Reviews

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Recommended Citation
This first volume of a new series, Études Himalayennes, marks the considerable progress French research in this field has achieved since L'homme et la maison en Himalaya came out in 1981. The papers, contributed by architects, geographers and anthropologists, cover a wide area from Ladakh to Eastern Nepal and from the Terai to Amdo in Tibet, and differ in scope and focus. Those on the various types of roofing in Nepal (pp. 155 ff.) and those on housing in general among the Tamangs of Central Nepal (Neverre & Toffin) and in the multi-ethnic settlement area of the Tamba Kosi valley (Verliat) provide precise ethnographic documentation; while those on the habitat among the Tamangs of Central Nepal (Blamont) and the inhabitants of Manang district (Pohle) emphasize ecology; those on the changes in the Tharu house type (Krauskopf), on the architecture in Marpha in the Kali Gandaki area (Salant, in English) and the habitat of urban peasants in Kirtipur (Barani) elaborate on socio-economic factors, such as family structure, revenue system, trade, tourism, agricultural production, traditional town planning, etc.; still another group of contributions on Ladakh (Dollfus) and Amdo (Karmay & Sagant), and a second article on the Tharus (McDonagh, in English) view the house, first and foremost, as a symbolic space the extension, subdivisions and use of which are articulated by, or are in congruence with, a specific belief system.

The Introduction by the editors and Toffin's concluding paper dealing with the classification of rural house types in Nepal are an attempt to integrate the different advantages into a comprehensive general perspective. Without asking explicitly the questions yet to be answered, they nevertheless point at the heuristic value the present findings may have for future research. The necessity of a multi-factorial approach, instead of a deterministic one, is stressed. The types of house and habitat prove to be conditioned by the interaction of different systems: technological, economic, social and religious. Each of these systems "has its own logic" manifest in its relatedness to a particular natural environment, and each of them is, at the same time, the outcome of the history of the social or ethnic group in question. It is not difficult to agree with such a balanced conclusion, provided it is meant programmatically, rather than as a definite answer or thesis. For, as a thesis, it will require with regard to both the systemic and historic components, a more precise, more sophisticated formulation that is adequate to a no doubt extremely complex reality with its networks to be unravelled by further work and reflection. The aspect of ecology in particular must be treated in a broader analytical framework based on more quantifiable data. (This is not to diminish the importance of the book, quite the contrary, but just to bear in mind that a series of longitudinal observations and measurements in cooperation with other disciplines is needed to cover
an ecosystem with all its interconnections and implications).

It is interesting to see how much attention the religious factor receives -not only in Dollfus, Karmay & Sagant, and McDonaugh, but also in the introduction. The use of terms, such as "representations religieuses", "Image du monde", "univers organique" (p. 11), "mentalité" (p.14), expression d'un système de pensée" (p. 209), "Mythe ... vécu" (p. 255), and the stress on categorical oppositions and correspondences in the representations of macrocosm and microcosm, etc. betray the inspiration by a specifically mentalistic tradition in French orientalism, that goes back to M. Granet, G. Dumezil and R.A. Stein among others.

All contributions are rich in new research results and most of them abound in new insights. The article by Karmay & Sagant is outstanding for both its analytical depth and stylistic presentation; Krauskopff provides us with a fine study of a local context in its synchronic and diachronic setting; Barani excels in attempting a kind of "thick description; to mention just a few. The quality of most of the illustrations is impeccable. One only wonders why the editors abstained from completing this valuable book by omitting English summaries and an index.

Our knowledge of the Himalayan cultures is increasing, and the literature on Nepal in particular shows an almost booming growth (just as if the younger scholars tried to recoup the loss and close the gaps caused by the inaccessibility of this country up until the early fifties). Architecture, milieu et société satisfies at least three demands: (a) Not only does it widen the horizons of our ethnographic orientation, but (b) it also seeks to view the Himalayas as a regional unity -precisely by raising the quest for both common denominators and independent or unknown variables in the diversity within that unity. (c) It thus invites intra-regional ordering and comparative pre-testing which is, in this instance at least, a necessary step to be taken before the findings are "passed on" to the higher levels of theoretical discussion. It is through such comparisons that we can arrive at a proper understanding of the history "beneath" the data, which in turn enables us to avoid the pitfalls a strictly deterministic or synchronic explanatory model may lay for us.

