

Recent Books from Nepal – Nov 2021

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Anthropology/Archaeology

The Restoration of the Krishna Temple : Patan – Nepal, 2015-2018 / Neeta Das
Lalitpur: Kathmandu Valley Preservation Trust, 2020
132p.
9789937072717
\$ 40.00 / PB
514gm.

A joint Project of Kathmandu Valley Preservation Trust (KVPT) and the
Government of Nepal - Department of Archaeology (DoA)
<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=781310>

Exorcising Ancestors Conquering Heaven : Himalayan Rituals in Context /
Brigitte Steinmann, Mukta Singh Tamang and Thuden Gyalchen Lama
Kathmandu: Vajra Books, 2020
xx, 380p.
Includes Bibliography
9789937624039
\$ 40.00 / PB
468gm.

This volume is a first attempt at gathering together, translating, describing and analysing an immemorial textual and oral Nepalese Buddhist heritage, doomed to disappear: a most antique form of veneration of major figures of the Buddhist religion of the Tamangs, based on Tibetan corpus. The analysis is centered around the recreation and final dissolution of both ferocious and pacific images of their gods and ancestors. Multiple dramas and rehearsals featuring the complex rules of the society and all the obstacles encountered by people in their day to day lives, are played theatrically under the guidance of the Head rnyingmapa Lama and/ or the Bard. Books, dramas, recitations, speak of fiercely combatting hordes of demons, enemies of the group, of eliminating a scapegoat and of using for this all the resources of a very high-mountain

environment, though far away in fact from where the ceremony in question is performed. People claims loud and clear to have descended from kings who came from the top of an original mountain situated in the centre of the world and touching the sky. Similarly, Funeral rites founded on a conceptualisation of the phases of death, and Teachings for the laity recited by the local bard, suggest that today's Tamangs' ancestors may well have been contemporaneous with ancient Mongolian societies, all of them adepts of the old Bon religion and prior to periods when the great literature of the northern Treasure-texts *gterma* disseminated in Nepal from the seventeenth century onwards, was introduced. This long-term work is the result of a collective effort bringing together the skills of researchers, ethnologists and historians, passionate about the world of these Buddhist populations of Nepal.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=735139>

Economics

An Alternative Development Paradigm for Nepal / Madhukar SJB Rana (Ed) Atul K Thakur

Kathmandu: Vajra Publications, 2021

xvi, 496p.

9789937624077

\$ 35.00 / PB

460gm.

Nepal's eminent public intellectual and Former Finance Minister Madhukar SJB Rana's remarkable writings and policy works had the guiding influence on Nepal's policymaking, his book "An Alternative Development Paradigm for Nepal" is a treasure trove as a single document to understand about the country's crucial development profile and fundamentals. Covering almost all the aspects of Nepal and South Asia's priorities, the book is uniquely rich and deserves a wide-readership and long shelf-life. The book is also important as a development history of Nepal, a democracy in transition. In the post-Monarchy phases, Nepal's democracy and realpolitik have shown unique characteristics. In the process of big shifts, Nepal's journey is worth a serious study. In the absence of a book written from the policy perspectives, it is difficult to get a one-stop solution. With his book (being published posthumously), Madhukar SJB Rana showed the way.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=781311>

History

Research for Zhang Zhung Civilization / Tsering Thar (Eds) Charles Ramble & Valentina Punzi (Translator) Qiujie Chen (et al.)

Kathmandu: Vajra Books, 2021

xviii, 378p.

9789937733250

\$ 38.00 / PB

532gm.

Tsering Thar is a specialist in the history of Bon religion and Zhang zhung civilization. Presently he is professor of history of Tibetan religions at the school for Chinese Minority languages and Literature of Minzu University of China, where he was already professor and director at the School for Tibetan Studies (2007 - 2018). Prior to his appointment, he was a research fellow on Bon religion at the China Tibetology Research Center in Beijing (1987 - 2006). He is a member of the Expert Committee of the Center for Conservation of Ancient Books under the Ministry of Culture of China, a board of International Association for Tibetan Studies (IATS) since 2010, and the Vice President of international Association for Bon Research (IABR-AIRB) since 2010.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=781312>

Linguistics

Discourse on Nepalese Translation / (Ed) Prof. Dr. Usha Thakur (Translator) Dr. Nabaraj Neupane

Kathmandu: Nepal Academy, 2020

212p.

9789937723954

\$ 25.00 / PB

232gm.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=781313>

Literature

Ghosts in the Bamboo : Inspired by the Truth and Imagination / Greta Rana

Kathmandu: Book-Hill Publication Pvt. Ltd., 2021

320p.

9789937941440

\$ 20.00 / PB

250gm.

Book Details:

"Ghosts in the Bamboo" plots the story of aspiring playwright Nurse Elinor Kittivane. Married to a philanderer this satirical novel is about the author's imaginary country Lapalasthan contains some delightful conversations of women as they discuss the men in their lives. Elinor takes her to play at the Edinburgh Festival and discovers she has a tumor behind the ear. Her inspiration has been conversations she thinks she had with the ghosts of her mother and grandmother in the bamboo grove in her garden.

