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Book Review

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Economic Development through Indigenous Means: A Case of Indian Migration in the Nepal Terai

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Introduction

Most anthropological studies during the last several decades have tended to be cross-sections of a particular society at one point in time. Historical materials in anthropological reports were consciously or unconsciously ignored because it was considered unimportant to the theoretical framework (due to the influence of the structural-functional approach in anthropology). However, the absence of historical depth in anthropological writings has been lamented by many anthropologists and particularly by Evans-Pritchard (1950) who aptly describes the need for using the historical material in anthropology. Though my interest in this paper is not purely a historical one, I thought historical materials were necessary to deal with change over time and hence to understand past economic development and the present political structure of Nepal more clearly. So this paper will focus a historical approach to understand the past economic development and also the present socio-economic situations of the Nepal Terai, with special reference to the Indian migration¹ in the area.

Nepal's Terai (a flat tropical area) presents an unusually interesting case of "indigenous economic development." Without an understanding of the history of this area the current situation would be difficult to understand. About the turn of the 19th century, the Nepalese government embarked on a deliberate policy to encourage migration from India as a means of opening up the Terai or low land areas which up to that time had remained largely undeveloped. Settlement in the area had been avoided by the hill people because of the presence of malaria. Up to 1950, the whole Terai region of Nepal was then called a "death valley" (kala-pani) by the hill people. In some situation, even the government servants evinced great reluctance to serve in the Terai and they considered exile or penal settlements if they were transferred to work here. However, today, the Terai has become not only Nepal's granary, but also the source of almost all her exportable surplus (see Gaije 1968, 1975; Rana and Thapa 1975). The Terai which was sparsely populated a few decades ago, is densely populated today (140.47 persons per square kilometer according to the 1971 census). So by 1964, the official policy to attract Indian settlers had become so successful that the Nepalese government was shifting its strategy and trying to discourage further Indian settlement as it feared it could not absorb more migrants (for the official figure of Indians in Nepal, see Appendix 1). The success of the program was due

to a combination of factors, both those which attracted migrants and those which forced them from their home areas in India.

The Geo-Political Situation of Nepal

Situated in the foothills of the Himalayas, Nepal's gate to the outer world was opened only to the south (India) until 1950, when foreign aid programmes² were launched in Nepal. Up to 1950, almost all her foreign trade was limited to India, except for a few commodities which were traded to Tibet in the north. Even today, being an absolutely landlocked country with her whole border open only to India, the Indian ports are the main outlets for Nepal's products to the outside world (see Bhasin 1970). The geo-cultural unity of the peoples of these two countries is reflected in the 550 mile open border between them which permits the free movement of citizens of both countries without passport or visa formalities.

Indian Migration in the Terai after the Unification

After the unification of Nepal (1768), the Shah rulers (during the period from 1768-1845) encouraged Indian people to settle in the Terai regions of Nepal. The founder of present day Nepal, King Prithvinarayan Shah while also in favour of attracting settlers to the Terai was cautious not to allow the entry of foreign businessman. In Dibya Upadesa (Noble Teachings) he stated that, "Do not permit Indian traders³ to go beyond God Pradesh. If they come to our country they will definitely make our subjects pauper."⁴ His main purpose in encouraging settlers was to increase production and to yield more revenue. The above statement however, clearly indicates that Indian businessmen were already in Nepal by that time. Pratap Singh Shah issued a royal declaration stating "cultivate the land and set up the farmsteads." This type of decree was widely circulated.⁵

At this time there were abundant virgin lands in the Terai, and much of the Central and Eastern Terai was forested (see Stiller 1976). Clearing of forests and developing the virgin lands was not possible due to the acute shortage of manpower in the Terai. This was however, partly remedied when a big famine broke out in Bengal and Bihar in 1769-70. It brought great changes in the agricultural structures of these regions. It is said that the number of deaths resulting from this famine amounted to one third of the population in Bihar.⁶ The famine-stricken Bihari Indian farmers were in search of richer and better watered lands and this brought many of them into the Nepal's Terai (Stiller 1976). In 1798, King Rana Bahadur Shah issued a special decree to send people to cultivate the Terai lands in Saptari, Mahottari, Bara, Parsa, Rautahat, and Morang districts.⁷ The second, third, eighth and ninth articles clearly say that Nepal wished to attract settlers from India or wherever possible to cultivate farms in the Terai. Nepal attracted tenants by giving subsidies for a year or two (not collecting revenue and production itself) and also by supplying seeds and grain to get the settlers started. Similarly the contractors (irrespective of whether they were

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those Nepalese or Indian citizens) were given many privileges to develop the Terai land and to attract settlers from India or from birta⁸ lands in Nepal. A sample contract for virgin lands development issued to Ambar Singh Das proves this.⁹

The East India Company was mainly interested in trade with Nepal. A treaty of commerce between Nepal and the Company was signed in 1792 mainly to facilitate the operation of businessmen of both countries. The trade situation between the two countries however, was not improved. Colonel Kirkpatrick's mission to Nepal in 1793 was primarily intended to arrange further English trade with Nepal and Tibet.¹⁰ Four successive governors, General Hastings, Cornwallis, Shore and Wellesley worked to maintain peaceful relations with Nepal and to promote increased trade.

Nepal's relations with the East India Company from 1768 (King Prithvinarayan Shah) to 1836 (General Bhimsen Thapa) however, were not harmonious. Prithvinarayan Shah was careful not to allow the entry of English influence into Nepal and Kinloch's military expedition to Nepal was thwarted by the King (Sharma, 1973). Tensions finally erupted in the war of 1814-16 between the Gorkhas (Nepalis) and the East India Company.

This war had many repercussions for Nepal. The English came to admire the Gorkhas for their loyalty, bravery and courage. Many Nepalese became "Lahure" (wanderers) and joined the army of Ranjit Singh and even the British army. Following the Sugauli Treaty diplomatic relations were established between the East India Company and Nepal, which further encouraged the nationals of one country to move in the territories of the other.

Indian Migration in the Terai during the Rana Period (1846-1950)

After the Sugauli Treaty the East India Company and Nepal both tried to maintain peaceful relations by exchanging letters (e.g., the decree written by the King of Nepal to the residents of British India in 1839) and treaties (e.g., the treaty of 1855 in which both countries agreed to hand over criminals to the country where they belonged to and the 1860 treaty of reciprocal exchanges of goods, etc.) These treaties further improved the relationships between the two countries and encouraged more people to cross the border.

Indian immigration to the Nepal Terai was enormously high from 1846-1950. The principle reasons were:

1. Nepalese government policy for maximizing agricultural production and revenue from the land.
2. Abundant birta and guthi lands in the Terai which needed more manpower to cultivate them.

3. The Terai was sparsely populated and there was a need to encourage more people to settle in the region.
4. There were natural calamities in the Indian regions bordering the Nepal Terai.
5. Socio-political causes either in Nepal or India which further encouraged Indian migration.
6. There was a need to develop Terai in the form of market towns.

Abundant Birta and Guthi Lands and Nepalese Government Policy to Maximize Agricultural Production

Mahesh Chandra Regmi has given figures for the areas of land under various forms of land tenure in Nepal up to 1952 (1976:79):

<u>Form of tenure</u>	<u>Area (hectares)</u>	<u>% of total areas</u>
Raikar	963,500	50.0
Birta	700,000	36.3
Guthi	40,000	2.0
Kipat	77,000	4.0
Jagir, Rakam, etc.	146,500	7.7

During the Rana period, plots of lands were given as birta to Rana family members and to loyal groups. Simultaneously, plots of lands were recorded in the name of religious institutions such as Guthi and other personal belongings, such as Kipat,¹² Jagir,¹³ and Rakam.¹⁴

Before 1846, the birta holdings were retained in the form of Jagir but during the period of Prime Minister Jang Bahadur Rana (1846), the birta system was retained more or less on permanent holdings. Jang Bahadur Rana and his family held all the Terai regions of Far Western Nepal comprising Banke, Bardia, Kailali and Kanchanpur districts as birta.¹⁵ Later Jang Bahadur Rana also secured birtas in 1862 and 1874 (Regmi, 1976, p. 30). Similarly, the brother of Jang Bahadur, Ranoddip Singh got 15,000 bighas (one bigha = approx. 71,188 square feet of land) of land in the Terai in 1833 (Regmi, 1976, p. 32) and another brother Bir Shumshere got birta lands (yielding an income of 200,000 Indian rupees) in Saptari and Rautahat districts in 1890 (Regmi, 1976, p. 32). Chandra Shumshere (Prime Minister 1901-1919) also gave plots of lands to his own brothers and followers in Western, Central and Eastern Terai.

Similarly, there were bighas of land allotted in the name of Guthi in the Western, Central and Eastern Terai regions of Nepal. As these birta and Guthi holders were religious teachers, soldiers, and members

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of the royal family, they remained permanently either in the Kathmandu Valley or in the hilly regions of Nepal. They had to cultivate lands and with the help of Indian contractors and labourers, much of this forest land was made habitable. These Indian contractors and labourers, as well as the land hungry Indian farmers of the border areas of Nepal, immigrated to the Terai and settled in the newly deforested areas. The Rana government also encouraged Indian landlords and tenant cultivators to clear forest land and settle even in non-birta areas so that land revenue would be increased (see below).

During the Rana period, some interesting Regulations and Acts were also enacted to encourage cultivation of the land in the Terai, e.g. the Madesh Malko Sawal (Revenue Regulations for the Terai districts), the Jimdar-Patwari Sawal (Regulations for revenue collectors: Jimdar and Patwari) and the Mulki Sawal (Administrative Regulations). These Acts promulgated in the reign of King Surendra Bikram Shah, are worthy of mention in this study. In the Jimdar-Patwari Sawal (1936), 18 orders were issued, and these were to be followed strictly by Jimindars (landlords). Article 14 of this Sawal states that, "If you (Jimindar) cannot find raitis (tenants) you have to cultivate the land yourselves and have to pay the land revenue. If you cannot do this, you have to assess the revenue from your paternal possessions and resign from the post of Jimindar because the land is under your disposal." Article 18 of this Regulation further states that "if there is barren land under your disposal and if someone comes to cultivate it, you cannot sue the cultivator because the land is already cultivated."

Article 28 of Madesh Malko Sawal states that, "if raitis are not available, they are to be purchased and should be kept in one's own mauja (particular area of land under the supervision of a Jimindar). Seed should be provided to a raiti if he does not have it." Article 62 and 63 of this sawal further state that all parti jagga (cultivable barren land) and Kala bangar (lands covered by bushes, weeds and thatches) should be cultivated." In addition, Article 377 of this sawal clearly states that "in Kailali and Kanchanpur districts the names and addresses of all Muglaniyas (foreigners) who had come to till the land should be recorded."

Another interesting law was promulgated at the time of King Surendra Bikram Shah (1847-1881).¹⁶ It states:

Raitis are to be invited from all sectors (irrespective of whether it be Nepal or India) to cultivate the land in Morang district. Necessary items needed (bhoto potadi) for agriculture are to be facilitated and land should be given to him for cultivation. Any raiti, if he has arrears of payment to government or loans repayable to other individuals, if he settles in the area (cultivates the land) or up to that

period when he cultivates the land, neither the government nor his creditors shall force him to pay the arrears or the loans. Property earned by him should be given for his livelihood and if there is surplus income, the office of that region or the amal should prepare a document for his land revenue and loans. A slave who has already settled one year in Muglan (India), but returns in Morang district and cultivates land, the creditors should not hold him for loans. But if a slave of Gorkha Raj has settled in Morang due to the similar situation, he could be hold by the creditors and they could sell him, there is no penalty (p. 36).

These documents clearly show that during the Rana period the government tried to attract settlers to the Terai from different areas and particularly from India. Their main interest was to maximize agricultural production and to increase revenue from the land.

Further an interesting document was also recorded by Elder et. al. study. (1974:8). They have noted,

"The government ... established settlement offices at Biratnagar in the Eastern Terai and at Hetauda in the Central mid Terai and announced that anyone could acquire as many bighas of land as he wished simply be setting on them and clearing them of forests."

The Terai was fertile with abundant rainfall. It was however, sparsely populated due to endemic malaria. Even the poor peoples of the hills did not migrate to the Terai until after the malaria eradication. Thus the ruling government of that time had to invite Indian contractors, labourers, and tenants either to clear the forest or to cultivate the land itself. The Indian people could adapt to the area from the very beginning due to the similar geographical setting of the Nepal Terai and the Plain regions of Northern India, particularly Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.

Natural Calamities in the Adjoining Regions of the Nepal Terai

The other important reason for the Indian migration into the Nepal Terai was the natural calamity in northern Bihar, which is located south of the Eastern and Central Terai of Nepal. The problem of flooding was serious in northern Bihar, and the river Sapta Kosi was the real trouble. This river comes all the way from East Nepal and flows down to the plain at Chatra in Nepal, there it enters Bihar (at Birpur), and flows through a great area, touching the districts of Saharsa, Madhubani, Darbhanga, Munghyr, eventually reachin-Kurusela in Katihar district of Bihar state. In all it covers a total distance of nearly 260 kilometers. (See Bihar District Gazetter, Darbhanga and Purnea, 1964).

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In 1763, the Kosi flooded a mile of west Purnea (India), changed her course, and swept miles of land during 1807-39 and 1873-92. The entire sector of northern Bihar Plain covering approximately 33 to 36 thousand kilometers constituting the Kosi belt used to come under the water of Kosi river. In Bihar, it was known as the "river of sorrow." Finally in 1958 a giant barrage was constructed at Hanuman Nagar under the combined efforts of the governments of Nepal and India.¹⁷

In 1770 there was a devastating famine in Purnea district, Bihar. Then in 1783 there was drought in the district and scarcity of food in the whole of northern Bihar. The construction of Golghar (a big store house) in Patna, Bihar in 1783 was done primarily to store food grain so that grain could be distributed in areas where was a shortage of food. In 1791, the rice crop almost failed in northern Bihar and a severe scarcity of food grain followed. Again, there was an earthquake in the northern plain of Bihar in 1934 and districts like Purnea and Durbhanga suffered badly.¹⁸

All these natural calamities and other sufferings together helped to encourage the migration of the poor, landless, hungry and suffering Bihari (Indian) peoples into the Nepal Terai.

Socio-Political Causes

Sepoy Mutiny of 1857

The Sepoy Mutiny of India was also one of the important factors that encouraged Indian migration into the Nepal Terai. Many Hindus and Muslims fled Nepal during this mutiny and made their permanent residence there, particularly in the Western Terai regions of Nepal. On the other hand, the Sepoy Mutiny also proved beneficial to the government of Nepal. Nepal helped the British government during this mutiny and restored to Nepal the present Terai districts of Banke, Bardia, Kailali and Kanchanpur in 1861.

Revolution in Nepal in 1950

It is said that the Indian government also indirectly took part in the overthrow of the Rana government in Nepal in the revolution of 1950 (see Devkota 1960). Hundreds of Indians entered Nepal to help the Nepali Congress in this movement. Those Indians who entered Nepal originally for political reasons were later encouraged to settle down as Nepali citizens.

The Need to Develop Market Towns in the Terai

The development of commercial centers in the Nepal Terai came about as a result of development just across the border regions. The Indian railheads were extended close to the border towns of Nepal from the late nineteenth to the early twentieth century. Nepalese Terai towns like Birgunj, Janakpur, Biratnagar, Bhadrapur, Bhairahawa, Nepalgunj, and

Dhangarhi flourished when the Indian railheads were extended to the adjacent Indian border towns of Raxaul, Jayanagar, Farbisgunj, Jogbani, Galgalia, Nautanwa, Rupadia and Gourifanta. Biratnagar, one of the largest trading centers of Nepal, flourished when the Indian railheads were connected in Farbisgunj (A distance of 20 kilometers away from Biratnagar) in 1914. (See Purnea District Gazetters, 1964). After a year or two the railhead was extended to Jogbani (four kilometers away from Biratnagar). When the railhead was connected, Mr. Jit Bahadur Colonel, the Governor of Morang district shifted his headquarters from Rangeli to Biratnagar. (Information was derived taking interviews with a lot of senior citizens in Biratnagar).

The Jogbani-Dharan road was constructed by the British around the middle of the 20th century. As communication facilities extended, Dharan Bazar (located in the Sunsari district of the Terai) boomed and it became the largest trading center for the people of the Eastern Hills up to 1962. Similarly, Bhadrapur Bazar (Jhapa district) developed when a railhead was extended to Galgalia (Bihar) and at the same time Dubi Bazar in Sunsari district became bigger. As these Bazar areas were developing in the Terai, Indian businessmen also moved their business firms slowly in these areas. In particular, Marwaris (the trading group of Rajasthan) and Bihari groups like Baniya, Haluwai, Rouniyar, Kalwar, Teli and as well as some Muslims and Bengalis established their businesses in these developing centers.

The indigenous Terai groups were not businessmen by tradition and the Nepalese hill businessmen like the Newars, Thakalis and Sherpas did not migrate to the Terai due to fear of malaria. So the government of Nepal had to encourage the Indian businessmen to set up their business in the Nepal Terai. It is also said that a special document was issued to attract the Indian businessmen in the Nepal Terai. Any businessman who wanted to set up business in the Nepal Terai was given two bighas (approx. 142,376 square feet of land) of land. The land distribution was made locally by the governor of the district (Personal communication with senior citizens in Biratnagar). Thus positive factors in the form of economic opportunities encouraged the Indian migration into the Nepal Terai.

Establishment of Factories and Industries in the Terai Towns

As most of the Terai towns were connected by the Indian railheads and were developed in the form of market towns, factories and industries also established in the Terai. The Biratnagar Jute Mill (1936), Raghu-pati Jute Mill (1946), Morang Cotton Mill Ltd. (1942), Morang Sugar Mill Ltd. (1947), the Joodha Match Factory, Birgunj (1938), the Joodha Match Factory, Biratnagar (1946), the Nepal plywood and Babin Company Ltd. Biratnagar (1943) and the Nepal Churot Company Ltd. (1947) were established during the Rana period. As there were few Nepalese who could invest capital, Indian capitalists were encouraged to do so and they set up the factories and industries in the Terai. Similarly, rice mills and Biri factories were established in Bhadrapur, Biratnagar, Janakpur, and Birgunj by Indian businessmen during this period. Managing heads and Birgunj by Indian businessmen during this period. Managing heads in these factories and industries were Indian nationals and, of course all office administrative workers and labourers were Indians (for more details see Dahal 1978).

Indian Migration in the Terai after 1950

After the Independence of India (1947) and the overthrow of Rana regime in Nepal (1950), the already peaceful and harmonious relationships between Nepal and India were further strengthened when citizens of both countries continued to move freely across the border and were allowed to maintain business enterprises, hold government jobs, and farm lands in either of the countries. The question of citizenship was minimally raised by the governments of either country. A treaty of Peace and Friendship between Nepal and India was signed in 1950. Article 7 of this treaty states that:

The government of Nepal and India agree to grant on a reciprocal basis, to the nationals of one country in the territories of the other the same privileges in the matter of residence, ownership of property, participation in trade and commerce, movement and other privileges of a similar nature (Bhasin, 1970:122).

Similarly, the treaty of Trade and Commerce between Nepal and India was signed on July 31, 1950; on September 11, 1960 and again in August, 1971. These trade and commerce treaties not only further strengthened friendship between the two countries but also encouraged more Indian nationals to do their business in Nepal. Further, a treaty was extended between the two countries concerning Irrigation and Water Development Projects on 14th July, 1954 and the treaty of Kosi barrage was signed on 25th April, 1954.

Until 1964, Indians were encouraged to settle down in Nepal. The Citizenship Act Law of 1952 was rather loose requiring only a five year stay in Nepal to hold Nepalese citizenship and started to monopolize business. Similarly, the Citizenship Acts of Nepal of 1963, 1964, and 1968 made it a simpler matter to obtain Nepalese citizenship (for details of the Citizenship Acts of Nepal, see Appendix 2).

In the general election of 1958, most of the Indian settlers in Nepal were included in the voter's list. This was encouraged by the Nepali Congress in spite of opposition from the parties of Tanka Prasad, K.I. Singh and the Communists (see Devkota 1960, 1979). The voter's list, however, became one of the avenues towards citizenship in Nepal in the Citizenship Acts of 1964 and 1975. Thus voters included for were originally political reasons were later encouraged to settle down as citizens of Nepal. Thus the liberal attitudes of the early interim government towards the migrants from India to Nepal were responsible for the increase of Indian population in the country.

During the period of King Mahendra (1956-1971), Indian capitalists were encouraged and given many privileges that would help them to set up factories and industries in Nepal.¹⁹ Indian capitalists like Birla were encouraged to open the cotton industry in the Nepal Terai. Similarly in the Industrial Policy Act of 1962, it is clearly stated that no distinction in nationality will be made where the establishment of bigger factories and industries in Nepal is concerned. Foreign nationals were further allowed to take back their sum plus 10 percent profit in foreign currency to their home country.²⁰

In the business sector, the establishment of National Trading Ltd. (1962) in Nepal also encouraged the Indian businessman to invest their money. According to one reputable Marwari (Indian) businessman of Biratnagar, it was from foreign goods that most of the businessmen earned an incredible amount of money. But it was also in foreign goods that maximum black marketing was carried on between Nepal and India and this brought a scandal to the Terai businessmen even though many of them were not involved. Further, the service institutions like the Trade Promotion Center (1971) and the Industrial Service Center (1974) not only expanded trade, industrial research and training but also stabilized the Indian businessmen and industrialist promoting faith in and security among themselves.

By 1964, Indian tenants had often been forced to move from one landlord to another in search of land. The Land Reform Policy of 1964 gave secure right to many Indian tenants and so they became permanent occupants. This prevented many hill people from holding land in the Terai. As many of the hill people could not find free land in the Terai, they deforested major areas of Nepal, a source of wealth for the country which was thought to be unending. In other words, the Land Reform Policy further stabilized even the temporary Indian cultivators who simply started to cultivate the land for a year or two. According to the Land Reform Law, no tenant can be displaced from a particular piece of land where he has cultivated at least one crop. A sample progression of Indian migration into a panchayat of Morang district (Terai) at different time periods is given below. The figures represent only wards 4, 6, 7, and 9 of Katakari Panchayat²¹ (see Table 1), Morang District.

Table 1: Immigration to Katakari Panchayat (Morang District) by Indian Ethnic Groups, 1933-1966

Indian Ethnic Groups	Total families or households in 1976	Total family members	Up to 1933	Number of Households			
				1934 to 1943	1944 to 1953	1954 to 1962	1963 to 1966
Koeri	12	66	-	-	12	-	-
Dhanuk	4	21	-	-	1	3	-
Saha	13	33	-	2	4	2	4
Kamat (Kewat)	58	296	-	17	15	22	4
Sahani	16	69	1	3	4	6	2
Das	2	7	-	-	-	2	-
Singh	2	15	-	-	-	2	-
Sahu	1	2	-	-	-	1	-
Mahato	4	20	-	-	4	-	-
Tatma	1	6	-	-	-	-	1
Mistri	1	5	-	-	-	1	-
Miya	12	62	-	1	4	6	1
Mausuri	1	3	-	1	-	1	-
Raya	1	1	-	1	-	-	-
Paswan	30	135	1	9	11	6	3
Yadav	1	2	-	-	-	-	1
Karna	1	4	-	-	1	-	-
Thakur	1	2	-	-	-	1	-
Dhobi	2	7	-	-	1	-	1
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The above figures clearly show that maximum numbers of Indians immigrated into the area up to 1963. After 1963, the numbers of permanent Indian settlers in this panchayat were seriously curtailed at least in the agricultural sector. This is due to the successful malaria eradication programme in the Terai after 1960, the promulgation of the New Legal Codes in 1963 and the implementation of the Land Reform Programme in 1964. These developmental plans and programmes greatly helped to bring the hill peoples to the Terai. This however, checked the permanent infiltration of the Indian population only in the agricultural sector of the Terai.

Conclusion

This historical pattern of Indian migration clearly shows that Indians were originally invited to settle in the Nepal Terai. They were encouraged to settle down not only in business, construction and the industrial sectors but even in the agricultural sector where competition with local Nepalese became most acute. In the early days, it was not felt that the Terai would become over populated, nor people were optimistic that it would become the backbone of the nation's economy. It was merely realised that agricultural production need to be maximized and land revenue be raised in the Terai. Thus Nepal tried to attract settlers even from India, promulgating different ordinance and adopting various means. After 1964, however, it was felt that the Terai was becoming over populated and that the population flow into the region needed to be curtailed not only from the hills of Nepal but also from the Indian nationals whose number in Nepal is increasing everyday. Thus the government of Nepal has taken the position that the continued inflow of foreign nationals into Nepal is unacceptable and has thus put many restrictions on these foreign nationals.²²

The restriction in foreign nationals came rather late in the developmental context of Nepal. Today, it is very difficult to differentiate the immigrant Indians from the local Terai people. Difficulties arise in many ways: 1. the ethnic groups living in the Nepal Terai are physically and culturally the same as the people living in the border districts of Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Bengal. Language, food habits, style of wearing clothes and other socio-cultural patterns are similar. This problem has become more complicated because of the frequency of intermarriage between people of the border districts of Nepal (these are all the Terai districts) and those of India. Thus a Nepali Terai man (locally known as madhese) who has settled in Nepal more than a century ago, might marry his daughter in India or get a bride for his son from India. As a result, peoples from both sides frequently cross the border to meet and exchange social obligations with their affinal relatives. Mr. Rishi Kesh Shaha has rightly pointed out that, "Controversies and tensions have already arisen in the Terai as to who is a local Nepali and who is an outsider meaning an Indian citizen" (1975:17). Rana and Thapa (1975: 58) have outlined three categories of Indians in Nepal:

- i. Those who are still Indian citizens.

ii. Those who were born in India but have not taken Nepalese citizenship.

iii. Those who were born in Nepal but are descended from Indians.

These divisions make it even more difficult to distinguish between the local Terai inhabitants and recently immigrated Indian citizens since no documents exist that differentiate Rana and Thapa's three classes of Indians. The difficulty lies here not in these categories themselves but in how to differentiate between the three categories of people as well as the whole immigrant group and the local Terai people. As these people do not have birth certificates, it is very difficult to say who has been born in Nepal or who has been born in India. Moreover, a local Terai person who has lived in Nepal for generations may be classified as Indian if he is unable to produce official documents or if he is landless. But a recently immigrated Indian can be classified as Nepali if he is clever enough to produce falsified documents or has managed to purchase land. The investigator of this paper came upon a good example of this situation when he was talking with the general secretary of the Morang Merchants' Association. He noticed that almost all the registered members of the Association had Marwari (Indian) names. The investigators asked the general secretary whether this was actually a "Marwari Association" (Indian Association). The secretary (who himself was Marwari) replied ironically that the names which the investigator was reading were all names of Nepalis. Clearly, in the Terai regions of Nepal today, those whom we might call Indians are sometimes in fact Nepalis and those whom we might call Nepalis are sometimes in fact Indians.

In brief, whatever the social, political or economic consequences Nepal is facing through Indian migration, it is obvious the Terai has become Nepal's vital economic zone. The Terai has undergone great economic change in the agricultural sector and today it has become the "granary" of Nepal. Much of the government's excise revenue comes from jute, cigarette, matches, cloth, sugar, rice, and oil industries which are located in the major towns of the Terai. The Terai is becoming increasingly urban due to effective communication and transportation systems which promote trade and industrial activities. Here is the most outstanding indigenous economic development ever to occur in the history of Nepal.

In fact it compares favourably with programme of economic development elsewhere in Asia. One of the most noteworthy aspects was the fact that there was little need for planning or complex bureaucratic organization and capital investment was low, with no foreign loans necessary. Nonetheless, like many of the other cases it produced unforeseen ill-effects as well as benefits.

This case then suggests that economic development may bring problems even when it is not involved with the usual capital intensive international aid structure and the overloading of the indigenous bureaucratic organization. It points out that to achieve rapid development new in-puts

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must be made. These and the change itself are very likely to be disruptive and any government which is trying to stimulate development should be aware of potential costs as well as benefits in its assessment of its plans.

NOTES

1. Field work on "Indian Ethnic Groups" was conducted from the periods between November 1977 to February 1978, hiring three research assistants. This study was made possible from the grant of Research Center for Nepal and Asian Studies, Tribhuvan University, where I work as a staff member of the Research Center. This paper utilizes partially some materials from the original field report, Indian Ethnic Groups in the Nepal Terai (see Dahal, 1978).
2. It should be noted that the first scene in the history of foreign aid in Nepal was the 'point four agreement' of 23 January, 1951 with the United States of America. The American aid was soon followed by formal economic assistance from India in October of the same year.
3. The Indian businessmen he means the Kashmiri Musalman and Gosain Brahmins from India who had already begun trade with Chinese via Nepal. This is illustrated in his letter written to Sadullaji Mojamji on Baisakh, 1822 (1765).
4. Quoted by P.R. Sharma in his article 'Kirkpatrick's', "An Account of the Kingdom of Nepal", Contributions to Nepalese Studies, Vol. 1, No. 1, 1973.
5. Lalmohar issued by Pratapsingh Shah (1774-1777) and Rajendra Bikram Shah (1826).
6. Quoted by Ludwig F. Stiller, S.J. The Silent Cry the People of Nepal: 1816-1839, 1976, p. 44. The account was originally from Bisheswar Prasad, (ed.), Fort William India House Correspondence: and Other Contemporary Papers. Relating there to (Delhi, 1960), 6:203.
7. Lalmohar issued to Kazi Abhiman Singh Basnyat, published in Itihas Prakash, 1955, p. 189-190.
8. The State granted land to individuals to enable them to make a living (Regmi, 1963, p. 25).
9. Recorded by Ludwig F. Stiller S.J. in his book. The Silent Cry the People of Nepal 1816-39, 1976, p. 55.
10. Prayag Raj Sharma, "Kirpartricks An Account of the Kingdom of Nepal", Contributions to Nepalese Studies, Vol. 1, No. 1, December 1973, INAS, Tribhuvan University.

11. Lands assigned for the use of charitable, religious or Philanthropic institutions (Regmi, 1963, p. 27).
12. Kipat is a form of communal tenure. Land is held on a tribal, village, kindred or family basis, and individuals have definite rights in this land by virtue of their membership in the relevant social unit. Hence title to land has a communal character and it is usufructuary, rather than absolute (Regmi, 1963, p. 29).
13. Jagir is to assign raikar land (land which the State retains under its ownership and taxes the private individuals who operate it) as emoluments of office to government employees. In other words, before 1951, it was the policy of the government to pay the salaries of civil and military employees in the form of land emoluments (Regmi, 1963, p. 22).
14. Rakam is the assignment of land as remunerations for the performance of specific functions mostly of a manual character (Regmi, 1963, p. 24).
15. Sarhakar-Akar-Sarbangna Mafi Biralab Birta Grant to Prime Minister Jang Bahadur, Aswin Sudi 6, 1917 (October 1860) from Regmi's Landownership in Nepal (1976, p. 31).
16. Shri Panch Surendra Bikram Shah Devaka Shasan Kalma Baneko Muluki Ain (Legal Code enacted during the reign of King Surendra Bikram Shah Dev), Ministry of Law and Justice, Kathmandu, 2022 (1965).
17. R.C. Poy, Choudhari, Bihar District Gazetteers, Darbhanga and Purnea, Patna, 1964.
18. Ibid, p. 139 (?).
19. Nepal Ain Sangraha (collection of Legal Codes) Part II, Ministry of Law and Justice, 1964, HMG, Nepal. See especially the Indo-Nepal Industrial Corporation Act, 1962, pp. 840-945.
20. Ibid, pp. 856-861.
21. Registers were made in the name of Nam Namesi by each panchayat of Morang district under the supervision of District Panchayat in 1967. They supply information on a person living in that panchayat such as name and address, duration of stay, and his place of origin and destination, and the total members in his family. When we tried to look at this type of register, they disappeared automatically from the panchayat office. We approached the District Panchayat Office and officials working in the District Panchayat tried to procure registers for us, but during our three month's stay in the field, things followed the official procedures and we could not get registers. We however got Nam Namesi registers of Ward No. 4, 6, 7, and 9 of Katahari Panchayat from the store of the District Panchayat.

22. Restrictions put on foreign nationals go as follows:

Land Reform Act, 1964: According to this act no person shall sell, give away or otherwise relinquish his rights to any immovable property in favour of any foreigner, foreign corporate bodies or foreign nations without the prior approval of the Government of Nepal. In case such rights have been relinquished and taken up the property shall be confiscated and shall accrue to the Government of Nepal.

The Ukhada Land Tenure Act, 1964: This act provides for termination of existing ownership rights over the lands being cultivated by tenants under the share-cropping system. The rules framed under the act provide for registration of the land in the name of the Nepalese nationals only.

The New Kuluki Ain of 1963: Restrictions on acquisition and disposal of immovable properties by foreign citizen.

The Nepal Citizenship Act, 1964: This Act puts many restrictions including those on employment on foreigners. In the field of Trade and Commerce under the Foodgrains (controls) order, Indians as non-Nepalese are not allowed to engage in foodgrain trade.

Similarly under the facilities of Industrial Enterprises Act of May 1961, Cottage and Village Industries requiring a capital investment of not more than Rs. 50,000.00 can be established only Nepalese nationals (Bhasin, 1970, pp. 122-123).

APPENDIX 1

The total number of Indians in Nepal is still difficult to specify from the records. According to the 1961 Census, foreign citizens in Nepal numbered 110,060 or 1.17 percent of the total population. Out of this number, Indian citizens were reported to be 73,311 or 70 percent of the total foreign population. The corresponding figure for the 1971 census was 136,477 persons or 1.18 percent of the total population. Out of this number, Indian citizens were reported to be 128,289 or 94 percent of the total foreign citizens. The 1961 and 1971 censuses also reported the foreign born population which constitute 3.6 percent and 2.8 percent respectively. 10.8 percent of the total population of the Terai was born outside the country according to the 1961 census. Of this figure, 98.9 percent had been born in India. In the 1971 census, the Terai born population born outside Nepal was 8 percent (337,448 total foreign born persons) of the total population of the Terai, and 96 percent of these people were born in India.

According to the 1961 census, the concentration of Indian born populations settled in different regions of Nepal was as follows:

<u>Regions</u>	<u>Total population</u>	<u>% of total population in that region</u>
Eastern Terai	213,230	9.6
Western Terai	78,162	28.7
Kathmandu and other parts of Nepal	32,767	.04

The 1971 census reports the concentration of the Indian born populations settled in the following regions of Nepal as follows:

<u>Regions</u>	<u>Total population</u>	<u>% of total population in that region</u>
Eastern Mountains	1,220	0.40
Eastern Hills	2,130	0.19
Eastern Plains (Terai)	165,521	11.92
Kathmandu Valley	3,645	0.70
Central Mountains	73	0.02
Central Hills	8,273	0.67
Central Plains (Terai)	122,791	6.94
Western Mountains	796	0.17
Western Hills	763	0.02
Western Plains (Terai)	17,505	1.47

Confusion, however, arises in the definition of the terms "foreign born population" and "foreign citizens" in Nepal. If a person (may be a Nepali) was born in India but now a Nepalese citizen working in Nepal, he will be recorded as foreign born. Secondly, the census schedule is

designed in such a way that if an Indian citizen claims to be a Nepali citizen at the time of census taking, his status will be so recorded on his own word alone. There is no method of cross checking for this. One should note however that most of the Indian nationals in the Terai are alert to safeguard their own position, and if they are not Nepali citizens they are unlikely to admit this. This leads one to assume that there has been a gross under estimation of the number of Indians in the Nepal census data (for details see Dahal, 1978).

APPENDIX 2

The Citizenship Act Law of Nepal promulgated ordinances at different periods when or in what conditions a foreigner can apply for the Nepalese citizenship. Some of the excerpts of the ordinances are the following:

The clause two of the Citizenship Act Law of 1952 states that: i. If one of the parents are born in Nepal. ii. One has settled at least five years in Nepal.

The Citizenship Act Law of 1963 states that:

- i. A person who can speak and write Nepali.
- ii. One who is doing some business in Nepal.

The Citizenship Act Law of 1964 and 1967 state that:

- i. A person has to stay minimum 12 years in Nepal.

The clause three of the Citizenship Act Law of 1968 states that:

- i. If any person who wants to get Nepalese citizenship, the Pradhan Panch (the head of the village council) of Town Panchayat, President of District Panchayat or any third class government officer can forward his application to Zonal Commissioner. The Zonal Commissioner, if he feels necessary, shall investigate the person and issues citizenship.

In 1975-76, the following basic criteria have been formulated to issue Nepali citizenship:

- i. The land tax revenue paper paid before 1950.
- ii. The name of the person in the voter's list prepared in the general election of 1958.
- iii. The name of the person included in the census list prepared by the Central Bureau of Statistics.

- iv. The certificate of work of the person employed in the government service.
- v. A person who has stayed 15 years in Nepal.



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History of Land Settlement in Nepal Tarai

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Introduction

Nepal is believed to have been populated mainly by immigration, over a period of many centuries, of Mongoloid groups from the Tibetan region and of Indo-Aryan groups from northern India. The Muslim invasion of India accelerated migration from the south, beginning in the thirteenth century, when a large number of Rajputs (ruling groups of north India) and other Hindus left the Gangetic plain to find refuge in the Hills of Nepal. The ruggedness of the Nepalese Hills kept them safe from any sustained or unified invasion from either the north or the south. The high Himalayas formed a nearly impregnable barrier in the north; and the south was protected by the dense malarial forests of the Tarai and lower hills. Within the confines of these natural barriers, several petty states and principalities grew and flourished, although they were in constant flux, frequently modifying their borders.

All accounts of Nepal's history focus on the Hill region, which was the center of political activity as well as the most densely populated region. Very little is known about the political or economic history of the Tarai before the unification of Nepal in 1769. Before unification almost all of the current Tarai region was under the jurisdiction of various Hill states and principalities. Those principalities controlling parts of the Tarai derived sizable revenues thereby.

Although human habitation in the early years in the Tarai was very sparse, probably due to the unhealthy malarial climate prevalent in the region, various localities in the central and eastern Tarai had several small population centers thriving on the rich lands. These centers lay on the fringe of the well cultivated northern Indo-Gangetic plain. Some indigenous Tharu groups, believed to be partially immune to malaria, also lived in settlements in the dense forest.

Population growth in the Tarai has been very slow until lately. Initial migration into the area came from the adjoining southern Indian plain, where population pressures became greater earlier than those in the northern Nepalese Hills.