Andras Hofer

Sidney Ruth Schuler
1987

Polyandry has always held a special fascination for anthropologists. Perhaps for some the rarity of the phenomenon presents an unusual and irresistible analytical challenge. But more frequently it seems that the fascination with societies which permit or even encourage multiple husbands can be attributed to a peculiarly male response. Whereas polygyny is titillating and monogamy mundane, polyandry confounds. At the source of the puzzlement are questions about the motivation necessary for a man to consent to share a wife (or wives) with one or more other men. To explain a phenomenon that is often seen to be "unnatural," several arguments concerning the economic function and social consequences of Himalayan polyandry have been offered in the literature. One widely accepted view treats polyandry as a sensitive cultural mechanism for adjusting population levels to changes in resource availability and economic productivity. In this view, polyandry is to be regarded as an adaptive strategy,
not as a cultural ideal, and monogamy is generally seen, even by the participants themselves, as the more personally satisfying form of marriage. Another argument associates polyandry with relatively high status for women. In this view polyandry is simplistically conceived of as the converse of polygyny: just as the acceptability of multiple wives suggests the relatively high status of males, polyandry is taken to suggest the opposite, the relatively high status of females.

The Other Side of Polyandry, Sidney Schuler's 1985 Ph.D. dissertation published as part of Westview's "Women in Cross-Cultural Perspective" series (one of two recently published books on Himalayan polyandry—the other is Nancy Levine's The Dynamics of Polyandry), responds to this latter view, arguing that polyandrous marriage is not a manifestation of women's high status but is better understood within the context of social and economic inequality. Schuler argues that the view that Tibetan women have "high status" within their society, particularly in comparison with the status of women in the neighboring areas of India and China, derives from the romanticized view of Tibetan societies frequently offered by travellers in the area. To counter this view, Schuler examines the basis of women's status in societies which practice polyandry. Her study focuses not on the institution of polyandry itself but on the existence of substantial numbers of unmarried women in several small "ethnic" Tibetan societies in the Himalayas of Northwestern Nepal. Schuler does not treat unmarried women simply as a byproduct of fraternal polyandry; she is interested in "nonmarriage" as a phenomenon itself, one that cannot be explained by the presence of polyandry.

Schuler's study focuses on two relationships 1) women's access to productive property, mainly land, and 2) the access of the landed to women's labor. In her consideration of the status of single women, she examines the concepts and norms governing marriage, family organization and devolution of property, and the status of unmarried women in society; discusses inequality in the distribution of wealth and the principles of inheritance; carefully describes the contexts in which access to property is governed by gender; and demonstrates how in-marriage preserves social and economic inequality by preserving the integrity of social groups. Schuler argues that unmarried women should be seen as part of a large category of peripheral people in the stratified society of Chumik.

Schuler's evidence indicates that polyandry cannot account for the percentage of unmarried women in her research area. Approximately 18% of marriages in Chumik for which she had data are polyandrous (p. 57), while in Tsang, a village studied by Goldstein, 38% of the marriages were polyandrous. Despite the relatively low percentage of polyandrous marriages in Chumik, the proportion of unmarried women is higher than in Tsang: forty-four percent of women over twenty years of age were unmarried in Chumik, compared to twenty-five per cent in Tsang (p. 57). Single adults are socially and economically peripheral, their access to property and status limited. It is this group of individuals who provide labor for the landed.

Schuler argues that the control of the society's resources is in the hands of only a few individuals. These few are almost all men (11-12% of married women have their own landed estates); non-landed members of society, either male or female, have limited influence and control of their own destinies. Her field site, Chumik, in Mustang District, is a food deficit area, with limited rainfall, a short growing season, and inadequate water for irrigation. Most families import food and many migrate south for the winter. During a few weeks at harvest time, there is a labor shortage, but during the rest of the year there are few opportunities for local employment; those who remain in the villages during the winter months are relatively idle. Fraternal polyandry, preferential primogeniture and 'nonmarriage' are the means by which families avoid the division of land, limit reproduction of legitimate heirs and produce a single set of male heirs in each
These practices enable families to appropriate the labor of non-entitled and unmarried adult offspring and siblings. Given patrilineal inheritance and the tendency to practice primogeniture, first-born sons of first-born sons are most likely to be landed. As Schuler notes "only first-born sons from aristocratic (ponpo) families and hereditary estate holding (trongba) families are truly entitled..." Schuler argues that while status and wealth differences can be bridged by hypogamous unions, women who are the lowest in status and poorest in material goods remain unmarried.

