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CONFERENCE ABSTRACTS

THE 29TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE ON SOUTH ASIA
MADISON, WISCONSIN OCTOBER 12-15, 2000

On Location in Ladakh: Love, War, and Mani Ratnam’s “Dil Se”
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As media representations of the Kargil war reveal, landscape and territory have dominated the portrayals of Ladakh while the people who inhabit this region are rarely brought into mainstream debates around definitions of the nation and its borders. Such foregrounding of land over people can also be seen in popular films like Dil Se, a movie about chasing love in the shadows of political conflict. A substantial portion of this film was shot in Ladakh but the location remains unacknowledged. This paper sets Mani Ratnam’s film against the realities of the border war in Kargil and compares it to earlier films to offer a commentary on political, gendered, and racial aspects of border constructions.

Keywords: India, Ladakh, nationalism, gender, landscape, anthropology of film

Contemporary Newar Buddhists have experienced a growing multiplicity of choices in the Buddhist traditions represented in the Kathmandu Valley. While their long-established vajrācārya sangha continues to perform rituals for the majority of households, Theravādin institutions draw growing numbers to merit-making rituals and vipassanā meditation programs. Japanese sects have also gained a following. Various Tibetan lamas, whose institutions have mushroomed in the Valley since 1990, still attract Newar disciples, usually for healing rituals. Most recently added to this pluralistic urban scene are two reformist/modernization initiatives that have arisen from within the high Buddhist castes, both with the support of international Buddhist organizations. After surveying this religious field, the paper will examine how these latter two groups reflect the democratic political environment of contemporary Nepal; it will also explore how they must balance their initiatives amidst the forces of “Newar nationalism” on the one hand, and a rising awareness of Buddhist universalism, on the other.

Keywords: Newars, Buddhism, Nepal

Un-monkly business? The Role of Buddhist Monks in Modern Ladakhi Politics
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At the time of the granting of regional autonomy to the district of Leh in 1995, considerable debate took place over the future role of religious figures in local government and decision making. While monks historically did not play...
formally as significant a role in secular affairs in Ladakh as in Tibet before its occupation, they have played a prominent role in different political agitations, have contested elections, and have held ministerial and other political and administrative posts at the regional, state, and central level. The continued prominence of the clergy both expresses and reinforces Buddhism as a central feature of identification and politics in the region. Part of ongoing research building on field research conducted since 1985, the paper draws on archival and other written sources, as well as interviews with religious figures, secular politicians, and common people. In addition to describing religious leaders' involvement in a 'modernizing' political and socio-economic environment, the paper contributes to the historiography of Ladakhi politics, and represents and analyzes local views and perceptions regarding the proper role of religious leaders in secular political affairs. The accounts also illustrates the dilemmas and contradictions caused by the encounter of religious authority and ideals of monkhood and 'Realpolitik', and the different ways in which people manage them.

Keywords: anthropology, identity politics, religion, Ladakh, Tibetan Buddhism

"We are the Buddha's descendants": Buddhism in the shaping of a Tharu identity in Nepal

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The term Tharu is an ethnonym shared by a number of ethnic group inhabiting the lowland region of Nepal known as the Tarai. Since the end of Rana rule, the Tharu elite has been molding these various communities into a single ethnic category. While these Tharu communities vary a great deal in terms of their religious systems, Tharu elites in the Eastern Tarai have embraced Theravada Buddhism as a central aspect of their identity and claim to be descendants of the original Sakyas. They use Buddhism to define all Tharus as a community distinct from and superior to Nepal’s Hindu majority and reject the myth of Rajput descent put forward by Tharu leaders in other parts of the Tarai to account for Tharu origins. From their perspective, Tharus are the victims of both Hindu and Muslim civilization. This discourse is widely known and accepted in the leading Tharu ethnic association, the Tharu Kalyankarini Sabha. This paper discusses the views of two of the first and most articulate proponents of this thesis, Ramanand Prasad Singh of Saptari and Tej Narayan Panjwar of Udaiapur. Other Tharus, while not claiming to be Buddhists, are nevertheless sympathetic to these ideas because of the prestige that attaches to the notion of being descendants of the Buddha.

Keywords: anthropology, Tharu, identity, Nepal Tarai, Theravada Buddhism

RELIGIOUS HISTORIOGRAPHY IN SRI LANKA AND NEPAL

Iconology of Vasundhara in Nepal: Deciphering Categories of Tantric Buddhist Methodology

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Tantric methodology often categorizes deities, ritual, and meditation as bahya “outer”, guhya “secret” and abhyautara “inner.” These generally reflect the movement from exoteric, openly accessible Tantric practices to secret, more esoteric spheres that are restricted to the initiated. Iconology and symbolism of Buddhist images may also be interpreted to signify such core categories of Tantric practice. The paper will discuss the iconology of Vasundhara in this context and place it within the larger cult of Tantric goddesses (yoginis) of the Newar Buddhist community in Nepal. As the patron deity of Buddhist women and as the goddess of wealth, Vasundhara is central to the lay practices. Yet, her iconology also hints at practices that are confined to the highly esoteric methodologies of the Highest Yoga Tantras. Using the ritual practices and material evidence, the paper aims to decipher Vasundhara’s multivalent symbolism within the categories of Tantric practices; further, Vasundhara’s role among the Tantric Buddhist yoginis will also be considered.

Keywords: art history, cultural studies, Tantric Buddhism, Buddhist goddess

Jalashayana Vishnu Imagery in Nepal: The Newar Tradition and Valley History

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The image of Vishnu Anantasayana (“Vishnu-reclining-on-the-serpent-Shesha”) is widely known throughout India. Jalashayana, sometimes also called Sheshashayi Narayana and Anantnarayana, is found in a unique setting and context in the Kathmandu Valley. Of the four large reclining Jalashayana images known from Nepal, two are currently situated within large water tanks at sites that are actively visited and widely venerated—Balanilakhantha and Budhanilakhantha. Mary Slusser and Gautamavajra

CONFERENCE DIGEST
Vajracharya have worked extensively on the dating, commissioning, iconographic, and political implications of these works. In concert with these significant contributions, I propose that an ethno-religious and culturally specific explanation for the commission of these unique and rare forms rests in the creation myth of the valley, which was once a lake.

PANEL: LOCATING TIBET

The Founding of a Nation-in-Exile: Tibetan Nationalism in the Post-war Era

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This paper is concerned with the founding of the Tibetan nation-in-exile. I begin by examining Tibet’s status before 1959 from the perspective of recent theories of nationalism. Most contemporary theorists of nationalism focus on nations that arose out of the post-war struggles for independence from imperial rule in Africa, Asia, and the Pacific. Tibet, which lost its de facto independence from China at this time of largely successful nationalist independence struggles, provides a radically different perspective on this era. In rethinking theories of nationalism from the perspective of Tibet, I explore the ways in which global politics helped to create two Tibet: a territorially bounded but colonized Tibet and a deterritorialized but independent Tibetan nation-in-exile. I pay particular attention to the founding moments of the Tibetan nation-in-exile in India. I ask: What discourses were at play in India’s offer of refuge to Tibetans? How did the Dalai Lama present the Tibetan case to an Indian audience? Examining the writings and speeches of the Dalai Lama, I trace how his formulation of Tibetan identity and his imaginings of a free or truly autonomous Tibet have changed over the years. I consider the Dalai Lama’s appeals for support to an international audience, focusing especially on the influence of Indian nationalisms his imaginings of Tibet.

Keywords: Tibet; India; nationalism; exile; the Dalai Lama; history

Exile Takes Place Somewhere: How the Indian Cultural Landscape (and Hindi Film Songs in Particular) Complicates Tibetan Refugee Ideals

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For many reasons, scholars, Western supporters and Tibetans themselves have largely turned a blind eye to the ways that India and Indians are integral to any understanding of contemporary Tibetan culture or identity in exile. The anti-assimilationist rhetoric of Tibetan refugees in South Asia is, however, complicated by their widespread enthusiasm for Hindi films, cultural objects whose power as agents of escapist fantasy, role-modeling and social catharsis has been well studied. Some Tibetans perceive the “Hindi film craze” in the refugee community as a significant threat to the paradigm of cultural preservation that is so central to their community’s political work in exile. Tibetan fans of Hindi films, in turn, are well aware of this potential conflict and have developed ways of exploiting the slippery slope between non-ironic and parodic stances as they consume and, more recently, produce the film music that they enjoy so much. I suggest that, in this way, film songs are used by Tibetans both as an excuse or opportunity to participate in Indian life and to draw attention to the cultural differences that potentially deeply qualify the extent of or desire for that participation. My discussion of these issues is grounded in ethnographic analyses of particular film screenings and musical performances in refugee communities in India.

Keywords: Tibet; India; ethnomusicology; refugees; Hindi film

Within and Against Hegemony: Counter Constructions of Tibetan Identity in Chicago

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This paper concerns itself with discourses that produce moments of what I call “existential dissonance,” when dominant ideologies about refugees generally and Tibetans in particular produce language, institutions, practices and beliefs that are fundamentally antithetical to self-understandings and the orders of signification that locate members of these groups in the world. It is this unexpected meeting of a self with an already scripted and often dominating depiction of that self which motivates my discussion. I will analyze an ethnographic moment when a Tibetan interpreter refuses to translate a question posed by a well-meaning American because it interpellates Tibetans as part of a lost or dying culture. The discussion will center around the question of whether the interpreter’s decision not to translate constitutes agency and if so what kind of agency that would be, given the limitation a Foucauldian analysis places on the actions of a radically constructed subject. By weaving in other accounts of Tibetans in Chicago, I will attempt to address the ways in which Tibetans mobilize and counteract the rhetoric of nationalism as well.
Electric Brains Go to School: Lhasa and Computer Education
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The capital city of the Tibetan Autonomous Region has undergone a rapid shift toward computer-mediated communication, education, and game recreation. This computerization process follows more than just market and governmental directives—the localization of new technology follows regional understandings of the relationship of technology to Tibetan culture. This paper examines the construction of an educational multimedia section of Tibet University’s new computer department and the establishment of a computer curriculum. Local understanding of this change is situated in the drive to modernize minority areas in terms of information technology and the drive to curtail forces undermining national sovereignty.

Keywords: Tibet; Tibetan Autonomous Region; China; anthropology; computers; education

Community Forestry Policy in Nepal: Progress and Potentials
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Since the HMGN 1993 Forest Act provided the legal basis for Community Forestry (or CF), there has been rapid implementation of CF throughout the mid-hills of Nepal. This has occurred through the formation and support (by the Department of Forestry) of legally-independent Forest User Groups (or FUGs), who are given responsibility for management of forests handed to them. This work has been supported in many areas from bilateral donor programmes. Since the inception period however there have been few extensive or rigorous studies considering the actual impacts of the policy on the ground. Research recently completed at the Leeds University Environment Centre, in collaboration with the Nepal UK Community Forestry Project, assessed the impacts of Community Forestry, in terms of the forest resources, the local FUG institution, and the livelihoods of the different forest users. The 3-year project employed an intensive and iterative Participatory Action Research method in conjunction with traditional household and resource survey, across a spectrum of FUGs. Findings of the research will be presented.