*The paper is based on the author's Ph.D. dissertation (Ojha, 1982).

see migration

The unification of Nepal from 1769 onward and the growing need for military expenditure led to various revenue policies for financing the territorial expansion campaigns. Tax burdens in the Hills increased continuously, impoverishing the peasants there and, consequently, forcing their migration toward India. The Nepalese government also attempted to attract migrants from India and the Hills into the Tarai so that cultivatable land and, hence, land revenue could be augmented there.

Programmes and incentives to encourage migration into the Tarai, however, were largely unsuccessful; it remained sparsely populated until recently, whereas population increased very fast in the Hills. It was only after the advent of democracy in 1951 that substantial population influx began into this region. Like the past rulers, the new government perceived great potential for agricultural development in the Tarai: the Tarai forest was presumed to have unlimited potential for settlement. However, subsequent unprecedented and unforeseen surge of settlements within a short period led to a situation that the government was unable to control. Before long the Tarai forests dwindled significantly. Measures for the control of spontaneous settlement and supplemental planned settlement programs to redirect the flow have met with little success. Future prospects do not seem any better.

This paper is divided into four sections:

- a) Land Settlement until 1950;
- b) The Transition Period: 1951 to 1960;
- c) The Surge Toward Land Settlement: 1961 to 1980; and
- d) Current Situation and Future Prospects.

In the first section I trace the programs and policies of the government relating to the settlement of the Tarai from 1769 to 1950. My argument is that hostile climate and endemic malaria, although major deterrents, were not the only factors limiting settlement of the Tarai by the Hill people; the extremely exploitative land tenure system in the country and economic opportunities available in India were more important factors. If opportunities outside the country had not been available, continued population pressure in the Hills would have inevitably increased settlements in the Tarai.

Land reform and developmental programs between 1951 and 1960 laid the basis for subsequent growth in the settlement of Tarai lands. Two of the major programs are briefly discussed in the second section.

Rapid growth of settlements in the Tarai after 1960 is discussed in the third section. The magnitude and causes of growth, as well as related government policies, are presented in detail. Short-sightedness (or lack of long-term perspective) and inability to anticipate the problem have been the main reasons for the uncontrolled growth, but ad hoc measures accentuated the process.

The paper concludes with a brief note on the current situation and future prospects.

Land Settlement until 1950Importance of the Tarai

Deliberate land settlement in the Nepal Tarai began in the third quarter of the eighteenth century. Before the conquest of Kathmandu Valley by the Gorkha King Prithvi Narayan Shah in 1769, and his subsequent territorial expansion, the present kingdom of Nepal was divided into eighty separate principalities. Some of these principalities controlled territories in the Tarai but the Tarai was then covered with dense forest and sparsely populated. Settlement in these areas is believed to have been discouraged by the rulers because of their value as a defensive barrier (Francis, 1819: 51-52). William Kirkpatrick, who represented the British Mission to Nepal in 1793, observed a "great forest" of eight and one-half miles wide covering the Tarai and with very few settlements. The eastern Tarai was somewhat more populous than the western Tarai which had almost inexhaustible forests (Kirkpatrick, 1811: 16-19, 42, and 183).

The situation changed after unification when the Tarai became the most prized acquisition of the Gorkhali rulers, partly because of its existing land revenues, royalty from timber exports, levies on pastures, and the export of elephants (Olyphant, 1852: 52), but it was even more valued because of the large tracts of undeveloped rich cultivable land. As early as the late eighteenth century, the Hills were extensively cultivated and offered limited possibilities for increasing revenue (Stiller, 1976: 43). Thus, the development of the Tarai was not only attractive but was a necessary precondition for territorial expansion. Availability of Tarai lands helped finance the growing military structure throughout the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Efforts to encourage settlement of the Tarai continued even after the halt in the territorial expansion process following the Anglo-Nepal war of 1814-16)¹.

Policies to Encourage Development of the Tarai Lands

From the period of initial unification to the advent of modern democracy in 1951, the rulers of Nepal initiated various direct and indirect policies for developing the Tarai lands. Such government policies were intended to increase revenues and, in some cases, to improve security. For all practical purposes, the lands in the Tarai were considered to be inexhaustible, especially because attracting settlers to them was so difficult.

Settlement Policies--1769 to 1815: The most concerted effort for reclamation and settlement of the Tarai land seems to have been made during the decades immediately following unification. In the initial period, the government tried to reclaim waste lands directly through forced labour. It soon realized, however, that in the absence of tenants

to cultivate the land such a policy could not be successful. Consequently, it was abandoned in favour of indirect methods (Regmi, 1971: 144).

Waste lands and virgin forests were allotted to civil and military officials, members of nobility, chieftains of vanquished principalities, and others under birta tenure;² similarly, government employees or functionaries were paid for their services through assignments of lands under jagir tenure (Regmi, 1971: 373). It was the responsibility of the birta holder and jagirdars to recruit tenants for the development of such lands.

Birta and jagir lands were also allotted to those who organized land reclamation and settlement projects (Regmi, 1965: 21). Often jagirs were assigned from military consideration, e.g., in the case of settlement of Makwanpur and elsewhere "which were considered of strategic importance in view of possibilities of war with the British" (Regmi, 1971: 40).

Waste lands were freely allotted to any person who undertook to reclaim them for settlement and tax remissions were made for the initial period ranging from four to ten years (Regmi, 1971: 144).

An active policy of encouraging Indian immigrants was followed because Hill people were unwilling to settle in the Tarai. Local administrators were encouraged to attract Indian settlers and revenue collectors were often obligated to settle a specified number of immigrants every year (Regmi, 1971: 143). Birta holders, jagirdars, and other prominent persons were allotted additional waste lands for compulsory reclamation; since inviting settlers from raikar (state) lands was prohibited, they had to seek cultivators from India.

From time to time after 1793, officials were sent to eastern Tarai districts to make arrangements for irrigation facilities at government expense in order to promote land reclamation and settlements (Regmi, 1971: 143-44).

Perhaps the most important policy of the government, initiated toward the end of the eighteenth century, was to allot relatively large areas of waste and virgin lands on contract basis to individuals who possessed sufficient resources for promoting land settlements, a major departure from earlier development efforts. Contractors were required to pay only nominal tax to the government but were permitted to appropriate all taxes and labour obligations from the settlers on lands reclaimed by them during the initial period (ten years); also a certain proportion of total land reclaimed, normally the best land, was granted as birta to the contractors (Regmi, 1971: 145). One important facet of this land development was that contractors provided settlers with "supplies to help them through the difficult period of building a homestead, clearing the lands, and getting in their first crops" (Stiller, 1976: 45).

These policies, especially the contracting system, seem to have been quite successful for "many villages, which were waste or under forest in 1793 had been reclaimed and settled by 1810" (Regmi, 1971: 146-47).

Settlement Policies--1816 to 1950: Direct and concerted efforts for land settlement stopped after the Anglo-Nepal war of 1814-16 until 1920. Settlements were still encouraged but through indirect measures such as remission of tax, amnesty to runaway slaves, debtors and criminals, and exemption from compulsory labour obligation. For example, runaway debtors, slaves, and expatriates were not to be excluded from settlement in the Surkhet and Morang areas by creditors, owners, or administrators (Ministry of Law and Justice, 1965: 36). In Kailali and Kanchanpur, criminals crossing over from Indian territory and settling on new land were free from any restrictions (Regmi, 1965: 170). Besides initial tax remissions, anybody who undertook development of waste and virgin lands for cultivation was entitled to 10 percent of such land as tax-free birta (Ministry of Law and Justice, 1965: 19).

In addition, the government took an important step in the 1920s to promote organized land settlement in the Rapti valley and Morang area; this effort contains many features common to the modern land settlement schemes in Nepal. For the first time, the government drew up plans for government agencies to clear large tracts of forest in these areas directly. As opposed to past schemes of attracting Indian immigrants, Hill people were to be specifically settled in the delineated areas. Large-scale emigration of Hill people to India was already noted at this period and one of the objectives of these early settlement programmes was to attract these Nepalese back to their own country and provide them with a means of livelihood.

According to the plan,⁴ forests were to be cleared under the supervision of the Forest Office. Settlement was to be supervised in Rapti valley by the Agricultural Office and in Morang by the Governor. Settlers were to be allotted land in the chronological order of their application and were to receive as much land as they could reclaim. They were also to be provided with credit, food supplies, health services and medicine, and free timber for construction in addition to exemption from land tax for seven years in Rapti valley and for ten years in Morang, and only a minimal tax for a number of years thereafter. Settlement leaders and other persons who brought in settlers were to be rewarded with personal land grants from the reclaimed area. Escaped criminals and convicts were to be granted amnesty if they returned and reclaimed land in these settlement areas.

No details on the execution and achievement of these plans are available but Regmi observes that "these plans were not overly successful, apparently, for in 1953 we find an FAO expert describing the Hetauda

(Rapti valley) region as containing only a few cultivated patches totaling about 400 acres, set among forests" (1965: 170). The First Five Year Plan attributes this failure to the prevalence of malaria in these regions (Government of Nepal, 1956: 65).

Achievements

It is not possible to estimate the magnitude of land settlement in the Tarai during the period from 1769 to 1950. Undoubtedly, settlements increased, especially in the Morang area of eastern Tarai, where most government effort was concentrated, and in the border areas contiguous to the cultivated region of India. However, much of the western Tarai and those areas away from the border were still heavily forested. Referring to the policies of the government to encourage settlements in the Tarai forests and the large amount of forest still available in this region, one observer in the early twentieth century notes that "this policy must be pursued for many years before there need be slightest grounds for fearing that sufficient forest will not remain" (Collier, 1928: 253).

Government policies prior to the early nineteenth century appear to have had some impact; however, there is no indication that government policies after 1816 were overly successful in attracting migrants to the Tarai. Much of the slow increase in settlements may simply be due to a spontaneous process led by the increasing population pressure in the adjoining Indian districts which may have taken place even without the incentives and concessions provided by the government.

Reasons Inhibiting Settlement by the Hill People

An important characteristic of land settlement in the Tarai was that manpower, the most critical factor for land development, was met through migration from India. The government tried to encourage settlement by the Hill people, both through indirect incentives (Regmi, 1971: 83) and later through direct programmes like the Rapti and Morang area resettlement plans. But the policies met with little success in spite of the fact that population in the Hills was increasing steadily and large numbers of people were migrating to India. The tropical climate and malaria endemic in the Tarai are usually mentioned as the main deterrents for settlement by Hill people, but there are other factors which were probably more important than these natural deterrents.

Before 1815, large-scale recruitment of able-bodied men for the expanding military absorbed part of the excess labour force in the Hills; moreover, lands, although of inferior quality, were still available for reclamation (Stiller, 1976: 43). This does not, however, mean that the situation of the Hill people was good, rather that the economic condition of the majority was rapidly deteriorating because of the land tenure system oriented toward extracting maximum surplus (and compulsorily labour obligations associated with it) to finance the growing military expenditure (Stiller, 1976: Chapters 3 and 10). Although conditions then were no better than now, Hill men did not

migrate to the Tarai, rather, they joined the army of Ranjit Singh in the Indian Punjab as mercenaries (Bruce, 1928: xxxviii).

After the 1816 treaty with the British, opportunities to enroll in the British army opened up; at the same time there were other economic opportunities in the rural and urban areas of India. Migration to India sustained the Hill economy until the early 1950s (which is still true to a large extent). One particular aspect of migration to India, viz., rural migration to Assam and other northeast provinces for land reclamation, which also had malarial climate,⁵ raises the question: why did the Nepalese migrate to these areas in India in preference to settlement in the Tarai.⁶ Obviously, it indicates that malaria was not the only deterrent for settlement in the Tarai. The only plausible explanation is that the Hill people wanted to escape the oppression within the country which may not have been possible to avoid simply by migrating to the Tarai for settlement. Different opportunities available outside the country were more important than the malarial climate of the Tarai in inhibiting the settlement of this region by the Hill people; otherwise the Hill people would have had no alternative to migration and settlement in the Tarai.

The Transition Period: 1951 to 1960

The period between 1951 and 1960 can be termed a "transition period" in the history of land settlement in the Tarai. This was a period when many of the preconditions necessary for the subsequent rapid growth of settlement in the Tarai were created.

Nepal underwent a dramatic change with the advent of democracy in 1951. The role of the government in national development and responsibility toward the people became more important than the simple emphasis upon law, order, and revenue collection of previous administrations. Land reform and other related measures were undertaken throughout the 1950s. For example, jagir tenure was abolished in 1951 and substituted by cash payments to the government employees; the zimindari system⁷ was replaced by collection through district revenue officers; laws were enacted to protect tenancy rights; compulsory labour obligations and other levies by the landlords and the state were abolished; and, most important of all, birta tenure was abolished in 1959 making almost all lands raikar (state land). These measures laid a basis for improving the peasants' position. One of the reasons for permanent migration out of Nepal, that is, excessive exploitation within Nepal, thus diminished in importance.

At the same time, several projects for economic development were initiated, mostly with foreign aid. A five-year development plan was launched in 1956. As in the past, the new government recognized the great potential of agricultural development in the Tarai for increasing revenue,⁸ for improving food production and supplies, and for providing land to the landless Hill people. Therefore, investment was concentrated into this region.

Among the various development activities were two projects. The implementation of the first major resettlement programme in the Rapti Valley and the launching of the malaria eradication programme marked the transition in the nature and magnitude of land settlement in the Tarai.

The Rapti Valley Development Project

The primary aim of the Rapti project, initiated in 1955 with U.S. aid, was to alleviate a food deficit in the Kathmandu Valley and surrounding Hill areas and to accommodate and provide employment to "poverty-stricken" farm workers including flood refugees (Government of Nepal, 1956: 65). The Rapti project was only partially successful in achieving its objectives. Very few flood victims and landless Hill people sought land allotment in the project. The opportunity was mostly exploited by the elite group in Kathmandu, both in government service and outside, who realized the future potential of this region. The target was to settle 25,000 people and to bring 50,000 bighas (33,860 hectares) of land under cultivation. By 1961, 5,233 families had been allotted 27,000 hectares of land but only 10,350 hectares were actually brought under cultivation (Ministry of Economic Planning, 1962: 218).

Malaria Eradication

The malaria eradication programme was a greater success. A phased programme began with the establishment of the Nepal Malaria Eradication Organization in 1958. The programme began in the central zone and continued in the eastern and the western zones. By the end of the 1960s, the incidence of malaria throughout the country was brought down to an insignificant level.

Along with the general climate of democratic reform of the 1950s, malaria eradication and publicity associated with allotment to the landless in the Rapti project resulted in a large-scale migration of the Hill people to the Tarai.

The Surge Toward Land Settlement: 1961 Onward

Growth of land settlements surged in the Tarai in the 1960s. The Rapti Valley efforts demonstrated both the feasibility of settlement in this region and the possibility of economic profit for the settlers themselves. Consequently, a large stream of migrants from the Hills started to the Rapti resettlement area and other Tarai districts where the malaria eradication programme was under way. They could not be accommodated in the resettlement project because the government was wholly unprepared for this. Ultimately, the mass of these migrants settled spontaneously in the neighbouring forest areas.

Planned Resettlement Programme

The subsequent response of the government was to explore the possibility of undertaking more resettlement projects with the objective of accommodating the natural calamity and disaster victims and landless peasants as well as controlling spontaneous migration by channeling new arrivals into organized settlements. Preliminary surveys of the Tarai were carried out with the help of an Israeli technician in 1962. Five areas in Nawalparasi, Banke, Bardia, Kailali, and Kanchanpur districts of western Tarai were identified as suitable locations.

The Nepal Punarvas (Resettlement) Company was established in 1964 as a government-owned but autonomous institution to plan and implement resettlement programmes in the Kingdom. The Nawalparasi Resettlement Project was launched in 1964 followed by the Khajura Project, Banke district in 1966. Israel provided expertise for technical planning and implementation for both projects.⁹ Eight other resettlement projects were subsequently implemented beginning in 1970, all under Nepalese expertise. Of these ten projects, land distribution and settlement have been completed in five by July 1977 (see Table 1).

Target and Achievement: Although planned resettlement in the Tarai was visualized as an important means for reducing population pressure in the Hills, the concept was not backed up by appropriate plans and programmes in practice. Numerical resettlement targets were set at very low levels compared to the immensity of the Hill population problem. During the periods of three national plans--from 1962 to 1975--only 18,000 families were targeted to be settled on 52,890 hectares of land. Moreover, actual resettlement was far below even this very modest and inadequate target: only 6,000 families were actually settled during the thirteen years on a total land area of 11,750 hectares (see Table 2).

The scope of the settlement programmes has been expanded in the Fifth Plan period (1975-80), principally because of the financial assistance available from the U.N. International Development Association (IDA) for three projects in Bardia, Kailali, and Kanchanpur. But again, achievements have been far below expectations. Although there was a target of settling 22,500 families during the five-year period, only 1,945 families, less than 9 percent of the estimates, had actually been settled by the end of 1977. All these projects are still in the initial stages so that meeting the target objectives during the plan period is a remote possibility.

Policies: Government policy supports resettlement programmes in those areas which are suitable for agricultural development but economically unsound for maintaining as forest.¹⁰ Priority for land allotment in such projects is to be given to natural disaster victims and landless people

Table 1: List of Resettlement Schemes Undertaken by the Nepal Resettlement Company and Progress up to July 1977

Name of Project	Location	Year initiated	No. of Families Settled	Land Settled (Hectares)	Status
1. Nawalpur Resettlement Project	Nawalparasi, West Tarai	1964	1,540	3,353	Complete
2. Khajura Resettlement Project	Banke, Far Western Tarai	1966	1,373	3,457	Complete*
3. Jamuni Resettlement Project	Bardia, Far Western Tarai	1970	1,280	2,670	Complete*
4. Jhapa Resettlement Project	Jhapa, East Tarai	1970	913	1,641	Complete*
5. Parashan Resettlement Project	Kanchanpur, Far Western Tarai	1970	1,634	3,147	Complete*
6. Nawalparasi (Dhanewa) Resettlement Project	Nawalparasi, Western Tarai	1975	880	768	Ongoing
7. Jugeda Resettlement Project	Kailali, Far Western Tarai	1975	71	68	Ongoing
8. Kanchanpur Resettlement Project	Kanchanpur, Far Western Tarai	1977	-	-	Ongoing
9. Bardia (Taratal) Resettlement Project	Bardia, Far Western Tarai	1977	-	-	Ongoing
10. Kailali (Mudha) Resettlement Project	Kailali, Far Western Tarai	1977	-	-	Ongoing
		Total	7,691	15,104	

*Settlement and distribution of land completed but projects still under full supervision of NRC.

Source: Nepal Resettlement Company.

Table 2: Target and Achievements of Planned Resettlement Programmes under Nepal Resettlement Company

Plan Period	Settlement Target ^a		Achievement ^b	
	Area in Hectares	Families	Land Area Dis-tributed, ha.	Families Settled
Second Plan: 1962-65	20,240	6,000	1,140	714
Third Plan: 1965-70	13,900	6,000	2,850	1,149
Fourth Plan: 1970-75	<u>18,750</u>	<u>6,000</u>	<u>7,760</u>	<u>4,260</u>
Total:	52,890	18,000	11,750	6,009
Fifth Plan: 1975-80	50,000	22,500	3,350*	1,945

*Progress from 1975 to 1977 (including settlements in projects initiated in 1977).

Sources:

- a. Ministry of Economic Planning, Trivarsiya Yojana, 2019-22 (Three Year Plan, 1962-65), (Kathmandu, 1962), p. 217; and Third Plan: 1965:70 (1965), p. 67; National Planning Commission, Fourth Plan: 1970-75 (Kathmandu, 1972), p. 64; Panchau Yojana: 2032-37 (Fifth Plan: 1975-80) (1975), p. 146.
- b. Official Records of the Nepal Resettlement Company; and Nepal Resettlement Company, Nepal Punarvash Company: Ek Parichaya (Nepal Resettlement Company: An Introduction) (Kathmandu, 1978 [2035]).

*Settlement and distribution of land completed but projects still under full supervision of NRC.

Source: Nepal Resettlement Company.

whose main source of income is agriculture, including repatriates and those evicted from protected forests (NRC, 1978).

Until 1970 the land allotment ceiling was set at 4 bighas (2.72 ha.) per family, which was reduced to 3 bighas (2.04 ha.) in 1971 and again to 1.5 bighas (1.02 ha.) in 1973. However, in the recent resettlement projects being implemented with the financial assistance of IDA, the size of allotment has been fixed at 2.25 bighas (1.53 ha.).

A number of facilities and subsidies are provided to the settlers including cleared land, free food rations for nine months, free agricultural implements, production credit, and agricultural extension services besides provision of infrastructure like roads, health facilities, schools and the like.

Lands are to be cultivated by the settlers through their own labour and full title is to be granted only after ten years, when project supervision is to be withdrawn. Holdings can be alienated through sale only after this period. Even then, any purchasers must continue to cultivate it themselves. Settlers are exempt from any land tax for the first four years. Price charged for the land allotted originally was set at Rs. 250 per bigha but subsequently raised to Rs. 300 (U.S. \$1 = Rs. 12) and more recently to Rs. 600, payable in ten equal installments beginning the fourth year.

Spontaneous Settlements

Magnitude: Spontaneous settlement of the Tarai forests during the 1960s range between 7,000 and 14,000 hectares, accommodating about 2,500 to 7,000 Hill households, per year. There is very little information on the extent of settlement during the 1970s, but available information suggests that the number of relocated Hill households range from 6,500 to 8,700 per year.

The Forest Resources Survey Office estimates a total loss of approximately 120,000 hectares between 1964 and 1972, out of which 56,000 hectares are estimated to have been encroached by illegal settlers (Ministry of Forests, 1976: 5). Official estimates of the Resettlement Department (1973: 32), on the other hand, indicate that 87,160 hectares of new land have been brought into cultivation in the Tarai by 32,175 legal and illegal (spontaneous) settler families during the decade of 1960-61 to 1970-71. Estimates from 1963 to 1972 are that a total of 20,300 hectares of land have been settled legally,¹¹ which would reduce the estimate of the Resettlement Department to 66,860 hectares of spontaneous settlements. Other studies, however, suggest that these estimates are probably on the low side.

Based on the analysis of Earth Resource Technology Satellite (ERTS) imagery, the World Bank estimates a total loss of 340,000

hectares of the Tarai forests during the period from 1963 to 1972; 130,000 hectares of this is estimated to be spontaneously settled by the Hill people and probably an additional 50,000 hectares through intra-migration within the Tarai and illegal migration from India (IBRD, 1974: Annex 1, 7).¹²

Information based on the 1971 census shows a net migration from the Hills to the Tarai during the decade of 1961 to 1971 of 400,000 persons (Rana & Thapa, 1974: 54), equivalent to about 72,700 household.¹³ It is difficult to ascertain what proportion of these migrants have been absorbed elsewhere in the existing Tarai farms or urban centers and what proportion have opened new land as spontaneous settlers. Considering the low absorptive capacity of the urban centers and the fact that only a small proportion can afford to acquire land in the existing Tarai villages through outright purchases, it is reasonable to assume that the bulk of these migrants are spontaneous settlers.¹⁴

Spontaneous settlements have persisted during the 1970s. According to the World Bank estimate, "36,000 persons (from the Hills) settled there (Tarai) in 1974/75 and 48,000 in 1975/76" (World Bank, 1979:21). If these figures are considered representative for the 1970s, numbers would range from 252,000 to 336,000 during 1971 to 1978. This suggests that the growth may have been stabilized.

Reasons for the Growth of Spontaneous Settlements: The underlying cause for the large-scale spontaneous settlements in the Tarai was growing population pressure in the Hills. But, as experienced in the past, this in itself was not a sufficient condition for migration into the Tarai. Reform measures and development programmes made settlement in the Tarai more attractive compared to migration to India. Had the planners adequately understood the population problem and foreseen the limitations of Tarai lands to absorb the likely flow, the adverse effects of spontaneous migration and settlement could possibly have been contained. For example, coordination between programmes of health (malaria eradication), forest and resettlement could have possibly limited indiscriminate forest destruction. Such coordination could, for example, have resulted in a planned "back pedalling on malaria eradication programmes where the most valuable forest resources lie" (Rana, 1971: 31-32). Similarly, planned settlements could have been simplified and made less expensive so that a large number of settlers could have been accommodated in a shorter period. Unfortunately, the Tarai was presumed to have unlimited forest resources until the 1960s. Problems of the encroachment on valuable timber lands were tackled through ad hoc measures which reinforced the migration flow.

The following are some of the specific factors that exacerbated the trend toward spontaneous settlement:

1. Inadequacy of Planned Settlement Programmes: Official capacity for resettlement was far below the demand for land. Therefore, a large number of disappointed households, who had come to the project

sites in hope of land entitlement, had no alternative but to encroach the nearby forests. Since prompt actions to evict or accommodate them elsewhere were not taken, others joined them in large numbers.

2. Ad Hoc Land Allotment Policies: Ad hoc and independent land allotments were made from time to time in the 1960s. Lands were allotted to individuals and specific groups such as exservicemen (retired veterans from the British, Indian, and Nepalese armies), repatriates from Burma and India, and "Political sufferers", not as a consistent policy but as sporadic measures to contain the specific problems and the political pressures imposed by such groups. Additional lands were also granted to victims of natural calamities. Similarly, individuals with influence and political connections were able to acquire free lands through special grants (Resettlement Department, 1973: 8). A notion developed over time, among the retired and inservice army personnel, repatriates, and others, that it was their right to get land entitlement in the Tarai (Resettlement Department, 1973: 67). When the demands of these groups could not be fulfilled, even through ad hoc channels, many settled spontaneously.

3. Laxity in Establishing and Enforcing Control Measures: Encroachment of forest and reclamation without permission was illegal but there was neither the will nor the capability to enforce these restrictions. What might be called the lack of "will" stems from the political situation during this period. The King had dissolved the parliament in 1961 and initiated a partyless panchayat political system. The government needed as much support for the new system as possible and felt the time was not right to initiate stringent control measures which could turn out to be unpopular, especially since subversive activities were going on in many parts of the country but particularly in the Tarai region. Moreover, many spontaneous settlements were being undertaken or instigated under the support of the panchas (members of panchayat at different levels), government officials and other influential people (Resettlement Department, 1973: 8-10). It was precisely these people's support the new system needed. Many of these influential people had started to recruit settlers to move to prespecified areas in the Tarai under their assurance and protection, often by charging a fee or under tacit tenancy arrangements.¹⁵ Serious measures, in this climate, were not initiated to control spontaneous settlements.

Some concern for the growing encroachment was shown in the early 1960s.¹⁶ But new arrangements were not made for strengthening security nor was the manpower of the Forest Department increased. Even if there had been a "will", control would not have been possible without adequate manpower and resources.

4. Policy of Containment of the Encroached Areas: The government frequently legalized settlements so as to contain the problems associated with them. It was hoped that such measures would limit new encroachments by making them illegal and subjecting new settlers to eviction. Thus in 1961, spontaneous settlers were legalized through the Conservator of Forest of the relevant area; again, in 1968, a list of the encroachers was compiled and temporary land certificates were distributed to the settlers by the forest officials (Resettlement Department, 1973: 16-17). Instead of discouraging continued uncontrolled settlements, the repeated recognition of settlements ex post facto led to the conviction on the part of potential encroachers that once they were established, sooner or later they would be regularized. Since the government has never been able to enforce its threat of eviction, spontaneous settlements flourished.

5. Lack of Coordination among Government Agencies: The failure to coordinate timely action among the different agencies of the government has also led to the growth of spontaneous settlements. The forest office alone does not have the authority to evict encroachers. Information on encroachers must be passed on to the local administration as well as to the Land Administration Office. Only when they have legally verified it can the local police take action to evict. Needless to say, this whole uncoordinated bureaucratic process takes a long time. Small-scale encroachments often go unnoticed or ignored at first; further evidence suggests that the forest officials sometimes encourage encroachment for selfish motives. Influential people and vested interests can lead to deliberate delays. By the time actions are initiated the settlements have often grown significantly. Eviction, especially if the community has become large, is difficult and can lead to unrest, which the administration tries to avoid.

6. Construction of East-West Highway and Other Road Networks in the Tarai: Modern transportation opened up areas previously protected from encroachment by their inaccessibility. Wherever roads went through the forests, within years many spontaneous settlements grew. Construction of the East-West Highway began in the Central and Eastern region and gradually extended to the west. This pattern is directly replicated by that of the growth in spontaneous settlements. By 1968, eastern Tarai forests were heavily settled but momentum was just beginning to gather in much of the Far West.

By the end of the 1960s the situation became alarming, forcing the government to consider control seriously. Existing forest protection measures, which were limited to the "delineation of forest boundaries" and "vigilance", were wholly inadequate and ineffective.

In the eastern Tarai encroachment took place even in privately owned lands known as Jhora¹⁷ which contained considerable forest. This led to continual clashes between original owners and new settlers. Government attempts to evict settlers led to violence and, ultimately, shootings resulting in some deaths in 1971.¹⁸

Spontaneous settlements, in some cases, were found in environmentally unstable areas, for instance, river banks and foothills prone to erosion. The most important concerns of the government were, however, the haphazard nature of the settlements and the loss of valuable forest resources along with the political tension generated in various places. Without concerted measures, no end of the process was in sight.

Policies and Programmes to Control Spontaneous Settlements: Concerted efforts to control spontaneous settlements were started beginning in the late 1960s. Since the eviction of established settlers was impossible, they were legalized so that efforts could be concentrated on controlling new encroachments. The Department of Resettlement was established in 1969. A "National Plan for Resettlement and Control of Unorganized Settlement" was formulated in 1973 along with a "National Forest Plan" in 1975. But, in spite of some progress made in legalizing spontaneous settlers, control of new settlements has been difficult except in some protected forests like the wildlife sanctuaries where control measures are stringent. Except for the limit imposed by the availability of forests, the future prospects do not seem good.

Policies and programmes undertaken for control of spontaneous settlements are discussed in the following sections.

Legalization of Settlements. In 1968-69 an inventory of all spontaneous settlers was taken through the Department of Forests and temporary certificates of ownership were issued pending a cadastral survey and issuance of a permanent certificate of title. However, the compilation was done hastily and missed a large number of settlers. The inventory revealed only 20,000 hectares of forest land encroachment (Kansakar, 1979: 9), far below the estimates of other sources. The subsequent cadastral survey carried out during 1969-70 to provide land titles to the identified settlers could cover only 9,400 hectares and the status of a large number remained tenuous. The objective of the inventory was to legalize the settlements that had already taken place and to check further growth of spontaneous settlements by making them ineligible for legalization. However, in the absence of supplementary measures to control new settlements, this policy was not very successful.

Establishment of Resettlement Department. In 1969 the Resettlement Department was established under the Ministry of Food and Agriculture to coordinate land settlement throughout the country and to implement

small projects involving less than 200 families (NPC, 1972: 63). The activities of the Department in initial years were limited to small-scale settlements of forest encroachers, disaster victims, and other specific individuals and groups. The Departmental projects, unlike those of the NRC, involved only delineation and allotment of land without any support services or supervision. Once the lands were allotted, the responsibility of the Department was, for all practical purposes, over. By July 1973, the Department regularized the settlement of a total of 1,333 families on 2,272 hectares of land.

National Plan for Resettlement and Control of Unorganized Settlements.

A plan and programmes for resettlement and control of unorganized settlements was formulated by the government in 1973. The plan distinguished two main programmes-planned resettlement, and regularization and control of unorganized settlement. Planning and implementation of major resettlement programmes remained under the NRC. Except for the selection procedure for settlers, which was now centralized instead of the past policy of direct recruitment at the project site,¹⁹ no major changes were made regarding settlement policies of the NRC.

The new plan specified that in general, if the encroached forests are "alienable" (i.e., suitable/expendable for settlement), settlers were to be regularized in the place of existing settlement. If protected and restricted forests are found to have been encroached, the settlers were to be evicted and resettled elsewhere. Arrangements were to be made to control further encroachment of forests.

The plan called for the Forest Resources Survey office to conduct a land use survey of all the Tarai districts in 1973 and, accordingly, existing forests were classified into several categories: protection, production, special, limited use, and alienable (Forest Resources Survey 1973). The survey estimated about 56,000 hectares to have been encroached upon since 1964 and indicated a total of 42,500 hectares of "alienable forests" suitable for agriculture and an additional 32,138 hectares of "border forests" for clear felling.

The Resettlement Department established eight regional offices in the Tarai. To obtain cooperation from the various local government agencies coordination committees involving all related agencies were established.²⁰

Soon after the establishment of the Regional Resettlement offices, listing of spontaneous settlers began, but overall progress was slow, principally because of a lack of manpower.

The National Forest Plan. In 1975 a national forest plan was formulated (Ministry of Forests, 1976). It provided a working plan for each forest division under which land use plans are currently being prepared for all the forest areas in the Tarai.

A new forest policy to "evict encroachers from the forest areas lying south of the road," was also formulated in 1977 (Resettlement Department, 1977: 1). The rationale of this policy was to protect the ecologically fragile region near the foothills from the onslaught of spontaneous settlers. The policy is being implemented by evicting small settlements amidst forests in this region.

Current Situation and Future Prospects

Considerable progress has been made in recent years toward containing the problem of already existing spontaneous settlements. The settlers have been assured that their status will be legalized soon. Long-term land-use plans had been formulated for the Far Western Tarai districts by 1976-77, to be followed soon in other districts. Compilation of the list of spontaneous settlers has been initiated and is under way throughout the Tarai. Cadastral surveys of landholding of the settlers have been started, wherever compilations are completed, for issuance of permanent land title. Relocation of settlers away from those areas delineated as permanent forests is under way. From 1973 to July 1979, the regularization and relocation of over 30,000 families on 27,600 hectares of land have been completed by the Resettlement Department, yet a large number still remains to be enumerated and regularized.

In spite of these policies and programs, the problem of spontaneous settlements persists. Because of the rumours of regularization, encroachments have continued through the 1970s. Since the Resettlement Department was unable to implement its program in all parts of the Tarai simultaneously, settlements increased overnight, even in areas where the Department had completed enumeration. Moreover, by the time the cadastral survey, a time-consuming process, is completed, many new settlers will already be well established, making eviction difficult once more. The government will have to face the situation of the 1970s again, although maybe in somewhat smaller magnitude; even so, eviction without alternate arrangements will be politically an unpalatable solution.

The momentum of illegal encroachments has picked up recently because of the political situation. Encroachment upon thousands of hectares of forests is reported to have occurred during the period of uncertainty between the announcement of a national referendum in May 1979 and the referendum itself in June 1980.²¹ Even government newspapers acknowledged such encroachments²² and unreported encroachments may be much more extensive. The extent of the problem and the inability of the existing organization to control illegal encroachments is indicated by the formation of a high level "Settlement Regularization Committee" with special authority under the Chairmanship of the Ministry of Forests in August 1979; subsequently several other committees were also formulated at the regional level. The stated policies of the committees are to make arrangements for relocating landless and natural disaster victims in pre-specified areas and "under no circumstances to allow encroachments to continue in other forest areas." This is again a repetition of the policies that were already in existence. Without additional

measures to strengthen the resources and activities of the existing organizations, like their predecessors, policies are bound to fail to solve the problem systematically.

NOTES

1. The Anglo-Nepali war of 1814-16 was a direct result of a clash between the East India Company and Nepal over the control of some villages in the Tarai. "They (British) knew full well that the source of Nepal's military strength was the Tarai, and that if this could be safely excluded from the valid objectives of Nepali military activity, they would have small cause to fear a state that was rapidly growing into a major power" (Stiller, 1973: 247). Nepal ceded a considerable part of its annexed territory in the Hills and almost all the Tarai, under a treaty with the British after the defeat in the war. The present boundary of Nepal has been determined by the treaty of 1816 and has remained unchanged except for the Tarai area restored in 1816 and 1860.
2. State grant of lands to individuals under which the grantee enjoys the privilege of ownership without any tax liability to the state and is entitled to appropriate rent and various other levies from the cultivator. Birta lands were inheritable.
3. A grantee of jagir land enjoyed the appropriation of rents on the land and other associated privileges as emoluments for their services during the employment period.
4. See Regmi (1979: 67-73) for details on the proposed settlement plans.
5. Resurgence of malaria in Nepal in recent years is mainly attributed to reinfection by the Nepalese returning from Assam (where malaria is still prevalent) for periodic visits to their native place. In order to control this the Nepal government has established several check-posts in entry points of most of the returnees, especially in eastern Tarai, to identify and treat the infected persons.
6. According to the 1961 Indian census there were about 90,000 Nepalese in Assam, Manipur, and Nagaland out of approximately 499,000 Nepal-born people residing in India.
7. Appointment of private individuals for revenue collection.
8. Revenue from the Tarai was the major source of income of the government at the time of the overthrow of the Rana regime in 1950. D.R. Regmi observes that "this part of the Kingdom (Tarai) is the richest from the agricultural standpoint and the Ranas derived their fifty percent of income from here" (1958: 20).

9. The actual physical plans for the Nawalpur project were prepared in Israel and throughout its implementation an Israeli agricultural expert was attached to the project. Similarly, Israeli technical and agricultural experts assisted in the physical planning and implementation of Khajura project (Marton, 1973).
10. See A. Kedem (1963) which mentions "bringing cultivable waste lands and lands with uneconomic forests" as one of the aims of resettlement projects. This has been accepted as a government policy and ultimately incorporated as a criterion for classifying "alienable" forests (Forest Resources Survey Office, 1973).
11. World Bank (1974: Vol. II, Appendix I, pp. 20-21, and Appendix 3, 10) indicates that for the period from 1963 to 1972, 7,000 hectares have been alienated by the government to organizations and individuals, another 7,000 hectares for relief of disaster victims, and 34,000 hectares to settlement agencies out of which only 6,295 hectares have been settled by 1971-72. This totals to 20,295 hectares of legally settled area.
12. It should be noted that most Indian migrants after the late 1950s are oriented toward already settled rural communities and urban centers. Spontaneous settlements by the Indians are insignificant since landownership for them is illegal in Nepal.
13. Because of the illegal nature and the difficult location of the spontaneous settlements, an under-enumeration is expected in the census. Therefore, the estimate based on the census should be somewhat lower than actual. The remaining 160,000 hectares are accounted for by legal settlements (through the NRC, the Resettlement Department, and independent land allotments to individuals), extension of lands by farmers in old villages, and by governments for developmental works (roads, etc.).
14. The employment opportunity in agriculture provided by the old Tarai settlements is of seasonal nature, mostly during the peak harvest season. Therefore, they cannot absorb much of these permanent migrants.
15. Samaj, Falgun 28, 2032 (March 1976); Naya Sandesh, Paush 25, 2032 (January 1975); Jana Barta, Ashad 29, 2032 (July 1976).
16. See Ministry of Economic Planning (1962: 222). Even the proposal for implementation of Nawalpur Resettlement Project in 1964 indicated this concern for the possibility of increased encroachment in the project area and accordingly suggested strengthening of security measures for forest protection (Ministry of Food and Agriculture, 1964).

