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EDITORIAL

We would like to start by welcoming the participation of a group of researchers, working on the Hindukush, to our Bulletin. Prof. Dr. Hermann Kreutzmann of Friedrich-Alexander Universität in Erlangen-Nürnberg will coordinate information in this field. Their contributions, which will be published in future issues, will extend the Bulletin's geographical scope to the Karakorum range.

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The present issue is our first attempt to offer our readers a number of articles on a specific theme, music in the Himalayas. This represents a turning point in the evolution of the Bulletin. While keeping our primary objective of providing information about new events, books and projects in our fields of study, we felt the need to present European research in greater depth. This need has emerged as a growing number of researchers have indicated their interest in constituting a research network around the Bulletin.

Only a few collective works on Himalayan music have been published so far and none of them includes a compact disc. This subject has prompted a great deal of interest from our readers, which is in itself evidence of its relevance and vitality. We are pleased to present contributions from established scholars, both Western and Nepalese, who are pioneers in this domain, as well as from newcomers still working on their dissertations.

We would like to take this opportunity to encourage reseachers to pay more attention to music while they are in the field and to publish their observations. We cannot emphasize enough the need to have a good tape recorder, of DAT type, if recordings are to be edited properly. Ideally, recordings should be made both in context and in a more controlled environment in order to minimise incidental noise. It is important to note down what people say about their music and their instruments, as well as

their own classification of their repertoire. Photographs and drawings of the instruments should not be neglected. It would also be useful to have instruments made.

While we were working on this issue, three topics in particular appeared to have attracted too little research : music of Himalayan tribal groups, folk-songs of the Indo-Nepalese (wedding songs, children's songs, Badi repertoires, etc.) and non-religious music among Tibetan groups.

We would like to go a little further by mentioning two possible subjects that could be especially interesting to pursue within a collective framework.

The first one concerns chanted epics from farwestern Himalaya (e.g. the Chand dynasty epic) and their likely movement towards western and central Nepal. Some recordings are already available, but much remains to be done. Both an anthropological study of various socio-cultural contexts of these epics, and a musicological study of the various performances involving different instruments, rhythms, etc. are necessary.

The second concerns what could be called the Tihar repertoire, although some of the songs belonging to it are also performed outside this specific festival. Among these songs, for example, are the well-known *Sorathi*, performed by the Magar, Tharu and Gurung or the *bhailo* songs performed throughout the country.

If you are interested in working on either of these subjects, please contact us. If there is sufficient interest, a seminar on the subject could be organised.

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There is still time to submit contributions on the use of photography in research on the Himalayas and the way this is understood by local people. The deadline for submission is June 15, 1998.

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INTRODUCTION

by Franck Bernède

Expressions of ethnic diversity, the variety of musical genres in the Himalayas, cannot be reduced to unilateral definitions or analyses. At the heart of different groups, music is the knowledge of specialists or of artisanal castes; it permeates all of society. Revealing identities, whether through festive or commemorative rituals, music, or more broadly any organised event with the phenomenon of sound, is one of the preferred areas of study in the humanities.

Since the pioneer work of A.A. Bake in 1931 and 1955-56, the field of ethnomusicological research in the Himalayas has not stopped growing. Thus, it seemed the time to present the research in this area. Beyond different geographical and cultural anchors, the articles in this issue are evidence of a great variety of approaches touching upon aesthetics, performance, apprenticeships, organology, myths and rituals. There was no question of choosing a particular approach but of revealing the vitality of the multifarious discipline.

This issue has been organised by geo-cultural area. The first group of articles presents different facets of Newar musical tradition and choreography. After a homage to the Newar god of music and dance by R.K. Duwal and M. Maharjan, R. Widdess, traces the history of the *caryå* songs of Newar Tantric Buddhism and their recent revival. He discusses the interesting question of the movement of a religious tradition and a non-ritual art form. I follow up with a description of the apprenticeship of the *dhimay* drum, specifically the role of musical discourse in the expression of territorial identities in this same community. Starting with a comparative analysis of several spring songs (*basanta gīt*), I. Grandin suggests means for considering the possible links between the musical tradition of the Maharjan peasants and the great traditions of the Indian sub-continent.

The articles devoted to the Damāi tailor-musicians in Gorkha accentuate two major manifestations of musical-ritual expression of this community. C. Tingey explores the nature of relations between two groups of musicians during Dasaĩ — "auspicious women" who sing inside shrines and men whose music is played out-of-doors. She shows how music reveals different phases of the ritual. As a counterpoint, S. Laurent writes on the notion of style based on an analysis of the music played in the temple of Manakāmanā. She shows how each instrumental ensemble develops from particularisms at the centre of an extremely codified ritual genre.

Emphasizing a cognitive approach, P. Moisala studies the *ghāṅtu* song and dance among the Gurung. She simultaneously analyses musical performance and choreographic description. The image of flowing water appears in the structural model of this repertoire.

Beginning with a portrait of the late Ram Saran Nepali, a *sarangi* player, H. Weisethaunet discusses notions of style and tradition among the Gāine caste of minstrels, whose lifestyles are indissociable from their music.

M. Helffer's article on the drums of Nepalese mediums relies on examples kept in the Department of Ethnomusicology of the Musée de l'Homme in Paris. She mentions the many observations of ethnologists and urges a comparative study of the manufacture and use of frame drums in this area.

Despite the geographical and cultural distance of the Tibeto-Burman group, the Hani of Yunnan, the editors have decided to include P. Bouchery's article, the first study in a western language on the musical traditions of this group. With their six vocal repertoires and their distinctive instruments, the distance separating the Tibeto-Burman populations from the Himalayas can be measured, presupposing their permeability to foreign influences.

Finally, a brief note by C. Jest accompanies the recording of imitations of bird songs by Gyendra Rana Magar. Man conceives bird songs as intelligible language. It is used by hunters to capture birds.

In addition to these contributions, two bibliographies are included, one by M. Helffer of Western sources, and the other by R.S. Darnal of Nepalese sources. These references cover the period from 1960 to the present and are a valuable tool for further research.

We wished to present reviews of the principal books published in Himalayan ethnomusicology: M. Helffer, *Mchod-rol. Les instruments de la musique tibétaine*; I. Grandin, *Music and Media in Local Life*; P. Moisala, *Cultural Cognition in Music*; and C. Tingey, *Auspicious Music in a Changing Society*. We thought it useful to translate the last three previously published book reviews from French.

Finally, this issue includes the abstract of Mark Trewin's dissertation *"Rhythms of the Gods: "The Musicological Symbolics of Power and Authority in the Tibetan Buddhist Kingdom of Ladakh"*. This work sheds new light on the Mon caste, homologous to the Damâi of Nepal.

This first survey of Himalayan music, however, still appears to be incomplete. Compartmental knowledge can never be used to draw up a musical atlas. Some regions have not yet been studied. The absence of musicological research in the Terai (especially among the Tharu), as well as in eastern Nepal (Rai, Limbu) is particularly noticeable.

Today, more than ever, "l'ethnomusicologie d'urgence" ("urgent ethnomusicology"), extolled by G. Rouget, seems to confirm a priority in Himalayan studies, not so much from the aspect of documentation collection as the broadening of traditional musical knowledge. As each of us knows, the process of "folklorization" paired with the advent of new media definitively upset ancestral traditions (cf. the report from the Bhutanese newspaper).

Apart from the collections already carried out, the rights of communities to keep their own cultural patrimony cannot be sufficiently insisted upon. Noting the anxiety of our interlocutors on this subject, there is a very real necessity to examine this request and to provide honest responses. The ethnomusicological formation of Nepalese researchers should be encouraged. We hope that the newly established Department of Music, directed by G.M. Wegner, at Kathmandu University in Bhaktapur, will fulfil the triple function of training researchers, preserving and diffusing the musical heritage.

We are happy to illustrate the contributions of this issue with a compact disc. Recordings provided by the authors are presented along with rare archival recordings (Bake, 1956, Pignède, 1958, Jest, 1965). The choice of tracks included on the CD is above all scientific, and explains the unequal technical quality of the whole set.

Acknowledgements

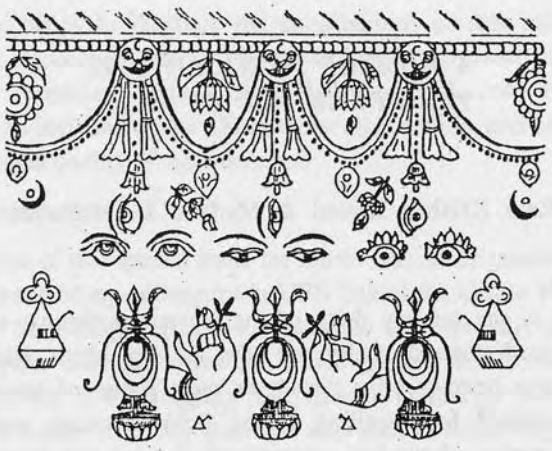
The publication of this special issue on music was made possible largely due to the interest of my colleagues in UPR 299 of the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique. Acknowledgements are especially due to the Société Française d'Ethnomusicologie which granted the necessary funds for the production of the compact disc, as well as to Jean Schwarz who assembled the master disc. My gratitude also goes to Susan Keyes for her translations.

A HOMAGE TO NĀSAḤ DYO, THE NEWAR GOD OF MUSIC

Ram Krishna Duwal & Madhab L. Maharjan

Nāsaḥ dyo is the tutelary deity of the Newar musicians, actors and dancers of the Kathmandu valley and other areas of Nepal. Nāsaḥ dyo is the deity who bestows on a person or on a group of musicians the qualities required for excelling in the field of music and for the successful staging of musical programmes, dances and dramas. There are many such divinities in and around the Kathmandu Valley. In addition to the Valley, Nāsaḥ dyo are also found in old cities such as Tansen in the west, Dolakha and Bhojpur in the east, where the Newar have migrated. But quite suprisingly, there are no Nāsaḥ dyo in Newar towns such as Narayan Ghat and Hetauda, located south-west of Kathmandu.

Many scholars refer to Nāsaḥ dyo as Nṛteśvar or Naṭarāj, the dancing Śiva. But it seems to us that this god can be distinguished from the Nāsaḥ dyo of the Newar, who is abstract like music and has the particularity of dwelling in a triangular-shaped niche in the wall of its shrines. This divinity is found both in *deo chẽ*, houses where the gods reside, and in private houses and inns. The slit representations of Nāsaḥ dyo are called *bālā pvaḥ* when located in a shrine, and *mibhũ* when found in a private house or inn, although they have the same appearance in both cases. The slits and niches of Nāsaḥ dyo are covered during rituals by a piece of cloth called *dhakī*. The following illustration is a richly decorated example of such cloth, taken from *Smarika*, 2051 V.S.



Because of these specific characteristics, Nāsaḥ dyo appears as a local god, but nevertheless people do worship him ultimately as one of the manifestations of Śiva as Nṛteśvar. Nāsaḥ dyo is established with rituals to train groups of students in the arts of drama, dance and music, at a specific place called *ākhā chẽ*.

In Newari, *nāsaḥ* means charm or grace. It is essential for every person to possess *nāsaḥ*. A person possessing *nāsaḥ* is referred to as *nāsaḥlaṃ liumḥ manū* while someone without it is regarded as *nāsaḥ madumḥ manū*, meaning "disgraceful" or "one with no knack at all". A popular saying among the Newar of the Kathmandu Valley is *nāsaḥ madusā kabilās hũ*, 'If you don't have *nāsaḥ*, go to the abode of Nāsaḥ Deo at Kabilās". Kabilās is the most sacred and powerful centre of all the Nāsaḥ Deo of the Kathmandu Valley. The great Newar musicians used to visit this temple; Krishna Bhai, a master of rhythmic drums, visited Kabilās five times. Recently, Ram Krishna, one of the writers of this article, who is a poet and singer, also had an opportunity to visit Kabilas for the second time. Upon reaching the temple, he composed the following poem in Newari, based on the *Bhagat* traditional *rāg*, expressing his devotion to Nāsaḥ Deo.

नासः द्यो
राग : भगत
ताल : चो
च्वमि : राम कृष्ण दुवाल

वय्धुन प्रभु थौं वय्धुन
छेलं मोलंसां चुत्तुचुया
छिगु हे पाली नुगले भ्यानाः
वय्धुन छन्थाय् पेपां चुयाः ॥ धु ॥

सकल नेवाया तःपुगु न्हाय् छ
संस्कृतिया ज्वाला न्हाय्कं थें
जल्ल थिना जिमि नुगले
नस्वा ह्वला च्वन जीवन बय् ॥ १ ॥

गन छ वयाच्वन न्ह्याइपुगु सघने
शान्त प्रकृतिया यइपु खेलय्
चुलुक पलाः छपलाजक चुलुसां
हाकत्यां वैथें झ्याया फलय् ॥ २ ॥

गवले झानं झ्वीं झ्वी कीकाः
कथं कथं जक तितुमतु तीकाः
थांवँ क्वाँवं झ्वाग्रां पाग्राँ
वय्धुन थौ कबिलास धकाः ॥ ३ ॥

गवलें फल्चाय् गवलें बल्चाय
बास च्वना सां वय्धुन न्हा

नाट्यश्वरीया दर्शन यायवं
दुःख फुकंवन तनाः तनाः ॥४॥

ग्याम्ह मचां :योमांः बः कायथे
जिमितः नं हल बल थनाः
नासः द्यो ए गर्व धाज जीं
खेलुइताः थें च्याय्मा सदां ॥५॥

फ्रंकबेरनेद् वयाः च्वन
सात समुन्दर पारयानाः
छंगु व महिमां थःत भुनाः वल
भावं नुगले थःत थनाः॥६॥

राम कृष्णया भाव धुकूचां
थुलि च्वय्रवँ पु वनीमखु
गन सुर्द्यो त्वै जलल निभाः दई
च्वनेमा जिमी नुगले छ थिनाः ॥७॥

As a last homage to the god of music, the text of one song is published here, *Nāsaḥ dyo mye*. This type of song is traditionally sung with *dāphā* orchestral ensemble on different *rāga* and *tāla*. This text was found in a *thyāsaphu* during our fieldwork at Bālkumari *dāphā khalaḥ*, Digukhel, Panga. It was composed during the reign of King Narendra Malla (1529-1560), and to our knowledge, it is the oldest Newari song or hymn devoted to Nāsaḥ Deo.

नासः द्योया म्ये माल ग्वारा ।
राग : मालुवा
घोचा : चो

हादे जये जये नित्येनाथ
हादे चद्रकला सिर
विसमविलोचणेः भास्य हभे हभे हभे
हादे जतामकुता सीर मुंदमाल गलसंः
गीरीजसंगर विराज्ये ॥

हादे सरसनवरस सिधीदायेक रीथु मंगल भाहासे
स्वयेंबु परवत नीस्ते करधर नरींद्रंभुस्पति भास्ये
जये जये निस्तेनाथस्वरं ॥ चो ॥

हर नर लक तयाः गनया थाकुर जुल
थथींन गणेस जुल आव ॥
विधीणे विनायेक सिदी विहुंणे छीनं पारवती
देवि जुल माम ॥१॥

वौवा जुल सदासिव ह प्यषनसं अतीरस
विभुतीन लपुः लपुः देव ॥
जव सह्म सं तसे चन्द्मा तस्य तल ॥
दुध लपु यस भोप्य येहेव ॥२॥

गंहाया ख्रुलिथेः ताहाकल जन्त्रा छपु
धु छेगुलि पाछाःवन वाहन॥
तील हिल विया भीनः लाहातीसं तसे तल

गलसं समुन्दर मल तिसा ॥३॥

जगत चन्दन ल्हान्या न्हापाहाल्यो नन्दि भींदी
जगतमोहन लप्य आवा व ॥
आदीभवानीयभ तुटीसं नीम्ह रसं वसलप्य फयकाव आव
॥४॥

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*CARYĀ: THE REVIVAL OF A TRADITION?**

Richard Widdess

The disappearance of old and once highly-valued cultural traditions is a familiar phenomenon the world over. Whether the reasons for the decline of a tradition are primarily economic, aesthetic, social, political, or religious, the end result may be a decisive termination, when the last person who knows a particular oral repertory or the technique of a particular instrument dies without transmitting his knowledge to any successor. Long before this point is reached, repertory and performance practice are remembered imperfectly or incompletely by successive generations, no new items are added to replace those that have been lost, fewer and less competent performers are recruited, patronage dries up and occasions for performance become ever less frequent. Such decline is not always terminal, but may stabilise for a period, the tradition surviving on continuing but minimal support from the community; traditions in this situation are very vulnerable to small fluctuations in resources, but they can also bloom like a flower in the desert if a new source of patronage presents itself. The process of revival, however, may entail varying degrees of change and transformation. A case in point is that of the *caryā* tradition of Buddhist ritual music and dance, of which an advanced stage of decline, and the seeds of a possible renewal, are both apparent today.

The Sanskrit term *caryā,* or its Newari equivalent *cacā*, refers to a particular repertory of song, instrumental music and dance, hitherto employed exclusively in Newar Buddhist Tantric ritual. It is believed to be one of the oldest cultural traditions in the Kathmandu Valley, having originated either in the valley itself many centuries ago, as some local

* I am grateful to the Leverhulme Trust for supporting my research on *caryā* during 1991, 1992 and 1994, as part of a collaborative project with C. Tingey and G.M. Wegner. I am also indebted to the British Council for support in 1996. Above all I have to thank Ratnakaji and Prajwal Bajracharya, for their teaching, kindness and encouragement, and offer this small tribute to their courage and dedication.

informants insist, or in mediaeval Indian Buddhist practice, as historians of South Asian culture normally assume. Suffice it for present purposes to observe that songs with esoteric texts, together with dance and drum music, have played an important part in Buddhist Tantric ritual and festival since the time of the *Hevajra Tantra*, a Sanskrit text dated to the 8th century at the latest (Snellgrove 1959,.I :101–2); and that the now famous *Caryā-gīti* collection of song-texts written in an eastern Indian vernacular around the 11th century, and surviving in a single manuscript preserved in Nepal, are regarded as belonging to the same tradition (Kvaerne, 1977). Newar *caryā* songs are today composed in Sanskrit, and their texts are preserved in numerous manuscripts in the libraries of Kathmandu and in the private collections of Vajrācārya priests. Their function seems to be essentially unchanged since the time of the *Hevajra Tantra:* through singing, dancing and playing instruments (the three-headed drum *kvatāḥ*, the double trumpet *pvātā,* and the small cymbals *tāḥ*), the Vajrācārya priests and other initiate performers meditate upon and identify themselves with the Tantric divinities in whose honour the ritual is performed.[1]

Like some other traditions of religious music in Nepal, *caryā* songs are attributed in the manuscripts and by their singers to melodic modes or *rāga*, and rhythmic modes or *tāla,* the names of which were, in many cases, current in mediaeval India; whether their musical forms today resemble those of mediaeval India is a matter of debate.[2] Research into these aspects of the tradition is restricted by the difficulty of access to its performance, for most caryā songs and dances are normally only performed in the Tantric shrine (*āgam-chẽ*), and only initiated members of the Buddhist community may attend. Ritual performances are in any case only rarely held because of the expense and the decreasing number of competent performers; this is especially so in the case of large

[1] *Hevajra Tantra*, I.vi.10—17, trans. Snellgrove 1959; Bake 1957; Kalamandapa 1986; Widdess 1992

[2] Bake 1957; Widdess 1992. This question is considered in an article in preparation, "*Cacā* and Indian music: Nepalese Buddhist ritual song in a South Asian perspective", which argues that in general the *caryā* songs do not show features that characterise the development of music in India since the 16th century, such as the use of scales with augmented seconds, or *tāla* with symmetrical structures.

festival celebrations, traditionally held at intervals of twelve years or more, where there may be over 260 persons involved in the preparations and rituals, and a period of three months' preparation is required to teach the music and dance to all the performers.[3] Those who still know the tradition tend to be highly secretive about it, fearing the wrath of the Tantric deities and of their peers if they divulge any of its secrets, and they sometimes deny that it exists at all. It is thus impossible to establish how many are still competent to teach and perform *caryā* music and dance, but Vajrācārya typically assert that 'hardly anyone is learning nowadays', and that in consequence, '*caryā* is dead'.

Fortunately for our knowledge of this tradition, its isolation from the outside world is not absolute. The sounds of *caryā* music can occasionally be heard emanating from behind the barred upper windows of Buddhist *vihāra*. Rare performances take place in public (for example the annual celebration of Buddha Jayantī at Svayambhūnāth); the songs and dances performed on such occasions are not considered to be 'secret' (*guhya*). The instrumental music is also treated as somewhat less secret than the songs and dances. Although the uninitiated are normally discouraged from taking an interest, distinguished outsiders may be invited to attend celebrations from which the public is excluded, as Arnold Bake was on two occasions in 1956. And some individual bearers of the tradition see it as their duty, not to conceal their heritage, but to enlist the interest of outsiders in order to ensure its survival.

The first and, so far as I am aware, only extensive recordings of caryā music were made by Arnold Bake (then Reader in Sanskrit at SOAS) in Kathmandu in 1956. A Vajrācārya priest recorded 20 *caryā* songs, some of them more than once. He also allowed Bake to film one of the corresponding dances, under conditions of great secrecy; but the priest then suffered a serious illness, which he attributed to divine displeasure, and which prevented any further filming or recording.[4] In 1990–91 Dr Gert Wegner, then a Leverhulme Research Fellow of SOAS, learned the drum repertory, which is quite separate from the

[3] Gellner 1992:305 f.; Ratnakaji Bajracharya, pers.com.

[4] Bake's recordings are now located at the National Sound Archive (British Library), and his films at SOAS.

vocal music and performed independently. His teacher was Ratnakaji Bajracharya, a widely respected scholar of Buddhist ritual and culture, who was and is prepared to risk censure in order to ensure the survival of *caryā* music and dance by promoting its performance openly. In 1991–2 I studied the vocal repertory with this same teacher, learning five complete songs in different *rāga* (a tiny fraction of the total repertory). Wegner and I also discussed with him various aspects of the ritual and cultural context of *caryā*, and compared his versions of the songs with those recorded by Bake. Bake's priest had been one of Ratnakaji's teachers, and indeed their versions were closely similar, though separated in time by 35 years.

In an attempt to compare Ratnakaji's tradition with others, Wegner also worked with a Vajrācārya priest in Bhaktapur, who willingly taught him the complete repertory for the drum again. A number of differences between the two traditions emerged. In 1994, however, my attempt to learn the vocal repertory from the same teacher in Bhaktapur failed; for unknown reasons, possibly because of pressure put on him by other members of the Vajrācārya community, the teacher ceased to co-operate further after the first lesson. Attempts to find an alternative teacher or a singer willing to record in Bhaktapur were also unsuccessful; all denied knowledge of the tradition or declined to share what they knew.

This secretiveness contrasted with the eager willingness with which singers of *dāphā*—Hindu temple devotional music performed daily in public—taught me items of their repertory in the summer of 1996 and allowed me to record them. It is however a common feature of Newar religious culture, and it makes all the more remarkable the courage of those few who attempt to lift the veil on their own traditions. In the case of Bake's priest, it seems to have been understood that the recordings and film he made were for foreign consumption only: elaborate precautions were taken to ensure that the filming of the dance, in particular, was not observed. Ratnakaji's objectives are different. While welcoming foreign pupils and scholars, he is also concerned to spread knowledge and understanding of Newar Buddhist traditions within Nepal. His numerous publications in the Newari language on various aspects of Tantric Buddhism, including music and dance, are

highly respected; they testify to his desire for the open dissemination of information and appreciation of Newar culture by Newars as well as others.

In the 1980's, concerned at the rapid decline of *caryā* dance (of which he is himself an expert performer) and its accompanying music, Ratnakaji began to train a number of pupils in this art. They included Rajendra Shreshta, and Ratnakaji's son Prajwal Bajracharya, both of whom have since established reputations as *caryā* dancers. The main forum for *caryā* dance performance by Ratnakaji's pupils was the Hotel Vajra in Kathmandu, where regular programmes were held in the hotel's small auditorium. At the performance I attended in 1991, the audience was composed almost exclusively of foreign visitors. In 1986 a small booklet appeared entitled *Buddhist ritual dance*, containing the texts and Indian-style music notation for a number of items of the repertory of this dance-group, and photographs of dance poses and costumes. The introduction in English, evidently addressed to foreign readers, explains the background to and functions of the music, and is translated by the distinguished scholar Fr John Locke; but authorship of the booklet itself is concealed behind the name of an institution, 'Kalamandapa'. At about the same time Ratnakaji received and accepted an invitation to perform *caryā* dances in Japan, presumably the first occasion on which this art-form had been seen outside Nepal (apart from Bake's film). Thus foreign interest enabled Ratnakaji and his pupils to remove *caryā* music and dance from its original, closed context and present it in a new light.

The transposition of *caryā* to the public stage involved some transformations, as the performers themselves acknowledged. The dancers wore colourful costumes and masks, reflecting the character of the deity represented in each dance, in place of the priest's traditional white robe; the performers said they had studied Buddhist iconography in order to create these costumes. The dancers also admitted that they exploited the full width and depth of the stage in their movements, whereas in the Tantric shrine the space available would be very limited: in Bake's 1956 film the priest's movements are largely restricted to hand and arm gestures, with some small movements of the feet but

essentially no change of position in a very small performance area.[5] The most striking changes, however, were in the performance style of the music. The songs were sung to traditional melodies, preceded and followed by the traditional *ālāp* or *rāg;* the *tāl* was indicated by the traditional *tāḥ* cymbals. But the singers (in 1991) were two young women, although women would never perform this music in the ritual context. Their rendition of the melodies was considerably less ornamented than that of Bake's priest. Accompaniment was provided by a harmonium and *tambūrā*, neither of which would ever be used in the Tantric shrine. The effect of the *tambūrā* drone was to impose on the melody a fixed tonal centre which is not necessarily apparent in the melodies themselves: in unaccompanied performance the melodies often seem to be tonally ambiguous or to move from one emphasised pitch to another. The effect of both instruments was to make the music sound more 'Indian' in style, and their use was perhaps intended to cater for the perceived musical tastes of the tourist audience, or was a consequence of the performers' training in Indian classical music.

A new phase in the revival of *caryā* began in 1996, when a group of dancers and musicians called 'Dance Mandal', under the leadership of Prajwal Bajracharya, were invited to Germany to perform in the 20th Festival of Traditional Music, organized by the International Institute for Traditional Music (based in Berlin). The group now comprised both male and female dancers. The elaborate costumes and ornaments worn by the dancers again expressed the iconographic characteristics of the divinities represented in the dances. Despite these transformations in the dance, the music had reverted to a more 'authentic' presentation: two male singers sang to the accompaniment of cymbals only, the harmonium and *tambūrā* having been dispensed with. The performances in Germany were intended for a foreign audience, but the departure of the group for their foreign tour was preceded by a public performance in Kathmandu itself, which was advertised and reported in the Kathmandu press. The printed programme, in English but with a

[5] The film was taken in a forest, where more freedom of movement would have been possible than in the tantric shrine, but the priest nevertheless dances 'on the spot'. Similar on-the-spot dance movements were observed by the author at a public fire sacrifice (*homa*) performed by Vajrācāryas in Kathmandu, October 1991.

summary in Newari, proclaims the dance as 'Secret /Spiritual/ Visualization', and explains: 'The goal of Charya Nritya is to perfect the visualisation [of Tantric deities] and to awaken within oneself specific qualities that the deities embody'. It is paradoxical that the secrecy with which the tradition was surrounded in the past is now presented as part of the attraction of performances that are no longer secret. In a similar context, the revival of *dhrupad* in India, Delvoye has observed that 'Despite their modernity and their cosmopolitan and urban background...audiences are often more responsive once they are assured of the genuineness, purity and serious character conferred upon a musical genre going back to ancient times.'

In the same year (1996), Ratnakaji Bajracharya published an anthology of 180 *caryā* song-texts 'old and new' (Vajrācārya 1996), including many traditional Sanskrit *caryā* song-texts and a small number in Newari of perhaps more recent composition. This volume, which Ratnakaji published in Newari under his own name, is clearly addressed to the Nepalese, and specifically the Newari-speaking community. Both this book and the performances of the Dance Mandal included 'secret' items of repertory that are not likely to have been previously published or performed in public: evidently the time for caution was now felt to be past.[6]

It remains to be seen whether the response to such performances and publications from the public in Nepal is favourable to the continued development of *caryā* as a non-ritual art-form for public performance. If it is, it will not be not the first case in which a tradition of sacred music and dance has been transferred from a moribund ritual context to the public stage in South Asia. For example, the Orissi and Bharatanatyam dance traditions in Orissa and Tamil Nadu respectively have already successfully undergone this transition. In these cases the performing art was not only transferred to a new context but also taken up by a new class of performer, since the temple dancers or *devadāsī*

6 The programme for the Dance Mandal concert included the *guhya* songs 'Nairātmā', 'Māyājāl' (a song traditionally used in *śrāddha* rites), 'Vajrayoginī' etc. These three songs are amongst those recorded by Bake, all of which, according to Ratnakaji, are secret.

were stigmatized, and even prohibited by law from performing in the temple context, because of their association with prostitution. Both dance styles were revived by Brahman performers, partly by reference to temple sculptures and ancient texts rather than to the surviving bearers of the tradition (Marglin 1985: 27 f.). In each case the desire for a local 'classical' tradition distinct from those of other regions of South Asia no doubt played a part in the revival process. In the case of caryā, this desire may also be a factor, but here the leaders of the revival are themselves members of the ritual tradition, and come from a respected social class; this may help to ensure a degree of continuity between the ritual tradition and public performance practice.

The 'revival' of *caryā* as a public, non-ritual art-form raises many questions of interest to the ethnomusicologist, and would reward more detailed and continuous observation than has been possible for the present writer. On the one hand it has brought to a wider audience music and dance of considerable beauty and historical significance, which would otherwise have remained almost totally inaccessible. On the other hand, given its de-contextualization, or rather its relocation in an entirely new context, and the changes in performance practice which inevitably ensue, it may be asked how far what is now presented justifies the claims made for it as an ancient religious art. Here Bake's historic recordings and film play a vital role in representing the tradition as it was before any 'revival' began. What the functions of this revived art-form might be in its new context remains to be seen. It may be destined for a primarily emblematic role: as a national Nepalese 'classical' dance and music, distinct from those of neighbouring India; as a contribution to the international Buddhist cultural heritage; as a symbol of Newar cultural identity; and as a Newar Buddhist response to the challenge of Tibetan Buddhism, with its colourful traditions of ritual music and dance, now prominently performed (in a ritual context) in the burgeoning monasteries of the Kathmandu Valley. Furthermore, although the revelation of hitherto secret aspects of their traditions may be viewed with misgiving by some members of the Newar Buddhist community, the revival of *caryā* in the public domain may have a revitalizing effect on the surviving tradition of ritual performance.

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MUSIC AND IDENTITY AMONG MAHARJAN FARMERS

THE *DHIMAY SENEGU OF KATHMANDU* [1]

Franck Bernède

In many ways, Newar music appears to apply metaphysical concepts to urban order. The 32 wards (*tol*) of Kathmandu reflect a cosmological ideal, asserting themselves as so many musical microcosms. Processional music plays an important part in urban organisation and its role is considered to be essentially a ritual one. While concentrating on the ways musical knowledge is acquired among the Maharjan peasants of Kathmandu, this study emphasizes the importance of the role held by the "language" of the drums in the representation of these territorial identities. This study is organised according to three axes of research: the mythical substratum, ritual structure and the orientation of musical education.

To begin with, it should be noted that musical performance among the Newar cannot really be qualified as professional; nevertheless, they occur as a parallel activity harmoniously integrated into daily life. Most castes take part in a number of instrumental and vocal groups. Among these, the Maharjan (Jyāpu) have a prominent role, whether in religious or memorial festivals. Considered by the Nepalese as the first inhabitants of the valley, they are often presented as the spokesmen for Newar culture. Their music comes under the banner of a lineage divinity explicitly associated with music. It is through a presentation of this divinity, that we hope to introduce a study of the *dhimay* drum, which as a tangible and musical form of the god of music, invests its deep resonance into the royal Nepalese cities.

[1] Translation: Susan Keyes. This article is among the first results of an investigation undertaken within the context of a research programme directed by G. Toffin (Pir-villes project of the CNRS). Material was collected during three missions (July-August 1995, February-March and July-August 1996), with the support of UPR 299 of the CNRS, the Société Française d'Ethnomusicologie and the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales. We are most grateful to K.P. Rimal, our collaborator, as well as Dev Narayan Maharjan, our *dhimay* teacher. Our thanks to our musicologist and musician colleagues—R.K. Duwal, I. Grandin and G.M. Wegner.

Nāsaḥdyāḥ

Nāsaḥdyāḥ is the Newar god of music, dance and the arts. He appears as an aspect of Śiva Mahādeva with whom he shares the names Nāṭeśvar and Nṛṭyanāth. These two terms refer to his initial function as the lord of cosmic dance, Naṭarāja. It is common to derive the Newar name Nāsaḥdyāḥ from *nāsaḥ*, "charm, delight, inspiration", and *dyāḥ*, "god" and to link this conventional etymology to the Nepali expression *nacne devatā*, "dancing god"[2].

Representations of Nāsaḥdyāḥ are diverse and can be divided into three principal categories: cavities (New. *Nāsaḥpvāḥ*), anthropomorphic forms and finally musical instruments. The cavities (New. *pvāḥ*) can be simple or consist of three or five cavities with different geometric configurations (cf. Wegner, 1992: 126). Most of Nāsaḥdyāḥ's shrines only have three symbolising the god and his principal musician assistants, the bull, Nandī, and the dwarf, Bhṛṅgi, (Fig. 1). The two supplementary cavities are generally associated with Śiva's two sons, Gaṇeśa and Kumār.

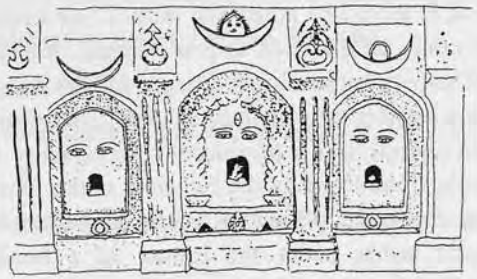

Fig. 1 Nāsaḥpvāḥ (Indra cok, Kathmandu)

In his anthropomorphic form, Nāsaḥdyāḥ is principally represented on the stone or metal tympanums (*toraṇa*) of temples. Generally, like Mahādeva, he is represented draped in a tiger skin, covered with ashes

2 *nasah* = 1. charm, delight, inspiration; 2. god of music, dance and drama": *Newar Music Dictionary* (Wegner, 1992: 125). According to Mahes Raj Pant (personal communication), the syllables *nā* and *saḥ* are contractions respectively of the Sanscrit root *NṚT-* "to dance" and the word *īśvara* "lord"; the contraction of Sanskrit syllables is common in monosyllabic Newari.

from pyres, adorned with snake necklaces and endowed with a varying number of arms. He holds a number of attributes in his hands, among which, the hour glass drum (*ḍamaru*) and a necklace of skulls are the most significant for our purpose. The *ḍamaru*, the archetype of all membranophones, bears some resemblance to the *ḍhakkā* drum of Śiva Naṭarāja. The most ancient text referring to this god[3] mentions that at the end of his dance, striking his drum 14 times, the lord of the dancers utters all the constituent sounds of articulated language, from which, among others things, music is born[4]. As for the garland of freshly cut human heads (Skt. *muṇḍamālā*), it indicates, as for all Tantric divinities, the acceptance of blood sacrifices. Moreover, the garland symbolises "the science of letters", *mantra vidyā*. Other iconic representations of Nāsaḥdyāḥ are drawn on pieces of cotton (New.: *dhaki*) intended to veil the cavities where he resides during rituals. The god and his assistants are represented here in a semi-abstract manner (cf. Duwal and Maharjan in this issue)[5]. Finally, as a tutelary divinity of music, Nāsaḥdyāḥ also manifests himself in the form of musical instruments. Among them, the *dhimay* drum has a special place. It is considered as a tangible aspect of the god, and is therefore the object of particular veneration.

Nāsaḥdyāḥ is associated with a mountain called Kabilas or Kapilasa, located north-west of Kathmandu in Nuwakot District. The first name of this mountain, which may come from the local pronunciation of Kailas (?), is an explicit reference to the archetypal residence of the god Śiva, while the second refers to the sage Kapila, who according to oral tradition practised austerities long ago on the summit of this hill. There,

3 The *kārikā* of Nandikeśvara on the *Pratyāhāra-sūtra* of Pāṇini, also called *Śivasūtra* (cf. Rao, 1990: 173).

4 The hymns to Naṭarāja are characterised by their propensity to imitate drum beating and comprise numerous alliterations of consonants and onomatopoeia evoking percussion. Hence, there are numerous devotional hymns attributed to distinguished personages like Patañjali, in which the text suggests dancing and the tinkling of jewellery. One of the most important hymns, the *Tatvārya-stava*, is recited after the *pūjā* at Cidambaram: it evokes the identification of Śiva with *ākāśa* as well as his association with grammar and medicine, describing him as the dancer and he who sings the purest hymns of *Sāmaveda*. Another hymn, the *Naṭeśa Cintāmani*, structured around five phonemes of his mantra, explicitly describes him as musical notes personified, residing in the Śri Cakra.

5 Although Nāsaḥdyāḥ is rarely depicted, the *thanka* in the National Art Gallery of Bhaktapur in a form with "16 arms", *ṣoḍasi mudra*, dancing with his consort and dated 1659 AD, is a remarkable example.

Mahādeva and Nāsaḥdyāḥ are distinct entities and reside in different shrines. A small temple built on the hill's summit shelters Mahādeva in the form of a *caturmukha liṅga*, while Nāsaḥdyāḥ is represented by a natural niche in the wall of the mountain side, about 50 meters below. Still further down, two raised stones are dedicated to Sarasvatī and Gaṇeśa. Curiously, Hanumān, the inseparable companion of the god of music in urban temples appears to be absent here.

These shrines are mostly frequented by Maharjan peasants who perform rituals including blood sacrifices every spring. It is said that everyone must go to Mount Kabilas at least once in their lifetime. Women cannot participate in the worship of Nāsaḥdyāḥ, nor even approach the shrine of the god. However, their presence is required for the worship of Sarasvatī. At this site, it is customary for the women to offer a small hemp sack to her thereby recalling the direct links that they maintain with the Goddess in their daily worship.

Two contrasting accounts illustrate the relationship of Nāsaḥdyāḥ with this mountain. The first recounts in essence that the god, who originally resided in Bhaktapur, fled to Kabilas riding a white cock, as he found the town too dirty. For the farmers of Kathmandu, the journey is reversed: it is said that Nāsaḥdyāḥ, coming from Kabilas one night, stopped at the northern entrance of the capital (*Thamel tol*) before settling early in the morning in each ward. Another version, from Rājopādhyāya priests in Patan, leads one to understand that Nāsaḥdyāḥ could have been the name of a realised being (*siddha*), deified following his numerous feats.

Principally associated with skill, talent, perfection, eloquence and right action, Nāsaḥdyāḥ is above all venerated for the powers (*siddhi*) which he confers on his devotees and without which no creation is possible. If his favours are principally sought by artists (musicians, singers and dancers), they are equally solicited by all Newar for other reasons. Thus, it is common to present the new-born to the god in order, it is said, to avoid malformations, especially mental. Various legends associated with the god should allow us to better define the nature of the ties uniting him with music and dance.

Legend 1

"The demon Bāsmāsur, eager for power, accomplished difficult acts of austerities. One day he was gratified by a visit from Mahādev, who to recompense him for his asceticism, asked him what he would like. Bāsmāsur asked for the power to reduce to ashes all that he touched. The great god agreed to his request, and Bāsmāsur wishing to verify his new powers, rushed headlong at Mahādev, who was frightened and fled. The demon followed him without respite and Mahādev had no other choice but to take refuge in the semi-obscurity of a rocky cavity. Risking great misfortune, the gods united and put together a plan to stop the rampaging demon. Making him think that Śiva's powers were not so great, he convinced him to test them on himself. Credulous and naive, Bāsmasur agreed and in an instant destroyed himself".[6]

Legend 2

"One day, Nasa Dya gave Bhim Dya [Bhimsen] a singing lesson, but the latter did not have much in the way of talent. When Bhim Dya was later practicing on his own, a washerman came by who happened to be searching for his lost donkey. Hearing the sound, the washerman thought it was his lost animal's braying and coming upon Bhim Dya asked where the donkey was. Bhim Dya thus realized that his singing sounded like a donkey's cry. Just as a bad craftsman quarrels with his tools, Bhim Dya grew angry with Nasa Dya, thinking that he had been badly taught. And so he went off to hit Nasa Dya with his club. Seeing him coming, Nasa Dya was frightened and ran away but Bhim Dya chased after him. Fearing for his life, Nasa Dya hid himself in a dark place among garbage and filth. This is the reason that his shrines are located in or near such places."[7] (Lewis, 1984 : 111).

6 Legend recounted by a Brahman from the temple of Kabilas.

7 The same spelling and underlining rather than italics is used here, as in Lewis' translation of Prem Bahadur Kasa, *Nasa Dyaya Mye*, 1963.

Legend 3

"A long time ago, Nāsaḥdyāḥ in his human form, was walking towards Mount Kabilas. On the way he saw a young woman who was cutting grass. Deeply moved by her beauty, he courted her and made love to her. Later, a child was born. The baby was beautiful and a source of pride for the young mother; she took all the credit for the birth of her son. However, Nāsaḥdyāḥ was proud of his virility and claimed the same rights. The situation created a quarrel between husband and wife and degenerated to such a point that the god and his consort decided to separate the fruit of their union into two parts. Nāsaḥdyāḥ took all the bones and created a skeleton named Kavā, and the young woman took the flesh and made a being called Khyā. Nāsaḥdyāḥ, saddened by the hideous creatures, sat down on a felled tree trunk and began to beat it furiously. Suddenly, the two creatures came to life and began to dance to the rhythm of their father. According to oral tradition, this legend is the origin of Nepalese music and dance." (after R. Praddhan (1111 NS, p. 1).[8]

Legend 4

"In the beginning was the great goddess Mahāmāyā. Alone in her glory and wishing to be multiple, she wanted to join forces with someone; hence she created Brāhma. Frightened by the ill-omened character of this incestuous relationship, the latter refused. The furious Mahāmāyā instantly destroyed him. She then created Viṣṇu who in turn refused and so met the same fate. Beside herself with rage, the Goddess engendered Maheśvara who agreed to her request on the one condition that the goddess change her form. Both took turns at all aspects of the creation. At the end of this divine game, Mahāmāyā and Śiva both assumed human forms and finally united. Following this divine union, Mahāmāyā disappeared. Insatiable and filled with despair, Maheśvara went to the ends of the universe to look for her. He then assumed the form of Rudra and abandoned himself to a terrible dance, *tāndava pyākkhā*[9]. Since then this wild, destructive dance associated with carnal desire, is called *Nāsaḥdyāḥ pyākkhā*".[10]

8 Translation from Newari by S. Manandhar.

9 *pyākkhā* , "dance" in Newari.

10 Legends 4 and 5 were recounted to me by a Vajrācārya dance master in Patan.

Legend 5

"One day Pārvatī in her angry form (*krodha mūrti*), was performing her wild dance when Mahādev appeared and began to dance with her, taking on, one after the other, all the different angry *rasa*. The last dance, which finally pacified and satisfied the goddess was called *Nāsaḥdyāḥ pyākkhā*. It is also called *lāsya nṛtya*. Surprised and completely won over by this dance, Pārvatī adopted it and made it her own. According to the local tradition, it is the origin of the *rasa adbhuta* ("the wonderful mood").

Legend 6

"Arrogant *ṛṣi* lived in a forest. One day Mahādyāḥ (Mahādeva's Newar name) decided to shatter their pride which was destroying them and he paid them a visit. Seeing the god, the *ṛṣi* became extremely angry. To test his power, they prepared an offering on the sacrificial hearth. A wild boar sprang forth from the fire. With a demented grunting, he rushed towards Mahādyāḥ to devour him. In an instant, the latter dismembered him with his finger and covered his shoulders with the animal's skin. The *ṛṣi* were unrelenting and started on a new sacrifice from which a venomous serpent sprang forth. Upon seeing Mahaḍyāḥ, the reptile was instantaneously pacified and delicately coiled around his neck, offering him body as an ornament. Confused, but determinate, the *ṛṣi* used the force of their mantras to engender a demon dwarf. The dwarf rushed at Mahādyāḥ to devour him. The great god knocked him out him and began to dance wildly over the inanimate body. According to the Newar, this dance attributed to Nāsaḥdyāḥ is called *tāṇḍava pyākkhā*".[11]

Certain characteristics which emerge from these legends allow the predominate features of the god's personality to be established. Obviously this divine figure presents a great number of similarities with the dancing Śiva of classical Indian tradition. Legends 4 and 5 illustrate the bipolarity of the *tāṇḍava* and *laśya* dances, traditionally associated with the lord of

11 Legend recounted by a Rājopādhyāya of Patan.

dancers, and myth 6 is a variation of Naṭarāja's story related in the *Mahātmya* of *Chidambaram*, the *Koyil purāṇa* (cf. Rao, 1990: 174). These elements would therefore lead *a priori* to the assimilation of this god with Śiva Naṭarāja. Nevertheless, as T. Ellingson (1990: 227) rightly remarked, this Himalayan emanation shows considerable differences with its Indian counterpart[12]. Not wishing to enter into the details of a synoptic study of these myths for the time being, only the most recurrent aspects will be discussed, which are in some respects, the most important for our purpose.

In most accounts, Nāsaḥdyāḥ appears as a fearful god. This sentiment, although affirmed in Vedic and Puranic mythology, is nevertheless paradoxical for a god. It is obviously not a trait of character. The divinity's fear is generally linked to the need to escape from hostility caused by ignorance. The classic story of Indra and Vṛtra in the *Pañcaviṁśa Brāhmaṇa* (XV.11.9) is an explicit illustration of this:

> "Indra, having slain Vṛtra and imagining that he had not killed him, went to the remotest distance. He pushed apart the *anuṣṭubh* and crept into its middle portion. This indeed is Indra's dwelling. In safety does he offer sacrifices, in safety does he finish the sacrificial session, who, knowing this, chants on these verses."

Within the context of Newar myths, the god, called either Nāsaḥdyāḥ or Mahādev, cannot escape from the demon Bāsmāsur's powerful asceticism and is forced to grant him what he wants. He is then compelled to flee from Bāsmāsur, who intoxicated with his new power, only dreams of destroying the one who has bestowed these powers on him[13]. In legend 2, it is the absence of Bhimsen's talent for music which

12 A master of dance, Vajrācārya, explained the difference between Mahādeva and Nāsaḥdyāḥ, "Nāsaḥdyāḥ concedes the *siddhi* "powers", and Mahādev, completely intoxicated with cannabis and drunk with the perfume of the *dhatura* flower, grants all that one asks . . . "

13 In the *Nirukta* of *Yāska*, one of the six auxiliaries (*vedāṅga*) of the Veda, it is said that Knowledge personified seeks refuge in a being whose function is precisely to be the trustee, the receptacle of Knowledge *par excellence* which is the Vedic Word, "Verily, knowledge approached Brāhmaṇa, 'Protect me, I am thy treasure. Do not expound me to

is at the origin of his blind hostility and leads Nāsaḥdyāḥ to hide in the cavities[14]. Nāsaḥdyāḥ's characteristic of invisibility is in keeping with the two meanings of the Sanskrit root *NAŚ-* which can perhaps link the name of Nāsaḥdyāḥ: "to bend", on one hand, and "to become invisible", on the other[15].

The account of the birth of Nāsaḥdyāḥ's child (Legend 3) appears as another noteworthy difference between Nāsaḥdyāḥ and Naṭarāja. The division of this child into two entities, Khyā and Kavā[16], resulting from matrimonial discord, is of the greatest interest. It should be pointed out in advance that for the Newar, these two beings are intimately associated with nocturnal terrors, in particular, those of children. They are sometimes considered as inveterate mischief-makers, sometimes feared. It is said that one of their "favourite games" consists in pressing down on sleeping people. Although it is not specified in the myth, their representations in the form of a skeleton and a pile of flesh recalls the heterogeneity of the constituent of the organism, divided into "hard" and "soft" parts associated respectively with the male and female.

Fig. 2 Kavā and Khyā

the scornful, nor the unstraightforward, nor the one who has no self-control; thus I shall grow powerful'." [Nir. 2.4].

14 It should be noted that Bhīmasena is the name of one of the five Pāṇḍava brothers in the *Mahābhārata* and of Deva Gandharva (Renou, 1987: 533). It is also the name of the Newar god of commerce.

15 *NAŚA* I. 658, *kautilye* and *NAŚA adarśane* IV.85 in the *Dhātu*-pāṭha (appended list of grammatical characteristics of Pāṇini including approximately 2000 roots which are used to form all Sanskrit words).

16 "[...] A spirit who accompanies the goddess Kāli, often represented in painting as a skeleton. Skt. *kaṅkāla*" (Manandhar, 1986: 26).

Turning towards India, one sees that this theme has been dealt with in detail in the *Caraka Saṃhitā*, the fundamental treatise on Ayurvedic medicine. In his work, Caraka indeed enumerates with precision the parts of the embryo which come respectively from the mother and the father: skin, blood, flesh, fat, umbilicus, heart, lungs, liver, kidneys, etc. are from the mother; while hair, moustache, nails, teeth, bones, channels, ligaments, vessels and sperm are from the father (*Śārīrasthānam III*: 6-7)[17]. This division between female and male organs according to female *mṛdu* (soft) and male *sthira* "hard" characteristics is not the exclusive prerogative of the Indian world, but it exists throughout Asia. It should also be recalled that for Tibetans, *sha* "flesh" designates the maternal family, and *rus* "bones", the paternal side and what remains of the corpse after cremation. This opposition of bones and flesh is intensified by other oppositions: hard and soft, cold and hot and white and red. With the latter, the colour white is associated with sperm and red with *śoṇita* or blood, the fertilizing element associated with the mother.

Within the musical aspect being examined here, the creation of Kavã and Khyã associated with the separation of gender is in keeping with the founding constituents of musical production as expressed in the traditional stanza of unknown origin, *śruti mātā layaḥ pitā*, translated as "the pitch is the mother and time is the father"(cf.Rao,n.d: 2). The soft parts are therefore associated with Speech (represented by the syllables, *bol*), and the firm or hard parts, by rhythm. As we will see, this game of oppositions which is found in symbolism associated with musical instruments, is decisive for the understanding of different phases of musical apprenticeships.

Laya, Tāla Smṛti

In his explicit relationship with music, Nāsaḥdyāḥ is associated with *laya*, a polysemous term which for the Indo-Nepalese as well as for the Newar, means a tune or melody (Manandhar, 1986: 224). Among the Newar, the technical meaning of *laya* is also the generic name of three musical *tempi* (slow, moderate and fast) used to accompany some rituals, in accordance with the meaning of the term in classical Indian musical tradition. As a major concept, embracing cosmology, yoga and the arts,

17 Edited and translated by M. Angot, in press.

the term *laya* as a wide meaning as conventional translations demonstrate with the words: "dissolution", "absorption", "merging" or even, "rest". P.L. Sharma (1992: 387), in his detailed study on this theme, presents four of the most synthetic definitions:

> "The important meanings of *laya* are 1) dissolution or destruction (*saṃhāra*) at the cosmic level, implying the dissolution of one element into another in the reverse order, with reference to the order of creation; 2) deep sleep or slumber (*suṣupti*) in living organisms where the merging of the faculties of sensation and perception into consciousness is implied; 3) in *hatha yoga*, the state comparable to *samādhi* (deep meditation) spoken of by Patañjali, 4) in music, the *viśranti* or rest immediately following each *kriyā* or action, spoken of in the treatment of *tāla*; taking a cyclic view of this action, rest not only succeeds, but also precedes each action."

