

1993

## Conference Paper Abstracts

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## CONFERENCE DIGEST

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### CONFERENCE PAPER ABSTRACTS

**American Academy of Religion  
1993 Annual Meeting November 20-23  
Chicago, Illinois**

Please see notes about the American Academy of Religion in NEWS and NOTES

Anne C. Klein, Rice University

#### **Stopping Hail: Religion and Social Dimensions in Tibet**

This paper outlines the interplay between Tibetan Buddhist tantra and the practice of protecting crops from hail. Although tantric initiations and practices are considered essential preparation for the mantrika who undertakes to protect an area from hail, there is a fundamental tension between his task of destroying the beings who bring hail and the Bodhisattva ideal on which his ritual efficacy is based. This paper draws from the *Tent for (Holding Off) Ferocious Fire and Water a Hail-Stopping* text associated with Hariagriva, and from discussions with the Tibetan scholar and former Hailmaster Khetsun Sangpo Rinboche. In addition to describing the ritual itself, the paper discusses the kinds of power and danger that accrue to the hailmaster, and the social organization that structures his relationships with the villagers whose crops he protects.

José Ignacio Cabezon, Iliff School of Theology

#### **Scholasticism as a Category in Understanding of Indo-Tibetan Buddhist Philosophy**

Not since the turn of the century (and the work of P. Masson-Oursel) has serious thought been given to the notion that scholasticism might be a fruitful cross-cultural category in understanding a variety of religious and philosophical traditions. This paper is in two parts. The first section suggests a theoretical problematization of the notion of scholasticism as a general and decontextualized category. The second part of the paper applies the theory to a specific historical example, that of Indo-Tibetan Buddhist thought. In the latter context the paper explores key themes relevant to the specific Buddhist case: the

reconciliation of reason and experience, the reconciliation of reason and scripture/tradition, the claim of basic intelligibility of the universe, Buddhist scholastic methodological self-reflection, and the role of language.

Ronald M. Davidson, Fairfield University

### **The Synthesis of Lam-'Bras and Virupa's Hagiography**

Early Tibetan models of lineal authority depended on the verification of certain structures within a putative line of descent. While not all the models proposed identical structures, there was remarkable consistency between the dominant paradigms when they are first being set down in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Sa-skyapa relied on two systems, formal and informal. Formally, the 'Four Auditory Streams' served to establish continuity of i. consecration ii. benediction, iii. instruction, and iv. teaching. Informal models concerned with verifying the 'historicity' of the transmission from Indic master to Tibetan disciple. Issues included the presence of verses as the essence of the teaching to be passed on, the composition of a chronicle associated with the verses, and the reliability of the individuals involved. The reliability of the Lam-'bras transmission accordingly hinged on bolstering the claims surrounding the hagiography of the Indian Siddha Virupa and its transmission to 'Brog-mi by Gayadhara.

Georges Dreyfus, Williams College

### **Historiography in Tibet: A Rhetoric of Identity?**

This essay inquires into the role of history in the different Buddhist traditions. My essay is a preliminary study of the nature and role of historiography among Tibetan traditions where history is often a focus of collective identity. Buddhists in general seem predisposed to view their own situation in historical terms as a way to relate their horizon to that of the founder of their tradition. History is not, however, only used as a focus of collective religious identity by Buddhist groups, but also as a rhetorical device in their dispute with other Buddhist traditions. I analyze the works of several Tibetan historians to capture the ways in which they use history to undermine other traditions to heighten the status of their tradition.

David Germano, University of Virginia

### **Nomadic Religiosity and the Myth of Legality: Early Tantric Thought, Narratives of the Past and Cultural-Identity in Tibet**

While the Great Perfection (*rDzogs-Chen*) tradition of Tantric Buddhism has been frequently referred to in 20th century Western scholarship for its supposed non-scholastic bent and rhetorical recourse to the simplicity of contemplative experience, it is in fact characterized by an intricate scholastic tradition little understood in the West, either in its own structure or in its contextualization within Tibetan civilization from the 10th to 14th centuries. This paper will discuss the nature and structure of this immense scholastic literature concerning the Great Perfection, and in particular focus on its religious revalorization of mediated experience in conjunction with its stylistic emphasis on the poetic capacities of the Tibetan language. In addition, it will link these issues to the wider question of the relationship of these traditions to the momentous reshaping of Tibetan civilization during this period, in particular the movements towards institutionalization taking place in terms of hermeneutics, textual production, religious communities, governmental structures, and other dimensions of Tibetan life. What is at stake during this period is senses of collective Tibetan identity (in terms of community and religio-philosophic ideology) as shaped and expressed in mythologized views of the past as well as contemporary expositions of religious thought/praxis, and this paper will trace the intimate interrelations between thought, rhetoric, religious practice, community, and mythologized histories in these early Great Perfection traditions.

