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## II. PAPER ABSTRACTS

**TITLE: \*TOURISM AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHANGE: THE CASE OF THE ROLWALING VALLEY IN EASTERN NEPAL<sup>1</sup>**

(Paper presented at Universität Konstanz Conference on "Recent Research on Nepal," March 27-30, 1984)

**Author:** Reudi Baumgartner  
Scheuchzerstr. 73  
8006 Zürich, Switzerland

In an environment of ethnic and cultural diversity as in the Nepalese Himalaya a single case study of a valley with about 200 inhabitants and 43 households (1979) can hardly be representative. Keeping such limitations in mind, the paper is focusing on tourism-induced change in the distribution of wealth and income as well as of prestige and political power among Rolwaling Sherpas. It traces the development of the valley along the three stages of tourist penetration<sup>2</sup>, starting with "exploration and discovery" (I), followed by a period of "local response and initiative" (II), and passing into a stage of "institutionalization" (III) with eventual loss of local control.

With their engagement in trekking and expeditions the Rolwaling Sherpas have successfully challenged the threat of declining life standard and migration pressure due to limited natural resources. There are clear indications of a growing integration of the valley into the economic and administrative framework of Nepal, accompanied by equally clear signs of disintegration in the social fabric of the community due to reduced relevance of agro-pastoral activities and the related village festivals. The increasing dependency on tourism as a vital source of income provokes the question of the extent to which development assistance should -- and could -- support such valleys in finding a sound balance between an engagement in tourism and economically self-reliant activities.

The study, which makes extensive use of an earlier ethnographical investigation by J. Sacherer<sup>3</sup>, finally tries to show problems which arise when one is setting out to identify the relevance of a single factor -- here tourism -- for the complex process of social change in marginal environments of high mountain valleys.

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<sup>1</sup>The paper summarizes the findings of Baumgartner, R., Trekking Und Entwicling Im Himalaya, Die Rolwaling Sherpa in Ost-Nepal Im Dilemma Zwischen Tourisms und tradition, Diessen-Hofen (Switzerland), Verlag Reugger, 1980.

<sup>2</sup>Noronha, R., Social and Cultural Dimensions of Tourism: A Review of the Literature in English, World Bank, 1977.

<sup>3</sup>Sacherer, J., The Sherpas of Rolwaling Valley, North Nepal, A Study in Cultural Ecology, Universite De Paris, 1976.

**TITLE: \*PRELIMINARY REPORT ON THE BALAJOGIS OR CHILDREN ASCETICS**

(Paper presented at Universität Konstanz Conference on "Recent Research in Nepal," March 27-30, 1984)

**Author:** Veronique Bouillier  
Centre d'Etudes de l'Inde et de l'Asie du Sud

Bālajogī-s are young boys dressed like Shaivite ascetics, living like them, begging and wandering. However, in spite of their name, which means "child-ascetic," they are not ascetics. Their nomadic condition results from the initiation ceremony (upanayāna or bratabandha) through which all high caste men achieve their full ritual status.

The unfolding of high caste initiation rites in Nepal is striking for its faithfulness to the textual prescriptions of the vedic grhya-sutras. Nevertheless, in Nepal as in modern India, the ceremony culminates in an episode that is unknown in these texts: a simulated escape to Benares, the appearance of beginning renunciation. The young boy departs running, but before reaching the

boundary that circumscribes the ritual area, he has to be caught by his maternal uncle, who persuades him to return home and assume the position of the head of a household.

What happens if the initiand breaches this boundary? Such a case is not anticipated in the Nepalese ritual manuals (the author translates, by way of example, a passage concerning the deśāntargaman or "voyage abroad," from one of these manuals). The consequences, as testified to by the fate of the bālajogī-s, are, however, dramatic: the young boy must flee his home; he is forbidden to reenter his village or to see his parents again for twelve years. These twelve nomadic years of the bālajogī appear to be a kind of tribute to the ideology of renunciation; they are the scene from the bratabandha played to the fullest measure.