With the omnipresence of Nāsaḥdyāḥ within Newar society as a whole, this association with *laya* must be considered in a broader perspective than its musical meaning. The existence of abundant literature relating to worship of this divinity in the milieu of the priesthood and the metaphysical speculation associated with it are evidence of a broader meaning[18].

Within the framework of musical apprenticeships, Nāsaḥdyāḥ, Hanumān, the monkey-god, and Sarasvatī, Goddess of Knowledge and of Speech, form an indissociable triad. In this context, each of these divinities is endowed with a "special quality" which benefits students. It is said that Nāsaḥdyāḥ grants *laya*; Hanumān presides over the *tāla*[19] "rhythm"; and Sarasvatī confers the power of *smṛti* "memory" permitting musicians to acquire competence.

Nāsaḥdyāḥ, the principal divinity of music, is present in all instruments, nevertheless, tradition particularly associates him with membranophones and aerophones. Hanumān, as rhythm master, is represented by different categories of idiophones (metal discs and cymbals). Lastly, Sarasvatī is traditionally associated with stringed

18 Bernède, forthcoming.

19 Literally, "hand-clapping", derived from the root *TĀḌ-* "to clap" or "to beat".

instruments, in particular the *vīṇā*. However, among the Newar she is also associated with the *pivāṃcā* fiddle, an instrument which no longer exists today[20].

The Ritual Context

Among the caste of Maharjan peasants, Nāsaḥdyāḥ is the object of an annual cult, called *Nāsaḥdyāḥ guṭhī pūjā, tvāḥ pūjā, Nāsaḥdyāḥ pūjā* or *dhimay guṭhī pūjā*. This ceremony, during which the *dhimay* drum is consecrated, is divided into two major parts: the first consists of various offerings; the second is an animal sacrifice called *si kāgu* "taking the head". The description which follows, based on the observation of several ceremonies in Kathmandu, enumerates the different stages. A diagram of good omen (*svastika*) is first of all drawn on the ground with white and yellow powders. The divinities Gaṇeśa, Nandi, Nāsaḥdyāḥ, Bhṛṇgi and Kumār are set in place one after the other from left to right. The *sukunda* lamp is lit before Gaṇeśa; the *svaṣṭikā* is drawn in front of Nāsaḥdyāḥ and the ingredients of the *pūjā* (flowers, incense, etc.) are set before Kumār. After these preliminaries, the cotton veil (*dhakī*) is stretched out across the cavities (*pvāḥ*). The ceremony begins with the *abhiśeka*, "sprinkling" of the shrine. In the rituals we observed, the officiant was the clan elder, *kaji* and music master (*dhimay guru*); he installs three sacrificial cakes representing respectively the god and his two musician assistants, Nandī and Bhṛṅgi. Yellow and red *ṭikā* are then placed on the drums, as well as on the ritual utensils. This procedure is followed by diverse offerings, consisting of cotton thread (*jajāka*) representing the gift of precious clothing, flowers and *samay*[21]. After having thrown the rice in eight directions, the incense and lights are presented to the god and his

20 According to oral tradition, the appearance of the *pivāṃcā* fiddle in Nepal coincides with the appearance of Mañjuśri, the divinity associated with the creation of the Kathmandu Valley. From ancient descriptions, the playing technique seems to resemble both the Chinese fiddle (fixed bow) and the Indian *saraṅgi* (fingers resting on the strings). It was chiefly used to accompany a repertoire of love songs, entitled *kāli*, "black" which were performed during marriages. This fiddle is described as one of the best means of seduction (R.K. Duwal, personal communication).

21 The *samay* is a mixture of rice, beaten rice, black soy seeds, puffed rice, ginger, roast meat, black seed cake, boiled seeds and alcohol.

assistants, then the *ṭikā* mark of Nāsaḥdyāḥ (New. *mvaḥani sinḥa*)[22] is placed on the forehead of each participant. Recitations of the mantras follow; after which, the master of ceremony is empowered to give instructions or to make remarks to his students. An offering called *baupā*, dedicated to the *bhut-pret* and *picāsa* concludes the first part of the ceremony. The *baupā* offering is composed of beaten rice, ginger, black soy seeds, black seeds, pieces of raw meat and salt. Intended to pacify the spirits of the dead, it is an indispensable preliminary to the sacrifice which follows.

The second part, the animal sacrifice, begins with the consecration of the sacrificial knife (New. *nāy cupi*, "the butcher's knife") and the victim, which may be a cock, a young goat or as in the ritual we observed, a buffalo. If the animal is a cock or a young goat, the officiant sprinkles it with water. It is said that if it shakes itself, this signifies that it accepts the sacrifice (*mūaligu*). If not, the animal is unfit (Pradhan, 1986:234). This sprinkling is not judged necessary for the buffalo. The throat of the animal is then cut open from top to bottom and a small piece of flesh is extracted from it. It is stuck to the temple's tympanum; a second piece of flesh is then presented to the *sukunda* lamp's flame, and placed in a saucer. Finally, the head is cut off, removed from the body and placed on the altar of Nāsaḥdyāḥ. The cotton wick of the *sukunda* lamp is lit and placed there. It is interpreted as the sign of the re-absorption of the buffalo's constituents into the five elements (Skt. *mahābhūta*). A blood *ṭikā* is then placed on the drum skins. The head is now placed in a pot and presented to the participants who each in turn apply the *ṭikā* mark to their foreheads. Egg whites are offered to all the divinities as well as to Khyā and Kavā, the children of Nāsaḥdyāḥ. The students return to the house of the elder (*Kāji chē*) where he blesses them. Immediately following this, the animal is dismembered. Its head is divided into eight parts and offered to the elders as music masters according to a strict hierarchy:

22 *mvaḥani* from the Sanskrit word, *mohan*, "illusion", and one of the names of Kṛṣṇa. The black *ṭikā* mark is placed on the forehead of all participants during the ritual. It is made with the soot from burning fabric mixed with mustard oil. It strongly suggests the powers of attraction attributed to Nāsaḥdyāḥ and is surrounded with immense prestige.

muzzle	*Kaji* (clan elder)
right eye	first song master
left eye	first instrumentalist
right ear	second singer
left ear	second instrumentalist
tongue	third singer
right cheek	fourth singer
left cheek	third instrumentalist

Thus, as shown above, all left parts are reserved for the instrumentalists (*khī* or *dhimay guru*) and the right parts, for the singers. The horns (called "the remains of the animal", Nep. *śeṣa*) are an indivisible part, offered to Nāsaḥdyāḥ and hung on the top of his temple. We note that the ritual follows the order of ceremony of buffalo sacrifices as practiced by religious associations (*guṭhī*) and is conceived as part of the category of rituals in honour of the group of tutelary divinities (New. *digudhyāḥ*) to which Nāsaḥdyāḥ belongs[23].

The sacralization of musical instruments is not an isolated phenomenon and is found throughout the Indian world. Bharata Muni (second century ?), in his famous treatise, *Natyaśāstra*, described in detail the diverse types of drums and their divinities. Even today in India, some drums are the subject of codified ritualization. As an example, the *bherī* of southern India, within the context of the cult of Naṭarāja, is the object of particularly elaborate procedures. The obvious link between the dancing god of Cidambaram (Tamil Nadu) and Nāsaḥdyāḥ, leads us to quote the translation of a text from the *Bherītādanaviddhi* part of the *Cidambarakṣetra Sarvasva* (1982, vol. 1 : 90). In some respects, this text is a meridional counterpart of the sequencing of Nāsaḥdyāḥ's *pūjā*[24].

23 Cf. the description of the buffalo sacrifice in Pyangaon, described by G. Toffin (1976).

24 We warmly thank Pandit Śivarāja Dikṣitar from the Institut Français d'Indologie in Pondichery, who told me of the existence of this passage and kindly agreed to translate it.

"[...] drawing two *śthaṇḍila maṇḍala* with rice, one in the East and the other in the North of the *dhvajadaṇḍa* "flag post". Drawing a lotus figure with eight petals in one of the said *śthaṇḍila* and placing the *bherī* in it. Placing the *astrarāja* "Śiva's holy trident" in the other. Both of these things are honoured with *dhupa* "incense", *dīpa* "holy oil lamp", *naividya* (cooked food, with fruit, etc.). Then the *bherī* is honoured by offering flowers, etc. [then] Worshipping 'Rudra' at the centre [of the *bherī*], *sapta ṛṣi*, "the seven sages" at the root [bottom of the *bherī*], *nava graha* "nine planets" at the holes (?), Vasuki "abyssal serpent" at the black [centre of the *bherī*], Śaṇnukhe (the god Śubramaṇya ?) on the beating stick (or sides of the stick, on the top ?) [then] adorning the *bherī* with a piece of silken cloth, flowers, etc. [then] elevating the wind on the *ākāśa* (sky) with *hakāra* meditating on Mahādeva as having (in) '*bindu*' form and *vyonākāra* (permeating the whole *ākāśa)*, [then] either the priest (of the festival) or his assistant beats *bherī* (thrice by reciting the following mantras):

1. *Brahmajajñānam + asataśca vivaḥ* - first beating.

2. *Idaṃ viṣṇurvicakrame + pauṃ sure* - second beating.

3. *Tryonbekaṃ yajāmahe + mā mṛtāt* - third beating.

After beating the *bherī* by the *ācārya* priest or assistant, the ritual is over, the regular *bherī* player is called to the place and is sprinkled with sanctified water. He is also adorned with garlands of flowers. He too beats the *bherī* with *Nandī tāla*. Other instrumentalists, at that time, play on the important instruments like *maddala, muruja, paṭaka* (kettledrum), *vīṇā,* flute, *dundhubi* (large kettledrum) and *jhallari* (cymbals). By that meditation, all the deities and all the worlds become pleased and bestow boons upon the devotees."

With regard to the polarity of the *miśra* type (Vedic and Tantric) of the cult of Naṭarāja in southern India, we note that is is the Brahmans who are responsible for the sacralization of the *bherī* drum and this procedure does not include blood sacrifice. One of the officiants of the temple of Cidambaram whom we met described the different steps in the *pūjā* of the Newar god: "The cult of Śiva Naṭarāja is that of Beauty, nothing hideous in it." This remark takes into account the respective typologies of the two poles of tradition. It should also be recalled that in

the case of the ritual to Nāsaḥdyāḥ, the ritualization of the *dhimay* drum, which is not codified in writing, is performed by *Jyāpu* peasants, who consider the god of music as a secret divinity (*āgādyāḥ*) especially bound to them.

The Instruments

Two kinds of *dhimay* drums are found in Kathmandu: a large one, most often called *mū dhimay* or *mā dhimay* and a smaller one called *yelepvāḥ dhimay* or *dhāñchā dhimay*. The Newar describe the first as an indigenous creation whose origin goes back to "the time of the gods" (Toffin, 1994: 438). According to I. Grandin (1989: 68), its existence goes back to the Licchavi period (fifth-seventh centuries). Let us briefly recall the characteristics of these two instruments, organologically linked to the great family of *ḍhol* drums scattered throughout northern India (Kölver and Wegner, 1992).

Fig. 3 mū dhimay

They are cylindrical drums, with two skins, in wood or in hammered brass. Their non-standard sizes, vary respectively from 35 to 42 cm in height and 23 to 27 cm in diameter for the *yelepvāḥ dhimay*, and from 45 to 50 cm in height and 38 to 50 cm in diameter for the *mū dhimay*. Their manufacture is collective uniting several craftsmen — Chunara carpenters for the wooden bodies (New. *gvāḥ*) and Tamrākār/Kansākār smiths for those in brass. The preparation — tanning, stretching the goat or buffalo skins and the final assemblage are the responsibility of the Kulu caste of tanners[25].

Each of the drum skins is charged with different symbolism in the three ancient royal cities. Hence, in Kathmandu the skin on the right is associated with Nāsaḥdyāḥ, while that on the left represents *māñkaḥ* (from *mā*, "mother", and *kaḥ*, "place" ?)[26]. In Patan this play of oppositions is respectively represented by the two types of dances of Śiva Naṭarāja, *tāṇḍava* and *lāsya* [27], and finally, in Bhaktapur the skin on the right is, as in Kathmandu, associated with the Newar god of music, while that on the left is identified with Haimādyāḥ, the divinity linked to Mahākāla who seems unknown outside the walls of "the city of the devotees"[28].

The *yelepvāḥ dhimay* is presented as a relatively recent creation, attributed to the caste of *kumā* potters (Nep. *Prajapati*). This group of inferior status to the Maharjan, without access to ritualized apprenticeships of the *mū dhimay*, would created the drum in order to improve its condition. The *yelepvāḥ dhimay* has been known in the Nepalese capital for approximately 60 to 70 years. Its name, *yele*, the former name of the town of Patan, and *pvāḥ*, "from" evoke this locality where it is in fact unknown. According to some, the *yelepvāḥ dhimay* more precisely originated in two wards, *Tyauḍa* and *Jyāthā tvāḥ* (high part of the town, *thahne*). It is above all the instrument of public

25 For a detailed description of the different steps in the manufacture of the *dhimay* drum, see G.M. Wegner (1986).

26 The term *māñkaḥ* generally seems to represent a contraction of *mahākala*. However, according to informants in the southern part of Kathmandu, the translation of *māñkaḥ* is "mother's place".

27 This evokes the popular etymology of the word *tāla* associating the syllables *tā* with *tāṇḍava* and *la* with *lāsya*.

28 For more on Haimādyāḥ, cf. Wegner, 1992: 125.

festivities and festivals as shown by its inclusion in ritual events (marriages, democracy day, the king's birthday, etc.). As opposed to the *mū dhimay*, which is exclusively reserved for the Maharjan, this instrument is played by the two communities.

Fig. 4 yelepvāḥ dhimay

To be complete, the *dhimay bājā* requires the presence of idiophones, which have the function of regulating the tempo (*tāla*). According to the locality, the ward or the circumstances of the performance, two kinds can be distinguished: large *bhusyāḥ* cymbals with protuberances and small metal discs called *kepuī* or *ghau*.

Traditionally made by members of the Vajrācārya and Śākya high castes from a combination of different metals whose proportions are kept secret, the two elements form pairs of *bhusyāḥ* cymbals (30 cm in diameter) which like the Tibetan *sbug-chal*[29] are not the same as each other. The left one is heavier and is placed flat in the hand; it is held by a small thong in a V-form across the fingers and associated with the female. The right one, male, is held by a piece of bamboo thought of as a *liṅga* and twisted into the the strap. Their evident association with the *yelepvāḥ*

29 Cf. the detailed description of M. Helffer in her work on Tibetan musical instruments, *Mchod-Rol*, CNRS Editions, 1994: 162.

dhimay of Kathmandu is here theoretically outlawed with the *mū dhimay*, at least in the lower part of the town (*Kone*).

Organologically similar, the *ghau* and *kepuī* can be distinguished by their respective pitches. The higher pitched *ghau* is used in the lower part of Kathmandu; it is also played in Bhaktapur and Patan. The *kepuī* (from Newari *ke*, "disc" and *puī*, "strap for holding the instrument") is played in the upper areas of the town (*Thahne*)[30]. Today, the *kepuī* have nearly disappeared and are mostly replaced by the *ghau*. An honorific practice because of their normative function of regulating the *tāla*, playing metal discs often falls to clan elders (*kaji*).

The Apprenticeship

The apprenticeship of *mū dhimay* (New. *dhimay senegu*) is a major event in the lives of the Maharjan peasants. All young people in the community must learn the instrument. Although generally taken up between the ages of 10 to 15 years, it is not uncommon that adults, who did not learn to play in their youth, join the training. Always preceded by a preliminary initiation called *vahlāh cvanegu*[31], it is organised every 12 years in each ward and last about three months. Under the seal of secrecy, its transmission is above all oral[32]. This session takes place in almost seclusion in special houses called *ākhāḥchē*. The name, formed from *ākhāḥ* "letter" and *chē* "house", designating the site of musical training, is most interesting.[33] Probably from Sanskrit, the first meaning of *akṣara* is "imperishable"[34]; the Newari term *ākhāḥ* corresponds with the meaning "phoneme", defined as the "plus petit élément, insécable a-tome (*a-kśara*)

30 According to R.K. Duwal (personal communication), the *kepuī* metal disc was also used in Panauti, Banepa and Thimi.

31 See Toffin, 1994: 439, for a description of this ceremony.

32 The transmission of musical knowledge is not hereditary, but based on individual abilities. Thus, as a general rule, the best student is destined to become a guru upon his master's death.

33 The term *akharā*, according to S. Isvarananda (1995: 1) designates "a place for exercise, meeting hall".

34 "*Akṣara*, according to the traditional etymology - *na kṣarati* or *na kṣiyāte* - is what does not flow out or perish, hence the imperishable, the indestructible, the eternal", in Padoux, 1992: 13.

de la langue" (Padoux, 1980: 75). It should be remembered that within a musical context and since the *Viṣṇu-dharmottara* (second century BC ?), *akṣara* is also the technical term for syllables corresponding to diverse drum beating[35]. Within the context of Newar civilisation, where every part refers to a totality and where analogous principles prevail in all sectors of society, it is not surprising to see a place for acquiring knowledge, based above all on the Speech, designated as "house of letters".

This apprenticeship is formally divided in two major, distinct periods, marked by four ceremonies respectively called: *Nasāḥ salegu, chema/chuma pūjā*[36], *bā pūjā* and *pirancgu pūjā* (Toffin, ibid.: 441). Each of them is accompanied by blood sacrifices and followed by a communal banquet (New. *bcay*).

Musical Language

Teaching invariably begins on a Thursday or Sunday after the festival of *Gathāmugaḥ* and terminates a few days before *nalasanigu*, the first day of Dasaĩ (cf. Toffin, ibid.: 439)[37]. Preference is generally given to Thursday, an auspicious day devoted to Nāsaḥdyāḥ and Bṛhaspati, the master of teaching in the Hindu tradition. It is preceded by a propitiatory rite called *Nasāḥ salegu*, "conveying", or *dyāḥ salegu pūjā*. This ceremony, an indispensable preliminary to teaching, is intended to transfer the god's energy from the temple of the ward to the *ākhāḥchē*. The music master and his students meet to make the *kislī*, a substitute for the god in the form of a terra cotta saucer containing uncooked rice on which a coin with a betel nut on top is placed (cf. Wegner, 1984: 12 and Toffin, ibid.: 441). Each student keeps one in the *ākhāḥchē* and dedicates a twice-daily worship throughout the apprenticeship. This ceremony is also intended to receive the black mark of Nāsaḥdyāḥ (*mvaḥanī sinḥa*).

35 Cf. A. Daniélou and N.R. Bhatt, 1959: 157.

36 Obligatory in Kathmandu, the *chema pūjā* is rarely practised in other localities (it does not exist in Kirtipur and is optional in Patan).

37 This schedule can, however, vary according to localities. Thus, in Kirtipur, according to student abilities, it can by prolonged by nine months, during which the festival of *Cait Dasaĩ* concludes a short time before.

For approximately six weeks, the first part is devoted to the theoretical acquisition of the repertoire, which in Kathmandu, includes about 15 pieces. Like most percussion instruments on the Indian sub-continent, playing Newar drums is based on a corpus of syllables (*bol*) and on stereotyped rhythmic structures (*tāl*) (cf. Kölver and Wegner, 1992). In Kathmandu, this language is based on five phonemes: two gutturals, *kho* and *ghũ* (left hand), two dentals *tā* and *nā* (right hand) and a compound syllable, *dhyã* (*nā* + *ghũ*), corresponding to simultaneously playing with two hands. The first guttural *kho* and the first dental *tā* relate to the edge of the skin and *ghũ* and *nā* to the middle. The left is struck with a bare hand, the right is struck with a bamboo stick (New. *tāhkutsa*) whose extremity is rolled up in a spiral[38]. If the timbres corresponding to the dentals *tā* and *nā* are well contrasted in playing the *mũ dhimay*, striking the edge of the drum causes a naturally duller sound than in the centre of the skin. However, the same dentals tend to merge in playing the *yelepvāḥ dhimay*, whose resonant surface is less[39]. As for the gutturals, *kho* made by the hand's pressure on the edge of the frame produces a dull sound, while *ghũ* consists of a bounce of the palm of the hand, favouring resonance. Finally, the *dhyã* syllable, associating *nā* and *ghũ*, is made by simultaneously striking the centre of the two membranes. These syllables, respectively mute and resonant, are supposed to be analogous with the type of sound produced by the drum.

These five phonemes are arranged in a limited number of combinations, each constituting a unit of measure (Skt. *mātrā*). Hence, from the matrical phonemes, 50 or so are combined, comprising two, three or four syllables (cf. Ex. 1 in appendix). Each musical sequence is repeated at the place, in reverse, inverted or by alternating sequences. These mnemotechnical procedures consist in first isolating each element of the musical phrase and then in reconstructing the totality from its parts. This technique aims as much at establishing a metric regularity as at developing the independence of the student's two hands. As an example, a list of stereotyped formulas used during the apprenticeship of the *yelepvāḥ dhimay* is given (cf. Ex. 2 in appendix).

38 According to L. Aubert (1988: 50) the name for this stick is derived from the Newari *tāhā*, signifying serpent.

39 Generally, the *yelepvāḥ dhimay*, whose reduced diameter of the skins restricts the possibilities of varying the timbres using different ways of striking the drum, has a great virtuosity in playing techniques which have contributed to its popularity.

Far from being the exclusive prerogative of the musical world, these techniques resemble other apprenticeships which may have inspired them. For example, one is reminded of the study of the Vedic corpus in which different types of recitation appear[40]. Moreover, corporal participation, attitudes linked to striking the drums, which are also found in the dance repertoire, *dhimay pyākkhā*, favour this memorization.

The memorization of the corpus is regularly controlled on two levels: through daily recitation before the music master, and each week, generally on Sunday evening during the collective *pūjā*, in the Nāsaḥdyāḥ temple. The first part of the apprenticeship ends with a ritual called *chema pūjā*. According to G. Toffin (ibid.: 441), it is a ceremony of pacification intended to appropriate an equivalent relationship between the devotees and the divinity. From the musical point of view, this rite is above all intended to solicit Nāsaḥdyāḥ's forgiveness for students' mispronunciation[41].

Musical Gesture

The third ceremony, *bā pūjā* (*bā*, "half" in Newari) marks the division between the two steps in the apprenticeship. A chicken is sacrificed for the occasion and the music master offers the right wing to the best student. This *pūjā* precedes the phase of instrumental practice which is in fact the application of the syllabic corpus to the instrument. In northern wards of the town, this stage also includes the practice of acrobatics (*māḥ tāḥnegu*)[42]. The students form human pyramids and learn to handle a long bamboo pole called *dhunyā* or *dhunyā munyā*.[43]. According to S. and H. Wichler (1980: 92), "These poles were originally a military sign and are relics of the time of the Malla Kings, when the Jyāpu whose caste alone play the *dhimay* were taken into military service together with the Nay or Kasaim". Even today, these poles, decorated

40 Traditionally 11 forms of the recitation of the Veda exist; they are intended to fix in the memory of the Brahman student the phonic sequence independently from the meaning of the words.

41 In some localities this rite, under the jurisdiction of the master, is optional.

42 According to G. Toffin (ibid.: 443), "*māḥ tāḥnegu* (short form: *māḥtāḥ*) seems to be derived from Skt. *mahā* and New. *tāḥnegu* "to join things together."

43 The origin of the word *dhunyā* is unknown to us. It may be derived from the Sanskrit root *DHŪ-* "secouer, s'agiter, faire trembler" (cf. Renou, 1880: 343).

with ten pennants associated with the ancient Malla dynasties, are perceived as a symbol of kingship, not however without some humour. One Maharjan questioned on the significance of these poles, said, "[...] the king must not fall, this would be the source of great unhappiness but [...] here at least, we make him dance as we like".

The handling of the bamboo pole is elsewhere associated with the god Hanumān, the master of the *tāla*, represented at the top by the tail of a white yak. With the *dhimay* drum, it forms an inseparable couple, the apprenticeship of the pole (*dhunyā senegu*) is accomplished on the basis of rhythms emitted by the instrument. This spatialization of musical language, whose importance in pedagogy should be underscored, is generally based on binary rhythms. In some wards, however, it is made up of combined rhythms (binary/ternary). The example cited below, called *dhunyā bol*, illustrates a conventional schema of word/gesture articulation. Each element of the choreography of the binary rhythm (*cho tāl*) coincides with two *mātrā*: / *ghũ ghũ* / *nara* / (going up) / *ghũ* / *nārā* / (descending) / *kho* / *tātā* : (turning around the waist from left to right) and *ghũ* / *nārā* / (turning around the waist from right to left).

// kho / tātā / ghũ / nārā /ghũ ghũ / nārā / ghũ / nārā /

kho / tātā / ghũ ghũ / nārā /ghũ / nārā / gũgũ / nārā //

The apprenticeship of the *mũ dhimay* ends after a first public performance. This festivity is accompanied by a ritual called *pidanegu / piranegu pūjā* during which the students must lead the god's energy (in the form of the *kislī*) saucer from the apprenticeship house to the neighbourhood temple. For them it is an occasion to receive once again the black *ṭikā* of Nāsaḥdyāḥ. In some localities, for example, Panga, *pirane pūjā* is followed by a fifth ceremony called *litanegu / litatayankigu pūjā* "giving back". This *pūjā* plays a similar role to that of *chema* in Kathmandu. These solemn ceremonies are invariably followed by a banquet. One can easily imagine the nature of the ties created through this apprenticeship. They once again reflect the basic parameters of Newar unity, as can be observed in all activities of this group — the principle of seniority and ritual cohesion on the basis of ward.

Analytical parameters

We have seen that the repertoire of *dhimay* drums has a relatively restricted corpus of pieces in which the circumstances of performance are most often linked to processions. Improvisation plays practically no part and the creation of new works is a rare phenomenon. These compositions generally follow a similar pattern in all sectors of the capital. They include three or four distinct parts called *nhyāḥ, gau, kolā* and *tvālhāygu*[44]. This technical vocabulary can be defined as follows:

1. *nhyāḥ* "to move forward in space" (Manandhar, 1986: 139). This first term which may be related to the Sanskrit root *NĪ-* "to drive, to direct", express the idea of a prelude or if one prefers, an "overture". It is generally repeated eight or ten times.

2. The word *gau* "to change, to meet, to follow" may be derived from the Sanskrit root *GAM-* "to go", designates what may be called "development". It is subdivided in two sub-sections of unequal length. The first *gau*, is very short (three *mātrā*) and acts as the "transition" between the overture (*nhyāḥ*) and the second *gau*, which constitutes the real "development". The latter is repeated twice.

3. *kolā* "to conclude". This fragment is a kind of coda introducing the final part. Contrary to the three other sections, it seems that this short composition, optional and rarely played, is the exclusive prerogative of the *mū dhimay*.

4. *tvālhāygu* "to finish, to cover, to close". The final part is fixed and invariable. It is played at the end of all compositions and acts as a kind of sound emblem of the ward (New. *tvāḥ*).

With regard to rhythmic organisation, one first of all notes that binary structures are common in two forms (*mū* and *yelepvāḥ dhimay*), while combined rhythms (associating binary and ternary) are principally reserved for the ritual drum. Nevertheless, even in the case of binary structures, the repertoire of *mū dhimay* proves to be more extensive than that of the *yelepvāḥ dhimay*. Two contrasting *tāla*, respectively called *cho* and *lānta*, can be distinguished. The first comprises four *mātrā* approximately corresponding to a beat of 112, while the second, played

[44] Cf. Ex. 4 in appendix and CD, tracks 6 and 7.

twice as slowly, comprises eight (= approximately 55) [cf. CD tracks 7 and 8]. Apart from this elementary binary structure, the ritual drum's repertoire uses two other *tāl* called *partāl* and *jati*. *Partāl* is made up of seven *mātrā* (3 + 4) and *jati* of 14 *mātrā* [(3 + 4) x 2]. With the exception of the latter which seems more to be the prerogative of the northern wards[45], the first three *tāl* are played in all wards of the capital. They are not specifically reserved for the *dhimay bājā* and are used in other ensembles (especially *dāphā* and *dāḥ khalaḥ*).

The rhythmic structure governing this repertoire seems relatively homogeneous throughout the urban area. In return, the sequencing of five matrical phonemes used in Kathmandu vary considerably from ward to ward. It should be remembered that each syllable corresponds to a different strike and that each strike produces a timbre of its own. The syllabic variations are thus concomitant with variations of timbre which whithin the same rhythmic frame are discrete markers of the identity of each group.

Repertoire

Although playing the *yelepvāḥ dhimay* is not restricted and can be employed in all circumstances, this is not the case for the *mū dhimay* which is required in nine specific circumstances in Kathmandu:

- worship of the god of music, Nāsaḥdyāḥ *pūjā*
- passing of power from the clan elder, *thakāli lui*
- initiation of aged people, *burajankvā*
- procession signalling the conclusion of the apprenticeship of the *mū dhimay, Swayambunāth wone*
- setting up the *stupa* and removal of the statues (*murti*), *bhagwan bijāyakigu*

[45] Hence, Dev Narayan Maharjan (in Ombaha *tvāḥ*) never mentioned the existence of *jati* during our brief apprenticeship of the *dhimay* drum, and when questioned on this subject, he responded, "Yes, *jati* certainly exists, but not among us."

- festival of the cow, *Sā pāru* (Nep. *Gāī jātrā*)[46]
- king's birthday, *jujuya janmadi*[47]
- full moon of *baisakh, baisakh purnima*
- concluding festivals, *shiba goyagu*

The repertoire of these different ceremonies is made up of a corpus classified in two distinct categories, as shown by the table below: the first, under the title *dhyāḥlhaygu*, (*dyāḥ* "god" and *lḥaygu*, "to speak, to express") includes five pieces, whereas in the second category there are eight, with no particular denomination.

Mū dhimay dhyāḥlhaygu

Title	tāl	Performance circumstances
mūdhyāḥ dhyāḥlhaygu[48]	*cho* *lānta* *partāl*	in the *ākhāḥchē* and in the temple of Nāsaḥdyāḥ, before as well as after any displacement
lānta dhyāḥlhaygu	*lānta*	in the *ākhāḥchē* during the *pūjā* to Nāsaḥdyāḥ
tvāchā dhyāḥlhaygu	*cho*	in front of temples as well as while moving to a chosen destination
tañtakho dhyāḥlhaygu	*cho* *partāl*	arriving and leaving chosen destinations
tabhunañtata dhyāḥlhaygu	*cho*	walking to the temple towards which a procession is making its way, as well as on arrival

46 This piece includes the use of natural trumpets. On account of the limits of this article, Newar aerophones will be presented in a later publication.
47 On this occasion, the *dhimay* is associated with the *nāykhī* drum, recalling the Majārjan peasants' and the Nāy butchers' service in the army during the Malla dynasties.
48 cf example 5 in appendix.

Essentially representing musical offerings addressed to the gods, the five *dhyāḥlhaygu* must be differentiated. The first which is the masterpiece of the repertoire, is a salutation soliciting Nāsaḥdyāḥ's protection, and is the only composition in the repertoire using the three *tāl* of reference (*cho, lānta, partāl*). There are 32 in Kathmandu, this number refers to the 32 wards of the city, as well as the canonical number of ritual drums[49]. This piece, devoted exclusively to Nāsaḥdyāḥ, represents in some respects the voice of the god in each *tol* of the town. The second *dhyāḥlhaygu,* dedicated in priority to Nāsaḥdyāḥ and Ganedhyāḥ, can, nevertheless, be played for other divinities; there are 24 in Kathmandu. As for the other three pieces, they are used especially during the displacement of the instruments outside the ward's borders. Among them, the last is specifically used during the festival of the cow (*Sā Pāru*)[50].

Some occasions require the combined use of the first three *dhyāḥlhaygu.* Bearing in mind the sacralization of the instrument, one is reminded that in some wards (especially in the lower part of the town), the *mū dhimay* is only played by the music master and in principle only leaves the apprenticeship homes (*ākhāḥchē*) to be taken to Nāsaḥdyāḥ's temple. The denomination of *mū dhimay* (from the Sanskrit *mūla* "root"), generally understood as a generic term referring to the category of ritual drums, here designates a particular drum in each of the "32" wards. Its displacement from the house of apprenticeship to the temple of Nāsaḥdyāḥ is the object of great precaution. On this occasion, the first three *dhyāḥlhaygu* must be successively interpreted: the first is played facing the altar of the god of music, the second on leaving the room and the third in crossing the house's threshold.

In contrast to the first five pieces, which in addressing divinities, can be understood as "bridges" between the worlds of men and that of the gods, the second series of compositions is intended to illustrate the different stages in procession itineraries. Each of these pieces is hence associated with the necessity of displacement: ascending, descending, circumambulating, overcoming obstacles, etc. Furthermore, this musical production becomes a means of sacralizing the ritual space which is the

49 For further information on the number 32, see G. Toffin's article (ibid.: 435).
50 It should be noted that specific *dhyāḥlhaygu* do not exist for the other two divinities, Sarasvatī and Hanumān, presiding over the apprenticeship.

entire town. As the table shows, with the exception of the second *lampvāḥ*, based on the combined rhythm *partāla*, all displacements are carried out on a binary structure (*cho tāla*); the combined rhythms are generally only played during pauses.

Title	*tāla*	Performance circumstances
lampvāḥ [51]	*cho*	between the *ākhāḥchē* and the first river
dhuniyāpvāḥ	*cho*	crossing a river[52]
swantipupvāḥ	*partāl*	at the shrine of Swantipvāh[53]
tampvaḥ	*cho*	during climbing
devalipvāḥ	*cho*	circumambulating the *stupa*
pūjāpvāḥ	(?)	during rituals
lampvāḥ	*partāl*	going back down to the *ākhāḥchē*
mahpvāḥ	*cho* *partāl*	accompanying acrobatics (*māḥ tāḥncgu*)

Lastly, the repertoire of the *mū dhimay* comprises a final piece which is not taught during the apprenticeship and which the students must discover themselves. Called *sā yāgu* (sā "cow" and *yāgu* "to make"), it is played during the festival of *Sā Pāru* (Nep. *Gāī jātrā*). Its existence illustrates an elementary principle which one could qualify as pedagogic; to become a musician one must be capable of integrating in an autonomous manner, through simple imitation, an unknown or new composition. Here, the *bol* must be appropriately reconstituted from direct observation, which significantly contrasts with the general scheme of musical instruction.

[51] Cf. Ex. 3 in appendix.

[52] This composition, as its name indicates, is also associated with the bamboo pole *dhunyā*. Moreover, it is played in the following circumstances: the displacement of the *murti, Shiba goyagu, Burajankvū, thakāli lui, Bhagwan bijāyakigu, Nāsaḥdyāḥ pūjā*, as well as during the festivals of *Seto Matsyendranāth* and *Indra jātrā*.

[53] The famous cave at the base of the shrine of Swayambhunāth.

Conclusion

This general presentation of the apprenticeship of the *dhimay* drum in Kathmandu does not aim so much at elaborating the details of musicological analysis as at emphasizing the underlying interrelations among myths, rites and music in this society. As we have seen, Indian sources have proved extremely valuable references for understanding certain aspects of the complex personality of the Newar god of Music. They seem to be able to elucidate in depth an aspect of instruction to which we hope to return, this is the important role of Sarasvatī, one of the cardinal divinities presiding over learning. The direct association between Sarasvatī and *smṛti* in this context is particularly interesting. This Goddess of the Arts and Knowledge is equally personified by Speech and the association between Knowledge and memory is omnipresent in Hindu tradition. This Knowledge is never conceived as extrinsic to the individual, but as something that has been forgotten. Within the Newar context, memorization of the *bol* syllables really constitutes the root of the acquisition of musical knowledge. The direct association between this goddess and *smṛti* within the framework of an apprenticeship resolutely centred on Speech is thus not surprising, even if in its practical application, it is destined to become silent and to be used to support the sound of the drum. Once these syllables are integrated, it could be said that instrumental application is immediate. As P. Sagant (1988) understood so remarkably well with regard to Limbu children, "Savoir dire, c'est savoir faire."

The second part of the apprenticeship of the *dhimay* finally appears as an exteriorization of Speech in the form of rhythm and musical "colours". It has been shown that from a relatively homogeneous rhythmic effect, identity expresses itself in each ward through the sequencing of specific syllables associated with strikes. Hence, the *tāla* rhythm appears as a fixed point, immovable, from which the various syllables/strikes radiate. Finally, transcending these two aspects of which he is the genitor, Nāsaḥdyāḥ is the master of silence, *laya*, silence before and after all musical creation.

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Appendix

Ex. 1. List of compound syllables used in playing the dhimay drum in Kathmandu

1	2	3	4
tā	tātā tākho tādhyă	tātātā tākhotā tātākho tātāghũ tākhoghũ tāghũghũ	tātākhotā tākhotātā tākhonākho tākhonārā tāghunātā tāghunārā tāghũtāghũ
nā	nādhyă nārā	nātākho nānākho nākhodhyă nākhoghũ	nātākhotā nānākhotā nākhoghũ
kho	khotā	khotātā khotāko khotāghũ	khotākhotā khotātakho khotākhodhyă
ghũ	ghũnā	ghũtāghũ ghũnārā	ghũnāghũnā ghũnākhotā ghũnātāghũ ghũnānākho ghũnānātā ghũnātākho
dhyă	dhyădhyă dhyănā dhyătā dhyăghũ	dhyănātā dhyătādhyă dhyăkhotā dhyăghũna	

Ex. 2 Formulas for the apprenticeship of the yelepvāḥ dhimay

1. tā / kho / dhyă / kho /
2. dhyă / kho / tā / tā /
3. tātā / kho / dhyă / dhyă /
4. kho / tākho / dhyă / dhyă /
5. dhyă / khotā / tā / kho /
6. tātākhotā / dhyă / khotā /
7. dhyă / khotā / tātākhotā /
8. tāghunātā / kho / tātā /
9. tātākhotā / tākho / dhyă /
10. dhyă / khotā / tākho / dhyă /
11. kho / tākho / tā / tā /
12. tātākhotā / tā / tā /
13. tāghũnātā / tā / tā /
14. ghũnātāghũ / tā / tā /
15. tāghũnātā / ghũna / dhyă /

Ex.3. Lampvāḥ for the mũ dhimay (tāl cho)

tā	tātā	kho	tātā	tā	kho	tā	tātā
ghũ	nārā	khotā	tākho	tā	ghũ	ghũ	nā
khotā	tākho	tā	tātā	kho	tātā	kho	tātā
ghũ	nārā	ghũ	nārā	ghũnā	nākho	tā	ghũ
tākho	nārā	ghũ	nārā	ghũ	nārā	khotā	tākho
tā	ghũ	ghũnā					

[x 10]

Ex. 4. Cholti

Cholti (cho tal) is constructed with a cycle of eight connected sequences. Each of them is subdivided in two unequal sections: *nhyāḥ* and *gau*. The piece concludes with a stereotyped *tvālhāygu* formula. The eight different *nhyāḥ* and *gau* are interchangeable. Each *nhyāḥ* is repeated eight to ten times. The *gau* part is in turn subdivided in two unequal sections. The first, made of three *mātrā*, acts as a transition between the introductory formula (*nhyāḥ*) and the development. This transition formula introduces the second *gau* which is repeated two times. The general structure can thus be summarized as: A [x 8-10] / B / C [x2] / D // The *bol* notation of the first sequence and *tvālhāygu* follows (cf. CD tracks 6 & 7) :

A *Nhyaḥ*

tā khotā	dhyădhyă	tātākhotā	dhyădhyă

[x 8-10]

B *Gau*

tā dhyă	nādhyă	kho

C *Gau*

tā tākho	tā dhyă	tā dhyă	tā dhyă
tā dhyă	nā dhyă	nā dhyă	tātākhotā
tākhoghũnā	nākhoghũnā	tākho tā	tākho tā
tā dhyă	nā dhyă	nā dhyă	tātākhotā
tākhoghũnā	nākhoghũnā	tākho tā	tākho tā
kho tātā	khotākhotā	tākhotātā	khotākhonā
tākho tā	tākho tā	tākho tā	ghũnākhotā
dhyă ghũ			

[x 2]

D *Tvālhāygu*

ghũ tāghũ	nārākhotā	ghũ tāghũ	nārākhotā
tā ghũ	tāghunārā	khotā ghũ	tāghunārā
ghũ nārā	kho tā	tātākhotā	tākhotātā
ghũ nā			

ex. 5. Mūdhyāḥ dhyāḥlaygu (tāl lāntā)

ghũ	tātā	khotā	tākho	tā		tā	tākho
tā	khotā	tākho	tātā	khotā	tākho	tā	tā
tātā	khotā	tākho	tātā	khotā	tākho	tā	tā
ghũ	nā	khotā	tākho	ghũ	nā	khotā	tākho
ghũ	ghũnā	takho	ghũnā	ghũ	ghũnā	ghũ	
ghũ	ghũ	ghũ	kho	tā	ghũ	kho	tā
ghũ	ghũnā	nā					

[x 2]

ex. 6. Gau (tāl cho)

ghũ	ghũ	nā	tātā	kho		tā	tākho
ghũ	ghũ	nā	tātā	kho	kho	tā	tākho
ghũ	ghũ	nā	tātā	kho	kho	tā	tākho

[x 2]

tā	khotā	tākho	tātā	tā	kho	tā	tā
tātā	khotā	tākho	tātā	khotā	ghũghũ	nānā	khotā

[x 10]

ex. 7. Kolā

tā	tātā	khotā	tākho	ghũnā	nakho	ghũ	ghũ
nā	tātā	khota	tā	ghũna	nākho	tāghũ	nārā

[x 10]

ex. 8. Tvalhāygu

ghũ	nārā	ghũna	tā	tākho	nārā	ghũ	nārā
ghũna	tā	tākho	nārā	tāghũ	tāghũ	tātā	ghũ

RAGA BASANTA AND THE SPRING SONGS OF THE KATHMANDU VALLEY.

A Musical Great Tradition among Himalayan Farmers?

Ingemar Grandin

In February 1798, Qayum Khan Kalawat was appointed by the royal order of Rana Bahadur, the King of Nepal, as musician at the Kathmandu court. Royal orders also assigned Qayum Khan a handsome jagir – amounting to some 1,500 rupees per year – as remuneration. And he was soon to be joined at the court by other, similarly well-rewarded, artists: the musicians Tapa Kathak and Jiwan Shah Kalawat; Bhawani Dayal Kathak who was appointed chief of music and dancing girls; and Arman Khan and Bhikhan Khan, the sarangiyas. They had all come from the south, where the titles of Kalawa(n)t (which goes back to the court musicians of Akbar) and Kathak belong to the specialists of classical music – those artists who have maintained Hindustani shastriya sangit till the present day, refining their art by intense practice and living a life of music.[1]

It is a great step from the King's darbar to the simple resthouse in a neighbourhood in a Kathmandu Valley town. A gulf separates the professional musician to the ordinary people of such a neighbourhood, who find time for their traditional hymns only in the morning or the evening. The men who sing in these groups may come from a variety of occupational groups, but most notably they are farmers by occupation, by caste, or both. And of course, these farmers do not assemble in their

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[1] See Regmi (1995, p. 21–22 and p. 30–31, fn. 17, 19, 20, 22) on the appointment of these musicians, and Neuman (1990: 86ff, 124, 273; *passim*) on the titles and the characterisation of classical musicians of North India.

resthouse to sing for any worldly sovereign – in fact, they sing for nobody but the gods and themselves, as there is no other audience. But introverted as this singing may seem, the devotional singing in the *bhajan* and *dãphã* groups is the kind of music-making that really permeates the Kathmandu Valley. In the Kirtipur neighbourhood where I myself lived for a period of musical fieldwork, there were at that time – and this was in 1986 – two musical resthouses very close to each other. In one, the dapha singers used to assemble, with their drum (*khĩṃ*) and their pairs of cymbals. The other was the home of the bhajan group, which in addition to the harmonium performed with a *nagarā* (kettle drum) in the mornings but with a tabla in the evenings.

On my first evening with the bhajan group, there was one song that particularly caught my attention. The meandering melody, the many and long melodical phrases, the seven-beat *tāla*, the shifts of tempo, the enthusiasm with which every participant joined in to sing it – all contributed to set this song off from the other hymns. The singers referred to this song as *Basanta*. The next song, though definitely different in both music and words, was called by the same name. In the morning, the bhajan presented me with still another Basanta melody. And when I went over to the dapha, I was able to add two more Basantas to my collection.

This article is a study of Basanta melodies, such as they are sung in different places (Kirtipur, Panga, Kathmandu, Lalitpur), in the Kathmandu Valley today. Four of these Basantas are included on the CD accompanying this issue of the EBHR (I refer to these songs simply as Bs1, Bs2, etc). Two others can be found on Laurent Aubert's CD. I complemented these with three Basantas from locally produced cassettes and three that I recorded myself, and ended up with a full dozen Basanta melodies. Though my study has already produced quite a lot of material, it is by no means complete; what I present here is a preliminary study covering the main points.

Basanta means "spring"[2] and these twelve Basanta can simply be described as different spring songs – each with own text and its distinct

[2] The spring songs are properly sung only during the six weeks from Basanta pancami (the fifth day of the bright lunar fortnight of *magh*, in the first half of

melody. To be sure, on the surface these distinct melodies have notable similarities. All these songs are in refrain–verse form (and further words will not be wasted on the texts in this strictly musical examination), with distinct melodies for refrain and verse. All melodies move along diatonic scales of the same kind as are found in India, and the movements are almost exclusively stepwise. And all have the verse melody in a higher register than the refrain melody. But these traits are not unique to the Basanta melodies – they are found in much of Kathmandu Valley music and indeed what one generally may expect in South Asia.

But there is one reason to listen for a closer affinity among these spring song melodies. Basanta is referred to as a song (mye) or a melody (laya), but also as a rāga. A raga – in the musical Great Tradition of śastriya saṅgīt – is something quite different from a mere melody.[3] But various distinct melodies can well be surface manifestations of the same melodical essence, the same raga. Is this the case among the Basantas?

At the outset, the Basantas do not appear to present a strong case for having a shared musical essence. The meandering refrain melody of Bs1 does not seem very similar to the straight-forward repetitive up-and-down-again of the Bs2 refrain or to the three short arcs of the Bs4 refrain. The verses seem mainly to move rather haphazardly around the upper tonic. And most conclusively, these melodies are not even in the same melodical mode! Some songs (like Bs2 on the CD) have all the pitches unaltered, or *shuddha* (a western musician would quite simply find this to be a major scale). Some songs (like A2 or the Gaine song on the Aubert CD) consistently employ the flattened form (*komal*) of three of the pitches: 3, 6 and 7. And some flatten also the pitch 2, consistently (like Bs4) or just here and there (like Bs1).

February) until Holi purnima (the full moon of *phagun*, in March). This period in fact anticipates the season of Basanta proper which starts only in the month after, in *caitra*.

[3] I have not included diacritics for the transliteration of common musical terms (such as raga, shastriya sangit, etc); for the words for musical instruments, genres etc. specific to the Kathmandu Valley diacritics are given only the first time they occur in the text.

Let us take good note of this modal inconsistency – and put it aside for later consideration. For the present, we will just stick to a simplified system of notation

octave:

lower	middle							higher
7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1' *etc*
ni	sā	re	ga	ma	pa	dha	ni	sā

where 1 is the tonic and, for instance, 2 denotes the second pitch (re), whether in its shuddha or komal form. This is the first step to find out certain similarities between the melodical processes in the different Basantas. The second step is to consider the phrases that are used in any of these Basantas. These, in fact, can be reduced to the following set.

Superordinate phrase:	*A*	*B*	*C*	*P*	*Q*
Versions:		*X*	*Z*		
Derivative phrases:	*AB'*		*Z'*	*P'*	

Among these ten phrases, five can be seen as superordinate types of phrase, which the other phrases either are versions of, or from which they derive.

The first three types of phrase – *A*, *B* and *C* – can be established inductively from the refrains of seven of our Basantas (among them Bs2, Bs3, and the Gaine Basanta on Aubert's CD) easily enough:

A an ascent from 1 to 1' where 2 and 5 are omitted

B a descent from 1' to 3 (where 5 and 2 are included)

C a concluding phrase going from 3 up to 5 and then down (mostly via 7) to the tonic 1.

Some Basantas (like the second phrase in Bs4) fuse the ascent-descent *A* + *B* into one phrase, *AB'*. Phrase *AB'* and the phrase-pair *A* + *B* both ascend from 1 (omitting 2 and 5) and then descend to 3. The main difference is that *AB'* is entirely confined to the lower register and does not reach the upper tonic 1'.

The *verses* invariably start directly in the higher register – around 1' – around which the melodies apparently move rather haphazardly. But once we identify two core motifs, and study separately the phrases built around each of these motifs separately, the apparent confusion in the verse melodies disappears.

TYPE OF PHRASE	MOTIF	ESSENTIAL MELODICAL IDEA
P	*p*	narrowly circumscribing the upper tonic by means of the two sub-motifs 7→1' and 2'→1'
Q	*q*	going down from 3' to the upper tonic 1'

The two types of phrase here, then, each contain a specific melodical idea, a core motif around which the individual phrase in a specific song gives in its own melodical elaboration and metrical and rhythmic adaptation. Each Basanta has several distinct versions of these phrases. Phrase *P'* – which utilizes only *one* of the two submotifs 7→1' or 2→1' at the heart of *P* – is found in a few Basantas. In the Basantas (like Bs1 and Bs2) where the verse temporarily stretches down to the lower register with an *X* inserted among the *P*'s and *Q*'s, phrase *Z'* comes directly after this *X* and brings the melody up to the higher register again.

The phrases *X* + *Z* – and in that specific order – appear as the concluding melodical statement of a verse. The individual Basantas correspond almost exactly in the pitch-for-pitch outline of the *X* and *Z* phrases. The descent *X* + *Z* in the verse is never straight but always oblique: when the melody has reached 3 (sometimes 4), it turns upwards temporarily, then turns downwards again at 5 (sometimes 6), and goes on all the way down to the tonic 1.

This is also exactly how the descent is shaped in the phrase-pair *B* + *C* that concludes the refrain. (As I have said, *X* + *Z* are indeed versions of *B* + *C*.) The specific *B* + *C* in many Basantas are nearly identical in overall length and metric positioning and differ only in details of rhythmic and melodic embellishments. *X* + *Z*, on the other hand, share the same general melodic outline only in the different songs.

They are treated much more freely metrically, and can be drawn out into a sequence of 10 measures (or more properly speaking, 10 cycles of the tala) as in Bs4, or be condensed to a quick eighth-note pattern, as in the *Z* of the song *Siri siri phasa jita*, probably the most well-known of all Basantas.

In the sample of twelve spring songs, each individual Basanta melody can be described with the set of five plus five phrase-types. To give a few examples:

Song	Refrain	Verse sect I	Verse sect II
Bs2	*A B C*	*Q X Z' Q*	*Q Q P X Z*
Bs3	*A B C*	*Q P*	*P P P' X Z*
Bs4	*C AB' C*	*P Q*	*P' Q X Z' C*
Bs1	*B C AB' B C*	*P Q Q X Z' Q*	*P Q P Q P X Z B C*

This suggests a close melodical relationship between the individual Basantas. And the picture of the individual Basantas as different manifestations of a shared set of melodical ideas becomes even deeper when we study the motifs. A set of seven basic motifs plus two derivative motifs can be identified in the various Basantas. All the basic motifs, save one, is found in every single tune. And the melodical processes, save in detail, of each individual tune can be accounted for from these nine motifs. These motifs are listed below.

