

MYTHS OF ORIGIN: THE JANAJATI MOVEMENT, LOCAL TRADITIONS, NATIONALISM AND IDENTITIES IN NEPAL

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This contribution is about myths of origin among the Tharu peoples of Nepal. The title indicates that such myths relate to the Janajati movement and nationalism. What do have such myths to do with the emerging new state and national identities?

A short answer would be that such myths are but one small element in a complex picture of relationships between indigenous peoples, ethnic categories and nation-building. Nevertheless, I feel that this small part may symbolically indicate a larger issue, one of origin, of self definition and of the way one looks at oneself in relation to the surroundings and ongoing process of change. The different myths represent Buddhist and Hindu constructions of reality. The problem illustrated here with reference to the Rana Tharu thus has a wider relevance to many ethnic groups in Nepal. As expressed by Prithvi Narayan Shah, the state is squeezed in the nutcracker between the Buddhist high mountains and the predominantly Hindu gangetic plains. This reality is also reflected in the choices of identities now prevalently made. Such elements are today made into important parts of the Janajati movement's ideology and contribute towards identity formation for the many groups of inhabitants in Nepal.

Background Information on the Janajati Movement and Democracy in Nepal

Before 1990, during the Panchayat system, ethnic associations were forbidden as public entities in Nepal, as were political parties. Ethnic associations were considered to be "communal" and a hindrance to the process of national unity and integration. At this time, the king was an absolute ruler and considered to be the incarnation of the Hindu god Vishnu. The country had a formal, democratically elected government in which representatives were elected on individual merit, but the elected ministers had less real power than the royally nominated state secretaries of each ministry. Political agitation ("Democracy Movement") in 1990 allowed rural power-elites (any from east Nepal and basically of Brahmins and Chetri background) to claim a share in Kathmandu's decision-making process.

After the overthrow of the Partyless Panchayat System (1990), most of the ethnic associations have now been formally recognized as they were allowed to register in the district administration offices of His Majesty's Government. A few of the associations, mainly of Tharus (1952), Magars, Gurungs (1954) and Tamangs, have existed underground since the early 1950s (the first democratic period in Nepal), whereas other associations have come about only recently after the restoration of democracy. Along with the emergence of the various ethnic associations, a bigger association known as Janajati Mahasangha (Federation of Nationalities) has been formed as a joint effort of the ethnic associations mentioned below. This Federation can be said to function as an *umbrella association*. The Federation of Nationalities has representation from the following ethnic associations:

- Nepal Magar Sangh (Magars)
- Kirant Yakthung Chumlung (Limbus)
- Kirant Yayokkha (Rais)
- Tamu Bandda Sewasamiti (Gurungs)
- Thakali Sewasamiti (Thakali)
- Tharu Kalyankari Sabha (Tharu)
- Dhimal Jatiya Utthan Kendra (Dhimals)
- Niko-Thami Sewa Samiti (Thami)
- Nepal Tamang Sangh (Tamangs)
- Nepal Bhasha Mankakhala (Newars)
- Nepal Hydmo Samaj Sangh (Hyalmos)
- Hyambu Syarba Chichhog (Sherpas)
- Kirant-Dharma Tatha Sahitya Utthan Sangh (Rai-Limbus)
- Meche Samaj Sibiyari Afat (Meches)
- Rajbanshi Bhasha Prachar Samiti (Rajbanshi)
- Jirel Samudaya Utthan Sangh (Jirel)
- Danwar Jagaran Samiti (Danuwars)
- Chhantyal Pariwar Sangh (Chhantyal) and
- Sunuwar Sewa Sangh (Sunuwar)

The objective of the Federation is threefold (according to Suresh Ale, General Secretary): to have "Nepal declared a secular state in spite of the Hindu Kingdom"; to make provisions for "the imparting of the primary level of education through the medium of their mother tongues; and to make "the constitutional provisions, of both jobs and political representation to all ethnic groups."

Myths of origin

Before relating origin myths to political realities in Nepal, let me say a few words about the way the scholars have tended to perceive such origin myths.

Anthropological studies of myths of origin have generally seen them as a way of looking at society as integrated wholes. Such studies have largely been connected to structural theories in which conceptual wholes (cultures)

are postulated. Secondly, studies of origin myths have also been taken to indicate self identity, or at least attempted to see what the different individuals in a group may have of common ground. Thirdly, besides explaining the content within the whole, origin myths may also define boundaries of the whole, and as such they delineate the "anthropological object of study."