KEYWORDS: community forestry Nepal livelihood participation institution

Factors Influencing the Transformation of Agriculture in the Mid-hills of Nepal
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In the mid-hills of Nepal, as in many developing countries, increased demand for agricultural produce due to population growth and to earlier development activities have induced farmers to re-orient their traditional subsistence farming to systems growing crops to be sold on mar-
kets. Based on household surveys and group discussions with key informants, we found that in areas where rapid change in farming systems is occurring, farmers are expanding their private landholdings and increasing their market participation irrespective of caste, which is often considered a social barrier to development. Off-farm wage labor has also increased to the point where it contributes up to one-half of total household income. Traditional farming systems of local rice varieties and maize have been replaced by a system growing vegetables and improved varieties of rice. Income from selling dairy products and vegetables have become the largest source of household income. We also found that the participation of community based organizations facilitated this transformation, while the efforts of external agency-induced organizations had little success. Multiple regression identified income from different farm enterprises, land under cash crops, and the ratio of improved to local crop species as important variables in determining the level of commercialization.

Keywords: Agricultural economics, agricultural transformation, farming systems, Mid-hills of Nepal.

PANEL: RECENT ETHNOGRAPHIC RESEARCH FROM NORTHERN PAKISTAN

Orality, Literacy and Scholarship: Shifts in Gender, Genre and Performance of Wakhi Oral Expression

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The Wakhi, an ethnic minority group of less than 40,000, reside in contiguous mountain valleys where Pakistan, China, Afghanistan and Tajikistan meet, an area difficult of access. Researchers have largely focused on the unwritten Wakhi language, one of the Pamir languages in the East Iranian group of the Iranian language family. Soviet-era scholars working in the Tajik SSR described Wakhi grammar and published texts of Wakhi stories and songs in phonemic (modified IPA) transcription. These have stimulated Wakhi poets to use this transcription system to write poetry, a fascinating situation in which the transmission and production of a culture’s oral expressive forms are being altered by the work of the scholars who study the culture. This paper, based on my 1995-7 field research in Pakistan, looks at a specific traditional genre, bulbulik, that has been adapted and incorporated into a separate, modern genre, bayed. The paper discusses the introduction of a mode of literacy in an oral culture, the implications for models of transmission and performance, and suggests that socio-economic change underlies change in performance context and genre boundary.

Keywords: Folklore; Orality; Literacy; Genre; Northern Pakistan

Inside the Menstrual House: The Kalasha Bashali as a Center for Women’s Community and Culture

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Although menstrual houses were once a common feature of many different cultures, today very few menstrual houses thrive as living institutions. This study of the Kalasha bashali is perhaps the only detailed ethnographic account of women’s lived experience in a particular menstrual house. Two years of living and working with Kalasha women convinced me that speculation about menstrual houses as oppressive institutions designed by men to exclude women due to the “horror felt for their state” (as Graziozi [1961] describes the Kalasha menstrual house) could not be further from the truth (at least in this case). The importance of the bashali in women’s lives goes beyond its ritual significance in Kalasha cosmology. The Kalasha bashali is an important center for female culture and community. Far from being a prison in which women are separated from the community and rendered powerless to act, the structure of the institution itself contributes to women’s agency, both personally and collectively. Specifically, the bashali provides women with space from which to act — to be creative and religious; to be part of the larger community of women; and to make personal decisions about marriage and reproduction away from the intense social pressure of village life.

Keywords: Cultural Anthropology; Menstrual House; Kalasha; Women’s Community; Northern Pakistan

Constructing a Photography Exhibition for Hunza, Pakistan, 1930s and 1990s

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Hunza in Treble Vision: 1930s and 1990s is a photography exhibition constructed about a small community of villages in the high Karakoram valley of Hunza in northeast Pakistan. Three photographic scenarios of this community are juxtaposed with one another: one made in British Colonial India principally between 1934-35 by the late
Colonel David Lorimer, a retired British Colonial officer, and two others made in Pakistan during 1999 by me.

SINGLE VISION comprises a core selection of 1930s photographs that describes the restricted road to the community, the local rulership, and economy. DOUBLE VISION is a paired version of each of the selected photographs from the 1930s photographed again in the 1990s. The paired photograph typically contributes ambiguity—double vision—to its predecessor because surrounding conditions have changed. TREBLE VISION is based on Lorimer’s thematic construction, but I focus on the postcolonial landscape and explore the difference of peoples lives in what is now Pakistan.

In discussing the construction of the exhibition, I consider how differences between Lorimer and myself contribute to the meaning of the photographs. Meaning is a self-reflexive process that is contextually based. Never co-equal, it reverberates with power and intention.

PANEL: GLOBALIZATION AND DISCOURSES OF THE FEMININE IN SOUTH ASIA

Panel Abstract: Globalization and Discourses of the Feminine in South Asia
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Global communication and consumerism promote a variety of ideas about value, identity and relationship that may complement, contradict, or encourage reinterpretation of ideas about gender in South Asian communities. This panel will explore the impact of constructions of gender in the media and the marketplace on the beliefs of people in South Asia whose points of reference have been more heterogeneous and localized in the past. Papers will explore the ways in which newer and more global constructions of gender influence desire, self-concept, and perceived life-possibilities for women, and the ways in which they are juxtaposed, contrasted and reconciled with more historically embedded representations of the feminine.

Women, Development, and Desire in Nepal
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New anthropological theories of globalization complicate simple models that oppose the “local” to the “global” at the level of ideas, ideals, or institutions. This paper compares the conceptions and characterizations of “womanhood,” “gender empowerment,” and appropriate feminine roles held and promoted by prominent international aid organizations working in Nepal in the nineteen-nineties with the attitudes held by the Nepali women who were targeted for these “development” interventions. Research carried out in central Nepal over a five year period suggests that rather than merely reproducing or resisting “foreign” models and their messages, both the women who took part in empowerment programs and others who didn’t but lived in the same communities where programs had been held tended to be deeply affected by national and transnational discourses touting independence, autonomy, and empowerment, and they came to see these as signs of personal and gender development. At the same time, these women did not accept the proffered definitions, and their accompanying ideologies, uncritically. Instead, their reported experiences suggest that development creates new self-conceptions and desires at the local level, which incorporate multiple, and potentially contradictory, expectations and ideals. Contemporary notions of women and feminine development in Nepal are produced in the space where the global is local: in the interstices between nationalism, globalization, and previously more localized values, and in relation to the critical realities of material constraints.

Keywords: Gender, Development, Nepal, Anthropology

Sumitra’s Room: Representation and Experience in the Global Realm
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Space and image can be conceived as a kind of discourse, one that conditions experience in interesting ways and that in its construction demonstrates identity and desire. Over the past three decades, the social and physical spaces inhabited by women in Nepal have altered greatly in response to patterns of globalization. Sumitra is a young college-educated woman whose family has moved from the Gurung village in which her parents grew up to the town of Pokhara. There, consumer goods, like televisions, motorcycles or automobiles have become important markers of status; access to neighborhoods is determined by wealth rather than kinship; and ideas deriving from development ideology figure into evaluations of worth. In this paper I will locate her room in a larger social context and explore the ways in which it expresses her orientation to life and reflects contemporary urban views of femininity.

Keywords: Gender, Representation, Nepal, Anthropology
Language Politics in Nepal and South Africa
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This paper is a comparative study of recent language politics in Nepal and South Africa. In the past, both states had attempted to contain subnational forces, albeit in very different ways. The apartheid regime in South Africa encouraged local linguistic fragmentation as a divide-and-rule policy. The monarchy in Nepal suppressed all languages other than Nepali. Both of these archaic regimes were swept away in the global tide of political change in the early 1990s. Both adopted new and more democratic language policies, in response to demands of mobilized subnational groups. What was the interface in these two cases between subnational linguistic demands and the global rhetoric, predominantly in English, of democratization? Although the global-local interaction and timing of these two cases may be similar, the role of English in the two countries differs. English competed with Afrikaans in South Africa, with tragic consequences such as the Soweto riots of the mid-70s. By contrast, in Nepal, English remained a foreign language, never competing with Nepali as a viable lingua franca. This variation in the role of (global) English, but relative similarity in terms of the state adopting a multilingual language policy because of local linguistic demands, provides for a provocative comparative analysis.

Keywords: language policy, Nepal, South Africa, English, democratization

Origin, Development, Current Condition of Gaon Bikash Samitti in Nepal and Towns in Wisconsin, U.S.A.
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In 1806, a British administrator, Thomas Munro, wrote that the Indian village was “a kind of little republic.” This idea was picked up by a variety of Indian nationalist authors and later Mahatma Gandhi claimed that a village “is a complete republic, independent of its neighbors for its vital wants . . . “ The idea of the village that began to emerge in Nepal in the 1950s, the gaon panchayat, was largely an incorporation of these ideas.

Twenty years after Thomas Munro described Indian villages as “little republics,” Alexis de Tocqueville was in the United States of America studying democracy in America. One of the first objects of his study was local governance, the towns of New England especially. In Democracy in America, he wrote that “[i]n no country of the world do the citizens make such exertions for the common weal. I know of not people who have established schools so numerous and efficacious, places of public worship better suited to the wants of the inhabitants, or roads kept in better repair.” The similarity between the perceptions of Munro in 1806 and de Tocqueville in the 1820s is striking. Was there a common cultural origin to the two concepts of local government?

This paper explores the development of the idea of town government in the United States and village government in Nepal. Examples are taken from towns in Wisconsin, the origin of whose local government law is New York. The development of the concept of the village is traced also for Nepal. Finally, a brief analysis is given for the current condition of towns in Wisconsin and villages in Nepal.

Keywords: local governance, gaon bikash samitti in Nepal, Wisconsin towns

High Promise: Tourism Development in the Tajik Pamirs and Wrangell-St. Elias Mountains, Alaska
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The Tajik Pamirs rise where the Hindu Kush, Karakoram, Tian Shan, Alaaksii and Kunlun Shan ranges converge. Similarly, the Wrangell, St. Elias, and Chugach Mountains converge in the Gulf of Alaska where the Pacific and North American plates collide. Both regions offer extensive mountain wilderness, free flowing rivers, rare wildlife, and unusual flora. They also present unparalleled opportunities for “sustainable ecotourism” such as mountaineering, backpacking, paddling fishing, and sport hunting. This illustrated paper 1) presents the relevant biophysical and human characteristics of both regions, 2) compares government and private sector efforts to develop tourism, and 3) postulates on the future of sustainable tourism in both regions. Ecotourism in the Wrangell-St. Elias region established a new model for park development in the United States, while public-private “dual professionalism” has met mixed success in Tajikistan. Federal legislation effectively protects the Alaskan resource, while land degradation associated with independence and civil war is thwarting tourism development in the Pamirs.