MOTIF	PHRASE	CORE MELODICAL IDEA
a	*A*	ascent from 1
	AB'	
b	*B*	descent, but not further than to 3
	AB'	
	X	
k	*B→C*	down-up kink at (about) 3
	X→Z	
	X→Z'	
c	*C*	up-down kink at (about) 5
	Z	
d	*C*	descent to 1
	Z	
p	*P*	narrowly circumscribing the upper tonic by means of the two sub-motifs 7→1' and 2'→1'
q	*Q*	going down from 3' to the upper tonic

Derivative motifs:

p'	***P'***	*one* of the ***p*** sub-motifs, that is, either 7→1' or 2'→1'
c'	***Z'***	ascent from (about) 3 to (about) 6, that is, the second half of ***k*** or the first half of ***c***.

There is, as can be seen, a close correspondence between phrases and motifs. Most of these motifs can be thought of as the essence of the corresponding phrase. But there is one that will escape unnoticed unless we also consider the way phrases are put together. This is the motif ***k*** which is found in the phrase-pairs *B* + *C* and *X* + *Z*. As noted above, these phrases outline an oblique descent with two kinks or turning points: an upward turn at 3 (motif ***k***), a downward turn at 5 (motif ***c***).

A study of the individual pitches – their relative prominence in the melodical flow, the way they are used, and in what melodical contexts they appear – further confirms the picture of deep melodical affinities between the different Basantas. I have calculated 1) the overall duration of each note in the total melodical flow, and 2) how often a note occurs in a stressed position (operationalized as occurence on the sam, the first beat of the *tāla* cycle). From all this, the following rank of the individual pitches emerge.

	% of total melodical flow	stressed position (in % of all sams)
1 (sā)	27%	42%
3 (ga)	18%	16%
5 (pa)	10%	13%
6 (dha)	10%	10%
7 (ni)	13%	6%
4 (ma)	10%	6%
2 (re)	8%	3%

Its sheer quantitative weight makes 1 stand out as the evident melodical point of reference. But also each of the other pitches has its particular melodical role.

3 (ga) is where the melodies make the inevitable kink in the descent (motif ***k***). In the upper register the 3' in phrase *Q* often marks the melodical peak of the entire song and is a rather frequent turning point.

5 (pa) is treated most characteristically of all the seven pitches. It is absent in the ascent, emphasised in the descent, and it is, as a turning-point in the oblique descent in phrases of type *C* and *Z*, an essential part of one of the most characteristically Basantic motifs, ***c***.

6 (dha) is the only pitch that can be found in all Basanta phrases. It is an essential and mostly emphasised part of the ascending *A* and *AB'* phrases. It is always featured (but not emphasised) in the descending phrases *B* and *X*. As the lowest pitch of the upper register, where it is optional in the *P* and *Q* phrases, it is frequently (but not essentially) used as a turning point, as the point of departure, or as the final note (sometimes cadenced upon). Similarly, it is optionally a part of the concluding *C* and *Z* phrases of the lower register.

7 (ni) has its chief importance in the upper register, as passing note and turning point in the *P* phrases; and – in many but not all Basantas – as a suspension note before the final tonic (1→7→1) in the refrain. In most Basantas, 7, rather than 1, sound on the final *sam* – they go on to 1 only after this formal ending of the song.

4 (ma) is used mostly as a passing note – it is not an essential part of any basic Basanta motif, but sometimes substituted for 3 or 5 in the descent kinks (motifs ***k*** and ***c***).

2 (re) is a turning point in the higher register (phrase *P*) and is also conspicuous by its absence in the ascent.

The four pitches 1, 3, 5 and 6 are the notes most frequently stressed and each has its characteristic melodical role. Among the

others, 7 is the most prominent, 2 has a few characteristical contributions, while 4 on the whole is not used in any characteristic way.

The notes 1 and 3 are the resting points of a Basanta tune: 1 especially at beginnings and ends of sections; 3 more temporarily in mid-sections. While 1 and 3 so to speak anchor the melodical processes, it is the treatment of 6 and, especially, 5 that is most striking. These two pitches in many ways appear as complementary[4]: 6 is essential and often emphasised in the ascent to which 5 gives a characteristic colour by its absence; 5 is essential and often emphasised in the descent where 6 is more weakly present. Much of the melodical dynamics in a Basanta derives from the opposition and interplay between 6 and 5; and from the tension between these two pitches and the static safety of 3 and 1, on which the melody temporarily and ultimately falls back.

This way of using the different pitches is inferred from the whole corpus but all the individual Basantas adhere well to this pattern. Of course, the various melodies are not totally uniform: some songs give more weight to 5 than to 6, others more to 6 than to 5. This only confirms the identification of 6 and 5 as the major combatants in the Basantic musical drama.

The individual Basanta songs have most of their melodical substance in common. They work from the same set of phrases and motifs, and they are strikingly consistent in their use of the pitches.

Whatever the extent of the transformations and repositionings of the component phrases, all Basantas end their refrains with *B+C*, and most end their verses with *X+Z*. Both *X+Z* and *B+C* essentially outline an oblique descent 1'→3→5→1. And this descent appears in the verse also of those songs not actually ending it with *X+Z* – here, as can be seen in the above chart, *C* or *B + C* (as "borrowed" from the refrain) have been substituted. The oblique descent, then, is always the melodical statement that brings both verse and refrain to their conclusion. In this final position, it seems to reinforce the "Basantic" identity of a composition – as does the ascent where 2 and 5 are omitted.

[4] The complementarity extends to the descent kink **c**, where 6 sometimes takes the role of 5.

The pentatonic ascent. Both 2 and 5 are consistently omitted in all ascending movements in all Basantas – with one exception, a 6→5→6 cadence occuring once in Bs1 and Bs4.

The oblique descent down to 1 is, in fact, a consistent feature of all our Basantas. There is no instance in any Basanta of a straight descent down to 1. Mostly, these kinks occur as an upward turn at 3, downwards again at 5. There are, however, exceptions where the upward turn occurs already at 4 (instead of at 3), or where the downward turn is at 6 (instead of at 5). There are even cases of the downward turn occuring already at 4 or where 6 has been prefaced with 7 (in Bs1). All this suggests that the oblique descent as melodical process is more instrinsic to Basanta than the exact point at which the turns occur.

A consistent use of the pitches. A scale that is different in its ascending and descending forms (gapped in the ascent, oblique movement in the descent).

Typical melodical turns. This is what the individual Basantas share, and in fact it is nothing less than the defining features of a raga, according to the musical canon maintained by court musicians such as Qayum Khan. In this Great Tradition of classical music, the features of a raga include:

ṝ A specific musical scale. This is always stated in both ascending and descending form since these are often (but not necessarily) different.

ṝ certain specific important pitches. These always include the tonic which is the final point of reference to all melodical processes (and reinforced by drones in classical music) but also what is known as vadi and samvadi. This can roughly be translated as "dominant" and "co-dominant" if we strip these concepts of any harmonic or functional connotations (harmony and chord progressions are entirely alien to this fundamentally melodic music). Which pitches are actually vadi and samvadi in a certain raga contributes to making it distinct from other ragas which use the same scale.

certain specific typical melodical turns. These, which are known as pakads, are what – together with vadi and samvadi – gives a raga its particular and individual identity, and keeps it distinct from other ragas.

This is exactly what the twelve Basanta melodies share – with the exception of a common scale. The uniformity between the Basantas of different scalar modes is certainly a striking feature of this corpus of tunes. I suggest that this is not one raga, but a family of ragas, using different scales but otherwise nearly identical, and that by processes of time probable qualifying names have been lost until all simply are referred to as Basanta. Such closely related ragas are not without parallels in North Indian raga demography.[5]

It might seem that the individual Basanta melody is entirely formulaic, that it consists only of the stringing together of standard phrases. But while the twelve Basantas share this melodical substance, they are not uniform in the way they use it. Let us study the individual case of Bs1 in this respect. This is the seven-beat Basanta sung by the Kirtipur bhajan-singers. As a glance at the chart on page 61 reveals, this Basanta is thoroughly elaborated. A rough notation is given at the end of this paper.

This song consists of the basic types of phrase, but in many cases these phrases have been extended considerably. These extentions are not merely random melodical elaborations. Quite the contrary. Instead, the extentions are made up by inserting and adding the basic Basanta motifs. Most significantly, motifs ***k*** and ***c*** are extensively used. Similarly, the pitches 5 and 6 are prominent in the extentions. It seems that the melody really goes a long way to explore the interplay between these two pitches.

To consider this in a little more detail, let us start with the refrain. In many Basantas, the refrain quite simply states the ascent and descent forms of the scale. In our present song the refrain has been

[5] This would be worth further exploration, but the size of the present sample is rather too small for that.

developed into ***B C AB' B C***. It has both repositioned the phrases and extended them. The refrain actually starts with the descent phrases ***B*** + ***C***. While ***B*** has the straight-forward form found in most Basantas, phrase ***C*** has been extended by the insertion of the motifs ***c*** and ***k***. In this way, the initial half of the phrase has been doubled: ascent from 3, descent to 3; then ascent from 3 and descent to 3 *again* before finally going on to the characteristic 2→1→7→1 end of the phrase. The refrain melody then goes on to a phrase of type ***AB'***. This phrase starts from 7, and states all five pitches of the ascent (7 1 3 4 6) – and hence shows the omission of 2 and 5. It is very much extended – but made up entirely by the basic motifs. Instead of rising directly from 3 over 4 to 6, the ascent part of the melody has been prolonged, and falls back temporarily to 3 twice before going on to 6 for the straight descent to 3. This means that the series ***c k c k c*** is inserted after the ascent motif ***a*** and before the descent motif ***b***. Moreover, the phrase has been concluded with a new ascent, ***a***. Hence the whole phrase reads ***a c k c k c b a*** instead of a simple ***a b***. Maybe the best way of describing this phrase is as a condensed version of the whole refrain – though with the important addition of motif ***a*** at the end. This makes it clear that it is not a final musical statement after all – Basanta's final statements always end on 1 – and that we should expect a continuation. Indeed, such a continuation appears: ***B*** + ***C*** are repeated. Only with the final 1 in phrase ***C***, the refrain melody is brought to its completion.

The first section of the verse – which is repeated – opens with a ***P*** where the position of two submotifs has been reversed, that is, first 2'→1', then 7→1' instead of the other way round which is the standard procedure. Then it goes on to three ***Q*** phrases, each differently shaped both metrically and melodically. Before the last of these three ***Q*** phrases, the pair ***X*** + ***Z'*** is inserted, taking the melody temporarily down to the lower register and of course including the motif ***k***, the characteristic Basanta kink at 3.

The second section of the verse doubles the tempo. This section opens with ***P*** + ***Q***, stated twice. The third time a ***P*** appears here (and like all ***P*** phrases in this song, it has reversed the submotifs, making for melodic consistency within the song) it is to initiate the descent ***X*** + ***Z***. It may be noted that the ***k*** kink here occurs already at 4 (instead of at 3),

but a more significant feature is the addition at the end – like in the phrase *AB'* of the refrain – of the ascent motif ***a***. Again, since this ends not on the tonic 1, but on 4, this makes it clear that *X* + *Z* is not the final musical statement of the verse in this song – and indeed, the phrases *B* and *C* follow here. This whole sequence – *P Q P Q P X Z B C* – is repeated before the refrain appears again, however now reduced to just *AB' B C*. This is only logical, for the initial refrain phrases *B* and *C* have already been sung.

The five *Q* phrases in this song make clear the degrees of freedom of how to articulate and give melodical details within the formulaic framework. Among these phrases, *Q5* is but a version of *Q4*. But each of the first four phrases has been given a distinct shape, both metrically and melodically. The individual notes of the core motif (3ý 2ý 1ý) have been given various metrical assignments. The *tāla* of this song is divided 3+2+2, typically articulated

q	h	h	h	or, tempo:	in	double	e	q	q	q
x		2	3				x		2	3

and each of the motif notes can be found in almost any of these four metric positions. Each core note is similarly found in various durational values. Melodically, the phrases work with reiterations of the core notes, and with different ways to "frame" the core motif with beginnings and ends. *Q1* is prefaced with an extention further up in the register, above 3' which is otherwise the topmost pitch in this Basanta. In contrast, *Q3* sets out from below 1', whereas *Q2* starts with 1' itself. *Q4*, by contrasting, starts directly with the motif but has extended the phrase at the end instead: here we find the characteristic cadence upon 6.

To sum up, the actual melodical shape of this Basanta can be entirely accounted for, but certainly not predicted from, the set of basic phrases and motifs. The song makes extensive use of all kinds of transformations: repositioning the overall order of phrases, extending the individual phrases, shaping (metrically and melodically) each

individual instance of a phrase differently. The song still adheres in every respect – ascending and descending forms, typical turns, the use of the different pitches – to the shared melodical material of the Basanta family. The different songs seem to derive from a basic model, but the individual shape of a particular Basanta melody cannot be predicted from the sets of phrases and motifs.

We have found that the individual Basanta melodies all share a set of essential melodical features. We have seen that this set of features is that of a raga in the Great Tradition sense. We have noted that these features are consistently employed in each individual Basanta melody. And we have observed that the individual melodies are distinct but create this individuality by their particular way of using the shared melodical material. True, the sample is not large. And we should not conclude that each and every time the term "raga" is used in Kathmandu Valley music does it have these Great Traditional denotations. But it does permit one to conclude that Basanta is not just assorted spring song melodies. The Basanta of the Kathmandu Valley farmers very much looks like a raga in the Great Tradition sense of the term.[6]

Certainly, there are important differences. The North Indian classical musician emphasises individuality, improvisation and virtuoso performance. There is nothing of this in Kathmandu Valley devotional singing. Seen from the singers' perspective, "raga Basanta" noted in the song-book is an aid to memory but far from specific enough to generate the performance. The singers are not expected to extemporate a "singable" shape of this raga at the spur of the moment. They will sing a fixed composition – as they learned it from their guru. But this is a question of the nature of these genres. The singing should fit a certain text and is done unisono in a group. Fixed compositions fulfill these requirements, so improvisatory development is rather out of the question.

[6] There are a few things in common between raga Basanta and raga Vasanta (Daniélou 1968, p. 349) as it is sung in North India today. Both omit 2 and 5 in the ascent; both have oblique movement in the descent. But Vasanta leaves out 5 entirely, also in the descent, and moreover it includes *ma tivra* (raised 4).

The social distance between court musicians such as Qayum Khan Kalawat and his colleagues and the hymn-singing farmers is large, but musically they seem very close. How is this possible? Is it really reasonable to expect proper shastriya sangit to be practised among ordinary people, in a mountain valley far from the courts and cities of North India? As Neuman (1990 : 54) puts it, the ideal shastriya sangit musician – the court musicians of the old days, the contemporary ustads – "lives, eats, breathes, and sleeps music". The intricacies of raga music require a life-time of learning and practice to master. This is a task for highly specialized full-time musicians. But the hymn-singing farmers are certainly not full-time musical specialists. Their music groups are operated as independent neighbourhood enterprises which satisfy, one might say, the twin aims of devotion and friendship. The performers learn the music, once and for all, in sessions of a few months, and the performances they then take part in are held with wide gaps, with no practice in between. One cannot imagine a greater disparity from the iconic upholders of the Great Tradition – people whose whole life is devoted to music, rather than to growing rice and vegetables.

How is it that Great Tradition music is maintained by these Himalayan farmers? And there are more questions to add to this. It is difficult to see the individual Basantas as mere versions – accounted for by the hazards of aural transmission – of each other. Rather, one glimpses the work of a musical mind behind each song, someone who has worked out the melodical material to specific compositions and known how to stay inside the melodical rules. How did the spring song repertoire – of melodies that are distinct yet share the melodical essence of the Basanta ragas – come into being? What has kept the melodies in check with the rules, as is obviously the case? Did these farmers possess the knowledge of the musical śastras necessary to utilize raga concept in this consistent way? And if so, by what historical processes has this been brought about?

Of course, it is possible that the Great Tradition music of local farmers amounts to no more than an imitation of the music of the court. Here, as we know, Qayum Khan Kalawat and after him many colleagues from India kept up the musical standards. And nor was Qayum Khan the first North Indian musician to work at the Kathmandu court. Why

should Prithvi Narayan issue his ban on such imports[7] if not to end a prevailing practice – presumably among the Malla kings whom he defeated? Mahindrasingh Malla, king of Kathmandu in the early 18th century, was known to entertain (and be entertained by) Muslim musicians[8], and the presumptions of other Malla kings of being great connoisseurs and practitioners of the arts – including music and the musical shastras – is well known.

The general logic of this interpretation is well-known in a Western context: that musical styles, genres, dance-types found in folk music have filtered down from the refined music of the courts. The musical Great Tradition of the Himalayan farmers would be a case of "filtering down" from the Valley society's royal centre to its periphery. The society can be imaged as a sugar cone, with status and power most highly elevated at the centre. (This image is in fact quite close to the actual social geography of Valley towns and cities such as Bhaktapur and Kirtipur.) From the top, shastric music then trickles down to the farmers down the slope.

Several questions remain, however. How were the contacts between courts and commoners made exactly? By what means were the local groups able to prevent the borrowed repertoire of melodies from drifting astray, changing a note here and a motif there until it would no longer be possible to find the common melodical essence among different Basanta melodies? The gurus of the farmers' devotional groups might have been responsible for that – but how did they originally get access to this knowledge? And, most importantly, why did the idea of setting up raga-singing devotional groups spread to become an instrinsic feature of each and every neighbourhood, not only in the cities but also in the smaller towns and villages? There are obviously good reasons to try another logic for the interpretation.

In the works by Western scholars, the Newar culture – as the traditional civilization of the Kathmandu Valley is referred to today – appears as the distribution of knowledge, duties, roles, occupations into a well-integrated whole. It is a mode of production with division of

[7] In the *Dibya Upadesh*. Translated in Stiller (1989: 46).
[8] Sattaur & Wegner (1993: 15).

labour and strict arrangement of duties according to the caste system where the material production and the production of culture are but the two sides of the same coin. Specialists in all conceivable tasks, whether economic, social, cultural, or ritual, together maintain a "unicultural" system – to use a word from Robert Levy's *Mesocosm* (1992 : 68). Levy traces much of the integration to the royal power at the centre – more specifically to the Malla king, today present only symbolically.

Levy does not say much about music, but the Malla kings were clearly interested in this particular form of cultural production. The many manuscripts of learned texts from Malla-time Nepal include copies, translations, and commentaries upon classical treatises on music commissioned for or authored by the kings.[9] The chronicles attribute to Jayasthiti Malla (14th century) a prescription that "raga Dipaka should be performed while the dead bodies were being burned" (Wright 1877:182). There was such direct intervention in musical affairs also when royal patrons founded the *navadāphā* (a *dāphā* ensemble with nine additional drums) of Bhaktapur. As Wegner (1987) tells us, the royal patrons donated the set of instruments together with a piece of land to cover the musical expenses. This was "as a regular offering to the major gods of the town" (p. 474) and one group even "once served the king at his palace" (p. 472). Is this the way the whole thing originated?

We might tentatively assume, then, that the various local groups for Great Tradition music were originally set up by the royal centre – to maintain the religious life of the town or even to serve in the palace. In addition to land and instruments, these local music groups may have been endowed with their repertoire and with a guru well-instructed in the canons of music.

Newar culture, as Levy (1992:15) puts it, has gone on "in very much the old way, like a clockwork mechanism assembled long ago that no one had bothered to disassemble". The present-day music of the Kathmandu Valley looks like a part of that clockwork mechanism.

9 Kaufmann (1968: 44–5) mentions a ms. from 1308 written for Bhumalla Deva, Daniélou (1968: 381–6) lists four other Nepalese mss. among which are the Sangitabhaskara authored by Jagajjyotir Malla and Vamsamani Jha (Shaha 1992 p. 77; see also Malla 1982: 40, 45, 47, 61).

Farmers were appointed as the musical specialists within the system – in the sense of adopting the responsibility for Great Traditional devotional singing, rather than of having music as their full occupation – and they have gone on to provide their services (like many others have done) even though the royal centre vanished long ago.

Daniel M. Neuman (1985) contrasted the classical traditions – in terms of music patronage and music performance – of North and South India. I reproduce key elements of Neuman's discussion in the table below, and add the Great Tradition as maintained in the Kathmandu Valley[10].

The picture on the chart (page 73) is quite clear. In feature after feature, Kathmandu Valley lines up with South India.

Neuman argues that the North Indian features were brought about by changing patronage of music by the Islamic nobility. Like South India, the Kathmandu Valley has obviously retained non-Islamicized ways of practising music. As Chittadhar "Hriday" says (1957, p. 3–4), ragas were introduced in the Kathmandu Valley almost as soon as they were invented by Mahadev. The late scholar Thakur Lal Manandhar (personal communication) has given more precise estimates. According to him, dapha music was imported from Mithila at the time – probably the 12th or 13th centuries A.D. – the connections between this kingdom and the Valley were at their height. This is long before the intensive Islamization of North Indian music – in the 17th and 18th centuries – that Neuman talks about. It seems that this musical Great Tradition kept out North Indian influences, and went on to meet the present day in this ancient social organisation of performance.

10 For certain of these features, see further Grandin (1989), ch. 2.

North India	South India	Kathmandu Valley
indoor music: in palace or (later) auditorium hall	outdoor music, at temple	outdoor music, in resthouse or at temple
court	devotional	devotional
professional musicians	amateur musicians	amateur musicians
audience of musically non-involved nobles or (later) middle-class	participatory audience	no audience
tabla drum-pair	mridanga barrel drum	khim barrel drum
no external time-keeping; tala articulated by theka (pattern of drum-strokes) only	external time-keeping: tala articulated by handclapping	external time-keeping: tala articulated by cymbals
virtuoso improvisation	composition; improvisation	composition, no improvisation
instrumental music important; distinct forms for instrumental music	instrumental music and its forms derivative of vocal music	instrumental music and its forms derivative of vocal music

The Kathmandu Valley lost the last "Newar" king of its own in 1769. If the mesocosmic interpretation is to be tenable, the Great Tradition as maintained by the farmers today must have been firmly established long before that. The more archaic social organisation – and maybe the different content of the ragas – is in line with this interpretation. To be sure, the North Indian variety is also found in Nepal. Maybe the social distance between Qayum Khan Kalawat and his successors at the Kathmandu court, and the farmers in their neighbourhood resthouses, has been the reason why these two forms of Great Traditional music still can be found, each on its own and with few signs that the up-to-date North Indian variety should transform what is sung by the farmers.

Time to end this discussion which by now has gone rather far from its base: the observation of certain melodic similarities among a group of Kathmandu Valley spring songs. But if nothing else, I hope I have suggested some avenues for further research – research that can corroborate, modify or refute the various points that I have raised here.

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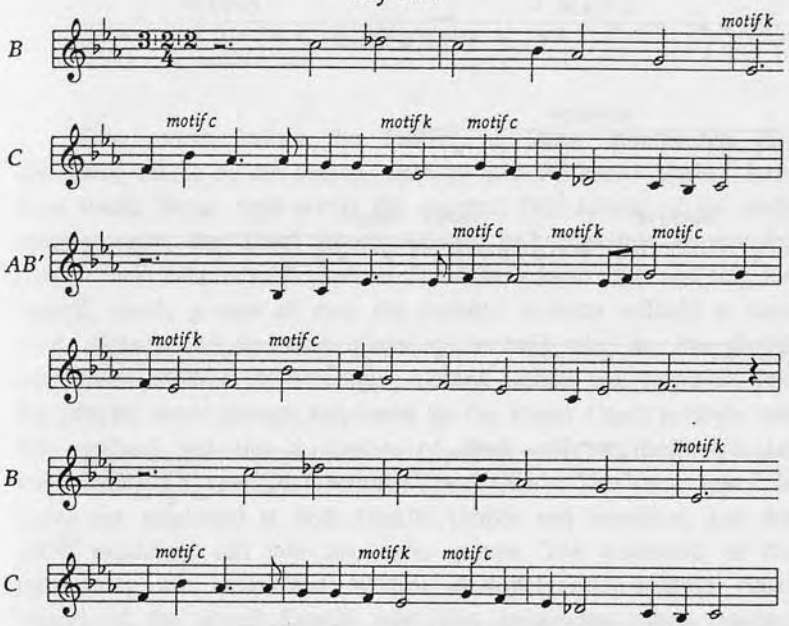
Appendix

Refrain

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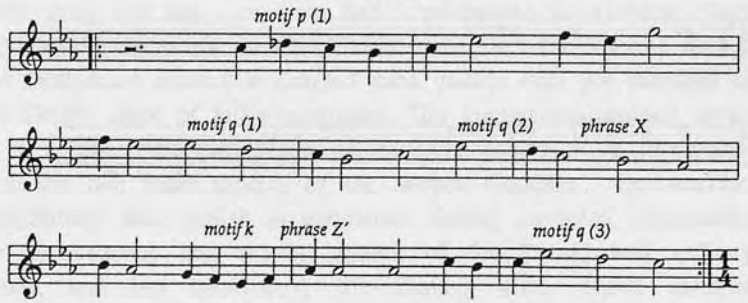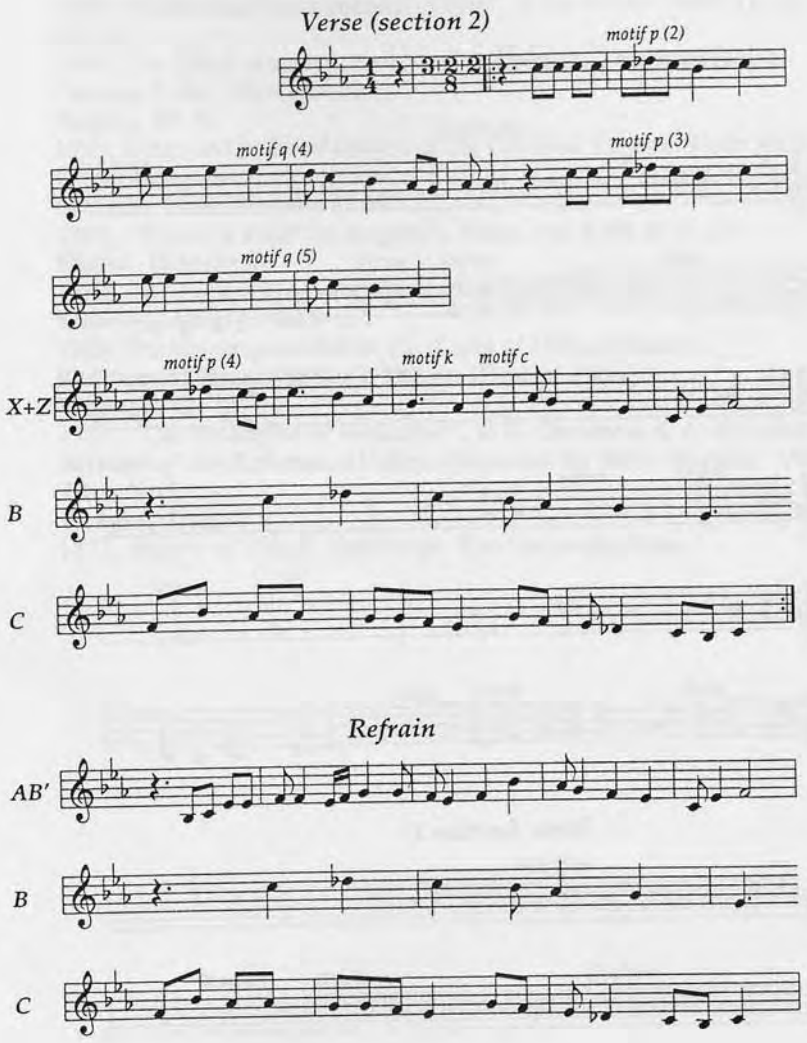
MUSIC FOR THE ROYAL DASAÏ (GORKHĀ AND NUWĀKOT)

Carol Tingey

One month before the festival of Dasaï commences, the distinctive music of the season -*mālaśrī*- can be heard blaring forth from Radio Nepal right across the country. This is one of the early warning signs that Dasaï is approaching, and from this time - the *aṣṭamī* two lunar cycles before *mahāṣṭamī*- until the end of the festival, music groups all over the country[1] perform *mālaśrī* at their local shrines. Music also plays a central role in the Royal celebration of Dasaï at Basantpur, Gorkhā Darbār and Nuwākoṭ, and the official music groups employed by the Royal Court perform not only *mālaśrī*, but also a number of ritual and sacrificial musical items which are specific to certain Dasaï rituals. The same types of music are employed at both Gorkhā Darbār and Nuwākoṭ, and the Dasaï musicians fall into two main groups. The musicians of the first group are 'auspicious women' (*maṅgalinī*), household ritual singers of the Royal Family who sing auspicious songs *(maṅgal gīt),* for the most part inside the shrines. By contrast, the musicians of the second group are all men, whose music is played out-of-doors only and has - or once had - militaristic associations. They include the drummers of the military band, and the various shawm and kettledrum ensembles *(nagarā bānā, pañcai bājā, jor damāhā)* of the Damāi caste of tailor-musicians. The contrasting musical styles of these two principle groups of musicians suggests an association with the two main aspects of the Mother Goddess - her warlike, bloodthirsty side, which is paramount during *navarātrī,* represented by the raucous and martial sounds of the Damāi and military bands, and her benevolent, life-affirming side, which assumes

[1]Including *bhajan* groups, Newar *dāphā khālaḥ* and the *pañcai bājā* bands of the Damāi tailor-musician caste.

predominance on *vijayā daśamī*, represented by the singing of the *maṅgalinī*. This paper will explore this relationship, by introducing the musicians, their music and ritual duties, and looking at their historical backgrounds, in order to account for the central role played by music during Dasaĩ rituals. The data were collected in Gorkhā in 1987-8 and Nuwākoṭ in 1990, funded by the British Academy (1987-8) and the Leverhulme Trust (1990).

Maṅgalinī

Maṅgalinī - *'auspicious* women' - are household ritual singers of the Rāṇā[2] and Śāha. The Śāha *maṅgalinī* are based at the old Royal palace at Basantpur, Kathmandu. They have the duty to sing auspicious songs (*maṅgal gīt*) during the life-cycle rites, festivals and daily worship (*nitya pūjā*) of the Royal household.[3] Most of their duties are performed in Basantpur Darbār, but during the Dasaĩ festival, three *maṅgalinī* sent to Gorkhā Darbār and five to Nuwākoṭ Satali Darbār, postings which are rotated annually.[4] In addition to singing ritual songs, the *maṅgalinī* have several other duties, including sewing together leaf plates for offerings and feasts throughout the year, and preparing all the plates of offerings required for each Dasaĩ *pūjā*. During Dasaĩ, the most senior of the *maṅgalinī* of ficiating at Gorkhā, Nuwākoṭ and Basantpur have the duty to escort the sacred *kalaś (water* pot) during the *phūlpātī* procession, and they are known by the honourable title *kalaśinī*.

[2]The tradition has been maintained by only one Rāṇā family - that of the late Brigadier General Aditya Shamsher Rana. In his household, two old Tamang women are the last survivors of a once thriving Rāṇā *maṅgalinī* tradition They reminisce that in their youth, twenty or more women would sing at Rāṇā life cycle rites.

[3]In Hindu ideology, the concept of "auspiciousness" is central to life itself, being the fundamental prerequisite for health, happiness, success, prosperity and general well-being in society. It is a divine blessing which makes life possible. Auspiciousness should not be confused with purity - these are completely separate realms of idea (Tingey 1994:5-6; Marglin 1985a; 1985b).

[4]*Maṅgalinī* are also in attendance at Lamjung Darbār during Dasaĩ, but these are young local girls. Lamjuṅg Darbār has been both a Śāha and a Rāṇā stronghold in its time, and the *maṅgalinī* tradition here could have been inaugurated by either family.

There are sixteen *maṅgalinī* employed at Basantpur Darbār. They do not live in the palace, but are all married women living with their husbands and families. Their posts are not hereditary (most of the women being put forward by fathers working in government posts), and their payment is in the form of a monthly salary, like that of other civil servants. The age range of the *maṅgalinī* is from early twenties to mid-forties, and most of them have had the job from their late teens or early twenties. Their caste backgrounds are similarly varied, including Brahmin, Chetri, and mid- to high caste Newār.

According to both Rānā and Śāha *maṅgalinī*, their tradition dates back only to the mid-nineteenth century, from the time of Rāṇā rule. At that time, they were known as the *nārāyaṇhity nanī* (Nārāyaṇhity girls), Nārāyaṇhity being the palace of the Rāṇā prime ministers. The *maṅgalinī* relate that the tradition was adopted by the Śāhas after two *nānī*, dressed in gold, had been sent to sing at the King's palace, but it is not remembered when this took place, or for which king they sang. Certainly, the Rāṇās were responsible for the introduction of many musical innovations (Boonzayer 1991:40-5) and Dasaĩ ritual practices, and against this background, their assertions seem probable.

Both the Śāhas and the Rāṇās trace their ancestry to Rajasthan, and the *maṅgalinī* tradition could be based on a Rajput model. Wealthy households *(haveli)* in Rajputana patronized women ritual singers from a number of castes, including *ḍholi* and *maṅgāniyār,* and all family life-cycle rites, *pūjā* and festivals demanded their participation (Erdman 1985). Alternatively, the Rāṇās may have copied the tradition from the Moghul courts, where classically trained women singers were employed.

There is no documentary evidence to contradict or support the women's account of their history. As the *maṅgalinī* are attached to households, rather than temples, there are no inscriptions referring to them, as there are for other ritual musicians. There are several pre-Rāṇā references to 'auspicious songs' and household entertainments, however, which could relate to household singers, although *maṅgalinī* are never mentioned specifically. For example,

Yogi's collection of historical documents and inscriptions includes the following reference to Drabya Śāha's capture of Gorkhā in 1559 (source not provided):

> When Drabya Śāha claimed the Tallokoṭ throne, there was the playing of music, the singing of *maṅgal gīt* and the recitation of the Vedas, after which he went on to capture Upallokoṭ (Naraharinath VS.2022:681).

The *Gorkhā vaṃśāvali* includes two interesting musical references in this context. The first one depicts the scene of the state entrance of Rām Śaha (reigned 1606-36) into his palace at Gorkhā, presumably on the completion of the building of his new residence, the first *darbār* at Gorkhā:

> In Gorkhā, people of five different castes celebrated with auspicious music and auspicious song and dance, each according to their caste, after which there was a *sīdur jātrā*, and at the auspicious moment, King Rām Śāha entered his palace. (Naraharinath VS.203 1).

Although *maṅgalinī* are not mentioned specifically in the state expense account of Narabhupal Śāha (1716-42), there are entries for gifts *(bakas)* and food given to singers of *kirtan* (sacred songs) (Panta V.S.2043:513), which perhaps relates to such a tradition. Thus, there is evidence to show that *maṅgal gīt* had been a desirable commodity in Nepal well before the nineteenth century, and even though the advent of the *maṅgalinī* tradition cannot be dated precisely, they must be a (perhaps more recent) strand of an old established tradition of Nepalese 'auspicious' music.

Until 1987, there were only nine *maṅgalinī* but for the occasion of Crown Prince Dipendra's *vratabandha* (sacred thread investiture) in Cait V.S.2044 (March 1988), another seven were added. The court was concerned by what it considered to be inferior songs and a poor standard of singing. Thus, at this time, the *maṅgal gīt* were all revised, and put into standard Nepali (from their original Hindi-Nepali mixture)[5] by the poet Nir Bikram Piasi,

[5]The texts of the Rāṇā *maṅgalinī* repertoire are still in a Nepali-Hindi mixture.

and the classical singer, Natraj Dhakal. The latter became the music tutor of the *maṅgalinī* coaching them in singing, *tablā* and harmonium for a period of over two years.

The revised repertoire comprises ten auspicious items, and the *maṅgalinī* divide these into two categories according to their texts - songs which are only for the Dasaī festival (numbering five) and five 'general purpose' auspicious songs for use during all other occasions. Two 'general purpose' items are also sung during Dasaī, however, so that seven of their ten songs are featured during the festival.

It should be noted that these songs are not the exclusive domain of the *maṅgalinī* This repertoire has been tailored primarily from songs that are well known across the country. For example, the text of *Śrī Gaṇeś pūjā* is a virtually unchanged Nepalisation of the first song in a collection of Hindi texts entitled *rāg mālaśrī* published by the *durgā sāhitya bhaṇḍār* (Varanasi), which contains 25 songs to be sung to *mālaśrī* and a *bhagavatī stuti.* This booklet is widely available in Nepal during the weeks leading up to Dasaī, enabling devotees to sing *mālaśrī* at the shrines of the Goddess.[6]

For most of the Dasaī rites, a sequence of up to five songs is performed, the number depending on the length of the *pūjā.* For example, at Nuwākoṭ, the three goddesses Taleju, Bhairavī and Kālīkā are honoured during Dasaī, and each morning during *navarātrī* there are *Gaṇeś* and *kalaś pūjā* and recitations of the *Caṇḍī pāṭh* at their shrines, for which the five-song-sequence is sung. The *maṅgalinī* split ranks, two singing for Taleju, three for Bhairavī, and then all five for Kālikā. The song sequence is also sung during the planting of *jamarā* (barley seed) on the morning of *ghaṭasthāpanā,* and for the *kalaś pūjā* which prefaces the *phūlpātī*

[6]For an account of Newar *mālaśrī* singing traditions in Kathmandu, which gives the appropriate song texts to be sung at specific shrines, see Darnal's article 'Rāg mālaśrī' (B.S.2045). This article also covers regional variation in *mālaśrī* (amongst Indo-Nepalese), with song text examples. Darnal's look at early references to *mālaśrī* in Malla and Śāha inscriptions and compositions is also of interest.

procession. At Gorkhā Darbār, the five songs are sung not only during rites on behalf of Kālikā, but also to accompany the recitation of the *Gorakṣa Śāhasranāma* in Gorakhnāth's cave shrine.

The first song in the sequence is *Śrī Gaṇeśa pūjā,* sung to the seasonal melody *mālaśrī* (ex.l) during the propitiation of Lord Gaṇeś at the start of each Dasaī rite. It is also sung at the commencement of other Royal rituals, such as coronations, weddings and *vratabandha* ceremonies. The text juxtaposes the worship of Gaṇeś with the attributes of the Goddess in her warlike aspect, and is as follows:

R gaṇeśa pūjāū nadī kināramā candra vadana mṛga locanī

1 āu gaṅga jamunā triveṇī saṅgamā madhya dāhine kālikā
caṇḍa pracaṇḍa.rupiṇī chattis vāhana sādhinī

2 śankha cakra gadā padma khaḍga khaparū liera
lal lahāgā vīra gīt chattis bājā bajāera

3 bajāi ḍimī ḍimī ḍamaru ḍimī ḍimī khaḍga khaparū dhāraṇī
hāt khaparū triśul lieki koṭī senā mārne

R Let us worship Gaṇeś, on the river bank, with moon-coloured body and the eyes of a deer.

1 Please come, Gaṇgā, Jamunā, up to Trivenī, the middle of the confluence, with Kālikā on the right.
She with the terrifying appearance can control thirty-six vehicles.

2 Conch, discus, mace, lotus, sword and skull are taken.
Red *dhoti,* a song of bravery, thirty-six instruments are played.

3 Play *ḍamaru* (with the sound) *ḍimī ḍimī,*
The keeper of sword and skull, having taken sword and trident in hand, kills ten million soldiers.

Jaya Bindya Bāsinī (ex.2) is the second of the five-song-sequence, sung immediately after *Śri Gaṇeśa pūjā.* Both the melody and the text contrast with the material of the former song, *jaya Bindya Bāsinī* being a gentle offering to the Mother Goddess, in which aspects of her worship are mentioned:

jaya bindya bāsinī timi[7] bhavānī	Long live Bindya Bāsinī, you mother goddess.
pujā leu mana lāera	Take offerings readily.
jaya bindya bāsinī timi bhavānī.	Long live Bindya Bāsinī, you mother goddess.
tan mana sārā āphno ṭimīmā	I am offering all my body and heart to you.
gardai chaū arpaṇā	
gharkī durgā manaūchaū	Household Durgā,
hāmī bārhai varṣa	We celebrate for twelve years[8]
jaya bindya bāsinī timi bhavānī.	Long live Bindya Bāsinī, you mother goddess.
anmaū phūlpātī caḍhaū ḍolī	We bring out the *phūlpātī,* we offer the litter,
bhandai jay jay kālī	Saying long live Kālī
veda jagāi jananī āin	Evoking the vedas, Janani comes,
kāla rātrī manāi	Celebrating *kāl-rātrī*
jaya bindya bāsinī timi bhavānī.	Long live Bindya Bāsinī, you mother goddess.

The *maṅgalinī* sing *Bhairavl Devl* (ex.3) after jaya *Bindya Bāsinī,* as the third song of the sequence that accompanies most of the Dasaī rites. As in the previous song, the text mentions aspects of the worship of the Goddess during Dasaī, as a gentle song of devotion to the Mother:

bhairavī devī, timro śaraṇamā
hāmī āyaū, hāmī āyaū, bhairavl devī
nuwākoṭamā sundar māndirbhitra
basera āsan vāḍhī sandhyā kālma dipa jalāi
nagarā bajāi śabda sunāi, bhairavī devī.

Bhairavī Devī, I am your dependant.
We come, we come, Bhairavī Devī.
Having sat inside the beautiful temple at Nuwākoṭ,
We stay inside in the evening time, having burnt light,
Having played nagarā (kettledrum), having heard the word,
Bhairavī Devī.

[7]Use of the familiar *timi* rather than *tapaī,* indicates that the Goddess is like a close personal friend.
[8]Implies 'a long time', not necessarily a fixed period of twelve years.

Le le hānaū le le le (ex.4) is a sacrificial song, sung during all Dasaĩ sacrifices, after *Śrī Ganes pūjā.* For example, before the *phūlpātī* is established inside the *pūjā* room *(Dasaĩ ghar)* of the Taleju shrine at Nuwākoṭ. and the Kālīkā Darbār at Gorkhā, there are goat sacrifices at the doorways. During the propitiation, the *maṅgalinī* sing *Śrī Ganes pūjā,* and for the sacrifice, *Le le hānaū le le le,* and this pattern is repeated for the many blood sacrifices that ensue. The text reflects the violent nature of the rites it accompanies, and focuses on the fierce, bloodthirsty aspect of the Goddess. *Le le is* also sung after *Bhairavl Devl* as the fourth song of the five-song-sequence if the ritual is a lengthy one requiring additional music to cover its duration.

le le hānaũ le le le	Take, take, let's strike, take, take, take.
daityāsa mārna khaḍga cyāpekī	She, having sword to kill demons,
prakaṭa vikaṭa vadana rūpa	With unusual body appearance,
caṇḍa muṇḍa māhalīnī	Caṇḍa, Muṇḍa ..?...
kālā kālā āṅkhā bhaekī	I-Iaving black, black eyes,
sor arūṇa vāhana chamcham	The 16 sounds of the sky jangling as vehiclesl[9]0
prakaṭa vikaṭa vadana rūpa	With unusual body appcarance,
unmata nayana lieki	With very angry eyes,
sor arūṇa vāhana chamcham as	The 16 sounds of the sky jangling vehicles
le le hānaũ le le le take.	Take, take, let's strike, take, take,

The *Kālikā stotra* (hymn of praise) *dhanya dhanya* (ex.5) is a song of thanksgiving to Kālikā. It is an 'all-purpose' *maṅgal gīt* which is sung at coronations and Royal life cycle rites. During Dasaĩ it may be sung after *le le hānaū le le le* as the fifth song of the series if the *pūjā is* long enough to require more music. The melody is that of a widely known *maṅgal gīt, bhajaũ manle Nārāyaṇa,* a song which describes the ten *avatār* of Viṣṇu, which is performed by Gāine (itinerant minstrels) and Damāi at village weddings. The text of this version describes the beauty of the

[9]*cham cham* is the sound made by ankle bells during dance.

Mother Goddess, and lists some of the epithets by which she is known:

R dhanya dhanya dhanya mātā dhanya gujya kālikā
1 timīnai koṭi candra vadana, timīnai umā radhīkā
tirmīnai tārā, timīnai sārā, timīnai gujya kālikā
2 siddhi kālī, siddhi jananī, siddhi sarva pujani
dhanya dhanya dhanya mātā dhanya gujya kālikā

R Gracious, gracious, gracious Mother, gracious sacred Kālikā.
1 You have the brightness of ten million moons, you are Umā, you are Rādhikā,
You are Tārā, you are all, you are the sacred Kālikā.
2 Siddhi Kālī, siddhi Jananī, worshipped by all,
Gracious, gracious, gracious Mother, gracious sacred Kālikā.

The two other Dasaĩ songs are both sung to *mālaśrī* (ex. 1). The contexts in which these songs are sung are more limited and clearly defined than those of the succession of five songs. *Jaya Devī Bhairavī is* sung as an *ārati* (evening hymn) for the sunset offering of light (*batti*) to the Goddess during *navārātrī.* It is also sung during the *phūlpātī* procession. The *maṅgalinī* have the responsibility of escorting the sacred *kalaś* (water pot) to meet the *phūlpātī.* Following the *kalaś pūjā* a length of red and gold cloth is attached to the water pot, and the ends are draped around the shoulders of the senior *maṅgalinī,* the *kalaśinī.* She is robed in red and gold brocade, and the others in their best red and gold saris, and they are shaded by a large fringed umbrella. The women do not sing continuously, but only at the start of the procession, midway, and again during the *phūlpātī pūjā* that takes place before setting off on the retum journey. The text of *jaya Devī Bhairavī* emphasizes the strength and beauty of the Mother, and links her with Gorakhnāth :

jaya devī bhairavī gorakhnāth
ambike jagadambike
jyotī jvālā viśāla āṅkhā bir gīt
kathī kathī
tāta thaiyā tātā thaiyā
nāc saṅga lii joginī

bhaktakā dukha haṭāu jananī ambike jagadarnbike
jaya devī bhairavī gorakhnāth.

Long live Goddess Bhairavī and Gorakhnāth,
Ambike, Mother of the World,
Big eyes, full of flaming light, making songs in the mind,
Creating brave sons,
Tāta thaiyā, tātā thaiyā[10]
Dance in the company of joginī
Please relieve the pain of your devotees, Mother
Ambike, Mother of the World,
Long live Goddess Bhairavī and Gorakhnāth.

In the original version of this song (i.e. prior to revision by Nir Bikrām Piasi), the penultimate stanza bestowed blessings on His Majesty Śrī Pañc Bir Bikrām Śāha Dev. The texts of both *maṅgalinī* versions of *jaya Devī Bhairavī* are very similar to the second text in the collection *rāg malaśrī* mentioned above, which includes a reference to Śrī Rāṇā Bahādur in the penultimate line, and several other songs in this collection mention *"Tribhuvan maṅgal"* These royal references are typical of this genre of devotional song, frequently found in *bhajan* and Newār *dāphā.* Part of the original *maṅgalinī* songtext of *jaya Devī Bhairavī* is included here for comparative purposes, to provide an example of the literary style before revision by Piasi:

R jaya devī bhairavī gorakhnāth, bhairavī devī manāiye

1 aye prathama devī utpanna bhaī hai janma liye kailāśa ye
jyoti jagamaga he ai, jyoti jagamaga cahũdiśa devī
cauṣaṣṭi yoginī sathaye

2 aye jaya devī bhairavī bardāna pāye hai vakata bhayo nepālaye
khāṭa siṃhā sana he ai, khāta siṃhā sana jiti liye
bhāratiye saba deśaye

[10] dance *bol.*

3 aye śira makuṭa caṇḍra sabita kuṇḍala jhala kata kānaye
śrī mahārāja dhirāja he, śrī mahārāja dhirāja birendra bira bikram śaha dev
śira devī bara pāiye (etc.)

The song *kanya pūjā* is reserved for two rites, *kanya khuvāune* (feeding the young girls) and *kumārī pūjā* (worship of the living goddess), which take place daily during Dasaī at Gorkhā Darbār, but which at Nuwākoṭ take place only on *mahānavamī.* At Nuwākoṭ, nine young Brahmin girls aged between 2 and 10 are selected for *kanya khuvāune.* The ceremony is performed by a Brahmin priest in the Satali Darbār, beginning with a *Gaṇeś pūjā,* for which the *maṅgalinī* sing *Śrī Ganeś pūjā.* Then the young girls are worshipped as goddesses, having their feet washed, receiving offerings and the priest's obeisance, whilst the women sing *kanya pūjā.* The *maṅgalinī* also pay their respects to the girls, who are then feasted and given gifts.

The *kalaśinī* officiates for the *kumārī pūjā,* whilst the other *maṅgalinī* sing *kanya pūjā.* A young Brahmin girl is selected to be the 'living goddess', and she is worshipped as such during this rite, is feasted and receives gifts like those given to the nine *kanya ketī.* The text of *kanya pūjā* describes aspects of the worship of the Goddess, and is in the tone of a supplicant addressing the Mother :

he māī pañca kumārī bhaktakī timī pālanī
uttar parbat himāl najik
timro sthān sabaitira
rāto vastra rāto candana pūjāna gardachaũ
hajūrko bhakti bhāvana jāndainaũ
ehī khusī hou praṇamale
he māī pañca kumārī bhaktakī timī pālanī.

Oh Mother, five kumārī devotees serve you.
In the northern hills, near the mountains,
Your shrines are everywhere.

We offer you red clothes and a red canopy.
We do not know how to worship you.
Be pleased with our obeisance,
Oh Mother, five kumārī devotees serve you.

These songs are sung at Gorkhā Darbār, Nuwākoṭ. and Basantpur without variation, although the range of ritual duties of the *maṅgalinī* varies between these locations. The fact that the entire repertoire of the *maṅgalinī* comprises just ten songs, seven of which are sung during Dasaĩ, of which five are performed exclusively within the framework of the festival, is one indication of the importance of 'auspicious' *(mangal)* music to the celebration of Dasaĩ.

Apart from the sacrificial song, *le le hānaū le le le,* the texts of the *maṅgalinī* Dasaĩ songs centre on the Goddess as the benevolent Mother, not as the terrifying killer of demons. *Jaya Bindya Basini, Bhairavī Devī* and *kanya pūjā* are gentle songs to the Mother, praising her, offering her full devotion, and describing aspects of her worship. *Kanya pūjā* has the tone of a child addressing her Mother, with an apology for the inadequacy of the supplicant's worship. *Dhanya dhanya* offers thanks to the gracious Mother, and describes her great beauty, and *Jaya Devī Bhairavī* addresses the strong Mother of the World, who brings forth brave sons. As a collection, these songs praise and offer worship to the Mother Goddess, in return for her care and benevolence.

Only during blood sacrifice do the *maṅgalinī* directly call up the terrifying aspect of the Goddess, in their sacrificial song *le le,* when the ritual context would seem to demand this. This side of her character does appear in *Śrī Gaṇeś pūjā,* but in the context of a *Gaṇeś pūjā* before battle. For the most part, the Dasaĩ songs sung by the *maṅgalinī* concern the Goddess as Mother and bestower of blessings, and through singing about her, the *maṅgalinī* themselves can be identified with the benevolent aspect of the Goddess. As female musicians, the *maṅgalinī* represent something of an exceptional case in Nepalese society, as public musical performance is normally the prerogative of men (Tingey 1994:8-9).

