



Contributions to the Anthropology of Nepal.

Review Author[s]:
Alan MacFarlane

Man, New Series, Volume 10, Issue 2 (Jun., 1975), 336.

Stable URL:

<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0025-1496%28197506%292%3A10%3A2%3C336%3ACTTAON%3E2.0.CO%3B2-W>

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use, available at <http://www.jstor.org/about/terms.html>. JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use provides, in part, that unless you have obtained prior permission, you may not download an entire issue of a journal or multiple copies of articles, and you may use content in the JSTOR archive only for your personal, non-commercial use.

Each copy of any part of a JSTOR transmission must contain the same copyright notice that appears on the screen or printed page of such transmission.

Man is published by Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland. Please contact the publisher for further permissions regarding the use of this work. Publisher contact information may be obtained at <http://www.jstor.org/journals/rai.html>.

Man

©1975 Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland

JSTOR and the JSTOR logo are trademarks of JSTOR, and are Registered in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. For more information on JSTOR contact jstor-info@umich.edu.

©2003 JSTOR

which the tribe asserts itself as the supreme body regulating the conduct of its members.

A large part of the book is devoted to detailed descriptions of sexual attitudes and customs, and poetry as well as myths is quoted to elucidate the Santals' view of sex. They emerge as a people of tremendous vitality and *joie-de-vivre*, and their lack of inhibitions in discussing sexual subjects would seem to have made it possible to gather very detailed information on topics treated far less fully in the majority of Indian anthropological writings.

The gift for artistic appreciation, on which W. G. Archer's reputation as one of the foremost critics and interpreters of Indian visual arts is based, has enabled him to render Santal poetry into elegant and yet simple English, entirely appropriate to the genius of a pre-literate and yet profoundly artistic people. The Santals are fortunate in their chronicler just as Archer was fortunate to spend some of the best years of his life among so attractive and amiable a people.

C. VON FÜRER-HAIMENDORF

SOAS, London

FÜRER-HAIMENDORF, CHRISTOPH VON (ed.).

Contributions to the anthropology of Nepal; proceedings of a symposium . . . [vi], 260 pp., illus., maps, tables, bibliogr. Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 1974. £6

Like population, anthropology in Nepal is growing exponentially. This multi-ethnic collection describes 'work in progress' and is consequently very uneven in approach and quality. Shamanism is the dominant theme. Allen describes the 'ritual journey' among the Rai of east Nepal in a perceptive piece of ethnography. Hitchcock analyses a shaman's song from the Magars of central Nepal and sees it in ambiguities found in generalised marriage exchange, reference to sexual ambiguity and evidence of the shaman's ambiguous status. Gaborieau analyses songs in western Nepal and concludes that they reflect a real tension between an older style of arranged marriage and more recent 'love' relationships. Höfer writes generally on spirit possession, asking why such possession is a specialist activity in the Himalayas while it is open to the laity in India. He then describes shamanism among the Tamangs, applying linguistic models to the shamanistic texts. Michl describes shamanism among the Chantel (copper miners). Sharma contributes to the ethnography on the 'Divinities of the Karnali Basin in Western Nepal'. Greenwold investigates the problem of whether 'monkhood' is an inherent characteristic of Buddhism and by what standards Newar 'Buddhists' are to be judged. The ethnographic

description of a Thakali clan ritual by Jest complements the film shown at the symposium.

Two papers are concerned with kinship and caste. Aziz argues that the stereotype of agnatic descent in Tibet is mistaken; Tibetan society was effectively bilateral, based on households and kindreds. Caplan tests hypotheses of Leach and Dumont concerning the significance and prevalence of caste endogamy by looking at inter-caste marriages in a west Nepalese town. It is the only paper to study the modern sector of Nepal and to use simple statistics. Two other papers discuss economic change. The editor discusses the effects of changing patterns of trade and increased monetisation, particularly the closing of the Tibetan salt trade, on the high-altitude Bhotia people. Messerschmidt and Gurung compare the innovatory techniques of Gurung and Thakali 'big men' and attempt a historical reconstruction of one legendary figure. The other three contributions consist of rather broad ethnographic accounts. Fournier describes the Sunwar and points to their complex religious life. Frank outlines an attempt to count the distribution of ethnic groups, particularly the Tamangs. Oppitz summarises his work, published in German in 1968, on the clan history of the Sherpas and reconsiders problems concerning the boundaries between myth and history.

For those interested in shamanism and in the Tibeto-Burman field this is a useful work. It omits many important areas, for example politics and power, agricultural economics and the major effects of economic development, formal demography and medicine, social control and administration. Yet it provides a good cross-section of some of the major fieldwork recently completed in the area. It is doubtful whether, in the present form, much of the material is of more than local interest. But there are clearly going to be some important contributions in the future based on the work reported in a preliminary way here. The editor is to be congratulated for having achieved the difficult task of international co-operation which led to the conference and to this volume.

ALAN MACFARLANE

University of Cambridge

PASTERNAK, BURTON. *Kinship and community in two Chinese villages*. xvi, 174 pp., illus., plates, maps, tables, bibliogr. Stanford: Univ. Press; London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1972. £4.25

In combining his two village studies from southern Taiwan into one monograph, Pasternak has produced a lively if somewhat awkward book. To read the ethnography of