Schuler's approach to the issue of polyandry is enlightening. Nevertheless, the answer to the question "is polyandry associated with high status for women?" remains unclear, largely because the criteria by which Schuler evaluates "high status" are not clearly established. Schuler's study presents evidence suggesting that the ideological status of women within Chumik society is lower than that of Chumikwa males (parents care less about daughters than sons, daughters have little status in their parent's homes, and daughters are valued less for themselves than for the potential affinal ties they represent), and at the same time confirms that Chumikwa women do have "high status" relative to women in other societies in Asia. The women of Chumik generally have more freedom than Hindu women to control their own sexuality (p. 67), they are self-assertive and outgoing, tend to have considerable choice in spouse selection, and many of them have a measure of de facto economic control. But, as Schuler convincingly demonstrates, the status of individual women varies widely; while some Chumikwa women are wealthy, wear fine clothes and jewelry and go on trips to Southeast Asia, many more are poor and powerless, peripheral to the power structure of their society. She cautions us against judging the status of women in Tibetan societies by the apparent freedoms enjoyed by a small minority of women.

Schuler's emphasis on single women leaves a number of other interesting and important questions unasked. Even after reading Schuler's book, the reader is still unable to say what is peculiar to the status of women in Chumik. As Schuler demonstrates, gender is only one of several criteria determining entitlement to property and status. In order to assess a society wherein few individuals of either gender have access to material resources, we need to compare the status of women to that of men; in particular, we want to know how the status of poor men compares to that of poor women. Schuler's data do not allow this comparison. For instance, she compares households headed by single women with all households headed by men (p. 68). This comparison alone is bound to present an unbalanced picture of the distribution of power. It would be helpful to compare the holdings of households of single women to the holdings of households headed by single men.

Schuler argues that opportunities for marriage are dependent on economic status: poor women are less likely to marry than rich women. This is an important and common-sensical argument, though she lacks the data to convincingly demonstrate that individuals from poor families are less likely to marry, or that poor women are less likely to marry than poor men. Certainly there are large numbers of unmarried women in Chumik, and, as Schuler clearly points out, the number of unmarried women cannot be explained as a consequence of polyandry. But how are we to determine the extent to which "nonmarriage" derives from individual and family economic strategies and the extent to which it is a consequence of social status? Single women have advantages which Schuler recognizes: industrious single women do maintain adequate standards of living, often running inns or selling alcohol in the village or along trade routes (p. 70). Furthermore, the women of Chumik themselves explain their choices in economic terms (p. 69). Unfortunately, the evidence to support Schuler's claim that nonmarriage is more often a status imposed by economic context and not chosen is unconvincing. Women do have some latitude to choose among economic and social options, and some women
clearly choose nonmarriage, religious celibacy, or divorce over undesirable marriages. But we do not know what percentage of women who remain unmarried do so by choice, (nor, for that matter, what percentage of unmarried men remain so by choice).

The Other Side of Polyandry adds considerably to our understanding of the complexities of a polyandrous society. The book is to be commended for raising a wide range of questions about the political and social implications of polyandry and for Schuler’s persistent emphasis on "the other side," the downside, of polyandry.

W.F.

Seddon, David


David Seddon, the author of the book under review, Nepal - A State of Poverty, needs no introduction. The co-author of Nepal in Crisis and Peasants and Workers of Nepal has created yet another tremor in the field of Nepalese studies by bringing out this book which attempts to inter-relate the social deprivation experienced by a growing population in Nepal to the country’s distinct political-economic structure.

Although the title of the present book doesn’t sound as apocalyptic as Nepal in Crisis it is no less revealing: for the book initiates the reader into ‘the other side of Nepal’ which is so often neatly suppressed in official documents and reports. The deliberately ambiguous use of the term ‘State’ in the title which can be interpreted as ‘Nepal - A Poor Country’ or ‘Nepal - In Poor Condition’ hints at what is to follow.

Drawing extensively from field work carried out by himself between 1974 and 1982 and from a wide range of secondary data, David Seddon presents ‘a bleak picture’ of Nepal. This picture which he calls ‘Crisis’ has two dimensions. The first is marked by a deteriorating physical environment and a declining resource base while the second is characterized by social and material deprivation of the mass of Nepalese people. The dual character of the current crisis, Seddon contends, can ultimately be explained by the ‘backwardness’ of Nepali economic and political structure.