Even the performance of devotional songs at shrines is male dominated, although in Kathmandu (e.g. at Swayambhunath) some women are participating these days, and a relatively small number of women are involved in the Kathmandu Valley classical music scene.

The performance of *mālaśrī* (by men) is a very popular devotional activity during Dasaĩ. For example, at Gorkhā Darbār, each morning from *ghaṭasthāpanā* to *phūlpatī,* a group of Newar men (*"Shrestha'*) from Gorkhā Bājār gather to sing *mālaśrī* hymns at the Darbār, accompanying themselves on *tablā* and harmonium, as part of their morning devotions. At Lamjung Darbār, even though *maṅgalinī* are in attendance, they do not participate in the *phūlpatī* procession, or in the procession to dispose of the *phūlpatī* on *daśamī.* This is the prerogative of male singers, who sing with great vehemence, often shouting the words and gesticulating widely, in a devotional frenzy. According to Marie Lecomte (personal communication), *mālaśrī* are usually sung in old Hindi by men, usually by Brahmins. Some of them even enter into a trance while singing.

Professional female musical performance is confined to the lowest castes (e.g. Bādi), and normally carries the stigma of prostitution. This is certainly not the case with the *maṅgalinī,* who are extremely respectable, and respected, high caste women, and thus, represent a unique category of Indo-Nepalese musician.

Apart from singing, the *maṅgalinī* have a number of other important ritual duties to perform during Dasaĩ, and these duties also align them with the benevolent side of the Goddess. For example, at Gorkhā Darbār during the afternoon of *daśamī,* they are the main protagonists in *phāgu khelne,* 'playing with colours', a rite in which they throw red dye and powder *(abir)* over the priests and their assistants *(susāre).* The women lean out from first floor windows, joyously drenching the men as they circumambulate the sacrificial courtyard below. After three circuits, the scarlet priests and their assistants storm the building, and a free tussle with the *maṅgalinī* ensues, until everyone is dyed completely red, in the manner of a *holi* celebration. The red dye represents Kālīkā's

menstrual blood, the paramount life-affirming blessing, which the *maṅgalinī* dispense liberally in this exuberant rite of renewal (Tingey 1994:Ch.7). Thus, the *maṅgalinī* become the Mother Goddess's handmaidens in a rite which bestows fertility and life during the coming year.

A few days later, on *purṇimā*, the *maṅgalinī* at Gorkhā must prepare and serve a huge feast for all the Darbār personnel, using the sacrificial meat that has been offered to, and thus blessed by Kālikā. Once again, the women are aligned with the benevolent, life sustaining aspect of the Goddess, providing food for her servants.

Lynn Bennett argues that the two aspects of the Devī are spiritual projections of the ideology surrounding affinal and consanguineal Indo-Nepalese high-caste women (1983:261-308), and although we are looking from a reverse perspective, still, we find some salient points. For example, Bennett says that 'we might characterize the gentle aspect of Devī as the pure (yet alluring), devoted wife and the gentle, nurturing mother' (1983:262), and that with regard to her terrifying aspect, 'despite (her) threatening image and the strong associations with blood, Durga is not directly connected with affinal women' (1983:262), two statements that are reflected in the *maṅgalinīs'* apparent alignment with the Goddess's benevolent aspect. Bennett maintains that worship of the Goddess in her various fierce manifestations is primarily a male activity, from which women may be barred (1983:264, 269), whilst females concern themslves predominantly with worship of her in her gentler forms, a type of *pūjā* which may be scorned by men (1983:307, f.n.11) - once again, a pattern that conforms to our categories of Dasaī musician and their ritual domain.

The *maṅgalinī* say that they are 'auspicious women' because they sing *maṅgal gīt* (auspicious songs). In other words, they become auspicious through the songs that they sing. However, the concept of the auspicious woman occupies a central place in Hindu ideology, and stems from woman's life-giving powers as mother. Marglin comments, 'Women are the harbingers of auspiciousness, a state which... speak(s) of well-being and health or more generally,

of all that creates, promotes and maintains life' (1985a:19). Within marriage, the power of female fertility is controlled and directed for the good of society, and thus, marriage is an auspicious state, and the wedding is the most auspicious life-cycle rite. In such an ideological framework, widows are regarded as highly inauspicious, and it is interesting to note that all the Royal *maṅgalinī* are married (but not those of the Rānās), and if one of them becomes widowed, she must be pensioned off and replaced.[11] Widowhood deprives the *maṅgalinī* of their auspicious status.

The Mother Goddess is associated with fertility in its widest sense, encompassing both human procreation and agricultural prosperity, and these themes find expression in a number of Dasaī observances. For example, the ten-day cultivation of barley seed must, as Bennett suggests, 'signify the fertility and prosperity - the "riches, grains and children" - which Durga bestows on her devotees when she is pleased' (1983:271).

In the human sphere, Gonda maintains that the association of woman and procreative power extends far beyond the realm of female fertility, to encompass agricultural productivity, for 'according to a widespread belief there exists an indubitable solidarity between woman and agriculture, an intimate connection between female fertility and the fecundity of the soil...' (1975:89-90). Whether or not this is true for the *maṅgalinī,* still there *is* an ideological parallelism between the auspicious life-bestowing attributes associated with the benevolent side of the Mother Goddess and the auspicious qualities inherent in her hand-maidens, the *maṅgalinī,* which may explain their alignment with this aspect of the deity during the celebration of the Royal Dasaī.

[11]The auspiciousness of the *devadāsī* of Puri stems from the fact that they can never be widowed, because they are married to a deity - Lord Jagannātha - and not to a mortal husband. They represent the 'wife whose husband is always alive... the woman who never becomes a widow, the one who is always auspicious' (Marglin 1985b:74).

Damāi ensembles

In the *Śrī Śrī Caṇḍī* of the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa,* Śakti is glorified as the Mother Goddess who descends to earth as Durgā to rescue the world from demons. Chapter Two describes the terrific battle between the demon army and the forces of Good led by the Goddess, accompanied by the sounds of thousands of conches and the beat of war drums. The association of the warlike, bloodthirsty aspect of the Mother Goddess with bands of conches and drums explains the widespread use of shawms and kettledrums, often in combination with other martial-type instruments, at her shrines.

Kettledrums are the fundamental component of all three types of Damaī ritual music ensemble played at Gorkhā Darbār and Nuwākoṭ - *pañcai bājā, nagarā bānā* and *jor damāhā.* This is not really surprising since the Damāi are named after one of their kettledrums, *damāhā,* the bass drum of the *pañcai bājā.*[12]

In addition to the ritual music ensembles, Damaī bandsmen from the Nepalese army escort a company of soldiers in the *phūlpātī* procession, playing bass drums, snare drums and bugles. The early history of this type of band coincides with that of the traditional Damāi ensembles, which have not always been the humble wedding bands we know today, but were once prestigious state symbols and at the vanguard on ancient battlefields. In this section, the *pañcai bājā, nagarā bānā* and *jor damāhā* kettledrum ensembles will be introduced, and then their martial past will be demonstrated.

Pañcai bājā

'Pañcai bājā' ('five instruments') is a generic term for the mixed ensemble of shawms, kettledrums, cymbals and natural trumpets and/or horns played by the Damāi. The band is essentially a village ensemble, found across the mid-hills of Nepal, wherever Indo- Nepalese castes have settled. As the ubiquitous village

[12]The other type of large kettledrum played by the Damaī *nagarā*, differs from the *damāhā* in that it is played with two sticks rather than one, tends to be larger in size, and is only used in the context of sacred music at temples.

wedding band, it takes a variety of forms and rarely has only five instruments, nine being the optimum number.

The band is also in use at temples. At Gorkhā Darbār the *Pañcai bājā* consists of six instruments - *sahanai* (shawm), *damāhā* (large kettledrum), *ṭyāmko* (small kettledrum), *ḍholaki* (double-headed drum), *jhyāli* (cymbals) and *karnāl* (long *straight natural trumpet).* The Damāi are employed by Gorkhā Darbār throughout the *year to play* during the worship of Kālikā each *āṣṭamī, and* for other festivals. Previously, they were remunerated in land, and the posts were hereditary, but today, the Damāi receive a monthly salary.[13]

The repertoires of village *pañcai bājā* are extensive and varied, but that of the Gorkhā Darbār ensemble is confined to seven highly individual items, each of which has a clearly defined ritual context. Five of these seven pieces are played exclusively in the context of Dasaī,[14] and these items demarcate the ritual succession of the festival. At Gorkhā, Dasaī falls into five ritual stages. During *navarātrī* there are two stages - the preparation for Dasaī, from *ghaṭasthāpanā* to *phūlpātī* (days 1-7), when the *pañcai bājā* plays *mālaśri,* the music of the season (ex.6), followed by the sacrificial stage, from *bhadrakālī* (the seventh night) to *mahānavami,* accompanied by the sacrificial music, *navagā* (ex.7), (a condensation of *'Nava Durgā)* and the *satar kaṭne bākya* (ex.8), 'big one's cutting tune'. The climactic tenth day marks the third stage - that of joyful celebration, which continues for four days (tenth-thirteenth), when the band plays *phāgu* (music of the month of Phāgun, ex. 9), to the partial conclusion of Dasaī, when the music switches to *cā̆cari* (ex.10). The fourteenth day *(caturdaśī)* heralds

[13]At Nuwākoṭ, Dasaī is on a much smaller scale than at Gorkhā, and the *pañcai bājā* has a less significant role to play. The band is specially formulated for the Dasaī festival, and its repertoire consists of just two items - mālaśrī (ex. ll), the music of the season, and a sacrificial musical item, the mār hālne cāl (ex.12). Nuwākoṭ Damaī are still payed in land for their musical services.

[14]The othertwo items are *asāre* (relating to Asār), played during the rice-transplanting season, and *chasore maṅgal* 'auspicious six-sound', which is played throughout the remainder of the year.

the fourth stage - another day of blood sacrifice (with a reprise of the sacrificial music, *navagā*), and *purṇimā* ends Dasaĩ with the concluding rites (resumption of the all-purpose ritual music - *chasore maṅgal*, 'auspicious six-sound').

Mālaśrī inaugurates the Dasaĩ season at Gorkhā. It is played by the *pañcai bājā* first on the *āṣṭamī* (*bhaumāṣṭamī vratam)* thirty days before *mahāṣṭamī* during a ceremony in which the director (*hakim)* of the Darbār invites all the priests and other personnel to participate in the festival. This is the only occasion on which a full rendition of *mālaśrī* is played[15]. An abbreviated form of mālaśrī (given in ex. 6) is played for most of the rites up until the return of the *phūlpātī* procession on the seventh day of Dasaĩ. For example, on *ghaṭasthāpanā mālaśri* is played during the sunrise move of Kālikā from her usual resting place to join other images in the *pūjā* room *(Dasaĩ ghar).* It is played again during the barley seed (*jamarā)* planting ritual, and for the daily offerings and *ārati pūjā* which take place until *phūlpātī.* Finally, it is played throughout the *phūlpātī* procession.

At sunset on *phūlpātī,* the second stage of Dasaĩ is heralded by a change of music from *malaśrī to navagā,* the sacrificial piece (ex.7), which is played first to accompany the goat sacrifice that establishes the *phūlpātī.* From this point until midday on *vijayā daśami,* and all day on *caturdāśī navagā* accompanies all the sacrificial rites (apart from the sacrifice of the biggest buffalo, the *satār),* including the ceremony for the sacrificial knives (*khaṛgamāī pūjā*) during *bhadrakāli, the* propitiation of hundreds of sacrificial buffaloes and goats, the sacrifice of a large black goat during *kāl-rātri,* and of a white sheep during the rites on behalf of the King's horse *(reaũte pūjā),* and the skinning of the satar.

The *pañcai bājā* also plays *navagā* for other rites that fall within the sacrificial stage of the festival, for example, during the raising of new banners (*patāka*) for Kālikā and the hanging of a canopy *(canduvā)* above the sacrificial courtyard. In addition, it must be played during the preparation of the sacrificial courtyard

[15] The *bhaumāṣṭamī vratam* rendition of *mālaśrī* is included on the CD.

(paṭaṅginī), which includes the spreading of cow-dung paste *(gobar),* the drawing of *maṇḍala* with rice flour *(rekhī)* and the placing of a lampstand *(pānas),* immediately prior to the sacrificing.[16]

At sunset on *mahānavamī* the sacrificial music *(navagā)* is interrupted by a special piece that accompanies the propitiation and sacrifice of the biggest buffalo (*satār*) - the *satār kāṭne bākya* (big one's cutting tune). The *satār* is dispatched when the sun is exactly half set - in other words, when it is neither night nor day. The *satār kāṭne bākya* is played just once more - for the sacrifice of the last and smallest buffalo, after which *navagā* is resumed.

Two other pieces are introduced on *vijayā daśamī.* The first of these - *phāgu* - is the seasonal music for the month of *Phāgun* (Feb-Mar), and is associated particularly with the celebration of the *Holi* festival, during which coloured powder and dye are thrown about *(phāgu khelne).* On *vijayā daśamī,* the *pañcai bājā* plays *phāgu* to accompany the *phāgu khelne* of the *maṅgalinī,* priests and their assistants. This piece is played again during Kālikā's return journey from the *Dasaĩ ghar* to a halfway resting place, and later, during the procession to dispose of the *phūlpātī.*

Once the *phūlpātī* has been ritually jettisoned, the *pañcai bājā* plays a new piece *cắcari* - which marks a joyful relaxation of tension (Tingey 1994:89-90). *Cắcari* is played during the return journey, interspersed with popular repertoire, and again upon arrival at the Darbār.

On the last day of Dasaĩ (*purṇimā*), the piece *chasore maṅgal* (auspicious six-sound) is reinstated by the *pañcai bājā* during the final stage of Kālīkā's journey back to her attic room. This piece is played throughout the year (until the next Dasaĩ), and its

[16] At two shrines in Dhading - Jamruṅg Darbār and Salyānkoṭ (Map 1), the mixed functions of *navagā* are divided between two musical items. A distinction is made between the music to accompany the preparation of a sacrificial area - the *rekhi hālne bākya* ('rice-flour putting tune') or *māru* ('death') - and the music to accompany the sacrifice - the *mār hālne cāl* ('death-giving *tāl*' or *kāṭne bākya* ('cutting tune').

resumption marks the re-establishment of the status quo after the turmoil of Dasaĩ.

Nagarā bānā

At Gorkhā Darbār, for the veneration of Kālīkā, the *pañcai bājā* is joined by a nine piece ensemble, also played by Damāi musicians. This band, the *nagarā bānā* (kettledrum ensemble), plays simultaneously with, and independently of the *pañcai bājā*. It is used exclusively in the context of the adoration of Kālīkā, that is, for the bi-monthly sacrifices on *āṣṭamī* (eighth day of the lunar cycle), and at *caite* and *thūlo* Dasaĩ. It comprises a pair of shawms, *nagarā* (kettledrum), and a number of natural trumpets and horns in various shapes and sizes - *kamāl, dhop bānā, kāhal, bijuli bānā, bheri* and *sikhār.*[17] The shawms (identical to the *sahanai* of the *pañcai bājā*) are called *rāsa*, after the single musical item which they play, an unmetered and rhapsodic piece.

The *nagarā* is the most important instrument in the ensemble, and the music is measured in terms of the number of drumming sequences (*murrā*) sounded by this resonant kettledrum, the relative importance of the various rites being marked by either five, seven, or most commonly, nine *murrā*. One Dasaĩ rite (*śaṅkha dhunī*) requires twenty-seven repetitions of three *murrā*. Essentially, one *murrā* consists of a drum beat which is gradually accelerated into a roll, after which the next *murrā* begins at a slightly faster tempo than the initiating speed of the previous one, so that there is an overall acceleration through the music. None of the trumpets and horns are used melodically, but each has its own distinctive fanfare on one to three pitches, which is inserted at intervals at the player's discretion.

[17]A related ensemble of five instruments is in daily use in the worship of Gorakhnāth. These instruments, one each of *rāsa, nagarā, karnāl, dhop bānā* and *kāhal,* are not used in any other context, or in combination with the other ensembles. The fact that these two ritual ensembles comprise nine and five instruments respectively is noteworthy, these numbers being particularly auspicious in Hindu numerology, and these numbers recur in many musical and ritual contexts.

Animal sacrifice involves two principle ritual stages - the propitiation (*manāune*) and the subsequent sacrifice (*kāṭne*) of the offering. Gorkhā *nagarā bānā* play for the cutting of the animals, rather than during their propitiation, supplying five *murrā* for each buffalo, apart from the biggest and the smallest, each of which get nine, and nine *murrā* for the start and finish of the mass sacrifice of goats (as many as fifty-four at a time). By contrast, the *pañcai bājā* plays *navagā* during the propitiation of animals and may or may not continue playing during their sacrifice. Thus, on *mahāṣṭamī* and *mahānavamī* the *pañcai bājā* and *nagarā bānā* play alternately during the continuous sacrifice of buffaloes (fifty-four animals over two days), the piece *navagā* being sounded until the *nagarā bānā* takes over, in a virtually unbroken cacophony of shawms and kettledrums.

The skin of the biggest buffalo (*satār*) is used for the kettledrums of the Kālikā and Gorakhnāth *nagarā bānā* the right half for Gorakhnāth and the left for Kālikā, and the musicians believe that depending on which side the buffalo falls during sacrifice, that side's *nagarā* will be blessed with a good tone for the coming year. In their myths, Damāi attribute the origin of their musical instruments to the dismembered body parts of a demon, and each Dasaĩ this demonic source becomes reality, when Mahiṣāsura is ritually slain, and the skin used for the drums. The skinning of the *satār* is the first ritual event of *vijayā daśamī* and is accompanied by nine *murrā* from the *nagarā bānā* and the sacrificial music of the *pañcai bājā.*

The skin remains in storage in the Darbār for a year until the new moon (*aũsī*) immediately prior to the next Dasaĩ celebration, when the two Darbār tanners, one each for Kālikā and Gorakhnāth, replace the heads of all the drums used in the Darbār ensembles. The skins of goats sacrificed during Dasaĩ are used for the heads of the smaller drums. Following the lacing of the *nagarā* heads, the tanners perform a *pūjā* of absolution, sacrificing chickens which are supplied by the Darbār. The lacing of the two *nagarā is* only tightened on specific dates - that of Kālikā's *nagarā* on the

mornings of *phūlpātī* and of Caite Dasaĩ, and that of Gorakhnāth on these two occasions, and again at *bhaṇḍara aũsi.*[18]

Jor damāhā

During Dasaĩ, the employment of Damaĩ to play additional kettledrums *(damāhā* or *nagarā)* at temples seems to be a fairly widespread practice. Sometimes single kettledrums are played, but frequently one finds pairs of kettledrums *(jor damāhā),* either with one player, or divided between two musicians. At Nuwākoṭ a kettledrum pair (with a single musician) plays several times daily during *navarātrī* at sacred locations (including Taleju and Bhairavī temples, the Satali Darbār and the *dhamī*'s house), and a single *nagarā* is played at the vanguard of the *phulpatī* procession.

At Gorkhā, throughout *navarātrī* there are daily *pūjā* at Upallokoṭ and Tallokoṭ, the sites of Magar and Ghale fortresses captured by Drabya Śāha, on the hills rising to the east and west of the Darbār, and on *mahāṣṭamī* and *mahānavamī* there are blood sacrifices at these shrines. The rituals are accompanied throughout by a Damāi playing a *damāhā* with two sticks (ex.13).

At Gorkhā Darbār itself, for the first seven days (from *ghaṭasthāpanā* to *phūlpātī* of Dasaĩ a *jor damāhā* (with two players) sounds the ex. 13 rhythm five times daily at approximately 2p.m., 6p.m., 9p.m., 12a.m. and 4a.m., but these playings do not accompany any ritual activities. Many of the musicians believe that the function of the *jor damāhā* is to announce to the Gorkhā populace that all is well at the Darbār, but opinion is divided, some thinking that the kettledrums are sounded in Kālīkā's honour. On *phūlpātī,* this jor *damāhā* precedes the *pañcai bājā* and *nagarā bānā* in the procession that escorts the *phūlpātī* to the Darbār, playing a rhythm (ex.14) that foreshadows the *satār kāṭne bākya* of the *pañcai bājā.* Once the *phūlpātī* has been established, the *jor damāhā* amalgamates with the *pañcai bājā,* and does not play independently again. Apart from Caite Dasaĩ, when the *jor damāhā* augments the *pañcai bājā,* this pair is not played at any other time of the year.

[18]The *kul-devatā pūjā* of the Darbār's *kanphaṭā yogi,* during Śrāvan.

Historical background to the damāi ensembles

The origin of the various Damāi kettledrum ensembles is the Middle Eastern - Central Asian shawm and kettledrum band, *ṭabl* or *naqqāra khānā* (Tingey 1994:22ff). In the Abbasid Empire (750-1258), the periodic playing *(nauba)* three or five times daily of a kettledrum or a shawm and kettledrum band *(ṭabl khānā)* was the prerogative of the khalifs, a prestigious symbol of their power and splendour. From the second half of the tenth century, the band and the three- or five-fold *nauba* were honours which could be conferred on deserving generals, ministers and governors (Farmer 1929:207-8).

> [The Mughals of Persia had] a monster kettledrum (*kūrka*) almost the height of a man which was played in pairs... It was part of the royal insignia and its tones accompanied the royal edicts. On the death of a sultan, after being played at the royal obsequies, it was broken to pieces (Farmer 1939:12-3).

This suggests that the kettledrums were inseparably linked with the identity of the sultan, so that their independent existence was impossible.

The *naqqāra khānā* was carried to North India by Turko-Afghan Muslims from Central Asia, and became very well established there by the fourteenth century. The function of the band included playing from balconies and terraces of palaces, fortresses and city gates to sound the hours of the day or to announce the arrival of visiting dignitaries.

In India, as in Central Asia, the *naqqāra khānā* was a prestigious status symbol reflecting rank and power, and could be conferred by the emperor. Consequently, the ensemble of greatest pomp and magnitude was that which graced the court of the emperor himself. That of Akbar was described by Abu'l Fazl in the *Ain-i-Akbari* of c.1590 as consisting of:

> about 18 pairs of Luwa~ah or damānah (large kettledrums) 'which give a deep sound'
> about 20 pairs of *naqqārah (kettledrums)*

4 *duhul (double-headed* dmms)
at least 4 karana (natural trumpets) of gold, silver, brass and other metals
9 Persian and Indian surna (shawms)
some each of Persian, European and Indian nafr (natural trumpets)
2 brass sing (natural horns) 'made in the form of a cow's horn'
3 pairs of sanj (cymbals). (Abu'l Fazl 1875:211).

The function of Akbar's *naqqāra khānā* included sounding the hours of day and bestowing auspicious blessings on the emperor.

The arrival of the kettledrum band in Nepal is difficult to date precisely, but the ensemble appears to have been carried into Nepal from Rajputana by court musicians fleeing with their patrons from a succession of Muslim aggressors, from Ala-ud-Dm (1303) to Akbar (1568), although it is impossible to determine during which wave of migration it arrived (Tingey 1994:24-9).

Musical activity at Nepalese temples pre-dates the arrival of the kettledrum in Nepal, however, dating as far back as the Licchavi period (A.D.300-750). Some Licchavi inscriptions survive, for example, those of Lele, south of Patan, dating from A.D. 605, and at Upallokoṭ, Gorkhā, dating from A.D.699, but these do not clearly identify the instruments in use, and leave much to conjecture. The most informative Licchavi inscription to mention music is that of Harigaũ, north-east Kathmandu, dating from 'Samvat 30' (A.D.?), which lists payments to court employees, and includes *Jyāndiśaṇkhavādyoḥ* as payees, who received '25 pu' (Regmi 1983:V72). Regmi (1983:IV44) translates this as 'drummers and conch blowers *(Jyāndiśankhavādayoh)*, but Bajracarya (BS2030) gives a convincing alternative: *nandī (maṅgal bājā) bājāune ra śaṅkha phũknelāī* 25 *purāṇa'* (to the player of the auspicious instrument and to the conch-blower, 25 *purāṇa).* His translation of *nandī* as *maṅgala* (auspicious) is based on other appearances of the word *nandīvādya* in a 7th century treatise - the *Harṣa caritra.* It is clear, at least, that the conch was in use in Nepal during the Licchavi era as a court and/or ritual instrument that was paid for by the royal treasury.

Much evidence suggests that an ensemble of conch and drums was prevalent in South Asia long before the arrival of the *ṭabl* or *naqqāra khānā,* and the conch often featured in auspicious ensembles of five types of instrument. Still, today, in many parts of South India, the conch functions in this capacity (Tingey 1994:20-2). On the Ancient Indian battlefield, the thundering of drums and blaring of trumpets and conches was essential, as described in the Epics (Shakuntala 1968; Hornell 1915:13; Kapadia 1953).

The temple music ensembles of Central Nepal do not include the conch - it is a ritual object used by priests. However, frequently it is played simultaneously with, but independently of the *nagarā bānā* during daily rituals, the Brahmin playing conch from inside the shrine, and the Damāi playing outside. In India at least (perhaps also in Nepal?), conch-blowing has not always been the prerogative of the ritually pure, with Tamil barbers (Hornell 1915 :30) and other low castes (Sambamurti 1962: 19-20) having this duty. Thus, it is feasible that once the shawm and kettledrum band had arrived in South Asia, it quickly took over some of the ritual and martial functions of the conch, which is extremely limited as a musical instrument.

Drums with sacred or military functions have been in use in South Asia since ancient times. According to Shakuntala, the *Ṛgveda* (VI, 47, 29-31) hails the drum *dundubhi*[19] as 'accordant with gods', 'thundering out strength', 'filling the warriors full of vigour' and 'the first of Indra', and similar phrases are to be found in the *Atharvaveda* (V, 20 21). On the battlefield, the capture of *dundubhi* meant defeat, which indicates the high esteem in which it was held (Shakuntala 1968:6). Five types of instrument comprised the band that assembled on the battlefield of Kurukshetra at the outset of the *Mahābhārata* war *(Bhagavadgita* I, 13), including

[19]The Vedic name *dundubhi* has been interpreted as 'kettledrum', but without positive evidence that such an identification is correct. According to Deva (1978:80), today paired *nagarā* are sometimes called *dundubhi.*

conch and drum (*bherī*.).[20] The *Jātakas* include many references to the conch in combination with various drums. For example, the *Māga-pakka Jātaka's* description of the preparation for a royal journey in which a mixed ensemble of conch and drums forms part of the entourage (Cowell 1907:vi/14). The *pañcamahāśabda* 'five great sounds' of the *Jātakas* apparently included conch, horn, gong and drums (Fox-Strangways 1914:77; Dick 1984:83). Another ancient drum, a *bherī* mentioned in a Jain text, is said to have had medicinal properties, facilitating the cure of anyone that played it (Kapadia 1953:382-3).

A pair of huge kettledrums, the *dam nagarā* of Gorkhā Darbār provide the earliest evidence for this instrument in Nepal. They bear the inscription : *srī śāke 1531 māse 5 śrī mahārāj chatra śāhasya kṛtiḥ*, 'provided by King Chatra Śāha in the fifth month of 1531 *Śāka Saṃvat* (A.D.1609)' (Bajracarya and Srestha VS2037:1-8). These *nagarā* were installed at a time of political unrest, and it is probable that they had a military function - possibly they were used to sound the call to arms, or to summon people to hear a royal edict.[21] Today, these kettledrums are part of the ritual furniture of the Darbār, which, like the cannon and the temple bells, receive offerings from devotees.[22]

> At least from the reign of Pṛthvīnārāyaṇ Śāha (1743-75), the *nagarā-nisāna* 'kettledrum and standards' were honours which could be bestowed on senior servants of the Crown. A royal edict has survived, in which Pṛthvīnārāyaṇ Śāha decrees that two of his senior administrators governing in the hills (the *bahrahā* and *umarāu)* were to receive this honour. These men, who were

[20] *Bherī* is described in the early thirteenth century *Saṅgītaratnākara* as a double-headed barrel drum made of copper, played with a stick on the right face and hand on the left (Dick 1984:81, 94). However, the ancient *bherī* has also been identified as a kettledrum by several writers. Indeed, in present-day South India, *bherī* is a kettledrum (see Sambamurti 1969:263; Day 1891:139).

[21] However, there is some confusion as to chronology, as Chatra Śāha ruled for only seven months, from 1605 A.D. to 1606 A.D., and by the year of the installation of the *nagarā* (1609 A.D.), Rām Śāha was on the Gorkhā throne.

[22] The *nagarā* is the most sacred instrument of the Damaī ensembles. It is respected as one of the ritual possessions of the deity. See Tingey 1994:Ch.3.

> 'as strong as Indra's thunderbolt', conducted their duties in Salyan, Liglig and Dhāding in a very praiseworthy manner, and so won the honour of the King's authority to govern - the *nagarā-nisāna* - and annual salaries of 'twelve-times-twenty rupees' (H.M. Govt. of Nepal BS2025:14).

The honour of *nagarā-nisāna* may predate Pṛthvīnarayaṇ's era, however. In the *Gorkhāvaṃśāvalī* there is a reference pertaining to the early eighteenth century and concerning Udyot Śāha, a son of King Pṛthvīlpati Śāha (1667-1715) by his third wife :

> Udyot Śaha believed himself to be a Rajput. Taking his wife, sons, daughters and servants and with *nisāna* (banners) and the playing of *nagarā*, he crossed the Gaṇḍaki River and went to the east of the country.[23] (Translated from Naraharinath:VS 2031)

Here the *nagarā* and *nisāna* form part of the royal entourage carried as the emblems of rank and authority.

> The title *nagarā-nisana* existed at least until 1829, because by a royal order dating from this year, an incumbent of this privilege lost some of his land in favour of someone named Kṛṣṇa Jaisi (Naraharinath:VS2022: 311).

The *nagarā-nisāna* tradition recalls that of the honour of the 'three- and five-fold *nauba'* of the Abbasids, although there is no evidence in Nepalese sources to suggest that in this context the *nagarā* was used for periodic playing at set hours of the day.

However, today, during Dasaī the *jor damāhā* is played five times daily at Gorkhā Darbār, in the manner of the 'five-fold *nauba'*. Thus, in a ritual context, the periodic playing of kettledrums was established as a Nepalese tradition. Perhaps the *jor damāhā* was introduced at Gorkhā as the *nauba* of the Śāha, and after the court had been moved to Kathmandu, the *jor damāhā* became superfluous, and in the course of time, its function was obscured.

[23] This exodus followed a dispute between Pṛthvīpati's sons over the succession, because the late Crown Prince was without heir. Udyot Śāha was a rival for the throne until Narabhupal Śāha was hailed as the rightful ascendant.

References to military music and musicians date mainly from Pṛthvīnarayaṇ Śāha's period of unification, in the form of army rolls and records, in the various *vaṃśāvalī* and accounts of military campaigns. Oral history also provides some interesting data, including the rhyme :

ḍāṅ ḍāṅ ra ḍuṅ ḍāṅ.ḍarlāgdo bājā
rāti rāti hīdne Gorkhālī rājā'

'dang dang and *dung dung* terrifying instrument,
the Gorkhālī king who walks in the night' [24]

which must refer to the kettledrum in use as a military instrument (Darnāl, R.S.,VS.2045:92-3).

Oral history also relates that at least from the inception of the Śāha dynasty, the *nagarā* was used in Nepal to announce state proclamations. In Kathmandu, this function was known as *jhyāli piṭne* 'drum beating'[25] and in the hills, *ghogh hālne*, 'repeating over and over'.[26] The *Damāi* and watchman *(kutwāl)* shared this duty, and a *nagarā* used for such a purpose was known as the raja or *śahi nagarā* (Darnal, R.S. VS.2044:28).

Before commencing the campaigns which resulted in the founding of the Kingdom of Nepal, Pṛthvīnārāyaṇ Śāha went on a pilgrimage to Varanasi, with a full entourage of ministers and servants. Among the latter, according to the 'Bir Library' *vaṃśāvalī*, were two to four *nagārci (nagarā* players) and another musician who had the honourable title of *visyādamāi* (Naraharinath VS.2022:330). Darnal suggests that Pṛthvīnārāyaṇ heard a British band in Varanasi which prompted him to establish the *śarduljaṅgko byāṇḍ* 'wild tiger band' (named after his first platoon) in the Nepalese army (VS.2043:9).

[24]i.e. 'fearless king'.

[25]*Jhyāli* = a type of drum used by the public crier, hence *jhyāli pitnu* : to announce (Turner 1931:238).

[26]From *ghok hālne. Ghoknu* = to repeat over and over again.

Prior to his attack on the Kathmandu Valley, Pṛthvīnārāyaṇ Śāha captured the strategically situated town of Nuwākoṭ in 1744. The 'Bir Library' *vaṃśāvalī* relates that after the conquest there was a *pūjā,* during which *dīpa, kalaś* and Gaṇeś were propitiated, Brahmins recited the Vedas, and the *nagarā* and other (unspecified) instruments played at the auspicious moment when Pṛthvīnārāyaṇ Śāha entered the palace (Naraharinath VS.2022:358). The Malla forces retaliated, so that Pṛthvīnārāyaṇ Śāha thought it prudent to embolden his army with a rallying speech, upon which the musicians struck up, and they went into battle: *'bājā bājāundae raṇa-bhūmi tarpha gayā,* 'as instruments were being played, they went towards the battle-field' (Naraharinath VS.2022:371).

Concurrently with developing their military bands, the Śāha were also the primary patrons of temple ensembles, dedicating instruments and founding *guṭhi* at a number of shrines. In many instances, this kind of musical offering was made to the Goddess following a victory on the battlefield (Tingey 1994:36-9).

Thus, in Nepalese history and in the wider context of South Asian history, it is clear that musical ensembles of the type played by the Damāi have strong military connections in addition to their sacred and/or auspicious functions. At some point in history, it was decided that this warlike and bloodthirsty goddess deserved the awesome reverberations of the kettledrum to manifest her presence, and the band was transferred from battlefield to temple. In the light of the symbolic association of Hindu gods and kings, with the dual concepts of 'kingly god' and 'godly king' (Subramaniam undated:21) the employment of shawms and kettledrums in both court/military and temple contexts is not surprising, especially for a Goddess who epitomizes all the qualities of a great warrior.

Other Dasaī music groups

Apart from the *maṅgalinī* and Damāi musicians, upon whom falls the main responsibility for the provision of music during Dasaī, a number of other music groups have smaller rôles to play during the festival. For example, the Magar *susāre* (ritual assistants)

at Gorkhā Darbār have their own band, consisting of a large and a small *mṛdaṅga* - barrel drums with unequal heads, played with the hands - and two pairs of large bowler-hat shaped cymbals called *jhyāli* The function of the *susāre* band is to lead priestly processions from the secluded interior of the Darbār, from whence their music emanates prior to their appearance in the visible ritual area immediately surrounding the Darbār buildings. Thus, it does not participate in the *phūlpātī* procession, but the rites of Bhadrakāli begin with the *susāre* band leading a procession of priests with their offerings from the Darbār to the sacrificial post in the courtyard for the blessing of the ritual knives *(khaḍgamāī pūjā).* On *mahāṣṭamī* the band leads the priests to the gateway of the Darbār for the anointing of the biggest and smallest buffaloes. The *susāre* accompany the priests during several other preamubulations (Tingey 1990: 198-9), and on each occasion, they play a single rhythmic pattern which is referred to as *phāgu* [27](ex.15). There is no *susāre* band, or corresponding ensemble in operation at Nuwākoṭ during Dasaī.

During Dasaī at Gorkhā, (but not at Nuwākoṭ.) local Gāine - itinerant minstrels - sing their own versions of *mālaśrī* at the Darbār, accompanying themselves on their four string bowed fiddles, *sāraṅgi,* ostensibly for the pleasure of Kālikā, but also in order to beg a few rupees from devotees.[28] On *phūlpātī,* two Gāine take part in the *phūlpātī* procession, preceding all the other musicians.

Conclusion

The range of musics performed in connection with the Royal Dasaī at Gorkhā Darbār and Nuwākoṭ is quite impressive. Each of

[27]Presumably because it accompanies the *phāgu khelne* of *vijayā daśamī* although in Far-West Nepal, *phāg* is synonymous with *maṅgal gīt/dhūn.*

[28]In this area of Nepal, Gāine have the tradition of singing *mālaśrī* from door to door in the villages, in return for which they receive foodstuffs and/or a little money.

the separate groups of musicians has its own function within the ritual structure of Dasaī[29]

The musical protagonists of the festival fall into two main groups - female ritual singers and male bandsmen. These two groups between them provide music to accompany almost every ritual that takes place during the Royal celebration of Dasaī. Usually the two groups are spatially separated, performing simultaneously but independently of one another, with the *maṅgalinī* singing primarily from within the temple buildings, and the Damāi playing outside, but occasionally (eg. during the *phūlpātī* procession) they coincide. Their music is highly contrasted, the *maṅgalinī* singing hymns of devotion to the Mother, and the Damāi playing the raucous shawms and kettledrums that previously stirred the troops on the battlefield. Mediating between the two main groups are the *susāre,* whose band leads priestly processions from inside the Darbār to the open air ritual areas.

The repertoires of both the *maṅgalinī* and the Damāi bands consist of context-specific items and other songs/pieces for more general use. In terms of musical *content,* only one item is common to both *maṅgalinī* and *pañcai bājā* (in Nuwākoṭ and Gorkhā) *mālaśrī,* the music of the season, but the functions of this song/piece vary between the groups. There is a coincidence of musical *function* with regard to the specific items of repertoire to be performed during animal sacrifice *(navagā, mār hālne* [illegible] and *le le hanaũ le le le* performed by the *pañcai bājā* of Gorkhā and Nuwākoṭ and the *maṅgalinī* respectively, and the *pañcai bājā* at Gorkhā has a further sacrificial piece to be played during the dispatch of the *satār, satār kaṭne bākyā).* Gorkhā Darbār *nagarā bānā* always plays the same music, but the amount of music to be supplied *(murrā)* is determined by the type of ritual it accompanies.

The Gorkhā Darbār *pañcai bājā* repertoire follows the ritual sequence of the festival, with a dynamic succession of pieces that mark the ritual and temporal progress of the festival. This is not

[29]For a detailed tabulation, see Tingey 1994: Appendix II

the case with the *maṅgalinī* songs. A five-song sequence, together with a sixth item sung as an *āratī,* and a further song performed during the worship of the young virgin girls *(kanyā pūjā* and *kumārī pūjā)* comprise the *maṅgalinī* Dasaī repertoire, and these songs are recapitulated as part of a daily cycle of worship.

The functions of the ritual music played during Dasaī are manifold. For example, it operates as a kind of augmented temple bell *(ghaṇṭa)* which devotees ring reverently to announce their presence to the deity. The *maṅgalinī, nagarā bānā* and/or *pañcai bājā* awaken the deity to the presence of the officiant, and to the ritual activity in which he is engaged on behalf of the King and community. When the Goddess graces officiants with her presence she is treated as an honoured guest, receiving food and offerings and music forms a part of her 'royal welcome' *(archaka).* The music creates an auspicious environment in which offerings may be bestowed upon the deity, countering any inauspicious omens that threaten the efficacy of the ritual.

Music plays a central rôle in the celebration of the Royal Dasaī, not only supplying the ritual needs of the festival, but also reinforcing the status of the King as the supreme *jajmān* - the one who has a sacrifice performed on his behalf. The shotguns and the official music groups announce that the King has had so many buffaloes and goats sacrificed, so that the music also serves as a Royal status symbol, in the same way that the *naubā* was a hallmark for the Abbasids.

The two contrasting facets of the Goddess's nature are symbolically manifest physically and aurally by the music of the *maṅgalinī* and the Damāi, which are sounded simultaneously and in various juxtapositions throughout the Dasaī festival. Whilst the Damāi music is redolent of the Goddess's victory on the battlefield, the songs of the *maṅgalinī* recall her motherly care and life-affirming graciousness.

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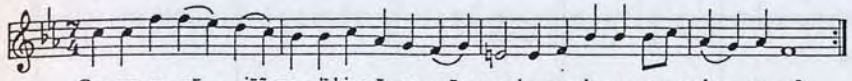
Appendix

Ex.1: Mālaśrī (maṅgalinī) ♩ = 110



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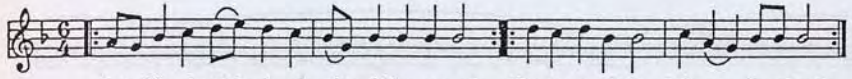

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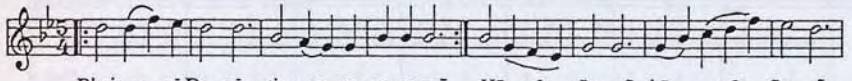
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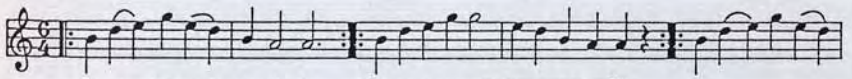

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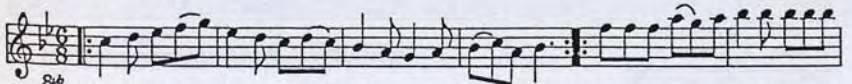
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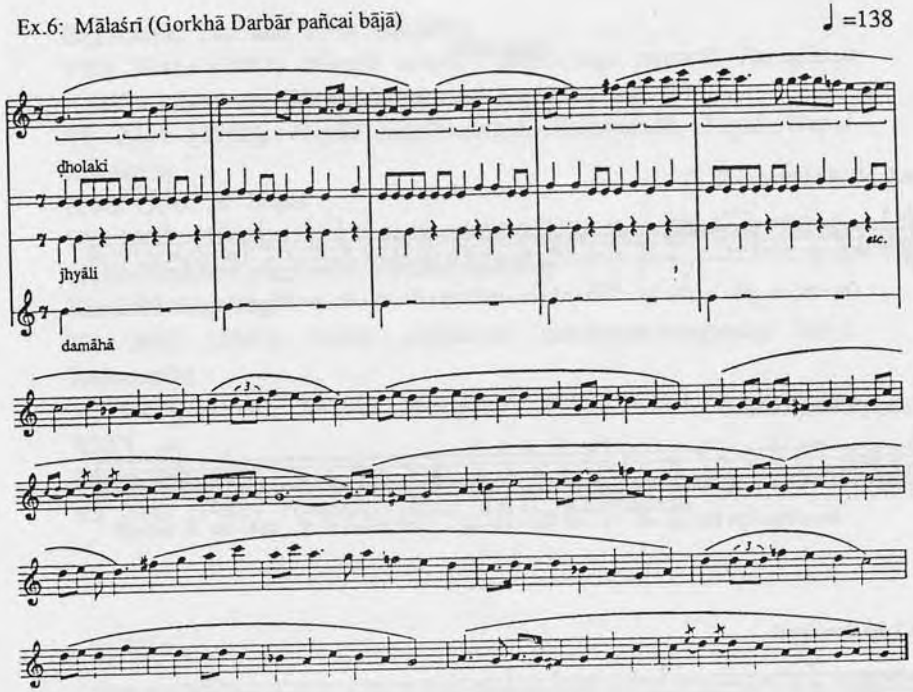
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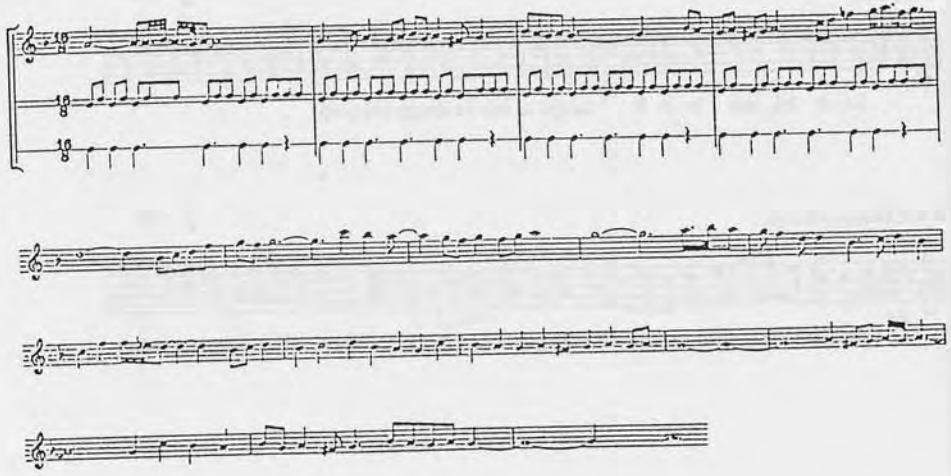
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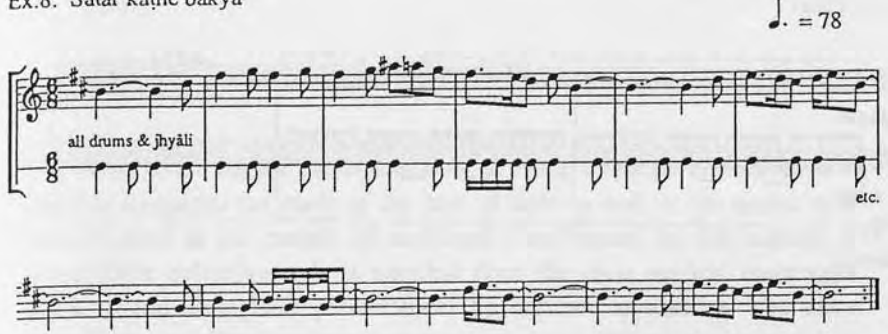
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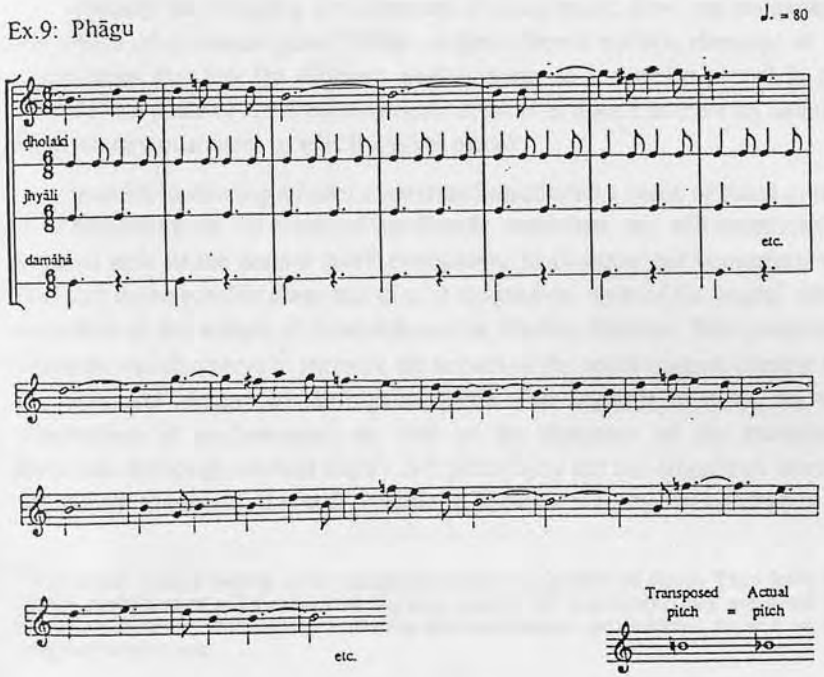
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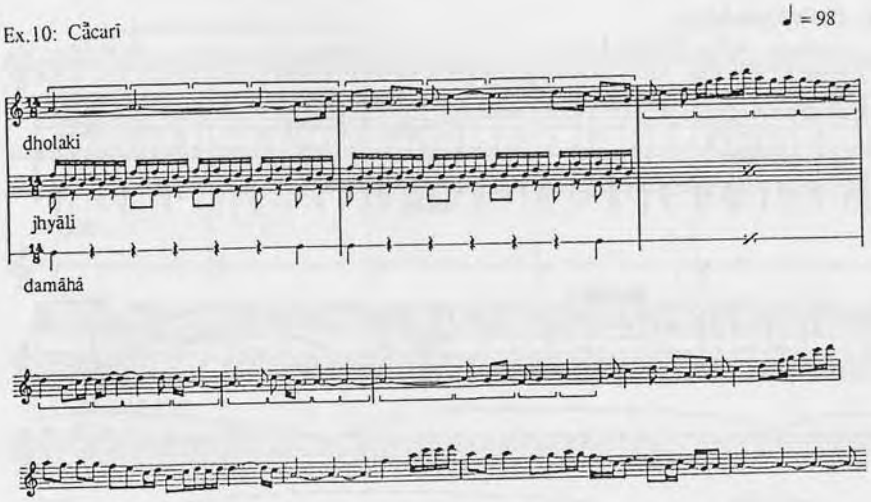

THE MUSIC AT MANAKĀMANĀ TEMPLE: ESSAY ON THE STYLE OF THE RITUAL MUSIC OF DAMĀI MUSICIANS

Sophie Laurent

The music of the *nagarā bānā* ensemble of Nepal's Damāi musicians[1] is a valuable source for the study of the idea of style as well as the notion of a musical piece in the context of traditional ritual music. In this context, a recognizable collective style is manifest since the same musical constraints can be found throughout performances by different ensembles. Yet some elements are specifically regional or even individual. The musical material of a specific piece will never be exactly identical from one performance to another, even if it is considered to be the same by the musicians playing. The musical style seems to allow every performance of a piece to be unique.

Through the changing performances of ritual music, how can we explain the notion of a musical piece? What are the different stylistic elements of its constitution that link the different performances to a specific piece? Is the identity of a piece of ritual music strictly musical or does it borrow its identity from the circumstances in which it takes place?

In order to develop a better understanding of what a piece of ritual music is in the context of the music of the Damāi musicians, we will examine the musical style of the *nagarā bānā* ensembles. To illustrate our comments, we will turn to the specific characteristics of the musical style of the *nagarā bānā* ensemble at the temple of *Manakāmanā* in Gorkha District. This particular example will also serve to measure the impact of the socio-cultural context on the style and identity of the musical piece. Our analysis is based on the observation of performances as well as the discourse of the musicians involved. Although musical theory and philosophy are not articulated among the Damāi musicians, it is still possible to deduce a non-explicit conception of

[1]The Damāi people belong to an occupational caste of the hills of Nepal. They have the double profession of tailor-musicians. Serving most of the population, they are hired for family celebrations, community festivities and ceremonies, processions, as well as for religious ritual music.

music from their discourse and their music. Our observation focuses on the whole musical event from an external point of view supported by the comments of musicians and villagers.

The idea of style

An examination of the idea of musical style will contribute to a better understanding of the musical piece in the context of the ritual music of the *damāi*. Generally speaking, the idea of style involves musical constants or permanent features and allows choices among variables that distinguish the specific interpretations. As a broad definition of style we will refer to the one given by Meyer in his book *Style and Music: Theory, History and Ideology* :

> "Style is a replication of patterning, whether in human behavior or in artifacts produced by human behavior, that results from a series of choices made within some set of constraints." (1989:3)

In musical style, the set of constraints will be less imposing at the general level and more detailed at the level of a specific piece. This is why we can speak of a collective style and an individual style. The notion of collective style is useful in two ways. First of all, it is a classification tool that allows for the differentiation of a variety of pieces in the same genre. Secondly, it can be used as a model to which the musicians refer. In this sense, the style becomes normative. With regard to the musical tradition of the Damāi, as in many oral traditions, the collective musical style is normative. It imposes limits on innovation, especially in the field of ritual music. But the nature of the musical style of the *nagarā bānā* ensembles of the Damāi offers an openness that allows each piece and each interpretation to vary, especially at the level of form. The specific performance of a piece will present characteristics that are brought on by the individual style of the musicians involved.

