One can see that Newāh Vijñāna has evolved with time. It has seen much metamorphosis since its first issue back in 1997 not only in the issues themselves but also the entire Newah community. The Newah community has been impacted by the demise of many great Newah scholars and personals. We would like to extend our condolences to Bhikshu Sudarshan, Iswarananda Shresthacharya, Revati Ramanandana, Sahu Jyana Jyoti Kansakar, Prof. Bernhard Kolver and Bert van den Hoek. We are very grateful for their contributions to the Newah community.

Another type of metamorphoses is seen in the creation of a worldwide community with the advent boom of the internet. Due to accesses of international exchanges of information in sophisticated way through the internet, the popularity of Newāh Vijñāna is growing rapidly. Recently, last summer, a Nepal Bhasa web magazine, www.newapost.com.np, was launched by dedicated Newah people whose voluntary work has lead to uploading of information pertaining to the Newah Vijana journal. We highly recommend you to please visit the website and click on the Newāh Vijñāna section to obtain information on previous issues of this journal. Of the many other websites that promotes the Newah heritage, www.jwajvalai.com deserves a mention. The website contains a group mailing and subscribers get a chance to participate in various topics on regular basis allowing them to update and promote the Newah world. For further details of the available websites information about Newah heritage is given in the page 30.

One can feel the impact of the rapidly-spreadipping regarding the recognition of Newah heritage and values. Scholars worldwide have discontinued the use of the word Newari since a paper was submitted on naming of Newah language. Similarly, our voice against the Nepal Sambat as Newari Sambat or Newar NewYear has also been taken into consideration by Newah community around the world as well as by world scholars. It is believed that Nepal Sambat does not pertain to a specific ethnic group, but it is a calendar of Nepal and must be followed by entire Nepalese people. Within these 25 years of Bhanituna movement, the Nepal Sambat celebration has seen a global recognition. We have received news of Nepal Sambat being celebrated in faraway places such as London, The Netherlands, Hong Kong, Japan, Washington DC, California, Texas and Oregon. The founder of this Sambat, Shankhadhar Sakhwa, was honored for the establishment of such amazing era.

Lastly, we would like to extend our apologies for the much delay between current issue and past issue and thanks every one of their patience and constant support. Our thanks also go to Suva Shakya, Unesh Shrestha for typing the Devnagari materials. We invite everyone to keep submitting their papers on Newah heritage so that Newāh Vijñāna can continue to grow. The valuable comments, suggestions and submission on relevant topics are the glue that extends the life span of this journal. Like a metamorphosis of seasons, we are hoping that the Newah community will continue to evolve for the better. Thank you for your support.
Typical Newah Bhoye (Feast)
Photo Courtesy of Raja and Sunita Shrestha, Portland Oregon
## English

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Drasha@aol.com
The Challenges of Multilingualism in Nepal

Tej R. Kansakar
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Introduction

This paper seeks to provide an overview of the complex linguistic and ethnic diversity of Nepal and the various problems that arise from this situation. It will focus on three aspects of multilingualism in Nepal, namely the distribution of dominant and minority languages, language contact and language use, and language endangerment due to rapid decline and extinction of languages spoken by minority groups. The paper will illustrate these problems with data on the demography of speakers, lexical borrowings and language functions in a multilingual setting.

1. Aspects of Multilingualism in Nepal

1.1 Linguistic Diversity

Like many mountainous countries, Nepal is a country of great linguistic and cultural diversity. The extent of this diversity can be seen in the large number of languages spoken by over 60 ethnic groups. There are no reliable sources on just how many languages and dialects are in active use in the country, while the estimates of linguists and scholars, both native and foreign, have ranged from 56 to 130 languages: see Malla (1989): 56 languages; Toba (1992): 70 languages; B. Grimes (1991): 104 languages; Noonan (2000): 130 languages. The official report of the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS), His Majesty's Government 1991 had recorded 32 languages and the 'Other' category of unnamed languages which alone consists of half a million speakers. The most recent census data of 2001 records a dramatic increase in the number of languages from 32 to 93, and these languages are the representatives of four great language families, namely Tibeto-Burman, Indo-Aryan, Austro-Asiatic and Dravidian, together with two controversial language isolates: Badi and Kusunda. The CBS enumerations, however, may not be reliable as language groups are generalized as a single language, e.g. the Rai/Kiranti languages of which Hanson (1991) cites 47 distinct language names. See Table 1 on Languages of Nepal where I list over 100 languages and dialects. The one important aspect of the demography of language users is that the Sino-Tibetan family has a large number of languages but few speakers, while the Indo-Aryan is characterized by few languages with a large number of native speakers.

Many Nepalese languages are also poorly documented and linguistic descriptions in the form of grammars, dictionaries and written texts are available only on a few languages that have written scripts. It is quite possible that surveys in other parts of the country may provide information on hitherto unknown languages and dialects. Although Nepal is a small country of less than 142 thousand square kilometers, there is thus immense scope for research on linguistic, social, cultural and ethnic diversity prevailing in the country.

1.2 Language contact and Bilingualism

When people speaking different languages come into contact, their languages converge and influence each other. Such convergences take place through increasing migrations and development of basic infrastructure in communication systems such as roads, air services, and electronic media which serve to bring people together. The growth of social, cultural and commercial contacts in turn have encouraged linguistic influences on, for example, Newar from Indo-Aryan (IA) and other Tibeto-Burman (T-B) languages of Nepal. Mutual influences of this kind lead to lexical and structural borrowings and promote bilingualism or multilingualism within changing social relationships. For example, it is very rare to find mono-lingual Newar speakers today. Borrowings itself may take various forms, as can be seen in Table 2a and 2b where we notice various forms of loan words, such as (i) direct
borrowings with some modification in pronunciation (e.g. lamphā for lamp', phāram for 'form'); (ii) changes in the morphological structure of words (e.g. grahāk > gahā; 'client, customer'; jyoti > jati > ja: 'light'); (iii) compound words or inflected forms of nouns and verbs that are partly native and partly borrowed (e.g. syā-parī 'meat puree', momo-cā 'a small variety of momo', pāthyā-saphu: 'textbook'); Classical Newar: raksā-rape 'to protect, preserve', danda-rape 'to punish'.

In Nepal where there is opposition between dominant vs. minority languages, it is important to recognize the increasing language shift from indigenous / ancestral languages to the official language Nepali. The use of Nepali for educational, commercial and professional purposes, creative writing, print and electronic media has promoted rapid spread of bilingualism. This has also coincided with the declining trend in the number of speakers of minority languages who constitute about 49% of the total population in Nepal. The present tendency to disfavor the use of the minority language has produced a growing number of unstable bilinguals whose competence in the two languages is clearly unequal. Table 3a below is extracted from the Census Report of 1991 which for the first time provided data on ethnic groups and mother-tongue speakers separately. This table records an alarming decline in the number of active speakers. Of particular concern are languages like Maghi (decline by 79.4 %), Magar (67.8 %), Danuwar (53.2 %), Gurung (49.2 %), Darai (39.3 %), Newar (33.7 %), Chepang (31.5 %). This report, however, left several endangered languages such as Hayu, Dura, Kusunda, Rautya, and Dumi unspecified by name or number of remaining speakers. These figures can be compared with the 2001 Census Report which shows a dramatic increase in the number of languages spoken in the country from 36 to 93, thanks to the assistance of the linguists and language scholars of Tribhuvan University in the enumeration and classification of the country’s languages and dialects. The 2001 statistics however continue to record a declining trend in the number of speakers of many minority languages which indicate obvious signs of language decay and language loss, as can be seen in Table 3b. These composite figures point to a disproportionate rise in bilingualism in many parts of the country among several ethnic minorities. According to the Census Report of 1991, Nepali is used as a second language by over 18 % (3,347,261) of the total population as compared to 13.3 % reported in the 1952/54 Census Report. The 2001 Census Report estimates that 0.12 % of the population speaks Newar as a second language, while Nepali claimed 86.6 % of all with second language. The percentage of bilinguals in the other languages is much lower.

1.3 Language Policy and Language Development

In my earlier papers on the language situation and language planning in Nepal (Kansakar 1996 a,b) I referred to the absence of any documented language policy and the government’s failure to implement any consistent program for the preservation and development of the country’s languages. The only government-sponsored initiative concerning the languages of Nepal was the formation of a National Languages Policy Recommendation Commission, which compiled vital information and data on the language situation in Nepal, and made a number of significant recommendations for the preservation and development of the country’s minority languages in particular. Among the 58 recommendations made under various headings, the following can be identified as the crucial ones:

1. To conduct a comprehensive linguistic survey of Nepal in order to identify and determine the actual number of languages spoken in the country.
2. To promote the languages of the country through codification and linguistic descriptions, and to develop the uses of these languages in education, administration and as vehicles of mass communication. This task will include the development of scripts for the languages that have no written traditions.
3. To identify the endangered languages and take steps on a priority basis to document, preserve and develop languages that are on the verge of extinction.
4. To promote monolingual or bilingual education in the mother tongue and/or Nepali on the basis of the ethnic composition of students in particular areas. This implies that all children have the right to receive primary education either in the mother tongue, mother tongue with Nepali, or Nepali alone.
5. His Majesty’s Government to approve and support those primary schools in the mother tongue which have been established by the local people.
6. To establish a separate administrative unit under the CTSDC of the Ministry of Education to develop curriculum, implement and promote mother tongue education.

to implement any of the recommendations. The various Constitutions in the past had designated Nepali as a national language in view of its status as a lingua franca among diverse linguistic communities and its role in the national life of the country. While no one has disputed the status of Nepali as an official national language, it was abundantly clear that the policy of His Majesty’s Government was to promote only the use of Nepali in education, administration, publication, and the media. Only two Nepalese languages, Maithili and Newar, were introduced as optional/elective subjects in the school and higher education curricula. This dominant language policy of the government has been questioned and resisted in recent years. The national referendum in 1979 raised the demand for assigning functional roles to various native languages so that each ethnic group could preserve and strengthen their linguistic and cultural identity. Following the restoration of democracy in 1990, the new Constitution recognized all indigenous languages of Nepal as “national languages” and guaranteed each community the right to preserve and promote its language, script and culture. The Constitution also asserts the fundamental right of each community to operate schools up to the primary level in its own mother tongue for imparting education to its children. Although some language groups such as Tibetan, Newar, Magar and Limbu have developed primary level materials in the mother tongue, this is a remote possibility for most minority languages which lack functional script or written literature. In the absence of official commitment and coordination from the government, programs of literacy in the mother tongue cannot be implemented for most national languages. The prevailing low rate of literacy especially among the minority groups remains a major challenge to Nepal’s development efforts and the growth of its socio-political infrastructure.

2. Language functions and Language Use

A large number of unwritten languages in Nepal are poorly developed in form and usage. Most of these languages have no literature or descriptive materials like grammars, dictionaries and teaching materials. There is therefore a very urgent need to develop the functional uses of minority languages (or language varieties) in written and spoken discourse, including literacy programs and mass media (radio/TV or publications) to upgrade the status of a language, both socially and politically. In the multilingual situations that prevail in many parts of the country, diglossia or the varieties of the same language in the form of social or regional dialects is a common phenomenon. In each of these dialect clusters, the variety that is used by a large proportion of speakers for socio-cultural and professional purposes is often recognized as the standard language. A language also becomes standardized through extensions of use in written literature, education (literacy, school, and higher education), linguistic descriptions (dictionaries, grammars), print and electronic media.

One important aspect of language contact is the specialization of function of one language or the other. Which language is appropriate or desirable in which situations may reveal interesting details about the sociology of each language for a particular speaker or group of speakers. Table 4 is a summary of the uses of various languages by an average educated Newar person in Nepal:

1. Everyone at home speaks only Newar: e.g. in gathering of family members and relatives on occasions such as festivals, life cycle rituals such as annaprásana, bratabandha, budhha janko, etc.
2. Use of Newar at home only with peers (husband-wife), but Nepali or English with children.
3. Some Newar but more Nepali on social occasions such as marriage or birthday parties where the guests include many non-Newars.
4. In academic or professional life, Newar is hardly used as a medium of discourse. Nepali and English are used predominantly in meetings, seminars, conferences, lectures and speeches. In school education, Nepali is the primary medium of instruction in the classroom and as a communicative medium outside the class. At the higher education levels, however, there is more use of English than Nepali.
5. Nepali is used exclusively in government offices, Nepalese Banks, NGO offices, corporations, libraries and private agencies.
6. In market places one can hear more Nepali than Newar. and increasingly Hindi due to influx of Hindi-speaking traders and workmen from southern Nepal and India.
7. Newar speakers today are exposed to a good deal of print and electronic media where Nepali and English dominate over Newar and Hindi.
8. Newar is still used widely as a written language in creative literature and personal correspondence, but official reports and letters to non-Newar are mainly in Nepali or English.
9. The Newars use Sanskrit to say their prayers, and they listen to the Vajrācārya priest recite the Buddhist sutras in Sanskrit without understanding their meaning.

Points of interest in Table 4:
1. An educated Newar speaks Nepali as much as or more than his mother-tongue.
2. She uses more English than either Newar or Nepali in academic or technical professions.
3. She has more options for use of Nepali than Newar, i.e. there are far more language functions for his communicative needs in Nepali.
4. When there are options for Newar or English, English takes priority in many social situations.
5. She has increasing exposure to Hindi due to political discourse, Hindi films and newscasts, trade and commerce with India, the influx of Indian tourists and Hindi-speaking traders and laborers especially in the Kathmandu Valley. As a result, there are many Nepalese, including Newars, who speak Hindi fluently today.
6. The use of Sanskrit is confined to recitation of sacred texts by a Vajracarya priest during religious rituals and daily prayers. The Newars of the younger generation do not say their daily prayers in Sanskrit any more.

It is thus clear from the above observations that today's Newar speakers are in general fairly versatile in the use of various national and foreign languages which defines the range of language functions they control and the extent or frequency of their contact with other languages. This, however, is only a test case involving the Newar community of Kathmandu Valley, and there will obviously be a good deal of variations and different sets of priorities in the functional uses of various languages.

3. Language Endangerment

3.1 Causes and Processes of Language Decline

As noted in 1.2 above, a large number of minority languages in Nepal have recorded declining active speakers. The present estimate is that more than three dozen of the languages in Table 1 are spoken by more than 5,000 people. There are several factors which may account for this situation among many language communities:

(a) The adults fluent in Nepali increase intra-ethnic communication in this official language. As younger people do not learn their ancestral language, inter-communication in the language also shows a corresponding decline.
(b) Proficiency in Nepali is essential for educational development, official work and job prospects.
(c) Most linguistic communities are small in size. There is extensive bilingualism, poverty and lack of government support for minority languages. The prospects for survival of most national languages therefore are very bleak. The statistics given in Tables 3a and 3b indicate the decline in the percentage of ethnic populations who continue to speak their ancestral language. These statistics are in many ways alarming due to their rapid decline and the severely endangered status of several of these languages.
(d) There is large-scale migration of young people leaving their villages for cities to find work.
(e) An increasing number of marriages take place outside their ethnic or caste affiliations.
(f) The connection between language and ethnicity is not as strong as in many parts of the world. One remains a Majhi, Gurung or Hayu even when one ceases to speak one's ancestral language. Traditional marriage patterns and the more-or-less officially sanctioned caste system support this situation.

All these factors have obviously contributed to the rapid degeneration and possible extinction of many minority languages in the foreseeable future. For example, the 2001 Census Report records some 24 languages which have less than 500 speakers. These include some of the languages which have been enumerated for the first time, namely Raute (518 speakers), Baram / Brahmo (342), Kusunda (87), Koche (54), Kagate (10), Kuki (9), Chintang (8), Lhomi (4), etc. The one classic case is that of Kusunda which has become a symbol of language endangerment in Nepal. This controversial language isolate was believed by many to have been extinct or survived by only two speakers living a nomadic life in the Mid-Western forest areas of Rapti. The 2001 Census Report then came up with a surprising discovery of 164 Kusunda people with 87 active speakers. If these indeed are authentic figures, the language and its speakers deserve to be investigated thoroughly under a separate research project.

3.2 Implications of language loss / extinction

(a) As referred to above, a vast majority of Nepalese languages are threatened and most of these languages are neither described nor documented. For about 65 of the languages in Table 1 there are simple word lists, and only a few have dictionaries and grammatical descriptions of any sort. The remaining languages have no documentation whatsoever. Hale et.al (1992), Robins & Uihlenbeck (1991), Noonan (1999) have highlighted the need for awareness and research on endangered languages before they become extinct.
(b) Language death leads to a loss of cultural and intellectual diversity in today's increasingly mono-cultural world. There is thus an inevitable loss of culturally-based knowledge (such as creation myths, medicinal lore, arts and crafts etc).

(c) Language endangerment / extinction also leads to loss of information about the nature of language and cognition which are essential for advancement of linguistic theory and typological studies.

(d) There is, for instance, considerable debate among Sino-Tibetan scholars concerning the sub-grouping of languages within the family. The resolution of these debates will depend on the presence of solid descriptive materials. For example, do we reconstruct verb agreement morphology for Proto Tibeto-Burman or tone for Proto Sino-Tibetan? Such questions cannot be answered without good descriptive materials.

(e) Nepal is situated at the geographical convergence of a number of important language families representing different typologies or clusters of linguistic features. Matisoff (1973) designated the Himalayan region as Indo-spheric (Indic) and Sino-spheric (Sinic), but the case for Nepal is a bit more complicated as it incorporates Austro-Asiatic / Munda and Dravidian (Ur-Himalayan) families as well.

(f) This situation results in great typological diversity for so small an area (142 thousand sq. kilometers). A few of the more prominent isoglosses (the distribution of certain linguistic features in a given geographical area), which run throughout the length and breadth of the country, are as follows:

**Phonological**

1. Presence vs absence of retroflex consonants: T. TH. D. DH vs t. th. d. dh
2. Presence vs. absence of tone systems: Lexical tone in Thakali: yāna = to count; yānā = to sneeze
3. Presence vs absence of distinctive murmur / breathiness: b d g l m n bh dh gh lh mh nh
4. Two-way vs three-way glottal timing contrasts: voicing, aspiration / breathiness, glottal stop

**Morphological**

2. Presence vs absence of complex verb agreement:

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Newar: wan- ‘to go’
NPs: Post
Conj: wan-e wan-ā
Disj: wan-i wan-ā

3. Analytic vs. inflectional reflexive:

Newar: Nom that ‘oneself’
Ag-1-Ab that-ma-ā
Com that-yā-ke
Dat that-yā-ta
Gen that-yā

4. Presence vs. absence of conjunct/disjunct systems:
Tibetan, Newar vs Rai / Kiranti
5. Mixed prefixing / suffixing systems vs wholly or predominantly suffixing systems:
Limbu: 2s-ke-verb-ā vs Central Himalayan langs:
2de-verb-si Newar, Chepang, Magar, Raute.
2p ken-verb-si Rajhi

**Syntactic**

1. Converbial constructions vs verb serialization:
Nepali: ga-era lāru-nu ‘go and bring’
gari-di-nu ‘do give-inf’
Newar: wan-ā ka-yā ha-ti ‘go-take-bring’
2. Use of nominalizations vs participles or relative clauses for clausal modification of nouns:
Nepali: ga-ye ko barsa ‘the year that is past’
Newar: wa-a saphur-bil-a ‘He gave a book’
saphur-bu:nu-ha ‘The one who gave the book’
3. Consistently ergative syntax vs aspectually split ergative syntax vs accusative syntax:
Newar: khicas sit-a ‘The dog died’
wa-ā khicas syat-a ‘She killed the dog’
4. Presence vs absence of ‘dative subject’ constructions:
Newar: wa-yā-ta dhee-bā māl-a ‘She needs money’
consistent language policy
complex one requires the
following rules: NCP - Nepali Linguistics

5. Presence vs absence of honorific verb and noun stems:

Newar: cha wā 'You come!'
(Non-honorific)
chi jhāsā 'Please come!'
(Honorific)
cha:pī/ chas-polā bijyā-hū (High Honorific)

6. Presence vs absence of numeral classifiers:

Newar: cha-gu saphu: 'one object book'
cha-mha manu: 'one animate person'
cha-khā chē 'one structure house'
ni-ju-lēkā 'two pairs of shoes'
sva-pā demā 'three plates'
pye-pu cvasā 'four pens'
nyā-phva svā 'five flowers'

4. Conclusion

The language situation in this country being a very complex one requires the government to formulate a consistent language policy and planning based on all available linguistic data and information. It will also be necessary for a government / non-government agency or the University to conduct specific field research on the following areas:

(a) What is the official policy on Nepali and the other national languages of Nepal? What is the status of a foreign language such as English? We need reliable information to these questions.

(b) We also need statistical data on the use of languages in education, administration, press and publications (including curriculum and educational materials, books and journalistic writings), internal and external trade and commerce, and research. In other words, which languages are being used for these purposes, to what extent are they used, and where are they used?

(c) It might also be very revealing to conduct area-wise surveys of the intelligibility ratings between different languages and dialects to discover the nature of bilingualism in each area in terms of mutual comprehension and extent of use, and what advantages or disadvantages are perceived by a bilingual person.

(d) It is widely recognized that the study of how languages change can provide valuable insights into social and cultural changes. Similarly, the study of the impact of language on social, political and educational fields can also provide essential input to language policy and its implementation. The Report of the National Languages Policy Recommendation Commission, referred to above, is a good beginning to prepare groundwork for sociolinguistic research which can be of immense benefit to government planners, education officers and administrators who need to formulate various policies on management of human resources.

