

NEWS

Human Rights Violations in the Himalayas - the Domination of Elites

6-10 December 1991, Kathmandu

As a result of democratisation in Nepal and the newly gained freedom of speech, it is now permitted to discuss potentially explosive topics in public. Between 6th and 10th of December 1991 in the Hotel Vajra (Kathmandu), about 100 human-rights activists, environmentalists, politicians, journalists and scientists from all over Nepal, as well as from Ladakh, Garwhal, Sikkim, bhutan (refugees), Tibet (refugees), Germany, England and the Netherlands met to examine critically human rights problems and the dominance of elites: the meeting was organized by NGO (Nepal Watch)/Berlin, and the Peace Movement Nepal, Lalitpur.

In an unusually free atmosphere there were discussions on human rights and human-rights violations connected with the following topics: environment, health, peace, education, language, access to information, freedom of speech, political participation, women, children, bonded labour, religion, culture, rights of ethnic minorities, land conflicts, racism, foreign aid, foreign media, tourism. From the discussion it became obvious, how much the ethnic minorities (who in some cases are not 'minorities' at all) in the Himalayas feel politically, economically and culturally oppressed. Above all religious elites and the centralist governments in Dehli, Kathmandu, Timphu and Beijing were held responsible for transforming ethnic groups into aliens. Nepal, is the largely unknown fact, of how many

ethnic groups there are and their number in relation to the national population. Tamang spokesmen, for example, estimate that they represent 17% of the whole population, and non-Hindus altogether about 75%. In the conference they assess that as long as the Nepalese constitution proclaims Hinduism a state-religion, many people would not reveal that they actually belong to another religion: the disadvantages are too great.

Massive Human-rights violations were reported anew from Tibet and Bhutan. In both cases there was no reaction from India or Nepal. In the case of Bhutan there has been even no reaction worldwide. About 70,000 Nepalese people here had to flee Bhutan, and it is said that 300 come each day to seek help in the refugee-camps in eastern Nepal. From Tibet also about 300 people escape daily to Nepal, there often being maltreated, extorted and robbed.

The participants at the meeting agreed upon the following statement (interestingly the demands in connection with the situation in Tibet were not reported on)...

We call on the Governments concerned to ensure equality of all ethnic, social, religious and linguistic groups, and to take appropriate measures to enable members of all these groups to participate fully in society and in decision-making processes. Surveys should be conducted to determine the size and living conditions of the various ethnic groups in the region.

The constitution of any country should not promote, safeguard, or grant preferential treatment to any particular religion.

The right to a healthy environment is the most fundamental of human rights. Governments concerned should take appropriate measures to prevent the further destruction of the environment. We strongly urge Governments to set up environmental courts.

Governments should ensure education is available in the mother tongue of different ethnic groups, at least at primary level. They should make available existing resources, including teachers and materials, to enable this to take place.

Governments in the Himalayan region that do not have a language policy and planning should initiate such measures.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child should be implemented. Special measures should be taken to improve the lives of women and to prevent their continued exploitation.

Communication through the media of announcements, reports and official Government statements should be in the languages of the people.

We call for the increased awareness of, and support for, the plight of the Tibetan people in their struggle for the restoration of their human rights, including the right to self-determination.

The world community should extend support and solidarity to the ongoing movement for human rights, justice and democracy in Bhutan, and should provide relief measures and protection to the refugees in India and Nepal.

The protection and rights of all refugees in the region should be guaranteed under the international laws concerned.

Finally, it was proposed and accepted that a Himalayan Network is

established to monitor, promote and document the human rights situation in the Himalayan region. It will be called "Peace Himalaya" with its headquarters in Kathmandu.

Ludmilla Tütting

Society and Culture in the Himalayas

9-11 December 1991, New Dehli

The entire Himalayan region stretching from the Pamirs-Hindukush-Karakoram trijunction in the northwest to Arunachal Pradesh in the northeast has attracted scholars, travellers, adventurers and mystics since ancient times. In recent times there has been a revival of interest in this region not only because of its distinct eco-cultural system, historical, socio-economic and scientific character but also due to its increasing geopolitical importance. It was in early 1989 that a group of area specialists and personalities from the Himalayan states of India, namely Sh. T.N.Kaul, former diplomat, Ven. Kushok Bakola, the spiritual personality of the Buddhists of the Himalayas, Sh.Ghulam Rasool Santosh, a leading artist from Kashmir, Prof. B.R. Grover, a historian, Prof.K.N. Pandita, scholar of Oriental studies, Prof. K. Warikoo of Jawaharlal Nehru University and a specialist in Central Asian and Himalayan studies and some other experts formed a non-profit voluntary organisation - Himalayan Research and Cultural Foundation - at New Delhi. The Foundation is engaged in systematic, in-depth and micro-studies of history, culture, art and literature, social structures, economic, geopolitical and other issues pertaining to the Himalayan and

pertaining to the Himalayan and adjoining regions in a holistic manner adopting an inter-disciplinary approach.