Keywords: ecotourism, Wrangell-St. Elias, Pamir Mountains

HIMALAYAN RESEARCH BULLETIN XX(1-2) 2000
Panelists will consist of Sumit Guha, a historian whose recent work has focused on tribes in Indian history, Subir Sinha whose work in development studies looks at citizenship and social movements, Rashmi Varma whose current work is on Indian literature and its representations of economic development, Chad Haines, an anthropologist who is undertaking research on forestry and tribal formations in Pakistan and Yasmin Saikia, a historian who is writing a book on the resurgence of tribal identities in Assam.

Panel: Emerging Cultures of Economy in the Kathmandu Valley

Cashing in on Culture: Or From Dharma To Capital In Three Easy Steps Emerging Cultures of Economy in the Kathmandu Valley

Gregory Grieve
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This paper is an initial exploration into the economics of cultural tourism in the Nepalese City of Bhaktapur. It concentrates on the Bhaktapur festival 1997, which was held on October 22-26, 1997. This cultural gala attracted 400,000 Nepalis and 20,000 Western tourists, and hinged on Bhaktapur’s role as Nepal’s “Cultural Capital.” Since the reconstruction of over 189 of Bhaktapur’s temples by the German-funded Bhaktapur Development Project, and the appropriation of heritage conservation by the local municipality, tourism plays an ever-increasing role in Bhaktapur’s economy. From Bhaktapur’s five-dollar admission fee to the small boys who hawk their services as guides, as one American expatriate living in Kathmandu said to me, “in Bhaktapur, when I hear the word ‘culture’ I reach for my wallet.” Yet, the economy of tourism is more complicated than the strip mining of the city’s heritage. And while some residents worry about “cultural pollution,” most people in Bhaktapur are proud of their city’s newfound fame as a UNESCO World Heritage City. Moreover, they appreciate how tourist funds have been used for the city’s upkeep and the renovation of temples. In the paper I will outline the strategies for turning dharma into culture, and culture into capital, and show some of the ways that Bhaktapurians have put their “culture” to work.
Carnal Economies: Notes on the History of Restaurants and Prostitution in Kathmandu.
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Since food and sex are so often linked in cultural imaginations, it is perhaps not surprising that the two follow similar, and often intertwined trajectories in cultural/economic process. This paper considers the cultural dynamics of commodification in the parallel emergence of restaurants and prostitution in Kathmandu. Both of these new “service” markets represent the public commercial availability of acts/relations/services traditionally associated with domestic space, and domestic gender roles. The commodification of food and sex services constitutes a recontextualization of intimate social acts into new public economies of social meaning in a marketplace of commercially mediated pleasure, desire, and distinction. Restaurants and prostitution are both “public” to the extent that they are “freely available” to anyone with money, yet both offer the consumer the intimate privacy of anonymous pleasures. In a cultural context where the potential stigmas associated with meat and alcohol consumption are not unrelated to those tied to illicit sexual relations, the commodification of food and sex offers particularly important insights into the shifting cultural logics of a new middle-class consumer society.

Keywords: historical sites, social memory, tourism, migration, Rajasthan

‘Culturing’ Urban Ecology: Competing Constructions of Degradation and Restoration on the Bagmati and Bishnumati Rivers, Kathmandu
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The Bagmati and Bishnumati Rivers, which converge at Teku in Kathmandu, are widely characterized as severely degraded and are active foci for internationally-funded ecological restoration projects. Drawing on ethnographic work among development planners, cultural restoration advocates, and residents of sukumbaasi (landless migrant) communities living proximate to the rivers, I explore competing constructions of river degradation and restoration, focusing on the conceptual pairing of ecological and cultural logics in forming definitions of degradation and legitimate visions of urban riverscape rehabilitation. By examining the creation and allocation of particular forms of cultural and ecological value in restoration discourses, I highlight the complexity of the journey from globally-conceived concepts like “green cities” and “sustainable habitats” to local experience and engagement with restoration initiatives. The case demonstrates how ecological projects reclassify both eco- and social systems, and in doing so expose relations of power that enable creation of value in the circulation of environmentally-affiliated forms of cultural capital.

Keywords: environment, development, Bagmati River, Bishnumati River, Kathmandu

Local-Global Articulations: Neoliberalism and Newar Economics of Practice
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This paper considers the articulation of global political-economic processes with local contexts of power through a study of the “economics of practice” (à la Pierre Bourdieu) in the merchant community of Sankhu in the Kathmandu Valley. It first illustrates the dialectical relationships among gender and caste ideologies, prestige systems, and patterns of social inequality. At the scale of individual consciousness, following the work of Steven Parish, the paper then explores the ways in which such ideological constructions occupy the minds and lives of women and low castes as common sense-as well as the extent to which women and low castes recognize the established order as an arbitrary human construction. This discussion highlights the critical resources available within culture should planners learn how to recognize them. Finally, the paper considers how neoliberalism and the associated “open market” policies articulate with the Newar economics of practice. In particular it evaluates the progressive and regressive tendencies generated for women and low castes in the articulation of local cultural economies with emerging service-sector labor markets in Kathmandu and patterns of commodification.

Keywords: Nepal, Sankhu; Newars; gender; caste; neoliberalism
Some Nepalis perceive the Mongol National Organization (MNO) as posing a threat to the country’s fledgling democracy. In this paper, I show how the MNO in fact strengthens democracy by instigating a process of questioning the post-1990 political system. The MNO is a small, marginal political party with support in rural east Nepal that seeks greater power for “Mongols,” the numerous ethnic minority groups in Nepal, and calls for radical changes such as eliminating the monarchy and creating federal states. The MNO argues that the current political system is not a “true” democracy, pointing, for example, to the Election Commission’s refusal to register their party as an illustration of the limited nature of democracy in the new system. The MNO’s critiques of the present system offer insights into people’s expectations for the changes that would emerge after 1990, and their ideas about the meanings of democracy. Even while the MNO questions the existence of democracy in Nepal, the party’s ability to operate publicly and to openly debate democracy demonstrates the relative openness of the new system. Although the MNO and its opponents disagree on what constitutes democracy, these actors all voice their political claims through forwarding the idea of democracy.

Keywords: anthropology, ethnic politics, democracy, social movements, Nepal - eastern

“Development, Discipline, Dynamism”: ‘Active Youths’ and the Practice of Liberty in Post-Jana Andolan Nepal

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The paper explores tensions and possibilities of contemporary politics in Nepal through an inquiry into the socio-political location of the ‘youths’. In particular, the paper focuses on the aspirations and strategies of the youths engaged in politics and grassroots development activities in rural western Nepal. “Development, Discipline, Dynamism” is the motto of the Sports Council of Nepal. The motto signifies a governmental anxiety, and its will to both contain and exploit the power of the youths for the project of nation-building. The category ‘youths’ has gained additional salience since 1990. “Democracy”, it is said, signifies discrediting of traditional authoritative figures. In development talks, the three alleged challenges to Nepal’s growth, “poverty, lack of education, and unemployment” intersect at the category ‘youths’. In the meantime, more and more youths are recruited into the front-line of development works. The bodies of youths are also deployed in the often violent politics of multi-party democracy. ‘The youths’ in contemporary Nepal constitute a critical node where complex battles between governmental will and various movements for social transformation are being fought, and the aspirations and actions of the youths in this conjuncture provide glances into the limits and possibilities of the political present.

Keywords: people’s war, insurgency, democracy, Nepal, counter-insurgency

Say Love Not Politics: FM radio voices, the economy of affect, and the effects of democratic “free speech”

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The People’s Movement of 1990 in Nepal might aptly be called a revolution of the voice. In this paper, I look at a popular new avenue for speech, the interactive FM radio, to explore a more general phenomenon in this decade of
multi-party democracy: namely, a discourse against politics that has ironically and powerfully taken shape in Kathmandu. For many in Kathmandu, democracy has meant the emergence of a new economy of affect based on the “free” expression of love. Love, FM radio producers insist, is not politics. However, like new political parties and development agencies, the makers of FM radio also see themselves as agents of social change. Here I explore how the FM radio producers and their listeners voice anti-political sentiments by drawing specifically on the language of democracy, politics and social change that surrounds them. The discourse of progress (bikas), “free speech”, and the “betterment of society” have thus become a vital aspects of the sentiments and sentimentality expressed in letters sent to the FM radio. In conclusion, I open up to broader questions about the effects of this new economy of affect on the way FM radio listeners imagine politics, “love” and the possibilities of critique ostensibly enabled by democracy.

Key words: cultural anthropology; FM radio; democracy; economy of affect; Kathmandu, Nepal

Debates on Trafficking in Women and Prostitution: The Question of Family Values in Democratic Nepal

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The paper analyzes the politics of female sexuality in contemporary Nepal by focusing on public debates on trafficking in women and prostitution generated by NGOs, women activists, lawyers and journalists. In particular, I focus on the notion of “innocence” in the discourses on trafficking in women to identify such dividing practices as polarization of childhood and adulthood, health and disease, the criminal and the innocent, and forced and voluntary decision making. I will explore how this notion, central to the international human rights discourses, has been remade in the public debates in Nepal, incorporating dominant idea of unmarried female child in terms of family honor, as well as images of simple, uneducated, poor village girls, as viewed through middle class sensitivity. The examination of these debates will illuminate aspects of the configurations of, and the challenges faced by the aspirations towards equality, justice, and human rights in contemporary Nepal.

Keywords: anthropology, gender, prostitution, Nepal

“We Were Kings Once”: The Gendered Construction of Magar Identity in a Speech by Gore Bahadur Khapangi

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On January 2, 1993, Gore Bahadur Khapangi, a well-known Magar activist and leading figure in the Rastriya Janamukti Party, gave a speech in Junigau, a small Magar village in western Palpa District, Nepal. This paper offers a close linguistic analysis of Khapangi’s speech and of its reception by the villagers. I examine how Khapangi presented a skillful reading of history and politics in order to construct a Magar identity that builds on existing gendered stereotypes of Magars as brave and honest soldiers in opposition to Brahmans as wily and lazy landowners. Weaving multiple voices and languages into his speech, Khapangi urged his audience members not to allow Brahmans into their homes, and told them to “order” their Magar-speaking daughters-in-law from other villages to teach their children the Magar language, which is not currently spoken in Junigau. “As long as we lack social emancipation, our political emancipation will be completely impossible,” Khapangi declared. In the years following Khapangi’s speech, the Rastriya Janamukti Party has acquired few adherents in Junigau, but the ideas Khapangi expressed have been taken up by many villagers. For this reason, Khapangi’s speech provides important insights into the processes of social change occurring in Junigau and throughout Nepal.