17. Jhora is defined as those forest areas which were allotted to individuals under special legal authority for development and cultivation (Jhora Act, 2028, Nepal Gazette, Aswin 6, 2028).
18. As a solution to the Jhora problem, the Jhora act was passed in 1971 to appropriate land from the legal owners who were not cultivating themselves and to transfer it to the spontaneous settlers.
19. See Ojha (1982, Chapter 5) for detail.
20. For example, "Zonal Resettlement Committees" were established immediately after the creation of the Resettlement Department in 1969. After the opening of the regional offices of the Department, the committees were replaced by "District Coordination Committees." Again in 1975 it was replaced by "Committees for Regulating Settlements by Delineating Forests" (Ban Chhettra Kayam Gari Basobas Lai Byabasthit Garne Samitteee). Almost all related agencies at the district levels were members of these committees. The main functions were to arrange for listing of spontaneous settlers, recommend eligible settlers, and ensure control of further encroachment. The committees fulfilled the role of overall policy formulation and coordination at the district level.
21. For a long time there was a general dissatisfaction over the functioning of the "partyless panchayat system" in the country which reached a climax in May 1979. Widespread strikes by students and employees of government and private industries as well as subversive activities led to an explosive situation which finally subsided after the proclamation of the King on May 24, 1979, of a referendum to choose between the existing political system with appropriate reform or a multi-party system. The referendum, which took place in June 1980, was in favour of the existing panchayat system.
22. For example, more than 18,000 families encroached forest lands in Rupandehi, Kapilabastu, and Nawalparasi districts out of which 16,400 were reported to have been already evicted (Gorkhapatra, June 24, 1979); in Chitwan 12,000 people who had occupied forest lands in protected areas were evicted (Gorkhapatra, December 27, 1979); during the past seven or eight months nearly 18,000 people have been reported to have occupied forest lands in Butaul area and 8,000 in Nawalparasi district, out of which 10,000 have already been evicted (Gorkhapatra, June 6, 1980); 20,000 people who had illegally occupied lands in Morang district since October 1979 were evicted (Gorkhapatra, June 23, 1980).

The extent of the problem is also indicated by a notice issued by the Ministry of Forests to the following effect: "All those people who have encroached the Tarai forests under the instigation of some selfish individuals are hereby notified to immediately eva-

cuate those areas. Those who do not abide will be taken strong action. Since the government has been settling landless people in the planned resettlement projects under the recommendation of the related panchayat, district administration and zonal administration, those who are illegally encroaching forests will not be spared in any circumstance." (Gorkhapatra, July 30, 1979).

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English as a Second Language/English as a Foreign Language Distinction: Its Pedagogy & the Nepalese Context

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Introduction

The initial interests in the non-native varieties of English such as the Indian and the Nigerian, were restricted largely to a descriptive curiosity, to the description and analysis of the variety, of the levels, the 'deviant' features, problem of intelligibility, and the like. However, more recently, in the study of non-native and 'nativized' English, the nature of emphasis has changed from being merely descriptive to that of being more prescriptive. The orthodoxy that English belonged only to Great Britain, USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa where it is spoken natively seems to have generally been giving way to the view which asserts that English belongs and is legitimate to countries where it is spoken, albeit non-natively in the classical sense, such as India, Singapore, the Philippines, Hong Kong, and Malaysia. There is nothing new in the concept of English as an international language, but what is quite refreshing is the idea that English is a World Language, a European, and an Asian language. Larry Smith (1976a) presents this point of view with the strongest force:

We in ELE [English Language Education] need to find redundant ways to point out that English belongs to the world and every nation which uses it does so with different tone, colour, and quality. English is an international auxiliary [now intranational] language. It is yours (no matter who you are) as much as it is mine (no matter who I am) ... English is one of the languages of Japan, Korea, Micronesia, and the Philippines. It is one of the languages of the Republic of China, Thailand, and the United States ... It is a language of the world.

This perspective has important consequences in the English language teaching (ELT) in countries where English is a non-native language. The target language bias has been very strong in the literature of second language acquisition. The non-native elements have always been looked down as 'errors'. Nemser (1971) makes a special mention of Indian English as an instance of his LA (i.e. the approximative system) and suggests that effective language teaching implies preventing, or postponing as long as possible the formation of permanent intermediate systems and subsystems. Selinker (1972), too, takes

Indian English as an example of 'interlanguage utterance' underlying the interlingual behaviour that results from a learner's attempted reproduction of target language norms. He believes also that a successful language learning/teaching will reorganize the IL (Interlanguage) materials in favour of target language.

In this paper, I shall begin by reviewing the categorization of English as a second language (ESL) and as a foreign language (EFL) and the pedagogy such a categorization is supposed to imply. I shall finally show that the distinction between the ESL and EFL is ambiguous; The definitions fail to establish the status of English at least in Nepal. I shall also show that the pedagogy accruing from this distinction, especially the model question, too, remains vague.

ESL/EFL Distinction

The use of English in a non-native situation is often distinguished between whether it is used as an ESL or an EFL.

Paul Christopherson (1960) was interested in making the distinction. For him it consisted essentially "in the personal attitude and in the use that is made of the language. A foreign language is used for the purpose of absorbing the culture of another nation; a second language is used as an alternative way of expressing the culture of one's own." Marckwardt (1963) also insisted on making the distinction, a distinction which he observed was maintained in Britain and not in the USA. According to him, English is a foreign language if it is "taught as a school subject or at an adult level solely for the purpose of giving the student a foreign language competence which he may use in one of several ways—to read literature, to read technical works, to listen to the radio, to understand dialogue in the movies, to use language for communication possibly with transient English or Americans." It is a second language when "English becomes a language of instruction in the schools, as in the Philippines, or a lingua franca between speakers of widely divergent languages, as in India."

Stevens (1971) reports of a conference in Britain in which it was suggested that the term second language be used to describe those countries in which English is the medium of instruction in some important sector of education (Hong Kong, Malaysia, and the Philippines) and foreign language in which English holds a dominant position as the principal language of advanced study (principal "library" language) but it is used only to a limited degree as a medium of instruction (Indonesia, Nepal, Thailand), and in which English is used not for internal purposes or as a medium of instruction, but where the position of English reflects its status as a major instructional language (Japan, Cambodia, and Laos). Stevens (1978) defines a country as ESL if English is accepted as an official language or as a medium of instruction, and if it receives the major time allocations in broadcasting system. In EFL countries, English has no such special status. Following Smith's terminologies, he equates EFL with countries where English is taught

as an international language and ESL with those where significant use of English is made although it is not a primary (intranational) language. Richards (1976) reflects similar view. Richards and Tay (1978) point out that in Singapore, English has never been considered a foreign language because of its status as an official language, as an important language of education, a dominant working language, a lingua franca, and a language for the expression of national identity. By these criteria, Thailand, Japan, Korea and Russia are considered EFL countries whereas India, the Philippines, and Singapore ESL.

The definitions reviewed above are functional, that is, they take into account the social, effective functions that the English language is put to play or plays in a country. These functions, in turn are supposed to lead to the nativization (also called indiginization) of English in its formal features, giving us another very important criterion on which the ESL/EFL distinction is based. Singapore (Richards, 1978; undated mimeo) and India (Kachru, 1978) are often taken as examples of the countries where English is reported to have nativized in such a way. It is further postulated that nativization is possible in an ESL and not in an EFL situation. The reason being that there is the marked tendency to standardize local accents and varieties in the ESL whereas such a tendency does not exist in the EFI countries. The 'nativized' English thus emerges and serves as a marker of a regional, social class, or ethnic identity. The new English is widely used for social transactions and is not modelled on British or American English as the use and learning of the target language has already moved from an external to an internal norm.

Pedagogy

In countries where English is not a native tongue, regardless of its status, the model for classroom teaching/learning has traditionally been standard British or American English. Teachers and curricula are designed and required to present the native model and the goal of teaching has invariably been "native speaker competence" or "near-native/native-like proficiency." In the new perspective, when the foreign and second language distinction is taken to be of practical importance in matters of model, it is assumed that the EFL countries tend to follow the external model (British, American, etc.) and the ESL the standard local variety of English. Richards (1976) maintains that there is the fundamental attitudinal and cultural difference between an ESL and EFL classroom as a context for learning English, in that, not only, for example, that the Indians see English as a language of India and the Japanese as the language of the British or the Americans, but that the EFL textbooks are about life and customs in Britain or the USA whereas the ESL textbooks are about life and people in the student's own country. Smith (1976) even though he refuses to maintain the ESL/EFL distinction strictly, also agrees that the model of teaching differs according to the functions of English within a country.

Kachru (1978) favours a polymodel approach. He suggests that a distinction between different varieties of English for local, national, and international uses should be made and the educational model should be chosen accordingly, Richards and Tay (1978), on the other hand, propose what they call a 'non-developmental model of proficiency' and recommend 'native fluency' in the different lectal norms as the aim of learning English in the ESL context. Smith (1976) and Strevens (1977) propose an educated variety as the model for any non-native situation. Smith believes that such a variety cuts across dialectal/national boundaries. Strevens calls this variety the "internationally high-valued form" and believes that "the more educated the ESL speaker gets, the more widely intelligible he should be."

The Nepalese Context

NEPAL : ESL OR EFL

The functional criteria of ESL/EFL distinction reviewed above appear clearly to place Nepal in the category of an EFL. English is not a second language in Nepal because it is not one of the official languages of the country; it is not an intranational language (in that it is neither a language of wider communication nor a language of any group identification). English is not a dominant working language. It is rather a foreign language because it is taught as a subject of study and is used by the adults for the purpose of reading literature, science, listening to the radio, etc. Furthermore, it is the principal "library" language and is used to a limited degree as a medium of instruction.

The societal use and the effective function of English in Nepal do generally fit in the EFL criteria and as such there would be little hesitation in granting Nepal an EFL status. However, in the English language (ELT) of Nepal, where EFL/ESL categories need to have their greatest motivation for distinction, the distinction is either far from clear or of little relevance. In the context of Nepalese education, in the use of English as a medium of teaching-learning other subjects, the distinction is complicated both historically and synchronically. The question of nativization makes the issue even more complex. I shall attempt to clarify these points in the following pages.

ELT in Nepal

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

ELT began in Nepal only in the beginning of this century and the aims and objectives of this were formulated even earlier by Macaulay. Macaulay (1835) had argued in favour of English education in India on what he assumed to be the "intrinsic value of our [English] literatures" over those of Sanskrit and Arabic. The aim of English education in India as propounded by him was 'to make the natives of this country thoroughly good English scholars,' and this may be taken to be the

unstated aim of English education in Nepal. The Nepalese aims and objectives could not essentially differ from those of the Indian because the schools and colleges of Nepal were affiliated with those of India. Even after the founding of a native university, the people who planned the Nepalese curriculum were trained in that country. The English syllabuses were literature based and the methodology that of grammar-translation. Teaching-learning of English was equated with teaching-learning of formal grammatical system, reading literature and moral philosophy, inculcation of classical and humanistic spirit, cultural enrichment, etc.

The need for changing the aims and objectives of ELT in Nepal was felt only in the beginning of the sixties. In 1964, the Board of English Studies is reported to have felt the need to separate the teaching of language from the teaching of literature (Malla 1968: 77). However, even after the split of English into General and Special, the spirit of the compulsory General English remained classical and literature-based. A National Conference of College Teachers of English was held in October 1968 of which a report was published in 1969. It was during this conference, I think it was for the first time, that the status of English in Nepal was discussed. David Rathbone (1969:9) forcefully pointed out:

There are some very important points which must be hammered home. One of these and perhaps the most important of these is that English must be taught as a foreign language. ... English is a foreign language in Nepal. For many of your students it is not even a second language. It is the third or fourth. This is very important. Because, I am afraid, your present courses, your present methods, your present examinations-all presume, unjustifiably, that English is the first language.

It took a decade of discussion and reflection before any meaningful change was brought about in the aims, objectives and methods of ELT in Nepal. Dr. Alan Davies, the Head of the Board of English Studies, introduced a new syllabus for colleges of Nepal in 1971, which may be taken as the date marking the end of the Macaulayan, grammar-translation period of ELT in Nepal. The syllabuses since 1971 until today remain essentially similar in spirit. Emphasis has now been shifted from literature to language teaching. 'Providing some access to contemporary spoken and written language' is the general objective of courses formulated by Dr. Davis. The teaching materials consist now not of the 'classics' but of materials written more recently. English language newspapers are prescribed as model of living language. In general, the grammar-translation is replaced by pattern practice. The emphasis naturally is on speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills. Speaking and listening as units of teaching were introduced for the first time in 1971. Some of the course titles used currently are expressive of their objectives: Remedial English, Common Core English, Contemporary English, and English for Special Purpose. The teaching units are spoken English,

verb pattern, grammar, usages, dictionary, framework essays and other forms of composition.

MODEL and PRIORITY

Before 1971, whereas the model of ELT in Nepal seems implicitly to have been classical English literature, the work and style of Shakespeare and Bacon, Carlyle and Ruskin, the model of today's ELT is contemporary English. Malla (1977) defines contemporary English as 'the kind of English used in the twentieth century by well-educated persons in Great Britain and the USA, an unmarked "standard national variety" -British, American, or other standard native varieties'. Kansakar (1977) defines the model of speech as 'no longer the commonly known term "Received Pronunciation" (RP) but what is now called the "classless accent" or "General British Pronunciation"'. Thus, the model has been native English throughout the Nepalese ELT.

Priority in the sequencing of skills has also been more carefully defined. Truthful to the audiolingualism, speaking is prior to all other skills. In the ELT before 1971, reading was given the highest priority.

ENGLISH AS A MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION AND SUBJECT OF STUDY

The Nepalese schools in the beginning of this century generally followed the patterns of British schools in India (HMG, 1964). Durbar School was affiliated with Calcutta University until 1910 and then with Patna University until 1933. This not only means that the courses prescribed in the Indian Universities were taught in this and other schools but also that the textbooks written in India for the Indian students had been in use. The medium of examination and possibly instruction was English. English was also a subject of study.

In 1934, the SLC Board of Examination was established in Nepal. English was retained as a compulsory language. As a medium of instruction and examination, it was the language which was 'voluntarily opted by the SLC candidates of the forties and the fifties' (Malla, 1976). In the sixties, the instructional medium at the secondary level was English and Nepali both (HMG, 1961, 99-101). Nepali became the only medium at secondary level after 1971.

In the higher education, until the inception of Tribhuvan University in 1959, the colleges of Nepal, too were affiliated with the Indian Universities, and therefore courses taught according to the latter's syllabuses. English was a compulsory subject of study and was the medium of instruction and continued to be so even after the founding of the native university. The University Act, 1959 envisaged that Nepali would replace English as the medium of instruction by 1974. The National Education System Plan (1971) kept the medium question undecided.

It should also be of interest to note that English has received the highest priority as a subject of study in the Nepalese education. In the SLC Board syllabus of 1934, it was the only compulsory language of study; Nepali came to be compulsory only in 1951 (HMG, 1964). In the revisions of 1953 and 1965, English carries more than 20 percent of the total marks allocation for the level whereas Nepali only 5 percent. It was only in 1971 that these two languages are equalized in this way. In higher education, English remains dominant in Arts and Humanities even now. In the Intermediate level syllabus of 1975, compulsory English carries 15 hours whereas Nepali carries only 9 hours.

To summarize the facts from English in the Nepalese education presented above, English has been a compulsory subject of study in secondary and higher education receiving the highest priority among language subjects of study. The teaching of English as a subject of study followed historically the pattern of India, therefore the status of English in India should be treated as an interacting variable in determining its status in Nepal. The Indian ELT has effected the Nepalese in the general aims, objectives, methods and materials. The association of the Nepalese ELT with that of the Indian, I think, forces us to make a simple corollary that historically, since the Nepalese ELT has been effected by the Indian ELT, and India is taken to be an ESL country, the status of English in Nepal at least as the language is treated in the ELT- would be equivalent to that of the Indian.

Secondly, English was taught in Nepal at least up until 1971, not as a foreign but a second or even a first language. The aims of high scholastic attainment, the teaching materials comprising of classics indicate that the ELT was not aimed merely at a foreign language competence. There is some truth in Rathbone's comment (op. cit.) that the English courses, teaching methods, and examinations of the sixties presumed that English was not even the second but the first language in Nepal.

Thirdly, English has always been the medium of instruction in Nepal. It was the only medium until the fifties. It alternated with Nepali in the sixties and was completely replaced by Nepali in the seventies in the secondary education. In the higher education, English was unquestionably the medium of instruction until the sixties and alternated with Nepali in the seventies. It has continued to be the medium of instruction in the teaching of English as a subject. According to the medium criteria of EFL/ESL, thus we see that the status of English in Nepal is far from clear. It appears like it is going through a transition. In the secondary education, the transition from a second to a foreign language seems to have been complete whereas in the higher education the transition is in its progress.

Nativization of English in Nepal

The question whether English has nativized in Nepal or whether there is a variety of English which is recognizable as the Nepali

English has not received any attention as yet. The contention that English is nativized only in an ESL situation seems to dismiss the question as irrelevant in Nepal. However, I would like to argue that some degree and kind of divergence from the "parent" English language is discernible in the English spoken and written in Nepal. There is a particular Nepali-ness about the use of English by the Nepalese who use the language and it is noticeable in their sound system, accent and intonation, and selection and arrangement of words. Samples of these are widely available in the classroom lectures, seminars, examinations papers, journals, newspapers, and the growing body of literary writing in English, one can hear them in parties, hotels, and all kinds of interpersonal conversations.

Shrestha (1978) analyses some such written samples of Nepali English and shows that the Nepalese writer of English tends to use a marked style, that is, he uses a great deal of adjectives, longer sentences, uncommon words with the effect of learnedness and bombast, synonyms and euphemisms. The choice of style is regarded as a complex of the rules of social evaluation of a particular L2 style, the native rules of social setting, obsolete L2 model and false generalization. The educated variety of Nepali English is presented, using Richard's term (1971) as a case of "diaglossomania." Further, it may be noted that the style seems to be symbolic classifier of High English in the same way as it is observed in the Indian and African context. Malla (1977) also acknowledges that there are a number of marked style-feature in the Nepalese written English.

To say anything further on Nepali English will require research.

Critique of ESL/EFL distinction

The EFL/ESL distinction is based largely on functional/instrumental criteria. The functions that a language is made to serve are largely non-linguistic, matters having to do with national policy and practices. Any rigorous treatment of the term is therefore unlikely as it involves too many non-linguistic conditions. These conditions may serve as context for nativization of the language in the formal ways, but on their own, it is difficult to completely disambiguate them. There may be too many borderline cases, such as Burma, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka where English has some official status although undesignated in the constitution. Malaysia's situation appears equivalent to that of Sri Lanka in this instance and yet the former is often referred to as an ESL and latter as an EFL country.

Paul Christopherson's definition carries the unfortunate association of English with some kind of culture of "another nation" as does Richard's (1976) that ESL textbooks are about life and customs in the student's own country and EFL about the overseas. In the Nepalese case, the contents of English Readers cover a wide range of topics involving national and international themes. Furthermore the textbooks and materials prescribed for the higher education are produced abroad, in India, Great Britain, Australia, and the USA. English in Nepal is seen

not as a language through which the culture of another nation is absorbed but as a language through which it can express its own culture to a wider world. Sardar Rudar Raj Pandey, then the Vice-Chancellor of Tribhuvan University, put it succinctly as follows in his address to the National Conference of College teachers of English in 1968.

Now, however, we feel that in order to communicate our very culture, our own ideas to peoples of other parts of the world, an international language is absolutely necessary. As you know we are going to launch very shortly a scheme for the study of our Nepalese culture, our Nepalese language and literature, our art and architecture. ... Now we have to communicate the results of our achievements to the various parts of the world, and for that the English language is absolutely necessary.

One may argue that English serves in Nepal all the four functions of nativization proposed by Kachru (1978). It serves the INSTRUMENTAL function as an instrument of education at various stages. English serves the REGULATIVE function because a large number of government publications, advertisements are in English. It serves INTERPERSONAL function, in that English provides a code among the educated Nepalese and also symbolic elitism, prestige, and modernity. And lastly, it serves IMAGINATIVE/INNOVATIVE functions, a large body of writing in English in the journalistic, poetry, criticism, essays, and other genres are developing.

In the educational use of language, the distinction is more complex. It is shown above that in the secondary education in Nepal, English went through a transition from an ESL to EFL. In the higher education, English has consistently been receiving the highest priority among language subjects, and in the Nepalese ELT it has never been treated as a foreign language until perhaps a decade ago. English has consistently been the medium of instruction and will continue to be if the criteria for defining the medium of instruction were to include not just the language in which the lectures are delivered and answer books are written, but also the language in which and only in which textbooks, reference books, and journals are available.

Whereas the functional criteria of ESL/EFL distinction fails thus to carry us very far, the formal linguistic criteria, to be derived from the formal processes of nativization, too fail in this case. Kachru (1978) considers hybridization, collection, and style as some of the formal processes by which English is indigenized in India. Richards (undated, mimeo.) proposed two-pronged matrix of categorical, that is the linguistic features of the code at the level of phonology, syntax and semantics, and variable features, that is, the norm switching such as code-switching and switch within the local varieties. However, what is not clear is just how these processes could be ESL specific and not EFL. The features of high style in Indian, African and

Nepali English stem from similar sociolinguistic processes. It can be hoped that the future researches in Nepal would show that the hybridization, collocation, and style as processes of the indigenization of Indian English are available in the Nepali English and that the rhetorical and communicative norms and the norm-shifts that Richards proposes for Singaporean English context do also occur in that of the Nepalese.

It is pointed out that there is a difference in attitude towards English in an ESL from an EFL country. For example, there is no motivation to model one's speech on a foreign pattern in an ESL situation while there is in an EFL. The reason for this is that in an ESL, English becomes the language of national, ethnic identities whereas in an EFL it is associated with a foreign culture. As a result, in an ESL, a speaker who rejects the indigenous model in favour of British or American English is regarded as snobbish and affected. Once again, the attitude obtains for the Nepalese context. At the same time, it must be pointed out, that if the speaker is very far from either of the native varieties, he, too, will be ridiculed.

Pedagogical implication

Now, I shall try to argue that the pedagogical relevance of the ESL/EFL distinction too is untenable. I shall discuss this point specially in light of the Nepalese ELT.

It appears that what model of an overseas language a country decides upon is a result of such empirical factors as the functions the language plays in that country, use of the language, peoples' attitude towards it, teacher's competence teaching environment, financial resources, etc. It is important, therefore, to analyse the nature of the uses of English and the needs it fulfils in Nepal before we can come up with any viable answer to the model question. This will in turn also have implication in the ordering of skills.

ENGLISH NEEDS IN NEPAL

Unfortunately, again, there is a serious lack in any empirical study on what the national and international needs for English is in Nepal. The best approximation of the Nepalese needs for English may be subsumed under the internationally felt needs of English.

Conrad and Fishman (1977), in their search for evidence of English as a world language, note that English is the language of diplomacy, the predominant language in which mail is written, the principal language of aviation and radio broadcasting, the first language of nearly 300 million people, and an additional language perhaps that of many more. Further, from the British Council Report for 1968-69 (quoted in Denison, 1970) we learn that sixty percent of radio programmes and most television materials are in English, that a flood of newspapers, magazines and comics are in English, and that it 'covers the bookstalls of the world airports.' It seems that more educational materials are available in

English than in any other language in textbooks, films and other audio-visual aids. Furthermore, it is the only language which is used as the most common official language in the world. It is also the language of good jobs. Nepal will need English in all these respects.

Furthermore, as Malla (1975) points out English is needed in the country because 1. Nepali does not have access to the scientific and technical knowledge of the modern world, and 2. It is not enough for establishing effective channels of communication with the rest of the world. Malla (1968) also reports that the immediate English language needs of the undergraduate is a minimum comprehension of spoken English to understand lectures in English on their major subjects; an adequate comprehension of written English to understand and read the textbooks and reference materials in English, enough English to express their ideas in writing, simply and effectively. Adhikary (1977) points out the majors of non-technical subjects need English mainly for reading standard works and articles in their subjects. The majors on technical subjects need to acquire their knowledge through the medium of English, so they need English for both reading and writing.

To summarize the needs of English in Nepal, Nepal needs to make use of the English language both for international and national purposes. In both instances, English serves its instrumental function. Nepal needs English because it is the language of international diplomacy, aviation, etc. Within the country, English is needed for educational, commercial, and other systems. Within the education it is needed as the medium of teaching-learning in the sense of the medium of lecture as well as of reading materials.

PRIORITY OF SKILLS

Given the nature of needs, what should be the sequencing of the four skills in the Nepalese ELT? The English curriculum has emphasized speaking as the productive skill since 1971, Macafferty (1968); Malla (1977), Kansakar (1977). This is a natural offshoot of structural linguistics in which speech was considered the real level of language and a primary manifestation of language.

From the needs point of view, however, it is not speaking for which the Nepalese students need English? English is not a Language of Wider Communication in Nepal; a very microscopic minority of these students become diplomats, or even tourist guides, and even fewer ever have a chance to speak English to the transient American or British tourists. It is rather for the usefulness of English as the only "library language" that is for the ability to make use of the educational materials available in English that these students need English. The place of speech as a component of language teaching cannot be denied; but it is irrelevant to put too much emphasis on a skill which is not much in use.

Thus, the ordering of skills in the Nepalese ELT needs to be revised. Reading needs to be given the highest priority followed by writing, speaking and listening. This completely reversed reordering of skills has theoretical support from the advances in generative-transformational grammar and cognitive psychology (Lester, 1971).

The ordering in priority of skills as presented above has the advantage that it relegates the model question to a matter of lesser significance. Even then, the native British or American model as the goal of Nepalese ELT needs to be revised in view both of the needs and the practicalities of the ELT. As pointed out earlier, majority of our students seldom have a chance to speak English, more seldom to speak to the native speakers. In so far as their needs for English to understand the lectures in English go, again, the variety of English in which these lectures are delivered are seldom native. Secondly the native model is an impractical goal because of the actualities of our ELT the English teachers who speak English non-natively, their competence in the language, the quality and method of teaching, and the "impossible" (not difficult) situation in which English has to be taught. For all practical purposes, then, the native model cannot and need not be strictly maintained. Teaching a standard classless British or American accent may be a pious wish on the part of the curriculum planners, but never in the history of our ELT has this been achieved and there is no reason to hope that this will be achieved in future.

What then should the model be? I would suggest that the native model should be abandoned altogether and be replaced by a more realistic goal of fluency in the ideal Nepali English. The aim should be fluency in the educated Nepali English, the acrolect. This is not setting up a new goal, but a legitimatization of what is happening now and will continue to happen in future. The new model will also satisfy the needs criteria, in that, the educated Nepali English will be enough for the comprehension of classroom lectures, and for interpersonal communication. It is not unreasonable to believe that the educated Nepali English will be similar to the educated South Asian English, the reality of which will not take too long to be recognized, if South Asia as a linguistic and socio-linguistic area is a reality. Nepalese students will need to speak more to the South Asian speakers of English than to the British or the American, and if this hypothesis is correct, then proficiency in educated Nepali speech will be adequate. Furthermore, as Strevens and Smith (op. cit.) believe, educated Nepali English will be the "internationally high-valued form" and so will cut across the national boundaries.

The revision of goal in this way will be of great psychological relief to our English language teachers. It will help lessen the guilt and disappointment of teaching or rather failing to teach a language which is somehow not their own.

CONCLUSION

The recent emphasis on the legitimacy of non-native varieties of English has significant implication to ELT of these countries. The distinction between EFL and ESL countries however, is ambiguous. Whereas the functional parameters are sociopolitical and cannot be applied to any situation too rigorously, the formal ones are applicable to either of the situations. The pedagogy of the distinction that ESL follows a native model of ELT and EFL an external model in the ELT cannot therefore be strictly maintained.

English in Nepal is a case in point. Although Nepal has been presented as an EFL country, it is difficult to establish its status unambiguously. English serves almost all the functions of ESL in Nepal. Similarly, the formal processes of nativization are also operable in this context. In the ELT of Nepal, considering the needs for English, the external Britain/American is irrelevant and impractical. Fluency in the ideal Nepali English will be enough for all the communicational needs of the students. Priority in skills needs to be reordered in the sequence of reading, writing and speech.

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The Gurung Personality Structure

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Problem

The basic objective of this paper is to report on the personality structure of the Gurungs, a preliterate group traditionally inhabiting the mid-western hilly region of Nepal (Pignede 1962, 1966; Macfarlane 1972, Andors 1974, Messerschmidt 1976) and to compare the findings with those reported by some other investigators in other cultures.

Modal Personality

'Modal personality', a concept developed in the psychological literature on national character (Mead 1942; Gorer 1943)¹ refers to the most frequently occurring and relatively stable personality characteristics and behavioural patterns among the adult members of a specific cultural group.

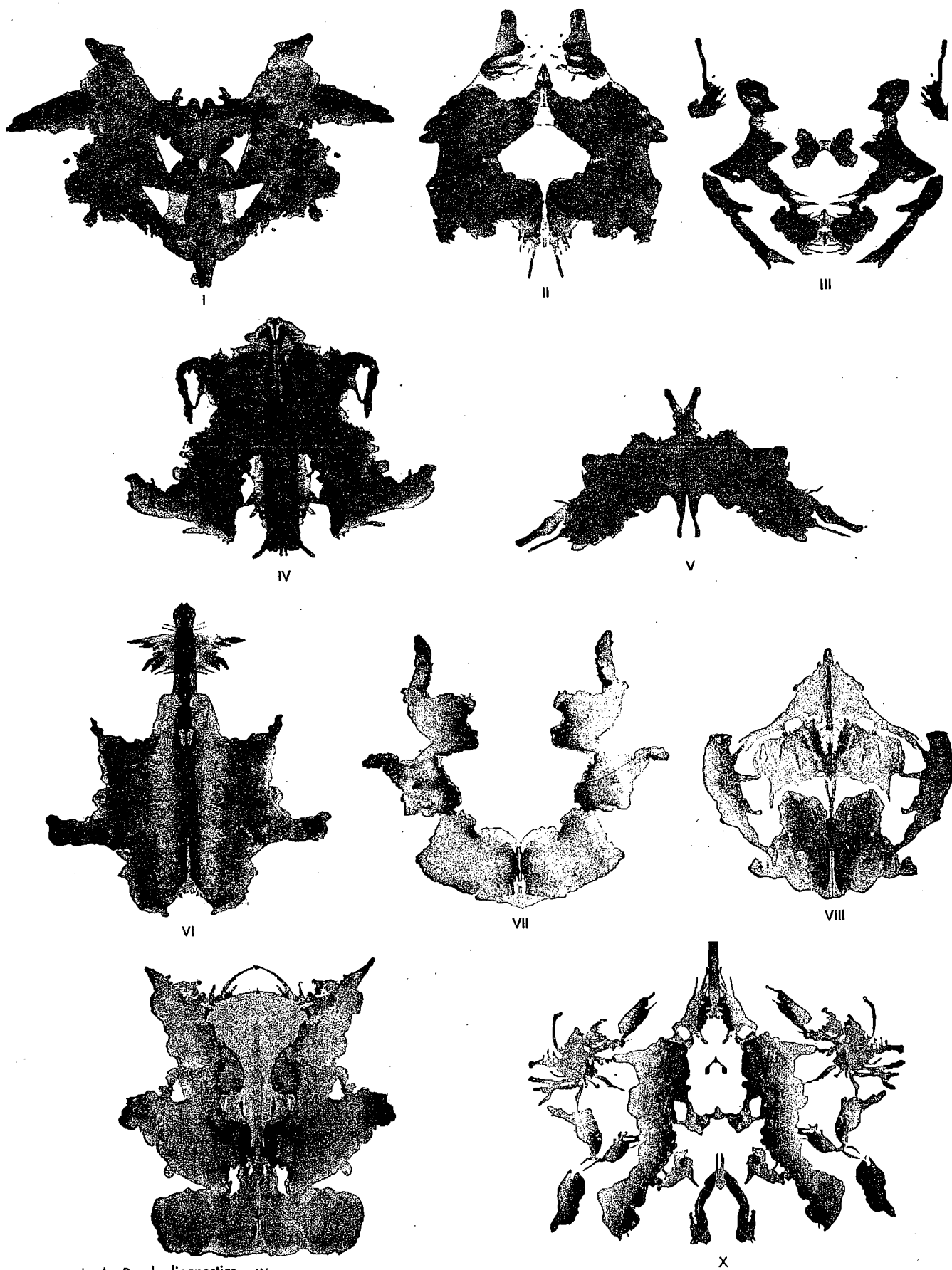
Rorschach Ink Blot Test

The Rorschach ink blots (Figure 1-10) employed in this study have had a worldwide use in modal personality studies (Bleulers 1935, for Moroccans, Henry 1942 for Pilaga American Indians, Asthana 1956 for Indians)².

As the Rorschach has been extensively used as one of the methods of national character research and for studies of modal personalities since it probes into the basic personality structure at a somewhat deeper level it is proposed to use the ink blot test as one of the method in the study of Gurung personality.

The Rorschach test is 'multidimensional instrument'. It purports to yield a global, or overall, assessment of personality, and also because it is difficult to falsify. Klopfer et al. (1954) state that Rorschach can contribute to our understanding of many aspects of personality - particularly perception, association, thinking, and their pathology. Since it utilizes ambiguous, or unstructured, stimuli, the subject cannot easily conceal undesirable personality characteristics. It is developed by Herman Rorschach, a Swiss psychiatrist, in 1921. It consists of ten ink blots, five of the blots are in different shades of black or grey, while the five consist of various colours.

The Rorschach Ink Blots



Sample

One hundred Gurung adults between the ages of 20 and 91 were individually tested on the Rorschach test. The subjects were drawn from Lamjung, Tanahu, Gorkha, Rumjatar, and Chitwan districts of Nepal. Gurungs belong to the upper northern reaches of the Himalayas, at the foot hills of Annapurna, Lamjung Himal, and Himal Chuli, of the Gandaki zone. They belong to Tibeto-Burman stock of Mongoloid race, known for their ethnic cohesion, and they live in remote and relatively inaccessible areas. Apart from the native Gurungs this sample also includes eastern Gurungs of Rumjatar, and the Terai-migrated Gurungs of Sharada Nagar, Chitwan. Thus the present sample includes both males and females, literate and illiterate, educated and preliterate respondents from rural and remote areas. The sample was distributed, as follows:

Sample	N	Age	Sex	
			M	F
Gurungs	100	20-91	71	29
(A) Western	38			
(B) Eastern	33			
(C) Migrated	29			

The scoring system used follows Beck (1948) with additional scoring for animal and inanimate movement responses after Klopfer (1942).

PROCEDURE

All the respondents were administered Rorschach test individually, and their life history and demographic data were also recorded. For collecting life history 60 adult Gurungs were interviewed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

- a. Life history record: The findings reported here deal with life history of the Gurungs.

All the Gurungs show uniqueness in maintaining harmonious good family life. Their mother-identification is much higher than father-identification. Mother-identification is higher among the native-group than the migrated group chiefly because the males generally move out for work leaving the young ones to the mothers.

Mother's role as the chief disciplinarian decreases as the Gurungs migrate from their native habitat.

Aggressiveness increases as the Gurungs come into contact with others. The native group shows very little aggression. They lead a more tolerant life reporting few problems even in the worst of situations.

Personality Structure: The findings here reported are confined to the Rorschach test analysis only.

- (a) Approach: The Gurungs emphasized W! (D) approach more than the (W) D! (Table 1). They show poor organizational interest, whereas (D % 61.87) they exhibit practical common sense.
- (b) Mental Activity: The sample shows high coartation in M responses. 79% subjects are unimaginative (Table 2) and dull. 20% are characterized by reproductive intelligence, only 1% appear intelligent. Gurungs showing inertness in mental potentiality. Nearly 1/10th M⁻ responses show regressive thinking. 30% subjects did not produce any H responses, and the preponderance of 'Hd' responses over 'H' shows restricted intelligence and 'Intrapsychic Constriction' (Table 6, 14).

85% subjects show clarity of form perception (F⁺) ranging between 4-12. Few (5%) scored below the range 4 showing less stable ego, and some (10%) scored above 12 range indicating obsessive-compulsive trait, and 72% subjects distorted their form perception (F⁻).

A very high percent (95%) subjects show stereotype (A scores range between 3-20) (Table 8). The 'Ad' proportion rises above one fourth of 'A' (Table 14) indicating high anxiety (Piotrowski 1965).

The subjects show hollow ambition as the W:M ratio is 16.1:1. Their productive resources of personality development are unduly low. This equally reflects their hostile life situation with poor resource conditions where potentialities do not grow. They lead a repressive and traumatic life similar to Alorese (Oberholzer 1944).

- (c) The Emotional Life: The sum C value is slightly lesser than 3 signifying unfavourable relationship with the emotional content of the environment. 47% subjects show coartation in affect (C). Only a very small percentage (13%) of subjects (Table 10) show emotional maturity, some 38% subjects are exhibiting uncontrolled emotional responsiveness, and only 2% subjects show a balance between controlled and uncontrolled emotional responsiveness.
- (d) Ties with Inner Life: The Gurungs show lack of inner creativity and maturity ($M < F M$). FM falls between 1 M and 2 M (Table 14). Their life is more oriented to instinctual drives.

The M : sum C ratio (1.238:2.377) clearly indicates extratensive type of experience balance as contrasted with Mukerji's (1960), and Asthana's (1963) Indian samples studies reporting predominance of intratensiveness 49% subjects exhibited $M < C$ pattern, 16% showed $M > C$ pattern, and 2% were ambivalent. 33% subjects

were perfectly coartated (0:0) experience type, and 61% subjects are ranging from 0M:0C to 1M:1C. 78% subjects are totally coartated of M (inner inertness) and 47% are coartated of C responses (affect paralysis). 5% of the highlander's sample show, high egocentric type (0M:xC). The C responses range from 4 to 16. The egocentric extratension appears to increase with the altitude of their places of habitation and communication remoteness, with inaccessibility and remoteness their optimism seems to increase (Regmi and Asthana, 1981).

