



HIMALAYA, the Journal of the Association for Nepal and Himalayan Studies

Volume 6
Number 3 *Himalayan Research Bulletin* 1986

Article 6

Fall 1986

Dissertation Abstracts

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Recommended Citation

. 1986. Dissertation Abstracts. *HIMALAYA* 6(3).

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III. DISSERTATION ABSTRACTS

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Iltis, Linda Louise

-- Ph.D.

-- The University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1985. 1023 pp.

Title: The Swasthání Vrata: Newar Women and Ritual in Nepal.
Order No. DA8528426

Supervisor: Robert James Miller

Swasthání, the Goddess of Own Place, is popularly worshipped by women and families in Nepal. Worship of Swasthání centers on a month-long ritual recitation of the *Swasthání Vrata Kathá*, a book of stories concerning her various emanations, the oldest manuscripts of which appear in Nepálbhasa, or Newari. Investigation of primary textual and ritual traditions associated with the Goddess Swasthání provides considerable evidence which strongly links this tradition with the Asta Mátrká, or eight protective goddesses, who are a part of the oldest stratum of Newar religious belief, and the foundations of ritual space complexes of the Newar Civilization which developed among the indigenous inhabitants of the Kathmandu Valley.

Whether reading the Swasthání stories or observing the roles of women participating in the Swasthání ritual, one is struck by the independent, initiatory, positive, and integrative image the women represent. Investigation of the roles of women in both the ideological/textual and behavioral/ritual levels of the Swasthání tradition allows derivation of new models of female participation in Newar society which have not previously been shown either by traditional male-centered approaches or by women's studies approaches utilizing more quantitative, culturally less value-centered means of investigation. It suggests a possible new approach to questions of women's (and men's) status and roles. From the standpoint of Nepal and comparative religious studies, it provides a translation of a major religious narrative of Nepal, from Newari,

and a description and analysis of a religious tradition which Nepalese Hindus and Buddhists themselves consider to be demonstrably linked on various levels with some of the oldest and most influential elements of Newar religious and cultural traditions.

JOHNSON, RODNEY LEWIS

- Ph.D.
- University of Colorado at Boulder, 1985. 158 pp.

Title: Mother-Infant Relations Among Wild Monkeys in India and Nepal

Order No. DA8528494

Supervisor: Charles Southwick

Mother-infant relations were observed among three populations of rhesus monkeys (*Macaca mulatta*) in India and Nepal, during four successive summers. The habitats of the study populations--a rural, agricultural setting in the Gangetic basin of India; a temple and parkland setting on the West side of Kathmandu, Nepal; and a forest preserve on the east side of Kathmandu--differed fundamentally in their three dimensional structure, the availability of food resources, and their levels of human disturbance. The Indian population was observed during the summers of 1981 and 1984. The Nepalese population were observed once each during the summers of 1982 and 1983.

The most striking aspect of the development of mother-infant relations observed during this field study was its relative consistency. Physical contact between mothers and their infants, the most commonly used index of the primate infant's independence, developed similarly across populations despite the profound ecological differences in their habitats. The infants' use of the area surrounding themselves and their mothers also developed similarly, suggesting the existence of a set of modal development curves characteristic of *Macaca mulatta*.

Although the development of mother-infant contact appeared remarkably invariant across populations, physical contact was found to be influenced by maternal time budgets. Specifically, infants were less likely to be in contact with their mothers while their mothers were feeding than if they were resting. Rhesus mothers disproportionately rejected their infants when feeding, suggesting that mothers were actively discouraging contact attempts by their infants during feeding bouts. These data support the suggestion that an active infant may diminish its mother's foraging efficiency if the infant remains in contact with her.

Contact was also found to be inversely correlated with the amount of time infants spent on the ground. However, a multiple regression/correlation analysis indicated that the inverse relationship between mother-infant contact and maternal feeding suppressed the expression of the effects of increasing arboreality. The reverse was also true. It is concluded that (1) maternal time budgets and environmental structure can and do influence the amount of time rhesus mothers and infants spend in contact, and (2) that these and other factors are likely to act in complementary ways to maintain the stability of the early development of infant independence.

McHUGH, ERNESTINE LOUISE

-- Ph.D.

-- University of California at San Diego, 1985. 308 pp.

Title: **The Social, Cultural, and Personal Worlds of the Gurungs of Nepal**

The dissertation is about the organization of the Gurung world. It is an analysis of the cultural reality system in terms of which their social life is arranged and personal experience is understood. Through this reality system, Gurungs orient themselves to their physical surroundings, and the larger cultural and social environment in which they live.

While experience is organized in cultural terms, individual interpretations of cultural models are also conditioned by the circumstances of personal history. People experience the world through a symbolic system of mediation which is offered by culture but transformed by the individual to suit the demands of specific situations, and to fit his or her particular constellation of emotional needs. There are limits beyond which one cannot transform cultural models of reality without being outside the norm, but there is a considerable range within which one can reinterpret them without being judged deviant.

Much of the dissertation has to do with the negotiation of the cultural reality system of the Gurungs. First I discuss the place of the Gurungs in the larger setting of Nepal, and their historical situation. Then I present models of kinship, marriage, interpersonal relations, and the person to show how the Gurung world is organized, and how people respond to that; where the fixed parameters are, what is negotiable, and how people go about negotiating within the cultural system.