Keywords: anthropology, Nepal, ethnic identity, gender

Searching for Democracy and Cultural Diversity: Janajati Movements and Decentralization Rhetoric

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In the aftermath of the people’s movement, what constitutes democracy has remained a central site of contestation. In order to participate in this contest over the meaning of democracy and as a way of envisioning the future of democracy, the Janajati movement has reworked collective identities so that they converge around ethnic and class categories. While Janajati movements in Nepal started with issues of language and culture, they have more recently embraced self-determination and autonomy of governance to secure cultural diversity and social justice. Janajati activists and organizations have proposed various new terms
of democratic rule and participation in public spheres in Nepal through their activism and social construction of reality. The government has also reformulated its rhetoric of people’s participation in nation building during the last decade, for example through legal provisions for decentralized local governance. This paper argues that the Janajati movement’s discourse on the right to self-determination and the government’s rhetoric of decentralization and local autonomy have shaped each other in varying degrees. The Janajati movement has gradually become a major force in Nepali socio-polity in search of democracy and cultural diversity.

Keywords: anthropology, democracy, social movements, Nepal

ROUND TABLE: EDUCATION AND DEMOCRACY IN NEPAL: WHERE ARE WE GOING? A BRIEF DISCUSSION OF HISTORICAL AND CONTEMPORARY TRENDS

Chair: Kalyani Rai, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
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This roundtable discussion is about Education and Democracy in Nepal: Where are we going? Nepal has expressed commitment to education as a cornerstone for democracy and pre-condition for development. This commitment has been implemented in difficult socio-economic situation and a changing political context. This panel will initiate a critical discussion on historical and contemporary trends of education in Nepal. An assessment of limits and possibilities of educational planning for democracy and development will be discussed.

Keywords: education planning, Nepal, democracy, history

Ancient Moraines in Yangma Valley (From Himalayan Journals, J.D. Hooker)
SESSION:
PASTORAL PRODUCTION SYSTEMS IN YAK-REARING AREAS

CLIMATIC AND GRAZING CONTROLS ON VEGETATIVE
ABOVEGROUND BIOMASS: IMPLICATIONS FOR THE RANGELANDS ON
THE NORTHEASTERN TIBETAN PLATEAU

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This paper presents data from a study that is investigating how two cited causes of rangeland degradation - grazing and climate change - affect key ecological characteristics of the rangelands on the northeastern Tibetan Plateau. In August 1997, we established experimental plots in two habitats: 1) a summer-grazed shrubland; and 2) a winter-grazed meadow. Within each habitat, we identified sites with low and high grazing intensity histories, within which we established a complete factorial experimental design. The treatments are: 1) simulated warming using open top chambers (OTC); 2) simulated grazing through clipping (G); and 3) combined warming and defoliation (OTCxG). In this paper, we present 1999 growing-season data on habitat, grazing history and treatment effects on vegetative aboveground (AG) biomass.

Combining all sites, the growing-season averaged air temperatures in the OTC plots and OTCxG plots were 1.28°C and 1.33°C, respectively, warmer than the controls. Moreover, the combined chambered plots (OTC and OTCxG) caused a 27% decline in total AG biomass. However, different trends emerge when the sites are grouped by grazing history. The defoliated plots in the low grazing history sites had significantly more total biomass compared to the non-defoliated plots. Conversely, the chambered plots in the high grazing history sites had significantly less biomass as compared to the non-chambered plots. Furthermore, the shrub sites were more responsive to the treatments as compared to the meadow sites. In order to relate these biomass changes to rangeland quality, we evaluate the compositional changes of different vegetative functional groups in response to our experimental manipulations.

Key words: Climate warming, pastoralism, Tibetan Plateau, vegetative biomass, rangelands
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF RANGELAND RESOURCES IN QINGHAI-TIBETAN PLATEAU

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Current situation of rangeland in Qinghai Province, productivity of yak and Tibetan sheep and main problems in resource development have been studied with aid of the theory of rangeland industry. It is shown that proper development and efficient utilization are critical for sustainable development of pastoral production. Suggestions on sustainable resource development in the Province have been recommended.

Key words: Rangeland resource, sustainable development, Qinghai-Tibetan Plateau, yak, Tibetan sheep

APPLICATION OF REMOTE SENSING (RS) AND GEOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION SYSTEMS (GIS) FOR MAPPING NATURAL PASTURES: THE CASES OF NORTHERN FINLAND AND THE TIBETAN PLATEAU

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Knowledge about quality and quantity of pastures and about of the amount of natural forage resources promotes sustainable use of pastures. Remote Sensing and GIS methods combined with traditional pasture mapping create the opportunity to study large areas reasonably fast and accurate.

In Northern Finland reindeer pastures have been mapped by Oulu Geography Department in corporation with Finnish Game and Fisheries Research Institute (FGFRI) during 1995-98. Finnish reindeer herding area lies mainly in the Northern boreal forest zone. Snow cover from middle October to May causes enormous stress to the survival of the reindeer. Therefore main focus was in the winter pastures.

The Remote Sensing data used in the study was Landsat-5™ images (22 images). Image classification was done with ERM upper image processing software. GIS-processing, final map producing and accuracy assessment was done in ARC/INFO GIS program. Based on this earlier research an investigation on natural pastures on the eastern part of the Tibetan plateau will be carried out in 2000-2001. The livestock consists of yak, sheep and horses, of which the amount in the herd composition varies regionally. Tibetan pastoralists carry out mobile animal husbandry.

One objective is to adjust the research method to the environmental conditions of the new research area, Zoige, in the north-western Sichuan province. Steppe and swamp meadows with an alpine vegetation serve as pastures. Semi-random test plots will cover the main vegetation types in question. The findings on the quality of the natural pastures should enable us to make recommendations on the future direction of mobile livestock rearing in this specific area.

Key words: Natural pastures, Remote Sensing, Geographical Information System, mobile pastoralism, rangelands

CARRYING CAPACITY OF YAK IN SURROUNDING QINGHAI LAKE AREA ECOSYSTEM

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Due to long term of over-grazing, the deterioration of rangelands have been a serious problem to sustainable development of yak production. This is due to the lack of scientific direction of carrying capacity of yak in rangelands. This study obtained the accurate and justifiable values of carrying capacity of yak in surrounding Qinghai Lake area ecosystem by using the method of protein balance of the production system.

Key words: Carrying capacity, yak, protein balance, Qinghai Lake

ECONOMICS OF YAK FARMING WITH RELATION TO TOURISM IN NEPAL

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Traditional Yak farming in Nepal is declining at an alarming rate denoting measure shift in use of yak husbandry from traditional butter and hard cheese (Chhurpi) to modern Swedish style hard cheese and as pack animals for tourist. Also there has been a positive shift in number of animals in one herd due to economic reasons such as economic return per herd and per animal. It has been noticed that small herds (15 Heads) show negative gross margins as compared to that of economically viable size (55 Heads). The economic return of a Hotel business in Yak raising area is five times higher than that of average Herds of 55 animals. However, the association of Yak as a pack animal in tourism sector is a vital element to carry the loads of the tourist in Himalayan region of Nepal. Without Yak and their crosses, it is not possible to strengthen the growing tourism in remote and rugged terrain of Nepal. In addition to this, meat value of yak steak in these areas is another major reason closely associated with tourism development in the Kingdom of Nepal. To develop tourism in Nepal, there is an urgent need to readress the Yak husbandry policy for mutual benefit of farmers as well as for rural urban migration and employment. A slow transition policy has been prescribed in this paper to resolve the current issues related with Yak Husbandry and need for tourism.

Key words: Yak farming, tourism, economy, Nepal

THE ECONOMIC COMPARISON ON YAK PRODUCTION IN TWO TYPES OF COLD-SEASON GRASSLAND IN TIANZHU COUNTY,
GANSU OF P.R. CHINA

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In cold seasonal (winter and spring) grasslands, overgrazing is very popular. Dasifora fruticosa shrub + Carex grassland was mainly used for yak grazing and Polygonum + Carex grassland for Tibetan sheep. In this case, both systems had very similar husbandry income in total but the net income from the former system was higher due to less labour and input were requested. Key words: Cold season grassland, yak production, economic benefit

RECENT RESULTS OF YAK RESEARCH IN WESTERN HIGH ASIA

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In this contribution four cases in point are introduced from Western High Asia, i.e. from the Western Kun Lun Shan and Pamir mountains. Yak-keeping has been an important survival strategy for nomads and combined mountain agriculturists. During the twentieth century significant transformations of production strategies took place which have affected the animal husbandry in general and yak-keeping in particular. Recent results of field work in different mountain communities in High Asia show the influence of political transformations and economic reforms exemplified in the case studies. The main emphasis is to put on the role of yak breeding within the specific production system. Key words: Nomadism, combined mountain agriculture, yak-keeping, Pamir, High Asia

EFFECTS OF STOCKING RATES ON ABOVEGROUND BIOMASS AND YAK GROWTH IN ALPINE MEADOW

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The trial reported the effects of stocking rates on yak growth and aboveground biomass in alpine meadow for summer pasture. The results showed that stocking rate had notable effects on yak growth and ratio of all kinds of herbage in the vegetation. On the one hand, grass and sedge would be improved with the reducing the stocking rate, the compositions of palatable plants were raised and the vegetation may have been restored. On the other hand, treatment A and B have no notable divergences in yak growth, aboveground biomass and ratio of all kinds of herbage but they have notable divergence with treatment C. Therefore, treatment B has a better stocking rate than others. Key words: Stocking rate, yak growth, aboveground biomass, alpine meadow

GRAZING RESOURCES FOR YAK PRODUCTION SYSTEMS IN BHUTAN

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Bhutan has extensive grasslands, covering approximately 10% of the total land area. This resource is the base for the transhumance yak production system prevalent throughout the northern regions of the country. Although the Bhutan has a relatively young research programme, with limited resources allocated to yak production systems, a remarkable amount of information has been generated. The presentation reviews the information relating to grazing resources, especially description of plant species and communities, production potential, resource management, and resource quality monitoring. Key words: Grazing resource, yak, production system, Bhutan