To measure the scale and the importance of the variations involved in a specific musical piece, it is essential to understand the musical style of the corpus to which it relates and the rules that govern it.

Musical style of the nagarā bānā ensembles

The *nagarā bānā* ensembles of the Damāi play ritual music, mostly at temples and occasionally during processions. Their performances are the

musical offering that accompanies the daily *pūjā* [2] and special religious ceremonies. These ensembles are found predominantly at temples devoted to goddesses, although some can be found at those devoted to *Siva* or *Bisnu*. From one temple to another, the overall sound of the ensemble varies. This depends largely on the instruments available and the musicians who are playing. But in all cases, the music of the *nagarā bānā* is distinguished by the beating of the *nagarā* drum. This large kettledrum gives its name to the ensemble and is the essential element of the musical formation. Frequently, the *nagarā* will be the only instrument played to accompany the *pūjā*. Its particular sound and symbolic meaning are associated with worship.The *nagarā* is not only the basis of the musical formation; its rhythmic phrases, called *murrā* are also the main musical element on which the form relies. Tingey describes them in the following way: "These phrases each in turn accelerate the *nagarā* beat until it becomes a drum roll and decelerate out of it to a new tempo (usually faster than the preceding one), but they vary in terms of length of phrase, tempi, and of rate of acceleration, ..." (1994:197) These rhythmic phrases and the sequence they create become the framework of the musical piece. A certain number of *murrā* must be played for the piece to be complete. As Tingey mentions, the length of these phrases will vary, thereby changing the progression of the piece.

In most *nagarā bānā* ensembles, horns and/or trumpets are played. The choice of instrumentation is determined by the instruments available and the different musicians playing. Among the horns and trumpets played are the *karnāl, kāhal, bijuli bānā* (also known as *nāg-beli bājā*), *dhop bānā, sikhār* and *bheri*. They are used in a variety of combinations, playing two or three-note motifs at sporadic intervals. Their powerful sounds and peculiar timbre[3] create a temporary intensification of the volume and the texture. There is no fixed strategy involved as the musicians enter at random, as they feel. The beating of the *nagarā* and the sporadic entries of the horns are the fundamental elements of this music. At certain temples, however, the *rāsa*

[2] *pūjā*: worship and offerings ritual.

[3] Their timbre and motifs can be compared to the sound of the conch, also used to accompany the *pūjā* in many circumstances and not considered by the Nepalese to be a musical instrument.

(shawm) is played, adding a melodic dimension to the music. The *rāsa* plays and varies motifs based on a specific scale in a free rhythmic style and in an ornamented, exploratory and sinuous manner. The different sound qualities of the instrument are enhanced by the contours of the melody. This is especially noticeable when the musician uses vibrato or chooses a straight (non-vibrato) sound for sustained notes. The process of melodic development used by the *rāsa* player is one of combination and variation of the motifs. As a basis for his melodic line, the musician has a bank of motifs that are specific to the piece. From these motifs he will choose to sustain some notes, without necessarily sustaining the same notes at the next occurrence of the motif. These motifs can be strung together in a variety of combinations, changing at every occurrence of the piece.

In contrast to the repetitive and cyclical characteristics of the entertainment music of *pañcai bājā* or *naumati bājā* ensembles of the *damāi*, the music of the *nagarā bānā* might appear to have linear and progressive melody. But the features of the different motifs are recognizable at every occurrence so it might be more appropriate to consider the progression of the melody to be cyclical in a spiral manner: the motifs will recur, but in different combinations and with some variation. In their own independent spheres of free non-measured rhythm, the different instruments of the *nagarā bānā* play in a type of stratification where relations between instruments and occurrences of different motifs become purely coincidental. The musical result is the product of coincidence thus creating interesting musical combinations. This absence of synchrony is the source of the distinctive texture of the *nagarā bānā* ensembles. The texture of this music, although very constant, progresses in small waves of density in a morphing continuity. An intensification of the texture can be heard as a drum roll is played on the *nagarā*, as the horns or trumpets interject or as the *rāsa* rises to a very high pitch. Other than these small fluctuations, the texture remains even and creates the sound with which the *nagarā bānā* ensemble is associated. The openness of the style allows for multiple combinations and a variety of unfoldings, but for the Damāi musician the piece remains the same. He follows rules and does not call upon innovation. These rules *do* offer some choice in deciding the moments of the horn entries and in the variations of the melody, but essentially, the musician

makes his choices in a mechanical way, obeying the tradition he has learned from his ancestors.

In our description of the constant elements found in the collective musical style of the *nagarā bānā*, it is important to emphasise that the instrumentation, form and duration, as well as the unfolding of the piece are all elements that are not fixed. What *is* fixed is the occasion, the intention, the type of rhythmic phrases of the *nagarā*, the texture, the coincidental encounters and most importantly, the process behind the performance.

Individuating specificities: the music of Manakāmanā's nagarā bānā ensemble

The temple of *Manakāmanā*, situated at the hilltop of a mountain in the district of Gorkha, is a very popular site for the Nepalese. As part of a family of temples devoted to goddesses in Central Nepal, *Manakāmanā* is dedicated to *Bhagwati* who, when she is worshipped, is believed to grant wishes. The ritual music of the *nagarā bānā* ensemble is heard twice daily at the temple. Every morning and at every sunset (*ārati*), the musicians accompany the *pūjā*. At special religious events and ceremonies, the *nagarā bānā* ensemble will play all day long, accompanying the different stages of the ritual, as it is customary on the day of *kartik pañcāmi* at *Manakāmanā* temple, for example. The intention of the musicians is to contribute to the ritual event. Their personal intention and subjective viewpoint is not involved in the performance, since the musical expression has a social and religious function. Through the sound of their music, they assist in the *pūjā* and invoke the presence of the Goddess. As the musicians play, the temple's bells are rung by the public. Although their intention is not of a musical nature, the sounds of the bells seemingly become part of the musical event.

The musical piece played is always the same. According to the musicians, the title is *bhagwatiko laya* or the 'melody of Bhagwati'. Others will simply call it *pūjāko dhūn* (tune of the *pūjā*.) Its melodic motifs are recognizable, but its structure varies from one performance to another. Through the analysis of two versions of this piece, its constant and variable constituents become evident. This also allows us to have an example of the individuating style of *damāi* ritual music.

In the two musical examples we have chosen[4], the instrumentation is that of a full *nagarā bānā* ensemble composed of four instruments. The *nagarā* drum, the *karnāl* and *bijuli-bānā* horns constitute the basis of the ensemble.[5] The *rāsa* (shawm) adds the melodic dimension to the music. For the purpose of comparison, it is important to note that in both of our examples, the same musicians are playing. The *nagarā* drum's rhythmic sequence, called *murrā*, and the playing of the *bijuli-bānā* and the *karnāl* are not distinctive to the style of this particular ensemble. We must, however, consider the chosen moments of the playing of the horns and the length of their phrases as being specific to each performance. The element that allows more uniqueness to this piece is the melody of the *rāsa* (shawm). The melody of this piece is based on the *kafi that* (scale type)[6]. The third and the seventh are usually minor although they happen to be major in some cadential figures. The use of chromatic intervals involving the major third, augmented fourth and major seventh are characteristic and add to the sinuous quality of the melody. In the following example, presenting the scale type used, the modal center is A.

Musical example 1: scale type

Listening to this melody for the first time, one might hear a pentatonic quality. This impression results from the stable notes of the melody which are

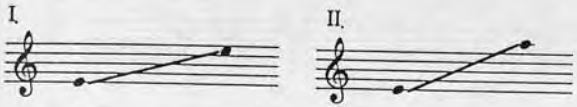
[4]The first one was the second performance of the *nagarā bānā* ensemble on the morning of 11th November, 1995, and the second was recorded on the morning of the 12th as a regular daily *pūjā*, although that day was *kartik pañcāmi* a very important day at *Manakāmanā* as hundreds of people come for the *pūjā* and *jātrā* (festivities).

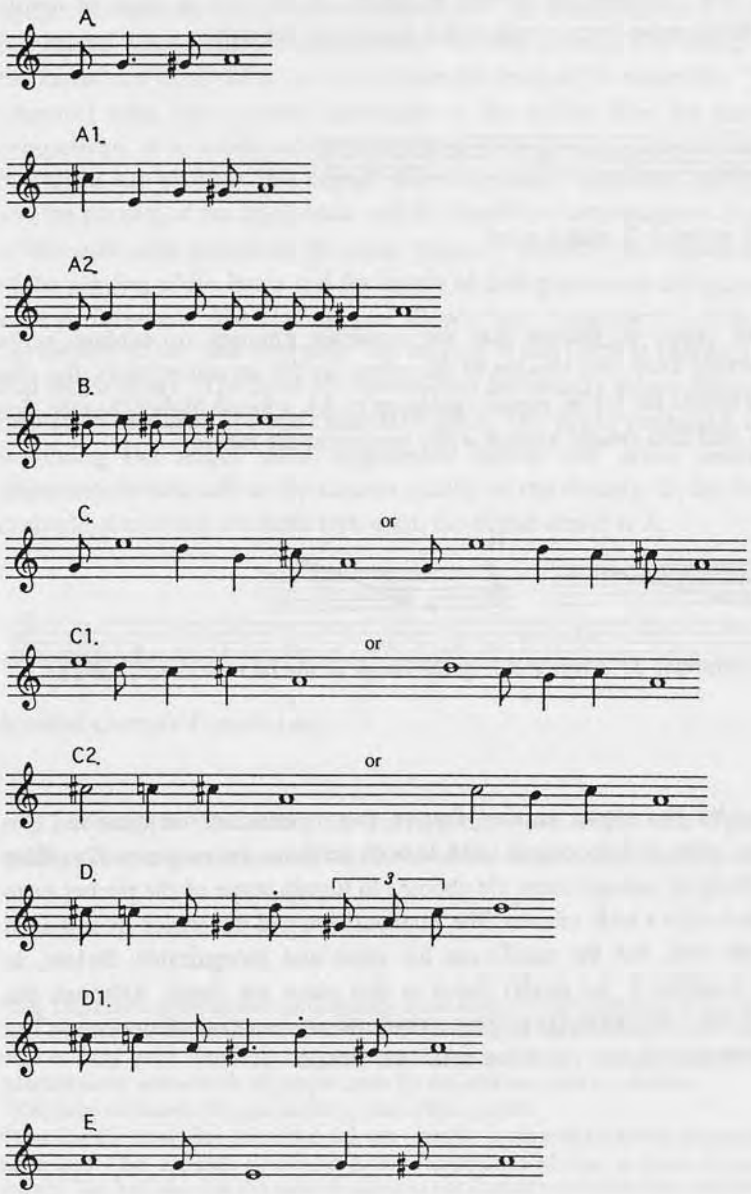
[5] On some occasions they are the only instruments played.

[6]The Damāi musicians consulted did not identify in theoretical terms the nature of the scale used. *That* are scale types used in the classification of *rāga* in North Indian musical theory. The *kafi that* has the same features as the Dorian mode: the third and the seventh are minor.

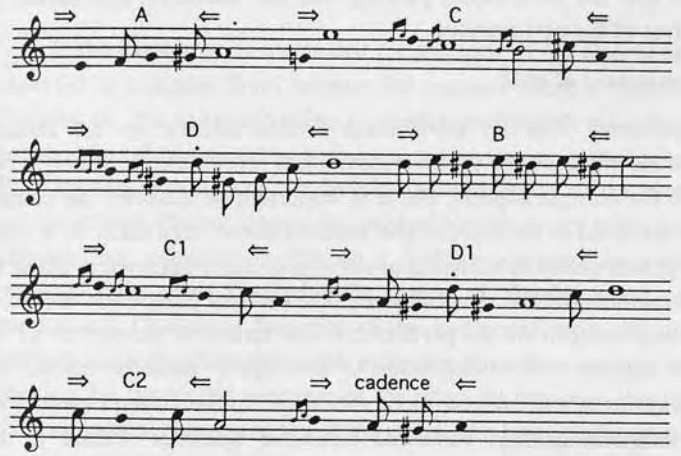
pitches that the musician chooses to sustain or the ending notes of motifs. These stable notes form a scale with a pentatonic character.

Musical example 2: stable notes

The range of pitches that the musician chooses to explore varies considerably from one version to the other. In the second version, the *rāsa* player exploits the higher register going up to A4, a fourth higher than the first version, and thus creates a much wider contour to the melody.

Musical example 3: comparison of the range of the two versions analysed

Besides the mode, another feature that is constant between the two examples is the melodic motifs used. In both versions, the musician assembles motifs freely by juxtaposition. He chooses to sustain some of the pitches or to play others with a wide vibrato. The juxtaposition and the choice of sustained notes will vary, but the motifs are the same and recognizable. Below, in musical example 4, the motifs found in this piece are listed. Although the rhythm is free, the examples present a rhythmic contour that often occurs. The whole note represents a sustained note with vibrato.

Musical example 4: melodic motifs

As we mentioned earlier, these motifs are assembled freely by juxtaposition. Musical example 5, an excerpt from the second version, illustrates this characteristic. Since the rhythm is free and unmeasured, in the following musical example the eighth note represents a short rhythmic value, the half note a sustained note without vibrato, and the whole note a sustained note with vibrato.



Musical example 5: sequence illustrating the juxtaposition of motifs

The structure of the piece is not only based on the number of *murrā* of the *nagarā* but also on the progression of the melodic motifs. The first version we analysed gives the impression of a more linear melody in which motifs are recurrent without making the sequence altogether cyclical. The second version demonstrates a much clearer form in which long sections are repeated almost unvaried and a unique section resembling a modulation occurs as the *rāsa* player, for a short moment, resorts to another mode.

The form is the most significant variable element and creates the most striking difference between two performances of the same piece by the same musicians. Among other variables, the range of the *rāsa*, the duration of the melodic and rhythmic phrases, the length of the piece, and the aleatoric occurrences of the horns must all be considered. The variability of the musical material is limited by the imposed process and constant elements such as the mode, the melodic motifs, the playing of the *nagarā* and the horns as well as the texture. Another important element that remains constant is that the intention of the musicians is always the same. The expression doesn't vary from one version to the other. The unfolding of the piece, the moment of its performance and the individuals playing are the elements that create the individual style of the performance.

Cultural parameters of style

Our comments thus far have been limited mostly to the musical dimension of the ritual music of the *nagarā bānā* ensemble, with only a few references to the cultural aspects. But it is important to consider the cultural parameters[7] involved in the style of the musical event, especially in a ritual context that grants symbolic meaning to the music. Such parameters allow for a better understanding of the musical piece. The cultural parameters are extra-artistic but they are part of the performers' and listeners' perception of the music. In the context of the ritual music of the *nagarā bānā* ensemble, four important qualities of the musical piece that relate to the cultural context are its magico-religious quality, enhanced aesthetic qualities related to the divinity's appreciation, mechanical characteristics borrowed from the ritual, and the focusing purpose of the music. There is a magico-religious quality that clings to ritual music. Like worship, the music is an invocation and a plea for the presence of the divinity. Invisible and powerful, the presence manifested through the musical invocation gives the music a mysterious and compelling quality. The auspiciousness of this music is an intrinsic quality even if it is imposed by the cultural and immediate context. Since the *nagarā bānā* ritual music is played for a divinity, aiming to please and to obtain favours, one must come to the conclusion that a non-explicit idea of beauty is

[7]This expression is borrowed from Meyer (1989:9).

attached to it. In writing about *rol mo* (Tibetan ritual music), Ter Ellingson notes that it :

> is indeed performed in a ritual context, in order to make a sensually pleasing offering (*mchod pa*) to the Buddhist "gods" (Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, Protectors, *Yi dam*). For precisely this reason, it must be both skillfully executed (*mkhas pa*) and aurally pleasant (*snyan pa*). If such considerations suggest an "esthetic of the alien", designed to please the ears of the gods rather than of men, it must be remembered that the "gods" themselves are visualized by Tibetans as idealized representations of human qualities. *Rol mo* esthetics simply represent human esthetics in an extreme form." (1979:225)

In the same way, it seems that the qualities of the Damāi ritual music are elevated to a higher level because the musical event is directed toward the divinity. So, the ritual and religious context and beliefs give the musical piece enhanced aesthetic qualities such as a certain beauty that pleases the divinity. Pleasing and worshipping the divinity is the objective of the ritual *pūjā*. There are set actions that are clearly determined for the proper realisation of the *pūjā* Gestures are regulated by the ritual and are executed in a routine manner towards a set goal. Similarly, the action of playing ritual music is quite mechanical. Observing the rules of the traditional style, the musician plays, without involving himself, as his ancestors have done and as he has learned, seeking the successful outcome of the ritual. In this way, the music takes on the mechanical characteristics of the ritual. The last significant quality relating to context is that the music draws attention to the ceremonial event and the presence of the divinity. Wegner mentions that, in the context of newari musical traditions, "musical structure can channel mental processes in a specific direction." (1992:129) In this sense, musical invocation serves a focusing purpose (Wegner 1992: 128). In the same way, because the presence of the divinity is linked in this context to the sounding of the instruments, the music becomes the vehicle (or medium) for the focusing of the attention on the ritual and on the present moment.

Beyond the qualities imparted by the cultural aspects, the ritual context has a direct impact on the musical piece itself. The choice of the melodic motifs and the mode are related to the divinity that is being worshipped, to the

occasion of the worship and to the place (in our examples, the temple of *Manakāmanā*). The duration of the piece and in some circumstances its formal structure are directly linked to the process of the *pūjā*. Its beginning and ending are determined by the actions of the *pūjāri* (priest) and some elements must be played or omitted in specific stages of the ritual. For example, the *pūjāri* rings a bell (*ghaṇṭā*) giving the musicians the signal to begin. Depending on the process of the *pūjā*, the musical piece will be modified.

Finally, among the cultural parameters of the style, we must not forget the flexibility of the meaning and the multiple functions of the ritual musical piece. Since there are many viewpoints from which the different people involved in a ritual event consider the situation, there is undoubtedly a variety of meanings and functions. The cultural context allows the ritual music to have many meanings and many functions. The variety of perspectives leads to what Qureshi identifies as the multi-specificity of the music.[8] Summing up the impact of the cultural and immediate context on the style of ritual music, three points are worth noting. The context adds extra-artistic qualities to the musical event. The immediate context determines some musical constituents such as the melodic mode or the duration of the piece. And the socio-cultural context gives the piece a multi-specific character as it allows a variety of interpretations from the different viewpoints of the people involved.

Understanding the piece of ritual music through its many levels

Observation of performances and collected comments of musicians lead to an understanding of the musical piece in a ritual context on its different levels: from the more general level of style to the specific moment of a unique performance. On a more general level, the musical piece belongs to a collective style that prescribes a sound through a specific instrumentation and also a musical process that determines the texture and the actions of the musicians. As we turn to the idea of a piece of ritual music, we notice that in its abstract and unrealised state, it is similar to the idea of style. In the context

[8]Qureshi writes of *qawwali* music: "This leads me to speculate whether the generally assumed "non-specificity" or "connotative" nature of musical meaning might not more accurately be identified as "multi-specificity". In other words, this analysis suggests that music might be seen to operate as an open-ended semantic code which allows both the performer and listener to choose from among, or combine, several meanings, each of which is itself quite specific." (1987:80)

of the ritual music of the Damāi, the musical piece imposes musical constraints yet gives the possibility of making many choices affecting its outcome, as does a collective style. In a sense, the abstract idea of the piece is collective because it is shared by different people and it has a multiplicity of realisations. The musical piece becomes a shared reference that is to be re-created at every performance. The uniqueness of the performance is determined by the specific time and place in which the piece is played. The whole musical event has an ephemeral quality since the configuration of the musical and the circumstantial elements will never occur again. The moment of the performance not only determines the choice of the piece but also gives the musical piece its special significance. The sacred place where the piece of ritual music is performed also imposes musical characteristics and cultural meaning. The abstract idea or the model[9] of a specific piece of ritual music is in accordance with the style and offers additional constraints to the process. Among the specifications of a musical piece, there will be the melodic mode and some melodic motifs. During the performance, the musicians involved will contribute an individual style through their musical choices and the sound of their instruments. From this perspective, we can understand the musical piece as being both an aural and a procedural reference as well as a unique musical object resulting from the specific performance of the piece.

To sum up, a piece of ritual music belonging to a collective style and played in an individual style is a unique product of an original proposition (the model), resulting from the configuration of musical and cultural elements in a set time and place.

Style as process and music as a result

Ritual is often understood to be strict in nature, as a series of imposed actions having a goal. Although the ritual music of the Damāi does follow certain rules, it is at the same time quite free and exploratory. The strictness is most apparent at the level of the style. In this context, musical style is a determined process that is almost mechanical. The musicians' set actions, affecting their way of playing, aim to bring auspiciousness to the ritual and to please the divinity. This strictness is complemented by an open quality which

[9]Lortat-Jacob defines the model as a stable and permanent reference that allows the emergence of infinite realizations. (1987:45-46).

allows for a variety of outcomes. The openness in question refers to the prevalence of coincidental events occurring at each performance. The coincidental relations of the different instruments' individual phrases create an infinite number of possible realisations. The presence of coincidence and the impact of the immediate context leads to understanding the piece of Damāi ritual music as being the result of the different musical and cultural elements intertwined at the moment of performance.

Is this model of ritual music specific to the tradition of the Damāi musicians? The sound of the *nagarā bānā* ensembles of the Damāi musicians is distinctive, but the openness of the musical piece and the impact of the ritual context on the music is not. Research on the ritual music of other socio-cultural groups of Nepal have shown characteristics that lead towards this interpretation. But more fieldwork and inquiry must be undertaken from the perspective of aesthetics before any conclusions can be made on the whole of ritual music traditions of Nepal.

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Ghāṅtu dancing in the village of Klinu
(photo P. Moisala)

Ram Saran Nepali, Gaine
(photo G. Wegner)

The caryā dance 'Pañcabuddha' performed by Dance Mandal
(photo R. Widdess)

Hani woman playing the gobe (Yuanyang district)
(photo P. Bouchery)

"MY MUSIC IS MY LIFE":

THE IDENTIFICATION OF STYLE AND PERFORMANCE IN GĀINE MUSIC

Hans Weisethaunet

> "All of my life I have been playing and singing with the people. Within this *sārangi* is my entire life. And when I die, this whole instrument will go with me."
>
> Ram Saran Nepali, 1994

> "Style is the man; but we can say: style is, at least, two men, or more precisely, man and his social grouping, incarnated by its accredited representative, the listener, who participates actively in the internal and external speech of the first."
>
> Voloshinov/Bakhtin, 1926[1]

> Styles are engraved and ingrained in cultures the way grooves are engraved and ingrained in record discs."
>
> Steven Feld, 1988[2]

On May 25, 1996, Ram Saran Nepali died. Present at the cremation ceremony by the banks of the Bagmati River, at Pashupatinath temple in Kathmandu, were his closest family, his two wives and children from both marriages. There were also many others, including friends and well known Nepalese artists, musicians, poets and official cultural representatives. Radio FM 100, a newly established radio station serving the Kathmandu Valley, aired a special programme in honour of his memory, which was broadcast the day after the ceremony. Everyone interviewed during that event felt that Nepal had lost a very great artist.

[1]Todorov (1984:62). From V.N. Voloshinov, "Slovo v zhizni i slovo v poezii." Zvezda 6 (1926), 244 - 67. Eng. trans. Wlad Godzich.
[2]Reprinted in Feld/Keil (1994:111).

Musical performance inheres in style as well as in patterns of culturally acclaimed interpretations of style. Styles are ingrained in cultures, not only as discourses of—and within—certain traditions of style but, also as individual utterances and idiosyncratic expressions within what Bakhtin described as the dialogic[3] nature of communicative practices. Moreover, style is a means of communication in which individual expression may come to challenge the ordinary and collectively accepted. As argued by Steven Feld, "Style is an emergence, the means by which newly creative knowledge is developed from playful, rote or ordinary participatory experience."[4] As I shall discuss, the music performance of Ram Saran Nepali in particular challenged the ordinary. At the same time, his performance was culturally contextualized and deeply embedded in what he conceived as the 'truth' of the Gāine tradition of performance.

In Nepal, the term *lok gīt* (folk or people's song) commonly covers several categories of style associated with local performance traditions. While the Damāi are a caste of tailors and musicians, the Gāine traditionally have been the only occupational caste of singers in the country. In addition to vocal performance, their playing of the four-stringed fiddle, the *sāraṅgi*, has been their hallmark. As outlined by the ethnomusicologist Mireille Helffer, the Gāine repertoire might be divided into three main stylistic categories: *jhyāure* (lyrical songs or folk songs), *stuti* and *maṅgal* (religious songs), and *karkhā* (songs of great historical events and heroism).[5] Other categories are also to be found. In particular are the Gāine musicians renowned for their *lāhure gīt*, songs in which they render the narratives and emotional experiences of the Nepalese Gurkha soldiers going abroad. In Nepalese everyday life, Gāine performances also serve certain ritual and time constitutive functions, as for instance in their obligatory performances of the *Mālsiri*

[3]Bakhtin's concept of dialogue is complex in the sense that it is seen as one of the founding principles of Being itself. Cf. Bakhtin, 1981 and 1993. As summarised by Morson & Emerson: "For people, the most important activity is dialogue. Thus, for any individual or social entity, we cannot properly separate existence from the ongoing process of communication. '*To be means to communicate*'." Morson & Emerson, 1990, p. 50.

[4]Feld/Keil (1994:150).

[5]Helffer, 1968 and 1969.

hymn in honour of the goddess Durga, performed during the observance of *Dasaĩ* in the month of *āśvin* (September-October).

In my fieldwork in Nepal (1988, 1991, 1993 and 1994), I took into consideration the extensive stylistic variety of their repertoire. In my doctoral dissertation, "The Performance of Everyday Life: The Gāine of Nepal"—to be published by the University of Oslo by the end of this year—I focus in particular on musical aesthetic perspectives and performance aspects, as these are conceptualized amongst the musicians themselves and their society. In this context, Ram Saran Nepali was undoubtedly one of the most idiosyncratic and stylistically innovative of all the Gāine musicians I came to know in Nepal. Like most Gāine, Ram started out at an early age going from 'village to village' with his father. These experiences laid the foundation for his views on music and performance. After he had stopped going from 'village to village' he became nationally recognized through the recording of cassettes, and through performances on Radio Nepal and at the Nepalese National Theater. Although his life consisted of playing and singing 'with the people'—either in the village or through other media—he always viewed his abilities to perform as his own. Hence, as he told me his whole life was carried "within his *sārangī*" and at his death "his whole instrument would go with him"[6].

Ram Saran Nepali's life and identity was inseparably linked to his music. However, more than many other men among his fellow caste, he became totally devoted to his instrument and musical performance. Based on my fieldwork and personal knowledge, I was never in doubt that Ram Saran Nepali possessed a view of and way life unquestionably his own. What I experienced among the Gāine is that they do indeed have theories about their performances and aesthetic concepts through which they aim to describe their music. The central task, however, has been to recognize that these theories emanate from their concepts and world views (which are also apparent in myth), and that these theories in fact are quite different from 'music theory' as I have learned to know it through my own education. To a large extent, I found that their

[6]From interview, 8.12.94.

aesthetic theories may also be conceived as utterances of identity[7]; as renditions of life histories in which their own views and conceptions of musical performance come to function as a reworking of memory and narrative of individual life. In many instances, these narratives seem to contrast the narratives of dominant Hindu world views and local community life; sometimes they also seem to refute the most common views of fellow caste members, in turn bringing forth a sense that music performance is an arena in which style, and hence identity, is openly contested. As I have observed, some of their utterances concerning aesthetic experiences and their own music performances do not conform to —and sometimes even contradict— central cultural narratives and conceptions of history, myth and religion.

In this context, I view Steven Feld's conceptualization of 'theory' as crucial, as the individual's dialogue within culture—and with himself in the sense of Bakhtin—especially may be revealed within the aesthetic arena of performance. For Feld, aesthetics concerns the emotional relationship established between participants and that which is conceived as an 'affecting presence'[8] in culture. 'Theory', in this context, concerns the use of language as a verbal means for the expression of musical experience and metaphorical thought:

> "By theory I mean a social articulation of systematic knowledge organized in such a way that it is applicable to a wide variety of circumstances. While it may derive from any number of

[7]The conceptualization of 'identity' and its relation to individual 'narrative history' is innately complex. In my work, I have conceived of 'identity' as an individual and cultural process rather than a substance of coherence and reference. Like Ricœur, anthropologists going for a 'critical anthropology of selfhood' will think of the 'self' as a 'self in process'. As described by Debbora Battaglia: "From this position there is no selfhood apart from the collaborative practice of its figuration. The 'self' is a representational economy: a reification continually defeated by mutable entanglements with other subjects' histories, experiences, self-representations; with their texts, conduct, gestures, objectifications...". (Battaglia, 1995: 2.)

[8]A term he has borrowed from Robert Plant Armstrong. In Armstrong's definition a symbol and an 'affecting presence' differ one from the other in that the former represents while bearing no necessary physical similarity to what it represents, whereas the 'affecting presence' presents and is physically identical to what it presents, and, following Armstrong, by metaphor also is identical to the emotions transferred in the affecting 'transaction'. (Armstrong, 1975: 13.)

activities in the realms of contemplation and observation, the major character of a theory is the systematic organization of thought."[9]

In Feld's view, musical sound is not only made, it is also "socially formulated, as theory."[10] From an anthropological point of view, this is an extremely important refiguration of the notion of 'music theory'.

There is no doubt that Ram Saran Nepali conceived of himself as a stylistic innovator within the tradition of Gāine performance, and that he was recognized as a most significant performer and innovator also by other Gāine and the Nepalese public in general. Concerning musical sound, one significant change was due to his changing the strings of his *sārangi* from traditional goat gut to metal strings. Concerning his individual world view, a more dramatic change is found in that Ram—in contradistinction to most Gāines, including the well-known radio performer Jhalakman Gandharva—never claimed that the sound of his *sārangi* was secured thorough the annual ritual sacrifice of blood to Sarasvati, the goddess of art and knowledge. According to Ram, the sound of the *sārangi* seemed to be so important that it needed some improvement in order to mediate what he termed as the 'true' experiences of the local "place-world". Culturally speaking, he thus distanced himself from the common belief that musical sound is ritually initiated.

At this point a clarification of the concept of 'tradition' might be useful. 'Tradition' is, according to Ram Saran Nepali, the Gāine 'way of life'. As he told me again and again, "that is why we are a caste, the Gāine, to go from house to house to perform the music". Moreover, as he claimed, "Gāine is not really a folk singer. Rather we are a travelling newspaper."[11] This view of 'tradition' is in particular linked to the Gāine's own rendering of their myth of origin. In the most commonly heard version of this myth, their origin is related to the creation of the *Gandharva Rishi* of Vedic mythology, also known as the heavenly

[9]Feld, 1981:23.
[10]Ibid.:45.
[11]From my interview 22.3.91.

musicians of the Hindu god Indra. Socially, however, this myth has a very ambiguous relation to their determination as one of the very lowest caste (*pāni nacalnyā choi chiṭo hālnuparnyā*), "untouchables and from whom water is unacceptable"[12], as described in the Nepalese legal code, the *Muluki Ain.*[13] The theme of fate or *karma* is also central to the repertoire of most Gāine, as it is central to everyday life in Nepal in general, even after the abolition of caste as a legislative system in Nepal. The theme of fate is also the focus of Ram Saran Nepali's song, *Mero Karma*, which I recorded in 1993:

mero karma bigreko dekhera
mero karma bigreko dekhera
duniyāle duniyāle bolāūchhan hepera
ho pāni āirahne
jāl māyā kahā̃ cha kahā̃ jhalko lāirahne
jāl māyā kahā̃ cha kahā̃ jhalko lāirahne

ho nīra haru
ma dukhī jā gaye pani
ma dukhī jā gaye pani
āphnai ṭhāuko āphnai gaũko jhaljhalko āirahne
ho pāni āirahne
jāl māyā kahā̃ cha kahā̃ jhalko lāirahne
jāl māyā kahā̃ cha kahā̃ jhalko lāirahne

pānī nera aa
paradeśmā mai mare bhane
paradeśmā mai mare bhane
pāune chhaina, pāune chhaina ek thopā sunpānī
ho pānī āirahne
jāl māyā kahā̃ cha kahā̃ jhalko lāirahne
jāl māyā kahā̃ cha kahā̃ jhalko lāirahne

sabai mānchhe janmera mamu cha
sabai mānchhe janmera mamu cha
tara maile tara maile śāhūko rin timu cha
ho pānī āirahne
jāl māyā kahā̃ cha kahā̃ jhalko lāirahne

[12]The term caste is here used synonymously with the Nepalese term *jāt*.
[13]Cf. the study of the *Muluki Ain* of 1854 made by Höfer, 1979.

mero karma bigreko dekhera
dāju bhāile bolāũchan hepera
ho pānī āirahne
jāl māyā kahā̃ chha kahā̃ jhalko lāirahne
jhalko lāira, jhalko lāira, jhalko lāira...

Translation

seeing my miserable karma (my broken fate)
the world (the brothers of the world) call me insultingly
rain keeps on coming
where is the web (trap) of love (from) somewhere (her) image keeps coming
(*jhalko āirahne*, lit. means that *jhalko*, the feeling of presence/image, keeps coming by itself)
my love is very far away, but I feel her presence (lit.: the image continues to be brought)
(*jhalko lārahne*, lit.: a transmission of *jhalko*: the feeling of presence/image is casual; it is caused to come, from him or her)

I the sad one, wherever I go
I got the reflection of my place, of my village, again and again
rain keeps on coming

If I die in a foreign land
I will not be able to get a drop of *sunpāni* (water touched to gold, holy water, for instance used to rinse after having touched or given food to an untouchable)
rain keeps on coming

everyone who is born must die
but I have to pay the loan of the moneylender (meaning that even after his death he will also be in debt; the state of bad karma/misfortune will also be passed on to the next life)
rain keeps on coming

seeing my miserable karma (my broken fate)
the world (the brothers of the world) call me insultingly
rain keeps on coming[14]

[14]This version of the song was recorded in Ram Saran's house in Kathmandu 3.12.93. Cf. CD.

In the Nepalese cultural context, the fate of life and the fate of being born into a particular caste is represented by one and the same word, *karma*. In this sense, the *karma* of life is identical to that of caste pre-determination. Hence, it is easy to see how this song could be taken as a lament portraying the fate of the Gāine singer himself, condemned to a life where the world calls him insultingly, where he is always away from his "home-place", and where his debt is so great that —as expressed in the song— it may even be passed on to his next life. The text contains several metaphors essential to the everyday lives both of the Gāine and of most Nepalese people. The emotional aspect of the traveller's fate is focused especially in the wordplay *jhalko āirahne* and *jhalko lāirahne*. In these words, the feeling of the presence or the image of a lover and a "home" 'keeps coming', just as it also may be 'caused to come' from him or her; in other words, the experience of a journey is always also the experience of being away from familiar people and places. The most central cultural metaphor of the song text is that of *sunpāni*, meaning 'water touched by gold'. As known, *sunpāni* is the essential symbolic means employed in rituals that clarify the difference between 'high' and 'low', 'pure' and 'impure', in everyday ritual life. 'Gold water' is used to purify food and to wash hands when food is given to or some contact has occurred with a person of an 'impure' caste, such as the Gāine. The theme of the journey has to be seen in relation to the situation where the Gāine have conceived their fate as continual travelling from place to place in order to perform their music for all kinds of people, including high as well as low castes.

However, the story of Ram Saran Nepali's relation to the concept of caste is not simply one of acceptance, as he had great problems in accepting some of the social expectations and premises ascribed to the Gāine role; or more precisely, of accepting the view of the Gāine as socially stigmatized.

> "As I was walking from village to village with my father, people would always say: do not come close, do not touch me, you are a Gāine. All of my life I have lived with this.

That is also why I married my [second] wife. All of my life I have been linked to this caste. I want to change my life, my whole life..."[15]

In my work I have observed several examples of subversive acts, of acts demonstrating how Ram tried to get away from his position as a 'low caste' Gāine. As he remarked above, his second wife was of high Newar descent. There are also many other examples of acts in Ram's life which must be considered uncommon for a Gāine. At the same time his musical practice was entirely embedded in his ideas of continuing the Gāine musical tradition, although in Ram's view, the social practice of caste discrimination should be condemned. On several occasions he also claimed that he thought that belief in caste was simply some kind of superstition and a system wholly 'made up' by high caste Brahmins:

"I think there is no caste. Only people started to make this system for themselves. They would say, he is only a singer this man. And people would look at this as a very low caste. There is no caste, I think. But people have made up caste."[16]

As I have documented in my study, Ram Saran Nepali wanted to 'break away' from the common beliefs of his society. His musical performance as well as his personal life were the results of individual acts embedded in tradition while at the same time breaking with certain aspects of traditional beliefs. Central to these problems is the question of fate. In general, Ram thus claimed that the song *Mero Karma* concerned the theme of bad *karma*. Yet, as he told me, no matter how hard he tried to go the 'good way' and forget about his bad fate, just thinking that he should be respected as a good musician, people would humiliate him and show their disrespect because of his Gāine identity:

[15]From interview, 8.12.94
[16]Ibid.

"This is the way people think. Even my brother, even my father, and all my friends tell me—people tell me I am very bad. I am Gāine. I am low. I want to go a good way, and people want to think in another way. I want to go the true way. I do not want the artificial things."[17]

In this sense, Ram claimed the text *Mero Karma* is also related to the fact that "everyone has to make his own country" and "everyone is always alone on their path of life with their feelings of loss and remembrance of their home-place."[18] The essential point made about fate, is that the individual belongs to a place, and is subject to the beliefs and experiences to be associated with that place.[19] In this sense, life is seen as a journey away from place and that which is known, a never-ending journey where the remembrance and experiences of home will be the reference point in the individual course of life. In summary, this reflects Ram's own ambiguous sense of being a Gāine, going the 'good way' as a Gāine musician, however, yet never escaping from the cultural processes of caste stigmatization.

Belonging to place, and experiencing the emotional intensity of specific places in the local world, was Ram Saran Nepali's most persistent theme. His style of performance emerged from this theme, which was linked to his own individual concept of 'truth' in performance. For Ram, musical 'truth' concerned the experience of going from 'place to place' as a Gāine:

"In my caste, one musician must always go from place to place. So what happens if he goes to those places and sings the same song every time, ta, da, da... (sings). What happens? People will get bored. They do not want to listen any more. So my caste of musicians must always learn new songs, we must always make new songs. We have to learn from the village. And when we hear something, we will learn from that.

[17]Ibid.
[18]Ibid.
[19]The significance of place is from an epistemological point of view in particular discussed in the recent works by the Western phenomenologist Edward S. Casey.

> When we sing about what happens in one particular village, people may start to cry. They will show their tears. And we may learn something from that place, some new melodies or some new histories. Later on we will remember what we have seen. This is the meaning of folk song. It is the remembrance of what we have seen. When I close my eyes and play this melody I will remember. I will see this village, this place. This is the true meaning of the folk songs. To understand a folk song you must first go to the village. Then you will understand the true meaning of it."[20]

In this sense, Ram's stylistic material was entirely linked to the experiences of the local "place-world". The principal idea expressed here is that music—and thus 'truth'—must be 'learned from the village'. As he often claimed: "To perform music, we need to see the true things."[21] In my interviews he gave several examples of what this concept of 'truth' implies. The general idea is that the feelings and experiences of particular places, villages, and landscapes must be somehow captured in sound. In his view, people of particular places will use their voices in specific ways, in speech and song. The travelling Gāine must capture these qualities in such a way that the specific local voice/sound qualities will be recognized in Gāine performances and associated with experiences of the local "place-world". Ram often gave examples of specific local ways of using the voice, and in our conversations he often made claims such as "this is typically from Jumsun (sings)" or "this is really truth (he sings) this is close to the border of India."[22] As such, the aesthetic experience inherent in the listeners makes sense of the musical sound, as these sounds are, precisely, 'inscribed in culture'. Without this local 'sound knowledge', the musical sounds would not produce this kind of locational and associational moves of local participatory experience.[23]

Furthermore, for Ram Saran Nepali, the concept of 'truth' implied something far more specific and encompassing than an idea of

[20]From interview, Kathmandu, 2.12.94.
[21]From interview, 22.3.91.
[22]From interview, 4.12.94.
[23]Cf. Feld's concept of 'interpretive moves'. (Keil/Feld, 1994.)

'collecting' or 'learning' songs from various places. The idea is rather that the performer is thought to be able to capture the 'spirit'—or ethos in anthropological terms—of the local "place-world". However, in order to do this, the performer has to 'go deep'. In Ram's theory, the ability to 'go deep' is also the decisive factor with regards to whether a performance is conceived as good or not. The only way to make folk music is to 'learn from the village'; and the musical 'sound' is thought to emanate directly from the experience of being 'touched' or moved by the experience of place:

> "I am a musician. What kind of musician? If I go to the village, what do I want? I touch the people, I sleep there. I am listening with people. I am playing with children. I am looking at flowers. I will watch the butterflies flying. I may see some waters and rivers. All touch you... you feel there. And people may experience happiness (he imitates laughter)... there may be laughter. It is all there. Then everything comes here... (he takes a long breath). Then these things comes to melody, to sound. There may also come some words. It [the 'true' music/Gāine music] does not come from beating [rhythm]...(he indicates a rhythm with his fingers)... If no touch [experience] here (he points to himself): no sound... That is why I collect music. This type of different things, you know. "[24]

In sum, music is viewed as a medium expressing experience, and in particular the experiences of local village life. In Ram Saran Nepali's aesthetic theory, the meaning of 'folk song' is entirely connected to the emotional experience of place, and the musician is thought of as the mediator who may transform the experiences of place into performance. While he was performing, instrumentally or vocally, Ram would always also close his eyes in order to capture the right mood or 'feeling' for the place or event remembered and recreated in the musical performance.

[24]From interview, 2.12.94.

In his view, the listeners or participants would be 'touched' or engaged in the performance only so far as they might recognize something related to their own experiences in life.

One example of a performance Ram said he had learned 'from place' is the piece which he named *The Butterflies of Jumla*.[25] The tune came about when he was visiting the district of Jumla, which lays in the Karnali Zone in the inner Himalayan range in mid-western Nepal. In fact Ram claimed this piece was a direct revelation of 'nature':

> [sic] "I am born in Nepal. My nature—where I am born. All the way [everywhere there is] nature, the forest, the birds, and so many butterflies, great rivers and mountains. This is music. What you need to find out is that this is music. Sometimes birds are dancing, sometimes there is fog, sometimes it is clouded: This is all music. I have a small piece of wood. I prepare it myself [the *sārangi*; I put strings on it. Then I play music. In that way all these things [the nature] is in my heart."[26]

According to Ram, if the musician 'goes deep' he will find that the real 'truth' is represented in nature. *The Butterflies of Jumla* is a typical example of how the musician sees himself as a mediator between nature and culture. As argued by Ram, butterflies have no language. Still, he claims that butterflies have feelings and emotions and that they would like to communicate with us if they only could. On the other hand we—as human beings—have language and brains, but do not communicate with each other as much as we fight with each other.[27]

[25]This piece is featured in the accompanying CD, and is also to be found in my own CD release: "The Real Folk Music of Nepal", Travelling Rec. 1997 (cf. advertisement in this issue), featuring several performances by Ram Saran Nepali and other Gāine musicians.
[26]From interview, 17.12.94.
[27]Ibid.

The role ascribed to the musician here —conceived as a mediator between the 'truth' of nature and the experiences of human life—is more complex than some kind of romantic idea about transformation of 'aesthetic beauty' from nature to musical performance. Rather than simply being a "sonic" representation of the 'nature', the 'truth' which underlies Ram's conceptualization is one of antagonism: between natural 'truth' and cultural experience. As Ram argued, the essential motif around which he constructed the melodic movements of *The Butterflies of Jumla* is thought to symbolize fight: "Now I play for fight... This note is not from *sārangi*. It is from the *karnāl* from the *Damāi*."[28] The *karnāl* is a straight conical-bore natural trumpet played in pairs, an instrument which has a long history of use for military purposes.[29] Inasmuch as Ram claimed that the performance of this piece was inspired by this instrument, it also seems probable that what he sought to imitate was the sound of the *karnāl* played in pairs. In listening to the performance, one may hear how Ram Saran typically intermingles various pitches to generate characteristics which especially endure in variations of sound qualities and timbre.

Musically and stylistically Ram's aesthetic search for 'truth' was a thoroughly individualistic project, as his combinations of sounds from 'nature' and the cultural traits of the local "place-world" sounded very different from the performances of most other Gāines. In conclusion, Ram Saran Nepali's performance represented a very original reworking of style based on local tradition and experience. The idiosyncrasies of his performance were undoubtedly his own; however, his musical style and life was also inherently linked to the cultural traits of the Gāine as the travelling messengers of Nepalese society. In this sense, his performance personified—as expressed by Bakhtin—the style of the man as well as his social grouping.

[28]From interview, 22.3.91.
[29]Cf. Tingey, 1990.

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GURUNG CULTURAL MODELS IN THE GHATU MUSIC AND DANCE

Pirkko Moisala

For almost twenty years, I have tried to understand what the Gurung mountain villagers of Nepal[1] do with music and how they think musically. In this article, I will focus on one particular performance of the Gurungs, the *Ghāṅtu*, in an attempt to demonstrate how the musical and kinetic processes relate to the cognitive models of culture.

Theoretically, the study builds on the tradition of cognitive ethnomusicology (e.g. Blacking 1971 and 1973; Herndon 1971; Rice 1980; Herndon and McLeod 1981; Kippen 1987; Baily 1985 and 1988; and Koskoff 1992), performance studies of ethnomusicology (Herndon and Brunyate 1975; Blacking 1981a and 1981b; and Behague 1984) as well as on the basic premises of cognitive anthropology. It is proposed that culture-bound musical cognition cannot be studied from within music and musical perception - which have been the objects of computational simulations of music and experimental studies of musical cognition, respectively - but by focusing on musical practices

[1]The people calling themselves Gurung consist of a variety of differents kinds of cultural groups. There are close to 200 000 Gurungs living in Nepal according to the 1991 census. Some Gurungs living in the capital have completely given up their ethnic traditions. The Gurungs living in the different areas of Nepal, in the Terai in the south, as well as the so-called eastern and western Gurungs, all have their own distinctive cultural features. Due to difficult transportation (the distances between mountain villages must be walked) and oral tradition, cultural traditions even vary from one village to another. Thus, I do not claim to make any generalizations about the Gurungs. My interpretations are based only on the data collected in a mountain village which is located in the main area of Gurung inhabitance of central Nepal, a distance of two-to-three-days' walk to the northeast of the city of Pokhara.

which are made public and shared through social behaviour, its products and speech, that is, on musical practice as social process in performance (see also Moisala 1991 and 1993).

Cognition as a mental activity, including musical cognition, is a process involving biological capacity, bodily experiences and social interaction. The human mind makes representations, maps of its environment in its brain. Each individual relates through the enculturaltion process to some cultural symbol system. But a society can react also as an integrated entity, whose members share experiences collectively and whose roles and relationships change in response to shared experiences.

Anthropology has, since the beginning of this century, recognised that each culture may be characterised by a set of general beliefs called collective representations which regulate the thought processes of the individuals of that group (Levy-Bruhl, 1910:23). Later on, the same phenomena has been referred to as standardised social experiences, schemes necessary and adequate for survival and acceptable behaviour for everyday life within the culture in question (Neisser, 1976:153), and cognitive models which are presupposed, taken-for-granted models of the world that are widely shared by the members of a society and that play an essential role in their understanding of that world and their behaviour in it (Quinn and Holland, 1987:4). The cognitive map (and/or model) of a culture represents the world of a social entity, an integrated group of people, who store information, among other things, on the arts (Laszlo et al., 1993:1-14).

Cultural models may guide behaviour and decision-making, but they may also be formed through action. The existence of models does not require awareness of them; conversely, the actors most probably are not able to verbalise them. The models are reflected widely in many layers of human action; they influence (and are influenced by) the ways of behaving, interacting, reasoning, arguing, evaluating and making decisions. The concept of model seems to imply a stable structure, but that is not so. Cognitive models inform both thought and action. They refer to the processes within the human mind which change with time.

The challenge of cognitive ethnomusicology is to study how these cognitive models of culture appear in and form musical processes (or vice versa). The aim of this article is to demonstrate how the cognitive models of culture relate to musical practice in performance with the help of several methods, ethnography of musical performance, an analysis of the native judgements of music and dance, transcription, and music analysis as well as a description of dance as a movement system.

The Ghāṅtu as Musical Practice in Performance

I had been living in a Gurung mountain village for just over two months in 1975 when, in the midst of the breathtaking Himalayan scenery, I got to see a *bāhramāse* Ghāṅtu performance for the first time. The small yard of a house was densely packed by crowds of people sitting, joking, chatting and enjoying the respite from their farming labours and economic hardships. In the middle of the yard was a small dancing area on one side of which twelve middle-aged and older male singers and four madal drum players were sitting. Three teenaged girls dressed in long multilayered dresses of deep purple and adorned with big, golden earrings and bracelets were dancing.

The drum players drummed a few beats and one of the men, called the guru, started to sing. The other singers joined in after a while. Soon after, the dancers began to dance, as well. The dancers rotated slowly and fluidly in place, simultaneously bowing down and rising again. The voices of the men undulated, overlapping and interlacing heterophonically in a pentatonic melody. Occasionally, the singers made their lower jaws vibrate creating a wavering sound. The singers moved around, left the "stage" and returned again. Some singers seemed to sing confidently and others, instead, echoed them.

The singing and dancing was accompanied by the slow beating of drums. Although the beats came slowly and relatively evenly, the rhythm could not be followed in accurate regular meter. It "breathed" and lived according to the dance and

decelerated at the end of the singing. The music was mixed not only with human sounds but also with the crowing of cocks, the clucking of chickens, and the heavy snorts of water buffaloes. The singing and dancing continued without any breaks for almost three minutes. Then the group had a short rest after which the guru commenced singing again.

After one and a half hours, the normal duration of a western concert, I began to anticipate the end of the performance. However, the singing, dancing, and drumming continued from hour to hour through the night. The performance which had begun at 9 p.m. did not end before 10 a.m. At night, the performers had a longer rest only for a rice meal. During the shorter breaks they drank buffalo milk tea and rice wine. Most of the audience stayed awake with the performers, chatting and joking, but some slept on rice mats. In a way, the music created an auditive space in which social gathering and interaction, a creation of the feeling of unity, and an enforcing of the traditional Gurung ways and beliefs could take place.

In these kinds of *bāhramāse* Ghāṅtu performances, which can take place to welcome a visitor, at weddings and for other celebrations, only parts of the complete Ghāṅtu story, called *satī* Ghāṅtu are performed. Each of the parts has a special theme: the *melbā* part describes flowers, the *mrõ rucba* growing rice, the *pha laba* hunting, the *jalā khelne* fishing, the *biyā laba* weddings, the *mõ priba* battle, the *jogī* living as a hermit and a part called Kusundā describes the visiting of the Kusuṇdā gods. Different elements of the Gurung life and world view are featured. For example, the rice farming chapter recounts the process of farming in chronological order from how the field is prepared and rice planted to the point when the rice has been eaten and it is time to brush one's teeth.