References


Summer Institute of Linguistics


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### Appendices

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<td>Camling/Rodong</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chulung</td>
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<tr>
<td>Haya/Wayu/Wayo</td>
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<tr>
<td>Koi/Koyu</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lohorong</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nacering</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunuwar</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yaksha</td>
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<tr>
<td>Magar</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Newar ‘dialects’</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Bhaktapur</td>
<td>Girit</td>
<td>Dolakha</td>
<td>Kathmandu-Patan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pahari</td>
<td>Phri</td>
<td>Raji</td>
<td>Rangkas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Raute</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Tamangic</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Chantyal</td>
<td>Gurung</td>
<td>Managba</td>
<td>Nar-phu</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tamang</td>
<td>Thakali</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Tibetan ‘dialects’</strong></td>
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<td>Dangar</td>
<td>Dolpa/Dolpo</td>
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<td>Humla</td>
<td>Bhotia/Dangali/ Ph oke</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lhasa Tibetan/Zang</td>
<td>Lhom</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tichurong</td>
<td>Zhar</td>
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<td><strong>Indo-European</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Abadhi/Awadh/Awadhi/Baiswari</td>
<td>Kojari</td>
<td>Bengali</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bote/Kushar</td>
<td>Danuwar</td>
<td>Darai</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindi</td>
<td>Kumbale/Kumal</td>
<td>Mathili</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marwar</td>
<td>Nepali/Gorkhali/Khas Kura</td>
<td>Rajnabansi/Tajpuri/Koce</td>
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<tr>
<td>Urdu</td>
<td></td>
<td>Kharia</td>
<td>Koruwa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Austro-Asiatic [Munda]</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Santhali/Sattar/Hor</td>
<td>Mundari</td>
<td>Kharia</td>
<td>Koruwa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dravidian</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kurux/Dhangar/Jhangar</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td><strong>Isolates</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Badi[?]</td>
<td>Kusunda</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Table 2a: Lexical borrowings in Newar from various source languages** (Kansakar N.S. 1119 / 1998-1999: 24-25)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source language</th>
<th>Newar forms</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nepali:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>numerals</td>
<td>ek, dui, tin etc</td>
<td>one, two three, etc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>days of the week</td>
<td>vihhaspalibar / bhibbar</td>
<td>Thursday, etc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>date, month, year</td>
<td>Phalgun sati gate 2058</td>
<td>7th Phalgun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>weights &amp; measures</td>
<td>pau, dharni &lt; Sanskrit</td>
<td>Vikram Sambat 2058</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mec, pāp, āsā, jāgir</td>
<td>mec, pāp, āsā, jāgir</td>
<td>chair, sin, hope, job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ghus. bhrastacar</td>
<td>ghus, bhrastacar</td>
<td>bribery, corruption</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rājdu, bhāg, annya</td>
<td>rājdu, bhāg, annya</td>
<td>ambassador, share, unjust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>phasad, āpadh</td>
<td>phasad, āpadh</td>
<td>difficulty, crisis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mantri, sāsad</td>
<td>mantri, sāsad</td>
<td>minister, parliament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anubhav, casmā</td>
<td>anubhav, casmā</td>
<td>experience, spectacles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ghadi, kaēci</td>
<td>ghadi, kaēci</td>
<td>watch, scissors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanskrit</td>
<td>Prakrit &lt; Sanskrit</td>
<td>Hindi &lt; Persian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>grāhāk</td>
<td>gāhā:</td>
<td>light</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>acārya</td>
<td>acā-ju</td>
<td>job, employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>palisthā</td>
<td>palthā</td>
<td>crowd, gathering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>svarga</td>
<td>sarga:</td>
<td>goods, merchandise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pāthyakram</td>
<td>pāthyakram</td>
<td>fine wheat flour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pāthya-pustak</td>
<td>pāthya-pahu:</td>
<td>small plate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pā:th, dharmasālā</td>
<td>pā:tha, dharmasālā</td>
<td>soldier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stri-purusa</td>
<td>ni-mha tipu:</td>
<td>week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tya:ga</td>
<td>tyā:ga</td>
<td>energy, strength, power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pascima</td>
<td>pachima</td>
<td>pair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yekānta</td>
<td>yekānta</td>
<td>job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>suwā:la</td>
<td>suwā:</td>
<td>goods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ghritam</td>
<td>ghya:</td>
<td>fine wheat flour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mahisa</td>
<td>mye:</td>
<td>small plate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gosthi</td>
<td>guthi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hansa</td>
<td>hāy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>svāsa</td>
<td>sasa:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>markata</td>
<td>māka:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dhupa</td>
<td>dhū</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>deva</td>
<td>dya:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>grāhāk</td>
<td>gāhā:</td>
<td>customer, client</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>acārya</td>
<td>acā-ju</td>
<td>priest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>palisthā</td>
<td>palthā</td>
<td>consecrate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>svarga</td>
<td>sarga:</td>
<td>sky, heaven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pāthyakram</td>
<td>pāthyakram</td>
<td>curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pāthya-pustak</td>
<td>pāthya-pahu:</td>
<td>text-book</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pā:th, dharmasālā</td>
<td>pā:tha, dharmasālā</td>
<td>lesson, charity house</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stri-purusa</td>
<td>ni-mha tipu:</td>
<td>husband &amp; wife, couple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tya:ga</td>
<td>tyā:ga</td>
<td>renunciation</td>
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<tr>
<td>pascima</td>
<td>pachima</td>
<td>solitary, alone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yekānta</td>
<td>yekānta</td>
<td>clarified butter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>suwā:la</td>
<td>suwā:</td>
<td>blessing, praise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ghritam</td>
<td>ghya:</td>
<td>buffalo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mahisa</td>
<td>mye:</td>
<td>group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gosthi</td>
<td>guthi</td>
<td>duck, goose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hansa</td>
<td>hāy</td>
<td>breath</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>svāsa</td>
<td>sasa:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>markata</td>
<td>māka:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dhupa</td>
<td>dhū</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>deva</td>
<td>dya:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jyoti &gt; jati</td>
<td>ja: (-la)</td>
<td>sound, voice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sora &gt; sola</td>
<td>sa: (-la)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>āgama &gt; āgam</td>
<td>āgā: (-ma)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kona &gt; kuna</td>
<td>kū: (-na)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jora &gt; jor</td>
<td>jva: (-la)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>karkataka &gt; kakali</td>
<td>ka:li</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jyoti &gt; jati</td>
<td>ja: (-la)</td>
<td>sound, voice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sora &gt; sola</td>
<td>sa: (-la)</td>
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<tr>
<td>āgama &gt; āgam</td>
<td>āgā: (-ma)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>kona &gt; kuna</td>
<td>kū: (-na)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jora &gt; jor</td>
<td>jva: (-la)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>karkataka &gt; kakali</td>
<td>ka:li</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Newāh Vijñāna-5  Kansakar, Tej R. / The Challenges of Multilingualism
It is obvious that the loans from English consist of words for which there are no equivalents in the Newar language since the majority of these words are of modern usage. However, Nepali continues to be the primary source language for borrowings in Newar, and the majority of these have native equivalents. This process has unfortunately replaced many Newar words, as can be seen in the examples given below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nepali</th>
<th>Newar equivalents</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kitāb</td>
<td>saphu:</td>
<td>book</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kalam</td>
<td>cvasa</td>
<td>pen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>khushi</td>
<td>layā</td>
<td>joy, happiness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cithi</td>
<td>pau</td>
<td>letter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>candramā</td>
<td>timila</td>
<td>moon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prasna</td>
<td>nhyasa.</td>
<td>question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>javāph</td>
<td>lisa:</td>
<td>answer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jahān / srimati</td>
<td>kalā:</td>
<td>wife</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jiu</td>
<td>mna</td>
<td>body</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jholā</td>
<td>mlica</td>
<td>bag</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>parivār</td>
<td>ja.</td>
<td>family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prakāsak</td>
<td>pikāka</td>
<td>publisher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>patrikā</td>
<td>cvasā munā</td>
<td>journal / magazine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bicār</td>
<td>dhāpu</td>
<td>idea, thought, opinion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pramāna</td>
<td>dasu</td>
<td>proof, evidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bībhīna</td>
<td>thithi</td>
<td>different, various</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sampādak</td>
<td>munāka</td>
<td>editor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>saphā-sughar</td>
<td>sucu-picu</td>
<td>neat and clean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sthāpna</td>
<td>palistha</td>
<td>establish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>samparka</td>
<td>svāpu</td>
<td>contact, connection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>akhērā</td>
<td>bukhā pau</td>
<td>newspaper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ascarya</td>
<td>aju cāye</td>
<td>to be surprised</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The borrowings in the opposite direction, however, are limited to only a few words:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source language</th>
<th>Newar</th>
<th>Nepali</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Newar</td>
<td>jyābha;</td>
<td>jyābal</td>
<td>tool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nepali</td>
<td>jyāsa (sala)</td>
<td>jyāsal</td>
<td>work place</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2b: Lexical borrowings in Newar from various source languages
Compound forms:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nepali</th>
<th>Borrowed forms</th>
<th>Newar</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nimtyāu-nu</td>
<td>nimtā yāye</td>
<td>bvo-e</td>
<td>to invite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kamāu-nu</td>
<td>kamay yāye</td>
<td>dhebā mun-e</td>
<td>to earn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>māt-nu</td>
<td>māte-juye</td>
<td>thvā kāye</td>
<td>to intoxicate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hep-nu</td>
<td>hepay yāye</td>
<td>hibāy cabāy</td>
<td>to humiliate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bhāsan gar-nu</td>
<td>bhāsan yāye</td>
<td>nvacu biye</td>
<td>to give a speech</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3a: Decline in active speakers of various Nepalese languages, Census Report 1991

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Languages</th>
<th>Caste/Ethnic group</th>
<th>Speakers</th>
<th>Decline</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Majhi</td>
<td>55,050</td>
<td>11,322</td>
<td>-43,728</td>
<td>79.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Magar</td>
<td>1,339,308</td>
<td>430,264</td>
<td>-909,044</td>
<td>67.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Danuwar</td>
<td>50,754</td>
<td>23,721</td>
<td>-27,033</td>
<td>53.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Gurung</td>
<td>449,189</td>
<td>227,918</td>
<td>-221,271</td>
<td>49.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Darai</td>
<td>10,759</td>
<td>6,520</td>
<td>-4,239</td>
<td>39.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Newari</td>
<td>1,041,090</td>
<td>690,007</td>
<td>-351,083</td>
<td>33.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Chepang</td>
<td>36,656</td>
<td>25,097</td>
<td>-11,559</td>
<td>31.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Tharu</td>
<td>1,194,224</td>
<td>993,388</td>
<td>-200,836</td>
<td>16.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Rai/Kirat</td>
<td>525,551</td>
<td>439,312</td>
<td>-86,239</td>
<td>16.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Limbu</td>
<td>297,186</td>
<td>254,088</td>
<td>-43,098</td>
<td>14.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Tamang</td>
<td>1,018,252</td>
<td>904,456</td>
<td>-113,796</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3b: Decline in active speakers of various Nepalese languages, Census Report 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Languages</th>
<th>Caste/Ethnic group</th>
<th>Speakers</th>
<th>Decline</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Majhi</td>
<td>72,614 (0.32)</td>
<td>21,841 (0.10)</td>
<td>-50,773</td>
<td>69.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Magar</td>
<td>1,622,421 (7.14)</td>
<td>770,116 (3.39)</td>
<td>-852,305</td>
<td>52.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Danuwar</td>
<td>53,229 (0.23)</td>
<td>31,849 (0.14)</td>
<td>-21,380</td>
<td>40.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Gurung</td>
<td>543,571 (2.39)</td>
<td>338,925 (1.49)</td>
<td>-204,646</td>
<td>37.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Darai</td>
<td>14,859 (0.07)</td>
<td>10,210 (0.04)</td>
<td>-4,649</td>
<td>31.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Newar</td>
<td>1,245,232 (5.48)</td>
<td>825,458 (3.63)</td>
<td>-419,774</td>
<td>33.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Chepang</td>
<td>52,237 (0.23)</td>
<td>36,807 (0.16)</td>
<td>-15430</td>
<td>29.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Tharu</td>
<td>1,622,421 (6.75)</td>
<td>1,331,546 (5.86)</td>
<td>-290,875</td>
<td>17.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Rai</td>
<td>635,151 (2.79)</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Limbu</td>
<td>359,379 (1.58)</td>
<td>333,633 (1.47)</td>
<td>-25,746</td>
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<td>11. Tamang</td>
<td>1,282,304 (5.64)</td>
<td>1,179,145 (5.19)</td>
<td>-83,159</td>
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<td>12. Hayu</td>
<td>1,821 (0.01)</td>
<td>1,743 (0.01)</td>
<td>-78</td>
<td>4.2</td>
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Table 4: The uses of various languages by an average educated Newar person. The numerals 1-4 indicate the order of priority in language use, i.e. 1 is the first choice with the highest priority and 4 is the fourth choice with the lowest priority. (Kansakar NS 1119 / 1998-99 : 26)

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<th>Hindi</th>
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<td>b. children</td>
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<td>2. Social occasions:</td>
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<td>a. festivals &amp; brata bandha</td>
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<td>7. Written language:</td>
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<td>8. Prayers &amp; religious rituals</td>
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Just published...

For centuries, merchants of Kathmandu have traveled to Lhasa to conduct trade. Their epic journeys over the Himalaya and across the Tibetan Plateau by mule caravan have become the stuff of folklore. Their contributions to the sacred art of Nepal and Tibet have been enshrined in Himalayan cultural history. However, the full story of the Lhasa Newars is still not well known. Caravan to Lhasa is an enthralling account of the life and times of these adventurer merchants.

Title: Caravan to Lhasa
Author: Kamal Tuladhar
Publisher: Tuladhar Family, Kathmandu, Nepal, 2004
Price in Nepal: Rs. 150
Available at: Himalayan Book Centre, Bag Bazaar, Kathmandu
The Karmacharyas of Bhaktapur Tradition in Nepal

Leiko Coyle
Nityananda Institute
Portland, Oregon, USA

I: Introduction to the Karmacharyas

The ancient city of Bhaktapur, located eight miles east of Kathmandu, holds great importance in the history of Nepal and its people. Home to the Newars, the indigenous people of the valley, Bhaktapur fostered some of Nepal’s most significant cultural and religious traditions. For centuries, Bhaktapur served as the Nepalese capital and the seat of the royal palace. Under the rule of the Malla kings from the 12th to the 16th century, Bhaktapur and the Newars developed a flourishing social, political and cultural system that influenced Nepal and its people for centuries thereafter. One of the main features of the Malla reign was the ascendancy of a caste of royal tantric priests called Karmacharyas.

The Newars created the royal city of Bhaktapur based on the model of a tantric mandala. Much like a cosmic map of the region, the mandala represents a type of idyllic blueprint for the city. Robert I. Levy, author of Mesocosm: Hinduism and the Organization of a Traditional Newar City in Nepal and an expert in the field of Nepalese history, describes the notion of a mandala as “a pervasive South Asian representation of a boundary and its contained area within which “ritual” power and order is held and concentrated” (Levy, 1990:153). At a time when the kings ruled with a religious mandate, Bhaktapur symbolized the ultimate fusion of secular power and spiritual devotion.

To ensure the protection and prosperity of the kingdom, the ruling kings in Bhaktapur employed the Karmacharyas to perform elaborate devotional rituals to the local deities. Since people believed that the land and its inhabitants rested in the hands of the gods, ritual worship of these deities was essential for the livelihood of the kingdom. For centuries, the kings held the Karmacharyas in high esteem for their power and knowledge of esoteric goddess-based rituals. Their practices and ritual tradition had an important social, political and cultural impact on the development of Nepal as a result of their association with the royal temples. However, with the fall of the Malla dynasty in the 18th century, the Karmacharyas lost their position in the royal court and with it their status in society.

Today, most Nepalese people have almost entirely forgotten the influence of the Karmacharyas. Despite the Karmacharya’s pivotal role in the development of Nepalese culture, little documentation survives of the history of the group and the impact of their practices. Under the rule of the Gorkhas from the eighteenth century, the kings tried to promote national identity based on a new concept of unity. The Newars were the main target of this subjugation. The Karmacharyas, emblems of Newar culture, lost their standing in the new social system.

In an effort to shed light on the ancient tradition of karmacharya tantric practice, Tribhuvan University in Kathmandu is leading a research project to study the Karmacharyas and document their impact on Nepalese social development.

The ethnographic-based portion of the study will follow a survey of written materials. This includes field observation, interaction and interviews with local
Karmacharyas living in Bhaktapur. Through extensive observation and participation in ceremonial events, committee members conduct an analysis of ritual practices, with the aid of photographic and video documentation. Lastly, the researchers produce a report of findings based on the assembled data. The outline for a list of chapters is as follows:

- Historical Background
- Origin and Development of Shaivism and Shaktism
- Emergence and Classification of the Karmacharyas
- Relation with Shakti Goddess Cult
- Karmacharyas and Tantrism
- Secular Role of Karmacharyas
- Conclusion

The Research

I first heard about the karmacharya research project in 2001 during a five-month stay in Nepal, where I had been studying ancient Buddhist and Hindu religious practices around the region. Shortly thereafter, the University invited me to participate in the project as an apprentice researcher. As an undergraduate student of anthropology, my research qualifications were rudimentary. However, having spent two of the last four years in Kathmandu studying the customs and social behavior of the Nepalese people, I had already developed a sense of and deep appreciation for Nepalese culture. While my knowledge about the Karmacharyas was lacking, my experiences of daily life in Nepal and interest in the religious traditions at the core of that life gave me a solid ground on which to build. Despite having little training in ethnographic fieldwork, I had substantial experience living in Nepal. This project provided an opportunity to focus my experiences and put them in an anthropological framework. The committee of researchers generously allowed me to put my experience to work by taking part in such a rare and worthy project.

As a member of the research team, I resided from March-June 2002 in the Kathmandu Valley doing fieldwork on Karmacharyas living in Bhaktapur. In preparation for the project, I read numerous texts on Nepal and its religious traditions, including Robert I. Levy’s Mesocosm, the preeminent work on Hinduism among the Newars. I attended committee meetings and was present at two karmacharya ritual ceremonies. I explored Bhaktapur visiting important karmacharya temples, which I photographed when appropriate. I interviewed different members of the committee. Throughout, I kept a journal of my experiences, observations and information relevant to the project.

Due to finances and schooling commitments I remained in Kathmandu for only four out of the seventeen months of research (I hope to return sometime before the end of the project). As a result, my findings are somewhat inconclusive in relation to the ultimate goal of the research project. There are still many unanswered questions and mysteries surrounding the Karmacharyas. However, it is my intention in this paper to provide some important insights into the Karmacharyas and their tradition by reflecting on my personal experiences among them.

My status as a foreign woman had both advantages and disadvantages to my work as a researcher. As the only female in an all-male committee, my presence was somewhat awkward and obvious. In a group of older mostly Asian males, my comments and questions were often received with mixed reactions. Even in the 21st century, most Nepalese men view woman as subordinate. Because opinionated and curious women are not commonplace in Nepal, it often seemed inappropriate to speak out, even with a question. However, this factor also worked in my favor by allowing me to focus on the research process within the cultural context of its constituents. As an outsider, I was able to observe the process of conducting a research project and the dynamics of committee members with some degree of detachment. While my peripheral position did not involve any direct participation in the committee’s decision making process, it did allow me to see from a female western viewpoint, the limitations and biases that arise in an all-male Asian system and how they might influence the outcome of the project.

Generally, Nepalese tend to avoid direct confrontation. Similarly, in Nepalese culture one avoids directness when communicating. Silence in the company of others is more common than a constant
flow of conversation. Unlike the West, where directness and confrontation are customary, Nepalese tend to agree with others, despite one’s true feelings. As a result, I observed numerous occasions where committee members would agree to one thing and then do something entirely different, or claim to have done something which they never did. More often than not, this type of behavior leads to unnecessary misunderstandings and delays in the expedition of tasks. For an American, this can be quite exasperating. Nonetheless, it allowed me to understand the cultural context in which the committee functions and the extent to which that context impacts the overall perspective of the research.

Two personal reasons motivated me to take part in this project. Firstly, I have a deep love of and appreciation for Nepal and its people. With constant pressure from the Indians in the South and the Chinese to the North, the Nepalese have maintained a distinct culture rich in spirituality and unique in character. It is a land where Hinduism and Buddhism exist side by side, in many cases overlapping and flowing into one another. The terrain, with the majestic Himalayan range encompassing a valley of terraced rice fields and pastures stretching as far as the eye can see provide an awe-inspiring sight. Due largely to the ancient religious traditions that continue to function at the core of the Nepalese social system, Nepal maintains a living connection to the past, despite its industrial developments of recent years. Daily worship still occurs at temples built centuries ago and worship and prayer continue to be defining features of Nepalese life.

The karmacharya tradition, one of the earliest and most influential religious traditions of Nepal have developed into a part of the fabric of modern day Nepalese faith. As a result, it is important to bring recognition and honor to the Karmacharyas and their tradition as a fundamental root of Nepalese culture. This paper attempts to bring a different perspective to the research process. Although this work mainly focuses on the history and tradition of the Karmacharyas, I hope to provide a sense of the overall process through which I came to know about the Karmacharyas and their practices. Professor Douglas Raybeck describes ethnography as “a process of becoming familiar with the uneven cultural terrain that lies below the seeming placidity of the surface” (2000:17). As a student of anthropology, I strive constantly to be aware of and reflect on my own perspectives, biases and ideals which impact my observations and shape the data I collect. The following pages illustrate my personal experience with the Karmacharyas as well as the context in which those experiences took place. Although incomplete, my findings lie on a foundation upon which I hope to build a deeper understanding of the Karmacharyas and of Nepalese culture in the future. In this way, I hope to share something of the beauty and uniqueness of Nepal with the rest of the world.

II: Historical Background of Bhaktapur, the Newars, & the Karmacharyas

The country of Nepal situated between India to the south and China’s Tibet to the north, is a unique and important ancient site in the history of the Asian continent. With drastic geographic diversity, Nepal is home to low-lying jungles, vast plains and enormous mountainous ranges. Among these regions, Kathmandu Valley holds the highest concentration of people, including the indigenous population of Newars. The Newars are the original inhabitants of the Kathmandu Valley and the founders of what is known today as Nepali culture. From around the 1st or 2nd century A.D., a political system was introduced into Nepal by a North Indian king and his ruling court, the Licchavis. While Sanskrit was the language of the Indian rulers, it was limited primarily to ceremonial and traditional arenas. Among locals Nepal Bhasha, the language of the Newars, was most commonly used in everyday life. While Sanskrit and Indian Bhasha, the language of the Newars, was most commonly used at a court level, Newar culture flourished among the people of the valley.

During this period and for the next several decades, Newar culture in Kathmandu Valley prospered. The rich valley soil and complex system of irrigation called “terracing” allowed for efficient and successful farming. Nepal’s geographic location provided a substantial trade market to emerge through the transportation and taxing of goods between India and
In the 9th century, the Licchavi dynasty fell, resulting in nearly 4 decades of political upheaval. Although historical documentation from this period is scarce, what little exists suggests numerous battles and political chaos. A powerful Muslim invasion in 1349 wreaked havoc on the valley. However, after this invasion there emerged a new Hindu dynasty under the Mallas which ruled Nepal until the early 1800s. In 1382, Jayasthiti Malla took power as the supreme ruler of Nepal. Historians credit Malla with bringing peace and stability to the chaotic valley: “He curbed the activities of feudal lords, brought the component units of the kingdom into submission, and with a strong hand, restored order” (Levy 1990:42). Even today, Nepalese remember Jayasthiti as one of the great leaders in the country’s history.

Jayasthiti Malla established Bhaktapur as the capital city of Nepal, which quickly grew into the “metropolis of the Malla dynasty and the nerve-center of its culture and civilization” (Levy 1990:40). Malla instituted laws regarding property and housing, as well as caste regulations, which largely radiated out from Bhaktapur to the rest of the valley. Most importantly, Malla promoted Hinduism in all aspects of his rule. He erected numerous Hindu temples the most important of which, the Taleju temple, remains today. This shrine to the goddess Taleju, the tantric manifestation of Durga, is considered the home of the lineage goddess of the Malla kings. As a Tantric goddess, Taleju is classified as a dangerous goddess who exists independent of other deities, namely the supreme Hindu god Siva. In most tantric traditions, deities are believed to possess both wrathful and benevolent qualities. Levy writes that Taleju represents “a version of the fully manifest warrior goddess” (1990:250). As a warrior, Taleju encompasses the fierce attributes necessary to protect the kingdom and its citizens.

The Mallas believed that in her most powerful and secret form as Siddhilakshmi, the goddess transmitted her power directly to the king. Therefore, only the king and a small number of initiated priests are allowed to see her private form. Outsiders and local people were made to worship various lesser forms of the goddess, represented by abstract images such as a yantra, a design depicting her attributes, or a metal pouring vessel called a kalash.

Private worship of the goddess was the means by which the king ensured the strength and longevity of his reign. Further, “it was apparently the right of each successor Malla king to receive from his predecessor the esoteric mantra (sacred word) for the control of the Taleju” (Slussers 1982:319). To carry out esoteric goddess worship, the king employed or enlisted Karmacharyas or Tantric priests, to perform ritual ceremonies or pujas to evoke the grace of the goddess in order to ensure the protection and prosperity of the kingdom. Although the king was considered a direct descendent of the goddess and garnered the most respect, the Karmacharyas, the king’s gurus, were very highly regarded as they were believed to have direct contact with the goddess. During the Malla reign, the Karmacharyas were instrumental in carrying out the esoteric innermost rituals for the King in the Taleju temple.

Even today, under a new kingdom, the goddess Taleju remains synonymous with royal power and Nepal’s past glory. She is a “powerful symbolic representation of traditional Newar political forms and forces, one that persists alongside of the new symbols and realities of modern politics” (Levy 1990:234).

Doctor Purushottam Shrestha, an expert in the field of Newar studies and a native of Bhaktapur, explained to me in an interview that during the Malla kingdom, three principal priests conducted Taleju ritual ceremonies: a Karmacharya performed rituals, a Brahman recited Vedic chants, and a Joshi advised the king on astrological subjects (Shrestha 2002). Together, the three priests acted as ritual liaisons between the king and the goddess.

As priests to the royal court and guardians of the temple goddess, the Karmacharyas and their tradition were highly revered. However, unlike the Brahmins or Joshis who acted more as consultants, the Karmacharyas actually performed the rituals. They were also distinguished from their religious peers, in that their practices did not derive from Vedism. The Karmacharya rituals originated in Tantrism and were known only by initiated members. In this way, the Karmacharyas were a unique and crucial component in the kingdom. The kings relied on the Karmacharyas to perform rituals unknown to any other group or tradition. Unlike Brahman rituals based on the Indian Vedas, karmacharya rituals were strongly rooted in Newar culture. During the Malla dynasty, this Newar identity symbolized the Karmacharya ties with the land and the original people of Nepal. In later periods, these ties to Newar culture caused the downfall of karmacharya status as royal priests and as esteemed members of society. With the degeneration of Newar culture following the fall of the Malla dynasty in the 18th century, the Karmacharyas found themselves under a new kingdom that rejected their tradition and denounced their Newar heritage.
By the latter part of the 18th century, a series of brutal attacks lead by Prthviranarayana Saha from Western Nepal resulted in the fall of the Malla dynasty. Under a new line of Gorkhali kings, Nepal underwent a drastic transformation in which an effort to promote a Nepalese national identity stunted the expansion of Newar culture. A movement to “promote Nepali and suppress Newari” (Gellner/Quigley, 1999:11) took hold and Newars lost their position among the royal court and society as a whole. As Newars, the Karmacharyas, once the highest ranked priests in the valley, fell to a status below most other religious groups. While they continued to perform pujas for local clients and for the city of Bhaktapur, they lost access to the royal court. Over time, the karmacharya tantric practices and the tradition from which they originated have lost importance in the larger social system of Nepalese culture. As a result, ancient ritual texts are decaying from accumulated mold and dust. Few people demand karmacharya rituals and many Karmacharyas have pursued other occupations to provide for their families. What was once a vital and fundamental part of the lives of the people of Nepal now faces extinction.

The Karmacharyas who remain in Bhaktapur today provide the only living link to ancient rituals of the Newars. For that reason, an effort to preserve karmacharya texts is paramount. Thru access to remaining ritual texts, the Karmacharyas can continue to practice the rituals of their ancestors, ensuring the longevity of their tradition for generations to come. Ultimately, the preservation of texts is key to restoring the honor and recognition they deserve for their contributions to the development of Nepalese culture.

III: Surendravir and the Karmacharyas in modern day Bhaktapur:

The primary difference between Karmacharyas of today versus those of the Malla period is that the king no longer employs them. In modern day Nepal local people, rather than royals, hire Karmacharyas to perform pujas for a variety of reasons, including rites of passages, astrological maladies, protection from illness and disease, and other life events. The pujas can last anywhere from a few hours to a number of days if necessary. Karmacharyas charge a fee for each puja, usually about $20 US, which by Nepalese standards is considered a substantial sum. However, because the demand for karmacharya pujas is not great, the high fee merely compensates for the irregular and infrequent demand. Surendravir Karmacharya is one of the few remaining tantric priests presently residing in Bhaktapur. Although he descends from a long lineage of Karmacharyas and is trained in their tradition, he maintains a regular day job, performing pujas only as a part time occupation. Surendravir works as the deputy campus director for the Bhaktapur campus of Tribhuvan University. He lives in Bhaktapur with his wife and three young children. His administrative job provides enough income to send his children to school and to live a relatively prosperous life in Bhaktapur. As a priest alone, he would not be able to support a family of four.

Through interactions with Surendravir Karmacharya and his family, I gained a sense of karmacharya life in modern day Nepal. Surendravir and his family descend directly from the karmacharya priests of the Malla dynasty. From the 13th to the 18th century, his ancestors acted as the primary priests to the Malla kings. As royal court priests, they had direct influence on the development of ritual and religion in the kingdom. This royal association greatly elevated the status of Karmacharyas at that time. This historical significance does not carry much weight in the modern “non-Newar” social system, which regards all Karmacharyas as below other non-Newar groups. However, their link to Malla royalty grants Surendravir family a slightly higher status than other Karmacharyas within the Newar community. As a result, the city of Bhaktapur employs Surendravir and his brother to perform certain pujas during festivals and on other auspicious dates. However, because of their tie to Newar culture, and its negative connotations in today’s society, they maintain a much lower social status than other non-Newar priests. Without royal clients, the Karmacharyas have become a marginalized part of society and are overlooked as a group, viewed more as religious vendors than high level tantric specialists.