NATIONAL RESEARCH CENTRE ON YAK: RETROSPECTIVE AND PERSPECTIVE

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Yak, the multipurpose bovid, is well known for its adaptation to high altitude and extreme environment. The highland of the Himalayan States of India, specifically of Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Jammu & Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh depend solely on yak rearing. The progressive decline in the yak population in the last two decades is a cause of concern which led to the development of a research centre solely devoted upon yak. Accordingly, National Research Centre on Yak was established in the fag end of the VII Plan (1989) with its full-fledged research establishment. A rational, pragmatic and futuristic Plan, research programmes and budgetary requirements have been proposed for smooth running of this institute. Seven Basic Research Programs on Physiology, Nutrition, Reproduction, Animal Genetics and Breeding, Disease and Extension have been identified with aims and objectives to achieve the mandate of this centre. Major achievements of this centre till the period are survey works on yak population dynamics-its problems and prospects, successful adaptation of yak in lower altitude, generation of base line data in some of the parameters of haemato-physiology, biochemistry and reproductive physiology, nutritional evaluation of some yak feeds, health coverage along with preventive measures, extension activities towards yaks and yak rearers, existing marketing patterns of yak products. Some new initiatives and future thrust have been taken. Proposal for establishment of Yak farms - one each in Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh and Ladakh for improvement of yak husbandry in yak inhabited states of India, adaptation of yak inhabited villages in Arunachal Pradesh and development of post harvest technology on yak products are the major future thrust areas. Developmental activities are also going on simultaneously for the smooth running of the centre. Key words: Yak, husbandry, research, development, achievement, thrust
DISCUSS ON YAK SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTHERN QINGHAI PROVINCE

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This paper discussed the present situation and problems for yak in south area of Qinghai Province. The measure and countermeasure of accelerating yak industry in southern Qinghai (YSQ) were recommended and it will offer some very useful references for sustainable yak development of the YSQ.

Key words: Yak, sustainable development, countermeasure

IMPACT OF NATIONAL PARKS AND TOURISM ON YAK FARMING SYSTEM IN THE ALPINE HIMALAYAN REGION OF NEPAL.

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Nepal has a large variation in altitude, which ranges from 8442 meters at the northern border to 60 m at the Southern border. As a result, it has many diverse agro-climatic conditions and farming systems. Nepal can be divided broadly into three physiographic regions, which run, more or less, parallel to each other from the Northwest to the Southeast of the country. Each of these regions has a distinct agriculture and forestry land utilization pattern.

Livestock are an integral part of the agricultural systems and their value is accounted in manure, draught and pack power and cash value, besides their food production through milk, meat and eggs. At present livestock contribute 31% to the total Agricultural Gross Domestic Product (AGDP) of the country. 53% of this amount is derived from the hills, 38% from the Terai lowlands and 9% from the high alpine Himalayan region. In the Ninth Five Year and Agricultural Perspective Plan, the future contribution of the livestock sector is expected to reach 45% of total AGDP. Livestock has also been identified as a sector of the economy with a large potential for growth.

The remote alpine region of Nepal is a unique and resilient ecosystem which has some of the highest permanent settlement on earth. The people of this region have survived in this difficult ecosystem for more than 1000 years, and developed a unique agro-pastoral culture. The region is changing, however, due to the increase in human population, the influx of modern ideas and products, and tourism. These changes may degrade its eco-system, transform its cultures and threaten its yak farming and wildlife.

People of this region rely on livestock-yaks, chauri (yaks-cow hybrids), sheep, goats, horse and poultry (indigenous breed) - to transform the energy locked in the wild grasses into food, clothing and shelter (Economic Survey Report 1993). Yak resides in these highlands of Nepal and they are usually found at elevations above 10,000 feet.

Yaks are primary food source for people living in this region of Nepal. Every part of the animal is utilized. Wool is used to weave blankets, rugs and clothing. Milk provides ghee (cooked butter), chhurpe (dried cheese), yogurt and buttermilk. Skins are used for leather, bedding, or seats. Meat is dried and eaten during the harsh winter months, particularly during the annual winter migration to the pastures at lower elevation (Economic of Raising 1988). The total population of yaks and hybrids is about 60,000 heads. However, the population is declining due to the following reasons:

- Annapurna Conservation Area and Shey Phoksundo Dolpo National Park. People used to drive their yak to these areas for grazing but this is no longer permitted. Due to the resultant lack of feed resources, many farmers are giving yak farming up.

A herd of yaks is normally composed of animals belonging to one or more owners and maintained under a common management style. Most of the owners are poor and they do not derive enough money from this type farming to survive. Some try to find alternative employment, but because most of them are illiterate it is almost impossible to find jobs in town or with the local government. Many yak farmers have joined the tourism industry to serve as sherpas during trekking trips.

Marketing and price of yak products is another major problem, as there is no organized and secure marketing system in the country. Yak cheese has got a high market and nutritional value, but there are few marketing channels. There are 10 government and private yak cheese factories in the region. A specific plan to preserve yak farming systems has not been developed thus far.

There is an urgent need in Nepal to understand the scope and effectiveness of range and management, which has implication for the livestock dependent people living in the alpine Himalayan region. It is, therefore, necessary to map areas of yak and other livestock use, herd movement patterns, and ranges where livestock and wild ungulates overlap. In addition, grazing practice and user rights within the National Parks, especially in key wildlife habitats, should be examined.

Key words: Nak, chauri, alpine, leasehold

DEVELOPMENT DYNAMICS OF FRAGILE PASTORAL SYSTEMS ON SOUTHEASTERN TIBETAN PLATEAU

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This study was conducted in Deqin County of northwestern Yunnan, an important yak-raising area in China, and focused on the recent development of pastoral production system. While rangeland resources, forage productivity and yaks' grazing pattern having been investigated, changes of management system, livestock structure and pastoral output in recent years were also examined. In order to promote the sustainable development of pastoral production system, the socio-economic and ecological features on development dynamics of the pastoral production system were identified, and further some suggestions were provided in the paper.

Key words: Pastoral production system, Tibetan Plateau, rangeland ecosystem, yak production
**Yak Crossbred Production in the Central Upper Slope Region of Nepal: A Community Resource Management Strategy**

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Sustainable socio-economic development of the upper slope regions of Nepal is reliant on the efficient management of community or common property resources (e.g. forest and non-timber forest products (NTFP), pasture, animals and people). The Yak crossbred production system is an integral component of this ecosystem and a major economic activity, heavily reliant on pastureland and Oak Forest resources. However, over the two decades these resources have been increasingly exploited and the available natural resources are now estimated to be beyond the limit of regeneration. As a result, the oak forests are showing signs of deterioration with poor regeneration and the alpine pastures are heavily infested with undesirable and unpalatable weeds. Available medicinal and aromatic plants and other forest products have also seen a dramatic decline in many areas.

Over the last two years, Nepal Australia Community Resource Management Project (NACRMP) has been currently working towards a management strategy for the upper slope resources of Central Region of Nepal. NACRMP’s approach involves the use of Participatory Action Research methodologies as a framework to empower communities and encourage collaborative decision-making.

The major principles of the NACRMP strategy include:
—The use of indigenous knowledge and local organizations.
—A participatory approach involving all stakeholders.
—A system approach that considers environmental, socio-economic, and production demands.
—Identification of appropriate interventions directed towards resolving livestock grazing related issues.
—An evolutionary approach to the management and protection of upper slope through existing forest policy and legislation.

The main efforts of NACRMP so far have been focused on:
—Improved Oak Forest and pastureland management practices.
—Formation of Forest User Groups (FUGs) responsible for the management of the community forests (Oak Forest) closest to their villages.
—Development of grazing and NTFP user right systems for those community forests

**Yak Rearing System in Nar and Phu Villages, A Restricted Zone of Nepal and Its Roles in Local Economy, Environment and Culture**

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Yaks are raised along the mountain ranges in Nepal, mainly between the altitude from 3,000 to 4,500m asl. Almost all the yak raising systems in Nepal are traditional. It is migratory and the migration is both vertical as well as horizontal according to the season, and grass and drinking water availabilities. Yaks are integral parts of the livelihood of the mountain people in Nepal that support the household for food, fibre, fuel and cash. Their role is equally important in maintaining local ecosystem and environment. However despite the significant importance of yaks in the Nepalese mountain economy and ecosystem, there have been insignificant efforts towards the improvement of yak herding in Nepal. Information is still lacking about the productivity of yaks, management strategies of the local communities under different environmental settings and socio-economic backgrounds, problems and prospects in yak rearing in Nepal. There is a lack of specific programmes to improve the yak productivity through the improvement of breeds, nutrition, health, management and optimum use of available natural resources. Attention has also
not been adequately given towards the marketing aspects of yak products. So, there is a tremendous scope in improving yak productivity to address the poverty of the mountain people in Nepal and at the same time to improve the mountain environment. Nar and Phu are two villages located in the central north of the country, bordered by Tibetan autonomous region of the People Republic of China in the North. Nar and Phu are located at an altitude of 4,200m asl and 3,800m asl respectively. The lowest altitude of the land resources used by these two villages is at 3,000m asl. Livestock, agriculture, herbs and trade make the basic life supporting activities of the people. Yak is a key livestock species for these villages. Since both the villages are above the tree line, yak dung makes the bulk source of fuel. Animal’s wool, including that of yak, supplies the raw materials for blankets and clothes used by the local community. Yak's meat and milk fulfil the essential nutrient ingredients. Trading of yak and its products with neighboring villages brings cash in for the people which supports to purchase basic supplies. These villages are known for their yak products.

Nar and Phu are physically right into the heart of the main Himalayan zone and are normally inaccessible. Legally, His Majesty's Government of Nepal has designated this area as a “restricted zone”. So no foreigner can go there beside exceptional. It is believed that the modern technology has either not impacted on or has been absorbed by the traditional way of life of the local inhabitants, which is still a subject of assessment. However the yak rearing systems and the related activities are predominantly traditional which help balance between the needs of the people and that of the nature. The traditional values predominate in the community.

The traditional yak herding system of Nar and Phu villages was studied through field visits, PRA and key informant contacts. The qualitative information were ranked and prioritised based on the perception of the local people and their views were collected and assessed.

The rotational grazing of yak herds from place to place is cautiously done. It is determined by grass availability, temperature, agricultural operations, herbs availability and seasonal trading plan. Similarly the movement of yak herds affects other activities. The communities are, knowingly or unknowingly, practising different indicators of natural factors to determine the time of animal movements. Livestock behaviours are also interpreted as the indicators of environment. Associated with yak, there are a number of rituals and traditional norms that keep the use of the resources within optimum limits. The herdsmen have their own knowledge, practices and beliefs to save the animals from the predators. They are equally rich in traditional knowledge and practices in yak breeding and on processing and trading of yak products.