In other fields apart from anthropology, studies of origin myths are tied up with history research and the special political science traditions which we for short can class under the catch phrase of "invention of tradition"¹ (T. Ranger and Hobsbawn 1989). An underlying current in such studies seems to have been that such myths blur history, manufacture "opium for the people" and... ultimately may not really be "true". That is, people use the past (or invent it) in the project of nation building. The past becomes in this sense history *as* myth, (that is, not necessarily reflecting what actually happened). It becomes an oral tradition, or folklore that in essence will be used as a proof that "We... are the People." We may recall the Victorian invention of tradition in India (Cannadine 1989) or according to Hobsbawn, the mass-production of tradition in Europe between 1870-1914. Myths were created in reference to Franks and Saxons of early Europe. We may ponder the meaning that origin myths may have had even for societies as our European ones.

Such stories of nations are stories or narratives which in themselves also may indicate the *beginning* in time (the Stiklestad war in Norway, Birth of Christ, etc; See Bhabha, 1992). But before this time what was there? On the one hand such narratives set the time of civilization off against barbarism; on the other it may portray the peoples whose origin it traces as the indigenous ones, the pagan first and so forth, with legitimist claims both on resources and territory. Such narratives set out a notion of them and us, where the WE may become linked to international treaties as those about indigenous rights set up within the United Nations.

Within this international system, however, one had previously a concern only for the state or the level of the individual, while today (after the migration of Iranian Kurds) there are also treaties for the protection of less advantageous groups between these two levels. Basically, this intermediate level concerns separatists and those who do not claim exclusive territory have status as "suffering and abused as *indigenous*" (See Skar 1994). We shall return to these issues later.

The Imagined Tharu Community:

If we accept Benedict Anderson's recent definition of a nation as "an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign" (Skar 1994:6), it becomes important to look into the collective dreams and desires which we may actually encounter. Such dreams are made both by Kathmandu politicians and by local leaders, as the young and ambitious ones in the rural areas in today's Nepal. Let us in the following counterpoise two origin myths and two political dreams which I encountered while working with the Tharu population. These myths tell of different

political aspirations, of a country with a centre and a periphery, and indeed also of a country in which identity at a deeper level is at stake in the new process of democratization.

The first myth and dream is of Tharu ethnic ancient ancestry in India, and it connects the ethnic group to Hinduism as it sets out a way in which the Tharu may attempt a "caste climbing" strategy. The other myth and dream is of making the Tharu the most original or aboriginal or indigenous people of Nepal, claiming ancestry back to the Lord Buddha, who was born in the lowland or Nepali Tarai, the Tharu ancestral land. The first myth relates to local power-structures and daily life, while the second relates to the present day fight for political power at high levels in the Janajati National movement in the capital of Kathmandu.

When I first began to work among the Tharu some years ago, they would tell me their origin myth² as follows:

Once, long time ago the sun became so hot that all men and women died. The sun was so big that the land dried up and no agriculture was any longer possible. Two people, a man and a woman, had survived, and they walked through the desolate landscape until they came to the Chittol-gar (gar=home), a place in India where all our forefathers later would come from. In Chittol-gar the people multiplied and they became a large tribe. They lived happily until one day they were attacked by an enemy, the Mongols. Then the king Rana Pratap Singh (or Thaku Rana) (Thaku=original) led them in war, but as they understood that they were losing, the noble and royal women were sent to safety in the forest with the male slaves/attendants. From that day our tribe has been condemned to moving about in the Thar desert (thus Tharu), always going from one place to another, until finally we could settle where we live today. Later the royal women married the slave men, and this is why the women today do not work in the fields and serve their men outside the house, pushing the food-plate with their foot.

This myth has many interesting characteristics as it sets out rules about such important institutions as slavery (still practised; see Skar 1995) and of women-men relations. What is important in this context is, however, that, firstly the mythical and mystical place of Chittol-gar is commonly known to be in Rajistan in India, and that by placing themselves as descendants of Rajput Indians, the Rana Tharu are sending a clear message to all other groups they relate to in their near environment. The myth indicates: "We are not as the Muluki Ain (the caste law of Nepal) indicates as alcohol-drinkers and close to the bottom of the ranking scale, but close to Chetri status, as warriors and state makers."