The low percent of F Y responses show low free floating anxiety (Table 12). Further analysis reveals that 57% subjects out of 64% scored 0:0 (FY:YF+Y). Thus 57% subjects are free from anxiety and passivity.

3/4th subjects are free from inferiority feelings. Only 6% subjects indicate depressive feelings (Table 13).

Comparative Perspectives

A comparison of these findings with similar work elsewhere shows that the Alorese exhibit more uncontrolled emotionality, and passivity than the Gurungs. The latter show more perceptual clarity, creativeness, and emotional control (Appendix II).

The Santhals of Bokrabandh show more instinctive drives, and uncontrolled emotions than the Gurungs whereas the latter exhibit more creativeness, clarity of perception, controlled emotions, and emotions, and impulsivity than the former (Appendix III).

The Indians exhibit more creativeness instinctive drives, controlled emotions, and passivity (Mukerji 1960); and accurate perception (Asthana 1963) than the Gurungs. The Gurungs show more form perception, uncontrolled emotions, overt reactivity, inaccurate perception and inferiority feelings than the Indians (Appendix IV & V).

In sum, the Rorschach findings reveal that the Gurungs show practical common sense in handling life problems, lack inner creativeness similar to Alorese (Du Bois 1944), Baiga (Ray 1957, Appendix V) and Santhals (Ray 1975). Their modal personality is Coartated type (61% subjects). Some show acute depression (6% subjects), and few (5%) highlanders are egocentric extratensives.

The basic personality appears resistant to change ontogenetically, and acculturation seems make very little dent to that structure.

Obviously, a short study of the strategically and remotely located and inaccessible Gurungs with a single tool (the ink blot test) needs supplementing with other methods. Present test findings only seem as preliminary hypotheses requiring verification.

APPENDIX I

TABLE 1
Table showing approach

Approach	W! (D)	(W) D!	W! D!	D! (Dd)	DW! (D)	D _o ! (D)
Theoretical Intelligence		Practical Intelligence	Normal related mood	Grumblers	Feeble minded	Depressed
	47%	35%	8%	7%	2%	1%

TABLE 2
Table showing M (Human movement) responses

No. of M responses	Percent Frequency
0	79
1-2	20
3-4	1
Total	100

TABLE 3 (i)
Table showing FM (Animal movement) responses

No. of FM responses	Percent Frequency
0	72
1-2	25
3-4	2
5-6	1
Total	100

TABLE 3 (ii)
Table showing m (Inanimate movement) responses

No. of m responses	Percent
0	94
1-2	6
Total	100

TABLE 4
Table showing M+ and M- responses

Card No.	% M +	% M -
3	42.32	-
5	-	3.84
6	3.84	-
7	3.84	-
9	26.92	3.84
10	11.53	3.84
Total	88.46	11.53

M + = Integrated perception.

M - = Distorted perception.

TABLE 5 (i)
Table showing the distribution of F+ (Form perception) responses
in the Normal Sample

F + Responses (Number)	Percent Frequency	F + Responses (Number)	Percent Frequency
0	1	15-16	2
1-2	3	17-18	1
3-4	5	19-20	0
5-6	22	21-22	0
7-8	32	23-24	1
9-10	16		
11-12	11		
13-14	6		
Total			100

TABLE 5 (ii)
Table showing the distribution of F- (Distorted form perception)
responses in the Normal Sample

F - Responses (Numbers)	Percent Frequency	F - Responses (Numbers)	Percent Frequency
1	2	14	3
2	10	15	0
3	16	16	0
4	11	17	0
5	9	18	0
6	10	19	1
7	9	20	0

Contd. (TABLE 5) ii

F - Responses (Numbers)	Percent Frequency	F - Responses (Numbers)	Percent Frequency
8	9	21	0
9	5	22	0
10	5	23	1
11	4	24	0
12	3	25	1
13	1	-	-

TABLE 6

Table showing the distribution of 'H' (Human) responses

H Responses	Percent Frequency
0	30
1-2	61
3-4	8
5-6	1
Total	100

TABLE 7

Table showing the distribution of 'Hd' (Human detail) responses

Hd responses	Percent Frequency
0	57
1-2	29
3-4	8
5-6	5
7-8	0
9-10	0
11-12	0
13-14	1
Total	100

TABLE 8

Table showing the distribution of 'A' (Animal) responses

'A' Responses	Percent Frequency	'A' Responses	Percent Frequency
0	2	11-12	13
1-2	3	13-14	5
3-4	13	15-16	1
5-6	27	17-18	2
7-8	17	19-20	2
9-10	15	-	-
Total			100

TABLE 9

Table showing the distribution of 'Ad' (Animal detail) responses

'Ad' Responses	Percent Frequency	'Ad' Responses	Percent Frequency
0	35	9-10	1
1-2	42	11-12	0
3-4	14	13-14	1
5-6	3	15-16	1
7-8	3	-	-
Total			100

TABLE 10

Pattern tabulation of colour (Emotion) responses

S. No.	Pattern Colour responses	Percent
1	FC > CF + C	13
2	CF+C > FC	38
3	FC = CF+C	49
	Total	100

TABLE 11
The Experience Balance (Intelligence: Emotion) Percent

S. No.	(Pattern) Experience	Percent
1	$M > C$	16
2	$M = C$	2
3	$OM = OC$	33
4	$M < C$	49
Total		100

TABLE 12
Pattern tabulation of (Y) shading responses.

S. No.	Pattern Shading Responses	Percent
1	$FY > YF+Y$	17
2	$FY < YF+Y$	19
3	$FY = YF+Y$	64
Total		100

TABLE 13
Distribution of 'V' (Vista) Responses

No. of V Responses	Percent Frequency
0	37
1	27
2	15
3	13
4	2
5	3
6	2
7	1
Total	100

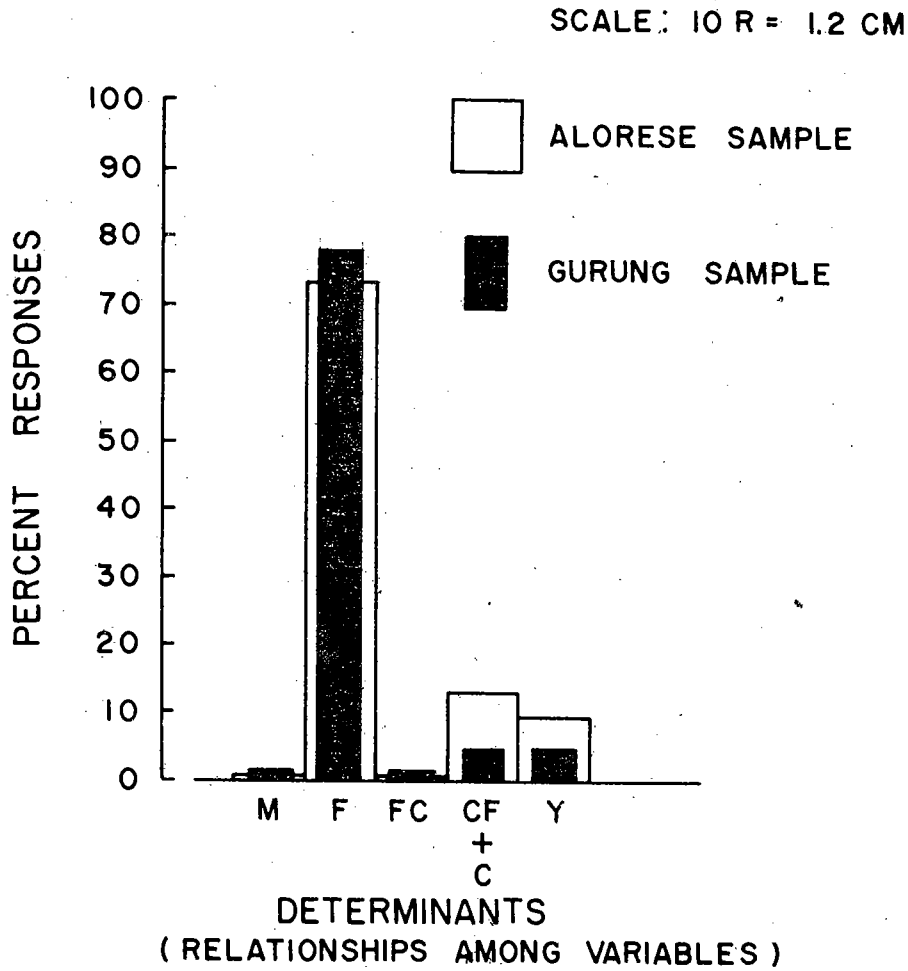
TABLE 14
Structural synopsis of the quantitative findings on Rorschach Variables
of the present sample (N = 100)

S. No.	VARIABLES	MEAN
1	R	18.45
2	% R in VIII, IX & X Cards	34.80
	<u>Location:</u>	
3	W	4.21
4	D	13.34
5	Dd	6.9
6	S	0.9
	<u>Determinants:</u>	
7	M	1.238
8	FM	1.428
9	F	14.7
10	F +	8.19
11	F -	6.51
12	FC (Total)	1.27
13	CF + C	1.62
14	C with blends	2.08
15	FC -	1.6
16	Sum C	2.377
17	Y	1.95
18	V	2

TABLE 14 (Contd.)

S. No.	VARIABLES	MEAN
19	H	1.6
20	HD	2.46
21	Hdx	1.16
22	A	7.62
23	Ad	2.80
24	At	2.1
25	Sex	1.5
26	Ls	2.09
27	Bt	2
28	R1	1.9
	<u>Ratios:</u>	
29	F + %	49.80
30	F %	78.68
31	A %	49.73
32	H %	12.73
33	H+A/Hd+Ad	2.2:1
34	Lambda Index	0.384
35	Affective Ratio	0.559
36	W : M	16.1:1
	<u>Timing</u>	
37	T/R (Sec)	53.65
38	T/1 R (Sec)	31.85
39	T/ (Minutes)	15.81
40	RT (Chrom in Sec)	31.31
41	RT (Achrom in Sec)	33.06
42	Inquiry time (Min)	20.70
43	Blends/R	1.9 : 18.45
44	P	2.2

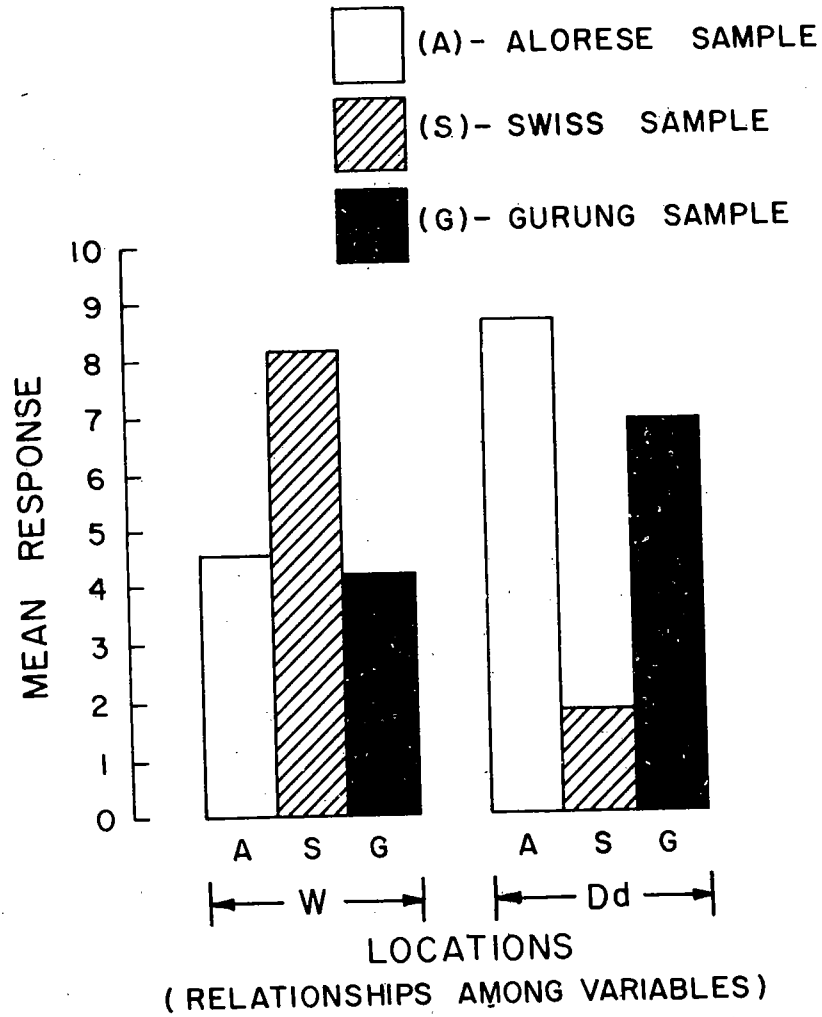
COMPARISON BETWEEN ALORESE AND GURUNG SAMPLES



(Source: Oberholzer in Du Bois's The People of Alor 1944)

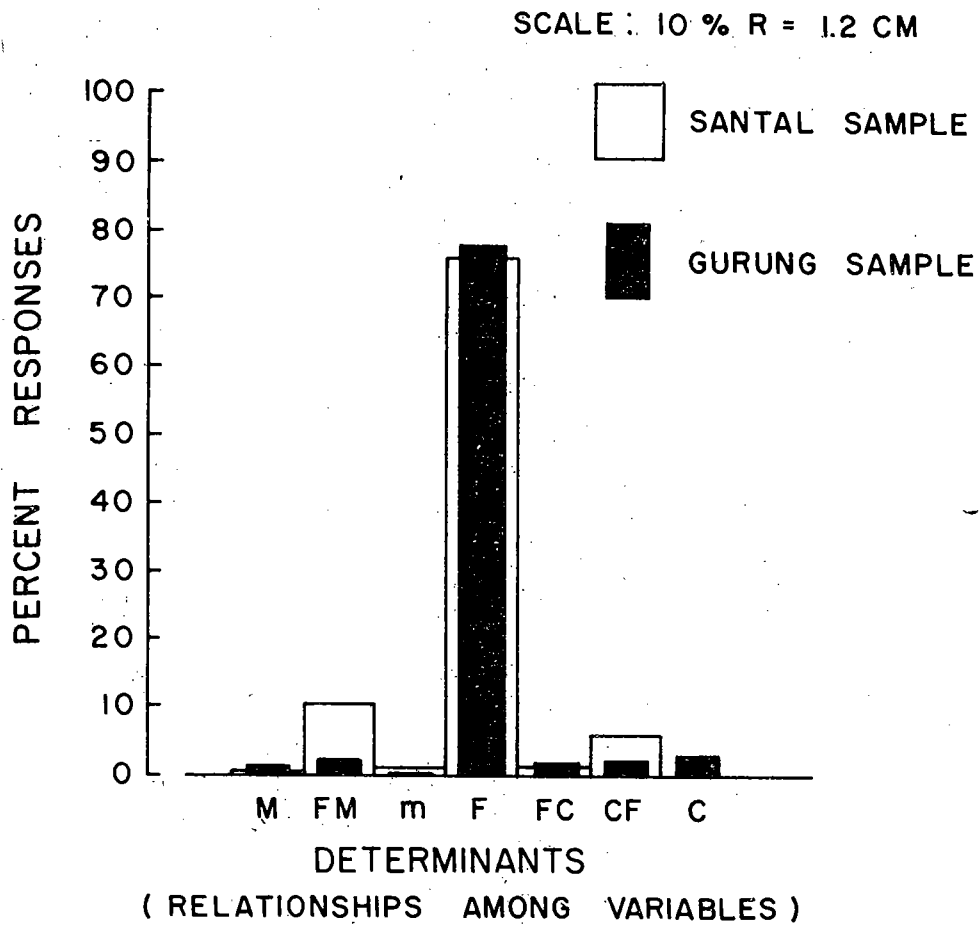
COMPARISON AMONG ALORESE; SWISS AND GURUNG SAMPLES

SCALE : 1 RESPONSE = 1 CM



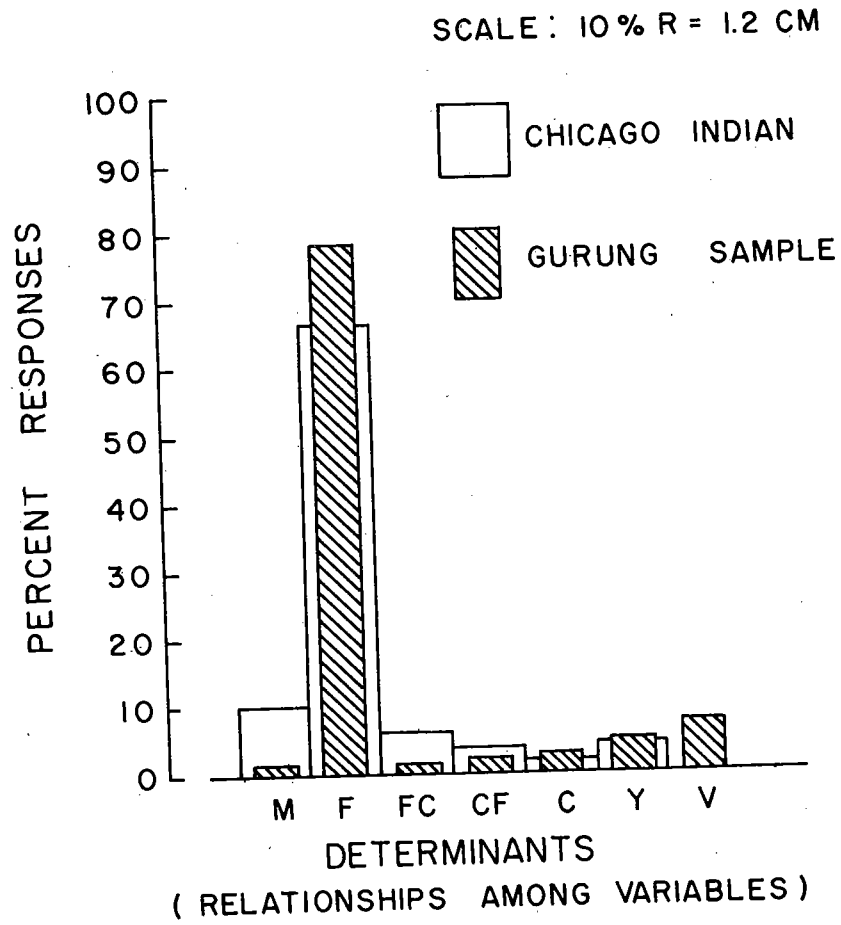
(Source : Du Bois , C. 1944 : 631)

COMPARISON BETWEEN SANTAL AND GURUNG SAMPLES



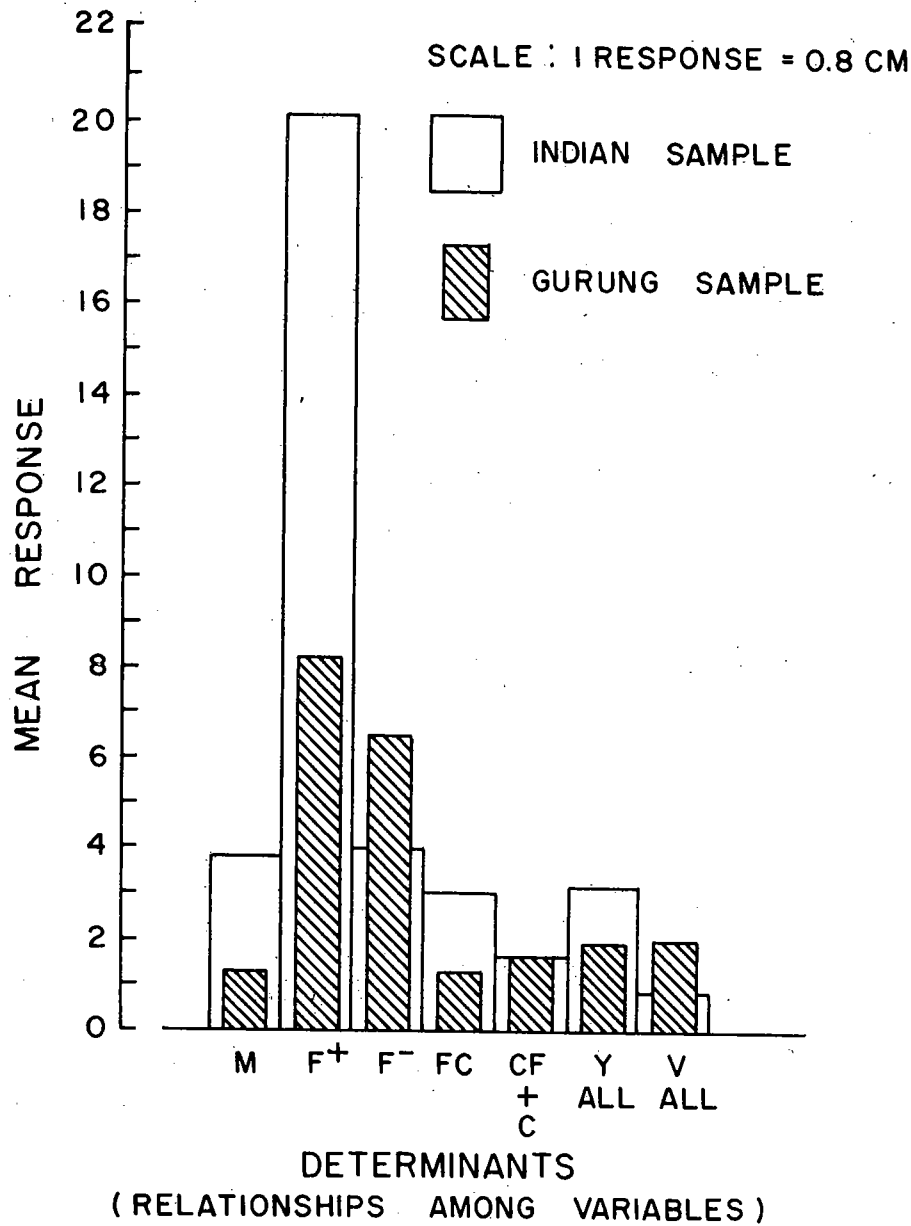
(Source : P. C. Ray 1975 : 83-84)

COMPARISON WITH INDIANS AT CHICAGO



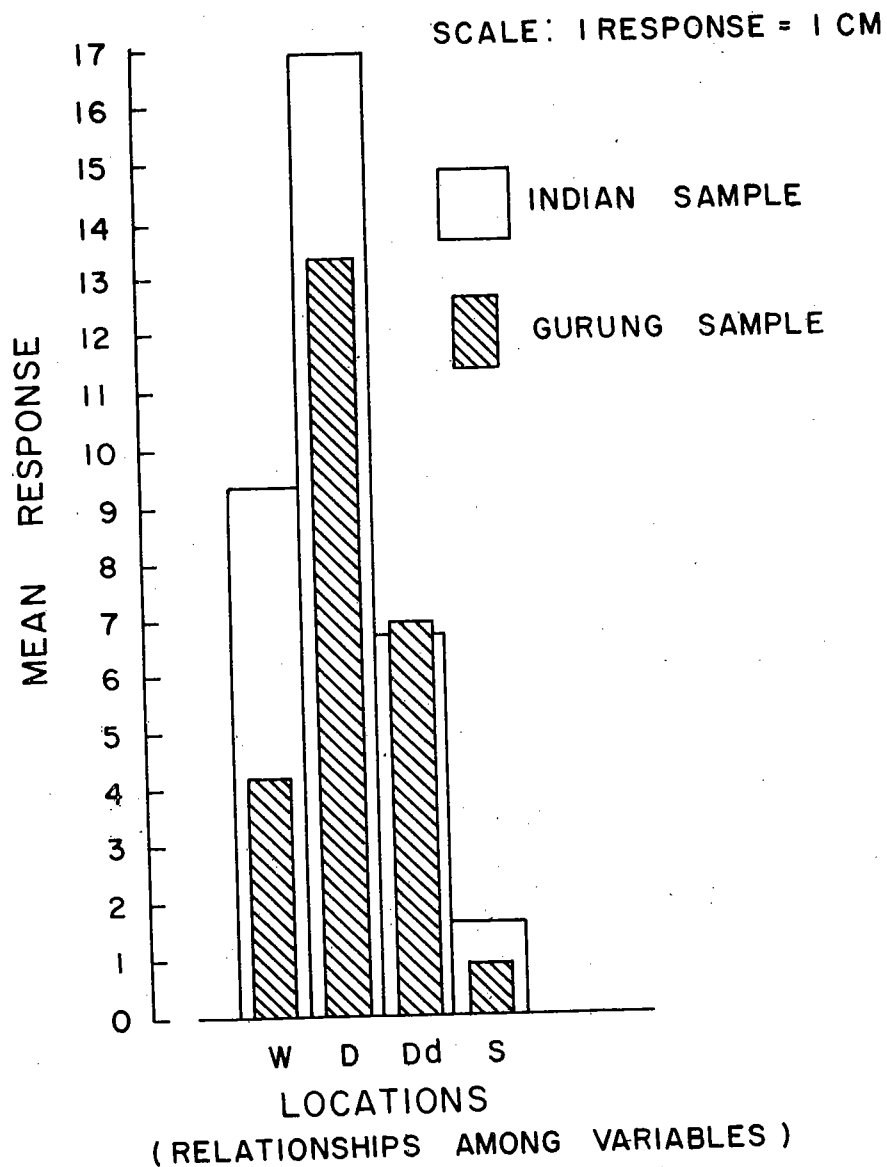
(Source : Asthana , H.S. 1956 : 157)

COMPARISON BETWEEN INDIANS & NEPALESE (GURUNG)



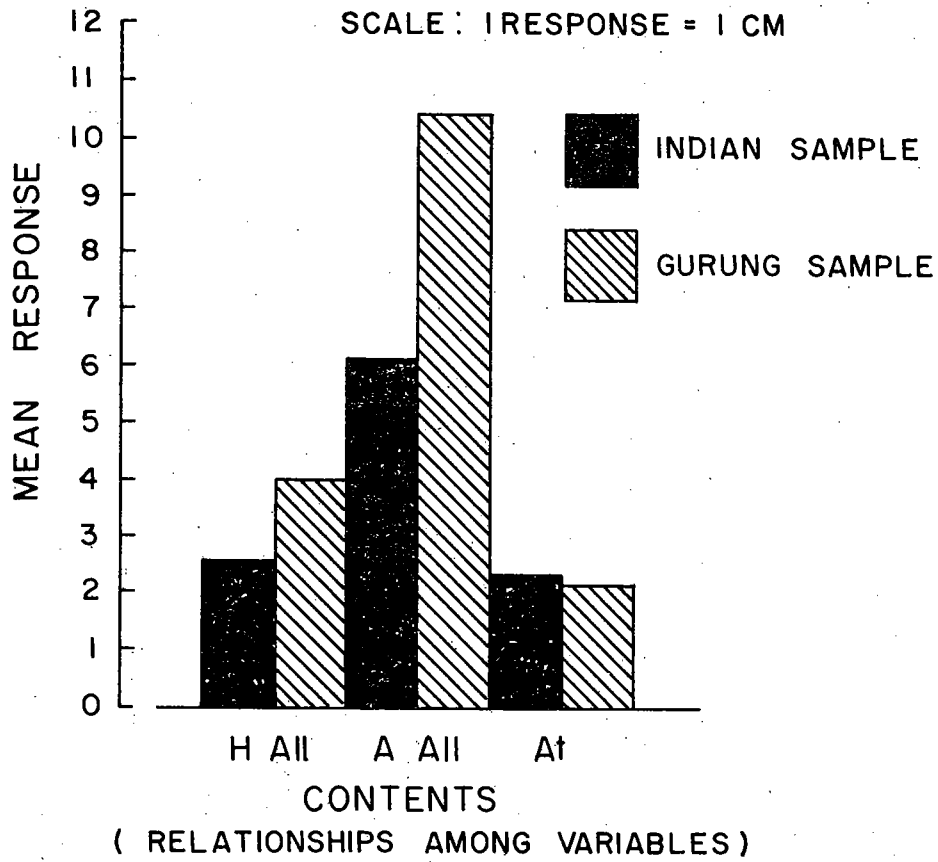
(Source: Prof. H.S. Asthana 1963:283-287)

COMARISON BETWEEN INDIAN AND GURUNG SAMPLES



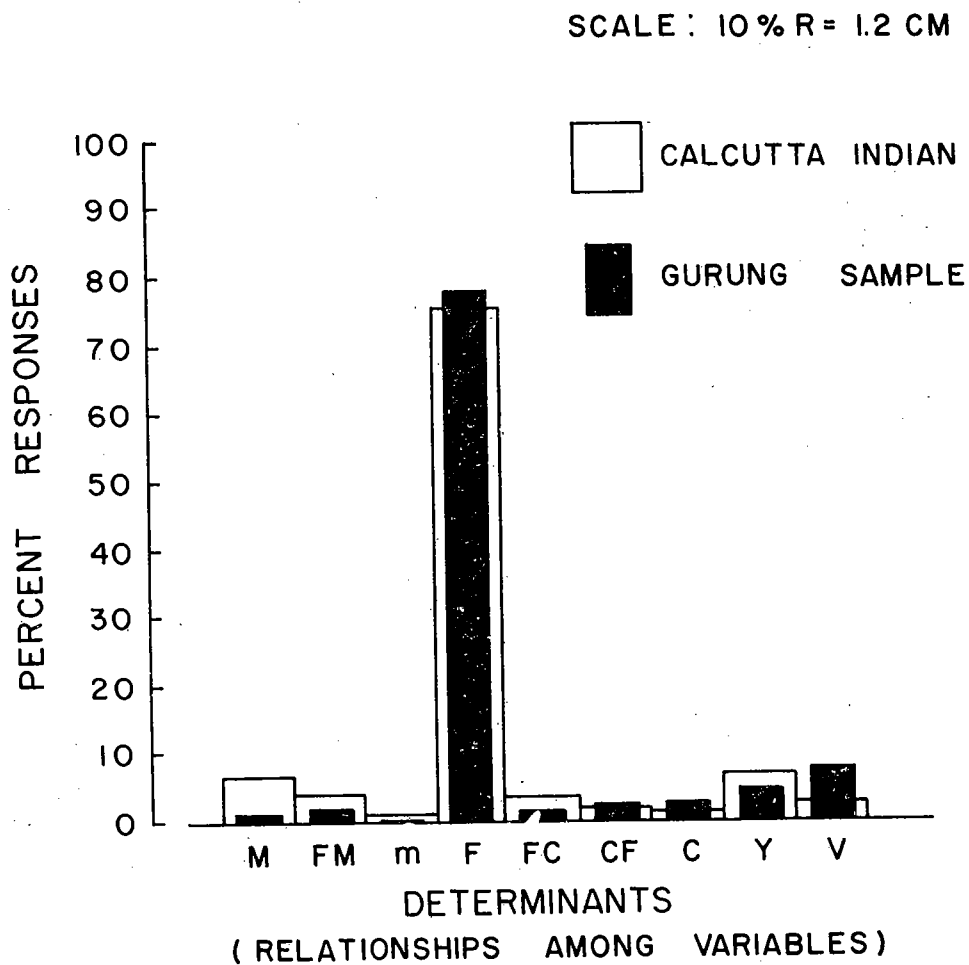
(Source : Asthana, H.S. 1963)

COMPARISON BETWEEN INDIAN AND GURUNG SAMPLES



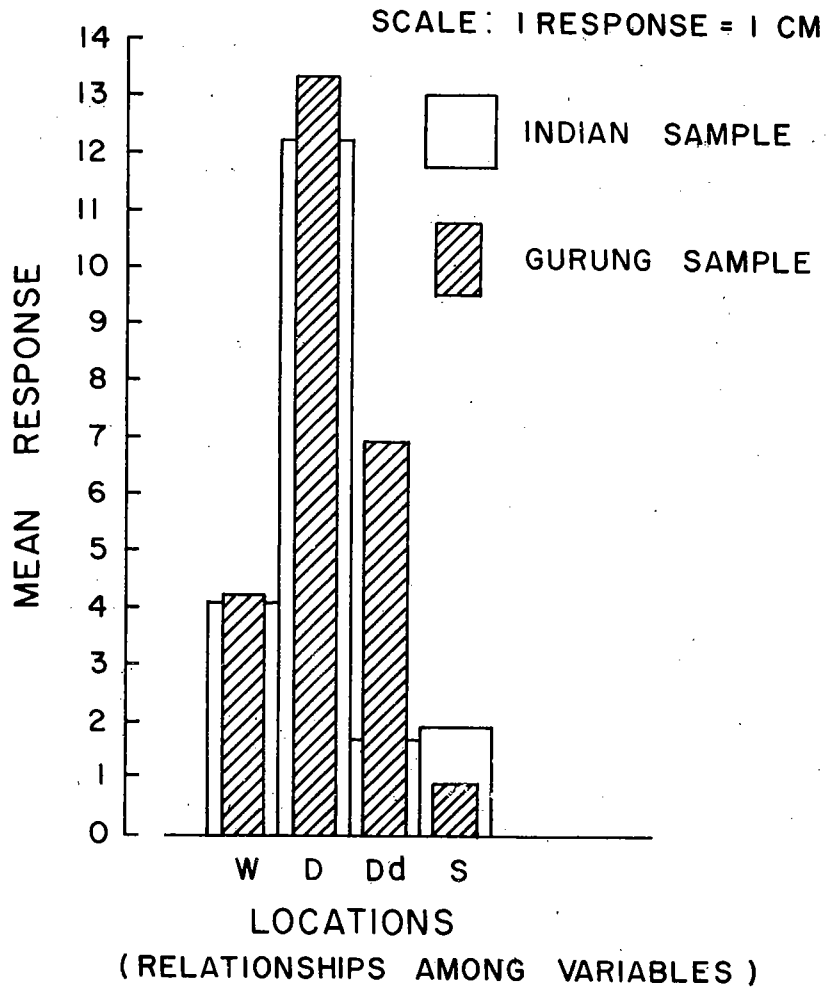
(Source : Asthana , H. S. 1963)

COMPARISON WITH INDIANS AT CALCUTTA



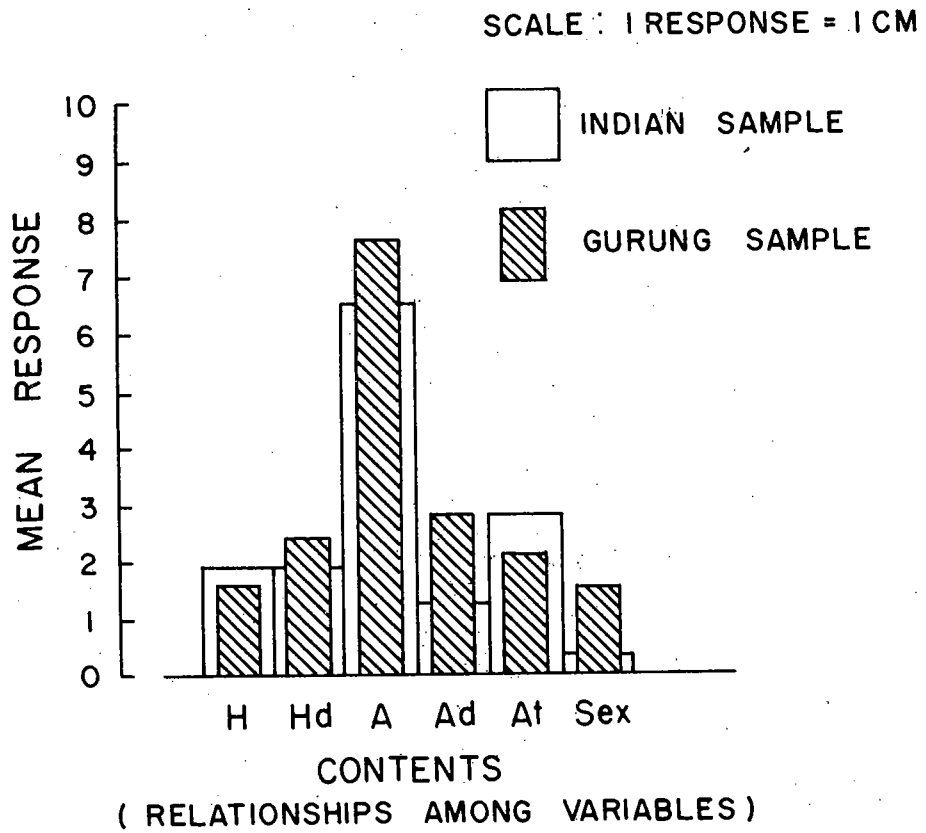
(Source : Mukerji , Maya . 1960 : 234 - 235)

COMPARISON BETWEEN INDIAN AND GURUNG SAMPLES



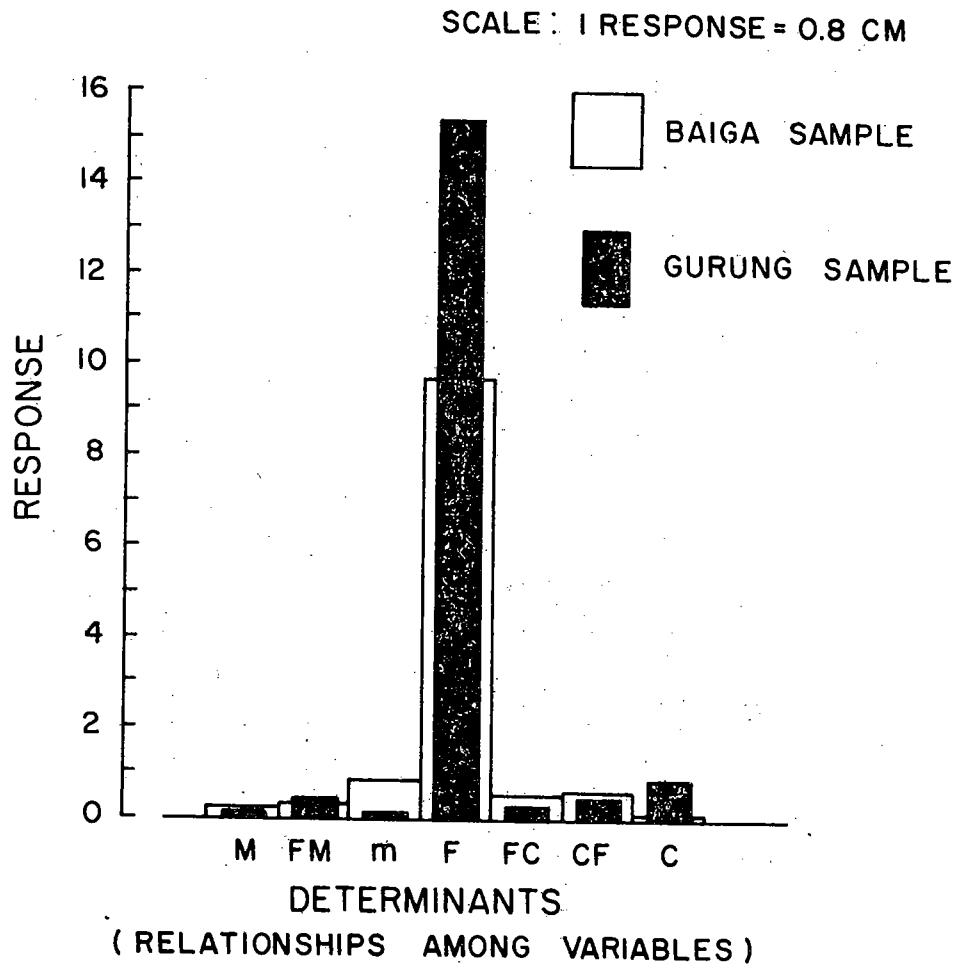
(Source : Mukerji , Maya . 1960 : 237)

COMPARISON BETWEEN INDIAN AND GURUNG SAMPLES



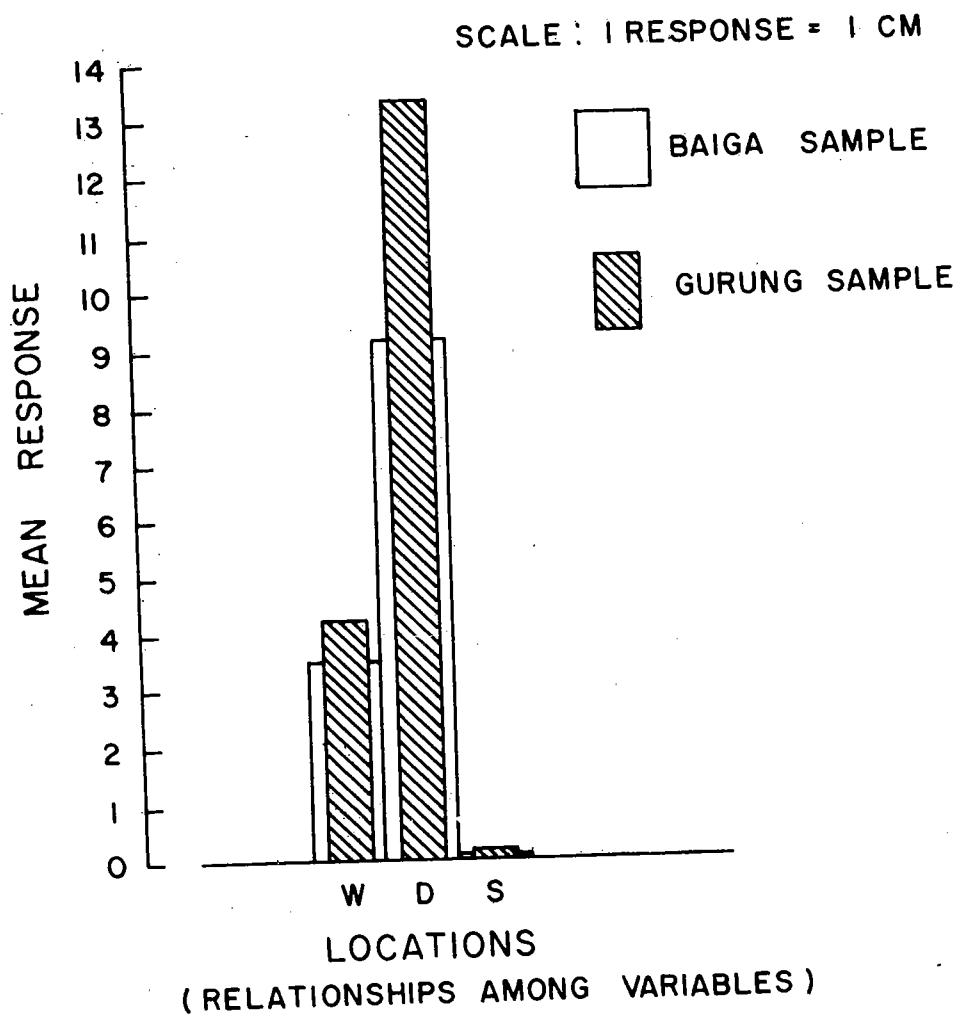
(Source : Mukerji , Maya . 1960 : 237)

COMPARISON BETWEEN BAIGA AND GURUNG SAMPLES



(Source : P. C. Ray 1957 : 52)

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(Source : Ray , P. C. 1957 : 52)

NOTES

1. Inkeles and Levinson (1969:426) define national character as 'relatively enduring personality characteristics (character traits, modes of dealing with impulses and affects, conceptions of self and the like), or it refers primarily to commonalities in adult personality.'