However as the time advances, the modern technology intrudes. Although the government does not permit foreigners to enter the area, the local people go out and learn various outside technologies and copy them to their environment. It is also not justifiable to keep the area closed to the outsiders for the protection of nature and culture which has a heavy cost for the welfare of the local communities. Both cultural as well as natural resources rather should be harnessed with optimal use for the benefit of both people and environment. It may need appropriate modern technologies. This paper documents the traditional yak herding system in Nar and Phu villages and the interlinkages of yak herding with economy, environment and culture. The paper tries to explain the positive and negative aspects of the practices and their linkages amidst the context of changed socio-economic environment, available resources base and values. Conclusions are drawn with the recommendations to continue with certain practices and improve some practices with incorporation of appropriate technologies.

Key words: Yak, rearing, economy, environment, culture, PRA

**Nomadism: a Socio-Ecological Mode of Culture**

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The paper presents the concept of nomadism as a *socio-ecological mode of culture* developed by Scholz. It was a “region-specific, temporarily and spatially ubiquitous survival strategy that was based on subsistence and coexisted as an alternative to the sedentary cultures of agricultural and urban societies”.

The disruptive changes which have taken place in the life world of nomads will be described and perspectives for a sustainable development of their world, the drylands of the Old World, will be given.

Key words: Nomadism, Old World dry belt

**Changing Patterns of Yak Management in Eastern Ladakh (North India)**

*Monisha Ahmed*

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At one time the nomadic pastoralists of eastern Ladakh grazed large herds of yaks on the Changthang, and their ubiquitous presence is vividly described in accounts of early explorers, British officials, and scholars who visited the region. However, in the last few decades their number has declined, a point several elderly nomads confirm. There are a number of reasons for this decline, but the degeneration of pasture is the prime one. In addition, nomads are now more inclined to rear goats as their value has increased as a result of the increasing demand and rise in the price of cashmere.

A decrease in the number of yaks has had an effect on the nomads’ lives, and they are now less dependence on the animal. Modern conveniences, such as vehicular transport, packaged butter, and tents made out of white canvas, are gradually becoming desired alternatives to the services and products yaks once provided the nomads.

This paper looks at traditional yak management systems among the nomadic pastoralists of Eastern Ladakh, and examines how these have changed. It also discussed how these changes have transformed the nomads’ lives, with respect to both their social systems and economy. Shifts in livestock composition, as a result of the decreasing number of yaks and increasing number of goats in a herd, have led to changes in attitudes towards the animals and these are examined here. Finally this paper looks at
the possibility of increasing the yak population, and if this is at all desired by the nomads.

**Key words:** Changing pattern, yak, management, nomads

**Production and Use of an Illustrated Handbook for Sheep and Yak Herders in Qinghai**

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Sheep and yak herders in pilot areas at the Qinghai-Tibetan Plateau are targeted by extension activities of the Bureau of Animal Husbandry. The abundance of detailed, technical information discussed on field days requires a reminder. For this purpose a hand-out was made in the form of a booklet of 190 pages. The booklet has an illustration on each page, and a minimum of explaining text in Tibetan and Chinese language. This paper discusses features of the booklet and experiences with its testing. The most important feature of the booklet is in its illustrations. Without these, the booklet would be less attractive and less understandable to many herders.

**Key words:** Yak, sheep, parasite, handbook

**Rangeland Conditions in the Indian Greater and Trans-Himalaya with Special Reference to Yak-Rearing Areas**

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Yak (*Bos grunniens*) is reared in several pockets of the Indian Greater and Trans-Himalaya adjacent to the Tibetan plateau. These areas support the vegetation similar to Tibetan plateau characterized by steppe formations, scattered herbaceous communities and sedge-grass meadows. The agro-pastoral communities inhabiting these highlands usually keep mixed herds of livestock including goats, sheep, yak, yak-cow hybrids, horses and donkeys. Despite a tremendous economic potential and adaptability to high altitudes, the population of domestic yak has remained relatively low in most of these ranges. This could be largely due to limited pasture availability, low primary productivity of the land and greater rearing cost needed for yak. It is seen that the alpine pastures of central and eastern Himalaya have higher densities of domestic yak compared to the Greater and Trans-Himalayan ranges of the North-western India, which could be a reflection of the rangeland productivity and socio-economic condition of the agro-pastoral communities.

In this paper we describe the general rangeland conditions in the yak-rearing areas across the Greater and Trans-Himalayan pastures of North-western India. We compare the pasture availability, vegetation characteristics, and potential productivity of rangelands in the region. Densities of yak and other livestock have been compared for various sub-regions. In the absence of detailed ecological studies it is difficult to ascertain the sustainability of present practices and level of competition among the domestic and wild ungulates. However, there are reports of low winter forage availability leading to frequent mortality among yaks and other domestic livestock in Spiti and Leh Districts. The state Governments have initiated yak breeding programs for these districts with limited success. We present the local people’s perception about the quality of pastures for rearing yak and recent socio-economic changes associated with livestock rearing in the region.

**Key words:** Rangeland, yak rearing, intensity, competition, wild animal

**Maintaining Livestock Mobility in Pastoral Development on the Tibetan Plateau**

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Is the settling down of Tibetan nomads the best development approach or should nomads be encouraged to remain mobile? Should Tibetan rangelands be privatized or would common property regimes be more suitable tenure arrangements? These are important questions that everyone interested in yaks and sustainable development of Tibetan Plateau rangelands should be considering. Current livestock development policies and programs for the Tibetan Plateau region of China encourage sedentarization of nomads and the division and fencing of rangelands into individual family holdings. There is growing evidence from other pastoral areas of the world, however, that indicate livestock mobility is a key factor for sustainable development of rangeland areas.

First, the paper reviews traditional risk management and livestock mobility among Tibetan nomads on the Tibetan Plateau and makes the case that mobility was a well-adapted tool for livestock protection. Second, changes that have taken place in recent decades among Tibetan pastoral societies are discussed and it is revealed that many development policies and programs were based on misconceptions and faulty assumptions paradigm in pastoral development is introduced and its relevance to the Tibetan nomadic pastoral system is argued for.

The mobility paradigm does not advocate returning to the traditional pastoral system or no development in Tibetan pastoral areas. Rather, it stresses that livestock mobility is a sound ecological and economic adaptation upon which to base pastoral development. The mobility paradigm also tries to ensure that appropriate policies, legal mechanisms and support systems are put into place in order to enable nomadic pastoralism to evolve towards an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable way of making a living on the Tibetan Plateau.

**Key words:** Livestock mobility, nomads, pastoral development

**Integrating GIS and Remote Sensing for the Study of Yak Habitat**

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This research project focuses on employing Geographic Information System (GIS) to integrate socioeconomic data on yaks with remote sensing imagery of grassland ecological dynamics. I compare six key phenological grassland events (time of onset of
Inadequate Forest Policy for Highland Range Management: Issues for Sustainable Yak Production

Krisha Hari Gautam
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Highland ranges, which are vital grazing resources, mostly come under the forest legislation. Forest policy’s direct intervention in this zone has been the creation of national parks, and indirectly (to a little extent) through expansion of community forestry based on the experience of middle hills. Although forestry sector masterplan emphasised the need of inter-sectoral cooperation between livestock and forestry for developing fodder resources, programmes implementation statuses were not encouraging. Eventually rangeland resources are degraded, and livestock development is mostly affected.

Highland range management involves balancing dichotomy of grazing and biodiversity conservation for sustainable development of livestock resources, including yak. The paper analyses the policies on highland range management in Nepal, and proposes for balanced dichotomy of livestock development and nature conservation.

Key words: Forestry policy, highland ranges, sustainable development

The Yak Population in Mongolia and Its Relation with Snow Leopards as a Prey Species

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The number of leopards in Mongolia is 1000 existing with an overall density of 1.10 cats per 100 km² found in the Altai Mountains, the Khangai Mountains, the Hanshoo Yul and Harkhya ranges and in isolated mountains sections of the Trans-Alta Gobi with a total area probably less than 90,000 km². The yaks, with a total number of 813,300, are mainly located alone in the high Altai mountain range, Khangai mountain range and Kharkhiraa, Khovsgul mountains. In the Gobi Altai mountains there is also limited numbers of yaks in the higher pasture as a Guransai Khan mountain. The yaks are grazing in the same habitat as a snow leopard without guarding and often killed by snow leopard together with horses and other large livestock.

Key words: Yak population, snow leopard, prey species, Mongolia

Yak Grazing and Forest Dynamics in Sagarmatha National Park, Nepal

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Livestock grazing in forest sets off alarm bells in resource...
managers who understand grazing to be incompatible with trees. Particularly in protected areas, livestock are targeted for restriction and removal because of the popular perception that forest grazing damages trees and inhibits regeneration, leading to degradation. But a small-scale study of forest dynamics in Sagarmatha (Mt. Everest) National Park, Nepal, documents active regeneration in yak-grazed plots of *Abies spectabilis* woodland near Sherpa villages, and supports an interpretation of warm-slope vegetation as a diverse and enduring shrubland, not degraded forest. These findings challenge much of the received wisdom about the dynamics of Himalayan forests in general and those of the Mt. Everest region in particular, and suggest that yak and yak-cattle hybrids here have been unfairly targeted as agents of forest destruction. Sherpa have managed livestock to increase their spatial and temporal distribution, reducing their impacts; tourism has accelerated the erosion of traditional management, but this is not yet manifest in damage to forests. 

**Key words:** Yaks, forest grazing, Mt Everest National Park/Khumbu, resource management

**Yak Pastoralism in Pakistan**

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This paper provides information on the status of domesticated, free ranging and wild yak in Northern Areas and Chitral of Pakistan. Yak has a great economic potential in this part of Pakistan and for this reason, its crossing with domestic cows and ox has evolved many different hybrids. Yak breeding is common in some parts of northern highlands of Pakistan (i.e. Astore in Diamer district & Skardu and Ganche districts in Baltistan). When male yak is crossed with cows, the male offspring is sterile and is locally called Zo that is used for draft purpose and is more suitable for lower altitudes. Fertile female is called Zomo that produces more milk than female yak. The role of yak in the highlands of Northern Areas of Pakistan is more or less the same as that of a camel in deserts. The British traveler who first saw Yak in Pameer, being widely reared by the nomadic tribes remarked that “Yak seems to do every thing except lay eggs”.