The book begins with an investigation of the political economy of Nepal as it emerged and evolved during the two centuries prior to 1951. The first chapter deals with population growth and agrarian change in Nepal during this period of time. The relationship between population growth and the ‘failure’ of agriculture to respond sufficiently during the twentieth century is considered in chapter two. The third chapter takes into consideration the social context of population growth. It then moves on to consider the growing pressure of population on available resources. The next chapter analyzes the structure of class relations in contemporary Nepal, while, the chapter that follows takes into account the various dimensions of social deprivation and certain responses to it. Finally, in Chapter Seven the role of the state is examined.

The author presents a strong argument while reiterating his assertion that the roots of social inequality should be searched for within the structure of agrarian economy and not in caste, ethnic or gender differences. By pointing out that caste and class are correlated but not usually related, the author suggests that it is class and not caste which is the determining variable in the analysis of land ownership.

The book also gives a brief account of the concept of Basic Minimum Needs. It states that the United Nations endorsed the ‘declaration of principles and programme of action’ in 1976 which was adopted earlier by the World Employment Conference.
According to the writer, the declaration not only includes adequate food, shelter, clothing, drinking water, sanitation and cultural facilities (Article 2), but also implies "the participation of the people in making decisions which affect them through the organization of their own choice" (Article 3).

In spite of the obvious neo-Marxist mode of analysis in explaining the deepening crisis of Nepal, there appears to be a deviation from this line of thought as the book continues. The landless, marginal and small farmers who are presented as the 'have nots' in the Nepalese context and the subject of sympathy and concern are for some reason known only to the writer incapable of initiating change to better their own conditions. Instead, the 'enlightened elites' backed by aid agencies emerge as the 'progressive forces' destined to lead Nepal through the crisis.

The author also seems to have overlooked the achievements of the era of 'assertive nationalism' (i.e., the sixties). A period marked by what the writer himself acknowledges as "a development of infrastructure, establishment of industries" and an effective foreign policy, its treatment is clearly inadequate.

Sudhindra Sharma

Rejoinder:

I was delighted to see a review of my recent book (Nepal - A State of Poverty) in the "APROSC Newsletter," no. 6, particularly given the generally positive inclination of the review. I would, however, like to correct the impression given that I believe the mass of the Nepalese people to be 'incapable of initiating change to better their own conditions' and that I envisage and support liberal reforms as the solution to Nepal’s economic and political backwardness. I argue in this book, as I did (with my colleagues) in The Struggle for Basic Needs in Nepal, that the mass of the people have always and continue to struggle to change the conditions which reproduce their material deprivation and social discrimination; but they do so within specific historical, political and economic circumstances which inhibit their capacity to transform those conditions. Those who would contribute to the progressive transformation of Nepalese economy and society must recognise both the dynamic inherent in the Nepalese masses and the objective constraints they face. For this reason, it is my belief that a broad popular front of progressive forces for democracy and socialism, involving an alliance (albeit inevitably temporary) of different sections of society committed initially to the development of a more democratic political climate in which different and even conflicting interests might be able to organise and express themselves openly, would constitute the most effective basis for fundamental transformation at this time. The contradiction between 'reform' and 'fundamental change' implied in the review is illusory when reform is seen as an integral part of the process of transformation: it was Mao Tse Tung who said that the journey of a thousand miles starts with one step. In the absence of such a popular movement for progress, there is a real possibility that the newly emerging 'technocratic elite,' who should constitute an important element within such a movement, will seek power for themselves to institute the necessary changes 'in the name of the people', with all the dangers that this entails.

'S published by the OECD, Paris in 1979

David Seddon
Norwich, August 1988
Special Section on Tibet
1988

Cultural Survival Quarterly, Volume 12, No.1, pp. 42-76.

The Board of Cultural Survival Quarterly includes anthropologists and other distinguished academics, linked by a concern in helping indigenous peoples survive the changes that come from contact with industrial society. Its stated aim is to inform both the general public and policy makers, and so to stimulate action on behalf of tribal peoples and ethnic minorities in different parts of the world. Each issue of the magazine is in the format of short essays by various authors around a few themes, a style which allows a degree of latitude to each writer in the way that he chooses to engage his readers.

The ‘Special Section on Tibet’ accompanies another section on health and healing world-wide. It consists of nine short essays, including an introduction by Robert A. Thurman, who also supplies ‘An Outline of Tibetan Culture’. Other essays are ‘Reflections on a Riot’ by John Ackerly and Blake Kerr; ‘A Chinese Conference on Tibet’ by Haynie Lowry; ‘Tibet Today: Current Conditions and Prospects’ by John F. Avedon; ‘The Monastery as a Medium of Tibetan Culture’ by Donald S. Lopez, Jr.; ‘The Legal Status of Tibet’ by Michael C. van Walt van Praag; ‘The Chinese View of Tibet - Is Dialogue Possible?’ by Anne F. Thurston; and ‘Tibet - The Washington Perspective’ by Tom L.Antos.