**TITLE: \*STATUS OF AFFINES AMONG HIGH CASTE HINDU IN THE NEPALESE HILL AREA**  
(Paper presented at Universität Konstanz Conference on "Recent Research in Nepal,"  
March 27-30, 1984)

**Author:** Joanna Czarnecka  
University of Zurich

The paper attempts to clarify the notion of post-factum hypergamy in isogamous marriages among high caste Hindus in the Nepalese hill area. It is argued that the relations among the affines in Nepal differ in some important aspects from those in North India, the supremacy of the wife-takers towards wife-givers in the Nepalese hill area being less obvious than that in the known North Indian cases. It is shown that, applied to the kin relatives, the terms "ritual purity" and "ritual superiority" are ambiguous, certain relatives being between each other ritual superiors and ritual inferiors.

The main part of the article considers (i) marriage presentations and other gifts; i(i) hospitality and the acceptance of food; (iii) participating on ritual occasions; (iv) deference; (v) future marriages -- comparing mainly my own fieldwork data from the Nuwakot District with North Indian cases. Another important part of the argument is the analysis of the dasain-tika-exchange and of the kinship terminology. I conclude that the superior status of the wife-takers is indicated by the flow of gifts and also by the feet-washing ceremony, the dakshina gifts and the bows received from the wife-givers. But more important seem to be the equal aspects of the affinal relationships. Some years after the wedding, the hospitality and food transfer of the givers and takers may become reciprocal, and on ritual occasions, especially on the mourning ceremony, the wife-givers are recipients as well as givers. Both parties do respect each other, and the direction of the dasain-tika-transfer does not reveal any superiority of the wife-takers, but hierarchicalizes, like the kinship terms, the affines in accordance with the agnatic model among the consanguineals. In both cases the affinal relatives are treated according to generation, sex and relative (that means: spouse's) age.

**TITLE: \*PROTOCOL OF A BRAHMANIC CURSE, ITS EFFECTS AND THEIR HEALING -- A MIXED CASE OF NUMINAL EVENTS**  
(Paper presented at Universität Konstanz Conference on "Recent Research on Nepal,"  
March 27-30, 1984)

**Author:** Dr. Walter A. Frank  
Burg Zievel  
D-5353 Mechernich  
West Germany

During a field stay for statistical researches in Nepal, I unconsciously violated a tabu zone at a Kalika temple. The two Brahmans in charge suspected me of photographing the animal sacrifice with which they were engaged and, very annoyed, cursed me. Although this fact did not enter my conscious mind, still the effects appeared in the form of certain bodily symptoms that I tried to treat with western medicines, but in vain. Instead, a sort of drug poisoning developed, which became really serious within one day, with boils on my face, etc. The real causes of these ailments were only diagnosed after my return to Germany by a Western medium, who had no knowledge even of the specific cultural backgrounds in Nepal. She also correctly diagnosed the remedy and the way in which I would obtain it: I received a phytologic medicine by a Tibetan lama, who on the other hand was not informed about the medium's precognition and diagnosis. The medicine restored my health within one night.

The case is particularly startling, as elements of three quite different cultures -- Nepal, Germany, and Tibet -- are involved, and in a very unusual combination. Though quite involuntarily, it is also a classic case of participant observation.

**TITLE: \*INTERPRETATION OF CADASTRAL MAPS AND LAND REGISTERS -- EXAMPLES FROM THE KĀTHMĀNDU VALLEY AND GORKHĀ**  
(Paper presented at Universität Konstanz Conference on "Recent Research in Nepal," March 27-30, 1984)