**Key words:** Yak, Zo, Zomo, hybridization, feral.

**SESSION:**

**GENETIC DIVERSITY OF WILD AND DOMESTIC YAK: CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT**

**GENETIC VARIATION OF MITOCHONDRIAL DNA WITHIN DOMESTIC YAK POPULATIONS**

Jillian F. Bailey¹, Barry Healy¹, Han Jianlin¹, Laxman Sherchaud¹, S.L. Pradhan¹, T. Tsenduren¹, J. Marc Foggin¹, Claude Gaillard¹, David Steane¹, Ilia Zakharov¹, Daniel G. Bradley¹

**LOW LEVEL OF CATTLE INTROGRESSION IN YAK POPULATIONS FROM BHUTAN AND CHINA: EVIDENCES FROM Y-SPECIFIC MICROSELETTES AND MITOCHONDRIAL DNA MARKERS**

H. Jianlin¹, ², O. Ochieng³, J.E.O. Rege³, O. Hanotte³

**GENETIC DIVERSITY IN BHUTANENE YAK (POEPHAGUS GRUNNEINS) POPULATIONS USING MICROSELETTLE MARKERS**

T. Dorji¹, ², M. Goddard², ³, J. Perkins², N. Robinson², W. Roder³

**COMPARISON OF MICROSELETTLE VARIATIONS OF DATONG YAK WITH GANNAN YAK**

Wang Mingqiang¹, S. Weigend¹, A. Barre-Dirie¹, J. Carnwath¹, Lu Zhonglin¹, H. Niemann¹

**OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF YAK PRODUCTION WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO GENETIC OPTIONS**

Gerald Wiener, Stephen C. Bishop

**GENETIC VARIATIONS OF YAKS IN GANSU/INFERRED FROM THEIR MILK PROTEIN POLYMORPHISMS**

Qi Xuebin, Han Jianlin

**CONSERVING THE WILD YAK ON THE TIBETAN PLATEAU**

Daniel Miller

**CRISIS LEADING TO DECLINE OF WILD YAKS AND ISSUES FOR THEIR PROTECTION AND UTILIZATION**

Lu Zhonglin
SESSION:
NUTRITION AND FORAGE MANAGEMENT

RECENT ADVANCES IN YAK NUTRITION RESEARCH
Hu Linghao

GRASS & LEGUME VARIETY TRIALS IN EASTERN TIBET
W. Eric Limbach\(^1\), Liu Yingchun\(^2\), Ma Yushou\(^1\)

AVAILABILITY AND UTILIZATION OF SHRUBS AS THE PROTEIN SOURCES FOR THE YAKS GRAZING ON ALPINE GRASS MEADOW OF TIBETAN PLATEAU, CHINA
Dong Shikui, Long Ruijun, Pu Xiaopeng, Hu Zizhi

POTENTIAL OF ALPINE SHRUBS IN QILIAN MOUNTAIN REGIONS
Guo Yanjun, Long Ruijun, Zhang Degang

UREA ENRICHED FINGERMILLET (ELENSINE CORACANA) STRAW: EFFECT OF FEEDING ON YAK
R.N. Pal, S. Patnaik, T.K. Mohanty

RUMEN CILIATE PROTOZOAL FAUNA OF YAK (BOS GRUNNIENS) IN CHINA WITH THE DESCRIPTION OF ENTODINIUM MONO U.N.SP.
Gui Rong\(^1\), Na Risu\(^1\), Zhao Qingyu\(^1\), Zhai Xiaohua\(^2\), Se Zhu\(^1\), Soichi Imai\(^4\)

PEPTIDE AND AMINO ACID METABOLISM IN THE GASTROINTESTINAL TRACT OF YAKS
Han Xingtai\(^1\), Xue Bai\(^2\), Du Jizeng\(^2\), Hu Linghao\(^3\)

CHANGES OF SEVERAL KINDS OF NUTRITION FACTORS IN YAK’S LIVING ENVIRONMENT AND THE MINERAL CONCENTRATION IN ITS CIRCULATION
Yan Ping\(^1\), Zhi Dejuan\(^1\), Xiao Xishan\(^1\), Pan Heping\(^1\), Cheng Shengli\(^1\)

SOME PROBLEMS FROM STUDY ON PLANTS EDIBLE BY YAKS
D. Doyoddorj
SESSION:
REPRODUCTION AND BREEDING

MONITORING OF TRAITS FOR YAK AND YAK CATTLE Crosses
Michael R. Goe, Gerald Stranzinger

ANALYSIS OF MAIN COMPONENT ABOUT SEVERAL BREEDING TRAITS OF MAIWA YAKS
Zhong Jincheng, Chen Zhihua, Zi Xiangdong, Wen Yongli

EFFICIENT PRODUCTION OF TRANSGENIC BOVINE/CAT BY MICROINJECTION AND CLONING TECHNOLOGY OF EARLY EMBRYOS
Suizuki T.

EFFECTS OF SELECTION AND BREEDING ON YAKS WITHIN BREEDS IN LINZHUO YAK BREEDING FARM
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Bureau of Science and Technology, Linzhou County, Tibetan Autonomous Region, Linzhou, P.R. China

EFFICIENT WAYS FOR THE INCREASES OF YAK NUMBERS AND THEIR PRODUCTIVITIES
B. Chertkov¹, M. Kasmaliev²

PRELIMINARY REPORT OF SELECTIVE BREEDING OF YAKS IN SANGRI COUNTY, T.A.R., P.R. CHINA
Hu Binling

SOME GENETIC PARAMETERS OF BODY MASS IN THE YAK OF THE BURYAT ECOTYPE
Emma Katzina

YAK BREEDING AND ITS ECONOMIC EFFICIENCY IN HIGH MOUNTAIN REGIONS OF KYRGYZSTAN
J. Tynaev¹, M. Asylbekov²

REVIEW OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF BAYINGOLIN YAK
Turshen Abudula¹, Liang Hongyun¹, Zhao Changrui¹, Chen Jingbo³

PRESENT SITUATION AND RESOURCE OF YAK PRODUCTION AND REASONS FOR DEGENERATION OF TIBETAN YAK PRODUCTIVE PERFORMANCES
Ji Qiumei, Bhu Chong, Dawa Yangla, Tsering Deygi, Dawa Chyege, Zhang Yongqing, Lob Sang

EXPERIMENTAL RESULTS OF OESTRUS SYNCHRONIZATION IN YAK COWS
M. Davaa¹, D. Badamدورj², B. Erdenebaatar², A. Magash¹, Yo. Zagdsuren¹, N. Altankhuuag³

EXPERIMENTS ON ESTRUS SYNCHRONIZATION AND ARTIFICIAL INSEMINATION WITH FROZEN SEMEN IN YAKS
Zhang Yun
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THE PRELIMINARY EXPERIMENT TO INDUCE SUPEROVULATION IN FEMALE YAKS
M. Davaa¹, N. Altankhuuag³, Yo. Zagdsuren¹, D. Badamدورj², A. Magash¹, B. Erdenebaatar²

LIGHT MICROSCOPIC INVESTIGATIONS ON FROZEN-THAWED YAK SEMEN - A PILOT STUDY
Szabolcs Nagy¹, Qi Xuebin², Han Jianlin¹, András Kovács³

A STUDY ON THE IMPROVEMENT OF YAK REPRODUCTIVE PERFORMANCE BY INTRODUCING WILD YAK BLOOD
Yan Shoudong
Qinghai General Station of Veterinary and Animal Husbandry, Xining 810001, P.R. China

ARTIFICIAL INSEMINATION TRIAL IN YAK IN BHUTAN
Tshering Lham

FERTILITY OF MONGOLIAN FEMALE YAKS INSEMINATED WITH FROZEN SEMEN OF WILD YAK BULL
D. Badamدورj², M. Davaa¹, B. Erdenebaatar³, B. Dagvirkhorol⁴, L. Batsurii³, J. Gombojav³, B. Amarsanaa³
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CHANGES OF PROGESTERONE CONCENTRATION IN BLOOD AND SKIM MILK DURING ESTRUS CYCLE IN FEMALE YAKS
B. Erdenebaatar¹, D. Badamdorj¹, M. Davaa¹

EXPERIMENTS ON SEXING YAK SPERMATOZOA BY FLUORESCENT IN SITU HYBRIDIZATION USING BOVINE Y-CHROMOSOME SPECIFIC DNA PROBE
Révay Tamás¹, Qi Xuebin¹, P. Tardy Erika¹, Nagy Szabolcs¹, Han Jianlin¹, Kovács András¹, Tóth András¹, Salgó András¹

USE OF HERBAL MEDICINE FOR ANOESTRUS MANAGEMENT IN YAK (POEPHAGUS GRUNNIENS L.)
T.K. Mohanty, R.N. Pal, K.V.H. Sastry, B.P. Singh

SESSION:
ENVIRONMENTAL PHYSIOLOGY

ADAPTATION OF YAK TO NON-TYPICAL ENVIRONMENTS: A PRELIMINARY SURVEY OF YAK IN NORTH AMERICA
Gerald Wiener

PRODUCTIVITY OF YAKS IN SOUTHERN QINGHAI PROVINCE
Luo Xiaolin, Yang Rongzhen, Xu Jiingtao, Li Quan, Wei Yaping

PHYSIOLOGICAL RESPONSES OF YAKS UNDER DIFFERENT ENVIRONMENTS
Sarkar M., Das B.C., Mondal D.B., Chatterjee A.

ECOLOGICAL AND PHYSIO-BIOCHEMICAL PARAMETERS OF YAK ORGANISMS IN HIGHLAND CONDITIONS OF KYRGYZSTAN
M. Asylbekov¹, S. Abdukaimov², J. Tynaev²

INSULIN, PROLACTIN, AND GROWTH HORMONE CONCENTRATIONS IN YAK COLOSTRUM AND MILK
Zheng Yucai¹, Zou Sixiang¹, Zhong Guanghui¹, Chen Weihua¹, Liu Wenjing¹, Peng Xianwen¹, Mao Yongjiang¹, Wang Yong¹

A COMPARATIVE STUDY ON THE EARLY GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF YAKS AROUND THE QINGHAI LAKE BY DIFFERENT MILKING METHODS TO THE COWS
Xu Jingtao¹, Yang Rongzhen¹, Shang Shengzhong²

ADAPTATION, SURVIVAL STRATEGIES AND MANAGEMENT OF YAK IN THE INDIAN HIMALAYAN REGION
Nehal A. Farooquee, L.M.S. Palni

ANATOMICAL CHARACTERISTIC OF PLACENTA AND ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH CALF BIRTH WEIGHT IN YAK (POEPHAGUS GRUNNIENS L.)
T.K. Mohanty¹, M.R. Ansari², R.N. Pal³

RESEARCH ON RELATION OF BODY SIZE OF CHINESE YAKS WITH ECOLOGICAL FACTORS OF HABITATION
Chen Zhihua, Zhong Jincheng, Zi Xiangdong, Wen Yongli

DENTITION IN YAK
R.N. Pal, S. Patnaik, T.K. Mohanty

BODYWEIGHT GROWTH MODEL OF DATONG YAKS IN QINGHAI
Wang Minqiang¹, Zhang Huiling¹, Li Pingli¹, Tian Yongqiang¹, Li Jiye¹, Lu Zhonglin¹

SOME SPECIFIC CHARACTERS OF ABDOMINAL WALL INNERVATION AND CAESAREAN SECTION IN YAK
S. Ganbat, A. Magash

A REPORT ON THE BREEDING BY MILKING ABILITY OF MAIWA YAK
Lang Jie¹, Zou Daorong², Wu Xianzhi¹

PARTURITION OF YAK COW
S. Ganbat, A. Magash

ANALYSIS OF YAK PRODUCTION FUNCTION IN SURROUNDING QINGHAI LAKE AREA
Xue Bai¹, Wang Jingzhong², Chang Qi³
SESSION:
DISEASES AND HEALTH SERVICES

TREATMENT OF BOVINE MASTITIS WITH MEDICINAL HERBS AND ACUPUNCTURE
Hu Songhua

MASTITIS CONTROL IN Ruminants
Karin Persson Waller

A DIAGNOSIS STUDY OF BRUCELLOSIS AND CHLAMYDIA IN YAKS
Ma Lizhong

EFFECT OF JAPANESE KAMPO MEDICINES (JKMs) ON IN VITRO PRESERVATION OF BOVINE SPERMATOZOA AND IN VITRO FERTILIZATION
Nakaya Yumiko¹, Zhang Rong³, Xi Yongmei¹, Fujihara Noboru¹

DISEASE PROFILE IN YAK
Mondal D.B., Sarkar M., Das, B.C., Bhattacharya M.