The next section involves the presentation and analysis of the life of a Gurung woman who radically transformed the reality system in terms of which her life had been ordered by renouncing her community and becoming a religious mendicant devoted to the god Siva. She crossed the boundaries of what is acceptable to Gurungs, and drew on a belief system outside that of Gurung culture, though not entirely alien, to construct a different, but not unrelated, model of reality in terms of which her identity and relationships with others were reorganized. Her case sheds light on the processes through which models of reality are transformed by individuals. I hope the whole reveals some aspects of the dynamic relationship between culture and the individual.

Parker, Barbara

-- Ph.D.

-- The University of Michigan, 1985. 274 pp.

Title: **The Spirit of Wealth: Culture of Entrepreneurship Among the Thakali of Nepal**

Order No. DA8600522

Supervisor: Sherry B. Ortner

The culture of a group of Himalayan traders is examined in terms of its relationship to economic behaviour. The Weberian question is posed--what kinds of cultural patterns culminate in a propensity for capital accumulation through the perpetual re-investment of resources--and it is suggested that this "capitalistic" tendency is characteristic of a culture which places the actor within a subjective universe in which progressive change is routine and expected, and cumulative gains are logically possible.

The meaning to villagers of wealth and resource distribution is explored through examination of important rituals, myths and cosmological constructs. The concept "yang," or the spirit of wealth, constitutes a model of prosperity in terms of its acquisition and loss; and rituals for enhancement of yang offer insights into the Thakali view of causative factors in the accumulation or dissolution of capital.

A discussion of popular curing ceremonies presents a more general view of local views concerning misfortunes and the means by which they may be dispelled. Various types of ritual action are compared to highlight the distinctively instrumental character of the common ritual activities--such as "false divination," and "boundary manipulation"--of the ritual repertoire. The preference for an "imbalanced," or actor manipulated, universe is discussed with reference to the local preference for odd rather than even numbers in both ritual and non-ritual contexts.

This exploration of the Thakali ritual universe is posed as an illustration of the premise that participation in cultural performances creates a subjective world in which particular styles of action are thought to be powerful and effective, and that economic activities will reflect the character of these culturally learned expectations. Cultural patterns, however, are themselves recast by the collective experience of a common history. Village interpretations of critical events in local and regional history pinpoint certain events as keys to the development of local culture, and a brief discussion of the dialectical character of 'culture' and 'event' concludes.

REEDY, CHANDRA LEE

-- Ph.D.

-- University of California, Los Angeles, 1986. 459 pp.

Title: Technical Analysis of Medieval Himalayan Copper Alloy Statues for Provenance Determination

Order No. DA8606473

Supervisor: Rainer Berger

A major problem in the art history of the medieval Himalayas has been the difficulty in reliably determining provenance of copper alloy statues. This difficulty is caused by many factors, including the lack of statues recovered from controlled archaeological excavations, few references in historical literature to art production, the mobility of artists and patrons, and portability of the statues. With date and place of manufacture uncertain, statues are of limited use in answering questions concerning the societies that produced and used them. Previous attempts to improve the certainty of attributions through a technical analysis of the objects have not been encouraging. However, this study takes a different approach which has proven successful in improving regional attributions for a group of 145 statues. The basis of this approach is an inter-disciplinary method, in which a wide range of technical and analytical data are combined with the existing art historical information. A major key to the success of the project is the use of appropriate multivariate statistical methods.

The following types of evidence are considered: Copper ore deposits available to Himalayan artists, political and economic factors governing access to and utilization of those deposits, casting and decorating techniques, evidence remaining from statue consecration ceremonies, elemental composition of statue metals, and mineralogical and elemental composition of clay core materials. The primary statistical technique employed for interpreting all data sets is the BMDP 7M stepwise discriminant analysis.

The method employed begins with a critical evaluation of stylistic attributions which have been assigned to the statues. All statistical analyses are performed first using only those statues of plausible regional

attribution, allowing the determination of technical criteria which differentiate the regional groups. In the next step of statistical analysis those discriminating technical variables are used to determine which regional group statues of uncertain or controversial attribution best fit. As a result of the technical analysis, many of the statues can now be regionally attributed with confidence to either Kashmir, north Pakistan, west Tibet, central Tibet, or Nepal.

VALBY, JAMES M.

-- Ph.D.

-- The University of Saskatchewan (Canada), 1985.

Title: The Life and Ideas of the 8th Century A.D. Indian Buddhist Mystic Vimalamitra:
 A Computer-Assisted Approach to Tibetan Texts

Supervisor: H.V. Guenther

Vimalamitra is an important figure in the history of Buddhism. He was born in India, studied in India and China, and taught in India and Tibet. Vimalamitra's biography, presented here, is translated from the History of the rdzogs-chen snying-thig Transmission written by the 14th century Tibetan scholar, kLong-chen-pa. This thesis includes table summaries of the persons, places, and events in Vimalamitra's biography.

This dissertation concentrates on 29 of Vimalamitra's work which are particularly significant for understanding his position in the history of Buddhist thought and practice. The approach here is that of computational stylistics. A fast on-line random-access Tibetan compound dictionary was used to create a keyword-in-context subject index and a vocabulary frequency dictionary. This dissertation also uses techniques to demonstrate book cataloguing, book comparison, work processing, table of contents preparation, author identification, and Tibetan script printing with both laser and dot matrix printers.

This dissertation, as far as the author knows, is the first in-depth analysis of Tibetan language texts using computer technology. Many computer techniques used here may be applicable to the study of other character-based language texts.