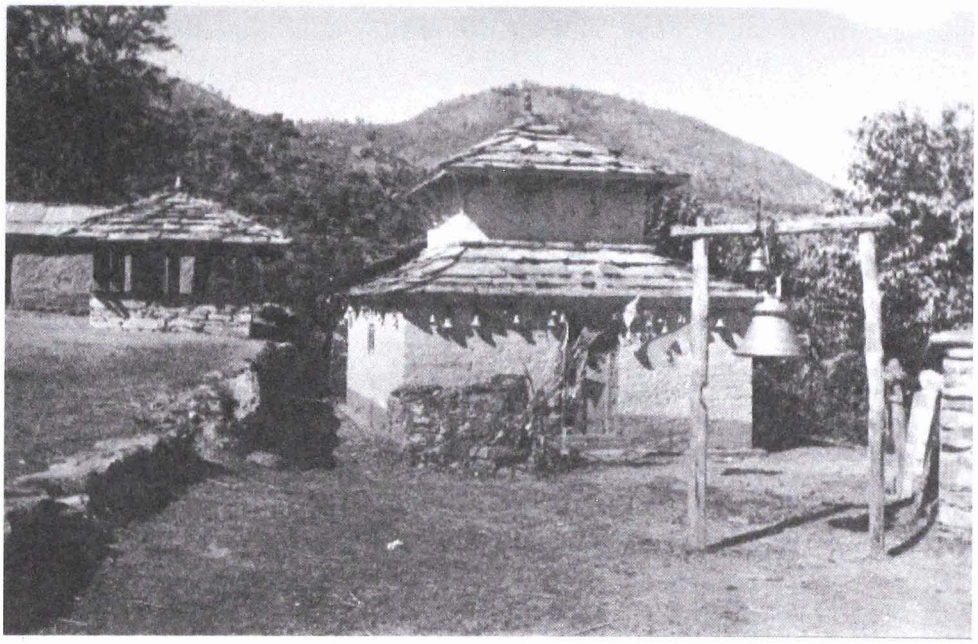


**Fig. 18**: Bhairava Mandir at Kakanibas in Ḍotī.

**Fig. 19**: Mahādeva Mandir at Rigāon in Bajhāṅg.

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## COMMENT ON GUTSCHOW'S CONTRIBUTION

SHAPHALYA AMATYA

Niels Gutschow and I have been friends for more than a decade. If you find me more polite and less critical towards him, it is because we have been too close to each other in almost every matter of professional interest. However, in the present context I feel the very title of his essay, 'The Need to Build a Temple', sounds rather out of context. Instead, I would like to suggest to him to change it to 'The Need to Conserve a Temple'.

I stole some time to read the paper, and found it very interesting. It has given us first-hand information on the aesthetic or aestheto-physiological qualities of the architectural heritage of the remote regions of western Nepal, particularly the districts of Baitaḍī and Dārchulā. It is more than two decades now since I have been to those districts. Then, I was leading a group of explorers from the Department of Archaeology for collecting and surveying the historical documents and manuscripts to be preserved in the newly established National Archives of Nepal. But being a student of Nepalese art, I could not distract my eyes from the beautiful stone temples and structures which came along my way. I feel somewhat dismayed not to find any mention of the beautiful and rich architectural heritage of these regions in his paper. It is, nevertheless, very appreciable on his part to give us details of some neglected but important temples, e.g., a wayside shrine of Banaridevī near Kānteśvarī, Dārchulā; the shrine of Bhūmirāj at Chiti; the Siddhanāth shrine at Chiti in Dārchulā, etc. But he has obviously overlooked the most important temple of Mallikārjun. This is probably the most revered temple in the whole district of Dārchulā.

The local term of Dārchulā for a temple is *Manu*. These *manus* look like stone *caityas*, and there are hundreds of them in the district. I cannot understand how Mr. Gutschow, though he reached Dārchulā, missed the most important and well-known architectural ruins of Uku. Uku is a very beautiful village which lies between Dārchulā and Baitaḍī, on the banks of the Mahākālī river. On the way to Uku from Dārchulā proper, we first arrive at Saipal Manu. The Śiva temple of Saipal Manu is also very important, and there are about four Śiva temples built

on the graveyard of the yogis of the Nātha community.

Uku, Bhairasthān, Tapovan, Gokuleśvar, Jolgibi, and Khirkoṭ are the important temple sites of this district. Among them, the architectural remains of Uku, popularly known as Uku Mahal, are very important and known all over the western districts of Nepal and the corresponding parts of India. It is a ruin of a large Hindu temple site, probably Vaiṣṇava.

The Tripurasundarī Temple of Baitaḍī district is known all over Nepal. The local people call it 'Rāṇā Sainī Bhāgvatī'. The present temple was built during the eighteenth century, but some artefacts found there could be dated back to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It is the only temple I have seen so far in these two districts which has carved wooden struts. At a place called Deval Hat, there are five stone Śiva temples. All are built in *śikhara* style. These five temples are the largest in shape and size. Most probably, these temples, which have an average height of 30 to 40 feet, were built during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

The ruins of Kulley Koṭ palace are also very significant for students of archaeology and architecture. This fortified palace was used by the kings of the Chand dynasty from the thirteenth to the eighteenth centuries. Other important shrines and temples of Baitaḍī are the temples of Durgā at Kulley Koṭ, the temples of Jagannāth, Śaileśvar Kedār, Dhura Kedār, Rowola Kedār, Pātāl Bhuvaneśvarī, etc.

In conclusion I would like to say that more exploration and research should be done in these two districts. As Mr. Gutschow has taken the initiative and shown interest in these areas, I hope some more scholars will join him to continue this task.

Although I have been asked to comment upon his paper, I am rather making my own observations instead. For many remote areas of Nepal, the Department of Archaeology still needs complete, reliable, and detailed inventories of their testimonials to the Nepalese past, and I was using this opportunity to draw the scholars' attention to these much-neglected areas. In doing so, I hope I am not wasting your valuable time.

# INVOCATIONS OF NĀSAḤDYAḤ

GERT M. WEGNER

Among the Newar the cult of the music god *Nāsaḥdyaḥ*[1] is closely connected with music practice and apprenticeship. The centre of worship is a hole or several holes in the front wall of a *nāsaḥ* shrine through which divine energy flows, spiritually perceivable by *Nāsaḥdyaḥ's* devotees[2]. In all the adjacent walls and buildings in front of and behind the shrine these holes (*nāsaḥ pvaḥ*) continue like a flight path which must not be blocked, either by buildings or by humans. While performing a *nāsaḥ pūjā*, the devotee steps a little aside to avoid interference with the subtle flow. This practice and the concept of a linear progression of divine energy prompts Kölver (1989) to suspect a pre-Hindu origin of the cult.

A map drawn by Niels Gutschow (Fig. 2) shows that the holes of Bhaktapur's twenty-six *Nāsaḥdyaḥs* do not always connect in exactly straight lines but in a slightly angular manner. It is noteworthy that only in Bhaktapur does *Nāsaḥdyaḥ* have a destructive counterpart called *Haimādyaḥ* who is responsible for mistakes in music. Similarly, his holes (*haimā pvaḥ*) connect in a linear way, and these *haimā* lines tend to cross the related *nāsaḥ* lines at ninety degree angles.

Attached to many *nāsaḥ* shrines are two dogs or jackals, manifestations of chaotic tendencies. These, together with the necessary blood sacrifices, suggest a close relationship with *Bhairava*. In the central front hole of the *Bhairavnāth* temple at *Taumāḍhi* Square (built in 1717 by Bhūpatīndra Malla) both the gods are identified.

During the worship that marks the conclusion of a music apprenticeship (*pirāne pūjā*) the ritual specialist (*Ācaju*) blocks the *nāsaḥ* hole at the shrine with a sticky dough prepared of yoghurt and beaten rice. This is done to make sure that *Nāsaḥdyaḥ* remains present during the ritual, and does not flow away through his airy passages. With vermilion powder and three tiny silver eyes the

[1] *nāsaḥ* = 1. charm, delight, inspiration; 2. god of music, dance and drama: Newar Music Dictionary

[2] For standard shapes, see Fig. 1.

Fig. 1: Common shapes of *nāsaḥ* holes

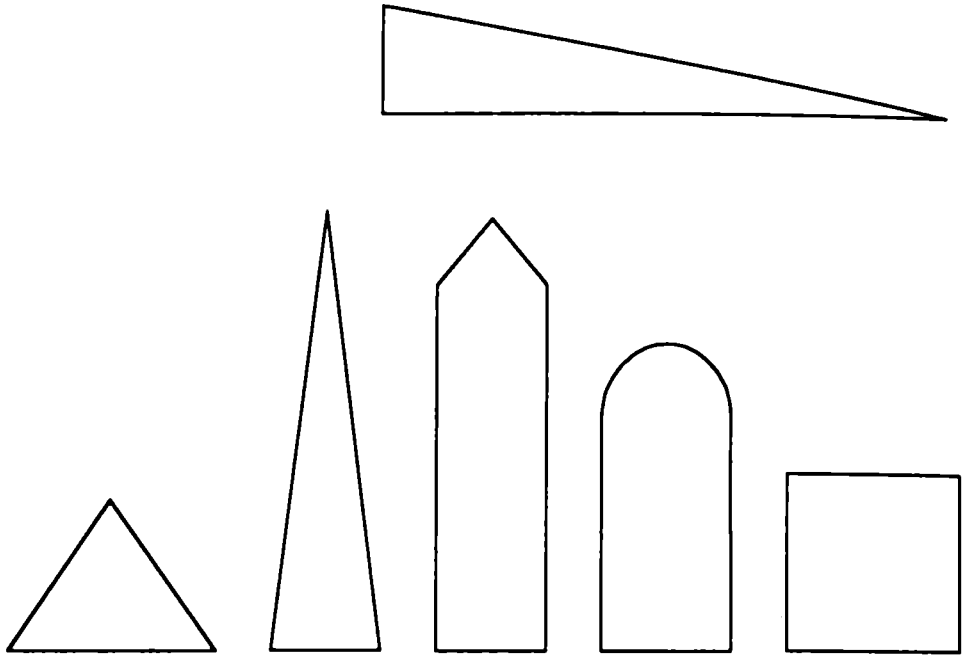
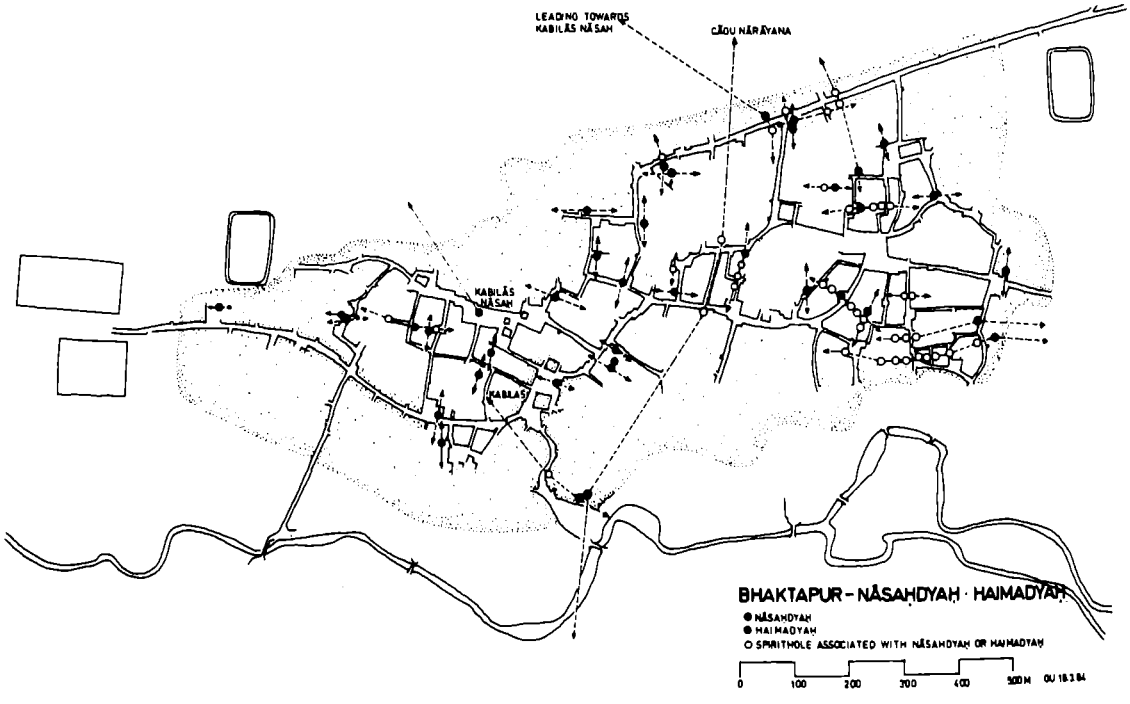


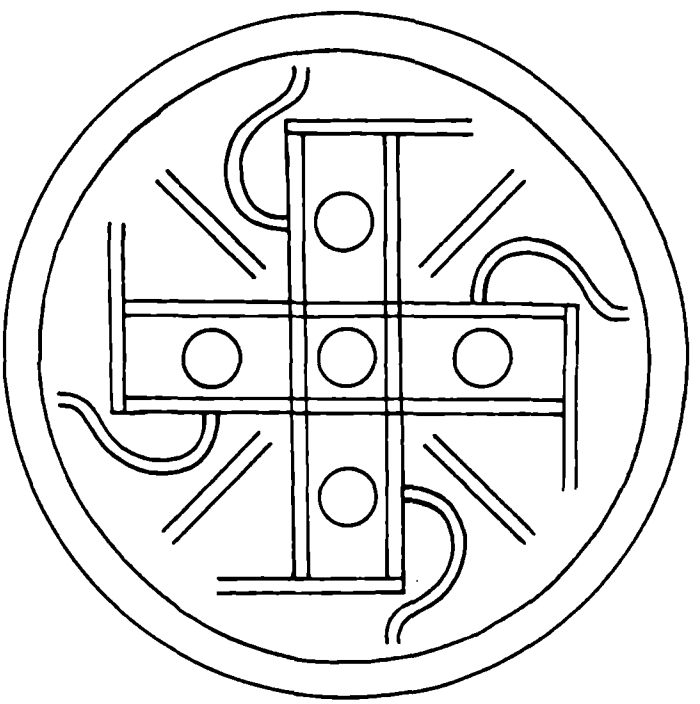
Fig. 2: The *nāsaḥ* and *haimā* holes of Bhaktapur



*Ācaju* paints Nāsaḥdyaḥ's face on the dough. The *Ācaju* performing my *dhimay* drumming *pirāne pūjā* in 1984 was not sure about the identity of that face. He asked his father who said it was *Bhairava's* face. However, when the *pūjā* with all the required blood sacrifices is finished, the *Ācaju* removes the dough from the *nāsaḥ* hole and distributes fragments to everybody present as *prasād.* The musicians eat these fragments, and by doing so they absorb the blessings of the music god.[3]

During the *pirāne pūjā* the *Ācaju* sprinkles rice flour to draw a number of magic diagrams representing gods and specific offerings. The chief gods are *Nāsaḥdyaḥ, Gaṇeś, Kumār,* and *Betāl.* The symbolic offerings include five sacrificial animals called *'pañcabali'* (buffalo, goat, ram, duck, and cock) for the *Navadurgā,* three sacrificial animals calles *'tribali'* (buffalo, goat, and ram) for malignant spirits (*bhūtpret*), and alcohol. The dominant diagram shows an elaborate *svastika* (New.: *svasti)* representing *Nāsaḥdyaḥ* as *graha*[4] (see Fig. 3).

Fig. 3: Magic diagram representing *Nāsaḥdyaḥ* as *graha* (drawing by Madhu Chitrakar)



[3] For further beliefs and rituals revealing *Nāsaḥdyaḥ*'s ambivalent powers see Wegner 1986: 12-17.

[4] 'any state which proceeds from magical influences and takes possession of the whole' : Monier-Williams 1899

Nowadays public belief tends to identify *Nāsaḥdyaḥ* with *Nṛtyanātha*. A small ritual canopy (*ilām*) which is put up during the New Year festival (*bisket jātrā*) in front of the *Thathu Nāsaḥ* shrine at *Yātāchē*, Bhaktapur, shows *Nṛtyanātha*, half male and half female, with the two mounts associated with *Śiva* and *Pārvaṭī*, the bull and the white lion. They are flanked by two divine drummers, *Nandi* and *Bhrindi*[5], playing two Newar drums, the *dhā* and the three-headed *pañcatāla* (also called *kvatāḥ* or *pastā* in Bhaktapur).

These drums are used to play musical invocations for *Nāsaḥdyaḥ*, the so-called '*dyaḥlhāygu*'. In the Bhaktapur *navabājā* ensemble of nine drums (founded in the early 18th century), *dhā* and *kvatāḥ* are the only drums that play such invocations, and they are played at the beginning of the complete set. This suggests an ancient use of these drums in Newar music, in contrast to some other *navabājā* drums imported from India at a later stage and modified to suit Newar musical needs. In another musical context, the *dhā* is played as a processional drum by Newar farmers and during the Buddhist *gūlābājā* processions. It also accompanies the *Bhairava* dance of the potters. The *pañcatāla* accompanies esoteric Tantric Buddhist dances and is played during *gūlā* processions by Buddhist oilpressers.

*Nandi* and *Bhrindi* are also depicted on the drum shields of the Patan *gūlābājā* drums (Fig. 4). Here *Nṛtyanātha* dances without his female counterpart while *Nandi* and *Bhrindi* support him with their drumming. This trio appears at many *Nāsaḥ* shrines throughout the Kathmandu Valley. A typical example, although not at a shrine of *Nāsaḥdyaḥ*, is the brass entrance shield of the *Nārāyaṇa* temple at *Thāchē*, Bhaktapur. Here the trio is flanked by *Śiva's* two sons, *Kumār* and *Gaṇeś*. Unfortunately, this *Gaṇeś* has been stolen.

During both a music apprenticeship and a public performance the musicians always start with an invocation (*dyaḥlhāygu*), in order to reactivate the divine source of inspiration. This works like a complex telephone number. If one dials correctly, the connection is usually established. Fortunately for the musicians gods are never 'engaged'. *Dyaḥlhāygu* is played also during processions when the group passes a god in a shrine, a holy river, or a holy tree. There is not one single *dyaḥlhāygu*. Every Newar musical style has its own invocation, sometimes several, and these may all have different musical structures. However, all these musical invocations serve their basic purpose, i.e. to focus energy. Without that, music is not possible.

[5] Bhaktapur term for 'Bhṛṅgī'.

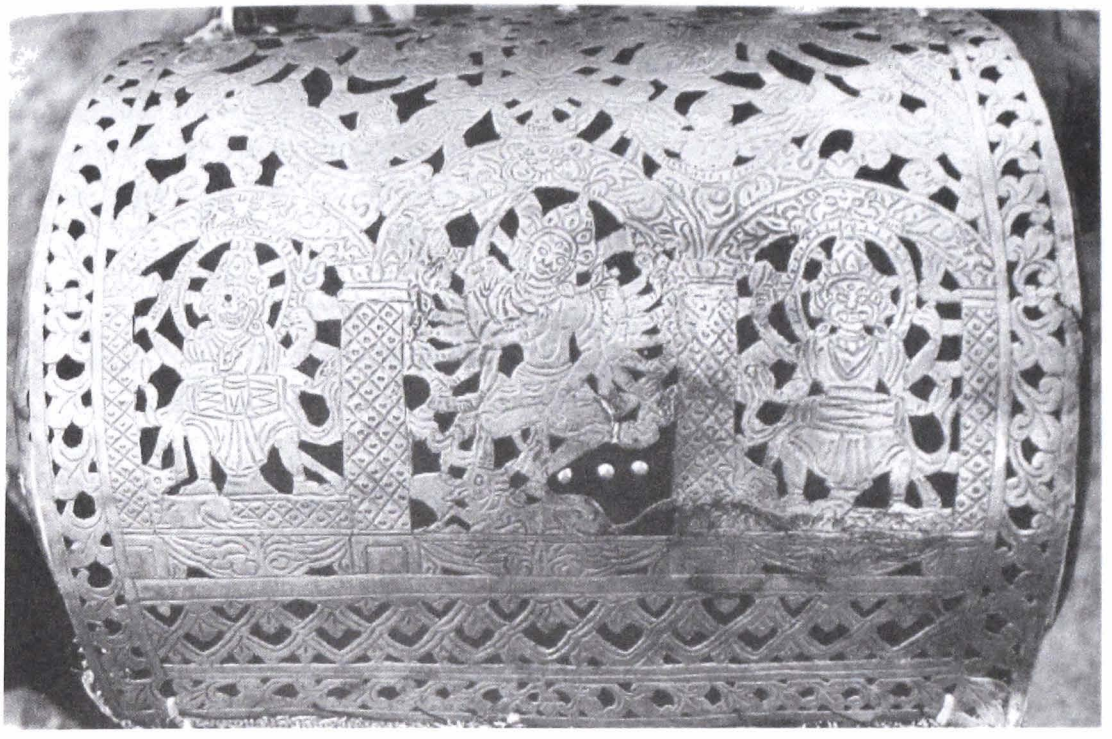


Fig. 4 : Patan *gūlābājā* drum shield: *Nṛtyanātha* dances while *Nandi* and *Bhrindi* play the drums.

This paper attempts to demonstrate and analyze a few *dyaḥlhāygu* invocations and to show how musical structure can channel mental processes in a specific direction.

A common musical technique used to increase intensity is that of acceleration. In the case of the Newar invocations two types of acceleration are employed, viz.,

1. a gradual increase in speed of a repeated musical pattern (see Example 1: *dyaḥlhāygu* for *pastā, Sāymi gūlābājā),* and
2. a gradual shortening of a given musical pattern, in such a way that each repetition is condensed, reducing the original pattern to its most characteristic constituent (see Example 2: *dyaḥlhāygu* for *nāykhī*, *Bajrācārya* and *Śākya gūlābājā*).

Historically interesting is the fact that technique no. 1 is used frequently in Tibetan ritual music, e.g. in the initial piece of performances of masked dances, whereas the second technique is used in Indian drumming in both north and south Indian art music traditions.[6] Conversely, technique no. 1 is not found in Indian art music, and technique no. 2 is not found in Tibetan music.

[6] see Wegner 1982: 89

3. The next structural technique employed is one which I should like to term 'scattered rhythm'. This musical material defies analysis because of its seemingly chaotic and completely unpredictable organization. This musical technique is found in many cultures in connection with states of possession by spirits and gods. In Bhaktapur it is used in the esoteric *dyaḥkhī* drumming which accompanies the dances of the *Navadurgā*.
4. Yet another way of focusing attention is the extreme reduction of musical material in combination with a very slow tempo. This technique is applied in the *mū dyaḥlhāygu* played by the *pañcatāla* drum, cymbals, and *pāytāḥ* trumpets as an accompaniment for Tantric Buddhist dances (see Example 3).

These dances are performed exclusively by Tantric Buddhist priests in their esoteric clan gods' house (*āgamchē*) in order to acquire magic powers. Newar music is divided into public and secret music, and this piece belongs of course to the secret music. Here, although there is little variation in actual sound, much happens in the performers' minds. Each drumming syllable is a *mantra*, a 'verbal instrument believed to possess power' (Stutley 1986), and though the playing techniques of the *pañcatāla* drum are few, the variety of *mantras* seems unlimited. Here music works simultaneously but separately on two different levels, the audible and the mental. Relatively few audible sounds represent a multitude of verbal magic which remains inaudible to outsiders.

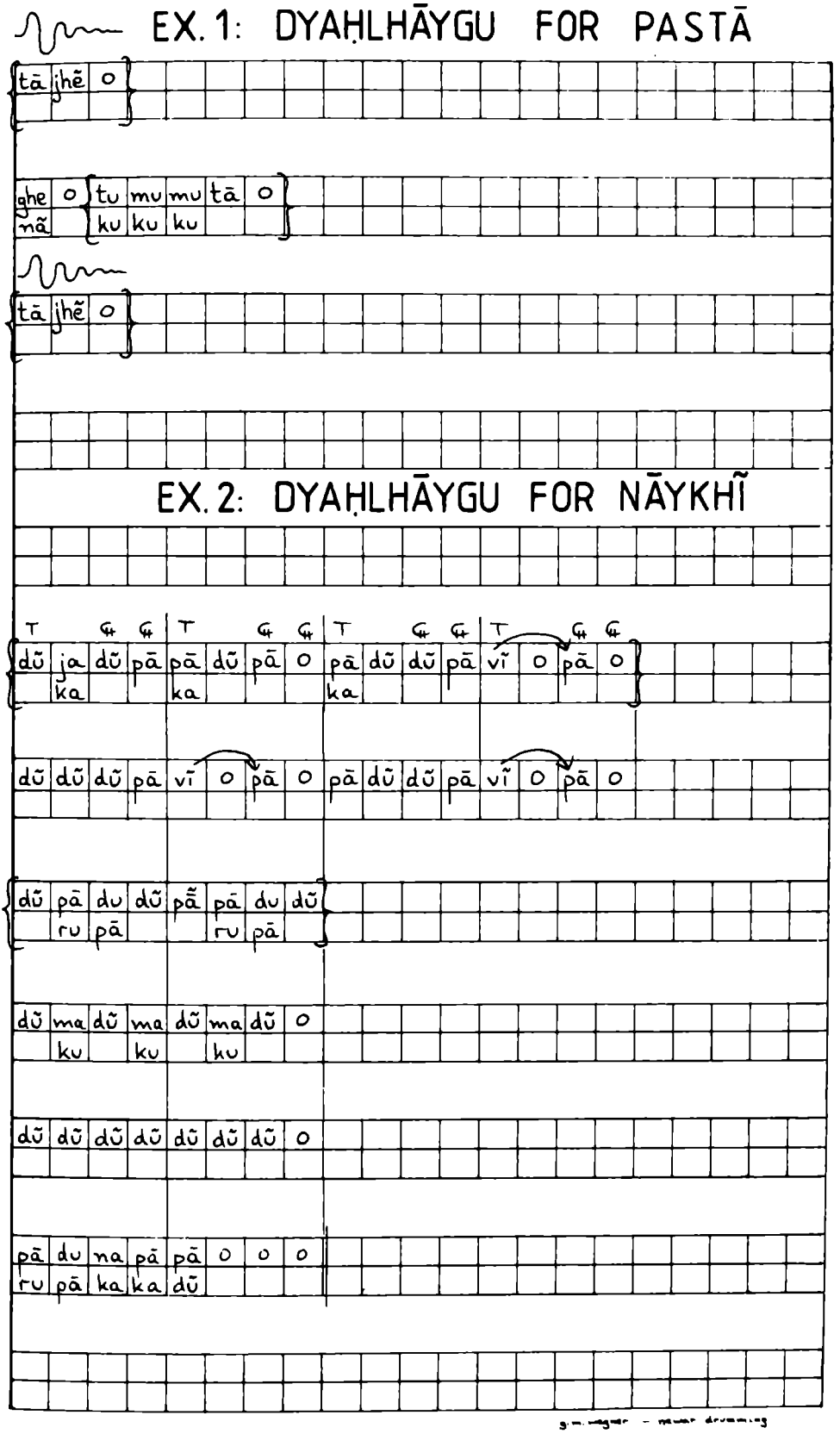
To summarize: The disposition of Newar musicians allows specific music to tune their minds to the divine source of music. Admittedly, they tend to assist this disposition with alcohol, but basically it is acquired through ritual apprenticeship where they are taught to approach *Nāsaḥdyaḥ*, the volatile music god, in the proper way in order to benefit from his powers. In this context music appears as a magical tool which connects the human plane with the divine.

*Notes on the Music Examples*

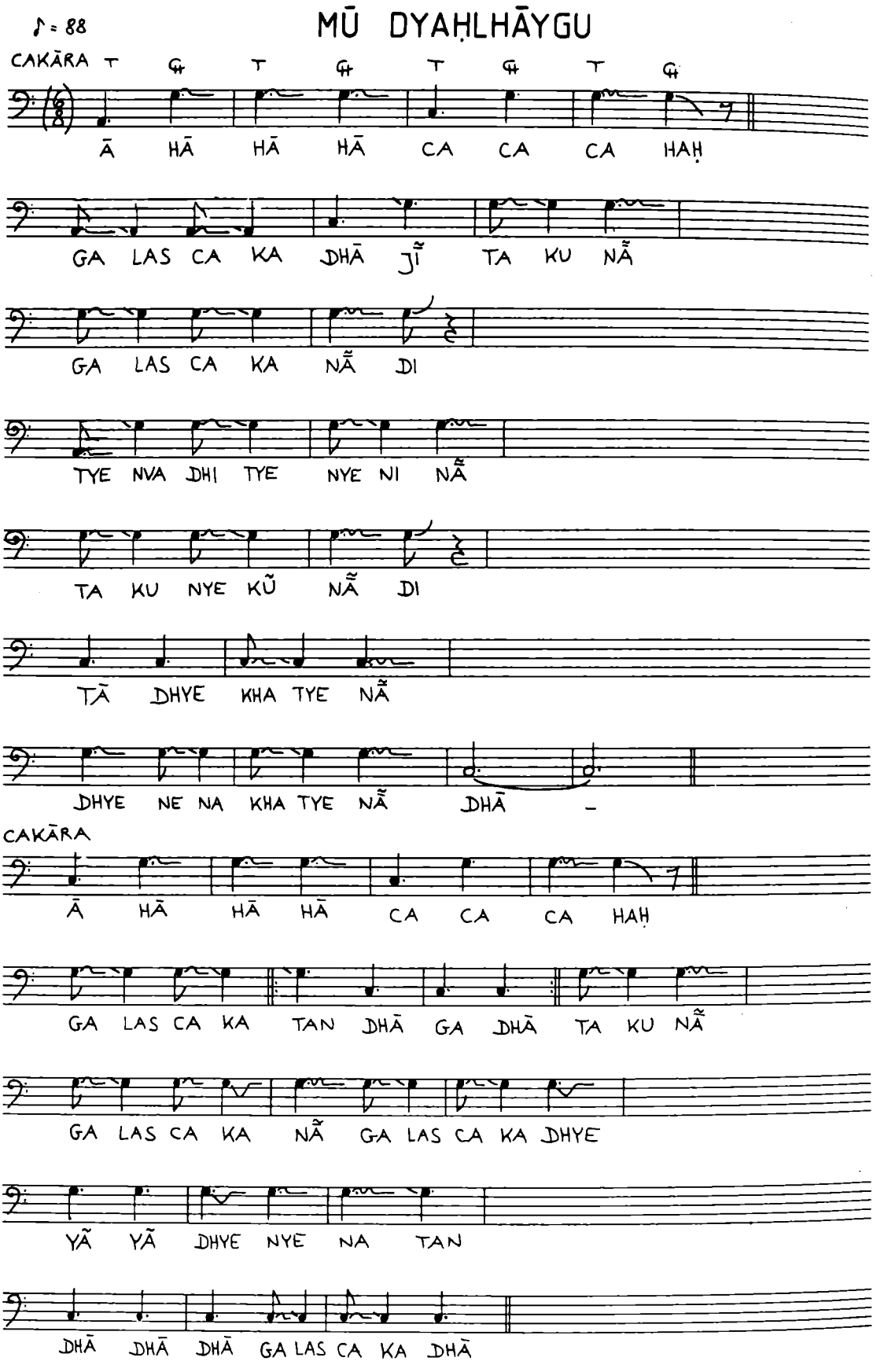
*Example 1*: This *dyaḥlhāygu* is played by the Buddhist oilpressers (*Sāymi*) of Bhaktapur during their annual *gūlābājā* processions on the *pastā* drum, with the accompaniment of two or four *pvaṅgā* trumpets and a pair of thick-walled cymbals (*taḥ*). These instruments try to synchronize with the drum. The drumming syllables of the *pastā* are transcribed here in a notation which allows one to read them in exact rhythm. The brackets in lines 1 to 3 with the wave sign above stand for two identical series of the signal *tā jhē*. These series are played *accelerando*.