Richard Kohn, University of California, Berkeley

### **Padmasambhava and the Hermeneutics of Conversion**

In 775 AD, Padmasambhava came to Tibet as a guest of King Trisong Detsen. Four years later, Buddhism was proclaimed the state religion of Tibet. Tibetans consider Padmasambhava the father of their tantric Buddhist tradition. Western scholarship, however, has doubted his importance in the early

period. One of the functions tradition assigns Padmasambhava is the conversion of Tibet's indigenous deities. A critical examination of ritual texts dedicated to these deities throws new light on Padmasambhava's role.

David Need, University of Virginia

**In the Absence of the Buddha: The Authority of the Teacher in the Indo-Tibetan Buddhist Traditions**

The Buddhist tradition is often characterized as placing considerable value on independent self-certification of doctrine, thereby evincing a program of free critical inquiry. In particular, the Ge-luk-ba (*dge lugs pa*) tradition in Tibet represents the Buddha as advocating a reasoned, empirical approach to his teaching, one that brooks no authority other than the standard of reasoned proof. This approach to the Buddhist Doctrine down-plays or conceals the considerable role authority and tradition have had in the authorization of interpretations of Buddha's word. In this paper, I will discuss (1) evidence pointing to the early and ever growing importance of the teacher as a source of authoritative instruction within the disparate Buddhist communities in India, and (2) the specific case of the Ge-luk-ba tradition where the advocacy of reasoned inquiry goes hand-in-hand with a tantric ethos in which one is directly enjoined to accept the instructions of one's teacher without question.

**ASSOCIATION FOR ASIAN STUDIES**  
**1994 Annual Meeting, March 24-27**  
**Boston, Massachusetts**

There were no panels this year dedicated exclusively to the Himalayas. This is a forum within which Himalayan scholars could be represented with entire panels. The 1995 Conference is scheduled to occur 6-9 April 1995 in Washington, D.C. Deadline for submission of paper, panel, and roundtable proposals is 3 August. Himalayanists should put together a panel. Information on the 1995 meetings is available from:

The Association for Asian Studies  
1 Lane Hall  
University of Michigan  
Ann Arbor, MI 48109 (phone 313 665-2490).

Piya Chatterjee, University of Chicago

**Communities of Tea: Gender, Ethnicity, and Hierarchy on an Indian Plantation**

The small highway from Siliguri to Bhutan winds past Sarah's Hope, one of the large, formerly British owned plantations in the Central Dooars of North Bengal. From the road, which slices the plantation's emerald bushes to one side away from the residential quarters, you will note some interesting spatial markers. The manager's (burra sahib's) bungalow rises palatially next to the white-washed buildings of the factory and it is flanked by smaller, and humbler cottages. These are the "bashas" of the clerical staff of the plantation, widely known as "babus." If you look carefully behind the bushes, you will see a high brick wall which separates the labor lines from both "basha" and bungalow. These spaces of power succinctly map the three-rung hierarchy which cleaves the plantation's social world: Punjabi/Bengali sahibs; the predominantly Bengali "Babus;" the "madesia," 'tribals' and Nepali communities among the workers. This paper will demonstrate the manner in which the social identities of the three basic strata are historically constituted, and how they remain in constant flux within the contemporary plantation. Of central analytic concern is the way in which "ethnic" and gendered dimensions are codified by labor, ritual and political practice.

One central analytic concern is how notions of work and of "appropriate" labors inform the politico-cultural practices within, and between, each community. The "burra sahibs" of the Raj rode on horseback through their estates, creating around themselves an aura of gentlemanly leisure which lay in direct contrast to the manual and "menial" laboring enacted within field and factory. The distance between the sahib on horseback and the bent figures of plucking women was mediated by power and its rich multi-layered dispersions. And it is through these distances of the minutiae that the social identities of "coolie" and "sahib" were created, consented to, and contested. The paper, however, will not present a "distant" past but will demonstrate how these codes of the Planter Raj remain powerfully efficacious in contemporary plantation. In short, the maintenance of this distance is inscribed through labor practices, through discourses of Otherness from the double-runged elite, and mapped within the spatial configurations of residence and productive activities of the plantation.