**Author:** Dr. Ulrike Müller  
Geographisches Institut  
Justus-Liebig Universität, Giessen

The land tenancy system prevalent in the Kāthmāṇḍu Valley today -- as in other regions of Nepal too -- is restricted to the raikar and guṭhi system, in addition, the state or pañchāyat land. However, in spite of the proximity of the Newar settlements, and their identical cultural background, considerable differences exist between their possession and ownership structures. They range from small independent farms to the feudal system based on rent collection. These conditions are closely related to the sociological grouping of the population and the economic structure as a whole. Where there is a pronounced caste hierarchy, relationships of dependency between individuals exist also in the question of tenancy. It is typical that in Pyāṅggāũ, a small village in which, with only one exception, only Jyāpu are living, the tenancy system is of no importance and possession and ownership structures are well-balanced. In Thimi these structures reflect differentiation of a greater degree within the caste structure. In Sākhu large tracts of land belong to the upper-class, which consists partly of Newar Shrestha and partly of Brahmin and Chetri who reside elsewhere. The predominance of the tenancy system is related to Sākhu's distinct function as a centre for trade but is also due to certain historical facts. In a village such as Thimi, which is geared to crafts, the tenancy system is not so important; a second business or extra employment, renting of additional land or farming out part of the land are typical features there.

According to the land register data of the Gorkhā area, all owners of raikar land farm their fields by themselves. However, in actual fact about 30% of the fields are cultivated by labourers, who do not enjoy the rights of a tenant. This evasion of the tenancy laws not only keeps the field workers themselves in an extremely precarious economic situation, it also has a negative effect upon agricultural productivity. The land is not evenly distributed: There is no shortage of land, in particular, amongst tradesmen and the higher castes, whereas impure castes not only have little, but also poor quality land. One can also observe variations in cultivation methods, and in reaction to environmental threats, which are specific to certain ethnic groups.

In Gorkhā we find an extremely large amount of guṭhi land -- much more than in the Kāthmāṇḍu Valley. It is also possible to prove the existence of birtā land in both regions, although regional variations occur in the Kāthmāṇḍu Valley in the different settlements. Both areas have one characteristic in common though: social hierarchies are endorsed by possession and ownership structures in both.

**TITLE: \*HIGH ALTITUDE POPULATIONS OF THE REMOTE NEPAL HIMALAYAS: ENVIRONMENTAL KNOWLEDGE AND ADAPTIVE MECHANISMS (A STUDY OF THE MANANG DISTRICT)**  
(Paper presented at Universität Konstanz Conference on "Recent Research in Nepal," March 27-30, 1984)

**Author:** Perdita Pohle  
Geographisches Institut  
Justus-Liebig Universität, Giessen

Indigenous people who for centuries have fulfilled their basic demands for food by means of agriculture, animal husbandry and trade have developed a vast knowledge about nature, its regularities and its usefulness to man, and have developed a complexity of adaptive mechanisms. Particularly in isolated regions, such as the high mountain valleys of the Himalayas, this knowledge was retained. Traditional tried-and-tested ways of life and modes of work were handed down until today. However, even here one may notice the danger of a slowly proceeding estrangement. There has been an increasing population accompanied by a reciprocal diminution of natural resources, resulting in migration movements to lower regions and the cities. The contact with "western civilization" by trading or tourism, and the influence of its specific morals and values lead to changes in society structure. The result is that handed-down knowledge about ecologically adjusted methods of land use or the knowledge about herbs and their function in natural healing, etc., becomes less meaningful and is no longer passed on to the generations to follow. Thus, a most comprehensive understanding of the

environment, developed through numerous century-long processes of learning, may irretrievably be lost in just one generation.

Therefore, the objectives of this report on the high mountain area of Manang are:

1. To show the vast knowledge of the high altitude dwellers about the nature of their environment.
2. To explain their mechanisms of adaptation to the natural environmental conditions.
3. To evaluate the design of the cultural landscape from a geocological point of view.
4. To discuss the consequences for man and nature of an estrangement from originally strong ties to the environment.

Altogether, research will aim at presenting a more accurate analysis of the system "Man and Environment" in high altitude regions according to the concept of "Human Ecology." It is intended to give some basic information useful for a regional planning that corresponds to the demand of the people and the nature of their environment.