## THE MUSIC EXAMPLES

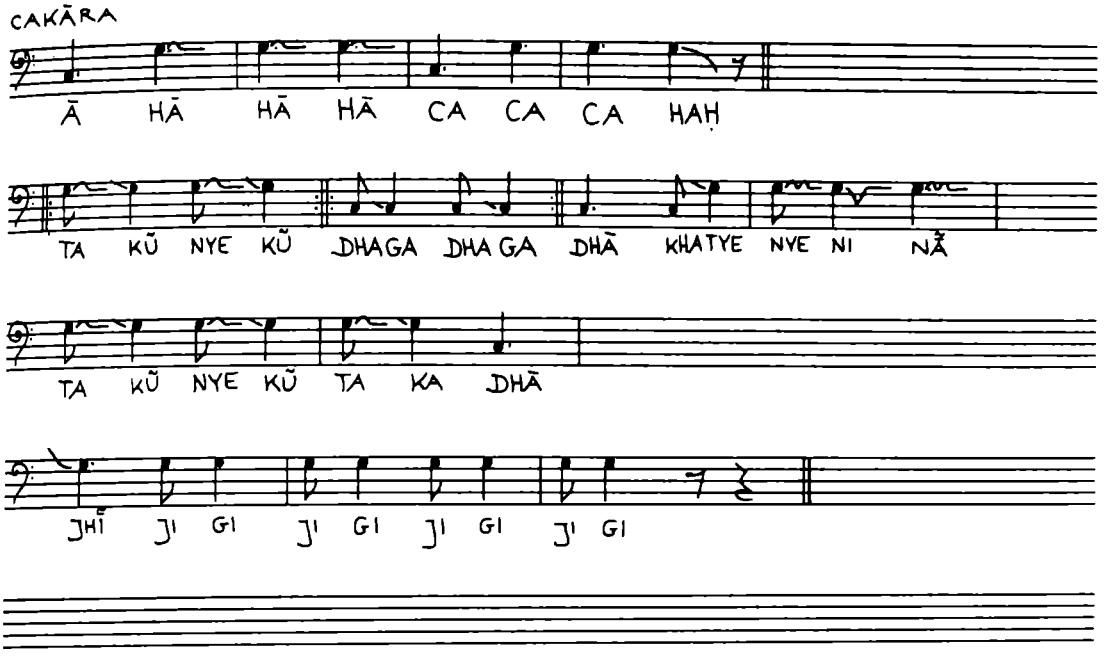
**Example 1 Example 2**



**Example 3, Part 1**



Example 3, Part 2




*Example 2*: This *dyaḥlhāygu* is played on the *nāykhī* drum by the Buddhist *Bajrācārya* and *Śākya* of Bhaktapur during their *gūlābājā* processions. The drumming syllables differ from those in Example 1, because each drum has its own set of syllables. The *nāykhī* is accompanied by a pair of flat, thin-walled cymbals (*sichyāḥ*). The cymbal pattern *tin — chu chu* is indicated by the symbols above line 1.

The piece contains two accelerations of the second category. The first one happens in lines 1 and 2. Their structural pattern is:

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| line 1: | A | B | C | A | B | C |
| line 2: | | B' | C | | B | C |

The second acceleration happens in lines 3 to 5, where the syllable *dū* gradually takes over. The last line contains a virtuosic statement which seems to capture the emotional build-up of the piece.

*Example 3*: This *mū dyaḥlhāygu* is played by the *pañcatāla* drum in the esoteric clan gods' house of the Kathmandu *Bajrācāryas*. It is accompanied by a pair of thick-walled cymbals (*taḥ*) and ten large trumpets (*pāytāḥ*). The drumming syllables have three different functions:

a) They are magic syllables (*mantra*). It is the purpose of the performance to

activate these *mantras*.

b) They serve as an aid to the drummer's memory.

c) They are always recited at a specific pitch and with seven different embellishments indicating the exact playing of the trumpets.

From beginning to end, the cymbals strike exactly one hundred and eight times, which is the familiar auspicious number. The *mū dyaḥlhāygu* is played at a very slow tempo, so that the spiritual effect of each *mantra* can be 'relished'. The piece is vaguely structured into three sections, each starting with a similar introductory line called *cakāra*.

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## COMMENT ON WEGNER'S CONTRIBUTION

RAM SARAN DARNAL

[...] The Nāsaḥdyaḥ, who is also called Nāṭyeśvara or Naṭarāja, is considered the ancient god of the performing arts, culture, and language. The god of the gods, Ardhanārīśvara, who created the world, is the master of his creation. He is worshipped as a formless power in our culture. At a later stage, idols of Nāsaḥdyaḥ were introduced and worshipped in the course of Tantric rituals. [I shall add a few supplementary remarks which might assist a further study of the god and his function.]

1. We have several Books of Songs, *bhajan saphū*, for praying in *pāṭīs*. Most of them are related to Śiva. Prem Bahadur Kansakar has collected some *bhajans* in praise of Nāsaḥdyaḥ. In these hymns, the god is addressed as *Nityanātha, Nāṭyeśvara, Nāṭeśvara, Naṭapati, Nistenātha*, and *Kabilāsa.* Kabilāsa is related to Narjakabilāsa, a small cave situated one and a half days's walk northwest of Kathmandu. According to popular belief, Nāsaḥdyaḥ came to Kathmandu from that place. If Dr Wegner could extend his studies of Nāsaḥdyaḥ to Kathmandu and beyond the Valley, more aspects may be revealed.

2. Nāsaḥdyaḥ is related to the stages or platforms *(dabuli)* one still sees in open squares of settlements. There are no authoritative books on Nepal's ancient stages; only Kashi Nath Tamot has thrown some light on the subject. Nowadays these ancient stages are often neglected or in ruins. Research on these stages and the performances which used to happen there would be necessary in order to find out many facts about the previous practice of the performing arts in Nepal.

3. Dr Wegner mentions a god with peculiar destructive qualities, whose shrine is in the vicinity of Nāsaḥdyaḥ. Haimādyaḥ, as he is called in Bhaktapur, disturbs the rhythm and the melody. To avoid his irritating influence, the Bhaktapur musicians worship him together with Nāsaḥdyaḥ. The details of this cult were revealed to me in a conversation with Dr Wegner. In casting light on Haimādyaḥ, he adds a new dimension to Nepalese music and culture. Haimādyaḥ has become a significant aspect not only of the rituals connected with music appren-

ticeship in Bhaktapur, but also of the Nepalese cultural heritage.

4. A *grahapūjā* which is mentioned in connection with the *nāsaḥ pirāne pūjā* is also carried out at major road crossings to pacify the bad influence of planets *(graha)*. This is called *grahaśānti* or *Navagrahaśānti*.

5. Dr Wegner mentions that a picture of Nṛtyanātha drawn on canvas is worshipped. Another painting depicting Nāsaḥdyaḥ through symbols is shown in the collections of the National Art Gallery in Bhaktapur. There may be more such paintings in private collections, from which a study of the god would perhaps benefit.

6. Nāsaḥdyaḥ has been imagined as Ardhanārīśvara and Ardhanārīśvarī, i.e. the combined form of Śiva and Pārvatī. The Saṃgītaśāstra states that six main *rāgas* originated from these gods, from the *tāṇḍava* dance of Śiva, and from the *lāsya* of Pārvatī. They stand for the eternal dance performed by men and women. Śiva and Pārvatī are considered the primeval *(ādi)* dancers and the originators of dramatic arts. In Nepal, there are many idols and sculptures of Ardhanārīśvara in stone, wood, clay, and metal. Their study will help to reveal the classical and philosophical aspects of the topic.

7. Nāsaḥdyaḥ is flanked by the two drummers, Nandī and Bhṛṅgī (the form Bhrindi is a corruption). Examples of these three are found on metal *tuṃḍāls* or tympanons *(toraṇas)* above the main gates of Śiva temples.

8. In the Patan *guṃlābājā* ensemble, different types of horns, *neku* and *tiglicā*, are played together with several drums. During some special days of the holy month of *guṃlā*, the *damakhiṃ* are played. These auspicious drums are decorated with idols of Bhairava, Mahākālī, and Mahāsarasvatī. When speaking about drumming in Patan, these horns and their functions should also be considered.

9. Dr Wegner uses a Newārī term, *dyaḥlhāygu*. This word is equivalent to *nāndi, badhaiṃ*, and *salāmi*, used in Nepalese music in the hills. These terms are applied to a piece played in respect of honoured individuals like the King while passing them, and also while passing a *chautāri*, a *deurāli*, or a *koṭ*, and while walking around a temple. Again, this is a special tune which calls the gods to earth.

10. Then, there is the *dyaḥkhiṃ* drum. There are several drums related to Nāsaḥdyaḥ, namely, *yākakhiṃ, jokhiṃ, poṅgākhiṃ, payṃtākhiṃ*, and *dangakhiṃ*. In some Newar towns, the horns of sacrificial animals are used by musicians passing their apprenticeship to decorate their drums and even the shrines of Nāsaḥdyaḥ.

11. Newar music is divided into secret music *(āgam)* and open music *(nigam)*. *Āgam* music is sung secretly by the Vajrācāryas in their Āgamcheṃ. This is the so-called 'chachā' music *(cacā, cāryagīti)*. The Saṃgītaśāstra distinguishes between

the *nibaddha saṃgīta* and the *anibaddha saṃgīta* traditions. What can remain secret in our times? Even though we have the religious concepts of secrecy, research in our *āgam saṃgīta* has become not only a necessity but a must. Entrance into the *āgamchem* is only possible for its members. This is why research in this tradition is extremely difficult. But it has to be carried out before the tradition dies.

[...]

# Comparison of Two Mythological Bodies of Songs: Persistence of Narrative Motifs, Collapse of Structure

Anne de Sales

The present paper compares two bodies of shamanic songs belonging to the same tradition but collected from two different ethnic groups, the Kham-Magar and the Chantel, both of the Dhaulagiri area, west Nepal. The first group are the transmitters of the shamanic tradition that is received by the second. In another paper (Sales n.d. [a]) I have shown that the Chantel are a composite of various castes (Chetri, Magar and Bhote) which happened to come together in the nineteenth century in order to exploit the copper mines for which the area was famous. They came to be recognised as a distinct caste only about sixty years ago, after the closure of the mines, when they were allocated lands by the government. A portion of these lands were appropriated from Magar territory, a fact which predictably led to conflict. The origin of the Chantel is consequently relatively recent, and certain processes involved in the formation of a tradition are more clearly evident here than in longer-established societies such as that of the Magar. It must be emphasised that such a comparison does not imply the existence of an authentic, original tradition — the Magar — on the one hand, as opposed to the hybrid tradition of the Chantel on the other: it would be misleading to assume that any tradition can be anything other than the result of various borrowings. A living tradition changes and reinterprets its own context. The difference between the Magar and the Chantel is that the first are in a strong position vis-à-vis the second. The Magar shamanic tradition is an integral part of the system that includes social organisation, whereas the Chantel tradition has more tenuous social roots. A feature of this lack of integration in the case of the Chantel is a greater degree of conflict with encroaching Hinduism.

Elsewhere I have suggested that the Magar strengthen their shamanic tradition by institutionalising it (Sales n.d. [b]). Chantel shamanism, by contrast, is not framed within an institution; the shaman is not part of a shamanic 'college' but instead occupies a marginal position in the society. In the present paper I would like to compare, not shamanic institutions, but shamanic songs, and thereby to isolate the processes governing change in a particular tradition through the

manipulation of narrative motifs and structure.

Before discussing these songs in detail it is worth recalling certain basic principles about Magar mythology without which the Chantel version would remain obscure.

In essence the Magar mythology offers a reflection on the human condition. Neither perfection nor plenitude is compatible with life on earth. A cosmogonic myth relates how the god Mahādev tries in vain to create man from precious metals, whereas the only human figure that comes to life is one which Pārvatī models from animal dung. Similarly, the immortal offspring of the original man and woman multiply until the earth is insufficient to sustain them: the gods accordingly allow witchcraft — and, through it, illness and death — to appear. This is the paradox which humanity must face: there is no life without death, since the one generates the other (as seen in the creation of man from decomposing matter). The two demiurges permit the first witch to survive and create the first shaman in order to fight her and thereby to postpone inevitable death. The shaman cannot exist without the witch nor she without the shaman: according to their pact she relinquishes her hold on victims in return for the sacrificial food which he provides.

But Magar mythology gives a further twist to the paradox with which men must deal: the gods forbid them to marry in their own line and inflict cataclysmic punishment on the first men who commit incest. Men must seek their wives among strangers. Now it happens that any stranger woman is a potential witch. Man is trapped: the marriage he must undertake in order to father offspring is also a commitment to misfortune and death. Marriage between a man and a woman is analogous to the pact between the shaman and the witch, a parallel that is dramatised in the shamanic ritual of the Magar; it gives structure to the shamanic mythology and embeds it in the fabric of social organisation.

It is against this background that the following two recitations, collected among the Chantel, are to be considered.

## THE COSMOGONIC MYTH OF THE CHANTEL

The myth begins with a scene inspired directly by Hindu mythology. In the beginning, Viṣṇu Bhagavān is meditating upon the waters that cover the earth. After twelve years he achieves illumination and, as he rises from his seat, two demons are created from the wax of his ears and the four-faced Brahmā is

simultaneously created in the upper world. To protect Brahmā from the demons who menace him, Viṣṇu kills them, and the landscape is formed from their dismembered bodies.

The song continues with a second episode which involves characters borrowed from a Magar song. Karmavatī, the daughter of Mahādev and Pārvatī, is sent in marriage to earth. There, as the song goes, 'the night is black and silent the day', signifying that there is no light and therefore no life. Karmavatī revisits her parents and complains bitterly about her marriage in an inhospitable land. She cries disconsolately until her parents agree to give her as dowry the sun, the moon and all the stars in the sky. Karmavatī returns to earth carrying the precious burden. While resting on the way she sees a man dancing with his niece, an act that has sexual connotations. The sight of this causes the stars to fly out of her bag. The heat of the stars shining all at once incinerates the earth, and before long not a drop of water is left. Life on earth is impossible.

The episode is developed more explicitly in the Magar version of the song. It is understood that Karmavatī remedies this situation of absoluteness — utter darkness or complete illumination — through a series of what are presented as sacrilegious acts, including the consummation of her marriage. Each act causes one star to vanish until an alternation between day and night is established, and life on earth becomes possible. It has to be understood that by starting the cycle of marriages, with its implicit violation of a rule of purity, Karmavatī enables the cycle of day and night to start as well. In the Chantel version, the episode ends with a catastrophe caused by the sight of the sexual act. (It should be recalled that marriage between uncle and niece is practised by the Thakali, whose marital rules the Chantel follow.) Like the Magar original the Chantel version establishes a connection between social and cosmic order, but in this case the narrative ends in disaster.

In the third episode the gods of the Hindu pantheon reappear. Nārāyaṇ charges the nymph Apsaras to attend to Brahmā, who is in meditation, and to feed him on honey until he awakes. After twelve years the illuminated Brahmā surveys the desolation caused by the cosmic fire and withdraws all the stars. Nothing is left on earth, neither fire nor water.

The development of the song up to this point may be summarized as follows: life does not emerge from a condition of absoluteness, in which the earth is entirely covered with water, or consumed by fire or devoid of anything. It seems that life is none of the gods' business. At this stage, the fourth and last episode begins, with a completely different tone.

The grasshopper approaches the god Nārāyaṇ and begs him to give fire to

men. The god agrees on the condition that the insect does not watch him lighting the fire. In spite of his promise to shut his eyes, the grasshopper watches the god from the corner of his eye. When Nārāyaṇ gives him the fire he places it in the crossed cloth which forms a pouch on his back, and sets off for earth. But soon the fire begins to burn his back, and he runs faster, yelling with pain. The hornets and the wasps happen to witness this farcical scene, and laugh so hard that their bodies break in half.

At this juncture the shaman appears. He is called to repair the broken bodies of the wasps and hornets. He settles down for a seance, begins to shake, and sews the pieces together with thread. Then, says the song, a servant brings water and grass, the grasshopper distributes the fire among men: night becomes distinct from day, and life is possible on earth.

The narrative introduces life on earth by the back door, so to speak, thanks to the cunning of an insect that fools the divine creator — an insect that is not a grand character but at the same time both wily and ridiculous. Laughter is never far from questions of life and death. The shaman appears as a healer, who repairs the fragmented bodies of the moribund wasps. At a higher level of abstraction he is to be considered as the agent who connects that which was separated and therefore hampered life. The song goes on to show how it is he who implements a cycle, and causes life to circulate. It is after his seance that water flows and the fire is distributed, and night and day follow each other.

This last episode may be compared with a well-known myth from the Kathmandu Valley. One night the god Gaṇeś was returning home from a feast, his stomach distended with all the sweets he had eaten. His vehicle, the shrew, was suddenly startled by a snake crossing the path, reared up and threw the rider. The fall caused Gaṇeś's belly to burst and discharge his load of sweets. Watching this ridiculous scene, the moon could not help laughing. Gaṇeś gathered the sweets back into his stomach and tied himself together again with the passing snake. Enraged by the mockery of the moon he broke off one of his tusks, flung it at her and extinguished her light. She begged him to restore her brightness and he eventually relented, but restricted his concession to the present monthly cycle of darkness and light (Slusser 1982).

In both the Chantel and Nepalese stories, the grotesque bursting of the body is associated with laughter, and laughter with the alternation of light and darkness, implying that of life and death. Gaṇeś repairs himself, whereas in the Chantel version the shaman intervenes as mediator.

The overwhelming influence of Hindu mythology in this first Chantel song is undeniable, but the shaman nevertheless plays a central part. The Chantel are

clearly mixing two frames of reference, Magar local tradition and Hindu folklore, without there being (at least in this case) any suggestion of conflict between the two. By contrast, the next song makes scarcely any reference to Hindu mythology. Both explicitly and implicitly, it develops several themes that are borrowed from the Magar original.

## THE ROUTE SONG

The song opens with a description of six wise characters from Magar mythology. These all inhabit separate villages located in the western part of the Chantel area. Of these villages, three are Magar and one, Jajarkoṭ, is the old capital of one of the small kingdoms which comprised the Caubīse confederation. There are nine witch-sisters who engage the six wise characters in a contest of their respective knowledge and powers. Each of the six is defeated in turn, but just as the witches are about to devour the last of their defeated adversaries, they hear the beating of a drum. This is Macha, the ancestor of the shamans. Thanks to the protection afforded by his magical costume he is invincible, and subdues the nine sisters by dancing for twelve years.

Thus it is only Macha, a shaman from the Magar country, who is able to vanquish the witches. This is just the beginning of a long relationship between the shaman and the nine sisters. With the aid of a magical love-*mantra* the latter induce Macha to accompany them to their home. On the way Macha is engaged in a boar-hunt, in the course of which he must shoot at special targets: he must place his arrows in the centre of each of the witches' jewels, their necklaces and bracelets. In order fully to understand this episode we must know that the Magar engage in a similar ritual game during a particular annual festival, the Māgh Saṃkrānti. The young unmarried women display portions of pig-meat and fat in the centre of their jewellery, and these form the targets for the young men's arrows. In describing this ritual, M. Oppitz reasonably suggests that it is a precursor to marriage (Oppitz 1988). The witches' involvement of Macha in this strange boar-hunt through the use of love-*mantras* is nothing less than an evocation of marriage, and in the following episode the shaman would indeed appear to play the role of son-in-law.

The witches take Macha to the home of their parents, a 'derelict house'. The song states enigmatically that 'the father is sinful, the mother is sinful'. This line cannot be understood unless it is related to the Magar story of the first incestu-

ous couple that we encountered at the beginning of this paper. The witches were in fact born from an unlawful union, and Macha appears as a son-in-law who, for various reasons that we need not go into here, can redeem the sinful situation. The nine sisters, however, remain witches. While Macha is repairing the roof of the house, the eldest rips the heart out of his breast. Beside his lifeless body the witches divide up and eat his heart. Only the youngest sister keeps her share uneaten, and, moved by Macha's fate, eventually convinces her sisters to restore him to life by mingling her share of the heart with the heart and blood of a wild deer.

This episode too must be explained with reference to a Magar ritual: the consecration of a new shaman. In the course of his initiation the neophyte has to climb a tall pine tree, holding in his mouth the heart of a ram that has just been sacrificed: the songs state that the new shaman is born from the heart of his ancestors. The occurrence of the deer's heart in the Chantel song corresponds to the shamanic notion of the intimate relationship between the shaman and wild nature. This association is represented in his drum, among other attributes: conceived as the shaman's double, it is covered with deerskin. The ritual sacrifice that accompanies the consecration of a new shaman — a ritual which, it must be stressed, is not performed among the Chantel — is implicitly represented in this episode of the song.

The following section is lifted in its entirety from a Magar song. The shaman is disguised as a blacksmith in the underworld, from where he will eventually emerge in full regalia. From the perspective of the song's inner logic this episode completes the initiation of the shaman. While he is reconstituted from the heart of a wild animal, a reference to his wild and solitary apprenticeship to the spirits, he is also partly reforged through the pieces of armour that cover every part of his body.

The song concludes with Macha leading the witches on a long journey, following a route that delimits the geographical space of the mythological Chantel universe. From their starting-point in Lhasa, in Central Tibet, the travellers go west to Lake Mānasarovār, near Mt. Kailāsh. The witches want to flee from this place because of their fear of the local lama — possibly a reference to the well-known story of Milarepa's successful battle against the Bonpo Naro Bonchung for dominion of the mountain. The route then leads southeast. The narrative mentions several villages, located in the present-day Dolpo and Mustang districts: Tsharkabang, Tetang, Muktināth, Tārākoṭ and Khanigāuṃ. The shaman and the witches at last arrive in the Magar country. The song lists all the Magar villages from north to south: Pelma, Maikot, Hubang, Padmi, Bachi,

Taka, Sera, Kakri, Lubang, Thabang, Nakha and Rukum.

It is likely that some of the places named on the itinerary designate the sources of the groups (the present-day Bhote, Thakali, Magar etc.) which compose the Chantel. Another, more obvious conclusion to be drawn from the journey is that the shamanic tradition of the Chantel is derived from the Magar: the song ends where it began, in the Magar country. The conclusion of the song makes explicit the pact on which shamanism is founded, and takes up a Magar narrative motif. Macha and the witches are about to cross the Bheri Karnali. The shaman, who is the first to cross the river by a fragile bridge, manages to drown eight of the nine sisters. The youngest implores him not to kill her, and supports her request with the following reasoning:

"If I die you will also die;
You will have no work [since there will be no illness].
Offer me ashes; the evil will be sealed for twelve years.
You will win fame;
If I die you will also die."

This song retains the narrative motifs of the Magar shamanic corpus: the war between the shaman and the witches (in which first he, and then they, are victorious), the drowning of the nine witches in the river, and the final pact, are borrowed wholesale. Also evident is the same narrative structure, that is, the same relationships between the motifs, but in attenuated form. The marriage between the witch and the shaman is nowhere as explicitly described as in the Magar version, although it recurs several times; the analogy between marriage and the concluding pact is likewise less clearly drawn. The relationship between the mythology and the social organisation of the Chantel is more tenuous. This does not mean that the song is not well composed. Its development is clear: the battles between the shaman and the witches, as well as the initiation of the shaman, are framed within the description of a geographical space which opens and concludes the song. Finally, the song itself reaches its climax in the form of the all-important pact. It is the roots of the myth in the social order that have been weakened for the sake of embedding the history of the Chantel in the song.

## Songs about Conflicts

Two other songs should be briefly described for their comparative value. Both contain meaningful reinterpretations of Magar songs. The first relates how nature is shared between two brothers, Gorha, the elder, and Separan. In the Magar version the two brothers fight over the boundaries that mark their respective territories: the elder, who is the ancestor of men, has dominion over cultivated land, while the younger, who is the ancestor of the spirits, is master of wild nature. The outcome of the narrative is that the two brothers make a pact, according to which the shaman must make offerings to the spirits on the part of men. The Chantel version describes similar fights, but these do not conclude in a clear sharing of nature. It is said that the elder brother wins the battles thanks to the protection of Mahādev. The shaman as an essential mediator has disappeared, and instead it is the Hindu god himself who resolves the conflicts.

By contrast, the second of these songs relates to a conflict in which the shaman is opposed to Viṣṇu Bhagavān and takes revenge on him by causing his son to fall ill. In the original Magar version the dispute is between the shaman and a king who insults him by slighting his powers and is punished with an illness to a member of his household. The shaman lifts his malediction when the king has been suitably humbled. The god has no option but to submit and gives presents to the shaman, who responds by curing the son. The comparison illustrates the way in which the Chantel songs manipulate the original motifs in order to interpret their socio-religious context.

In the light of this brief survey of the Chantel shamanic repertoire, it is possible to make some general observations about the creation of a tradition from elements of the local and great traditions. The example of the first song shows the narrative firmly embedded in Hindu folklore, but with a key position being accorded to the shaman. The latter feature is in line with the religious organisation of the Magars, in which the shaman is the only religious specialist. The second song, by contrast, develops within a framework borrowed entirely from the Magar mythology; this is clear from the narrative motifs themselves and from the geographical references which frame the song. However, there is also implicit evidence that the Chantel version refers to the Magar tradition. It was shown, for example, that a particular line was too elliptical to be understood in isolation, and had to be regarded as a sort of quotation from an entire episode in a Magar song. It was also shown that certain narrative motifs in the Chantel version described rituals performed only among the Magar, specifically the boar-hunt and the initiatory sacrifice for a new shaman. In other words, the Chantel describe in

song but do not practice rituals that are not described but only practised by the Magar.

Contrary to the process illustrated in the first song, in which a Hindu narrative was manipulated in such a way that the shaman intervened as a mediator, the third song manipulates a Magar narrative so that the shaman is discarded and replaced by a Hindu god. Like the third song, the fourth manipulates a Magar motif, but with the opposite result: the shaman is victorious over the Hindu god.

The Chantel tradition offers a wide range of possible reactions to the material provided by various symbolic systems. No one interpretation prevails at the expense of the others. What the corpus of the Chantel songs lacks is a rooting in the social organisation of the community. The Chantel have borrowed narrative motifs from the Kham-Magar, but the structure of the shamanic system has collapsed. However — and this is a point that must be stressed — the Chantel shamanic repertoire is not a confused compilation of motifs: each song has its own inner logic, even if this logic is not shared by all.

## CONCLUSION

There are three conclusions which can be drawn from a comparative study of the shamanic tradition of the Dhaulagiri area (west Nepal). First, the Kham-Magar and the Chantel, located respectively in the western and eastern parts of the area, display two different reactions towards prevailing Hinduism. These two types can be considered as two poles of one single continuum: whereas the Kham-Magar college of shamans strengthen their shamanism by institutionalising it, Chantel shamanism is not framed within an institution as such. The Chantel shaman is marginalised and the shaman's condition approaches that of possession.

The second conclusion is that the shamanic tradition is dependant on the social organisation of the community. The Magar conceive the organisation of their social relationships according to the same patterns as those governing their relationships to the supernatural world. In this kind of system, therefore, disturbance at one level has a corresponding reaction in the others. This situation is illustrated by the case of the Chantel. This ethnic group was not identified as such sixty years ago and was barely mentioned in anthropological literature. An investigation into the area lying between the Kham-Magar and the Chantel themselves, the so-called Nisi-Bhuji valleys, showed how this ethnic group emerged from the Nepalese caste society and settled in their remote land on the southern slopes of the Dhaulagiri. Because of their relatively recent origin, the

Chantel are still in the process of developing their identity through various institutions, such as marital rules and shamanism. It is in this context that the Chantel shamanic literature has to be placed in order to be fully understood.

The comparison between Magar and Chantel shamanic songs — based on the collection of 3500 lines of shamanic songs from among the Chantel, and an earlier study of Magar shamanic poetry (Sales 1985, in which 3500 lines out of a total of 7000 have been transcribed and translated) — illustrates precisely how the Chantel reinterpret the narrative motifs of the Magar mythology and incorporate Hindu folklore. The study of this process leads to a third conclusion: the Chantel actively manipulate the motifs that are provided by these two symbolic systems. Each song is recomposed and presents an inner logic of its own. Chantel shamanic literature is not the result of a passive and therefore confused compilation of motifs. Through their songs the Chantel reinterpret their own socio-religious context. It seems, however, that the Chantel shamanic tradition lacks a general structure that would unify these interpretations and root them in the social order, as is the case among the Magar. As the tradition is transmitted from its source, the Kham-Magar, to the Chantel, the narrative motifs persist whereas the structure collapses.

The comparative study of Dhaulagiri shamanism at the regional level has a two-fold interest. In the perspective of the ethnography of Nepal, it covers a set of practices and a body of myths that seem atypical for Nepal. The first observers brought out the striking similarities of Dhaulagiri shamanism with Siberian shamanism. This specific and singular tradition has been implanted for centuries in an area overwhelmed by Hinduism. Various ethnic groups have reacted differently to these two frames of religious references, shamanism and Hinduism. These conditions of simultaneous homogeneity and disparity provide an ideal field for a comparative study resting on historical evidence concerning the unity of the shamanic tradition in question.

The study of the transmission of Dhaulagiri shamanism in a Hindu context has led to a few conclusions of more general anthropological interest. A shamanic tradition is part of a system and when one element changes the others change accordingly:

- Among the Magar who are the transmitting group of this tradition, the structure of the mythology is rooted in the social structure. This connection is more tenuous in the case of the receiving group, the Chantel.
- As the tradition is transmitted from its source to the receiving group, it seems that ritual acts persist whereas abstract mythical references tend to be forgotten. It is the most concrete part of the ritual that bears the whole weight of

tradition.

- When shamanic songs are still sung during rituals it seems that the narrative motifs survive whereas the relationship between the motifs, the original structure, disappears. In contrast to what has often been argued in other similar examples of religious syncretism, people do not compile motifs without making sense out of them. The receiving group uses borrowed narrative motifs in order to interpret its own socio-religious context.

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## COMMENT ON DE SALES' CONTRIBUTION

DILLI RAM DAHAL

[...] The writer describes the nature of Shaman songs persisting among the Kham Magar and the Chantel groups of the Dhaulagiri area, western Nepal. The distinctive features of the article are as follows:

1. The Kham Magar follow old Shamanic traditions, and Shamanism has been developed as an institution. In contrast, the Chantel (who according to the author are a composite group of Chetri, Magar, and Bhote populations) are migrants who settled in the Magar country about 60 years ago. Chantels do not have an institutionalized Shamanism, and with them, a shaman has a marginal position in society. The shamanic tradition of the Chantel heavily borrows from local Magar tradition and Hindu folklore. The author compares only the Shamanic songs of the two groups, but not the institution of Shamanism.

2. First, she speaks about Magar mythology: how Man originated from animal dung, and not from the precious metals. These humans multiplied indiscriminately. Death was inevitable. So shamans and witches evolved to make life [bearable] on earth. Marriage between man and woman [created union and harmony], and an analogous relationship was developed between the shaman and the witch. Śiva and Pārvatī are clearly implicated in the story.

3. Likewise, cosmogonic myths and route songs were brought into the Chantel group: how life was created on earth, and how earth was made inhabitable.

There are four episodes in the cosmogonic myth. The first episode is the story of God Viṣṇu who destroyed two demons produced from the wax of his ears. From their dead bodies, Earth was created. A similar story is found in the Bhāgavatapurāṇa.

The second story relates the episode of Karmāvatī, the daughter of Mahādeva and Pārvatī. She was married to Earth. As life was hard, she pleaded with her parents to give fire, light, etc. On her way, she noticed a man and a woman [embracing each other] — which resulted in the falling of stars and planets which gave light, and created day and night on earth.

Third, there is the Nārāyaṇ nymph *(apsaras)* and Brahmā, and how life was created on earth. — Then, in a further story, she relates how the grasshopper brought fire to earth from the God Nārāyaṇ by playing tricks. — By way of a supplement, there is an episode from the Kathmandu Valley which involves Gaṇeś, the snake, the moon, and the mouse. It again shows how life was created on earth.

4. The route song is drawn from Magar mythology. Six Wise Characters are depicted who were involved with Nine Witch Sisters. This gave birth to Macha, the ancestor of the shaman. This Macha with his magical power overcame the Nine Sisters.

In another story, Macha was married to these witches. Except for the youngest, all the other witches with their wiles devoured the various parts of Macha's body. The youngest witch, however, with the help of her sisters, saved Macha's life.

A third story tells how Macha brought these witches to the Magar country all the way from Lhasa to Mansarovar and then to Mustang, Manang and the Magar villages. Macha, however, with all his tricks, drowned all the sisters in the Bheri Karnali except for the youngest one. It is for the sake of the survival of humanity that the shaman and the witch are needed: they must be there to give life and death on earth. And the shaman and the witch themselves cannot survive without each other's help.

5. I find Dr de Sales's materials interesting: they are an example of how rapidly mythological bodies of songs become established to explain the underlying motifs of creation: life and death are possible because of the shaman and the witch. This is a model of Lévi-Straussian thought where binary opposition plays the key role in every myth. — But I should like to raise a number of points where I find the paper could be improved upon.