Benedict (1946) emphasized learned cultural behaviour and Mead (1951) stressed on certain learned cultural configurations in any society for the study of national character. Linton (1945) conceived of national character as modal personality structure.

Kardiner (1939, 1945a, 1945b) coined the term 'basic personality structure' with reference to the socio-cultural matrix where the personality structure is most congenial to the prevailing institutions and ethos of the society. For detail see Gorer (1948, 1949), Riesman (1950), Rickman (1949) Mead (1951a); Benedict (1946a), Fromm (1936), Erikson (1950), Bateson (1942), Taylor (1948), Narayan (1957), Asthana (1963), Mukerji (1960), Dhapola (1977), Du Bois (1944), Wallace (1952a), Hallowell (1952), MacGregor (1946) and Spindler (1955).

2. The Rorschach ink-blot test was used by Spiro (1947) for Ifaluk of Microneisa; Wallace (1952) for Tuscarora Indians of USA; Hallowell (1938) for Ogibwa of Canada; Cook (1942) for Samoan males of Polynesia; and Spindler (1958, 1961) for Menomini acculturation.

The Rorschach researches of Sen (1950), Asthana (1963), Carstairs (1957), and Mukerji (1960) are studies of Hindu (Indian) personality.

The responses on the Rorschach test are scored for location, determinants, content, popularity and originality. The location of a particular response, may involve the entire blot, scored as 'W', indicates subjects intellectual ability, a part of the blot, scored as 'D' is regarded as evidence of concrete and practical commonsense; or a small detail, scored as 'Dd', associated with precise and critical mentalities, and the white spaces (S) indicate simplicity or contrariness. The determinants of a particular response may be the shape or form of the blot (F). Clear and accurate form perception (F + or F) indicates firm control. Inappropriate, distorted, or bizarre forms (F -) signify low intelligence. Responses to colour (C) indicates impulsivity and emotional relationships to environment. The colour response is the sole determinant of emotional intensity. The predominance of form colour responses (FC) indicate emotional control and social adaptability. Colour form responses (CF), in which form is secondary, suggest impulsive, egocentric personality, and pure colour

responses (C) signify emotional impulsiveness. Shading responses (FY, YF and Y) are interpreted as related to anxiety, depression, and feelings of inferiority. The vista (V) responses indicate feelings of inadequacy. Human movement responses (M) indicate creativeness, intellectual potency and richer inner potentialities. M > C indicates introversive personality. On the other hand, C > M indicates extroversive personality. OM:X C (zero M: high C) signifies egocentric extratension. OM:OC (zero M: zero C) signifies perfect coartation (innert or low intelligence). Animal movement (FM) indicates instinctive activity rather than the level of creative activity. Movement of non-living objects (m) indicates stereotyped thinking. Popular (P) and original (O) responses indicate intelligence. In connection with contents the most common categories of responses are animal (A), animal detail (Ad), human (H), human detail (Hd), anatomy (At), landscape (Ls), science (Sc), household (Hh) geography (Ge), and mythology (My), etc.

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Land Use Pattern and Ecology in the Madi Valley

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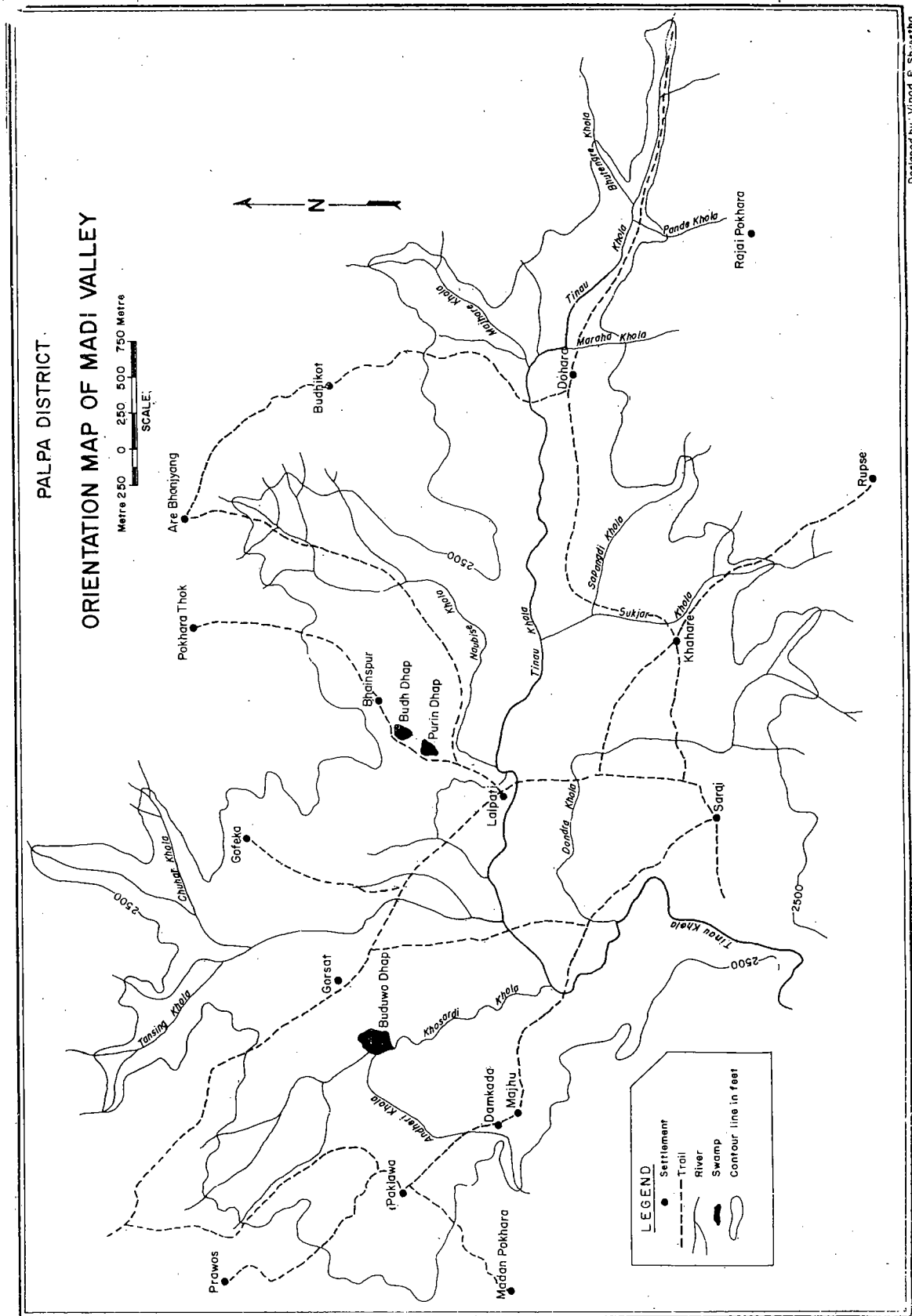
Background

This paper was prepared to analyse land use pattern in the Madi valley from the ecological viewpoint. Though the Madi valley is the biggest agricultural land in the Tinau watershed area, due to ecological and environmental problems, the land use pattern has been adversely affected, which has led to low agricultural production and frequent crop failure. Due to rapid population growth, there has been a marked increase in deforestation, soil erosion, landslides and flood hazards in recent years. The process of environmental deterioration and ecological degradation has resulted in loss of top soil and landslides along the surrounding hill slopes on the one hand and loss of agricultural land, fertility of soil and siltation problems in the fertile valley on the other. These critical problems have led to investigate and analyse the various causes that are responsible for adverse effect on land use pattern in the Madi valley which lies within the Tinanu watershed area of Palpa district.

The present study is an attempt to analyse the present land use pattern and effects of ecological degradation on land utilization in the Madi valley.

Methodology

The base map for land use in the Madi valley was prepared with the help of aerial photographs of 1972 on the scale 1:20,000. The map was up-dated at the time of field study in March 1981. The information regarding the present situation and problems of land use was gathered from the local farmers through questionnaires and interviews. The personal visual survey was done at the time of field study. Different types of land use categories were delimited with the help of one inch to one mile (1:63360) toposheet of 1959, aerial photographs of 1972 (1:20,000) and land use map (1:25000) of Tinau watershed area prepared by the Tinau Watershed Project. The study includes areas up to the altitude of 762 m. (2500 ft.) above sea level. The field study was conducted in the month of March 1981 in Damkada, Andhari Khola, Agani, Sukjor, Dohara, Pande Khola, Pipli and Gorsot villages which represent the whole Madi valley and all the panchayats that lie within (see Map 1).



Map 1

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Geographic Reality

The Tinau watershed area which covers about 520 sq. km. lies within the hilly region of the western development region of Nepal is a part of Palpa district in the Lumbini zone. There are several small and narrow basins and valleys within the watershed area some of which are Redi, Madi, Nayapati, Hangadi, Dovan and Cachal. The Madi valley is an enclosed one surrounded by the Bahabharat Lekh which forms the biggest single agricultural land within the Tinau watershed area (Tinau Watershed Project 1980: 215). The average altitude of the Madi valley is about 7000 m. above sea level (Shrestha 2035 B.S.) and lies within the mid-land region of Nepal. The area of the valley is approximately 19.2 sq.km. (Shrestha 1982:17) and is about 3.69 percent of the total land area of the Tinau watershed.

The spatial location of the Madi valley lies between $83^{\circ} 33'$ E. to $83^{\circ} 39'$ East and $27^{\circ} 48'$ N. to $27^{\circ} 51'$ North. Geologically, the Madi valley is a tectonic valley (Sharma 1977:4). It is believed that the Madi valley of Palpa district is probably of lacustrine origin and provides extensive patches of flat land (Malla 1969). In the geological past, due to some movements in the earth's crust, the river flowing from the valley was obstructed and turned into a lake, which later in the recent geologic past drained away leaving the fertile valley. The low lying Madi valley has at present few water logged ponds and swamps which seem to be the remnants of a past lake, notable of which are Purin Dhap, Kalpu Dhap, Budh Dhap and Buruwa Dhap¹.

The drainage pattern in the valley is controlled by the landscape and slope of the land. The main river flowing from the Madi valley is the Tinau river. The other streams and torrents like Sukjor, Andheri, Khoserdi, Tansing, Chilangdi, Naubise, Bhutungre, Pande and Nakate are the notable ones and its tributaries. These river and streams originate from the surrounding hills of the Mahabharat Lekh. The general slope of the land is towards the centre and to the west-mouth of the valley. These streams flowing from the enclosed hills meet the Tinau river in the centre and flow together towards the west and then to the central Tarai through Butwal-Khasauli.

Because of low altitude and enclosed nature of the valley, the climatic conditions are similar to that of the Inner Tarai (Duns). The climatic conditions in the valley can be divided into hot and dry, warm and rainy, and cold and dry seasons. According to the climatological data collected from Lalpati centre (Madi valley) in 1980, the maximum temperature for the hot and dry seasons was 36.7°C . and in the cold winter the minimum temperature was 4.2°C . The Madi valley lies to the north in the rain shadow of Kaude Lekh (1843 m). The annual rainfall for the year 1980 was 1827 mm (Tinau Watershed Project 1980) and the winter months are foggy.

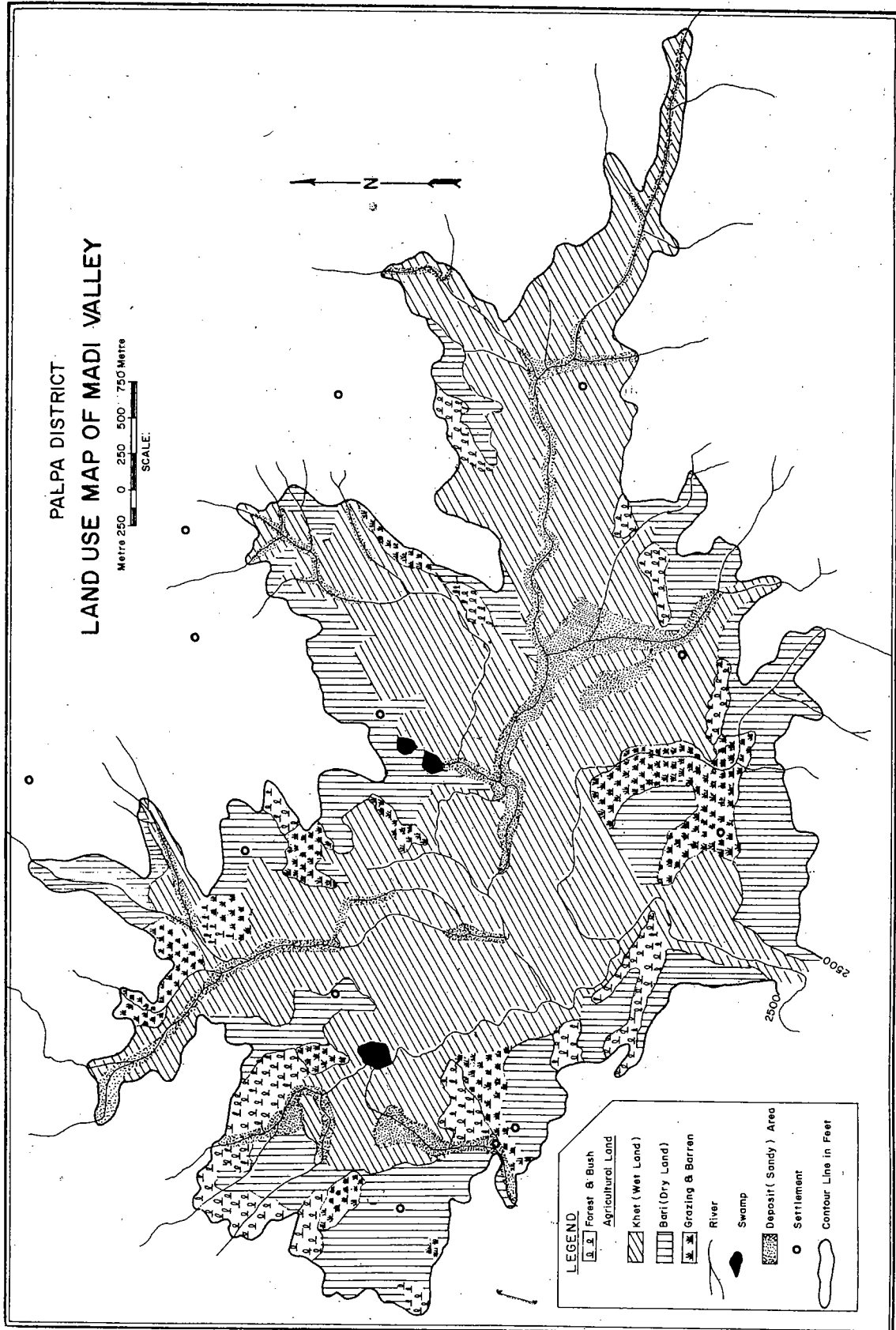
The soils at various locations in the Madi valley indicate that majority of them are in medium to high textural groups. The main soils found in the valley are sandy loam to silt loam. Apart from

these soils, eroded debris from the surrounding hills like sand, boulders, gravels and pebbles are found along the foot of the hills and in the bed and banks of the streams. The soils of the valley contain low to medium organic matter and possess mostly acidic soil reaction. Except in the western sector of the valley, nitrogen content in the soil is low. The soil in the western portion of the valley possesses mostly medium to high level phosphorus and rest of the areas show mostly a low level phosphorus content (New Era 1982:7).

Land Use Pattern

Land in Nepal is a basic and important natural resource on which more than 90 percent of the total population depends for living. According to the preliminary census report of 1981, the rate of population growth between 1971-1981 was 2.6 percent per annum (Gurung 1981) which is very high. Because of fast rate of population growth, the land-man ratio is decreasing rapidly. Consequently, there is an acute shortage of agricultural land in Nepal specially in the hills where agricultural density is three times more than that of the Tarai region (National Planning Commission 1974). In the Tinau watershed area, where about 1.38 hectares per head of land of all sorts have to meet the varied needs of the people. The per capita cultivated land for the whole watershed is only 0.23 hectares in average. Like in the other hilly region of Nepal land for agricultural use in the Tinau watershed is extremely limited because land resource is in short supply. In such a case planned allocation alone can assure optimum use of available land, because limited supply of land resource cannot meet the requirement of the increasing population.

The Midlands of Nepal which was originally woodland now have only a 10 to 15 percent forest cover (Kollmannsperger 1978-79). Though the Madi valley lies within the Midlands, has only about 4.8 percent of forest cover to the total land area. Due to lack of authentic data, it is difficult to say in what proportion the agricultural land is increasing at the expense of forest land. Due to rapid population growth (about 2 percent per annum in the area) the land use pattern in the Madi valley has become more complex. The change in land use pattern is most remarkable in the area between agricultural land and forest and pasture. The extension of crop land in the marginal land creates a chain reaction of contraction of pasture land and the overgrazing of woodland for crop land for dry crops and subsequent conversion of unirrigated land into irrigated land (Gurung 1969-70). Environmental deterioration is taking place along the slope of the enclosed hills of the Madi valley which has ultimately led to adverse effects on present land use pattern in the downstream area. Table 1 presents a general picture of land use pattern in the Madi valley (see Map 2).



Designed by: Vinod P. Shrestha

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Map 2

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Table 1: Land Use Pattern in the Madi Valley

Land Category	Area in Hectare	Percentage of the total
1. Cultivated land	1510	78.64
2. Forest and Bush	92	4.79
3. Pasture and Meadow	120	6.25
4. Swamp and Water Bodies	28	1.46
5. Built-up Areas	30	1.56
6. Others (Barren and Debris)	140	7.30
	1920	100.00

Source: (Shrestha 1982:64).

Major Land Uses

Table 1 shows the total land areas under different uses: cultivated land, forest and bush, pasture and meadow, water bodies and built-up areas. Only about 7.3 percent of the total area is not usable for productive purposes. The land under this category includes barren lands, landslides, eroded areas and debris. The present situation of the different categories of land uses is as follows:

Cultivated Land: Cultivated land appears to be the most important and productive land use in terms of the coverage of the area. The cultivated land area of the Madi valley is 1510 hectares which amount to 78.64 percent of the total land area. Due to fertile soil, most of the land in the Madi valley has been converted into agricultural land. From the centre of the valley the percentage of cultivated land decreases progressively towards the foot and lower slopes of the enclosed hills. The Madi valley which is most ideal in the Tinau watershed area for rice production is not cultivated the year round. The cultivated land in the valley can be divided into two categories - (a) Khet² and (b) Bari³. The cropping intensity is estimated to be around 120 percent (Tinau Watershed Project 1980:40). To a certain extent, factors like soil depth, high water table, frequent change in the course of Tinau and Sukjor rivers and lack of irrigation facilities affect the cropping potential in the Madi valley. The major cereals grown in the valley are paddy, maize, millet, wheat, lentils, linseeds and some vegetable crops (in negligible areas). Most of the Khet lands (about 72 percent) are left fallow after the paddy harvest. Other major crops that are relayed/intercropped with rice are peas, soyabeans and blackgrams. Soyabean and blackgram are mostly grown on the bunds of the paddy fields (New Era 1982:7). The major cropping pattern followed in the Khet land in the Madi valley is shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Major Cropping Pattern in the Khet (Wet) Land in the Madi Valley

Cropping Pattern	Percentage
1. Rice-fallow	71.99
2. Rice-wheat	26.05
3. Rice-corn	0.37
4. Rice-rice (early paddy)	1.29
5. Rice-linseed	0.23
6. Rice-barley	0.04
7. Rice-lentil	0.03
Total	100.00

Source: (New Era 1982:7)

In the Bari land maize is the main crop in summer followed by millet, buckwheat, oil seeds and wheat. Mixed cropping and relay cropping with maize or planting other crops after the maize harvest is generally practised. These lands are located along the lower slopes and foot of the enclosed hills. The spatial extent of the coverage of Khet and Bari lands are shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Coverage of Khet and Bari Lands in the Madi Valley

Cultivated Land	Area in Hectare	Percentage to the Total Area
1. <u>Khet</u>	1098	57.18
2. <u>Bari</u>	412	21.46
Total	1510	78.64

Source: (Shrestha 1982:71)

Table 3 shows the higher percentage of cultivated land in the Madi valley where 78.64 percent of the total land is under cultivation. Khet land constitutes 73 percent to the total agricultural land where as Bari constitute only 27 percent. However, the major portion of the Khet land remains fallow because of the deteriorating ecological situation of the area. In winter, the rivers and streams in their upper courses become dry. The water in the river course disappears underground and reappears in the lower part of the valley creating springs in the paddy fields and the water remains logged even during the winter season upto mid March. These problems can be seen mainly in the South-Western part of the Amliyan area in the Madi valley. These water logged agricultural lands are left fallow in winter after the harvest of paddy crops due to excessive moisture. The problem of drying up of river beds in winter along the upper courses of the rivers on the one

hand and excessive moisture, water logged and swampiness in the lower courses on the other are responsible for the single cropping pattern in the valley.

Forest and Bush: The area covered by forest and bushes are only 92 hectares of land which is only 4.79 percent of the total land area of the Madi valley. Though the forest is most import land use from the viewpoint of ecological balance there is at present very limited area of forest left. These scanty patches of forest are mostly found along the foot of the mountain rim. Mostly in the forest area hard Sal (*shorea robusta*) and semi-hard deciduous trees are found mixed with bushes. In the valley proper, areas under forest are very small indeed because most of the forest land is encroached for cultivation. The forest produce, especially fuel and timber are in acute shortage in the valley.

Pasture and Meadow: Pasture and meadow land occupy 6.25 percent of the total area of the valley which amounts to 120 hectares of land. These lands are primarily public land left for common grazing purposes, which is normally covered with grass. Though pasture lands are distributed along the foot and lower slopes of the enclosed hills, broad pasture land is found in the Sarai Tar area. There is a very little area under fodder trees. Existing pasture and meadow are over grazed resulting denudation of soil and reduction of carrying capacity of pasture lands. Little or no attention is paid to cultivate fodders to support animal husbandry.

Swamps and Water Bodies: Swamps and water bodies cover an area of 28 hectares which is about 1.46 percent of the total land area of the Madi valley. Among the ponds and swamps Purin Dhap, Buduwa Dhap, Kalpu Dhap and Budh Dhap are notable and are believed to be the remnants of a big lake which had formed in the geological past. In recent years, the area under water bodies and swamps are increasing because of the deposition of rock debris and sand in the outlets by rivers and streams.

Built-up Areas: About 1.56 percent of the total land or 30 hectares of land in the Madi valley are covered by built-up areas. These areas include settlements, roads and trails. Most of the lands under this category are concentrated along the lower slopes and foot of the surrounded hills. Of the settlement areas Kunsare, Paklwa, Majha, Damkada, Simalghat, Sarai Tar, Khahare Khola, Lalpati, Gophek, Gorsot, Bhainspur, Sanseni, Rupse, Dohara and Pande Khola are notable.

Other Land Uses: Land use under this category includes barren and buried lands, land slip and eroded land which are unproductive. The areas occupied by this category is about 140 hectares which amounts to 7.3 percent of the total land area of the Madi valley. The once fertile agricultural land along the river course is now buried under rock debris, sand and pebbles leading to an increase in desert like unproductive land.

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Effects of Soil Erosion and Landslides in Land Use Pattern

Though the Madi valley is the biggest and most important single agricultural land unit in the Tinau watershed area, environmental degradation along the slopes of the hills surrounding the valley have had a negative impact on land use pattern in the valley. Due to population growth of about 2 percent per annum, the basic demands for a livelihood in the area can under no circumstances be fulfilled from locally available land recourses. An ever increasing number of people who depend entirely on land for livelihood have to live for generations on the same small amount of land (Malla 1980). Further, lack of alternative job opportunities, the growing population is compelled to extend its cropland towards the marginal and ecologically sensitive areas which for reasons of structure, slopes and soil quality are not suitable for agriculture. Expansion of cropland on steep and unstable slopes, overgrazing of animals in the woodland and cutting down of the trees from the forest for fuel and timber are taking place everywhere in the area. The area under forest along the slope of the hills (especially along the slopes of Kaude Lekh and Lam Danda) is fast diminishing under the combined pressure of slash and burn cultivation, overgrazing of the animals and wood gathering for timber and fuel. Consequently this has led to soil and gulley erosion, landslides and flood hazards with much damage and disaster. The effects are permanent lowering of soil fertility, frequent crop failure, change in the hydrological cycle by increasing silt load along the river beds in the Madi valley.

The incident of flood hazards by swollen rivers flowing from the surrounding hill slopes is increasing every year. If the volume of rain water flowing down is doubled during heavy rainfall, then the erosive capacity will be increased 4 times and the transportation capacity 32 times (Killmannsperger 1978-79). The rivers and torrents flowing from the surrounded hills wash away debris and deposit in the fertile valley along the river beds. Every year in the rainy season fertile khet land is buried by sand pebbles and debris converting fertile land into waste land. The rivers which once flowed below the level of the khet land now flow above the level of khet land between vulnerable banks (New Erā 1982:11). At present rivers and streams of the Madi valley have damaged and deposited debris along their course in the following areas and localities:

Rivers/Streams	Localities
1. Sukjor (Khahare)	Southern part of the valley in Khahare, Beltari and Lalpati area.
2. Maraha	Dohara area.
3. Pande	Pande Khola area.
4. Tinau	Along the bed and banks in eastern portion of the valley from Bagchaur to Pande Khola areas.

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| 5. | Majhare and Naubise | North eastern part and Naubise Phat area |
| 6. | Chuhar and Tansing | North western part of Gopek and Gorsot areas. |
| 7. | Khoserdi and Andheri | Western portion of the valley in Damkada and Paklahwa area. |
| 8. | Nakate | South western part of Aagani Khat area. |

During heavy monsoons, the above mentioned rivers and streams bring a huge amount of silt and debris from the surrounding hills and deposit it in the fertile agricultural lands and irrigation channels. The Chekuwa Kulo (irrigation channel) in the eastern part of the valley has been damaged by floods and debris deposition. At present the deposit area along the banks of the rivers are scattered through the valley. If the present deposition process continues in the future, the area of debris deposition will gradually expand, and further continuation of the process will lead to join the deposit area converting the whole valley into one big desert land. The heavy rainfall (more than 200 mm of rain within 14 hours) of Aswin 13, 2038 B.S. (late September, 1981) in the valley seriously damaged the standing crops and serious deposition problems caused by Sukjor Khola (Khahara), Tinau, Maraha and Andheri Khola. Sukjor Khola completely washed away Beltari Khet while the Tinau Khola washed away more than 150 ropani of agricultural land near Dohara (New Era 1982:11). Similarly Andheri, Tansing and Nakate Khola also made serious damage and buried agricultural land under debris. The heavy deposition of debris by the rivers along its beds have resulted in raising the level of the rivers even during normal rains. These rivers often change their course converting fertile land by depositing debris into unproductive waste lands on the one hand and damages the standing crops on the other. According to one inch to one mile (1:63360) toposheet of 1959, the total area under deposition was only 9 hectares but the area has increased to about 140 hectares in 1981. Thus within a short period about 22 years, the area under waste land has increased by 16 times (Shrestha 1982:69). This process of siltation in the Madi valley has had adverse effects on agricultural land use. Because good and fertile agricultural land of the valley is being converted into unproductive deserted land every year. Because of ecological constraints (soil erosion, landslides and flood hazards) productive capacity of the fertile valley has not yet been able to be fully utilized. Due to spreading aridity and lack of proper water management there has been a tendency to grow dry crops like wheat, maize, and mustard in the khet lands of Andheri Khola and Sukjor Khola areas where previously paddy was grown. Because of increasing problems of soil erosion, landslides and flood hazards, double or triple cropping agricultural lands are gradually being converted into single cropping agricultural land. Thus, soil and gully erosion and landslides along the slopes of the enclosed mountain rim of the Madi valley have resulted in converting the valley into a semi-desert-land, thus having a negative impact on proper land use pattern.

Conclusion

Though the Madi valley is the biggest agricultural land in the Tinau watershed area, which is ideal for paddy production is not cultivated all the year round. Because of ecological and socio-economic constraints in the valley, cropping intensity is estimated to be only 120 percent. For proper land utilization in the valley, ecological constraints like flood hazards, debris deposition, water logging in the agricultural fields and frequent changes in the course of river should be checked by different preventive as well as protective measures like correction of river beds, plantation of trees along the river banks, construction of check dams and embankments and diversion of water from water logged paddy fields through proper water conservation and management. Droughts and flood hazards are the two main problems in proper agricultural land use in the Madi valley, while former needs provision of proper irrigation and conservation of water through scientific management where as latter requires proper drainage and flood control measures. Traditional cropping pattern followed in the Madi valley needs adjustment and change in view of the increased basic demands of the people, and at the same time appropriate land use measures based on conservation policies should be adopted to discourage the unwise and wasteful use of land and to preserve the valley from the grip of ecological disaster.

NOTES

1. Dhap means swamp or marsh.
2. Khet land is used to grow paddy, usually lowlands along the side of the rivers which are irrigated or wet land.
3. Bari is unirrigated dry land usually up lands where maize is grown as the main crop.