The Foundation organized a three day National Seminar on "Society and Culture in the Himalayas" at the Jawaharlal Nehru University Campus, New Delhi (India) from December 9 to 11, 1991. Attracting wide participation from specialists and cultural personalities from the Himalayan states of Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh hills and Jammu and Kashmir, the seminar was the first such organized initiative in India to involve experts from the grass roots with an established disciplinary specialisation connected with the Himalayan and adjoining Central Asian region. The seminar provided a forum for scholars, literati and cultural personalities from the entire Himalayan region to share their experiences and opinion with leading social and natural scientists from Jawaharlal Nehru University and other institutions. The deliberations of the seminar were organized in 5 technical sessions covering almost all aspects of the society and culture in the Himalayas in a thematic manner. More than twenty-five research papers were presented and discussed in the seminar and important recommendations were adopted at the concluding session.

In the first session which focussed on "ecological and geopolitical perspectives of the Himalayas", three keynote presentations were made. Prof. P.S.Ramakrishnan, of the School of Environmental Sciences, JNU made case studies of Kumaon, Garhwal, Sikkim Himalayas and the north-eastern hills thereby illustrating linkages between ecological, social and cultural dimensions of devel-

opment process. Dr.A.R.Yousuf, Reader in Kashmir University explained the changes in the ecology of Kashmir Himalayan lakes occurring due to adverse impact of modernisation. The geopolitical imperatives of the Himalayas were analysed in detail by Sh.T.N.Dhar, president of Lucknow based voluntary organisation SHERPA.

About ten papers were presented in the second session which dealt exclusively with the "Himalayan society and culture in a historical perspective". The participation of a learned delegate from Mongolia, Mr.Jigjidiin Byamba, Member Parliament and Dy.Chairman of Association of Mongolian Free Writers, who discussed the cultural and historical ties between peoples of The Indian Himalayas and Mongolia lent an international character to this seminar. Prof.Grover explained the methodology and approach to the study of Western Himalayan history and culture during the medieval times. Whereas Prof. K.N.Pandita's paper dealt with the contribution of Kashmir to Indian culture, Prof. P.N.Pushp analysed the importance of Kashmir as the crucible of cultural interaction. Dr. R.P.Khatana highlighted the dilemma faced by the Gujjars in Jammu and Kashmir over the past few years. Similar case studies on Sikkim Society and culture and Adi tribes of Arunachal Pradesh were made by Dr. Aparna Bhattacharya of Calcutta University and Dr. Tamo Mibang, of Arunachal University respectively. The participants were enthralled by the range and depth of case studies presented and discussed in the seminar, particularly when these were made by scholars who have spent their life times in this field.

The third session, "Himalayan frontiers in recent history", witnessed

lively discussion. Whereas John S.Lall, former Dewan of Sikkim gave his opinion on the Sino-Indian border in the western sector, Mr.A.K.Ray, former diplomat shed interesting light on the strategic aspects of the Himalayan frontiers of India. Dr.Warikoo provided a historico-political perspective of Kashmir's relationship with its frontier territories. A Tibetan scholar from Sarnath, Acharya Jampa Samten gave a biographical account of Dorjjeff, the key person involved in Anglo-Russian-Tibetan frontier diplomacy during the Curzon years. This session was marked by intense debate on various strategic and political issues involving the Himalayan frontiers of India and the participation of three former diplomats in the deliberations lent a special character to the seminar.

"Modernisation and change in the Himalayas" formed the theme of discussions in the fourth session. The problems of changing society and cultural dilemma faced by Ladakhis at present were analysed by Prof. Harjeet Singh of JNU. Similar case studies about the impact of modernisation on the society and culture of Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim and Himachal Pradesh were made by Dr. S.Dutta (Arunachal University), Dr. Anand Kumar (JNU), Dr. Yashi Choudon (Gangtok), Dr. Pamela Kanwar (Shimla) and several others. The face to face interaction between experts from the Himalayan region and well known social scientists helped them in a better understanding of the problems and issues related to Himalayan society and culture.