Originally, Bhaktapur had six agham houses, or groupings of distinct karmacharya lineages. Today, only four agham houses remain and of those four, Surendravir’s family holds the highest ranked group because of its past ties to royalty. The Karmacharyas...
consider Surendravir, as the younger brother of the head karmacharya in Bhaktapur, a high-ranking priest among the community, second only to his brother. The brothers share a sense of duty to their families and loyalty to their tradition. They cooperate closely, sharing a home and family temple. While a hierarchical system based on seniority exists among the Karmacharyas, competition among the group appears rare, since as a marginalized community, they share a common identity and allegiance with one another. However, as the younger brother, Surendravir must defer to his brother as a senior member. Because the karmacharya tradition is based on initiation, the younger or newer initiates must always yield to those who are older and more knowledgeable. Surendravir's agam house has not held a new initiation for thirteen years. Possibly the next generation of Karmacharyas is still too young for initiation, or perhaps they are old enough but not interested in carrying on the tradition of their elders.

In the karmacharya tradition women, like men, can become priests. However, unlike male priests who usually marry, the tradition forbids female priests to marry, as the role of a wife, which is seen as subservient, is contrary to the revered role of a priestess. In this sense, by renouncing her identity as a wife, the priestess takes on the status of a male member. This double standard reflects the Nepalese belief that a woman's identity is determined by her role as a wife and mother. Another role for women in the karmacharya tradition is through marriage to a priest. As the wife of a karmacharya, a woman gains initiation into the group where she serves as a ritual assistant to her husband. I observed this role in action during both pujas I attended, in which Surendravir’s wife assisted throughout the entire ceremony. Her duties included collecting all the ritual objects and necessities for the puja, such as ghee, grains, firewood, flowers, incense, and preparing the food for the feast afterwards. While Surendravir recited prayers from the ritual texts and made the primary offerings during the puja, she made sure the fire remained ignited and all the offerings were ready and accessible to her husband. Her role, while secondary to her husband's, is essential to the puja. Like most women in Nepal, the Newar females are responsible for the majority of the housework and child rearing. Therefore, the karmacharya wife’s religious responsibilities are an extension of her household duties.

Children of Karmacharyas are present at most ritual activities. The three children of Surendravir and his wife were present at both pujas I observed. Mostly, they ignored the rituals and played games with each other nearby. It wasn’t until the end of the puja, when the food was being served, that the children joined the group to eat. As young children, their disinterest in the puja seemed acceptable. However, I imagine that as they grow older, they will be expected to participate with more earnestness. The dilemma of passing down the karmacharya tradition to future generations is difficult to resolve. While on the one hand, most Karmacharyas feel it is important that their children learn the rituals and history of their ancestors, they also see how little modern day society values their tradition. As a result, religious training has taken a back seat to academic and vocational schooling in most karmacharya families. Modern day children tend to ignore religion as a possible vocation and focus more on schooling to prepare for a future in the standard job market. With such a low status in the overall social system due to their Newar heritage, karmacharya children focus on earning power, rather than tradition. As a result, the karmacharya tradition is in great jeopardy of being lost. Future generations will have to conform to social values that deny Newar culture and its religious origins.

IV: Ritual Analysis

One of the primary challenges of this study is to find a way to illustrate and document the practices and beliefs of the Karmacharyas without exploiting the sacred and private aspects of their tradition. Because the Karmacharyas hold their practices sacred and private, it is uncommon for an outsider, especially a non-Newar to participate in a puja. While locals can hire Karmacharyas to perform pujas for specific events, they rarely observe the personal, sanctified rituals performed within the karmacharya temples which are reserved for initiates only. It is unlikely that any Westerner has ever before seen these esoteric rituals. As a result, I was greatly honored to be invited by Surendravir Karmacharya to observe two ritual pujas during the spring of 2002. The
reasons I was included among the group of 8 participants is largely due to my role as a researcher and through my friendship with Purushottam, one of two Newars on the research committee and a close friend of Surendravir and his brother, the head karmacharya in.

Because the Karmacharyas agreed to participate in the Tribhuvan University research project, they were willing to open up to outsiders for its sake. How to open their rituals to outsiders without compromising their traditional beliefs of secrecy and exclusion however, presented a difficult challenge. As a result, the pujas I attended took place at non-karmacharya temples, so as not to disturb the integrity of those sacred spaces. In all other fashions, the ceremonies followed traditional authentic ritual procedure.

The karmacharya tradition is rooted in Shaivism (based on a belief in the Hindu God Shiva), but as tantrics, Karmacharyas worship goddesses who protect the valley. In Nepal, two distinguishable groups of deities exist: vedic and tantric. Vedic gods are mostly male and are attended to by Brahman priests for Vedic rituals which forbid the offering of blood or alcohol. In tantrism, the primary deities are largely female goddesses who unlike Vedic gods, receive blood and alcohol offerings. These goddesses are considered dangerous and fierce emanations of the god Shiva. In this sense “Shiva is conceived as generating a powerful form of the goddess, who then, in turn, generates or is transformed into subsidiary forms”. (Levy, 1990:225)

Nava-Durga, or the Nine Durgas is the principal goddess in the karmacharya pantheon. Of these nine manifestations of the goddess Durga, there are 8 Ashtamatrikas, or eight mothers and the goddess Tripurasundari. The Karmacharyas worship at least two forms of each goddess, a public form and a private, esoteric, form. The goddess Taleju, the primary public form of Nava-Durga, is one of the most important deities in the Karmacharya pantheon. She is worshiped privately among initiates as Siddhilakshmi. There are separate and unique rituals associated with each goddess. It is believed that separate public and private forms of goddesses emerged in order to prevent local people from worshipping the same deity as the king. By worshiping a private form of a goddess, the king maintained a more powerful and direct link to the deity. The king would essentially claim direct “access” to the heavens through the worship of the most powerful and esoteric form of the goddess. The Karmacharyas acted as the king’s link to the goddesses by performing the rituals used to invoke their presence and power. As a result, the king’s access to the heavens was ensured.

The Puja

While attending a karmacharya puja, I had the sense of being transported hundreds of years into the past. Sitting by firelight listening to Newar chants, it is easy to conjure the Nepal of old. Surendrabir recites from old decaying texts passed down to him by his ancestors. Because today’s Karmacharyas perform the same secret rituals done in ancient times, the stages and logistics of the puja itself have remained largely unchanged over the time. Today, Karmacharyas perform most pujas for local patrons who cannot afford the more extravagant pujas of their royal Malla ancestors. However in terms of basic ritual and text recitation, the Karmacharyas claim to practice much like they did hundreds of years ago. This is one of the reasons why the karmacharya tradition is such an important link to the past. While Nepal and its people have undergone many significant transformations over the generations, the practices of the Karmacharyas appear to have persisted in almost original form. It is that integrity which is to be honored and preserved in these ever changing times.

From my observations of two karmacharya pujas, I recognized five primary stages in the puja: preparing the sacred spaces, installing the deity, offering to the deities, invoking the deity through fire, and receiving prasad. Each stage is performed with the intention of calling upon the deity for help. While modern day Karmacharyas still perform a number of annual pujas to protect the city of Bhaktapur, locals can also hire a Karmacharya to perform a puja for protection from maladies or to bring about prosperity. In both cases, the stages of the puja are the same and are as follows:

Preparation

The first stage is perhaps the most important, as no other part of the ceremony can occur without the initial preparation rituals. The preparations are done by both the priest and his wife or assistant and can take over two hours to complete. During neither puja did I observe the preparation stage, as Surendravir
Karmacharya opted to do this in private with his wife. As a result, I base my account of this initial stage of the puja on questions I asked about the nature of the preparations. Surendravir explained that there are two distinct areas prepared for worship. The first is an east-facing central fire pit which represents the retinue of deities belonging to Siddhilakshmi. The second is a north-facing shrine which represents the seat of the goddess Siddhilakshmi. Firewood is collected and arranged in a small pyre inside the east-facing pit. Thirteen different offerings representing each of the thirteen consorts associated with the goddess Siddhilakshmi are placed on banana leaves and arranged around the pit. The offerings, which consist of different grains, beans, fruits, and fried bread, are thrown into the fire pit during the fire ritual portion of the puja.

Next, a three-dimensional cone shaped mound of rice representing the goddess is placed to the north of the fire pit and adorned with three eyes, flowers, multi-colored dyes and a canopy of red cloth. The rice cone is set atop a stand which contains the secret mandala of Siddhilakshmi. Smaller rice cones surround the main object symbolizing her retinue. Small metal vessels placed around the goddess image serve as butter lamps. A dish of aelā, or homemade alcohol is also placed near the central cone, as are numerous flowers and fruit. According to an interview with Swami Chetanananda, an expert in tantra, the three-dimensional cone shape represents the goddess as the unity of all 3 dimensions of reality. “The use of rice is evidence of Vedic influence, which asserts that everything is food, deities and offerings alike” (Chetanananda 2002). Throughout the preparations Surendravir recites mantras and prayers as each object is placed and arranged. For each individual prayer, Surendravir throws rice to consecrate the action.

Installation

Following the preparation of the area for worship, three other committee members, a small group of guests, and I took seats in a circle around the fire pit. Before beginning the installation stage of the puja, Surendravir performed a short purification ritual on himself and everyone at the puja. He did this through mantra recitation and by performing certain mudrās (hand movement representing certain characteristics and qualities of ritual observance). Following this purification, the ritual instatement of the goddess into the cone image began. Seated with his back to the fire pit, facing north, Surendravir began to recite installation prayers from his text while throwing rice on the adorned cone image of the goddess. While chanting, he also performed an elaborate series of mudrās and movements that accompany those particular prayers.

Offering

Once Surendravir finished installing the goddess into the representational cone, he moved to the fire pit where he sat facing east. While he recited from his text, his wife ignited the wood inside the pit and the offering portion of the puja ensued. With the flames fully ignited, Surendravir began throwing offerings into the fire pit in an ordered sequence. These offerings include the grains associated with each of Siddhilakshmi’s 13 retinue of Bhairavas and Rudras. The offerings are made to the retinue of deities as the initial stage of requesting their benevolence and aid. Surendravir’s wife continuously poured ghee on the fire throughout the puja which keeps the wood ablaze.

Fire Ritual

Once each of the thirteen uncooked grains had been offered, the invocation of the goddess and her retinue took place. In this stage Surendravir recited a series of prayers marked by throwing rice into the pit. The Karmacharyas believe that it is the retinue of consorts who grant blessings on behalf of the goddess. The fire pit represents the power of the goddess and her retinue. Therefore, certain prayers and mantras are recited over the fire pit summoning their presence and requesting their help.

Prasad

Once all the offerings were made and the deities invoked, Surendravir returned to the north-facing seat in front of the rice cone image of the goddess and thanked her for her presence and blessings. After wards he looked for signs the goddess has accepted the offerings and granted her blessings. One indication of the goddess’ satisfaction is if a small clay cup which has remained upside down over a butter lamp during the puja, has formed a thick black film over it. If so, the goddess is pleased and the puja was a success. If not, the puja may have to be repeated or done differently. Next, Surendravir took the red material that had been placed over the form of the goddess, tore it into strips and proceeded to tie the cloth around the neck of each person at the puja as a symbol of the goddess’ blessings and protection. Each person then received a teša, a dab of red powder placed on the forehead as a symbol of the goddess’ blessing, as well as a flower and piece of fruit from the installation area as prasad, or as a gift from the goddess. Finally, Surendravir’s wife prepared plates of food for each person. The food included uncooked hammer rice, a vegetable dish, cooked meat, fried soybeans, a hard-boiled egg and some fried sweet bread. Lastly, aelā, a
type of alcohol made from barley, was poured into small salli, clay cups and served to each person. The pouring of the aela is a traditional conclusion to most pujas. Everyone was encouraged to drink numerous cups of the alcohol, which with an alcohol content of hundred percent, causes rapid intoxication. In this type of tantric ceremony, the consumption of alcohol is an appropriate conclusion to the event.

V: Critique of Methodology

My experience working with the Karmacharyas in this unconventional context was extremely challenging. As a foreign woman, I was as outside their inner circle as one could be. However, as a young female, I was also viewed as less authoritative and intimidating than the other male researchers, which allowed me to be more invisible and observant. Though I did not have many opportunities to talk openly with the Karmacharyas, witnessing their rituals first hand was incredibly informative. Attending two of their pujas and having the opportunity to ask technical questions regarding the rituals was an extraordinary honor and a giant step toward gaining access to the group.

There is still a great deal I do not know or understand about the Karmacharyas, but I was able to see with my own eyes the ancient practices that are the core of their tradition. In the short time that I spent with the Karmacharyas and under such limited circumstances, the largest being my inability to speak the native language, my experiences far exceed my expectations. Given the chance to do ethnographic research on the karmacharyas again, I would opt for a more lengthy stay and I would want to be able to converse in their native language, Nepali. The language barrier, more than anything else, was the most significant obstacle. I think without being able to speak the language, it is impossible to truly understand the nuances and details of any culture.

VI: Conclusion (The Dilemma of Studying a Closed Religion)

The other major obstacles in conducting research on a group such as the Karmacharyas, is the issue of secrecy. As with all tantric esoteric practices, initiation is a fundamental part of preserving the integrity and purity of the tradition by limiting ritual practice to members only. According to Levy, tantric initiations “entail the transmission of some esoteric knowledge by the guru, or his equivalent, and a solemn and sacred pledge of secrecy by the initiate” (Levy 1990:314). During initiation, the student receives private teachings of ritual practice and worship for a particular lineage, which he/she is expected to protect. The process of initiations, “initiate and make sacred the teaching relation between guru and initiate, introduce the appropriate mantras and procedures or worship to the deity who will give effectiveness to the studies, and may introduce technical instructions or esoteric knowledge” (Levy 1990:315). Therefore, secrecy within each tradition is essential to the longevity and integrity of the lineage.

This secretive methodology and exclusion becomes even more extreme when the group becomes marginalized or threatened by society, as with the Karmacharyas. Following the overthrow of the Malla Kingdom by the Gorkhas in the latter part of the eighteenth century and the ensuing suppression of Newar culture, the Karmacharyas were forced to retreat even further into secrecy, guarding their practices and beliefs more than ever before.

In the past century the traditions and rituals of the karmacharyas have rarely been seen by outsiders. Access to karmacharya temples is restricted to initiates and their families. This is, in part, why there is no existing literature on karmacharya rituals and customs. Thus, gaining access to, studying and documenting this tradition is an extremely difficult task. Firstly, the tradition is at its core a secret tradition. Secondly, the Karmacharyas are a historically marginalized and exploited people, who have been forced to practice in private. This research project is a conscious effort to walk the fine line between honoring and exposing a group such as the karmacharyas. The dilemma of studying a closed group is that it is impossible to at once pay tribute to and document the history of a group without also compromising their privacy on some level. For
this study, the head Karmacharya of Bhaktapur agreed that the benefits of bringing recognition and support to their tradition outweighed the consequences of exposing some of their secrets. Coupled with an impending sense that the tradition might not endure the changes and pressures of modern society, the Karmacharyas approved the study of their customs in an effort to preserve their history and pay homage to their ancestors. It is certain, however, that many aspects of the tradition will never be revealed to outsiders. The Karmacharyas have the ability to control to some degree, and limit what information they will reveal. In such a study, it is never possible to fully penetrate the depths of the culture without full initiation into the group. Whether or not full initiation of an outsider is possible remains to be seen. Until then, the Karmacharyas will continue to try to preserve their tradition without compromising its core values. Hopefully, this research project will help to further in that endeavor.

Note

IDr. Tirtha P. Mishra, the Executive Director of Tribhuvan University, assembled a committee of researchers to conduct a seventeen-month survey of the Karmacharyas, their practices and history. The project examines the influence of karmacharya tantric ritual on the secular and local systems of the Nepalese. The research will develop a deeper understanding of the rich and sophisticated Newar culture by examining the Karmacharyas and their practices.

The research committee consists of specialists in the field of Asian studies, including Professor Tirtha Prasad Mishra, Executive Director for the Center for Nepal and Asian studies; Swami Chetanananda, Director of Socio-religious Traditions of Nepal and the Nityananda Institute; Professor Sanderson of Oxford University; Professor T.B. Shrestha of the Center for Nepal and Asian Studies; and Doctor Purushottam Shrestha, a historian specializing in Bhaktapur and Newar culture. Suriendrabir Karmacharya, a practicing karmacharya and brother to the head priest in Bhaktapur, is the primary contact person in the karmacharya community and acts as the liaison between the Karmacharyas and the research committee. He is essential to the project because of his personal association with the Karmacharyas and his knowledge of tantrism.

Together, the research team has launched a seventeen-month investigation into the history and culture of the Karmacharyas which began in September of 2001 with a survey of source materials, including books, articles, inscriptions, chronicles and manuscripts in related topics, as well as relevant unpublished works from the National Archives and numerous libraries. Dr. Shrestha is leading an ongoing effort to collect, catalogue, copy and translate any existing karmacharya ritual texts.

References


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Shrestha, Purushottam Lochan. Kathmandu interviews: May 15 and 20, 2002
A Summary of Dissertation

The Ritual Composition of Sankhu

*The Socio-Religious Anthropology of a Newar Town in Nepal*

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This book presents a detailed view of Newar society and culture, its socio-economic, socio-religious and ritual aspects, concentrating on a single Newar town. Sankhu is a small but ancient town in the Kathmandu Valley populated by Newars, the original inhabitants of the Valley. The foundation of Sankhu is attributed to the goddess Vajrayogini. Through its special relationship with this goddess, Sankhu forms a ritual unity, which transcends its socio-economic, administrative and political divisions.

The present study shows that Sankhu is a ritual universe in its own right, having ceremonial rather than socio-economically defined features, interacting with its surroundings, the Kathmandu Valley. Although Sankhu is an urban-oriented society, the beliefs and practices of both the Hindu and Buddhist religion are so strong that castes (*jāt*) and socio-religious associations (*guthi*) will continue to be of socio-religious importance, despite worsening economic and political circumstances in Nepal as a whole.

This study of Sankhu's ritual composition deals with the relation between Hinduism and Buddhism, with the interrelations between the town's 22 castes, and above all with the numerous socio-religious associations (*guthi*) that uphold its ritual life. The social life of the Newars in Sankhu is highly organized. Many socio-religious associations (*guthi*) remain active in carrying out complex rituals. These *guthi* have their roots in antiquity.

These conclusions have been reached by means of (a) intensive fieldwork and participant observation of fasts, feasts, festivals, processions of the gods and goddesses of the town of Sankhu, as well as by (b) in-depth interviews with ritual specialists, (c) an analysis of published and unpublished ritual texts, inscriptions, colophons, (d) an extensive sociographic survey, and (e) the use of video recordings.

The main subjects treated in this monograph are Newar society and culture (Chapter 2), the mythical, historical and topographical features of the town of Sankhu (Chapter 3), its socio-economic aspects (Chapter 4), its castes (*jāt*) and caste-bound associations (*guthi*) (Chapter 5), the socio-religious associations (*guthi*) that are active in the town's ritual life (Chapter 6), and the festivals celebrated in Sankhu (Chapter 7). The festival and fasts of Madhavanārāyana (Chapter 8) and the festival and procession of the goddess Vajrayogini (Chapter 9) have received special attention because they are unique to Sankhu. The major focus of this study is on Vajrayogini, the rituals performed at her temple (Chapter 9), and her festival (Chapter 10) and dances (Chapter 11), because she has an overall importance for the cultural identity of the town.

This study consists of twelve chapters. The first chapter provides a general introduction to the book. Chapter 2 presents a general view of the Newars, the single nationality (*jana*jātī*) inhabiting the town of Sankhu, and their identity in modern-day Nepal. In Chapter 3 various published and unpublished versions of the legend of Manishatilamahāvadāna (MM) have been treated. It is the only legend that provides mythical details of the coming into being of the goddess Vajrayogini and the town of Sankhu. The MM also tells that vaikhadeva was installed as the first king of the town in accordance with the goddess Vajrayogini's wishes. There is an attempt to relate the mythical story with the history of the town and of king Sangkhadeva, because the myth of the MM presents Sankhu as an ancient kingdom of Sangkhadeva. The inscription of
king Vāmana Deva (dated 538 AD) found in the Durghāthī quarter in Sankhu is the only evidence to prove the antiquity of the town, and this gives grounds to assert the existence of the town of Sankhu during the reign of this king in the sixth century. No excavations of historical sites in Sankhu or in the Vajrayogini sanctuary have taken place. These would make it possible to provide more authentic historicity for the town. All inscriptions found in the town have been treated in this monograph for the first time. Mostly these are from the Mañala period (12th-18th century), but there are several inscriptions dating from the Shah period (1769 till today). Mostly religious people installed these inscriptions when building temples, rest places and water sprouts in the town.

In Chapter 3 a description of the town's topography, pantheon, settlement, houses, art and architecture is provided. Two major earthquakes, in 1834 and 1934, destroyed most buildings. Most of the public buildings such as temples and rest places have been reconstructed, in many cases in their original form. Replacing traditional buildings with modern architecture has become popular since the latter half of the twentieth century. Only recently interest in traditional architecture has reappeared. In 1996 a local NGO (Friends of Sankhu) began the restoration of the Mahādeva temple and its surrounding monuments, the temple of Vajrayogini, the Sarāvata Sarah resthouse and the Datta Phalca rest place.

In Chapter 4 an account is given of the socio-economic status of Sankhu, based on a household survey conducted in 1997. Quantitative data gathered from this survey reveal the social conditions of the town as well as its socio-economic and political characteristics. The data contain information about the distribution of property, types of land, irrigation systems, occupations, and so on. The data surveyed make it clear that although people in Sankhu are united for the purpose of performing religious ritual traditions, they are politically divided into many fractions. At present three national parties, namely the National Democratic Party, the Nepal Communist Party United Marxist Leninist (UML) and the Nepali Congress Party, have strong footholds in the town. Despite political differences, followers of these parties have formed one voice in demanding that the town be turned into a municipality instead of keeping it divided into three different Village Development Committees (VDCs). This year (2002), the Nepalese Government has announced its intention to turn Sankhu into a municipality, Sankharapur Nāgarpalīka.

One of the most interesting aspects of Newar society is Hindu-Buddhist unity. Chapter 5 discusses why Hindu and Buddhist divisions among the lay Newars are indiscernible. Nowadays, the majority of people in Sankhu refer to themselves as Hindu. An analysis of data on the employment of priests for their domestic rituals makes clear that most people in Sankhu employ both Hindu and Buddhist priests according to the needs of a ceremony.

In 1997 Sankhu had 5,340 inhabitants, but no fewer than 22 Newar castes. The largest among them are the shrestha, who are ranked below the Brahmin but higher than all other castes. They occupy the largest portion of agricultural land, trade, business and the service sector. They also support most ritual activities performed in Sankhu. Traditional hierarchies of castes lost their importance after the implementation of the 1964 new legal code in Nepal, but people in Sankhu have still maintained them without much change in practice. Sīgathī, or the caste-bound funeral associations, are still fundamental in Newar social life and are an important reason behind the prevailing caste divisions.

Chapter 6 gives a detailed account of all socio-religious associations (guthi) responsible for carrying out various feasts and festivals in Sankhu. The structure and functions of more than eighty such guthi active in the town are discussed and a list of guthi that have disappeared is given. Most of the active and inactive guthi traced in Sankhu are related to the cult of the goddess Vajrayogini, because she is the most important goddess of the town and is venerated by both the Hindu and Buddhist population of Nepal and beyond. Other guthi listed in this chapter play different roles during various festivals, rituals, feasts and processions of other gods and goddesses that are carried out in the town.

The socio-ritual guthi have endowments of land cultivated either by tenants or by one of its members as their source of income. The 1964 Land Reform Programme of Nepal curtailed the income of most guthi to a large extent. The decline of sources of income of the guthi has compelled many of them to reduce their ritual duties and in several instances has forced their members to abandon the guthi. Whether all these guthi will survive in the long run is doubtful.

In Sankhu, all major and minor Newar feasts and festivals are celebrated (Chapter 7). In view of the many feasts, festivals, fasts and processions of gods and goddesses celebrated in the town, Sankhu can be considered one of the most ritually organized settlements in the Valley. The festival and fasts of Mādhavanārāyana and the festival and procession of Vajrayogini are both very important and can be considered as typical of Sankhu. Each of these festivals has a long history, going back four or more centuries. In the course of time some of these festivals have gained popularity, while others have lost prestige. A recent example is the loss of one of the processions of Kāvā as well as of the dances of Hāleyo Lakhe Pākhā.

Most festivals celebrated in Sankhu are related to the agricultural cycle. Considering the festival of
Gathamuga as the beginning of the ritual year and Sihinaka as its end is one of the most common ways of defining the yearly ritual cycle among the Newars. However, this monograph has followed the Amantaka calendar, which takes the change of the lunar month Nepal Samvat as the beginning of the ritual cycle.

A detailed account of the month-long Madhavanārayana fast (vrata), Sankhu's second most important festival, is presented in Chapter 8. Although people have now begun to mix up both the Madhavanārayana and Svasthāni traditions, this study shows that each has a different background. The festival of Madhavanārayana is becoming increasingly important for the cultural identity of Sankhu. Modern media such as television, radio and newspapers, and modern transportation facilities have played an important role in increasing the number of participants and pilgrims visiting the site of the vrata.

Vajrayogini is one of the most important goddesses in Nepal and for the people of Sankhu she is the most important one. In Chapter 9 the goddess Vajrayogini, her sanctuary and her cult are discussed. An attempt has been made to reconstruct the history of the goddess and her sanctuary from published sources, unpublished chronicles and inscriptions found in the sanctuary of Vajrayogini and in Sankhu itself. Chapter 9 also sketches the religious and ritual significance of the sanctuary by describing its physical appearance and rituals performed at the sanctuary. Special important ritual activities, such as the twelve yearly repainting of the fixed statue of the goddess Vajrayogini, and the incidental renovation of her processional statue are performed at the sanctuary.

A common feature of all Newar cities, towns and villages is that each has its specific festival and procession (jātra) of their most important deity. In the case of Sankhu, the festival and procession of the goddess Vajrayogini is the most important one for its inhabitants (Chapter 10). The ritual features of the festival are discussed and interpreted. This chapter presents a detailed discussion of rituals involved in her festival, including the duties of those actors who play important roles during the rituals.

Apart from feasts, festivals, fasts and pilgrimages, other religiously important features of Newar society are the masked dances of various deities. Unlike the Devi dances in other places, the Sankhu Devi dances are considered to be the manifestation of the goddess Vajrayogini, the chief deity of the town (Chapter 11), which makes them special.