(a) The author does not provide us with the text of the mythological songs of the two groups. As such myths are often prevalent in several groups, it is difficult to ascertain the 'originality' of these myths without such texts.

(b) Both the cosmogonic myths and the route songs, of the Magar as well as the Chantel groups, are greatly influenced by the Hindu Great Tradition, by Hindu tales of gods and goddesses, particularly among the Chantels. This is an aspect which demands consideration; its omission shows a lack of directed scientific study of the primitive religion.

(c) The paper actually does not show a pattern or structure where Magar and Chantel myths and songs are similar and where they are dissimilar, and if they

are dissimilar, why. Myth, in fact, refers to events assumed to have taken place in the past, but — and this is an important point — the reason why it is effective lies in the specific patterns it describes. It provides reflections on social relations and social order within the structure. The meaning of a myth and of a song does not arise from isolated elements, but from their combination. The parallel episodes of myths formulated elsewhere must be incorporated into the study: it is always worth recalling other comparable myths. So, by a process of organizing the variants within myths, one will be able to formulate a structural law of myth. Analyzing myths in this manner leaves us with basic contradictions that are at the core of the myth, such as life and death, shaman and witch, etc. — As it stands, the paper selects and analyzes only what may be the author's preferred versions.

# ON THE POETICS OF HEALING IN TAMANG SHAMANISM[1]

ANDRÁS HÖFER

Why is the Tamang shaman (*bọmbo*) also a poet, and what may be seen as specifically shamanic in his poeticity? To what extent is the aesthetic effect of his night-long recitations essential for healing the sick, or what do poetic manipulations contribute to symbolic constructions aimed at effecting some sort of transformation, both psychically and somatically, in the patient? This preliminary paper outlines one of the perspectives from which the problem can be approached. I contend that we must interpret the recitation in two contexts that intersect each other, namely in that of the average Tamang layman's literary or exegetic competence, and in that of the shaman-client relationship as a whole.[2]

Shamanic recitations are difficult to interpret, not only because of their archaic language, but also precisely due to what one may term their poetic qualities. The texts abound in specific figural patterns, such as parallelisms, enumerations, amplifications and other obvious deviations from modern colloquial Tamang, and the problem with them is that while they enhance the structural "strength" of the text as an organized whole, they at the same time often tend to obscure the meaning. Either they introduce — for the sake of, say, symmetry — terms of unknown meaning, or their propensity for detailing and multiplying leads to a semantic overdetermination discomforting for anyone seeking a clear-cut proposition or message. One could say that in such cases the "form" takes precedence over the "content". As is commonly held, one of the functions of poetic language is to liberate the perception of its habitual automatism. In the texts of the Tamang shaman, the "form" does more than that: the formal structuredness is, to some extent at least, also to mask the conceptual

[1] I wish to thank Martin Gaenszle and Bernhard Kölver for their comments. — For the transcription of Western Tamang cf. my Tamang ritual texts I: Preliminary studies in the folk-religion of an ethnic minority in Nepal. (Beiträge zur Südasienforschung, Band 65). Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner 1981.

[2] For a concise, highly stimulating analysis of Western Tamang Shamanism cf. Holmberg, D.H.: Order in paradox: Myth, ritual and exchange among Nepal's Tamang. Ithaca: Cornell University Press 1989: pp. 142-174.

vagueness behind the many names and terms and their often surprising combinations. One may even go a step further in saying that the "form" also shams the "content", instead of simply organizing and articulating it. In other words, the formal-structural constraints, to which the text subjects itself and to which it owes its referential freedom, also serve to fill the vacuum left — as is the case with Tamang oral tradition in general, and shamanism in particular — by the lack of shared and authoritatively codified knowledge with regard to pantheon, mythology, human anatomy and the like. It is an interesting question, of course, to know how far the reception of the "mere form without content", in a way similar to music or to some creations of modern poetry, can have a bearing upon the process of healing: how a convincingly closed, albeit seemingly empty, organization of utterances is likely to organize or re-orient the patient's experience...

Be that as it may, the autonomy of "form" is preserved, and this non-reducibility of "form" appears to be in line with the commonly recognized specificity of shamanic performance with its ludic fabrications and genuinely poetic qualities. However, things are not as simple as that. After all, the shaman's recitation is not a mere work of art; it is also expected to *tell* something, to be informative with regard to diagnosis or therapy for those in stress. And since neither listeners nor even the shamans themselves can ever determine with certainty where exactly the autonomy of "form" begins or stops being valid, the average Tamang's quest for meaning (even if its pursuit remains quite different from an exegesis as practised by the philologist or theologian) and for some "terms of communication" is often frustrated. To be sure, different constructs may provoke different reactions. Let us examine a few examples from a text recorded in 1971:

a) Referring to the parts of the patient's body, the shaman recites, among others:

*luwa-ụwa ñạmba — salñi!,*
*luwa ñạmba — salñi!,*
*bụwa ñạmba — salñi!,*
*luwa-bụwa ñạmba — salñi!,*

that is,

'the downy hair is damaged — let us go and find (out its cause)!,
the down (?) is damaged — let us go and find (out its cause)!,
the hair (?) is damaged — let us go and find (out its cause)!,
the downy hair is damaged — let us go and find (out its cause)!'

In colloquial Tamang, only *luwa-bụwa* as a compound is attested. Its artificial disjunction (tmesis) into *luwa* and *bụwa* (in lines 2 and 3) separates what is

normally united. The passage constitutes a movement from the whole back to the whole over a pseudo-parallelismus membrorum that dissects the whole into its parts so as to pretend a minute search to the extent of forcibly disassembling what is otherwise indivisible. The operation is prompted by an almost desperate effort to "palpate" a totality literally "down to the ground", but its tautological circularity betrays at the same time the hesitation in which this effort ultimately gets stuck: a hesitation between the whole and its constitutive parts... Be that as it may, Tamang informants found this construct "normal"; that is, they saw in it a typical example of that poetic "exaggeration" or "embellishment" in which the shaman's texts abound.

There were, however, certain formulations which the informants could not help finding "odd" or even "absurd". Since they appear, indeed, to be slips of the tongue resulting in seemingly nonsensical mutilations or increments (nonsensical at least if judged by the understanding the Tamangs of our days have of both their ritual and colloquial languages), I subsume them under the term parapraxis. Yet it should be stressed that such "mistakes" tend to occur repeatedly in the text, and that they represent anomalies from the conceptual or paradigmatic viewpoint only; structurally, by contrast, they seem to conform to the general organizing principles that underlie some of the typical figural patterns and appear as bastard offshoots of amplifications, of the characteristic interweaving of enumerative text modules and the like.

We need to know more about the formation and frequency of such parapractic phenomena to be able to delimitate them more neatly from corrupt archaic expressions, on the one hand, and from casual blunders (heterophemy) due to fatigue and other problems of individual articulation, on the other. All we can state at the present stage of research is this: There is a portion of conventionality inherent in such unconventional formulations inasmuch as they, too, tend to be regarded by the Tamang informants as typically shamanic: they are — ultimately — conceded as an expression of the eccentric and even subversive individualism of a poet-ecstatic. We can, however, by no means regard them as *spontaneous* manifestations of an ecstatic or other "altered state of consciousness", bordering on glossolalia or other anomalous speech phenomena. Their irregular distribution alone disproves this, for such parapraxes also occur in those stages of the ritual which do not require any "paranormal" state or experience.[3]

[3] Non-shamanic ritual specialists, by contrast, are supposed to recite "correctly", i.e., to render their texts word by word as taught by their guru.

(b) Compare two (adjacent) variants of the passage describing the growth of the primordial trees in the creation myth:
The first variant reads as follows:

*jạra sombo khilnem, **mạ ni sombo** kenem, hà:ṅga sòm chya:nem, mendoi gyạra ...*

that is,

'the living roots grew whirling, the **living trunk** was born, (on it) there were three branches (and on these there were) hundreds of flowers...',
while the second variant has:

*jạra sombo khilnem, **mạ ni sòm** kenem, **mạ ni sòm** chya:nam hà:ṅga sòmḍi mẹndoi gyạra chya:nam...,*

that is,

'the living roots grew whirling, the **three trunks** were born, (and) when there were the **three trunks**, on the three branches there were hundreds of flowers'.

The **mạ ni sòm** struck both the informants and myself, since it is nowhere attested that the primordial trees had **three** trunks. One informant saw in it a mistake for *mạ ni sombo* (as in the first variant above), while the shaman himself and a third informant said that both versions were possibly correct.

Morphologically, *mạ ni sombo* has its parallels in a number of other configurations of the type monosyllabic substantive + *ni* + bisyllabic substantive or adjective, as in, e.g., *sa ni mẹra, dọ ni cha:jo* and *ro ni dụṅma,* instead of the normal *sa mẹra* ('ash and dust'), *dọ cha:jo* ('rocky place') and *rọ dụṅma* (lit. 'life-beam') respectively. The alternation of forms with and without *ni* (etymologically identical with the isolating or deictic *ni* in Tibetan) is not conditioned by a metric adaptation to the respective environments; and so far I have found only one instance in which *ni* clearly replaced the genitive suffix *-i*, namely in *mị: ni ñẹndap*, instead of the normal *mị:i ñẹndap* ('harmful charm of a human being'). Consequently, the insertion of *ni* is a matter of convention or style in the examples cited, having no other function than to augment the first (monosyllabic) substantive in order to establish a two-syllable symmetry.

The problem, however, is that the ominous *mạ ni sòm* does not establish such a symmetry, and that its repeated occurrence in the text nevertheless warns against treating it outright as a casual slip of the tongue. All we can do is to trace down the conditions that might have facilitated its formation, and guess the effect it is likely to generate: The fluctuation between *mạ ni **sombo*** and *mạ ni **sòm*** seems to have been conditioned by the intermediary position of *mạ ni*

between *jara* ***sombo*** and hà:ṅga **sòm** = 'living roots' and 'three branches', respectively. And the effect of the resulting interference is to stress — by sacrificing referential unequivocality — the metonymic contiguity that exists between roots, trunk and branches, each constituting an organic part of a triadic whole: the Tree.

(c) Contrary to the last example in which a subtraction *(som-bo)* creates confusion, in the present one, it is a so-called adjection which is likely to cast doubt on the shaman's seriousness. Compare two variants of the periphrasis extolling the creative power of the divine mother *(ḍiṇjyen phamo)* Kaliama:

The first variant has

*ṭha:, li: seṅbai ḍiṇjyen phamo, bu:, li: seṅbai ḍiṇjyen phamo, kha keba, li: keba, so keba, ro keba, bu: keba... (-i) ḍiṇjyen phamo,...*

that is,

'the *ḍiṇjyen phamo* who makes (creates) the blood, the body, the *ḍiṇjyen phamo* who makes the breath, the body, of whom the mouth (speech) is born, of whom the body is born, of whom the vital principle is born, of whom the life-principle is born, of whom the breath is born...'.

With two exceptions, the second variant shows a similar pattern:

*li: seṅbai ḍiṇjyen phamo chya:nem,* ***ṭha:gi*** *li: seṅbai ḍiṇjyen phamo chya:nem,* ***bu:i*** *li: seṅbai ḍiṇjyen phamo chya:nem, kha keppa, li: keppa, so keppa, ro keppa, bu: keppa...(-i) ḍiṇjyen phamo,*

that is,

'the *ḍiṇjyen phamo* who makes the body resided [in the primordial tree], the *ḍiṇjyen phamo* who makes the **body of the blood** resided, the *ḍiṇjyen phamo* who makes the **body of the breath** resided, the *ḍiṇjyen phamo* (who) gives birth to the mouth (speech), gives birth to the body, gives birth to the vital principle, gives birth to the life-principle, gives birth to the breath, ... *ḍiṇjyen phamo*.'

The amplificatory pattern (cf. the repetition of *li:* and *bu:*) in the first variant develops, here in the second variant, into

*li: seṅbai + ṭha:gi li: seṅbai + bu:i li: seṅbai + li: keppa(i), bu: keppa(i)*, etc.,

wherein *ṭha:gi li:* and *bu: li:* appear to have conglutinated, by means of the genitive suffix *-i/-gi*, which in the first variant constituted independent members in the enumerative sequence, i.e.,

*ṭha:, li:* ... and *bu:, li:* (1st var.) → *ṭha:gi li:* and *bu: li:* (2nd var.).

The 'body of the blood' and 'body of the breath' are obscure, and one informant found my proposal to interpret them as 'the body as the receptacle for blood/breath' forced. At any rate, both *ṭha:gi li:* and *bu:i li:* can be regarded as amplifications of the preceding

*li: seṅbai* = '(divine mother) who creates the body', etc.

The conceptual clarity thus tends to be sacrificed in favour of a formal manipulation the very intent of which is — paradoxically — a semantic enrichment of *li:*, 'body'. In analogy to the photographic procedure of a blow up which, beyond a certain limit, results in blurring the detail in the enlarged picture, adding *ṭha:gi* and *bu:i* to *li:* is likely to aggrandize the importance or complexity of the latter by expanding it, as it were, by a pseudo-explanatory operation which frustrates any exegetic attempt focussing on the lexical meaning of the configuration thus obtained in isolation.

Let us add that in this instance, the hasty recitation facilitates the oddity being smuggled in, and if confronted with the problem of interpretation in a conversation afterwards, the Tamang layman may find a 'body of the blood' or a 'body of the breath' hard to imagine and yet ultimately tolerable as expressions with a possibly mystic or lost meaning and/or as a token of that shamanic freedom which allows for surprising eclecticisms and rollicking permutations. A smile or a shrug of the shoulders betray his uncertainty in deciding to what extent religious truth and poetic exuberance can be getting along with each other.

(d) The confrontation between the text and the listener is more dramatic in the following case (of repeated occurrence!):

*gyábna jọ kha taṅbai noccyen, ṅònna jọ chi: taṅbai noccyen,*

that is (literally),

'the harmful agent which presents its mouth at the back **top** (peak),
the harmful agent which presents its backbone at the front **top** (peak)'.

Formally speaking, the curious passage results from an interlocking of two elements that have occurred previously in the text, namely

{*Gyábna* / *gyábna*} *Jọ* *kha taṅbai,* etc...

from:

(1) the names of two peaks (*jọ*) called Gyábna Jọ and Ṅònna Jọ,

(2) *gyábna kha taṅbai noccyen, ṅònna chi: taṅbai noccyen* = 'the harmful agent which presents its mouth at the back (to swallow the victim from behind), the harmful agent which presents its backbone at the front (presents its back to carry the victim away on it)'.

Such a "lumping together" is conceptually unjustifiable; it is nothing if not absurd. The unexpected formulation (aprosdocheton) results in some sort of a concrescence of the images of the human body and the physical landscape. Astonished, the listener is prompted to oscillate between this concrescence and its elements with which he has previously been made familiar and which now appear so strangely coalesced. A fraction of a second may suffice for this oscillation to spark off its "synergetic" effect deadlocking the listener in a labyrinth of dilemmas (which I shall try to reconstruct somewhat speculatively as follows): Is this insertion of *jọ* an individual (conscious, spontaneous) creation or just a slavish reproduction by the shaman actually reciting? Is it the inarticulate product of an ecstatic enthusiasm or just an inexplicable, monstrous blunder, part of an esoteric word-puzzle yet to be completed or a pun just for fun, a corrupt expression or just a padding conditioned by rhythm — or perhaps all this at the same time? One finds oneself trapped in the confrontation between one's own paradigmatic competence and the communicative competence of the shaman and/or the (unknown) original author of the text. One is caught in the dilemma as to whether to accept this formulation as a kind of performative truth in its own right or to treat it as a denotative that grasps an un-truth. Can the impossible be trustworthy and preferred, in certain cases at least, to what is untrustworthy even though possible?[4]

If asked later, the shaman won't give a convincingly serious or satisfactorily definitive answer (and neither did my shaman informant when confronted with the problem during the work on the tape-recording).[5] The uncertainty in which he leaves one is, of course, likely to make the responsibility entirely his, which in turn, amounts to postponing the arbitration to "future hermeneutics".[6] This may buffer the shock — after a while. But for the moment there is no authority to

[4] I am paraphrasing Aristotle who regarded this preference as a necessity for the drama to unfurl its eudaemonic, cathartic effect.

[5] Holmberg, op.cit. pp. 160 ff. aptly characterizes both the shaman's rituals and self-interpretation as "shamanic suspensions".

[6] Informants tend to postulate an optimal interpretability of ritual texts in general, which existed in the past and might be restituted in future to reveal the "identity of things" behind the "mere signification" and the "play of form".

which to lodge the assumpsit; one cannot even decide who is defaulting or, even worse, whether there is a breach of the terms of the client-recitor and client-text relationship at all. And so the listener cannot help acknowledging his impasse with laughter and a shake of the head.

Liminality — a state in which elements of what is familiar and possible emerge in an unfamiliar, impossible assemblage — is the term which lends itself best for subsuming the crisis of identities, resulting from the collapse of imagery: The momentary suspense of the consensual nature of the text (its capability of "telling" the listener what to anticipate) inevitably impeaches the identities of those who otherwise claim to participate in it as a discourse.

One is also tempted to interpret this momentary crisis as a specific type of what is called self-distancing in modern analyses of ritual.[7] Generally, self-distancing is thought to pave the way for catharsis in that it implies a role-reversal by means of parody, comic distortion or even a transposition into the absurd. In the present instance, the inversion would consist in a sudden conversion of the parabasis into liturgy, since the absurdity of the formulation in our third example is only parallelled by those derisory comments and puzzling gambados which the shaman otherwise affords in off-stage situations, be it in everyday conversations on therapy or diagnosis, or in the pauses between the different stages of the ritual itself. He thus appears, in his clients' eyes, as distancing himself not only from his role as a holder of religious truth and curer in divine commission, but also from his role as a poet. But I doubt if the impasse into which he manoeuvres the patient as a listener is likely to generate any *direct* cathartic effect in the latter; all one can say is that the listener's laughter is an attempt to distance himself from his own helplessness with the text. If there is any catharsis to be generated in the patient, it is, then, likely to be triggered by the total effect of all self-distancings in the ritual as a whole, by their dramaturgy and specific ordering in more or less coherent sets. Instead of considering it in isolation, we should examine (a) how this type of self-distancing in question is interconnected with, and/or contrasted to, other types of self-distancing within and even outside the framework of the ritual, and (b) how each of these types becomes effective, be it as a "direct supply" to the patient, or as a "feed-back" via the reactions by the audience. Only then will we be in a position to know more about how the subtle psycho-logistics of the on-and-off arrangement of such

[7] Cf. Kapferer, B.: A celebration of demons: Exorcism and the aesthetics of healing in Sri Lanka. Bloomington: Indiana University Press 1983.

self-distancings really works. All this must be reserved for a future study focussed more on the therapeutic strategies of the ritual as a whole and based on systematic empirical observations including psychological tests, medical examinations and the like. Even so it is evident that each type of self-distancing is bound to shift the mirrors around the shaman-patient-public triangle, or to highlight, each time, a different facet of the shaman-client relationship. The primary effect of these shiftings comes close to that confusion about identities, resulting from contextual interference and frustrated anticipations, which social psychologists call a double-bind. And, perhaps, it is only in exploring this double-bind that we can arrive at a better understanding of the transformation which is expected to take place in the patient to the effect of being cured, or at least of subjectively feeling cured.

Why do people "stick" to a text of which they know so little? How can the shaman's text be recited day after day and expected to have an impact on reality if it is, at the same time, so problematic precisely for those who "make use" of it? The investigation into the poetics or rhetorics[8] of healing might provide a partial answer to this old and nevertheless intriguing question.

RESEARCH REPORT

1.0. Title: The oral tradition of Western Tamang Shamanism.

1.1. Fieldwork: In 1982-1983, three months were devoted to completing and revising the data collected in a previous fieldwork in 1971 in Dhading district. The aim was to update information on specific religious concepts, and to clarify a number of questions relating to linguistics and the native interpretation of oral texts.

1.2. Objective: Translation and analysis of a shamanic recitation as an exemplary monument of both Tamang folk-religion in particular and oral tradition in general.

2.0. Publication of the research results: "A recitation of the Tamang shaman, Nepal" (book title).

[8] As to Nepal, Nicholas J. Allen and Anne de Sales have been among the first to draw our attention to this aspect of ritual language. Cf. Allen, N.J.: Sewala puja bintila puja: Notes on Thulung ritual language. *Kailash, a Journal of Himalayan Studies* VI,4,1978: PP. 237-256; Sales, A. de: Actes et paroles dans les rituels chamaniques des Kham-Magar (Népal). Paris: Université de Paris X, 1984 (vols. I and II).

2.1. The introductory chapters outline the general setting and deal briefly with, i.a., pantheon and mythology, the Tamang shaman's professional ethos and position within the larger fold of Tamang tradition, his repertory and specific ritual techniques, etc.

2.2. The second part is devoted to select problems of interpretation and text linguistics. Among others, the question is raised as to what extent exegesis, as a Western method developed on written texts, can be applied to interpreting an oral literature, such as the shaman's recitation. A separate chapter focusses on text pragmatics and examines some specific structural — rhetorical or poetic — properties that are likely to enhance what in the anthropologist's jargon is called the psycho-physical effectiveness of symbols.

2.3. The central part of the book consists of the description of the ritual and the presentation of the text: the transcription of the original, recited partly in Tamang, partly in Nepali, and its translation. The translation is only intended to render the Tamang informants' interpretation, which the latter is commented upon in a comparative perspective in the annotations elucidating etymology, concepts of nosology and the like.

2.4. The project is an attempt to view one particular tradition through its textual manifestation and to explain, among others, why people "stick" to a text of which they appear to know so little.

3.0. **Prospects:** Both the material and the scope of its analysis invites us to increase our efforts towards a more systematic work on oral literature and folk-traditions — that part of Nepali culture which is now being threatened by an increasing rate of socio-cultural change.

3.1. One field of interest to be pursued by future research is the history of local and regional folk-traditions: their origins, the processes of their formation and their inter-connections both with each other, as well as with high-cultural traditions.

3.2. Another task for future research is to investigate into local and regional traditions as sources for historiography. This would require interdisciplinary cooperation with scientists specialising in epigraphy, migration, population dynamics, place names, cultural ecology and the like. Recent attempts to exploit oral literature in the light of evidence as provided by comparative linguistics and the study of social structure for reconstructing the ethno-history of Central Africa have proven quite promising (cf., e.g., *Social Analysis* 4, 1980). In a region like the Nepal Himalayas where

— in contradistinction to Black Africa — written sources and a stable grid of chronology greatly facilitate comparative analysis, research in this field may succeed in providing even more reliable results.

PREVIOUS PUBLICATIONS:

HÖFER, András: Tamang Ritual Texts. Notes on the Interpretation of an Oral Tradition of Nepal. In: Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland (1985), pp. 23-28.

--- : Wieso hinduisieren sich die Tamang? In: KÖLVER, B. (ed.): Formen kulturellen Wandels und andere Beiträge zur Erforschung des Himālaya. (Sankt Augustin 1986), pp. 35-52.

## COMMENT ON HÖFER'S CONTRIBUTION

DOR BAHADUR BISTA

[...] Usually the job of a commentator is simplified by the fact that most of the information is presented by the contributor, and the commentator makes easy judgements upon them. But Professor Höfer does not make the job of the commentator that easy and simple. He does not talk about any substantive issues or about the informations of his field work. He makes promises through his paper. He talks about pregnancy and the would-be birth of a healthy child called 'A Recitation of the Tamang Shaman'. He assures us that the child could make a positive contribution once it makes its own debut into the world. We, the students of Nepalese Studies, ought to be satisfied with this, because he appears to be doing an excellent job as midwife. After all, the research scholars, particularly field anthropologists, are nothing but midwives helping to facilitate the birth of a healthy baby. Field anthropologists do not create ideas, nor do they manufacture facts. Of course some field scholars do the job of collecting informations and interpreting them better than others, and Professor Höfer claims he is doing very well.

His forthcoming book, according to Professor Höfer, besides providing an interpretation of Tamang Shaman's recitations, also invites us to step up our efforts towards a more systematic work on oral literature and folk traditions — that part of Nepali culture which is now being threatened by an increasing rate of socio-cultural change. He suggests, for future research, the history of the origins of folk traditions, their formation, and the processes of their 'interconnections with the high-cultural traditions'. For the investigation of the sources of historiography into the folk traditions he invites an interdisciplinary cooperation between the studies of migration, population dynamics, place names, cultural ecology, comparative linguistics, and the study of social structure.

I like the idea of this collective midwifery to produce healthy, hybrid and composite knowledge. It could not hurt but will certainly help anthropology to collaborate with history; history, with sociology; sociology, with religion; religion, with folklore; folklore, with politics; and politics, with economics and bureaucra-

cy. We probably have reached a stage in Nepal where anthropological studies to produce knowledge of one exclusive genre is beginning to have a diminishing return as far as its use in any meaningful application is concerned.

Höfer also promises to deal with the question: Why do people stick to a text which is so poorly understood by those who make use of it. Casper Miller who studied Shamanism among the Eastern Tamang some twelve years ago suggested that they do it partly because they have no other, better means of curing illnesses readily available to them (Miller 1979, p.163). He was referring to the treatment of psycho-somatic illnesses by the Shamans, unlike Höfer, who is interested in a wide-ranging study of many different aspects of Tamang Shamanism. Therefore we are not going to be satisfied with the answers concerned with the role of the Shamans exclusively as faith healers.

Höfer's work should make a contribution towards our efforts to understand the background of Tamang cultural history. It should help to explain an important aspect of the cultural history of the Kathmandu Valley population as well. Unlike most other ethnic communities in Nepal, the Tamangs have been living around the Valley, almost totally encircling it, and therefore interacting with the Valley population in many respects over a very long period of time. We do not really know how long they have been living around the Valley. We certainly do know that their blood runs through the veins of many Nepalis who are among the standard-bearers of the great traditions of the classical Hindu and Buddhist religions of today's Kathmandu Valley population. Shamanism which has never lost its grip and clientele, especially in the field of curing undiagnosed maladies in the Kathmandu Valley, in its ritual details and performance largely draws upon Tamang tradition. The repertoire of Shamanic performance and incantations, sometimes known as Jhankrism and Jhar-phuk, is profoundly dominated by Tamang practices. Thus the oral tradition of Tamang shamanism is not an isolated aspect of Nepali socio-religious culture. It is very much interwoven with the Hindu caste society of the Kathmandu Valley.

Shamanism, although wide-spread among every ethnic community, does not come out as prominently everywhere since it is sometimes integrated within other larger traditions. Often it draws upon Hinduism, Buddhism, and other aspects of older tribal religion, as in the case of the Tamangs indicated by Höfer.

The introductory part of Höfer's forthcoming book promises to deal with the Tamangs' pantheon and mythology, the Shaman's performance, his ritual repertoire, and will determine the position of Shamanism within the larger context of Tamang tradition and its relationship with the other ecstatic healers such as the Jhankris who are quite wide-spread throughout the hill zones of Nepal. As I

myself have found during my studies, Shamanism is not a restricted phenomenon of any one region of the country. It is wide-spread in the Terai, in the Siwalik regions and the Inner Terai, and in the high-altitude Himalayan regions as much as in the middle hills. A scientific and systematic study of Shamanism therefore will help us understand the origins of certain important aspects of our cultural heritage in a far more comprehensive manner than the literature existing in any language so far does. The classical literature in Sanskrit such as the Vedas and Purāṇas, having been created by the learned *paṇḍits* of the Upper Gangetic basin, view the culture and people of Nepal from their own ethno-centric perspective, just as the accounts of the Eighteenth-century European visitors have their own biases in them. To all practical purposes, Nepali native culture is still largely unaccounted for. With a few recent publications, we are just about to make a beginning.

A recently published, excellent book by David Holmberg ('Order in Paradox') fills this gap in a useful way to quite an extent. He deals with the entire cosmology of Tamang religious practice and shows how it integrates with other religions. He also points out the evolutionary approaches to the study of Shamanism which indicate its origins can be found in the substrata of the human mind rather than in the bedrock of human history (Holmberg 1989, p.143). This applies to the study of Shamanism in general everywhere, even though Holmberg holds Tamang shamanic practices would be 'unintelligible outside the specifically Tamang ritual field' (*loc.cit.*, pp. 143f.)

There has been a tendency to look into Shamanism usually in its role as a healing practice. But it appears quite clearly now that we will not be able to understand its complexities unless we look into its religious and social role in general. We do not yet know to what extent this oral tradition affects the national society. Very few Nepali scholars have looked into it. On the other hand, it has become a fashion among the Nepali élites and the educated youth to consider the formal structure of politics as the ultimate and decisive factor that singularly determines and affects the socio-cultural realm of the national society. Sadly, this propensity of the élites to give ultimate priority to the political structure has tended to ignore and overshadow the socio-cultural-religious realm of the society which in fact plays a far more decisive role in conditioning the daily political behaviour of the poeple at all levels than most people believe. This informal and indirect but *de facto* political attitude is ultimately responsible for the formal political structure people help create and support.

The peculiar geo-political and ecological circumstances of our land have guided our élites to rely more on fashions coming from beyond our ecological and socio-religious boundaries than on the native wisdom or strength of the population. Many Nepali élites and educated youths seem to believe that they can command the respect and the trust of the people simply by drawing their attention away from the reality of their own. The political rhetorics of poverty and backwardness independent of their socio-cultural norms, religious principles and values, family organizations and social structure have a danger of leading people away from the most precious human values that bring people nearer to god and the divine existence. This is where the religious preachers, priests, and politically vested interests have been playing significant roles: they capitalize in the vacuum created by political rhetorics. But the mosaic of religious-cultural traditions of so many different groups of people speaking so many different languages could not and ought not be overlooked that easily. Because then we will be so much the poorer in our mind and attitude towards the most precious human values which are still maintained through the oral traditions of our people.

For all these reasons, I consider the forthcoming work of Professor Höfer as of great significance and usefulness. [...]

# THE LINGUISTIC SURVEY OF NEPAL

WERNER WINTER

Very early in the planning stages of what was to become the Nepal Research Programme, Bernhard Kölver approached me with a proposal that I become involved in a survey of the lesser-known languages of Nepal, in particular of Tibeto-Burman languages of the hill country. Initially, what we had in mind was the gathering of data (and their preliminary analysis) from a number of selected idioms. However, it soon turned out that the actual state of information made it necessary to change our strategy from an eclectic approach to a much more comprehensive one: too little was actually known about the number, the closer affiliation, and the location of a wide variety of languages; what reports existed could at best be called incomplete. Hence it was decided that the immediate goal should be a complete coverage of all geographical areas of Nepal we would be able to explore, with data to be collected from all languages found in these areas. On an earlier occasion (Winter 1984), I described our intentions and the practical steps we took; it may be useful to present here a substantial selection from this text as the original publication is not readily available.

The Linguistic Survey of Nepal began its work early in 1981 as one of the component projects of the Nepal Research Programme; it was financed by the German Research Council (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft) with funds administered by the University of Kiel. Its work would not have been possible without the generous moral and administrative support of various branches of His Majesty's Government and Tribhuvan University, especially its Research Division and the Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies and its Directors.

It was the aim of the LSN to identify and document the nature and distribution of the numerous idioms used in the Kingdom of Nepal alongside the national language, Nepali, and to determine the interrelation of these idioms so as to be able to classify them as separate languages or as sublanguages (local and social dialects) combining to form separate languages.

From the beginning of the project, it was known that Nepal is one the linguistically most diversified regions of the world, a veritable treasure house for

the student of languages. It was known that at least four major stocks were represented — Indo-Aryan, Tibeto-Burman, and marginally, Dravidian and Munda. It was furthermore known that settlement patterns were intricate, with diversity encountered even within very small areas.

It followed as a consequence that if we wanted to come up with a reasonably representative record of language data, we would have to use a rather narrow grid so as to avoid leaving out possibly highly interesting idioms simply by bypassing them unawares. It was therefore imperative that our work should be limited to an area of good, but manageable, size at least in the initial phase of the survey, and that we should collect data from as many points within this area as possible. To this purpose it was necessary to enlist the help of personnel qualified to do linguistic fieldwork and willing to cope with the hardship of doing fieldwork in remote and difficult areas.