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गुल्मी राज्यको राजनैतिक इतिहास र केही अप्रकाशित ऐतिहासिक सामग्री

टेकबहादुर श्रेष्ठ

नेपालको इतिहास पूर्ण भएको छैन। तसर्थ यसका लागि काठमाडौं उपत्यकाका पूर्व र पश्चिमका ऐतिहासिक प्रदेशहरूमा सर्वेक्षण गर्ने र त्यहाँ प्राप्त ऐतिहासिक सामग्रीहरूको आधारमा छुट्टा छुट्टै प्रादेशिक इतिहास तयार पार्न अत्यावश्यक हुन्छ। यस किसिमको कार्य नेपाल र एशियाली अनुसन्धान केन्द्रबाट विगत केही वर्षदेखि हुँदै आएको छ। यस सन्दर्भमा नुवाकोट तथा दोलखाका बेग्ला बेग्लै ऐतिहासिक रूपरेखा प्रकाशमा आइसकेका छन्। यसैगरी पश्चिमका चौबीसी राज्यहरूमध्ये धेरैजसो राज्यहरूमा सर्वेक्षण कार्य गरी प्रतिवेदन तयार गरिसकिएको छ। यहाँ चौबीसी राज्यमध्ये गुल्मी राज्यमा प्राप्त केही ऐतिहासिक सामग्री प्रकाशमा ल्याउने तथा गुल्मी राज्यको राजनैतिक रूपरेखा संक्षिप्त रूपमा भए पनि प्रस्तुत गर्ने प्रयास गरिएको छ।

काठमाडौं उपत्यकाको पश्चिममा काली गण्डकी नदीको प्रश्रवण क्षेत्रमा विस्तारित गुल्मी राज्य चौबीसीमध्ये एक हो। यो राज्य पर्वत, प्यूठान, पाल्पा आदिको तुलनामा सानो राज्य थियो। यसको पूर्वमा गरहुँ, पैञ्चु, पश्चिममा धुरकोट, उत्तरमा पर्वत, गलकोट र दक्षिणमा अर्घा राज्य पर्दथे। त्यसताका धुरीको गणना अनुसार राज्यको नाम राख्ने पद्धति रहेको हुँदा गुल्मीलाई 'छ हजार गुल्मी' भनिन्थ्यो।

पवित्र स्थल मानिएको यस गण्डकी क्षेत्रले पौराणिक कालमा ऋषिमुनिहरूको तपस्या स्थलको रूप लिएको थियो। गुल्मी राज्यको रमणीय स्थल रेसुङ्गामा ऋङ्ग ऋषिले तपस्या गरेका थिए भनिन्छ।^१ यस कुरोको सम्झना यस पूर्य स्थलको दक्षिण पूर्वस्थित ऋङ्ग नामक वस्तीले दिलाइरहेको छ। यहीं जोसमनी सिद्धान्तका शाशिधरले तपस्या गरेका थिए^२। पछि यिनैका पुत्र लक्ष्मी नारायणले पनि यहाँ तपस्या गरेका थिए^३। अहिलेसम्म पनि यो स्थल साधु-सन्तहरूको अखडा रहेको पाइन्छ।

लिच्छविकालमा नेपालको सीमा वर्तमानकालकै सरह थियो भन्ने कुरा विभिन्न ऐतिहासिक प्रमाणद्वारा सिद्ध भइसकेकोले^४ गुल्मी राज्य फैलिएको यो प्रदेश लिच्छविराज्य अन्तर्गत पर्दथ्यो भन्ने कुरो निश्चित छ। त्यस कालमा काठमाडौं उपत्यकादेखि टाढा-टाढाका प्रदेशमा सोझै केन्द्रबाट शासन चलाउन सम्भव नभएकोले केन्द्र अन्तर्गतका सामन्त शासकद्वारा यी प्रदेशको प्रशासन चल्दथ्यो। मध्यकालको पूर्वार्द्धमा भने विषयपतिहरू नियुक्त भई यिनीहरूबाट नै यी प्रदेशको प्रशासन चल्न थालेको थियो। ने. सं. ११९ (वि.सं. १०५५) को एउटा हस्तलिखित ग्रन्थमा-गण्डी गुल्मको उल्लेख भएको छ।

यसैगरी ने. सं. २१३ को अर्को हस्तलिखित ग्रन्थमा 'श्रीगण्डीगुल्मविषये कुलपुत्रस्य कायस्थ श्रीजीवधरसिंहस्य पुस्तकम्' भनी गण्डी गुल्मलाई 'विषय' भनिएकोछ^१। यहाँ उल्लिखित गण्डी गुल्म प्रदेश कुन प्रदेश थियो भन्ने कुरोमा विभिन्न मत देखिएका छन्। एक थरीले गण्डी गुल्म प्रदेश ललितपुरमा पर्दथ्यो भनी अनुमान गरेका^६ छन् भने अर्का थरीले वर्तमान गुल्मी भेकलाई औल्याएका छन्^७। यसबारेमा टुङ्गो लगाउन अरू सामग्रीको अभाव नै छ तापनि कर्णाली प्रदेशमा खस राजाको आधिपत्य रहनुभन्दा पहिले यस बीचको समयमा केन्द्र अन्तर्गतका विषयाधिपतिद्वारा प्रशासन चलाइएको थियो भनी अनुमान गर्न गाह्रो पर्दैन।

कर्णाली प्रदेशमा नागराजले नयाँ राज्यको स्थापना गरेपछि मध्यकालको इतिहासमा नयाँ मोड आयो। यिनीपछिका जितारी मल्ल, आदित्य मल्ल आदि राजाहरूले आफ्ना पूर्वजले आर्ज्येको राज्यलाई विस्तार गरी एउटा विशाल राज्य नै खडा गर्न समर्थ भएका थिए। अभय मल्लको समयसम्म यो राज्य सैनिक, आर्थिक आदि दृष्टिले शक्तिशाली नै रहेको थियो। यिनको राज्यकालपछि खस राज्य टुक्रियो^८। फलतः यो विशाल राज्य बाइसी र चौबीसी राज्यहरूमा विभाजित भयो।

गण्डकी प्रदेशका चौबीसी राज्यमध्येको गुल्मी राज्यको स्थापनाकालबारेमा प्रकाश पर्ने धेरै कम सामग्री भएकोले गुल्मीका राजाको नाम र क्रम समेत राम्ररी प्रस्तुत गर्न गाह्रो भएको छ। गुल्मीसँग सम्बद्ध ऐतिहासिक सामग्रीहरूमध्ये सेन वंशावलीमा 'गुल्मी सेन वंश' भनी छुट्टै शीर्षक दिइएको छ^९ तापनि यसमा गुल्मीका राजाहरूको विवरण खुलेको छैन। यहाँ मुकुन्द सेन, महादत्त सेन, पृथ्वीपाल सेनका नामोल्लेख मात्र छ। यसबाट गुल्मी राज्यको संस्थापक तथा उनका वंशजहरूको बारेमा केही थाहा हुँदैन। एउटा पत्रमा^{१०} "..... वीर साहका सन्तानहरूले १३ पुस्तासम्म सो राज्य गरेपछि गोर्षा सर्कार वेकाम्मे भैबकस्याको हो....." भन्ने वाक्यांश परेकोले गुल्मी राज्यको संस्थापक वीर शाह थिए भन्ने बुझिन्छ। चौबीसी राज्यमध्ये धेरैजसो राज्यहरूमा तेह अर्थात् चौध पुस्तासम्मका राजाहरूले राज्य चलाएको कुरा विभिन्न वंशावलीबाट स्पष्ट हुन्छ। यी कुराहरूलाई विचार गर्दा वीर शाहलाई नै गुल्मीका प्रथम राजा मान्न उचित देखिन आउँछ। एकजना राजालाई साधारणतः २५ वर्षको शासनकाल छुट्याउने इतिहासकारहरूको चलन अनुसार १४ पुस्तालाई (१४x२५=३५०) ३५० वर्ष जति हुन आउँछ। यसैगरी वि.सं. १८४३ मा गुल्मी राज्य नेपाल अधिराज्यमा गाभिन आएकोले यसको स्थापना (१८४३-३५०=१४९३) वि.सं. १४९३ तिर भएको देखिन्छ। यसरी इ. सं. १४०० देखि १५०० सम्ममा गुल्मी आदि केही राज्यहरूको स्थापना भएको थियो भन्ने बाबुराम आचार्यज्यूको अनुमान^{११} मिल्दो देखिन आएको छ।

गुल्मी राजाहरूको बारेमा केही लेख्नुभन्दा पहिले यिनीहरूको वंशावारे चर्चा गर्नु उचित देखिन्छ। गुल्मीमा कालामकवानी वंशले शासन चलाएका थिए भनिन्छ^{१२}। यस बारेमा सेन वंशावलीमै गुल्मीका राजाहरूलाई कतै 'सेन' र कतै 'शाह' भनिएको पाइन्छ। अर्कातिर तात्कालिक सामग्रीहरूमा राजाहरूले आफूलाई सेन नभनी शाह मात्र लेखेका छन्^{१३}। कालीगण्डकीको पूर्वी भेकमा शाह राजाहरूले स्वतन्त्र राज्य स्थापना गरेका थिए। यिनीहरू आठ टीका शाह राजा कहलाएका थिए। तर गुल्मीका शाह राजाहरू भने आठ टीकाभिन्न परेको पाइँदैन। अर्को विचारणीय कुरो, गुल्मीका राजाहरूले आठ टीका शाह राजाहरूले भन्दा बेग्लै प्रकारको प्रशस्ति चलाएका थिए। अहिलेसम्म प्राप्त भएका तात्कालिक ऐतिहासिक सामग्रीहरूमध्ये वि. सं. १७०३ को अभिलेखमा राजा शाही शाहीले आफूलाई 'श्रीमहाराज' लेखेका छन्^{१४} भने अर्का राजा कीर्तिकल्याण शाहले 'स्वस्ति श्रीमहाराजाधिराज श्री श्री श्री मत्कीर्तिकल्याण शाह देवानां सदा समर विजयिनां' लेखेका छन्^{१५}। तर यसै वंशका अर्का राजाले भने 'स्वस्ति श्री रूपनारायणेत्यादि विविध विरूदावली विराजमान मानोन्नत श्रीमहाराजाधिराज श्री श्री श्री मत्सत्यधन शाह देवानां सदा समर विजयिनाम्' लेखेका छन्^{१६}। यसैगरी गुल्मीका अन्तिम राजा शिव नारायण शाह र उनका वंशजहरूले पनि यस्तै प्रशस्तिको अनुकरण गरेका छन्^{१७}। यो प्रशस्ति शाह राजाहरूले लेख्ने प्रशस्तिभन्दा फरक छ र यो सेन राजाहरूको प्रशस्तिसँग बढी मिल्छ।

पाल्पाका प्रसिद्ध राजा मुकुन्द सेनले (वि.सं. १५७५-१६१०) राज्य विस्तार गर्दा पश्चिमोत्तरमा पर्ने गुल्मी, अर्घा, खाँची, आदि राज्य पनि कब्जाए। र गुल्मीमा यिनले आफ्नी कान्छी आमापट्टिका भाइहरू उग्र सेन, र पूर्ण सेनलाई राजा बनाए भनिन्छ।^{१८} यसबारेमा पनि निश्चित गर्न गाह्रो छ तापनि गुल्मीका राजाहरूको सेनहरूसँग निकटतम सम्बन्ध रहेको थियो। यसैले यिनीहरूलाई कालामकवानी वंशका थिए भनी अनुमान गरिएको बुझिन्छ।

अब यहाँ सर्वेक्षणमा प्राप्त सामग्रीको आधारमा गुल्मी राजाहरूबारे केही लेखिन्छ।

वीर शाह :

वीर शाह गुल्मीका पहिलो प्रामाणिक राजा देखिन्छन्। यिनको शासनकाल वि. सं. १४९३ तिरदेखि शुरू भएको अनुमानित हुन्छ। यिनको बारेमा प्रकाश पर्ने सामग्रीको धेरै अभाव छ। एउटा पत्रमा^{१९} यिनले रेसुङ्गामा गुल्मी रजस्थल चार पांलाकागौपालनकालागि सौविर्ता दिएको कुरो परेको छ। यसबाट यिनको धार्मिक प्रवृत्तिबारे पनि केही स्पष्ट हुन्छ। यस स्थलमा गाईवस्तु पाल्ने काम केही वर्षअघिसम्म पनि थियो। त्यसलाई सम्झाउने गोठका अवशेष अझै देख्न पाइन्छ।

वंशावली अनुसार वीर शाहपछि रुद्र शाह र कीर्ति शाह क्रमशः राजा भए^{२०}। यिनीहरूको बारेमा कतै केही थाहा पाइएको छैन।

शाही शाही :

कीर्ति शाह पछि बीचका केही पुस्ता छोडी शाही शाही राजा भएका थिए। वि.सं. १७०३ मा राजा शाही शाहीले गुल्मीमा एक दरबार बनाउन लाइराखेको अभिलेख^{२१} सानो भए पनि गुल्मीको इतिहासमा निकै प्रकाश पार्ने खालको छ। यस अभिलेखबाट त्यसताका राजा शाही शाही थिए भन्ने कुरो निश्चित भएको छ। साथै सो दरबार बनाउने मुख्य कालिगढ विनयसिं थिए भन्ने कुरो पनि यसैमा 'विनयसिंह शिल्पिना कृतं गृहमिदं' भन्ने कुँदिएबाट स्पष्ट हुन्छ। यो दरबार भग्न भएपछि यही दरबारका ईटा, ढुङ्गा, काठको सदुपयोग गरी जीर्णोद्धार गरियो। पछि २०२६ आश्विन १२ गतेको दिन फेरि जीर्णोद्धार भएको कुरो अर्को काष्ठ पत्रमा कुँदिएको छ। हाल सो भवनमा श्री ईश्वरी निम्न माध्यमिक विद्यालय सञ्चालन भइरहेको छ।

राजदरबार प्रशासनिक दृष्टिले केन्द्र रूपको हुने हुँदा यस्ता दरबारको निर्माण गर्दा सुरक्षालाई प्राथमिकता दिइन्थ्यो^{२२}। गुल्मीको यो दरबार सामरिक दृष्टिले महत्त्वपूर्ण स्थलमा निर्माण गरिएको थियो। यस दरबारको चारैतिर अर्वाथोक, मुसीथोक, गलमथोक, पाल्पाथोक रहेका छन्। यी चार थोक चारतर्फ भएकाले पनि गुल्मी दरबार निकै सुरक्षित रहेको थियो।

उपर्युक्त अभिलेखबाट त्यसताकाका वास्तुकला, मूर्तिकला आदिवारे विवेचना गर्न निकै मद्दत मिलेको छ। ईटा, ढुङ्गा, काठ आदिको प्रयोग गरी भवन, मन्दिर बनाउने शैली नेपालको पहाडी भेकमा प्रचलित थियो। गुल्मीको यो दरबार पनि यही शैलीमा निर्माण गरिएको थियो। यस दरबारको मूल ढोका काठको बनेको थियो। यस ढोकामा विभिन्न बुढाहरू कुँदिनाको साथै माथिल्लो भागको बीचमा गणेश-मूर्ति पनि कुँदिएको छ। हालको मूल ढोकाको दायाँ बायाँ पट्टिका झ्यालहरू पनि बुढेदार छन्। यस दरबारको अगाडिपट्टिका भित्तामा लहरै काठका विभिन्न देवदेवीका मूर्तिहरू रहेका छन्। यी मूर्तिका तल्लो भागमा कामकला सम्बन्धी चित्र पनि कुँदिएका छन्। यी मूर्तिहरू सो दरबारमा रहेको नभई कुनै देव मन्दिर भग्न भएपछि त्यहाँबाटल्याइएका टुँडाल यी हुन् कि भन्ने अनुमान हुन्छ।

यस दरबारको माथिल्लो तलामा ढलोटको भगवती-मूर्ति रहेको छ। सो मूर्ति पछिमात्र स्थापना गरिएको हो; पुरानो मूर्ति नरहेको कुरा पुजारीबाट थाहा भएको छ। यसबाहेक यहाँ तोपका ताला, भरुवा बन्दूक, तरवार, हुक्का आदि वस्तु रहेका छन्। यिनमा हुक्का निकै कलात्मक रहेको छ।

यस दरबार क्षेत्रमा पानीको अभाव रहेको थियो। चौथाइ मील जति टाढा गएपछि मात्र यो अभावको पूर्ति हुन्थ्यो²³। पँधेराको पानी सुक्न नपाओस् भनी पँधेरा वरपरका जङ्गल मास्न नपाइने व्यवस्था तात्कालिक राजाहरूले मिलाएका थिए। गलमथोकका वेदपानी र अर्वाथोकका चिडीया पँधेराहरूको सम्बार पछिसम्म पनि गर्दै आएको कुरा ऐतिहासिक सामग्रीले बताउँछ²⁴। यहाँ अद्यापि पानीको अभाव छ।

गुल्मी दरबारको उत्तरपट्टिसँगै एक विशाल शिवालय रहेको छ। हालै जीर्णोद्धार गरिएको सो शिवकी मन्दिरमा शिव-लिङ्ग बाहेक काली र भीमसेनका शिला-मूर्ति रहेका छन्। यहाँ रहेका पूजा-सामग्रीमध्ये धातुको एउटा पानसमा ने. सं. ८२४ (वि. सं. १७६०) को अभिलेख कुँदिएको छ²⁵। यो अभिलेख नेवारी लिपि र नेवारी भाषामा छ। यो पानस चिकुटीद्वारा आगमजुलाई चढाइएको हो। यसबाट एउटा कुरो के बुझिन्छ भने यहाँ आगमजुको बेग्लै मन्दिर पनि रहेको थियो। सो मन्दिर भग्न भएपछि त्यस मन्दिरका सामग्री यस मन्दिरमा ल्याएको अनुमान गर्न सकिन्छ। अर्को कुरो, नेपालको एकीकरण हुनुभन्दा पहिला नै केही नेवारहरू पश्चिमतर्फ लागेको कुरो यस अभिलेखबाट स्पष्ट हुन्छ। यसबाहेक यसताकाका अरू केही अभिलेख प्यूठानमा पाइएका हुँदा यसबारे अझ बढी स्पष्ट हुन्छ²⁶।

कीर्तिकल्याण शाह :

कीर्तिकल्याण शाह गुल्मीका अर्का राजा थिए। यिनले जारी गरेको ताम्रपत्रमा²⁷ तिथिमिति नदिइएको हुँदा यिनको राज्यकाल निश्चितगर्न गाह्रो भएको छ। यसर्थ यस ताम्रपत्रमा प्रयोग गरिएको लिपि, भाषा आदिको आधारमा यिनलाई यो क्रममा राखिएको छ।

कीर्तिकल्याण शाहले यस अभिलेखमा 'श्रीमहाराजाधिराज' मात्र लेखेका छन्। त्यसताका राजाहरू पूरा प्रशस्ति नदिई यसरी पनि ताम्रपत्र, लालमोहर जारी गर्दथे। यहाँ कीर्तिकल्याण शाहले लिहिद्वै खत्रीलाई पाल्हीअ(?) र घर विर्ता दिएको कुरो परेको छ। यसमा विर्ता बेचन नपाउने बन्देज राखिनुको साथै अपुताली, जारी आदिमा रकम तिर्न नपने सुविधा पनि दिलाइएको छ। यी खत्रीले गुल्मी र जस्थल नजीकै पर्ने धर्मपानी भन्ने स्थानमा पौवा गुठी राखेका थिए²⁸। यस किसिमको गुठीमा कुनै रकम तिर्न नपने व्यवस्था थियो। वि.सं. १९१६ सम्म पनि यसमा कर माफी भएको थियो²⁹। यसरी विर्ता पाउने लिहिद्वै खत्रीको परिचय प्राप्त भएको छैन तर यिनी गुल्मीका राजा शिवनारायण शाहताकाका प्रसिद्ध शशिधर खत्रीका पूर्वज भएको बुझिएको छ। यिनका वंशजहरू सैनिक सेवामा संलग्न थिए।

कीर्तिकल्याण शाह वैष्णव धर्ममा श्रद्धा राख्दथे। कृष्ण गण्डकीको प्रवाह सँगसँगै वैष्णव सम्प्रदायको लहर चलेको थियो³⁰। यस नदीका निकटवर्ती राज्य पर्वत, पाल्पा आदिका राजाहरू वैष्णव सम्प्रदायका राम र कृष्णका भक्त देखिएका छन्। कीर्तिकल्याण शाहले गरिदिएको ताम्रपत्रको शिरोभागमा 'श्रीराम' कुँदिएकोले वैष्णव सम्प्रदाय अन्तर्गतका 'राम' का भक्त यिनी थिए भन्ने कुरो सिद्ध हुन्छ।

सत्यधन शाह :

राजा सत्यधन शाह गुल्मीका अर्का राजा थिए। यिनका वि.सं. १८०६ र १८०८ का दुई पत्रहरू पाइएका छन्³¹।

सत्यधन शाहका यी दुई रजबन्धक पत्रहरूबाट गुल्मी राज्यको तात्कालिक आर्थिक इतिहासमा केही प्रकाश पर्दछ। त्यसताका राजाहरूले आवश्यकता परे, जनतासँग व्याज तिर्ने गरी ऋण लिने, जग्गा बिक्री गर्ने तथा बन्धकी राख्ने प्रथा चलेको थियो। सत्यधन शाहले जग्गा बन्धक राखी रूपियाँ लिएको उदाहरण उपर्युक्त पत्रहरूमा रहेको छ। तात्कालिक राजाहरूले गरिदिएको रजबन्धकबारे जानकारी दिने अरू पत्रहरू पनि प्राप्त भएका छन्³²। यो प्रथा पर्वत, पाल्पा, तनहुँ आदि राज्यहरूमा पनि रहेको थियो।

शिवनारायण शाह :

शिवनारायण शाह वीर शाहको वंशजमा चौधौँ तथा अन्तिम राजा थिए। यिनको वि.सं. १८४२ को एउटा पत्र पाइएको छ³³।

गुल्मी राज्यको छिमेकी राज्यहरूसँगको सम्बन्ध र राजनैतिक गठबन्धनबारे प्रकाश पार्ने ऐतिहासिक सामग्रीको अभाव छ तापनि अरू राजाहरूको पालाको तुलनामा शिवनारायण शाहताका केही बढी पाइने हुँदा यी सामग्रीको आधारमा तात्कालिक राजनैतिक गतिविधिबारे प्रकाश पार्न यहाँ प्रयास गरिएको छ।

गुल्मीमा शिवनारायण शाह राजा रहेताका छिमेकी राज्य पर्वतमा कीर्तिबममल्ल राजा थिए। यिनी चौबीसी राज्यमध्येका एक शक्तिशाली राजा थिए। यिनले गोरखाका राजा श्री ५ पृथ्वीनारायण शाहको एकीकरण अभियानलाई असफल पार्न निकै प्रयत्न गरेका थिए³⁴।

यता श्री ५ पृथ्वीनारायण शाहले नेपालको एकीकरण गर्ने उद्देश्यले नेपाल-उपत्यकामाथि विजय गर्न उपत्यका वरपरका प्रदेश कज्याई आर्थिक नाकाबन्दी गर्न सफलता प्राप्त गर्दै थिए। यिनी चौबीसी राज्य जित्नका लागि पश्चिममा सल्यान, जाजरकोट, आदि बाइसी राज्यहरूसँग सम्बन्ध जोड्न सफल भएका थिए। यिनले चौबीसी राज्यहरूमध्ये केहीलाई हात लिई तथा फुटाई विजय गर्ने (Divide and Rule) नीति लिएका थिए। यसका लागि यिनले विभिन्न अधिकारीहरूलाई त्यसतर्फ दूतस्वरूप पठाएका थिए। वि.सं. १८२२ मा श्री ५ पृथ्वीनारायण शाहले रामकृष्ण कुँवरलाई लेखेको एउटा पत्रमा³⁵ ".....पाल्पाको फौज पनि उठ्यो भनी विन्ति गरी पठायाछौं त्यो फौजले गुल्मी हान्यो कि कसो हो बुझी विन्ति गरी पठाउ....." वाक्यांश परेको छ³⁵। यसबाट गुल्मी र पाल्पाको सम्बन्ध राम्रो थिएन भन्ने बुझिन्छ। यसताका पाल्पामा मुकुन्द सेन द्वितीय राजा थिए। श्री ५ पृथ्वीनारायण शाहले कालु पाण्डेलाई लेखेको वि.सं. १८२७ का अरू पत्रहरू चौबीसी राज्यमध्ये गुल्मी, तनहुँ आदि राज्यहरू बीच राम्रो सम्बन्ध नभएको बुझिन्छ³⁶। गोरखाले गुल्मी, प्यूठानलाई आफ्नो पक्षमा मिलाउन लागेको संकेत पनि यी पत्रहरूबाट पाइन्छ। तर गोरखाली फौजले गरहुँ दखल गरेपछि गरहुँका बालक राजालाई गुल्मीले शरण दिएकाले गुल्मी र गोरखाको सम्बन्ध बिग्रँदै गएको बुझिन्छ।

वि. सं. १८२८ देखि १८४० सम्मको गुल्मी राज्यको राजनैतिक गतिविधिवारे थाहा हुँदैन। तर श्री ५ पृथ्वीनारायण शाह सतहुँको हारपछि चौबीसी राज्यमध्ये पर्वत, गलकोट, प्यूठान आदि राज्यलाई लाषविसी दिई आफ्नो पक्षमा मिलाउने प्रयासमा लागेका थिए। साथै शत्रु राज्यका प्रभावशाली धनीमानी व्यक्तित्वहरूलाई प्रलोभन देखाई ती राज्यको रहस्य थाहा पाउने कार्यमा श्री ५ पृथ्वीनारायण शाहलाई केही सफलता मिलेको थियो। यसर्थ यिनी पछिका राजा श्री ५ रणबहादुर शाहका पालामा नायब राजेन्द्र लक्ष्मीले पनि उही नीतिको अनुसरण गरेकी थिइन्। यिनलाई गुल्मीका प्रभावशाली व्यक्तित्वहरूमध्ये शशिधर खत्रीलाई आफ्नो पक्षमा मिलाउन निकै सफलता मिलेको देखिन्छ। शशिधरलाई लेखिएको वि. सं. १८४१ को एउटा पत्रमा^{३७} ".....तिमी भन्याका हाम्रा सेवक हौं हिजो भरभारा पनि गरिआयो आज पनि गोर्खा गुल्मी एक रहन्या अर्थ गर तुम्रो सेवा हामीले देखेका छौं....." भन्ने वाक्यांशबाट शशिधर खत्रीलाई आफ्ना पक्षमा लिई गुल्मी लिने दाउ रचिएको स्पष्ट हुन्छ। वि. सं. १८४२ को अर्को पत्रमा^{३८} ".....ताहाँवसी सेवा गन्याको र इहा आइ सेवा गन्याको एकै हो सेवा हामीले देखेका छौं तहाँ अनकृपा भन्याका दिन पालना गर्ना हामी छौं....." भनी शशिधरलाई आश्वासन दिइएको छ। यी कुराहरूबाट गुल्मीको अवस्था कमजोर हुँदै गएको संकेत मिलेको छ।

गुल्मीले गोरखाको हतियार बनी खाँचीमाथि आक्रमण गरी गोरखाको पक्ष लिएको थियो। गुल्मी राज्यको गोरखा समर्थक प्यूठान, सल्यानसँग पनि साँठगाँठ थियो। यी राज्यहरू खाँची तथा पर्वतमाथि हमला गर्न सहमत थिए भन्ने कुरो वि. सं. १८४२ को पत्रबाट^{३९} स्पष्ट हुन्छ। वास्तवमा चौबीसी राज्यहरूबीच मेलमिलापको कमी थियो। आफ्नो स्वार्थ पूर्तिका लागि एक राज्यले अर्को राज्यको विरुद्ध अर्कोलाई गुहार दिने चलन थियो^{४०}। यिनीहरूमा टाढासम्म हेर्ने क्षमताको कमी थियो। अर्कोतिर वि. सं. १८४२ सम्ममा काली गण्डकी पूर्वका चौबीसी प्रदेश नेपाल अधिराज्यमा गाभिसकेको थियो^{४१}। अब पर्वत र पाल्पा दुई शक्तिशाली राज्य मात्र बाँकी थिए। यिनमा पनि नायब राजेन्द्र लक्ष्मी देवीको मृत्युपश्चात् बहादुर शाहले पाल्पासँग वैवाहिक सम्बन्ध जोडेपछि गोरखाको टक्कर लिनसक्ने पर्वत एकलो थियो। यस मौकामा गुल्मीमाथि आक्रमण गर्ने तयारी भयो। त्यसताका ठूलठूला कार्य गर्न साइत ज्योतिषी लक्ष्मीपति घण्डेले हेरे। "गुल्मीको भूमि युद्धले अघायाको छैन, आषाढ २२ दिन जादासम्म त युद्धको इच्छा एस भूमिलाई छ" भनी यिनले भविष्यवाणी गरे^{४२}। तर काजी जीव शाहले नेतृत्व गरेको गोरखाली फौजले वि. सं. १८४३ ज्येष्ठ १० गते नै गुल्मी विना लडाजी विजय गर्‍यो^{४३}। यसपछि गुल्मी रजस्थल वरपरका अर्जुङ्गा, रेसुङ्गा, सल्यानथोक, चन्द्रकोट, आदि प्रदेश नेपाल अधिराज्यमा गाभिए। वास्तवमा गुल्मीमा गोरखाली फौजसँग त्यतिका दिनसम्म लड्ने क्षमता पनि थिएन। नत्र राजा शिव नारायण शाहले गोरखाली फौज काली तरेपछि नै रामनगरतर्फ भाग्नपर्ने अवस्था आउने थिएन। यसरी वीर शाहको वंशको राज्य केही समयका लागि गुम्यो।

महादत्त सेन :

गुल्मीमा अब सेन वंशका पाल्पाका राजा महादत्त सेनले राज्य चलाउन थाले। यिनको राज्यकाल वि. सं. १८३७ देखि १८५० सम्म रहेको कुरो सर्वेक्षणमा प्राप्त तात्कालिक पत्रहरूबाट थाहा हुन्छ^{४४}। यिनले आफ्ना ज्वाईं गोरखाका राजकुमार बहादुर शाहबाट चौबीसी आदि राज्य विजय गर्न सहयोग दिए बापत पुरस्कारस्वरूप गुल्मी अर्घाखाँची राज्यहरू र केही हात्ती घोडा नगद पाएका थिए^{४५}। महादत्त सेनले वि. सं. १८४४ मा 'श्रीनगर' को निर्माण गरी महत्त्वपूर्ण कार्य गरेका थिए^{४६}। यिनी नेपालको आश्रित राजाका रूपमा रहेका थिए।

महादत्त सेनकै शासनकालमा अर्थात् वि.सं. १८४६ मा गुल्मीकी राजकुमारी राजराजेश्वरीसँग श्री ५ रणबहादुर शाहको विवाह भएको थियो⁴⁷। यी राजकुमारी शिवनारायण शाहकी नातिनी थिइन्। बडामहारानी राजराजेश्वरी देवीलाई वि.सं. १८५५ मा नायबी चलाउने अधिकार सुम्पिएको थियो⁴⁸। पतिव्रता राजराजेश्वरीले यस समयमा निकै कष्ट भोग्न परेको थियो। यिनी वि.सं. १८६३ वैशाख १५ गते श्री ५ रणबहादुर शाहको हत्या भएपछि हेलम्बुबाट आई सती गइन्⁴⁹। यी कुरारूबाट नेपालको राजनैतिक इतिहासमा राजराजेश्वरीको देन महत्त्वपूर्ण रहेको देखिन्छ।

पृथ्वीपाल सेन :

महादत्त सेनपछि उनका छोरा पृथ्वीपाल सेन राजा भए। यिनले गुल्मी, अर्घा, खाँची राज्यहरूमा पनि शासन चलाउँदै थिए। यिनको समय प्राप्त ऐतिहासिक सामग्रीको आधारमा वि. सं. १८५१ देखि शुरू भएको देखिन्छ⁵⁰।

यसताका नेपालका राजा श्री ५ रणबहादुर शाह थिए। यिनले काका राजकुमार बहादुर शाहबाट राजकाज लिनासाथ गुल्मी राज्य पृथ्वीपाल सेनबाट खोसी आफ्ना जेठान सिद्धिप्रताप शाहलाई सुम्पेका थिए⁵¹। यस घटनापछि नेपाल र पाल्पा बीच रहेको सम्बन्ध बिग्रन थालेको थियो।

गुल्मी राज्य सिद्धिप्रताप शाहलाई फिर्ता दिइए पनि अर्घा राज्यमा भने पृथ्वीपाल सेनकै आधिपत्य रहेको थियो। यो कुरो हालै अर्घाखाँचीको सर्वेक्षण क्रममा प्राप्त वि. सं. १८५७ को ताम्रपत्राभिलेखमा⁵² पृथ्वीपाल सेनले नयनसिंहद्वारा स्थापना गरिएको गौरी शङ्करको पूजाका लागि राखिदिएको व्यहोराबाट स्पष्ट हुन्छ।

सिद्धिप्रताप शाह :

वीर शाहका वंशज सिद्धि प्रताप शाहको हातमा एकपल्ट फेरि राज्याधिकार आयो। यिनी गुल्मीका अन्तिम राजा शिवनारायण शाहका छोरा थिए। यिनले वि. सं. १८५४ मा आफ्ना पिताले गरिदिएको बाँधा सम्बन्धी पत्रलाई थमौती गरिदिएको पत्र पाइएको छ⁵³। यसबाट उपरोक्त कुरोको पुष्टि हुन्छ। गुल्मी राज्य Vassal State को रूपमा रहेको थियो⁵⁴। सिद्धिप्रताप शाहको मृत्यु वि.सं. १८९२ मा भएको थियो⁵⁵।

शक्तिप्रचण्ड शाह:

सिद्धिप्रताप शाहपछि शक्ति प्रचण्ड शाह राजा भए। यिनले वि. सं. १८७२ मा श्री महाकालीलाई चढाएको गुठी सम्बन्धी एउटा पत्रबाट⁵⁶ उपरोक्त कुरोको पुष्टि हुन्छ। यिनले सिद्धिप्रतापको मृत्युभन्दा पहिले नै राज्याधिकार पाएका थिए भन्ने देखिन्छ। यिनको बारेमा अरु प्रकाशमा आएको छैन। यसरी यिनका वंशजहरू पनि राजा रजौटा उन्मूलन नहुञ्जेलसम्म गुल्मीका राजा रहेका थिए भन्ने बुझिन्छ।

गुल्मीका ऐतिहासिक सामग्री

(१)

दरबारको काष्ठअभिलेख

गुल्मी रजस्थलस्थित दरबारको अगाडिपट्टि रहेको निदालमा यो अभिलेख कुँदिएको छ। यहाँ वि. सं. १७०३ दिइएको छ।

१. श्री शाकेवसुन्मवाणशशाके श्रीसंवत् १७०३ समये आषाढ सुदि ३ श्रीमहाराजाधिराज श्रीमत्साही माहि देवानां

२. विनयामिह शिल्पनां कृतं गृहमिदं

(२)

सं. पानसको अभिलेख

गुल्मी दरबारसँगै पश्चिमपट्टि शिवको एउटा सानो मन्दिर रहेको छ। सो मन्दिरमा रहेका पूजा-सामग्रीमध्ये धातुको एउटा पानसमा यो अभिलेख कुँदिएको छ। यहाँ ने. सं. ८२४ (वि.सं. १७६०) दिइएको छ।

१. संमत ८२४ श्री ३ आगमजु प्रितिन चिकृतिन दुता।।

(३)

कीर्तिकल्याण शाहको अभिलेख

गुल्मी खरजुड निवासी श्री नेगुबहादुर टण्डनसँग रहेको ताम्रपत्रमा यो अभिलेख कुँदिएको छ। यसमा तिथिमिति दिइएको छैन।

श्री राम

१. स्वस्ति श्रीमहाराजधिराज
२. श्रीश्रीश्रीमत्कीर्ति कल्याण सा-
३. ह देवानां सदा (स)मर विजइनां लि-
४. हिद्रे षत्रिकन पालिहअ वनाइ
५. टोलाको घर दुइ थुक विर्ति दि-
६. ज्ञां वेचिना नाहि षत्रिको डंड
७. अपुतालि जारी नास्ति साछि

छेउमा -

कृता श्रीमनि महत

लोकमनि राउत

(४)

१. स्वस्ति श्रीरूपनारायणेत्यादि विविध विरूदावली विराजमान मानोन्नत
२. श्रीमहाराजधिराज श्रीश्रीश्रीमत्सत्यधन साह देवानां सदा समर विजयिं
३. नां लिषितम्
४. उप्रांत सिरपति पाध्यालाई तगुवाको षेत असिमुरि वाधा दिया तस्को मोल रू-
५. पैया सोह्र बिस चार अंकेपि ३२४ रूपैयां दियाका दिन मुक्त कर्ता
६. रणविर साहि साछि धन्नाम वस्न्यात् उमरा पर्वल कवर दिसालि धनपति
७. एति साक्षि शाके १६७१ कार्तिक वदि ७ रोज शनि मुकाम गुल्मी शुभं
छेउमा - लिषक साछि पंडित नित्यानन्द
(गुल्मी, तमघासका पं. श्रीपरशुराम पन्थीसँग यसको सक्कल पत्र रहेको छ)

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श्री

१. स्वस्ति श्रीरूपनारायणेत्यादि विविध विरूदावली विराजमान मानोन्नत श्रीमा-
२. हाराज श्रीश्रीश्रीसत्यधन साह देवानां सदा समर विजइनाम लि-
३. षितम्
४. उप्रान्त षल्या पाडेलाई षेत वाधा दिया वाहुल्या ४० मुरी चालिस मुरी मन्य थापा-
५. को षड्लु तस्को मोल रूपैया सात वीस अंकेपि १४० रूपैया दियाका दिन मु-
६. क्त कर्ता रणवीर साही साछि जसै षत्री मनश्राम षत्री मनिकठ थापा भु-
७. जिवलन साहु दिसालि मधै षत्री श्रीशाके १६७३ जेष्ठ वदी ११ रोज शुक्र मु-
८. काम गुल्मि शुभं
छेउमा - लिषक पंडित नित्यानन्द
(तमघासका पं. श्री परशुराम पन्थीसँग यसको सक्कलपत्र रहेको छ।)

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श्री

- स्वस्ति श्रीरूपनारायणेत्यादि विविध विरूदावली विराजमान मानोन्नत श्रीमन्महाराजाधिराज श्रीश्रीश्रीशिवनारायण शाह देवानां सदा समर विजयिनाम् लि. उप्रांत गिदुवा माधौ पाँडेलाई सौ रूपियांको वाध्रा
- महाराजाले बक्सनुभयो अंकेपि १०० तस्को साध उभो गिदुवामाथिको नागी उधो गण्डकी पश्चिम पधेरा खोलो पूर्व डिहिंग्याका वितदिख उभो डिहीं षोला कर्ता वीरनारायण शाह साक्षी शशिधर खत्री भागीराम खत्री मिति कार्तिक वदी १२ रोज ७ मुकाम गुल्मी शुभम् शाके १७०७
- छेउमा - रूपिया दिया मुक्त लिषक हेमन्त शुभम्
(म्याङ्जा, वीरघाका श्री दीन दयाल पाण्डेसँग रहेको नकलपत्रबाट यो यहाँ दिइएको छ।)

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श्री

श्रीशक्तिसहाये

स्वस्ति श्रीरूपनारायणेत्यादि विविध विरूदावली विराजमान मानोन्नत श्रीमन्महाराजधिराज श्रीश्रीश्रीमत्सिद्धिप्रताप साह देवानाम् सदा समर विजयिनाम् लि. उप्रांत गंगाधर जैशीलाई श्री ५ वावाज्यूले पुगलीपुरको वनवुटा निजसंगको रूपैया ३०२ मध्ये बाधा बक्सनुभयाको रहेछ त्यो बमोजिम हामीले थाभिवक्सौं आफनु बाधा जानी भोग्य गर पूर्व साधका अर्थपूर्व पहरो दछिन रिडी षोलो पश्चिम छनी उस्योलो आरदोगाम डांडोको वानो चाकिंल्लाभिन्न बाधा जानी भोग्ये गर रूपयाँ दिया जंगगा मुक्त कर्ता वीरनारायण साही साक्षी छाप घर सेवक अमर पुरोहित धुंडीराज थम्बै षवास इति सम्बत १८५४ साल पौष सुदी ३ रोज ५ मुकाम गुल्मी शुभम्

(माल कार्यालय गुल्मीमा रहेको नकल पत्रबाट यो यहाँ दिइएको छ।)

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श्री

स्वस्ति श्रीरूपनारायणेत्यादि विविध विरूदावली विराजमान मानोन्नत श्रीमन्महाराजाधिराज श्रीश्रीश्री शक्तिप्रचण्ड साह देवानाम् सदा समर विजयिनाम् आग्ये गुल्मी गोर्मुनिया भेद पर्दा आमदानी मोहरू रूपैया ३०० के सवाई वट्टाले चलनी रूपैया ३७५ दछिना चानचुन पैसा रूपैया ८ जमा रूपैया ३८३ मध्ये चलनी रूपैया २०० भागीरथ आचारजलाई गयो बांकी रूपैया १८३ भैरव गिरीलाई रह्यो इनी रूपैयाको वंधक उत्तर षानी जान्या बाटो साध थोग्याली मुषिया विरस्पतिको षेत मनिको दुम्कीलोभिन्न वेलतारी ३५ मुरी वाहेक पूर्व चुन दुंगो दक्षिन सतिघाट पश्चिम गलफुल्या वट्टार इ चार किलाभिन्न १८३ रूपैया दवारमा राषी श्री ५ महाकाली पूति वंधक गरिदिज्युं कर अकरमा फर्फिरता वेपारी भिक्षु संतधारि मेटि मुर्दावली धुपदीप अक्षेता महौटी षेत मुरि २० के कुत मुरि छ खरको कुस अर्पनमाथि लोभानी पापानी दावा धक्का जस्ले गर्ला नहकमा पनि पर्ला यति गुठि दिज्युं पुण्य श्री ५ महाराज साछि काजि नरभूपाल श्रीसर्दार उमराउ गिरी तुरूवा मिझार लेषक साछि छापदार तांसेन ढोकामा जउन् मालिक होला नजर गराइ ज्या कुराले हुंछ श्री ५ महाकाली पुण्य इति सम्बत् १८७२ साल वैसाष वदि ८ रोज ३ शुभम्

(माल कार्यालय, गुल्मीमा रहेको नकलपत्रबाट यो यहाँ दिइएको छ।)

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श्री

१. स्वस्ति श्री जनरल भीमसेन थापाकस्य रूक्का
२. आगे गुल्मीमा सालवसाल रकम उठाउन जान्या जन रक-
३. मि गैहके ज्यथोचित उप्रान्त गुल्मीका राजाका
४. पूर्णा छेउ जमादार पर्सुराम षतुका पुर्षा लाहरि
५. षत्रीले पाषो विर्ता पाइ धमपानीमा पौवा गुठि
६. राष्यामा आजतक् रकम केहि लाग्या-
७. को रहेन छ आज गोर्धुवा देउभनी टंटा ग-