The Seminar participants deliberated in detail various resolutions before the same were finally adopted. The seminar called upon the central government and concerned Himalayan state

governments to initiate steps for preservation of rich and variegated cultural heritage of the Himalayan region. It urged upon the government to fulfill the cultural aspirations of the hill people and support specific result oriented programmes recommended by the Himalayan research and cultural Foundation in order to accelerate the process of social development keeping due regard for local milieu, needs and cultural quest.

The proceedings of this Seminar are expected to be published soon. For further details write to: Dr. K.Warikoo (Secretary, Himalayan Research and Cultural Foundation), Associate Professor, Central Asian and Himalayan Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi - 110067.

K. Warikoo

The Anthropology of Nepal: A Franco-Nepalese Seminar, 18-20 March 1992, Kathmandu

This seminar, convened jointly by the National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS) and the French Embassy in Kathmandu, intended to present recent scientific results, discuss methodological problems and raise several issues on the anthropology of Nepal. Three areas of research were explored.

1. Urban studies. In his paper, "Buddhism as seen through Svayambhu Purana", Kamal P. Malla showed the importance of this religious text in Newar Buddhism. He analyzed the genesis of the Svayambhu Purana in the particular context of the Kathmandu valley, and its different sources, especially Indian. Annick Hollé, Gerard

Toffin and Krishna Prasad Rimal offered a paper on "The 32 Maharjan tols of Kathmandu city". They stressed the role of the Maharjan (Jyapu) in the growth of the present capital of Nepal and explored the ritual functions of this group in the city. The three authors presented also the social and territorial organization of the Maharjan of Kathmandu - an organization without parallel in Patan and Bhaktapur - and for the first time pointed out the importance of *dhimay* drum in the social fabric of the town. Nadia Mercier gave a paper on "Socio-economic determinants of women's work in urban service sector", based on fieldwork carried out in 1988-1990. She discussed the changes introduced by women's work in the traditional family structure.

2. The anthropology of religion. Two papers dealt with Tibetan studies. Katia Buffetrille spoke on "Preliminary remarks on a Sherpa pilgrimage: the pilgrimage to the milk-lake in the district of Solu". She described this ritual practice and stressed its similarities with Tibetan tradition. However, she noted that Sherpa do not circumambulate sacred mountains but mainly lakes. Mireille Helffer, an ethnomusicologist who studied the Gaine in the sixties, gave a paper on "A recent phenomenon: the emergence of Buddhist monasteries around the stupa of Bodnath". She questioned the present revival of Tibetan Buddhism in the Kathmandu valley and recalled the ancient links between this region and Tibet. Ram Niwas Pandey spoke on "The religious beliefs of people of Western Nepal". The integration of local divinities into the Hindu pantheon was vividly discussed by participants. R.N. Pandey rightly outlined that Masta was at the same time a territorial

divinity and a lineage deity of many high caste families. Finally, Jag Man Gurung spoke on "Continuity and change in the Gurung culture of Nepal". He argued that funeral rituals were one of the stronghold of Gurung identity during the days of Hinduization.

3. Anthropology and Development. Mangal Siddhi Manandhar and Caitanya Misra presented the CNAS research programme on the remote areas and their study in West Nepal. Corneille Jest presented the Gulmi-Argha Khanci CNRS project which was launched in late 1985. Both papers questioned the relevance of basic research for development and decision-makers. To be sure, besides raising heritage consciousness in the different ethnic groups, the anthropologist can be a link between tradition and change. Prayag Raj Sharma expressed the view that road construction is not a correct indicator of development in the remote areas. On the other hand, Denis Blamont, a geographer himself, gave a paper on "Demographic growth, natural constraints and the diversification of the rural productions systems: Bajhang, Jumla, and Dhading-Rasuwa". He emphasized the recent standardization of crop systems all over the Hills of Nepal, from West to East. By and large, this trend encompasses the ethnic boundaries.

Gopal Singh Nepali and Prayag Raj Sharma played a vigorous role in the debate and all the discussions. G.S. Nepali, who spoke on "The role of anthropology in Nepal", outlined the need of theoretical training for Nepalese anthropologists. Referring to the great amount of anthropological studies published in French by CNRS scholars, P.R. Sharma urged these works be translated in English.