The complete Ghāṅtu performance, *satī* Ghāṅtu takes place only once a year at the time of the full moon in mid-May during the Baisākh Purne festival. At that festival, the whole story of the Ghāṅtu which tells about the life of King Pashurām (alternatively, Pasrām), Queen Yāmāvāti and their son Balkriṣṇa (Balrām) is

performed. The story ends with a description of the burning of the Queen alive with her deceased husband, the tradition called *satī*. In Baisākh Purṇe, which is the festival of Lord Buddha's incarnation, there is continuous dancing for three days and three nights. After that, the rice is planted. The performance of the Ghāṅtu is given in order to please the gods of the Himalayas. It is believed that if they are pleased, they will give a good rice crop.

The language in which the Ghāṅtu is sung is unidentified; it is neither Nepali nor Gurung. It is also unfamiliar to the ordinary performers; they cannot understand the words of the song but can only explain the approximate meaning of single sentences. Only the leader of the musical group, called *guru*, can explain the meaning of single words. The villagers in the audience are only able to describe the approximate content of each part. In a performance, they follow the proceeding of the story: keeping in mind the story, they observe other factors relating to it, such as changes in melodies, rhythmic patterns, and in the paraphernalia used.

The Ghāṅtu also includes dimensions which westerners call supernatural; in the beginning of each Ghāṅtu performance, the singers intone a blessing and invite the Himalayan gods to attend the performance. When the gods and spirits enter, some sensitive people may begin to tremble. The trembling does not cease until the gods leave. In the Kusuṇdā part of the Ghāṅtu, the dancers become possessed by spirits. The supernatural dimensions set special requirements on the performers: The male performers should be mature enough, at least 18-years-old, and at the time when the female dancers are selected for the dance, they should be of premenstrual age, virgins and skillful dancers. According to one belief, only such virgin girls can become "touched by the gods", *devatāle cundacha bhaera*, i.e., possessed by the spirits.

Ghāṅtu music and dance do not exist as domains separate from the performance occasion, but learning and rehearsing take place in performances. Remembering the words of the song and the rhythmic patterns of the drumming outside the performance

situation is possible only for a few members of the musical group. It is also possible that there can be no rehearsals due to the esoteric, formerly possibly even more sacred, nature of the performance event.

To the villagers, the Ghāṅtu is not only music-making and/or dancing, but the wholeness of a social occasion in which the essential legends of the Gurung history are sung, central values, beliefs, and other criteria of "Gurungness" are confirmed and for which the music, singing, and playing - elaborated in a flexible and collective manner - create an auditive and spiritual space. And, in addition, the movements of the dance visualise the spirit of the Ghāṅtu and Gurung culture.

The Unique Features and Aesthetics of the Ghāṅtu Song and Dance

The special sound character of the Ghāṅtu is created by heterophonic group singing which is a deliberate stylistic signifier; each singer varies his singing as he likes within the style. The more skillful the singer is, the more variations he can produce. An analysis of the recorded performances revealed how the ways to vary the melody are limited. There are only five ways of varying the melody: embellishing certain pitches in specific ways, prolonging a pitch while others proceed to the third above, singing in undulating glissando with other singers, adding a pure fifth above the tonal centre or a minor third below the tonal centre. When ten singers constantly vary the melody individually in these ways occasionally adding colour to the sound by vibrating their lower jaw, the result is a complex sounding texture.

The ceaseless flow of the heterophonic singing is another central feature of the Ghāṅtu Each verse is sung continuously without breaks. The singers breathe intentionally at different times, filling the gaps left by others' breathing. They also have the freedom to retire from singing and join in again as they wish.

The Ghāṅtu music includes a great deal of repetition. One part of the Ghāṅtu consists of several repetitions of song sections

(the musical example on the CD includes two song sections of the Ghāṅtu, each lasting less than three minutes (Table 1.). Song sections include an introduction and two to three repetitions of the basic melody. One part of the Ghāṅtu for instance, the one which describes hunting, the Pha Laba, includes four different basic melodies (such as in Ex. 1.), which are varied throughout the heterophonic singing techniques. The same rhythmic pattern – with the addition of the starting, ending and mediating rhythmic beats related to it – accompanies the singing throughout the section. In the performance of the Pha Laba, four different rhythmic patterns varied throughout the performance were played (see Table 1 and Ex. 1).

The striking feature of the Ghāṅtu dance is the fluidity of the movement. The slow rotation in place as the dancers bow down and raise their bodies up again takes place in a smooth continuous movementn (Fig. 1). An interesting feature of the dance is the co-movement of the two dancers. The dancers perform the same rotation, the same bendings and the same whole arm movements one after the other. It can be said that the style of dance visual ises the heterophonic style of Ghāṅtu singing.

It was by chance that I learned how to esthetically evaluate the Ghāṅtu performances. I had always greatly admired the special kind of fluid flow of the Ghāṅtu dance which was unique among all the other dances I had ever seen before. The choreometrical analysis of the Ghāṅtu had revealed that the dance employed postures typical of the activities of the mountain people: the body attitude of the dancers – in which the trunk is used like a solid block and no movements or twist at the waist occur – is exactly the same as that which is used when carrying loads in a basket placed on the back and supported on the forehead by a carrying rope. However, dance is more than just an imitation of daily movements, it is also an esthetic visualization of culture and its main values. According to Adrienne Kaeppler, "movement is a surface manifestation of the underlying structures of a society" (1992:153).

I learned about Gurung aesthetics when walking back with a couple of Gurung friends from a neighbouring village where we had attended a Ghāṅtu performance. My companions greatly admired the dancing style of one of the dancers describing her dancing as "flowing like the water", *sallala pāni bage jastai.* I began to test on other occasions, if this judgement was how the Ghāṅtu singing and dancing should be. It turned out that fluidity, "flowing like the water", was the esthetic aim of the performance.

According to Simon Strickland (1982:89), who has thoroughly and deeply studied ancient Gurung narrations, the symbolism surrounding water is also strongly involved in Gurung narrations. Admiration of water and its flow among people who live high up in the mountains is not suprising. Villages used to be established on the very top of the mountains because, from there, it was easier to see an approaching enemy and to defend the village. Still today, most of the villages stand in their ancient places. Therefore, many Gurung villages, such as the village where I stayed, lack water. For instance, in "my" village - before the water pipe was built in the beginning of this decade - all villagers, approximately 1500 of them and their livestock, got their water from a modest well. From the village, the return journey to the nearest mountain stream takes hours. Thus, what could be a more esthetically desirable vision to the villagers than a stream forming whirls as it flows down the hill?

Cultural Models of Thinking and Ghāṅtu Music

In the study of the Gurung cultural models of thinking, I have chosen, methodologically, to define the shared ways of thinking, the models of thought which could be found in many aspects and in much of the behaviour of the Gurungs as *cultural premises.* A premise in the context of cultural analysis "is a generalised statement of a particular assumption or implication recognizable in a number of details of cultural behaviour" (Bateson 1958:24). Premises are abstract assumptions and implications which act as the basis for different kinds of behaviour.

I have earlier interpreted the cultural characteristics of those Gurung villagers with whom I worked in Nepal, and reduced them into four cultural premises which are relevant to Gurung music (see Moisala 1991:116-132). No attempt was made to identify all the Gurung cultural premises, but only those related to music.

The essential feature of Gurung culture and thinking is that it is based on orality. Although nowadays an increasing number of young people have acquired a modest ability to read and write, the transmission of old Gurung heritage and traditions, such as the Ghāṅtu, takes place purely orally. As an oral tradition, Ghāṅtu singing is based on a small number of melodic core formulas. The variation of these formulas develops from slight changes made in the melodic progression, but the character of the formula remains recognizable. Paradigmatic analysis of a recording of the Pha Laba Ghāṅtu of 1.5 hours revealed seven basic formulas (Ex. 2.) out of which the four melodies used in the performance are formed (Ex. 3).

Another central feature in the thinking of the Gurung villagers is the emphasis on collectivity (ibid., 124-126) which was demonstrated in their decision-making, as well as in all other aspects and activities of the villagers. The collectivity controlled and directed individual lives: an individual was placed within the structure of the village community and into the Gurung internal caste hierarchy by birth. Social expectations sanctioned by moral pressures were placed upon everybody and individuals were expected to put their efforts into shared activities. The social interaction was based on mutual concern, reciprocity, and solidarity. Some property, such as forests, also used to be owned collectively by the villagers.

The emphasis on collectivity plays a part in the conceptualization of music. In order to be conceptualised as "music"[2] by the Gurung villagers, singing and/or playing has to be

[2] When speaking about music, the villagers used words such as *gīt* (literally a song), *bajā* (playing), *gīt gāune bajāune* (to sing play a song) or, more seldom, *saṁgit* (music).

done in groups for an audience in a public situation. Singing alone or together with others when working, cutting rice, or carrying fire wood, was not considered as music. For instance, in 1994, when I visited a new village and asked a man who was introduced to me as a skillful performer to sing and demonstrate parts of the Ghāṅtu of that village, he insisted that it was impossible to sing without other singers. He refused to sing at all before collecting together his peers. Finally, the Ghāṅtu was demonstrated but not before midnight when all the singers were gathered from the village and its neighbourhood.

The singing of the Ghāṅtu concomitates also with the emphasis on collectivity among the Gurung villagers. It creates a flowing complex texture, as illustrated in the Figure 2. The singing is not unified but heterophonic and the singers must carefully observe each other in order not to breathe at the same time, and as they embellish certain pitches as well as make decorative additions to the melodic core. This kind of texture cannot be created only by one singer, but there must always be a group of singers to perform it — as it is always done in practice.

People living mainly in a barter economy and in close relationship with nature, such as the Gurungs, are generally assumed to conceptualise time in relation to the yearly and daily cycle of natural phenomena. This conceptualization is called, as the opposite of continuous and linear conceptualization of time, cyclical and nonlinear. According to my observations (see Moisala 1991:121-124), the Gurung villagers also perceived time as a kind of continuous, nonlinear space in which movement is cyclic in nature: the present time was related to the course of the sun and daily actions and the same agricultural tasks and festivals were known to take place in the yearly cycle of nature and sky (Gurung astrology is highly developed[3]).

Because of the cyclical conceptualization of time, we cannot expect the Ghāṅtu singers to think about the progression of the

[3] Dr. Jagman Gurung, a scholar from Tribhuvan University, who studies Gurung astrology (personal communication).

melody as a linear line as we would transcribe it. To the listener, the Ghāṅtu music also gives the impression of circulation: the musical ingredients are few in relation to the long duration of the performance involving a great deal of repetition. Figure 3 shows the melodic material analyzed with the help of the paradigmatic method and arranged according to the way formulas relate to each other. Thus, Ghāṅtu singing is not a single lineal and linear progression but a complex texture which repeatedly and continuously circulates within a small number of melodic formulas. The repetitive musical material establishes a special circular sphere, like whirls in the flowing water of a stream.

The synchronization of performers - singers, drummers and dancers - also takes place in a continuous rotation. No one actually directs the Ghāṅtu performance, although the guru, the selected leader of the group whose responsibility it is to maintain the tradition, is the main supporter of the melody. The synchronization of the different artistic elements evolves from the active and aware participation of every performer and his/her intensive adjustment to other performers. Due to the loudness of the drumming, the drummers act as the central producers of the rhythmic coordination. However, they do not create the pulsation to be followed by the others; instead, they closely follow the movements of the dancers in order to fit and synchronise the drumming with the dance. Usually the singing synchronises at regular intervals with certain drum beats and the dancers follow the melodic line. Only hand movements take place to the rhythm of the drumming.

Thus, synchronization takes place in a circular spiral process: the dancers listen to the singers, the drummers follow the movements of the dancers, and at certain points, the singers synchronise with the drumming (Fig. 4.).

Cultural Models, Music, and Change

Cultural models of thinking transform themselves with time, because the character of human cultural cognition, both acquired

by an individual and an integrated group of people, is not stable but dynamic. Like all human cultures, Gurung culture and cognition are also continuously changing.

These above analysis of the concomitance of the Gurung cultural models with the Ghāṅtu music was based on the material I collected, in 1975-76, when the the changes in the cyclic conceptualization of time and the decline of collective emphasis were not yet major factors in the village life. Due to the nation-building and modernization of Nepal, radical changes are taking place in the Gurung culture and thinking. School, preindustrial enterprises such as state-run weaving mills, the use of watches, Radio Nepal, and other means of mass communication for the purposes of nation-building and modernization have introduced a more exact and linear, chronological time. Furthermore, economic hardships caused primarily by increased population and land erosion have produced a decline in the desire for collective activities and goals. Instead of being arranged according to Gurung internal clan hierarchy, social control is now more a matter of wealth and financial dominance, and individual survival has eroded the favourable view toward the benefits of collective action. The school system which emphasises work for the development of the nation and ignores the needs of the locality has provided a route for personal gain.

These tendencies of change in Gurung cultural thinking have had an influence on their music. Due to the changed cultural models of thinking, the performance practice of the Ghāṅtu has changed. The Ghāṅtu performers with whom I have collaborated had, before 1985, decided to give up repetitions of the verses. Nowadays, they sing them only once in order to save time. The shortening has been done on the basis of current values: time used for "development" advocated by the state, such as for the schooling of children, was considered more important than the traditional Ghāṅtu supporting an animistic world view.

The norms concerning the Ghāṅtu have also been loosened: nowadays, the dancers can be mature women and a drum player a youngster. The singing technique lacks the undulation created by

the vibration of the lower jaw and includes fewer embellishments of the pitches. Group singing is still heterophonic but the voices do not blend together in such an overlapping manner as earlier. The singing is more unified: especially at faster tempos, the breathing of the singers tends to take place simultaneously. To make a representation of the "new" Ghāṅtu, however, would be a subject for another article. In this context, I only wish to point out that cognitive models of culture and music change in time.

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Fig.1. Illustration of the rotation of the dancers as they bow down and raise their bodies up again.

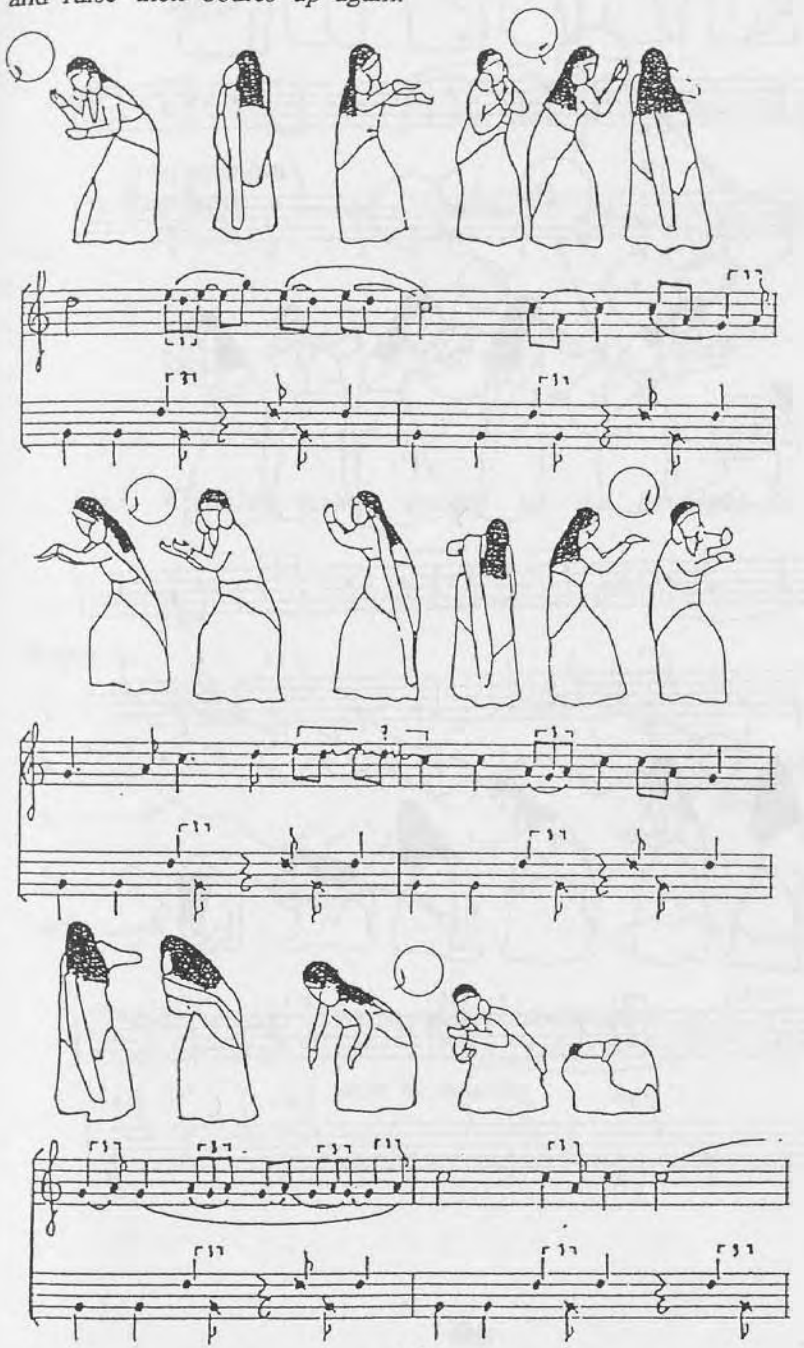
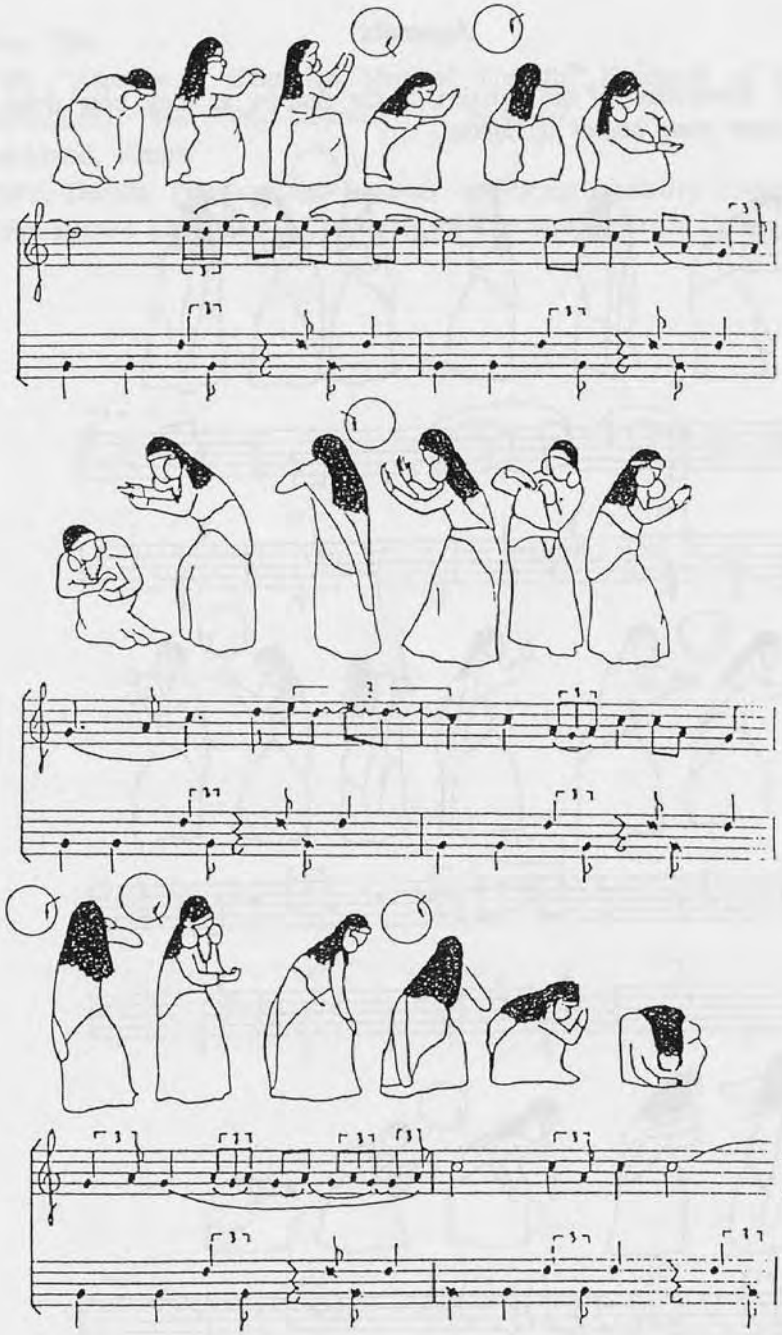



Fig.2. Core formulas of the Pha Laba Ghāṅtu arranged according to the way they relate to each other demonstrating the circular movement of the mental mapping.

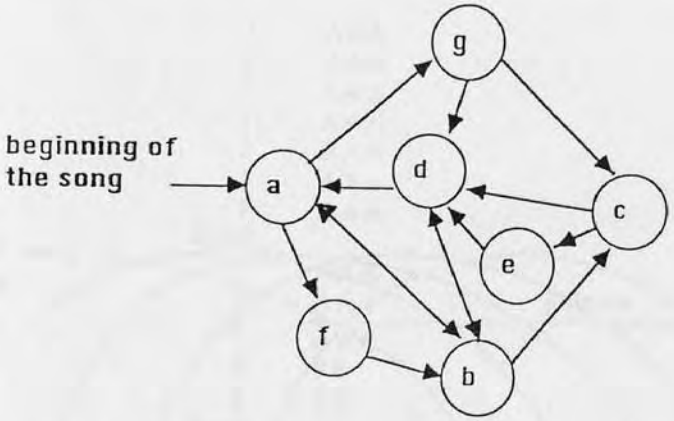


Fig.3. Complex texture created by the heterophonic singing.

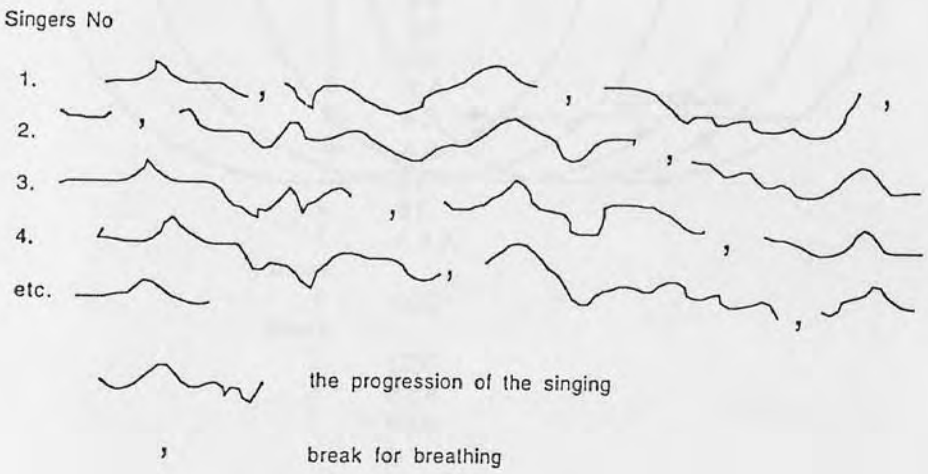


Fig.4. The flow of the performance and synchronization in it : drummers follow the movements of the dancers, singers synchronize with the drumming and dancers with the melodic line.

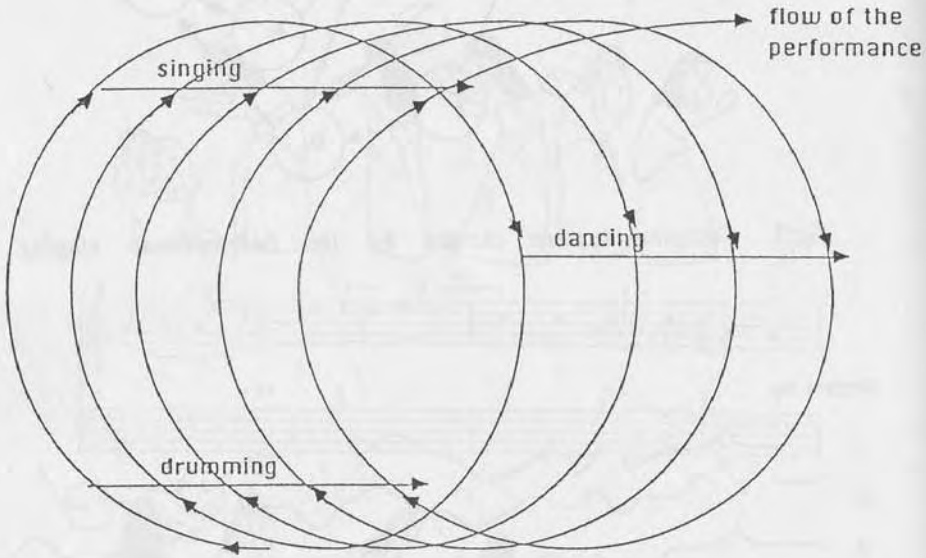
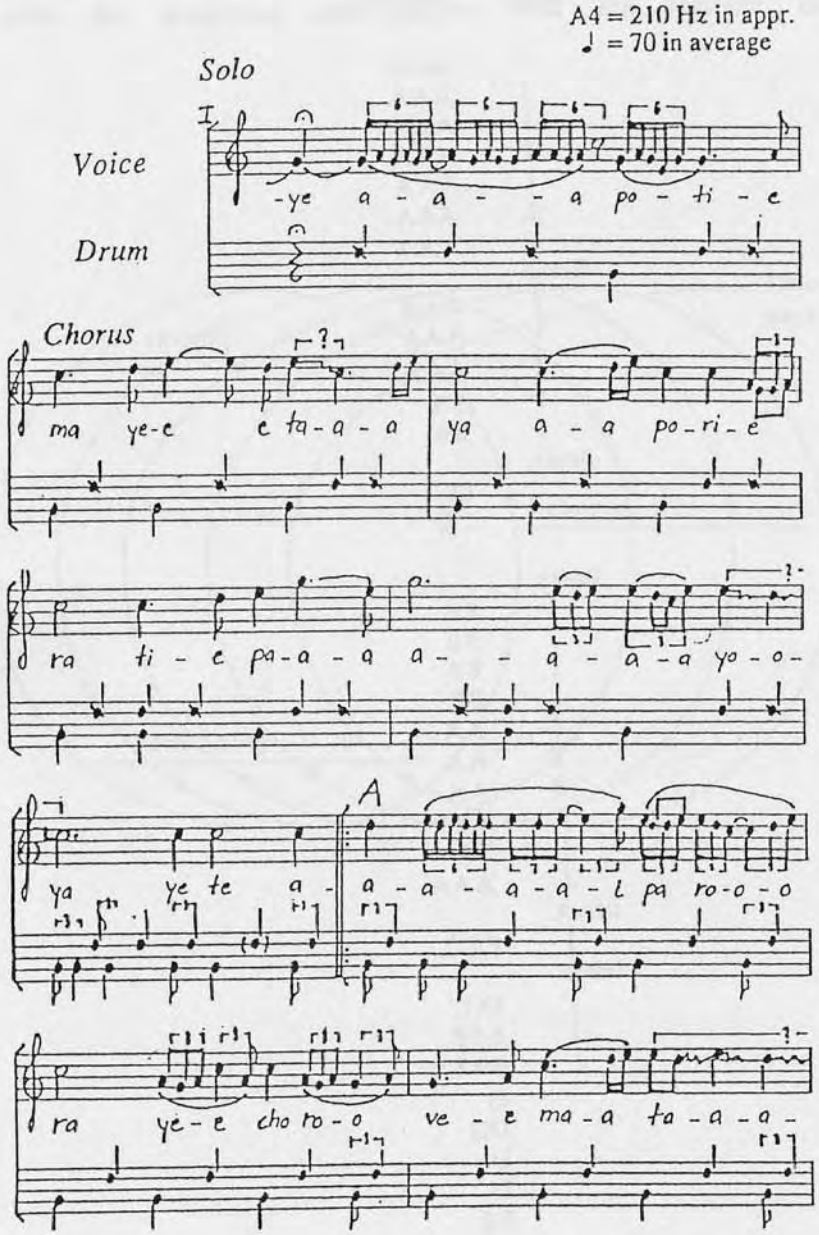
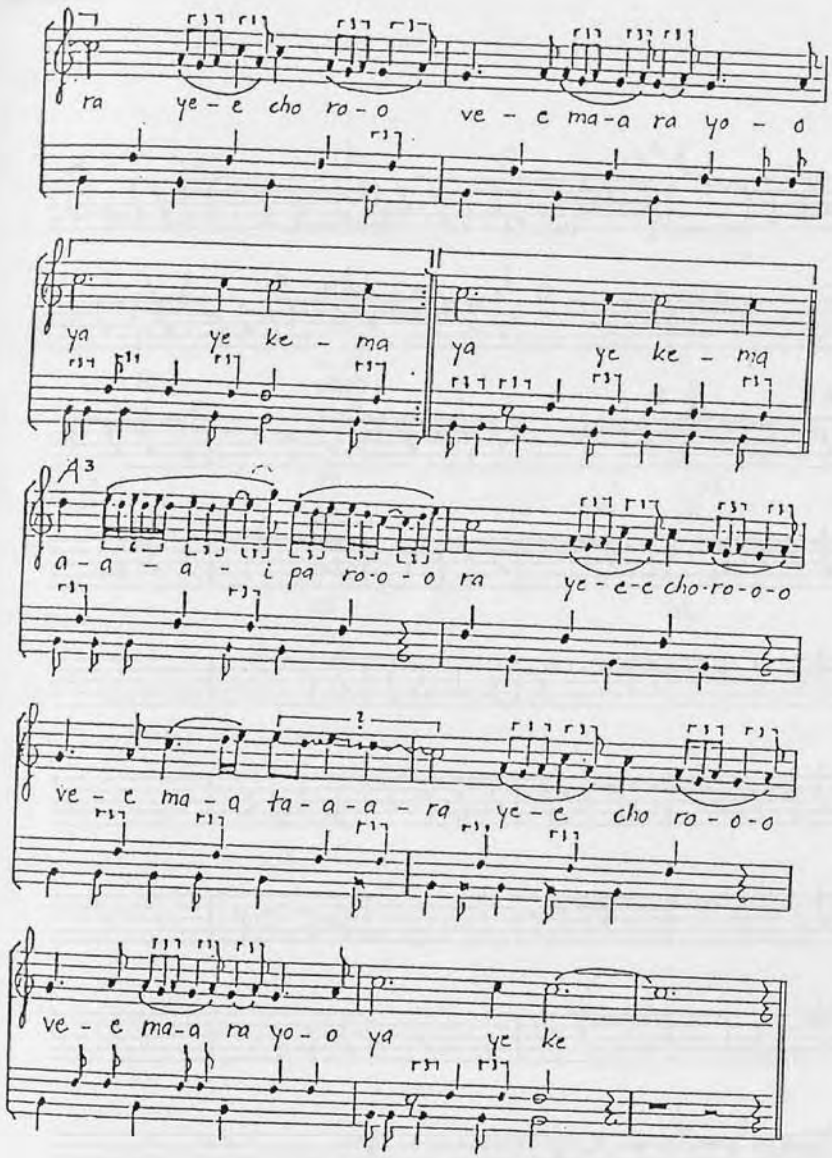
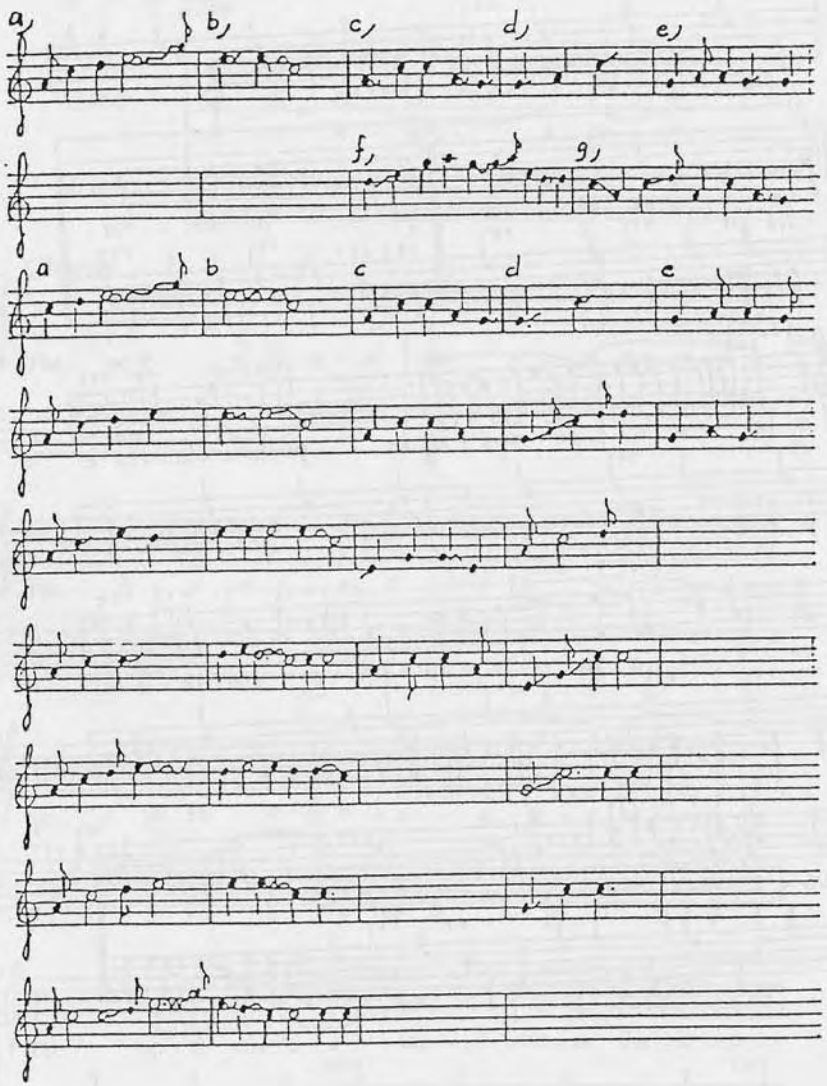


Table 1. Melodic organization of the Paha Laba Ghāṅtu.

Intro	Melody
I	AAA
I	AAA
I	AAA
I	AAA
I	AAA
I	AAA
I	AAA
Break	
I	AAA
I	AAA
I	AAA
I	BB
I	BB
Break	
	D
	DD
Break	
I	BB
I	BB
I	BB
I	BB
B-	AA
B-	AA
B-	AA
I	BB
I	BB
I	AAA
Break	
I	CCC
Break	
I	CCC
I	BBB
I	BBB
	D
	DD
	D
	D
	BB
Break	
I	BB
I	BBB

Ex. 1. A melody of the Ghāṅtu.

Ex. 2. Core formulas of the Pha Laba Ghāṅtu and their variations revealed by paradigmatic analysis.

Ex. 3. The formulaic construction of the Pha Laba Ghāṅtu melodies.

Melody	Formulas	Melody	Formulas
A	abcd bc e d	D	ab d b a f b
B	abcd bc e d ab ab		ab a g cd ab
C	abc e d ab ab		a g d ab

*THE DRUMS OF NEPALESE MEDIUMS**

Mireille Helffer

An astonishing variety of drums is used in Nepal, both among Hindus and Buddhists. The organological types include: frame drums[1]; cylindrical drums, barrel or tronconical drums, hourglass drums (*huḍko,* western Nepal) and small *damaru*, all with two skins; as well as hemispherical kettledrums with one skin (Helffer& Gaborieau: 1974).

I shall focus here on the drums used by some specialists to establish links with the supernatural--for healing, protection, predicting the future, etc., or as A.W. Macdonald wrote about the *jhāṅkri* someone who is: "... an interpreter of the world [...] a person who falls into a trance, during which time voices speak through his person, thereby enabling him to diagnose illnesses and sometimes cure them, give advice for the future and clarify present events in terms of their relationship to the past. He is therefore both a privileged intermediary between spirits (who cause and cure illness) and men; between the past, present and future; between life and death, and most importantly between the individual and a certain mythology (Macdonald, 1976 : 310).

All of these people, who are considered sorcerers, soothsayers, shamans, intercessors, or, more simply, mediums, are accompanied by a specific drum, generally a frame drum. Existing documentation discloses three principal types: 1) a two-membraned drum with a handle carved in the shape of a ritual dagger with a triangular blade; 2) one skin with two diametrically crossed sticks; 3) one skin without a diametrical stick.

It is interesting to compare the available information on these instruments, as their descriptions are often incomplete–scattered in diverse, sometimes difficult-to-find publications--and as examples of most of these drums are in the Department of Ethnomusicology of the

*Translated by S. Keyes

[1] Their height is less than or equal to the frame's radius.

Musée de l'Homme, Paris, due to the numerous missions of ethnologists. Moreover, this approach, already attempted by M. Oppitz from a different angle, establishes a framework for ethnologists and ethnomusicologists, as well as for organologists and all those who are interested in complex relationships established over the centuries among followers of the Buddhist tradition and/or Hindus and immigrant populations variously influenced by these dominant traditions.

I studied a dozen of these drums kept in the Department of Ethnomusicology of the Musée de l'Homme or in private collections to successively examine organological characteristics, modality and use, written texts, as well as oral traditions and associated symbolism before advancing various hypotheses related to their provenance.

Frame drum with double-laced heads and sculpted handle (Nep. *murrā*) in the form of a ritual dagger (Nep. *kila*, Tib. *phur-pa*, beaten with a stick (Nep. *gajo*)

According to numerous witnesses, the above-mentioned drum, called *dhyāṅgro* is used from Darjeeling and Kalimpong as far as the Kali Gandaki valley by the *jhāṅkri* whose ethnic or caste origins vary. The use of the *dhyāṅgro* drum is relatively easy to observe because of the numerous gatherings of *jhāṅkri* during the full moon to honour protective divinities (*kul devatā*) or their teacher. The following list will serve as a reminder:

- in the month of *baiśākh* in Gupteshwor at the shrine of Mahādev (from J.C. Marize);

- in the month of *saun* in Kalingchok for the Janai purnima (Macdonald : 1976, and Miller : 1979, p. 45/note 3), but also : in Mahādevpokhari (Jest), in Gosainkund (Macdonald), in Kumbeśwar (in Patan)

- in the month of *bhadau* during the Kāgeśwari melā (personal observation in 1979 with J.C. Marize and P. Aubry);

- in the month of *pus* in Deoliṅgeśwari among the Tamang;

- in the month of *phāgun* in Rikeśwar (near Daman) (from J.C. Marize, 1980); and

- during the Devikot jatra (near Dolakha) for Dasain (Miller).

This brief enumeration seems to show a predilection for shrines dedicated to Mahādeva; this is not very astonishing as some *jhāṅkri* consider Mahādeva to have been the first of the *jhāṅkri* divinities.

> "Who was the first *jhāṅkri*? The majority agree on Mahādeo. Mahādeo and a bhoṭiyā lama met on Mount Kailaś. The two competed [...] Since Mahādeo had not succeeded in reaching the sun, the latter became angry and began to construct a drum. With this drum he would be able to reach the sun [...]
>
> How was Mahādeo's drum made?[...]""Then he sent the *ghuṅrin* to fetch *bet* [...] from which to make the straps to brace the drum heads [...] Mahādeo closed the drum by attaching the *murrā* (handle). Before closing it, he put seven blades of *dubho* and a *rudrācche* inside." (Macdonald, 1976 : 319).

What do ethnologists have to say about this drum?

Following his research in Muglan at the end of the 1950s, Macdonald stated :"The *jhāṅkri*'s drum is called *dhyāṅgro* the curved baton with which he beats the drum is a *gajo*; [...] and it is by the sound of the drum echoing far in the night that one knows a *jhāṅkri* is at work." (Macdonald, 1976:311). This brief information is completed in a footnote: "The *dhyāṅgro* is a single-handed drum with two heads (generally made of deerskin and monkeyskin); the handle (*murrā*) is made of wood and always sculptured." (Macdonald, 1976:326n.13). Fournier's observations in 1969-70 of the *puimbo* and *ngiami*, who officiate among the Sunwar, allowed him to be much more precise :

> "The *dhyaṅgro* is a double-headed drum with a single handle. The frame is made of one piece of hazel wool (*tsegi*) or of (*thingre*), c. 4 inches deep [= 10 cm], with a circumference of c. 16 1/2 inches [= 42 cm]. The membrane covering each of the two sides is folded over on the outside. It is made of the skin of a three-year-old deer (*rokoshie*) (Sun.), or of a two-year-old goat (*kiarshe*) (Sun.). A leather thong or a thong made of calamus (*guri*) (Sun.) secures the skins by a network of interlaced knots. Between the wood of the frame and the thong, the *puimbo* slips one or more porcupine quills to prevent the skins from stretching. The handle (*goedaki*) (Sun.) which is ca. one foot long [30.5 cm], is pegged to the frame. It is made of the same wood as the

> frame and sculptured with various symbolic patterns, usually in forms that are identical to those engraved on the *phurbu* or on the lance. [...] The *dhyāṅgro* , as well as the *phurbu* or the lance is made under the direction of the *puimbo* or *ngiami* [...]. At the time of the major public Sunwar rituals, each side of the drum is decorated with paint." [*N.B.* the design is different on the male side and the female side] (See Fournier, 1976:108-111, for a detailed diagram).

After more than two years among the Limbu between 1966 to 1971, Sagant wrote:

> "[...] The *yuma*'s instrument is never the gong but mainly the *jhāṅkri* 's drum, the *dhyaṅgro*. It is made specially for him (mainly of *koiralo* wood and *mirga* skin), and is analogous to the *jhāṅkri*'s drum. Enclosed are seven grains of rice, seven 'lightning' stones, three kinds of incense and a copper coin. The drum is consecrated at a ritual during which a chicken is sacrificed. The drum, as well as the rest of the gear, is personal. In the case that it changes owners, a chicken must be sacrificed to prevent a possible risk of sickness or death. The baton is identical to that used by the *jhāṅkri* and is also called a *gajo*. A trident, the sun and moon are painted on the skins." (Sagant, 1976:89, photo p. 99).

The two *dhyāṅgro* drums brought back by Sagant to the Musée de l'Homme present the following characteristics:

68-35-103 (D. 27 cm, H ?, L. handle 32 cm)
68-35-104 (D. 52 cm, H 13 cm, L. handle 42 cm)

Father Miller, who undertook extensive fieldwork from 1974 to 1978 in Dholaka District and its vicinity, was evidently not interested by the organological characteristics of the *dhyāṅgro*, but numerous photographs accompanying his work are valuable evidence of the way in which the drummer beat the instrument (Miller, 1979). When Höfer met the *bombo* who officiated among the western Tamang, he discovered that the drum they used was similar to the *jhāṅkri* but was called in Tamang by the Tibetan term *rnga*:

> "It consists of a round-shaped wooden frame covered on both sides with a membrane; of a carved handle, the one end of which is fixed in the frame and the other is pointed; and of a curved drum-stick. For the membrane the leather of the wild goat (Nep. *ghoral*) is used; the frame and the handle are of

the wood of a particular tree and the stick of a particular species of cane. The drum is mostly beaten from the front, i.e., towards body of the *bombo* or from the side. While reciting a blessing or another text of a mild type (*siway*, Tib. *zhi-ba*), the face carved on the upper part of the handle is turned towards the *bombo*. While fighting with the spirits, the *bombo* turns this face towards the same direction in which he is is looking. Doubtless, the main function of the drum is to provide the recitation with an accompaniment. The sound of the membrane is believed to summon or terrify the beings with which the *bombo* deals, while the handle with its pointed end also serves as a weapon to 'pierce' or to 'fix' the evil to be exorcised."(Höfer, 1974,:170; also see Höfer, 1994: 64-68 accompanied by several detailed drawings and completed by Höfer (1997).

In 1979 I purchased a *dhyāṅgro* in the market in Kathmandu; I was told it was most probably of Tamang origin, and I have based the following observations on this instrument:

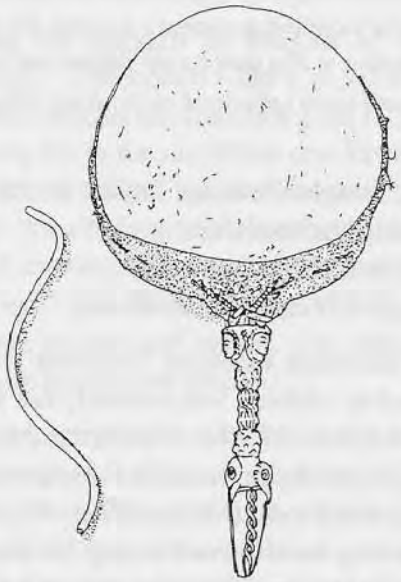


Fig. 1. The Nepalese dhyāṅgro drum (from M. Helffer's collection)

1) The roughly circular frame is formed with a wooden slat approximately 12 cm wide; it is bent so that the edges can be pegged together, thus forming a circle 38 cm in diameter.

2) The frame is covered with two skins. Each was first stretched and sewn on a hoop; the diameter of the skin is superior to that of the frame; the skins placed on each of the openings of the frame were sewn using a lacing in V form, secured by a thin bamboo thong.

3) A pierced opening in the frame allows the introduction of various grains or stones whose clinking accompanies all movements of the drum; a wooden handle, 35 cm high, (Nep. *murrā*,Tib. *rnga-yu*) in the form of a ritual dagger (Nep. *kila*, Tib. *phur-pa*) obstructs this opening.

From top to bottom, it comprises:

a) a triangular part with angles corresponding to three sculpted heads surrounded with a bead pattern;

b) a central, elongated part with an arrangement of the following motifs:

a form resembling a ritual sceptre (Nep. *vajra*, Tib. *rdo-rje*), but which could also correspond to a double row of stylized lotus leaves separated by a kind of coil (Höfer, 1994, p. 66, Fig. 4b(5) : "patterns called *pe:ma* [= Nep./Tib. *padma* = lotus] *cya:ri syi*" and for a different interpretation : Foumier, 1976: 108-110 and drawing Fig. 2). This form is framed at the top and the bottom by the sign of auspiciousness, "an endless knot" (Tib. *dpal-be'u*).

c) a three-edged blade with each side surmounted by a bird's head; a *nāga* serpent protrudes from the beak of each of these birds; the serpent's body is entwined around another serpent coming out of the adjoining bird's head. These serpents form three caducei occupying the intervals separating the blade's edges. This seems to illustrate the antagonism between Garuda and the serpent. However, some informants (Höfer, 1994) interpret this motif as three marine monsters (Nep. *makara*, Tib. *chu-srin*).

Two other drums of different sizes collected by C. Jest in the Kathmandu Valley show similar characteristics. They are kept in the Musée de l'Homme:

68-20-44 (*d.* 44.5 cm, *h.* 5 cm, *l.* handle 30 cm)
68-20-45 (for children, *d.* 17 cm, *h.* 5 cm).

It is necessary to examine the symbolism of each of the handle's elements of the *dhyāṅgro* even if there is general agreement on the characteristics of a *kila* or a *phur-bu*. Models can differ and interpretations may vary according to knowledge (generally incomplete) which comes from Buddhist and Hindu written traditions relative to the ritual use of the drum. To substantiate the varying interpretations, it suffices to compare what is said about the three heads found on the top of the handle of the *dhyāṅgro*. According to Macdonald's and Sagant's informants, the heads represent Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswar/Mahadeo; according to Fournier, they are three human or lama faces--Tsinge lama, Nima tele [? Tib. *nyi-ma* = sun], Urgin tele [? Tib. *O-rgyan* for Padmasambhava]; and according to Höfer "*haha hihi* faces". If we put aside informants' assertions and examine texts on Tibetan Buddhist iconography, Professor R. Stein, at the end of his erudite investigation of texts related to the *phur-pa*, maintains that he recognises the heads of Vajrapāni, Hayagrīva and Amṛtakundali (Stein, 1977 and 1978), while Huntington (1975) sees three faces of the divinity Phur-pa. I personally prefer the last interpretation because Rdo-rje phur-pa (Vajrakila)

> "(...) est le nom d'une divinité particulière, personnification du poignard rituel. Il possède généralement trois têtes et six bras. Les deux mains originelles tiennent un *phur-bu* devant la poitrine. Le bas du corps est également en forme de *phur-bu*. Cette divinité complexe, liée à tout un cycle de légendes et de rituels ne doit être confondue, ni avec Hayagriva, représenté sur de nombreux poignards rituels, ni avec Guru Drag-dmar, forme farouche de Padmasambhava chez les Bonnets Rouges qui, comme lui, a le bas du corps en forme de poignard rituel" (G. Béguin, 1977: 258/n° 319).

In summary, if one attempts to clarify similarities and differences among the *dhyāṅgro* described above, the following points emerge:

- terminology designating different parts of the drum, apart from a few words borrowed from indigenous languages, generally uses Nepali or Tibetan words;

- these drums have a carved wooden handle and two skins usually linked by a lacing system;

- one of the skins is considered masculine and the other is considered feminine; this opposition is expressed in diverse ways:"Lors des grands rituels publics ou privés, chacune des faces est décorée. Sur la face masculine, il y a un trident (*trisul*) entre soleil et lune; sur la face féminine, une étoile est peinte dominant les cimes des montagnes. Lorsque la *ngiami* ou le *poembo* est en transe, il frappe son tambour en s'adressant tantôt à la face féminine, tantôt à la face masculine, selon le sexe de l'esprit avec lequel il dialogue." (Fournier, 1977).Within a Tamang context, Höfer speaks of "beating the violent side" (*thowai lajo rappa*) which he contrasts with "beating the mild or peaceful side" (*syiwai lajo rappa*), evoking the Tibetan opposition of "violent music" (*drag-rol* / "peaceful music" (*zhi-rol*).

- with regard to the manner of striking the *dhyāṅgro*, it has been established that a more or less sinusoidal drumstick is used; the form may resemble a serpent.

There is nothing in current research, to my knowledge, which can explain the broad diffusion of this type of drum--from the Kali Gandaki to Darjeeling and to Sikkim--nor, is there any concrete evidence that it is an adaptation of the Tibetan *rnga*.

One-membraned frame drum with two sticks diametrally crossed, struck with a rectilinear stick

The diffusion of this type of drum is much less broad than that of the *dhyāṅgro* and appears limited to areas in proximity to the Annapurna range. The terminology by which it is designated varies according to the user groups:

nah among the Gurung, *rnga* among the Thakali
rẽ among the Kham Magar and *ring* among the Chepang
dhyāṅgro among the Bhujel

Among the Gurung, it is used by *pucu* priests, and according to Pignède whose research concerned the Southern Gurung, reveals the following characteristics:

> "*nah* : tambour de cinquante à quatre-vingt centimètres de diamètre. Cadre de bois de 6 à 9 cm d'épaisseur. Peau de chèvre tendue sur un côté. De l'autre une baguette diamétrale permet de saisir l'instrument. Le prêtre tient

généralement dans la main gauche son *nah* et le frappe de la droite avec une baguette de bois enveloppée de petites bandes de tissu dans sa partie supérieure pour protéger la peau du tambour et obtenir le son désiré." (Pignède, 1966: 295) ". . . le *pucu* utilise un tambour d'un diamètre un peu supérieur." (*ibid.* p. 298)[2].

The Gurung drum in the Musée de l'Homme (971-58-1) is smaller with the following characteristics: *d.* 32.5 cm, *h.* 8.5 cm, 1 laced skin in an X form, 2 wooden crossed sticks attached to the frame, used as a handle.

Pignède mentions the existence of a *pe* recounting the drum's origin and its power, recited during funeral ceremonies, or to ward off an illness (*ibid.* p. 326).

Strickland attributes the fabrication of the *nga* to the so-called Rangupwe: "Rangupwe makes tools to cut wood for a *nga* drum, but is frightened by demons near the tree; a rat deceives him into promising all the grain to the rodent; Rangupwe stifles his fear and makes a drum with the wood obtained." (*rangupwemai pé*) : 170 lines. Macfarlane MSS, from Strickland, 1982: 298).