The second analytic concern of the paper is the manner in which gender, the position of women within the field and bungalows, fissures the more clearly "ethnicized" hierarchy mentioned earlier. The contrast between the "mehsahibs," within their inner worlds of palatial bungalows, and public laboring of women workers is striking. The "maijis," wives of the staff cadre, do not sit on their verandahs when workers pass, in fear of a visual defilement. In significant ways, the women of the plantation elite create the boundaries of status and power which speak loudly of the terms of dominance that mark

all relations within the productive ritual and political enactments within the social worlds of the plantation.

Ann Forbes, Harvard University

#### **Land Tenure as a Way of Representing the Past in Northeastern Nepal**

The right to maintain their traditional form of land tenure, called "kipat," was granted to the ancestors of the Yamphu Rai of Northeastern Nepal in the late 1700s. Over time, the "kipat" system has come to embody the grandeur of this history and to be essential to Rai identity. This representation of the kpat system in fact has been used to obscure the ongoing manipulation of land tenure laws by powerful village headmen. This paper will discuss the disjuncture between this construction of the past and the political economic reality of contemporary life in Northeastern Nepal.

Subir Sinha, Northwestern University

#### **Moving Against Modernity: India's Environmental Movement as Critique**

Since 1972, with the news of peasant inhabitants rebelling against profiteers and the state in the remote mountain villages of the Himalayas, India has seen a series of struggles around issues of the meaning and control of nature, the limits to the market, and the basis of the legitimacy of the Indian state. There seems to be consensus among observers that these -- and other -- social movements have challenged the ideology and practice of "modernity" and "development" in the Indian context.

In this paper, I will argue that there are two contending explanatory frameworks most commonly used to analyze India's environmental movements. The one more readily accepted in Western media and academia posits an essentialism wherein there was a timeless harmony between nature and those primarily dependent upon it for subsistence and survival. These "indigenous people," especially the women among them, were repositories of a system of knowledge that enabled sustainable use of nature. The onset of modernity under the colonial state and its perpetuation by the postcolonial state changed this harmonious relationship into an exploitative and unsustainable one; modern science and technology, the modern market and the modern state replaced indigenous knowledge and social systems.

The second framework sees the unsustainable exploitation of nature as a result of changes in property relations brought about by the state since the onset of colonialism and the articulation of local economies and systems of authority with (inter)national markets and national political institutions.

I will argue that these two frameworks have embedded within them two ideological responses to modernity, representing two political agendas in the search for alternatives. I shall counterpose an "anti-modernity" to a "counter-modernity," and argue further that these frameworks and the alternatives they represent, despite their Indian specificities, fall along the faultlines of environmental politics worldwide, the one between "deep ecology" and "social ecology."

Finally, I shall argue that the reception of these frameworks within Western academia reflects changes within the academy more than it does the experience of those actually involved in everyday struggles against "development" and "modernity."

Kirin Narayan, University of Wisconsin

#### **The Two sisters: Kangra Women's Perspectives on Serving Others**

A cluster of folktales about feminine morality is told among upper caste Kangra women who celebrate the wedding of the sacred basil plant (*tulsi*) each year. One story, which I collected in several variants, describes two sisters, one poor, humble and kind; the other rich, haughty and selfish. Folklorists have documented variants in U.P. (associated with the festival of Sakat), and further, this story fits larger cross-cultural tale types (480 The Kind and Unkind Girls, 750B Hospitality Rewarded). Following the lead of A.K. Ramunujan, I trace how the tale has been recast to the contours of local cultural themes. Ramanujan's insight may also be extended to a teller's personal themes, and I argue for the value of including performers' exegeses in the framing of scholarly interpretations.

Ujjwal Pradhan, International Irrigation Management Institute, Kathmandu  
**State and Property Relations: The Context of Environmental Changes in Agrarian Nepal**

Sociologists have viewed property as a social relationship among people with regard to the control and use of a wide range of objects having both use and/or exchange value. This complex system of rights and duties over such valued objects is usually validated by traditional beliefs, attitudes, and values and is sanctioned in customs and law. Property rights are thus an institutionalized means of defining who may control various classes or valuable objects for a range of present and future purposes. Such institutions are usually derived from differentiated power relations within a society and resolutions of resource conflicts. This sociological convention is used in this paper for the analysis of irrigation and forestry changes in Nepal.

The relationships between property, state, and local actions are explored in this paper with respect to environmental changes within irrigated agriculture and forestry. In the evolution of this interaction and environmental change, the coexistence and contradictions of various property regimes and legal bodies, the hierarchy of property rights, eminent domain, the notion of public good, the cores and peripheries of knowledge are elaborated to gain an understanding of the legal and institutional frameworks governing these objects of property. The historical and cultural factors underlying such institutional arrangements, the various state actions propelled by fiscal and legitimacy crisis, and external financing through international capital are issues that are presented in this paper. They are substantiated by cases of resource control and management in the field of irrigation and forestry in Nepal.