In closing, Dyuti and Isvar Baral (Central Dept. of Sociology, TU/Royal Nepal Academy) presented the new official policy concerning cultural pluralism. In fact, since the promulgation of the new constitution, which explicitly guarantees the right of every community to conserve and to promote its language and culture, an unprecedented situation arose. The controversial question of the interrelationship between national identity and minority cultures was posed and passionately discussed by participants.

Seven French films on the anthropology of Nepal were shown. Most of these films were made in the 1970s and can now be considered as historical documents.

The papers will be published by the French Cultural Centre, Kathmandu.

Gérard Toffin

**Journey through a Century: A Tale of the two Cities,
7-28 May 1992, Kathmandu**

The recently held photo exhibition on 'Images of a City - The Old Townscape of Kathmandu and Patan: 1910-1992' was a memorable social event in Kathmandu. A distinguished gathering of elites from various walks of life had assembled on the occasion of its inauguration on May 7, 1992. The guest of honour invited to address this inaugural function was no less a person than the Nepali Congress Party supremo, Mr. Ganeshman Singh himself. The pictures made a vivid documentation of the towns of Kathmandu and Patan as they have changed and transformed themselves under the impact of 'development' and

'modernization' in Nepal over the past eighty years or so. It was jointly organized by the Nepal Heritage Society and the Urban Development through Local Efforts Project (UDLE) in Nepal. To have thought of such a theme was a commendable act in itself, since it was perhaps the first exhibition of its kind. The show was made possible by the energy, ingenuity and resourcefulness of a small but active band of persons consisting of Nepalese, Germans and some other nationals working in Nepal. That the exhibition was a tremendous success can be easily deduced from the keen public response it evoked in Kathmandu, both among native and foreign audience. There was a record number of visitors to the exhibition during the entire three-week duration for which it remained open in the Birendra Art Gallery at the Balmandir building in Naxal. The organizers deserve our sincere praise and appreciation, as well as our gratitude.

The objective of the exhibition, described in the printed handout, was 'to create awareness of the changes' taking place in Kathmandu and Patan in this century. Visitors to the exhibition could get enough of an idea of the extent of this change through the eyes of the camera in a most telling manner.

Unfortunately, all this change in the character and appearance of the town is not for the better. I am inclined to think that all these physical changes not only affect the architecture and style of individual house-making, but also alter the street scenes, the character of temple, public squares, monuments, open spaces, the city skyline - in short - the ambience and elan of these two towns as a whole.

The organizers disclaim any idea that their aim in putting together the

exhibition lay in 'glorifying a past'. This apologetic tone on their part has been prompted probably by the fact that the exhibition was made concentrating chiefly on the 'politically oppressive' and 'economically exploitative' Rana period of Nepal's history (1846-1950). This explanation was quite unnecessary, in my opinion, because the focus of nostalgic quality about it which it comes to acquire with due intervention of time. This is what has happened also in the case of the present Rana period exhibition. Watching the photographs of the exhibition has been a moving experience, especially to those people who grew up and spent their childhood in these towns. The now vanished face of Kathmandu looks so quiet, tranquil and placid - what one would like to have once again - in these pictures. This feeling gets far acuter, as the harried denizens of Kathmandu try to cope with their life in an over-crowded, over-polluted and traffic-choked city.

Altogether, 137 black and white photographs in frames were put on display, hanging them on the walls of the large, spacious rooms of a former Rana palace. Photos were taken from the old box camera on a tall wooden stand, using glass negatives. The subjects covered by these photographs have included i) the street scenes, ii) vernacular architecture, iii) Rana palace architecture and gardens, iv) religious and secular monuments, such as temples, stupas, river-banks (Nep. *ghāṭs*) old Durbar squares, Clock tower (*ghaṇṭāghar*) and the Dharahara, v) the shots of the town damaged by the earthquake of 1934 and those during reconstruction, vi) festivals and peasants, vii) the Bagmati river and viii) ordinary people and soldiers in their normal dress and uniforms.