८. न्याछौं र जमादार पर्सुराम षत्तु यहाँ कराउन
९. आया तस अर्थ अधिदेषि केहि रकम क-
१०. लम नलाग्याको भया आज टटा नगर छा-
११. डि देउ इति सम्बत् १८८३ साल मिति मार्ग
१२. सुदि १५ रोज ५ शुभम्
(गुल्मी, खरजुङ्का श्री नेगुबहादुर टण्डनसँग यसको सकल पत्र रहेको छ।)

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१. स्वस्ति श्रीगिरिराज चकचूडामणि नरनारायणेत्यादि विविध विरूदावली
२. विराजमान मानोन्नत श्रीमन्महाराजाधिराज श्रीश्रीश्रीमहाराज राजेन्द्र
३. विक्रम साह बहादुर सम्सेर जंग देवानां सदा समर विजइनाम्
४. आगे महादेव पाँडे महेस्वर पाँडेके अधि गुल्मीका राजा तषतमा छुँदै ति-
५. भ्रा तगुवा षेत्र मध्येमा लियाका रूपैयाँ ३२४ औ बाहुल्या षेतमध्येमा
६. लियामा १४० ज्मा रूपैयाँ ४६४ चासय चौसट्टी रूपैयाँ लि माझ-
७. कोटका अम्बलमा तगुवा षेत मुरि ८० औ बाहुल्या षेतमुरि ४० ज्मा षेत
८. मुरि १२० बाधा दियाका रहेछ ६२ सालमा जांचकिहेरूले जाचि बुझि
९. चाहार दरको षेत ठहराइ अधि षायाका मोहोरमध्ये सहर षेत केहि नझि-
१०. कि अधिकै ४६४ रूपैयामध्ये थामिदियाको आजसम्म तिमीले षाई वि-
११. होरी आयाको बाधा माझकोटका अम्बलमा तगुवा षेत मुरि ८० तस्को
१२. साध पूर्व ८४ सालमा डंगोलले नापि कट्टि गन्याको रैकर षेतको साध द-
१३. क्षिण फुल्दि षोलो पश्चिम बस्यालको जवदि उत्तर षोलाको साध औ
१४. बाहुल्या-षेत मुरि ४० तसको सांध पूर्व वंजाराको जवदि दक्षिण रैकर पश्चि-
१५. म कुलो उत्तर जलविरका रूपको सांध इतिचार किल्लाभित्र ज्माषेत मु-
१६. रि २० तगुवा षेतमा वियाडका चार गहा समेत थामि बाधाको मोहोर
१७. गरिवकस्यौं आफना षातिर जामासंग बाधा जानि भोग्य गर जहिया दाम दे-
१८. व तहिया माटो लेव इति सम्बत् १८८९ साल मिति फागुण सुदि ३ रोज
१९. ६ शुभम्

मार्फत भीमसेनथापा
मार्फत् रणधोज साह
मार्फत् फत्तेजंग साह
मार्फत् रणजोर थापां

मार्फत् दलभंजन पाँडे
मार्फत् कुलमानसि वस्न्यात
मार्फत् उमाकान्त उपाध्या

(तमघासका श्री परशुराम पन्थीसँग यसको सकलपत्र रहेको छ।)

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स्वस्ति श्रीमद्विप्रचण्ड भूजदण्डेत्यादि श्रीश्रीश्रीमहाराजा जङ्गबहादुर राणाजी प्राइम मिनिष्टर याण्ड
कम्याण्डर इन् चिफकस्य रूक्का-

स्वस्ति श्रीमद्राजकुमार कुमारात्मज श्रीकम्याण्डर इन् चिफ जनरल कृष्ण बहादुर कुंवर राणाजीकस्य
पत्रम्

आगे गुल्मीका द्वाच्या मुषिया भला आदमी र सालवसाल रकम कलम उठाउन जान्या जन रकमी
गैहके यथोचित उप्रान्त हाम्रा पूर्षा लाहुरी षत्रीले गुल्मीका राजाबाट पाषा विर्ता पाइ धरमपानीमा घर र
पौवा गुठी राष्यामा आजतक् रकम कलम केही लाग्याको थियन आजकल रकम कलममा रकमीहरूले टंटा
गर्छन् भनी अधि भयाका सनद स्मेत देषाइ कम्याण्डर कर्णेल सनकर्सिह षत्रीले हाम्रा हजुरमा विन्ति पत्र
जाहेर भयो तसअर्थ अधिदेखि आजतक नलाग्याको जग्गामा रकम कलम देउ भनी टंटा नगर इति सम्बत्
१९१६ साल मिति आश्विन वदि ६ रोज १ शुभम्

(गुल्मी, खरजुङ्का श्री नेगुबहादुर टण्डनसंग रहेको नकलपत्रबाट यो यहाँ दिइएको छ।)



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1. योगी नरहरि नाथ (संपा), इतिहास प्रकाशना सन्धिपत्र संग्रह, भाग १ (वि. सं. २०२२) पृष्ठ ५९७
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9. शङ्करमान राजवंशी (संपा) सेन वंशावली, (काठमाडौं : श्री ५ को सरकार, वीर पुस्तकालय, २०२०) पृ. २८-३१
10. नरहरिनाथ, पूर्ववत् टिप्पणी, पृ. ५९७
11. बाबुराम आचार्य, श्री ५ बडामहाराजाधिराज पृथ्वीनारायण शाह, भाग १ (नेपाल : श्री ५ महाराजाधिराजका प्रेस सचिवालय, राजदरबार, २०२४) पृ. ४६
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13. ऐतिहासिक सामग्री १, ३, ४, ५ संख्या
14. ऐतिहासिक सामग्री १ संख्या
15. ऐतिहासिक सामग्री ३ संख्या
16. ऐतिहासिक सामग्री ४, ५ संख्या
17. ऐतिहासिक सामग्री ६, ७, ८ संख्या
18. राजवंशी, पूर्ववत् टिप्पणी ९, पृ. २८
19. नरहरिनाथ, पूर्ववत् टिप्पणी १, पृ. ५९७
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28. ऐतिहासिक सामग्री ९ संख्या
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बझाङ्गी राजा कल्याण सिंहको शाके १६५६ को ताम्रपत्र

राजाराम सुवेदी

बाइसी राज्यहरूमा गणना हुने बझाङ्ग राज्यमा पुराना कागतपत्रहरू तथा ताम्रपत्राभिलेख-हरू यत्रतत्र छरिएका रूपमा पाइन्छन्। तिनीहरू एकै ठाउँमा संग्रहित नभई विभिन्न ठाउँका विभिन्न मानिसहरूका घरमा सञ्चित भएका छन्। म त्यस राज्यमा २०३४ भाद्रदेखि २०३५ ज्येष्ठसम्म रा. वि. से. विद्यार्थीको रूपमा बस्ने अवसर पाएको थिएँ। मैले त्यस समयमा केही पुराना अभिलेखहरू पनि उतार्ने मौका पाएँ। त्यसै प्रसंगमा यो ताम्रपत्र पनि संकलन गरिएको छ। बझाङ्गका अन्य ताम्रपत्रहरू त प्रकाशित पनि भइसकेका छन्। जसमध्ये मुख्यतः शाके १२९४ को हरब्रह्म कुँवरको ताम्रपत्र^१, शाके १२९९ को राजा अभय मल्लको ताम्रपत्र^२, शाके १२९९ को राजा अभयमल्ले गरेको ताम्रपत्रलाई शाके १३१३ मा जसब्रह्मले उधार गरेको ताम्रपत्र^३, शाके १३१२ को राजा उदयसिंहको ताम्रपत्र^४, शाके १२३६ को डोटेली राजा रीपु मल्लको ताम्रपत्र^५, शाके १३६८ को डोटेली राजा कल्याण मल्लको ताम्रपत्र^६, शाके १३४० को शिरब्रह्म राउलोको ताम्रपत्र^७, शाके १४२० को भावसिंहको ताम्रपत्र^८, शाके १४८४ को सुमेरू खड्काको ताम्रपत्र^९, शाके १६२३ को भूपतिसिंह, मधुसिंहको ताम्रपत्र^{१०}, शाके १६९१ को समुद्रसिंहको ताम्रपत्र^{११} र चक्रसुदर्शन शाहको पत्र^{१२} आदि प्रकाशित भइसकेका छन्।

यो ताम्रपत्र शाके १६५६ अर्थात् वि. सं. १७९१ मा बझाङ्गी राजा कल्याण सिंहले गरिदिएको हो। उपर्युक्त बाह्रवटा बझाङ्ग राज्यका अभिलेखहरू प्रकाशनको क्रममा यो ताम्रपत्र स्थानान्तरणको कारणबाट छुट्न गएको थियो। तसर्थ यो ताम्रपत्र एकलै पन्यो तापनि यससँग सम्बन्धित ताम्रपत्रहरू भने प्रकाशित हुने अवसर पाइसकेका छन्। प्रकाशित भइसकेका ताम्रपत्रहरूमा बझाङ्गी राजा कल्याण सिंहको उल्लेख पाइँदैन। त्यसकारण यस पत्रले बझाङ्गी राजा कल्याण सिंहको अस्तित्वलाई स्वीकार गर्नुपर्ने तथा उनको गतिविधिलाई प्रकाश पार्न सकिने स्थिति भएकोले यस ताम्रपत्रलाई पनि पाठकवृन्द समक्ष प्रस्तुत गर्नु उचित कुरा ठानेर प्रकाशनार्थ प्रदान गरेको छु। येनकेन यो सानो ताम्रपत्रले पनि बझाङ्ग राज्यको इतिहास निर्माणमा महत्त्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाउन सक्ने नै छ।

बझाङ्गी लोक इतिहास तथा बझाङ्गी राजवंशावलीमा राजा कल्याण सिंहको नाउँ निकै प्रचलित छ। हालसम्म कुनै पनि ऐतिहासिक पुष्टिको अभावमा केवल जनजिब्रोलाई मात्र आधार मानेर इतिहास लेखन कार्य अप्रामाणिक प्रायः मानिने हुँदा एउटा अनभिज्ञता प्रकट गर्नु एक बाध्यता थियो। तर प्रस्तुत ताम्रपत्रको आधारबाट अवश्य पनि बझाङ्गी राजा कल्याण सिंहको स्थान इतिहासमा उल्लेखनीय भएको तथ्य सकारण बल मिलेको छ। बझाङ्गी राजवंशावली र पाण्डुलिपि इतिहास बझाङ्का विभिन्न गाउँका निवासीहरूबाट प्राप्त हुन आएका छन्। त्यस्ता वंशावली र प्रशंसाको टिपोटहरूमा केवल कल्पना र सुनेकै आधारमा मात्र मनगढन्ते कुराहरूको संगालो हुनाले पत्यार गर्न लायक ठहरिँदैनन्। यद्यपि त्यहाँकै निवासी बझाङ्गी राजगुरु भवकेशर जोशीसँग प्राप्त पाण्डुलिपि भने पक्कै पनि कुनै न कुनै सन्दर्भमा युक्तियुक्त पनि पाइएको छ।¹³ त्यो पाण्डुलिपि सत्यसँग केही निकट भएको पाइएको छ। त्यसमा बझाङ्गी राजा कल्याण सिंहको विषयमा यसरी लेखिएको छ : "कल्याण सिंह - राजा रतनी सिंहलाई डोटीका राजा रैका मान्धाता साहीले मारेतापनि बझाङ्गी र डोटीचाली बीच झगडाहुँदा बझाङ्गीले जिते। तेसपछि कल्याण सिंह बझाङ्गका राजा भए। उनका कान्छाभाइ लघुसिंह एघार वर्षका नाबालिक कालमा राजगुरु गजु जोशी र धाईले डोटीको डरले पल्लेकमा लुकाई राखेका थिए। पछि लघुसिंहको सर्वस्व गरी मान्धाता शाहीले लघुसिंहलाई लगेको हो। राजा कल्याण सिंहका छोरा अम्बरसिंह हुन्। अम्बरसिंहका सात भाइ भएका हुन्।"

प्रस्तुत बझाङ्गी लोक इतिहासबाट बझाङ्गी राजा कल्याण सिंह रतनी सिंहका छोरा र अम्बरसिंहका पिता रहेछन् भन्ने कुरा बुझिन्छ। राज रतनी सिंहलाई डोटीचाली राजा मान्धाता शाहीले काटेर बझाङ्ग राज्य हडपेको कुरा पनि बुझिन्छ। योगी नरहरिनाथले पनि बझाङ्गी राजा कल्याण सिंहको विषयमा उल्लेख गरेका छन्। उनले प्रकाशित गरेको वंशावलीमा¹⁴ बझाङ्गका ४६ सौं राजा पृथ्वी सिंहको समयमा डोटीले बझाङ्गमाथि हमला गर्‍यो। वंशावली अनुसार वि.सं. १७३८ मा डोटीका राजा मान्धाता शाहीले पनि बझाङ्गमाथि हमला गरी नराम्रोसँग हराइदिए। त्यतिमात्र होइन कि मान्धाता शाहीले आफ्ना ससुरा रतनी सिंहलाई मारी बझाङ्गका सम्पूर्ण सामग्रीहरू डोटी पुऱ्याए। डोटीमा प्राप्त ताम्रपत्र अनुसार पनि वि.सं. १७५४ मा डोटीमा मान्धाता शाही राजा थिए।¹⁵ तसर्थ मान्धाता शाहीले बझाङ्गमा हमला गरेको कुरा यथार्थसँग केही नजीक छ।

बझाङ्गी राजा रतनी सिंहको मृत्युपछि कल्याणसिंह वि.सं. १७४४ मा राजा भए। यी राजा बडा प्रतापी र विद्वान् पनि थिए। यिनकै समयदेखि बझाङ्ग एक शक्तिशाली राज्यको रूपमा परिवर्तन भएको थियो।¹⁶ यस प्रकार डोटीका राजाले वि.सं. १८४४ भन्दा पूर्व नै अर्थात् कल्याण सिंहको उदयपूर्व वि.सं. १७३८ मा नै बझाङ्गमाथि हमला गरेको हुनुपर्छ। राजा कल्याण सिंह पछि बझाङ्गी राजसिंहासनमा अम्बरसिंह बसेको कुरा पनि वंशावलीबाट थाहा हुन्छ।¹⁷ बझाङ्ग राज्य र डोटी राज्यको बीचमा पहिलेदेखि नै नराम्रो हुँदै आएको कुरा देवकान्त पन्तले पनि स्वीकार गरेका छन्।¹⁸ उनकै शब्दमा भन्ने हो भने यस प्रकार : "... मान्धाता शाहीको पालादेखि नै डोटीको बझाङ्ग, वाजुरा, र आछामसंग कट्टर शत्रुता रहेको बुझिन्छ। तर यी राज्यहरूको बेगलाबेगलै वा संगठित शक्तिले पनि डोटीसँग लड्न सक्ने स्थिति थिएन ...।" इत्यादि। त्यस्तै डोटीको लोक साहित्यलाई आधार मान्दै मान्धाता शाहीको दुस्कोमा यसरी उनले लेखेका छन् : "विक्रमशाहीका राजा वडेराजा मंधाता शाहीकी पाठी बजड्या गण मारी बखेत्रको जीतवार वाजुराकोट मारी बूखेत्रको जीतवार वडेराजा मंधाता शाहीको खाँणो प्रकाशियो।"¹⁹

माथि उल्लेखित उक्तिहरूबाट डोटेली राज मान्धाता शाहीले बझाङ्गी राजा रतनी सिंहलाई मारी बझाङ्ग डोटीमै मिलाएको कुरा स्पष्ट बुझिन्छ। तत्पश्चात् रतनी सिंहका छोरा कल्याण सिंह बझाङ्गी राजा कल्याण सिंह भएको कुरा त यसै ताम्रपत्रबाट स्वतः सिद्ध हुन गएको छ। राजा कल्याण सिंहको यस ताम्रपत्रले तत्कालीन बाइसी राज्य बझाङ्ग यथार्थ स्थिति व्यक्त गर्न पनि सफल भएको छ। मध्यकालीन जुम्ला भेकका मल्ल खसीया राजाहरू र तत्पश्चात् उनीहरूको शक्ति पतन भएपछि आफ्ना आफ्ना सामन्त क्षेत्रहरूबाट स्वतन्त्रताको सास फेर्न पाएका बाइसी राज्यहरूले पनि ताम्रपत्र प्रदान गर्ने जुम्ला मल्ल राजाहरूको परंपरालाई जीवितै राखेको कुरा सिद्ध हुन्छ। त्यसै प्रचलन अनुसार बझाङ्गी राजाहरूले पनि ताम्रपत्रहरू लेखी दिएका पाउँछौं। ताम्रपत्र प्रायः जमीन दान गरेका पाइएका छन्; जसबाट तत्कालीन सामन्तवादी समाजको स्पष्ट चित्र उतार्न सकिन्छ तापनि राजनैतिक दृष्टिकोणबाट अलि टाढै रहनुपर्ने स्थिति अझै छ। तर त्यस समयका कुनै पनि प्रमाणहरू उपलब्ध नभएको समयसम्म यस्ता ताम्रपत्रहरूको अभिलेखबाट मात्रै भए पनि तत्कालीन समय निर्धारण गर्नुको साथै राज्यमा प्रचलित सामाजिक, धार्मिक, आर्थिक एवं सूक्ष्मतः राजनैतिक क्षेत्रको पनि अध्ययनको निर्वाह गर्न भने सकिन्छ। खासगरी मध्यकालीन नेपालका बाइसी राज्यहरूको समयलाई एउटा "अन्धकारको युग" को जून संज्ञा दिइएको थियो त्यसलाई यस्ता अभिलेखहरू पाइएकोबाट आलोक अवश्य प्रदान गरेको छ। हुन पनि त्यस समयमा भएका विभिन्न राज्यहरू बीचका झगडाहरू बाहेकका घटना थाहा पाउन ज्यादै गाह्रो पर्थ्यो। त्यस कालमा कुनै पनि क्षेत्रमा सुधार भएको पनि पाएको छैन। यो हुनाको मुख्य कारण त्यस समयको इतिहास नै अस्पष्ट र शंकास्पद छ। इतिहास लेखन प्रक्रिया केवल तथ्यहरूकै आडमा हुनसक्ने हुँदा मध्यकालीन सामन्ती राजाहरूले तत्कालीन रीति अनुसार ब्राह्मणहरूलाई जमीन दान गरेका प्रमाणहरू मात्रै भएपनि त्यस समयको विभिन्न पक्षको अध्ययन गर्न सहयोग अवश्य पुऱ्याएको छ।

प्रस्तुत ताम्रपत्र शाके १६५६ को हो र यो दिने राजा कल्याण सिंह हुन्। उनले बाजागाई ब्रह्मण शंकर जोशीलाई गोलाईको निमतोला भन्ने जमीन दिएको कुरा ताम्रपत्रमा उल्लेख गरिएको छ। यसमा उल्लेखित जमीन नाउँ हालसम्म पनि उही नै छ। यसबाट उक्त ताम्रपत्रमा उल्लेखित जमीन स्पष्टी सीमाना सहित छुट्याउन सजिलो पारेको छ। हालसम्म पनि बझाङ्ग गोलाईको निमतोला भन्ने जमीन निज शंकर जोशीका सन्तानहरूले उपभोग गर्दैआएका छन्।

बझाङ्ग राज्य बाइसी राज्यहरूमा पर्दछ भन्ने कुरा प्रमाणित भए पनि त्यस राज्यको विषयमा विस्तृत ऐतिहासिक खोजीबाट विवरण थाहा पाउन सकिएको छैन। हुन त ह्यामिल्टन र कर्कप्याट्रिक जस्ता महोदयहरूले नेपालका बाइसी र चौबीसी राज्यहरूको विषयमा सानो चर्चा उठान गरेका छन्। यसले गर्दा तत्कालीन बाइसी राज्यको विषयमा पक्का स्थितिको परिचय प्राप्त गर्न स्वतः कठिन पर्न गएको छ। त्यस भेकको अप्रकाशित तथा तथ्य कुराहरूलाई प्रकाशमा ल्याउन सके नेपालको इतिहास पुष्ट बन्न सक्थ्यो। त्यस्ता तथ्य कुराहरूमध्ये ताम्रपत्र जस्ता सामग्रीहरूको मुख्य स्थान छ। प्रस्तुत ताम्रपत्र धार्मिक अभिप्रायले प्रेरित भई बझाङ्गी राजा कल्याण सिंहले ब्राह्मणलाई जमीन दान गरेको प्रमाणस्वरूप प्रदान गरेका हुन्। यस ताम्रपत्रमा कल्याण सिंहको नामको अगाडिपट्टि "श्रीराजाधिराज" उल्लेख गरिएकोबाट उनी बझाङ्गकै राजा भएको कुरामा कुनै शंका उत्पन्न हुँदैन। त्यसबाहेक उनको नाम लगत्तै पछि पनि "अमरसिंह गोसाईंज्यू" भनिएकोबाट अमरसिंहलाई के कारणबाट गोसाईं शब्दले संबोधन गरिएको भन्ने

तात्पर्य बुझनुपर्ने हुन्छ। सुदूर पश्चिम नेपालको मध्यकालीन इतिहासमा जुम्ली राजाहरूले आफना छोरालाई युवराज शब्दको तात्पर्य बुझाउन गोसाई शब्दको प्रयोग गर्दथे। त्यस्तै डोटेली राजाहरूले पनि युवराजको पदलाई गोश्वामि भन्ने चलन छँदै थियो। २०गोसाईको खास अर्थ त संस्कृति शब्दको "गोश्वामि" बाट तद्भव भई आएको कुरा स्पष्ट छ। गोश्वामिको अर्थ मध्यकालमा जात वा थर विशेषलाई नबुझाई पद वा दर्जा विशेष भएको कुरा अवगत हुन्छ। शायद मध्यकालीन बझाङ्गी क्षेत्रका उच्च ओहदाका व्यक्तिहरूलाई, विशेष गरी राजकुमारहरूलाई गोसाई भनिएको हो भन्ने अटकल गर्ने ठाउँ छ। किन भने डोटीका मल्ल राजाहरूले ताम्रपत्रमा गोसाई शब्द आफना राजकुमारहरूलाई मात्र प्रयोग गरेको पाइएको छ। त्यसबाहेक बझाङ्गी राजा कल्याण सिंहका समकालीन डोटेली राजा रघुनाथ शाही पनि मान्धाता शाहीको राज्यकालमा गोसाई शब्दले संबोधन गरिएका थिए। २१यसबाट प्रस्तुत ताम्रपत्रमा उल्लेखित अमरसिंह गोसाई राजा कल्याणसिंहका उत्तराधिकारी भन्ने कुराको संकेत मिल्दछ। बझाङ्गी वंशावलीमा पनि राजा कल्याण सिंहको पछाडि नाम आउने राजाको नाम अमरसिंह नै भएको हुँदा पक्का पनि कल्याण सिंहका छोराको नाम अमर सिंह नै हुनुपर्छ भन्ने कुरा यसबाट प्रमाणित हुन्छ। २२बझाङ्गकै प्रकाशित शाके १२९४ को ताम्रपत्रमा पनि हरिब्रह्म कुवर राजाका तीनवटा राजकुमारहरू साक्षीस्वरूप रहेको कुरा बुझिन्छ। उनीहरूको नाम छ राजवम्म गोसाई, सुमेरु गोसाई र कालु गोसाई इत्यादि। २३यहाँ उनीहरूको विस्तृत चर्चा गरिंदैन।

मध्यकालीन सामन्ती राजाहरूले ब्राह्मणहरूलाई जमीन दान गरेको प्रमाणस्वरूप वितरण गरेका ताम्रपत्रहरूबाट राजा र उनका राजकुमारहरूको नाम मात्र थाहा नभएर त्यस समयमा राजाका मुख्य मुख्य कारिन्दा, भाइ भारदार, तथा काजीहरूको नाम समेत थाहा हुन्छ। प्रस्तुत ताम्रपत्रमा साक्षीस्वरूप रहेका राजा कल्याण सिंहका छोराहरूको पनि नाम छ। यस विषयमा शंका उठ्ने ठाउँ पनि छ, त्यो हो के ती सबै राजा कल्याण सिंहका छोराहरू नै हुन्? यस विषयमा अन्य स्रोतहरूको अभाव हुँदा उनीहरू महत्त्वपूर्ण दर्जाका भारदार हुन् वा राजकुमारहरू हुन् छुट्याउन कठीन पर्दछ तापनि अमरसिंह राजा कल्याण सिंहकै उत्तराधिकारी भएको प्रमाणबाट अरु गोसाईको पद प्राप्त गर्ने या त कल्याण सिंहकै छोरा हुनुपर्छ या त उनको राज्यमा कुनै प्रतिष्ठित ओहदा आशिन व्यक्ति हुनुपर्छ भनी ठोकुवा गर्ने ठाउँ छ। यसरी शंका गर्नुपर्ने व्यक्तिहरू यस ताम्रपत्रमा उल्लेखित रतु गोसाई र मनु गोसाई हुन्। तिनीहरू साक्षी बसेका छन्। ती बाहेक गजे खड्का, महेन्द्र खड्का, अर्जुन खड्काहरूको नाम पनि उल्लेख गरिएको छ। उनीहरू पनि बझाङ्गी राजाका महत्त्वपूर्ण सल्लाहकार भएको कुरामा शंका छैन। यसरी साक्षीहरू राखी ब्राह्मणलाई जमीन दान गरेको पाइन्छ भने धार्मिक विधि अनुसार राजाले वाचा, कबोल र शपथ लिई राजाले पुनः हरण नगर्ने कुरा पनि उल्लेख गरिएको पाइन्छ। मध्यकालीन बाइसी राज्यमा संस्कृत भाषाको प्रचलन भएर पनि यसमा प्रशस्त अपभ्रंशहरू आएका थिए। यस ताम्रपत्रमा उल्लेखित संस्कृत पूरा र शुद्ध नलेखी बीचमा गड्बड पारी निर्वाह गरिएको छ जस्तै : 'साठी वर्ष सहस्रानि विटायां जेति कृमि' २४ यी शब्दहरू राजाले विर्ता हरण गर्न नसक्नु भनी राखेको हुनुपर्छ। त्यतिमात्र होइन ब्राह्मणहरूले धर्मशास्त्र र स्मृतिहरूको आधारमा राजालाई अरु शब्दको प्रयोग गरेर पनि पक्को बनाउन चाहन्थे। त्यसको उदाहरण यहाँ दिइन्छ त्यो हो यस ताम्रपत्रको संस्कृत श्लोकको अगाडि अर्थात् पंक्ति ९ र १० मा "जो दत्त हर द्यौ तौ नव कुभिपाक नर्ग" भन्ने शब्द राखिएको पनि छ। यसबाट यही निष्कर्ष निस्कन्छ कि राजाले प्रदान गरेको जमीन किमार्थ हरण हुँदैन भन्ने आशय प्रकट गर्न खोजिएको हो। कुभिपाक नरक हिन्दूहरूको गरूड पुराणमा उल्लेख गरिएको छ। भूमिहरण गर्नेलाई साठीहजार वर्षसम्म वीष्टाको कीरा भई कुभिपाक नरकमा बस्नुपर्ने कुराको सूचना यस श्लोकको तात्पर्य हो। बाइसी राज्यका राजाहरू धर्ममा गहिरो श्रद्धा राख्थे। पुराणहरूको प्रभाव जनमानसमा गहिरोसँग परेको कुरा यस्ता उक्तिहरूबाट सरलतापूर्वक जान्न सकिन्छ।

ताम्रपत्र दान दिएको ठोस प्रमाण हो भन्ने कुरा त माथि पनि उल्लेख भयो। यो प्रचलन मध्यकालदेखि नै भएको पाइएको छ। त्यसै परंपरा अनुरूप बझाङ्गी बाइसी राजाहरूले पनि जमीन दान गरी निर्वाह गर्दै आएका थिए। त्यस्तो प्रचलन केवल राजाले मात्रै होइन कि धनी तथा ठूला ठालहरूले पनि व्यवहार गरेका प्रशस्त प्रमाणहरू प्राप्त भएका छन्। यसको एउटा उदाहरण बझाङ्गमा प्राप्त शाके १४८४ को सिमेरू खड्काको ताम्रपत्रलाई लिन सकिन्छ।²⁵ यसको एउटा नौलो पक्ष छ। त्यो हो ताम्रपत्र दान दिने राजा रजौटा वा रजवारको कुनै नाम उल्लेख छैन।²⁶ जे होस, त्यस समयको धार्मिक परंपरा आचार्य मनुद्वारा संकलित कानून "मनुस्मृति" बाट निर्देशित भएको थियो। मानिसहरू धर्मलाई स्वोपरि ठान्दथे। राजाहरूले निरंकुश अधिकार प्राप्त गरेका भए पनि उनीहरूले धार्मिक राज्य सञ्चालन गर्दथे। राजा वा रजौटाले पनि भूमि दान गरे भने पुण्य हुन्छ भन्ने धारणा थियो। भूमि दान गर्दा भूमि प्राप्त हुन्छ, धातु मवर्णादि दान गर्नाले दीर्घायु हुन्छ, घर आवास दान गर्नाले सुख सुविधा प्राप्त गर्दछ, चाँदीका रुपियाँ दान गर्नाले धन बढ्दछ भन्ने कुरा स्पष्टसँग मनुस्मृति उल्लेख गरिएको छ। राजालाई "भूपति" भनिन्थ्यो। अर्को योनिमा पनि भूपति भन्ने लालसा राजाहरूले राख्थे। तसर्थ मध्यकालीन राजाहरूले प्रशस्त विर्ता दिने गरेका हुन्।

यस ताम्रपत्रबाट अर्को कुरा पनि थाहा हुन्छ। त्यो हो यसको नवौँ पंक्तिमा उल्लेखित "रतनीसिंहकी मैले नषानु" भन्ने वाक्यांश। यस वाक्यांशको भावार्थ हुन्छ राजा कल्याण सिंह रतनी सिंहका छोरा हुँदा उनले आफ्ना बाबु बाजेले थामी आएको पौरुष राख्ने प्रण गरेको एकातिर झल्किन्छ भने अर्कोतिर उनका बाबु पनि धार्मिक विचारका भएर दान दिने गरेका भन्ने बुझिन्छ। यो ताम्रपत्रले रतनी सिंहको अस्तित्वलाई पनि स्वीकार गर्न बाध्य तुल्याएको छ। यस ताम्रपत्रमा उल्लेखित जमीन "शंकर जइसीका चेला नातीले षानु" भन्ने छ। बझाङ्गी राजा रतनी सिंहको समयको कुनै पनि प्रमाण स्वतन्त्ररूपमा प्राप्त भएको छैन तापनि यस ताम्रपत्रमा उल्लेखित नामका रतनी सिंह कल्याण सिंहकै बाबु हुनुपर्छ। राजा रतनी सिंहलाई डोटेली राजा मान्धाता शाहीले मारेको कुरा पहिले नै वर्णन गरियो।

यस ताम्रपत्र अनुसार बझाङ्गी राजा कल्याण सिंहले बझाङ्ग गोलार्कको निमातोला निली चौवारी नाली २ जमीन बाजगाई शंकर जोशीलाई दान दिएको कुरा उल्लेख छ तर यसमा चार किल्लाको वर्णन अन्य ताम्रपत्रहरूमा झैं दिएको पाइँदैन। त्यो जमीन दान गर्नुपर्ने कारण राजा कल्याण सिंहले वि.सं. १७९१ फाल्गुण महीनाको शुक्लपक्ष, पञ्चमी तिथी, आइतवारमा शुद्ध शान्ति गरिएकोले ताम्रपत्र दिइएको कुरा थाहा पाइन्छ। शुद्ध शान्तिमा दान प्राप्त गर्ने व्यक्ति राजाकै गुरु पुरोहितहरू नै पर्दथे। यसर्थ निज शंकर जोशी कल्याण सिंहकै पूज्य व्यक्ति हुनुपर्छ। निज शंकर जोशीका सन्तान हाल राजज्योतिषीको नामले प्रचलित छन्, जसबाट यो ताम्रपत्रको उतार मैले प्राप्त गरेको हुँ। उनको नाम हो विष्णुभक्त जोशीकै नाउँमा हालसम्म यही ताम्रपत्रलाई थमौती गरिएका बझाङ्गी राजाका रूक्का मोहरहरू पनि प्राप्त भएका छन्।²⁸

जुम्ली मल्ल राजाहरूले प्रदान गरेका ताम्रपत्रहरू र बाइसी राजाहरूले दिएका ताम्रपत्रका ढाँचामा केही पृथक्पना प्राप्त भएको छ। त्यो हो जुम्ली राजाहरूले आफ्ना ताम्रपत्रमा "रत्नत्रयायाम्" लाई साक्षीस्वरूप उपस्थित गराएका छन् भने बझाङ्गी राजाहरूले क्रमशः यो परंपरालाई त्याग्दै आएको आभास हुन्छ। रत्नत्रयायाम्को अर्थ हुन्छ बुद्धम शरणम्, संघम् शरणम्, धर्मम् शरणम्।²⁹ जुम्ली मल्ल राजाहरूले भूमण्डलका साक्षी राख्नुभन्दा पहिले बुद्ध बौद्ध रत्नत्रयायाम्, चन्द्र, सूर्य पछि मात्र राख्ने प्रचलन कायम थियो। तर त्यो परंपरा बाइसी राजाहरूले नपछ्याउँदै चन्द्र सूर्य मात्र साक्षी राखेका छन्। यो हुनुको मुख्य कारण थियो विशाल जुम्ला राज्यको संपर्क केवल भारतसँग मात्र नभएर तिब्बतसँग पनि घनिष्ठता थियो। तिब्बतमा बुद्ध धर्मको बाहुल्यता थियो जसको प्रभाव उनीहरूमा नपरी रहन सकेन। तर

जुम्ला राज्यको शक्ति पतन भएपछि उसका अधीनस्थ प्रदेशहरू क्रमशः स्वतन्त्र हुँदै गए। स्वभावतः उनीहरूको सम्पर्क तिब्बतसँग टाढा हुँदै गयो। परिणामस्वरूप उनीहरूको व्यवहारमा समेत त्यसको असर पर्‍यो। धार्मिक संकुचितता, उदारताको अभाव तथा रूढीवादीको ज्ञान प्रभाव बढ्न थाल्यो। त्यसैले यस काललाई अन्धकारको युगसम्म भन्नपने स्थिति आइपरेको। यस ताम्रपत्रमा पनि ती जुम्ली मल्ल राजाहरूको परंपरालाई त्याग गरिएको छ।

यस ताम्रपत्रको पाँचौं पंक्तिमा "डुंग्राकोटमा बसी" भन्ने वाक्यांश पनि उल्लेख छ। यसबाट राजा कल्याण सिंहको दरबार डुंग्राकोटमा भएको अनुमान हुन्छ।³⁰ उक्त डुंग्राकोटलाई उदम्बरीपुरी पनि भनिएको पाइन्छ। तर त्यो डुंग्राकोट डोटी जिल्लामा पर्दछ। बझाङ्गी राजा कल्याण सिंहको राजधानी डुंग्राकोट भएको कुरा प्रमाणित हुन जान्छ। किन भने ताम्रपत्र गरिदिएको स्थलको कीटान समेत गरिएको छ। राजा कल्याण सिंह पराक्रमी राजा भन्ने कुरा माथि उल्लेख गरियो तापनि उनले के कस्ता सुधार र पराक्रम गरे भन्ने प्रमाणहरूको अभाव छ।

मध्यकालीन बाइसी राजाहरूले आफ्ना उत्तराधिकारीहरूलाई प्रशिक्षण दिने उद्देश्यबाट हो वा आफ्नो लागि सल्लाहकार आवश्यकता महसूस भएर हो कुनै न कुनैलाई आफ्नो सहयोगी बनाएको पाइन्छ। त्यसै प्रसंगमा राजा कल्याण सिंहले पनि आफ्ना छोरा अमरसिंहसँग संयुक्त शासन चलाएको कुरा पनि अट्कल गर्न सक्ने ठाउँ छ। किन भने प्रस्तुत ताम्रपत्र दोस्रो र पंक्तिमा "श्रीराजाधिराज कल्याणसिंह माहाराज अमरसिंह गोसाईंज्यू" भन्ने वाक्यांशबाट राजा कल्याण सिंह र अमरसिंहको संयुक्त शासन भएको कुरा थाहा हुन्छ। यदि संयुक्त शासन नभएको भए सजा कल्याण सिंहको नामोल्लेख गर्नुपर्ने बाध्यता नै के हुन्थ्यो र ? यसर्थ यो एक शंकास्पद कुरा अवश्य हो। डोटी राज्यका राजाहरूले आफ्ना राजकुमारहरूलाई उल्लेख गर्ने परंपरा बझाङ्गी राजाहरूले पनि अवलम्बन गरेको कुरा पनि यसको महत्त्व हुन सक्छ। राजकुमारको नामको पछाडि गोसाईं लेख्ने चलन भएको कुरा त माथि नै उल्लेख भइसक्यो। तैपनि बझाङ्गी राजा कल्याण सिंह पराक्रमीका साथै बुद्धिमान भएको कारणबाट आफ्ना छोरालाई पनि राजकाजको प्रशिक्षण दिनको लागि संयुक्त शासन पद्धति अपनाएका त होइनन्? भन्ने तर्क प्रस्तुत गर्ने ठाउँ छ। जे भए पनि यस ताम्रपत्रले बझाङ्गी इतिहासलाई केही स्पष्ट पार्न एउटा नयाँ अध्याय थप्ने भूमिका अवश्य निभाएको छ। बझाङ्ग राज्य बाइसी राज्यहरूको समूहमा पर्ने भए पनि चौतर्फी दृष्टिबाट मध्यकालमा पछाडि नै थियो। यसो हुनुको मुख्य कारण बझाङ्गको सम्पर्क तिब्बत तथा भारतको टाढा पर्ने तथा एउटा रूखो पहाडी धरातल हुनाले यहाँको आर्थिक तथा सामरिक दृष्टिले ज्यादै निर्धो थियो। त्यस्तै राजनैतिक र सामाजिक स्थिति पनि तत्काली बाइसी राज्यको भन्दा बझाङ्गको ज्यादै सोचनीय थियो।