According to Allen (1972), similar myths indicating higher than actual status are to be found among many of the Nepal Tarai groups. But this myth

has had a most interesting affect among the Rana Tharu unlike that of the other cases. The people of Kailali, in the Far West are today *reenacting the myth*, but in reverse. In 1994 for the first time, a large group of Rana Tharu led by the charismatic leader XX planned to go to India to reunite with a Rana group who XX has located in Rajasthan. If received by these as “lost brothers”, a claim to equal status could be made, according to the “rules of the game” as laid down in Hindu tradition and customs.

One problem remained, however. Nepal today is in the process of de-Hinduizing the kingdom, and thus the “rules of the game” are changing. This is a point which so far has seemed of little importance to *local* political actors, but of great importance to the leaders of the Janajati Movement in Kathmandu. Their strategy has thus been to renounce the above version of the “Indian”-origin-myth and exchange it for the following one.

The Tharu originated in Nepal as remnants of the Sakya's and Koliya's the two branches of the descendants of Okaka and Okamukha, the king of Banares. During the time of sage Kapil who had his Ashram in the area which later became known as Kapilvastu, King Okaka had married a second wife in his old age and was forced by the younger queen to promise to make her son the next king. The king, Okamukha was very pious minded and, therefore, informed his three sons from his elder wife of his predicament and advised them not to revolt in his life time, but to recapture their kingdom after his death from their step brother. The four sons left the kingdom instead, thinking that there were no dearth of land and they could found a new kingdom. The five sisters, the eldest's name was Priya, also joined their brothers left the country of Kosala, came to Kapil's Ashram and sought his permission to settle in the region by clearing the jungle and cultivating the forest land. Kapil readily agreed, but requested them to name their state as Kapilvastu after his name. So the new name came to be known as Kapilvastu.³

At first, this seems an origin myth similar in vein but different in content with the first. But its significance may be glimpsed when we are told that “these facts are writ-large in the Buddhist literature – Lalit Bistar and “jatak” tales. Furthermore, according to the story pamphlet the author Mr. Singh, “the birth stories as narrated by Buddha support it” (Ibid.: 2). Thus the Hindu paradigm is exchanged for a Buddhist one, and the Hindu caste ideology is, according to Singh denounced, because “Buddha created a revolution in the then deteriorating Hindu society... and Buddha's proposition that all men are born equal and are the architect of their own life was very painful to the Brahmins and the people supporting Brahminism” (Ibid.: 3).

To further such a mythical view, this exegesis continue by disclaiming any high caste ranking, or caste climbing. This is done as follows: “Again, it is well known to the Buddhist historians that the Buddha's ancestors, when they

came to resettle in the woods of Kapilvastu, the brothers married their own sisters, while the eldest sister Priya ran the household and remained unmarried. Now if the Buddha's ancestors had been Kshatriyas (Chetri) of Hindu concept, they could not have married their own sisters. It would have been sacrilegious, abhorring to the caste Hindu" (Ibid.: 3).

Having established a different mythical origin, of a people which cleared primordial forests in the ancient time, (i.e. a non-Hindu group), the author goes on to establish a link between this group and the Tharu. This is done in a very sophisticated way, in which the Tharu are not only seen as the "original people," but also descendants of Buddha himself. Firstly, let me explain that the primordial jungle area at this time was intact from Delhi to the foothills of the Himalayas (see Skar 1995). And that within this region, close to the hills and now within the Nepali Tarai, we find Buddha's birthplace (date approx. 563 B.C.) at Lumbini. According to the story of Buddha, the original carrier of this faith was a group known as Therabadins, who were descendants of the Sakya and Kolian peoples living in Kapilvastu (the new jungle-kingdom described in the story above). These followers of the Therabada Buddhism came to be called "Sthavir." "It is from this word that Singh (Op. cit) and other leaders of the Janajati movement claim that the name "Tharu" derives from "sthavir" to "thavir". and from Thavir to Tharu is an easy and logical transition," we are told (Ibid.: 4).

Following the logic of the Janajati followers, the Tarai was inhabited by a malaria resistant people, and no one but the Tharu lived there in the olden days. If Buddha was born in this area then he had to be "Tharu," and thus *they* would be the original tribe in the Nepali lowland. If thus the Tharu were in Nepal from approximately the eighth century B.C. onwards, why should the later Tharu groups arriving from India marry their slaves as in the other myth? Mr. Singh asked during my interview (Des. 1993).