Nowadays, it is more common to find the admirers of old and by-gone things among higher business classes and nouveau riche class of Kathmandu. The concern for heritage preservation is also expressed more strongly by these people. It should, however, be remembered that the pace and direction of 'development' on which they put the blame for Kathmandu's plight today, is the work of their hand to some extent. The 'development' creed earlier suited and favoured them up to a point. Hotel trade and tourism in Kathmandu has thrived by selling the idea of modern luxury and comfort concealed beneath the so-called cultural surface. It is they who are responsible for reducing a living culture into a piece of drawing-room decoration and its cheap commercialization. They would themselves live in the suburban residential areas and lament the loss of heritage in the inner cities. But an awareness in these matters from whatever direction is a desirable thing to have.

The amorphous change and rude transformation of Kathmandu, which the exhibition was well able to capture, however, gives little cause for rejoicing. There is so much thoughtlessness and lack of planning in everything going on in Kathmandu lately. The pace of construction and unplanned urban growth is simply mind-boggling. This follows no defined order and system. There are no guiding norms or rules for regulating the urban development of Kathmandu. The supply of basic civic amenities and minimum of hygiene are threatened.

In this background one cannot but admire the Rana rulers who showed a greater appreciation for the idea of a planned Kathmandu town, and gave evidence of a high urban aesthetic taste

and orderliness to it. Looking at the picture of the Juddha Road, the new Town-Hall and Nepal Bank buildings, the Bhugol Park, the uniformly designed row of houses at Indrachowk, the New Road gateway arch, the respect shown to the lay-out of Tundikhel, etc., one is struck by the presence of an unmistakable desire for planning, aesthetics and urban order, when this portion of the town was rebuilt after the earthquake of 1934. Some of the more pretentious buildings, like those of the Town-Hall and the Nepal Bank, were laid out on spacious premises with open grounds in front, fenced off by elegant wrought iron railings. Today we know how little respect Kathmandu gives to open, public spaces. More than anybody, the government and the corporations established by it are the greatest encroachers of public grounds. If we had only the sense to preserve the sanctity of this older Rana period town-planning, at least the New Road and Tundikhel area would have done us proud today. The curse of Kathmandu, therefore, is not its 'development' or 'modernization', as some people would like us to believe, but the haphazard method of doing things, which I call pseudo-modernization. If anything can redeem Kathmandu as a town, it is an even more modernized, efficient and orderly approach.

The many religious and secular structures adorning the towns of Kathmandu and Patan yesterday, individually may or may not have been in an ideal state of preservation, but they were certainly endowed with a dignity and atmosphere befitting them, because of plenty of open and unencroached open spaces surrounding them. The exhibition brings out this moral amply clearly. The tragedy of Kathmandu today is that we have neither any

energy, nor a collective will, nor the urge to be locally resourceful - so much that we do not even show cognizance of our most pressing problem - to check and put some order to our chaotic urban growth. The exhibition, I am sure, has succeeded in putting such questions into the minds of many onlookers. The success of the exhibition must be regarded to lie precisely here. Not to let its usefulness go to waste or fade into quick forgetfulness, it would be profitable, in my opinion, to bring out a catalogue of this exhibition with a short text and small-sized illustrations of the exhibited photos alongside it, so that its contribution to the public becomes more lasting and permanent.

Prayag Rai Sharma

Oral Traditions and Literature in Nepal,
22 May, 1992, Kathmandu

A growing interest in studies on oral literature among Western scholars became apparent with the formation of the Oral Tradition Study Group during the Franco-German conference on the Anthropology and History of Nepal in Arc-et-Senans in 1990. To explore the field and assess the "state of the art" in Nepal itself, where in the changed political context there is a renewed awareness about the multilingual heritage and cultural diversity of the country, the South Asia Institute, Kathmandu Branch Office, organized a one-day seminar on May 22, 1992.

The objective was to convene scholars who - in one way or another - work in the field of oral tradition studies, to discuss research findings, methodological problems and practical

aspects. It turned out that such a forum of discussion was indeed felt to be necessary, as interested scholars are spread in various different departments, or are not in the university at all. Significantly the interest was not only guided by academic questions but also by a genuine concern for the preservation of a cultural heritage. Maybe it was also symptomatic that among the Nepali contributors there were several poets, but no anthropologists. As Prof. D.P. Bhandari emphasized in his inaugural address, it is quite a different thing whether an oral tradition is "lived" or whether it is made an object of study. And it was perhaps one of the special characteristics of the seminar that several of the contributors spoke about traditions of which they themselves are - to some degree - still a part.

The papers focussed on the unique, rich, and multifunctional character of the various oral genres, such as myths, tales, songs and proverbs.