Although Nepal has a fair number of qualified linguists, these people could not be expected to give up their present work and to devote their time and energy for a number of years to the exacting tasks of the survey. We therefore felt that the only option we had was to train our own fieldworkers. Training had to be done both in intensive course work prior to the beginning of our fieldwork, but also in breaks between campaigns and in the field itself. For the initial training period, we enlisted the help of Dr Subhadra Subba and Dr Ramawater Yadav of CNAS, of Dr Armin Kohz of the University of Kiel, and of Mr. William Templer, then attached to the Goethe Institute at Kathmandu.

From a group of some forty university graduates with some experience in work in the field in various disciplines, but — with one exception — not in linguistic investigations, we selected twenty-two candidates for training; after completion of the course, these twenty-two young men were sent out to Ilam in May, 1981.

Following the advice of local colleagues, we had decided to start our work in the Eastern Developmental Region, moving generally from east to west. The main reason behind this decision was that we were convinced we would encounter almost all types of settlement and language-diversity patterns there if we included the highlands as well as the Terai. Our expectations were exceeded by far as concerned the diversity found.

Since we could not know in advance what varieties of language we were to find, we decided to postpone answers to the question of language identity and accept, as different, idioms that were labelled locally with different names. As it turned out, many of these labels did not mark a substantial difference from further idioms with another label; but not infrequently the labels mirrored a

diversity of the past, now no longer in existence, and the current over-differentiation was by no means meaningless. To complicate the picture even further, at times an identical label turned out to be used for two or more different idioms; such under-differentiation had to be accepted for the time being.

The collection of data was carried out with the aid of questionnaires (and later on, and to a more limited extent, with that of tape recorders). In the course of our work, the experience gained led us to modify and expand the original basic questionnaire. The first questionnaire contained a word list and a list of sentences both in Nepali and English, with Nepali, the language to be used in the interviews. Completely filled in, the questionnaire would have provided us with 250 words and with an excess of 100 sentences illustrating the use of these and other words and arranged in such a way that basic syntactic patterns and important features of paradigms could be detected. It was our intention to keep the questionnaire stable so that very different languages would be approached in an identical way. This intention was maintained throughout later stages in our work, but an expansion of the basic questionnaire was introduced by the addition of three further questionnaires designed to capture some of the impressive richness of paradigms in the various languages, in particular of those often called Kiranti.

An analysis of our data required, of course, technical linguistic skills we could not expect to find in our own trainees; we therefore had to rely on the help of linguistic scientists working in Nepal, viz., Dr Subba and Dr R. Yadav, who had obtained their doctorates in India and the USA, respectively, and on the German field supervisor during the years 1982-1984, Dr Alfons Weidert, with doctorates from Heidelberg and Kiel, as well as those working with the Kiel branch of the survey, Dr Gerd Hansson and myself. The analysis has thus far yielded a number of articles in print, more publications being prepared to appear soon.

Such publications have included a *Concise Limbu Grammar and Dictionary* (Weidert — Subba 1985), a book prepared with financial support by the Survey, and articles that have since appeared. As the *Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft* decided not to provide support for further work in the field — a decision much to be regretted as it cut off established lines of contact and cooperation inside Nepal that would have made it possible to continue, and maybe complete, the comprehensive coverage of the panorama of languages in this part of the world — our activities had to be carried out at the homebase of the Survey, the Department of Linguistics at the University of Kiel. The two linguists involved pursued

goals that differed from one another, but also supported and complemented each other. During a period of one year, Gerd Hansson used the information available in our questionnaires to summarize the insights we had been able to accumulate so that they could be made available to, among others, agencies of His Majesty's Government. The compilation (Hansson 1991) is richer in information about the distribution of languages and sublanguages of the Tibeto-Burman group in eastern Nepal than anything available elsewhere; it attempts in detail to determine the identity of idioms and ethnic groups and their inter-group relationships. Though a sort of encyclopedia rather than an analytic monograph, it should turn out to be a useful tool not only to those concerned with linguistic and ethnic diversity in Nepal from a practical point of view, but also to linguists in the Tibeto-Burman field, for whom labels of languages will take on a higher degree of tangibility. The second major contribution by Gerd Hansson is a strictly linguistic one: in Hansson (to appear) he tries to interpret the rich data of the Survey with a view toward determining the nature of the relationship of the Kiranti languages to one another; as it seems very hard, if not impossible, to make use of a *stammbaum* model for this group of more than thirty languages, the investigation of this particular cluster of languages turns out to be highly significant for the general theory of comparative linguistics.

My own work focused on two major topics. The presence of Novel Kishore Rai as a Humboldt fellow in Kiel enabled me to continue the writing of a fairly comprehensive Bantawa dictionary; a final review will have to be carried out in Nepal. A selection from the data of the Survey will be presented in a set of volumes of the *Linguistic Atlas of Eastern Nepal: Minor Tibeto-Burman Languages*. It will present — apart from commmentaries — a selection of synopses of vocabulary items collected from close to forty languages in more than two hundred localities. Those lists that are suitable for this purpose will be converted into a presentation on maps (for which a technique of abstract geographical presentation and coded identification of forms has been developed), these lexical maps to be accompanied by others depicting the distribution of phonological and morphological phenomena over the range of languages investigated. Up to this point, close to two hundred maps have been drafted; a small residue awaits completion. The lists of words are ready for printing; only the maps, however, are in the hands of the publishers.

A major result of the Survey has been that scholars from outside Germany have been encouraged to start fieldwork in Nepal, making use of the facilities offered by us. Such fieldwork has resulted in book-size publications (Gvozdano-

vić 1985; Van Driem 1988; another book by the latter author will appear soon). In Nepal itself, Novel Kishore Rai has embarked on a continuation of the work he began with his dissertation (Rai 1985); while he was in Kiel, I was able to cooperate with him in the preparation of an edition of analyzed texts from Bantawa; their publication is to be expected in the not-too-distant future.

While the discontinuation of financial support for the Survey put an end to its work in the field, the results of subsequent analyses and of research carried on independently by individual scholars will make it evident that the Survey has been able to make a substantial contribution to the study of the languages of Nepal, a country particularly rich in this respect. It is pleasant to note that the importance of our contribution has received professional recognition by the fact that the Linguistic Society of Nepal has elected me — after Sir Ralph Turner, R.K. Sprigg, and K.L. Pike — an Honorary Member in 1988. I look forward to a continuing association with linguists in Nepal that are willing to carry on the work we were able to start.

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## COMMENT ON WINTER'S CONTRIBUTION

SUBHADRA SUBBA DAHAL

1. I feel privileged to be given this chance to comment on the Report of a Project in which I was involved throughout its entirety in Nepal, i.e. from February, 1981, to June, 1984. I admit I have full knowledge of this project, linguistic and non-linguistic, which even my German counterparts did not have. I have witnessed its introduction, its operations in the field and in the Kathmandu office, its management, its style of work, and its premature end.

Now when the project results are being sorted out in Kiel, we, the Nepali side, do not have any contact with Kiel [in this phase, which to a linguist is of course the most rewarding]. The writer says there are no funds for such contacts. To this I should say academic ethics, interests, and friendship are not commodities for exchange offered by Nepali poverty to German affluence. Nepali scholars may not have a funding agency like the German Research Council, and may not have the same command of methodology as our German colleagues, but we have enough self-confidence to resent an arrangement where outside scholars give us nothing but the status of field workers and informants. We want recognition for the work we do.

The writer of the paper repeatedly mentions there are no funds for the Nepali scholars, and for this reason all the work has to be done in Germany, which of course means all the major publications will be in the names of Germans.

However, the major results of the project [will be] a compilation of Tibeto-Burman languages in eastern Nepal; it attempts to determine in detail the identity of idioms and ethnic groups, and their interrelationship. Nepali scholars should have a fair and proper share in this work.

2. The project has now reached the stage where it interprets the rich data of the Survey, with a view to determine the relationship of some thirty of the Kiranti languages with one another. The investigation of this particular cluster of languages will be highly significant for the general theory of linguistics, [as has become patent through the work of] G. Hansson, a devoted linguist who knows all the *pañcāyats* of east Nepal though he has never visited this country. Linguists in Nepal would very much like to meet him and share his knowledge.

3. [The projects under preparation are]
   (a) a Bantawa dictionary,
   (b) a Linguistic Atlas of East Nepal: Minor Tibeto-Burman Languages, i.e. a synopsis of vocabulary items Professor Winter has collected from close to forty languages and 200 localities.

As a linguist, I am overwhelmed by this [prospect]; I heartily welcome this significant contribution by the *Survey,* and offer my sincere thanks to the *German Research Council* for funding the project [... and to all the linguists, foreign and] Nepalese who worked hard to achieve these results.

[There is a number of questions, though, which ought to be raised.]

What happened to all the Indo-Aryan, Dravidian, and Munda language materials? The *Survey* has accumulated information from 18 Districts, during ten campaigns. [And] Nepali [itself should not be forgotten. It was] found, as a distinct language, in all of the *pañcāyats,* even in the remote areas of Solu Khumbu, Sankhuwa Sulka, and Taplejung. [Everyone will agree that] the linguistic results of the contact between Nepali and the Tibeto-Burman languages are highly important. [In the same way,] convergence and divergence of the many Indo-Aryan languages of the Tarai, their borrowings from each other, their kinds and effects, [will be most significant and rewarding;] I hope some linguists will continue to work in this area.

[To facilitate such work,] I should like to remind the *Nepal Research Programme* of the promise made by our German friends viz., that [ a complete set of] the questionnaires of the Linguistic Survey of Nepal should be deposited in the Documentation Section of the Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies (CNAS) of Tribhuvan University. At present, all the useful questionnaires are in Kiel. This transfer should take place as soon as possible. [...]

4. My last remarks are addressed to my own university. My university should have a clear-cut research policy for foreign affiliations. Let it frame a policy which is useful for the progress of Nepalese scholars when they are assigned to work with foreigners. Let them not be used as informants and field assistants, just for [the sake of] some additional income.

[Editor's Note]

Professor Winter, who could not attend the Conference, would like to point out the fact that copies of the materials collected by the LINGUISTIC SURVEY had been offered to the Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies in 1983; that his offer had at that time been refused; and that a renewed request for the materials had not reached him. He takes the occasion to repeat that the materials are accessible to

any *bona fide* scholar, now as earlier, and assures the Centre every effort will be made to provide the copies now desired. At the same time, he draws attention to the financial problems involved in duplicating materials of sizeable quantities collected under a project the financial support of which ceased some time ago.

# Report on a Study of Buddhist Revival in Nepal

Heinz Bechert

Buddhism has been a major spiritual force in this country for more than 2,000 years. Thus, the study of Buddhism in Nepal represents a vast subject, and any detailed study should limit its scope to particular aspects of its history and development. In the remote past, various schools of Śrāvakayāna, Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna spread in this country, but after the decline of Buddhism in India only two main Buddhist traditions managed to survive in Nepal: the so-called "Newar Buddhism" and "Tibetan Buddhism". Whereas Newar Buddhism has remained limited to the ethnic and linguistic community of the Newars, Tibetan-speaking ethnic groups and mountain peoples of other descent profess themselves to be either completely or partially Tibetan Buddhists.

The fact that the spread of traditional Newar Buddhism has remained limited to members of a particular ethnic group has to do with the peculiar structure of this form of religion. Historically, Newar Buddhism is to be grouped together with the tradition of Indian Vajrayāna or "Tantric" Buddhism, but it has developed its own peculiarities which are unique in Buddhist history. There are no longer any celibate monastic orders among the Newar Buddhists. Presumably in the 13th or 14th century, rather, the Sangha was transformed into a caste community, i.e. a community one was admitted to not on the basis of a personal decision but by virtue of one's birth. The members of this caste live in "vihāras", which grew out of the former monasteries. New vihāras of this type, of course, were also founded. The communities which grew out of the previous monastic orders have retained the designation "Sangha", the old name of the monastic community.

I do not propose to deal with this particular form of Buddhism here because it has been the subject of another project in the "Nepal Research Program", which has been carried out by Professor Siegfried Lienhard, and has also been investigated by a number of other scholars.

In the context of my own studies, which I shall outline here, I would like to point out one peculiarity of Newar Buddhism, viz. its rather complete lack of a living doctrinal tradition. Traditionally, the Vajrācāryas and Śākyabhikṣus are ritual specialists who perform rather complicated ceremonies and know the

corresponding texts very well, but most of whom are not persons knowledgeable in Buddhist teaching who might be able to explain the meaning of these rituals and texts. They sometimes declare the meaning secret on account of the esoteric nature of Vajrayāna, but this reply is no longer generally accepted by contemporary Buddhists. In any case, the preaching and propagation of doctrine were largely unknown in their tradition. The restriction of important initiatory rituals to members of the Śākyabhikṣu caste (in the case of the *ācāryābhiṣeka*, the admission of Vajrācāryas only) provides occasion for critical questioning in our present age of increasing social and cultural equality. The Vajrācāryas were not in a position to offer a rational justification for this. One can therefore certainly say that traditional Newar Buddhism has worked itself into a spiritual crisis. With recent reforms, the situation has, of course, partially changed, but this is a very new development.

In theory the possibility was available to the Nepalese Buddhists of having the answers to their questions being given by Buddhists from Tibet, since doctrinal traditions, including philosophical disputation, have remained alive there. These traditions, moreover, are rather close to Newar Buddhism in their philosophical foundations, as Tibetan Buddhism, too, has integrated the Tantric tradition. Some Newar Buddhists have, in fact, become adherents of Tibetan Buddhism, but Tibetan influence on the Newars has remained on the whole rather limited. A major factor was the language problem. The Tibetans have systematically translated Buddhist terminology into Tibetan, whereas the Newar Buddhists have retained nearly all the Sanskrit terms. For Newars who did not already possess a certain amount of theoretical knowledge concerning Buddhist doctrine it was almost impossible to recognize essentially familiar concepts of that doctrine in a Tibetan guise. Then, too, among the more educated Tibetan monks there existed hardly anyone who possessed a tolerably good knowledge of Sanskrit. In any event, cases in which Tibetan clerics were able to exert a lasting influence on Newar Buddhists prior to 1959 were more the exception than the rule, or merely a passing phenomenon, like the lamas preaching at Kindol vihār in 1923 and 1925.

Under these conditions, Nepalese Buddhists interested in religious knowledge and education had to look for help from another side. The resulting new trends in Nepalese Buddhism form the subject matter of the project which I would like to introduce in this symposium, viz. the impact of modernization of thought and of social change on the Buddhist communities in Nepal, and the identification of the sources as well as of the characteristic features of the so-called "modernistic"

Buddhist movement in this country. This project was carried out within the framework of the NRP by members of the Institute of Indian and Buddhist Studies of the University of Göttingen, viz. Dr Jens-Uwe Hartmann, Dr Petra Kieffer-Pülz, and the author of this report. Information was collected during field work in Nepal between 1986 and 1989.

The most conspicuous new trend in Nepalese Buddhism is represented by the spread of Theravāda. Theravāda in Nepal, however, is not identical with traditional Theravāda as it has existed in Sri Lanka and in South-East Asia for many centuries. It is a variety of what has been termed "Buddhistic modernism" by European scholars. This movement has deeply influenced contemporary Theravāda.

It was in the last decades of the 19th century that there originated, in a number of Buddhist countries, reform movements propagating new views of Buddhism in tune with the times. Among the aims of the reformers has been that of bringing Buddhism back to life in the land of its origin, India, where it had almost disappeared. The activities of the Maha Bodhi Society of India did not immediately result in the conversion of large numbers of Indians, but it contributed to the spread of knowledge of Buddhism, particularly among the educated classes. And from India the influence of Buddhist modernistic thought found its way to Nepal, the country where the Buddha's birthplace is located.

The policy of the Rana regime in Nepal was naturally opposed to any attempts to introduce the Buddhist reform movement into Nepal. The few Nepalis who, in the period before 1950, joined these attempts soon discovered this. In the long run, however, the suppression was ineffective, and since the overthrow of the Ranas, modernized forms of Buddhism have been able to develop quite freely.

The suppression of Buddhist reform activity by the Rana regime and the repeated expulsion of monks had as a consequence that the first Nepalese Buddhist associations were formed in India. The Buddhist reform movement in India, in its initial phases, overwhelmingly bore the stamp of work done by Sinhalese and Burmese monks. For many of the early Theravāda monks, therefore, India was but a stopover on the way to further studies in Ceylon or in Burma, and the influence from these two countries has remained of a formative nature up to the present day. Only within the last decade has the influence of Thai Buddhism become significantly apparent, and it has become very strong recently.

For our research project, we had to determine the current state of knowledge, the sources of information and, of course, the methodology to be applied. As for the current state of knowledge, Ria Kloppenborg published a paper on "The-

ravāda Buddhism in Nepal" in *Kailash* (V, pp. 301 — 321) in 1977, and Ramesh Chandra Tewari commented on "Socio-Cultural Aspects of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal" in the *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* (VI, part 2, pp. 67 — 93) in 1983. An additional chapter of seven pages was also contributed by John Locke for the English version of Dumoulin's book on *Buddhism in the Modern World* (1976, pp. 295 — 301). These authors have succeeded in drawing the attention of Buddhologists to the existence of this phenomenon, which I had the opportunity to observe as early as in 1967 during a short visit in Kathmandu. It was in 1967 that I became interested in the study of the revival of Buddhism in Nepal, but for various reasons I had to postpone my research in this field until 1986.

For our present study, we were able to make use of a number of Nepalese publications. Amṛtānanda Mahāthera has produced an account of the history of Theravāda in Nepal, and Vaikuṇṭhaprasād Lakaul has written a book on the same subject in Newari. A major source of information is represented by the biographies and by autobiographical records of leading Nepalese Buddhists, such as Mahāprajñā, Dharmāloka Mahāsthavir, Prajñānand Mahāsthavir, the Anāgārikā Dharmācārī and several others. The reformers have produced an enormous number of publications for Buddhist readers. In 1974, Bhikṣu Sudarśan prepared a list of the then available Nepalese Buddhist literature, and Prof. K. P. Malla included such material in a series entitled *Nepal Bhasha Bibliography.*

Therefore, one of our first tasks was the collection of the relevant publications. It was not possible, of course, to bring together a complete set of them, but we hope to have at our disposal now all the major publications on the history of this movement as well as a sufficient number of examples for the various types of contemporary Theravāda and related Buddhist writings of Nepal.

However, a collection of the publications is not at all sufficient for forming an adequate idea of contemporary Theravāda in Nepal and its impact on society and culture. We also had to visit the monastic communities and the lay associations to get to know their understanding of Buddhism and of the textual sources used, to inquire about their *guruparampará*, to observe their religious teaching, or *dharmadeśanā,* and the religious practice as represented by the regular *pūjās*, the *jñānamālās*, the various festivals, etc. For the observation of the most prominent festival of the Buddhists, the Vaisakh day, Dr Kieffer-Pülz visited Nepal last year, and she has made a detailed report on the proceedings.

Because of the limitations of space, I cannot describe here the results of our investigations in detail. I should rather refer to the paper published in the *Journal*

*of the Nepal Research Centre* and the paper read at the Stockholm Conference on Nepalese Studies in 1987 (see bibliography). However, I shall add some remarks linking our observations with the general theme of the NRP, viz. the question of the syncretistic nature of Buddhist revivalism in Nepal.

As mentioned previously, the adherents of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal come primarily from the Buddhist Newar population. It follows that not only the monks themselves have been moulded by this tradition in a certain sense, but also that they must conform to the realities of this social tradition in their missionary activities. In Nepalese Theravāda, conferring the *pravrajyā* status for a limited period of time represents a link with the Newar tradition of the *bare chuyagu*, or rather an attempt to replace the *bare chuyagu* with a Theravāda custom. Such temporary ordinations are quite common in Burma and in Thailand, while they are not practiced in Sri Lanka. More recently we have also been able to observe efforts to replace the traditional initiatory rites for girls (*bārhāy tayegu*) by a so-called *ṛṣiṇī* ordination of the Theravādins.

The first modern biography of the Buddha in Newari bears the title *Lalitavistara*. It was composed by Mahāprajñā and first published in the year 2484 according to Buddhist reckoning (1940/41). While the title refers to a famous Mahāyāna text important for traditional Newar Buddhism, the work, in content, is oriented entirely towards the traditions of Theravāda Buddhism, i.e. to Pali literature, and may be taken to be an account of the Buddha's life in conscious opposition to that of traditional Newar Buddhism.

To postulate a syncretistic nature of Nepalese Theravāda Buddhism from such links would be, according to our observations, a fundamental error. On the whole, Nepalese Theravāda Buddhism is relatively untouched by syncretistic elements. We have been unable to detect in Nepal any fundamental concessions to the traditions of folk religion. The single element of ritualism in the Theravāda Buddhism of Nepal is the *paritrāṇa*, i.e. the *paritta* ceremony well-known to all Theravāda countries. It is carried out in a form based on the Buddhist tradition of Sri Lanka and may be taken, in the full sense of the word, to be orthodox, even if not canonical. For the rest, however, Nepalese Theravāda Buddhism is defined by rationalistic and modernistic modes of thought. It is the very picture of contrast to Newar Buddhism, with which it must necessarily coexist, but to which it only unwillingly makes concessions.

It is quite apparent that syncretistic tendencies are much more widespread among the laity than among the monks. One may still say that even for those Newar lay persons who have come under the spiritual sway of Theravāda Bud-

dhism, the strong involvement in the traditional social order as defined by the ritual of Newar Buddhism would not admit an abrupt "dropping out" of this order. Nor do the monks demand this of the laity, but, with the support of some of the latter, they seek forms of their own by which the traditional ritual can be replaced. We have already mentioned the short-term ordination and the *ṛṣiṇī* ordination as examples. Some other rituals can be replaced by the *paritta*, which can be recited, in the form of the *mahāparitrāṇa*, by large groups of monks or, at home, by individual Theravāda adherents.

In this connection the example of a Newar nun may be mentioned who converted from Tibetan to Theravāda Buddhism. Since she had already been a nun in a Tibetan monastery, she had become so accustomed to certain ritual acts, e.g. the use of "rosary" (*akṣamālā*), that she could not forthwith abandon the practice. Now, the rosary is by no means unknown in Theravāda countries, and, in some, particularly in Burma, it is even widespread. Our nun, however, was admonished by her fellow nuns to give up such behaviour unbecoming to a Theravāda adherent. From this example the particular mental attitude of Nepalese Theravādin women becomes very clear.

The same applies to the stupa cult. The Theravādins revere the Laṅkācaitya at Ānandakuṭīvihāra, in which a Buddha relic brought from Sri Lanka to Nepal is deposited. On the other hand, the monks and nuns of Theravāda Buddhism hardly ever take part in the cult of the traditional stupas, including Svayambhunath and Bodhnath, and when they do revere these stupas, they do so not, as we were told, in the same way as the Newar Buddhists and the Tibetan Buddhists. Still, it is the stupa cult where points of contact with traditional Newar Buddhism are probably most likely to be observed. The Tibetan Buddhists, for their part, have included the Laṅkācaitya in their list of pilgrimage sites. It is contained in a list of sacred sites of the Kathmandu Valley published for Tibetan pilgrims, and we have repeatedly observed lamas in *pradakṣiṇā* around this stupa.

On the other hand, one can observe influences of Theravāda Buddhism on the traditional Buddhism of Nepal. Thus the most solemn holy day of the Theravādins, the Buddhist Vaisakh festival, though previously unknown in Nepal, has come to be observed by the other Buddhists. Vaisakh processions in which not only Theravāda monks but also Newar Buddhists and lamas take part occur in all areas inhabited by Buddhists. The chronology of Theravāda Buddhists, according to which the year of the *parinirvāṇa* of the Buddha is set at 544 B.C., has gained acceptance among all Buddhists of Nepal. Individual Tibetan

Buddhists, on the example of the Theravādins, have resumed the practice, largely forgotten in Tibetan Buddhism, of going around for alms.

The new Buddhist movement issuing from the Theravādins has been recognized by the Newar Buddhists as a challenge, and that challenge has been accepted. For several years now many Newar Buddhists have been engaged in public activities which they hope will be competitive with the Theravāda activities in this field. They defend Newar Buddhism from the charge of being a "corrupt" form of Buddhism.

Considering these facts, I would venture to formulate the results of our investigations in this way: The Theravāda Buddhism of Nepal is not a marginal phenomenon but rather has introduced a profound change into the consciousness and self-image of almost all of Nepal's Buddhists, whether through direct conversion or through its indirect influence. Whereas strongly syncretistic tendencies have been correctly identified as the outstanding feature of the traditional religious life in Nepal, Theravāda Buddhism represents, as it were, a picture of contrast to the country's traditional religiosity: not time-honoured ritual but preaching, not the simple acceptance of received mythological notions of the sacred, but abstract religious doctrines as well-founded as possible, not the traditional ceremony of the community but the practice of meditation, not the embedding of religious life into the community of caste and extended family, but the making of personal and free religious decisions, the emphasis upon the ethical behaviour of the individual as the central concern of Buddhist religiosity, the critical examination of the inherited social and political order, a stronger propensity, on the whole, to rational modes of thought and debate, and a pronounced distaste for the inherited image-cults of traditional religion: these are some of the salient features within this picture of contrasts. When we began our studies, we expected to come across a development in Nepal similar to what can be observed in Java. There it is possible to speak of "intra-Buddhist syncretism". By this is meant the tendency to fuse the doctrines and concepts of the various forms of Buddhism with one another and to bring about a new synthesis. The expectation of finding something similar in Nepal has not been realized. Thus we had assumed that the site of Ānandakuṭīvihāra, Nepal's most important Theravāda monastery, on the Svayambhū hill would indicate a tendency for the Svayambhū cult to be incorporated into Theravāda Buddhism. In fact, nothing of the sort has happened. The site of the vihāra is to be explained in terms of the strategy of mission work, as Svayambhū is traditionally considered the most sacred Buddhist place in the Kathmandu Valley.

Finally, I should like to express our gratitude to the Nepalese scholars as well as to the Ven. Theras, Bhikkhus, Anāgārikas and lay followers who have supplied us with the information necessary for our research. Without their generous help, these studies would not have been possible at all.

SUMMARY

The Buddhists of Nepal are to a large extent either adherents of the traditional "Newar Buddhism" or adherents of Tibetan Buddhism. Whereas "Newar Buddhism", belonging to the tradition of late Indian Buddhism, has remained limited to the ethnic and linguistic community of the Newars, a number of mountain peoples (e.g. Tamangs, Gurungs, etc.) other than those belonging to Tibetan-speaking ethnic groups profess themselves to be either completely or partially Tibetan Buddhists.

Side by side with traditional Buddhism, forms of a Buddhist reform movement (the so-called Buddhist modernism) can be observed. Such reform movements, propagating new views of Buddhism in tune with the times, have sprung up in a number of Buddhist countries since the closing years of the 19th century. In Nepal they are mainly represented by Theravāda Buddhism which was first introduced to Nepal about sixty years ago. During the Rana regime, it met with considerable difficulties, but after 1950 it was able to develop relatively freely. Since then, it has gained considerable influence mainly among Buddhist Newars, but recently also finds followers among other ethnic communities.

Our project aimed at studying the influence of modernistic forms upon traditional Buddhism and the changes which Buddhist modernism had to undergo to adjust to the specific needs of the Newar Buddhist background. Thus we investigated not only the understanding and interpretation of Buddhist tenets, but also the institutional history and the biographies of the leaders of the Buddhist reform movement as well as the impact of the reform movement on rituals, functions, festivals and social life in general.

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## COMMENT ON BECHERT'S CONTRIBUTION

ASHA RAM SHAKYA

[...] First let me say that I am not a research scholar. I must say, however, that I am a student of Buddhism and as such have taken pains to study and practise Buddhism in its original form, and Buddhism as it is being practised in Nepal. [...]

I am happy to see that a scholar brought up in the different culture of Europe has taken so many pains to study the development of Buddhism in a most objective way.

1. [*Professor Shakya then gave a brief survey of Buddhist doctrine, stressing the grounds common to the manifold schools of Buddhism, the continuity within the history of Buddhist thought, and its enduring value to Mankind. The team of scholars under Professor Bechert's guidance had focussed upon what is, as it were, one episode within this continuum: but even in a framework like the present conference the Buddha's teachings should be given their due weight and appreciation.*]

2. [*In continuation, Professor Shakya outlined the early history of Buddhism in general, and of Nepalese Buddhism in particular. He stressed the role of Nepal as an intermediary between India and Tibet, and pointed out that Vajrayāna schools are just as prevalent in Tibet as they are in Nepal:*]

Western research scholars like to call this type of Buddhism 'Newar Buddhism': Vajrayāna, no doubt, is a more appropriate term. The form of Buddhism practised in Tibet is Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna, as well. In Mahāyāna, compassion is predominant, while in Vajrayāna, a *sādhaka* tries to achieve his liberation through *yoga* based on Tantra. [...]

3. Whatever may be the form of Buddhism prevalent at a particular time and place, its basic principles remain the same; only the emphasis has shifted, due to a multitude of factors. As for the emergence of Vajrayāna, religious and cultural contacts with other religions have obviously made their impact, along with the lack of proper understanding on the part of the monks. [...]

4. Professor Bechert refers to Theravāda in Nepal as *Buddhist Modernism.* To me, this looks a bit strange and confusing because Buddhism as preached by the Buddha, and as practised by contemporary Theravādins, is always 'new'. Therefore, I should prefer to call it a 'Revival of Buddhism'. Theravāda Buddhism has introduced nothing new. It has simply laid stress on the need of strictly observing the Vinaya rules of the Buddha's time.

5. In Nepal, there is syncretism in Buddhist culture. As indicated by Professor Bechert, the revival of Theravāda Buddhism was very necessary because the Vajrayāna Buddhism being practised in Nepal and Tibet is so much ritualized in character that the very spirit of Buddhism expressed in the Four Noble Truths, the Noble Eightfold Path, and the theory of Dependent Origination has been lost. [In the course of Nepalese history] people, including Buddhist monks, had become very engaged in earning their livelihood and the study and practice of Buddhist philosophy declined.

6. Professor Bechert deserves hearty appreciation for his study of Buddhist monks, nuns, and the laity, as well as for his observations regarding differences in rituals and Vajrācārya traditions. (Vajrācāryas and Śākyas, incidentally, are not two separate castes: Vajrācāryas, being priests, must have Vajrayāna initiations and are respected as teachers.)

7. Ultimately, research studies of this type will throw light on the fact that even though Buddhist culture varies from country to country, the basic tenets remain the same, these tenets being complete liberation from suffering and complete emancipation from the cycle of life and death.

# LUKUMAHĀDYAḤ – THE HIDING ŚIVA
# A NEPALESE STONE DEITY AND ITS CULT

AXEL MICHAELS

1. This paper[1] is concerned with the tradition of covering seats of deities with food, leftovers or household waste, in particular with such rituals and myths regarding Lukumahādyaḥ. My aim is to demonstrate how a small and specific object of veneration is related to so many different deities that it becomes almost impossible to identify it clearly. I would also like to show how this deity resists, to a certain extent, the influence of the Great (Southern) Tradition.

Lukumahādyaḥ, the "hidden or hiding Śiva", is a deity worshipped exclusively by Newars on the dark 14th of Caitra, a day when a number of Newar festivities and rituals can be observed in the Kathmandu Valley. The day is called *piśāca-caturdaśī* ("goblin's fourteenth") or, rarely, *pretacaturdaśī* ("the fourteenth of the deceased persons") or, in Nevārī, *pācāre* (also spelt *pāsācahre*, *pahāṃcahre* etc.). On this day Śiva is supposed to become a demon, ghost or goblin (*piśāca*), depicted in a small stone, which is kept hidden in 'unclean' places such as the neighbourhood garbage dump or the courtyards. In Kathmandu, Lukumahādyaḥ resides mostly in a hole covered by stones, dust and, sometimes, garbage. Strolling through the courtyards of Kathmandu I have also seen (besides the usual household rubbish) human excrements or even decaying rats and cats on Lukumahādyaḥ stones. However, it is not always garbage that covers the seats of Lukumahādyaḥ but simply dust or soil, since he can also be located just under the earth or even in the form of a flat open stone on the pavement.

Lukumahādyaḥ is mostly represented by a simple unhewn stone, rarely shaped as a *liṅga*. Generally there is only one Lukumahādyaḥ stone in a hole, but in

[1] The extant version of my paper distributed among the participants at the "Seminar on German Research on Nepal" is published elsewhere under the title "Śiva under Refuse — The Hidden Mahādeva (Lukumahādyaḥ) and Protective Stones in Nepal" (1991 in press). In this summary, I add new material on the ritual of Lukumahādyaḥ while the longer version focusses on theoretical implications. Govinda Tandon's remarks partly also concern the longer version.

some courtyards I have seen up to four stones in one hole (e.g. at Nāsācok, Kathmandu). If Lukumahādyaḥ is a flat stone on the pavement it can also have the form of lotus (*aṣṭakamala*), *maṇḍala* or even Navagraha (in Kilagala, Kathmandu) like the *pikhā-lakhu* stones (see *infra*). What is surprising is that, even if the Lukumahādyaḥ stones have the shape of a *liṅga*, they never show the typical ring-stone (*yoni* or *jaladharī*). Only occasionally is the an-iconic stone representation of Lukumahādyaḥ supplemented by a carved *liṅga* once the hole has been opened.