The final chapter (Chapter 12) provides a conclusion to the book in which the central theme of the book (Sankhu as a Ritual Universe) is discussed, as well as the topical issue of continuity and change in the town of Sankhu.

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Notes

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Commercial Recordings of Traditional Newar Music:
A Review Article

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Despite the remarkable diversity to be found among the traditional music\(^1\) of the Newars, publicly available recordings remain rather limited. There is certainly a burgeoning industry of popular Newar music recordings, but the lack of recordings of older styles can probably be partially attributed to the fact that most Kathmandu valley Newars have much traditional music virtually at their doorsteps (though seemingly to a lesser extent with each passing year), whereas most outsiders, for whatever reason, seem to have taken relatively little interest in (or are simply not aware of) Newar music. One will occasionally find the rickety cassette or two among the Kathmandu valley's music shops, but this is usually a hit and miss affair.

The intention of this article is to look at some commercially available recordings of traditional Newar music and to examine what they have presented as well as, just as importantly, how the music is contextualized and explained in the form of liner notes. There are, to the best of my knowledge, currently only three compact discs in print which focus on Newar music. CDs rather than cassettes will be discussed simply due to the relatively unstable status of cassette issues. The three CDs being reviewed here, on the other hand, are all published by bigger labels and will hopefully be available for some years to come. Due to what is still a relative lack of published information about Newar music, it seemed that this review article would also present a good opportunity to discuss features of Newar music that are difficult to find information about.


The first of these items is not new – it was published in 1994 – though in the United States it was unavailable for several years, a status which seems to have changed relatively recently. The recordings on the CD (with one exception, to be discussed) and the liner notes are written by an ethnomusicologist, Laurent Aubert. The CD includes some excellent material, though as Aubert spent apparently only two or three months in the Kathmandu valley – a short time to study the music of such a complex society - some weaknesses are apparent. It might also be pointed out that Aubert is not a South Asia specialist, but rather has written about quite a wide range of musical traditions.

The CD booklet is divided into three sections. The first “Newar Society and Religion”, is generally helpful in broad outline, but is marred by a number of misconceptions, and this sections' focus on an imagined ‘flexibility’ of the Newar caste system contains a number of statements and conclusions that very few anthropologists who have worked with Newars would be likely to accept. The next two sections, “Newar Musicians” and “The Recordings” are considerably better (though these include some errors as well). The main strength of the former section is its description of musical instruments (rather than the musicians per se), while the main strength of the latter section is the descriptions of the relations of the pieces of music to the seasons and the months of the year. The recordings on the CD are, in fact, arranged so as to roughly depict in miniature the annual cycle, by including one or two songs associated with a given month, in sequential order. The manner in which this is done is not entirely systematic (for instance, some of the twelve ‘bahramāse’ songs specific to each of the twelve months are present, while others are absent altogether and something else is substituted for that month instead), but the thematic arrangement makes for a helpful framework. Of course, given that the recordings took place over three months, a number of them were recorded ‘out of season’. And as the notes discuss, good field recordings of Newar music can be quite difficult to make due to the festive atmosphere in which Newar music often takes place. As such, with one exception, the recordings are of indoor performances arranged specifically for recording
The majority of the pieces on this CD are performed by the Newar castes of Jyapus and Jogis. However, quite a bit of space is also devoted to songs sung by Gaines, a Parbatia caste. Although the Gaines are not Newar, Gaines who lives in Newar-speaking settlements often plays and sings some Newar songs (and in some cases may actually have a fairly large repertoire of them). They accompany themselves on the small bowed stringed instrument sârangi, well known throughout Nepal (but not to be confused with Indian namesakes, the most well known of which is considerably larger and includes about thirty more strings!). The presence of some Gaines pieces side by side with analogous Jyapu pieces makes for an interesting comparison and contrast. It is also conceivable that the way the Gaines present these songs on the sârangi could — though to a limited extent — give some idea of what Newar music on the now extinct bowed instrument piwamâi may have sounded like.

The majority of the Jyapu items were recorded at Gita twâh (tol) in Lalitpur. They offer a good introduction some of the ‘typical’ music-making of the Jyapus, primarily flute ensembles and the devotional style dapha, a form of group singing with percussion accompaniment. There are, however, also a few pieces that, to the best of my knowledge, represent fairly unusual practices. One of these is a bânsuri khalâh (bamboo flute ensemble) accompanied by dhimay drumming. It is far more common that dhimay drumming features percussion only and no melodic component. In fact the dhimay’s lack of association with melodies is actually suggested by some Newars as evidence for the drum’s great antiquity. Another unusual item on the CD is a dapha song which features both singing and bânsuri playing — in the vast majority of occasions, the melody of such songs is rendered either by flutes or voices, but not both simultaneously.

Another item from the dapha genre is a single recording made in 1953. Of particular note in that this was made only one year after Nepal opened up to the outside world after nearly a century of isolation imposed by the Rana prime ministers. It is a solo on the dâphâ kin drum, a musical invocation of the type known as ‘dyah lhâyegu’ which invokes Nâsa Dvân and other gods. It would be quite interesting to know whether this composition is still in current practice, and if so, how it is being performed today (regrettably, the crucial piece of information in this connection — what residential quarter or twâh the musicians belonged to — is not provided). It is a fascinating recording (despite the poor quality), so I provide some additional details here.

The poor quality of the recording makes it initially quite difficult to make out the pattern played on the tal cymbals among the other cymbals that are played in accompaniment, but a closer listen shows that the majority of the piece is in jati tal (a seven beat rhythm divided 3+2+2), a common rhythmic cycle for the genre as a whole, but in current practice not particularly common for dyah lhâyegu-s. Beginning at a slow pace, the main body of the composition is a particular theme which, after every second repetition, is followed by a cadential phrase which draws upon material from the main theme. This process repeated continuously with the tempo building up gradually over nearly seven minutes. Upon reaching a relatively fast speed, there is a process of increased contraction of some its phrases, involving a particular type of permutation. During this process, the rhythmic cycle switches to co tal, and once a particular point of contraction is reached entirely new material is played. At that juncture, the sound of two pwângas (natural trumpets) comes in and the piece eventually closes with a dramatic finish, sounding a few times like it may burst apart at the seams before doing so.

The CD also includes on field recording, a ‘bâhâ puja’, or ritual worship performed in a Buddhist monastic complex. This enables the listener to hear processional music performed on the way to the bâhâ complex performed by one group of musicians, with additional music performed inside the bâhâ itself by different groups, and provides an interesting perspective on the musical diversity that can be associated with a particular ceremony. And, while the vast majority of the recording is entirely ‘traditional’, a short dâphâ kin solo in the middle provides interesting documentation of musical change: it has far more in common with today’s flashy tabla drumming than it does with the dâphâ kin’s traditional compositions. Unfortunately, however, the liner notes describing the bâhâ puja feature a number of incorrect attributions, such as a mistaken reference to a high caste Buddhist pancâtalâ ensemble as being a Jyapu ensemble.


Among the CDs reviewed here, this one covers the widest geographical range — it features recordings from all three capital cities of the former Malla kingdoms, roughly in equal proportion. As the title implies, almost all of the pieces on the CD pertain to particular festivals or other ceremonial occasions. Suresh Bajracharya, himself a highly talented musician, knows a number of the leading Newar musicians in the valley and recorded several of them in making this album.

The liner notes of this CD, while certainly helpful, do not seem to have ‘ethnomusicological’ aspirations in the way that the other two CDs do. Apart from quite
short explanatory notes for each song (which often mention the festivals they are associated with and relevant details), the notes do not provide an overview about Newars and their music, and in fact they do not explicitly state that all the pieces on the recording were performed by Newars (this is only mentioned, for unknown reasons, in connection with the piece 'Basanta', the ninth track). That does not at all diminish the fact that this is an excellent and highly professionally produced collection of music, though those who purchase this CD without some prior knowledge of Newar music may be puzzled by what they hear.

In order to provide additional details of the CD’s contents, I will provide a brief description for one each of the pieces featured from Kathmandu, Lalitpur, and Bhaktapur (the CD itself has a total of 14 tracks). It should be noted that all the pieces are instrumental, despite the importance of vocal music during many festivals.

One piece from Kathmandu is a gvarâ dedicated to the god Nâsa Dyah in his form as Nrya Nâth, lord of dance. Apprentices of the dâpha khin drum throughout Kathmandu learn this as their first composition after the obligatory main dyah lhâyegh has been learned. There is a text to the song, but here it is rendered instrumentally by an ensemble of bansuri flutes, the highly resonant double-sided barrel shaped drum dâpha khin, and small hand cymbals. The liner notes do not mention the structure of the piece, but like most gvarâ, this one is comprised of different rhythmic cycles that follow each other in sequence, in a kind of process which would seem to be quite rare in South Asia as a whole, though there is textual evidence that in the past this would have been more common in some South Asian classical forms. Those who are not trained to listen for such things would generally have no idea that different rhythmic cycles are following one after another in this recording (the melodic transitions often seem to have a certain ‘seamless’ quality to them), but a good way to orient oneself to this process is to listen closely to the sound of the small râh hand cymbals.

One of the pieces from Lalitpur is an ensemble of dâh drums, playing for the occasion of Buddha Jayanti. An observer of dâh groups in procession, during the month of Giunlâ for instance, can note that the vast majority of them are accompanied by musicians playing trumpet and clarinet for melodic content, but this recording actually features the oboe-type instrument mwahâli instead— an instrument that is, by most accounts, approaching extinction fairly quickly. Given the relative rarity of this practice, it is probably safe to assume that the producer of the CD wished to provide listeners with a more ‘authentic’ or ‘traditional’ experience than some might perceive in the more common contemporary practice. For those interested in comparison, a dâh ensemble from Kathmandu with clarinet and trumpet can be heard at length on the two volume cassette ‘Guntâ bâjâ’.

Representing Bhaktapur, among other pieces, is music from the Mhâkâlî pyâkhan, which portrays the victory of the goddess Mhâkâlî and her attendants over the demons Shumbha and Nishumbha. It features the drum pacimâ—very similar to the dâpha khin, discussed above, and in some key respects identical with the North Indian drum known as pakhawaj, but with its own playing style which is distinct from both of these drums. The melody is provided by the wind instrument mwahâli, discussed above. It also features the medium sized hand cymbals châyâh, which outside Bhaktapur would generally not be played along with pacimâ (and even in Bhaktapur itself, this practice is not particularly common). ‘The lively pacimâ drumming features a basic example of a kind of ‘polyrhythm’ that would be known in North India as layakari, but this rhythmic technique is for all attempts and purposes quite rare in Newar music. The liner notes mention little about the dance apart from the fact that it takes place during Indra Jatra, but a useful description of a troupe from Bhaktapur has been provided by Okuyama (1983), including details about the music.


Dr. Wegner is director of Kathmandu University’s Department of Music, located in Bhaktapur, and has lived in Bhaktapur for much of the past twenty years or so. Having earlier published some materials on the genres of nava bâjâ (1997) and dhmây (1986) this CD marks part of his long term efforts at documenting and preserving Newar music in general as well as those two genres in particular. The majority of the material on this CD is from the former genre, followed by nearly 15 minutes of the latter. One might not agree with all the working assumptions and conclusions in Wegner’s previously published items on Newar music, but the text of the CD booklet is certainly an excellent introduction to music making in Bhaktapur, acquainting the listener with relevant aspects of the religious and social life of Bhaktapur. The booklet also features excellent photographs of the musicians and their instruments.

Nava bâjâ is a set of nine drums, always played in a particular sequence, with an essentially fixed repertoire and exact prescriptions about what the accompanying instruments for each of the nine drums will be. There are three ‘rounds’ of drumming sequences on the nine drums, and this CD presents the first. These ‘rounds’ are ceremonially framed by dâpha songs — in fact, as the booklet describes, nava dâpha...
groups are really expanded dāpha groups – though dāpha songs are absent on this CD.

The drummer featured most often in the nava dāpha section is Hari Govinda Ranjikar, one of the few people in Bhaktapur who still knows the entire repertoire for all nine drums, and is a most enthusiastic practitioner of the musical traditions he has inherited. As the booklet notes, the nava baja genre marks an attempt by an 18th century king to “combine all possible sources of musical sound”, and one will definitely hear a wide range of musical ideas and sounds on this recording. Most of the drums are double sided drums, though there is a one headed drum (the kyangkām) and well as a three headed one (known in Bhaktapur as pastā), in addition to a pair of small kettle drums (naggara), the only drum which is played only with a pair of sticks (other drums are played with both bare hands, or with a stick in one of the hands). There is also a wide range of tempos as well as metric patterns. The final nava baja track marks what is probably a relatively uncommon practice, that of two drums sharing the same piece (the two drummers alternate back and forth). It might also be pointed out, although the drumming performances are generally described as a ‘drumming solos’, the sound of wind instruments such as mwañali and pwanagī and (for the one of the drums) flutes, is much more to the forefront than some listeners might expect from this designation. The melodies played on the mwañali (the most commonly heard melody instrument) are often relatively repetitive, pointing clearly to their accompaniment function, though these melodies can be fairly ornate – as the booklet suggests, the extent to which the playing is embellished suggests a ‘continuum rather than a precise melody’.

Following the nava dāpha performances, is a recording of the large double-headed cylindrical drum dhimay, associated particularly with the farming castes. Dhimay is not one of the nava baja drums, but it is the most commonly heard processional drum of Bhaktapur, and the recording rounds out the CD nicely. As the CD notes explain “The main function of this music – besides connecting the musicians with the source of inspiration – is, to create a joyous atmosphere where people are inspired to jump in front of the drums and dance. Large quantities of rice-beer tend to be consumed during such occasions.” Social considerations aside, the dhimay is a drum that can be quite difficult to make good recordings of for acoustical reasons as well, and the one here is the best commercial recording that I have heard. The other two CDs reviewed here also feature dhimay recordings, and in fact very similar versions of a few of the compositions on the Bhaktapur recording can be heard on the Lalitpur recording on the “Sound of Festivals from Kathmandu Valley” CD. Given the huge differences that can be found in the repertoires for some of the Newar drums in the Kathmandu valley, the relative uniformity of the dhimay drumming is fairly remarkable, particularly given that the dhimay is commonly regarded as being much older in Newar society than many of the drums which show far greater divergence. Whatever the historical and social reasons for those similarities may be, this recording captures the vibrancy of the genre excellently.

Notes

1 As has often been pointed out, the distinction between categories such as ‘traditional’ and ‘modern’ is often not nearly as clear as common usage would have us believe. This notion can quite plausibly be applied to the study of Newar culture (cf. Ellingson 1994), but a discussion of these points is beyond the scope of the present article. The genres represented on the compact discs reviewed have roots in the Malla period and in some cases perhaps earlier. This review article does not look at modern interpretations of old songs, whether performed on classical instruments such as sarod and tabla or the latest ‘Bajamati’ dance hit, though a study of modern interpretations would certainly be an interesting project.

2 The cassettes are also less significant for our purposes here in that they generally lack liner notes.

3 For the totally mame reason that the American wine company Julio and Gallo threatened to sue the CD company for distributing CD in the U.S. due to the “similarities” in names of the companies.

4 In fact, the two different versions of Basantara on this CD were among the dozen songs examined by Grundin (1997) in his thought provoking article on Basantara melodies in Nepal.

5 This instrument declined to the point of extinction, perhaps 70 to 100 years ago. Today it is extremely difficult to find reliable information as to how and when it was played, what types of songs were played on it, who played them, etc. The newspaper Nepali Times (Sherpa:2002), it was reported that this instrument had been ‘revived’. However, the ‘revived’ instrument was constructed from looking at a temple sculpture rather than copying a surviving pwanagā (which apparently exist in a few collections, such that of the Royal Nepal Academy, and a museum in France). The esraj player Santosh Shrestha suggested to me that, having seen one of the old instruments, he did not think the new version was a very accurate representation (personal communication, November 2002). Currently workshops are taught at the Nepal Lok Baja Sanghralaya (Nepal Folk Instrument Museum) using the revived instrument, though the instructor is a sarangi player, so what is being taught is adapted from sarangi rather than a survival of the pwanagā’s technique, presumably lost. Nevertheless, the interest in the revival of the instrument is certainly of much interest in its own right, and it will be interesting to see what additional developments may take place in this regard.

6 As the liner notes explain, this song ‘Buddha Bhagavan mar’, was recorded during the month of Paš, a month when drums with the type of tuning paste known as kau are forbidden to be played. Therefore, during this time a song that might normally be accompanied by a drum with ‘kau’
must be accompanied by a substitute. The dhimay does not
have khaan, but the choice to use dhimay as a ‘substitute
drum’ in these kinds of instances is to the best of my
knowledge not at all common, and in general it is very rare to
hear dhimay played in an ensemble with melody instruments.
This observation is confirmed, at least for Bhaktapur, by
Wegner’s (1986: 44-49) survey of dhimay groups in that
particular city. His entry for each of the 23 groups existing at
that time includes a full list of all accompanying instruments
used, and only 2 of these groups make use of bansuri. It is not
clear from his description how often they actually use
bansuri.

7 The appendix of Aubert 1988 features a helpful list of
all the music that was recorded during that expedition, “the
first Genevese scientific mission in Nepal”. The CD booklet
also features two photos of musicians taken during that
expedition, noteworthy in part for depicting styles of clothing
not often seen today. As the photos were taken only about a
year after ‘democracy’ had arrived in Nepal, it was still
common for members of the same caste in the same locality to
wear matching uniforms.

8 See Ellingson (1991) for details on Nasa Dyah.

9 There are intriguing parallels (as well as some
important differences) between details of the way this is done
on the khun, and the main features of a kind of composition on
the pakhawaj known as ‘paragi’, in current practice associated
particularly with the Nathdwara style of pakhawaj
playing of Rajasthan, India.

10 The main features that quickly mark it as very different
from ordinary dapha khun drumming include the use of fast
strings of ‘closed’ (i.e. non resonant) drum sounds, frequent
use of ‘hat’ cadences (essentially absent in traditional khun
drumming), and what is presumably an adaptation of
‘keharwa theka’ variations from tabla. It is also telling that
this short solo is not accompanied by hand cymbals.

11 About the only exception is an instrumental rendition
of the popular folk song Rajmata, basically a ‘secular’ piece.
Even in this case, the accompanying drum damaru has strong
religious associations, such as an intimate connection with
the god Shiva. On the other hand, the Newar adaptation of
this drum for specifically musical purposes, the ‘yor damaru’
is used quite flexibly by the Newars. It differs from the
ordinary damaru that is common throughout South Asia, in
some key respects that I have outlined elsewhere (Bianchi
2002). I hope to publish a more detailed study in the future.

12 The same gvara can be heard, as performed by a dhim
ensemble rather than a dapha ensemble, on volume two of the
‘Gunla baja’ cassette mentioned above.

13 The subject of the musical form ‘gvara’ is one that
could benefit greatly from additional research, but some
important materials have been published. A collection of
Lalitpur gvara compositions was transcribed into a local
form of notation by Shakya (1108 N.S.). Ellingson has (1990:
458-461) discussed the structure of a particular gvara and
has offered a possible explanation as to how the structures of
gvaras may be reflective of particular religious ideas.

14 After a short ‘introduction’ in 7 beat jat tal, the gvara
is comprised of two cycles of palima tal (a cycle of 6 beats),
four cycles of co tal (a cycle of 4 beats), two cycles of astra
tal (an additive cycle of ten beats), and two cycles of jat tal (a
cycle of 7 beats). In this recording, as is most often the case,
there is a pause when the end of the last cycle in the sequence
(i.e. that of jat tal) is reached, before repeating the cycle and
going to the first beat of the first tal (co tal). Less commonly
(for instance, when the accompanying drum is jor damaru),
there is no pause and repetitions of the sequence are entirely
continuous. For comparative purposes, this gvara can be
heard performed by quite a different kind of ensemble on the
two volume cassette ‘Gunla Baja’, issued in Kathmandu
(there is no publication data on the cassette inlay).

15 The pachama and pakhawaj generally look exactly the
same, and both go by the additional (older) name niradonga in
their respective locales. However, there are important tonal
differences between sound the right hand side of the pachama
and that of the pakhawaj. The main one, being in mind that
the situation is complicated considerably by a number of
overtones, is that the tonal relationship between the partially
damped ringing sound (‘ta’ or ‘na’) and the fully open
sound of the drumhead differs. In the pakhawaj, the latter is
about a tone higher than the former, whereas in the pachama
(as well as the dapha khar) there is a difference of about a
semitone. This (not to mention the large differences in
repertoires) gives the Newar drumming a quite different
flavor, despite other aspects of the construction of the drum
being much the same.

16 The most obvious explanation for this, apart from the
obvious limits of time on a CD, is that the performers are the
group ‘Master Drummers of Bhaktapur’, rather than a нава
dapha group as would traditionally come into existence
under the traditional rubric of residential quarter, caste, and
other factors. For those interested in comparison, a cassette
released some years earlier by a different label “Traditional
Tunes of Bhaktapur” comprises mainly navabaja material
performed by a different group.

17 If one postulates that dhimay predates the division of
the Kathmandu valley into three separate kingdoms, and
that many of the other drumming traditions date from a period
when these three kingdoms were in competition with each
other, provides a partial explanation. One might have
expected the dhimay drumming styles to diverge significantly
during the centuries after this division, but what seems most
likely is that the compositions continued to be passed down in
a very conservative way. Alternate explanations, such as that
the dhimay drumming simply became codified at a relatively
late date, do not seem very likely.

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“Newah Jhii Newah hey Jui”, means “We the Newars must live like Newars”. What does this mean to the Newah people living in the United States in this day and age? In order to maintain our Newah identity, one should aspire to follow the traditional Newah lifestyle as well as to teach it to our children. Only then the impact of this slogan can be truly felt.

In these modern times of the 21st century we are very much attracted to the Western way of life. The task to honor the Newah culture in the United States thus can become difficult. This paper tries to show how a person can find his/her Newah identity and how the Newah Organization of America (NOA) can help facilitate our endeavor. At this time, one may wonder whether we really have the time to delve into such a seemingly unnecessary topic. They may ponder why they would even consider maintaining the Newah lifestyle at all. What is the true meaning of this slogan? When participating in such a discussion, won’t other ethnic groups consider them exclusionists?

It would be worth reflecting upon how the slogan “Newah Jhii Newah hey Jui” actually came about in Newah society. To do so, one must review a bit of Nepali history. Nepali people experienced a drastic change after the failure of the 1950's democratic transformation and the subsequent establishment of the Panchayat System. During this system, not much attention had been paid for recognition of ethnic diversity in Nepal. As a result, Newah language programs were abolished from Radio Nepal. In the field of education, the study of Newah language was considered an optional subject. Eventually it was eliminated in primary and middle schools and was made available for study only at four high schools in Kathmandu, whereas in colleges, the Masters and PhD programs were added.

In addition, the Lok Seva Ayog (Public Service Commission) of the HMG disallowed credits for classes taken in the Newah language major. They were however certifying large number of boarding schools where Nepali children were taught primarily English. Because of these events, Newah language was slowly marginalized in the minds of the Newah people. Parents began to feel embarrassed when they heard their children speaking Newah language, and so adopted the Khas language (known as Nepali) as the primary language at home.

After the restoration of democracy in 1990 the local authorities including the municipalities of Kathmandu, Lalitpur, Bhaktapur, and Kirtipur unanimously adopted the Newah language for official usage along with Nepali. However, this act was declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court. This unfortunate historical event struck the hearts of the Newah people. A language recognized as one of the national languages of Nepal by the constitution is not allowed to use for practical purpose. Newah people consider it a grave dishonor to a national language. Newah is not an imported language in Nepal. Not appreciating this fact we have instead adopted Nepali as our primary means of communication and have taught our children Nepali as their mother tongue, despite the existence of our own language. From this point of view, therefore, Newah children are really not aware of their own identity. We should teach them that the Newah people are the original inhabitants of Nepal Madan (currently known as Kathmandu Valley) and their culture is a major aspect of Nepalese culture as a whole. Children today have no awareness of Newah literature. Newah localities, such as chuka, Bahun Nani, etc., are unknown to them. In this situation, the slogan “Newah Jhii Newah hey Jui” can help us acknowledge our identity as Newah, especially for those who consider themselves Newah by their last names only.

Let us not dwell upon how many of them can read and write the Newah language. I am certain not many of them still speak their own language at home. In this situation, speaking and preserving the identity of

Newāh Vijñāna-5 Shakya, Daya/ Newah Jhii...31
Narayan ghat, in the west side. Banepa Panauti, Dolakha, Okhaldhunga, Dharan, Biratnagar, Dhankuta, Chainpur, Bhojpur, Khandabari and Dingla in the east, In India, we also see Newah people speaking their own language in Kalimpong, Darjeeling, Sikkim etc. The population of Newah people in the USA is increasing every year. Some of them are still speaking our language at home, while others have already given up. It is my great aspiration that the Newah people living in the USA should also give their language a chance to survive by using it at home and with each other. Speaking in Nepal Bhasa does not cause them degradation as is believed by so many people in Nepal. If the Newah people were to begin to use own language and follow their own customs and traditions in recognition of the need to preserve their heritage, it can have groundbreaking effects. This is actually not a very difficult task, and can have a tremendously positive impact on their children. Even if you feel awkward speaking Nepal Bhasa, or your sentences are broken, you can begin speaking with children simply by using the names of certain objects. This method helps build some vocabulary, as well as supporting the meaning of the slogan “Newah Jhi Newah Hey Jai.” This states that they are the Newah people. Their culture is the Newah culture, and their language is the Newah language. As we all know, there is no place like home, and no other term than Newah to call them. Finally I would like to request you to remember the slogan Newah Jhi Newah Hey Jai (We the Newars must live like Newars) to bring awareness of own identity among the Newah community. Subhayē! (Thank you)
In Memoriam

Bert van den Hoek
(1951-2001)

Bal Gopal Shrestha
Han F. Vermeulen
University of Leiden

Bert (Albertus Wilhelmmus) van den Hoek was a brilliant anthropologist and indologist from the Netherlands, who had been working on India and Nepal for more than thirty years when he died on December 1, 2001, on his way to a conference in India at age 50. He left behind numerous scholarly works, three films, and the memory of a gentle, warm and dedicated man.