Prof. Krishna Chandra Mishra (Department of Hindi) in his paper on "Oral Tradition and Literature, with special focus on the Mid-eastern Tarai area, gave a short historical sketch of the role of oral traditions in South Asian religions. He pointed to the importance of oral transmission of vedic knowledge (e.g. *śruti*) in the earlier periods, when writing was still viewed with scorn. In later times, the orthodox scholars tended to look down on oral traditions, though these have always influenced the scriptures. That many folk cults of the 'people' (*loka*) gradually find a place in the written traditions can be observed in the Tarai region to this day. But numerous forms of orally transmitted knowledge, some

of which have an important educational value, are as yet unrecorded.

Sueyoshi Toba's paper on the "World View in the Khaling Creation Myth" was a vivid exemplification of the existential importance which oral traditions have for many ethnic groups in Nepal. Mr. Toba emphasized that for the Khaling Rai, as expressed in the creation stories, the universe is animated (which can also be deduced from grammatical markers) and largely anthropomorphic. His paper presented the myths of origin in its consecutive order: from the separation of heaven and earth, through various episodes like the story of the First Women who is in need of a husband and gives birth to the various species, to the migration of the ancestors to the present settlements.

Vairagi Kahila, member of the Royal Nepal Academy and a poet who is known for his association with the "Third Dimension" literary movement in the 60s, gave a paper (in Nepali) on the Limbu *tongsing mundhum*. The full ritual recitation and enactment of these oral texts, which recount the origin of man and society, lasts for three days (the recording is 30 hours long). He stressed that though the *phedangma* ('tribal priest') is regarded as higher in the ritual hierarchy, it is the *samba* or *yeba/yema* who is in charge of reciting the *tongsing mundhum*. This was exemplified by ritual invocations and the metaphors and idioms used to chase away *Nahen*, the Spirit of Jealousy.

Also Prof. Satya Mohan Joshi (Department of Newari) gave his paper in Nepali, which was clearly conducive to his style of presentation. As he spoke on "Folk Drama in Lalitpur.

Social Humour and Satire" his contribution could not escape giving examples of the joking exchanges which are enacted during the *Kārttik nāc*. This little known drama festival, which goes back more than 300 years to the time of the Patan ruler Siddhinarasimha, is staged by lay actors and lasts for several days. The humorous dialogues, as Prof. Joshi pointed out, are full of caricature and criticism, both of society and oneself.

Tulsi Divas, also a poet, who has published a collection of folk stories from all over Nepal at the Royal Nepal Academy some twenty years ago, presented a paper on "Nepalese Folk Tales about Specific Traits of Human Character" based on the aforementioned material. He, too, stressed the humorous side of these stories as well as the social meaning which is conveyed through them. Distinguishing between tales of cleverness, of foolishness, and of greed and stinginess, he showed that these narratives all serve to uncover not only individual shortcomings but also the hollowness of social formalities and injustice of economic imbalances.

Dr. Ram Dayal Rakesh (Department of Hindi) spoke on Maithili proverbs, pointing out the social and cultural meanings which they have. He gave various examples, classifying them according to their content (like proverbs relating to other social groups), and stressed that the most important thing in using a proverb in speech is using it wittily at the right time (for example in court to defend one's case). Thus, it is not enough to collect proverbs, but it is also necessary to study the context of their application, - which methodologically is not unproblematic.

Finally, Prof. Cuda Mani Bandhu (Department of Nepali) presented a paper on the "Use of Oral Traditions in Education." He emphasized that orally transmitted songs, tales, riddles and proverbs have already had an important educational value. Since the beginning of the century folk stories and songs were included in school books in Nepal, but they were later reduced under a new education policy during the Panchayat time. As Prof. Bandhu pointed out, many editions lack a sound methodology, which often leads to a distortion rather than a preservation of these traditions. Thus he warned that the genuine nature of folklore may eventually be destroyed by "fakelore".

Though the papers could only give glimpses of the numerous oral traditions in Nepal - as there were, for example, no contributions on Tibetan groups, Tamang, Magar, Gurung etc. - the richness of this type of cultural heritage became evident. It was generally felt necessary that such a meeting should be repeated, possibly on a broader scale (involving more foreign scholars), and the suggestion was brought up to found a Folklore Society to encourage and coordinate further collections and study of oral traditions all over Nepal.

Martin Gaenzle