In the night of Piśācacaturdaśī, the area of Lukumahādyaḥ is cleaned, at times purified with cow dung. Then the stone covering the hole is removed and the garbage or dust is taken out from beneath. Afterwards the edges of the hole are usually marked with vermilion (*sindūra*). Moreover, at the corners of the hole or at the stone itself votive oil wick lamps are lit, which burn during the whole night.[2] The lampblack (Nep. *gājal*), which is painted around the eyes and also on the forehead as the so-called *mohinīṭikā*, is regarded as a means of protection. It is "especially effective, when painted around the eyes of women and children, in curing eye disease and improving eyesight" (Anderson 1971: 264). Lukumahādyaḥ is washed, anointed with (sesame ?) oil, and is offered red and yellow flowers, smoking incense and and foods which include meat, garlic and alcoholic drink, otherwise rather disliked by Mahādeva. Basically, the offerings are flowers of radish, mustard plants (*cp.* Vajrācārya [4]V.S. 2036: 114), dishes of lentils, flattened rice (Nep. *ciurā*), but sometimes also animal sacrifices, at Teṅgalṭol even a buffalo.

Among the various offerings, garlic plays a major role. The day of Piśācacaturdaśī is, in fact, also known as Nev. *lābhā nakhaḥ*, "the festival of garlic" (Śreṣṭha and Juju N.S. 1108: 55). Similar to the widespread Western belief that garlic is a useful device against vampires, Newars sometimes carry a garlic clove with them to protect themselves against ghosts. They explain the extensive use of garlic on Piśācacaturdaśī as due to the demon Bhasmāsura's terror against Śiva (see below): it is believed that presenting garlic to Lukumahādyaḥ protects Śiva against this demon. After Piśācacaturdaśī, Jyāpus do not eat the green leaves or the clove of garlic anymore since they consider it to have become too hot or foul-smelling. Moreover, at the festival of the local goddess Kaṅkeśvarī, held on

[2] Cf. Bhāṣāvaṃśāvalī I: 83 (*deśamadhye mahādeva sthānaprati akhaṇḍa rātribhari agni jagāi*), or Padmagiri (p. 41): "while fires are kindled before images of Mahādeva throughout the city"; similarily Wright Chronicle, p. 126.

the same day, participants often sing a Nevārī song with the refrain *kahnaseṃ neseṃ vayeke makhu, lābhā tarkāri nayeke makhu* "As of tomorrow we don't come [and] we don't eat [the green leaves of] garlic" (Śreṣṭha and Juju, ibid.). The period following Piśācacaturdaśī, i.e. the spring and summer months, is considered to be extremely dangerous due to infections and diseases caused by ghosts and demons.

The use of radish plants is sometimes explained by a rather distasteful story which again demonstrates how Śiva/Lukumahādyaḥ is provoked during this festival: Pārvatī/Devī used to discharge her stool at night in an earthen vessel as some people in the old cities and in the villages sometimes still do. One day there was a radish seed kept in this pot so that the radish grew rapidly and to an enormous size.

From a brahmanical point of view, it is quite bewildering to see Śiva being worshipped in a hole or stone covered with refuse, which is dumped by Newars in the courtyards of their private homes until it gets collected by special cleaning castes (e.g. the Poḍe). However, if we leave aside for a moment the aspect of unclean garbage, it looks as if a popular theme of high tradition has manifested itself: Śiva being hidden somewhere and being discovered more or less accidentally, e.g. by a cow, or coming into existence by himself (*svayambhū*), is a major topic of Śaivite mythology as well as of legends of origin at Śaivite temples.[3] To the best of my knowledge there are, at least in Kathmandu and Deopatan, basically two popular myths of Lukumahādyaḥ: one has to do with Śiva and the Goddess, the other with Śiva fleeing in fear from a figure called Virūpākṣa or a demon called Bhasmāsura or from the Buddhists. Interestingly no mythological identification of Rudra with Lukumahādyaḥ is known, although this vedic god lends himself easily to such an identification since he received the leftovers from the sacrifice.

2. The myth which connects Lukumahādyaḥ with the Goddess centres around another common topic, namely the conflict between Śiva and (his) Śakti. The following is the translation of a version recorded by Puṇyaratna Vajrācārya who was among the first to publish on Nepalese festivals:

> A long, long time ago, still in the Satyayuga, Pārvatī used to take the form of Kālī and Bhagavatī after she had accepted alcohol, meat etc. Once she

[3] Cf. Eichinger Ferro-Luzzi 1987 for such myths. One could also mention the myth of the discovery of the Paśupati liṅga by a cow (Gopālarājavaṃśāvalī, fol. 17a-b; Wright Chronicle, p. 107; Padmagiri, p. 33; Bhāṣāvaṃśāvalī I:2-3) or the Śivarātri myth (see Michaels 1989, in press).

spoke to Mahādeva: 'Great Lord (Maheśa), who is called even among all gods the Great God (Mahādeva), since I am your half, I am always full of happiness and I feel great pleasure about it. However, since between you and me one thing is not on an even keel, I feel a little bit distressed. It is because of this: I take from time to time another form and consume alcohol, meat, etc., but I have never seen you eating these things. Therefore I feel somehow uneasy.' After Mahādeva had listened to Pārvatī's speech, he said: 'Gaurī, you seem to have got things wrong! It's not only you who from time to time, after taking another form, consumes alcohol, meat etc. I have also done it!' After Pārvatī had heard this speech of Mahādeva she forcefully expressed her desire to see him taking alcohol, meat etc. [in front of her]. According to her wish Mahādeva took the form of a demon (*piśāca*), went into a field in which mustard and radish plants were growing [and] where he could not be seen, sat down in a hole and gourmandized on alcohol, meat [and] garlic. By showing all this to Pārvatī he set her mind at ease. Thus, since that time, the day on the dark fourteenth of Phālguna [sic! correct is Caitra] is called 'Goblin's Fourteenth', and the festival is celebrated by worshipping Mahādeva in that manner. (Vajrācārya [4]V.S. 2036: 114-5; Anderson 1971: 264)

This myth is not — as in the myth of Śivarātri — a peaceful story of the accidental discovery of the hidden Śiva, but a conflict between two religious and ritual traditions: the (tantrik) cult of the Goddess along with godlings (*piśāca*) accompanying her and the brahmanical tradition of the pure, vegetarian Śiva/Mahādeva refusing unclean food. Moreover, it is not a myth of the hidden Śiva but of the hiding Śiva, and not one in which leftovers are offered to Śiva but unclean food stuff. However, in order to understand the local implications of the myth better one must compare it with other rituals performed on the same day.

3. Any fourteenth night in the dark half of a month is *caturdaśī*, the day of spirits (*bhūtadina*), and the night of Śiva as the lord of the night (*niśāpati*). The date of Lukumahādyaḥ's ritual, the Piśācacaturdaśī, falls in a period which is very much concerned with the "chthonic forces and the indigenous 'root' manifestations of deity in the [Kathmandu] Valley" (Slusser 1982: 343). Moreover, there are many clues to suggest that Goblin's Fourteenth was a special time for appeasing the *piśācas* and goddesses with human sacrifices.

It is on Piśācacaturdaśī that the cannibal ogres Gurumāpā (see Slusser 1982: 364) and Tuṇḍi (see Anderson 1971: 266-8) are worshipped, two insatiable demons who seize and eat mainly children, and it is on the same day that the local goddess Vatsalā at Deopatan is made an offering to, again with many traces

of human sacrifice:[4] Not only do the local chronicles, the Vaṃśāvalīs written in the 19th century either in Nepālī or Nevārī, mention this fact,[5] there are also frescoes on the outer eastern wall of the Vatsalā temple in which jackals are depicted with human limbs sticking out of their mouths.

At the end of the long night of Piśācacaturdaśī the *pīṭha* of Vatsalā is showered with rice beer (Nev. *thvā*, Nep. *jāḍ*). It is remarkable that before this orgiastic part of the ritual takes place icons of Vatsalā and Śiva are tied together on the *pīṭha*. When, however, the alcohol is brought in five bulky jars (Nev. *thvātepa*, Nep. *ghyāmpo*), the icons are taken out of the temple again. Then the rice-beer is poured through three extremely large buffalo horns onto the *pīṭha* of Vatsalā until it rises up to the ankles of four tantrik Karmācārya priests. At that moment the Dhvājuju (lit. "king of the jackals", a Śreṣṭha with semipriestly functions), howls like a jackal and this is the sign to open three pipes leading into the Bāgmatī River where participants of the ritual then take a shower in the beer.

It is, of course, mainly Vatsalā who receives in this ritual unclean food and drinks, but Śiva is made a witness to the scene and has to tolerate it. That Śiva is opposed to this ritual enacted on behalf of his consort is demonstrated by the procession of the Vatsalā festival which follows in the next three days. Vatsalā and Śiva are first tied together on a processional litter (Nev. *khaḥ*, Nep. *khaṭ*), with Vatsalā on top of Śiva, who is now represented by a wooden *liṅga*. In the first night Vatsalā is carried to the Paśupatināth temple nearby. Paśupati, however, who does not want her to enter the temple, directs his temple priests, the so-called Bhaṭṭas (see Michaels 1988) — who are vegetarian South Indian Brahmins in contradistinction to the Newar Karmācārya priests responsible for the festival —, to close the temple doors. Vatsalā, outraged and disappointed, threatens Śiva/Paśupati that she will leave the town: she is carried through the western city gate where she rams the city walls. Śiva, then, feels sorry and has his priests call her back.

4. In the other group of myths related to Lukumahādyaḥ, Śiva is exposed to great danger because he is attacked by a figure named Virūpākṣa, a demon called Bhasmāsura (see Michaels 1990 in press) or by the Buddhamārgīs. How are these figures related to Lukumahādyaḥ?

[4] For a more detailed description of this festival see Michaels 1984, ibid. 1989: 51ff. and ibid. (forthcoming).

[5] Bhāṣāvaṃśāvalī I: 83; Wright Chronicle, p. 130; Padmagiri, p. 41.

In the Himavatkhaṇḍa (89.11-15), Virūpākṣa is a *brāhmaṇa* who, through unintentional incest with his mother, leads a sinful life (*pāpācāra*): He just eats meat, neglects the study of the Veda, hunts after prostitutes, etc. As a consequence, he loses his caste status and contracts leprosy. Tortured by this disease he seeks relief in the Himalayas where Nemuni, the legendary founder of Nepāla, advises him to go on a long pilgrimage to 64 *liṅga-tīrthas* located mostly in the Kathmandu Valley. If Virūpākṣa bathes by these *tīrthas* and completes the Catuḥṣaṣṭiliṅgayātrā at the Paśupatinātha temple, his sins will be washed away and he will reach heaven.

This is the brahmanical Sanskrit version of Virūpākṣa,[6] which provides the background for a statue of Virūpākṣa being embedded in the floor of a little shrine east of the Paśupatinātha temple. The story of Virūpākṣa as told in the Buddhist Wright Chronicle (p. 91f., cp. Vaidya 1986: 290-2) is, however, slightly different: Virūpākṣa, again, after having committed incest with his mother, became angry with Śiva by the many and impossible penances told to him that he began to break every Śivaliṅga. Even Paśupati was in danger and could only be rescued by Buddha who covered him with a crown.

This myth confronts us again not only with a conflict between two different religious traditions, this time Buddhists *versus* Śaivas, but also with the theme of covering Śiva or his *liṅga*. Here it is called a head-dress, and the background to this myth is a famous Nepalese ritual, famous for its syncretistic implications: On each *mukhāṣṭamī*, i.e. the 8th day of the bright half in Kārttika, the main *liṅga* in the Paśupatinātha temple is worshipped as Avalokiteśvara and is supposedly covered for this purpose with a crown of the Bodhisattva.[7]

In the Hindu Vaṃśāvalīs (Padmagiri, p. 38; Bhāṣāvaṃśāvalī II: 18), the Buddhists are, however, accused of throwing their leftovers onto Paśupatinātha. According to these chronicles it was only through Śaṅkarācārya that the Buddhamārgīs were defeated and the Śivamārgīs again obtained power over the Paśupatinātha.

Both the Hindu and the Buddhist Vaṃśāvalīs are brought together with the myth of Lukumahādyaḥ in a third (oral) myth:

[6] See also Rājavaṃśāvalī IV: 4 and Bhāṣāvaṃśāvalī I: 29.

[7] Lévi 1905/I: 361, Nepali 1965: 331, Slusser 1982: 227-8, Vaidya 1986: 290. There are, however, strong doubts whether this ritual was ever practised in the Paśupatinātha temple or whether it is just claimed to have been so.

> ... Virūpākṣa, angered at Śiva's recommended penance, tried to destroy the god. Fleeing in terror, Śiva sought refuge in the interior of a domestic rubbish heap. He was undetected in this unlikely spot, and the chase was at last terminated by the Buddha's clever intervention at Paśupati's shrine. Śiva emerged, by chance, at the time of Piśācacaturdaśī in honor of the Mother Goddesses; the startled family invited the divine guest to share the meal, albeit one traditionally not to his taste (Slusser 1982: 232).[8]

In his myths, Lukumahādyaḥ is thus clearly identified with Śiva, proposing various reasons why Śiva is worshipped (and named) in a "hiding manifestation" — either Devī mocking Śiva or Śiva endangered by Virūpākṣa or the Buddhists.

5. In his rituals, however, another identity of Lukumahādyaḥ is suggested. First of all, it is surprising that the ritual of Lukumahādyaḥ is mainly celebrated in Kathmandu but far less in other cities of the Kathmandu Valley. In Kathmandu it is one of the main days in the festival calendar because it happens to fall together with the many festivities of the grandmother goddesses (*ajimā*) and with the spectacular horse festival of Ghoḍejātrā. In Pāṭan, however, Lukumahādyaḥ is much less represented. In other cities with a majority Newar population there are either none or only very few deities called Lukumahādyaḥ. Thus, in Deopatan there is no Lukumahādyaḥ stone, in Bhaktapur there are only one or two stones called by this name, and the same is true for Pharpiṅg. In Kīrtipur and Dhulikhel there are several Lukumahādyaḥ stones but apparently they have different functions and identities (e.g. Gaṇeśa, Kumāra, Aju-Aji: see Devkota 1984: 14f.). In Dhulikhel, for instance, these stones are not (or not only) worshipped on Piśācacaturdaśī but (also) on all kinds of other occasions: e.g. marriage, Dasaĩ, Śivarātri, which is in Kīrtipur sometimes called "Lukucāhre", any kind of religious feast etc. Given the overall situation in the Kathmandu Valley it seems that many different stones are declared to be Lukumahādyaḥ. To mention just two examples:

a) *Pikhā-lakhu*. All kinds of ritual material brought in or out of the house or passing it (e.g. at processions) are placed on this stone, which is generally located in front of a threshold, such as any kind of *pūjā* material for the rites of passage; the firepot with whose help the funeral pyre is lit later on; food for the deities at Māpūjā, Pitṛpūjā etc.; the bier before being carried to the cremation ground; the Dhaludyaḥ or lamp deity, kept in a clay pot, is smashed on this stone when the cremation is completed; etc. Now, in Kīrtipur

[8] Cf. Anderson 1971: 264f., Nepali 1965: 292f. and Vézies 1981: 79f.

the *pikhā lukhā* of the Cīlāco Stūpa is the easternmost of altogether four or five such Lukumahādyaḥs. All these stones represent Śiva who is believed to reside under the city of Kīrtipur (Herdick 1988: 100).

b) *Chvāsa lhvā*. This idea of a deity which lives underneath the city and manifests itself in stones is current also in Bhaktapur and practically all Newar towns. There is, for instance, the concept of the *chvāsa lhvā* which are basically connecting points to *bhūtas* and *pretas*. As Niels Gutschow has informed me, one of the two Lukumahādyaḥ stones in Bhaktapur is also called *chvāsa*, and on Piśācacaturdaśī many people in this town worship these *chvāsa* stones.

These stone deities are either directly identified with Śiva-Lukumahādyaḥ or they show features very similar to those of Lukumahādyaḥ. Ritually too, it is to these stones that refuse or garbage is offered, or the deities are believed to reside in garbage dumps.[9]

6. When one takes these protective stones into consideration, another feature of the religious background of Lukumahādyaḥ literally sticks its head out of the ground. One could perhaps describe it as a kind of network of religious forces, gods or godlings, spirits and ancestors underlying the city and connecting individual households with these forces in order to protect the inhabitants.

What remains essential in the cult of Lukumahādyaḥ is a more or less simple stone with various religious identities and mythological explanations. Due to the lack of historical evidence, it remains an open question as to whether a *piśāca* has become Śiva or Śiva a *piśāca*, whether the deity was raised or degraded, whether it was related to the Goddess from its origin or whether this was an aspect added later, possibly through Indian influence.

However, one could perhaps suggest the following scheme of layers in the historical development: First there is nothing other than a simple, unhewn and

[9] "The Chwāsa is a socially accepted place where people can throw household rubbish" (Devkota 1984: 12). "Kaladeo, the spirit, is believed to reside at a place where garbage from the area is deposited" (ibid. p. 14). In Pāṭan, this Kalaḥdyaḥ, which is identified with Lukumahādyaḥ, Bhairava or Aju, is explicitly called *juṭho devatā*, the deity which receives the impure left-overs (Śreṣṭha and Juju N.S. 1108: 59). "[...] it is to these beings [*bhūt*, *pret*, etc.] that refuse or inedible parts (beak, feathers, etc.) of a sacrificial animal are offered (while edible parts are dedicated to the gods)" (Höfer and Shrestha 1973: 75). "Witches control evil spirits and some deities by invoking them with spells, [...] and feeding them refuse (N[ep]. *putali*), ideally consisting of nail and hair clippings of their victims" (Durkin-Longley 1982: 67).

uncarved stone representing an indigenous, pre-Hinduistic, possibly not anthropomorphic deity, perhaps a dangerous demon. No matter whether it had the shape of a *liṅga* or not, this stone was associated with Śiva-Mahādeva and it was declared to be a *liṅga*; sometimes the original stone was even replaced by a modelled or carved *liṅga*, sometimes it was not.

From this level onwards it is no longer clear whether a highly localized deity has been raised to a Great God or whether the High Tradition has incorporated a local deity in order to extend its influence. It seems to be another case where it is almost impossible to determine the direction of religious developments: We simply don't know whether it was an upward movement (Srinivas' Sanskritization) or a downward one (Marriott's parochialization).

Mythologically, Lukumahādyaḥ is Śiva-Mahādeva, no doubt. Ritually, however, he remains a stone deity of rather coalescent identity. Ritually, he has almost nothing in common with Śiva or a *liṅga*: no *jaladharī*, no *triśūla*, no *upacāra* offerings, instead garlic, meat, alcohol. The cult of Lukumahādyaḥ thus shows how a stone deity resists, to a certain extent, the influence of the Great Tradition. Usually local deities are raised up (see Gutschow, this volume): on the ground platform — open shrine — domed shrine — temple. Lukumahādyaḥ remains in the ground and the mythological overlapping can only be successful by declaring him to hide himself. If the overlapping had been fully successful we could expect Lukumahādyaḥ to be called "Gupteśvara". And, in fact, one of the two Lukumahādyaḥ stones in Bhaktapur is (already) called by this name.

SUMMARY

The project "Ritual Topography of Deopatan" is concerned with historical, ethnographic and cultural aspects of the city and its main sanctum, the Paśupatināth Temple.

It focusses on the relationship between two rather distinct ritual traditions: the vedic-purāṇic represented through the South Indian Bhaṭṭa priests of Paśupatināth, and tāntrik Karmācārya priests responsible for several temples and shrines of the goddesses.

Within the scope of the project falls the descriptive documentation through photos and cartography of all major holy sites of the Paśupatikṣetra, as well as their historical analysis through documents and inscriptions. Moreover, oral myths and legends regarding the origin of the holy sites have been collected and

compared with the published and partly unpublished material of chronicles and Māhātmyas.

Another research priority has been given to festivals and rituals, mainly to ritual processions concerning the locally important Vatsalā and Pīgāmāī goddesses.

The project is carried out in collaboration with Govinda Tandon and has benefited to a large extent by the help of Mṛtyuñjaya Karmācārya.

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## COMMENT ON MICHAELS' CONTRIBUTION

GOVINDA TANDON

[...] Dr Michaels' work gives an introductory account of Lukumahādyaḥ, the festivities and rituals observed on the day he is worshipped, stories and local beliefs about him and Virūpākṣa and the protective stones. What I should like to do today is to contribute a few supplementary remarks and comments.

1. The day he is worshipped, *Piśācacaturdaśī*, is known by different names. *Pāhācahre* is its Newārī version, which is taken as a Festival of Guests. There is another word for it, viz., *Pāsācahre* or the Festival of Friends, and *pācahre* is the short form of all these. The approach of *piśācacaturdaśī* is indicated by the day *dūdūcyāṃcyāṃ*, a ritual invitation to other goddesses to participate in the *Vatsalā-jātrā*, which occurs six days earlier.

On the day of *piśācacaturdaśī* the ditch or the place where Lukumahādyaḥ is kept is cleaned according to traditional practice. Lukumahādyaḥ is washed and worshipped with offerings of mustard flowers, *avīrakṣatā*, incense, food *(naivedya)*, etc. He is also offered *raksī* (alcoholic drink) and meat. Garlic is also sacrificed, and because of this the occasion is also spoken of as *lābhā-nakhaḥ*, the Garlic Festival. On this occasion, a votive oil-wick lamp is kept lit all through the night, and *gājal* (lampblack) is collected. It is a custom very popular in Newar society to put the *gājal* collected then on the forehead of children to keep evil spirits away: this is what is commonly called the *mohinī-ṭikā*. The lampblack is also applied to the eyes of women and children, to cure eye diseases and improve sight. On this day children, with the *gājal* around their eyes, are seen running around shouting *mahādevayā mikhā pulupālu jyūmikhā telā* which means, 'my eyes are bright, and Mahādeva's dim'.

After offering garlic to Lukumahādyaḥ, i.e. after *piśācacaturdaśī*, people believe garlic becomes over-matured; hence, from this day onwards it is not eaten in some Newar communities. It is not only garlic but also many other things with which this kind of custom is connected in Nepalese culture. For instance, on the occasion of the *triśūlyātrā*, a religious festival held at Deopatan, a flower called *mū-svāṃ* is offered to the Bāgmatī River at the close of the religious procession

on the day of *Āṣāḍhakṛṣṇāṣṭamī*, and again as is the custom and belief of the people, this flower is not offered to a deity again until new ones bloom up.

2. In Dr Michaels' paper, Lukumahādyaḥ is visualized as a deity kept in filthy places. But the reason for this I think is that it is we who have made him appear as a deity living under garbage, because it is obvious that, knowingly or unknowingly, the tantric aspect is given much prominence in Lukumahādyaḥ rites. On the day of *piśācacaturdaśī*, the people who have taken initiation first worship *piṃgana* or *pīṭha* deities in their *āgamchē* according to tantric procedures, and only after this do they worship Lukumahādyaḥ. In the process of his rites, an oil-wick lamp is lit, and the residue collected from this is known as *mohinī*. As we have seen, this is customarily put on children's foreheads to ward off evil spirits — which is another indication of tantric aspects. It is still a prevalent custom that tantra-oriented deities are kept hidden and not brought into view. This is perhaps why Mahādeva in this particular form is called 'hidden'. It is not surprising, perhaps, that through the natural effects of rain and mud a place below ground level turns into a garbage dump when not covered properly.

It is a quite prevalent custom in lower Newar communities to worship deities oriented towards tantra — and accordingly, they worship Lukumahādyaḥ with great celebration and pomp, as much or even more so than at Dasaiṃ. All the married daughters and relatives are invited. It is for this reason that some people call the day *pāsācaḥṛe* or 'Guests' Fourteenth'. [...] The festival, incidentally, is celebrated both in the Vaidic and the Buddhist communities of Newars, and the god is found in all the ancient Newar settlements but not in the new ones. [...] I have heard reports that in Citlāṅg, to the south of Kathmandu, Lukumahādyaḥ is worshipped by offerings of *pañcāmṛta*, i.e. cow's milk, ghee, honey, sugar, and curds.

3. Here is a supplementary legend about the origin of the Lukumahādyaḥ which may be of interest; I owe it to the kindness of Mr. Dhana Vajra Vajrācārya. People say he hid himself when he knew he would have the bad effect of *Śani* (Saturn) on him; only on the day of *piśācacaturdaśī* did he come out of his hiding place, mocking Śani and saying Śani could not harm him. Śani, as the legend goes, smiled at Mahādeva and said what more could be achieved than that even he, the Great God, had been forced to go into hiding.

4. In regard to Virūpākṣa, the paper cites a story found in modern chronicles as well as in the Himavatkhaṇḍa. This tells how Paśupati, afraid of Virūpākṣa, had hidden himself. In this connection, the author mentions the fact that on the day of *mukhāṣṭamī*, i.e. the eighth day of the bright half of Kārttika, Paśupatināth

is decorated with the head-dress of a Bodhisattva and is worshipped as Avalokiteśvara, and Dr Michaels goes on to express his doubts as to the truth of this legend. In my opinion, he is very right in this: to my knowledge, there is no such ritual performed on *mukhāṣṭamī* day. Only on two occasions is Paśupatināth decorated with a special dress and head-dress: first, on the occasion of *pavitrāropaṇa* (on Śrāvaṇaśuklacaturdaśī) when the god is dressed with clothes of raw thread and a head-dress; and second on Māghaśuklacaturdaśī when he receives a head-dress made of different pieces of coloured cloth. The first occasion has no connection with Avalokiteśvara, while the latter is also celebrated in a special way by the local Buddhist community. And the head-dress of Māghaśuklacaturdaśī is said to be known as *kailāsakusumārohaṇa*[1]. On this day, water is collected in the inner sanctum of the temple, and the reflection of Lord Paśupatināth seen in the water is worshipped. While this occasion is known as *tikincā* in Newārī, its usual Nepālī name is *chāyādarśana*. I mention this chiefly in order to point out that the relationship between Virūpākṣa-Bodhisattva and Paśupatināth as described in Wright's Chronicle[2] indicates no connection with either of these occasions.

5. The description of Virūpākṣa given in the research paper touches upon an important aspect of Nepali culture. The best-known image of that name is enshrined in a stone temple on the right bank of Āryaghāṭ, east of the Paśupati temple. As its hands and the lower part of his body, downwards from the navel, are underground, it has been described in different ways by different scholars. Some have interpreted it as an image of Śiva[3], others as a nobleman[4], still others as a leader of the Nāga dynasty[5]. Dr Michaels refers to the legend the Himavatkhaṇḍa, but in Wright's Chronicle, the story is presented in a somewhat different way. Both versions try to point out that the Virūpākṣa described in the stories is identical with the Āryaghāṭ image. Now, on the one hand there are the stories of the Purāṇas and Chronicles; on the other hand, though, we have the image itself before us to study its features. Dr Michaels has tried to relate it to the Lukumahādyaḥ. Virūpākṣa is famous both in the Vaidik and the Buddhist

[1] See Bhāṣāvaṃśāvalī (ed. Devī Prasād Lamsāl), Vol.2 (Kathmandu 2023), p.94.

[2] D. Wright: History of Nepal (Cambridge 1877), p. 91.

[3] See P. Pal: The Arts of Nepal 1 (Leiden/Köln 1974), pp. 51f.; L.S. Bangdel: History of Ancient Nepalese Sculpture. Kathmandu 1978, p. 95.

[4] M. Singh: Himalayan Art. London 1968, p. 181.

[5] H. Jośī: Virūpākṣa. In: Nepālī Saṃskṛti 2.3 (Kathmandu 2043), p. 6.

communities. Among thousands of names of Lord Śiva, Virūpākṣa is one.

Similarly, he is also one of the Eleven Rudras[6]. He is also one of the Four *Lokapālas* or *Mahārājas* of Mahāyāna Buddhists[7]. When considering these facts, one begins to have one's doubts as to whose image it actually is. As for the physical features, the image has a belt around its waist, and its phallus is shown erect. Its hair style is unique: the hair is long, thick, and becomes even thicker on its end. The face of the image is simple and smiling; the broad chest, the well-built body, the round face, the nose somewhat flattened, the thick lips and almond eyes and plump cheeks all combine to form a unique and pleasing appearance. The statue, as a matter of fact, shows the characteristic facial features of a Kirāta. A crescent can be seen on its hair. Right in the middle of its forehead, there is a vertical eye-like mark: in fact, it is a Third Eye. All those marks are characteristic features of Lord Śiva. Surely if the emblems in his hand were visible to the eye, we could identify the image beyond a doubt.

There is a story about them. In 1965 A.D., an abnormal man named Kirāṭ dug a whole night to unearth the image. This news spread, and the people who had seen the image at that time say it had something shaped like a Śivaliṅga in its left hand, and a rosary in the right[8]. If this is true, the image is to be identified as Śiva.

The Virūpākṣa image is also known as Kali, and again there is a legend to account for the name. It is said to come out of the ground little by little every day. The day when the whole body has appeared and when the burden of its body will be supported by his toes will be the day of the deluge which ends the Kali Age. It is with this fear, or to save the earth from annihilation, that people coming here will at least offer a handful of water to Virūpākṣa. In other words, it is an obeisance to Lord Paśupatināth.

[6] Their names are Ajaikapāda, Ekapāda, Ahirbudhnya, Virūpākṣa, Revata, Hara, Bahurūpa, Tryambaka, Sureśvara, Jayanta, and Aparājita.

[7] See J.N. Banerjea: The Development of Hindu Iconography. Delhi 1974[3], p. 588.

[8] I owe this information to Mr. Padma Prasād Bhaṭṭa, a priest related to the Mṛgeśvara Temple, who heard about it from Baṭu Kṛṣṇa, the chief of Paśupati Gośvāra at that time.

# SOME EXAMPLES OF SYNCRETISM IN NEPAL

BERNHARD KÖLVER

One of the central topics of this conference is the diversity of cultures which is so characteristic a mark of present-day Nepal. Much of our work has gone into attempts to achieve an adequate description of these separate strands, and this attempt is, as it were, the factor common to the anthropologist working on a particular ethnic group and the philologist analyzing written source materials.

Behind all this basic spade-work there of course looms the larger question of the relations between these separate components, the problem of how they have mutually influenced each other and when and why. Even in the first two days of our seminar, we have touched upon it several times, in a more or less explicit fashion:

There was the sculpture of Śiva mounted upon Sūrya that Professor Gail drew our attention to, which is such an exact analogy to the Hariharivāhana Lokeśvara now famous. There was Axel Michaels on the Lukumahādyaḥ; there was the complex relationship between the Nāsaḥdyaḥ and Śiva Nṛtyanātha of Gert Wegner's paper which we shall presently revert to; chiefly, there were Dr de Sales's subtle and explicit remarks on the Chantel, an emerging group which as it were stands between two different ideal patterns to guide them, that of their shamanist neighbours, the Magars, and representatives of some form of conventional Hinduism.

Obviously, these kinds of cultural contacts to be observed in Nepal, and the various solutions your country has found for reconciling different religions and ways of life, are very essential fields of study. And if they are not yet pursued to any great extent, it is perhaps because we do not feel sufficiently sure of our ground: i.e. we still lack an adequate knowledge of the separate components which united to form the complex. Even so, the problem should at least be mentioned, and this is what I propose to do, on a somewhat elementary level. For the sake of briefness and, perhaps, of clarity, I shall be going outside my own field, and shall draw your attention to a few artefacts. In doing so, it goes without saying I do not mean to dabble in the history of Nepalese Art, which is

quite outside my scope; I just mean to offer a few observations on objects which are tangible and clear to the eye: they are perhaps easier to argue from than texts or myths which often cannot be understood without longish and at times cumbersome elaboration.

## ANICONIC GAṆEŚA IMAGES

One of the very obvious signs which point to a pre-Hindu element in contemporary Nepalese religion is found in representations of the God Gaṇeśa. He, the God of the Beginning, the Lord of Obstacles, pot-bellied, with his elephant head and tusk, is a markedly individual figure; and in Nepal as in other parts of the subcontinent, there is no dearth of images which conform to iconographical canons: their frequency is a direct reflection of his importance in daily cult and ritual.