Joanne Watkins, University of Nevada  
**Spirited Women: Tradition and Identity in Northern Nepal**

Many studies on the effects of capital penetration, the expansion of the world market system, and the incorporation of minority groups into centralized states often find that these economic and political changes lead to the subordination of women -- through their loss of customary property, marriage and legal rights, or through a general devaluation of their work, social status, and their loss of autonomy. However, as the Nyishang case will demonstrate, this overall subordination does not always occur.

The Nyishangba are an ethnic Tibetan Buddhist group whose ancestors migrated to the Nyishang valley from Tibet six hundred years ago. The Nyishangba have been involved in transnational trade for over a century, and their networks extend into northern India and mainland South East Asia.

First, I will briefly discuss some of the historic and culturally specific conditions that initially gave rise to a gender egalitarian society; then I will summarize how the reorganization of trade in the 1960s led to major changes in the sexual division of labor and in residential patterns. I suggest that the persistence of female autonomy is due to their continued importance in food production, their central roles in village activities, and the long-term absence of adult male traders from the homeland.

Finally, I will look at the variety of ways adult women have reconstructed their traditional authority and secured their position in the household and community at large in the face of changes that threaten to undermine the egalitarian social order. These changes include the impact of urban migration to Kathmandu and greater incorporation into the Nepalese Hindu state, and increasing disparities in wealth and household income. With members of the community scattered across Asia, and divided between their rural valley settlements and their urban homes in Kathmandu, Nyishangba are increasingly concerned with maintaining their "sacred homeland," their cultural identity and their cohesiveness as a "closed" ethnic group.

**ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN GEOGRAPHERS**  
**1994 Annual Meeting, 27-31 March**  
**San Francisco, California**

Nigel J.R. Allan, University of California, Davis

**Refugees and Environmental Change in Northwest Frontier Province, Pakistan**

Approximately five million refugees have fled Afghanistan since the Afghan king was overthrown by his cousin, a former prime minister, in 1973. Initially the number of refugees was few but this action set the stage for a 1978 coup d'etat in which the ruler (the former king's cousin) was killed and wholesale purging of dissidents among factions started. What began as a revolt of the periphery against the urban, modern elite at the center ended up as a contest between two superpowers with massive human misery and environmental destruction of the biotic resources both within Afghanistan and in adjacent countries. This paper will focus on the refugee inhabited areas adjacent to Afghanistan, principally Pakistan, with brief remarks about the conditions in neighboring Tajikistan. A review of cross-border environmental security projects is given and a methodology for appropriate reconstruction is proposed for Afghanistan.

The conflagration that erupted in Kabul, Afghanistan in 1978 had enormous repercussions for environmental security sustaining a subsistence society in Afghanistan. These resources are water for irrigated farming, seasonal pastures, and forests. A review of the internal conditions in Afghanistan is given but most of this presentation will focus on adjacent Pakistan, especially the condition of the forests. Complete denudation of some forests has occurred where refugee camps were established. The condition of other protected and reserved forests is assessed using previous studies in 1982 and 1985 as benchmarks.

Indigenous and foreign NGO assisted efforts to halt the current deforestation and consequent environmental degradation side effects are described. A prognosis about the current refugee situation and environmental security is given. Keyword: environmental change, refugees, Pakistan.

Barbara Brower, University of Texas at Austin; Ann Dennis, USFS Pacific Southwest Range and Experiment Station

**Forest Dynamics in Sagarmatha National Park, Nepal.**

A small-scale study of forest dynamics in Sagarmatha (Mt. Everest) National Park, Nepal, documents active regeneration in small plots of *Abies spectabilis* woodland near Sherpa villages. These findings contradict much of the received wisdom about the dynamics of Himalayan forests in general and those of the Mt. Everest region in particular. The research reported here has implications not only for the bigger picture of the status of Himalayan forests but also for the ways in which we approach the analysis, planning and management of natural resources important to both local people and the world.

In 1990 Dennis analyzed small stands of mixed *Abies spectabilis* woodland in Sagarmatha National Park. The sample plots, located near villages and subject to browsing, limited fuel gathering, and litter collection, have been widely represented as declining remnants of retreating native forest. But previous reports, based on a range of approaches including travelers' and foresters' intuition, local oral history, selective forest sampling, comparison of photographs, and GIS analysis, are contradicted by the results of this study. We argue the risks of overgeneralization, reliance on a single source, and the privileging of a single perspective in reaching conclusions about the functioning of wildland resources subject to complex and changing uses, and suggest the benefits of a balanced perspective and multifaceted, complementary strategies of analysis. Keywords: Himalayan forests, resource management.