Bert was born on September 2, 1951, in Apeldoorn as the first son of his parents. He attended high school at Utrecht, completing the Stedelijk Gymnasium in 1969. In the same year he attended courses in cultural anthropology and philosophy at the University of Amsterdam. He then switched to Leiden where he studied cultural anthropology at the University of Leiden for his BA and MA degrees from 1970 to 1976. He, together with Jan Brouwer, traveled to India for the first time in the summer of 1970. During this period, Bert followed courses in linguistics and anthropology of Indonesia with Professor P.E. de Josselin de Jong and in anthropology and sociology of South Asia with Professor J.C. Heesterman, which included studies of Tamil, Sanskrit and philosophy. Together with Sjoerd Zanen, he carried out fieldwork for his MA thesis in Lebanon (1974). They traveled extensively through the Middle-East, Turkey, Syria, Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India (1973-74) and Bert first visited Nepal in 1975. In 1977 he was a post-graduate student of Professor Louis Dumont at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Centre d’Études de l’Inde et de l’Asie du Sud, in Paris. During this period, he worked out the research he had undertaken in the spring of 1977 with Sjoerd Zanen in Madurai, South India. “The Goddess of the Northern Gate: Cellattamman as the ‘Divine Warrior’ of Madurai” (1979) was one of his earliest papers based on his research in South Asia. For a short period (January-March 1978), he worked in South Sudan in a mission for the Foreign Ministry of the Netherlands with Sjoerd Zanen and Philip Leck Deng, which resulted in several publications on Dinka religion and culture (1978, 1985, and 1987).

From September 1, 1978, until January 1, 1981, he was a Ph.D. student at the University of Leiden under the supervision of P.E. de Josselin de Jong and J.C. Heesterman carrying out research on “The Religious, Social and Political Significance of the Goddess Kali (Devi Durga) in Hindu-Buddhist Society.” For this purpose, he conducted fieldwork in Kathmandu, Nepal, together with Sjoerd Zanen in 1979; in 1979-1982 he was assisted by Bal Gopal Shrestha and Tirtha Narayan Mali.

Having returned to Leiden in May 1982, he regularly participated in seminars of the CASA (Cognitive Anthropology and Structural Anthropology) research group at Leiden and of the ERASME research group at Paris. From April until July 1985 he was assigned by LIDESCO to prepare the working document for the International Symposium on the Cultural Dimension of Development, sponsored by UNESCO. In addition, he published several articles on the same subject (1985, 1986, 1988), arguing its importance for the implementation of anthropological ideas in the development process.

In 1988, he went back to the University of Leiden to expand his language skills and enrolled in the study of Sanskrit and cultural history of South Asia at the Department of Languages and Cultures of South and Central Asia, where he obtained a BA degree in 1989. During this period, together with Bal Gopal Shrestha, he carried out research on the “Sacrifice of Serpents and the Festival of Indrayani in Northern Kathmandu” and on “Fire Sacrifice in Nepal: the Agniimatha in Patan.” For this purpose he was in Nepal during two periods of three months of fieldwork in 1988 and 1989. His knowledge of Sanskrit and Vedic literature is very evident in the published papers from this research.

From 1989 to 1992 he served as the head of the Documentation Centre of South Asia at the University
of Leiden. During this period he managed to add a
wealth of literature on South Asian to the library of the
Kern Institute at Leiden. He was also editor of the
South Asia Newsletter, published by the Universities of
Amsterdam and Leiden in 1989-92. He organized the
Dutch Asia Conference (KOTA) with Dr. Jos D.M.
Platenkamp at Leiden in 1989 and at Amsterdam in
1990. He was also a member of the organizing
committee of the 11th Conference on Modern South
Asian Studies, held in Amsterdam in 1990.

Resigning his post as head of the Documentation
Centre of South Asia in 1992, he took up a position as
research assistant (AoO) to write a Ph.D. thesis on “The
Ritual Structure of Kathmandu, Nepal.” For this
purpose he was in Kathmandu to carry out fieldwork
with Bal Gopal Shrestha from June 15, 1992, to July
14, 1994. During this period, he took lessons in Newar
language with Surendra Man Tuladhar. In November
1992, Dr. Dirk Nijland of Leiden University joined
them to shoot an ethnographic video-film on their
earlier research “Sacrifice of Serpents.” During this
period, Bert participated in a number of conferences and
wrote several research papers such as “The Death
of the Divine Dancers: The Conclusion of Bhadrakali”
(1992), “Guardians of the Royal Goddess: Dakya and
Kumar as the Protectors of Taleju Bhavani of
Kathmandu” (1992), “Kathmandu as a Sacrificial
Arena” (1993) and “Caste and Gender in the Perfect
Buddhist Gift: The Samyak Mahadan in Kathmandu,
Nepal” (1994). His genius is to be seen in all these
writings, which provide penetrating insights into Newar
cultural and ritual life.

In July 1994, Bert was back in Leiden to write up
his Ph.D. thesis at the Centre of Non-Western Studies
(CNWS) under the supervision of Professor
Heesterman. He was one of the most talented students
of Heesterman and took his comments and criticisms
seriously. Accordingly, he tried to revise all chapters in
accordance with his guru’s suggestions, and, more often
than not, he was a perfectionist. He finished a draft
version of the text, but was compelled to leave his
office at the CNWS in December 1996, before being
able to finalize it. This situation was aggravated by
personal problems, including financial constraints and
an addiction to alcohol that never stopped haunting
him.

Nevertheless, he remained active academically and
in 1997 completed the editing of the documentary film
Sacrifice of Serpents, together with Dirk Nijland and
Bal Gopal Shrestha. The film deals with the annual
Newar festival of Indrayani in the northern part of
Kathmandu city and was first screened at the opening
of the festival of South Asian documentaries “Film
It was selected for the seventh Bilan du Film
Ethnographique in Paris, 23-28 March 1998, the
Ethnographic Film Festival ‘Beeld voor Beeld 1998’ in
Amsterdam, 4-7 June 1998, and the Film Festival of the
Society for Visual Anthropology during the Annual
Meeting of the American Anthropological Association
(AAA) in Philadelphia, 2-4 December 1998. On the
latter occasion, the AAA honored the film with an
“Award of Commendation” for making:

“A thorough documentation of a multi-day festival
which is slow paced with spare narration and ‘time to
see’. A depth of Vedic scholarship and many years of
fieldwork by the anthropologist are combined with
Nepalese team assistants who were community
members to make an informed film record of the
event.”

Earlier in 1998, in the wake of the annual meeting
of Asian Scholars in Washington, Bert and Bal Gopal
had been invited to show the film at Cornell, Princeton,
and Harvard Universities as well as in Washington in a
meeting of the Newar community in the USA. The
audience in Nepal and in all other countries where the
film was shown appreciated it for presenting an inside
view of the rituals performed during the Indrayani
festival.

Many scholars in Nepal greatly appreciated Bert
for his scholarly talents. Professor Tirtha Prasad
Mishra, director of the Centre for Nepal and Asian
Studies (CNAS) at Tribhuwan University in
Kathmandu, to which Bert was affiliated until his death,
stated a few weeks before he died that Bert was one of
the most talented foreign scholars working on Nepal.
Professor Kamal Prakash Malli, a prominent Nepalese
scholar from Tribhuwan University, had the following
to say on Bert’s sudden departure:

“His death is, indeed, a great loss to the world of
Indian Studies in general and Nepal Studies in
particular. His work and keen insight into the culture of
the Kathmandu Valley, particularly its festivals and
ritual structure, have always been deep and penetrating,
often ending in brilliant conclusions, synthesizing
indology with anthropological perspectives. Personally,
it is a great loss to me and my colleagues in the
academic community in Nepal, committed to the cause
of the promotion of Newar studies.”

Although Bert’s chief interest in Nepal was the
study of rituals and religious festivals he was also
interested in Nepalese politics, ethnicity, and the
situation of human rights. He published several articles
on Nepalese politics, language issues and social
problems in Nepal Nieuws, a bulletin published in the
Netherlands by a group of activists, of which he was
one of the editors in the 1990s.

In addition to his academic interest in Nepal, Bert
was active in social work and in heritage conservation.
His idea was that scholars working on Nepal should not
only work in their own interests but must also
reciprocate by supporting Nepalese traditions and
cultures. His involvement in fundraising for the restoration of temples and monuments in Nepal was proof of this. For this reason Bert will be remembered especially in Sankhu, a small town near Kathmandu, where a number of religious monuments are being renovated with his active support.

He was a member of several organizations in the Netherlands working in Nepal and India, such as Vereniging Nepal Samaj Nederland (NSN), Vereniging Nederland Nepal (VNN), International Council for Friends of Nepal (ICFON), and Vereniging Nederland India. He was active in establishing a relation based on equality between Nepal and the Netherlands. He was of the view that Nepal has rich traditions of culture, arts and architecture, which fully deserve the attention of countries like the Netherlands. For this purpose he wished to establish a cultural agreement between the Netherlands and Nepal at the governmental level. In 1992–1994, when he was in Nepal, he met Ishor Baral, then vice-chancellor of the Royal Nepal Academy, and drafted a memorandum for the agreement that was not followed up for financial reasons. Bert not only wanted Nepal to be studied by foreign scholars, but also wanted Nepalese scholars to be given chances to study the cultural traditions of Western societies. This led to the appointment of Bal Gopal Shrestha as a Ph.D. student at the CNWS, University of Leiden in September 1996. That same year, Bert drafted a Memorandum of Understanding for co-operation between the University of Leiden and Tribhuvan University. The director of the Research School CNWS, Professor D.H.A. Kolf, played a key role in getting this memorandum signed in January 1997. Bert continued to work on restoration projects in Sankhu, and in July 2000 established a foundation for cultural and scientific exchange between Nepal and the Netherlands (Stichting Culturele en Wetenschappelijke Samenwerking Nepal-Nederland). Its immediate aim was to build a Nepalese style pagoda temple of Ganesh in Leiden; its long-term aim was to spread Nepalese art and culture in the Netherlands and contribute to the preservation of cultural heritage and infrastructure in Kathmandu Valley.

Intending to finalize his dissertation and add to his research data he went to Nepal in August 2000, only to return to the Netherlands for a month towards the end of May in 2001. He again returned to Nepal on July 13, 2001, to continue his research on rituals in Kathmandu. He was very concerned about the political developments in Nepal, including the “palace massacres” of June 1, 2001 and the government struggle against the Maoist movement. Ironically, his departure for India, to participate in an international seminar in Pune, coincided with the declaration of the state of emergency in Nepal on 26 November. In Pune he was expected to present a paper titled “Lingua Franca in Nepal: The Pre-Nationalist, the Nationalist and the Ethnic Discourse” in an international seminar on ‘Language, Modes of Interpretation and the Concepts of Tradition and Modernity’, on 28 November 2001. Unfortunately, he never reached the conference venue, but on his way to Pune was hit by a motor trailer in Mumbai (Bombay) on the early morning of 27 November. He was admitted to the King Edward Memorial Hospital where he died without regaining consciousness on 1 December, at Full Moon (Sakimila punhi).

This was the tragic end of a brilliant man. He has left behind three films and a corpus of published and unpublished papers, including his incomplete Ph.D. dissertation, which he retitled Caturmasa: the Celebration of Death in Kathmandu.

Bert took a lively interest in the cultural tradition of the Newar of Kathmandu Valley. Newars combine Hindu and Buddhist beliefs and practices, which fascinated him. Shortly before the fatal accident, Bert stopped in Lumbini, the birthplace of Buddha in southern Nepal, for a few days. There he was initiated by His Holiness 17th Gyawala Karmapa on 22 November, one week before he died. Respecting his last initiation during Bert’s cremation at Rijswijk, the Netherlands, on 14 December 2001, Kalsang Norbu Gurung, a Tibetan-Nepali monk, was invited to carry out a brief recitation of Buddhist texts and to pray for the eternal peace to Bert’s departed soul. At the same occasion, Bal Gopal Shrestha and his family performed a puja or farewell worship to pay respect to Bert van den Hock and his long association with Newar rituals and traditions, which he admired so much and which he knew much better than most Newars today.

Bert van den Hock made his contributions to South Asian studies by combining his thorough fieldwork-based anthropological research with his profound knowledge of Sanskrit and Vedic literature. This sometimes confused contemporaries as to whether they should consider him an anthropologist or an Indologist. In real life, actually, he was both.

With his departure, a great light has gone out.

Publications A.W. van den Hock

1976b Huwelijks-alliantie op Sumatra, bezien in het licht van het Pandji-thema. Scriptie voor het


1990f "Eindelijk een nieuwe grondwet." Nepal Nieuws No. 4: 2-8.


1991f Vikasa va Sanskriti. Raksha Ntam Nang Jaina. [Development and the Protection of Culture must be carried out simultaneously.] Interview by Bal Gopal Shrestha, conducted in English and translated into Nepali by Bhasa (Newari), published in Inap, a Nepalbhasa Weekly, 9(44), 20 November, pp. 3 and 7.


1992e "Locale verkiezingen locaal beschouwd." Nepal Nieuws No. 3: 4-10.


1995b Presentation of fragments of the Agnimatha film, during the conference 'Film and Ritual' organized by the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique at Nanterre University, Paris, 26-28 October. Showing video material about the Darsapurnama ritual in the Agnimatha in Patan, which takes place every fortnight to guarantee the continuation of the cycle of the moon.


1997 Ethnicity and Pre-ethnicity in Nepal: The Case of Indrayatra in Kathmandu. Unpublished paper presented at a special meeting of the Nepal Bhasa Academy in Hotel Vajra, Kathmandu, 23 December. (Broad press coverage in the vernacular press, including a
first-page headline in the national newspaper Gorkhapatra)

1998 (with Erik de Maaker, Dirk Nijland and Bal Gopal Shrestha) "Film South Asia 1997." IIAS Newsletter No. 16, p. 16.

1998 "Sacrifice of Serpents: the Festival of Indrayani." Presentation of documentary film with a lecture at Cornell University, Ithaca, 30 March; Department of Anthropology of Princeton University, NJ, 7 April; Department of Anthropology and Department of Sanskrit of Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, 16-17 April; Ethnographic Filmfestival 'Beeld voor Beeld 1998' in Amsterdam, 4-7 June; International Convention of Asian Scholars (ICAS-1), panel 'Film South Asia', Noordwijk, the Netherlands, 25-28 June; Filmfestival of the Society for Visual Anthropology, Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Philadelphia, 2-4 December 1998.


2001c Sadness and Suspicion: A Tribute to the late King Birendra (Amsterdam 10 June 2001). Sent to Kanak Dixit, editor of Himal South-Asia, after 20 June. Typescript, 3 pp.


In preparation


n.d.<av> (Film, with Dirk J. Nijland & Bal Gopal Shrestha) Agnimatha, the Fire Temple in Patan.

n.d.<av> (Film, with Dirk J. Nijland & Rajendra Shrestha) Pacali Bhairava, the Festival of Liquor and Death.

Newah Language Workshop

Newah Bhaye Jyāsah

Tribhuvan R. Tuladhar
Newah Organization of America, USA

Introduction:

One of the sessions in the second convention of Newah organization of America (NOA) was started as language workshop or Newah Bhaye Jyāsah. It was intended to make it as interactive as possible among the attendants. The session talked about a state of Newah language in general and then asked to fill a short survey that would help to understand where the Newah people are in terms of Newah community in the US. With the help of Hariman Shrestha and Daya Shakya a short class or workshop of the Newah Language was conducted and discussed on the state of Newah language and how/our heads we can put together to tackle this problem.

The Dilemma:

At that moment I had a problem, and I called it a dilemma. The fact was that in order to talk about Newah language I had to use the English language. This was a dilemma that we face very often and quiet difficult to balance. Isn’t it a misfortune that in order to talk about own language Newah people have to do it in English? In fact, it was started in English and ended in Newah language.

The State of the Language:

Frankly speaking, the Newah language is in a very precarious state. The language spoken by Newah people is in much worse shape than it was twenty years ago, and with passage of every day, week and month, it seems to get worse and worse. This trend is causing much alarm to them. Newah language is on the downward turn and some of the numbers from the 1991 Census proves that they will go thru these numbers shortly.

More and more Newah people and especially the younger generation tend to speak less and less of the Newah language. We know that some of the reasons are obvious but some of them we still do not know. The present situation is not a unique to Newah speaking populace only, but also it is true for other language speaking people in Nepal and of course around the world too.

The time has come to Newah community to think much harder and deeper and spent some real "sleepless nights" to get to the bottom of it.

Language and culture are inseparable. If language dies the rest of culture and history becomes mute and die away too. It is naïve to think that by not speaking the language Newah people can still keep their Cultural Heritage live and strong and claim themselves as Newah. In fact, language is the mainstay of any viable culture. It is the mouthpiece, the voice, the loud-speaker of the culture. It is the expression of their mind, thought and emotions. It is only thru language they can tell others of their Culture and history. This is also true of all other languages and dialects in Nepal. Nepali language itself is not immune to this. There are languages like English that dominate the world and Nepalese people in America speak more English than Nepali. Language is said to be the window into own mind, as eyes are said to be windows to the world. Mother tongue or language is very important for any culture and history to survive and specially like the Newah people who are very history bound, the effort to keep language and culture alive cannot be calculated in economic benefits alone there is much more at stake than just economics.

Some Hard Facts:

To be truthful, the Newah language life span has become very short. If the present trend continues the life span of the language will be something between 40-75 years. This is just a parametric calculation. Lots of circumstances will play into it and they do not know how things will turn up. Many factors depend on themselves alone. Here is some facts:
According to the Worldwatch Institute, a private organization that monitors global trends says half of world's 6,800 languages could die by 2100. One reason is that half of all languages are spoken by fewer than 2,500 people each.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age group</th>
<th>Popul. No</th>
<th>Speak</th>
<th>Read &amp; Write</th>
<th>Understand</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Up to 20</td>
<td>333K</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-45</td>
<td>333K</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 &amp; up</td>
<td>343K</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Languages need at least 100,000 speakers to pass from generation to generation, says UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. War and genocide, fatal natural disasters, the adoption of more dominant languages, and government bans on language also contribute to their demise.

It is reminded here again that this critical mass number 100,000, minimum number of speakers required to pass language from one generation to another.

The 1991 Census of the Kingdom of Nepal put the total Newah population in the country at 1,041,090 or 4.63% of the total population of Nepal. There are 825,458 Newah people or 3.66% of the population that speak their mother tongue. Deductively, there are about 215,632 who do not consider Newah as their mother tongue i.e. more than 20 percent who have given up Newah as their mother language.

The Here are some other numbers are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nepali</td>
<td>11053255</td>
<td>48.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maithali</td>
<td>2797582</td>
<td>12.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhojpuri</td>
<td>1712536</td>
<td>7.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tharu</td>
<td>1331546</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamang</td>
<td>1179145</td>
<td>5.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newar</td>
<td>825458</td>
<td>3.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magar</td>
<td>770116</td>
<td>3.41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here is the dynamics of people speaking Newah language over the decade:

- 1961: 4.01% of the population
- 1971: 3.94% of the population
- 1981: 2.99% of the population
- 1991: 3.73% of the population

This shows the trend is in downward. And of course they do have to verify even the numbers adopted in the national census. But for now that is the basis. Since 1991 to 2003 some 12 years have passed and the trend seems to have accelerated. They need to update their numbers. But anyway, here is some rough and hypothetical calculation and assumptions I have made.

Newars are little more over a million. Hypothetically, If the population is broken into three age groups a half of the Newah people do not speak Newah language even at present.

From the above calculation there are only 509,000 Newah who can speak the language and many of them cannot read and write. This is simple arithmetic.

Even if considering the life expectancy of 70 for Newah people, in the next 25 years the group of 45 and over will die and the numbers of people speaking the language will diminish clearly by 345,000. So 164,00 people will be speaking the language. The number is pretty low. Isn't that scary? It is getting very close to the Critical Mass number of 100,000 minimum required to keep any language alive.

If the present younger generation, which does not speak the language, is allowed to remain as it is, then in the next 10-15 years the Newah speaking populace will dwindle to less than 100,00, which brings to the critical number of 100,000 speakers. Hypothetically, in the worst case scenario Newah language has a life span of 40 or more years to reach the critical mass of 100,000 speaker, a language in the endangered list and where after it won't take much more time to be extinct if nothing is done to change this. At the turn of the century the 22nd Century, of course when currently alive Newah people are dead, Newah language will be in the column of EXTINCT LANGUAGES of the world according to World Watch Institute and will be in the history books of the world as such. Imaging the Newah children will not be speaking Newah language anymore and won't know that their parents were of Newah culture.

Even in the best case scenario the prospect is still precarious and this trend has to be reversed. The Newah community needs to think about this quietly seriously and ponder over this reality. It's imperative that they should all come together to change this trend to rejuvenate this process back to health.

**An Initiative Step of NOA**

Based on many of these concerns and assumptions NOA has taken the initiative to undertake the formation of Newah Language Class. NOA formally adopted the proposal made at the First convention May 25th 2002 to establish a Nepal Bhasa Language Class for the first time in the Washington DC, US to teach and learn Nepal Bhasa (Newah Bhyā). This important decision will go a long way to keep language and cultural identity alive. It is nearly a year, and it has not been able to take it off the ground. The support and enthusiasm as well as volunteerism and activism are...
required. Mr. Deepak Shrestha and Sunil Shrestha have already agreed to offer NOA fully equipped classrooms at Global Computer Training Center in Springfield and NOA thank him for this great gesture. Mr. Daya Shukla, Hariman Shrestha, Tribhuvan Tuladhar and others are putting heads together to come up with an interesting and fun-filled viable curriculum and program to teach this difficult language. But if NOA does not get people wishing to learn the language this program is not even good as the paper it is written on. To understand the wishes and desire of the community a set of questions in the Survey form was distributed to fill them up to understand where the Newah people are with respect to the language initiative.

The Goal:

The goal and purpose of this program and measure of its success is very simple: it is just "One Newah person, one Newah word, at a time." If one can make you speak a new Newah word a day, it means the success has already begun. This is the bottom line.

Development in the Grass-root Level:

Even though there seem to be a constant output of literary works like stories, poems article and other writing from well known authors and writers, what I do not see is the attempt to stop this downward trend of the language. More and more people of the younger generation are speaking less and less of own language. I ask myself what is the use of all literary works by renowned authors and writers when there will be no one to read or understand them. It has to be started from the very beginning and learn how to speak, listen and understand elementary Newah language. It is important that each of them must know how to speak, read and write the Newah language. They need to make sure that mothers of young children know Newah language. This is where the new generation will get the first Newah word from the mouth of their mother. Without the parent knowing the language the children will never learn the language. In a household where the parents do not speak the language the children will never speak it either. This is where Newah people can start.

Newah as a Second and First language

In the realm of the nations Newah can only achieve the status of second language or even third language. A Newah person must have a confidence in his vocabulary. Isn't it good to learn one more languages like French, German, Russian, Chinese, Newah language? But in the boundaries of our homes Newah language has to be our first language.

Finally:

Soon after, the NOA tried to design a very good and interesting language program. They would like to see the rest of the community pitch in with positive ideas and initiatives and make this program fun and interesting rather than a mundane learning process of un-interesting lingo. There are many innovative ways to do it and it was confident that it would be able to come up with a good program that is fun, enjoyable and at the same time educational.

At the end of the session survey forms were distributed to collect the suggestion, and volunteers were selected. From this group of volunteers and collected survey forms. The NOA took an initiative step to implement the class in the Washington DC.

In Context of Teaching Newah Language to Children

As mentioned above, the Newah language speakers are in rapid decline and the future is not going to be good if the trend continues. There is enough evidence to suggest that if the trend continues, the language will not survive beyond the third quarter of this century. However, small steps need to be taken at every level to reverse this trend. In-fact, it would not be out of place to undertake a national and international effort to bring about the required changes so as to nurse the language back to strength and popularity. NOA has worked hard towards fulfilling the important goal.

A year ago, a local survey was conducted asking various aspect of our culture and many questions were about native language. The survey clearly suggested that majority of the community members supported the idea of the having a language class amidst them, but at the same time, there were skeptics who questioned the need, usefulness and economic benefit of such an endeavor to individuals of the community. On the reality side too, there were many of them who would not speak the native language at home for various reasons of their own. It is rather paradoxical to know that they themselves would not want to speak and learn their own native language, and will not try to find use of the language in daily lives, either in form of daily conversation, writing stories, songs, and poems. than who else will!

Nevertheless, the Newah class was formally launched and NOA Language Center (NLC) was born. Classes were devised, and in anticipation of sufficient participation from the community, it befell on only few concerned families to go ahead with the program. The class was officially inaugurated by NOA president Mr. Beda Pradhan on September 7th 2003.
Taking Kids to Task

The call went out to all, youth and adult members of the community, but not many showed interest or enthusiasm at that time. The only way this program could be launched is by taking own kids to task. To begin with the kids was just perfect. The new minds and subtle fingers soon went to work and every three weeks the classes started to happen. No one of them was sure how long this could go on, but the kids surprised them all and they stood their ground and forged head-on to learn a completely new and difficult language. The mothers of the kids became “ Gurumas” teachers and the kids became the first group of students that started to learn their native Newah language in America.

NOA had an on-going class comprising of six young kids of ages 6 to 12 from three families. Their participation is very regular and well attended, and the students are learning quiet well, and have made some good amount of achievement in this short span of time. Even though it may look as a family affair and the classes are being held each time at each family’s home, it is perhaps the best environment where the kids feel happy, friendly and secure to be able to learn a completely new language. The progress of the kids in learning a new language is very encouraging and even though their “Gurumas” are their own parents, they respect them and learn from them as if they were formal teachers. The essences and importance of cultural heritage is slowly being passed on to a new generation.

A typical day at the Newah class is quiet simple. The class is of 1-1/2 or 2 hours duration and broken up into two parts. The first part went into reading and writing of alphabet, vowels and numbers while after the break when the kids feel a bit tired the time is spent on learning verbal skills of saying aloud Newah words like body parts, things, places, and learn some verbs and pronouns. Lately, for the NOA Convention the kids were learning a Newah song, which they had sung together. It was a great experience for all as parents and teachers found society, even though they could not express the cultural heritage and linkage of their children to themselves.

Another interesting aspect was the numerous instances a parent would hear kids ask, “When is the next Newah class? Is it this Sunday?” Once, one of them were late and was heard saying “we were late last time, we should go now, we do not want to be late again”. Many times they asked if they could have more frequent classes.