- Among the **Kham Magar**, the *rẽ* drum has been described in great detail by Oppitz and by A. de Sales. Their descriptions include methods of making the *rẽ* and mythological texts with which the drum is associated (cf. Oppitz, 1980, 1981). Specific songs designated by the term "songs for attaching the skin to the drum" (*dhagori murine kheti*) relate the search for the appropriate material with the best way of treating it (de Sales, 1991:281-286). The following points should be kept in mind:

The *rẽ* drum is made of diverse elements named and fabricated with material prescribed by mythology:
- a frame (*rẽgor*) made from a slat cut from oak (*gui* or *guipâl*), from whence the term *guipal rẽgor* is derived; this frame can be circular, oval or heart-shaped; the diameter is variable, generally from 30 to 50 cm;
- a few nails (*killi*) and small iron plates (*tãs*), in vertical rows to nail the two elements cut from the wooden slat;
- a membrane (*syelo*) made from wild Himalayan goat skin (*ghoral*);

[2]Messerschmidt's photographs taken in the region of Ghaisu, show that the *khepre* use this type of drum when they officiate at death rituals (Messerschmidt, 1976, p. 78).

- diverse leather thongs to lace the membrane;
- a certain number of holes pierced with fire (*dulo*) on the open circumference of the frame; the thongs to which the membrane is attached are laced through them;
- a hoop made from elastic tendon (*yel*) encircling the frame on the side where the membrane is fixed in order to prevent the thongs from moving;
- two bamboo sticks crossed in the form of an X, suspended from small iron chains attached to the frame's interior and serving to hold the instrument in the hand;
- four small iron chains (*sãngal*) with two or three links which attach the bamboo handles to the frame;
- a stick (*gãjã*) in *mãke* wood; because of the material used, it is also called wooden *mãke* spoon (*mãke dablĩ*) in mythology (Oppitz, 1990, p. 80).

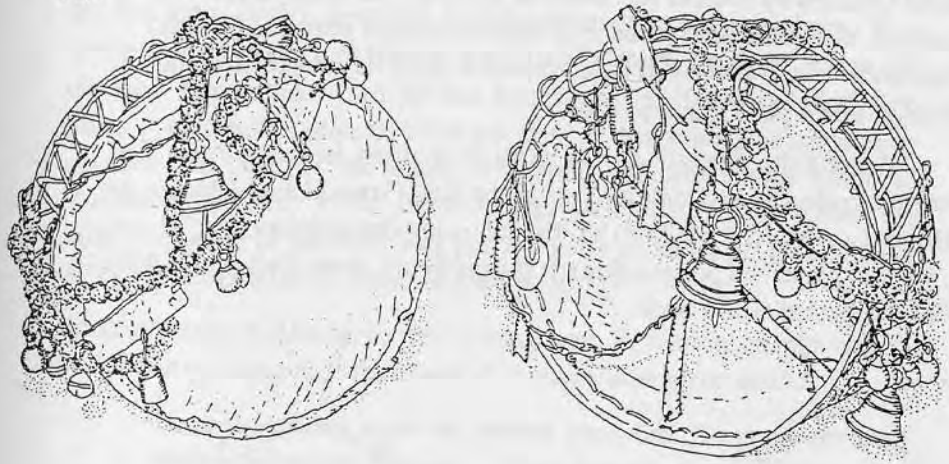


Fig.2. The two sides of the rẽ drum, (after a photography by M. Oppitz).

The *rẽ* drum is made in several stages: looking for the tree and making the frame, nailing the frame and fixing the diametral handles, attaching the skin, consecrating it. White paint, associated with particularly rich symbolism, is added to the skin at the time of the rituals (Oppitz, 1992).

The *rẽ* drum is used by a specialist often designated by the Nepali term *jhāṅkri* [3]; his role is to accompany mythical songs and the dance of the *jjhāṅkri* to communicate with the spirits and to organise divination activities.

Among the Chepang the *rẽ/ring* drum is also used. The example in the Musée de l'Homme (992-49-1) is a circular frame drum with a glued skin; it has the following characteristics: *d.* 45 cm, *h.* 15.5 cm, rattan bands, two diametrical cross pieces in wood and rattan, a sinusoidal cane stick.

Among the Bhujel, in the region of Dhaulagiri, a similar drum is called by the Nepali term *dhyāṅgro* , although it is a frame drum with a single skin: "The drum (*dhyāṅgro*) is one-sided and is held by crossed sticks fastened by rings to the inside of the rim - on which a bell may be fastened. The drum head is made of wild Himalayan goat skin (*ghoral*) ... The handle of the slender straight drumstick (*gājā*) is carved." (Hitchcock, 1976, p. 174 + photograph p. 166).

Among the Thakali, the same kind of drum is called *rnga*. The example collected by Corneille Jest in the Kali Gandaki area (Musée de l'Homme collection , 68-20-4) has the following characteristics: *d.* 34 cm, *h.* 6.5 cm, glued and pegged skin). It is used by the *drom* (Jest, 1974: 303-306) and beaten with a stick.

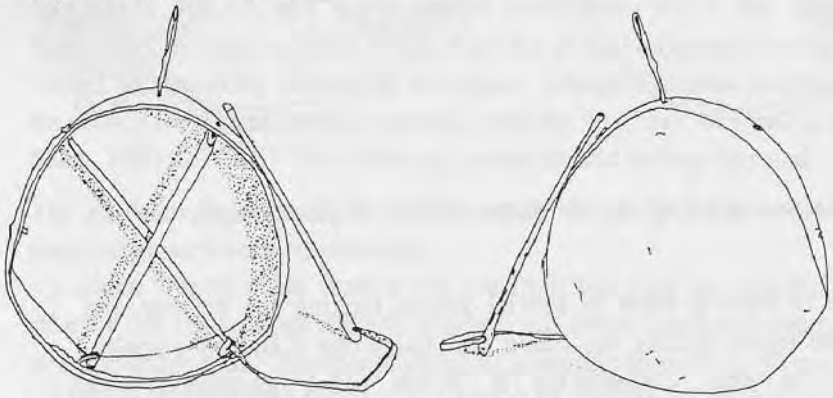


Fig.3. The Thakali rnga (after a picture of Musée de l'Homme)

[3] Rammā Puran Can is the name used by the Kham Magar for the first shaman.

Frame drum with pegged skin (and without diametrical stick), beaten with the bare hands

This drum, the Tamang *damphu*, has a particular organological form. The two examples in the Musée de l'Homme have the following characteristics;

- 65-102-72 : *d.* 30 cm, *h.* 7 cm, 32 regularly spaced wooden pegs, widely surpassing the frame.

- 69-74-2 (Valeix-Jest mission) : *d.* 30 cm, *h.* 8.5 cm, sheepskin glued and stretched with 46 long pegs inserted in the frame.

In the presentation of the contents of the *Tamba kaiten*, published in 1959 in Darjeeling by Santabir Lama, Macdonald discloses that one of the first songs (*hvāī)* describes the fabrication of the *damphu* drum: "It is not specifically stated whether it is a Tambā's drum. However it may be, the song tells us that when he was hunting in the Himalaya, Pengdorje killed a wild goat (*ghoral*). With the skin of this animal he apparently covered one head of his drum. The frame of which was made of ambursing (*koirālo*) wood. Bamboo pegs were used for stretching the skin. The sound of the drum was like the voice of Sarasvati (Macdonald, 1975:135, original text : *Tamba kaiten*, p. 20-21[4]".

After extensive fieldwork in the Tamang area, B. Steinmann was able to verify that the *damphu* is the essential characteristic of the *tamba*:

> "Le *tamba* possède aussi des attributs particuliers. Son costume est le vêtement ordinaire des Tamang . . . Quoiqu'il en soit, c'est son tambour (Nep. *damphu*, Tib. *dampa*) à une seule face qui le distingue. Lui aussi a une origine mythique. Recouvert d'une peau de chèvre, il est cerclé du bois de *koirālo*. Le *tamba* frappe avec les deux mains alternativement sur cette peau qu'il dit être la peau même du démiurge Mathu Kaitap (ou Visnu)." (Steinmann, 1987:161).

Steinmann further stated:

[4] In the original text of verse 16, published with a translation in Nepali, it is specified that bamboo from the plains is used to make 32 nails which protrude from the interior like thorns and produce a sound *plākshwai*.

"[...]Le *tamba* possède un instrument distinctif, son tambour à une seule peau, le *damphu* ou *dampa*, tambour sans manche, de facture assez simple. Il est constitué d'un cercle de bois de *koirālo*, sur lequel est tendue une peau de chèvre fixée par des tiges de bambou fichées à l'intérieur du cerclage et formant un cercle de 32 pointes. Le bois est verni et durci. Le *tamba* ne se sert de son *damphu* que pour les mariages, les cérémonies en l'honneur des dieux du clan, devant un arbre du renouveau, le jour de l'initiation des filles (*pāsni*) et des garçons (*chewar*). Parfois, il peut jouer aussi lors des danses exécutées par les *māruni* au mois de novembre-décembre, et pour les fêtes de Dasaî." (*ibid.* p. 181 colour photo 16 and black and white photo 16). In other ways, the response to an enigma suggested in the same context recalls some accounts concerning the origin of the Tibetan *rnga* drum (Helffer, 1983 and 1994)."Quant au *dampa*, sa peau qu'est ce que c'est? Le tour qu'est-ce que c'est? La langue, à qui est-elle? [...] A l'origine, le cercle du *dampa* est fait de la côte de Mathu Kaitap, [la peau] c'est une peau de chèvre. Le son obtenu par le battement des doigts sur le *dampa*, c'est le bruit de la langue de Mathu Kaitap (T. *tep tep tilla le* que je suggèrerais de traduire par : dont la langue claque en faisant *tep-tep*)." (Steinmann, 1987, p. 199).

Despite elements alluding to the Tibetan world, an organological relationship between the Tamang *damphu* and Islamic frame drums, called *duff / daff*, cannot be excluded.

Conclusion

The ambiguous terminology for various types of drums used by mediums is outlined in the following table.

As has been discussed and as the table shows, the Nepali term *dhyāṅgro*, usually designates a frame drum with two laced heads, a handle in the form of a *phur-pa*, but among the Bhujel it designates a simple frame drum with a diametrical stick.

The Tibetan term *rnga*, as we know, is a generic term among Buddhists, designating a frame drum with two laced heads, provided with a handle or suspended from a wooden support. For the Gurung, it can mean either a drum with two heads used by the *klihbri/ghyābre*; or the one-skinned drum of the *pucu/paju*, and the Thakali use the term to designate a frame drum with one skin used by their *drom*.

The Drums of Nepalese Mediums

Population	Drum name	Organological characteristics	Wood used for the frame	Type of skin	User
1. Indo-Nepalese et al.	*dhyāṅgro*	frame drum with 2 skins and a handle shaped like a *phur-pa*, beaten with a sinusoidal *gajo*	*sinaro*	deer / monkey	*jhākri* [Macdonald, Miller...]
Limbu	"	"	*koiralo*	*mirga*	*yuma* [Sagant]
Sunwar	"	"	*tsegi*	*kiarshe* (goat) or *rokoshie* (deer)	*putmbo / ngiami* [Fournier]
Tamang	*rnga*	"	*sing-sing*	*ghoral* (wild goat)	*bombo* [Höfer]
Gurung	*rnga*	"	?	?	*ghyabre* [Mumford] / *khlihbrih* [Pignède]
2. Gurung	*nah*	frame drum [1 skin] held with diametrical sticks inserted in the frame, beaten with a carved, wooden rectilinear stick	*kega*	?	*pucu* Pignède] / *pajyu* [Mumford]
Northern Magar	*rẽ*		*gui / guipal*	*ghoral*	*jhãkri* [Oppitz, de Sales]
Chepang	*rẽ / ring*		?	?	?
Bhujel / Chautel	*dhyangro*	1-sided, held by crossed sticks attached with rings to the rim's interior	?	?	*jhãkri* [Hitchcock]
Thakali	*rnga*	frame drum	?	?	*drom* [Jest]
3. Tamang	*damphu*	frame drum with pegged skin	*koiralo / amboursing*	*ghoral*	*tamba* [Macdonald, Steinmann]
Tibetan	*rnga*	frame drum with 2 skins	?	?	Buddhist lamas
"	*phyed-rnga* (= half *rnga*)	frame drum	?	?	*bon-po* [Nebesky-Wojkowitz]

Whether the drum has one or two heads is generally considered as the result of a competition for power: Competition between Mahādeo and a bhoṭiya lama to reach the sun: Mahādeo is thwarted; he decides to make a drum. The most widespread explanation refers to the competition between Milarepa and a Bonpo over the conquest of Kailaś: In the written version in Milarepa's *Mgur-'bum* ("The miracle contest on Ti-se snow mountain" in Gamma C.C. Chang, 1970:100-109), the bonpo, Naro bon chung, is defeated; the drum on which he rides comes tumbling down, but there is nothing more precise about the drum's number of skins. According to the version Mumford collected in Gurung country, mediums are identified with ancient Bonpos:

> "Sometimes they refer to the local *Paju* shaman, a virtuoso sacrificer, as a "black" Bon (*bon nag*). The Ghyabre shaman views himself as becoming a "white" Bon . . . [the lamas] think of the Ghyabre and Paju as descendents of the unreformed Bonpos. . .." (Mumford, 1990:32). [...]"The Ghyabre and Paju shamans unhesitatingly identify themselves with the Tibetan Bonpo (practioners of the Bon religion) who "lost the contest" to Milarepa. They and the Tibetan lamas agree on the main kernel of the story, which I summarize here from taped interviews: Milarepa went with his disciples to Mount Tise. He met a Bonpo who challenged him to a contest of magical power to see which of them should control the mountain. After a few preliminary contests of flying over the lake in which they were both equal, they decided to see who could reach the top of Mount Tise first on the morning of the next day. Early in the morning the Bonpo, riding his drum, flew up the slope of the mountain. Milarepa's disciple awoke his master and pointed to the Bonpo nearing the top. At the moment a ray of sunlight broke over the top of the mountain and beamed down into the window of the hut. Milrepa instantly rode the sunbeam to the top of Mount Tise, arriving ahead of the Bonpo. Defeated, the Bonpo fell back, dropping his drum which rolled down the mountain slope and split in half. To this day, the drum of the Bonpo has only one side, while the drum of the lama still has two sides". (*ibid.* p. 52). "After the Bonpo was defeated on Mount Tise and dropped his drum, the version given by the Paju shaman adds the following: The Paju [Bonpo] was angry that he had lost the contest. In despair the Paju took all his written texts and threw them into a fire, where they burned to ashes. Then he heard the voice of a god above: "Although you have destroyed your books you must do your rituals by remembering the knowledge that your books contained." The Paju ate the ashes of the burned texts and thus swallowed the knowledge. To this day the lama has to read his texts, but the Paju chants his learning from memory "(*ibid.* p. 52-53). "According to another informant, a Paju from the village of Rangu: "Originally the lama, the Ghyabre, and the Paju were all equal brothers. Having the same mother and father, they all had texts. After the contest on Mount Tise, however, they decided to have different specializations. The lama chose to perform rites of fortune expansion [*ghang khug*]. The Ghyabre chose to do the death rite and deliver the soul to the land of the dead. The Paju decided to recall the wandering soul of the living and to expel demons, dealing with rites concerned with the earth and the underworld." (*ibid.* p. 54).

This agrees with the version recounted by Das at the end of the nineteenth century. He wrote that a long time ago, a lama, a *zhagri*, a *klihbri* and a Brahman were competing to determine who was the most powerful. The loosers would have to pierce their drums and burn their books. The winner had to reach Lake Manasarovar at sunrise. The lama and the Brahman spent the night meditating, while the *zhagri* and the *klihbri* flew away on their drums. The two priests reached the lake later than their competitors. Having lost, they burned their books and pierced their drums, which is why the the *nah* drum has a skin only on one side and the lama's drum has two skins.

Nebesky-Wojkowitz, without citing his sources, considered the drum with one skin to be typically Bonpo. He calls it a half-drum (*phyed-rnga*), implying that the true drum, used by the dominant Buddhists, has two skins. "Sorcerers of the "black Bon" (*Bon nag*) use in their ceremonies a tambourine, about twenty inches in diameter [50 cm], held by means of a short wooden handle. Over the broad wooden frame is stretched the skin of the Saiga antelope (*rGya ra*), held in position by strings drawn cross-wise over the frame. Contrary to the drums described above the tambourine has only one drum-skin, and it is called therefore *phyed rnga*, "half drum", also, *Bon gyi rnga*, "drum of the Bon". It is being beaten by means of a curved wooden stick in a peculiar way: the tambourine, held with the left hand, is brought close to the face of the sorcerer, with the skin facing downward. The right hand has then to lead the stick upward, in order to hit the drum-skin. The Tibetan Buddhists claim that this peculiar technique became customary among the Bonpos

after *Na ro bon chung*, a famous representative of the "black Bon", had been defeated by the Buddhist sage *Mi la ras pa*. The Bon sorcerers are ashamed of the defeat which one of them had suffered, and they try therefore to hide their faces in the tambourine." (Nebesky-Wojkowitz, 1975:399-400)[5].

Can this interpretation, which would tend to underscore Buddhist superiority with respect to the Bonpos, be accepted without discussion, when today, in Bonpo communities the drum used always has two skins and does not therefore correspond to the previous description? Only more in-depth studies can elucidate under what analogous circumstances and for which actions, whose purpose is not apparently dissimilar, do some people use a drum with one skin, while others use a drum with two.

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[5] The manner of holding the drum does not differ from Macdonald's description of the *jhāṅkri* :"The *jhāṅkri* holds the drum handle in his left hand, one side of the drum held at face level. He beats the exterior side of the drum by bringing towards his face the *gajo* he holds in his right hand. When he is officiating, the *jhāṅkri* speaks directly to one side of the drum while he plays on the other side (Macdonald, 1976: 329, note 14). Father Miller also made the same observation: ". . . three-sided and pointed handle of the drum in his left hand so that the broad face of the drum faces him and beating the outer face with a snake-curved *gajo*. . ." (Miller, 1979, p. 12).

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A SKETCH OF THE MUSICAL HERITAGE OF THE HANI (YUNNAN/ CHINA)

Pascal Bouchery

The Hani are a Tibeto-Burman speaking people, scattered over a wide area in Southern China and neighbouring countries. In China proper, the Hani, whose population is reported to be more than a million, mainly inhabit a mountainous area situated on both banks of the Red River (Honghe) which runs through the south-eastern part of Yunnan, and especially the Ailao range flanking its southern bank. Although several articles and even books are available in Mandarin, so far nothing has been published on Hani music that is accessible to non-Sinologists. Although very scanty, this report is the first attempt to introduce the musical tradition of this ethnic group to a larger audience.

Songs

Hani musical culture is rich, as is the oral tradition itself. Although there is no polyphonic singing, the vocal repertoire includes solos, antiphonal singing and choruses, the most popular singing forms being unison and responsive. The singing repertoire is commonly divided into six types of songs: children's songs (*anini-tsatsa* or *zagu tsatan*), lullabies (*ani-musha*, *ani-thu*), dance songs (*sokë-so-ae*, *lotso*), love songs (*atsi*, *atshi*), festive songs (*xaba*) and reciter's songs (*Pema-thu*).

Only a few minorities in Yunnan can match the Hani in terms of the vividness and variety of children's songs. In one village of the Xishuangbanna Prefecture, more than 70 samples were collected from a couple of adult singers and 4 or 5 pupils[1]. Hani children's songs are usually melodious and vivid. Melodies

[1] Yang Fang, 1993.

are short in length, wide in range and all possess rhythms which are interesting and precise. Lullaby songs may also fall in this category. Children's songs can be performed anywhere, but they are generally sung after dusk when children gather together to play in an outdoor area of the village for the first hours of the night, and are often accompanied by dances. They may be sung either as a solo or in unison by groups of individuals. Call and response by a leading voice and an ensemble of voices are often encountered, the answer being in most cases a mere repetition of the call. The leader sets the general tone of the song (which may vary greatly) as well as the tempo, rhythmic changes and general nuances which occur in such performances.

Titles are often determined by the initial words of the songs, and the lyrics extensively reflect daily life and play. Although they are not the general rule, rhymes are sometimes encountered. More frequently, sentences are elaborated on the model of the "genealogical patronymic linkage system", a very meaningful structure in Hani society which consists of giving as the first syllable(s) of the son's name the last syllable(s) of his father's name[2]. In children songs, sentences are often linked on the same word linkage basis, as in the following verse:

bala thisi sa-ë moku-aga,
moku-aga luma thaeba,
luma-thaeba bo-dë tshusu
bo-dë tshusu khuubë la-tsae
khuuza latsae khuuma la-u
khuuma la-u tshomo lanö
tshomo lanö zagu lathu
zagu-lathu tshaelo bitho
tshaelo thosa ma-u dzakha

[2] See P. Bouchery, 1995: 28-36.

The round moon highlights (the village of) "Moku-aga",
"Moku-aga" with large, flat stones,
The large flat stones, a bamboo bell rings,
The ringing of the bell awakens the dogs in their kennels,
The little dogs are awake, their mother barks,
The barking of the bitch awakens the old man,
The old man is awake, he awakes the child,
and he asks him to go to husk the rice with a pestle,
The carefully husked rice will provide the rice meal.

or in a looser form:

çaeji "lilë" dza
"lilë" xabo dzae
xabo dae xu dzae
xae xu xae lao lao
Jilao-laopa tshi.

Dance songs (*sokë-so-ae*), as the name implies, are sung by men and women while dancing. They, like children's songs, display a wide range of short, melodious and vivid melodies. Like children's songs, they may be sung either as a solo or in unison by groups of individuals. Alternative singing is common, either on a basis of call and response by a leading voice and a choir, or on a two-group basis, the answer sometimes being a repetition of the call. Dance songs also include a category of lamentation chants (*lotso*) sung for funerals accompanied by instrumental ensemble music and collective dancing around the coffin.

Love songs (*atsï* or *atshï*) are exclusively sung by young people, individually or collectively, but always outside and usually at the outskirts of the village (fields, paths, mountains). The repertoire is divided into three types according to the loudness of the voice: *tshïma* (high), *lopë* (middle) and *tshïza* (low). Texts of *tshïma* love songs are usually introduced and ended by loud

interjections, but this is not the case with *tshiza* which, as lullabies, are calm and almost whispered. Because love songs are essentially textual songs in which the singer improvises by addressing his or her beloved, it is not surprising that the range of tunes displayed is narrow compared with the children's repertoire, melodies being closer to other textual songs such as praising songs (see below).

Misa-we (*mi*: woman; *sa*: sad; *we*: to cry, sometimes called *öxoma*) is a type of lamentation chant sung solo by women in memory of departed relatives, friends or lovers, and relating to the life of the deceased. The song, taking place in the house where the dead body is laid before being taken to the cemetery, also makes up an essential part of funeral ceremonies. At regular intervals sentences are interrupted by collective lamentations (crying may be simulated or not).

A very important type of song (*xaba*:) is represented by what can be tentatively called "laudative songs" (*xa*: to sing loudly; *ba*: to praise, to offer with respect). One might as well call them "festive songs" or "customs songs" as they are mainly heard on festive occasions and their contents mainly relate to tradition and customs. *Xaba* songs are exclusively sung by male adults, especially senior singers when they gather for festive banquets. Therefore they make up an essential part of some festive gatherings such as the New Year (*Gatho-tho*), the festival for the God of the Soil (*Xama-thu*) in February-March and the "swing" festival (*Kudza-dza*) of July, as well as the main ceremonies of the life cycle (births, marriage, funerals, rituals ending the building of a house).

Xaba are basically textual songs. Melodies are very limited in range, most of them following a general pattern of tune heard everywhere in the Ailao mountains with only slight variations,

and are not subject to much improvisation[3]. In contrast, the words of the song are more or less free according to the song type and the circumstances of the performance, with the exception of fixed formulae faithfully handed down by tradition. This usually does not mean that the singer invents all the words, but rather draws from a corpus of phrases, of formulae, which he modifies to his taste and whose order he may sometimes change at will. Should the number of syllables in a text be less than the number of notes in a given melodic segment, the singer adds exclamations, interjections or "empty words" of a more or less fixed form, or simply hums the tune.

The lyrics are performed in a narrative form, and thus the song is generally irregular in length. Texts can be very long, and performers can be seen singing night and day for several days. Their construction, however, follows a set of fixed rules which make *xaba* songs resemble chanted poems. Songs are first divided into broad categories according to the ceremony of which they are a part. Because the texts are very long, each song is further divided into a series of verses sung in solo or duet by one or two lead singers. A complete song usually consists of one or several dozen such verses. Each of them, called by the leading voice, is answered by a choir in the form of an interjection expressing content (*So*, *Sa*, *Yi*, *Sa-yi*). Ordinarily, every verse is also included into a set of polite formulae of a more or less fixed form, used to pay respect to the members of the assembly as well as to introduce and conclude the sentences of the verse proper. Their contents vary according to the general context of the celebration, so there are general frameworks of introductions and conclusions for marriage songs, others for funerals, etc. Very often the singer also starts his solo lead the same way the choir is

[3] On special occasions, however, such as honouring a guest, the lyric may be totally improvised. It is a favourite among the better singers because it provides them with opportunities to display their voices and skills in improvisation.

answers each verse, i.e. using the same interjection. The following extract gives an example of such general structures:

Lead solo singer

Introductory interjection:
Sayi !
Introductory polite formulae
The elder brother loves his younger brother,
Water of the brook (also) loves fishes of the river,
Your talent for singing *xaba* songs is not small,
Your talent for singing *xaba* songs is great.
Strophe (proper)
We cannot see the nine past generations -*utilo* (empty word),
But their words last forever -*ya* (empty word),
We cannot hear the voices of the last ten generations -*utilo* (empty word),
But their facts and events last forever -*ya* (empty word),
Conclusive polite formulae
The elder brother is above his younger brother,
Elders have a long life.

Choir
Sa ! Sa ! (*Choir interjective answer*)

Every verse comprises a minimum of two sentences, not including the introductory and conclusive formulae. Sentences of one verse are frequently ended by empty words used to express the feelings of the narrator as well as to produce rhyme effects, most commonly of the AA-BB type. Each verse may be composed of sentences which all consist of either an even or odd number of syllables (not including those of the empty words), or may comprise an ensemble of mixed sentences. Sentences of even verses often comprise the same even number of syllables (eight in

many cases), while sentences of odd verses, although always comprising an odd number of syllables, may be of different lengths (for instance, 5, 7, 9).

The total number of *xaba* songs is still unknown, although the number already listed by Chinese scholars is very great. A typology partially based on Hani classifications has been tentatively elaborated by Yunnanese researchers (Li Yuansong ed., 1989). The contents of the Hani praising songs really embody every aspect of their social life: building techniques, agricultural methods, social customs such as births, marriage and funerals, genealogy, history, calendar, cosmogony, as well as various epic narrations, with the exception of love themes. One of the longest texts is *Aosë-Misë*, which relates the creation of the Universe and mankind. Another, *Aphö-tsopopo*, recalls the ancestral migrations of the Hani from a mythical place of origin located in a mountain cave. Many historical events, sagas and experiences are passed down this way from generation to generation by singing. By listening to the men's choir, children and women assembled in the village for festivals also take this opportunity to learn a great deal from the oral tradition otherwise largely appropriated by men in Hani society. *Xaba* songs therefore make up not only an important part of Hani culture, but are an essential way of transmitting knowledge, ideas, ethics and concepts. Thus they have an educational function as well as a sociological function of enhancing the stability and harmony of social life, helping to maintain both village cohesion and social hierarchy.

The last set of songs consists of ceremonial and worship music sung by Reciters (*Pema*), being called for that reason *Pema-thu*, "Reciter's prayers", although in some cases the priest casts spells but can hardly be said to be singing. The Reciter, who keeps the chanting of long melodies among his specialities, resorts to these kinds of songs as part of the ritual for guiding departed souls to the land of ancestors, to call back lost souls (*sula-ku*), to

drive off evil spirits (*nae-tu, naexa-tu*), to pray for ancestors or any revered spirit whose protection is needed, etc. Such songs not only constitute an essential part of religious ceremonies, but are also thought to contribute in themselves, as formulae, to the efficacy sought through the ritual. A strict adherence to the text transmitted from generation to generation is therefore requested, and this sole aspect sharply differenciates Reciter's songs from other textual songs such as *xaba* and *lotso* types. This may also account for the use in many Reciter's prayers of an archaic language (*Pema-do*, simply called "language of Reciters"), usually incomprehensible to lay people. Ordinarily, no musical instrument accompanies the *Pema*'s recitations except sometimes the beating of a gong, or perhaps the ceremonial beating of bamboo sections on the ground and ensemble instrumental music for funerals.

Musical instruments

So far, about 25 distinct instruments have been identified among the Hani of China, among which wind instruments predominate. Many of them, especially string instruments, have their counterpart in the Han musical patrimony from which they appear to be borrowed. A limited number of them however, such as musical leaves, vegetal horns and wooden "ankle bells", shared with several other neighbouring minorities (especially Yi and Lahu), appear to be genuinely part of a common tribal heritage of central and southern Yunnan. The existence of clarinets, recorder and bossed gongs displays further ties with other South-East Asian cultures. More surprising is the general absence of free-reed instruments such as mouth-organs which are in use among all other neigbouring minorities of this area and, as confirmed by artifacts and written documents, appeared in Yunnan as early as 2000 years ago. The following account gives a list of the instruments most commonly found in the Ailao mountains.

Wind instruments

a) Reed Instruments

Single reed: The simplest of all single reed instruments possessed by the Hani merely consists of the reed itself, in the form of a tree leaf set horizontally between the lips and held tight with the fingers, the thin edge of the leaf freely vibrating when breath is blown onto it. It is a favourite among Hani boys who play them solo at night. Several species of hard glossy leaf trees typical of the forest cover of this area are suitable, especially many of the *Lauraceae* and *Rutaceae* families, and more specifically among the latter species of the *citrus* subfamily, the most common ones being known only by their Hani and Yunnanese names *-sïni* (Chinese: *mujia*) and *sïpi* (Ch: *hongushu*, "red-rice-tree"). Solo performances of leaf reed are used by the Hani, especially young men, to call each other over mountains while they work, or to introduce their courting songs. Melodies, due to the difficulty of playing the instrument, are usually short in length.

Clarinets are scarce in the Chinese and Indochinese world, but the Hani do possess a few varieties. One heteroglottal type found in Jiangcheng area under the name *Lilu* (or *Motu-ala*) is made of a bamboo section measuring approximately 50cm, cut so that it contains a node closed to the mouthpiece. A little below the mouthpiece a hole is pierced and covered by a thin bamboo reed attached to the outer body. The lower end is inserted into a vegetal cornet consisting of the upper half of the fruit of the Calabash Gourd (*Lagenaria siceraria*). The instrument is mainly played by men. A closed idioglottal type popular in the Mojiang area is called *tshilu-lewo* by members of the Xidi subgroup. It has a body made of a straight bamboo tube measuring about 50 cm, in which three holes are pierced (one in the upper end and two in the lower end). A reed is set up in the upper end by taking off a rectangular section of the body while the lower extremity of the

tube is inserted in a hollowed gourd (*Lagenaria sicerania*). Ordinarily the instrument is played outside by men and sometimes used for courting. While playing, the musician may be helped by an assistant holding the lower part of the instrument in his hands. Other kinds of four-hole bamboo clarinets, which are also traditionally played for courting, bear various names (*wobi, wobon pili, pishi, alamiya, motu-mutshi*, etc.) and are mainly distinguished by the length of the body. They also only consist of a single tubular body (no calabash is attached to it).

One type of clarinet (*meshao*, or *matsi*) made either of brass or bamboo, resembles the Chinese *bawu*, having a metal reed. It measures approximatively 40 cm in length and 3 cm in diameter. Close to the embouchure is a copper reed attached to the body of the instrument. This type bears eight holes (including one back hole), the scale playing F, G, Bb1, C1, D1, Eb1, F1, G1, Ab1. While playing the musician (usually a girl or a woman) holds the intrument at an angle to the right. A legend relates how a young girl, having become mute by the action of some evil spirit, once had the idea to make up an musical instrument that could function as a substitute for her lost voice, using for that purpose a bamboo flute to which she added a wooden reed whose shape imitated a human tongue. Another type called *dëlë*, resembling the Chinese *caobawu*, has six holes and is a favourite instrument along the Sino-Vietnamese border, especially among members of the Duoni subgroup in Jinping area.

Multiple reeds

The Chinese conical oboe (*suona*) of Arabo-Persian origin is also widespread among the Hani under various names (*sanjie, tsëdzu, dagwe, moxa*, etc). Conical oboes are found in a great number of shapes, but all seem to stem from the same Chinese model. The instrument has a double reed made of a piece of flattened reed-plant. Eight holes define a scale which has nothing to do with the pentatonic scale but is characterized by a split of

the minor third into two intervals of 3/4 tones. As elsewhere in China, this type of oboe is closely associated with life cycle rituals, such as marriage and funerals, or agricultural festivals. It is also very commonly used by pairs. Traditionally among Hani of the Yichë subgroup, for instance, two oboes are played by young men in the fields to accompany female workers while transplanting rice. The conical oboe is also an essential part of the set of instruments which, together with horns, gongs and cymbals, makes up the traditional orchestra required for marriage and funerals.

A very popular wind instrument in the Ailao mountains and other areas in the middle of Yunnan Province is a kind of miniature six-hole oboe measuring eight to ten centimeters long and less than a centimeter in diameter, similar in some aspects to the Chinese small-weeping oboe (*xiaomendi*). It has a double reed and can produce shrill and loud sounds, being suited to outdoor playing where it is used both by men and women.

Multiple reed instruments also include a somewhat primitive type of idioglottal oboe called the *wupo* (or *wudu,wu-on*), whose vibrating reeds are created simply by cutting multiple slits along the upper end of the body. The latter is a paddy or wheat stalk measuring about 20 cm in length, cut just under a node so that the upper end is closed. Two to four slits are then made in the body a little lower than the node, functioning as reeds by which the sound is produced when the player puts the upper end into his mouth and blows into the slits. While playing, the hands of the musician circle the lower end of the body in order to make the sound resonate. It is a favourite among children who make it by themselves and play it in great numbers at transplanting and harvesting times, either in solo or group performances.

b) Flutes

Flutes, mainly bamboo of mono-tubular type, are used in great numbers among the Hani. The great majority of them are vertically held flutes (*dzɑpi*) although transverse flutes, very common everywhere in China, are also used. More noticeable is the existence of a bamboo recorder (*tixe*) among the Hani of Jiangcheng, as this instrument is practically non-existent elsewhere in China. The body, measuring 30 cm with four holes, has a mouthpiece made of a block of wax held by two bamboo sticks. Its role is to deviate the air flow and to cast it against the thin edge of a bamboo slice inserted just below a rectangular hole that is pierced a little lower on the body of the intrument. A second remarkable type is the vertical nose flute of the Yichë subgroup, played by practising circular breathing. All flutes are male instruments made to be played outside and, like oboes, are frequently used by young men in courtship.

c) Horns and Trumpets

Horns made of buffalo horns or bamboo are traditional instruments used by the Hani for calling, announcing guests coming from distant villages, coordinating collective works in the fields or, formerly, as war signals. The use of tree leaves as vegetal horns, or trumpets, is certainly the greatest originality of Hani musical instrumentation. The instrument, called *gobe*, *gubi* or *maetshü-(a)pa*, is usually made from the leaf of the spiked gingerlily (*Hedychium spicatum*, Hani: *mae-(a)pa*), or the Japanese banana tree (*Musa basjoo* Sieb. et Zucc) cultivated near pondfields not for its fruits but for medicinal purposes. The leaf is rolled by hand into a conical shape, the musician blowing into the narrow end, producing a rather low-pitched sound. The sound being simply produced by the vibrations of the lips and made to resound by means of the hands clasping the lower end, the instrument offers great potential for modulation, glissandos and vibratos, with a typical tone of horn. A legend wide-spread in the

Ailao mountains relates how a woman first got the idea of inventing such an instrument after her husband had been killed at war. Having kept on crying for seven days and nights she lost her voice, so she had this idea of making an instrument out of a leaf that could be used as a substitute to express her lamentations. The villagers, hearing that very special sound evoking a human cry, were deeply moved and soon started imitating the girl by making their own instruments. The *gobe* is exclusively used by girls and women in their play and to accompany some religious ceremonies and ritual dancing. As for the leaf used by boys, the range of melodies is limited although the tunes are usually longer.

String Instruments

a) Plucked string instruments

The Hani three-string lute resembles the Chinese *sanxian* and bears the same name (*sa(n)xye(n)*). It has a shallow cylindrical body made of hard wood, both sides of which are covered with snake skin or, in one type (*thingë-dzëli*) in use among the Piyo subgroup of Mojiang, made from scales surrounding young bamboo stems which are dried and assembled together. The instrument also has a long flat neck, ending with an curved scroll, often carved, into which are inserted four lateral tuning pegs. On the neck no frets are made, so the pitch of tones may be freely decided. The three strings, tuned so as to produce successively a fourth and a fifth, or a fifth and a fourth (most commonly A1-D1-A2, D1-A2-D2, or C1-F1-C2), are played with nails or with a plectrum (*laomyane*) made of the stone of some chestnut tree (*laomya-(a)dzo*). Strings are usually plucked, not bowed, except for one very small type of lute played by Akhas in Xishuangbanna, made of a single piece of wood measuring 10-15 cm in length which can be either plucked or bowed, the strings of the bow passing under the strings of the instrument. Among the Hani, bows are most often made of horse tail (*maokao*) or of vegetal fibers obtained by using the sword-shaped leaves of the

Sisal Agave (*Agave sisalana*, Perrine, *Agavaceae*; Hani: *laxe*) that have been kept macerating in water for two weeks. The three string-lute accompanies a lead voice or alternatively is played with a vocal solo. When played the musician is sitted, the intrument being set up in upright position on one knee, held in the left hand while strings are plucked alternatively by the nail of the index finger of the right hand.

A very unusual type of string instrument played by the Hani is the *hadë*, in use among the Duoni subgoup of Jinping district. It is made simply by stretching three or four strings between the fingers of one hand, which are then plucked by nails or plectrums. Lacking a permanent body and neck, the *hadë* is tuned approximately as other Chinese string instruments using a succession of fourths and fifths (for instance C1, F1, C2), and is usually played by men while accompanying vocal solos.

The Hani four-string lute (*xaothuu*) is similar to the Chinese "moon shaped" lute (*yueqin*), having the same wooden shallow circular shaped body with the flat sides both covered with wood, and a short neck bearing a curved and frequently carved scroll. The table board, often decorated with paintings, and the back, are also made of wood, different species being suitable and used according to the resources locally available. The strings, made of the vegetal fiber extracted from the Sisal Agave (*Agave sisalana*) are frequently tuned in D2, D2, A3, A3. They are stretched over the neck by four thin lateral tuning pegs and, at the bottom of the intrument, on the bridge. On the neck are made nine frets, of which three are located on the finger board and six on the table board, thus defining the fixed scale of the instrument. The four-string lute, like the other string instruments of the Hani, is a male instrument. While playing, the body lays on the player's thighs, the neck being held in a slanting upright position. Plucking is done by the right hand, using nails or a plectrum (*xaothuu-labö, nyuka-labö*) made out of cattle horn. As for the Chinese *yueqin*

only the two highest-pitched strings ordinarily play the melody while the two lower strings serve to mark tempo counterpoints. Two strings are also frequently played together so as to make intervals of 2nd, 3rd or 4th. The four-string lute can be played in solo performances or used to accompany singing and dancing. In the latter case the hollowed body of the instrument is often slapped, conveying the festive atmosphere of songs and dances.

A third major type of plucked string intruments used by the Hani is a three or four-string long-neck lute, measuring approximately 70 cm in length, and differing from other lutes mainly in the shape of the body. The instrument is a favourite in the western part of the Ailao range, especially among the Piyo subgoup of Mojiang. Its body is made of a half-rounded piece of hollowed trunk of a wild species of mulberry tree (*Morus sp.*), while the table board is made of a thin board of the Chinese Aralia (*Aralia chinensis*) that is stude to the body. A legend among the Hani of that area tells how a young hero first made the instrument for his beloved by imitating the shape of a cow's leg. As a matter of fact the shape of the body of the instrument evocates a cow-leg while the shape of the scroll evocates a cow's hoof. The instrument is used in particular to accompany songs and dances at harvest times.

b) String Instruments

The Hani fiddle (*tshiwu*) is of the same type as the Chinese *er-hu*, and seems to have been recently introduced among the Hani by Han people, especially after 1950. Like its Chinese counterpart it has an hexagonal or octogonal barrel-shaped body made of hard wood whose height is larger than its diameter. The table board is covered by lizard or snake skin while a long neck, often of bamboo, passes through the body. Its slightly curved head bears two arrow-shaped tuning pegs whose bodies bear slanting entails so as to facilitate the tuning. Two strings, tuned in the fourth (most often A2-D2), run from the lower extremity of the neck

located under the body, pass over a bridge and join the tuning pegs. Due to the length of the lateral tuning pegs, the strings tend to deviate from the axis of the neck, so a ring located approximatively in its middle part helps to maintain the strings parallel to the neck. The instrument is played with a bow whose strings made of horse tail (*maokao*), pass under the strings, as in Chinese fiddle. The musician plays while seated, his instrument being set up on his knees. The two strings are simultaneously bowed while the fingers of the left hand simply touch them on the neck, without exerting any significant pressure as frets are lacking on the instrument. Despite the small size of the body the sound is rather low-pitched. The play of the left hand is marked by frequent effects of vibratos and glissandos which are also a characteristic of the Chinese *er-hu*.

Percussion instruments

Percussion instruments include several types of wooden "ankle bells" associated with dancing music, especially musical wooden or bamboo pestles used as dancing bells attached around the ankle, or wooden ancle bracelet which are tight around the legs, all of them being used in collective playing and group dancing. Larger bamboo sections held in an upright position and struck against the ground by an ensemble of girls are part of the funeral dancing. Instrumental ensemble music often uses Chinese cymbals of small and medium size, either of the flat type equivalent to the Chinese *bo*, or with a round protruding central part (equivalent to the *nao*), held with strings attached to the center of the metal disc. Other small percussion instruments used in ensemble music include miniature slit drums hollowed out from sections of tree trunks, cylindrical or octogonal in shape, which are beaten with mallets.

The Hani also possess several kinds of Jew's harps although they do not appear to be common. The instruments, which are mainly idioglottal and made from bamboo, may have several vibrating lamellas resonating in the mouth, as among the neighbouring Yi. They are mainly used in solo performances.

Hani drums (*xudu*) are of two main types: the first one is a one-membrane cylindrical type, made of a hollowed hard-wood tubular cylinder. One face is covered with cattle hide as drumhead, the skin being stuck to the wood on the edges and tied up with a circling of grass or bamboo. Tension and tuning are ensured by hammering this vegetal circling which, by moving closer to the center of the body, stretches the skin. The other type is a two-membrane barrel like drum made of the same materials, the two membranes being attached and stretched together over the body by means of cattle bowels or skin. Hani drums, which produce sounds in the mid-lower register, are essentially beaten by the hands, or in a few cases, with one or two wooden mallets. In the latter case the musician holds the instrument in the left hand while beating or holding one mallet in the right hand. Ordinarily, dances are not accompanied by any melodious instrumental music, but only by the striking of gongs and drums which keep the dancing in pace; therefore drumming in itself is also often associated with dancing and singing. Gongs (*bölö*) used among the Hani all have a protruding central part, this type being typical of South Chinese ethnic groups and more specifically members of the Tibeto-Burman linguistic family. Gongs exist in different dimensions but are generally of small and medium size, not exceeding 40 cm in diameter. While being played, the instrument is held by hand or suspended by a bridle held in the left hand and beaten in its center with a mallet. Gongs suspended horizontally on wooden frames, probably borrowed from Han people, are sometimes encountered in ensemble music, although not commonly.

Ritual uses of percussion instruments

In the culture of the Hani, as of many people in Yunnan and more generally the Eastern Himalayan region, the drum and the gong are much more than mere musical instruments. As a matter of fact gongs and drums kept collectively in one village cannot be struck or even touched in normal times, but only used by religious officials or their assistants in ceremonial rituals. For the Hani consider them as sacred wares having the power to transmit information and prayers to the gods. Gongs are kept in pairs in the village priest's house (*Migu*) as an essential element of the paraphernalia used for collective rituals. On such occasions the two instruments play a key role in relaying communication between humans and spirits during collective rituals. At burial time, for instance, gongs and drums are struck profoundly in order to send the dead's soul to the place where its ancestors lived. Collective prayers addressed to the sky god or gods of the soil are also often initiated by a formal striking of the gong, to call the gods as well as for conveying human messages and prayers. Drums and gongs also have a protective function resulting from their ability to expel evil forces. The founding of a new village, taking the corpse from the house to the burial ground, purifying the village on the seventh lunar month, are all ritual activities for which the beating of percussion instruments is requested in order to drive off spirits. That expulsive power attributed to gongs and drums is furthermore reflected in the Hani mythology under the traits of the legendary hero Alo, represented as using his belly as a drum to kill malevolent demons[4].

[4] A similar association is found in the mythology of the Jinuo, another Tibeto-Burman speaking people of Yunnan, through the story of a hero who, after having defeated and killed a devil, used its skin for his drumhead and its big bones for his drumsticks.

A third prominent feature of religious beliefs attached to percussion instruments is their close association with chtonian cults and the general idea of fertility. The Hani, with some other minority groups as the Lahu and the Wa, differentiate their ritual percussion instruments into male and female ones. Among the Hani, it is the gong, more frequently than the drum, which is differentiated into *epa* (male) and *ema* (female) types. The female type often bears two small protuberances thought to represent human breasts, while the male one has only one in the center that is assimilated to the male genital organs. When beaten, male gongs also produce a lower sound than female ones, on the model of the human voice. In some places, as among members of the Xalo subgroup, the sexual differentiation is made between the gong and the drum, the former being considered as male and the latter as female. The gong itself (or in some places the drum) is further venerated as a divinity, being thought of as a lucky charm having the power to ensure the multiplication of humans and cattle, lots of food when hunting, bumper harvests.

The association of percussion instruments with the idea of fertility is most clearly apparent in the set of rituals of the New Year festival that takes place around the winter solstice in some places or shortly before sowing time in others, and lasts three days. On the first day the gong and the drum cannot be struck, but from the second day on they are collectively played by the "pure men" (*tso-sao*) of the village community while accompanying a series of ritual dances. The striking of the gong is first initiated by the village priest (*Migu*) who presides over a banquet rallying all household heads. The *Migu* first drops wine into the two male and female gongs (or the gong and the drum), beginning with the female one. In some places, when addressing prayers to the sky god, the village priest also puts inside the gong (or drum) various species of grains and green grass taken as symbols for the prosperity of human beings and cattle, hoping that the drum, being satisfied, will bestow whatever man prays for. He then

strikes the female gong three times, meaning that the ceremony is over and the dancing can start. Suddenly a dozen or so young men sound gongs and strike drums, while dancing. Gongs and drums provide repetitious, duple and strongly accented rhythmic patterns that continue for long periods unchanged in form and style. The dancing action mainly consists of imitations of ritual gestures (sacrifying, kneeling down, standing reversely), but also gestures associated with hunting and agriculture (searching for animal footprints, walking forwards and backwards as if clearing a field, and so on) which respectively identify male and female activities.

This calls for an explanation. Drums are clearly associated in several myths with hunting (i.e. male activity), and more specifically collective hunting. One of them relates how, in ancient times, a group of hunters got a large quantity of game attracting the animals by the beating of drums. But in the specific context of the New Year festival, the association of gong and drum is further embedded with the idea of fertility through the combination of male and female principles. Members of the Xalo subgroup of Yuanyang, for instance, explicitly say that the playing of gong and drum symbolizes "the union of the couple", and indeed in many places the collective dancing first starts with a ritual "parade dancing" of the male and female gongs held by the village priest and his assistant, during which the two instruments are ceremoniously presented to each other. Human fertility is itself linked with the fertility of the soil, and so drumming and sounding the gong and dancing naturally become ways of ensuring good crops for the new agricultural cycle to begin. Members of the Lopi subgroup of Jianshui area say for instance that when beaten the sound of the drum "touches" the earth, while members of the Yichë subgroup estimate that he who dances best will also get the best harvest. Lastly, when collective dancing takes place, the gong-gong intercourse becomes a man-drum intercourse as young men occasionally stand facing a drum simulating mating

actions. The dance then becomes a symbolic way of having intercourse with the Earth[5].

Villagers then rely on their gongs and drums for ensuring the general welfare of their domain for the beginning year, making the two instruments the most sacred vessels of their community without which no prosperity is obtainable. As the saying goes:

"Happiness in the village depends on the drums and gongs
as happiness in the household depends on the parents"
(*Pusa-sa-e ludu bölö tshi dzao, Xosa-sa zo dama ni xa*).

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[5]The Yi people of Shiping district, on the northern bank of the Red River, express a parallel idea in a festival taking place on the 15th of the 7th lunar month, the drum dance involved being similarly thought as a symbolic way of having sexual intercourse with a divinity, here the local "Mother Hill". The local people consider their mountain divinity as a female horse in metamorphosis. Every year in ancient times, when the female horse was at puberty, it neighed terribly for a mate. The ancestors of the Yi people who lived at the foot of the mountain tried to quench her desire by dancing upon the hill. They made huge drums with cattle hide as drumheads to accompany the dance. This was a complete success as the female horse no longer neighed, and also marked the beginning of their festival of stepping on the mountain. As for the drum dance of the Hani, it is generally thought that the more energetically people dance, the better the harvest will be.

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CHARAKO BOLI

A brief note on the language of the birds in Nepal

Corneille Jest

In the middle hills of Nepal, the common word for the song of the bird is *boli*. *chiribiri* is an onomatopoeic word used for the twittering of small birds (*chiribiri garnu*: to sing) like sparrows or swallows; for larger birds one would say *karāune*. In Nepal birdsongs are often associated with human feelings. They may also be interpreted by the farmer as a signal or a warning, and may be imitated by the hunter for capturing fowl [*cf.* CD. 15]. Birdsongs are often thought as narrating a story. Such is the case of the sad duet between the *nyauli* and *kuthurke* birds [*cf.* CD 16][1]:

nyauli chari
byauli
kuthurke chara
byaula
sabai chari
milijuli
aphnei gharma jaula...

The female bird *nyauli*
[is] the bride
the male bird *kuthurke*
[is] the bridegroom
all the birds
having assembled
let each of us go to their house!

[1] *nyauli* (Nep.): great Himalayan barbet, *Megalaïma virens*." The great Himalayan barbet sings in the month of *cait* (March-April) when people do not have much food to eat and when the stores are empty"(GBM).According to the dictionary of Nepali, *nyauli* has different meanings: a type of bird, lovers in popular songs (*lokh git*), a musical instrument: bagpipe (when one presses on a bagpipe, it emits the sound *nyaul)* (*Nepali brihat sabdakos*, Kathmandu, Royal Nepal Academy, 2040 BS/1982:755a), *kuthurke* (Nep.), blue throated barbet, *Megalaima asiatica*. A brightly coloured green bird with a red forehead and a blue throat.

In Kumon, the Hurkyas, a caste of bards, sing a repertoire called nyauli which recall the sadness of lovers who are separated (see F. Bernède : *Bards of the Himalayas, Nepal/India*, Le chant du monde CNR 274 1080, Compac disk).