David Butz, Brock University, St Catharines, ON  
**Symbolic Resources and Ecological Sustainability in Shimshal, Northern Pakistan**

Habermas identifies two central orientations of social activity: instrumental action and communicative action. I argue that these correspond to two types of ecological resources: instrumental and symbolic. A sustainable resource utilization system requires the maintenance and integration of both types of resources, because the communicative process implicit in a shared recognition of symbolic resources constrains and validates instrumental uses of material ecological resources. Rapid transformations in the definition and use of either symbolic or instrumental resources threatens the sustainability of a resource utilization system. Frequently, as indigenous non-industrialized communities interact with the industrialized world, their instrumental resource uses shift without a corresponding shift in symbolic resources, so that instrumental ecological activities lose their indigenous normative validity.

I explore this process in Shimshal, an agricultural community in the mountains of northern Pakistan. Since its "discovery" in 1889 by European explorers, Shimshal has been exposed to outsider re-interpretation of its environment. Selected quotations from accounts by explorers and adventurers, and more recently by tourists and development agents, reveal that outsiders have interpreted Shimshal's ecological resources in terms that correspond to a western/industrial world view. Outsiders have created their own set of symbolic resources from Shimshal's environment, which threaten to overwhelm the indigenous meanings attributed to ecological resources. Shimshal's continued sustainability as a community relies on its ability to retain an indigenously defined and shared set of symbolic resources which gives meaning to its activities, and which legitimizes its utilization and stewardship of instrumental resources. Keywords: sustainability, resources, cultural geography.

John J. Metz, Northern Kentucky University  
**Composition, Dynamics, and Use of Upper Elevation Forests in West Central Nepal**

Forest conversion and degradation in the Nepal Himalaya creates shortages of essential forest products for local peoples. The national government and many local communities are acting to improve the management of forests. Local efforts are almost always in lower elevation communities whose forests consist of small, remnant stands and for whom forest products are scarce. The management systems they design, however, are better at preserving forests than at creating equitable and sustainable systems of use. Several forestry development projects have responded to this void by designing simple frameworks of management which they then refine with the aid of forest user groups. These forest management schemes are initially based on research which divides forests into "types" and identifies the dynamics of the various types.

In contrast to deforested lower elevations, extensive forest tracts remain from about 2400 to 3600 m. Here also human use is killing large trees and limiting forest regeneration. Little quantitative information exists about the species composition, structure, and dynamics of these broadleaf, evergreen (2400 to about 3000 m) and Abies-Rhododendron-Betula (3000 to 3600m) forests. This paper first summarizes the types of forest products people extract from upper elevation forests and then presents an analysis of 77 stands from two watersheds on the southeast flank of Dhaulagiri Himal in west central Nepal. The analysis describes the gross patterns of the vegetation, divides the vegetation into types, and explores the dynamics of these types. This information will be essential to the design of sustainable management plans for upper elevation forests. Keyword: Nepal, forest-uses, forest-dynamics.

Nanda R. Shrestha, University of Wisconsin; Whitewater

**Land Encroachment as an Agrarian Protest: Its Implications for Rural Development and Environmental Security**

Relying on the political ecology drama being played out in the Tarai region of Nepal, this paper will argue that land encroachment is a form of agrarian protest. In the agrarian context, a protest can take different forms ranging from individually-oriented outmigration (the most passive form) to group or class-based armed revolts (the most active form), and invariably occurs in response to deteriorating socioeconomic viability and social injustice. As a form of protest, the widespread encroachment of common land resources has direct implications for both rural development and environmental security. True, in the process of deforestation and consequent environmental damages occurring in the tropical and subtropical regions of the underdeveloped world, there is a hierarchy of culprits that can be commonly divided into a three-tier reverse pyramid. In this three tier hierarchy, the primary culprits are commercial logging operators - both officially contracted and illegally operating - followed by state resettlement schemes and land encroachers. In other words, the process of deforestation is completed when land encroachers reclaim the land by destroying the secondary growth natural vegetation in areas cleared of standing (timber) trees by loggers. With this premise, this paper will explore the origin of the land encroachment-based agrarian protest movement in the Tarai and its implications for rural development as well as environmental security. Since it is the poor who are most dependent on common environmental resources, their long-term economic survival and security is closely intertwined with environmental security. It is therefore important to realize that land encroachment as a weapon only provides a temporary solution to their socioeconomic deprivation. In the long run, such a weapon may actually prove to be detrimental to their long term economic viability. Keywords: Land encroachment, protest, environmental security, economic viability.