Side by side with them, though, Nepal shows many examples of the God manifesting himself in forms which are in no way to be reconciled with codified texts. Enclosed by the usual tympanon, there often are large stones, apparently unhewn or but little worked, sometimes of markedly unusual shapes.

The divergence can of course be readily explained by a historical hypothesis: It is pre-Hindu deities who have been introduced into the Hindu pantheon. Once the wish or need had arisen to 'hinduize' divinities of earlier strata, Gaṇeśa must have been an obvious choice. For to Hindus, he is both frequent and essential, and in the divine hierarchy, he is not one of the chief gods of the pantheon: rather, he by and large belongs to Śiva's retinue.

A reason for the identification is not hard to find: it will have lain in the fact that Rudra/Śiva has since Vedic times been attended by his 'hosts', the *gaṇas*, a group of 'godlings' who were undefined as to their nature and number and thus provided a perfect opening for incorporating new figures into the established system: including what to the orthodox was a new and unknown god among the 'Lords of the *gaṇas*' looks like a very satisfactory solution. And then one remembers the strange purāṇic legends about his origin: they will of course go some way to account for the unorthodox forms of worship that some of the old gods were habituated to.

The old, amorphous shapes received a new and persuasive doctrinal justification once the notion of 'self-manifest' *(svāyaṃbhuva-)* deities had gained currency: an image or manifestation of a god which had appeared without a human agent can of course lay claims to greater authority and sanctity than the product of a

craftsman, however skilled.

NĀSAḤDYAḤS

The Nāsaḥdyaḥs, the Newar 'Gods of music, dance, and drama', are in some respects similar: again, they betray clear signs of a pre-Hindu origin.

To repeat the gist of Dr Wegner's exposition[1]: Usually, a Nāsaḥdyaḥ manifests himself hewn into stone or cut into a sheet of metal. Their shape is often a triangle, equilateral or isosceles, in which case its height can much exceed the base. Variants include a rectangle, again with its height exceeding its width, underneath the triangle; this shape is at times smoothened and rounded (see Fig.2: ).

His worship is attended by dance and music. The god accepts animal sacrifices; when worshipping him, people do not refrain from alcohol. All this is of course far from the more orthodox and measured ways of addressing Hindu deities; even so, it does not seem altogether inconceivable within more extreme Śaiva contexts. And it is to Śaiva contexts that the god is ascribed: his Sanskrit name is given as Śiva Nṛtyanātha, the 'Lord of the Dance'.

There are two traits, though, which point in another, non-Hindu, direction. One is his shape. Hinduism knows and uses many kinds of tangible representations of deities: *mantras*, *yantras*, paintings, images, stones hewn or unhewn — but holes are not among them. In the Kathmandu Valley, though, and in Newar practice, we find them in profusion: they are there in clan-gods *(digudyaḥ)* and in the *halimāpvāḥ* holes in walls; there are the Nāsaḥdyaḥs under discussion and their corollaries, the *Haimādyaḥs;* they can even be found at the core of important sanctuaries like the Bhaktapur Bhairavnāth where a triangular hole occupies the central — i.e. chief — position among the five panels of the ground floor. This means we here encounter a number of deities who manifest themselves in a shape foreign to normal Hindu patterns.

The second irregularity of this god is his way of movement. He can only proceed in a straight line and must not be obstructed; hence, his manifestation, the hole or opening, is often continued through walls of adjacent houses or gardens which he will encounter on his way[2]. These show what goes under the name of 'Nāsaḥ holes' *(nāsaḥpvāḥ)*, which interrupt the brickwork. Yet to close

[1] See G.M. Wegner: *supra*, pp. 125

[2] Cf. Dr Wegner's map: *supra*, p. 126

them would be considered highly inauspicious. Apparently, this characteristic is repeated in daily ritual: when presenting their offerings, worshippers often do not stand straight in front of the hole, but to its side. -

The principle of linear movement of gods or spirits has East Asian analogies, but to my knowledge is not ascribed to Hindu deities, and it alone would warrant attributing a pre-Hindu origin to this shape of the 'Lord of Dance' (Nṛtyanātha). This raises the question of how and why the name and identification were found and justified.

It cannot lie in their external appearance. In codified Hindu iconographical tradition, the Lords of Dance in their various forms again are well-defined types, but holes are not recognized among them. It is in other directions, then, that we have to seek the reasons which have led to the identification.

Since early, Vedic times, Rudra/Śiva and his entourage lack the quiet dignity and poise of the other High Gods: they are often imagined wild, uncanny, with a demoniac or ecstatic component: the god himself can be *unmatta-*, as one of the traditional epithets has it. This appreciation of his nature has prevailed through the centuries, percolating to a lighter passage in a Sanskrit play: The Mṛcchakaṭikā shows the Vidūṣaka perceiving Vasantasenā's mother sitting in a courtyard and apparently presenting none too attractive a picture; he says 'Ah! the girth of the impure *ḍākinī's* belly! (Surely) this splendid door in (this) house was built only after making her enter, like a Mahādeva?'[3]. Uncouth, large, and fat: this, then, is how Śūdraka could conceive a Mahādeva image.

A further line of connection is voiced in Sanskrit literary theory. When discussing the comic *(hāsya)*, one of the eight basic moods *(rasas)* which plays evoke, the Sāhityadarpaṇa says it has Śiva's hosts *(gaṇas)* as its Chief Deity *(prathamadaivataḥ);* 'with low people, there is (i.e. the comic is accompanied by) silly and excessive laughter'[4]. Is this not the well-bred Hindu's reaction to the inebriated, low-caste performers of Nāsaḥdyaḥ rites? — More specific: the Nāsaḥdyaḥ is worshipped amid dances and drumming: an analogy to Śiva's *tāṇḍava* dance was a fairly obvious idea. -

The reason for the identification, then, lies in the ways of worship. And one can follow how he was gradually drawn into the normal pantheon.

The illustration of Fig.2 shows the identification of the hole with Śiva carried

[3] Fourth aṅka (ed. Haridas Sanskrit Series No. 252, p.244): *aho se apavittaḍāiṇie poṭṭavitthāro | tā kiṃ edaṃ pavesia mahādevaṃ via dvārasohā idha ghare ṇimmidā* ?

[4] *nīcānām apahasitaṃ tathātihasitam* (3.214).

beyond the merely verbal level: beneath the hole, to the right and left, one recognizes Gaṇeśa and Kumāra, both depicted in line with normal iconographical precepts. In all probability this icon is meant to re-interpret the series of three holes seen in some Nāsaḥdyaḥs: but Gaṇeśa and Kumāra, the two attendant gods of the illustration, are often taken as Śiva's sons, and by their presence they clearly affirm the identity of the Nāsaḥ and Lord Śiva[5].

All this allows us to trace the outlines of how this non-Hindu deity was transformed.

(1) Among the gods who manifest themselves through holes, there was the Nāsaḥdyaḥ[6], represented by one or three of them. From the ways he was worshipped, he was identified with the Lord of the Dance. Initially, this was a mere concept, and to this very day the identification has not at all affected the majority of Nāsaḥdyaḥs in the Kathmandu Valley.

(2) Sometimes, though, it did, as shown by what I take to be variations of the three-hole form. For how to cope with the alternation, one hole or three? Within a Hindu context, it was very natural to take them as a god with or without retinue. At this stage, the problem of identifying the attendants raised its head. Gaṇeśa and Kumāra were a very obvious choice: thus this is what is actually found in the *repoussé* plate of Fig.2. There were others who thought this identification less than cogent: they knew that Śiva in his Nṛtyanātha form is not usually attended by his 'sons'. In Śiva's huge retinue, they found another pair, much less prominent, viz., Nandī and Bhṛṅgī.

(3) Development did not quite stop at this stage. Dr Gutschow draws my attention to the Nāsaḥdyaḥ of Guje Bāhāl, Patan (who belongs to the one-hole type). He is crowned by a wooden tympanon that shows a carved Nṛtyanātha

[5] Dr Wegner *(supra,* p. 116) mentions a different interpretation of the two deities adjoining the central hole, viz., Nandī and Bhṛṅgī. The very alternation is suggestive: it cannot but mean there was a problem of identification. As for the Nandī of his informants, there can be little doubt the name is derived from that of Śiva's bull. He has no obvious counterpart as such. But there were two holes to be accounted for, two names to be found. In this predicament, someone versed in mythology hit upon Bhṛṅgī for the second of the subsidiary holes: the Kathāsaritsāgara (ed. Durgāprasād/Parab, Bombay 1930[4], 50, 186f., p.247) names them next to each other in a list of five door-keepers of Śiva.

[6] Professor Lienhard suggests an etymology for Nāsaḥdyaḥ which derives the name from the Sanskrit term, Nāṭeśvara: see his *Nepalese Manuscripts*, pt. 1 (Stuttgart 1988), p. 82. Even so, the god is not a normal figure of the Hindu pantheon.

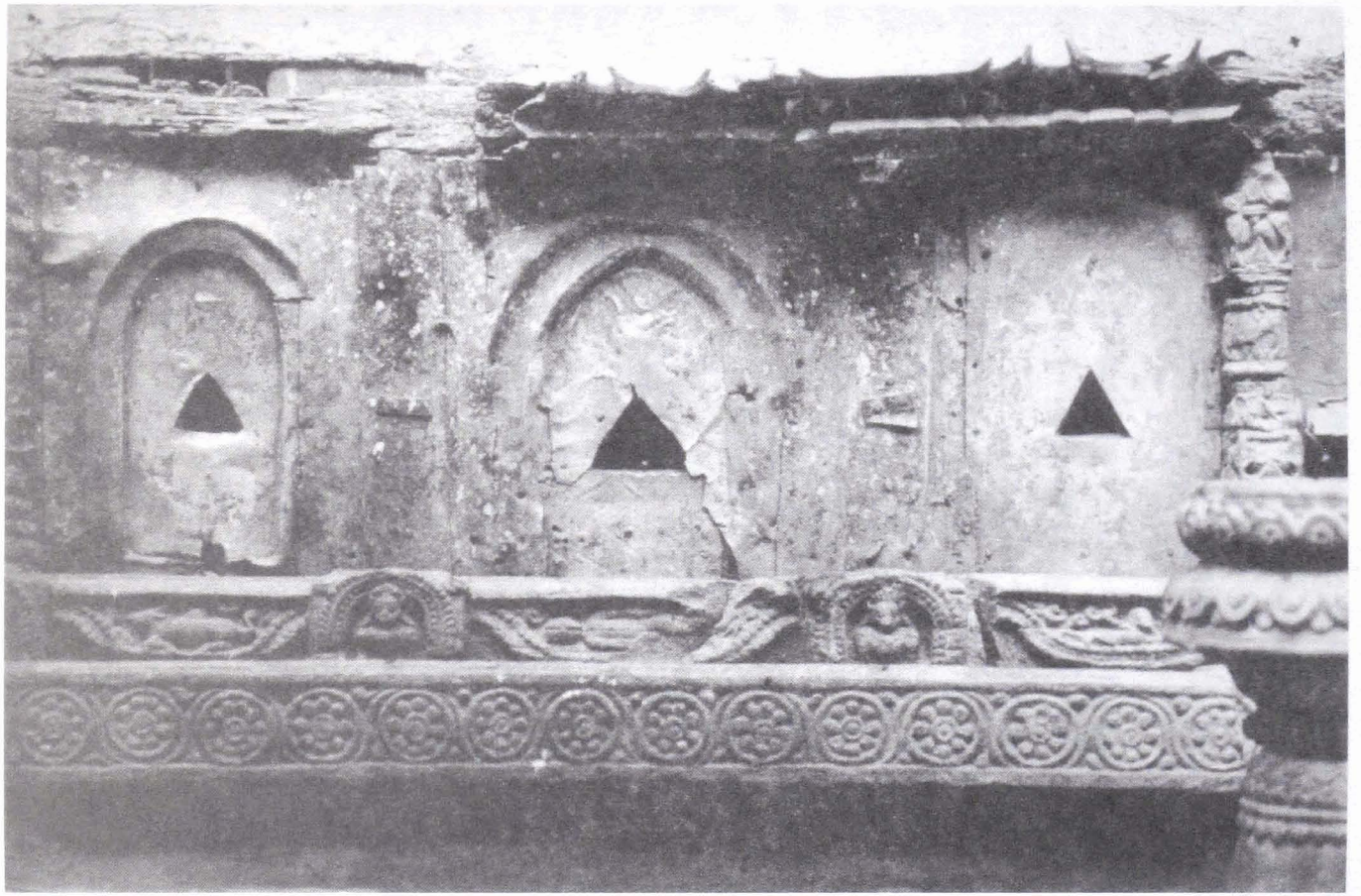

**Fig. 1**: Three *Nāsaḥ*-holes at the shrine of Mū-Nāsaḥ of Nāsaḥmānā, Bhaktapur.

**Fig. 2**: Brass plate at the shrine of Tāthu *Nāsaḥ* of Yātāchē, Bhaktapur.

at its centre. What the literate had been claiming all along is here transposed into an icon — but it is done in a slow and hesitating fashion. For the identification is placed at the periphery of the icon, and does not touch the original god. What one would consider the logical end of the development has apparently not been reached: I am not aware of an isolated Nṛtyanātha image of orthodox shape which is the centre of a cult in the Kathmandu Valley.

## 'JALAHĀRYUPARISUMERUCAITYAS'

Among the *caitya* types popular in 19th-century Nepal there is the shape illustrated by Fig.3. This goes by the name of Jalahāryuparisumerucaitya, i.e. a 'sumeru-caitya on top of a drain'. To go by dictionaries, this is not a term which can be quoted from literature.

It is distinguished by the following features: (a) It is a slim edifice: the sphere of the dome which is so general and essential a characteristic of stūpas appears much reduced in width, so as to resemble a shaft rather than the usual half globe. (b) Its four sides are apparently always adorned by the Tathāgatas whose representations are much increased in size[7]. (c) The *caitya* rests upon what one might describe as a stone slab, usually quadrangular, with its edges raised: this is the 'drain' *(jalahāri-)* the name refers to.

From its appearance, its antecedents are quite clear. The *caitya* was re-shaped in response to that most common of Śaiva emblems, the *liṅga* raised in the *yoni*. The Tathāgatas on the four sides correspond to the four faces the Śaiva emblem so frequently shows (in its *caturmukhaliṅga* form), and its top, which as usual consists of a 'neck' *(gala-, harmikā-)* and the tiers rising above it, is a morphological parallel to Īśāna, the fifth and central head of the *caturmukhaliṅga*.

To be sure, the drain of the Bauddha image bears a functional label, *jalahāri-*, while with Śaivas it is usually denoted by the word *yoni-*, i.e. by a religious metaphor. There can be little doubt, though, about the functional

[7] 'Es handelt sich um eine Vergrößerung des ehemaligen Nischeninhalts, der nun sogar konstruktive Formen übernimmt' (N. Gutschow: Caitya Typologie und Chronologie. 1988, p.11 [unpublished paper].

identity of both parts[8].

The reduced volume of the *caitya* and the *jalahāri* or *yoni* condition each other, and both are brought about in the attempt to adapt the *caitya* to one of the hallowed Śaiva symbols. This is as it were a tangible, visible counterpart to legends like those which connect the Buddha and the Paśupati temple[9].

## BUDDHIST SUKUNDĀS

A similar process is to be observed in the Buddhist ritual lamp depicted in Fig. 5. This is an oil jar with an elaborate handle adorned with or consisting of serpents intertwined. It has a shallow, pointed bowl affixed to its front to hold oil and a wick. Normally, its deity is a Gaṇeśa, whose image rises between the bowl and the jar (Fig. 4). In the Buddhist version shown in Fig. 5, he is replaced by an Avalokiteśvara with eleven heads. Interestingly enough, Gaṇeśa is not therefore entirely abandoned. Tiny but unmistakable, his figure stands below Avalokiteśvara's feet. He is dislodged in the most literal sense of the term, but — omitted he was not.

[8] In the paper just quoted, Dr Gutschow voices reserves about the morphological analogy here suggested: '[...] könnte die yoni ein rein funktionelles Element darstellen, das im Hinduismus Teil eines jeden Kultbilds ist: es führt das Wasser, mit dem das Reinigungsopfer vollzogen wurde, ab. Da zur Verehrung des Caitya auch eine Lustration gehört, ist dieser Gedanke sogar naheliegend' (*loc.cit.*, p.12). No doubt; the very term *jalahāri-* says so: it stems from the technicalities of ritual procedure and as such is neither Buddhist nor Hindu (cf., e.g., the entry '*jalahri* [...] a square, rectangular base of an image of Śiva (a yoni-like base)': T.L. Manandhar: Newari-English Dictionary, Delhi 1986, s.v.). The *yoni* of a *liṅga* is a *jalahāri*, too; yet nobody would therefore think of denying its religious significance. Insisting on the slab being nothing but a drain fails to account for what after all is the essential problem: for centuries, *caityas* had done without a *jalahāri-*. Surely their sudden appearance is what one has to come to terms with.

[9] To see the *caitya* reduced to a shaft is not without its historical piquancy. The invisible central beam so essential to the structure of a stūpa in Newārī manuscripts goes by the name of *yaḥsiṃ* — which is the very term that is used to denote the big wooden liṅga raised annually at the New Year festivities at the southern outskirts of Bhatgaon: the open space to hold the festival is called *Yaḥsiṃkhyaḥ* ('field for the *yaḥsiṃ*'); the pole has to come up in a special place, the 'hole for the pole' (*yaḥsiṃpvāḥ*). Again: this opening is called a 'hole' (*pvāḥ*). Are we therefore to say it does not stand for a *yoni* ?

**Fig. 3**: Jalahary uparisumerucaitya.

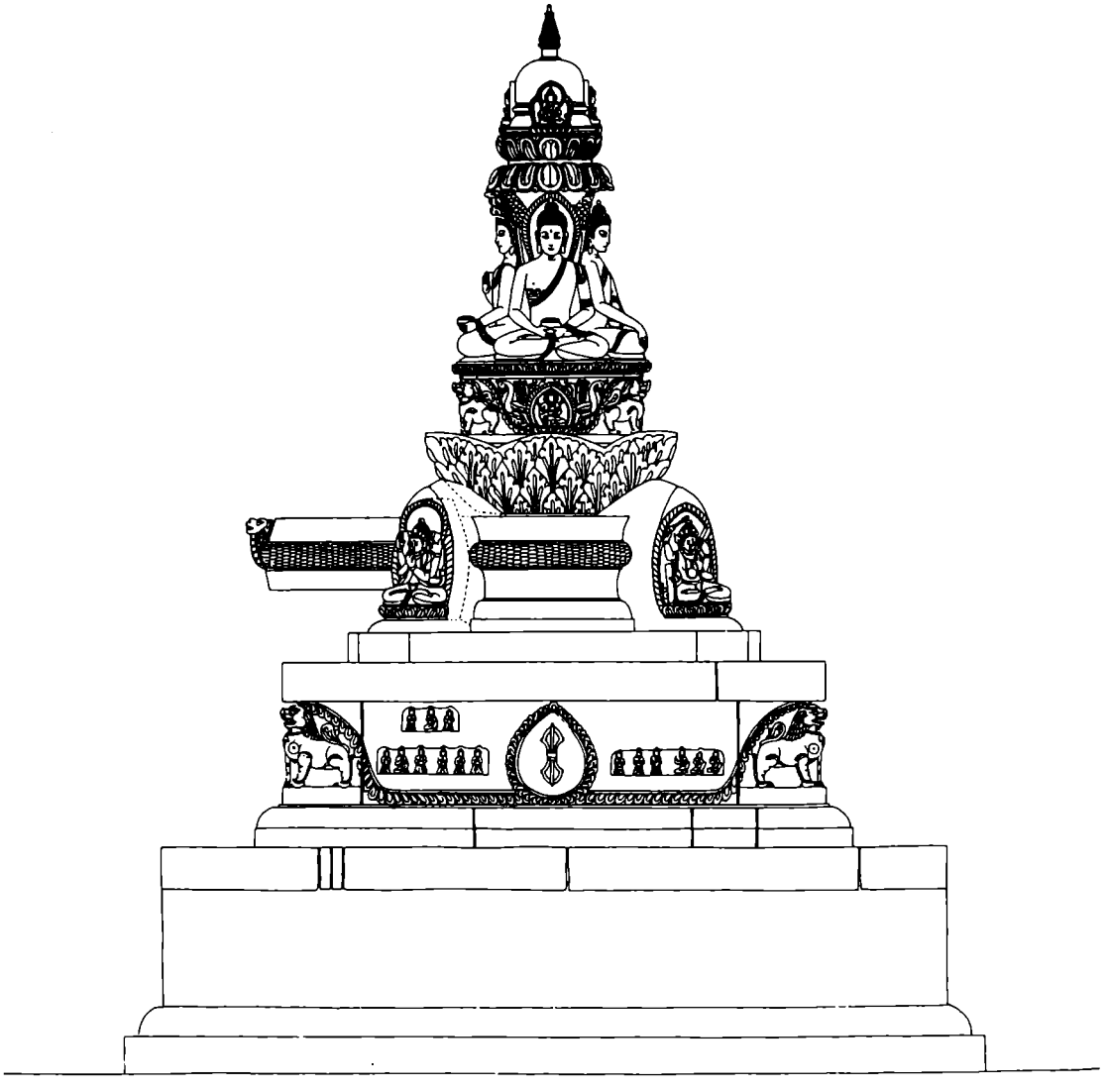

**Fig. 4**: Sukundā with Gaṇeśa. National Museum, Chauni (Photograph: B.R. Chitrakar).

**Fig. 5**: Sukundā with Avalokiteśvara and Gaṇeśa. Private possession (Photograph: D. Ohlsen).

* * * *

How to deal with this kind of evidence?

First, there are of course the historical conclusions to be drawn. The modified *caitya* and the Buddhist *sukundā* both stem from a similar impulse: an emblem sacred in one religion is adapted so that it can be used in another. In the *sukundā*, this is effected by mere addition and replacement, a very simple device (: in keeping with what has been noted above, the jar, incidentally, shows how Gaṇeśa could be absorbed into the Buddhist pantheon[10]). The narrowed *caitya* is a more complicated case. It remains an essentially Buddhist monument; while slightly changing its shape, it does not lose any of its characteristics and only adds the drain so as to achieve a plausible approximation between the central symbols of Buddhism and Śaivism. In another medium, that of religious art, we have here reached the territory of what Hacker has so cogently termed 'inclusivism' — which he tends to interpret in terms of subliminal fights for religious domination.

From what one sees in Nepal, one rather doubts whether the component of hostility was all that decisive. A Kathmandu Tulādhar group, I am told, worships an amorphous stone as the *sanctissimum* of their *āgaṃcheṃ*. At a certain stage in rituals, it is covered by a *caitya* with a hollow dome: the unorthodox deity is in a most immediate sense overlaid by an emblem of highest doctrinal prestige and sanctity. Clearly it will not do to say this is a *caitya* pure and simple. If these Buddhists had meant to discard a previous creed, it would have been natural to part with the old stone and replace it by a normal *caitya*. They did not choose this line; rather, they very literally incorporated the previous deity. -

Much more important for understanding the Nepalese, and indeed the South Asian, heritage is a second aspect. The *caitya* with its *jalahāri* and the *liṅga* with its *yoni*; the Hindu and the Buddhist versions of the *sukundā*: do they not testify to the emergence of a common set of signs and symbols, valid beyond the territory of an individual religion?

This is all the more essential since there can hardly be any doubt that these common forms do not owe their existence to a conscious influence exerted from

[10] Cf., e.g., M.-Th. de Mallmann: Introduction à l'iconographie du tântrisme bouddhique. Paris 1975, pp. 166 ff.

above: one can hardly conceive of missionary propagation which would have led to their emergence. And a very similar description could be applied to the two Deities, Gaṇeśa and Nṛtyanātha. Again, there seems to have been little interference with the ways they are worshipped, or with their public: in a way, the new names are but forms or labels to explain their nature in a wider context.

In hazy outlines, we perceive the outlines of something like a morphology of forms which can be established beyond individual utterances constituted by a single religion. Ways to structure experience can be examined under this aspect[11], just as processions or myths. And in all the variations of religious creed, it is this common morphology which constitutes the unity of the subcontinent. In Nepal, it has been preserved and developed — and this is one of the grounds that make for the lasting fascination of your country in a very literal sense.

[11] I have tried to follow the ramifications of such pre-established patterns in my paper *Stages in the Evolution of a World Picture* and in the introduction to *Re-Building a Stūpa*.

## Comment on Kölver's Contribution

Kamal Prakash Malla

[...] The paper [...] should not go uncontested [...] I have not much to say if [the author] is being polite to us by appealing to the popular sentiments of Nepalese culture as syncretic, playing a kind of latter-day Hsüan Tsang who testified to the coexistence of Buddhist monasteries and Hindu temples in seventh-century Nepal. It seems to me [the author] is doing justice to his role as scholar-coordinator, but not to his own discipline nor to the illumination of Nepalese cultural processes by choosing to write about the topic the way he did.

Syncretism is a little romantic, [a] touristic and textbook view of the vicissitudes of Nepal's cultural history, *if* by syncretism we merely mean the absence of competition and conflicts among the specialists and purveyors of salvation for the patronage of their temporal clients, or for what [the paper] calls 'subliminal fights for religious domination'. I am afraid the pieces of evidence which Kölver happily ignores seem to indicate that the fights were neither subliminal, nor were they merely for religious domination, for the simple reason that religious domination has never been merely religious.

In the first place, I am not clear why Kölver confines himself to what he calls *visible testimonials* by leaving aside the whole textual traditions which he seems to dismiss as merely *longish and cumbersome elaboration* of the so-called visible testimonials.

He discusses 'four *uncontroversial* set[s] of facts testifying to a conscious effort towards a common set of signs and symbols, valid beyond the territory of an individual religion'. To counter almost every one of these testimonials, one can produce near[-]identical items, to sketch in not too hazy outlines an opposite thesis. Among the four pieces of evidence, Dr Kölver discusses an oil-lamp with an Avalokiteśvara displacing the usual Gaṇeśa, not completely but mercifully relegating him to a tiny-sized place at his feet. I agree that this is not such a disastrous symbol of religious syncretism. Dr Kölver claims that symbols and signs such as these do not 'owe their existence to any conscious influence exerted from above nor any missionary propagations'. But what about the Buddhist ico-

nography of Vighnāntaka, in which a clearly Buddhist deity is trampling heavily on Gaṇeśa who barely maintains his divine poise under such heavy oppression? Dr Kölver's examples are so motivated and premeditated that they cannot but prove his happy thesis, i.e., our gods are in their proper shape, behaving properly with one another so that their mortal devotees also do so. But at the same time, it is nearly evident that the examples and testimonials are so far and few between that they seem to be exceptions [rather] than the rule.

Let us take the example of the so-called *caitya* with a drain or *jalahāri*. How many of them are there in [a] typical city like Patan, where there are thousands of *caityas*? As far as I know, there is only one in Bhelāchem Tole. From Gutschow's typology and chronology it seems that it is a Nineteenth-century innovation, with a textual reference going not further than [the] *Dharmakośasaṃgraha*, a kind of guidebook written for Hodgson by Amṛtānanda. I am afraid this is too late a date for a testimonial of any cultural historical significance relating to syncretism. Besides, I tend to agree more with Gutschow when he says that 'the *jalahāri* might be a purely functional element'. In fact, this was the point I had made to him [...] There is no compelling argument to persuade us to think that this kind of *caitya* is a pervasive cultural expression standing as a visible testimonial to Buddhist art accommodating a Śaiva symbol. In a paper, Ruth Laila Schmidt verifies our apprehensions:

> I asked four Nepalese — a Buddhist Newar, a Hindu Newar, and two Hindu Brahmans — to describe the shrine to me. Their statement made it clear that the syncretistic nature of the shrine was of little or no importance to them. (Schmidt, 1978 p.450)

Let us also briefly look at the hypothetical pre-Hindu elements being assimilated by Hinduism proper in the culture of the Nepal Valley. As far as I know, there is no reference to Gaṇeśa nor to Nṛtyanātha/Naṭeśvara in the Licchavi documents. There is only one Gaṇeśa image with an inscription which Mohan Khanal claims to be datable to the seventh century A.D. This claim seems to be somewhat controversial as Gaṇeśa does not make any appearance even in the ubiquitous Umā-Maheśvara or Kailāsa *parivāra* panels in the Valley until about the eight century A.D. or even later (see Bangdel 1982, plate 113). Whereas I fully subscribe to the hypothesis that the aniconic representations of nameless and formless gods and goddesses of the Valley were later assimilated into the Hindu-Buddhist pantheon and were later baptised as such, I didn't quite get the argument for Gaṇeśa — he being a very late-comer in the Valley's pantheon. I

would, besides, have thought that Gaṇeśa — even in the classical Hindu pantheon — is a deity of dubious legitimacy with conflicting evidence from the Purāṇas. According to Kane, 'the peculiar features of Gaṇeśa, as described in the medieval works, namely, the head of an elephant, pot belly, mouse as *vāhana* are entirely wanting in the Vedic literature' (Kane Vol. 2, p. 213). Foucher speculated that the origins of Gaṇeśa go back to totem worship and agrarian rites. At least one of his names, Heramba, a Dravidian loanword, means a buffalo — wh ich does not seem to have anything to do with the cult as we know it today nor the ungainly form of the deity. In the Kathmandu Valley, the nameless and formless stones are made to represent *not only* Gaṇeśa, but also the Degū dyaḥ, the lineage deities of various Newar castes and clans, the Mother Goddesses, the Bhairava, the Serpent Gods, the Gods of Space or Directions, etc.

Dr Kölver also contends that the Nāsaḥdyaḥ, the Newar gods of music, dance and drama, 'betray clear signs of a pre-Hindu origin'. Among these clear signs Dr Kölver mentions two: their abstract representation in geometric forms, mostly a triangle or a rectangle, and secondly what he calls the principle of linear movement, i.e. the god can only proceed in a straight line and must not be obstructed. The hole or opening is continued through walls of adjacent houses or gardens which the god will encounter on his way. As far as I have been able to verify, there is no documentary evidence that the cult of Nṛtyanātha is older than the later Malla period, particularly when the later Malla kings of the divided kingdoms began to take pride in their knowledge of the finer arts and began to build such public monuments as *dabuli* and *nāsal cuka* inside or outside the royal palaces. Besides, one would have liked to know if the principle of linear movement holds good for the Nāsaḥdyaḥ shrines in all the Newar settlements inside the Valley. Or does it hold good only for Bhaktapur?

This ultimately leads us to the vexing question: are all elements and forms of culture which are non-Hindu necessarily pre-Hindu? In much of our writings on cultural history, we (which includes me as well) are fond of using somewhat restricted categorical or descriptive terms which seem self-evident to us. Disturbingly enough, much of our terminology is too restricted in a way — Hindu, Buddhist, tribal, Aryan, Dravidian, or pre-Aryan or pre-Hindu. Compared with other flourishing social sciences which are groaning under the deadweight of their own jargons, or shall we say over-differentiation (to bastardize a term from Werner Winter's paper [...]) we who are preoccupied with the history and evolution of cultural systems, are suffering from a poverty of conceptual terminology, from 'under-differentiation', if you like. Dumont once issued a stern caveat for

the scholars of South Asian culture:

> Hinduism or Indian civilization is not the great monolith some would have us consider it; there are major cleavages, but these do not always lie where it has been imagined. The most disastrous of these divisions which has been imposed, and is still imposed, on Indian culture is the so-called distinction between Aryan and Dravidian features. (Dumont 1957, p.15)

We, the students and analysts of Nepalese culture, should shield ourselves from either of these trends: to consider it as a great monolith or to analyse it along lines of imaginary divisions.

On the whole, Dr Kölver's paper is untypical of his substantial contributions to Nepalese studies because here he is [leaving] us [...] totally puzzled about what he may have meant. I am not saying that this paper is not transparent; in fact, it is disturbingly so, particularly in the choice of the few visible items of cultural expression which fit the syncretic scheme. But is this the whole story? If not, where do we look for the rest of it?

Of course, culture is a sensitive theme. But should we, for that reason, stop studying it except in palatable capsules? Does true scholarship hurt anyone, or for that matter, [is it] meant to please anyone? I confess, Professor Kölver, I have no means of verifying.