Thurman begins by looking at a linguistic confusion in the view that one nation, namely the Tibetan, could ever be part of another nation, namely the Chinese, as some Chinese publications in English seem to suggest. Certainly in formal logic (at least, following Russell-Whitehead’s Principia Mathematica), a category cannot be a sub-category of itself. However, such logical slippage is one of the general problems of translation, given that looseness is a feature of many everyday terms in all languages. Moreover, while such use may be indicative of a trend, this does not have to be a sign of confusion in the Chinese position on Tibet.

In everyday speech the Chinese term Min-zu, of which ‘nation’ is a translation, can be used for two terms in English, ‘ethnic group’ and ‘nation’ - rather like the English word ‘people’: hence conceptually it may tend to unite these levels. These terms are ambiguous from the specialist standpoint, and interpretation depends on context. Thurman has to be aware of comparable technical problems of translation with Buddhist terms from the Tibetan and Sanskrit into English, but what he has chosen to do here is slightly different from this scholastic task. Rather by the use of an overt psychoanalytic simile, he legitimates his own move from the recognition of the looseness of the term, to stating it is bad and being able to propose a remedy. Thurman’s use of language is not too dissimilar to that of the Chinese, in that they both make a political and goal-directed use of rhetoric by pushing semantic categories together.

His general presentation, as well as historical material, includes some fashionable, fragmentary and at times questionable statements concerning psychoanalytic repression, spiritual politics, the nature of national culture, the fragility of the ecosystem, the dangers of nuclear power and crude materialism, and a post-modernist perspective; all these are linked to the person of the Dalai Lama and Tibetan independence. This linkage and oversignification, such as when stating that a ‘top planetary priority’ is the ‘continuing survival’ of Tibet, is to run the risk of losing credibility to most policy makers.

His writing in some ways is close to the polemics and agenda of Avedon. Here omissions, inaccurate assertions, and the suspension of critical faculties appear like tools to an end. Avedon’s essay is reprinted here; earlier (Himalayan Research Bulletin, Vol VIII, No 1, 1988) I suggested that he is more concerned with the use of Half-truths to
engender political action than with the accuracy of data, its analysis, or the history that he
reconstructs. I also pointed out that though it sometimes is irrelevant to judge journalism
by academic standards, if writings are presented as serious works then one has little
option but to treat them as such. Tom Lantos's contribution is different, with a style
beyond polemic: but it may owe as much to a history of writing speeches for political
campaigns as it does to the study of US-Tibetan relations. For it to be considered
favourably by a knowledgeable audience, surely it should at least mention the military
training of Tibetans by the U.S. at Camp Hale in Colorado Springs in the early sixties.

Lopez provides a clear summary both of the very early Buddhist and monastic
history of Tibet, and of the more recent way in which monastic religious practice has
functioned to maintain the Tibetan culture. Van Walt van Praag gives a resume of the
argument of his excellent book on the legal and historical status of the Tibetan polity.
He comes down heavily in favor of Tibet as always having been independent, with the
possible exception of brief periods in the 13th and the 18th centuries. Those who see
international legal status as a legitimation of empirical power relations might wish to add
modern times to those periods; however China, we are told, makes no such overt claims
to Tibet on the grounds of current conquest. Reference to previous rule, along with
presumed popular assent and general benefits of their rule, are the primary grounds of
claim to legitimacy.

Ackerly, Kerr and Klein give clear, eye-witness descriptions of the demonstration and
violence in Lhasa on 1st October 1987. These reports conflict with subsequent Chinese
statements, including the evasions that were given to western journalists in Beijing at the
end of the month. These statements are documented and considered quite meticulously
by Lowry, in her account of her experience in trying to work as a journalist in Tibet at
that time. All these descriptions, together with the common-sense observations that
accompany them, manage to have the obvious ring of truth to them. They are also
reinforced by the reports on violence in Lhasa that have been filtering through to
organizations such as Amnesty International. Perhaps the excellence of these first-hand
accounts lies in the fact that, without the pressure of any pre-existing political or
ideological agenda, they allow the reader to draw his own conclusions.