If some groups in the Far West were forced to go north during the time of the Mongols (thirteen hundreds), the other groups would have been here to welcome them, as we are all descendants of Buddha.
(From interview with Mr. Singh)

Interpretation and discussion

Let me now attempt some words of interpretation and an explanation of the context in which the different claims are made, and also add a few words on the texts themselves.

The first version of the origin myth, the Hindi version, is locally shared by all in the Far West and of long standing. It has been reported by anthropologists and travellers from the time of the British East India Company (1757-1857) up to the present (see Shrivastava 1958: 14-5, and my own fieldnotes).

The myth reflects traditions (caste, slavery, women's place etc.). It is an *oral* tradition, and it is not national but *bi-national* in that the Tharu groups in India (who marry across the borders to Nepal) share the myth, and lastly, it

is *continental* in that it reflects values and beliefs predominantly found on the Indian subcontinent and within the Hindu tradition. From the local community, we see connections first with the Hindu God State of the Panchayat period (up to 1990) and associations with the symbols of this nation state, in which nationalism was built on the three pillars of Hinduism, kingship and Nepali language. We see further connections, emanating from the local contexts and blending with Brahminic traditions all over the Hindu world.

However, on a visit to Rajasthan in 1993, we met with local leaders in the town of Chittorgar. They could tell us that the Rana Tharu were a part of their own Rajasthani claim to sovereignty within the state of India. Every year, according to Mr. YY, there was in Chittorgar a celebration of the battles of Rana Pratap Singh. Last year even state ministers of India flew in with helicopters to attend it. We had the feeling that a claim of relationship to ethnic groups in Nepal as very welcome, as this furthered the nearness of the peoples in the two countries and could thus be used politically. However, we were told that the Rana Tharu had to be real Rana, and thus there would be no acceptance into the Rajasthani movement if they continued to maintain that the women had married slaves.

Another origin myth of origin told among the eight Deuba Rana families of Urma may satisfy this purist Hindu requirement, while loosing the Indian connection. Here the mythical father is a local Nepali (paharia) hill king of Chetri origin.

Today we are living in an area previously called Parivar Thapa. The Thapas were areas from hill to lowland, and they were ruled by kings. In Parivar Thapa was the kingdom of the Paral ethnic group, as Boktan Thapa was ruled by the Bogati Chetri, and Reikavar was ruled by the Raul.

The Paral Raja (king), had however begun to sacrifice human beings. At every Dasai (Hindu festival in November, he would sacrifice (cut is the word used) young men. Only men were slaughtered, not women. Then Prahal man Deuba arrived. He had arrived from Ruakhola in the Dandeldhura hill district. He settled with a woman who previously had one son, and when the old Paral king said it was this son's time to be slaughtered, Deuba told the young man to be brave and not afraid of him. "If you are brave we shall go against him," he was told...As the old king Paral Raja was holding up the boy's head so as to cut it (here we were showed how the jaw was kept open as the chin (was pushed forward), Deuba arrived and cut off the king's head instead. After that day, all descendants of Paral Raja were killed as well. Deuba Rana ruled from that day on, but left this area, Parivar Thapa to be administered by his younger brother while he himself went to Singhai in India. He became a king there, and no one

has ever been there, nor do we know where it is. The Deubas were Chetri, and now the younger brother wanted to return to Pahar (mountain) for a wife. However, the natives said: "You cannot go. You must be the king of your petty state and rule here. Then he was compelled to take a Tharu wife." Even the barbarians (Muslims) would not at that time stay in this area as it was so hot, but Deuba stayed and his descendants reckon themselves as Chetri today.

Deuba brought with him one goddess-guntidevi. Even today this goddess receives sacrifice of a male buffalo during Dasai. She has her own little shrine at the end of the forest closest to the village. Otherwise the Deuba Rana have the same gods as the Rana Tharu (Niradar, Durga, Nangarihei, and Hanuman). The Guntidevi is now in Gasita. This was the village in which they all lived before. Later, the eight families of Urma moved here. The goddess is worshipped by all the villagers of Gasita, but only here in Urma do they cut buffalo. The meat, head, hoof and all, they give to the untouchable.