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# KṚṢṆAISM IN NEPAL

SIEGFRIED LIENHARD

A great reawakening of Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa characterizes the sixteenth and, to an even greater extent, the seventeenth century in Nepal. As we know, ever since 1482 A.D. — the year marking the beginning of the Late Malla period — the Kathmandu Valley had been split up into three small kingdoms — Kathmandu, Bhaktapur, and Patan. Vaiṣṇava temples were constructed in front of each of the three kingdoms' royal palaces, and what is noteworthy in this context is the fact that now both sanctuaries honouring various forms of Viṣṇu, and others sacred to various manifestations of Śiva, the two most significant gods of the Hindu pantheon, gradually began to adorn the palace precincts.

Also falling within this period of flourishing artistic and literary activity were the beginnings of the Kṛṣṇa cult in Nepal, a new belief that quickly became popular, but which is still only sparingly documented for the valley's entire early history. Although the Licchavi kings, who were familiar with the *Mahābhārata* and with the text of the *Bhagavadgītā* incorporated into it, doubtless possessed knowledge of Kṛṣṇa, one of the epic's principal figures, Kṛṣṇa worship in the form of an inner Kṛṣṇa-centred *bhakti* heavily suffused with erotic elements only broke through onto the scene in full bloom at the beginning of the 17th century. In his nature and deportment, to be sure, the Kṛṣṇa who was exalted in the cult of a deeply felt love of God (*bhakti*) was an entirely different character from the originally heroic god, the hero-god Kṛṣṇa, whom the Licchavis knew of. One of the inscriptions of Śivadeva I, Aṃśuvarman's predecessor, mentions the expression *vāsudevabrāhmaṇa*, which, we may assume, designates followers of Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa who were recruited from among the Brahmans. While Kṛṣṇa, called Vāsudeva after his father (Vasudeva), is the most important of the ten *avatāras*, the identification of Kṛṣṇa with Viṣṇu and the melting of Kṛṣṇaism into Vaiṣṇavism can hardly have taken place earlier than the first centuries before and after Christ. Kṛṣṇa the cowherd and lover of the *gopīs* and Kṛṣṇa the hero are two figures entirely different in origin. The life story of the young,

erotic and to a certain extent 'classical' Kṛṣṇa, which was assembled from many different components, with Vṛndāvana forming its pastoral background, only received its final shape in certain Purāṇas — the *Harivaṃśa*, and the *Viṣṇu-* and *Bhāgavatapurāṇas*. Interestingly, the group of people known as the Ābhīras apparently played some rôle in the early worship of the cowherd Kṛṣṇa. While one tribe called Ābhīra turns up in the Deccan and in Malwa shortly after the Christian era, another short-lived dynasty (506 to 641 A.D.) of the same name — the Ābhīra Guptas — interrupts, as far as Nepal is concerned, the long period of Licchavi rule. Although it is tempting to identify the Ābhīra Guptas with the Gopāla Guptas, the 'Cowherd Guptas', who are likewise mentioned in the Nepalese chronicles, the identity of neither is at all sure. According to Hindu tradition, it was Kṛṣṇa and his son Pradyumna who once freed the Nepal Valley from the waters of the lake Nāgahrada and thereby caused the Vāgmatī River to flow off. The *Bhāṣāvaṃśāvalī*, translated into English by Daniel Wright, therefore attempts to establish as fact the arrival into the valley of Kathmandu of a group of cowherds who were among Kṛṣṇa's retinue at the time, and who came directly from Dvārikā.

The wave of pious Kṛṣṇa worship that seized Nepal in the 16th century originated in geographically neighbouring India, where, as early as the 11th century, individual and literary communities could be found that, drawing their inspiration from Shakti and Tantra movements, placed Kṛṣṇa at the focus of their preoccupations. The chequered love relationship between Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā, which oscillated continuously between estrangement and reconciliation, separation and reunion, attained great significance — for the religiously and poetically minded alike. Although the figure of Rādhā was late to enter the Kṛṣṇa legend, failing to appear, for example, in the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa*, there soon arose an incandescent erotic mysticism with a quality all of its own, and extremely fruitful in the sphere of Nepalese art, as is borne witness to by the number of paintings, sculptures and literary works continuously on the increase from the 16th century onwards. Artists and poets did not tire of portraying the love game of Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā, which also admitted of an allegorical interpretation.

Nepal received the decisive impulses along these lines, as far as religious and literary life are concerned, from Vaiṣṇava Brahmans who had immigrated from Bihar, particularly Mithila (Tirhut), and Bengal, and, as specifically regards painting, from Indian emigrants who made their way to the Nepal Valley from Rajasthan and the western foothills of the Himalaya. Spared the storm of Islamic

conquest, Nepal was for centuries the preferred goal of religiously minded men, scholars and artists from beyond the border. Not a few found a new setting in which to follow their pursuits, whether in the three courts of the Malla kingdoms or at the court of the Shahs, the seat of which — up to the seizure of power in the year 1768 — was the small principality of Gorkha to the west of the city of Kathmandu.

The man who played by far the most decisive rôle in the consolidation and spread of Kṛṣṇaism in Nepal was King Siddhinarasiṃha Malla of Patan (1619 — 1661). Already indicative of a strong gravitation towards Vaiṣṇava belief is the very name Narasiṃha, 'man-lion', who on the one hand is the fourth incarnation of Viṣṇu, while being on the other a superbly fitting name for a king, a ruler who preserves and protects his country. A large number of buildings, art objects and literary sources document the many-sided activities of this great monarch whose style of living and piety captivates us even today. Like his predecessors and like his fellow rulers in nearby Kathmandu, King Lakṣmīnarasiṃha (1619 — 1641) and Pratāpa Malla (1641 — 1674), Siddhinarasiṃha regarded himself as an outward manifestation of Viṣṇu. His grandfather was King Śivasiṃha of Kathmandu (1578 — 1619), who conquered Patan and assimilated it into his kingdom. His parents were Hariharasiṃha and his younger wife Lālamatī, an extraordinary woman, who, though of mysterious origins, was much praised in inscriptions. When after Śivasiṃha's death the kingdom of Kathmandu apparently split up into Kathmandu and Patan, Lakṣmīnarasiṃha, a son of Hariharasiṃha from his first marriage, became regent of Kathmandu, and his half-brother Siddhinarasiṃha, who possibly lost his mother as a child, king of Patan.

In spite of his strong involvement in Vaiṣṇava and, as we shall see, Kṛṣṇaite concerns, Siddhinarasiṃha distributed his royal favours equitably. As early as 1627 he had the large Viśveśvara Temple, dedicated to the god Śiva, built in direct proximity to the palace; one of the elephant riders posted in front of the entrance presumably represents the ruler himself. He extended the royal palace, which attained its present-day size during his rule; he founded new Buddhist monasteries (*vihāra*), and, as the previously mentioned chronicle in Nepali, the *Bhāṣāvaṃśāvalī*, informs us, reorganized monastic structure. Connected with the tutelary deity of the Malla family is a fountain complex of Siddhinarasiṃha's, east of the palace, formerly bordered by a garden, and also the account of the king's having always plucked the flowers for the daily offering to Taleju himself, while recalling the worship of his titular deity is a statue of Viṣṇu-Narasiṃha, which the king had placed at the entrance of the Sundara Cauk, an inner courtyard

fashioned for private purposes. In the area of non-religious affairs, the king undertook settlement-promoting measures which revived the city's appearance; he attracted merchants living outside the city into it and — not the least of his accomplishments — also intensified trade with Tibet.

The pious nature of this princely personality, who was felt to be unusual even during his lifetime, added more than its part to the fascinating picture of Siddhinarasiṃha drawn in historical writings. Among all the Nepalese kings, Siddhinarasiṃha is regarded — for good reason — as the king-sage (*rājarṣi*), the great saint on the lion throne. As recorded by tradition, a favourite pastime for the king was keeping up *satsaṅga*, association with saintly men. He meditated frequently and long, and not seldom undertook the then burdensome pilgrimage to Benares and other religiously significant sites. In addition, the monarch at times retired completely from the court and worldly life. He practised great charity, but he himself was modest and had his tax officials collect as few taxes as possible. Nor did the king desire to have his wife and his daughters wear jewellery. Satisfied with possessing only what was most necessary, he conceived all property as being merely a loan which the king, to whom it was entrusted, administered for the good of the people. When Siddhinarasiṃha was on a trip, he turned official business over to his son Śrīnivāsa. In the year 1661, after having, as the chronicles report, personally placed the crown on Śrīnivāsa's head, he renounced the throne forever, in order to effect his departure into 'another country' (*deśāntara*), again in this case India.

King Siddhinarasiṃha gave expression to his worship of Kṛṣṇa in numerous ways. Ever since 1637, when he built a temple on the square in front of the royal palace in honour of Bālagopāla, the 'young cowherd (Kṛṣṇa)', this structure has represented the most important centre of the Kṛṣṇa cult in the Nepal Valley. The shrine stands opposite a pillar on which there is a kneeling Garuḍa, right next to the previously mentioned Viśveśvara Temple, which is ten years older. Whereas in its first upper storey the shrine houses a large picture of Kṛṣṇa and two smaller statues of his two wives, Rukmiṇī and Satyabhāmā, the outer walls are adorned with stone reliefs of the ten *avatāras* of the god Viṣṇu.

Ever since Siddhinarasiṃha's time the Bālagopāla Temple has been the focus of a richly developed cult, upon which certain limitations have been placed during the past two decades for economic and other reasons. Basically two forms of religious practice may be distinguished there: (1) the daily *pūjā* service and (2), a yearly cycle of special festivals and ceremonies, spread over the religious calendar. An important date is the *Kṛṣṇāṣṭamī*, the eighth day of the month of

Bhādrapada (August-September), the god's birthday, on which occasion the king of Nepal visits the temple.

Kārttika is, so to speak, the sacred month for the Kṛṣṇaites. Not only does the famed night of the full moon, the *rāsapūrṇimā*, when Kṛṣṇa promised the gopīs fulfilment, fall in this month; the 11th day (*ekādaśī*) of the month is the famous Hariśayanī which is sacred to all Vaiṣṇavas. Moreover, during the month of Kārttika the big yearly dance festival (*kārttik nāc*) which was inaugurated by Siddhinarasiṃha takes place; originally taking one whole month, today it lasts only ten days. The former pomp of these dances may be gauged from the fact that in the past approximately one hundred and fifty persons were employed in the preparations and the performance, whereas since about 1950 only fifty have had a part in the festival. Every evening various episodes of the Kṛṣṇa legend are performed in dance on a stage set up in front of the Bālagopāla Temple.

Siddhinarasiṃha was at the same time a prominent patron of Nepali and Indo-Nepali poetry, which at that time was composed, apart from Sanskrit, primarily in Maithili, Bengali and — the most important language of the valley — in Newari. We may certainly assume that the monarch occasionally had dramas staged, with those plays Vaiṣṇava-Kṛṣṇaite in content being preferably staged, one presumes, during the month of Kārttika, and directly in front of the Bālagopāla Temple. To his son and, for a while, fellow regent Śrīnivāsa are ascribed two dramas, one of which deals with the ten *avatāras* of the god Viṣṇu. Poetical stature has also been recognized in Siddhinarasiṃha himself. The king is said to have composed religious lyrical poetry in Maithili and, what is far more important, is regarded as the author of 36 renowned Kṛṣṇaite songs or poems which, written in Newari, display a very close relationship to the Kṛṣṇa cult in Nepal. In a tradition that is unbroken since the day of Siddhinarasiṃha, the songs are sung even today, usually next to the temple, though once a year inside it, too.

The group of men entrusted with the singing and musical accompaniment at present consists of about twenty-five singers and musicians, who constitute one of the many *guṭhīs* that are so important for the socio-religious life of the valley. In the present case, they are almost exclusively members of the Tāmrakārs, the caste of coppersmiths, who regard themselves as Hindus. Admission occurs in principle on a hereditary basis, the oldest son being received into the *guṭhī* after the death of his father. The performances of songs do not, however, take place daily, but only three times during the year, namely on the Jyeṣṭhapūrṇimā day, i.e. the full moon day in the month of Jyeṣṭha (May-June); further, on the day when the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara-Karuṇāmaya returns from his shrine in

Bungamati to his second temple, located in Patan; and finally, as is fully to be expected, in the month of Kārttika, when the group of singers sings the songs inside the temple. On Jyeṣṭhapūrṇimā, the performance lasts the entire day: thirty-five of the songs ascribed to the king are sung, which takes approximately twelve hours; in the month of Kārttika, starting with the first day, one of the songs is sung each evening; likewise, after Avalokiteśvara's return to Patan one song is sung each morning, followed by two or three songs of a different origin — though this time it is not in or at the Kṛṣṇa temple but in the Karuṇāmaya shrine. A particularly strong connection with Siddhinarasiṃha is exhibited by the festival of Jyeṣṭhapūrṇimā, as on this day both the king's throne is shown and, next to the temple, a Kṛṣṇa painting is displayed illustrating 31 poems in an equal number of scenes arranged next to and underneath one another. These are the poems, as Nepalese tradition would have it, that were composed by Siddhinarasiṃha himself.

This valuable painting, approximately 54 by 64 inches in size, is nowadays in the possession of the National Bronze Art Museum of Patan, but it has nevertheless suffered irreparable damage in numerous places during the long period of its religious worship. It represents a beautiful and — having presumably been painted during Siddhinarasiṃha's reign — relatively early example of Nepalese miniature painting, which received its creative impulses from Rajasthan and the Pahari schools of painting. The upper portion of the pictorial space of each individual scene reproduces the song being illustrated in the Newar alphabet, the *Nepālākṣara*. The poems, written in a difficult, classical Newari, recur to older models among the Indian poets, particularly the Kṛṣṇa-inspired lyrical poetry of Vidyāpati Ṭhākur (ca. 1375 — 1450), who came from Mithila in Bihar, and who made use of the Maithili language. As we may expect, both the poems and the pictures illustrating them depict the whimsical games the young Kṛṣṇa plays with the herdswomen. The lovers' happiness, meeting and separation are portrayed in a colourfully alternating sequence.

Kṛṣṇa is depicted a great number of times, but it is the large figure of Kṛṣṇa Veṇudhara, the flute-playing god flanked by a *gopī* to the left and right, who dominates the painting from his position in the middle of the scenes. The god is four-armed and, as always, dark-blue. His head, which a golden crown adorns, is surrounded by a red mandorla. Golden jewellery shines radiantly on his neck and arms; the upper part of his body is bare, and the lower part is covered by a loincloth and a golden-coloured bow. The herdswomen are dressed like women of Indian or Nepalese courts, in bodices and skirts. The girl on the

left is holding a bowl in her right hand, while the girl standing to the right is offering her beloved god a drink from a handsome chalice.

The first scene is of interest. Five figures are situated on red-coloured terrain in an open setting. To the very right one can see, his head covered by a turban, King Siddhinarasiṃha Malla, who is in the act of paying worship to Paśupati-Śiva and Durgā. Durgā is standing in the middle, with the god Śiva, wearing a crown, to her left. We are astounded to see Śiva depicted in a Kṛṣṇa painting, but this picture reminds us of the fact that Nepal's rulers reigned by the grace of Paśupati-Śiva, and that Māneśvarī-Taleju, an outward form of Durgā, was the family deity of the Malla kings. As he represents an incarnation of Viṣṇu, the king, whom we recognize from his face and hands, has skin that is blue in colour. The divine couple is flanked on both sides by a servant who is to all appearances an ascetic. Due to damage to the painting, only the left arm and the upper part of the body of the man standing at the extreme edge of the picture can be seen. The god Paśupati-Śiva stands out over all other persons portrayed in the picture. The upper part of his body is bare; a brown loincloth enfolds its lower part. The head is adorned by a bejewelled golden crown, on which individual points jut out like flames, each adorned with a red jewel. In his two hands the ascetic god is holding two of his typical attributes: a small hourglass-shaped drum (*ḍamaru*) in the right and a trident (*triśūla*) in the left. The left arm is slightly extended, as if to touch Durgā's shoulders; the right arm is bent. From the crown descend long matted locks onto the breast, both to the left and right. Chains of skulls and garlands of snakes are suspended from the neck and belt.

I shall dispense with an interpretation of the remaining scenes and the songs reproduced in the space above the scenes, as I intend to publish a treatment both of the entire painting and of the king's Kṛṣṇa songs. But let one more thing be said: Kṛṣṇaism flourished in other places in Nepal as it did in Patan, as, for example, in Bhaktapur, but the city of Patan and the temple of Bālagopāla located there have remained to the present day the centre of Kṛṣṇa worship in Nepal.

(Translated into English by Philip Pierce)

PROJECTS

I. Kloster und Außenwelt. Klosterfunktionen und Interrelationen zwischen Kloster und Laiengemeinschaft im Stadtraum von Kathmandu und Patan (The

Monastery and the Secular World).

It has been the purpose of this project to examine both the function of the Buddhist Newar monasteries and the relationship that exists between these monasteries and the lay world. In the course of my work I have come to distinguish the socio-religious order, which is embraced by Vajrācāryas and Śākya-bhikṣus alone, by naming it *saṅgha-* or community-Buddhism. Those who belong to the two large classes of Urāyas and Jyāpus, on the other hand, are laymen pure and simple. I call them caste-Buddhists and their socio-religious way of life caste-Buddhism. As in *saṅghas*, there are in each caste a number of *guṭhīs*, and the caste itself, just like the *saṅgha*, forms a large *guṭhī* embracing every member. Where the ramifications of the tasks and functions of the *vihāras* are concerned, my research has been concentrated on the content of various rites, both public and private, which, as I have endeavoured to show in a number of papers, are partly formed on Indian models and partly based on elements from Newar usage. In addition to this, the project gives high priority to the *guṭhīs*, which are of vital importance in regulating the affairs of the *saṅghas* as well as the castes.

II. Kṛṣṇa in Bild und Gedicht (Kṛṣṇa in picture and poems).

This project aims at describing the development of pious Kṛṣṇa worship in Nepal and in publishing the famous *Kṛṣṇalīlā* painting illustrating 31 Kṛṣṇa poems which is nowadays in the possession of the National Bronze Art Museum of Patan. The poems, written in a difficult, classical Newārī, display a close relationship to the Kṛṣṇa cult in Nepal, particularly that of the Bālagopāla Temple in Patan. Nepalese tradition ascribes them to King Siddhinarasiṃha Malla (1619-1661) who played the most decisive rôle in the spread and consolidation of *Kṛṣṇabhakti* in Nepal.

# THE POLITICAL ORGANISATION OF SOUTHERN MUSTANG DURING THE 17TH AND 18TH CENTURIES

DIETER SCHUH

During the 17th and 18th centuries, western Nepal consisted of numerous political entities which recognized the suzerainty of the king of Jumla. Even the relatively small area of southern Mustang was comprised of at least several smaller states, for instance Thags (the area from Thugche down to the southern border of the present district), sPung-khris (present-day Marpha), Som-bu (present-day Thini) and Yul-kha bcu-gnyis (present-day Baragaon). It is an interesting fact that this fragmentation into small political units paved the way for the development of forms of political state organization which seem to be unique even for the rest of Asia.

Whereas source material on the political structure of most of the so-called "western-kingdoms" seems to be extremely rare, we find an entirely different situation in southern Mustang. Here the small states were ruled according to written constitutions, called *bem-chag*, and some of these are still kept in the archives of different places. The first *bem-chag* known to us is a document copies of which were kept in different places of the Thak Khola area north of Thukche. I was able to photograph the copies kept in Marpha and Shyang, while the copy of Cimang was published in facsimile in 1987 by M. Vinding and Charles Ramble.[1] Accordingly we shall call this document *Cimang bem-chag*. Four more *bem-chag* documents were photographed by me in 1987 and 1988. These are the *bem-chag*-s of Kagbeni and Marpha. All extant *bem-chag* documents are written in Tibetan script. The language is a mixture of classical Tibetan and Mustang dialect. The rules of orthography are more or less completely neglected. This means that the interpretation of these documents is extremely difficult.

The name *bem-chag* itself is not of Tibetan origin. It derives from the Mongo-

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Charles A. E. Ramble and Michael Vinding: The Bem-chag Village Record and the Early History of Mustang District. In: Kailash, Vol XIII (1987), pp. 5-48.

lian word *bičig* "letter" which was used during the 13th centuries as a designation for legal documents of a certain type.[2]

If we compare the Cimang *bem-chag* with the *bem-chag* of Kagbeni, we can observe that the former contains much more historical narrative than the latter. Contrary to the other *bem-chag* documents, the Cimang *bem-chag* does not contain any information about the internal political order of the political units of northern Thak Khola but rather contains regulations of supra-state relations between the different states of Thak Khola. In one case the text of one of the treaties (*rgam-shag*) between Thak and Som-bu is cited in part. This treaty dates back to the time when Thak Khola was divided into only two states. This document was issued most probably no later than the 17th century. Besides this the Cimang *bem-chag* contains the complete text of a second treaty (*chod-yig*) between the three countries (*yul-sgo gsum*) Thag, mThin (Thini) and sPun-gri (Marpha). This treaty was ratified either in 1697 or in 1757. It regulates among other things the return of animals and slaves that have escaped from their owners and the mutual support of the countries in case of military danger from outside.

As far as the Marpha *bem-chag* is concerned, I have been able to photograph three different versions, which shall be called MB1, MB2 and MB3. MB1 and MB2 are basically two copies of the same code of laws ratified in 1796 by an assembly of all citizens. Both texts contain many later additions of paragraphs and reformulations. These changes were always discussed and decided upon by assemblies of the citizens of Marpha. The citizens are called *yul-mi*, whereas foreigners are generally mentioned under the term *phyi-mi*. But not all residents of Marpha were regarded as citizens. The *bem-chag* mentions two more groups of persons, called *g.yog-po* (slaves) and *bha-do* (bondservants). Both groups consisted of persons forced to stay with their masters. Sexual intercourse between the male members of these groups and female citizens was explicitly forbidden and fined. Obviously slaves and bondservants did not take part in the assemblies of the citizens and were not entitled to fill a position in the administration of the state.

The right of the citizens (*yul-mi*) to decide upon new legal regulations was achieved at least as early as the first half of the 18th century. In MB3 we find a regulation which dates back to the year 1738. In this year it was decided by all

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For details see D. Schuh, Politische Implikationen tibetischer Urkundenformeln, St. Augustin 1985, p. 7 and D. Schuh, Erlasse und Sendschreiben mongolischer Herrscher für tibetische Geistliche, St. Augustin 1977, p. 162.

citizens that the judiciary power would be entrusted to the *rgan-pa*, the 4 *mi-thus*, the so-called eight great men (*mi-chen brgyad*) and the twelve "nobles" (*mi-drag bcu-gnyis*). The text of this decision of 1738 shows clearly that the power to enforce the law was conferred mainly upon the twelve nobles. It seems to me that the twelve nobles represented the old aristocratic groups among the families of Marpha who had lost their predominant role during the 17th century, so the decision of 1738 actually meant a step backward in the development of democratic structures. The reason for this is mentioned in the decision itself: There had been serious problems with the enforcement of public law and order within the community.

Looking into the *bem-chag* of 1796, we find that the group of nobles no longer had any specific function. They are only enumerated as one of the groups of persons present at the ratification of the *bem-chag*. They were again present in a meeting which took place in 1808. Hereafter no text available to us mentions them again.

The citizens had to fulfill a number of public duties. One of these duties was the participation in the regular meetings of the citizens. To these assemblies every household (*grong-pa*) had to send one man. Participation was compulsory. If someone failed to attend such a meeting without prior excuse he was fined.

Between the ages of 18 and 60 all citizens had to accept appointments for public offices made by the head of the state, who is mentioned under the term "elder" (*rgan-pa*) or "great elder" (*rgan-chen*). The great elder himself, who also bears such exalted titles as "lord of the people" (*mi-rje*) and "highest being" (*gong-ma*), acted as political leader for a period of three years. Before he took office, he had to swear an oath in front of the assembly of all citizens organized by the four *mi-thus*. Although the *bem-chag* mentions that he was elected by all citizens (*yul-mi*), it does not say anything about the procedure of this election. We also do not know if everybody was eligible for this office or if the position was confined to a specific group among the citizens of Marpha.

One of the specific duties of the great elder was the appointment of the other officials, such as the four *mi-thus* and the ten *rol-po*. The *rol-po* were headed by one official called min-kya who belonged to the group of *rol-po*, so altogether the administration of Marpha consisted of a group of fifteen officials. The citizens of Marpha were appointed to these offices in turn (*rim-pa*). If it was someone's turn and if he refused to take office, he was fined.

Besides a number of specific duties, which included the representation of the country in its relations with outside powers, the great elder also acted as judge.

There existed the possibility of appeal if someone did not accept the decision of the great elder. The case was then entrusted to somebody else and the great elder and the four *mi-thus* acted as one party against the citizens who had appealed the judgement. It was an outstanding feature of the legal system of Marpha that in legal procedures any appeal to foreign officials was strictly forbidden. In spite of the fact that in 1796, the year of the ratification of the *bem-chag*, Marpha was a part of the Gorkha Kingdom of Nepal, the *bem-chag* explicitly forbade any appeal to the king of Kathmandu (*Yam-bu*). Only in 1808 did an assembly of the citizens lay down an additional rule. From that year onwards it was allowed to go for appeal to the residence of the king of Kathmandu. But this was considered to be the only exception to the general rule.

There is another feature of the democratic structure of Marpha which seems to be of great importance. Although the great elder was the leader of the community, for a certain period of time invested with remarkable power, he was still compelled to submit to the regulations and laws laid down in the *bem-chag*. If the great elder acted against the law of the country it was the duty of the four *mi-thus* to inform all citizens of Marpha. In this case an assembly of all citizens was called together and the case of the great elder was decided upon by all members of the assembly. If the *mi-thus* failed to summon the assembly of citizens, they were fined.

Next in rank to the great elder were the four *mi-thus*. None of them was allowed to leave Marpha without the permission of the great elder. It was the general rule that two of them always had to be present in Marpha. The period of office for the *mi-thus* was two years. Every year two of them were replaced. Lowest in rank within the administration of Marpha were the ten *rol-po*. They were appointed for a period of one year only. Like the great elder, the *mi-thus* and the *rol-po* had to swear an oath before taking office.

It was a general rule that anyone who was appointed to a certain office had the duty to stay in Marpha most of the time. If we take into account that trade must have been an important source of income for the greater part of the citizenry we can understand why this obligation was a real burden for all officials.

The reason for this obligation is easy to understand. It was the main duty of the officials to enforce adherence to public law and order. If someone acted against the regulations laid down in the *bem-chag*, he was fined. In many cases 50% of the fines imposed on citizens was distributed among officials. The rest was added to the general income of the community. If any official failed to impose a fine on a citizen in accordance with the prescriptions of the law he

himself was fined accordingly.

Besides their responsibility for public law and order the officials had to be present at the execution of certain obligations by all citizens. This included, among other things, the collection of tributes and taxes, the cleaning of irrigation channels and the construction of a bridge over the Kali Gandaki in summer.

Besides the income from imposed fines, the *mi-thus* and more especially the *rol-po* were not paid for their services. The advantages granted to them on certain occasions were at most economically insignificant. This does not hold true for the great elder. He could, for instance, rely on the services of the *rol-po*, who had to supply porterage to him even when he was travelling privately. Besides this he received a significant income from taxes raised from all households on his behalf. Every household had to deliver five bundles of hay, a certain amount of rice and a certain quantity of grain every year to be handed over to the great elder.

While the Marpha *bem-chag* of 1796 consists of approximately 48 paragraphs, only ten of them deal with the political organization of the community. The rest can be grouped into four parts, dealing with the following main subjects.

1. Organization of labour and trade.
2. Internal economic organization.
3. Regulations concerning the monastery.
4. Customary laws and regulations.

1. With respect to the payment of labourers and trade with outsiders, the laws of Marpha enforced a unity among its citizenry which must be characterized as a cartel. This cartel covered the recruitment of labourers, the purchase of animals and the monopolistic control of trade activities.

If a weaver was employed by a citizen of Marpha, the amount of payment was strictly prescribed as a certain fixed amount of buckwheat. If the employee paid more or tried to attract labourers by paying in kind with rice or grain, he was fined. For all other kinds of labour the payment was fixed to 2 *ā-nā* per day. Again, anyone whose payment surpassed this amount was fined heavily.

Since the community of Marpha obviously relied heavily on the importation of meat, the purchase-price of livestock, especially Yaks, was strictly prescribed. As the price of an animal depends mainly on its age and size, the regulations had to be quite detailed. For example, the price of a certain older animal was fixed as 16 *dngul*. The community tried to enforce this price by almost any means. If someone observed any offence against this regulation and reported the case to any official he was rewarded with the payment of 4 *dngul*, which is equal to one-

fourth the price of the animal purchased. Any official who failed to prosecute such an offence had to pay a fine of 1 *dngul-zho*. Special regulations contained the stipulation that the purchaser had to buy the animal as a whole. If he returned the tail, the head or the hide to the cattle breeder who sold it to him he was also fined.

Very strict regulations existed with respect to trade. The community had established a house of trade (*grong-khang*) to which all trading activities were confined. Chapter 9 of the *Bem-chag* contains the regulation that no trader from Thags, a country which formed the southern border of Marpha, was allowed to store any goods, as for instance salt and grain, in private houses of Marpha. Generally the salt of all other traders from outside had to be stored in this house of trade. The traders were compelled to keep their transport animals here, too. Citizens of Marpha were not allowed to transport grain brought from the south beyond the house of trade to the north. It was especially forbidden for them to transport grain to the houses of trade in Shyang and Jomsom. If a citizen of Marpha was engaged in trade or the selling of beer in Shyang he had to pay the huge fine of 51 *dngul*, a sum which was equivalent to the price of three Yaks.

2. As far as the internal economic organisation is concerned the *bem-chag* mainly contains regulations concerning the usage of forests, the common usage of fields, the usage of irrigation water, the tending of cattle and the taxation of inns.

Due to a lack of time I shall only deal with regulations concerning the usage of forests. Although the area covered by forests belonging to Marpha must have been quite large, the rules for the usage of wood from these forests were very strict and complicated. In the bem-chag they cover approximately two pages. In certain parts of the forest it was only allowed to cut trees for building houses. In other areas this usage was limited to cutting pine trees. As a general rule, it was not allowed to bark trees.

The importance of the forest for the economy of Marpha was not only limited to the usage of wood. The dried needle-like leaves of the conifers and the cones were considered to be of high value for agriculture. Their collection was bound to take place at a certain period of time in summer only and at the same time the means of collection were again strictly regulated. During the first three days of the period of collection, it was not allowed to hire any labourer for this purpose. While being collected, dried leaves and cones were put together into big bundles. It was compulsory to transport these bundles to the town on the

same day. There the collected material was spread on the ground of the roads and the stables in order to mix it with the dung of the animals. Later it was put on the fields to improve the soil.

3. Two paragraphs deal with regulations concerning the monastery. The first one fixes the fines to be paid by a monk or a nun who leaves the monastery. The second one deals with the rotation in the office of the *chos-khrims-pa* and his payment for the time he is in charge of this position.

4. Fourteen paragraphs of the *bem-chag* deal with customary law. Among other things they contain regulations for marriage and divorce, death ceremonies and a number of festivals held in the course of the year.

I suppose that during the 18th century a similar code of laws or *bem-chag* must have existed in Thags too. But until now we unfortunately have not been able to photograph any copy of such a bem-chag. As already mentioned above, this does not hold true for the area of present-day Baragaon. If we call this area Baragaon, we must keep in mind that this name is only a translation of its older Tibetan designation Yul-kha bcu-gnyis. This area comprised twelve villages and formed the northern border of the former Som-bu. In former times one of the most important places of that area was Kagbeni. The *bem-chag* of Kagbeni was photographed by me in 1987. It was written in a fire-ox year, which is most probably equivalent to 1697.

Contrary to the *bem-chag* of Marpha, the *bem-chag* of Kagbeni is not a code of laws ratified by the citizen of the community but mainly a description of the political system, the borders between Kagbeni and other villages, the judiciary system, the obligations of the officials concerning the collection of taxes, etc., the regulation of customs duties to be paid to the customs house in Kagbeni and the organization of certain festivals.

According to the description in the Kagbeni *bem-chag*, the political organization of old Baragaon was a feudal system. The *bem-chag* contains the statement that Baragaon belonged to the realm of the king of Jumla. The main representative of the king of Jumla is mentioned under the title *'o-'om-pa*, which is a transcription of *hukum-pa* "one who is in command of". In addition to him was an official bearing the title *khri-thog-pa*. He was obviously a member of the noble sKyar-kya-gang-pa-family, whose ancestors had built the castles of Dzong, Dzarkot and Kagbeni in the 15th century. Having their main seat in Dzong and possessing the castles of Kagbeni and Dzarkot, the Khri-thog-pa and their noble

family were the actual rulers of Baragaon.