**TITLE: \*SACRED WORLD VIEW AND ECOLOGY IN NEPAL**  
(Paper presented at Universität Konstanz Conference on "Recent Research in Nepal,"  
March 27-30, 1984)

**Author:** Dr. Klaus Seeland  
Sozialwissenschaftliche Fakultät  
Universität Konstanz

Essential for a sacred world view within archaic communities is the omnipresence of the sacred in imagination and everyday reality. Being predominantly an agrarian country with thousands of village communities, the ethnic groups and castes of Nepal live in a world that is structured by Animism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Shamanism which amalgamate into ritual practices and beliefs to counterbalance the common insecurity of existence. According to these beliefs there is a permeability between the human world and nature and there is no anthropocentrism that creates a contradiction between man and his environment. The environment is not regarded as an economical resource, but as an aspect of the universe which is cultivated or, as far as the uncultivated land is concerned, belongs as crown land to the raja-dharma of the King of Nepal. He, as the incarnated Lord Vishnu, has to take care of this land and put it at the people's disposal. It is not the dharma of a peasant to foster the uncultivated nature. This would be a transgression into the realm of the sacred powers.

In the eyes of western development experts, the whole Himalayan ecosystem will face an ecological crisis due to overpopulation, deforestation, erosion, etc. They introduce the term "ecology" with the notion of a secularized environment that has to be cared for as a future resource. But the sacred world view of the religiously determined hill peasant surrenders to religious powers in his concept of life. He lives according to his dharma as long as he is able to do so and to a deterioration of living conditions he would respond with migration. With his sacred world view he cannot have an ecological responsibility, because this would be a transgression of his dharma. Surrender to the actual conditions of life is a characteristic of the subsistence ethic of archaic peasant communities in the Himalayas.

**TITLE: \*MUTUAL ASSISTANCE IN AGRICULTURAL WORK AMONG THE WESTERN TAMANGS OF NEPAL: TRADITIONAL AND NEW PATTERNS**  
(Paper presented at Universität Konstanz Conference on "Recent Research in Nepal,"  
March 27-30, 1984)

**Author:** Gerard Toffin  
Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique

The Tamang in the Anku Khola and Trisuli regions of central Nepal make their livings essentially through agriculture and pastoralism. Traditionally, their mutual help groups ("teams") for agricultural work were based on a very flexible system of rotation and reciprocity, from which all forms of salary or direct payment were excluded. These teams played (and continue to play) an important role in the social and religious life of this ethnic group. In this article, the author attempts particularly to describe a new form, called goremo, which these agricultural teams have been assuming, beginning in approximately 1970-72. This new form is very rigid and accommodates the concept of wage payment; it is tied especially to paddy and finger millet cultivation. The majority of the participants are women and young people. The emergence of these goremo forms must be placed within the context of

agricultural intensification and crop rotation. It is equally tied to the growing monetarization of the village economy and may be considered one of the indices of change in social organization.

**TITLE: \*THE NACHANE OF THE KHAM-MAGAR: ETHNOGRAPHIC NOTES ON A GROUP OF RELIGIOUS DANCERS**  
(Paper presented at Universität Konstanz Conference on "Recent Research on Nepal," March 17-20, 1984)

**Author:** Anne de Sales  
23 rue Montogueil  
75001 Paris, France

Among the Kham-Magar (a Tibeto-Burman society located in far west Nepal), till about twenty years ago, there were two groups of religious dancers, the nachane and the feminine equivalent, the jaulani. They used to leave their village in winter (Kartik-Pus) to tour within the Kham-Magar country. The visit of the dancers had the religious purpose of expelling evils from the village. The whole ritual ended with a blood sacrifice to Kali Bhagwati.

The ritual framework of this institution is fully congruent with Magar tradition as a whole which evokes a number of Tibetan traits. It takes the form of a play in which nachane and yogis alternate heroic dances and comic sketches. At the same time it is as though this ritual framework was filled with a corpus of legends which belong to a widespread, partly learned, Indian tradition: the cult of the Naths.