जुम्ली मल्ल राजाहरूले ताम्रपत्र दान दिदा दान प्राप्त गर्ने व्यक्तिलाई छत्तीसकर मुक्त गर्ने परंपरा पहिले पहिलेका बझाङ्गी राजाहरूले पनि अनुकरण गरेका थिए। तर यो ताम्रपत्रमा राजा कल्याण सिंहले निज शंकर जोशीलाई छत्तीसकर माफ गरेको उल्लेख भने गरेको पाइँदैन। प्रायःजसो ताम्रपत्रमा छत्तीसकर अकर गरेका पाइएका तर यसमा उल्लेख नभएकाले केही नौलो जस्तो पनि लाग्दछ।³¹ यस ताम्रपत्रमा छत्तीसकरको विवरण उल्लेख नगरिएकोले निज व्यक्तिलाई करमुक्त नगरिएको कुरा थाहा हुन्छ।

बझाङ्गी राजा कल्याण सिंहको राज्यकालमा नेपालको एकीकरण गर्ने कुनै पनि सूत्रधार तयार भइसकेको थिएन। त्यस बेलालाई बाइसी तथा चौबिसे राज्यहरूको स्वतन्त्रताको पराकाष्ठा अर्थात् चरमबिन्दु मान्न सकिन्छ। तत्पश्चात् गोरखाधिपति पृथ्वीनारायण शाहको शक्तिले एकीकरण अभियान शुरु गरिसकेका थिए। बझाङ्गी राजाका समकालीन गोरखाली राजा नरभूपाल शाह नुवाकोट विजय गर्ने चेष्टामा संलग्न थिए। तदनुसार वि. सं. १७९४ (ई. १७३४)सम्ममा गोरखाली राजा नरभूपाल शाहले काजी जयन्त राना, महेश्वर पन्तको नेतृत्वमा नुवाकोट उपर हमला गर्ने पठाए। तर त्यस युद्धमा गोरखालीहरू पराजित भई फर्के। यस समयमा पृथ्वीनारायण शाहको किशोरकाल व्यतीत भइरहेको थियो। राजा नरभूपाल शाहको नुवाकोट विजय गर्ने अभिलाषा पूरा नहुँदै उनको देहान्त भएकोले वि. सं. १७९९ (ई. १७४५) मा गोरखाको राजसिंहासनमा पृथ्वीनारायण शाह विराजमान भए।³²

बझाङ्गी राजा कल्याण सिंहका समकालीन जुम्ला कल्याली राजा सुदर्शन शाह थिए भन्ने कुरा शाके १६४१ (वि.सं. १७७६) को ताम्रपत्रबाट थाहा हुन्छ।³³ त्यस समयमा जुम्ला राजा र बझाङ्गी राजाको बीचमा कस्तो सम्बन्ध थियो भन्ने कुरा थाहा भएकै छैन। त्यस समयसम्म जुम्ला राज्य ज्यादै निर्बल अवस्थामा पुगेको थियो। जुम्ला राज्यको पतन शाके १३१३ मा अभयमल्लकै समयदेखि हुन थालेको कुरा व्यापक भइसकेको छ। त्यस समयपूर्व शाके १२९४ मा बझाङ्ग राज्यले स्वतन्त्र सास फेर्न खोजेको कुरा त्यसै समयको बझाङ्गी राजा हरिब्रह्म कुवरको ताम्रपत्र³⁴बाट थाहा हुन्छ। त्यसकारण राजा कल्याण सिंहको समयमा जुम्लाको हैकम बझाङ्गमाथि हराइसकेको हुनुपर्छ। तर बेलाबेलामा डोटीले बझाङ्गलाई दुःख दिएका विभिन्न उदाहरणहरू भने प्राप्त भएका छन्। जुम्लाका राजा सुदर्शन शाहले आफ्नो राज्यको विस्तार गर्नुको साटो सिजामा ठूलो दरबार बनाउन लगाएको कुरा शाके १६६७ (वि. सं. १८०८) (को जुम्लाका कल्याली राजा) को ताम्रपत्रबाट³⁵ थाहा हुन्छ। यसकारण जुम्लाको शक्तिले बझाङ्गमा कुनै असर पारेको थिएन।

प्रस्तुत ताम्रपत्रका लेखक वामदेव जोशीका नाम उल्लेख छ। बझाङ्ग जिल्लाका सबैजसो ब्राह्मणहरूलाई जोशी शब्दले पुकारिन्छन्। यसको तात्पर्य राजज्योतिषी भई कार्य गरे बापत पाएको पदवी हो। बाइसी राज्यमा जोशी ब्राह्मणहरूको भूमिका महत्त्वपूर्ण रहेको कुरा यस्ता प्रमाणपत्रबाट सिद्ध हुन आउँछन्। बझाङ्गमा विभिन्न गाउँहरू, दरा, थुम, गर्खा तथा इलाका आदि पर्दथे र ती ठाउँका महत्त्वपूर्ण जमीनहरू जोशी ब्राह्मणहरूलाई विर्तास्वरूप दिइन्थ्यो। त्यसबाहेक राजाले ताम्रपत्र दिँदा लेख्ने काम ब्राह्मणहरूको र कुँदने काम चुनारहरूको हुन्थ्यो। चुनारलाई तमौटे वा तामाको कारोवार गर्ने भनी बझाङ्गमा हालसम्म पनि प्रचलित शब्द छ। तमौटाहरू नभएका ठाउँमा चुनारहरूले पनि ताम्रपत्र कुँदने काम गर्दथे। उनीहरू पनि राजाका अगलबगल तथा खानीहरूमा काम गर्ने गर्दथे।

मध्यकालीन युगका बाइसी राजाहरूले हिन्दूधर्म मानेको कुरा माथि पनि उल्लेख गरियो। धर्मको आधारमा, जमीनलाई विना मालपोत विर्ता (वृत्ति) स्वरूप दिँदा अवश्य पनि राज्यको आय न्यूनतम हुन्थ्यो। यसकारण तत्कालीन राजाहरूका ताम्रपत्रहरू सरसरती हेर्दासामान्य जस्तो लागे तापनि यिनीहरूले आर्थिक तथा अन्य क्षेत्रहरूमा महत्त्वपूर्ण भूमिका खेलेका पाउँछौं। प्रस्तुत शाके १६५६ को बझाङ्गी राजा कल्याण सिंहको ताम्रपत्रले पनि एउटा महत्त्वपूर्ण स्थान ओगट्न पुगेको छ। किनभने यसले राजा कल्याण सिंहको मात्र अस्तित्वलाई प्रकाश नगरी उनका बाबु रतनी सिंह तथा उनका छोरा अमर

सिंहको समेत उल्लेख गरेकोले यसको महत्त्व झन् बढ्न गएको छ। यसले गर्दा बझाङ्गको अन्योलपूर्ण ऐतिहासिक वातावरणलाई स्वच्छता प्रदान गरेको छ। यसबाहेक भविष्यमा त्यस क्षेत्रमा उपलब्ध हुने सामग्रीहरूले राजा रतनीसिंह कल्याण सिंह र अमर सिंहको विषयमा झन् प्रकाश पार्न मद्दत पुऱ्याउने छन्। हाललाई यही छोटो ताम्रपत्रले मात्रै भए पनि कल्याण सिंहको समयको राज्य अस्तित्व, राज्य व्यवस्था तथा तात्कालिक सामाजिक परिवेशको चरित्रलाई प्रकाश पार्दै त्यस समयको निसंकोच निर्धारण गर्ने सक्षम भएकोले सानै भए पनि यसलाई एउटा महत्त्वपूर्ण उपलब्धि मान्न सकिन्छ। बझाङ्गी राजा कल्याण सिंहको अनिश्चित इतिहासलाई यसले एउटा निर्णयात्मक टुङ्गोमा पुऱ्याएकोले यसको महत्त्व त्यस सन्दर्भमा सानो मात्र सकिन्न। एउटा मामूली स्वस्ति शान्तिगर्दा लेखिएको अभिलेखको त यत्रो महत्त्व ठानिने घडीमा अन्य सामग्रीहरू उपलब्ध भएमा निश्चय पनि त्यस भेकको इतिहास एक परिपक्व र रहस्यपूर्ण बन्न सक्ने विश्वास छ।

प्रस्तुत ताम्रपत्र बझाङ्ग लुयाटा गा.पं. पडेस निवासी देवान विष्णुभक्त जोशीसँग सम्बन्धित छ। केही वर्ष पूर्व यो ताम्रपत्र निजकै साथमा थियो। वि. सं. २०१४ सालमा बझाङ्गी राजघरानाका चन्द्रजंग बहादुर सिंहले मागेर बझाङ्ग चैनपुर ल्याएका थिए। सो ताम्रपत्र हाल कहाँ छ निज विष्णुभक्त जोशीलाई समेत थाहा छैन। किनभने चन्द्रजंग बहादुर सिंहको वि.सं. २०२५ मा मृत्यु भएकोले उनकी श्रीमतीले योगी नरहरिनाथलाई दिएको कुरा मसँग भनेकी हुन्। तर सकलको स्थान प्राप्त नभए पनि निज विष्णुभक्त जोशीजीसँग रहेको नकलबाट पक्कैबद्ध रूपमा यो सार्न म सफल भएको हुँ। निज विष्णुभक्त जोशीसँग यसको प्रतिलिपि छ। उनको अन्दाजी बनाइ अनुसार त्यस ताम्रपत्रको लम्बाई १० इञ्च र चौडाइ ८ इञ्चको थियो भन्ने छ। पुरानो देवनागिरी लिपिमा लेखिएको यो ताम्रपत्रको दाहिने पट्टि प्वाल पारी किलामा झण्ड्याउन सुविधा बनाइएको छ।

उक्त ताम्रपत्रको मूल पाठ यस प्रकार छ :-

१. राम राम २
२. ॐ स्वस्ति श्री गणेशाय नमः श्री शाके १६५६ श्रीसम्बत्सरे १७९१ फाल्गुन
३. मासे शुक्लपक्षे पंचम्या तिथौ रविवासरे असिनि नक्षत्रे।। श्रीराज धिराज कल्या
४. नसिंह महाराजा अम्मरसिंह गोसायीज्यू पादा चिरंजयतु।। अंभसि राम सि हठिसि
५. वावु तैले बसि गोलाइको निमातोला निली चउवाडी नालि दुवौ बियमया
६. चितयो घालिमोलि डुंग्राकोट वसि वाजगाईलाई मयाचितयो शंकरजोइ
७. सि का चेलाले जै देव सहित सोवर्ण जोइसि वामदेवले पाया सर्वसुध गरि पायो घालि
८. मोली खायो अत्र भुमंडलका साँचि चन्द्रसुर्जे साँचि यिमिका रतनु गोसायी साँचि
९. मनु गोसायीसाँचि गजि खड्का साँचि महिन्द्र खड्का साँचि पेतको दो अर्जन खड्का साँचि।।
१०. रतन सिंहकि मैले नखानु संकर जोइसि चेला नातिले खानु।।
- जो दत्त हर द्यौ तौ
११. नव कुंभपाक नर्ग साठिबर्ष सहस्रानि विटायां जेति कृमि लिखित साँचि वामद
१२. व जोइसि सुभमस्तु।। ।

पाद टिप्पणी : Foot Notes

१. राजाराम सुवेदी : बझाङ्ग जिल्लाका बाह्र अभिलेखहरू, "कन्द्रीव्यूसन्स टु नेप्लीज स्टडीज, सि. एन. ए. एस. टि. यू. (कीर्तिपुर, काठमाडौं २०३६) खण्ड VI, नं. २, पृष्ठ ९०
२. ऐ. पृष्ठ ९१
३. ऐ. पृष्ठ ९२-९३
४. ऐ. पृष्ठ ९३-९४
५. ऐ. पृष्ठ ९४-९५
६. ऐ. पृष्ठ ९६
७. ऐ. पृष्ठ ९७-९८
८. ऐ. पृष्ठ ९७
९. ऐ. पृष्ठ ९९-१००
१०. ऐ. पृष्ठ ९८
११. ऐ. पृष्ठ ९९
१२. ऐ. पृष्ठ १००-१०१
१३. श्री भवकेशर रेग्मी (जोशी) ज्यूसँग भएको पाण्डुलिपिको नकल मैले पनि टिपी ल्याएको छु। निजसँग भएको वंशावली पनि प्रकाशित भइसकेको छ।
ऐ. पृष्ठ ८५-८६
१४. योगी नरहरिनाथ, इतिहास प्रकाशना सन्धिपत्र संग्रह, भाग १ (वाराणसी २००४) पृष्ठ ५८५
१५. ऐ. पृष्ठ ६६४
१६. सूचना विभाग, मेचीदेखि महाकाली, खण्ड ४, पृष्ठ ७५५
१७. राजाराम सुवेदी, पूर्ववत्, पूर्ववत्, पृष्ठ ८५, ८६
१८. देवकान्त, डोटेरी लोक साहित्य एक अध्ययन, नेपाल र एशियाली अध्ययन संस्थान (कीर्तिपुर २०३२), पृष्ठ १४३
१९. ऐ. पृष्ठ ९४
२०. ऐ. पृष्ठ १४३
२१. ऐ. पृष्ठ ऐ
२२. राजाराम सुवेदी, पूर्ववत्, वंशावली नं. (क), वंशावली नं. (ख), पृष्ठ ८५-८६ ऐ. पृष्ठ ९०
२४. स्वदत्तं परदत्तं वा योहरेच्च वशुंधराम्। षष्टिवर्षसहश्राणि विष्टायाम् जायतेकृमिः।। २६. ऐ. पृष्ठ ८३
२७. पं. वाशुदेव शर्मण संशोधिता मंस्मृति तृतीय अध्याय, (बम्बई १९२० ई)
२८. देवान विष्णुभक्तको नाउँमा ताम्रपत्रको थमौती भएको रूकाको नकल प्रति मेरो संकलनमा पनि रहेको छ।

२९. धनबज्र बज्राचार्य, कर्नाली प्रदेशको ऐतिहासिक रूपरेखा, "कर्नाली प्रदेश एक विटो एक अध्ययन" (काठमाडौं २०२८) पृष्ठ ४४
३०. बझाङ्गमा डुंग्राकोट निकै प्रख्यात स्थल हो। बझाङ्ग जिल्लाको सदरमुकाम चैनपुरबाट आगम्य दिशातिर पर्ने पहाडलाई डुंग्राकोट भनिन्छ जहाँ ३ वटा शिलालेखहरू, १ वटा शिलास्तम्भ छन्।
३१. बझाङ्ग राज्यमा प्रचलित छत्तीसकर २०१७ सालसम्म लगाउने चलन थियो। यी करहरूको विवरण पनि प्रकाशित भइसकेको छ।
राजाराम सुवेदी, पूर्ववर्णित, पृष्ठ ८७-८८-८९
३२. बालचन्द्र शर्मा, नेपालको ऐतिहासिक रूपरेखा, (वाराणसी २०१५) पृष्ठ २१५
३३. बालकृष्ण पोखरेल, पाँचसय वर्ष, (विराटनगर २०२७) पृष्ठ १०४
३४. राजाराम सुवेदी, पूर्ववर्णित, पृष्ठ ७५
३५. बालकृष्ण पोखरेल, पूर्ववर्णित, पृष्ठ ३३५-३३७

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- (घ) बज्राचार्य, धनबज्र, कर्नाली प्रदेश एक विटो अध्ययन, काठमाडौं, २०२८
- (ङ) योगी नरहरिनाथ, इतिहास प्रकाशना सन्धिपत्र संग्रह, भाग १, वाराणसी, २०२२
- (च) शर्मण बाशुदेव, सशोधिता, मनुस्मृति, बंबई, भारत, १९२० ई
- (छ) शर्मा, बालचन्द्र, नेपालको ऐतिहासिक रूपरेखा, वाराणसी २०१५
- (ज) सूचना विभाग, मेचीदेखि महाकाली, सुदूर पश्चिमाञ्चल खण्ड ४, काठमाडौं, २०२८

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- (क) पाण्डे रामनिवास, पश्चिमी नेपालको ऐतिहासिक र सांस्कृतिक विकासमा शाहवंशको योगदान, भ्वाइस अफ हिस्ट्री, खण्ड III, कीर्तिपुर, २०३४
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Book Review

The Limits of Surface Archaeology

Mary Shepherd Slusser, Nepal Mandala: A Cultural Study of the Kathmandu Valley, Volume I: Text xix + 491 + Appendixes + Bibliography and Index, Volume II: Plates 3-Colour Maps 9; Figures; Black and White Plates 600. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Price: Rs: 2379/-

Books on the arts, architecture, and culture of the Nepal Valley are not now so rare as they were in the past. Most of them, however, cater to the needs of the lay reader or the visitor. Mary Slusser's book is an exception. It has two clear merits--it is not a guide book nor is it a conventional art history. Secondly, it is love's labour--unlikely to be lost, or even replaced in the foreseeable future. Although she is not a trained 'Indologist' (she did her doctoral work on South American archaeology), her background as art-historian, archaeologist, and anthropologist has been an invaluable asset, and nothing could have been more desirable in a student of the culture of the Nepal Valley.

The book grew out of Slusser's long sojourn and her holy curiosity leading to fruitful and catalytic contacts with native culture and scholarship. Although Slusser was in Nepal between 1965-1971 only, the book is a product of years of indefatigable industry, meticulous study and research. As such, it deserves to be discussed in some detail. The subject-matter too is complex and intimidating--a culture system that evolved in the course of two millennia of symbiosis that took place within the geographical confines of the Nepal Valley.

When Slusser first came to Nepal in 1965 she wanted to read about its culture. Her American colleagues knew the most famous Buddhist monument of the Valley merely as "the Monkey Temple" whereas her Nepali friends could only let her know that it was "old". Because she couldn't find any satisfactory answer to her curiosity in the monuments that crowd the Valley, she came to write the book she did. After doing two years' unremitting field work Slusser had enough materials "to write a serious guide to the Kathmandu Valley cities and their compelling monuments." However, by the time her "serious guide book" was complete, she made a "startling discovery--at once exciting and sobering." The King Solomon's Mines that Slusser bumped into were the Nepali-language publications--the work of native scholars, mainly the output of Itihāsa Saṃśodhana Maṇḍala. They provided her with the clues of a firm chronology--a clue to the jigsaw puzzle of the culture.

From the Nepali sources I could now see that from A.D. 300 to 1769 there was an unbroken political continuum that harmonized with what was clearly an unbroken cultural continuum. (p. xiii)

Slusser's study seems to have, thus, two main hypotheses:

- a. the cultural continuum harmonized with the political continuum;
- b. the cultural continuum was, in fact, unbroken from A.D. 300 to 1769.

Keeping these hypotheses in view, "my primary aim", says Slusser, "has been to render in broad outlines as cogent and comprehensive a history of Nepalese culture as is now possible within the limitations of one book." (p. xiv) Dividing her time between field work, Nepali language study and research-- "in comprehending the sources" (p. xii), Slusser devoted well over a decade in writing the book. In her industry, she was fortunate to win the support, constant assistance, and geniality of "the impeccable historians of the Samsodhana Mandala." Slusser's book is, thus, an exceptional monument to the cross-fertilizing impact of the two traditions of scholarship--the Eastern and the Western. Without her "accidental" contact with native research and scholarship, Slusser would have ended up with yet another glossy though, of course, "serious guide to the Kathmandu Valley."

Much of the groundwork--"the pieces unevaluated and uninterpreted"-- for the book come from the published sources--both Nepali and Western. Slusser's achievement lies in providing the elegant structure that one needs "to make the cultural materials understandable." Both her assimilation of "the pieces" as well as her mastery of structure is in clear evidence in the early chapters of the book. In 61 odd pages (Chapters 2, 3, and 4) Slusser has given us one of the clearest outlines of Nepalese history available in any language. With exceptional clarity and conciseness she builds up her main themes in these chapters--the evolution and continuity of the culture system, its dovetailing with the continuity of Nepalese Monarchy, artificially divided into the House of Licchavis, the House of Thakuris, and the House of the Mallas. The political and cultural milieu, on the one hand, and the foreign contacts of Nepal during each of these periods, on the other, evidently show increasing Hinduisation of both polity and culture by successive dynasties.

As the mortal dramatis personae--as the patrons and creators of a complex culture--the Licchavis, the Thakuris, and the Mallas--in short, the Newar political and cultural elites were a pious, credulous and a somewhat addicted breed. The external stimulus for the growth of the culture has come almost continuously from India, and intermittently from contacts with the North. As noted by most observers on Newar culture, Slusser too finds that

Newar settlements have an urban character that persists even in the smallest villages.

Her explanation for this urbanity of Newar culture is that "the Newar towns and villages are generally oriented towards the river and the

streams that course through the more level Valley floor" (p. 83). This is at best an adequate description, but not a convincing explanation. One possible explanation may be early discovery of the art of brick- and tile-making--a crucial technology without which urban growth is inconceivable. The Newars appear to have known it for full two millennia. Among the "surface fragmentary remains" of Newar culture nothing is, perhaps, more important than the massive bricks that form the bedrock of its culture and urbanity. Another possible explanation for the growth of compact settlements and consequent socio-cultural syndromes is the Newar obligation to stay within the ritual and social space defined in terms of patrilocal and patrilineal boundaries with bahāls and bahis, nanis and āgams, degu-dyo and pālā-dyos as their radius. This cultural phenomenon is maintained largely through such instruments of social control and government as the guthis, rites, rituals, and, of course, a crowded calendar of communal festivals in familial as well as public sanctuaries. Despite Slusser's concentration on cities, courts, capitals, communities, and settlements, the amount of space and attention devoted to these instruments of cultural identity, maintenance and solidarity is scanty and dispersed. One wonders if Newar addiction to ritualism falls within Slusser's formula of "the cultural history."

Part II of Nepal Mandala, consisting of four chapters 4-9 on Settlements and Structures, comprise the core of Slusser's book. This is also the most exciting and controversial part of the book, laced with "delicately engineered reconstructions--both debatable and subjective." Nowhere are the limits of "surface archaeology" in greater evidence than in these chapters. Her credentials as an archaeologist notwithstanding, Slusser has done no digging in any site, at least not in the broad daylight. It is, of course, not her fault that archaeology is a taboo word in the Nepal Valley. To dig is to invite divine as well as human wrath--almost as good as digging one's own grave. Slusser's concentration on architecture is puzzling, not because she herself has done no digging, but because

- a. no building has survived in the Valley which is datable earlier than the 12th-13th century A.D.;
- b. for the most part present superstructures represent continuous restorations, following too frequent fires, earthquakes, and other tolls of time;
- c. even the locations of the Licchavi capitals and well-documented palaces such as Mānagrha, Kailāsakūtabhawana, and Bhadrādhivāsa are matters of wild conjecture.

This leaves not much room for a serious and well-documented architectural history. Yet Slusser's certitude is intoxicating and infectious:

We know, therefore, that in architecture, as in so many other aspects of Valley culture, there was an unbroken continuum. (p. 127)

Her data and arguments are tenuous and fragmentary, laced with her favourite expression "almost certainly", an odd turn of phrase for a trained archaeologist to use so lavishly all over the text. At several places, she is neither here nor there. To cite a classic example,

But even so, some escape dating altogether, such as the 'Svayambhū Caitya (Plate 274), which seems almost certainly to be very early, but which, as Pal discusses, may in fact be late. (p. 174)

On the basis of the extant physical remains, the surviving monuments and documentary references Slusser attempts to reconstruct "a certain understanding of early Nepali architecture." Comparing their elements and structures, their idiom and style with the known successors of the Malla period as well as with contemporary architecture of ancient India, she arrives at interesting, but not unforeseen conclusions:

I believe Nepali architecture (is) firmly rooted in India, particularly the Gupta, and even Kuṣāṇa tradition..... an assessment now tempered by the study of Ulrich Wiesner (1978) ... in which the Indian source, Kuṣāṇa and Gupta, of the Newar style temple is convincingly demonstrated. (p. 186 and footnote 109)

The alleged formality of Newar town planning is investigated in the section on life histories of five communities (pp. 86-106). Conscious planning, according to Slusser, "is quite possible" because of the Newar familiarity with Vāstuvidyā. At the same time, she appears to think that, like fortifications and walling around the city, the conscious attempt to bring the socio-religious structures of the towns in conformance with the Vāstuśāstras may have been "a recent veneer"--"accelerated under the orthodoxy of Sthiti Malla and his successors" (p. 94). Recent researches of Kölver and Gustchov on Bhaktapur, Patan, and Kathmandu seem to show that these cities were ritually and socially defined spaces divided into the sacred and the profane areas with well-defined routes for gods and men, for the living and the dead, including the commemoration of the dead. Slusser's feeling, however, is that

the splendour of the Newar town design seems to emanate more from an innate sense of aesthetics, a natural rhythmic articulation achieved over a long time span than a conscious organization of space according to dictate (p. 94).

Slusser's quest for the Licchavi period capital, particularly Aṃśuvarman's palace Kailāsakūṭabhawana, is an exciting piece of detective writing, except that she makes the same "egregious error of place-identification" scholars so often tend to make. Her identification of the palace site with Kelāchem Chowk in Jaisi Deval is a classic example of an excellent methodology on a false trail. Kelāy Chowk is a small domestic courtyard surrounded by ordinary houses. Next to the courtyard is a minor shrine dedicated to Sithi-dyo (Kārttikeya)--usually a guardian deity on palace ramparts. Little bands of Thasi and Balambū villagers come to pay their annual pilgrimage to this shrine containing

Malla period polychrome painted wood image--believed to have been stolen from Balambu Village. The most powerful scent was thrown on this false trail by two mid-14th century colophons, containing a reference to "Udasimhadeva the nobleman descended from the dynasty of Kailāsakuta in the district of Yaṅgala" (southern half of Kathmandu). Notwithstanding the anthropological concept of field work Slusser was "committed to teach her assistants"--the impeccable historians, on their own right--the fatal and biological leap was taken when the colophons were interpreted as if Kailāsakūtabhawana was in Yaṅgala. The colophons certainly do not say so. Recently, on the basis of a careful analysis of the place-names and directions mentioned in the undated Nārayan Caur, Naxāl inscription of Jayadeva II, Michael Witzel has convincingly shown that the most likely site of Kailāsakūtabhawana is around Taṅgāla--the find-spot of large brick walls built of bricks inscribed with the legend Śrī Mahāsāmāntāmsuvarmaṇaḥ. If Aṃśuvarman's palace-site is in Taṅgāla, to look for it in Yaṅgāla with such seriousness is yet another distressing evidence of the limits of surface archaeology.

The third part of the book is an analysis of Newar pantheon, their source and transformation. It consists of four chapters--Chapters 9, 10, 11, and 12. Although Slusser confesses

the understanding of Nepalese religion depends on a multiplicity of approaches and methods, flexible and varied to suit the material (p. 222)

the main data in this part of the book come from the monuments--sculptures, primarily, and bronzes and paintings, marginally. The cultural process at work in the Nepal Valley is more clearly outlined in these chapters than in the second part of the book. Here Slusser didn't have to plod through "delicate reconstructions": the sculptures speak eloquently of her continuum hypothesis.

Newar pantheon is dominated by two formal systems--Hinduism and Buddhism, syncretically fused by Hindu Śakti cults and Buddhist tantrism. Underlying both the formal systems is the third stratum of indigenous elements and belief consisting of the nature gods, particularly such deities invested in trees and stones, birds and serpents, various animals, mountains and fire, and especially water. Their shrines are hypaetheral and the cult objects are often aniconic. Central to the Newar mode of worship is the emphasis placed upon the supremacy of the female principle which, according to Slusser, "is but a reassertion of much older cults of the Mother Goddesses that prevailed in Nepal from at least neolithic times" (p. 215).

The cultural process at work is primarily one of annexation and inclusion: the formal systems taking over the informal ones, the primordial cults taken over by the imported pantheon and iconography, often one grafted onto the other. But more often it is also the other way round--the Indian gods are transformed unrecognizably in the process of localization. The changing fortunes of Kārttikeya--so popular

in Licchavi Nepal--inexplicably overtaken by the relatively late coming inelegant populist Gaṇeśa, the transformation of Nāṭeswara as a guardian deity, the cult of Bhīmasena as a god of trade, and of course, Indra as a pilloried though adorable thief--are only a few cases in point.

Undoubtely, Slusser is right in suggesting that

Brahmanism in the Kathmandu Valley does not seem to be sufficiently different from that of India to merit particular attention. But the local aspects of Nepalese Buddhism, together with its evolution and dissolution over the years, demand just that. (p. 222)

This promise, however, remains unfulfilled in Slusser's treatment of Newar Buddhism (Chapter 10). The underlying reasons for the dissolution of Buddhism, including the secularization of the too numerous viḥāras of the Valley, are neither convincingly analysed nor documented. The apparent chronological order--the Licchavi, the Transitional, the Malla, and the Contemporary Scene--in which the chapter is organized is somewhat deceptively neat. Slusser makes sweeping statements without producing any evidence to support them. "Buddhism appears to have reached its zenith during the Transitional Period" (p. 281), "All (that) has transpired to efface Buddhism in Malla Nepal" (p. 290), "decline and virtual dissolution of Buddhism in the Kathmandu Valley" began to set in by the end of the twelfth century (p. 286). If Buddhism can be interpreted as a system of ethics concerned with personal salvation, the means sought for such an end have been different in succeeding phases in the evolution of the doctrine. There is no dearth of evidence (Tibetan sources, for instance) to show that literary-intellectual as well as artistic-creative activities inspired by Buddhist faith continued till the rise of the three city-states in the Nepal Valley. Slusser appears to use sculpture or monuments as a standard of measurement of the vigour of the doctrine. There may not necessarily be such a correlation because the creative energies of a society may find different medium in different phases of its history. The Buddhist bronzes and paintings of the Malla period may indicate a change of taste, but not necessarily the complete dissolution of quality. Nor were all the late Buddhist cult objects "made for the Newar traders by Tibetans with stock inscriptions in Newari", "purely Tibetan replete with Central Asiatic and Chinese influences" (p. 289). To give just one telling example, the 19th-century bilampau (narrative scroll) of Viśwantara Jātaka at the Berlin Museum of Indian Art shows that the standard of Buddhist art was maintained by Newar painters till so late in the day. The astonishing overgeneralizations are somewhat out of place in a book so well-documented and meticulously researched.

The last two chapters of the book make unforgettable reading. They deal with what Slusser calls "ancient indigenous root divinities of the Valley." What characterizes their cults is their informalism, their ambivalence, and above all their prime importance in the worship of the Newars. Central among these cults are the cults of the Mother Goddesses

(the ajimā worship). More often than not, the imported "formal" goddesses have been grafted onto root/folk/indigenous goddesses. For example,

Maiti Devi is almost certainly a riverine māi or ajimā, fundamentally a chthonic divinity who long predated both Mahāmāyūri (Vajrayāna) and Kaumāri (Hindu-Śakti). (p. 336)

Here, then, is a prototypical case--a riverine goddess of indigenous origins was transformed into Mahāmāyūri--a Buddhist Vajrayāna goddess. She was later on annexed into the Hindu Śakti pantheon of Aṣṭamātrikā cults as a Kaumāri. A number of analyses in these chapters show that the substratum of Newar worship is the root-folk-indigenous layer transformed by the ritualism and formalism, by the Hindu-Buddhist polytheism and iconography.

Slusser the anthropologist clearly overtakes Slusser the archaeologist in these--as in some of the early, chapters. The disturbing question here is: how old are these "indigenous cults"? Did they really prevail "widely in prehistoric times since the neolithic age" (p. 307)? Slusser seems to believe that they did. The foundations are of uncertain antiquity. Some of the sites of the Mother Goddesses--river-banks, ghats, etc.--may prove to be ancient. Most cult objects are aniconic and primitive. When they are iconic they are represented mostly in the toranas, conforming to late iconographic details which are tantric, vajrayāna or śakti. But not all Mother Goddesses are in such locations; some are in the city centre, others are in the cardinal limits of the city. In Kathmandu, such sites have legendary tales purporting to explain the location of a particular Mother Goddess--Luti, Lumarhi, Lucubholu. But such "origin stories" are prevalent also about tantric Paculi Bhairava and Mahānkala Bhairava, and most unexpectedly of Sighah Caitya! A number of these stories smack of late after-thoughts--one or two at least as late as Pratāpa Malla, a period when gods and god-like magicians seem to prefer to walk in the Valley.

The main conclusion of Slusser's study of Newar pantheon is clear: with the exception of grāma-devatas, root-folk-indigenous and assorted riverine gods and goddesses, Newar religion is by and large a provincial outpost of Indian polytheism. Slusser's analyses of Newar art, architecture and religion come to similar conclusions. Not that they are new or startling. They are not particularly revealing. For if we peel off the cultural strata of any Western country, no matter in which continent it is, we are likely to arrive at some uniform conclusions: their roots are Judaic-Christian and Greco-Roman with regional and provincial variations. But does such reductionism really help to interpret or explain such distinct cultures of the West as the Byzantine or the Renaissance?

Finally, to come back to Slusser's continuum hypothesis. At the present state of our knowledge, there are perhaps far too many gaps in Nepalese political and cultural history to be able to talk with any

confidence and certitude. Between Jayadeva II (A.D. 733) and Jayasthiti Malla (A.D. 1382-1395) the political history of Nepal is merely a tantalizing string of names collated with labour from the colophons of many manuscripts and a few dozen fragmentary inscriptions which contain remarkably little history. The darkness which surrounds the sudden emergence of the Licchavis in A.D. 464 and their equally abrupt fizzling out are too uncomfortable brackets of ancient Nepalese history. The mystery which surrounds the obscure social origins of Jayasthiti Malla is at present impenetrable. Numerous monuments, Buddhist vihāras, offices and palaces prominently mentioned in Licchavi epigraphy cannot be identified with any certainty. Several Licchavi settlements are today desolate rice fields; some key sites like Deopātan and Hādīgāon stand mute and benumbed by the ravages of time and men. Why and when they were obliterated and abandoned as political and cultural centres we do not know. In fact, nothing less than a gaping discontinuity is writ large on the history of Nepal--a discontinuity which can at best be glossed over by such handy terms as "the Transitional Period."

The book contains useful appendices on eras and calendars, on scripts and languages in use in the Nepal Valley, including a very valuable chronology of kings and their known regnal years, and an inventory of Licchavi inscriptions. The bibliography is extensive, particularly in listing the publications of the Saṃsodhana Mandala. Here, for the first time, is a book in which a Western scholar gratefully acknowledges the contributions made by Nepalese scholars. In the past, books on Nepalese history and culture written by authorities on Nepal--Western as well as Nepalese--used to be summaries of the writings of British-Indian civil/medical/military cadre. It is gratifying to see that this is no longer possible. The acknowledgements to Nepalese sources are ample, and in a few cases, fulsome. To give just one example, Slusser singles out Śri Pāca Prithvinārāyaṇa Shāhāko Upadeśa (Pātan: Jagadamba Press, 1968) edited by Naya Rāj Pant and others as "an outstanding contribution on the history of Nepal after A.D. 1769" (p. 78, footnote 168). It is an edition of a late manuscript of 10 pages in length. The edition is in five parts, running to a total of 1350 pages, -- the magnum opus of the group, according to its principal editor (Preface, p. 4). The first part, oddly enough, begins with an anaemic versified interpretation of Prithvinārāyaṇ Shāh by Naya Rāj Pant, displaying the latter's competence in Sanskrit prosody. Then comes the prose version, not of the text, but of the poem. The actual text of upadeśa the book purports to edit is in an appendix between pp. 413-431! The edition includes a 109-page errata and addenda. A greater part of the 1350 pages is padded with extracts from the 1878 Bhāṣā Vamsāvalī. Compare this antediluvian "textual/critical edition" with Fr Ludwig Stiller's Prithvi Narayan Shah in the Light of His Divya Upadesh (Ranchi: 1968). A slim volume of 78 pages, it contains not only an eminently readable English translation of the Upadeśa text, but also one of the best available interpretations of it, clearly and concisely bringing out the life and times of the soldier-statesman. Slusser's adulations of Saṃsodhana Mandala is understandable, but why she chose such an inept specimen of their scholarship to do so is incomprehensible.

A sound knowledge of Sanskrit and Newari, particularly epigraphic Sanskrit and Classical Newari, tempered with some grounding in Nepalese paleography and calendars, is a basic prerequisite for working on the cultural materials of the Nepal Valley. Despite Slusser's association with "impeccable historians" the book is not flawless. Factual errors are not rare. To exemplify from a single page (p. 9), the name newāra is used for the first time, not in A.D. 1654, but in A.D. 1652. On the same page Slusser writes:

The first local occurrence (of the name Nepāla) is early seventh century, when King Aṃśuvarmā began an edict with an expression swasti nepālevyaḥ.

Nearly a century ago, King Vasantadeva had used the phrase in A.D. 512, and the form is not nepālevyaḥ, but naipālevyaḥ. Slusser dates the invasion of Mukunda Sena to mid-thirteenth century (p. 57, p. 69). The confirmed dates are A.D. 1525/26. Suvarṇapraṇalināgara is not Yaṅgala (p. 90), but Yambu, the northern half of Kathmandu, particularly Thahiti. On page 286, Slusser includes Mānandhar and Chitrakār among the Urāy castes, which is not the case. Translation and transliteration errors are too many to list. Some sampling is given below:

Vṛsadeva for Vṛṣadeva (p. 22 and ff.); Bhaktivada for Bhaktivāda (p. 75); deśa gumne for deśa ghumne (p. 93); karṣāṇa for karṣāṇa (p. 37); khā is door or gate, not boundary (p. 99); Kanehala, not Karnel (p. 192); Plate 503, not plate 508 (p. 197); Pāhācare, not Pācare (p. 232); Lākhe, not lakhe (p. 238); Lumbini is not inside Nepal's frontier with Bihar, but with Uttar Pradesh (p. 271); the A.D. equivalent of one of the dates in the Thahiti Stupa inscription is not A.D. 1482, but A.D. 1582; bahidyo boyegu is not "looking at the Gods in Vihāra" but "displaying the Gods of the Vihāra" (p. 303); gūlā, not gulā (p. 302); gathu, not gāthā (p. 347); sāparu, not saparu (p. 303); nā lākegu, not na lākegu (p. 340); paṭa, not pāṭa (p. 346); jāti ajimā, not jātaka ajimā (p. 363).

These are, of course, minor details, mentioned here mainly because the book comes from a distinguished writer sponsored by an equally distinguished publisher. No matter how one responds to it, Mary Slusser's Nepal Mandala will be considered as an outstanding contribution to the cultural history of the Nepal Valley. For many years to come it will continue to be our standard reference work on the culture of the Valley. The only foreseeable substitute for Slusser is the spade—an accursed implement in the Nepal Valley since Balbla first violated its sacred earth for wet rice cultivation.