Were they ghosts or was it the tumor? Written most remarkably by a literary veteran, read this humorous account of one woman's journey into her psyche and find out.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=774422>

Politics

Nepal's Instability Conundrum : Navigating Political, Military, Economic and Diplomatic Landscape / Maj Gen Purna B. Silwal (Retd)

Lalitpur: Institute for National Security Studies, 2021

xx, 376p.

Includes Index

9789937091442

\$ 35.00 / HB

572gm.

Instead of focusing on advancing its interests, Nepalese stakeholders have often compromised them while serving the interest of external powers and dislodging or defending the system and government.

Without civilian control over the military, democracy cannot effectively control armed insurgency and deliver political stability. "Prithivian Trinity" could be a mantra to deter or defeat external threats and critical internal challenges.

The government's handling of the Maoist insurgency was a political mess. Had the RNA leveraged the palace-military relations for its preemptive mobilization in Dunai, subsequent major events like Holeri, Dang, and the dissolution of the twin-pillar system would have been prevented. The sovereign monarch is quite an old concept, hence became untenable in 2006.

India's core interests in Nepal are to continue with the 1950 Treaty, maintain influence in internal affairs, prevent security threats from the Nepali front, recruit youths for Gorkha regiments, maintain an open border regime, and harness water resources.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=781314>

Triumph and Trauma of Transition / Shambu Ram Simkhada

Kathmandu: SANRAB Publication, 2021

296p.
9789937092791
\$ 30.00 / HB
636gm.

The Climate Crisis, COVID 19 Afghanistan serious pandemic and represent the most challenges to global academic, and wisdom and action. If all three have one common thread, it is in posing a question to our understanding of "Power" and what makes us "Powerful", concepts so central in all human affairs, not just politics, economics, diplomacy (International Relations) but even individual human behavior, as we relate to who we see as "other", human beings, species and creations of God or Mother Nature. Based acquired knowledge defined by my personal life experience further refined by the innate unique human quality of "Gyana", Trauma political, diplomatic-security economic and security externally uo Triumph Transition is my commentary pund the erroneous uo understanding, acquisition and use of Power and its consequent outcome of Transition Mismanagement in Nepal in particular but also the World in general, as the Human Family leaves behind the second and embarks on towards the third decade of what we call the 21st Century and beyond.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=781315>

From the Bagmati to the Potomac : In the Vortex of Change and Upheaval / M. R. Josse

Kathmandu: Periwinkle Prakashan Pvt. Ltd., 2021

192p.
9789937092395
\$ 20.00 / PB
152gm.

In this tome – 'From the Bagmati to the Potomac: In the Vortex of Change and Upheaval' presenting the latest compilation of write-ups by consultant editor emeritus, M.R. Josse, spanning the period from 30 June, 2020 to 19 January, 2021. Of the 26 thoughtful and incisive pieces contained herein, all of which have been published in the print editions of The People's Review weekly, 14 are essays drafted by the veteran columnist in Kathmandu and 12 are think-pieces penned from Gaithersburg, in the U.S. state of Maryland. The 'Bagmati and the Potomac' in the volume's title are metaphors for Nepal and the United States of America. The expositions were driven or inspired by the swirling political tides and dramatic geopolitical developments, including those that resulted in change and/or upheaval in Nepal and the wider U.S.-centric world, in the age of the disruptive Covid-19 pandemic. The opening write-up deals with the 'Sino-Indian face-off on the high Himalayas; the book concludes with 'Transition and violent

threats and military lockdown' centred on the charged political scene in Washington, D.C., as the curtain came down on Donald J. Trump administration.
<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=781316>

Religion-Buddhism

Zangh Zhung Nyengyud Ngondro : The Preliminary Practices to Dzogchen According to the Oral Transmission of Zhangzhung as Taught by Ponlob Tsangpa Tenzin Rinpoche / Ponlob Tsangpa Tenzin Rinpoche (Ed) Gideon Makin (Translator) Dr. Sangmo Yangri
Kathmandu: Vajra Books, 2021
196p.
9789937624091
\$ 35.00 / PB
224gm.

In this book Ponlob Rinpoche charts the course of the nine practices known in the Tibetan Bon and Buddhist traditions as Ngondro. Because Ngondro teachings hardly assume any prior knowledge, they are suitable for introducing Buddhist practices in general, as well as some key concepts of the underlying world view. For instance, before a meditation session a practitioner performs the three Ngondro practices known as Guru-Yoga, Refuge, and Bodhichitta. In this book one finds an orderly and detailed explanation of what these practices mean, as well as practical instruction on how to perform them.

Ngondro (literally: "that which goes before") is, firstly, a preliminary. The role of the nine practices is to purify the mind in preparation for higher practices - in this case Dzogchen - like cleaning a cup before pouring fresh milk into it. Second, Ngondro is also the foundation for more advanced practices. Skipping it is like trying to jump to the top of a building instead of using the stairs. Unless one takes the stairs of Ngondro one by one, one's Dzogchen practice will not become stable and beneficial.

Third, even a practitioner who has come to Dzogchen after climbing the stairs of Ngondro still needs it as a support. One's Dzogchen practice may fail to progress and become stagnated; practicing Ngondro is the remedy to this. As Rinpoche puts it, thinking to oneself "I have been practicing Dzogchen for a long time. I hold a high view. I've done Ngondro practice already" is misguided. Both Ngondro and Dzogchen are indispensable, like the two wings of a bird.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=781317>