Barbara Thomas-Slayter and Nina Bhatt. Ecology, Community Organization, and Gender (ECOGEN) Project, International Development Program; Clark University

**Land, Livestock, and Livelihoods: Changing Dynamics of Gender, Caste, and Ethnicity in a Nepalese Village**

*(The following is an expanded abstract of the paper. The results are available as a case study entitled **Managing Resources in a Nepalese Village: Changing Dynamics of Gender, Caste, and Ethnicity** published by Clark University. This is part of the larger ECOGEN project funded by USAID's Women in Development program.)*

Over the past ten years, significant changes have taken place in Ghusel Village Development Committee, Lalitpur District Nepal, as the community has moved from primarily subsistence agriculture into the wider cash economy. Several factors contribute to this transition, including the Small Farmers' Development Program (SFDP), which provides credit to farmers mainly for the purchase of buffaloes for milk production, and the emergence of dairy cooperatives.

This paper explores the changes in gender, ethnic, and caste dynamics as the largely Tamang and Brahmin residents of Ghusel shift from subsistence agriculture to livestock rearing. The paper is based on fieldwork carried out in Ghusel VDC between January and April, 1993, by researchers from the Institute for Integrated Development Studies in Kathmandu and from Clark University of Worcester, Massachusetts. It draws on a variety of quantitative and qualitative methods including wealth ranking, resource/benefits analysis, focus group discussions, participant observation, key informant and household interviews, and a household survey.

Ghusel's shift from traditional subsistence farming to the wider economy has assured food security to many households previously vulnerable to hunger through milk sales, earned income and increased agricultural productivity. It has also brought new opportunities for cooperation among households through the dairy cooperatives. These organizations are successfully bringing farmers together to collect, transport, and sell their milk collectively. They work across the boundaries of class, caste, and ethnicity on a common set of objectives.

These interventions, on the other hand, have created new inequalities in gender roles and ethnic/caste relations and put unanticipated pressures on the environment to support livestock production. Three negative impacts can be discerned: (1) women with respect to livestock care; (2) the distribution of benefits by gender as well as ethnicity and caste; and (3) management of production is intrinsically linked.

With regard to the first point, men seek the credit and are defined as the important earners of income for the family while women are designated the labor responsibilities in regard to buffalo care. Women experience significantly increased workload, diminished mobility, and little involvement in household resource allocation decisions.

With regard to the second point, the study reveals that the Government's SFDP Credit Program is not reaching the poorest farmers, as was originally intended. Evidence from this study shows that the wealthier Brahmin community disproportionately gains access to and benefits from the SFDP Program, despite its mandate to reach the poor in the community, comprised primarily of its Tamang residents.

Finally, the ongoing extraction of government forest resources without replanting or sustainable management of forest resources threatens the livelihoods of local residents. The current high rates of forest resource extraction impact the larger ecology of Ghusel and exacerbate soil erosion, landslides, and disappearance of certain fodder types.

Analysis thus reveals that the move to milk production and incorporation into the cash economy is increasing the well being of many households within the community while also increasing inequities between Brahmins and Tamangs resident in Ghusel. The paper argues that the fragile ecosystem is now under growing strain as households have substantially increased their needs for fodder and fuelwood. Evidence suggests that there is critical need for attention to the gender-based implications of maintaining livestock for milk sales and to the ecological underpinnings of this livelihood system.

A policy of forging ahead with a set of economic objectives while ignoring the ecological requirements of the system, as well as its social implications, is fundamentally flawed. Without major readjustments, this livelihood system is unsustainable.

## CONFERENCE REPORT

contributed by Nirmal Man Tuladar, CNAS

### **The Fourteenth Annual Conference of the Linguistic Society of Nepal November 26-27, 1993 Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur Campus.**

Welcoming the participants, Mr. Chandra Prakash Sharma, Secretary-Treasurer of the Society, reported that the Society has five Honorary Members: Late Ralph L. Turner, Prof. Kenneth L. Pike, Prof. R.K. Sprigg, Prof. Werner Winter, and Prof. Bernhard Kolver, 111 Life Members and 89 Regular Members. He went on to report that the Society has been able to generate a sum of Rs. 100,000/- out of the membership fees, the interest of which has been a considerable help to bring out *Nepalese Linguistics*, the journal of the Society.

In his inaugural address, Prof. Alan Davies of Department of Applied Linguistics, the University of Edinburgh expressed his concern for the lesser known languages of Nepal and recommended that they be studied before they would completely die out. He said that he was under the impression that Tribhuvan University has the department of linguistics and that he was surprised to learn it does not have the department but was happy to learn that the Linguistic Society of Nepal has been struggling to set up one. He ended up his address wishing the conference a great success.