The informant added that as other Tharu's are Rajputs, they are Chetris, as the Deuba in the hills marries the Bom Thakuri.

In this myth, we see that mythical "fathers" can be made Rana, and thereby give identity to whole groups of descendants. The Indian connection is weakened, but it is still there reminding us that the Tharu nation is divided by state borders (India-Nepal), while the connection to the upperclass Hindus of the Nepali hills is made pervasive. Indeed, this myth presents an ideal notion for Hindu caste climbing in a local context.

The Buddhist version of the origin myths presented earlier counter the Hindu mythical framework. Furthermore, it functions exterior to the local narrative context. Nepali Hinduism is in itself a mix. This clear-cut juxtaposition between Hindu and Buddhist is known to be hard to make in practice at the village level, but easy in the abstract. Such opposing views are thus generally made in Kathmandu, especially as laying claims in opposition to the government, which is accused favoring Brahmins and Chetris in its policies.

As an example of the difficulty in differentiating between Hindu and Buddhists, the Dasain festival is frequently used. The festival of Dasain (in October), originally a Hindu festival, is today celebrated by most religious groups in Nepal as Christmas is also celebrated by believers and non-believers in Europe. For some this represents the essence of Hinduism, for others a prolonged party and a vacation. The difference is not always readily observed in the field (Janajati have voted to abolish this festival as a national holiday, see text at the end of essay).

Another example frequently used when denying religious separateness between Hindu and Buddhist is as follows: If the criteria to establish who is a

Buddhist is to be "anyone believing in Buddha," (as suggested by Buddhists, during the planning of new national statistics), most villagers in Nepal would doubtlessly be Buddhist. This is so because even the most devoted Hindu would believe in Buddha as a sacred man.

Without going into more detail concerning the way to classify Nepali citizens, we see that the framework used by the Janajatis is found among the intellectuals and often exterior to the village context. It reflects rather a growing consciousness of a group within a larger society, and especially the way they are perceived by the leaders. (Some of its leaders come from very Hinduised villages, and thus they reclaim their lost past, hoping for a new present.) The Buddhist origin myth is considered as "truth" to these leaders. They thoroughly believe in their version of history, and as such, it is not questioned but postulated and used in the modern political dialogue.

Today the Buddhist origin myth is part of a national discourse, having to do with political motivation the changing relationships between the 36 flowers (ethnic groups) in the garden of Nepal, to paraphrase Prithvi Narayan, the founding father-king of Nepal. It has to do with who is to weed the garden and who is to water and be watered; and ultimately, in what soil one is to grow the flowers. Ultimately for the Tharu, the myth is a claim to be part of the modern vision of Nepal – a non Hindu mosaic with equal rights to all, to quote the Janajati leader Suresh Ale Magar. (The smiling man which the press often today like to call the "angry man", a derogatory term as anger is not supposed to be shown in this society). However, before one enters the garden path of Prithvi Narayan, a strong Tharu nation in its own right is seen as necessary, a Tharu nation capable of protecting rights and positions beside the other ethnic groups. To acquire such rights, internal differences between different Tharu sub-groups (i.e., as between the Dangora Tharu and the Rana Tharu who generally do not understand each other's language) are overlooked. Furthermore, an affiliation is made with the international movement of indigenous peoples.

As the U.N. year of the indigenous peoples was declared and the Guatemalan human rights activist, the indigenous Mrs. Menchu, was given the peace prize, the Tharu and other Janajati leaders were requesting the government to have a Nepali indigenous rights committee formed. This request was declined, and it led the government later to set up its own non-ethnic committee to represent the multiethnic nation in the World Human rights Conference in Vienna in June, 1994. I shall not go into detail about the events which led to Nepal having two committees present at that conference, but only note, for the sake of this article, that the subcontinental Indian framework of bi-nationalism is replaced by the Janajati politicians invoking international frameworks and also in parenthesis the support of international NGOs.

Conclusions

To conclude this article, I shall briefly restate the two model in which the people of Nepal today are "imagining their community" to use Benedict Anderson's term. These visions are reflected in the origin myths, but they go much further as Nepal is squeezed between the two great traditions, one in the north and the other in the south. One predominant model is of the Hindu state, and the other, most frequently opposed, is of a multiethnic democracy, favouring Buddhism. So far no ethnic group seems to want to set up a pure one-ethnic state within Nepali territory as each of Nepal's 36 ethnic groups is seen as too small to withstand either of the two large neighbours, China or India. However, although there seems to be a tacit agreement on the preservation of the state as such, there is no agreement on what type of state it is to be.