TEST OF ENTEROTOXICITY OF E. coli FROM YAKS
Zeng Qionghui¹, Cheng MingYong¹, Zhang Bing³, Song Qinye², Wu Jiemei²

DEVELOPMENT OF INACTIVATED VACCINE FOR ENTEROTOXIC GENIC E. coli (ETEC) AND ITS IMMUNITY
Zeng Qionghui¹, Zhang Bing³, Cheng MingYong¹, Cui Wentao²

DIAGNOSIS OF ENTEROTOXIC GENIC E. coli IN YAKS
Zeng Qionghui, Cha Guo, Denba Tsering, So Zhen, Pan Duo

THE CONTRIBUTION OF COMMUNITY ANIMAL HEALTH WORKER’S (CAHW’s) TO AN EFFICIENT ANIMAL HEALTH MANAGEMENT SYSTEM
Horber Peter

PHYSIOLOGICAL MECHANISM OF YAK’S THERMOREGULATION
T. Cholponkulov

GROWTH PATTERNS OF NEW BORN 1/2 WILD YAK CALVES
B. Amarsanaa¹, B. Erdenebaatar², V. Dagviikhoro³, D. Badamdojil³

MORPHOLOGY OF YAK HEART
S. Hamitov

SEASONAL CHANGES OF BLOOD METABOLITES AND ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH BODYWEIGHT IN THE GROWING YAK
Tian Yongqiang¹, Zhao Xingxu¹, Wang Minqiang¹, Lu ZhongLin², Zhang Rongchang³

REINDEER (RANGIFER TARANDUS) AND YAK (BOS (POEPHAGUS) GRUNNIENS): DISPARATE ANIMAL SPECIES – SIMILAR ENVIRONMENT, SIMILAR MANAGEMENT, SIMILAR PARASITE PROBLEMS?
Peter J. Waller

DRUG SUSCEPTIBILITY TEST OF E. coli ISOLATES FROM HEALTHY YAKS OF QINGHAI
Tian Yun¹, Lu Chengping¹, Xiao Luzhong²

SEROLOGICAL SURVEY ON INFECTIOUS DISEASES OF A WHITE YAK HERD IN THE GANSU PROVINCE
Horst E. Geilhausen
SESSION: YAK PRODUCTS AND THEIR PROCESSING AND MARKETING

YAK PRODUCES NEEDS COMMERCIALIZATION IN INDIA THROUGH A PRICING POLICY AND MARKETING STRATEGY: A PRA
B.P. Singh, K.V.H. Sastry, T.K. Mohanty

DEVELOPMENT OF YAK VEAL AND ITS RELATED TECHNOLOGY
Ma Zhengchao, Li Jiye, Han Kai, Zhao Longquan

PROCESSING AND UTILIZATION OF BY-PRODUCTS FROM SLAUGHTERED YAKS
Hu Jiang

BEEF PRODUCTION OF KYRGYZSTAN YAKS AND ISSUES FOR ITS IMPROVEMENT
B. Sarbagishev¹, R. Usubamatov²

BEEF PRODUCTION AND QUALITY ANALYSIS IN JALI YAKS
Ji Qiumei, Bhu Chong, Dawa Yangla, Tsering Deygi, Zhang Yongqing, Lob Sang

BEEF PRODUCTION AND QUALITY OF THREE FINE YAK BREEDS IN TIBET
Ji Qiumei, Bhu Chong, Dawa Yangla, Tsering Deygi, Dawa Chyegi, Zhang Yongqing, Lob Sang

DIVERSIFICATION IN PROCESSING AND MARKETING OF YAK MILK BASED PRODUCTS
Tek B. Thapa

COMPOSITION AND QUALITY OF THE YAK’S MILK AND CONSUMPTION OF THE YAK MILK IN MONGOLIA
R. Indra, A. Magash

MILK PRODUCTION AND QUALITY OF THREE FINE YAK BREEDS IN TIBET
Ji Qiumei, Bhu Chong, Dawa Yangla, Tsering Deygi, Dawa Chyegi

ISSUES OF DEVELOPMENT OF YAK PRODUCTS AND THEIR PROCESS-

ING AND MARKETING
K. Kachkynbaeva

STUDY ON TECHNOLOGY IN PRODUCING YAK SOUR MILK
Huang Youying¹, Tao Yin²

STUDY ON TECHNOLOGY FOR PRODUCTION OF YAK MILK BEVERAGE WITH GINSENG AND CALADIUM
Huang Youying¹, Tao Yin²

STUDY ON PRODUCTION TECHNOLOGY OF YAKS CHEESE
Huang Youying¹, Wu Hong¹, Cheng Lianghong¹, Ai Ming¹, Tao Yin², Chen Liang¹

STUDY ON PRODUCTION PERFORMANCES IN PALI YAKS
Ji Qiumei, Bhu Chong, Dawa Yangla, Tsering Deygi, Dawa Chyegi, Zhang Yongqing, Lob Sang

THE CHARACTERISTICS AND PROBLEMS OF LEATHER-MAKING WITH YAK HIDE
Shao Shuangxi

WOOL AND UNDERCOAT PRODUCTION AND THEIR PHYSICAL PROPERTIES OF THREE FINE YAK BREEDS IN TIBET
Ji Qiumei, Bhu Chong, Dawa Yangla, Tsering Deygi, Dawa Chyegi, Zhang Yongqing, Lob Sang

UNDERCOAT PRODUCTION AND QUALITY ANALYSIS IN SIBU YAKS
Ji Qiumei, Bhu Chong, Dawa Yangla, Tsering Deygi, Dawa Chyegi, Zhang Yongqing, Lob Sang

PRODUCTIVE PROTOCOL AND QUALITY EVALUATION OF NUTRITIONAL BONE MARROW POWDER
Han Ling
OTHER CONFERENCES

FRANCO-NEPALESE CONFERENCE ON PEOPLE, ENVIRONMENT AND LANDSCAPE OF THE HIMALAYAS

KATHMANDU, NEPAL APRIL 19-20, 2000

Organized by:
Environment, Society and Culture in the Himalayas
Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS) and Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies (CNAS), Tribhuvan University
Tribhuvan Memorial Hall, Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur

Chief Guest: Honorable State Minister for Education, Mr Dilendra Prasad Badu
Chairman: Prof. Dr. Krishna Manandhar, Dean of Science and Technology, Tribhuvan University
Welcome Address: Prof. Dr. Tirtha Prasad Mishra, Executive Director, Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies
Inauguration: Chief Guest
Remarks: H.E. Michel Lummaux, Ambassador of France
Signing of MOU: Prof. Mishra and Prof. Meyer
Keynote Address: Prof. Dr. Fernand Meyer, Director Environment, Society and Culture in the Himalayas, CNRS
Inaugural Address: Chief Guest
A Vote of Thanks: Mr. Nirmal Man Tuladhar
Chairman’s Remarks: Prof. Dr. Krishna Manandhar
Session I: Geographical and Cultural Features
Chair: Dr. Harka Gurung

Presentation of the Programme: Explanations of the Diversity and the Evolution of Some Landscapes in the Himalayas: Examples from Nepal and Ladakh
Joelle Smadja

The Role of Invariant, Physical Factors in the Shaping of Landscapes of Central Nepal
Monique Fort

Mental Representation of the Landscape as an Exegesis of the Country
Marie Lecomte-Tilouine

Cultivating Bhanubhakta: Local Landscapes of Nepali National Culture
Pratyoush Ohta

Landscape Units and Place-names in Ladakh
Pascal Dollfus

The People and Place-names of Lo/Mustang: Historical and Etymological Perspective
Ramesh K. Dhungel

The Territory and Landscape of the Tamang from Salme
Joelle Smadja
Theme: Environmental Changes
Session II: Historical Features
Chair: Prof. Dr. Tri Ratna Manandhar

When Under-population was a Nightmare: Gorkhali State and the Transformation of Nepalese Landscapes
Philippe Ramirez

History of Rice, Maize and Potato in the Himalayas
Pascale Dollfus and Marie Lecomte-Tilouine

A Step towards understanding the Historical Seismicity of Nepal (To be read out by Marie Lecomte-Tilouine)
Mahes Raj Pant

Theme: Environmental Changes
Session III: Case Studies
Chair: Dr. Pravakar Bikram Shah

Parcelling, Privatisation and Collective Management of Space and Natural Resources on the Salme Watershed
Blandine Ripert

Adaptation of People from a Jumla Village to the Setting Up of the Rara National Park
Satya Shrestha

Tradition and Change among the Balamis of Central Nepal
Gérard Toffin in collaboration with Krishna Prasad Rimal

Population and Landscape Dynamics in the Nepal Himalayas: A Case of the Madi Watershed, Western Nepal
Narendra Raj Khanal

A Bocage Landscape, Masyam Gabisa in Palpa District
Tristan Bruslè, Monique Fort and Joelle Smadja

Madhese, Regionalism and National Integration: A Case of the Nepal Tarai
Dilli Ram Dahal

A Short Presentation of the CNRS Documentation Centre; Centre de Etudes Himalayennes (Central Himalayan Studies)
Pierrette Massonnet

Dolpo Dancers (photograph by Daniel J. Miller, 1992)