Gyendra Bahadur Rana told me the following story concerning the *nyauli* and the *kuthurke*:

"A long time ago, when the gods lived on earth with the humans, a young girl left home without the permission of her parents. She did not accept her fate of being married without her consent. Her parents were very upset and cursed her; she could never go back to her mother's house. She died and was reborn as a *nyauli* and her lover became the *kuthurke* bird. In her bird's life she wanted to return to her mother's home, but the *kuthurke* bird told her to wait as she could only go if she was requested by her parents. This is the reason why, along the river, one can hear: "*nyauli, nyauli*", I am sad, I am sad!, and her lover answering: "*pakh-pakh-pakh*" Wait! wait! wait!"

The song of the *nyauli* is also associated with the weeding of maize. During the month of *asar* (May-June) a song which mentions the *nyauli* is accompanied with a rhythm produced by two *dhol*, ritual drums.

The Nepalese are fond of the "voice of the birds". The Newars have often kept birds as pets. They were put in a cage and one can remember the merchants in Asan tol, in Kathmandu, listening to bird songs in the early morning hours. The *torichari*, the Himalayan gold finch, *Carduelis spiroïdes* "the bird which eats mustard seeds" (*tori*), are kept in cages. They sing melodious songs in *kartik-munsir* (October-November). Sometimes, *battaï*, quails, *Turnix sp.*, are also kept in cages above shop entrances.

The birdsongs are understood as a signal for farming activities: The *kaphalpakyo*, the Indian cuckoo, *Cuculus micropterus*, gives the signal for sowing maize. It is also called *hakupaku* and indicates that the small berries such as *aishalu* wild raspberries, or *matsaïno* (*Comaria nepalensis)* are ripe.

The *kagalkui*, crested serpent eagle, *Spilornis cheela*, calls the rain with its song "*supi-supi*".

The *phapar chara*, hoopoe, *Upupa epops*, signals that the buckwheat, *phapar* is ready to be harvested.

The *karang kurung*, crane, *Grus virgo*, signals that the pumpkins are ripe.

Other birds are always on alert and warn people in case of danger. Thus, *seto jureli*, the white-cheeked bulbul, *Pycnonotus leucogenys*, emits a "*té-té-té*" when a leopard approaches houses.

The *lampuchare*, the red-billed blue magpie, *Cissa erythrorhyncha*, cries and attacks leopards, jackals and cats.

The *cibe*, drongo, *Dicrurus sp.*, emits "*chibe yoki chibe yoki*" in the presence of leopards.

Hunting is practiced by farmers, and the most skilled attract fowl by imitating their song. The *chakura*, partridge female, *Alectoris chukar*, is called by imitating the song of the male "*tok-tok-tok* ". The *luije*, the jungle fowl, *Gallus gallus*, is called with "*kokorik kokorik*"; the female answers "*kotkotkotkota*".

Titra, the black partridge, *Francolinus francolinus,* is called with "*ti taritiri*" or the call of the male, "*teng teng tarara*".

The *dokur*, the turtle dove, *Streptopelia orientalis*, is attracted by the song "*dokurkur kur*".

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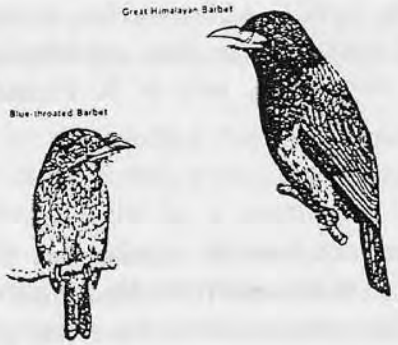

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF HIMALAYAN MUSIC

by Mireille Helffer

The following bibliography comprises works in European languages on the Indian Himalayas, Nepal and Bhutan. Nepali and Newari publications are included in the bibliography compiled by Ram Sharan Darnal. Tibet is not included since several bibliographies have been published elsewhere (cf. Helffer, "An Overview of Western Work on Ritual Music of Tibetan Buddhism (1960-1990)", in M.P. Baumann, A. Simon, U. Wegner (Eds.), *European Studies in Ethnomusicology: Historical Developments and Recent Trends.*, Selected papers presented at the VIIth European Seminar in Ethnomusicology, Berlin, Oct. 1-6, pp. 87-101, Wilhelmshaven: Florian Noetzel Verlag).

Books, contributions appearing in journals or collective works and leaflets accompanying records were taken into account in the publications of songs, musical instruments and organology (cf. collections in the Musée de l'Homme and the files established by Agnès Eberhard-Heinmann in 1971), musicians, music and musical language, the performing arts (Theater, Dance).

For a brief presentation of the tape recordings kept in the department of ethnomusicology in the Musée de l'Homme, please see EBHR No.5, 1993, pp. 24-25.

We shall consider publications from the 1960s on, when portable tape recorders became common-place. This was also the time when researchers supervised by Prof. G. Millot and Dr. C. Jest started their work in Nepal. We shall mention a few older published recordings that are of some historical importance, such as B. Pignède's recordings among the Gurung.

Nepal

Fieldwork in Nepal remained for a long time confined to the Kathmandu Valley, as A.A. Bake's and A.W. Macdonald's studies show. Relationships with the Gaine musicians were not easy given their low status.

A) Works by anthropologists and linguists mention musical performances in the life of the people that they describe, but they rarely publish recordings or offer musical analysis.

For instance the very thorough studies by M. Oppitz or A. de Sales on the Kham-Magar accord considerable importance to the drum *rẽ* used by the shamans. The fabrication of this drum is described in great detail, and songs related to this instrument are presented. However, the recordings remain in these researchers' personal archives.

With regards to the Tamang, the situation is approximately the same; since A.W. Macdonald's pioneer publication, A. Höfer and B. Steinmann have introduced many *hvāi* texts to their readers and here too, the omnipresent drum is carefully studied, but no recordings are available.

Recently G. Krauskopff presented the rich repertory of the Tharu songs of Dang, but it is significant that her contribution appears in a collective work devoted to oral traditions in the Indian world and music is not even mentioned.

It is important to cite the numerous songs, especially wedding songs, collected in the Humla region by N. Levine (unpublished to my knowledge) and by David Friedlander (MA thesis submitted to INALCO in 1991). As for numerous songs collected by C. Ramble in the Mustang area, they still need to be edited and analysed.

Regarding the French researchers whom I know better, many recordings remain unexamined in various collections. For example no one has pursued the preliminary surveys, accompanied by recordings and rich photographic documentation, collected by C. Jest in Dolpo or among the Thakali.

It should be aknowledged that many ethnic groups are almost totally unknown as far as their music is concerned because there is no qualified ethnomusicologist in a position to study them. Only a comparison with recordings collected in the past would allow researchers to bring out specific features before it is too late: radio or television programmes, as well as the growing popularity of professional folklore groups tend to bring a general uniformity to these performing arts.

The question of the *jhāṅkri* and their use of the *dhyaṅgro* drum are often presented, but it is an exception when it is the object of an ethnomusicological study (*cf.* Gianattasio).

B) Works by ethnomusicologists or musicians such as Bernède, Ellingson, Gianattasio, Grandin, Helffer, Moisala, Tingey, Wegner, Weisetaunet, or Wiehler-Schneider, concern mainly four domains:

1. Musicians castes and their repertoires.

Following A.A. Bake's (cf. Tingey, 1989) and A.W. Macdonald's works on the singer-musicians *gāine* in the 1960s, this caste attracted the attention of researchers. The numerous recordings of that time (cf. archives in the Musée de l'Homme: recordings by Macdonald, Gaborieau, Jest and Helffer) can be compared today with modern Gāine music, recorded by J. Galodé and H. Weisetaunet.

C. Tingey provides us with some excellent work on the musicians-tailors Damāi and their instruments within the traditionnal context of the village, as well as at contemporary weddings in Kathmandu.

The practice of the *dholi* and of the *hurkiya* in western Nepal, on which M. Gaborieau and myself worked in 1969, has been part of F. Bernède's research programme since 1994. A compact disc on the subject should be published in 1997 in the CNRS-Musée de l'Homme collection.

2. Newar music.

Newar music has been studied from various angles: organology (Wiehler-Schneider), publication of songs (S. Lienhard) and drumming analysis (G.M. Wegner). I. Grandin examined the musical tastes of the young Newar population; G. Toffin analysed the way drums are used in the *jyapu* initiation in Kathmandu, while F. Bernède is working on the rythmic structures of drum repertoire. In addition, the music god, Nasah Diyo, has not been forgotten (Ellingson,Wegner).

3. Gurung music

See the work of Pirkko Moisala.

Ladakh

The numerous publications by Francke at the beginning of this century were followed by a long period of silence. Then recordings were published following the Crossley-Holland mission in 1961, and the Helffer mission in 1976. Texts of songs are published locally. Anthropologists, researchers and travellers have published records with little documentation. Since 1986 Mark Trewin has been working on the *mon* repertoire (cymbals and oboe), and in particular, on the *lha rnga* or "the drum of the gods".

Bhutan

Very little documentation is available. Bhutanese music has obvious links with Tibetan music. John Levy published several records with a few comments. Although he was neither an ethnologist nor an ethnomusicologist his publications provide the best available source of Bhutanese repertoire.

A few cassettes as well as texts of songs are published locally, but there is no analysis either of the context nor of the musical language.

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THE BHUTANESE MATERIALS OF THE JOHN LEVY COLLECTION IN THE SCHOOL OF SCOTTISH STUDIES SOUND ARCHIVE, UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

by Mark Trewin

John Levy (1910-1976), recordist, musicologist and theologian, made more than 700 field recordings, mostly of excellent quality, between the years 1958-1972 from many parts of the world, including India (1958-1962), Sri Lanka (1960), Iceland (1961), China (1963) South Korea (1964) and Taiwan (1964 and 1969). Other materials include several thousand photographs, 16mm cine films, and several hundred LP recordings (including the 18 he himself produced).

His visit to Bhutan in September-November 1971, facilitated by Michael Aris (at that time tutor to the royal family), was his last foreign trip before a motorcycle accident in the UK led to his early death. Upon the suggestion of Madeau Stewart at the BBC (who had produced his radio talks on Bhutanese music in 1972, among others), these recordings, together with the rest of the collection, were bequeathed to the School of Scottish Studies (which John Levy had first contacted in 1962 when researching possible connections between the music of Iceland and the Northern Isles of Scotland).

The wealth of material was left in some disarray by its collector, and over the years a numbers specialists have worked on parts of the archive. The Bhutanese materials were sorted and catalogued by Ricardo Canzio, and his work is gratefully acknowledged.

Levy's published recordings of Bhutanese music (LLST 7255-8), recently re-issued on CD, are among his most valuable contributions, but they are, of course, only representative samples of the original field recordings. The following report is intended to briefly survey the entire Bhutanese holdings, with a view to promoting its research potential.

List of Holdings

The Bhutanese recordings consist of 46 reels of field recordings made on a Nagra S (JL/71/3-48, with copies JLX 224-255), 7 LPs (LLST 7255-8 and BBC 34691-3) with accompanying documentation, together with miscellaneous materials including photographs, correspondence and other items.

The recordings are catalogued and indexed along with the others in the Levy Collection. The Chronological Register of Recordings gives essential information (tape number, place, date, informant, title/cue, type genre, indexer's comments), while the Card Index includes copies of Levy's own typed field notes for each tape.

Contents of the Recordings

Liturgical Music

Kyichu Lhakhang *(rnying-ma-pa* monastery), Paro Valley

JL171/9-12 Ceremony dedicated to *rdo-rje sems-dpa'*. Recorded 3.10.71

JL/71/23-25 Annual Festival of *sgrub-chen*. [cf. LLST 7257 Side A] Recorded 11.10.71

Tashichö Dzong (*'brug-pa bka'-brgyud-pa* monastery), Thimphu

JL/71/16-21 and 27-28 [cf. LLST 7255 Side A and Side B, tracks 1-5 and 11] Various instrumental items (including "the 11 ways of playing the *dung-chen"),* and chants. Recorded 6-7.10.71 and 19.10.71

Tongsa Dzong (*'brug-pa bka'-brgyud-pa* monastery),

JL/71/36 Supplication rite for Guru Padmasambhava [cf. LLST 7256 Side B] Recorded 29.10.71

JL/71/37-38 *bla-ma nor-bu rgya mtsho* rite [cf. LLST 7256 Side A, Tracks 3-5] Recorded 31.10.71

JL/71/39 *cham* masked dances [cf. LLST 7256 Side A, Tracks 1-2] Recorded 1.11.71

Jampai Lhakhang (*rnying-ma-pa* monastery), Chokor Valley, Bumthang

JL/71/42-43 Miscellaneous items from an annual festival [cf. LLST 7257 Side B] Recorded 3-4.11.71

Punakha Dzong (*'brug-pa bka'-brgyud-pa* nunnery)

JL/71/45-46 *smyung-gnas* rite [cf. LLST 7255 Side B, tracks 6-8] Recorded 11.11.71 (mono)

Para-liturgical Music

This includes *mantra* recitations (JL/71/35) and bardic recitation (JL/71113), recorded from *manip* in Thimphu and Tongsa, a number of Milarepa songs, probably from Paro (JL/71/14), and an *a-che lha-mo* performance in Thimphu (JL/71/26). Several of these recordings are represented on the published discs.

Ceremonial Music

There is one item of processional music performed by a drum and reed ensemble in Thimphu, apparently similar to those found in other Himalayan regions; plus two versions of the Bhutanese National Anthem played by the European-derived military and pipe bands of the Royal Bhutanese Guards in Thimphu (JL/71/16).

Folk Music

There are approximately 100 songs, dances and solo instrumental items (mainly the *sgra-snyan* lute) recorded from a number of performers from different regions of Bhutan and Tibet. A range of genres are represented, and include Gesar songs, praise songs, and songs accompanying a sword dance and archery competition. Several items were released on LLST 7258.

Documentation: Song Texts, Notations and Translations

Wherever possible, Levy obtained copies of the written texts of the song forms he recorded. Most of these texts are on single leaves in manuscript, xerox, or photographic form, and in either block or cursive Tibetan scripts. These have now been collated and bound, together with the English translations provided by Philip Denwood for those items selected by Levy for publication.

In addition there are several sets of Tibetan folios of liturgical texts. These, being perhaps of greatest interest, are itemized in the following list of texts and notations in the collection which correspond to the recordings of liturgical music (refer above):

JL/71/9-12 *dpal rdo rje sems dpa' thugs kyi sgrub pa'i bsnyen sgrub phrin las kyi chog rnam lam gzang zhes bya ba bzhugs so* [42 folios]

JL/71/23-25 *klong chen snying gi thig le las: rig 'dzin thugs sgrub dpal chen 'dus pa bzhugs* [19 folios]

JL/71/16-21 and 27-28 Sixteen texts on single sheets accompanying these short recitations, with translations;

JL/71/36 *Padmasambhava gsol 'debs, smon lam, le'u bdun pa* [53 folios, with translation]

JL/71/37-38 *bla ma nor bu rgya mtsho* [musical notation].

Other documentation includes Levy's original field notes, correspondence (principally with Michael Aris, but also Hugh Richardson, David Snellgrove, Philip Denwood, Laurence Picken and others), LP sleeve notes, transcripts of his three radio talks, record reviews (including Crossley-Holland 1974), newspaper clippings and maps.

Discography

BBC 34691-3 *Music from Bhutan.* Three radio talks. BBC 1972.

LLST 7255 *Rituals of the Drukpa Order from Thimphu and Punakha* [Tibetan Buddhist Rites from the Monasteries of Bhutan, Vol.1]. Recording and commentary by John Levy, Lyrichord 1973.

LLST 7256 *Sacred Dances and Rituals of the Nyingmapa and Drukpa Orders* [Tibetan Buddhist Rites from the Monasteries of Bhutan, Vol.2].Recording and commentary by John Levy, Lyrichord 1973.

LLST 7257 *Temple Rituals and Public Ceremonies* [Tibetan Buddhist Rites from the Monasteries of Bhutan, Vol.3]. Recording and commentary by John Levy. Lyrichord 1973.

LLST 7258 *Tibetan and Bhutanese Instrunental and Folk Music* [Vol.4]. Recording and commentary by John Levy. Lyrichord 1973.

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ABOUT BHUTANESE MUSIC

Note from the editors

The inventory of Bhutanese music presented by Mark Trewin gives us the opportunity to once more emphasize the importance of collecting and localising information of old documents, keeping in mind the constant and important changes in musical expression accelerated by the media (TV programmes and films) and easy access to all kinds of recordings (cassettes, etc..).

There are a number of changes taking place in Bhutan and which might affect the musical life of this country.

In October 1995, the Special Commission for Cultural Affairs of the Royal Government of Bhutan organised a three-day musical competition to 'preserve, promote and improve Bhutanese music'.

The performances comprised: a cappella classical songs, *zhungdra,* court songs and dances, *boedra,* and modern songs, *rigsar.*

The following editorial, published in *Kuensel,* the weekly newspaper of Bhutan, in October 14,1995, should serve to remind those interested in 'traditional' music of the risk of its replacement by contemporary music.

> 'The general response (to the festival) came as a shock to the organizers and to some in the audience. Boedra was tolerated, rigsar was a smash hit, but zhungdra performers, selected singers from rural Thimphu were "booed" by the crowd...
>
> Yet, under the circumstances, it was inevitable, it was even understandable. Above all, it was a clear indication of the change taking place within the society.
>
> The loud categories of music like rock music and what is known locally as "disco" type music have come into the country and are here to stay. As more people, especially the younger generation, are influenced through film and other media, it will pick up momentum.
>
> It was visible last week, The rigsar category was popular partly because of the use of synthesizers and modern instruments. Its other effect was the rhythm and dance beat which young fans prefer. Meanwhile the boedra category was also appreciated for its use of accompaniment, both traditional and modern instruments. It was seen as less formal than zhungdra.
>
> It is perhaps desirable that, if music is to change and develop, it should happen to Bhutanese music and Bhutanese artists so that bhutanese youth can be involved with the changes rather that their identifying with imported music....
>
> The bottom line is that such traditional art forms (like zhungdra) may be lost with the passing generation".

Mireille HELFFER: *Mchod-rol. Les instruments de la musique tibétaine*, CNRS Éditions/ Éditions de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme. Paris, 1994, 401 pp. + Compact disc.

Review by Per Kvaerne

For two decades, Mireille Helffer has been the foremost expert in the West on Tibetan music, especially ritual (or religious) music. Many of her friends and colleagues have been aware that she was preparing a comprehensive survey of the instruments used in Tibetan religious music. The present volume is the product of many years of dedicated research - and it is indeed a fascinating, scholarly book which will be eagerly read by Tibetologists as well as by ethnomusicologists.

The Introduction relates a number of episodes from the first Western encounters with Tibetan ritual music, and provides a brief survey of the various instruments, their use and organological classification. Further, it contains a useful general survey of the manifold sources: written sources in Tibetan (canonical as well as non-canonical) and iconographical material.

The main body of the book is a presentation of each instrument in separate chapters, starting with the wind-instruments: trumpets (*dung-chen*), oboes (*rgya-gling*), followed by a heterogeneous group of instruments defined by their function, viz. calling the monks to assembly: the wooden *gandi*, the gong (*'khar-rnga*), and the conch (*dung-dkar*). The following chapters deal with instruments used for marking the beat: the drum (*rnga*), various cymbals (*sbug-chal*, *sil-snyan*, and *ting-shags*). Separate chapters discuss the bell (*dril-bu*), the flat-bell (*gshang*), the hand-held double drum (*damaru*), and the bone trumpet (*rkang-gling*, often, in spite of the name, made of metal), all of them characterized by being not only instruments used in rituals, but also ritual objects and in some cases, iconographical symbols. Finally, three instruments, which are not used in rituals, but are found in religious iconography (and also used in lay music), are briefly discussed: the lute (*pi-wang* and *sgra-snyan*) and the flute (*gling-bu*).

Two short, but extremely interesting chapters, dealing with the use of music in rituals and the effect of combining various instruments, complete the main part of the book.

There are several useful appendices, including a survey of all examples of musical notation in Tibetan texts known to the author and a discussion of the so-called "Tibetan bowls" (which, while apparently not entirely unknown in Tibet, are in no sense "Tibetan"). The bibliography is, as could be expected, extensive, listing 89 works in Tibetan and probably virtually all relevant Western works; there is also a useful list of CDs, records, and films, as well as of recordings preserved in the archives of the Musée de l'Homme in Paris.

The author points out that all Tibetan rituals presuppose a text, and hence the ethnomusicologist who wishes to study Tibetan music on more than a superficial, purely technical level has to have access to the relevant texts in Tibetan; in other words, she or he has to be a Tibetologist as well. This Mireille Helffer is, and thereby the book achieves a unique breadth as well as depth. She makes use of a large number of written Tibetan sources, some of them difficult indeed to read and interpret, and this enables her to present, for each instrument, the relevant Tibetan traditions regarding the manner of playing and historical and mythological origins. Several of the instruments, such as the conch, the drum, and the flat-bell, have quite elaborate origin myths, which are translated in the book. In general, the following topics are discussed in relation to each instrument: morphological and acoustic characteristics; Tibetan systems of musical notation and relevant terminology; repertory and techniques of playing; historical and/or mythological origins; iconographical sources; symbolism of the instrument and of its parts.

The author (or the publishers?) have followed the policy of not using diacritical marks for Sanskrit terms, except for the long vowels. This is perfectly acceptable, but there are, unfortunately, numerous errors in the use of this mark. There are also a number of printing errors, as well as Tibetan words which presumably have been faithfully copied from manuscripts, but retaining erroneous spellings; in the most obvious cases, at least, the correct form might have been added in parentheses.

There are a few points which require comments; thus on p.48 *dkar-brgyud bstan-pa* is rendered "la doctrine des *bka'-brgyud-pa*". On p.98 the author states that "L'usage du *'khar-gsil* semble s'être perdu assez tôt au Tibet"; this is not entirely the case, as this object is still part of the equipment of a fully ordained Bonpo monk and is used by these monks on certain ceremonial occasions. On p.145 *Bu-ston* (1290-1364) is anachronistically referred to as "le savant *dge-lugs-pa*"; surely it is more correct to refer to him as a *bka'-gdams-pa*, and reserve the term *dge-lugs-pa* for the school founded by Tsong-kha-pa. On p. 221, *stong-gsum* is translated as "les trois mondes"; this expression refers, however, to the concept of "a thousand worlds three times multiplied", i.e. a billion, in other words, an infinite number. On p. 285 there is a reference to Liui and Kiggel 1988, a work which does not seem to be listed in the Bibliography. On p. 288 there is a reference to a Bhutanese instrument *surlim*, to which the author adds *sic*; the *sic* is, however, uncalled for, as the word surlim is the normal Dzongkha pronunciation of Tibetan *zur-gling*.

These details are, obviously, of marginal importance and do not detract in the least from the overall excellency of the book, both as an indispensable handbook and as an important contribution to the study of Tibetan culture. On the whole, the documentation is extensive and meticulous, and the use of illustrations generous. The inclusion of a compact disc is particularly praiseworthy.

Precisely because of the excellency of the present volume, the lack of comprehensive studies of other aspects of Tibetan musical traditions becomes all the more apparent. First and foremost, a study of the vocal traditions of ritual music is needed; these traditions can only be studied in conjunction with the relevant rituals. Likewise, the various regional traditions of folk-music should be studied and documented systematically. Mireille Helffer's book will serve as an inspiration for research in all these fields, and provides a standard of excellence and comprehensiveness against which all future contributions will be measured.

P.K.
University of Oslo

Ingemar Grandin, *Music and Media in Local Life. Music Practice in a Newar Neighbourhood in Nepal*, Linköping : Linköping University (Sweden), Department of Communication Studies, 1989. XX-233 pp.*

Review by Mireille Helffer

This book is the outflow of a Swedish programme, "Music, modernity and the communication of a national identity in Nepal". The author's objective was the study of musical practice (performance and listening) and "mediatization" (assimilation of and accommodation to new resources) in the micro-society of a small Newar town in the Kathmandu Valley from 1985 to 1988.

The book is divided into six chapters. The first chapter describes "everyday" and "extraordinary" situations in which musicians/performers practice various forms of music (religious festivals, processions, marriages, cultural programmes) or how the residents of a specific neighbourhood understand and listen to music.The second chapter focuses upon the Newar musical heritage and describes the diverse musical forms which have survived and the circumstances in which they are performed. The third chapter takes into consideration "modern" music (*adhunik*), transmitted by the media (radio, cassettes, film)--Nepali or Newari songs, songs adopted from popular Indian films or, among the young, western rock, pop or disco music. An interesting distinction is made between "love songs", predominant on the radio, and "societal songs", undoubtedly corresponding to the Nepali term *sāmājik*. The latter attract much interest in Newar society but do not appear on official programmes. The fourth chapter discusses the results of a neighbourhood survey of 27 out of 53 households which responded to a questionnaire. The analysis of these responses from a total of 61 individuals, from 12 to 72 years of age and nearly all men, reveals the role played by the presence of a radio and the programmes broadcast by Radio Nepal (which do not really allow much choice) and the marked preferences of the choice of cassettes. The fifth chapter analyses how the contemporary phenomenon of gradually substituting some repertoires for others has already manifested itself over the years and how

* Published in French in *Yearbook for Traditional Music*, 23/1991, p. 145-146.
Translation: S. Keyes

some circumstances, such as *jātrā* religious festivals, today favour the merging of diverse repertoires.The sixth chapter puts forth an interpretation of the observed facts by emphasizing the musical compatibility of repertoires marked by a common association with "Indian civilisation" or by the use of the same instrument (combination of harmonium and *tabala*, for example). Grandin also discusses the ideological currents which articulate Newar ethnic awareness today, within the realm of music, but also extend to the linguistic and political realms.

In contrast to his predecessors, who followed a more familiar approach to ethnomusicology, and were more interested in Newar music and instruments, Grandin deals with the subject from a new and justified sociological perspective. He clearly shows the turning point marked by the fall of the Ranas, the openings to modernity following the revolutionary movement in 1989-90; he always places such changes within the perspective of the Newar minority. The methodology employed, despite its extremely positive side, nevertheless has serious drawbacks; it assumes as a matter of fact that the reader without knowledge of Nepali will be familiar with the acoustic material in question or have on-site experience. I would have hoped that in addition to the very useful glossary of Nepali and Newari terms, a cassette of recordings would have been included to allow direct access to the sounds of the Newar of Kirtipur.

Besides the questions which the representativeness of the sampling bring up, one might also question the choice of the town of Kirtipur in relation to other Newar towns in the Kathmandu Valley, or even towns which are predominantly Nepali-speaking.

In conclusion, this text by Ingemar Grandin is a valuable source of information and most useful because of its numerous Nepali references (texts, records and cassettes, often unavailable in the West). However, it is likely to have greater interest for the sociologist and risks disappointing the ethnomusicologist anxious to better understand Newar music.

Pirkko Moisala, *Cultural Cognition in Music: Continuity and Change in the Gurung Music of Nepal.* Jyväskylä : Gummerus Kirjapaino Oy, 1991 (Suomen etnomusikologisen seuran julkaisuja 4). xii, 427 pp.*

Review by Mireille Helffer

Pirkko Moisala's book, dedicated to the music of an ethnic group in central Nepal, is a significant contribution to the knowledge of Himalayan music, as much for the novelty of the subject as for the methodology which combines anthropological, musicological and cognitive approaches.

The author, who has had several articles published in periodicals in Nepal and Finland, bases her work on solid fieldwork. She visited a village in the district of Lamjung with a majority Gurung population (in 1975-76, and more briefly in 1985); there, she collected music documentation to which 12 hours of videocassettes were added. She took advantage of the ten-year interval between her two visits to perfect her study of Nepali in London and ethnomusicology in the United States.

In the two introductory chapters, the author explains and justifies her choice of methodology by acknowledging her indebtedness to the late John Blacking, and other significant names in American ethnomusicology: Alan Merriam, Bruno Nettl and Norma McLeod. She also details the theoretical presuppositions which underlie her research and which aim at elucidating to what measure changes in musical order are concomitant with other observable changes in a given culture.

The following chapter places the Gurung ethnic group within the Nepalese context. There is a clear summary of data gathered by numerous English, Nepalese and French anthropologists during the last decades and a rigorous presentation of the conditions in which the study was carried out, at a time when the process of Nepalization was most intense.

The fourth chapter which deals with problems relative to the specificity of Gurung music takes up nearly half of the book: it is divided in six sub-chapters which successively examine the following points:

- village music, 1975-76
- Gurung and Nepalese musical concepts

* Published in French in *Yearbook for Traditional Music*, 24/1992, p. 163-164.
Translation: S. Keyes

- musical events, a description of sites where music is practised, especially the Gurung institution, *rodi ghar* where the youth of both sexes get together to sing and play the *madal* drum

- diverse "genres" representing varying degrees of Gurung culture

- changes in the village in 1985

- the emergence of urban music among the young Gurung living in the Kathmandu Valley

Two particularly significant musical manifestations are emphasised: 1) the *serga* dance, included in death rituals, which uses a dozen different rhythmic patterns; and 2) the *ghāñtu* epic dance, considered by the Gurung as well as foreign observers as the most representative of Gurung culture which requires a male chorus, four *madal* drummers and two to three young female dancers. The performance lasts three days and nights. One part of this long epic is minutely analysed: text, carefully noted melodic and rhythmic patterns, vocal and dance styles leading to a trance, etc. Two other musical genres where Indo-Nepalese influence are clearly present are highlighted: 1) the *Krishna Caritra* or the life story of Krishna, with Nepali text; and 2) contemporary music and dance performed by village youth for amusement and integrated in presentations designated by the English term *Thetar* (for theatre); local songs are included as well as popular pan-Nepalese songs called *lokala git* and some songs adapted from Radio Nepal broadcasts.

In the conclusion, the author, who recognises the transitory state in which the ambient culture is conveyed by the education system and the media, attempts to analyse the changes she witnessed during her two fieldtrips. She always considers musical performances from three aspects: culture, musical genre and particular conditions where she observed each of these aspects.

In summary, it is an informative book based on the author's original documentation; contemporary ethnomusicology is confronted with the omnipresent problem of musical acculturation, and there is ample material for reflection. The reader will appreciate the abundance of iconographic documentation and musical examples, but unfortunately, there are no recordings illustrating the author's subject matter nor an index which would make the work more accessible.

Carol Tingey: *Auspicious Music in a Changing Society. The Damāi Musicians of Nepal.* London : School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, SOAS Musicology Series/vol. 2, 1994, 284 p.*

Review by Mireille Helffer

Seven years have passed since Carol Tingey completed her Ph.D., under the supervision of Richard Widdess, at the University of London. The above-mentioned book, which further explores her dissertation topic, is much more comprehensive and the author merits the highest praise. The book constitutes the culmination of extensive fieldwork in Nepal from 1987 to 1988 and concerns the caste of tailor/musicians, the Damāi, whose primary function is to ensure "auspicious music" for everyone.

The author's material has been organised according to a standard pattern. The two introductory chapters specify the methodology; the Damāi are placed within their geographical environment and the historical conditions of their settlements are examined. The reader will appreciate seeing how the Rajputs from northern India seemed to have favoured the development of small instrumental ensembles in Nepal; these ensembles were the heirs of *naqqāra khānāī* and *naubat shahnāī* in India and were characterised by the presence of *naqqāra* kettledrums and *shahnāi* oboes.

The study of the instruments composing these ensembles, often designated by the term "the five instruments" (*pañcai bājā*), comprises the contents of the third chapter. Each of the instruments--whether shawms (*shahnāī*), kettledrums of varying sizes (*naqqāra, damahā, tyāmko*), long natural horns (*narsinga*), trumpets (*karnāl*), or cymbals–is the object of a meticulous organological description accompanied by excellent photographs and drawings. There is particular attention to playing techniques, especially the shawm (oboe), of which Carol Tingey has become a skilled instrumentalist.

The fourth chapter examines the status of the Damāi in Nepalese society; despite their fairly low rank among the impure and untouchable castes, such as the Kami smiths or the Sarki tanners/shoemakers, the

* Published in French in *Cahiers de Musiques Traditionnelles*, 8/1995, p. 237-239. Translation: S. Keyes.

Damāi and their music are indispensable to numerous rituals and contribute to the prestige of those who employ them.

The following three chapters (pp. 103-227), illustrated with several musical examples, are devoted to the repertoire; it is examined within the context in which the various pieces are played: "popular" repertoire, repertoire within a specific context, ritual repertoire.

In the introduction to Chapter 5, Dr. Tingey analyses the respective roles of the instruments used in the two principal types of ensembles, *nagarābānā* and *pañcai bājā).* She shows how the *damahā* kettledrums (from which the Damāi caste takes their name) and *jhyāli* cymbals provide rhythm, how the *dholak* drum and the small *tyāmko* ketteledrum provide rhythmical interest, how the two *shahnāī* shawns, which are usually present, ensure respectively melody and tonic drone; and how the small, specific phrases characterising the *narsinga* and *kamāl* horns are articulated.

An inventory of the scales follows -associated with the *thāt* of classical north Indian music; this seems justifiable as the Damāi have some knowledge of the *rāg,* but in my opinion there is little point comparing them to Ionian, Dorian, Lydian, or Aeolian modes of traditional medieval western music; more especially as the author herself underscores the predominance of the pentatonic-anhemitonic scale.

Data related to popular repertoire as it existed at the time of the study (Ch. 5) are classified under different headings: 1) "popular songs", instrumental versions of locally well-known songs or those widely broadcast on local and national radio stations; 2) purely instrumental pieces which musicians call *khyāli* and *jhyaure* according to the binary or ternary character of the rhythmic structure; 3) dances.

Music associated within a particular context is discussed by the author in Chapter 6; such music belongs to a seasonal repertoire. It is essentially comprised of diverse versions of *asāre* performed during the transplanting of rice and of *Mālashri,* played at the time of Dasain. In addition, music performed on the occasion of various ritual activities -processions, life cycle rites, and especially marriage - are also included with numerous musical examples. The author also mentions the existence of a now obsolete repertoire, contingent like the Indian *rāg,* on different

hours of the day. In contrast to "popular" repertory, these pieces hold a more important place in melodic improvisation.

Finally, under the heading, "ritual repertoire" (Ch. 7), the author refers to a corpus of works which are the obligatory accompaniments for certain ritual activities in specific shrines. Tingey then presents the calendar of ritual obligations for various ensembles at the palace in the town of Gorkha; she emphasises music associated with rituals in honour of Gorakhnāth or the goddess Kalika.

In the concluding chapter, the ongoing evolution of Nepalese society and its consequences for Damāi musicians with regard to the composition of their ensembles and repertoire are examined.

Several appendices furnish: 1) equivalencies between the Nepalese and western calendars; 2) a detailed table (hour by hour) of musical interventions which take place at Gorkha during Dasain; 3) the localisation of various groups of musicians, other than the Damāi , who take part in the festival of Dasain; and 4) an evaluation of the remuneration received by the Damāi from their "patrons" (*bista*).

In conclusion, Tingey' book is an exemplary contribution on a subject too long neglected by ethnologists studying Nepal, and it will serve for many years as an indispensable reference to all those interested in the field of Nepalese ethnomusicology. The wealth of information based on actual familiarity with the musicians, meticulous work methods, precise analyses, high-quality illustrations, a glossary of 285 Nepali words, a valuable index and a good bibliography -all of the aforementioned items contribute to the legibility and clarity of this book. One sole regret is that there is no CD accompanying the publication as this would permit access to the music so carefully described by Carol Tingey.

FROM INDIA TO THE POLE STAR: THE SHAMANIC COSMOS, Venice, 11-12 October 1996

Conference Report by Martino Nicoletti (University of Perugia)

An International Conference, organised by Ca' Foscari University of Venice, Venetian Academy of Indian Studies, and CIRSE (Interuniversitary Centre for Research in Eurasian Shamanism), was held at Ca' Foscari University in October 1996. The Seminar aimed at the collection of data about/ and scholarly interpretation of the shamanic conceptions of space of various Asian cultures.

The list of scholars and topics is the following one:

Prof. V.N.Basilov (Academy of Sciences of Moscow): "Cosmos as Everyday Reality in Shamanism".

Dr. B. Brac de la Perrière (CNRS Paris): "37 Naq Cult and the Construction of the Burmese Space".

Dr. A.Cacopardo (Is.M.E.O, Rome): "Shamans and the Space of the 'Pure' among the Kalasha of the Hindu Kush".

Prof. A.T.Chang, Prof. T.Seppilli (University of Perugia): "Shamanic Cosmos and Sacred Kinship in Ancient China".

Prof. G.G.Filippi (University of Venice, Ca' Foscari): "Riding through Heavens".

Prof. G.Giuriati (University of Rome, La Sapienza): "Sampeah Kru Thom: Music as Coordinating Element of Khmer Syncretism".

Prof. M.Hoppal (Hungarian Academy of Sciences): "Shamans in Siberia Today".

Prof. I.M.Lewis (The London School of Economics): "Is there a Shamanic Cosmology ?"

Prof. M.Massenzio (University of Rome, Tor Vergata): "Ernesto De Martino's Conception of the Shaman's Role"

Prof.R.Mastromattei (University of Rome, Tor Vergata): "Quality of Shamanic Space".

Dr. M.Nicoletti (University of Perugia): "The Journey to the Forest: Rituals Hunts and Cosmic Organisation in Eastern Nepal".

Prof. M.Raveri (University of Venice, Ca' Foscari): "The Search for a New Salvation: Shamanic *Imagerie* and Buddhist Language".

Dr. A.Rigopulos (University of Venice, Ca' Foscari):" Forms of Possession in the Marathi Cultural Area: The Cases of Khandoba and Dattatreya".

Prof. V.Sestini (University of Florence): "Architecture and Water in Newar Culture".

Prof. G.Stary (University of Venice, Ca' Foscari): "Shamanic Rituals in Today Korea".

Prof. G.Torcinowich (University of Venice, Ca' Foscari): "Axial Symbolism and Ascensional Rituals".

DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

Mark Trewin: ***Rhythms of the Gods: The Musical Symbolics of Power and Authority in the Tibetan Buddhist Kingdom of Ladakh***, City University, London, 1995. 1 Vol, 425 p., 48 illus., 1 map, 4 figs., 8 tables, 15 mus. exx., glossary-index, cassette.

This thesis is a cultural study of music in Ladakh ("Indian Tibet"). Drawing upon interdisciplinary theories in symbolic anthropology and musicology, the study stresses the primacy of symbolic action as a means of defining and controlling social reality, and proceeds to examine the relationship between the activation of musical structures and the social construction of power and authority, in terms of the generation of meaning.

Ladakh music is particularly suited to this kind of study because the instrumental genre of *lha-rnga* (literally "god-drumming") was once closely linked to the structure of Ladakhi society as a feudal monarchy legitimated by buddhist authority. This music, associated with the personnification of deities or the divine aspects of certain mortal beings, constitutes a 'code' which, in the context of public ritual and royal ceremonial, represents and sustains political authority by embodying aspects of the ideal, transcendental order. Building upon Sherry Ortner's concept of cultural schemata, it is shown how music provides the key to 'naturalising' or 'grounding' these more or less predictable programmes of symbolic action in emotional experience, so that through the patronage of performance, those in authority can manipulate the conduct of their subjects or rivals in expected ways.

In supporting cultural schemata, public musical performance also constitutes a mechanism for dealing with conflict and change, as historically demonstrated by the way in which the later dynastic kings used music to negotiate the perceived Islamic threat from Kashmir and Turkestan. Supported by the analysis of rhythmic structures, in conjunction with historical, organological and iconographic evidence, it is proposed that forms of military and chivarious music of West Asian origin have been accommodated by the indigenous Buddhist tradition: to

the external Mughal authorities, this represented the incorporation of Ladakh into their political framework, but the Ladakhi monarchs presented this phenomenon as the meaningful incorporation of the symbols of Islamic rule into a theoretically immutable Buddhist cosmological order.

The research is intended, in part, to complement existing work in Indian and Tibetan music, which has hitherto mainly concentrated on liturgical or classical traditions, and which has tended to overlook the role of the 'living', regional traditions in Indo-Tibetan culture. On a theoretical level, the study also aims to further understanding of the dynamics of culture change and continuity, and to develop lines of enquiry aimed at bridging the gap between musicological and anthropological context of explanation.

CORRESPONDENCE

Comment on the conference report "Mythos Tibet".

There follows an extract of Dr. Rudolf Kaschewsky's letter.

"I refer to the Conference report "Mythos Tibet" in issue 11 of your Bulletin which includes (p.83) a short notice on my lecture about the Pre-1900 European knowledge of Tibet.

Unfortunately, the writer has misquoted me considerably. By no means I said that the Christian missionaries Antonio de Andrade and Ippolito Desideri "nurtured negative prejudices about the uncivilised barbarians with their disgusting superstitious rituals"!

Quite the contrary is true. In my lecture, I described in detail the missionaries' admirable efforts in the study of Tibetan language and culture, especially Desideri's, who was the first European to explain in a scientifically satisfying manner the famous formula Oṃ maṇi padme hūṃ, and I clearly pointed out that Desideri's learned treatises written in Tibetan are an example of Buddhist-Christian encounter on a level never reached again in later times.

I am prepared to send a copy of my lecture manuscript (in German) to everybody interested."

Seminar für Sprach- und Kulturwissenshaft zentralasiens der Universität, Regina-Pacis-Weg 7. 53113 Bonn. (Fax: 49 228 73 7458).

Comment on de Sales' review of The Rulings of the Night

by Gregory G. Maskarinec

It is not unlikely that most readers of my book, *The Rulings of the Night: An Ethnography of Nepalese Shaman Oral Texts* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press 1995), would agree with at least one comment found in its review by Anne de Sales (*European Bulletin of Himalayan Research* vol. 11, 1996, p.67), when she observes that "it is regrettable that the texts are presented piecemeal...[t]he transcription of the songs [sic] is absent." This is a regret that I myself share. However, the corpus of texts that my bookdraws on dwarfs it many times over, consisting of not just the "thousands of lines" that de Sales imagines, but thousands of pages. To expect such inordinately lengthy material to appear as an appendix is

utterly unrealistic, clearly made impossible by normal publishing constraints. Fortunately, I would like to announce that a representative selection of my collections (approximately 10,000 lines of Nepali text, line by line English translations, and extensive notes, totaling about a thousand pagesin length) will appear soon from Harvard University Press, in the "Harvard Oriental Series", edited by Michael Witzel. This collection includes three complete repertoires, representing around a third of the material that I have collected over the past fifteen years from nearly twenty shamans: still a small part of what supports *The Rulings...*, but less "piecemeal" than in it.

It is far more difficult to respond to de Sales' other remarks, particularly her puzzling claim that "[i]t should be obvious that for the author it is only by trying to become a shaman that one may understand what a shaman is." [68] This is not obvious to me, at least: nowhere do I suggest such an absurd position, nor, as the book makes clear, did I ever try to become a shaman. Such a position would undermine the entire ethnological enterprise, making paradoxical and irrelevant such studies as the one that I have written. What I do rather modestly claim is that one needs to know what a shaman says before expecting to understand what they are doing, a position that I develop throughout the book and will not reiterate here. It was also, admittedly, necessary to recite from memory texts to the shamans before they were willing to teach me their secretive "mantras," but they knew, as would any careful reader, that I was not trying to become a shaman, only to understand fully their cultural universe, and that this was the only method possible to obtain access to this material.

No author, of course, can anticipate what readings of any work prove to be possible (a remark intended to be jocularly ironic may apparently be read as pretentiously heroic, for example), so I will not challenge other points of de Sales' interpretation of my work, except to add, in keeping with the review's overall spirit, two small corrections to her final comment. First, the Birendra Prajyālaṅkāra was also awarded to Guiseppe Tucci as well as to Toni Hagen, Christof von Fürer-Haimendorf, and myself. Second, I was not awarded it for this particular book (which only coincidentally appeared at the same time), but for my collections, transcriptions, annotations, and translations of shaman texts.

PROJECT: A DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC LINKED TO KATHMANDU UNIVERSITY.

A creation of a Department of Music linked to Kathmandu University will open at the Harsha Narayan Dhaubhadel Shivalaya (Chupin Ghat) in Bhaktapur.

Placed under the direction of Dr. Gert-Matthias Wegner, the purpose of the Department of Music is to :

- Give the musical traditions of Nepal a chance for survival by means of study, practice, documentation, preservation, communication, appreciation.

- Provide the public and private sector with students competent in music studies as well as modern recording media, in order to work in areas concerned with practice, preservation, and presentation of culture, like performance, teaching, research, publication, tourism, media work, cultural politics, international presentation, consultation, etc.;

- Preserve the traditional repertoire and encourage and involve traditional musicians and dancers.

In order to achieve this, the Department of Music has been designed to work in five different areas :

1. Academic course leading to B.A. and M.A.

2. Practical music classes

3. Sound Archive (recording and preservation)

4. Publication and communication (literature, bulletin, master tapes for CDs, documentary films, public concerts)

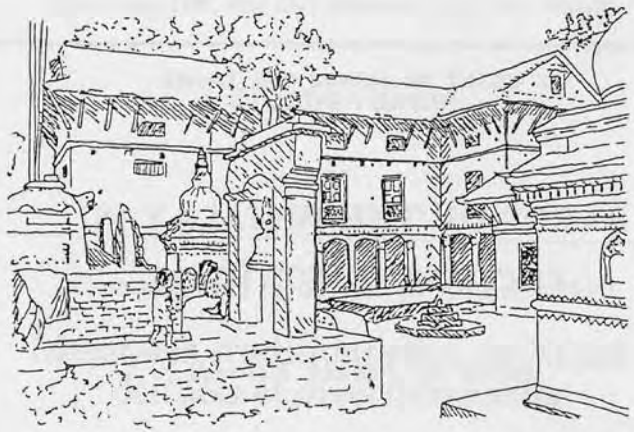
5. Research

The British Council, the German Academic Service (DAAD) and the School of Asian and African Studies (S.O.A.S) at the University of London have offered to collaborate with the

Department of Music, Kathmandu University, in supporting the academic programme.

Head of Department of Music, Kathmandu University : Dr. Gert-Matthias Wegner

Postal Address : P.O. Box 10878 Kathmandu. Nepal.



Mandala and Landscape

edited by
A. W. Macdonald

Emerging Perceptions in Buddhist Studies, no.6
New Delhi, D.K. Printworld, ISBN 81-246-0060-0, INC 1600

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Compact disc to appear in Autumn 1997

Musiques traditionnelles du Népal : Rituels et divertissements

edited by
Sophie Laurent

Productions UMMUS de l'Université de Montréal

contact : laurents@ere.umontreal.ca or bedarm@ere.umontreal.ca

Himalayan Music

Contents of the enclosed Compact Disc

[1] *Basanta* (6'28)
This spring song is sung by a *bhajan* group with harmonium, tābla, cymbals and assorted percussion instruments. Recorded by I. Grandin in Kirtipur on February 25, 1986.

[2] *Basanta* (3'22)
This spring song is sung by a *bhajan* group with harmonium, *nagarā* (kettledrum), bellsl and cymbals. Recorded by I. Grandin in Kirtipur on February 17, 1988.

[3] *Basanta* (2'34)
This spring song is sung by a *dāphā* group with *khīm* (a large, barrel-shaped drum with tuning-paste on the heads) and cymbals. Recorded by I. Grandin in Kirtipur on January 28, 1988.

[4] *Basanta* (2'06)
This spring song is sung by Ram Krishna Duwal. Recorded by I. Grandin in the singer's home in Panga on October 28, 1993.

[5]*Caryā song 'Raktavarṇa'* (3'55)
The song is in *rāga Nāṭ* and *tāla Jati* (extract). It is preceded by a short *ālāp* (*rāg kāyegu*). recorded by A.A. Bake in 1956.

[6] *Cholti* (0'41)
Sung by Dev Narayan Maharjan (extract of the *bol* recitation). Recorded by F. Bernède in Kathmandu in August 1995.

[7] *Cholti* (1'59)
Played by a *dhimay bājā* group of Kathmandu (Ombahal tol) conducted by Dev Narayan Maharjan (extract). Recorded by F. Bernède in August 1995.

[8] *Lampvāḥ* (2'52)
Played by a *dhimay bājā* group of Kathmandu (Ombahal tol), conducted by Dev Narayan Maharjan. Recorded by F. Bernède in Kathmandu in August 1995.

[9] *Srī Gaṇeś pūjā* (4'13)
Mālaśrī melody sung by a group of *maṅgalinī* auspicious women. Recorded by C. Tingey.

[10] *Pañca bājā* (4')
Played by a group of Damāi of Gorkhā. Recorded by C. Tingey.

[11] *Bhagwatiko laya* (4:'46)
Nagarā bānā ensemble of the Manakāmanā temple (Gorkha district). Played by Deviram Pariyar (*rasa*), Nabaraj Pariyar (*nagarā*), Sujan Pariyar (*bijuli-bānā*) and Man Bahadur Pariyar (*karnal*). Recorded by S. Laurent.

[12] *Mero karma* (5'22)
Played and sung by Ram Saran Nepali. Recorded by H. Weisethaunet.

[13] *The butterflies of Jumla* (4'26)
Played by Ram Saran Nepali. Recorded by H. Weisethaunet

[14] *Pho laba ghãtu* (4'41)
(Two song sections). Sung by Klinu villagers conducted by Bhasu Gurung. Recorded by M. Lahtinen and P. Moisala on February 16, 1976.

[15] *Imitations of bird songs* (0'48)
Sung by Gyendra Rana Magar. Recorded in Kathmandu by F. Bernède in March 1996. Jungle fowl, partridge, *nyauli* (great Himalayan barbet), *kuturkhe* (blue-throated barbet).

[16] *Nyauli* (3'36)
This love song is sung by the Huḍkiya bard Sher Ram at Paparsali (Almora District, U.P. India). Recorded by F. Bernède in February 1989.

[17] *Ngah drum and voice* (2'26)
Recording made by B. Pignède in 1958. (*"Au pied de l'Annapurna,"*Le Chant du Monde. LD-S- 8245).

[18] *Dhyāṅgro drum of jhāṅkri mediums (Tamang).* (1'20)
Recorded during the *Janai Purnima* at Patan by C. Jest in 1965. (*"Tibet, Nepal, musiques religieuses et profanes.* BAM, LD 104, 1966).

[19] *Hani children's song* (0'21)
Recorded by P. Bouchery in 1996.

[20] *Hani children's song* (0'34)
Recorded by P. Bouchery in 1996.

[21] *Hani children's song* (0'39)
Here executed by men's choir. Recorded by P. Bouchery in 1996.

[22] *Hani laudatory song (Xaba)* (1'48)
Welcoming song for visitors, improvised text on the most common melodic structure in the Red River region (district of Jianshui, Yuanyang, Jinping). Recorded by P. Bouchery in 1996.

[23] *Use of a citrus leaf as a wind instrument* (0'19)
Typical melody of Yuanyang region. Played by a man (extract). Recorded by P. Bouchery in 1996.

[24] ***Vegetal trumpet (gubi)*** (0'54)
Melody of Yuanyang region. Played by a woman (extract). Recorded by P. Bouchery in 1996.

[25] ***Leaf and gubi. duet*** (0'29)
Played by two women. Recorded by P. Bouchery in 1996.

[26] ***Hani love song (atsï)*** (0'38)
Accompanied by the sound of *gubi* (extract). Recorded by P. Bouchery in 1996.

[27] ***Hani percussion ensemble*** (2'15)
(Gongs, cymbals, single membrane cylindrical drums). Played by the "pure men" of the village community during the performance of the ritual dance for the celebration of the new year (extract). This piece is accompanied by a dance song (*sokë-so-ae*) borrowing the same melodical and textual sructure of the *xaba* type (cf. track 21). Recorded by P. Bouchery in 1996.

Total : (69'50)

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