The Hindu version is of a melting pot where all become more or less like each other, as in the idealized "America." I shall not at present go into detail as to its foundation in the Panchayat period, its link to the royal family, and to various Brahminic fundamentalist groups. We shall, however, note that a Nepal Sadbhana (Goodwill) Party was formed in 1990, and that one of its claims is to have Hindi recognized as a national language in Nepal at a par with Nepali. A special Hindu (Sanskrit) University is currently also running in Dang, Nepal (although there are few students). (During the 1994 election, it was interesting to note the simultaneous timing of a large seminar on the Hindi language going on at this university). Close to the University grounds the massacre of UML party workers also took place, which again affected Kathmandu as the dead were buried there making martyrs for the new regime. In opposition to this Hindu nationalism, we note that few tribal individuals (non-Brahmin/Chetri) have today been appointed judges, that neither high-ranking military nor police officers seem to be in view, and that few tribals are members of the National Academy of Science. Today many are of the opinion that the situation is worse than before the revolution and that previously the king, by privately appointing individuals to the upper house, at least maintained some future for non-Hindu citizens. In 1993, many frustrated citizens flocked to the Janajati movement, and even the traditional political parties saw themselves forced to view for the ethnic vote, previously controlled by the Janajati Federation of nationalities.

Definitely Nepal is changing. During the last census only 53% (down 5% since 1991) claimed to speak Nepali, and Hinduism as a religion was so much in decline that the government, according to some, decided not to publish the figures. Meanwhile, the janajati is growing. But will it reach the villages? And how will it interact with local perceptions of self and local ambitions to caste climbing and individual status?

During the election campaign of 1994, all political parties declared that they were furthering nationalism and everyone's well-being in Nepal. (The use of the term 'nationalism' has only positive connotations here so far, and it refers to the nation state only). Now we may ask who are the nationalists

in the making of the Nepal of the future: the janajati or the Hindu? The ones believing in the old rule and order, or the ones with the new vision of change? Who will draw the longest straw as times go by will at least partly depend on the support available at the local level. Thus the parties may now need to confront the way people think of their origin, not only in Kathmandu but also in the predominantly rural "majority Nepal," that is, at the "gaun" level. Thus it may depend on which of the political parties first wakes up to the real importance of the ethnic vote in general, and how they will interweave this aspect with local practices and international traditions. During the 1994 election, the CPN/UML, and RPP seemed to have done a slightly better job than the NC, as they had included more "ethnic candidates" than the Nepali Congress (rough personal estimates from party name lists). Voting behaviour is, as I have noted elsewhere, dependent not only on party policy but also on tradition and the way people will want to perceive of the political messages (see Skar 1994).

As politics is rapidly changing the Nepalese reality, I shall end this article without a firm conclusion. We see that myths are made relevant in present day politics, but present day realities in the capital of Kathmandu may differ from those of the local caste village setting. The multiethnic nation of Nepal poses local and national problems addressed by some but not others. However, it has been noted that the parties under the 1994 election so far have been able to absorb much of the momentum of the Janajati movement. However, this may only be so at the present time. In an interview with Ganesh Man Singh on November (two days before the election), he stated that if Congress lost at the elections, one reason would be their failure to include the Janajati. As Congress had established itself in the early 1950s, it had been dependent on the support of the Rai and the Limbu, Mr. Singh maintained. But this, according to him, seems only to be history. Thus an understanding of history and one's place in it, both in relation to the mythical past and the rather more recent present, may be of importance for future policy makers and peace in this country.

Notes

1. "Invented tradition is taken to mean a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition; which automatically implies continuity with the past. In fact, where possible, they normally attempt to establish continuity with a suitable historic past". (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1989:1)
 "We should expect it (the invention of tradition) to occur more frequently when a rapid transformation of society weakens or destroys the social patters..." (Ibid.: 4)
2. Told by the Balemansa (leader) of Urma village (1992).
3. Excerpted from the pamphlet "The Real Story of the Tharus" by Ramanand Prasad Singh, p. 2

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