Well, this was quiet an experience, and as they know, the Newah class has begun and will have a life of its own. Going by the attitude of the young students it give NOA confidence that teaching and learning own native language is a viable endeavor and a fruitful one. I do not know how economically beneficial it maybe, as one asked, but, I can say now that the life of our Newah language has been extended for a couple more years. With the help of new generation one can make contribution and advancement to the heritage we/his has been born into.

Teaching Kids and Learning from Them in Return

During the last 6 months of classes NOA did not hear the kids complain even once. No one said that the studying and even writing of the Newah language was boring, difficult, and they did not say that they did not want to learn anymore. On the contrary, when the classes were held every three weeks the kids were anxious to know when was the next Newah class. It seems that three weeks interval was a long wait for them. The kids showed maximum co-operation, enthusiasm and understanding of what this whole activity was all about. This is some lesson the grown up can learn from the kids. The parents have learnt a lot from the kids. All the kids interacted with each other very well despite of some age difference. At break time between session and after end of class they would play together for hours and parent had to get them to go home eventually. The feeling I got from the way the kids held on to the classes was that they felt proud of what they were doing and understood how this could help them find their identity and place in the such a sentiment. It was apparent that through the classes conducted, they found society, even though they could not express the cultural heritage and linkage of their parents to themselves.

More Language They Learn the Better

For first time learners, the Newah language should be taken as learning any other language, like French, German or Spanish. The only difference in this particular case happens to be that it is their native language or mother tongue. Newah language should be made a second language in their community and homes, and English will remain to be the first language. It is always good to know more than one language in lifetime. The more different languages one learn, the better his or her understanding of people around the world. Research has shown that bi-lingual and multi-lingual individuals have better aptitude for deductive and analytical frame of mind and are good in mathematics and science.
Cultural, Spiritual and Nutritional Value of Samaybaji

Nirmala Rajbhandari
North Carolina, USA

Introduction

Foods and festivals are important aspects of Newah culture that has the ability to strengthen an entire network of social and cultural relationship in the Newah community. This article discusses the features and values of ingredients used for preparation of ‘Samaybaji’, a cuisine of Newah people. It also sheds light on socio-cultural, spiritual and nutritional values of ‘Samaybaji’ as well as the method of preparation along with recipes.

Many festivals celebrated by Newah people are named after certain types of food served on the occasion, for instances the festival of Yomari puñhi, Sakimanapuñhi, and Ghyachāku Santhinu etc. The primary food used during these occasions are ‘Yomari’, the conical shaped steamed dumplings filled with sesame seed and sweet sauce, steamed yam and sweet potatoes, molasses, ghee and sesame balls respectively. All these festival names are self explanatory for what to expect on a particular day. To understand the samaybaji meal, it is necessary to know the variety of meals in Newah cultural cuisine. There are several types of Newah meals that can be categorized as follows:

1. “Bhoye” is considered as ceremonial feast containing wide variety of dishes
2. “Samaybaji” as sacramental food containing of steamed and flattened rice known as baji (or chiurra in Nepal) with other side dishes
3. “Jyona” and “Byelci” as daily meals: lunch and dinner containing cooked rice, lentil, vegetable and pickled sauces or salad.

Among several varieties of Newah meal, samaybaji is symbolized as a popular, important and spiritually accepted meal to be offered to various divine beings. Because of its taste, nutritional value, social bonding and convenience of preparation, the samaybaji cuisine is taking place as popular meal among the Newah community in homeland as well as in the foreign countries. It is an important meal that shows various aspects of cultural and spiritual domain of Newah people. It is also considered as an ancient and classical type of food consumed by them. Besides, the samaybaji meal also shows a strong component of natural dietary requirements to stay healthy irrespective of age and sex.

Samaybaji, a kind of Newah cuisine that represents the nine ingredients such as, beaten rice, puffed rice, meat, fish, egg, lentil cake, ginger, roasted black soybean, and a side dish of green vegetable, is offered in a ceremony of fire sacrifice (David N. Gellner, 1992). Other Hindus often say the constituent of samaybaji is a substitute for animal sacrifice. The five elements represent beaten rice, black soybean, fresh ginger, meat and liquor.

Generally, the samaybaji is served in a leaf plate ‘lapa’ or bowl ‘behtā’, especially stitched together using leaves of Sal tree (Sorea robusta). There is a popular Newah folk song about colorful combination of items used for samaybaji on green leaf plate and beauty of a lovely Newah girl who serves it. The first few lines of the song go as follow:

“Wanglu lapte tayu baji, hākumusyā kyā majā
Pālu chiurralā dyone tayu boyatala jhan bānla......
Lali da mhnusyā miyha ajan chhānaya
Jhēr mayaja myąchona hisin bhayabika......”

An existence of this folk song shows vitality of an old tradition of the samaybaji meal in Newah community. In the United States of America, most gatherings of Newah people samaybaji meal is served to keep the tradition alive.

There is another legendary story behind the samaybaji. It goes back to history of fetching the well-known deity, Rato Maheshnāth or Karunānaya, to Patan from the Kamru Kamkshyā in Assam, India.
Social and Cultural Aspects of Samaybaji:

Samaybaji is deeply rooted into ritual and religion of Newah people. The significant meaning of its adoption in Newah culture seems emerged when Rato Matshendranāth was brought to Kathmandu valley to relieve the drought. The tantric priest Bandhu Darlatta Acharya demonstrated a powerful tantric ritual using the pujā basket consisting of Madhya mārśar with samaybaji and thon (soft liquor). The tantric priest gave away a handful of samaybaji to the demons and devils, and satisfied their instinct of hunger. The priest did not encounter any problem in bringing the Rato Matshendranāth to the Nepal valley. Since then a tradition to worship deities with samaybaji was adopted to receive blessing in one’s life.

In addition, the festival of Indrajatra can be taken as another example of using samaybaji meal. Indrajatra is one of the biggest festivals celebrated in Newah culture. During this festival the Akash Bhairav located in Indra Chowk, Kathmandu is worshiped by displaying huge quantities of offering of samaybaji right in front of its image. A huge pile of samaybaji is very nicely displayed and decorated with various dishes of food items and garnishes. The visiting devotees get a handful of it as the prasad from the deity.

On that night, children visit door to door in the neighborhood asking for a treat of samaybaji with pieces of meat. The popular rhythm of asking samaybaji in Newah language is “La chhaku wayaka samaybaji, wala wala pulu kisi”. It is of course similar tradition to “Trick or Treat” during the Halloween night in the USA. Similar usage of samaybaji can be found in Dashain, Saraswati puja, and Guthi gatherings.

Spiritual Aspect of Samaybaji:

The ritualistic tradition or “pujā” observed in Newah culture is mainly categories into two. The first category is ‘Nītā-pujā’ the daily rituals and the other is ‘Lāstā-pujā’ the occasional rituals. The Lāstā-pujā is performed during festivals like Indra jatra, Matshendranāth jatra, Mohani (Dashain), Swonti (Tihar), Sitihi nukha, Yamari puja, etc. and some personal occasions like janmanhi ‘birthday’, macha jankō ‘rice feeding ceremony’, kavata puja (bratappidha), ‘initiation’, ‘thi, bahra’ and so on.

Significantly, the spiritual value of samaybaji is noticeable on all the occasion of Lāstā-pujā. Generally, the Newah people worship two types of deities categorized into amaya food receiver and non-amaya food receiver. Simply the amaya food includes meat, fish, egg, legumes, garlic, onion and liquor. Samaybaji is offered to those deities who take amaya food items. In Newah tradition, the tantrism is deeply established in spiritual domain. The tantric deities such as Kumārī, Ajimā, Bārāhī, Bhadrakāhi, Bhaiwā, Swetkāhi, Mahakāli, Sankata, Bhagabhuti, Ganesh Kumār, Bhimsen, Gaheswari, Bhavani, Jogini, Lukumahadev, Kāli and all pitha devatas etc. take the amaya meal. The samaybaji meal is not offered to non-amaya deities that includes Rama, Krishna, Vishnu, Narayan, Hanuman, Buddha, Lokeswar and to all types of Buddhist Chaityas (stupas). Obviously, when a tantric ritual is performed the amaya food becomes necessary. One of the amaya foods can be identified as the samaybaji meal.

Nutritional Aspect of Samaybaji:

The other important aspect is the discussion of nutritional value of food items used in preparation of the samaybaji meal. Generally, the samaybaji contains Bajī (beaten rice), Chhuyala (roasted or steamed meat dish), and Sanyā (dry fish, Musā (soybeans), Lāvā (garlic) and Palu (fresh ginger). The list of food items listed by Amaty (1995) is very common in Newah community in Lalitpur, Nepal. Every food item consumed by Newah people contains some sort of chemicals that include carbohydrate, fat, mineral, vitamin, and enzyme. These elements are very essential for function of different parts of body as discussed below.

Carbohydrate: Carbohydrate is body fuel and it gives energy to maintain the daily work. Even at rest, body needs energy for growth, repair, and maintenance. For these all activities, energy comes from consuming carbohydrate.

Protein: Protein is essential constituents of all human cells, controlling vital process such as metabolism and providing structural basis of body tissues, muscle and skin. It enables body to grow and repair itself and also plays a role in protecting the body against infection.

Vitamins: Vitamins are substances that humans need to keep their body functioning. Vitamins regulate biochemical process such as growth, metabolism, cellular reproduction, digestion, and the oxidation of blood.

Minerals: Minerals are vital for developing and maintaining body function. They are essential components of critical enzymes that help the body to break down food.

Fats: Fats are excellent source of energy. They facilitate the absorption of fat-soluble vitamins and certain fatty acids, are essential for good health. To make sure that the diet is healthful, one need to know which type of fats and oils are good for health and
which are harmful. Wide range of food contains fats. All most all food contains more than one type of fat. Saturated fats are bad whereas unsaturated fats like monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats are good.

Listed below are food items used in samaybaji. All these food items belong to one of the essential food group mentioned above.

Baji/Syabaji (Chitra/Golphuki, flattened/puffed rice): This baji being flattened rice provides carbohydrate whose energy properties fuel the body and brain. It also has vitamin B, calcium, iron, sodium and some fiber.

Chhoelâ (Sekwâ or Usineko māsu, roasted meat): Chhoelâ like any other meat are good source of protein which provides amino acids necessary for the growth, development and maintenance of the body. It also contains valuable quantities of the B vitamins, especially vitamin B12, which is not found in plant food. It also contains vitamin A and vitamin D.

Nya (Sidrâ Mâchhâ, Sardin/Anchovies): This is another good source of protein. It has high omega-3 fatty acids, which appears to reduce blood clotting to prevent strokes and heart attacks. This also helps to reduce cancer possibility.

Khêh (Andâ, Egg): Eggs are natural source of goodness because it contains so many nutrients. Egg is an excellent source of high quality protein. It contains all nine essential amino acids, and makes a complete protein including significant numbers of vitamins and minerals.

Woh (Bârâ, Lentil Cake): Lentil ranks as a highly nutritious food group and they provide plenty of fiber. Not only fiber but lentil also supplies useful complex carbohydrates, vitamins, iron and minerals.

Musyâ (Bhatmas, Soybean): Musyâ supply complete protein with all eight essential amino acids. It also contains phyto-estrogens, which help to reduce menopause symptom and may also help breast cancer and osteoporosis. It is a good source of fiber, which help to eliminate cholesterol from body. Furthermore, its vitamins include vitamin B3, B6 and vitamin E. It also has potassium, magnesium, iron, copper, and phosphorous.

Lâbhâ (Lasun, Garlic): Garlic appears to be a miracle food. Allicin content in garlic has antibiotic effect, reduce unhealthy fats and cholesterol. It also contains antioxidants that reduces blood clotting and also has some chemical which help against cancer.

Pâlu (Aduwa, Ginger): Ginger has natural anti-inflammatory properties. It also is a great natural preservatives, bactericide. It has a chemical called papain, which acts as meat tenderizer. Ginger also stimulates circulation and keeps body warm.

Alu (Potato): Alu has plenty of energy-providing carbohydrate. When cooked potatoes are left unpeeled, it conserves most of vitamin B and C that it contains and the boiled potato used in samaybaji helps retain its valuable vitamin. Moreover, potatoes also supply potassium and magnesium which help to control high blood pressure.

Bhuti (Bodi, Black eye pea): This is rich in fiber which helps to eliminate cholesterol from the body and is good source of folate, potassium, low in sodium to reduce blood pressure, and also low in fat. Beans also have protease inhibitor, which suppress cancerous cell.

Tukancha (Sag, Mustard green): For health enthusiast tukancha is low in calories, and not only is it fat free but also it is cholesterol free. It is very rich in vitamins and minerals. It is a very good source of riboflavin, potassium, calcium, and iron.

Methods of preparation and the recipe for Samaybaji:

Most of recipes are made for 500 gm of food item, which is little bit over one pound (440 gm =1 pound). Any kind of cooking oil can be used for recipe. To have really a Newah flavor, use mustered oil. To maintain the good flavor of Newah cuisine, it is advisable to use fresh garlic and ginger all the time, but powdered garlic and ginger are also acceptable.

1. Chuyala (Poleko masu, Roasted meat):

   **Ingredients:**
   - 500 gm of chicken or pork
   - 1 tbsp ginger, minced
   - 2 tbsp garlic, minced
   - ½ red chili powder or according to taste
   - 2 green chilies sliced
   - 5 garlic cloves, sliced
   - 2 tbsp mustard oil
   - 1/4 tsp fenugreek seeds
   - Salt to taste

   **Procedure:** Boil meat with little water as possible. Cook the meat until it is brownish on the bottom. Upon cooling, cut into small pieces. Marinate meat with ginger in a bowl and cover for 5 minutes. Ginger will...
help to tender the meat. Add garlic, chili, and salt, in the meat and mix well. In a small pan, heat oil. Add fenugreek seeds in heated oil, when fenugreek seeds turn golden brown black add sliced green chili pepper and sliced garlic and turmeric, and immediately pour into the meat. Mix well. You might like to add some water to make chaola juicy. Serve cold.

Note: Any meat can be used. follow the same cooking method. Mustard oil can be replaced with any kind of cooking oil.

2. (San)-nya (Sidra Macha, dry Anchovies):

Ingredients:
- 100 gm sardine
- Dab of oil
- Pinch of chili powder.

Procedure: Roast dry anchovies until golden brown. Add little bit of chili powder and oil. Mix well and serve cold.

3. Khen (Anda Tareko, Fried hard boil eggs):

Ingredients:
- 12 Eggs
- Cumin powder
- Pinch of turmeric powder
- 1 tbsp mustard oil
- Salt to taste

Procedure: Boil eggs until well done. Then peel them and cut into halves. In a small pan, heat little oil. Add turmeric powder, salt and eggs. Cook eggs in medium until golden brown turn on one side, then turn them upside down and do the same thing. Add cumin powder at the end mix and serve. It can be served hot or cold, but with samaybaji always served cold.

Note: Eggs can pop when pressure builds (inside egg) by temperature. Be careful.

4. Wo (Bara. Beans Cake):

Ingredients:
- 500 gm split pulse, soak over night in water
- 1 tsp of garlic crushed
- 1 tsp of ginger crushed
- Pinch of asafoetida powder (hing)
- 1/4 cup mustard oil
- Salt to taste

Procedure: Grind the soaked pulse into fine pieces using grinder. Add garlic, ginger, salt, and asafoetida into pulse batter, mix well. In a thick 12" pan, heat little oil in medium/low heat; add a tablespoon of the batter in 4 or 5 places, then spread the batter to make a circle like a small pancake. Cook until golden brown. Turn upside down with the help of a spatula. Cook this side also until golden brown. Remove from the pan. Cool on paper towel. After cooling you can put in a plate. Repeat until all batter is gone.

5. Musya Wala (Bhatmas Sandheko, Soybeans):

Ingredients
- 500 gm soybean, dry
- Dab of oil
- 1/8 tsp cumin powder
- Pinch of chili powder
- Salt according to taste

Procedure: Roast soybean in a thick pan dry until it splits. Add little bit of chili powder, salt, cumin powder and oil. Mix well and serve cold.

6. Lava (Lasun Ilhuteko, fried garlic):

Ingredients
- 100 gm of whole garlic
- 1/8 tsp cumin powder
- Salt to taste
- Oil

Procedure: Slice the garlic clove into half. Remove scales. Heat little oil in the pan; add sliced garlic, salt, cumin, and turmeric. Cook only for 2 minutes or until the hot test of garlic goes away. Add cumin powder mix well and serve.

7. Palu (Aduwa Bhuteko, Fresh Ginger)

Ingredients
- 100 gm of whole ginger
- Salt according to taste
- Oil

Procedure: Peel skin off of ginger, wash and slice into small about a 1/2 inch long. Heat little oil in a pan; add ginger, salt, cumin and cook for 1-2 minutes. Serve cold.

8. Alu Achar (Potato Salad):
Ingredients

10-12 medium size potato
1/4 cup sesame seed, roasted, crushed
2-3 green chilies (according to test)
1/4 tsp turmeric
tsp lemon juice
1-2 tbsp mustard
Coriander leaves
1 tsp chili powder
Salt to taste

Procedure: Boil and peel potatoes. Cut them into small pieces. Add sesame seed, chili powder, green chilies, turmeric, lemon juice, salt, and mustard oil. Mix well. You might need to add some water to make nice texture. Garnish with coriander and serve cold.

9. Bhuti wala (Bodi Sandheko, Black eye beans):

Ingredients

500 gm black eye pea soaked in water over night.
1/4 red chili powder or according to taste
1/2 tsp crushed garlic
1/2 tsp crushed ginger
Pinch of turmeric powder
Salt to taste

Procedure: Boil black eye pea with little water until fully cooked. Upon cooling, add chili powder, salt, garlic, and ginger on to black eye pea. In a small pan, heat little oil. Add turmeric powder in heated oil then immediately pour into pea. Serve cold.

10. Tukancha wala (Toriko ság, Mustard Green):

Ingredients

500 gm mustard green, washed, cut into small piece
1/4 red chili powder or according to taste
5 garlic cloves, sliced
Salt according to taste
Whole dried red chili
Oil
Asafoetida (hing)

Procedure: In a pan, boil mustard green with high flame for 5 minutes or until wilt. It is not necessary to add water. All green leafy vegetable comes with lots of water. In between 5 minutes, turn green upside down. Do not over cook. Upon cooling, add chili powder, salt on to green mustard. In a small pan, heat some oil.

Add asafoetida, sliced whole chili pepper and garlic, immediately pour into mustard. Mix well. Also, mustard green can be replaced by any green, leafy vegetable. Follow above procedure to make the dish.

Conclusion:

Newah people’s life is inseparable from use of samaybaji. For any kind of social, cultural and spiritual activities, samaybaji plays an important role. Also the nine food items that signify the meaning of samaybaji came to be a complete balanced diet. It contained all food groups like carbohydrates, proteins, vitamins, and minerals. It is amazing that how the Newah people at that time were so wise to combine different food group, and the way of cooking to match with present scientific knowledge on nutritional value and health awareness. I definitely think that our forefathers were not far behind than present nutritionist. None of the food in samaybaji is fried or over cooked, just perfect to maintain all vitamins and mineral nutrients. From the recipe, you know that almost all the foods are boiled and grilled, then seasoned with some spices and oil. All spices also contained essential elements for good health example capsicum from chilies, allcin from garlic, bactericide effect from turmeric and many more. I became particularly intrigued by the contents and its nutritional value, which I tried to briefly explain above with best of knowledge and experience.

Notes:

1 The terms Jyana and Byeli represent first and last meal of the day and the Newah people simply use jau nadvgu “eating rice” for consuming lunch or dinner. That is why they say keamaye dhanalä as greetings when they meet some one in the late morning or evening.
2 The further explanation and discussion on the meaning of such activities are beyond the scope of this paper.
3 The Chicken and Pork are not used for ritualistic purpose whereas buffalo meat is acceptable.

References:

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Obituary

Bhikkhu Sudarsan Mahasthaivir
By: Rajani Maharjan

On July 2nd 2002, the "Sandhya Times" Nepal Bhasha daily newspaper published a sad and heart breaking news on demise of a Nepal Bhasha literary figure Ven. Bhikshu Sudarshan Mahasthaivir. He is popularly known as Sudarshan Bhante and his family name was Lumbini Raj Shakya.

Sudarshan Bhante took ordination in Theravada Buddhism on July 1st, 1938 and thereafter he was named Shrmaner Saudarshn. This is an irreparable loss for Newar community as well as for the Nepal Bhasha literature, in the Theravada Buddhist tradition of Nepal and in the field of Buddhist research studies at the Tribhuvan University. He resumed teaching career from a primary school in Palpa, Tansen in 1950 and later joined the Ananda Kuti Bidhyapith Boarding School, Kathmandu in 1955. Since it was founded by Ven. Amritananda Mahastha vira, he continued this teaching until 1971 then he became the School Superintendent until 1975. After finishing his post graduate degree in Nepal Studies at the Tribhuvan University he took a position of teaching at the Department of Nepalese history, culture and Archaeology. By the time of his expiration Bhante Sudarshn was recognized as a reader in the department of Post Graduate Degree in Buddhist Studies (PGDBS) in Tribhuvan University. He was 62 years old.

Another aspect of his life long contribution is his dedication of building up the Nepal Bhasha Literature. He has been recognized as the well known drama and non-fiction writer. His literary works so far published are as follows:

Juja java prakash (drama)
Nepalaiie Rahul (Non fiction)(1085)
Ambapuati (drama)
Lekuli sindhartha (2509)
Prasudha
swânyâ punhit (2510)
Supriva
Dhâhângâ mangala
Aasankâ
Ashâda punhit(?)
Vijaya
Vidhartha vabuddhawo prâjita(?)
Rastrapâku

Mâ bau vâ sewa(1087)
Bimbashâ(1089)
Dubbi(1087)
Patachâra wa Siddhârtha
Chatur poojâ(2510)
Singhâ Sartha bâhu wa kabir Kuma(1088)
Bisweye Budha Dharma part-1(1088)
Bisweye Budha Dharma part -2(1089)
Budha kalin Jamba dwipya chagu parichaya(2512)
Pâli Tripitaka parichaya
Maha Budha Chau Purchaya(1101)
Budha Dharma vâ Mool Siddhânta
Isamanka Baha pin(1090)
Budha Dharma Sambadhi grantha suchi

As a Buddhist monk, he traveled many countries to participate in the Buddhism related conference representing Nepalese Buddhists circle. To name a few he has participated in the World Buddhist Conference in 1956 in Calcutta, India. In 1963 he has also attended the 11th Asian Buddhist Conference in China. Similarly, Bhikku Sudarshn has visited Hong Kong, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, USA, Israel and so on in connection with participation and presentation of his speeches and papers in seminars and conferences. In addition, he was honored with a membership to the Supreme Tathâgata Fellowship Committee and led a delegation to China on behalf of Tibetan Dharmodaya Sabha the leading Nepalese Buddhist Association. He was not only an activist and strong supporter of Buddhist tradition but also a well known, dedicated, recognized activist for promotion of Nepal Bhasa, the language of Newar people. He worked as the editor for Dharmodaya monthly in 1953-54 and also edited Lumbini and Nepal Bhasa Patrikaa. He also worked as a vice chancellor of Nepal Basha Academy. By the time he passed away he had written a couple of dozen of books relating to Nepal Bhasa and Buddhist literature. He was honored with Title of Natak Samrât (An Emperor of Nepal Bhasha Drama) and honored with awards “Shrestha Sirpâ” and “Mahendra Vidhya Bhushan”. His drama books were prescribed in the Higher Studies of Nepal Bhasha Literature. In the final stage of his life he has founded the Sri Kirti Vihar in Kirtipur and became chairman and vice chairman in many of the schools and Buddhists institutions.
Conferences, Conventions, Seminar, Exhibitions, and Lecture Programs

Conventions and Annual Meetings

The first convention of Newah Organization of America (NOA) and seminar on “Newah Jhii Newah hey jui”
May 26th 2002 Washington DC USA.

Newah Organization of America concluded its first Convention for the year 2002 in Washington Metropolitan Area. The convention was inaugurated by the Royal Nepalese Embassy Councilor Mr. Dinesh Bhattarai by lighting of the traditional twadeva lamp. Mr. Beda Pradhan welcomed the participants and thanked them for their support and encouragement. Mr. Tribhuvan Tuladhar, coordinator of the Adhoc committee, presented the Organization’s report. Mr. Balaram Joshi presented the financial statement. Mr. Hariman Shrestha thanked all participants, individuals, organizations who made this convention possible. The full day’s event was highlighted by the celebration of “Buddha Jayanti” also known as “Swaanya Puhni” and Bhikku Sugandha spoke on the teaching of Lord Buddha for Peace, compassion and non-violence. He said that the world and the UN specifically have taken up the teaching of Lord Buddha as their guidance for Peace and non-violence to resolve world issues at these difficult times. He said that the teaching is more relevant today than ever before. Councilor Mr. Dinesh Bhattarai also said that Buddha’s teaching should be followed to resolve many issues in peaceful and non-violent way, with special reference to the Maoist insurgency in Nepal. He also reiterated the accomplishment of NOA in this short period of time as a strong and promising institution.

“Newah Jhii Newah Hey Jui” was the theme in the paper presentation by scholars Dr. Balgopal Shrestha, presenter from the Netherlands spoke about “Newah Swanti” and Dr. Anil Shkaya (Bhikku Sugandha) from UK spoke about “Newah Identity.”

Mr. Tribhuvan Tuladhar highlighted the Nepal Bhasa Academy Cultural Center in Kirtipur, and conveyed the message from Chancellor Mr. Satya Mohan Joshi to the Newah community to help NBA, Nepal Bhasa Academy, by contributing at least one dollar per person per month here in USA.

“Multi-Culturism and Cultural Harmony in Nepal” Representatives from Nepalese Organizations in Washington Metropolitan area spoke on “Multi-culturism and Cultural harmony in Nepal”.

The Scholars Dr. Balgopal Shrestha, Dr. Chitra Tiwari, Dr. Balaram Aryal President of Nepalese Human rights Organization in America spoke on the topic of “Recognition of Ethnic diversity in the Development of Nepal” Mr. Balaram Joshi also expressed his views on the subject. Dr. Chitra Tiwari, a freelance political analyst, and contributor to Washington Post, pointed out that the movement like the maoist insurgency and others in the future could happen if proper recognition of the Ethnic diversity does not take place in Nepal. The convention was widely attended by the cross section of the Newah community in America. The program was anchored by mc duo Mr. Hariman Shrestha and Mrs. Babita Shrestha.