The *'o-'om-pa* did not stay permanently in Baragaon. He came every year to Kagbeni for a period of only three months. The main purpose of his visit was the collection of tributes from Upper and Lower Mustang. The tribute for the area of Lower Mustang was collected by the elder (*rgan-pa*) of Kagbeni, the steward of the castle of Kagbeni (*mkhar gyi gnyer-pa*) and two stewards of the farmers of the area (*mnga'-zhabs kyi gnyer-pa*). These four persons gave what was collected to the *khri-thog-pa*, who handed it over to the *'o-'om-pa*.

In the Kagbeni *bem-chag* the elder of Kagbeni is also called the "elder of the whole of Yul-kha-bcu-gnyis", so his position must have been quite important. Nothing is known about his appointment. The *bem-chag* mentions two more groups of officials. The first of these, the six *rol-po*, took office for a certain period of time only. The second group was formed by six *mi-thus*, who were representatives of the so-called six *cho-ba* groups of Baragaon.

The *bem-chag* gives much space to the description of the judiciary system of Baragaon. Here I would only like to mention that this system derives almost completely from Tibet.

The area of what we call present-day Thak Khola stretches from Gaza in the south to Jomsom in the north. During the 18th century, it was divided into three small, state-like political units, which developed real democratic forms of political organization. These areas were bordered in the south by Parbat and in the north by Baragaon and Mustang proper. All these neighbours had feudal systems and were governed by aristocratic families, so we must ask for the reasons these unique forms of political organization were able to develop in this area.

## COMMENT ON SCHUH'S CONTRIBUTION

TULSI RAM VAIDYA

[...] The paper contains first-hand information about the political structure of southern Mustang which till now has been ignored by scholars both Nepali and foreign. Up to some years back we had little knowledge about the whole Mustang region which was almost a sealed area. [...] Under such circumstances, the paper is most welcome indeed. It reveals the political structure of Marpha, Thags, Thini, Baragaon, Kagbeni etc. And the text of the paper amply warrants the author's assertion that 'the political state organization of the area seems to be unique even for the rest of Asia'.

[*After a summary of the new records, Professor Vaidya went on to say*:]

Thus the constitutions of the southern Mustang area were quite comprehensive and democratic in spirit. As a student of history, I have read of the elected monarchy prevailing in Kapilavastu, Vaiśālī, Pippalīvana etc. in the ancient period. But we have no reference to any kind of elected ruler during the mediaeval or early modern periods of Nepalese history. Thus Dr Schuh's findings have really revealed a unique political structure, with, as he says, 'real democratic forms of political organization'. The types of historical evidence about other parts of Nepal which have been explored so far have revealed the people's active participation in executive, political, legislative and judicial functions, even in the initial phase of the modern period. Nepal has a democratic political system called *Pañcāyat* right from the ancient period. During the mediaeval period, the head of the Pañcāyat was called *pañca pramāṇa* and its members were called *prajā pañcas*. The Malla period had encouraged the Pañcāyat system so much that it had become omnipotent and omnipresent. And this legacy continued for some time during the modern period: even when a treaty was concluded with Tibet in 1775, the *pañca pramāṇas* signed as witnesses. [Even so,] the political system of southern Mustang definitely proves a unique political structure.

[The paper of course raises a host of problems, some of which I should like to point out.]

First, there is the question of how republican institutions having elected

'elders' for periods of three years could exist in this area. Nepal has a long tradition of monarchical institutions right from the dawn of history. Even when the Licchavis with their glorious legacy of democratic republicanism ruled Nepal, they adopted monarchy. Moreover, Northern Mustang had monarchical institutions — since 1380, if I am not mistaken. So it is very much a surprise and a puzzle how this part of the country, surrounded by monarchical states in the north as well as in the south, could have the political structure Professor Schuh describes.

Second, any type of political system is very much influenced by its social, economic and cultural set-up. [...] This means we have to analyze the facts and try to determine the factors which led southern Mustang to have elected heads of state and elected officials. At that time, neither Tibet nor Nepal had such a system.

Third, a comparison of the political structure of the area with that of other parts of Nepal will be an urgent necessity. Does the assembly of all the area's citizens tally with the Pañcāyat system of other parts of Nepal?

Fourth, Professor Schuh has mentioned the ratification of the *bem-chag* in 1796. But by the latter date, not only southern but also northern Mustang were already merged with Nepal. Hence, the Marpha of the 1796 *bem-chag* was under the hegemony of the Śāha rulers. Thus, the 'elders' of the *bem-chag* could be compared to the *Jetha Bora*.

Moreover, the history of the area reveals that there used to be a triangular conflict among the states of Jumlā, Parbat, and Mustang for the supremacy over southern Mustang. Later on, King Raṇ Bahādur Śāha offered Thini to Jumlā, in order to obtain its favourable neutrality in the course of a military campaign. Jumlā was much annoyed since the prize was meagre, though Thini had long been a bone of contention between Parbat and Jumlā. Could it be possible the area had elected tribal chiefs prior to the Gorkhā conquest? In 1788, Bārāgāon was conquered by Amar Singh Thāpā. This was followed by the whole area, including Mustang and Jumlā. In 1791, an order was sent by the Nepal Government to the concerned officers in the area to use weights and measurements duly sealed. In the same year, Dzonga was granted to Syamarpa Lāmā by the Nepal Government. Hence, after 1791 there was no question of having separate states in the area. Further, places like Kagbeni, Bārāgāon and others were granted to [the] Nepal Bista of Jharkoṭ on a contract basis in 1791; he was to pay Rs. 1702/- to the Government of Nepal. Hence, the *bem-chag* of 1796 would mean [it embodies] the rules and regulations of the area, much as the Pañcāyats for other

regions.

Lastly, if one was to think of an indigenous Tibetan system, one would of course raise the question whether those *bem-chags* were meant to be valid for a limited number of people of Tibetan origin.

[One sees the paper opens wide vistas for further research.]

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# GORKHĀ - SIRDI KHOLĀ

## Soils and Sediments

**Survey Map of the Region** **1 : 100 000**


Quarry

Slide

Gravel (fluvial)

Rockfall - block field

Rockfall debris with fine material

Rankers on rockfall debris

Rankers on bedrock

Rankers/dystric cambisols on hillocks and steep slopes

Dystric cambisols intermingled with stone material

Dystric cambisols, shallow

Dystric cambisols, deep

Ferric luvisols, strongly degraded (scarce vegetation)

Ferric luvisols, shallow

Ferric luvisols, medium

Ferric luvisols, deep (intensively used and manured)

Rice gleys

Rice gleys intermingled with stone material

Settlement area

road - path

shadow trees

stream (kholā)
spring (dhārā)

0 100 200 300 400 500 m

| | |
|---|---|
| Topographic base: | R. Kostka, E. Schneider, U. Müller-Böker |
| Fieldsurvey and draft: | W. Haffner, P. Pohle, March, April 1984 |
| Cartography: | M. Remmers |
| Printed: | R. Stolper, Institute of Geography, Giessen, 1990 |

# GORKHĀ - SIRDI KHOLĀ

## Land Use Map

**Survey Map of the Region** **1 : 100 000**


- Evergreen mountain forest (Castanopsis/Quercus)
- Evergreen mountain forest (Castanopsis/Quercus/ Rhododendron)
- Degraded mountain forest (brushwood)
- Pine – afforestation
- Palm – tree
- Bamboo
- Fruit – tree
- Grassland – Pasture
- Dry inclined terraces (bāri)
  Main crops : maize, millet
- Irrigated levelled terraces (khet)
  Main crop : rice

**Irrigated crops in March / April :**

| | |
|---|---|
| R | Rice (asāre dhān) |
| M | Maize |
| W | Wheat |
| P | Potatoes |
| N | Peanuts |
| V | Vegetables |
| Ra | Radish |
| O | Onions |

- Uncultivated fields
- Rocks and thatching grass
- Rockfall sediments
- Wasteland
- Gravel
- Quarry
- Slide
- Settlement area

N W E S

road - path

shadow trees

stream (kholā)
spring (dhārā)

0 100 200 300 400 500 m

Topographic base: R. Kostka, E. Schneider, U. Müller-Böker
Fieldsurvey and draft: W. Haffner, P. Pohle, March, April 1984
Cartography: M. Remmers
Printed: R. Stolper, Institute of Geography, Giessen, 1988

# GORKHĀ - SIRDI KHOLĀ

Map of the Region 1 : 100000


South slope of Gorkhā ( c. 800 to 1 400 m ) Photo: E. Schneider, Nov. 1981

Gorkhā Darbār ( 1 380 m ) and Pokharāthok Photo: G. Unbescheid, Nov. 1981



Topographic base, fieldwork and draft : R. Kostka, E. Schneider, U. Müller-Böker

Cartography : M. Remmers

Printed by R. Stolper, Institute of Geography, Giessen, 1990

# GORKHĀ - SIRDI KHOLĀ

## Ethnic Groups and Castes

Survey Map of the Region 1 : 100 000


30
20
10
5
0

number of households

## Ethnic Groups and Castes

- Śreṣṭha
- Śākya
- Bāhun
- Chetri
- Jogi
- Sārki
- Damāi
- Kāmi
- Gāine
- Kasāi
- Magar
- Gurung

road - path

shadow trees

stream (kholā)
spring (dhārā)

0 100 200 300 400 500 m

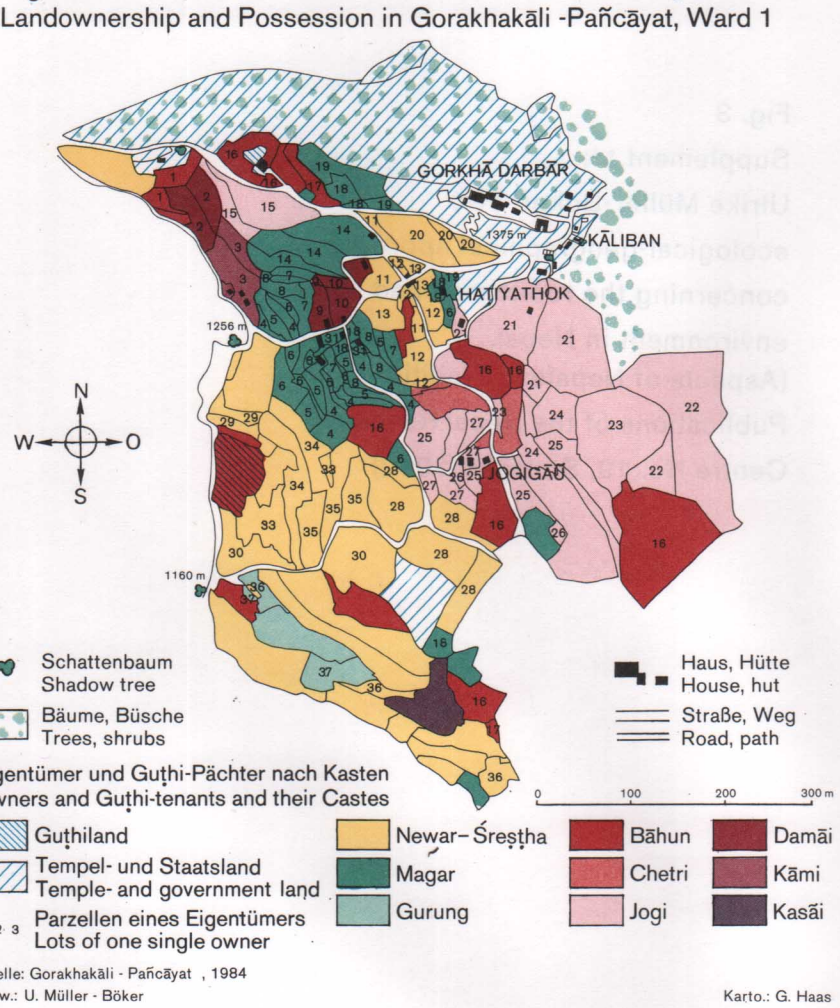
Topographic base: R. Kostka, E. Schneider, U. Müller-Böker

Fieldwork and draft: U.Müller-Böker

Cartography: M. Remmers

Printed by R. Stolper, Institute of Geography, Giessen, 1988

## Eigentums- und Besitzverhältnisse im Gorakhakāli-Pañcāyat, Ward 1
## Landownership and Possession in Gorakhakāli -Pañcāyat, Ward 1




Schattenbaum
Shadow tree

Bäume, Büsche
Trees, shrubs

Haus, Hütte
House, hut

Straße, Weg
Road, path

Eigentümer und Guṭhi-Pächter nach Kasten
Owners and Guṭhi-tenants and their Castes

Guṭhiland

Tempel- und Staatsland
Temple- and government land

1 2 3 Parzellen eines Eigentümers
Lots of one single owner

Newar–Śreṣṭha
Magar
Gurung

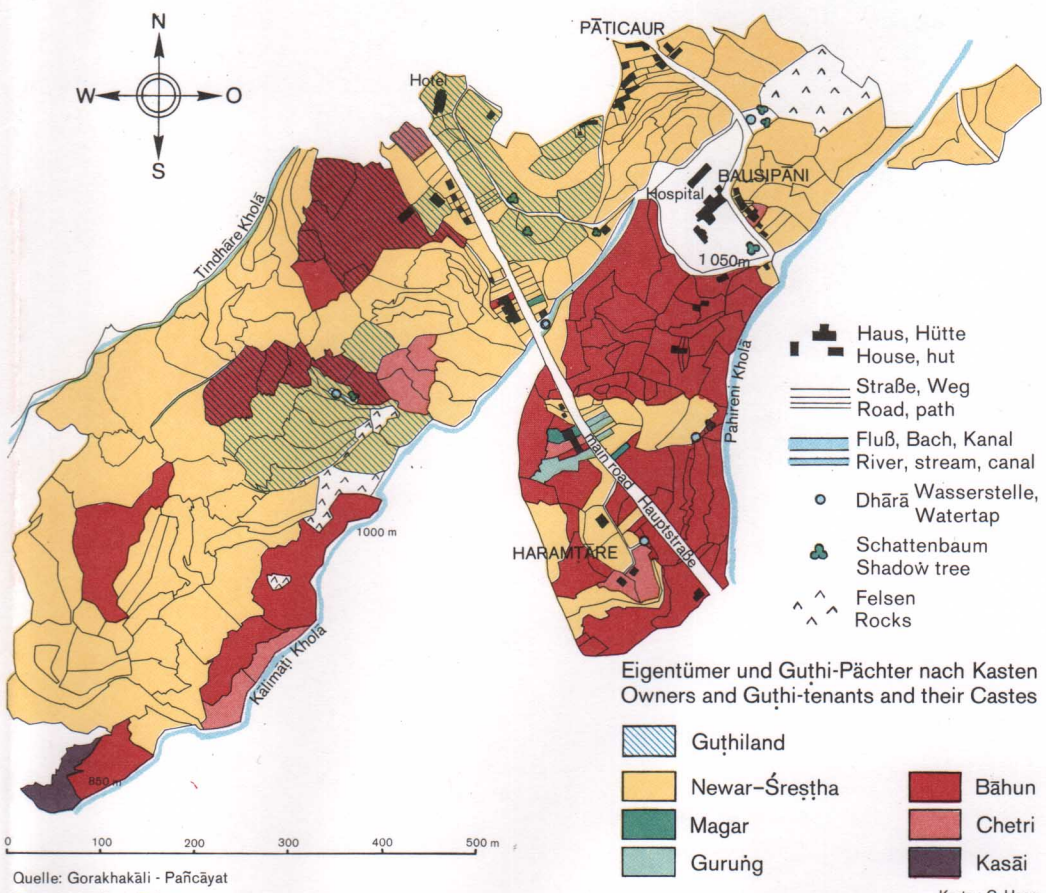
Bāhun
Chetri
Jogi

Damāi
Kāmi
Kasāi

Quelle: Gorakhakāli - Pañcāyat , 1984
Entw.: U. Müller - Böker

Karto.: G. Haas

## Eigentums- und Besitzverhältnisse im Gorakhakāli-Pañcāyat, Ward 4
## Landownership and Possession in Gorakhkakāli-Pañcāyat Ward,4




Haus, Hütte
House, hut

Straße, Weg
Road, path

Fluß, Bach, Kanal
River, stream, canal

Dhārā Wasserstelle,
Watertap

Schattenbaum
Shadow tree

Felsen
Rocks

Eigentümer und Guṭhi-Pächter nach Kasten
Owners and Guṭhi-tenants and their Castes

Guṭhiland

Newar–Śreṣṭha
Magar
Guruṅg

Bāhun
Chetri
Kasāi

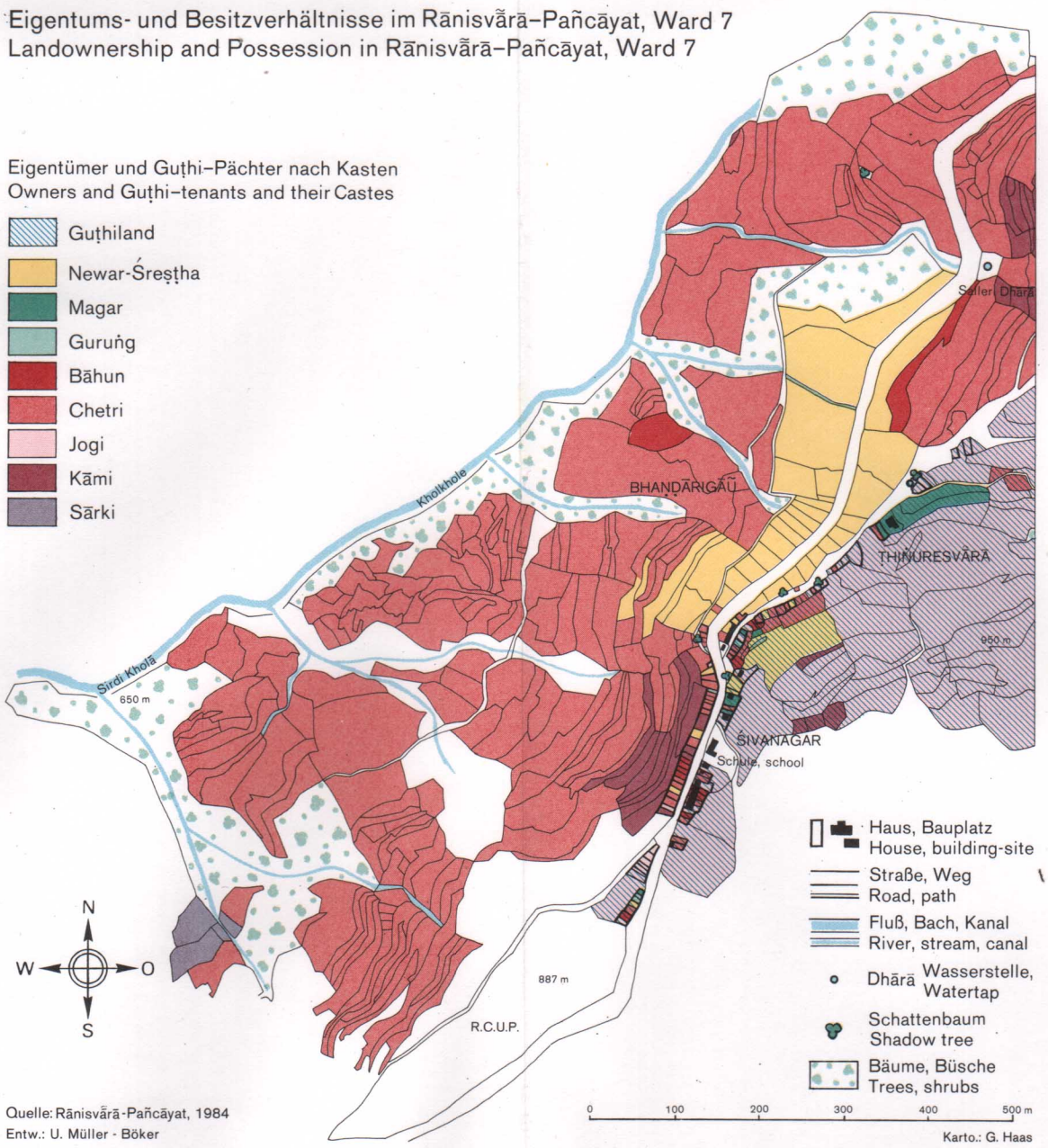
Quelle: Gorakhakāli - Pañcāyat
Entw.: U. Müller - Böker

Karto.: G. Haas

## Eigentums- und Besitzverhältnisse im Rānisvārā–Pañcāyat, Ward 7
## Landownership and Possession in Rānisvārā–Pañcāyat, Ward 7

Eigentümer und Guṭhi–Pächter nach Kasten
Owners and Guṭhi–tenants and their Castes

Guṭhiland
Newar-Śreṣṭha
Magar
Guruṅg
Bāhun
Chetri
Jogi
Kāmi
Sārki




Haus, Bauplatz
House, building-site

Straße, Weg
Road, path

Fluß, Bach, Kanal
River, stream, canal

Dhārā Wasserstelle,
Watertap

Schattenbaum
Shadow tree

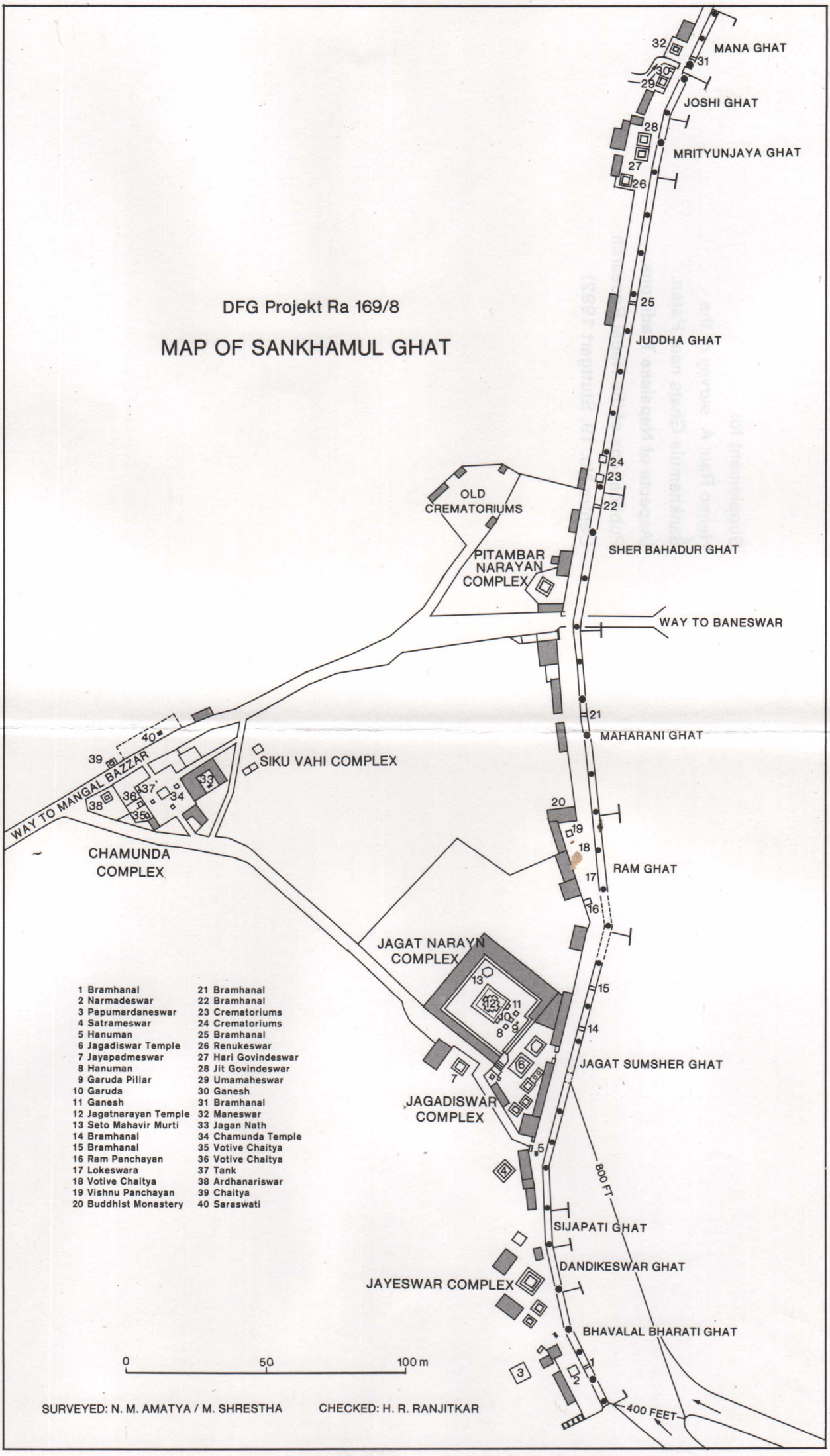
Bäume, Büsche
Trees, shrubs

Quelle: Rānisvārā-Pañcāyat, 1984
Entw.: U. Müller - Böker

Karto.: G. Haas

DFG Projekt Ra 169/8

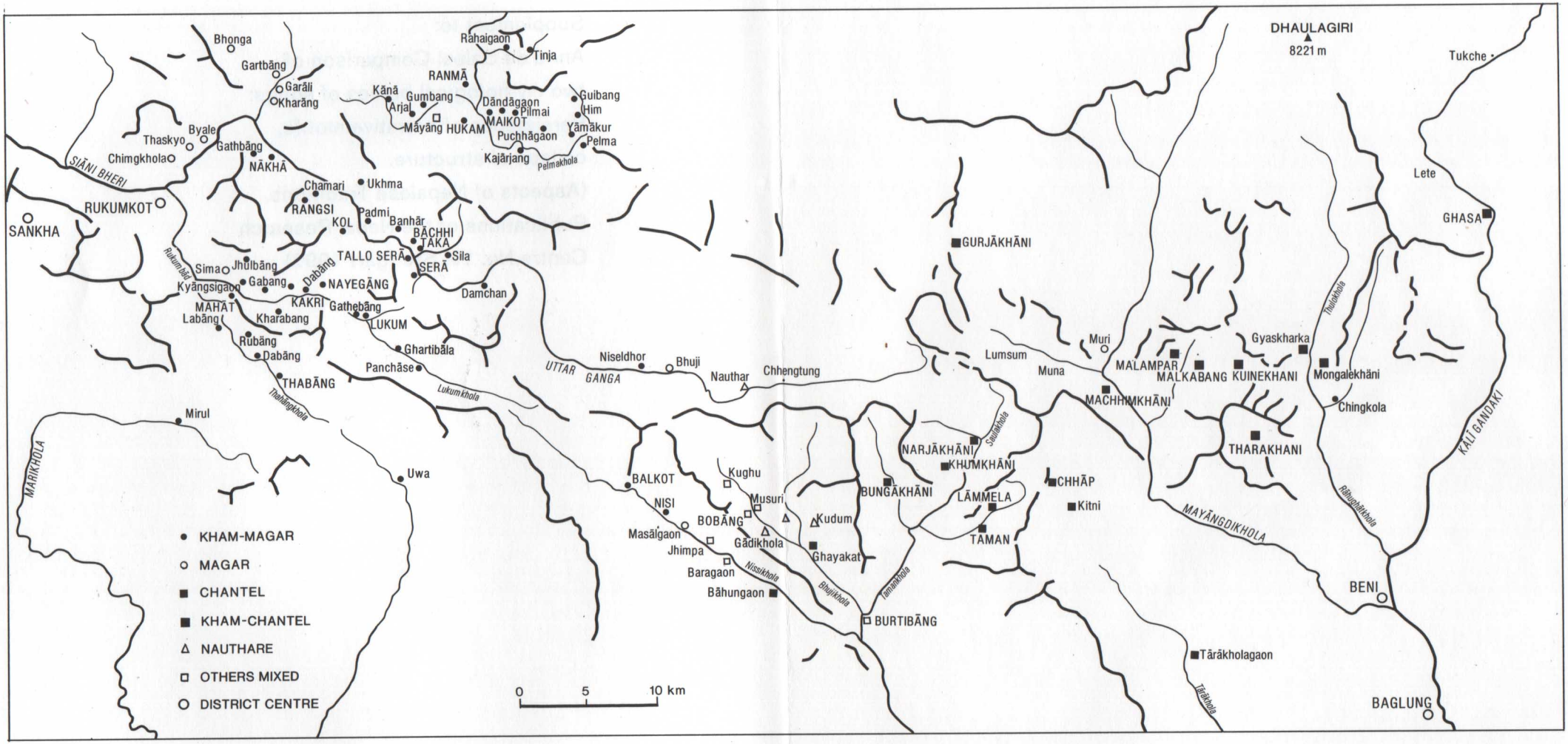
# MAP OF SANKHAMUL GHAT




| | |
|---|---|
| 1 Bramhanal | 21 Bramhanal |
| 2 Narmadeswar | 22 Bramhanal |
| 3 Papumardaneswar | 23 Crematoriums |
| 4 Satrameswar | 24 Crematoriums |
| 5 Hanuman | 25 Bramhanal |
| 6 Jagadiswar Temple | 26 Renukeswar |
| 7 Jayapadmeswar | 27 Hari Govindeswar |
| 8 Hanuman | 28 Jit Govindeswar |
| 9 Garuda Pillar | 29 Umamaheswar |
| 10 Garuda | 30 Ganesh |
| 11 Ganesh | 31 Bramhanal |
| 12 Jagatnarayan Temple | 32 Maneswar |
| 13 Seto Mahavir Murti | 33 Jagan Nath |
| 14 Bramhanal | 34 Chamunda Temple |
| 15 Bramhanal | 35 Votive Chaitya |
| 16 Ram Panchayan | 36 Votive Chaitya |
| 17 Lokeswara | 37 Tank |
| 18 Votive Chaitya | 38 Ardhanariswar |
| 19 Vishnu Panchayan | 39 Chaitya |
| 20 Buddhist Monastery | 40 Saraswati |

SURVEYED: N. M. AMATYA / M. SHRESTHA

CHECKED: H. R. RANJITKAR


Bhonga
Gartbāng
Garāli
Kharāng
Rahaigaon
Tinja
RANMĀ
Kānā
Arjal
Gumbang
Māyāng
HUKAM
Dāndāgaon
Pilmai
MAIKOT
Puchhāgaon
Kajārjang
Guibang
Him
Yāmākur
Pelma
Pelmakhola
Thaskyo
Byale
Gathbāng
Chimgkhola
NĀKHĀ
SIĀNI BHERI
RUKUMKOT
SANKHA
Chamari
Ukhma
RANGSI
Padmi
Banhār
KOL
BĀCHHI
TAKA
TALLO SERĀ
Sila
SERĀ
Rukum bāgar
Simā
Jhulbāng
Gabang
Dabāng
NAYEGĀNG
Kyāngsigaon
KAKRI
Damchan
MAHAT
Labāng
Kharabang
Gathebāng
LUKUM
Rubāng
Dabāng
Ghartibāla
THABĀNG
Panchāse
Lukum khola
Thahāngkhola
Mirul
MARIKHOLA
Uwa
UTTAR GANGA
Niseldhor
Bhuji
Nauthar
Chhengtung
DHAULAGIRI
8221 m
Tukche
Lete
GHASA
GURJĀKHĀNI
Muri
Lumsum
Muna
MALAMPAR
MALKABANG
KUINEKHANI
Gyaskharka
Mongalekhāni
Thulekhola
MACHHIMKHĀNI
Chingkola
THARAKHANI
KALI GANDAKI
NARJĀKHĀNI
KHUMKHĀNI
Sedakhola
BALKOT
Kughu
NISI
Musuri
BOBĀNG
Masālgaon
Jhimpa
Baragaon
Gādikhola
Kudum
Ghayakat
Nissikhola
Bāhungaon
BUNGĀKHĀNI
LĀMMELA
CHHĀP
Kitni
TAMAN
MAYĀNGDIKHOLA
Bhujikhola
Tamankhola
BURTIBĀNG
Rāhughāthkhola
BENI
Tārākholagaon
Tārākhola
BAGLUNG
KHAM-MAGAR
MAGAR
CHANTEL
KHAM-CHANTEL
NAUTHARE
OTHERS MIXED
DISTRICT CENTRE
0
5
10 km