In the presidential address, Mr. Nirmal Man Tuladhar, President of the Society said that having Prof. Alan Davies to inaugurate the 14th Annual Conference was indeed an auspicious occasion for the Society because it was he who for the first time introduced linguistics at the department of English, Tribhuvan University in 1969 when he was in the Chair and also ran three short-term courses on linguistics and applied linguistics for college teachers of English paving the way for linguistic studies in Nepal. Tracing back the brief history of linguistic studies with ups and downs, Mr. Tuladhar said in 1972 the Institute of Nepal and Asian Studies in conjunction with the Summer Institute of Linguistics launched an MA in Linguistics for the postgraduates in English, which was the first and last programme. He went on to say that in 1973 Tribhuvan University took the initiative in establishing a department of linguistics, so to design and assess teaching-research infrastructure a committee was formed under Prof. P.R. Sharma, Dean of Institute of Nepal and Asian Studies (INAS). This Institute held the first Seminar in Linguistics on November 4-7, 1974 and also published the proceedings entitled *Seminar Papers in Linguistics: Problems and Perspectives in Linguistic Studies*. When INAS was converted into Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies (CNAS) as non-teaching institution in 1977 that was the end of the history of linguistics studies. When the Linguistic Society of Nepal came into being in 1979 the interest and concern for the linguistic studies was revived. Updating the information about the status of the memorandum submitted to Vice Chancellor of Tribhuvan University on January 8, 1993 requesting him to commission a task force for setting up a department of linguistics, Mr. Tuladhar said that he had been keeping track of the memorandum and that the other day he had seen Rector about it, who had assured that he would soon be commissioning a committee. He wound up the address saying that the Society can be hopeful when there is a committee since where there is a committee, there is a hope.

Mr. Hriseekesh Upadhaya, Chief Editor presented a copy of the latest *Nepalese Linguistics* to the chief guest. Mrs. Rudra Laxmi Shrestha, Executive Member gave a vote of thanks.

Addressing from the chair, Prof. D.P. Bhandari, Executive Director of the Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies, expressed his happiness for being in the chair for the inaugural session. Prof. Bhandari concluded that there must be a department of linguistics in the university for studying the languages of Nepal.

Session I: General Linguistics

Chair: Prof. Ramawater Yadav

1. Sunil Kumar Jha: The Inclusion of Aspiration in Distinctive Feature Theory
2. George van Driem: East Bodish and Newar in the Comparative Context
3. Roland Rutgers: The Status of Liquids in Consonant Clusters in Yamphu Rai
4. Amma Raj Joshi: significance of Sound Variation in Pluralization in Bajhangi dialect
5. Warren W. Glover: Shoebox: Integrated Data Management and Analysis for the Field Linguist

Session II: Applied Linguistics and Language Teaching

Chair: Prof. Sunil Kumar Jha

1. Wayne Amtzis: Procedure, Context, Theme and Voice: Guided Writing for EFL Students
2. Phanindra Upadhaya: The Possibility of Clinical Supervision at the Campus Level
3. Hemanta Raj Dahal: An Overview of ELT Course at MA English
4. Sushma Regmi: Causes for the Deterioration of English in Higher Education

Session III: Sociolinguistics and Language Planning

Chair: Prof. Kamal P. Malla

1. Jeff Webster: Nepali Proficiency in Rural Nepal
2. Bryan Varenkamp: The Nepali Sentence Repetition Test: Evaluating community-wise Bilingualism
3. Ramawater Yadav: The Use of the Mother Tongue in Primary Education: the Nepalese Context
4. Bal Gopal Shrestha and Bert van den Hoek: Education in the Mother Tongue: A Case of Newari

Session IV: Syntax and Semantics

Chair: Prof. Abhi Subedi

1. J.P. Cross: The Derivation of Some English Words
2. Madhav P. Pokharel: Aspects in Nepali
3. Tej R. Kansakar: Classical Newari Verbal Morphology
4. Tsetan Chonjore: Tibetan: "A Non-tense Language"
5. Yogendra P. Yadava: Verb Agreement in Maithili
6. Amrit Yonjun Tamang: Tamang Grammar

Valedictory Session

Chair: Prof. Chudamani Bandhu

## UPCOMING CONFERENCES

### **23rd Annual Conference on South Asia, Madison, WI, 4-6 November 1994**

(proposal deadline was 14 May )

For registration information contact:

Center for South Asia, University of Wisconsin, Madison, 1269 Van Hise Hall, 1220 Linden Drive, Madison WI 53706. Phone: 608 262-4884; FAX 608 265-3062; e-mail SASIAN CTR@macc.wisc.edu

**The Annual Meeting of the Nepal Studies Association** will be held on Saturday, 5 November, from 5:30 to 6:30. All members are encouraged to attend, and to come with ideas about prospective conference panels and other business.