Finally, the 11 member Adhoc committee established in Feb 2001 concluded its assignment of formulating the Organization and giving it a comprehensive Constitution. The new Executive body was elected and the chairman of the Election committee Mr. Ishwar Rajbhandari announced the new Executive Body of Newah Organization of America (NOA) as follows:’

The First Executive Committee: (2002 - 2005)

1. President (Naayah)
   Mr. Beda Pradhan
2. First Vice President (Nhaapanmii nwoko)
   Mr. Ganes Kayastha
3. Second Vice President (Nimbamba nwoko)
   Mr. Daya Shkaya
Welcoming the audience Mr. Beda Pradhan, the president of NOA emphasized that Nepal Sambat though started by a person from the Nepal Valley, Shankhadhar Shakhwaa, is the Sambat of Nepal, a national Sambat, which was changed relatively recently during the time of Chandra Sumshere. It is an indigenous Era, and would be appropriate to recognize it as the national Calendar by the people and the government of Nepal.

Speaking at the occasion Royal Nepalese Ambassador Mr. Jai Pratap Rana said that, he does have a special relation with the organization and highly commends the works done by the organization in this short period of times for the community and the culture of Nepal in general.

Mr. Hariman Shrestha explained to the audience the meaning and significance of Nepal Sambat in a comprehensive way and what it means to the history of Nepal.

Mr. Balaram Joshi reiterated the importance and summarized at the need of Nepal Sambat to be given its full recognition.

Mr. Tribhuvan Tuladhar related that sometimes Nepal Sambat is misunderstood as Newari Sambat, which is incorrect. Started 1123 year ago during the reign of King Raghava dev, it is the true Sambat of Nepal.

Also, at this auspicious occasion, the campaign “One dollar per month, per Newah person” for the Nepal Bhasa Academy Cultural Center in Nepal was formally launched. Mr. Tribhuvan R. Tuladhar called for pledges from the audience and the first many dollars contributions for the Cultural Center was received. NOA will continue to ask for contribution from each member of the Newah community to contribute generously for this good cause. Whatever contribution received from the community will be handed over to Nepal Bhasa Academy.

Mr. Ganesh Kayatha, the first vice president thanked the audience for coming to join together in this important event, and heartily thanked the contributors and volunteers for making it a grand success.

The event concluded with a traditional Samee Baje session and lots of good wishes and sentiments amongst the participants in celebration of the New Year 1123 N.S.

**The Second Convention of the Newah Organization of America (NOA)**

NOA concluded the Second Convention on May 25, 2003. It was attended by cross section of the Newah community here in the US. Guests and participants from Nepal and from different parts of the US attended this convention held in Metropolitan Washington.
The event was kicked-off by Mr. Praveen Shrestha, the Master of the Ceremony, of the event calling upon Mr. Rudra Nepal, Counselor of the Royal Nepalese Embassy to inaugurate the Convention by lighting the traditional "Twarebha". Welcoming all the participants the President of NOA Mr. Beda Pradhan highlighted the goals of the organization and the work it has done in the short period of its existence. He thanked all those who helped the organization develop rapidly in the last year and said that NOA is moving in the right direction. He indicated that many important works are underway to serve the Newah community here in the US and also in Nepal.

In the general meeting session, General Secretary Mr. Tribhuvan R. Tuladhar presented the First Annual Report and highlighted the achievements and programs undertaken by NOA in its first year of operation. He mentioned events like the Nepal Sambat Day, The Campaign of "One dollar per month per person" to help Nepal Bhasa Academy Cultural Center in Nepal, and the need to start Newah Classes to reverse the trend of dwindling populace speaking their native mother tongue.

Mr. Balaram Joshi presented the First Financial report and also the budget for the year 2004. He said the revenue for the first year of the organization was encouraging and said that the next budget target would be met.

Leaders of prominent Nepalese Organizations spoke at the event Mr. Rajendra Oli from America Nepal society, Mr. Krishna Niraula from America Nepal Association and Mr. Balaram Aryal representing Nepal Human Right Organization wished NOA all the success in it important work for the years to come.

Mr. Rudra Nepal, the Counselor of the Nepalese Embassy spoke at the occasion and conveyed good wishes and encouragement for the Organization to keep serving the community and Nepal in general.

Mr. Ganesh Kayestha, the first Vice President of NOA thanked all the participants and those who had helped selflessly to make this Organization what it is today.

In the session of Newah Language Workshop "Newah Bhaya Jyashaa" Mr. Tribhuvan Tuladhar talked about the diminishing numbers of Newah speakers and said that if the present trend is let to continue then by the turn of the century Newah language will be extinct. He indicated that the "Critical Mass" of 100,000 speakers could be reached in about 40 years where after the demise of the language becomes assured. He emphasized the initiative of NOA to undertake Newah Language Class in the US to familiarize the new Newah generation with the sounds and salient features of Newah language. This will go a long way to reverse the trend away from extinction. A survey of the audience regarding the language issue was conducted and it would be expanded to get a bigger picture. The result of this survey will be published soon.

Mr. Hariman Shrestha spoke on this occasion and said that without language the culture will die and people must realize that learning the Newah language is not as difficult as one would fear. He also talked about the need to establish "NEWAH DHUKU" to collect and assemble disappearing items of art and craft in one place for display, so that the rest of the community will learn from these interesting items the culture and life of the Newah community.

Other session was on "Culture and trade". Moderating the session Mr. Rajendra Shrestha called upon the participant of the session to highlight the role and contribution of the Newah community in trade and business and the economic development of Nepal.

Speaking at the occasion Mr. Sujeev Shakya, Vice President for Business Development for the Seattle group of companies in Kathmandu reiterated that Newah community had been in the forefront of trading activities for number of centuries. He talked about how traders of the community traveled across to Lhasa, Tibet, endangering their lives to do business in the far away land and ultimately influencing the lives and Culture of that land. He is coining a new term "Newahnomics" and it meaning.

Dr. D. Walker, Director of Small Business Administration from Montgomery County related to the curious audience how one can start a small business in the local county and how the local State Government provide support and information to open up a business. Ms. Jennifer Carter from "Sangha" expressed interesting views on fair trade and Culture around the world and expressed her genuine liking of the art and craft from Nepal which she said is quiet popular with her customers.

Hans Sawyer expressed his feeling how Nepal could become the real Shangri-La of the world if few important changes were made to achieve this.

Number of companies doing business in Washington metropolitan area put up stalls to display items of handicraft marketed in the US. Mandala from Baltimore was represented by Mr. Season Shrestha. Himalayan House was represented Mr. Abhi Joshi.

Interesting Newah film "Pahkhaa" was screened at the event and audience was quiet captivated by the simplicity of presentation of very complex issue of the plight of untouchable in the Newah community.

Dances by a young group of local artists stole the hearts and mind of the audience. One Newah song was also sung at the program. A band of young and upcoming musicians played modern Nepali songs to the liking of the excited audience.

It all concluded with "The Taste of Newah Cuisine" dinner and prizes being distributed for the
lottery winners. More than 200 people participated in the event and it felt like that each one of them enjoyed the time spent at the convention.

**Newah Dey Baboo: The Third Convention of Newars in Nepal**

The third convention of Newah Dey Baboo or the National convention of Newars was inaugurated by the chief guest Ven. Buddhist Nun Dharmavati in Kathmandu, Nepal on Oct 20 and 21, 2002. It was resumed by paying a tribute to all the dedicated Newah people who have lost their lives in service to development of Newah Ethnicity and Nepal Bhasha Literature. The program was highlighted by Chancellor of Nepal Bhasa Academy (NBA) and said that there are lots of things need to be done to uplift Newah people in the country and abroad. Similarly the convention honored the founding former President and a Newah scholar Mr. Bhakati Das Shrestha by offering the traditional Betaali (the Turbin) and credentials. On the occasion the Secretary of Dey Babu Mr. Nareshvir Shakya read out the message of good wishes sent by various political parties and social organizations from the country and around the world. In addition, the chairperson of the Mid-western region Mr. Padma Ratna Tuladhar released the CD version of bibliography on Newah newspapers and journals.

The two days convention was well attended by a large number of Newah personalities around the nation. The chair persons from various regions presented the report on activities in their respective regions. The following resolution have been passed by the two day convention including election of new working committee headed by Malla K. Sunder. The other members of new committee are Pabitra Bajracharya, General Secretary Pratap Man Shakya, Secretary Binod Man Rajbandari, Treasurer Dr. Pushpa Raji Rajkarnikar Member and a member representing women’s group is undecided. Advisory board includes Satya Mohan Joshi, Dr. Kamal Prakash Malla, Luxmidas Manandhar, Sudarshan Bahadur Shrestha, and Padma Ratna Tuladhar. The regional Vice presidents are Naresh Tamrakar, Eastern, Govinda Man Shrestha, Middle region, Rudra Kumar Pradhan, western, Madan Bhakata Shrestha, Far western. The Past president of the Dey Baboo Mr. Bhakati Das Shrestha and Luxman Rajbansi were recognized as the patrons of the organization. Since its inception, the following are the accomplishments of Newah Dey Baboo that was highlighted in the convention:

- Regional Newah convention in five regions
- In request of Sikkim Newah community the Dey Baboo has sent experts to teach Newah language and scripts, traditional dance and music.
- With recommendation of Dey Baboo, scholarships were given to disadvantageous Newah students for higher studies.
- In collaboration with Newah communities, the Dey Baboo has played a successful role in bringing awareness in enumerating the actual number of Newah people and speakers of Nepal Bhasa in the census of 2001.
- Put a pressure to HMG’s education ministry to include Nepal Bhasa in a language group instead of current grouping in optional subjects in High School Curriculum.
- Newah Dey Baboo played an important role in making Newah people become recognized as the JANA JAATI of Nepal by the HMG cabinet of ministers.

The Newah Dey Baboo is an umbrella organization of 113 sister organizations working for Newah causes, in the country and aboard. Its Mission Statement is as follows:

To enhance the importance of Newah history, culture, language, literature, art, and music to Newah people in the country and abroad and make it easy to understand the the true meaning of being “Newar” and ethnic right and preserve it for the new generations of Newars.

**Bharatiya Newah Sangatha, (All India Newar organization): Convention of Newah people in India**

The two days convention of Bharatiya Newah Sangathan, (All India Newar organization) was held in Bagrapot, Doors in Jalpaigadi district of West Bengal in December 2002. The convention was attended by about two hundreds Newah representatives from Sikkim, Assam, Meghalaya and various parts of west Bengal including Darjeeling and Kalimpong. It was inaugurated by Nepal Bhasha Manka Khahal president Mr. Padma Ratna Tuladhar and resumed by paying homage to the late I.M. Pradhan and recognizing the former Newah MPs Badri Narayan Pradhan and Ganga Ram Joshi. On the occasion, in lieu of bringing the awareness of preserving the Newah culture among the Newah community of India, the “Jannadehki Sii Jya Samma” book was also released. The Bharatiya Newar Sangathan was established in 1993 in view of bringing awareness on Newah culture and tradition. It has established regional committees in various districts.

Lāyalāmā
**Poetry Reading Program**
Nepal Bhasha Poets in search of peace and against the war  
(Courtesy of Layalama online 3-8-03)

A very successful poetry reading in public was held under the chairmanship of Nepal Bhasha poets. Bhaju Durga Lal Shrestha and Bhaju Purna Vaidya, on March 5th 2003 at Pratibha Samaj, Sateaki Building, Lalitpur (between Katmandu and Lalitpur.). The live poetry reading event coincided with the International day of poets protesting against the war. Poems from the Nepal contingent of poems by 27 poets were read at the gathering of more than 100 poets, writers and readers.

Poets read their own poems submitted to the Poets Against the War and included in anthology of 12,000 poets presented to the U.S. Congress Washington on the same day - . Madhav Mool (Song of Peace), Pushpa Ratna Tuladhar (The Peace Digger), Nabin Chitrakar (The Veiled Soil), Taba Maru (Can't create the poem) and Bhagat Das Shrestha (For Human and Humanity's sake).

Other renowned Nepal Bhasha poets, Durga Lal Shrestha, Purna Baidya, Buddha Sayami, Pratissara Sayami, Suresh Kiran Manandhar, Mallu K. Sundar, Shukya Suren, Rajami Mili, Iswori Maiya Shrestha, Sudan Khusa, Narad Bajracharya, Sri Ram Shrestha, Pushpa Rajkarnikar, Mohan Kayastha, Basanta Maharjan and other poets also read their poems against the war.

Presidents of the literary organizations, Nepalbhasa Parishad, Newa Dey Daboo, Nepalbhasa Writers' Forum, are also present in this event.

Amir Ratna Tamrakar, secretary of Nepalbhasa Writers' Forum welcomed the distinguished poets and guest and Bhubaneswor Joshi, vice-president of Nepal Bhasha Writer's Forum, expressed thanks for participating in Poetry Reading event on International Day of Poetry Against the War.

The talk discussed the mandala-representations of (1) the sun-god Surya, (2) the moon-god Candra, and (3) the Buddha. As the presiding deity, they are encircled by the remaining eight or the complete group of nine, planetary gods as well as by other astral deities (constellations, zodiacal signs, solar and lunar deities). By examining stone sculptures, metal images and cloth paintings, many from private collections, it will be shown that this artistic tradition started in the 14th century and continues up to modern times. Special attention will be paid to the structure of the images and the arrangement and sequential order of the astral deities. The religious context, in which the images were created, i.e. Hindu or Buddhist, will also be evaluated. Finally, some enigmatic images will be presented, in which the preaching Buddha, riding on Candra's chariot drawn by seven geese, is encircled by astral deities. This type of mandalas remains hitherto unexplained.

"Towards an Iconology of Newar Buddhism"  
Dina Bangdel, Ohio State University  
January 16, 2003

The talk was focused on the visual language of Newar Buddhist monasteries - the iconographic program - and the ways in which it relates to core Buddhist ideologies as well as local cosmogonic symbols.

Workshops on Themes in Newar Culture, History, and Identity

Location: SOAS Vernon Square Campus  
Organizer: David N Gellner  
Sponsored by Pasa Puchah Guthi (UK)

Lecture and Talk Programs

Surya and Candra Mandalas in the Art of Nepal

Location: Royal Nepal Academy, Kamaladi, Kathmandu, Nepal

Dr. Gerd Mevissen, Berlin  
The South Asia Institute of Heidelberg University and the Royal Nepal Academy  
Wednesday, March 5, 2003.

Newah Vijñāna-5
Exhibitions

The Circle of Bliss: Buddhist Meditational Art

Location: LACMA (10/05/03-01/04/04) Columbus Museum of Art (2/6/04-5/9/04)

The Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) www.lacma.org presents a major exhibition of approximately 160 Tibetan, Nepalese, Mongolian, Indian, and Chinese paintings, manuscripts, sculptures, textiles, and ritual implements that illuminate the ideals and teachings of the Chakrasamvara Tantra and other key Himalayan Buddhist tantras. The Circle of Bliss: Buddhist Meditational Art, on view October 5, 2003, through January 4, 2004, presents works of art from both public and private collections and showcases many masterpieces from LACMA’s permanent collection. In addition, LACMA has commissioned the first ever on-site creation of a Chakrasamvara particle sand mandala in the United States.

The exhibition includes works from approximately 40 international museums and private collections from Nepal, North America, Europe, and Great Britain. Many of the works are exhibited publicly for the first time. His Majesty’s Government of Nepal has lent 13 of the most important treasures in the national collections of Nepal, none of which have been on view outside of Nepal in the past 40 years and many of which have never been exhibited in the United States.

For all its esoteric mystery, striking beauty, powerful and sometimes fierce imagery, and seemingly overwhelming complexity, Himalayan Buddhist meditational art has a single function: the processes through which a faithful observer can obtain enlightenment and ultimately reach perfection. Artists throughout Asia have created extraordinary art forms to convey the progression through specific meditations that can assist the practitioner in the pursuit of enlightenment.

The exhibition explores the notion of human perfection, the methodology needed to achieve it, and the visual imagery used in leading practitioners to the state of attainment. The Circle of Bliss presents Himalayan paintings (thangkas), illuminated manuscripts, metal, stone, wood, and terra cotta sculptures, often embellished with gemstones; appliqué and embroidered silk textiles; and diverse ritual implements in a variety of media and styles. Each work has been carefully selected for its aesthetic qualities and for the importance of its role in communicating the ideals of Himalayan Buddhist tantras. The Circle of Bliss delineates the significance of cultural, geographic, and ethnographic contexts across Asia in the development of practices of Chakrasamvara and other tantras. (Source: L.A Times Dec 2, 2003)

Traditional Newah Buddhist Ritual in California

Newah Organization of America (NOA) thanks to Ohio State University scholars Dina Bandel and John Huntington, for successful exhibition on Historical artifacts of Newah people at the Los Angeles County Museum (LCMA) in the theme of "Circle of Bliss Buddhist Meditational Art" from October 5, 2003, through January 4, 2004. On this occasion, a group of Newah Buddhist priests (Guruju), led by Pundit Badri Ratna Bajracharya and Narsh Man Bajracharya, was invited from Nepal. As noted by the late King Birendra, Pundit Badri Ratna is known as “Living Treasure of Nepal”. During their stay in Los Angeles they drew a Dharma Dhatu Sand Mandala at the premises of the Museum and performed the Saptabidha nottra Puja, a ritual of seven layer offerings and prayed for world peace and happiness. On this occasion many devotees visited from different parts of the country including California, Texas, Arizona and Oregon. They also got the initiation Dikshya from Pundit Badri Ratna including Nepalis and Americans. The three days event was high lighted by Prof. Bandel and Prof. Huntington by explaining the theme of the exhibition, and meaning, purpose and significance of Puja that is still practiced as unique feature of Newah Buddhism. It has been believed that such type of Newah Buddhist ritual and the Vajrayana Buddhist dances were also performed by the visiting priests first time in the US. The Newah community of US commends Prof. Bandel and Prof Huntington’s dedication in promotion of the Newah cultural heritage in the US. For further details on the exhibition ‘The Circle of Bliss’ accompanied by a groundbreaking, fully illustrated catalogue is available. The 600-page catalogue includes 160 full-color images of works of art from the exhibition. To order the catalogue, check the website www.amazon.com. The exhibition was moved to Columbus Museum of Art in Columbus, Ohio from Feb 6’t0 May 9th 2004 (Reprinted from NOA newsletter ‘Laskus’ 2004)
Special Events

NOA Language Center
Sept 9, 2003

In an initiative to maintain and promote Newah language amongst the Newah community in America, Newah Organization of America (NOA) launched the Newah Language Class Program in an event of September 7, 2003, here in the Washington Metropolitan Area.

Attended by dedicated members of the Newah community the teaching program of the NOA Language Center was inaugurated by the president of NOA Mr. Beda Pradhan. An hour long Newah class was held for the first time and the class had sessions for the Beginners and for the Intermediate. Some eight young boys and girls from the age of 5 to 12 participated in the classroom activities by learning the Devanagri alphabet, coloring them as well as pronouncing them for the first time in their lives; learning the words and sounds of their native language.

Teacher volunteers Saroj Shrestha, Rashmi Tuladhar and Pramila Rajhandari conducted the hour long class. At the intermediate level teenagers across the table were heard asking various questions in Newah language and answering them in turn with the teacher looking on. They took home homework from their teachers. NOA will conduct these classes once every month in the Washington Metropolitan area.

NOA is committed to provide the environment, opportunity and teaching help for members of the Newah community here to take part in this important endeavor. Parents have the responsibility to bring their children to the classes, and other individuals to join in the classes to learn and improve their language capability. Those who missed out on this opportunity should make good in the next class room session.

The inauguration program itself was conducted fully in the Newah language. It is the first time a Newah organization in America was successful in conducting the whole Program in Newah language. All speakers spoke in Newah language. This is a great step forward for the community where English and Nepali languages dominate every aspect of the day.

Mr Hariman Shrestha, Mr. Dibya Hada and the president of NOA Mr. Beda Pradhan spoke at the occasion in Newah language reiterating that there is no alternative to learning our native languages in a classroom environment and the launching and initiating the class is a very timely and needed element of a community trying to preserve and promote their culture, language and arts. Ganesh Kayastha thanked all those who helped to make this program a reality and all those who took the time to come here at this important event.

Over coffee break attendees’ conversations on topics like politics, language, history, and even jobs related and small talks were heard to be spoken in the Newah language. This clearly demonstrates that Newah language is a viable, working, and practical language for all kind of use here in the US and in Nepal.

In the other event of the day Mr. Hariman Shrestha recited some of his new poems and latter in the musical session along with the audience a famous and popular song “Rajamati Kumati” was sung with 9 years old Bivek Tuladhar leading the way on keyboard with singers like Rashmi Tuladhar and Saroj Shrestha accompanied by Tribhuvan Tuladhar on the guitar.

An emerging band played on various songs in Nepali to end the day in a very enjoyable manner.

MC for the event Tribhuvan Tuladhar thanked every participant for their much needed support and help in all forms and sizes. Donations were received from various dedicated persons.

Finally, stay tuned for the latest information on the upcoming classes this coming month for more details.

For enrolling your children in the class please contact us at contact@newah.org or call 703-713-0107.

The Third convention of the Newah Organization of America
May 30th 2004

NOA concluded the Third Convention on May 30, 2004. It was attended by cross section of the Newah community here in the US. Guests and participants from Nepal and from different parts of the US attended this convention held in Metropolitan Washington.

The event was kicked-off by Mr. Babita Shrestha, the Master of the Ceremony, calling upon Mr. Rudra Nepal, Counselor of the Royal Nepalese Embassy to inaugurate the Convention by lighting the traditional "Twarebha"

Welcoming all the participants the President of NOA Mr. Beda Pradhan highlighted the goals of the organization and the work it has done in the short period of its existence. He said that the work accomplished in the last year was noteworthy with programs like the Newah Class and the Business forum moving ahead. He indicated that many important works are underway to serve the Newah community here in the US and also in Nepal.

In the general meeting session, General Secretary Mr. Tribhuvan R. Tuladhar presented the Second Annual Report and said that the programs like Newah language classes are underway with classes held every third week with 6 student and 3 volunteer teachers conducting them. The organization hopes that more and more people of various ages will join in to learn, and to
reverse the trend of dwindling populace speaking their native mother tongue.

The NOA Business Forum is being constituted and will work towards enhancing the business activities of the community. This is an important aspect of the Newah Community since business and Newah are synonymous to each other.

Nepal Sambat Day is an important event for the community and will be celebrated this year too. The Campaign for "One dollar per month per person" to help Nepal Bhasa Academy Cultural Center in Nepal, is moving too slow, he said, and needs to be speeded up with help from all the members of the community.

New proposals for Newah Dhukau and NOA Library are on the table and will be moved forward in the next coming years.

Mr. Balaram Joshi presented the financial report and also the budget for the year 2005. He said the revenue for the first year of the organization was encouraging and said more new life-members needs to be induced into the organization. The tax-exempt status of the organization he said was important and the organization hopes that he pre-tax donation will increase this year.

Representing Nepal Pasa Pucha, the vice President, Surendra Pradhan, delivered the message and announced that the Nhu dan-Mha Puja celebration will be held in November.

Leaders of prominent Nepalese Organizations spoke at the event Mr. Rajendra Oli from America Nepal society, wished NOA all the success in its important work. He opined that the two Newah organizations here in the US could conduct an International Event on culture and history and other Nepalese organization would also join in.

Mr. Rudra Nepal, the Counselor of the Nepalese Embassy and chief guest spoke at the occasion and conveyed good wishes and encouragement for the Organization to keep serving the community and Nepal and was happy that NOA could become such an important organization in so short period of time.

Mr. Ganesh Kayestha, the first Vice President of NOA thanked all the participants and those who had helped selflessly to make this Organization what it is today.

In the session of Culture and Language, Mr. Beda Pradhan, spoke about the influence of religion in the newah society. Dr. Navin Rai a specialist in indigenous people from the World Bank spoke about the Newah Ethnic history and Janjati issues and said Newah community is more of a nation.

Mr. Tribhuvan Tuladhar spoke about the possibility of the Newah language to disappear if the present trend in newah language is not reversed. He emphasized the initiative of NOA to undertake Newah Language Class in the US to familiarize the new Newah generation with the sounds and salient features of Newah language. This will go a long way to reverse the present trend, somewhat, at least in the US.

Other session was on "NOA Business Forum". In the session Rajendra Shrestha laid out his thoughts about how this forum could be constituted and developed. Mr. Deepak Shrestha, CEO of number of companies here in the US, related to the audience, how one could become a successful entrepreneur here in the US.

Mr. Dharma B. Shakya proposed that a non-profit Trade Promotion Center could be established here in the United States too.

Later in the Cultural Program a jam-packed hall enjoyed dances and songs from young talents.

The NOA Newah Language Students, each spoke to the audience in Newah language and sang a Newah song, "Rajatati-Kumari," to the amazement of the audience. The youngest participant was just 4 years old.

The program continued with more songs, band musicians played modern Nepali songs to the liking of the excited audience. Then NOA recognized the volunteers for their dedication, support and good work by handing each with Certificates of Appreciation.

It all concluded with "The Taste of Newah cuisine" dinner and prizes being distributed for the lottery winners. More than 200 people participated in the event and it felt like that each one of them enjoyed the time spent at the convention.

Newah Community in Dallas, Texas
By Pramod Kaji Baniya

Mha Puja and Nepal Sambat 1124 Nhu dan Celebration

Feeling homesick for not being able to celebrate Mha Puja and Nhuu Daan during the time of Tihar, fellow Nepali Daajishai and DeedeebahihiHar, then come on down to Dallas, Texas, where you can get together with the local Nepali community to participate in a modern version of Mha Puja and Nhuu Daan celebration and enjoy a traditional Newah Jhow Bhoie (Dinner feast while sitting on the floor) with more than 20 authentic Newah cuisine. If you are lucky enough, you might get to see some cultural performances by the local artists too.