Anne Thurston is a political scientist with a great familiarity of field-research in
China. Her paper may be the most valuable of all to policy makers who are concerned
more with dialogue and resolution, than with confrontation. Her essay covers atopic that
few consider, namely the situation of Tibet as most educated - and one might say
rational- Chinese would view it. She places this world-view, which has an uncomfortable
familiarity to a student of western colonialism and modernization, alongside some of the
facts and unfortunate questions that at the moment do not have much of an overt
expression within the People's Republic of China. In looking forward, Thurston
recognises that in a world of complex economic interdependencies, issues of national
sovereignty, territorial integrity and 'independence' are in some ways nominal, and
perhaps should not be allowed to dominate policy agendas.

1After all, one respected South Asian anthropologist and historian of ideas, namely
Louis Dumont, has made a theory out of the use of the same term to link logical levels,
which he terms the 'hierarchical opposition' (Dumont, 1982 'On Value', Proceedings of
the British Academy, Vol. LXVI, pp. 207-41).
2 There are a few other terms in common use related to min-zu, such as ren-min for people (ren having the same sense of people as elements or isolates combined), and zu, especially as seen in conjuncts such as Zan-zu, 'Tibetans', an expression which to an anthropologist suggests a gloss as 'Tibetan ethnic groups'. These terms can all be seen together in the general expression Zan-zu ren-min, which often can better be translated as 'Tibetan peoples' rather than as the slightly unwieldy 'Tibetan ethnic groups and peoples', which would result from the uniform imposition of standard glosses.

3 Thurman's population statistics are unverifiable; he also states that in history there were no Chinese (Han or non-Tibetan?) populations in the Sino-Tibetan borderlands; he makes statements about racial types (including a Burmese and a 'Dardic' type) that biological anthropologists would not agree with; and he writes on a 'universally Buddhicized spiritual, peaceful culture' that is said to have dominated the direction of development of Tibetans over the last millenium, from which most historians, with quite good reason, might wish to dissent.

4 The reader should be aware that Tom Grunfeld's volume The Making of Modern Tibet (1987, OUP India, Zed Books UK, M.E. Sharp USA, 277 pp.) provides a most comprehensive documentary compilations on modern Tibetan history, although in places the historical account may be held to task for its uncritical restatement and interpretation of Chinese sources and statistics.

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Manabendu Banerjee
1985
Bhandar. pp. 76. Rs.50

Sanskrit Inscriptions of Nepal. Calcutta: Sanskrit Pustak

This book purports to be a "politicocial study of the time of Amsuvarman, Jisnugupta, and Visnugupta: 7th century A.D.". Though the author mentions the work of Gnoli and Levi, his work is based largely on that of Dilli Ramman Regmi and earlier writers such as Bhagvanlal Indraj. The author appears to be totally ignorant of the work done in Nepal by Bajracharya, Khanal, Joshi, the Pants, and other members of the Itihas Samshodan Mandal, as well as the work of Western scholars. Regmi's careelss and superficial work cannot form the basis of any serious study, and the author's neglect and ignorance of recent scholarship are inexcusable and fatal flaws.

TR.
Isvaranand Sresthacarya, Jagan Nath Maskey, Austin Hale.

1987


The present volume is a revised version of some of the lessons of the language course first issued in 1971 by the Summer Institute of Linguistics. It contains the first ten lessons in a "phonetic transcription instead of a morphophonemic one" and a Devangari transcription of the conversations.

The volume contains material that is intrinsically useful to the student of Newari, but its presentation is so poor that one wonders whether any but the most intrepid language learner could gain anything from it. Misprints and errors abound, and the four pages of errata supplied by the author do not even begin to deal with the problem. He has mercifully dispensed with the original transliteration system, but he maintains the unnecessarily obscure terminology (e.g., conjunctive/disjunctive) of the original. He also continues the original abbreviation system which produced monsters like Vimps which will still bring the cold chill of despair to the heart of the language student.

The burdens placed upon the student by this volume are unendurable. Newari deserves better than this. The book in its present form should be immediately withdrawn and revised. The time has come to call a halt to expensive idiocies such as this.

T.R.

Munashi Tachikawa.

1986


Finding competent reviewers for works written in Japanese on Nepal is still a difficult task and the purpose of this brief note is merely to signal the existence of this well-illustrated volume to scholars interested in the subject. Tachikawa is known for his studies of the astamatrika of the Kathmandu Valley and his study of the Hindu ritual, the sodasa-upacara-puja. It is hoped that a full review of this work will appear shortly.

T.R.