The Nepal- and Himalaya-related panels in this fall's conference that we've been informed about include:

#### **A Hindu Paradox: Sex, Sexuality, and Women's Status in Nepal**

organizer: Nanda Shrestha; chair: John Metz

Kalyani Rai, *Women at the Cultural Crossroads: An Analysis of Nepalese Women in the United States*.

Nanda Shrestha, *When the Darkness Falls: Selling Sex in Nepal*.

Dyuti Baral, *Women in Hindu Religion*.

#### **The Status of Himalayan Studies**

Organizer: Nepal Studies Association/Barbara Brower; Chair: Naomi Bishop

A roundtable discussion to include James Fisher, Leo Rose, Bruce Owens, Todd Lewis, John Metz, Ter Ellingson, and others TBA.

### **Linguistic Society of Nepal 15th Annual Conference November 26-27, 1994, Kirtipur Campus, Tribuvan University, Kathmandu**

The Conference will focus on the following areas:

- Tibeto-Burman and Indo-Aryan Languages
- Phonetics and Phonology
- Syntax and Semantics
- Sociolinguistics and Psycholinguistics
- Orthography and Lexicography
- Historical and Comparative Linguistics
- Applied Linguistics
- Linguistics and Literature

Please send a copy of the abstract of your paper (about 200 words) by October 31, 1994.  
All correspondence should be addressed to:

Mr. Chandra Prakash Sharma  
Campus Chief  
Campus of International Languages  
Tribhuvan University  
Exhibition Road  
Kathmandu, Nepal

**Association for Asian Studies, 1995 Annual Meetings, 6-9 April 1995, Washington, D.C. Proposal deadline 3 August 1994.**

Regional Conferences of AAS:

*ASPAC Conference*, University of Guam, Tumon Bay, Guam 23-25 June 1994  
Contact: Theodore M. Critchfield, Humanistic Studies, University of Guam Station, Mangilao, Buam 96923.

*Mid-Atlantic Conference*, University of Pittsburg, Pittsburg, PA, 21-23 October 1994.  
Contact: Frank L. Chance, Director, Japanese House and Garden in Pairmount Park, 4332 Larchwood Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19104.

*Midwest Conference*, Western Illinois University, Macomb, IL., 23-25 September 1994.  
Contact: Vaman Rao, Department of Economics, Western Illinois University, Macomb, IL 61455..

*New England Conference*, Clark University, Worcester, MA, 15 October 1994.  
Contact: Stefan Tanaka, Dept. of History, Clark University, Worcester, MA 01610.

*New York Conference*, Utica College of Syracuse University, Utica, NY, 14-15 October 1994. Contact: Richard B Rosen, History Department, Utica College of Syracuse University, 1600 Burrstone Rd., Utica, NY 13502.

*Southwest Conference*, Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas, 28-29 October 1994. Contact: Edward J.M. Rhoads, Department of History, University of Texas-Austin, Austin, TX 78712-1163.

*Western Conference*, The Claremont Colleges, Claremont, California, 21-22 October 1994. Contact: Allan Barr, Department of Modern Languages, Pomona College, Claremont, CA 91711.

**1995 Annual Meetings of Association of American Geographers (AAG), 14-18 March 1995, Chicago, IL. Abstract deadline 1 September 1994.**

Regional Meetings of AAG:

*East Lakes Division*, Kent State University, 12-15 October 1994.  
Contact: Jay Lee, Department of Geography, Kent State University, Kent, OH 44242-001, phone: 216/672-4304..

*Great Plains/Rocky Mountain Division*, Salt Lake City, 13-15 October 1994.  
Contact: George Hepner, University of Utah, OSH 270, Salt Lake City, UT 84112,  
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*West Lakes Division*, Terre Haute, IN, 13-15 October 1994.

Contact: Paul Mausel and Bill Dando, Dept of Geography/Geology, Indiana State University, Terre Haute, IN 47809, 812/237-2254..

*New England/St. Lawrence Division*, Hartford, CT, 14-15 October 1994.

Contact: Mark Okrant, Plymouth State College, Geography/Social Science Dept, Plymouth, NH 03264, phone 605/535-2364..

*Southwest Division*, Hot Springs, AR, 20-22 October 1994.

Contact: Jeff Allender, University of Central Arkansas, Geography Dept., Conway, AR 72035, phone 501/450-5641.