The function was held last year on October 24th 2003 here in the heart of Dallas by a newly formed Newah Cultural Association of Texas (NCAT). A similar but smaller Newah Food Festival was organized about a year ago on the occasion of Dashain Festival by the same group of people. The success of that First Food Festival and also recommendation, love and support of the community led to the formation of Newah Cultural
Association of Texas (NCAT). The association was officially established on this Nhuu Dean (New Year) day and hence became possible, this Grand Mha Puja and Nhuu Dean celebration.

The inauguration started with the celebration of the Newah Cultural Association of Nepal (NCAT) by the President of NCAT Mr. Deepak Naim Bajdracharya (youngest son of Nepal’s Buddhist priest Pundit Rev. Badri Ratna Bajdracharya aka Badri Guraju) by lighting the auspicious Panaas with a Sukunda. The function was hosted by Ms. Archana Karmacharya. Mr. Bajdracharya then gave a short inauguration speech where he highlighted the need of such an association to preserve our national cultural heritage in the US and pass it on to the new generation. He also pointed out the support and relationship of NCAT with Newah Organization of America (NOA), Nepal Pasa Pucha Amerikaye (NPPA), Nepal Khalsa and other Nepalese Associations in America. Mr. Bajdracharya then introduced the committee members. They are as follows:

Vice President: Kiran Ranjit
Vice President: Pramod Kaji Baniya
Secretary: Ujwal Karmacharya
Treasurer: Dipendra Hada
Advisor: Baikuntha Thapa
Advisor: Dhiren Gurung
Advisor: Sarendra Nakarni
Advisor: Sanjaya Rajbhandary
Web designer: Ujjwal Kajee

After the inauguration ceremony, the first round of people was directed to sit down on the Sukals (mattress on the floor to sit) in the beautifully decorated feast area. First of all, the President com Guraju Mr. Bajdracharya came to the line offering Tika to everybody. Then Sagun was given of hard-boiled, sauteed egg, fried fish and of course, Aila (alcohol) served from Antee (traditional Newah pitcher to serve spirit.) How can a Mha Puja be complete without the Kokha and Jajanka (sacred strings)? Yeah, we had them too, the real thing, especially ordered all the way from Nepal just for the occasion. Sagun and Aila were served by Newah Lysaya (young women) in traditional sari dress.

Right after the puja ceremony, the feast began with the incoming of the army of servers serving the authentic Newah cuisines one after another. Everything from Chhoola, Pancha Kwaath, Talikhah, Sanyakkhuna, Fast Kwaath to Mysya Palu and Lain Achon, just to name a few – were served with the taste just like at home, if not better. The festival was well organized and went along very smoothly with the repeated servings of some of the main items such as Dasekangkha laa, Talikhah etc. People didn’t seem to mind to sit on the floor with their legs crossed for 30 or 45 minutes to taste those delicious foods. It was totally worth it. As the first round of feast was over; the stage was warming up for the cultural show. First came the Jyuapu Jyapuri dance which was performed by the couple Mr. Amit Shrestha and Ms. Merina Shrestha on the famous Newah song called “Rajmati Waa, Matina Yaave Waa.” After that, a beautiful solo song was sung on the track by an artist from Nepal, Mr. Prakash Bajdracharya. The song goes like “Hisi Dumphu Maveju, Gufi Buamlaaagu…”

The next item was from Dallas’ own Mr. Yaman Shrestha, who with his own style and a rare guitar sang a few Newah oldies with funny stories on the side. After that came the performance of NCAT Vice President Mr. Pramod Kaji Baniya with the loveliest evergreen Newah song “Rajmati Kumati, Jeke Wohsaa Peeratee,” which energized the whole audience. The song was performed with the help of Dallas’ new Band Diabolique. After Mr. Baniya, the band played one of their songs. Last but not least were the young duo of Mr. Anshu Shrestha and Mr. Amar Jung, who rocked the audience with few hit Nepali pop numbers and they ended the show with our traditional “Deusi Re.” The whole audience were clapping and participating with them singing Deusi all together.

While all these were happening on the stage, feast was being served just as the first round – for three more rounds. So the servers were busy serving, people was busy having feasted while enjoying the cultural show at the same time; some were socializing with friends and family at the back side of the hall while waiting for their turn to sit for the feast: some were just hanging out after the feast. There were even a bunch of festivalers playing Langoor Burja on one corner, which is not very proud thing to say – there was money involved. But what would be a great Tihar festival with out a little bit of gambling, right? Anyway, it was very friendly and homely environment.

After all, the festival ended in a peaceful way with 350 or more participation and people left the festival with over-joyed taste buds, full stomachs, and the memory of such an extra ordinary experience for years to remember. But come this Mha Puja, we will repeat the extravaganza all over again, the whole nine yards or even ten this time. (Reprinted from Laskus 2004)

Nepal Bhasa body marks Silver jubilee

A seminar was organised today on the role of different community organisations in the development of the literature of Nepal Bhasa and cultural rights of the Newars. It was organised by Nepal Bhasa Manka Khala (NBMK) Yaa to mark its silver jubilee.

Chancellor of Nepal Bhasha Academy, Satya Mohan, said government suppression had given rise to
the movement for the rights of mother language. "There are various instances in which the government deprived us of our rights to use our mother language in public and the literary field. This has resulted in the ongoing movement for the rights of autonomy of nationalities," he said.

Chairman of NBMK, Padma Ratna Tuladhar, said the organisation should be taken as the movement, rather than just a body. "NBMK was set up as an umbrella organisation to coordinate working style and aims of different institutions."

He added the style and target of community movement should be changed according to the changing political scenario.

A working paper by Chhatra Bahadur Kayastha and Dr Pushpa Raj Rajkarnikar elaborated on the different historical cases in which the government had imposed different rules barring the Newars of Kathmandu Valley from using their language for official purposes. The paper also shows mainly in the capital city, to protest the government's suppressive moves.

Also available in:
http://www.thehimalayantimes.com/fullstory.asp
(Source: Himalayan News Service Lalitpur, July 30)

Announcements

The 9th Himalayan Languages Symposium

The 9th HLS event was hosted by the Central Institute of Indian Languages Government of India, Manasagangotri, MYSORE-570 006, India. From December 16-19, 2003

For more information please check the website www.ciil.org Contact persons: Professor Udaya Narayana Singh (Director) Professor J.C. Sharma (Chairman)


On June 9th 2004, the Chairperson of the ISO 639-2 Maintenance Agency and Senior Networking and Standards Specialist at the Library of Congress, Washington DC, Rebecca S. Guenther has confirmed by writing a letter to Mr. Kamal Tuladhar that the Library of Congress has created a log on name with Nepal Bhasha for all the titles relating to the language of Newars. Eventually, the word Newari will be abolished from the catalog. Newah Vijnaana owes a big thank to Kamal Tuladhar and Allen Baloanchan Tuladhar in support of changing the name campaign started by the editor in 1997. Allen was very instrumental in bringing an attention of changing the name in international agencies that still retain Newari in various ways. It is imperative that Newars draw your attention to change the name of their language into Nepal Bhasha instead of Newari.

NEPAL STUDY PROGRAM

Nepalese Language and Culture Classes for Beginner, Travelers and Researchers (VIA Internet or in a Classroom)

Instructor:
Daya R. Shakya

US West Coast
Nepalese Learning Center
3717 NE Broadway
Portland OR, 97232

Phone: (503) 284-7843
Direct Line: (503) 282-0447
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e-mail: drasha@aol.com
This study examines the core iconographic elements of the Buddhist Monasteries in Nepal and their relationship to the religion and ritual practices of the Newar Buddhists. Based on original field research I conducted in the Kathmandu valley, I have identified three major iconographic themes were widespread and prevalent. These were the Swayambhu Mahacaiitya, the Dharmadhatu Mandala, and the Cakrasamvara Mandala, which are manifest in the monasteries as three mandatory architectural elements: the principal deity of the monastery; and, the secret esoteric shrine to the Tantric deity. The study analyzes their symbolic meaning and explores how these iconographic components serve as visual metaphors to express the fundamental constructs of Newar Buddhism.

The findings of this study suggest that the core iconographic program is unique to Newar Buddhist context and reflects the essential ideological frameworks of the religion. Specifically, the three core components are conceived of as a hierarchic progression, articulating the Newar Buddhist soteriological methodology of encompassing the "three ways" (shravakayana, Mahayana and Vajrayana) of Buddhism. By examining the constructions of sacred space, the essential iconological constructs of Newar Buddhist art and religious practices are contextualized and defined through these visual symbols.

The analysis also explores the yoginis in the Newar Buddhist context and situates the goddess tradition within the larger tantric Buddhist methodological framework. A key premise of the study is to understand the Buddhist yogini not only as a unifying theme to decipher the iconology of the core components of the religion, but more importantly, the study proposes to establish the yogini tradition as the ontological source of the Newar Buddhism.

The subject of this dissertation is everyday religious practices in Bhaktapur (Khwopa), Nepal. Proceeding from the notion that religion occupies a distinctive place in the social construction of reality, this study analyzes how Newars in Bhaktapur use Hinduism’s and Buddhism’s pragmatic, world-building, material elements to construct their daily lives. As an interpretive tool, the dissertation co-joins Paul Mus’s notion of celestial space with Michel De Certeau’s theory of the commonplace in order to develop the notion of everyday mesocosms—prosaic "recipes" for making ceremonially organized social space.

The dissertation consists of two parts. The first part, made up of chapters two and three, orients the reader by sketching Bhaktapur’s history and geography. The second section—chapters four through seven—analyzes everyday religion. Using the god Bhairava as a touchstone, chapter four examines the central object of worship, god-images (loha[n]dya). Chapter five concentrates on ceremony (puja) to trace the relationship between person and deity. It argues that ceremonies are systems of ritual logic by which a mutually beneficial relationship is created with a god. Chapter six demonstrates that what makes gods venerated is "religious power" (shakti). Using the example of the "uncanny" (Jhi[n]jaa[n] m[n]jaa[n]) religious feeling generated by tantric performances, it maintains that religious power is an emotional discourse which can be understood as a type of social sublime. Chapter seven concentrates on a "forged" goat sacrifice that was performed during Bhaktapur’s 1995 Cow festival. It argues that such festivals ought to be understood as religious social fields within which various groups attempt to generate a lived world most in conformity with their interests. The dissertation’s three major insights are: (1) religious practices require a material element; (2) Hinduism and Buddhism employ generative world-building logics; and (3) that
Bhaktapur's everyday religious practices have been one of the main strategies by which modernity has been mediated, implemented, and localized. This study will provide new perspectives on Hinduism and Buddhism, the anthropology of religion, the history of religions, as well as cultural studies.

Advisors: Frank E. Reynolds, Professor of the History of Religions and Buddhist Studies, Wendy Doniger, Mircea Eliade Distinguished Service Professor of the History of Religions

Post Graduate Diploma Thesis
“Buddhist Literature in Nepal Bhasa” (197 pages)

Ven. Bodhijnana
Tribhuvan University

One can find a large number of Buddhist texts in Nepal Bhasa which were produced in due course of time. But is it difficult to obtain any catalog of those publications so far. In order to fulfill the need an attempt has been made here.

This thesis deals with different aspects of literature based on Buddhism with special emphasis on revival and development of Buddhist literature in Nepal Bhasa. The published books on Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism (from 1909 to 2001) in Nepal Bhasa are listed. The content of the thesis includes the Buddhist publications (Books and periodicals) in Nepal Bhasa primarily the author and title series, secondly, title and author, thirdly, chronological order of books and periodicals and finally a comparative list of books published in different years from 1909 to 2001. Some major findings of this research indicates that a total of 840 books were published on Topics related to Theravada Buddhism and 495 books were in Mahayan Buddhism totaling 1335 books during the period. The first three books related to Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism published in the year 1909 was:

1. “Prajnaparamita Devi-yaagu Strotra” Hymns on Prajnaparamita Devi
2. “Samyukta Nikaya”- Theravada book containing 1192 pages
3. “Gandavyuhanama Mahayana Sutra” Mahayana Book containing 1117 pages

The Ritual Composition of Sankhu
The Socio-Religious Anthropology of a Newar Town in Nepal

Bal Gopal Shrestha
Research School CNWS,
University of Leiden
The Netherlands.

The dissertation includes xxvi + 450 pages, 27 tables and charts, 16 maps, 49 B & W photos, Glossary and printed in September, 2002
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रञ्जना लिपी, संयुक्त राष्ट्र संघ र हामी

भाषा: नेपाली
पत्रकार: श्रेष्ठ ओम कृष्ण शेष
लेखक: श्रेष्ठ ओम कृष्ण शेष

do not forget to properly cite any sources used in your response.
Bibliography of Nepal Bhasa

A Descriptive Catalog of selected manuscripts preserved at the Asia Archives

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नेवारीकरण गरिएको नेपाल संबंध

द्रया शाखा

उपाध्यक्ष, एन. ओ.ए.

नेपालको पारिता पालनहरू फलस्वरूप हेतौ विभिन्न नामका सम्मानहरू प्रशिक्षणमा नयाँको देशमा उभईन्। यस निम्नलिखित सांख्यिक मान्यताको नामका संबंध जताइएको देखिएर्न त्यसपश्चिम राजा अंशुरामको नामका संबंध प्रशिक्षणमा ल्याएको देखिएर्न। यसैले नेपालमा पड्ने विभिन्न शोभार्थका शक्त सन्तो सन्तो र गरेको पाइन्। निजीकृतीकृत राजा प्रशिक्षणको नामका संबंध नेपाल संबंध प्रशिक्षणमा आएको अहिले १९२४ वर्ष पुरानको ३। नेपालका निजीकृत विद्यालयको विद्यार्थी संबंध तात्साहित्य जनजातीय सम्बन्ध राशन उच्चको संबंध उच्चको भवन|

यस छोटो नेपाल द्वारा वर्ष अविष्कार प्रशिक्षणमा आएको नेपालको मौलिक संबंध नेपाल संबंध गरेको देखाइको कीर्तिको नेपालको प्रामाण्य गरिएको ३। नेपाल संबंध प्रशिक्षणमा जीवन स्थान नेपाल संबंधको मौलिक विभिन्न निकै विविध प्रशिक्षण आभारी हुने राखा हुने नेपालको विभिन्न निकै विविध प्रशिक्षण आभारी हुने राखा हुने। नेपालको विभिन्न निकै विविध प्रशिक्षण आभारी हुने राखा गरेको हो। नेपालको विभिन्न निकै विविध प्रशिक्षण आभारी हुने राखा हुने। नेपाल नेपाल संबंधको शुरुवातको विभिन्न निकै विविध प्रशिक्षण आभारी हुने राखा हुने। नेपाल नेपाल संबंधको शुरुवातको विभिन्न निकै विविध प्रशिक्षण आभारी हुने राखा हुने। नेपाल नेपाल संबंधको शुरुवातको विभिन्न निकै विविध प्रशिक्षण आभारी हुने राखा हुने। नेपाल नेपाल संबंधको शुरुवातको विभिन्न निकै विविध प्रशिक्षण आभारी हुने राखा हुने।

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अभोलिमा परेको जीवित संवत्

सुभाषराम

नजङ्गे दिनरङ्गसह निंविश्वनाथ नेपाल अभिमान राजा मानव मानवहरुको जन्म ९३ थापा समाजवादी शर्मसारी मानव नाप्ताको वि सम्बन्धमा नेपाली देशनस्य अनुमति सम्बन्ध वन्स्तरीय निकृप्त कायम भएको अधिकारिक राज्य राज्यलरका नर्माण 

собах RAM/Ojhelma Pareco..65

Newah Vinehna..-5
पुस्तक परिचय

नेपालभाषा व्याकरण

पुस्तकको नाम : नेपालभाषा व्याकरण /
लेखक : डा. सुनस्रजनी जोशी /
प्रकाशन : नेपाल राजनीति प्रतिष्ठान /
प्रकाशित : भिन्न. प्रि.नि. २०७० /
प्रेस : ताप प्रेस, काठमाडौं /
नेप १०५ गृह : १४२-।

प्रस्तुती : पन्ननक, अनुवाद : दया शाक्य

नेपालभाषा व्याकरण नेपाल राजनीति प्रतिष्ठानको प्राचार्यहरूको लागि तैयार गरिएको भाषाविज्ञानीय सर्वेक्षण र विश्वासनीय गतिशील व्यक्तिगत तथा सामाजिक साइटको व्याख्यान र व्यापक हेतु तिनैहरूको अनुष्ठान र विद्याक्षेत्रको समाजहरूको महत्त्वपूर्ण सङ्ग्रहको रूपमा प्रकाशित गरिएको हो। नेपालभाषाको व्याकरणको विवरणमा डा. सुनस्रजनी जोशीले नेपाली तथा अन्य भाषाको व्याकरणको अनुसार नेपाली भाषको व्याकरण तथा विश्वासनीय साइटको व्याख्यान र व्यापक हेतु तिनैहरूको अनुष्ठान र विद्याक्षेत्रको समाजहरूको महत्त्वपूर्ण सङ्ग्रहको रूपमा प्रकाशित गरिएको हो।

यस व्याकरण नेपालभाषाको विवरण डा. सुनस्रजनी जोशीले नेपाल राजनीति प्रतिष्ठानको प्राचार्यहरूको लागि तैयार गरिएको भाषाविज्ञानीय सर्वेक्षण र विश्वासनीय गतिशील व्यक्तिगत तथा सामाजिक साइटको व्याख्यान र व्यापक हेतु तिनैहरूको अनुष्ठान र विद्याक्षेत्रको समाजहरूको महत्त्वपूर्ण सङ्ग्रहको रूपमा प्रकाशित गरिएको हो।
नरेश गुरुजुलिसे अन्तर्वार्ता

नेपाल भाषा खण्ड
(d) Putha, Dr. David Gellner, Prof. Todd Lewis, and Prof. John Huntington are some of the scholars you have to create the scope yourself. They have organized programs in Korea, Japan, and America to propagate the young generation.

The dedication is to the young generation of Korea, Japan, and America to propagate the young generation.
ज्ञानसाहु मन्त हैं। धात्यें ख़ा।

दरसा नेमामि
अमेरिका

जित ज्ञानसाहु बप्पि बबे मन्त हैं। ज्ञानसाहु बबे मन्त हैं। ज्ञानसाहु बबे मन्त हैं। ज्ञानसाहु बबे मन्त हैं। ज्ञानसाहु बबे मन्त हैं। ज्ञानसाहु बबे मन्त हैं। ज्ञानसाहु बबे मन्त हैं। ज्ञानसाहु बबे मन्त हैं। ज्ञानसाहु बबे मन्त हैं। ज्ञानसाहु बबे मन्त हैं।

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नवाम् विन्यास-५
नवामी, दाराश्चर्य/ ज्ञाना साहु-६९
उत्साहजनक ढंग ख्वाचा:गु भारतीय नेवा:तयू अधिवेशन

तेज महर्जन

संसारको सबैको मनुष्य धम्प जातीय समाजको विकसित विकसित रुपमा निर्माण हुँ। मनुष्य धम्पको उभयनुभित्त भाषा, उभयनुभित्त संस्कृति, संस्कृत, सहयोग एवं भविष्यवाणी उद्देश्य का भएको भएको हो। भाषा, संस्कृति, संस्कार, भएको धम्पको उभयनुभित्त भाषा, उभयनुभित्त संस्कृति, संस्कृत, सहयोग एवं भविष्यवाणी उद्देश्य का भएको भएको हो।

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དིབ་ཐང་བིསྡྭ་སུ་དཔོན་པོས་བཤད་འབྲིང་ཤེས་

རྒྱ་མཚོ་བཤེས་

ཁྱི་ལྗན་དུ་དོན་པའི་ཕུལ་བུ་གྱིས་བོད་བཤད་ སཱ་བོས་ལས་ཕྲེང་བཙན་བཞི་གྲོལ་བཞི། བོད་སོ་ སྲིད་པོ་ལྟར་བསྟེན་པའི་ཕུལ་བུ་བསྒྲིག་བཅས་སྲིད་ དུས་བོད་བཤད་སོ་བཤད་བཤད་ཚོག་མཐུན་ནས་བཤད་ ད་བཤད་གྱིས་མཐུན་དུ་བཤད་སོ། །

བོད་ལྟར་བསྟེན་པའི་ཕུལ་བུ་རྒྱ་མཚོ་བཤེས་ བཤད་པོ་ནི་ཤུག་ཤུག་ཚོག་མཐུན་དུ་བཤད་ ད་བཤད་གྱིས་མཐུན་དུ་བཤད་སོ། །


dhegya

Newa Vijnana-5

Maharjan, Rajani / Dibangata Bhiktshu...71
जिमि पुलाम्ह पासाभाजु ईश्वरानन्द श्रेष्ठाचार्य

पृष्ठकारी ताम्रकार

जिमि पुलाम्ह पासाभाजु ईश्वरानन्द श्रेष्ठाचार्यको बोधितमा नेपालमा साहित्य खलाय जनपाता सहित ज्ञान, बुद्धिनिहारिन्तु वेष्कम्प निवृत्तमा धुर्गुण र भणाले वनार्थको साहित्य तप्युमा निर्भर जितुः पासाभाजु धुर्गुणको साधन र तप्यु निवर्तन दुर्गुणमा ज्ञान, जितुः पासाभाजु धुर्गुणको साधन र तप्यु निवर्तन दुर्गुणमा ज्ञान। जितुः पासाभाजु धुर्गुणको साधन र तप्यु निवर्तन दुर्गुणमा ज्ञान।

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Newāh Vijñāna-5
Tamrakar, Purna Kaji / Jimi pulāmāh..72
साहित्यकार रेवती रमणानन्दजु नेपाली

वनेवाह रेवती रमणानन्द शेप्तु नेपाल तपस्या जस्ता महसूल नेपालमा फुट्का हुने गरिन्छ। यस दिन नेपालमा प्राकृतिक सम्पत्ति तथा साहित्यकारीहरुको समाजको विकास मध्ये सहयोग हुनुहोस्।

विवरणको लागि, साहित्यकार मुकन्द नेपाल तपस्यामा रहेका परम्परागत विवरणको साथै साहित्यकारीहरु त्यस्तै विकासमा सहयोग हुनेछ।

नेपाल र भाषाको संस्कृति तथा साहित्यकारीहरु लागि महत्त्वपूर्ण गर्नेछ। यसलाई समाजको विकासमा सहयोग हुने र यसलाई साहित्य र भाषाको संस्कृति तथा साहित्यकारीहरुको प्रेम र समर्पण प्रदर्शन गर्दै सकिन्छ।

नेपाल र भाषाको संस्कृति तथा साहित्यकारीहरुको प्रेम र समर्पण प्रदर्शन गर्दै सकिन्छ।
News Collection

Bukhan Munaa (news collection)
अमेरिकाय नेपालभाषा कथा न्यूयार्क

अमेरिकाय नेपालभाषा कथा न्यूयार्क

अमेरिकाय नेपालभाषा कथा न्यूयार्क
नेपालभाषाया न्यायांगु वेबपत्रिका नेवा: पोस्ट

नेपालभाषाया न्यायांगु वेबपत्रिका नेवा: पोस्टप्रकाश भौ ५ अगस्त २०१४

अमेरिकाको विर्ष नेवा: सम्पलन यायेपु बारे सहलह

अमेरिकाको विर्ष नेवा: सम्पलन यायेपु बारे सहलह

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अमेरिकाको विर्ष नेवा: सम्पलन यायेपु बारे सहलह
नेपालभाषा व्याकरण

सफल नभयिका

नेपालभाषा व्याकरण

सफल नभयिका

नेपालभाषा व्याकरण/भनिम : डा. सुदरकुमार जोशी/फिकसिर : नेपाल राजकीय प्रजा प्रतिष्ठान/पिडाको : विस. 2060/भागिधारा : लेख प्रेस, वे/मु : १४३२-

कु नै भएको जोरीको र जस्ता उन्मुक्त र प्राथमिक मुख्य र नेपाली प्रतिष्ठान तथा नेपाल राजकीय प्रजा प्रतिष्ठान अन्तर्गत समाजसेवा शास्त्रीय गति मान्य रहेको छ। जस्ता र त्यसैस्तिक व्यवस्था र विषयक मान्यता र नेपाली प्रतिष्ठान तथा नेपाल राजकीय प्रजा प्रतिष्ठान यसैस्तिक गति मान्य रहेको छ।

राजनीतिक स्वतंत्रता सरकार र राष्ट्रीयता विविधता नास्ता यसैस्तिक नर्मदाता तथा राष्ट्रीय संघर्ष कर नास्ता कार्यरतहरूको विविधता छ।

एस्ट्रीयमा च्याचौको चारिको व्यवस्था नेपाली प्रतिष्ठान एकैको र नेपाल संस्थान राष्ट्रीय संघर्ष कर नास्ता कार्यरतहरूको विविधता छ।

शान्तिभाष शाखाको

व्यवस्था र विविधता: राजनीतिक क्रियाकलाप क्षेत्र देखि नेपाल संस्थान प्रत्येक शाखा छैन। नेपाल राजकीय प्रतिष्ठान तथा नेपाल राजकीय प्रजा प्रतिष्ठान कसरिका देखि बीलिका तथा राष्ट्रीय संघर्ष कर नास्ता कार्यरतहरूको विविधता छ।

नेपालभाषा विवरण आ. सुदरकुमार जोशी तथा यानदीप व नेपाल राजकीय प्रजा प्रतिष्ठान नेपाली नेपाली र नेपाल राजकीय प्रजा प्रतिष्ठान नेपाली नेपाली र नेपाल राजकीय प्रजा प्रतिष्ठान नेपाली नेपाली र नेपाल राजकीय प्रजा प्रतिष्ठान नेपाली नेपाली र नेपाल राजकीय प्रजा प्रतिष्ठान नेपाली नेपाली र नेपाल राजकीय प्रजा प्रतिष्ठान नेपाली नेपाली र नेपाल राजकीय प्रजा प्रतिष्ठान नेपाली १४३२-२०२३ र नेपाल राजकीय प्रजा प्रतिष्ठान २०६०/भागिधारा : लेख प्रेस, वे/मु : १४३२-

जस्तै समाजसेवा यसैस्तिक गति मान्य रहेको छ।

नेपालियो नेपाली नेपाली नेपाली र नेपाल राजकीय प्रजा प्रतिष्ठान २०६०/भागिधारा : लेख प्रेस, वे/मु : १४३२-

कु नलिया साहित्य पाला १९०६

Newah Vijñana-5

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